



PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATION

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| Meeting Date: April 10, 2013 | Item: PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. PC-1, SERIES 2013 2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE | Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution X Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presented by: Matt Blakely Bob Blanchard | | |

KEY POINTS/SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

In February, 2012, the Town initiated an update of the 2007 Town of Timnath Comprehensive Plan. The Orion Planning Group, a national land use planning firm, was hired to complete this project. The planning process, which began in March, 2012 has occurred in three phases:

- Phase 1: Background Study and Analysis, Public Outreach
- Phase 2: Preparation of a Draft Comprehensive Plan Update
- Phase 3: Preparation of the Final Comprehensive Plan Update

An initial public meeting was held on April 2, 2012 to introduce the project and consulting team. Additionally, a Steering Committee was established by the Town Planner and a list of stakeholders was identified for possible interviews. The following Steering Committee members were active throughout the process:

- Bill Neal –Town Council
- Phil Goldstein – Planning Commission
- Scott Taylor – Planning Commission
- Pete Wray – City of Fort Collins
- Matt Lafferty – Larimer County
- Ray Wright – Resident
- Don Ridsen – Resident
- Aaron Pearson – Resident

Four Steering Committee meetings were held to receive initial comments on the 2007 Comprehensive Plan and thoughts about potential changes, to review the proposed goals, objectives and action items and lastly, to review the proposed changes to the Future Land Use Map including the Downtown recommendations.

Stakeholder interviews were held on May 21, 2012 with 6 people from the invitation list attending.

Additionally, an online survey was conducted during the first month of the project. Postcards encouraging people to take the survey and inviting them to the first public open house were mailed to property owners throughout the entire Growth Management Area. 254 responses to the survey were received.

Drafts of the proposed Goals, Objectives and Action Items were developed and discussed with staff over the summer of 2012 with final drafts presented to the Steering Committee in September of 2012. Two public meetings were held on October 22 and October 25 to review the proposed Goals, Objectives and Action Items with the public.

During this same time, the consulting team was asked to expand consideration of how the downtown area might develop and to identify more specific land uses than were then adopted in the Plan. Additional members of the consulting team conducted a site visit the week of September 17th to specifically address the downtown



area. The results of this visit were included in the Goals, Objectives and Action Items and can be seen on the Proposed Future Land Use Map that focuses on downtown.

Changes to the Future Land Use Map and the creation of a Future Land Use Map specific to the downtown area were developed over the Fall and Winter. These proposals were presented to the Steering Committee in April, 2013 and at a public open house on March 5, 2013.

On March 13, 2013 the Town Council and Planning Commission held a joint work session to review and discuss the draft plan and schedule the public hearings to conclude the adoption process.

Proposed Changes To The 2007 Comprehensive Plan

Because major portions of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan were implemented, the majority of the Goals and Objectives in the Draft Plan are new. In addition, the goals and objectives from the 2011 Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan (PROST) have been inserted into the Plan Update. Action items for each Objective have been developed to identify specific recommendations for implementation. Two action items stand out as being paramount – finally accomplishing an intergovernmental agreement with the County related to the area referred to as Timnath's Growth Management Area (GMA) and completing a new Transportation Plan to replace the existing 2005 Plan. Beyond these, Town staff and the Council should categorize the action items into short-range and long-range actions, prioritize those that are most important to the Town and begin to determine how they can be accomplished and budget as necessary.

The most obvious changes from the 2007 Plan and the Proposed Update are visible on the Future Land Use Maps. Three significant changes were proposed on the map that covers the entire GMA:

- The Employment designation to the north and south of County Road 50 has been reduced from the area shown on the 2007 Plan. This area has limited existing infrastructure to support development and none is currently proposed by the service providers.
- The Employment designation north and south of State Highway 14 and west of Weld County Road has also been reduced from the area shown on the 2007 Plan for the same reasons listed above. The final recommendation retains the Employment designation north of the SH14 and removes the designation to the south, replacing it with Low Density Residential consistent with the surrounding area.
- The Commercial designation north and south of State Highway 14 east of County Road 1 and north of SH14 west of County Road 1 has been reduced from the 2007 Plan due to the lack of infrastructure and lack of future plans to provide infrastructure. The final recommendation is to leave the Commercial designation north of SH14 as currently adopted and change the designation south of SH14 to Mixed Use.

Additionally, significant changes occurred in the Downtown area. The 2007 Plan designated both the downtown itself as well as large areas surrounding downtown as Downtown Core which is described as commercial and mixed use. The Proposed Update suggests more detailed recommendations for development within the Downtown Core. Highlights of the downtown plan include:

- Focusing the Downtown Core on Main Street and 4th Avenue between Main Street and the proposed Parkway.
- Encouraging mixed use on either side of Main Street north of the downtown core.
- Retaining the existing residential along Main Street to the north with an option to change the use to low impact commercial.
- Encouraging development to occur as mixed use as much as possible giving the downtown more around the clock activity and creating a synergy between uses.
- Encouraging residential uses as part of any mixed use development.
- Integrating pedestrian and bike connections from downtown to the trail.



Public Outreach

As noted above, public outreach included an online survey and several public meetings and open houses. Open houses were generally well attended. Announcements for the first open house were sent to all property owners in the Growth Management Area. As a result, the majority of attendees were County residents. The remaining open houses were focused for Timnath residents although they were all publicized on the Town's website.

Until the final open house when residents could view the Future Land Use Maps, most questions and comments were focused on when certain projects, such as parks, utilities and roadways were to be initiated or completed. At the final open house, the majority of attendees focused on recommendations for downtown. While most comments were favorable to the recommendations, residents of Main Street south of the railroad objected to the proposed Mixed Use designation. Once the parkway is constructed to the east of Main Street the current vehicular at grade rail crossing of Main Street will need to be abandoned. There may continue to be a pedestrian crossing at this location, that is yet to be determined. Once this crossing is removed, much of the traffic along the southern portion of Main Street will be diminished. Main Street will still be the primary street within this southern area for residents and potential future development. Mixed use can and still is viable along the Main Street frontage, especially since the east side of Main Street is currently undeveloped. As discussed in the land use goals and objectives the east side of Main Street will transition to higher intensity commercial uses and is appropriate to be Mixed Use to make that transition from the residential on the west. The existing neighborhood on the west side of Main Street has been changed to Low Density Residential to reflect the current land use. However, the area just south of the tracks and including the lot south of 3rd are being shown as Downtown Core. These areas are directly adjacent to the railroad tracks and are a logical transition to the lower density uses to the south. They can also provide additional commercial and mixed use alternatives that would bolster the Downtown Core on the north side of the tracks, especially if a pedestrian connection across the tracks is available. In addition the PROST Plan is showing a connection to the Poudre River Trail in this general area, which will also encourage commercial redevelopment of this area of Old Town.

Correspondence from Property Owners

The following letters were received prior to the joint Work Session and are referenced herein. These letters will be available at the Public Hearing if requested: email from Denise Fisher dated 3/8/13, email from Rose Moon dated 3/10/13, email from Debra Scott at 4201 Main Street, and letter from Diane Fusaro dated 3/12/13.

In addition, Planning Commissioner Scott Taylor could not attend the joint work session and submitted a letter on 3/11/13 for consideration to the Town Council and Planning Commission.

Growth Management Area

Timnath has long taken an aggressive position in identifying an area they would like to direct future growth and suggest interim land uses until it finally becomes part of the Town. Currently, the Growth Management Area covers over 21 square miles extending north of County Road 50. During the planning process, the idea of expanding the GMA further north to Cobb Lake was discussed and is shown on the figure titled: Proposed Growth Management Area Expansion. This graphic also identifies potential adjustments to the shared Growth Management Area with Fort Collins which are currently under discussion.

Representatives from Larimer County have expressed concern not only over the proposed northerly expansion but over the existing size of the GMA. County representatives support the emphasis on finalizing an intergovernmental agreement but hesitate to indicate support for a GMA the size shown on the Future Land Use Map.



Additionally, representatives from the City of Fort Collins expressed some concern over the intensity of uses within the existing GMA adjacent to some portions of the shared boundary where the City's Structure Plan currently indicates less intense land uses.

Next Steps

Following the Planning Commission Public Hearing and Resolution and recommendation, the Town Council will hold a Public Hearing and adoption of the Plan at the next available Town Council meeting.

ADVANTAGES:

The Town of Timnath will use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the current and future growth for the Town.

DISADVANTAGES:

None

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends approval of Planning Commission Resolution No. PC-1, Series 2013 – Town of Timnath 2013 Comprehensive Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2013 Comprehensive Plan
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. PC-1, Series 2013