

Rolla Comprehensive Plan Update, 2005

COMMUNITY ISSUES MEMORANDUM 11/1/2004

Introduction

Throughout the planning process, but particularly during the early phases of the update, various individuals and groups will be asked to identify and verify key issues and conditions that will form the foundation for the updated plan. This memorandum provides an initial summary of identified community issues by category to be used as a starting point for discussion and discovery.

Community Issues

A summary of key issues was prepared to help appreciate the diversity and complexity of issues and conditions having an impact on the future of Rolla. The issues summary also focused the process on the relative key issues for each of the major elements of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update, as follows:

LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

- Potential impact of BRAC 05 on development in Rolla, need to employ strategies to capture a reasonable share of this growth following realignment;
- Limited amount of developable and available land for commercial use in Rolla/lack of shopping opportunities;
- Limited amount of land suitable for industrial use inside the corporate limits;
- Underutilization of prime commercial locations due to blight/lack of access;
- Reconfirm the appropriate land use pattern for the Southside area, need for future commercial and service use locations;
- Protection of residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible uses, particularly large commercial uses;
- Plan for the annexation of land that can be serviced by the planned expansion of City road/utility systems and is cost effective in terms of needed infrastructure upgrades in existing developed subdivisions;
- Passed-over sites for infill development...efficient use of existing infrastructure in Rolla;
- Conflict with Water District territory adjoining Rolla... development discouraged due to inadequacy of District service, cost disadvantage for City to extend service;
- Imbalance between zoning designation and actual land use, particularly in Rolla's center city neighborhoods;
- Sufficient expansion room for major center city institutions, particularly UMR and PCRMC, the direction of growth;
- Avoid vehicular congestion along new arterial road corridors;
- Continue downtown revitalization efforts, expand program to Rolla Street;
- Encouragement of commercial development to the Northwest of I-44;
- The impact of City regulations on development costs;

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- Obsolete permitted uses in the zoning ordinance... add new uses, shift as necessary;
- Rolla's form of government – limits flexibility in the application of some land development regulations.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

- Preservation and enhancement of the natural environment in Rolla – open space, flood plain, wooded areas, etc.;
- Expand the hiking/biking trail system throughout Rolla... "lineal" parks;
- Reduce flooding during heavy rain storms resulting from new development;
- Keep development from occurring in environmentally sensitive areas, such as flood plains and areas with excessive slope (above 10-12 percent slopes);

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- Lack of developed neighborhood level parkland in the Southside;
- Parkland needs north of I-44;
- Undeveloped parkland currently throughout the system;
- Use open space resources efficiently... share open space by collocating schools and neighborhood parks;
- Additional athletic fields: specifically a full size soccer field, dedicated baseball field, and an adult/youth softball field;
- Maintain a tourist-oriented visitor's park off of I-44 and Bridge School Road;
- Accommodate need for educational space (elementary school) in the Southside;
- Lack of coordination of urban expansion planning;
- Extension of fire protection services in the Southside;
- Fire protection services needed north of I-44;
- Additional public library space/ land and new building;
- Lack of adequate space for senior activities/services;
- Need for a community cultural center... possibly collocated with senior center;
- Consider a second recreation center or gymnasium facility in the south side... possibly collocated with a new school;
- Improve the reliability of electrical service delivery system-relocate and construct a bulk power station in North Central Rolla area;
- Aging electrical infrastructure;
- Reduce/eliminate flooding;
- Need facility for consolidated maintenance of City vehicles, training, and storage of materials.
- Existing solid waste transfer station is deteriorated.

TRANSPORTATION

- Improve I-44 through Rolla, eliminate the dangerous "tunnel" effect between Vichy Road and U.S. 63 Highway;

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- Replace/rebuild obsolete bridges;
- Better connections to I-44 for traffic now flowing through Rolla;
- Complete Southside arterial system/extend Lions Club Drive from State Highway CC to V;
- Traffic congestion along U.S. Highway 63;
- Extend the hiking/biking trail throughout Rolla as development occurs;
- Vehicle/pedestrian conflicts around UMR;
- Parking congestion on streets around UMR;
- Upgrade, straighten and widen U.S. Highway 63 north of Rolla;
- Acquire proposed arterial street right-of-way in advance of development;
- Confusing public directional signage for visitors and residents;
- Public parking in the downtown with landscaping;
- Inadequate arterial roads as to width, open drainage ditches/no shoulder, lack of turning lanes, site distance problems...10th Street, Highway O, Little Oaks Road;
- New interchange for I-44 west of the Kingshighway/I-44 interchange.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

- Non-local traffic traveling through neighborhoods;
- Affordable housing threatened by commercial encroachment;
- Use zoning to protect established neighborhoods more effectively;
- Lack of property maintenance in some areas of Rolla;
- Need to maintain a balance of available housing...for executives, multi-family, low income;
- Encourage new single-family construction in the \$ 90,000 to \$ 125,000 price range;
- Housing stock is aging, encourage preservation targeted to older center city neighborhoods;
- Need for more dedicated seniors housing as the baby boomers age/more retirees move to Rolla;
- Too much density permitted in R-3 (multi-family) zoned areas, not enough off-street parking.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Preserve and develop greenbelts throughout the City, connecting subdivisions and preserving natural drainage areas and open space;
- Upgrade the appearance of Rolla, specifically its entryways and arterial road corridors;
- Consider site plan review requirement when re-zoning residentially zoned property to commercial and /or for all commercial development;
- More pedestrian friendly development;
- UMR campus integrity for pedestrian use...consider street closings;
- Incorporate design elements that assist seniors and other individuals with mobility issues in new development;

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- Consider stricter sign ordinance, more aggressive enforcement ...too many billboards!;
- Infill development that is compatible with and enhances the surrounding neighborhood character;
- Too many overhead utility lines, should be placed underground along arterials for safety and aesthetic reasons;
- Protect residential areas that abut corridors using screening and other devices like landscape berms and walls;
- Screen parking lots when they abut residential neighborhoods.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Lack of a diversified economic base;
- Keep pace with the demand for industrial land by zoning a sufficient amount of land in advance of industrial/commercial development needs;
- Lack of available industrial/warehouse building space in Rolla;
- Build on the advantages of UMR as a contributor to economic development, particularly for technology-related development;
- Opportunity to expand conference-related activity in Rolla at the Havener Center;
- UMR's impact on downtown revitalization... school expansion toward downtown;
- Recognize and support the contribution of the arts to economic development;
- Assist existing businesses with planned expansions of their buildings and related facilities;
- Changing work patterns, more people working from their homes...regulatory issues?;
- Keep a balance between employment growth and housing demand;
- Recognize the critical relationship between economic development and community quality of life issues;
- Potential for Rolla to attract retirees.