



COMMUNITY VISION AND
ACTION PLAN
COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

Visioning Committee. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Kettler, Columbia Business Times.) Back Row: Dave Overfelt, Dan Goldstein, Toney Lowery, Tim Klocko, Lynda Baumgartner, Bill Costello, Dr. Jeffrey Williams. Middle Row: Susan Bear, Sarah Read, Al Price, Dee Dokken, Kay Callison, Jo Sapp, Sally Beth Lyon. Front Row: Louesa Runge Fine, M. Dianne Drainer, Tina Ehrhardt, Kim Stonecipher-Fisher. Not Pictured: Kevin Brown, Dan Simon, Robert Bailey, Pieter Van Waarde, Mary "Becky" Wagner, Steve Spellman, Nick Peckham.

Supplement to Chapter 5. Implementation

Introduction

When the Visioning Committee met on November 27, 2007 it agreed that implementation was a critical topic to address in its report on the visioning process. Because time constraints precluded including detailed recommendations on implementation in the actual report, the Visioning Committee voted to include its recommendations in this Supplement. The Visioning Committee considers the recommendations set forth in this Supplement to be an integral part of the final report which is dated October 2007 and titled "Imagine Columbia's Future/Community Vision and Action Plan /Columbia, Missouri." Our recommendations in this Supplement are grouped within the following four subjects: "Context for Implementation," "Use of Existing Commission Structure," "Preparation of The Initial Implementation Plan," and "Creation of a Vision Management and Oversight Entity."

1. Context for Implementation

Several principles should guide implementation. First, the Visioning Committee recognizes that, as implementation progresses, adjustments in the specific action steps and strategies will necessarily be made as those strategies are integrated with other ongoing activities within the community, new information is obtained, and new people become involved. In implementing the vision, however, the vision and goal statements of the various Citizen Topic Groups should be a constant guide that both informs the changes to be made and sets a standard against which the outcomes of various changes can be measured. Second, in implementing the vision, the City and other governing entities should also act to ensure ongoing public outreach and dialogue among diverse community segments throughout the implementation process, as well as oversight by entities accountable to the public. This is consistent with the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and openness that have characterized the visioning process to date. Third, the Visioning Committee recognizes that there are limited resources, both monetary and non-monetary, for implementation. Thus, both to further the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and openness and to make the most efficient use of funds, implementation of the vision should utilize and build upon existing structures and resources.

2. Use of Existing Commission Structure

As noted in Chapter 5 of the Imagine Columbia's Future/Community Vision and Action Plan, both the City of Columbia and Boone County currently have large commission structures and many of the strategies in the vision can be directly addressed by current standing commissions or boards. A good example is strategy #2 of the Plan and Manage Growth subtopic under Development that reads: *"Implement a growth management plan that incorporates form based zoning."* The Columbia Planning and Zoning Commission along with the Boone County Planning and Zoning Commission would be logical entities to address this strategy. As another example, strategy #2 of the Economic Development subtopic under Economic Development reads: *"Leverage Columbia's natural advantages—MU, Columbia's location and environment, and Columbia's people—in fostering economic development."* Implementation of this strategy should involve the Special Business District Board of Directors (a City commission) and may require a new broader commission that will bring together the business community in and around the City. As a final example, strategy #1 of the Means subtopic under Arts and Culture reads: *"Create an alliance for the arts that serves and advocates for artists, art professionals, and art-related organizations by fostering an environment of collaboration, and by providing ongoing training."* This falls within the scope of the Cultural Affairs Commission and the Cultural Affairs Standing Committee on Public Art.

Although it may be necessary to expand the scope of various Commissions to accomplish these and other strategies, it is the recommendation of the Visioning Committee that the existing commission structure be used wherever possible in implementing the vision, and that the City avoid creating new entities that duplicate the work of the commissions. In addition, specific procedures for coordination among relevant commissions and citizen-centered groups working on implementation that are consistent with the principles set forth above should be established.

3. Preparation of Initial Implementation Plan

The Visioning Committee recommends that the Columbia City Council, as the recipient of the vision, authorize the City manager and appropriate staff, in consultation with the County Commission and its staff, to prepare an initial draft implementation report. This report should begin with a recommended grouping of related goals and strategies set forth in the visioning report and include an inventory both of existing efforts and new resources required to accomplish the identified goals. This report should identify and recommend existing City or County commissions or boards that could take the lead in implementation of the various groupings of goals and strategies.

Using the Citizen Topic Group action plans as a guide, the initial draft implementation report should also identify specific implementation tasks that could be completed over the next two years. In addition the report should identify additional organizations and entities, that could be involved to work with the lead designated commissions or boards discussed above, in implementing the Community Vision and Action Plan. Any additional resources required for implementation should also be discussed in this report. Finally, the draft report should include guidelines for the convening, management, and coordination of citizen groups that can aid the work of the various boards and commissions in order to both maintain the open dialogue that has occurred in the visioning process to date, and also to enhance the public understanding and acceptance of the vision and related implementation efforts.

A discussion draft of the initial implementation report should be (i) circulated for comment to the Sponsor's Council, the Visioning Committee, and those groups and organizations identified in the action plans as being necessary for implementation; (ii) posted on the City's website for public comment; (iii) revised as may be appropriate to incorporate comments received; and (iv) presented to the City Council for review. In assigning responsibility for preparation of the initial draft implementation report, the City Council should approve a specific timeline for completion of each of these tasks.

4. Create a Vision Management and Oversight Entity

The Visioning Committee recommends that an independent Vision Oversight Entity be created to track and encourage implementation of the vision. It is the recommendation of the Visioning Committee that this take the form of a Boone County/City of Columbia joint commission, which would allow for the new entity to function with a clear authority derived from being appointed by two elected bodies, the Columbia City Council and the Boone County Board of Commissioners. Regardless of how it is constituted, this entity should reflect a broad cross section of the community. Ideally, active members of the Citizen Topic Groups would be included in this Commission in order to build on the foundation begun in the visioning process to date.

The Oversight Entity would not be charged directly with implementing strategies but would fulfill the roles set forth below. To the extent sufficient funding is obtained, it might also take on the role of providing staffing support to citizen groups that are assisting in implementation and help coordinate implementation activities in order to better avoid and eliminate duplication of efforts. The role of watching for duplication of effort should be performed by appropriate City and County staff, if not performed by the Oversight Entity.

(a) Tracking, Measurement and Reporting. One of the primary tasks, which must be performed by the Oversight Entity, is conducting periodic reviews and reporting on the progress of implementation to the community. Thus one of the first tasks of this entity should be selection of a reporting format and identification of the information to be captured for purposes of preparing that report as implementation proceeds. This entity would then be responsible for ensuring that an “Annual Goals and Strategies Report Card” that tracks the progress of implementation is completed. Thus the Oversight Entity also must be empowered to request and receive reports on implementation from the groups charged with the actual work of implementation. The Oversight Entity should also be empowered to make recommendations to improve the ongoing process of implementation in order to continue to build community support for the vision as more is learned during the implementation process. In the Annual Report Card, the Oversight Entity should also report on its own efforts in each of the areas set forth below.

(b) Identification of Next Steps. Beginning one year after the initial implementation plan and biennially (every two years) thereafter, the Oversight Entity, in conjunction with the relevant boards and commissions, should have the task of identifying the implementation tasks to be undertaken over the two years following the period covered in the current implementation plan and the additional resources needed. A discussion draft of this plan should be (i) posted for public comment for at least 30 days, (ii) revised as may be appropriate to incorporate comments received, and (iii) presented to the City Council and Boone County Board for review.

(c) Public Education and Outreach. The Oversight Entity should offer public programs on the visioning process and its component parts, track the groups involved in implementation, and work to recruit a diverse participant base. The Oversight Entity might also operate a website, separate from the City website, which provides ongoing information on implementation efforts and ways to become involved, and also allows for public feedback on a range of implementation issues.

(d) Resolving Conflicts. The Oversight Entity should have the authority to hire a facilitator and convene dialogues relating to conflicts that arise in implementation between different strategies or groups, including conflicts that arise over the allocation of scarce resources.

(e) Fundraising. The Oversight Entity should have the authority to seek grants and other funds to be used to offset the costs of its work.

(f) Community Dialogues to Review Progress of the Vision. The Oversight Entity should also convene community wide dialogues at 5-year intervals to review the vision and the progress being made in implementation. These dialogues should be structured in a way that they remain consistent with the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and openness that have characterized the visioning process to date.