

# NOTES

## Morgan City & Morgan County General Plan Updates Public Workshop

September 19, 2021, 5:30 pm, Zoom/Morgan City Council Chambers



*Approximately 35 members of the public joined the meeting in person, with approximately ten joining on Zoom.*

In the meeting the planning team presented and sought feedback on the draft concepts for the General Plan, including the guiding principles and the land use, transportation, housing, and economic development concepts. The first half of the meeting address Morgan County and the second half addressed Morgan City. A summary of the feedback received follows.

### **Morgan County**

- Guiding Principles
  - Community character is important.
    - Worried the County is will get too big and lose its rural atmosphere.
      - Want to reinforce and protect that atmosphere.
  - Need to include affordable housing
    - Want kids to be able to live here, but they are currently being “zoned out”
    - We need some growth to provide for our children
      - However, there needs to be a balance in order to maintain rural atmosphere at the same time. Perhaps everyone who wants to live here won’t be able to?
  - Protect the mountain, wildlife, natural resources, the environment.
    - Focused areas of tourism
  - Running out the space for recreation (particularly parking)
  - Worried more housing will increase tax base
    - Schools are already at capacity.
  - Protect private property rights
- Land Use
  - Balance the value of land and community ties to water
    - Water needs to be addressed
  - Would like to see the differences between old and new plan
  - Factor in natural surroundings into the plan
  - Current land owners need to be aware of proposed changes and have the opportunity to provide feedback

- Balance public input with property owner needs
  - Need more education on public/private land – What is available for recreation.
    - Prevent trespassing.
  - Need to consider the consequences of water.
    - Particularly for high density housing and how it affects water availability for agriculture
  - Need to address short term rentals codes
  - Does the community want public access resorts? If so, where?
  - The county should acquire access to public lands (i.e. national forest land)
  - Don't want to be Park City
  - Incorporate Mountain Green to have autonomy to plan for themselves.
  - How to protect current landowners? Incentives?
  - What does community want? Balance
  - Address community needs/desires vs. landowner needs/desires
  - Public land access is an issue – currently land locked – need education on the situation
  - Address real water vs. paper water/water shares policy
  - Clarify short-term rental policies
  - Want public access to resorts
- Housing
  - 923 units seems low. Where did that number come from?
    - Answer: Governor's office projections and U.S. Census
  - Where will the housing go?
    - A lot of higher density in the city? What form will density take?
    - Are the Wasatch Peaks units factored in?
      - Answer: yes
    - Will we have to lose some agriculture?
      - Answer: most of housing would be in Morgan City & Mountain Green and preserve open space and agriculture.
    - Desire for growth in western Morgan County – not everyone agrees
  - Water is an issue – need more water if we are going to grow
  - Tax rate should vary by land use to encourage certain types of growth.
  - High density housing is necessary to conserve resources.
  - Protect commercial space from residential development
  - WPR is primarily part time residents.
  - Value farmland – water, agriculture and growth
  - Kids have been zoned out/priced out of the community
  - Need affordable housing

## General

- Bike: safety is an issue
- Need a plan for bike trails
- Streetlights cause light pollution
- Signage for bike/pedestrian safety
- Summarize the differences between this plan and the old plan
- Increase tax base/school capacity
- Protect land long-term

## **Morgan City**

- General
  - To preserve small town feel, property owners need to stop selling their land to developers
  - Disconnect between the landowners and the plan.
    - Need to bridge the communication gap.
    - Landowners need a bigger say in the plan
  - Wildlife management area – public land but access is limited because purpose is to protect wildlife.
- Housing
  - Challenge: How do we provide a variety of housing types while protecting rural character?
    - Focus growth in certain areas so open space can be preserved
  - Where will the houses go? And how?
  - Higher city density – apartments. Need options.
  - Factoring in resort units? What is the WPR factor?
  - Zoning – where should density go?
- Economic development/Tourism
  - Business owner: 95% of clients are not from Morgan County
    - Expensive to run business here
  - Tourism brings in a lot of money. Great way to increase tax base
    - Can be used to preserve rural open spaces
  - Each household saves \$1300 annually in taxes due to tourism
  - Many apartments are going up in Morgan City, but there is not enough businesses to support them – we need a better tax base to support growth
    - Response: housing brings the businesses (not the other way around). As we grow, more businesses will come.

- Perhaps we need incentives to bring businesses to support housing.
  - Event center; driver for local retailers. Bring out of town to spend dollars – good tourism generator.
    - Morgan can stay rural without high property taxes
- Land Use
  - Event Center - like that idea
    - Would like an amphitheater to support the arts
    - We need event center, but we have other event facilities. Do not want to be redundant. Event space should be appropriately focused.
    - Need event center. The Trojan Century Center can go back to being used for athletics
  - Are there enough rooftops to support commercial growth?
    - Answers: Yes. Based on population projections.
  - Property east of gun range. Would like their property to be included in the annexation boundary. City can provide services to it.
    - Desiring to develop it as residential
  - Potential housing and mixed use should be a big shift from existing community. Some images seem out of proportion.
  - Feels that focused growth in certain areas is an encouragement of growth. Would like a focus on how to mitigate the impacts of growth to maintain rural atmosphere
  - Young street is a high-trafficked area. Would like more discussion on what this area should look like, especially on the frontage. Would like a rural look – do not want to look at high density housing along young street. Perhaps consider mixed use along frontage then garden court housing behind it.
  - Growth can occur without destroying important open spaces.
    - Growth can add to the community. Growth does not have to be negative.
  - Flex District will accommodate a lot of future growth. Better use of space than current manufacturing zone.
- Transportation
  - Street improvements near Commercial/Main Street should be a priority before commercial growth or building along the frontage road
  - Priority should be given to the bridge project and proposed road connection for Morgan Valley Drive/Island Road/Frontage Road by water treatment facility.
    - Concerned how increased traffic would impact Island Road.
  - Congestion near the Freeway interchange
  - Make frontage road between two nodes, South of Freeway two lane to ease industrial traffic from Rock Quarry as it was in the past.

- Might be challenging because area is already a bottleneck.
- Pedestrian safety is an issue on Island Road.
- Road/trail network need to account for rural uses like tractors and 4-wheelers
- Speed limit – how “fast”

#### VERBATIM CHAT STREAM COMMENTS

- Morgan County
  - Do the guiding principles capture your vision? Should there be any changes? Have other ideas?
    - yes
    - Our group identified the need to protect natural assets and resources and character while having focused areas that allow tourism and recreation development.
  - Does the land use concept meet your vision for the future of Morgan? What should be changed? Have other ideas?
    - We are faced with increased growth no matter what we want.
    - We need to plan accordingly. Wasatch front is almost growing out of control.
    - We need to face what is coming and dealing with what is inevitable.
  - Does the housing concept meet your vision for the future of Morgan? What should be changed? Have other ideas?
    - Summarized from our group: Higher density housing is necessary to help conserve water and resources. Fewer lawns to water, etc. In addition, it is important to protect commercial space and development by building residential in residential-appropriate-areas.
    - WP Ranch is primarily part time seasonal residence.
  - Does the transportation concept meet your vision for the future of Morgan? What should be changed? Have other ideas?
    - Summarized from our group: There are residents in Porterville and Richville who don't have water rights for the land they have now. Thus, water is a major concern for incoming and future development.
- Morgan City
  - Small town feel = property owners have to STOP selling land to developers.
  - support your OWN county!
  - Gas, goods, groceries should be purchased by Morgan residents in Morgan. Morgan has a loyalty problem!
  - Every household saves \$1310 annually in taxes due to tourism.
  - River sports are Morgan county's best tourism option.
  - Event center = yes!!
  - Agreed - event center is a must. Would also like to see an amphitheater for future events as well as support of the music/arts/theater demand and lack of supply.

- Do we have a population count or roof tops needed study to support additional commercial and retail growth. This would provide a more clear picture of the need or necessity for housing to support downtown expansion.
- It was a bit of a shock to see the pictures that were displayed about potential housing and mixed use in the future. This would be a major shift for our small community. From the prior meeting, the comments shared were wanting to avoid a Park City or Wasatch Front feel.
- I am happy to address the value of adding an event center to a community and the revenue it can generate to a city/county as well as the amount of tax savings to county residents due to the diversification of tax collection through increased sales and tourism tax.
- Event Center becomes a driver to local retailers, hotel, and restaurants as a business generator through local/state/regional/national events that bring out of town attendees to spend their dollars in our community and then go back home - allowing us to stay rural without needing and depending on high property taxes to sustain public service costs.