

Meeting Notes

Meeting: Housing

Date/Time: 11-18-14

Location: Missoula Organization of Realtors Conference Room

Notes by: Kate McMahon, Applied Communications

Attended by: Collin Bangs, Sandy Schoonover, Nick Kaufman, Andrea Davis, Greg Oliver, Eileen Sansom, Sherrie Feathey, Katherine Brady, Lori Davidson, Eric Gabster, Patty Kent, Casey Wilson (Development Services Staff), and Brenna Rietmann (Facilitator Assistant Intern)

Updates

- At the next meeting the group should appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair that will also serve as representative and alternate to the Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee will begin meeting in January, so that will mean a second meeting during a few months overlap with the focus group work for the person acting as a Chair or Vice Chair.
- Draft Community Profile (existing conditions) is now online at <http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/27401>.

Background

Review a few key elements of the Focus Group Guidelines

- Inspiration section:
 - Overview of core pillars – they help to set up the process for this project
 - Overview of the City Council Resolution – In April, 2014, the Council passed a resolution in support of the process and starting point being exploration of policies that delve into the meaning of “focusing inward” for our community.
 - Draft Value Statement – this document describes the background for the focus inward concept and lists many core values to consider. This document will be revisited by the Steering Committee toward the end of this process to see whether we need to make any adjustments to the statement.
- Goal/Objective/Action section:
 - The definition and examples of goal statements are shown in the guidebook

Focus Group discussion ideas:

A focus group member noted that the summary of assets/issues from the listening session did not include some housing issues that may be suggested by the trends data. It was discussed that topics can be added to the list of suggested topics from focus group members at any time and the group does not have to limit discussion to the listening session summaries.

Overview of the Values and Challenges process:

For the past five months the planning group has been collecting comments from community members through many topic-based listening sessions regarding values and challenges and ideas to address the challenges. The notes from the listening sessions are available on the website. The Summaries from the notes are the tools used tonight to help guide the process of developing Goals.

Goal Development Task:

Each group member Identified key topics that they felt best relate to the focus group subject by reviewing the Summary Values material and circling five topics and reviewing the Summary Challenges material and circling five topics.

Group members shared their top priorities for the focus group from the Value topic list and the Challenge topic list.

High priority topics were chosen from the Values topics and the Challenges topics. Each group member was asked to write goal statements for any of the high priority topics (whether they came from the Values or Challenges lists).

Group members read off goal statements and some questions and clarification were discussed.

Project staff collected the goals statements and grouped them under the related topics.

The purpose of this process is to collect as many initial individual goal statement ideas and then through the next few months expect to see the statements become refined, combined, sorted and even possibly moved to another group or level of policy development (such as objective or action).

Topics Identified and number of people interested in exploring the topic (with discussion notes as sub-bullets):

- Natural Resources - 2
 - Air Quality is now a problem with shoulder-season burning in Spring and Fall and wildfires in summer. Quality of life in Missoula has diminished of late because of the bad smoke.
- Land Use Zoning – 9
 - State law needs to be changed so that it is not so easy to block good housing projects. Zoning protest laws are especially problematic in the County, where it is easier to block a project.
 - City needs to zone area specifically for mutli-dwellings, rather than have multi-dwelling occur on expensive Commercial property. And, the City needs more land zoned for small lot housing developments, such as Canyon Creek and Windsor Park which are Special Districts. Zoning is on the books, but not on the ground.
- Affordable Housing - 10
 - It used to be that a small house on a small lot was affordable to a median income household, but it is no longer, as of the last few years.
 - Need a continuum/diversity of housing types to create movement through the single family market. If there are more housing options, the market will have more movement, freeing up housing along the continuum – starter home on up. An example: It is desirable to have \$350k condo development so that the retired person with a now half million dollar University House in

need of 40-years of deferred maintenance can move into low maintenance housing, freeing up that high tier of the market, which may at the same time bring down the price of the house.

- Housing Demand – 6
 - Housing Diversity/continuum – get more houses into the market. Houses, not apartments, are quickly rented and in demand. There is not such a demand for multi-dwellings.
- Housing – Neighborhood Design – 9
 - Create development that is reflective of character of the neighborhood. Housing should be designed affordable, energy efficient, etc. Housing, especially low-income housing, needs to be designed with social infrastructure in mind – connecting these developments to neighborhoods.
- Neighborhood Opposition – 6
 - Makes it difficult to implement good projects, especially ones with a higher density component or a social service component.
- Transportation/Parking/Transit – 2
 - A good transportation and transit system can protect a sense of place, natural resources, and neighborhoods. Look at how people move through neighborhoods. Corridor development. Develop more densely around the transit corridors. Develop housing while keeping in mind how people are going to move around.
- Economy/Jobs/Econ/Development
 - Lack of a skilled workforce – the pool has diminished of late.
- Community Involvement
 - Community Involvement is the basis for getting things done in the community. Volunteers. Community Involvement is also needed for countering neighborhood resistance to new projects.
- Diversity
 - Need diversity of housing types in neighborhoods. A diversity of housing types will meet the need of a diversity of people, keeping/making neighborhoods diverse. Diversity of people means a variety of income levels, age levels, including university students.
- University of Montana – 4
 - A significant number of students- 10,045- live off of campus
- Transit – 5
 - People on limited income have need of transportation, but don't necessarily have money for a car. Housing strategically located to take advantage of a vibrant transit system is important to people's quality of life.
- Sense of Place – 6
 - Maintaining the different character of neighborhoods. Pride in the neighborhood is both an asset and a challenge. NIMBYism inhibits some housing projects, but neighborhoods are also important. How do we incorporate diverse needs of housing into a sense of place?
- Family Oriented – 5
 - Need safe and affordable housing for all families. Many families in Missoula don't have safe and affordable housing, might have one or the other.
- Local Business – 10
 - Need workforce housing. There's not enough to recruit new business to Missoula.
- Infrastructure

- Need good infrastructure to maintain our clean environment.
- Political Leadership
 - Leadership is needed to address key policies and issues coming up and take unpopular stances.
- Funding – 9
 - Housing Funding. Educational piece to tell people how much money comes in from outside the community/other sources to develop housing. The City and County contribute nothing. Write the Growth Policy to support funding opportunities.
- Homelessness – Poverty – 7

Initial Individual Goal Statements by Topic

Affordable Housing – Housing Demand

- Define optimal percentage of affordable housing as a target for re-zoning.
- Address diversity of housing type
- Have enough housing for the demand to keep housing costs affordable
- Need permanent place-based affordability mechanisms in Missoula
- Provide affordable housing options that allow new businesses to thrive in our community
- Educate the community on the issues associated with housing affordability
- Appropriate housing types for the continuum of housing needs for a diverse, population (Age, income, abilities, family size)

Housing – Transportation Links

- Develop affordable, visitable housing inside city limits with easy access to public transit.
- A good transportation system will help reduce housing cost.
- Use existing primary transit network backbone for high density development along transit corridor.
- Develop zoning for transit oriented development along developing corridors. (Russell & Brooks)
- A vibrant multi-modal transportation network that reduces dependence on single vehicle use, improves health, air quality and is accessible.
- Educate the public on the costs and benefits of public transit investment.
- Areas closest to transit or arterial streets should be designated for higher density housing.
- Address transit development and housing near transit

Land Use/Zoning/Neighborhood Design

- Identify/map areas of city where diverse zoning can encourage a mix of housing types.
- Zoning that gives predictability and flexibility of uses – allows mixed uses to live compatibly while protecting strong sense of place.
- To create an efficient process by which we can change zoning to better accommodate the housing needs of our population.
- Identify areas in the city to build apartment buildings but not zoned for commercial.
- Build diverse neighborhoods to create more demand for housing.
- Identify areas in the city to build more compact single family or townhome development.
- To provide a variety of housing options to meet the needs of the diverse Missoula population.

- Educate the community on the social and actual costs of population distribution and infrastructure investment.
- Address land use and zoning
- Address political leadership to rezone land for multi-family

Housing – Economic Development Relationship

- Develop housing for mid to upper income single professionals.
- Educate the community on the issues that associate housing with economic development.
- Recognize the fact that work force housing attracts businesses and new businesses increases wages
- Strong, vibrant enterprising social and business environment that allows Missoulians to have opportunity and build assets.
- Attract higher paying jobs; educate workers to gain more skills.
- Require fiber optic access for all development by area and cost points. (Drives business and influx of business owners.)

Parking Lot

Political Will – Political Leadership
Implementation of zoning/Growth Policy
Funding - Government spending priorities

Next Steps

At December meeting: select chair and vice chair; review information from Asset Mapping project; review & discuss topics and goals statements from November focus group meeting; report on topics being covered by other focus groups; refine goals and move on to developing objectives.

Next Meeting Date: December 16, 2014, 5:15 to 7:15 p.m. at MOR Conference Room, 1610 S 3rd St W, Ste 201. This is the same venue as the previous meeting.

Public Comment on items not on the agenda:

None received