

## Comprehensive Plan Update

Virtually all comprehensive plans begin with a discussion of issues and opportunities, including the community's long-term vision; data and analysis of current conditions within the community; and the public participation process. Every plan is a combination of consolidating, tweaking, and fundamentally rethinking different aspects of the City's current plan. Staff anticipates this update to be primarily a consolidating of the plan (the sector plan update, the parks plan update and the thoroughfare plan update) and tweaking – adjusting the vision for certain areas based on activities at JBSA Randolph and the suburbanization of rural areas.

The bulk of the comprehensive plan is comprised of a series of thematic elements or chapters. Traditional elements cover topics such as land use, transportation, parks, housing, economic development, natural resources, and community facilities; newer elements may address issues such as sustainability, natural hazards, public health, or climate change. Some elements such as the thoroughfare plan can require significant analysis and modeling if the land uses change dramatically. They can also simply be slightly adjusted to account for other changes in the plan. Staff is not anticipating such significant changes as to warrant new modeling of the recently updated thoroughfare plan or the currently being updated utility master plan. Staff is also not anticipating including newer elements such as public health, climate change, natural hazards (though there will be an awareness of floodplain issues) or higher education.

The guidance component of comprehensive plans is traditionally structured around goals, objectives, policies, and actions. Goals are general statements about desirable future conditions. Objectives are statements of measurable outcomes in furtherance of a certain goal. Policies are statements of intent with enough clarity to guide decision making. Actions are directives about programs, regulations, operational procedures, or public investments intended to guide the implementation of specific policies. Staff anticipates following this traditional model but using less text and more graphics as is the current trend.

A vital but sometimes underdeveloped feature of comprehensive plans is implementation, evaluation, and monitoring. Implementation can be passive and or active. Providing a detailed implementation program in the plan influences if and when plan recommendations will be enacted. Benchmarks and indicators with clearly defined metrics help quantify progress towards community goals. Traditionally, Schertz has taken a more passive approach – allowing new development and private sector investment to drive the plan. Generally that is anticipated to be the case with this update except in the areas of economic development and entertainment and recreation.

The plan must then be implemented through regulations and programs to translate the plan's guiding policies and principles into on-the-ground outcomes. As such it is important to consider what regulations would be necessary in order to achieve the desired outcomes and assess whether the community is willing to regulate to that degree. Finally, plan monitoring and evaluation should be regular and ongoing.

Public engagement and participation is vital to a legitimate and effective planning process. There are many methods and techniques for soliciting and incorporating public participation into the

planning process. It is important to develop a plan for ensuring public participation, including participation by underrepresented groups that may be missed by traditional public engagement approaches. Staff would anticipate a moderate level of public engagement with the Planning and Zoning Committee guiding the effort and input from other city boards and commissions and some traditional public engagement – community meetings and internet surveys.

#### UDC Update

The update to the UDC will track somewhat behind the update to the Comprehensive Plan, but to be clear will occur concurrently. This lag is to allow final updates to the UDC as part of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Generally, the goal of the UDC update is to ensure compliance with State Law, reflect actual practice, be very clear as to standards, and provide flexibility. The flexibility is expected to be achieved through a menu board option of requirements. For example, the landscaping section may include 20 different requirements and new development must comply with at least 15 of those – with the developer determining which 15 they want to meet. It is important to note that complaints will still arise from developers only wanting to meet 14 of the requirements, etc. Generally, staff is proposing to only regulate in areas where there is a clear public need – such as safety and quality of life, but is not anticipating trying to regulate to the degree that there will be no develop that no one in the community has any complaints about.