

**Missoula City/County Elected Officials Policy Meeting
Planning and Grants Services Interlocal Agreement
February 28, 2007
10:00 a.m. – noon
Council Chambers, 140 W Pine**

Present: John Engen, Ed Childers, Jack Reidy, Dick Haines, Jon Wilkins, Jerry Ballas, Stacy Rye, Heidi Kendall, Jean Curtiss, Barbara Evans, Don Nicholson, John Hendrickson, Bob Jaffe, Dave Strohmaier, Bruce Bender, Ann Mary Dussault, Ginny Merriam, Pat O'Herren, Denise Alexander, Anne Hughes, Roger Millar, Mike Barton, Amber Blake, Keila Szpaller, and Bobbi Day.

1. Introductions and Public Comments

2. [OPG Director's Report](#) *(Click on this link to view the presentation)*

Roger Millar began by explaining his experience in urban areas, mountain towns and his other qualifications. He spoke about the reasons why he was in Missoula and then provided an overview of OPG's organization. Some of the office accomplishments in the last six months (by division) included:

- ◆ Crime Victim Advocate Program (CVA)
 - Increase in clients served and the amount of service provided to those clients
 - Increase in number of volunteers, *pro bono* attorneys, and intern hours.
 - Increased training and hosted a conference
 - Created a web-based grant system that saved staff hours
- ◆ Human Services – held first Project Homeless Connect event in the State
- ◆ Youth Program
 - Awarded a second Mentoring Children of Prisoners grant
 - Administering Poor Fund dollars to 14 local not-for-profits
- ◆ Brownfields activities include:
 - The former Champion Millsite
 - Former White Pine & Sash site
 - The Revolving Loan Fund
 - Bitter Root Economic Development District (BREDD)
- ◆ Historic Preservation projects including 'Then and Now' re-photographing Missoula and the nomination of the Missoula Downtown Historic District for the National Register.
- ◆ CDBG and HOME grants helped on projects such as the Silvercrest Apartments, Missoula Art Museum and Clark Fork Commons.
- ◆ Urban Initiatives completed the first phase of the City Subdivision Regulation amendments and began the second phase process. Other projects include:
 - City Zoning Ordinance rewrite
 - Northside/Westside Plan Update
 - Ward boundary revisions
- ◆ GIS/Cartography/Mapping continue to assist with legal ads and mailings, updating map data, creating presentation maps for staff, and reapportionment scenarios.
- ◆ Transportation has been busy with public outreach and education, responding to citizen inquiries, and updating the transportation website weekly. In addition to this work, they have also:
 - Managed the Impact Fee Advisory Committee and Working Group
 - Managed the West Broadway Charrette

- Began the Long Range Transportation Plan Update process
 - Completed the Franklin to the Fort Infrastructure Plan
 - Updated the Unified Planning Work Program
 - Support several committees and workshops
- ◆ Missoula in Motion activities and events include:
 - Way To Go! Club membership increased by 500 members; with over 4,000,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions saved. Milestone rewards offered to members.
 - Employer partner events with over 80 employer partners
 - Best Practice Awards were given to two businesses and one business received a Continued Excellence award
 - EZ Pass and MDA EZ Pass program increased
 - Monthly raffles and monthly advertisements
 - High School/Youth Outreach Program utilizing a Vista Volunteer
- ◆ Current Planning (Projects) assisted with the City and County subdivision regulation amendments and are in the process of implanting them.
 - Monthly meetings have been held with projects staff and Fire Chiefs for consistent subdivision review for fire issues.
 - Third quarter subdivision activity exceeds the total projects reviewed in the first half of this year. Anticipated subdivision review will be 88 in FY2007 compared to 63 in FY2006.
 - Project staff numbers are the same as last year but their experience level is lower due to staffing changes.
- ◆ Current Planning (Permits) have issued over 1500 permits since July 1, 2006. Permits average 260 per month. Mr. Millar has received only two phone calls regarding permits since arriving at OPG one month ago which means most permits are apparently processed without issues or problems.
- ◆ Support Services continue to support ten boards and committees averaging 32 hours of meeting time per month. In addition, support staff handles public notices, updating the web, provide administrative support and personnel support, financial management, and records management.

Mr. Millar reported on the work that OPG would accomplish in the next six months.

- ✓ More outreach to Board of County Commissioners and City Council
- ✓ Agency outreach such as attorneys, Health Department, Public Works, and Rural Initiatives.
- ✓ Permit streamlining by participating in the City LEAN study and having dialogue with the County Public Works.
- ✓ Streamlining the subdivision process at Element and Sufficiency review

Mr. Millar talked about policy direction and observations he made while working around various western communities. He noted six basic changes that have occurred worldwide:

1. Technology advances
2. Economy
3. Transportation
4. Social mores
5. Values
6. Quality of urban life

3. Workshop on Jointly Funded Priority Issues for FY08

Mr. Millar reminded members of the three priorities for OPG they set in April 2006. Those priorities were:

- ✓ Consolidating and simplifying the City and County zoning designations
- ✓ Expanding bus coverage and look at impacts of growth on the transportation system
- ✓ Review and improve the permitting system to improve customer permitting.

Mr. Millar wanted members to spend the remainder of the meeting considering if these priorities were still their top three choices and brainstorm ideas on how to accomplish these goals. The floor was opened up for questions.

1. Is new growth good for the economy, especially in western towns? Some western communities managed growth by driving people out into other areas. Missoula can learn from other communities; their successes and failures. The wheel does not have to be reinvented.
2. In reviewing the priority list, what progress has been made?
 - ✓ OPG updated the City and County Subdivision regulations in response to State Legislation. Staff are about to start the rewrite of the City Zoning Ordinance. The City's code writing process would be a good opportunity for City and County to work together in the urban area.
 - ✓ There is an opportunity this year for the City and County to work together on the Long Range Transportation Plan Update. Unfortunately there is more need than there is money available.
 - ✓ Staff is in the midst of making improvements and streamlining the permitting system. Mr. Millar felt that this was not a significant work plan item since it was already in process.
3. What is the scope of the City Zoning rewrite? This may not be as easy as was originally hoped. Mr. Millar talked about his experience in Tempe when he worked as a consultant. The rewrite process took three years. By asking a consultant to make a list of what worked and what did not work in the current zoning ordinance, we would receive responses related to process and to policy. "You can not open up Pandora's Box part-way." The consultant will provide a list and ask what the City wanted to do. He felt that the City needed to do a substantive rewrite of the ordinance; it could be done but it would take longer. Most of the issues on the Plat, Annexation and Zoning (PAZ) list could be addressed in this process. This could be wrapped into a broader effort but if PAZ thought some items needed to move toward resolution faster this could be accommodated.

Members discussed Mr. Millar's suggestion of doing a rewrite and brought up the following ideas, concerns, and questions.

- A rewrite would be the same scope for the consultant but bigger and more costly, possibly between \$250,000 and \$300,000 to do the whole thing in the next two or three fiscal years.
- Previous attempts were stopped by lack of political will. One of the problems with these attempts was that the rewrite was done and then presented to the public without significant public participation. In this instance, the public feels like something was being done to them. Find out what the problem is and then craft the solution using the consultant's expertise to bring ideas forward.
- There needs to be a sense of how to do business in the urbanizing area of the County. The City and County could manage with either two different ordinances for the urban area or an identical one.
- Define the urbanized area that the City and County would be working together on so there would be a boundary for the jointly adopted regulations and where they would apply. There is the Urban Growth Area identified but there is a gap between the City limits and the Urban Growth Area boundary where planning effort is needed.
- Would it be possible to have a consolidated zoning document that addressed City issues, addressed City and County areas, and addressed County areas? This would be a good place for the BCC and City Council to work together.
- If this process takes three years to get a simplified document, how do we keep from wearing out volunteers? Most stakeholders have volunteered a good part of their lives and have already spent time involved in public process.
- Who would direct and oversee the consultant and did OPG have the talent? Mr. Millar stated that there was incredible talent at OPG that was ready to get going on this project. There were also the best consultants in the business applying to do the job.
- Getting buy in from the public was important.
- Council needed to send a message to future Councils that it was important to get this rewrite done.

City Council was willing to move forward with the zoning issues and recognized that the City and County needed to work together in the urbanized area. Further discussions need to happen between the City and County about the urban growth area.

Councilman Childers requested Mr. Millar make a referral to PAZ for expanding the focus of the zoning ordinance rewrite before selecting a consultant.

Members discussed the priority of expanding bus coverage and made the following points:

- Bus coverage for transportation was too narrow and should be expanded to include all modes.
- The biggest problem with traffic was not within Missoula but with traffic coming from outside Missoula into the City. The problems of growth were regional, not just local.
- There was not much money available to the state to fix problems so Missoula needed to either create a revenue stream inside (our money) or look at the problems differently by taking land use and putting it into the mix of solutions.
- The City should deal with transportation issues within its boundaries and the County should deal with issues outside.
- People need choices/options for either living in town or having available transportation into town. Look at the relationship between 'here and there' as well as how to move people between here and there.
- Too much money was put into planning transportation leaving very little to implement those plans.
- Amend the priority for bus coverage to identify traffic as a major problem.
- Include ideas to refocus or reframe the Transportation Plan Update. Figure out a way to bring back neighborhood stores. Open up the question 'Are there alternative solutions to these problems?'
- If affordable housing was available, the public would not have to travel into Missoula. Getting people off the roads would make it possible for others to use it. Are there ways to invest dollars that would be just as effective to reduce demand?

Commissioner Curtiss made a motion to remove 'Streamline permitting' from the priority list and add 'Affordable housing.' Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Councilman Ballas made a friendly amendment to change it to 'Focus on future housing needs (for everyone)'. Commissioner Curtiss accepted the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

Bruce Bender was asked to provide information on the LEAN process.

- The LEAN process was being applied nationally, mostly in hospitals.
- A consultant has volunteered her time to look at Missoula's process.
- University interns were working with city staff reviewing their process.
- This was a tool to help evaluate what the City was doing and provided an opportunity to question why we were doing processes a certain way.

Commissioner Curtiss thanked Mr. Millar for facilitating the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbi Day

Support Services Administrator
Office of Planning and Grants