



**Planning Commission
Work Session Agenda
Town of Orange Community Meeting Room – 235 Warren Street
Monday, July 8, 2024**

6:00 p.m.

1. Call to order.

Roll Call:

Chairman Benjamin Sherman
Vice-Chair Page Sullenberger
Commissioner Rita Carroll

Commissioner Donald Schafer
Commissioner LJ Taylor
Mayor Martha Roby, *Ex-Officio*

2. Continued Discussion of Comprehensive Plan – Goals/Visions.

- Ranking of Themes 5-11

3. Next Meeting – July 22, 2024, at 6p.m. – Regular Meeting

4. Adjournment.

The Town of Orange Planning Commission Agenda Package is available on the Town's website for review at www.townoforangeva.org

Creating not just a plan but a plan of action and implementation. That's a critical distinction. Lots of people, it seems, are good at creating plans, but it's a rare leader who knows how to move from plan to reality.

Planning Commission Agenda Item 3 – Comprehensive Plan Discussion – July 8, 2024

The Comprehensive Plan is supposed to be the guiding document to development within the Town. Our other documents (the zoning ordinance, the subdivision ordinance, Capital Improvement Program) are the statutory means for the Town to bring the Comprehensive Plan vision to fruition.

State code §15.2-2223 *Comprehensive Plan to be prepared and adopted; scope and purpose* states:

“The local planning commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction and every governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction.

In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be.”

So, I am thinking that included with the top three action items (items which are measurable and able to be implemented) we look at the goals we wish to attain in each of the Themes within the Comprehensive Plan. These goals would be general in nature and be for the Immediate time frame, 1 to 3 years, the short term, 3 to 10 years, and the long term, 10 + years. The goals would be in line with “The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature”.

At some point we will need to discuss what studies, if any, the Planning Commission would like to undertake in support of this plan update.

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My plan with the goals is to take them all and create a narrative instead of a bulleted list but I need the list to work from.

You will see from the rest of the document that I have gotten up to Theme 7. Some themes have more goals/action items listed than others. I need your help to not only fill in the holes in the information but to make sure that what I have put in the document you agree with.

What I would like to do at our next meeting, May 22, 2023, is begin with Theme #1 and work through the goals, action items. Once we have the theme goals written down with the action items, we can move on to Theme 2. I would like to get everyone to agree to the goals and action items for each theme before we move on. This may not be possible in all cases, but that is how I would like to proceed.

The quotes in the header and footer are just quotes that I liked and help me to focus on what I believe the plan should be. Not only a plan but also a plan of action and implementation (when used in conjunction with the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, capital improvement plan, and any economic development strategies that are developed for the Town such as the ODA Downtown Development Planning Service 2016 report prepared by Barman Development Strategies or the 2021 Downtown Strategic Vision by Retail Strategies. These reports will be included as an appendix.

Some comments and questions from past discussions are listed below:

1. How do we connect our themes?
2. Create a sustainable workforce that entices business to come to Orange
3. How do we synthesize all of this information into actionable items/goals? Employment Match, work force analyzation, Job matching recruiter
4. How do we connect workers to businesses where their abilities match the businesses need
5. What existing industries are close to Orange which other businesses could "tag" off of?
6. How can we use the ESRI data to the benefit of the Town?
7. Ideas, Momentum, Championship

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Vision:

Town of Orange

Comprehensive Plan Updated Vision Statement

Approved by Planning Commission June 24, 2013 (Tweaked by Planning Commission Nov, 2018)

"The Town of Orange is a rural, historic Virginia town that cares responsibly for its citizens and its heritage. Orange wishes to promote development and investment in the town which fosters long term sustainable growth that expands the economic, educational, cultural, housing, recreational, and transportation opportunities for all residents. The town further seeks to preserve its architectural and environmental assets as its legacy to future generations of town citizens."

Page Sullenberger submitted a draft mission statement on 3-28-2023:

Our mission is to support a vision for the Town of Orange that describes a rural, small-town community that values its natural, built and cultural resources and promotes quality, diversity and participation in all areas of community life.

Housing, Recreation, Transportation, Education

Training/Internships/ How do we keep our kids in Town

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Theme 1 – ECONOMY

We envision an economy where our existing assets (small size, low cost of living, architectural history, clean air and water, diversity of plants and animals, fields and forests, civic organizations and our friendly people) are seen as the foundation of our economic development. We look for businesses that work with localities as partners as we strive to ensure all of our citizens have the opportunity to succeed.

Planning Commission Goals:

- a. Determine what types of businesses to target and go after them. Ben/LJ/Page/Don
- b. Review all commercial/industrial areas in Town to determine if there are impediments to existing businesses expanding or new businesses opening. Ben/LJ/Page/Don
- c. Determine what types of jobs are needed in the Town – Nurses/IT Ben/Don
- d. Entice business to locate in Towns. How can we position the Town to be attractive to manufacturers, dot.coms, big box, small box so that there are sustainable employment opportunities for Town residents. Ben/Don
- e. Create an economy where people who grew up in Orange have the ability to either stay in the area and work or to go away to school and then come back to work. Ben/LJ
- f. Help create a sustainable workforce that will help businesses grow Page
- g. Work with local businesses to see what they need in terms of materials, labor, etc. and how can we help them meet these demands/needs/etc. Page

Other Goals discussed:

- a. Make it easier to get to where you want to go using your preferred transportation method. (Driving, walking, bike, scooter, etc.)
- b. Improve the overall look and walkability of Downtown
- c. Ensure that existing businesses know how much we appreciate them being here
- d. Create Program to Celebrate Dates:
 - a. One for them – Date Business Opened
 - b. One for us – Date Town Incorporated
 - c. One for both – When Downtown/Main Street formed
 - d. Other dates?
- e. Determine businesses that the citizens want – Survey of citizens
- f. Business Center/Co-work Center

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- g. Identify local successful companies and talk with them about what they are looking for – Klockner, Aero Jet, Lohmann – Job Match recruiter (4-22-2019)
- h. Look into Hub Zones? Are they available to Town? What are the benefits to businesses?
- i. How do we plan for change? Example Doubleday Books and American Press (books and magazines) both now gone. How can we set up the Town to weather changes?
- j. Creating a diverse economy where businesses are clamoring to be located on Main Street which in turn forces professional offices to decide whether to pay the higher rents or move.

Action Items:

1. Create an Economic Development Strategy
2. Create an Economic Development Plan of action and implementation for the Town.
3. Create a Master Marketing Plan for the Town.
4. Encourage the Orange Downtown Alliance to focus on their service area
5. Create business center/Co-work center
6. Survey of needs
7. How do we promote what is here?

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Theme 2 – PUBLIC FACILITIES/INFRASTRUCTURE/Community Facilities

The Town of Orange provides various services to the citizens, businesses and visitors in our Town. Services provided to Town residents encompass more than just water, sewer and trash disposal services. Public Facilities including parks, green spaces, Police Station, Town Hall, Public Works Facility, Water Plant, Sewer Plant, broadband, telecommunications, street lights, storm water conveyance,

Planning Commission Goals:

- a. Operate our water and sewer facilities to continue to provide valuable services to our users at a competitive rate based on industry standards Ben/LJ/Don
- b. Water availability – Manage, protect, conserve, maintain and improve the quality and quantity of water available to the Town of Orange citizens, businesses and water customers. Page/Don
- c. Continue to improve the existing water and wastewater conveyance systems LJ
- d. Work with developers and property owners to implement low maintenance Low Impact Development (LID) practices in all new developments. Opportunities to implement LID within existing development should also be investigated. Ben/LJ/Page/Done
- e. Replace aging infrastructure Ben/LJ/Page/Don
- f. Secure adequate water sources serving the Town of Orange water customers. Ben/Don

Other Goals discussed:

- a. Recycling

Action Items:

1. Extend water and sewer service to unserved and underserved areas within the Town
2. Refurbish the concrete water storage reservoir
3. Identify and create alternative sources of water for use by Town residents other than the Rapidan River. As part of this, work with State and Federal politicians.

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Theme 3 – EDUCATION

We envision an educational environment where all of our citizens are able to further their learning experiences allowing them to grow intellectually, spiritually and artistically. Whether their path is along the traditional education tract leading to college, technical training to support trades, continuing education for those looking to enhance or perhaps change careers, providing learning opportunities for those seeking knowledge/new experiences or if you are seeking to share your knowledge with others we want to help foster an environment where these, as well as other, opportunities exist for all of our citizens. Need support from the community. All these programs need to start now, every day we wait is another day we won't have the education system we need.

Planning Commission Goals:

- a. Provide all citizens opportunities within the Town to enhance their learning/education
Ben/LJ/Page/Don
 - a. GEDs
 - b. Trades Education
 - c. Distance Learning
 - d. Continuing Education – Professionals, Stay at Home Parents, Retirees
 - e. Opportunity to obtain certificates/credentials (Professional and Trades)
- b. Work to create a comprehensive list of all entities with educational programs within the Town LJ/Page/Don
 - a. Orange County Schools – The Orange County High School, Prospect Heights Middle School, Orange Elementary and the Taylor Education Administrative Complex (TEAC) are all located within the Town
 - b. Grymes Memorial School
 - c. The Arts Center of Orange
 - d. Orange School of Performing Arts
 - e. The Music Room
 - f. The Boys and Girls Club
 - g. Headstart
 - h. Orange County Parks and Recreation
 - i. Orange County Library
 - j. VA. Extension Service
 - k. High School Nursing Program
 - l. High School Technical School

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m. Others

- c. Identify skills needed by local companies now/today. Work with VEDP. LJ/Page
- d. Use VDOT's Safe Route To Schools program to install sidewalks along streets leading to all three schools in Town LJ/Page/Don
- e. Build a labor force to meet the needs business today and in the future. Ben/LJ/Pae/Don

Other goals discussed:

- a. Focus on identifying students strengths and then build on their strengths
- b. Create a learning environment where all residents of the Town are able to achieve their educational passions.

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Theme 4 – TRANSPORTATION

We envision a transportation system where people, goods and services are able to travel safely and efficiently from one place to another. We also envision our transportation system to be affordable and constructed in a timely manner, provide access to all citizens, and minimize impacts to both our citizens and private properties.

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- a. Create a transportation system where people have multiple means of transportation (car, train, bicycle, scooter, foot, other) to get from their point of origin to the point of destination in the safest, most efficient manner possible.
- b. Continue to coordinate transportation projects with the appropriate external Federal, State and local organizations (FHWA, VDOT, RRRC) to ensure projects appropriate receive funding.
- c. Identify and pursue funding opportunities other than VDOT (public/private grants, low cost/interest free loans, other funding options) to aid in the completion of identified local transportation projects.
- d. Upgrade, repair, and install sidewalks throughout Town to foster pedestrian activities.
- e. Reconstruct North Madison Road from its intersection with Spicers Mill Road to its intersection with Main Street. This work will include the replacement of utilities as well as streetscape improvements. Part of this project will include reviewing access management requirements for the corridor. Being within the Town's Urban Development Area (UDA) Overlay district may open up additional funding through VDOT.

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Theme 5 – Architectural Assets and Aesthetics

We envision an architecturally appealing and walkable Town which respects our rural, historic heritage by encouraging preservation and renovation of existing structures while encouraging new development designs derived from our historic architecture. Respect historic values and preserve historic sites and buildings that represent period architecture or history in the Town of Orange. We will protect the existing street tree canopy while expanding the street tree canopy using a diversity of canopy trees. We will use design to improve the quality of life for those working, visiting, and living in the Town.

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- a. Protect existing historic resources throughout Town (ie Downtown Historic District buildings)
- b. Focus on economic development and re-use through Historic/Existing structure Renovation – How is the question.
- c. Identify locations for new street trees to be planted. New tree plantings should use a diversity of canopy trees.
- d. Encourage new development to incorporate/utilize commercial and residential architectural features from adjacent neighborhoods/areas in Town. Build upon existing architectural features to develop quality design principles to enhance the community's quality of life.
- e. Encourage the continuation of the ongoing revitalization activities along the Main Street corridor as well as the rest of the Town.
- f. Guide contemporary development in a way which compliments the historic fabric of the Town and works to strengthen the overall character of the community.
- g.

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- a. Create policies and regulations protecting identified historic sites.
- b. Create education program to educate and encourage property owners regarding protection of historic structures and architectural features.
- c. Continue to protect entrance corridor landscapes. This is not to say we will not develop the Town's entrance corridors, rather that we will develop the corridor in such a way as to visually enhance the entranceway into Town
- d. Establish historic districts in areas that can benefit from the special recognition and protection offered by quality design principles.

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

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- a. Work to create a culture of protection and reuse of community assets

Action Items:

- a. List of historical resources
- b. Library of architectural resources
- c. Action Item

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Theme 6 - Environmental

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- h. Water quality/water conservation
- i. Air Quality – How is the Town's air quality? How to improve the air quality if we need to?
- j. Encourage environmentally friendly development practices that reduce the impact on the environment through "Green" and/or LEED building practices and neighborhood design.
- k. Where appropriate complete public projects in an environmentally sensitive manner utilizing "Green" or LEED building practices, site design/development and construction techniques.
- l. Encourage protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas
- m. Encourage residents to plant trees on their properties
- n. Encourage residents to create rain gardens, using native species, on their property to reduce storm water runoff which could overwhelm the Town's storm water conveyance systems
- o. Recycling program
- p. Promote education of the public about issues of local and regional environmental concern.
- q. Encourage and recognize environmental stewardship in all aspects of Town life.

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- e. Institute curb side recycling
- f. Work with the school system to get students/teachers/parents involved in environmental projects. Recycling, Earth Day, etc.
- g. Goal

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

- b. Goal
- c. Goal
- d. Goal

Dreams/Fantasy/Utopian Goals:

- d. Replace all water distribution pipes owned by the Town.

Action Items:

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Theme 7 - Town and County Partnerships

The Town of Orange chooses to work with Orange County on projects beneficial to all residents of the County. The Town will work to ensure its citizens receive benefits from these partnerships. The Town is not subservient to the County but rather an equal partner.

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- r. Create a more formalized agreement between Town offices and County offices for projects within the Town.
- s. Fire/Rescue/Police
- t. Parks Planning, construction and management – Chatter Island walking path and dog park

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- h. Active Fiber Optic Network
- i. Economic Development
- j. Recreation Center/Indoor Pool – Warrenton's "The Wharf" concept

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

- e. Encourage local government support for Arts and Cultural activities
- f. Goal
- g. Goal

Dreams/Fantasy/Utopian Goals:

- e. In a perfect world we would all work together for the betterment of everyone. This seems to be an idea that remains just out of reach. Both the Town of Orange and Orange County could do a much better job communicating with each other and trying to work together instead of, as it appears, to always be working at cross purposes.

Action Items:

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Theme 8 - Public Safety, Fire and Rescue, Community Health and Government

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- u. Encourage local citizens to engage with their local governments
- v. How to entice more medical professionals to live/work in Orange?
- w. Create/Update the concept of a Citizen's Police Academy to help educate the public on policing to create dialogue and support for the profession
- x. Work with citizens to create Neighborhood Watch programs

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- k. Recruit more medical professionals to work in Orange and call Orange home
- l. Appropriate facilities for Town Employees
- m. Provide public transportation to governmental activities. Possibly the Toot bus.

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

- h. Goal
- i. Goal
- j. Goal

Dreams/Fantasy/Utopian Goals:

- f.

Action Items:

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Theme 9 - The Arts

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- a. Work to define what the Town is concerning the Arts
- b. Work with property and building owners to create more murals in Town
- c. Encourage Public Art Installations
- d. Encourage "Movies in the Park" type activities

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- n. Goal
- o. Goal
- p. Goal

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

- k. Goal
- l. Goal
- m. Goal

Dreams/Fantasy/Utopian Goals:

- g.

Action Items:

- a. Need to coordinate with the following;
 - i. Grelen
 - ii. Anna with the Arts Center
 - iii. Music Room Symphony
 - iv. Blue Ridge Art Studio (The Murrays)
 - v. Paint it Orange
 - vi. Schools/Teachers
 - vii. Grymes School
 - viii. Woodberry Forest
 - ix. Others?

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Theme 10 - Population/Demographics and Housing

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- e. Work with residential developers to create all levels (affordable, starter, mid and high range) of new housing stock in the Town
- f. Work to create enough affordable housing in the Town
- g. Goal

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- q. Goal
- r. Goal
- s. Goal

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

- n. Goal
- o. Goal
- p. Goal

Dreams/Fantasy/Utopian Goals:

- h.

Action Items:

- a. Continue to study how to use the demographics of the Town's citizens to encourage businesses to locate in Town
- b. Lodging needs
- c. Trade Schools – both adult and High School training
- d. Encourage home ownership throughout the Town
- e. Support Smart Growth development with current infrastructure
- f. Apprenticeships
- g. Department of Labor Apprenticeship grants
- h. How do we encourage apprenticeships?
- i. Tiny house development in Town – Need to study to see if this is something that would work in Town.

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Theme 11 - Recreation

Immediate Goals (1 to 3 years):

- h. Plan and construct a multi-use path on the Chatter Island property.
- i. Plan and construct a dog park on the Chatter Island property.
- j. Development of walking trails/Connected sidewalks that tell a story – Parks Trail – Gardens Trail – Beer Trail, etc.

Short Term Goals (3 to 10 years):

- t. Create a yearly budget of \$10,000.00 to purchase or maintain park equipment (Swings, Jungle Jims, benches, picnic tables, chess/checker tables, etc.)
- u. Recreation Center/The Wharf/Health Center (Powell Wellness Center)
- v. Goal

Long Term Goals (10+ years):

- q. Goal
- r. Goal
- s. Goal

Dreams/Fantasy/Utopian Goals:

- i.

Action Items:

- a. Encourage physical outdoor activity
- b. Encourage YMCA style facility in the Town
- c. Install a "hard" track around Town
- d. More basketball courts at Veterans Park
- e. Pool in Town – Belleview Ave Park
- f. Pickleball Courts

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Other Possible Themes:

- g. Implementation
- h. Mobility
- i. Revitalization Areas/Urban Development Areas

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Goals and action items which cross over between Themes:

Sidewalks

Broadband

Fiber to cell towers

Advanced technologies/fiber broadband

Create appendices which are continually update

Smart Cities/Smart Towns

Encourage design/technological innovation

Maintain and improve all Town buildings – Admin/Police/Storage

Clean up enforcement – Make the Town look nice!

How can we utilize Community Service hours to help the Town? Students at the High School?

Keep the health system we currently have and build on it

ADA Accessibility

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Updated 6-5-2024

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Appendices:

1. Town of Orange Parks Plan
2. Downtown Strategic Vision, July 2021 – Created by Downtown Strategies
3. Downtown Development Planning Service 2016 – Created by Barman Development Strategies

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