

NEWS RELEASE

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Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum ask residents to help propel progress on four ‘Key Issues’ the communities face

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum invite residents to attend a community meeting for collecting problem-solving ideas regarding four “Key Issues” in the communities’ 10-year comprehensive plan.

The meeting will be Monday, Feb. 17, at 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Salvation Army gym, 917 Brackenridge Avenue, Brackenridge, 15014. Parking is available on local streets and in the Salvation Army lot.

The event is free, accessible, open to all and family-friendly. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

The comprehensive plan is a joint effort by the three communities to choose how they would like to change in the coming years. The plan will incorporate realistic strategies for matters that are important to the communities, said Elaine Kramer, a planner and landscape designer with Pashek+MTR, a Pittsburgh-based consulting firm. It will be durable and practical enough to be useful for 10 or more years, she said.

Last summer, at an initial public meeting, about 100 community members shared their opinions about what are important problems to solve or strengths to build on in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum. In addition, more than 600 residents and business owners completed questionnaires asking similar questions. Two dozen community stakeholders participated in interviews to provide their thoughts. In addition, “pop-up” events were held in the three communities.

A 17-member steering committee for the comprehensive plan digested all the public input and identified four Key Issues that the plan will address:

- Parks/Recreation/Trails/Riverfront
- Social Entrepreneurship/Community Development/Economic Development
- Property Deterioration and Blight
- Community Identity

The steering committee – comprising volunteers from each of the three communities – has been researching potential strategies for making improvements in the four Key Issue topic areas. At the Feb. 17 community

Let us know you will attend!

Details about the community meeting can be found at this event page:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-meeting-on-harrison-brackenridge-tarentum-comprehensive-plan-tickets-91212092825>

Registration is requested (but not required) so organizers know how much popcorn to make and how many chairs to set up.

meeting, the committee and the consulting firm will present some solutions that appear to be the most promising, seek feedback on the ideas, and ask residents to make additional suggestions.

Cody Nolen, a Harrison representative on the steering committee, said this meeting is valuable to the planning process and to citizens. "It's important to make sure our progress reflects residents' thoughts and feelings. It also gives an opportunity to hear from some that haven't been involved so far."

Steering committee member Denise Sloan of Brackenridge is a member of a steering committee group that has been investigating the best ways for the three communities to address blight and property deterioration, a topic that she felt was a main concern raised at the public meeting in June. She said one blight-fighting idea to potentially include in the comprehensive plan would be for the three municipalities to establish a joint process for identifying blight and enforcing ordinances. "This means that codes would need to be uniform across the communities," she said. "Ideally this would make information-sharing easier too."

Nolen is part of the steering committee group that has been working on the topic of community and economic development. "Some of the topics we've covered include identifying industries and economic opportunities that match the population and location of our community. We also discussed how to involve local community groups and coordinate efforts for community development."

He said he hopes residents of the three municipalities attend the Feb. 17 meeting so they can contribute ideas while the next steps of the plan are being developed. "Citizens should attend the meeting so that decisions are made that reflect their thoughts and not exclude certain communities or people."

When a final draft is completed later this year, it will be presented for comment at a public hearing, and each municipal body will be asked to vote on adoption. Meanwhile, residents can stay abreast of plan development at this website: <http://tarentumboro.com/plan>.

The three communities are sharing the \$90,000 cost of the planning process, including a \$50,000 grant from Allegheny County Economic Development. Each community is contributing a portion the \$40,000 local cost based on shares of the total population: \$23,000 from Harrison, almost \$10,000 from Tarentum and about \$7,000 from Brackenridge.

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