

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

2015-2016 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 sustainable elements such as context sensitive design, place making, and vary transportation options
- Conduct training programs for City Boards and Commissions, focusing on planning and land use concepts
- Coordinate with neighboring cities regarding transportation and land use matters
- Increase public awareness of the City's long range plans such as the City Center Plan

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 at least one workshop, by the end of the fiscal year, with City departments 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 annual meetings with NCTCOG to boost momentum for commuter rail.
- Prepare and distribute promotional materials for 4 different existing events within the City Center.

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 to ensure their effectiveness and compliance with State Law
- Review and develop regulations to implement the concepts contained in the City's plans
- Review of current planning and development practices and procedures to ensure efficiency
- 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
- Communicate to boards, commissions and/or City Council in written form if the proposed development applications are consistent with the City's plans, policies and ordinances
- 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
- 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)

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

- Approve select development applications (Tree Preservation Plan, Certificate of Occupancy and Alcoholic Beverage for off-premise consumption) within 7 business days.
- 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	BUDGET	EST.	FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016		
	FYE 13	FYE 14	FYE 15	FYE 15	CONTINUED	GROWTH	PROPOSED
Personnel	\$ 276,190	\$ 274,639	\$ 283,905	\$ 280,490	\$ 290,910	\$ 290,910	\$ 290,910
Supplies	4,133	2,322	2,100	2,000	2,600	2,600	2,600
Maintenance	2,509	2,467	2,200	3,250	3,300	3,300	3,300
Services	1,198	3,881	29,825	23,355	26,075	426,075	26,075
Utilities	945	1,005	910	860	910	910	910
Leases/Rentals	-	-	-	-	-	25,315	-
Sundry	13,003	14,767	15,155	13,175	13,355	13,355	13,355
TOTAL Dept. Budget	\$ 297,978	\$ 299,081	\$ 334,095	\$ 323,130	\$ 337,150	\$ 762,465	\$ 337,150

STAFFING	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGET	EST.	FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015		
	FYE 12	FYE 13	FYE 14	FYE 14	CONTINUED	GROWTH	PROPOSED
Director of Planning	1.00	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	1.00
Development Services Coordinator	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Executive Secretary	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
TOTAL Department Staff	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

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

Program One (1): Regulatory Codes (Form Based Codes)

Program Cost: \$100,000

Tax Rate Impact: \$0.0034

Included City Manager's Budget: No

Program Description:

The City Center Development Plan defines a development typology that is not supported by the City's current zoning code. To implement the concepts outlined in the City Center Plan, codes need to be developed that places greater emphasis on urban design, pedestrian oriented streets, and compact, mix-use development. The current zoning codes are designed to create a more auto-centric development pattern and control the use of land. New regulations are needed to direct land development in a manner that is consistent with the concepts outlined in the City Center Plan.

The Zoning Code audit, performed by Smart Growth America and funded by a grant from the NCTCOG's sustainable development initiatives, also recommends the development of new zoning district regulations for the City Center. The report points out that the current regulations actually prohibit many of the City Center concepts and are unduly complicated.

This program will fund the retention of consultants, experienced in the successful development of land use codes and policies to guide development to attain the concept in the City Center Plan. The regulations developed would focus on creating functional, attractive, and economically successful neighborhoods and commercial areas by creating more predictable outcomes. The City Center Development Plan identifies the update of the regulatory codes as a critical step action needed for the successful implementation of the plan.

Background:

Since the adoption of the City Center Vision Plan in 2010, the momentum for quality development and walkable communities has grown exponentially. To build upon this vision, \$250,000 has been invested in creating a City Center Development Plan, which provides a framework for policy discussions to take place for a more sustainable development. The City Center Development Plan was adopted in October 2014. To ensure the vision outlined in the City Center comes to fruition, regulations are needed to ensure that development of private property occurs in a prescribed manner.

As a follow-up to the City Center Development Plan, the city's current zoning code was audited as to its ability to achieve the City Center Development Plan's vision and the City Council's sustainability goals. The audit identified several zoning standards that contradicted many of the City Center concepts and an approval process that was overly complicated and lengthy. To achieve the concepts outlined in the City Center Development Plan major elements of the zoning code need to be rewritten.

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 stress public interaction;
- Codify proposed codes into the existing Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations; and
- Develop architectural and landscape requirements for the City Center.

The Planning Department has researched consulting firms and has found the cost of this program is approximately \$150,000, which is a reduction from previous estimates. The cost reduction is due largely to the amount of planning and public engagement work that has recently been completed, such as the adoption of the City Center Development Plan and the Zoning Code Audit.

If this program is not funded:

Not funding this program could impede the progress of the City Center vision. In the absence of zoning regulations aimed towards creating a walkable, mixed use destination, developers would have to rely on creating Planned Developments which are expensive to develop, time consuming, somewhat of a gamble and subject to multiple public hearings.

From the City standpoint, relying on different Planned Development zonings to implement the City Center vision is likely to result in a patchwork of varying development standards and patterns that may be inconsistent with the plan, difficult to evaluate consistently and may not yield the type of development pattern supported by the community. Providing streamlined development standards for the development community alleviates confusion, avoids mistakes, and abates claims of unfairness.

This program reflects City Councils 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

Program Two (2): Electronic Plan Review Software

Program Cost: \$25,315

Tax Impact: \$0.0009

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, 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 and faster. A faster and 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

Finance Department's Comments:

This program is eligible for the Equipment Lease Fund. The budgeted cost of the Plan Review Software is \$98,000 with a lease term of \$25,315 per year for 5 years.

Program Three (3): Comprehensive Plan Update

Program Cost: \$300,000

Tax Rate Impact: \$0.0101

Included in City Managers Budget: No

Program Description:

This is a two year program split into two budget years (\$150,000 each year) and will fund the updating of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is declare the city's over-arching plan for the physical development so that future public and private investments are well coordinated and aimed towards a set of common goals. The main purpose of this plan is to:

- Consolidate the main points of various city, county and state plans. Typically plans such as the Parks and Trails Plan, Master Water and Sewer Plans, City Facilities Plans, Loop-9, NCTCOG Transit Plan are considered and elements of each are incorporated into a single document so that any inconsistencies can be identified and corrected thus enhancing coordination and improving efficiency.
- Establish goals for development of the city and insure they reflect emerging directions in: sustainable design; environmental stewardship; trails and open space; place making; marketing and tourism; neighborhoods; and economic development.
- Base decisions on the latest demographic, economic and census data to insure that forecasts are accurate and useful as possible.
- Inventory the City's current physical characteristics. This includes identifying and quantifying vacant land, underutilized land, and lands to be preserved in their current condition, major utilities, natural land forms, historical sites, neighborhoods and the like.
- Develop a Future Land Use Plan that shows where major land use types, such as residential, retail, industrial, commercial areas, are to be located. This helps to mitigate any negative impacts between land uses such as noise, traffic, and smell. Since the Future Land Use plan guides land use and intensity, it also helps prioritize where new public utilities should be located or existing utilities to be improved.
- Update the Thoroughfare Plan to insure it accommodating the transportation needs for every demographic in the City.

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; and
- Include the most current alignment of Loop 9.

If this program is not funded:

As time goes by, the current Comprehensive Plan will be less able to help the City Council manages growth and development, as the concepts and data within the plan is dated. Increasing growth and development pressure can strain local resources, endanger the environment and inconvenience property owners and businesses. This in turn could cause no growth or slow growth that may bring problems such as stagnant or declining tax revenues and deteriorating public infrastructure. A Comprehensive Plan addresses where and how future development should take place to help avoid these types of problems and make sound decisions about their growth.

This program reflects City Councils Premier Statements:

- ✓ Cedar Hill is Safe
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PLANNING
VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

ITEM	X IF ITEM IS UNRELIABLE	YEAR	MILEAGE	DESCRIPTION OF REPLACEMENT ITEM	COST	ESTIMATED LIFE	CM APPROVED
Office Equipment:							
Xerox 3001 Large Format Copier		2000		Sold at Auction/will not replace			
Plotter HP 750 - (Color)		1999		Sold at Auction/will not replace			



CEDAR HILL
WHERE OPPORTUNITIES GROW NATURALLY