



**Steering Committee Meeting 1 – Meeting Summary**

August 30, 2023

**Existing Conditions - Small Group Discussion**

At the first Steering Committee meeting, participants were asked to identify positive aspects of the plan area, anything missing in the plan area (for example, sidewalks, housing, retail, etc.), and challenges in the area. Each participant was given green, yellow, and red dots to represent the different aspects of the area, respectively. For each question, participants were asked to place a dot on the map to correspond with the location of their comment. Comments were recorded by a group facilitator and each dot was assigned a numerical value to correspond with comments.

**Positive aspects identified in the plan area:**

- Group 1
  - Grimes Field Municipal Airport
  - Customer traffic/patrons of businesses in the area
  - Simon Kenton Trail
  
- Group 2
  - Airport events and free museums spur outside interest in the community
  - West Liberty & Salem pickup point on Dellinger Road, drives traffic in the area. West Liberty-Salem is the local school district just north of Urbana. Many students from the Urbana City School District open enroll at West Liberty-Salem, and there is a school bus pickup location on Dellinger Road that is just east of the new Dollar General.
  - Bike trail connectivity to the neighborhoods located at Boyce Street, Lincoln Place, and Lafayette Avenue
  - Ultra-Met did a good job gaining feedback from the community in preparation for site improvements on their property.
  - Car show brings people north of Skelley Lumber and attracts people to the area
  
- Group 3
  - Grimes Field Municipal Airport
  - Skelley Lumber
  - White's Ford
  - The Sarica Manufacturing company is a major employer in the area
  - Lincoln + Main is a good redevelopment example in the area
  - The vacant bank property at the corner of Gwynne Street and North Main Street is planned for redevelopment
  - Ultra-Met expansion improved the site and area
  - Champaign Salon and Spa
  - United Church of Christ
  - Spotted Cow Coffeehouse
  - Simon Kenton Trail – connects to the Grimes Field Municipal Airport and Pointe North Park



### Challenges and obstacles identified in the plan area:

- Group 1
  - The former Siemens manufacturing site
  - Event traffic caused by events at Grimes Field Municipal Airport and general congestion on North Main Street
  - Truck traffic is elevated on North Main Street
  - Traffic Speeds are too fast on North Main Street
  - Vacant buildings and property in the area
  - Mix of land uses and zoning designations (east of North Main Street, south of East Twain Avenue, and north of Bloomfield Avenue)
  - Lack of pedestrian connectivity
  - Lack of housing availability for employees of major employers in the community
  - Parking maximums and minimums may be facilitating empty lots
  - Private parking lots in the corridor are in poor condition and underutilized
  - Julia Street connectivity (street does not connect from Bloomfield Avenue to Dellinger Road)
  
- Group 2
  - Deep lots on the east side of North Main Street may be underutilized
  - Mobile home community is in a challenging location for corridor redevelopment
  - Potential issues with people moving in and out of residential area west of North Main Street
  - Potential issues at the 19 Motel on North Main Street
  - Lack of sidewalks on the west side of North Main Street and side streets
  - Former Dayton Power and Light company site
  - The former Siemens manufacturing site
  
- Group 3
  - A portion of the property owned by Grimes Field Municipal Airport was previously used as a plastic manufacturer site
  - There may be challenges redeveloping the former Siemens manufacturing site as the owner may be opposed to selling the land
  - The Habitat for Humanity Restore parking lot needs improvement and repaved
  - There may be environmental concerns to redevelop the laundry mat site
  - Opportunity to redevelop the Woodruff Feed site
  - Potential issues at the 19 Motel on North Main Street



### Things that are missing in the area:

- Group 1
  - Redevelopment opportunities on the former Siemens manufacturing site & the McKeever properties
- Group 2
  - Julia Street has limited road connectivity, but there is potential for additional housing in the area
  - Older or missing water lines in areas near Taft Avenue, Poe Avenue, Harman Avenue, and West Twain Avenue
  - Health services and sit-down restaurants
- Group 3
  - Potential need for more infrastructure improvements to mitigate new traffic from recent development
  - Additional housing
  - Sidewalks to connect neighborhoods to new Dollar General store and other retail locations

### Additional topics that were discussed in the small groups included:

- Cost of living in the community is reasonable compared to large metro areas and suburban areas
- A major issue in the area is housing availability to meet local workforce needs
- HUBZone program is an opportunity and includes part of the planning area
- There may be an opportunity to develop charging stations for electric vehicle adoption in the area
- Overall, there is a desire for the area to be more pedestrian friendly and walkable
- The existing CRA program is a potential incentive to encourage redevelopment, and it may be beneficial for the City to develop or apply for grant programs dedicated to improving facades and signage
- There is a desire for new lighting and additional sidewalks in the area
- There is a lot of bicycle activity along North Main Street with the Simon Kenton trail nearby



Vision and Goals – Small Group Discussion

**Envision North Main Street**

Participants were asked to share three words to describe how they envision the corridor 10 years from now. Each participant entered up to three words in a crowdsourcing application called Mentimeter.com, and they had the opportunity to emphasize a word by entering it more than once. Participants then spent time talking about if they agreed with the words in the word cloud, reasons for their selections, and if any words were missing from the word cloud.

The top ten words include:

1. Welcoming
2. Walkable
3. Greener
4. Growth
5. Trees
6. Prosperous
7. Sidewalks
8. Refreshed
9. New
10. Pedestrian-Friendly





### Opportunity sites

Participants were then asked where the catalyst redevelopment sites are located within the Plan Area. Each participant was able to enter the names of locations into the live survey and spent time as a group discussing if they agreed or disagreed with the locations selected by the group.

Participants entered the following sites:

1. Former Siemens manufacturing site (x9)
2. Vacant buildings and lots (x5)
3. Habitat for Humanity Restore (x3)
4. Woodruff's Feed Drive-Thru (x3)
5. Grimes Field Municipal Airport (x2)
6. Motel 19 (x3)
7. Church of Christ vacant land
8. Dunham property
9. McKeever property at Dellinger Road and Julia Street
10. Mexican Restaurant (vacant building)
11. Quonset Hut
12. Existing playgrounds attached to closed schools
13. North Main Street and Light Street intersection
14. Older car dealership
15. Residential neighborhoods