

Facilitator's Summary Statement

Overall, I would say that our group found ourselves affirming a lot that Columbia is doing right. We are an active community, with many different kinds of initiatives taking place across the board. We love our community – with good reason. So, we believe that we are building on a lot that's good and right about our town.

That doesn't mean there aren't challenges. As the community grows, we need to be reminded of the values that make Columbia unique. With the proliferation of activity communication gets more challenging and coordination becomes more critical. Finally, this is an arena of life where it is relatively easy to talk a good game, but we have to make sure that the follow through is equally strong.

Therefore, we propose and want to pursue the following goals and strategies:

Regarding YOUTH, we want to explore purposefully connecting and networking youth-related resource outlets and service providers to better promote existing services and opportunities, discover under-supported/under-resourced programs and needs, and investigate the interest and feasibility of a multi-use shared (center of town) youth facility.

Regarding DIVERSITY/INCLUSION, we want to promote a reorganization and expansion of the Human Rights Commission, in order to more effectively review policies regarding human rights; to develop an intercultural council to foster increased cultural awareness and communication, and insure that cultural awareness training is developed/enhanced/promoted for all new and existing city employees – understanding that what is modeled in the city has a positive net affect on other groups and organizations.

Regarding SENSE OF COMMUNITY, we want to facilitate more effective communication between/within Columbia's various community groups (ethnic, religious, social, economic, geographic, etc.) through the development of a comprehensive (web-based) community calendar, and to create a series of fun, high-impact, coordinated activities and events that reinforce our common values and relationships.