

Implementation

With the completion of a new Comprehensive Plan, the City of Carbondale has goals and recommendations for the ongoing development, redevelopment, and enhancement of the community over the next 20 years. However, now comes the most challenging and important step in the planning process—implementing the plan by turning the community's aspirations into reality. This will take the efforts and commitment of the City's elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, institutions, other levels of government, and other organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the plan and its particular direction and strategies. It will also require the City to make sound decisions, set priorities, and secure necessary resources to implement the action strategies set forth in this plan.

6.1 Introduction

Plans are never intended to simply exist as a binder that is forever sitting on the shelf. These are collaborative works that involve many different contributors and include directions for many aspects of City development. A great many people put time and effort into chronicling 'the next step' for the City of Carbondale and the addition of this Implementation Chapter is meant to recognize those efforts by providing a clear vision for implementation. Using this Plan on a frequent basis for planning, regulatory, and capital decisions will lead to its commonplace acceptance and reference. This is the goal of this chapter and moreover, this document as a whole.

The Comprehensive Plan should be a "living document," that is, a document that is frequently referred to for guidance in community decision-making. Its assumptions, goals, policies and action strategies must also be revisited periodically to ensure that it is providing clear and reliable direction on a range of matters, including land development issues and public investments in infrastructure and services.

Implementation is not just about a list of action items. It is a challenging process that will require the commitment of the City's elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, major institutions, other levels of government, and other organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the plan and its particular direction and strategies. Equally important are formal procedures for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of successes achieved, difficulties encountered, new opportunities, and challenges that have emerged. This is in addition to any other change in circumstances, which may require rethinking of Plan priorities.

This chapter is divided into four sections:

- Plan implementation methods
- Plan administration
- Action plan
- Plan amendment process

6.2 Purpose

The Comprehensive Plan provides recommendations to assist in decision-making for future development and enhancement projects in Carbondale. This final chapter breathes life into the rest of the plan by setting out a practical, prioritized and sequenced implementation program. The key objective of this chapter is to integrate the different elements of the plan in such a way as to provide a clear path for sound decisions. This chapter is also intended to establish accountability for plan implementation and provide guidance on essential processes to maintain its relevance to the City and its citizens.

6.3 Plan Implementation Methods

Simply setting out an implementation framework in this chapter is not enough to ensure that the action items of this plan will be carried out and the community's vision and goals ultimately achieved. The recommendations and action priorities in this plan should be consulted frequently and should be widely used by decision-makers as a basis for judgments regarding:

- The timing and availability of infrastructure improvements.
- Proposed development and redevelopment applications.
- City-initiated and landowner-requested annexations.
- Zone change requests and other zoning-related actions.
- Expansion of public facilities, services and programs.
- Annual capital budgeting.
- Potential redrafting and amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance and related code elements.
- Intergovernmental (including inter-City, and City/County) coordination and agreements.
- Operations, capital improvements, and programming related to individual City departments.

There are six general methods for plan implementation:

1. policy-based decisions;
2. land development regulations and engineering standards;
3. community investment programming;
4. coordination and partnerships;
5. special projects, programs, and initiatives; and
6. specific plans and studies.

POLICY-BASED DECISIONS

Land use and development decisions should be made based on the recommendations that are set out in this Comprehensive Plan. In some measure, the adoption of new or amended land development regulations (e.g., zoning, subdivision, landscaping, sign controls, etc.) will establish a specific framework for evaluating private development proposals against the City's articulated policies. However,

decisions regarding annexation, infrastructure investment, Future Land Use map amendments, and right-of-way acquisitions are generally left to the broad discretion of the City Council. This plan provides the common threads that should connect those decisions.

LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AND ENGINEERING STANDARDS

Land development regulations and engineering standards are fundamentals for plan implementation. It is plain—but often underappreciated—that private investment decisions account for the vast majority of any City’s physical form. Consequently, zoning and subdivision regulations and associated development criteria and technical engineering standards are the basic keys to ensuring that the form, character and quality of development reflect the City’s planning objectives. These ordinances should reflect the community’s desire for quality development outcomes while recognizing economic factors. They should not delay or interfere unnecessarily with appropriate new development or redevelopment that is consistent with plan goals and policies.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAMMING

A community investment program, or “CIP,” is a multi-year plan (typically five years) that identifies budgeted capital projects, including street infrastructure; water, wastewater and drainage facilities; open space, trails and recreation facility construction and upgrades; construction of public buildings; and purchase of major equipment. Identifying and budgeting for major capital improvements will be essential to implementing this plan. Decisions regarding the prioritization of proposed capital improvements should take into account the recommendations of this plan.

SPECIFIC PLANS AND STUDIES

There are a number of areas where additional planning work is recommended, at a “finer grain” level of detail than is appropriate in a Comprehensive Plan. As such, some parts of this plan will be implemented only after some additional planning or special study.

SPECIAL PROJECTS, PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Special projects or initiatives are the last broad category of implementation measures. These may include initiating or adjusting City programs; entering into interlocal agreements; expanding citizen participation programs; providing training; and other types of special projects.

6.4 Plan Administration

During the development of the plan, representatives of government, business, neighborhoods, civic groups, and others came together to participate in the planning process. These community leaders, and new ones to emerge over the horizon of this plan, must maintain their commitment to the ongoing implementation of the plan’s recommendations—and to the periodic updating of the plan to adapt to changing conditions or unforeseen events.

EDUCATION

Comprehensive Plans are relatively general in nature, but they are still complex documents that account for interrelationships among various choices. As such, educating decision-makers and administrators about plan implementation is an important first step after plan adoption. As the principal groups that will implement the plan, the City Council, Planning Commission, and City department heads should all be “on the same page” with regard to priorities, responsibilities and interpretations.

Consequently, an education initiative should be undertaken immediately after plan adoption, which should include:

- A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the City Council, Planning Commission (and other advisory bodies), and individual staff members.
- A thorough overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on the parts of the plan that relate to each individual group.
- Implementation tasking and priority setting, which should lead to each group establishing a one-year and three-year implementation agenda.
- An in-depth question and answer session, with support from planning personnel, the City Manager, and other key staff.

INTEGRATING THE PLAN INTO DAILY OPERATIONS

Each department, staff person, board, commission, and committee of the City has an obligation to use this plan in guiding their decisions and priorities. As such, the plan has been designed to be user-friendly with the intent that it can be used on a daily basis to guide the overall growth and economic development of the community. The plan is intended to guide staff in their efforts to manage their individual departments, annual work programs, and capital improvement projects. To ensure cross-fertilization throughout all municipal departments, the overall community vision and the recommendations articulated in each element of the plan should be referenced in other related studies and projects that are developed by the City. Components of the plan, including the Future Land Use Plan and Thoroughfare Plan must be used during the development review process, as well as during any decision-making related to investments in community infrastructure and the provision of municipal services.

While it is critical that the plan be highly visible within the City to ensure that it is considered in all municipal functions and operations, it must also be accessible to, and used by, the private sector as it makes investment decisions in the community.

ROLE DEFINITION

As the community’s elected officials, the City Council will assume the lead role in implementation of this plan. The key responsibilities of the City Council are to decide and establish priorities, set timeframes by which each action will be initiated and completed, and determine the budget to be made available for implementation efforts. In conjunction with the City Manager, the City Council must also ensure effective coordination among the various groups that are responsible for carrying

out the plan's recommendations.

The City Council may take the lead in the following general areas:

- Acting as a “champion” of the plan.
- Adopting and amending the plan by Ordinance, after recommendation by the Planning Commission.
- Adopting new or amended land development regulations to implement the plan.
- Approving interlocal agreements that implement the plan.
- Establishing the overall action priorities and timeframes by which each action item of the plan will be initiated and completed.
- Considering and approving the funding commitments that will be required.
- Offering final approval of projects and activities and the associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the plan and its policies.
- Providing policy direction to the Planning Commission, other appointed City boards and commissions, and City staff.

The Planning Commission may take the lead in the following general areas:

- The Commission should consider the appointment of Committees within the Commission with the express purpose of ensuring that programs and activities are carried out to implement the plan.
- Hosting the education initiative described above with the assistance of the Planning staff.
- Periodically obtaining public input to keep the plan up-to-date, using a variety of community outreach and stakeholder involvement methods.
- Ensuring that recommendations forwarded to the City Council are reflective of the Plan's goals and recommendations. This relates particularly to decisions involving development review and approval, zoning requests, ordinance amendments, and potential annexations.
- Making recommendations to the City Council regarding plan updates and plan amendments.

City Staff may take the lead in the following general areas:

- Managing day-to-day implementation of the Plan, including ongoing coordination through an interdepartmental plan implementation committee.
- Supporting and carrying out community investment planning efforts.
- Managing the drafting of new or amended land development regulations.
- Enforcing code standards in existing neighborhoods.
- Conducting studies and developing additional plans (including management of consultant efforts, as necessary).
- Reviewing applications for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan as required by the City's land

The vision and goals in a comprehensive plan are attained through a multitude of specific actions. Many of the action initiatives highlighted in this section cut across—and are supported by—multiple chapters within the plan.

Table 6.1
Priority Action Agenda

Action Type	Implementation and Coordination Roles City of Carbondale's Coordination with Public and Private Partners	Funding Sources				
		City Budget	CIP Budget	Other Govts	Grants	Private/Other
Zoning and subdivision ordinance revisions	Community Representatives (i.e., developers, design professionals, neighborhood associations, etc.), Professional consulting firm	✓			✓	
Maintain and ensure neighborhood integrity	Housing and Neighborhood Action Group, Neighborhood Associations, Southern Illinois University (SIU), Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Promote economic development	Carbondale Business Development Corporation (CBDC), Southern Illinois Research Park, Carbondale Main Street, Carbondale Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Jackson Growth Alliance, Local Investors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reinvest and rehabilitate the existing housing stock	Funding Assistance through Illinois Housing Development Authority and DCEO, Carbondale Business Development Corporation, the establishment of a not-for-profit Neighborhood Redevelopment Group	✓	✓		✓	✓
Downtown revitalization and redevelopment	Carbondale Main Street, IDOT, CBDC, Carbondale Chamber of Commerce, Memorial Hospital	✓	✓		✓	✓
Promote sustainability and green building	Utility companies and local providers, Southern Illinois University (SIU), Homebuilders Association, Various Grants and Incentive programs through the State and Federal Government.	✓	✓		✓	✓
Increase pedestrian and bicycle use	IDOT, Local Bike Enthusiasts, Local Retailers, School Districts, SIU, Federal and State Grants	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

development regulations.

- Administering collaborative programs and ensuring open channels of communication with various private, public, and non-profit implementation partners.
- Maintaining an inventory of potential plan amendments, as suggested by City staff and others, for consideration during annual and periodic plan review and update processes.

6.5 Action Plan

For progress to be achieved in any of these areas, it is essential that both long- and short-range implementation strategies be identified along with an action timeframe and an assignment of responsibilities to specific entities. **Table 6.1, Priority Action**

Agenda, includes the following elements and implementation considerations:

- **Action Type.** This relates back to the six types of implementation methods highlighted earlier in this chapter (policy focused, regulatory focused, capital focused, program/initiative focused, partnership focused, planning/study focused).
- **Implementation and Coordination Roles.** In addition to identifying which City department(s) or function(s) would likely lead a task, this portion of Table 6.1 also highlights a variety of local and regional agencies that might have a role to play in certain initiatives, perhaps through potential cost-sharing, technical assistance, direct cooperation, or simply by providing input and feedback on a matter in which they have some mutual interest. In particular, whenever potential regulatory actions or revised development standards are to be considered, participation of the development community is essential to ensure adequate consensus building.
- **Funding Sources.** This final set of columns in Table 6.1 indicates typical ways to finance plan implementation efforts. An obvious source is through the City's own annual operating budget, as well as multi-year capital budgeting which is not strictly for physical construction projects but also for funding significant studies and plans intended to lay the groundwork for long-term capital projects. An Other Governments column is included along with a Grants column because grants are often applied for and awarded through a competitive process. Also, the County or other government agencies might choose to commit funds directly to an initiative along with the City. On the other hand, grants can also come from foundations and other non-government sources. Finally, the Private/Other column underscores the potential for public/private initiatives, corporate outreach, university participation, faith-based efforts, and other community volunteer contributions. The early implementation of certain action items, while perhaps not the highest priority, may be expedited by the availability of related grant opportunities, by a State or Federal mandate, or the willingness of one or more partners to

SETTING A DIRECTION FOR ACTION

A mock task prioritization exercise was completed with members of the City Council, Planning Commission, and Plan Review Committee prior to final consideration of the proposed Comprehensive Plan. Through this informal exercise, participants ended up rating a set of initiatives that originate from various sections of the Plan involving neighborhoods and Downtown, infrastructure, economic development, and housing conditions – all of which will require particular types of tasks to achieve, as discussed in this chapter.

This type of ranking exercise, and the ensuing workshop discussion of implementation opportunities and challenges, demonstrates the value of considering Plan implementation priorities among the City's leadership. It is essential that implementation priorities be revisited annually to recognize accomplishments, highlight areas where further attention and effort is needed, and determine whether some items have moved up or down on the priority list given changing circumstances and emerging needs. One should keep in mind that the early implementation of certain items, while perhaps not the highest priority, may be expedited by the availability of related grant opportunities by a State or federal mandate or the willingness of one or more partners to pursue an initiative with the City. On the other hand, some high-priority items may prove difficult to tackle in the near term due to budget constraints, the lack of an obvious lead entity or individual to carry the initiative forward, or by the community's readiness to take on a potentially controversial new program.

pursue an initiative with the City. The vision and goals in a Comprehensive Plan are attained, over time, through a multitude of specific actions.

6.6 Plan Amendment Process

The Carbondale Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a flexible document allowing for adjustment to changing conditions over time. Shifts in political, economic, physical, technological, and social conditions, as well as other unforeseen circumstances, may influence and change the priorities and fiscal outlook of the community. As the City grows and evolves, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be as relevant. Some action statements will be found impractical or outdated while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it continues to reflect the overall goals of the community and remains relevant and resourceful over time, the plan must be revisited on a regular basis to confirm that the plan elements are still on point and the associated goals, policies and action statements are still appropriate.

Revisions to the Comprehensive Plan are two-fold, with minor plan amendments occurring at least bi-annually and more significant modifications and updates occurring every five years. Minor amendments could include revisions to certain elements of the plan as a result of the adoption of another specialized plan or interim changes to the Future Land Use Plan and/or the Thoroughfare Plan. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and anticipated growth trends; re-evaluating the goals, policies and recommendations in the plan—and formulating new ones as necessary; and adding, revising or removing action statements in the plan based on implementation progress.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The Planning Commission, with the assistance of staff, should prepare an annual progress report for presentation to the Mayor and City Council. This ensures that the Plan is consistently reviewed and that any needed modifications or clarifications are identified for the bi-annual minor plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of consistency between the plan and the City's implementation of ordinances and regulations should be an essential part of this effort.

The Annual Progress Report might include and highlight:

- Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year, including the status of implementation for each programmed task in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Obstacles or problems in the implementation of the Plan, including those encountered in administering the land use and transportation aspects, as well as any other recommendations of the Plan.
- Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to individual maps or text changes.
- Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the coming year, including recommendation of projects to be included in the City's CIP, other projects to be funded, and coordination with public and private implementation partners.

BI-ANNUAL AMENDMENT PROCESS

Plan amendments should occur on at least a bi-annual basis, allowing for proposed changes to be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect may be understood. When considering a plan amendment, the City should ensure the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and recommendations set forth in the plan. Careful consideration should also be given to guard against site specific plan changes that could negatively impact adjacent areas and uses or detract from the overall character of the area. Factors that should be considered in deciding on a proposed plan amendment include:

- Consistency with the goals and recommendations in the plan.
- Adherence with the Future Land Use and/or Thoroughfare Plans.
- Compatibility with the surrounding area.
- Impacts on infrastructure provision including water, wastewater, drainage, and the transportation network.
- Impact on the City's ability to provide, fund, and maintain services.
- Impact on environmentally sensitive and natural areas.
- Whether the proposed amendment contributes to the overall direction and character of the community as captured in the Plan vision and goals.

FIVE-YEAR UPDATE / EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT

An evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by City staff with input from various City departments, the Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. The report process involves evaluating the existing plan and assessing how successful it has been in achieving the community's goals. The purpose of the report is to identify the successes and shortcomings of the plan, look at what has changed over the last five years, and make recommendations on how the plan should be modified in light of those changes.

The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators. It should also evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unmet goals and recommendations. The evaluation report and process should result in an amended Comprehensive Plan, including identification of new or revised information that may lead to updated goals, and/or action recommendations.

More specifically, the report should identify and evaluate the following:

1. Summary of major actions and interim plan amendments undertaken over the last five years.
2. Major issues in the community and how these issues have changed over time.
3. Changes in the assumptions, trends and base studies data, including the following:
 - The rate at which growth and development is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the plan.
 - Shifts in demographics and other growth trends.
 - The area of land that is designated and zoned for urban development and

its capacity to meet projected demands and needs.

- City-wide attitudes and whether apparent shifts, if significant, necessitate amendments to the stated goals or strategies of the plan.
 - Other changes in political, social, economic, technological, or environmental conditions that indicate a need for plan amendments.
4. Ability of the plan to continue to support progress toward achieving the community's goals. The following should be evaluated and revised as needed:
- Individual statements or sections of the Plan must be reviewed and rewritten, as necessary, to ensure that the Plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
 - Conflicts between goals that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the Plan must be pointed out and resolved.
 - The action agenda must be reviewed and major accomplishments highlighted. Those not completed by the specified timeframe should be re evaluated to ensure their continued relevance and/or to revise them appropriately.
 - As conditions change, the timeframes for implementing the individual actions of the Plan should be re-evaluated where necessary. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances while others may become less important to achieving the goals and development objectives of the community.
 - Based upon organizational, programmatic and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered, as needed, to ensure timely accomplishment of the plan's recommended actions.
 - Changes in laws, procedures and missions may impact the ability of the community to achieve its goals. The Plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.
 - As the City continues to grow, it may be necessary to expand the Future Land Use Plan to identify land uses in areas not initially covered by the study area included in the original plan. The City may or may not choose to expand the zoning jurisdiction as the City expands. An amendment to the Future Land Use Plan would at least provide the framework for such an action if the City so chooses.

ONGOING COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

All review and updates processes related to the Comprehensive Plan should emphasize and incorporate ongoing public input. The annual and continual plan evaluation and reporting process should also incorporate specific performance measures and quantitative indicators that can be compiled and communicated both internally and to elected officials and citizens in a "report card" fashion. Examples might include:

- Acres of new development (plus number of residential units and square footage of commercial and industrial space) approved and constructed in conformance with this plan and related City codes. This measurement should also include the number of affordable residential units.

- Various measures of service capacity (gallons, kilowatts, acre-feet, etc.) added to the City's major utility systems as indicated in this plan and associated utility master plans—and the millions of dollars allocated to fund the necessary capital projects.
- Acres of open space and miles of trail developed or improved in accordance with this plan and related bikeways plan.
- Indicators of City efforts to ensure neighborhood integrity as emphasized in this plan (e.g., code enforcement activity, number of homes receiving improvements and weatherization, number of historic designations made for homes/neighborhoods, etc.).
- Miles of new bike routes and sidewalks added to the City's transportation system to provide alternative mobility options as recommended in this plan.
- New businesses and associated employment added to the local job market through the economic development initiatives and priorities identified in this plan.
- Indicators of the benefits of redeveloped sites and structures (appraised value, increased property and/or sales tax revenue, new residential units, and retail and office spaces in urban mixed-use settings, etc.) as envisioned through this plan.
- The estimated dollar value of operating cost savings from reduced energy and water use, heating/cooling, etc., from green building practices and related conservation efforts in new and existing City facilities, as suggested in this plan.
- The numbers of residents and other stakeholders engaged through City-sponsored education and outreach events related to Comprehensive Plan implementation and periodic review and updating, as outlined in this chapter.