



## **Pre-Proposal Conference Meeting Notes**

**August 22, 2007  
9:00a.m – 11:00a.m**

*On August 22, Mayor Kathy Taylor, Mayor's staff, city planning staff, and INCOG staff met with potential proposers for the Comprehensive Plan Update. A formal question and answer session followed a brief introduction based on materials found at the PlaniTulsa website ([www.planitulsa.org](http://www.planitulsa.org)). Notes from this session are presented here.*

**Q: What has the steering committee done to date, how were they formed, and what was their role in the process of creating the RFP?**

**A: (Susan Neal, Director of Community Development and Education Initiatives, City of Tulsa)** Mayor Taylor pulled together a group of citizens that were thought to represent different skill sets and a diverse group of interests. They also have diversity in their geographic location throughout the city. Their professional or personal experience was also considered inasmuch as it reflected their ability to contribute to the planning of our city. Each one of the committee members has been involved with neighborhood advocacy, own a small business, or has been a part of a design team someplace else in the city. Each member has helped give the staff direction as to what should be in the RFP. Each committee member was asked to attend as many public meetings as they could throughout the city and participate, listen, and help us to structure major components of what they thought we should put in this

RFP. That has primarily been their commission to date. They have been asked to continue in the planning process beyond the selection of a consultant. They have already committed five months to this process...it's a lot to ask, but the City hopes that they will.

**(Pat Treadway, Planning Department Manager, City of Tulsa)**  
More members have walked in the room and a majority of the committee is here.

Susan Neal introduced Councilor Maria Barnes as a member of the Steering Committee.

**Q: Describe the thought process behind splitting up the Phase 1 and Phase 2, since Phase 2 is not part of this particular RFP and given the fact that it includes the regional area. Explain, just a little bit, about the split and how Phase I will address the regional issues.**

A: **(Susan Neal)** You are right that consideration will need to be given to the entire region. That is why we have included as a partner with us, INCOG and the Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission. We have several members of the Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission that work with us on the steering committee and a county commissioner who has also been engaged in the process so far. Also, the area mayors that we work with regularly have asked that we keep apprised during Phase 1. We ask whatever consultants that we work with to continue to invite them to all of our processes and meetings. One of the things that became apparent to us through talking with the citizens of Tulsa is that there is a true desire to get *our own house* in order within the confines of Tulsa. We know that the cities interrelate, and that Tulsa must consider the regional area. But our citizens are saying that we need to take care of the City of Tulsa's business first and then branch out.

**(Rich Brierre, Executive Director, Indian Nations Council of Governments [INCOG])** Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission has legal authority for the City of Tulsa and the unincorporated portion of Tulsa County. Some of the other regional

cities' boundaries are in place and they have their own comprehensive plans. The first priority based on the funding *and* the need is to update the City of Tulsa portion of the comprehensive plan.

**(Pat Treadway)** Most of the surrounding communities have newer plans than Tulsa. This is the reason that Phase 1 is about the City of Tulsa, and how Tulsa relates to these other areas.

**(Rich Brierre)** And a lot of those communities are still dealing with greenfield development where they have vast open spaces, whereas Tulsa is largely built out.

**Q: Did the surrounding towns or the unincorporated areas take into account the potential relationship with Tulsa itself?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** Yes, I believe they did. I believe that the communities in the surrounding area all factored Tulsa in with their planning.

**Q: The RFP calls for extensive citizen involvement and we would strongly support that. It also seems to imply that it is to be the sole responsibility of the consultant. And what I'd like to know is what the role of the city would be in the public participation process?**

A: **(Susan Neal)** I think we look to the consultant to tell us what type of citizen participation and what level of citizen participation has worked in other communities. The consultant should say how much you would factor in citizen participation. We've tried to express that citizen involvement is *critical* in our city and that we think will it is essential for a successful plan. Our planning team, including our partners at INCOG, will be supportive as possible, but we are, at this point, looking to the potential consultants for success stories and good formulas for citizen involvement. We really want to hear your ideas.

**(Pat Treadway)** We really wanted to say that we want you involved with our citizens. It doesn't mean that we're excluding ourselves from

being involved too. We want you and your company involved with our citizens.

**Q: Can you give me some sense of how the city divides itself? How do the people perceive themselves as living within the city? Are there neighborhoods or districts?**

**A: (Susan Neal)** Our citizens definitely have a sense of neighborhood. Some communities are very well established. The older neighborhoods feel a real identity with, for example, the midtown area. Talk to someone in West Tulsa and you'll hear, "West is best." Talk to someone in some neighborhoods and they'll have a lot of neighborhood pride; there are many organized neighborhoods. Other neighborhoods are just not as organized. There's a real sense of community in certain areas. They have a real sense of neighborhood and community separate from just being in Tulsa.

**(Pat Treadway)** If you went out into our community and said "Where do you live?" First thing somebody might say is "I live in North Tulsa, I live in East Tulsa, I live in West Tulsa, I live in Midtown," and somebody might say "I live in South Tulsa." We define ourselves in these ways. And I'm not sure that's great, but then again, maybe it is. But we know, as we said in our presentation to you earlier, we're different depending on where we are in the community. That is a great strength as well as a great challenge. How we marry this wonderful diversity?

**(Rich Brierre)** I'd like to add one thing that might be a little confusing as you come in to our area. There are several political boundaries to consider. In the 70's when the district plans were created, the city and the metropolitan area were divided into, at that time, 26 planning districts. Also, what we have within the City of Tulsa is nine political council districts. So you see what we have is some overlap of council districts and several planning districts. We've also added some recently annexed city property creating a 27<sup>th</sup> district. All of those planning districts did not have a plan actually prepared. So, some of the unincorporated areas never got a specific district plan. So going

forward, we can assume that there's nothing sacred about the 27 planning districts. We're looking for some fresh ideas on how to demarcate the city, and if we decide to go with districts, it would certainly be much less than 27 planning districts for the city.

**Q: Of the 17 district plans you've have within the City, what's the relationship to that and if you put those on a map would they make sense to a Tulsan?**

**A: (Pat Treadway)** I'll give you my impressions and others can do the same. If you lay the 17 district plans on a map of the city you will see that within those districts there may be 10 neighborhood associations in planning district number 16. They are thinking a lot about their area, but perhaps not much about the collective area. So those district boundaries which made sense in 1975 may make less sense today. And that's my impression.

**(Rich Brierre)** If you look at the boundaries in those planning districts, they were largely defined by major physical features: the Arkansas River, Expressway systems, and so on. So an expressway could be a boundary. If you go back again in the 70's, there weren't as many identifiable neighborhoods. People didn't associate or think of themselves as living in this neighborhood or this neighborhood as the current situation is. In the 70's, you'd probably only hear about less than 10 specific neighborhoods. Now there are 300 to 400 organized neighborhoods and it really has become more of an institutionalized process. Neighborhood associations have become major players in the development issues of the city. So the neighborhoods that we know of today were not really thought of when the planning district boundaries were established. They were based on major physical features.

**(Pat Treadway)** So now we have some new expressways and so we may have boundaries we didn't recognize then.

**Q: Is there any preference to how you want the proposal; along the planning districts or the council districts? What is your input? Do you want the city treated at different levels or the city as a whole?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** The desire is to solicit your ideas on how you hope to accomplish that. I don't think anybody has a preconceived notion that it has to be this way or this way. Our basic requirements are that we're saying give us your best idea on how to approach this. We have 400,000 people living in the city, that's where we're beginning.

**(Mayor Kathy Taylor)** I do think that we certainly do want your guidance, but I think that it is fair to say that we in Tulsa need to guide you as to where the natural groups that are working together well. I don't think we want to completely redefine the world. We're going to help guide you with that.

**(Pat Treadway)** We have an infrastructure in our city that works to some degree in terms of citizen engagement. We don't want you to discount that. But we also want to know what worked for you with all of the other city plans that you have done. We're looking for your expertise to combine with what we have. And what we have ain't perfect.

**Q: The concern would be that if the city is looking for something that focuses on individual areas and if the proposer slices up the city in one bash. The concern is that one would slice through the neighborhoods that have their own plans.**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** We'll work with you to make sure that you understand the existing neighborhood plans. Does that neighborhood's vision work really well with other visions that surround it? We hope it does, but if it doesn't, help us understand how you have engaged the public, worked with the public, and produced amazing plans for cities. Help us understand what your model is, and what you think works best.

**Q: There are certain expectations from unique neighborhood groups that their particular neighborhood identity will be preserved. So maybe some kind of way in which they can interact with our people will be very helpful because I know that expectation is there. Could you give me some guidance on who to contact?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** First thing you should do is to put the question in email form and send it to Larry (Hood, Purchasing) or Darlene (Donica, Purchasing), they'll send it to me and we'll get you the answer. A neighborhood association map is available and we can then assist you with contact info for them. We can go from there if we want to grill them.

**Q: If you're trying to help us tailor specifics to public participation, do we have access to some geographic maps, population, employment data, everything involved?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** You have access to everything that we collectively have, and there are ways to view that through the RFP and the PlaniTulsa website. And, if you look at the INCOG website there's lots of "stuff" out there, the City of Tulsa and PlaniTulsa website "link to" lots of stuff.

**(Susan Neal)** If there is any information that you cannot find, information that's not already online, please submit that question, we'll get you that information, if available.

**(Mayor Kathy Taylor)** We have put together information that might go along with this data under the headline of the paper "Budget Tulsa." We have a primary performance measure that the City of Tulsa lives by and where we are on those measures in terms of poverty and crime.

**Q: Could you elaborate on the section about computer capability and state your expectations on the final product and what that looks like?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** On page 15, the very last paragraph says, "The Proposer shall plan for a detailed publicly accessible, online, GIS system for the city." From there it goes on. We are not asking you to help us understand what we ought to do to achieve this. We're looking for you to help us with a plan that we can begin to implement. We want you to help us understand where we are, and to help us with a plan for what we might need to be doing to get to where we want to go. *Where* we

want to go is an amazing system that is very accessible for people like me sitting at home and bored. We want *great information* for citizens and others so we can make *great decisions* about our city.

**Q: There's a couple of things in the RFP about scheduling and providing schedules. Do you guys have a goal? Do you have a time constraint for your schedule?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** Our goal is that we have a renewed, updated comprehensive plan for the City of Tulsa and the metropolitan area. We want Phase 1 within 2.5 to 3 years. We'd be happy if it's 2. And there are some interim products that we've mentioned in here that we want before then. We're asking you to be responsive to that. And if you believe in your heart of hearts that we're making a huge mistake and this is stupid, then you can say that in your proposal. But we're going to want to know "why 'cause" this can't be done. But we also recognize this takes some time. The question becomes how do you balance out the time with our goal and what we're trying to do? We think it's very important that we get on with this. The Mayor's firm, she wants this.

**(Mayor Kathy Taylor)** Having talked with mayors in other cities who have been through this process, my goal is to have it done in two years. We're at a critical point right now in Tulsa and we need this plan.

**(Pat Treadway)** Two years. (laughter)

**Q: If we register today, will we have to wait until next week to begin to examine resources? If you can provide us with or tell us where to go to find out what data, GIS, where the aerials are, what resources are available between now and the time the project starts, that would be helpful. Could you help us understand what we have in digital format now?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** Correct. We're going to get you some information on that. It's really important that if you haven't registered with the city, please do that. Sign up today so that we know you're here.

**Q: Do we all get a copy of the sign up sheet?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** We can make a copy of the sign up sheet.

**Q: What is the budget for this plan?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** We believe that we have the resources necessary to fund this project.

**Q: Can you elaborate on that?**

A: **(Susan Neal)** Not really.

**Q: What's your expectation to the proposal?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** We want you to propose a project with a “not to exceed” figure. Now, you may end up saying there are about three ways to do this and the “not to exceed” figure for Phase 1 for Option A is here, Option B is here, Option C is there. We see Option C as something you may want to consider, that it's not a part of A and B. We're really looking for you to give us your “not to exceed” figure because we want to be able to compare and make good judgment.

**Q: Are you going to take the lowest bid or the best proposal?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** My opinion is that it will be the proposal that is the best fit for our community.

**Q: Does the city have any pier cities that we want to be like?**

A: **(Susan Neal)** I think you could talk to Tulsans and get different ideas on that. As far as the City of Tulsa is concerned, the actual city, this mayor, this administration, I don't know that we have a city in mind. We, as a city, have built a quality of life model where we compare ourselves in transportation, housing, parks and recreation, art and culture, to a number of these other cities. And we can see whether we are good, fair, or average, above average, wherever we rank. I don't

know that we have sat down and collectively as a community said “we want to be like Portland”. And, for as many people that want to be like Portland, there will be people who say “I want to be like Houston”, which would send me over the edge. Look at the community feedback from citizens on the PlaniTulsa website and you’ll see that we want. Among other things, you’ll see:

- Quality of Life
- To Be a Green City
- Progressive City
- Efficient City
- Welcoming City
- Liveable City

We want people who want to live in an urban environment to have that choice. We’d like to have an urban offering. For neighborhoods that want walkability, we want that. We have built our city not unlike other cities in the Sunbelt, that is, around the car. In our community there seems to be a growing sentiment that we need to look at ourselves a little differently. We’re still going to need cars in this part of the world apparently and for the foreseeable future. So, how do we become greener and more progressive and add walkability and pedestrian friendly communities and do all the things that people say they want to do in this city? That’s why we’re still primarily without public transportation. I know public transportation is mentioned frequently in the community feedback, and growing towards that is very important.

**Q: It sounds like you have some kind of geographic separation, whether or not you say you do or not, because South Tulsa is far more car-oriented. Do you guys want to limit this Plan geographically, separate it in terms of downtown, midtown?**

**A: (Pat Treadway)** This plan is about Tulsa and all of the aspects of our city and all of its development. East Tulsa is not West Tulsa. It’s Tulsa, both of them. This is about Tulsa, our town. 390,000 people, our people. Not about this part or that part alone.

**(Susan Neal)** And it's not about one part telling the other part how they are. Different parts of the City may have different solutions.

**Q: You make a general statement about a need to upgrade development regulations. From the city's perspective can you talk about the expectations during Phase 1 of the project? What that would entail?**

**A: (Pat Treadway)** We are not expecting you, from my perspective, to rewrite the zoning code as part of this effort. But we are asking you to say to us, "we think there's about four or five things that need to be done and, oh, by the way, here's the way you might want to do them." I think one of the things we are facing right now is the fact that all of our decisions have been based on the current zoning code.

**(Wayne Alberty, Manager, Land Development Services, INCOG)**  
We are aware that there are other ways to approach land use and quality of design, other than Euclidian zoning. One of the things that we want to know is, are there other ideas that you as consultants have found successful in communities like ours that can incorporate parts of the updated plan and allow us to take the next step, after preparations of the development plan, to totally revamp, if possible, our zoning code? We currently have a lot of leads in regards to updating our zoning codes. We realize that the climate seems to be hold off, do not do any major changes until this component, this first step, Phase 1, has begun. So we're at a point now we're saying bring to us some fresh ideas, some things that have worked.

**(Pat Treadway)** I'll also say that if there are things that need to be done that are discovered six months into this effort, we'll begin to do things then. We're not going to wait three years before we begin.

**Q: Will PlaniTulsa be the official website?**

**A: (Pat Treadway)** That's our plan, at least the web address.

**Comment: Problems with the Powerpoint presentation on the website**

A: See Theron ([planning@cityoftulsa.org](mailto:planning@cityoftulsa.org)).

**Q: On the website, does the City have some web technology person? What you're saying is that website will become the project website. That's where the modeling and work will be done. Is that something the City has the resources for or do we need to bring people with us for programming?**

A: (Pat Treadway) My opinion about this is that we *do not* possess everything we need entirely. We need to look to you to provide what we need to do pretty much what you just said. We need you to work with us. Bring some extra people.

**Q: Can you tell us about other plan efforts, either ongoing or recently completed, on the horizon that that the plan update should be coordinated with? For example, the river project.**

A: **(Rich Brierre)** Most of the plans can be accessed through the PlaniTulsa website. From there you can link to relevant areas on the City of Tulsa website, INCOG website, Tulsa Development Authority website (TDA is the Urban Renewal Authority). If interested in demographic information about our citizens, in addition to what the Mayor said we would provide as to our performance measures, you might get on [cstulsa.org](http://cstulsa.org). This is the community service council website. Check out the community profile.

**Q: Regarding resources from other departments; transportation, public works, parks; how involved will they be? Is there a structure to that? Are they as needed?**

A: **(Susan Neal)** Yes, they are needed and will be included along with all citizens. We're working on that internal structure, we have made a presentation recently to the mayor's management team of which I am one member of 11. We know that we need to bring all of these city resources to bear, and we're committed to doing that.

**Q: Does the consultant need to bring expertise for the transportation plan perspective? What can they expect from our infrastructure?**

A: **(Rich Brierre)** We're primarily looking at a policy level plan.

**(Pat Treadway)** INCOG has MPO capabilities.

**Q: The role of education and schools?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** We had a request to speak a little bit about education and the role of the schools. If you've looked at the Planitulsa website and have seen some of the comments that have been made, you'll see that education is a big deal, it's a big issue in our community. Susan is going to say a little bit about that.

**(Susan Neal)** One of the six departments that I have is education. But within a city, our sales tax does not fund education. The schools are funded through property tax. The school districts are independent of the City. However, there is a lot of outreach and continual communication. What is different about this particular administration is this: we have added education to our flow chart even though the school systems are not a part of our vast array of resources. The Mayor has made education one of her lead priorities, along with public safety and economic development. As Pat mentioned, education is a top priority in this community. As an example, Tulsa Community College, through a program called Tulsa Achieves, has made it possible for *every* graduating senior in Tulsa County in the class of 2007 to go to Tulsa Community College for the first two years of college, basically for free...books and everything. The University of Tulsa, a private institution, has partnered with Tulsa Community College. This is new. They are now reaching out to TCC and saying we will have as many of your students as we can fit on campus. They're trying to bring those kids up through the University of Tulsa. They would actually have the ability to live on campus. We are looking to be transformational in our approach to education in this community. There are also other successful initiatives. Early childhood education, of which Tulsa is a leader in this state, has put Oklahoma on the map by offering universal

“pre-k,” we were one of the first states to do that. Education has been important throughout Oklahoma history, but when you look at how we fund it, it is still not as important as it should be and it shows.

We have another priority in education and that is community schools. We think that education, the health of citizens, how we live and how we design our city and how we plan our city is directly related. For our part, the City is looking at how we can build strong neighborhoods and communities that can support the schools. Education is critical to our system. Schools have to be successful. The community has to be engaged in every child’s academic success, we know that how we make a liveable city that supports good public education, that’s important to us.

We must continue to coordinate with these various education components so that the private sector recognizes that higher education and common education are being provided. Even with common education, there is not always an understanding of the array of services available: early childhood, community schools, drop-out convention, and workforce re-entry.

Job selection is critical to us, to our future prosperity. We have a list of engineer’s positions at our aeronautical companies that goes wanting. We don’t necessarily have the workforce. We know we need to be visionary in our thinking, we need to get Tulsans into those jobs. If you look at our demographics, for the first time in our history, we have a larger population over 50 than we do under 50. We’re really excited about how this could work for us. We hope some of you are equally enthusiastic about Tulsa and one of you will want to marry us and make this successful.

**Q: What about sustainability? It was not mentioned in the RFP.**

**A: (Pat Treadway)** It’s been talked about a lot in our community, we didn’t mean to exclude it. We met with 1500 citizens of our city and we said “Talk to us about the future and what you’d kind of like to achieve.” Lots of people said, “We want to be green. We want to be thinking about the future we should be trying to achieve, not based upon the old model

but some new things.” We’re not sure what that is. It is something that’s on the minds of the public and we’re interested in how our city can move forward in a way that is greener, sensitive to issues and sustainable.

**Q: Does the City have an economic development strategy?**

A: **(Pat Treadway)** We have a relatively new economic development strategy in our city and you can download that document electronically at the City Council website. It has the marketing criteria that our economic development groups are working towards, and it does merit the fiscal aspects of our city.

**Q: Susan Neal talked about education. Whether in fact do you have a close relationship with your school district? Are they involved with the Steering Committee or any of this process?**

A: **(Susan Neal)** We have made presentations and engaged the school board. As we go forward, we will welcome your ideas on how to make sure that they are at our table. We did get their thoughts at one of our meetings. We haven’t done anything else with them to date. You are right that is a critical component. We have a new school superintendent.

**(Pat Treadway)** We have three principal public school districts within our city. If you count every school district that has a small geographic area within our city then its up to about eight. Our education system is complex and we have excellent working relationships everyday with the administration and board in those districts.

**Comment: (Pat Treadway)** If you have questions please register, please email the questions and we’ll answer. We’ll also make a summary of today’s meeting, what was asked, what was said and we’ll put it on the website. We have hard copies of everyone who was here today which is available here for you to pick up. Thank you very much.