

This exercise is intended to get your perspective on the future of Waterloo. Please think broadly about existing conditions and the future of your community as a whole.

Please take a few minutes to respond to all of the following questions. At the end of this meeting, we will ask that you return this sheet, so please write as neatly as possible. Please go around the table and share/discuss each person's **TOP** thoughts.

The meeting facilitator will record the *TOP VALUES*, *CHALLENGES*, and *ASSETS* on the flip-chart. This process should take **approximately 20 minutes**.

1. What do you VALUE most about the City of Waterloo?

- Small town atmosphere, classic styling, its like "Cheers"
- The small town atmosphere, w/friendly people and good services. Safe place to live.
- Small town atmosphere.
- Small community
- Firemen's park and manufacturing plants
- Friendly community, Fair economic base, Proximity to large cities
- Proximity to Cities (Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago) w/lovely downtown small atmosphere
- The park
- Small town atmosphere; open spaces-trees
- The quiet neighborhood; friendly neighbors
- Quiet, rural surroundings
- Housing cost, low taxes, small community, close proximity to outdoor "country" amenities
- Small town, location, unique buildings, park, and carousel
- Park locations
- Smallness, friendliness, location
- The natural beauty (context-amidst wildlife areas, open country, farmland); small town feel; the potential for revival-enliven the "happy"
- The people
- It is developing; social justice organizations (meals on wheels, food pantry); social networking; band!

TOP VALUES REPORTED OUT TO LARGE GROUP

- Everybody knows everybody
- Firemen's Park
- Proximity to Cities like Madison/Milwaukee/Chicago
- Open space
- Rural surroundings
- Accessible DNR lands
- Unique architecture
- Growing City
- Quiet neighborhoods/good neighbors
- Housing costs
- Schools

2. What are some of the THREATS/CHALLENGES facing Waterloo both today and in the future?

- Keeping our heritage while expanding community opposition to expansion/progress
- Allowing growth and economic change to happen
- Lack of local economic activity
- Lack of downtown businesses, employment opportunities; proximity to metropolitan area
- Empty Perry building/warehouses/shoe facility/old Van Hollen/Canning Co. property

- Residential expansion and expanding on manufacturing base
- “no change” attitude in community
- new businesses coming to town
- growing too fast
- Madison and “Big Business”
- No public transportation outside
- Keeping businesses here
- Tax revenue, without it expansion will be difficult
- Economic vitality without urban sprawl
- People not allowing for change (stubbornness)
- Downtown is restricted by river
- High speed train
- Bike path
- Bitter people (changing their attitude)

- N. Monroe – fix area, down apartment buildings and old hair building
- Lack of downtown businesses
- Interests for the kids
- Community building is wasted
- Perry Building
- Reducing taxes
- Tower water
- Downtown, financing schools, highspeed train
- Ad hoc, ugly, poor designed development
- Altering a city that says “we can’t, no, not possible” into developing and realizing a dream
- Jobs/growth/control of growth
- Pessimism; willingness to be welcoming

TOP THREATS AND CHALLENGES REPORTED OUT TO LARGE GROUP

- Increase tax base
- Need new water tower
- Empty downtown buildings
- Segregation of Hispanics
- Lack of appreciation for river
- Shortage of money
- Community opposition to growth and expansion
- Poor residential design

- Need to be more pedestrian friendly
- Hi speed train
- Need manufacturing base
- Controlling growth
- Getting past “can’t do” attitude
- Pessimism
- Lack of things for kids to do

3. What are potential POSITIVE TRENDS/OPPORTUNITIES/ASSETS for Waterloo both today and in the future?

- Growing businesses, tourism, safety, education options (public/private)
- Openness of city government to try to facilitate
- Low costing costs; downtown redevelopment sites P-J; walkable, bikable city
- Business owners interested in growth
- Trek bicycle, McKay Nursery, New Van Hollen Plant
- Normal population growth
- Opportunities to revitalize downtown and connect to other cities
- Trek, park, city band, hunting

- The park, Trek, Susek
- Fireman’s Park, schools, Trek
- Current planning process starting to be implemented
- Current youth in government
- Farm/country scenery
- Ability/room for growth; have not been hit by sprawl yet; start compact, clean and smart growth
- Business park, youth sports, community building
- Needs to be a Park & Rec - bridge gap b/t city and school sports
- Churches, school, youth programs

- Location, #1
- Love of outdoors, developing community

- Groups are working together – has potential for downtown development

TOP OPPORTUNITIES REPORTED OUT TO LARGE GROUP

- N. Prairie Productions
- Filling vacant buildings
- Become more eco-friendly city
- Good transportation access
- New people in community = new energy
- Firemen's Park
- Manageable growth
- Coordination w/County on bike trails
- Need for Park and Recreation Department

- Willingness of City to let things happen
- Making a community people want to live in
- Support business owners
- Take advantage of international companies (Trek, McKay)
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Openness and friendliness
- Still early phases of growth

4. What is the CURRENT IMAGE of Waterloo?

- Small "hick" town according to my friends; perfect blend of country and city life
- Nice small town w/the need for economic change
- Transitioning
- Rural community
- Suburban community – close to Madison
- Void of "Bedroom Community" image
- Rundown, smaller town
- Hicktown
- Nice, small town
- Friendly, quiet community

- Small, quiet town
- Trek where? Iowa? McKay; Small farming community
- Somewhat stagnant, behind trends of other towns revitalizing; need more access to park-bluegrass trail
- Empty buildings
- Stagnant #1
- Needs polishing
- To some people – that Waterloo is staying the same
- Uncertainty

5. What are some of your favorite places in Waterloo to take visitors?

- Building 129, City Hall, Garman Preserve, Firemen's Park
- Firemen's Park, Bike Trail, antique mall
- Building 129, Garman Preserve
- Building 129, Park, Jim's Cheese
- Firemen's Park, Schools, Churches
- Firemen's Park, McKay Nursery
- Firemen's Park, Building 129 coffee shop, river walk, South Monroe to "show" vision of what could be

- Park, museum, Trek
- Park, museum, Trek
- Firemen's Park
- Firemen's Park, Building 129
- Firemen's Park, Public DNR lands, Historic Society, Mannescha River (in Urban setting), Yonker Park, Mill Pond Rest
- Park, new McKay building
- Park, Trek, historical building

- Antique mall, park, library, McKay, Trek
- Carousal, Riverwalk, Park, downtown
- Park, WUMC, Indian Hills, Village Hall, W&K

6. What places in Waterloo do you AVOID taking visitors?

- South Monroe St. (downtown)
- I don't know that I avoid it, but I don't go downtown often
- Bars
- Business District – empty storefronts; messy downtown properties
- River, school
- School
- Smoke filled businesses
- Behind the downtown
- South Monroe – dead end (except the lower parking), Hwy 19 towards Portland is eyesore
- On Hwy 19 – east of town; the Palet Company and buildings across from them
- Empty factories; downt-town; post office; smelly river