

Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting

MAPC Large Conference Room, 10th Floor, City Hall

4:00-6:00 p.m., November 5, 2014

Discussion Highlights & Points of Agreement:

Attendance - Plan Steering Committee:

Stacy Christie, Mitch Coffman, David Foster, Bryan Frye, Julie Hedrick, Ken Lee, Joe Johnson, Cindy Miles, Bill Ramsey, Richard Ranzau, Gary Schmitt

Attendance - Project Staff:

Dave Barber, John Schlegel, Scott Wadle

1. Welcome -

The meeting was called to order by Cindy Miles.

2. Presentation and Discussion on Wichita and Sedgwick County Long-term Water, Sewer and Stormwater Priorities -

Alan King, Director of Public Works and Utilities with the City of Wichita and Jim Weber, Deputy Director of Public Works with Sedgwick County each gave presentations to the Committee on their respective infrastructure priorities and programming plans.

King emphasized that water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure and facilities constitute sustainable essential services for our community. The City's top priorities are to protect what we have already invested in (especially horizontal replacements) and to make future facility enhancements as appropriate. King indicated that benchmarks are being developed for all asset classes, and that the City needs to be more aggressive in the replacement of its existing aging horizontal assets. Deferred maintenance decisions going back several decades have resulted in the deficient condition of our assets. Vertical assets (treatment plants, pump stations, etc.) will also need upgrades to meet higher KDHE and federal EPA requirements (treatment and discharge).

Wichita needs to develop a long-term water supply/financing plan, as well as a long-term sewer treatment/financing plan. If a sales tax is not used to help fund City future water supply and distribution needs, then there will be less or delayed drought protection, and water rate increases will need to be ramped up and increased significantly. The City water and sewer utility enterprise fund has already drawn down \$11 million of its reserves to make recent reinvestments. The challenge for the City is finding the right funding approach – water and sewer rates at the right level, the right people paying the right amount, and spending revenues in the right places. Significant reinvestment is needed to secure the City's water and sewer system.

Wichita's stormwater infrastructure faces the same challenge – setting the ERU (equivalent residential unit) fee rate structure so that it generates funds sufficient to meet our stormwater infrastructure needs. A big problem for stormwater quality issues in our community is non-point discharge (lawns and agricultural land) rather than point-source discharge (from development sites).

Committee members asked King whether a regional water authority for communities in this area would help solve long-term regional water issues. King replied that a regional water authority works best when there are regional water equity issues or problems to resolve. The biggest problem with this approach in our area is a structural one – who will own the existing assets and how would Wichita be compensated for its current assets?

Weber provided the Committee with an overview of the County's stormwater and flood control infrastructure investments and long-term project priorities. The City and County have jointly

maintained and funded the Wichita-Valley Center County Flood Control Project (the Big Ditch) since the late 1950's and represents the area's most significant flood control project. Ongoing maintenance costs are \$2 million annually, with accreditation cycles with the Corps of Engineers costing an additional \$3 million every 10 years. The County's Stormwater Management Advisory Board has focused on a countywide-approach to addressing stormwater issued in Sedgwick County. Current County funding has enabled the completion of two watershed planning studies. However, no significant stormwater project funding will occur in future unless a regional funding source (such as a sales tax) is created.

Committee members asked Weber what the rural sanitary sewer issues were in the County. Weber felt that the biggest issue is keeping current with technological developments for independent systems.

3. Committee Worksheet Discussion on Water, Sewer and Stormwater Plan Goals and Strategies -

Staff took the Committee through an exercise where each Committee member wrote possible water, sewer and stormwater goal and strategy ideas on cards which were then posted on the wall. Using sticky dots, Committee members individually voted for their top plan goal and strategy ideas (the results of this exercise are summarized under separate attachment). Staff will utilize this input in developing a set of water, sewer and stormwater plan goals and strategies for consideration at the November 19th Committee meeting.

4. Committee Review of Draft Arts, Culture and Recreation Plan Element -

Following a review and discussion of the material presented by staff, the Committee agreed to endorse the draft Arts, Culture and Recreation Plan Goal and Strategies subject to the following changes which will be reviewed by the Committee at the November 19th Committee meeting:

- Leave the word 'premier' in the proposed Goal statement (rather than eliminating it or replacing it with a word like 'adequate' or 'appropriate')
- Modify one of the proposed strategies or add a strategy that acknowledges regional park and open space planning needs in the County, and promotes better integration of park/open space and stormwater management systems
- Add a strategy that advances better healthy community lifestyles and connectivity in our urban form
- Add a strategy that addresses the need for comprehensive arts and culture infrastructure planning and coordination

5. Introduce Worksheet on Transportation Plan Element - Staff distributed a Transportation Plan Element worksheet for Committee members to review in advance of the Committee meeting on November 19th. This will also be emailed to all Committee members next week.

6. Next Committee Meeting - November 19, 2014

7. Comments from Public Attendees - Keep in mind that the draft Plan will need to meet the approval of the City Council and the County Board of Commissioners.

8. Adjourned - 6:00 p.m.