

# CHAPTER 1

## INTENT AND PURPOSE

### Introduction

Planning in Hobart is mandated to be a continuing process through which the local government decides land use questions. Zoning, and to a lesser degree subdivision controls, are the recognized legal mechanisms for implementing the comprehensive plan. The Plan Commission understands that how well the City of Hobart functions fifty years from now will depend upon the foresight of Hobart's planners in the understanding and application of the growth management and control process today.

The process of growth management in the City of Hobart is seen as the most important component, similar to the city's zoning land use restrictions, subdivision design standards, or industrial performance standards, as a means for carrying out community goals, objectives and policies for a better quality of community life in Hobart. The framework for the City's planning process is driven by the City of Hobart Comprehensive Plan, and is implemented by the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Control Ordinance, and depicted on the Official City Maps. In addition, a decade of diminishing federal and state funding participation has led community leaders to institute economic improvement programming in the form of a redevelopment authority utilizing an innovative funding device (Tax Increment Financing) to capture additional tax revenue to fund necessary public improvements.

### The Plan

The plan once adopted: 1) informs property owners and development interests of the City's position with respect to public and private development; 2) guides public response to specific rezoning and subdivision applications; and 3) provides insights for citizens, property owners, and others who might be contemplating investment or development activities in the future.

This comprehensive plan and the recommendations contained therein are intended to assist planners in the important decision-making process that guides the City's investments in capital improvements and promotes equal and fair application of subdivision design and land use policy. This body of information was developed through the completion of a number of studies and surveys, including the following:

-existing land use survey

-population study

- community facilities study
- housing analysis
- growth study
- thoroughfare study

There is widespread agreement among planners that data ought to be collected as exhaustively as possible, and that it should be presented graphically whenever feasible. Thus, the physical features of the community should be depicted on maps supplemented by graphs and charts.

The following types of maps, charts and other data are normally prepared in a comprehensive planning program:

1. Existing Land Use Map - This map should include a narrative statistical summary of existing land use relationships. Such an inventory can reveal many of the community's physical assets and potentials, and also point to various deficiencies or problems resulting from incompatible land uses. This will help provide a base from which logical future development patterns can be determined. Ideas can then be formulated about areas best suited for future residential, commercial, industrial and public purposes.

2. Thoroughfares Classification Map - This map depicts the current road system by dividing it into freeways, arterials, collectors, and locals. It indicates how the road functions without regard to its suitability or capacity. When these factors are later added, it helps to identify required thoroughfare improvements on those roadways which are over utilized, and alternate routes on those which are underutilized.

3. Thoroughfare Recommendations Map - As a result of the above-described comparison, necessary improvements to existing roads and intersections are identified and prioritized. In addition, new roads and the extension of existing ones are also identified and prioritized. In this way, the Plan Commission is armed with data about infrastructure improvements which are required of developers when asking for subdivision or planned unit development approval.

4. Future Land Use Map - This map identifies a development guide which describes how property should be used throughout the community. Its largest benefit is to offer the Plan Commission an opportunity to look at their community as a whole, instead of one petition at a time. This land use map is not to be confused with the zoning map, the latter being a legal document, and the former being a recommendation or guide. When petitioners file rezoning and subdivision requests with the Plan Commission, the future land use map should be one of potentially several tools used to either support or deny the request.

## Community Planning

Local communities were granted the authority to plan and pass development controls in 1947 with the enactment of the ADVISORY PLANNING LAW. Under this statute, municipalities and counties could establish a plan commission to guide and direct development in their jurisdiction. In 1957, the AREA PLANNING LAW was passed, which provided a means for both incorporated and unincorporated areas to collectively establish a "single" unified planning and zoning department. In 1979, these two statutes (IC 18-7-5 and 18-7-4 respectively) were combined as the first step in recodifying the planning and zoning laws. In 1981, all the separate planning sections of the Indiana Code, including the METROPOLITAN PLANNING LAW statutes were consolidated under IC 36-7-4.

The main purpose of community planning currently practiced in the City of Hobart is to insure an informed decision-making process; enable elected officials the ability to manage community growth and development in the City of Hobart; and provide a continuing planning process that is in the interests of all residents, the business community and the industrial community.

Community planning is the process by which the City of Hobart decides what kind of future it wants and then establishes the policies and management tools, such as zoning and subdivision regulations, to help reach that goal. It is the intent of the City not to simply take action on the items that make up the monthly agendas. Instead, Hobart officials are to initiate and implement policies, rather than merely respond to the circumstances of a given situation.

The Plan Commission and the City Council must anticipate changes in the local tax base and population characteristics, and be prepared to meet changing needs in physical facilities and governmental services in a rational way. The end result is some degree of stability in the City government, its tax rates, and other financial considerations, all of which have an impact on the future growth of the community. Costly mistakes, such as the paving of streets that are later torn up for the installation of utilities or the design of a public building which may soon become obsolete should be avoided. Advanced planning of required improvements will result in substantial savings, especially in the case of utilities. A carefully crafted comprehensive plan will assist in making the right decisions.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan should prove to be an effective working guide for public and private decision-making in Hobart, since the Plan is a balance between existing conditions and the principles of sound land use planning. Since no plan can anticipate every specific future development, the Plan Commission and the City Council will continually find a need to update the Plan. This should be done in accordance with the planning concepts presented in this study. Implementation of the Plan will have to be brought about through the control of land use by the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

The Comprehensive Land Use Management Plan is a portrait of future proposals reflecting a desirable inter-relationship of the following uses:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Recreational
- Community Facilities
- Utilities
- Transportation
- Municipal Services

As a result of this considerable study and analysis of existing physical, economic, and social characteristics, and projections of future conditions, the City should be armed with an important tool which will help shape it's future.