

Carol Stream, CMAP to develop new comprehensive plan

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CAROL STREAM – Carol Stream’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan hasn’t been updated since 1980.

“Really, they are supposed to be prepared much more frequently,” said Don Bastian, the village’s assistant community development director.

Thanks to a partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Carol Stream has begun a 14-month process to prepare a new plan that would ideally reflect feedback received from residents and business owners in the community.

But what exactly is a comprehensive plan?

“The comprehensive plan, once it is complete, is supposed to contain goals and objectives for how a community wants to develop and grow and change over the years,” Bastian said.

Usually plans contain a 10- or 20-year outlook, and the goals and objectives outlined in them serve as guidelines for village staff, the Plan Commis-

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sion and Village Board as they make decisions about various projects, initiatives and development proposals, he said.

It’s a big project and very time-intensive. That’s why most municipalities hire a planning consultant to prepare a comprehensive plan for the community, Bastian said.

Carol Stream has been struggling to find room in their budget to accommodate a consultant, considering all the other priorities that demand attention, he said.

So the village tried a different route.

CMAP is the official planning agency for northeastern Illinois, which includes Cook,

DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties – a total of 284 communities. The agency was formed by the Illinois General Assembly seven years ago, and it has since created GO TO 2040, a comprehensive plan for the entire region.

“When we put the plan together, we knew there would be more than 2 million more residents by 2040 [in the region],” said Justine Reisinger, a CMAP communications associate.

The plan, adopted in October 2010, covers many items, including increased commitment to public transit, improved access to information, energy conservation and housing development.

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Reisinger said the organization received a grant from the Illinois Housing Development Authority to implement a local technical assistance program, which helps communities such as Carol Stream update their own comprehensive plans free of charge.

CMAP is currently working with Carol Stream officials, residents and businesses to solicit feedback on a variety of subjects ranging from population, housing and transportation to community facilities and natural resources, said Nicole Woods, a CMAP associate planner and project manager for Carol Stream.

The first phase of the process aims to get a snapshot of where Carol Stream currently is, using both the feedback

received and related data, she said. Next, the agency will present an existing conditions report sometime this summer summarizing all the data received and some common themes to emerge from it.

Woods said CMAP will work with the community to develop an overall vision to guide them during the next 20 years.

The final phase includes the creation and adoption of the plan, which will outline the vision set and discuss the plans and policies needed to help achieve that vision, Woods said.

Both Bastian and Woods said it’s too early to tell what that vision will look like.

One of the ways to implement some of the potential goals and objectives would be through updated zoning regulations, Bastian said. He added that the village plans to update their code following adoption of the plan.

At this point however, Bastian said he hopes to bring everyone to the table to the extent possible to hear what they have to say before coming up with ultimate objectives.