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Community Involvement

Public participation is an essential component in successful planning, community building and decision-making. Citizens (residents, businesses people and property owners) need and deserve ongoing communication about and the ability to influence projects and issues that affect their community and their lives. The Town embraces this concept in all planning efforts, realizing that a genuine community involvement process is the key to the future success of the Master Plan.

Because the Town of Parker is a regional center, with many area residents living outside its boundaries but directly impacted by it as a source of employment, shopping, and services, or as the location of a personally-owned business, the decision was made by the Parker Town Council to open the community involvement process to all area residents who were interested in the Master Plan.

Our intent through our outreach processes is to effectively combine area residents' "lived experience" with the technical planning expertise of the Town in order to address the many complex issues contained in the Master Plan. Although not everyone who participated may have gotten exactly his or her first choice, this Plan reflects the overall goals, sentiment and desires of those in our community who helped to craft it. With ongoing help and direction from Parker area citizens, this Plan will continue to strengthen the Town of Parker as a great place to live, work and play while maintaining our identity and hometown feel.

This Plan is an update of the Parker 2025 Master Plan approved in 2005. It is important to acknowledge the values that our citizens shared through the community outreach process in 2005, as well as the values that our citizens shared in 2012.



"Tell me, I forget.

Show me, I remember.

Involve me, I understand."

– Chinese Proverb

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION GOALS

The Town places significant value on our citizens input. The Master Plan public involvement processes were designed to accomplish two goals:

- To engage a large number of community residents in Master Plan decisions by making it convenient and by providing multiple avenues for them to communicate their priorities and hopes for the future; and
- To use the community's response in development of the Master Plan.



2005 CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

The 'Parker 2025: Changes and Choices' process was designed to be cumulative. Each phase provided a foundation for the next phase with increased specificity with each step. The four phases of the citizen involvement process were as follows:

Phase One:

Describing the Ideal Parker and Identifying the Big Issues

Phase Two:

Topic-Specific Workshops

Phase Three:

Reviewing Topic-Specific Visions, Goals and Strategies

Phase Four:

Reviewing a Draft Master Plan and Community Celebration



2005 PHASE ONE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Phase One established the initial perceptions and beliefs people hold about Parker and helped define the issues of concern that needed to be included in the Master Plan. The purpose of Phase One was to seek area residents' hopes for their community's future and to identify the issues of importance to them. In order to solicit the opinions and beliefs of as many Parker area residents as possible and to make it easy and convenient for them to participate, Phase One featured multiple methods for response. The intent was to gather initial beliefs, opinions and attitudes in as many ways as possible to provide the Town with a comprehensive picture of how its residents view the Town's future.

Phase One of the 'Parker 2025: Changes and Choices' process included the methods described below.

- **Personal Interviews**
- **Written Survey**
- **Meetings-in-a-Box** These meetings were self-directed, citizen-based participation opportunities allowing Parker area residents and businesses to host meetings in their own homes or other familiar settings.
- **Telephone Survey**



2005 PHASE TWO COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Phase Two of the process was carried out through a series of seven topic-specific public workshops. The purposes of the workshops were to provide community residents with factual information regarding each topic and to solicit their guidance regarding both short and long-term directions the community should take regarding that topic.

Topics for the workshops, as outlined below, were chosen by Town staff and consultants after a thorough review of the results of Phase One.

Workshop 1: Defining ‘Small Town Feel’

Workshop 2: Managed Growth

Workshop 3: Transportation

Workshop 4: Community ‘Things to Do’

Workshop 5: Housing

Workshop 6: Jobs and Economic Development

Workshop 7: Land Use: Laying out the Town

The format for each workshop was the same. Town staff and consultants first provided a short presentation including factual information, results from Phase One of the community outreach process and feedback from previous workshops specific to the topic under consideration. Workshop participants then worked together in small groups to reach consensus on specific questions posed to them about the topic. Each workshop concluded with a report-out of the work of the small groups.



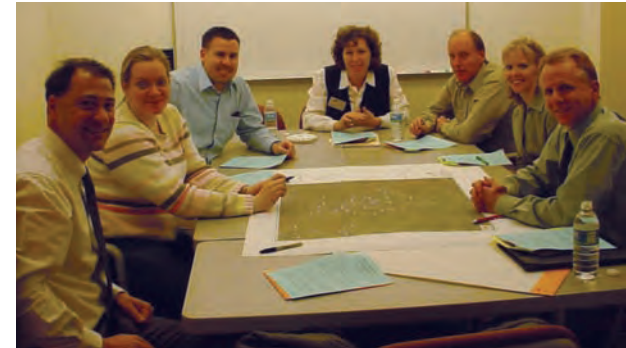
2005 PHASE THREE COMMUNITY GOAL AND STRATEGY WORKSHOPS

Phase Three of the community outreach process provided residents the opportunity to review and suggest improvements to the draft visions, goals and strategies. These Plan elements were developed by the Town, based on Phase One and Phase Two community outreach results, factual data and professional planning principles. The draft visions, goals, and strategies were mailed to every household and then presented to the community through a series of three workshops, as outlined below. At each workshop, participants worked in small groups to identify the visions, goals, and strategies they particularly liked and to suggest any improvements they would like to see considered for the final draft documents.

Workshop 1: Land Use; Community Appearance and Design; Transportation

Workshop 2: Housing and Neighborhoods; Jobs and Economic Vitality; Regional Coordination

Workshop 3: Natural Resource Protection; Open Space and Recreation; History, Arts and Culture; Public Services and Facilities



2005 THEMES BY TOPIC

Throughout the outreach process in 2005, several overriding concepts emerged. These concepts were used as the foundation in developing the Parker 2025 Master Plan.

High Standards – Parker residents who participated in the Master Plan update process clearly had strong expectations that their community deserves quality development, quality management of their natural resources and open spaces, and quality implementation of their Master Plan.

Balancing the Pace of Development – Parker residents strongly supported directing and timing growth so that the Town and other governmental entities could continue to provide supporting services and improvements to match their expectations of maintaining our high quality of life, “Balance is vital,” wrote one group of participants.

Open Space – Participants emphasized the importance of designated open space and view corridors to Parker’s quality of life and community identity.

Small Town Character – Parker’s identity as a small town continued to be expressed as a core value for Parker’s future. Residents believed that a significant component of Parker’s character is embodied in its downtown. Downtown is the hub that centers the town’s identity as a small town grounded in western heritage. Residents value its history, scale and essential contribution to our sense of place.

Design and Visual Standards – The look and ‘feel’ of Parker’s built and natural environments was an area of concentration as participants discussed specific Master Plan goals and strategies. In many cases, suggestions for improving proposed strategies focused on strengthening rather than weakening concepts.

Community Venues – As part of the development of the Town’s downtown core and surrounding public spaces, participants in these workshops particularly stressed their support for places dedicated to the arts, learning and community events.

Transportation – Traffic congestion continued to be of concern, with support expressed for interconnectivity to alternative routes around Parker as well as for a local transit service that could also provide access to the regional public transportation system.

A Community for Our Whole Lives – Parker is a place that supports residents of all ages, including families, young people as they grow up here, adults who enjoy the Town’s special culture and older adults as valuable members of our community.

The Town’s vision of Parker as a ‘full service’ community requires a broad range of services and housing opportunities. It’s important to locate the more intensive uses at Parker’s center and along major highway corridors so that our single-family neighborhoods on the periphery retain their family orientation, appearance, and protected open space. When residents are in Parker, they’ve “come home” and treasure our space as distinct from the nearby urban environment.

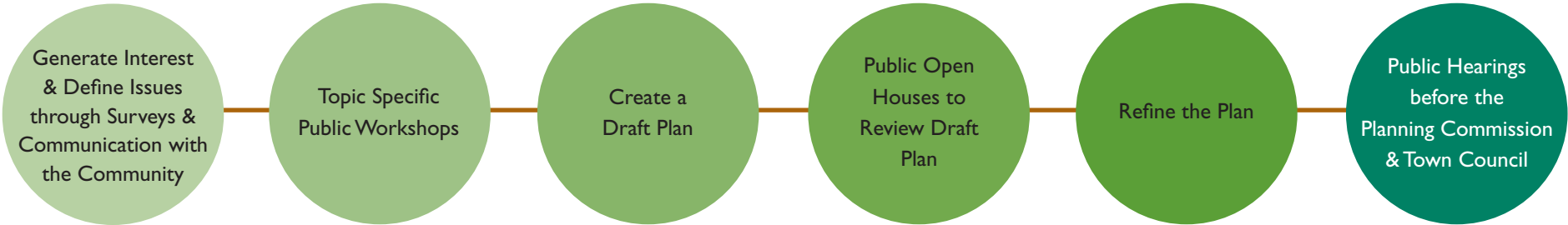
2012 OUTREACH PROCESS

Since 2005, the Town of Parker, along with the nation, has faced a significantly different economic reality. For this reason, the Town sought to revisit the Master Plan and seek resident input on the impacts of these changes and to assure that our community can respond to and plan for the future with the goal of retaining our high quality of life.

2012 PROCESS PROMOTION

In order to involve as many citizens as possible, there was an extensive promotion of the process before and during each outreach phase. Throughout the outreach process, a number of methods were used to reach and encourage area residents and business owners to participate, including Town newsletters, website, postcards and emails, newspaper coverage, letters to area churches, business and homeowners associations, as well as the Town electronic message board sign.

2012 Process



2012 PHASE ONE COMMUNITY SURVEYS

Phase One sought to understand the initial perceptions and beliefs people hold about Parker and helped define the issues of concern that needed to be considered in the Master Plan update. In order to solicit the opinions and beliefs of as many Parker area residents as possible and to make it easy and convenient for them to participate, Phase One featured two methods for response.

Online Survey

In order to offer residents in every household the opportunity to identify issues of importance to the Master Plan and the Town's future, an online survey was advertised in the 'Talk of the Town' monthly newsletter and on the Town website. A total of 58 written surveys were returned.

Telephone Survey

As a way to probe with more depth the attitudes behind the issues and concerns of our citizens, 400 telephone interviews were conducted. The households contacted exemplified a statistically valid representative sample of Parker residents.

Phase One sought to understand the initial perceptions and beliefs people hold about Parker.

2012 PHASE TWO COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Phase Two of the process was carried out through a series of three topic-specific public workshops. The purposes of the workshops were to provide community residents with factual information regarding each topic and to solicit their input regarding both short and long-term directions the community should take regarding that topic.

Topics for the workshops, as outlined below, were chosen by Town staff and consultants after a thorough review of the results of Phase One community surveys.

Workshop 1: Defining ‘Hometown Feel’

Workshop 2: Managed Growth

Workshop 3: Jobs and Economic Vitality

The format for each workshop was the same. Town staff first provided a presentation including factual information and the summarized results from the surveys conducted during Phase One of the community outreach process. Workshop participants then worked together in small groups to reach consensus on specific questions posed to them about each topic. Each workshop concluded with a report-out of the small groups results.

2012 Phase 2 Outreach Workshops



Streetscape and architectural design in keeping with Parker's western heritage is essential to the visual character of Parker.



2012 PHASE THREE COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

Phase Three was the final phase in the community outreach process. 30 Citizens participated in an open house that was held at Town Hall in order to provide an opportunity to review the draft Master Plan prior to the formal public hearing process. The Town was grateful that the citizens took the time to participate in the public outreach effort.





2012 COMMUNITY OUTREACH RESULTS

Parker residents participating in the 2012 outreach process had consistent values with participants in the 2005 process. Both outreach processes supported the following consistent themes:

High Standards

Balancing the Pace of Development

Open Space

Small Town Character

Design and Visual Standards

Community Venues

Transportation

A Community for Our Whole Lives

However, in 2012, Parker residents viewed local issues relating to the current economy very differently.

Jobs

Citizens had a stronger desire to create local quality jobs that pay a living wage. Citizens were particularly supportive of expanding upon our health care industry and seeking new businesses in the high tech and renewable resources industries.

Vacant Commercial Buildings

Participants believed that the Town should focus on incentivizing property owners to fill their vacant buildings.

Redevelopment Opportunities

Citizens were also concerned about the aging areas of our Town. Citizens saw the Parker Road and Cottonwood commercial areas as opportunities for redevelopment to increase their viability and aesthetic appeal.



PUBLIC HEARINGS

The last opportunity for public comment comes during the formal public hearing process. The draft document is forwarded to the Planning Commission for a recommendation and then the draft is taken to the Town Council for final decision and adoption. Both the Planning Commission and Town Council public hearings are open to the public for all to be heard.

