

Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan should be a “living document,” that is, a document that is frequently referred to for guidance in community decision-making. Its assumptions, goals, policies, and action strategies must also be revisited periodically to ensure that it is providing clear and reliable direction on a range of matters, including, among others, land development issues and public investments in infrastructure and services.

Implementation is about more than a list of action. It is a process that will require the commitment of the City’s elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, major institutions, other levels of government, and organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the Plan and its directions and strategies. Equally important are formal procedures for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of successes achieved, obstacles encountered, new opportunities and challenges that have emerged, and any other change in circumstances which may require rethinking of Plan priorities.

PURPOSE

This Comprehensive Plan will be the basis for decision-making on the future development and enhancement of Ponca City. This final chapter breathes life into the rest of the Plan by setting out a practical, prioritized, and sequenced implementation program. The key objective of this chapter is to integrate the different elements of the Plan in such a way as to provide a clear path for sound decisions. This chapter is also intended to establish accountability for Plan implementation and provide guidance on essential processes to maintain its relevance to the City and its citizens.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

Simply setting out an implementation framework is not enough to ensure that the

action items of this Plan will be carried out and the community’s vision and goals ultimately achieved. The policies and action priorities in this Plan should be consulted frequently and widely used by decision-makers as a basis for judgments regarding:

- ◆ The timing and locations of infrastructure improvements.
- ◆ Proposed development and redevelopment applications.
- ◆ City-initiated and/or land owner-requested annexations.
- ◆ Zone change requests and other zoning-related actions.
- ◆ Expansion or redirection of public facilities, services, and programs.
- ◆ Annual capital budgeting.

- ◆ Amendments to the City’s Zoning Ordinance and related regulatory elements.
- ◆ Intergovernmental (including City/Tribes, inter-City, and City/County) coordination and agreements.
- ◆ Operations, capital improvements, and programming related to individual City departments.

There are five general methods for Plan implementation:

1. policy-based decisions;
2. land development regulations and engineering standards;
3. capital improvements programming;
4. specific Plans and studies; and
5. special projects, programs, and initiatives.

Policy-Based Decisions

Land use and development decisions should be made based on the policies that are set out in this Comprehensive Plan. In some measure, the adoption of new or amended land development regulations (e.g., zoning, subdivision, landscaping, sign controls, etc.) will establish a specific framework for evaluating private development proposals against the City’s articulated policies. However, decisions regarding annexation, infrastructure investment, future land use map amendments, and right-of-way acquisitions are generally left to the discretion of the City Commission. This Plan provides the common policy threads that should connect those decisions.

Land Development Regulations and Engineering Standards

Land development regulations and engineering standards are fundamentals for

Plan implementation. It is plain—but often underappreciated—that private investment decisions account for the vast majority of the City’s physical form. Consequently, zoning and subdivision regulations, and associated development criteria and technical engineering standards, are the basic keys to ensuring that the form, character and quality of development reflect the City’s Planning objectives. These ordinances should reflect the community’s desire for quality development outcomes while recognizing economic factors. They should not delay or interfere unnecessarily with appropriate new development or redevelopment that is consistent with Plan goals and policies.

Capital Improvements Programming

A capital improvements program (“CIP”) is a multi-year Plan (typically five years) that identifies budgeted capital projects, including street infrastructure; water, wastewater and drainage facilities; parks, trails, and recreation facilities; public buildings; and major equipment. Identifying and budgeting for capital improvements will be essential to the implementation of this Plan. Decisions regarding the prioritization of proposed capital improvements should take into account the policy and management directives of this Plan.

Specific Plans and Studies

There are a number of areas where additional Planning work is recommended, at a “finer grain” level than is appropriate in this Plan. As such, some parts of this Plan will be implemented only after additional Planning or special study.

Special Projects, Programs, and Initiatives

Special projects or initiatives are the last category of implementation measures. These may include

initiating or adjusting City programs; entering into interlocal agreements; expanding citizen participation programs; providing training; or other types of special projects.

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

During the development of this Plan, representatives of government, business, neighborhoods, civic groups, and others came together to inform the Planning process. These community leaders, and new ones who may emerge over the horizon of this Plan, must maintain their commitment to the ongoing implementation of the Plan's policies—and to the periodic updating of the Plan to adapt to changing conditions or unforeseen events.

Education

Comprehensive Plans are relatively general yet complex policy documents that account for interrelationships among various policy choices. As such, educating decision-makers and administrators about Plan implementation is an important first step after Plan adoption. As the principal groups that will implement the Plan, the City Commission, Planning Commission, and City department heads should all be “on the same page” with regard to priorities, responsibilities, and interpretations.

Consequently, an education initiative should be undertaken immediately after Plan adoption, which should include:

- ◆ A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the City Commission, Planning Commission (and other advisory bodies), and individual staff members.
- ◆ A thorough overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on the parts of the Plan that relate to each individual group.
- ◆ Implementation tasking and priority setting, which should lead to each group establishing

one-year and three-year implementation agendas.

- ◆ Facilitation of a mock meeting in which the use of the Plan and its policies and recommendations is illustrated.
- ◆ An in-depth question and answer session, with support from Planning personnel, the City Manager, and other key staff.

Role Definition

As the community's elected officials, the City Commission will assume the lead role in implementation of this Plan. Their key responsibilities are to decide and establish priorities, set timeframes by which each action will be initiated and completed, and determine the budget to be made available for implementation efforts. In conjunction with the City Manager, the City Commission must also ensure effective coordination among the various groups that are responsible for carrying out the Plan's recommendations.

The City Commission will take the lead in the following areas:

- ◆ Acting as a “champion” of the Plan.
- ◆ Adopting and amending the Plan by resolution, after recommendation by the Planning Commission.
- ◆ Adopting new or amended land development regulations.
- ◆ Approving interlocal agreements.
- ◆ Establishing the overall action priorities and timeframes by which each action item of the Plan will be initiated and completed.
- ◆ Considering and approving the funding commitments that will be required.
- ◆ Offering final approval of projects and activities and the associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the Plan and its policies.

- ◆ Providing policy direction to the Planning Commission, other appointed City boards and commissions, and City staff.

The Planning Commission will take the lead in the following areas:

- ◆ Hosting the education initiative described above.
- ◆ Periodically obtaining public input to keep the Plan up to date, using a variety of community outreach and citizen and stakeholder involvement methods.
- ◆ Ensuring that recommendations forwarded to the City Commission are reflective of the Plan goals, policies, and recommendations. This relates particularly to decisions involving development review and approval, zone change requests, ordinance amendments, and potential annexations.
- ◆ After holding one or more public hearings to discuss new or evolving community issues and needs, making recommendations to the City Commission regarding Plan updates and Plan amendments.

City Staff will take the lead in the following areas:

- ◆ Managing day-to-day implementation of the Plan, including ongoing coordination through an interdepartmental Plan implementation committee.
- ◆ Supporting and carrying out capital improvements Planning efforts.
- ◆ Managing the drafting of new or amended land development regulations.
- ◆ Conducting studies and developing additional Plans as necessary.
- ◆ Reviewing applications for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan as required by the City's land development regulations.
- ◆ Negotiating the specifics of interlocal agreements.
- ◆ Administering collaborative programs and

ensuring open channels of communication with various private, public, and non-profit implementation partners.

- ◆ Maintaining an inventory of potential Plan amendments, as suggested by City staff and others, for consideration during annual and periodic Plan review and update processes.


ACTION PLAN

The vision and goals of this Comprehensive Plan will be attained, over time, through a multitude of specific actions. To this end, both long- and short-range implementation strategies must be identified along with an action timeframe and the assignment of responsibilities to specific entities. **[Remainder of this Action Plan section will be completed through the priority-setting workshop scheduled on _____.]**

Table 7.1: Action Plan

PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS

The Ponca City Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a flexible document allowing for adjustment to changing conditions. Shifts in political, economic, physical, technological,



and social conditions, and other unforeseen circumstances, may influence and change the priorities and fiscal outlook of the community. As the City grows and evolves, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be as relevant. Some action statements will be found impractical or outdated while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it continues to reflect the overall goals of the community and remains relevant and resourceful over time, the Plan must be revisited on a regular basis to confirm that the Plan elements are still on point and the associated goals, policies, and action statements are still appropriate.

Revisions to the Comprehensive Plan are two-fold, with minor Plan amendments occurring at least bi-annually and more significant modifications and updates occurring every five years. Minor amendments could include revisions to certain elements of the Plan as a result of the adoption of another specialized Plan or interim changes to the Future Land Use Plan and/or the Thoroughfare Plan. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and anticipated growth trends; re-evaluating the goals, policies, and recommendations in the Plan—and formulating new ones as necessary; and adding, revising, or removing action statements based on implementation progress.

Annual Progress Report

The Planning Commission, with the assistance of staff, should prepare an annual progress report for presentation to the Mayor and City Commission. This ensures that the Plan is consistently reviewed and that any needed modifications or clarifications are identified for the bi-annual minor Plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of consistency between the Plan and the City's implementing ordinances and regulations should be an essential part of this effort.

The Annual Progress Report should include and highlight:

- ◆ Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year, including the status of implementation for each programmed task in the Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ Obstacles or problems in the implementation of the Plan, including those encountered in administering the land use and transportation Plans, as well as any other policies of the Plan.
- ◆ Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to the individual Plan maps or other recommendations or text changes.
- ◆ Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the coming year, including recommendation of projects to be included in the City's CIP, other programs/projects to be funded, and priority coordination needs with public and private implementation partners.

Bi-Annual Amendment Process

Plan amendments should occur on at least a bi-annual (every two year) basis, allowing for proposed changes to be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect may be understood. When considering a Plan amendment, the City should ensure the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and policies set forth in the Plan regarding character protection, development compatibility, infrastructure availability, conservation of environmentally sensitive areas, and other community priorities. Careful consideration should also be given to guard against site-specific Plan changes that could negatively impact adjacent areas and uses or detract from the overall character of the area. Factors that should be considered in deciding on a proposed Plan amendment include:

- ◆ Consistency with the goals and policies set forth in the Plan.

- ◆ Adherence with the Future Land Use and/or Thoroughfare Plans.
- ◆ Compatibility with the surrounding area.
- ◆ Impacts on infrastructure provision including water, wastewater, drainage, and the transportation network.
- ◆ Impact on the City's ability to provide, fund, and maintain services.
- ◆ Impact on environmentally sensitive and natural areas.
- ◆ Whether the proposed amendment contributes to the overall direction and character of the community as captured in the Plan vision and goals (and ongoing public input).


Five-Year Update / Evaluation and Appraisal Report

An evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by City staff with input from various City departments, the Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. The report process involves evaluating the existing Plan and assessing how successful it has been in achieving the community's goals. The purpose of the report is to identify the successes and shortcomings of the Plan, look at what has changed over the last five years, and make recommendations on how the Plan should be modified in light of those changes.

The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators. It should also evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unmet goals, policies, and recommendations. The evaluation report and process should result in an amended Comprehensive Plan, including identification of new or revised information that may lead to updated goals, policies, and/or action recommendations.

More specifically, the report should identify and evaluate the following:

1. Summary of major actions and interim Plan amendments undertaken over the last five years.
2. Major issues in the community and how these issues have changed over time.
3. Changes in the assumptions, trends, and base studies data, including:
 - ◆ The rate at which growth and development is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the Plan.
 - ◆ Shifts in demographics and other growth trends.
 - ◆ The area of land that is designated and zoned for urban development and its capacity to meet projected demands and needs.
 - ◆ City-wide attitudes and whether apparent shifts, if significant, necessitate amendments to the stated goals or strategies of the Plan.
 - ◆ Other changes in political, social, economic, technological, or environmental conditions that indicate a need for Plan amendments.
4. Ability of the Plan to continue to support progress toward achieving the community's goals. The following should be evaluated and revised as needed:
 - ◆ Individual statements or sections of the Plan must be reviewed and rewritten, as necessary, to ensure that the Plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
 - ◆ Conflicts between goals and policies that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the Plan must be pointed out and resolved.
 - ◆ The action agenda must be reviewed and major accomplishments highlighted.



Those not completed by the specified timeframe should be re-evaluated to ensure their continued relevance and/or to revise them appropriately.

- ◆ As conditions change, the timeframes for implementing the individual actions of the Plan should be re-evaluated where necessary. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances while others may become less important to achieving the goals and development objectives of the community.
- ◆ Based upon organizational, programmatic, and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered, as needed, to ensure timely accomplishment of the Plan's recommended actions.
- ◆ Changes in laws, procedures, and missions may impact the ability of the community to achieve its goals. The Plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.

Ongoing Community Outreach and Engagement

All reviews and updates related to the Comprehensive Plan should emphasize and incorporate ongoing public input. The annual and continual Plan evaluation and reporting process should also incorporate specific performance measures and quantitative indicators that can be compiled and communicated both internally and to elected officials and citizens in a “report card” fashion. Examples might include:

- ◆ Acres of new development (plus number of residential units and square footage of commercial and industrial space) approved and constructed in conformance

with this Plan and related City codes. This measurement should also include the number of affordable residential units.

- ◆ Various measures of service capacity (gallons, kilowatts, acre-feet, etc.) added to the City's major utility systems as indicated in this Plan and associated utility master Plans—and the millions of dollars allocated to fund the necessary capital projects.
- ◆ Acres of parkland and miles of trail developed or improved in accordance with this Plan and related parks, recreation, and greenways Plans.
- ◆ Indicators of City efforts to ensure neighborhood integrity as emphasized in this Plan (e.g., code enforcement activity, number homes receiving improvements and weatherization, number of historic designations made for homes/neighborhoods, etc.).
- ◆ Miles of new bike routes and sidewalks added to the City's transportation system to provide alternative mobility options as recommended in this Plan.
- ◆ New businesses and associated employment added to the local job market through the economic development initiatives and priorities identified in this Plan.
- ◆ Indicators of the benefits of redeveloped sites and structures (appraised value, increased property and/or sales tax revenue, new residential units and retail and office spaces in urban mixed-use settings, etc.) as envisioned through this Plan.
- ◆ The estimated dollar value of operating cost savings from reduced energy and water use, heating/cooling, etc., from green building practices, and related conservation efforts in new and existing City facilities, as suggested in this Plan.
- ◆ The numbers of residents and other stakeholders engaged through City-sponsored education and outreach events related to Comprehensive Plan implementation and periodic review and updating, as outlined in this chapter.