



213 S. Marquette St. Ironwood, MI 49938
Memorial Building, Conference Room #1, 2nd Floor

Planning Commission Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Recording of the Roll
3. Approval of the January 7, 2015 Meeting Minutes.
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Citizens wishing to address the Commission regarding Items on the Agenda (Three-minute limit)
6. Citizens wishing to address the Commission regarding items not on the Agenda (Three-minute limit)
7. Items for Discussion and Consideration
 - a. Discuss Volunteerism Implementation – Comprehensive Plan Implementation Practice (spreadsheet)
 - b. Discuss Zoning Ordinance Update
8. Project Update
 - a. Comprehensive Plan Implementation Status
9. Other Business
10. Next Meeting: March 5, 2015
11. Adjournment



**Proceedings of the Ironwood Planning Commission
Wednesday, January 7, 2015**

A Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Wednesday, January 7, 2015 in the Women's Club Room, Second Floor of the Municipal Memorial Building in the City of Ironwood, Michigan.

1. Call to Order: Chair Bergman called the meeting to Order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Recording of the Roll:

MEMBER	PRESENT		EXCUSED	NOT EXCUSED
	YES	NO		
Bergman, Thomas	X			
Burchell, Bob		X	X	
Cayer, Joseph Sr.	X			
Davey, Sam	X			
Lemke, Joseph	X			
Johnson, Leroy	X			
Semo, Rick, ex-officio, non-voting member	X			
Silver, Mark	X			
	7	1	Quorum	

Also present: Community Development Director Michael J.D. Brown and Code Enforcement Officer Jason Alonen.

3. Nomination and Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:

Motion by Davey to elect Bergman as Chair. **Second** by Silver. **Motion carried 6 to 0.**

Motion by Johnson to elect Burchell as Vice-Chair. **Second** by Cayer. **Motion carried 6 to 0.**

4. Approval of the December 3, 2014 Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Davey to accept the December 3, 2014 Minutes. **Second** by Cayer. **Motion Carried 6 to 0.**

5. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Davey to accept the Agenda. **Second** by Silver. **Motion Carried 6 to 0.**

6. Citizens wishing to address the Commission regarding Items on the Agenda (three-minute limit):

None.

7. Citizens wishing to address the Commission regarding Items not on the Agenda (three-minute limit):

None.

8. Items for Discussion and Consideration:

- a. Discuss Meeting Protocol: Director Brown reviewed the meeting protocol handout with the Commissioners.
- b. Discuss Annual Report: Director Brown reviewed the Annual Report of last year's cases and projects.
- c. Discuss and Consider Adopting 2015 Zoning Map: Director Brown presented the zoning map for approval. The map depicts the zoning changes that took place in 2014.

Motion by Davey to adopt the 2015 Zoning Map. **Second** by Cayer. **Motion Carried 6 to 0.**

- d. Discuss and Consider Amending Section 5a of the Bylaws to change the meeting time to the First Thursday of the month at 5 p.m.

Motion by Cayer to Amend Section 5a of the Bylaws to change the meeting time to the First Thursday of the month at 5 p.m. **Second** by Silver. **Motion Carried 6 to 0.**

- e. Discuss Zoning Ordinance Update – Comprehensive Plan Strategy 3.1(a): Director Brown advised the Commission to review the ordinance to note changes that should happen with the comprehensive zoning ordinance update. He also brought up the issue of junk vehicles and outdoor storage in commercial districts for the Commission to discuss. Code Enforcement Officer Jason Alonen was available for questions. Discussion Ensued. Johnson requested a listing of the problem areas to help understand the hurdles. There was consensus that the Planning Commission will look at the issue from the zoning perspective during the zoning ordinance update and the City Commission should update the blight ordinance to address commercial blight issues, with the Planning Commission's review during the blight ordinance update.
- f. Discuss Volunteerism Implementation – Comprehensive Implementation Practice: Director Brown presented a portion of the Comprehensive Plan that discusses Grow and Promote Volunteerism and Philanthropy. Discussion ensued regarding the Planning Commissions role in this issue. The first step is to find out what other organizations are the Commissioners currently involved with and create a list of volunteer organizations.

9. Project Updates:

- a. Comprehensive Plan Implementation Status: Director Brown has been researching the zoning ordinance update. Discussion ensued.

10. Other Business:

- a. Silver brought up the little league field site plan. He was concerned that the Little League was going against what was approved. Director Brown stated that the issue was with the dumping of materials, which was allowed by the City Commission. Discussion continued.

11. Next Meeting: February 5, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

12. Adjournment:

Motion by Cayer to adjourn the meeting. **Second** by Silver. **Motion Carried 6 - 0.**

Adjournment at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Thomas Bergman, Chairman

Tim Erickson, Community Development Assistant

KEEPING THE PLAN OFF THE SHELF!

RELY ON THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

No one solution in this plan will be the ultimate answer to community challenges- and not all possible solutions have been explored. The Plan allows for innovation and a degree of flexibility and interpretation of policy directions. However, the Plan's Vision and Guiding Principles should serve as a benchmark for maintaining the integrity of the plan. New ideas should be explored and encouraged- but must demonstrate consistency with the Vision and Guiding Principles of the plan.

Even the most inspirational plan can lead nowhere if the plan just sits on the shelf. Successful implementation requires that the comprehensive plan be used and referenced on a regular basis by various groups in the community.

...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...

All members of the community have a potential role to play in ensuring that the plan is put into action. The Comprehensive Plan should be used in a number of ways:

The plan as a guide to decision making

The plan is used on a daily basis by **City Staff** in the day to day operations of local government. Staff will reference plan policies and goals 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 development projects will be evaluated based on consistency with the plan.

Elected and appointed officials use the plan to justify hard decisions related to land use development, zoning requests, annexation, growth, redevelopment, and public infrastructure investment.

The plan is 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** use the plan to help formulate strategies for new development projects or investing in existing development and to help with risk assessment.

The plan is used by **Major Institutions** such as the Ironwood Area School District, Gogebic Community College, Gogebic County, Gogebic-Iron Wastewater Authority, and others to ensure that community systems and infrastructure are in place to support the valuable functions provided by the institutions.

Residents, Businesses, and Property Owners use the Plan to better understand the City's goals and policy directions; to support decisions about where to live, locate, or build in the community; and to spark discussion, brainstorming, and action around community improvement projects.

The plan as a marketing tool

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 Ironwood community, the region, and the state seeking to invest or re-invest in the city. In essence, the plan becomes the document that is provided to prospective businesses, residents, visitors, tourists or investors. Lastly the plan's policy directives are important when applying for grant funding from government or non-government entities.

The plan as a "to do list"

Almost everyone maintains their "to do lists" at home stuck on the fridge or bulletin board or at work on a sticky note on the computer. The Comprehensive Plan informs the City of Ironwood's to do list and should be a resource for city departments, boards, and commissions as they establish annual goals and work programs. Successful implementation of the comprehensive plan results in checking off some of the projects on the list. As items get checked off the list, it is an indicator that the plan be revisited and refreshed.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

Grow and Promote Volunteerism and Philanthropy

Volunteerism is important within small towns across America. It is of critical importance to the community in Ironwood. Volunteerism helps build ownership in the community, strengthens civic engagement, builds relationships, and ultimately, contributes to the "quality of life" aspired by the Ironwood community. It can be very rewarding when a plan or idea is supported by a shared vision created by an entire community. The new comprehensive plan has been prepared with many opportunities for the public to participate in a dialogue. As Ironwood moves forward with implementation, it must continue the dialogue and grow the community participation in that dialogue. Changing times require continuously planning for the future and the ability 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 the vision, guiding principles, and comprehensive plan ideas.

Key actions to consider include:

- Establishing a coordinator of volunteer activities: this person would be responsible for helping recruit volunteers, align interests and skills with volunteer opportunities, hold volunteers accountable (a friendly nudge/reminder) for following through on intentions, recognize volunteer contributions.
- 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, tap into civic organizations: Rotary, Kiwanis, or others.
- Create/advocate for matching contributions from local organizations that seek to benefit by the volunteer activities and efforts.

Responsible Entity: City Commission/Administration/Ironwood United

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.)

Establish a “Future of the City Forum”

Establish a “Future of the City Forum” or similar event to review the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis (or every other year) 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. The event should be designed

to “take the pulse of the community” and celebrate community accomplishments.

Responsible Entity: Planning Commission/Community Development

Timing: 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.

Maintain and Update the Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Plans are not static documents. Rather they are dynamic plans that inspire innovative thought and a desire for progress. They must be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The implementation tools provided in this plan (action plans, spark plans, implementation database, and future of the city forum) provide a means to evaluate progress towards implementing the plan.

Michigan state law requires that Comprehensive Plans be updated every 5 years; however, more frequent updates may be warranted. Key indicators for major plan updates include:

- significant economic or physical change occurs in the community
- frequent requests for variances from policies and laws are received and granted
- completion of several spark plans or action items
- four years have passed and little progress has been made



MEMO

To: Mayor Corcoran and the City Commission

From: Michael J. D. Brown, Community Development Director

Date: January 19, 2015

Meeting Date: January 26, 2015

Re: Zoning Ordinance Update

Congratulations on the successful completion of the City's new Comprehensive Plan; this is a great accomplishment. However, it doesn't stop there, the more important and sometimes difficult task is its implementation. One of the most effective ways to implement the plan is by aligning the City's Zoning Ordinance with the plan, this not only creates a business friendly regulatory environment that promotes what's in the plan for future development opportunities; it is also required by law. The State of Michigan requires if a municipality engages in zoning it is based on its plan. In order to comply with the State planning law the City needs to update its Zoning Ordinance.

Comprehensive Plan

The decisions the City makes and policies it sets should align with its comprehensive plan. Therefore, the following should be reviewed for consistency with the comprehensive plan.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles consistent with updating the Zoning Ordinance are a Friendly Community, an Active Community, a Great Destination and a Thriving Community.

What We've Heard (What did the public say during the planning process?)

The community indicated that improvements to City infrastructure (sidewalks, roads and utilities) was a high priority. 63% of survey respondents ranked "strengthening existing neighborhood infrastructure" as one of their top three priorities for future investment. Respondents emphasized the importance of infrastructure in enhancing Ironwood's image as a well-maintained and affordable community.

Residents described job and retail growth and diversity as critical to creating an attractive place to live and work. In the community survey, "economic development, job creation, and expansion" was the highest ranking priority for future investment with 68% of respondents ranking it among their top three priorities.

Many community members emphasized quality of life improvements (such as investment in infrastructure, parks, housing, retail, arts and culture, and recreation amenities) as an important strategy for attracting new businesses and residents, and promoting economic health.

Goals and Policies (Is this consistent with the goals and policies that are in the plan?)

The descriptions of each goal and policy have been attached due to the number that are consistent with updating the Zoning Ordinance.

Goal 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 6.1, 6.2

Policy 3.1.1-3.1.4, 3.2.1-3.2.3, 3.2.6, 3.3.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.5, 6.1.1-6.1.3, 6.1.7, 6.2.1-6.2.6

Framing Concepts (Is this consistent with the framing concepts that are in the plan?)

The form and character of Ironwood is important to the community as evident in the district-based approach described in Chapter 3 of the plan; these desired effect can be achieved through changes in zoning regulations. Economic development was a leading issue for the community and the concepts presented and discussed can be encouraged through regulatory changes. Ironwood's neighborhoods and its housing can also be addressed through regulatory changes to promote the type and quality of housing City resident's desire.

Strategies (Is this consistent with the strategies that are in the plan?)

Strategy 3.1: Update City Ordinances

Strategy 6.2: Develop a Business-Supportive Zoning and Regulatory Environment

Strategy 6.11: Support Infill and Redevelopment

Sub-Strategy 3.1(a): Update the Zoning Ordinance

Sub-Strategy 3.1(c): Create a Subdivision Ordinance

Priority Actions (Has the City set this as a priority action?)

The Planning Commission and City Commission has set this as a priority action for 2015 through its priority action setting workshops in August and September of 2014.

Potential Partners (Are there entities that can partner with the City?)

This effort will require a consultant to work with the City through the update process.

Cost and Funding (What are potential costs and funding sources?)

Potential Cost: Staff has analyzed the necessary extent of the update and based on that a full rewrite of the ordinance is recommended. There are changes required to become consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as well as State law requirements that need to be updated or even added to the ordinance that are not currently in it. This complete rewrite will also make the ordinance easier to use by staff, officials and the public, more business friendly and provide more flexibility for economic development/redevelopment. Staff has spoken with a number of planning firms that specialize in zoning ordinances and based on those conversations the anticipated costs can be similar to the comprehensive plan; more refinement of costs will be flushed out during the budget process.

Potential Funding Sources: Staff has researched funding sources and there are no grants available for development of ordinances. Funding would need to come from the City General Fund.

Project Drivers (If this is a project, what members will be participating and driving it?)

City staff and the Planning Commission will be responsible for this project.

GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 3.1 COMMUNITY IMAGE

Enhance Ironwood's image as a community of vibrant, desirable neighborhoods; a gateway to the Upper Peninsula and the state of Michigan; and a regional hub for commerce, recreation, arts, and culture.

Policy 3.1.1 Establish, communicate, and enforce clear standards for built form, site design, building materials, and landscaping requirements for future development and redevelopment projects.

Policy 3.1.2 Collaborate with developers on future development and redevelopment proposals to ensure high quality design that enhances the community image.

Policy 3.1.3 Encourage the use of design elements to create safer streets, facilitate social interaction between neighbors, and enhance neighborhood character.

Policy 3.1.4 Encourage the use of quality, durable building, and landscaping materials to create attractive residential developments.

GOAL 3.2 MAINTENANCE & PRESERVATION

Ensure that future investment: prioritizes infill and redevelopment within the existing city footprint; enhances community vibrancy, health, and character; and respects and preserves the historic context and development patterns in the community.

Policy 3.2.1 Encourage residential infill and redevelopment that respects the integrity and character of existing neighborhoods.

Policy 3.2.2 Promote continued maintenance of and reinvestment in Ironwood's primary commercial centers in downtown and along the Highway 2 corridor.

Policy 3.2.3 Focus industrial development in identified areas with existing industrial uses, appropriate roadway access, and complementary adjacencies.

Policy 3.2.4 Identify historic buildings and sites in the community and encourage preservation through incentives and programs.

Policy 3.2.5 Collaborate with local businesses, institutions, and community groups to promote and celebrate local history, including historic sites and buildings.

Policy 3.2.6 Preserve and enhance park, open space, and recreational facilities to serve neighborhood, community, and regional needs.

GOAL 3.3 REVITALIZATION

Encourage revitalization in key areas through infill and redevelopment.

Policy 3.3.1 Encourage infill and redevelopment in areas with existing infrastructure, major commercial/employment destinations, and in areas impacted by high levels of blight, vacancy or underutilized land.

Policy 3.3.2 Pursue public reinvestment strategies such as land acquisition and blight removal to facilitate private redevelopment and infill.

Policy 3.3.3 Ensure that city policies allow for diverse housing types that meet the needs of the market and accommodate changing needs of residents.

Policy 3.3.4 Form effective partnerships with private investors to undertake redevelopment efforts.

Policy 3.3.5 Establish clear development review procedures, guidance, and technical assistance for developers and homeowners.

Policy 3.3.6 Coordinate infrastructure improvement projects with redevelopment efforts.

Policy 3.3.7 Market redevelopment sites to prospective developers as a first priority rather than land areas at the edge.

Policy 3.3.8 Invest in community infrastructure improvements that support revitalization and redevelopment as a priority.

GOAL 3.4 LIMITED & STRATEGIC EXPANSION

Expand corporate limits of Ironwood through annexation where expansion helps advance the community's vision and improves upon the efficiency of infrastructure systems (operations and usage) and community services.

Policy 3.4.1 Evaluate infrastructure expansion in consideration of current system capacities and unused infrastructure.

Policy 3.4.2 Prioritize expansion that provides services to areas where human and/or environmental health are at risk.

Policy 3.4.3 Prioritize expansion that supports civic/community oriented institutions such as colleges and hospitals.

Policy 3.4.4 Evaluate the near term and long term fiscal impact of annexation relative to community revenues and ongoing operations and maintenance costs.

KEY TERMINOLOGY

The goals and policies on this page support the vision and guiding principles of the plan and should be used to inform future decision-making and action.

Goals: are broad statements that describe a desired outcome or end-state. Goals are often long-term in scope.

Policies: describe the general course of action or way in which programs and activities are conducted to achieve a stated goal or objective. Policies speak to underlying values, context, or principles and are often place-specific.

GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 6.1 A THRIVING AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

Promote Ironwood as a great place for business, innovation, and commerce- and a community that provides diverse and sustainable economic opportunities for all.

Policy 6.1.1 Support and retain existing businesses and provide assistance for businesses looking to grow, start up, or relocate in Ironwood.

Policy 6.1.2 Invest in quality of life amenities like housing, parks, trails and open spaces, as well as community programs and events that contribute to the attractiveness of the Ironwood community to prospective businesses and residents.

Policy 6.1.3 Encourage development of diverse retail and services that support local and regional needs.

Policy 6.1.4 Promote a high standard of service and hospitality for local businesses.

Policy 6.1.5 Establish and preserve partnerships and coordination with local, regional, and state organizations that support economic development activities.

Policy 6.1.6 Promote and preserve unique local amenities and drivers for regional tourism, including arts and culture, outdoor recreation, and historic assets.

Policy 6.1.7 Promote downtown as a hub of economic activity within the city and region and a unique destination for retail and services.

Policy 6.1.8 Collaborate with educational institutions, economic development entities, and local businesses to address industry workforce needs and create career and educational pathways for residents of all ages.

Policy 6.1.9 Encourage and sustain K-12 educational institutions in pursuit of top quality educational programs and facilities.

Policy 6.1.10 Collaborate with educational institutions, economic development entities, business leaders, and civic leaders to help grow and foster community leaders who will help lead Ironwood and the community into the future.

GOAL 6.2 DIVERSE AND QUALITY HOUSING

Develop a diverse and high quality housing stock that meets the needs of residents at all stages of life and at various income levels.

Policy 6.2.1 Encourage development of new housing to fill gaps in the housing market.

Policy 6.2.2 Expand downtown housing options.

Policy 6.2.3 Support the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing properties.

Policy 6.2.4 Collaborate with community partners to support housing development and rehabilitation.

Policy 6.2.5 Encourage high quality design and use of durable materials in home construction and rehabilitation.

Policy 6.2.6 Maintain quality of historic housing stock.

GOAL 6.3 VIBRANT AND COHESIVE NEIGHBORHOODS

Cultivate vibrant and cohesive residential neighborhoods that support the image of Ironwood as a welcoming and connected community.

Policy 6.3.1 Encourage community and neighborhood cohesion, gatherings, and interaction.

Policy 6.3.2 Building capacity at the neighborhood level for community improvement projects.

Policy 6.3.3 Reinforce neighborhood identity and history.

Policy 6.3.4 Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing neighborhoods.

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