

NITRO BEGINS MAPPING PLAN FOR FUTURE

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Soon, citizens of **Nitro** will be able to voice their opinions on the direction their town should take in the future.

On Aug. 23, **Nitro** officials, council members, business owners and concerned citizens listened as three engineering firms pitched their ideas for Nitro's comprehensive plan, or roadmap to the future.

By 2014, all municipalities must have comprehensive plans in place that address zoning, codes and development, according to Councilman Jim McKay.

And such a plan will have citizen input.

"It's essential that the citizens of **Nitro** have an opportunity to have input into this. Each engineering firm that we interviewed, we ensured that they had a plan for public involvement," said **Nitro** Development Authority President Hershel Facemyre.

Facemyre, who is a lifelong **Nitro** resident, said the town has never had a plan that addresses business stabilization, growth and the aesthetic value of the town.

"This is the first time, in my memory, that there has ever been a concerted effort by several entities in town - members of city council, business groups and other organizations - coming together collectively to see this town stabilized and to grow," he said.

Once an engineering firm has been negotiated with and selected, a series of public meetings will begin, Facemyre said.

Baker Engineering, GAI Consultants and Tri-Ad Engineering have pitched their ideas to the city.

The comprehensive plan involves a master enhancement plan and streetscape design, said **Nitro** City Councilman Dave Casebolt.

"We've applied for federal grants to pay for this planning," Casebolt said.

"We've already received a Phase I streetscape grant. Once we pick an engineering firm, we'll continue to move forward," McKay said.

Nitro's strong connection to World War I could play a part in boosting business in town, Casebolt said.

"We offer what no other town can offer. We have a history - a World War I history - and we hope to build off that as a tool to get people to pull off the Interstate come down into town," Casebolt said.

The comprehensive plan will address future growth in the city limits and in areas that could become part of **Nitro** in the future.

"Right now, they're looking more at the centralized business area to get the town stabilized a little more than it has been," Facemyre said.

With a comprehensive plan in place, "we'll know exactly where to start, how to start, how we're going to finish, and in between, how we're going to get to that finish," McKay said.

Metro photo by BEN CALWELL

Representatives from Baker Engineering, from left, Pat Fogarty, Todd Schoolcraft and Laura Cox, present their ideas for the City of **Nitro**'s comprehensive plan, which, among other things, addresses a streetscape design.