

## Introduction

On March 28, 2023, The Berkley Group met with the City of Petersburg Planning Commission and City staff to review and discuss the public engagement summary and the first two draft chapters of the 2044 Comprehensive Plan. Four Planning Commissioners – Tammy Alexander, Thomas Hairston, James Norman, and Marie Vargo – were in attendance.

A summary of the discussion, as well as action items if applicable, is included below.

## Discussion Summary

Topic	Discussion	Action Item
Public Engagement Summary	Several questions to clarify survey statistics.	N/A
Chapter 1	PC did not have any questions or comments.	N/A
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	Consideration of internet and broadband infrastructure as a key planning factor. This will help boost economic development and remote work opportunities in the City.	BG to add discussion of Broadband Infrastructure as a planning factor.
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	Arts, Culture, and Entertainment should be another planning factor addressed in Chapter 2. We need to support our arts community. The City could be prime to be a festival city; there is a lot of open land to host festivals and other entertainment events for the community. We need an arts & cultural district and an Arts & Cultural Master Plan. We also don't have enough museums.	BG to add discussion of Arts and Culture as a planning factor. The Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation chapter of the Plan will include a component related to Arts and Culture where specific items and strategies can be discussed in detail.
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	Trails should be discussed in this chapter as a planning factor. We need to capitalize on our trails and make them a tourist attraction.	Trails are already discussed in Chapter 2 as a component of Waterfront Investment. BG can add additional detail in this section.
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	The impact of climate change on the City will be important to address in the Plan. The City needs to be able to recover from serious events. Energy efficiency – including	One of the Plan's key themes is Environmental Stewardship. BG can include Climate

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	considerations for clean energy and EVs – is also important to discuss. This could be a selling point for tourists through EV charging stations in Old Towne.	Resiliency and Green Energy as a planning factor.
Chapter 2 – Planning Scooters	E-bikes and e-scooters should be addressed, but we must figure out how to address concerns with liability and safety. There are varying opinions on whether e-bikes and e-scooters are a good fit for Petersburg.	BG will provide information on e-bike and e-scooter programs as part of the Mobility and Transportation chapter of the Plan. PC can review and determine a policy stance at that time.
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	Bikeability needs to be improved. There are more and more bike riders in the City, but accessing trails is difficult and sidewalks are not well-kept. Additionally, landscaping along trails and sidewalks is poorly maintained.	The Mobility and Transportation chapter of the Plan will address pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the City and strategies for building upon this asset.
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	Trash and Recycling – There is a lot of litter on the streets. How can we improve recycling practices? Are there modern incentives that can be used? Danville was cited as an example of a city that has undergone successful beautification. Additionally, what about pharmaceutical waste? How could this impact the City?	This topic will be addressed in the Environmental Stewardship and Community Facilities and Infrastructure chapters with associated strategies included as opposed to an overall planning factor.
Chapter 2 – Planning Factors	There are not enough healthcare options in the heart of the City.	Public Health is identified as one of the Plan’s key themes. Healthcare and other factors of a healthy community will therefore be discussed throughout the Plan.
Chapter 2 (General Comment)	Petersburg needs to capitalize more on VSU. How can we make Petersburg more attractive to faculty and staff, and students & their families? Not just physical transportation – also destinations and opportunities that keep them here after graduation to live.	The Economic Development chapter will discuss partnerships with institutions of higher education in the region, along with workforce development pipelines and opportunities. The Land Use chapter will highlight different uses and amenities to consider in future planning efforts, especially in Old Towne. The Housing and Neighborhood section will address targeted

		housing and homeownership opportunities.
Chapter 2 (General Comment)	Marketing and Branding for Petersburg – the Economic Development chapter should address strategies for marketing, branding, and strategic planning.	BG will address as directed.
Chapter 2 (General Comment)	Affordable housing is a controversial subject. What does it mean for Petersburg, and how do we address it in a way that focuses on what we do want, instead of what we don't want? The issue of hotels and public housing needs to be addressed as part of the conversation. Median household income ties into the issue of affordability as well – how can we raise the median income?	BG will discuss affordable housing in detail in the Housing and Communities chapter of the Plan. The PC should reach consensus on policy stances during the May worksession to discuss the chapter. BG notes that state code requires all jurisdictions to address affordable housing in their Comprehensive Plans.
Chapter 2 – Draft Vision Statement	Vision statement is too long and needs to be something people can internalize. Education needs to be addressed. It's a great start and we can continue working through it as we draft.	BG will simplify language and include reference to education. BG will bring a revised draft vision statement back to the Planning Commission for review in May.

## Action Items

Item	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Provide Planning staff with minor text edits on the Plan draft.	Planning Commission	COB April 4, 2023
Provide the Berkley Group with the compiled minor text edits on the Plan draft.	City staff	COB April 6, 2023
BG to make all edits as directed.	BG	<i>As schedule permits</i>