

RAPID
PLAN



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Jane Ja

February 23, 2021 – Commission Update



2002 MASTER PLAN

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Partnerships

Martin Luther King Park Neighborhood Association and Heartside Neighborhood Association formed

Friends of Grand Rapids Parks, Grand Rapids Whitewater, Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition formed

Six parks and/or park land at schools created, expanded, or preserved

Six Corridor Improvement Authorities formed

Over 3 million gallons of stormwater infiltrated per year

Riverwalk expanded

Historic structures adaptively reused

Green Grand Rapids Plan created

Grand River restoration permit submitted

A City in Balance with Nature

A City that Enriches our Lives

Vital Streets, Bicycle Action, and Equitable Economic Development & Mobility Strategic Plans created

Industrial areas along the river rezoned to allow mixed-use development

Medical Mile growth

Silver Line and Laker Line built

114 miles of bicycle infrastructure installed

Equitable Economic Development & Mobility Strategic Plan created

Balanced Transportation

A Strong Economy

11 Area Specific Plans and Corridor Plans adopted

1000 housing units built or added onto since 2011

\$4.1 billion invested in commercial construction

Business districts streetscape improvements made

Great Neighborhoods

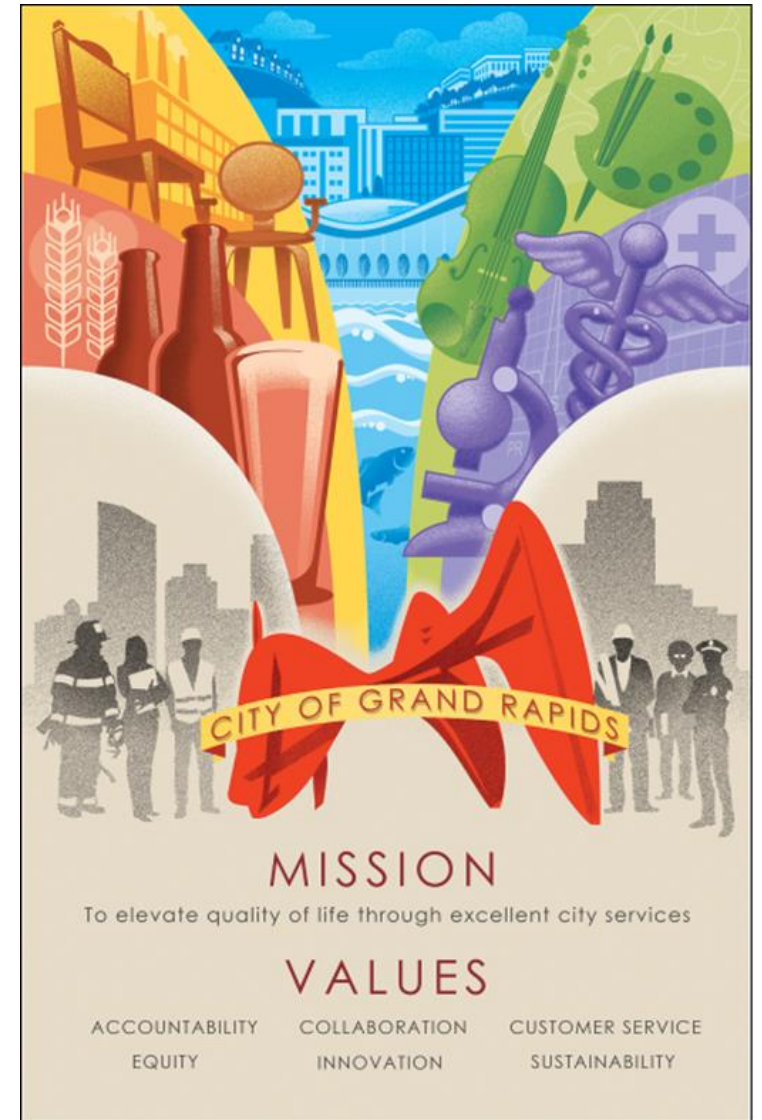
Vital Business Districts

New Zoning Ordinance adopted to replace the 1969 one

GRForward Downtown and River Action Plan created

MASTER PLAN FACILITATOR PROGRAM GOALS

- Alignment with the Strategic Plan’s Governmental Excellence Objective 6: Update the Master Plan to enable smart equitable growth.
 - Complete scoping of the Master Plan update—pre-planning phase to review the 2002 Master Plan
 - Metric: % of participants that are residents of color
- Alignment with the Strategic Plan’s Engaged and Connected Community Objective 4: Elevate resident voice in City operations.
 - Leverage partnerships and neighborhood leadership to gather and lift up resident voice



MASTER PLAN FACILITATOR PROGRAM

- 20 facilitators
- Ward distribution
 - First Ward – 6 Facilitators
 - Second Ward – 7 Facilitators
 - Third Ward – 7 Facilitators
- Trainings
 - City of Grand Rapids Equity Foundations
 - MSU Extension Citizen Planner
 - MSU Extension facilitation training
- Master Plan review divided into four rounds with three chapters reviewed each round
- Questions answered for each round



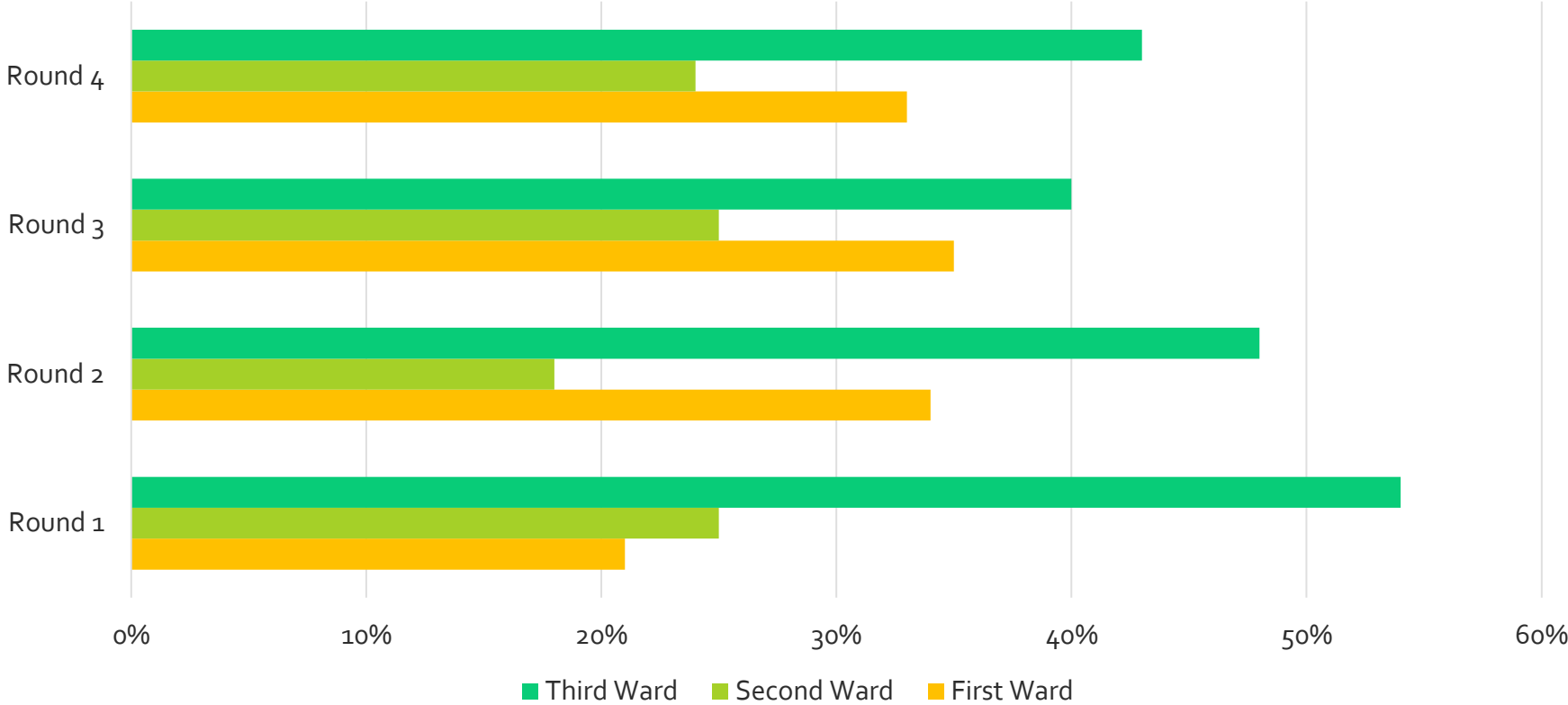
MASTER PLAN FACILITATORS

Marcus Manders	Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Isaac Brown & Marian Barrera Young	Baxter Neighborhood Association
Victor Williams	Boston Square Neighborhood Association
Megan Kruis	Creston Neighborhood Association
David Rhodes	Campau Commons
Magdalena Rivera	East Hills Council of Neighbors
Frances Dalton	Garfield Park Neighborhoods Association
Walt Marston	Grand Rapids resident representing Age-Friendly Communities
Gabriella Favela	Grandville Area Arts & Humanities
Mary Harden Johnson	Helping Important People Succeed (HIPS)
Barbara Draughon	Heritage Hill Neighborhood Association
Margo Johnson & Peter Carlberg	John Ball Area Neighbors
Isaac DeGraaf & Samika Douglas	LINC UP
Torino Scott	Martin Luther King Park Neighborhood Association
Madison Smith-Jacoby	Midtown Neighborhood Association
Elianna Bootzin	Neighbors of Belknap Lookout
Rocio Rodriguez	Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
Paula Collier	Seeds of Promise
Tarah Carnahan	Treetops Collective
Annette Vandenberg	West Grand Neighborhood Organization

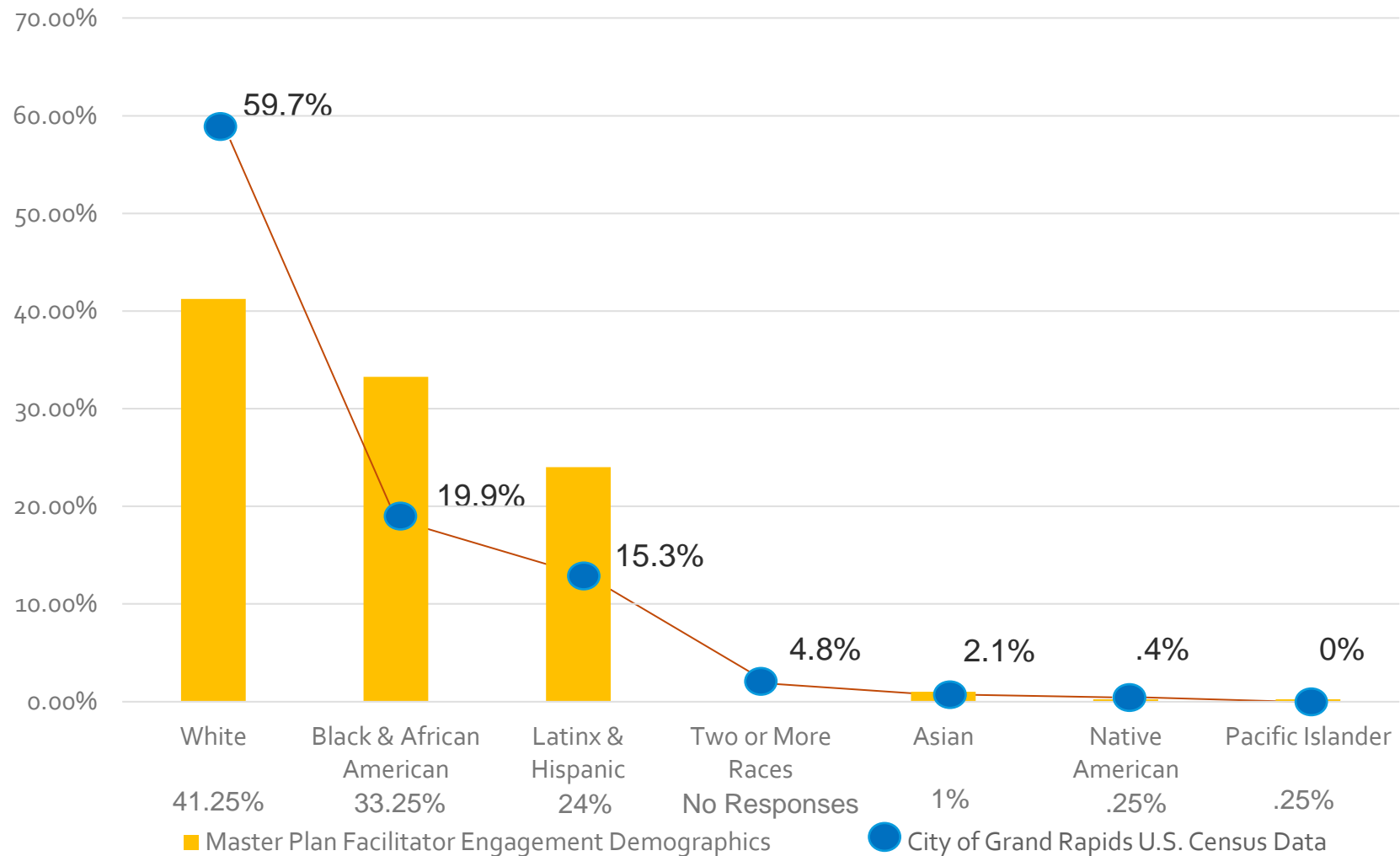
FACILITATOR MEETING ENGAGEMENT

- 92 community meetings
- 530+ community members engaged
- Non-English speakers engaged
 - Arabic
 - Dinka
 - Kinyarwanda
 - Nuer
 - Spanish
 - Swahili

Facilitator Meeting Engagement
Ward Distribution



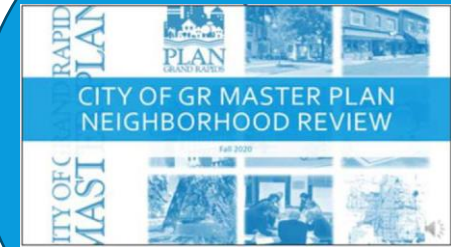
FACILITATOR MEETING ENGAGEMENT



HELPING IMPORTANT PEOPLE SUCCEED

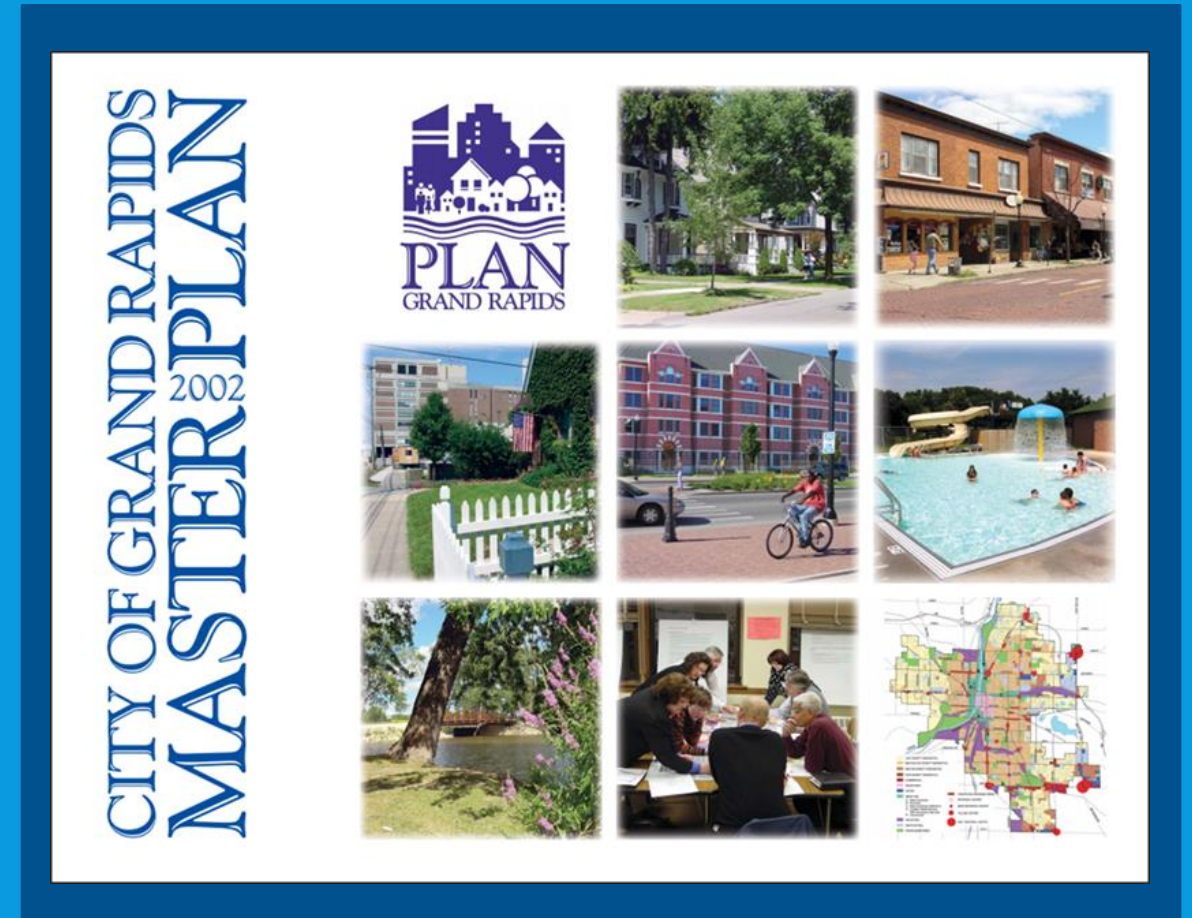
MARY HARDEN JOHNSON

- HIPS Summer Ambassador Program
- Youth engagement
- Introduced planning to participants
- Outcomes

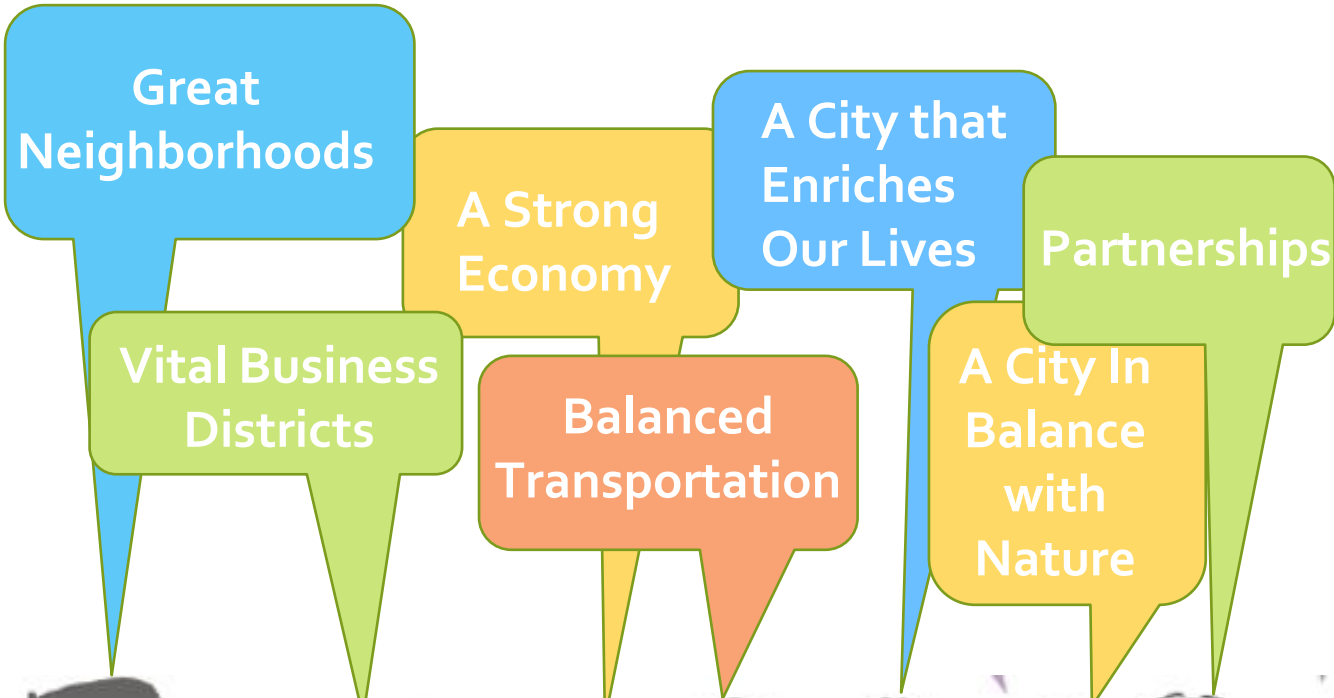


PLANNING STAFF 2002 MASTER PLAN REVIEW

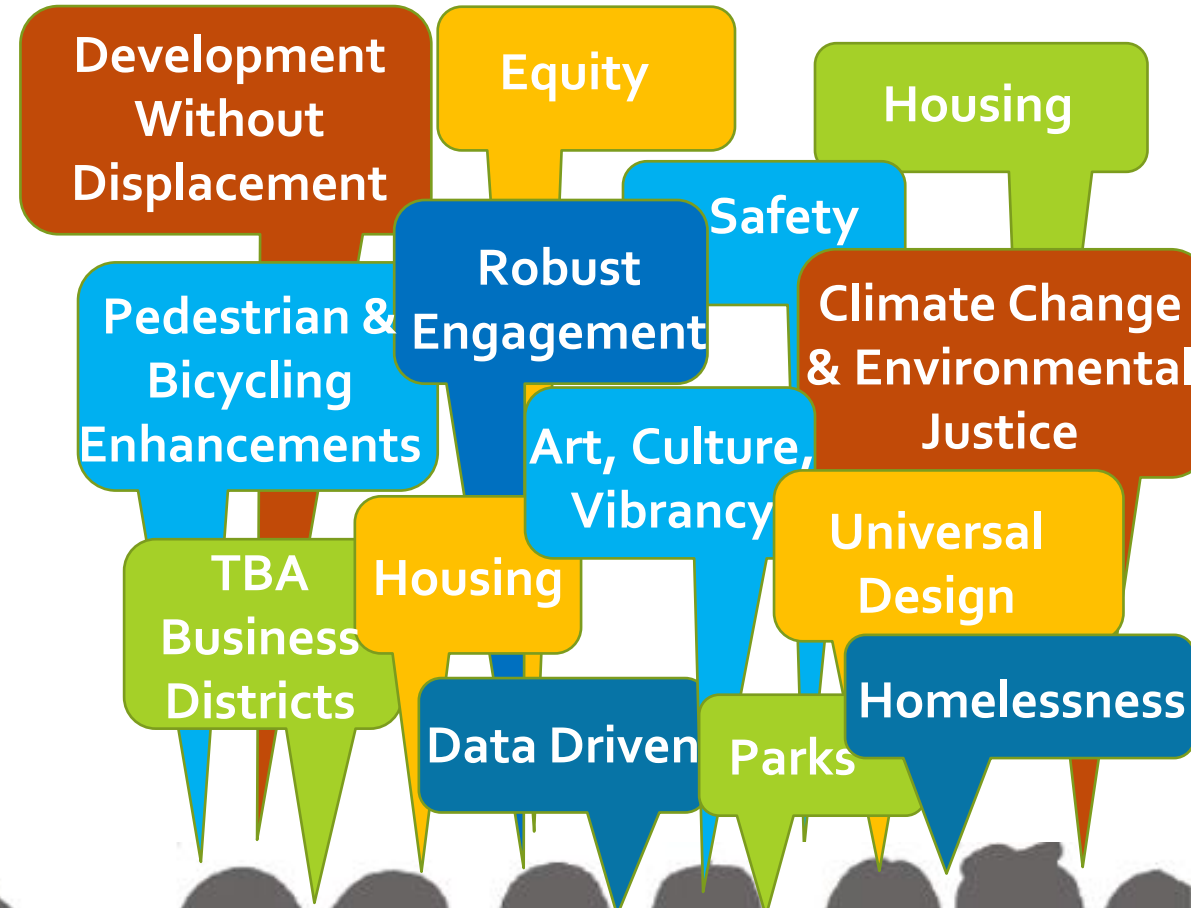
- 11 planners completed review
- 13 weeks
- 95 land use questions
- Drew out their experiences with the Master Plan



THEN – 2002



NOW – 2020



GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS - CHAPTER 3

THEN

"Great neighborhoods are the foundation of a great city. They are the physical and social expressions of the community. Every neighborhood can be a great neighborhood by building on its special assets and character."
- 2002 Master Plan

- Housing diversity
- Urban heritage
- Collaboration and community
- Quality of life
- Quality of education
- Committed homeowners, landlords and tenants

NOW

"There needs to be more affordable housing that is walking distance to things we need and creates a neighborhood feel for people to connect."
-Treetops Collective & UMC House participants

- Neighborhood focus
- Incremental and infill development
- Development without displacement
- Homelessness
- Housing
- Youth development and education



VITAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS – CHAPTER 4

THEN

“Vital business districts are critical components of a livable city and a strong economy. ... The choices that are made in locating and designing business districts are also important factors in creating a walkable city and supporting transit.”

– 2002 Master Plan

- A healthy downtown
- Near downtown and riverfront mixed-use areas
- Traditional Business Areas (TBA) restoration and revitalization
- Mixed-use neighborhood, village and sub-regional centers
- Vitality
- The public realm

NOW

We need to create business districts that reflect the population with equity.”
– Boston Square participants

- Drop the mixed-use neighborhood, village, and sub-regional center concept
- TBA district of mixed business types and uses
- Businesses and banks owned by BIPOC individuals



A STRONG ECONOMY – CHAPTER 5

THEN

“The citizens of GR recognize the importance of continuing business and institutional investment, but seek to balance economic growth with priorities for neighborhoods, the environment and the quality of development.”

– 2002 Master Plan

- Business climate
- Job diversity and a productive workforce
- Building on our assets such as the Grand River
- Retaining industrial uses near rail and highways
- Incorporating light industrial in mixed-use areas

NOW

“A strong economy—an equitable economy—needs to be included, what are we doing to spread economic growth across the city in an equitable way, and what are we doing to mitigate divestment in the Third Ward specifically.” – Baxter participants

- An economy that everyone can benefit from
- Environmental justice
- Improving transit for job access



BALANCED TRANSPORTATION – CHAPTER 6

THEN

*"GR citizens support the coordination of transportation and land use decisions to reduce dependence on the automobile, provide choice in travel modes and to balance the needs for automobile and truck access with the objectives of improving transit, making streets more walkable and creating a system of bike routes."
- 2002 Master Plan*

- Automobile alternatives
- Well designed street network
- Parking and quality pedestrian experience balance

NOW

*"Expand transportation to include all mobility and accessibility for all, inclusive of wheelchair bound, sight/hearing limited. As well as people without a car."
– East Hills participants*

- Emphasis on accessibility
- More pedestrian and bicycling enhancements
- Differing opinions on parking



CITY THAT ENRICHES OUR LIVES – CHAPTER 7

THEN

"Many factors influence quality of life, including schools, environmental quality, open space and recreation and the attractiveness of the built environment. The Master Plan focuses on the Grand River, open space, the city's heritage and urban design as important quality of life considerations."

– 2002 Master Plan

- Building on our assets such as the Grand River
- Parks and open spaces
- Stormwater management
- Art as an essential resource

NOW

"We should also add a component focused on art, culture, and vibrancy. Cities with strong art, culture, and that are vibrant are loved by tourists, we need to make our city more VIBRANT and invest in that vibrancy, so it doesn't go elsewhere."

– Garfield Park participants

- Art, culture, and vibrancy
- More accessible and safe parks and open spaces
- Human element
- Safety
- Universal design/planning for an aging population



A CITY IN BALANCE WITH NATURE – CHAPTER 8

THEN

“People in GR support planning approaches that protect natural resources, capitalize on existing infrastructure and honor the principles of Smart Growth. The plan highlights recommendations that provide an alternative to sprawl, promote balanced transportation, protect valued natural resources and better manage stormwater runoff.”
- 2002 Master Plan

- City as center to limit urban sprawl
- Air quality
- Clean water
- No mention of climate change

NOW

“One key concept that meeting participants wished was included in the plan was “environmental justice.” Many are concerned that minorities and low-income families suffer the brunt of climate change and environmental contaminants.”
- LINC UP participants

- Environmental justice
- Acknowledgment of climate change
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Local food systems



PARTNERSHIPS – CHAPTER 9

THEN

“The planning policies that guide development in the metropolitan region will influence GR’s success in achieving planning objectives. In addition, collaboration among city departments, residents, property owners, businesses and institutions will be essential in bringing the MP’s recommendations to fruition. Both regional and community partnerships are needed.”

– 2002 Master Plan

- Working together
- Regional partnerships
- Community partnerships

NOW

“It is important to have open collaboration with neighbors, business, stakeholders in community to increase the investment, by planning and developing together.”

– Seeds of Promise participants

- Still applicable and important for implementation
- Reaching all residents, especially those not represented by a neighborhood association



FEEDBACK TO INFORM THE PROCESS

- Data driven
- Evaluate and revise the future land use map
- Robust engagement
- Implementation reporting after plan creation



NEXT STEPS

- Form the Steering Committee
- Write and release request for proposals
- Interview planning consultant teams (with equity, communication, and engagement specialists)
- Hire planning consultant team
- Begin public process



MASTER PLAN TIMELINE

