

**Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
December 9 2021
Conference Room 1A & 1B - 1st Floor City Hall**

I. Call to Order

Commissioners Present – Kimbell, Carroll, Stanton, Geuea-Jones, Loe, Rushing, Placier, Burns, and MacMann

Commissioners Absent – None

Staff Present – R. Smith, Thompson, Kelley, C. Smith, Cantin, Zenner, Teddy, Palmer

II. Introductions

III. Approval of Agenda

Meeting Agenda adopted unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

November 18, 2021 work session minutes adopted as presented.

V. Old Business

A. Comprehensive Plan Update- Draft Engagement Plan

Mr. Zenner opened the work session. He said there would be time to enjoy the holiday meal and reflect on a busy year of work session topics and cases, in addition to time devoted to reviewing the draft engagement plan staff had been working on for the next Comprehensive Plan (Columbia Imagined) update that had begun with the Status Update reviewed early in the year. They were working on background materials and research to launch a successful public outreach strategy as was identified by the Status Report. He said much of this work was transitioning to Mr. Kelley and Mr. Cantin know that Mr. Cantin (Neighborhood Communications Coordinator) had joined the Planning Division team. He said the wanted initial feedback on the draft plan this evening so that they could continue to refine it in early first quarter of 2022 and then get a consultant on board mid-year or so.

Mr. Cantin introduced himself and his work objectives to broaden and deepen diverse and inclusive public input in the Comprehensive Plan and other related planning processes and products. He presented a PowerPoint Presentation (attached) that showed the results of extensive research and discussions with other communities leading the way with innovative best practices for communication and input. He discussed efforts to reach diverse populations and models of success and lessons learned. He specifically discussed the experiences of Fort Collins and Minneapolis as good examples. He presented the matrix of other plans/outreach processes and summarized his research.

There was discussion of on-the-ground ambassador programs undertaken by persons closely tied into the community. Trust and how trust was built and sustained was important. There were tactics and tools discussed by the Commission that had worked in the past and other places, and there was discussion on how funding and stipends, education, recruitment and communication processes had worked in peer-community examples. Accountability and feedback loops and input cycles were discussed. The use of equity framing as a needed lens for the work and the plan was discussed.

Ms. Loe discussed funding sources for the Plan which may be available from the Federal government for equity. Staff also discussed funding sources they were aware of both for plan development and public input, and ultimately for plan implementation action items.

There was extensive discussion on how to better engage and educate staff and internal city stakeholders and well as outside stakeholders and boards and commissions on the value of the plan. How to tie-in CIP (Capital Improvement Program) funding processes was discussed. The tie of equity to CIP priority pipelines and project funding was discussed. The need for the public to see the relationship between the plan and how the Council and decision makers make decisions and fund projects was important. There needed to be a clear partnership between the vision of the plan and City decision-making processes. There needs to be continual relationship acknowledgement and sustained engagement between the plan, policy makers and the public.

How to utilize local talent versus the pros and cons of outside consultants was discussed. The knowledge of the local environment, and established trust was very important. Authentic decision-making and bringing folks in the community to the table was discussed. Education would need to be a two-way street between on-the-ground community members and the Council and City leadership to have successful buy-in. Continued stakeholder engagement after the Plan was developed needed to be accounted for in the engagement plan, and baked into the implementation sections of the Plan itself. Dedicated funding sources for Plan implementation and this sustained education and engagement was discussed. How to keep all parties accountable was imperative to the engagement plan. In addition to dedicated plan implementation funding, there were successful models where there was dedicated staff devoted to plan implementation and continuous and sustainable engagement.

Additional discussion on growth and equity considerations was had. The differences between equity and diverse participation in both plan input processes and the product of plans and community growth was discussed. Both concepts were important but were different aspects to consider. The Plan and Plan processes need to have integrity in the aspirations for diversity and integrity. This needs to permeate the rewrite of the plan, not just be tacked-on. The ability of a consultant to provide sustained support to keep Plan stakeholders track with the goals of the Plan development process was an important role. The plan could be written by staff and communication and outreach performed by local experts; a consultant could be used to share technical resources/expertise and best practices and keep goals on the forefront of the larger team. This may utilize existing and local resources which may be more authentic and on-the-ground, but also help with challenges to staff time and resources.

There was additional discussion on how plan ambassadors may be utilized. The process would be best designed to be citizen-driven with a bottom-up approach.

Mr. Cantin and Mr. Zenner thanked the Commission for their time and review of the draft engagement plan. The Commission's feedback would be incorporated into the draft and brought back for additional feedback at future check-ins.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned approximately 7:00 pm

ACTION(S) TAKEN:

Motion made by Commissioner MacMann, seconded by Commissioner Rushing, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously. Made motion by Commissioner MacMann, seconded by Commissioner Kimball, to approve the November 18, 2021 work session minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.