

Zoning Assessment Steering Committee

Session 6 | 06/12/23 | 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: 26 people, including MPC and Urban Institute staff.

Definition Review

MPC reminded participants that the group agreements would remain in place for the meeting. The final draft versions of the definitions were presented for review. The definitions themselves were not open for discussion, but the considerations for each of the definitions were reviewed for updates and edits. An addition was suggested for the Health definitions' considerations to provide detail on the meaning of "structural" and "structures". An update was also suggested for the Sustainable Development definition's considerations to add in the same qualifier for the word "development" that was included as part of the Equitable Development considerations. The final draft definitions are below:

Equity

Outcomes and processes that result in fair and just access to opportunities and resources by way of repairing past harms and transforming power dynamics so that everyone, but particularly oppressed groups, both historically and presently, have the power and resources that they need to thrive.

Sustainability

An inclusive, systemic approach that improves and integrates environment, climate, health, social equity, and economic vitality in order to create thriving, healthy, diverse, and resilient communities and natural ecosystems for this generation and generations to come.

Public Health

The physical, mental, and social wellbeing of individuals and neighborhoods and populations. All of these are shaped by social and physical structures, conditions and processes.

Health Equity

The collective structural and social conditions within which individuals' wellbeing (physical, mental, and social) can thrive and where social categories cannot predict health outcomes.

Equitable Development

Development that acknowledges economic and historic and current drivers of disinvestment, fosters health, and vibrant places, centers and meets the needs of historically marginalized residents, and reduces racial, ethnic, and class disparities through a process that includes resident engagement and accountability, leading to improved socio-economic outcomes.

(Environmentally) Sustainable Development

Development that acknowledges the importance of ecology and natural systems and works to address past environmental harms, reduce current negative impacts especially the overburdening of marginalized communities--mitigate future harms, and ensure the benefits of

economic activity are broadly distributed throughout neighborhoods by taking positive steps towards a sustainable future.

Review of Outcomes

MPC reminded the Steering Committee that the group agreements and “fist to five” voting tool will remain in place during the session. MPC presented a list of 15 prioritized outcomes. The list was developed based on a pre-meeting activity that the Steering Committee members completed where they selected 10 outcomes that they felt were most important. The project team tabulated scores across each outcome based on members’ responses. The project team then cross-referenced the high scoring outcomes (those that scored five or greater) with the Outcome Classifications that were reviewed in the May meeting. The Outcomes Classifications categorized the outcomes based on their relation to zoning and land use and whether changes to either could impact the outcome. The prioritized list of 15 outcomes generally fit with the zoning and land use relationship classifications, with most falling within the Zoning/Land Use, Zoning/Land Use PLUS market, and Zoning/Land Use PLUS other dept./codes. Only two of the top scoring outcomes were classified in the Other city depts./codes category:

- High quality public schools that are accessible within neighborhoods
- Little threat to personal safety and/or property

The project team recommended removing these two from the list and did not present them among the 15 prioritized outcomes due to land use and zoning’s limited ability to move the needle on the outcomes in a meaningful way. The Steering Committee took a vote using “fist to five” via Mentimeter on whether the group could agree on using the 15 prioritized outcomes as a first focus for the zoning and land use assessment. There were two Steering Committee members who voted twos. The remainder of the Steering Committee members voted three, four, and fives, with the majority being fours.

The project team did not want to proceed with using the list of 15 outcomes as the basis of the assessment if there were Steering Committee members that were voting two, which indicates that they do not like the list very much but are willing to go along with it. Below are the high-level comments from the Outcomes Discussion:

- ❓ Steering Committee members felt that the scoring would have changed if “High quality public schools that are accessible within neighborhoods” and “Little threat to personal safety and/or property” were removed from the list prior to voting.
- ❓ Steering Committee members felt that the outcomes related to public schools and public safety are related to zoning and land use and that they should be included within the list of prioritized outcomes.
- ❓ Steering Committee members wanted to include a few additional outcomes on the prioritized list from the original list of outcomes. These include:
 - o Affordable health care providers (pharmacies, hospitals, medical clinics, social services) options are accessible in all neighborhoods (half-mile of each neighborhood)
 - o Revitalization and/or preservation of historic commercial corridors through focus on nodes (can be included in the outcomes related to business corridors)
 - o Planning and incentives for existing and new builds (incentives to retain existing buildings vs new builds)

- o Building stock is energy efficient and less reliant on carbon-based fuels
- ❓ Steering Committee members wanted to include the “Transit hub” outcome under the category of land use rather than Mobility

Additional comments around the Outcomes Review included:

- ❓ Steering Committee members want to see a consolidation and rewording of the outcomes as a number of them are similar and can be grouped together.
- ❓ Steering Committee members questioned the meaning behind “prioritized outcomes” and whether the additional outcomes that were included would be revisited.
- ❓ Steering Committee members were interested in revisiting the outcome for “Provide clean safe water supply and water systems (removal of lead pipes)” in the project’s phase II

The project team updated the list of prioritized outcomes to include the additional six outcomes discussed by Steering Committee members. The Steering Committee took another vote on this revised list. With this vote, there were no Steering Committee members voting two. There were two threes with the majority of members voting fours and fives. The assessment will move forward with the revised list of priority outcomes and the project team will consolidate the outcomes based on Steering Committee member feedback.

Metrics Discussion

The project team presented initial data sources to be used to determine metrics for each of the outcomes. Within small groups, Steering Committee members reviewed the data sources and answered the following questions:

- Any concerns with these proposed metrics?
- What are some other metrics that should be considered?
- What are appropriate data sources to use for these other metrics?

Key takeaways from these conversations included the following:

- This discussion is really centered on data sources for the study rather than metrics.
- Data sources could include considering grocery stores that accept WIC as well as closures of supermarkets across the city. It would also be important to measure food access versus hunger.
- Trust for Public Land may have a more useful data layer for tree canopy, and parks and green space should be differentiated.
- Data sources on business corridors are missing and should be explored.
- Data is refreshed on zoning maps so it may be helpful to try to find old maps to indicate change over time.
- Department of Housing as a dashboard that may provide data sources related to housing and the Affordable Requirements Ordinance.
- Affordable housing will need to be defined as part of locating data and data sources. With some metrics being around affordability as well as gaps in affordability in both need and access. Shelters need to be included as well, which may require checking with the Illinois Dept. Of Housing Services.
- The Food Equity council may have data sources as well as the Food Pantry network.
- IDHA has useful data around market analysis and affordable rental unit survey.

- USPS has data with the quarterly vacancy survey.

Assessment Approach

The project team presented the approach to the assessment based on the work of the Steering Committee as well as additional activities that the team had finished. The project team discussed its key takeaways from conducting a literature review and practitioner conversations and how they will inform the assessment. The outline and main steps for conducting the assessment based on the Prioritized Outcomes that were identified by the Steering Committee was then presented.

Finally, the process theme coding data was shared. Phase II will focus on investigating questions about key areas that emerged as main challenges as part of the zoning and land use process based on the focus group and Steering Committee activities. They are:

- Public Review (Public hearings do not allow for a fair view of community input/support; Community meetings are not transparent about outcomes and what residents can and cannot influence)
- Process Participation (Process is difficult to understand)
- Aldermanic (No consistent ward level (community engagement) process on land use decisions)
- Applicant Process Requirements (Process is difficult to start and complete)

Next Steps and Future Phases

The project team provided a brief recap of the work that was accomplished over the past six months. A revised timeline for the project was presented as well as some plans around continued engagement and outreach. Finally, the project team documented many outstanding challenges and topics around zoning, land use, and development that arose during phase I. These topics will be ideas that the Steering Committee will need to grapple with as part of Phases II and III of the project in order to make collaborative short-term and long-term recommendations based on the results of the assessment.

The last Steering Committee of Phase I concluded. The project team will follow-up with revised materials and a post-survey for all members. Phase II will begin in July and the Steering Committee will reconvene in Fall 2023.