

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The policies set forth by the Wayne Plan are largely based on a planning process in which community members defined the city's primary objectives for the next 20 years. A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, representing a wide variety of community interests, was the primary contributor to this process. The strategic planning process with the Steering Committee involved three tasks: issue identification, visioning, and tactical planning.

- *Issue Identification*, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee assessed Wayne's current condition and determined the community's most significant strengths and weaknesses.
- *The Visioning and Goals* process involved the following focus areas:
 - community issues
 - economic development
 - community appearance/design
 - infrastructure
 - housing

Committee members worked within these focus groups to further refine the issues and develop goals.

- *Tactical Planning*, committee members defined actions to accomplish the goals for their focus areas.

Issue Identification

During the initial stages of the planning process, Steering Committee members completed a survey about important community services and facilities. The survey consisted of eight questions, including both multiple choice and short-answer questions.

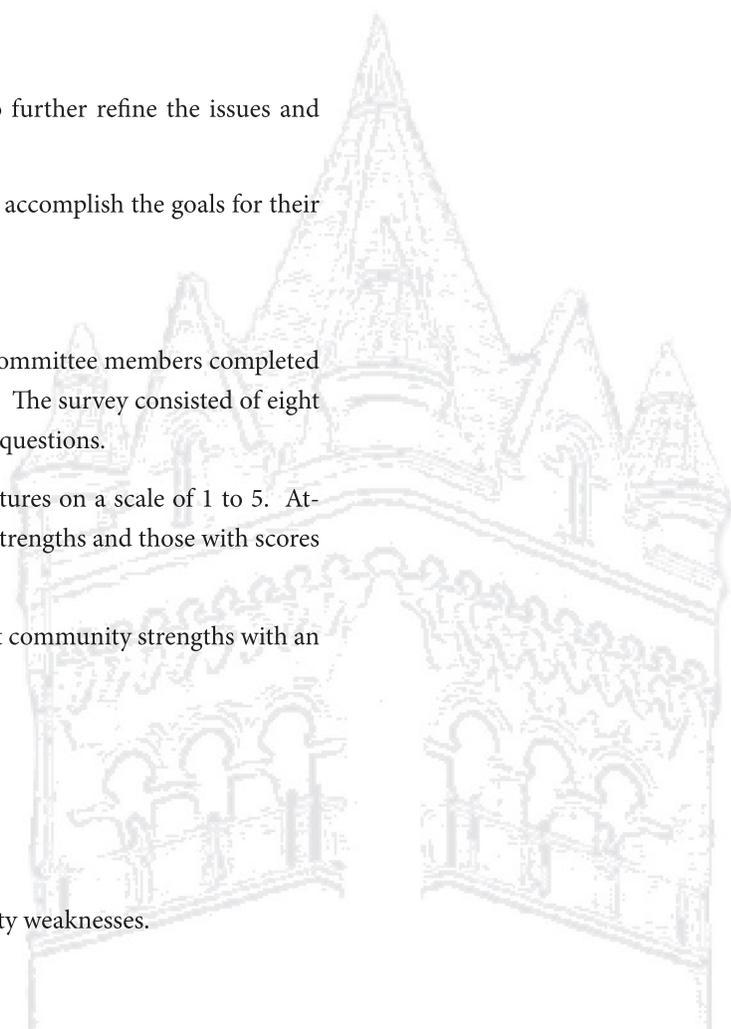
The first question asked participants to rate community features on a scale of 1 to 5. Attributes with aggregate scores of 3.0 or above are perceived strengths and those with scores below 2.5 represent areas of perceived weakness.

Participants identified the following issue areas as significant community strengths with an average rating above 4.0.

- Elementary Education
- Public Safety systems
- Services and housing for seniors
- Recreation facilities
- Medical resources

Participants identified the following issue areas as community weaknesses.

- Ability to retain young people
- Tax levels
- Affordability of housing



Chapter Two

- Retailing
- Job creation and growth
- Tourism potential

The survey then asked residents to identify issues facing Wayne within the next five years.

The most common responses dealt with:

- Economic development
- Population retention and quality of life
- Government and taxes
- Housing
- Transportation
- The Downtown

The survey also addressed future actions or projects that should be accomplished in the next ten years. These included:

- Downtown and retail growth
- Business and industrial development
- Housing and neighborhoods
- Community projects

Participants were also questioned about favorite and least favorite places in town, the city's strengths and weaknesses, and the city's goals over the next ten years. The complete results of the survey are located in Appendix A. However, many of the responses fell into similar categories as those listed above.

Visioning and Goals

In addition to a community survey, Steering Committee members participated in focus groups where they further defined the issues facing the city. These groups then established specific goals, which are listed below.

Economic Development

1. Expand the industrial businesses located in Wayne
2. Address market demand for retail sales
3. Expand the number of small to medium size businesses

Housing

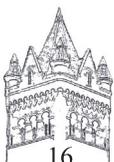
1. Encourage maintenance and improvements of existing housing stock
2. Meet market demand for entry level homes

Main Street

1. Sustain downtown businesses
2. Expand economic base of downtown Wayne

Long Term Community Growth

1. Build on Wayne's quality of life to attract new residents and young families
2. Retention of both Wayne High and Wayne State graduates
3. Provide for and support growth while maintaining community character
4. Increase community and college interaction



Tactical Planning

In order to achieve the community goals formulated during the visioning process, the Steering Committee identified a series of actions. The lists of actions identified by the Committee are as follows:

Expand the industrial businesses located in Wayne

1. Work with existing businesses to expand
2. Attract subcontractors/suppliers
3. Work with Wayne Industries, building on existing business base
4. Provide financial assistance for expansion of existing businesses
5. Develop a spec building
6. Work with DED and NPPD to promote Wayne's resources
7. Keep Wayne current with technology and advertising what we have to offer
8. Offer/implement networking of current businesses
9. Support infrastructure extensions

Address market demand for retail sales

1. Adjust business hours to address market demand
2. Provide services for everyday needs such as dry-cleaning, men's clothes, etc.
3. Expand/investigate businesses hours

Expand the number of small to medium size businesses

1. Expand retail opportunities around the college
2. Identify affordable locations for businesses
3. Start-up funding
 - a. Identify options for business development
 - b. Educate the public about funding opportunities
4. Work on marketing assistance – including display/merchandising
5. Research community's needs and identify businesses that will work in Wayne

Encourage maintenance and improvements of existing housing stock

1. Research and identify other communities' funding sources
2. Develop incentives for landowners and landlords to improve their properties
3. Expand Wayne Community Clean-up program
4. Establish sweat-equity loans/programs

Meet market demand for starter homes

1. Blend homes into existing neighborhoods – grouping low income housing can cause a stigma. Make housing compatible with the surrounding neighborhood to ensure that sales in high-end neighborhoods do not slump
2. Provide down payment assistance
3. Low interest loans for updating/renovating/energy improvements
4. Property tax deferment or other strategies should be investigated
5. Better define what starter home means for Wayne residents

Sustain downtown and local businesses

1. Expand networking opportunities among existing businesses



Chapter Two

2. Establish marketing programs for existing economic development programs
3. Establish uniform marketing plan
4. Revitalize previous marketing programs
5. Establish a façade improvement program

Expand economic base of downtown Wayne

1. Define what the downtown is
2. Establish more night time businesses
3. Investigate establishment of an enterprise zone
4. Develop business zones near WSC
5. Increase walking and bicycling traffic
6. Provide housing and cater to downtown residents

Build on Wayne's quality of life to attract new residents and young families

1. Provide jobs for college-age and new graduates
2. Market to existing employees and former residents regarding Wayne's qualities
3. Market to outside businesses
4. Improve and expand the walking trail including benches and signage.

Increase interaction of WSC and the Community

1. Expand on service learning projects with WSC students
2. Re-investigate activities such as adopt-a-student
3. Work on welcome back activities and homecoming involvement
4. Expand job opportunities for students
5. Expand mentoring programs

Retention of Wayne graduates

1. Local businesses should offer internships and seek out potential graduates
2. Set up a signing bonus for purchase of a home
3. Advertise Wayne more
4. Keep Wayne website up to date

Provide for and support growth while maintaining community character

1. Utilize zoning ordinance to maintain community character.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

One of the challenges of any community plan is bring together the diverse views around the city. In an effort to accomplish this goal a series of community meetings were held. These included stakeholder interviews and neighborhood workshops. Using the information gathered at these meetings and guidance from the Steering Committee, fundamental Development Principles were identified.

Stakeholder Meetings

The community input process included a series of stakeholder interviews. These groups included developers, realtors, business owners, community service organizations, and those involved in economic development, housing and education. Focus group meetings were also held with residents living in Wayne's jurisdiction and residents in their 20s and 30s. The broader themes of these meetings included:

- *Housing.* The availability of good, affordable housing is a significant concern in the community. The number of units for sale is at its highest level in many years. However, many feel that there is a lack of affordable housing in the community. Many first time home buyers find a disparity between wages and the cost of housing. The cost of lots, at roughly \$20,000 to \$30,000, is also seen as an impediment to construction of new affordable housing.
- *Retail Services and the Downtown.* Retail development and retention was seen as a significant community-wide issue. The role of the downtown is changing as prominent retail businesses have closed. Younger residents see a need for more affordable retail. The idea of a big box development in the community often leaves the community divided. Some see it as a catalyst that would bring more people to the community, while others feel it could devastate some existing businesses including the community's grocery stores.
- *Job Development and Growth.* The community needs to continue to attract businesses and expand the market with skilled positions. There is a need to attract jobs that can utilize the available workforce at the college. This would keep students in town year around and could help strengthen the retail market. Jobs that offer internships and keep both Wayne High and Wayne State students in the community after graduation are also needed.
- *Highway 35 Expressway.* The future location of the expressway could have a significant effect on the community. The expressway will need to be as close to the city as possible, as a location even a mile north or south would isolate Wayne and would have a significant detrimental effect on the community.
- *Property Taxes.* Residents noted that property taxes in Wayne are often higher than surrounding communities, which often deters people from moving to Wayne. They did note that the community has many high quality public facilities that other communities lack; therefore, the community should advertise what residents can get for their tax dollar.

Appendix A provides a complete listing of comments made at each of the stakeholder meetings.



Neighborhood Workshops

A series of four neighborhood workshops were held in October and November of 2005. These areas were equally divided by Highway 15 and 35. Discussions at these meetings covered issues related to the specific neighborhoods and broader community topics. The community issues often reflected the concerns noted in the stakeholder meetings including retail development and housing. The neighborhood meetings provided more insight into the day to day functioning of the community, what people like about their neighborhood and community, and how that relates to future development in the community. The general issues included:



- *Transportation Connections.* Concern about traffic loads on existing collector streets including Windom and Sherman Streets and the effect future development could have on these corridors.
- *Downtown.* Residents saw a need for greater utilization of the downtown and were concerned about the effects of the Highway 15 construction work on the downtown. Participants felt that different uses of the downtown should be identified, including housing and more specialty stores. Residents north of Highway 35 also saw North Main Street as a mixed use corridor that should connect the downtown and the college.
- *Infrastructure.* Residents in the southeast were concerned about the relocation of the sewer treatment plant and the need to decrease odors. By moving the plant they saw an opportunity to open up a large area, adjacent to the city, to development. There were also discussions on changes in the floodplain boundary that will open up development areas and protection of the floodplain for greenway and trail development.
- *Parking.* Some residents felt that parking regulations were applied too generally and that some areas did not need to be as restrictive with on-street parking.
- *Community Amenities.* Residents in all parts of the city spoke about the reason they chose to live in Wayne and their neighborhoods. These included the high quality school system, the small town atmosphere, and quality community facilities; all features that make Wayne an excellent place to raise a family.

Appendix A provides a complete listing of comments made at each of the neighborhood workshops.



DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

This section presents the principles that guide the policies of the Wayne Plan. These Development Principles are derived from a consideration of population demand, stakeholder input, and the deliberations and comments of the comprehensive plan steering committee. They provide the guiding assumptions for the development concept and implementation of the systems presented in the plans subsequent sections.

Use existing subdivision plats and infrastructure investments as first priorities toward meeting the city's development needs and objectives.

Development should be managed to make the most efficient use of existing and future investments in infrastructure and public facilities. In light of the land use policies and community development goals of the Wayne Plan, the city must determine the appropriate timing for any public financing of service extensions and improvements

The Wayne Plan should designate growth areas for residential development, designed to provide the appropriate amount of land for urban conversion.

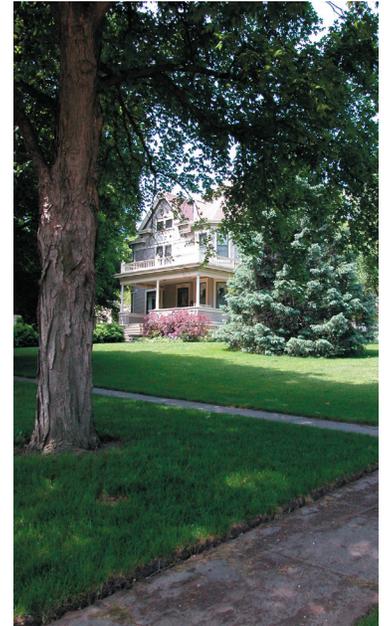
It is important that the area designated for future development be based upon a realistic demand analysis. Land use projections should anticipate future growth needs and permit a reasonable amount of flexibility to accommodate possible changes in trends and provide adequate choice to consumers. Designation of too little land for development results in inflated land costs, while designation of too much land results in a loss of control over the development process and over expenditure on infrastructure improvements. Such a loss of control can erode community focus and character as piecemeal development occurs.

Ensure that new development maintains continuity and linkages among neighborhoods.

As a community grows, it should strive to maintain a sense of unity and avoid the development of separate enclaves. Wayne has succeeded at this in the past, growing as a tight, unified community; an important characteristic of the city. Land use planning can help to build on this physical structure and strengthen the sense of community by relating new development to existing community resources. Ensuring that new development is connected to the existing community via streets, sidewalks, and trails can support a sense of unity.

Encourage adequate commercial growth to respond to potential market needs in Wayne.

Downtown Wayne has historically been the community's commercial center but recent business closers have left the downtown with more vacant store fronts and a lost sense of identity. Wayne's challenge will be to identify key commercial areas in the community, including the 7th Street corridor and areas around the college, and their relationship to the downtown. Connections between these commercial centers and identifying downtown Wayne's role in the community should guide commercial development in the community and capture opportunities.





Provide adequate land to support economic development efforts that capitalize on Wayne's strengths.

Wayne's educated workforce and access to a regional education institution are vital strengths for capitalizing on economic development opportunities. Business growth can reduce the need to drive long distances for employment and services. In addition, it can improve the community's property tax base, thereby enhancing services throughout the city and reducing the overall tax burden. Access to east/west and north/south transportation corridors, a large un-tapped workforce at the college, and a strong business environment strengthen the city's attraction for business investment. The city must ensure that commercial and industrial land uses are located according to Wayne's overall transportation and land use pattern. High-intensity businesses that generate heavy traffic or other adverse impacts should be situated so as to minimize their effects on neighboring residential areas.

Maintain development patterns in lower density areas that conserve the natural landscape and preserve the long-term growth prerogatives of the city.

Growth at the edges of the city should protect the natural landscape and not limit future growth of the city. Increased stormwater runoff into the community should be avoided through protection of existing drainageways and stormwater management plans with new developments. Rural developments on septic systems should also be avoided in those areas that can be served by urban services in the future and are designated for future urban development.

Use Wayne's special city assets and features to best advantage in framing the character of existing and new neighborhoods.

The city must ensure that appropriate development standards are enforced so that Wayne's small-town character is retained. Rehabilitation of dilapidated properties as well as working with new developments must continue to be a strategic community goal.

Develop housing in different design configurations, reflecting the needs of a diverse population.

No single type of housing can meet the needs to today's diverse households. Any growing community should provide a range of housing choices for its citizens. These might include attached owner-occupied housing for empty-nesters, moderately priced units to help young families build equity in the community, and smaller-lot single-family developments in innovative design settings, as well as standard single-family development. Residential development may also be incorporated into mixed-use projects to reduce separations between living places and activity centers, especially in the downtown and around the campus. Wayne must emerge as a community with opportunities for people at all stages of life and allow households to find their niche in the community.

