



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Economic Sustainability Steering Committee

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MEETING SYNOPSIS

January 30, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Hannah Center, Room 211

819 Abbot Road

Present: Lee Reimann, Laura Goddeeris, Susan Chalgian, Peter Dewan, Charlie Hasemann, Jeff Kusler, William Mansfield, Stephen Troost, Ray Vlasin, Ray Walsh, Jeremy Wittrock

Staff Members: Lori Mullins, Heather Pope, Tim Schmitt

Others: None

Steering Committee Responses to the November Meeting Exercise

QUESTION 1

What are three characteristics that come to mind when thinking about a vital downtown commercial district? The top responses for question 1 were generally:

A strong downtown has

- Diversity of people, shops, housing, etc.
- Both pedestrian and vehicular access
- Vibrant environment, activities, and spaces

The following goals, objectives and actions were developed from language in the current plan and continue to be relative based on the Steering Committees general responses to questions 1.

Objective 2-1: Increase the attraction and vitality of the downtown.

Action 2-1.1: Provide incentives **public, TIF, Brownfield**, to support commercial adaptive reuse or redevelopment of properties in the core downtown specifically where new sewer and water infrastructure has been constructed.

- **Redevelopment of City Hall site.**
- **Expand the downtown one block to the north of Albert Ave.**
- **Senior Housing for 55 and older to help balance the downtown retail.**
- **Consider the redevelopment of the Albert Ave. Parking Lot.**

Action 2-1.2: Create active streets through the promotion of art, plazas and outdoor seating in the core downtown.

Action 2-1.3: Continue to improve the City’s “Wayfinding” system which includes uniform signage with clear directional information for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Action 2-1.4: Encourage alternative parking options to reduce infrastructure needed and vehicle use.

- Conduct and assessment on surface parking lots to determine best use (parks, open space).

Action 2-1.5: Continue to collaborate with downtown property owners to recruit a broader diversity of retail including, but not limited to urban grocery, soft goods, and higher quality restaurants.

- Look at more intentional businesses to mix with housing (i.e. grocer, hardware store)

Action 2-1.6: Implement design guidelines for the downtown that include enhancements to both the public and private portions of the streetscape and create additional open/greenspace.

Action 2-1.7: Work with the Capital Area Transit Authority and MDOT to maintain downtown access, greenspace, and median alignment during design of redevelopment projects and Bus Rapid Transit design and development.

QUESTION 2

What are three characteristics that come to mind when thinking about a vital downtown commercial district? The top responses for question 2 were generally:

A strong commercial area has/is

- Strong vehicular access
- Well designed
- Meets the needs to the neighborhood market
- Diversity, quality, and compatible

The following goals, objectives and actions were developed from language in the current plan and continue to be relative based on the Steering Committees general responses to questions 2.

Objective 2-3: Support the development of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Service Districts to provide basic retail services for the convenience of residents.

- Need a better definition for “Mixed-Use”

Action 2-3.1: Revise zoning and land use policies in a way that will balance the housing, office, technology, and commercial needs to the City.

Action 2-3.2: Institute a minimum building height in commercial districts to prevent strip center development and encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial areas to include mixed-use, multiple-story buildings.

- Residential and commercial mixed-use is not two floors of residential above a business. Better definition needed. (Parking/Residential, Office/Residential, Commercial/Residential)

Objective 2-4: Encourage continued growth where appropriate.

- Redevelopment at the gateway’s into East Lansing.

Action 2-4.1: Revise land use policies for the area along Lake Lansing Road to improve upon existing land uses patterns.

Action 2-4.2: Market the opportunities for the redevelopment and revitalization of underutilized commercial properties.

- Redevelopment readiness community
- Add under this section: Abbot/Burcham, Coolidge/Coleman, Trowbridge
- Connect mix-use and transportation

Action 2-4.3: Promote the redevelopment of the commercial properties at the intersection of Harrison and Michigan Avenues into a new and more efficient neighborhood commercial area.

Action 2-4.4: Promote collaboration with the City of Lansing to improve properties along West Michigan Avenue with innovative redevelopment.

- **Michigan Ave. Corridor Plan**

Action 2-4.5: Provide economic incentives, **TIF, Community Reinvestment, and Brownfield**, to support the implementation of the East Village Master Plan.

QUESTION 3

What are three key things to making East Lansing more attractive to talented, professional individuals? The top responses for question 3 were generally:

To Attract Talent, East Lansing Needs:

- Jobs
- Culture, arts, music, and fun!
- Quality, affordable and diverse housing
- Promote existing talent and services

The following goals, objectives and actions were developed from language in the current plan and continue to be relevant based on the Steering Committees general responses to questions 3.

Objective 2-5: Promote the development and growth of the knowledge-based economy.

Action 2-5.1: Create a program to retain Technology Innovation Center (TIC) graduates within the City limits.

Action 2-5.2: Partner with Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) to provide business support services ~~for management of the TIC~~ **throughout the City.**

Action: 2-5.3: Support the University’s efforts to commercialize technology.

- **Retain retirees, recent graduates from the University, FRIB employees.**

There are some items that the Steering Committees and public raised that need to be discussed further, to allow Staff the background to draft effective objectives and actions. We do not want the Steering Committees to get into the specifics of “wordsmithing” the objectives and actions, Staff will work on that after the Steering Committees have talked further and will bring language back to address outstanding items. These include:

To Attract Talent, East Lansing Needs:

- Culture, arts, music, and fun!
- Promote existing talent and services
- **Accessibility to places and entertainment**

A Strong commercial area has/is

- Well designed
- Meets the needs of the neighborhood market

Additionally, there were some items from the Steering Committee’s discussion that are being discussed with other Steering Committees to work on more directly, as they are more relevant to their charges as a Steering Committee. They are:

To Attract Talent, East Lansing Needs:

- Quality, affordable and diverse housing (Housing and Human Dignity Committees)

A strong commercial area has/is

- Strong Vehicular access (Transportation Committee)
- Well designed (Urban Form Committee)

Miscellaneous

Staff to provide the East Village Plan and information on CATA Design Charrettes.