

**AGENDA REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
June 6, 2013**

SUMMARY

A request by the City of Columbia to adopt a new comprehensive plan entitled “Columbia Imagined – The Plan for How We Live & Grow”. This plan will replace Metro 2020, adopted in February 2001, and will provide land use and policy guidance for residents, professional staff, and appointed and elected officials. The plan period extends through the year 2030. The document may be amended from time to time in response to changing conditions. (Case #13-82).

DISCUSSION

Overview & assignment -

The City of Columbia’s current comprehensive plan, Metro 2020, was adopted in 2001. During the visioning efforts of Imagine Columbia’s Future (2006-2008), the Development Citizen Topic Group recommended that a new growth management plan, that incorporates form-based zoning, be prepared. This recommended strategy was ultimately incorporated into the Final Visioning Report for this plan.

As a part of implementing the goals and objectives articulated in the Final Vision Report, the City Council on May 18, 2009, approved Resolution 113-09A formally directing the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) to engage in the preparation of a new citywide comprehensive plan. Within that same resolution, Council established the Comprehensive Plan Task Force (CPTF) to assist the PZC in its assignment.

The resolution also directed the PZC and CPTF to use the report entitled *Imagine Columbia’s Future* as the basic reference for evaluating the existing Comprehensive Plan and developing vision statements, goals, objectives and policies in the new Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the resolution included a listing of tasks as well as content matter that the new plan should address and include.

Comprehensive plans are intended to be general in their nature and documents that provide guidance for the orderly growth and development of a community. Columbia Imagined identifies and provides recommendations and potential policies from which the appointed and elected officials may choose to facilitate future development patterns.

Columbia Imagined is not a regulatory document, but rather a policy guide. It proposes several changes to the existing city codes affecting land use and development. The plan also proposes enhancing the planning process by developing smaller and more detailed “area plans” that better address specific neighborhood conditions and dynamics.

The following sections provide brief descriptions of each processes undertaken in preparing Columbia Imagined. The attached Executive Summary and “quick facts” sheet provide a general sense of the content of the complete plan in a manageable format.

Planning to Plan -

In January 2010, using Resolution 113-09A as its base of reference, the PZC and CPTF began the process of reviewing existing community conditions and creating the framework by which the requested plan would be built. During this period, the PZC and CPTF were briefed on existing conditions, researched

other plans believed to be successful, decided on a unique name, tagline, and graphic image for the plan, established the plan's framework, and developed a public outreach plan and strategy.

The Plan Structure –

Columbia Imagined is structured around the following seven thematic areas:

1. Land use and growth management
2. Environmental management
3. Infrastructure
4. Mobility, connectivity, accessibility
5. Economic development
6. Inter-governmental cooperation
7. Livable and sustainable communities

These seven thematic areas incorporate the broader 12 categories Resolution 113-09A requested the PZC and CPTF incorporate into the new comprehensive plan. These themes overlap throughout the plan (see **Attachment A**). The choice of these themes was a result the CPTF's review of other successful plans and the belief that they were more inclusive and superior to traditional comprehensive plan topic areas such as land use, transportation, housing, etc.

The Planning Phases -

A 6-phase planning process (see **Attachment B**) was used in completing the development of the new comprehensive plan. A chronology of the phases is as follows:

Phase 1 (May 2011) - Introduced the idea of a new comprehensive plan to the community. **Phase 2 (December 2011)** - Gave an overview of the existing conditions of Columbia.

Phase 3 (March 2012) - Identified resident "favorites" and "issues" in and around Columbia. **Phase 4 (April 2012)** - Produced goals and objectives and development scenarios.

Phase 5 (May 2013) - Provided the recommended framework for achieving the principles, policies, goals/objectives, strategies, and actions to implement the plan as well as the future land use map and implementation strategy.

Phase 6 (June 2013 and beyond) - Planning Commission endorsement and Council adoption of the plan and future implementation of its elements.

Public Engagement & Outreach -

Overall, during the planning process:

- 26 public meetings were held throughout the community at 9 separate locations
- 700+ public input surveys for each of the 5 phases and plan draft were collected

Plan outreach and public participation opportunities were broad and diverse:

- **24,000** information sheets were sent to families with elementary school children on 3 separate occasions during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years to describe the plan, ask for input, and announce upcoming meetings
- During the plan's 25 months of public engagement, City Insiders were sent each month to **55,000** commercial and residential utility customers with an article describing the plan and how to get involved
- Information and survey boxes were placed at **7** high-traffic facilities including the Wabash Bus Station, the Activity and Recreation Center (ARC) and Daniel Boone Public Library
- Special interest and community groups were engaged and asked to participate through surveys, meetings in a box, and facilitated discussions and special presentations. Groups included

neighborhood associations, the PedNet Coalition, the NAACP, the University of Missouri Grounds and Facilities and the Chamber of Commerce

- Electronically, information about the plan was sent to **75** neighborhood associations, the City's **50+** boards and commissions, and **234** email accounts subscribing to the Planning and Zoning listserv at each phase of the plan
- Plan information was available online **24-7** at Columbialmaged.com, via Facebook and Twitter, and surveys were available online through Survey Monkey (in addition to the hard copies available at the survey boxes)
- Ads were placed in Columbia Tribune prior to every public meeting, with online ads providing a direct link to the final draft of the plan and input survey

Development of the Plan's principles, policies, strategies, and actions -

As the staff, PZC, and CPTF engaged the public in the forums held during Phases 3 and 4 of the planning process significant information was collected. This information was analyzed, smoothed, and categorized for use in the development of the principles, policies, strategies and actions presented in Chapters 4 and 5 of the plan.

As part of the analysis process, the goals and objectives captured as part of the Imagine Columbia's Future visioning effort were reviewed and compared with the information being obtained during the Columbia Imagined forums. This analysis identified many similarities between the earlier visioning efforts and the information obtained through the current public outreach leading staff, PZC, and CPTF to concluded that public sentiment toward planning and development has remained relatively unchanged since 2008 and now.

The section entitled "Where Do We Want to Go?" of Chapter 4, presents the key principles, policies, and strategies derived from the public input received. Actions to effectuate those principles, policies, and strategies are addressed within Chapter 5 (Implementation) of the plan in tabular form by thematic area.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the plan

Report prepared by Patrick Zenner

Approved by Patrick Zenner

Executive Summary

Goals of Columbia Imagined
Guiding Principles
Chapter Summaries

The seven elements are:

1. Land Use and Growth Management
2. Environmental Management
3. Infrastructure
4. Mobility, Connectivity and Accessibility
5. Economic Development
6. Inter-Governmental Cooperation
7. Livable and Sustainable Communities

Form-based zoning is a planning tool which addresses urban sprawl, the need for safe streets, and the preservation of historic neighborhoods. It encourages compact, vibrant, walkable cities.

Instead of zoning by land use, form-based zoning looks at a development's height, placement, appearance, and relationship to surrounding buildings, neighborhoods, and districts.

Introduction

"Columbia Imagined – The Plan for How We Live & Grow" is the City of Columbia's new comprehensive land use plan. This plan is intended to provide residents, appointed boards and commissions, and elected officials with a document that will help guide and direct the City's growth until 2030.

The plan builds upon a foundation of public engagement begun with the efforts of Imagine Columbia's Future (2006-2008) and is in direct response to one of the recommendations of the Development Citizens' Topic Group that suggested, as a strategy, to "implement a growth management plan that incorporates **form-based zoning**."

The planning process involved many different individuals. At the local level and in accordance with state statutes, the Planning and Zoning Commission is charged with the responsibility of preparing the plan and recommending it to the City Council. The City Council appointed a 15-member Task Force to assist in the public outreach and research efforts to compile the materials that follow. These groups were further assisted by consultants from the University of Missouri and the City's Community Development Department staff.

While the efforts of the above groups have yielded the plan that follows, the ideas upon which this plan has been built would not have been realized without the involvement of the citizens of Columbia. A goal of achieving the participation of three percent of the City's population (roughly 3,000 people) was set during

the kick-off meeting held in April, 2011. While the exact number of participants is difficult to measure, completion of this plan included direct outreach to over 80,000 citizens, asking them to participate in the development of Columbia Imagined via a variety of methods addressed to Chapter Two. This participation has been critical in shaping and influencing the contents of the chapters that follow, especially the "Big Ideas" and "Growth Patterns and Policies" chapters.

Preparing to Plan

Embarking on the task of developing a comprehensive plan such as Columbia Imagined requires an understanding of what one has to work with and what has proven to be successful in similar communities. To this end, the Task Force spent the first 10 months of this planning process learning what planning efforts existed within Columbia and how these efforts have impacted the development that now exists.

During this same period, the Task Force organized into subcommittees to evaluate other cities' comprehensive plans and to review the goals and objectives from the Imagine Columbia's Future visioning efforts. The results of this "planning to plan" phase of the Columbia Imagined process have influenced the plan framework and the outreach efforts used by the Task Force and Planning Commission in the development of this plan.

The first, and most notable, influence of the plan preparation phase was the establishment of this document's framework. The Task Force's Purposeful Planning Subcommittee identified seven



elements around which this plan has been developed. These elements are the result of a reorganization of the 12 topic areas listed in City Council enabling resolution #113-09A that authorized the comprehensive plan and were seen by the subcommittee as superior to the traditional listing of topics like land use, transportation, housing, etc.

The seven elements are:



Land Use and Growth Management



Environmental Management



Infrastructure



Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility



Economic Development



Inter-Governmental Cooperation



Livable and Sustainable Communities

A second notable outcome of the preparation phase dealt with designing the public engagement process. A conscious effort was made to ensure that residents would be engaged and that many input opportunities would sustain resident involvement throughout the plan development process.

To this end, ColumbiaImagined.com, a website devoted to the plan, was created in addition to Facebook and Twitter social media sites. Public engagement meetings were held throughout the community and “meeting kits” were developed to allow interested residents a convenient way to share the plan’s objectives with neighbors or other interested parties. Online surveying and strategically placed survey drop boxes were also implemented as part of the public outreach efforts to ensure a sustained stream of public engagement.

These combined efforts have influenced the contents of the document that follows. The comments, ideas, goals, and objectives obtained through these outreach efforts are seen throughout the plan. This plan, while prepared by professional staff, is a publicly influenced document that incorporates the ideas representative of the diversity found within our community. This plan is what Columbians have “imagined” our future to be.

The Goals of Columbia Imagined

Columbia Imagined will replace the City’s existing comprehensive plan, *Metro 2020*, which was adopted in February, 2001. While Columbia Imagined contains several similar elements to *Metro 2020*, such as a land use plan policy and recommendations, it also examines the social and environmental implications that land use changes have on the community. These added areas of focus are seen as important elements to encourage more holistic planning for the City’s future and its citizens’ quality of life.

Columbia Imagined:

1. Provides a framework for shaping and managing growth and allowing for more detailed plans.
2. Is built upon and supported by current and accurate data that is a product of community conversation and outreach.

Citizens’ Quotes:
Quotes gathered from citizens during the public input part of the planning process are included in the margins of this document. This illustrates the origins of the ideas expressed in the main text.



The Plan for How We Live & Grow

3. Incorporates best management practices of planning and sustainability.
4. Provides opportunity to address key issues facing Columbia.
5. Provides opportunity for reviews, updates, and amendments.
6. Incorporates Columbia's physical and economic aspects as well as social issues.
7. "Connects the dots" to other City plans.
8. Provides reliable guidance for rezoning, subdivision, and planned district approvals.
9. Includes implementation measures and strategies.
10. Incorporates and identifies opportunities for more regional planning collaboration and builds upon existing relationships.

Each of these goals are found within the chapters that follow or identified as opportunities for future policy development as part of the plan implementation strategies.

Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles:

1. Recreation
2. Cultural opportunities and the arts
3. Quality of life
4. Downtown
5. Economic opportunities
6. Small town feel
7. Natural environment
8. Historic integrity
9. Educational opportunities

The success of a plan is based, in part, on how successful it is in providing meaningful guidance to its end users. To ensure that this plan is utilized as a resource in future decision making, its contents focus on a set of common objectives or principles. Conformity with these objectives or principles should become the benchmark for future policy and land use decisions. Careful consideration should be given to the potential ramifications of policies and proposals that deviate from these objectives and principles prior to the final approval of other documents by elected officials.

This check-and-balance approach is viewed as necessary to ensure that the process of public engagement utilized throughout the development of Columbia Imagined is upheld. Unnecessary deviation from these generally expressed objectives and principles may compromise public trust in the overall planning process and diminish future public involvement in updating this plan as well as other planning efforts necessary to facilitate implementa-

tion of its goals and objectives.

The guiding principles listed below emerged from what the public expressed as the type of community they want to live in (see Phase III community input). These principles are interspersed throughout the pages that follow. In some instances they are readily apparent, while in others a new policy or regulation may be needed to become part of the decision-making process.

The guiding principles:

1. Preservation and enhancement of the existing network of **recreation** facilities, programs, and opportunities shall influence future growth and development within and surrounding Columbia.
2. Identify, promote, and enhance **cultural opportunities and the arts** throughout Columbia as it continues to grow in population and as a regional destination.
3. Balance the **quality of life** enjoyed by residents with the needs of providing new employment and housing opportunities for an increasing population.
4. Identify and enhance opportunities for continued investment in **downtown** so that it becomes the preferred hub of activity for cultural, dining, and recreational activities.
5. Leverage Columbia's location, quality of life, access to high-quality education/research facilities, and medical services in its pursuit of sustainable **economic opportunities** viewed as essential to compete in a global economy.
6. Balance the needs of growth so that the **small town feel** of Columbia is retained through sustainable programs, policies, and innovative regulations.
7. Acknowledge, respect, and preserve the **natural environment** in and around Columbia so that its aesthetic and ecological value is retained for future generations.
8. Preserve the **historic integrity** of Columbia's landmarks, neighborhoods and downtown through various methods such as education, incentives, and regulations so that these resources and the history they represent are not lost as the community continues to develop.

9. Support and encourage **educational opportunities** with Columbia's institutions of higher education as well as its public and private schools so that partnerships may be forged, permitting enhanced economic stature within the region, state, and nation.

Chapter Summaries

The following are brief descriptions of each chapter of Columbia Imagined. Included within these sections are highlights of information believed to be most critical in understanding the broader plan and its goals and objectives.

Chapter One – Existing Conditions

Chapter One provides background information relating to what makes Columbia the place that it is. In this chapter, the seven themes are used as the organizing structure in presenting the existing conditions of the City. The chapter starts by describing the history of planning in Columbia and wraps up with what elements make our community livable and sustainable. The chapter includes descriptive information about our efforts related to environmental management, the state of our infrastructure, how we move about and connect neighborhoods, what drives the economy, and what efforts exist to cooperate with other local and quasi-governmental agencies. This chapter is intended to give the reader a basic understanding of who we are and where we have been.

Chapter Two – The Planning Process

Chapter Two explains the process, techniques, and tools used in the development of Columbia Imagined to engage the public in the preparation of the plan. This chapter also explains the role of the planning partners and the design of each phase of the plan. The tools used to obtain public input and examples of engagement materials and results are included.

Chapter Three – The “Big Ideas”

Chapter Three explores the “Big Ideas” that emerged from asking the community “What do we care about?” and “Where are we headed?” during the third and fourth phases of the

plan. Big ideas are the guiding principles and priorities the plan must consider when looking at growth scenarios and policy recommendations. These principles and priorities are reflective of the community's favorite things about Columbia (those aspects that must be preserved and promoted) and describe what the community should become over the next twenty years. The issues, goals, and objectives described in Chapter Three align the plan with the pulse of the community.

Chapter Four – Growth Patterns & Policies

Chapter Four provides an in-depth look at where and how future growth is most likely to occur based on current land use patterns and policies. Population and employment projections are matched with recent development patterns and an inventory of developable land area to predict future land use needs through 2030.

The results of this analysis are compared to the core values and beliefs as expressed by Columbia citizens in Phase III and IV public input forums. This comparative exercise highlights both consistencies and discrepancies between current development practice and core community principles.

Land use policies and strategies are recommended in the latter half of the chapter by which the pattern of future growth may be influenced to more closely align land use and development practices with the citizens' community vision and values.

Chapter Five - Implementation

Chapter Five introduces the reader to the Columbia Imagined implementation table, implementation tracking process, and table modification procedures. Within the table are the Plan's goals, objectives, and strategies as well as the key stakeholders for each identified task or policy objective. The policy objectives also describe a general priority for completion- low, medium or high- as identified by the public in Phase V. The implementation table was structured around broader policy objectives developed as part of the preceding chapter, and is intended to guide the staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council in making any necessary changes to the City's regulations such that the Plan's broad objectives are fulfilled.

Columbia Imagined Chapters:

- Chapter One - Existing Conditions
- Chapter Two - The Planning Process
- Chapter Three - The “Big Ideas”
- Chapter Four - Growth Patterns & Policies
- Chapter Five - Implementation



The Plan for How We Live & Grow

This chapter also describes how the plan, table, and future land use map will be updated and amended as needed. Evaluation of policy outcomes will be compared with the policies, goals, and objectives identified by the public at appropriate intervals. Additionally, population growth and demographics, housing, employment, and other trends will be evaluated so that the models used in the plan may be updated to best represent the land use needs of the community throughout the 20-year planning horizon.

The chapter concludes with the future land use map for the study area. The future land use map may be realized by the adoption of the policies presented in the implementation table and is intended to present a picture of how and where growth is likely to occur in the future if guided by the expectations and desires of the community.



7 Plan Themes:

The diagram consists of seven overlapping circles arranged in a circular pattern. The central circle is labeled **Transportation** and features an icon of a car, a bicycle, and a bus. The surrounding circles are:

- Land Use and Growth Management** (top): Icon of a house and a tree. Text: "Land use and growth management is inseparable from the capacity, timing, and quality of transportation infrastructure."
- Economic Development** (top-right): Icon of a person with a briefcase. Text: "The quality and availability of transportation improvements and services is fundamental to economic development."
- Inter-Governmental Cooperation** (bottom-right): Icon of a classical building. Text: "Transportation planning is necessarily an exercise in inter-governmental cooperation."
- Livable and Sustainable Communities** (bottom): Icon of a house with a leaf. Text: "Street designs can contribute to the livability of cities."
- Environmental Management** (bottom-left): Icon of a plant. Text: "Construction of transportation improvements and mode choices have varying environmental impacts."
- Infrastructure** (top-left): Icon of a road, a bus, and a train. Text: "Roads, sidewalks, bike routes, buses, airports, and rail are community infrastructure."

Environmental conditions make some areas **developmentally sensitive**:

Karst topography: Sinkholes and caves

Erodible soils: Soil type easily washed away

Steep slopes: Extreme changes in grade

Types of **Infrastructure** affecting development:

Hard: facilities such as sewer, electric, roads

Soft: Emergency response (police, fire)

Mobility: Ability and knowledge to move from one place to another by a variety of travel modes

Connectivity: Streets, sidewalks, trails, and other public transportation facilities linked in a system

Accessibility: Ability or ease of persons to get directly to the places they need and want to go

REDI- Regional Economic Development, Inc.: Non-profit public/private partnership for business promotion/economic development

Shovel Ready: Immediately developable industrial site
Business Incubator: Matching tools and resources to foster entrepreneurial activities

Livable: Quality of life, i.e. places that are suitable and comfortable for living

Sustainable: Designs and practices enabling the present generation to meet needs without compromising capacity of succeeding generations

1. What is the plan? (May 2011)
2. Who are we? (December 2011)
3. What do we care about? (March 2012)
4. Where do we want to go? (April & May 2012)
5. **How do we get there? (Spring 2013)**
6. Approval and adoption of the plan (Summer 2013)

We are now in phase 5.

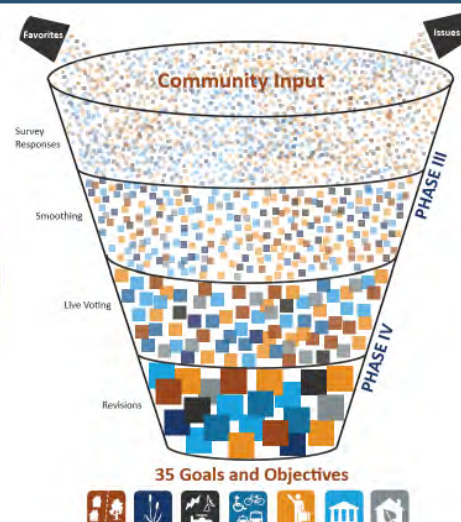
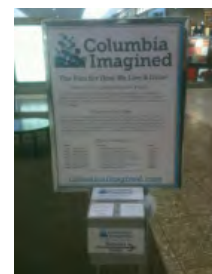
This phase introduces the draft plan and asks the public to prioritize the strategies and actions outlined in Chapter 5 (the Implementation Plan)

1	What events are you attending?	<p>Review all local and regional programs. Considerations: Program format, information, location, time, cost, and other details.</p>	Review: 10-15 minutes
2	Where are you attending?	<p>Examine location, parking, nearby facilities and services that affect the trip. Considerations: Transportation to the site, safety, security, and other details. Considerations: Location, time, cost, and other details.</p>	Examine: 10-15 minutes
3	Who are you attending with?	<p>Identify 2-3 program goals and objectives. Considerations: Program format, information, location, time, cost, and other details.</p>	Identify: 10-15 minutes
4	What is the purpose of the trip?	<p>Identify 2-3 program goals and objectives. Considerations: Program format, information, location, time, cost, and other details.</p>	Identify: 10-15 minutes
5	What is the purpose of the trip?	<p>Identify 2-3 program goals and objectives. Considerations: Program format, information, location, time, cost, and other details.</p>	Identify: 10-15 minutes
6	What is the purpose of the trip?	<p>Identify 2-3 program goals and objectives. Considerations: Program format, information, location, time, cost, and other details.</p>	Identify: 10-15 minutes

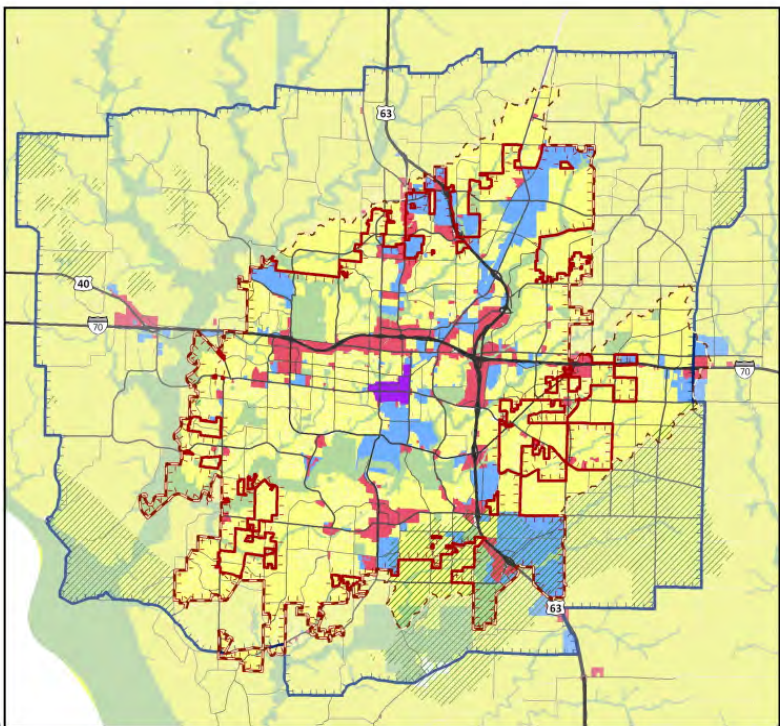
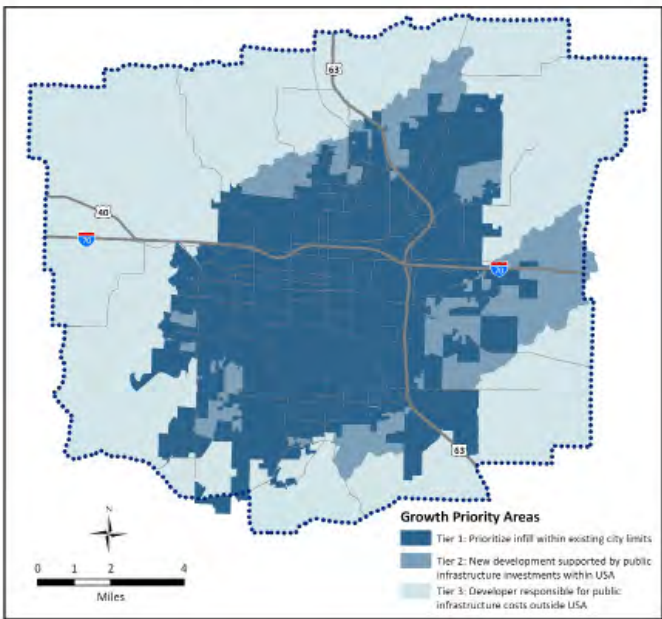
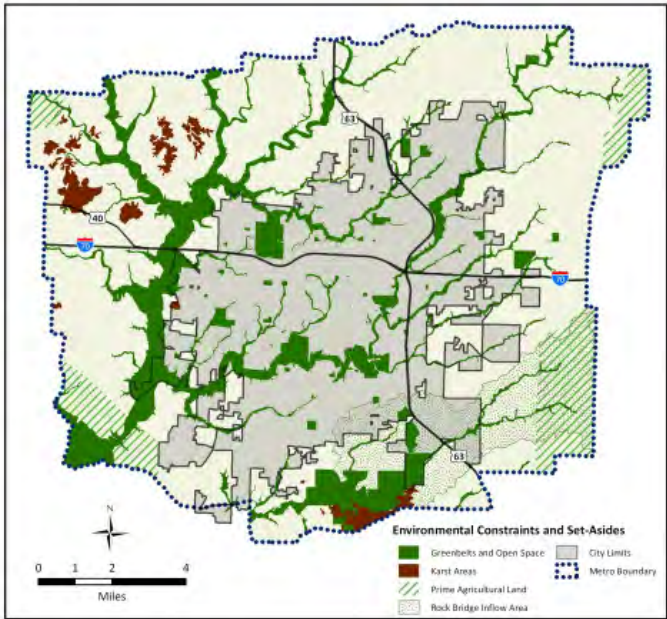
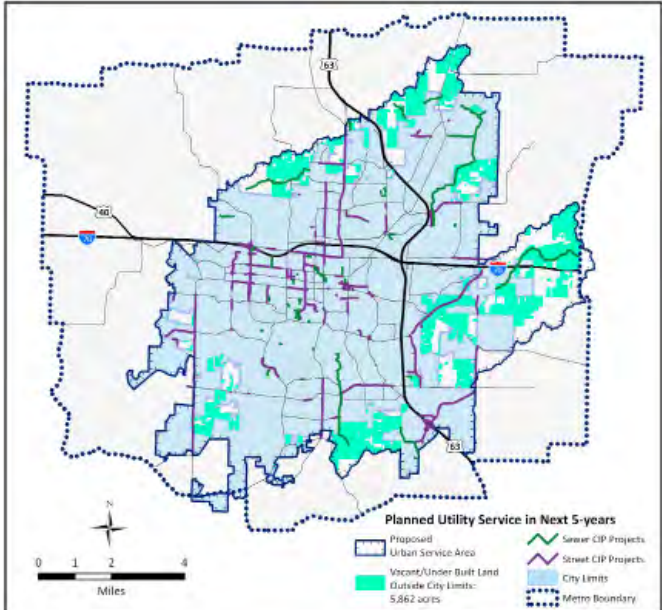
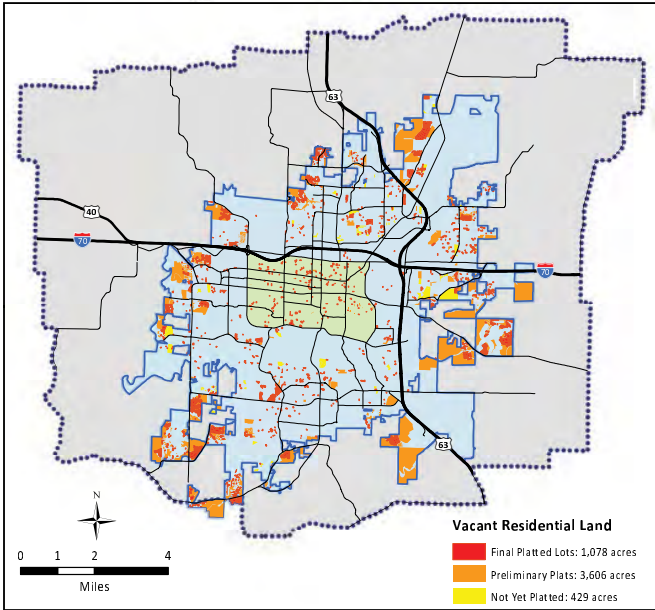
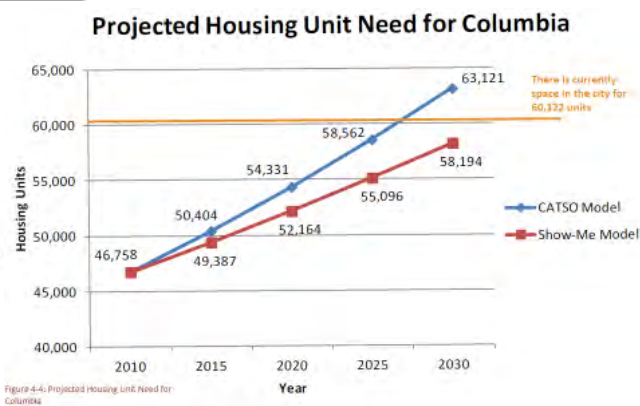
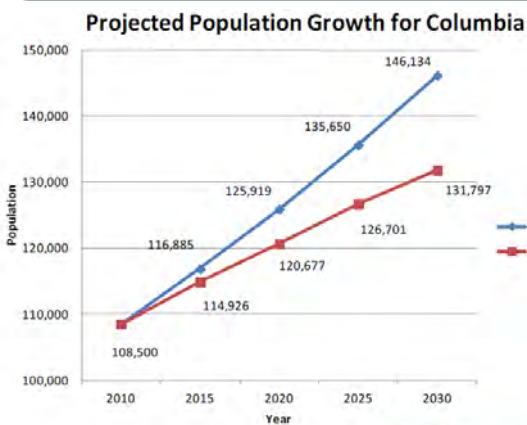
- Executive Summary
- 1. Existing Conditions
- 2. Planning Process
- 3. Big Ideas
- 4. Growth Patterns
& Policies
- 5. Implementation
- Appendix



- Rooted in 2008 Visioning Process
- Role of Planning Partners
- Public education, participation, and input
- Survey questions & issue identification exercises:
 - *What are your favorite things about Columbia?*
 - *What are you concerned about?*
- Goal-setting and prioritization
- Implementation program
- Plan approval and beyond
- Updating the plan over time



Chapter 4: Growth Patterns & Policies



Neighborhood District: A mix of residential uses and neighborhood services

Commercial District: Contains citywide and regional retail uses, with offices, businesses, and personal services; high density multi-family dwellings are supporting uses

Employment District: Includes offices, corporate headquarters, manufacturing, warehouses, and research parks. Supporting uses include multi-family residential, convenience retail, daycare facilities, restaurants.

City Center: Serves as the education and government center of the community. This single district has mixed uses and is built at a pedestrian scale. Includes the Central Business District (downtown office/commercial)

Open Space/Greenbelt: Provides for the recreational and aesthetic needs of the residents of Columbia; also intended to protect sensitive areas from development and to preserve prime natural areas. Uses include public and private parks; other open spaces, golf courses, and greenbelts.

Sensitive Areas: This overlay district identifies karst topography, the Devil's Icebox Recharge Area, and prime agricultural land. Preservation and protection of these areas should be encouraged to mitigate negative impacts on community resources and safety.

Each element overlaps with the others:



Figure 1-1: Seven overlapping elements

Each of the seven elements could be the center of the diagram. This example displays how *Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility* connects to all of the different elements.

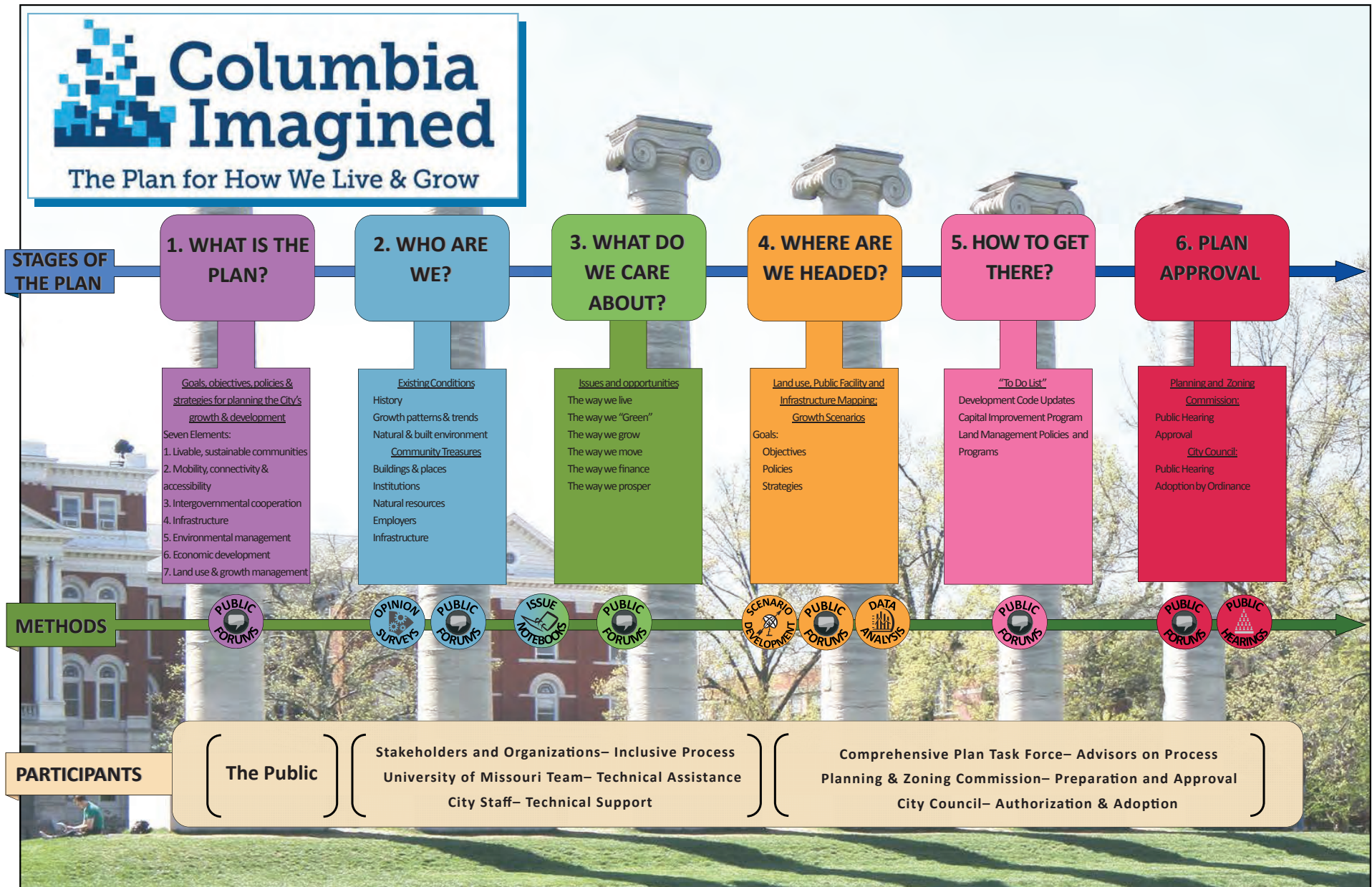


Figure 2-1: Columbia Imagined Work Plan