

Prairie Dog Working Group
Protocols – FINAL 3/6/17

Purpose and Authority

The purpose of the Prairie Dog Working Group is to deliver a report of consensus-based recommendations to the Boulder County City Manager by May 2017. The group itself can propose recommendations but does not have the authority to bind City staff to any decision.

- The first priority is determining relocation methodologies under existing plans and policies that can be used in 2017.
- The second priority is determining methodologies under existing plans and policies that can be used in 2018 and beyond.
- The third priority is determining longer-term ideas that might need further exploration or require changes to city plans and policies.

Group Membership and Alternates

The Working Group is comprised of eighteen named members selected by the City of Boulder City Manager. No alternates were reviewed or considered. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, he or she will not send an alternate. However, the group can request outside experts or speakers to attend and present on key issues. Exceptions: Working Group members who represent government agencies may send alternates if the named member cannot attend in order to ensure that the Working Group has access to the information and expertise that person is intended to provide.

Working Group Members:

Dan Brandemuehl
Kristin Cannon
Patrick Comer
Aaron Cook
Elle Cushman
Keri Konold Davies
Jeff Edson
Deborah Jones
Amber Largent
Amy Masching

Valerie Matheson
Andy Pelster
Carse Pustmueller
Jesse Rounds
Eric Sims, Jr.
Lindsay Sterling-Krank
Heather Swanson
John Vickery
Jon Wold

Representation

Several Working Group members indicated that they would be representing themselves, but the following members provided clarification on their function:

- Keri Konold Davies, Valerie Matheson, Andy Pelster, Heather Swanson, Jon Wold are representing the City of Boulder in the Working Group.
- Kristin Cannon is speaking on behalf of Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
- Jesse Rounds is speaking on behalf of Boulder County Parks and Open Space.
- Lindsay Sterling-Krank is speaking on behalf of the Humane Society’s Prairie Dog Coalition and will clarify when she is speaking for herself.
- Aaron Cook is speaking on behalf of Naropa and will clarify when he is speaking for himself.
- Amy Masching is speaking on behalf of the Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration and will clarify when she is speaking for herself.

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Subcommittees

Subcommittees will only be formed for information gathering purposes and not for issue resolution or substantive discussion. Subcommittees are permitted to reach out to external experts at the request of the group, providing all relevant information is shared with the entire group during a meeting.

Decision Making

The Working Group will operate under consensus, with no reserve majoritarian voting process. For the Working Group, consensus has the following components:

- Consensus is both a process and an outcome. During the consensus-building process, it is the job of the Working Group members to help each other reach an agreement that everyone can live with.
- It is not the function of the facilitator to force the group to reach agreement.
- If an agreement is not possible, the group will draft a single report to Council that explains the reasons for the recommendations and the reasons why certain members could not agree to them.

Public Meetings

All the Prairie Dog Working Group meetings are public. The agendas will be posted one week in advance on the City website, and meeting summaries will be posted at least a week before the next meeting. Working Group members can distribute the final meeting summaries and agendas freely and should encourage public participation.

Public Participation

There will be 10 minutes of verbal public comment at the beginning of each meeting. If there is not enough time to attend to each public comment or question, members of the public will be encouraged to submit a written comment. Before each meeting, facilitation staff will read the written comments and quickly summarize and send key themes to the Working Group. During the 10 minutes provided for verbal comment, facilitation staff will also offer a verbal summary of the written comments during the meeting. Written comments will also be accepted through an online comment form available on the City of Boulder Prairie Dog Working Group webpage.

Documentation

Peak Facilitation Group will provide detailed, non-attributory meeting summaries for each meeting. All participants will have a chance to review and edit these meeting summaries before they are finalized.

Meetings

The Prairie Dog Working Group is committed to six meetings.

Media Interaction

Working Group members will refer the media to the public meeting agendas and meeting summaries which will be available on the City of Boulder Prairie Dog Working Group webpage and will encourage them to attend the meeting.

Interaction with Other Entities

If any group members would like to solicit information from individuals or entities who might serve as decision-makers in future policy change discussions, they must do so with the permission of the group. Any substantive discussion must be deferred to public comment (either written or verbal).

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This applies to the Boulder City Council, City of Boulder Open Space Board of Trustees, City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Boulder County Commissioners, and Boulder County Planning Commission.

Member Responsibilities

Working Group members will:

- Abide by these protocols, and allow the facilitator to enforce them if necessary.
- Engage in meaningful and productive dialogue.
- Actively participate.
- Focus on the discussion at hand and avoid side conversations.
- Speak up if in opposition to a proposal.
- Provide an explanation for all objections.
- Avoid destructive language and personal attacks.
- Read materials prior to meetings and come prepared.
- Be or become knowledgeable about the issue at hand.
- Proactively work to keep constituents, colleagues, and managers informed about the group.
- Avoid surprises.
- Characterize your own needs, desires, and interests; let others do the same.
- Disclose conflicts of interest.
- Respect the time of the group; speak briefly and on-topic.
- Learn from the past but let it go; work for the future.

Facilitator Responsibilities:

The facilitator is responsible for:

- Logistics.
- Facilitating meetings to be on point, productive, and on time.
- Enforcing protocols.
- Neutrality.
- Fair and equal treatment of all participants.
- Maintaining confidentiality of any discussions that are requested to be confidential.
- Documentation based on non-attribution.
- Making a best effort to incorporate all suggestions for change into draft documents or explaining why suggestions were not incorporated.