

Draft Scope of Work for

## ALTOONA 2030

### THE CITY OF ALTOONA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An attractive executive summary of the comprehensive plan will be prepared as the plan is completed. It is intended to be distributed to the residents and business owners of the City.

#### SUMMARY OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EFFORTS

This section will briefly describe the public participation efforts behind the new City comprehensive plan. The feedback gathered from the public will be summarized. After the Planning Commission has framed key issues for public consideration, at least three separate outreach efforts will be undertaken.

- neighborhood public meetings
- focus group meetings directed at specific stakeholders
- broad outreach efforts to the City's young people and college students

#### HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN

This plan will examine the City of Altoona's history, as well as the history of its neighborhoods. The neighborhoods will be identified here, as will the historic and cultural resources that give each neighborhood its identity. A plan will be formulated for preserving and enhancing these neighborhood resources. This section will also...

- Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures and buildings by providing information on the financial assistance available
- Examine the advantages and disadvantages of regulating demolitions and exterior alterations in each of the City of Altoona's five historic districts (as Hollidaysburg Borough does)
- Plan public education and outreach efforts regarding the City's historic districts
- Develop procedures and criteria for determining the significance of historic features, so that developers may ascertain any significance of a

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property prior to its development or redevelopment

- Create a linkage plan to physically connect key cultural and historic sites in the City, possibly in concert with the designation of a City bike route network
- Plan to update the Altoona Historic Downtown Walking Tour
- Examine the extent to which the existing *Altoona Planning Code* and its zoning and land development regulations protect or threaten designated historic resources, cultural resources, and historic districts. Where warranted, specific improvements to the *Code* will be recommended.

Altoona. It will be based on land demand projections for residential, industrial, commercial, transportation, utility, and community/public lands. As such, it will be based on both population and employment projections, as well as detailed existing land use maps and environmental suitability maps. It will also...

### DEMOGRAPHICS AND ECONOMICS

This section will examine the City of Altoona's demographic and economic characteristics and trends that are shaping the community's future. The analyses and projections made here will serve as the base for several sections below.



### BUDGETING

This section will examine the City budget, focusing on spending priorities, constraints, and trends. Given the City's limited ability to raise tax revenue, this section will also serve as a base for the recommendations made in later sections.

- Identify and explore neighborhoods, designating those of special importance (such as Logantown or Wehnwood) for special study and possible later neighborhood plans
- Examine the possibilities of focusing resources on the enhancement of select neighborhoods with a distinct character and mixed-use orientation for the attraction of new residents who desire an urban lifestyle
- Study how food sales can be encouraged closer to neighborhoods (e.g., farmer's markets)
- Examine the concept proposed in the Areawide Comprehensive Plan for Blair County for a regional Development of Regional Significance and Impact (DORSI) review process and committees
- Examine the possibilities and advantages of joint zoning or multi-municipal coordination of zoning regulation development
- Examine how smart growth principles can be implemented in Altoona
- Examine the recommendations of the *Blair County Greenways Plan* (finished 2005, adopted 2007)
- Examine the further application of form based codes and mixed use zoning districts in the *Altoona Planning Code*

### NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN

This section will address the wise use and protection of the City of Altoona's natural resources and environment. Existing environmental constraints will be carefully mapped to show suitable areas for future development or redevelopment. The *Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory* and its recommendations will be examined, and improvements to the *Altoona Planning Code* will be recommended where warranted. Note that this section will also serve as the base for several sections below.

### FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This section will show the amount, location, character, intensity, and timing of future development and redevelopment in the City of

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- Identify priority sites for redevelopment
- Analyze the extent to which the Altoona Planning Code should be enhanced to better fulfill the goals set in the "Visual Appeal, Economic Development, and Sense of Place" white paper adopted by the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation's Board of Directors
- Examine and potentially improve how the Altoona Planning Code regulates live-work spaces such as home-based businesses
- Identify strategies for providing or retrofitting pedestrian and bicycle facilities in new development or redevelopment
- Continue to look for ways to improve and simplify the *Altoona Planning Code*.

### DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

In light of the significant investments made in Downtown Altoona by Penn State Altoona, this section of the comprehensive plan will develop a coordinated strategy for best leveraging the City's and the business community's resources for revitalizing Downtown Altoona.



### HOUSING PLAN

This plan must address the housing needs of present and future residents of the City of Altoona. As such, it will be based on the demographic analysis, the population projections, and a survey/analysis of our housing stock. This plan element will also...

- Identify neighborhoods for targeted housing investments in concert with the neighborhood planning discussed above

- Examine the effectiveness of code enforcement efforts at protecting existing housing stock, and search for ways to strengthen these efforts
- Analyze the *Altoona Planning Code* to insure that it will allow for the diversity of housing types needed in the future
- Reach out to local developers to gauge the market for various housing styles and potential obstacles in the *Altoona Planning Code*
- Educate the general public on the impact of good neighborhood design on property values, desirability, and livability

### TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This section will address the following needs within the 2030 timeframe of the comprehensive plan.

- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists (A City of Altoona Bike Route Network that connects schools, neighborhoods, employment centers, shopping, recreational facilities, historic/cultural attractions, and other key destinations will be considered, as will the designation of bicycle lanes on main roads. This section will be coordinated with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for the Altoona MPO.)
- Streets and street maintenance
- Alleys and alley maintenance
- Railroads
- Intermodal facilities
- Parking facilities
- Neighborhood parking facilities
- Public transit
- Designated gateway corridors, such as 4th Street, 6th Avenue, 7th Avenue, Union Avenue, Broad Avenue, Beale Avenue, 17th Street, Plank Road, Pleasant Valley Boulevard, Valley View Boulevard, and Chestnut Avenue)

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES PLAN

This plan will inventory and address the following needs within the 2030 timeframe, and within budgetary constraints...

- Schools (This subsection will be coordinated with the strategic plans of AASD and the parochial school system. It will also develop strategies for the reuse of facilities that are no longer needed.)
- Recreational facilities (The need for a countywide park and recreation plan will be

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studied, as will the advantages and disadvantages of fee-in-lieu of ordinances to fund recreational facilities.)

- Municipal buildings
- Fire fighting
- Police
- Emergency medical services
- Hospitals
- Libraries
- Water supply systems
- Sewage disposal systems (the City's Act 537 Plan will be examined here)
- Solid waste disposal networks (coordinate with solid waste planning)
- Storm water drainage facilities (addressing combined sewer overflows or CSOs)
- The advantages of and possibilities for multi-municipal joint or shared services and purchasing



compatibility in the relevant sections above, such as the *Blair County Municipal Waste Management Plan*.

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In each section, the plan must set goals and objectives that can be implemented, and whose implementation can be measured in future annual

reports to City Council. These goals and objectives will be summarized here in a chart format that also notes the parties responsible for implementation and the funding sources.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMMING

This section will establish the City of Altoona's first formal capital improvements program and plan.

### ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

This plan will address ways for both City government and the community as a whole to save energy and become more efficient. This section will be heavily based on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategies statement submitted to the U.S. Department of Energy in October 2009.

### PLAN COMPONENT INTERRELATIONSHIP STATEMENT

The plan will contain a section showing how the various goals and objectives interrelate. This section may also include an estimate of the plan's energy, fiscal, and social consequences.

### COMPATIBILITY STATEMENT

This section must examine the compatibility of the City's Comprehensive Plan with those of Blair County, Allegheny Township, and Logan Township. It must also examine compatibility with the *Blair County Greenways Plan*, the *Blair County Natural Heritage Inventory*, the *Long Range Transportation Plan for the Altoona Metropolitan Planning Organization*, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan of the Altoona Metropolitan Planning Organization. Other specific plans will be examined for

