

EDINA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



EDINA BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS WORKSHOP – 5/3/17 MEETING SUMMARY

Overview

A workshop with representatives from the various Boards and Commissions of the City of Edina was held on May 3, 2017 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Edina Public Works. The purpose of the meeting was to bring representatives from each of the various city boards and commissions together to introduce the comprehensive planning process, collect relevant information from each group, and to foster more regular inter-group communication. Approximately 50 members from the following commissions were in attendance:

- Planning Commission
- Transportation Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Human Rights and Relations Commission
- Heritage Preservation Commission
- Energy and Environment Commission
- Community Health Commission
- Arts & Culture Commission



Meeting Purpose

The meeting began with a presentation on the basics of comprehensive planning (e.g., purpose, required elements, process, etc.) and an overview of the comprehensive plan update and small area plan process for the City of Edina, followed by a group question and answer session.

After the group presentation, attendees participated in facilitated small group discussions with individual commissions. The small group discussions focused on the activities of each commission and how they might feed into the comprehensive planning process. The commissions also participated in an exercise to identify areas of overlapping responsibility with the other commissions, to facilitate better inter-group coordination. Facilitators took notes and participants were asked to fill out comment forms to document the results of these discussions.

Comments

Participants provided verbal comments to project staff and written comments through notes on their comment forms. The common themes from the meeting are summarized below, followed by a full transcript of the comments received.

Highlights

- Many participants felt that the comprehensive plan update represents an opportunity to provide clear direction on the work plan for each of Edina's boards and commission; however, participants don't use the old (2008) comprehensive plan often.
- There is a clear desire for the comprehensive plan to include actionable guidance to help the boards and commissions implement Edina's vision. Words like *specific*, *quantifiable*, and *implementable* were used to describe desired outcomes of the comprehensive plan update.
- There is a sense that Edina's Comprehensive Plan should go beyond the basic requirements. There is a desire for topics like health, art, and sustainability to be incorporated throughout the plan.
- There are definite areas of overlap between all of the various boards and commissions. Some commissions are better at inter-commission coordination than others, but there is a clear desire for more opportunities for this type of communication. Suggestions include regular staff level updates on commission agendas, regular (perhaps quarterly) "all commission" workshops, and regular appointed liaisons with other commissions.



Verbal comments

- Participants asked questions on the purpose of a comprehensive plan and asked how it is evaluated. It was suggested that the comprehensive plan should be quantifiable.
- Members of the Planning Commission expressed frustration with how Southdale has developed to this point and hoped they could improve on the direction of development with the Southdale Small Area plan.
- A member of the Planning Commission considered the 7700 France Development a failure and was caused by the developer being able to out-muscle the commission due to a weak comprehensive plan from 2008.
- Members of the Human Rights Commission acknowledged that Edina commissions tend to work in silos. They came up with an idea to have each person on their commission assigned as liaison to one other commission and attend that commission's meeting monthly.
- The Human Rights Commission does not currently have a chapter of their own and felt like they should. As it stood, they felt like an afterthought in the comprehensive planning process. Human rights and life-long learning should be included in the comprehensive plan update.
- One member of the Community Health Commission expressed issues with data and wanted more specificity in their work as well as in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Members of the Transportation Commission felt that new technologies such as autonomous cars, congestion, and integration of their plan were three of the most important issues that they will be faced with in the coming years.
- One participant was surprised that there was no resilience chapter in the plan update.
- One participant felt the old comprehensive plan is missing alternative business models for implementing the plans.

Written comments

Participants were given a worksheet where they were asked to take notes on the projects and priorities of their commission before sharing in a small group discussion. A reporter for each board and commission was chosen to share the top three highlights of their small group discussion with the larger group. Commissions were also asked to share any areas where their board or commission may overlap with other boards and commissions that were identified during the discussion. Finally, all participants were given a space where they could write down any other comments they wanted to share with the project team. Worksheets were collected at the end of the meeting and the written comments received are listed below.

Projects and Priorities (Small Group Discussion – Comment Forms)

Issues Overlap

- Transportation overlaps with many areas: where people live and work, transportation infrastructure near water and environment, health-air quality, and recreational opportunities, etc. Transportation heavily overlaps with Planning, Parks, and Arts and Culture.
- Energy & Human Rights overlap on desires for a bus circulator and passenger rail.
- Transportation overlaps with Energy and Environment when trying to get people to reduce their car use, Parks when encouraging residents to walk/bike to parks, Planning for infrastructure for biking and walking, neighborhood transport in redevelopment, and parking.
- Temporary Family Health Care Dwellings (TFHD) overlap with Planning, Health, Promotion (Parks & Rec), Transportation (Isolation, mental-social well-being), and access to healthy food.
- Living Streets policies overlap with Transportation, Health, and Energy and Environment.

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- The development of green space and recreation areas such as Braemar and Fred Richards overlaps with all commissions.

Reliance on Comp Plan

- This is the first I've heard of the Comp Plan. It is very hard to find on the City's website.
- My commission hasn't referred much to 2008 Comp Plan and that they rely more on Living Streets.
- The 2008 plan is seen as something the developers own.
- I use it all the time.
- We as the planning commission do not use the comp plan as often as we should. We rely heavily upon city staff to frame the relevant items in the comp plan but each commissioner should be individually more accountable to knowing its contents.

Top of Wish List

- I want a better/faster/bigger bike and pedestrian network.
- I want data and to see what measurable success looks like regarding usage of other modes of transport.
- I think car traffic dampening could be better used on major arteries and less in neighborhoods. I would also like to see much better bikeways that are safe for all levels of bikers.
- I would like to see Comprehensive Wellness and Data incorporated into the Comp Plan.
- I would like to see GIS and an Environmental review trigger.
- I would like to see GIS, outreach education, and a built basis from workplan.
- I would like to see a new art center, and public art integrated as a solution to connecting nodes, promoting healthy lifestyles, parks, 1% development, economic viability, resilience, and equity and human rights.
- I want to see guidelines on how to preserve the best of our housing stock, neighborhoods, and on how to get different, affordable housing stock—not just apartment buildings and ever-increasing single family homes.
- I want the Comp Plan to incorporate all the various commissions' plans and needs.
- I want the Comp Plan to feature prioritization and budget guidelines.

Desired Outcome

- I hope the Comp Plan has a vision for future of city and a basis for workplans going forward.
- I want it to be specific and quantifiable
- I want a more city owned document.
- I hope it is a rational and clearly-expressed plan, applicable, and that the ties between the Comp Plan and commissions is clear.
- I want to see environmental sustainability incorporated into everything.
- I want the Comp Plan to have integrated functions.
- It needs to be useable.
- I want it to have clear guidance to new developers.
- I want our Comp Plan to have approval from the Met Council and to help make Edina a great city to live in illegible 21st century.
- I want it to have firm guidance on park & rec needs and budget equipment.

Most Important

- I serve on the transportation commission. We advise on the multimodal changes that Edina aspires to make to roads, trails, etc. I think Edina citizens are excited by light rail but may not connect to it. We originally were started to deal with congestion. We think it will significantly worsen the way we are increasing density. We need to work

with border communities to connect our citizens to light rail and regional bicycle trails. WE also want to lead on recommending how MSP communities are transformed by autonomous cars. We rarely use the 2008 comp plan, but city transportation planners do.

- I want to see passenger rail in Edina
- Art is essential to a community. We need collaboration, communication, and accessibility and to understand what is at stake.
- The Comp Plan is an important tool for building our annual work plan. We need it for landmark zoning and integration with land use planning. It should focus on GIS, visioning, and use benchmarks to measure accomplishments. It should also identify historic resources, and aim to preserve, protect, and encourage proper stewardship of these resources.
- The Comp Plan should identify, document, and preserve the resources we have. The best form of sustainability is preservation; look at the National Parks' Preservation "Tool Kit", Landmark Zoning, and College of the Atlantic (COA).
- It should consider how we deal with climate change and what our sustainable principles are, how do we hold ourselves accountable, and how we implement a specific budget. I also want to see the comp plan talk about the HR Job description, the circular economy, water and energy re-use, environmental justice; our section connection; and work plans and how it links to the work plans.
- The Comp Plan should have a foundational vision for Edina with a flexible means of achieving goals.
- The Comp Plan should be connected, cohesive, timeless, and authentic.
- It should have specificity with timelines and quantifiable "targets."
- It should be strategic and forward looking.

Other

- Mitigation banks are a mechanism for creating incentives for providing environmental services.
- At France Ave & Xerxes Ave, Edina was really let down by the county. The two streets are our front door and the county went out of their way to let them stay unattractive – and we let them!
- The trammel crow sketch review could really have used guidance.
- Dan C said, "So that the values of the community come through in the plan." With that in mind, what are the values of the community?
- What have other similar cities done with/for Arts & Culture?
- Use "circular economy" as a model for using things and then recovering and regenerating them. Have environmental considerations, resilience, and sustainability cross all aspects of community planning and growth. Make sure human rights and relations are consistent with city goals and getting the right people that are concerned about things involved at the right time. Make communications and outreach a priority. Avoid the church preaching to the choir.
- Staff as well as the boards and commissions are in a natural position to cross-fertilize. Be strategic and incorporate diversity into the Plan. A sub-committee could be used to work with developers before going to Planning Commission. Commissions could have a one day retreat. Are city council members present at this meeting?
- My preferences are for the Comp Plan to incorporate small area plans, smart multimodal transit networks, connectivity (especially to parks), and lifetime learning.

Discussion Highlight (Large Group Read Out)

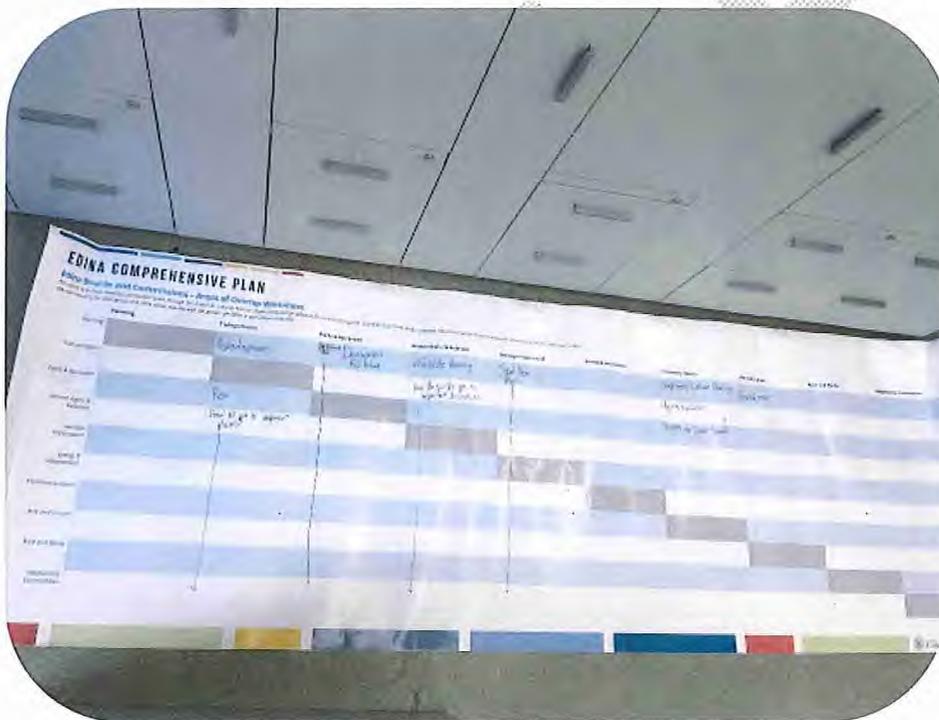


Top 3 Highlights

- The Comp Plan needs an executive summary for each chapter with clear goals or initiatives for the 10-year period. It should include chapter summaries that come out of other commission/small area plans. Congestion on Edina roads lead to growing and creating less healthy, less multimodal transport.
- We need integration with other commissions. We are concerned with the future of the Edina Arts Center (it's thriving, can't even meet current demand). We want to professionalize and formalize assistance to other commissions and see partnerships with local arts organizations, big and small.
- We want to see health incorporated into all policies. integration and collaboration between commissions
- The executive summary should highlight major initiatives and link to the first chapter overview. The plan should address new technologies in transportation, density, congestion, multimodal transportation and transportation integration with other cities,
- We are concerned about quality art experiences: In museum or in arts facilities and on the streets, as part of everyday life, creating a sense of place, pride, connecting us to one another. Public Art beyond sculpture!
- We want to see integration of arts and culture into all parts of the comp plan. The comp plan should be meaningful and powerful for creating vibrancy and health and should foster a sense of place and pride. The process should engage with development projects in a more disciplined formalized approach. In the center of Edina itself, demand outstrips supply. The comp planning process ideal time to consider location and connectivity.
- We want to see sustainability, resiliency, and the environment in everything. (these are three different things); future business models should consider paying for/recovering costs of incorporating these things. Sustainability builds the case for many things other boards want. Sustainable businesses and cities are thriving and growing faster than ever. Consider the lifecycle of things and the circular economy where there is a connection between resources and environmental areas.

Areas of Overlap between Boards and Commissions

- Each commission plan begins with a quantitative/qualitative bullet list of goals (or executive summary). Commissions should plan regular meetings on topics where they overlap.
- There is overlap with Health and the Community Health board (City Council), Planning (TFHD), Transportation (an aging of population, isolation, mental/social well-being, and access to services and resources), and parks and recreation (equitable access to programs and greenspace).
- Transportation overlaps with planning when considering redevelopment, parks and recreation when moving for recreation, and everyone else when considering how to get to important places.
- Parks and recreation see overlap with everyone when considering the integration of green space and the development of places such as Fred Richards and Braemar into the community.
- Human rights and relations see an overlap with all commissions including planning when thinking about affordable housing and with transportation when considering how people get to important places.
- Heritage preservation sees an overlap with everyone when considering the small area plans.
- Arts and culture sees an overlap with everyone when integrating arts and culture into the community considering development and with development.



Other Comments to Share with the Project Team

- It would make sense to identify the primary values which help provide guidance to the commissions with big picture direction.
- Art is essential, it's not a "we'll add some on at the end." Art builds community, bridges differences.
- Consider the integration of senior housing with day care facilities.
- I would like to see a separate guidebook companion to the comp plan for each commission.