

Missoula City/County Elected Officials Policy Meeting
Planning and Grants Services Interlocal Agreement
April 27, 2011
10:05 a.m. – noon
Council Chambers, 140 W Pine

Present: Ed Childers, Renee Mitchell, Marilyn Marler, Bill Carey, Jean Curtiss, Michelle Landquist, Mayor Engen, Bob Jaffe, Pam Walzer, Jason Wiener, Dave Strohmaier, Stacy Rye, Lyn Hellegaard, Mike Barton, Ann Cundy, Denise Alexander, Mary McCrea, Laval Means, Casey Wilson, Cindy Wulfekuhle, Ginny Merriam, and Bobbi Day

- 1. Introductions and Public Comments** - None
- 2. Approval of January 26, 2011 minutes** – approved as presented.
- 3. Director's Report - Mike Barton**

Mike Barton did not foresee any increases to the OPG budget outside of the pay raises that were still being negotiated. Work plan activities anticipated for the coming year included:

- Finishing the Active Transportation Plan then updating the Long Range Transportation Plan.
- Bringing the County exemption process from the County Attorney's office to OPG. There has been discussion on the city side to do something similar.
- Update the developable lands inventory; make it part of a better GIS effort, make it dynamic and live in order to use technology better.
- Review and analysis of Transportation Demand Management modules (including Missoula in Motion). This has been tasked to the Transportation Division.
- Create a process for electronic submittals for subdivisions.
- Make development codes and the processes more transparent and user friendly. This will most likely be ongoing for the next few years. This could be done through asking a question on the web that would direct the public to the appropriate documents or resources.
- OPG will soon be able to take credit card payments for permits and other project activities.
- Explore getting staff that have LEED credentials to assist on energy conservation projects.
- Develop a ten year plan to address homelessness.
- Create a Family Justice Center which was a relatively new concept around the nation. Staff have been looking at other city models.
- Reconcile the Growth Policy between the city and county. The original intent was to adopt the same document but currently there were some differences. Each jurisdiction has adopted various amendments to the Growth Policy.
- Respond to legislative policies and laws mandated by the current Legislation.

Members made the following comments and asked questions:

1. Explain the effort to make the codes more understandable. Currently there were no resources (on the web) that addressed specific questions. Most users come to the OPG web page to research what they need to do a specific type of project or how to get permits. The top ten questions could be addressed by developing a resource booklet that explained processes. The electronic interaction could be changed so the user did not have to search but could be directed to the information or steps they need to accomplish their goal.
2. What happens when a request was made; did staff encourage or discourage the public on the request? The public ask staff what they need to do to do what they want. One of the

answers might be to change the zoning and then the process would be explained. Staff give options; they might have to explain the issues and provide a history to the governing body. If a resource was available, this information would be included.

3. Graphics or a flowchart could be provided that showed the process.
4. This would be a good plan to help with process information. Currently when someone goes to the OPG web page, they have no idea where to start for a specific project they have in mind.
5. The electronic tools could be used better. This concept attempts to address broad consistency so everyone has the same idea what the code is, how it is applied, and the processes.
6. What credit costs were there and have these been budgeted? There is a fee for the credit card swipe machine and then the credit card companies charge a fee on each charge. This fee could be between 2% and 2.9% that OPG would have to pay. Council should look at the fee structure and possibly increase fees to cover the additional costs.

Mr. Barton addressed some recommendations from the Dennis Taylor report in a [memo he sent to Mayor Engen and Bruce Bender.](#)

- A review team for both the City and the County has been set up to look at projects that may have issues. The review teams meet once or twice a month and has improved agency responses because there was collaboration between the reviewers.
- The development review process should be centralized and strengthened. The person staffing this position would need to be knowledgeable on all department processes.
- Follow-up with Mr. Taylor on these ideas to get his impression.

Was there someone on staff now that was knowledgeable on all aspects or would someone have to be hired? There were several staff in OPG and other offices that could do the job.

Commissioner Curtiss noted that it was unfortunate that a few 'bad' stories were the ones that got told over and over rather than all the good ones.

4. Annual UFDA Update ([presentation](#))

Casey Wilson presented the 2010 census highlights and the UFDA update:

- The census numbers were as of April 2010 with an overall growth increase of 17.1% for the city and 14.1% for the county.
- Urban areas grew more than the rural areas.
- Population was shown by neighborhood council areas in preparation for information to be released by the end of May.
- The numbers on the map showed increases in each area.
- The maps when viewed side by side showed a comparison of how population was growing and how housing units were growing.
- Missoula, compared to the rest of the state, had a higher growth rate.
- The census information is available on the [OPG web page](#) and also on the [census web page](#).

UFDA:

- This was the third annual UFDA update.
- There was a .8% increase in housing units in the last year.
- The Solstice project was the largest with 34 units.
- Every area had at least one building permit.
- Updated data came from Permits Plus.
- There were no new entitled lots in 2010 but a thorough inventory uncovered 690 more entitled lots.
- The 2010 Update to the Residential Allocation map was updated with the newly inventoried 690 entitled lots.

- Zoned lots potential decreased with the 306 new building permits.
- There were 13.5 miles of new sewer lines built that included the Wye and the Rattlesnake sewer project that was recently completed.
- New bike/pedestrian facilities included 2.7 new miles of trail (adjacent to Mullan Road) and 1.9 new bike lanes.
- Continue to see infrastructure projects to accommodate construction.

5. BBER's Housing Report ([Presentation](#))

Mike Barton explained that the reason OPG commissioned the survey was to find out what the residents of Missoula would like to see for development.

- Even with the downfall of the housing market there were only ten unsold units.
- Key findings included those that would be moving, buying or renting. Most people wanted to buy.
- Condominium demand was very low due in part to financing and lack of interest.
- In the next year, 15% were looking to move.
- A higher number were interested in purchasing a single family home.
- There was a significant number who wanted to come back into the city.
- The condo market did not respond to the economy which could be the reason for the lack of interest.
- Most folks wanted to live in a neighborhood they liked rather than have a larger or more affordable home.
- Schools were another key factor in deciding where to live.

Questions and comments:

1. Was the question on moving to gauge moving within the area or outside? The question asked if they were 'most likely to move' and was not intended on finding out where.
2. Where are the survey results? There is a link on the [OPG web page](#).
3. It seemed that there was a tool that could be used (ADUs) that could help with the housing products using existing buildings with accessory buildings. The lack of this tool has not made it easy for development.
4. ADUs may not solve the housing problem.
5. Will the change in the law for Subdivisions for Lease or Rent affect this issue? It could suggest that any additional structure on a lot would trigger subdivision review.
6. Housing stock was available but the price has not met demand. The proximity to the core held its value while those further away lost value.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:36 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbi Day
Recording Secretary
Office of Planning and Grants

(To listen to this meeting in its entirety, [click on this link](#))