

# Mayor Set To Address City Growth

## Planning Monthlong Endeavor To Shape Future Of Rose City

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A special-called meeting of the Tyler City Council scheduled for Tuesday is being described as a turning point for the city.

Mayor Joey Seeber plans to unveil a monthlong undertaking, designed to help shape orderly growth, lessen congestion on roadways and promote improved quality of life for residents.

It will be the first opportunity for the public to hear details for the creation of a Comprehensive Plan, a development guide built around what citizens of today want for tomorrow.

Seeber said, "There are areas that need more attention. We're not talking about just

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the council being involved, but the entire community coming together to plan our future."

The gathering begins around 9 a.m. in the City Council chambers at City Hall, 212 N. Bonner Ave., with a presentation on the scope of the project, followed by an action item for the council to cast an official vote to move forward.

The plan is expected to focus on a series of key areas facing the city, including traffic problems, historic preservation, north end revitalization, downtown refurbishment, recreation, lakes, neighborhoods and public facilities.

Officials are touting the plan — which is expected to take up to two years to complete — as an investment in the city's future, one which should include input from citizens from all areas and walks of life.

"If we don't end up with a consensus for a vision for our community, we will not succeed with creating this plan," the mayor said.

Seeber first hinted at his desire to create a comprehensive plan last May, during his "State of the City" address. In that address, the mayor pointed out that Tyler's successes would be lost if the city failed to protect itself from out-of-control development.

"It doesn't take much of a stretch to envision Tyler as nothing more than a distant metroplex suburb," he said. "The central challenge we face today is whether we will allow that to happen or whether we will be able to maintain the quality of place — this place — that we have all fallen in love with. Do we really want to be another generic concrete jungle suburb with a patchwork of subdivisions impossible to distinguish from one another?"

The likely answer is "no," the mayor said.

For several months, Seeber has been working with city staff to figure out how to create a plan and what it should include.

The city's move to secure a Comprehensive Plan appears to

be fueled by the realization that Tyler has surpassed 101,000 inhabitants, based on results obtained from a private study commissioned by the city.

City Manager Bob Turner said it's not a question of *if* the city should create a comprehensive plan, but *when*.

"If you fail to make plans, you have to examine what that decision will cost in 10 to 15 years," Turner said. "I personally think it will be money well spent."

Details about dollar figures have not been released, pending Tuesday's review and consideration by the City Council.

Officials said the completed Comprehensive Plan should serve as a footprint for development trends that spans decades.

Areas frequently overlooked in some master plan documents, such as extraterritorial jurisdictions and future land use, are expected to be addressed as well.

Officials will likely utilize the expertise of outside firms, which specialize in helping overhaul outdated ordinances and create new ones, based on what exists currently.

Local groups with knowledge about the workings of the city, such as the Economic Development Council, are also expected to participate in this effort.

Citizens will have an opportunity to communicate their thoughts in town hall meetings, Web surveys and open houses to be announced at a later date.

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