

7.14: Discuss Opportunity for Assistance from University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) to Complete Pending Land Use Studies and Strategic Plan Initiatives

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the staff report and asked for input from the Council as to whether or not to submit a letter of intent to the Resilient Communities Project for consideration.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that he appreciates the time staff has put into this but was not thrilled with the cost to hire interns and therefore would not support the action.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated that he likes the innovation and different perspectives that would be provided as well as the fact that the skills the students have align with the projects in Ramsey but was concerned with the cost. He asked if the value gained would exceed the cost. He asked where the commitment would become non-returnable, whether that would be with the letter of intent or later in the process.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that he does not have the complete picture of the value compared to the cost. He noted that there would not be a commitment from the City with the letter of intent, which would simply provide the City with additional information and an ability to determine if the City would qualify.

Councilmember Riley noted the large amount of staff time that would be needed that would potentially outweigh the value that would be gained. He noted that he would not support this request.

Councilmember Shryock stated that if you look at the number of projects on the list, the cost for the City to complete those projects on their own and the amount of staff time would be huge. She stated that this would provide a different perspective and she would be interested in applying to determine if the City could qualify.

Mayor Strommen asked the amount of time that would take to develop the letter of intent.

Community Development Director Gladhill estimated eight to ten hours to develop the letter of intent.

Mayor Strommen stated that it appears the City has little to lose by submitting the letter of intent to see where Ramsey stands in comparison to other communities and finding out more information.

Councilmember Williams stated that with the staff time that will be needed for the Comprehensive Plan, along with other items, she would support submission of the letter of intent.

Mayor Strommen confirmed a majority consensus of the Council to submit the letter of intent.