

Summary of Council Initiatives Discussion and Proposed Actions:

The following is a summary of Council's discussion regarding the City's current initiatives and potential new initiatives. The purpose of the discussion was to review the initiatives to determine if they should remain as initiatives, be amended or removed; discuss the addition of new initiatives and provide direction to staff.

Community Engagement

Social Media

Develop a more effective way to communicate with residents. (Use a variety of social media platforms).

Dawn Moore expressed concern about social media and anonymous comments. She herself doesn't look at social media and is concerned that she doesn't learn about community opinions until they have been out there for a while. She wanted to know how we respond to people who want to say things anonymously but won't confront or discuss their opinions in person.

Robbie gave an example of the Chase Bank building scenario. Staff wanted the developer to proactively engage the merchants and neighbors, but not enough was done to get out the actual facts and information about the project.

Get more people involved

This was achieved in that we met the goal for appointing all interested Leadership UP graduates to a committee. Term limits were not implemented.

Task force for hot issues/ governance task forces and make sure more people know the door is open.

Dawn said she saw a difference between the YMCA project and the Chase Bank Building. The YMCA is a community facility and had community-wide interest. The Chase Bank Building was more specific to the Snider Plaza area and had a limited amount of interest from the community. The Natatorium and Chase Bank Building were more contentious debates with name calling and lack of civility. Maybe the lesson is that we (City staff) were dealing with a developer initially and the community felt left out until too many decisions had been made. Taylor Armstrong noted that the opposition to Chase Bank wasn't really monolithic, that they were all coming from different places of opposition. Gage Prichard was concerned about all the false information that went out about the Chase Bank development.

Steve Mace gave a presentation about the City's social media during the Chase Bank project discussion, especially an online comment chain on NextDoor.

Robbie talked about the staff conflict of whether or not to respond or comment on NextDoor by correcting the misinformation versus appearing to side with the developer.

Randy Biddle was concerned about the City getting into a war of words on social media.

Mayor Lane mentioned open office hours. It was a way to let the public know you're available to listen although not many actually showed up.

Direction: Merge the above three items into one general “Community Engagement” initiative. Continue efforts to inform and engage the public. Utilize social media when appropriate to direct the public to information so as to make informed decisions.

Facilities and Capital Improvements

Miracle Mile

Tommy Stewart and Bob Begert are meeting with the property owners.

- Dawn Moore said that if the City does it all, we have control. If we share cost, we may have some buy-in.
- Jacob Speer clarified that almost all parking on the Miracle Mile is in the City right-of-way.

Let’s try to take the lead on the parking study with Stantech. Robbie thinks it is important that the merchants and property owners participate in the parking study.

Parking Development

Construction sites – can workers be bused in from a Park & Ride facility?

Circular driveways - currently don’t count toward the “permeable surface” requirement, but this seems to allow homeowners to put impermeable surfaces elsewhere on the property.

Peek Service Center

Staff is looking at ways to refurbish 4419 Worcola.

Look at ways to reinforce University Park boundaries

We currently have concrete markers at City entrances. These markers need to be refurbished. The cost is \$2,000 per piece for signs like Highland Park. Gage Prichard said that the City has too many signs and Taylor Armstrong agreed. Jacob Speer said that the City is required to erect signs if an ordinance is passed. He agreed that “Stop Ahead” signs seem silly, but noted that they are helpful in cases like a big, old tree blocking the stop sign. The choice is to save a tree in exchange for adding a sign.

Direction: Continue to pursue Miracle Mile solutions. Assign parking development and reinforce UP boundaries to the Master Plan study.

Governance

Allow Committees Some Ability to Study Issues

Develop a survey to distribute to the boards and committee members and review with the City Council. Robbie asked the Council if this is enough of an issue to pursue. After general discussion, it was suggested that each Committee chair with the assistance of the Council liaison be asked to develop an agenda of issues they think need to be studied during the upcoming year and then present that information to the City Council for approval.

Direction: Staff will work with the Council liaisons and Committee chairs to develop an annual agenda. Further define governance and how the committees should be utilized.

Institutional Partnerships

Partnership with HPISD

Robbie feels that the City has developed good working relationships with its institutional partners which enables the groups to work together in a positive manner even when dealing with difficult issues. Council felt that this is still very important but given that this goal is being met doesn't need to be one of the initiatives for this year.

Direction: Remove from the list of initiatives.

Redevelopment and Neighborhood Character

Zoning Ordinance Overhaul

This is underway

Re-evaluate Code Enforcement Philosophy

City issues 8,000 code enforcement notices annually. Still need to review the City's Code Enforcement philosophy.

Update of 1989 Master Plan

Robbie advocates creating a new Master Plan since most of the goals from the 1989 plan have been addressed. In addition a Master Plan study is a good vehicle for encouraging more citizen participation and engagement. After general discussion it was suggested that staff provide a copy of the 1989 Master Plan to Council as a starting point to see what has been accomplished.

Direction: Further discussions regarding an update to the Master Plan needed. Continue to re-evaluate the City's code enforcement philosophy.

Other Discussion Topics

- Library Governance
- Master Plan Study
- Signage
- Park Connectivity
- Sister City International
- Public Art
- City Entrance Signs
- Capital Programming

Library Friends

Dawn Moore wants to know if we can make this more of a public/ private partnership. She used the Dallas Zoo arrangement as an example. Taylor Armstrong said that the Friends of the Library are essentially raising operating funds. This is not "sexy" for a contributor, so he wondered if there were other projects they could fundraise for that might attract more money. Sharon Martin said she has offered numerous

University Park City Council Retreat
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times to help the Friends raise money. She has some ideas on how the Friends of the Library could help the library, and also feels they are helping with the operations of the Library.

Direction: Add to list of initiatives. Staff will work with the Council liaison to clarify roles.

UP Public Arts Committee/Committee Development

Gerry Bradley gave a presentation.

Robbie has an idea to implement a hotel/motel tax to fund public art. He thinks the hotel would support the tax because the owner is an art lover.

Direction: Staff will perform further research and bring to Council for further discussion.

Sister Cities

Direction: Staff will provide additional information for Council consideration.

Signage, Park Connectivity, City Entrance Signs

The consensus was that these topics should be included in a Master Plan study.

Direction: Include these items in a Master Plan study, should Council elect to pursue such a study.