

Work Program Elements

As members of the Churchill/Amsterdam community think about beginning a neighborhood planning process, we suggest framing the work ahead in three distinct phases:

- **Phase I:** Collecting and Analyzing Information;
- **Phase II:** Developing the Community Vision;
- **Phase III:** Implementation, including Neighborhood Planning Policies and (possibly) Regulations;

Phase I: Information

This is the step where you put the Planning Department to work and, if you decide to move forward, should start over the next several months. The factual background of the Churchill/Amsterdam planning effort will be half the foundation for your plan policies. We recommend collecting and analyzing the following information:

Social and Demographic Profile. Given the fact that the Churchill/Amsterdam planning boundary is not a distinct political jurisdiction, information gathering will be fairly limited. Planning Staff can pull together census and GIS mapping information to help the working group and community have a reasonable understanding of social and demographic information.

Public Facilities Inventory. This step will consist of interviewing local service providers (school, fire department, sheriff department, environmental health/sewer district) to determine the present capacity and needs of public facilities and services.

Land Use Inventory. The current use – grazing, farming, residential, commercial, public – of lands throughout the planning jurisdiction will be mapped. This inventory will include the location and size of existing subdivisions.

Landscape Inventory. This step will assemble the natural factors – floodplain, soils, etc. - that may affect proposed developments in the planning jurisdiction.

Phase II: Public Participation and the Community Vision

The other half of the foundation for your neighborhood plan is public involvement, and we recommend a working committee (Board of Fire Trustees? Other?) be formed and begin developing a basic plan for this. Generally, a kickoff meeting introducing the process and soliciting public involvement is the best way to get started. The kickoff meeting could, depending on your goals, be held on pretty much any time, though you

should set aside about 3 hours or so. The kickoff meeting will be the first of several public meetings, such as *education forums* and/or *policy development forums* during which more specific questions are asked and alternatives presented. Those meetings could be followed up by meetings where drafts of the plan are presented for critique.

We recommend the public participation plan consist of the following:

- Flyers, posters, press announcements, newspaper announcements of any meetings;
- Drafting an invitation letter explaining what the working committee is up to and the kickoff meeting/workshop that is sent out to a majority of landowners;
- Obtaining a schedule of events for the community center/fire hall (where meetings are to be held) and preparing materials explaining the process to have on display;
- Developing a simple presentation explaining the scope, purpose, and outcome of the kickoff meeting that can be delivered by members of the working committee at any gatherings that might happen at the school or community center;
- Developing a phone tree to issue personal invitations;
- Developing a strategy to include people who need to be involved but, for whatever reason, have not been.

The kickoff meeting is important because you need to pull as much public opinion out of people as possible. While a lot of options are available, an example to think about could include the following questions:

- 1) What makes Churchill/Amsterdam a good place to live?
- 2) What concerns do you have for the future in Churchill/Amsterdam
- 3) What would you like to change in the future for Churchill/Amsterdam?
- 4) If Churchill/Amsterdam is to be a successful community in 20 years, what would that success look like to you?

Phase III: Implementation

This is where the rubber meets the road and all the hard work pays off. Implementation of a planning process consists of two parts:

Neighborhood Plan. The Neighborhood Plan generally consists of the following elements: an introduction and preview, a vision statement, background information, and planning policies. As stated above, the factual background (including opportunities and needs identified by Phase I) and the vision will form the basis of the planning policies. Ideally, the planning policies will be used to guide future development in Churchill/Amsterdam and the surrounding area.

Zoning Regulation. This is the controversial part and whether or not you proceed with this is up to you. A zoning regulation is designed to implement a neighborhood plan. Without regulations, your neighborhood plan will not have much teeth. This is a bitter

pill for some people and you will decide how you want to proceed. We would also remind you of the County Commissioner's larger Growth Policy Implementation Program – if adopted, a neighborhood plan and zoning regulation will *grant* you development potential

Currently, Churchill/Amsterdam does not have a zoning regulation. This can result in a lot of unpredictability for landowners- both those who want to develop and those who do not. By state statute, a zoning regulation is required to address two issues: 1) density, and 2) use of a property. A zoning regulation can be as complicated or as simple as you would like. As stated above, true implementation of a neighborhood plan will require a zoning regulation.

Responsibilities

Seeing the planning process through to the end will be the responsibility of both the Steering Committee and Planning Staff. We see the breakdown as follows:

Planning Staff:

- Collect information and present it to the Working Committee and the community (Phase I).
- Help the Working Committee develop a kickoff meeting and be (partly) responsible for summarizing information gathered at this and any other public meetings (Phase II).
- Present all information to Working Committee at bi-monthly meetings.
- Help draft plan and policies (Phase III).

Working Committee:

- Meet twice a month to oversee and direct Phase I work and any drafting by Planning Staff.
- Help develop and implement the Phase II public participation program (including running the Visioning Workshop).
- Be responsible for any funds received.
- Run a website (if you develop one).
- Be willing to speak about the planning process to members of the public.
- Ensure the planning policies and possible regulations developed through this process are truly in line with Churchill/Amsterdam values.