



To: John Cooley, Chairman, Future Fort Smith Committee
From: Maggie Rice, Director of Development Services
Date: September 1, 2022
RE: 2022 Future Fort Smith Comprehensive Plan Annual Report

The following report provides information from the Planning and Zoning department to the Future Fort Smith Committee regarding implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning and Zoning department is integral to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Planning staff manages City land-use ordinances, policies, and procedures governing all development within the City and its growth area. This division responds to public inquiries and reviews building permits each year to ensure compliance with federal and state laws as well as local ordinances. The Planning and Zoning division regularly proposes amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance to encourage development and limit regulatory barriers. Some examples of amendments that were made in 2021 are as follows:

- Restaurants (with outdoor dining within 300 feet of property zoned or developed residential) – shall mean an establishment serving food to the general public having a designated dining area as well as a porch, deck, or other area of land used for seated dining only which is not within the interior building walls of a restaurant or eatery that may include music and does not exceed 50% of the number of seats indoors.
- The restaurant (with outdoor dining within 300 feet of property zoned or developed residential) would require conditional use approval in the C-2 through I-1 zoning districts while the restaurant (with outdoor dining) would be permitted by right in the C-2 through

I-1 zoning districts. The amendment eliminated conditional use application when outdoor dining would have little to no impact on surrounding property owners.

- Form-based Codes Boundary Map was revised to reclassify Type A and Type B Streets.

These amendments support the following Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, or actions:

FLU 1.1.3	Review and adjust zoning classifications for consistency with the Preferred Future
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The Planning and Zoning division assists citizens interested in pursuing a rezoning within their neighborhood. Often residents are unaware the zoning within their single family neighborhood is not single family. Once this is discovered it can prompt a neighborhood rezoning. This supports the following Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and actions:

HN 1.7	Reduce non-compatible land uses by mitigating any negative impacts and revising zoning language and map designations as necessary.
HN 1.7.1	Continue to rezone existing, predominantly, single-family residential neighborhoods where the historic zoning pattern does not reflect the predominant built pattern with a priority to focus on targeted growth areas and areas where stability and character are threatened.

The Next Step Day Room rezoning was approved and once the construction is complete at 815 S 6th Street, the current site located at 123 N 6th Street shall be closed. Additionally, there were two annexations in 2021, this will have a positive economic impact on Fort Smith. The 6-acre annexation of the Weather Barr property at 6500 S Zero Street and the 74.44 acre Owens Corning property located at 5520 Planters Road and 9015 Highway 45. Moreover, the Planning Commission applications have increased 61% compared to 2020.

Staff also works to amend regulatory ordinances that have proven to be unreasonable when applied. The Land Use Matrix has been amended several times to allow the market to dictate where land uses would be the best fit. This supports the following Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and actions:

PFS 1.1.2	Continue to update the City's UDO based on feedback from the business community and continue to improve on-line access.
FLU 1.1.3	Review and adjust zoning classifications for consistency with the Preferred Future

Additionally, planning staff has spent considerable time towards the set-up and migration of the new City website. The new website will have a prominent Future Fort Smith page with completed projects, upcoming projects, FFS top 10, and a volunteer page. Similarly, staff has been working towards the transition to *City View*, a municipal software that will aid staff and the citizens in planning applications, business licensing, and online development review submittal. This new software will help mitigate paper submittals and the overall efficiency of the entire planning process.

PFS 2.1	Ensure that the City's planning and implementation process is transparent.
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Lastly, planning staff has incorporated larger signage to notify citizens about public meetings. The larger sign is more prominent and easier to read. Larger signage increases the effectiveness of notifying surrounding property owners of public meetings.

Planning staff provides support to the Future Fort Smith committee. This support helps ensure the viability of the Comprehensive Plan and therefore supports the entirety of the implementation matrix.