

Section 7

Visioning and Next Steps

This section outlines the importance of the visioning process, whereby the community comes together and formally chooses a direction. This vision usually is written down and used as a basis for future decision-making.

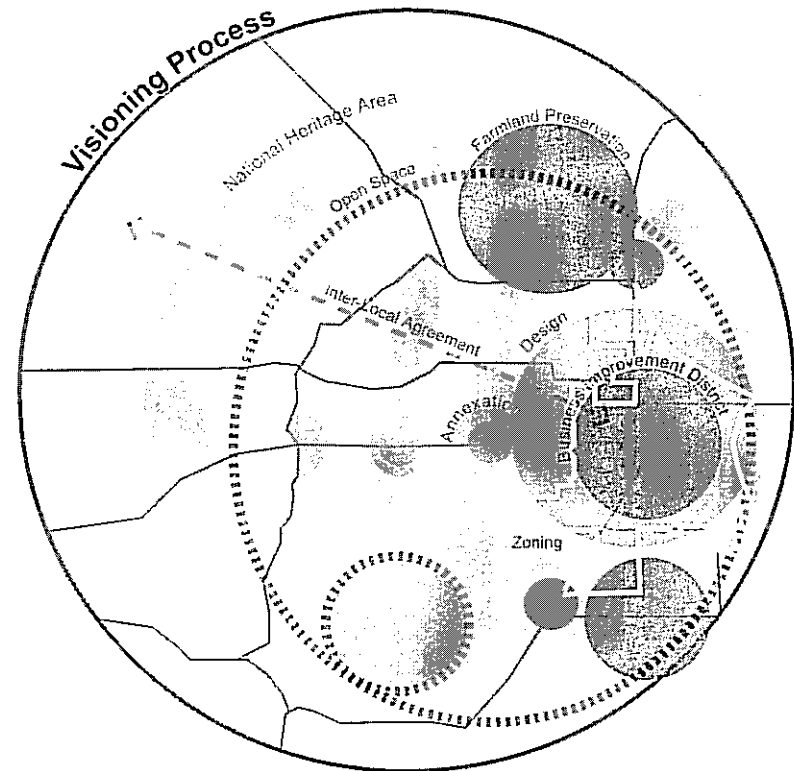
Although the University of Washington held two workshops that assisted in identifying community values, it is recommended that additional community meetings are held in order to develop a formal, unified vision of the community's future. A discussion of the recommendations throughout this document is an ideal point from which to start.

Related Working Goals

Shape the character and channel the direction of growth into city limits in order to maintain and enhance Palmer's working rural landscape and small-town identity.

Enhance Palmer's social and economic vitality by promoting downtown commercial growth and community development.

Identify and prioritize farmland facing development pressure and establish mechanisms to preserve identified farmland.



Recommendation

Engage the Palmer community in a participatory visioning process that results in a unified vision of Palmer's future.

Visioning

The community of Palmer should produce a formal statement around which to focus activity, and that further defines what they value. By formalizing a vision statement that explicitly states what they wish the city of Palmer to look like in the future, the community can focus on the direction they wish to see development take and the commitment they are prepared to make in order to achieve this. Holding public participatory meetings – a component of the Comprehensive Planning process - will allow for a greater sharing of ideas, concerns and understanding, and will ultimately gain public support for the unified vision that defines the direction that Palmer will take.

Next Steps

Possible strategies for setting a direction in Palmer.

1. Choose a direction
2. Set goals
3. Roll up sleeves
4. Check the work
5. Revise as more is known

Although the University of Washington students and faculty

performed extensive analysis to produce this report, the actual direction the strategies and recommendations take likely may not be exactly the same as the Palmer community, as the community has not formally stated the direction in which it wants to go. A discussion of the recommendations listed above is an ideal point from which to start, but should not be considered the final word on a direction.

1. Choosing a direction requires visioning.

Developing a vision requires a community to look into the future and envision a desired state for themselves and their neighbors. A community vision is a future-oriented expression of the community's direction. Once the community decides on a direction, the decision should be formalized in a vision statement. Vision statements incorporate a shared understanding of the people and their purpose for being in the community, and uses this understanding to move the community toward a desired future. A vision statement identifies where the community intends to be in the future or where it should be to best meet the needs of residents. Creating a vision statement requires a community to think big.

Visioning is the first step a community takes when it begins to systematically address its future. Communities are comprised of social, economic, and environmental factors. Getting agreement means buy-in from the community. Another term for this is consensus. Building consensus is key in politics.

2. Setting goals for the Comprehensive Plan requires a process.

Standard planning process for Comprehensive Planning requires setting goals, creating policies to achieve the goals and selecting projects to implement the goals and policies. Ideally, the goals, poli-



cies and projects should be reflected in the Municipal Code when completed.

Goals are broad statements which describe what the City aspires to provide for residents, as well as what they hope to achieve.

Policies are more specific statements that outline methods of accomplishing goals.

Projects are specific actions or standards designed to implement Policies.

4-5. Checking work and revising requires a process.

Checking work and progress follows the standard Plan-Check-Do-Revise model of planning. There are many methods of checking work and progress, and the City of Palmer should choose a method that best matches the skill of staff, electeds, and appointeds.

Sample Vision Statements

Albany, OR

A vital and diverse community that promotes a high quality of life, great neighborhoods, balanced economic growth, and quality public services.

Woodburn, OR

Woodburn will be a vibrant, full-service, market-based community that retains its small town feel and values. Woodburn will be a community of unity, pride, and charm. It will be a sustainable, but technologically advanced community with a functional multi-modal transportation system. Woodburn will thrive as a regional focus for the advancement and enjoyment of the arts, culture, leisure, and recreational activities, and be a great place to live.

National American Indian Housing Council Board

To be the recognized leader delivering excellence in services and related programs to assist Tribes/TDHEs in providing a quality home for every Native American/Alaska Native and their future generations.

University of Alaska Behavioral Health Workforce

To prepare trained behavioral health providers to deliver the highest quality of care in ways that are responsive to the needs of Alaska's diverse population.