

Oakland City Comprehensive Plan

Steering Committee #1 Meeting Summary

December 16, 2021

Meeting Overview

On Wednesday, December 15 the project team hosted the first steering committee meeting for the Oakland City Comprehensive Plan. The meeting was held at the community center at Wirth Park from 5:30-7:00PM. There were 7 committee members and 3 project team members in attendance. Meeting participants included –

- Scott Siefker – TSWDG
- Hailey Roark – TSWDG
- Jon Craig – Midwestern Engineering
- Mike Brewster – Retired School Superintendent
- Darin Nossett – Local Pastor
- James Deffendall – Mayor of Oakland City
- Phil Young – Bridon – Bekaert Corp.
- Tami Muckerheide – Gibson County Economic Development Corporation
- Charlotte Gray – President of Good Start
- Ron Dempsey – Oakland City University

The project team begin the meeting with introductions followed by a presentation of the planning process, existing conditions data, and next steps. Following an overview of the existing conditions data, the committee completed two interactive exercises including a worksheet regarding growth and development, community services, and quality of life and then a big idea post-it note activity. The following sections highlight the feedback that was shared.

The Worksheet and Group Report Out

The committee was asked to complete the worksheet on their own and then the project team facilitated a conversation around a few of the topics.

1. What are the key Challenges related to land use and growth?
 - a. Trailer Courts
 - b. Run down properties
 - c. Homeowners – Attitudes of residents (x2)
 - d. Land availability of land (x3)
 - e. Lack of basic services (infrastructure) (x3)
 - f. Perception of zoning
 - g. No current zoning
 - h. City mindset
 - i. Housing

- j. Lack of evening activities
 - k. Need to become a thriving bedroom community to Evansville, Jasper, and Bloomington
 - l. People stick thinking all growth requires zoning.
 - m. Limited development interests
2. Where is new development most appropriate?
- a. Downtown
 - b. Going west on 64 outside of Oakland City
 - c. Outskirts of City with Single-family homes
 - d. Pretty much anywhere
 - e. North / East of the City
 - f. Growth near interstate should be balanced with infill
 - g. Main Street near SR 57
 - h. Along IN 64 and I-69
3. Where should infill and redevelopment be focused?
- a. Downtown (x4)
 - b. Wirth Hospital Building
 - c. Main Street near SR 57
 - d. Numerous homes all over the city could be renovated. (x2)
 - e. North / East end of the City
 - f. Around the university (x2)
 - g. IN 64 south of the City for businesses
 - h. Within existing city limits
4. What types of growth would you like to see more of?
- a. Single-family residential – 8 votes
 - b. Multi-family residential –5 votes
 - c. Retail and dining– 6 votes
 - d. Commercial – 5 votes
 - e. Industrial – 4 votes
 - f. Parks and Recreation – 4 votes
5. Oakland City should be actively planning for growth to occur westward along IN-64 toward Interstate 69.
- a. **Strongly Agree – 3 votes**
 - b. **Agree – 4 votes**
 - c. Neutral – 0 votes
 - d. Disagree – 1 vote
 - e. Strongly Disagree – 0 votes

6. What are the key challenges related to Transportation?
 - a. No public transit
 - b. Need more trails (x2)
 - c. Condition of City streets
 - d. Condition of sidewalks and ramps (x4)
 - e. Pedestrian facilities to OCU
 - f. Money to repair the roads that we already have
 - g. If money is no object, the biggest obstacle is getting people to truly desire the improvements.

7. What are the key challenges related to public utility services?
 - a. Having adequate resources
 - b. High water prices – the problem is a long-term contract that holds the city captive.
 - c. Old water and sewer lines
 - d. No maps of storm sewers at all
 - e. No broadband (x4)
 - f. Being able to provide them things for new growth
 - g. Numerous stormwater issues
 - h. Infrastructure to I-69 interchange
 - i. High cost of infrastructure expansion
 - j. Lack of interest in broadband

8. What community facilities, services, or programs are missing from Oakland City?
 - a. Pharmacy
 - b. 2nd Grocery Store
 - c. Evening activities
 - d. Daycare
 - e. Housing
 - f. Downtown activity
 - g. Opportunity to tie university, high school, and town together – partnership and collaboration
 - h. Providing more recreational opportunities for the youth
 - i. Senior citizen programs
 - j. Boys and Girls Club
 - k. Things to do at our park
 - l. Community gym / fitness center
 - m. Health clinics for low-income families
 - n. More high school youth assembly areas

9. How would you rate the overall quality of life offered within Oakland City?
 - a. Exceptional – 0 votes
 - b. Great – 0 votes

- c. **Satisfactory – 6 votes**
- d. Poor – 1 vote
- e. Very Poor - 1 vote

10. How would you rate community character?

- a. Exceptional – 0 votes
- b. Great – 1 vote
- c. **Satisfactory – 4 votes**
- d. **Poor – 3 votes**
- e. Very Poor - 0 votes

Big Ideas – Post-it Note Activity

The committee was asked to share their big idea for the future of Oakland City on a large post-it note. The project team collected the post-it notes to display on the wall. The following big ideas were shared:

- To be a vibrant bedroom community that serves Evansville, Jasper, and Bloomington with restaurants, evening activities, top quality daycare, top quality K-12 schools, and recreational activities like trails and camping.
- Quality apartments
- We need to clean up the City to encourage people to want to live here. It is nice to ride in a new car than an old dirty one.
- New sidewalks!
- Development – Housing, businesses, and amenities
- Lots of \$100,000 -200,000 homes
- Lots of \$200,000-300,000 homes
- Be the place where people want to live their live outside of work
- Growth with exceptional quality of life
- Renewal of appreciation for the presence of the university
- Fast food restaurants