CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM

DEPARTMENT: ___Planning, Research and Development_____

AGENDA DATE: _____April 12, 2005_____

CONTACT PERSON/PHONE: _____Verónica Rosales, Chief Urban Planner_____

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: ____All Districts__

SUBJECT:
APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include $ amount if applicable.

Resolution to adopt the Neighborhood Plan Development Process

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:
Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?

Neighborhood Plan Development Process document will serve as a guide to help identify, prioritize, and process neighborhood plans

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:
Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?

No.

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:
How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?

No Cost to the City

BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:
Enter appropriate comments or N/A

The Development Coordinating Committee (DCC) recommended unanimous approval on March 23, 2005 and the City Plan Commission at their public hearing of March 24, 2005 voted unanimously (7 to 0) to recommend approval of this item with one change.

**********REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION**********

LEGAL: (if required) _____ **FINANCE:** (if required) _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD: _____

(Example: if RCA is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)

Information copy to appropriate Deputy City Manager

APPROVED FOR AGENDA:

CITY MANAGER: _____ **DATE:** _____

JOE WARDY
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

GEORGE G. SARMIENTO, AICP
DIRECTOR

PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

CITY COUNCIL

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DISTRICT NO. 7

ANTHONY W. COBOS
DISTRICT NO. 8

3/25/2005

TO: Mayor and Council
Adrian Ocegueda, Executive Assistant to the Mayor

COPY TO: Joyce Wilson, City Manager
Patricia D. Adauto, Deputy City Manager

FROM: George G. Sarmiento, AICP Director

SUBJECT: City Council Public Hearing: April 12, 2005
Resolution Adopting the Neighborhood Plan Development Process

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The following item has been placed on the above noted City Council Agenda.

Resolution: that the El Paso City Council hereby approves the Neighborhood Plan Development Process together with appendices (Exhibit "A") as the appropriate document for identifying, prioritizing, and processing neighborhood plans. (All Districts)
[Planning, Research and Development Department, Verónica Rosales, 541-4633]

Office Use Only			
Mayor's Office (2 copies):	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 1:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 2:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 3:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 4:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 5:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 6:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 7:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
Representative District 8:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____
City Attorney's Office:	*date:* _____	*time:* _____	*by:* _____

#2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, El Paso, Texas 79901
915.541.4024 Telephone • 915.541.4028 Fax • www.elpasotexas.gov

A copy of the adopting Resolution and the Neighborhood Plan Process document is attached. The draft Neighborhood Plan Development Process document was distributed on March 15, 2005 along with background information on the series of public meetings held and the input received and an analysis of the public comments received. Public comments were the basis for some changes to the original draft completed in January. The revised draft has been presented to both the Development Coordinating Committee and the City Plan Commission.

On March 23, 2005, the Development Coordinating Committee (DCC) unanimously voted to recommend approval of this item. The City Plan Commission at their public hearing of March 24, 2005 voted unanimously (7 to 0) to recommend approval of this item with one change. The change was to include economic development issues within a neighborhood as part of the neighborhood plan elements. This change has been incorporated into the final document and it can be found on page 11, item as the last listed item and on Appendix B of the document.

For your information, all public meeting participants and recognized neighborhood association leaders will be notified of the public hearing date before City Council of this item as a courtesy.

Should you have any questions, please call Verónica Rosales at 541-4633 or George Sarmiento at 541-4193.

Attachments:
Resolution Adopting the Neighborhood Plan Development Process
Neighborhood Plan Development Process – Final Draft dated April 12, 2005

c: Verónica Rosales, AICP, Chief Urban Planner
Matt Watson, Assistant City Attorney

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, *The Plan for El Paso* was formerly adopted by the El Paso City Council on April 27, 1999 pursuant to the provisions of Section 219.002 of the Texas Local Government Code as the comprehensive plan for the City; and

WHEREAS, the *The Plan for El Paso* serves as a general guide for the future growth and development of the City to promote public health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, *The Plan for El Paso* recommends the development of study area plans for areas of the City designated for mixed use, and encourages citizen participation in the development and implementation of these plans; and

WHEREAS, a study area plan is intended to be a separate policy document that is integrated into *The Plan for El Paso* to ensure consistency with the goals, policies and general objectives of the City's comprehensive plan and ongoing planning process; and

WHEREAS, a neighborhood planning focus was initiated in August of 2002 with the adoption of the Neighborhoods Matter! Program, an initiative administered in the Planning, Research and Development Department to establish neighborhood plans; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission has an important role throughout this process in conformance with the Commission duties listed in Title 2 of the City of El Paso Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council requested that the policy for developing neighborhood plans be adopted so that neighborhood groups, staff, and elected and appointed officials can use this a guide to authorize and develop neighborhood plans; and

WHEREAS, the proposed framework for prioritizing and developing neighborhood plans ("Neighborhood Plan Development Process") set forth herein carries out the purpose and spirit of the polices expressed in *The Plan for El Paso* and the Neighborhoods Matter! Program and further delineates the process by which neighborhood plans can be developed and adopted under the neighborhood planning program; and

WHEREAS, community input for the Neighborhood Plan Development Process document was solicited initially through a series of public meetings held in each of the five planning areas throughout the City from January 24, 2005 through March 3, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the Development Coordinating Committee and City Plan Commission have recommended approval of the Neighborhood Plan Development Process provided for herein

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council finds that the adoption of the Neighborhood Plan Development Process carries out the purpose and spirit of the policies expressed in *The Plan for El Paso.*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS:

1. **THAT** the El Paso City Council hereby approves the Neighborhood Plan Development Process together with appendices (Exhibit "A") as the appropriate document for identifying, prioritizing, and processing neighborhood plans.

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2005.

THE CITY OF EL PASO

_____
Joe Wardy,
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Richarda Momsen,
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Matt Watson, Asst. City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

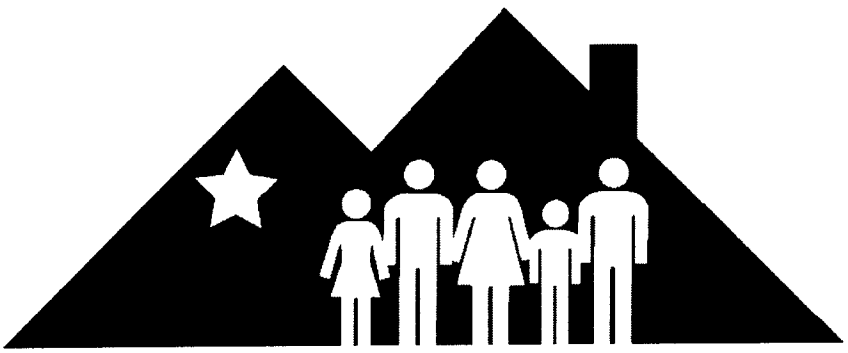
Patricia D. Adauto
Patricia D. Adauto, Deputy City Manager
Building and Planning Services

Document #: 9634
Document Name: PLANNING/1/RESO/NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN TEMPLATE
Document Author: MWAT

Neighborhood Plan Development Process

A Guide for Neighborhoods, Staff and Appointed & Elected Officials

Neighborhood Planning Program



Neighborhoods Matter!
Fostering Community Pride

The City of El Paso, Texas
Planning, Research and Development Department
April 12, 2005

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Purpose of a Neighborhood Plan

A Neighborhood Plan is a written document setting forth a vision and goals for a certain area of the city and outlining steps that city government and the community may take to implement that vision. A neighborhood plan provides a framework for local officials and municipal departments to incorporate neighborhood issues into municipal actions that have a greater chance of being supported and implemented, not just at the neighborhood level, but city-wide.

A neighborhood plan shall address City land use goals and policies, and related City infrastructure, transportation and service issues. A plan builds on the efforts outlined in the City of El Paso's Comprehensive Plan to address land use issues in more detail. The neighborhood planning process involves informed residents collaborating with decision-makers, service providers and business leaders. The neighborhood planning process further affords residents an opportunity to view issues in a larger context.

The process to follow for neighborhood plan development—from request submittal through adoption—is listed in this document. The City Plan Commission has an important role throughout this process in conformance with the Commission duties listed in Title 2 of the City of El Paso Municipal Code. There are several distinct steps in plan development as noted in Figure 1.

Pre-Planning Steps: Request for Neighborhood Plan Development

Requests for neighborhood plan development can be submitted in writing at any time to the City of El Paso Planning, Research and Development Department ("Department") by any of the following:

1. A Neighborhood Association
2. An organized group, e.g. Neighborhood Watch or Business Association
3. A request by City Council
4. A request by the City Plan Commission
5. A request by a City Department

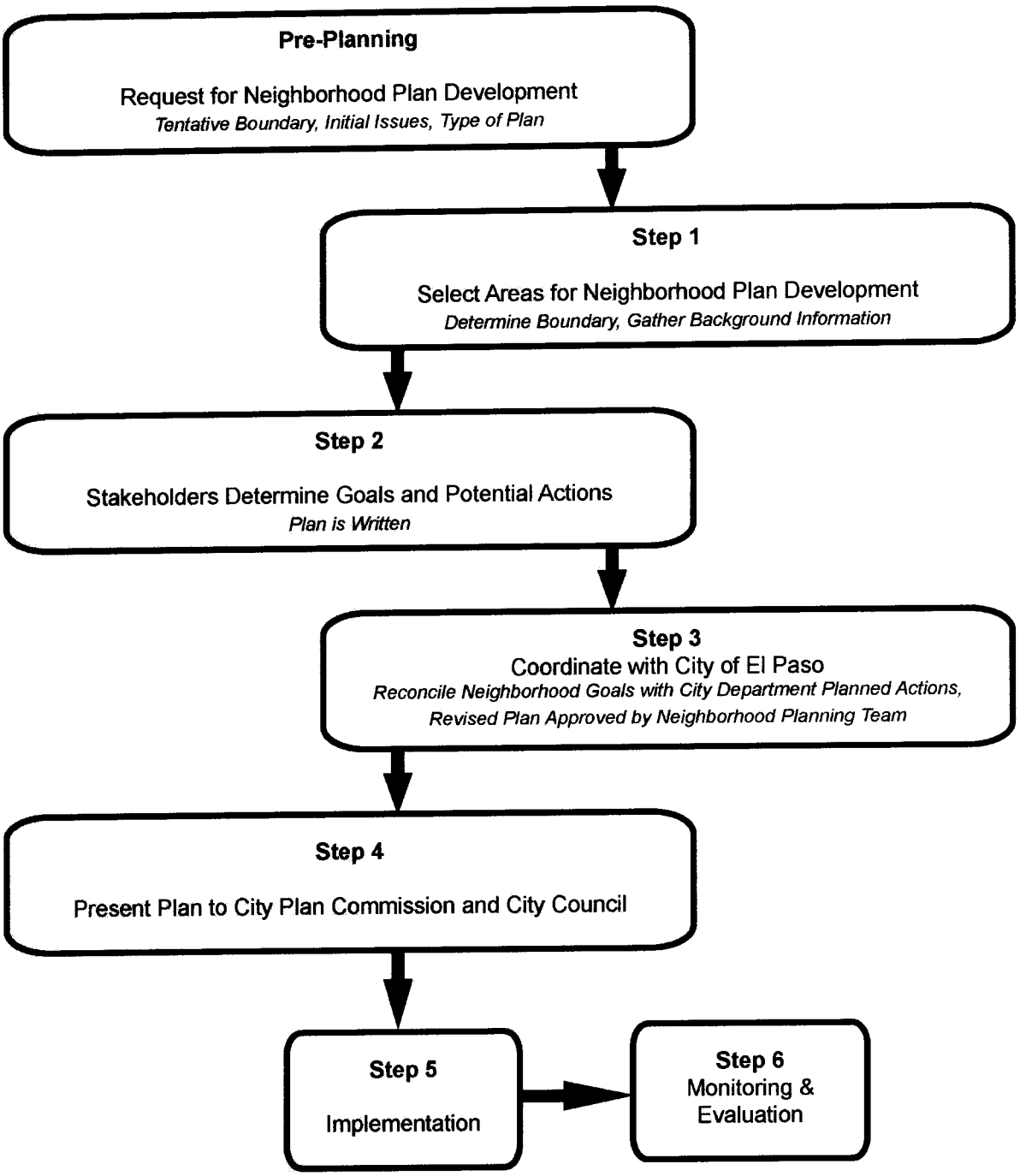
All requests shall be submitted in writing. Written requests for plan development are submitted to the Director of Planning.

Requests shall include issues to address in the plan—City land use goals and policies, and related City infrastructure, transportation and service issues —and a tentative neighborhood planning area boundary. For requests submitted by a neighborhood association or other organized group, support for plan development from a majority of the group must be provided. Majority support for plan development can be in the form of a documented vote or a signed petition and must be included with the written request. A majority is defined as fifty percent plus one of the membership of any association within the area.[1]

[1] For votes taken by associations where a quorum as defined by a group's by-laws is present, a majority of those present at that meeting is sufficient. For planning areas where there are overlapping neighborhood association

Figure 1. Neighborhood Plan Development Process

CITY OF EL PASO
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



boundaries, a neighborhood plan area meeting should be held inclusive of the registered associations. The majority of those present is sufficient to satisfy the requirement for a majority vote needed.

Neighborhood Plan Development Process

Step one: Selecting areas for neighborhood plan development

The City Plan Commission (CPC) will select areas for neighborhood plan development from the written requests submitted.

1A: Request Assessment by the Department and Schedule for Authorization

The area's Neighborhood Planner reviews the request and prepares an item for placement on the CPC regular agenda for public hearing. A copy of the request is provided to the appropriate City Council Representative. The request is scheduled before the CPC within thirty days of receipt. A report of CPC action on neighborhood plan requests is provided to the Mayor and Council within fifteen days of CPC action.

1B: CPC Authorization

The CPC may authorize work on a plan to commence or may deny the request. The request is presented at a regular public hearing of the CPC where the public is provided opportunity to comment. The CPC evaluates requests based on the criteria outlined in this section. The CPC may make a determination that a request meets one or more of the criteria in Sub-Section i: Selection Criteria and therefore merits plan development.

If authorization to proceed is granted, the CPC determines the initial project scope including:

1. Priority given to plan development (Sub-Section i)
2. Preliminary planning area boundary (Sub-Section ii)
3. Preliminary issues for the Neighborhood Plan to address (Sub-Section iii)

The Director of Planning will advise the CPC of other neighborhood plans in progress so that adequate time and resources may be taken into consideration when selecting areas for plan development and to better set plan development priority.

The CPC may appoint a Neighborhood Planning Sub-Committee to assist staff in reviewing plan development as work progresses. Should a major scope change occur during the plan development process, the Department shall present the changes to the City Plan Commission Sub-Committee for review and approval. Changes to the planning area boundary are approved by the CPC; other scope changes may be approved by the Sub-Committee itself.

If a plan request is denied, an appeal may be filed to the City Council. An appeal request must be made to the Director of Planning—in writing—within thirty days of CPC denial. The appeal request is scheduled for City Council action within thirty days.

i: Selection Criteria

The assessment for plan development and a priority for conducting the work are determined by the City Plan Commission at a public hearing where comments from the public shall be received. Selection and prioritization is made based on the criteria below:

- **Neighborhood in transition**

The character of a neighborhood has changed over the past few years, e.g., many commercial rezoning requests in a residential neighborhood or gentrification of an area.

- **Pressing land use, infrastructure or municipal service issue in a neighborhood**

A pressing issue is one that a group of stakeholders identifies as requiring municipal action in an immediate way.

- **Priority listing in the City's Comprehensive Plan**

The candidate area is listed as a potential study area for more detailed land use planning per the City's Comprehensive Plan—*The Plan for El Paso.*

- **Identification as a Mixed-Use Area in the Comprehensive Plan**

The candidate area contains parcels of land identified as mixed-use in the projected general land use map of *The Plan for El Paso.* The Comprehensive Plan calls for further study of mixed-use designated areas.

- **Community Development Block Grants or Empowerment Zone Eligibility**

The candidate area contains parcels of land identified as eligible for Community Development Block Grant funding or within the Empowerment Zone boundary. Typically these areas consist of low and moderate income neighborhoods in need of revitalization programs.

- **Appropriateness of issues to address in the neighborhood plan**

The City can address certain issues in a neighborhood plan. City land use goals and policies, and related City infrastructure, transportation and service issues can be addressed in the Municipal Action Strategy (See Appendix B – Plan Template). Plan issues that are clearly the jurisdiction of municipal government and deal with land use, City infrastructure, municipal services and/or quality of life issues are ones that can effectively be addressed and implemented.

- **Stakeholder's Commitment**

Commitment of an area's residents, property and business owners is important for plan development. Areas with volunteers make plan development easier. Support for plan development must be demonstrated in the requests made by a Neighborhood Association or other organized group.

ii: Determine the preliminary boundaries of the Neighborhood Plan

The City Plan Commission determines the boundaries of a neighborhood plan. Should discussion at subsequent community meetings demonstrate that a change to expand the preliminary boundary is needed, an additional majority vote of the Association or group is required. The proposed change is then submitted to the CPC. The CPC shall review and ratify the change. Consideration of the following items is necessary for neighborhood plan boundaries.

1. Neighborhood associations registered with the City of El Paso

The City of El Paso maintains a database and boundary maps of recognized Neighborhood Associations. These boundaries may be used as a starting point for a plan boundary. Depending upon the scale of plan desired, the Department might wish to contact various associations to see if they are willing to work together on a neighborhood plan.

2. Coherent area with all attributes of a neighborhood

The planning area boundary should have a functional and meaningful size to reflect common interests, economic factors, year the area was developed (subdivision platting), topographical features, or available infrastructure/services (sewer, water, police, fire, etc.). The boundary should be coherent regardless of association boundaries. An effective boundary is large enough to provide new opportunities to address a broad range of community needs and functions (shopping, schools, recreation, etc.) while still allowing participating groups to work together effectively. A Neighborhood Plan includes short and long range actions that can be taken by city government, other entities, and citizens to implement the plan.

iii: Identify preliminary scope of a plan

The preliminary scope of a neighborhood plan outlines the issues to be addressed in the neighborhood plan. These issues include land use, transportation and related municipal infrastructure or service needs.

Step two: Stakeholders determine neighborhood goals and potential actions

During the neighborhood planning process, three general open neighborhood meetings shall be held at which stakeholders determine the neighborhood goals and potential actions. In order to prepare for the neighborhood meetings, background information will be gathered for the purpose of identifying and illustrating the neighborhood's assets and needs that will be analyzed for planning solutions. This information may take the form of maps, demographics, zoning history, capital project history and other planning considerations.

2A: First public meeting

The plan requestor—the Neighborhood Association, the Council Representative, etc.—and the Department host the first open neighborhood meeting with Neighborhood Planning Staff present to moderate and explain the neighborhood planning process. The staff role is to facilitate reasonable and equal participation from all interested groups in the neighborhood, document input and to gather additional information for plan development. Preliminary information may also be presented at the first public meeting. The appropriate City Council representatives are notified of the first public meeting for a neighborhood plan.

Community Meeting Requirements

Requirements for community meetings are in place to ensure meetings are open to the general public and proper notification takes place. Open neighborhood meetings must be held in an accessible public place. Meetings will be open to all who wish to attend and all neighborhood residents, business people, and property owners will have equal voting rights. Minutes of all meetings, including Neighborhood Planning Team and Sub-Committee meetings, will be kept. Notice of the first neighborhood meeting will be satisfied through the guidelines below.

- The City, using the Central Appraisal District database, will mail notices to all affected property owners within the proposed boundary for the first public meeting. (The Department shall keep a contact list of meeting attendants, and non attendees requesting to be on the list, to notify of subsequent meetings through appropriate means including but not limited to phone calls or e-mail.)
- The host committee will strive to have notice of the meeting distributed throughout the neighborhood through flyers and personal contact in the neighborhood to encourage attendance at the meeting.
- The host committee will strive to have notice of the meeting placed in neighborhood and business newsletters, church bulletins, and local area newspapers.

Gain general agreement for a plan

The purpose of the first meeting is for attendees to agree that a plan is needed. Community support in the neighborhood planning process is important to the success and implementation of the process. Without it, the Neighborhood Plan would not reflect the vision of the neighborhood as a whole and would not be an accurate record of the neighborhood's goals.

Gain general agreement for planning area boundary

The second purpose is to agree on the final plan boundary. Reasonable community consensus is needed. Maps demonstrating the proposed neighborhood planning area should be provided to all participants. The Neighborhood Planner should be able to explain how the boundaries were selected. Should discussion lead to consensus that the preliminary planning area boundary needs to change, the Neighborhood Planner prepares a briefing to the CPC about this scope change. The scope change is presented to the CPC within thirty days.

Discuss Neighborhood Planning Team composition & responsibilities

The final purpose of the first meeting is to present to the public at large the structure of a Neighborhood Planning Team ("Team") and its responsibilities. Meeting attendees should approve the Team composition using the guidelines below. Stakeholders needed to serve on the Team will be identified and recruitment of Neighborhood Planning Team volunteers begins at the first public meeting.

The Committee and stakeholders present select Team composition in consultation with the Neighborhood Planning staff. Team members complete Volunteer Forms (Appendix C). The Team will convene regularly and commit time and effort to the development and completion of the neighborhood plan. Once the Team is selected it is the main contact point for the rest of the planning process.

Neighborhood Planning Team Composition

- Ensure balanced representation of stakeholders: Stakeholders reflect the diversity and uniqueness of each area. In identifying stakeholders, it is important to remember to include people of all ages, ethnicities, races, income levels and interests. Stakeholders include residents, property owners, and businesses within the area.

- Balance of residents, landowners, and business owners: The Team must demonstrate that it has made efforts to identify and contact representatives of organizations, groups and interests, if any, within the planning area boundary, successfully involving a broad spectrum in the organizing effort. If a neighborhood's major property owners/residents include businesses, the Team should represent these interests. In addition, a balance of these interests is important to ensure that one group does not dominate the process.

- Inclusion of stakeholders from different areas of neighborhood: The Team should include people from different parts of the neighborhood. Representation of a wide spectrum is important not only to gain consensus but also to include the relevant issues of stakeholders in different parts of the neighborhood.

2B: Neighborhood Planning Team responsibilities/activities

Timeline

The first task of the Team is to develop a working timeline for plan development in conjunction with Department staff. The timeline includes proposed Team meeting dates, community meeting dates, scheduled timeframe for data collection, analysis, and writing the document and target dates for submitting the draft plan for review and adoption.

Strategic Issues Discussion

Once the Neighborhood Planning Team is organized and the timeline is approved, it can begin its work. An important step is to more clearly analyze the neighborhood issues to address in the plan through a strategic analysis such as a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis helps frame the conditions of the neighborhood by assessing a neighborhood's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

- Strengths - what are the strong elements of the neighborhood
    - e.g., active citizens, historic area, good schools
- Weaknesses - what are the weak elements of the neighborhood
    - e.g., deteriorated housing, inadequate park space, littered vacant lots
- Opportunities - what events or forces are positive for the neighborhood
    - e.g., a program to rehabilitate houses, a proposed retail center
- Threats - what events or forces represent threats for the neighborhood
    - e.g., a highway expansion, closing of a major retail center

Neighborhood Planning Team clarifies issues of interest in neighborhood

After the strategic analysis identifies key issues, the Team and Neighborhood Planning staff will need to gather additional information. Surveys and other tools can provide additional issue clarification so that possible solutions are easier to develop.

Neighborhood Plan Content

The **Neighborhood Plan** includes the description of the planning area, an analysis of the issues affecting that area and the implementation strategies and actions that municipal government may take to address these issues. A Neighborhood Plan contains recommendations for actions over which the City has jurisdiction and responsibility and consists of actions focused on land use and related municipal infrastructure or services only.

Elements of a Neighborhood Plan

1. Description of Planning Area:
    a. Vision/Mission/Purpose
    b. Boundary
    c. History

2. Analysis (Not all issues need to be included):
    a. Land Use/Zoning: Zoning map(s) and land use map(s) of current conditions and proposed future conditions. Commercial development needs, nuisance concerns, and desirable developments need to be addressed. Graphics and maps can be used to illustrate the problems and potential solutions. Any proposed changes to future land use should be included.
    b. Transportation/Transit/Circulation: Circulation trouble spots at streets and/or intersections. Sidewalks (pedestrian walkways), bicycle lanes, speed limits and access to transit. General safety, fluidity, mobility and connectivity of transportation systems (streets, sidewalk, bike lanes, parking lots, transit stations.)
    c. Capital/Public Facilities: Evaluating existing facilities and deficiencies and/or adding new functions such as recreation centers, libraries, schools, fire and police stations, and health clinics may be included.
    d. Infrastructure/Utilities: May identify problem areas with existing infrastructure. Listing the agencies responsible for curbs, sidewalks, streets, utility poles, sewers, water mains, culverts, and other infrastructure elements may be added as well as the process by which some of these items may be addressed.
    e. Quality of Life: Includes urban character, landscape, streetscape, parks/open spaces, recreational and sports facilities/programs. May also include cultural aspects and character, educational opportunities, medical facilities, and areas of special impact.
    f. Quality of Environment: Identify environmental concerns and needs of particular interest to the neighborhood such as air, water, land and noise pollution as well as preservation areas. Crime and safety issues, code compliance and nuisances also fall under this category
    g. Housing: Information regarding available housing types, affordability, and housing programs, describe/discuss design elements, density, physical condition factors, housing characteristics/needs and infill areas.
    h. Architectural Control/Historic Preservation: Preserving architectural character, design goals, scale, signage, color, texture, street furniture, landscaping, and setbacks may be listed. For historic district plans, this will be a requirement.
    i. Economic Development: Economic development issues related to land use and zoning within the neighborhood area under study may also be considered.

3. Municipal Action Strategy: Implementation and Municipal Actions

An optional section of the Plan that is attached as an addendum may reflect additional issues identified as the Neighborhood's Perspective. This section may offer suggestions for community or citizen action that do not fall within the jurisdiction of municipal government. These items are not part of the implementable municipal actions.

The last part of a Plan—also optional—consists of supporting documentation including appendices.

Neighborhood Planning Team prepares plan issue presentation

The Neighborhood Planning Team and Neighborhood Planning Staff prepare an issues document and presentation. Graphics and visuals may be used to communicate this information. This presentation is to be shared during the next step in the neighborhood planning process.

2C: Second public meeting

Present the plan issues

Notice of the second meeting shall be conducted by the Department to the contact list compiled from the first public meeting, through appropriate means including but not limited to phone calls or e-mail. At this meeting, the Neighborhood Planning Team is responsible for presenting progress made. This includes presenting preliminary data and information collected, scheduled events, and any other pertinent information directly related to neighborhood plan development. The second neighborhood meeting presents the opportunity for the Team to solicit input, comments and feedback on the collected information and address concerns about the process.

Gain consensus on issues

The community must come to reasonable consensus on the issues identified for plan inclusion. Additionally, the community will be given the opportunity to provide input into the process and present additional items to address. The information collected at the second neighborhood meeting will be recorded and addressed in the development of the neighborhood plan. Once the issues have been identified by the community, the Team will be responsible for incorporating the information into the neighborhood plan draft.

2D: Write draft of plan

A very important part of the first draft will be the goals, objectives and actions. The following are points to consider when formulating neighborhood goals and actions.

Develop neighborhood goals for each element

Goals are broad sweeping statements of what the neighborhood wants to accomplish. Goal statements should be short, consist of only one main thought, feature an action word and not specify how the goal will be accomplished. Goals should be written in general terms and need to reflect the view of neighborhood residents. For example:

Goal 1- Develop a clearer, more unified image for the neighborhood
Goal 2 - Increase recreational opportunities for youth within the neighborhood

Formulate alternative actions to achieve goals

The recommendations in neighborhood plans usually take the form of objectives, action items and maps. Objectives are the generalized strategies to be followed to achieve each of the goals. Action items are the steps required to implement the objectives. For any goal, there are an infinite number of ways of reaching it. It is important for the Neighborhood Planning Team to explore various ways to reach the goal. For example:

Goal 1- Develop a clearer, more unified image for the neighborhood
Objective - Adopt a name, motto, and logo for the neighborhood
Action - Conduct a contest for name, motto and logo, open to all neighborhood residents

Discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each solution is important; this helps narrow choices down to a few solutions that can be discussed in depth. Under scrutiny, many proposed solutions will drop out, but it is important to consider several ways of reaching a goal before settling on one approach. For example:

Goal 2 - Increase recreational opportunities for youth within the neighborhood
Alternative Strategies:

1. *Apply for city funds to expand the offerings at the local community center (Part A).*
2. *Create a new nonprofit organization that will then raise funds to start a program (Part B).*
3. *Work with the schools to use those facilities for after-hours programs: (Part B).*
4. *Encourage private businesses to open more pools, bowling alleys, and other facilities (Part B).*

In addition to the objectives and action items, the Neighborhood Planning Team will want to prepare maps that show proposed goals or actions. Examples include:

1) Proposed land use (e.g., a transitioning corridor designated as commercial);
2) Proposed regulatory standards for rezoning (e.g., design standards conversion from residential to commercial use);
3) Proposed transportation system (e.g., new bicycle routes);
4) Proposed housing plan (e.g., vacant area for multi-family residential);
5) Proposed community facilities (e.g., possible site for new senior center); and,
6) Proposed urban design plan (e.g., specific streets for tree planting).

Prepare Municipal Action Strategy

The final step in the Neighborhood Plan's development is to organize selected items into the Municipal Action Strategy. The Action Strategy prioritizes the important goals, actions or projects to the neighborhood. Typical tools to implement plans are the city's budget for capital investments (the capital improvement plan or CIP); controls on land use such as zoning; federal grants/programs; and, municipal service improvements. The Municipal Action Strategy lists projects or regulatory controls that could help the Neighborhood achieve its stated goals.

Although they are in some sense the culmination of the planning process, Neighborhood Plans have limited force. They are guidance documents, not laws or fiscal promises. In the case of the Municipal Action Strategy, by adopting it the City is only obligated to use it as a guide when making other, legally binding, decisions.

Step three: Coordination with City of El Paso

3A: Present draft goals and actions to appropriate city departments

The Neighborhood Planning Team and the Neighborhood Planner submit the Neighborhood Plan draft to the Department for distribution to other municipal departments and the planning area's City Council representative for courtesy review. Courtesy review allows the Team to address, clarify and correct the draft, find out about potential problems or conflicts in the Plan, and check for content accuracy.

3B: Reconcile neighborhood goals with city department planned actions

The Plan goals need to be reconciled with the City's planned actions. If the City's planned actions are contrary to the Plan's stated goals, a review of the disparity should include reconciliation recommendations. Neighborhood goals or City planned actions may be changed to conform with the other. If no reconciliation is possible on certain issues, this can be noted in the neighborhood plan as well as in any relevant City document or instrument.

3C: Prepare revised Municipal Action Strategy

The **Municipal Action Strategy** will cite the recommended City action(s) and note the relevant departments needed to fulfill the goal. Actions that would revise existing plans should be noted and any new actions deemed necessary should be listed. Actions should include approximate costs, if possible, and be classified as capital improvement proposals, regulatory enhancement or municipal service improvement.

3D: Third public meeting

The primary goal of this meeting is to gain support for the plan from the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Team takes the lead in presenting the draft to the community, with assistance from Planning Staff. The neighborhood must endorse the draft before it is submitted for final review through a majority vote of any association (majority vote defined as fifty percent plus one of the association membership). Notice of this meeting follows the same guidelines as the first meeting.

The plan, or a concise summary of it, is disseminated within the neighborhood, including distribution to residents, public officials, neighborhood institutions, and the media. Letters of endorsement of the plan from residents, organizations, businesses, and neighborhood institutions are also good tools to use in promoting the accomplishment. The Neighborhood Planning Team will submit the neighborhood's endorsement in writing to the Department so that the formal review and approval process may proceed.

3E: Obtain DCC recommendation on Neighborhood Plan

The Development Coordinating Committee (DCC) formally reviews the Neighborhood Plan and makes a recommendation for adoption. Any departments that have dissenting opinions on issues should provide documentation of that dissent in writing with relevant commentary to the Team.

Step four: Take Plan to City Plan Commission (CPC) and City Council

The Planning Team, with assistance from the Neighborhood Planning staff, prepares a final draft incorporating all the comments of City departments and neighborhood property owners/residents and presents it before the City Plan Commission (CPC) and the City Council for approval.

4A: Neighborhood Planning Team prepares final draft

Informal Briefings with the City Plan Commission

The Team shall brief the CPC or its Sub-Committee on the Neighborhood Plan draft and comments from Departmental staff during the inter-departmental review stage. The Team also briefs other City Commissions or Boards if necessary.

Final Draft Preparation

After considering comments made by City departments at the DCC and the CPC, and other City Commissions or Boards, the Planning Team prepares a final draft. During plan preparation, the Neighborhood Planning Team coordinates with the Department staff to incorporate recommended changes into the plan.

4B: CPC public hearing to make recommendation

The CPC shall hold a public hearing to evaluate the plan and formulate a recommendation for City Council. CPC shall act upon the Neighborhood Plan within 90 days.

CPC will evaluate process leading to plan.

The CPC must find at a minimum that the following requirements were met:

- Three open neighborhood meetings held and all major interest groups in the neighborhood had opportunity to participate. Notification satisfied standards outlined.
- The Neighborhood Planning Team met the process standards included.
- Appropriate City departments, boards and commissions reviewed and commented on pertinent sections of the plan.
- Proper notification—mailed notice to affected property owners—was provided for the public hearing at which the CPC formulates a recommendation on the Plan.

CPC will evaluate the content of the plan

The CPC shall recommend the Neighborhood Plan for approval before it is forwarded to the City Council. If the Plan is not acceptable to the CPC, it shall be returned to the Planning Team with a written explanation and the CPC Sub-Committee will be asked to assist in resolving outstanding issues for a neighborhood plan. The explanation shall identify the requirements and/or standards not met by the Plan and a recommended procedure for the

Neighborhood Planning Team to follow to make certain the Plan complies with the requirements and/or standards.

The CPC will evaluate the Neighborhood Plan's content to determine that the following standards have been met:

- The Plan's goals and recommendations are consistent with or complement adopted City policies, plans and regulations.
- The neighborhood's recommended changes to City policies, plans or regulations are identified and listed separately in the section for municipal adoption as the Municipal Action Plan. In the event of an inconsistency between the Comprehensive Plan and the proposed Neighborhood Plan, the CPC should consider initiation of an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan or changes to the Neighborhood Plan.
- Comments and recommendations from City departments and agencies have been incorporated or otherwise addressed in the plan.
- Implementation of the plan's recommended actions and projects will achieve the Plan's stated goals and objectives.

Should the City Plan Commission make a negative recommendation about a neighborhood plan, the issues that lead to a denial recommendation will be provided to the Neighborhood Plannign Team. The Team shall work with the CPC Sub-Committee to resolve outstanding issue within the neighborhood plan. The plan—with or without revisions—will then be submitted for consideration by the full CPC.

4C: City Council hearing on the plan

After recommended for approval by the City Plan Commission, the Neighborhood Plan is forwarded to the City Council for a public hearing and final action. The City Council evaluates the process used to develop the Plan and the Plan's content to ensure the adopted standards and procedures were followed. City Council will then consider an ordinance to approve the Neighborhood Plan and adopt it. An adopted Neighborhood Plan shall serve as a guide for future development and policy decisions in the area.

Step five: Recommendations

Involvement of all the participants in the neighborhood planning process and in implementing the neighborhood plan is vital. Each goal and recommendation may have a time frame for carrying out that specific portion of the plan. The primary parties responsible for implementing the recommendations will be identified. Where approved by City Council, implementation of the recommendations in a Neighborhood Plan can be pursued. Capital projects identified in a neighborhood plan may be added to the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Funding for executing these capital projects shall be at the sole discretion of the City Council and subject to the availability of funds. Code amendments that may be recommended in a Neighborhood Plan, once authorized by City Council, can be implemented. City Council may authorize changes to a speed limit sign recommended by a Neighborhood Plan.

Some of the recommendations are likely to require capital improvements, which may influence the budgeting processes and the work plans of various departments. Cooperation and collaboration throughout the process are the keys to the successful implementation of the Neighborhood Plan and its projects.

Step six: Monitoring & Evaluation

Neighborhood Plan review and evaluation may be established, by the Team Committee or other interested group, to maintain a Plan's viability. This committee may meet on a regular basis for at least one year after the initial adoption of the plan. Neighborhood Plans are not static documents. It is important to revise the plan periodically. Changing conditions within a neighborhood and the discovery of new opportunities and implementation strategies could impact recommendations in the plan. Neighborhood Plans may be reviewed on a regular basis—at least once every two years. If evaluation reveals the need to change the plan, then a Neighborhood Planning Team may be formed to address the issues of concern. Revisions to the adopted Neighborhood Plan will follow the procedures that were used to adopt the original plan.

Appendix A

Plan Types

TYPES OF PLANS (SPECIFIC STUDY AREA PLANS)

One of four distinct plans may be developed depending on the needs of the area to be served. Defining the boundary of the area to be planned is a critical step in the neighborhood planning process. The type of plan depends on the *size of the area to be planned, the length of time predicted to accomplish goals, and the proportion of actions that are implementable by the City.*

Community Plan: Community Plans focus on larger geographic areas and several neighborhoods. Community Plan areas include the population necessary to support at least one middle school or high school. The issues addressed by the Community Plan may be short (2-5 yrs.) or long range (up to 10 yrs) and can include actions implementable by the City as well as items that may require action or further study by other agencies or entities.

Neighborhood Plan: Neighborhood Plans focus on smaller geographic areas. Neighborhood Plan areas generally include the population necessary to support an elementary school. Typically, two or more neighborhood association areas are included within a Neighborhood Plan. The issues addressed by the Neighborhood Plan may be short (2-5 yrs.) or long range (up to 10 yrs) and can include actions to be implemented by the City as well as items that may require further study.

Strategic Plan: This can be an action plan with a short-range (2-5 yrs.) outlook on implementation for a limited number of very specific issues that can be addressed by the City. The planning area may be large or small and may depend on the area affected by the issues addressed.

Historic District Plan: The Historic District Plan is unique in that it is reserved for the recognized historic districts within the City. Because the Historic Landmark Commission regulates historic districts, they are subject to stricter oversight that supersedes other plans. Since the historic district will be the focus area, the boundary should encompass the historic district overlay and any interconnected areas of concern as well. Each plan should include mandatory design guidelines, among other elements that may be addressed.

Types of Plans under the Plan for El Paso

	Size of Area covered	Time Range	Type of Recommendations
Community Plan	Approximate population to support a middle or high school	Long and Short Range	City government actions, other entity actions, citizen actions
Neighborhood Plan	Approximate population to support an elementary	Long and Short Range	City government actions, other entity actions, citizen actions
Strategic Plan	Any	Short Range only	City government actions only
Historic District Plan	Historic district area minimum	Long and Short Range	Mandatory design guidelines, city government actions, other entity actions, citizen actions

Appendix B

Neighborhood Plan Template

PLAN TEMPLATE

A Neighborhood Plan is a written document setting forth goals for a certain area of the City and outlining steps that municipal government could take to further those goals.

The following is a list of topics that may be included in a neighborhood.

Elements of a Neighborhood Plan

1. Description of Planning Area:
    a. Vision/Mission/Purpose
    b. Boundary
    c. History

2. Analysis (Not all issues need to be included):

a. Land Use/Zoning: Zoning map(s) and land use map(s) of current conditions and proposed future conditions. Commercial development needs, nuisance concerns, and desirable developments need to be addressed. Graphics and maps can be used to illustrate the problems and potential solutions. Any proposed changes to future land use should be included.
b. Transportation/Transit/Circulation: Circulation trouble spots at streets and/or intersections. Sidewalks (pedestrian walkways), bicycle lanes, speed limits and access to transit. General safety, fluidity, mobility and connectivity of transportation systems (streets, sidewalk, bike lanes, parking lots, transit stations.)
c. Capital/Public Facilities: Evaluating existing facilities and deficiencies and/or adding new functions such as recreation centers, libraries, schools, fire and police stations, and health clinics may be included.
d. Infrastructure/Utilities: May identify problem areas with existing infrastructure. Listing the agencies responsible for curbs, sidewalks, streets, utility poles, sewers, water mains, culverts, and other infrastructure elements may be added as well as the process by which some of these items may be addressed.
e. Quality of Life: Includes urban character, landscape, streetscape, parks/open spaces, recreational and sports facilities/programs. May also include cultural aspects and character, educational opportunities, medical facilities, and areas of special impact.
f. Quality of Environment: Identify environmental concerns and needs of particular interest to the neighborhood such as air, water, land and noise pollution as well as preservation areas. Crime and safety issues, code compliance and nuisances also fall under this category
g. Housing: Information regarding available housing types, affordability, and housing programs, describe/discuss design elements, density, physical condition factors, housing characteristics/needs and infill areas.
h. Architectural Control/Historic Preservation: Preserving architectural character, design goals, scale, signage, color, texture, street furniture, landscaping, and setbacks may be listed. For historic district plans, this will be a requirement
i. Economic Development: Economic development issues related to land use and zoning within the neighborhood area under study may also be considered.

3. Municipal Action Strategy: Implementation and Municipal Actions

4. Optional Sections:
   Neighborhood Perspective (addendum)
   Additional Analysis of Neighborhood Issues
   Appendices
   Samples of Regulatory Changes

Appendix C

Neighborhood Planning Team Volunteer Form

PLANNING TEAM VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I, _____ , the undersigned volunteer for
(Please print)

the City of El Paso "**Neighborhoods Matter**"!_____ ,
(Name of plan)

understand that I am not an employee, agent or contractor of the City.

I further understand that the City will not provide me with any pay, compensation, monetary or otherwise, insurance, worker's compensation or any other benefit to which an employee may be entitled.

I further understand that as a member of the planning team it will be my duty to participate, with guidance from the planning staff, in the creation of a timeline for plan development, development of an issues list, in identification of issues of interest to the neighborhood, in the writing of the plan draft, and also to conduct public meetings for the presentation of issues, plan drafts, etc. to the general public, and carry out other duties pertaining to the creation of a plan as detailed in the "Process for Creating a Neighborhood Plan."

I hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand and voluntarily agree to the aforementioned statements.

Signature _____ Date_____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Resolution that the El Paso City Council hereby approves the Neighborhood Plan Development Process together with appendices (Exhibit "A") as the appropriate document for identifying, prioritizing, and processing neighborhood plans. **(All Districts)**
[Planning, Research and Development, Verónica Rosales, 541-4633}