CITY OF ALBERT LEA
PLANNING COMMISSION
ADVISORY BOARD

2/5/2013, 5:30 p.m.
NOTE NEW LOCATION: ROOM 213

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

B. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES-January 15, 2013

E. PUBLIC HEARING
   a. CASE #12-37- ZA Sign Ordinance

F. OLD BUSINESS
   a. Diversified Central District Update
   b. Work Plan- Albert Lea Listens/Comprehensive Plan Discussions

G. NEW BUSINESS
   a. Approve official meeting schedule for 2013
   b. Request for identification of 10 year future development areas in Albert Lea

H. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

I. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

J. ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF ALBERT LEA
PLANNING COMMISSION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

1/15/13, 5:30 pm
City Center - Council Chambers

Members Present
Robert Hoffman
John Severtson
Tony Trow
Jon Murray
Carol Hassebroek
David Gross
Councilor Baker

Members Absent
Thayne Nordland

Staff in Attendance
Breanne Rothstein, WSB and Associates
Addison Lewis, WSB and Associates
Chad Adams, City Manager
Jennifer Nelson, Office Specialist

Chairman, Robert Hoffman called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes
A motion was made by John Severtson and seconded by Tony Trow to approve the minutes of December 4, 2012. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

Public Hearing-None

Introductions were made for the new staff and members;

David Gross, employed by ITC and has a genuine interest for the City of Albert Lea. He advised he was a member of the downtown streetscape committee.

Jon Severtson, employed by Enders Tools. He stated he doesn't agree with some of the things going on and is ready for some changes.

Robert Hoffman, enjoys a career in real estate and owns his own brokerage and also manages commercial and rental properties. He supports growth of the downtown and wants to give back to the community. He is serving his last term and this will be his last year on the Planning Commission and noted he would still like to remain involved with the community in some way.

Jon Murray, employed by Mayo Health Systems and moved back to Albert Lea with his wife to be close to his family. He would like to see growth for Albert Lea.

Carol Hassebroek, employed as a pathologist for Mayo Health Systems and has lived in Albert Lea since August. She is interested in giving a fresh perspective and getting younger people involved in the community.

Tony Trow, is third generation family living in the area. He has lived in many different locations but has strong family history and ties to Albert Lea. He is looking for improvements for the City and stated it is exciting to think about the people living and thriving in the downtown area.

Breanne Rothstein, lives in Minneapolis and has worked as a municipal planner for the past eight years. She has a Masters Degree in Urban Planning from the University of Minnesota and a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies from Augsburg College. She enjoys living close to activities and the downtown. She likes the idea of the "urban village" and living in a walkable area.

Addison Lewis, grew up in Apple Valley and attended the University of Minnesota and has a Bachelor of Science in Urban Studies. He worked as an intern in Apple Valley and has been working full time with the WSB since August.

Chad Adams, City Manager advised he would be involved with the broader projects and listed some examples such as; Port Authority, Freeborn Bank Building, Downtown Street Scape, Blazing Star, Gateway Downtown projects, and Doug Johnson would take the lead on smaller projects.

Jennifer Nelson, Office Specialist for the Fire & Inspection Department will be taking minutes for the Planning Commission Meetings and assist with communications.

Old Business

1. **Case # 12-22-ZA Diversified Central District and Re-zonings**. The staff report was presented by Breanne Rothstein who is the new consultant municipal planner. This report becomes part of these minutes by reference. *Memorandum was dated January, 2, 2013*. Breanne advised the advantages of the Diversified Central District (DCD) would bring more flexibility to the downtown, promote walkability, help with the retention of businesses and promote new business opportunities. This brings the idea of the "Urban Village" and bringing people to the downtown. This re-zoning will affect approximately 300 downtown parcels. Breanne presented a power point presentation to the Planning Commission (PC). This re-zoning would encourage denser land uses. Breanne explained that in the areas where there are single family dwellings those would become legal nonconforming status. If this was the case any expansion of a single family would require a variance. She also asked if the PC would want single family dwellings to be a permitted use in the DCD.

Breanne advised this re-zoning would also lead to more opportunities for redevelopment.

Breanne is looking for input and plans on beginning to draft an ordinance.

Breanne also asked for input on standards for parking.

Breanne discussed an outline for the next steps to move forward with this concept for the DCD. She advised putting together a public informational meeting to educate the public on the specifics of the proposed ordinance and for those whose parcels will be affected by this re-zoning. She would like feedback and to gather input and concerns the public may have. She plans to update the council of this re-zoning study at a work session on February 4th. The public informational meeting was set for Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

John Severtson brought up concerns regarding redevelopment in the HPC district. Breanne advised they can still redevelop this area although the rules are stricter and they would be required to meet certain guidelines for approval.

Robert Hoffman advised there are benefits for being located in the Historic district. There are tax incentives and grants available.

Breanne would like to have a draft of the ordinance ready to present by the April PC and council meetings.

Re-zoning may also affect property values which may cause taxes to increase for these properties. Larry Baker thought it would be beneficial to include staff from the county assessor's office at the public meeting. This would assist to answer the questions of how much impact this would have for owners of existing properties.

Larry Baker thought it would be a good idea to put an informational piece together to air on the government channel.

The Commission discussed the need to have a preliminary community meeting introducing the idea of a Diversified Central District, then a follow-up community meeting to discuss the specific re-zoning of each property.

2. **Case # 12-37-ZA Sign Ordinance Discussion.** Breanne asked for feedback from the PC before an amended sign ordinance brought before the council. .This report becomes part of these minutes by reference. *Memorandum was dated January, 2, 2013.* The Commission discussed the minor changes to the sign ordinance, including allowing more square footage for projecting signs on corner properties, and directed staff to bring a revised ordinance and conduct a public hearing on the matter.

New Business- Breanne would like to put together a work plan for 2013 and asked the PC members what items they would like to include on the plan. Tony Trow would like to discuss the Albert Lea Listens concept and the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Communications:- none

Staff Communications:- none

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m. 1/15/13 motion by John Severtson and second by Jon Murray.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

Breanne Rothstein, Planner

Approved:

_____

Planning Commission Secretary

WSB & Associates, Inc.

Infrastructure ■ Engineering ■ Planning ■ Construction

701 Xenia Avenue South
Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55416
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Memorandum

To: ***Planning Commission, City of Albert Lea***
Doug Johnson, Building Official

From: ***Breanne Rothstein, Planner***
WSB & Associates, Inc.

Date: ***January 30, 2013***

Re: ***Public Hearing Ordinance to amend Article IV of Chapter 74 SIGNS***
Case #12-37-ZA

Based on the discussions at the November and January Planning Commission meetings, staff has prepared a draft ordinance for your review. This is a public hearing and has been properly noticed.

Several changes to the sign ordinance are proposed, and are summarized below. The impetus for these changes was to reconcile the zoning ordinance with the "Architectural Guidelines for Historic Preservation" adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission and to allow multiple family district uses to install larger identification signs for complexes.

The primary discussion of the Commission was regarding marquees signs and their appropriateness in the B-3 district. The Planning Commission discussed not changing the standards for marquees and asked for renderings of signs for the Marion Ross theatre that could conform to the sign ordinance. They did express an interest in allowing for some additional square footage for projecting signs.

Currently, the definition of a "projecting sign" is: *a building sign extending more than 18 inches out from the wall of the building in which it is mounted.* Currently, projecting signs must be a minimum of 8 feet from the ground in all districts, and in the B-3 district, all awning, canopy, and projecting signs are limited to 12 square feet per sign face (and only one total of these types are permitted). Specifically regarding projecting signs, the code limits such signage to 4 feet long, and allows for projection of up to 4 feet. The Planning Commission expressed a willingness to allow more signage for projecting signs, but only those on a corner of a building. Staff is recommending an increase in square footage from 12 to 18, and an increase in length from 4 to 6 feet. Also, an allowance is proposed for the sign to reach up to the second story (rather than "halfway to the second story").

The Planning Commission expressed a willingness to allow for more of this type of projecting sign. Two other minor changes include adding standards for portable signs in the B-2, I-1, and I-2 districts and allowing for R-2 and R-3 properties to have one larger development community sign. The ordinance is included in your packet, with tracked changes to allow for ease of review.

3) Residential Preservation District (R-P), and the Multi-Family Residential Office District (R-O) as follows:

Table 1: Permitted Signs and Specifications in Residential Districts	
Permitted Sign:	Freestanding Sign
Zone:	R-1, R-2, R-3, R-P
Maximum Sign Area:	6 sq. ft. per face with two signs per property May be double faced for a total area of 12 sq. ft.
Maximum Height:	6 ft. above grade.
Special Provisions:	1. Development Communities may have additional signs: a. Only one (1) sign shall be erected at dedicated street entrances to the development and shall be allowed by a conditional use permit. b. No more than two (2) such signs shall be allowed per site. ~~b.~~c. Those located in the R-2 or R-3 district may have one freestanding sign up to 32 square feet in size located on the property. 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Wall Sign
Zone:	R-O
Maximum Sign Area:	50 sq. ft. per sign face
Maximum Height:	N/A
Special Provisions:	1. Only one (1) sign per building face bordering a street. 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Freestanding Sign
Zone:	R-O
Maximum Sign Area:	50 sq. ft. per sign face, limited to two faces. Total site signage area shall not exceed 200 sq. ft. for each site.
Maximum Height:	25 ft.
Special Provisions:	1. One (1) sign per site frontage 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

b. Signs are permitted in the Neighborhood Business District (B-1) as follows:

Table 2: Signs Specification and Provisions in the Neighborhood Business District	
Permitted Sign:	Freestanding Sign
Zone:	B-1
Maximum Sign Area:	50 sq. ft. per sign face, limited to two faces. 100 sq. ft. in total.
Maximum Height:	25 ft.
Special Provisions:	1. Only one (1) sign per site. 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Wall Sign
Zone:	B-1
Maximum Sign Area:	50 sq. ft. per site.
Maximum Height:	N/A
Special Provisions:	3. Only one (1) sign per building face bordering a street. 4. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

c. Signs are permitted in the Community Business District (B-2), Limited Industrial District (I-1), Industrial District (I-2), and Diversified Industrial District (I-3) as follows:

Table 3: Signs Specification and Provisions in Business and Industrial Districts	
Permitted Sign:	Wall Sign
Zone:	B-2, I-1, I-2, I-3
Maximum Sign Area:	1. Single-story buildings: a. The maximum total wall sign area for each building face shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of each building face. 2. Multi-story buildings: a. The maximum total wall sign area for each building face shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the first floor level building face.
Maximum Height:	Shall not extend above the roof or parapet wall.
Special Provisions:	1. Permitted for each building face abutting on or facing a public street, alley, ~~or~~ public parking area or a private parking area not facing or adjacent to a residential district. 2. Multi-story buildings may have one (1) identification sign for each wall facing or abutting on a public street or parking area and the sign shall not exceed a sign area equal to five (5) percent of the building face on which the sign is located. The area of the building

	face shall be measured from the floor level of the second story. 3. Shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line. 4. *Setback Credit: For all Wall Signs within the B-2, I-1, I-2, I-3 districts a setback credit permitting additional individual sign area is allowed where signs are located beyond required front yard setback. Such credit allows an increase of one (1) square foot of sign area for each additional one (1) foot of setback beyond the required front yard setback. The maximum wall sign area shall not increase by more than 50%.* For Setback guidelines please reference the City Code, Sec. 74-219. Tabulation of district requirements.

Permitted Sign:	Projecting Sign
Zone:	B-2, I-1, I-2, I-3
Maximum Sign Area:	1. Single-story buildings: a. The maximum total aggregate sign area, including wall signs, for each building face shall not exceed twenty (20) percent. 2. Multi-story buildings: a. The maximum total wall sign area for each building face shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the first floor level building face. 3. Aggregate sign area includes both faces of double sided signage.
Maximum Height:	Shall not extend above the roof.
Special Provisions:	1. Permitted for each building face abutting on or facing a public street, alley, or public parking area. 2. A minimum distance of eight (8) ft. between sidewalk and the bottom of the sign is required. 3. Multi-story buildings may also have one (1) identification sign for each wall facing or abutting on a public street or parking area. 4. Shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Freestanding Sign
Zone:	B-2, I-1, I-2, I-3
Maximum Sign Area:	250 sq. ft. per side, maximum of two sides.
Maximum Height:	50 ft.
Special Provisions:	1. Sign shall be located at a distance of not less than 100 ft. from any other freestanding ground signs and billboards on the site. 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a

	property line.

Permitted Sign:	Menu Signs
Zone:	B-2, I-1, I-2, I-3
Maximum Sign Area:	50 sq. ft. total per drive through lane.
Maximum Height:	8 ft. above ground level.
Special Provisions:	1. Sign shall not be located within required yard setback areas, and shall have only one (1) face. 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Billboard Signs *(formerly known as Outdoor Advertising Signs)*
Zone:	B-2, I-1, I-2
Maximum Sign Area:	600 sq. ft. for each viewing direction (1,200 sq. ft. total)
Maximum Height:	25 ft. above ground level.
Special Provisions:	1. No billboard shall be placed closer than 300 ft. from any other billboard or closer than 100 ft. from any other freestanding ground sign on the same side of the street. 2. No billboard shall be constructed or erected within 300 ft. of a residential district, school, or park property or within 100 ft. of any public property, other than a street or alley. 3. No billboard shall be constructed or erected within 50 ft. of the intersecting property lines of a street intersection or within 50 ft. of a railroad crossing and in no event shall be constructed as to block the visibility of a street intersection or railroad crossing. 4. No site on which a shopping center is located may be used for the installation of an outdoor billboard. 5. Billboards shall not be attached to walls or roofs and shall not be located so as to obstruct doors, windows, fire escapes, light or air to any building. 6. Billboard shall only be single-face or double-face signs that are installed parallel to each other. 7. Billboards shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Portable Signs
Zone:	B-1, I-1, I-2
Maximum Sign Area:	32 sq. ft.
Maximum Height:	8 feet off the ground
Special Provisions:	1. Must not restrict vehicle views or pedestrian traffic. 2. Can be permitted for up to 14 days only.

d. Signs are permitted in the Central Business District (B-3) as follows:

Table 4: Signs Specification and Provisions in the Central Business District	
Permitted Sign:	Sidewalk Signs
Zone:	B-2, B-3, B-4, I-1, I-2
Maximum Sign Area:	6 sq. ft. per side (12 sq. ft. total)
Maximum Height:	4 ft.
Special Provisions:	1. No more than one (1) sidewalk sign shall be allowed per property. 2. A sidewalk sign may be placed on the sidewalk directly abutting the owner's building. 3. Shall be displayed only during hours of business operation. 4. Shall not be illuminated, or have any shimmering or revolving parts. 5. Shall not be affixed to the sidewalk, other signage or structures. 6. Shall not block driveways, entryways, or pedestrian accesses, shall not significantly obstruct the sidewalk, and shall not encroach on any sidewalk so that less than 5 ft. of pedestrian passage is provided, and shall not impact site line/view of street intersections.

Permitted Sign:	Identification Sign
Zone:	B-3
Maximum Sign Area:	3 sq. ft. total.
Maximum Height:	N/A
Special Provisions:	1. One sign may be placed beneath a moveable or fixed awning, or canopy perpendicular to the building.

Permitted Sign:	Awning, Canopy, and Projecting Signs
Zone:	B-3
Maximum Sign Area:	12 sq. ft. total area per sign face (unless otherwise stated herein)
Maximum Height:	~~Halfway to~~ S~~s~~econd story of building (unless otherwise stated herein)~~.~~
Special Provisions:	1. Only one awning, canopy, or projecting sign is permitted for each site. 2. An awning sign shall have only one face. The sign must be placed on the valance and shall not exceed 12 in. in height. 3. A canopy sign shall have only one face parallel to the face of the building. 4. A projecting sign may have two faces and must project at right

	angles from the building façade or from a right angle from the corner of a building. The sign shall not be more than 4 ft. long from the bottom to the top (unless located on a corner of a building, then can be up to 6 feet long), and shall not project more than 4 ft. from the building façade. The sign shall be at least 8 ft. above the grade. A corner projecting sign can be allowed up to 18 square feet. 5. All signs must be installed in accordance with the International Building Code and obtain a "Certificate of Appropriateness" from the Historic Preservation Commission prior to submittal for a sign permit, if located in the National Commercial Historic District.

Permitted Sign:	Freestanding Sign
Zone:	B-3
Maximum Sign Area:	250 sq. ft. total.
Maximum Height:	50 ft.
Special Provisions:	1. Sign shall be located at a distance of not less than 100 ft. from any other freestanding ground signs and billboards on the site. 2. Signs shall not extend into the public right-of-way or over a property line.

Permitted Sign:	Wall Sign
Zone:	B-3
Maximum Sign Area:	Twenty (20) percent of the first floor level building face.
Maximum Height:	Shall not extend over the roof line.
Special Provisions:	1. Single-story buildings a. Wall signs are permitted for each building and shall be placed only on building faces that abut or face a public street, alley, public parking area, or shopping center parking lot. b. The maximum aggregate wall sign area, including projecting signs, for each building face shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the building face on which the signs are installed. 2. Multi-story buildings a. Wall signs are permitted for each building face abutting facing a public street, alley, public parking area. b. The maximum aggregate wall sign area for each building face shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the building face on which the signs are installed. c. Multi-story buildings may have one identification sign for each wall facing or abutting on a public street or parking

	area, and the sign shall not exceed a sign area equal to five (5) percent of the building face on which the sign is located. The area of the building face shall be measured from the bottom of the second story.

Permitted Sign:	Portable Signs
Zone:	B-3
Maximum Sign Area:	32 sq. ft.
Maximum Height:	8 feet off the ground
Special Provisions:	1. Location – Northeast corner of the North Broadway Parking Lot: The non-parking area of the Southwest Corner of Fountain Street and North Broadway Avenue, on Lot 2, Block 1, Community Development Plat No. 2. 2. Must not restrict vehicle views or pedestrian traffic. 3. Can be permitted for up to 14 days only.

Permitted Sign:	Banner
Zone:	B-3
Maximum Sign Area:	4 ft. by 13 ft. each, subject to maximum wall sign area permitted.
Maximum Height:	8 ft. off the ground

e. Signs are permitted in the Freeway Interchange Zone (B-4) as follows: See Section 74-579.

f. Signs are permitted in the Interstate Development District (IDD) as follows: See Section 74-589.

g. Signs are permitted in the Shoreland Management District as follows:

Table 7: Signs Specification and Provisions in the Shoreland Management District	
Permitted Sign:	Freestanding Signs
Zone:	Shoreland Management District
Maximum Sign Area:	N/A
Maximum Height:	N/A
Special Provisions:	1. Signs shall be placed in or on public waters by a public authority or under permit issued by the county sheriff.

Section 74-579 Signs permitted in the B-4 Freeway Interchange Zone

(1) ***General development signs.*** One general development sign may be permitted for each ten acres of land area within the designated B-4 district. A minimum size B-4 district (25 acres) shall be permitted two general development signs. A general development sign may include an

electronic reader board but may not include other forms of flashing or rotating lights. A general development sign may carry logos and symbols representative of major businesses on the site and a common identification name for the site. The general development sign is not intended to carry other advertising messages other than on the reader board. A general development sign shall not exceed 100 feet in height or 1,000 square feet in total sign area per sign face. No part of a freestanding general development sign shall overhang a public right-of-way. Such signs shall be located 200 feet apart, and may be located anywhere within the B-4 zone subject to landowner approval.

(2) ***Business signs.*** Each detached freestanding business within the district shall be permitted one freestanding business sign not to exceed 300 square feet in sign area per sign face or 100 feet in height. Each cluster of businesses consisting of an aggregate floor area of 5,000 square feet within a common building shall be permitted one freestanding business sign not to exceed 300 square feet in sign area per sign face or 100 feet in height. Such business signs shall be located not less than 100 feet from any other freestanding sign and may be located anywhere within the B-4 district subject to property owner approval. No part of a freestanding business sign may overhang a public right-of-way.

(3) ***Signs on building faces.*** Signs may be permitted on all building faces. The maximum aggregate sign area on a building face shall not exceed 25 percent of the first floor level of the building on which the sign is located, and, for multistory buildings, additional sign area shall not exceed an area greater than five percent of the face of the remainder of the multistory building as measured above the first floor; however, the sign may be placed anywhere on the building face, as long as the aggregate sign area for that face is not exceeded. Roof signs shall not be permitted.

(4) ***Information, direction and private traffic control signs.*** Signs indicating Information, direction and private traffic control movement or services provided shall not exceed 100 square feet in sign area per side, 20 feet in height, and shall not carry any advertising message other than name, service, identification or logo. The area of the signs shall not be counted as part of the aggregate sign area for the site. Signs on fueling area canopies shall be considered as information, direction and private traffic control signs.

(5) ***Compliance.*** Other than as stated in this section, signs shall conform to the standards established in article IV of this chapter.

(Ord. No. 440, 2d, § 1 (11.33, subd. 9), 1-8-96).

Section 74-589 Signs permitted in the IDD Interstate Development District

(1) ***Freestanding business signs***. Each detached freestanding business within the district shall be permitted one freestanding business sign not to exceed 300 square feet in sign area per sign face or 100 feet in height.

(2) ***General development sign.*** Each cluster of businesses consisting of a total of 100,000 sq. ft. of ground floor area or greater, or located on 25 or more acres may have an additional freestanding sign to identify the development. Said sign may be 100 feet in height and 1,000 square feet in sign area per sign face. Said sign may only include a common identification name for the site and logos and symbols representative of major businesses for the site. The general development sign is not intended to carry other advertising messages.

(3) ***Freestanding signs and general development signs*** shall be placed a minimum distance of 100 feet apart measured at any angle.

(4) ***Signs on building faces.*** Signs may be permitted on all building faces. The maximum aggregate sign area on a building face shall not exceed 25 percent of the first floor level of the

building on which the sign is located. For multistory buildings, additional sign area shall not exceed an area greater than five percent of the face of the remainder of the multistory building as measured above the first floor; however, the sign may be placed anywhere on the building face, as long as the aggregate sign area for that face is not exceeded.

(5) ***Roof signs*** shall not be permitted.

(6) ***Information, directional and private traffic control signs.*** Signs indicating information, direction, and private traffic control movement or services provided shall not exceed 50 square feet in area per sign face, 20 feet in height, and shall not carry any advertising message other than name, service, identification or logo.

(7) ***Compliance.*** Other than as stated in this section, signs shall conform to the standards established in article IV of this chapter.

WSB & Associates, Inc.

Infrastructure ■ Engineering ■ Planning ■ Construction

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Memorandum

To: ***Planning Commission, City of Albert Lea***
Doug Johnson, Building Official

From: ***Breanne Rothstein, Planner***
WSB & Associates, Inc.

Date: ***January 30, 2013***

Re: ***Update regarding Diversified Central District***

The Council is planning to meet to discuss the proposed Diversified Central District at their pre-agenda meeting on February 7th. Once Council is informed and approves of the direction of the staff and Planning Commission, public notices will be sent to affected property owners regarding the rezoning study. Due to the number of affected properties (close to 300), Planning Commission directed staff to hold an informational meeting on Tuesday, February 26, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. to introduce this effort to the public. No specific property information will be available at this meeting, but a general presentation will be made regarding the need for this effort and the reasoning behind it. This effort will be presented as an economic development initiative to focus residential re-development efforts in the downtown area, thus increasing the level of economic vitality in the downtown core.

Below is a tentative plan for the completion of the rezoning study for the Diversified Central District:

February 26th-Public meeting to introduce the rezoning study
March 5th -Planning Commission meeting-draft ordinance
End of March-Second public meeting-specific rezonings that are proposed
May Planning Commission meeting-formal public hearing for ordinance and rezonings

If you have any questions, please contact me at 763-231-4863.

WSB & Associates, Inc.

Infrastructure ■ Engineering ■ Planning ■ Construction

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Memorandum

To: ***Planning Commission, City of Albert Lea***
Doug Johnson, Building Official

From: ***Breanne Rothstein, Planner***
WSB & Associates, Inc.

Date: ***January 30, 2013***

Re: ***Work Plan-2013***

At the January meeting, the 2013 Work Plan for the Planning Commission was discussed, and the group directed staff to consult the Comprehensive Plan and the feedback from Albert Lea Listens to determine the direction of the Planning Commission for 2013. I have attached the implementation section of the Comprehensive Plan for discussion. The entire Comprehensive Plan is available on the website under the Planning and Zoning Department link.

In general, the Comprehensive Plan lays out several action steps and assigns responsibility to the Planning Commission for some of these items. Specifically, the implementation items in your Comprehensive Plan are:

- Be willing and open to change
- Understand available financial resources
- Use the Comprehensive Plan daily
- Update/modify official tools and regulations and orderly annexation agreements
- Conduct Focus Area Plans on downtown, southwest greensward, ecovillage (bath Road interchange), Bridge Ave redevelopment, Glenville Corridor.
- Develop a plan for streetscaping, gateways, and wayfinding along key corridors
- Develop a park and recreation system master plan
- Participate in legislative efforts
- Maintain and update Capital Improvement Program
- Pursue public/private partnerships
- Increase awareness and implementation of public art
- Develop a means to measure success/community indicators

Several of these items are currently being implemented, including the Central Diversified District rezoning study and the streetscape efforts.

According to the introduction section of the Comprehensive Plan, three main themes emerged from the Albert Lea Listens process: business development/jobs, community appearance and attitude, and recreation and cultural amenities. These were the top three priorities of the community residents who participated.

Staff would recommend having a discussion on prioritizing the remaining implementation tools.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 763-231-4863.

Implementation Action Steps

5

Implementation Action Steps are an essential component of our Comprehensive Plan for Albert Lea. This section identifies how the Plan is to be implemented, essentially serving as our "to do list" for the next several years. It recommends action steps to achieve the community's Vision and the many good ideas that have resulted from the processes leading up to our plan: Albert Lea Listens, The Minnesota Design Team and the efforts of our Land Between the Lakes Action Teams. These actions work collectively with the guiding principles and policies identified throughout the Plan.

In this section of our plan, we describe a number of actions. Some of these actions will be clearly defined projects with an obvious start and end point. Other actions might be ongoing, recurring action steps focused on measuring progress and resetting the standards. Therefore, our plan is not a static plan. It is dynamic. We must be willing to change and amend the plan; but we must hold true to our vision and guiding principles. Implementation of our plan requires a coordinated effort from our community. Not just those who live within the corporate limits, but also those who rely on Albert Lea for services, recreation, schools, jobs and entertainment. Our plan can't be carried out by only a few individuals. It must be embraced by the community. It must transcend economic, cultural and generational barriers in order to achieve the level of diversity we envision.

This implementation strategy focuses on the near term (one to five years.) The plan must be updated after the first five years (if not done sooner), and new implementation action steps would follow. The action steps that follow include a basic dialogue to set the stage. Following each action step, a summary matrix illustrates the general time frame, core responsibilities and general cost identifier (if reasonably known) for implementation. As annual goals and work programs are established, these action steps should be updated, expanded upon and checked off when completed.

Community Action steps are identified to provide an ongoing dialogue regarding planning for the future of Albert Lea with clear and explicit directions for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The action steps should serve as

The Land Between the Lakes Action Team

This volunteer group was organized to implement the visions presented in Albert Lea Area Listens and the Minnesota Design Team visit. Since the early 2000s, this group has been meeting regularly to mobilize around key action steps.

Our Action Steps are identified as priority projects for:

Immediate (1-2 years)

Mid range (3-5 years)

or

Long range (5+ years)

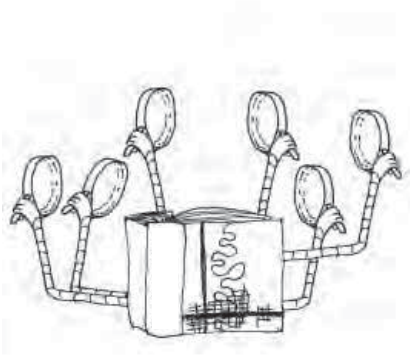
a tool and direction for City Council, staff and advisory boards in setting annual work programs, goals and budgets. Finally, action steps provide a means for general citizenry to continue to be engaged in shaping community growth and development through volunteerism and community involvement.

Action Step #1: Be willing and open to change

Over the next few decades, Albert Lea will experience a number of changes, some of which are foreseen in the Plan and some of which will be entirely unanticipated. Adapting to those changes will require flexibility. Since not all ideas and proposals will conform to the specific directions within the Plan, the Vision and Guiding Principles serve as "yardsticks" to assess those ideas and proposals for consistency with the bigger picture. Decision makers may find a proposal to be compatible with the Vision; and therefore, find changes to the Comprehensive Plan to be appropriate. New data and information about our community will be made available from time to time as new measurements are made and new technologies emerge. All of our planning efforts should be formally reviewed on a regular basis (annually or biannually) to assess progress on attaining the community's Vision and to continue a dialogue about the community's future. The annual review should focus on both the success and failures, if any, of the Plan. The results of this dialogue should lead to potential modifications or amendments to the plan. Annual review of the Comprehensive Plan should include widespread community participation, allowing Albert Lea to continue to benefit from its active citizenry. The Planning Commission should serve as the principle entity charged with this review.

1. Be willing and open to change - Conduct annual progress report on action steps and determine plan modification needs.	
Time Frame	Annual
Core Responsibilities	Leadership Staff - Planning Commission
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$

Action Step #2. Understand Available Financial Resources

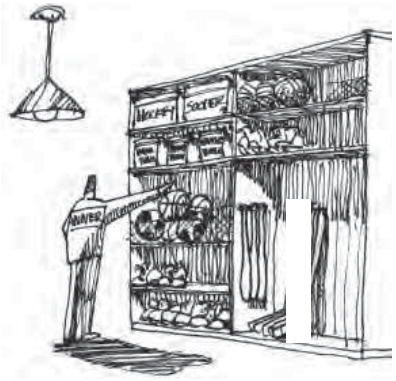


Implementation of our plan will require a combination of public and private actions. Public actions require a public investment and some private actions will require a partnering financial effort as well. When possible, public investments should seek to leverage private investments. While there is not a bottomless pot of money to tap into, there are a variety of financial resources available to undertake community development projects and action steps. However, the tools of today may become outdated and should be reviewed on a regular basis. City staff and decision makers will need to retain a current working knowledge of all of the tools that can be used to create specific implementation strategies and

apply those resources to the appropriate strategy when advising decision makers. A financial "toolbox" should be developed identifying available resources such as: state and federal grant and loan programs, foundation grant and loan programs, city operating budgets and capital improvement program funding, tax increment financing (TIF), tax abatement, philanthropic opportunities, special taxing districts, special service districts or business improvement districts, bonding or borrowing, local option sales tax, referendums, etc. We must also remember our guiding principles "Create new tools to solve old problems" and partner with our state legislators to think beyond the box and create new tools to address our unique challenges. The City should subscribe to newsletters and database organizations that match grant programs with community interests. One such program is the Minnesota Sustainable Communities Network, or MnSCN (www.nextstepminnesota.org).

2. Understand Available Financial Resources	
Time Frame	Annual
Core Responsibilities	Staff
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$

Action Step #3. Use the Comprehensive Plan Daily



An effective Comprehensive Plan is one that suffers from excessive use as demonstrated by worn edges, coffee stains and scribbled notes in the margins. As this Plan takes a new approach to comprehensive planning, its benefits will only be seen with frequent consultation, review and evaluation. The Plan should be used not only by the community's planners, but by other city staff, decision makers, advisors and developers. The Comprehensive Plan can be used as a:

City Staff Resource – The Plan should be used most often by our City Staff. The Plan is a guide for staff's recommendations and responses to inquiries from the community. It is the responsibility of City Staff to ensure that the Plan is being kept current, and when inconsistencies arise, to facilitate resolution through a community forum and a public process.

Guide and educational tool for other community organizations –The growth of Albert Lea is facilitated by many community interests, including the school district, business community, ALEDA, Shell-Rock Watershed, Freeborn County, developers, and other special interest groups. The Plan should be promoted to these groups, not simply as a marketing tool, but as a resource in the development of their own plans which articulate the community's Vision and direction.

Policy Guide to Decision Makers and Advisors – Advisory Boards, particularly the Planning Commission, and City Council members but also the Economic Development and Port Authorities and Businesses are charged with making recommendations and decisions about the growth and development of our

community. The Comprehensive Plan's vision, guiding principles and policies should be the "yardstick" to which innovative ideas are measured as to how well they achieve the community's shared vision (see Chapter 2 Vision and Guiding Principles).

Basis for Setting Annual Goals and Work Programs – The community's advisory boards, commissions, civic groups/organizations and City Council establish goals and work programs on an annual basis. The Comprehensive Plan, and particularly the Action Steps, serve as a basis for identifying future projects and directions.

Guide for Ongoing Regulatory Changes – Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance will be reviewed for consistency with the directions outlined in our Comprehensive Plan. Our land use patterns are purposely broad so that we can respond to changing market conditions. However, the policy statements enable us to enact regulations that shape the design of future development so that it meets our needs for sustainable development. Regardless of the degree of change, future requests to amend official tools will be brought forth. We must use the plan as a tool to evaluate and guide this change toward the community's vision.

3. Use Comprehensive Plan Daily	
Time Frame	On-going
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff Boards/Commissions City Council
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$

Action Step #4. Update/Modify Official Tools and Regulations and establish orderly annexation agreements.

The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance are the official regulatory tools to implement the Land Use Plan and its policies. The Comprehensive Plan provides the "nexus" to the specific laws in the City's ordinances and allows implementation of ideas that help the City reach goals outlined in the Guiding Principles. The judicial system has often cited inconsistencies between the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance when siding against the community in a zoning dispute. The Zoning Map and its supporting text are the primary sources for implementing the Land Use Plan. In general, the Zoning Ordinance Map and the new Land Use Plan should be thoroughly reviewed for consistency.

The current zoning code contains relatively flexible districts and bulk standards. Application of the districts should be evaluated relative to the land use plan. A key area that should be explored in depth includes future growth areas. How does the City wish to influence development patterns in areas outside of City

boundaries that are anticipated to develop, but maybe not for several years? This is an important question that can only be answered through collaborative planning and cooperation between the City, Freeborn County and the Townships. Part of our zoning modification should be the development of orderly annexation agreements with Albert Lea, Bancroft, Pickerel Lake and Manchester Townships. Our land use planning completed for the comprehensive plan update enables us to be more informed of the economic and fiscal impacts annexations might have on our greater community.

While our current zoning regulations can function within the context of our comprehensive plan, we might begin to explore the idea of using our zoning regulations to focus more on shaping the form and character of buildings in our community. A 'form based' zoning approach puts design at the forefront of regulation, whereas the traditional approach to zoning is to regulate a particular use on a site. With a form based zoning district, the form of the development is dictated by the type of street front it sits on. So long as the yard and front of the building can adhere to the form requirements, its use is generally very flexible. The end result is more flexibility with the type of use on the site and a stronger connection with the context of the neighborhood and street. A form based zoning approach is not appropriate in all areas of Albert Lea. We might start by considering it in downtown or along our corridors.

4. Update/Modify Official Tools and Regulations and Orderly Annexation Agreements	
Time Frame	1 year
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Appeals/City Council
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$

Action Step #5. Conduct Focus Area Plans for Growth Areas and Transforming Areas

As new development continues, a detailed planning process will enhance the coherency of development patterns, and will present the greatest likelihood of guiding development consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and the City's Vision. A key purpose of conducting focus area plans is to establish more detailed land use plans that illustrate how a larger area with multiple property owners develops in a manner consistent with our Plan. Focus Area Plans go beyond land use to ensure appropriate design character, streetscape, open space systems and public infrastructure systems that accommodate development and redevelopment but also maximize the ability to leverage quality private investments. Use of Focus Area Plans will help the City meet its goals of implementing quality land development, a part of the guiding principles of this Plan.

Steps in preparing Focus Area Plans

Establish Objectives for Plan

Prepare team of experts

Engage stakeholders in defining barriers and opportunities and exploring solutions and directions

Prepare the plan

Seek approvals of the plan (buy in)

Adopt and implement the plan

Completion of a Focus Area Plan could be triggered by one of two events. One reason would be a community decision to direct new development or redevelopment to a certain area of the community where there exists a need for improvements to infrastructure systems. A public need could be associated with economic development, telecommunications, transportation, the environment or schools. A second trigger for a Focus Area Plan would be a developer or landowner who wishes to plan a development project that should be considered in a larger context, for example a development project on the edge of our community that might require expanding beyond our boundaries.

Each Focus Area Plan would be completed under the direction of City staff and Council with direct involvement from the advisory boards, commissions, community groups and the general public. The Focus Area Plan would also involve developers or developer representatives and landowners or landowner representatives within the defined neighborhood. Priority Focus Area Plans would be funded by the City, carrying the costs until such time that development occurs. As development occurs, City costs would be re-captured through public improvement assessments. In some cases, where plans are requested by land owners or developers, planning costs should be fronted by the landowner/developers. Sharing costs with land owners and developers could also offset the public cost. Depending upon what is being addressed in the planning process, regional or state agencies may also participate in the cost of such planning efforts providing a regional issue is being addressed.

Focus Area Plans are adopted as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan so that they add greater significance relative to land use and zoning decisions. Once a focus area plan is adopted by the City, it serves as a guiding document for future development. As preliminary and final plats are submitted to the City, they would be checked for consistency with the overall comprehensive plan and the focus area plan.

Priority Focus Area Plans

Downtown Albert Lea: A Redevelopment Focus Area Plan--Downtown is the heart and soul of our community. We have done a lot of thinking and planning around the Blazing Star Landing site in the last few years. What we are clear on is that the site needs to redevelop to a use that compliments our downtown and does not draw vitality away from downtown. At a time when our community wants to see something happen on the BSL site, we must not forget about our downtown. A planning process surrounding downtown Albert Lea should focus on identifying redevelopment opportunities, not necessarily designing what the redevelopment should look like, but identifying new development opportunities and determining the necessary infrastructure systems that must be in place to facilitate such development. This infrastructure includes both the "grey" systems (storm sewer, sanitary sewer, potable water supply, telecommunications, streets,

trails and sidewalks) as well as the "green" infrastructure (public open space, plazas, streetscapes, storm water management systems). Our public spaces and infrastructure systems must set the example for private investment and re-investment. We might first work with our downtown community to help frame the core objectives of this focus area plan and establish a plan to determine how we fund such and effort. This would parlay into a funding strategy that ultimately builds identified public improvements.

Downtown Albert Lea aerial photo from 2006.

A plan for Downtown should be an immediate priority.

Southwest Greensward: The Southwest Greensward was a big idea that has generated excitement and intrigue. Through the Comprehensive Planning process, we have only brushed the surface. A detailed plan to determine future alignment and specific redevelopment opportunities would be the logical next step for our community. This process would directly engage the part of our community most impacted by the idea and would seek to turn a vision into reality.

Southwest Greensward.

A plan for the Southwest Greensward should be an immediate to mid-range priority and should be connected to the plan for Downtown.

EcoVillage—Bath Road Interchange: The EcoVillage concept (also referred to as the Bath Road Interchange area) has been a point of discussion for several years. It was mentioned in the 1996 Comprehensive Plan and has been the subject of an Interchange Access Study that determined that while it might be allowed by the Federal Highway Administration and MnDOT, it is seen as a development driven interchange and would likely not be eligible for significant federal or state funding. The Comprehensive Planning process explored the idea of a development that establishes a unique theme with a focus on alternative energy sources. A number of issues were raised in this process that will require further planning: annexation and extension of growth north of I-90 to facilitate local funding of an interchange; traffic impacts on Richway Drive; funding for extending sanitary sewer systems or exploration of alternative treatment systems and the impact on existing commercial areas. These issues require a more focused dialogue with affected agencies.

Exploration of the EcoVillage concept is a longer range priority.

EcoVillage Concept.

Bridge Avenue—Land Use and Redevelopment: Traffic flow on Bridge Avenue has been studied and a plan for roadway improvements has been prepared (see pages 74 and 75). We all know that the traffic challenges with Bridge Avenue will only grow in the future. Moving forward with a plan to address those challenges requires difficult decisions that will have significant impacts on some. Immediate benefits may not be easily recognized, but in the long term, thoughtful planning will have significant paybacks to the community and the businesses that rely on access to the corridor. An approach to implementation has been developed by the City and County Engineering staff. This approach is one that involves the long term acquisition of some parcels to secure right-of-way for future improvements to Bridge Avenue which will alleviate traffic problems and enhance the corridor. As our principle suggests "Encourage new while planning the old…" we must understand the opportunities that correcting a traffic problem presents. Bridge Avenue's traffic problems are bearable today, but in twenty years they may not be. A long term plan for acquiring parcels for road improvements should be guided by or based on a plan for redevelopment of remnant lands. Returning remnant lands to taxable uses can serve as an investment tool for offsetting some of the costs to improve the corridor.

Redevelopment planning along Bridge Avenue should be an immediate to mid-term priority.

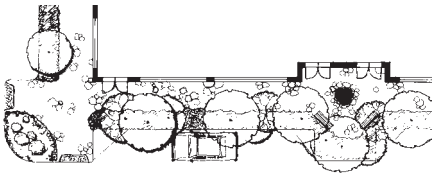
The Glenville Corridor is an important regional economic opportunity for Albert Lea. Regional planning must consider regional impacts and needs including traffic on key transportation corridors (TH 65 and County Highway 13).

Glenville Corridor: We are a center piece to a larger rural community. We are somewhat of a lifeline to smaller towns that surround us, providing jobs, government services and recreational opportunities. Within the last decade, agricultural industries have located along Highway 65 towards Glenville and more continue to express interest. The benefit of these industries to our community is many; jobs, regional tax base, and economic development opportunities. Sanitary Sewer service from Albert Lea has been extended to serve this corridor because we have the capacity and ability to do it. We need to recognize the opportunities presented by this emerging critical mass of industry, and collaborate with the regional entities that have the abilities to serve this development with needed infrastructure and transportation systems. We might explore plans for regional transportation impacts (impacts on local roads and access to the regional transportation systems), opportunities to enhance rail service to the corridor and possibly relocate railroad uses located near downtown Albert Lea to a more functional setting, infrastructure systems (sanitary sewer and potable water), and a unique taxing structure that balances the impacts and the benefits with the many jurisdictions that have a stake. Our guiding principles state "Create new tools to solve old problems." This would appear to be a great opportunity to collaborate as a community, develop a plan that addresses land use, transportation and infrastructure delivery and position our greater community to develop an emerging industry.

A plan for the Glenville Corridor is an immediate to mid term priority.

5. Conduct Focus Area Plans	
Time Frame	1 per year to be prioritized at annual goal-setting workshops
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff Boards/Commissions City Council-Townships-Freeborn County and Glenville
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$$

Action Step #6. Develop a plan for streetscaping, gateways and wayfinding along key Corridors



The image of the community was raised as a key issue at various public meetings throughout our Albert Lea Listens process and through our Comprehensive Plan Update. It was such a concern that a Steering Committee with the title of Appearance and Attitude was created as an outcome of Albert Lea Listens. Code enforcement (the stick approach) can only go so far in improving our community's appearance. Other approaches (the carrot) might prove more beneficial. Our transportation corridors contribute greatly to our community's appearance. Streetscapes along heavily traveled roadways and gateways into the community should be enhanced to express our community's identity. We must also think beyond the streetscapes at how development fronts on our corridors. While the temptation to market goods and services to travelers is always going to be present, our need is to let the public know there is a destination here, not that a particular product is on sale. Signage along our corridors should be well thought out and meet the needs of local businesses but should not be the dominant feature of a corridor. Building architecture should present a strong public presence. Access should be coordinated to allow clear and safe entry to business districts. Streetscape features can go a long way toward enhancing a community's image at key "gateways" into the community or into specific districts. Another idea that was raised through the planning process is the notion of "wayfinding." Wayfinding is a means to direct people to our downtown, our lakes or key shopping areas through signage or identity markers.

A plan for streetscaping, gateways and wayfinding is a mid to long range priority.

6. Prepare streetscape plan for corridors and community gateways that incorporates a wayfinding system.	
Time Frame	2-5 years
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$$

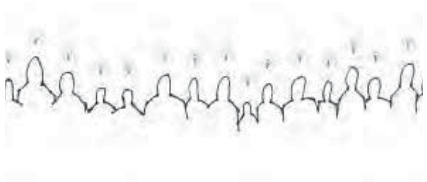
Action Step #7. Develop a Park and Recreation System Master Plan

Our Comprehensive Plan establishes a broad framework for our park and recreation system. It embraces the fact that our Park infrastructure and Recreation programming serves a community that extends well beyond our boundaries. We focus on a park system that provides active and passive recreation opportunities. But our park system also provides a significant enhancement to our overall quality of life. Our guiding principles focus on creating neighborhoods as a way of providing great housing; and we suggest that parks are the common ground of our community. Our energies need to be prioritized on maintaining our park system and making sure that they continue to serve our needs even as our neighborhood needs change. A park master plan that inventories our current park facilities and establishes a replacement/upgrade program will be established to guide our park investments. We must also look at where we anticipate future growth, and be prepared to guide our future development opportunities in land acquisitions for future parks. A park master planning process will enable us to explore new tools for ongoing park maintenance challenges and ways in which we can turn underutilized resources into stronger community assets.

A Park and Recreation System Master Plan is an immediate to mid-term priority.

7. Develop Park and Recreation System Master Plan	
Time Frame	1-3 years
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff Park Board City Council School District (Community Education) YMCA and other recreation program and facility providers
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$$

Action Step #8. Participate in State Legislative Efforts



State legislative actions often have an impact on how local communities conduct day to day planning administration of their community. Good governance relies on officials who are informed and committed to finding opportunities for constituents and their community. Legislative actions relative to the environment, economic development, energy, regulation of the provision of municipal services, annexation, state transportation, planning and zoning rules are continually being discussed and amended during legislative sessions. We should continue to

take a proactive approach to engaging our House and Senate representatives to represent our City's interest in these regional issues. Cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions is also a critical component when advocating or lobbying for particular legislation.

8. Participate in State Legislative Efforts	
Time Frame	On-going
Core Responsibilities	Staff City Council City Leaders
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$

Action Step #9. Maintain and Update Capital Improvement Plan

Another tool for implementation is the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which establishes schedules and priorities for projects generally over a five year period. The City first prepares a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five years, including transportation and community facilities projects. Then all projects are reviewed, priorities are assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified. The City can determine which projects should be financed through annual tax revenues, which require public borrowing, and which may be eligible for outside sources of assistance.

The City's financial resources will always be limited and there will always be competition for community resources. The CIP allows the City to provide the most critical public improvements, yet stay within budget constraints. The City has recently developed a CIP which is annually updated. Through the CIP, recommendations can be prioritized, budgeted and programmed into the City's decision making process.

9. Maintain and Update Capital Improvement Plan	
Time Frame	Annual
Core Responsibilities	Staff Council
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$-$$$

The city has a history of partnering with the Albert Lea School District (staff involvement with courses and student internships) and Riverland Community College (Leadership training.)

These partnerships can serve as models for future endeavors.

Action Step #10. Pursue Public / Private Partnerships

Often a means to achieve a desired objective that has a public benefit but is something more often (or better off) done as a private initiative is the formulation of partnerships. Partnerships may be formed with public sector (government), private or not for profit entities. A first step in establishing a public private partnership is to determine the organizational aspect of the partnership. Is it led by the private, the public or a not-for-profit entity? Three areas of potential partnerships that could be explored include:

Public Arts (see related action step #11)—objectives might include:

Develop a community wide public arts strategy.

Facilitation of a public art works review board.

Lead the effort to commission community art works.

Provide a physical space for functions or activities.

Ensure an on-going financial resource for public arts.

Environmental Stewardship Program—objective to promote environmental stewardship:

Provide outreach and education—schools, developers, businesses, etc.

Provide a funding mechanism for demonstration projects promoting environmental design, sustainability and green infrastructure.

Build sustainable best management practices into public improvement and operational activities.

Historic Preservation (HPC with private preservation focused entities)—objective to preserve the rich cultural and historic resources of the built environment:

Continue to research and survey Albert Lea's rich historic and archaeological resources

Review and administration of historic conservation districts.

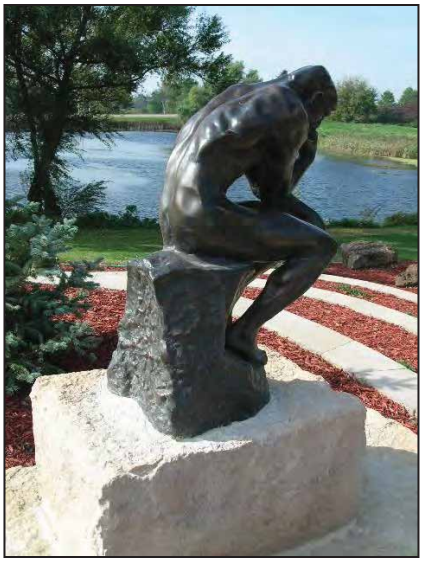
Education and promotion of restoration programs, techniques and resources.

Lead the effort to commission interpretive design elements in public and private improvement projects.

Explore on-going financial resources for historic preservation and interpretation.

10. Pursue Public/Private Partnerships	
Time Frame	3-5 years
Core Responsibilities	Staff HPC LBL Action Team
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$

Action Step #11. Increase Awareness and Implementation for Public Art



Our Vision notes that we are a community "that tells its story through arts, community activities and the design of its buildings and public spaces…" We should investigate eligible sources of funds for public art, including allocations from the capital budgets of various departments, general fund allocation for program management and maintenance, special service districts, and fund raising strategies for augmenting city resource fees, including grant requests to government, foundation, corporation, and other appropriate entities, as well as private fund raising activities (such as allowing citizens to make gifts dedicated to memorials or new art projects). The city should also leverage funds or actions of private developers, and state and county agencies involved in public improvement projects in Albert Lea.

Public art sites should be selected based on their public access (visual or actual) and their ability to accommodate another aesthetic voice in the architectural design, after which a variety of artwork possibilities can be suggested. For example, a public plaza, particularly one in which people may sit, is often a prime site for artwork. If the budget is fairly small, the artwork might use elements already included in the construction budget, such as pavers or landscaping. If the budget is more substantial, freestanding artist-fabricated elements (sculpture or custom seating) might be possible.

11. Increase Awareness and Implementation for Public Art	
Time Frame	1-3 years
Core Responsibilities	Staff Art programs/organizations
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$$

Action Step #12. Develop a Means to Measure Success / Community Indicators

The methods of defining success related to our plan must go beyond the physical projects that have been conceptualized. The underlying goal is to make Albert Lea a more sustainable community, and to foster public and private action steps

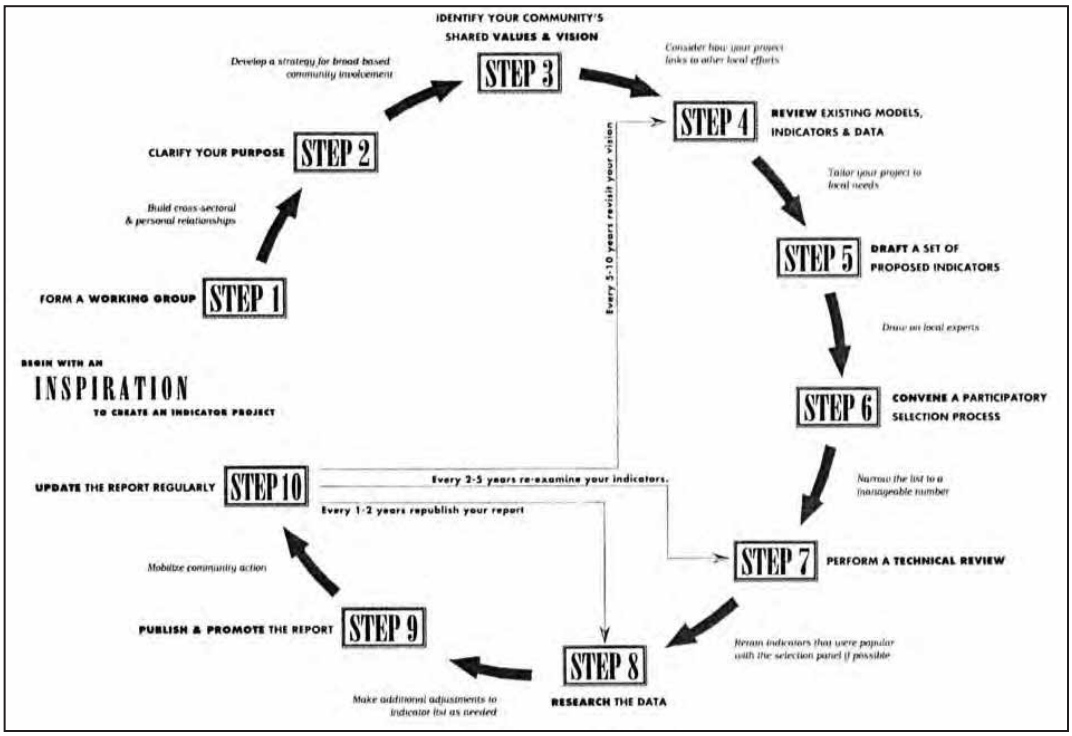
that recognize and celebrate Albert Lea's character and qualities. "Checking off" projects as they are completed are one measure of success, but it is important to look beyond that.

Many of the policies and action steps of this plan are long term oriented and it will seem like progress is waning as the community awaits the next big project to be "checked off." Patience is important as the nature of a Comprehensive Plan is evolutionary and long term.

Through this new Comprehensive Plan, we have begun assembling a "baseline" of quantitative and qualitative information about our community using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. GIS allows for the spatial representation of information, or more simply said, the ability to map various qualitative and quantitative features relative to geographic relationships. This information can be characterized as "livability" or "community" indicators. Over time, as we build our data and track our progress, we enable greater informed decision making. We are able to use this information to refine our public policy ensuring effectiveness.

At the beginning of this process, we discussed a set of community indicators. Action Step #12 is the beginning of establishing base line community indicators and a system to track and measure our progress in these areas. The first step is to develop a baseline from which we can begin to develop goals around. Step two happens after we have a year or two of data that we can use analyze and base our goals or standards on.

A process for identifying community indicators as outlined in Planning Advisory Service Report #517, published by the American Planning Association.



The following might be used as indicators for success:

Economic Development

Average wages

Job growth

Number of start up businesses

Unemployment rates

Sales volumes

Hotel stays

Growth in taxable valuations

Growth in lease rates for commercial and office uses

Vacancy rates for commercial, industrial and office spaces

Absorption

Ratio of jobs to square feet of building space

Number of households and businesses with access to high-speed internet

Housing

Community reinvestment/investment (annual building permits by permit type and value)

Median housing prices

Median Household Income

Mix of new housing types developed-overall mix

Housing affordability (tied to economic development)

Education

High school graduation rates

Percent of student enrollment (elementary, middle, high)

Mobility (how many students start school year enrolled but don't finish or start midway)

Diversity of student enrollment

Percentage of higher education

Test scores

Average class size

Youth involvement in community activity

Library service measurements

Health and Wellness

Birth rates

Medical admittance

Walkability/bikeability

Social health and family services

Governance

Candidates running for election

Voter participation

Collaborative projects/partnerships

Development project approvals

Citizen satisfaction surveys

Crime rates by type and location

Human Relations

Demographic diversity

Language immersion in schools

Immigrant work force

Crime rates

Number of hours contributed by volunteers

Number of volunteer service clubs

Natural Resources Protection

Air quality

Water quality

Resource Conservation

Energy consumption

Water consumption

Amount of recycled materials used in new construction

Amount of household and business waste reduction

Preservation or loss of agricultural lands

Land Use and Development

Land consumption

Land redevelopment (net increase in units or market value)

Population/housing/employment density

Impervious surface coverage

Infrastructure services (homes and businesses served by technology)

Mobility

Miles of sidewalks

Miles of multi-purpose trails

Accessibility of businesses to sidewalks and trails

Lane miles of roadways by functional class

Traffic delays

Traffic crashes (by type/severity)

Pedestrian/vehicle crashes

Mode Split (trips by car, bike, transit, walk, boat)

Vehicle ownership by household

Infrastructure

Age of improvement (lift station, pipe, well, etc...)

Feet of replaced pipe and new infrastructure

Number of breaks or leaks in system

Level of inflow or infiltration

Peaking patterns of usage

Remaining capacity within system

12. Develop a Means of Measuring Success	
Time Frame	On-going
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff Boards/Commissions/City Council ALEDA/LBL Action Teams and other Citizen Volunteers
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$-$$$

This action step is listed as an on-going action step. Many of the indicators are already being measured in one form or another by our City staff. However, no coordinated effort exists to be able to analyze the results of the various measurements against one another. This action step is a significant step, and although we don't expect to see immediate results, we will over time be well positioned to tell a better, more accurate and more compelling story of Albert Lea.

Action Step #13. Infrastructure System Master Planning

Our plan envisions a future that includes growth. As we grow, our community infrastructure system must be maintained to accommodate existing and future development. Our policy position guides our public investments towards maintaining and improving our currently in-place and aging infrastructure system. This Action Step is aimed at developing a the detailed system plans that direct our future public infrastructure investments. System plans typically have a shorter shelf life than the broader comprehensive plan. These system plans are dependent also on a sound understanding of the existing infrastructure including age of system component, capacity, service areas, usage and unused capacity among other features.

Using the growth management policy areas and future land use plan information, we can guide where future infrastructure investment goes. System master plans help determine what improvements are necessary in those locations.

13. Infrastructure System Master Planning	
Time Frame	On-going
Core Responsibilities	Technical Staff
$,$$,$$$,$$$$	$$-$$$

Planning Commission Meeting Dates for 2013

Tuesday, January 15, 2013
Tuesday, February 05, 2013
Tuesday, March 05, 2013
Tuesday, April 02, 2013
Tuesday, May 07, 2013
Tuesday, June 04, 2013
Tuesday, July 16, 2013
Tuesday, August 06, 2013
Tuesday, September 03, 2013
Tuesday, October 01, 2013
Tuesday, November 19, 2013
Tuesday, December 03, 2013
Tuesday, January 07, 2014

WSB & Associates, Inc.

Infrastructure ■ Engineering ■ Planning ■ Construction

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Memorandum

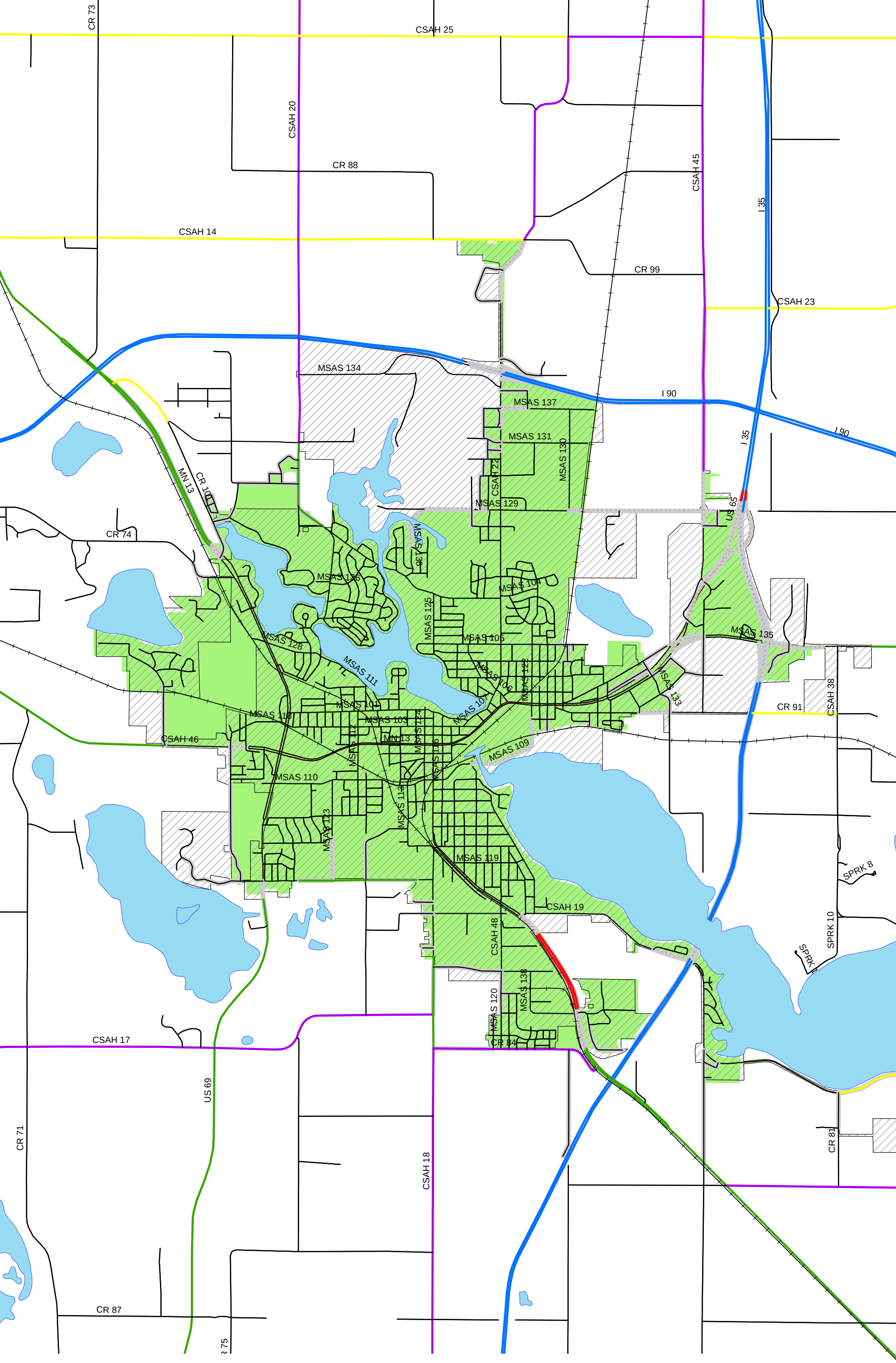
To: ***Planning Commission, City of Albert Lea***
Doug Johnson, Building Official

From: ***Breanne Rothstein, Planner***
WSB & Associates, Inc.

Date: ***January 30, 2013***

Re: ***Request for 10 year future development areas (Mn/DOT)***

The Engineering Department has received a request from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) for a map of the future development areas in Albert Lea in the next 10 years. The information they are requesting is the areas of likely development rather than the areas of possible development. Therefore, planning and engineering staff have developed a map of likely development areas within the next ten years and are seeking your approval of this map. This includes areas of existing development and areas of possible re-development, which are limited to those lands within already developed areas (in-fill) and those developments that have been platted and are currently under construction. Staff felt that those would be the primary areas for development within the next 10 years. Attached is a map for your approval.



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