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MEMO

Date: December 16, 2011

To: Edwardsville Planning Commission
Michael Webb, City of Edwardsville, City Administrator

From: Frederick L. Sherman AICP

RE: Public Hearing on the comprehensive plan for the city, The Edwardsville Plan

Public Hearing

A public hearing has been scheduled to review and consider a resolution amending the Edwardsville comprehensive plan per KSA 12-747 et seq. The public hearing to consider the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 in the Council Chambers of the Edwardsville City Hall, 690 S 4th Street, Edwardsville, Kansas 66113.

The role of the Planning Commission is to conduct the public hearing, seek input and comments from the public on the proposed changes, and then consider adoption of the plan as a whole by a single resolution. The adoption of the plan by the Planning Commission acts as a recommendation to the Governing Body, which will ultimately need to approve the plan documents by ordinance.

Comprehensive Plan

In general, a comprehensive plan is the community's vision, illustrating how we want to grow and develop – today and in the future. The main objectives of the comprehensive plan are to establish a shared vision for the community and set priorities. Public input and involvement are vital to creating this community consensus.

Community leaders should look to the comprehensive plan for direction on land use, transportation, housing, parks, trails, open space, and community economic issues, all guided by public input. The comprehensive plan influences policies that have a direct bearing on the quality of life in the community. Utilizing the comprehensive plan as a guide can help ensure that decisions made now are helping the community move towards its established goals.

The Edwardsville Plan

The Edwardsville Plan is an update and reorganization of the city's comprehensive plan, which was last adopted in 1999. The Edwardsville Plan has been reformatted into different sections that address specific aspects of the community. This includes land use, transportation, the natural environment, economic development, and so on. The reorganization of the plan also includes two new plan elements that was not part of the 1999 adopted plan - a Growth Management section which defines specific growth areas or service areas within the Edwardsville community, and; specific detailed policies by plan element, which needs to be considered in the review of individual development proposals.

Growth Management

The updated comprehensive plan for Edwardsville identifies several Current Growth Areas based on fiscally responsible utility, infrastructure plans and policies. The priority approach to guiding growth and development relies on establishing designated areas where municipal facilities are planned and can be provided. These areas are noted on the **Priority Growth Area Map**. By coordinating public and private investments, new urban-density developments should be anticipated to occur primarily in areas of the city most easily served by public facilities and services. Future Growth Areas should remain rural or agricultural during the planning period to accommodate future urban development and the extension of utility services in the long-term.

Guided by the Growth Management policies of the plan, the **Development Plan Map** builds upon all elements of the plan to recommend specific areas for future development. The Development Plan Map is a graphic compilation of the recommendations for land use as shown on the Future Land Use Map, but for only the designated Current Growth Areas. While the Development Plan Map is not necessarily the most important component of the plan, it may be the most visible. The Development Plan Map attempts to reflect all policy aspects of the plan by bridging the gap between current and future development desires and trends, and utilizing land use principals to guide new projects so that they may better blend into the fabric of the community in a fiscally responsible manner.

The Plan's Policies

The Edwardsville Plan now includes specific policies, listed by plan element, which needs to be considered in the review of proposed developments. These policy statements complements the Future Land Use Map and the Development Plan Map by defining specific criteria, rather than simply the type and general intensity of land uses as the plan's map is intended to show. By more clearly stating the criteria used in evaluating and guiding planning in the city, the plan's policies help to ensure consistency in how plans are evaluated. The policies also identify what the city is seeking and why these criteria are useful for all to review and reflect upon. In short, they help implement the comprehensive plan.

Even though these policies are specific, they are guideline statements that do not legally bind city officials from making alternative choices to those called for in the plan. The choice of not following a stated policy must be made for valid and supportable reasons; however, otherwise there is the risk of being found to be arbitrary and capricious by the courts.

Additional Planning Items

In addition to the adoption of The Edwardsville Plan, additional planning and detailed engineering studies may be warranted for the city to fully achieve the goals and strategies reflected in the comprehensive plan. The city's comprehensive plan cannot adequately address all of the relevant issues that these plans and studies would resolve. The following studies and area plans for the community may be addressed and completed individually over time and over several budget cycles for the city.

Development Codes

Codify all of the public policy parameters of the city's existing development codes and zoning overlay districts into an updated development code for Edwardsville. The development code is a regulatory document that provides specific direction on how development or redevelopment will occur within the city. The development code is a key tool to implement the comprehensive plan. The current zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations may not be adequate to deal with the type and scale of development that Edwardsville will see in the future. A development code needs to act as an incentive to promote economic development and attract business and industry while also promoting quality of life and creating a healthy community for residents.

Mixed-Use Guidelines or Development Plan

This will help ensure that the designated Mixed-Use areas of the city are developed into a distinctive and memorable environment, versus an "anything goes" for zoning and development that only results into a hodge-podge of unrelated individual stand-alone buildings containing primarily highway-oriented businesses along commercial strip that is adjacent to the interstate highway.

East Side Service Area Plan – subdivision policies for "piano-key" lots.

The East Side service area may require a detailed sub-area plan to be formulated if there is a desire to further divide and develop the "piano-key" properties. Unique subdivision and access policies will need to be evaluated and adopted for most of this service area to account for the rugged terrain and haphazard lot pattern that currently exists.

Street Design Standards

Develop street design standards for type and classification of street as well as adjacent land use.

Betts Creek Drainage Basin Study

A detailed drainage engineering study is warranted to map-out the ultimate floodplain areas of the Betts Creek drainage basin, for both a current and a build-out scenario, and to size needed culverts for thoroughfare/stream crossings. This could result into the adoption of stream setback ordinance/standards for the city.

Preliminary Thoroughfare Engineering Designs

This engineering analysis would evaluate both the horizontal and vertical curve design needs of a future roadway. Future thoroughfare improvements will likely require that additional rights-of-way be dedicated or acquired to accommodate the final grade of the embankment side slopes without having to construct expensive retaining walls.

Detailed Sidewalk and Trails Plan

Develop a detailed sidewalk and trails plan and priority list for the city of Edwardsville, which targets the connection of sidewalks and trails to key locations in the urban growth areas.

Establish Utility Extension Plans for Future Growth Areas

Develop a utilities extension priority plan for the City of Edwardsville, which ensures phasing for connection of water, wastewater, electrical services, and other utility services for all new developments in the urban growth areas.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Develop a formal CIP plan – for new construction and for maintenance of public infrastructure.

Evaluate Service Areas Annually

Evaluate the status of future and current service areas annually with a review of the comprehensive plan for the City of Edwardsville.