Carroll 2030

**Overview and Recommendations**

**Presented to the**

**Carroll County Board of Commissioners**

December 11, 2014

Carroll 2030 Purpose

In January of 2013, a meeting of community leaders representing business, education, agriculture, public safety, health and wellness, transportation, municipalities, the arts and recreation convened, at the suggestion of Commissioner Howard, to engage in a process to identify long range needs and priorities for Carroll County. The information gathered through this community-based process would be presented to County officials to provide a context for establishing long-term capital planning and policy decisions that have long-term implications for quality of life and economic success.

Summary of Activities

The 2030 Workgroup engaged in a participatory process to identify and prioritize the most critical issues facing Carroll County between now and the year 2030 that will require long-term funding considerations.

The group divided the work into nine clusters or sub-groups to research issues and to engage organizations and individuals for the purpose of preparing a report of the critical issues facing each cluster and long range needs. The nine clusters, in alphabetical order are: Arts, Culture and Recreation; Agriculture and Environment; Business; Education; Health and Well Being; Municipalities; Public Safety; Transportation and Infrastructure; and Technology.

Each cluster presented a report to the 2030 Workgroup of its vision for the future and priority needs to be addressed in support of the vision. The 2030 Workgroup then ranked all of the priority needs and identified four priorities for the County. The Workgroup members then reported the findings back to their respective organizations, boards and stakeholders upon which they gathered additional information, ideas and validation of the priorities. It is estimated that over 400 individuals engaged in the 2030 process and priority setting. The 2030 Workgroup then presented a report to the Board of Commissioners on March 6, 2014, outlining the process conducted and findings on long range priorities.

Long-Term Planning and Funding Priorities

It is clear that a broad based dialogue of community leaders from all facets of the County can contribute valuable insight and useful information to elected officials in establishing long-term funding priorities. There will always be many needs in every community and organization. However, when tasked to establish the top priorities, it has been shown by the example of Carroll 2030, that a diverse group can and will reach consensus about the most critical areas needing long term funding.

The four priorities identified by the Carroll 2030 Workgroup are:

* **Technology**: develop high speed internet connectivity and a coordinated technology infrastructure for County.
* **Infrastructure:** plan improvements to roads, water, waste management.
* **Education:** support long term educational opportunities to meet challenges of changing economy, new technologies and emerging careers.
* **Emergency Services:** support strong emergency response capabilities for EMS, fire and law enforcement.

(See appendix documents for details on process, cluster group priorities, key findings)

The group also recommended that Carroll 2030 continue working to gather more community input.

Recommendations to Board of Commissioners for Next Steps:

1. Review the Carroll 2030 Report and priorities for consideration for long term planning during term of office.
2. Officially recognize *Carroll 2030 and Beyond (C2030+)* as a Council for the purpose of recommending priorities for long term planning through a community engagement process.
3. Task *C2030+* with developing and implementing a community-based process to identify and examine long range needs.
4. Task *C2030+* members with meeting as necessary during the first year to assess the needs of the community and present a draft of their initial findings to the Board of Commissioners. Over the second year, task *C2030+* with presenting the draft initial findings to the public for comment and review. Final recommendations will be presented to the Board of Commissioners before January of the third year, prior to budget deliberations so any identified needs can be addressed in the Community Investment Plan. Following presentation of these final recommendations, work will continue only on an as-needed basis.

Proposed Activities of *Carroll 2030 and Beyond*

* Hold a SWOT analysis for *C2030+* members to identify Cluster priorities.
* Update demographics, other factors that will impact the future. Determine *C2030+* board priorities (already completed for 2015 group).
* Schedule structured public information gathering sessions throughout the County to further identify long-term priorities; use SWOT analysis for this purpose. (Three have been conducted).
* Prior to presenting final report to the Board of Commissioners, *C2030+* will hold a summit to review compiled findings. The event will feature a speaker(s) describing forward thinking initiatives at work in other communities.
* Integrate research and information gathered into final report to the Board of Commissioners

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