

RECORD OF MEETING

Williston Comprehensive Plan Planning Advisory Committee

Review of Draft Land Use Plan Alternatives for the Comprehensive Plan

March 30, 2009, 3:00 p.m.
Williston City Hall

Members in Attendance:

Kent Jarcik
Monte Meiers

Jeff Zarling
Brent Bogar
Jenelle Loomer
Larry Grondahl
Tom Rolfstad
Deeann Long
Chris Kattleson
Melanie Stillwell
James Lokken
Alan Hanson
Cindy Gray (via telephone)

Representing:

City of Williston Planning Department
City of Williston and Williams County Engineering
Department
Williston Chamber of Commerce
Williston City Commission
Williams County Planning
Williston Park and Recreation District
City of Williston Economic Development
North Dakota Community Action Partnership, Reg. 1
Williston Public Schools
Community Representative
Police Chief
Fire Chief
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.

Kent Jarcik explained how the development of the draft land use plans fit into the process of the Comprehensive Plan development, and discussed the two meetings next week (public forum and Planning Advisory Committee meeting). He said that lunch will be provided for the Planning Advisory Committee meeting on Tuesday at 11:30 a.m., so he would like to know if people cannot attend. He turned the meeting over to Cindy Gray.

Cindy described the starting process for development of the land use plans. She explained that the location of major features, such as topography, roadways and highways, creeks, rivers, existing development and so forth are used as the starting point in the development of land use plan alternatives. She explained that she started with the identification of land with more than 10% slope, and identified those properties as part of a connected area of open space. She also explained that the land around the airport was handled in a couple different ways, either open space or public/institutional land making of a fairly large area off the NW end of the runway. She described other characteristics of land uses around the airport.

Land use variations along Highway 2 and 85 on the southwest side of the city were discussed

along with land uses associated with a possible “bypass”. Cindy pointed out that at a previous meeting there was a comment made that the Little Muddy River could be emphasized more as an open space/recreational corridor, so that change was made. She noted that both alternatives contain some agricultural land up in the northwest portion of the planning area, due to the extensiveness of the area being studied and the long time frame before any development would be justified in that area. She also pointed out that primarily agricultural land use was shown east of the Little Muddy River corridor, largely due to input from the township focus group and due to the topography and the fact that it would be significantly easier to serve other areas with city services. She pointed out that in some cases, such as the area east of Hwy 2 north of 26th Street, Scenario 1 proposes a gradual change of land use in that area going from industrial to commercial in nature, so the color red is shown there. In Scenario 2, that area is not colored, indicating that the industrial/commercial nature of the area would remain. A corridor overlay is also shown in Scenario 1, and could be applied to Scenario 2 as well, regardless of the land uses shown there. After summarizing some of the main features of the land use and roadway corridor alternatives, Cindy asked committee members for their questions, thoughts, and comments. The following comments were made and discussed by the group.

1. The open space corridor east of the Little Muddy River seems to go too far east, and should probably be limited to the Army Corps of Engineers land. Some land in that area is owned by people who might intend to develop it in the future. Cindy stated that this could be modified, but that there were other considerations given to the amount of open space as well, such as the presence of the old coal mining shafts between the Little Muddy River and County Road 9, where development is undesirable due to instability of the soil. She also cautioned that if CR 9 was desired as a possible truck route, that future development along this corridor would need to be handled differently than it has been in the past, where numerous individual driveways have been allowed along the corridor. She said that the use of any federal funding along the corridor would most likely require a different approach to access management to further limit access. SRF will look into this and modify it to more closely match the Army Corps land, but that our recommendation for the rest of the area would be agricultural land use rather than some form of development, due to the fact that this isn't one of the areas that will be easy to serve with city services.
2. The size of the open space around the Sand Creek was noted. This area was discussed as a possible open space and trail corridor or some combination of that and permanent grazing land. Cindy stated that the topography of greater than 10 percent slopes were used as the guide to determine the parameter of that area. She stated that there are certainly areas of less than 10 percent slope within that area that could be suitable for some scattered development, but that from a planning standpoint, concentrating services in other areas that can accommodate more condensed development is more cost effective and these are important areas aesthetically and environmentally more fragile.
3. The high land south of the Sand Creek is an attractive area, and is probably preferable as a future development area rather than as a waste water treatment facility in the location currently shown on the plan. In light of that, Scenario 1 could be changed to slide the Possible Future Wastewater Treatment Facility farther to the southeast, to push it closer to the highway and the industrial land use that's just north of the highway at this time. The conservation design development shown to

the northwest could probably be pulled farther to the southeast, but for now, the open space buffer will be left to the west of the possible waste water treatment site, since it will be important to have a buffer area around such a facility.

4. Monte suggested that it would be reasonable to also show an alternative site for future waste water treatment just west of the existing waste water treatment lagoons south of the railroad tracks. This location will be added as another alternative, recognizing there may be some wetland or other constraints in that area.
5. Monte also asked about the land use designation of the entire area south of the industrial land along the railroad tracks. He expressed that this area might best be designated as public land to ensure that public facilities such as expansion of waste water treatment facilities are possible.
6. The location of the existing industrial park east of the Little Muddy River was discussed. It was acknowledged that the subdivided area is already industrial land use, and that other property to the northeast, between the industrial park and the landfill, should also be designated as industrial, as far west as the ETA boundary. It was also acknowledged that the existing landfill and surrounding future expansion area most likely requires industrial zoning despite its designation as public/institutional on the land use map.
7. Larry brought up the issue of relocating the airport, and asked if that had been considered. He asked if the cost of keeping it in its existing location had ever been compared to the cost of relocating. Brent replied that moving the airport has been discussed, but that there's never been a good case for it. The existing location is already the third relocation. At one time, the airport was located down along the Little Muddy River. Tom added that at one time there was an alternative to place the airport in a location that would serve both Williston and Sidney. It was ultimately dismissed, and it was felt that having the airport in a convenient location encourages Williston residents to use the airport rather than drive to an airport in another city. Cindy noted that the text of the Comp Plan can discuss the option of studying airport relocation in the future, but at this time, the efforts have been focused on planning land uses with the airport at its existing location, since it seems all efforts have been focused on shifting the runway to the NW to allow for further development of the land currently in the runway approach zone, and studying an airport relocation would be a major study in and of itself. If the city wants to address it as a separate issue in the future, it should be mentioned in the text of the Comp Plan at this time, so future analyses can show that there was at least some thought given to it as a possibility when the Comp Plan was done.
8. The relocation of the power transmission poles and lines northwest of the airport was brought up, and Larry asked Cindy if SRF has seen that information. Cindy has not seen plans for the proposed relocation of the power transmission structures or lines.
9. Jeff Zarling stated that an east bypass truck route continues to come up due to the complaints about truck traffic along East Dakota Parkway. CR 9 north of Hwy 1804 was discussed as a possible truck route, and SRF will change the roadway designations to show it as a future minor arterial. In Scenario 1, the corridor could extend up to CR 6 (two miles north of CR 7B), which

would require a new structure over the Little Muddy River. In Scenario 2, the corridor could just extend up to CR 7B, which connects to the White Bridge. This will require some modifications to the roadways system plan. The group seemed to agree that the alignment of CR 9 would need to change just north of Hwy 1804 where the road currently curves to the east and climbs a large hill. If this is to be used as a truck route, we may need an effort to realign the road to reduce the slope.

10. Questions were asked about the necessity of extending University Avenue to the north. Cindy stated that she felt development between Hwy 2 and the Little Muddy River should be accompanied by a northerly extension of University Avenue, or that area of the City would seem very isolated from the area south of 26th Street, as there would be no good way to travel north/south other than to go out to the major highway. Difficulties with improving this corridor due to existing development outside city limits were discussed. It appears a northerly extension of the existing corridor is the best route. The extension is already shown on the two land use plan alternatives. Future development north of 26th St. should be accompanied by extending University Avenue at least as far as that particular development if development occurs in advance of a street project.
11. Jenelle asked about the proposed industrial land use along the corridor gateways. In light of the appearance of some of these sites, she asked why SRF placed industrial land use in these locations. Cindy stated that the decision was partly based on existing land uses, since the presence of existing industrial development makes it unlikely that other uses would be compatible in the vicinity. She stated that industrial development does not have to look unsightly, and that this is where the corridor overlay zone comes into play, specifying higher development standards for sites along major gateways to the community. Such a corridor overlay would be recommended for all city gateways, although right now it's only shown on one portion of Scenario 1, just to give people an idea of where it would be applied relative to the corridor.
12. Monte mentioned that the city owns another five acre water reservoir site west of 138th Ave NW and ½ mile north of 26th St.
13. Cindy noted that on Scenario 1, the purple color west of the airport should've been blue rather than purple.
14. The group asked if the county roads could be labeled, as they know them best by county road numbers versus street and avenue numbers.

The Planning Advisory Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 7th at 11:30 was discussed. We hope to work with the committee to get concurrence on a preferred land use alternative. Kent will be providing lunch for the group, as this will be a work session that could last a couple hours. We also hope to get feedback on the goals and objectives for both the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Plan.