

Chapter 3: A Community Vision

The Public Participation Process & Results

Key Issues

A Community Vision

Appendix: Public Participation Summary



Figure 1 March 14, 2016 Issues & Opportunities Workshop

The Public Participation Process

A robust public participation and stakeholder engagement process which generated over 2,000 unique comments and directly engaged over 1,500 people was used to inform the plan. See Appendix Public Participation Summary for a copy of all comments. Key issues and priorities were identified based on the results of the following activities:

- Issues and Opportunities Community Workshops (March 14 and 16, 2016)**

Two community workshops were held to formally introduce the project and provide participants an opportunity to share views in greater detail. Small groups of participants engaged in discussions concerning issues, opportunities and their vision for the City of Appleton.

- Appleton Downtown Incorporated Annual Banquet**

The consultant team prepared a hands on mapping activity which was on display at the March 15, 2016 ADI annual banquet. Participants had the opportunity to chat informally with several members of the project team. Ideas were shared verbally, on sticky notes, and using formatted land use game pieces depicting different types of downtown development.

- Downtown Design Charrette (May 16-18, 2016)**

A three-day design workshop was conducted as a means of engaging key stakeholders and the broader public in focused design-based discussions and exercises to develop consensus around key land use, circulation, place-making, and redevelopment opportunities in the downtown study area and adjacent areas including the riverfront. The workshop included both a walking tour and bicycle tour of downtown and the riverfront.

- Community Survey**

The purpose of the survey, which was conducted online during the month of May 2016, was to obtain a broad level of citizen input regarding community-wide and downtown issues and opportunities.

- Interactive Website**

Using an interactive website, the project team provided opportunities for 24-7 public input. The website was also used to communicate project status, post draft work products, and solicit input on

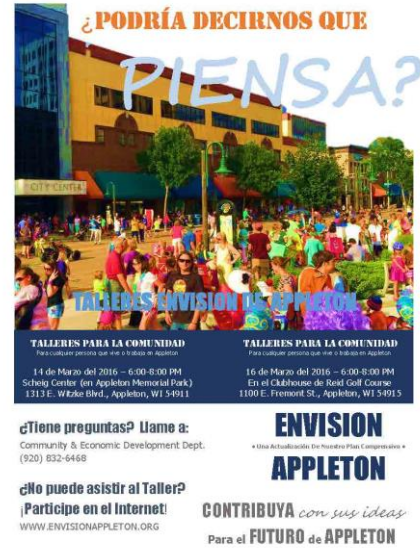


Figure 2 March 2016 Issues & Opportunities Workshop Poster (Spanish version)

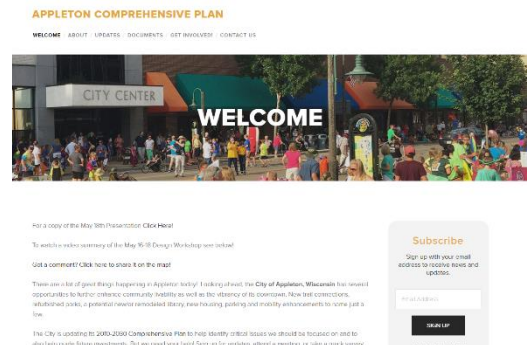


Figure 3 The project website included on-line mapping for citizen comments.

alternatives. Participants were able to leave place-specific comments by clicking on an aerial map of the City.

- **Focus Groups and Key Stakeholder Interviews**

The project team met with key downtown stakeholders and city officials to discuss the current state of the downtown and issues and opportunities looking ahead. These sessions were conducted as small focus groups and individual interviews with key property and business owners, including representatives of the development “delivery system” such as public officials, financiers, developers, property owners, brokers, institutional leaders.

- **Focus Groups and Interviews – Arts, History, Culture and Sustainability**

The project team conducted two focus group meetings with key arts and culture, sustainability and historic preservation community leaders. The purpose of these discussions was to better understand opportunities and constraints to investment in the study area from the unique perspectives of these individuals and organizations.



Figure 4 The word cloud summarizes responses to the survey question: What are your hopes for the future of Appleton?

- **Neighborhood Academy**

City staff and the consultant presented an overview of the Comprehensive Plan update to the Neighborhood Academy participants in May 2016. A "meeting in a box" exercise was also conducted, followed by discussion of key issues and opportunities related to neighborhoods.

- **Meeting in a Box**

The consultant team prepared a stand-alone public input activity called 'Meeting in a Box', which allowed individual groups to brainstorm ideas for Appleton's future. It was used at the Citizen's Academy and with the Downtown Appleton Rotary Club. The consultant team recorded all input gathered using the box and compiled results into the public participation summary document.

- **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC)**

The CPSC oversaw the project and met monthly (10 times). While the CPSC's purview included updating multiple elements of the City's Comprehensive Plan, the committee discussed the Downtown Plan element at two of its meetings.



Figure 5 The "Meeting in a Box" provided a self facilitated opportunity for people to contribute to the planning process

- **Downtown Plan Sub-Committee**
The Downtown Plan Sub-Committee met seven times during Plan development to help guide the process and review and comment on draft concepts. Final Plan recommendations from the Downtown Plan Sub-Committee were recommended for approval to the CPSC.
- **Appleton Parks and Recreation Committee**
The Parks and Recreation Committee met to review and comment on the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan chapter.
- **Draft Plan House**
An open house was conducted to review and comment on the draft updated Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan with community members.
- **Final Plan Open House**
An open house was conducted to review the final updated Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan with community members.

Key Issues

Summary of Key Issues Impacting Appleton

A summary of key issues (in no particular order) were identified based on input from Appleton residents, business owners, and other key stakeholders. The key issues are organized by Comprehensive Plan chapter. In some cases the key issues appear in more than one chapter because they are related to multiple chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

Housing and Neighborhoods (Chapter 5)

1. **Central city neighborhoods**
How can the City best partner with central city neighborhoods and others to ensure that housing conditions do not deteriorate, and that the areas remain desirable for a mix of income levels?
2. **Affordable housing**
How can the City and its partners ensure that housing is available and affordable to all?
3. **Mix of housing types**
How can the City encourage a broader mix of housing supply beyond single family, including more town homes, pocket neighborhoods, multi-family housing, and other housing types?
4. **Downtown housing**
How can the City encourage the development of more housing in and adjacent to downtown in order to support a more self-sufficient downtown neighborhood with its own grocery store and other amenities nearby?
5. **Housing conditions**
How can the City ensure that both single family and multi-family housing stock is well maintained? What steps should be taken to deal with properties which are becoming blighted?

6. Safety and crime

What steps should be taken to maintain safe neighborhoods? How can the City partner most effectively with neighborhoods to address concerns over crime? How can citizens become more engaged in neighborhood issues and organizations?

7. Walking and biking

How can the City promote more walkable neighborhoods, with easy, convenient access to neighborhood restaurants, retail, and other daily needs and services?

8. Housing and school choice

There is some concern that residential development on the north side of Appleton is being hampered by the fact that some areas lie within the Freedom Area School District and not the Appleton Area School District. What should the City do to address this concern?

Transportation (Chapter 6)

1. Street repairs and maintenance

How can the City most effectively and efficiently maintain the city's street network? How can College Avenue be better maintained to improve its aesthetics, especially at the west end of College?

2. Biking and pedestrian issues

How can the City better connect and grow its on-street and off-street trail networks? How can the commercial corridors be made more bike and pedestrian friendly? How can frequent destinations be made more accessible and safer to get to? What should be done to encourage bicyclists to obey the rules of the road and to encourage drivers to pay more attention to bicyclists?

3. Rail safety and noise impacts

How can the negative impacts from the trains be mitigated?

4. Public transit

What is the future of the public transit system in the Fox Cities? What steps should the City take to ensure it meets the current and future needs of the population?

5. Funding

How can existing transportation-related infrastructure be adequately maintained in light of budget constraints?

6. Access and connectivity to the river

How can access and connectivity to the river be best achieved?

7. Parking

How can future development incorporate mixed use parking structures? How can the amount of surface parking downtown and along the river be minimized as the City grows?

Utilities and Community Facilities (Chapter 7)

1. Appleton Public Library

How can the City help resolve the issue of where to locate and how to fund a new or renovated library?



2. Safety and crime

What steps should be taken to maintain safe neighborhoods? How can the City partner most effectively with neighborhoods to address concerns over crime?

3. Older adults

What role should the City play in terms of ensuring adequate continuum of care services and facilities for older adults?

Agriculture, Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources (Chapter 8)

1. Local food system development

How can the City and its partners continue to encourage the growth of the local food system? How can additional neighborhood serving grocery options be made more widely available for people to access on foot and by bicycle?

2. Creative culture and public art

How can the City and its partners encourage the growth and diversification of the local arts and creative culture scene? How can a broader arts strategy be pursued in a fair and equitable manner? How can public art and other forms of creative expression be leveraged to foster a stronger community identity?

3. Diversity

How can the City promote an inclusive environment which welcomes and celebrates diversity of all types? How can the City encourage healthy community dialogue around issues of race and ethnicity?

4. Appleton Public Library

How can the City help resolve the issue of where to locate and how to fund a new or renovated library?

5. Historic preservation

How can historic areas of the City, including the Fox River corridor, be preserved and maintained?

6. Environment and Sustainability

How can environmental corridors and high value ecological sites be preserved? How can the City encourage more sustainable design including green buildings?

Economic Development (Chapter 9)

1. Talent retention and attraction

How can the community continue to best partner with educational institutions, employers, cultural organizations and others in order to grow a highly educated and innovative workforce? How can the City brand itself as a desirable location for creative and talented individuals looking for a great place to live and work?

2. Business attraction, retention, and expansion

How can the City more effectively attract, retain, and facilitate the expansion of existing and new businesses? How can more neighborhood based businesses be encouraged?

3. Growth on the fringes

How can the City cost effectively invest in fringe growth areas such that new development pays for itself, both in terms of short term infrastructure costs and long term service provision?

4. Corridor revitalization

How can the City rejuvenate its commercial corridors including Wisconsin Avenue, Richmond Street, and S. Oneida Street? How can corridor development be used to foster ethnic and neighborhood identity? How can destinations along Appleton's corridors be made more walkable and accessible to pedestrians?

5. Housing development

How can the City help stimulate the provision of more housing options? How can a mix of affordable and market rate housing be provided across the City, including additional opportunities for a variety of downtown housing types?

6. Capturing regional growth

How can the City capture its fair share of regional growth given its geographical constraints and concentration of tax exempt properties?

Land Use (Chapter 10)

1. Redevelopment

How can the City facilitate the redevelopment of blighted or vacant parcels into more productive uses? How can the City stimulate redevelopment along existing commercial corridors?

2. Zoning and land use regulations

How can the zoning code and related land use implementation tools be utilized most effectively to achieve the overall goals and objectives contained in the Plan?

3. Future land use

How should the future land use map be modified to best achieve the overall goals and objectives addressed throughout the Plan?

Downtown Plan (Chapter 14)

Key downtown issues are described in more depth in Chapter 14. They include the following topics:

1. Housing
2. Transportation & Walkability
3. Parking
4. Grocery Store
5. Library
6. Development & Business Climate
7. Security
8. Organization & Marketing
9. Richmond Street & College Avenue
10. West College Avenue Entertainment Area
11. Creative Culture & Public Art



12. River Connectivity, Trails, & Parks
13. Diversity
14. Senior Center
15. Small Theater
16. North of College Avenue
17. City Center Plaza
18. Fox Cities Exhibition Center and Tourism
19. Maintenance

Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Chapter 18)

1. Trails and biking

How can the City create a comprehensive trail system which links on-street bike lanes to off-street multi-modal trails, providing greater connectivity and access to key destinations?

2. Dogs and parks

How can the interests of dog owners be accommodated?

3. Gaps in existing park system

How can the needs of the geographically underserved areas of the City be met?

4. The Fox River

What additional park and trail amenities should go in along the river? How should Ellen Kort Peace Park be planned and designed? How can greater access to the river be facilitated?

A Community Vision

Based upon an extensive public participation process and an understanding of the key issues impacting the City, a set of vision statements were developed to help guide the City's comprehensive planning process. The effort led to adoption of the following community vision:

Appleton is a great place to live, work, and visit. Residents have an enviable quality of life characterized by:

1. Safe and attractive neighborhoods for all income levels and stages of life.
2. A vibrant economy and a thriving downtown, providing diverse career opportunities.
3. A thriving, walkable downtown, including north and south of College Avenue, where people go to spend time with family and loved ones.
4. Exceptional cultural resources, schools, and life-long learning opportunities.
5. A revitalized Fox River corridor with more housing and destinations, with public access to the water's edge.
6. Convenient and efficient multi-modal transportation options.
7. A well connected and developed trails, parks, and open space network throughout the City.
8. Good access to recreational facilities throughout the City.



9. Well regarded recreational facilities and programs which evolve to meet changing demands.
10. Outstanding city services, public safety, and medical care.
11. Proactive problem-solving with residents, businesses, and neighboring communities.
12. Creative place making and public art enhance the public realm and contribute to a vibrant economy.
13. A convenient, well run public transit which meets current and anticipated needs.
14. Corridors which are pedestrian friendly and accessible, serving as neighborhood centers in addition to maximizing the flow of vehicles.
15. Attractive commercial environments where neighbors can shop and visit on foot, by bike, and car.
16. Well maintained neighborhoods where neighbors know and look out for each other.
17. Neighborhoods which are safe and crime free.
18. Beautiful streetscapes which are designed and maintained in a manner that preserves neighborhood value and encourages walking and biking.
19. Cooperation with neighboring communities resulting in sensible borders, energy efficient policies, effective service provision, and resource management.



Appendices

Public Participation Summary

All appendices for the Comprehensive Plan are available online at www.appleton.org.

