Overview

The **Master Plan** is a watershed effort that will guide the City of Belle Meade for decades to come. The themes and recommendations emanating from this plan will be the result of a careful and thoughtful process that reflects residents’ values and vision, which can only happen through extensive dialogue with the community.

That dialogue began in 2019 with a resident survey, which garnered a response rate of about 50 percent. Over half of those who responded feel a long-term plan for walking, traffic calming, beautification, and branding is “Very Important,” and almost all of the remaining responses indicated it was “Somewhat Important.”

The **Master Plan** will continue the conversation through robust and intentional stakeholder outreach. This Stakeholder Engagement Strategy provides a framework for the tools and strategies that will be used throughout the process.

Who are Stakeholders?
Stakeholders are those who have a vested interest in the recommendations of the **Master Plan**. First and foremost, this includes the residents of Belle Meade. Beyond that, stakeholders with varying degrees of interest in the plan include the City Commission, committees and staff, neighborhood associations, community groups and visitors. The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy provides opportunities for each of these groups to get involved in the **Master Plan**.

Protect, Preserve, Prepare and Enhance
During all phases of outreach, thoughtful attention to messaging is essential. Overall, the outreach effort will engender a spirit of collaboration. Stakeholders should feel that they are an integral part of the plan development process.

More specifically, the outreach narrative and general messaging should reassure stakeholders that the plan will protect and preserve what draws people to Belle Meade, while at the same time preparing the City to enhance and improve in a way that respects its unique history and character.

Stakeholder Engagement Objectives and Process
This **Master Plan** does not endeavor to engage stakeholders simply for the sake of engaging them. Rather, there are specific objectives to be achieved. These include:

- **Inform**: Build awareness among stakeholders of the **Master Plan** itself and how they can participate in the process.
- **Consult**: Get stakeholder feedback on issues, opportunities and, ultimately, recommendations.
- **Collaborate**: Partner with stakeholders the development of the preferred strategies and solutions.
The timeline in the figure below illustrates where each of these objectives fall relative to the overall planning process. The engagement strategy is built around two major milestones, one occurring at the beginning of the process (“Kickoff”) and one toward the end (“Celebration”).

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There are several strategies designed for achieving the stakeholder engagement objectives, as identified in the table on the following page. The following sections describe how each of these strategies will be used within each milestone.
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Community Engagement Event No. 1: “Kickoff”

The first major community engagement milestone, “Kickoff,” will happen early in the process. As the name implies, this milestone will serve as a highly visible signal to the community that the Plan has begun.

This milestone has two major objectives: First, to *Inform* stakeholders about the Master Plan and how they can get involved; Second, to *Consult* with stakeholders about what they see are the predominant issues and opportunities for the City. There are a mix of virtual/online and in-person tools and strategies to achieve these objectives. Our messaging and narrative will reinforce the notion that the intent of the plan is to protect, preserve, prepare and enhance.

**Website**

A project-specific website will be developed that will serve as a virtual one-stop shop for all project materials and engagement activities. The website is a particularly important venue for individuals who are not yet comfortable with in-person interaction and may be too busy attend a specific event.

For the first community engagement milestone, the website will include the following elements:

- A description of the project.
- Announcements of project activities and events, such as the survey and Virtual Town Hall.
- The ability to host virtual presentations (such as the Town Hall), both live and recorded.
- An online mapper that gives participants the ability to pinpoint their issues and opportunities.
- Integrated online survey.
- Contact information for key project staff.

**Virtual Town Hall**

Using the Zoom Webinar platform, a Virtual Town Hall will include an introductory presentation, information on how to get involved, real time audience polling and a moderated question and answer session. The Town Hall will be housed in the project website and simulcast on the City’s Facebook page.

**Stakeholder Interviews**

Stakeholder interviews provide an opportunity for one-on-one interaction with individuals who may offer additional insight into the project context and history or unique opportunities. This could involve staff from the public works department, police department and others. Specific stakeholders to be interviewed will be determined by City staff and the Steering Committee. Up to eight (8) interviews will be conducted during the course of the project via telephone or videoconference. Many of these will occur during the Kickoff phase, but will also occur during the Plan Development phase.
Survey
A survey will be used to gather quantitative information on what stakeholders like and don’t like about the City, as well as to identify their top priorities. The survey will be available online at the project website and in hard copy format at in-person activities.

Issues and Opportunities Map
A thematic map will provide stakeholders an opportunity to pinpoint specific issues in the City. The map will be available online at the project website and in hard copy format at in-person activities.

Hosted Listening Sessions
Hosted listening sessions provide an opportunity for socially-distanced, in-person interaction in a relatively intimate and familiar setting. Residents will be recruited to host the sessions on their lawn and to invite their neighbors. The sessions are intended to be informal and will include a brief introductory presentation, followed by a question and answer session and opportunities to participate via the issues and opportunities map and survey. Up to three hosted listening sessions will occur during the Kickoff. Hosts can be Steering Committee members, Neighborhood Watch Block Captains or other residents of the City.

Park Day
A Park Day provides residents an additional opportunity to participate in-person, but are unable to attend one of the hosted listening sessions. The Park Day will occur at either Parmer Park or Percy Warner Park at a publicized day and time. The outdoor setting will provide stakeholders the ability to participate in a safe, socially distanced manner. Activities will include the issues and opportunities map and survey.

Speakers Bureau
The Speakers Bureau is a bench of speakers that are able to nimbly respond to speaking requests to raise awareness of the Master Plan and expand the reach of public and stakeholder engagement. Specific speaking engagements will be determined as opportunities are identified and should occur during the Kickoff, but may also occur at other points in time during the project.

The Speakers Bureau could include staff from the City, Steering Committee and consultant team, each with the ability to speak on behalf of the project at various groups and organizations, such as the Beautification Committee, neighborhood watch groups, chamber and business groups, and/or religious and civic organizations. The consultant team will attend up to three such presentations during the course of the project.

Social Media and E-mail
An update will be posted to the City’s Facebook page and website, pointing stakeholders to the project website and building awareness of Kickoff events and activities. An e-mail will be prepared to serve the same purpose, using available mailing lists from the City as well as project partners, including members of the Steering Committee and others.

Plan Development
The time period following the Kickoff milestone will be relatively quiet for stakeholder engagement, as the project team becomes focused on the development of the Plan. We will use
this period to *Inform* stakeholders on the results of the Kickoff and provide periodic updates on progress. We will also *Collaborate* with select stakeholders to provide subject matter expertise.

**Website**
The results of the Kickoff milestone, including survey results and “hotspot” map emanating from the issues and opportunities and other feedback, will be posted to the project website. A recording of the Virtual Town Hall will also remain available.

**Stakeholder Interviews**
The City includes residents who bring subject matter expertise in many of the topic areas addressed in the plan. The project team will collaborate with these stakeholders during the course of plan development to provide input and local context.

**Speakers Bureau**
The Speakers Bureau presentation will be updated to include the results of the Kickoff milestone.

**Social Media and E-mail**
An update will be posted to the City’s Facebook page and website thanking stakeholders for their participation in the Kickoff and pointing them to the results on the project website. An e-mail will be prepared to serve the same purpose.
Community Engagement Event No. 2: “Celebration”

Once the draft plan elements have begun to come together, the second major engagement milestone, “Celebration,” will launch. Major objectives are to Inform stakeholders about the draft recommendations, Consult stakeholders on the recommendations and Collaborate with stakeholders on any remaining decisions. The Steering Committee will help determine the appropriate level of engagement (for example, will stakeholders react to draft plan elements, or will they play a role in deciding some of the recommendations?).

The outreach narrative and general messaging will emphasize how the plan protects and preserves what draws people to Belle Meade, while at the same time preparing the City to enhance and improve in a way that respects its unique history and character.

Website

The project website will be updated with the following elements:

- Draft plan materials.
- A new survey to solicit feedback and input.
- Notification of Big Reveal events, such as the Virtual Town Hall.
- Livestream and hosted recording of the second Virtual Town Hall.

Virtual Town Hall

A second Virtual Town Hall will include a presentation of the draft recommendations, information on how to get involved, real time audience polling and a moderated question and answer session. The Town Hall will be housed in the project website and simulcast on the City’s Facebook page.

Park Day

A second Park Day will provide residents an additional opportunity to participate in-person. The Park Day will occur at either Parmer Park or Percy Warner Park at a publicized day and time. Activities will include the draft plan recommendations and the opportunity to provide feedback via a tactile exercise of survey.

Speakers Bureau

The Speakers Bureau presentation will be updated to include the draft recommendations.

Social Media and E-mail

An update will be posted to the City’s Facebook page and website pointing them to the draft recommendations on the project website. An e-mail will be prepared to serve the same purpose.
Finalize Plan
The Master Plan will be finalized using feedback received on plan recommendations during the second engagement milestone. The emphasis will be on *Informing* stakeholders of the Final Plan.

**Website**
The Final Plan will be posted to the project website.

**Social Media and E-mail**
An update will be posted to the City’s Facebook page and website pointing them to the Final Plan on the project website. An e-mail will be prepared to serve the same purpose.

**Final Presentation**
A final presentation will be given to the City Commission or other venue as deemed appropriate by the City, either in person or virtually.