

Perry Comprehensive Plan
Summary of Input from Community Workshops - April 3-4, 2013
(All events were held at the Town/Craft Center)

Summary of Engagement:

- Small Group Listening Sessions, April 3-4 - Consultants met with 20+ community members through small group sessions to discuss key issues, assets, and liabilities within the community.
- Community Workshop, April 4, 6:30-8 pm – 21 community members participated in a workshop to generate a list **community values** which will be used to inform the overall **vision** and **guiding principles** of the comprehensive plan.
- For a detailed description and summary of the Community Values exercise from the workshop, please see the “Workshop Activity: Community value statements” on the [Documents and Reports page](#).

Summary of Key Themes and Issues:

- **Housing**
 - Desire for better quality of housing (better heating/cooling, energy efficiency, relative affordability)
 - Maintenance of rental properties is an issues (some landlords are better than others)
 - Not just a rental issue- owner housing has maintenance issues as well
 - Run-down homes/properties hurt community image
 - Desire for diversity of housing types and lot sizes (e.g. larger lots)
 - Foreclosures – People are renting them, but not maintaining adequately
 - Need marketing of housing options (access to information)
 - City has done a good job of removing some houses in tough shape
 - Appearance of trailer park as you enter the town from the RRVT trail
 - Give residents ability to report issues
- **Recreation**
 - McCreary Center
 - Outgrowing the space/doesn't meet needs of all users
 - Splash pad doesn't work on Sundays
 - Splash pad is for little kids- need water feature/park for older kids/adults
 - Duplication of sand volleyball courts
 - Rivalry between older and younger users
 - Soccer - Current Issues
 - Large population of children and adults involved (500+)
 - Town fields are in bad shape
 - Could bring lots of people into town
 - Losing kids/adults to Waukee and Des Moines
 - All recreational, no select
 - Fields are packed; competition for space
 - Soccer - Facility Needs
 - Centralized facilities; accessible location
 - Amenities (concessions, vendors, food trucks)
 - Bathrooms/shelters

- Storage for equipment
 - Irrigated fields/ proper drainage
 - Look at synthetic turf
 - 2-3 adult fields, 6-8 youth fields
 - Indoor facilities in the long-term
 - Do not need to be lighted-could work up to it
 - Bleachers
 - Phased plan; space to grow into
 - Funding is a barrier (concessions as fundraising opportunity?)
- Desire for outdoor water park/outdoor pool
- Skate Park – built one, but already out of date (changing trends)
- Look at sustainable park design
 - Adaptable to changing trends (e.g. fast, hard surface soccer)
- Trail has improved biking/jogging/running opportunities, however, can be difficult to safely reach the trail in some areas.
- Outdoor recreation could be a tourist draw
 - Bike trail
 - Connect to High Trestle Trail
- Indoor sports facilities (Softball and baseball; multi-use)
- **Downtown**
 - Concern over vacancies/loss of businesses
 - Desire for places to live, shop, and work
 - Businesses not open when people are here – particularly for those who commute to other communities
 - Need to create a place where people want to be; create “community” through downtown
 - Big expense to open a new business- purchasing and repairs; need to subsidize start-up costs
 - Pop-up businesses
 - Niche stores have come in- but locals only buy so much, especially if not open when people are in town
 - Would like to see revitalization like East Village in Des Moines
 - Downtown Revolving Loan Fund exists but isn’t used much
 - People come downtown only for events; need more events to draw people in
 - Community needs to support downtown businesses
 - Maintenance of buildings by landlords and renters an issue
- **Food/Restaurants/Shopping**
 - Need sustained dining and restaurant opportunities
 - Town has some unique/diverse dining options
 - Trailside amenities could be unique draw
 - Like Whistling Donkey in Woodward or Flat Tire in Madrid (at trailheads)
 - Restaurants- not open consistent hours
 - Fairway not open on Sundays
 - People go to Des Moines for greater diversity – shopping and restaurants
- **Identity/Image**
 - Question raised by facilitators: What is Perry? Is it a bedroom community? Or is it an independent, small town?
 - Varied responses; some say “both”

- Residents value access to Des Moines/Ames for work, entertainment/cultural, and retail options; but also enjoy small town character, close-knit community, and sense of having most day-to-day needs met in Perry
 - Image of community is good/improving
 - Improved image will attract housing development and economic growth
 - Perry has an identity as “place to go” for history – historic character and tourism is an asset to build on
 - Empty storefronts on 2nd; lack of visibility of downtown
 - Perception of Perry as a “safe” community – low crime rates
- **Community Life/Activity**
 - Need sustained community festival/identity (festivals start/stop, change- would be good to keep consistent)
 - Consider a bike theme?
 - Friday Fest – first in downtown, then moved to Pattee
 - Better in Pattee Park because of bring your own beer opportunities, additional space, more inclusive; but some vendors didn’t move to the Park when the location changed
 - Builds community; brings people together
- **Growth + Development**
 - Do we grow or stagnate?
 - Annexation is needed to expand the tax base
 - Need to bring in homes just outside of town that are already being served by city services (police/fire)
 - Need more area to offer for new development; create a good image to attract businesses and builders and diversify socio-economic level of families
- **Economic Development/Jobs**
 - Diversify job opportunities (varying wages, higher wages) – manufacturing, retail, office
 - Lots of residents commute out to Des Moines
 - Expand commercial along Highway 141 to capture those who commute through Perry
- **Education/Youth Development**
 - Good schools
 - Need center/programming for youth
- **Public Safety**
 - Perry provides public safety services to the surrounding area
 - Need expanded space – particularly would benefit from a garage for vehicles
 - Public safety has improved over the last decade, however, not sure whether those outside Perry perceive it as a safe community yet
 - Highway 141 has the most accidents due to speed and congestion at the stoplights
- **Infrastructure**
 - Pedestrian-friendliness – needs work
 - Around schools – better sidewalks and trails
 - In general, sidewalks in poor condition and missing/inconsistent
 - Sidewalks not built even though codes require them
 - Sustainable funding for sidewalk replacement/repair is needed
 - Sidewalks are responsibility of property owners; older residents don’t have funds to replace them

- Alternatives? Concrete jacking, funding, prioritization, assessment policy (What is it currently? Can it be adjusted/improved?)
- Need amenities for bike riders
- Dangerous intersections for Peds/Bikes
 - Highway 141
- BlueZones – project one year ago to promote healthy choices/walking; are there other ways to get funding for improvements through “healthy living” programs