

iMesa

imagine, invest, improve

Steering Committee Meeting

January 11, 2012

Mesa City Plaza

20. E Main Street, Ste. 170

6 PM

Attendance:

Mark Schofield (chair)

Bill Puffer

Doug Griffen (facilitator)

Karen Frias-Long

Kate Ali'varius

Kathy Macdonald (staff)

Kay Henry

Ted Wendel

David Short

Stephen Sparks

John Schroeder

Elizabeth Danielson

Minutes:

- Mark Schofield gave the welcome and acknowledged the meeting facilitator Doug Griffen of Advanced Strategy Center.
- Mark recapped the Council Meeting presentation from January 9. He noted the Mayor's and Councilmember Finter's positive comments.
- Bill commented that we should take advantage of community meetings to advertise the program. There is a pancake breakfast coming up in Council District 5. Kathy said that staffing is an issue right now, but any committee members who would like can staff these events. The City will provide any needed materials. Kathy also mentioned that there will be an iMesa display at the Mayor's breakfast on January 26 at the Hilton.
- Media coverage of iMesa presentation was discussed.
- Doug led a discussion about the Council meeting and recap. Doug asked what the committee felt was communicated to the Council? Key messages identified were:
 - a. Community based/grass roots process
 - b. Seven priorities based on community input
 - c. Example ideas only of those priorities
 - d. Presented a framework/organizing principle
 - e. Need a microbrewery downtown
 - f. Downtown vibrancy
 - g. Consistent themes
 - h. Transformation is ambitious
 - i. There are some things identified that can move forward
 - j. Items that fit within existing framework and priorities validates what Council is doing
 - k. Need the Council to help move this forward in the right way

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- Bill commented that he was disappointed there wasn't more feedback from the Council during the meeting. Mark said that he met with Councilmembers individually beforehand and may have diverted some problem issues. He mentioned there was some negativity expressed during those meetings. Kathy stated that the committee should focus on the positive because the Council is in a good place to move forward. Doug stated that the committee wasn't asking for anything from the Council this time so not hearing extensive feedback may be a good thing.
- Kate expressed a concern with Jim Ripley's article in the newspaper because it may seem to the public that those ideas with the most votes may be the ones that Council would be inclined to implement. Elizabeth said that she felt it was important that the ideas be expressed as examples only. Kate said that the Mayor said at the next meeting he wanted to see specifics.
- Doug wanted to know what the committee would identify as Council expectations. Mark said the Council is looking for low hanging fruit. Elizabeth said that Council is looking for both - low hanging fruit and larger, more ambitious projects. John said that there are strategic opportunities here to create projects with sustainability. Ted agreed that there needs to be a strategic approach - find the idea that strategically moves the process forward. Doug said this is a strategy discussion that can develop and unfold. Low hanging fruit is a validation to the community that things are happening. The larger ideas are a longer-term view of what the possibilities are. This process is something that will go on for a long time. The committee is playing the role to get the project moving. Advocacy and sponsorship can be created. The ideas in the middle are the interesting ones that create a work opportunity to see if we are aligned with the strategic vision. Three levels can be identified - low hanging fruit on up. This approach creates wins for everyone along the way. Elizabeth said that this is not about votes. Bill said that some criteria should be established to properly evaluate the ideas. Rather than a list of priorities give them a list of things that community wants and let the Council decide.
- Doug asked if two or three recommendations should be proposed that meet the criteria that has been discussed. This could be a pilot format to move forward. Ted said that they would like to see a comprehensive strategic plan of parks, gardens and trails within the City. Bill asked what partners can be identified outside the City budget. Elizabeth said that it isn't the responsibility of the committee to come forward with a detailed plan for each item. Kate said that her strategy is to study the demographics of Mesa and find out what people would want to serve the different population segments. Things that can be implemented with some degree of ease and create excitement that can move the initiative forward. Tag projects as "brought to you by iMesa." Kate said that the village concept should be used when gathering information. John said that ideas need to be organized in a way that displays connection and livability. Elizabeth said that she is concerned that they have to come forward too quickly with ideas.
- Doug said that what he is hearing that there could be an advocate for each one of the seven areas. Mark said that we will have projects to come forward in February. Ted said that low hanging fruit doesn't define transformational. Committee has been asked to define what is transformational. Staff needs a plan to make things happen. Doug said that they can bring forward projects that merit further study and then ask the Council to support it with staff research. Need buy in to support longer term process. Kathy said that is the right direction as far as expectations of the Council. Mark said the committee needs to find common ground and move forward.
- Doug asked if there are two or three recommendations right now, not even from one specific area. Kate suggested a divide and conquer approach. Stephen said that divide and conquer might create a knowledge drain on the committee in the process. The committee discussed

further what is considered transformational. The committee as a whole suggested to focus on one or two themes.

- Doug asked the committee to come up with some projects that jump out at the group now. Items discussed by the group were Pioneer Park, pools, trails, downtown, education, transportation. Leverage what is going on and pick projects that compliment - light rail extension, Gateway area growth, new education institutions. Ideas with a lot of votes can't be ignored and need to be considered like the Buckhorn Baths.
- The committee decided to focus on vibrant downtown, transportation and parks/recreation.
- Group wants the DMA plan of work summary. Kathy will forward to the group in the next few days.
- The next workshop was tentatively scheduled February 4 at 8 or 9 am. Kathy will confirm date and time.
- Meeting adjourned