

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plan Abstract

The following are excerpts from Swansea's 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

A Comprehensive Plan is the official document adopted by the Planning Commission and the Village of Swansea Board of Trustees to serve as the legal and conceptual foundation of the Village's zoning code and all other land use regulations. The primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the community by preserving and protecting four (4) key interrelated quality of life factors which include; the social, economic, physical and natural environment. The intent of the comprehensive plan is to serve as a rational land use guide to help direct future land use, zoning, subdivisions of land and the quality, timing and intensity of future land use and development.

Chapter 3 "Vision, Goals and Objectives" is organized into thematic planning components that reflect the critical issues identified in Chapter 2. The goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for each thematic planning element or critical issue serves as the framework for the Plan.

Chapter 4 "Future Land Use & Transportation" includes recommendations for future land use, growth, and vehicular, bike, and pedestrian transportation improvements. The Future Land Use & Transportation Map and Future Land Use Matrix included in this Chapter physically and graphically depict Future Land Use conditions and recommendations. The Future Land Use Map depicts the recommended locations for residential, commercial, and industrial development opportunities and designates areas for future parks, trails and "Complete Street" enhancements. The intent of the Future Plan is to provide the focus and direction needed to make well informed future land use, zoning and annexation decisions that help achieve the citizen-defined vision for the future of Swansea.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the community.

The development of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan was led by members of Swansea's Planning Commission, Village Staff, and input provided by members of the Board of Trustees and the Swansea community at large. The Plan includes the following Chapters

Chapter 1 "Existing Conditions" includes the Plan introduction, an overview of the comprehensive planning process, socio-economic analysis, primary and secondary trade area characteristics, and existing public services, utilities and parks.

Chapter 2 "Critical Issues" provides a summary of the information gathered during the public engagement program and includes the citizen-defined vision statements, goals and strategies developed for this Plan.

SWANSEA'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE:
Make Swansea a great place to live, work and play by preserving Swansea's family-friendly atmosphere, providing efficient public services and increasing the confidence to invest in the Village's commercial areas, neighborhoods and the qualities that make Swansea a desirable bedroom community.

Existing Conditions Summary

Population: The estimated 2015 population of Swansea is 13,870, an increase of 29% from 2000. Overall, the population and gender characteristics for Swansea indicate that females, middle aged adults and seniors find Swansea a desirable place to live. Swansea’s location, quality schools and stable neighborhoods have greatly influenced the population growth the Village has enjoyed over the past several decades. In the next 10-20 years, the population of Swansea is expected to stabilize. The projected 2020 population of Swansea is 14,101 based on past growth characteristics.

Income: Swansea’s average household income, average family income and per capita income were higher than the US, Illinois, St. Clair County and all peer cities with the exception of Glen Carbon. Swansea also has the second lowest poverty rate with just over 9% of individuals and 8.4% of families living below the poverty level.

Cost of Living: The Cost of Living Index in Swansea is 93.4% which is lower than the state of Illinois (96%) and US (100%). This means, on average, the cost of housing, utilities, transportation, gas, groceries and healthcare in Swansea are 6.6% less than prices at the national level and 4% less than the state level.

Taxes: The Village of Swansea has one of the lowest tax rates in the region. Swansea’s real estate (property) tax rate and sales tax rate are both around 7.8%. By way of comparison, the real estate tax of surrounding cities is significantly (3-10 times higher) and the sales tax rate is also higher than the tax rates in Swansea.

Trade Area Profiles: A trade area profile includes various locational factors such as accessibility, commute, income levels, education and the density and intensity of population (i.e. rooftops). The Trade Area Profile report in the Plan goes beyond the Village limits to provide a summary of the 1, 5 and 10 mile trade area profiles for the Village of Swansea, see Table 1.16. The data shows that the Village’s commercial districts have access to a significant population with a solid income base which would support a wide range of retail, commercial service, and mixed use opportunities in Swansea.

Table 1.16: Swansea Trade Area Demographics (2010 US Census)			
Control Point: Administrative Offices	1 Mile	5 Miles	10 Miles
Population- 2010 Census	5,661	108,062	225,133
Age (2010)			
Under 18 years of age	23.2%	22.0%	24.5%
20 to 24 years	7.1%	6.8%	6.4%
25 to 44 years	26.8%	26.6%	26.5%
45 to 64 years	27.0%	28.4%	27.0%
65 and over	14.6%	14.0%	13.2%
Median Age	38.6	39.4	38.4
Trade Area Housing Statistics (2010)			
Total Households	2,440	44,078	86,683
Total housing units	2,817	50,067	98,685
Family households	61.8%	62.2%	65.9%
Owner occupied housing	60.5%	66.4%	66.9%
Renter occupied housing	39.5%	33.6%	33.1%
Average home value	\$89,854	\$140,523	\$149,940
Average household income	\$49,485	\$69,403	\$68,889
Average family income	\$55,501	\$84,949	\$82,727
High school grad. or higher	88.9%	92.7%	90.7%
Bachelor degree or higher	12.8%	27.8%	27.5%

Vision, Goals & Objectives

Economic Development

Goal: Expand, diversify and strengthen the Village’s economic base by supporting local businesses and recruiting family-friendly businesses that reflect market-based demands while also catering to the current and future needs of Swansea’s residents

Housing & Neighborhood Stability

Goal: Provide safe and quality housing for all residents of Swansea by promoting reinvestment in existing neighborhoods and encouraging well-planned new residential development opportunities to accommodate future growth and create a diverse, self-renewing housing stock.

Quality of Life

Goal: Develop programs that promote healthy, active lifestyles, neighborhood stability, community beautification, and preserve Swansea’s quiet, family friendly atmosphere.

Transportation

Goal: Maintain a safe and efficient transportation system that provides the necessary improvements to accommodate future traffic volumes and the latest “Complete Streets” infrastructure for pedestrians, bikes and transit.

Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure

Goal: Preserve and improve upon the quality, affordability and capacity of the Village’s public utilities, services and infrastructure to ensure current and future needs of Swansea’s growing, prospering population are met.

Future Development & Annexation

Goal: Promote future growth that expands and diversifies the Village’s tax base, provides development to support a growing prospering population, increases property values and is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for this Plan.

Future Land Use & Transportation Plan

The Future Land Use & Transportation Plan serves as a guide for the planned and orderly growth of Swansea and its 1.5 mile extraterritorial growth boundaries. The Plan includes the Future Land Use Map, Future Land Use Matrix and supporting text; all of which must be considered when making future land use and zoning decisions. The Plan provides recommendations for the future land use and development for the next (10) years. The future land use recommendations were developed based on the community’s feedback provided during the public engagement program and careful consideration of the various physical, social, economic and political factors and influences. The purpose of the Future Land Use & Transportation Plan is to implement the goals, objectives and vision developed for the 2017 Village of Swansea Plan Update.

FUTURE LAND USE MATRIX		
Description (Corresponding Zoning)	Density	Recommended Uses
Non-Urban ("C")	Min. lot size: No less than 2 acres or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farms & Agriculture Uses - Single Family - Nurseries, greenhouses - Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated as "Non-Urban" are primarily undeveloped areas and include farmland, lakes, woodlands and creeks. These areas are generally not connected to public infrastructure or utilities and not recommended for urban development. Uses should be limited to future parks and recreational uses, existing agricultural and low density residential uses. New single-family homes should be located on at least 2 acre lots or as approved by the Board. Any utility, infrastructure, or road improvements should be the responsibility of the owner or developer(s). The preservation of natural areas and open spaces is recommended.</p>		
Residential ("SR1 - SR4" & "PB"-PUD)	Min. lot size: 6,000 SF to 12,000 SF or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single Family - Modular Homes - Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated "Residential" are intended for single-family homes in well-planned subdivisions ranging in lot sizes from 6,000 square feet in areas zoned "SR-4" to 12,000 square feet or larger in areas zoned "SR-1". Planned Unit Developments (PUD) located within an existing "PB" Planned Business District may contain smaller lots, but should generally maintain the same density as the surrounding subdivisions, or in the absence of existing development, the zoning district most compatible with the proposed development. A special use permit is recommended for proposed subdivisions that cannot meet the minimum density or lot size requirements in the Village's Single Family ("SR") Districts. The special use permit criteria should discourage densities that exceed the maximum density permitted in the designated "SR" zoning district. All development should be served by public sewer, water and streets that meet Swansea's latest subdivision standards. All subdivisions should include street trees and street lights, new or improved roads, sidewalks, utilities and storm water facilities- the cost of which should be paid for and installed by the developer prior to the occupancy of any dwellings.</p>		
Multifamily ("MR1-2" & "MH1-2")	Min. lot size: 2,000 SF per unit or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multifamily - Single Family - Single Family Attached, Villas. - Duplexes, Triplexes, & Condos - Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated as "Multifamily" are intended for a mix of residential uses and densities including senior housing, assisted living facilities, apartments, condos, villas, duplexes and single family dwellings. All multifamily development should contain at least 2,000 square feet of land per dwelling unit, unless developed as part of a TOD (transit oriented development). All multifamily development should provide buffers between less intense residential developments. Any infrastructure improvements should be paid for and installed by the developer. Single or unified ownership of all multi-family structures and common use areas is encouraged. Multifamily development should be permitted as a special use, require a public hearing and review/approval by the Planning Commission & Board, including multifamily development located in an area zoned Planned Business "PB". All multi-family development should be in accordance with the architectural design guidelines provided in Section 4.10.</p>		



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Future Land Use Matrix (continued)		
Description	Density	Recommended Uses
Commercial-Mixed Use ("HB" & "PB")	Min. lot size: 18,000 SF or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial Service & Retail - Office, Medical, Financial - Planned Residential & Mixed use - Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated "Commercial-Mixed Use" includes Swansea's existing business districts and prime opportunity areas that provide excellent visibility and highway access. A wide range of commercial uses such as restaurants, retail sales, medical, commercial services and planned mixed use development are envisioned. Areas located at the intersection of two (2) major roads (nodes), adjacent to the MetroLink Station, along Boul Avenue and commercially zoned property within a TIF or Business District should be targeted for future Commercial-Mixed Use development. The use of shared access, shared parking and monument signage (in lieu of pole signage) should be encouraged. Buildings should be designed to the human scale, with visible street oriented entrances, and unifying architectural and landscape designs. The use of landscape buffering and screening is recommended to buffer commercial uses from other less intense uses. Multifamily development, condos and villas are recommended when they are part of a planned mixed-use development. Stand-alone residential development should require a special use permit in areas designed "Commercial-Mixed Use". Transit oriented development (TOD) should be offered waivers from zoning district requirements, as determined by the Board, to encourage compact development that is contiguous to the MetroLink Station, walkable, safe and attractive.</p>		
Industrial ("LI" and "HI")	Min. lot size: 18,000 sf in the "LI" and 62,500 sf in the "HI" zoned district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manufacturing / Assembly - Warehouse, Distribution - Vehicle & Equipment Sales - Parks & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated "Industrial" are intended for environmentally "clean" manufacturing and industrial operations, including warehousing, transportation and distribution related uses. All industrial uses should provide on-site buffering when abutting less intense uses. Pole buildings should be prohibited. All uses that include the storage of inoperable automobiles, boats, RVs or other such inoperable equipment should contain sight proof screening, approved by the Village. The maximum lot coverage should not exceed 80% of the total area of the lot.</p>		
Public & Semi-Public Uses (All Districts)	Min. lot size: No less than 2 acres or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agriculture Uses - Golf Courses - Public & Semi-Public Rec. - Nurseries, greenhouses - Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Public/Semi-Public uses are allowed in all of the designated future land use categories subject to Village approval. Areas currently being used for public or semi-public uses are shaded blue on the Future Land Use Map. Uses include, but are not limited to, active and passive public parks, open space and recreational areas, sports fields schools, community facilities, churches and other institutional/governmental uses. All public and quasi-public uses and facilities should provide access to public roadways and public utilities and comply with the applicable zoning and design criteria. Should a public or semi-public parcel stop being used as public or semi-public, it should be rezoned to the zoning district most representative of the adjacent zoning or use and developed accordingly.</p>		



Future Transportation Recommendations: An effective transportation system integrates and enhances the social, physical and economic elements of the region. Therefore, annual investments to the local transportation network are recommended to preserve and enhance safe, efficient travel and mitigate traffic congestion. When planning future transportation improvements, the following objectives are recommended to ensure future improvements serve the best overall public interest.

- *Preservation of the existing infrastructure:* Manage and maintain the current transportation system assets, capacities and levels of service.
- *Congestion management:* Ensure that congestion on the roadways does not reach levels which compromise safety, economic competitiveness or the quality of life.
- *Alternative modes of transportation:* All modes of transportation should be considered with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle linkages to community activity centers.
- *Sustainable development:* Coordinate land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality and community aesthetics in a manner that meets today's needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations.