

## **Appendix F: Notes from Community Visioning Workshop**

# City of Lake Forest Park October 4 Public Workshop Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement



## Introduction

On October 4, 2014, the City of Lake Forest Park hosted a community workshop to share results of the visioning outreach that had occurred over the summer and to invite feedback on preliminary vision concepts that came from the outreach and to develop preliminary vision statements.

The workshop was held at Lake Forest Park Elementary School and ran from 9:00 to noon. About 26 people attended the workshop. City representatives included:

- Steve Bennett, Planning Director
- Ande Flower, Associate Planner
- Richard Saunders, Planning Commission
- Connie Holloway, Planning Commission
- Jean Maixner, Planning Commission
- Donna Hawkey, Economic Development Commission

Deborah Munkberg and Marcie Wagoner, from the consulting firm of Studio 3MW, served as facilitators for the workshop.

The event was conducted in three parts; (1) open house; (2) presentation and audience poll; and (3) small group visioning. Each of these is summarized below.

## Open House

An informal open house was conducted from 9:00 to 9:30 am. Display materials and handouts described the Comprehensive Plan, the visioning events that were conducted from June through September and the major findings of those events. City representatives were available to talk informally with community members. Display materials may be found at the City's comprehensive plan update website: [www.LakeForestPark2035.com](http://www.LakeForestPark2035.com).

## Presentation and Vision Priorities

Following the open house, Deborah Munkberg and Marcia Wagoner gave a short presentation describing the comprehensive plan update process, the visioning process and major findings. The statistically significant telephone survey that was conducted in August was also summarized. Following the presentation, additional feedback on possible vision priorities was taken through an audience polling exercise. Presentation materials, including the polling results may be found at the City's comprehensive plan update website: [www.LakeForestPark2035.com](http://www.LakeForestPark2035.com).



Audience polling

## Small Group Visioning

Participants broke into three small groups to discuss and prioritize vision concepts. Each group was asked to identify the top three to five vision concepts that should be included in a vision statement and report back their top priorities to the full group. Findings from each small group report are provided below.



Small group discussions

### GROUP 1

#### Priority Vision Concepts:

- Focused economic opportunities that allow us to develop our tax base while maintaining the environment and neighborhood character.
- A safe place to live, work and play with multi-modal transportation plans that support all ages and family structures.
- Diversity of shops, liveliness and a youth-focus for town center improvements (wi-fi, better shops and less vacancy).
- School safety enhanced by less traffic and safe walking routes to and from school.
- Food safety and security.

#### Additional discussion notes:

- Natural/Green
- Present condition = opportunities (traffic impediments such as traffic circles, growth pressure, increased congestion, worries about light rail, traffic thru residential increased)
- Traffic is a problem
- Core utilities need improvement
- Tech Hub possibility as a business opportunity
- Walkable communities with less or no hard surfaces
- Safer school zones (Brookside)

- Multimodal forms of transportation that support multi generations/business opportunities/environment
- Walk • bike • transit are integrated (the 1<sup>st</sup> and last mile to transit are key for connections between modes)
- Heart+soul – Town Center revitalized community hub (restaurants, transportation hub, P&R)
- Business and services to support citizens who live here – groceries, etc.
- Rural residential character preserved
- Municipal fiscal policy responsibility to enable good services are possible to deliver
- Green space – trees/acquisition by city? (Old reservoir site – about 6 acres in 40<sup>th</sup>/45<sup>th</sup> area)
- Mutual & beneficial solutions between economic sustainability and environmental sustainability to allow for a tax base that supports our environmental priority
- Density a touchy issue therefore need to set the stage for growth
- Tax base vs. rural character (Are pockets, South Gateway enough? Focused areas along state highways? Important to protect residential areas)
- Ideas – bioswale + hardscape as a solution, strengthen intermodal connections
- “Lake Forest Park for Green Space”
- Food systems + food safety/security plans in place
- LFP as a food self sufficient community (similar to Whidbey Island)
- Shared workspace at Town Center? (Gigabit City -Verizon has laid infrastructure now=Frontier, Shoreline Community College space and home business also as an incubator)

## **GROUP 2**

### Priority Vision Concepts

- Ability of community (locally and regionally) to connect physically and socially including access to public transit and footpaths.
- Preserve, Restore and Protect Natural Environment (tree canopy, watershed, wildlife, lake access, open spaces, habitats).
- Maintain and enhance parks – both passive and active.
- Encourage and improve attractive, appealing, vibrant Town Center, gateways and commercial properties, thereby improving revenue sources for the city.

### Additional discussion notes:

- Ability of community within and around LFP to connect both socially and physically

- Maintain unique tree canopy and natural environment leaving green green and protecting wildlife habitats
- Increase access to public transit
- For Lake Washington – maintain water quality & improve stormwater management
- More access to Lake Washington
- Forest – maintain tree canopy
- Maintain and enhance current parks
- Add active parks – new 5.5 acres near 40<sup>th</sup>
- Preserve and develop current land ( including right of ways)
- Attractive, appealing and vibrant Gateways, Town Center (not a strip mall) and commercial properties (design guidelines & architectural review)
- Improve Town Center as destination and revenue source for the city
- Sidewalks and paths for safety walking – connect to school system

### **GROUP 3**

#### Priority Vision Concepts

- LFP uses its zoning authority to enhance economic viability by encouraging commercial development that increases its tax base without diminishing its residential or environmental character.
- The city has and maintains user and environmentally friendly pedestrian paths on all major streets connecting all residential areas to the community center, transit stops and schools.
- LFP communicates with its residents on a frequent basis through multiple venues and keeps residents informed about issues and initiatives the city is undertaking.

#### Additional discussion notes:

- Environmental character
- Communication
- Economic sustainability
- All the major streets in the city have pedestrian paths connecting residential areas to Town Center, transit stops and schools (user friendly)
- LFP is a community that has made every effort to use its zoning authority to enhance economic viability by encouraging development that supports community character and enhances environmental sustainability
- Walkability/Economic Sustainability
  - Maximize potential of Town Center

- Allow more commercial uses on Ballinger Way with character of LFP
- Connections with residential areas (walkable)
- Safety on Ballinger Way for pedestrians

Following the group presentations, the full group discussed similarities and differences between the different vision concepts. Key points and observations from this discussion include the following:

- Some common themes that appear among the groups included a preference for walking paths over sidewalks and an emphasis on balance economic growth and environmental preservation.
- Historically, much of the environmental preservation that has been achieved in Lake Forest Park was based on volunteer effort. There is a continued need to maintain work that has been done and to continue to preserve, protect and restore the natural environment. This is an important role for the City in the future. The City should look for innovative, forward looking solutions.
- The Comprehensive Plan should look for opportunities for mutual benefit and set the stage for innovative solutions, rather than preserving the old conflicts and dichotomies. Consider an integrated approach to how the document is put together so that issues are addressed in an integrated and positive manner. We need to look for synergies as we move forward.
- City needs state help to insist that communities take responsibility for their own problems, such as stormwater. This is not an issue that Lake Forest Park can solve on its own; we need to work in collaboration with our neighbors to solve problems.
- Other environmental issues that haven't been discussed are the acoustical environment and air quality. Both are big issues that extend beyond Lake Forest Park. We need regional solutions to the degraded environment.
- Some see taxes as the dues that we have to pay to have a residential community and are okay with paying more taxes to meet the goals of the City. Others note that some may not be able to live in this community if taxes go up. A consequence of increased taxes may be that Lake Forest Park becomes less diverse and inclusive and that current residents have to leave. There was discussion of the need for thoughtful development of a tax structure that promotes financial sustainability while still remaining affordable to residents.

### **Next Steps**

Based on the concepts developed at this workshop and from the entire visioning process, the consultant team will develop a preliminary draft vision statement for public and City review and revision. The goal of the preliminary draft is to reflect the priorities identified by the community throughout the visioning process. The preliminary draft will initially go to the Planning Commission for review. Input on the preliminary draft is invited directly to the Planning Commission and through the website at [www.LakeForestPark2035.com](http://www.LakeForestPark2035.com).

## Written Comment

Prior to adjournment, workshop participants at the workshop were invited to provide written comments. Five written comments were received and are included below.

1. A reminder! The informal discussion of the presentations tracked on the important observation that Lake Forest Park must reach out regionally to surrounding jurisdictions for cooperative efforts to solve mutual problems, especially water issues, and very importantly, to the state for legislative support on developing mandatory water policies and enforcement. Thank you.
2. To increase taxes without doing economic development will not solve the problem of keeping the city going. Home business development is a good idea.
3. I have concerns about our police department and their actions. Almost daily I observe police vehicles parked in no parking zones by City Hall. This gives me the sense they think they are above law. These early actions often are precursors to larger issues. I would hate for Lake Forest Park to have abuse of force issues like Seattle is facing. When confronted by a police officer over my documenting this, he was very aggressive and intimidating.
4. Keep commercial and multifamily housing concentrated to major traffic corridors. Maintain and protect current residential neighborhoods. Convert Towne Center to mixed use live/work/play community. Low high-rise condo development. Rooftop facilities for community activities – playground, etc.
5. I arrived late in the process, but one thing I felt was missing from the comments was self-determination for neighborhoods in Lake Forest Park. I think it is vitally important that when important issues are considered that affect a specific neighborhood (such as rezoning), that people of those neighborhoods are included in the conversation and the city reaches out to them. There are many neighborhoods in Lake Forest Park that have community organizations, such as Brookside and 182<sup>nd</sup> Street. The city needs to work with them when considering changes to the character of their neighborhoods.

In our Brookside neighborhood, this consideration was missing during the process of proposal to rezone our neighborhood for mixed use many years ago, and more recently when the city proposed a Park n Ride in front of residential houses.