



Columbia, Missouri

COMMUNITY WIDE VISIONING PROCESS AND
VISION FALL FESTIVAL

RFP 159/2006

PROPOSAL

AUGUST 25, 2006



August 25, 2006

City of Columbia, Purchasing Division
800 Cherry Street, Lower Level
Columbia, Missouri 65201

Re: Proposal for Community Wide Visioning Process and Vision Fall Festival(s) / Columbia, Missouri

Dear Selection Committee:

On behalf of ACP—Visioning & Planning, Ltd. (ACP), we would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit our proposal for the design and facilitation of the Columbia Community Wide Visioning Process and Vision Fall Festival(s). As you will see from our proposal, ACP offers the Columbia community an integrated and unique approach to visioning. Our approach offers:

A deep commitment to an inclusive and transparent public process. ACP's proposed meeting outline is designed to engage the general public and community stakeholders early on, often, and in ways that are accessible to all residents, particularly those less likely to become engaged in this type of activity. The aim is to ensure that the resulting vision is fully owned and supported by the community.

A process that is both intuitive and informed. ACP thoroughly integrates technical and factual information with the intuitive articulation of ideas, dreams and expectations for the future developed through public participation. This integration makes the proposed "Fact Book," the compilation of baseline information about the community, into a tool to be used throughout the visioning process as well as the foundation upon which to build the implementation of the vision.

A dedication to implementation. ACP's approach involves the public in the process of transforming the vision from an expression of the community's wishes into a detailed action plan. The involvement of the public in this critical transformation ensures that the action plan respects and reflects the public's vision while providing an opportunity to identify the leaders and champions of its implementation.

The benefits of extensive experience. ACP has pioneered and is a leader in the integration of visioning with physical planning. It has successfully implemented the type of vision proposed for Columbia in communities throughout the country with characteristics similar of those found in Columbia. The integration of visioning with physical planning has enabled communities to pursue the broader scope of a vision while at the same time creating the technical and regulatory tools that facilitate implementation.

We appreciate your consideration of our proposal and hope to have the opportunity to work with the Columbia community once again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gianni Longo'.

Gianni Longo
Principal

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1. Approach Proposal

Introduction

The development of a community wide visioning process for the City of Columbia, Missouri, presents a number of unique challenges. They include:

- Generating diverse and extensive public participation, including provisions to attract students, people with low-incomes, and other traditionally under-represented groups;
- Conducting a fair and transparent process that minimizes polarization, enables a constructive dialogue among all participants, and protects their ability to share ideas;
- Enriching the public dialogue with strong technical work and analysis; and
- Involving all major public and private institutions in the formulation of the vision, including the city, surrounding jurisdictions, county, university, businesses, banks, developers, and hospitals.

ACP's scope of work will address each of these challenges with a national perspective on developing consensus among diverse interests; a philosophy aimed at integrating visioning and physical planning; and a methodology that engages the public in exciting, interactive and productive ways.

Having helped the Columbia community in conducting the recent Visioning Forum, ACP has a solid understanding of the background and issues faced by the City and is poised to seamlessly initiate the Visioning Process.

Approach Overview

The ACP approach is comprised of five parts, each with corresponding tasks:

- A. Preparation
- B. Baseline Data Acquisition and Forecasting
- C. Mobilizing Support
- D. Facilitation of the Visioning Process and Public Participation
- E. Finalizing the Vision and Action Plan

The proposed approach responds to the program outlined in Section 3: Process of the Community Wide Visioning Process and Vision Fall Festival Request for Qualifications. It is designed to enable the largest possible involvement of the public, which is a key component of ACP's expertise. It is also designed to provide the City with baseline data and forecasting to be used throughout the process and beyond.

It is assumed that throughout the community wide visioning process ACP will interact with city staff assigned to the process (Staff), the Vision Committee, and the Internal Project Coordination Committee as described in the presentation "Imagine Columbia's Future," dated August 21, 2006. Together these entities will help refine the proposed approach and tailor it to the unique assets and challenges of Columbia.

A. Preparation

A strong emphasis on preparation is a key component of ACP's approach. The preparation phase includes:

1. Work Plan and Project Management Protocols Refinement

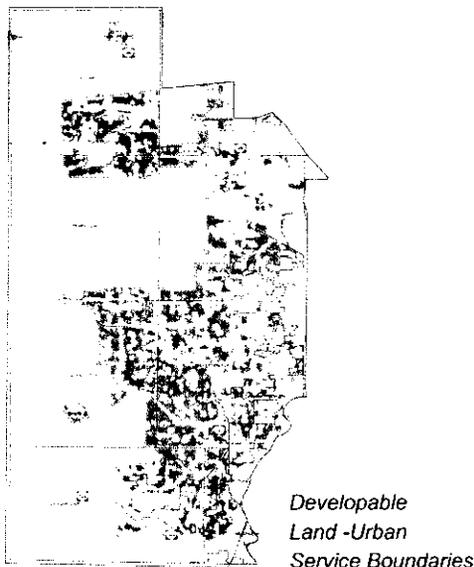
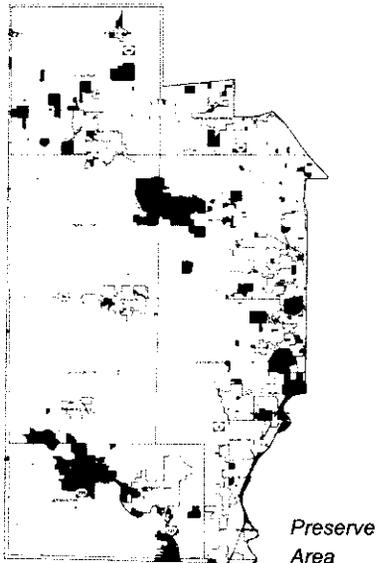
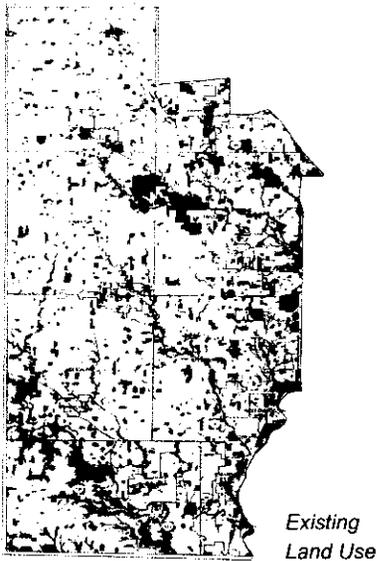
Developing a set of protocols early on in the project and refining the scope in consultation with Staff and the Vision Committee provides clarity and gives all those involved a clear road map for the process. ACP will work with City to finalize the program, establish project protocols, and develop a project management plan that spells out communication and information sharing modalities.

2. Understanding the Project Environment

2.1 Area Tour – Staff will lead a tour to orient ACP to the unique historic and contemporary development patterns of Columbia and its immediate surrounding areas.

2.2 Briefing from Relevant Agencies – ACP will receive a briefing from relevant agencies to gain an understanding of current issues and initiatives in the City. The briefing will also include an overview of current studies and plans germane to the development of the visioning process. Copies of relevant studies will be collected for further review.

**Mapping for Baseline Analysis:
Dayton, Ohio Region**



3. First Meeting with the Vision Committee

ACP will conduct the first of several meetings with the Vision Committee designed to collaboratively finalize logistic and programmatic aspects of public participation process. This meeting should be concurrent with the area tour and represents the official start of the vision process.

B. Baseline Data Acquisition and Forecasting

This phase of the project establishes a baseline understanding of the community’s current and forecasted conditions. The outcome will provide a frame-of-reference for the initiative aspects of the visioning process.

Baseline data and forecasting includes:

4. Collecting Pertinent Studies and Data

In preparation for ACP’s first visit, Staff will assemble relevant studies, GIS files, plans and maps as resources for the consultant team.

5. Data and Indicator Outline

ACP will prepare an outline of the baseline data and recommendations for appropriate indicators and forecasting. This outline will be presented to—and approved by—Staff and Vision Committee prior to undertaking the research and forecasting. Some of this information may be gathered during the “Briefing from Relevant Agencies” (Task 2.2).

6. Base Maps

ACP will prepare appropriate base GIS maps that will be utilized for the analysis as well as any map-based exercises of the public process. The extent of the mapping will be a function of the community’s GIS data as ACP’s approach is based on utilization of existing map data.

7. Initial Technical Report: “The Fact Book”

Once the Data and Indicator outline is prepared, ACP will prepare a draft report of the existing conditions, forecasts and indicators. It is anticipated that the report will be structured according to three key themes:

- People (population, housing, and other socio-economic characteristics);
- Place (land use, infrastructure, natural environment community appearance, etc.); and
- Prosperity (jobs, housing affordability and economic development issues).

The report will contain narrative, graphs, charts, maps and photographs.

The report will be used as reference throughout the process and be especially useful by the Citizen Topic Groups in the Community Resources Scan (Task 14.3).

8. Final Technical Report: “The Fact Book”

Prior to the Environmental Scan, ACP and project staff will evaluate the Initial Technical Report in light of the public input gathered up to that point. It may be determined that some additional data is needed for the Citizen Topic Groups to make recommendations for the Action Plan.

C. Mobilizing Support

This phase of the project identifies and mobilizes key support systems for the visioning process and includes:

- Identifying and interviewing stakeholders;
- Conducting publicity and outreach activities; and
- Training facilitators.

9. Identifying and Interviewing Stakeholders

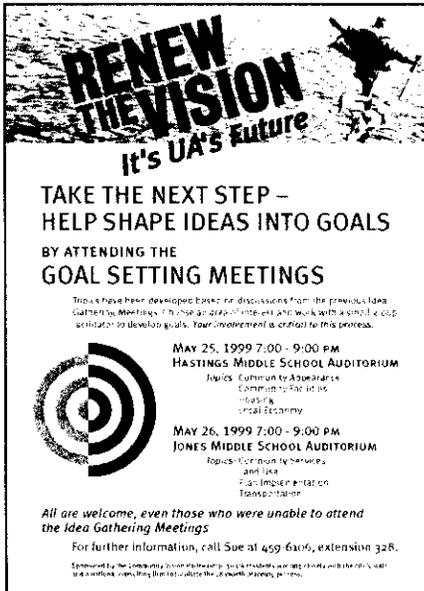
The early identification and interviewing of stakeholders provides intuitive information that parallels the baseline data collection while establishing the inclusiveness of the process.

9.1 Develop Stakeholder Lists - ACP will work with Staff and the Vision Committee to refine and further develop lists of stakeholders who will be invited to participate in the community wide visioning process. Stakeholders to be considered should include, among others, elected officials, business leaders (representing the area’s traditional businesses as well as new economy businesses); residents; special interest groups (in areas such as the environment, education, housing, the arts, and transportation); representatives of rural interests; representatives of the development community (small and large scale residential, commercial, and mixed-use developers); academics; and the planning community.

9.2 Conduct Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups - ACP will conduct up to 14 individual or group interviews with stakeholders and community representatives. The purpose of these interviews will be to understand prevailing attitudes, identify the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the community, and further broaden the stakeholder lists.

10. Conducting Publicity and Outreach Activities

ACP makes a distinction between publicity and outreach. Publicity involves a public information program that creates a general awareness of the community wide vision process, while face-to-face outreach actually brings the public to participate in the meetings. ACP will work with Staff and the Vision Committee on best practices in both publicity and outreach in order to build awareness of upcoming events, invite the community to the public meetings, and encourage the participation of diverse segments of the community, including those who are typically less likely to engage in a program like this. ACP recommends a number of subtasks to enable public information and outreach campaigns to succeed, including:



10.1 Form and Coordinate Outreach and Publicity Action Teams – ACP will assist Staff in forming Outreach and Publicity Action Teams and will conduct monthly meetings to coordinate their activities. The Action Teams will include community representatives who are willing to assist in the effort. They will help target media outlets and reach out to specific segments of the population based on geographic and demographic considerations. The Action Team should have liaisons to the Vision Committee to ensure communication flow between the two.

10.2 Develop Communication Materials – ACP, working with Staff, the Vision Committee, and the Action Teams, will assist in the development of communication materials to be used in promoting the community wide visioning process including flyers, press releases, newsletters, etc.

10.3 The Vision Fall Festivals – ACP considers the proposed Vision Fall Festivals as an exciting and integral component of the overall effort to build awareness and participation in the visioning process. ACP will coordinate with the City, the Vision Committee and the proposed outreach and publicity action teams in designing the Fall Festivals. ACP will participate in the first set of Vision Fall Festivals.

11. Training Facilitators

ACP considers the recruiting and training of local volunteer facilitators as a key step in the early involvement of the community and as a tool to expand community ownership in the public participation process. ACP has found that volunteer facilitators from the community lend legitimacy to the visioning process and reduce the perception that the effort is controlled by any single entity.

Trained facilitators become part of the legacy of the visioning process – they gain valuable skills, they serve as ambassadors of the process, and they often become part of the growing circle of community leaders that support implementation of the vision.

11.1 Recruit Facilitators – ACP will assist staff in recruiting volunteer facilitators needed for the facilitation of all public meetings. These volunteers are trained in the meeting methodology to ensure quality control and consistency of results from meeting to meeting.

11.2 Train Facilitators – ACP will prepare facilitator instruction manuals that cover all the meeting techniques used in community wide visioning process and will conduct scheduled facilitator training sessions to instruct volunteer facilitators in those meeting techniques.

D. Facilitation of the Visioning Process and Public Participation

This part of the proposal includes all the activities related to conducting the vision. Activities include:

- Gathering ideas;
- Probing the vision;
- Strategizing the vision; and
- Revisiting the vision.



The Blueprint Houston Citizen Congress.



Small group work session for *Imagine New York: Giving Voice to People's Visions*.

12. Gathering Ideas

ACP will design a set of generative meetings to provide a broad base of ideas that will help identify issues as well as the public’s desires and expectations. The generative meetings will set the tone for the visioning project, establish transparency and legitimacy to the process, create buy-in from the public, and later, implementation support for the results. The following activities are included:

12.1 Conduct Public Meetings - ACP will conduct up to six public meetings in different parts of the community catering to a full range of geographic and socio-economic conditions.

The typical public meeting will start in assembly with an orientation on the planning process and a review of key trends. The assembly is followed by facilitated small group activities in which the participants will conduct a number of exercises specifically designed to facilitate the gathering of ideas. It is important to note that the small group process will begin with a “clean slate” and without any preconceived notion of the outcomes.

ACP uses a variety of tools and techniques for engaging the public in envisioning the future, indicating preferences, and discussing critical issues. These include brainstorming sessions, visual preference surveys, a “Strong Places, Weak Places” exercise, and a “Critical Questions” activity. ACP will work with Staff and the Vision Committee to combine the desired techniques into a seamless meeting format. The specific techniques used and the number of public meetings will be finalized in Tasks 1 and 3.

12.2 Collect and Database Information – The public meetings will generate substantial amounts of ideas and comments. All comments and ideas collected through the process will be databased and posted on the project’s website if available. This is done for transparency and public information. ACP will database the results of the public meetings. After ideas have been analyzed, ideas will be coded and sorted.

12.3 Preliminary Analysis – Once input has been sorted, ACP will provide a preliminary analysis of the information to identify major themes that will be explored and expanded in the development of the community wide vision goals.

13. Probing the Vision

ACP implements meetings to refine and probe the ideas gathered in the previous phase and develop goals and strategies.

13.1 The Vision Committee Goal Writing Workshop - ACP will conduct a goal writing workshops with the Vision Committee to identify a set of preliminary goals derived from the ideas gathered in the public meetings. The Vision Committee will review the ideas, identify recurring themes, and build from those themes the principles and goals of the vision. The preliminary principles and goals will be first tested in the Probing the Vision Workshop and later used by the Citizen Topic Groups as a framework to identify strategies and action steps for implementation.

13.2 The Probing the Vision Workshop - The Probing the Vision Workshop will engage stakeholders in discussions of the future of Columbia in terms that make reference both to the results of the public meetings and the technical analysis. The workshop will engage participants in interactive exercises designed to identify alternative ways to accommodate future growth and to address critical questions related to how to achieve the community's desired future.

Preparation for the workshop includes inviting the stakeholders, finalizing the workshop format with the Vision Committee, developing meeting materials, and training facilitators.

14. Strategizing the Vision

The outcomes of the steps one and two provide a preliminary framework of the vision for the future of Columbia. The framework must now be organized in strategic terms while still respecting the public's ideas. This step includes the following activities.

14.1 Form Citizen Topic Groups - ACP will work with Staff and the Vision Committee to form a number of Citizens Topic Groups, each focused on a topical area of the vision. The purpose of the Topic Groups is to finalize the goal for their topic, prioritize actions, and identify strategies and action steps for implementation.

The topical area of each committee will be determined by the outcome of the previous steps of the visioning process. Based on ACP's experience, however, there are a number of topics that are likely to emerge. These include the environment, growth and development issues, economic issues, and social concerns.

Each Citizen Topic Group should include stakeholders and citizens with interest and knowledge in their topic. They should represent a broad range of points of view and expertise within the topic to reflect the type of discussion likely to take place in the community around their topic.

The Citizen Topic Groups meet monthly for a period of four to six months. ACP will meet with each topic group and coordinate their activities, which include the next tasks.

14.2 Finalize Goals and Develop Preliminary Strategies - ACP will focus the first two meetings of the Citizen Topic Groups to review the results of the vision, finalize the draft goals and begin to identify strategies for its implementation.

14.3 Conduct the Community Resources Scan - The Community Resources Scan is a tool ACP uses to translate a given set of implementation strategies into a more strategic and purposeful action plan. This is accomplished by engaging the Citizen Topic Groups (in some cases augmented by subject matter experts) in a thorough review of organizations and programs (the resources) active in their topic areas.

In the course of the review, the group identify organizations and programs that should be involved in implementation, what resources are needed, what measurable criteria for success can be established, and what steps can be implemented to jumpstart implementation.

14.4 Develop Preliminary Action Plan - After the Community Resources Scan, ACP will continue meeting with the topical Citizen Topic Groups for one or two more times to finalize the action plan for each topic. This phase of the process is often used to eliminate duplication of activities and require joint meetings of two or more Topic Groups. The result is a preliminary vision and action plan to be reviewed again by the public during the Community Choices Workshop described below.

15. Revisiting the Vision

This workshop is a two-day event designed to publicly review the results of the Citizen Topic Groups process and to validate the emerging vision.

15.1 The Community Choices Workshop - ACP will employ the appropriate tools and methods to effectively engage the public in a thorough review of the preliminary vision and action plan. Community Choices typically includes the following activities:

- The Vision Summit – a public meeting to gain feedback on the vision and action plan as well as document the public’s priorities;
- Meetings with selected stakeholders groups – if necessary, ACP will touch base again with specific stakeholders and special interest groups to ensure the vision and action plan address the critical needs of the community; and
- A special meeting with the Vision Committee to review comments, and finalize the vision and action plan.

E. Finalizing the Vision and Action Plan

At the completion of the Community Choices Workshop, the basic framework of the vision and action plan will be in place. It will portray a complete picture of the community's desires anchored on an in depth knowledge of community issues.

16. Finalize Vision and Action Plan

ACP will work with the Vision Committee to finalize the vision and action plan. The Plan will spell out a bold and realistic vision of what the community wants to become. It will identify projects and initiatives to turn that vision into reality and the financial and community resources needed to sustain those projects and initiatives; it will recommend implementation steps and the timing of implementation, spelling out the roles government, business, citizens, non-profits will have in implementation; it will emphasize quality of life issues for residents, and the protection of the community's important assets.

17. Produce the Final Plan and Report

ACP will develop a final report. The report will describe the process methodology, key findings from the baseline data analysis and forecast, and specific strategic recommendations. It will also document the work effort and include information on techniques used to reach consensus. A final presentation to the community might be scheduled at the unveiling of the report.

18. Setting Up Implementation

ACP recommends that implementation steps be taken immediately following the release of the report to benefit from the momentum and good will created by the public involvement process. ACP can advise the City, Staff, and Vision Committee on the organizational structure and the methodology needed to jumpstart implementation including the creation of specific task forces empowered to carry on the implementation of specific aspects of the vision and action plan. ACP will conduct an implementation orientation with the Coordinating and Steering committees.

2. Proposed Schedule

Please find ACP's proposed schedule for the Community Wide Visioning Process on the following page.

	Months	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
A. Preparation																
1. Work Plan and Project Management Protocols Refinement																
2. Understanding the Project Environment																
3. First Meeting with the Vision Committee (Monthly Mtngs)																
B. Building Data Acquisition and Forecasting																
4. Collecting Perinent Studies and Data																
5. Data and Indicator Outline																
6. Base Maps																
7. Initial Technical Report: "The Fact Book"																
8. Final Technical Report: "The Fact Book"																
C. Identifying and Interviewing Stakeholders																
9.1 Develop Stakeholder Lists																
9.2 Conduct Stakeholder Inter. and Focus Groups																
10. Conducting Publicity and Outreach Activities																
10.1 Form and Coord. Outreach and Publ. Act. Teams																
10.2 Develop Communication Materials																
10.3 The Vision Fall Festivals																
11. Training Facilitators																
11.1 Recruit Facilitators																
11.2 Train Facilitators																
D. Facilitation of the Visioning Process and Public Participation																
12. Gathering Ideas																
12.1 Conduct Public Meetings																
12.2 Collect and Database Information																
12.3 Preliminary Analysis																
13. Probing the Vision																
13.1 The Vision Committee Goal Writing Workshop																
13.2 The Probing the Vision Workshop																
14. Strategizing the Vision																
14.1 Form Citizen Topic Groups																
14.2 Finalize Goals and Develop Prelim. Strat.																
14.3 Conduct the Community Resources Scan																
14.4 Develop Preliminary Action Plan																
15. Revisiting the Vision																
15.1 The Community Choices Workshop																
E. Finalizing the Vision and Action Plan																
16. Finalize Vision and Action Plan																
17. Produce the Final Plan and Report																
18. Setting Up Implementation. (ongoing)																

3. Cost Proposal

The cost estimate on the following page is based on ACP's understanding of the expectations for the project as outlined in the Request for Qualifications/Proposals, the anticipated effort associated with the Approach Proposal outlined in Chapter 1, and a project duration of approximately 14 months.

It is expected that the project cost will be refined as the scope of work and schedule are finalized through discussions with Staff.

Time Allocation and Fee					
Staff	Principal in Charge	Project Manager	Senior Advisor	Planner	Support
Hourly Rates	190	125	175	75	50
A. Preparation					
1. Work Plan and Project Management Protocols Ref	2	3			
2. Understanding the Project Environment	8	10	10		
3. First Meeting with the Vision Committee (Monthly Mtngs)	16	42	12	12	
Total Hours	24	48	22	12	
Sub Total Fee	4560	6000	3850	900	
B. Baseline Data Acquisition and Forecasting					
4. Collecting Pertinent Studies and Data		2	2		
5. Data and Indicator Outline	2	6	4		
6. Base Maps	2	4	2		10
7. Initial Technical Report: "The Fact Book"	4	20	20	8	2
8. Final Technical Report: "The Fact Book"	8	10	8	8	2
Total Hours	16	42	36	16	14
Sub Total Fee	3040	5250	6300	1200	700
C. Mobilizing Support					
9. Identifying and Interviewing Stakeholders	18	20		20	
10. Conducting Publicity and Outreach Activities	16	32		36	
11. Training Facilitators	6	26		24	
Total Hours	32	72	0	60	0
Sub Total Fee	6080	9000	0	4500	0
D. Facilitation of the Visioning Process and Public Participation					
12. Gathering Ideas	14	56		72	30
13. Probing the Vision	20	24		45	35
14. Strategizing the Vision	30	56		72	20
15. Revisiting the Vision	32	32	20	24	5
Total Hours	96	168	20	213	90
Sub Total Fee	18240	21000	3500	15975	4500
E. Finalizing the Vision and Action Plan					
16. Finalize Vision and Action Plan	12	30		40	10
17. Produce the Final Plan and Report	16	24		36	
18. Setting Up Implementation (ongoing)	12	24			
Total Hours	40	78	0	76	10
Sub Total Fee	7600	9750	0	5700	500
Total Fee					\$ 138,145
Travel and expenses					\$ 20,721
Grand Total					\$ 158,866

