

City of Sarcoxie's Comprehensive Plan Action Plans 2010-2012

Approved by the City Council on 8/14/2010

Overview

The city's official comprehensive plan was approved in 2008. It quickly became apparent though that the actual document was more of a reference document and provided very broad generalities as opposed to clear action plans on how to reach goals outlined in the plan. To better work in the spirit of the official plan, the council and task force approved a supplemental document that outlined specific short and medium term action plans and policies that furthered the spirit of the comprehensive plan.

Using the 2008-2010 supplemental document as a guide, we have learned and done much. While accomplishing many items, we also had several "dead ends" due to changing federal and state programs and a better understanding of same. Detailed below are the action plans and policies for the 2010-2012 time frame that take into account what has been accomplished to date, better understandings of the issues before us, and our available resources.

Critically Important Groups

The City continues to view the Chamber of Commerce and the School District as critically important groups. Between the City, Chamber, and School District, the success of any of these organizations provides benefits to the others. Without a spirit of cooperation between these and all other civic groups, progress on improving our city will always be difficult at best.

Task Force

The City continues to believe in the benefit of an active Task Force but recognizes that the individual members are stretched thin due to their other civic activities and professional responsibilities that cause members to be unable to formally meet with any frequency. Accepting these real world restrictions but pushing to keep progressing requires expanding the pool of volunteers relied upon in the city.

POLICY The Mayor reserves the legal authority, subject to council approval, to appoint special boards, committees, and work groups recruited from the pool of available volunteers in and around the city in order to meet the action plans and goals of this document.

AP01. Initial input and feedback from the task force on the below listed action plans by 9/10.

It is vitally important that elected officials be readily available to Task Force, and other local civic groups, as requested for review and updates on progress towards the action plans in this document and any other aspect of the City's operation.

Future Land Use

Growth through Annexation – The City will continue a policy of growth through annexation. In 2010, the city completed phase 1 annexation goals including Highway rights of way for 37 Highway to Newton County Road, Business loop 44 East to the overpass, and West to County Road 60. In addition, three businesses also voluntarily annexed from this new area with 2 being current sales tax generators.

AP02. Pursue annexation through phases:

- Phase 2 is UNDERWAY. This includes 14th Street from Business Loop 44 to Bridgeview, Bridgeview to County Road 40, County Road 40 from Bridgeview to Business Loop 44, and the city owned ball complex and waste treatment facility to be completed by 2/11.
- Phase 3. Seek voluntary annexation of Autumn Acres Mobile Home Park. This would provide a significant increase in population to assist with increasing motor fuel tax revenue, assist in law enforcement efforts, etc. This will be reviewed and acted on upon completion of phase 2.
- Phase 4. Road rights of way on Apple Road to County Road 60 and County Road 60 to Business Loop 44. To be reviewed 7/11.

NEW POLICY The City will have a policy of annexation versus “out of town” fees for new water service outside of city limits. This would require new services outside of city limits to sign an agreement to incorporate in to the city limits if / when the city limits reach that property as part of the consideration for receiving water and / or sewer service from the city.

Deed Restrictions – No activity currently planned on deed restrictions.

Zoning – No activity currently planned on zoning without EEZ Board and Task Force support and approval. The Mayor does not believe it continues to have the negative perception it once held.

Downtown Revitalization

Floodplain Status – A continued top priority for the city is to define true flood risks within the city and ensure that NFIP Flood Maps are accurate. Local consensus is that that current flood maps overstate both risk and potential severity and stifles economic development downtown.

AP03. The City will take the following steps on our floodplain status:

- Obtain the new SEMA maps by 11/10.
- Publicly review the maps with the aid of an engineering consultant and determine if the circumstantial report is appropriate by 12/10.
- Public review of circumstantial evidence report and determine merits of requesting revisions by 6/11.
- Make application for mapping revision based on new maps, circumstantial evidence, and engineering consultant recommendations by 08/11.

Grants for Downtown Revitalization – Hold and review when flood status is resolved.

Historic District – While a state or federal historic district is out of the question with the current flood status, the City recommends:

- AP04. Appoint a local group of volunteers to establish a LOCAL Historic District Board. This offers benefits in ensuring that historic aspects of participating properties are maintained. In addition, assuming eventual success in getting flood zone relief, the local historic district can be more readily upgraded to a state or federal district. Volunteers to be requested immediately after approval of this plan.
- Resource: Ann Black is willing to assist and has provided preliminary information.

- AP05. The City to reassign up to 6 hours per week of compensated time for Library Director Jeannine Wormington to assist with initial historical research and collection of data to establish the district effective immediately after approval of this plan.

Small Steady Improvements to the Downtown District – Continue with small steady improvements that do not require significant capital investments.

POLICY Take advantage of any grant funds that become available under our current flood status.

POLICY The City will continue to fully support and encourage the growth of city events such as Chief Sarcoxie Days, Christmas event, Concert in the Park, Spring Fling, etc. The success and growth of these events helps the city gain a positive image.

Gateways to the City (Signage) – No formal activity currently planned.

Neighborhood Stabilization (NS) – This aspect of the comprehensive plan has seen a low amount of progress in the past two years due primarily to limited resources including grant programs, local funds, manpower, and civic group participation. To increase improvements in this area, the city has developed the following understandings, policies and action plans:

1. NS can be visualized by comparing a specific property to the neighborhood, or a neighborhood to the city in general. Properties or neighborhoods that fall below the standard should be considered distressed. Efforts and resources should be focused first at the individual properties and then at the neighborhood level to bring improvements.
2. Distressed properties can be recognized through such things as high turnover of residency, lengthy time periods that properties are for sale either while vacant or occupied, and the general condition and upkeep of the properties such as yard, nuisances, general building condition, types of activity occurring at a residence (i.e. frequent criminal activity, disturbances, dog and animal issues, etc.)
3. Distressed Properties can be broken down in to two distinct groups of owners or tenants. It is important to note these differences and address the needs of both groups accordingly:
 - o Owners or tenants with a desire to improve properties but lack resources.
 - o Owners or tenants that lack the desire to maintain properties to a standard consistent with the neighborhood they reside in.

POLICY Increase enforcement activities and review existing and new laws that impact quality of life and public safety in neighborhoods including:

AP06. The City is currently considering creating different standards (i.e. residential / commercial, agricultural, etc.) of maintaining properties in the city with respect to mowing and grass height. The expected completion is 9/10.

AP07. The City is currently considering adding additional criteria for nuisances, with respect to, property maintenance. The expected completion is 8/10.

AP08. The City is in the midst of rewriting the City Code on Animals, with an emphasis on dogs. The expected completion is 10/10.

AP09. The City is planning to begin consideration of developing laws for mandatory safety inspections of rental properties and to begin dangerous buildings enforcement up to and including condemnation proceedings and orders of vacating. The expected completion of these reviews is 3/11.

AP10. Begin enforcement of registration of abandoned dangerous buildings by 11/11.

- AP11. Develop a resource office by 9/11. The City has initiated working with a regional group that may be able to fund a local office. Examples of benefit include weatherization projects, utility bill assistance, etc. This office would be responsible for:
- Identifying available resources at the regional, state, and federal level.
 - Inform qualifying groups and assist with the application process.
 - Coordinate the creation of volunteer groups to assist with property projects.
- AP12. The City will complete the CDBG funded demolition project by 12/10 with the goal of cleaning up 20 properties.

Infrastructure

Resource: The City has signed an agreement with McLiney and Company for assistance with future bond issues.

Water – While the City appears to have adequate water supply for current and future growth, obvious shortfalls in the distribution system have been realized that need to be addressed. The City was forced to review and significantly increase water rates in 2009. The proceeds from this increase are earmarked as budgeted line items to ensure they are responsibly used and tracked.

- AP13. The City will strive to achieve 70% efficiency on water billed versus pumped by 12/11. Water pumped but not billed includes leaks, water taken from fire hydrants, pools and parks, and usage in city government buildings. Prior to 2008 it was roughly 40% and is now currently at 56%. To improve this, we have to continue leak proofing the distribution system and ensure that meters accurately track water usage at individual properties.
- AP14. The City has applied for a grant to evaluate the city's public drinking water as well as explore the cost to expand water service to the east. Grant status should be determined by 8/10.
- AP15. The City believes it is vitally important to the economic growth of the city, to expand water service to the East along Business Loop 44. If the grant application is unsuccessful, the city has budgeted funds to conduct the expansion study. Once the City has obtained the results of the study and has an estimated cost, funding options will be explored with a goal to get the project completed by 2013.
- Establish goal of fully expanding water service west and south by 2017 or sooner based on business growth opportunities.
- AP16. The City's Engineering firm has provided new water maps to the city and reviews are currently being done to ensure that the city's water system is accurately identified. Have mapping fully completed by 12/12.

POLICY Fully use the funds detailed in budgeted line items including:

- Water Tower Maintenance - \$15,000 per year
- Water line expansion - \$7,200 per year

POLICY Water rates will be reviewed annually to ensure they cover system costs.

Wastewater – Improving the city's wastewater system and reducing Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) is considered a top priority. The City was forced to review and significantly increase sewer rates in 2009. The proceeds from this rate increase are earmarked as budgeted line items to ensure they are responsibly used and tracked.

- AP17. Maintain the current lagoon system through 2018 to allow resources to be prioritized to current infrastructure improvements

AP18. The City believes it is vitally important to the economic growth of the city, to expand sewer service to the East along Business Loop 44. The City has already approved and reserved funds to have a study completed to determine the cost of this expansion. This study will be conducted during the above mentioned water service expansion study. Once the City has obtained the results of the study and has an estimated cost, funding options will be explored with a goal to get the project completed by 2013.

- Establish goal of fully expanding sewer service west and south by 2017 or sooner based on business growth opportunities.

AP19. POLICY Fully use the funds detailed in budgeted line items including:

- Manhole Risers – 5 per year
- Annual smoke test inspection
- Property owner assistance with abating I&I issues
- Camera inspection and sewer line repairs
- Recondition manholes – 10 per year
- Lift Station repairs - \$8,000 per year
- Dredging of #1 Lagoon - \$7,500 per year
- Sewer line expansion - \$10,000 per year
- Water & Sewer Savings - \$30,000 per year for major repairs, equipment replacement

AP20. Perform a City wide sewer inspection, using the newly acquired camera system, by 3/11. The City's Engineering firm has provided new sewer maps to the city and reviews are currently being done to ensure that sewer system information is accurate. The camera system will help facilitate this process.

POLICY The City has two limited funds that have been used to finance emergency sewer repairs that cause public nuisances. When used, the property owners have agreed to make payments to reimburse the City for these emergency repairs. The City will continue to offer this option as a last case scenario and with the Council's approval as funding allows.

POLICY Sewer rates will be reviewed annually to ensure they cover system costs.

Streets – The streets have a dedicated fund which currently allows approximately \$30,000 per year in resurfacing projects.

POLICY on street repairs:

- Priority 1 is to annually repair the worst streets in the city.
- Priority 2 is to make improvements to our collector streets. This category of street provides passage through the city and to such destinations as our schools, city square, etc. These streets should provide for two-way traffic, be in top condition, have our best sidewalks, curbing, and enjoy priority snow / ice removal. These streets are:
 - Around the square
 - 5th Street
 - 11th Street
 - 17 Street
 - Joplin Street
 - Center Street

POLICY The city will include Minor St. between 16th street and 37 Highway in the priority snow and ice removal to allow access to the nursing home and the city's sole medical facility.

POLICY The City will attempt to replace sections of sewer mains under new asphalt projects prior to new asphalt being laid.

AP21. The City will prepare preliminary work to renew the Street Sales Tax which is set to expire in 2012. This is a vitally important income stream.

Sidewalks and Curbing – Sidewalks and curbing can greatly improve the appearance of a neighborhood or collector street. This is especially true when replacing currently damaged or deteriorated items. The City has direct dialog with MoDOT on grants for sidewalks and curbing.

POLICY Apply for Grants, as they become available for sidewalk and curbing projects.

- o Priority 1: Center Street sidewalk and curbing, from the square to 11th street.
- o Priority 2: Collector streets with special emphasis on primary walking routes for children going to and from school.

Bridges – Of the existing bridges in the City, two are currently in poor condition and slated for potential replacement. Per County Commissioner Jim Honey, the Center Street Bridge, over Swifty, could be scheduled for replacement as soon as 2012. The Cross Street Bridge, over Swifty, could be slated for replacement around 2020.

AP22. Secure confirmation from the County Commission that the Center Street Bridge is on the 2012 replacement list. Have this confirmed by 12/10.

Storm Water System – By 2012, the City will be required to implement a storm water program per State and Federal law. In addition, the city does recognize storm water drainage issues in the city which can even impact the sewer system through inflow and infiltration.

AP23. Beginning in the 2010-11 fiscal year, the city is reserving funds from the Parks and Storm Water Sales tax for currently unidentified needs for this program. This will need to increase as sales tax revenues increase and we learn more about the requirements.

AP24. Send at least one elected official and one public works employee to storm water training to learn what will be required by 3/11.

AP25. 2010/2011 Winter project to clean up Swifty and some of the city's current stormwater ditches to make them less of an eye sore and to accommodate property owners mowing.

City Services

City Ordinances – The City's laws are posted online at sarcoxiemo.com and several chapters have been reviewed and revised. Many chapters however are still obsolete and ineffective.

AP26. The City will review at least three chapters a fiscal year with an eye towards modernizing and ensuring they are effective and relevant including those reviewed under neighborhood stabilization (above).

Police Protection – The goal of the city council is to have a competent and competitively paid department that provides 24/7 protection and encourage community involvement and interaction with our citizens.

POLICY The department is increasing its affiliation with the Jasper County Sheriff's Office to improve the working relationship and take advantage of potential benefits such as training, improved case resolution, report writing software, equipment, etc.

AP27. The City has applied for the COPS grant. If successful, this grant will cover all costs for a fourth officer for three years to gain our primary goal of 24/7 protection. We should learn the fate of the application by 12/10.

AP28. Support and drive the development of a volunteer Sentinel program. This organization will be able to assist with crowd and traffic control during events in the city and serve during emergency or disaster operations. The first Sentinels will be trained and operational by 8/10.

AP29. Develop requirements for reflective address numbering to assist police and other emergency services with locating correct addresses for emergency calls by 12/12.

Fire Protection – The City supports and enjoys a good working relationship with the Rural Fire District and has seen some improvements to the overall Volunteer Fire Department. Acknowledging the City's right to select the Fire Chief who supervises the department and its volunteers the City is taking a very active roll in developing the department beginning in 2010.

AP30. Drive the development of a department specific comprehensive plan by 12/10.

- This plan will define the typical missions of the department, what resources they currently have, and what they need to better fulfill these missions.
- Resources include equipment, vehicles, training, procedures, and personnel
- More to follow as a stand alone plan.

AP31. Have a voluntary ISO inspection for an independent review of the dept, its capabilities and compliance with laws and standards by 12/10.

POLICY The City is not opposed to being an equal partner in considering a taxable fire district.

Emergency Management – In 2009, the City replaced the defunct appointed position of Civil Defense Director with the more relevant position of Emergency Management Coordinator. This position is responsible for preparing and implementing FEMA recognized emergency plans. Written emergency plans are not only a federal and state requirement, they are vital to be prepared for the inevitable disaster that will eventually hit our city. Tornadoes, extended power losses, ice storms, floods – all are likely events that require planning and resource allocation. Part of this process includes defining resources required to respond to and recover from disasters. This also helps with seeking grant funding to obtain these resources (i.e. possible generators to maintain operation of water and sewer services).

AP32. Complete the written Emergency Plan by 12/10.

AP33. Ensure full NIMS training of elected officials and emergency services employees and appointed positions by 12/10.

AP34. Apply for at least one grant to provide continuation of vital services during power loss in 2010 and two grants in 2011.

Library – The Sarcoxie Public Library continues to go through major technological advancements 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, work force skills development, etc.

POLICY The Sarcoxie Public Library will strive to be a premiere local resource for adult education and job skills development.

AP35. The City will continue to seek grant funding to improve services offered by applying for at least two grants per year

AP36. Jeannine Wormington, the current Library Director, is retiring 8/11. To ensure a smooth transition a part time person has been hired by the City as the Director in Training who is also primarily responsible for implementing the technology upgrades.

AP37. The City began major building renovations in the winter of 2009. The project will resume in the winter of 2010. The City is also applying for grant funding that could cover up to 65% of the renovation costs. The Library can be a quality anchor for the square.

AP38. The City will continue informal and formal efforts at consolidating library information systems with the school district and become more relevant in services for our youth with the goal of fully cooperating by 4/12.

Park Board – Continues to be one of the most proactive and successful volunteer group in our community. We expect they will continue their successful efforts. Our residents overwhelmingly voted to continue support of the Park Sales Tax in 2010.

AP39. Ball Complex is underway. The Park Board is coordinating with the School District and the Youth Sports Board to design and build a modern ball facility which will be a major draw to our city and benefits our area youth. The goal is to have 2 fields operational by the 2011 season and the complex completed by the 2012 ball season.

AP40. The Ozark Regional Land Trust has requested to meet and work with the Park Board to establish a soft park centered on the cave just off the square. This cooperative partnership should be completed by 8/11.

AP41. Continue Community Building Renovations – Floor replacement and upgrading the bathrooms is budgeted for 2010. Additional work identified includes improving acoustics in the main hall and updating the kitchen by 2011.

AP42. Continue City Square and Gazebo upgrades. Current plan is to establish a watering system on the square by 12/10 and continue annual enhancements to the Christmas decorations.

AP43. Work with the state conservation department and public input to develop a long term tree plan for the city parks by 12/12.

Other City Activities & Initiatives

Website Usage – The City believes that the current website sarcoxiemo.com is massively underutilized. It should serve at least two purposes:

1. Be a window front that people can look through to see how great our city is.
2. A resource to new and current residents and businesses to find common info that will assist them in their lives in our city.

The City has made some attempts at utilizing the website with such measures as posting City Ordinances, employment applications, and important documents on line but more progress is required if it is going to be a premiere resource for our city.

AP44. Develop a City Facebook site with a link from the website by 11/10.

AP45. Add a website page for new residents moving to our city by 10/10.

City's Participation in Organizations –

POLICY The City will participate in the following organizations BUT has to strive to “get our money's worth”.

- o Harry S Truman Council
- o Missouri Municipal League (MML)

- Missouri Rural Water Association (MRWA)

POLICY Support local organizations which are important to our city including:

- Sarcoxie Chamber of Commerce
- Chief Sarcoxie Days Committee
- Sarcoxie Foundation

POLICY Participation in New Organizations - The Council will review the merits of joining any new organizations as awareness of these organizations increase. A decision to participate will be based on such criteria as cost of membership, potential benefits, resources available to take full advantage of benefits offered, and how membership to the new organization will further the tenants of the comprehensive plan.

AP46. Effective 6/2010, the City has committed to sending a full time city employee to represent the City at the Harry S Truman Council meetings to get more involved and obtain maximum benefits for our city and residents.

Enhanced Enterprise Zone – The City is actively promoting and assisting with the development of an EEZ to attract commercial development in and around the city. Success in this area will have long term benefits for the City. More to follow as a stand alone plan.