

  
**REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Date: October 22, 2012  
Item No.: 13.b

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Department Approval

City Manager Approval



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Item Description: Neighborhood and Community Engagement Task Force

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1 **BACKGROUND**

2 The Human Rights Commission created a neighborhood and community engagement task force  
3 in the spring of 2011. The purpose of the task force was to recommend ways that the city could  
4 enhance community involvement. A committee of residents met throughout the year to develop  
5 recommendations to the City Council

6 **POLICY OBJECTIVE**

7 Discuss how city government relates to neighborhoods and how citizens can have an effective  
8 voice at City Hall.

9 **FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

10 None

11 **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

12 Receive Neighborhood and Community Engagement Task Force Report.

13 **REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION**

14 Receive Neighborhood and Community Engagement Task Force Report.

15  
16  
**Prepared by:** Carolyn Curti, Communications Specialist

**Attachments:** A: Neighborhood and Community Engagement Task Force Report (DRAFT)

FINAL REPORT  
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ROSEVILLE  
NEIGHBORHOOD &  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
TASK FORCE

A Project of the  
Roseville Human Rights Commission

OCTOBER 15, 2012

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Contents

Task force members .....	3
Our Charge.....	4
What Is Civic Engagement and Why Address It? .....	4
Our Core Values .....	5
Our Process .....	6
Our Community .....	6
Our Opportunity.....	6
Areas for Recommendations.....	7
Recommendations At-A-Glance.....	8
Detailed Recommendations .....	10
Related Comprehensive Plan Policies .....	21
Conclusion .....	23
Items for Future Consideration .....	23
Appendix A – Tapping Volunteers for Results.....	24
Appendix B - Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation .....	28
Appendix C – Minneapolis Core Principles of Community Engagement.....	29
Appendix D - Community Forum Feedback .....	30

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Task force members

**Gary Grefenberg**

Co-Chair and member of  
Human Rights Commission

**Kaying Thao**

Co-Chair and member of  
Human Rights Commission

**Judy Berglund**

League of Women Voters

**Shannon Cunningham**

At-Large

**James DeBenedet**

Public Works, Environment  
& Transportation Commission

**Randall Doneen**

Parks & Recreation Commission

**Megan Dushin**

At-Large

**John Gisselquist**

Planning Commission

**Theresa Gardella**

At-Large

**Jim Lewis**

At-Large

**Rita Mix**

At-Large

**Kathy Ramundt**

At-Large

**Greg Simbeck**

Parks & Recreation Commission

**Peter Strohmeier**

Planning Commission

This listing is for identification purposes only, and does not imply that each Commission listed supports every recommendation.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

“No man is an island” and “Together we are more” are sentiments that if understood and realized can raise the quality of a community’s common life. The first reminds us we do not exist independent of one another. The other implies that a higher level of satisfaction in community occurs when we work cooperatively toward civic ideals. Unique among creatures, we have the capacity to increasingly advance our quality of life.

When human societies first formed they devised compacts or covenants, sometimes unwritten, carrying the idea that privileges and protections, both personal and property, entail the reciprocal responsibility of individuals to contribute to the general welfare of others. What follows is motivated by the belief that our citizens are gifted with the knowledge, skills and heart-felt desire to make Roseville an even greater place to live.

### **Our Charge**

The Neighborhood and Community Engagement Task Force was established by the Human Rights Commission in pursuance of its charge from the Roseville City Council to “*increase the sense of community by reaching out to all members of the community and ensuring that our city government and its activities, programs, and services are accessible, understandable, and responsive to all.*” (City Code, Chapter 204.03)

We recognize and acknowledge that our work builds upon solid foundations set in place by our predecessors, especially the City Council, Imagine Roseville 2025, and the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Council meetings and procedures, the availability of city-sponsored communication vehicles, such as the City’s web site and City News, already provide opportunities for civic engagement. The purpose of this report is to build on those foundations and make recommendations to the Roseville City Council for enhancing and increasing civic engagement within all sectors of Roseville’s diverse community.

### **What Is Civic Engagement and Why Address It?**

Civic engagement or civic participation has been defined as “*Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms— individual volunteerism, volunteering on city commissions and committees, involvement with neighborhood groups or other non-profit civic organizations, and/or organizational involvement for electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy.*” (American Psychological Association, <http://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx>)

The engagement of citizens creates more effective government and more sound decisions. Civically-engaged citizens have a stronger sense of community and knowledge of established community networks and resources; they can help the city get information out quickly,

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

efficiently and economically; and they have a valuable role informing the City of relevant issues. As a recent article published in the League of Minnesota Cities magazine stated, “*Cities across Minnesota are taking a new look at roles for volunteers and engaged citizens. As budgets get tighter, and new revenue opportunities are few and far between, the effective engagement of volunteers can be a great way to bring in new resources.*” (Tapping Volunteers for Results, Minnesota Cities, November-December 2011, *see Appendix A.*)

Civic engagement is especially relevant in an inner-ring suburb such as Roseville, which has the best of urban life and suburban living. Like many other inner-ring suburbs, Roseville faces the challenges of rapid change, urban sprawl, and the growing anonymity of urban culture. These challenges can be met with a strong civic engagement infrastructure.

### **Our Core Values**

Early in our process we adopted the recommended International Association for Public Participation’s (IAP2) core values to guide our work (*see Appendix B*). These core values were made available to the Task Force by the League of Minnesota Cities, and are as follows:

Public participation...

1. Is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Includes the promise that the public’s contribution will influence the decision.
3. Promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
4. Seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

The Task Force added an additional core value:

8. Taskforce participants will be open-minded toward the involvement of others and towards the input of staff, city commissions, and those experienced in public policy and civic engagement.

These core values should be useful to the City in assessing the value of these recommendations and future efforts at increasing civic engagement in Roseville.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Our Process

The Human Rights Commission intended to form a task force with a diversity of perspectives reflecting our community (age, gender, and ethnicity). In the end, approximately half of the Task Force members were appointed City Commissioners and half were at-large members. We met monthly for well over a year, with subcommittees meeting in between to study specific issues and questions. We held one city-wide community forum entitled “Neighbor-to-Neighbor” (*see Addendum*), and one meeting with the City Manager and a Planning Department staff member who subsequently attended another Task Force session and provided commentary and suggestions. The meeting notes developed by the Forum’s small groups are incorporated into the Addendum.

## Our Community

- Almost one third of our residents rent their homes.  
9,211 rent and 23,023 own
- We have more citizens over 65 than under 18.  
18.6% aged 17 and under and 20.1% aged 65 and over
- We are ethnically diverse.  
19.7% non-white and 81.3% white

## Our Opportunity

Roseville’s most important resource is its people - diverse and highly educated, concerned about their neighbors and willing to be involved in their community. Roseville also has a high proportion of talented retirees who now have the time and energy to contribute to their community, and a desire to be useful to future generations. As government gets increasingly complex, costly, and at times combative, Roseville has a unique opportunity to enlist this energy and benefit from this experience by providing opportunities for effective and meaningful engagement in response to these challenges, thus developing common ground and shared responsibility for a civil society.

# **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

## **Areas for Recommendations**

During the past sixteen months of meetings, study, and discussion, nine main areas for recommendations have emerged in the work of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Task Force. They are as follows:

1. Integrate citizen engagement into City Hall culture.
2. Increase effective public participation in City Council and Commissions.
3. Engage Roseville renters and non-single family homeowners.
4. Provide public participation support, training, and resources.
5. Enhance print communications and dissemination.
6. Enhance website and electronic communications.
7. Enhance overall city communication.
8. Foster and support vibrant neighborhoods.
9. Improve notification process.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Recommendations At-A-Glance

### 1) Integrate Citizen Engagement into City Hall Culture

1.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should work to enrich and strengthen civic engagement at-city hall, and encourage employees and elected officials to appreciate civic engagement as an asset.

### 2) Increase Effective Public Participation in City Council and Commissions

2.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should foster public participation at both the council and commission level.

2.2 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should widely publicize openings on all commissions and ad hoc groups and encourage all residents to apply.

2.3 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should develop and enforce an absence policy for commissioners.

### 3) Engage Roseville Renters and Non-Single-Family Homeowners

3.1 Policy Intent or Policy: The city should engage renters as it does homeowners.

### 4) Provide Public Participation Support, Training, and Resources

4.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should sponsor administrative supports to foster more effective volunteerism and public participation.

4.2 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should invest in civic engagement training for public officials and city staff to foster a climate of public participation.

4.3 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should develop educational and informational resources for citizens to learn how best to participate in civic issues.

### 5) Enhance Print Communications and Dissemination

5.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should continue to disseminate information via printed material, keeping in mind that many residents rely solely on print media for news and information.

5.2 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should include pertinent information and stories related to civic engagement and neighborhoods in its print communications, the Roseville City News.

### 6) Enhance Website and Electronic Communications

6.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should continuously improve its website to make it most user-friendly, thereby fostering civic engagement.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

6.2 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should maximize two-way communications technologies (Web 2.0) to facilitate timely public participation and engagement.

6.3 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should enhance access to City Council and commission agenda items, minutes, and recorded meetings through its (and/or North Suburban CTV's) website.

6.4 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should foster direct and efficient email communication with public officials.

### **7) Enhance Overall City Communication**

7.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should go beyond the legal requirements for public notification on issues critical to Roseville's development (refer to Recommendation 9: "Improve Notification Processes" for suggested criteria).

7.2 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should emphasize communications utilizing existing systems more proactively and effectively with the intention of engaging residents.

### **8) Foster and Support Vibrant Neighborhoods**

8.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should continue to support residents' efforts to create neighborhoods as a means to build community.

8.2 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should support neighborhoods in developing neighborhood networks and associations.

8.3 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should increase access to public participation events and facilitate *meetings at the neighborhood level*.

### **9) Improve Notification Process**

9.1 Policy Intent or Practice: The city should expand the notification radius and methods to take into account developments that have great impact and/or involve issues of probable concern.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Detailed Recommendations

### 1) Integrate Citizen Engagement into City Hall Culture

**1.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should work to enrich and strengthen civic engagement at city hall, and encourage employees and elected officials to appreciate civic engagement as an asset.

**Rationale:** Demonstrating a commitment to civic engagement dispels public cynicism and connects citizens more closely to their government, while also allowing them more resources for authentic grass roots neighborhood planning and community building.

#### We recommend the City:

- a) Continue its practice of forming resident task forces to assess significant issues and make recommendations to the city council or city manager. In particular, consider establishing a residents' task force to assess and make recommendations regarding the transparency and accessibility of the Council's budgeting process.
  - i. Make the budget process more transparent and understandable to residents, and utilize other resources such as a Roseville U course on budgeting, neighborhood workshops, and/or webinars to engage residents in budgeting well before the budget is finalized. (Also see Recommendation 6.1 d, below.)
  - ii. See Edina Civic Engagement web page *Public Participation in the Budgeting Process*.
- b) Host two or three general community meetings per year in various locations (outside of city hall) to talk with citizens about issues of concern, update citizens on upcoming events and development proposals, and build trusting relationships within the community. We encourage the city to seek cosponsors for such meetings if there are neighborhood associations in those areas.
- c) Recognize and reach out to the changing demographics of Roseville (increasing communities of color, aging population, and other marginalized groups) in order to understand how best to keep them informed and involved.
- d) Sponsor an annual training/conference on the latest trends, technologies and tools used to engage citizens. City staff and residents should jointly plan and publicize the event, and be encouraged to participate.

### 2) Increase Effective Public Participation in City Council and Commissions

**2.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should foster public participation at both the council and commission level.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

**Rationale:** Making public meetings more accessible and understandable to the community demonstrates the City's commitment to civic engagement, which in turn enables the community to better value and trust their public officials, elected and appointed.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Schedule occasional city council and commission meetings in neighborhoods provided that meeting locations are well publicized, ADA-compliant, and accommodate cable television coverage.
- b) Formalize the current mayor's practices of recognizing members of the public in city council meetings and asking if there is any public comment after each substantive decision item is presented by staff and prior to discussion and final vote. This will help ensure that future mayors and councils follow this example of inviting public participation.
- c) Have commission meetings follow these same rules and procedures as the city council, and as described above.

**2.2 Policy Intent or Practice:** The city should widely publicize openings on all commissions and ad hoc groups and encourage residents to apply.

**Rationale:** Recruiting participation in governing and advisory bodies from the community ensures greater likelihood of having such groups reflect the communities they serve.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Fully utilize existing print and electronic means to announce openings on city commissions and task forces. Such means include but are not limited to the Roseville City News, Roseville Patch, Roseville Review, Roseville Issues Forum, and the neighborhood network NextDoor.
- b) Pursue outreach efforts aimed at underrepresented groups.

**2.3 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should develop and enforce an absence policy for commissions.

**Rationale:** This will ensure that commission positions are effectively being utilized and available to those who not only wish to serve but will make available the required time.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Request staff report to the City Council when any commissioner misses more than four meetings in a rolling twelve month period.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

### **3) Engage Roseville Renters and Non-Single Family Homeowners**

**3.1 Proposed Intent or Policy:** The city should engage renters as it does homeowners.

**Rationale:** According to the 2010 census, almost 1/3 of Roseville residents are renters and pay for city services through their rent, yet appear underrepresented in civic engagement efforts. Other communities, such as Hopkins, have programs targeted specifically to engage renters in city government (for more information about Hopkins' Engaging Raspberry Renters program, go to <http://hopkins.patch.com/topics/Engaging+Raspberry+Renters>).

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Include renters/leasers (both residential and business) and residents of co-ops and assisted living facilities in any communications initiatives (such as the recent adoption of Nextdoor, a neighborhood networking tool) to facilitate their engagement.
  
- b) Include renters/leasers (both residential and business) and residents of co-ops and assisted living facilities in the notifications process pertaining to zoning changes and planning issues (as with property owners).

### **4) Provide Public Participation Support, Training, and Resources**

**4.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should make available administrative support to foster more effective volunteerism and public participation.

**Rationale:** Without administrative supports such as volunteer coordination and administration (note-taking and meeting coordination), citizens' efforts are less efficient and satisfactory. Providing this minimal support would alleviate many frustrations and make citizen participation more effective, and would also provide opportunities for city staff and engaged citizens to dialogue and develop a shared perspective.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Create and promote more volunteer opportunities for citizens to actively contribute to the Roseville community.
  
- b) Create a new city executive position to support volunteerism and effective public engagement across all departments. This position would direct and coordinate volunteer opportunities and neighborhood and community relations; he/she could develop procedures and methods to provide clear and consistent two-way communication between city government and residents and businesses (improve communication and find opportunities for more effective civic engagement). We recommend that this position report to the City Manager and Council.
  
- c) Provide opportunities for City staff, council members, and commissioners to discuss key issues with citizens, including the City's progress on increasing civic

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

engagement (such as occurred at the March 13, 2012 Task Force meeting with City Manager Bill Malinen and City Planner Bryan Lloyd).

**4.2 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should invest in civic engagement training for public officials and city staff to foster a climate of public participation.

**Rationale:** The more public officials understand the importance of civic engagement in achieving city goals and gain skills in public participation, the more effective their leadership will be.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Offer periodic (annual at a minimum) training to city officials and staff on civic engagement principles and best practices, including leadership and public participation.

**4.3 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should develop educational and informational resources for citizens to learn how best to participate in civic issues.

**Rationale:** The more people know about the process of city government (i.e., how to find the schedule of meetings, agendas, minutes; how and when to contact city staff, council members, and/or commissioners; how to speak during public comment or hearing, etc.), the more likely they are to get involved and stay involved, and share constructive and relevant comments.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Expand on the information available to citizens re: how a city council and/or commission meeting is run and what procedures citizens need to know in order to testify. This may be in the form of a “how-to” video tutorial sharing some basic information, such as how to sign up for email alerts, how to locate the agenda on the city’s website, how to prepare your comments for public testimony, etc.
- b) Expand on its successful Roseville U program by offering:
  - i. Collaborative workshops specifically focused on civic engagement for residents both new to and seasoned in public participation. The “How-to” material suggested above could be repurposed for this format.
  - ii. A “graduate” course that focuses entirely on the city’s budgeting process, as this is critical information for engaged citizens to understand.
  - iii. More flexible scheduling or informal one evening seminars so that individuals who can’t make the full seven-week commitment can still participate.
- c) Compile and publish a directory of existing resources to educate citizens on how to effectively participate in city government decisions that affect them.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## 5) Enhance Print Communications and Dissemination

**5.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should continue to disseminate information via printed material and other means, keeping in mind that many residents rely solely on print media for news and information.

**Rationale:** At our community forum, we heard from many Roseville residents that they do not have access to computers or the internet and rely on printed mail communications.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Continue to disseminate Roseville City News and ensure all residents including renters and those living in non-single family homes receive the paper.
- b) Print any electronic updates pertaining to City Council decisions in Roseville City News so that people without email are able to access this information.
- c) Work with Nextdoor.com or other appropriate non-profits to find ways to include residents without computer access in community-building and communications.

**5.2 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should include pertinent information and stories related to civic engagement and neighborhoods in its print communication.

**Rationale:** In doing so, we increase the value of the city's investment in this resource.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Include information related specifically to neighborhoods and their activities in the Roseville City News.
- b) Include information related specifically to commission activities and civic engagement opportunities in the Roseville City News.
- c) Invite volunteer residents to advise city staff on items of interest for City News and possibly other communications such as the biweekly electronic newsletter. For instance, the City should consider establishing a Residents' News Advisory Committee to serve in this capacity.

## 6) Enhance Website and Electronic Communications

**6.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should continuously improve its website to make it more user-friendly, thereby fostering civic engagement.

**Rationale:** Content can be difficult to find. For instance, if one is interested in online news such as The Patch but don't know its name, they need go through the Resource Directory (which is only found when clicking on over 25 alphabetically ordered options in the pull down menu under "For Residents") and even then if they type "news" to

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

search the directory, they come up blank. The site should instead be oriented towards browsing for meaningful and relevant content.

### **We recommend the City:**

- a) Improve the organization and presentation of content so the website is easy to use.
- b) Improve the search feature to yield more relevant keyword matches.

**6.2 Policy Intent or Practice:** The city should maximize two-way communications technologies (Web 2.0) to facilitate timely public participation and engagement.

**Rationale:** Several neighboring cities make investments in civic-engagement-focused media. For example, Edina offers a Citizen Engagement blog titled Speak Up Edina ([speakupedina.org](http://speakupedina.org)) as well as a Facebook page, Twitter account, and YouTube channel. Many other cities offer any combination of these Web 2.0 tools, such as St. Louis Park, Minnetonka, and Hopkins.

The City's Comprehensive Plan also lists two-way communication as a goal; see the Plan's "Housing and Neighborhoods," Chapter 6, page 6-2.

### **We recommend the City:**

- a) Make use of existing electronic communications channels and networks (website, email alerts, Roseville Community Forum, Nextdoor, Patch, etc.) to connect with and actively engage Roseville citizens with an emphasis on two-way communication.
- b) Explore new media channels (Facebook, YouTube, blogging, etc.) to connect with and actively engage Roseville citizens with an emphasis on two-way communication.
- c) Create an area of the website (or web-based communications) focused specifically on public engagement information and resources for citizens, including two-way communication (see Edina's Citizen Engagement blog as an example).

**6.3 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should enhance access to City Council and commission agenda items, minutes, and recorded meetings through its website and CTV cable television.

**Rationale:** Increasingly residents have come to rely upon cable television broadcasts and the city web site to be informed on city issues. These vehicles provide access to government, and with relatively minor adjustments can become even more useful to Roseville citizens.

### **We recommend the City:**

- a) Publish approved city council and commission meeting minutes on the city website in a timely manner, such as within one week of approval. If public meeting minutes

## Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

are not approved in a timely manner, such as within one month, publish draft minutes on its website until minutes are finalized.

- b) Offer the full text of meeting agendas in the body of email alerts and meeting notices rather than requiring the extra step to click a link to learn of the full agenda.
- c) Include a link to the specific recorded televised city meeting on the same page as the meeting minutes and/or agenda. Currently it takes at least 8 clicks through 2 different websites to access a specific recording, and these links are difficult to find.
- d) Ensure online video streaming is optimized for citizens at average connectivity.

**6.4 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should foster direct and efficient email communication with public officials.

**Rationale:** Citizens are more apt to contact public officials if provided a direct email address. Although the current online communication form allows citizens without email to make contact, it has its drawbacks: 1) citizens cannot send attachments with their emails, 2) citizens cannot retain a record of communications sent, 3) public officials cannot receive email immediately (esp. difficult over the weekend) and thereby cannot respond as efficiently and easily; and 4) staff time is spent forwarding messages unnecessarily.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Create and publish public, city-domain email addresses for city council members and commissioners to directly receive email from and send email to citizens on public matters without requiring city staff to manually forward such messages. (The online contact form may still be useful for individuals without email.)
- b) Automatically forward messages sent to the City Council's single email account to these new public addresses for council members.
- c) Create a group email account for each commission and automatically forward messages sent to each commission to the respective commission members.

### 7) Enhance Overall City Communication

**7.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should go beyond the legal requirements for public notification and provide information on issues critical to Roseville's development (see Recommendation 9: "Improve Notification Processes" for suggested criteria).

**Rationale:** Many residents feel that the legal requirement of public notification is insufficient to provide information on significant issues before the City. The City should exceed these requirements on issues critical to Roseville's development.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Organize/host an open house or community meeting for projects that pose issues of substantial community or neighborhood-wide impact to engage in dialogue

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

before the Council or any commission takes any formal action. This would allow the city to explain the project, answer any questions, identify pros and cons, and get a feel for residents' viewpoints.

- b) Aggressively communicate these open house opportunities in local media, as well as through existing communications systems and networks.
- c) Encourage staff to consult with community and neighborhood leaders on issues critical to Roseville's development.

**7.2 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should emphasize communications utilizing existing systems more proactively and effectively with the intention of engaging residents.

**Rationale:** When residents receive information in a timely manner and in clear understandable language, they are better able to process and provide feedback on how they would like their city to be run, and the City is better able to respond to citizen concerns.

### **We recommend the City:**

- a) Connect Nextdoor neighborhood leads to facilitate communication between them on issues of city-wide significance. This will need the cooperation of Nextdoor.
- b) Use neighborhood networks such as homeowner associations, SWARN (Solidarity of West Area of Roseville Neighbors), the Lake McCarron's Neighborhood Association, and possibly the City's Neighborhood Watch block captain system to supplement existing information systems and to invite residents' responses.
- c) Create and publish a policy for staff to respond to residents' requests and comments within 2 business days, and where applicable, inform residents of any relevant Roseville mailing (or emailing) lists they can join for updates on issues of concern.
- d) Reinstate the "Welcome Packet" for new residents of Roseville and incorporate information needed to foster volunteerism and effective civic engagement. If printing costs are prohibitive, the city might offer these resources online and provide a postcard to new residents inviting them to visit the web link or request a printed packet.

## **8) Foster and Support Vibrant Neighborhoods**

**8.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should support residents' efforts to build community within their neighborhood.

**Rationale:** Vibrant neighborhoods -- neighborhoods where residents know each other, can support one another, and feel invested in their city -- are a critical aspect of a healthy

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

city. Assisting neighborhoods in this important task benefits civic governance as well as its citizens.

### **We recommend the City:**

- a) Support the creation of resident-defined neighborhoods. The City, in asking residents to adopt NextDoor.com as their online neighborhood networking tool, established neighborhood boundaries.
- b) Evaluate the success of Nextdoor.com and include goal-related metrics such as its overall effectiveness in building community. Solicit input from residents on their satisfaction with the tool as it pertains to community building within pre-defined neighborhoods.
- c) Provide materials to support neighborhood gatherings throughout the year, similar to the Night to Unite materials offered through the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- d) Create a neighborhood profile column in the City News. Solicit content from residents and neighborhood groups.
- e) Explore opportunities to use Cable 16 to promote neighborhoods.

**8.2 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should support residents in developing more formalized neighborhoods and/or neighborhood organizations.

**Rationale:** By recognizing neighborhoods and neighborhood organizations, the city reinforces the value of neighbors working together to achieve common goals. Providing infrastructure and technical assistance to these groups also enables their success and provides another effective way for the city to disseminate and gather information.

### **We recommend the City:**

- a) Provide residents wishing to formalize their neighborhood or neighborhood organization with the following:
  - i. Definition of a neighborhood, network, and association.
  - ii. Example of forming a neighborhood, network, or association.
  - iii. Clear process to formalize a neighborhood, network, or association.
  - iv. Recognition of neighborhoods, networks, and associations.
    1. A page on city's website with the neighborhood's name, boundaries, characteristics, events, and contact person. (Example at <http://www.stlouispark.org/wolfe-park.html>).
    2. Signage in the physical neighborhood.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

- b) By utilizing various neighborhood networks and organizations to disseminate information relevant to the city and its neighborhoods, the City will assist these groups in providing value to their members and neighbors.

**8.3 Policy Intent or Practice:** The City should facilitate meetings at the neighborhood level.

**Rationale:** Many residents are interested in neighborhood issues which may not have city-wide impact, and are interested in knowing their neighbors and working on issues of neighborhood significance. By providing assistance to interested neighbors the City can play a critical role in building strong neighborhoods and thus a vibrant community.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Compile, maintain, and make readily available a list of meeting places for Roseville residents to use when organizing neighborhood meetings.

### **9) Improve the Notification Process**

**9.1 Policy Intent or Practice:** The city should expand the notification area and methods for developments that have greater impact and/or involve issues of probable concern.

**Rationale:** With numerous developments that have a greater impact on the community than the 500-foot notification area, a large number of residents have been noticeably upset at the city's lack of attention to notifying the community. Although the city has followed city and state requirements for notifying the public, many feel those requirements are insufficient.

**We recommend the City:**

- a) Expand the notification radius for projects reaching a threshold of having significant impact, based on those proposals that meet certain criteria. We recognize developing such criteria is challenging and therefore recommend the following as a starting point:
  - i. Environmental impact including any use that will generate air emissions beyond normal heating and cooling or restaurant exhaust; and noise that may be heard beyond a 500 foot radius or at any distance from the property before 7:00 am or after 5:00 pm weekdays or anytime on weekends and holidays; any proposal requiring a mandatory Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) or a proposal that would require an EAW on its own if an Alternative Urban Area-wide Review (AUAR) had not been prepared.
  - ii. Any proposal requiring a change to the Comprehensive Plan or an interpretation of the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - iii. Any proposal requiring a rezoning for a site of more than one acre.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

- iv. Any subdivision creating more than 20 residential lots or more than 40 residential dwelling units.
  
- b) Require notification for such proposals be provided to any established neighborhood organization any part of which falls within 500 feet of the proposal and to all residents and businesses within 1500 feet of the proposal and solicit their input. Highway and freeway rights of way shall not be included in the measured radius and the city will liberally interpret this notice criteria.
  
- c) Work with governing associations of condominiums and townhomes to notify residents, and advise neighborhood groups and associations of pending development issues as soon as legally-allowable and solicit their input.
  
- d) Co-host (with the proper) informal public communications meetings in the community to display renderings, drawings and maps of the proposal and set aside time to respond to residents' questions and concerns. These should include site plans, landscaping plans, lighting plans with off-site impacts shown, and in the case of buildings higher than 35 feet, site cross-section drawings showing the relationship of the proposed buildings to existing adjacent buildings.
  
- e) Provide administrative and communications supports for the above mentioned information meetings, such as maintaining an attendance list and taking notes; providing information on the proposed schedule, future public meetings, and review and decision processes; and informing the public on how to access staff reports and other information regarding the proposal.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Related Comprehensive Plan Policies

The following Comprehensive Plan policies – if fully implemented – will help to ensure civic engagement:

### Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4, Pages 4-2 through 4-3

Goal #1: Maintain and improve Roseville as an attractive place to live, work, and play by providing sustainable land-use patterns, land-use changes, and new developments that contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the community's vitality and sense of identity.

Policy 1.1: Promote and provide for informed and meaningful citizen participation in planning and review processes.

Goal #5: Create meaningful opportunities for community and neighborhood engagement in land use decisions.

Policy 5.1: Utilize traditional and innovative ways to notify the public, the community, and neighborhoods about upcoming land use decisions as early as possible in the review process.

Policy 5.2: Require meetings between the land-use applicant and affected persons and/or neighborhoods for changes in land –use designations and projects that that have significant impacts, prior to submittal of the request to the City.

Policy 5.3: Provide for and promote opportunities for informed citizen participation at all levels in the planning and review processes at both the neighborhood and community level. Policy 5.4: Ensure adequate and diverse representation of the appropriate stakeholders in land-use studies and advisory bodies.

Goal #8: Promote a sense of community by encouraging neighborhood identity efforts within the community.

Policy 8.1: Seek opportunities to plan, design, and develop inter--and intra—generational, multipurpose neighborhood gathering places.

### Housing and Neighborhoods

Comprehensive Plan Chapter 6, Pages 6.1 through 6.2

Introduction: Neighborhoods are the building blocks of the larger community, and many people identify with the social and physical aspects of their neighborhood. Because of the shared community connections within neighborhoods, they often foster grass-roots civic discourse...

Goal #3: Encourage the development of neighborhood identities that build a sense of community and foster neighborhood interaction, as appropriate.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

Policy 3.1: Foster the creation of individual neighborhood identities through the promotion of each neighborhood's unique attributes and amenities.

Policy 3.2: Assist residents in developing and maintaining neighborhood organizations and forums.

Policy 3.3: Create two-way paths of communication with existing neighborhood organizations regarding overall city-wide information and as well as specific issues of concern and interest to individual neighborhoods.

Policy 3.4: Encourage neighborhood-based planning processes that rely heavily on resident participation.

Policy 3.5: Consider involvement of neighborhood residents in further development of area plans for the 16 planning districts (Land Use Chapter 4) within the framework of the Roseville 2025 Vision and the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 3.6: Partner with neighborhood organizations to provide forums for residents to participate in the achievement of the housing and neighborhood goals.

### **Using the Plan**

Chapter 11, Community Engagement Section, Page 11-2

Civic participation is vital to democracy. It takes many forms: individual volunteerism, volunteering on city commissions and committees, involvement with neighborhood and other nonprofit organizations, and participation in elections and governmental processes.

When residents are actively involved, civic decisions themselves are more likely to reflect and serve the needs of the community. And the built environment that results from public decisions made to benefit the community as a whole will decrease isolation and increase the vitality of public life.

Without public acceptance and engagement in the Comprehensive Plan, it will not have much of an impact in guiding Roseville's future.

Public participation and engagement is a community standard that this plan values. As indicated in the Imagine Roseville 2025 Final Report, Roseville residents are invested in their community and Roseville has a strong inclusive sense of community. The City values community input and will utilize all input when making decisions. To this end, the City will encourage diverse representation on all city commissions and advisory bodies. The importance of community engagement is reflected throughout the Comprehensive Plan, primarily in the Land Use Chapter and the Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter, and public participation will continue to be a major underpinning of future public policy decisions...

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, Roseville has other examples of community-based planning, Vista 2000, Imagine Roseville 2025, the Twin Lakes Master Plan, and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. All these documents reflect the hard work and commitment of Roseville residents to their community, and all these plans draw from resident aspirations for their

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

community. These plans should continue to be utilized by the staff and Council as important statements regarding the community's goals and objectives.

When plans are altered, all interested citizens should be educated about the need for the alteration and opportunities for public comment should be made available. To engage the community, their input must be actively sought and their advice heard. If a conflict is reached, staff should consider possible alternatives before bringing issues to the Council for approval or dispute resolution.

### **Conclusion**

As a group we have heard from many individuals and neighborhoods. We have reviewed efforts in other Minnesota suburban communities, specifically Edina, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park. We encourage all residents and Council Members to look at the websites of these three cities in particular to see how they have encouraged and implemented strategies for effective civic engagement.

We are making no claims that these are all the possible ideas or strategies, but they reflect those of basic categories, some large and some small. We are aware that the implementation of some of these ideas will have a budgetary impact. We hope that the City Council will take the time to prioritize the suggestions, establishing a cost impact at the same time. **We would like to take part in this process.** The Task Force is willing to chart the priorities according to the Council's wishes, suggesting that the items then come forward to the Council on a periodic basis for progress updates. We feel that such action would provide confirmation of the work of the Task Force members and a commitment on the part of the Council to support effective civic engagement in Roseville.

### **Items for Future Consideration**

1. Monitor progress on our recommendations based on city council priorities.
2. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Civic Engagement elements in the Imagine Roseville 2025 Plan and the 2030 Roseville Comprehensive Plan.
3. Assess the effectiveness of these recommendations as they relate to minority or marginalized communities, and if needed evaluate additional recommendations based on diversity of Roseville's population.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Appendix A – Tapping Volunteers for Results

Tapping Volunteers for Results  
By Mary Quirk

*Volunteers can help a city accomplish goals while also bringing a new energy and sense of community. During these hard economic times, cities are relying on volunteers more than ever. Here are a few tips to help make your new or growing volunteer program a success.*

Cities across Minnesota are taking a new look at roles for volunteers and engaged citizens. As budgets get tighter, and new revenue opportunities are few and far between, the effective engagement of volunteers can be a great way to bring in new resources.

Cities have historically involved volunteers in a variety of ways, but media reports and studies show that cities are now relying on volunteers even more than they have in the past. A recent survey by the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA) found that over 50 percent of nonprofit and governmental organizations reported an increased reliance on volunteers since the economic downturn. (For full survey results, visit [www.mavanetwork.org/shiftingenv](http://www.mavanetwork.org/shiftingenv).)

Noting this trend, the League of Minnesota Cities chose “Effective Use of Volunteers” as the topical category for this year’s City of Excellence Awards. The quality of the entries for this award clearly indicates a vital and growing role for volunteers in cities (see page 8).

### **Determine Readiness to Start**

So, should your city seek to expand volunteer involvement? Most likely yes, but it depends on three factors:

1. Do you have a vision for how volunteer talent can bring value to the city?
2. Are you ready to invest resources in a volunteer program?
3. Are you ready to offer the updated forms of volunteer engagement that today’s volunteers expect?

Also, as you build your program, keep this caveat in mind: volunteers can be critical to supporting an organization when budgets are tight, but they do not replace paid employees. Be careful not to fall into that trap.

### **Plan First**

Initiating a volunteer program is best done with a vision for what the volunteers will accomplish, along with the proper investment of resources. But volunteers are free, aren’t they? Just put up a flyer and start recruiting? No. To be successful, engaging volunteers will require time, financial

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

resources, and careful planning. (See the sidebar on page 5 for steps to grow a volunteer program.)

### **Meet the Expectations of Today's Volunteers**

In addition to planning and investment, you need to understand and offer the types of opportunities today's volunteers seek. The days of volunteer engagement being limited to routine tasks—like stuffing envelopes or picking up trash—are over. The true keys to success for a volunteer program today are an updated understanding of what volunteers expect and a willingness to involve volunteers in high-impact, meaningful ways. The Wayzata volunteer program is a perfect example. This program started in 2010 with three initiatives—the Adopt-a-Garden Initiative, Senior Initiative, and City Hall/Public Works Administrative Initiative. Not only are volunteers involved in all three initiatives, they are the managers of the initiatives. To update how you involve volunteers, follow these pointers:

- Understand today's volunteers' deep-seated need to have impact and use that understanding in all facets of how you involve them as volunteers.
- Focus on learning the prospective volunteer's passions, mutually designing his or her volunteer role.
- Offer a wide choice of volunteer opportunities in all aspects of the organization's operations.
- Include some short-term and seasonal volunteer positions to align with current volunteer availability.
- Offer skills-based volunteer opportunities to tap citizens' willingness to volunteer their workplace skills.
- Move volunteers into project leadership roles and positions of higher responsibility.
- Reinvigorate volunteer recruitment through social media, electronic communication, partnerships with schools and employment agencies, and use of your organization's networks.
- Reframe volunteer recognition to respond to the value current volunteers place on having impact and on being lifelong learners.
- Create systems to monitor changes in volunteer expectations and adapt to the changing needs of volunteers.

### **Reach out for Diversity**

As communities become more culturally diverse, your volunteer program should reflect that diversity. Reach out to engage people from all the various cultures and backgrounds represented in your city. MAVA offers the following tips, based on research of volunteerism in immigrant communities:

- Focus on creating relationships and trust first.
- Learn the cultural history and background of the immigrant communities you seek to involve as volunteers.
- Find volunteer opportunities that engage and benefit the collective, family-centered system that is prevalent in immigrant communities.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

- Assess practices and systems that may cause barriers to fully engaging immigrant volunteers. These might include excessive paperwork and reference requirements.
- Build on the talents of immigrant volunteers.

Brooklyn Park's community engagement initiative, which has been in action for two years, has had great success in involving residents of various cultural backgrounds. The key to the city's success has been simply inviting participation. This may sound simple, but staff actually spent many hours—including nights and weekends—to personally contact and invite immigrant residents to be involved. They did this because other immigrant volunteers advised that many immigrants would only attend events if invited personally.

Their hard work has paid off. "Through our initiative we not only have increased civic participation," says Denise Rene Wollenburg, the city's community relations coordinator, "but that participation reflects the full diversity of Brooklyn Park, one of the most diverse cities in our state with over 21 percent of our population being foreign-born."

### **Fit it Together**

The City of Red Wing is another example of a city putting all the pieces together for a successful volunteer program. In 2009, former Red Wing Mayor Donna Dummer attended a MAVA workshop because the city was ramping up its volunteer program, and she wanted to learn everything she could about engaging volunteers. Two years later, Minnesota Public Radio interviewed Dummer about the city's success in involving volunteers to "make Red Wing look spiffy." It's not surprising that the city is held up as an example because the city leaders took the right steps—they studied best practices, planned their vision, invested in the project, and worked to meet the expectations of today's volunteers. That's a recipe for a successful volunteer program in any city.

### **10 Steps to Start or Expand a Volunteer Program**

1. Obtain buy-in. A successful volunteer program starts with support from the entire organization.
2. Identify what volunteers will do. Gather staff and ask: "What are you doing in your job that a volunteer could do?" and "What dreams do we have for the city that volunteers could help us realize?"
3. Develop resources and staffing for the volunteer program. Place someone (paid or volunteer) in the position to lead the volunteers. Resources are also needed for recognition and other expenses such as mileage.
4. Provide training for the person leading the volunteer program. Volunteer management has evolved into a field with a knowledge base of best practices. For local workshops, check with your local volunteer center or the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration. Visit [www.mavanetwork.org](http://www.mavanetwork.org) to learn more.

## **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

5. Design the structure of the volunteer program.
  - Take the initial ideas for volunteer positions and draft position descriptions.
  - Develop interview questions to learn what a volunteer has to offer the organization.
  - Outline the training volunteers will need.
  - Decide on policies for the program.
  - Figure out what supervision and support volunteers will need and who will provide that.
  - Determine the goals of the program and how success will be evaluated.
  - Develop systems to track and evaluate volunteer hours and other data.
  
6. Address risk management. What risks to the organization are created by having volunteers? What are the risks to the volunteers? (See page 6 for more about managing risk.)
  
7. Determine whether there are legal issues to address. Make sure your city understands and complies with any state or federal laws related to using volunteers.
  
8. Design volunteer recruitment.
  - Draft a recruitment message that states the need the volunteers will address, how they will make an impact, and the benefits they will receive from volunteering.
  - Identify the profile of a volunteer who would be ideal for each position and think about where you might come into contact with people who match the profile.
  - Ask other staff and board members to work their networks to find volunteers. Once you have volunteers, ask them to help recruit more volunteers. The number one reason volunteers get involved is because they were personally asked.
  - Make a list of places to post the volunteer position(s). Find places to post on the Internet such as your local volunteer center, **www.VolunteerMatch.org**, **www.Idealist.org**, and websites that your target volunteer population would use.
  - Look for opportunities for speaking engagements and media attention to promote your volunteer needs.
  
9. Recognize the volunteers. Recognition is the number one practice of volunteer management that leads to retention of volunteers, according to a report by the Urban Institute. Build a culture of recognition that includes regular personal thank yous and sincerely letting the volunteers know the difference they make. (To access the Urban Institute report, visit **www.urban.org/publications/411005.html**.)
  
10. Let stockholders know what happened. Keep the community informed of the success and vital difference volunteers make. This will springboard into new ideas on how to involve volunteers.

*Mary Quirk is executive director of the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration. Phone: (651) 255-0469. E-mail: [mquirk@mavanetwork.org](mailto:mquirk@mavanetwork.org). Minnesota Cities, November – December 2011 (p.4-5)*

# **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

## **Appendix B - Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation**

### **Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation (As Adopted by the Civic Engagement Task Force on May 7, 2011)**

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.
8. Participants will be open-minded toward the involvement of others and towards the input of staff, city commissions, and professionals.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Appendix C – Minneapolis Core Principles of Community Engagement

Core Principles of Community Engagement As adopted by the Minneapolis City Council in December 2007

- 1. Right to be involved:** Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- 2. Contribution will be thoughtfully considered:** Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will be thoughtfully considered.
- 3. Recognize the needs of all:** Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicates the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
- 4. Seek out involvement:** Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- 5. Participants design participation:** Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- 6. Adequate information:** Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- 7. Know effect of participation:** Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

## Appendix D - Community Forum Feedback Sponsored by the Task Force

Feedback from One Table at Community Forum

September 14, 2011

Note-taker, Megan Dushin

Theme	Main Point	Supporting Discussion
<b>Neighborhood involvement</b>	<p>Organizing when there's a common threat is easy - people are motivated, committed, vocal, visible. Without a threat is more difficult</p>	<p>3 participants from Cty C2 issue - mtg since 3/2011 and even weekly over summer to organize.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Went door-to-door to collect phone/email and spread the word</li> <li>• Made Facebook page and entire Website to share info and recruit emails</li> <li>• Created email list</li> <li>• Printed signs and posted on lawns</li> </ul>
	<p>Roseville University and Police Citizen's Academy well liked among those who've enrolled</p>	
	<p>Citizenry "appears empty" in Roseville - people less engaged than back in the 50s</p>	
	<p>Aging people sometimes don't have energy to get involved in neighborhood development</p>	<p>One side of the complex had organized the Nat'l Night Out 2 yrs in a row and this year there was none because the other side wasn't contributing.</p>
	<p>Roseville University and Police Citizen's Academy well liked among those who've enrolled</p>	

# Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

<p>Review current literature on this - there must be suggestions out there on how to get people more involved in their neighborhood</p>	
<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>City website helpful for C2 issue.</p> <p>Not all people have computers or email (feel left out)</p> <p>More relevant political news such as summaries of Council meetings needed in Roseville papers (Review and City News)</p> <p>Apathy among citizens might improve with better communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learned of council member emails</li> <li>• able to email council in one click</li> <li>• city engineer answered questions on website</li> <li>• showed both sides of the issue</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One person said she knows more about what's happening in Falcon Heights than Roseville.</li> <li>• City News poorly written and edited, one person commented.</li> <li>• Consider surveying readers to see if they read it, why / why not, etc.</li> </ul> <p>People don't know who their council members are. They're not interested in reading Roseville City News about water purity or utility services</p>
<p><b>Health &amp; safety, Demographics</b></p> <p>Need for elderly care watch program in Roseville with aging population (i.e., block nurse program similar to one in St. Paul)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some aging neighbors in one person's complex are found yelling for help in their apartments/condos but no one is on call to respond. (She's a nurse so she's responded, but sees this need in Roseville.) Need some communication system to know that everyone's OK.</li> <li>• Another person said they have a</li> </ul>

## Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations

### Government decisions

May even want to form a Special Commission on the aging population in Roseville to address the various issues

It's not clear how government makes decisions - suspicious

volunteer "care committee" in their complex. Mostly people over 55 in their building. That seems to work well.

- Young people do not want to get involved w/ aging people.
- Job Corps or Senior Companion Program?

- The C2 group met with retired Planning Commissioner to get some consultation advice on how government makes decisions.
- Even still, it appears people make up their minds before public hearings and proceed regardless - "it doesn't matter what you do"
- City politics appears cliquish- "it's all in who you know."

# **Roseville Neighborhood & Community Engagement Task Force Final Recommendations**

## **Notes from the Public Forum (My Table) At the September 14, 2011, Community Forum**

Small group gets involved. These same people are on multiple committees.

People who are functional maybe too busy to get involved.

There are different levels of involvement.

Mobility issues can deter involvement.

Neighborless people coming & going.

Neighborhood identity can be of varying degrees.

Homemakers of Roseville still exist. Assisted by U of M extension.

Walkers & Dog Walkers could form a group.

City has many ways to culturally get involved such as libraries, Roseville Players, the choir & dance club.

Community events bring people together.

Simple things can unite people.

Positive points for Roseville U & the City's website.

Greater need for transparency.

The group has had fair dealings with City Government.

How do we do a better job of engaging renters?

Roseville has received some favorable press as of late (Parks Master Plan, coverage of the single hauler issue).

Senior Resource Guide would be a good idea. Same with a general Resource Guide.