

Comprehensive Plans

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Comprehensive Planning

- ◆ Defines the identity and role of the city,
- ◆ Establishes direction for the future,
- ◆ Guides decision making processes,
- ◆ Formulates and recommends policies, programs, and regulations,
- ◆ Provides basis for implementation of these programs and regulations,
- ◆ Requires monitoring and provides for revisions.
- ◆ Is part of a city's overall Growth Management Program.

Comprehensive Planning

- ◆ Minimizes conflicts,
- ◆ Achieves more efficient use of funds,
- ◆ Copes with growth and decline,
- ◆ Preserves unique and historical aspects,
- ◆ Coordinates development and redevelopment,
- ◆ Establishes the legal foundation for regulations,
and,
- ◆ Guides rational decisions.

Texas Local Government Code

Note: The municipal zoning ordinance and the subdivision regulations implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

- ◆ Chapter 211 - Municipal Zoning Authority
- ◆ Chapter 212 - Municipal Regulation of
Subdivisions and Property
Development
- ◆ Chapter 213 - Municipal Comprehensive Plans

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 211 – Municipal Zoning Authority
 - Sec. 211.001. PURPOSE. The powers granted under this subchapter are for the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare and protecting and preserving places and areas of historical, cultural, or architectural importance and significance.

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 211 – Municipal Zoning Authority
 - Sec. 211.004. COMPLIANCE WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. Zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan and must be designed to:
 - (1) Lessen congestion in the streets;
 - (2) Secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers;
 - (3) Promote health and the general welfare;
 - (4) Provide adequate light and air;
 - (5) Prevent the overcrowding of land;
 - (6) Avoid undue concentration of population; or
 - (7) Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewers, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 212 – Municipal Regulation of Subdivisions and Property Development
 - Sec. 212.002. RULES. After a public hearing on the matter, the governing body of a municipality may adopt rules governing plats and subdivisions of land within the municipality's jurisdiction to promote the health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the municipality and the safe, orderly, and healthful development of the municipality.

Note: In Texas, if a plat meets the technical requirements of the subdivision regulations, it must be approved.

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 212 – Municipal Regulation of Subdivisions and Property Development
 - Sec. 212.003. EXTENSION OF RULES TO EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION (E.T.J.). ... unless otherwise authorized by state law, in its extraterritorial jurisdiction a municipality shall not regulate: ...
 - Shall not regulate a municipal zoning ordinance;
 - But can enforce a municipality's subdivision regulations within its E.T.J.

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 213 – Municipal Comprehensive Plans
 - Sec. 213.001. **PURPOSE.** The powers granted under this chapter are for the purpose of promoting sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety, and welfare.
 - Sec. 213.002. **COMPRHENSIVE PLAN.** (b) A comprehensive plan may:
 - (1) include but is not limited to provisions on land use, transportation, and public facilities;
 - (2) consist of a single plan or a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area; and
 - (3) be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 213 – Municipal Comprehensive Plans

- Sec. 213.003. ADOPTION OR AMENDMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

- (a) A comprehensive plan may be adopted or amended by ordinance following:

- (1) a hearing at which the public is given the opportunity to give testimony and present written evidence; and

- (2) review by the municipality's planning commission or department, if one exists.

- (b) A municipality may establish, in its charter or by ordinance, procedures for adopting and amending a comprehensive plan.

Texas Local Government Code

- ◆ Chapter 213 – Municipal Comprehensive Plans
 - Sec. 213.005. NOTATION ON MAP OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

A map of a comprehensive plan illustrating future land use shall contain the following clearly visible statement:

“A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.”

Comprehensive Plans

- ◆ A long-range plan intended to direct growth and physical development of a community for a longer period of time;
- ◆ The city's official statement of policies regarding desirable future physical development;
- ◆ Ideally, (and if feasible), it is appropriate to prepare a Plan for the ultimate development of the community;

Comprehensive Plans

- ◆ A set of goals drawn from existing conditions and the desires of citizens;
- ◆ Distribution and relationships of a variety of land uses;
- ◆ A basis for future physical development recommendations for streets, community facilities, other improvements, etc.;
- ◆ Identification of actions to achieve desired and necessary improvements;

The Planning Consultant

- ◆ Provides an unbiased view of the community;
- ◆ Has working knowledge of planning principles;
- ◆ Has experience in similar situations;
- ◆ Has a proven methodology for plan development and citizen participation;
- ◆ Allows city staff to focus on important day-to-day activities;
- ◆ Has experienced and diversified staff to address specific elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Municipal Staff

- ◆ Be the principal point of contact;
- ◆ Provide input and discussion from the city and staff perspective;
- ◆ Coordinate and attend meetings;
- ◆ Review drafts and make recommendations;
- ◆ Use the finished (and adopted) Plan in reports and on-going recommendations.

Steering Committee

- ◆ Provides input and discussion from a wide variety of interests;
- ◆ Serves as a liaison to their respective groups regarding the Comprehensive Planning process;
- ◆ Usually includes representatives from City Council / Commission and Planning & Zoning Commission that will provide continuity throughout the process;
- ◆ Tends to meet monthly with consultant team to review and comment on drafts (These are working meetings, open to public);
- ◆ Recommends the Plan to the Planning & Zoning Commission;

Planning & Zoning Commission

- ◆ Reviews and considers all the elements of the draft Plan;
- ◆ Recommends adoption of the Plan to City Council;
- ◆ Uses the Plan in the evaluation and recommendations for zoning and development proposals;
- ◆ Recommends updates as needed.

City Council

- ◆ Reviews and considers all the elements of the draft Plan;
- ◆ Adopts the Plan;
- ◆ Uses the Plan to consider zoning and development proposals;
- ◆ Implements the actions as appropriate;
- ◆ Adopts updates as needed through the public hearing process.

Remember!!!

Two things to remember about a Plan:

- ◆ First, have one!

and

- ◆ Second, the Plan belongs to the citizens of the community (not the city staff, consultants who prepared it or even to the elected and appointed officials)

Planning Process

Overall steps in the planning process:

1. Identify the strengths, weaknesses, problems and/or opportunities;
2. Collect information on the problems and opportunities;
3. Develop recommendations;
4. Consider possible alternatives;
5. Agree through consensus on a plan;
6. Put it to work;
7. Monitor the progress.

Public Participation

Note: Public participation aids in the citizenry buying into, understanding, and supporting adoption of the Plan and the decisions of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council regarding the preparation and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan - concerning both short and long-term physical development issues.

Seven characteristics of a public participation program:

1. Inform citizens that the city is preparing/updating a comprehensive plan;
2. Solicit input from the community through meetings and focus groups;
3. Involve the media to get the message out;

Public Participation (cont.)

4. After draft chapters of the plan are prepared, make them available to citizens for review (library, basic web site);
5. After final draft is prepared, hold an open house for public review;
6. Hold a public hearing for formal adoption of the Plan;
7. Citizen involvement should continue through the plan update, revision and refinement process.

Public Participation Process

- ◆ Focus Group Meetings and Interviews:
 - Held with interested groups, representatives of all segments of the population
 - Steering Committee will assist in contacting people and organizing meetings
- ◆ Open House Town Meeting:
 - Held at complete draft stage
 - Maps and chapters on display for public review and comment

The Introduction of the Plan Document:

- ◆ Background
- ◆ Demographic and Forecasts
- ◆ Physical Assessment and Character
- ◆ Planning Process

Land Use Plan Element/Section:

- ◆ Define and identify the existing land uses
- ◆ Develop and consider appropriate new uses
- ◆ Develop Future Land Use Plan
- ◆ Future Land Use Plan actions and policies needed to guide decisions

Transportation Plan

- ◆ Identify classifications and locations of streets and thoroughfares;
- ◆ Determine current conditions of roadways, traffic volumes:
 - ◆ Relate to the Future Land Use Plan
- ◆ Identify transportation needs and requirements for the next 10 to 20 years (or beyond, as feasible.)

Transportation Plan

- ◆ Look at where new or expanded streets may be needed:
 - ◆ Consider in relation to potential reduction/elimination of other city thoroughfares.
- ◆ Recommend phased improvements including priority and potential funding sources.

Implementation Plan

- ◆ Assemble Goals and Objectives and Recommended Actions into a workable and useable form
 - Identify projects required to implement Comprehensive Plan
 - Evaluate available funding for infrastructure upgrades
- ◆ Identify Potential Funding Options
- ◆ Use the Comprehensive Plan to develop and implement the city's Capital Improvements Program.

Other Elements of the Plan

Each of the other elements will address:

- ◆ Existing Conditions
- ◆ Goals and Objectives
- ◆ Needs and Desires and Problems and Opportunities
- ◆ Public Facilities
- ◆ Implementation Recommendations
- ◆ Urban Design: elements that add to the aesthetic quality of the city.
- ◆ Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan
- ◆ Economic Development Strategic Plan
- ◆ Historic, Cultural, and/or Social Preservation Plan
- ◆ Other planning components as needed by the city (e.g. reference to more detailed Neighborhood and/or Special Area Plans)

Using the Plan

- ◆ Plan should not “sit on the shelf”
- ◆ To guide land uses, thoroughfares, and community facilities, and both short and long-range planning and growth management decisions
 - Use the Plan to evaluate each development review.
- ◆ Show how policies and standards are to be applied to the actual physical form of the city
- ◆ Only as good as the commitment of citizens to the planning process
- ◆ Development of Comprehensive Plan is an ongoing process – needs to be updated periodically:
 - Evaluate annually or at least every three to five years, or when relevant economic, social, and/or physical circumstances warrant.

A Closing Note

A Comprehensive Plan is:

- ◆ A long range guide based upon present knowledge and goals
- ◆ Flexible so that it can change when necessary
- ◆ A basis for making rational decisions
- ◆ A guide that aids growth-management and growth inducing programs
- ◆ A component of the on-going planning process
- ◆ The goals and objectives of the plan provide the depth and “heart and soul” and rationale for the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan.

A Closing Note (cont.)

- ◆ Changes to the Comprehensive Plan should be evolutionary and not revolutionary - for example, the Plan recommendations should not change solely because there is an election of a new council person(s) and/or there are new appointments to the Planning and Zoning Commission: therefore, the Plan recommendations should transcend elections/appointments.
- ◆ As feasible, the Plans Goals and Objectives should be graphically portrayed on the Future Land Use Plan within the Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you!

Copies of this Power Point presentation can be obtained from, and we would be pleased to answer any questions as follows:

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