

Regional Council of Mayors: November 14, 2016

2017 RCM PRIORITIES

The RCM is identifying its set of priorities for 2017. Many of these are longstanding topics such as housing affordability and infrastructure funding while others reflect emerging areas of importance such as how new technologies like drones and electric car charging stations will impact communities. The mayors reviewed the draft set of priorities for 2017 and engaged in discussion about what should be added, changed, or removed. The updated draft of priorities that resulted from this conversation is listed below.

- **Leading in to the Future**
 - ULI Innovation Grant: best in class speaker series
 - Strengthen and deepen RCM collaborative platform
 - Presentations and dialogue: content experts and influencers
 - Initiative Advisory Committees
 - Advisory Services
 - Community engagement best practices
- **Support a Full Range of Housing Choices**
 - Messaging
 - Policies and Tools
 - Preserve market affordable housing
 - Mixed income housing
 - Housingcounts.org
 - Trending/emerging innovative solutions
 - Identify emerging trends: what is getting in our way to take advantage of new possibilities, how can we replicate and normalize (e.g. design and construction, zoning and regulation, financing, legal)
 - Legislative Initiatives
 - Common interest property reform
 - MHFA regional rental rehab funding
- **Building Healthy and Resilient Communities**
 - Regional Indicators Initiative; Green Steps Cities
 - Water supply and management; Atlas 14 NOAA
- **Transportation Infrastructure**
 - Sustainable funding: roads, bridges, transit and non-motorized
 - Rail roads: crossings, safety, routing
- **Economic Vitality**
 - Talent attraction/retention, workforce and housing supply: GreaterMSP
 - Rapidly changing technology: e.g. autonomous vehicles, drones, electric charging stations, sharing economy, renewable energy, climate science, electric grid security
 - Race & Equity Initiative: League of Minnesota Cities
 - Industrial/commercial: repositioning land uses to accommodate changing manufacturing and technology requirements

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS ROUND OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Moderator: John Shardlow, Stantec **Panelists:** Karl Batalden, Woodbury
Julie Farnham, Bloomington
Julie Wischnack, Minnetonka

John Shardlow of Stantec provided an overview of the history and evolution of the comprehensive planning process and the role of the Metropolitan Council as a lead in to a panel discussion about the 2018 Comp Plan update. John identified seven issues for communities to consider as they move forward:

1. Demographics – aging, growing diversity
2. Housing – new choices, affordability, accessibility
3. Energy – conservation, alternatives
4. Water resources
5. Climate – frequency and severity of weather events
6. Sustainability, resilience
7. Race, ethnicity, religion – building community

The panel discussion touched on these topics and focused on how the panelists were approaching comprehensive planning within their communities for this go around. Some themes emerged:

Online tools are much improved: The “[Local Planning Handbook](#)” is now fully online and is very well done. The improvements are helpful to staff, and having them online can make the comp plan process less opaque to the public than it once was.

Changing approaches to community engagement: Panelists shared that they are finding it both necessary and desirable to change how they engage with their populations. It is no longer viable to simply place an announcement for a hearing in a newspaper and wait for people to show up. It’s much more about going *to* people rather than waiting for them to come to you.

Examples: Bloomington held a town hall in Spanish. Woodbury is creating “guiding principles” through proactive input from citizens rather than bringing an already completed draft plan to them. Minnetonka brought in “Average Mohamed” to discuss Islamic culture when the city’s first Islamic center opened.

Understand all the tools you have available. This is especially important for affordable housing goals. Be open to TIF and other financial tools, and know that non-financial tools are also important.

Example: Woodbury approved an affordable housing project with no subsidy by offering a density bonus.

Put more focus in the “Economic Development” portion of the plan: The economic development content is often weak and filled with vague objectives and platitudes. Make your land use classifications clear and understandable but also able to adjust to changing markets. This is especially important for “industrial” land as “industry” uses are evolving rapidly. One emerging approach to this is the idea of “innovation districts.”

Build flexibility into your plan: A lot can change in ten years. Flexibility increases the likelihood of success while a plan that is too restrictive may hamper it. Communities should identify up front how often they will review their goals and objectives and make sure the plan continues to reflect their vision.

ULI MINNESOTA ADVISORY SERVICES

Gordon Hughes provided a brief update on ULI Minnesota’s Advisory Services programs. To date, ULI MN has provided 51 Navigating Your Competitive Future (NCF) workshops since the program launched and by the end of 2016 will have completed five Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) this year including our most complex to date on behalf of MnDOT. These programs have reached cities across the metro as well as greater Minnesota communities such as Brainerd, Duluth, Rochester, Austin and Sartell.

Coming up in 2017, ULI MN will host NCF workshops in Watertown, Belle Plaine, and Roseville. Please visit “[Navigating Your Competitive Future](#)” to learn how to bring this valuable workshop to your community, free of charge. If you have held an NCF already, consider holding another as a “refresher,” especially if there are elected or appointed officials who were not around before.

Learn more about the [MnDOT TAP Report](#).

COMING UP

The next meeting of the Regional Council of Mayors will be Monday, December 12th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Seattle Room at Dorsey & Whitney, 50 South 6th Street, Minneapolis, MN.

ATTENDEES

Mayors

Mary Giuliani Stephens	City of Woodbury (Co-Chair)
James Hovland	City of Edina (Co-Chair)
Debbie Goettel	City of Richfield (Chair, HRC Initiative)
Mike Maguire	City of Eagan (Chair, Housing Initiative)
Elizabeth Kautz	City of Burnsville (RCM Founder)
Sandy Martin	City of Shoreview (Past Chair)
Jim Adams	City of Crystal
Molly Cummings	City of Hopkins
Kathi Hemken	City of New Hope
Marvin Johnson	City of Independence
Stan Karwoski	City of Oakdale
Sandra Kresbach	City of Mendota Heights
Peter Lindstrom	City of Falcon Heights
Lili McMillan	City of Orono
Tim McNeil	City of Dayton
Terry Schneider	City of Minnetonka
Mike Webb	City of Carver
Gene Winstead	City of Bloomington

Guests

Jenna Fletcher, Trust for Public Land; Ellen Sahli, Family Housing Fund; Gilbert Achay, Center for Prevention-Blue Cross; Michael Huber, Blue Cross/Blue Shield MN; Gretchen Camp, ESG; Michelle Mongeon Allen, JLG Architects & AIA MN; Alex Sharpe, City of Apple Valley; Bob Engstrom, Robert Engstrom Companies; Rick Carter, LHB; Emily Goellner, City of Golden Valley; Margaret Kaplan, Minnesota Housing; Jennifer O'Rourke, Met Council; Mike Ericson, City of Centerville; Scott Neal, City of Edina; Mike Mornson, City of Hopkins; Jamie Verbrugge, City of Bloomington; Patricia Nauman, Metro Cities; Beth Reetz, Met Council; LisaBeth Barajas, Met Council; Julie Farnham, City of Bloomington; Karl Batalden, City of Woodbury; Kevin Frazell, League of MN Cities; Julie Wischnack, City of Minnetonka; John Shardlow, Stantec

ULI Minnesota Staff and Consultants

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