

CITY OF CEDAR RAPIDS AREA MEETING #2

Barriers to Opportunities

The following is a list of barriers to opportunities presented by participants in the North Area. The numbers following each item indicate how many dots the item received from participants – a higher number indicates a higher concern for that issue. The barriers which received dots were grouped into the following categories to identify related concerns. The barriers which were presented but received no dots are listed in the “other barriers” section.

Attitudes (24)

- Resistance to change (3)
- City priority hasn't included broader area – too focused on downtown area (3)
- Negative people (3)
- Safety/security (fire safety, interstate traffic between the “Ave of Saints” (2)
- Fear of crime associated with low income housing (2)
- Fear and apathy (2)
- Lack of priority by city government (2)
- Priorities too focused on downtown and downtown area (2)
- Envision possibilities (1)
- Disconnect between ordering and goals of city and community (1)
- Industry along river gets in the way of embracing river (1)
- Lack of innovation/connection (1)
- Public will (1)

Community Organization (22)

- Lack of participation/interest/leadership (6)
- Build up neighborhood association (5)
- Lack of community center by Taylor school and NW side (4)
- All residents/organizations not equally vested (3)
- Lack of leadership (3)
- Sporadic neighborhoods (1)

Money (20)

- Money (10)
- Must bring in outside money—attract out of town business/commuters/ tourists (5)
- Disconnected with what people can afford vs. what's being built (3)
- Delay of financial help (1)
- Financial (1)

Flood Plan (19)

- Immovable design for flood protection (levee) desire for re-movable barrier on Ellis Boulevard (6)
- Clear borders for levee location so people can construct (6)
- Uncertainty regarding flood recovery (5)
- Uncertainty of city neighborhoods is large obstacle to investment (1)
- Old levee – no access to river (1)

Transportation (18)

- Access to Time Check from Taylor (3)
- Transportation systems current buses are too big; want smaller buses; bigger buses increase traffic, are never full, add to pollution (noise and air) (3)
- Lack of sidewalks/bike trails (3)
- Railroad tracks (2)
- Unsafe bike routes in high traffic areas (2)
- Lack of planning for multiple modes of transit (bike lanes, sidewalks lending to amenities and businesses) (1)
- Lack of appropriate connections (too busy to get to Recreation Center, bicycling difficult across river) (1)
- Existing connections developed “piecemeal” (1)
- Taylor/Ellis Area lacks appropriate transit connections (1)
- Inadequate routes, shorter routes, more destinations/diversity of destinations, more frequent stops (1)

Streets (16)

- Lack of priority East/West connection (6)
- City streets not bike friendly (sidewalks) (3)
- Roadways to support recreation (3)
- Barrier to connecting 6th Street up Ellis (traffic issues) (1)
- Flood damaged streets and sidewalks (1)
- Ellis to 6th speed of traffic (1)
- Parking: lack of parking along rivers (1)

Housing (16)

- Support to rebuild houses (5)
- People’s ability to home rehab – code issues/oversight of volunteer labor (3)
- Multi-family housing doesn’t fit in neighborhood (scale: architecture) (2)
- Cost of housing will prevent diversity (2)
- Options for housing types, price (1)
- Housing too low on list (1)
- Rehab existing housing doesn’t led to multi-family housing (no townhouses) neighborhood doesn’t want multi-family (1)
- Lack of diversity in housing – new housing development tends to be homogeneous (1)

Planning (13)

- Which area property acquisition, green space neighborhood revitalization are we looking at? (5)
- Lack of big picture planning (future) (3)
- Plan – between business and residential – availability (2)
- Plan (city's) (2)
- Time, timing (1)

Communication (12)

- Lack of information/education (5)
- Lack of communication of plan (3)
- Public knowledge – market parks (communication of opportunities in Ellis Park) (3)
- Interagency cooperation (one stop shop) (1)

Businesses & Jobs (10)

- Not bringing in variety of jobs (5)
- Lack of community support/investment in smaller retail neighborhood stores – enough people need to shop there on a daily basis (2)
- Risk for businesses (1)
- link smaller business incentives (1)
- fair tax breaks for business of housing (1)

Year Round (8)

- Year round facilities for use of structures (4)
- Lack of winter recreational opportunities (ski down Mt. Trashmore) (3)
- Year round opportunities in Ellis Park (1)

Heritage (8)

- Careful decision must be made re housing types to maintain character of neighborhood (3)
- Bringing back destination like A&W (2)
- Connecting to heritage (1)
- Bringing past to present – Time Check, Clock (1)
- Time Check is essential for vibrant community (1)

Zoning and Codes (5)

- Lack of city flexibility in zoning/codes (3)
- Lack of resources to update properties; system to insure consistent code enforcement (both ownership and rental) (2)

Vacant Lots (4)

- Checkerboard of small unbuildable lots (2)
- Offer vacant lots to neighbors at reduced cost (1)
- Ability to use newly vacant lots (1)

Age (2)

- Age (1)
- Youth (1)

Other Barriers

- Townhouses create a division by creating a wall on the other side of the street
- Lack of “walk-ability” in Ellis Park
- Ellis Park lacks an invitation to enter area
- Congestion
- Nothing to draw people to parks (concessions)
- No public art in neighborhood
- Walkways/trails
- Variety of housing
- Neighborhood “clicks”
- Economic barriers for rebuilding
- Money
- Off-street parking
- Recreation Center location
- Housing functions (neighborhood identity)
- Leadership
- How to pay – money
- “House-lessness”
- Lack of investment by community to attract public art to area
- Schools not open to community events
- Appoint new leaders
- Complexity
- Affordability to bring historic buildings to code
- How to plan collectively with diverse buildings
- Flood/real loss with housing diversity
- Relax codes (variance)
- 4-plex or duplex
- Levee
- More owner occupancy
- Affordable housing options
- Activity and energy are positive (e.g., ski show) but too much commercialization and development crowds creates safety risks
- Location of Time Check
- Expand on Taylor School/Recreation
- Problems with connectivity
- Unanswered questions
- Training for neighborhood association (Development of Assoc.)
- Community and social interaction
- Change Land Use

- Incentivizing small businesses
- Public not accepting alternative housing
- Accepting new ideas
- Roadways to support small businesses
- Lack of imagination/creativity/community vision
- Lack of consensus
- Giant levee is barrier (physical/visual)
- Money
- People
- Access, location, visibility
- Uncertainty about where to build
- Implementation
- River barrier —docks that aren't usable (not resident friendly)
- Larger chain stores have impacted smaller businesses
- Topographic layout of land
- Trails don't connect
- Congested streets for public transportation
- River
- Ellis Blvd. with 1st Ave. connect
- RR tracks
- One ways – East Ave. and F Ave.
- Housing
- Expense of maintenance/investment
- 1st Ave. barrier to pedestrian connections
- Inappropriate streetscape design
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Business owners interest in rebuilding
- What are vibrant center?
- Boat ramp
- Shafer Park
- A&W
- Planning – Urbanizing
- Money – Funding
- Consensus – Neighbors/City
- Need to support people who want to set up small businesses: city advice
- Teen centers/youth
- Music center/indoors
- Pavilions with amphitheaters – mixed use -- river location
- Lack of support from SBA
- Vibrant center may not draw the people back
- Construction area
- Funding
- Flood wall
- North side 501 bridge narrow sidewalks

- I-380 corridor visible dike area interrupts connections
- Suggest loop system (trolley tram major parking areas)
- Ugly plain buildings
- Cedar Rapids has different needs than Chicago
- Boys and Girls Club
- Small strip malls for business/people to get together (need more)
- YCMA
- Neighborhoods not connected
- Use of river/quality of river
- Income
- Elderly (especially vulnerable)
- Where the zone areas are
- Connectivity up the river
- West Side Hospital/Trauma Center (the connectivity availability)
- Public transportation inefficient – takes too long
- No direct route between 6th and Ellis
- Levee
- Need design guidelines
- Leadership to get it done

Evaluation Criteria

The following is a list of evaluation criteria proposed by participants from the North Area. The numbers following each item indicate how many dots the item received from participants – a higher number indicates a higher priority. Evaluation criterions which were proposed but received no dots have no number listed afterwards.

Housing

- Must provide desired replacement housing, not infill for infill sake. Must fit character, affordability of neighborhood (6)
- Houses not cookie cutter-different-older and newer-architectural compatibility (6)
- Esthetically pleasing (4)
- Does it fit With overall Neighborhood look (4)
- Encourage owner Occupancy(4)
- Sensitivity of character of established neighborhoods (4)
- Is it single family units or 3-4 units?
- Economically Feasible (3)
- Aesthetics (Home, curb appeal) (3)
- Kid Friendly (3)
- Economically feasible for pre-flood residents (3)

- Is it energy efficient (3)
- Single family, modes income housing - does it meet identified needs? (3)
- No “cookie cutter” (2)
- Preservation of Neighbors (2)
- No trees, does not meet needs of Flood families, could be unaffordable to some families
- Cooke-Cutter have not compact with creating character (1)
- Density must match desired character/current character(1)
- Housing (1)
- Setbacks too close to street (1)
- Tow story units maximum (1)
- Is it affordable and sustainable (1)
- Architecture (1)
- Environmentally friendly (1)
- Opportunity for home ownership for low income (4)
- Rental housing low income, elderly and handicap accessible (3)
- Variety of housing Constructions/lot-sides
- Variety, character, economically feasible, mixture of housing, has open space
- Interaction Bf, houses and street/ sidewalk
- Porches
- Front yards for reaction /BBZ
- Looks upscale, prevents mixed income
- All single family prevents mixed income
- All single family prevents diversity
- Provide affordable single family
- Must offer range of types price
- Need Diversity of type
- Mix of types-single apartments, Multi
- Need open neighborhood
- Need to offer range of price
- Provides a mix
- Too dense
- Too uniform-looks like army base, No mix of housing type and affordability
- Environmentally friendly-Green built
- Lot Size
- Maintenance of open/green spaces
- Sustainability (Revenue)
- Commercial & Residential co-existing
- Greater good
- Demographics
- Attempt to preserve existing housing and businesses
- Has to have character - unique orientation /architectural variety

Business Revitalization

- Preserve exiting structures (5)
- Small (Neighborhood scale) Businesses. Mixed use (Church in middle) (4)
- Need more encouragement of Development and Job Growth (2)
- Appropriate zoning (Mixed use) (3)
- Does the business “Fit” in with neighborhood
- Encourage neighborhood businesses draws people, walk ability, neighborhood centers available, but no too close, retail creates jobs, are/cultural events draw people (2)
- Sustainability (2)
- Incentives for job creation and small business (2)
- Secure neighborhoods-safety (2)
- Zoning codes (2)
- Business appropriate for that particular area (bars, strip etc.) (2)
- Encourages business and Neighborhood use of area, within walking distance, connects schools, business, historical building (1)
- Adequate traffic control/parking. Does it support character of neighborhood? (1)
- Encourage Diversity (1)
- Funding Assistance for small business (1)
- Does not encourage commercial business, sidewalk, condition, looks cluttered, not enough off street, parking, driveways
- Timing of growth and type of investments must match need phasing is key
- Diversity of options is fundamental
- Green /open space is not just grass
- Multiple options must be provided
- Provide educational opportunities within green space-Native plants
- Strategies must reflect local pride in location, heritage (Prairie Learning Garden)
- Not enough parking
- Room for Growth
- Room for Development Smaller Business
- Accessibility
- Parking considerations
- Biker rider
- Foot traffic
- Pedestrian-only
- Shop fronts
- No space to grow to (in pictures)
- Need balance of commercialization
- Need attract people (tourists)
- Commercial opportunities must reflect neighborhood character need
- Need opportunities for new business

- Need to attract high paying jobs
- Business and jobs must fit need and offerings
- Must match people and offerings (create vibrant center)
- Must provide variety of offerings
- Attract more Business
- Does it provide for business Development
- Walk ability to local stores/ Restaurants
- Are there incentives for businesses to be more environmentally conscience

Connectivity and Open Space

- Criteria provides green space within neighborhood and preserve existing trees / environment (7)
- Not to be too busy with traffic trails, bike not to be on sidewalks (5)
- Does it preserve existing trees whenever possible? (4)
- Green space / aesthetics (4)
- Does it provide for and promote healthier lifestyle (3)
- Family friendly / pedestrian friendly (3)
- Streets comfortable & wide, good transit connections, bike and pedestrian connections (3)
- Turning lanes, dedicated trolley, wide streets (3)
- Safety on paths and how paths cross/intersect, lighting (3)
- Need shade (3)
- Parking (side street parking, multi-level vs. safety (3)
- Does it provide good bike and pedestrian connections (3)
- Sidewalks and foot traffic (3)
- “Green” public transportation (2)
- Is it too dense? (2)
- Insert alleys (1)
- Mature trees (1)
- Reconsider use of one-way (1)
- Open space needs plants, empty lots, green areas, place for people to hang out (1)
- Adequate parking, parking structures (1)
- Gathering space (1)
- Does it provide good transit connections? (1)
- Does it provide good automobile connection (1)
- Does it provide “green” master plan for entire city (1)
- Streetscapes (1)
- Pedestrian only areas
- Connect to park areas destinations
- Enough parking
- Network connected green areas
- Specific, designated areas
- Bike racks

- Sign marking rout
- Stops where needed
- Easy access to stops for pedestrians
- Covered bus stops
- Street size reflects traffic need 4-lane main, 2-line residential
- Include streets as open space
- Trolley hits character of city
- Good access to open space
- Combination of wide and narrow streets and depending on need and character of neighborhood
- Smart growth
- Parking areas designated and open space preserved
- Clear designated areas for bike riding (not on sidewalks)

HOUSING -- Looks like there is no character

How long does it take to develop character

Townhouses create a schism ; creates a wall on the other side of the street

Unique orientation / architectural variety

Massing, scale, roofline, (not identical though)

“they fit together”