



City of Elkins

Planning Commission Meeting

September 12, 2024

3:30 PM

West Virginia Wood Technology Center
10 11th Street, Elkins, WV 26241

AGENDA

1. **Call to order and roll call**
2. **Public comment**
3. **Minutes**
 - a. Proposed minutes for the meeting of August 8, 2024
4. **New business**
 - a. Discuss, review, and consider Focus Areas Public Safety and Housing
 - b. Zoning and uses in the Industrial Park
5. **Adjournment**



CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date:	September 12, 2024
Section:	Minutes
Category:	Action Item
Agenda Item Name:	Proposed minutes for the meeting of August 8, 2024
Recommended By:	City Clerk
Summary:	Minutes proposed for the meeting of August 8
Fiscal Impact:	n/a
Recommendation:	Consider for approval
Attachments:	1. Planning Commission - 2024_08_08 - minutes_proposed

**PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

***401 Davis Avenue
Elkins City Hall
August 8, 2024
3:30 p.m.***

Present were Commissioners P. Kolsun, B. Woods, A. Carroll, K. Somers.

Commissioners D. Talbott and J. Marco were absent.

Also present: L. Roberts (recording secretary).

MINUTES

Woods **MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAY 9, 2024.** The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

The commission continued work on its update to the Comprehensive Plan. There was discussion of what the new plan's goals and objectives should be. No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Name & Title

Signature



CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date:	September 12, 2024
Section:	New business
Category:	Action Item
Agenda Item Name:	Discuss, review, and consider Focus Areas Public Safety and Housing
Recommended By:	WVU LUSD Law Clinic
Summary:	Work to finetune and finalize two proposed Focus Areas for the updated comprehensive plan: Public Safety and Housing
Fiscal Impact:	n/a
Recommendation:	Review, discuss, and finalize language
Attachments:	1. Elkins Planning Commission - goals and objectives draft - 2024_08_12 2. Notes - Proposed Critical Issues for Comp Plan - Burley - 2024_08_08 3. 2024.07.01.GoalObjectiveHandout

Elkins Planning Commission

2025 Comprehensive Plan Update: Goals and Objectives

Critical Issues

The commission has identified the following Critical Issues for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update:

1. Public Safety
2. Housing
3. Infrastructure
4. Economic Development
5. Land Use
6. Technology

Critical Issue 1: Public Safety

Goal: *Further strengthen public safety services to meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses.*

Objectives:

1. Prepare for public safety challenges arising from completion of Corridor H.
2. Improve and expand public safety infrastructure and resources.
3. Facilitate the safe, efficient movement of drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Critical Issue 2: Housing

Goal: *Meet the needs of current residents of all economic levels, while exploring options for future expansion.*

Objectives:

1. Increase available housing and reduce obstacles to home ownership.
2. Evaluate options for encouraging housing infill and higher population density.

Critical Issue 3: Infrastructure

Goal: *Upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increase resource-use efficiency.*

Objectives:

1. Modernize water, wastewater, and stormwater management.
2. Evaluate parking availability and policies to ensure best fit for current needs and future growth.
3. Strengthen walkability by encouraging and supporting sidewalk improvements.

Commented [SS1]: Retained 2015 wording.

Commented [SS2]: Commission notes mentioned Corridor H. This objective matches wording from council's Strategic Plan.

Commented [SS3]: Wording from council's Strategic Plan. Encompasses plans for a substation on Beverly Pike and other potentially valuable work.

Commented [SS4]: Wording is from council's Strategic Plan.

Commented [SS5]: Wording from council's Strategic Plan.

Commented [SS6]: Similar to a Strategic Plan objective.

Commented [SS7]: This doesn't seem to be something a city can have much influence on. What about a wording change: **"Upgrade infrastructure to meet current needs while preparing for future growth."**

Commented [SS8]: Wording from council's Strategic Plan. Stormwater piece is important due to ongoing separation of stormwater from sewer system (meaning sewer rates are allowed to pay for less and less of the cost of managing stormwater). Also increasing heavy rain events, etc.

Commented [SS9]: Council's Strategic Plan calls for a parking study.

Critical Issue 4: Economic Development

Goal: Provide opportunities for increased economic development

Objectives:

1.

Critical Issue 5: Land Use

Goal: z

Objectives:

2.

Critical Issue 6: Technology

Goal: z

Objectives:

3.

Proposed Critical Issues for Comp Plan

Round robin style proposal

- Housing
 - Limited supply
 - Condition
 - Cost
 - Population Density v/s Zoning
- Infrastructure
 - Technology
 - Transportation
 - Aging Systems
 - Water
 - Sewage
 - Storm Water
 - Parking
 - Sidewalks - Walkability
- Land Use
 - Annexation
 - Control on Development
 - Zoning v/s Density
 - Amenities / Recreation
 - Historical Preservation
 - Streetscape improvement
 - Riverfront plan
- Economic Development
 - Convention Center
 - Ascend
- Technology
 - Smart City

- Competitive Edge
- Operational Efficiency
- Data-driven Decisions
- Citizen Experience Optimization
- Future Preparedness
- Transportation
 - Pedestrian first
 - Bike Share
- Public Safety
 - Corridor H Project

Critical Issues Identified and Goal

Public Safety

- Goal: Further strengthen public safety service to meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses

Housing

- Goal: Meet the needs of current residents, of all economic levels, while exploring options for future expansion.

Infrastructure

- Goal: upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency. (and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes)

Economic Development

- Provide opportunities for increased economic development

Land Use

- Enhance and protect the characteristics of the City (through proactive) land use planning

or

- Encourage and Promote the growth of the City through private planning

Technology

- Enhance technology to provide a competitive edge for future development and preparedness

or

- Use technology to increase organizational efficiency and the delivery of services

Updated vision statement:

Quality of life is cultivated for all individuals with opportunities in technology, recreation, and economic development and supported by community investment in arts, education, and healthcare.

2015 Critical Issues

- Public Safety
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Land Use

Updated issues identified during planning process (Planning Commission SWOT, stakeholder interviews, public online survey)

- SWOT
 - Tygart River
 - Stormwater drainage
 - Abandoned and dilapidated buildings
 - Limited housing stock
 - Unsafe intersections
 - Aging infrastructure
 - Consolidation of schools
 - Recreation (Potential to expand parks, trails, community center, etc)
 - Make downtown Elkins more bicycle friendly
 - Connections with D&E (support of students, connecting D&E with downtown)
 - Public/private partnerships
- Online Survey
 - Walkability
 - Safe access to pedestrian street crossings
 - Condition of streets and sidewalks
 - Street lighting
 - Accessibility for those with challenges
 - Level of traffic
 - Parking for visitors
 - Safe access to outside roads
 - Access to public transit
 - Retaining young people
 - Lack of job opportunities
 - Availability of mental health and addiction services
 - Availability of high-speed internet
 - Abandoned and dilapidated buildings

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Update
Goals and Objectives-July 2024

- Activities for young children
- Keeping streets safe (homeless people, drugs, etc)
- Dog park needed
- Beautification of city
- Infrastructure concerns (age and cost)
- Need affordable housing
- Online survey respondents would like to see additional retail, single family housing, and recreation facilities
- Stakeholder Interviews:
 - The city could provide incentives for businesses to operate in downtown Elkins
 - Convert some of those yellow lines to handicap parking
 - Local government could create a means by which business owners could peacefully and regularly communicate with the city about issues and support needed
 - Local government could actively promote small local businesses on social media
 - Guidelines for making alcohol permissible for downtown community events while lessening prohibitive guidelines
 - Fund the creation of the part-time “beautification” or landscape specialist
 - Need a Glendale dog park
 - Upgrade of playground equipment in neighborhood parks
 - Renovation of the main pavilion of City Park
 - Security at parks
 - Tennis courts, additional pickleball courts
 - Continue to promote tourism, events, fairs/festivals for the county, as well as be a prominent hub for surrounding counties
 - Continue to beautify downtown
 - Sidewalk restoration and adding better footpaths
 - Promote new businesses
 - Develop areas of river front for recreation
 - Rising costs of rent (commercial and residential)
 - Community/business leaders reluctance to work together for the greater good
 - Age of school buildings
 - Drugs
 - Old Four Seasons Hotel reimaged
 - Additional parking
 - Lack of historic preservation regulations
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - Lack of senior housing
 - Lack of ability to annex additional area

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Update
Goals and Objectives-July 2024

- Bad sidewalks and bad law that makes the property owner responsible for replacement along with poor or missing handicapped sidewalks at crossings
- Lack of signage for businesses and tourist attractions
- Retention of a young and educated workforce
- The current housing stock is limited and aging
- Benches for Town Square/Streetscape improvements
- Elkins specific marketing
- Lacking number and spacing on fire hydrants outside of city on PSD systems
- Difficulty with visibility at some intersections
- Lack of appropriate traffic control signs and systems
- Second fire station
- Recruitment and retention of fire volunteers-lack of volunteers will require additional paid positions
- VFD training facility
- City has parks and the normal community sports leagues, but what do we have for kids outside of that? There seems to be very little community or civic involvement from the youth.
- Educating the community on how each city department functions, why they function that way, and how it benefits the community.

2015 Goals

Goal 1: Further strengthen public safety services to meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses

- Objective 1: Ensure residents are served with a high quality police and fire department
- Objective 2: Establish policies to help protect the public from disasters and make the community more resilient
- Objective 3: Provide residents and students with information regarding the effects of drug use

Notes from Dec. 2023 meeting- Police has hired more staff, purchased body armor and cameras, two canines. There is paid fireman and fire fee. Petty crime can be an issue with completion of Corridor H.

Goal 2: Improve traffic and pedestrian circulation to provide a safer and more accessible transportation network for residents

- Objective 1: Improve the walkability of the City
- Objective 2: Investigate parking options in the downtown business district
- Objective 3: Alleviate congestion in the City of Elkins

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Update
Goals and Objectives-July 2024

Notes from Dec 2023 meeting- traffic on Randolph Ave. is still an issue, wayfinding is still important, sidewalks/pedestrian infrastructure is still needed, traffic calming. Refer to streetscape master plan.

Goal 3: Provide opportunities for increased economic development

- Objective 1: Identify areas for re-development and new development to increase the tax base
- Objective 2: Capitalize on visitors to the American Mountain Theater and Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad
- Objective 1: Improve functions of city government

Notes from Dec. 2023 meeting- TIFF district can help with streetscape/signs. Big Timber and Tygart Hotel open will spur development around those places. Would still like to annex. City charter has been updated.

Goal 4: Enhance and protect the character of the City through land use planning

- Objective 1: Protect the natural and historic character of the City through zoning
- Objective 1: Encourage the beautification of the City to entice visitors
- Objective 2: Establish policies to protect neighborhoods throughout Elkins

Notes from Dec. 2023 meeting- Don't want 250 N to look like out towards Walmart. Not in city limits but concerned with corridor H and new development. Regulations have been modernized. Fine-tuning new zoning and stepped-up enforcement. Historic preservation has improved.



CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date:	September 12, 2024
Section:	New business
Category:	Action Item
Agenda Item Name:	Zoning and uses in the Industrial Park
Recommended By:	City Clerk
Summary:	The attached memo is presented to open a discussion of the possibility of reducing non-industrial uses allowed in the Industrial District.
Fiscal Impact:	n/a
Recommendation:	Consider for next steps or recommendations to council
Attachments:	1. Industrial vs commercial uses

Comparison of Uses in Industrial and Commercial Zone

“Industrial Zones” that include too many non-industrial uses can be an obstacle to industrial uses locating there. This is because of conflicts and risk related to, for example, a mix of heavy truck traffic and passenger cars and foot traffic visiting adjacent businesses.

The “Industrial” category in Elkins includes multiple uses not typically associated with an industrial area.

The table below offers a comparison of uses included in:

- BOTH Commercial and Industrial
- In Industrial but not Commercial
- In Commercial but not Industrial

Yellow highlighting indicates uses that are assigned to (1) existing businesses that are (2) currently located in an area zoned Industrial. (Some of them might be outside the Industrial Park.) Based on this analysis, there seem to be only two use definitions currently applicable to active businesses that would raise the concern described at the top: Clinic (Seven Performance and the Audiology business) and Butcher Shop (Charm Farm Market).

In addition to Clinic and Butcher Shop (both currently “in use”), green highlighting indicates (1) uses allowed in Industrial that (2) are NOT currently “in use” and that (3) would probably need to be eliminated from Industrial to avoid raising the concern described at the top.

If the commission decided to recommend this, only three currently active businesses would see their uses eliminated from Industrial. Keep in mind, however, that they would be grandfathered in and would could continue to operate with no effect; the right to continue these nonconforming uses would persist even if the property were sold, as long as the nonconforming use were never discontinued for longer than 12 months.

Industrial Only	Industrial & Commercial	Commercial Only
Adult business	Animal hospital/veterinary office	Bed & Bkfst I-III
Extractive industry	Car wash	Catering business
Freight terminal	Clinic	Child day care (all sizes)
Incinerator	Auto repair	Community facility
Industrial park	Bakery	Continuing care facility
Lumber yard	Bank	Cultural service
Manufacturing (heavy)	Boat and marine sales and service	Dwellings
Medical cannabis growing facility	Brew pub	Educational institution
Medical cannabis processing facility	Broadcasting studio	Emergency shelter
Research & development	Building material facility	Funeral home
Salvage yard	Bus/transit facilities	Health club

Self-storage facility	Bus/transit shelter	Home based business (low impact)
Solar energy facility, large	Butcher shop	Hospital
Solid waste disposal area/Facility (public & private)	Convenience store	Hotel/motel
Truck terminal	Conversion of school/church	Kennel
Warehouse	Distillery	Laundromat
Wholesale establishment	Distribution facility	Liquor store
Wireless telecom facility	Dock	Medical adult day care center
	Dog day care	Medical cannabis organization, health care
	Dry cleaner	Night club
	Equipment repair/rental	Office supply establishment
	Essential utilities and equipment	Park
	Event, mass gathering	Personal service
	Event, special	Pet shop
	Farm/construction equipment and supply sales	Pharmacy
	Farmer's market	Private club
	Garden center	Professional services
	Gas station	Roadside vendor stand
	Gas station, large	School, prek-12
	Governmental operations	Senior independent housing
	Greenhouse, commercial	Shopping center
	Greenhouse, noncommercial	Sports arena
	Group residential facility	Studio, dancing, music, or art
	Group residential home	Tattoo parlor
	Home-base business (no impact)	Theater
	Manufacturing (light)	Theater, drive-in
	Medical cannabis dispensary	Vehicle sales/rental and service
	Parcel delivery facility	Video gaming or lottery establishment
	Parking lot	Water treatment plant
	Parking structure	
	Photographic studio	
	Places of worship	

	Reception facility	
	Recreation, commercial indoor	
	Recreation, commercial outdoor	
	Recreation, municipal	
	Recycling facility	
	Restaurant	
	Retail store (all sizes)	
	Solar energy facility (small)	