Grand Rapids Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (Meeting Summary)
May 12, 2010

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steering Committee</th>
<th>Present/Excused</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barb Sanderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ben Hawkins</td>
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<td>Cheri Zeppelin</td>
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<td>Colleen Swanson</td>
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<td>Diane Weber</td>
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<td>Frank Allen</td>
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<td>Gary McInerney</td>
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<td>Joe Chandler</td>
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<td>Joe Maher</td>
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<td>Jack Mooty</td>
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<td>Mark Gothard</td>
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<td>Mark Hawkinson</td>
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<td>Mark Miner</td>
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<td>Marn Flicker</td>
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<td>Meghan Bown</td>
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<td>Mike Twite</td>
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<td>Ron Niemala</td>
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<td>Ross Williams</td>
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<td>Ruth Pierce</td>
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<td>Tara Makinen</td>
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The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee convened for its second meeting at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, May 12th. Committee members briefly introduced themselves. The consultants, Brian Ross and Jean Coleman, led the Committee in discussion of three topics: the draft vision narrative and modifications to the vision, values, and principles in the 2003 plan; community inventory topics and initial data gathering; and preparation for the May 25th public meeting.

**Draft Vision Narrative/Vision, Values, and Principles:** Based on the work of Committee members at the first Steering Committee meeting, the consultants drafted a vision narrative describing a desired future for Grand Rapids. The draft was sent to Committee members prior to the meeting and members were asked to: compare the narrative to the 2003 Vision, Community Values, and Guiding Principles; and identify common language between the narrative and the Vision, Values, and Principles as well as note items in the narrative that were not in the 2003 plan. The results of this discussion are included after this meeting summary.

Points made in the general discussion of the vision narrative included: the narrative is more specific than the 2003 vision; items that were missed in the vision narrative included: technology including best fiber optic service in the state; and reference to regional interdependency; food supply; civic infrastructure; work force development; and energy infrastructure; and consider complete streets ideas.

There was discussion of how to structure the section on vision, values, and principles in the new plan. Suggestions included: go from general to specific (overarching goals / values / principles → details); spend more time defining quality of life in specific terms to set tone; remember that the plan is a tool city / community will use but will also be used by developers; tell the story; highlight changes from 2003 to new plan; and use the vision narrative as a guiding document for goals and objectives.

**Community Inventory:** Brian Ross presented a slideshow overview of the community inventory update process and examples of information that has been updated to-date including: a current land use map; utility infrastructure; demographic data; economic base data; and natural infrastructure.

**Public Meeting Preparation:** Jean Coleman presented the proposed format and content for the first public meeting scheduled for May 25th. Steering Committee members will be asked to assist in facilitating issue identification small groups and the facilitation process was reviewed. There was discussion about how to invite people to get a good crowd.

**Adjournment.** The next meeting is set for June 9th, at 6:00 pm. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.
Instructions: Please complete the following exercise

1. Read the vision narrative
2. Compare the narrative to the 2003 Vision, Community Values, and Guiding Principles
3. Identify common language between the narrative and the Vision, Values, and Principles
4. Identify one statement in the narrative that you believe is strongly supported in the 2003 Vision, Values, or Principles.
5. Identify something in the narrative that you believe is not common or not supported by the Vision, Values, and Principles.

Vision narrative statements that are STRONGLY SUPPORTED in the 2003 Vision, Values, or Principles
(some listed items were mentioned by more than one Steering Committee member, the number in front of the statement indicates how many times it was listed)

1. **Community Vision: First sentence.** Grand Rapids offers a unique blend of small town charm and big city amenities.
   a. Not connected to vision narrative.

2. (2) **Community Vision: Third sentence.** Grand Rapids provides families safe, friendly, affordable, and inclusive neighborhoods that reflect the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside.
   a. **Vision narrative statement** (2) Development should be done in a manner to enhance natural systems.

3. **Community Value: Small Town Feeling.** The notion of ‘small town feeling’ means living in a friendly vital neighborhood where people know and care about each other, have a strong sense of community, a sense of investment in the neighborhood and the city, and convenient access to shops, businesses, and the rest of the City. It is imperative that the small town feeling is nurtured and future developed even as the community continues to grow and change.
   a. **Vision narrative statement:** Residential neighborhoods retain the feel of the North woods through the mix of single family and attached homes and some multi-family buildings. Neighborhood residents know each other. Neighborhoods are connected with trails and provide access to natural beauty and opportunities for healthy activities.

4. **Community Value: Cultural and Recreational Opportunities.** We value the availability and quality of cultural and recreational opportunities as an important element of how we define our community – in terms of our quality of life and in terms of Grand Rapids as a regional center
   a. **Vision narrative statement:** (2) Art fairs, public performance spaces, and other artistic venues are popular among residents and tourists and have established the City as a creative destination.
   b. **Vision narrative statement:** Commercial and service center for surrounding region.
5. **Community Value: Safety.** Safety is a priority for us, especially in our neighborhoods and on our streets. This means that our children have safe environments in which to grow and our residents can cross the streets and drive in safe, regulated traffic environments.
   a. **Vision narrative statement:** Grand Rapids provides families safe...

6. (2) **Community Value: Natural Environment.** Our natural environment is a defining characteristic of our community. We value our natural features and want our resources to be properly maintained and expanded.
   a. **Vision narrative statement:** (2) Residential neighborhoods retain the feel of the North woods through the mix of single family and attached homes and some multi-family buildings. Neighborhood residents know each other. Neighborhoods are connected with trails and provide access to natural beauty and opportunities for healthy activities.
   b. **Vision narrative statement:** Planful development

7. **Community Value: Economic Opportunities.** A strong diversified economy with opportunities for local businesses and meaningful jobs is a prerequisite to the full realization of all other values. We value a healthy, growing economy
   a. **Vision narrative statement:** The local economic base includes stable manufacturing and natural resources based businesses in addition to a thriving downtown and larger regional retail outlets.
   b. **Vision narrative statement:** Grand Rapids continues to be a regional economic center for retail, manufacturing, and government services.

8. **Community Value: Education.** We value equal access to quality educational opportunities for citizens of all ages.
   a. **Vision narrative statement:** (2) The community has high quality public education and plenty of opportunities for life-long learning and cultural enjoyment.

9. **Guiding Principles: #5.** Grand Rapids continues to be a regional economic center for retail, manufacturing, and government services.
   a. **Comment:** This idea is supported in the general list of statements, but lacks teeth

**Identify one statement in the narrative that you believe is NOT SUPPORTED OR POORLY SUPPORTED in the 2003 Vision, Values, or Principles.**

1. Jobs are on the increase and unemployment is low.
   a. What is the means to accomplish this?

2. New roads are designed to accommodate/support a variety of modes.
   a. Need to complete study and incorporate this idea in new vision, etc.

3. Development is done in a manner to enhance natural systems. Water bodies are recognized as community assets that enhance property value and are emphasized when existing developed areas are redeveloped.
   a. The “Vision, Values and Principles” similarly states “Natural Environment. Our natural environment is a defining characteristic of our community. We value our natural features and want our resources to be properly maintained and expanded.” However,
the Narrative statement can be distinguished from the “Vision, Values and Principles” as being more specific and helping to define what it means to “properly maintain and expand” our natural resources. (Properly maintaining and expanding our natural resources means “development is done in a manner to enhance natural systems.”)

4. 1st line of Green/Natural Infrastructure – Street trees, pockets of natural areas, river corridors, and lakes create a largely unbroken connection between people and natural systems and green spaces.
   a. Glossed over in the Community Values.

1. Technology. 2. Business friendly environment. Grand Rapids supports a business friendly climate in which industry can thrive and its residents have opportunity for economic prosperity.

5. Grey infrastructure. Not mentioned in 2003 V-V-P.

6. Art fairs, public performance spaces... have established the city as a creative destination.

7. The local economic base includes stable manufacturing and natural resource based business in addition to a thriving downtown and larger regional retail outlets.
   a. No strong reference in 2003 to thriving business concept in the vision statement. There was some reference in community values, but it should be part of the vision statement!
   b. Values: A strong diversified economy with opportunities for local businesses and meaningful jobs is a prerequisite to the full realization of all other values.
   c. Principles: Promote economic vitality to provide jobs, services, revenues and opportunities.

8. Unequalled sense of community spirit.

9. Rural areas: Growth of the urban area has not affected the rural nature of the city’s outlying areas which serve as a transition between urban density and adjacent undeveloped areas.

10. I didn’t see gaps. What I did recognize is how generalized the 2003 study was – and noticed a stronger focus on safety issues.
    Some missing areas in our 2010 vision:
    - Mixed housing that meets needs of all residents
    - Public transportation – not much mention
    - Relationship of housing/education/transportation systems
    - Diversity – importance of
    - Accessibility of community
    Need to integrate housing, land use, work force development and environmental issues into sustainable community plan.


12. Jobs / economic base / change / energy

13. “Green or natural infrastructure” – poorly supported. “Grey infrastructure” – not supported, particularly energy systems.

14. Residents have easy and numerous opportunities for healthy living choices. Not much on health in 2003 Plan.

15. “Rail and highway access to regional members is well maintained and fully functioning” or “development is done to enhance natural systems.”