

City of Sarcoxie Comprehensive Plan – 2008

Approved by City Council on 7/15/08 except “streets” component.

Critically Important Groups

In order to ensure a thriving community, three groups have to work closely together - The City Government, the Chamber of Commerce, and the School District. Strategic plans or actions attempted without the inclusion of all of these groups is at best unnecessarily difficult and at worst doomed to fail. The leadership of each of these groups is made up of local citizens or business owners who have a vested interest in the success of our community.

Joint City / Chamber Task Force

The city sees immediate benefit in the creation of a joint City / Chamber Task Force that is dedicated to focusing on items / issues that directly benefit the city. This Task Force should be a relatively small group of motivated community volunteers / leaders empowered to represent City Government and Chamber Interests. This Task Force would be jointly chaired by a designated a city official and Chamber member, empowered to spin off focused subcommittees as they deem necessary, and have direct access to city and chamber officials and resources. It is recommended that the chamber have up to 3 seats (including a co-chairperson), the school district have at least 1 seat, and the city have up to 3 seats (including a co-chairperson).

Future Land Use

Voluntary Annexation – A top priority for the city with the goal of increasing sales tax revenue to improve city services and to be “a better partner with the Chamber” in promoting and improving the city. The city is looking at three phases of voluntary annexation involving street right of ways :

- Phase 1. Efforts are underway to acquire “right of way” annexation of 37 Highway to Newton Road, and business loop 44 East to the overpass, and West to County Road 60.
- Phase 2. New ball complex, City Lagoon system, and ensure that 14th Street to Bridgeview and Bridgeview to County Road 40 are in city limits.
- Phase 3. Apple Road to County Road 60 and County Road 60 to Business Loop 44.

After securing right of way annexation, the intent is that businesses and residents will see value in voluntarily annexing into the city. The city will work with MGE to encourage them to run natural gas lines along the annexed right of ways to further encourage voluntary annexation. Other immediate potential benefits to interested property owners will be speed zone enforcement, police protection, fire protection, etc.

Deed Restrictions – recognized as a potentially useful tool for the city – especially after annexation is fully resolved and requests for subdivisions become an issue. This will require the advice of the City Attorney to pursue.

Zoning – Although recognized as a potentially useful tool for the city, it is currently a low priority with no action planned at this time. Future consideration of zoning should be as minimally invasive as possible (i.e. broad designations as general residential, commercial, retail, etc). Undertaking zoning is a labor intensive effort with respect to citizen volunteers to fully comply with strict state laws on zoning implementation and enforcement.

Downtown Revitalization

Floodplain Status – A top priority for the city and chamber. Current information indicates that grants and financial investments in capital improvements on the square will be hampered by the current flood status and anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that the current floodplain status is different from actual conditions. With that in mind, we need to determine the possibility of changing or modifying our floodplain status.

Community Development Block Grants – Another top priority. Determine eligibility for the down town district to take advantage of CDBG. Possibilities include 50/50 grants for façade development, or low interest loans, and outright assistance for public buildings and places.

Small Steady Improvements to the Downtown District – Continue with small steady improvements that do not require significant capital investments. Doing things like improving the attraction of downtown events (i.e. Chief Sarcoux Days, city wide garage sales, and the Christmas event), doing affordable improvements to facades, etc. can provide significant improvements to the draw of the city without spending “big bucks”.

Gateways to the City (Signage) – The potential for this will be determined by the Task Force.

Neighborhood Stabilization

This is considered a high priority. Visible deterioration of the community is one of the most frequent complaints regarding the city. The city has identified two groups of property owners that can be assisted to improve neighborhood stabilization. One group includes people with the desire to improve properties but lack resources and those with no desire to maintain properties to a very minimum level. To affect this, the city is working on two different approaches to improve neighborhood stabilization.

Community Development Block Grants – To assist with improving neighborhoods, the Department of Economic Development has been contacted to gain access to Community Development Block Grants. To that end:

- The city is developing contacts and obtaining information on how to qualify and apply for CDB grants.
- Divide the city into “blocks” that can be easily surveyed to establish “levels of conditions”. Gay Lynne Dawson has volunteered to assist with establishing the blocks.
- Try to promote civic groups to assist with upgrading neighborhoods (i.e. League of Churches) using CDBG funds where possible.

Nuisance Abatement & Code Enforcement – The city is undertaking a thorough review of city nuisance rules including abandoned hazardous buildings. The goal is to ensure enforceable ordinances that a very reasonable and minimally invasive standards of property maintenance. To that end, the city has budgeted funds in the 2008-2009 fiscal year to ensure the means of enforcing these rules.

- Continuing to focus on weed enforcement and other nuisance abatement efforts.
- Registration of dangerous vacant buildings passed. Waiting to pursue this until CDBG grant on demolition of dangerous residential buildings is approved.

Infrastructure

Water – The city’s current water supply and system will be maintained at current levels with an eye towards ensuring that funds are available to adequately maintain upkeep (i.e. funds to paint and maintain the towers).

Wastewater – Improving the city’s wastewater system is considered a top priority. Current infrastructure is aging and deteriorating at rate that is not correctible with current funding. Current plans include:

1. Plan to maintain the current lagoon system for a minimum of 10 more years to allow resources to be prioritized to current infrastructure.
2. Improve existing infrastructure and resolve Inflow and Infiltration issues. Fees will be increased as required to accomplish this.
3. Expand the city’s sewer system West and North to ensure relocating businesses stay within city limits and to allow pursuit of a potential housing subdivision.

Streets – The streets have a dedicated fund which currently allows approximately \$30,000 per year in resurfacing projects. To that end, the city has to choose between two distinct road maintenance plans:

1. Divide city up into 7 zones to and try repave / replace paving in 1 zone per year until completed. In the 8th year begin a seal coat program.
2. Target specific streets as collector streets that will have a priority treatment of top condition, good sidewalks, curbing, and priority snow / ice removal.
 - Around the square 5th St. 9th or 11th St.
 - 17 St. Joplin St. Center St.

Regardless of which direction the city chooses to take, the following activities will also be in affect:

- Cold fill patching of potholes and replacement of manhole covers are fairly inexpensive fixes that go a long way in residential satisfaction.
- The city will include Minor St. between 16th street and 37 Highway in the priority snow and ice removal to allow easier access to the nursing home and the city’s sole medical facility.
- The city will pursue MoDot reimbursement grants for paving projects on an annual basis.

Economic Enterprise Zone

An Economic Enterprise Zone has the potential to bring manufacturing companies and jobs to the Sarcoxie area. It is a good idea with no apparent adverse impacts on the city and should be pursued. The city recognizes that an EE zone can have a long term benefit to the city and medium to long term benefits to residents. The city can best assist in attracting businesses to the area by supporting an EE zone and pursue activities that will cause the area to be more readily attractive to future business owners.

OTHER CITY ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Park Board Activities - The Sarcoxie Park Board is currently working on a major park addition of a four ball field sports complex. Having already purchased the land they are currently coordinating with the School District and Sarcoxie Youth Sports representatives to create a ball complex that will be a benefit to the local community. Primary funding for this project will be through grants, donations and fundraising activities. The sales tax that funds most park activities is up for renewal in 2010. Efforts are underway to place its renewal before voters in November of 2008.

Library Development – The Sarcoxie Public Library is currently going through major technological renovations with the assistance of state grant funds. The library has the potential to offer significant resources for any future plans. Grant funds are available to provide such services as video conferencing, GED, skills development, and the creation of resources for target groups. The library will be submitted as a potential recipient of CDBG funds to make major repairs to the building it is located in.

Stormwater System – The city recognizes stormwater drainage issues during periods of heavy rainfall. Limited resources require that significant improvements be made to the wastewater system and the water system be maintained before significant expenditures can be directed towards stormwater projects.

Fire Protection – The city supports working with the Rural Fire District to develop a taxable fire district. Until a taxable district is achieved, the city will strive to improve the quality of fire and medical responses to the best of its ability.

Police Protection – Through funding from sales tax revenue, the city's goal is to develop 24 / 7 police protection.

Environmentally Friendly Policies – The City fully supports measures that are environmentally friendly - specifically alternative energy sources and efforts at conservation and recycling.