

Staff Report

Land Use Policy Plan Workshop Second Session

June 17, 2014

City Council has identified an objective under the Goal of Promote Economic Development to “examine the Land Use Policy Plan for relevance and effectiveness.” In order to accomplish this objective, the Council would first need to review the LUPP and determine if any changes are needed.

The Planning and Housing Department provided background information and an overview of the Ames Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) on May 20th. The presentation included the following topics:

- Why a Comprehensive Plan
- Ames Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) framework
- LUPP Building Blocks and assumptions
- What has occurred from 1997 to 2014
- What changed from original planning
- Points of contention and challenges
- What are other national planning issues and trends
- Next steps on scope of an update of the LUPP

The June 17th workshop is intended to be a discussion of policy interests and their relationship to the current LUPP to determine the extent to which an update is needed. This report provides a summary of comments related to the LUPP and examples of potential issues and how they could be incorporated into an update. **Direction from the Council regarding the extent of the update will allow staff to prepare a scope of work with tasks and timelines. A proposed work plan will be based upon the stated range of interests, planning resources of staff and consultants, and community outreach efforts to formulate amendments to the LUPP.**

Staff presented the following basic questions to the City Council on May 20th to help guide the discussion:

- What are the Council concerns/interests? For example:
 - Are there significant challenges with the plan?
 - Are there gaps in the plan?
 - Are there new issues that may affect the plan?

Depending on the degree of change or Council's specific desired changes, there is a wide range of options for updating the LUPP that are summarized below:

- Major overhaul with extensive public outreach for a new vision, goals and policies
- Reshape Goals and Policies to meet current intent and purposes
- Repackage and clarify the Plan's priorities; remove "options" chapters
- Minor changes to specific text of the plan, no major repackage or rewrite
- Create Sub-area plans for growth areas and intensification areas

Minutes of the May 20th meeting can be found at this [link](#). Individual Council comments at that meeting regarding possible issues for an update included:

- Growth Area planning and continued need for incentivized Growth Areas
- Residential development options, beyond Village and FS types
- Diversity of housing options and variety of types
- Employment centers and access to homes
- Lincoln Way Corridor planning
- Current Goals and Policies are alright; minor adjustment and tweaks needed
- Consideration of economic development as an important component of the plan
- Future annexation scale and planning
- Growth in City population and ISU student enrollment projections

Staff took Council's feedback and incorporated information from the May 20th Workshop presentation about potential challenges and other trends to make the following list of potential update topics.

1. Maintain the current Vision and work with language of the Goals and Policies for clarity on how to guide long range planning versus current development projects
2. Consider availability of land to meet population and economic development projections; gain consensus on ISU Enrollment assumptions within total population
3. Review the concept of Growth Areas for their basis and need, including Ames Urban Fringe Plan designations related to future annexation
4. Consider individual Growth Area planning needs, prepare sub-area plans for full range of uses and types of development within a growth area, proactively engage with property owners on defined City interests

5. Consider the residential development pattern expectations in “New Lands;” and reconsider language of Village and FS zoning designations to meet variety of housing interests and building types
6. Review transportation and infrastructure planning for infill opportunities and limitations affecting future growth
7. Consider Lincoln Way corridor as a unique place with a sub-area plan for intensification of residential and commercial development with design and use requirements
8. Incorporate concepts into the Plan supporting national trends related to housing types, economic development, community design, placemaking, transportation and mobility options, and sustainability
9. Identify other issues and topics by Council

STAFF COMMENTS:

Part of the discussion of an update is to look at current challenges related to implementing the vision of the plan. A second, and equally important part of preparing a comprehensive plan, is to think about the City’s aspirations and intentions for the place it desires to be in the next 20-30 years. Staff believes that such an assessment can be embodied in one multi-faceted question.

Does the language of the existing plan’s vision, goals and policies – combined with individual chapters and elements of the plan – truly guide development to meet the City’s long term interests?

If the Council’s answer is generally “Yes, it fully captures the community’s interests,” we can focus the update efforts on options concerning format and gaps in implementation. Possibilities include such areas as:

- Clarity of Goals and Policies
- Implementation strategies for specific needs
- Individual sub-area plans
- New Goals, Policies or Chapters concerning unmet interests or future trends

If the answer is “Not sure that it fully captures the community interests,” the update scope would need to be broader, and should more fully assess the planning options available for specific topics to get clear-cut direction before working on implementation. Possibilities include:

- Reconsidering growth strategies and areas
- New priorities for infill and intensification with neighborhood support
- Comprehensive review of land use needs and growth projections

If the answer is “No, it does not capture future needs and community interests,” options to update the plan would need to be very broad to garner input on defining community interests. Possibilities would include:

- Extensive community outreach on community interests
- Define a new Vision
- Reformulate corresponding Goals and Policies
- Prepare new supporting chapters
- Identify an implementation plan

Based on Council’s direction from this discussion, staff will prepare a scope of work for an update and present it to Council for your approval.