
Topic: Public Hearing: Comprehensive Plan Update – The Ankeny Plan 2040
Date: February 12, 2018
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INTRODUCTION

The City of Ankeny has experienced record breaking growth over the past several years. To proactively manage this growth, the City has embarked upon a complete rewrite of its comprehensive plan. The City has a rich history of long-range planning and has created and adopted many comprehensive plans. The first of those plans was adopted in 1958 and subsequent plans coming along in 1963, 1974, 1980, 1992, 1996 (significant update to the '92 plan), 2004 and 2010 (significant update to the '04 plan). The proposed plan, the Ankeny Plan 2040, represents a new, fresh look at the community and takes into account the significant growth the City has experienced in recent years, while maintaining the core values of the community that has made Ankeny such a great community to live, work and play.

Comprehensive planning is an important tool for cities to guide future development of land to ensure a safe, pleasant and economical environment for residential, commercial, industrial and public activities. A comprehensive plan is a policy document of the City, adopted by resolution, and is intended to be a dynamic document that is regularly reviewed and updated. Generally, the comprehensive plan:

- Establishes a future vision based on a thorough community input process.
- Influences the form, pace and location of new development.
- Protects property investments by ensuring consistency and compatibility of land uses and development policies.
- Promotes the maintenance and enhancement of existing neighborhoods and commercial districts.
- Determines and reinforces approaches for protecting natural resources and open space.
- Guides the community in investment decisions for capital expenditures related to roads, utilities and parks.
- Provides the basis for zoning regulations, subdivision ordinances and other land use and development related controls.

A comprehensive plan sets forth or reiterates a vision and goals for a city's future, and provides the overall foundation for all land use regulation in the City. State law requires all cities that enforce Zoning to prepare and implement a comprehensive plan. The Ankeny Plan 2040 outlines the vision and goals of the community through the horizon year 2040.

CONSULTANT SELECTION

To initiate a fully transparent Comprehensive Plan process, on January 20, 2016, the City issued a Request for Proposals to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Ankeny. The City received twelve proposals from a variety of consultants located across the Midwest and the Country. Those 12 consultants were (in alphabetical order):

- BNIM – Kansas City, MO
- Confluence – Des Moines, IA
- Gould Evans – Kansas City, MO
- Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. – Minneapolis, MN
- Houseal Lavigne Associates – Chicago, IL
- JEO Consulting Group, Inc. – Omaha, NE
- Kendig Keast Collaborative – Sugar Land, TX
- Peter J. Smith & Company, Inc. – Buffalo, NY
- RDG Planning & Design – Des Moines, IA
- Teska Associates, Inc. – Plainfield, IL
- The Lakota Group – Chicago, IL
- Vireo – Kansas City, MO

A review committee was assembled to review the proposals, interview selected consultants and make a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council of the preferred consultant. The review committee was comprised of the following City staff:

- David Jones, City Manager
- Paul Moritz, Assistant City Manager
- Eric Jensen, Planning and Building Director
- Eric Carstens, Planning Administrator
- Mark Mueller, Public Works Director
- Derek Lord, Economic Development Director
- Nick Lenox, Parks and Recreation Director

On April 1st and April 15th, the review committee conducted interviews with five of the consultant teams. Those teams were (again in alphabetical order):

- Confluence – Des Moines, IA
- Gould Evans – Kansas City, MO
- Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. – Minneapolis, MN
- Houseal Lavigne Associates – Chicago, IL
- RDG Planning & Design – Des Moines, IA

The interview consisted of a 20-30 minute presentation by the consultant teams and then 20 - 30 minutes of follow-up questions. All five interviews were of a high quality, but one consultant team stood out to the Review Committee. And after careful review and consideration, the Review Committee unanimously recommended to the Mayor and City Council that Confluence be hired to lead the Comprehensive Plan project for the City of Ankeny. The Ankeny Comprehensive Plan project has been managed by Chris Shires who is a Principal in Confluence's Des Moines office. City staff is extremely pleased with the work of Confluence on this project.

PLAN PREPARATION

A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Team (CPAT) was established to serve as a steering committee and to work with Confluence and City staff on this project. The CPAT was comprised of:

- Gary Lorenz, Mayor
- Bobbi Bentz, City Council
- Kerry Walter-Ashby, City Council
- Trina Flack, Plan and Zoning Commission
- Glenn Hunter, Plan and Zoning Commission
- David Jones, City Manager
- Paul Moritz, Assistant City Manager
- Eric Jensen, Planning and Building Director
- Eric Carstens, Planning Administrator
- Mark Mueller, Public Works Director
- Don Clark, Municipal Utilities Director
- Derek Lord, Economic Development Director
- Nick Lenox, Parks and Recreation Director
- Amy Baker, Communications Manager

The CPAT worked with the consultant and City staff for approximately 18 months to prepare, review and modify the Ankeny Plan 2040. In addition to normal research and background work, this effort included:

- A Public Kickoff Meeting – attended by more than 150 people
- A Public Survey – completed by over 2,200 citizens
- Dozens of Individual Stakeholder Meetings
- Public Booths at both the Ankeny Farmer's Market and Summerfest
- Eight Advisory Committee Meetings
- An Advisory Committee Tour of Developments in Minneapolis
- Two Joint Plan and Zoning Commission/City Council Worksessions
- A Public Open House Unveiling the Draft Plan – attended by more than 150 people

APPROVAL PROCESS

The approval process for the Ankeny Plan 2040 includes public hearings before the Plan and Zoning Commission and the City Council. The Commission will review the draft plan, recommend modifications as necessary and make a recommendation to the City Council. The Council will review the draft plan and the recommendations of City staff, the CPAT and the Commission and ultimately approve a resolution adopting the plan.

While a lot of work has been done by City staff, the CPAT and the consultant, the Commission's public hearing on this plan represents a beginning and not an end of this process. The plan is still in draft form and presented with the expectation that there will continue to be changes and additions before the final action by the City Council. Therefore, at the end of the public hearing on February 20th, staff suggests that the Commission leave the hearing open and use the time between this meeting and the next as a continued opportunity to review the draft plan. At the Commission's next meeting, on March 6th, you can continue the public hearing and take any additional public input that is outstanding, and then close the public hearing. If you wish to make a recommendation at that time, you can do so, or if you would like to take more time and delay taking action and make your recommendation at the following meeting on March 20th, you can do that as well.

Again, the plan is a policy document of the Council and is not the law. It guides the City's development of Subdivision, Zoning and Building regulations. It guides the development of the Capital Improvement Program which is the City's infrastructure investment strategy. It creates expectations and ideas that should be further developed with additional studies, programs and projects. The Commission should take their time and be thoughtful and think from the perspective of a member of a community of 130,000 people.