COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The following are the summary minutes from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held on May 9, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room 3138, 700 North Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Sharon Thomas, Planning & Zoning Commission, Chair
Mary Ann Hendrickson, Infrastructure/CIP Policy Review Committee, Vice Chair
Harvey Gordon, Planning & Zoning Commission (Departed Meeting at 5:40 p.m.)
John Moscato, Las Cruces Home Builders Association
James Bennet, Planning & Zoning Commission
Todd Stuve, Health Policy Review Committee
George Vescovo, Economic Development Policy Review Committee
Heather Watenpaugh, NMSU

Members Absent
Roberta Gran, Planning & Zoning Commission
La Vonne Muniz, Planning & Zoning Commission
Abraham Sanchez, Planning & Zoning Commission
Christina Ainsworth, Dona Ana County Community Development
Russ Smith, Planning & Zoning Commission

STAFF PRESENT:
Srijana Basnyat, Community Development
Dominic Loya, Community Development
Larry Nichols, Director Community Development
David Weir, Community Development
Mark Miller, Community Development
Adam Ochoa, Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT:

I. Call to Order (4:00 p.m.)

II. Approval of Minutes

1. April 24, 2019
Motion passed unanimously (9-0).
III. **Elevate Las Cruces Vision Statement and Components - Action**

A presentation was given by Srijana Basnyat on the background work conducted to formulate the proposed Vision Statement and Components and what a Vision Statement should be and the key components to constructing one. She noted that a good vision statement should describe the desired end-state, be clear, succinct, inspiring, have local context, and focus on long term achievement. Each Vision Component was then discussed by the committee with Srijana Basnyat facilitating the discussion.

1 Cultural Crossroads
Comments on this component included questioning the use of identity with the component. The second question is Las Cruces a Cultural Crossroads? Lastly, is this the place for the historical background of Las Cruces and if not where is the proper place for it?

2 Livable Community
The question arose if economic development should be included in this component. The question also came up whether to include economics and environment with quality of life and standard of living. The last concern was whether investment in services amenities and economic development belong in this component.

3 Vibrant Neighborhoods
The committee had no major concerns with this component.

4 Balanced Development
The committee had no major concerns with this component. However, they did note that the term compact was limiting. The question came up what or how much leeway the comprehensive plan has to explore areas outside of the physical and built environment. The comprehensive plan is not limited to physical and built environment as the New Mexico enabling statute does not preclude the inclusion of items outside of land use. Many plans go beyond land use and the built environment.

5 Embraces and Preserves Our Natural Setting
The committee expressed that water needed to be worked into this component as it is a limited resource.

6 Fosters Economic prosperity
Committee comments included competitiveness must be first. Investment opportunity might be addressed here.
George Vescovo gave a quick presentation on Las Cruces’ economic situation. His information was from the Federal Reserve Economic Data. He showed graphs of Las Cruces standard of living versus the National Standard of Living. He showed Las Cruces economic growth vs. U.S. economic growth. He also showed Las Cruces unemployment rate versus the national average and compared to Arizona, Texas, and El Paso. He also included some Forbes rankings on Las Cruces. The last slide was the gross receipts tax rates across the state of New Mexico.

7 Leverages Social Partnerships
The committee looked at changes to take out “at risk” and make more inclusive to all residents
The committee revised each vision component as a group. The discussion and revised language is as follows.

Edit Session:

1 Cultural Cross Roads.
The committee discussed and decided to remove “identity” at the end of multi-faceted community.

2 Livable Community.
The discussion on this component revolved around the differences between jobs and careers. While jobs are needed overall, we need more careers to keep people in Las Cruces. The survey results were discussed and one of the top reasons that people would leave Las Cruces are job opportunities. Also discussed was moving from unskilled labor to skilled labor. The differences between Quality of Life and Standard of Living were also discussed. Ultimately it was decided that the term Quality of Life would remain. Overall the component was felt to be good but the committee decided it needed to have more about the economics. The committee added in “economic environment” to the first sentence and “careers” to the second sentence.

3 Vibrant Neighborhoods.
The committee felt that component reflected the direction Las Cruces wanted to go.

4 Balanced Development.
The discussion focused on the term “compact”. It was mentioned that at the CPAC City Council Joint Work Session with City Council none of the groups chose the Compact Growth Scenario therefore it was felt that “compact” should be removed from the component. The committee replaced “how” with “the way” (our built environment evolves).
5 Preserves our Natural Setting.
The general feeling on this component was that water management was missing in the vision statement and components. This was felt as the best place to put in the water component. The committee also felt that “our view of the iconic Organ Mountains” needed to be included as opposed to “the view of our nearby Organ mountain peaks”. The committee felt the rest of the component reflected Las Cruces.

6 Economic Prosperity.
The committee felt that economic prosperity needed the most attention. There was discussion on creation of jobs, investing in Las Cruces and the direction that Las Cruces should take. It was strongly felt that Las Cruces needs to be competitive on a regional, national and global level. It was also strongly felt that Las Cruces needed to create opportunities for businesses as well as residents. The committee felt that Las Cruces needs to be growing local business while attracting new business. Finally, Las Cruces needs to build a robust economy.

7 Social Partnerships.
The committee felt in that this statement needed a few tweaks. After discussion, the committee added in “workforce development.” They felt that “residents” was a better option to describe Las Crucens.

Vision Statement
The last discussion was on the vision statement. The committee wanted “of choice” removed and they wanted “its cultural diversity” changed to “our cultural diversity.” The committee felt that the three titles of the subcommittees and the organization of the document, Community Livability, Prosperity and Environment, needed to be referenced to in the vision statement. There was a discussion followed by a consensus to connect the vision statement to the rest of the plan document.

Mary Ann Hendrickson made a motion to adopt current Vision Statement and Components (as shown in attachment A) contingent on a connection to the Introduction and Community Profile. George Vescovo seconded. The motion passed unanimously. (8-0)

IV. Public Comment
No public Comment

V. Next Steps
The next CPAC meeting will be May 29th. Elevate Las Cruces will host a Design workshop May 28th through June 1, 2019.
VI. Adjournment (6:03 p.m.)