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The Role of Community Development Corporations in Comprehensive Planning

Comprehensive Planning

- Comprehensive planning is a process that determines community goals and aspirations in terms of community development. The result is called a comprehensive plan and both expresses and regulates public policies on transportation, utilities, land use, recreation, and housing. Comprehensive plans typically encompass large geographical areas, a broad range of topics, and cover a long-term time horizon. The term comprehensive planning is most often used by urban planners in the United States.

Comprehensive Planning

- From the beginning, community development advocates have pursued the vision of a truly comprehensive strategy, one that would integrate approaches and overcome the barriers between types of services and the government and nongovernment entities that provide them. Now, in the twenty-first century, the vision of broadly collaborative approaches seems more feasible than at any time in the long and rich history of community development.

Community Development Corporations

- A CDC develops real estate for housing and commercial properties which will help meet its community development mission, offers economic development services such as business loans to small businesses in low-income geographies, and/or operates other programs and services which help develop and improve the quality of life of the communities it serves.

Community Development Corporations

- Much of CDC's strength and effectiveness comes from its community-based focus. Community-based CDCs can tailor projects and programs to its community's specific needs and situation.
- A CDC can help a community take a proactive role in its economic, political and social development. It is a vehicle through which the community can provide direct involvement and input into present and future community efforts including comprehensive plans.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Engagement

- Comprehensive plans often express a community's values and preferences.
- To ensure that a comprehensive plan articulates these values, is it essential to engage the community.
- Direct input is needed from the community through public workshops, forums, surveys and hearings.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Engagement

- Most jurisdictions in Texas have a comprehensive plan and must engage the public according to its resources, size, and issues.
- It is essential to build a collaborative environment that actively involves the community in all aspects of the decision-making process in comprehensive planning, including the development, update, and/or revision of the Plan.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Engagement

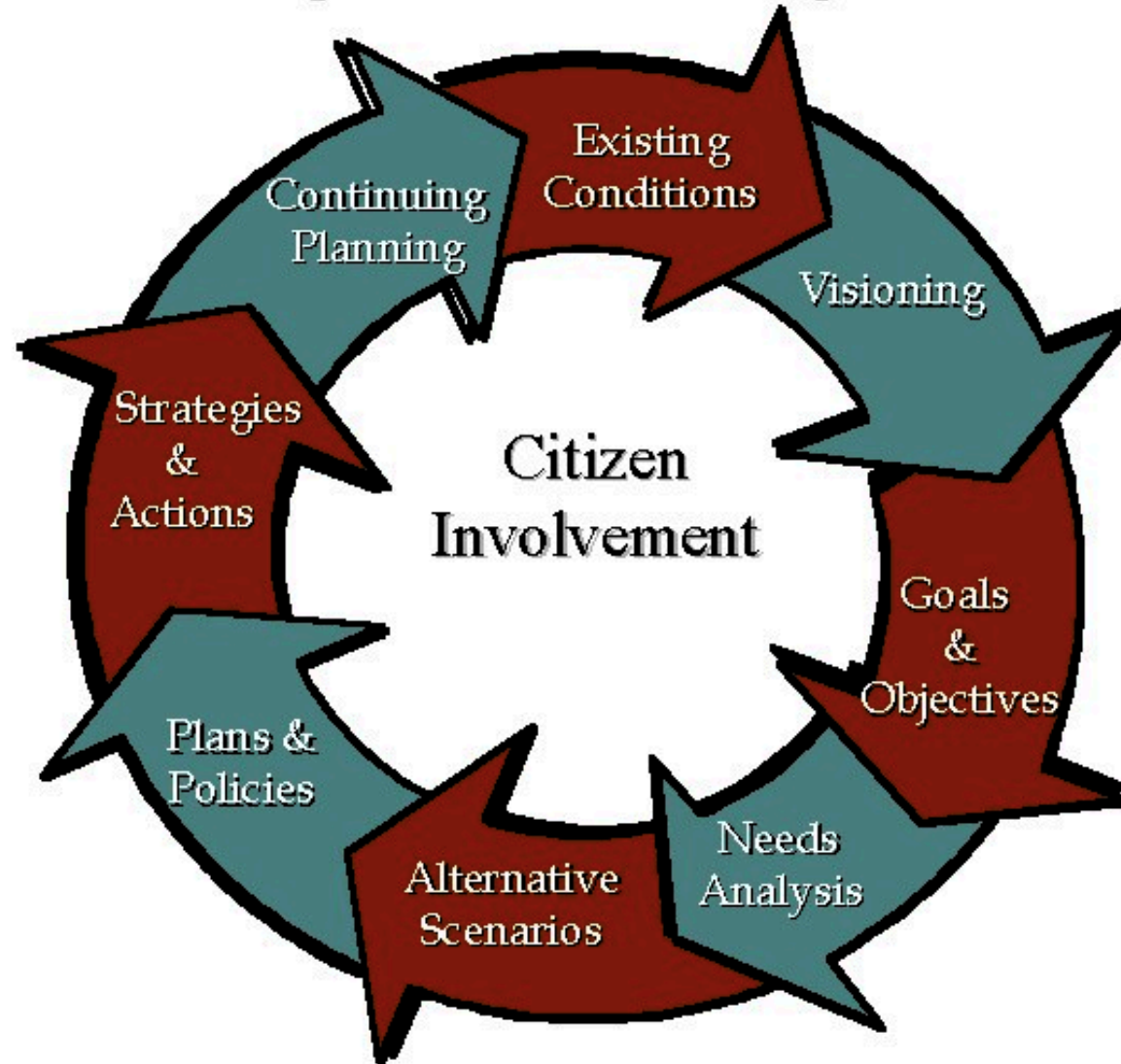
- A sustainable, comprehensive plan is community driven and focused. Stakeholders representing diverse community interests must be involved from the onset in a comprehensive planning process. Their input is vital to the development of a community vision, the establishment of goals and objectives, and the review of the draft plan prior to adoption.

The City of Austin – Imagine Austin

- The City of Austin chose an aggressive participation strategy, establishing community engagement as one of three overarching goals of the process for completing their comprehensive plan.
- A budget of \$1.3 million was allocated to drive public participation

Comprehensive Planning: the Process

The Comprehensive Planning Process



Comprehensive Planning & Community Development Corporations

- The Community Development and Comprehensive Planning Program can work together with communities to develop the guiding plans for growing and strengthening local economies. Community development and planning address the inter-relationships of our communities, and helps to foster inter-municipal collaboration in planning and development initiatives.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Development Corporations

- Community Development Corporations are subject matter experts when it comes to representing diverse community interests
- Being community-based, CDCs are often the boots on the ground; the eyes and ears for communities and they are able to articulate the wants, needs and desires of community residents.
- A possible result of having CDCs serve in the comprehensive planning process is widespread buy-in, possibly funding support for comp plan initiatives and implementation success.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Development Corporations

- Having CDCs involved in the community engagement process of comprehensive planning can lend validation to the data collected regarding zoning, land development, housing development, transit oriented development, etc.
- Because CDCs can serve as a vehicle through which the community can provide direct involvement and input into present and future community efforts, municipal departments may view them as a partner in the comp plan process.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Development Corporations

- CDCs may be able to make planning terms relatable. For instance, using acronyms and lingo that is common in meetings at city hall, may not be understood by neighborhood residents. Therefore having practitioners at community engagement meetings can make terminology more clear and plain.

THE *LONGVIEW*

The City of Longview, Texas

- Longview's comp plan has a chapter on *Neighborhood and Community Livability*. It lists the *Key Elements to Implement* as Life-Cycle Housing, Quality Development, Connectivity, Neighborhood Conveniences, Society, Open Space, Recreational Access, and Neighborhood Signage.
- Remembering the definition of a CDC and the roles they play in community development, most are poised to be able to participate in the implementation of each key element.
- Not only are they poised to do so, they have the expertise to move projects to they completion phase.
- Many of the strategies for implementation include creating a committee to develop objectives to meet the key element goals.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Development Corporations

- The article *The Past, Present, and Future of Community Development in the United States, by Alexander Von Hoffman* – indicates that the community development field has grown immeasurably over the years.
- It states that the industry has become more innovative and creative. And that many CDCs had to recreate themselves, lest they become obsolete.
- It goes on to say financial pipelines such as CDFIs have developed over the years to facilitate community revitalization initiatives.
- CDCs continue to be involved in public-private community development partnerships. Playing very significant roles.

Comprehensive Planning & Community Development Corporations

- CDCs continue to evolve. They must continue to reinvent themselves to remain relevant.
- Many routinely look for opportunities to fill gaps in the development industry that municipalities and the private sector have overlooked.
- Comprehensive planning is one such opportunity. Municipalities often employ consultants, use planners, internal staff and trade associations to help develop Plans. However, there is an often overlooked group that can be the bridge between the community, the public and private sectors.