

Refining the Framework: Recommendations for Community-Based Planning

Advisory Council on Community-Based Planning

JANUARY 1998

Minnesota Planning develops long-range plans for the state, stimulates public participation in Minnesota's future and coordinates activities among all levels of government. The Common Ground staff at Minnesota Planning coordinates community-based planning for the state and assists the Advisory Council on Community-Based Planning. The views expressed in this report to the Minnesota Legislature are those of the advisory council.

Upon request, *Refining the Framework: Recommendations for Community-Based Planning* will be provided in an alternate format, such as Braille, large print or audio tape. For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 and ask for Minnesota Planning.

January 1998

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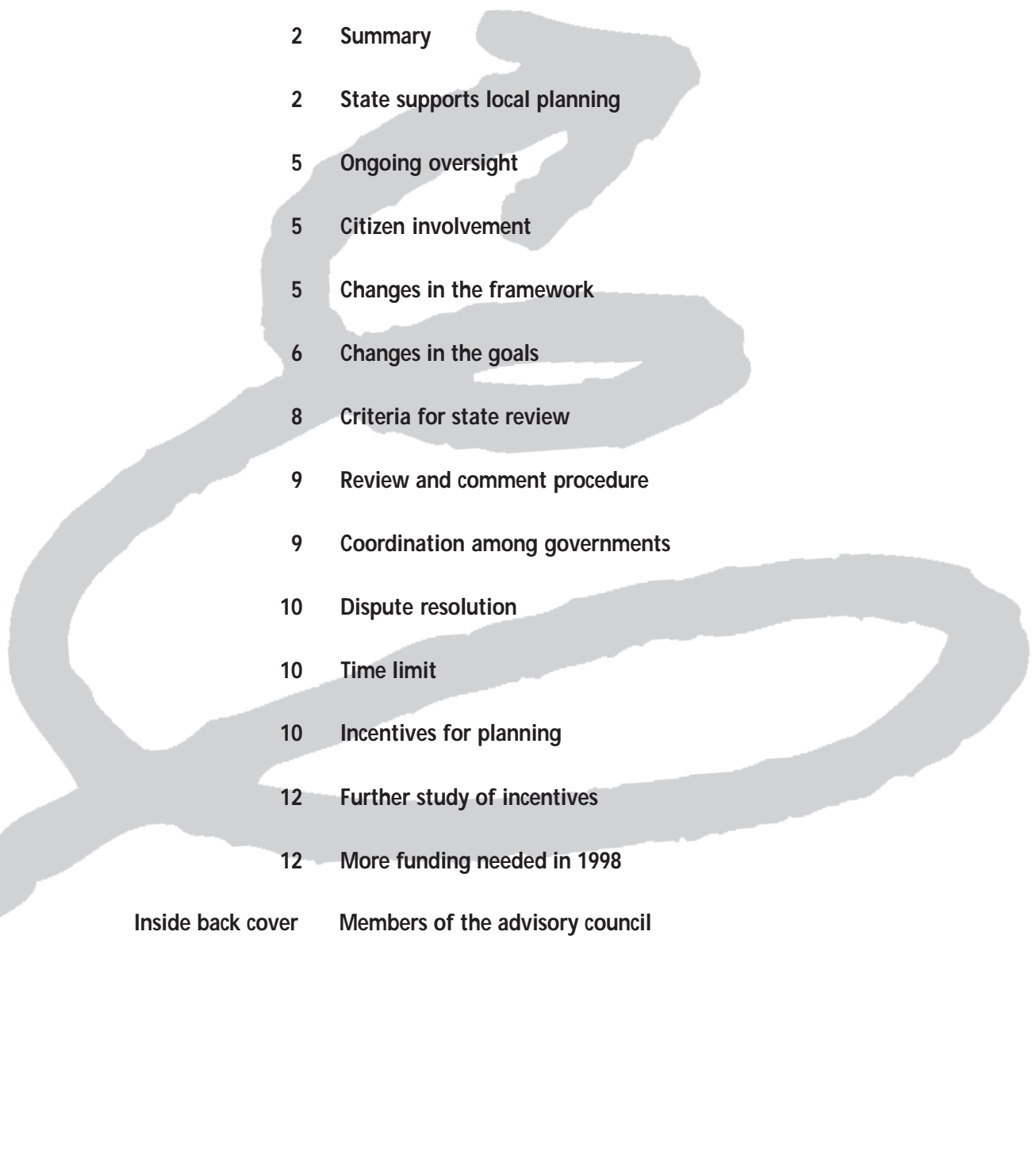
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Refining the Framework: Recommendations for Community-Based Planning



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Summary

Community-based planning is a new statewide framework for voluntary local planning, established in 1997 by the Minnesota Legislature. The new framework integrates sustainable development principles into 11 statewide goals for local planning.

The Legislature also established an 18-member Advisory Council on Community-Based Planning to further refine the new framework. The council was asked to review the language and content of the goals, identify criteria for state evaluation of local plans, further refine and develop the planning process, and recommend incentives for community-based planning. The Common Ground staff at Minnesota Planning, the state agency that coordinates community-based planning, assists the advisory council.

The council hosted 24 public meetings in 12 communities around the state in fall 1997. Ideas and comments gathered at those meetings, together with suggestions from the council's five working groups, form the basis for the council's recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature.

Highlights of the recommendations include:

- Expanding advisory council membership to achieve better geographic and local government representation, and extending the council until Dec. 31, 1999
- Refining the goals of community-based planning and adopting a new goal to address property rights
- Amending the law to include a four-step planning process for communities
- Adopting a set of five principles for citizen participation and three principles for cooperation among governments, to be incorporated in a planning guide
- Using interim criteria for state review of plans

- Further refining the review criteria and the planning process itself through pilot projects
- Developing a resource center to coordinate technical assistance and resources for community-based planning.

In early January the advisory council released its *Public Review Draft: Recommendations for Community-Based Planning*. This report was distributed to those who attended public meetings and other interested people for review and comment. The advisory council considered all written comments and developed final recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for the 1998 legislative session and to Minnesota Planning for the administration of the law.

Refining the Framework: Recommendations for Community-Based Planning summarizes the council's recommendations.

State supports local planning

Responding to the challenges of the state's growth during the 1990s, the 1997 Minnesota Legislature passed and Governor Arne H. Carlson signed the Community-Based Planning Act.

Different ways of handling change have very different results for the environment, the cost of public services, and the character of a community. Many communities do not have up-to-date plans to guide decisions about development, land use, transportation, and environmental impact.

Community-based planning gives local residents a stronger voice than in the past, by involving them throughout the planning process. Citizen involvement provides the momentum needed to follow through and make the plan a reality.

Another feature of the Community-Based Planning Act is stronger collaboration among neighboring communities and between local and state government. A cooperative approach to planning makes sense because the issues extend beyond the borders of one community. Cooperation also may lead to more efficient delivery of public services in a wider area.

The act sets forth a new voluntary planning framework that integrates sustainable development principles into local comprehensive plans and provides financial and technical assistance for planning. The law lays out goals that address the long-term interest of the state in responding to growth and change.

Pilot projects pave the way

Four pilot projects in community-based planning will provide practical experience in applying the new framework, beginning in 1998.

Three were selected through a grant application process in fall 1997: Carlton County, Dodge County and a tri-county area in western Minnesota consisting of Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, and Big Stone counties. The fourth is in the St. Cloud area, which was chosen by the Legislature. It includes Benton, Stearns, and Sherburne counties. Twenty-five cities and 13 townships will participate with the counties in these pilot areas.

The Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for the four pilots — \$350,000 for the St. Cloud area and \$50,000 for each of the remaining three pilots. The goal of the pilot projects is to gain a better understanding of how to develop local community-based comprehensive plans, including public participation, coordination among governments, resolving conflicts and determining the cost of preparing local plans.

Minnesota Planning is currently working with three of the pilots to

develop joint powers agreements so that they may conduct cooperative planning activities in their area. The St. Cloud Area Joint Powers Board has been meeting since November 1997. The next step is a grant agreement that will spell out what the state expects from the pilots and will establish a schedule for grant payments. Once the grant agreement is signed, each pilot has two years to complete its community-based plan. All four pilots should be up and running by June 1998. Minnesota Planning will work closely with each of the pilots throughout their planning efforts.

Additional funding for planning and technology grants will be available in

July 1998. Minnesota Planning is the state agency that will provide support for local planning and state review of completed plans.

Responsibilities of the advisory council

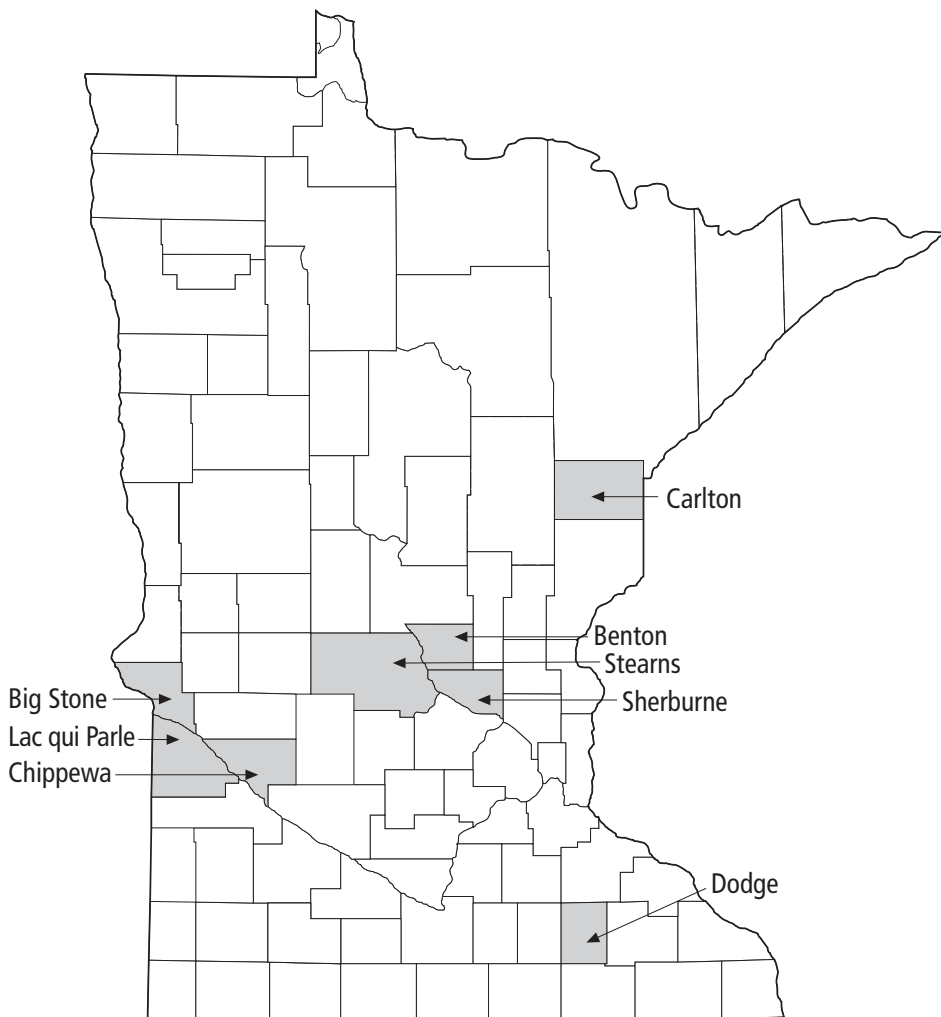
The Minnesota Legislature and the Governor appointed the advisory council in August 1997. The council consists of 18 voting members — four state senators, four state representatives, nine private citizens and the deputy director of Minnesota Planning. Five ex-officio members represent the departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture, Transportation, and Trade and Economic Development, and the Metropolitan Council.

The law instructs the Advisory Council on Community-Based Planning to propose changes to the law for the 1998 legislative session and to complete its remaining work by June 30, 1998.

The advisory council began work in September 1997. To address its duties, the council established five working groups to develop recommendations for the advisory council to consider. Technical advisors from several state agencies and other interested parties assisted the working groups. The working groups were organized by topic:

- citizen participation and cooperation among governments
- incentives for community-based planning
- economic development and public investment
- livable communities, housing and transportation
- conservation and sustainable development

Four pilot projects include eight counties, 25 cities, 13 townships



Public meetings

The advisory council hosted 24 public meetings in 12 cities during October and November 1997 to solicit advice and insight that would help the council do its job. About 1,000 Minnesotans attended, including county, city and township officials, business people, private citizens and state employees.

In each of the 12 cities, participants voiced unique local and regional concerns. These are summarized in *Directions for Community-Based Planning*, published by Minnesota Planning in December 1997. Common themes about community-based planning also emerged, including:

- Local planning is important
- Local planning should remain voluntary
- Local ownership of plans is crucial
- The goals and program must be flexible

- State guidance and assistance for local planning are desirable, but state approval is viewed with concern
- Citizen involvement is essential
- Cooperation across local boundaries is necessary for success
- Membership of the advisory council is not broad enough

The Advisory Council discussed the public input and incorporated many of the themes and ideas it heard into its final recommendations.

In December 1997, the advisory council considered the reports of its five working groups and developed

preliminary recommendations. After public review and comment, the council finalized its recommendations.

The recommendations include proposed changes to the legislation, areas for further study, administrative issues that need resolution, and guidance for Minnesota Planning in the administration of community-based planning.

The remainder of this report contains the recommendations, grouped by topic. Each recommendation is numbered.

Public meetings around the state provided insight on local planning priorities



The 12 duties of the Advisory Council on Community-Based Planning:

- Hold statewide meetings to solicit ideas and comments about community-based planning
- Consider ongoing oversight of sustainable development initiatives and the community-based planning process
- Develop a model process for citizen involvement in community-based planning
- Review and recommend changes to the community-based planning framework
- Develop specific, measurable criteria for reviewing the plans for consistency with the statewide goals
- Recommend procedures for review and comment on local plans
- Recommend a process for coordination of plans among local jurisdictions
- Recommend alternative dispute resolution methods for citizens and local governments to use to challenge proposed plans or the implementation of plans
- Recommend a time frame for completing plans
- Recommend incentives to encourage state agencies to implement the goals of community-based planning
- Recommend incentives to encourage local governments to develop community-based plans
- Identify tools and strategies for local governments to use to achieve the statewide goals

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

Ongoing oversight

The law directs the advisory council to consider the need for ongoing stewardship and oversight of sustainable development initiatives and the community-based planning process.

1 Extend the council's appointment

The council recognizes that community-based planning is a significant step for the state and that oversight of its development is critical. Because the advisory council was not appointed until August, it had a very short time to complete its work. The council also believes that valuable information could be garnered from the pilot projects and is reluctant to propose significant legislative changes without the benefit of this practical experience. To provide continuity in the development of community-based planning, the council recommends that the Legislature extend the council's appointment through Dec. 31, 1999.

2 Broaden representation

Members of the public have expressed strong concern about the lack of representation from local government and northern Minnesota on the advisory council. The council recommends that council membership be expanded to provide three more voting members, including two elected officials from local government and broader geographic representation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

Citizen involvement

The law directs the advisory council to develop a model process to involve citizens in community-based planning.

3 Add principles for citizen participation

The Community-Based Planning Act places great emphasis on citizen participation as local plans are developed. The council decided not to recommend a model process, but instead to add a general statement to the law stating the importance of early and ongoing efforts to encourage citizen participation throughout the process.

The council further recommends that five principles be incorporated in a planning guide for community-based planning. The principles are intended to further define the citizen participation goal and to assist local governments in involving citizens:

- Be early and continuous in efforts to involve citizens
- Be flexible, tailored to the specific population and situation of the community
- Provide opportunity to influence decisions that affect one's life by proactively soliciting participation
- Be responsive to public input and communicate the final decision
- Go beyond minimum legal requirements for public notification

4 Establish a resource center on citizen participation

To assist local governments with the citizen participation process, the advisory council also recommends that a citizen participation resource center be established. They recommend that this resource center

be a part of a more comprehensive resource center for community-based planning that would assist with cooperation, geographic information systems, data collection and other planning issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

Changes in the framework

The law directs the advisory council to review and recommend changes to the community-based planning framework established in the act.

5 Include a process for creating local plans

The law stipulates that the state will review plans for consistency with the statewide goals of community-based planning. It does not, however, define a process that communities should go through to address the goals. The advisory council recommends that the following four steps be added to the legislative framework and be used by counties and planning districts in addressing the goals separately and collectively:

- Establish a vision
- Create an inventory and analysis of the current situation
- Develop strategies for accomplishing the vision
- Determine how to monitor and measure success

6 Refine and augment the goals

The goals provide the basis for state review of plans. Each community must address these goals based on its local characteristics. Recognizing concerns for local differences expressed at the statewide meetings, the advisory council recommends some modifications to

Changes in the statewide goals of community-based planning

Goal	Original	Recommended
Citizen participation	To develop a community-based planning process with broad citizen participation in order to build local capacity to plan for sustainable development and to benefit from the insights, knowledge, and support of local residents. The process must include at least one citizen from each affected unit of local government.	[No change]
Livable community design	To strengthen communities by following the principles of livable community design in development and redevelopment, including integration of all income and age groups, mixed land uses and compact development, affordable and life-cycle housing, green spaces, access to public transit, bicycle and pedestrian ways, and enhanced aesthetics and beauty in public spaces.	Community design – To strengthen communities through development and redevelopment design that accommodates integration of all income and age groups, mixed land uses and compact development, affordable and life-cycle housing, green spaces, access to public transit, bicycle and pedestrian ways, and enhanced aesthetics and beauty in public spaces.
Conservation	To protect, preserve, and enhance the state’s resources, including agricultural land, forests, surface water, groundwater, recreation and open space, scenic areas, and significant historic and archeological sites.	To protect, preserve and enhance the state’s resources, including agricultural land, forests, lakes, rivers, wetlands, ground water, biological resources, energy resources, mineral resources, other raw materials and renewable resources, recreation and open space, scenic areas and significant historic and archeological sites.
Cooperation	To promote cooperation among communities to work toward the most efficient, planned, and cost-effective delivery of government services by, among other means, facilitating cooperative agreements among adjacent communities and to coordinate planning to ensure compatibility of one community’s development with development of neighboring communities.	[No change]
Economic development	To create economic development strategies and provide economic opportunities throughout the state that will achieve a balanced distribution of growth statewide.	To create economic development strategies and provide economic opportunities that focus on local strengths throughout the state.
Housing	To provide and preserve an adequate supply of affordable and life cycle housing throughout the state.	To enable the development and preservation of an adequate supply of affordable housing and life-cycle housing (appropriate for all age groups).
Land use	To establish a community-based framework as a basis for all decisions and actions related to land use.	[No change]

Goal	Original	Recommended
Property rights	[Proposed new goal]	Property rights – To ensure that in exercising its delegated authority of the state’s power to protect the public health, welfare and safety, a community will seek to ensure that private property shall not be taken, destroyed or damaged for public use without just compensation.
Public investment	To account for the full environmental and social and economic cost of new development, including infrastructure costs such as transportation, sewers and wastewater treatment, water, schools, recreation and open space, and plan the funding mechanisms necessary to cover the costs of the infrastructure.	Public costs and investment – To decrease the costs of public infrastructure and services through effective and efficient land use decisions. To take into account the environmental, social and economic costs of development, including infrastructure costs such as transportation, sewers and wastewater treatment, water, schools, recreation and open space. To plan the funding mechanisms necessary to cover the costs of the infrastructure.
Public education	To support research and public education on a community’s and the state’s finite capacity to accommodate growth, and the need for planning and resource management that will sustain growth.	To support research and public education on a community’s finite capacity to accommodate growth and the need for planning and resource management that will sustain growth.
Sustainable development	To maintain a better quality of life for all residents while maintaining nature’s ability to function over time by minimizing waste, preventing pollution, promoting efficiency, and developing local resources to revitalize the local economy.	[Replace with the sustainable development language in Minnesota Statute 4A.07, which is]: To maintain or enhance economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Transportation	To focus on the movement of people and goods, rather than on the movement of automobiles, in transportation planning, and to maximize the efficient use of the transportation infrastructure by increasing the availability and use of appropriate public transit throughout the state through land-use planning and design that makes public transit economically viable and desirable.	To provide a transportation system for the movement of people, goods and information that maximizes the efficient use of the existing transportation infrastructure and integrates land use planning and appropriate transportation alternatives such as public transit, bikeways, walkways, telecommunication and other technology.

the 11 statewide goals established in the law. These changes include adding a property rights goal, emphasizing cost efficiency in government services, and making several goals easier to apply to all types of communities.

The recommended changes in the goals are found on pages 6 and 7.

7 Direct funding to counties and joint planning districts

The act provides funding for counties and joint planning districts electing to prepare community-based plans. No funding is provided directly to cities and townships. The advisory council believes that cities and townships preparing community-based plans should be encouraged to work in concert with the county. Given the limited funding available, the advisory council recommends that funding remain targeted to counties or joint planning districts. Counties or joint planning districts can distribute grant money to cities or townships, if desired.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Criteria for state review

The law directs the advisory council to develop specific, measurable criteria by which plans will be reviewed by Minnesota Planning for consistency with the goals of community-based planning.

8 Use an interim approach

The law requires that counties and joint planning districts send their community-based plans to Minnesota Planning. Minnesota Planning will review the plans for consistency with

the goals of the act. However, no specific criteria for evaluating consistency are provided in the act.

The advisory council concluded that it is too early to adopt specific criteria. The council's five working groups developed many options that could be used as either criteria for evaluating plans or guidelines to help communities as they prepare plans. Based on these options and input from the 24 public meetings around the state in fall 1997, the council recommends that Minnesota Planning use one basic interim criterion: general adherence to the community-based planning framework. Other interim criteria are listed below.

9 Evaluating citizen participation

The advisory council views citizen participation as the key to community-based planning, but cannot yet identify a set of criteria to evaluate consistency with the goal. Citizen participation should be integrated into every step of planning.

The council recommends the following approach to developing criteria for citizen participation:

- Ask communities participating in the pilot projects to use the five principles of citizen participation recommended in this report to develop a process for participation and to develop criteria for evaluating consistency with the citizen participation goal
- Ask the communities to set measures for evaluating the success of the process
- Minnesota Planning should use these criteria and measures to evaluate citizen participation
- Minnesota Planning should work with the pilot projects and other communities to recommend changes to the criteria

10 Evaluating cooperation among governments

The advisory council recognizes that neighboring governments must work together in order for community-based planning to succeed. The council recommends a set of principles, interim criteria and guidelines to achieve the cooperation goal. The three principles should be incorporated in a planning guide and reflected in the law:

- Make early, continuous and broad efforts to involve other jurisdictions
- Be responsive to feedback
- Coordinate implementation of the plan among jurisdictions

The interim criteria to be used by Minnesota Planning in evaluating cooperation are:

- Was a good-faith effort made to involve officials of other jurisdictions, including sovereign tribes?
- Were comments and plans of other jurisdictions considered?
- Was sufficient effort made to secure cooperation in delivering cost-effective services and coordinating regulatory standards?

The council recommends the following approach for further refining criteria for evaluating cooperation:

- Ask communities participating in the pilot projects to develop a cooperation plan addressing the three principles and the interim criteria
- Ask communities to set measures for evaluating the success of the cooperation plan
- Minnesota Planning should use these criteria and measures to evaluate cooperation
- Minnesota Planning should work with the pilot projects and other communities to recommend changes and refinements to the criteria

11 Use interim criteria for other goals

Each working group identified a series of items that each community should consider in preparing their plan. The advisory council believes these suggestions are appropriate for a guidance document to assist communities in planning, but too expansive to be used as criteria for state review. For the remaining goals, the advisory council recommends the following approach for developing criteria:

- Rephrase the goals as questions to be used as interim criteria by Minnesota Planning in evaluating community-based plans
- The review by Minnesota Planning should focus on whether the plan adequately considers and addresses each goal
- Minnesota Planning should work with the pilot projects and other communities to recommend refinements to the interim criteria

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR **Review and comment procedure**

The law directs the advisory council to recommend a procedure for review and comment on community-based plans.

Currently, the law establishes a formal procedure for submitting a plan to Minnesota Planning. It provides a policy for notice and participation of all interested or affected parties and determines how and when comments and objections must be filed. The law also sets time limits for Minnesota

Planning to complete its review and for the county or joint planning district to complete any revisions.

12 Address all written comments

The advisory council recommends that Minnesota Planning be required to acknowledge, in writing, all comments or objections that were submitted in writing to Minnesota Planning during the comment period.

Minnesota Planning should respond to comments that are of state concern, and refer comments of local interest to the respective county or joint planning district for their response. State-level concerns include determining if the plan is consistent with state goals for community-based planning, and issues of state interest and jurisdiction such as highways, wetlands and parks.

The advisory council recommends that if cities and townships develop community-based plans, they may request review and comment by Minnesota Planning.

13 Refine the review and comment process

At this time, the advisory council recommends no further changes to the review and comment process. Minnesota Planning should work with the pilot projects and other early community-based planning projects to refine the process. Minnesota Planning should also explore necessary changes to the review and comment process with input from counties, cities and townships, state agencies and the public. Minnesota Planning should report these findings to the advisory council for possible changes for the 1999 legislative session.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR **Coordination among governments**

The law directs the advisory council to recommend a process for coordination of plans among local jurisdictions.

It is apparent that the intent of the Legislature, through passage of the Community-Based Planning Act, was to improve coordination among governments as they conduct comprehensive planning. A goal of the new law is to promote cooperation among communities to work towards the most efficient and cost-effective delivery of government services. This may be accomplished by, among other means, cooperative agreements among adjacent communities and coordination of planning to ensure compatibility of development in neighboring communities.

14 Notifying state agencies

Minnesota Planning should notify state and regional agencies when a county or joint planning district has decided to undertake community-based planning. This would revise the current language that requires a county to notify selected state agencies of the county's intent to undertake community-based planning.

15 Notifying local governments

The county should remain responsible for notifying all local units of government. The advisory council recommends clarifying the law regarding notice to local governments to include all general and special purpose units of government within or adjacent to the county or planning district. This

would include watershed districts, school districts and other special-purpose districts, as well as townships and cities.

16 Expand the list for notification

The following organizations should be added to the list of those who must receive notice from Minnesota Planning when a community-based planning project begins:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Department of Health
- Office of Environmental Assistance
- Housing Finance Agency
- the appropriate Regional Development Commission or Metropolitan Council (for counties within or adjacent to the seven-county metropolitan area)

17 Provide state agency plans to communities

The Community-Based Planning Act should be amended to require state agencies that are notified by Minnesota Planning to provide applicable state agency plans to communities beginning the community-based planning process.

18 Refine the coordination process based on experience

Minnesota Planning should work with the four current pilot projects, and other projects to be named after July 1998, to refine the process for coordination among governmental bodies. Minnesota Planning should also seek comment from the public and affected parties about necessary changes to the coordination process. Minnesota Planning should report these findings to the advisory council for possible changes for the 1999 or 2000 legislative session.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Dispute resolution

The law directs the advisory council to recommend an alternative dispute resolution method for citizens and local governments to use to challenge proposed plans or how the plans are implemented.

The Community-Based Planning Act emphasizes citizen participation and cooperation among governments to ensure that potential conflicts are addressed as local plans are developed. The intent appears to be that parties resolve disputes before plans are submitted to a county or to Minnesota Planning for review. The law does provide a dispute resolution process for addressing disagreements between a city and county or between a county or planning district and Minnesota Planning. This same process can be used for annexation disputes. No process is provided for citizens to challenge plans, or for addressing conflicts in implementing plans (beyond annexation).

19 Monitor the need for changes

The advisory council suggests no change to the alternative dispute resolution process, but recommends that Minnesota Planning work with the four pilot projects, and other projects to be named after July 1998, to refine the process. No completed plans are anticipated until late 1999 or early 2000. Minnesota Planning should also monitor the need for changes in the alternative dispute resolution process, seeking input from the Municipal Board, Bureau of Mediation Services, local governmental units, state agencies and the public. Minnesota Planning should report its findings to the advisory council for possible recommendations for the 1999 or 2000 legislative session.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Time limit

The law directs the advisory council to recommend the time frame in which the community-based plans must be completed.

20 Keep the two-year limit

The law requires that pilot projects complete their community-based plans within two years. The advisory council believes this is a reasonable starting point and should be further evaluated through the pilot projects to determine whether a requirement should be added to the law.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Incentives for planning

The law directs the advisory council to recommend incentives to encourage local governments and state agencies to implement the goals of community-based planning, and to identify tools and strategies that a county, city, or town may use to achieve the goals.

The advisory council recognizes that financial and technical incentives are necessary for community-based planning. During the public meetings held in fall 1997, people across the state expressed the need for assistance in such areas as gaining citizen participation, developing geographic information, beginning the planning process and collecting data.

Many local governments also cited technical assistance as their most pressing need in moving forward with planning. Needs range from information on basic planning principles to hands-on instruction in the use of geographic information systems.

21 Assess the need for future funding

The Legislature should appropriate more money for incentives for local governments and state agencies. The advisory council believes that the \$750,000 allocated for local governments for the 1999 fiscal year is inadequate. In addition, money is needed for Minnesota Planning and other agencies to provide technical assistance to local governments. The council recommends that Minnesota Planning prepare a report projecting the cost to local governments and state agencies of community-based planning. The report should be submitted to the council by June 1998 for inclusion in the 2000-2001 biennial budget.

22 Use current funding to expand pilot program

The current 1999 fiscal year appropriation, slated for planning grants and technology grants, should be used largely to help determine the real costs of preparing a community-based plan. A portion of the planning grants should be used to fund two or three additional pilot projects beginning in July 1998. Technology grants should be made available to these new pilots, as well as to the pilots selected in 1997.

Technology grants should cover geographic information systems and other technology needs. Grants for geographic information systems could be used for data collection, staff training, software and hardware. Other technology grants could cover telecommunications and Internet needs, data development and visual tools (such as drawings or computer simulation). Planning and technology grants should continue to be distributed to joint planning districts and counties.

23 Increase funding for citizen involvement

Recognizing the importance of citizen involvement and the lack of clear models for achieving it, the advisory council recommends that additional money be allocated for the 1999 fiscal year for programs and materials to strengthen citizen involvement. This could include grants to local governments to develop local citizen involvement programs and materials, and grants to statewide organizations or agencies to develop model programs and materials. Money also should be provided to Minnesota Planning to establish a citizen participation resource center, as part of an overall resource center for community-based planning.

24 Develop grant distribution and cost-sharing requirements

The law does not specify how to select grant recipients and determine the amount of funding for them. In addition, no local matching funds are required. The advisory council wants to ensure that communities receive adequate money for planning, that cooperative efforts are encouraged and that communities with special needs receive additional assistance.

Minnesota Planning should develop possible funding methods, which could include match requirements, bonuses, and selection criteria, for advisory council consideration. Options could include a base grant amount, cost sharing, hardship grants based on total cost of planning or technology in relation to the total budget of the local government, and a cooperation bonus for joint planning districts.

25 Provide grants for implementation

Many communities have expressed the need for help in implementing their plans. The advisory council and Minnesota Planning should examine the need for

ongoing support and recommend an appropriate state role in funding implementation of community-based plans.

26 Create a planning guide

Minnesota Planning should prepare a manual for community-based planning, including guidelines for the content of plans. The guide should draw on materials prepared by the advisory council's working groups and should include input from the pilot projects and other agencies.

27 Develop a planning resource center

Minnesota Planning should establish a community-based planning resource center to provide technical assistance and coordinate assistance from other agencies and organizations. The center must complement and draw on existing technical assistance efforts and expertise.

The center should include resources on citizen participation, community design and other planning related materials. It also should include technical materials and resource lists to assist local communities in finding or collecting data, analyzing data and preparing ordinances.

Through the resource center, Minnesota Planning should provide training and information on geographic information systems and develop a statewide inventory and directory of geographic information resources, which could be Internet-based. Minnesota Planning also should work to strengthen the visibility and activities of the Governor's Council on Geographic Information to encourage state agency coordination.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Further study of incentives

Additional studies are needed to further define incentives for community-based planning. Most of these could be pursued by Minnesota Planning, the advisory council, and a new planning cabinet made up of state agencies that have local planning authority and responsibility.

28 **Explore public investment surcharges**
The advisory council intends to establish a working group with representation from local governments, property developers and builders from across the state to explore allowing local governments with approved community-based plans to adopt local ordinances imposing public investment surcharges, or impact fees. This working group should assist the advisory council in drafting enabling legislation for public investment surcharges, for consideration by the Legislature in 1999.

29 **Consider tying grants and loans to plans**
Giving local governments with community-based plans priority for state grants, loans and other discretionary spending would be a financial incentive to participate in planning. Minnesota Planning and the council should study and identify specific agency appropriations, funding programs and discretionary spending authority that could be used for this purpose. This should be completed by October 1998.

30 **Develop other tools and strategies**
More work is needed, drawing on the pilot projects, the public, and other affected parties, to develop other tools and strategies to achieve the goals of the Community-Based Planning Act. Some possibilities include:

- Streamlining or waiving the permit process for governments with community-based plans
- Consolidating state planning requirements into community-based plans
- Helping governments integrate existing state-required plans into community-based plans
- Expedited project review from state regulatory authorities

More funding needed in 1998

The 1997 law provided funding for community-based planning through June 30, 1999. The advisory council recommends several new initiatives and studies for 1998 and 1999, and also recommends that the council itself be extended for another year and a half to provide further policy direction and guidance for the act. Recognizing that current funding is inadequate to follow through with these recommendations, the advisory council has directed Minnesota Planning to develop a cost estimate for the recommended activities. The estimate should include:

- Planning resource center, including citizen participation resources
- Planning manual
- Continuation of the advisory council
- Additional Minnesota Planning staffing or consultant services

The cost estimate will be used to request a supplemental appropriation from the 1998 Minnesota Legislature.

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