

# CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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## ZONING

The City of Greenwood’s existing zoning ordinance has been analyzed for effectiveness in implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The new ordinance is included as part of the Appendix. The analysis indicates that some revision is needed. In addition, new development policies and goals set forth by this plan require that zoning provisions be consistent with these items. Proposed revisions to the zone ordinance are as follows:

- Eliminate Board of Adjustment. Planning Commission and Development Plan Review Committee can issue variances & handle other duties.
- Add a new Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay zone. Developers will be drawn to the zone because of high densities, but overall design will be more aesthetically pleasing than current high-density developments.
- Restrict Manufactured homes to Manufactured Home Parks and Subdivisions in only one zone. Disallow mobile homes as defined by HUD.
- The term “special exception” should be changed to “conditional use” and only those uses on which conditions can be placed should be included in this category (some spelled out, others determined by the Planning Commission).
- Home occupation rules should be strengthened and clarified (will become significantly more frequent).
- Area around the hospital should be rezoned as a medical office zone to reserve this area for the growing medical facilities needs.
- Adult Entertainment provision.

## SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The City of Greenwood’s existing subdivision regulations have been analyzed for effectiveness in implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is also recommended that regarding the definition of a subdivision the following provision be removed: “...provided, however, that the following shall not be included within this definition, nor be subject to the subdivision rules and regulations of this municipality (a.) The division of land into parcels greater than five (5) acres, and where no additional street right-of-way dedication is involved.”

Other recommendations include:

- Remove prohibition for alleys in residential districts.
- Add provision that subdivision development cannot make runoff problems any worse.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Expand the local Historic Preservation protections to residential properties/districts.

## COMMUNITY DESIGN & APPEARANCE

Community design and appearance should be addressed in the implementation measures through the Historic Preservation Design Standards (expanded for residential properties/districts) and the adoption

of a Site and Design Standards ordinance, Sign Ordinance and Landscape Ordinance (or to be made a part of the Zoning Ordinance).

The City has sought evaluations and advice from the Mississippi Development Authority's Asset Mapping Program, the Main Street program and the First Impressions Program from MSU.

The City should continue to expand upon its active code enforcement program.

## **HOUSING**

There will continue to be a need for a broad variety of housing types and sizes, especially as the city competes for young, well-educated professionals, and retirees. The City of Greenwood will respond to housing demand with well-planned and well-designed living spaces, with a variety of housing types and sizes available to serve the entire community. Specific policies include the following:

1. Utilize pattern books in master planned developments to encourage overall building quality and design.
2. Develop a Comprehensive redevelopment plan for areas undergoing transition or that are dilapidated, that includes rehabilitation of existing substandard housing stock.
3. Maintain standard housing stock at that level. Substandard housing should be improved to standard condition if it is economically feasible to do so. If housing units are dilapidated and unsuitable for rehabilitation, the units should be removed from the housing stock through the City's code enforcement program.
4. Allow accessory living units in certain conditions.
5. Administer the most current International Construction Code and Maintenance Code.
6. Set measureable goals each year for removal or renovation of dilapidated housing stock.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### ***Law Enforcement***

- Ensure enough police officers, equipment and crime reduction programs to keep the crime rate low.

### ***Fire Protection***

- Retain Class 4 Fire Insurance Rating.
- Continue improvements in the department and water system.

### ***Water System***

- Improve water flow; replace lines and increase line sizes where needed.
- Develop policies that protect groundwater aquifer recharge areas such as rain gardens, swales along roads, below ground porous storage areas for water, etc.

### ***Sewer System***

- Continue inflow/infiltration testing and improvements to lines.

### ***Solid Waste***

- Adopt curbside recycling.

## ***Drainage and Floodplain Management***

- Adopt pre-construction grading ordinance.

## ***Educational Facilities***

- School board should develop its facilities plans in concert with the City's Comprehensive Plan and in cooperation with the Greenwood planning staff, the Planning Commission and the Mayor and City Council

## ***Parks***

- Improve existing parks and programs.
- Secure additional parklands through exactions from developers when appropriate.
- Include green space in redeveloping areas.
- Develop Greenwood Nature Trail.
- Make full use of the city's rivers – sponsor with other organizations, kayak and canoe races, etc.
- Use existing and future sidewalks and future trails to provide connectivity between parks, historic sites, downtown, and other sites of interest.
- Conduct a site analysis showing the following when developing new recreational facilities:
  - Impact of solar aspect – Pay attention to how sun path changes the suitability of potential uses especially sports fields and play settings.
  - Existing Drainage Patterns – Note how surface water flows – look for indicators of erosion, high water marks or evidence of standing water
  - Environmental Considerations – Investigate the potential for environmental regulation such as wetland areas, water quality disturbance, evidence of dumping, etc
  - Existing access points for both vehicles and pedestrians. Assure that emergency vehicles have reasonable access to developed parts of the site. Note presence or lack of ADA access points.
  - Access to existing and proposed public transportation links.
  - Links to existing or proposed Greenway system
  - Availability of utilities both existing and anticipated.
  - Location and condition of existing vegetation – coordinate with community tree standards.
  - Views into and from the site – Note proximity to residential areas in particular.
  - Special or significant contextual influences such as materials, forms, colors or architectural features that could be incorporated into the design solution to visually link park features to the surrounding neighborhood or community.

## **STRUCTURE, STAFFING & ENFORCEMENT**

The recommendations for new and revised implementation ordinances in this Comprehensive Plan will take a well-trained staff to administer. To adequately implement the Comprehensive Plan, a professional planner should be hired by the city to consistently pursue enforcement and offer professional advice to the Planning Commission and the Mayor and City Council. The planner would carry a title of Director of Planning and Community Development. A sample job description follows:

## CITY OF GREENWOOD JOB DESCRIPTION

**JOB TITLE:** Director of Planning and Community Development

**QUALIFICATIONS:** A bachelor's degree in planning, sociology, political science, public policy, geography, or other related field. Masters degree in planning or related field preferred. Membership in American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) preferred, but not required. Minimum of 3 years planning experience required.

**SALARY:** Based on education, experience, and qualifications.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Directs all operations related to city planning (land use, open space and conservation activities, zoning, etc.) and community development (grants, public/private partnerships, special projects, etc.).
- Acts as senior advisor to the Mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission on matters related to planning for healthy communities.
- Identifies opportunities for and recommends changes to the built environment that will promote active lifestyles and alternative modes of transportation.
- Researches and makes specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, and time-framed policy recommendations for passage by the Greenwood City Council that encourage healthy lifestyles and/or discourages unhealthy lifestyles.
- Undertakes a variety of planning projects, which may include the formulation and implementation of community plans, strategies, ordinances, agreements, legislation, programs, projects and policies that encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles.
- Researches, applies for, coordinates, and administers grant programs on behalf of the City of Greenwood in an effort to obtain funding for special projects related to healthy communities.
- Works with the Industrial Board, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Main Street Greenwood, and other development organizations to enhance community development efforts in Greenwood.
- Conducts public forums, seminars, and presentations as part of community outreach in an effort to educate citizens, city officials, and planning commissioners on planning and community development related topics and programs.
- Coordinates with developers, residents, consultants and public and private entities on all matters relevant to active living in the City of Greenwood.
- Reviews and evaluates commercial, industrial, residential, and mixed-use development plans, proposals, designs, applications, occupancy certificates, code amendments, variance requests, technical documents, and special permits.

In addition, staff training should be strengthened and a part-time uniformed police officer assigned to the Community Development and Planning Department. The Planning Commission and the City Planner should be members of the American Planning Association and the Mississippi Chapter of the APA.

Code enforcement should answer to the Director of Planning and Community Development. The City Engineer's office may be separate, answering to the Mayor, but working in concert with the Planner in reviewing site and other plans for engineering issues. The office should retain clerical staff and add new code enforcement staff as is determined by the Director of Planning and Community Development to effectively administer the city's Development Code and building/housing codes. The city should strengthen its GIS capabilities and use it more effectively in addressing city problem areas.

One of the major issues identified in this planning process was lax or inconsistent enforcement of existing ordinances. The presence of new ordinances will not alleviate this problem. As mentioned above, in Staffing, the city needs departmental leadership in the form of a seasoned, experienced city planner. New ordinances will require more negotiating skill and fewer adherences to a checklist. It is important that the new planner have experience in dealing with land developers.

It is important that the department operate with consistent Standard Operating Procedures, and set goals and measurable objectives each budget year. Part of the SOP would include provisions for a "tickler file" for home occupations and conditional uses that must be re-approved annually.

It is recommended that the city eliminate the Board of Adjustment. The new multi-disciplinary site plan review committee can take care of recommendations for variances, etc. to the Planning Commission.

## **Construction Codes**

In implementing the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Greenwood should ensure that it continues to operate under the most current version of construction codes available from the International Construction Code.

## **Departmental Financing**

Planning department funding should be partially financed by application fees, filling fees and permit fees consistent with those allowed by State Law. Administrative fees associated with successful grant proposals should also be used to underwrite departmental costs, if possible. In addition, the city should adopt registration/licensing of rental units with a registration fee of \$10 per unit. The funds can help offset the cost of inspecting the units for code compliance. Rental registration is one way to give the city a better idea of how many rental units are in the city and help the city communicate important rental information and requirements to property owners.

Recommended fees are listed below:

### ***Recommended Action Fees***

- Preliminary Subdivision: \$100 + \$3/lot
- Final Subdivision: \$100 + \$3/lot
- Subdivision Revision: \$50 + \$3/lot
- Vacate Plat: \$100
- Rezoning Request: \$250 for unplanned district/\$500 for planned district
- Residential Variance: \$100
- Commercial Variance: \$300

- Residential Conditional Use: \$100
- Commercial Conditional Use: \$300
- Fence permit: \$35
- Sign permit: Based upon the building permit formula.
- Building permit: According to the recommendations of ICC.
- Rental Registration: \$10
- Fines for infractions: \$1,000 per day per infraction.

## **CAPITAL FACILITIES FINANCING MECHANISMS**

### **Sources and Methods**

Ingenuity and sound financial policies should be exercised in obtaining capital improvements. While certain methods are better suited to particular needs and situations, there is no one ideal way to acquire all capital improvements. Some of the suggested sources and methods found desirable in most cities are discussed below:

#### ***General Obligation Bonds***

General obligation bonds are usually financed out of the property taxes. Assessed valuation of property in the City is, in a sense, pledged as security towards payment of these bonds. Legal limits exist for bonding in the State of Mississippi set at ten percent of the assessed valuation within the municipality. There is no limit to the number of projects needed or desired by a city and it is possible to sell within this legal limit as many bonds as the market will bear. As the community's general obligation debts outstanding approaches this mark it is generally found that higher interest rates are incurred. General obligation bonds should not be issued for a period of longer than 30 years and generally should be limited to shorter periods. As a practical rule, the Mayor and City Council should keep its debt requirement so scheduled that at least 25 percent of the principal is due for amortization within a five-year period. Serial bonds are recommended because these come due in successive years and are from current funds each year, permitting lower interest rates in some cases. Serial bonds are sometimes refinanced to take advantage of lower interest rates. If revenues from a particular tax or from a limited property tax levy are pledged, the bonds are known as limited tax bonds. Sometimes general obligation bonds are sold with the stipulation that revenue from a facility will be used to retire the bonds and only in the event that this revenue is insufficient will the full faith and credit of the city be used. A combination of term and serial bonds are used to finance a revenue producing facility whose earning revenue cannot be readily determined.

#### ***Revenue Bonds***

If both principal and interest costs are to be met exclusively from the earnings of a facility to be constructed the bonds are known as revenue bonds. Interest rates on this type of bond depend upon the type of facility and its economic feasibility. Extension of sewer and water utility systems are often financed in this manner. Revenue bonds are limited in Mississippi by the Fifteen Percent Rule, which says that a municipality cannot collectively issue revenue bonds in excess of fifteen percent of its assessed valuation. Revenues must be sufficient to cover principal and interest in this type bonds. Again it is desirable for their term to be held to as short a period as possible.

### ***Special Taxing Districts***

Special benefit assessment or improvement districts are another financing alternative. Taxes levied on certain properties benefited by the improvements are often called district. Special assessments may be levied on property fronting on a road to be paved, for example, or for street lighting in a particular area.

### ***Tax Increment Financing***

Under this finance mechanism, a bond instrument is used to raise capital for public improvements related to an economic development project. Additional tax dollars raised by the new economic development activity are then pledged to retire the previously issued bonds.

### ***Pay as You Go***

Financing from current revenue or the “pay as you go” policy has both advantages and disadvantages. When expenditures of comparatively large amounts occur at varying intervals, it may not work. Current revenues available for capital expenditure are those funds left over after all operating expenses have been taken care of. Excess funds, when they occur, may be set aside for future improvements. Having available funds at any specified time is not dependable.

### ***Subdivision Regulations***

The subdivision regulations require that subdividers provide certain public improvements at the time a new subdivision is constructed. Local streets and major street right-of-way, paving, water main, storm and sanitary sewerage and sidewalks may be required when the subdivider takes the responsibility for construction. A performance bond is required to guarantee that all improvements are installed in accordance with the specified standards of construction. Improvements must be made and inspected before approval of the final subdivision plat is granted.

### ***State and Federal Loans***

Considerable amounts of money are provided by other units of government to aid cities with needed public improvements. State highways, where they are within a city are eventually built, widened, or otherwise improved by the State. Libraries, schools, hospitals, and parks may be financed in part for both land and construction costs from other government funds. Hospitals, parks, sewerage and water systems are supported by federal grants. In some cases, matching funds must also be provided by the city to obtain this aid. That is, the city puts up one dollar for each dollar or more received from the state or federal government.

### ***Grants***

A number of sources are available to the city for bequests, grants, donations, etc., of land, money or building equipment. A local company may build a facility for the city or an estate or trust may specify in money or land to be put up for a public park. Care should always be exercised that a particular gift is an economic asset to the city and will not become a white elephant. A building donated for public use is not necessarily free, as it may be obsolete and cost more to remodel than construction of a new building. Land that is too small or inaccessible to the public for a park will become a burden because of a continuing maintenance cost.

## CAPITAL BUDGETING METHOD

This public improvements program presents a schedule of capital, public, and physical improvements for the City of Greenwood, Mississippi. A five-year time span is used to accommodate the anticipated growth and development within the city. Capital improvements are one-time expenditures, nonrecurring in nature, and generally have long life expectancy, usually between 20 and 50 years. Their scheduling is based on a series of priorities established by the city through its planning process reflecting the city's present and anticipated needs, desires, and the importance of the various proposed improvements, along with its present and anticipated future financial condition. The benefits derived from capital improvements programming are many and include the following:

1. Assurance that projects will be carried out in accordance with a predetermined priority and the city's ability to finance them.
2. Protection for the city from undue influence of aggressive partial interest groups and consideration of the best interests of the entire community.
3. Reduction of possible opposition to needed projects by showing special interest groups that their projects will be taken care of at a proper time.
4. Assurance of impartial treatment to all citizens.
5. Means for foreseeing and anticipating bond issues and tax income.
6. Realization of efficiency through the ability to foresee needed construction over several years including the avoidance of purchasing additional equipment or technical services when several related projects might justify the use of the same resources.
7. Saving of desirable, but not urgently needed projects for periods when the economy of the community can better accommodate them.
8. Lengthening of the period of time available for technical design of long-range public improvements to provide for better long term planning and coordination of various city projects.
9. Provision for advance acquisition of land by purchase at favorable market prices and conditions when feasible.

It is essential that Greenwood projects its intermediate-range capital improvement needs and chart an intermediate range financial plan. With increased demands for public service, the cost of government is continually increasing. Providing fire and police protection, streets, schools, and other public services is consuming a larger part of the annual revenue dollar, leaving fewer funds each year for adding new capital improvements. Consequently, a well-analyzed, economically sound intermediate-range financial program is an important management tool derived from the Comprehensive Plan for developing the city in order to provide adequate community facilities.

The capital improvements program provides a link between the Comprehensive Plan and actual construction of public improvements. Because of the influence attendant to the provision, nature, and location of public facilities and its effect on the pattern of urban growth, the capital improvements program is one of the most important implementation tools available for implementation of the community's Comprehensive Plan. The zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations guide certain aspects of private development. The capital improvements program guides decisions as to how and when improvements that support private development will be built.

The general purpose of the capital improvements program provides a schedule for the acquisition, construction, and alteration of public property and facilities within the City of Greenwood over the next 5 years. This program includes recommendations from several of the Comprehensive Plan elements in order of relative need, merit, and economic desirability.



The capital improvements program is not a rigid schedule, which must be followed regardless of unforeseen changes, nor does its adoption constitute such a commitment; rather, it is a framework for decision-making. The program should be reviewed and revised annually to remain relevant. As each year of the schedule is carried out, an additional year should be added to it containing new projects. This annual review is primarily for the purpose of adjusting to individually changing circumstances. In order that this program can, in fact, provide the desired framework, it should become policy of the city that no major community improvement be undertaken without the Planning Commission's review in light of the Capital Improvements Program.

The capital improvements program is but one phase of the Comprehensive Plan for Greenwood. The study involves the combination of findings of several previous planning elements that should be consulted for reference if additional background is needed. The usual procedure after preparation, adoption, and hearing on the Capital Improvements Program is for the Mayor and City Council to adopt the first year of the capital budget and incorporate it as part of the annual budget. The Mayor and City Council then should tentatively authorize the remainder of the program subject to annual revision and reauthorization. As the City of Greenwood grows it must not only renew and replace structures and equipment that have become old and worn out, destroyed or obsolete, but it must also improve its facilities and services to support its population.