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MEMORANDUM

TO: Troy City Council
Mark Miller, City Manager

FROM: Richard Carlisle, FAICP
Ben Carlisle, AICP

DATE: February 22, 2021

SUBJECT: Master Plan Process Update

It has been a pleasure working with the City of Troy for almost 20 years and we appreciate the opportunity to update the Master Plan that we assisted in drafting over 10 years ago.

FOCUS ITEMS

Over our time working with you, the City has faced two recessions and a global pandemic, but also has seen tremendous growth and achievements that continues even today. As noted by Director Savidant, we agree that generally speaking, the Master Plan continues to be relevant in 2020. It was forward thinking at the time and many of the issues that were focused on are still applicable in 2020. While we have a great base to work with, there are some revisions that are timely to address upcoming issues that the City may face:

1. Format and Layout – The 2008 Plan was the first comprehensive Master Plan update in 40 years. In order to give it a more modern and fresher look, we propose to update 2008 Master Plan layout and format, including updated graphics and images.
2. Public Input – Incorporate a robust community engagement strategy. Strategy can include both traditional and technological methods. Public input could be thematic such as : (1) Housing; (2) Seniors; (3) Neighborhoods, specifically transition/points of friction between frontage properties and neighborhoods; and (4) Diversity.
3. Demographics and Data – Update demographics and data including incorporating 2020 census data.
4. COVID-19 – Update the Master Plan to reflect planning issues and changes in a post-pandemic world.
5. Neighborhood Node Sub Area Plan – Comprehensively review each 21 nodes addressing issues of land use, buffer, and transition. The process could include individual community engagement for each node.

6. Land Use – Based on community input and nodes, update the future land use plan. Future land use plan may include new land use categories.
7. Introduction - Strengthen the Introduction section to discuss relationship between Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. This chapter could serve as a Planning and Zoning primer.
8. Implementation – The 2008 update did not include a detailed implementation chapter or strategy. Update Plan to incorporate a detailed implementation strategy including actions, responsible party, and priority.

Please note that these focus items will evolve as more information, including Census Data, is received and further public discussion occurs.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – STRATEGY

Due to the Executive Orders issued by the Governor of Michigan in order to lessen the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, in-person community engagement events and planned interactions are limited. We had previously adjusted the engagement strategy to allow for a mix of virtual or on-line platforms. We are conducting similar engagement strategies for the cities of Berkley and Northville, and Scio Township. The engagement strategy can be nimble and adapt as necessary.

With regards to community input and ability to meet again in person, we've learned a lot since we last met in October. While virtual and online engagement can be valuable, it should not be exclusive of robust in person via small groups, workshops, and targeted outreach. We advise the Council to act prudently to allow for more in-person engagement. While we are still not out of the woods with regards to ongoing Covid-19 issues, it appears that due to vaccine, reductions in caseloads, and warmer weather, we may be able to do in-person (outdoors at first) engagement starting this summer and perhaps robust in person engagement this fall and winter.

Furthermore, the Census data release was recently announced to be further delayed. Pre-pandemic the apportionment data was to be delivered by December 31, 2020. Due to Covid-19 issues, the Census Bureau announced the timeline for releasing the data by April 30, 2021. However, there may be delays to the expected April 2021 release.

For these reasons, the Council may wish for us to continue to work on limited online engagement, gathering as much data as possible in the near term, but target a more robust community engagement strategy in the summer and fall.

Near-Term Engagement

That being said, we recommend the following near-term engagement strategies:

1. Project Kick-Off with City Council. We are working with the City Administration to establish a date for a Project Kick-Off with the City Council. The kick-off would include a

background on purpose of the Master Plan, Council's role, and a deeper dive into focus items.

2. Project Kick-Off with Planning Commission. Based on discussion and direction from the City Council, we would present to the Planning Commission for their input in order to build consensus.

The input from City Council and the Planning Commission will be used to build the community survey and seek further community input. Based on collection of community survey and further community input, the Council will have a future chance to review and respond.

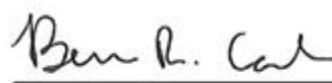
3. Master Plan 101. A community primer on what is a Master Plan, relationship to Zoning Ordinance, and identified focus items. The format (video, webinar, presentation) of the Master Plan 101 is yet to be determined but will allow for public input. The Master Plan 101 primer will assist the community in taking the community survey.
4. Community Survey Launch. An on-line community survey, with paper copies available upon request. Postcards could be mailed out to all Troy addresses.
5. Reformat Layout. Reformat and revise layout.
6. Summer Walking Tours. Small group social distanced walking tours of Nodes and Corridor to discuss issues.

Thank you again for the opportunity.

Sincerely,



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Richard K. Carlisle, AICP
President



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