



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 February 4, 2016 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. PC Case 2016-002 Zoning Map Update – Strategy 3.1(b)
 - B. PC Case 2016-003 Sidewalk Policy – Strategy 4.4
 - C. Comprehensive Plan Implementation Status of Priority Action Items
 - I. Strategy 3.1(a) Update the Zoning Ordinance
 - II. Strategy 3.1(b) Update the Zoning Map
 - III. Strategy 4.2 Prepare a Wayfinding Master Plan
 - IV. Strategy 4.4 Prioritize, plan for and construct pedestrian system improvements
 - V. Strategy 5.8(a) & 6.8(a) Develop a community-wide arts plan
8. Other Business
9. Next Meeting: April 7, 2016
10. Adjournment



**Proceedings of the Ironwood Planning Commission
Thursday, February 4, 2016**

A Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Thursday, February 4, 2016 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 5:00 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	X	
Nancy Korpela	X			
Semo, Rick, ex-officio, non-voting member	X			
Silver, Mark	X			
	6	2	Quorum	

Also present: Community Development Director Michael J.D. Brown.

3. Approval of the January 7, 2016 Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Davey to accept the January 7, 2016 Minutes. **Second** by Silver. **Motion Carried 5 to 0.**

4. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Davey to accept the Agenda. **Second** by Korpela. **Motion Carried 5 to 0.**

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

None.

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

None.

7. Items for Discussion and Consideration:

A. Public Hearing and Consideration of PC Case 2016-001 Scandinavian Homes Site Plan and Conditional Use for Outdoor Storage

Chair Bergman read the Public Hearing Procedure to the audience. Director Brown presented the staff report.

Blake Estola, applicant, presented before the Planning Commission and outlined the uses that will be present in the Speculation Building and Lot 14.

Chair Bergman opened up for public comment:

Bob Carlson located next to the property was concerned with the noise attributed to the business and the appearance of the outdoor storage.

Roman Tauer was concerned with the business meeting the zoning requirements and the noise level.

Chair Bergman closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Silver to approve the Site Plan with the condition that any required county, state and federal permits are obtained. **Second** by Davey. **Motion Carried 5 to 0.**

Motion by Cayer to approve the Conditional Use Permit. **Second** by Korpela. **Motion Carried 5 to 0.**

B. Annual Report: Director Brown presented the annual report on the Comprehensive Plan.

C. Zoning Ordinance Update Budget Recommendation: Director Brown presented the zoning ordinance memo.

Motion by Davey to recommend to the City Commission to budget for the zoning ordinance update for 2016/2017 fiscal year. **Second** by Silver. **Motion Carried 5 to 0.**

D. Comprehensive Plan Implementation Status of Priority Action Items:

- I. Strategy 3.1(a) Update the Zoning Ordinance
 1. Addressed during Item 7(c)
- II. Strategy 3.1(b) Update the Zoning Map
 1. Director Brown asked the Commission to review Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan in order to have a discussion in March.
- III. Strategy 4.2 Prepare a Wayfinding Master Plan
 1. Some Commissioners turned in their maps. Director Brown indicated staff would prepare a draft map based on the data submitted for discussion in March.
- IV. Strategy 4.4 Prioritize, plan for and construct pedestrian system improvements
 1. Director Brown asked the Commission to review Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan in order to have a discussion in March regarding setting sidewalk policy.
- V. Strategy 5.8(a) & 6.8(a) Develop a community-wide arts plan
 1. Director Brown updated the Commission that the planning process has been initiated with a volunteer group from the community.

8. Other Business: Cayer about the history of the Speculation Building; Director Brown provided an overview.
9. Next Meeting: March 3, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.
10. Adjournment:

Motion by Silver to adjourn the meeting. **Second** by Davey. **Motion Carried 5 to 0.**

Adjournment at 5:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Thomas Bergman, Chairman

Tim Erickson, Community Development Assistant



MEMO

To: Chair Bergman and Planning Commission

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

Date: February 25, 2016

Meeting Date: March 3, 2016

Re: 2016-002 Zoning Map Update

Strategy 3.1(b) of the Comprehensive Plan recommends to update the City's zoning map. Attached are the pages from the plan that discuss this. The Planning Commission identified this as a priority action item for this year.

I recommend phasing in rezoning of property based on type of rezoning changes proposed. This process may take a number of years. I will have a more detailed discussion with the Planning Commission at its meeting.

Once the Planning Commission does decide to engage in the rezoning process, I have provided an outline of the process to be considered.

1. Discuss and decide on a process to be followed.
2. Identify properties to be considered to be rezoned based on recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Notify the City Commission of the Planning Commission's direction.
4. Notify property owners (see attached example letter).
5. Hold public information meeting with property owners, Planning Commission and City Commission.

This meeting will allow the property owners to understand why the City is proposing rezoning and allow property owners to voice their opinions and concerns. This wouldn't be a public hearing, but an open forum for discussion. This will give the Planning Commission and City Commission a sense of acceptance to the project or not. Ultimately, the City Commission has final approval authority on the matter.

6. Discuss the feedback from the public information meeting with Planning Commission and determine what properties will be proposed to move forward with rezoning.

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Zoning Map Update\2016-002 PC Memo March 2016.doc

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7. Schedule and hold a public hearing at the Planning Commission and send recommendation to the City Commission.
8. City Commission takes action on rezoning ordinance.

DATE

Dear Property Owner,

In July of 2014 the City of Ironwood adopted a new comprehensive plan. The City did so because the 2008 Michigan Planning Enabling Act grants municipalities the authority to create a "master plan" (or comprehensive plan) which acts as the legal basis for the development of land use regulations. While a master plan is not explicitly required, the statute does indicate that for municipalities (such as Ironwood) that have a zoning ordinance, zoning must be based on a plan.

The purpose of the master plan is to guide future development towards more harmonious, economic, and efficient use of the land; promote public health, safety, and the general welfare; provide for adequate transportation systems, public utilities, and recreation; and ensure efficient expenditure of public funds.

The Comprehensive Plan can be found at
<http://cityofironwood.org/Documents/Comprehensive%20Plan.html>.

As part of the plan a number of strategies or action items were recommended. One of those strategies was to update the City's Zoning Map in order to align with the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map.

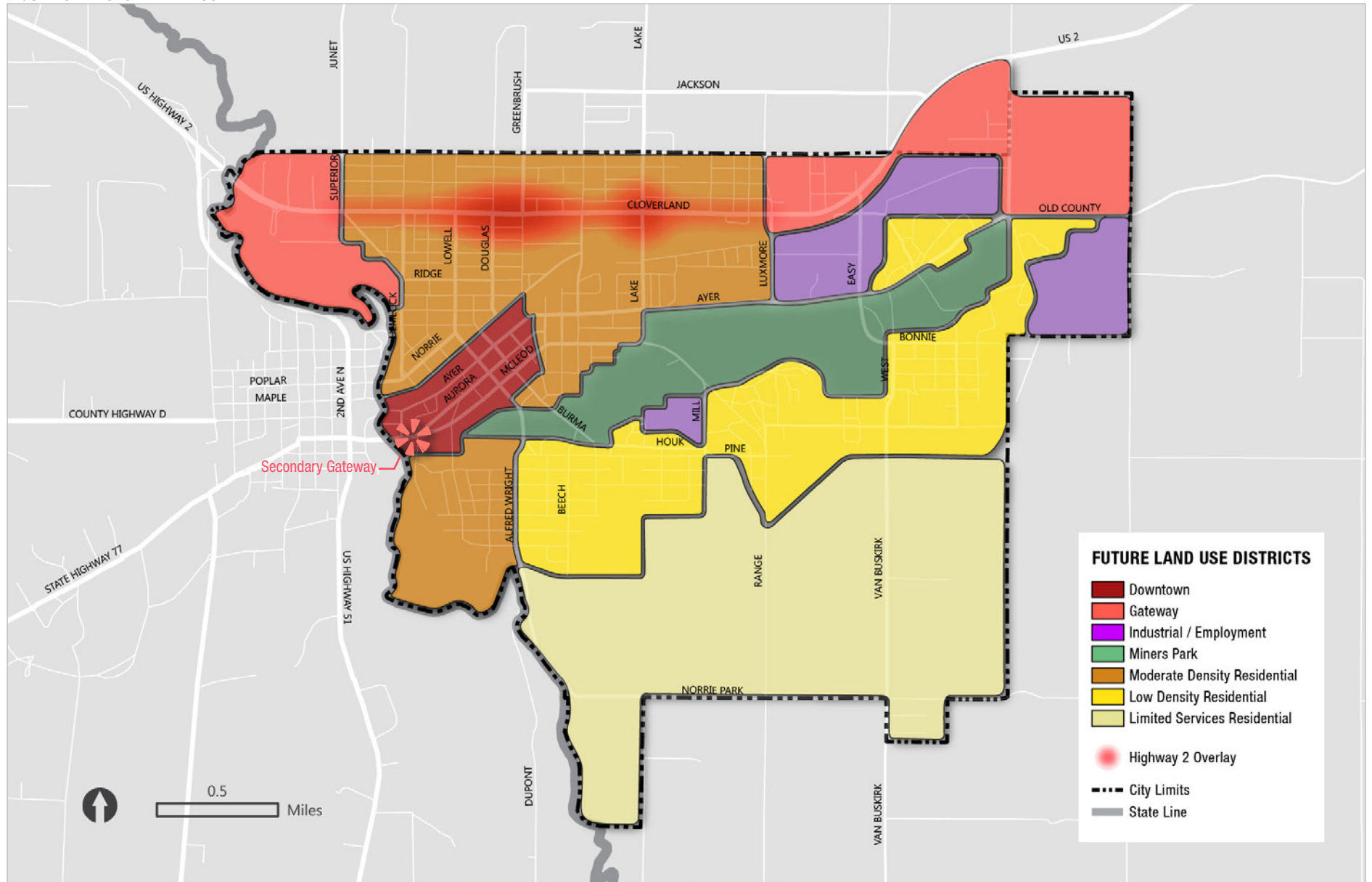
Your property has been recommended to be rezoned. **A list of all properties recommended for rezoning has been provided.** It identifies the property, its current zoning and proposed zoning. Current zoning regulations can be found at **INSERT LINK** for you to understand what is permitted for both your current zoning and proposed zoning.

The City of Ironwood Planning Commission along with the City Commission will be holding an informational meeting to discuss this process on **INSERT DATE**, at **INSERT TIME**, at the Memorial Building 213 S. Marquette St, Ironwood, MI 49938 in the auditorium. This meeting will provide you with a better understanding of the rezoning process and will allow you a chance to ask questions. A public hearing will also be required at a Planning Commission meeting. Upon recommendation by the Planning Commission, the City Commission will take formal action at one of its meetings where you will have another opportunity to speak.

Sincerely,

Tom Bergman
Planning Commission Chair

FIGURE 3-1. FUTURE LAND USE MAP



KEY TERMINOLOGY

“Strategies” are actions, programs, and practices that support one or more of the plan’s goals and policies. Strategies address the “who, what, when, where, and how” of reaching a goal, and may involve multiple sub-strategies.

The following strategies support the Land Use goals and policies described in this chapter.

STRATEGY 3.1: UPDATE CITY ORDINANCES

Successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan’s vision for future land use requires the alignment of land use regulations, primarily the City zoning ordinance, as well as administrative practices that facilitate public understanding of City policies.

Strategy 3.1(a): Update zoning ordinance

Ironwood should update its zoning ordinance to reflect modern building standards, ensure compliance with state regulations, and alignment with land use directions in the Comprehensive Plan. Key considerations include:

- Provide more explicit direction in the zoning around built form and design character rather than use per se; provide flexibility for proposed developments that conform to design standards, but may not adhere to permitted uses.
- Understand the scope of non-conformities in the community, including types of existing non-conformity (lot size, structure, use) and the issues and impacts related to such properties; to the extent that non-conforming uses are an issue, consider using the zoning update process to rectify or mitigate.
- Ensure that zoning allows for a mix of housing types in downtown, appropriate to both the higher-density mixed use core and more peripheral neighborhoods; within the downtown core, specify a higher-level of design standards for store front design, signage, and pedestrian-friendly elements.
- Permit flexible uses within the Industrial/Employment district to encourage diversity and accommodate new economy type businesses.
- Due to the historic platting of lots, many properties are too small to accommodate modern standards for garages and accessory structures. Provide flexibility in the zoning to allow adjacent vacant residential parcels under single ownership to be regarded as a single property when applying dimensional standards for accessory buildings.

Strategy 3.1(b): Update the City’s Zoning Map

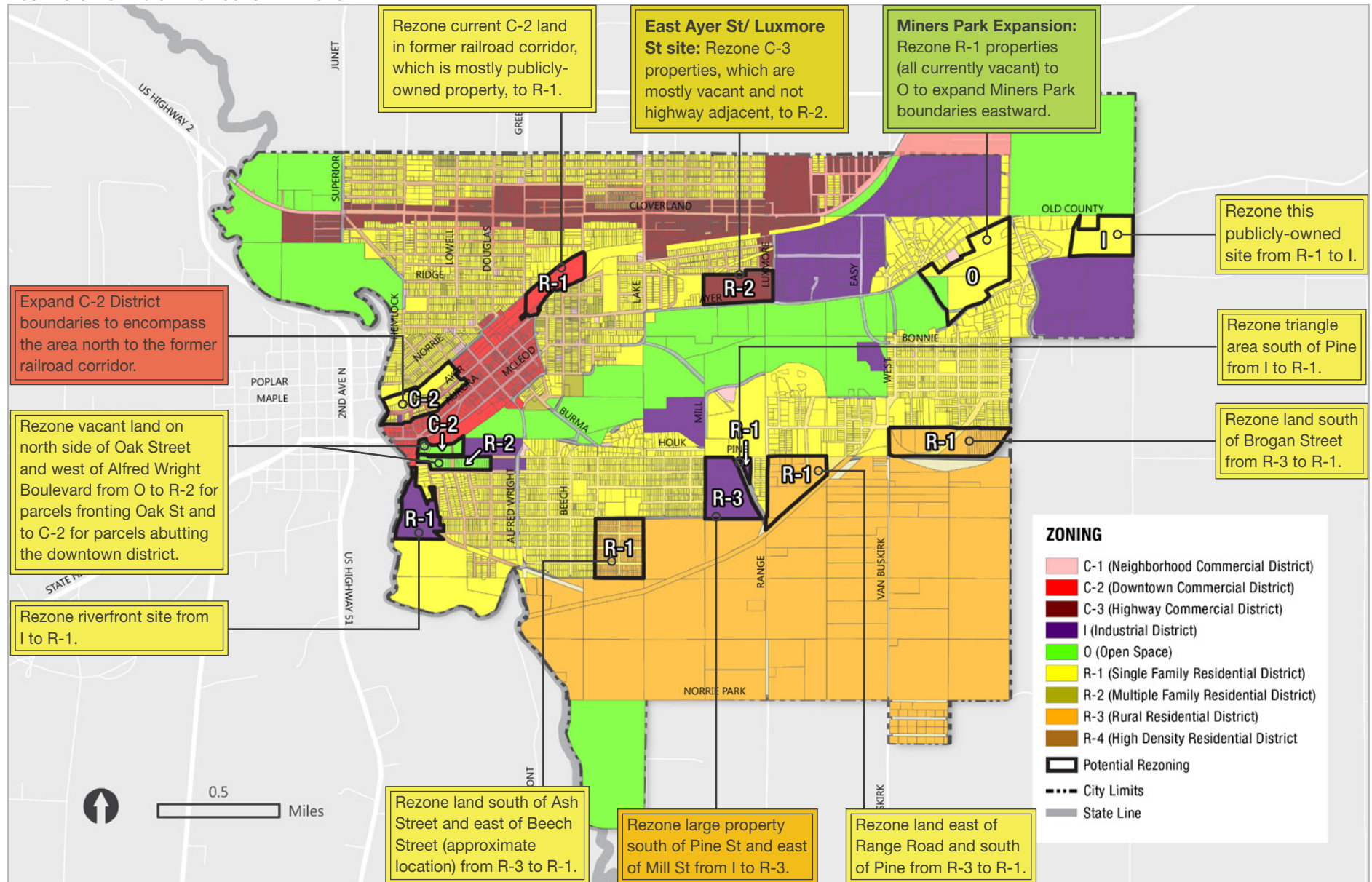
To align the City’s zoning map with the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map, the following areas should be considered for potential rezoning. Figure 3-3 shows these potential rezoning areas on the City’s current Zoning Map.

Table 3-1 below shows the potential alignment between future land use districts described in this chapter and existing zoning districts. An in-depth evaluation and update of the City’s zoning ordinance is recommended to ensure that zoning supports the land use character and form described in the Comprehensive Plan.

TABLE 3-1. FUTURE LAND USE & APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

Future Land Use District	Applicable Zoning Districts
Downtown	C-2
Gateway	C-2, C-3, O
Industrial	I
Miners Park	O
Moderate Density Res.	R-1, R-2, R-4, C-1
Low Density Res.	R-1 could be applied with appropriate modifications to the zoning description, or a new zoning district could be created.
Limited Density Res.	R-3

FIGURE 3-3. ZONING CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS





MEMO

To: Chair Bergman and Planning Commission

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

Date: March 3, 2016

Meeting Date: February 22, 2016

Re: Sidewalk Policy

The City's award winning Comprehensive Plan discusses the need for and importance of pedestrian networks. The Planning Commission elected to address Strategy 4.4: Prioritize, Plan for and Construct Pedestrian System Improvements as one of its goals for 2106. Below is an outline of the issue and talking points for consideration. The ultimate goal of the Planning Commission is to present a policy recommendation to the City Commission regarding the future of our pedestrian network, specifically regarding sidewalks. While trails are discussed within this strategy, policy has already been set in motion through the City's current actions and projects related to trails. In addition, funding for trails and sidewalks come from different sources and is a major factor in implementation of a sidewalk program as there are limited grant funding for sidewalks that the City hasn't already taken advantage of.

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 improving our pedestrian network are a Friendly Community, an Active Community, a Great Destination, a Rich Story and a Thriving Community.

Overview and What We've Heard

Street and trail right-of-way comprises nearly 20% of the land area of Ironwood, as such, transportation infrastructure plays a critical role in shaping the public realm and image of the community. The trail and sidewalk network is one of three components that make up Ironwood's transportation system for both transportation and recreation. The plan discusses connections and barriers associated with the transportation system and that a balanced multi-modal transportation system is needed that addresses automobiles, bikes,

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Sidewalk Policy\2016-003 Sidewalk Policy Memo March 2016.doc

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pedestrians as well as ATV's and Snowmobiles.

The public said strengthening mobility for non-car modes through sidewalk and trail improvements is a priority investment for the community. Many residents and businesses in the community see these kinds of "quality of life" improvements as supporting the community's economic development, as well as transportation goals, by making the community a more attractive and livable destination. In addition, consideration needs to be taken between non-motorized and motorized activities. The City recently took steps toward this in the fall of 2015 when it adopted Resolution 015-035 designating off-road motorized trail routes to separate pedestrians from motorized activity. Further action is required now to separate pedestrians from automobiles.

Improvement and maintenance of city infrastructure (sidewalks, roads, and utilities) was consistently cited by community members as a high priority with 63% of survey respondents ranking "strengthening existing neighborhood infrastructure" as one of their top three priorities for future investments.

Many community members emphasized Quality of Life Improvements as an important strategy for attracting new businesses and residents and promoting economic health.

Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies are consistent with creating a policy regarding improvements to the City's sidewalk system.

Goal 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 6.1, 6.3

Policy 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.2, 6.1.2, 6.3.4

Framing Concepts

Chapter 4 discusses the concept of Complete Streets and incorporating this into street design. In addition page 4-8 (attached) provides a framework specifically on the Pedestrian network and Figure 4-3 (attached) illustrates priority routes and zones for pedestrian connectivity. These pages prioritize how the City should address the pedestrian network and should be used to help set future improvements to the pedestrian network, specifically sidewalks.

Strategies

The following strategies are consistent with creating a policy regarding improvements to the City's sidewalk system.

Strategy 4.1, 4.4, 6.1

Priority Actions

The City Commission set developing a sidewalk policy and maintenance and replacement plan as a priority for the 2016-2017 fiscal year as it ranked 3rd during the goal setting process. The City Planning Commission has set this as a priority action for 2016 as well. The Comprehensive Plan indicates this should be an ongoing strategy that is addressed every year as a construction and maintenance item.

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Potential Partners

The City has recently partnered with the Michigan Department of Transportation on a Safe Routes to School grant project in 2015. Unfortunately, this is the only partner that staff has identified for sidewalk improvements at this time.

Cost and Funding

Potential Cost: It is unknown what the potential cost is until a policy decision is made on whether sidewalks will be a priority moving forward and where sidewalks will be installed. If the City sets policy to implement a sidewalk program it is anticipated to be an ongoing cost, similar to street maintenance. Funds would need to be set aside on an annual basis.

Potential Funding Sources: At this time the only other funding sources outside of City funds is through the Michigan Department of Transportation on a Safe Routes to School program, which only applies around schools. No other funding sources have been identified. Sidewalk programs are typically handled at the community level across the country. A standard sidewalk program involves funding from the City, property owners or a combination of the two. Typically when property owners are asked to pay a share it is calculated based on the amount of frontage of the lot on a per linear foot basis; property owners are then typically assessed on their taxes with payback over a set period of time.

Spark Plan

Spark Plan #16 Trail and Sidewalk Improvements provides an outline to how the City could approach sidewalk improvements. The plan has been attached for reference.

Project Drivers

The City Commission along with the assistance of the Planning Commission and staff will be the main drivers behind this initiative. Once policy is set on how to proceed, the real work begins with prioritizing projects through the planning and budgeting process.

Recommendation

Staff is asking for a recommendation from the Planning Commission to the City Commission on the future of sidewalks within Ironwood. A recommendation isn't needed immediately as I encourage the Planning Commission to have a thoughtful discussion on this matter. The following are the main points to consider as part of your recommendation:

1. Does the City develop a sidewalk program/plan?
2. If so, what does it look like? Does it comply with the recommendations on page 4-8 and Figure 4-3 of the Comprehensive Plan or is it a variation of that? What gets built where and in what order?
3. How are sidewalk improvements paid for? City, property owners or a combination of both?
4. Are sidewalk projects defined by a set budgeted amount or based on defined project locations? For example, if one million dollars is budgeted every year, as costs rise over time less and less sidewalks will be constructed. What is the priority: how much is spent or how can be constructed?

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FRAMING CONCEPTS

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Many of Ironwood's traditional older streets have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Where gaps in the sidewalk system exist, priority should be placed on completing sidewalks. Priority should be further placed on projects that:

- Are proximate to Ironwood Schools, particularly elementary and middle schools.
- Are more prominently travelled sidewalks that connect popular pedestrian destinations: parks, outdoor recreation places, commercial services
- Provide separation between pedestrian and heavier vehicular traffic operations

Figure 4-3 illustrates priority routes and zones for pedestrian connectivity based on the above principles. The city is organized into three priority zones and primary pedestrian routes, and priority in completing and filling existing gaps the sidewalk system should be given in the following order:

- Primary Pedestrian Routes: should have sidewalks on both sides of the street, with the exception of streets with adjacent multi-use paved trails, such as the proposed River Walk Trail near Norrie Park Road and the existing multi-use trail along Alfred Wright
- Primary Pedestrian Zone: streets should have sidewalks on both sides
- Secondary Pedestrian Zone: streets should have sidewalks on both sides
- Tertiary Pedestrian Zone: streets should have sidewalks on at least one side

The City of Ironwood has successfully pursued funding for improvements to the pedestrian system near and around schools through the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Routes to School Program, and should continue with these efforts.

Snow removal is a major challenge for the sidewalk system. Property owners should be responsible for keeping sidewalks clear. In times of major snow fall, storage of snow can be challenging to nearly impossible. Snow removal from sidewalks should be explored in key areas around schools where walking most likely occurs year-round.



SIDEWALK: Traditional paved off-street pedestrian paths within the public right-of-way



MULTI-USE TRAIL: Wider off-street paved paths designed to be shared by pedestrians and bicycles. These trails can also be utilized as cross country ski and snowshoe trails during winter months.

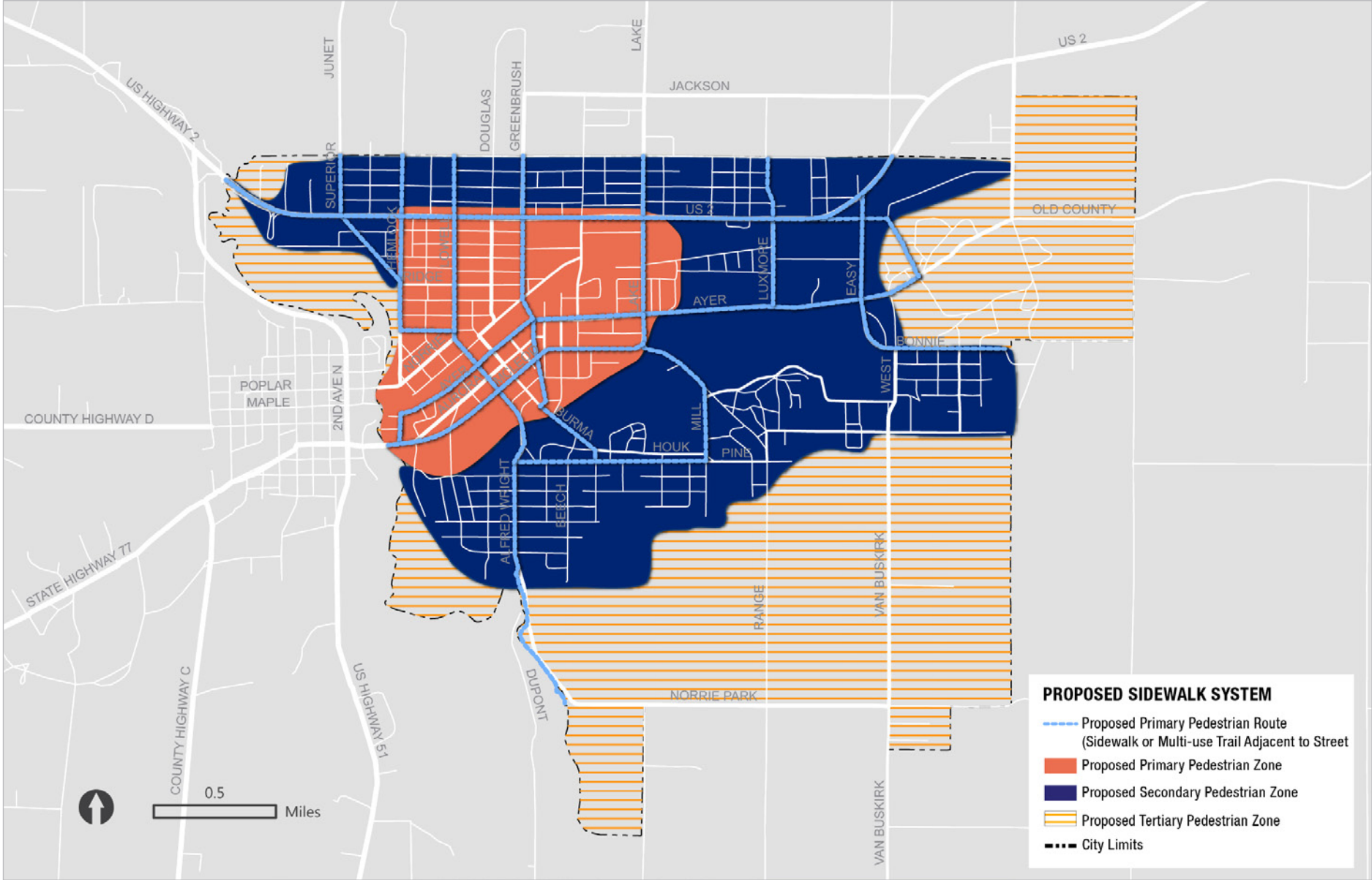
RELATED STRATEGIES:

Strategy 4.4: Pedestrian System Improvements

Strategy 4.5: Prioritize & Plan for Trail System Improvements

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

FIGURE 4-3. PEDESTRIAN NETWORK IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIZATION



Trail & Sidewalk Improvements

What is it?

- A prioritized plan for incremental construction and reconstruction of new sidewalks, multi-use paths, and trails
- A permanent, designated segment of the North Country Trail that coincides with Michigan's Western Gateway Trail
- Encourages connections across and along the Montreal River into Wisconsin, including the proposed River Walk Trail
- Includes strategies for making stronger connections to existing trails south of Ironwood, and nearby communities such as Mercer, Wisconsin

Why do it?

- Improve the multi-modal transportation system.
- Encourage active living by making walking, biking, and skiing the easy and fun choice for transportation.
- Draw new residents and tourists to Ironwood with the lure of a looping, complete trail system with regional connections.
- Increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- Capture North Country Trail users as a new segment of tourist in Ironwood.
- Reduce pollution by getting people out of their cars (less sediment from vehicles entering the stormwater system, reduced carbon monoxide, heavy metals, and other pollutants from vehicle exhaust).

Who does it?

- The City
- North Country Trail Volunteers

How do you do it?

- Ironwood Streets Fund
- Explore outside grant opportunities
 - › Federal
 - › State
 - › Private
- Seek permanent designation for The North Country Trail along a portion of Michigan's Western Gateway Trail.
- Join the North Country Trail Association's Trail Town Program

Where do you do it?

- Prioritize sidewalk improvements by comparing and analyzing street projects and Pedestrian Zones according to the Transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Make trail improvements, starting with low-hanging fruit and connections to the most-utilized trails:
 - › Michigan's Western Gateway Trail
 - › Shorter, more easily-implementable connections

How is it measured?

- Keep updated goals that get revisited and revised on an annual and ten year basis.
- Are you meeting your goals, or do they need to be recalibrated and refined?
- Identify barriers or keys to success and strategize to overcome or utilize them.

Related Strategies:

- Strategy 4.1: Identify and Implement Pilot Routes for a Complete Streets Program
- Strategy 4.4: Define Priority Improvements to the Pedestrian Network
- Strategy 4.5: Prioritize and Plan for Trail System Improvements
- Strategy 6.1: Invest in Quality of Life

Connecting to the Vision & Guiding Principles

The Vision and Guiding Principles of the Ironwood Comprehensive Plan articulate how the community will look, feel, and function over the next 20 years and help to define the character, values, and priorities of the Ironwood community. The strategy described in this Spark Plan supports the vision and guiding principles in the following ways:

AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY A more complete sidewalk network and trail system encourages multiple modes of transportation and encourages active living among residents.

A FRIENDLY COMMUNITY This strategy helps to enhance Ironwood's inviting and friendly atmosphere by creating pedestrian friendly streets and connected, usable trails.

A GREAT DESTINATION Upgraded and well-maintained sidewalks and trails attract visitors and potential residents to Ironwood.

See Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive Plan for full text of the community Vision and Guiding Principles.

SPARK PLAN: TRAIL & SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [North Country Trail -Trail Towns Program](#)
- [American Trails](#)
- [Safe Routes to Schools National Partnership](#)

Action Planning Worksheet!

Do you support this idea? Make a commitment to act! Complete this worksheet and submit it to the City Community Development Office (Contact: Michael Brown, Community Development Director; Memorial Building; 213 S. Marquette Street; Ironwood, MI, 49938; (906) 932-5050 ext.126; brownm@cityofironwood.org)

NAME / ORGANIZATION:

GOAL / MOTIVATION

What is the larger reason for supporting this idea? What do you hope to achieve?

OBJECTIVES

What are the tangible/measurable outcomes you'd like to see in the short term (next 6 months)?

ACTION STEPS

What needs to happen next to meet your objectives? Who specifically is responsible? Set a Deadline!

Action	Owner	Deadline