

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

OVERALL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Amendatory Comprehensive Plan, including the General Development Plan (map), for Itasca contains recommendations for the constructive utilization of land and resources as they relate to the future development of the community. The plan provides a reference framework for undertaking development projects required to reach the long-range goals of the community and also provides short-range guidelines for reviewing applications for rezoning and proposed subdivisions of land.

The plan can be useful only if it is implemented. This will require action by public agencies, developers, business, industry and private citizens. Action steps that can put the plan into effect include:

Voluntary compliance arising from community and public understanding and acceptance of the plan proposals.

Coordination by the Plan Commission of the individual plans of various local and regional governmental agencies relative to the recommendations made in the comprehensive plan.

Adoption, implementation, and continuing review by municipal officials of the codes and ordinances including zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, development standards and specifications, a storm water control ordinance and other regulatory ordinances and development controls.

Adoption of a capital improvements program by the governing body to guide expenditures in the foreseeable future.

Adoption of an official map with procedures for continuing review and amendment where necessary.

Itasca has available many of the tools necessary to implement the amendatory comprehensive plan. However, there are others which should also be used to help capitalize on the strengths of the community and also to solve problems of growth. Adoption, enforcement and continuing review of zoning ordinance, development standards and specifications ordinance, and to amend the subdivision regulations for use in the community will result in a better community. This will help eliminate many of the problems related to future development and will give local governing officials the proper instruments of control necessary to insure orderly growth. It is especially important to provide adequate regulations for the unincorporated areas recommended for annexation within the plan. When community boundaries are extended, appropriate design and

developmental standards as contained within the plan can be immediately implemented, thereby providing for rational development while minimizing community costs.

Public Acceptance by Citizens

Public acceptance of the amendatory comprehensive plan is important. Citizens who make many individual investment decisions that will influence the future development of the community must feel that this plan offers sound solutions to growth problems and, therefore, assures them of both return on and protection of their investment. This assurance will encourage voluntary compliance with the plan. Nevertheless, strong civic leadership, both inside and outside local government, is needed on a continuing basis to publicize the plan, emphasize its value, and encourage its acceptance as a guide to sound community development.

Action by the Plan Commission

The Itasca Plan Commission is an advisory body whose prime responsibility is to develop plans for the future of the community. A major step toward achieving this responsibility was participation in the development of the amendatory comprehensive plan. The Itasca Plan Commission's continuing overview includes a study of routine matters involving zoning and subdivision, as aids to implementation of the amendatory comprehensive plan. Its advisory and coordinating functions have a far-reaching effect on physical, social, and economic development in the Itasca planning area. It is that body in the community that has the responsibility and authority to coordinate the development proposals of one agency with those of another, as well as with the long-range amendatory comprehensive plan.

While no plan commission has enforcement authority to require conformance with an official amendatory comprehensive plan, it does, however, have authority to review proposals for changes in land use, etc. It cannot be assumed that agencies or individuals (developers, businessmen, etc.) will always desire to make their individual plans conform to the Itasca General Development Plan (map). The support of the governing body, community leaders and the general citizenry will do much to provide the proper climate in which conformance becomes the rule rather than the exception.

Adoption and Review of the Comprehensive Plan including the General Development Plan (map) by the Governing Body

Following a public hearing, the Village Board should consider enacting the Amendatory Comprehensive Plan including the General Development Plan (map) as a guide for future growth. After adoption, the Amendatory Comprehensive Plan, including the General Development Plan (map), should be recorded to officiate the documents, and shall be referred to if it is to be implemented and not remain stagnant. To further aid the plan in remaining viable, it should be reviewed periodically, as necessary, and consideration

should be given to major revisions, if needed, approximately every three to five years. The scope and extent of plan revision, of course, depends on the rapidity and trend of growth, the availability of new or changing data, and other factors which have an effect on the relevance of the plan.

Ordinances to Insurance Continuing Planning Controls

Zoning Ordinance - The amendatory zoning ordinance is one of the essential tools used for implementing the amendatory comprehensive plan. By this legal means for controlling development within the corporate limits, an orderly and desirable pattern of land use can be achieved. Since urban development occurs through individual projects, the zoning ordinance, in conjunction with the comprehensive plan, is an important aid in unifying the project planning efforts of many individuals.

The zoning ordinance, as amended, coordinates project activities with policies expressed in the amendatory comprehensive plan. The ordinance contains provisions for regulating the use of property, the size of lots, yards, and open spaces, and the height and bulk of buildings. In addition, it establishes direct and indirect limitations on population density in the areas through minimum lot area requirements.

Subdivision Ordinance - In the future, parts of the community will be developed as a result of individual tracts of land being subdivided. When street designs are laid out and land is divided into lots, the pattern of development becomes established for an indefinite period of time. Once land is subdivided and development takes place, it is often extremely difficult to change. Many of the problems inherent in past developments could have been avoided with proper land subdivision.

The subdivision of land involves expenditures for the installation and maintenance of public improvements and the development standards and specifications controlling the development of streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and water lines, as well as potential income in the form of property taxes. It is the responsibility of local government to insure that new subdivisions conform to the General Development Plan (map) and other community policies and standards, including insuring that subdivisions are compatible with existing development.

The subdivision ordinance establishes reasonable requirements and procedures that shall be followed to protect the general welfare of the community. Development of various parts of the community can be coordinated and a logical street pattern established. When a plat is presented for approval, community officials have an opportunity to evaluate, prior to construction, what impact the proposed development will have on existing public facilities and services, and to consider the financial aspects, including both tax revenues and costs to the community. The ordinance protects individuals who purchase lots or homes in a subdivision, by assuring homeowners that the layout of the subdivision and installation of improvements meet specific minimum standards. In addition, the controls in a subdivision ordinance discourage substandard developments.

Capital Improvements Program

A public or capital improvements program is a long-range study to identify: (1) public improvements needed in the community and corresponding priorities; (2) their estimated costs; (3) the anticipated revenues with which to finance them; and (4) the programmed time frame in which such improvements are to be developed. As a community planning tool, a public improvements program coordinates improvements that will be needed in the community over a series of extended time periods based on the ability of the community to finance them.

In developing a program, a list of proposed capital improvements, including enlargements and replacements of existing facilities, is compiled jointly by the governing body, the heads of various municipal departments and the Itasca Plan Commission. Such a list usually contains large, relatively permanent community facilities: streets, water supply and distribution systems, sewers, sewage treatment plants, storm drainage facilities, parks and recreation centers, parking facilities, and the replacement of municipal equipment. The items proposed are evaluated and reviewed in conjunction with anticipated revenues, fixed expenses, and the ability of the community to borrow. Then, based on what is most urgently needed and on proposals in the General Development Plan (map), the projects are arranged in order of priority, with an estimate of the approximate cost of each item. Improvements scheduled for construction and/or purchase, usually over a five or six year period, are then arranged by year and included in the capital budget.

The budget includes an estimate of how much it will cost to construct each project and the source(s) of funds to finance the work. Federal, state and regional fund sources should be considered by the Village. Detailed cost figures for projects on the priority listing are prepared annually and incorporated into the capital budget for the year. As projects are completed, major construction projects and purchases scheduled for the succeeding year are then included in the next capital improvements budget.

A capital improvements program has several advantages for Itasca including the following:

It can minimize fluctuations of the tax rate over a period of years.

Projects can be undertaken in their order of urgency.

It enables all municipal departments to coordinate proposed projects, maximizing available funds.

All municipal projects can be evaluated in relation to each other.

The community may acquire land at lower costs through planned, advance acquisition.

Wasteful, overlapping projects are prevented.

The maximum use is made of available funds.

Projects are not prematurely undertaken.

Future plans of the community are made known to all citizens.

Attention is called to community deficiencies.

To develop a more sound policy and to implement the General Development Plan (map), a capital improvement program should be established, adopted and continually reviewed on an annual basis.

Official Map

The purpose of an official map is to reserve future locations of streets, highways, public utility rights-of-way, sites for public buildings or public open space for future public acquisition. When this authority is exercised, the Village Board, after receiving a recommendation from the Plan Commission, may establish and adopt the official map and the accompanying regulations for its respective areas of jurisdiction. After the General Development Plan (map) has been prepared and adopted, and with approval of the Village Board, the exact location of such facilities is determined and shown on the official map.

The legislative process gives the Village Board the opportunity to acquire the property and to conserve areas for public use, if so needed, within a reasonable length of time after the owner applies for a building permit. The authority granted by this legislation should be exercised by the Village in the public interest. Further, the Village Board will be able to defer purchase of land for future use until development by the owner is imminent and it becomes necessary to purchase land which is crucial to long range public improvements.

IMPLEMENTING THE TOWN CENTER PLAN

The Itasca Town Center Plan, as revised, is, in a sense, a statement of a goal. Many public and private decisions and actions will be needed to accomplish the overall goal. But, if the goal is to be achieved, the decisions and actions should be coordinated. Ideally, public and private investment in the area should be mutually supportive.

It should be noted that the plan is not a dream or program. The plan is a statement as to what is desirable and attainable under conditions known at present. A program, on the other hand, describes specific interrelated projects or activities to which time frames have been assigned and to which known resources have been allocated.

Thus, any discussions of implementation at this point shall emphasize the matter of how the public and private sectors organize themselves to develop one or more programs to accomplish the goal inherent in the Town Center Plan.

Organization

In small communities like Itasca, where so much must be accomplished through volunteer efforts, the full range of organizational alternatives is not really available. In large communities with more diverse business communities, for example, there are often local chambers of commerce with a full time staff which can devote attention to market studies and other groundwork necessary to assemble a development program. Similarly, large municipalities have planning or development personnel which perform staff work from the initial concept through project completion.

Within the context of Itasca's experience and practices, however, there are several possible approaches, as the following describe:

1. A study committee with no formal powers could be formed. This might include representatives of the business community and municipal government, and possibly citizen-consumer(s) at large. The committee would make recommendations for specific actions to the Village, and would prove useful also as a means of communication between the business community and local government.
2. Under the Tax Increment Financing (TIF), a municipal financing tool to stimulate redevelopment, is being used more and more frequently by communities across the United States.

The essence of the Act (Chapter 24 of the Illinois Revised Statutes) is that a TIF district captures the incremental increase in property tax revenue for new and renovated development to pay for the investment expended for development.

This Act should be addressed in providing revenue to further the improvement of the Town Center.

3. A business district development corporation could be formed. Such corporations often are a means for assembling private resources to accomplish specific parts of the overall program.

The permanent organization ultimately chosen would first confront the need to prepare a program for development, and probably would require at least a modest budget.

Sources of Funds for Public Improvements

Any developmental program, if it is to be successful, must be adequately financed. Where private investment is conditioned upon or influenced by public outlays for supplemental facilities, that private investment will not occur without firm commitment on the public side. This principle operates on a fundamental level. For example, commercial development at a particular site may be dependent upon adequate access to a parking lot which involves a turning lane and signalization. Inasmuch as the traffic improvements are needed to make the parking lot work well and the parking is vital to the proposed business, failure to provide the improvements in a timely manner may cripple the business during its crucial start-up period. This need for coordination, with its associated need for commitments several years into the future, implies that planning for business development must be closely coordinated with municipal capital programming.

Public improvements can be funded from a variety of sources, both general and special purpose. As for general funds (property taxes, sales tax rebates, etc.), these may be used for any of the kinds of improvements usually generated by a downtown improvement program. However, as a practical matter, it seems more likely that a municipality would turn to special purpose revenues.

The more well known revenues may be listed here:

1. Motor vehicle tax;
2. Motor fuel tax (MFT) funds;
3. Utility taxes;
4. Special purpose property taxes, including those for community buildings and cultural centers.

THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR FUTURE LAND USE: A FINAL NOTE

The Itasca General Development Plan (map) represents a composite of all the land use elements: residential areas, recreation facilities, environmental considerations, community facilities, commercial and industrial areas, and a thoroughfare plan.

A prime objective of the plan is to achieve a balance of land uses that will economically, physically and socially benefit the residents of the Village. Thus, to achieve this balance of land uses, each of the above elements has proposed a general plan for a specific land use. In turn, each element has been combined to form a general plan of land use that will serve to guide the long-range land development of the area as shown on the Itasca General Development Plan (map), which is part of the Comprehensive Plan Document.

In conclusion, the Itasca General Development Plan (map) for future land use can be defined as:

A long-range, comprehensive and general guide for the development of land, circulation and public facilities in the community.

A map of future land uses and the accompanying documentation describing the details.

The result of an orderly process of study which has guided the Itasca Plan Commission thus far in a study of:

Land Use

Population, Housing and Economic Characteristics

Community Facilities, including schools, parks and open space

Commercial Land Use

Industrial Land Use

Thoroughfares

Environmental Considerations

Finally, the following should be kept in mind in terms of using the Itasca General Development Plan (map) as a growth and development guide:

THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MAP)
IS NOT:

The municipal zoning ordinance

Any other ordinance that regulates the use of land

A rigid unchanging plan or statement concerning land use, growth and development

The final answer to the problems of the future

THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MAP)
IS:

Based upon present knowledge and goals

Flexible so that it can be changed when the Itasca Plan Commission and/or other municipal officials and citizens see the need for such a change

A guide for decision making...it does not make decisions

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