Albuquerque ABC-Z
Public Engagement Plan

The Clarion Team is excited to be underway on the Albuquerque ABC-Z project. We enjoyed meeting with City officials, stakeholders, and citizens and learning more about the community during our kickoff visit early this month. This document outlines our suggested approach for public engagement throughout the project. We can revise this proposal through further discussion with the City’s Project Team if necessary, and our proposal includes a process for mid-course corrections in this strategy.

At the start, we need to clarify the distinction between public engagement and project coordination. This document describes how we intend to reach, communicate with, and engage with citizens, stakeholders, and code users to ensure that the ABC-Z process reflects their values and input. It does not address all the ways in which the Clarion Team intends to ensure that input, information, and experience with the current plan and land use regulations is coordinated among the various City and County departments and other public and quasi-public agencies that provide public services to the people of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. That is an important – but separate – task.

Objectives

This ABC-Z Public Engagement Plan has four objectives:

- To inform and solicit input from the public about alternative changes to update and better integrated the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- To inform and solicit input from the stakeholders who use Zoning Ordinance and DPM the about the weaknesses of those documents and how to improve them in a new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO);
- To educate community residents and property owners who may be affected by changes in the UDO but who are less conversant with zoning code issues; and
- To ensure that citizens, stakeholders, code users, public officials, appointed and elected officials have a variety of conduits to convey their input to the City and the Clarion Team.

Approach

TASK 1.1: OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION (FOR BOTH COMP PLAN AND UDO)

Because broad and inclusive outreach and communication are essential during both the Comprehensive Plan Update and drafting the Unified Development Ordinance, the Clarion team has designed a coordinated approach to outreach and communication that will be used throughout this project. Although the types of tools needed to engage and educate the public and stakeholders about planning and zoning differ, many tools and approaches are the same, and it would be confusing for the public to distinguish between the two separate outreach and coordination efforts. In addition, engaging Albuquerque’s citizens on issues related to the targeted updates of the Comprehensive Plan can build momentum to keep them engaged during the drafting of the Unified Development Ordinance.
For these reasons, our integrated approach to outreach and education is described in this Task 1.1. Although the same tools will be used in Task 2.1. Task 2.1 will only describe any changes in focus, targeting, or frequency required for the UDO drafting effort.

While engagement and coordination among Albuquerque departments and other agencies also involves outreach, all of those activities are consolidated and described in Tasks 1.2 and 2.2 below (Coordination).

The Clarion team takes pride in finding new and inventive ways to assure success for all parties and the ability to overcome the difficult and often controversial aspects of developing a plan to guide the community’s future. Because engagement and education is so important, Clarion team members bring to Albuquerque a very strong and diverse set of outreach and education skills and experiences:

**Task 1.1.1 Initial Public Engagement Plan and Social Media Strategy**

The field of public engagement is rapidly evolving, and increasing use of digital and mobile technology has altered typical patterns of communication. This shift has generated a growing need for outreach and engagement efforts that maximize inclusion by offering a variety of ways to participate in public process. Emerging practices in the field of online engagement indicate that the web is not replacing traditional methods of civic engagement—it is expanding the set of tools in the box. Urban Interactive Studio (UIS) offers a range of web-based tools and services to engage the public, starting with the EngagingPlans app, which are often used as part of a multi-channel engagement strategy that complements and encourages face-to-face participation.

In addition, no comprehensive outreach strategy can ignore the potential of social media to broaden the range and scope of understanding of zoning, as well as awareness of the project itself. At the same time, the Clarion team’s experience is that the topics of planning and zoning does not lend themselves to thoughtful posts or tweets unless the process is carefully managed and monitored. In fact, there is a risk of feeding misunderstandings about how zoning works (or could work) through the types of short messages that work best on Twitter or other social networks. To avoid that result, we will use the project-specific accounts to connect with important local media accounts, bloggers, thought leaders and connectors, while posting more frequently for a smaller, expert audience.

Our first task is to finalize this Public Engagement Plan with Albuquerque project staff.

The project team has agreed on “ABC to Z” as the “brand” for this project, and the logo has been developed collaboratively between the consultants and City staff. The logo elements reflect the involvement of both the City of Albuquerque (“A”) and Bernalillo County (“BC”), and the tagline and “Z” indicate that this project includes both updates to the Comprehensive Plan and updates to the Zoning Code, among other land use regulations.

An initial public meeting schedule has been developed and will be posted on the project website. Specific dates will be posted on the project website and other social media as soon as they become available.
### Year 1:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comp Plan</th>
<th>UDO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 2015</td>
<td>Public Kickoff</td>
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<tr>
<td>March – April 2015</td>
<td>Modeling / Analysis</td>
<td>Assessment / Analysis</td>
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<td>May-June 2015</td>
<td>Public Workshops</td>
<td>Module 1: Zone Districts &amp; Uses</td>
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<td>July 2015</td>
<td>Comp Plan Updates</td>
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<td>August 2015</td>
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<td>Module 1: Public Review</td>
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<td>Sept. 2015</td>
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<td>Module 2: Zoning &amp; Subdivision Standards</td>
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<td>Oct. 2015</td>
<td>Draft Update: Public Review</td>
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<td>Nov. 2015</td>
<td>Begin Approval Process</td>
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Watch for Public Meetings
The initial social media strategy for this project is to begin with a project website and a Facebook page. As the project gets rolling and engages multiple stakeholders, a Twitter page may be added. City staff will manage postings and content on the website and Facebook page, with assistance from the consultant team to generate content and graphics.

City staff will also be the keeper of a communications plan and will be primarily responsible for its implementation, with assistance from the consulting team on the schedule, milestones, and content for press releases, web postings, etc. Communication media will include the project website; City Planning, Council Services, and County Planning websites; Neighborhood Newsletter; Facebook; print media; flyers; and online media.

City staff will create and maintain an open-ended e-mail list of stakeholders and citizens. Staff will regularly download contact information from the website for those who sign up to be on the distribution list for this project and add others who sign-up at events, etc. The stakeholder list will be maintained as a master spreadsheet, with sub-categories for invitations to focus groups that target specific topics and/or stakeholder interests (youth, for example). MailChimp will be used for large email communications, with sub-lists for targeted invites. Every email communication will offer the opportunity to unsubscribe.

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<th>Year 2:</th>
<th>Comp Plan</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan-March 2016</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Module 3: Administration &amp; Procedures</td>
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<td>April 2016</td>
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<td>Module 3: Public Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>May-July 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated Draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated Draft: Public Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin Adoption Process</td>
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In addition to the project website and the project email distribution list, hard-copy flyers and notices will be distributed to local libraries and other public facilities. Hard-copy documents for public review will be made available at local libraries and at the City Planning Department.

Efforts will be made throughout the project to bridge language and cultural barriers, including translation of invitations into Spanish, providing a Spanish translator at major public meetings, and conducting at least one early Comprehensive Plan workshop in both Spanish and English. City staff will ensure that a Spanish-speaking staff member is available to answer questions as requested.

**Deliverable:** Final Engagement Plan

**Task 1.1.2 Web Site Design and Web-based Document Interaction**

Key to the public’s awareness of and support for a planning and zoning reform effort is the design of a visually rich and interactive web site. Urban Interactive Studios (UIS) has worked with Clarion Associates on numerous public engagement web sites, and the team will present strengths and weaknesses of each to ensure that Albuquerque’s is the best yet. At a minimum, effective web sites include a “click to comment” feature (which both Fregonese and UIS have configured and used frequently), a section highlighting new videos and drafts, a way to comment on the drafts themselves, a visually engaging project schedule display, a compelling way to highlight the next meeting, an easy way to join the mailing list, and a reminder of the many other ways to learn and be heard.

All content, public engagement features and surveys created through the EngagingPlans site are optimized for mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets. When participants access the site from their device, the website resizes and allows users to engage and easily provide feedback at their own convenience.

Throughout the other tasks and Modules of the Comprehensive Plan and UDO process, UIS will use its in-house tools to serve not simply as a channel for communication, but as a resource to the public, showcasing both the Plan and UDO process and the draft and final result. During the drafting stage, BrightPages will allow us to collect and analyze general feedback on current zoning and development practices, while collecting preferences and suggestions for future revision. In later phases, BrightPages will make full Plan and UDO documents, reports, maps and media easily accessible to the public, giving a full, clear, and informative picture. Selected information will be highlighted and brought together in a streamlined visual navigation system so users can jump to the sections that most interest them. UIS will bring all the rich media developed during the project, including graphs and maps, to life by adding these vital elements of the plan as interactive sections right with the document. Simply put, the process will live in its entirety on BrightPages, accessible at any time, and presented with a range of compelling media and tools.

**Deliverable:** Project Web Site and Web-based Engagement Tools

**Task 1.1.3 Blanket Coverage of Project Initiation**

It is very important that the public and stakeholders be aware that the Unified Development Ordinance project has started, its scope and schedule, and of the various ways to engage with the project. At the start of the Code Update portion of this work, the Clarion team will mount a full
court press to inform the public that work is underway – including the use of the City’s web site and social media accounts, neighborhood organization leadership, print media, and television to introduce the project Brand, the web site, the project-specific social media accounts, the project schedule, and the initial meeting schedule. One of the key outcomes of this phase is to grow the project’s mailing list in order to keep stakeholders and interested citizens informed and engaged across the whole project.

**Deliverable:** Press Releases and Materials for Web Site and Social Media

**Task 1.1.4 Key Stakeholder Interviews**

At project initiation, the Clarion team will interview key stakeholders, Plan and Zoning Ordinance users, thought leaders, and others to:

- Build awareness of the targeted scope of the Comprehensive Plan updates and the broader scope of the Unified Development Code drafting effort;
- Confirm or modify our understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the current Plan, Ordinance, Regulations, and DPM as outlined in the White Paper;
- Generate ideas on strengthening the focus, articulation, or implementation of the Centers and Corridors approach to land use in Albuquerque;
- Solicit additional information about strengths and weaknesses from their unique perspectives; and
- Identify issues missing from the current Plan and Ordinance that need to be addressed

**Deliverable:** Posted List of Stakeholder Interviews

**Task 1.1.5 Regular On-line Surveys**

Clarion’s successful redraft of Philadelphia’s Zoning Code demonstrated the effectiveness of online surveys to both inform and solicit input from the public. The first survey will provide opportunities for input about broad topics related to both the Comprehensive Plan and the existing framework for land use regulation. Subsequent surveys will seek input on key questions related to key sections of the Unified Development Code while explaining key zoning challenges and measuring public support for (1) the need for the city to address each challenge, and (2) the approach chosen by the city to do so. In Indianapolis, Clarion combined this approach with short educational briefs to make the survey a learning experience; UIS has used a similar “workbook” approach in its survey work. Consistent public support on these surveys gave both appointed and elected officials (and the citizens themselves) confidence that the New Zoning Code effort was on the right track. A similar series of on-line surveys will be designed to educate and measure support for these issues throughout the Unified Development Ordinance project (approximately once every three months).

**Deliverable:** On-line Surveys and Summaries

**Task 1.1.6 Neighborhood, Stakeholder, and Public Meetings**

The project team will also conduct neighborhood, stakeholder, and public meetings throughout the process. Because neighborhood organizations meet on varied and sometimes irregular schedules, outreach to neighborhoods will emphasize the availability of Karpoff & Associates, DPS, and other
Clarion team staff to meet on their schedules, and to meet repeatedly during the project if requested. Meetings with stakeholders such as business owners, land planning firms, surveyors, NAIOP, ULI, and the Downtown Action Team will be headed up by DPS project staff, with support from Clarion Associates and Leland Consulting Group. Public meetings will be held at the start of the project and at each point where draft materials area made available for public review. Keypad polling techniques will be employed to measure public support for (or concerns about) proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance and Development Process Manual.

Other stakeholder groups may be engaged through focus groups organized by topic or targeted stakeholder, such as focus groups for youth or open space advocates. These will be scheduled as necessary throughout the project to ensure appropriate and timely input opportunities as they are needed.

**Deliverable:** Posted List of Meetings Held

**Task 1.1.7  Mid-Course Corrections**

In every planning effort, there are portions of the public and stakeholders who engage readily and others that do not. Historically, it has been difficult to engage residential renters, racial and ethnic minorities, neighborhoods with lower educational levels, and student populations in zoning and land use discussions. Materials will be designed specifically to reach these groups. At two key points in the project schedule, the project team will consult with City staff to determine which groups are aware of and engaging with the Unified Development Ordinance effort:

- **Milestone 1:** Following public release and meetings on Module 1 of UDO
- **Milestone 2:** Following public release and meetings on Integrated Draft of UDO

Based on these discussion, the Clarion team and Albuquerque staff to make mid-course corrections to redesign outreach materials or to identify additional public outreach efforts for those missing from the project. If necessary, additional interactive tools, such as i-Pad kiosks at community events, can be used to engage missing segments of the public or stakeholders.

**Deliverable:** Posted Amendments to Engagement Plan

**TASK 2.1:  OUTREACH AND EDUCATION (SPECIFIC TO UDO)**

Zoning codes are not intuitive. Effective public participation does not come naturally to most citizens; it has to be carefully cultivated and sustained throughout the process using a wide variety of tools and approaches. But public outreach and education for zoning projects needs to be designed and administered very differently than for planning efforts. Public engagement for zoning projects involves far less visioning and more in depth discussion and education on a variety of topics. At a minimum, this effort should cover the following topics:

- **Basic Approaches to Zoning:** The full range of zoning approaches currently in use – including not only traditional use-based zoning and more current form-based tools, but also the wide
range of “hybrids” – mixes of use and form-based tools tailored to the needs of the specific neighborhoods (which is what most cities choose, in the end).

- **Highly Visual and Web-based Formats**: The full range of graphics and interactive elements available to communicate zoning information and to simplify understanding of zoning requirements (which can build and sustain significant support for the entire reform effort). In addition, showing the public and stakeholders the operation of the newest generation of web-based on-line codes can build enthusiasm for a much more intuitive code.

- **The Limits of Zoning**: Information about what aspects of adopted plans can be effectively implemented through zoning and subdivision controls (and which cannot).

- **Problems with the Current Regulations**: Public and stakeholder understanding of the problems arising from the current structure and substance of the zoning and subdivision regulations is key to broadening the base of support for change.

- **Best Practices and Alternatives**: Even those frustrated by the current regulations may be used to using them, so explaining and illustrating best practices from elsewhere in the U.S. is a key step in educating the public that there are better ways to implement the types of controls they care most about.

- **Pros, Cons, and Tradeoffs**: Perhaps most importantly, public and outreach and education needs to help Albuquerque citizens and stakeholder understand the advantages, disadvantages and tradeoffs involved in different zoning decisions. For example, choices that may be highly popular on first blush may prove less popular when the cost and complexity of administration or the risks of over-rigid or overly flexible decisions are explained and understood.

To achieve this additional level of engagement and understanding, **the Clarion team will implement each of the outreach and engagement strategies listed in Task 1.1 above throughout the Unified Development Ordinance drafting process.** Those include:

**Task 1.1.1** Initial Public Engagement Plan and Social Media Strategy  
**Task 1.1.2** Web Site Design and Web-based Document Interaction  
**Task 1.1.3** Blanket Coverage of Project Initiation  
**Task 1.1.4** Key Stakeholder Interviews  
**Task 1.1.5** Regular On-line Surveys  
**Task 1.1.6** Neighborhood, Stakeholder, and Public Meetings  
**Task 1.1.7** Mid-Course Corrections

In addition, to ensure full engagement with the different nature of zoning reform, the Clarion team will produce the zoning education and engagement videos described below.

**Task 2.1.1** Short Engagement Videos

One emerging educational tool in zoning and planning is the creation of short three-to-five minute videos in which Clarion team members explain how a particular aspect of zoning works, how form-based or hybrid forms of zoning differ from traditional use-based zoning, what best practices are available to protect neighborhood character and integrity, or why the current ordinance has proven ineffective to achieve planning goals. These videos will be produced throughout the project – approximately one every two months – and notices of the availability of those videos will be distributed through the web site and social media. Those videos also provide background information and key questions to be tested when embedded into our workbooks alongside visualization, maps, and core questions.
Deliverables: 6 short engagement videos on key zoning topics.

Key Engagement Groups

1. The General Public

The general public of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County will be engaged throughout the ABC-Z project using the following methods.

   a. Project Website
   The Albuquerque ABC-Z project has a dedicated website at www.ABC-Zone.com that will be maintained throughout the course of the project. The website will serve as the main portal for two-way communication between the project team and the community. The website allows staff and the project team to push information out to those that sign up for updates. Staff will also use the site to upload useful project background materials, link to media coverage of the project, and post drafts of the unified development code installments once reviewed by staff and the Environmental Planning Commission. The website will host project surveys and can be used to learn about upcoming events and other meaningful ways to participate in the process.

   b. Questionnaires
   There will be periodic Comprehensive Plan and/or Unified Development Ordinance questionnaires on the project website throughout the project. The survey will solicit specific feedback related to code organization and format, zoning districts and land uses, development standards, and approval processes and procedures. These surveys are intended for wide distribution including the general public.

   c. Public Meetings and Hearings
   The public is encouraged to attend public hearings and public meetings where the ABC-Z project is discussed. The general public is invited and encouraged to attend the infill and development workshop where they will participate in an exercise reviewing potential development scenarios to determine the desired outcomes for Albuquerque. The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback and comment on the Annotated Outline, each of the draft code installments, and the consolidated draft of the Unified Development Code prior to adoption. Additionally, the public is invited to attend the final adoption hearings of the Unified Development Code at the culmination of the project. Staff and the Environmental Planning Commission may incorporate other public meetings or workshops as deemed necessary throughout the project.

The role of the general public is to:

- Provide input on existing code successes and shortcomings
- Provide recommendations for direction of Unified Development Code project
- Review and comment on public draft annotated outline
- Review and comment on each code installment (3 installments)
- Attend public meetings, hearings, and workshops where ABC-Z is discussed
2. Key Stakeholder Groups

During the project kick-off, Clarion met with more than 220 individuals through a series of 15 focus groups to secure initial feedback related to the current zoning code and the ABC-Z project. These interviews included various key stakeholders such as community members, developers, City and County staff, business owners, local engineers, elected and appointed officials, and downtown interest groups. Input from those interviews will be consolidated into major themes and used to prepare the initial draft of an Annotated Outline.

Stakeholder input will be sought at key points throughout the project. Staff may also choose to provide information directly to key stakeholder groups when public drafts for the Comprehensive Plan Update and code installments become available as a checkpoint.

The role of the key stakeholder groups is to:

- Provide input on existing code successes and shortcomings
- Provide recommendations for direction of Unified Development Code project
- Review and comment on public draft annotated outline
- Review and comment on each code installment (3 installments)
- Attend meetings with staff and the consultant team as necessary
- Attend public meetings, hearings, and workshops where ABC-Z is discussed

3. Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) / County Planning Commission (CPC)

We understand that the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) and County Planning Commission (CPC) will create a joint advisory committee to provide input on the Comprehensive Plan update, and the EPC will continue to provide guidance via a subcommittee of four (4) commissioners on the UDO project. Commissioners will act as sounding boards, providing input throughout the project. Members should be prepared to attend approximately five or six meetings to hear presentations from staff or the project consultants on draft revisions. EPC commissioners will need to attend special meetings with staff to review draft code amendments and discuss as a sub-committee. Sub-committee members will be expected to review draft updates and offer detailed feedback. Although Commissioners will be providing a thorough review of project documents and offering detailed feedback, they will not be voting or officially approving interim project documents. Rather, Commissioners shall work diligently with staff to provide clear direction to the project consultants while reviewing draft installments.

The role of the Joint EPC/CPC sub-committee is to:

- Provide input on existing Comp Plan successes and shortcomings
- Provide oversight and recommendations for direction of the Comp Plan update
- Review and comment on a Comp Plan outline
- Provide feedback and outreach to general public
- Review and comment on the draft Comp Plan
- Attend key meetings with staff to discuss the draft Comp Plan
- Attend meetings with consulting team to provide feedback on Comp Plan
- Attend public meetings, hearings, and workshops where ABC to Z is discussed

The role of the EPC sub-committee is to:
• Provide input on existing code successes and shortcomings
• Provide oversight and recommendations for direction of Unified Development Ordinance project
• Review and comment on draft UDO annotated outline
• Provide feedback and outreach to general public
• Review and comment on each UDO code installment (3 installments)
• Attend key meetings with staff to discuss draft UDO code sections
• Attend meetings with consulting team to provide feedback on code installments
• Attend public meetings, hearings, and workshops where ABC-Z is discussed