

**CITY OF ABERDEEN ♦ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

VISIONING WORKSHOP #2: GROUP EXERCISE COMMENT COMPILATION

The City held its second Visioning Workshop on Wednesday, January 26, 2022 from 7:00-8:30pm at Mt. Zion Baptist Church (200 Post Road, Aberdeen). Following is a compilation of the workshop’s discussions and comments. A summary of all Visioning Workshops—including Boards—is provided separately.

**ATTENDEES**

**PARTICIPANTS**

Christy Rumbaugh

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

Adam Hiob

**ABERDEEN PLANNING COMMISSION**

Terri Preston

DeAunte Printup

**ABERDEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Steve Horne, Chair

Mark Shaver

**ABERDEEN STAFF**

Phyllis Grover, Director—  
Planning & Community  
Development

Vickie Horne, Main Street  
Coordinator

Stefani Specter, Senior Planner

Sydney Trionfo, Planning  
Assistant

**WALLACE MONTGOMERY—CONSULTANT/FACILITATOR**

Lauren Good, Project Manager

Ray Moravec

Nicky Davis

**EXERCISE #1**

**NEEDS: WE NEED TO ADDRESS THIS CRITICAL ISSUE**

- Family oriented activities/entertainment options (including indoor)
- Restaurants (non-fast food) – 3
- Sit-down restaurants
- Public/Private attractions
- Quality of life features
  - Walking trails
  - Community Center/Youth programming
- Vibrant downtown after hours with transportation (bus routes)
- MARC/Amtrak Station Revision and connection to communities on both sides of track
- Transportation for seniors
- Connect downtown and neighborhoods to hospitals
- Diverse housing options
- Community events
- Retail shops (Kohls)
- Parks and Rec – Aberdeen lacking a department
- Better quality of life for citizens
- Mix retail in downtown area
- Restrict types of business in downtown area
- Deli/Sandwich shop open 6 days/week
- Area for eatery/food service at Medical

- Center to encourage both patients and staff to eat/spend time/walk
- Library improvements (or new) – encourage events/speakers
- Overall connectivity
- Downtown area needs more to attract you to actually go downtown
- Brewery
- Retail clothing stores
- Make Festival Park more user-friendly – bathrooms not accessible unless there's an event
- Bakery
- Specialty shop
- Craft night/paint night
- New library
- More evening/weekend activities
- Parks & Recreation

**WANTS: IF WE HAD THE CHOICE, WE WOULD CHOOSE TO HAVE...**

- More retail options
- Pocket parks throughout the City
- Entertainment & events for families of all ages – utilize public space
- Mixed use of recent annexed land commercial (walking distance) from the planned residential projects
- Skilled nursing and residential treatment facility
- Affordable senior living with wellness focus
- Parks and amenities – 2
  - Bathroom availability
  - Family planning/events
- Brewery
- Sit down restaurant
- More active downtown – bakery, specialty shops, creative spots (paint night, etc.)
- Focus on homeownership (east side)
- Housing that is affordable

**DESIRES: WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF..., BUT IT'S OK IF WE DON'T GET IT**

- Brewery in the TOD
- Bakery and other specialty shops
- Community gardens
- Family focused options (similar to Havre de Grace and Bel Air)
- Single floor living
- Sustainability/green team
- Remove barrier on Rt. 40 (walking overpass) to make better connectivity between East side of Town
- Private development focused on revitalizing blighted property
- Better communication from City on what is happening

**BARRIERS: IMMOVABLE OBJECTS OR OBSTRUCTIONS THAT WE MUST GO AROUND—WE CAN'T SIMPLY ELIMINATE THEM**

- Railroad bridge
- Redevelopment of worn-down homes/properties - 2
- Breaking through old impressions of Aberdeen that we aren't an area worth investing in or that the community isn't considered safe
- Not having a property maintenance ordinance - 2
- Crime and safety
- Reason to go downtown on evenings and weekends
- Not a large enough population radius for retail shops to build/desire to come here
- Attracting developers for redevelopment
- Low income/subsidized housing issue with Historic East Side
- "It's all Aberdeen" – erase notion that it's East or West
- Properties in squalor drive away potential residents
- Lack of organized Parks & Rec
- Ignored neighborhoods – "slumlords" and absentee landlords

- Concrete pedestrian overpass/train tracks
- Lack of communication on active/in-progress projects
- Lack of community engagement
- Lack of community investment in character/community events

**OBSTACLES: THINGS GET IN THE WAY OF WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH, BUT CAN BE CHANGED**

- Relationships with Government partners (County/State) needs improving and finding mutual benefit from growth and investment
- Absentee landlords
- Communication
- Lack of organized Parks and Rec department
- Getting ahead of the water/sewer needs in order to supply the growth expected West of I-95
- Need a more civic/volunteer focused community
- East side of City "ignored" – need to reinvest
- Solve for the aesthetics related to the rail (Amtrak)
- Better participation of Aberdeen citizens and employees of the City
- Many activities geared towards mid-day; need activities for evening/weekend

**ANNOYANCES: THINGS WE JUST DON'T LIKE; TEND TO BE NUISANCES AND PERSONAL; DO NOT PREVENT YOU FROM ACHIEVING GOALS**

- Lack of code enforcement
  - Traffic issue in certain areas of Aberdeen – mostly includes warehouse traffic
- Progress is slow and finding compromise in government to plan out more than one project at a time makes it difficult to execute a comprehensive plan, but it is still doable.

**EXERCISE #2**

*2011 Comprehensive Plan Vision: Aberdeen will concentrate development in a manner that ensures a safe, attractive, and economically viable land use pattern that sustains a balance between the City's current footprint and the inevitable growth that will occur.*

**I LIKE...**

- Have a safe City (proven by stats)
- Economically viable, great location
- Safe

**I DON'T LIKE...**

- Don't need dependency on BRAC; City is more than APG/BRAC
- Not really attractive (aesthetically)

**IT'S MISSING...**

- Get people to live/stay and not just drive through
- Climate control/sustainability
- Quality of life
- History (has been and will continue to be)
- Vibrancy
- Sense of community
- Recreation
- Attractive

**WHAT WILL ABERDEEN BE KNOWN FOR IN THE FUTURE?**

- A great place to live
- Focus on what we have instead of what we don't
- Build around experiences (APG, Ripken, University Health System)
- Vibrant Main Street with Culture and History

- Active Community (Civic Mindset)
- More active transportation/less reliability on cars
- "Work, play and stay"
- Tie together public health/resiliency
- Friendly
- Welcoming
- Community
- Medical expertise
- Employment opportunities
- Build off of what we already have
- Sustainability