

RECORD OF MEETING

Williston Comprehensive & Transportation Plan Update

Focus Group of Emergency Services Providers

September 23, 2008 2:30 PM

Williston City Hall

Members in Attendance:

James Lokken
Alan Hanson
Kent Jarcik
Rick Lane
Cindy Gray
Steve Peterson
Jeff Rodacker

Representing:

Williston Police Department
Williston Fire and Ambulance Department
City of Williston, Planning Department
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.
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Ackerman-Estvold Engineering

Cindy and Rick welcomed James and Alan to the meeting and thanked them for coming. They explained that early input is being sought as to the issues that need to be addressed by the updates of the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Plan. The following comments were made.

- Fire Department has some full time staff, but is mostly volunteers. The more volunteers they have, the less work there is for everyone.
 - Volunteer fire fighters who work in the oil fields are out of town all day, and can't respond in a timely manner, or can't respond at all.
 - At 20,000 people, the community needs full time paid positions. The city would like to avoid that with the current population.
 - Would like 40 volunteers. Now have 25. They need to get the word out that they need more volunteers.
 - Training costs are incurred for each volunteer fire fighter, plus \$3000 for each set of protective gear.
 - Training facility is needed. Such a facility should address all hazards and also serve law enforcement such as police and highway patrol.

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- The fire department needs a tire training structure. They set it on fire, create smoke conditions, provide a place for a car fire, etc. Dickenson has such a facility.
- Three acre site would accommodate parking and training room, training grounds, industrial usage issues. Could be shared with police. Could be accommodated close to police pistol range south of tracks, south of depot.
- The area next to the pistol range has been suggested but is not good from the standpoint of emergency vehicles, because it's cut off by railroad tracks.
- Currently have one station. Will likely another station with further growth to west.
- Would like to retain five minute responses time, which is approximately a three-mile radius around the station.
- Williston also houses rural fire department. The City would like to have a cooperative agreement with the rural fire department so the City's fire department could respond within a certain distance of the city. Dave Benth is the rural fire chief. The Williston Fire Department currently does not respond to fires outside city limits.
- Hydrant capability throughout city. Getting more cul-de-sacs over the years.
- Volunteer firefighters respond to scene.
- City will have hazardous material de-con facilities by next year and be 70% trained. This is part of a regional hazardous materials plan. The City of Williston is working with Minot on this. Have double de-contamination tent for mass de-contamination emergencies.
- Jeff Haugen - Fire Chief
- For fire department, easterly growth would be a problem due to the single bridge. They prefer/need to have two means of access in case of an emergency that blocks of one route of access.
- Pheasant Run Area
 - Cimeron Heights - cutting down to one access. Can 32nd Street be developed? The trailer park currently has only one access to Pheasant Run.
 - Sand Creek - single access only.
- Ambulance service is also based at the fire station. They serve 1200 sq. miles.

- 800 square miles in Williams County, 400 square miles in McKenzie County, plus the city of Williston.
- No noticeable increase in ambulance demand due to oil industry. Demand seems normal. Call volume hasn't gone up that much. Still a lot of elderly in the community that need ambulance service.
- 15,000 people - 2 ALS (advanced life support) ambulance units required.
- Currently have 4 ambulances consisting of two ALS units, one BLS (basic life support) unit, and one Transfer unit.
- The city has 200 mobile homes and full apartment buildings. The calls are normal, but there are probably more of them. Call increases don't seem to directly correlate with oil people.
- Ambulance service receives 50% reimbursements for costs.
- There are currently three to four EMS staff on duty. They are full time, and they drive fire apparatus to scene. Volunteers respond directly to scene. There are currently nine paramedics plus chief. There are three on duty at any given time.
- Police Department
 - Police Dept leases space out in the County facility. Currently there are 22 full-time police officers and 6 full-time dispatchers. Police Chief could use another two full-time officers.
 - Work with County for jail space.
 - Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located in county law enforcement building.
 - Handle 911 dispatch for Williston and Williams Counties.
 - 24 full time positions for sworn officers
 - never filled those last couple positions
 - 1 narcotics task force
 - Constantly hiring, constantly training - lots of turn over
 - Finding people already trained when no housing not easy.
 - Problem with recruiting no place to live. Would prefer to hire only licensed officers but generally have to train.
 - 6 full time dispatchers for 911, 1 dog catcher, 1 secretary.

- May need to add ambulance, fire, police to all of Williston and Williams County including Highway Patrol.
 - Traffic light and stop sign needs/problems:
 - 22nd St @ 2nd Ave W
 - 11th St West by hospital when accidents occur, they are bad crashes
 - 9th Ave W at bypass - needs better pedestrian crossing. Pedestrian underpass of highway would help.
 - Facilities - staffing - need to maintain enough people for growth.
 - Police experiencing more disturbance calls for incidents such as bar fights, domestic problems. Because of these things, traffic speeds don't get enforced from Thursday nights to Sunday afternoon.
 - Oil companies have been very cooperative. The Police Department feels they have a good relationship with them. There's more attention to drug testing and so forth than during the previous oil boom.
 - Sheriff's office has 20' boat and airboat (flat bottom) to make rescues on the Lake. Also have a dive team.
 - Winter issues - difficulty getting around at times.
- Growth east of Little Muddy River makes it more difficult to service police calls due to the lack of river crossings.