

PLANNING

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Planning Department is to facilitate the physical growth and development of the City in a sustainable manner that reflects its unique and vibrant character.

CORE FUNCTIONS:

- 1) **Manage Comprehensive Long Range Planning** – Develop, maintain and supplement *The Comprehensive Plan* in a manner that effectively guides development
- 2) **Develop Implementation and Enforcement Strategies** – Analyze, prepare and maintain land development ordinances, policies and procedures to attain the concepts in adopted City plans
- 3) **Facilitate Development Review and Approval** – Guide land development proposals through the process. Review and evaluate proposals with respect to adopted City plans, policies and ordinances

2014-2015 WORK PLAN

CORE FUNCTION: #1 Manage Comprehensive Long Range Planning

Action:

- Conduct periodic reviews of The Comprehensive Plan with the Planning and Zoning Commission
- Research and evaluate new planning and design concepts that are economically viable, promote social interaction and preserve natural resources
- Continue to develop and refine specific area plans, such as City Center, Historic Downtown and Corridor Plans, that incorporate the elements of walkability, mixed-use and social interaction
- Develop a training program for City Boards and Commissions, focusing on planning concepts such as walkability, mixed-use and social interaction
- Coordinate with neighboring cities regarding transportation and land use matters
- Increase public awareness of the City Center Plan by using social media

Activity Measurement:

- Conduct two meetings, by the end of the fiscal year, with the Planning and Zoning Commission to review and evaluate *The Comprehensive Plan*
- Conduct an annual meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission to discuss and develop strategies for the implementation of *The Comprehensive Plan*
- Attend at least four sustainable development design seminars (i.e. LEED-ND, Form-Based Codes and Complete Streets), by the end of the fiscal year, to learn how these standards may be best applied
- Conduct two meetings, by the end of the fiscal year, with the City Center Advisory Committee and consultants, to conclude Phase II of the City Center Plan
- Conduct at least one workshop, by the end of the fiscal year, with City boards and commissions to educate about the concepts outlined in the City Center Plan
- Attend at least a four neighborhood meetings, by the end of the fiscal year, to discuss the concepts of the City Center Plan
- Facilitate an annual meeting with neighboring cities and NCTCOG to boost momentum for commuter rail.
- Gain/maintain at least 50 friends on *Facebook*, 25 followers on *Twitter* and 10 participants on *Community Voice/Center* discussion boards by the end of the fiscal year

CORE FUNCTION #2 Develop Implementation and Enforcement Strategies

Action:

- Conduct periodic reviews of the zoning and subdivision ordinances with the Planning and Zoning Commission
- Facilitate the review of land use and development related ordinances with the Development Review Committee (DRC) to ensure their effectiveness and compliance with State Law
- Facilitate the review and adoption of land use and development ordinances that will achieve the concepts in adopted City Plans
- Review of current planning and development practices and procedures to ensure efficiency
- Review and approve select development related applications such as Tree Preservation Plan, Certificate of Occupancy (CO) and Alcoholic Beverage (retail sales of beer/wine for off-premise consumption only)
- Research and prepare official zoning verification letters.
- Address unforeseen issues related to zoning and land use matters

Activity Measurement:

- Conduct an annual meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission to review the zoning ordinance
- Facilitate quarterly meetings with the DRC to discuss issues related to zoning and land use matters
- Conduct an annual meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission to review the subdivision regulations
- Conduct monthly meetings with the DRC to review land use and development related ordinances, plans, policies and/or procedures
- Conduct an annual meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission, to review and gain feedback on any recommended amendments to land use and development related ordinances, plans, policies and/or procedures
- Approve select development applications (Tree Preservation Plan, Certificate of Occupancy and Alcoholic Beverage for off-premise consumption) within 7 business days.
- Process zoning verification letters within 7 business days
- Conduct quarterly meetings with the Code Enforcement/Building Inspections department to discuss zoning enforcement issues

Meets City Council's Premier Statements:

Cedar Hill is Safe.

Cedar Hill is Clean.

Cedar Hill has a Strong and Diverse Economy.

CORE FUNCTION: #3 Facilitate Development Review and Approval

Action:

- Develop and maintain submittal guidelines, applications and other aids that inform and assist the development community in submitting land development applications
- Accept applications for land development and facilitate their review and advise the applicant of any needed changes
- Notify the general public, as required, and schedule development proposals for consideration by the appropriate board, commission and/or City Council
- Analyze land development applications, with respect to City plans, policies and ordinances, and report staff's findings to the board, commission and/or City Council
- Report to the board, commission and/or City Council any comments received from the general public regarding land development applications
- Develop training programs for boards and commissions, focusing on zoning and subdivision regulations, as they relate to their respective review of land development applications
- Execute the actions of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council, as they relate to land development applications
- Archive land development applications and decisions, as required by law

Activity Measurement:

- Conduct an annual meeting with the DRC to review submittal guidelines, applications and other publications to ensure their continued effectiveness
- Process land development applications, i.e. Platting, Site Plan, Zoning Changes and Conditional Use Permit requests within 30-45 days or as established by City and State Law
- Conduct weekly reviews with the DRC to evaluate land development applications
- Report monthly to the DRC the actions of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council regarding development applications
- Develop and implement, by the end of the fiscal year, procedures for web based submissions of land development applications
- Convey DRC comments to applicants, within ten business days Planning and Zoning Commission of receipt of an application
- Conduct at least three training seminars, by the end of the fiscal year, with boards and commissions related to their respective review
- Each planning staff member will attend at least 4 continuing education classes annually on topics related to Land Use Law, Subdivision or Zoning and code management
- Prepare City Council Action letters on all development applications and distribute to applicants and key city staff within 72 hours from City Council meeting
- Maintain development application files and preserve documentation regarding development applications within 72 hours from City Council meeting

Activity Measurement (continued):

Meets City Council's Premier Statements:

Cedar Hill is Safe.

Cedar Hill is Clean.

Cedar Hill has Excellent, Safe and Efficient Mobility.

SUMMARY - PLANNING

EXPENDITURES	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	EST.	FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015		
	FYE 12	FYE 13	FYE 14	CONTINUED	GROWTH	PROPOSED
Personnel	\$ 277,747	\$ 276,190	\$ 276,500	\$ 283,905	\$ 283,905	\$ 283,905
Supplies	899	4,133	2,600	2,100	2,100	2,100
Maintenance	1,745	2,509	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200
Services	15,634	1,198	29,925	29,825	429,825	29,825
Utilities	1,196	945	940	910	910	910
Leases/Rentals	-	-	-	-	25,315	-
Sundry	13,855	13,003	14,605	15,155	15,155	15,155
TOTAL Dept. Budget	\$ 311,076	\$ 297,978	\$ 326,770	\$ 334,095	\$ 759,410	\$ 334,095

STAFFING	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	EST.	FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015		
	FYE 12	FYE 13	FYE 14	CONTINUED	GROWTH	PROPOSED
Director of Planning	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Senior Planner*	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Planner	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Development Services Coordinator	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Executive Secretary	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
TOTAL Department Staff	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

REPLACEMENT VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT:	ACTUAL COST	LEASE COST	FUNDED
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N/A

PROGRAMS:	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDED
Regulatory Codes	1	\$ 100,000	No
Electronic Plan Review	2	\$ 25,315	No
Comprehensive Plan Update	2	\$ 300,000	No

*This position is one of the frozen positions.

Proposed Program Descriptions

Planning Department

Program One (1): Regulatory Codes (Form Based Codes Third year request)

Program Cost: \$100,000

Included in City Manager's Budget: No

Program Description:

By the end of FYE 2014, more than \$250,000 will have been spent on developing a Long Range Plan to transform the Historic Downtown, Midtown and Uptown areas of Cedar Hill into a pedestrian/transit oriented development, supported by a mixture of highly intensive land uses. To translate this plan into reality, regulations are needed to ensure that development of private property occurs in a prescribed manner.

This program will fund the retention of consultants, experienced in the successful development of land use codes and policies to help Cedar Hill's City Center to become walkable. The funding of the regulatory codes is deemed critical within the implementation portion of the Development Plan.

City Center Development Plan began last year and is scheduled to be completed by Summer 2014. Subsequently, a land use code audit is scheduled to be conducted to examine sustainability issues and provide an assessment of barriers and regulatory gaps in codes to attaining community sustainability goals.

The associated costs of hiring a consultant would include:

- ✓ Initial review and analysis of current plans, policies and ordinances
- ✓ Engage the public in regards to the policies and regulations needed to implement the City Center Vision and the City Center Plan
- ✓ Develop applicable zoning code amendments
- ✓ Provide the policies and regulations needed to implement the Visions, Goals and objectives of creating walkable, mixed-use areas which emphasis public interaction within the community
- ✓ Codify proposed codes into the existing Zoning Ordinance
- ✓ Develop architectural and landscape requirements for the City Center

The Planning Department has researched 3 consulting firms and has found the price range for this program is approximately \$100,000, which is a reduction from previous years. The associated price is largely due to the level of detail required for each development type.

If this program is not funded:

The City Center Vision Plan, which envisions a walkable mixed – use destination, may not be fully realized without the necessary expertise.

This program reflects City Council's Premier Statements:

- o Cedar Hill is Safe,
- o Cedar Hill has Vibrant Parks and Natural Beauty,
- o Cedar Hill has Excellent, Safe and Efficient Mobility,
- o Cedar Hill has a Strong and Diverse Economy.

Program Two (2): Electronic Plan Review Software (Third Year Request)

Program Cost: \$98,000

Included in City Manager's Budget: No

Program Description:

This Program will fund the purchase of software that will enable developers to submit development applications electronically via the web. Also, the software would expedite staff review by routing projects to the Design Review Committee (DRC), track changes and manage documents. Implementation of this system would reduce paper, printing costs, protect the environment and allow for collaboration from any location without the need for travel.

The ultimate benefit would be to Cedar Hill citizens, by increased efficiency in plan review; staff is allowed more time for customers and collaboration with applicants to obtain better development for the community. The public engaged in land development would also benefit from the City using such a system. It would reduce paper and printing costs, eliminate delivery costs and make submitting an application easier. An easier application process could encourage development and this would result in an increase in tax base.

Presently, the Planning Department accepts and distributes paper development applications which are time-consuming for staff and prospective developers. Many times, developers may fail to make deadlines due to the time associated with printing and transporting revisions, and Staff could decrease review time by eliminating the 1 or 2 days it takes to process paper applications. Time savings can quickly translate to saving money for the City and our customers, as well as, deliver excellent customer service.

The electronic review software would:

- ✓ Allow applicants to submit documents via a website 24 hours a day/7 days a week;
- ✓ Decrease the amount of paper and eliminate the time to distribute and process paper documents;
- ✓ Increase accuracy of reviews by incorporating software applications to help identify inconsistencies;
- ✓ Decrease staff time updating or giving status reports to applicants;
- ✓ Decrease the amount of paper - to conserve the environment.

There are many software companies that specialize in electronic plan review implementation and implementation costs range to be \$30,000 - \$98,000, depending on who hosts the software. There will be a maintenance agreement with a service company to provide perpetual updates to the software.

Staff conducted a survey of other cities that were possibly thinking about using electronic plan review within the near future, and found Desoto, Euless and Mansfield have indicated they would be using some form of electronic plan review sometime in the future. Presently, Mansfield uses electronic plan review in their permits department to increase efficiency.

A portion or all of the cost associated with implementing the software can be offset by an approximate \$500 increase to the average cost of a Development Application. A partial Return on Investment (ROI) on this program would be approximately 3-5 years based on the current rate of 50 development applications per year.

If this program is not funded:

Staff will continue to spend time processing development applications instead of using that time for plan review. Additionally, developers will continue to incur travel and printing costs associated with submitting development applications to the City.

This program reflects City Council's Premier Statements:

- Cedar Hill has a Strong and Diverse Economy
 - Going Green Initiative
 - Customer Service Initiative

Program Three (3): Comprehensive Plan Update (First Year Request)

Program Cost: \$250,000

Included in City Manager's Budget: No

Program Description:

A Comprehensive Plan major update would update population, and socio-economic demographic information, as well as reevaluate the goals and the objectives of its residents. The Planning and Zoning Commission has recently completed its review, and has concluded that several sections of the Plan no longer accurately represent the City's Plan for development or have become obsolete. Based on these facts, the P&Z recommends that the city undertake a major update of the Comprehensive Plan.

This program will fund the retention of consultants, experienced in the successful development of a comprehensive plan that emphasizes sustainability.

The associated costs of hiring a consultant would include:

- ✓ Preliminary review and analysis of current plans, policies and ordinances
- ✓ Engage the public in regards to the policies and vision for the City of Cedar Hill
- ✓ Update the population and socio-economic conditions
- ✓ Develop a Future Land Use Plan, Thoroughfare Plan based on the community's vision, and the population forecasts
- ✓ Develop a plan that includes polices that facilitate and support a strong sense of community
- ✓ Develop a plan that preserves Cedar Hill's natural beauty
- ✓ Develop strategies that enhance economic opportunity for distressed communists, raise personal incomes and increase property tax revenues.
- ✓ Incorporate major elements of the City Center Plan
- ✓ Include the most current alignment of Loop 9

The Planning Department has researched 3 consulting firms and has found the price range for this program is approximately \$250,000. Because of the Comprehensive Update is such a long process, the cost will be divided between 2015 and 2016 budget years; therefore, \$125,000 will be budgeted for both FYE 2015 and 2016.

If this program is not funded:

The Planning Department will continue to utilize a Comprehensive Plan that is out of date, creating an environment of indiscriminate development that moves the City away from a more sustainable development pattern.

This program reflects City Council's Premier Statements:

- Cedar Hill is Safe
- Cedar Hill has Vibrant Parks and Natural Beauty
- Cedar Hill has Excellent, Safe and Efficient Mobility
- Cedar Hill has a Strong and Diverse Economy