

# WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



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## STAFF

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## SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

**Staff Report: Civic Assembly Update.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to provide an update to Council and the community on the Civic Assembly process and current and next steps.

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## GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. What questions do Councilmembers have regarding the Civic Assembly process?

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## BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

One of the identified 2024-2026 Council priorities is to develop a Hughes Site Master Plan by engaging in an inclusive process to determine desired future uses on the site. In addition, another priority is to make government more accessible, approachable and fun by providing opportunities to connect with local government and community in meaningful ways. Therefore, staff recommended the utilization of a civic assembly process as one engagement tool in developing the site plan.

As part of a ballot measure, the City acquired this 164 acre parcel in 2021. After an initial outreach effort conducted by staff and a consultant, Council in August 2024 supported piloting a Civic Assembly process in partnership with Healthy Democracy, a non-profit organization that works with local governments to design and coordinate civic assemblies through a lottery selected resident panel.

Staff has been working with Healthy Democracy and other partners in the design, promotion, and implementation of a process that will occur in April and May 2025. Upcoming work includes:

### **Awareness and Promotion**

- A communications plan has been developed that includes standard outreach (newsletters, social media, etc.); a video introduction to the process by the Mayor; creation of a short explainer video; and a presence at the State of City.
- Two OurCity sites have been created: one specific to the civic assembly process and an update to the existing Hughes property page outlining the civic assembly process and how to engage.

## **Information Gathering**

- Prior to the assembly meetings, this process works to ensure that there has been thorough and unbiased information gathering. An initial information gathering effort is done through Community Guide work. The Colorado State University's Center for Public deliberation (CPD) has developed a facilitation guide to be used by Guides selected through an application process. These Guides are paid for the conservations they facilitate and are utilized to reach interested groups who may not otherwise have an opportunity to present to the assembly or awareness that this process is occurring.
- Information from the Guides, as well as previously created materials or reports will be provided to an Information Committee made up of four Board and Commission members (one each from Natural Resources, Land Conservation and Stewardship, Parks and Recreation, and Youth Advisory boards), four Community Guides and four at large community members who will tasked with reviewing and finalizing an information packet that will be provided to the assembly. This information will also be publicly available on Our City page.

## **Recruitment and Selection**

- Postcard invites to participate in the assembly will be mailed to 8000-8500 randomly selected addresses in February.
- Residents that opt in to the selection process will be asked to complete demographic information. The key criteria for a representative panel will be:
  - Age
  - Geographic location (even split between Council Districts)
  - Educational attainment
  - Housing status
  - Income
  - Other languages spoken at home
  - Interaction with government
- A randomized panel selection event will occur in March.

## **Assembly Logistics**

- Once a panel has been selected, Healthy Democracy will run an intensive deliberation process that will be held in 222 LaPorte Avenue over two weekends, one in April and one in May.
- Ultimately the panel will make a recommendation which staff will then bring to Council (likely in June.)

## **NEXT STEPS**

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Community Guides will conclude their work by early March and the process for information gathering will begin in parallel.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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1. Presentation