Sustaining Places: Geodesign Meets Comprehensive Planning

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American Planning Association
Warren H. Manning’s plan for the United States as published in 1923
Design Across Scales

Warren Manning
Southwest Washington, DC Ecodistrict

Study Area Boundary

The 15-block study area in Southwest Washington, DC is bound by Independence Avenue to the north, Maine Avenue to the south, 12th Street to the west, and 4th Street to the east. This area comprises approximately 110 acres and includes private and publicly owned land.

Building Sites
1. U.S. Department of Energy
2. Cotton Annex
3. U.S. Postal Service
4. Federal Aviation Administration
5. General Services Administration
6. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
7. U.S. Department of Education

Other Sites
8. Reservation 113
9. 12th Street Tunnel
10. Rail Line/Maryland Avenue
11. Southwest Freeway
12. Banneker Park
Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
The Power of the Comprehensive (General) Plan

• Legal mandate for decision-making by local governments

• Long-range perspective

• Implemented through policy, regulation, and investments

• Scales down and up
  • District, site
  • Region
APA’s Sustaining Places Initiative

The Sustaining Places Initiative is a multi-year, multi-faceted program to define the role of planning in addressing all human settlement issues relating to sustainability.
Comprehensive Plan Standards Framework

- Principles
- Processes
- Attributes
Comprehensive Plan Standards Framework

- **Principles:** normative *statements of intent* that underlie a plan’s overall strategy, including its goals, objectives, policies, maps, and other content.

- **Processes:** *planning activities* that take place during the preparation of a comprehensive plan and define how it will be implemented.

- **Attributes:** *plan-making design standards* that shape the content and characteristics of comprehensive plans.

- **Best Practices:** *planning action tools* that activate the principles, processes, and attributes.
1. Livable Built Environment
2. Harmony with Nature
3. Resilient Economy
4. Interwoven Equity
5. Healthy Community
6. Responsible Regionalism
1. Livable Built Environment

Ensure that all elements of the built environment, including land use, transportation, housing, energy, and infrastructure, work together to provide sustainable, green places for living, working, and recreation, with a high quality of life.

Photo: City of Albany
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1 Plan for multi-modal transportation.</th>
<th>1.7 Encourage design standards appropriate to the community context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Plan for transit-oriented development.</td>
<td>1.8 Provide accessible public facilities and spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Coordinate regional transportation investments with job clusters.</td>
<td>1.9 Conserve and reuse historic resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Provide complete streets serving multiple functions.</td>
<td>1.10 Implement green building design and energy conservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Plan for mixed land-use patterns that are walkable and bikeable.</td>
<td>1.11 Discourage development in hazard zones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Plan for infill development.</td>
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Plan Processes

7. Authentic Participation
8. Accountable Implementation
7. Authentic Participation

Ensure that the planning process actively involves all segments of the community in analyzing issues, generating visions, developing plans, and monitoring outcomes.

Photos: City of Seattle
## Authentic Participation: Best Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.1 Engage stakeholders at all stages of the planning process.</th>
<th>7.5 Provide ongoing and understandable information for all participants.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Seek diverse participation in the planning process.</td>
<td>7.6 Use a variety of communications channels to inform and involve the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.3 Promote leadership development in disadvantaged communities during the planning process.</td>
<td>7.7 Continue to engage the public after the comprehensive plan is adopted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4 Develop alternative scenarios of the future.</td>
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Ensure that responsibilities for carrying out the plan are clearly stated, along with metrics for evaluating progress in achieving desired outcomes.
### Accountable Implementation: Best Practices

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.1</strong> Indicate specific actions for implementation.</td>
<td><strong>8.5</strong> Identify funding sources for plan implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.2</strong> Connect plan implementation to the capital planning process.</td>
<td><strong>8.6</strong> Establish implementation indicators, benchmarks, and targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.3</strong> Connect plan implementation to the annual budgeting process.</td>
<td><strong>8.7</strong> Regularly evaluate and report on implementation progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.4</strong> Establish interagency and organizational cooperation.</td>
<td><strong>8.8</strong> Adjust the plan as necessary based on the evaluation.</td>
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Plan Attributes

9. Consistent Content

10. Coordinated Characteristics
10. Coordinated Characteristics

Ensure that the plan includes creative and innovative strategies and recommendations and coordinates them internally with each other, vertically with federal and state requirements, and horizontally with plans of adjacent jurisdictions.

Source: City of Albany, NY
## Coordinated Characteristics: Best Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.1 Be comprehensive in the plan’s coverage.</th>
<th>10.6 Coordinate with the plans of other jurisdictions and levels of government.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.2 Integrate the plan with other local plans and programs.</td>
<td>10.7 Comply with applicable laws and mandates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3 Be innovative in the plan’s approach.</td>
<td>10.8 Be transparent in the plan’s substance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4 Be persuasive in the plan’s communications.</td>
<td>10.9 Use plan formats that go beyond paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5 Be consistent across plan components.</td>
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# Pilot Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilot Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savona, NY</td>
<td>822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foxborough, MA</td>
<td>16,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeling, WV</td>
<td>28,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goshen, IN</td>
<td>31,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Island, IL</td>
<td>39,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn, WA</td>
<td>70,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hanover County, NC</td>
<td>202,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma City, OK</td>
<td>599,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td>634,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memphis/Shelby County, TN</td>
<td>927,644</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Can Geodesign Impact Comprehensive Planning?
Early Public Health Advocates

Frederick Law Olmsted

Jane Addams
Today’s Public Health Vision

APHA is calling on public health practitioners nationwide to help achieve its new long-term vision...to create the healthiest nation in the world in one generation.

Dr. Georges Benjamin, APHA Executive Director
The Reality

• Our **national life expectancy** was 37\textsuperscript{th} in the world in 2011, down from 26\textsuperscript{th} in 2000 and 16\textsuperscript{th} in 1960 (*Source: World Life Expectancy*)

• **Chronic conditions** have replaced infectious diseases as our new health epidemics
  • 69\% of adults 20 or older were obese (35\%) or overweight (34\%) in 2011-2012
  • Over 18\% of children 6-19 years old were obese in 2009-2010

(*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*)
Most health disparities affect underserved groups (socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, etc.)

Example: Cuyahoga County ranks 69th of 88 Ohio counties in health outcomes
- 81st in physical environment
- 78th in morbidity
- 67th in socioeconomic factors
- 57th in mortality
“Health starts at an individual level and progresses to a community level. We need to move the nation from a focus on sickness and disease to one based on prevention and wellness. This is a 21st century flag... and I call upon the APA to deputize planners for this mission.”

– Acting Surgeon General Boris Lushniak, Keynote Speaker NPC 2014, Atlanta
5. Healthy Community

Ensure that public health needs are recognized and addressed through provisions for healthy foods, physical activity, access to recreation, health care, environmental justice, and safe neighborhoods.
What if Geodesigners Were Deputized for the Health Mission?

- **Evidence:** Generate and analyze population health data and trends across scales
- **Engagement:** Use health data to inform scenario development and selection of a preferred future
- **Implementation:** Establish health indicators to prioritize investments and monitor progress
- **Impact:** Leverage emerging health information technologies to **advance equity and address health disparities** at the neighborhood scale
For more info:
www.planning.org/sustainingplaces/compplanstandards/

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