



Memorandum

To: Lee's Summit 360° Stakeholders
From: Derek Okubo, National Civic League
Re: This Past Meeting, Next Meeting
Date: November 21, 2008

Congratulations on your continued progress! I am excited to see that you selected six strong areas to focus our planning throughout the remainder of this project!

As I have told all of our communities, there are some important things to remember as we move ahead. All of these reminders emerged from past experience with other communities!

1. We are creating one strategic plan not six different ones: Despite working in six different work teams, we are all still Lee's Summit 360°. That means our final plan will be one coordinated plan, not six separate ones. Therefore, we will have meetings where your work team will report out to the entire stakeholder group for input, feedback and consensus. For ideas to be a part of the final plan, we must agree to that ideas purpose and approach.
2. Avoid the temptation of jumping straight to strategies: The outlined tasks were given to you for a reason – to ensure that you developed the best strategies for the unique conditions in Lee's Summit. When the proper steps are not followed, aggravation occurs. Work teams will have to back track and go through the steps and spend a lot of extra time to complete the work within the project timeline. Why not do it right the first time?
3. Conflict and frustration is a natural part of this process: Conflict will happen and will provide you with those defining moments where your group will overcome those differences and build trust in one another. In those situations where differences emerge, recognize those moments as opportunities to develop something really special. Indeed, the most exciting ideas usually come out of such situations. It is crucial to listen and discuss the issue...share your rationale and ask for others' rationale for their points. In the end, you still may not agree, but you may understand why the person feels the way they do...that is a big step.
4. Problem identification vs. Problem solving: The easiest thing to do is to point out problems and all the reasons the situations stink. The hardest thing to do is to think differently about the situation in order to address it. When you get stuck in the problem identification treadmill, ask yourselves about the ideal (what it would look like if the problem were being addressed well) and what you need to do differently to get there. Thriving communities are all about working together with a problem solving mindset and approach.
5. When there is a stalemate: Sometimes, there will be no changing of viewpoints – a simple reality in communities. In situations where this occurs, agree to disagree for the time being and set it aside. If it remains important, revisit it at a later time. Remember that consensus is not unanimity. It is being able to live with a decision enough to support and not block its implementation.
6. Talk to each other rather than about each other: Parking lot discussions, in-between meeting emails and phone calls will occur. Bring important planning decisions back to the whole group to decide. If there are issues with specific group members, take the step to address your issues with those individuals directly rather than only talking about them with others. Focus your energy on solutions and alternatives rather than on blaming.
7. Email: Yet another important learning that emerged in other communities - use email only to share information and bring up ideas for discussion in meetings. Make all final decisions face-to-face.
8. **Yes, you will have to meet in-between stakeholder meetings to complete your planning.**

I am very excited about what is result from your joint efforts. The responsibility for creating and implementing this plan lays with each of you, not just with your KPA chairs or the city staff. You all have something to offer! I have the utmost confidence that we all will focus our talents and energies in creating something special.