

# COMMUNITY PLANNERS COMMITTEE and 42 COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUPS

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**FY2014 Capital Improvement Program Budget**  
**A seminal effort at participatory budgeting**

*Presented to the INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE  
25 February 2013*

# Timeline

- July 25 City memo outlines public participation process
- July 27 CPC preliminarily accepts responsibility with caveat that project recommendations be made at the community level
- August CPC committee drafts framework of process
- Aug 28 CPC adopts framework for community process
- Sept City hosts 3 training sessions  
(64 attended from 30 communities)
- Oct, Nov Planning groups hold public meetings
- Nov 28 CPC submits recommendations to the City

**Concept to Completion: 18 weeks**

# Process

*2012 effort was more about proof of concept than a full implementation of what the planning groups are capable of and what participatory budgeting is about.*

*Nevertheless, the community process in this first go round was indeed impressive.*

# Process

- **Community Planning Group Process (Guidelines for FY2014 CIP Budget only)**
  - Conduct an expanded public outreach effort; your goal is to attract residents and merchants that do not normally attend your meetings. Use other community organizations and council offices for assistance.
  - Schedule at least one public meeting, more if feasible.
  - **The task is to recommend projects that have not yet been funded, only partially funded and thus delayed, or have yet to be taken up by the city.** We are not imposing a limit on how many projects you can recommend, but focused effort on a few projects may be more productive than a long wish list of projects.
  - **Start** by choosing from “existing” projects already on the CIP list but haven’t had sufficient priority to obtain funding or have been only partially funded; and/or,
  - **Second**, draw from projects on your community’s Public Facilities Finance Plans; and/or,
  - **Third**, draw from projects on “needs lists” as may be available from various city departments; and/or,
  - **Fourth**, identify “new” projects that have not previously been considered by the city.
    - Be as specific as possible; for example, “new sidewalk along 100 block of ABC Street”, not “more sidewalks in our neighborhood”. Studies are allowed if tied to identifying possible solutions to a specific problem.
    - Projects must be consistent with your community plan. For communities with very old community plans and needs today that are not consistent with your plan, recognize that a community plan amendment may be needed before such a project can be implemented.
  - **If you are recommending several projects be sure to indicate your priorities.**
  - Do not worry about how your recommendation will be funded. The city only wants to hear which projects you want to fund.
  - **Keep in mind that available funds at the city are extremely limited and only a handful of new projects city-wide will qualify for the FY2014 CIP budget.**
  - Use the Project Application Form (preferably in an electronic spreadsheet file) for each recommended project.
  - If it can facilitate your community’s deliberations use the Priority Scoring Form. The form and ranking will not be used by the city; it is for your use only.
  - Transmit recommendations to CPC by no later than November 7.

# Public Outreach

- **GOAL: Maximize public participation.  
Minimize expectations.**
- Outreach typically limited to regular **noticed meetings**.
- Some significantly **expanded outreach**: on-line surveys, community newspapers, social media, etc.
- Notably, some **coordinated with other community-based organizations** (school district, recreation councils, neighborhood councils, etc.).
- Some publicity by individual city council offices.

# Results

- **29 communities** recommended a total of **225 new projects** in addition to prioritizing current CIP projects.
  - 16 communities south of Interstate 8 identified 176 new projects
  - 13 communities north of Interstate 8 identified 49 new projects
- **11 communities** made no recommendations for FY2014 but look forward to FY2015
  - 3 communities south of Interstate 8
  - 8 communities north of Interstate 8
- **2 groups** did not respond

# Lessons learned

- **Community planning groups** can provide a structured and documented process for direct local public outreach/participation with CPC as the overarching manager.
- Planning groups should **start** hearings no later than July.
- **Kick-off** public process with a city-wide publicity campaign through the Mayor's Office & the City Council.

## Lessons learned, continued

- Offer CIP **training** in locations throughout the city for both CPG members and the public.
- City staff should **attend** at least one planning group meeting in each community.
- **Assist** planning groups in expanding their public outreach and participation.

## Lessons learned, continued

- Continue to **improve** the City's CIP website providing city data in user-friendly formats.
- Consider **on-line forms** to facilitate submittal of community recommendations.
- Create a process to **track** community recommendations through the budget development process.

# Appreciation

Startup and timely completion of this seminal effort would not have been possible without the hands-on involvement of:

- James Nagelvoort, Public Works
- Mark Nassar, Public Works
- Erin Noel, Independent Budget Analyst
- Angela Colton, Financial Management, and
- city staff in other departments.

# Conclusion

- **Participatory budgeting works**
- Community Planning Groups and the Community Planners Committee stand ready to build on last year's success and make this an annual process.

**Questions?**