



Department of Planning, Housing, & Community Development

Richard C. David, Mayor

Jennifer Taylor, Acting Director/Grants Administrator

Blueprint Binghamton – PHCD Response to Mayor’s Comments

Executive Summary

Mayor’s comments: Public Involvement

- Low percentage of involvement, 7449 maximum number of residents.
- Not sure if all were actually residents. If non-residents can’t even talk at a City Council meeting, how have they impacted the most important document for the next decade of City government?
- 454 took citywide survey

Response: Public outreach efforts will be discussed at Joint Planning session.

Mayor’s comments: Economic Development (IX)

- Why Charles Street Business Park?
- Can mixed-use downtown be limiting?
- Why is focus on small, independent retailers?
- Guide = Regulate

Responses:

- *Refer to response in Economic Development section for redevelopment opportunities for Charles Street Business Park.*
- *This question requires further clarification as it is not clear what concerns to address.*
- *The plan supports economic development activities that attract both large- and small-scale businesses in diverse market sectors ranging from large manufacturing, graduate incubator businesses, to small business storefronts and home office.*
- *It is unclear what is being referenced (Guide = Regulate).*

Mayor’s comments: Housing (X)

- How to preserve? Grants? BLDC? CDBG?
- What are the real housing needs? Talk to developers.
- Remove 20% affordable units in future housing projects
- What are the incentives for new student housing?
- How to encourage historic preservation and develop moderate-income senior housing?
- Should PR firm be hired by the City?

Responses:

- *Please refer to the Action Plan located in the plan's Appendix to review proposed resources that can assist with preservation of City's housing stock.*
- *Please refer to the Housing Market Analysis that was conducted to support development of the Action Plan.*
- *The statement to remove 20% of affordable housing was referred to the consultant and will be discussed at the Joint Planning session.*
- *Please refer to the Action Plan located in the plan's Appendix to review proposed resources that can incentivize new student housing development.*
- *Recommendations for historic preservation and development of moderate-income senior housing will be pursued through public/private partnership, policy making and leveraging resources. Please refer to the Action Plan located in the plan's Appendix to review proposed resources that can assist with implementation of these recommendations.*
- *Dedicating resources to hire a PR firm is a decision to be made by Council and the Administration.*

Mayor's comments: C) Transportation (XII)

- Work with private rail companies? Tough to do. Where is the excessive infrastructure?
- Does the City want to take money from parkers and give to pedestrians and bicyclists?
- Are alternate modes of transportation a priority? State has a crosswalk policy.
- Partnering with BCSD to increase number of students walking to school contradicts with school policy that more walking students impacts truancy. Seek input from BCSD.

Responses:

- *It is important that the City continue to outreach to private rail companies to preserve this important transportation and economic asset. The City should partner with BMTS in its efforts to identify excessive infrastructure and research options to maximize appropriate uses for diverse modes of transportation.*
- *Recommendations to use a portion of parking revenue will assist in the City's efforts to maximize appropriate use of our roadways to support diverse modes of transportation for all users of all abilities.*
- *The City's local efforts to provide alternate modes of transportation are consistent with regional, state, and national policies to enhance infrastructure networks that can accommodate all users of all abilities.*
- *Staff has reached out to BC Department of Health (BCDOH) to gather additional information. BCDOH leveraged a Safe Routes to School grant to support development of safe walkable routes for local schools.*

Mayor's comments: D) Infrastructure

- Concerned about additional regulations on economic development.
- Enforce vs. enhance are very different. Separating sewers not always good idea. Low impact development is very expensive. May be cost prohibitive.

Responses:

- *This statement requires further clarification as it is not clear what concerns to address.*
- *Enforcement is attributed to enforcing the City's existing policies. Enhancement recognizes the need to continuously improve policies that meet or exceed local needs, while remaining in compliance of state and national requirements as well. Recommendations for separating sewers will be discussed at Joint Planning session. Recommendation for low impact development recognizes that the City must be an active partner in providing financial incentives to offset upfront costs, and educating community of the long-term financial benefits and potential for job growth when pursuing this type of development.*

Mayor's comments: E) Environment and Open Space

- How would recycling ordinance be enforced/fines collected?

Responses: Adoption of a construction and demolition recycling ordinance promotes non-punitive efforts to reduce deposits into the landfill, reduce payment of tipping fees, and supports growing market demand for reusable building materials.

Mayor's comments: F) [Land Use & Zoning]

- Define pyramidal zoning.
- Civic Design Review = More regulation.

Responses:

- *Pyramidal zoning will be discussed at Joint Planning session.*
- *Recommendation for civic design review will be discussed at Joint Planning session.*

Chapter A - Economic Development

Recommendation 1.2 – Development Professional Branding Strategy for the City to Market Binghamton Assets and Quality of Life

Mayor's comments: Need to have a better plan about what businesses/development we're focusing on.

Response: This recommendation is not an initiative to be completed by the City. Instead it is recognizing the efforts and resources that the downtown business associations can provide in partnership with the City's efforts to brand the downtown.

Recommendation 1.3 – Restructure Economic Development Office to create a dedicated concierge position to help businesses navigate the system

Mayor's comments: Basically says we need a better ED and BLDC. How is that accomplished without changing the players in the game? Already exists.

Response: Unsure if this statement is rhetorical or if a response is being requested by PHCD.

Recommendation 1.4 – Seek “Shovel Ready” Designation to Enhance Marketing of the Charles Street Business Park

Mayor’s comments: Why Charles Street Business Park?

Response: The State invested funds to remediate Charles Street Business Park into a clean/green industrial site. As identified in the Plan, obtaining shovel-ready certification for the remaining 25 acres allows for development in this area to begin faster since major permitting issues are already resolved with certification status. NYS Department of State recognizes this site as a key redevelopment area in the City’s FW BOA and has approved the City’s work plan to pursue shovel-ready certification, currently being pursued by the City’s consultant, Bergmann Associates.

Recommendation 2.1 – Create an Industrial preservation Area within the Brandywine Industrial Corridor

Mayor’s comments: Developing industrial areas should include salt, water transport to PA for fracking.

Response: This type of business activity is already an allowable use in the BOA area. The purpose of the recommendation is to preserve what the consultants consider to be a strong asset for the City: low cost industrial land with access to rail and highways.

Recommendation 2.2 – Focus site acquisition efforts on the Brandywine BOA, using Land Bank Program to assemble property

Mayor’s comments: Support should go beyond Brandywine BOA.

Response: This recommendation is related to a specific goal that addresses rail and highway access, industry and job growth specifically in the Brandywine project area. The recommendation is consistent with the City’s North Chenango BOA and the County’s Brandywine BOA, site assemblage in this area is integral to redevelopment efforts.

Recommendation 2.4 – Leverage freight rail to attract businesses in the distribution cluster and intermodal businesses

Mayor’s comments: City should meet and discuss with IDA.

Response: Discussion with IDA is ongoing.

Recommendation 3.1 – Support the implementation of the BU Technology Incubator and position City to offer space for incubator grown-ups and ancillary businesses support incubator

Mayor's comments: Define terms about types of businesses.

Response: This recommendation supports a partnership with BU and the State to incentivize diverse business and job growth for emerging technologies. Unsure how the City could define what types of businesses are appropriate to support unknown/emerging incubator activities.

Recommendation 3.2 – Challenge anchor institutions to purchase 20% with annual escalator of procured goods and services from local businesses

Mayor's comments: Legality? Enforcement? / SUNY Broome, Davis College, tech companies, hospitals not addressed in local anchor institutions. Banks, architects, engineering firms, etc.

Response: This is a "challenge," not a "requirement." City Council is supportive of this recommendation as it supports the City's "Buy Local" ordinance as an effort to expend City resources in support of local business. The other institutions identified will be added to the Action Plan for this recommendation.

Recommendation 4.1 – Create a BID to build on the successes and momentum in Downtown Binghamton

Mayor's comments:

4.1 More regulation. Will it draw people to open new businesses in downtown Binghamton?

Level of taxation?

4.2) Supportive but need to eliminate BID verbiage.

4.4) Take out BID verbiage.

4.5) Take out BID verbiage.

Response: The comments on 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5 that recommend elimination of the BID will be discussed at the Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 4.6 – Improve gateways to Downtown and City

Mayor's comments: Shovel Ready Projects for Charles Street Business Park. Truck access will be enhanced with the new interchange being constructed under the NYSDOT Prospect Mountain Project. This interchange will provide westbound on and off. The intent is to have a direct connection into the business park.

Response: A direct connection was not part of DOT's design for the new WB on and off ramps. Interested users continue to cite a direct connection as a concern.

Mayor's comments: The Front Street Gateway Project should go to bid later this year with construction underway by 2015. This should be the first phase of the project. Phase 2 should address amenities such as decorative street lighting and development of green space on vacant lots with benches and other park like setting to get the feel that the drivers are be lead to the downtown area. Way finding signs will be important.

Response: None required.

Mayor's comments: The Court Street Gateway project should be completed from Exchange Street to Chapman Street to direct drivers downtown.

Response: Recommendation is supportive of this statement.

Recommendation 7.1 – Create a volunteer Public Art Commission to foster local arts

Mayor's comments: Done. PAAB.

Response: None required.

Recommendation 7.2 – Encourage visible and large-scale public art to promote local arts and downtown revitalization

Mayor's comments: How does community feel about public art? How many business owners were asked about murals?

Response: Recommendation builds on City's public outreach to artist and business community to create a more attractive, interesting, and beautiful downtown. Complements business and cultural presence in downtown (i.e., GWSA, State Street Artist ROW). (Not discussed at JP)

General Comments to Economic Development Chapter

Mayor's comments: As a general comment I feel there are a number of missing elements to the Economic Development portion of Blueprint Binghamton that should be further explored. I'm concerned that the topics addressed are not substantive enough to promote major change. Here are some ideas that I am supportive of and am in the process of implementing at City Hall.

Business Retention: The City will work to identify and help resolve problems affecting business; Visit existing businesses to share information, facilitate expansion, and assist in removal of operational barriers. Binghamton Visitation Program – Economic Development Staff will create a database of all Binghamton businesses and embark on a regular visitation program to develop an understanding of challenges and opportunities that the City may be able to assist with or facilitate assistance from other state or local organizations.

Promote the development of new products and services – The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: The City will work closely with Binghamton University and SUNY Broome to foster investment in basic and applied research and development; and facilitate technology transfer and commercialization opportunities.

JumpStart Binghamton: Recognizing that venture capital plays an important role in high technology entrepreneurship, the City should work to form a network of venture capitalists, angel investors, and local investors to provide incentives for entrepreneurship by lowering the difficulties of entering an industry. As part of this effort, the City will cooperate with Binghamton University and the Small Business Administration in providing information and assistance to start-up firms that may qualify for SBIR/STTR grants, which are programs to ensure the nation's small, high-tech, innovative businesses are a significant part of the federal government's research and development efforts. In today's environment of constrained credit, the public sector can and should play an important role in enabling deeper and more diverse funding opportunities. Ultimately, all players in the funding ecosystem need to think more creatively about how to provide access to finance. The JumpStart model will also enhance entrepreneurship providing new start-up ventures with enhanced entrepreneurial assistance, including help with business plans and connection to business mentors, through its partners throughout the Greater Binghamton area.

Workforce Development: Workforce development programs are a valuable tool with long-term benefits for companies and the communities where they are located. There is a need in Binghamton to build a more skilled workforce that is not expendable, more adaptable to change, and better able to transfer within and between economic sectors. The City will work with its partners at Broome Tioga Workforce, SUNY Broome, and the Department of Labor in the development of workforce development programs; Provide information on the training needs of businesses and industries; and Provide access to workforce training and recruitment resources.

Binghamton Quick Response Team. A team of individuals will be assembled from the Mayor's Office, and City Departments of Economic Development, Planning & Community Development, Buildings and Code Enforcement, and others where the need is indicated, (e.g. Law and Engineering). The Quick Response Team will be ready to quickly collaborate with existing and prospective businesses when new opportunities arise for development, relocation, or expansion.

Binghamton INSPIRED: The City will develop and brand a central initiative that recognizes that creativity is fundamental to the emerging 21st century global economy. With a strong history of innovation, and as home to many arts and cultural venues, Binghamton has many of the elements that make up a robust creative economy. By making the right strategic investments and collaborating with the Arts Council and known creative industries, Binghamton will become known as a cultural and creative hub. The many elements and industries that make up our creative economy will be investigated, and will frame the community's conversation with a focus on the production and consumption of creative works, creative people, and the creative workforce.

Ross Park Zoo and the Discovery Center should be further promoted. These are assets that underutilized and are unique to a City of this size. Upgrading and maintain these facilities will help attract young families. Funding is an issue that needs to be addressed. To help improve the access to these facilities, Park Ave area needs to developed around a theme that lets you know you are approaching a very unique area.

Establishing backoffice types of development. Our close proximity to large metropolitan areas and our lower cost of living make this area ideal for this type of operation. These types of offices can provide computer support remotely and act as a backup in case of problems at the company's main office (i.e. 9/11).

Response: These comments were referred to the consultant and will be presented at the Joint Planning session.

Chapter B - Housing

Recommendation 1.2 – Encourage Historic Preservation to maintain neighborhood character

Mayor's comments: Will neighborhoods near historic buildings also be regulated?

Response: The City's Design Guidelines for Historic Properties apply to neighborhoods within one of the four historic districts. Neighborhoods that are near historic buildings, but not within one of the four historic districts, are not subject to these guidelines.

Recommendation 1.3 – Work with BHA, private developers/owners, and CDC to preserve and expand quality affordable rental housing

Mayor's comments: Market rate, not Section 8, needed for young professionals and seniors.

Response: This recommendation supports maintenance, repair, and upgrades to enhance available rental housing stock.

Recommendation 1.5 – Consider a land trust to assist seniors with maintenance and repairs in exchange for ownership of the land

Mayor's comments: Can this be accomplished by Broome County Land Bank? The City probably does not have the money. Does the City want to own property? Why would elderly people donate their property?

Response: This would not be carried out by the City. Other municipalities use land banks or other nonprofits to carry out similar efforts. This will be discussed at Joint Planning Session.

Recommendation 1.6 – Consider working with one or more FHA-approved lending institutions to define parameters of a Binghamton housing acquisition and rehab program using FHA 203(K) mortgage insurance for loans

Mayor's comments: Would be good in Weed & Seed/BLDC for ED dept. Pick neighborhoods carefully.

Response: This recommendation would be useful on a city-wide basis. Please also refer to Council's comments.

Recommendation 3.2 – Identify opportunity sites and incentives for new student housing development

Mayor's comments: How would the City "direct" the development of student housing?

Response: The recommendation is meant to encourage and foster development that would attract students to live in the Main Street urban corridor.

Chapter C - Transportation

Existing Conditions

Mayor's comments:

Page 148: The City does have a pavement management plan that is updated every year. The DPW is currently working on improving this plan. Also more strategies are being implemented to keep good streets in better condition while maintain the poor streets in fair condition through minor repairs. Full reconstruction is no longer a viable option for most streets. The cost of reconstruction uses a large amount of resources on two or three streets when these same resources can be used to upgrade the entire street system.

Response: The summary acknowledges that the City does not currently use a database that comprehensively tracks historical maintenance, current conditions, and recommended maintenance for City roadways.

Pg. 149 the Railroad Bridges are inspected by the Railroad. Its inspection program and frequency is not known. They work independently of the NYSDOT and FHWA.

Pg. 149 the Exchange Street Bridge is being renovated this year. There will still be a 20 ton posting on the bridge after the renovations. The East Clinton Street Bridge is in the Design Phase. The South Washington Street Bridge will be painted in 2014. There are 6 other bridges in the City .These bridges are smaller and rehabilitation of these bridges will put in a 5 year plan using NYSDOT and FHWA funding if available.

Response: Staff notes that these statements are commentary.

Pg. 150 “One of the recent changes to Downtown was the installation of a back-in angled parking on Hawley Street and Court Street. Though this change was considered confusing at first, drivers are adjusting.” - Disagree.

Response: A proposed amendment will be submitted to Council to strike out the sentence “Though this change was considered confusing at first, drivers are adjusting”.

Goal 1.1 Develop Citywide Roadway Infrastructure Plan

Mayor’s comments: If council disagrees with the plan, they can stop funding. Funding must come first and priority of roads has to come from DPW Commissioner.

Response: Staff acknowledges that this statement is commentary.

Recommendation 1.4 Reduce costs by removing excessive infrastructure where possible.

Mayor’s comments: It is not realistic to remove the railroad overpasses on Route 363.

Response: Recommendations to reconfigure North Shore Drive (Route 363) will require further study.

Recommendation 1.5 Convert most one-way streets to two-ways

Mayor’s comments: Eliminating one way streets is not feasible.

Response: The recommendation indicates that conversion should be done when possible.

Goal 2: Address Parking and Maintenance Issues

Mayor’s comments: “Providing more parking is not the answer to a perceived parking problem.” What?

Response: Staff will request consultant to clarify verbiage.

Recommendation 2.1 Undertake a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study

Mayor’s comments: Parking minimums, etc. have been discussed by the ZBA. Comp plan should be sure what methods for parking will be available in the years ahead. Needs Council district input.

Response: This recommendation acknowledges that a comprehensive parking study will evaluate future parking demand.

Recommendation 2.3 Introduce shared parking arrangements or residential permit parking in neighborhoods with student housing zones

Mayor's comments: Why would City pay a private parking developer for access to space? It can work with them.

Response: Staff will request consultant to amend verbiage to clarify that the City's role will facilitate lease arrangements with private lot owners and businesses to encourage the use of unused parking spaces to help meet short-term parking needs (i.e., events at Arena, First Friday!, loft tours, etc.)

Recommendation 2.4 Incentivize green infrastructure within surface parking lots

Mayor's comments: Parking Lots using green technology is a good approach. They usually cost more and we have to be careful not to deter development. Green Technology does help our sewer system. A program could be developed with an incentive for development using green technology. The funding could come from savings in the maintenance and improvements not needed on the sewer system.

DEC is already strict with its storm water requirements. Why are we looking to be even stricter?

Response: These are conflicting statements. The recommendation considers the dual benefit of surface parking lots meeting parking needs and helping with stormwater management over the long-term. Staff has requested a text amendment to add potential development of a green technology fund as referenced above.

Recommendation 3.2 Improve the public transportation experience

Mayor's comments: How does it impact form-based code?

Response: This will be addressed in Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 3.4 Incentivize EV charger stations with new development, and install at key locations in each neighborhood

Mayor's comments: Support EV charger stations.

Response: Staff acknowledges this statement is commentary.

Recommendation 4.2 Develop a list of streets in need of a road diet

Mayor's comments: How will City accomplish?

Response: Staff will request consultant to amend recommendation to include partnership with BMTS to assist with data collection and analysis.

Recommendation 4.6 Restrict or limit truck traffic downtown

Mayor's comments: It is not feasible to restrict truck traffic downtown. A truck route could be designated on other downtown streets to minimize the traffic on Court St.

Response: This recommendation encourages consensus amongst local government entities to delineate truck routes. Staff has requested a text amendment to remove the word "restrict" from recommendation.

General Comments for Transportation Chapter

Mayor's comments: Under Transportation, there was no mention of traffic signals. The City is currently studying removal of signals that are not warranted by the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. (MUTCD). Many of the traffic signals are very old and parts are no longer made for them. The City is developing a 5 year plan to address this.

Response: Summary of existing conditions will be amended to reflect this effort.

Mayor's comments: Reducing traffic is not realistic, Americans are tied to their cars and a culture change around the Country will have to change before this does. Even with higher gas prices the amount of miles driven has not substantially reduced. This reality must be taken into account for parking.

Response: Staff acknowledge that this statement is commentary. The recommendations for transportation within the plan reflect current local, state, and national policies to promote a use of streets that accommodates all modes of users.

Chapter D Infrastructure

Existing Conditions

Mayor's comments:

p. 196 Green Technology has its place. First, every government-owned facility should consider it during reconstruction. Private development should also consider it. In both cases a cost benefit ratio and payback time frames need to be considered.

Response: Staff acknowledges this statement is commentary.

Recommendation 1.3 Partner with Broome County in NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program planning efforts to ensure consistency across plans

Mayor's comments: [T]he City has submitted several projects under the NY Rising program that will address drainage and flooding mostly in isolated areas or neighborhoods.

Response: Staff acknowledges this statement is commentary.

Recommendation 2.1 Enforce and enhance urban runoff reduction plan requirements

Mayor's comments: The City needs to revisit the Urban Runoff Reduction Plan. It is too restrictive. The cost vs. the benefit needs to be assessed. It also makes City unattractive to development because of the additional costs even with the 50/50 plan.

Response: The URRP is existing legislation that was adopted by City Council. There were no public comments received in opposition to this recommendation.

Recommendation 2.2 Implement stormwater management practices for green mitigation and runoff/flash flood control

Mayor's comments: Very expensive.

Response: It is recognized that the City is an important partner in leveraging resources to incentivize sustainable development that will result in long term financial savings to developers.

Recommendation 2.4 Continue to support combined sewers, and explore underground storage and flow controls in flood prone areas

Mayor's comments: The projects separating storm and sanitary sewers have had little effect on the wet weather flows at the Binghamton Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Plant. There are two reasons for this. First, almost all the impervious roof drains on the buildings and houses in the city are connected to the combined sewer system. Separating the storm from the sanitary doesn't remove this flow from the combined sewers. Effectively you are only removing a fraction of the drainage area from the combined sewers. Connecting the roof drains to the new storm systems, if possible, would be cost prohibitive and would create a public relations nightmare. Secondly, based on the configuration and hydraulic characteristics of the City, the system will continue to deliver the maximum wet weather flow until such time as there is no more backup in the City sewer collection system.

Response: Staff have referred this statement to the consultants to further discuss with City staff. Subject matter will be discussed at Joint Planning sessions.

Recommendation 2.5 Incorporate trenchless rehab alternatives to reduce infiltration and inflow into sewers

Mayor's comments: Discusses methods to reduce infiltration into the sanitary sewer systems. Several studies of the City's sewer system have proven that this is not cost effective and the

success of an infiltration program including trenchless technology is very low. The trenchless technology replaces the main sewer lines but does not address the laterals to the building where there could be as many leaks as the main line. Replacing the laterals is cost prohibitive. Other attempts to reduce infiltration have proven to be ineffective for a system as old as the City's. Most cities in the United States have abandoned the inflow infiltration program and have gone with other programs. In many instances including the Binghamton Johnson City Sewage Treatment service area it has been determined that it is more cost effective to treat the wet weather flow at the plant rather than remove it from the collection system. Several municipalities have chosen methods such as best management practices to keep flow out of the system with green space techniques and large underground storage facilities to hold the a portion of the storm water and then pump it to the treatment plant during low flows. Syracuse is doing this now because they were not in compliance during wet weather. Currently the City of Binghamton is in compliance for the capture of wet weather flows at the combined sewer overflow (CSO) and the BJSTP will be in compliance with both dry weather and wet weather flows once the improvements are completed. Currently there is a flow management plan in place administered by the BJSTP Board. This plan has proven to be cumbersome to administer and has not been effective in reducing flows. It has also been a deterrent to development within the City.

Response: Staff have referred this statement to the consultants to further discuss with City staff. Subject matter will be discussed at Joint Planning sessions.

Recommendation 3.2 Establish energy and climate action task force to mobilize the community to help meet ECAP goals

Mayor's comments: Where are we on this?

Response: This effort is ongoing. Staff continue to request support from interested community members to help with the implementation of the City's Energy and Climate Action Plan.

Recommendation 3.5 Update water model to assist in detecting areas of concern within the system to target funding

Mayor's comments: The City will be seeking proposals to replace all city street lights with LED bulbs, mass change out of all water meters, a wireless meter reading system and a leak detection system.

Response: Staff acknowledge these statements are commentary.

General Comments for Infrastructure Chapter

Mayor's comments: One item that was not mentioned in the infrastructure section was the Water Filtration Plant. The plant has a capacity to produce 20 million gallons per day. The current daily production varies between 6 to 9 million gallons per day. There are fixed costs at the plant that don't change based on the amount of water produced. Based on this it costs the

city \$137,000 per year for each additional 1 million gallons produced per day. The revenue from 1 million gallons per day is approximately \$900,000 per year. We need to attract industries with large water consumption. With this type of savings the enticement for these industries would be to offer them a substantial reduction in the water rate. We also have to explore the possibility of selling water to the gas drilling industry and to adjacent towns such as Conklin, Vestal Johnson City and the Village of Port Dickinson.

Response: Staff have referred this statement to the consultant to discuss at Joint Planning session.

Chapter F Land Use and Zoning

Recommendation 1.1 Update the land use map

Mayor's comments: Zones vs. Districts should be clarified.

Response: The Future Land Use map must be adopted first before zones and districts can be further delineated. The map would update zoning classifications as proposed on Future Land Use map (267).

Recommendation 2.1 Convert urban village district overlay into a zoning category, and expand its application

Mayor's comments: Getting rid of overlay can help with too much regulation, but what type of new zone would be created?

Response: Recommendation 2.1 will be discussed at Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 2.2 Encourage floor plans in multi-family developments that are suitable for a variety of end users

Mayor's comments: Encourage does not mean dictate under law. How does the City "encourage."

Response: Recommendation 2.2 will be discussed at Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 2.7 Enable higher density housing along Main Street west of Downtown

Mayor's comments: Higher density means more cars and parking requirements. Increased foot traffic may be so, but there would also be an increase in vehicle traffic.

Response: This recommendation complements the City's efforts to attract more people living and working in the City's urban core and corridors.

Recommendation 2.8 Amend the zoning code to allow for and manage urban agriculture as an interim use prior to redevelopment

Mayor's comments: Unnecessary.

Response: Recommendation 2.8 will be discussed at Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 3.1 Change mix of uses permitted within the Urban Business Park zoning classification

Mayor's comments: How would impacts be calculated?

Response: The impacts of the change of uses would be studied under State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). This effort is included in the City's First Ward BOA Step 2 workplan.

Recommendation 4.1 Identify and code an industrial preservation area within the Brandywine Industrial Corridor

Mayor's comments: Is it better to leave a rail yard vacant for a use that may/may not happen if a development can go in today?

Response: The recommendation is consistent with the City's North Chenango BOA and the County's Brandywine BOA which recognizes the Brandywine Corridor as a unique redevelopment opportunity to expand land for manufacturing use and pursue economic development activities that will attract industry and jobs to Binghamton.

Recommendation 5.1 Adopt a civic design review process and design guidelines for large projects

Mayor's comments: Remove.

Response: Recommendation 5.1 will be discussed at the Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 5.2 Develop reasonable landscape requirements for all zones

Mayor's comments: How can a business owner quantify that certain beautification can help their business? For \$10,000 in landscaping, is that increasing business by that much? How long for ROI?

Response: Recommendation 5.2 will be discussed at the Joint Planning session.

Chapter G Community Building

Existing Conditions

Mayor's comments: p. 299 eliminate "perceived"; 2013 crime figures should be included.

Response: This proposed language amendment will be presented and discussed at the Joint Planning Session. The presentation and availability of 2013 data did not allow for timely analysis and mapping of crime statistics to assist with outreach efforts.

Recommendation 1.1 Create a Binghamton Neighborhood Development Corporation

Mayor's comments: Not in favor.

Response: This comment has been referred to consultant to discuss at Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 3.4 Revisit the community food systems legislation drafted in 2013

Mayor's comments: Eliminate.

Response: Recommendation 3.4 will be discussed at Joint Planning session.

Recommendation 3.5 Promote tobacco and smoke free living through better protections for non-smokers and youth

Mayor's comments: Already accomplished.

Response: Raising awareness of the long-term financial and health impacts to our community as a result of tobacco is a continuous effort. Local governments are seen as important partners in promoting education and community development activities that support building healthier communities.

Recommendation 4.7 Formalize partnership with BOCES vocational programs to complete small neighborhood improvement projects

Mayor's comments: Good ideas. What about residents and businesses?

Response: This recommendation acknowledges an opportunity to partner with a public vocational institution. It does not restrict the City's ability to develop additional community partnerships.

Recommendation 4.7 Crowdsource youth pilot projects and offer seed grants to implement

Mayor's comments: Just use existing groups.

Response: The recommendation is broad and does not identify new or existing groups. It encourages the City to continuously engage youth in decision-making process. Staff recognizes that this recommendation should be labeled 4.8.

General Comments for Community Building Chapter

Mayor's comments: The following goals and objectives of Youth Success are not specifically included in the Blueprint Binghamton document's Chapter IV on "Actively Engaging Youth in City Initiatives."

1. The hallmark of Youth Success is the first-ever establishment of a direct educational, cooperative partnership between BCSD School District and the Office of the Mayor. Chapter IV does not directly call for this binding partnership in Blueprint Binghamton.
2. Youth Success speaks specifically to creating safer schools and neighborhoods for our youth, free from violence, harassment, juvenile delinquency, and gang involvement. As for school safety, Youth Success provides for 2 new School Security Resource Officers (SRO's) to keep our students at East and West Middle Schools safer and build personal relationships. Youth Success will work closely with law enforcement and BHA's Gang Prevention Unit to deter/steer our youth away from gangs.
3. Youth Success expands the already existing, student mentor program of BCSD, "Mentor Now," by adding upwards of 50 new adult volunteers from our community to improve school completion rates and promote increased youth development.
4. Our new Initiative addresses an educational goal, not part of Blueprint Binghamton, to promote greater understanding of the functions and inner-workings of City Government for students through educational activities/events in their Social Studies classes.
5. Youth Success advocates expanding existing athletic, recreational, and extracurricular opportunities offered by City Parks for our youth. Particular program emphasis will be placed on exposing our City's youth to life-long sport and recreational activities (e.g., golf, ice-skating, chess, tennis, fly-fishing, kayaking, etc.).
6. A focused objective of Youth Success is to improve the quality of bus transportation services to/from school for our students in BCSD.
7. The Initiative will work with Health Service Agencies in our Region to improve the delivery of youth services, particularly in the area of adolescent Mental Health Care.

8. BCSD Principals are requesting greater assistance in the area of College-Career Readiness. Youth Success is establishing a Career-Guest Speaker Bureau of area professionals, who will serve as guest speakers for our students, to enhance their career awareness.

Response: These comments were referred to the consultant and will be presented at the Joint Planning session.

Main/Court Street Form-Based Code

1.3) More regulations.

2.0) B) Eliminate building height requirements.

L) How does this affect energy costs and building requirements?

2.3) Too much roadway for bikes. Garage doors cannot face Main/Court street? How will cars get out?

2.7) Eliminate Planning Director having final say on alternate materials. The proposed building materials are too limiting. Add a variety of high tech materials for a rich architectural diversity.

3.0) Overall too much authority is given to the Planning Director, eliminate all references. This needs to be changed.

3.2) Explain social services use in table.

4.1) Required bike parking?

In general, I'm concerned in every aspect of this plan that requires stricter regulations than New York State already has. If the State does not require more regulation, than why would the City?

Response: These comments were referred to the consultant and will be discussed at the Joint Planning session.