



Cedar Rapids Next Generation Commission

Findings and Recommendations

December 2008

Cedar Rapids, a vibrant urban hometown - a
beacon for people and businesses invested in
building a greater community for the
next generation.

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I. Executive Summary

At the request of Cedar Rapids' community leadership, the Next Generation Commission was formed in 2008 to advise the Cedar Rapids City Council, Recovery & Reinvestment Coordinating Team and the community on specific steps needed to make the Cedar Rapids area a place for the Next Generation to live, work and play.

Recommendation 1: Develop a spectacular riverfront park making the Cedar River the long-term centerpiece of the city, setting aside adequate land and uninterrupted green space for flood mitigation, recreation and year-round activities.

- 1. Create a spectacular riverfront park and adjacent neighborhood that appeal to diverse ages and four-season, outdoor activities such as outdoor dining, bike/pedestrian options, and access to our parks, trails and water features.**
 - Connect existing parks to create a large urban park that the city can develop over time. It will give Cedar Rapids an identity-building "wow" feature.
 - Redevelop Downtown so it embraces the park.
 - Encourage people to live, play and work near it by removing incompatible uses
- 2. Shift growth away from the fringe, and concentrate on the core, by using a riverfront park to attract and support new residential, retail and entertainment.**
 - Revitalize Downtown and create new special-use districts.
 - The park will support i) an adjacent pedestrian-friendly, vibrant mix of sustainable uses, including higher-density housing, condos, diverse eateries and leisure options and ii) an arts district and cultural campus that offers new and refurbished performance venues, upgraded commercial facilities, and creation of a "Third Street Arts & Cultural District".
 - Support collocation efforts and create campuses for critical mass, resource sharing, and synergies for users of and operators of facilities.

3. Achieve greater sustainability (development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations) through an ongoing evaluation and redevelopment process.

- Preserve critical cultural and historical assets, incorporating the 10 principles for sustainable communities in redevelopment.
- Change public transportation from a low-income solution, to a more broadly used community solution.
- Be a green leader. Sustainability is the “It” factor of the current next generation.

Recommendation 2: Retain existing jobs and create new opportunities specifically targeting the next generation workforce.

1. Partner with businesses, especially in the core, to offer win/win solutions.

- Provide financial incentives for core business redevelopment.
- Retain existing jobs by providing flood-affected businesses the resources to be in a location that has the infrastructure, access and space that support continued growth and innovation, while matching the creation of the new Cedar Rapids.

2. Target and support new business opportunities for the next generation of workforce.

- Focus post-flood economic development on replacing jobs moved from the riverfront to other locations. Focus economic development on creating high-quality, high-wage jobs in the city’s core, as well as on local entrepreneurs.
- Make the Downtown an attractive place to do business, including office-based new business formation, relocation and expansion.

3. Develop and implement further initiatives to attract, retain and engage the next generation of workforce in the Corridor

- Establish a public / private partnership with the Next Generation Commission to attract, retain and engage Cedar Rapids’ next generation

- Embrace regionalism with a long-term strategy on developing the Corridor.
- Advance early childhood resources, to help families manage work/life issues.
- Support diversity initiatives, and ensure that existing resources are welcoming and inclusive to the range of diversity in the community.
- Improve communications, particularly web-based. The “on-line generation” has arrived.



II. Recommendations

Develop a spectacular riverfront park making the Cedar River the long-term centerpiece of the city, setting aside adequate land and uninterrupted green space for flood mitigation, recreation and year-round activities.

Action Step 1

Create a spectacular riverfront park and adjacent neighborhood that appeal to diverse demographics and four-season, outdoor activities such as outdoor dining, bike/pedestrian options, and access to our parks, trails and water features.

Implementation:

- **Connect Existing parks and create a park that the city can build on / in over time.**
 - The creation of a significant urban park will take decades to build, but begins with setting aside adequate land today
 - St. Louis' Forest Park was created in 1870. Its signature zoo was added in 1890, major athletic facilities added in 1897 and art museum in 1900. Now, more than 12 million people visit the park every year.
 - New York's Central Park required the displacement of 1600 people and took more than 6 years to open. Recreational features are STILL being added, with every major addition leading to redevelopment of adjoining neighborhoods.
 - Given the central location, today we must determine the park boundaries. The park potentially could have the sorts of urban amenities seen in other cities, like:
 - Restored river edge, with access to the water for recreation
 - Wide, interconnected trails for recreation and commuting
 - Amphitheater
 - Winter activities like snowboard / sledding runs and outdoor ice skating
 - Recreation (i.e.: golf course/soccer fields/baseball) along the river
 - Great Lawn that is a focal point of activity

- The park design should protect from future floods, protect access to the river, and make neighboring areas attractive for office, retail and residential.
 - Grade the land up and out to make the river more inviting, natural and accessible. Protect access to the park with attractive access points
 - Build flood walls only where necessary and out of sight, but use attractive landscaping as an accessible “buffer” between the river and walls
- **Redevelop downtown so that it embraces the park.** Build up a critical mass of office, retail and residential, slow down traffic to make downtown a destination rather than a thoroughfare, and leverage the natural layout and access points provided by the interstate. We specifically recommend:
 - Make Downtown and the riverfront pedestrian / bicycle friendly
 - Turn some bridges into intermodal, pedestrian focused bridges to the new riverfront park.
 - Widen sidewalks in Downtown, on both sides of the river to a full lane-width to facilitate outdoor cafes and more pedestrian traffic.
 - Create pedestrian bridges across the river, to transition the river to Cedar Rapids’ premier meeting place.
 - Make it easier and faster to get to Downtown. Ease access from the freeway by reconfiguring existing ramps and the primary roads that serve them.
 - Solve the Downtown rail issue, immediately.
 - Encourage, and work with builders to develop, diverse downtown housing options
 - Use existing parking structures and public investment to provide affordable parking to all downtown locations
 - Preserve historic structures where possible, especially by repurposing existing buildings on Mays Island
 - Make the riverfront open and inviting
 - Create access to outdoor activities, public art and outdoor dining options with continuous walkways / boardwalks
 - Protect the core of downtown with removable flood walls to preserve views of, and access to, the water

- **Encourage people to live, play and work near it by removing incompatible uses**
 - Riverfront industrial must include abundant green space buffers, and meet modern environmental standards.
 - Adopt form-based design standards for the park's area.

- **Over 7 miles long and wide enough to support new activities, entertainment facilities and open space, the proposed riverfront park will:**
 - Require moving incompatible uses out of the downtown, thus improving the smell, sight and sound of downtown. Air quality will improve (see appendix)
 - Strengthens the Cedar Rapids "brand" to the next generation workforce. Most consider heavy industrial to be an unacceptable environmental and safety risk
 - Creates a protected /core central business district and arts and cultural district
 - Strengthens and improves connectivity
 - Embraces the following Fifteen in Five initiatives:
 - Makes parks more attractive to youth and families
 - Develops the riverfront
 - Rejuvenates abandoned and deteriorating property by making clear boundaries
 - Encourages the development of downtown housing (makes it possible by mitigating the sight, smell and sound issues of industrial facilities)
 - Connects trails that already exist in the city, making them more functional to alternative transportation (i.e. destination travel, rather than recreational use)
 - Is consistent with the ideals determined by the Long Term Planning Commission
 - Contains much needed amenities including golf courses, trails and a great lawn
 - Creates a "first and obvious choice" location for future community projects, including Vision Iowa projects, new park features and festivals

Action Step 2

Shift growth away from the fringe, and concentrate on the core, by using the park to attract a mixed-use of residential, retail and entertainment options.

Implementation:

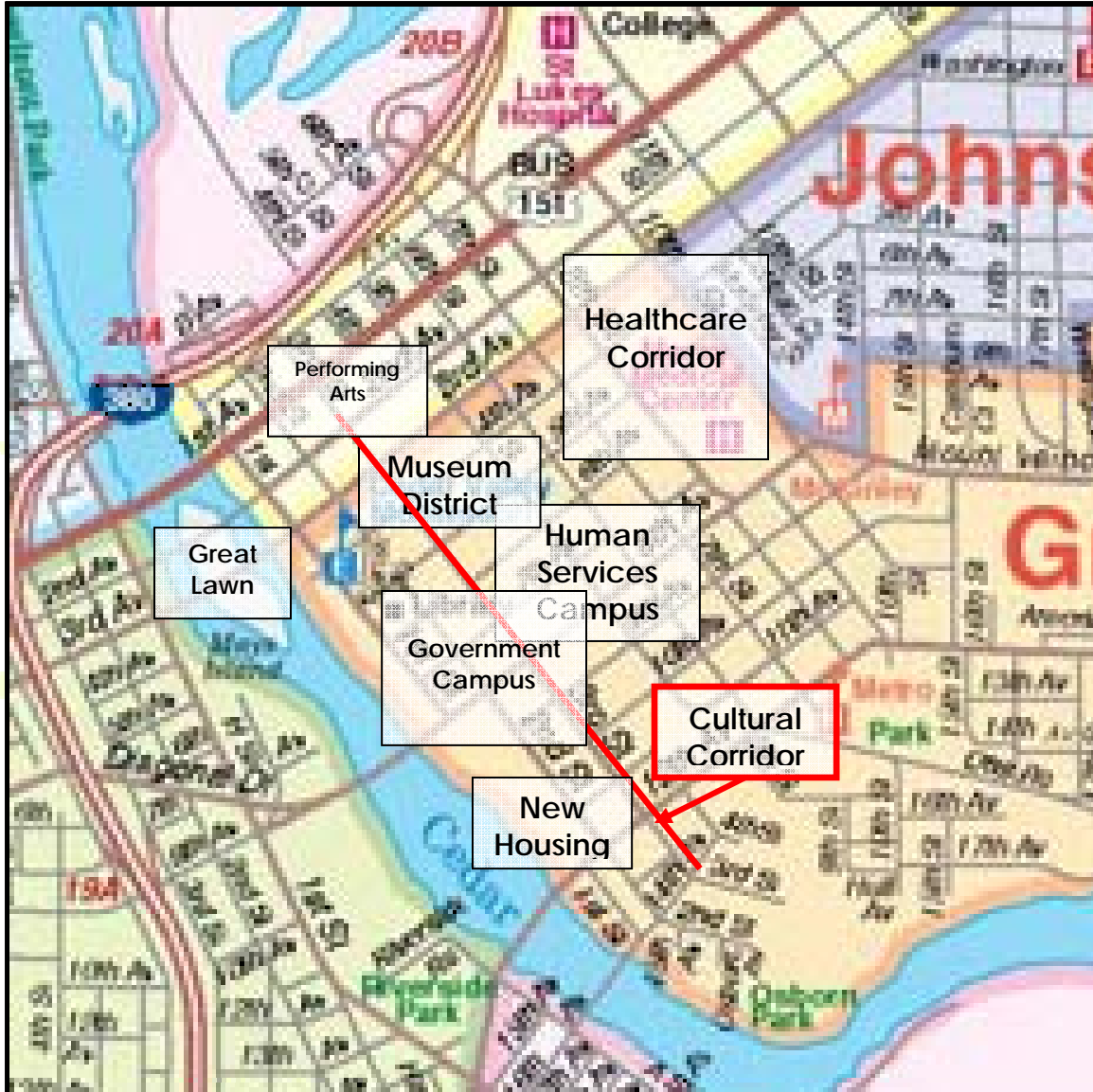
- **Revitalize Downtown and create new special-use districts.**
 - Adopt high-quality site and building design and architecture standards
 - Cities, such as Milwaukee, have found a architectural code more quickly transitions the skyscape, pedestrian frontage and usage
 - Gives clear guidance on what is acceptable and appropriate for redevelopment. Clarity in community standards will spur additional projects
 - Use diverse, neighborhood-specific standards to celebrate and distinguish the separateness and history of unique areas (e.g. Czech Village vs. Downtown)
 - Mixed-use zoning should encourage retail, office and residential to co-exist
 - Create “micro-retail” locations to supplement the two existing “mega-retail” zones. This enhances neighborhoods, encourages new business formation and allows non-auto transportation to be practical on a day-to-day basis
 - Move industrial away from where we want residential to grow rapidly. Simply put, Next Generation will not willingly live in the shadow, or down-wind, from a factory
 - Shift growth away from sprawling into the fringe of the city, and concentrate on The Core and The Corridor
 - Sprawl is: i) not environmentally friendly, ii) expensive to maintain, and iii) isn't fun (without density, it is difficult to establish fun, urban “hot spots”)
 - Discourage fringe growth by i) increasing fees for fringe development, ii) require developers to complete connectors (sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting, landscaping) before homes are sold, iii) raise the cost of city services to the fringe, and iv) create barriers with greenbelt zones and industrial areas
 - Encourage core growth by: i) decreasing fees for new development in the core, ii) creating tax incentives for redevelopment, iii) increasing marketing effort of the city to celebrate the core and iv) removing incompatible uses.

- Shift the direction of growth toward the south, to support the long-term development of the Technology Corridor. Do this by shifting office development from northern CR to Downtown, and industrial relocation from the Downtown to Highway 30 / Airport
- **Western edge = Leisure Campus**: The park's western edge will support a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant mix of sustainable uses, including higher-density housing/condos, diverse eateries and entertainment options.
 - Increase entertainment options and venues, from art to music to food. Build on the existing parks, trails, fishing, boating, healthy leisure activities, golf, and professional / community athletic entertainment.
 - Create more high-quality housing options for young professionals.
 - Make the streets, sidewalks and streetscapes conducive to pedestrian / bike access, outdoor events/activities and diverse retail.
 - Focus on four-season, "get outdoors" activities including outdoor dining, bike / pedestrian options, access to our great park system and interconnecting trails
 - Outdoor dining, with appropriate parking and sidewalk regulations.
 - Bike / pedestrian options, with trails running not in the shadow of industrial, but in our best natural settings, and bike lanes / wide sidewalks in all areas.
 - Access to our great park system that doesn't require driving – interconnecting trails.
 - Riverfront should be open, inviting and accessible for a range of outdoor activities (e.g. skating rink in winter, waterplay in summer).
 - Sports complex in the core (not duplicating, but complementing YMCA).
 - Outdoor arts in the core, both organized and individuals.
 - Year-round outdoor activities / events in the community.
- **Eastern edge = Cultural Campus** The park's eastern side can support a consolidated arts district and cultural district, with new and refurbished performance venues, public and private art and studios, and a museum district
 - Designate part of Downtown a Cultural Corridor and leverage existing assets, such as US Cellular Center, Theatre Cedar Rapids,

Paramount Theatre, Art Museum, History Center, New Bohemia, and Legion Arts.

- Endorse the idea of shared resources for non-profit arts organizations (space, staff, assets).
 - Locating facilities close together creates critical mass which can facilitate sharing of operational resources and visitors.
- Endorse organizations positioned to lead post-flood:
 - A New Bohemia artist district, as a southern anchor to the Downtown / Arts / Czech Village area. Include artists' working area, arts education and galleries.
 - The City should lead the creation of a new performing arts center with multiple, connected venues for various sized audiences and uses.
 - Create a new museum district around Greene Square. Encourage the creation of a critical mass location (not to mention a multi-stop school field trip) including many heritage and learning centers.
 - Expand the calendar of coordinated festivals, year-round, to celebrate the entire community.
- Combine art with public areas.
 - Place visual / public art as landmarks in linear parks / trails (e.g. mile markers, trailheads), intermingling art with benches and planters. This broadens both art and parks recreational appeal.
 - Integrate art and "the arts" into community development by requiring the use of the arts in all public projects.
- **Support collocation efforts and create campuses for critical mass, resource sharing, and synergies for users of and operators of facilities**
 - Collocation is respectful to the community by consolidating services. It is sustainable, in reducing the energy and use footprint of the entities providing those services. It allows shared resources, reducing service costs. It increases cooperation and partnerships among public entities.
 - We support all collocation efforts that are being discussed in the community, including a government center placing parallel government offices (i.e. similar services offered by City and County) under the same roof. Also, the community should consider collocation options for:
 - Health and Human Services - Establish a health and human services campus.

- Economic Development – Chamber, Priority One, Downtown District, CVB.
- Performing Arts - Performing Arts Center, Museums located together or next to each other.



Action Step 3

Achieve greater sustainability (development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations) through an ongoing evaluation and redevelopment process.

Implementation:

- **Preserve critical cultural and historical assets**
 - Our history makes the community unique and creates an authentic environment
 - Leverage and preserve historic assets to celebrate the culture of the community

- **Incorporate the 10 principles for livable, sustainable communities in redevelopment.**
 - Design on a Human Scale. Pedestrian-friendly communities allow residents to walk to destinations, reduce traffic congestion and benefit public health.
 - Provide Choices. People want variety in housing, shopping, recreation, transportation, and employment. Variety creates lively neighborhoods and accommodates residents in different stages of their lives.
 - Encourage Mixed-Use Development. Integrating different land uses and varied building types creates vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and diverse communities.
 - Preserve Urban Centers. Restoring, revitalizing, and infilling urban centers takes advantage of existing streets, services and buildings and avoids the need for new infrastructure. This helps to curb sprawl and promote stability for neighborhoods.
 - Vary Transportation Options. Giving people the option of walking, biking and using public transit, in addition to driving, reduces traffic congestion, protects the environment and encourages physical activity.
 - Build Vibrant Public Spaces. Welcoming, well-defined public places stimulate face-to-face interaction, collectively celebrate and mourn, encourage civic participation, admire public art, and public events.
 - Create a Neighborhood Identity. A "sense of place" gives neighborhoods a unique character, enhances the walking environment, and creates pride in the community.
 - Protect Environmental Resources. A well-designed balance of nature and development preserves natural systems, protects

waterways from pollution, reduces air pollution, and protects property values.

- Conserve Landscapes. Open space, farms, and wildlife habitat are essential for environmental, recreational, and cultural reasons.
- Design Matters. Design excellence is the foundation of successful and healthy communities.
- **Change public transportation from low-income solution, to community solution**
 - Place bike racks on buses, and use smaller “Cambus” style buses to match demand, be in more places, and be more appealing to use
 - Engage college students through bus transportation between Coe, Kirkwood, Cornell, Mt Mercy and Cedar Rapids core venues. This pulls the college students into the city, so that they experience Cedar Rapids, adding to the city’s culture, and making graduates more likely to stay long-term
 - Complete Hwy 100 (disaster transportation need), and a Cedar Rapids beltway to ease access to our Hwy 30 industrial area.
 - Create more through-way East-West roads and paths to increase the connections between the two sides of the river. (E.g. Ease Collins Rd. congestion, raise Edgewood Rd below the bridge to mitigate the frequent flooding in that area)
 - Create better roads south from CR, into the Corridor, to reflect and build reality of CR/IC as a single economic region. (E.g. Widen I-380, and provide alternates to I-380, such as widening and making through-ways on Ely Rd, Hwy 1 or Hwy 151
 - Make rail work for us
 - Reduce Downtown non-passenger rail traffic, eliminate switching traffic Downtown, reduce rail noise in the core and strictly limit how and when trains can block downtown roads
 - When CR Downtown has critical mass, establish a high-speed Corridor train
 - Effective intermodal transportation
 - Connecting trails in order to make them user-friendly as a function, versus recreation
 - Bike trail connecting CR/IC
 - Bike lanes on all roads with limited visibility (hills/curves) or a high car traffic count

- **Be a green leader: set the goal of having the smallest per capita carbon footprint, among the nation's mid and large-sized cities**
 - "Green Living" is a primary "It Factor" for marketing to the Next Generation. Environmental responsibility is a top community value of the Next Generation.
 - "Best in Carbon Footprint" is extremely marketable. If the goal is to realize in 10 years, start marketing now: "Working toward the best carbon footprint by 2018."
 - It ties into an achievable message: The farms of yesterday link to the plant and energy biotechnology breakthroughs of tomorrow
 - Carbon footprint efforts complement other Next Generation goals: sustainability, walkability, in-fill in lieu of sprawl, expanded green space, water quality, and transformation of our economic base to 21st century industries
 - Recognize and address the negative health and image issues of our current environmental "footprint."
 - Linn County is reported as the 32nd worst county in the US, and worst in Iowa, in releases of known carcinogens (based on 2002 EPA data)
 - Emissions concentrated in Cedar Rapids' downtown and along Highway 30:
 - Total Toxic Air Emissions have increased 168% since 1997. The release of acetaldehyde, a known carcinogen, has increased 50% between 2002 and 2006 (latest data available), to 184,372 pounds. In 2006, 65,956 pounds of hydrochloric acid and 41,949 pounds of sulfuric acid were reported as air emissions within 2 miles of Downtown (See appendix).
 - The actual scope and data of our environmental issues should be debated, but it is clear that rising plumes out of smokestacks creates a very negative "brand" issue that is one of the greatest impediments to attracting the Next Generation to Cedar Rapids.

Recommendation 2:

Retain existing jobs and create new opportunities specifically targeting the next generation workforce

Action Step 1

Partner with businesses to offer win/win solutions to retain jobs in the right location

Implementation:

- **Provide financial incentives for Downtown / Riverfront business redevelopment, and the relocation of industrial jobs. Every business should be in a location that has the infrastructure, access and space for continued growth and innovation.**
 - Expand the industrial clustering near the Airport and along Highway 30. Industrial clustering leads to shared cost of infrastructure, interacting supply chains, better career opportunities for labor, more jobs and higher wages.
 - Provide for a 5-year transition program for the industrial properties that incorporates the following ideas / themes:
 - Retain these companies in the community by prioritizing sites and infrastructure projects for industrial employers relocating from Downtown.
 - Obtain federal / state funds to assist with the post-flood relocation efforts.
 - Provide adequate economic incentives / financing to retain the companies, including land buyouts, non-flood plain land grants, site preparation and grants to cover relocation cost.
 - Scale incentives according to both the creation of high paying jobs and capital expenditures in the community. Both factors have a greater multiplier effect in the community.
 - This will trigger a series of factory, infrastructure and building projects and ensure the retention of these employers in our community for some time to come.

Action Step 2

Target and support new business opportunities for the next generation of workforce.

Implementation:

- **Focus post-flood economic development on replacing jobs in affected areas. Replace jobs moved from riverfront to other locations with high-quality, high-wage jobs in the city's core.**
 - These jobs must be in sectors compatible with the long-term, form-based goals of the riverfront and Downtown areas.
 - Improve economic development metrics in attracting, creating and retaining jobs that factor in the concepts of environmental impact, net present value (cost) of incentives, wages and capital expenditures
 - Focus on diversifying high-end professional opportunities and locally created businesses
 - Iowa struggles to retain its advanced degree graduates. Focusing job growth in that area has a great multiplier effect as highly skilled professionals create new jobs, new businesses and faster economic growth.
 - Move economic development focus away from “how many jobs”, and into “how much value created.”
 - Cedar Rapids must attract a new major corporate employer to Downtown.
 - Create and attract more high-tech firms that are either cutting edge or established leaders in their industries

- **Make the Downtown an attractive place to do business, including office-based new business formation, relocation and expansion.**
 - Adopt form-based zoning policies that enable retail, office and housing to co-exist.
 - Sustainable zoning in existing building renovations.
 - Preserve existing neighborhoods and buildings, upgrading them to modern standards.
 - Additional Downtown “Class A” office space, both public and private
 - All new public construction should be built to at least LEED Silver
 - Consider property tax abatements for LEED certified buildings

Action Step 3

Develop and implement further initiatives to attract and retain the next generation of workforce in the Corridor

Implementation:

- **Adopt Next Generation Commission as a permanent entity, with the mission of attracting, retaining and civically engaging Cedar Rapids' next generation.**
 - A public / private partnership to:
 - Develop a skilled, dynamic next generation workforce
 - Recruit engaged, young leaders to sit on community and ED boards
 - Engage next generation into the civic process and dialogue
 - See additional / parallel proposal for new civic entity
- **Advance early childhood resources, to help families manage work/life issues.**
 - Restore high quality child-care / preschool options to at least pre-flood levels.
 - Support the vision for a local "Community Early Childhood Institute" which can anchor an early childhood system focused on quality, capacity and efficiency. High quality child care services are an essential community infrastructure needed by children, working parents and local employers.
- **Celebrate our diversity by ensuring that the community is welcoming and inclusive to a range of diversity. Do this with existing and new resources.**
 - Build on diversity festivals (e.g. International festival in Greene Square Park) and create new experiences through a special events / festival coordinating group
 - Ethnic-themed festivals around established events like Black History Month (February), Hispanic Heritage Month (September), Native American Heritage Month (November)
 - Neighborhood parties to celebrate unity (National Neighborhood Night Out)
 - Highlight diversity with "lamppost signs" Downtown
 - Regular media coverage celebrating diversity of all sorts
 - Incorporate local colleges and their diverse international population

- Consider creating several “International Zones” to co-locate many ethnic restaurants and businesses to create a critical mass in specific locations. This creates alternative, smaller shopping districts to make neighborhoods walkable, better draw customers / visitors from outside Cedar Rapids, and provide school fieldtrips to highlight diversity
- **Improve web-based and alternative communications. The “on-line generation” has arrived**
 - Support the creation of a single, central community website. This unifies the community image and gives the public a common portal to our community’s business, non-profit, government, schools, churches, events and the arts.
 - Redesign City of Cedar Rapids website to be more user friendly
 - Unify information currently scattered across various websites
 - Make many community services available and accessible online, to reduce the need to drive and queue at city offices, and to enable better time / workflow management by city employees

Action Step 4

Embrace regionalism with a long-term strategy on developing the Corridor

Implementation:

- Transition both public and private boards / commissions to a broader Corridor focus by broadening the scope to the full Corridor.
- Improve North-South infrastructure links through the Corridor.
- Focus future development on filling in the area between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City.
 - Iowa City is already growing north as North Liberty / Coralville both expand.
 - Cedar Rapids holds the key to regional development by shifting industrial growth toward the south, into the Airport / Highway 30 industrial area.
 - Residential / workforce development will naturally follow into the Corridor
- Create more regional public / private partnership, patterned after the EPRC, to guide marketing, commercial development and economic development

III. Support of River Corridor Redevelopment Plan

We are proud to have assisted in the development, and continue to strongly support the River Corridor Redevelopment Plan, as presented by Sasaki/JLG. We support the Framework for Reinvestment and Revitalization, including the overall flood management strategy and focal points in for community reinvestment and redevelopment in the areas of:

- Neighborhoods and Housing
- Transportation
- Business Reinvestment and Downtown
- Arts and culture
- Open Space
- Public Buildings and Facilities

The Framework for Reinvestment and Redevelopment integrates the seven plan elements into three main themes for the future of the City to accomplish the Vision:

1) A Flood Management Plan

Provide increased protection against future floods and leverage the *flood management* strategy to create a *great Riverfront Park for Cedar Rapids*

2) Connectivity

Knitting together the City and its neighborhoods via *transportation improvements* to public transit, trail systems, and street grid system, rail operations and specific streetscapes

3) Sustainable Neighborhoods

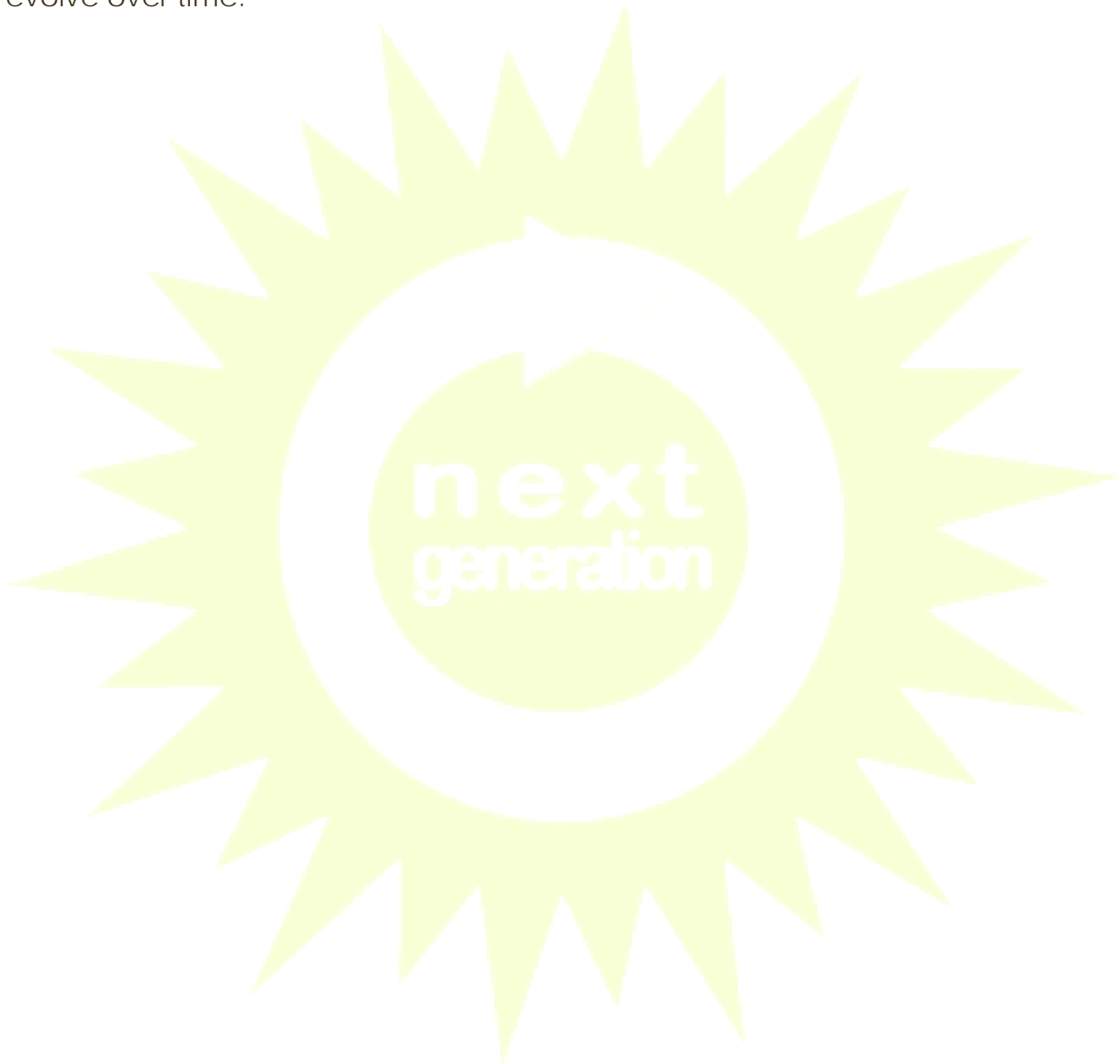
Targeted areas within the City serve as opportunities to reinvest and redevelop to provide *housing*, strengthen *neighborhoods*, enhance the *downtown business and arts communities* and improve *public facilities*.

Justification

The recommendations in the Framework for Reinvestment and Redevelopment mirror many of the recommendations found in this report. This proposal also embraces the principals of "15 in 5," is consistent with the ideals determined by the Long Term Planning Commission, and represents a near-consensus of years of community planning groups.

We like that it designates an arts and cultural entertainment district, makes parks more attractive to youth and families, develops the riverfront, rejuvenates abandoned and deteriorating property by making clear boundaries, encourages the development of downtown housing and connects trails. **We want a healthy community and the RDCP moves us toward that goal.**

We also support the indirect themes in the report including the support the collocation efforts including those related to non profits, government and human services entities and the relocation of incompatible industrial facilities. It is essential to recognize that when combined with the other ideas in the report, strategy number three creates a palate from which the city can grow and evolve over time.



IV. Support of Long Term Planning Commission Vision and Direction

We strongly support the recommendations of the Long Term Planning Commission. It aligns with our goals and priorities. Vision 2030 includes goals and objectives including a growing focus on regionalism and public and private partnerships. We highlight its findings:

Cedar Rapids is a leader in effective regionalism

We capitalize on the complementary strengths of our regional partners. We actively pursue and plan regional partnerships with governments, non-profit groups, universities, community and private colleges, and businesses. These partnerships encourage economic development, efficient delivery of high quality services and effective infrastructure planning.

Downtown is thriving and vibrant

Our downtown is lively, inviting, and visually attractive. It creates a strong sense of community and generates energy felt by residents and visitors alike. It features a riverfront that combines public spaces and mixed use development, abundant employment and housing options, cultural, artistic, and entertainment opportunities, public spaces with a sense of community and easy pedestrian access.

We promote strategic and sustainable development

Development policies promote a unique sense of community and place, preserve and enhance the city's natural and cultural resources, and consider long-term economic costs.

We value compassion and celebrate diversity

Our differences strengthen our community, our workplaces, and our lives. Our policies treat everyone equally and with dignity.

We foster and conserve the natural environment

Our standards and policies reduce energy use, improve energy efficiency, provide clean air and pure water, preserve and protect the land, and reduce solid waste. Our policies invest in and encourage environmental sustainability in business, government, and housing.

Our educational system is world-class

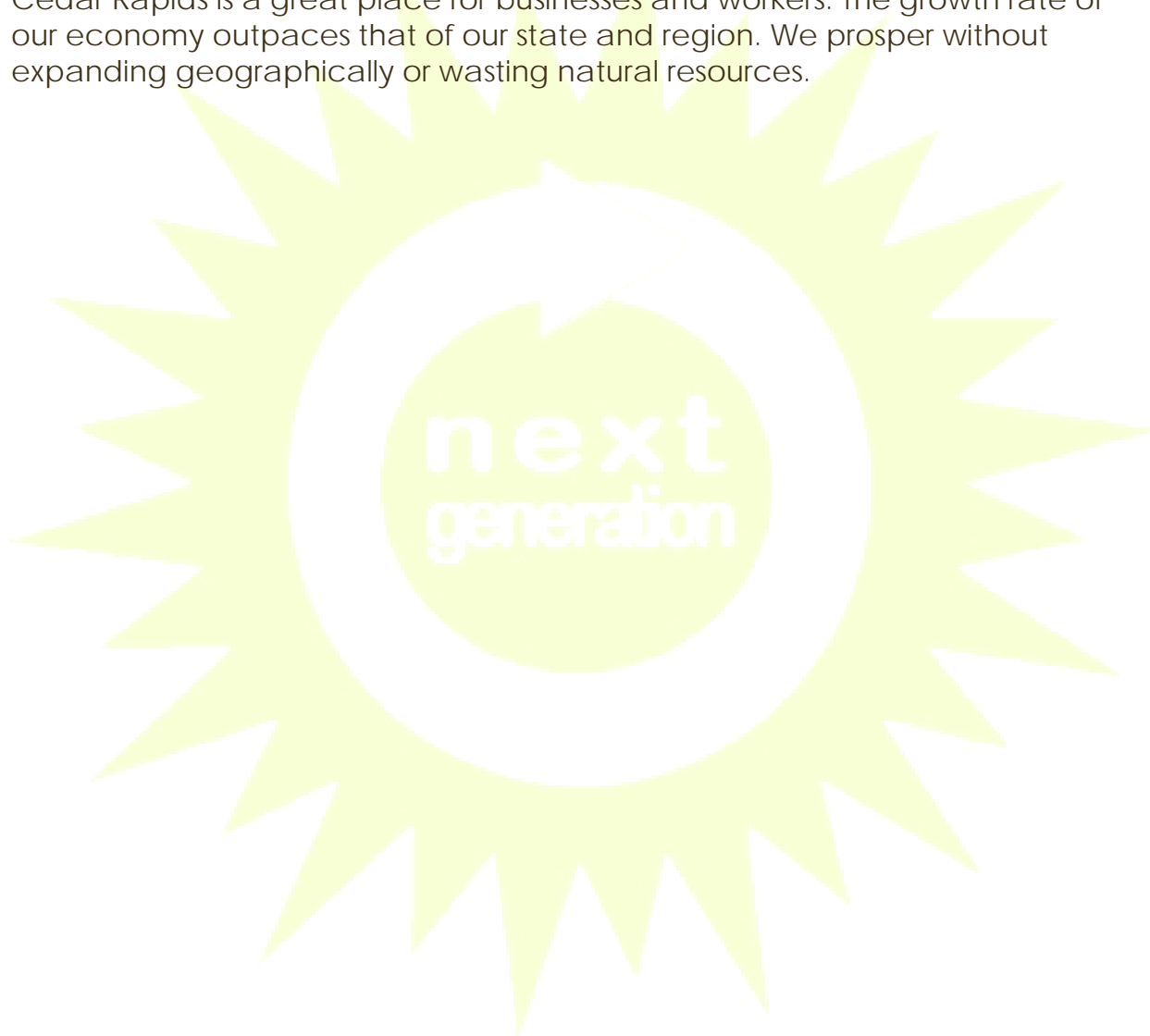
We cherish the right to education for everyone. Education improves our lives and strengthens our community. We strive to provide the best educational programs available anywhere in the world.

We offer broad access to cultural, recreational, and entertainment opportunities

Such access energizes and enlivens the community experience for all ages and interests. We provide contemporary venues featuring diverse artists offering rich cultural experiences for all, state-of-the-art athletic facilities that are used by all, a robust trail system, clean waterways and lakes, numerous public golf courses, and neighborhood parks and pools.

Our economy is prosperous, sustainable, and fair to all

Cedar Rapids is a great place for businesses and workers. The growth rate of our economy outpaces that of our state and region. We prosper without expanding geographically or wasting natural resources.



V. Support of City Revenue Diversification

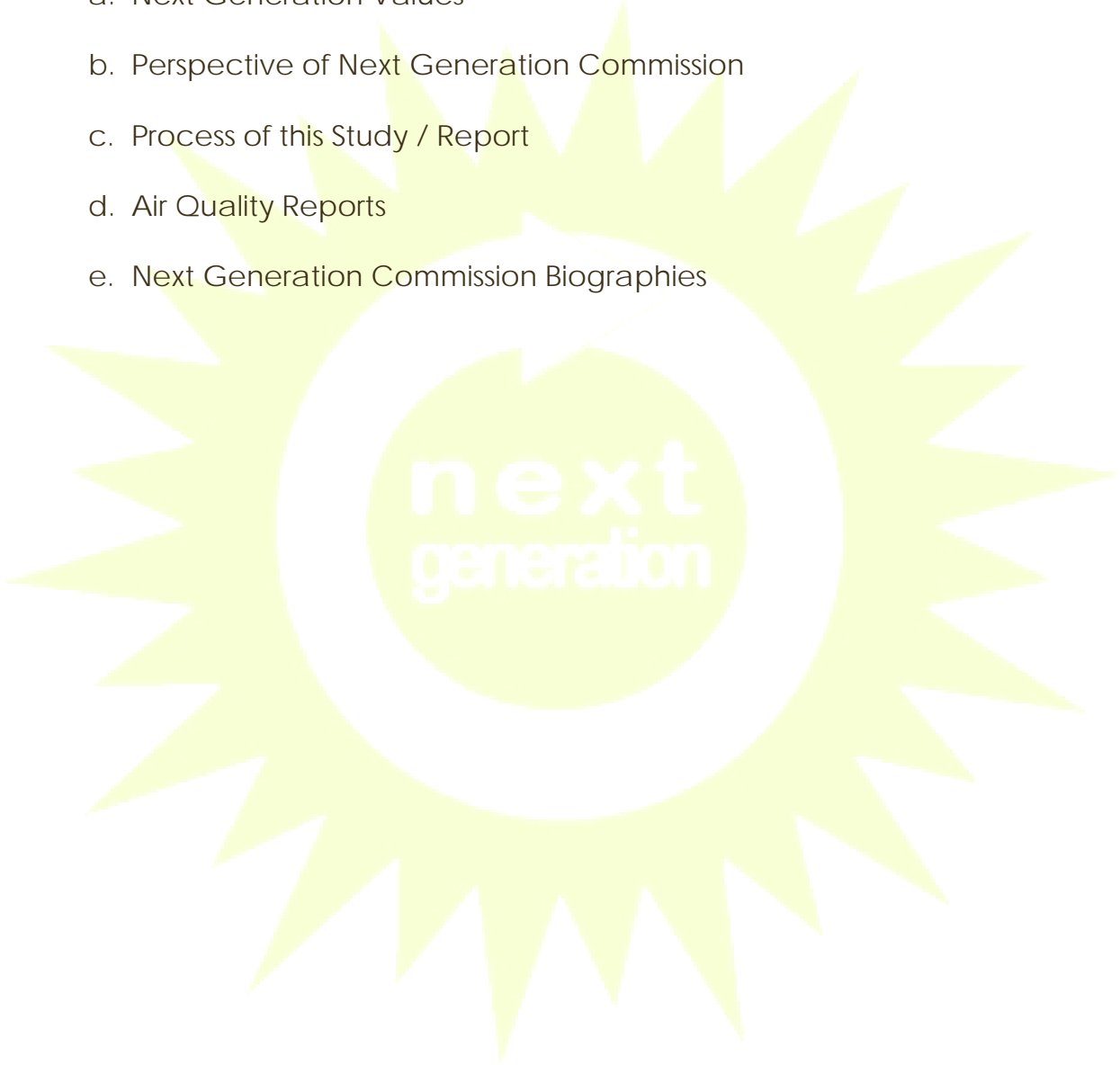
In order to compete in a global economy, a diverse economy and flexible government are required to retain and attract the next generation of workforce and residents. Cedar Rapids, and other cities in the Corridor, do not have access to the types of financial tools that other Midwestern cities have. The Next Generation Commission supports the City's efforts to obtain more financial tools to allow for more efficient growth management.

- **Iowa cities are over-reliant on property taxes.**
 - The State legislature limits cities operating revenues to a much greater extent than other Midwest states. Cedar Rapids receives 73% of its General Fund revenues from property taxes compared to 31% for other selected Midwest cities.
- **Iowa cities lack revenue diversity.**
 - Just as an investment portfolio should be diversified into various investments, a city must have a diverse source of revenue for maximum stability. Doing so enables lower overall tax rates in the long run, because of being better able to plan ahead, better able to defend a AAA bond rating and better able to drive growth.
- **Property tax reform is needed.**
 - Preliminary Cedar Rapids estimates indicate that property taxes paid by residential properties cover less than one-half of the cost of services. We are not advocating raising long-term tax rates, but we point out the obvious: broad subsidization of services is a distortion of economic and community reality.
- **Commercial/Industrial properties pay a significantly higher portion of property taxes compared to residential properties.**
 - This affects the next generation disproportionately. Young adults are more likely to rent than other demographics, and thus to pay a higher share of property tax.
- **Alternate revenue sources promote Cedar Rapids growth in wages, business formation and job creation.**
 - Activities that raise wages, result in more people traveling to Cedar Rapids to shop, create a clear job creation strategy do not have the same immediate economic impact as land development. Allowing revenue to flow from these activities encourages the City to pursue them as explicit, near-term goals.
- **Revenue Diversification does not mean "higher taxes".**
 - Revenue diversification can lead to either lower tax rates in the long run, or increased investment opportunities at today's rates.

V. Appendix

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- d. Air Quality Reports
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VI.a Next Generation Values (Appendix)

Before presenting recommendations we feel it is important to provide a simple framework for thought in understanding our values. The third person refers to the group we feel we have been designated to represent – the Next Generation. The following is a summary of extensive research (cited in the appendix):

- **Things we value:**
 - Quality year-round recreational opportunities
 - Quality career opportunities with a broad and diverse employment base
 - Being near our peers and family
 - Fabulous parks, green space and trails
 - Environmentally responsible living
 - Interesting arts and cultural entertainment opportunities
 - An area of town that has a critical mass where arts / culture / dining / entertainment / living and working all co-exist
 - Art. Specifically: Public art, artists, galleries, & museums, particularly when they co-exist in concentrated areas
 - Year-round schedule of community gatherings such as farmers markets, festivals, celebrations, parades and fairs
 - A strong relationship with local colleges
 - Design standards, continuity and quality construction
 - Diverse housing options
 - Diversity – diversity creates uniqueness in a community which creates variety of thought and activities for everybody.
 - Well regarded community image. We are brand conscious!
 - Opportunity to engage in civic life
 - Proximity to an airport that can get us to where we want to be quickly and inexpensively.

- **Things that may surprise you:**
 - We are very mobile, and are proud of it.
 - Civic pride, loyalty and feelings of a “hometown” tend to be low within our generation.
 - Generation Iowa Commission found that young Iowans want:
 - Highest paying job in their field of study, in a lower cost-of-living area. (Iowans cite the wage gap as the #1 reason they leave.)
 - Demographic specific amenities and attractions
 - Options for career advancement and mentoring
 - We are not as tax sensitive. We choose areas with higher tax rates if the quality of life and career opportunities make up for it. Tax rates matter, but are not a primary factor in where we live.

- We are advocates of industry clusters. Industry clusters facilitate having quality career opportunities and growth. By having multiple employers within our industry located within close proximity we can change companies without moving our families. Evidence is strong that clustered areas not only attract more talent for a given industry but that they retain that talent in the community.
 - Employers are increasingly focused on talent management and the employee and employer's goals are complimentary.
- Local affordability and commute times are not top concerns of ours. We'll deal with traffic and higher costs if we are in an area that provides us with great quality of life and career opportunities.
- We like our cars. We'll walk, bike or take a short bus ride, but in areas close to where we live, work and play - 5 miles or less. In general, without this density we drive our cars. That's why we like density. It allows us to embrace "green" transportation in practical ways.

Based on a survey of 10,491 Iowa College students found the following weaknesses in our state:

Areas Identified by College Students As Our Weaknesses	
Topic	% that agree Iowa Has
Social / religious / professional organizations	45.5
Attractive night life	45.7
Entertainment options that interest me	51.1
Diverse communities	43.2

- **Other important facts:**
 - There is little evidence of new residential projects nationwide being located next to operating factories and industrial facilities
 - There is little evidence of extensive construction of Class A office space next to operating factories and industrial facilities
 - This is most evident in Cedar Rapids as new office expansion continues at our perimeter instead of within our core.

VI.b Perspectives of the Next Generation Commission (Appendix)

Our commission consisted of seven community leaders. Our members have direct or indirect affiliations with the following groups.

Commission Member Community Involvement		
Access Iowa	Generation Iowa	Cedar Rapids Long Term Planning Commission
Chamber of Commerce	CR Parks and Recreation Dept	Convention and Visitors Bureau
Downtown District	Hawkeye Labor Council	Cedar Rapids Symphony
Greater Cedar Rapids Foundation	Diversity Focus	Leadership For Five Seasons
Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance	Cedar Rapids Museum of Art	Rebuild Iowa Commission
CR Disaster Recovery Team		YIowa
Priority One	Cornell College	AFL – CIO
Rotary	CR Community Schools	St. Lukes Healthcare Foundation
Theater Cedar Rapids	United Way	CR Hotel Motel Allocation Commission

This list is provided to not only for perspective but also to potentially identify conflicts. It is provided for guidance and neither its completeness nor accuracy is guaranteed by members of the commission.

Members of the Next Generation Council work for some the area's largest employers, school districts, colleges, and non-profit organizations. We bring perspective from the business/non-profit and arts and cultural worlds. We value the experiences individuals have gained outside Cedar Rapids. That being said, members have chosen Cedar Rapids to be their current hometown. Members of our commission and their families have lived in or have family that lives in the following communities:

Where We Have Lived and / or Have Family		
St. Louis, MO	Denver, CO	Des Moines
New York, NY	Naples, FL	Los Angeles
Hanover, NH	Presque Isle, ME	Boulder, CO
Omaha, NB	Honolulu, HI	Colorado Springs, CO
Westport, CT	Seattle	Iowa City, IA
Chicago, IL	Minneapolis	Rapids City, SD
San Diego, CA	Akcakoca, Turkey	
San Francisco, CA	Toledo, Spain	

VI.c Process of this Study / Report (Appendix)

Study / Resource Information

We did not do any of our own studies and instead relied on the extensive number of existing studies and research that is out there. This included, but was not limited to, the following:

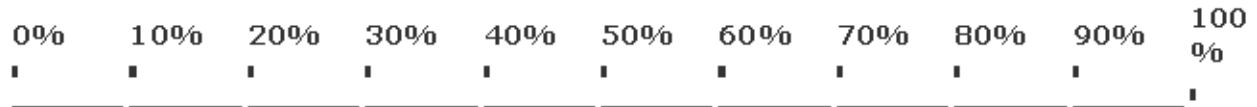
Cedar Rapids / Iowa Specific	
15 in 5 http://www.cedarrapids.org/Content.asp?Page_Id=138	Linn County Nonprofit Flood Impact Study
Long Term Planning Commission http://www.cedar-rapids.org/council/Ltpc.asp	The JLG report
International Economic Development Council 2008 Economic Recovery Recommendations	Iowa Workforce Development –Iowa College Student Analysis
« Englemann » Presentation	Americans for the Arts Economic Impact Study on the Corridor
General Reference	
Rebecca Ryan – Next Generation Consulting www.nextgenerationconsulting.com	Richard Florida – The Rise of the Creative Class and the Flights of the Creative Class
AngelouEconomics www.angeloueconomics.com	515 Alive (Des Moines) www.515alive.com
Lowertown Art District http://lowertownartdistrict.com	Fieldstone Alliance http://fieldstonealliance.org
Vitamin G: effects of green space on health, well-being, and social safety	Culture as an Economic Engine http://creativecity.ca
Innovation Philadelphia http://www.innovationphiladelphia.com/initiatives/young-pros-facts.aspx	Planning Livable Communities www.pedestrianfriendly.com
Ecosystem services in urban areas	Pedestrian Friendly Cities – Kent Robertson PhD, St. Cloud State University

Further, we met with a broad spectrum of community leaders and had a diverse series of guest speakers to gain greater perspective.

VI.d Air Quality Reports (Appendix)

Linn County Ranks in bottom 10% of all US Counties in Air Releases of known carcinogens, and in the bottom 20% of most other metrics for “worst environmental record.”

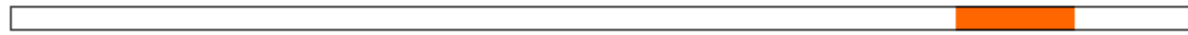
• **Cleanest/Best Counties in US** Percentile **Dirtiest/Worst Counties in US**



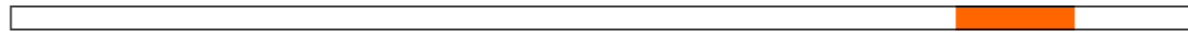
Total environmental releases:



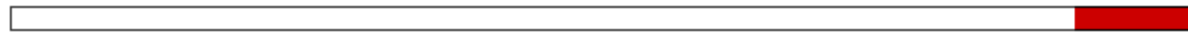
Cancer risk score (air and water releases):



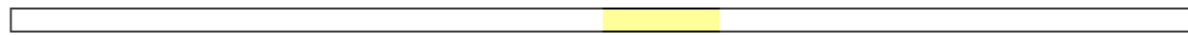
Noncancer risk score (air and water releases):



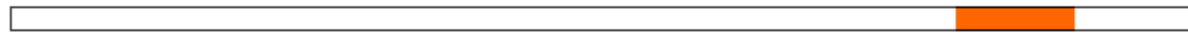
Air releases of recognized carcinogens:



Air releases of recognized developmental toxicants:



Air releases of recognized reproductive toxicants:



Source:

http://www.scorecard.org/env-releases/county.tcl?fips_county_code=19113#major_chemical_releases

Linn County has the worst reported Air Quality in Iowa

http://www.scorecard.org/env-releases/cap/rank-counties-exposure.tcl?how_many=25&pollutant=psi&fips_state_code=19

Exposures to Criteria Air Pollutants		
Ranked by (select your ranking criteria)		
Air Quality Index		
Rank	County	AOI
1.	LINN	141
2.	CLINTON	125
3.	SCOTT	117
4.	POLK	112
5.	MUSCATINE	108
6.	VAN BUREN	101
7.	CERRO GORDO	100
8.	JOHNSON	96
9.	PALO ALTO	91
10.	BLACK HAWK	90
11.	HARRISON	85
12.	WOODBURY	81
	WRIGHT	81
13.	MONTGOMERY	80
	POTTAWATTAMIE	80
14.	EMMET	73
15.	WARREN	72
16.	BREMER	66
17.	STORY	64
18.	LEE	48
19.	DELAWARE	35

Other Environmental Data and Reports

2006 Toxic Releases from Point Source Air Emissions in Linn County (Source: EPA at <http://www.epa.gov/tri/>)

- o 1,241,655 pounds of total toxic releases of air emissions
- o 446,472 pounds of Acetaldehyde, up from 300,955 in 2002 (a carcinogen)
- o 174,295 pounds of Hydrochloric acid

In 2002, Linn County ranked # 32 in the nation in air releases of Recognized Carcinogens

http://www.scorecard.org/ranking/rank-counties.tcl?how_many=100&drop_down_name=Recognized+carcinogens+to+air&fips_state_code=Entire+United+States

VI.e Next Generation Commission Biographies (Appendix)

Tom Anderson

Tom Anderson is a Vice President and Wealth Management Advisor for Merrill Lynch. He is also the Associate Director of the Cedar Rapids – Iowa City Office. Tom's has been in the securities industry since 1996 and with Merrill Lynch since 2002. Prior to joining the private client side of the business, he was an analyst in Investment Banking in New York and St. Louis.

Tom has his MBA from the University of Chicago and a B.S.B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis where he obtained a double major in Finance and International business. A member of the Investment Management Consultants Association, Tom passed his Certified Investment Management Analyst (CIMA®) examination at Wharton School of Business in 2002. Tom is fluent in Spanish and has lived in Spain and worked in Mexico.

Tom and his wife Sarah have 2 children, Rowan and Rory, and are active volunteers in the community. Tom serves on the boards of the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce, United Way of East Central Iowa, the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art and the Downtown District. He was the founder of Access Iowa and has served on numerous boards and commissions in the community.

Christian Fong

Christian Fong is AEGON's Head of Capital Markets for real estate debt, where he oversees high yield real estate debt investing and the sale of commercial mortgage loans. He was previously a management consultant with McKinsey & Company. He was appointed by Gov. Chet Culver as a founding member, and is currently Vice-Chair, of the Generation Iowa Commission, which advises and advocates for ways to make cities, companies and the state more appealing to the next generation.

Fong founded, and is CEO, of Corridor Recovery, a non-profit that coordinates efforts between government, local agencies and businesses, and online communication, in the recovery of the Cedar Rapids Flood of 2008. He serves on the Cedar Rapids Recovery & Reinvestment Coordinating Team, as well as the boards of the Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, Brucemore and River of Life Ministries.

Fong is from Underwood, Iowa, and has lived in Cedar Rapids since 1998. He has a B.S. in Statistics from Creighton University, and an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, where he graduated with High Honors and as a Tuck Scholar. Christian is a CFA and CCIM charterholder. He and his wife, Jenelle, have three kids, Luther, Ty Anders and Elsa.

Mark Hudson

Mark Hudson is an attorney at Shuttleworth & Ingersoll, P.L.C where he focuses on labor and employment compliance, counseling, and litigation. Mark also is the co-author of "McDonnell Douglas: Alive and Well", 52 Drake Law Review 383 (2004), is a Contributing Editor for BNA's leading labor law treatise, The Developing Labor Law, and is a Chapter Monitor for BNA's and the ABA Section on Labor and Employment Law's definitive reference on the law of discrimination in the workplace, Employment Discrimination Law. In the civic arena, Mark serves on the Arc of East Central Board of Directors, Corridor Recovery, and the Iowa SHRM State Council.

Mark graduated from Cornell College with a B.A in Politics in 1999, and then Drake University Law School in 2003. Mark and his wife, Lisa, have two children, Matthew (3.5 years old) and Kaitlyn (3 months old).

Steve Koepke

A 1992 graduate of Jefferson High School, Steve Koepke has lived in Cedar Rapids for most of his life. After high school, Steve continued his education at UNI where he graduated with a BA and MA in education. He has taught Middle Level Science for the Cedar Rapids Community School District for the past 10 years and coaches both boys and girls basketball at Taft Middle School. In addition to coaching at the middle school level, he also coaches men's and women's golf at Jefferson.

Steve is an active member of the PTA at Taft Middle School and is on the S.I.P. (School Improvement Plan) committee at Taft in addition to other duties outside the classroom.

Steve is an avid golfer and loves riding his mountain bike with his wife, skiing, traveling and staying active.

Sarah Olson

Sarah Olson is the AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison at United Way of East Central Iowa where she works with both labor unions and local businesses to encourage participation in the annual campaign and community involvement. She leads the public policy outreach for UWECI and is the statewide co-chair of United Ways of Iowa Public Policy Committee. While not a native Iowan, Sarah moved to Cedar Rapids in 2003 to become more active in politics after serving in the AmeriCorps National Readiness Response Corps for the Tampa Chapter of the American Red Cross Disaster Services. She has worked for Senator Tom Harkin and State Senator Rob Hogg. Sarah chose to stay in Cedar Rapids to raise her family because of the strong sense of community she felt here.

Sarah is a member of the Linn County Community Services Advisory Board and the Board of Trustees at BruceMore. In 2007, she was a member of the Cedar Rapids Long-term Planning Commission and in 2008, a member of the Cedar Rapids Vision Deployment Steering Committee. She earned her bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from University of South Florida. Sarah and her husband, Tyler, have one son, Leo.

Kelly Montijo Fink

Kelly Montijo Fink is an adjunct Spanish professor at Kirkwood Community College and Cornell College. She has been involved in higher education since 1992 and has also taught at the University of Iowa. Kelly is active in a variety of international and multicultural activities. In the past she has served as a translator and interpreter to foreign dignitaries, authors, musicians, and others. She is a recording artist and in 2008 was nominated for a "NAMMY" (North American Native music awards). She enjoys music, languages and travel. Kelly and her husband, Brian, have 2 children, Angelica and Gabriel.

Jessica Palmer

Jessica Palmer is Director of Marketing and Research for the Cedar Rapids Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. Her responsibilities include working with partner organizations, developing and conducting primary market research material for Cedar Rapids in order to recommend and implement strategic marketing initiatives for the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Technology Corridor™ region. Prior to CVB, Jessica was a Manager of Communication and Research with Priority One.

Jessica serves as a board member of YPlowa, Paul Engle Center, United Way Young Leaders Society Committee, Cedar Rapids Downtown District Committee, Access Iowa Civic and Leadership Committee and the Eastern Iowa Marketing Roundtable. She is a graduate of the Cedar Rapids Area Chamber Leadership for Five Seasons program and also serves as a volunteer for several community organizations including Junior Achievement and Mount Mercy College. In 2007, Jessica was named as one of the region's "40 Under 40" by the Corridor Business Journal. A Cedar Rapids native, Jessica earned a B.S. in business marketing from Mount Mercy College.

Casey Prince

Casey Prince is the Managing Director of Theatre Cedar Rapids, where he is responsible for the theatre staffing, operation and fundraising activities. He is also drama director at Franklin and McKinley middle schools and founding board member of The Arts Farm and Urban Theatre Project of Iowa. In addition to theatre and business, Casey has a specific background in industrial air quality, specifically pollution control and plant ventilation. Raised in Cedar Rapids, Casey is an alumnus of Arthur, Franklin and Washington. He earned a B.S. in Business Administration from Drake University, majoring in International Business and Information Systems while playing football, serving as student senator & ambassador and performing onstage throughout his college years. After living and working in Los Angeles as an actor in his early twenties, Casey returned to Iowa for a job opportunity. Recent associations include Downtown Rotary, current enrollment in the Chamber's Leadership for Five Seasons program and active involvement with the Next Generation Commission.

He and his wife Lindsay have a daughter, Eloise. Casey has performed on the stages at the Paramount, Iowa Theatre, Old Creamery and Brucemore. Casey enjoys almost every sport, wishes there was an aging football player league and absolutely loves his hometown and positively affecting the young people now growing up here like he did.