

May 10, 2022, Collinsville City Council Summary

May 16 2022 10:02 AM



COLLINSVILLE – Residents will soon have an even greater opportunity in shaping what their neighborhoods look like and how to make them stronger. The Collinsville Community Development Department plans on rolling out a new program focused on proactively strengthening the residential neighborhoods through the Neighborhood Planning and Improvement Initiative.

Senior Planner Andi Yancey explained the Neighborhood Planning and Improvement Initiative started in 2020, but due to COVID and other circumstances, it was sidelined. Now in 2022, Yancey said it is time to revisit the project and start moving it forward. “What we’re looking to do is really empower people to take initiative, identify the problem, communicate that to the appropriate staff so that we can be more proactive in our service efforts, code enforcement, and our other outreach efforts,” Yancey said.

The project seeks to have city departments working more closely together, increase the ability to identify and respond to neighborhood issues and capital improvement needs, improve customer service, responsiveness, community outreach, education efforts and encourage neighborhood-based, citizen-led organizations.

To accomplish the goals of the project many departments within the city including Community Development, Police Department, Fire Department, Street Department, City Council, and the Parks and Recreation Department will be involved.

A needs assessment survey has been created and will serve as the first step in the program, with the goal to get the survey out to residents' late spring or early summer. In the fall, after surveys have been received and data examined, preliminary planning will take place.

Within this plan, the city is broken down into 11 different neighborhoods in order to tailor a specific response to each area and not take a one size fits all approach.

By the spring of 2023, the goal is to start having meetings to address the survey results and develop plans for what needs to be accomplished.

Getting the survey to residents will be accomplished via mailings, presence at city events, and on the city's website.

Questions include basic information about where people live, quality of life with living in the city, identifying common problems, level of satisfaction with city services, and gauging interest in establishing neighborhood associations and meetings.

In the future, the city aims to have a website for residents to visit to be able to report any concerns, look for resources to help address issues, and see what kind of projects are happening in any given neighborhood.

“What we've heard a lot from everybody is, I don't know where to find these resources and I think that website will give us that opportunity to be very holistic and organized by neighborhood... We're going to have all the information populated there based on what's important to your neighborhood,” said Mitch Bair, Collinsville City Manager.

In other business, the Council approved an ordinance to sign a contract with Great Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau.

According to the staff report, the agreement is very similar to previous agreements with Great Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau in providing marketing and promotion services for the City of Collinsville and increasing the tourism and visitor opportunities.

“That’s our prime economic development strategy as you’ve all heard me say for the past 6 years and it continues to be even more refined as we move through time and have events to bring into this community,” Bair said.

The only change is an increase from \$100,000 to \$125,000, which Bair said is justified by the numbers in the report prepared by Corey Jobe, President, and CEO of Great Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau.

The report includes marketing data about the reach of social media and other advertising efforts made by the bureau and sales data from tours and sporting events.

A bright spot on the report is hotel occupancy, which for the period of February 2022 to April 2022 is at 62.9 percent with an average daily rate of \$90.50 generating \$4,110,000 for the local economy.

Jobe highlighted a big asset the bureau can provide is data to understand a lot about the people visiting and what they want.

“The data will allow us collectively to make better positive decisions,” Bair said. The ordinance passed unanimously.

Mayor John Miller took a moment to recognize Dale Kress and Larry Clubb, both who after 23 years each, retired from the Wastewater Department.

“We lost 46 years of experience right there in two employees and we wish them well,” Miller said.