

## I. INTRODUCTION

An old saying amongst those in the planning profession is that if you fail to plan, you are in effect, planning to fail. If the community in which you live, work, and play does not have a plan for its future, what ultimately may happen is that the community will fail to adapt to change and take advantage of opportunities.

“In a growing urban area, development will occur with or without a plan.” This is the first line of the Comprehensive Plan for Germantown Hills from 1978, and it is just as true today as it was then. Change will occur in our community, whether we want it to or not. A plan says we will direct this change; we will be leaders of change, instead of letting unwanted change happen to us.

### **Background**

The Comprehensive Plan which follows originates from a local initiative begun in 1992. In September 1992, the Peoria County Board adopted the Peoria County Land Use Plan. The County Plan is general in nature and its policies concentrate on issues of regional scope. To address issues at the local level, the Board appropriated funding for planning on a smaller scale. Unincorporated Peoria County was divided into seven small areas: West Peoria, Chillicothe-River, Dunlap, Kickapoo Valley, Hollis-Timber, Northwest County, and West County. The purpose of the planning process established by the County for West Peoria was to tailor recommendations of the broad and general County Plan to the specific needs and issues that are unique to this small area.

During the fall and winter of 1992-93, the Peoria County Board appointed local representatives to serve as advisors for West Peoria’s planning process. It appointed five residents of the Township to the Small Area Advisory Group (SAAG) to work with Peoria County’s planning staff and their consultants. Two of the five residents appointed were Township officials and the remaining three were active in the community and/or members of the West Peoria Residents’ Association. (This group later formed the nucleus of the City of West Peoria’s Planning Commission.)

The 1993 West Peoria Small Area Plan provided a policy framework and set of principles for future decision-making as well as recommended actions to carry out these policies. It served as the basis for the City of West Peoria Planning and Zoning Commission document. West Peoria’s SAAG focused on ways to meet recreational and housing needs, increase employment, sufficiently provide goods and services for West Peoria residents, and create opportunities to enhance community life and environmental quality. The City Council appointed seven members to staggered terms and the Commission began service in April 1994.

Since that time, the City has taken many of the action steps its Commission recommended. Among them, the City has

- redrawn its floodplain boundaries
- rezoned industrial areas for commercial use
- restricted commercial uses in residential neighborhoods
- required landscape buffering between residential and commercial properties
- established a hierarchy of roadways, each with its own right-of-way standards
- acquired a community building
- successfully promoted the development of Franciscan Recreation Park
- developed a Capital Improvement Program for adding, replacing and repairing water lines, sewer lines, storm drains, streets and roads
- developed a Sidewalk Replacement Program
- adopted a sign ordinance, fence ordinance, and a weed control ordinance.

In June 2000, the West Peoria Plan Commission, a successor agency to the Planning and Zoning Commission, began a thorough review of the Plan put together in 1994 – in part to recognize the City’s successful implementation of the above portions of it, in part to outline new opportunities and challenges. Seven years later, new revisions are needed.

During the past few years, the City of West Peoria has undertaken some initiatives to promote growth. A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district was established in 2004. The City participated in a strategic visioning process offered by the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, the MAPPING the Future of Your Community Program; and a survey of local business owners was conducted in 2006 to explore the needs and concerns of West Peoria business owners. In addition, the City and West Peoria Township are exploring possibilities for a community building which would house all city and township staff and provide a meeting room for public use. New goals for the community resulted from the MAPPING process, addressing issues such as crime prevention, code enforcement, and education; and these goals are integrated into this newly revised Comprehensive Plan.

To prepare for the future and begin the implementation of goals and strategies discussed during the MAPPING process (in which 45 residents took part), the City of West Peoria has prepared this Comprehensive Plan for the community. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan which follows is a revision of the 2000 Plan. Its proposals, combined with the statements of goals and objectives, establish a framework for future decision-making which will lead to an orderly and balanced pattern of land use.

### **Description of West Peoria**

The *City of West Peoria* was incorporated in 1993. West Peoria is a small community with a neighborhood feel – somewhat a bedroom community with most residents working outside the City. It’s a place where families have lived for generations, nurturing a strong commitment to each other, their community, and to the volunteers and civic groups that make this town unique. While West Peoria has its own volunteer Fire Department, the City contracts with Peoria County for police services.

West Peoria is bounded on the east, north and south by the City of Peoria. The Kickapoo River valley extends along the area's western boundary. The northern one-third of West Peoria is distinctively separate from the rest. The steep topography, wooded bluffs, Dry Run Creek's floodplain and Farmington Road (a major east/west arterial roadway) create physical barriers between the north and south portions of the community.

The City of West Peoria encompasses approximately one and one-half square miles, and according to the 2000 census, was populated by 4,762 persons (the estimate in 2005 was 4,710). This indicates a decline of 10% since 1990. The 2000 census, the most recent data available for the following, also revealed that the majority (88.1%) of the population of West Peoria is white. The minority population (11.9%) is primarily black. Nearly 22% of the population is under the age of 18, 20% are age 65 and over, and the remaining 58% are between the ages of 18 and 64. Estimated median household income in West Peoria was \$45,600 in 2005, while median household income in Peoria County was \$44,291, and in the state of Illinois, \$50,260.

In 2000, 15% of employment was in manufacturing, while 43.8% was in the service sector. In Illinois overall, 16% of those employed were in manufacturing and 49.3% were in the service sector. The proportion of individuals that have at least a high school education in West Peoria has increased in 2000 to 83.7%. The proportion of individuals with a Bachelor's Degree or better has increased from 16.4% to 21.7% from 1990 to 2000. 8.1% of West Peoria's population was below the poverty level of income; in Illinois, 10.7%. Per capita income was \$22,247 in West Peoria. (The next U.S. Census will be done in 2010. At this time a review of the Comprehensive Plan may be required and adjusted as new statistical data will have been collected.)

(Sources: <http://censtats.census.gov/data/IL/1601780736.pdf> and <http://www.city-data.com/housing/houses-West-Peoria-Illinois.html> )

### **Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan**

Comprehensive Planning is a process by which a community can guide its future development. Growth can be encouraged to take place where necessary services can be reasonably provided. Conflicts between uses can be minimized. Financial and other resources can be more effectively used.

The Comprehensive Plan is a *guide*. It is not an ordinance, although changes to the City's zoning or subdivision ordinances may be a result of the Plan. This Comprehensive Plan looks ten years into the future. However, the Plan is not a static document and should be reviewed and updated every 3-5 years. In addition, the Plan should be required reading for newly elected officials and new members of the Planning Commission.

With a Comprehensive Plan, a community can choose and design its own future. The future will come, and local leaders will make decisions with or without a plan. Only through planning, however, can a community make rational choices for sustainable growth and



## II. INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

### **Land Use**

In the past, the pattern of West Peoria's land use has reflected the character of the land, its historical growth influences, regional transportation linkages, its social and economic base, and previous planning initiatives. The arrangement in a community of residential, commercial, industrial, office and open space uses create an image that may attract or repel existing and potential residents, viable businesses, and quality developers. The Plan Commission evaluated this mixture of uses in 2000, at the time of the last revision of the Land Use Plan, and proposed a direction for West Peoria to meet existing and future needs.

Refer to the current Zoning Districts Map (updated in June 2006) on the next page to see how development has occurred. The primary use of land in West Peoria is for housing, most of which are single-family homes. Land classified along Farmington Road provides the majority of the City's highway and service business uses (B-2), while the majority of land classified as General Business District (or B-1) is found along Western Avenue. The City has sought to preserve open space throughout West Peoria while encouraging economic growth by allowing for commercial uses in select areas (see Economic Development, page 7).

As the City is bounded along its northern, eastern, and southern border by the City of Peoria, the development of new subdivisions and/or industry is limited. The only area available for growth is along the City's western border with Limestone Township, but at this time no annexation of land is proposed. In addition, the City of West Peoria does not have an industrial base and it is unlikely that the City will attract major industry in the future since no large vacant parcels exist upon which such industry could be developed.

In 2008, the Plan Commission continues to encourage the distribution of land uses as laid out in the section entitled Land Use on page 17. Also, see the planned land use map for the future on page 19. Minimal modifications have been recommended. The planned land use map on page 19 has been compiled by the Planning Commission without the assistance of professional planning consultants. Thus, the Commission recommends that at the time of the next revision of the Comprehensive Plan (or by 2013) the City allocates funds for a professional consultant to be hired to offer guidance and recommendations.

**Please refer to the Land Use Map on the City's website:**

**<http://www.cityofwestpeoria.com/planning.asp>**

## **Economic Development**

Established commercial uses exist primarily along Western Avenue, Farmington Road and the intersection of Rohmann and Sterling Avenues. Some businesses also exist in the residential neighborhoods located in the southeast quadrant of the city. During the Small Area Planning process, the SAAG evaluated existing business development opportunities and means to enhance, support and expand nodes of commercial activity. The Plan Commission continues this process today. The Commission's long-standing intent is to provide essential goods and services for West Peoria residents in attractive, safe environments by focusing business activity along major roadways and at key intersections. Planned areas of commercial growth are depicted on the Zoning Districts Map and have been identified as follows:

Specialty Retail: The area immediately north and west of the Radisson Hotel, between Cedar and Arthur Streets, has been planned for specialty retail shops designed to attract patrons of the hotel as well as residents of the cities of Peoria and West Peoria and adjacent Limestone Township. In addition, Western Avenue, the corner of Western and Heading Avenues, and the Sterling/Rohmann intersection are all prime locations for retail shops.

Downtown: The intersection of Rohmann and Sterling Avenue is centrally located within the City. This area, which includes a grocery store as well as a bank, has been planned to extend primarily east along Rohmann to provide a concentration of retail goods and services to meet the daily needs of West Peoria residents. The business survey conducted in 2006 indicated that the City would benefit from a restaurant/deli/cafe, and the downtown area would be a great location for this.

Highway-oriented: Western Avenue and Farmington Road support uses that serve a regional market, such as hardware stores, lumber yards and pool supply companies; or are automobile-oriented such as fast-food restaurants and gas stations. These arteries have high visibility and convenient access for businesses that rely on drive-by traffic. The Commission recommends that, to the extent possible, new development along Western Avenue and Farmington Road occur in unified centers with limited access. This policy will reinforce business activity by providing cross-easements or unified points of access to properties along these arterials. It will also seek to maximize consumer safety by reducing the number of curb cuts, and therefore, potential points of conflict between vehicles entering and exiting business properties.

A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District was established in 2004 to encourage business development along Western Avenue and in the downtown area, and also to improve some blighted areas of town. As the City begins to receive money from the TIF fund, programs can be initiated to help attract new businesses, expand existing ones, and develop blighted residential areas within the TIF district. See next page for a map of the TIF district boundaries.

**Please refer to the TIF District Map on the City's website:**

**<http://www.cityofwestpeoria.com/planning.asp>**

## **Housing**

The 2000 Census of Population and Housing indicates that there were 2,192 total “housing units” in West Peoria. 1,984 housing units were occupied, thus indicating “total households” in West Peoria – 431 (or around 20%) of which are renter-occupied. The average household size was 2.29, while the average family size was 2.89. The median price asked for vacant, for-sale houses in 2000 was \$76,300. Median rent asked for vacant, for-rent units was \$333; and the median gross rent paid in West Peoria in 2000 was \$491. In 2005, the estimated median house/condo value in West Peoria was \$94,800, which compares to \$183,900 in the state of Illinois.

(Sources: <http://censtats.census.gov/data/IL/1601780736.pdf> and <http://www.city-data.com/housing/houses-West-Peoria-Illinois.html> )

The members of West Peoria’s Plan Commission agree that existing non-owner occupied, multi-family dwellings provide an affordable housing alternative to owner-occupied, single-family homes. Many homes throughout the community have been converted into two-family dwellings consistent with the zoning of the area. The consensus of the Commission is that regulations need to be adopted and enforced so that non-owner occupied dwellings do not reduce property values of this predominantly single-family, owner-occupied community. Members also agree that, given the number of affordable rental housing units already available in the community, additional multi-family housing should be discouraged and that a priority should be placed on attracting upscale, as well as senior housing to West Peoria.

At present, no options exist for seniors who may wish to purchase or rent a dwelling that is fully maintained by a homeowners’ association or other organization. Similarly, the supply of upscale housing in West Peoria is limited. Senior housing is proposed at the northeast quadrant of Swords and Alice Avenues and wherever land is available for such development. Due to the limited land resources available for new single-family, residential developments, members of the Plan Commission agree that upscale, or “upgrade” homes were the most likely to be constructed on vacant lots in the community, or within the one and one-half mile boundary into unincorporated Peoria County.

The Commission recognizes the importance of maintaining the character of existing residential neighborhoods. There are several neighborhoods in the City where the architecture and character of the residential streets make them unique to Peoria County. The members of the Plan Commission agree that the integrity of the neighborhoods along Moss Avenue between Sterling and Waverly Avenues and along Edgehill Court north of Heading Avenue should be protected. The Commission recommends that these areas be protected by regulations that promote the repair, rehabilitation and reuse of these structures rather than to allow them to be torn down and replaced with homes that do not relate to those that already exist in these areas.

The City is currently “peppered” with commercial uses in residential neighborhoods. The members of the Plan Commission agree that commercial uses which provide support services to residents are desirable, but recognize also that there are many businesses which are not compatible with surrounding residential development. Members wish to reduce the potential for additional uses that could detract from the residential character of the area and to focus

new business development along Farmington Road, to the west of the Radisson Hotel, at the corner of Heading and Western avenues, and in the vicinity of the intersection of Sterling and Rohmann Avenues (see above, Zoning Districts Map and section entitled Economic Development).

### **Community Character and Facilities**

The members of the West Peoria Plan Commission agree on the importance of preserving the existing character of this community. The Comprehensive Plan reflects the Commission's desire to preserve existing neighborhoods and promote the intersection of Sterling and Rohmann Avenues as the downtown, the focus of neighborhood commercial activity. The Commission also recognizes the importance of property maintenance in preserving West Peoria's image as a desirable community in which to live and work. It believes that measures should be taken to enforce the maintenance of both residential and commercial properties in the community.

The Plan Commission proposes that streetscape improvements be made to enhance the image of West Peoria and set it apart from the City of Peoria and adjacent Townships. Proposed improvements include the installation of shade trees, ornamental lighting, entry signs and other amenities. The Commission has a desire to see mature trees preserved and landscape screening installed between dissimilar land uses. This is a way to enhance community character and minimize privacy intrusion and other nuisances that can occur when commercial properties abut residential districts. When trees impinge on above-ground utility wires, the Commission also desires to work with local utility companies to protect mature trees and plant new ones.

The County is promoting the continued development of a regional trail system. West Peoria is looking to add to this system by providing trails and designated pedestrian routes within the community. Proposed trails would provide linkages between established residential neighborhoods, community parks, open space and commercial activity in the vicinity of the Radisson Hotel and the intersection of Sterling and Rohmann Avenues.

West Peoria also contains a large number of institutional and semi-public land uses, and a high percentage of land dedicated to these uses. The City's institutional uses include schools, cemeteries, churches, government buildings, and religious or other semi-public agencies such as Catholic Charities. These institutions provide a wide variety of services to the region and are a unique community resource. However, they do not provide tax revenue to the City. The benefit gained by retaining such a large number of institutional uses should be augmented by the provision or expansion of revenue-generating commercial uses (see Economic Development above).

The Plan Commission recognizes the importance of existing institutional uses in West Peoria and recommends coordination between existing institutions, the park district and local governments. This will maximize the use of existing facilities as well as enhance educational, recreational and civic programs that currently exist or may be developed in the

future to serve residents in the community. Education, and the quality of primary schools serving West Peoria, was a major topic of discussion during the strategic visioning (MAPPING) process.

### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Natural Resources**

The City of West Peoria is wonderfully situated in the Pleasure Driveway Park District (Peoria Park District), adjacent to two parks and two golf courses. Laura Bradley Park, which is located off of Farmington Road and Park Road; and the Franciscan Recreation Complex both provide West Peoria with green space and a great environment for recreation. Madison Park Golf Course is located off Manor Parkway and Sterling Ave; while Newman Golf Course is found off Nebraska Ave.

The Franciscan Recreation Complex (FRC) is a multi-purpose recreation center located at the intersection of Heading and Sterling Avenues. The FRC features a full-size gymnasium, a multi-purpose room with kitchenette, a community room, dance studio, soccer field, two baseball fields, and an outdoor playground. The Commission sees a lot of potential for the FRC serving West Peorians, and seeks to better utilize this facility and promote its expansion.

Nevertheless, there is currently limited land set aside for outdoor park and recreation uses within the City. As redevelopment occurs within West Peoria, park and recreational facilities should be established to serve the needs of local residents. Two sites presently offer potential as future community park facilities. The first is the existing Finch's gravel pit. Following the extraction of existing sand and gravel deposits, secondary use of this facility could coordinate reclamation with establishment of a West Peoria Park. The second is a small green area near the end of Barker Avenue owned by the Township. Other appropriate areas throughout the City should be considered for park and recreation uses as well.

Open space within West Peoria consists of mature woodlands, floodplains, steep slopes and cemeteries. A majority of these areas within West Peoria consist of lands designated as Environmental Corridors by the County Plan.

West Peoria is looking to add to the County's regional trail system by providing trails and designated pedestrian routes within the community. Existing bicycle trails in West Peoria include a trail along State Route 8 (Farmington Rd) which continues to Taylor Rd; a trail along Rohmann Ave. from Western Ave. to Calvin Coolidge Middle School; and one continuing down Sterling Ave. from Rohmann Ave. to Manor Parkway. These existing trails lack connectivity with other areas in West Peoria and throughout the region. The Commission proposes two geographically separate trail systems. The first would link Bradley Park to the residential areas of the City north of Farmington Road. The second, larger system would unite pathways along local streets connecting the destinations of the Radisson Hotel, Madison Park, Calvin Coolidge Middle School, the commercial area at Sterling and Rohmann Avenues and institutional uses along Heading Avenue. Land for trail

systems outside of street rights-of-way and public lands would be acquired through voluntary measures with the consent of the property owner.

One objective of the Commission is to assure that land is set aside as permanent open space for public recreation, natural resource protection and separation between differing land uses. It will also encourage the continued development of a regional park and open space system, promote a countywide environmental corridor and provide for the diverse recreation needs of our residents.

The members of the Plan Commission also recognize the importance of maintaining floodplains, bluffs, woodlands, steep slopes and other environmentally sensitive properties in West Peoria. These natural features set West Peoria apart from the adjacent City of Peoria and Limestone Township.

## **Transportation**

Peoria County has established a hierarchy of arterial, collector and local roadways each with its own right-of-way standards. It selected roadways on the basis of their traffic volume and their connections between towns, interchanges, significant traffic generators and state highways. The purpose of classifying some Peoria County highways as “primary” was to enable the establishment of a network of roads wherein the right-of-way is protected by limitations on curb cuts, building setbacks, and signage, and includes guidelines for appropriate landscaping. The establishment of this network helped establish priorities for improvements and maintenance of the overall County system.

None of the primary County highways pass through West Peoria. State Route 8 (Farmington Road), however, serves as the major east-west artery and functions as the service corridor for many larger commercial uses (see Zoning Districts Map). As commercial uses expand or develop along Farmington Road, buildings should be set back far enough from the existing right-of-way to allow for future expansion on this roadway. In addition, curb cuts should be controlled in number and placement in order to increase safety and traffic flow.

The West Peoria Zoning Districts Map shows the major roadways in the community. N. Western Avenue, Heading, Sterling, Rohmann, Swords, and Farmington Road, represent streets that presently carry higher traffic volumes. The members of the Plan Commission seek to establish a roadway system to help guide through traffic and destination traffic to designated streets and discourage additional neighborhood traffic. The Commission also recommends that Peoria County and the City of West Peoria continue to evaluate measures to restrict motorists seeking a shortcut off Western Avenue. The members discussed options such as one-way streets, limited access, and cul-de-sacs as possible means to prevent non-residential traffic in West Peoria’s residential neighborhoods.

The City has initiated a Sidewalk Improvement Program (begun in 1996) in which several neighborhoods have participated to have their sidewalks reconstructed or repaired. The Commission wishes to see this program continued.

The Tri-County Planning Commission has been designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Peoria/Pekin Metropolitan Planning Area. An MPO is a regional transportation decision-making body which the federal government requires for metropolitan areas of 50,000 people or more. The Tri-County Planning Commission has delegated its duties to the Peoria/Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study (PPUATS), an advisory board consisting of local officials and staff members from local municipalities, counties, IDOT and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District.

The West Peoria Plan Commission feels it is in the best interest of the City to maintain participation in PPUATS and have projects included in the Long-Range Transportation Plan FY 2005-2030. In this plan, the City of West Peoria has submitted three street improvement projects, one for Swords Hill with a completion goal within 10 years and an estimated cost of \$750K, another for Sterling Avenue (between Farmington Road to Nebraska) with a completion goal within 10 years and an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. Also included is a Farmington Road Streetscape Improvement project for the area along Farmington Road between Main Street and Kickapoo Creek Road. As traffic volumes along this road have increased over the last 5 years, this project would seek to enhance traffic flow and the pedestrian experience by creating a bicycle and pedestrian path, lessening the amount of curb cuts, improving infrastructure and adding basic amenities (such as trees and sidewalks) of an urban arterial street.

In addition, found in the PPUATS Long-Range Plan is a project for improving and expanding Franciscan Recreation Park under the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program. This project is set to be completed within 10 years and has an estimated cost of \$75K. The Plan Commission recommends pursuing the above projects by continually submitting proposals for federal funds through PPUATS and maintaining a presence on the advisory board.

## **Infrastructure**

Lines from the Illinois American Water Company serve most homes and businesses in West Peoria. The Pleasant Valley Water Company serves a small area in the western portion of the City along Farmington Road. Community wells located near Farmington Road serve the remainder of West Peoria.

An existing Pleasant Valley Water Company study indicated that groundwater contamination is a serious threat to existing wells along Farmington Road. The study's recommendations include restricting land uses in the groundwater recharge area to those which do not cause contamination. Members of the Plan Commission would like to encourage commercial, residential and open space land uses for these areas rather than industrial development. The Commission agrees that industrial and commercial uses posing a groundwater contamination threat to this area should be prohibited.

The Greater Peoria Sanitary District provides sewer service to West Peoria. A majority of the vacant parcels in the City have direct access or are in close proximity to existing sewer lines.

There are many areas in the City where the lack of street lighting results in unsafe conditions for pedestrians and motorists. The members of the Plan Commission agree that the potential for installing ornamental lighting as a means of identifying and unifying West Peoria should continue to be explored with the West Peoria Lighting District.

In regards to information technology infrastructure, more and more communities are deciding to acquire wireless technology for internet services. The greater Peoria regional area is seeking to become a “wireless community” following in the footsteps of many cities throughout the country. As this initiative develops in the next year or two, West Peoria seeks to be included in the wireless area.

A pressing issue in West Peoria has always been improvement of our infrastructure, specifically our sidewalks and storm sewer/drainage system. The City has established a Sidewalk Improvement Program, whereby residents on a particular street can choose to pay a small increase in taxes for a few years to go towards the reconstruction of their sidewalk. The City contributes half the cost of the project. Regarding our storm sewer system, while we have completed much essential infrastructure work, there is still a great need to address storm sewer repair and replacement in West Peoria.

### III. VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

#### VISION

West Peoria aspires to be the city of choice in Central Illinois for ourselves and future generations – beautiful, clean, and safe.

Our community is renowned for its unique balance between a hometown atmosphere and a progressive business environment.

West Peoria, with its high quality schools and extensive cultural opportunities, truly is a city for the ages.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

To build the civic infrastructure for the 21st century

To increase the spirit of cooperation among residents by fostering family activities and safety

To encourage and maintain a thriving business environment and promote opportunities for many types of businesses

To retain our outstanding residential value

#### IV. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES

The Goals, Objectives, and Strategies are considered the “meat” of the plan. We’ve looked at where we are and the Vision expresses where we want to be. This section answers the question, “How do we get there?”

Whereas *the Vision* indicates a state of being or where a community wants to be at a specified time in the future; *Goals* are what are to be accomplished, and they represent something that when completed will lead to the stated Vision.

Goals are long-range, general aims of the community which are broad and abstract.

Objectives are actions that, if taken and become successful, should lead to the goal. They are more precise, tangible and concrete.

A strategy is usually a specific activity consistent with and contained within the objective. Implementation strategies are realistic and measurable. They keep the plan from “sitting on a shelf”. A plan will only be successful if the goals and objectives are implemented.

## Land Use

### **Goal 1: Provide a well-balanced mix of land uses to preserve the character of the community and to promote a friendly atmosphere for West Peoria residents.**

Objective 1: Promote and approve developments that are compatible with, and mutually support, one another.

- *Uphold the land use classifications adopted in West Peoria's Comprehensive Plan when evaluating a development proposal or a request for rezoning or special use permits.*

Objective 2: Retain and enhance the small town atmosphere of West Peoria to maintain neighborhood identity.

- *Promote the intersection of Sterling and Rohmann as the focus of neighborhood commercial activity – the “downtown”.*
- *Initiate a streetscape improvement program along major arterials that sets West Peoria apart from adjacent City and Township development through the addition of street trees, pedestrian linkages, pocket parks, ornamental light standards, entry signs and other amenities. Investigate ways to fund streetscape improvements (grants, special taxing districts, and/or developer contributions).*
- *Preserve mature trees where possible and provide landscape buffering and screening between new and existing business and residential properties. Encourage potential developers to do the above as part of a request for rezoning, special use permit or other development proposals. Work with local utility companies to protect mature trees and plant new ones.*
- *Work with the Lighting District to determine a cost-effective approach toward installing ornamental lighting and/or replacing existing streetlights with ornamental fixtures.*

Objective 3: Adopt and enforce property maintenance regulations to upgrade the appearance of the community.

- *Develop more stringent property maintenance regulations and code enforcement procedures to assist property owners in preserving the community character.*

- *Investigate possibility of adopting a building or maintenance code and registration of rental properties.*

**Refer to the Planned Land Use Map on the following page.**

**Please refer to the Planned Land Use Map on the City's website:**

**<http://www.cityofwestpeoria.com/planning.asp>**

## Economic Development

### **Goal 2: Achieve a stable economy and an attractive commercial, office/research and industrial base that provides employment opportunities and which serve the needs of West Peoria residents.**

Objective 1: Establish and maintain a public body, as well as a position at City Hall, to propose, guide, and monitor all planning and development projects.

- *Investigate ways to fund streetscape improvements in areas planned for business development along Sterling and Rohmann Avenues, the downtown area, and in established commercial districts along Farmington Road and Western Avenue. (Grants, special taxing districts, and/or developer contributions)*
- *Work with local governments and water companies to find ways to extend water to properties along Farmington Road prior to the time IDOT reconstructs this roadway so that development or redevelopment becomes economically feasible.*
- *Support West Peoria's Comprehensive Plan when reviewing zoning changes, special use permits or other development proposals in West Peoria.*
- *Encourage zoning changes that help West Peoria realize commercial growth in those areas planned for such development according to the Comprehensive Plan.*

Objective 2: Promote West Peoria as a great place to do business and establish a plan to attract and retain new residents and quality businesses.

- *Develop and maintain website (and other marketing tools) to market available property in West Peoria to potential residents and business owners.*
- *Promote the conversion of vacant and residential properties in the vicinity of the Radisson Hotel for specialty retail shops.*
- *Utilize the Tax Increment Financing District to encourage development. Also, explore other possible economic development incentives (such as a revolving loan fund or façade improvement program) to promote business development.*

Objective 3: Promote land at/near the intersection of Sterling and Rohmann Avenues for new commercial development and “revitalization” of West Peoria’s downtown.

- *Focus convenience retail and services in this central area of the city.*

- *Encourage the redevelopment of older commercial buildings or the conversion of residences on or adjacent to this intersection to commercial uses.*
- *Install trees, lighting, unified signage, “street furniture” and other improvements to enhance and identify this area as West Peoria’s downtown.*
- *Utilize the Tax Increment Financing District to encourage development.*

Objective 4: Encourage clustering of commercial, service and office/research uses in planned centers along Farmington Road and Western Avenue.

- *Reinforce business activity by providing diversity and a concentration of business uses for the convenience of the consumer.*
- *Maximize consumer safety by minimizing curb cuts.*
- *Avoid strip commercial by designating nodes of business activity at highway intersections.*
- *Enhance the appearance of the Farmington Road and Western Avenue commercial districts through the installation of shade trees, ornamental lighting, entry signs and other amenities. Work with local utility companies to protect mature trees and plant new ones.*
- *Encourage developers to provide cross-easements or joint access to properties along Western Avenue and Farmington Road as part of a request for rezoning or special use permits to accommodate new business development.*

## Housing

### **Goal 3: Preserve West Peoria's individual neighborhoods which contribute to overall community character as well as offer diversity in housing for residents.**

Objective 1: Encourage the conservation of West Peoria's older, more established neighborhoods.

- *Promote the repair, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of older residential structures as a means of maintaining architectural diversity and preserving the community's cultural heritage.*
- *Preserve uniqueness of neighborhoods, such as those along Moss Avenue between Sterling and Waverly Avenues and along Edgehill Court north of Heading Avenue.*
- *Establish guidelines for new construction so that the design of dwellings constructed on vacant lots is sympathetic to the architectural character and setting of the majority of the homes in these neighborhoods.*

Objective 2: Provide for a balanced variety of housing, based on the projected population and employment mixture of West Peoria, by encouraging an increase in supply of "upgrade" housing and limiting the development of new multi-family dwellings.

- *Pursue initiatives to encourage owner-occupied homes rather than rental units.*

Objective 3: Encourage developers and homebuilders to construct new housing consistent in quality and architectural design with the neighborhood in which the dwelling will be constructed.

Objective 4: Adopt and enforce regulations that require repair and regular maintenance of residences in order to preserve housing stock and protect property values.

- *Investigate possibility of adopting a building or maintenance code and registration of rental properties.*
- *Educate residents on existing regulations (covering litter and property maintenance) including what they cover, how they are enforced and how the public can file complaints.*

Objective 5: Discourage commercial uses from locating in residentially zoned and developed areas when they do not provide support services for the residents or are incompatible with the principal residential character and use of the neighborhood.

- *Prevent further encroachment of incompatible business uses in single-family residential areas by amending the home occupation restrictions in the City's Zoning Ordinance.*
- *Deny requests for changes in zoning classification or special use permits for businesses when such changes would result in commercial developments in an area that has not been planned for such use.*
- *Support the West Peoria Comprehensive Plan when making recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals on special use and rezoning cases to prevent the further encroachment of commercial uses into residential areas.*

Objective 6: Encourage the development of quality senior housing in West Peoria to meet the needs of elderly residents seeking independent living opportunities and baby-boomers looking to retire in the near future.

- *Encourage the development of senior citizen housing in the northeast quadrant of Swords and Alice Avenues.*
- *Investigate all options for senior housing facilities in West Peoria wherever land is available for such development.*

## Community Character and Facilities

### **Goal 4: Establish recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in West Peoria for all ages, and promote public safety, to enrich the lives of West Peoria residents.**

Objective 1: Promote collaboration among institutions such as schools, police and the fire protection district, the park district, community organizations, the Township, and so on, to provide a variety of recreational and educational opportunities that target all age groups within the community.

- *Meet periodically with representatives of the West Peoria Residents' Association, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, Sisters of St. Francis and other similar organizations in the community to share common goals and establish a community bond between these organizations and the City of West Peoria.*
- *Seek for better ways to utilize the Franciscan Recreation Center and Park.*
- *Promote neighborhood events annually such as cultural fairs, concerts, art classes, family nights, parades, and community gatherings.*

Objective 2: Encourage public safety and crime prevention in West Peoria.

- *Analyze crime situation in West Peoria to determine better ways to deter crime.*
- *Support an ongoing discussion among community leaders, public officials and law enforcement representatives to come up with a plan to promote public safety.*
- *Maintain a neighborhood block captain system and Neighborhood Watch groups to assist police in protecting West Peoria neighborhoods and to better disperse information among residents. Encourage active citizen involvement in these programs.*

Objective 3: Promote high quality schools to serve West Peoria residents.

- *Encourage parent involvement and explore possibilities for the community to become more involved in the local schools.*
- *Research and analyze the current situation to begin process of addressing the problems. Evaluate options to improve education/schools in West Peoria.*

- *Meet periodically with residents, teachers, the superintendent, principals, and local public officials to discuss problems and solutions.*

## **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Natural Resources**

### **Goal 5: Promote environmental conservation in West Peoria and achieve a network of open space, parks, and recreational lands linked by a regional pedestrian trail system.**

Objective 1: Investigate the use of lands within or adjacent to the floodplain for green space, park, and recreation sites.

- *Cooperate with agencies and other public bodies to prioritize the acquisition or protection of land within environmental corridors.*
- *Meet with owners or developers of commercial property along Farmington Road to discuss the establishment of a park/open space corridor along Dry Run Creek.*
- *Plan for the adaptive reuse of the quarry for future open space and recreation including fishing, picnic areas and wildlife habitat. Work with the owners of Finch's gravel pit and the state's Mined Lands Reclamation Council to investigate its reclamation and adaptive reuse as a community park or recreational facility.*

Objective 2: Create an interconnected network of trails and designated pedestrian pathways linking major regional parks, recreation destinations, institutional uses and commercial shopping districts.

- *Encourage the development of a continuous non-motorized, multi-purpose trail system (pedestrian, bike, ski) through West Peoria, utilizing protected greenbelts and existing easements. Investigate non-acquisition techniques such as easements to provide linkages between systems.*
- *Work with Peoria County and other regional organizations to pursue and be included in a comprehensive regional trail system.*

Objective 3: Achieve an awareness of the value of West Peoria's natural resources and preserve those areas that are environmentally unique.

- *Coordinate a strategy to acquire and protect Horseshoe Bottoms and the city bluffs.*
- *Discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas, i.e., mature woodlands and flood-plains, which might be degraded by such development.*
- *Continue to promote a system of open space corridors as a basic structure and framework for resource protection and open space planning.*

- *Preserve and protect wetlands, streams, floodplains, wildlife habitat, old growth forest and ridgelines throughout West Peoria and emphasize their value as focal points of natural beauty.*
- *Encourage the private contribution of environmentally sensitive properties through conservation easements or dedication of land to public or semi-public organizations dedicated to preserving open space.*
- *Encourage developers during the site plan review process to set aside lands in the open space corridor system, as well as other environmentally-sensitive resources that may exist outside these corridors, as permanent open space.*

Objective 4: Work with the Peoria Park District to promote the development of small neighborhood parks and “tot lots” within existing West Peoria neighborhoods.

## Transportation

### **Goal 6: Attain a safe, efficient and convenient system of roadways that links neighborhoods with community resources, businesses, and with regional transportation systems.**

Objective 1: Reserve rights-of-way for future road-widening and intersection improvements to serve areas of projected growth or redevelopment.

Objective 2: Protect the safety, capacity and efficiency of West Peoria's primary roadways by minimizing curb cuts particularly on sections with high traffic volumes.

- *Work with IDOT during the development of plans for the reconstruction of Farmington Road to develop appropriate access controls.*
- *Continue to pursue improvements according to the Farmington Road Streetscape Improvement Plan.*

Objective 3: Promote and develop transportation systems which include provisions for public transportation, bicycles and pedestrians.

- *Work with CityLink officials to coordinate bus routes with the major roadway system and maintain the current level of service.*
- *Pursue proposal for bicycle/pedestrian path along Farmington Road as part of the Farmington Road Streetscape Improvement Plan.*

Objective 4: Explore ways to control non-residential traffic in residential neighborhoods to eliminate shortcutting through and improve safety in residential neighborhoods.

- *Investigate traffic patterns and review options for local roads with access to Western Avenue such as one-way streets, cul-de-sacs, and limited entry from Western Ave.*

Objective 5: Use the major roadway system as a basis for land use planning and transportation expenditures.

- *Coordinate major roadway improvements with streetscape improvements discussed in section entitled Community Character & Facilities.*

- *Redesign the entrance to West Peoria at Sterling Avenue and Manor Parkway with appropriate landscaping.*

Objective 6: Develop design guidelines for the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances that provide for pedestrian connections in order to assure safe, convenient pedestrian linkages between public transit and residential, commercial or employment destinations.

Objective 7: Maintain participation in the Peoria/Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study (PPUATS) and continually pursue projects indicated in the Long-Range Transportation Plan FY 2005-2030.

- *Continually seek funds through PPUATS for street improvement projects on Swords Hill, Sterling Avenue (between Farmington Road and Nebraska), and Farmington Road.*

## Infrastructure

### **Goal 7: Provide and maintain public facilities and services that are functional, safe, economical and available to all residents of West Peoria.**

Objective 1: Develop an ongoing Capital Improvement Program for repairing, replacing, and adding to West Peoria's water and sewer lines, streets and roads, and other public facilities as needed to serve existing and future development.

- *Continue an ongoing upgrade of drainage systems.*
- *Continue the ongoing Sidewalk Improvement Program for residential neighborhoods.*
- *Coordinate upgrades to existing water and sewer lines with new development or redevelopment in the City. Plan for the construction or expansion of wells and wastewater treatment plants to accommodate new growth.*
- *Ensure all areas are served by fire hydrants with adequate pressure and supply.*
- *Encourage the extension of sewer and water to properties along Farmington Road so that new development or redevelopment becomes economically feasible.*
- *Use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) money appropriately to fund public infrastructure improvement projects as needed.*

Objective 2: Coordinate the monitoring of local water wells for harmful contaminants with County and State agencies.

- *Collaborate with IEPA on all situations/necessary items.*
- *Make certain all abandoned wells are properly filled, sealed and made safe.*

Objective 3: Continue an ongoing upgrade of street and pedestrian lighting characteristic of West Peoria's established neighborhoods.

- *Continue to meet with the local electric utility along with interested County and State representatives to discuss options for acquiring or replacing existing ornamental lighting fixtures.*

Objective 4: Coordinate utility improvements with recommended streetscape improvements identified in section entitled Community Character & Facilities.

- *Encourage utility companies to bury electric, telephone and cable lines as replacement and improvements are made to these systems.*