

**East-West Streets' break out session**

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Facilitator: Sagree Sharma

**Main Ideas****1 – Town Center**

The participants believed that the town center was being bypassed by locals and visitors travelling through town due to the frequency and un-synchronized nature of the street lights. They asked for a clustering of diverse programming to draw people to attend events, dine, shop and spend time there. The Playhouse which is currently tucked in to the Northwest of the town center was identified as one of the many amenities that are not located for maximum benefit. An outside amphitheatre space was also suggested as a complimentary program to the playhouse in its (recommended) new central location. The participants also expressed a desire to see some sort of sculpture or (brick/arch) structure that highlights the prominence of the town center.

**2 – Connectivity**

The participants raised the need for bike lanes and a parallel bike network that connects all the places of interest and amenities. They felt that particularly the corridor along Maple Street that connects the town center to Walsh University needed upgrading and beautification given that so many students and parents and visitors use that route to and from the university. The locals use a secondary network of streets to get around in order to avoid the main corridors on account of frequent and unsynchronized lights. They asked that this network be upgraded and connectivity along it be smooth and easily legible. The idea of walkable and bikeable networks parallel to the existing corridors was very popular with the participants. The participants did not believe that the city had a public transit culture stating that the ridership might improve if there was a density of destinations in the city that could be easily and quickly accessed through the public transit.

**3 – Future Development**

The participants raised the need for development along main Street across from Charlotte Street intersection as that is a large empty site that they believe makes the town center seem disconnected from the rest of North Canton. The participants also said that any future development should take into account the significant problem with Flooding that the town encounters and were very receptive to the idea of ecological design that reduced impervious surfaces and helped the water find its way into the ground.

In addition to this they were also very concerned about the lack of accessible, cheap/free and easy to use parking in the Town Center and felt that it would be a significant barrier to drawing new development and people to the city.

**4 – Identity**

Beyond the obvious suggestions of signage and improved wayfinding mechanisms the participants also stressed that creating visible public spaces and parks in the town center and the rest of the town would be beneficial in improving the town's image and identity. They believe that the city is a family friendly community and that can be highlighted in the programming in the town – like public spaces for the elderly, youth and children that are easily accessible and visible. They stressed that programming events like 'get to know your neighbor night' and creating community gardens and trails and parks would be a step in the right direction to create a desirable destination in North Canton.

Walsh University – New Identifier – Market Street is a Growth Area

**Edges : CITY**

East – Walsh University

West – Whipple Street

North – x

South – Everhart Street

**Edges : TOWN CENTER**

East – Wise Street

West – x

North – Charlotte Street

South – Glenwood Street

**Desired First Impressions –**

- Larger signs (that include names of local assets and attractions + schools and their accomplishments)
- More green space
- Consistency of greenery (no over grown vegetation)
- Cleanliness (no trash)

Example – empty lot when entering from Charlotte (across Main)

- Brick Arches or Columns as Identity markers for town center
- More Dogwoods (+ more flowers)

**Points of Pride**

- Walsh University – Washington Square
- Family Oriented Place
- Safe
- Schools! Schools! Schools!
- YMCA
- Hoover Connector Trail
- History of City Square
- Police
- Fire Deptt
- Community

**Problems**

- No Bike Corridor / sidewalks on Maple St (particularly going to WU)
- Too many and Badly timed lights in Town Center (leads to visitors avoiding town center)
- Playhouse Square – not located accessibly
- Difficult to get alcohol permit – therefore such few restaurant
- E Maple not very wide
- Scattered Amenities & Recreation Places
- Post Office
- Parking – private, inadequate and difficult to find
- Wayfinding
- Underutilized Dogwood Park
- No Dog Parks (although it is a very dog friendly area)

- Flooding! Flooding! Flooding!
- Low bus ridership – poor connectivity and not efficient.

**Suggestions for improvements:**

- Incentives for residents to upgrade lawns, yards etc
- Improved connection between 2<sup>nd</sup> tier connectors (which are used more often than main corridors) like – 7<sup>th</sup>, Glenwood, Pershing, Woodside, Schneider, East Hill
- Destination Creation
  - o For elders (shuffle board, outdoor chess)
  - o For kids to gather and play
  - o For outside visitors
  - o Better programming - Meet your neighbor night, Midnight basketball
  - o Outdoor Amphitheatre with Playhouse in a Central location
- Improve Town Center – specialty restaurants clustered near center + Dntn parks + arts + Performance venues
- Improved lighting for pedestrians
- Bikes routes and Trees along E Maple
- New and Improved parking in town center for new clustered amenities
- Put parking at Charlotte & Main on the west side lot
- Bury Utility lines (already done in some parts of the town)
- Better Signage and Wayfinding
- Get owners of abandoned buildings to maintain lots
- Promote the town website – Use Media to tell people about the town and its attractions / events
- E-W connector for Greenway plan
- Comprehensive approach to Infrastructure – including broadband
- Create off-road walking trails (tie in with greenway network)
- Bring Trader Joe's / Wholefoods here
- Wind turbines behind Hoover? To take us off the grid
- Outdoor sculptures throughout the town center

**High School (to be demo-ed) ideas**

- Common Space, community garden
- Reuse existing Building
- Lawn space for Frisbee throwing

**North - South Streets' break out session:-**

Facilitator: Gauri Torgalkar

- **GATEWAYS:**
  - **Applegrove St.** is a main gateway from Interstate 77 (west) and N. Main St.(north) On Applegrove heading towards Main, Pittsburgh/Ernie's bike shop is where the street character changes.
  - **Portage** is also widely used to get to Main-Maple St. (turn left at Charlotte)
  - **Walsh Univ.** campus is the eastern gateway
  - **Nimishillen creek intersection area** at Main St. is also perceived as a gateway from south
  
- **IDENTITY & CHARACTER:**
  - Applegrove-Main has an **auto-oriented feel** which continues to a lesser extent towards Charlotte St.
  - Applegrove going south towards Charlotte is perceived as a **transitional zone**
  - South of Charlotte the street character changes: **Charlotte to Bachtel** is considered as the town center
  - The vacant car dealerships on Main (Charlotte intersection) are an eyesore. The auto dealership used to house a grocery store on that property
  - **Existing Town center destinations:** Café Gelato, Main Street grill, Library, YMCA
  - Historic theatre was a great attraction
  - **We need to ask Eric or the others for info on the historic theatre.**
  
- **ISSUES:**
  - **Main Street DIED** when street parking at the intersection of Maple was eliminated (to allow for faster exit for Hoover employees)
  - Pedestrian and bike environment on main street is **scary**; speeding cars and truck traffic.
  - Dogwood park is not used to its full potential; it can become so much more!
  - Need to get more seniors and adults to bike. Safer bike friendly streets need to be designated. sharrows? More amenities: bike racks, water fountains, etc.
  - **Towpath doesn't connect** to North Canton:  
<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/SPR/bicycle/Pages/NE.aspx>
  - Maple has **high speed traffic**; not ideal for bike lane. Applegrove is also not bike friendly, so even if the Walsh campus is great for biking, to and from the campus is dangerous & inconvenient. **A number of people mentioned using 'inside' streets for biking. We need to sit with the planning group to identify these streets.**
  - Some streets have **extreme topography changes**, leading to narrow and blind hills. **Identify these.** Wayfinding, signage and lighting could be used to alleviate this problem.
  - The existing **skate park** (near the stadium?) is not an asset. It attracts unwanted activity. It needs to be relocated or made more visible.
  - Hoover building is an eyesore
  - **Flooding**
    - Easthill area
    - Everhard St.
    - A few sections along Main St., south of town center
  - **Bus transit:** vague answers, not very widely used. **Confirm with Eric**, forgot to ask:

- Q: Would improved **transit waiting environments** encourage additional use?
- Q: Is the bus network **adequate**?

• **IDEAS/STRATEGIES:**

- **Public parking & on-street parking** need to be included to make Main St. vibrant again. Parking is not uniformly distributed; they are all 'private' lots even when adjacent to each other.
- For the town center, **traffic calming** is crucial
- **Pedestrian overlay district**, walkable shopping area desired
- **Destinations** need to be created along the Main St. in the town center to give people a reason to walk around. Bowling Alley (Maxie's was a popular bowling destination)
- Adding wi-fi to the main public areas in town ctr. will add to the appeal
- There is an existing **farmers' market** in the parking lot behind Main St. Grill & St. Paul's, but a pavilion or some structure in the dogwood park or on Main St. at the town sq. will give it more frontage/customers
- A **senior center** could be a good use for the vacant car dealership bldg.
- A small grocery store or downtown market in the town sq. will help recreate the old charm of North Canton
- The building style of Main St. Grill should be continued along the Main St. in the town center
- **7<sup>th</sup> street** is a great option for developing as a **bike/pedestrian-oriented street** (with a large number of kids and teens already using it) **perhaps link the proposed senior center on Main via Charlotte-hillcrest to this bike/ped street?**
- Better **signage and streetscape**
- **MORE TREES**; for streetscape as well as individual properties along the main corridors
- Create a presence for the **Nimishillen creek trailhead/entrance** off Main St.
- A **better exchange of activities and users** between NC residents and Walsh college students is desired through programming, shared public space design and better connectivity
- The best part of **North Canton's identity is the 'hometown' feel**, which started fading in 1990's. Recreating that identity with a new twist, relevant to the lifestyles of current & prospective residents would be great.
- The planning needs to be forward looking – **change the paradigm**, cater towards attracting younger families
- **Events/Festivals:** (re-create or build on what's existing) **pics from Eric?**
  - Annual Jaycees fairs take place at NC Memorial stadium:  
[http://www.northcantonjaycees.org/?page\\_id=5](http://www.northcantonjaycees.org/?page_id=5)
  - Cleveland Pops Orchestra used to perform on the lawn @ Hoover. Stopped since 2008. Maybe recreate that in a new/different way? (something like Barberton; wine/napkins/food baskets/sit on lawns)
  - Main St. festival August 20-21, 2011:  
<http://www.northcantonchamber.org/2010mainstreetfestiv.htm>  
(Charlotte to Bachtell is closed for vehicular access)
- **Dogwood is a dead identity**; very few Dogwood trees left in the city; esp. in the town center
- **Fieldcrest Lodge** and **Playhouse** are great destinations, need to be better connected & advertised

- Dinner room at the Playhouse is lovely, but access is inconvenient. No presence on the street...Hidden from view.
- **Need to speak w/Eric about this:** If the town center becomes a place where traffic is intentionally slowed down, what streets can serve as options for connecting N-S, E-W. **No solid answers.**
- Library has insufficient parking. Parking lot is hurting the four Dogwood trees that remain in the backyard, and are slated for untimely death. **Library +Art gallery can work as a cultural node for NC. Incorporating some outdoor reading/ sports/senior activity space, can make a huge difference; maybe combine with the school/kindergarten center behind the library. Parking shared w/Sewer district building or across the street on Reams St.**

**Development Sites break out session:-**

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Facilitator: David Jurca

**Missing**

- Applegrove Corridor west of Main St- Development and Gateway
  - Site W. of Main on Applegrove across from Schwab Electric
- Behind Main St. Grill-site of market currently. Important view from W. Maple

**Desired Development Features**

- Elderly/Senior Housing
  - Possibly in Hoover Building but renovation cost expensive and floor to floor heights would make residential conversion very difficult
- Animal + Arts friendly community
  - Want more friendly pet spaces
  - Dog park desired – possibly at former middle school site
- Cat shelters, etc.
- Theater is best kept secret of N. Canton
  - Arts exist, but not visible
  - Want arts cultural center
- Vacant structures are visible, but arts are invisible, so why not combine the two?
- City sign planned for 10 years, but ran into ordinance issues.
  - What is the current status of the large Canton sign?
- Outdoor venue downtown, amphitheater
- Larger signs desired than the current “Welcome to North Canton” signs
- Show off the things we are proud of: arts, college, welcoming atmosphere
- Could Golf Course be downsized to 9 holes?
- Bitzer park should be more family friendly
  - Current Vietnam Memorial is only seldom used
  - Water feature, ice skating, etc.
- Imagine N. Canton: Bus trips into a cultural center
- Don’t want to be a “bedroom community”

**Hoover**

- Peds, outside seating, seeing people
- Nothing between Viking St. + Main Street Grill
- Businesses on Main St. should have door on Main St.

**Walsh**

- Need bus service from Walsh to Town Center
- E. Maple needs to be more walkable/safer

### **Town Center**

- Need street lights across at Viking
- Need accessible Post Office
  - Want 6 acre site/9years left in lease

### **Between Maple + Charlotte**

- Mixed use development
- Retain Hoover identity
  - Dig into history

### **Old Middle School Site**

- Retain historic archway
- Public green space plan by school
- Animal (dog park)
- Kindergarten -> Elementary
- Montessori out already
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### **Additional Comments**

- Need more cell phone towers
- Old Spitzer site under used
  - Never coming back
  - 2 owners would sell, willing to lease
- Off-site Akron's Children's Hospital in North Canton wanted
- Would a VA center move in?
- Want a place to have a drink and watch a game
- Micro-Brewery
- Belden Village is competition
  - It has a variety of choices
  - Mostly chains
- Farmers Market started 5 weeks ago
  - Have permission to expand into St. Paul's
- Wi-Fi hotspots needed
  - Along Maple, Main, + 7<sup>th</sup>
  - Leverages intelligent communities