



1
2
3
4
5
6

Appendix A
Appendix B
Appendix C

Public Input

This Appendix is a compilation of stakeholder input collected during the comprehensive planning process. The goals, objectives and policies of this comprehensive plan were created in response to the issues and ideas collected here.

	Page
B.1 Citizen Survey	B-2
B.2 Public Visioning Meeting	B-22
B.3 Focus Groups	B-42
B.4 Growth & Development Workshops	B-52

Adopted on
November 19, 2012

Citizen Survey

In the months of January and February 2012, the City of Burlington conducted a citizen survey. The Citizen Survey was designed to gather stakeholder opinions on a range of topics relevant to preparing a plan to guide growth and change in Burlington over the next 20 years. The survey covered quality of life, city facilities and services, economic development, housing, and land use and development. The survey also collected respondent information to analyze how well the survey responses represent the overall population of the community.

The survey was available in several locations: digitally using SurveyMonkey, a downloadable version on the Comprehensive Plan website, and as paper copies through the City of Burlington's Planning and Development Office. To encourage citizens to take the survey, respondents could enter a drawing to win up to \$100 in Chamber Bucks.

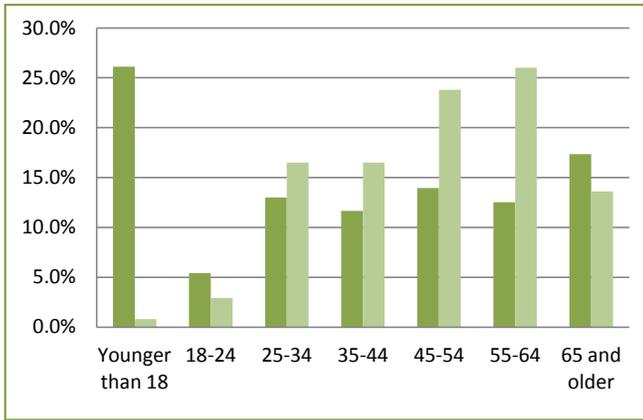
Approximately 4.2% (1,078) of citizens responded to the survey. Only 3.7% of the responses were from citizens under the age of 25, while 63% of the respondents were over the age of 45. In addition, those who live in single family homes and homeowners were overrepresented by 15% and 19.5%, respectively.

Response rates per question varied, with all questions over 90% except Question 20 (Place of Employment). Response rates ranged from 89.5% to 99.6% for individual questions.

This section provides comparative data on the profile of respondents, results from the survey, and selected respondent comments for each survey question. Complete survey data was provided to the City of Burlington.

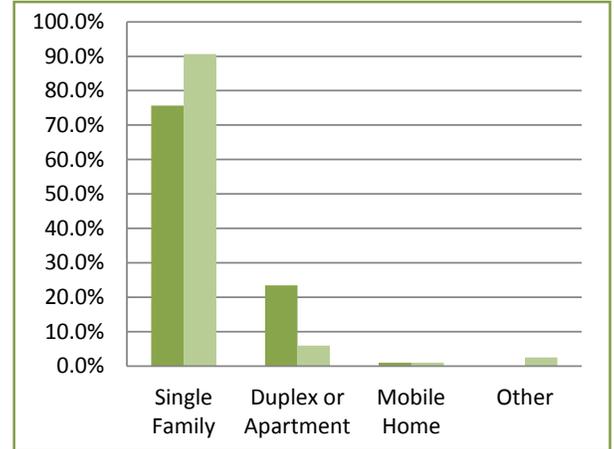
Profile of Respondents

Age



- Census Data (2010)
- Survey Respondents

Type of Dwelling



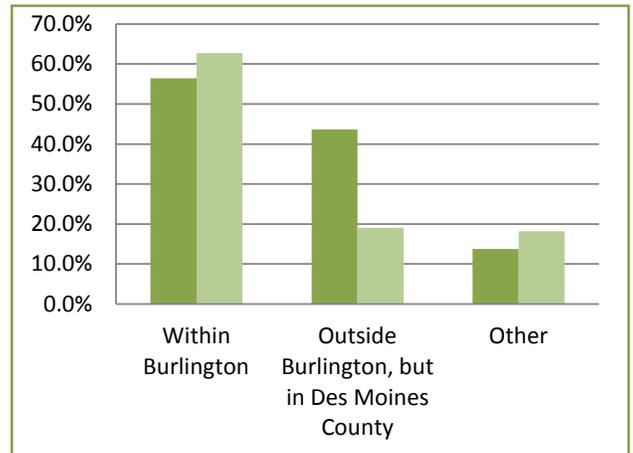
- ACS 3 Year Avg. (2008-2010)
- Survey Respondents

Occupancy



- Census Data (2010)
- Survey Respondents

Place of Employment



- ACS 3 Year Avg. (2008-2010)
- Survey Respondents

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

Responses & Selected Comments

1. What are the three most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the City of Burlington?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Community services		6.9%	74
Near job		63.2%	677
Appearance of homes		2.2%	24
Property tax rates		2.2%	24
Quality neighborhood		14.7%	157
Cost of housing		18.2%	195
Quality schools		13.7%	147
Recreational opportunities		11.6%	124
Low crime rate		8.9%	95
Urban/City atmosphere		9.4%	101
Natural beauty of area		29.0%	311
Near family and friends		66.9%	717
Other (please specify)		14.7%	157
		answered question	1,071
		skipped question	7

SELECTED COMMENTS

- I've lived here all my life.
- Good Place to Raise Kids
- Community sense of history and enjoyment of historic homes
- Beautiful parks, culture (Civic Music, Little Theater, etc.) and historic atmosphere
- I work in Burlington.
- The Mississippi River.
- small town feel
- Regional medical facility, cultural events, size of community

2. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Burlington?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		7.9%	84
Good		62.1%	664
Fair		27.1%	290
Poor		3.0%	32
	Comments		102
	answered question		1,070
	skipped question		8

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Burlington is where I want to be.
- We've lived here 7.5 years, and it is the best place to raise a family.
- There's no where else I'd rather be. We live within about 4 hours of Chicago, St.Louis, Milwaukee, Des Moines and cities in between----perfect for a weekend trip of culture and other activities----and then we can come home to the quality of life we enjoy here, along with a 6-minute commute to work, bearable traffic and decent parking. We're not perfect, but we're closer to being "Heaven" here in Iowa than any place else I've ever been.
- City has a "you aren't from around here" mentality.
- Could be improved with more emphasis on bike trails, indoor sports facilities and healthy lifestyles.
- Crime rate increasing and neighborhoods declining.

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

3. Please indicate up to four changes you think would improve the quality of life in Burlington.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Improve K-12 education		31.8%	342
Improve post-secondary education opportunities		13.8%	148
Improve recreational facilities		24.6%	264
Increase diversity of housing types		3.4%	37
Increase affordability of housing		7.4%	80
Decrease taxes and fees		32.3%	347
Improve road infrastructure		37.3%	401
Improve utility service (including telecommunications)		12.6%	135
Increase employment opportunities		73.2%	786
Expand retail shopping options		29.0%	311
Improve community services		11.2%	120
Improve quality of housing		11.6%	125
Decrease crime rate		46.7%	502
Improve bike and pedestrian facilities		27.0%	290
Improve public transit		6.7%	72
Other (please specify)		14.3%	154
		answered question	1,074
		skipped question	4

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Increase places/things for kids to go to and do. Don't close the swimming pool!
- Focus on revitalizing downtown.
- Become less restrictive to business start-ups.
- Housing standards need improvement from the City. There are too many rental problems that are not maintained. Increase enforcement of housing inspection.
- More and better paying jobs
- Commit to public safety

4. The City maintains a wide array of public facilities and infrastructure with a limited budget. How would you like the City to prioritize maintenance and construction investments? Please indicate your investment preferences based on your satisfaction with these public facilities.

	More \$	Same \$	Less \$	No Opinion	Response Count
Major streets	34.2% (342)	61.1% (610)	3.1% (31)	1.6% (16)	999
Neighborhood streets	57.0% (577)	39.4% (399)	1.9% (19)	1.7% (17)	1,012
Sidewalks	38.1% (369)	47.5% (460)	10.0% (97)	4.4% (43)	969
Bike routes and trails	39.8% (397)	29.5% (294)	26.2% (261)	4.6% (46)	998
Riverfront and river access	38.0% (378)	45.0% (448)	13.5% (134)	3.5% (35)	995
Parks	21.8% (218)	70.6% (705)	5.9% (59)	1.6% (16)	998
City Hall	1.2% (12)	56.9% (564)	34.4% (341)	7.6% (75)	992
Public Library	8.5% (85)	61.7% (616)	26.3% (263)	3.5% (35)	999
Sanitary sewers and treatment systems	19.3% (193)	69.4% (695)	5.0% (50)	6.3% (63)	1,001
Stormwater management systems (sewers, ponds, etc.)	22.3% (224)	65.4% (656)	6.2% (62)	6.1% (61)	1,003
Public water supply	12.4% (124)	79.2% (792)	2.6% (26)	5.8% (58)	1,000
Other	38.6% (59)	17.0% (26)	8.5% (13)	35.9% (55)	153

If "Other", please specify or enter comments: 119

answered question	1,028
skipped question	50

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Wiser use of the budget
- Repair the Depot
- The pool and Cascade Bridge should remain top priorities.
- Remove empty, unwanted buildings
- Sidewalks are most important

5. The City supports many public services with a limited budget. How would you like the City to prioritize spending on these services? Please indicate your spending preferences based on your satisfaction with these public services.

	More \$	Same \$	Less \$	No Opinion	Response Count
Police protection	40.0% (399)	53.8% (536)	5.0% (50)	1.2% (12)	997
Emergency medical/ambulance services	17.8% (178)	75.9% (759)	4.6% (46)	1.7% (17)	1,000
Inspections (building code enforcement)	14.4% (143)	58.0% (578)	23.6% (235)	4.0% (40)	996
Demolition Program (Removal of Dilapidated Structures)	45.8% (461)	39.0% (392)	11.8% (119)	3.4% (34)	1,006
General City-wide clean-up, etc.	43.6% (442)	50.0% (507)	5.2% (53)	1.2% (12)	1,014
Arts/Culture program funding	21.8% (219)	45.4% (457)	29.4% (296)	3.4% (34)	1,006
Recreational programs	31.3% (316)	51.7% (521)	14.7% (148)	2.3% (23)	1,008
Affordable housing	14.8% (147)	55.0% (548)	26.1% (260)	4.1% (41)	996
Historic preservation	21.7% (217)	46.7% (467)	29.2% (292)	2.3% (23)	999
Housing Rehabilitation	27.5% (274)	48.6% (485)	20.8% (208)	3.1% (31)	998
Programs for the elderly	22.7% (227)	62.2% (622)	11.7% (117)	3.4% (34)	1,000
Programs for youth	41.1% (413)	47.2% (474)	9.9% (99)	1.8% (18)	1,004
Transit system (bus)	10.1% (101)	66.3% (661)	19.7% (196)	3.9% (39)	997
Economic development	55.0% (550)	36.9% (369)	6.1% (61)	2.0% (20)	1,000
Yard waste/ City composting	14.4% (143)	63.5% (632)	18.6% (185)	3.6% (36)	996
Other	27.8% (30)	12.0% (13)	13.9% (15)	46.3% (50)	108

If "Other", please specify or enter comments: 81

answered question	1,028
skipped question	50

SELECTED COMMENTS

- City-wide cleanup - every citizen can and should participate - need to educate & raise public awareness
- Real economic development- not corporate handouts- would be great!
- Enforce codes to clean up our neighborhoods
- Improve downtown area.

6. The recent Imagine Our Future initiative resulted in five core vision ideas, two of which address health and recreation. Please indicate up to four types of recreation amenities that you would like to see expanded or improved in Burlington, either by the City or by the private sector.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Playgrounds and playground equipment		36.2%	363
Baseball/softball diamonds		15.4%	154
Soccer/football fields		7.5%	75
Indoor soccer facilities		15.0%	150
Basketball courts (outdoor)		6.1%	61
Basketball courts (indoor)		12.7%	127
Tennis courts (outdoor)		6.7%	67
Tennis courts (indoor)		6.7%	67
Swimming pools or splash parks (outdoor)		54.2%	543
Swimming pools or splash parks (indoor)		20.4%	204
Bike trails		52.1%	522
Golf courses		8.1%	81
Disc (frisbee) golf courses		7.5%	75
Skate parks (outdoor)		6.9%	69
Skate parks (indoor)		6.0%	60
Picnic areas		33.0%	331
Weightlifting and fitness centers		14.5%	145
Other (please specify)		18.4%	184
answered question			1,002

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Running/walking/bike trails
- Indoor ice skating rink
- River Front and river access
- Indoor soccer, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball facility

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

7. How secure do you believe your employment to be over the next 3-5 years?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Secure		35.7%	362
Somewhat secure		33.7%	342
Insecure		10.5%	106
Don't know		6.1%	62
Unemployed		1.5%	15
Retired		12.5%	127
	Comments		46
		answered question	1,014
		skipped question	64

SELECTED COMMENTS

- All small businesses are struggling.
- I work outside of Burlington
- The school system is constantly threatening to cut my position due to lack of funding.
- We need to bring things to this town to attract people here to make them want to stay...
- Job market is horrible. Either high-tech or low-end jobs, not much in between.
- No one really knows, it can be here today and gone in the blink of an eye.

8. Do you believe the City of Burlington should commit additional tax dollars to attract, retain, and replace lost jobs in the private sector in Burlington?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		69.8%	699
No		21.3%	213
No opinion		8.9%	89
	Comments		92
		answered question	1,001
		skipped question	77

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Just reduce regulation and make Burlington more business friendly.
- Need to attract new manufacturing jobs.
- Need to spend money on improving amenities so Burlington will be a city that attracts people!!!
- To the extent it does now. Mostly to retain existing jobs. Leave the recruiting to the Chamber. That's what the City pays its dues for.

9. How often do you shop downtown?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Never		12.7%	128
Daily		3.1%	31
Weekly		16.2%	163
Monthly		32.9%	332
At least once per year		35.2%	355
	Comments		79
		answered question	1,009
		skipped question	69

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Poor selection of stores and mostly overpriced items.
- What is there to buy downtown except nic nacs?
- There is nowhere to park. Most shops are closed and the ones that are open are high priced because they have to pay extra to have their shop downtown.

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

10. How often do you leave the Burlington/West Burlington area to shop?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Never		4.4%	44
Daily		0.6%	6
Weekly		7.3%	73
Monthly		44.3%	445
At least once per year		43.4%	436
	Comments		69
		answered question	1,004
		skipped question	74

SELECTED COMMENTS

- I frequently go to Coralville or the Quad Cities to shop because they have better malls, more options.
- We purchase a lot of items online.
- 4-5 times per year
- I have everything I need here.
- I go to movies that never come here, shop for media and clothing, and frequent concerts outside of our community.
- Only way to shop at a Scheel's and /or Bass Pro Shop, Red Lobster, etc.
- If you asked me about online shopping though, I would have to say "All the time!". I keep my UPS and Fed Ex folks busy.
- Iowa City and Quad Cities offer much more shopping/dining options than around here.

11. Please share your opinions about the supply of various retail and service businesses in the Burlington area (including West Burlington).

	Need More	Have Enough	Have too much	Not Sure	Response Count
Downtown retail shopping/services	71.2% (717)	19.7% (198)	2.7% (27)	6.5% (65)	1,007
Convenience retail/services in/near my neighborhood	20.3% (203)	71.3% (713)	3.2% (32)	5.2% (52)	1,000
Department and general merchandise stores	35.4% (354)	60.2% (601)	2.5% (25)	1.9% (19)	999
Boutique and specialty retail stores	43.6% (438)	46.3% (465)	4.7% (47)	5.4% (54)	1,004
Apparel and shoe stores	40.7% (404)	54.9% (545)	2.6% (26)	1.8% (18)	993
Hardware and building supply stores	7.7% (77)	86.8% (865)	4.1% (41)	1.4% (14)	997
Fast-food restaurants	7.1% (71)	59.0% (589)	33.1% (331)	0.8% (8)	999
Sit-down restaurants	60.1% (603)	35.4% (355)	3.4% (34)	1.2% (12)	1,004
Other	57.3% (75)	8.4% (11)	4.6% (6)	29.8% (39)	131
				If "Other", please specify or enter comments	125
				answered question	1,017
				skipped question	61

SELECTED COMMENTS

- There are NO HUNTING AND FISHING specialty stores around here. They are definitely needed. We have to go to Iowa City or Prairie du Chien or Peoria to find a good one.
- We just need good sit-down restaurants.
- Burlington lacks anything that really draws anyone to stay in town and shop. The mall is significantly lacking in sufficient variety of stores due to their outrageous rent. Downtown could be quite the hub of town, however, there is nothing really down there- no sense of cohesiveness amongst what is. There is Digger’s Rest, but hardly entices anyone to come in or think “hey, let’s go to that coffee shop downtown”...I forget it’s even there. And the restaurants are decent enough, but there seems to be lacking a middle of the road “nice” place to eat. It’s either expensive (Martini’s, Drake, Boogaloo) or cheaper (AppleBee’s, Gator’s)...but what about the in-between (Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Famous Dave’s, or Roadhouse).
- Kids museums, educational businesses

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

12. Please share your opinions about the supply of various housing types in the City of Burlington.

	Need More	Have Enough	Have too much	Not Sure	Response Count
Single-family housing	25.7% (251)	58.0% (566)	2.3% (22)	14.0% (137)	976
Mobile home parks	3.6% (35)	50.2% (494)	32.4% (319)	13.8% (136)	984
Duplexes (2 units)	16.5% (160)	52.0% (505)	6.3% (61)	25.3% (246)	972
Apartments (studio/efficiency)	22.6% (222)	42.8% (421)	5.1% (50)	29.6% (291)	984
Apartments (1-2 bedrooms)	25.9% (254)	41.9% (410)	4.5% (44)	27.7% (271)	979
Apartments (3+ bedrooms)	27.4% (264)	37.8% (364)	3.5% (34)	31.3% (302)	964
Townhomes and condominiums	32.5% (320)	41.4% (407)	4.0% (39)	22.2% (218)	984
Affordable housing	42.2% (416)	34.7% (342)	8.5% (84)	14.5% (143)	985
Senior condominiums and apartments	34.5% (339)	42.7% (420)	2.4% (24)	20.3% (200)	983
Assisted living facilities for seniors	23.6% (232)	53.2% (523)	2.9% (29)	20.3% (200)	984
Starter (first time buyer) homes	39.0% (383)	41.7% (409)	2.7% (26)	16.6% (163)	981
Executive (high-end) homes	8.4% (83)	56.0% (550)	15.5% (152)	20.1% (198)	983
Downtown upper-story living	49.3% (482)	26.5% (259)	4.5% (44)	19.7% (193)	978
				Comments	88
				answered question	998
				skipped question	80

SELECTED COMMENTS

- The number of affordable housing/starter homes is adequate, however, the quality is lacking.
- Once I moved back into town I couldn't find an apartment because I wasn't on Section 8 housing... Burlington has too many slum-lords, and not enough nice rental properties
- We need to renovate the historic and beautiful homes we already have.
- There are currently many > 300K homes on market; perhaps with economic improvement, we will have more residents who can afford those homes
- Focus should be on infill development utilizing existing lots/infrastructure. Quality apartments are especially needed for young graduates. Focus on upperstory redevelopment downtown or new building in vacant lots downtown.

13. Which one of the following aspects of housing is most important to improve in the City of Burlington?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Housing supply		4.2%	42
Housing cost		27.8%	278
Housing quality		59.5%	594
No Opinion		8.5%	85
	Comments		75
answered question			999
skipped question			79

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Improve neighborhoods
- Too many homes in disrepair and or falling apart
- For young professionals, the sort you want to come to your community, there is little up-scale or middle income apartment living. It certainly does not bode well for a young person to come to burlington knowing that the only apartment they can find is in a neighborhood where they are frankly afraid to go out at night.
- Too many rental properties and slum lords!
- Need more housing for the lower end of the middle class and upper end of the lower class
- Houses are affordable, taxes are not in my neighborhood!!

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

14. How do you rate the following aspects of the City of Burlington?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Response Count
Access to parks	37.2% (371)	45.8% (457)	12.2% (122)	4.6% (46)	0.1% (1)	997
Access to the Mississippi River	27.2% (273)	48.0% (482)	18.1% (182)	6.2% (62)	0.5% (5)	1,004
Number of street trees	20.0% (199)	55.5% (551)	19.2% (191)	3.4% (34)	1.8% (18)	993
Signage control (size and location of signs)	12.7% (126)	58.8% (585)	20.8% (207)	5.7% (57)	2.0% (20)	995
Noise control	9.8% (98)	58.1% (582)	22.5% (225)	6.9% (69)	2.7% (27)	1,001
Lighting control	8.0% (79)	53.1% (527)	28.6% (284)	7.2% (71)	3.1% (31)	992
Aesthetic design of new development	7.9% (78)	48.6% (480)	27.4% (271)	7.7% (76)	8.4% (83)	988
Property upkeep/cleanliness	2.5% (25)	20.0% (199)	44.0% (437)	32.9% (327)	0.6% (6)	994
					Comments	146
					answered question	1,007
					skipped question	71

SELECTED COMMENTS

- Owners of property should be strongly encouraged to maintain and clean their property.
- Most streets could use more lighting for safety and crime prevention purposes. I won't get started on property upkeep.
- Burlington access to the Mississippi River is probably one of the worst in the state. There is no place to park a boat and walk to downtown without getting a ticket.
- Need better access to Crapo Park... Cascade Bridge fixed!!!!
- The river front is a huge asset that we do not take full advantage of.
- Muscatine's riverfront is a great example of what I'd like to see downtown. Signage for area attractions is not visible. Galesburg, Ames, Des Moines are good examples of colorful, attractive signage throughout town.
- There are some side streets that do not have enough street lights, It would also be nice to see some new trees planted on streets where trees have been removed.

15. Should the City offer financial incentives to encourage development and investment?

	Yes	No	It Depends	Response Count
For residential units	35.7% (351)	44.2% (434)	20.1% (198)	983
For retail businesses	60.4% (597)	21.5% (213)	18.1% (179)	989
For non-retail employers	62.3% (611)	18.5% (181)	19.3% (189)	981
In the downtown area	62.3% (616)	24.1% (238)	13.7% (135)	989
On vacant infill sites outside the downtown area	51.2% (503)	28.7% (282)	20.1% (197)	982
On undeveloped land (e.g. farmland)	26.9% (260)	53.6% (517)	19.5% (188)	965
Comments (please explain any "it depends" responses:				159
answered question				1,001
skipped question				77

SELECTED COMMENTS

- City needs to be able to respond to opportunities when they arrive. If the opportunity fits into the overall direction for the city, then incentives may be needed. Each opportunity should be evaluated in context, not just an isolated opportunity that looks good. When we have visitors to the community, the constant comments relate to the overall image of the city in terms of first impressions. Some of the things are cosmetic, but could do a lot to enhance the appearance of the community. Instead, we tagged as being a dirty old river town. Thank goodness Twin Rivers and Diamond Vogel and service organizations have worked on this. Our visitors continue to applaud the new library and it's appearance. It is a real boost to the city's image.
- Will it increase jobs? Will it draw businesses into the Burlington area?
- Only if property taxes won't increase. Incentives should not be on the backs of those who pay property taxes.
- Getting untaxed properties in the tax base should be given a high priority. Look at the properties that residents and businesses are currently maintaining and "offer" to sell or give them away to increase tax income. Having empty buildings and large lots "filled" is important. The buildings are maintained better than when they are empty. Image is everything!
- A reliance on corporate welfare weakens our economy- so "it depends".

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

16. Age of Responder

		Response Percent	Response Count
<18		0.8%	8
18-24		2.9%	29
25-34		16.5%	165
35-44		16.5%	165
45-54		23.8%	238
55-64		26.0%	260
65 and older		13.6%	136
		answered question	1,001
		skipped question	77

17. What type of dwelling do you live in?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Single-Family Home		90.6%	906
Mobile Home		1.0%	10
Unit in a duplex		1.5%	15
Unit in a building with 3+ units		4.4%	44
Unit in an assisted living facility		0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		2.5%	25
		answered question	1,000
		skipped question	78

18. Do you rent or own your dwelling?

		Response Percent	Response Count
I own my home		87.1%	867
I rent or lease my home		12.9%	128
answered question			995
skipped question			83

19. In what community do you currently live, and how long have you lived there? (Check one)

	Less than 1 Year	1-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-25 Years	More than 25 Years	Response Count
City of Burlington	2.5% (20)	12.3% (100)	11.9% (97)	27.1% (221)	46.3% (377)	815
City of West Burlington	16.1% (10)	24.2% (15)	12.9% (8)	32.3% (20)	14.5% (9)	62
Des Moines County, IA (not in Burlington or West Burlington)	6.4% (10)	15.4% (24)	13.5% (21)	34.0% (53)	30.8% (48)	156
Lee, Henry, or Louise County, IA	30.6% (11)	13.9% (5)	2.8% (1)	25.0% (9)	27.8% (10)	36
Henderson County, IL	52.6% (10)	15.8% (3)	5.3% (1)	10.5% (2)	15.8% (3)	19
Other	15.4% (2)	38.5% (5)	15.4% (2)	7.7% (1)	23.1% (3)	13
	If "Other", please specify:					17
answered question						1,002
skipped question						76

SELECTED COMMENTS

- We have live in Des Moines County all of our lives...
- I moved to Danville for the better schools.
- Considering moving out of Burlington.

B.1 CITIZEN SURVEY

21. What is the approximate distance of your commute to work (each way)?

		Response Percent	Response Count
< 1/2 mile		5.6%	55
1/2-1 mile		4.4%	43
1-3 miles		27.7%	271
3-5 miles		22.3%	219
5-10 miles		13.6%	133
>10 miles		10.7%	105
None-work from home		3.4%	33
None-retired		12.3%	121
answered question			980
skipped question			98

22. Do you currently serve or have you served on City Council, Planning Commission, Park Advisory Committee or other public boards or commissions in Burlington?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, currently		5.7%	57
Yes, in the past		6.3%	63
No		88.0%	880
answered question			1,000
skipped question			78

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Public Visioning Meeting

This section provides detailed information gathered from the Public Visioning Meeting held January 11, 2012 at the Burlington Public Library.

Station #1: Community Identity & Vision

Q: What word or phrases describe your City as you want it to be 20 years from now?

A:

- “Come back to Burlington!” Or “Pride in Our Community!”
- A clean, attractive, progressive city.
- Beautiful. No trash on streets. Homes maintained.
- Vibrant, sustainable, growing, positive attitude
- Friendly, clean
- Vibrant, active, clean, friendly, low crime
- Vibrant, creative, filled with public art
- A leader in renewable energy use. Encouraging and appreciative of the arts, literature, education and music. Mindful of nature, conservation, education for natural science. Attractive and innovative for its citizens to build upon.
- Vibrant, fun, green, enticing, historic, walkable easy to get around, stewardship, safe
- Most progressive one on the Mississippi River
- Progressive, growing
- Vibrant, hip and happening, fun, the place to live and work in Iowa
- The river, the bluffs, the hills, great views from parks
- Innovative, healthy, entertaining
- Updated
- Vibrant, historic
- Intelligent, just and fair, clean, safe, diverse
- Vibrant, growing, prosperous, youthful
- A destination point. A regional hub. Progressive. A clean and beautiful city. Visitor friendly. Youth oriented city. A growing community.

Q: What do you like most about Burlington and wish to preserve?

A:

- The parks have been here since we were kids, and each generation after can come back and enjoy them. We have some of the best parks around. Keep the riverfront attractions.
- Historical significance to the history of Iowa would be promoted and preserved.
- Parks, library, historic buildings, history.
- Historic structures, river views and access, parks and recreational opportunities, nice people.
- The Burlington Dankwardt outdoor swimming pool. We need to preserve our park for our children and adults. The lap pool is the only one around. It's open and accessible.
- Our architectural heritage
- The architectural diversity, the size, the library services, the public safety services
- I like most the old structures downtown. I like old stories of its history and famous Burlingtonians. I like its waterfront and improvements. I wish to preserve all of the old buildings; without them there isn't much appeal aside from the Mississippi and nature.
- Historic buildings, variety of cultural activities, scenic views, local businesses, brick streets, riverfront access, parks, downtown.
- River, historic points, architecture, parks
- Character as a river town with a history.
- Friendliness of the people, the cost of living
- Park system
- Snake Alley, Starr's Cave (county but bike accessible), Riverfront park area
- Architecture, trees, roads
- Downtown, riverfront, parks
- Scale, not too big and not too small
- There are many things to do in the city if you choose to become part of the community or to partake in the events. I would like to preserve that and build on this.

Q: What would you most like to change about Burlington?

A:

- Clean up the dilapidated houses in Burlington. Get an enforcement code like they for to landlords, clean up the property as many are eyesores around town as paint is peeling on many houses. Give incentive to put siding on, etc.
- Change any negative attitudes to positive attitudes. Have the local media stress the priorities of Burlington such as our medical center, schools, SCC, minor league baseball, etc. Put the negative stories of murders, rapes, burglaries and drug deals on the back pages of the Hawk Eye.
- Replace Cascade Bridge. Make the city attractive. Property owners need to be responsible to keep property clean. Fix up the train station.
- Reverse the negative attitude. Change the perception of “a dirty river town.”
- Lower the crime rate
- The tendency to settle for mediocrity.
- I don't like that a gambling casino was allowed here or that an unappealing name like Fun City was chosen. It makes the city sound tacky. I'd like for the arts to be encouraged and therefore the artists who are invaluable to a city would want to stay and make Burlington their lifelong home.
- Negative attitudes, more white collar employment opportunities, increase pride in keeping property, slow-to-change attitudes, embracing sustainability, protect

historic buildings.

- Attitude from negative to positive
- Old housing inventory and arcane method of utilizing architecturally significant facilities. Make changes to allow garages, etc.
- Attract businesses. Growth in economy. Attract more young people. A strong leader. Build a more positive self image for the community.
- We have great educational facilities for now. I wonder if education K-12 could be improved. I don't know how we stack up compared to the rest of the state.
- The empty downtown buildings. Lack of interesting shops.
- Deal with younger population. Create cultural welcome committee for new, different citizens. Grow the population! 10% over the next 10 years....
- Short-sightedness.
- Burlington needs to be more welcoming to new businesses and residents. More jobs must be added. We need to provide a reason for employees to locate to our community that differentiates as from our competition. Perhaps we need to be a low cost business location with labor availability.
- Many good things exist in Burlington but a negative attitude seems to prevail. I would like for the attitude to become more positive.

B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING

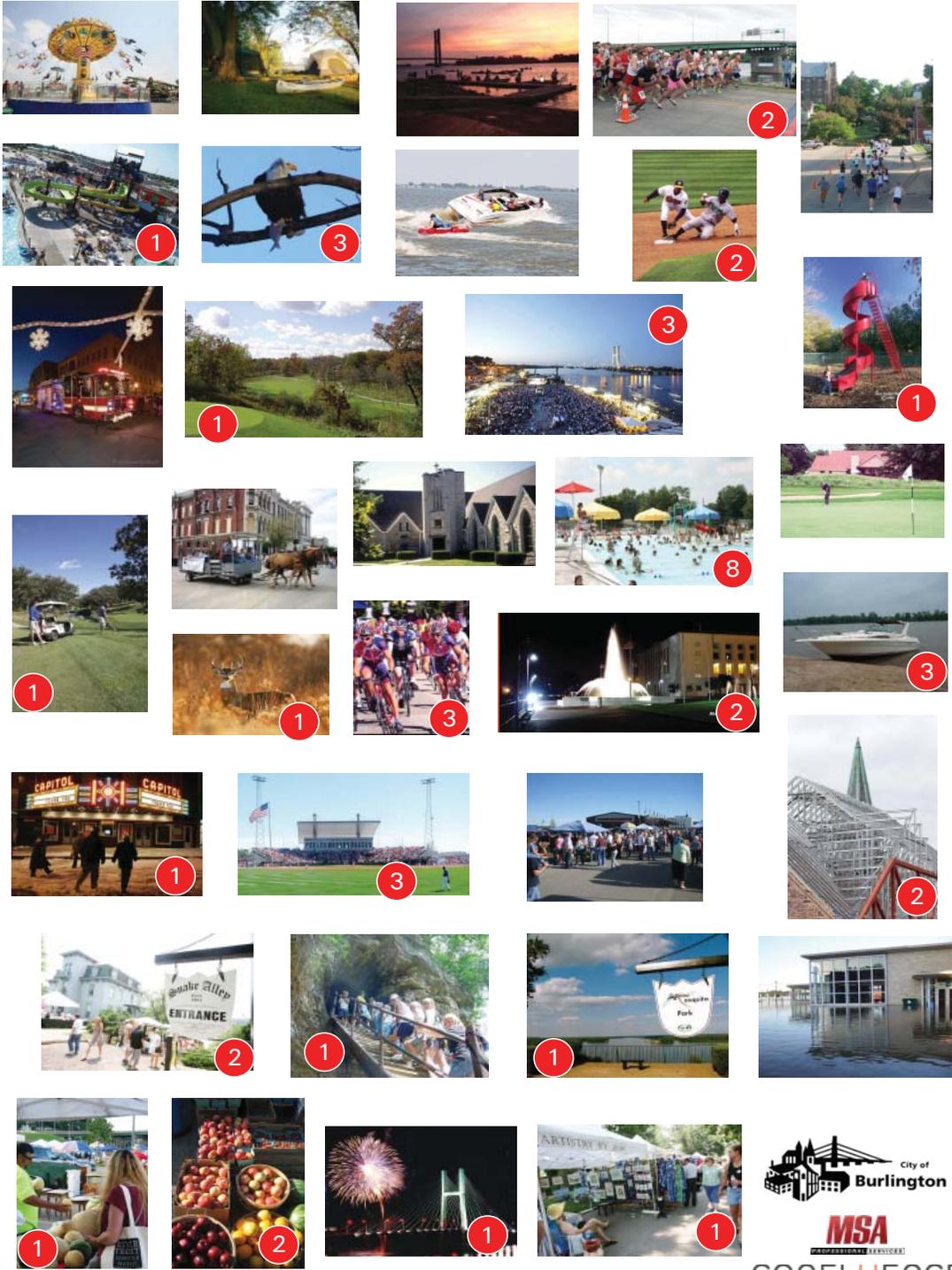
Q: What are the essential features that make Burlington, Burlington?

A:

- The town hasn't changed that much in 50 years. The old buildings are still standing; many of them empty for 20 years or so and need to tear them down and have someone build something nice as a restaurant or park on the lot. To have people move back, the town needs to look nice, and have jobs created.
- The historical features of the downtown, the river and the beautiful scenic and river vistas. Our industrial base here is a positive, CNH, Amer. Ordinance, etc.
- Snake Alley, Crapo and Dankwart Parks, Band Concerts, City Pool, Mosquito Park, Mississippi River, cultural opportunities, civic music, art center, Players Workshop, Heritage Center.
- Snake Alley, Bees Stadium, Rec Plex, River Front, railroad
- The river front, the hills, the churches
- Riverfront and historic downtown, Snake Alley
- Library, caring people
- All of the old structures, the river, the parks, the cemeteries, Victorians, the hills, Fairway Center seems like a perfect place to have something great happen. Perfect location.
- Snake Alley, parks, riverfront, downtown, hills and ravines.
- River, downtown, rail depot, parks
- River, hills (bluffs), Snake Alley
- Professional baseball. Library
- The river. The downtown. We should continue to refurbish all of the old attractive buildings downtown.
- Historic homes and buildings, Riverfront
- River, railroad
- River, railroad, old industries, people, open minded....
- Tradition, topography, and climate. Slow to adapt. Quick to give negative criticism.
- Family oriented activities such as the Rec Plex

BURLINGTON 2032 Community Life
Recreation | Entertainment | Art

Community Identity and Vision
Choose the most appealing qualities



B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING



Growing Prosperity

Community Identity and Vision

Industries | Transportation | Architecture | Commerce

Identify Burlington's character



Station #2: Land Use & (Re)Development

Q: Are there any specific areas or sites that you feel are primed for redevelopment? Please describe the site location and any specific uses you would like to see there.

A:

- The Manor project- sitting empty for years. We need a nice mall with a major restaurant located there to help draw people.
- The 27 acres along Hwy. 61 where Flint Hills Manor South Madison are north of Klein Center.
- Downtown empty store fronts.
- Old Manor, old railroad shops, depot, Apollo School, Fairway Center, Downtown buildings
- The downtown as upper-story residential and 1st floor retail
- I'd like to see something great happen with the train station, the block on Main Street that was torn down and the empty warehouses.
- Buildings on N. 3rd next to police department are perfect for condos. Former typewriter shop boutique hotel for downtown. SE corner 4th and

Court brownstone style townhouses. 200/300 blocks S. Main small scale, high density, mixed use. Area between Jefferson and Washington parkland.

- Old Wal-Mart area
- Roosevelt, Mt. Pleasant, Fairway Center is great potential
- Much more could be done with downtown. I hear a lot of complaints about City bureaucracy discouraging individual efforts in this area.
- Renovate Dankwart Park pool and downtown buildings.
- The Manor
- Bracewell Stadium should be updated/upgraded. It should be turfed and made available for public use.
- The old manor site is prime a development site for commercial. I would like to see that property sold.

Q: Do you have a favorite redevelopment project completed in the City in the past 10 years?

A:

- There hasn't been any big projects completed. We need aggressive people that aren't afraid to make good decisions.
- The new library and reuse of the old library as the Heritage Center.
- Burlington Public Library, Heritage Center
- River Park Place, new library, Alda Leopold
- Soon to be completed Capitol Theater
- Library, the Heritage
- The Bridge was a nice improvement; looks just like Oakland, CA Bay Bridge span. Mister Motos is what I'd like to see more of and 9 the Art Gallery. Skate park.

- Library
- Mercy Building
- Fun city, Pizzazz, GRMC, the industrial park.
- Library, community field, the hospital
- Downtown apartment developments
- Downtown apartments/downtown riverfront
- Riverfront
- Burlington Apartments
- The Vision Iowa Projects seem to be most significant. For a rather small investment of public funds we had nearly 29 million in improvements.

Q: Are there any recent redevelopment projects that you have not liked? If so, what and why?

A:

- The Manor project. We had poor organization... and are now in a large debt over it with nothing but empty ground.
- Moving James Madison Middle School.
- Replacing James Madison School with a new middle school. It has a beautiful location and plenty of room to add on.
- Didn't like pouring money into the old depot, the Old Capitol
- Super Wal-Mart because it causes people to believe they are getting "bargains" at the expense of independent businesses.
- The development that is going on in West Burlington using prime blocks soiled farm ground that is irreplaceable. Hospital could have been where Fairway Center is?
- Catfish Bend. If is good for the community but the building itself is unattractive.
- Manor, only because nothing has happened.
- The money sunk into the auditorium has STILL left us with a fossilized building.
- Plan and develop the Manor. It would be nice to leave it as an open green space. Eventual 61 bpass will not be favorable to retail development of that area.
- Roosevelt Ave. median strips were poorly designed for maintenance.
- Most projects have been a positive.

Q: Are there any specific areas or parcels at the edge of the City that you think are most appropriate for new development? Are there any specific uses you would like to see there?

A:

- The Industrial Park, the Shell building standing empty, we need new development there and south of town, otherwise West Burlington's tax base will grow, not ours.
- South Madison Ave. south of Klein Center would be ideal location for an upscale retirement complex.
- South area west of airport. Old Manor Area.
- I would like to see less sprawl and more in fill
- A real state park for young people, not metal make-shift stuff!
- Fill in the gaps between existing development on S. Roosevelt.
- South and north on Hwy. 61
- Encouraging further widening of 61 north of Burlington would greatly enhance the transportation features of this area.
- Haskell Road
- Along south end of Roosevelt
- All of the area to the southwest of the city is good for development. I would like to see expansion there.

B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING

Q: What kinds of development do you believe the City is in need of in the next 20 years, and why?

A:

- Burlington needs more jobs, good paying ones, to keep our younger generation here, and more, nicer housing areas.
- Tear down odd dilapidated housing and build new housing.
- Public-Private partnerships. Industrial parks. Intermodal facility.
- Preservation of existing stock of older buildings
- Better street lighting for pedestrians, better sidewalk maintenance for pedestrians.
- Centers for the arts, music, a university, a teen center to keep the young people here; give them an opportunity for a 4 year degree, real entertainment, ask young people what they want for their city.
- Small to medium office space. We don't have the structures for good paying white collar companies.
- Housing, entertainment
- Mixed development, residential. Also a new convention center like Ottumwa!
- New ice arena. New condos. River Road bike and recreation path. FUN recreation to attract young people.
- More industry. Are we pursuing Caterpillar? They came here once before.
- Needs more industry. More small businesses downtown. Indoor recreation for children that all can afford and an outdoor pool that actually has space for swimming, not just slides.
- Remove small, old houses to make lots for new homes.
- All areas should grow. Must have jobs/employers to make a reality.
- Housing always seems to be an issue (or shortage). Development of new homes of moderate cost would be good.

Q: What kind of new land development do you feel the City should not encourage?

A:

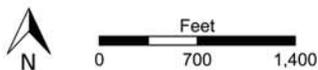
- Do not need more low-rent housing...
- Mobile home parking
- Small PUDs less than 6 acres.
- Mobile home development
- Casinos, things that drain the citizens of their funds and end up not bettering the quality of life.
- We should not expand commercial or residential new development when we have existing buildings and infill sites. This is unsustainable environmentally and economically especially if our population is not growing.
- Fast food restaurants, fewer chains
- Keep industrial out have enough that it doesn't close off commercial and residential. Case, etc. blocked river development North of Burlington.
- None! The more the better.
- No more Big Box Stores. They discourage the small retailers downtown.
- Leave Manor as green space. Develop the downtown first. We don't need another superstore that would be the same in every community.
- Rentals, multi rentals
- Do not encourage sprawl!
- Anything that would be detrimental to the image of our community (although that would of course be debatable in some cases). For the most part, any development if in compliance with current codes and land use should be a positive.

Burlington 2032
Redevelopment Downtown
Existing Land Use - Downtown

Place a dot where you would like **redevelopment** to occur.

Legend

	City of Burlington		Agriculture/Open Space		Industrial
	City of West Burlington		Residential		Public/Institutional
	Lakes & Rivers		Recreational Commercial		Commercial
	Parcels				

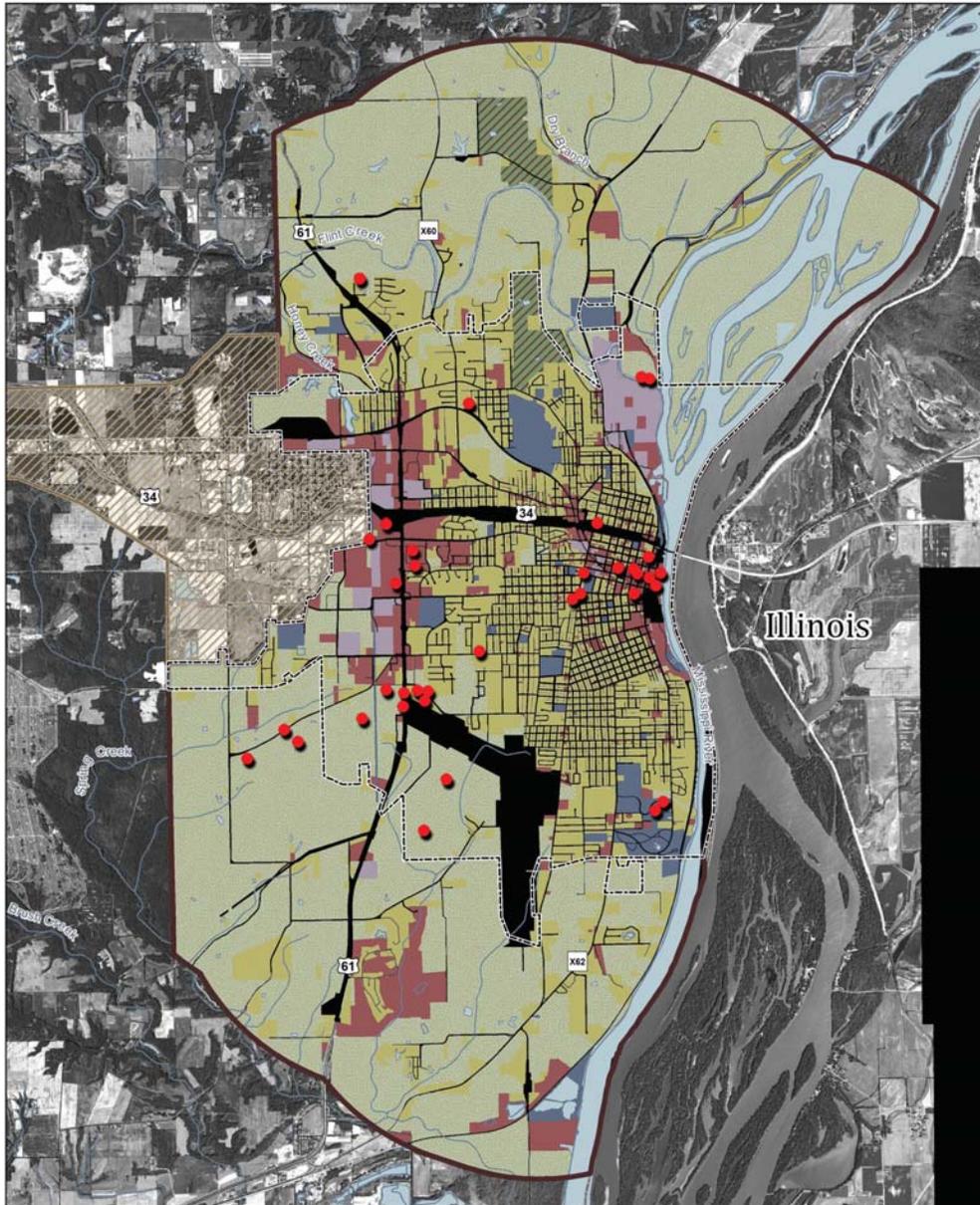


B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING

BURLINGTON 2032 Land Use and (Re)Development Existing Land Use

Place a dot where you would like **growth or development** to occur.

- Legend**
- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Planning Area | Roads | Industrial |
| City of Burlington | Streams | Agriculture/Open Space |
| City of West Burlington | Residential | Public/Institutional |
| County Boundary | Recreational Commercial | Transportation |
| | Commercial | Surface Water |



Station #3: Transportation

Q: Describe any specific streets or intersections where either congestion or safety is a concern to you.

A:

- Too many people running red lights- need cameras at the intersection, especially on Roosevelt.
- Rebuild the Cascade Bridge.
- Sunnyside at new Aldo Leopold School. Central Avenue/Osborn Street intersection.
- Blackhawk School area. 14th Street needs to return to a 2 way street due to the new subdivision being built.
- Any downtown corner is a hazard for a pedestrian! It is safer to “jaywalk” because there is no expectation the drivers will stop as they should at a stop sign.
- Bottom of Central Avenue and Osbourne Street
- Roosevelt and Agency. Roosevelt and Mt. Pleasant. Roosevelt and West. Roosevelt and Main Road.
- Roosevelt and Agency (dangerous)
- Division/Curran
- Agence and Curran intersection can sometimes be a problem area. Cars going north on Curran wanting to turn left many times backs traffic up for nearly a block.

Q: Did you use either the Burlington Urban Service (B.U.S) or SEIBUS regional bus service in 2011? If yes, please describe the quality of your experience. If no, please indicate why not.

A:

- No, because I drive a car.
- No, BUS; Yes, SEIBUS; I rely on my automobile.
- No need (for either) but I know others need these services.
- No; No
- No, I drive or walk. Are both of these services really necessary for the size of the community?
- No
- No
- No, live in the country
- No, I live 1.5 miles from work so it is an easy drive. I might consider it is the bus ran more often. I think we need to offer more public transportation options; the costs of car ownership are high but largely hidden.
- No
- No
- No, not convenient to where I live
- No
- No
- “Schedule” and 24-hour “service” process took me a year to understand. “Service” level so low that system is difficult to comprehend.
- No
- No, I have however ridden on both and they seem to be quality services.

B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING

Q: Are there any improvements you would like the City to make to walking or biking facilities (sidewalks, bike lanes, bike trails, etc.)? If yes, what and where?

A:

- There are signs up on West Ave for bike lanes, which is way too busy and a good place to get hit. Other towns have a lane painted and marked bike lanes which is safer.
- The city is doing a good job at Crapo Park walk and bike ways.
- North/South overpass for vehicles and pedestrians and bikes over railroad from Sunnyside to Mt. Pleasant Street.
- Bike trails available
- I would like to see bike lanes that give access across the city. Sidewalk maintenance a priority.
- Since I have been in Burlington, I have wanted to walk from Crapo Park to the gazebo at Riverfront Park along the river. Let's make that happen!
- I used to be able to walk and ride my bike on the road that I live on presently and (grew up on). Now I am for the most part fearful that I will be hit by a car if I do either. Cars consistently drive over the speed limit since it is now a paved road. This is on Gear Avenue.
- We ought to add walking trails along the sewer lines in the ravines (they are used already). Bike trails should be put in whenever possible.
- Complete walk/bike routes to connect major points of interest throughout the city. Marked bike lanes, routes. Bike racks at points of interest.
- Continue development of bike/trails. Someday put Irish Ridge all the way from Sunnyside to Mt. Pleasant. It's frustrating to have to go around the ends of Sunnyside and it would alleviate traffic on Roosevelt Avenue.
- Yes, all of the above, especially along the river.
- Bike lanes on West Avenue, Mt. Pleasant and Sunnyside
- More bike lanes, especially in park areas.
- Sidewalk down Sunnyside
- Provisions for pedestrian and bike traffic are generally abysmal especially across and along Roosevelt Avenue and areas west of Roosevelt.
- Over Roosevelt at West Avenue. Along Mason by new middle school.
- We need to continue the sidewalk improvement program assuring that curbs at the sidewalk are accessible by disabled persons. Bike trails in the city would be nice but not all roadways are wide enough for them and costs might be prohibitive.

Burlington 2032 Transportation

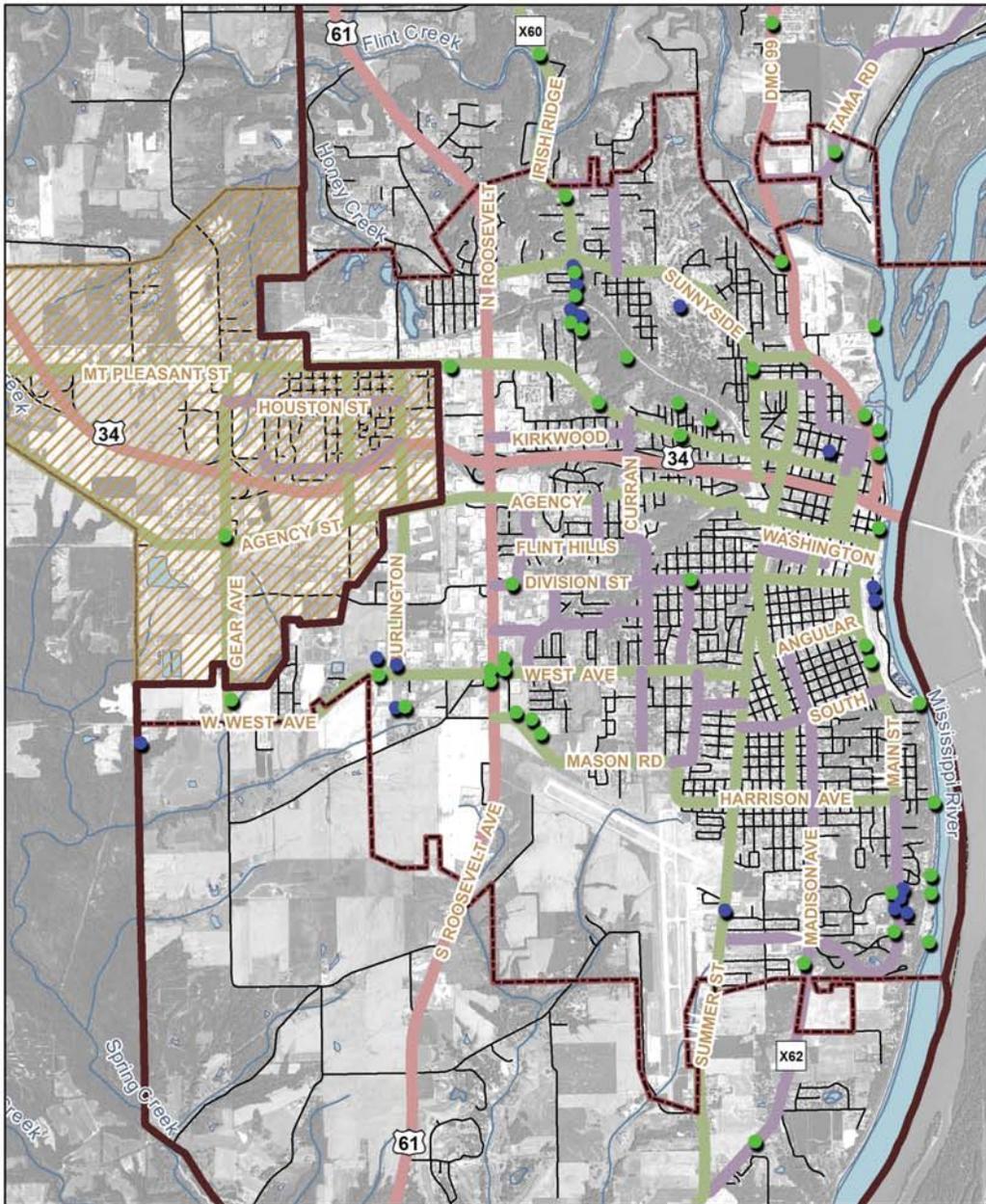
Existing Transportation Facilities

Place a **GREEN** dot where you would like the City to make *bike or pedestrian facilities* improvements.

Place a **BLUE** dot where you would like the City to make *road, highway, or other facility* improvements.

Legend

Planning Area	Lakes & Rivers	Local Roads
County Boundary	Streams	Principal Arterial
City of Burlington		Minor Arterial
City of West Burlington		Collector



Station #4: Economic Development

Q: Would you like the City to actively encourage or discourage growth in any specific economic sectors? For example: Entertainment, Retail, Professional & Technical Services, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Health Care & Social Assistance, Educational Services, Construction, Transportation & Warehousing.

- A:**
- The City should encourage manufacturing and probably all of the above, which they should have been doing in the past. This town needs a larger tax area because property owners here are over-taxed compared to other areas with more industry, etc.
 - Our transportation is important.
 - Encourage entertainment, professional and tech services, manufacturing
 - Retail and restaurants
 - Encourage tourism, downtown retail, manufacturing and education services
 - Please pursue the installation of residential water meters. I believe that the present method of billing encourages substandard housing and discourages improvement of single family homes.
 - I'd like for all aspects to be encouraged especially information technology and renewable energy using solar, wind, and geothermal.
 - Encourage entertainment, IT, education, cultural opportunities. Discourage warehousing.
 - Encourage all sectors.
 - Encourage all the above and look for new ideas and work on our airport!
 - Growth in new housing
 - Improve K-12 education (and other factors for educational success). Upgrade public transportation (especially for young and elderly)
 - Encourage all
 - I would encourage any growth in compliance with codes and the land use plan. It is also very important to support current businesses in the Burlington area.

Q: Are you aware of specific economic development efforts by the City, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, or Downtown Partners? Which of those efforts, if any, do you see as successful and worth the effort?

- A:**
- The public sees very little in development efforts by these groups which are probably over-paid for the work getting done.
 - Visitors Center is very important. Chamber works for all of us. Downtown Partners has helped with downtown development.
 - Yes, all of them.
 - The redevelopment of historic buildings downtown
 - I am on the Renewable Energy Committee. We are seeking to fundraising to install wind energy or solar at the Port of Burlington. Also, we are investigating installing light tubes in the welcome center.
 - Nearly everything they do!
 - Downtown, riverfront, manufacturing, GE case
 - Downtown Partners, very worthwhile
 - Tech and manufacturing
 - Aware of Chamber's local efforts, but appalled at Chamber's anti-human political activities at national level.
 - Tax abatement and TIF
 - Burlington needs to expand on the waste water treatment quality and the water distribution system to provide for additional industry and manufacturing.

Q: What challenges do you see the community struggle with as it works to retain and grow businesses?

A:

- We need to push harder for a 4-lane highway connecting us to Monmouth and going north on Hwy 61 which is a major factor when an industry or large business wants to locate here which is faster and easier to ship out their products.
- The city needs to have an attractive look. No one wants to move to a community that is not kept up.
- Negative perception by local residents. Higher crime rates.
- Quit providing incentives to businesses to either stay open or add a job or two.
- Negative comments in the paper.
- Water conservation
- Some lack of vision with some people. In order to move forward different angles need to be tried.
- Nostalgia for heavy industry/manufacturing jobs. Increase in online shopping. Lack of sufficient skilled workers.
- Negative attitude too many residents never leave Des Moines County!
- Infrastructure. School development, library, etc. are the kinds of projects that make the city look as if it is progressing. A great convention center (a la Ottumwa) is a possibility.
- Aging population. We need more young and highly educated people
- Keeping enough high paying jobs to support growth and retaining young people.
- Taxes
- Problem of inadequate education of local workforce and poor transportation options for that workforce.
- We need to be low cost alternative. We should develop ways to provide low cost utilities and health care costs.
- The city has been confronted with tight budgets for some time and that will most likely continue for a few years. The best way to insure progress to create positive improvements will be through public/private partnerships.

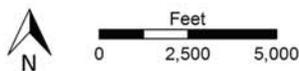
B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING



Planning Area - City Limits

Economic Development

Place a dot to indicate where you **work**.



Station #5: Parks & Recreation

Q: What park and recreational facilities do you currently enjoy using?

A:

- All the parks are used and we enjoy them. The Blackhawk trails are fun to show visitors, just keep up the pathways.
- Crapo Park, North Hill Park,
- Dankwardt and Crapo Park.
- Sunnyside Park and Rec Plex.
- The Dankwardt swimming pool as it is an outdoor facility, accessible, and friendly. It is inviting to adults as well as children. The indoor facilities are noisy and not conducive to the adult population as well as the children. The West Burlington Pool is strictly for children. Maintain the existing pool with plans and action to either build around it or in the Dankwardt Park location.
- South Hill Park, great views. Dankwardt Park, dog park. Crapo Park
- Walking trails in Crapo Park and Riverfront Park
- I enjoy using Dankwardt, Crapo, Perkins, Starrs Cave and the YMCA.
- Crapo Park
- Crapo and Dankwardt Park
- Fun City, Dankwardt and Crapo, Riverfront events, BSD, Snow Ball, etc.
- Dankwardt Pool and Crapo Arboretum. I can't imagine a city this size without a municipal pool. That certainly would not be a selling point for anyone who wanted to move here.
- Dankwardt pool, Bees Park
- Riverfront, Crapo
- Dankwardt Park Pool, South Hill Park passive space, Dankwardt and Crapo picnic space.
- The Rec Plex. It has been a great investment in terms of drawing people to our community thereby creating an economic impact for businesses here.

Q: Are there any improvements you would like to see to any of these parks? What and where?

A:

- The parks are nice, just keep up the roads and don't have potholes in them. Crapo had too many last year.
- Keep the Swimming Pool open.
- Keep the municipal pool open
- More parking at Rec Plex.
- The young people should have a professionally designed state park
- I would have to think about it. Maybe having educational classes on botany. The parks are pretty perfect to me.
- Restore Cascade Bridge
- More flowers
- Update some of the necessary facilities. They are kind of dated.
- New swimming pool, new recreation center
- Every city around us (even Mediapolis) has a better pool than we do with features that make people want to go there. West Burlington's pool puts us to shame.
- Renovate the pool. Keep lap area in design.
- Road repair
- Need to maintain and improve pool at Dankwardt. Should maintain South Hill Park preferably with fewer "amenities" there actually.
- Expand Rec Plex to include indoor facility. Fix Dankwardt Pool.
- I have always thought an indoor facility at the Rec Plex would be good. The issue of course is the capitol investment.

B.2 PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING

Q: Would you like to see any new parks and recreational facilities (public or private) in the City? What and where?

A:

- The kids need entertainment in this town as an indoor ice-skating rink and basketball practice area.
- I think the city needs our open swimming area for our citizens. We don't always need all the bells and whistles to have something nice.
- If there were any, I would like to see a dog park closer to West Burlington.
- The area west of Hawkeye Street between Jefferson. Washington is an ugly wasteland and would be good for passive recreation. Ditto the south side of Valley between 5th and 7th. Bonn's Hollow.
- Bigger park north side of town.
- Yes, at the Manor. Put some green space in there.
- Yes, yes, yes
- Manor would be a great park location.
- An indoor playroom would be great for young children during inclement weather. Recently went to one in Raleigh that had a climbing area and various recreation equipment. There was an adjacent room that could be rented for private use for parties or group meetings.
- Indoor facility at the Rec Plex to include basketball courts.
- We have some great parks but we really don't need more.



Existing Community Facilities

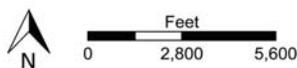
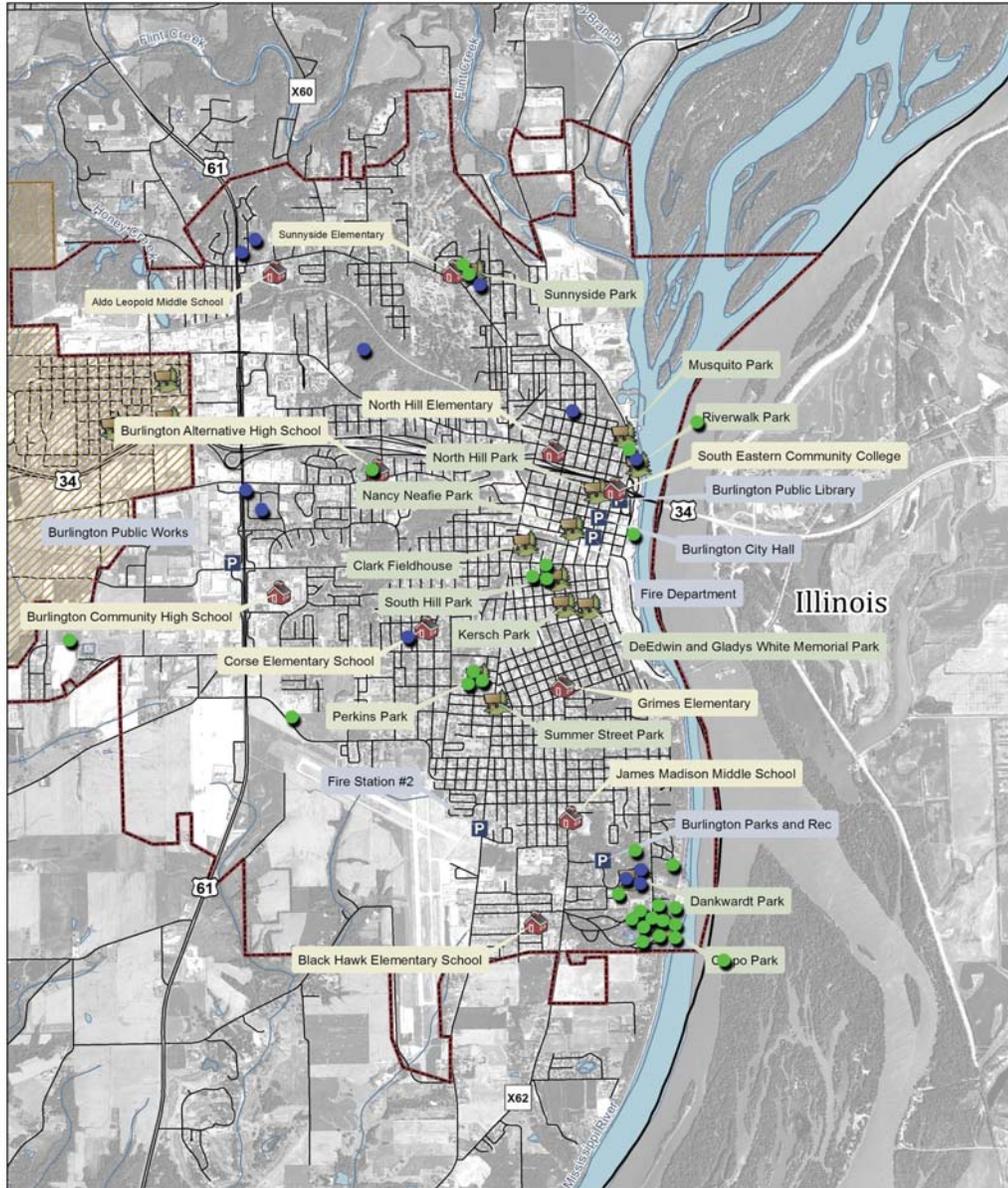
Parks and Recreation

Place a **BLUE** dot where you would like a *new park or playground*.

Place a **GREEN** dot to indicate the park *you use the most*.

Legend

	City of Burlington		Education
	City of West Burlington		Government Building
	County Boundary		Park/Rec
	Roads		
	Lakes & Rivers		



Focus Group Guidelines



Comprehensive Plan Update

2012-2032

Focus Groups – City of Burlington Comprehensive Plan Update

Location: City Hall Council Chambers (3rd Floor), 400 Washington St.

The City of Burlington is in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan for the community. The new Comprehensive Plan will be utilized by the City to define policies and priorities for coordinated growth; community revitalization; and the provision of public services/infrastructure. The planning document will include policy statements, goals, objectives, guidelines, maps and graphics to serve as a guide for future land use and fiscal decision-making.

Additional information on the City can be found at: www.burlingtoniowa.org

Additional information on the Comprehensive Plan, along with a community survey can be found at: www.BurlingtonCompPlan.com

Focus Groups are being held to bring community leaders and interested individuals together and gather input and hold discussion on particular topics. General topics / questions can be found below, though the discussion is not limited to these.

Wednesday, February 8, 8:00-9:30 AM

- **Youth**
 - Topics:
 - How do you describe Burlington to others?
 - What do you like about living and going to school here? Has it been a good place to grow up?
 - What would you like to change about Burlington?
 - Do you think you will stay in Burlington after graduation? If not, do you think you will you move back some day? Why or why not?

Wednesday, February 8, 10:00-11:30 AM

- **Land Use and Development**

- Topics:

- What are the current real estate trends, in terms of sales, lease rates, etc.?
 - What do you consider to be Burlington’s growth opportunities, in terms of either land use types or development location?
 - What are the greatest challenges to real estate investment in Burlington?
 - What is the relationship between the development community and the City in Burlington? Does the City have a reputation as being either easy or difficult to work with on development projects?

Wednesday, February 8, 3:00-4:30 PM

- **Healthy Living (Recreation, Parks Facilities, Quality of Life & Healthcare)**

- Topics:

- What are the most important recreation facilities in the City and region? What is missing?
 - In what ways are healthcare or recreation part of the Burlington identity today? In what ways could they be?
 - What quality of life characteristics stand out to you? What could be enhanced to elevate the quality of life in Burlington?

Thursday, February 9, 8:00-9:30 AM

- **Downtown, Waterfront, and Tourism**

- Topics:

- What are the current success stories in the Downtown area?
 - What role does downtown play in tourism promotion, and in tourism spending?
 - Downtown parking – how difficult is it to find parking, and what is the general perception?
 - How is downtown residential growth affecting perceptions of the downtown area? How is it affecting merchants?
 - How are people using the waterfront now? Is there potential for more use, especially for recreation and tourism?

B.3 FOCUS GROUPS

Thursday, February 9, 10:00-11:30 AM

- **Employment and Economic Development**
 - Topics/questions:
 - What trends are you seeing in the local economy, especially regarding employment?
 - What are the advantages to operating a business in Burlington? Disadvantages?
 - For corporate leaders: why is your business operating in Burlington?
 - By what methods does the community (City, GBP, etc.) actively work to attract, grow, and retain jobs
 - What should the city or community be doing to attract, grow and retain jobs?
 - Are there any shortcomings to the local transportation network inhibiting success or growth, including transit, road, rail, airport and port infrastructure/service?

Thursday, February 9, 1:00-2:30 PM

- **Civic Groups and Non-profits**
 - Topics:
 - In your experience, relative to other communities where you have lived or worked, how active and engaged are residents in civic organizations?
 - Are the leaders and participants of the various civic and nonprofit groups in the city sufficiently unique and diversified, or is there significant overlap, such that a small group of the same people is sustaining many different organizations?
 - Is there a shortage of leadership and participation in civic organizations? If yes, define that shortage – what demographics are underrepresented?
 - What else could civic organizations be doing to encourage and develop leaders?

Thursday, February 9, 3:00-4:30 PM

- **Service and Retail Business Success**
 - Topics:
 - What trends are you seeing in the local economy affecting your business success (positive or negative)?
 - What challenges are you facing today or do you anticipate in the next 12 months?
 - Could the City/Chamber/DPI/etc. be doing more to support your success? If so, what?



Focus Group Participants

Employment and Economic Development

x	Jason Hutcheson	Grow Greater Burlington
	Rob Ritson	Two Rivers Bank
	Jason Martin	CNH
	Jenny McNeil	Temp Associates
x	Dan Gifford	West Burlington City Administrator
	Chuck Griffin	American Ordinance
	Gloria Warner	Dresser Rand
	Jim Davidson	Mayor Burlington
	Rob Higgins	GRE - Pzazz Complex

Service and Retail Business Success

	Jon Bullips	Bullips Tire
	Don Sheedy	Peaches Restaurant
x	Jason Hutcheson	Burlington Partnership, Econ Dev
x	Dan Gifford	West Burlington City Administrator
x	Bryan Bross	Klingner Engineering

Land Use and Development

x	Mike Pierson	Land Developer, Pierson Inc
	Deb Fowler	Century 21 - Realtor
	Sherry Reed	Century 21 - Realtor
	Sheila Crowner	RE/Max - Realtor
x	Jim Olson	President, Two Rivers Financial Group
	Scott Peck	Residential Developer
	Justin Bushong	SEIRPC
	Matt Warner	County Assessor
	Bob Fleming	City Council
	Bob Brueck	Local Developer, Brueck Construction

Downtown, Waterfront, and Tourism

x	Steve Frevert	Burlington Partnership, DPI
	Charlie Walsh	F & M, Riverfront Advisory
	Shawn Foehring	Bistro 322
x	Beth Nickel	Burlington Partnership, CVB
	Bob Brueck	Local Developer, Brueck Construction
	Dave Walker	Fun City / Pzazz Manager
	Todd Darnall	McConnell Lofts, Downtown Development
	Dana Johnston	Drake Hardware & Software
	Becky Anderson	City Council, Downtown Developer

Youth

	Morgan Shaver	BHS
	Matt Hard	BHS
	Amber Mead	BHS
	Britney Grimshaw	BHS
	Alex Gaddis	BHS
	Liz Darnall	BHS
	Hannah Ebbing	Burl/ND
	Lauren Hillyer	Burl/ND
	Patrick Moore	Burl/ND
	Chris Reed	City Council

Civic Groups and Non-profits

	Michelle Randal	Kiwanas
	Win Boyd	Rotary
	Scott Noll	Burlington YP
	Sharon Ford	Community Action
	Bob Bartles	Hope Haven
x	Bill Ell	Retired City Council/Fire Chief, Library Board, Steamboat Days,
	Deb Mulch	YMCA

Healthy Living

	Brad Selby	Parks Dept
	Kim Perlstein	DMC Conservation
	Kirk Danforth	Rec Plex
	Deb Mulch	YMCA Director
	Kevin Brueck	Team BEAST
	Tyler Bickel	Bike Burlington
	Jaimie Dengler	Great River Medical
	Madeline Emmerson	SEIRPC
	Chris Reed	City Council

x Comp Plan Advisory Committee Member

Youth Focus Group Notes

- Would move back to Burlington after school/college but did not believe there would be jobs available for them.
- The riverfront is very busy, parking and trailer parking is completely used in the summer and during Steamboat Days.
- Excited about stores and shopping downtown as well as the improvements; want to see more downtown development.
- Most are leaving for school, several are staying.
- Proud of Burlington and want to see more pride in the community, especially at school sporting events.
- Burlington is a safe city to grow up in.
- Burlington has a reputation as a small river town with family-oriented activities.
- They felt there was plenty of visual access to the river, but limited physical access.
- Would like to see more river front parks including beach access
- They expressed a disappointment with The Hawkeye's notification of events/happenings after the fact, their portrayal of the reputation of Burlington, and the lack of sports coverage for the Burlington High School sports programs
- Would like to see extended pedestrian/bike connections between parks, Rec Plex, and the high schools/SCC
- A safe crossing of Hwy 61 (Roosevelt Ave.) is desired

Land Use & Development Focus Group Notes

- Need more quality rental homes/units; renting out for sale homes to many families that are not ready to buy or building. Need higher quality rentals/executive rentals.
- Need more area to develop for housing, different price-points of housing.
- Affordable housing is dependent on who is the buyer/renter and what they can afford.
- Would like to see more townhouse/row house/condo units downtown and in other growth areas.
- New commercial growth is set up for HWY 61/ Roosevelt, West Burlington and redevelopment downtown.
- Burlington's development polices and incentives are not in line with West Burlington's, there is a disadvantage for many to develop in Burlington.
- Amenities are a huge factor in selling the region and need to be incorporated into redevelopment and new residential development... question is how to pay for them.
- Bike trails are needed, like ones in Fairfield, IA.
- Burlington needs to use TIF more to help new development and provide infrastructure
- The group felt a convention center on the site of the existing post office would be of great benefit to the downtown
- Commercial properties downtown are available but no businesses to fill them
- There is a lack of high-end or market value rental properties in town
- The group expressed a corrosive atmosphere between developers and the city officials
- Would like to have better working relationships between Burlington, West Burlington, and Des Moines County
- A lack of river front amenities: temporary boat docking, beach access, more river front park area

Healthy Living Focus Group Notes

- City needs to connect trails sidewalks and add more/clearer wayfinding signage for recreation and community facilities
- Bridge at park needs to be replaced/fixed/open.
- Need more parks on North side of town and in new residential neighborhoods.
- Very few kids bike to school.
- Pool is great amenity that needs to be kept open.
- Ignorant drivers and rude drivers are a huge problem to bikers and runners; swerve to hit both a lot – unsafe
- Need more shade in parks, trees in well-used spaces on edges for people to relax under.
- Water recreation/river recreation needs to be more developed and promoted.
- Want to continue Blue Zone concepts.
- Need better food quality restaurants, less fast food.
- City needs to continue trail development.
- Need to promote and provide more information on recreational facilities – maps for trails.
- Need bike light at Rec Plex for safer crossing
- Public boat ramps need improvements
- Need facilities/amenities map of riverfront
- Non-boaters need better connections to river
- Amtrak Station needs renovations, great opportunity.
- Unofficial mountain bike park could be promoted?
- Seniors need to know about existing recreation opportunities
- Need more urgent care facilities
- Very hard to find a Family Doctor, hospital is trying to attract more doctors to the region.
- Single Source Recycling is needed.
- Count needs to step-up recycling abilities and services.
- Need more planters- more attention to planters downtown.
- Sewer trails are an amenity that could be improved and promoted.
- Lack of winter recreation opportunity
- Need more bike racks at parks
- It is tough to plan new community events
- Need amenities for young professional families
- Need Community Pride to be increased
- A microbrewery would be great
- Minor League baseball team is a huge asset and needs to see continued/growing support.
- Youth need places to hang out without causing trouble.
- Would like to see row houses and infill downtown.
- Expanded Bike trails and better, more helpful signage, stretching stations/exercise nodes
- Sidewalks and roads in bad shape for runners and riders
- Lack of bike trails to parks
- Many playgrounds in parks around town have no shade. Would like to see shade structures or build playgrounds nearer to existing trees
- Lack of park maintenance, non-working drinking fountains, inadequate maintenance of bathroom facilities, which are often closed
- Mention of a Safe Routes to School grant that should be utilized for all the new school district developments
- A desire for an indoor complex at the Rec Plex, the 2 gyms at the YMCA are always booked
- A need to promote or educate what facilities are where to the citizens
- Need a bike crossing at Roosevelt and West Ave.
- The flint trail project was discussed as a step in the right direction for regional recreation planning
- The train depot is not aesthetically pleasing
- More medical clinics would be a great benefit to everyone in the community
- Opportunities for volunteers to help keep Burlington beautiful, clean-up sponsors
- The group discussed a need for an ‘Event Planner’ or some sort of city liaison to educate people on events and amenities

Downtown, Waterfront & Tourism Focus Group Notes

- Very focused on using existing urban fabric to support infill growth over costly suburban growth.
- Capital Theater and new housing projects are a huge success and can continue to promote downtown.
- Need to support more infill and renovations.
- Need shuttles between downtown/riverfront and casino to connect and promote both.
- Casino is a huge asset to tourism along with Rec Plex.
- Create district for tourism promotion
- Many warehouses and older buildings need to be renovated and out of town owners are just letting them fall apart.
- Need more market rate rentals downtown, enough subsidized.
- \$95K-\$115K condos/lofts/row houses units needed
- Key attractions study is important.
- Regional COG moving out of downtown was big blow to downtown employment and traffic; need to keep these types of businesses downtown.
- Success Stories: Capitol Theater, Residential Rehabs, Library, Heritage Center, Arts Center, Restaurants, Tom's Market
- Want better wayfinding signage around town to direct to downtown/Roosevelt/Rec Plex
- There is not a parking problem downtown, there is a walking problem. Too many vacant storefronts between shopping destinations. People just drive and park all around downtown
- Could offer tourism packages = flights/dinner/movie/lodging
- City's website needs to be updated to be a useful promotion tool
- Desire for a downtown hotel with gym/pool/spa
- Roof decks and gardens are great spaces for downtown residents
- Need to incentivize downtown development
- Need an attraction map for the city, more education and training of "front-line" people, i.e. hotel clerks, gas station attendants, etc.
- Burlington is beautiful, lots of photography opportunities
- River boats will be making nine different stops in Burlington, only here for a day or less, how to best welcome them?
- SCC and Capitol Theater are working on a shared space agreement for the second floor of the old Capitol Theater
- Surge in airport use is a good thing that will help continue to make Burlington a regional destination
- Winery tours are available but not well promoted, could expand that market
- The 'Warehouse District' has a lot of potential for development
- There was discussion on how to go about developing and reinvesting in properties owned by absent/out-of-state landlords
- Mention of strongtowns.com
- There is a lack of connectivity between visitors and means of accessing river recreation opportunities
- Expand train service and renovate train depot
- Lack of child care services downtown
- A sports field downtown would be beneficial
- Most downtown shops are closed on Sunday mornings when a large amount of church-goers are there
- A website should be developed to let business owners and entrepreneurs know what types of funding, assistance, and protocols need to be followed to start a business
- There is a lot of outside interest in Burlington, but a general lack of pride from within the community
- Identified a 'Developer vs. City' mentality that should not exist
- The Hawkeye fuels the negativity and tarnished reputation
- Visitor docks on the riverfront and boat excursion company to offer way to enjoy river for visitors

Employment & Economic Development Focus Group Notes

- Casino is a huge asset, employment draw.
- Manufacturing is strong and continues to see huge need for skilled workforce.... Looking outside region to attract workers.
- Community College and schools are dropping the ball on preparing kids in Burlington for skilled labor employment. College-only career path is not good for the region and employment needs...keeping people raised here at skilled positions is much easier than attracting outsiders.
- Advantages:
 - o No traffic jams
 - o Quality of life
 - o Choices in housing
 - o River
 - o Recreation
 - o Scale of community and services available
 - o Local technical workforce
 - o Excellent schools
- This plan has to be a guide for doing what needs to be done... one that will outlast the current elected officials and staff and give them the tools and backing to make tough decisions for the community.
- Need more pride throughout community
- Cost of living is a huge asset
- Need to better network young professionals and interns in major employers
- Family environment is a huge asset
- Need more young professional involvement in community
- Burlington is a great community...promote that!!
- Need temporary/rental housing that is quality, and condos.
- The current media conditions feed unnecessarily on negativity
- NIMBY's are a problem.
- The Hawkeye is very negative; City and Community need to get positive stories out.
- Wineyards's expansion is great for the community and that area.
- Need better transportation routes... 61 to north would be great as a four-lane and 34 into Illinois should also be four-lane to improve Burlington's connections.
- Amtrak needs ticketing or a kiosk
- Many streets need patching and improving
- BNSF is a huge asset to manufacturing and economic development as well as the river port.
- Regional Airport with Commercial Service is great for economic development
- Burlington is a blue-collar community based on manufacturing, but there is a lack of technically skilled workforce in Burlington and hard to recruit good employees
- Employers have lowered the standards of job applicants
- Disappointment in SCC's fostering of technical programs, no or limited skill/trade training
- Pros: small town/short commutes, centrally located between major metros (Chicago, St. Louis, Des Moines, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Omaha)
- Historically excellent technical workforce
- The outside perspective of potential employees when researching Burlington is always negative (Google clean-out of negative hits)
- Burlington has been described as a "social desert", more suited for families, which can make it hard to recruit employees
- "We've allowed the nay-sayers to be the spokesmen of Burlington" (C.A.V.E. People, Citizens Against Virtually Everything)
- Lack of decent temporary housing for new residents/employees
- Road maintenance contributes to bad reputation
- Rail/river opportunities, what are the potentials for growth

Civic Groups & Non-Profits Focus Group Notes

- Many citizens and churches are very involved, always could use more but likely average for City's of similar size.
- Hard to find dedicated long-term volunteers to turn over important project leadership to.
- Need for more quality rental housing
- Need for affordable housing (purchase)
- Need more kids involved with community organization
- After school programs are great and want to expand
- Hospital has tons of great volunteers
- Community news is focused on the negative things, need more pride, more positive coverage.
- Large employers are great at helping with volunteer recruitment but there is room for improvement and companies need to continue to support employees volunteering to show community they care.
- Need to list volunteer and community service opportunities to promote them to people who may not know about them all.
- Need to find more support for vocational and skilled labor educational opportunities.
- Overall, there are few/limited citizens involved in community activities and a majority that is disconnected
- The involvement from those participants is fantastic, but taken for granted by most
- There are too many "slum-lords" or landlords that do nothing to maintain their low-rent properties
- Lack of housing for disabled
- Some city codes are unnecessarily prohibiting development of more housing for the disabled
- One way to get/keep youth and young professionals involved in civic organizations is to give them responsibilities and tasks.
- Should try to limit organizations board members from staying in the same positions for too long
- There is a lack in child care facilities for those with disabilities and mentoring opportunities
- The Hawkeye newspaper was brought up again as a strong source of negativism

Service and Retail Focus Group Notes

- Identified the Chamber as a good use of funds for promotion and business development
- The "shop locally" campaign should be expanded to all local businesses not just "mom and pop shops"
- City is viewed as a roadblock to development
- Inconsistencies in the enforcement of code throughout the city
- There needs to be dedicated project managers for each development project so developers are not getting inconsistent information from different city staffers
- Need to communicate to citizens how great Burlington is!
- The work ethic of people in town seems "sour"
- The school system is seen as a bright spot in the community
- Retail business is good, potentially not really a need for retail growth with the expansion of online shopping
- The Manor development needs to be re-branded. The manor name is carrying a negative connotation
- Website that has "keys to the city" or development standards – city/banks/developers = A,B,C's of development
- Expand low-impact low-cost recreation opportunities, such as disc golf
- A downtown catalog should be developed to let developers know which properties are available for development



Growth & Development Workshops

In May 2012, the City of Burlington hosted three workshops and a public open house to discuss land use and development issues. The workshops were designed to gather stakeholder opinions on “Regional Collaboration”, “Downtown/Waterfront” and “Highway 61 and Residential Neighborhood Growth”.

The workshops were held over two days (May 29th and 30th) and concluded with a public open house to discuss the ideas gathered during the workshops. Approximately 40 people participated in the workshops and open house. A list of participants can be found on the following page.

Regional Collaboration

Objectives

- Identify issues/opportunities that may/may not exist
- Facilitate regional conversation & develop a common understanding among regional agencies
- Foster economic development possibilities and policy discussion

Topics

- Growth and development expectations (location)- *Comparison of City of Burlington growth areas to growth/development expectations of West Burlington, Des Moines County and other regional activity*
- Growth and development expectations (type)- *Industrial growth, retail/service/tourism growth*
- Transportation needs and issues- *transit, trails, freight, Highway 61 realignment*
- Park and recreation facilities and services
- Education issues and opportunities (K-12, postsecondary)

Downtown/Waterfront

Objectives

- Maps indicating locations of key public and private improvements
- Written goals, strategies, guidelines

Topics

- Future land use- emphasize certain uses in certain places within “Downtown Mixed Use”?
- Private property guidelines- parking, building setbacks, building design, signage, landscaping
- Discussion on the difference between a standard (integrate into zoning) and a guideline (only in plan)
- Public ROW improvement- streetscape standards/guidelines, streetscape improvement priorities by location, waterfront access and amenities

Highway 61 & Residential Neighborhood Growth

Objectives

- Maps indicating locations of key public and private improvements
- Written goals, strategies, guidelines

Topics

- *Future land use*
- *Private property guidelines- parking, building setbacks, building design, signage, landscaping*
- *Discussion on the difference between a standard (integrate into zoning) and a guideline (only in plan)*
- *Public ROW improvement- streetscape standards/guidelines, streetscape improvement priorities by location, desired transportation improvements to address congestion and safety, bike/pedestrian/transit enhancements*
- *Examine residential growth areas- greenspace needs/wants, transportation routes, guidelines on development*



Workshop Participants

Regional Collaboration

Ron Knoke	City of Burlington
Steve Hartman	City of Burlington
Jason Hutcheson	Greater Burlington Partnership
Bryan Bross	Burlington Planning & Zoning Commission
Eric Tysland	City of Burlington
Amber Verkuilen	City of Burlington
Beth Nickel	Greater Burlington Partnership
Mary Beard	Southeast Iowa Regional Airport
Kim Perlstein	Des Moines County Conservation
Tom Broeker	Des Moines County
Mike Norris	SEIRPC
Jim Olson	Two Rivers Financial Group
Dan Gifford	City of West Burlington
Jim Ferneau	City of Burlington

Downtown and Waterfront

Amber Verkuilen	City of Burlington
Eric Tysland	City of Burlington
Don Tramon	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Bryan Bross	Burlington Planning & Zoning Commission
C.E. Walsh	Farmers & Merchants Bank
Janet McCann	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Hal Morton	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Dennis Imler	Farmers & Merchants Bank
Dana Johnston	Drake Hardware and Software
Scott Zaiser	Zaiser's Landscaping, Inc.
Beth Nickel	Greater Burlington Partnership
Mike Darnell	McConnell Lofts
Jim Olson	Two Rivers Financial Group

Highway 61 & Residential Neighborhood Growth

Steve Hartman	City of Burlington
Martin Salino-Hugg	Metzger-Johnson Architects
Madeline Emmerson	SEIRPC
Ryan Gourley	City of Burlington
Don Sheedy	Triple S Leasing
Matt Shinn	Two Rivers Bank/Imagine Campaign
Mike Pierson	Pierson Inc.
Jim Olson	Two Rivers Financial Group
Susan Diehl	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Bob McCannon	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Mark Miller	Ruhl & Ruhl
Amber Verkuilen	City of Burlington
Eric Tysland	City of Burlington

Public Open House

Mark Morris	KBUR
Steve Zager	Zager Properties
Mike Hartman	Retired
Ann Distelhorst	
Mike Pierson	Pierson, Inc.
Jeff Heland	Friends of the Depot
Don Tramon	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Diane Sweiden?	Friends of the Depot
Mark Moore	Friends of the Depot
Florence Paterno	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Mark Miller	Ruhl & Ruhl
Beth Nickel	Greater Burlington Partnership

Regional Collaboration Workshop Notes

- Southeastern Regional Airport has a 5 yr Master plan which is considering things like zoning and purchasing adjacent properties within the runway clearance zones, which may increase traffic loads from the new Edward Stone middle school. Also considering relocating the terminal to the west side of property to take advantage of the Highway 61 corridor access.
- The Comfort Inn on the SW side of town is the extent of the current water and waste water infrastructure. The infrastructure currently existing to the north of this point towards town, but does not cross Highway 61 to service the area immediately west of the airport.
- The city of Burlington and West Burlington are both implementing projects to increase capacities for their waste water treatment plants, but the increase in the capacity will not be able to handle further growth to the SW. The two cities will need to collaborate on increasing the capacity for the benefit of future development.
- The Flint Creek Watershed study may have regional impacts from a mitigation of erosion/sedimentation/pollution standpoint from the confluence of the Mississippi west to New London.
- Future Highway 61 upgrade extends 4-lanes from just north of Burlington to South of Muscatine where the 4 lanes currently transition to 2 lane. Currently in the land acquisition and ROW delineation phase.
- Highway 34 is planned to be widened to 4 lanes between Burlington and Monmouth with a bypass around Biggsville. This is currently in the planning stages.
- Some of the regional similarities compared to Burlington are population decline, infrastructure needs, and rural growth.
- Des Moines county has zoned lands for two miles surrounding the city of Burlington, but not zoned any other lands within the county. (2 mile Zoning Plan)
- Employment impact with possible large fertilizer development just south of Burlington. Project would create 2,400+ construction jobs for 24 months and contribute 160+ full time positions.
- Flood control issues north of Case Corp. on the Flint creek need to be addressed.
- Multijurisdictional collaboration needed to discuss techniques to mitigate on both Iowa and Illinois side.
- Efforts should be focused on Highway 61 alignment, upgrades and possible north-south alternative (e.g. Curran/Plane). A bypass scenario may be discussed in the future if traffic loads increase.
- The Flint River trail is a precedent-setting trail for the region and many of the participants thought that a more extensive network of regional trails was desired to connect all of the natural amenities in the region. The Des Moines County greenway study should be utilized for trail planning.
- Starrs Cave Nature Preserve is owned by the state and leased to Des Moines County, with their lease coming to an end within 5 years. The plan is to move those functions to the proposed Aldo Leopold Interpretive Center which is planned as a 235 acre eco-tourism attraction off of Mill Dam Rd.
- Big hollow recreation area to be completed soon.
- There needs to be a bigger education and marketing push to highlight the natural amenities of the region.
- Campgrounds on the river have been requested by citizens, but the participants discussed the difficulties of maintenance.
- All call for more bike lanes and better way-finding signage along bike routes was mention.
- ADA Accessibility issues within the conservation attractions

- Des Moines County Conservation has encouraged exploring opportunities to expand public hunting within conservation lands
- Regional collaboration is needed to decrease competition among Burlington, West Burlington and Des Moines County for tax base and development.
- West Burlington’s residential growth area is the farm land to the west of Target off of Gear Ave. Their industrial growth area would be located further west, near the new ethanol facility.
- West Burlington has postponed building a new public works building to facilitate a Deery Bros. growth area.
- West Burlington does not want to annex any land unless that land is volunteered to be annexed.
- The Regional Housing Trust Fund that has plans for 95 homes with half of those completed
- Educational infrastructure has a definite regional impact. The open enrollment policy seems to affect how efficiently infrastructure is utilized.
- The School Board and City should work on aging or decommissioned school properties to address the vacancies prior to the building becoming empty. So the city may address in-fill growth opportunities and proper conversion of the use/zoning.
- Development of a regional technical school needs to be seriously discussed. Whether that be through SCC or other means, possibly through the use other vacant school properties
- The region’s tourism season runs from May to sept/oct.
- The Rec Plex is a big regional draw with talks of an indoor rec center being developed
- The crowds drawn by the Rec Plex tournaments sometimes are causing a shortage of hotel inventory and guests are being directed to Monmouth and ft. Madison which means that hotel tax dollars are being spent elsewhere. Where is the appropriate place to develop a hotel?
- Trails need to have connections with other trails throughout the city
- Wayfinding signage needs to be uniform to the region but individual districts have unique character.
- The desire for improved conference center locations in the regional was expressed, in particular the options of having appropriately sized break-out spaces has been an issue with not getting certain conferences in the recent past.
- At one time Burlington’s airport serviced 38,000 passengers yearly. It is now down to 7,000. They need at least 10,000 for certain grants or funding opportunities. Ways to increase commercial flight activities should be considered with regional growth to the Southwest.
- “Close to home” vacations is the marketing push right now to encourage people to vacation but to use the local amenities.
- Fairway Winegard facility is implementing innovative stormwater techniques and should be utilized as an example of best practices.
- Burlington’s short-line freight is award winning. Is there a way to capitalize on this?
- Public/private partnership opportunities should be further discussed.
- Greater Burlington partnership should facilitate regional cooperation on growth issues and development opportunities.

Downtown/Waterfront Workshop Notes

- There is a desire to have a hotel downtown, whether a new building or re-use of an existing structure. A downtown hotel would help sell Memorial Auditorium opportunities.
- There is a facade restoration grant being applied currently to a several blocks of Jefferson St. The grant does not specifically require facades to be done with historical accent but that is encouraged or desired from all of the participants.
- For most passer-bys, Burlington is like every other town that just travels the commercial corridor of Highway 61 and never experiences, or is even aware, of the beauty and historical significance of downtown. An effort needs to be concentrated on getting Roosevelt traffic to experience downtown.
- Several trails from downtown should be developed to Roosevelt, ideally one to the north, central and south portions

Highway 61 & Residential Study Workshop Notes

- Maintenance of roadway and curbs/medians is lacking.
- How do we maintain current median plantings? How can we expand that treatment or some treatment to create uniformity and continuity throughout the corridor?
- Discuss possibility of having business owner's maintain/clean the ROWs adjacent to their sites.
- Complete Streets should be used to safely incorporate alternative modes of transportation safely.
- Sidewalks/trails should be added to Roosevelt. Bike lanes could also be added to the frontage roads.
- West Ave seems like the most reasonable location for a crossing, either elevated or under the roadway, because of the existing trail. Ideally, there should be other crossings at Division St. or Agency St. and Mt. Pleasant St.
- The highway overpass bridge is not safe for pedestrians, but is heavily used by them. What is the best way to provide crossing opportunities to reduce this risk?
- The comprehensive plan should incorporate a comprehensive trail/bike lane map for those currently existing and for future trail routes.
- Further discussion is still needed on the extent of architectural standards that should be required in the Highway 61 Corridor. However, all agreed that some uniformity could occur through landscaping.
- Currently each of Burlington's "entry signs" has a different look. Signage should be uniform.
- A technology based signage would be helpful when looking to the future. With at least a scan code that could update traffic status or upcoming events and possibly lead visitors to the downtown area.
- The entry sign on the south end of Highway 61 should be moved further south (the bend by Comfort Inn) to represent Burlington's true boundary
- Infrastructure upgrades (including locating the post office or other public facility) could help spur development at the "Highway 61 Redevelopment Area".
- Trails should connect Rec Plex to Crapo through Perkins Park. Trail development overall should be prioritized by cost. For example, the easiest to implement seems to be those that could accommodate on-street bike trails.

B.4 GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS



