

**PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**  
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

**AGENDA TITLE:** Getting Citizens involved in Public Hearings

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning and Development Services

**PRESENTED BY:** Steven Szafran, Planner II

**I. INTRODUCTION**

One of the 2004-2005 goals of the City Council was to encourage more citizen involvement in City government.

**II. BACKGROUND**

In response to this goal, the City of Shoreline Department of Finance held two long range financial planning sessions in October 2004 and March 2005 for the purpose of focusing on the operating budget and asking participants to prioritize the City's programs and services.

The two sessions held in October 2004 were by invitation to community leaders and a randomly selected group of citizens who had completed the Citizen Satisfaction Survey. In March the City held two additional workshops at an open invitation to any residents or business owners that would like to attend.

The purpose of the meetings were to: 1) continue an on-going dialogue with interested community members about the long-term financial health and stability of the City of Shoreline; 2) review and discuss the long-term capital needs of the City and how they can be funded; and 3) learn from the meetings participants about their priorities for funding capital projects in the future.

The outcome of this exercise showed the top priorities of the citizens and the preferred way to fund the top priorities.

In the end, citizens of Shoreline appreciated the efforts of the City to involve them in long-term City decisions.

**III. DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this discussion is to find ways for increased citizen involvement in the Planning Commission processes.

What are the Planning Commissions priorities for increased citizen involvement? Who and how many citizens should be involved in the process?

What mechanisms can the Planning Commission use to include more people in the process? Open houses, TV, web casts, workshops, targeted mailings, question and answers with your Commissioners, and public bus tours are all ways to get information to citizens and business owners of Shoreline.

The American Planning Association suggests a visioning process that places citizen involvement at the beginning of the planning process. Citizens see the visioning process as an approach that results in a more meaningful participation process. A visioning process could be used to bring ideas from the community to the Planning Commissioners about how they would like to see the public hearing process work.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Commission and staff could brainstorm ideas for ways to include more citizens into the land use planning process and the public hearing process.

Some points to consider are: What is the purpose? What are the goals the Commission is trying to achieve? Who are the players? How is the Commission going to achieve those goals?

#### **V. ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Recap of Community Priorities Session on Long-Range Financial Planning



## **Memorandum**

**DATE:** June 17, 2005

**TO:** City Councilmembers

**FROM:** Debbie Tarry, Finance Director

**RE:** Recap of Community Priorities Session on Long-Range Financial Planning – Phase 2

As you may recall we held two long-range financial planning sessions in October 2004 and two sessions in March 2005. These sessions focused on the operating budget and we asked participants to prioritize programs and services into four priority “buckets.” For the workshop in May, we focused on the City’s capital needs and asking for input regarding capital priorities. This memorandum summarizes the May 24, 2005 Community Priority Session.

### **Participant Demographics**

For the May 24, 2005 Community Priority Session, we invited representatives of our community, which included all participants from the previous Community Priority Sessions. Of the 92 participants invited to attend the May 24, 2005, session, 52 attended.

The two sessions held October 2004 were by invitation to community leaders and a randomly selected group of citizens who had completed the Citizen Satisfaction Survey. There were a total of 70 participants who attended the October meetings and the demographics of those participants included:

- 54% were male and 46% were female
- 72% have lived in Shoreline more than 15 years
- 29% were retired, while 33% worked in Shoreline
- Of those participants who worked outside of Shoreline 83% commute 20 or fewer miles to work
- 45% of the participants live west of Aurora and 55% live east of Aurora

In March the City held two additional workshops at an open invitation to any residents or business owners that would like to attend. There were a total of 22 participants in those sessions. The demographics from the March sessions were:

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- 38% were male and 62% were female

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- 59% have lived in Shoreline more than 15 years
- 24% were retired, while 43% worked in Shoreline
- Of those participants who worked outside of Shoreline 100% commute 20 or fewer miles to work
- 67% of the participants lived west of Aurora and 33% lived east of Aurora

When combining both groups 50% of participants lived west of Aurora and 50% lived east of Aurora.

Although staff did not ask demographic questions at the May session, the base of invitees was very balanced on gender and living location within the City. The one area that was not balanced in any of the sessions was that of age distribution. The majority of the participants were 45 years of age or older.

### **Purpose and Agenda of the May Session**

The goals of the May Session were to:

1. Continue an on-going dialogue with interested community members about the long-term financial health and stability of the City of Shoreline.
2. Review and discuss the long-term capital needs of the City and how they can be funded.
3. Learn from the meeting's participants about their priorities for funding capital projects in the future.

In addition to the session goals, staff wanted to follow up on information that had previously been discussed with the session participants during the earlier workshop. This included an update of the City's long-range operating budget forecast and a review of the operating budget program priority results of all the sessions combined.

The bulk of the May session did focus on the capital needs of the City. Since the earlier sessions had focused on the operating budget, this session focused on the capital budget and resources available to fund capital projects. This process included a review of resources available to the City to fund capital needs, the City's adopted Capital Improvement Program and the 20 Year Capital Facilities Element that the Council had adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan update.

### **Session Exercise and Overall Results**

Since the Council had recently adopted the 20 Year Capital Facilities Element that established funding priorities for projects, the May session focused on the unfunded capital needs that were identified in the Capital Facilities Element. Specifically the participants focused on the unfunded needs in these areas:

1. **Open Space Acquisition:** *City acquisition of undeveloped open space such as critical areas, beach access, environmentally sensitive areas including creeks and wetlands, or passive open space.*
2. **Park Facilities:** *Outdoor sites that provide opportunities for active (athletics, hiking, etc.) and passive (picnicking concerts, etc.) recreation.*

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3. **Facility Improvements:** *The major project in this category is to acquire and construct a City maintenance and office facility for storage of heavy equipment for Public Works and Parks Maintenance.*
4. **Recreation Facilities:** *Indoor facilities designed for year round community recreation.*
5. **Sidewalks:** *Concrete sidewalks and asphalt walkways along arterials, near schools and in residential areas.*
6. **Bike Paths/Lanes:** *Off street bike paths and on-street bike lanes.*
7. **Intersection and Street Improvements:** *Improvements to existing streets to increase capacity and safety.*

Participants split into four groups and each group was asked to identify the two capital project categories that they believed were most important for the City to seek additional funding. The results of this exercise resulted in the following four categories being the top priorities:

1. Intersection and Street Improvements
2. Open Space Acquisition
3. Park Facilities
4. Sidewalks

Following this part of the exercise the participants were asked to identify which of the following resources would they be most willing to support to fund projects within these areas of capital. The resources that each group could consider included the following:

1. Property Tax Levy Lid Lift
2. Voter Approved General Obligation Bonds
3. New Tax Sources: i.e., Local Fuel Tax, Increased Utility Tax, Business & Occupation Tax, etc.
4. Local Improvement Districts

The results of this portion of the exercise showed these preferences for funding the priority areas.

<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Property Tax Levy Lid Lift</b>	<b>Voter Approved GO Bonds</b>	<b>New Tax Source</b>	<b>Local Improvement District</b>
Intersection and Street Improvements				
Open Space Acquisition				
Park Facilities				
Sidewalks				

**Summary**

This session provided another opportunity to hear feedback directly from community members. This information should be viewed as another tool to use to evaluate the

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priorities and desires of our community. Staff will be providing this information to the Bond Advisory Committee that will be meeting later in June as another piece of information that they can use as they evaluate a possible bond issue.

To conclude the evening staff asked participants to identify what they thought worked well and what could be improved for future meetings. The following are some of the comments.

### *Worked Well:*

- They appreciated that the City was doing this.
- They found the financial overview of how the City funds its operating and capital programs helpful.
- They liked that they were able to be involved in an exercise that asked them to be responsive based on their individual priorities without being persuaded by lots of group discussion. (see comment under desired improvements)

### *Improve:*

- More group discussion before voting (see comment under what went well)
- Some wanted the ability to write-in other options for funding capital priorities (i.e., eliminating projects currently slated to be funded over the next 20 years)
- More discussion time to summarize reasons for their selections.
- Have more participants that are young and participants that have young or school age children.