



THE NEW COMP PLAN ENGAGEMENT APPROACH: COMMUNITY WORKING COMMITTEES

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Typical Comp Plan Public Engagement: A complete revision or even a modest Comprehensive Plan Update requires significant city staff effort and considerable financial obligations. When the public is invited to engage in the process, it typically involves a passive community advisory committee that adds only scant input on other Comp Plan team efforts. Unfortunately, the advisory committee disbands after several meetings and the Comp Plan usually ends up in the file cabinet. Worst yet, the process never tapped into community resources: local leadership, relationships, skills, talents, and funding sources ready and willing to support the Comp Plan goals.

Leverage Your Comp Plan Efforts and Budget: Restructuring the Comp Plan engagement process, incorporating “community working committees” creates essential community buy-in, harnesses stakeholder talents and resources, develops local funding support, and establishes long-term civic and community relationships. How is this achieved? Simply stated – Let your Community Working Committee drive the Comp Plan engagement process in:

- Identifying the issues, challenges and opportunities;
- Researching solutions and successes from other communities;
- Defining their solutions through images, mapping and presentations.

Develop Community Action Plan: To achieve this new leveraged outcome, the Comp Plan engagement process needs to be restructured.

- Change the Comp Plan to “Community Action Plan” (CAP).
- Change typical Comp Plan terminology to more community-friendly terms.
- Create an action plan that won’t be put in a file cabinet.
- Create a CAP marketing kit used by the City and community organizations.

Create New Community Long-Term Relationships: Through the Community Working Committee Process, committed committee members take ownership of their work and promote their CAP ideas to community resources. This bottom up process generates community interest and wide-spread support of CAP outcomes. This civic and community collaboration expands into a growing supportive effort seeking implementation opportunities attracting community resources.

Generate Community Funding Opportunities: This new community engagement approach places emphasis on generating community funding participation throughout the process. This focus includes creating a community foundation as a local funding facilitation method providing benefits to contributors and resulting CAP projects.

Results from This Approach: This proven bottom up community collaborative approach has led to:

- Incorporating committee recommendations into a City’s Comp Plan RFP;
- Formation of a community foundation;
- Choosing CAP process after traditional engagement process failed to engage community.

