



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, February 19, 2002

Study Session

Item H3

Update Concerning Comprehensive Plan

The Hall County Regional Planning Commission has signed a contract with JEO Consulting Group of Wahoo.

JEO has offices in Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin, including an office in Hastings. JEO has a wide range of experience in planning in Nebraska and surrounding states. They will be teaming with CBB of St. Louis to update the transportation network for Grand Island that was created for the 1992 comprehensive plan. Keith Marvin, AICP, Planning Manager for JEO Consulting Group, was at the meeting on Wednesday for the contract signing.

The cost of the proposed scope of services is \$218,065. The Planning Commission raise \$225,000 for this project in funds from member communities and grant sources.

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Regional Planning Commission Guides Communities into the Future

Change is one of the inevitable facts of life. Physical changes take place in every community every day. Sometimes it is only the slow changes that are the result of daily wear and tear. Other times it is the catastrophic changes that happen because of floods, tornadoes and other natural events. It may also be those changes that appear suddenly, but in all likelihood were inevitable:

- the owner of the empty lot next to your house decides to build there;
- a wide street that moves traffic between and around several neighborhoods is striped for three or four lanes of traffic instead of two;
- the city extends sanitary sewer and water to your neighborhood and refuses to let you simply replace your septic system or well.

A responsible and responsive government is one that is prepared to meet the challenges (minimize the negative impacts and maximize the positive impacts) of all of these types of change.

A group of citizens appointed by the County Board, City Councils and Village Boards in Hall County, known as the Regional Planning Commission, provides insight and guidance from the perspective of ordinary citizens into planning for and reacting to these changes. They work with the professional planning, engineering and legal staff of the County, Cities and Villages to plan for changes to those communities. Since 1968, it has been the mission of the Regional Planning Commission to give their informed opinion and recommendation regarding changes to these communities to the elected officials. The opinions and recommendations of the Regional Planning Commission are formed based on:

- their knowledge of the communities,
- the recommendations of staff or consultants,
- the comments, questions, fears, hopes, and dreams of the people (citizens, landowners, neighbors, school children, etc...).

The Regional Planning Commission recommends a course of action (based on technical information balanced against the common sense of the citizens) to the local governing bodies. This information is essential to elected officials that must make decisions that will change their communities. These recommendations and decisions do produce winners and losers:

- some people end up with a four-lane street in front of their house,
- others have city services extended to their suburban development,
- businesses have places to locate,
- developers sell lots for those business and houses.

Virtually every project, regulation or change brought before the Regional Planning Commission will have positive impacts for some people and negative impacts for others. The Regional Planning Commission tries to be fair in the way it gathers information about and makes decisions regarding each project, regulation or change.

In the end the people of Hall County, it's Cities and Villages, have places to work, live, sleep, shop, play and learn. They can be sure that the consequences of changes to the community have been considered and weighed. They can also be sure that as other changes occur the consequences of those changes will be taken into account.

Planning is fundamental

Everybody plans. Everybody changes their plans to fit new situations.

A young couple just getting married has their life together all planned.

Year	Plan
1	Live in an apartment and save for a house. Both work full time.
3	Buy a house, have a baby. Both work full time
4	Both work full time
5	Have another baby. One parent works full time other stays home and takes care of the kids.
8	Kids in school or preschool. Both work full time
10	Buy a bigger house.
24	Kids are in college
28	Kids are out of college
31	Build dream house
40	Retire and Travel

Wouldn't it be nice if life could work like that. We all know it doesn't. That young couple will have to deal with issues that they can't plan for. What if one of them loses their job. What if they have a house fire? What if they can't get have children or if they have twins, triplets or more? What if the kids don't get in college? What if interest rates are at 18% when they want to buy a house?

Not knowing the answers to those questions isn't a reason to not plan. They should still make plans. They just need to realize that those plans may need to be changed, updated or redone to fit the conditions when they do know the answers to some of those questions.

Comprehensive plans for communities are like the couples first plan. In an ideal world if everything works out, you don't need to change the plan. You don't need to update it. In the real world plans change.

Comprehensive Plan Timeline

- March 2002 Kickoff Meetings for Hall County and Grand Island Comp. Plans
Meetings with Staff and Steering Committees
- May 2002 Kickoff Meetings for Wood River, Doniphan, Cairo and Alda Plans
Meetings with Staff and Steering Committees
- April 2003 Approve Comprehensive Plans for Hall County and Grand Island
Begin revising regulations based on new plans
Meetings with Staff and Steering Committees
- June 2003 Approve Comprehensive Plans for Wood River, Doniphan, Cairo and
Alda
Begin revising regulations based on new plans
Meetings with Staff and Steering Committees
- January 2004 Adopt new subdivision and zoning regulations for all Communities.

The Steering Committee

Each community will have its own steering committee. Membership on the steering committee should include Planning Commission representatives from that community, city council, county board or village board members from that community, local business people, landowners within the community, persons from the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the city or village, real estate professionals, chamber of commerce and economic development officials, representative from the local service clubs, school board members, utility company representatives, any individual interested in the future of their community.

The steering committees may recruit additional people to serve on subcommittees to deal with specific portions of the plan such as housing or transportation.

The steering committee will be responsible for working with the consultant to develop a comprehensive plan and regulations that are in the best interests of the community. The consultant will develop the plan and regulations using good planning practices, techniques and principles based upon the guidance of steering committee. The steering committee should be available to take the plan and regulations as presented by the consultants to the Hall County Regional Planning Commission and the elected officials for approval.