

STAFF REPORT

DATE: 02/07/2025

TO: Bel Aire Planning Commission

FROM: Paula Downs

RE: Agenda

STAFF COMMUNICATION

FOR MEETING OF	2/13/25
CITY COUNCIL	
INFORMATION ONLY	

SUMMARY:

Annual Review of the Comprehensive Plan

History:

- State law requires the Planning commission to review the comprehensive plan on an annual basis.
- The Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2014 and set the vision for growth through 2034.
- The plan was last updated in 2018 through the adoption of the Master Plan for Community Growth.

Function of Plan:

- To serve as a guide for the overall development of land in an orderly fashion that minimizes conflicts between the various users of the land and to provide accompanying community services in an efficient and economical manner.
- To compile information which the City can base short-range decisions within the context of long-range planning.
- To balance urban development with community facilities and services.
- To serve as a tool that develops updates to the zoning and subdivision regulations.
- To provide direction for the City Council on major land use policy issues including assistance to potential developers.

Progress with Principles- a Master Plan For Community Growth:

- Adopted in 2018.
- Long-term plan for growth and development through 2035.
- Plan includes:
 - Land-use maps
 - Development guidelines
 - Future growth strategies that align with community planning objectives
- Plan has served as a guide in the evaluation of Planning and Zoning cases.

Master Growth Plan Strategies:

Future Development:

1. Maximize compatibility between land uses to preserve community character as development occurs.
2. Encourage new development on currently undeveloped, agricultural and large lot/estate residential properties.
3. Establish situational and locational criteria to guide decision making when flexibility is needed during the development process.
4. Amend the Bel Aire Zoning Ordinance to encourage mixed use/ local commercial developments.
5. Maintain strict standards for general commercial uses that mitigate negative impacts to lower intensity uses.
6. Review sign regulations and revise as appropriate.
7. Adopt policies and programs that encourage local commercial development in the short term.
8. Provide for the development of sufficient parks and recreation facilities to meet community needs as Bel Aire grows.
9. Pursue unilateral annexation of properties in Bel Aire's north growth and along K-254 east of existing city boundaries. This will preserve expansion opportunities as development demand grows.
10. Integrate the Preferred Balanced Growth Scenario and these strategies into Bel Aire's land use, facility and infrastructure master plans to ensure implementation of this Plan:
 - Comprehensive Development Plan
 - Park System Master Plan
 - Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
 - Transportation Master Plan
 - Towne Center Master Plan

City-Owned Properties:

1. Residential Development- adopt policies that continue to diversify housing options while preserving community character.
2. Mixed Use/Local Commercial Development- limit self-storage units; promote walkable mixed-use development; encourage cohesive development styles.
3. General Commercial Development- work with KDOT and property owners to develop frontage roads along K-254 to facilitate commercial development.
4. All Commercial Development- promote high-quality design for buildings and sites and encourage contiguous multi-lot developments.
5. Sunflower Commerce Park- avoid incompatible industry with community character and keep larger lots intact to recruit major industrial residents.
6. Adopt a policy that prefers the sale of city owner properties for the development of tax revenue generating uses.
7. Implement strategies with the use of:
 - a. Planned Unit Developments
 - b. Overlay Zoning Districts
 - c. Development Agreements
 - d. Restrictive Covenants

Plan Discussion:

- Each Master Growth Plan strategy has action steps to guide staff as development occurs in the city.
- City staff utilize the Master Growth strategies when evaluating development applications submitted to city staff.
- Cases brought before the Planning Commission include references in the “Golden Factors” review that states the project adheres to the Master Growth Plan.

Comprehensive Plan Update- 2024/2025:

- In 2024, an update to the Comprehensive Plan was initiated by the City Council in partnership with Professional Engineering Consultants (PEC).
- City staff uses the Master Growth Plan as a guide when reviewing planning and zoning cases.
- Strategies that encourage updating the City Code were suspended pending the new Comprehensive Plan being adopted in Spring of 2025.
- Planning and Zoning will utilize the 2025 Comprehensive Plan to inform changes to the City Code including- Zoning and Subdivision regulations.

General Review Discussion:

- The Current Master Growth Plan is reviewed and considered with each planning and zoning application in the city.
- Current city codes will be incrementally updated based on strategies and action steps developed in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Receive and file the annual review of the comprehensive plan.