

**CITY OF FORT ATKINSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FUTURES OPEN HOUSE
OCTOBER 1, 2007
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS = 43**

In October of 2007, the City held a Futures Open House to provide an opportunity for residents to advise the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee regarding the desired future location, appearance, and type of development in Fort Atkinson before the draft comprehensive plan was prepared.

During the open house, participants were given an opportunity to review general information about the comprehensive planning process, to comment on the City's draft vision statement, to review and comment on draft future land use concept maps for different parts of the community, and to participate in a visual preference survey.

OPEN HOUSE RESULTS

Workshop participants were asked to take time to review information and maps located at 12 stations set up around the room. Participants were encouraged to provide comments on the materials at each station by either recording their thoughts on a comment form or by using the numbered stickers and large sheets of paper located at each station. Participants were instructed to place a numbered sticker on the location of the map they wished to comment on and then write the number of the sticker and their comment on the large sheets of paper.

Participants' responses have been organized by station number below.

Station 2: Background

This station presented background maps and information, as well as the results of the City's public participation efforts prior to October 1st. The station was intended to provide a foundation for the rest of the information participants would view at subsequent stations.

Comments from Comment Forms:

None

Comments from Large Sheet:

- Provide 1-page summary of May workshop for people to take and review.

Station 3: Vision and Context

This station presented maps showing regional and local influences that will affect future growth in the City. It also included a draft vision statement for future growth, change, and preservation in Fort Atkinson, and a map showing the City broken down into several planning areas, which were described in greater detail at later stations.

Comments from Comment Forms:

- Thrift is important. So is efficiency. But, please avoid the temptation to always be thrifty and efficient. Please apply aesthetic consideration to everything you do.
- Sustainability is the program of the future. Our only sane response. Better before bigger. Growth through added value to services and products already being offered. Cottage Industries, education over retail and chain expansion.

Comments from Large Sheet:

- Cultural assets, like the library, museum, and arts scene.
- Sustainable economic growth – green!
- Cultural assets supporting long term economic viability
- Important to define what “compact form” means in Fort Atkinson (develop scenarios about how the “edge” of the City should look and function)
- Habitat protection for the area’s flora and fauna
- The cultural significance of our lands and waters and their impact on our sense of identity (i.e., chain retail does not make us – whereas our chains of wetlands do), glacial heritage/land legacy state projects philosophy embraced here
- Focus on becoming an example of a sustainable and cultural small community
- Community gardens downtown and on empty vacant lots around neighborhoods

Station 4: Northwest Quadrant Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

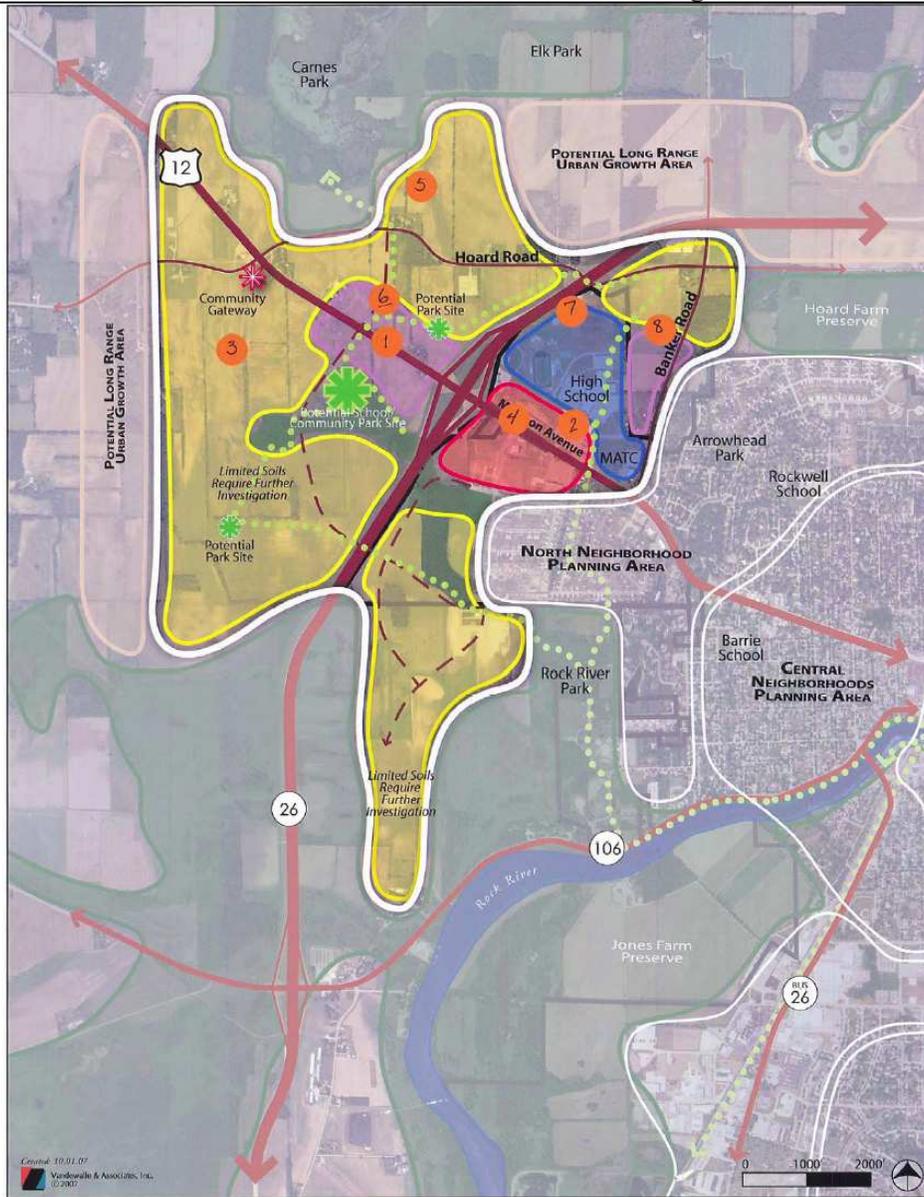
Comments from Comment Forms:

- We managed to slow development from crossing the 26 Bypass, if only for the expense of extending the sewage lines. I think all the reasons for slowing still exist, perhaps even more so, so I’d like to see you concentrate on making better use of the land within before we extend outward. Let’s save some land for the farmers and flora/fauna and the future.
- Make sure enough room is allowed for schools and overall plan allows connections for traffic flow to any possible future schools.
- Like alternative school site on S (by Hwy K) as well. Agree with gateway idea.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Now that there is a concept vision for the northwest side, the community needs to look at various scenarios of what “mixed use” could look like (e.g., Town Center; traditional neighborhood design; other innovations such as co-housing considerations; hybrid concepts unique to Fort Atkinson
2. Revitalized development where Piggly Wiggly was. Create live/work development (like K-Mart site).
3. New residential should be smaller houses/lots on grid patterned streets with pocket parks interspersed. Promotes walking/biking and creates fewer bottlenecks for cars at collector points.
4. Question the existence of four “money stores” which leads to negative image and poor financial budgeting.
5. Development in this area must be sensitive to the extraordinary jewel, Rose Lake. There are very few of these deep glacial marshes left in southern Wisconsin and the waterfront habitat is spectacular.
6. Like the plan west of bypass for park land and mixed use – not big box! Also like the trails to hook up and lead to Carnes Park.
7. Water runoff from WisDOT property negatively impacting school property
8. May be another elementary school site or high school athletic field expansion

Station 4: Northwest Quadrant Planning Area



Opportunities

- Proximity to Madison enhances marketability
- Community gateway experience
- Traditional neighborhood & sustainable design
- Neighborhoods connected across Highway 26
- Capitalize on existing businesses & schools
- Urban mixed use development & redevelopment opportunities

Note: This map is not a Detailed Future Land Use Map or Future Transportation Map for zoning and other decision making. The purpose of this map is to show conceptual future growth options and facilitate public discussion.

Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
- Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood
- Employment
- Environmental Corridors
- Existing Major Roads
- Potential Future Roads
- Main Trails (Existing & Proposed)

Station 5: North Neighborhood Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

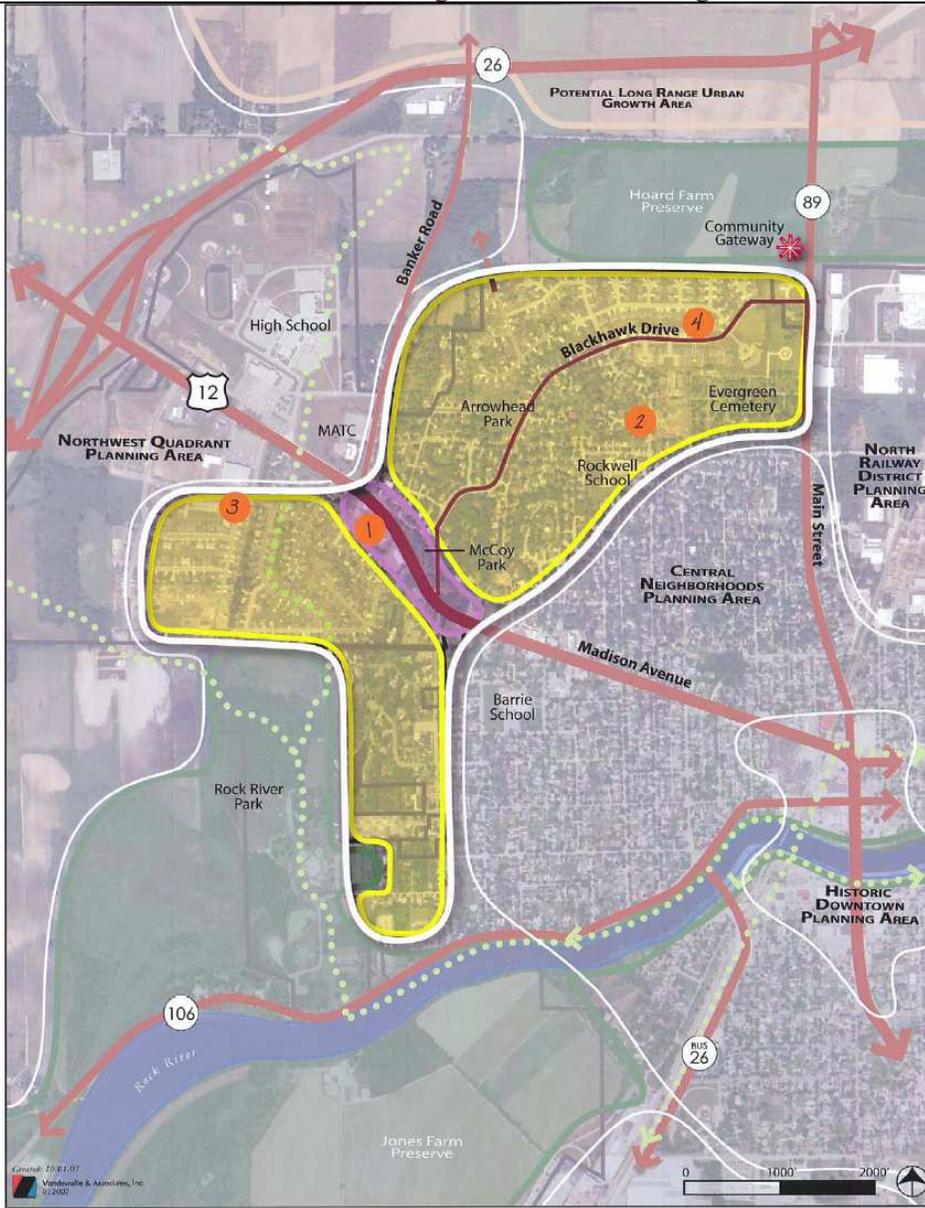
Comments from Comment Forms:

- Connect bike paths and trails to high school from this area. Using Cramer to connect Rockwell School
- Connection of paths between schools along Cramer (High School, MATC, Rockwell). Like urban growth north of Howard farm for distant future.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Improve streetscape – more pedestrian friendly (i.e., parking in rear of buildings, planting along sidewalks, residences above businesses – more mixed use).
2. Will sidewalks be on both sides of street? Some streets have none, while other streets only have them on one side of the street.
3. It's a shame you can't get to Pick-n-Save, etc. from the residential homes behind it without getting into your car. There should be walking paths to get to those stores from the backside.
4. For large apartment complexes and new residential areas that are placed/built on former Ag land, it should be encouraged/required that as many trees be planted (native species) to shade/cool in summer months. Established neighborhoods have them. Tree City, USA? Arbor Day observances?

Station 5: North Neighborhood Planning Area



Opportunities

- Infill tree planting & sidewalks
- Mixed use redevelopment close to Madison Avenue
- Municipal boundary clean-up
- More trail connections to adjacent parks & schools

Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
- Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood
- Employment
- Environmental Corridors
- Existing Major Roads
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- Main Trails (Existing & Proposed)

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Station 6: North Railway District Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

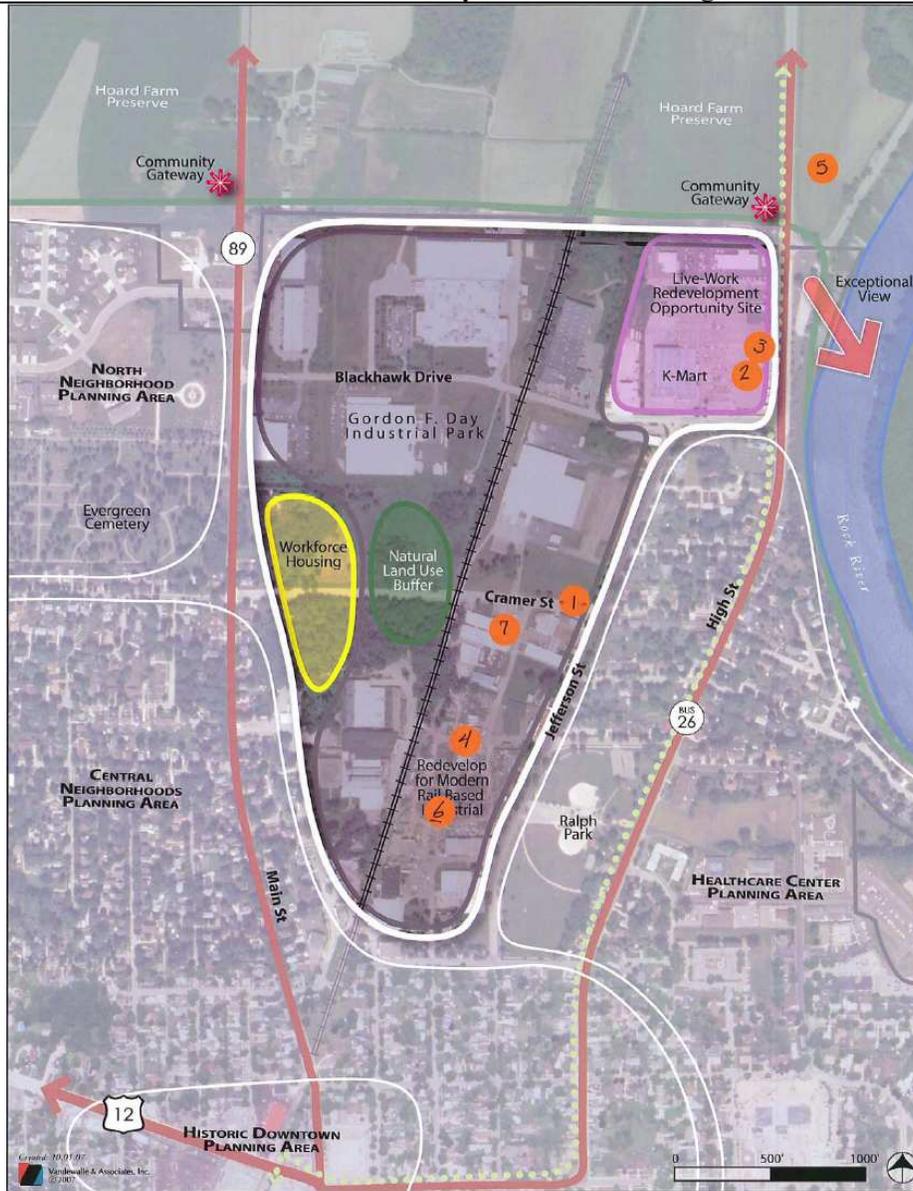
Comments from Comment Forms:

- Aggressive development of current K-Mart space – Target?
- Loman's Scrap Iron – a big negative/eye sore. Very noisy up to midnight! Remove it!
- Run bike trail to high school and on to C. Carner Park later. Make effort to get more business in K-Mart site.
- Like idea of emphasizing airport and rail transport options for industry and other businesses. High Street bike trail okay north of road on south side of Ralph Park, then head west to Edwards and job south to current trail end on Main Street. Like reuse of K-Mart idea.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Connect bike trail at Cramer Street and extend out to High School (and eventually Dorothy Carnes Park). Make as many trails interconnected as possible.
2. Does the parking lot at K-Mart need to be that big?
3. Could they add anything green? Their green area is in very poor condition – no maintenance.
4. Move Lorman's
5. Create/develop a commercial/retail corridor north towards the airport.
6. Lorman's move would be nice, but investigate quality of soil – probably contaminated and was a former fill site.
7. Business may need to grow, but is there room here? Business is focused towards Milwaukee area, so don't want to go to southwest side of town. Can area north of Hoard Farm be planned for industrial use?

Station 6: North Railway District Planning Area



Opportunities

- "Live-work" focus
- Business growth - infill industrial sites
- Job-focused redevelopment in areas closer to park & downtown
- Employment focused redevelopment (e.g. K-Mart site)
- Superior natural entryway experience

Conceptual Land Uses

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- Downtown
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Station 7: Healthcare Center Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

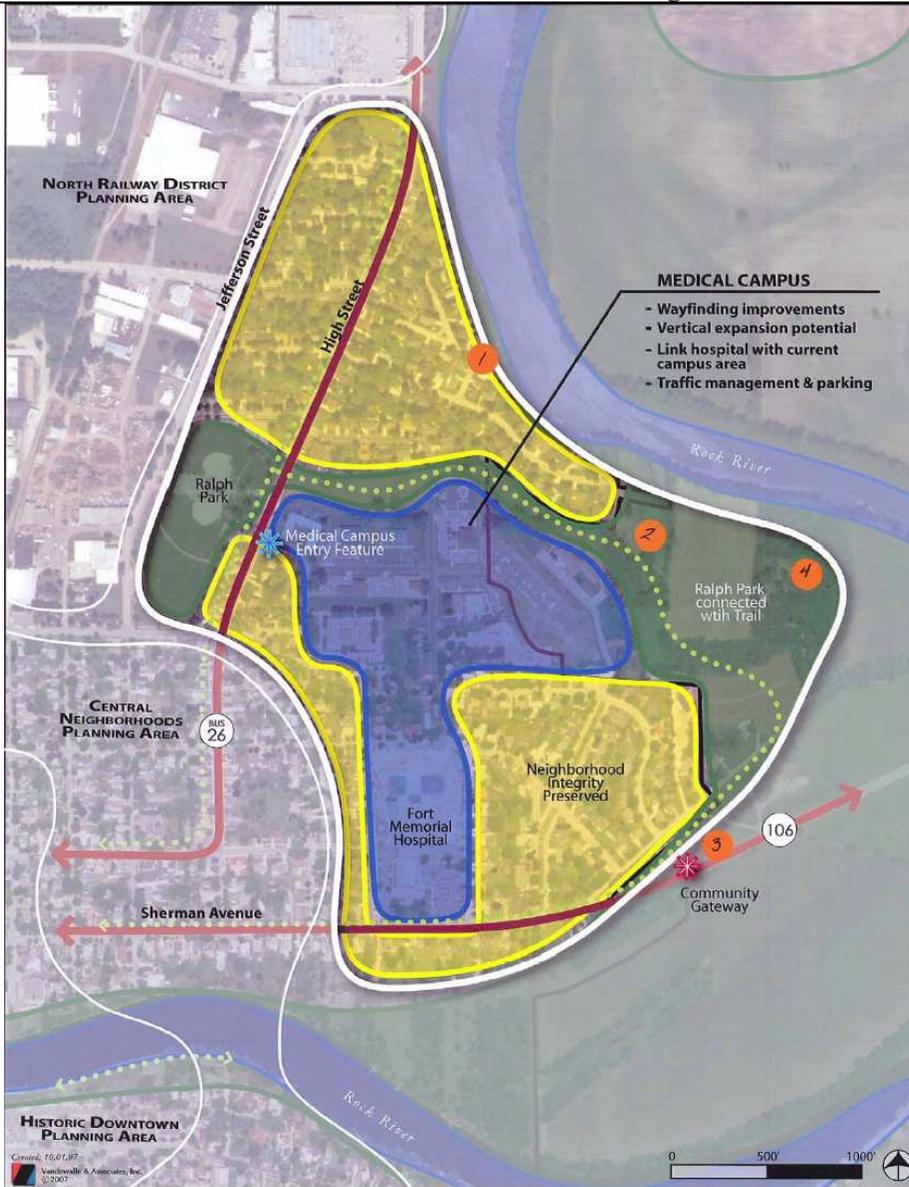
Comments from Comment Forms:

- I live in the neighborhood and appreciate your vision for this area.
- Environmental corridors and “Ralph-Park Connecting Trail” a good idea. I live on Rogers Street and would welcome this in my backyard.
- I like these ideas connecting green space!
- If we detect that the sprawling nature of the healthcare center is pulling apart the neighborhoods, make strong planning decisions to protect the neighborhoods with some of the money the healthcare industry can afford to contribute.
- Get more signage and visible routes to health care areas.
- Like better signage to medical facilities. Preserve river’s edge for public use – River Walk extension.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Protect riverfront for public use
2. Could there be pathways to park/scenic area developed where patients from hospital could be wheeled outside? (Like they’re planning for the hospice facility in Johnson Creek?)
3. This is a marsh – should be preserved. Why is someone filling this?
4. High ground – would be great overlook over river.

Station 7: Healthcare Center Planning Area



Opportunities

- Fort Atkinson Healthcare as regional marketing asset
- Healthcare expansion balanced with neighborhood preservation
- Single story healthcare building sites can expand up
- Access and wayfinding improvements
- Neighborhood preservation & senior housing development

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Station 8: Central Neighborhoods Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

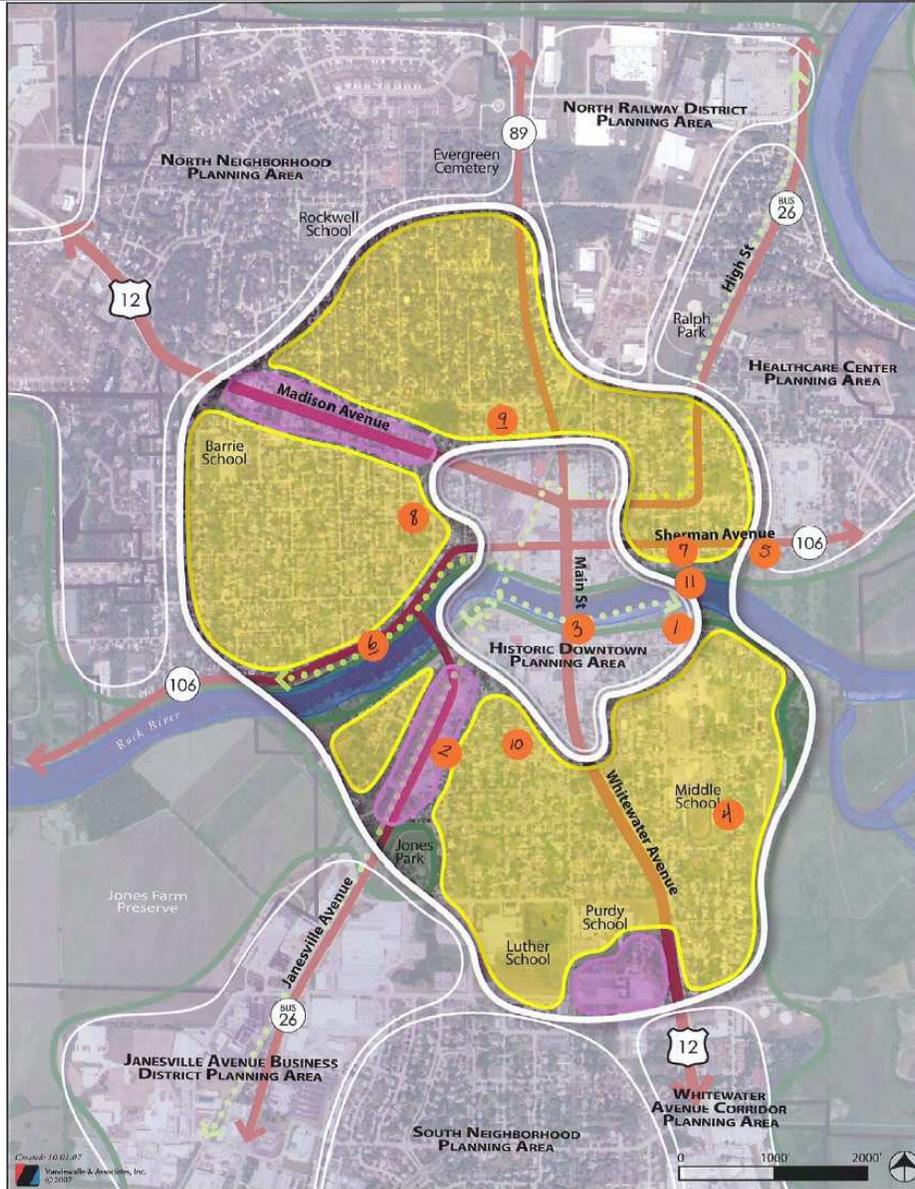
Comments from Comment Forms:

- Work to preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods. I know the “new money” is in the outlying areas, but all our real estate is stronger if we have a strong core.
- Get a third bridge in downtown area to help people living and working in health care area or east of downtown get there including students who need to go to Purdy Elementary or the Middle School.
- Third bridge critical – along High Street corridor. Several spots to infill more dense housing.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Bike trail continuing to Whitewater
2. Improve streetscape – make more pedestrian and bike friendly. Add a bike/pedestrian overpass – maybe into Jones Park.
3. Downtown is dangerous, cars and pedestrian, consider rerouting traffic; coordinate stoplights for better flow; move traffic to one side and consolidate all business and retail on the other side. Add parking or a shuttle.
4. Before or for next meeting can you create overlay that shows current and proposed bike/walking routes so we can see how school kids might ride bike safely to dance club/library/community center and also green spaces and river opportunities/recreation?
5. Expand historic area to include Sherman Avenue
6. Expand historic area to include east to 500-600 block and Riverside Drive to include Intaglio round
7. Expand historic area to include east to 500-600 block and Riverside Drive to include Intaglio round
8. Declining neighborhoods need some reinvestment
9. Declining neighborhoods need some reinvestment
10. Declining neighborhoods need some reinvestment – particularly this neighborhood.
11. Put 3rd bridge to allow easy flow of traffic (with pedestrian walkway on bridge) to get to and from Health Care Center and to enable students to get to Middle School and Purdy and St Paul’s schools. Also, helps people working east of city to get out to 106 and lessen congestion downtown.

Station 8: Central Neighborhoods Planning Area



Opportunities

- Urban living experience
- Single family neighborhood character
- Historic preservation balanced with modernization
- Bed & Breakfast Opportunities
- Schools, parks & downtown as gathering places
- Parks & streets maintenance & improvements
- Neighborhood retail revitalization, along Janesville, Madison & Whitewater Avenues

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Station 9: Historic Downtown Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

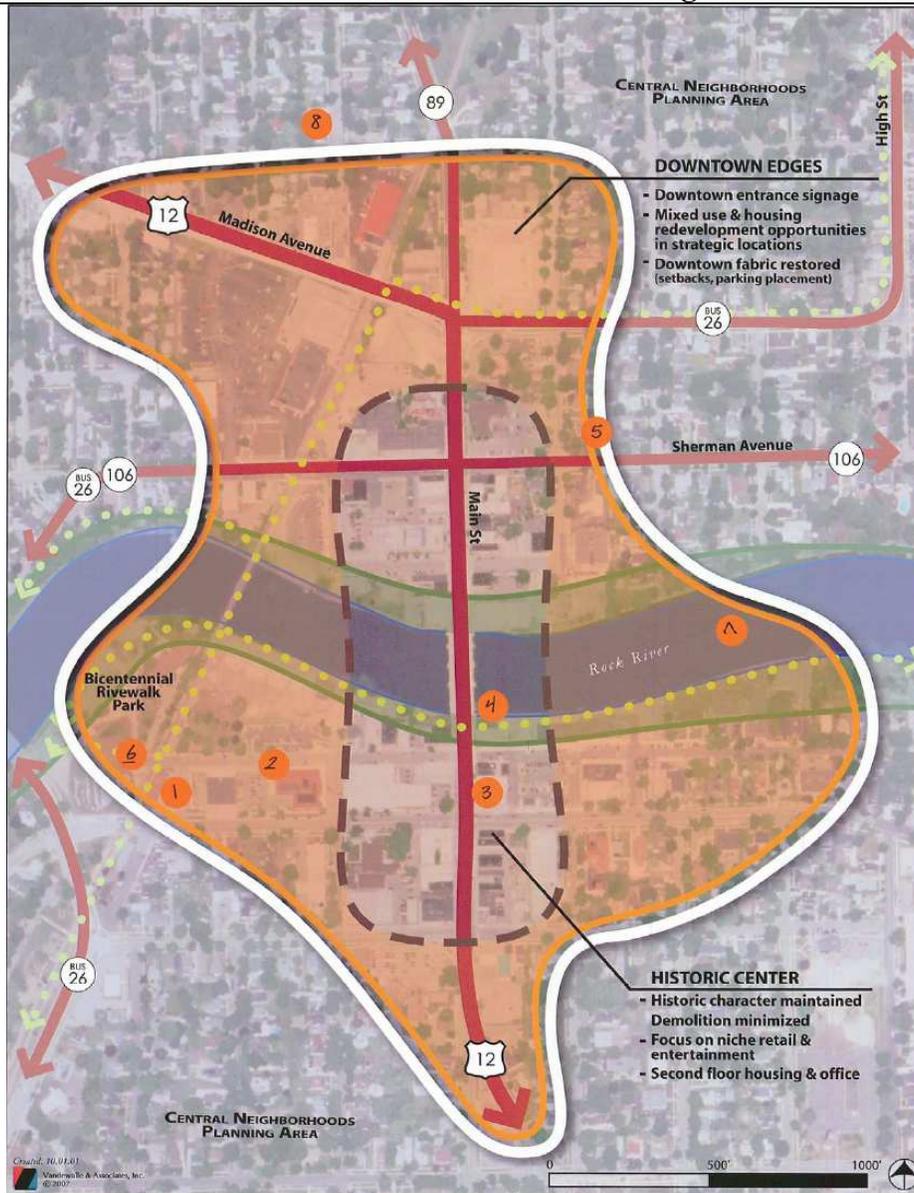
Comments from Comment Forms:

- Promote population density and mixed use development.
- Like the concept to restore and upgrade. Bypasses seem to take business away from downtown?
- All people make decisions about this area – should take one day historical overview class by Sue Hartwig at Howard Museum
- Fix the zoning code to allow signage perpendicular to Main Street.
- Need bigger areas for library and Boys & Girls Clubs.
- Agree with need for redevelopment downtown (Patrick's Liquor, 300 block of South Main, old clinic). Need bigger library – hotel building on Sherman and Main, maybe? Need Boys & Girls Club and Park and Rec. Department – municipal building, maybe?
- People setting standards/making decisions for this area should go through Fort Atkinson Historic Education Seminar (1/2 day or full day) by Sue Hartwig at Hoard Museum. She is wealth of information and has photos of good, bad, ugly, and potential or city planning.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Revitalize area where Patrick's Liquor is/was. Create live/work or mixed use (retail/housing) development.
2. Could we have connecting bike lanes from the bike path to downtown (post office, library, etc.)?
3. Historic is fine as long as it is functional. Consider tearing down and rebuilding to create a unified modern look with some touches of history (i.e., downtown Breckenridge, Co.)
4. Adopt a city ordinance that requires renovations to buildings in downtown district to be approved by City. For example, if someone wants to paint their building green and gold, someone could deny this (no offense to our beloved Packers, but come on!).
5. Expand historic district east to Sherman Avenue and west to Riverside Drive
6. For Fort Atkinson to be a two night destination we must have additional hotel space with parking in the structure.
7. Minimal light pollution in historic district and other surrounding areas.

Station 9: Historic Downtown Planning Area



Opportunities

- River orientation & riverwalk
- Diverse entertainment, arts & dining options
- Growing housing opportunities
- Continued building rehabilitation
- Broad range of specialty shops with regional draw
- Community events & gatherings
- Compatible design & sign control at commercial edges

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Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
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- Neighborhood
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Station 10: Janesville Avenue Business District Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

Comments from Comment Forms:

- Good plan to expand business – more retail, maybe a grocery store.
- Trails involving multi-use should not be referred to as “bike” trails.
- Arts – community center, theatre, pub, gallery, etc.
- Jones Dairy and the others are hugely important to the city. But they’re an aesthetic blight. Mask them with walls of arbor vitae.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Use bike path/Jones Park (connected to Bicentennial Park into Downtown) as hub to build traffic to and from Janesville Avenue. Janesville Avenue entertainment ideas – art gallery, Jones Museum, old theater or art house small theater, murals on industrial buildings along bike path connecting arts, history, and nature.
2. Revitalize old Jones’ industrial building. Beautiful old brick building – Brew Pub?
3. More green/shade trees in parking lots

Station 10: Janesville Avenue Business District Planning Area



Opportunities

- Regional Entertainment Center ("2nd Night")
- Community serving retail & dining redevelopment
- Some industrial relocation to modern business parks
- Fireside Theater helps support other uses (e.g. gifts, high-end hospitality)
- Development design standards & access control
- Landscaping, street & utility enhancements

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Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
- Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood
- Employment
- Environmental Corridors
- Existing Major Roads
- Potential Future Roads
- Main Trails (Existing & Proposed)

Station 11: Southwest Economic Opportunity District

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

Comments from Comment Forms:

- Very important to develop
- If we build it, will they come?
- Add light industry like insurance, data processing centers, etc. to this area.
- Spot for light industry of many kinds and larger (insurance, IT, banking) financial/health care/agricultural businesses.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Proximity to environmental corridor suggests development inside area should also include creative ways to deal with runoff, landscaping, building design, etc.
2. Please plan for shade trees in business parking lots.
3. Please plan for small green spaces in business developments – restful views for employees/respite

Station 11: Southwest Economic Opportunity District

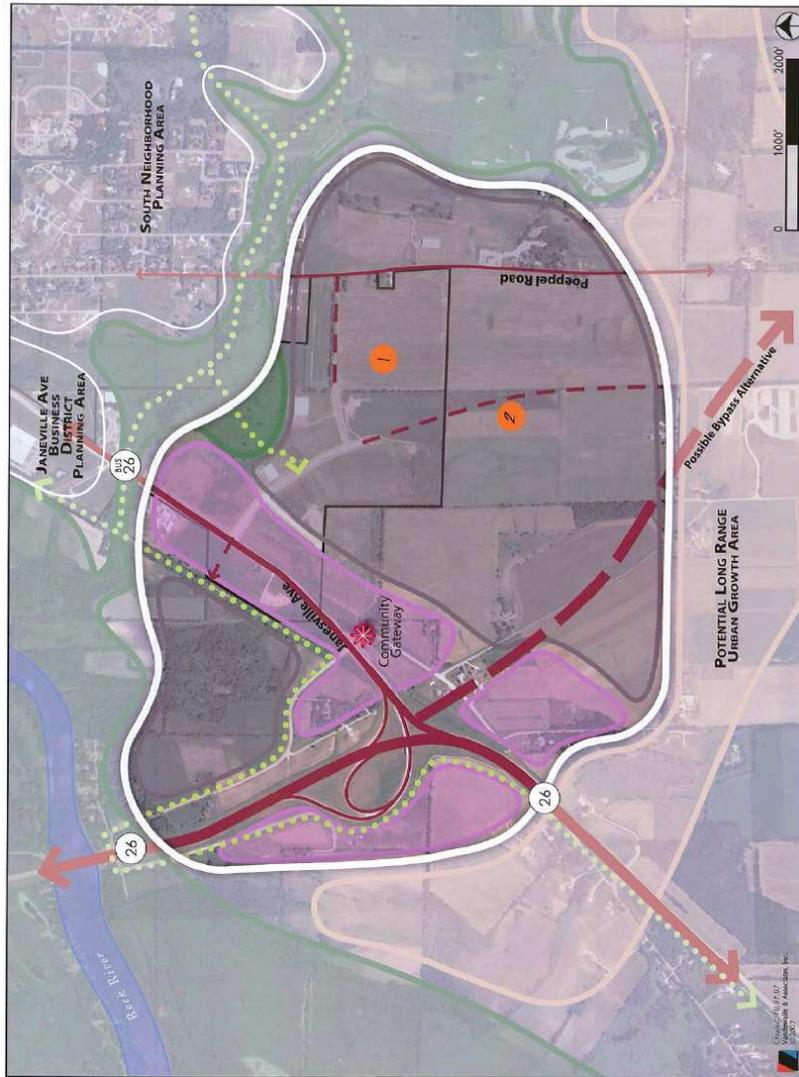
Opportunities

- Local terrain, lack of environmental constraints & few land use conflicts support industrial development
- Expansion of Robert L. Klement Business Park
- Opportunity for bio-based industry
- Employment-focused mixed use and hospitality uses near interchange
- Relationship to industrial center in Janesville/Beloit
- Access would be enhanced through Highway 12 bypass & 4-lane Highway 26
- Community character preserved through design standards

Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
- Mixed-Use
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Station 12: South Neighborhood Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

Comments from Comment Forms:

- Will housing be affordable?
- Could use a grocery store.
- Add more sidewalks and equalize parks and recreational areas compared to north side of city. Existing parks need more development and bathrooms.
- Greater development of parks (playground, bathroom, performance fields, tennis courts, etc.). Trails and sidewalks to connect parks to each other and major roads/neighborhoods. Follow grid pattern with roads.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Increase density for new residences – smaller lots and houses. Streets on grid rather than cul-de-sacs to alleviate bottlenecks of cars and promote more walking and biking.
2. Please connect parks with paths/walking routes
3. Already a great town park with valuable habitats
4. Community garden plots?
5. Concerned with housing this close to Allen Creek, this is an exceptional resource waterway.
6. With all this housing, shouldn't we plan for new school site too?

Station 12: South Neighborhood Planning Area

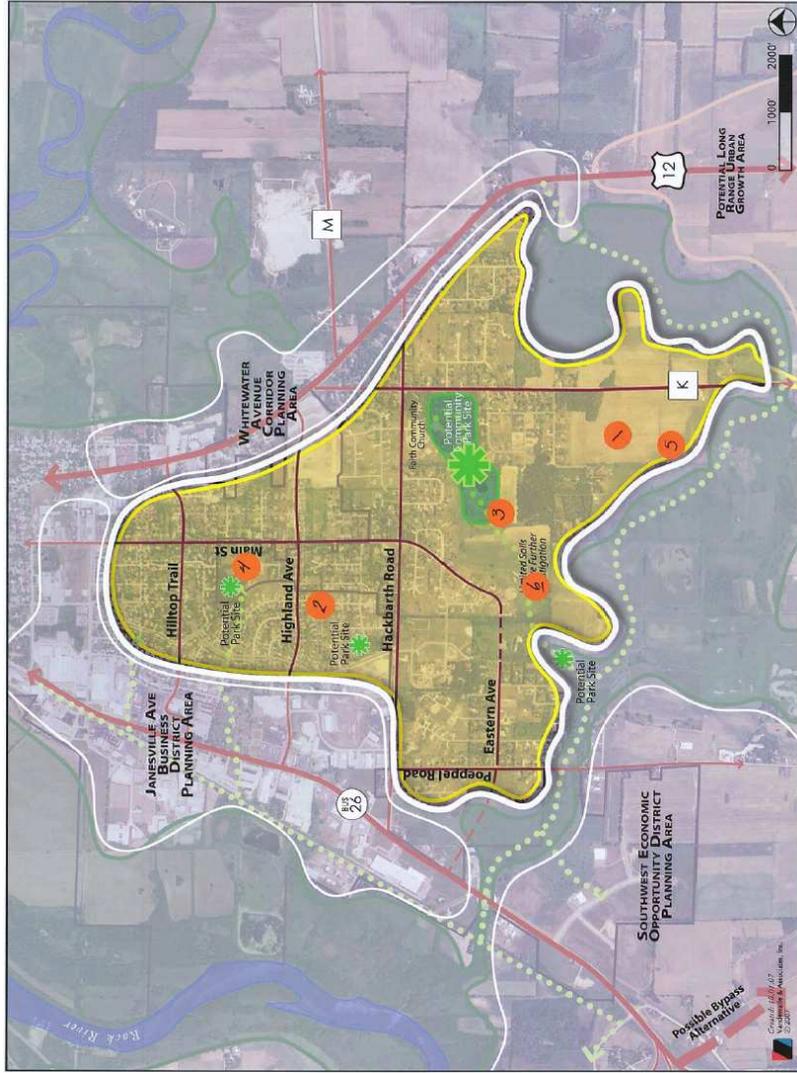
Opportunities

- City & town open space and street connections
- Logical sewer & water extensions
- Mix of housing types including executive housing
- Conservation neighborhood design to preserve & celebrate natural features
- Park Infill opportunities
- Wooded character retention

Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
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Station 13: Whitewater Avenue Corridor Planning Area

This station presented conceptual future land use and opportunities maps for this planning area.

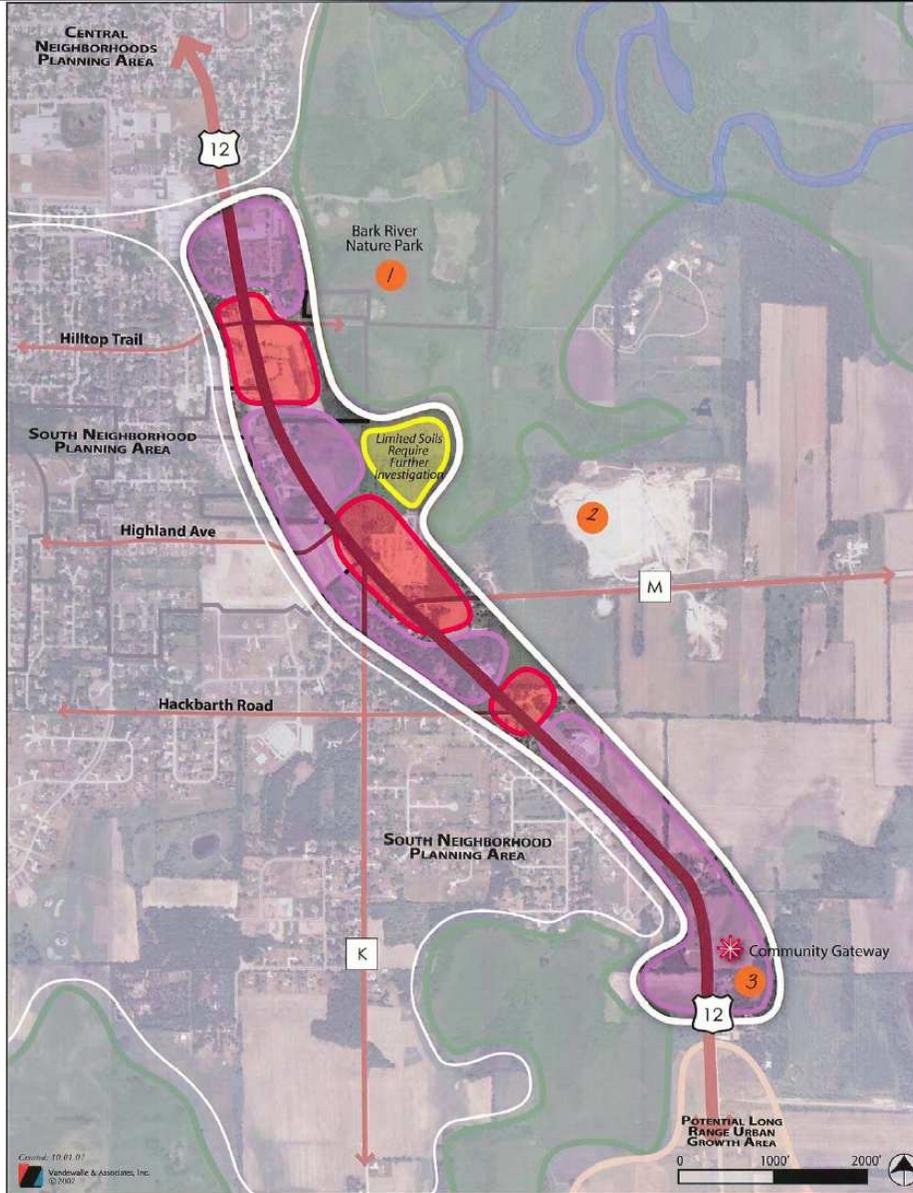
Comments from Comment Forms:

- I think the multi-use concept has some value for this area.
- While we “wait and see” what’s to happen with this blighted areas, don’t allow more junk to evolve. Protect the future by making every decision sway toward cleaning this area up.
- Consider access on to Whitewater Avenue for people going to Middle School from subdivisions who need to go left in their effort to go to Middle School or to downtown – get lights with or without high 12.
- Need stop-n-go lights at intersections. Community gateway on M as well if on 12 so far south.

Comments from Large Sheet and Map (numbers correspond to numbered areas on map):

1. Important to preserve
2. Runoff concerns
3. Create a welcome gate, like the Hwy 26 “Forts”

Station 13: Whitewater Avenue Corridor Planning Area



Opportunities

- Improved development character
- Mixed use pattern responsive to future redesignation of Highway 12
- Focused commercial at intersections
- Access control & consolidation
- Community gateway experience at bend

Conceptual Land Uses

- Community Commercial
- Downtown
- Major Institutions
- Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood
- Employment
- Environmental Corridors
- Existing Major Roads
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Other General Comments from Comment Forms:

- Deemphasize use of automobiles. Emphasize sustainable transportation like walking and bicycles.
- When I think of Fort Atkinson – mainly Janesville Avenue, Madison Avenue, and Main Street – its look and character 20 years from now... I hope it can have the look and feel of Monroe Street in Madison. Contemporary while maintaining to show its history and heritage.
- Energy efficiency might mean increased density; growing up not out; allowing looser ordinances for more creative home and business alternative energy systems. Smaller homes, granny cottages, mixed use buildings, home plumbing and grey water systems, etc.
- We need light and heavy industry and commercial.
- Would not be in favor of expanding onto A-1 farm land or wetlands.
- At all the “Gateway” entrances – can there be some regulation on size of business signs, more continuity in the look of buildings/businesses, to be more inviting, and to be a better look into the city?
- The open space connections should be pursued in every instance and added onto as we gain more clarity in the planning.
- Everyone (children to seniors) should be able to go out their front door and make a choice to bike, walk, drive, or bus to their chosen destination and know that they would be safe.
- Please have information/maps/recommendations available on website a week before. There is so much to absorb. Committed citizens who attend these things would – www.fortspeaks.blogspot.com
- Overall, glad to see efforts to add/preserve green space. Would like walkable/bikable new development scale. Promote green building.

Station 14: Visual Preference Survey

This station was intended to get participants’ input on the desired character of future development in Fort Atkinson.

At this station, participants were shown a series of 65 images depicted different types and characteristics of development. Using a rating table, participants rated each image from **-5 to +5** (with -5 being the most objectionable and +5 being the most favorable). Each image remained on the screen for only eight seconds, so ratings were based on a participant’s initial reaction to the image.

Below are the results of the visual preference survey, followed by a presentation of the top ten images and the bottom ten images. All images are available for viewing at <http://www.vandewalle.com/work/fortatkinson.html>.

Generally, the top rated images depicted attractive, uniquely designed, higher-density mixed-use or residential development at a pedestrian-friendly scale; or smaller, neighborhood-oriented shops.

The bottom ten images generally depicted strip commercial development or residential development that was either characterized by large lots, was somewhat generic in its design, or was developed in a manner that seemed isolated from other homes or buildings.

Visual Preference Survey Results			
Image #	Average Rating	Image #	Average Rating
1	1.14	34	2.82
2	-0.52	35	1.07
3	0.62	36	0.07
4	-3.14	37	0.17
5	2.97	38	1.14
6	-1.17	39	2.21
7	-0.24	40	2.21
8	2.21	41	-0.18
9	1.59	42	-0.83
10	1.11	43	-0.34
11	2.31	44	0.04
12	0.76	45	2.15
13	-1.00	46	2.25
14	3.07	47	2.32
15	1.10	48	3.07
16	1.24	49	0.04
17	1.34	50	-1.21
18	1.76	51	-1.97
19	2.42	52	1.66
20	0.85	53	-0.38
21	1.31	54	2.38
22	1.97	55	0.76
23	0.45	56	0.97
24	2.66	57	2.41
25	0.39	58	0.45
26	2.31	59	0.93
27	2.14	60	-2.00
28	-0.76	61	1.17
29	0.31	62	1.76
30	-0.48	63	2.62
31	2.34	64	-2.93
32	-1.28	65	2.25
33	0.69		

Top Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
14	3.07	 A three-story brick building with a ground-floor storefront. The storefront has large glass windows and doors, with red and white striped awnings extending over the entrance. There are several red outdoor tables and chairs in front of the building. A street lamp and a black car are visible on the left side of the image.
48	3.07	 A single-story yellow house with a white porch. The house has a gabled roof with a small window in the gable. The porch is supported by white columns and has a white railing. There are some plants and flowers in front of the house.

Top Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
5	2.97	 A street scene featuring multi-story brick buildings with large windows. Several cars are parked along the street, and a few pedestrians are visible on the sidewalk. The scene is captured from a street-level perspective.
34	2.82	 A row of brick townhouses with white-painted porches and railings. The houses are set back from the street by a green lawn and young trees. The sky is clear and blue.
24	2.66	 A row of white townhouses with dark shutters and gabled roofs. In the foreground, there is a garden area with a wooden fence, a stone path, and a black lamp post. The scene is bright and sunny.

Top Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
63	2.62	 A photograph of a two-story white building with a sign that reads "FARMERS MARKET" and "FARMERS GROCERY & WINERY". The building has a gabled roof and large windows. People are walking on the sidewalk in front of the building.
19	2.42	 A photograph of a blue house with a white porch and a white railing. A yellow car is parked on the street in front of the house. There are trees and other houses in the background.
57	2.41	 A photograph of a sidewalk scene. Two people are walking away from the camera. One is wearing a green jacket and the other is wearing a red and white plaid jacket. There are trees and buildings in the background.

Top Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
54	2.38	 A photograph of a modern, single-story building with a light-colored facade and a dark roof. The word "LOFT" is prominently displayed on the front facade in two locations. The building features large windows and a covered entrance area. In the foreground, there is a landscaped area with mulch, small plants, and a brick-paved walkway. The sky is clear and blue.
31	2.34	 A photograph of a multi-story residential building with a mix of brick and white siding. The building has several windows with white shutters and a balcony with a white railing. In the foreground, there is a landscaped area with a small stream or water feature, surrounded by rocks and greenery. The sky is clear and blue.

Bottom Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
4	-3.14	
64	-2.93	

Bottom Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
60	-2.0	
51	-1.97	

Bottom Ten Images		
Image Number	Rating	Image
32	-1.28	
50	-1.21	

Bottom Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
6	-1.17	
13	-1.0	

Bottom Ten Images

Image Number	Rating	Image
42	-0.83	
28	-0.76	