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Abstract

How are rural places handling demand for development? This poster summarizes a comprehensive plan for Salix, Iowa that hopes to serve as a regional model for Woodbury County and provide guidelines applicable to rural communities across the United States.

Introduction

SALIX

Small, rural communities in Woodbury County, lowa are facing potential development pressure for the first time due to recent industrial expansion in the county. Salix is facing the largest amount of this pressure because it is located adjacent to county-zoned industrial land with a large nitrogen fertilizer manufacturing and distribution plant in operation. This plant is owned by CF Industries. The plant is currently undergoing a \$2.1 billion expansion, the single largest private investment in the State of Iowa's

history. This investment is expected to generate a minimum of \$140 million in new tax revenues from 2018-2038. The County will capture these funds in a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District and use them to fund infrastructure projects and property tax relief efforts.

Infrastructure projects will only be funded if the applying municipality has a comprehensive plan that:

- Provides a clear direction for development;
- Includes components of the lowa Smart Planning Act.

Salix, Iowa

Salix's population has been stagnant between 300 and 400 people for the last century. The city is split into two east-west sections with Highway 29 running between them. The city's original location is east of Interstate-29. It contains the vast majority of the city's housing, businesses, and public spaces. The area west of Interstate-29 consists of newly annexed land that is used for agricultural purposes.



This comprehensive plan will allow for development in a timely, orderly, and predictable manner that furthers the community's vision by actively preserving natural and agricultural lands, preventing land use disputes, providing appropriate housing and economic development opportunities, and preserving the city's rural character. It will accomplish this no matter the amount of development pressure that Salix could potentially face. School of Urban and Regional Planning, the University of

Salix 2035 Planning Phases Phase 1: Research



Salix's Vision

"Using small-town lowa values to create a family oriented, business friendly, and sustainable community for future generations."

Using data collected through research and interactions with the residents of Salix, the Comprehensive Planning Team developed the above vision. At the visioning meeting were 72 attendees, or 14% of the voting age population. This vision reflects the desires for the community to be an aesthetically appealing, fiscally viable, family oriented community that provides excellent social, recreational, and cultural opportunities.

The Goals & Objectives







Preserve Rural Character

- Buffer Salix from surrounding communities
- The rural image of Salix should harmonize with its surrounding agricultural environment
- Land uses should complement the rural character of Salix

Strengthen Existing Places

- Revitalize downtown Salix, particularly its Main Street
- Promote local businesses in Salix
- Pursue further collaboration with Woodbury County and Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO)

Create Celebrated Spaces

- Areas in Salix should encourage social interaction and foster a sense of community
- New development should be compact and contiguous to existing development
- Diversify transportation modes, especially for pedestrians



Projects Priorities

The comprehensive plan needed well-defined criteria to prioritize the proposed projects for the community. The evaluation system would need to ensure that projects that went the furthest to achieve the plan's three main goals, *Preserving Rural Character, Strengthening Existing Places, and Creating Celebrated Places,* had the highest priority. Each project was evaluated against five criteria.

The five criterion are:

1. Goal Achievement

- 3. Complexity
- 2. Benefit Maximization
- 4. Feasibility

5. Implementation

Prioritization levels were assigned to all 17 projects based on these criteria. Level four is the highest priority; level one is the lowest.

| Priority | Project | Economy | Equity | Environment |
|----------|---------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| 4 | Capital Improvements Plan | Χ | X | X |
| | Stormwater Project | | | X |
| | Community Development Corp. | X | X | |
| | Annexation Policy | Χ | X | |
| | Green Buffer Policy | | X | X |
| | Floodplain Policy | X | X | X |
| 3 | Complete Streets policy | Χ | X | X |
| | Zoning Code | X | X | X |
| | Hire a Code Enforcer | | X | |
| | SIMPCO Membership | Χ | X | X |
| 2 | Biodiversity Policy | | | X |
| | Entrance Beautification Program | Χ | | |
| | Water Quality | | X | X |
| 1 | Parks | | X | X |
| | Green Building Features | | | X |
| | Local Food/ Seed Bank | Χ | X | X |
| | Library/Museum | | X | X |

This table displays how each of the 17 projects address the three E's of sustainability: Economy, Equity, and Environment.

The Project Menu

Salix benefits from not only having a Comprehensive Plan, but also having an Action Plan in the form of a Project Menu. The Project Menu provides the "recipe" on how each project proposal will be implemented, with information on implementation strategies, priority level, and possible funding sources.

Example Project "Recipes"



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