

II. FOREWORD

Introduction

The Raytown Comprehensive Plan has been developed by the City’s Planning and Zoning Commission, with assistance from a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, the Raytown Board of Aldermen, a professional planning consulting team, and the residents of Raytown, Missouri. The Comprehensive Plan is made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated development of the City, which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development. As such, the Plan’s policies, strategies, and recommendations are intended to be used as flexible guides to decisions regarding land use, transportation and streets, economic development, public facilities, etc.

Legal Authority for Comprehensive Planning

The City of Raytown, Missouri is authorized under Missouri Revised Statutes (RSMO 89.310) to “make, adopt, amend, and carry out a City plan and appoint a Planning Commission. . . .” Within the context of this authority, the Raytown Planning and Zoning Commission “shall make and adopt a City plan for the physical development of the municipality” (RSMO 89.340). According to State law, the Planning and Zoning Commission may adopt or amend the Comprehensive Plan after a public hearing and a majority vote of the full membership of the Commission.

Nature and Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

As noted earlier, the general purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide the City’s development so that it occurs in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner. The Plan is thus an advisory document, and it is intended to be amended over time as conditions and/or community preferences change.

On a more specific level, the Raytown Comprehensive Plan is designed to guide the City’s day-to-day activities within the context of a long-range future vision. Toward this end, the Comprehensive Plan:

- ↳ **Has a long-range time frame:** *Long-range has always meant that the Plan should be looking forward and that it should attempt to provide for the future needs of the community insofar as it is possible to make reasonable projections and judgments.*
- ↳ **Is general and should remain general:** *The term “general” means that the Plan should not address issues of great detail, but it should instead outline a desirable future development scenario by showing the general location, character and extent of physical development and the relationship of those elements.*
- ↳ **Is comprehensive in scope:** *“Comprehensive” means that the Plan should encompass the most significant physical elements of the community. Social and economic factors affecting future development must also be part of the Plan’s analysis and recommendations.*
- ↳ **Focuses on the physical development of the City:** *Physical development issues are those involving the coordination of basic building blocks of the built and natural environment, such as infrastructure, streets, land use, public facilities, topography, habitat, etc.*

- ↳ **Clearly relates identified issues and goals to proposed policies, strategies, and recommendations:** *A plan can exhibit all of the characteristics listed above, but it will not be useful if the recommended actions contained in the plan do not directly address community goals and issues. The policies recommended in the Raytown Comprehensive Plan are intended first and foremost to serve as a guide to decision-making and to provide continuity in addressing issues.*

The Comprehensive Planning Process

The participants involved in Raytown's planning process have followed a rational sequence of steps to develop the Comprehensive Plan. Theoretically, the comprehensive planning process is made up of six to ten steps and is continuous in nature. These steps include:

- ↳ *Issues identification*
- ↳ *Data gathering*
- ↳ *Data analysis*
- ↳ *Formulation of alternatives and goals*
- ↳ *Implementation*
- ↳ *Feedback / evaluation*

Such a process relies not only on the expertise of planners and staff, but also on the input of experts from other fields, members of elected and appointed boards and commissions, representative of various community interest groups and community residents at-large.

A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee oversaw Raytown's Comprehensive Planning process. This Advisory Committee consisted of persons appointed by the Board of Aldermen. The committee was expanded to include additional members appointed by the Mayor in late 1995.

In addition to technical analysis of data by the planning team, a number of strategic planning workshops were held to elicit issues and goals from residents regarding the future development of Raytown. A mail survey was also distributed as part of the citizen input process, and a number of public meetings were conducted for feedback.

In addition to the data gathering, data analysis, and public input efforts, alternative futures were evaluated so as to set a framework to move from existing conditions to desired goals for the future. Whereas technical data and survey results provided the foundation for the "Existing Conditions" and "Issues and Goals" sections of the Comprehensive Plan, the "Policies, Strategies, and Recommendations" section provides guidance for the City's future decisions and actions.

Comprehensive Plan as a Living Document

Through land use ordinances, budgetary activities, and other legal and policy directives (including a Capital Improvement Program), the primary implementation tools for the Plan are put in place. As the community changes and priorities shift, the Plan and associated planning efforts will need to be adjusted. Thus, the planning process and the Comprehensive Plan are "living" or dynamic in nature. The intent is to ensure annual review and minor updates through continual maintenance of databases, monitoring of community issues, and follow up on decisions made by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Aldermen, and other public and semipublic organizations. Major evaluations of the Plan should be scheduled on five year intervals. Such an approach makes the Plan a viable instrument, which is flexible and adaptable to unanticipated change.

Plan Implementation as an Ongoing Activity

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, which begins with the adoption of the plan document, should be an ongoing, day-to-day process. The Plan, by itself, does not bring about change except by identifying issues, articulating goals and objectives, defining directions, and providing information regarding the future consequences of present actions. Implementation of the Plan is directly connected to daily public and private decisions regarding the allocation of public and private resources and the need to coordinate the actions resulting from those decisions.

The final component to the continuous comprehensive planning process is the acquisition and use of feedback from the community to evaluate the performance of the Plan and refine its recommendations. Refinement activities, including the development of area plans, the adoption of detailed public facility master plans, and the use of community survey techniques, provide a solid sense of direction for policy / decision makers in the public and private sectors. The utilization of feedback creates a Plan that is responsive to the needs of the community and is not stagnant.

Recognition of accomplished goals

The City of Raytown feels that it is important to recognize goals that have been identified through the Comprehensive Plan, and then accomplished. This epitomizes the idea that the Plan is a living document, and should change as the City grows and changes. As the Plan is updated, it will reflect a list of accomplished goals, to reflect how the City has grown.

As of 1996, the following goals have been accomplished:

- The shooting range has been redeveloped
- The Tax Increment Financing Commission is in place
- The Downtown Plan has been approved
- The 59th Street upgrade has been completed
- The Raytown Square Shopping Center has been completed
- The water service improvements have been completed
- The storm water sewer systems have been rebuilt
- The retention basin has been completed
- The new YMCA building has been completed as a part of the redevelopment of downtown
- The Rice-Tremonti Home has been acquired and opened as a tourist attraction
- The old YMCA along 75th Street is now a city park
- The Downtown overlay district has been created
- Public transportation is available through a shuttle bus system
- Habitat for Humanity is building in Raytown
- A Public Nuisance Code and Blight Ordinance have been written
- There is a new Zoning Ordinance in place
- We now have a Community Development Director

By recognizing the goals that have been accomplished through the Comprehensive Plan, the

community can see that it a tool that is working for the City of Raytown.

Plan Organization

The Raytown Comprehensive Plan consists of four sections: I) Introduction, II) Existing Conditions, III) Issues and Goals, and IV) Policies, Strategies, and Recommendations. The Plan also includes a section of Appendices. Each of these major sections is discussed in more detail below:

- Ⓟ **Section I. Introduction:** *The first section of the Comprehensive Plan includes an Summary of the Plan's major findings and recommendations. It also includes a Foreword section that provides a brief overview of the Comprehensive Plan as a process and a product.*
- Ⓟ **Section II. Existing Conditions:** *The Plan's second section analyzes the various existing conditions (both regional and local) that affect the City's future development. This section consists of ten chapters that address topics, such as population, economics, the natural environment, land use and development, land use regulations, major streets and transportation, educational facilities, and public services and utilities. The planning implications of these existing conditions are also addressed in this section.*
- Ⓟ **Section III. Issues and Goals:** *The third section of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the strategic issues facing Raytown, and it also presents a series of general, long-range planning goals. These issues and goals are community based, meaning that they were derived from public workshops, public meetings, and public surveys. While the previous section of the Plan provides an analytical, rational framework for planning, this section presents the wants, needs, concerns, and desires of the community at the time the plan was developed.*