



City of Union, Missouri - *Comprehensive Plan Update*

VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES REPORT



Table of Contents

Section 3.01. Introduction 3

Section 3.02. Union’s Vision 3

Section 3.03. Goals & Objectives Overview 4

Section 3.04. Comprehensive Plan Goals 4

Section 3.05. Downtown Revitalization..... 5

Section 3.06. Business Stability & Economic Development 6

Section 3.07. Quality of Life 6

Section 3.08. Housing & Neighborhood Sustainability 7

Section 3.09. Transportation..... 8

Section 3.10. Future Land Use..... 9

Section 3.11. Parks and Public Infrastructure..... 10

Section 3.12. Summary..... 12



Section 3.01. Introduction

A comprehensive plan must be a reflection of the community it serves. This is achieved by setting a tone, or vision for the Plan that comes from the wishes and needs of the community. From the vision, the plan relies on goals and policies to provide the focus and direction needed to make intelligent decisions throughout the planning process. The “Critical Issues” identified in this plan were generated by the citizens of Union through a customized public engagement process developed for the purpose of updating the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the results of which are summarized in the previous chapter entitled “Critical Issues”.

Section 3.02. Union’s Vision

The intent of this plan is to take Union into the twenty-first century by promoting the community’s rich natural resources, small town atmosphere, affordable housing stock, central location and interstate access. The vision, as determined after studying the values and critical issues provided by the residents, is:

“To make Union a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family”

More specifically, the following vision statements illustrate the community’s preferred future:

- **As a community** - to protect the resources that make Union a good place to live and provide cost-effective services and opportunities for all residents and business owners.
- **As a group of residential neighborhoods** - to maintain the local character and quality of life while preserving the area’s small town, family-friendly values.
- **As a great place to raise a family** - to provide access to a wide range of social and recreational activities so that everyone benefits from a healthy, active community life.
- **As a responsible regional partner** - to actively collaborate with neighboring communities/agencies to promote the region’s work force, stable neighborhoods and strong industrial and commercial partnerships.

The Union comprehensive planning process defined what residents want Union to be in the next ten (10) years. The plan calls for balanced and carefully considered growth, ongoing transportation investments, downtown revitalization and economic development. The intent of the Plan is to protect Union’s small town character and outline new initiatives such as increasing pedestrian and bike access, promoting active lifestyles and diversifying the City’s tax base. It foresees:

- commercial and mixed use redevelopment focused primarily in the City’s Downtown and existing commercial districts and more intense, large scale commercial uses along Highway 50 and at the Highway 50/I-44 interchange;
- taking a progressive approach to create more full-time, salaried jobs to support the City’s workforce;
- expanding the supply of dwelling units to provide appropriate housing for all;
- improving pedestrian accessibility throughout town, and;



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

- preserving the City's small town atmosphere and maintaining the current level of public services, parks, schools and seasonal events.

The foundation of the plan rests on the belief that Union will do what is necessary to understand changing market demands, accept new trends in land use, seize the opportunity to improve downtown, create jobs, and grow the resident population. The community is already taking an active role in expanding the City's park system, improving Highway 50 to 4 lanes, and investing in ongoing economic development efforts. The Plan recognizes that if Union does not proactively position itself to take advantage of, or even create, economic development opportunities, they will occur elsewhere and Union will see a decline in both its financial situation and the financial situation of businesses located in Union. The following sections identify the City of Union Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives.

Section 3.03. Goals & Objectives Overview

The goals adopted for the Union Comprehensive Plan Update represent measurable conditions that Union should strive to achieve in the next 10-20 years. This plan update also includes several objectives and implementation strategies that provide the focus and direction needed to obtain the preferred future. The implementation strategies form a work program the City should follow to achieve the vision, goals and objectives adopted as part of this plan. Some strategies are clear actions the City should take; others are recommendations for additional planning work, more study or further public input.

The formulation of a vision, goals and objectives is a critical process in the preparation of a comprehensive plan. Goals are general statements that address the City's long-range plans and desired outcomes. They provide the framework upon which the objectives of the comprehensive plan are based. Objectives more specifically define how a goal will be achieved. The next level, policies or implementation strategies, discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Section, provide physical actions or steps that help further explain and define the goals and objectives. The stability and future growth of Union depends directly on its ability to provide the desired public services, facilities, administration and expanded commercial/industrial growth options. These and other factors that influence the growth of Union have been considered in the development of the following goals and objectives.

Section 3.04. Comprehensive Plan Goals

The goals and objectives developed for this plan respond to the critical issues raised during the Town Hall Meetings, interviews with stakeholders and the conditions observed and researched during the formation of this plan. The goals and objectives will assist public officials in guiding their decisions relating to services, land use development, and neighborhood preservation. Obtaining these goals will require the coordination and leadership of all levels and forms of government, both internal and external to the City, plus strong support from community groups and private enterprise. The goals and objectives have been broken down, in no particular order, into the following seven (7) planning elements:

1. Downtown Revitalization
2. Business Stability & Economic Development
3. Quality of Life



4. Housing & Neighborhood Stabilization
5. Transportation
6. Future Land Use
7. Parks & Public Infrastructure

In addition to the following goals, objectives and implementation strategies, Chapter 3 (Community Facilities & Services) and Chapter 4 (Future Land Use Plan) also provides recommendations and land use policies that, when implemented, create a more livable community that retains and attracts residents and businesses.

Section 3.05. Downtown Revitalization

Goal: Promote investment in Downtown Union to attract and retain businesses, generate commercial and entertainment opportunities and create vitality that attracts people.

Objectives:

1. Recruit and retain businesses in Downtown Union
2. Promote higher density residential uses in the downtown—above stores and as infill development in adjacent neighborhoods within walking distance of downtown.
3. Create an ongoing partnership between the City, Chamber and other civic groups with an interest in the downtown to work towards a unified effort to enhance the Downtown experience. These groups should work together in promoting special events, sponsoring façade and streetscape improvements and acting as a catalyst in forming partnerships that fuse together cultural, professional and residential interests.
4. Reestablish downtown Union as a cultural destination, entertainment attraction and retail center.
5. Develop a central theme or focus for the redevelopment of downtown.
 - a) Encourage the use of street furniture such as benches, waste containers, fountains, public art, information kiosks and seasonal banners to help create a unified visual theme.
6. Restore Union's historic buildings by encouraging preservation efforts. Historic preservation and improvement
 - b) Continue to promote façade and urban design improvements with a focus on historic preservation. Seek funding from the State's CDBG program, public/private partnerships or other funding sources.
7. Reinvest in infrastructure improvement such as people gathering spaces, public restrooms and utility upgrades.



Section 3.06. Business Stability & Economic Development

Goal: *Diversify and strengthen the City's economic base and local employment opportunities.*

Objectives:

1. Seek out and nurture entrepreneurs.
2. Provide incentives to bring businesses into Union. Consider waiving taxes, rent subsidies and low interest loans to help businesses get started.
3. Create a business incubator- offering low rent, tax abatement, etc
4. Develop marketing strategies for the reuse of vacant commercial buildings.
5. Consider the use of public funding, Enterprise Zones, Facade Improvement Programs and regional and state economic development programs to meet local economic development objectives, expanded private investments and increase the local tax base.
6. Adhere to the State's Certified Site Program to create "shovel ready" development sites that attract job producing industries.
7. Provide opportunities for small business owners and start-ups.
8. Recruit more places that provide full-time, salaried jobs.
 - a) Develop programs to attract clean industrial land uses. Targeted uses should include technology based enterprises, green industries, warehousing, light assembly, manufacturing and transportation distribution.
 - b) Work with Union Development Corporation to better market industrial property for industries that offer salaried jobs with benefits
9. Develop an economic diversification policy that facilitates long term economic stability and reduces the City's economic dependence on a few industries.

Section 3.07. Quality of Life

Goal: *Develop programs that promote job creation, community beautification and quality of life by preserving lifestyles and building upon Union's municipal services, facilities, and housing stock.*

Objectives:

1. Continue to maintain the city's low cost of living through the provision of quality, competitively priced public services and reasonable tax rates. Police, Fire, Water, Sewer, Parks and other City Services are currently very good, the intent of this plan is to maintain the current level of service and expand only as needed to accommodate growth.
2. Preserve the areas open spaces and other resources that characterize Union's small town atmosphere, outdoor recreation opportunities and make Union a great place to live.



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

3. Expanding upon the City's current events and encouraging the development of new activities to help promote the businesses and people of Union, its rich heritage and designation as County Seat.
4. Work towards making Union a "Healthy Community".
 - Encourage the establishment of walking groups.
 - Install sidewalks to the school and along all roads. Make sure kids can safely walk to school
 - Promote better nutrition (restaurants, shopping, farmers market).
 - Plan for a comprehensive trail system connecting parks, neighborhoods, shopping areas with connections (visual & physical) to the Bourbouse River.
5. Maintain and build upon Union's existing educational, social and recreational successes. Promote and encourage active lifestyles by providing the necessary services and facilities needed to enrich the lives of Union residents and maintain the city's quality of life and healthy lifestyles.
6. Promote more aggressive code enforcement for rental units/absentee landlords
7. Plan for the development of training facilities to provide the education and job skills needed to position Union's workforce for new and emerging technologies, trends and opportunities, i.e. green jobs, etc
8. Install new (or maintain/replace existing) sidewalks throughout town as needed.
9. The City needs to hire someone to coordinate and lead grant writing efforts for federal and state applications. The City should also take a proactive role in talking with County and State representatives regarding financing opportunities.
10. Promote the creation of more youth events. Recruit members of the student body and members from youth groups from local churches to help lead the efforts.
11. Promote the development of the City's new park.
12. Expand the City's retail shopping opportunities.
13. Plan for the development of a new indoor recreation center.

Section 3.08. Housing & Neighborhood Sustainability

Goal: *Provide safe and quality housing for all residents of Union.*

Objectives:

1. Promote new residential development that fulfills unmet market demands.
 - a) Increase the supply and variety of housing options to meet all socio-economic needs. Updated, affordable housing options need to be developed in many of Union's older neighborhoods. There is a deficiency of new or higher quality homes in the \$100,000 range.



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

2. Prevent blight through code enforcement, redevelopment, and rehabilitation.
 - a) Continue current code enforcement efforts as needed to prevent property deterioration and to protect property values.
 - b) Promote investment in the redevelopment of the older, dilapidated housing in or adjacent to the downtown. The housing near downtown is in need of reinvestment. Many homes are rentals and not maintained with pride. Identify a block or group of homes and consider an adaptive reuse project. This type of revitalization would not only eliminate blight, but also provide a much-needed supply of downtown housing stock.
 - c) Promote public education about neighborhood investment and beautification, including help with organizing area-wide meetings.
 - d) Continue to implement voluntary housing code inspection of residences for life-safety hazards in conjunction with available grant and low interest loan programs.
3. Investigate grants or financing assistance for home repairs and maintenance for all ages and income groups, being particularly sensitive to the needs of elderly and low-income homeowners.
4. Promote public-private partnerships in financing improvements for neighborhood stabilization.
5. Promote efforts that make the city more attractive to working families by improving housing options and other services that are attractive to working families.
6. Promote and initiate annexation efforts that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map, the provision of infrastructure and the timing, type and density of future development.
7. Support and encourage the development of neighborhood organizations that promote civic activities and empower homeowners to maintain their properties and patrol the neighborhoods. (I.E National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch, etc)
8. Develop a plan review process to regulate the installation of modular homes, limit the use of mobile homes and encourage in-fill development.

Section 3.09. Transportation

Goal: Maintain a safe and efficient road system that provides pedestrian and multi-modal access to all while maintaining the small town character and the integrity, security and privacy of Union's the original street pattern.

Objectives:

1. Invest in better pothole repair and general street maintenance.
2. Widen, pave and/or resurface all collector roads, such as Prairie Dell, Denmark etc.
3. Partner with Federal, State, and County agencies, including East West Gateway Council of Governments, to obtain maximum funding for identified projects.



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

4. Provide sidewalks and paths to connect the City's neighborhoods, schools, downtown and parks/recreational areas for pedestrians and cyclists.
5. Improve Union's entryways (gateways). The image of Union is lacking along Hwy 50 (going east toward 44 from Hwy 47), specifically the area where the mobile units are stored on the north side and Le Chateau on the south side.
6. Improve Highway 50 to 4 lanes all the way to I-44.
7. Continue evaluating the availability of multi-modal transportation services; such as the need to expand on-demand public transit for elderly over the coming years. Providing services to an increasing elderly population is a challenge facing Union as well as other communities throughout the nation.
8. Incorporate state of the practice design features such as roundabouts, traffic calming and synchronized traffic signals into roadway projects.
9. Invest in better signage and wayfinding- use the new visual cues as an opportunity to reinforce the branding of Union.
10. Continue to seek funding and create strategic public/private partnerships to facilitate the construction of new sidewalks or the rehabilitation of old sidewalks.
11. Require a level of service (LOS) of C or better in all new projects, (please see Chapter TBD for a definition of LOS). Any development that causes traffic to exceed a level of C should be required to provide the necessary updates to the appropriate roadways.
12. Replace the low water bridge on East Denmark.
13. Explore opportunities for off-street trail development.
14. Provide sound walls along newly expanded Highway 50 to protect adjacent residents from traffic noise.
15. Provide sidewalks connecting East Central College to the CBD.

Section 3.10. Future Land Use

Goal: *Promote land development that encourages revitalization of the central business district (downtown), reinforces industrial/business growth and preserves the natural landscape, topography, vegetative cover, scenic viewsheds and natural drainage patterns.*

Objectives:

1. Develop appropriate plans and financing strategies for extension of utilities and services into regions planned for annexation where these needs can most cost-effectively be met.
2. Encourage commercial, residential and industrial growth along Highway 50 and Highway 47.
3. Prioritize restorative development and preservation of the existing building stock and infrastructure downtown over greenfield development.



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

4. Encourage the development and redevelopment of residential units downtown.
5. Formulate an annexation policy based upon future growth patterns, the City's ability to provide public facilities/services, and suitability of land for development.
6. Identify areas within the floodplain and regulate any new use or change in use within the floodplain to avoid future property loss or damage.
7. Locate a recreation/civic center in Union
8. Establish a more formal process for planning long-term capital improvements (a 5-year CIP).
9. Landscaping and tree planting requirements for commercial development
10. Update the City's zoning code to promote planned growth
11. Get Union Corporate Center listed on the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Certified Sites Inventory and work towards 100% occupancy.

Section 3.11. Parks and Public Infrastructure

Goal: *Ensure the availability of public facilities, infrastructure and emergency services that adequately serves Union's present and future needs.*

These services include, but are not limited to, code enforcement, planning, road maintenance and construction, schools, police, fire, parks, and other community services. Such services may be provided directly by Union, through the private sector or through other governmental agencies.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and continue investing in our school system, library, etc. The quickest way to lose quality citizens is to allow the degradation of our schools.
2. Continue to maintain, enhance and expand the City's parks and recreation system. This should include making improvements as needed to keep pace with the latest trends in park and recreation services, facility market demands, the acquisition of additional park land and the establishment of open spaces and trails as needed to serve the City's resident population.
3. Encourage more entertainment (indoor and outdoor) opportunities for all. In general the residents want more things to do and see.
 - a) Build upon the summer movie series.
 - b) Develop an indoor movie house/theatre.
 - c) Promote the development of places for the youth to gather (teen town, community building, basketball, skateboard park, pool, bowling, soccer, etc.)
 - d) Promote the development of a community center that includes a senior center, water park, indoor play areas, gym, theatre, classrooms, meeting rooms to



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

accommodate large gatherings, a library, places for people to purchase snacks and refreshments and places for people to linger.

4. Continue to partner with the school district to make better use of facilities, programs, and expand upon the options available to graduates.
5. Create a mentoring program to encourage young professionals to return home to Union as well as attract young professionals from throughout the region.
6. Promote development of the City's new park
7. Investigate a policy regarding the use of public rights-of-way, where private companies seek to install fiber optic cables
8. Provide continued investment in the City's infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, internet and telecommunications) to ensure quality, affordable utilities.
 - a) Promote incremental upgrades to the city's aging infrastructure to help avoid costly one-time expenditures and allow the city to spread the costs out over several years.
 - b) Concentrate capital investments into areas that are contiguous to currently developed land and that are currently or easily served by existing facilities.
 - c) Initiate development agreements that help pay for the direct and indirect costs of new infrastructure development.
9. Provide upgrades as needed to City Hall to ensure it continues to be a central part of the Historic Downtown and adequately provides the necessary office, storage and meeting needs of City government.
10. Increase the presence of code enforcement officers and the consistent enforcement of city codes.
11. Assign appropriate staff to seek out available resources, coordinate grant writing efforts, and take a proactive role in talking with County and State representatives regarding financing opportunities.
12. Continue to plan and budget for near-term capital improvements.



CITY OF UNION, MO 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

Section 3.12. Summary

In an effort to prioritize the objectives stated above, each member of the Steering Committee and City Staff rated the objectives on a five-point Likert-type scale; where (1) means “Very Important”, (3) means “Important” and (5) means “Not Important”. Based on the survey results, the following objectives received the highest ratings.

Table 5.1 Highest Rated Objectives		
Goal	Objective / Implementation Strategy / Policy	Mean
Business Stability	Seek out and nurture entrepreneurs.	1.3
Quality of Life	Continue to maintain the city’s low cost of living through the provision of quality, competitively priced public services and reasonable tax rates.	1.6
Transportation	Invest in better pothole repair and general street maintenance.	1.6
Downtown Revitalization	Recruit and retain businesses in Downtown Union	1.8
Transportation	Widen and pave all collector roads, such as Prairie Dell, Denmark etc.	1.8
Transportation	Partner with Federal, State, and County agencies, including East West Gateway Council of Governments, to obtain maximum funding for identified projects.	2
Business Stability	Create a business incubator- offering low rent, tax abatement, etc	2
Business Stability	Provide incentives to bring businesses into Union. Consider waiving taxes, rent subsidies and low interest loans to help businesses get started.	2
Future Land Use	Develop appropriate plans and financing strategies for extension of utilities and services into regions planned for annexation where these needs can most cost-effectively be met.	2
Future Land Use	Encourage the development and redevelopment of residential units downtown.	2
Future Land Use	Encourage commercial, residential and industrial growth along Highway 50 and Highway 47.	2
Quality of Life	Expanding upon the City’s current events and encouraging the development of new activities to help promote the businesses and people of Union, its rich heritage and designation as County Seat.	2
Quality of Life	Preserve the areas open spaces and other resources that characterize Union’s small town atmosphere, outdoor recreation opportunities and make Union a great place to live.	2

In the preceding sections, the objectives are listed in order of their rating, with the highest rated objectives listed first. These should be considered the highest priority objectives, however all objectives listed received a favorable rating of 4 or higher. Only three (3) proposed objectives were omitted based on their low ranking. They received a median score of 4.3 and included the following:

Table 5.2 Lowest Rated Objectives		
Business Stability	Farmers market. Need more- whatever works!	4.3
Parks & Public Improvements	Develop and implement a single-stream curbside residential recycling program.	4.3
Parks & Public Improvements	Promote the development of a museum, information center and/or other regional destinations that provide information about the area’s heritage, natural resources and provide connections to the City’s past, present and future.	4.3