



Legislation Text

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Comprehensive Plan Status Update- Proposed Strategic Redevelopment Planning Initiative - Peter Wysocki, Planning & Development Director and Carl Schueler, Planning Manger - Comprehensive Planning

Summary: Given the uncertainty of future funding to complete the comprehensive plan, staff was asked to evaluate alternative initiatives that could be equally beneficial and in-line with the strategic plans of both the Executive and Legislative Branches.

The purpose of this discussion is to briefly outline plans for a potential alternative to preparing a new comprehensive plan. Rather than a full multi-year update, using the services of one or more consultants, the alternative approach would be more limited, strategic and action-oriented with a focus on the Economic Opportunity Zones, infill strategies, zoning code amendments, and re-evaluation of Banning Lewis Ranch. Instead of being used for a Phase I consultant contract, some or all of the currently budgeted \$150,000 would be devoted to hire additional staff that would assist with this process.

Although staff believes that a city-wide comprehensive plan should continue to be part of a long-term strategic objective, staff also recognizes that there are immediate needs that should be addressed to aid the growing impetus on redevelopment and infill projects. The energy and momentum gained by the work of the Economic Opportunity Zones task forces and reports highlights the motivation of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch to implement tangible, “rubber meets the road” results. Staff believes the proposed alternative meets this intent.

Previous Council Action: The 2014 adopted budget includes \$150,000 in funding for a first phase consultant contract.

In conjunction with a January 27, 2014 Work Session on this topic, City Council designated Councilors Jill Gaebler and Andy Pico as core members of a steering committee to represent Council in leading this effort.

Background: An RFP for a potential consultant contract for Phase I of the Comprehensive Plan update has been issued, and some proposals have been received. In accordance with City Procurement requirements and processes, these proposals have not been reviewed or circulated to a selection committee, pending a determination as to whether the City will or will not be proceeding as originally planned.

In light of the long-term revenue outlook for the City, coupled with other important future budgetary needs, City Administration is concerned about the future funding of the second phase of this project as now contemplated. Although not precisely determined at this time, the full consultant cost of this entire effort might be on the order of \$500,000 over a period of 2+ years. Additionally, under the currently contemplated full scope, subsequent implementation actions (such as Code changes or more specific and strategic plans and initiatives) would require further time and cost and would not be completed until adoption of the comprehensive plan. By shifting to a more focused and strategic approach, staff could shorten the time frame, limit costs and potentially get to implementable and tangible development and redevelopment- supportive outcomes sooner.

Key components of the modified approach could include the following;

- Focus strategic planning attention primarily on infill, economic development, priority areas, and the long term fiscal sustainability of the City.
- Update and present for adoption the *Infill White Paper* as a starting point template for infill supportive strategic plans, initiatives, and actions.
- Hire one additional senior-level employee on a contract basis to assist Comprehensive Planning Manager with this initiative to be undertaken predominantly as an “in house” project
- Complete and appoint Steering Committee as originally contemplated, but with a refined purpose
 - Identify, recruit, appoint and direct technical support teams
- Develop and maintain a public participation plan and program
 - Develop and maintain a project web site and mobile applications
 - Identify, recruit and support a broadly based stakeholders group
 - Effectively and efficiently solicit input and market the initiative
- Focus on and manage redevelopment and action plans for Academy Boulevard and North Nevada Avenue Economic Opportunity Zones (EOZs)
- Support Downtown redevelopment initiatives via this process
- Evaluate and recommend options regarding development or use of Banning Lewis Ranch based on best available information and status
- Initiate and implement a strategic infill and redevelopment-supportive Zoning Code change project

Financial Implications: Some of the \$150,000 currently budgeted in FY 2014 for the originally anticipated Phase I consultant contract would instead be used to hire a senior level planner on a temporary basis. Assuming a start date of June 1, 2014 the anticipated expenditure in 2014 would be on the order of \$35,000, the remaining amount could be either rolled forward into the 2015 budget as a new line item or could contribute to fund balance in the form of budget savings.

Shifting this project to “in-house” will also translate into some additional staffing obligations for other Departments including IT/GIS and Communications staff.

The overall direct cost of this approach would be less than that for a full multi-year Comprehensive Plan update using consulting services.

Board/Commission Recommendation: This alternative has not been presented to the Planning Commission; however, staff has discussed it with the two Planning Commissioners selected to be on the steering committee - Commissioners Robert Shonkwiler and Chuck Donley.

Stakeholder process: At this point, this alternative has not been discussed with any stakeholder groups or associations.

Alternatives:

1. Direct staff to proceed with the suggested shift in scope.
2. Direct staff to proceed with the comprehensive plan as planned, although if not supported by the Mayor and if additional funding is not allocated in future years, the project will not be completed.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the City Council concur with staff and shift the budgeted \$150,000 from the comprehensive plan project to an “infill and redevelopment related initiative” project.

Proposed Motion: Not applicable