

TO: Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

CC: Scott Dunlop, AICP, Assistant Director of Development Services

FROM: Chance Sparks, AICP, CNU-A, Freese and Nichols

SUBJECT: Survey Results and Future Steps for Engagement

DATE: 8/6/2021

PROJECT: Comprehensive Plan and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

With this memo you will find a summary of the online survey results for the first survey. The survey was completed by 279 individuals, which is in-line with what we expect for a study area the size of Manor, taking place during the summer and with limited precedent for community participation (no previous comprehensive plan, in this case).

The goal of the survey was three-fold: to provide a baseline of information to begin developing a vision and guiding principles, to identify topical areas to focus on and in what ways during future engagement, and to identify practical equity gaps in virtual engagement given descriptions of social media use.

Prior to the meeting, we ask that you review the feedback received via the survey. We will be discussing three overarching items in addition to the survey results themselves:

- Drafting Potential Vision Statements
- Guiding Principles
- Next Steps in Engagement

Vision and Guiding Principles

The survey results in particular point towards a desire for significant transformation in Manor, and this seems consistent with what was heard in the first Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee meeting and earlier City Council meetings. This presents a great opportunity, but one that is not without challenges. We believe one of the greatest challenges in Manor will be prioritization—put simply, where do you start? This does not need to be solved at this meeting, but we want you to start thinking in this framework when we enter topical discussions.

The vision statement will be a more in-depth discussion during our meeting.

We believe we have seen five guiding principles emerge from the prior CPAC meeting, these survey results and some preliminary conversations with likely stakeholder groups, described generally below:

- **Embedded Equity** – This is the idea that fairness & equity should be a prevailing thought in EVERY aspect of this plan, fully interwoven, and impacting all other guiding principles. It is not a single subject; it is a part of every subject. The plan should advocate and ensure fairness and

equity in providing for the housing, services, health, safety and livelihood needs of all people and groups.

- **Healthy Community** – Ensure public health needs are recognized and addressed through provisions for healthy foods, physical activity, access to recreation, health care, environmental justice and safe neighborhoods.
- **Connected Community** – Create a community where residents can walk short distances from home to destination for daily needs. The City should be walkable and designed with walkers, cyclists, and vehicles in mind. People should be connected to opportunity, whether that be economic, educational, or social well-being. The community should also be connected technologically through broadband and other infrastructure like fiber to provide residents with the internet they need to work from home and access education. Lastly the City should be connected to the region via multiple modes of transportation whether its highways, Metrorail, or trails.
- **Resilient, Transformative Economy** – The economy should be diversified, with greater opportunities for the people of Manor to achieve financial stability and enhanced quality of life through local access to jobs and educational opportunity. Manor should seek to support businesses already here, start-ups and local entrepreneurs and new businesses seeking a skilled workforce that allows Manor’s residents to work here in addition to living here. This should be especially attentive towards groups that may have historically lacked access to capital and opportunity.
- **Livable Places for All** – The building environment should work together to provide sustainable places for living, working and recreation, creating an enviable quality of life on which to base identity, sense of place and environmental stewardship. Opportunities like downtown revitalization and transit-oriented development fit into this conversation, but so do efforts to stabilize neighborhoods and encourage reinvestment without displacement.

Next Steps in Engagement

To increase the probability of equitable outcomes, equitable engagement must guide the planning process. Increased awareness and enhanced engagement practices are prerequisites for equitable engagement. This involves a coordinated strategy and strong partnership with advocacy organizations, institutions, and community groups. Inclusive engagement strategies require:

- **Monitoring Participation:** Identify who’s missing and seek them out.
- **Adjusting:** Remain dynamic with resources and methods.
- **Creativity:** Tailor materials and methods so that they resonate and are relevant to the diverse people we need to serve.

As we discussed, this survey is the first of MANY engagement efforts, and that its results would shape engagement going forward. We are likewise remaining mindful of the emerging threat of COVID variants. This survey represents maybe ten percent of the engagement effort, and helps to establish targets and gaps.

Manor has a highly diverse population. While we experienced success, some cohorts emerged as gaps to address. During the meeting, we will discuss various approaches to reaching these cohorts. As we have

said, we seek to avoid “engagement theater” and achieve meaningful engagement. This requires us to *plan with humility* – to recognize we do not have all the answers and make no assumptions.

Three gaps have emerged in the outreach that warrant special consideration. While all three are shaped in some degree by the inclusion of the Manor ETJ rather than just the city limits, we believe the gaps need further discussion and recommendations for outreach. We likewise believe future engagement during the school year, partnering with the school district to reach audiences, will enhance all outreach.

- Hispanic, Latino and Spanish origin – we believe this may be specifically a gap in those families that speak a language other than English primarily at home. While the survey included a Spanish alternative, our experience and those of most planning efforts show survey approaches may not be the best way to reach people with these characteristics. Often, there is a need to rely on in-person engagement via stakeholder/focus groups and trusted community leaders. Likewise, it is not uncommon for people to register no response to race and ethnicity questions. Roughly 83 percent of unique stakeholders answered this question.
- Black and African American participation – We suspect this may be a result of selecting multiple responses as well as those choosing not to respond. Roughly 83 percent of unique stakeholders answered this question.
- Participation by Those Renting Homes – This is heavily influenced by the inclusion of the ETJ, but it does not explain away the gap. Oftentimes this is the result of people that recently moved to a community, and thus are not “plugged-in” to local government and community activities. Manor has few large multifamily complexes, meaning rental properties tend to be distributed in smaller buildings and homes. School-based outreach tends to be especially effective in these circumstances.

One of our positive observations from survey responses is that, despite these gaps, there is clear awareness of equity consideration. This is most pronounced in free-response comments regarding access to jobs, parks, libraries and healthy food. We do, however, note some issues that may be emerging in Manor due to regional pressures, such as housing affordability/accessibility.

With gaps identified, we have begun contacting groups for possible stakeholder/focus group interviews. Some groups we have contacted include:

- Austin Area Urban League
- One Voice Central Texas
- Interfaith Action of Central Texas
- Keep Austin Affordable
- Area churches
 - We have already had positive conversations with Father Henry Cuellar, Jr. at St. Joseph Catholic Church
- Al Noor Muslim Community Center
- Black Leaders Collective
- GO! Austin/iVAMOS! Austin (GAVA)

We will also be discussing your relationships as CPAC members, and relationships of other leaders like City Council as appropriate avenues for outreach. As important, we will be looking to you for suggestions on creative approaches to resonate with the diverse people we need to serve.