




Columbus Area Commission / Civic Association Work Group



Report to City Council
12 December 2007



Purpose

Examine the function and status and potential improvement of civic groups across the city.



Process

- Kickoff meeting held May 23, 2007.
- Open meetings held approximately twice per month from May-September 2007.
- Retreat held August 25 to compile ideas into formal recommendations.
- Public comment was received at several meetings.



Recommendations

- Status of Community Councils & Civic Associations
 - A formal process should be established for recognizing “**civic advisory bodies.**”
These are groups which provide recommendations to the city using an open, public process in areas not covered by area commissions.



Recommendations

- Training and Education
 - Meeting management and zoning training should be mandatory training for area commissions and civic advisory bodies.
 - Training should be provided to all city staff who interact with civic groups.

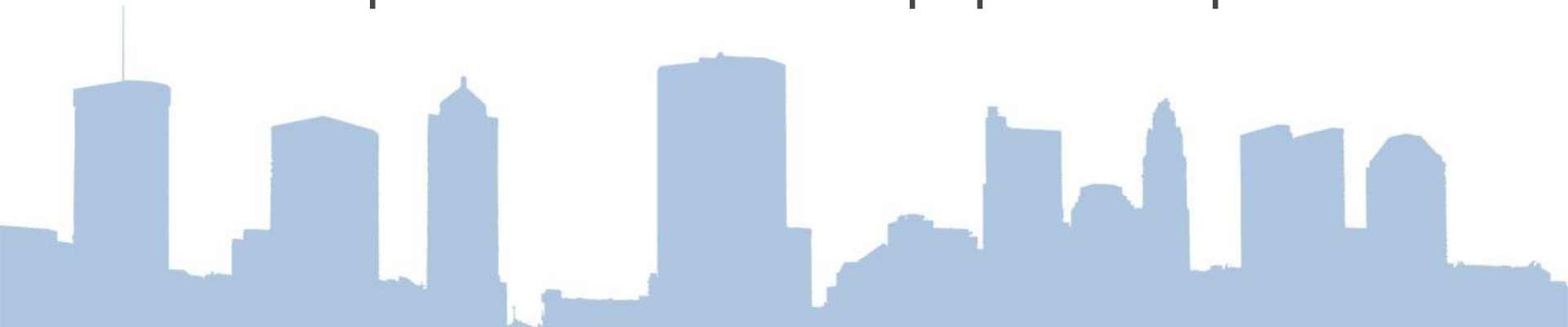


Recommendations

- Staffing and Financial Support

The city can assist area commissions by providing the following:

- Websites
- Physical and electronic storage
- \$5,000 stipends
- Simpler finance-related paperwork process



Recommendations

- Status of Non-Residents
- Common Committee Structure
 - Individual areas have considerably different situations, therefore these issues should be defined by individual area commissions and not standardized across the city.



Recommendations

- Encouraging Participation in City Service Delivery
 - Dedicated speaker slot at council hearings.
 - Provide results of city decisions to affected civic groups promptly and without charge.
 - Keep civic groups informed of all projects active and planned within their areas.
 - Regular and equal service is expected for all civic groups across the city.



Recommendations

- Dispute Resolution
 - Mediation training and good neighbor agreement templates are needed.



Recommendations

- Community Planning Areas and Area Commission Boundaries
 - Create a mechanism to amend area commission boundaries.
 - Specific mechanism requires additional debate by community groups and public input.



Recommendations

- Other – Graphics
 - Allow graphics issues to be heard with related zoning cases.



Work Group Information

Available on Columbus website:

www.columbuscitycouncil.org/initiatives



Columbus Community Coalition

- Announcing the intent of Columbus's civic groups to formally communicate and collaborate on issues of city-wide concern.
- The Coalition seeks to work with City Council and the Mayor to improve all Columbus neighborhoods.
- First meeting: 31 January 2008



Closing

- Area Commissions and Civic Advisory Bodies:
 - Have different capabilities and resources.
 - Share many common issues and concerns.
 - Work for the betterment of neighborhoods.
 - Seek closer mutual relationships.

