

To: City Council

From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator

Date: September 26, 2015

Weekly Council Update

● **Council Goal Setting:** The following goals were adopted at the September 21st Council Goal Setting Session. Total votes for each item are noted in parentheses:

1. Street Upkeep (15)
2. Additional Amenities at Wapsi Creek (14)
2. Splash Pad (14)
4. New Salt Shed (12)
4. Business Incentive Plan (12)
6. N. Downey & East Main Street Sidewalks (11)
6. Complete I & I Phase II Work (11)
8. Continue to work on Emergency Communications System (9)
9. Preserve Golf Course (8)
10. Trail Expansion (7)
10. Creek Clean-Up (7)
12. Adopt a PTO Plan with Disability/Maternity/Adoption Benefits (6)
12. Flood Retention Structure (6)

Other goals considered by the City Council included the following

14. Later City Office hours (4)
15. Police Evidence facility (2)
16. Provide online payment option for Utility billing accounts (1)
17. Police Recruitment Program (1)
18. Paver crosswalks downtown
19. Pilot Stormwater BMP
20. Place cemetery information online
21. Code Revisions
22. Acquire Electronic Records System
23. Define pay ranges for positions

● **Reminder – Council Work Session, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30:** Please keep in mind that the October 5, 2015 Council Work Session will take place prior to our regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. Cedar County EMA Director Tim Mallot will present the Cedar County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Council.

● **Planning & Zoning Commission to Update Comp Plan:** At their September 22, 2015 Meeting, the P&Z Commission decided to move forward with an update of the Comp Plan. Chair John Fuller provided a discussion sheet (attached to this Weekly Council Update) and members of the Commission agreed to review one chapter of the plan and report back to the Commission at their November 24, 2015 Meeting.

● **Prescription Drug Disposal Event and other PD News:** Reserve Officer Lynn Lovetinsky accepted prescription drugs from residents this morning. There was a steady stream of people dropping off unwanted drugs throughout the day. While there is not an estimate available at this time of the poundage of prescription drugs that were collected, Police Chief Mike Horihan reported that this year's event had strong participation.

Last month, we reported that the West Branch Police Department had provided ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) active shooter training to new faculty in the school district. The PD is now preparing to provide age-appropriate ALICE education programs to school children. The training, planned for next month, is not designed to scare children, but rather prepare them with knowledge should they be faced with a violent situation including an active shooter situation. The goal of the training is to begin the mental preparation of recognizing, assessing, and responding to threats. ALICE is being taught around the country to law enforcement, college campuses, K-12 schools, private businesses and other social organizations who realize they need education on this topic.

● **Park & Rec Commission Rescheduled for October 1<sup>st</sup>:** The Park & Rec Commission will meet on Thursday October 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss several items including the upcoming Park Vote on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Halloween Chili Supper and Costume Contest.

● **Upcoming City Meetings & Events:** Please see the Calendar of Events on the City Website <http://westbranchiowa.org/home> for a complete list of upcoming events. There are several meetings and other community events currently scheduled in the next few weeks:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ▪ Tuesday September 29 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.     | Preservation Commission Meeting     |
| ▪ Wednesday September 30 <sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.   | WBHS Homecoming Parade              |
| ▪ Thursday October 1 <sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m.       | Park & Rec Commission Meeting       |
| ▪ Friday October 2 <sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.         | Homecoming Football Game vs. Durant |
| ▪ Saturday October 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 7:00-11:00 a.m. | City-Wide Clean Up                  |
| ▪ Monday October 5 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.         | City Council Work Session           |
| ▪ Monday October 5 <sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.         | City Council Meeting                |
| ▪ Thursday October 8 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.       | Library Board of Trustees Meeting   |
| ▪ Tuesday October 13 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.       | Animal Control Commission Meeting   |
| ▪ Monday October 19 <sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.        | City Council Meeting                |

**The information provided is one-way communication and should not be discussed among you as this would be a violation of the open meeting law.**

# West Branch Comprehensive Plan

## Work Session Discussion

Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

September 22, 2015

### Background

Most cities have comprehensive plans, often required by state law (as in the neighboring state of Wisconsin, although not in Iowa). These plans provide the rationale for land-use regulation. They generally have 20-year horizons and cover a variety of topics of interest to a city. According to Iowa City's 2013 plan:

*The Comprehensive Plan provides a broad, general road map for how our community will grow and develop over the next 10-20 years. The Comprehensive Plan describes what kind of community we want to be and the steps to making that vision real. The Comprehensive Plan should:*

- *Reflect community values and aspirations.*
- *Provide roadmap for directing change, development and growth as well as preservation.*
- *Provide a foundation for policies, strategies, and actions.*
- *Set priorities—our community's to-do list.*
- *Build consensus.*

West Branch produced a comprehensive plan in 1997, and updated it in a process that started in 2011, culminating with a plan adopted in 2013. We engaged a consultant for the activity, the East Central Intergovernmental Association, and this P & Z Commission worked with the Association to develop the plan and engage our citizens in the activity. We presented the plan to the City Council, which approved it.

As a matter of good practice, comprehensive plans are to follow a "3C" process—*continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative*. In short, they evolve, include all interested citizens and groups, and ensure a process that brings together all affected parties and organizations. Part of good practice is updating comprehensive plans to account for changing times and knowledge.

The purpose of having the comprehensive plan on our agenda today is to begin discussing whether any changes, additions or revisions to update the current plan are appropriate for our evolving community. In order to begin our discussion the Plan's Table of Contents is reproduced on the following page.

# WEST BRANCH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Table of Content

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	4
Chapter 2: Vision Statement, Goals & Objectives.....	6
Chapter 3: Smart Planning .....	13
Chapter 4: Community Profile/Character .....	16
Chapter 5: Land Use .....	20
Chapter 6: Housing.....	25
Chapter 7: Economic Development.....	31
Chapter 8: Public Infrastructure and Utilities.....	36
Chapter 9: Transportation .....	40
Chapter 10: Hazard Mitigation .....	48
Chapter 11: Parks, Recreational Facilities and Programs .....	53
Chapter 12: Public and Community Facilities.....	63
Chapter 13: Intergovernmental Relations & Collaboration & Image .....	66
Chapter 14: Issues, Opportunities, Strategies and Mechanisms for Plan Implementation.....	68
Appendix A: Street Condition Map.....	82
Appendix B: West Branch Community Trail Plan.....	84
Appendix C: West Branch Input Survey Results.....	85

The West Branch plan begins with a vision statement, then lists a variety of goals in the general categories of:

- Economic development;
- Housing;
- Public infrastructure and service;
- Administration;
- Library Building project, and;
- Land use and zoning.

The plan then proceeds, in Chapter 4, with base-line information about the community. Chapters 5 through 12 cover subject areas, such as, to list a few, land use, housing, economic development and transportation.<sup>1</sup> The last chapter describes "Issues, Opportunities, Strategies and Mechanisms for Plan Implementation." The plan concludes with several appendices.

### **Proposal**

What I ask our P & Z members to do before our next regular meeting November 24 is to refresh our memories of the plan by reading or rereading Chapter 2, Vision Statement and Goals. Then I ask as a task for our next several Commission meetings that each of us sign on to investigate the material in one of the subject area chapters, so that the investigator could lead us in a discussion of that chapter to jointly determine whether there is reason to propose changes or additions to the chapter as part of a 2016 revision of the plan.

There are seven of us, so addressing the following seven chapters would seem practical:

- Housing
- Economic Development
- Public Infrastructure and Utilities
- Transportation
- Hazard Mitigation
- Parks, Recreation Facilities and Programs
- Public and Community Facilities

Fuller proposes to update for the November meeting, as possible, the materials in Chapter 4 on Community Profile/Character. (The chapter's information draws from the 2010 Census and 2011 data on communities similar to West Branch. Newer information from the American Community Survey may be available.)

After our Commission has updated base-line information, and has investigated the subject material chapters in our plan to determine whether changes or additions are desirable, we can jointly review Chapters 2 and 14, on Goals and on Implementation. Once we have done our homework we will be prepared to share our thoughts with the community and the City Council, leading to a properly updated Comprehensive Plan.

While reviewing our Comprehensive Plan requires time and commitment on our part, this is a basic responsibility of a P & Z Commission, and necessary to guide achievement of the goals we all seek to achieve.

---

<sup>i</sup> Topics commonly dealt with in city comprehensive plans are:

Land uses (describing where commercial, residential, industrial development are to be directed; recreational/green space; also, in Iowa, agricultural uses)

Housing (affordable housing strategies, multi-family zones, mixed use development)

Transportation.

Natural resources.

Economic development.

Cultural resources (museums, schools, churches).

Historical or archaeological resources.

Annexation policy – i.e., how can the city grow spatially?

Community resources (parks, recreation facilities).

Sub-area plans (e.g. district plans or neighborhood plans).

Utilities.

Maps: There are typically, but not always, maps that accompany comp plans, almost always including land use (zoning) maps.

There are new elements being brought into comp plans today (but not everywhere, not in all plans).

Energy planning.

Natural disaster planning (e.g. tornado, climate change, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes) and storm-water management.

Non-natural (human-caused) disasters--security planning, riots, terrorist strikes).

Urban forestry.

Local food systems (ensuring the community has secure access to local food).