

## SYRACUSE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INITIATIVE

### News Conference, August 8, 2001

Today is truly an historic day in the City of Syracuse. For a long time, many have called for a Comprehensive Plan for the City. For over a year now, Van Robinson has championed this initiative and by his tenacity and dedication, he's kept it in the forefront of the community's mind.

The last time the City engaged in a complete and comprehensive plan was in 1919.

I made reference to a Comprehensive Plan for the City in my State of the City address 4 weeks ago. I am proud to say that today; I will wholeheartedly support the initiative as set forth, and will partner with Councilor Robinson to provide the support of my office, and the City's departments and resources to make this proposal a reality.

Simply put, the City's Comprehensive Plan is a plan of place that meets the needs of people, work, play, visitors and government.

The City's Comprehensive Plan will provide a vision for Syracuse over the next 20 years. It will knit together the neighborhood plans of TNT, the Downtown Committee Plan, the Syracuse Neighborhood Initiative Neighborhood Plans, the community vision of FOCUS Greater Syracuse, and other local and regional plans. The Comprehensive Plan will include:

- The City's goals and policies,
- Assets and strategic issues,
- An implementation strategy and an action plan.

The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to build consensus on a future vision, establish City policies to guide official actions toward that vision, and to inform the public and investors about our vision.

According to New York State City Law: Section 28-A:

"Among the most important powers and duties granted by the Legislature to cities is the authority and responsibility to undertake comprehensive planning."

The key word for me in this mandate is responsibility. As in any other business enterprise, planning, detailing and outlining your goals, objectives and policies for growth and development are necessary for any successful venture. Short-term and long-range action plans are vital for a coordinated effort. No more would any builder start a project without a blueprint should this City continue to design and plan individual areas without developing a blueprint for the entire City and its neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Plan will provide the much-needed continuity of effort that our City currently lacks and desperately needs. In addition, the plan will guide the actions and intents of governments to:

- Tell residents, visitors, investors and other governments about the City's vision and how they can participate in the City's future.
- Provides predictability for residents and investors.
- Helps a city attract private investments and grants. (A comprehensive plan is a requirement of many funding agencies)
- Provides a context for decisions by the Common Council; City officials and department heads; the City Planning Commission; and the Board of Zoning Appeals, so that all official actions work toward the long-range vision.
- Promotes cooperation and collaboration between the public and private sector and between the City, town, county and state governments.
- Can be used to direct Federal and State programs to locally determine goals and priorities.
- Gives consideration of City goals when Federal or State projects are proposed in Syracuse.
- Will require periodic review of trends, policies and strategies.

The Common Council is being asked to initiate the planning process and adopt the Comprehensive Plan.

Ordinances being submitted to the Council today:

Ordinance directing the Planning Commission to Prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the City

1. Ordinance Authorizing an Intermunicipal Agreement with the County of Onondaga to utilize professional staff from the Syracuse Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA) to prepare the Comprehensive Plan
2. Ordinance Authorizing a Contract with SUNY-ESF in an amount not to exceed \$66,000 for professional services related to development of specific components of the Comprehensive Plan.