



Boone seeks input on comprehensive plan

Written by

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BOONE COUNTY - The Boone County Planning Commission staff is starting to roll out the goals and objectives for the comprehensive plan update.

Planning Commission Director Kevin Costello and Bob Jonas, project manager for the update, made presentations to the Boone County Fiscal Court and a group of community leaders Tuesday.

A presentation was made to city officials in Union Monday night and Walton and Florence will also get an update in the next few weeks.

Identifying goals and objectives is the first step in the update process. A planning commission committee identified the goals and objectives and the full commission approved that report, allowing the process to advance.

After the individual governing bodies sign off on the report, the planning commission staff can get to work on how best to achieve those goals.

"We have the car ready, now it's time to go under the hood," Jonas said. "We need help from the people in the community to do that."

The presentation to government officials, Costello explained, is different than that made to community groups.

"We are basically providing information on technical changes, such as wording (to government officials)," Costello said. "When we meet with people in the community we are looking for input and feedback."

At Tuesday's Community Needs Assessment meeting, Jonas broke down the different elements of the plan update and provided background on previous updates.

The monthly meeting, which takes place at the Northern Kentucky Area Development District office in Florence, focuses on issues of concern in the Northern Kentucky community.

Jonas encouraged participants to focus on

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an element of the update that interests them and sent around a sign-up sheet encouraging them to list the area on which they could provide input.

"When you look at the plan as a whole, it's pretty daunting, but if several people focus on individual elements and provide input, it can be very helpful," Jonas said.

About 12 people from the group of roughly 25 at the meeting signed up.

The county also solicits input from business leaders, but the different groups each provide a unique perspective, Jonas says, which is why the range of feedback is so valuable.

"We would love to see everyone participate in this planning process," Jonas said.

The state requires the county to update the comprehensive plan every five years and this update will also include a 25-year horizon to guide long-range planning.

The long-range outlook is critical because of the continued growth in the county.

The county's population this year, which will be confirmed by census results released in a few months, is expected to exceed 120,000. Even with the recent slowdown in population growth, those numbers are expected to grow to 153,000 in 2020 and more than 186,000 by 2030.

That level of growth requires extensive planning to accommodate changes in housing, transportation, education and

other areas.

The goals and objectives of the plan are available on the Boone County Planning Commission website and officials plan to schedule workshops to encourage increased participation in the process.

The county hopes to get approval from the Fiscal Court and all of the cities in the next few weeks and will then develop a strategy to achieve the objectives outlined in the plan.

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