

Council Minutes February 28, 2023

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF TARRANT §

CITY OF BEDFORD §

The City Council of the City of Bedford, Texas, met in joint work session with the Planning and Zoning Commission at 6:00 p.m. in the in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 2000 Forest Ridge Drive, on the 28th day of February, 2023 with the following members present:

Michael Boyter	Mayor
Amy Sabol	Mayor Pro Tem
Dan Cogan	Councilmembers
Nichelle D. Dawkins	
Steve Farco	
Rob Gagliardi	
Rich Steves	

constituting a quorum.

The following members of the Planning and Zoning Commission were present:

Bruce Emery	Chairperson
Kate Barlow	Commissioners
Roger Gallenstein	
Bryn Henderson	
Tom Jacobsen	
Steve Otto	
Danielle Stellrecht	
Treasure Ford	Alternates
Terry Smith	

constituting a quorum.

Staff present included:

Jimmy Stathatos	City Manager
Andrea Roy	Assistant City Manager
Michael Wells	City Secretary
Wes Morrison	Community Development Manager
Jose Saenz	Planner

JOINT WORK SESSION

The Joint Work Session began at 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER/GENERAL COMMENTS

Mayor Boyter called the Work Session to order.

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- **Receive an overview of the Comprehensive Plan (Master Plan) process and discuss the long-term vision for growth and development of the City.**

Assistant City Manager Andrea Roy stated that representatives from Hawes Hill and Associates, the consultant on the project, have collected data on Bedford and had a preliminary meeting with staff. City Manager Jimmy Stathatos stated there would be opportunities for public input and information gathering throughout the process.

Naina Magon and Tony Allender with Hawes Hills presented information on their and the company's background, including with planning, economic development, finance and implementation. They stated they work with Clark Condon Associates, a landscape architecture firm, to bring added value to the team through placemaking landscaping parks, open spaces, and stormwater management. They discussed the importance of a comprehensive plan to assist communities remain relevant and competitive, including to help bring in revenue investment and improve the quality of life. They stated the comprehensive plan is about gaining a level of understanding and establishing common ground, building a common vision, building a path forward, and ultimately understanding the actions to get there. Further, the plan is an understanding of the physical environment and what to do with it. They stated that the plan should make Bedford market competitive for long-term investment, while being flexible as needs and demands change; create a common ground for elected officials, appointed officials, staff, developers, engineers, architects, and the general public; and provide a guide and policy tool for making decisions.

Ms. Magon and Mr. Allender presented an overview of the process. Phase 1 is a community assessment on the current conditions in Bedford. Phase 2 is to establish a common vision and guiding principles. Phase 3 is to reposition Bedford and address major features of the community, including places, land use, mobility, connectivity, infrastructure, and environment. Phase 4 is for recommendations and implementation, including prioritized actions and policies. Phase 5 is approval of the plan, which is to set the stage for action and making ideas into reality. Ms. Magon and Mr. Allender discussed projects on which they have been involved, including public-private partnerships. They discussed infrastructure improvements, including adding bike lanes and medians, intersection improvements, adding trails to existing drainage ways, retooling parks, and adding public art.

In response to questions from Council and the Commission, Ms. Magon and Mr. Allender stated their work product would be the assessment of existing conditions and the comprehensive plan. They discussed the needs for a comprehensive plan to be actionable as well as opportunities for public input during the process, including online community engagement. They stated the plan can be used for significant period of time while still being flexible in its design, and the overall process would take approximately one year. Their observations on Bedford and challenges for implementing the plan include underutilized opportunities for land uses, such as drainage ways, and opportunities for a community that is mature and built out. They discussed work they have done with similar mature, built-out communities.

There was discussion on the connection between various other plans the City has already implemented, including for parks and streets; the possibility of resident fatigue from providing feedback; focusing on the southern part of the City and the opportunities for investment and redevelopment; working with and incentivizing shopping center owners; reaching out for input from other stakeholders, including the Hurst-Euless-Bedford Independent School District and the HEB Chamber of Commerce; Hawes and Hills involvement in the downtown plan for the City of Lewisville; the idea that every community has its own unique character, discovering what makes

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a community special during the assessment, and how it impacts the market competitiveness of the community; the scope of the assessment, including examining gateways, the commercial and housing mixes, connectivity, and currently marketability and trends; a future land use map as part of the deliverables to establish the basis for decisions regarding future zoning decisions; and determining the character of the community.

There was further discussion regarding a thoroughfare plan regarding the treatment of the City's corridors as part of the deliverables; the Council and Commission having policies in place to help make decisions on certain items; possible catalysts for success, including focusing on destinations and experiences; that a zoning map would not be a deliverable; how success is defined and Council and the Commission setting the measures for success; catalysts for success and future development, including the current trend of destinations and experiences; Bedford's asset of being located in the middle of the metroplex; the comprehensive plan as a marketing tool; utilizing outside resources, forecasts, and trends when developing recommendations as part of the plan; where trends are taking the City versus where it wants to go; information on changes in industries; specific action items as part of the implementation program; trends in retail being overplayed, including mixed-use developments; determining Bedford's identity; potential partnerships with surrounding communities; and helping apartment complexes remain market competitive.

In response to a question regarding what makes a comprehensive plan successful or unsuccessful, Ms. Magon and Mr. Allender stated it depends on how it is written, including those that have failed were not geared towards the community and/or were not actionable. Further, they recommended engaging and getting buy-in from the various City departments during the process. Regarding the City's strengths and opportunities, they discussed the City's drainage ways, synergy between parcels, and turning the City's wide streets into multi-purpose corridors to increase connectivity in the community. There was discussion on the reasoning behind Bedford becoming an aging community and ways to bring in a younger demographic, including by creating experiences; rebuilding older homes in the community; the causes of gentrification; and the arts community driving revitalization.

In response to questions from Ms. Magon and Mr. Allender regarding what they wanted out of the comprehensive plan, the Council and Commission discussed the City becoming a destination; uniqueness; the plan as a functional tool when reviewing zoning requests; creating energy for the City; redevelopment and revitalization; connectivity and branding of City properties, including Bedford Commons and the Old Bedford School; areas of opportunities; and recommendations on updating the City's ordinances.

There was discussion on the next steps in the process, including a visioning workshop and developing guiding principles; and how the comprehensive plan plays into the Campus West and Bedford Commons developments.

In regards to the working relationship between the Council and the Commission, there was discussion regarding having a commonality in the thoughts and vision for the City; raising the City's standards and not accepting every development that is presented; improving the communications between the two bodies, including holding more joint work sessions; presenting development updates to the Commission and departmental updates during Council meetings; the improvements in communication between the Commission and staff; the Commission doing homework on zoning items and presenting Council with an encapsulated view of the pros and cons of said items; the Commission considering whether zoning items are amenable to the Council and if they are something the community wants; and building a community.

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ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Boyter adjourned the Work Session at 8:01 p.m.

Michael Boyter, Mayor

ATTEST:

Michael Wells, City Secretary