



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Transportation, Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability
Steering Committee

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AGENDA

January 29, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

Hannah Center, Room 211

819 Abbot Road

- 1) **OPENING**
 - A) Roll Call
 - B) Approval of Agenda

- 2) **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES DISCUSSION**

- 3) **ADJOURNMENT**



PLANNING, BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT

Quality Services for a Quality Community

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation, Infrastructure, and Environmental Sustainability Steering Committee Members

FROM: Timothy R. Schmitt, AICP, Community Development Analyst
Catherine DeShambo, Environmental Services Administrator
Robert Scheuerman, Engineering Administrator

DATE: January 27, 2014

SUBJECT: Goals and Objectives for Comprehensive Plan Update

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At the November Steering Committee meeting the Committee responded to a series of questions intended to stimulate the subconscious and assure full participation from each member. The responses to these questions are attached for your review and were used by staff to help identify existing goals, objectives, and actions that are still relative and highlight those that may be missing in the document.

The January meeting will begin by discussing the Steering Committees responses to the questions from the November meeting and how they relate to existing goals, objectives and actions. The next step will be to discuss topics that are not covered in the existing plan. To reiterate, the definitions we are using for Goals, Objectives, and Actions are:

Goals are the broadest expressions of a community's desires they give direction to the plan as a whole. They are concerned with the *long term*, and often describe *ideal situations* which would result if *all* plan purposes were fully realized. Since goals are value-based, their attainment is difficult to measure.

Objectives are broad statements that set preferred courses of action – choices made to carry out the goals in the *foreseeable future (mid- to long-term)*. They need to be specific enough to help determine whether a proposed project or program would advance community values expressed in the goals.

Actions are specific statements that carry out a plan in the *short term* which accomplish the broader statements expressed in the goals and objectives. Actions are generally implemented through the City Council's Strategic Priorities and are activities that can realistically be carried out within a two to five year period and guide the City's day-to-day operations.

The following goals, objectives and actions were developed from language in the current plan and continue to be important going forward, based on the Steering Committees general responses in November.

In terms of Environmental Sustainability, there was a great deal of discussion about this at the November meeting, focused around several areas. Generally, sustainability in East Lansing is/should be:

- Focusing on Red Cedar, Water Conservation and Quality
- Continued Implementation for Green Technology/Infrastructure
- Preserving/Enhancing Green and Natural Areas (especially water)

And it is addressed in the following objectives and actions in the plan:

Objective 4-2: Provide public access to the Red Cedar River.

Action 4-2.1: Seek resources to implement a riverfront park.

Action 4-2.2: Work with Michigan State University and other governmental jurisdictions to improve public access to the Red Cedar River.

Objective 4-3: Enhance the City's natural features through the creation and preservation of programs and policies that guide development.

Action 4-3.1: Protect and enhance high quality wetlands facing development pressure.

Action 4-3.2: Procure conservation easements to mitigate the impact of concentrated development.

Action 4-3.3: Promote innovative storm water management practices.

Action 4-3.4: Plant and maintain a diversity of native vegetation.

Action 4-3.5: Eradicate invasive plant species on City properties.

For non-motorized transportation, we asked the committee about barriers to non-motorized transportation. The main groupings of responses were:

- Moto v. Non-Moto Conflicts (Grand River, Hagadorn Crossings)
- Car First Mentality
- Safe Routes and Habit (Education!)

There is one objective in the existing plan that addresses non-motorized transportation already.

Objective 5-2: Improve nonmotorized transportation opportunities.

Action 5-2.1: Minimize pedestrian vs. vehicle conflict through innovative road designs.

Action 5-2.2: Connect the River Trail and the Northern Tier Trail to the surrounding regional trails.

Action 5-2.3: Improve access to Emerson Park through the purchase of right of way or an easement at the south end of Larkspur Drive.

Action 5-2.4: Assist the East Lansing Public School System in the implementation of safe routes to schools.

There were other actions that also addressed non-motorized transportation:

Action 1-3.3: Seek funding sources to expedite accessibility improvements to the neighborhood sidewalks.

Action 2-1.3: Continue to improve the City's "Wayfinding" system which includes uniform signage with clear directional information for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Since the development of the last comprehensive plan, the City undertook the development of a non-motorized plan master plan that has a great deal of information in it and will help guide the development of objectives and actions in the Comprehensive Plan.

There are a number of items that relate specifically to motorized transportation and infrastructure, items the Committee did not spend a great deal of time discussing. These include:

Action 1-3.1: Pursue funding options to improve neighborhood street lighting.

Action 1-3.2: Develop a best practices manual for neighborhood traffic calming.

Action 2-1.4: Encourage alternative parking options.

Action 2-1.7: Work with the Capital Area Transit Authority to maintain downtown access, greenspace, and median alignment during Bus Rapid Transit design and development.

Objective 5-1: Enhance the City's street network.

Action 5-1.1: Minimize vehicle vs. vehicle conflict using traffic calming tools where traffic studies and other community objectives support their use.

Action 5-1.2: Collaborate with Regional Transportation Organizations to evaluate transportation routes based on population movement.

Action 5-3.1: Pursue engineering and design studies to extend State Road from Chandler Road to Webster Road.

Action 5-3.2: Pursue engineering and design studies to extend Coleman Road from West Road to Wood Street.

There are other issues that the Steering Committees and public raised that need to be discussed further, to allow Staff the background to draft effective objectives and actions. We do not want the Steering Committees to get into the specifics of 'wordsmithing' the objectives and actions, Staff will work on that after the Steering Committees have talked further and will bring language back to address outstanding items. These include additional discussion about the environmental sustainability aspect of the Comprehensive Plan, which is largely new since the last Plan was adopted, specifically these responses.

Environmental Sustainability is -and- Sustainability in East Lansing is/should:

- Educate and Promote
- Continue to Expand Recycling
- Planning for Climate and Energy
- Waste Reduction/Increased Recycling
- Modification of Transportation Habits

Environmental Committee Responses

Question: What are the top four barriers to non-motorized transportation and movement through and within the City of East Lansing?

Barriers to Non-Moto Transportation Are:

- Moto v. Non-Moto Conflicts (Grand River, Hagadorn Crossings)
- Car First Mentality
- Safe Routes and Habit (Education!)
- Weather

Responses:

- The weather
- Icy side walks
- Need better, more complete sidewalks that are cleared in the winter
- Hagadorn (especially Hagadorn and Grand River intersection)
- Crossing Grand River
- Narrow streets north of Grand River
- Pinch points where East Lansing streets meet campus
- Bike lanes that disappear at busy intersections
- Safe, defined routes for bikes through neighborhoods
- Easy, strategic storage spaces for bikes
- Locations to safely park bike
- Walking and texting
- Uneducated bike users (wrong side, no lights)
- Traffic volumes and safety issues
- Riders/pedestrians racing traffic signals
- Bikes on sidewalks
- Cars/people in bike lanes
- No effective communication of what people are expected to do
- No standardized transportation plan
- More about speed, not enough road diets or improvement of flow traffic
- Planning for automobiles
- Car first mentality
- Not enough promotion of the bus system
- Sprawl in the north end

Question: What are the top four things you think of when I say the word environmental sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability is:

- Preserving/Enhancing Green and Natural Areas (especially water)
- Modification of Transportation Habits
- Planning for Climate and Energy
- Waste Reduction/Increased Recycling

Responses:

- Energy (especially efficiency)
- Climate change planning
- No adverse effects on the environment
- City and university work to improve everyone's quality of life
- Leadership
- Recycling needs to be even better
- Waste reduction
- Easy recycling of a greater variety of materials
- Lessening of pollution
- Congestion mitigation
- Reliance on gasoline
- Transportation integration
- Sprawl reduction
- Reducing vehicle miles traveled (modern, multi-modal transit)
- Trip reduction
- Eliminate unnecessary four-way stops and speed barriers
- Reduction of auto use - more buses, walking, etc
- Continue tree city - designation with continued tree planting and maintenance
- Rain gardens, bios walls to handle storm water runoff
- Clean water
- Gardens
- Conserving green space
- Education to reduce pesticide use, plant native species
- Water management
- Long-term protection of natural resources

Question: What are the top four things that the City focus their environmental sustainability efforts on?

Sustainability in East Lansing is/should:

- Focusing on Red Cedar, Water Conservation and Quality
- Continued Implementation for Green Technology/Infrastructure
- Educate and Promote
- Continue to Expand Recycling

Responses:

- Advance water conservation
- Make Red Cedar a core feature of city
- Work on new ways to divert rain water from sewers
- Too focused on cars
- Good public transit (but need more, and integrate with other modes)
- Keep putting in electrical charge stations for electric cars
- Develop dedicated roads to bikes to serve students and us old-timers
- Green space and pedestrian oriented development
- Keep promoting walkability
- Zoning restrictions in place/building codes
- Stop sprawl in the north end

- Parking facilities
- Educational programs/recycling initiatives
- Promotion of "green" activities
- Maintain parks
- Good recycling program
- Have a good waste plan
- Educate community on sustainability
- Continue to lead by example
- More green infrastructure/less impermeable surface
- Promote/communicate "green" to residents via city's system
- Congested trunk lines (Lake Lansing, Saginaw, Grand River)
- Roads
- No major congestion issues
- Transit

Question: What are the top four things you think of when I say the word infrastructure.

Infrastructure is:

- Roads and Integrated Non-Motorized
- Sewer/Water/Electric (the classics)
- Quality of Life (Mass transit, high speed intersections, parking)

Responses:

- Transportation, all modes integrated
- Trails
- Bike lanes
- Roads
- Highways and Roads
- Roadway diets
- Roads and pipes
- Roads, adequate signage, maintenance
- Power and light, reliable quick emergency response
- Electricity supply for lights, signals, etc
- Water and sewer up to date
- Safe protection of streams and rivers
- Sewer system
- Rail
- Transit station
- Communications up to date, cutting edge technology
- High speed internet
- Pedestrian friendly
- Sidewalks, ADA curbing
- Safety
- Framework for future projects/limits our decision making to realistic measures

Question: Based on the last question, what are the top four words that come to mind when thinking about East Lansing's current infrastructure?

East Lansing's Infrastructure is:

- Needing Work Implementing Non-Motorized Goals (Integration)
- Needs to be more Downtown Focused
- Needs Upgraded to Accommodate Vehicular and Household Growth

Responses:

- Parking problems (amount, cost, enforcement)
- A lot of parking
- Good water and wastewater management
- Worry about sewer overflow and climate change
- East Lansing becoming urban and dense - good
- Not investing in downtown core
- Communication (internet and smart phones) is constantly being upgraded
- Lacking in data/internet infrastructure
- Creating incentives for sprawl
- Reasonable internet connections
- Could be more walkable
- Not enough bike lanes
- Pedestrian oriented in terms of land-use
- Not enough quality sidewalks
- Transportation is becoming integrated but it needs more
- Busy/congested streets (car centric mentality)
- Adequate neighborhood streets (signage, quality, cleanliness, etc)
- Working towards multi-modal