

**Wahpeton Comprehensive Plan Update
Joint City Council and Planning Commission Work Session
November 18, 2010
Identification of Key Community Issues**

Community Issue Priorities

The following list summarizes how the Planning Commission and City Council members ranked the most important issues for the community. In parentheses is how many dots each received.

- Prioritize, fund, construct and maintain quality public infrastructure (11)
- Wahpeton's challenge is to provide employment opportunities for all ages (10)
- Lack of variety in shopping and restaurant choices (8)
- Keep downtown revitalization efforts moving forward (7)
- Housing with emphasis on senior housing (6)
- Population: Keep young people with clean, safe community (4)
- Grow retail base to include more choices in clothing for all ages and sexes (3)
- Diverse business manufacturing/agriculture/service and NDSCS educational facilities (2)
- Recreational Use of the River (2)
- Activities for Seniors and Youth (2)
- Identify Wahpeton's "niche" and promote (1)

Strengths/Challenges

The following categories summarize the community strengths and challenges identified individually by Planning Commission and City Council members during the work session:

Land Use, Development & Growth

Strengths

- Proximity to large regional draws.
- The people that live here – their dedicated spirit and the safe environment in which to live.
- The people and the community.
- The people who are involved with groups are very dedicated to making Wahpeton a great place.
- Safe neighborhoods.
- The citizens that live here and the values we share.
- The people that live here are a fabulous strength.
- Progressive leadership and participation.
- Diversity of citizenry's interests and ideas
- Work ethic and ability to get things done.
- Clean, safe community
- Keeping/attracting young people
- Wahpeton is a neat community with a downtown shopping area, zoo, and other attractions.

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Challenges

- Improve the quality of life to create a “The” place to live attitude.
- Growth Area Locations
- Where will we grow?
- Population decline
- Reach out to surrounding communities – be a hub for small towns

Housing & Neighborhoods

Challenges

- Senior housing

Business & Employment

Strengths

- Build on our existing diverse businesses – manufacturing/ag/service
- NDSCS employment and education

Challenges

- Quality jobs.
- Keeping people here – creating more jobs
- Provide business opportunities
- Getting businesses to Wahpeton to keep our young people here.
- It is necessary for the City to be open to new ideas for future business and “young” ideas
- Diverse economic base
- Need to attract more retail options
- Lack of retail stores
- Improving Wahpeton's image of a destination type town (retail, dining, activities)
Keep on working on the downtown so it thrives.
- Shopping: clothing, womens, childrens, mens, shoes
- Restaurant choices – variety, student hangouts, and senior activities
- Shopping challenges – crafts, sewing, hobby, furniture
- Provide assistance in drawing and building more places of business
- Where are the college students hanging out, eating at? How could we attract them to downtown?
- What is the niche market / identity for Wahpeton?

Transportation

Challenges

- Public transportation
- Bypass on the south side

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Recreation, Parks & Trails

Strengths

- Diverse recreational and cultural opportunities.
- Our parks and trails
- Parks
- Recreational opportunities

Challenges

- More green space
- Water/river usage

Public Utilities & Services

Challenges

- Maintaining infrastructure at level that meets citizens' expectations and needs.
- Funding priorities
- Provide the best for the least
- Funding infrastructure
- Funding the CIP
- Provide quality infrastructure and services

Public Facilities

Strengths

- Schools
- NDSCS educational facilities
- NDSCS employment and education

City's Role

The following summarizes how individual Planning Commission and City Council members described the City's role in achieving its vision.

- 1) Keep citizens engaged in the plans and goals of the city.
- 2) Open minds to change and opportunities for community improvement.
- 3) Listening to citizens while communicating to them of the Council and Staff's perceived city short and long term needs.
- 4) Providing basic services.
- 5) Protect investments while lending assistance.
- 6) Facilitate and support the various entities in the community.
- 7) Provide an environment conducive to business, education and community life.
- 8) Creating an environment for business to thrive.
- 9) Provide incentives and/or opportunities for business to grow or expand in Wahpeton.
- 10) Provide business opportunities.
- 11) Provide housing for population.