

CHAPTER 9

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A plan, like St. Croix Falls Comprehensive Plan, is only useful if it provides techniques to implement the plan's recommendations, goals and policies. Development regulations, capital improvements planning and a continuing and on-going planning program are tools the city may use to implement the goals of the document.

A plan cannot be implemented with the support of a variety of different persons, groups and agencies. There are specific roles that these persons must play and a variety of tools that can be used to make the ideas that are written on paper or colored on maps become reality.

The plan should be used, not set aside. The land use plan is a guide for making decisions concerning land development in and around the City.

Regulatory controls used to guide development are an important means of important means of implementing the recommendations of the comprehensive plan. The zoning ordinance, housing and building codes, subdivision regulations, official mapping, and extra-territorial controls are the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development and guide future in accordance with the comprehensive plan. These regulations are officially adopted by the City Council as ordinances, and then administered by the various municipal departments and officials.

Official Map

The statutes allow municipalities to implement their public right-of-way plans through a document called an official map (see Wisconsin Statutes 62.23(6)).

The primary intent of the official map is to implement elements of the Comprehensive Plan by prohibiting construction of buildings or structures on land that has been designated for current or future public use. Areas needed for streets, widening, parkways, recreation areas, drainageways and the protection of unusual natural features may be included on the Official Basemap. The jurisdiction for Official Mapping extends 1-1/2 miles from the City limits. If an individual does build on an Officially Mapped area, he can be deprived of compensation for loss due to the construction of streets, highways or parkways. Within the City, the official map should be directly enforced through the issuance of building permits.

The City should review the need for an official map as it is revising its other regulatory land use controls.

Zoning Ordinance

The City of St. Croix Falls has an updated zoning ordinance. Amendments, which reflect current conditions and trends, are made as needed. The zoning ordinance is probably the most important and useful tool used by the City in guiding development efforts. Zoning provides a means to ensure that land uses are compatible with one another, selected densities are maintained, and that new growth is directed to appropriate areas. A zoning ordinance promotes sound, orderly development directed towards the preservation of property values and the improvement of the overall appearance of the community by regulating the use of land on individual lots and parcels of land.

Zoning power is authorized by section 62.23(7) of the Wisconsin Statutes. As mentioned earlier, the City should continue to review and update its zoning ordinances to reflect development trends and public perception. Although the zoning ordinance cannot correct past mistakes, it is one of the best ways to prevent repetitive mistakes.

Through the City's zoning power, a process for reviewing development plans is implemented. The process allows the Plan Commission and City Council to review development plans for compliance with zoning standards. The Board of Appeals may recommend conditions, which the developer must comply with in order to proceed with the proposed plans. This process is used so the City can review the overall picture thus achieving compatible land use and development.

Extraterritorial Zoning

Wisconsin Statutes 62.23(7)(a) allows municipalities to develop and implement zoning regulations in their respective extraterritorial area. The extraterritorial area for the City of St. Croix Falls extends up to 1-1/2 miles from its corporate limits into the village of Dresser and Towns of St. Croix Falls and Osceola. An extraterritorial zoning ordinance is developed jointly by abutting local governments. It allows the City to have some say as to how the area adjacent to its corporate limits is developed

Subdivision Regulations

Another regulatory tool the City uses to direct growth in the City is subdivision regulations. The subdivision ordinance is used in conjunction with the zoning ordinance and the goals and policies established therein, to promote and direct the orderly growth of the City. The subdivision ordinance ensures that the public utilities and street improvements are installed and constructed to City standards. Subdivision regulations can also be utilized when performing extraterritorial plat review. This gives the City the authority to approve subdivision plats in unincorporated areas that are located within 1-½ miles of the City.

Subdivision regulations require a developer to present the proposed development for Plan Commission review and comment. These regulations allow the City to ensure compatible land uses and orientation to the growth of the City. A complete networking of streets and public utilities is presented and reviewed in terms of consistency with past and future developments. Again, an overall picture development is achieved.

Continuing Planning Program

An effective comprehensive planning program should be reviewed and updated to reflect current and projected conditions and trends. The time frame addressed by this planning document extends through the year 2020. Although the goals and policies established by herein should be used to guide the City's decision-making process through the year 2020, these too may be amended to reflect changing attitudes.

A continuing planning program requires the support of the City officials and staff. The following discusses the roles each should play.

Capital Improvements Summary

Another development tool the village can use to guide the decision making process is capital improvements programming. The following section is the Capital Improvements Program developed by the City and describes the scheduled anticipated improvements to be addressed by the City between 2003 and 2007

Purpose

One method available to local units of government to help manage and systematize the budget allocation process for needed improvements is a Capital Improvement Program.

A capital improvement may be defined as a major expenditure of public funds, beyond maintenance and operation cost, for the acquisition or construction of a needed physical facility. Salaries, supplies and other overhead expenditures are considered maintenance and operating cost and should be provided for elsewhere in the annual budgetary process. Improvements or acquisitions of a permanent nature representing a long-term investment of public funds are considered capital improvements.

A Capital Improvement Program is simply a method of planning for major capital expenditures and scheduling them over a period of years in order to maximize the use of public funds. It is a means of attempting to coordinate a physical development plan with the City's current and anticipated financial resources.

The Capital Improvements Program is a five-year plan covering 2003 - 2007. The overall purpose of assigning years to proposed projects is to provide a short range outline for action, and a long range schedule of project and completion for an accurate picture of needed capital improvement projects and resources.

The first year phase of the program, 2003, presents the most comprehensive and detailed picture of those projects scheduled for immediate action. This phase of the program, known as the Capital Improvement Plan Budget (CIPB), will be presented as a detailed list of anticipated expenditures and sources of funding. The second phase of the Capital Improvements Program includes those projects specified as being necessary but not of an urgent or immediate nature to warrant inclusion into the first year of the program, this stage will not require a detailed cost breakdown, however, estimates of capital costs will be provided. The Capital Improvements Program provides continuity by addressing long-range projects and therefore minimizing duplication or conflicts with other improvements.

It is important to note that the Capital Improvement Program must be based on local needs and objectives. These needs and objectives can be found in earlier chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, which relate to Transportation, Utilities and Communities Facilities. When formulating a needs analysis of the City, goals and objectives act as the basic guide to the development of the City. Through this process, the City is in a position to guide development rather than having to constantly react to development pressures.

The process used to develop the Capital Improvements Program involves four major steps:

1. Identification of Capital Needs

Based on the comprehensive process, the City arrives at a capital needs list, or a description of all anticipated improvements needed by the City. All City departments and organizations, appropriate, offer their recommendations to the City Council in this process.

2. Financial Analysis of the Community

A financial analysis of the City entails a review of past expenditures, mill rates, and taxable valuation. All of these factors are then projected for the capital improvements budget period.

3. Determine Method of Financing Capital Improvements

The analysis of the City's financial situation dictates to a large degree the number and cost of all capital improvements that can be undertaken. Of the primary methods available to finance capital improvements, the City must determine which particular method best fits the financing requirements of that particular improvement.

4. Capital Improvements Priorities

Once the total needs list is identified, these projects need to be put in priority based on a variety of factors ranging from total cost of the project, to arrive at a year-by-year improvements list.

These four steps serve as the basic process for the development of the Capital Improvements Program. A yearly review of the City's needs and economic characteristics is recommended. What is contained in this program is at this point a suggested improvements budget; as conditions in the community change, the capital improvements Program must be altered in an attempt to reflect those changes.

As with virtually all budgeting procedures, there are usually worthy projects left over when the money runs out. This fact of life appears to be the case of all budgeting entities from the federal government down to families and individuals.

The Capital Improvements Program must attempt to identify potential sources of funds available to enable the City to provide those capital improvements.

City Council

The growth and development of the City will continue to be influenced by governmental decisions. The adoption of this plan will assist the decision-making process by providing sound land use goals and policies to act as a basis for those decisions. The City Council has the authority to adopt the plan and implement development regulations and programs. As chief policy makers, the City Council is responsible for establishing and activity participating in a continuing planning program. An important step in developing a continuing program is the maintenance of the City Plan Commission and City Planner to address the planning needs of the City.

Plan Commission

The St. Croix Falls Plan Commission will continue to take the lead role in implementing this plan. It will be the Plan Commission's responsibility to review all pertinent information that is available on a particular planning issue and to develop an objective recommendation to the City Council for final action. The Plan Commission can actively pursue the goals and policies developed within this document in order to insure and promote orderly growth and development within the City of St. Croix Falls.

Although the City has a Plan Commission, planning issues arise from time to time which require expertise and assistance from various staff such as the Planner, Engineer, Building Inspector, Attorney, ect. It is recommended that the City maintain and utilize these key people to provide their expertise and assistance to the City on these planning issues.

Process for updating the comprehensive plan every ten years.

On-going evaluation and monitoring is important to maintain the integrity of the Comprehensive Plan. The needs of the community today may not match the needs of the community 10 or 20 years from now. Therefore, the Plan Commission will need to monitor the progress of the plan implementation. Revisions or amendments to the plan can be addressed at any time by following the procedures for adopting a comprehensive plan under Wisconsin Statutes and the public participation procedures. It is recommended that the Comprehensive Plan be reviewed yearly. A potentially large update may be needed after reviewing 2010 census data. The state statute requires updates no less than every 10 years.

Actions Related to the Plan

The following steps should be taken to implement the planning process:

Plan Commission

1. Adopt the City of St. Croix Falls Comprehensive Plan and recommend to the City Council that the plan be accepted as the official statement of public policy on matters relating to the future development of the City.
2. Recommend to the Council means of developing the policies and carrying out the proposals and recommendations of the Plan, including adoption of the proposed ordinances, the maintenance of the capital improvements program, and the fostering of a continuing planning program.

City Council

1. Review and adopt the St. Croix Falls Comprehensive Plan and use it as a statement of public policy relative to community development problems and decisions.
2. Review, adopt, and provide for the administration and enforcement of the development ordinances.
3. Establish and actively sponsor a continuing planning process.
4. Maintain, administer, and update the capital improvements program.
5. Monitor and evaluate the development/success of recommended activities.

Conclusion

This planning document, when adopted and implemented, will serve to guide City officials in the decision-making process. Demands for public services and increased pressures for development of marginal lands will continue. Without development controls and an active review process, the City will not be able to effectively meet these demands from both an economically and environmentally sound standpoint. This could result in various problems for the local residents, such as land use and traffic problems, higher taxes, decreases in services, declining property values, etc. Officials in St. Croix Falls have recognized these problems and have taken steps to address these issues in order to provide for the orderly growth and development. The preparation and implementation of the St. Croix Falls Comprehensive Plan is one step the City has taken to achieve that overall goal.