

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## HARRISON COUNTY 2030

### HARRISON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**DATE:** APRIL 24, 2008

**In Attendance:** Patrick Bonck, Warren Doussan, Angel Middleton, Fred Boykin, Mike Andrews, Andy Balius, David Ladner, Rondell Young

Below is a summary of the key issues discussed in regard to the preliminary Draft Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Process**

Taking feedback on initial chapter goals and strategies to be integrated into Draft Plan tonight, will be ready tomorrow morning. Draft plan will be sent by email tomorrow. After review, Steering Committee meeting the week of May 5, as early as possible. With feedback, will revise plan. By the end of the week will release the plan to the public. We will have a newsletter with key points of the plan and release a 10 minute video that summaries the plan. Also, there will be a survey with key concepts for public input and feedback. We will continue to revise and prepare for the public meetings in June.

#### **Land Use**

In first paragraph, 1/3 of the land is in wetlands, another category we should sum up is how much of the land is in floodplains. In second paragraph, households sizes fallen: size of house or number of people living in the houses? Feels the statistic may be off. These figures and facts commercially zoned land, less than 2 percent of land area? Where does the figure come from? Did GIS analysis on parcels, commercial parcels are low because of rural areas.

Key issues section: approximately XX acres converted from rural. From what start date? Based on sector map, so it is the total area planned. Citizens expect new development to meet quality standards: building code or aesthetic standards? Both. Add both qualifiers to make this clear, want better buildings for sustainability and better looking buildings.

Regional land use planning framework based on New Urbanism. This is the first instance of this word. Is it a philosophy? Need an adjective describing what new urbanism is. Adopt language of goal 7 below.

#### **Economic Vitality Section**

Introduction: Third paragraph: Harrison County participates in the global economy (shipments, fed. Government, Du Pont. May be a question of a distinction between unincorporated and incorporated. Need examples from the unincorporated: DuPont, the Sand Beach, timber.

Goal 7: principle of new urbanism, likes wording.

Key Issues: Bullet points: protect homes and businesses from storm surge and wind damage. Key issues: construction standards, elevations.

Background/Orientation: business list, for political reasons but the business council and renaissance corp last because they were the newest members.

Shrimp David Siquila(?) Harbor Master supposed to call, haven't heard back from Port. Trying to get shrimpers and commercial vessels out of Gulfport Harbor. That is part of the cultural heritage. Issue of expansion. Add a strategy: support working waterfronts? Find action items to support local shrimping and oystering retaining place in Harrison County economy. People park in Hard Rock to access Biloxi's working waterfront. Should be a main goal in protecting the local shrimping and oystering. How could we address? We had a meeting with MDMR, Federal legislation passed to support the Working Waterfronts program to further develop harbors for harbors with funds. MDMR believes it's a great idea through CIAP they are giving Pass Christian 3 million, Long Beach 2 million to support harbor redevelopment. Promote tourism, but retain and expand areas for fishing operations. Using CIAP to bolster application for federal funds. Especially with shrimping, don't have as many packing houses to sell shrimp, so do it on the dock.

Critical issues: have to preserve space along waterfronts to have active harbors, docks need to be expanded to better sell shrimps directly from the docks, looking into a seafood packing industry. Healthy communities working on farmer's and seafood markets. People go to shrimp boats when come in. Tax incentives to support development of seafood packing plants. No duty on imported seafood and high gas prices place strain on local workers. Packers can only transport by truck.

Has there been any thought to the future of moving the railroad north? If we expand port, may not have the transportation infrastructure to support? Doesn't seem likely that the railroad will relocate north. Limited line to New Orleans, Amtrack line. What about service to Harrison County. Multi-modal center.

Add charter boats to the vital economy. What really hurts charter boats is lack of infrastructure, no electricity.

### **Healthy Communities**

Residents in unincorporated county do not have access to healthy food options. Add description of what healthy foods are. Less than 20 minutes not greater than 20 minutes.

Second paragraph: What is the demographic significance of listing low-income, minority, .... All minority groups, lower life expectancy, is this the point? Diseases vary on ethnic groups. Say ethnic groups instead of minorities.

Like the idea of promoting community gardens, know it is popular in Florida.

Really like the concept of the land bank. Develop a land bank office. Thinks should start with model of Harrison County Development Commission Property. Have to tell them what will build, if doesn't build, it goes back to Development Commission . Prevents people from buying up land and then sitting on it forever. It would be appropriate for Harrison County to bid out lots for affordable housing, would offset lot cost.

### **Safer Communities**

Key Issues: global change too broad, instead write increase in insurance costs, energy costs.

Energy efficient development: identify reduce consumer spending on heating and cooling their houses and businesses; make goal more understandable to a lay person.

Have floodzone maps available in the courthouse, increase minimum building heights. One foot, or four five inch above the street grade. People don't understand how flood zones work and how they are set up to protect them. Maybe we should add strategy to educate folks on how increases in development may affect run-off.

## **Tourism**

Emphasize fishing more.

Key Issues section: Sentences seemed too negative. The threats are negative, but what about the positive. We are competing, so need to acknowledge competition but framing is too negative. Identify challenges to overcome, that may be too fatalistic.

Average stay is shorter than national average. With the increased cost of fuel, day trips are more popular. What can you do with a tank of gas? We should put increase in day trips in key issues as a possible market expansion. I don't think you could go out 20 minutes and go kayaking, freshwater fishing as well as estuarine fishing and deep sea fishing.

Parking is still an issue.

What is part of the package to draw tourist? What should we facilitate being a part of the package? Some say shorter nights stays are better for casinos than longer. Special session of legislature to pass the compromise between limiting gaming and a 10 year accelerated depreciation of anything that a casino would build, including waterparks, hotels, etc. It died in regular section, but it will be called back in a couple of weeks. What may have stopped it from passing were some amendments that were added, to include counties not originally in the legislation.

Existing outdoor recreation facilities aren't inviting enough: too negative.

Need more information about CTA plans for beach transportation. There may not be things on ground now, but there are many things planned that could be great. Really superior sports facilities to emphasize. Existing outdoor facilities are underutilized.

Gulfport Port is a big asset. Cruise lines are a big issue and taking tourists from Harrison County. Have to build the facilities and people will come. We can compete with New Orleans, but we must have facility already to attract. It would also be beneficial to the airport. Could do two days of casinos, visiting, and then go to Mexico on cruise. Workers on ships would then live in the area. Have had Conquest come into Gulfport harbor because powerlines in New Orleans were down. In one week, were prepared to service the cruise ship.

New Ideas for Harrison County Tourism: Supportive of Bush Gardens amusement park for Harrison County, although didn't work well in New Orleans. Science Center for Harrison County, similar to Toronto concept because the facility was outside of the city. Saltwater and freshwater aquarium in Chatanooga, TN. Imax theatre. Coordinate tourism activities into one fee. Do you want a Sea World? Marine Life was in

Gulfport. Look at all of these ideas as strategies to expand the length of stay. Need to come up with good programs so people will increase investment and increase draw.

### **Transportation**

Walking path on new bridge nice. Safety issues. While encouraging walking and hiking, need to keep security and safety in mind. In the summer time have patrol on beaches. Someone on bicycles, to go across bridge every now and then or on trails. Sheriff's deputy to patrol areas.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

We are not improving communication. Example of Long Beach, 5 million dollars to tear up sidewalks for sewer and sidewalk widths. All MDOT projects should be coordinated with County.

What about non-cooperation with other municipalities? How do you address people not willing to cooperate?