

Chapter 7

Implementation

Introduction

Wahpeton's 2030 Comprehensive Plan serves as the community's big picture policy framework to guide physical and socio-economic changes in the community over the next 20 years. The Plan's effectiveness for helping guide the community's future development and public investment decisions depends to a large extent on how well the Plan's implementation is defined up front. The Implementation Chapter identifies and describes the actions and initiatives necessary to implement the Plan's vision, goals and policies.

Implementation of the Plan will occur in three primary ways:

- Using the plan as a guide for decision-making.
- Using the plan as a marketing and funding tool.
- Using the plan as "to do list".

Using the plan as a guide for decision-making

The plan is used by City Staff in the day-to-day operations of local government. Staff will reference plan goals and policies to support elected and appointed officials in carrying out their responsibilities in making key decisions relative to public investments, growth and redevelopment. Requests for land use applications and major development projects will be evaluated based on consistency with the plan. City Staff's copy of the plan should be most noted by its torn edges, protruding sticky notes and coffee stains, evidence of extensive use of the plan.

Elected and appointed officials will use the plan to justify



hard decisions related to land use development, zoning requests, annexation, growth, redevelopment and public infrastructure investment.

The plan will be used by the development community to understand how particular projects fit within the community and how it might affect existing or planned future growth around their projects. Developers, brokers, realtors and investors will use the plan to help formulate strategies for new development projects or investing in existing development and to help with risk assessment.

Using the plan as a marketing and funding tool

Wahpeton's guiding principles emphasize a number of strategies (such as diversifying its economic base or strengthening the entertainment opportunities within the downtown area) that require coordinated efforts by the community to attract, grow and develop ideas. As an

adopted policy plan developed through a participatory public process, the Comprehensive Plan can help solidify the support, commitment and collaboration needed to mobilize the community. The plan should be referenced, celebrated and promoted to the Wahpeton community and the region seeking to invest or re-invest in the city. In essence, the plan becomes the document that is provided to prospective businesses, residents or investors.

Using the plan as a "to do list"

We all have our "to do lists" at home stuck on the fridge or bulletin board. In fact some of us have many to do lists. The Comprehensive Plan is the City of Wahpeton's to do list and should be a resource for city departments, boards, commissions and the City Council as they establish annual goals and work programs.

Successful implementation of the Plan results in successfully achieving and checking off some of the projects on the to do list. As items get checked off the list, it is an indicator that the plan is working and helping the community progress toward our long-term vision, guiding principles, and goals. At the same time, the Plan is intended to be a living document. As goals are accomplished, the community will learn new things and face new challenges. Over time, as the Plan is being used, it should also be revisited and refreshed.

Vision elements

- Community for a Lifetime
- Regional Hub, Jobs & Attractions
- Traditional Midwest Town Character
- High Quality of Life for Everyone

Guiding Principles

- Reinforce our traditional midwest town character
- Offer housing options for all stages of life
- Provide convenient connections to destinations
- Revitalize downtown as the civic, commercial and cultural heart of our community
- Grow and diversify our economy and job opportunities
- Enhance our community institutions, gathering places and entertainment opportunities
- Create a senior-friendly community
- Provide high quality and cost-efficient public services

Implementation Action Steps

Action steps are physical and socio-economic initiatives that are intended to carry out an idea or policy identified through the comprehensive planning process and memorialized in the adoption of the plan. The action steps directly correlate to the vision and guiding principles. Action steps will result in both tangible and intangible outcomes. For example, one action step may be to provide a service that enhances quality of life. Providing a service may not result in a physical development or change but would implement a policy of the plan. On the other hand, an action step that is focused on growing a business or industry might result in a new development or new jobs, both tangible outcomes.

In the case of action steps, the plan identifies an initiative or action, an entity or person responsible for the action or initiative, a time frame for completion, a general statement of cost to understand the magnitude of the action or initiative and a means to measure the action or initiative's effectiveness in moving toward the plan's vision, goals and policies.

The following are the recommended action steps for implementing the comprehensive plan:

- Update the City's Regulations
- Align Capital Improvement Plan
- Establish a "Future of the City Forum"
- Develop Small Area Master Plans
- Coordinate Parks and Trails System Plan
- Increase Economic Diversification and Employment
- Support Housing Reinvestment and Development
- Encourage Historic Preservation
- Strengthen Partnerships
- Promote Volunteerism/Philanthropy

Update the City's Regulations

"There are two basic products that emerge from the planning process - plans and regulations. The first is a blueprint, while the second is a tool. Plans represent goals, things to be achieved, while regulations represent the vehicle to reach those goals." [North Dakota Planning Handbook] Chapter 16 of the Wahpeton City Code comprises the City's zoning ordinances/regulations while Chapter 17 comprises its subdivision ordinances/regulations.

Zoning Ordinance

From section 16-120, the purpose and authority of the zoning regulations are established as follows: *"The zoning regulations are made in accordance with a comprehensive plan. They are designed to lessen congestion in the streets; secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other dangers; to promote health and general welfare; provide adequate light and air; prevent the overcrowding of land; avoid undue concentration of population, to facilitate the adequate provisions of transportation, water sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements. They are made with reasonable consideration, among other things, to the character of the area of each district and the particular suitability of such area of particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City of Wahpeton. For the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals, or the general welfare of the community, the City Council of Wahpeton, North Dakota, is hereby empowered to regulate and restrict the height, number of stories, the size of buildings and other structures, the percentage of lot that may be occupied, the size of yards, courts and other open spaces, the density of population, and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, or other purposes. The authority of this Ordinance is based upon the right of the City Council of Wahpeton as empowered by the provisions of NDCC 40-47."*

The City's zoning ordinance was last adopted in 1986 and has since had a number of amendments. In order to maintain consistency between the updated Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance, a thorough review, analysis and update of the zoning ordinance and zoning map should be undertaken. This update should include:

- An evaluation of existing zoning districts, permitted uses and development standards with a focus on what is working and what is posing challenges to new development and property improvements;
- A comparison of existing zoning districts to the new land use categories established in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Refinement of existing zoning districts as needed to match with new land use categories;
- Creation of new zoning districts where existing districts are not able to be matched with new land use categories;
- Deletion of zoning districts that are no longer applicable or better handled through a revised district/

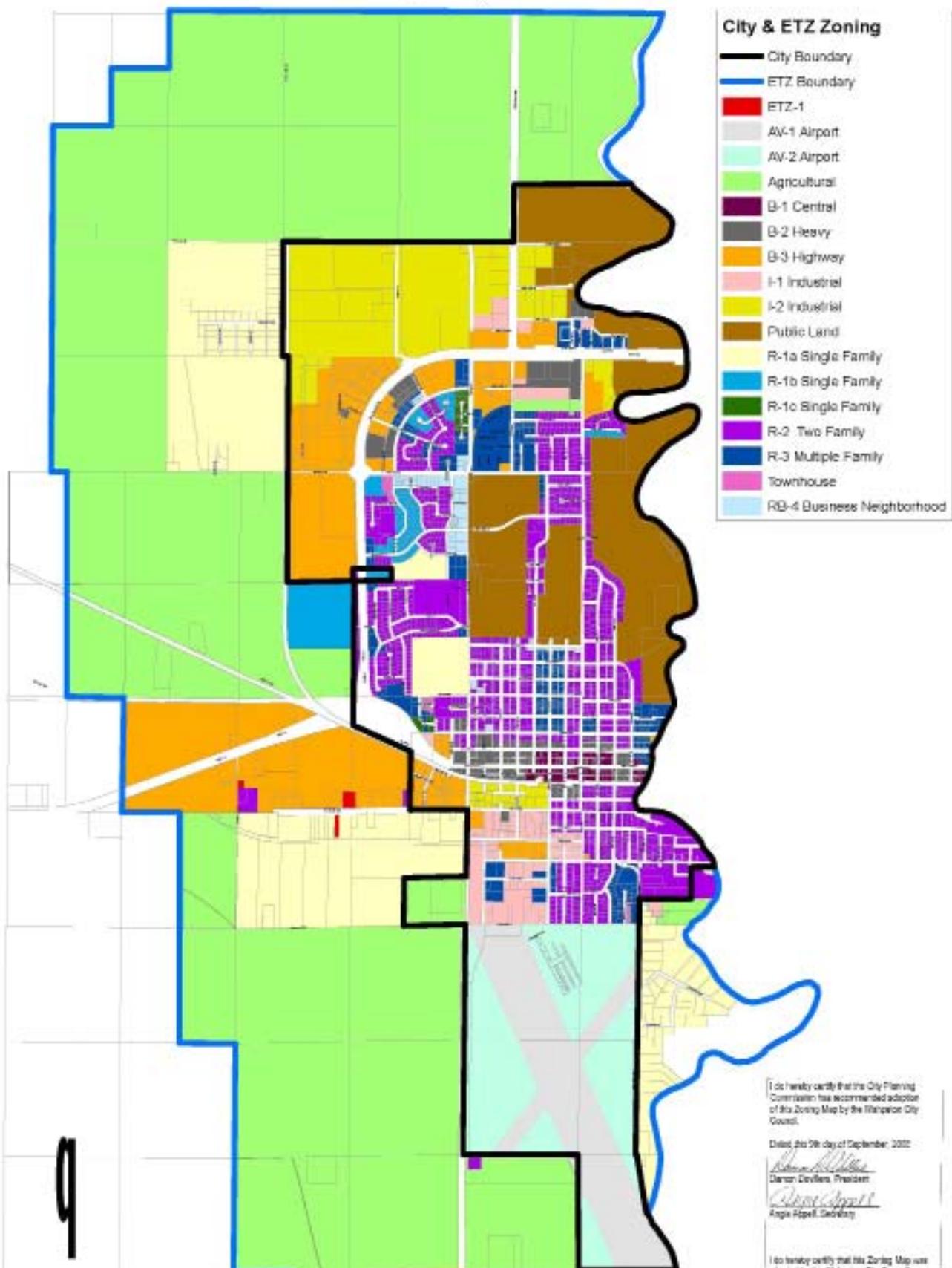


Figure 7.1: Wahpeton's current Zoning Map, which was last amended in 2010

- new district;
- Mapping of new zoning districts;
- Review of development standards and an evaluation of consistency with the goals and policies in the plan;
- Refinement of development standards as deemed applicable; and,
- A review of administrative procedures.

The following key aspects of the zoning ordinance should be reviewed in more detail and amendments should be considered:

1. Official Zoning Map

The following areas should be considered for potential rezoning:

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Rezoning Considerations</i>
Downtown	Adjust B-1 and B-2 district boundaries to align with DTMU and DEMU land use designations
	Possibly create a new downtown mixed use district
South Industrial Area	Expand R-3 zoning district adjacent to existing residential areas
	Rezone B-3 district to I-1
	Evaluate I-2 district boundaries
Highway 210	Expand I-1 and I-2 districts
	Reduce B-3 district west of 11th St
	Expand B-3 district near 4th St
	Rezone portion of B-3 district to R-2 or R-1b west of Hwy 210
Neighborhood Business District	Rezone current RB-4 land that is not located at a major intersection to a residential zoning district
Public Land	Not currently assigned a zoning district; possibly zone to new public/semi-public and/or parks/open space districts
Fairview Cemetery Land	Rezone western portion to R-3 or Townhouse
ETZ	Rezone North Wahpeton Industrial Region to I-2 or I-1
	Evaluate appropriateness/need for current areas zoned for R-1a and B-3

2. Zoning Districts

The following existing districts should be considered for potential modifications:

- Business B-2 Heavy district - Modify to fit guidance of DEMU land use category, such as permitting residential uses on the first floor of buildings and completely residential buildings.
- Business B-1 Central district - Possibly modify to encourage more mixed-use buildings with traditional downtown scale and form.
- Industrial zoning districts, I-1 and I-2 - Possibly add business, professional and office uses as permitted uses.
- Residential zoning districts - Evaluate current development standards for opportunities to improve, such as density requirements and housing types permitted.
- Townhouse district - Evaluate need for district since it is not used very much.
- Extraterritorial zoning district - The ETZ-1 district should be evaluated for its long-term appropriateness/need.

The following new zoning districts should be considered to better align the zoning ordinance with the comprehensive plan:

- Downtown Edge Mixed Use district - Evaluate potential for modifications to B-2 district versus creating a new mixed use district specifically for downtown.
- Public/Semi-Public district - Consider for zoning of currently unzoned public land.
- Parks/Open Space district - Consider for zoning of parks and open space land.
- Mixed Residential district - A variety of zoning options for implementing the Mixed Residential land use pattern could be explored. Mixed Residential could be implemented primarily through modifications of existing residential zoning districts, such as revising permitted uses to be less restrictive and establishing development standards that ensure adequate design transitions between higher density residential and lower density residential development. Mixed Residential could be implemented through a Planned Unit Development (PUD) process. A third option is to create a new Mixed Residential zoning district.
- Urban Reserve district - Consider for using as a long-term holding zone in the ETZ to prevent premature and inappropriate development from complicating orderly expansion of the community in the future. This new district could incorporate development/design guidelines and standards for allowing the expansion of urban services to new growth areas.

Modifications considered for Supplementary Regulations: At a minimum, the off-street parking and sign regulations should be reviewed and updated, particularly in relationship to the desired character of a revitalized downtown. In addition, the Designed Shopping Center district should be evaluated for its appropriateness, need and impact on downtown commercial development.

Subdivision Ordinance

The subdivision regulations guide the development, subdivision and platting of land. Subdivision regulations also provide direction on street design and neighborhood block patterns. The subdivision ordinance references the street plan that is part of the comprehensive plan. A review of the subdivision ordinance should evaluate the consistency with the vision, guiding principles and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Responsible entity: Planning Commission/Planning Staff

Timing: Year 1 and Year 2

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate and consultant time to do work – budget range \$20K to 25K

Funding sources: general fund – grant resources

Key measurements: N/A

Align Capital Improvement Plan

The City of Wahpeton uses a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to manage capital improvement expenditures for public facilities in an efficient and effective manner. The CIP is a rolling 5-year plan that is updated annually. CIP planning is critical to maintaining the community's public infrastructure facilities such as streets, sidewalks, trails, waste water system, potable water system, storm water system, fire and police equipment, and government buildings. The current 5-Year CIP focuses primarily on maintenance and upgrades of the City's aging infrastructure system.

The CIP should not be managed as an independent plan. The Comprehensive Plan should be used as a guide to determine what the City's long-range plan is for development, improvements or reinvestments in particular areas of the community. As future growth and development occurs, the CIP plan should be maintained as a valuable planning and budgeting tool. When the CIP is updated annually, the CIP project request and review

processes should include evaluating the feasibility and consistency of each project with the comprehensive plan.

Responsible entity: City Council/Administration

Timing: ongoing

Cost implications: Staff time – minimal budget impacts

Funding sources: general fund

Key measurements: new projects identified and funded – projects completed – dollar value of completed projects/investments

Establish a "Future of the City Forum"

Establish a "Future of the City Forum" or similar event to review the plan on an annual basis and facilitate a community dialogue about what has worked well and what has maybe not worked so well. This evaluation should lead to identifying a need for amendments or updating the "to do list" on an annual or every other year basis. This can occur through regular survey mechanisms or through a process designed to "take the pulse of the community" and celebrate community accomplishments.

Responsible entity: Planning Commission/Planning Staff

Timing: Year 1 – then ongoing

Cost implications: will require staff time to initiate/start up – minimal budget impacts

Funding sources: general fund, philanthropy

Key measurements: number of total participants in the community dialogue – number of new participants in the dialogue.

Develop Small Area Master Plans

Downtown Master Plan

Our downtown area is a focus of our plan. It is the civic, cultural, shopping and entertainment center of our community and is a significant regional draw. As such, we should derive a plan that demonstrates how we can achieve some of the desired improvements to our downtown to move towards achieving our goal of recapturing the economic and social vibrancy and unique sense of place that downtown can offer. Focusing on maintain and strengthening downtown Wahpeton as a great place supports the recent investment in Dakota Avenue and is prominent within several of the guiding principles of our plan. A downtown master plan would provide the following directions:

- Identify opportunities for investments in physical public improvements that strengthen connections to adjacent neighborhoods and enhance the pedestrian environment (walkability and bikability) and generally define the cost implications of the improvements.
- Identify locations for organized civic events, activities and gathering places that bring more residents to downtown and devise a strategy for establishing such spaces/places for entertainment, cultural and social opportunities to create a downtown cultural district.
- Improve physical connections and wayfinding between downtown and Wahpeton’s regional tourism destinations, particularly Chahinkapa Park & Zoo, to attract more regional tourism business to downtown.
- Evaluate redevelopment and reuse needs and demonstrate opportunities for new development aligned with creation of new downtown housing opportunities, new office opportunities and niche retail/services.
- Devise a strategy and plan for how redevelopment can occur including public financial incentives/assistance.
- Ensure a coordinated parking and wayfinding strategy that enables smooth traffic flow and circulation in downtown.
- Provide design guidelines relative to scale and massing of new development so that it can retain the small town, traditional downtown character desired by Wahpeton.
- Update the 2006 Downtown Action Agenda, which was intended to serve as a 5-year plan and then revisited.

Responsible entity: City Council/EDC/CDC/Administration

Timing: short term 1 to 3 years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate and consultants to conduct planning process – \$40K to \$60K

Funding sources: general fund, grant resources, TIF

Key measurements: goals addressed in the comprehensive plan

Southside Master Plan

The southside, particularly west of 6th Street, is another focus of the comprehensive plan for promoting future infill development and redevelopment. Originally planned as the South Industrial Park, this area has struggled to develop as a full-fledged industrial park and now has developed with a mix of heavy industrial, light industrial, commercial and higher density residential uses. The current mix of uses

present some incompatibility concerns. In addition, a substantial portion of the area still remains undeveloped or underutilized. The public street network is incomplete and some existing streets are in need of improvement long-term.

In order to improve the Southside area and spur on full development of this land in a compatible and efficient manner, it is critical that the City develop a master plan for this area. This master plan needs to analyze and recommend future land use patterns, street networks, and development standards that ensure compatibility between the different uses that exist and will remain long-term.

Responsible entity: City Council/EDC/CDC/Administration

Timing: short term 1 to 3 years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate and consultants to conduct planning process – \$40K to \$60K

Funding sources: general fund, grant resources, TIF

Key measurements: goals addressed in the comprehensive plan

North Wahpeton Industrial Region Master Plan

In 1997, the same year that the City updated the comprehensive plan, the City also developed a specific plan for the North Wahpeton Industrial Region called Advantage of Wahpeton: A Framework Plan for Regional Industrial Development. This area plan addresses land outside the current City boundaries, including land within the City’s ETZ and beyond the ETZ, which is under jurisdiction of Dwight Township. The plan recommended designating the 6,000 acres of land in this desired industrial region for a mix of agricultural and non-agricultural land uses, rezoning the land, expanding the transportation system, ensuring environmental protection, and establishing a coordinated effort between the City, Township, County, existing industries, and land owners.

Consistent with the 2011 update of the City’s comprehensive plan, it also makes sense to revisit this specific plan for the North Wahpeton Industrial Region to increase its relevancy, effectiveness, and consistency with the updated comprehensive plan and create a true master plan for future development. As one of the community’s primary goals is to grow its employment base, it is critical that the City have a master plan for what may become its largest employment area.

Responsible entity: City Council/EDC/CDC/Administration

Timing: short term 1 to 3 years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate and consultants to conduct planning process – \$40K to \$60K

Funding sources: general fund, grant resources, TIF

Key measurements: goals addressed in the comprehensive plan

Potential Expansion Area Plans

Potential future growth areas are described in the land use plan west of Highway 210 and possibly west of Highway 127. These areas will be needed to accommodate the limited new development that is forecasted to be needed over the next 20 years. Future growth in these areas will require the planned extension of community infrastructure (sanitary sewer, potable water, storm sewer and roads) and the coordination of future community park land.

A goal of the plan is to create “great neighborhoods” that will help offer a diversity of housing choices and neighborhoods that are attractive to live in (i.e. are close to services and have desirable amenities like parks, trails and natural resources or open space areas). Wahpeton has a current supply of housing in mature neighborhoods. New growth areas create opportunities for move up housing or to fill in a housing gap.

Another goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to diversify the economic (jobs) base in the community. Opportunities for new growth can also accommodate growing or expanding businesses that don't fit into downtown Wahpeton or existing commercial areas.

Small area plans would provide the following guidance and direction for the city of Wahpeton:

- A more detailed master plan that defines how land uses would interact and exist taking into consideration incompatibilities and transitions.
- A street network that provides access to development parcels and ensures connectivity to the street system and adjacent neighborhoods.
- A feasibility study of infrastructure requirements identifying associated costs and establishing a financial plan for covering the costs.
- Location and programing of future parks needs.
- Area and site amenities that contribute to quality of life and neighborhood character development (open spaces systems, infrastructure design, streetscape,

sidewalk/trails, etc.)

- A phasing plan that would understand how development would occur over an extended period of time due to the slow rate of growth in Wahpeton.

Responsible entity: Planning Commission in partnership with landowner/developer

Timing: Mid term – 3 - 5 years to longer term 5+ years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate – consultant budget could vary depending on size and scope of project - \$50K to \$100K

Funding sources: general fund/park fund/grant resources/developer-landowner contributions

Key measurements: number of goals address in the comprehensive plan

Coordinate Parks and Trails System Plan

A common theme that emerged through the public input of our plan was the need to enhance the quality of life and to provide the amenities and attractions in a community that would give people a reason to want to live and work in Wahpeton. With rising gas prices, the desire (and need) to live closer to one's job place is growing. Our community has a great asset in the Red River of the North and the Chahinkapa Park and Zoo. On a smaller scale we have neighborhood parks that provide residents with various recreational opportunities. The community also has trails and sidewalks that serve recreational and daily transportation purposes. With the recent addition of the river levee trail and its popularity with residents, the community has a great opportunity to create a truly connected trails system that creates a loop within the community, linking all neighborhoods to the community's major destinations. Another opportunity is to partner with the City of Breckenridge in creating a trail loop that connects the Twin Towns. Since some trail segments may need to be located on streets, this initiative will require coordination between the Wahpeton Park District, Wahpeton Public Works Dept. and Breckenridge Public Works/Parks Depts.

A parks and trails system plan will provide:

- An updated inventory of the existing park system including age and general condition of existing improvements.
- A plan for how to improve parks that need improvements and programing needs for parks based

on the function or role the park plays.

- Identification of future park needs and a strategy for how future parks can be designed to serve as a focal point for a neighborhood and contribute to the “sense of place” desired by people who are making choices about where to live.
- An understanding and plan for how the parks work together with the open space system to offer linked recreational opportunities through a coordinated trail system.
- Identification of a connected trail system connecting all neighborhoods to major destinations in the community and creating recreational trail loops, including a loop that connects with the City of Breckenridge’s trail system.
- A financial plan that recognizes improvement costs and funding resources

Responsible entity: Wahpeton Park District, City Public Works

Timing: Mid term – 3 - 5 years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate – consultant budget \$35K to \$45K

Funding sources: general fund/park fund

Key measurements: number of goals address in the comprehensive plan

Increase Economic Diversification and Employment

Expanding the commercial and industrial base of the City is an ongoing effort. This initiative becomes even more important as the community faces its current downtrend in population. Retaining, diversifying and growing the community’s employment opportunities is viewed as a critical element in retaining and attracting residents to the community long-term. Our history of successful economic development suggests that most of our ongoing initiatives should continue. Identifying new, effective strategies for Wahpeton will most likely come in response to the needs articulated by existing and prospective businesses. Thus, listening and establishing relationships with existing businesses, and even business prospects, is the best initial step. Initiatives which do and can benefit economic development efforts include:

1. Establish a business call program or a system of regular meetings with existing businesses to explore needs

and future opportunities through individual meetings and group forums. City staff currently performs these activities on a one-on-one basis. These meetings and forums should be primarily focused on listening, and if resources already exist, understanding why these existing resources are not meeting the needs of businesses. Using the information from these meetings, Wahpeton should work with local partners, such as the Twin Towns Chamber of Commerce, Wahpeton Community Development Corporation, North Dakota State College of Science, Richland County and the school district to address the needs identified.

2. Meet with local commercial realtors and site selectors to promote the community and its resources, as well as understand business needs and possible impediments to locating in Wahpeton.

3. Acknowledge and promote local businesses, and their employees for their contribution to the community through press releases, newsletter articles, and recognitions for anniversaries or notable expansions.

4. Identify and market to industry businesses which would complement and/or benefit from close proximity to existing Wahpeton businesses, student labor pool and/or existing labor force which graduates every year from NDSCS.

5. Create a supportive business and entrepreneurial environment through connections to local resources, business networks, start-up financing, and business incubation opportunities. Establish a start up business center.

6. Work with businesses and residents to promote buying locally. If necessary, identify barriers to buying locally (i.e. hours of operation) and work with the business community to address these impediments.

Responsible entity: EDC/CDC

Timing: ongoing to short term – 1 - 3 years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate and conduct

Funding sources: general fund

Key measurements: number of goals address in the comprehensive plan

Support Housing Reinvestment and Development

A diverse and adequate housing supply is one of the key elements of Wahpeton’s Vision. Housing is addressed by various policies throughout the land use plan. Achieving

the Vision requires more than simply providing a land use pattern and identifying policies that support a diverse and adequate supply of housing. The key action strategy relative to housing is to implement the recommendations from the 2010 Wahpeton-Breckenridge Housing Study Report. This report thoroughly documented the issues and challenges facing the Wahpeton community relating to housing development.

Responsible entity: EDC/CDC

Timing: ongoing to short term – 1 - 3 years

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate and conduct

Funding sources: general fund

Key measurements: number of goals address in the comprehensive plan

Encourage Historic Preservation

The City has a wealth of historic assets, particularly in downtown, which would benefit from stronger historic preservation efforts. Preservation of the remaining valued landmark buildings is a critical element of what makes downtown unique and an important part of the revitalization of downtown. The City should explore the possibility of establishing more formal historic preservation roles and processes at the City level, such as setting up a historic preservation commission, establishing a historic preservation ordinance, and becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the State Historical Society. As part of establishing a historic preservation ordinance, the City could then designate qualifying historic buildings as local historic properties, develop preservation standards, and create incentives for property owners to reinvest in historic properties.

Responsible entity: City Council/Administration

Timing: Immediate – then ongoing

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate – minimal budget impacts

Funding sources: general fund

Key measurements: number of partnerships created – number of projects initiated – number of projects completed.

Strengthen Partnerships

Implementation of our comprehensive plan requires

partnerships between the public and private sectors. Within this plan, we have articulated a plan for future growth with an inward focus on the core of our community and the recognition that we need a balanced approach to new growth and revitalization. The ability of the private development community to create new development is hampered by weak economic conditions and the challenges associated with redevelopment. Forming new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships is a critical strategy to overcome these barriers.

- Partner with the city of Breckenridge to maintain, implement and update the 2006 Wahpeton-Breckenridge Downtown Action Agenda.
- Partner with the North Dakota State College of Science to strengthen and build on the asset of having a higher education “campus” in the city.
- Partner with Richland County to manage growth and foster economic development on a regional basis.
- Partner with landowners who control parcels most suitable for new development in the future to provide a coordinated marketing and development plan that reduces development barriers and maximizes consistency with the City’s vision and guiding principles.
- Partner with local and regional housing agencies to identify and develop housing types to fit the community’s housing gaps, such as senior-friendly housing and affordable housing.

Partnerships can take many forms. A first step is defining the objective of the partnership and establishing a desirable outcome such as a specific development project, coordination of an event or delivery of a particular service. A second step in forming the partnership is to understand the organizational structure and the roles of each partner. This would include the financial commitments, decision making structure and staffing responsibilities. Lastly, and probably most important, is identifying a passionate leader who coordinates and facilitates activities of the partnership, mediates potential challenges and advocates for the desired outcome.

Responsible entity: City Council/Administration

Timing: Immediate – then ongoing

Cost implications: will require staff time to coordinate – minimal budget impacts

Funding sources: general fund

Key measurements: number of partnerships created
– number of projects initiated – number of projects completed.

Promote Volunteerism/Philanthropy

Volunteerism is important within small towns across America. It is of critical importance to our community in Wahpeton. Volunteerism helps build ownership of community, strengthens our civic engagement, builds relationships and ultimately, greatly contributes to the “quality of life” we aspire to have. It can be very rewarding when it is supported by a shared vision created by an entire community. Our new comprehensive plan has been prepared with many opportunities for the public to participate in a dialogue. As we move forward with implementation, we must continue the dialogue and grow the community participation in that dialogue. We must recognize that changing times require us to continuously plan for our future and be able to adapt to change and seize opportunities as they emerge.

A key strategy for growing volunteer participation is to open up more opportunities for community members to volunteer their services, expertise and time in the pursuit of carrying out our vision, guiding principles and comprehensive plan ideas.

Action Steps:

- Establish a coordinator of volunteer activities.
- Provide a means to align and connect community members strengths, skills, passions and assets with the appropriate implementation strategy, project or idea.
- Establish specific targets and goals for volunteerism (i.e. number of new volunteers participating, total estimated volunteer hours logged, projects completed, projects initiated, etc.)
- Establish a recognition and appreciation program that celebrates accomplishments and recognizes contributions.
- Create/advocate for matching contributions from local organizations that seek to benefit by the volunteer activities and efforts

Responsible entity: City Council/Administration

Timing: Immediate – and ongoing

Cost implications: will require staff time to initiate/start

up – minimal budget impacts

Funding sources: general fund, grant resources, philanthropy

Key measurements: create a volunteer database and record total volunteers, new volunteers added on an annual basis, total volunteer hours logged and measured on an annual basis. An important measurement is also to be able to measure the diversity in the volunteer base, particularly new residents vs. long term residents and age of volunteers (kids, young adults, families, retirees, seniors.)