

**Rochester-Olmsted Planning
Department Strategic Plan
Assessment and
Recommendations**



Prepared for:
Olmsted County

Prepared by:
Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.

August 22, 2016

ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Foreword
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1.0 FOREWORD

Stantec Consulting Services was retained by Olmsted County (the County) to complete an assessment of the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department (ROPD; Planning Department) to inform the preparation of a Strategic Plan for the ROPD. The objective of the Strategic Plan is to guide decision making related to programs, services, skills and staffing needs. It will help the ROPD identify priorities, navigate the phasing of changes and articulate the levels of support and funding needed in the short and long term.

The assessment included review of relevant planning documents and reports, 23 personal interviews with key internal and external stakeholders and customers, and an online survey completed by 17 staff members and 86 other stakeholders. It also included a review of an internal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) exercise and related staff input and discussion.

This assessment was led by John W. Shardlow, FAICP. A summary of his experience and qualifications is included at the end of this report.

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Introduction, Background
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2.0 INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND

The ROPD was created through an agreement in the 1970s. This combined County and City department is unique within the State of Minnesota and while there are some other national examples (Boulder/Boulder County, Colorado) they reflect more differences than similarities to Rochester (the City). This planning department is unique and many aspects of the opportunities and challenges facing the community are unprecedented.

The enhanced level of coordination through the combined Planning Department has historically served the community well. The question that is at the heart of this assessment is “How should it change to meet the demands of a community that is already very different than it was in the 1970s and is projected to grow in ways that bear little resemblance to its past”?

The other major distinguishing characteristic of the City is the presence of the Mayo Clinic (Mayo). Mayo’s emergence as a medical institution of global significance and the campaign to grow the City as a Destination Medical Center (the DMC) presents both exciting opportunities and major challenges.

Rochester’s population, employment and housing projections are well known to the community, but they bear repeating. Over the next 25 years the County’s population is projected to grow by 60,000 people and over 80% of those people will live within the City. The nearly 50,000 new residents will be matched by 50,000 jobs and a high percentage of these new residents will live in one of the 23,000 dwelling units that don’t currently exist.

The urgency of this situation is further emphasized when one considers that within the next five years the County population will increase by nearly 10,000 with the majority residing in the City. In municipal planning five years is the standard time period for capital improvement plans (CIP) and CIPs are considered “current” planning tools. 3,500 new dwelling units are projected and to be accommodated successfully and complement the Downtown Plan and the DMC Vision they will need to be configured in development patterns of much higher density than ever before. Add an expected 15 million visitors to this mix and the need to serve all of it with infrastructure, multi-modal transportation, parking, recreation, affordable housing and more. When one recognizes that to be effective planning is supposed to have happened ahead of these developments then the magnitude of the challenges facing ROPD become clearer.

The sheer volume of planning work to be completed added to the expectation of world class quality, innovation and forward thinking design and infrastructure make it clear that a business as usual approach by the Planning Department will not yield the desired results. The response that is needed by the Planning Department cannot be thought of as an adjustment to business as usual. It demands a different approach with new resources and procedures.



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Personal Interviews, Online Survey
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3.0 PERSONAL INTERVIEWS, ONLINE SURVEY

Stantec completed a total of 23 personal interviews as part of this assessment. Those interviewed included a broad cross section of County and City leaders, neighborhood representatives, Mayo, the DMC, representatives of the development community and civic organizations.

All of the people interviewed were supportive of the need for the Planning Department to conduct this assessment and to think and act strategically to successfully adapt to the many challenges facing the County and City. Everyone was generous with their time and sincerely interested in the issues and offered constructive input.

To broaden the opportunities for input an online survey was prepared and invitations to take the survey were broadly distributed. Organizations like the Rochester Builders Association and the Convention & Visitor's Bureau were encouraged to post links to the survey on their websites. Members of the Planning Department were also encouraged to complete the same survey. A total of 86 stakeholders and 17 staff members completed the online survey.

A sample questionnaire used for the personal interviews and a compilation of all of the responses is included as Appendix A of this report. A graphic summary of the online survey responses follows as Appendix B.

While there is value in reviewing all of this detailed information our purpose was not to conduct an opinion poll. Instead it was intended to provide insight into the Planning Department from the perspectives of numerous individuals who either work closely with it in various capacities, or who could be broadly categorized as customers.

What came through in the personal interviews and was reinforced by the online survey and from internal staff input was a clear consensus regarding several key facts. These will be identified and discussed in the following section.

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Summary of Findings, Key Unmet Needs
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4.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, KEY UNMET NEEDS

This section starts with the most obvious and basic findings and proceed to a more detailed description of issues and unmet needs.

- The County and City have changed substantially since the Planning Department was established through the joint agency agreement in the 1970's.
- The percentage of County growth and development that occurs within the City is projected to continue to increase over the next 20 years.
- The final decision body on Planning Department budget and staffing is the Olmsted County Board.
- The County and City continue to operate under a completely outdated Comprehensive Plan. The process to update and adopt a new Comprehensive Plan has taken longer than expected though opinions vary regarding the reasons for this delay.
- The Land Development Code was written in the 1970s and is also widely recognized as being complicated, outdated, and unsuitable for regulating high density urban developments.
- The nature, rate and magnitude of change (percentage increase) facing the City are without precedent in Minnesota. The style and scale of the projected development demands completely different planning strategies, policies, regulatory tools, procedures, and communication and community engagement capabilities.
- Virtually every person interviewed identified transportation and transit (broadly defined) as the biggest challenges that are facing the City. There are no transportation, transit, multi-modal improvements, or parking solutions that will be effective unless they are completely integrated with supportive land use planning.
- The Planning Department will continue to lose talent, experience and institutional memory as senior members retire. Both retention and recruitment of talent will be challenging for the ROPD as it is for other departments and community organizations in the Rochester.
- There is broad consensus that the ROPD has barely the capacity it needs to keep up with day to day activities. The Department does not have enough capacity to do long range planning, engage with and prepare neighborhoods in advance of development, or simply handle the volume of communication that the City needs in order to understand and accept so much change.

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Summary of Findings, Key Unmet Needs
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- The outdated Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code, the County and City department structure, the interrelated roles with other departments, the interests and priorities of Mayo, the DMC and other key stakeholders combine to create a cumbersome decision making process.
- Because neighborhoods have not been engaged before major developments were proposed the time to process applications and complete the entitlement process has simply taken too long. This has led to dissatisfaction on all sides. This can't continue if the DMC Vision is going to come to fruition.
- The City's downtown will be the focus of a significant percentage of the total growth and development, but it won't all fit downtown and there will always be people who will not choose to live there. This makes the Transit – Supportive Mixed Use Nodes that are being planned outside the downtown so important. Each of these areas will require special area studies and analysis of ways to connect surrounding areas to these nodes to extend the benefits of transit service as broadly as possible. Transit supportive development, TOD, urban design, redevelopment and revitalization have not been high priorities for the City in the past, but they definitely will be in the future. There will also be a continued demand for greenfield development with the opportunity to offer a greater diversity of housing choices and benefit from the many emerging innovations in healthy living, sustainability and energy efficiency.
- The ROPD is not directly charged with the issue of housing affordability, but there is a lot of planning work necessary to accomplish a successful housing program and ensure community acceptance and support.
- The level of organization in City neighborhoods varies and this results in different levels of communication, engagement and advocacy. Even with the most organized neighborhoods there is a need for education and a clarification of roles and responsibilities and consistency regarding the timing of neighborhood involvement. The best and most constructive and mutually beneficial time for neighborhood involvement is in the plan development stage and when design standards are being developed. When this prior involvement has not occurred before actual development projects are proposed the overwhelming majority of neighborhoods will respond negatively.

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Summary and Perspective
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5.0 SUMMARY AND PERSPECTIVE

The items identified above are by no means a comprehensive list of the issues and challenges that confront the Planning Department. There are also many interesting ideas and perspectives that were shared in the interviews that are worthy of consideration.

Every one of the issues identified above merits attention and unfortunately circumstances really don't offer the luxury of a lot of time to address them. The Planning Department is organized in a joint County-City structure while the vast majority of growth and development will occur in the City.

To effectively complete all of its' essential pending planning activities with adequate staff capacity and the best available tools would be a challenge. To expect successful results with inadequate staff resources, an outdated comprehensive plan, land use and zoning regulations is simply unrealistic.

The community leaders and stakeholders interviewed for this assessment had different opinions about the best way to approach many of the issues identified above. They also had different opinions regarding the role that the Planning Department should play and whether they should take the lead or provide support. Candidly, there are more than one ways to approach most of the issues. The time to have those conversations and make decisions is now.

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6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term:

1. Complete and Adopt the Comprehensive Plan

The Community needs the Comprehensive Plan now. We don't fully understand what is delaying the process, but whatever the reasons are, they need to be resolved. If ever there was a Comprehensive Plan that should be designed to be a living document, it is the ROPD Comprehensive Plan.

The Plan should include clear, actionable and measurable goals and policies related to every issue identified above. The Implementation chapter of the document should establish procedures to ensure that the document is reviewed periodically and updated regularly.

Special area studies and neighborhood plans should be designed to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan so they carry the full policy support of the Plan.

2. Prepare and adopt new land use and zoning regulations and amend whatever policies are necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan

This must be a top priority and it is something that often gets delayed. Once the new Comprehensive Plan is adopted everyone from elected officials, through department heads, to partner organizations should understand that all decisions must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. To establish the authority to implement the Comprehensive Plan, the zoning ordinance and other ordinances must be legally adopted. Until they are adopted, the County and the City are in a nebulous place from a regulatory standpoint.

3. Add staff capacity with priority given to the following skills, talent and experience:

A. Current, Day to Day Planning

The volume of applications of all kinds will increase. The ROPD will lose years of experience and institutional memory in the near future through retirements. The Planning Department needs a Succession Plan to take advantage of the time to train new staff while experienced staff is still available to share knowledge and experience.

Unfortunately planners who aspire to processing day to day applications and permit requests are a bit of a rarity. It can seem like a thankless, never-ending exercise. This is also fundamentally reactive work and most planners are naturally predisposed to choosing to be proactive and be involved in a creative process. Nevertheless, this will always be at the core of the ROPD's responsibilities and it is work that requires knowledge, skill and experience.



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It may be beneficial over time to cross-train staff members and rotate people out of day to day planning into special projects from time to time. Enlisting Department staff in the development of this system could boost morale and improve job satisfaction.

B. Communications and City Engagement

Excellent and timely communication skills will be an essential asset to the Planning Department. Change is hard, but major, rapid change is harder. The City needs robust and strategic communication resources.

Several of the people interviewed spoke of the need for the Planning Department to “tell their story”. In some of the areas where respondents gave poor performance marks, people suggested that part of the problem was that they simply didn’t know what the ROPD has done and is doing to respond to past concerns.

Stakeholder engagement is critically important and to be effective it has to be proactive and ongoing. That takes capacity and commitment. The Planning Department has an essential role in engaging neighbors and other stakeholders in advance of actual development projects.

C. Urban Design

While a lot of excellent urban design work has been done in the City, much more remains to be done. Neighborhood plans, special area studies, the development of design standards and the engagement of neighborhoods in this work will all be necessary.

The Planning Department might be able to find and recruit an individual with the urban design talent to conduct the work described above. To really bring this capability to scale and be effective it would almost certainly necessitate hiring a team of professionals with the skills from multiple disciplines.

It may not be feasible to fund the establishment of an Urban Design team within the ROPD in the near future. Instead a better strategy might be to hire skilled project managers with the ability to manage consultants with the expertise and capabilities to accomplish specific projects.

Several of those interviewed did speak of the need for someone within the ROPD with the talent and authority to make urban design decisions and effectively communicate design objectives. This individual would function in a review capacity, but with sufficient credentials and authority to represent the City’s design interests through interaction with private sector developers, architects, urban designers, landscape architects and engineers.

D. Develop and implement systems to finance planning services

There are many excellent examples of fee structures at local governments that “pass through” the costs for planning and review expenses. These fees need to be fair and reasonable and directly related to the



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costs incurred reviewing a specific project or a pro-rata share of a planning study or activity that created the opportunity for a proposed development.

The specifics of this recommendation can take many forms, but the underlying principle is that planning is an investment that creates value. It is fair and reasonable for those benefitting from that created value to pay their fair share of the cost. This can support the costs associated with hiring staff. In the case of special studies and neighborhood plans the City may have to finance the investment, but this investment can be repaid with interest over time. Again, there are numerous examples where this strategy has been successful.

Mid-Term Recommendations:

1. Prepare and adopt neighborhood plans and special area studies.

These should be prioritized to the extent possible in response to the best assumptions about where development projects will be coming next. The neighborhoods and surrounding property owners should be fully engaged in these studies.

Regardless what the zoning district is called the model we recommend is patterned after traditional Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning. The planning study will result in the completion of a Concept Plan and this is the point at which the land will be zoned. The neighborhood and other stakeholders should be fully engaged in this part of the project, including the development of design standards and any other essential conditions of approval.

Once the Concept Plan is approved and the zoning is in place any development that is fully consistent with the Plan and meets all of the design standards and other conditions can be approved administratively. This will have the effect of significantly streamlining the subsequent development review and approval process and it sends clear messages to developers regarding expectations. They are able to incorporate these expectations in to their pro forma as they assess development feasibility.

2. Add staff with long range planning skills and an expertise in sustainability and resilience

There are those who believe that long range planning is a luxury and it is dispensable. In fact it is an investment that will pay for itself many times over. It is essential to protect both public and private investment over time and that happens best when current decisions are made in the framework of a long range view.

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3. Work toward establishing a Planning Department liaison in every neighborhood

The Planning Department liaison will be the identified point person and will attend their neighborhood's meetings. They will establish strong working relationships and be the voice of the ROPD, explaining issues and communicating news and policy. They should become the go to source for information and the first point of contact as issues are raised and concerns are voiced. Depending on the level of activity some staff members may be able to serve as a liaison to more than one neighborhood.

4. Migrate away from the Joint County/City Department Model

Just like the old Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code the joint department structure may have run its course. There are obviously numerous logistical, organizational and cost implications associated with a change like this. It would be distracting and unnecessarily disruptive to make an abrupt change, however an orderly, staged migration could be a reasonable and effective way to make the shift to establishing distinct planning departments at the County and the City. In the near term this situation could be addressed by establishing distinct divisions within the Department, but in the long run we are confident that both the County and the City would be better served by having their own separate planning departments.

This idea was actually expressed by several of the people interviewed. It wasn't grounded in criticism as much as in the simple recognition that the County and City's planning needs are already very different and the gap is growing wider every day. The nature of the planning issues facing the City are also completely different than in the rest of the County and the disparity between the needs of each jurisdiction will only grow as the Destination Medical Center and associated downtown planning investments continue to progress.

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Summary and Conclusion
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7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The City of Rochester is engaged in a transformation of rather daunting proportions. The Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department has a vital role to play in this process. The Planning Department is respected and generally receives good marks for all of the services that it provides. There is, however, virtually unanimous consensus that it currently lacks the skills and capacity to do the work that will be required if Rochester is going to realize the Destination Medical Center Vision.

We appreciate the opportunity to assist the ROPD with this assignment and we are confident that the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report will greatly improve the Planning Department's capacity and effectiveness.

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John Shardlow, Qualifications

This assessment has been led by John W. Shardlow, FAICP. Over the course of his 38 year career he has assisted over 100 cities and counties in the preparation of their comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, design studies, environmental review studies, housing plans, parks and open space plans, economic development plans, community visioning initiatives, downtown revitalization plans, redevelopment projects and more. He has also led several large multi-jurisdictional planning projects, complicated redevelopment projects and transit oriented development corridor studies and station area plans.

He has served city clients as a planning consultant and organized and conducted the review of planning applications and permits of all types. He has streamlined development review and approval processes and developed and implemented procedures to improve the working relationship between local governments and the development community. He is a skilled facilitator and has extensive experience with innovative and effective community engagement and communications.

For private sector clients he has led hundreds of projects of all types and sizes, including all types of land uses in communities large and small. He has extensive experience representing land owners and developers in the entitlement of projects in numerous cities and counties across the Upper Midwest.

He has prepared and taught courses on Community Planning and Zoning, as well as educational programs for lawyers, builders and developers for 35 years. He has served as an expert witness in land use, eminent domain and annexation disputes.

He is a founding member of the Sensible Land Use Coalition. He is also Past Chair of the Urban Land Institute in Minnesota and was involved with the formation of the Regional Council of Mayors (RCM). He remains on the ULI Minnesota Management and Governance committees and Co-Chairs the RCM Healthy & Resilient Communities Committee. He is the Immediate Past Chair of the ULI Sustainable Development Council at the national level.

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Appendix A COMPILATION OF STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

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Rochester-Olmsted Strategic Plan process Update, Interview Questions
City of Rochester, 193803581
June 20, 2016

BACKGROUND

The Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department (ROPD) was created through an agreement in the 1970s and this unique organizational structure has served its purpose well. The arrangement has contributed to efficiencies, cooperation and coordination that would be unachievable through the operation of separate Departments. Since the time of consolidation, community characteristics, urbanization, transportation needs, demographics, the economy, and access to information have changed significantly. More recently, the Destination Medical Center (DMC) initiative introduced a focused economic development effort that includes significant investment and re-development within the City of Rochester (City), and the identity of the City as “America’s City for Health”.

LOOKING FORWARD

Over the next 25 years, Olmsted County’s (County) population is expected to increase by approximately 60,000 people; with nearly 50,000 of that growth within the City. Approximately 50,000 jobs and 23,000 new dwelling units will also be added to the City in this timeframe.

In the next five years alone, we expect:

- The population in the County to increase by nearly 10,000, with the majority of that growth in the City;
- More than 3,500 new dwelling units in the City;
- Considerable investment in commercial/non-residential development;
- Over 15 Million visitors;
- More urbanization, including mixed-use, re-development, infill development, and more downtown and near downtown investment than seen in the City’s past;
- New strategies to manage growth while maintaining a high quality of life – including more housing and transportation choices including transit supportive development, and emergence of a primary transit network;
- New strategies to develop and manage the transportation system to support continued economic growth and success of the DMC initiative;
- Development of a Bioresearch Campus in DMC’s Discovery Square (Downtown Rochester), that will include 2 Million sq. ft. of research space when fully built out;

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- Robust market interest in Rochester, and the DMC and expectation for considerable development and re-development in and near the downtown.

Changes over the next 5-10-20 years are expected to be significant and necessary to ensure the region is positioned for long term economic growth and success; to attract and retain talent, visitors and residents; provide a high quality of life and attractive lifestyle options that appeal to a diverse community; and, to compete with vibrant economic centers and other medical destinations throughout the country and internationally.

The ROPD is engaged in a strategic planning process to explore how to best adapt to, respond to, and support these changes. The process is being supported by a consultant (Stantec) and will include an assessment and recommendations. The assessment will be informed by input from staff members; a series of personal interviews with community leaders and stakeholders; and, an online survey that will be distributed broadly to community stakeholders and partner organizations. There will be a core set of questions asked of everyone, as well as some questions unique to specific stakeholders. The questions and responses by participants are provided below, without reference to individual identities.

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are your thoughts about assessing what the Planning Department needs to be in order to best support this growing regional center?

Responses:

- Our organization does strategic planning ever 2 years. This is an excellent idea!
- Great idea to do this – it is easy to get into a rut and just manage current workload and not be proactive. This is an opportunity to figure out how to get in front of development.
- The department almost needs to be a resource to determine what is possible; needs to be more forward-thinking; identify constraints to thinking creatively about the future.
- There is a clear disconnect between Planning and Public Works. Land use and transportation have to be planned together and yet they approach the issues with two completely different methodologies.
- This needs to be done - all agencies need to reflect on their mission and adapt to changing conditions.
- Customer feedback is always a good idea particularly in the fact that the Planning Department will be less of a regulatory agency and more of a agency managing growth. This can guide the shift to being more proactive shift, refocus.
- Great idea, but what are the specific goals of the assessment? This should be done by all departments.
- Good idea – it provides opportunities for course correction, to match capacity with needs.
- The assessment is absolutely necessary. I couldn't imagine a better time to do this - very wise.
- Absolutely important.
- I don't know, it depends on the Intended outcomes
- I love Mitzi – This is a vital time for the Department to determine what assets they need “there are profound opportunities to miss the mark”.
- The members of our organization are not doing business the same way – this is very worthwhile – they need to shape and adopt new policies and determine how to be a better partner - very important.
- Always a good idea to look for improvements. There was a scuffle with developers a few years ago, not sure where that stands now.

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- Great idea – The Community has been planned to death in the past few years – “All of those recommendations need to be implemented, or what good are they”?.
- Pretty small group of folks who are being involved in a wide variety of issues. – Lines between City, County, ROCOG get blurred. It is a small close working group that appear to be quite collegial group, but they all have very full plates and this is an inefficient way to do business.
- I was here when the departments were combined. They are doing what they should be doing. ROCOG is doing the regional stuff.
- The Department has always seemed to me to be kind of an odd duck. Transportation seems to rest with ROCOG, but there seems to be a bit of a gap between the land use transportation areas.
- Definitely needs to be reassessed especially in light of the projected growth. The joint County/City model still works ok, “but I think a distinct City Planning Department would be better”.
- Consolidated Planning Department has served the City well, “but they have not been funded and staffed adequately to do long range planning”.
- There is a clear need for more capacity. “This is the right thing to do” – they need have more staff to create new standards to handle the projects that are coming and provide meaningful reviews “with teeth”.

2. What does the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department do well?

Responses:

- Very qualified, passionate staff, 110% effort. “They are accessible, responsive and helpful”. “They are an excellent community partner”.
- Many staff with long tenure and valuable institutional memory. This is changing; Some new hires have had shorter tenures. They are trying to incorporate more new technology.
- Great interaction – always accessible – great support to our consultants.
- Assembly of trend data – reporting out availability of data.
- GIS Team implemented a process for integrating information and facilitating more useful info over time. They created a clear process for updating and maintaining info. They seem to keep themselves abreast of broader Planning issues. They understand the big picture.
- Supporting growth; shepherding projects through the process; they have found ways to support different types of development as it occurs. They are creative and very supportive.
- I am confused about what they do and what they are there for. They do a good job of coordination and code explanation.
- They do a good job of trying to deal with County and City related issues which can be difficult to coordinate. They do customer service well.

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- I believe they have great skills – they have been inserted in DMC and the Comprehensive Plan and have been willing partners. They bring valuable institutional knowledge.
- We have had positive experience with the department personnel. They demonstrate a desire to look for new ideas and engage with the community.
- From my involvement (development process) especially in the last 2 years they have been getting people together early in the process. They have been developing an Excel system software web based platform – it takes time for the public and development industry to understand.
- My involvement has been limited to the strategic level, but they seem to be attentive to lower income working class neighborhoods and to be trying to engage in forward thinking. Their lack of capacity hinders their ability to do more, but the awareness is there.
- They are responsive and always willing to meet with our Association and our members. They are accessible and we have a constructive working relationship. They have good people.
- Our Solid Waste Plans and Water Resource Plans utilize a lot of info from the department. They did the Water Plan for us and provided GIS services. They maintain data bases and have integrated data to support the septic ordinance. "They are experts on how to plan".
- They are currently, pretty connected to the pulse of what is going on good and showing leadership. They are around the right tables and are having the right conversations.
- Technical analysis focus, they really get in to the details – they know history and have intimate knowledge of the community. Forward looking group seem to have a real good base line of analysis.
- They do a lot of things. They have had a change in personnel and new people need to get up to speed. Their Planning and zoning work is mostly in the City.
- Their "Complete streets" initiative was impressive. From a policy stand point they seem to be doing a good job of staying on top of issues – policy development.
- Good job managing the current land development manual.
- Good advice on development applications for 40 years. If you assume the population had doubled during this time frame that is a lot of applications.
- I have only met and interacted with 3 people, but they are very sharp and knowledgeable, deep knowledge of existing codes and ordinances; enthusiastic, good at leveraging resources.

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3. What could it be doing better? (Prompted with examples as needed)

Responses:

- There is a strong need for a community engagement person. This would allow the department to build trust and foster communication 2-ways. Handling feedback better can be a win/win and allow them to avoid us vs. them situations.
- There needs to be more community engagement, earlier in the planning process. Many of the codes and standards are outdated. These updates need to happen sooner and be more thorough in order to keep up with the pace of development and magnitude of change.
- Often focus more on regulation than long range vision. This keeps them from getting ahead of the curve. "Some of this is a result of political constraints whether real, or perceived".
- Lack of coordination and consistency – a lot of meandering; disconnects between departments, disconnect between Administration and Planning – with information being not being shared. There is a turf battle between the DMC and City.
- Good system, but it takes a long time to deliver work in a timely manner. There is a definite lack of staff capacity.
- "They need to do a much better job of telling their story". They need to be proactive and consistent in their communication. What is their mission? What is their role? They often seem to be in a position of communicating defensively.
- They sometimes fall short on reflecting on comments from other departments in the process. They may feel their role is to serve as gatekeepers, but there is seldom an explanation about why a recommendation from another department gets dropped. A lack of staff capacity probably explains this lapse.
- Biggest shortfall is follow up on projects that have been approved (are conditions being met?). Long range planning has suffered. The Comprehensive Plan update is long overdue. There should be more frequent, periodic updates.
- They are stuck in how things have been done in the past (in part due to the obsolete land development code). They are not tracking trends and are missing design capacity; not on top of projects coming through the process – "they don't attend neighborhood meetings and are out of the game more than they are in it".
- I am guessing capacity limits their ability to handle everything that is on their plate. DMC is an enormous undertaking. They need to do a better job of advocating for their mission.
- Turnover – key retirements, younger planners didn't stick; Land Development manual is very complicated.
- Assessing more aggressively the abundance of assets they have at their disposal

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- Hesitation in implementing some infrastructure process improvements across the departments – break down silos – part of this problem may be turf protection.
 - On the GIS side they should be viewing it more broadly as a service they could provide to others – not just for their purposes: attitude of seeing their work as helping others. Environmental management Team not getting the attention it needs. Who will replace key retiring staff members?
 - Implementation has been difficult – frustrating – how do we get there? Process for approvals needs improvement; sometimes the public is involved with projects before policy makers and staff members are touching them.
 - Added capacity could speed up some of the analysis. The department and the City (and partners) need to do a better job of differentiating roles and responsibilities.
 - Could be working better with the smaller cities. They are not getting services. This is because the department is spread so thinly.
 - They should negotiate more proactively with developers to achieve desired outcomes. Planning and Public Works do not always see eye to eye. Administration seems to favor Public Works over Planning in Transportation. Not as proactive as they need to be. Struggle with implementation, having the right seat at the table and really being able to communicate and sell. Need more capacity to handle day to day activities.
 - Land development model is outdated. Not ready for redevelopment. More proactive; rather than reactive to the development community; they should be more assertive with the Planning Commission and the politicians – they are the professionals and need to assert the right policies. They need a strong, charismatic leader who will not be intimidated.
 - Lack of resources to be able to do long range planning effectively.
 - More staff that understand urban design would be helpful. This could be handled different ways, either with in-house capacity, or working with the best consultants. A separate entity could be created, or they could bring in assistance.
- 4. I'd like to get a sense for how well the Planning Department performs some of its basic functions. I'll go through a list of different services the Planning Department provides. If you have experience working with the Department in the following areas, please describe how well they performed.**

a. Conduct long-range planning (e.g. comprehensive plan, small area plan)

Responses:

- Impressed with the firm they have engaged for the Comprehensive Plan.
- They are updating the Comprehensive Plan, but it is seriously outdated.

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- Average – need to step it up.
- What they have done is strong, but the Department hasn't done a lot of it. Current Plan is quite old. Not nearly enough small area plans – some led by Public Works – not clear how much involvement Planning had in these. Sometimes ideas seem to get quashed because of the assumption that the Council won't support it. There seems to be a lot of anxiety around what the Council will support.
- This is a strength of the Department– they try to anticipate and forecast.
- The Comprehensive Plan update is long overdue.
- Good to very good – understaffed to accomplish the Plan.
- There could be improvement in this area.
- Poorly until recently – struggling – big effort.
- They do well.
- I have no experience with this.
- A decade ago they were doing a decent job.
- Target date of implementation keeps getting moved.
- They provide us with data. I think they do a good job – I don't have a lot of experience beyond that.
- Good with the ones I have interacted with well thought out – solid projections.
- They do long range planning really well with a good blend of analysis techniques. They seem to have good connections with the community. The Comprehensive planning has taken longer than expected because of the DMZ.
- They do transportation well.
- Long range transportation planning has been good, comprehensive planning is getting better.
- Never seen that in action, from my perspective they are consistently reactive.
- Their work is average in this area. Long range planning needs have not been addressed due to inadequate resources.
- No information about this. I have seen the Sasaki Plan. It was a good plan

b. Coordinate with other City/County departments

Responses:

- Not enough background to judge.

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- Quite well - referral system between agencies.
- Not heard anything negative.
- Not a lot of interaction with them in this area. They have shown good collaboration with Parks, but there are still silos when they work together. They ultimately work together well, but it is inefficient and takes a long time just to get all of the parties together.
- I find this to be a strength. They function as a bridge between the City and County. They respect and manage the balance between the interests of the City and County.
- I give them an 8 out of 10, but there is always room for improvement.
- Very well – They reach out to us; invite us in, but of course it could always be done better.
- Good job.
- Not very well done yet. They still seem to be working in silos. The Department leaders meetings have been restarted and this will help.
- From my experience they do this well.
- Done well.
- I have seen them convene multiple departments.
- Still some silos and turf issues – sometimes the department responds defensively. The Department head seems to be protecting staff.
- Pretty new - no experience of the departments. Communications are open and timely. Rochester Energy Commission could be better.
- Don't know.
- No knowledge.
- Fair - not real good.
- ROCOG relationship is tight. Planning is collaborative, but they don't have the level of influence they should have on infrastructure decisions.
- They work in a silo – All of the departments that work on development are in silos – it isn't all Planning's fault.
- Very well.
- No idea - no exposure.

c. Engage with, and educate, the Community

Responses:

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- They do the best they can do with the staff they have, but could do much better.
- More help in this area – training to neighborhood groups – helping neighborhoods understand role in the planning and development process. There is a lot of confusion.
- Good effort, but structure gets in the way – when they engage they are open and engaged.
- They do fairly well in this area.
- Haven't seen a lot of this in my area, Website does not do as good job as it could in regards to education. They need better resources.
- During the update of the Comprehensive Plan I would give them an very good 8 out of 10. Before that process they were about a 5.
- We all fall short here; on small scale projects they do well, I don't know about large scale projects.
- Decent but could be improved upon.
- They don't do this well generally. They lack of resources or staff members with strong communication or community engagement skill sets. Some of the Comprehensive Plan events were good.
- It has been done well recently but it appears that there is a lack of capacity to do it well on a regular basis.
- Done well.
- I have less exposure in this area. What I have witnessed seemed to have been effectively pursued. They convene constructive conversations with advocacy groups.
- Have reached out on the Master Plan.
- Comprehensive Plan public meetings were good and the Department used various tools. It did seem like the attendees were self-selected and they could do a better job of reaching out to all of the populations, including immigrant's and poorer people.
- Pretty good; need to communicate expectations to neighborhoods and developers It would be good to have a concierge, or ombudsman to guide projects through process.
- Outstanding – good messages.
- They did a fairly good job as part of the Comprehensive Plan. Outside the City they don't do much.
- Good job of bringing in outside expertise for programs, especially those that are transportations focused.
- Pretty good job with this – good at telling you what is needed to process applications.

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- Not sure.
- Just beginning to see that, but not a strong background.

d. Provide timely information to elected officials

Responses:

- Appears to be good based on my experience, they seem well informed
- Do this well.
- No knowledge.
- Do this well – conversations with Council members There does seem to be a tendency to choose to not bring items forward because of assumptions regarding Council responses..
- Outstanding from my perspective – depth of information substantive.
- 9 out of 10 – very responsive.
- For the most part good – may be some lapse – project specific.
- Good job.
- Pretty well – system works.
- Don't know.
- No knowledge.
- No comment.
- Appears to be done well.
- Sense that they do a good job with the County Board.
- Good from my perspective.
- What I have seen – very good.
- A lot of that would be to the City not a lot of info to the County Board.
- On projects, I have been involved with I have been surprised by how hands off they are – when asked they respond well, but not active relationships.
- Do it well given the weapons they have in their arsenal - land development code is outdated. They are too passive not assertive enough.
- Very good job – on time.
- Not a lot of experience, but they seem careful and diligent.

e. Maintain on-going, proactive neighborhood relations

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Responses:

- Well intended, great attitude, but could be done better.
- Can be a struggle.
- Seem to be trying in this area.
- Do this well – lots of neighborhoods just exist on maps – organized neighborhoods engage well.
- Not familiar.
- 6 out of 10 in this area – They don't do a lot of outreach; don't attend neighborhood meetings on developments.
- Fairly good – definitely neighborhood advocates.
- Could be improved, good reactive responses, but could be much better proactive involvement.
- No.
- Not necessarily aware of all of neighborhoods, but they have been accessible to us.
- Do that well.
- No recent exposure – they were 6 years ago – may be understaffed based on my perception.
- Done a great job – sometimes the neighborhood meetings can be a stumbling block – letter could be sent to the neighborhood explaining the purpose of the meeting and roles, responsibilities and ground rules.
- No exposure.
- Could be significantly improved.
- No knowledge.
- I would defer to the City, not at all to the small cities and townships.
- Don't know outside Downtown – Downtown pretty active conversations are being had.
- Lacking big time – there could be much better coordination; Planning staff should attend neighborhood meetings.
- They do a relatively good job, but we have had our difficulties - roles and relationships and timely participation all needs better definition.
- Appear to be doing this, but may not be staffed adequately to manage.

f. Track development activities, land use, economic and social data

Responses:

- From my perspective, they are rock stars – great sources.



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- Long term institutional memory will be lost with retirements.
- No knowledge.
- Seem to do this well.
- NA to me
- 9 out of 10
- No answer.
- Good job.
- Phil Wheeler did a lot when he was here. I don't really know now.
- To my knowledge they do a nice job.
- Do this well.
- Better than average. Phil Wheeler did a great job and he is still active in the community.
- No info.
- Do this quite well, we use it for our planning.
- GIS tools are nice – could do a better job of communication and connecting to existing potential partners.
- Really good job.
- Fairly good job – prior Director did a lot more.
- Analysis capabilities have improved; GIS skill sets are catching up.
- Really well – former Director set up a good system.
- Average – not sure what the demand is – probably lack of resources.
- No awareness.

g. Address emerging issues, proactively

Responses:

- Don't have the staff to do this, they are reactive.
- Need capacity – loss of staff, new staff lacks experience; how to navigate a unique culture difficult zoning ordinances.
- No – this is one of the challenges; some of this could be due to the political process.
- Pretty well – when there is an issue and a need they do it well.

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- I have limited experience. The affordable housing presentation was strong and the topic was viewed holistically.
- Good job of naming the issues only a 5 in regards to responding – ordinance revisions seem to drag on and on.
- They have done a fairly good job given their staff capacity and skill sets. They have been leaders in some issues like the need to identify other transit modes. They may be more liberal than the conservative business community.
- Good at identifying them, but lack the capacity to address them.
- No – they are boxed in – reactive.
- Fairly good job, but could be better if they had more capacity.
- They do this well.
- They are trying. The magnitude of the challenge is beyond their capacity.
- They are sometimes reactive – lack of succession plan for Phil Wheeler. The Department is losing people – how to replace this institutional memory?
- Given the resources they have, they do ok, but lack of capacity and need to focus on day to day needs.
- Pretty good job – there were recent trepidations around the Airbnb and Uber and other aspects of the shared economy have been identified, but there is no direction about how we can deal with these.
- Trying – drawing upon lots of expertise.
- Director is trying. She is new, but she is trying.
- Policy level good, but not implementation.
- Treading water – slow comprehensive planning process; Land development code is outdated – pressure of the DMC.
- Good job.
- Based on our project, they see the need and are trying.

h. Process building permits

Responses:

- No background, builders seem frustrated.
- No knowledge.
- Good experience.



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- No.
- NA
- 9 out of 10
- They are doing a good job. The lapses over time have been resolved.
- Pretty good job – task force works well.
- Made progress; they are creating an electronic system, but it needs improvement.
- Doesn't apply to me.
- No direct knowledge.
- No knowledge – they seem quite cordial.
- Complaints on the time it takes; inconsistent requirements; lack of a customer service mentality.
- No exposure.
- Defer to others but I have heard there are issues.
- No knowledge.
- Defer to City.
- Not aware – sense is that they could be administering the entitlement process more effectively.
- Fairly good job.
- Their role is done well – there have been complaints, but building code and grading permits has been most of the hold up.
- No knowledge.

i. Process site plan reviews and entitlement requests

Responses:

- No background.
- Adequate in a timely manner.
- Good experience.
- No.
- NA
- 8 out of 10– very good job based on the information they are given.
- Generally good – referrals back to other agencies gets slow.

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- Same as above.
- Just implemented the project development group – hopeful.
- Doesn't apply.
- Does that well, but growing pains – new staff need time to acclimate.
- Same.
- Same – number of corrections letters.
- No exposure – water issues Excell communications ok.
- Same – noticed recently that the Planning Commission and the final decision makers Council or Board – roles and responsibilities need to be clarified.
- No knowledge.
- Defer to the City – from what I see they do well.
- Same - Not aware – sense is that they could be using the entitlement process more effectively.
- Outdated tools – decision making is left to politicians.
- Good job.
- No knowledge.

5. What community growth or development related challenges, or opportunities, do you think the City and County should be addressing, or addressing better?

Responses:

- Open houses could be done better. Better engagement.
- Preparing for urbanization, mixed use, transportation and transit; different model of transportation hubs.
- Transportation – if we don't get this right, we will be in a much more difficult position. Land use regulations and codes to achieve the kind of development we want. Development community needs to be attracted to Rochester's vision. Housing choices and affordability needs to be distributed throughout the community.
- Opportunities – infill sites are available with some thoughtful small area planning – Transit corridors – TOD – Challenges – sewer capacity issue - making tough decisions.
- Housing issues - . Transportation – recognized as a need but much more is needed. Full range of recreational facilities –
- Addressing density – sewer system capacity is going to be a major task wherever development occurs. This will be an uphill struggle because it isn't clear what level of support there is politically.

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- Current code is not ready for the new development, complete streets, densities, park dedication.
 - Transportation is huge? Affordable housing. Trail system connectivity.
 - Torn. Codes that work well in urban context don't work well outside the core – we need a thoughtful, deliberate plan.
 - Walkability, bikeability, core neighborhood, multi model. Having high quality standards and understanding all of the impacts of development. Just being more proactive generally.
 - Biggest issue is addressing affordable housing, including the designation of specific locations – related to service jobs we need to align living places with services.
 - DMC - balancing implications for Rochester proper with intense downtown and figure out how to shepherd other neighborhoods and communities. Transportation in all forms – safety, walkability bikeability – fostering improved connectivity.
 - Housing choice and affordability across the entire spectrum. How do we accommodate density? Infrastructure?
 - All energy related stuff. We need to be as forward thinking as possible. Future retrofits for clean energy. Transportation – mass transit - battling perceptions about what people want now versus the future.
 - Work Force essentially at zero unemployment now; people are redesigning businesses to need fewer employees. Transportation is a big issue – visitors to double – parking, airport getting people to and from. Housing- mega trend coming downtown housing will take off.
 - DMC is going to drive things for 20 years. Infrastructure, transportation, parking, access, transit, pedestrian, bicycle movement.
 - Transit response is being addressed much better – transportation. Not involved in social, criminal justice.
 - Impending jobs housing imbalance is huge lots of implications – grow housing. A lot more they could be doing to introduce another class of developers to Rochester.
 - Infill and redevelopment in the downtown even if it requires a short moratorium. Authority that the City gives to neighborhood groups needs to be re-evaluated – vocal minority.
 - Infill development over expansion outwardly.
 - Transportation is an enormously big challenge. How do you do transit effectively and avoid building a city of parking ramps. Achieving a really good public realm.
- 6. As the community grows and changes, what do you believe the top staffing priorities should be?**

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Responses:

- Community engagement.
- Long range division – community engagement, transportation, day to day.
- Don't understand the structure well enough to comment.
- City Planning & DMC – better liaison don't know how staff time is allocated capacity is needed to handle what is on their plate. Joint City/County relationship gets in the way. May be time to abandon the joint department model.
- Staff capacity to manage volume of work – forecasting, projections – training continuing education – GIS staff to handle immediate and long term needs. Add capacity proportionately.
- Replacing the experience that is walking out the door. (Jeff, John & Charlie). How do we find a Senior Transportation Planner as good as Charlie” – retaining young talent.
- More – simply need capacity – address.
- Charlie Ryder – replacement. Design background. Operational Planner. Long Range Planner – overseeing and making some updates get done.
- Urban design. Communications community engagement. Transit – “Kick ass leader”.
- Urban design best practices. Community engagement and communications. Alignment between staff capacity and mission. Business Development.
- Add capacity to deal with development activities and enforcement.
- Whatever skill sets are needed to address DMC and regional needs.
- Development coordinator - multiple titles have been suggested: Economic development Coordinator, Development Coordinator, Ombudsman. Concierge,
- 14, Don't have enough information to comment.
- Concentrate on our front door align P & Z to the DMC – staff to make it happen.
- Pass – I am an outsider, but it seems there is a need for a clearer definition of roles.
- Capacity to meet priorities in the City.
- Urban design capabilities – much stronger liaison with developers. Finance expertise. More emphasis on implementation.
- Strong professional leader planner with credentials and engaging personality who will not be intimidated.
- Resources and personal to do long range planning.
- See No. 7 (below)

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7. If the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department could hire *three more positions*, and you could design those positions, what would they be and what would you want them to do or specialize in?

Responses:

- Community engagement specialist - urban design.
- Transportation expert specializing in mode sharing transit. Operational planner to review zoning applications. Long Range Division – technical information tracking community engagement / communications.
- Transportation expertise – connecting and coordinating.
- Primary job – dedicated to the DMC – infill / redevelopment under staffed – not clear how to deploy small area planning.
- Make sure that emergency management work is being done certified flood plain manager.
- Senior Transportation Planner – Economic Development Division – if not in the Administrative office then it could be housed in Planning. Development Coordinator – Ombudsman.
- Liaison development coordination expanded long range planning.
- Urban design – review capacity. Operational planner, day-to-day work load. Long Range Planner – maintain the Plan.
- Above + - Deliberate strategic development planning. Tell people what they do.
- Urban design – Business development liaison streamline. Community engagement and communications experts.
- Don't have the context.
- Making downtown Rochester the most it can be to attract Millennials and achieve regional vitality.
- Not aware enough of the community.
- Lacking dedicated sustainability position.
- Concierge, Ombudsman. New trends specialist, best practices forward – looking position.
- Tie it all back to the theme of replacing – succession planning – junior – mid level to senior.
- Defer to the City – more statistical data and analysis – could use an analyst.
- Urban designer – work very closely with Mayor. Current planning staff with more experience working with developers. Someone with real estate finance expertise – able to negotiate at a higher level and to understand the tools the City needs to close the financial gaps.

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- Development Coordinator. Strong vocal leader. Consider reconfiguring the department to assign planners to wards to build relationships and maintain communications.
- Concentrate on long range planning and replace lost experienced staff.
- Urban design capabilities. A sustainability advocate – integrated systems expert. Communications expert. We need to achieve higher standards for buildings.

8. When you picture Rochester and Olmsted County *fifteen years from now*, issues do you think the Department should be planning or preparing for today? [Prompt from list if needed.]

Responses:

- Transportation is Key - Low income housing.
- Congestion if transit isn't done correctly. Infill development – better ordinances - affordable housing.
- Transportation housing interconnected. Smart growth – being deliberate integrated approach.
- Managing the tension between existing neighborhoods and infill and redevelopment. Transportation system and redevelopment opportunities.
- Flow of people – transportation, transit, parking needs, personal safety for people.
- Transportation needs to support higher densities. There needs to be better collaboration between City and County. HRA was taken out of Planning not sure why?
- Transportation the whole gamut. Energy and water solar, wind conservation, re-use.
- Plan to better support density.
- Transportation and parking critical true developer – place making capability – urban design. The Department needs somebody on their team who is always thinking ahead.
- NA
- Getting people in and out of downtown. Look at decisions in the context of the future.
- NA
- Transportation in all facets, parking ramps, how do you move people?
- Energy – Power Plant or distributed energy generation- Transportation – Be more entrepreneurial – accommodating entrepreneurs.
- Understand that it is coming; we don't know all the challenges – builds a culture that embraces and facilitates changes.

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- Middle of a huge building boom. Have to be able to adapt. Manage systems fine tuning investments. Avoid pitting the rest of the City and County against the DMC.
- More applications, more sprawl, social issues, economic issues, housing moderate and low income.
- Transit system planning, TOD focus. Social equity – housing affordability needs.
- NA
- How can new land be brought into the City and more people be fit into into infill locations. More emphasis on affordable housing and housing choice generally.
- Radically different transportation system – are we really going to have driverless cars? High speed rail? District infrastructure systems. Higher standards for buildings.
 - a. Aging infrastructure – (10, 13, 16)
 - b. Climate change
 - c. Access to healthy foods
 - d. Environmental quality – (12,
 - e. Transit services – (1, 6, 8, 10, 19), (11-expand)
 - f. Transit-oriented development - (6, 8, 10, 12, 19)
 - g. Walking and bicycling mobility (1,6, 10) (8 –connecting downtown core.)
 - h. Improving equity and addressing social and racial disparities – (10, 12)
 - i. Aging population
 - j. Housing affordability – (1, 6, 11, 12, 13, 19)
 - k. Healthy & Active community design – (6, 10, 12, 19)

How well does the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department currently address the issues you selected? Why do you think that?

Responses:

- Planned very well to avoid concentrations of poverty, drugs, crime. On their radar, need more capacity to address.
- A lot of knowledge – huge volume of knowledge, several transportation studies are being studied - other options than the car.
- Need to do a better job of communicating consequences of decisions or lack of decisions. Help people stand behind hard decisions – downstream implications.

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- Needs improvement.
- Pretty well, but the challenges will continue.
- There is awareness – most are being addressed in the Comp Plan.
- Transportation – trying to create mode shift energy and water is not on their radar.
- Recognition is there, but the capacity is not there to be proactive.
- They are late – reactive and not brought into the conversation early.
- Done a good job – lack of political will to get support.
- Done as well as they can with the resources they have, but a challenge to accelerate.
- Intelligently, but with resource constraints scaled to a city of 60,000, but with opportunity that way out of that league.
- Aware of the issues – working on them but not fast enough.
- Transportation they are working on. Not actively working on the Energy issues, should be more involved. Don't realize the potential on the entrepreneurship piece. Plan for co-habitation flexibility.
- Struggle with communication and alignment can be done better. Internally, they are knowledgeable – communication must improve at all levels.
- Pretty good – They are looking forward just too much on the plate to look out far enough.
- Haven't handled affordable housing well in the past – now is with HRA.
- Hidden in the discussions – modestly at best. Political support may not be there.
- Broadly – needs to be much more focused and have to be implemented.
- Affordable housing mostly led by the Administrator's office. Looking for the HRA to be taking the lead. They will need to tell the story better, more controversy about redevelopment.
- Do not address them well currently; there is awareness.

9. What do you believe to be the most important community growth and development factors to be addressed in the next 5-10 years?

Responses:

- Influx of professionals and service providers. Diversity – interact and get along.
- Increased population – where are they all going to live?
- Transportation – investments need to be made now – land use connections.

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- Address friction between new development opportunities higher densities. Transportation is the leading topic, but everything else has to be implemented to make it happen.
- Aging population. Internally the organization needs to plan for succession.
- Emphasis on modal shift if that doesn't work all of the planning will fail still a small town.
- Park system matches the needs of the future community; inter-connectivity sustainability connecting employment center.
- Transportation – movement in the core and beyond.
- Transportation and parking and everything related. Planning vs creating strategy.
- Intentionality – how does new development support our plans – political will. Properly staffed.
- Housing and transit.
- DMC – redevelopment – intelligent connectivity to its environs – broadband – Mayo – IBM.
- Process improvement, development coordinator.
- Affordable housing – if we can't address this it compounds transportation challenges. Avoid the "poor door" syndrome. Recognition is that our water quality depends on the surrounding areas. Need to be very careful.
- How we develop the Downtown. How and where do we house the neighborhoods of the future. How do we attract the work force? Infrastructure – how do we get people here?
- DMC stuff access, parking, transit options.
- Transportation – housing.
- DMC success vision and relationship between the City and the EDA in accomplishing that vision. Development of the City as a multi-modal community with walkable nodes outside the Downtown.
- City core redevelopment. Sprawling development pattern is unsustainable. Update the land development manual.
- DMC, updated comprehensive plan Downtown; extension of infrastructure to serve new development.
- Strong guidelines and standards for all aspects of growth and development. Enforceable development standards.

10. What do you think the Planning Department needs, or needs to do, in order to successfully address those factors in a timely manner?

Responses:

ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix A Compilation of Stakeholder Interviews
August 22, 2016

- Community engagement person would help a lot - conversations with real people.
- Hire a consultant. Breaking off from the County. The current model is not necessarily still a good idea.
- May not have the knowledge to say specifically. Communication of downstream impacts from decisions.
- A better true collaboration between Public Works and Planning. Better communication between Administration and Planning. Prepare a Strategic Plan – annual goal setting, prioritization – how we work process. County/City shared Department model warrants review.
- Allow 5% of their time for reflection - document what they have done – improvement process – Retreat.
- Tell their story – Public information campaign analogy to recycling – consistent sustained messaging.
- Completion of the Comp Plan is a great start. Code changes will be a challenge – may not get everything they want. Encourage smaller scale development to get there –
- Providing background information to SRF lack the capacity to do the work. All of the code work to address higher density. May not have the capacity.
- Reevaluate the work they are doing today still do what has been done create a strategy. They need a seat at the Administration Table – more than they have had in the past. County /City model not as efficient as it is in theory.
- Effective advocacy to achieve political will – make the case for their requesting.
- Complete the Comprehensive Plan. Encourage development in proactive ways.
- Double down now to be able to ramp up in time. I don't care how they get access to the skill set even if they contract for the services. 2-3 broadly equipped PM's to be the interface with the best consultants.
- P & Z Commission that supports the staff – need much better communication.
- Housing – they are working on it; HRA moved out but they need to maintain a close working relationship. Prepping for distributed energy, on the water side – revisit the septic ordinance.
- This process is key; solid Research Projections. Biggest thing is to embrace where we are going – communication. More customer services attitude vs. regulatory.
- Well underway on first pieces. Take a fresh look, scrutinize big investments. Developing the processes to manage major change.

ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix A Compilation of Stakeholder Interviews
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- Hiring this consultant is a good idea. Director is new and needs to develop more, but she is progressing well.
- Structurally creating a separate City Planning Division would be a smart decision. The current coordination function could be maintained.
- Strong trusted leader. Streamlined land development manual for the downtown core.
- Need sufficient staff to bring forward policy positions that are more proactive and well supported.
- Need to expand staff and budget.

ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix B Planning Department Performance
August 22, 2016

Appendix B PLANNING DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE

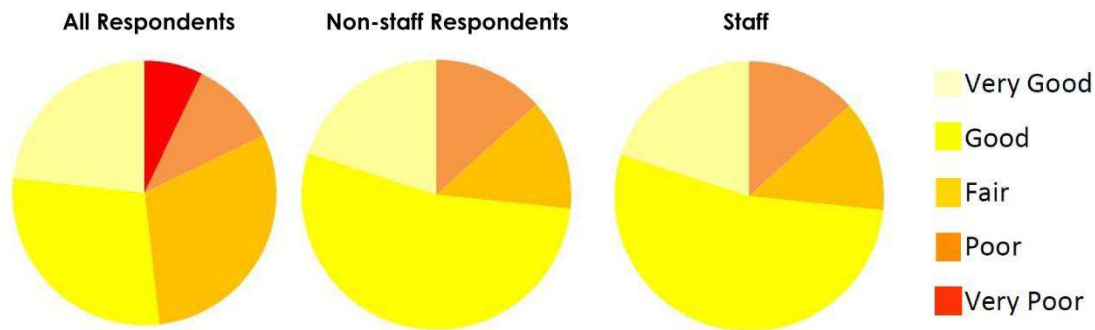
ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix B Planning Department Performance
August 22, 2016

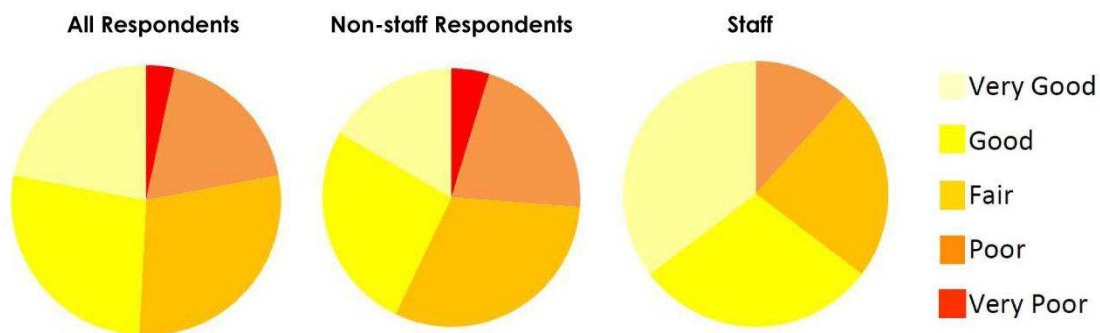
PLANNING DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE

How well does the planning department...

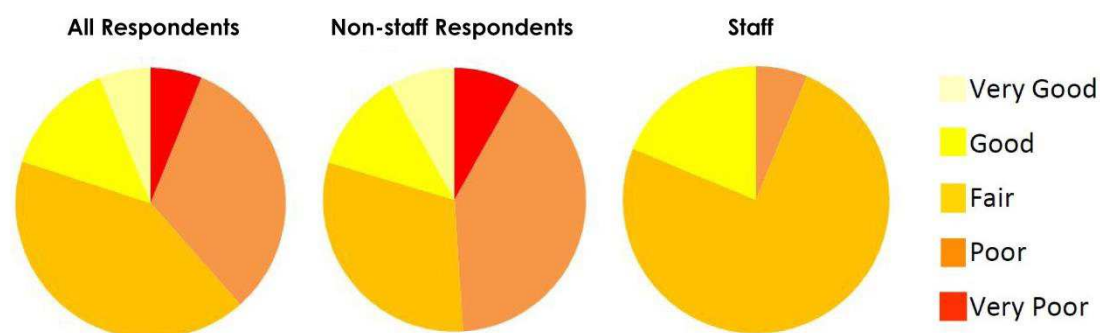
1. Conduct long range plans?



2. Coordinate with other City/County departments?



3. Engage with and educate the community?

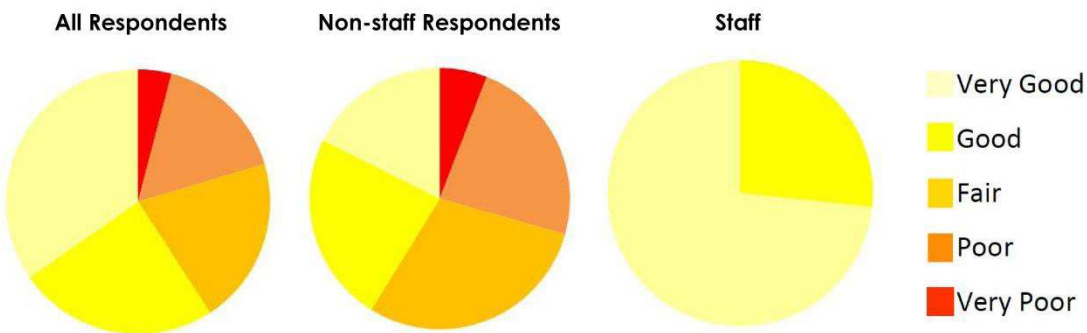


ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

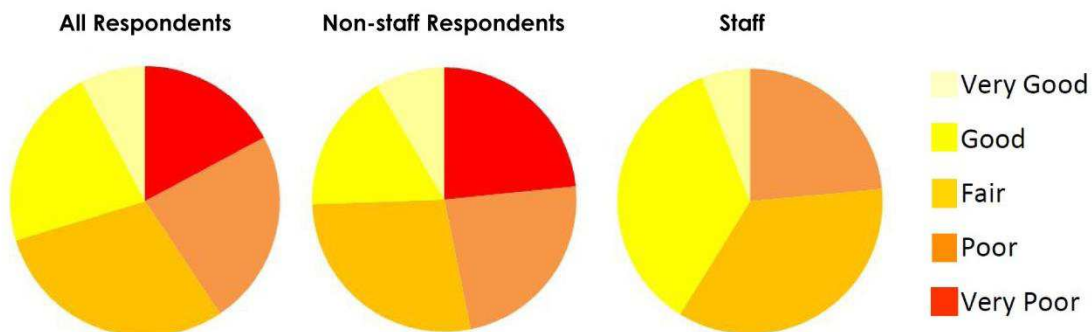
Appendix B Planning Department Performance
August 22, 2016

How well does the planning department...

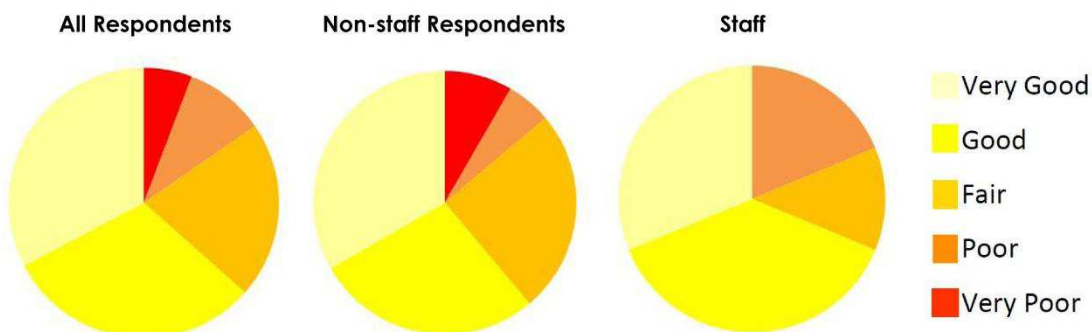
4. Provide timely information to elected officials?



5. Maintain on-going, proactive neighborhood relations?



6. Track development activities, land use, economic and social data?

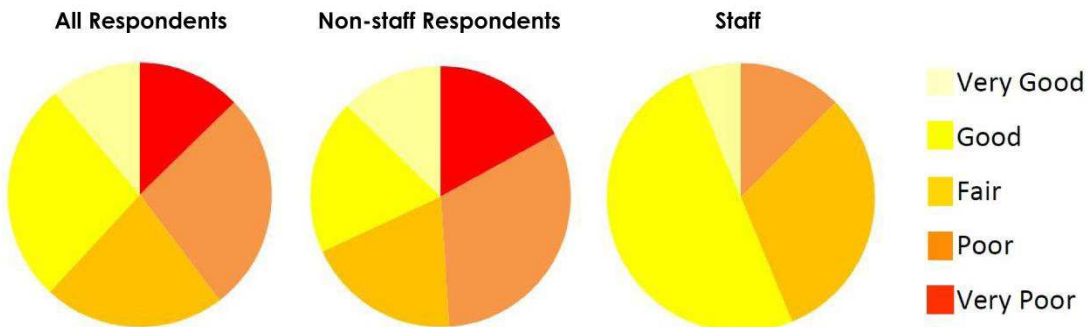


ROCHESTER-OLMSTED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

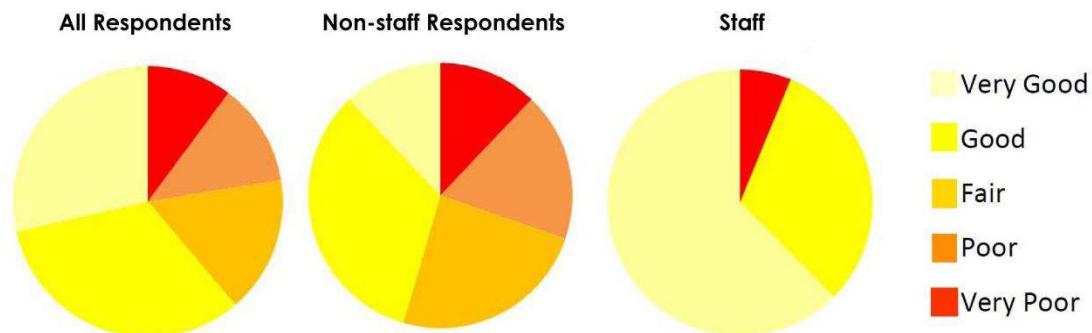
Appendix B Planning Department Performance
August 22, 2016

How well does the planning department...

7. Proactively address emerging issues?



8. Process building permits?



9. Process site plan reviews and entitlement requests?

