

**Toledo City Hall
Council Chambers
206 N Main St. Toledo OR
June 8, 2022
6:30 pm**

AGENDA

TOLEDO PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission will hold an in-person meeting in City Hall Council Chambers. Participants can also attend the meeting through the Zoom video meeting platform. Email planning@cityoftoledo.org or call 541-336-2247 ext. 2130 to receive the meeting login information.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL
2. VISITORS: (A time set aside to speak with the Planning Commissioners about issues not on the agenda)
3. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 11, 2022 MINUTES as circulated and reviewed by the Planning Commission
4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:
 - a. Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update – Introduction and Citizen Involvement Chapter (See attached documents)
 - b. Updates and Reports
5. STAFF COMMENTS
6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS
7. ADJOURNMENT

* Comments submitted in advance are preferable. Comments may be submitted by phone at 541-336-2247 extension 2130 or by email to planning@cityoftoledo.org. The meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired, or for other accommodation for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting by calling the Toledo Planning Department at 541-336-2247.

TOLEDO PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Toledo Planning Commission was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Anne Learned-Ellis. Commissioners present: Cora Warfield, Brian Lundgren, Ruthanne Morris, Ricky Dyson, and Jonathan Mix (arrived at 6:33 pm). Excused was Terri Neimann (was in attendance, but due to technical issues, lost connection at 6:30 pm).

Staff present: Contract Planner (CP) Justin Peterson, City Manager (CM) Judy Richter, City Attorney (CA) Mike Adams, and Secretary Arlene Inukai.

VISITORS: Rich Kuehn, Ed French, and Stephen Swinehart

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 13, 2022, MINUTES:

Commissioner Lundgren noted two corrections. Page 2, Paragraph 6 should be corrected to remove "as" and Page 4, Paragraph 1, add the word, "is" before "willing to work". Commissioner Mix entered the meeting at this time. It was moved and seconded (Dyson/Lundgren) to approve the March 9, 2022, minutes as circulated and corrected by the Planning Commission. The **motion passed** unanimously, noting the absence of Neimann.

PUBLIC HEARING: MODIFICATION TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO AMEND A CONDITION OF APPROVAL FOR AN APPROVED EXPANSION OF THE WASTE TRANSFER/RECYCLING FACILITY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5441 HWY 20 (FILE #CU-1-21MOD), REQUESTED BY DAHL & DAHL INC. (RYAN CROTTY AUTHORIZED AGENT):

President Learned-Ellis opened the public hearing by stating the nature and purpose. After calling for declarations of ex parte contact, bias, or conflict of interest, Commissioner Lundgren reported he worked at the site for the construction project and President Learned-Ellis is familiar with the site. The statements of rights and relevances and rights to appeal were then read.

Staff Report: CP Peterson reviewed the staff report as on file at City Hall. He reported that the request is for a change to the existing conditional use permit that was approved last year. The proposal includes a change to Condition of Approval #3 to remove the requirement that the temporary structure must be replaced with a permanent structure. The applicants would like to continue to use the temporary structure during the research and development phase, and to expire March 31, 2026. The temporary structure would have to continue to receive annual building/fire review for re-certification. One year extensions can be issued by the Building Official's certificate of occupancy. No other modifications or revision are proposed.

CP Peterson reviewed the findings presented in the staff report. He noted that the current certificate of occupancy is approved through June 1, 2022. If approved, the applicants will need to receive an updated certificate of occupancy.

The property is located at 5441 Highway 20 and is in the Light-Industrial Zone. The original conditional use permit allowed for the expansion of the existing waste/transfer facility to allow the

baler facility. Normally, temporary structures are only allowed for 180 days, but the applicants worked with both the Fire Department and Building Division to extend the time limits. CP Peterson reviewed the criteria and recommended approval of the extension and the requirement to obtain an annual certificate of occupancy. President Learned-Ellis asked if the request is not approved, the applicants would need to discontinue use of the temporary structure. CP Peterson clarified that the applicants want to continue use of the temporary structure while they complete the research and development work needed on the baler project.

Applicant Testimony: Rich Kuehn of Dahl Disposal, 5441 Hwy 20, reported that staff summarized the request well. The membrane structure will outlast the time period they are requesting (2026), but they are asking for an extension in order to continue the research work and wanting to align the use with GP's facility.

Proponent Testimony: None.

Opponent Testimony: None.

Other Interested Parties: None.

Questions by Commission: None.

Deliberations: The public hearing was closed and the Commission entered into deliberations. It was moved and seconded (Warfield/Dyson) that based on the testimony received, the staff report, and the evidence and arguments before the Planning Commission at the public hearing on May 11, 2022, the Planning Commission finds that the request by Dahl & Dahl Inc. and authorized agent Ryan Crotty, Maul Foster & Alongi, Inc., (CU-2-21(mod)) complies with the criteria identified in Toledo Municipal Code 17.64.050. The Planning Commission hereby adopts the staff report as findings, as well as the proposed conditions of approval for CU-2-21(mod), and allowing for the correction of typographical and grammatical errors. The **motion passed** unanimously, noting the absence of Neimann.

PUBLIC HEARING: MINOR PARTITION TO CREATE THREE PARCELS FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT NE 1ST STREET/NE 2ND STREET (FILE #MP-1-22), REQUESTED BY EDWARD AND KELLY FRENCH (STEPHEN SWINEHART AUTHORIZED AGENT):

President Learned-Ellis opened the public hearing by stating the nature and purpose. After calling for declarations of ex parte contact, bias, or conflict of interest, President Learned-Ellis reported she conducted a site visit. The statements of rights and relevances and rights to appeal were previously read.

Staff Report: CP Peterson reviewed the staff report as on file at City Hall. He reported that the proposal is to create three parcels. The property fronts NE 1st Street and NE 2nd Street. Two proposed parcels are on the south side (NE 1st Street) and one on the north side (NE 2nd Street). A property line adjustment has been reviewed and is nearing approval. This would adjust the property boundaries for Tax Lots 4300 and 6000. The lot line adjustment plat must be finalized before the minor partition plat can be finalized.

The proposed partition meets the R-G Zone standards. Water and sewer are available and an easement will be provided for any utility services to cross Parcel 3. CP Peterson reviewed the

criteria, minimum lot size, and the ability for Proposed Parcel 3 to be divided in the future. Although, there are some slopes on the site, which could limit future development. The proposal meets the Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives. Proposed improvements will be proportional to the impacts of the development. There will be driveway, street, and sidewalk improvements and the applicant could defer those improvements until development occurs. Sidewalk improvements are needed, based on the requirement that there are sidewalks within 500' of the project. The work can begin when a building permit is issued. The applicant expects to start on the two southern parcels, along NE 1st Street. When this work begins, the sidewalk and street work will also be needed. The NE 2nd Street work would not be needed until construction starts on Parcel 3. Commissioners reviewed the current location of sidewalks, sidewalk width, and deferred improvement agreements.

The property has double frontage, but the proposed partition would remove the double frontage. The Public Works Department has asked for a stormwater plan when construction begins. The applicant expects the utility line for Parcel 1 and 2 to cross Parcel 3, and an easement has been identified in the proposal. Some site work and fill will be needed for the property.

CP Peterson reviewed proposed conditions. He noted a typo on Page 11, under Staff Analysis, should list "three" lots and Page 1, should be "steeper" under Topography. Staff recommends approval of the request.

Applicant Testimony: Ed French at Bus. Highway 20, Toledo, owns the property and has been working on the lot line adjustment to provide the existing home with an off-street parking area. He plans to provide affordable housing, with a duplex on Parcels 1 and 2. He will work with Public Works on the sidewalk requirement and is willing to sign the deferred improvement agreements. The sewer line connections will be challenging, as the properties will be served from NE 2nd Street. He expects to work on the two properties on NE 1st Street first.

Proponent Testimony: None.

Opponent Testimony: None.

Other Interested Parties: None.

Questions by Commission: None.

Deliberations: The public hearing was closed and the Commission entered into deliberations. It was moved and seconded (Lundgren/Warfield) that based on the testimony received, the staff report, and the evidence and arguments before the Planning Commission at the public hearing on May 11, 2022, the Planning Commission finds that the request by Edward and Kelly French (MP-1-22) complies with the criteria identified in Toledo Municipal Code, Titles 16 and 17, including the criteria identified in Toledo Municipal Code, Section 16.08.070. The Planning Commission hereby adopts the staff report as findings, as well as the conditions of approval for MP-1-22, and allowing for the correction of typographical and grammatical errors. The **motion passed** unanimously, noting the absence of Neimann.

DISCUSSION ITEMS: COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN UPDATE AND SURVEY
QUESTION REVIEW:

Commissioners reviewed the proposed Comprehensive Plan survey. It will be an online questionnaire with the option for paper submittals. Information will be provided in the newsletter, website, and newspaper. English and Spanish versions will be available. Surveys can be available at City Hall, Library, farmers market, and online. Based on discussion, the survey will be modified to allow multiple selections for #3, #4, #5, and #6; expand the options for the type of residency; modify the responses for employment status/retired; include an education question, and limit the demographic questions.

The joint Planning Commission/City Council worksession will be held June 22nd to review the Comprehensive Plan update. Several Commissioners offered to volunteer to sit at the Thursday Market to distribute the survey. Commissioners also discussed an incentive to complete the survey.

DISCUSSION ITEMS: OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION GRANT – ARCADIA PARK:
CP Peterson reported that the Arcadia Park grant application was just submitted. This project includes restroom improvements, curbs and ramp upgrades for ADA compliance, crosswalk improvements, sidewalk widening, tennis court surface improvements, new fencing, and updated lighting. Grant awards will be announced late this summer.

STAFF COMMENTS:

CM Richter announced that Cycle Oregon is sponsoring a bike event that will be held in Toledo on May 20th. The gravel ride will be from Toledo to Ona Beach and campers will be located at Memorial Field. Volunteers are needed for the event.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

President Learned-Ellis noted the new sign at the library.

Commissioner Mix apologized for being late, as it is his son's birthday.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Secretary

President

2020 Vision for Toledo, Oregon

The 2000 Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Adopted in compliance with Oregon Revised Statutes
Chapter 197 and implementing administrative rules by
Ordinance # 1285 on April 4, 2001.

Acknowledged: _____

ATTEST: _____
City Recorder

APPROVED: _____
Mayor

Prepared by the Toledo Planning Commission and the Toledo Community Development
Department. Reviewed and adopted by the Toledo City Council.

Funding for this document was provided by the
Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
and the City of Toledo.

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INTRODUCTION TO TOLEDO

The City of Toledo, situated seven miles inland from the Pacific Ocean on the scenic Yaquina Bay is conveniently located between the Coast Range and the Pacific Coast. Toledo's inland location combines proximity to the ocean with weather that is frequently warmer and sunnier than that of its coastal neighbors.

As a rural community with a 1999 population of 3,605, Toledo expresses a "small town" feeling to the people who live here. With its quaint downtown, steep hillsides, narrow streets, forested neighborhoods, and scenic waterways, Toledo is a charming community. The community offers a wide variety of housing types and styles. Toledo is a popular area because of accessibility to a variety of sports and recreational activities including fishing, canoeing, sailing, hunting, hiking, and scenic drives. The area also offers an indoor swimming pool, tennis courts, golf course, bowling alley, historic museum, well-kept parks and a library. Many churches of various denominations provide opportunities for worship and community events. Many of Toledo's citizens are active in community organizations and enjoy school functions and community festivals. Toledo attracts many visitors to the local antique stores and art galleries.

Transportation routes to Toledo include rail, air, marine, and U.S. Highway 20. Many communities including Toledo suffered economic declines as resource based industries declined in Oregon. Fortunately, Toledo retains an industrial base with the largest industrial employer in Lincoln County.

By the year 2020, it is projected that between 5,000 to 5,600 people will live in Toledo. These people will live, work, shop, and recreate in the Toledo area. What do people want Toledo to be like in five years? or in twenty years? How will the community respond to the changes and challenges Toledo faces? How can the community shape and guide the development of Toledo in a positive and productive manner? Toledo's Comprehensive Plan, 2020 Vision for Toledo, has been written to help Toledo's citizens and leaders envision and achieve the community's desired future.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Toledo Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for making better decisions regarding the use of land and community resources. The plan is a means of controlling the urban environment, conserving Toledo's existing values and guiding growth in the desired directions. The plan is a policy statement based upon the existing assets, problems and needs within the community. It predicts future conditions and sets forth City policies in an effort to guide the development of Toledo in a positive and productive manner. The plan is designed to help Toledo to know its past and present and to develop a future which reflects the community's values and goals. The plan is a guideline for both short and long term development and is written to assure a comprehensive view of how individual projects can contribute to the community as a whole.

Change is an inherent part of the community. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to help the community adjust to changing circumstances in a manner which reflects the community's desires. It is a tool designed to:

- be comprehensive,
- be long range,
- be general,
- focus on physical development,
- be related to the social and economic forces that the plan proposes to accommodate, and
- to be adopted and used by the City of Toledo to guide land development and use.

The plan is intended for use by local officials, persons with development interests, neighborhood and community groups, state and federal agencies, special districts and citizens of all interests. It provides information about the community and how future land use development should be balanced to meet the overall needs of the community. The Plan is comprehensive and should not be viewed in parts without consideration of the interrelationships with other aspects of the Plan.

The Toledo Comprehensive Plan was also written in compliance with the Oregon Planning Act and addresses the Oregon Statewide Planning Goals. The framework of the plan is based upon the Oregon goals with adjustments to assure a comprehensive review of Toledo's specific characteristics and needs. This comprehensive policy plan is the central, but not only, document for directing Toledo's future. Other planning documents are equally important. Many of these have been used as background reports or inventory documents providing specific and detailed information on each of the statewide land use planning goals applicable to Toledo. Others include the specific facts regarding Toledo from which the Comprehensive Plan statements, policies and objectives are derived. Summaries and references to the relevant background materials are found in the 2020 Vision for Toledo, Oregon – The 2000 Toledo Comprehensive Land Use Plan Inventory.

Planning is a continuous, not a static, process. Over time, the Comprehensive Plan must incorporate new values, concerns and opportunities. Periodically (approximately every 5 to 7 years) the plan should be revised to reflect the needs, goals and desires of Toledo's residents.

2020 VISION FOR TOLEDO*

Toledo, "the jewel" on the gateway to the scenic Yaquina River, is a community of 5,500 nestled in the forested mountains next to the Oregon Coast. Just 7 miles from Newport, off Scenic Highway 20, Toledo offers all the modern-day amenities while preserving the charm and feel of a 1900-era Timber Town. With its forested hillsides, narrow winding streets, historic neighborhoods and waterways, Toledo has much to offer its residents and visitors alike.

Toledo residents have maintained their small town identity while benefitting from the growth in both the retail and industrial sectors. Through persistence and community sponsored, multi-pronged approach to economic development, Toledo has benefitted from the development of:

- the Toledo Industrial Park, a mixed-use industrial and commercial center,
- an active waterfront with shipbuilding and dockside repair facilities and marinas,
- and a strong retail segment in downtown and along Business Loop Highway 20.

As the community has grown, the Georgia-Pacific paper mill and the timber industry have continued to play important roles in sustaining the local and regional economy. Toledo has been discovered by tourists as a thriving arts, antiques and eco-tourism center. Toledo remains a community which supports cottage industries and home based businesses. All of this has created a stable and diversified economic base while maintaining Toledo's safe and friendly hometown feel.

Toledo is a family-oriented community with a strong commitment to the success of its people. This has been achieved through maintenance of a quality education and life-long learning system. Together, businesses, the community and the schools have worked to ensure the future of the youth, the workforce and the community. Toledo provides the support systems necessary to educate and train individuals enriching their lives and enabling them to become contributing community members and skilled workers. School activities such as sports, drama and the arts are supported by the families and businesses in Toledo.

Toledo has developed programs and policies to support safe and attractive neighborhoods. Community pride is exhibited in the nicely painted homes, clean yards, and friendly, caring people greeting one another on the streets. Residents and businesses take great pride in their buildings and grounds. The two entrances to the City are adorned with landscaping and signage that communicates Toledo's identity. Businesses along the highway through town have been expanded and improved. Main Street has been beautified and has capitalized on the "old town" feeling. 1900-era store fronts are nicely painted. Trees and planters border the sidewalk promenade. The commercial areas are fully occupied with antique and curio shops, boutiques, floral shops, eateries (restaurants, ice cream parlors, etc.), art galleries, professional offices, a hotel, grocery stores, entertainment centers, and personal and retail services. Main Street is also a thriving residential neighborhood with apartments on the upper stories and adjacent streets. The quality and variety of services available in Toledo have increased.

Toledo has honored its history with many of the properties and neighborhoods preserved to their early and mid-1900's style. The One Spot, a steam locomotive, is on display. The Toledo Historic Museum continues to attract visitors. These visitors also enjoy viewing the Georgia-Pacific Paper Mill, and driving through neighborhoods with restored mill cottages lined up in a

row, bungalows and craftsman style homes.

Toledo offers a wide variety of homes which families can afford to rent or purchase and maintain. Along with the historic homes which have been renovated and preserved, there are manufactured homes, ranch style and more modern homes and apartments. Multi-family units are in various neighborhoods and designed to blend into the single-family areas. Many small homes are available as starter homes and for the increased number of retired persons in Toledo. Yet there are also several streets which contain estate type homes with larger hillside lots. Many of the homes have beautiful views over the mountain and waterway vistas. There are a few remaining areas with small family farms and forest lots primarily at the edges of the city within the urban growth boundary.

One of Toledo's main attractions continues to be its natural setting which has been preserved and enhanced with a strong orientation to the forests, wetlands and waterways. Recreation programs and public parks abound. Much of the city is developed with natural landscaping and open spaces linked with greenways and urban parks. The park system includes sport complexes at the schools, a skateboard park, neighborhood pocket parks, community parks, a Main Street plaza, waterfront parks with boating activities, and nature parks and trails. The parks vary greatly in size and the types of facilities. They are easily accessible by Toledo's residents and visitors. Regular community events are held throughout the year bringing people together and providing entertainment.

Additionally, Toledo's community members have formed effective networks to meet human and family needs ranging from child care to transportation. Volunteers are active and enthusiastic as they continue to support community improvement projects, social services programs, and school projects. People are proud and appreciative that Toledo is a quiet and safe town where they know their neighbors and feel they can walk throughout town at night.

Supporting this charming small town is a City government (elected officials and staff) which remains responsive to its citizens' needs and priorities. City government continues to support Toledo's vision of the future by facilitating citizen-initiated projects. Through careful planning and financing, Toledo City government maintains the community's modern, efficient and high quality infrastructure and services: police, fire, land use planning, streets, water, wastewater, stormwater, library, parks, and recreation. Overall, community members take a pro-active role in city, county and school decisions, as well as state and federal issues dealing with forests, environment, and transportation. Toledo's governmental agencies and citizens strive to achieve the community's vision. The town's people continue to work together to solve problems, make improvements and build on a history of community mindedness, neighborhood pride and individual caring.

Toledo is a small town with a unique identity. We are known for our small town hospitality, our climate, and our picturesque location. Toledo is an appealing place to live, work, play, raise a family and retire because of its friendly and caring people, community spirit, business and employment opportunities, quality schools, clean and beautiful environment and social amenities. Our future continues to look bright because of our continued commitment to make Toledo's vision a reality.

* (Adapted from the Toledo Community Action Plan based upon work completed by Sylvia Rose of Sylvia Rose Communications and input from a March 1993 *Community Strategic Planning Work Session: Creating a Vision for Toledo's Future* and the Vision Statement written by Terry M. Lewis of TCL Planning Consultants with input through the Toledo Community Action Plan drafting process.)

OREGON STATEWIDE PLANNING GOALS

The following is complete list of the Oregon Statewide Planning Goals (“Oregon Goals”). The highlighted goals are goals applicable to Toledo and addressed within the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan follows the general outline of the goals but also includes changes to the format of the goals.

- GOAL 1: CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**
- GOAL 2: LAND-USE PLANNING**
- GOAL 3: AGRICULTURAL LANDS
- GOAL 4: FOREST LANDS
- GOAL 5: NATURAL RESOURCES, SCENIC AND HISTORIC AREAS, AND OPEN SPACES**
- GOAL 6: AIR, WATER, AND LAND RESOURCES QUALITY**
- GOAL 7: AREAS SUBJECT TO NATURAL DISASTERS AND HAZARDS**
- GOAL 8: RECREATIONAL NEEDS**
- GOAL 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- GOAL 10: HOUSING**
- GOAL 11: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**
- GOAL 12: TRANSPORTATION**
- GOAL 13: ENERGY CONSERVATION**
- GOAL 14: URBANIZATION**
- GOAL 15: WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY
- GOAL 16: ESTUARINE RESOURCES**
- GOAL 17: COASTAL SHORELANDS**
- GOAL 18: BEACHES AND DUNES
- GOAL 19: OCEAN RESOURCES

ARTICLE 1: CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

GOAL:

1. Provide a citizen involvement program that ensures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process so as to provide useful guidance to and an understanding of the overall planning process.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide for widespread citizen involvement.
 - a. The City shall involve a cross-section of citizens, citizen organizations and public agencies in all phases of the planning process.
 - b. The City shall establish the Planning Commission as the recognized citizen involvement committee for the planning process and programs.
 - c. The City shall select and appoint the Planning Commission members by an open, well-publicized public process.
 - d. The City shall prepare and maintain lists of recognized citizen organizations and public agencies and shall forward appropriate notices to those groups who have indicated interest in identified topics or geographic areas.
 - e. The Planning Commission and City Manager shall provide periodic reports to the City Council evaluating the process being used for citizen involvement.
2. Provide opportunities for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process.
 - a. Public involvement programs shall be designed and conducted to meet or exceed the legal requirements for each stage of the planning process.
 - b. Public involvement programs shall include opportunities for citizens to participate in the preparation of plans, implementation measures, plan components, plan adoptions, minor changes and major revisions to plans, ordinances, regulations and other implementation measures.
3. Maintain effective two-way communications between local officials and citizens.
 - a. Opportunities shall be provided to develop two-way communications between local officials and citizens.
 - b. Times shall be established to allow citizens and public officials to communicate at formal hearings and meetings to discuss planning issues.
 - c. Informal opportunities for two-way communications shall be encouraged in appropriate settings and at appropriate times for the topics of interest.
 - d. Information shall be provided to inform citizens about how, when, and where they may participate.
4. Make technical information available to citizens in an understandable form.
 - a. Information necessary to reach policy decisions shall be available in a simplified, understandable form.

- b. Assistance shall be provided to interpret and effectively use technical information.
 - c. A copy of all inventory and Comprehensive Plan materials shall be available for viewing at the Toledo City Library and at City Hall during regular business hours.
 - d. Staff reports and other technical information presented at public hearings shall be made available for review at City Hall and copies of staff reports shall be available at a reasonable cost.
- 5. Provide mechanisms for citizens to receive responses or feedback from policy makers.
 - a. Citizens participating or providing comments on planning issues shall be provided with notices of the results of the planning process relating to their submitted comments.
 - b. Rationales used to reach land-use policy decisions shall be available in the form of a written record and kept on file at City Hall.
 - c. Recommendations and plans resulting from the citizen involvement program shall be retained and made available for public review.
- 6. Provide funding for City sponsored citizen involvement programs. Citizen involvement programs shall be funded through the Planning Commission, Community Development and other program funds. Funds shall be provided for public notices, workshops, meetings and other City projects as needed to involve a cross-section of citizens and citizen organizations.

CHAPTER 1

Citizen Involvement

Monroe is a welcoming and inclusive community collaborating to ensure meaningful and informed participation in transparent land-use and transportation planning processes.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Proactive and effective citizen involvement is a cornerstone of planning practice, and focused public engagement is crucial to achieve success in land use and transportation planning initiatives that often impact the entire community. Monroe residents expect the City to maintain transparency, provide access to information, and offer meaningful public participation in the planning process.

CONTEXT

Statewide Planning Goal 1 requires the City to design and maintain an active citizen involvement program that provides for widespread involvement, effective two-way communications with the public, the opportunity for the public to be involved throughout the planning process, access to technical information in an understandable form, and a mechanism for the public to provide feedback to policymakers.

The Monroe Planning Department coordinates a number of public involvement activities ranging from proactively notifying residents of pending development applications, holding community meetings and workshops to discuss more complex or longer-range planning projects, and facilitating access to information on planning and development in the City both online and in-person. Some projects have included various citizen involvement methods such as surveys, design charrettes (an intensive planning session where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for development), outreach at public events, newsletters, or public tours. The Department also researches and publishes information about historical growth patterns, population trends, and other development statistics.

Public oversight is provided by the Monroe Planning Commission. The Monroe Planning Commission makes quasi-judicial decisions (many of which involve public hearings), makes recommendations on legislative actions, and provides additional advice to the City Council on land use issues and priorities. The City will emphasize the use of technology to extend public involvement and engagement, while also preserving opportunities for in-person dialog at community events and meetings. Finally, the Planning Department will continually monitor and assess its citizen involvement efforts to ensure continual improvement and ongoing effective public service.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN MONROE

Monroe's designated Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) is the City Council. Typically, for smaller cities like Monroe, it is common for a governing body to assume responsibility for developing and implementing a citizen involvement program in lieu of forming a new committee involving representatives from multiple organizations and geographic areas. In such cases, the City must submit a letter to the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) stating the rationale. The City has done so and the request was formally approved by LCDC in 1979.

The City of Monroe's first Citizen Involvement Program (CIP) was created and acknowledged in 1978 during the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. This CIP is outlined below:

- Designation of the Monroe City Council as the Committee for Citizen Involvement.
- Provide for open public meetings at key points during the planning program to give citizens the opportunity to participate in data collection and analysis, plan preparation, and plan implementation.
- The major aspect of citizen involvement in Monroe is the opportunity for continuing personal contact which citizens now have with City Council and Planning Commission members.

- Notices of meetings of the Planning Commission and City Council will be posted at the City Hall, the Bank and the Post Office.
- The creation of ad hoc or permanent citizens committees was determined to be inappropriate in Monroe, largely because of the very limited number of people available to participate in a City of 625 persons.
- Meeting minutes of the Planning Commission and City Council are readily available for public use at City Hall or on the City Website.
- Town hall type meetings and public hearings are the most appropriate means for more formal communication between citizens and the Planning Commission or City Council.
- Since 1978, Monroe's CIP has been incorporated into City land-use development codes and City policies.

In accordance with the City of Monroe's CIP, planning staff utilize a multi-faceted public outreach approach to engage the community during all stages of planning efforts. Currently, a major aspect of citizen involvement in Monroe is the opportunity for continual personal contact with City Councilors, Planning Commissioners, and City staff. To ensure this opportunity exists, all Planning Commission, City Council, and Committee meetings are well publicized, regularly scheduled, thoroughly documented, and provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on plans and ordinances. Meeting agendas are posted at post office, bank, City Hall and on the City's website. Meeting minutes and schedules, planning documents, and public notices are readily available on the City's website or at City Hall for review. Monthly newsletters advertising meeting schedules, opportunities for volunteer positions, and significant planning projects are mailed to every City utility customer, available on the City's website, and at City Hall. Public hearings and informal community workshops are publicized and held to discuss complex long-range planning projects.

GOING FORWARD

A great deal has changed in Monroe since the adoption of the 1978 Comprehensive Plan and along with it Monroe's Citizen Involvement Program. Going forward, Monroe's public involvement approach will be designed to inform and stimulate public engagement in the land-use planning process throughout the entire Monroe community by utilizing inclusionary, collaborative, accessible, and accountable involvement methods. As Monroe develops and grows, it will inherently become more diverse in regards to age, income, language, abilities, ethnicity, etc.

There are two pressing examples of this phenomenon that will need to be addressed in Monroe's new Citizen Involvement Program - Monroe's Hispanic population and the 'Monroe Community'. The City's Hispanic population is the clearest example of this shift already underway. Over the past two decades, the Hispanic community has represented the fastest growing population cohort in the City. Monroe's updated approach to public involvement will reflect this new development to ensure all citizens are provided meaningful opportunities to become involved in land-use planning processes and decisions.

Additionally, through the public workshops and surveys completed during the 2019 Comprehensive Plan update it became apparent the City's citizen involvement strategies must also address a unique challenge: the spatial relationship the City shares with its surrounding communities. In addition to serving the Monroe residents, the citizen involvement program will be respectful of the dynamic between the City of Monroe residents and the greater 'Monroe Community' – residents of unincorporated Benton County (i.e. Alpine, Bellfountain, Glenbrook, and Ingram Island). While not officially residents of the City, many citizens of the 'Monroe Community' maintain strong cultural and economic ties with the City of Monroe. Understanding and acknowledging this relationship throughout all planning practices is critical to ensure appropriate communitywide collaboration.

With these local trends and conditions, it is paramount that the City’s Citizen Involvement Program reflect this reality by emphasizing the necessity to achieve these four goals:

1. Inclusion
2. Engagement
3. Accessibility
4. Accountability

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT – GOALS & POLICIES

The following citizen involvement goals and policies challenge City staff and elected officials to assess current practices and develop new tools and methods to serve as Monroe’s citizen involvement program.

INCLUSION – *Goal 1*

The City of Monroe works to create an atmosphere of respect and cultivates community diversity and wisdom through inclusive, meaningful, and innovative community participation.

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| POLICY CI 1.1 | A designated Committee for Citizen Involvement. A Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) will evaluate and provide feedback to City staff on citizen involvement processes. City Council should continue to serve as the CCI. The creation of permanent citizens committees was determined to be inappropriate in Monroe, largely due to the limited number of people available in the city to participate. |
| POLICY CI 1.2 | Review Bodies. Maintain review bodies, such as the Planning Commission and Monroe Vision & Revitalization Committee, to provide an opportunity for community involvement and provide leadership and expertise for specialized topic areas. |
| POLICY CI 1.3 | Engage Community Organizations. Engage existing community organizations, such as civic groups, non-profits, community centers, health centers, and school districts to extend participation and engagement. |
| POLICY CI 1.4 | Accommodate for Diverse Participation. Utilize community involvement best practices that accommodate for the diverse needs of citizens such as physical ability limitations, language barriers, and time constraints when appropriate and financially reasonable. |

ENGAGEMENT – *Goal 2*

The City of Monroe implements and maintains a comprehensive citizen involvement program to promote outreach and engagement in land use and transportation-related projects, decisions, and initiatives.

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| POLICY CI 2.1 | Citizen Awareness. Post notices of meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission, and Committees at City Hall, community centers (i.e. Monroe Community Library and Legion Hall), local businesses, and on the City website. |
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| POLICY CI 2.2 | Social Media. Develop and adopt a social media POLICY that utilizes social media platforms to enhance citizen involvement methods and techniques. |
| POLICY CI 2.3 | Ongoing Dialogue. Ensure and encourage ongoing dialogue between the public and the City regarding land-use planning and decision-making. |
| POLICY CI 2.4 | Emerging Technologies. Utilize emerging technologies, methods, and techniques to enhance and extend public involvement. |
| POLICY CI 2.5 | Best Practices Engagement Methods. Utilize community engagement methods, tools, and technologies that are recognized as best practices. |

ACCESSIBILITY – Goal 3

Ensure citizens are provided clear, user-friendly, and appropriate information and opportunities to participate in City land-use and transportation-related planning initiatives, processes, and decision-making.

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| POLICY CI 3.1 | Informed Citizenry. Make minutes of the City Council, Planning Commission, and Committee readily available for public use at City Hall and on the City website. All plans, studies, records of decisions, maps, and related ordinances will be made available for public use at City Hall and on the City website. |
| POLICY CI 3.2 | Formal and Informal Forums. Provide both formal and informal settings for communication between citizens and the Planning Commission or City Council. Workshop/town hall-type meetings should be held to facilitate informal communications, and public hearings should be held to facilitate formal communications. |
| POLICY CI 3.3 | Accessible Information. Provide information to the public in accessible and easy to understand formats, including multiple languages where appropriate. |
| POLICY CI 3.4 | Develop Consistent Procedures. Develop and utilize a consistent set of procedures for notifying and soliciting input from the public as appropriate to the scale and type of the proposed action. |

ACCOUNTABILITY – Goal 4

Ensure accountability and clarity in City of Monroe land-use and transportation-related planning processes and decisions.

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| POLICY CI 4.1 | Rights and Responsibilities. Establish clear rights and responsibilities of applicants, decision-makers, staff, and other participants of planning projects, initiatives, and decision-making processes. |
| POLICY CI 4.2 | Adequate Funding. Provide adequate personnel and financial support for the Citizen Involvement Program through the City Budget and the Land Conservation and Development Department's (LCDC) maintenance grants, as funds are available. |

- POLICY CI 4.3** **Program Evaluation.** The Planning Commission will evaluate the effectiveness of the Citizen Involvement Program on an annual basis to help guide recommendations for program and policy improvements. The Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) will advise City staff regarding this evaluation.
- POLICY CI 4.4** **Implementation.** Once adopted, the policies stated above will be recognized as Monroe’s Citizen Involvement Program.