

STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning & Economic Development Committee **DATE:** 6/21/16

FROM: Todd Okolichany, AICP, LEED AP ND, Planning & Urban Design Director

PREPARED BY: Stacy Merten, Historic Resources Director

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Update Status Report

Summary

This is a status report from the Department of Planning and Urban Design on the Comprehensive Plan update for the City of Asheville.

Background

The Comprehensive Plan is a tool that the City uses to establish a high-level vision to guide policy decisions over a 10-15 year period. The update to the Comprehensive Plan will provide a visionary framework to help guide Asheville's long term development and provide an essential tool that will be used across the City's many departments.

Update

The Skidmore Owings and Merrill (SOM) Planning Team kicked-off the Comprehensive Planning process with a visit to Asheville on May 16 and 17, 2016. The two-day workshop included introductions and initial data gathering from the City's Technical Team and City Management. Staff also assembled a collection of existing city plans and other pertinent documents for further assessment by the Planning Team. Refinements were made to the project scope, and meeting schedules. The Planning Team concluded their visit with a tour of the City's physical environment, led by city staff.

Additional work underway as part of the Assessment Phase of the project includes the following:

- Chipley Consulting, the lead public engagement consultant, and the City's Community and Public Engagement staff met following the kick-off to outline an overall communication plan for the project.
- Staff coordinated a more in depth consultation with the Office of Sustainability and the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) to discuss the work they will be doing and how that work will be coordinated with the comprehensive planning process.
- Staff helped identify benchmark cities and the appropriate stakeholders for Development Strategies to interview as part of the economic assessment.

Work continues to establish an Advisory Committee which will have representation from the following organizations (in no particular order), plus three at-large members:

- Planning and Zoning Committee;

- African American Heritage Committee;
- City of Asheville Recreation Board;
- Asheville Downtown Commission;
- Historic Resources Commission of Asheville & Buncombe County (HRC);
- Public Art and Cultural Commission (PACC);
- Buncombe County liaison;
- Downtown Commission;
- Sustainability Advisory Committee on Energy and the Environment (SACEE);
- Asheville Multi-modal Transportation Commission;
- Asheville Affordable Housing Advisory Committee;
- Neighborhood Advisory Committee; and,
- Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce/Economic Development Coalition.

The deadline for at large members to submit their application materials was June 8, 2014. Thirteen applications were received. Council will decide who to interview for these positions at their meeting on June 14, and make the final appointments at their meeting on June 28, 2016.

Financial Impact/Resources

The Comprehensive Plan contract was approved with a total budget not to exceed \$264,345.

2036 Council Vision

This Comprehensive Plan update aligns with the 2036 Council Vision in the following area:

- **A Well-Planned and Livable Community.** The Comprehensive Plan update aims to promote community through thoughtful, resident-led planning that will result in strategies related to land use, multimodal transportation, economic development, infrastructure, housing, livability, place-making, open space, streetscapes, climate change, sustainability and resiliency.

Recommendation

Not applicable. The information provided in this report is for information purposes only.