



LAKE HAVASU CITY

General Plan & Development Code Update

Public Information Session #1: April 1, 2014 (Meeting Summary)

Summary of Session

On April 1, 2014 the City and Clarion Associates held a kick-off meeting to inform the community about the City's General Plan and Development Code Update Project. Over twenty people were in attendance. A recording of the session and Clarion's presentation are both available on the City's website: <http://www.lhcaz.gov/generalplan/>

The following summarizes the general discussion, key points made about each update, and the comments, and concerns voiced by the community.

Project Introduction:

Greg Froslic, Director of the City's Community Services Department introduced the project team, provided a brief overview of the General Plan and Development Code Update project, and indicated that the City initiated this project to adhere to Arizona law and to better guide future City development.

Members of the consultant team (Don Elliott, Darcie White, and Kristin Cisowski of Clarion Associates) then provided an overview of each project component and answered questions from the audience.

GENERAL

- This is the first of eight public information sessions intended to keep the public informed and involved in this update process, which will take place over the next 18 months.
- A Public Involvement Plan (PIP), prepared in accordance with Arizona's Grow Smarter Act, and designed to allow for effective, early, and continuous public participation of the General Plan update, will be reviewed by City Council in April.
- While code enforcement regulations are one component of the overall Development Code update, and will be addressed, code enforcement issues are not the driving force behind this project.

OVERVIEW: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

- The General Plan is a planning document that identifies the community's visions and goals, as well as how to achieve those goals over the next 10 years.
- The General Plan will be updated to include new elements (e.g., conservation, neighborhood preservation and revitalization, public services and facilities) required under Arizona law for a City with a population greater than 50,000.
- Since 2002, the 50,000 threshold has been exceeded (52,819, 2012 U.S. Census estimate).

PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION #1: APRIL 1, 2014 (MEETING SUMMARY)

- As in 2002, following Planning Commission and City Council review and approval of the updated General Plan, Lake Havasu City residents will have the opportunity to vote on the General Plan (sometime in 2015).

OVERVIEW: DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE

- The Development Code contains the standards and regulations for development in Lake Havasu City.
- Many communities update their General Plans and Development Codes at the same time because a community cannot achieve its development goals if its standards and regulations do not reflect those goals.
- The primary goals of this update are to eliminate existing conflicts and inconsistencies within the existing Development Code, to ensure that the new Code compliments the updated General Plan, and to make it simpler and more user-friendly.
- Because code enforcement regulations are contained in the Development Code, these regulations will be reviewed and revised as one component of this update process.

Public Comments:

- Code enforcement is a pressing community issue. While individual opinions about code enforcement varied, participants expressed concerns that any changes not interfere with private property rights. (e.g., many of the attendees do not believe that the development code should regulate cars on front yards).
Response: The Clarion team will share their knowledge of how other communities balance the property rights interests of lot owners with those of neighboring owners not to have nuisances in their neighborhoods.
- Several participants noted that citizens should be able to “vote” on the updated Development Code as they do on the General Plan.
Response: Unlike the General Plan, Arizona law does not require voter ratification of the Development Code, and it is unusual for voters, rather than the City Council, to adopt a Development Code. While the community will be involved throughout this 18 month update process, the City Council has not indicated a desire to have a public vote on the new Development Code.
- The new Development Code needs to be consistent with Arizona Proposition 207 and its emphasis on property rights.
- The “stakeholders” for the updates include the citizens, and as many private citizens as possible should be included on the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) and Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC).
Response: Membership on the two committees has not been finalized. The City Council intends to include a broad cross-section of the community (including public citizens and agency representatives, as well as those who use the Plan and Code on a regular basis) in these committees.
- To ensure that the community is informed of upcoming public involvement opportunities, the attendees proposed additional notification methods including: mailings (e.g., water bill flyers), Facebook, and notification of faith-based organizations.
- Concerns about public health and safety issues were voiced (e.g., the lack of sidewalks and the dangerous situation this creates, especially for kids, walking around the City at night).
- The City is a different place at night, so Clarion should tour the City after 10:00 p.m. to get a sense of different issues that come into play at this hour.

PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION #1: APRIL 1, 2014 (MEETING SUMMARY)

- The General Plan and Development Code should create a healthy, nurturing, and family-oriented community.
- Although the “buffer zones” between residential and commercial uses have been eroded in some cases, they should be strengthened in order to prevent negative impacts on residential neighborhoods, particularly noise impacts.

***Response:** Clarion will suggest various means by which impacts of commercial development on nearby residential areas can be buffered or reduced.*