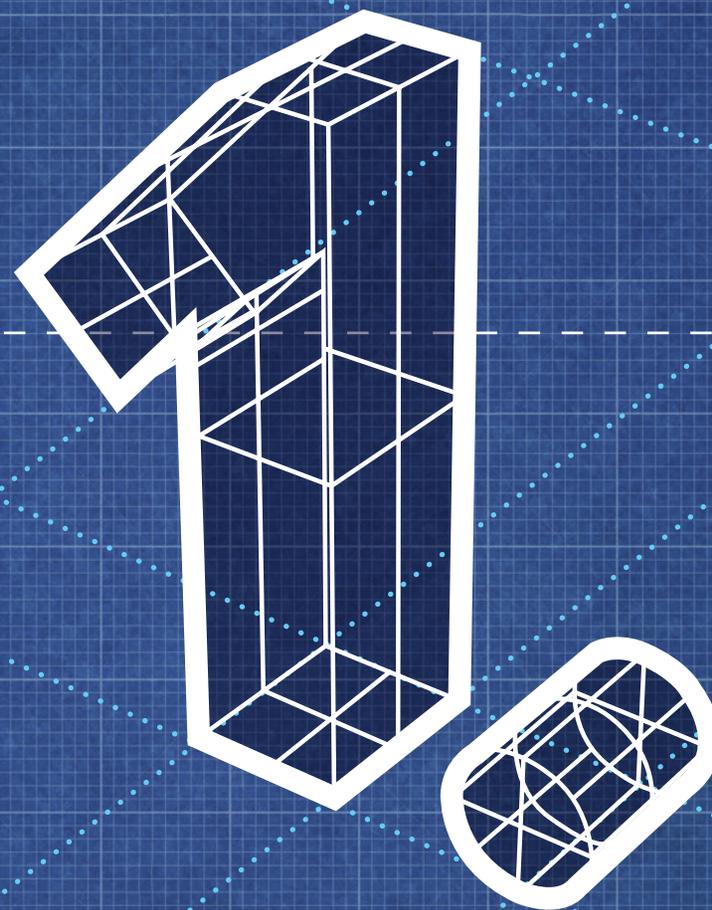


1



INTRODUCTION

BLUEPRINT
BINGHAMTON

INTRODUCTION PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

01 PROJECT BACKGROUND

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

B **LUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: FORWARD TOGETHER** is the 2014 update of the City of Binghamton's Comprehensive Plan, a citizen-driven effort to plan for Binghamton's future and move our City forward together. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the City a Community Challenge Planning Grant* to update the Comprehensive Plan and develop a corridor plan focused specifically on the design and redevelopment of Court and Main Streets. The planning process began in the fall of 2012, and over the next year and a half, thousands of people shared their thoughts on how Binghamton should move forward over the coming decade. Their input, combined with an analysis of current and historic conditions in Binghamton, form the vision for the City's future and the basis for the action areas of the Plan.

* The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under an award with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government.

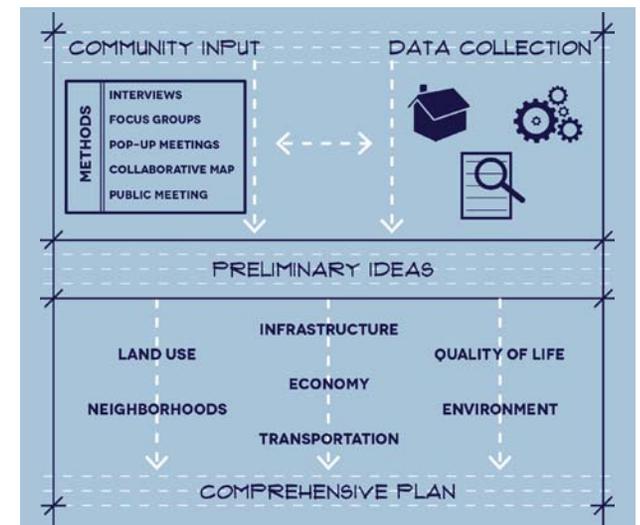
Since the last Comprehensive Plan in 2003, new businesses and housing have brought new life to Downtown; the City's population has stabilized, and the waterfront trail and parks have given a boost to the quality of life and regional image of Binghamton.

But there is still a lot to do to keep the City's infrastructure and neighborhoods in good shape, advance the local economy, and fully realize the potential of Binghamton's educational assets. Even more pressing, the devastating presidentially declared disaster floods in 2006 and 2011 have made it clear that the City must think proactively and prepare for tomorrow, today.

That is where a Comprehensive Plan comes in. A Comprehensive Plan is a State-mandated document that describes municipal policies and actions related to land use, neighborhoods, transportation, infrastructure, the economy, the environment, and quality of life. Updating the Comprehensive Plan now provides the opportunity to build on the positive initiatives already in full swing in Binghamton, while proactively tackling the challenges.

We live in an age of limited resources. Our City needs a comprehensive plan to coordinate our actions and investments in ways that help to improve Binghamton for all residents and

businesses, while encouraging efficiency and cost savings. This means promoting a high quality of life for current residents that also attracts future residents, balancing growth and development while preserving the City's historic character, maintaining and building upon the City's educational assets, promoting the growing arts and cultural life of the City, strengthening and diversifying the local economy, improving transportation, supporting strong civic ties, reducing the City's environmental footprint, and encouraging regional cooperation. This Plan, **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON**, is a collaboration between the City of Binghamton and each citizen to create a framework for re-investment that moves our City **FORWARD TOGETHER**.



NEIGHBORHOODS

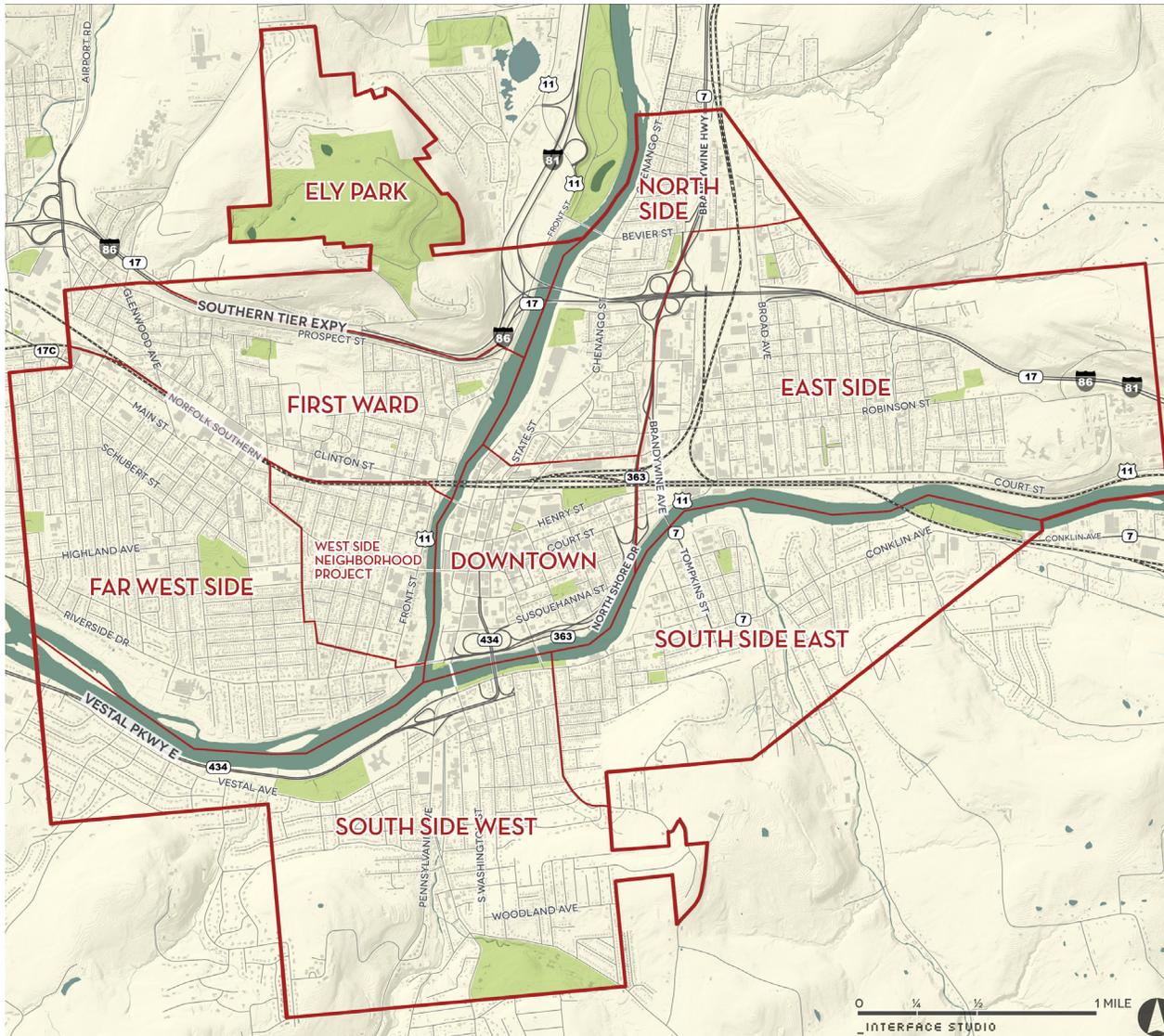


FIGURE 1: Neighborhood Map

PREVIOUS PLANS

B LUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: FORWARD TOGETHER builds off and expands on the work of the previous 2003 Comprehensive Plan and several other plans and studies that include the following:

BINGHAMTON METROPOLITAN GREENWAY STUDY: TRAIL MASTER PLANS, DESIGN GUIDELINES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR RIVERBANK TRAIL DEVELOPMENT (1999)

This study examines the feasibility of creating a riverbank trail network to improve access to the Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers. Of the 13 trail master plans reviewed in this study, four cross through Binghamton: the Vestal Parkway Trail connecting Binghamton University and Downtown Binghamton, the Chenango West Bank Trail connecting along Front Street and the riverfront from the Memorial Bridge to Otsiningo Park, the Chenango East Bank Trail linking the Washington Street Bridge and Confluence Park to Otsiningo Park, and the Susquehanna River Trail from Confluence Park to Rock Bottom Dam. Of these, only the Chenango East Bank Trail has been developed as far as Cheri A. Lindsey Memorial Park. The Chenango Connector of the Riverwalk to Otsiningo Park and Susquehanna River Trail are currently under design.

CITY OF BINGHAMTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
(2003)

The previous Comprehensive Plan envisioned the City as a “Vibrant Regional Center” and provided four areas of recommendations that focused on quality of life, the City’s regional image, its economic vitality, and neighborhood stability. Many of the focus points are still relevant today; the redevelopment of major sites such as the Anitec site and Binghamton Plaza, improving parks, addressing infrastructure barriers, mitigating the impact of commercial corridors

on residential neighborhoods, developing the riverfront, managing Downtown revitalization and parking, managing student housing, and reinvesting in and marketing neighborhoods. The 2014 update to the Comprehensive Plan reassesses these issues while also adding new goals, objectives and recommendations to reflect the changes that have occurred over the last 10 years.

LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM
(2005)

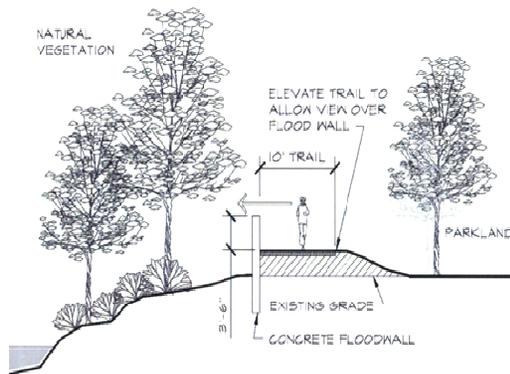
This plan identified key issues and opportunities for the revitalization of the City’s waterfront including: improving links between Downtown and the waterfront, completing the Chenango River Promenade, improving the Downtown core and capitalizing on its historic character, improving physical and visual access through innovative flood control measures, creating gateways, identifying appropriate services and programs, updating zoning and design standards, redeveloping vacant and underutilized waterfront sites, upgrading parks, preserving scenic views, improving pedestrian and bicycle circulation, and addressing the barrier North Shore Drive creates between Downtown and the Susquehanna River. The LWRP sets forth policies that promote uses that benefit from the waterfront location, minimize the adverse effects of development,

preserve and maintain natural areas and open space, protect and improve water resources, minimize loss from flood and erosion, improve public access and recreation opportunities, and preserve historic resources. Major proposed projects include redeveloping North Shore Drive as a parkway with access to the waterfront and pedestrian and bicycle connections, removing the 363/434 cloverleaf and converting the space for recreation, developing a pedestrian bridge across the Susquehanna River connecting Lourdes Hospital to the South Side, adding bike lanes to Route 434, and creating a Susquehanna River Trail from Sandy Beach to Veterans Park. The LWRP also proposes land uses that support the development of the waterfront and adjacent neighborhoods as mixed-use areas.

NORTH SIDE CARES VISION PLAN
(2003)

This plan was incorporated into the city's Comprehensive Plan and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program as part of the larger North Side Riverfront Revitalization program which partnered the North Side Communities of Shalom with the City of Binghamton, NYS Department of State, Cornell University and the State University of New York School of Environmental Science and Forestry. The plan centers around seven goals: community engagement and relationships, safety, economic opportunity, diverse housing, accessible open spaces, identity, and holistic planning. Major recommendations

include: developments such as a community center, a supermarket, and redeveloping Binghamton Plaza; redeveloping State Street and revitalizing commercial areas; developing a plan for vacant properties; improving access to River and connections to open space; creating a riverside performance venue; improving park programming; encouraging walkability through a sidewalk plan and pedestrian-friendly mixed-use development; remediating brownfield sites; and reinforcing neighborhood identity through design, signage, marketing materials, events, and beautification.



LWRP Riverwalk Trail Section



LWRP Concept Plan for Downtown

**SUSQUEHANNA HERITAGE AREA MANAGEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT**
(2009)

The plan proposes expanding the Susquehanna Heritage Area to include Broome and Tioga Counties in their entirety, identifies strategies for the enhancement of the counties' unique cultural and natural resources, and guides the implementation of programs and projects to strengthen regional identity, foster economic revitalization, and enhance quality of life throughout the region. The Heritage Area supports the revitalization of Downtown Binghamton as a cultural center, recognizing that the City stands out as a regional urban center in contrast to its surrounding rural landscape but it is challenged by a lack of identity outside of the Binghamton area. It is seen as a gateway to other destinations such as the Finger Lakes, Cooperstown, and the Endless Mountains, rather than a destination

itself. The plan suggests telling the story of the community through the theme of late 19th and early 20th century labor and industry in the Triple Cities (Binghamton, Endicott and Johnson City). Recommendations include developing cohesive signage and interpretation around the theme and working with cultural venues and museums to develop an interpretative plan that segues into their exhibits and programming, developing the Center for Technology and Industry's TechWorks Museum of Upstate Invention and Industry, and supporting the proposed Susquehanna Heritage Byway (along Routes 17C and 11) with design guidelines, streetscape improvements, historic preservation initiatives, and a corridor management plan, along with pursuing designation as a state or national scenic byway.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN
(2011)

In 2009, the City of Binghamton joined ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, aligning with hundreds of other cities to take action on climate change at the local level. The Energy and Climate Action Plan outlines a proactive approach to climate change that also seeks to improve the quality of life for residents. The Plan identifies actions in four main areas with a goal of reducing emissions to 25% below 2006 levels by 2025. The areas include: 1) Buildings and

Energy, 2) Transportation and Land Use, 3) Waste Management, Reduction and Recycling, and 4) Local Food, Agriculture and Urban Forestry. The plan addresses topics such as severe weather and impacts on food systems, power, buildings, vulnerability due to flooding and drought, water conservation, storage capacity, energy efficiency, alternative fuel, renewable energy, emissions reductions, waste reduction/recycling, and Smart Growth.

**BUILDING OUR FUTURE: BROOME COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**
(2013)

Broome County recently finished a Comprehensive Plan that envisions the County over the next 10 years and considers how to enhance its assets, such as its mix of scenic beauty and urban villages, its educational strengths, and its investment in innovation and technology. The planning process involved an

extensive public component with surveys and workshops that allowed the County to listen to what Broome County residents had to say. The City of Binghamton was an active participant in this planning process, and conversely, Broome County representatives were closely involved in the creation of **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON**.

BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA (BOA) PLANS
(ongoing)

The Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program assists municipalities and community-based organizations with the completion of revitalization plans and implementation strategies for areas affected by brownfield sites. The goal is to assist communities with redevelopment, return blighted land to productive use, and restore environmental quality. A BOA plan helps communities identify

what sites should be targeted for clean-up and development, and determine what types of projects are viable given the market. Currently, three BOA plans are underway for areas in the City of Binghamton. Two are being managed by the City (North Chenango River Corridor and First Ward), and one is managed by Broome County (Brandywine Corridor).

BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON, as the updated Comprehensive Plan for the City of Binghamton, seeks to align and reinforce these major prior plans as well as other previous and ongoing planning efforts.



2



OVERVIEW OF BINGHAMTON

BLUEPRINT
BINGHAMTON

OVERVIEW OF BINGHAMTON

02 HISTORY

The City of Binghamton grew around the confluence of the Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers, originating as a Native American settlement until the land was given over to the State of New York in the late 18th century and then granted to William Bingham in 1800. First known as the Village of Chenango Point, Binghamton was legally incorporated as a Village in 1834. The rivers were the drivers of its growth with raw materials and goods traded on the waterways. The major industry at the time was lumber. The construction of the Chenango Canal in the 1830s, connecting Binghamton to Utica and the Erie Canal, contributed greatly to the growth of the Village. The canal was then supplanted by the railroad. The first train arrived in Binghamton in 1848 on the Erie Railroad, touching off another transformation, which expanded Binghamton's access across the country, making it a transportation hub. Rendered obsolete, the canal eventually became today's State Street.

By 1867, Binghamton had grown to the point where it was incorporated as a City. In the late 1800s, industry had shifted to finished goods, in particular to the production of cigars. Binghamton was the second largest manufacturer of cigars in the country behind only New York City. The success of the cigar industry during this period spurred the development of many of the City's institutions and a housing boom that gave Binghamton the nickname "Parlor City".



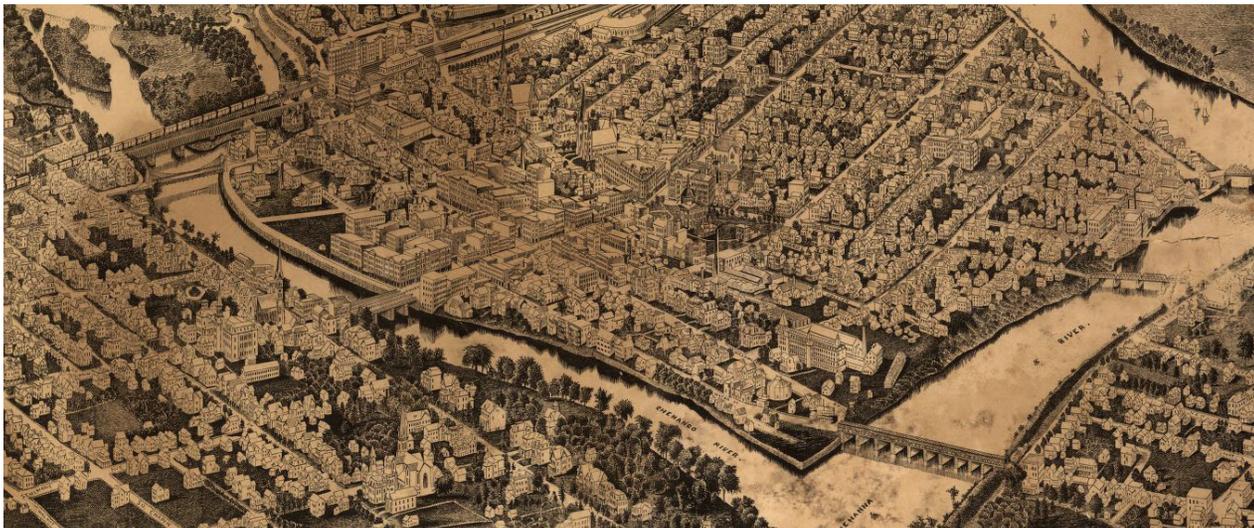
Historic photos of Downtown Binghamton

In the 20th century, major companies such as the Endicott-Johnson Company came to the region and ushered in another economic boom. Endicott-Johnson Company was known for its progressive labor policies, the Square Deal, that provided extensive benefits to its workers ranging from subsidized housing to generous medical plans and even free carousel rides (a tradition that lives on today). As this industrial wave declined with automation and

outsourcing in the era following World War II and the boom of the 1950s, it was followed by the rise of technology companies, most notably IBM, which exerted an equally strong influence on the region. By the 1960s, the dominance of the automobile and the construction of NYS Route 17 and I-81 through the City pulled businesses and residents to outlying areas. This marked an era of decline that only now is beginning to reverse.



Carousel in Binghamton



1882 Perspective of Binghamton



Historic Endicott-Johnson Factory

BY THE NUMBERS: YESTERDAY TO TODAY

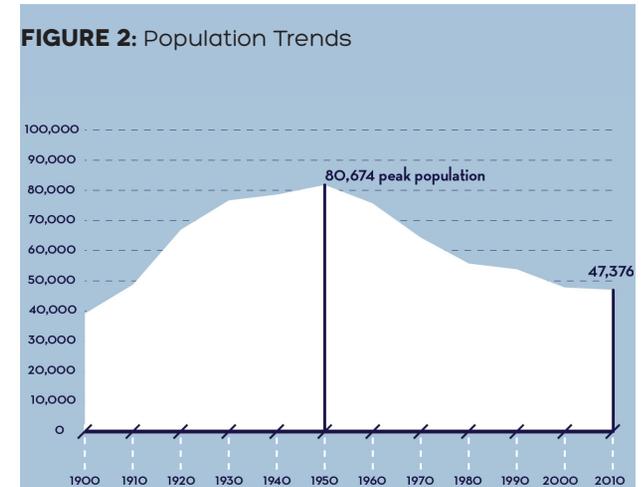
POPULATION

SOURCE: 2010 Census, Census Projections

Total (2010): **47,376**
 High (1950): **80,674**
 1950-2000: **- 41.3%**
 2000-2010: **< 1% DECREASE**
 5 year projection: **-2.5%**

As with many older, northeastern cities with an economic base in manufacturing, Binghamton witnessed large population growth during the first half of the 1900s, peaking in the 1950s, followed by decades of precipitous decline. As of the 2010 Census, Binghamton's population stands at 47,376 persons, a 45% decrease from its peak population in 1950 of 80,674 persons. The largest declines occurred during the 1960s and 1970s, when manufacturing jobs relocated to southern states and offshore locations and many city residents relocated to new surrounding suburban communities. In recent years, the population loss has leveled off, and between 2000 and 2010, the population remained stable, with no decrease. Current population projections predict the population to continue to decline with a 2018 population of 44,801, a 2.5% decline from 2010.

FIGURE 2: Population Trends



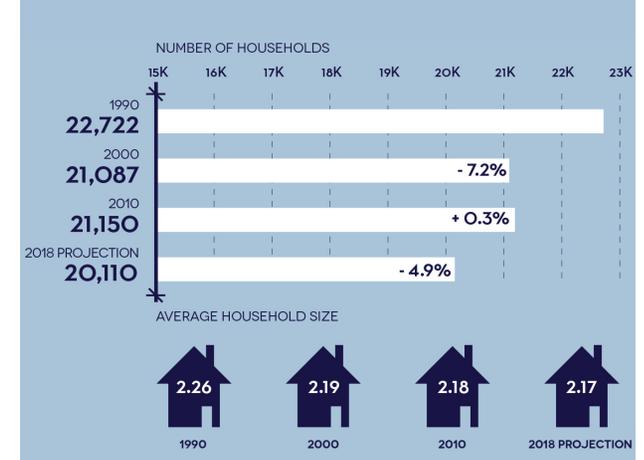
HOUSEHOLDS

SOURCE: 2010 Census, ESRI Projections

Total (2010): **21,150**
 Size: **2.18 PERSONS**
 TYPE
 Non-Family: **52.8%**
 Family: **47.2%**
 FAMILY
 Husband-Wife: **26.9%**
 Male-No Wife: **4.7%**
 Female-No Husband: **15.6%**

According to the 2010 Census, there were 21,150 households present in Binghamton. Of these households, 47.2% are made up of Families and 52.8% are classified as Non-Family. The census classifies a Family as Husband-Wife, Male-No Wife present, or Female-No Husband Present. The Non-Family definition includes couples cohabiting or single persons living alone. The average household size of 2.18 is relatively small and declining. The decline in household size is consistent with the broader trend in the U.S., in which household size has declined consistently over recent decades.

FIGURE 3: Household Data



RACE & ETHNICITY

SOURCE: 2010 Census, Census Projections

- White: **77.6%**
- Black or African American: **11.4%**
- American Indian / Alaska Native: **0.4%**
- Asian: **4.2%**
- Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander: **0%**
- Other: **2%**
- Two + Races: **4.4%**
- Hispanic: **6.4%**

White persons make up the majority of Binghamton's population with 77.6%, followed by 11.4% Blacks, 4.4% Two or More Races, 4.2% Asian, 2.0% Other, and finally 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native. Hispanics comprise 6.4% of the population. Compared to New York State which is 65.8% White, 15.9% Black, 7.3% Asian, 7.4% Other, 3.0% Two or More Races, and 0.6% American Indian/Alaskan Native; Binghamton is considerably less diverse. While the City's population continues to be predominantly white, there have been increases in the minority population, including two or more races, and Hispanics. Further increases are expected in the five-year projections shown in the adjacent figure.

AGE & SEX

SOURCE: 2010 Census

- Male: **49%**
- Female: **51%**
- Median Age (2010): **35.8 YEARS**
- 65+: **15.5%**
- <18: **20.1%**

The median age of Binghamton residents is 35.8 years of age. Of the 47,376 persons living in the City, 20.1% are under the age of 18, and 15.5% are over the age of 65. There have been slight variations in the age structure between 2000 and 2010, with some cohorts gaining persons and other cohorts losing persons, as depicted in the age pyramid to the right. As is typical of college towns, the age pyramid bulges to capture the large number of residents between the ages of 18 and 34, and records growth in the percentage of young adult (mostly student) residents. The male-to-female ratio is close to 1:1 with 49% male and 51% female.

FIGURE 4: Minority Population Projections

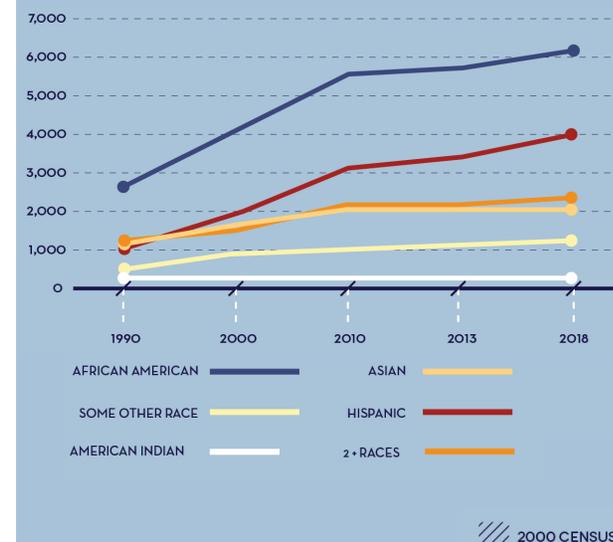
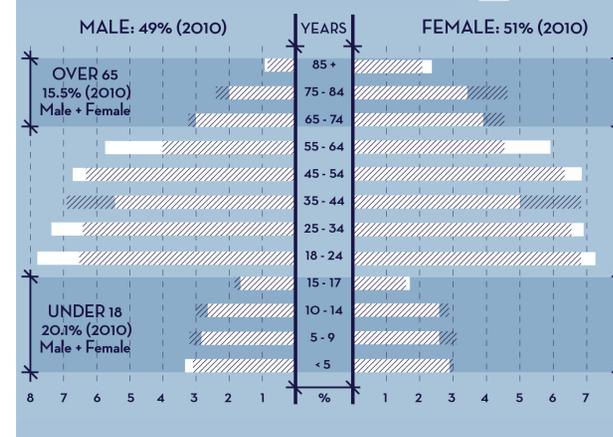


FIGURE 5: Age Breakdown



INCOME & POVERTY

SOURCE: 2008-12 American Community Survey

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Binghamton: **\$30,179**

Broome County: **\$45,856**

New York State: **\$57,683**

Poverty Levels: **31.2%**

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Broome County (as of November 2013): **7.1%**

Like many other older center cities, Binghamton has a lower Median Household Income (\$30,702) than its surrounding County (\$44,457) and State (\$55,602). According to the 2008-12 American Community Survey, almost a third of all Binghamton residents live in poverty at a rate of 31.2%, compared to 16.5% for Broome County, and 14.9% for the State of New York. Projections estimate that incomes will be consistently lower than the County and State for the next five years.

Within the City boundaries, the lowest median household income levels can be found in parts of the West Side particularly along Front Street and Main Street, and in portions of Downtown, though income levels are low throughout much of the North Side and First Ward neighborhoods as well. The highest income levels can be found in the Far West Side, South Side West, and parts of South Side East.

EDUCATION

SOURCE: 2008-12 American Community Survey

Percent HS graduate or higher: **83.6%**

Bachelor's degree or higher: **23.5%**

With 23.5% of the population 25 years or older holding a college degree, Binghamton can compete for highly skilled jobs that require advanced degrees. This number compares favorably with Broome County's 25.9% of residents, but less so compared to the 32.8% for New York State. However, 16.4% of Binghamton residents 25 or older do not have a high school diploma. Binghamton residents with low educational attainment could benefit from adult education and workforce training programs to address issues of under/unemployment.

FIGURE 6: Income and Poverty

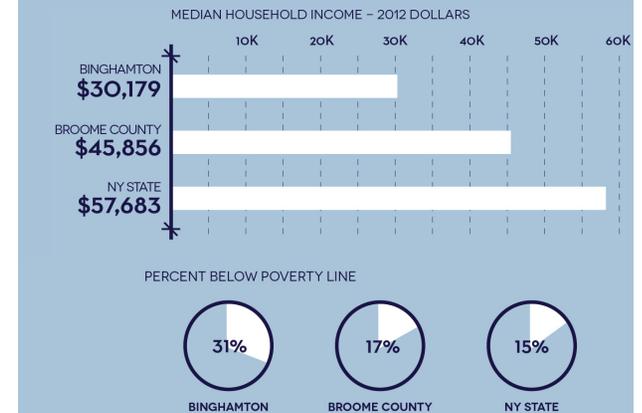
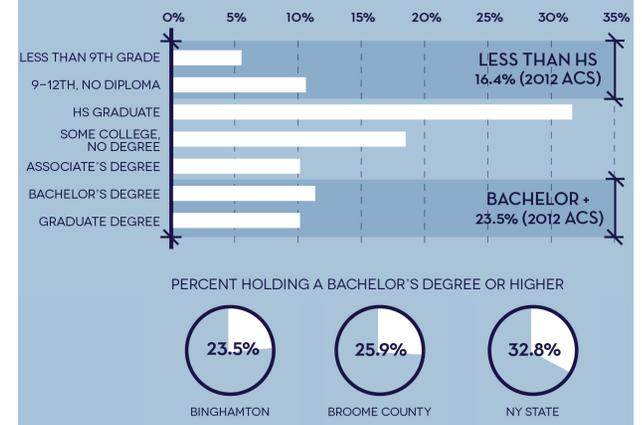
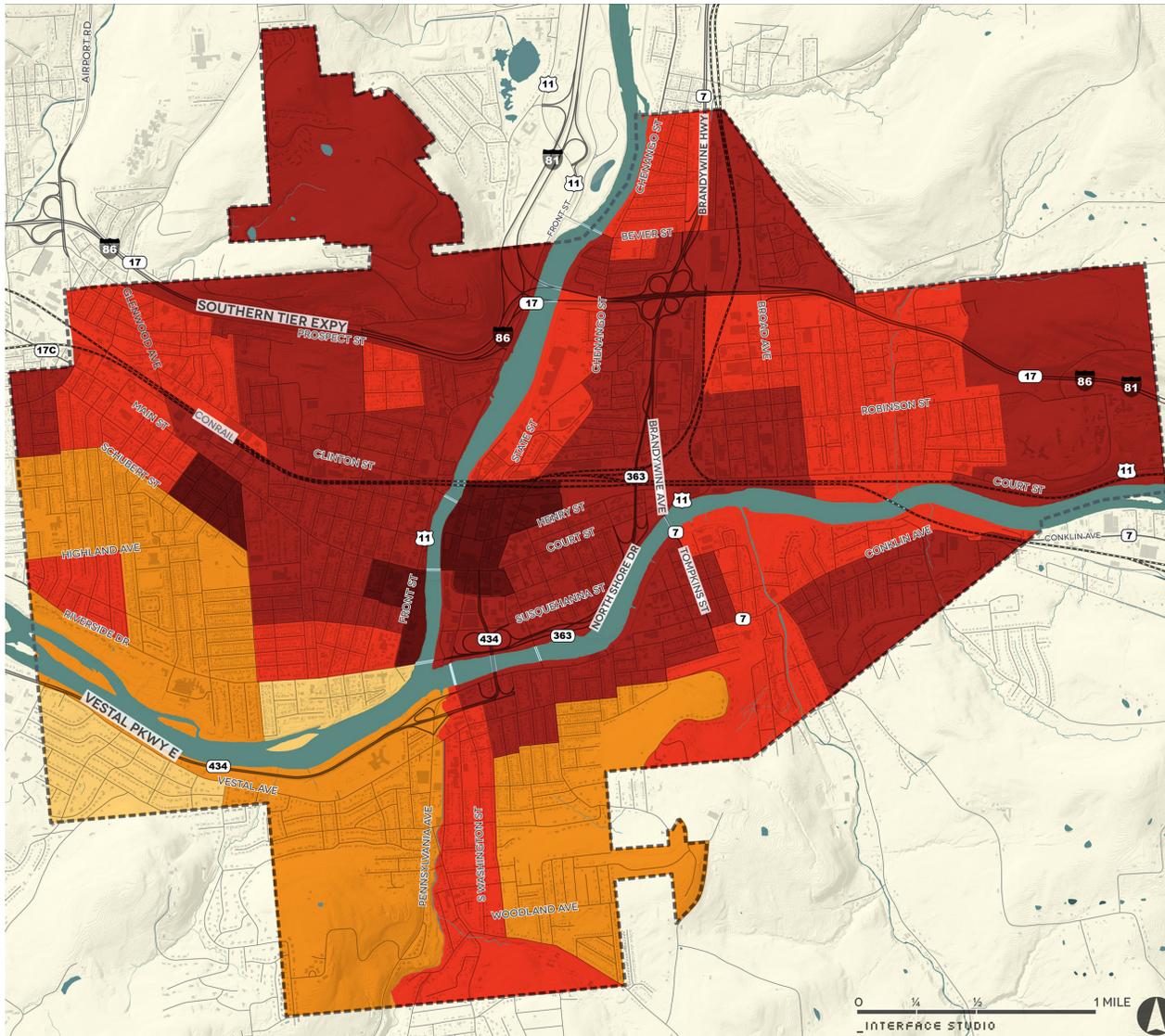


FIGURE 7: Educational Attainment



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

2010



- LESS THAN 15K
- 15 - 30K
- 31 - 45K
- 46 - 60K
- MORE THAN 61K

SOURCE: 2006-10 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

FIGURE 8: Median Household Income

HOUSING UNITS, TENURE & OCCUPANCY

SOURCE: 2008-12 American Community Survey

Units: **23,842**

Occupied: **88.7%**

Vacant: **11.3%**

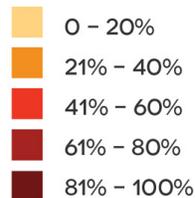
Occupied: **21,150**

Own: **42.5%**

Rent: **57.5%**

There are 23,842 housing units in Binghamton, of which 21,150 are occupied, resulting in a vacancy rate of 11.3%. Of the 21,150 occupied units, 42.5% are owned, and 57.5% are rented. The highest concentrations of rental units can be found in the West Side Neighborhood Project target area (the near West Side), Downtown, parts of the North Side, and Ely Park, as illustrated in the map to the left.

SOURCE: 2010 CENSUS



RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS

2010

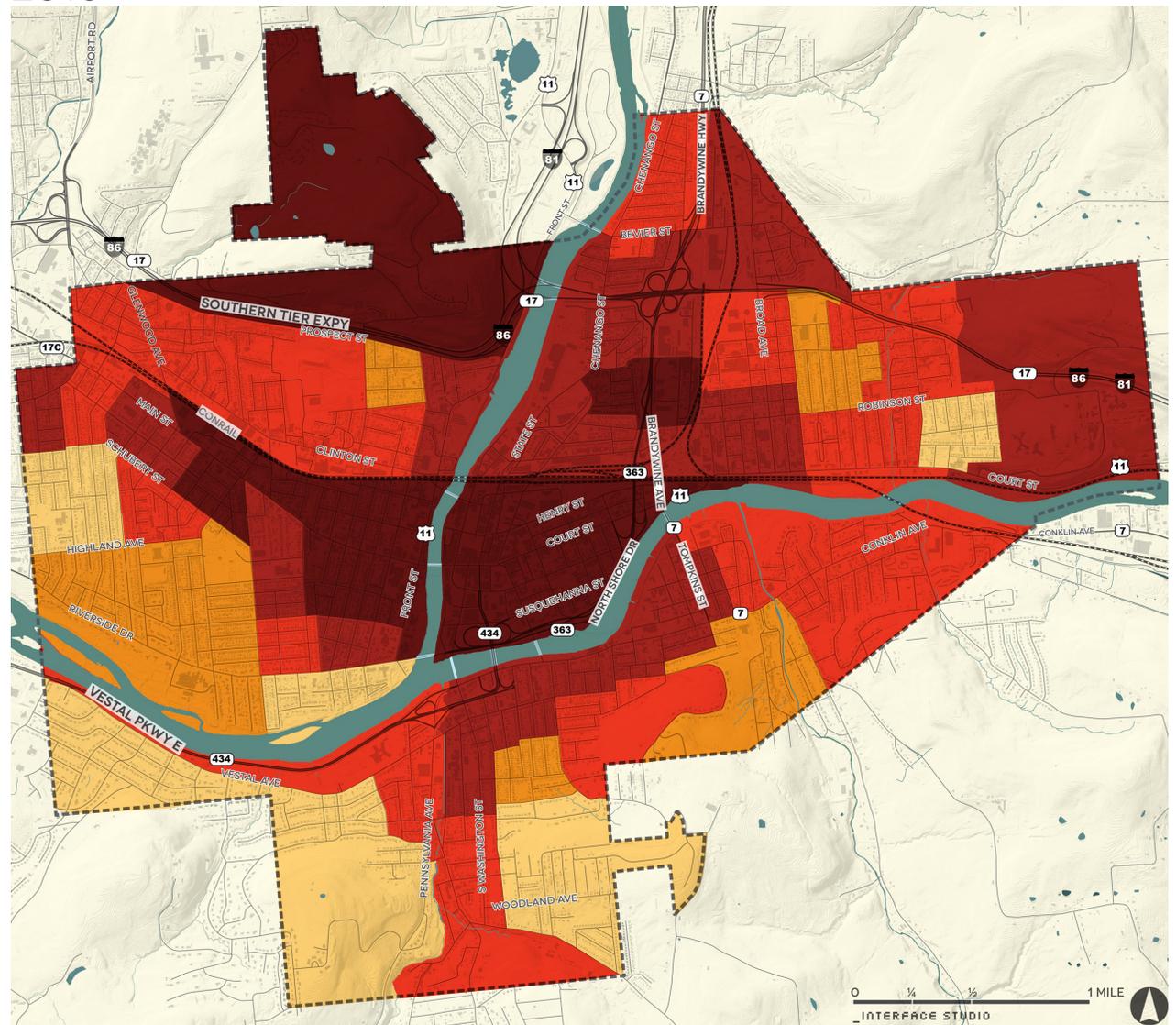
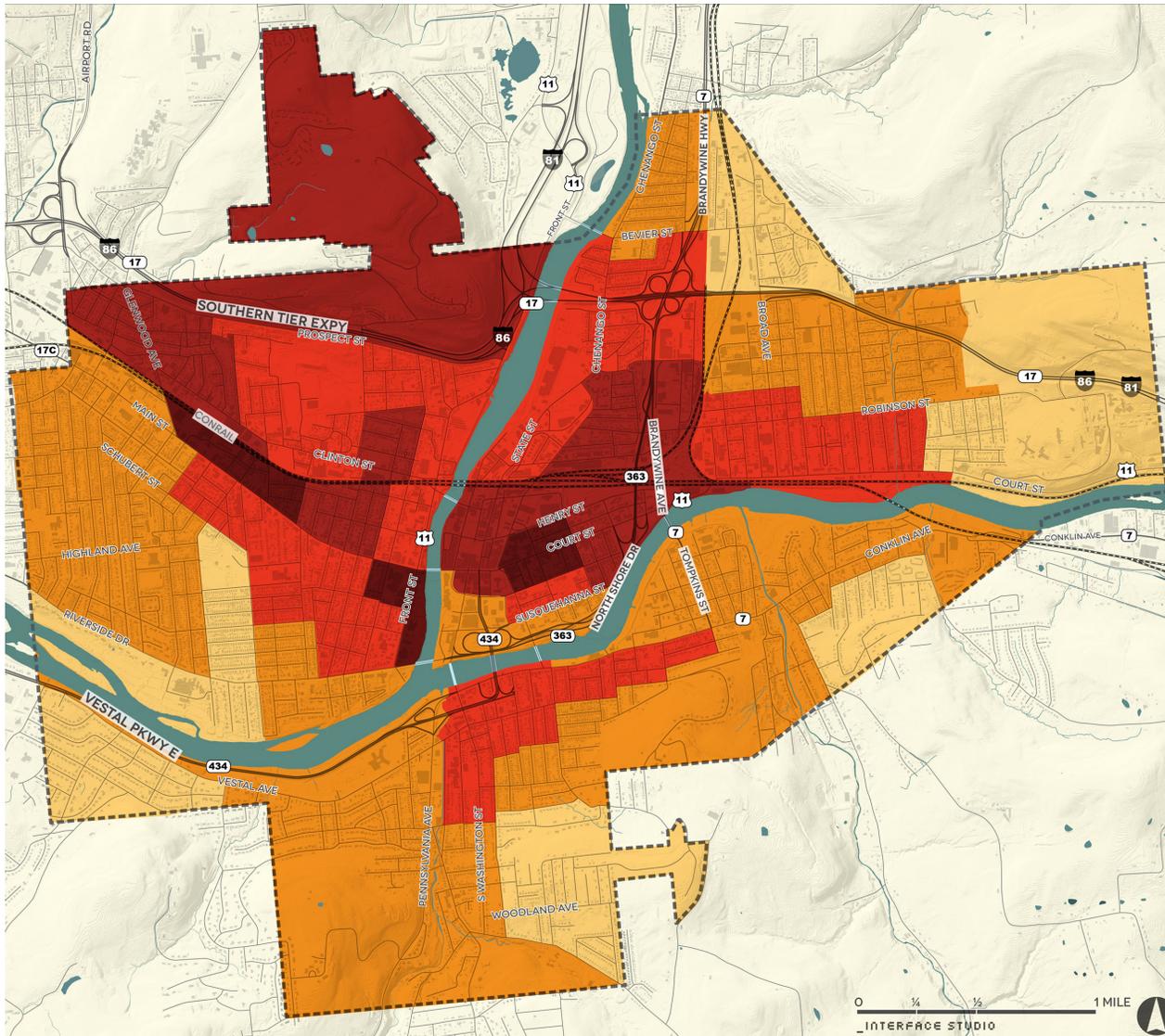


FIGURE 9: Renter Occupied Units

HOUSING VACANCY

2010



The largest concentration of vacant units can be found in the near West Side, along Front Street, and north of Main Street, as well as in the residential sections of Downtown.

50%

OF BINGHAMTON BLOCK GROUPS
HAVE A VACANCY RATE OVER 10%

- 0 - 5%
- 6% - 10%
- 11% - 15%
- 16% - 20%
- 21% +

0 1/4 1/2 1 MILE
INTERFACE STUDIO

FIGURE 10: Housing Vacancy

SOURCE: 2010 CENSUS

COMPARABLE CITIES

SOURCE: 2010 Census, 2007-11 American Community Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics

While Binghamton faces some demographic challenges, it is illuminating to place the City and the data in the context of other cities located nearby. Compared with these other cities in New York, as well as nearby Scranton, Pennsylvania, Binghamton fares better on some demographic and economic factors and substandard on others.

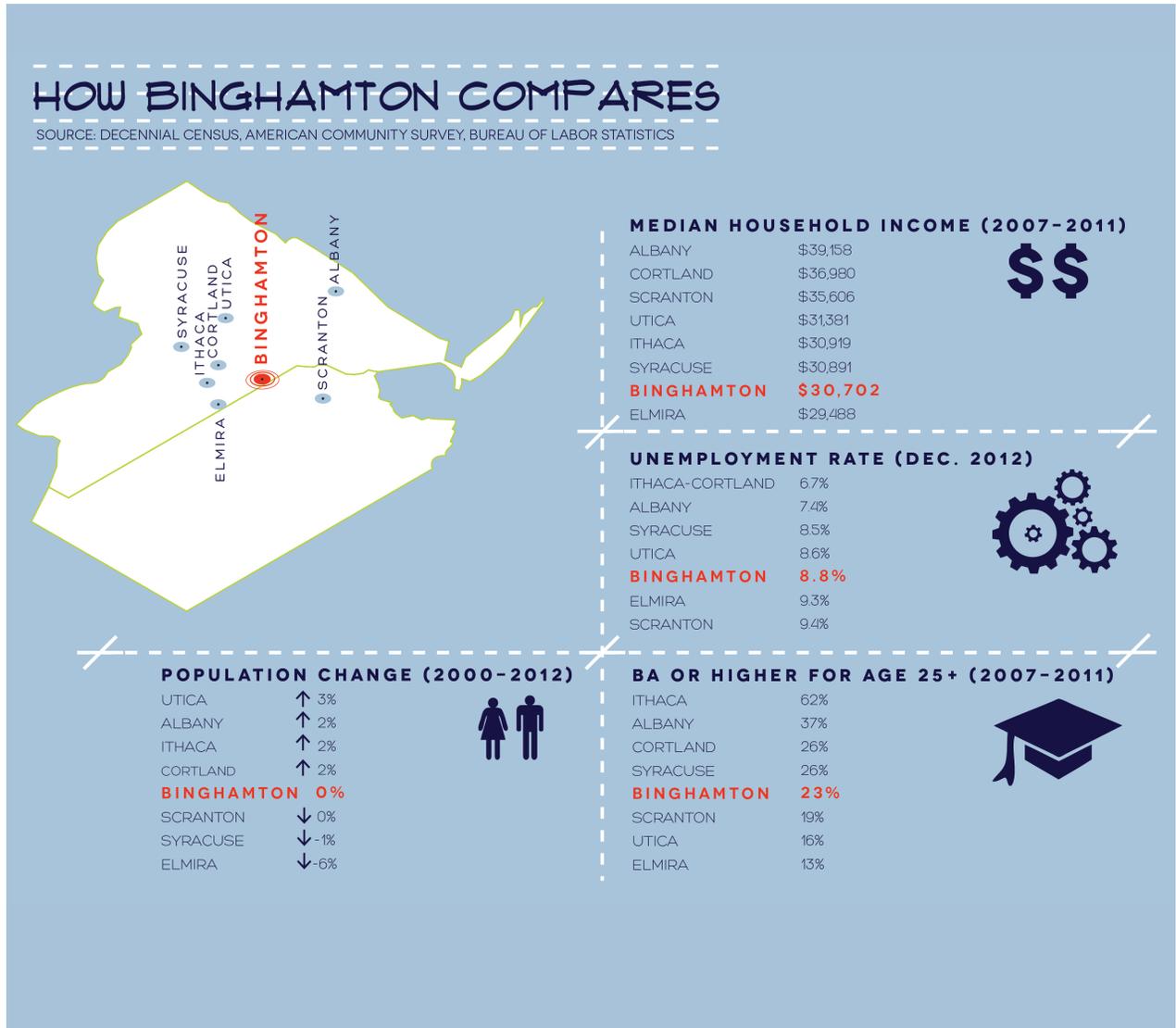


FIGURE 11: Comparative Cities

BINGHAMTON TODAY

For the first time since the 1950s, Binghamton's population has stabilized. Nationwide, recent population growth in small and large cities alike has brought about a renewed interest in walkable communities and the amenities of urban life. Binghamton is poised to take advantage of this emerging trend. With its distinctive architecture, its grid of walkable streets and neighborhoods, and a resurgent Downtown, Binghamton stacks up favorably when compared to other cities with similar characteristics.

Binghamton is close to the region's most prized scenic resources, premier universities, two international airports, and regional cities and national hubs such as Philadelphia and New York. However, the infrastructure that helped fuel Binghamton's growth also enabled population and jobs to relocate outside the City. This combined with the economic shifts of the latter 20th century, the decline of manufacturing, and heightened influence of a few major employers left the Binghamton area vulnerable. In order to support the City's urban revival, some challenges will need to be addressed.

Population loss and neighborhood decline have impacted each neighborhood in different ways. While some neighborhoods in the City are stable and thriving, others face issues that negatively impact their residents' quality of life such as aging housing stock, deferred maintenance, and physical deterioration. Downtown, boosted by new construction and adaptive reuse of historic buildings for housing, has experienced a blossoming of new businesses and restaurants, rendering the urban core more appealing as a residential option. But Downtown and the City's local neighborhood shopping streets continue to face competition from the suburbs for shopping and jobs, and such competition is further complicated by perceptions of crime and a persisting negative image of the City. However, there are opportunities to foster a more business-friendly environment that not only attracts big businesses, but also encourages independent local businesses that add to the character of the City, create distinctive retail corridors, and enhance local pride of place.

While Binghamton is inherently walkable, more can be done to make it easier and more enjoyable to get around the City without a car, which in

turn supports economic development and improves health and overall quality of life in the City. Physical barriers in the form of vacant land and infrastructure such as highways and flood walls inhibit the connection of neighborhoods to each other, to Downtown, and to the riverfronts, but they have the potential to be re-imagined and reclaimed.

The major environmental issues affecting the region today are also of great concern in Binghamton, particularly after the 2006 and 2011 presidentially declared disaster floods and new Federal flood insurance requirements. The City can take the opportunity to plan now to manage the impacts of future flooding, ensuring the safety of its residents and neighborhoods and redefining its relationship to the rivers.

All of these issues and opportunities touch the daily life and future of the people who call Binghamton home, a diverse community of people of all ages, races, ethnicities, and incomes. Blueprint Binghamton sought to build a sense of community as much as it built a plan of investment for our community. As we look forward from today to tomorrow, we must continue to come together as residents, businesses, organizations, City agencies, and elected officials to move our City **FORWARD TOGETHER.**



PHIL'S
GIFT
SHOP

ELLIS
BROS

BINGHAMTON RESTAURANT W
LUNCH 3 COURSES \$10.
DINNER 3 COURSES \$20. 3/12-21
BINGHAMTON RESTAURANT W

3



PLANNING PROCESS +
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

BLUEPRINT
BINGHAMTON

PLANNING PROCESS + PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

03

PLANNING PROCESS

B **LUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: FORWARD TOGETHER** is the culmination of a year and a half-long planning process that sought to involve everyone with a stake in the City of Binghamton. This citizen-driven plan will guide the growth and development of the City over the next 10 years; its complement is a proposed form-based code corridor plan that focuses specifically on the design of Court and Main streets as future redevelopment occurs.

The **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON** planning process had four main phases:

- **PHASE 1: ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS** - The first phase of work was all about learning. Early in the process, the planning team spent time studying the City in detail, collecting data, conducting interviews, and listening to the thoughts, concerns, and ideas of the Binghamton community. Taken together, the input from the research and public outreach yielded an in-depth analysis of existing conditions in the City today. This first phase provided the foundation of the planning process.
- **PHASE 2: VISION + RECOMMENDATIONS** -The second phase of work marked the transition from studying the way things are to imagining the way things could and should be. Drafting a collective vision statement was the first step in this phase. The vision statement for Binghamton tomorrow blends all of the hopes and dreams that people shared and organizes those aspirations into key goals for the City to work toward. These goals or themes serve to frame the recommendations that comprise the Blueprint Binghamton plan.
- **PHASE 3: PLAN DEVELOPMENT** - The third phase of work brought the analysis, vision, and recommendations together into one plan - this Plan - complete with many pictures and quotes to reflect the citizen-driven process, as well as maps and illustrations to communicate all of the work undertaken to develop this Plan for the future of our City. Finalizing the plan also called for much thought about implementation: the action steps necessary to make our shared vision a reality; the key agencies, organizations, and actors that the City will need as partners in implementing each recommendation; and the decisions required to prioritize and allocate limited resources.
- **PHASE 4: FORM-BASED CODE FOR THE COURT STREET-MAIN STREET CORRIDOR** - The fourth phase of the planning process provided an opportunity to kick-start the implementation process while the plan was still in progress through the drafting of a proposed form-based code for Court and Main streets, which could result in updated zoning to guide new development along the corridor.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The overarching goal of **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON** was to ensure that this update to our City's Comprehensive Plan would be a community-driven effort to move our City **FORWARD TOGETHER**, so public involvement was a central component of each phase in the planning process. We committed to a robust, equitable and meaningful public process, and we dreamt up and implemented an innovative approach to outreach and engagement in order to reach and reflect the diversity of our Binghamton community. As a community, we had FUN as we worked together on this Plan!

THOUSANDS of people who live, work, worship, learn, and play in Binghamton participated in the planning process between Fall 2012 and Spring 2014, making time to share their visions, hopes, and dreams for the next decade in the life of our City. **MANY THANKS TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.**

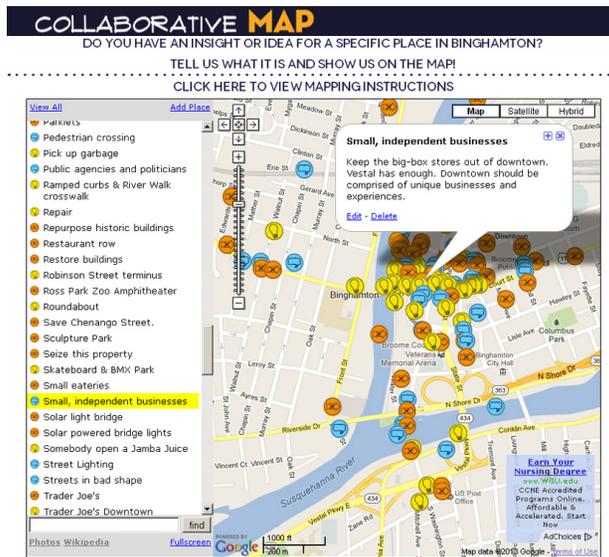
PUBLIC OUTREACH -- TO DATE

	BINGHAMTON NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT SURVEY	454
	INTERVIEW / FOCUS GROUP ATTENDEES	101
	COMMUNITY DISCUSSION ATTENDEES	422
	FACEBOOK FRIENDS	400
	TWITTER FOLLOWERS	185
	UNIQUE WEBSITE VISITORS	3,889
	OPEN HOUSE VISITORS	1,000+
	VISION STATEMENTS	72
	BIG IDEAS	170
	COLLABORATIVE MAP COMMENTS	361
	MEETING IN A BOX	85+
	STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM	230+
	KIDS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM	80+

GOALS FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The City's goals for inviting everyone in the Binghamton community to embrace an active role in the planning process were to:

- Inform and educate the public about the purpose of planning and the challenges and opportunities facing Binghamton today
- Encourage the participation of all community members regardless of age, income, race, ethnicity or first language
- Actively engage the youth in Binghamton
- Invite feedback and meaningful discussion through a transparent planning process
- Build and maintain confidence, trust, and enthusiasm about the planning process
- And foster a civic culture of active and engaged community members, interested and poised to collaborate with each other and with the City on implementation efforts now that the plan is complete.



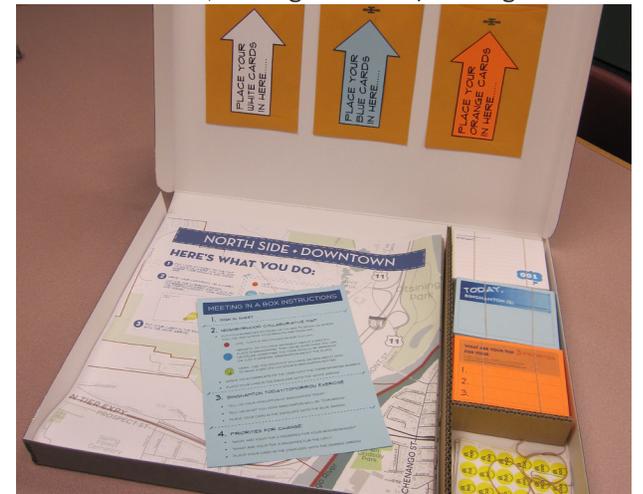
Online Collaborative Map



JOIN US: FOR ANOTHER EVENING OF LOCAL ART, EXHIBITS ABOUT BINGHAMTON & A CHANCE TO SHARE YOUR IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CITY
Advertisement for public outreach



5th Graders at work, thinking about Blueprint Binghamton



Meeting in a Box brought planning activities to neighborhoods

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To foster a truly citizen-driven process, **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON** employed a range of strategies to meet the people of our City, learn from their unique perspectives, and use their local knowledge to inform the creation of the plan. Opportunities for learning and sharing, involvement and action included:

- **TRADITIONAL MEETINGS** with the public, with community groups, and with the Steering Committee convened to help guide the process
- **A CITYWIDE SURVEY**, developed and administered (both online and door-to-door) by the Binghamton Neighborhood Project, that reached **454 RESIDENTS** across the city (see summary on next page)
- **INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS** with more than **120 RESIDENT/COMMUNITY EXPERTS** on topics from community health to infrastructure, housing to commercial districts, transportation to zoning and design, the elderly in Binghamton to the youth of Binghamton
- A series of free lunchtime **COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS** that explored different community development issues - **442 PEOPLE** attended the first round of seven community discussions, which addressed:
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Placemaking & Economic Development
 - Trends in Residential Markets
 - Energy Efficiency for Businesses
 - Historic Preservation & Adaptive Reuse
 - Environmental Justice: Blight, Brownfields & Land Banks
 - Public Health & Community Design
- A **PROJECT WEBSITE** [WWW.BLUEPRINTBINGHAMTON.COM] that catalogued the planning process, public events, results, and findings and invited input and interaction through mini-surveys and an online collaborative map. Before the publication of the final Blueprint Binghamton: Forward Together plan, the website had received **3,889 UNIQUE WEB VISITORS!**
- Frequent updates using the powers of the internet to reach a **FACEBOOK** following of **400 PEOPLE**, and a twitter following of **185 PEOPLE**, and counting...
- An evolving series of interactive exhibits hosted in the **PROJECT DESIGN STUDIO**, the Blueprint Binghamton public headquarters and pop-up gallery located in the former First National Bank at 49 Court Street. Over the course of the planning project, the Project Design Studio was open to the public for meetings and events, the biggest of which happened every few months in conjunction with Gorgeous Washington Street Association's First Fridays Art Walk. The Project Design Studio opened its doors to the public five times, and was a **HUGE** success, drawing **MORE THAN 1,000 VISITORS** who signed in (many more attended and participated in the activities). The space featured exhibits designed to raise awareness of the Plan, ask people to share a bit about themselves, their ideas and insights for the city, their vision, and their priorities for the future of Binghamton.

BINGHAMTON NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT CITYWIDE SURVEY

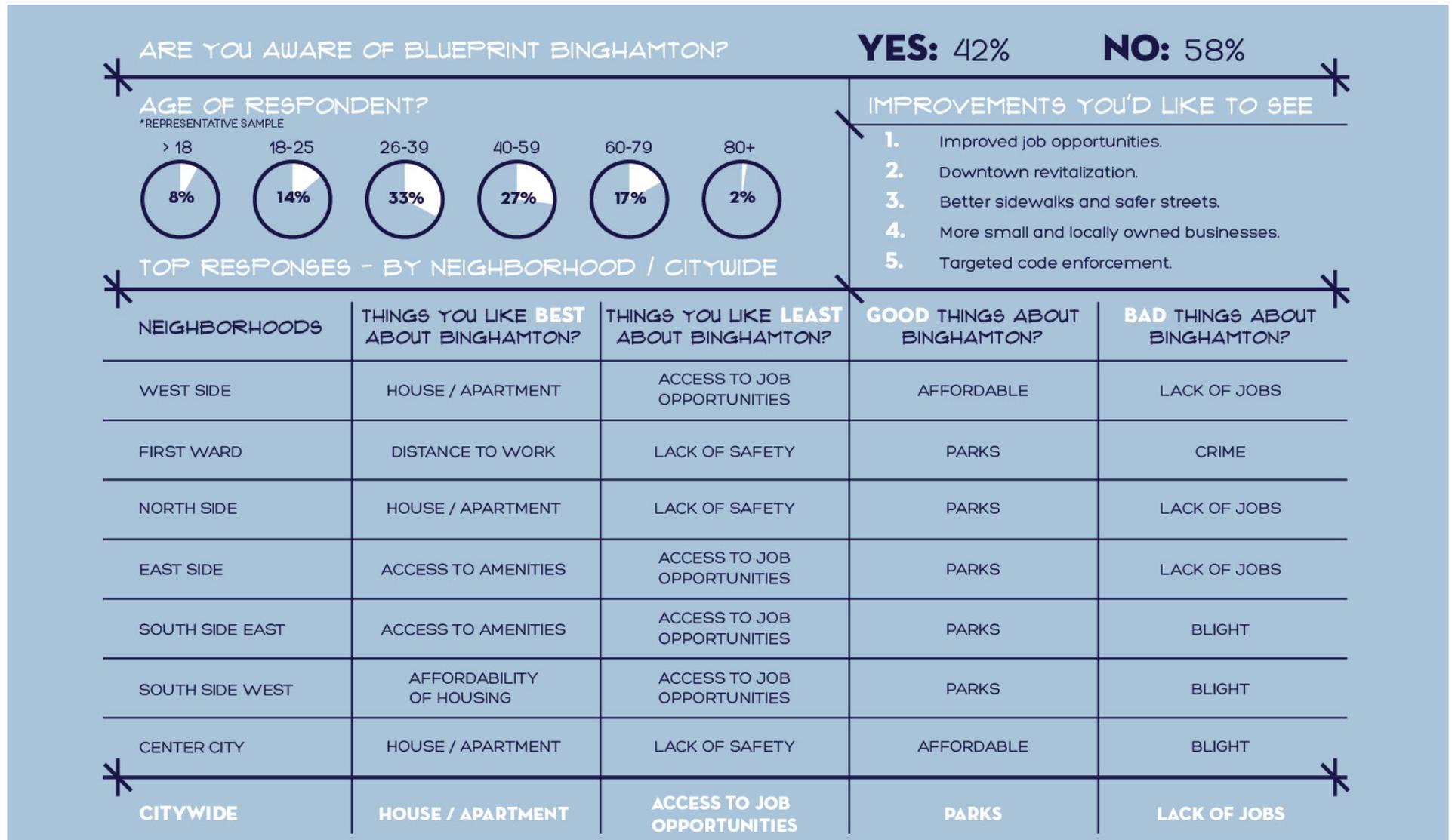
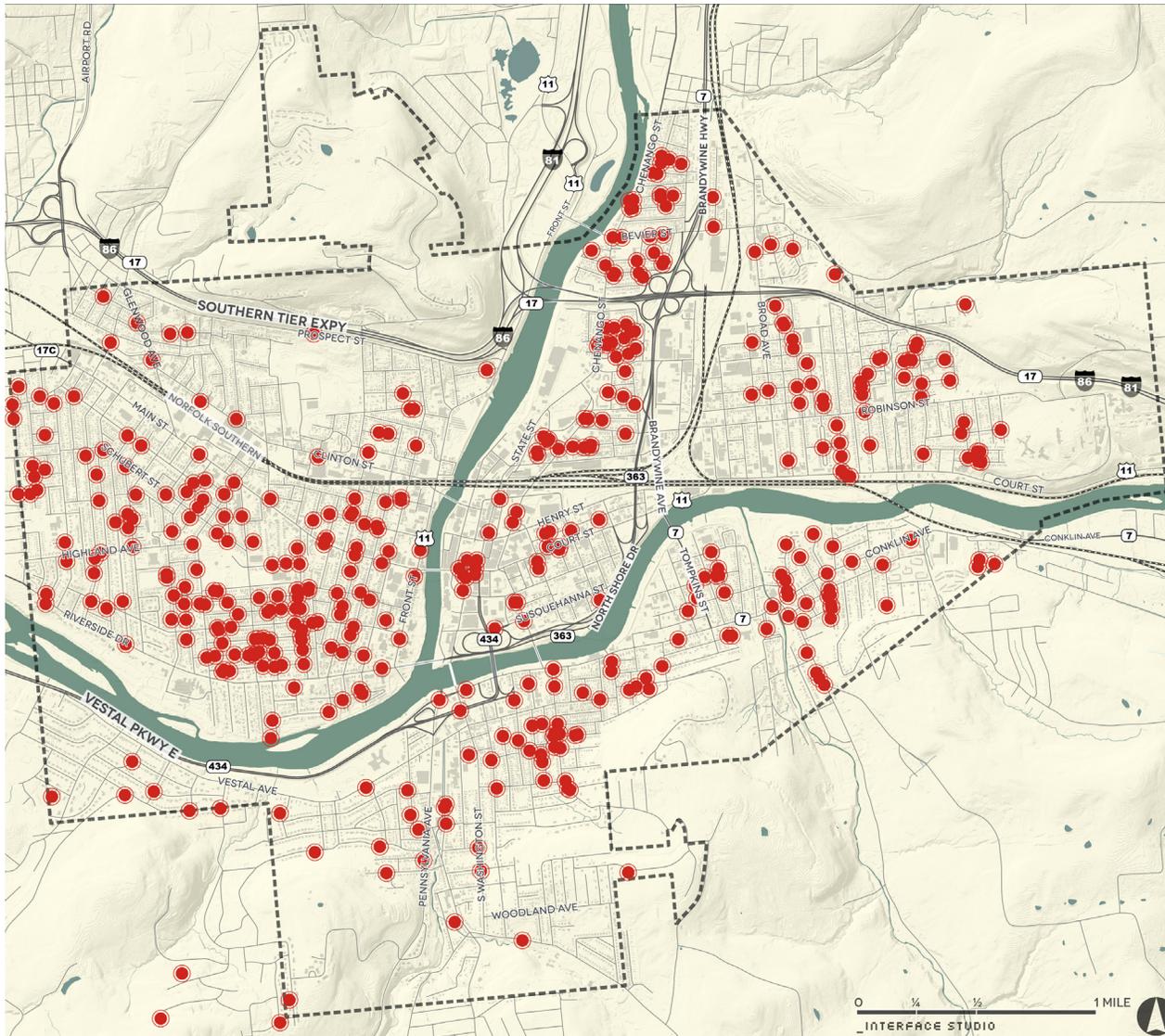


FIGURE 12: Summary of Citywide Survey Results

CITYWIDE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

454

● SURVEY PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 13: Citywide Survey Participants

POP-UP GALLERY - PART I

Over 700 people attended **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON'S** Spring & Summer First Friday Pop-Up Gallery events. In all, we received more than 70 vision statements on **POSTCARDS FROM**

THE FUTURE, we collected more than 170 **BIG IDEAS IN THE PHOTO SUGGESTION BOOTH**, and we received more than 360 comments on a **COLLABORATIVE MAP**.

Photos from the Pop-Up Gallery - Part I



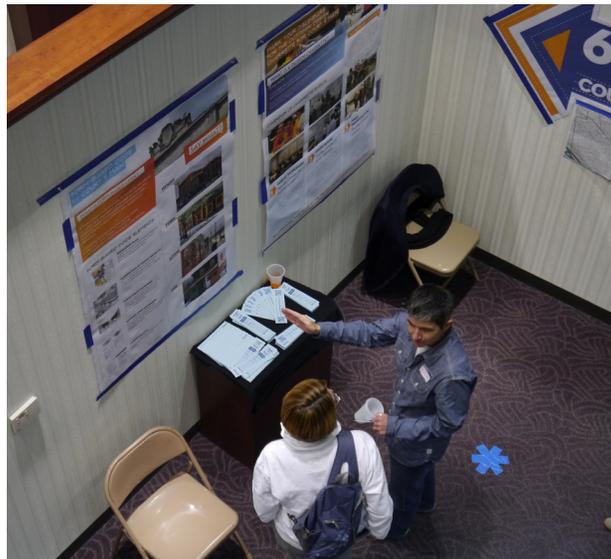
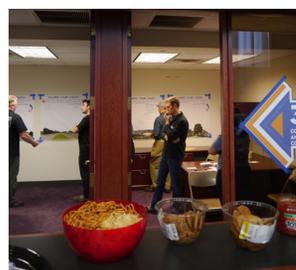


POP-UP GALLERY - PART II

In Fall 2013, Blueprint Binghamton re-opened the Pop-Up Gallery featuring a new collection of exhibits that repackaged all of the community ideas collected in the spring and summer and presented a **COLLECTIVE VISION** for the

future and series of ideas - possible policy recommendations and action strategies - for consideration. Over 300 people attended the fall event and offered their feedback on **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON'S** preliminary recommendations.

Photos from the Pop-Up Gallery - Part II





COMMUNITY EVENTS

And finally, Blueprint Binghamton has had a presence at **MANY DIFFERENT COMMUNITY EVENTS** - we brought the plan to you in the midst of your daily routines! Among these community events were several **YOUTH-ORIENTED EVENTS** where we engaged children and families to get their thoughts on the future of our City. Kids,

teens, and parents weighed in on Blueprint Binghamton at the Stand for Children Anti-Bullying Rally, at the Juneteenth Celebration, and at the special version of the Pop-Up Gallery, designed just for kids! Blueprint Binghamton visited classrooms at the elementary, middle, high school and college levels too!

So, thank you, Binghamton for your enthusiasm and involvement. This Plan - our community-driven plan for our City - is **YOUR PLAN**, and your words, your ideas, and your smiling faces are found throughout.



Irish Dancers at the Youth Open House



Attendees at the Juneteenth Event



JOIN US: FOR AN EVENING OF LOCAL ART, BASKETBALL CLINCS, AND YOUTH THEMED EXHIBITS ABOUT BINGHAMTON TODAY & A CHANCE TO SHARE YOUR IDEAS FOR BINGHAMTON TOMORROW
Advertisement for the Youth Open House

SPECIAL FOCUS ON YOUTH

Binghamton's youth are the future of our City. **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON** wanted their voice to be heard loud and clear, and their vision for the Binghamton of tomorrow to be central to our planning effort. Working with the Youth Bureau and the Binghamton City School District, City staff visited classrooms with important lessons, cultivating a cadre of concerned citizens and aspiring planners-to-be.

Photos from the youth events



- Over 100 5th graders from Horace Mann and Theodore Roosevelt Elementary Schools wrote and illustrated essays about their neighborhood as it is today, and their ideal neighborhood as they envision it in the future. The art and essays were displayed at City Hall and also within the Project Design Studio when it reopened with special exhibits designed for young people in Binghamton. The artwork and essays of the seven winners are featured throughout this Plan.

- 212 students in 11th and 12th grade at Binghamton High School participated in eight sessions, generating thorough lists of Binghamton's Strengths, Weaknesses, and Suggested Solutions for the future.

- About 20 planning students from Binghamton University participated in a focus group sharing their thoughts about why they chose Binghamton, what they like best about the City, what would make them more likely to remain in Binghamton after graduation, and what would make the City more competitive in attracting graduates and young professionals.

Outside the classroom, kids, teens, and parents have had other opportunities to lend their voice and vision to help create **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON**.

- Stand for Children Anti-Bullying Rally - City Planning staff hosted a table at the event in Recreation Park. Over 40 kids stopped by the table, and before they could earn a **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON** sticker, they had to vote on what would make Binghamton a safer city.

- Juneteenth Celebration - City Planning staff hosted two tables at the event in Columbus Park, one for kids and one for adults. Again, over 40 kids shared their thoughts on what would make Binghamton a safer city for children, and adults shared their priorities for the future.

- Pop-Up Gallery, Special Edition for Kids - City Planning staff, Blueprint Binghamton volunteers, and ten teens from the Cornell Cooperative Extension's CitizenU program hosted a youth-focused version of the Pop-Up Gallery with the interactive exhibits retooled to be kid-friendly. More than 200 kids and parents came out and weighed in. The Binghamton University men and women basketball teams ran clinics for youth. The B-Mets donated eight tickets for a raffle, and their mascot, Buddy the Bee was there to help out. A local teen Irish dancing troupe performed as well.

AINSLEY G.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOW:

My neighborhood is NOT the best neighborhood ever. The people aren't the best either. People in their apartment, I can hear them yelling at each other when I'm inside. College kids throw parties with blasting music keeping me up all night. Only some of the people don't do that. Safety is scarce. Cars speeding already ran

friends dog over. Litter like glass, cigarettes, and cans. No crossing guards and I'm close to Leroy Street. The thing I'm mostly concerned about is the environment. There's trash A LOT trash, bumpy sidewalks and run down houses. If I could change my neighborhood, it would be the best neighborhood ever.

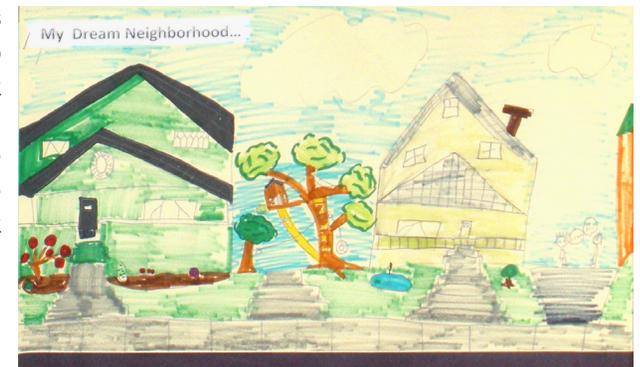


Ainsley G. "Neighborhood Now"

MY DREAM NEIGHBORHOOD:

This would be my version of the perfect neighborhood. The people would be the best. The people would nice and polite. They wouldn't yell and instead they would talk quietly so I COULDN'T HEAR THEM FROM A MILE AWAY (hint hint). They would pick up their trash so I don't have to. Recreational areas would be good to have also. There would be more trees to play in. There would also be a few "watch for children"

signs and some basketball hoops or hockey nets to play with. My perfect neighborhood would also have no environmental problems. Trees wouldn't be cut down so we could have more air and homes for birds. Absolutely NO pollution because when you breath it you could get sick. There would be no speeding cars. If that were true that would be the best neighborhood ever.



Ainsley G. "Dream Neighborhood"

CHYNA B.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOW:

The street I live on isn't the best street ever. I'd like to tell you about it. I live near Recreation Park and I play there all the time. Some people don't care about the park and just litter all over the ground instead of putting it in the garbage can. A lot of kids play at the park, so the park shouldn't be looking like this. To keep people safe on my street, we should be cooperative with

each other and nice. If everybody got along on my street it would be the best place ever. That's what my neighbors and I can do to get along on my street. This is what my neighborhood is like now. It is unsafe and not clean. I hope it gets better in Binghamton because if not, people will move away.

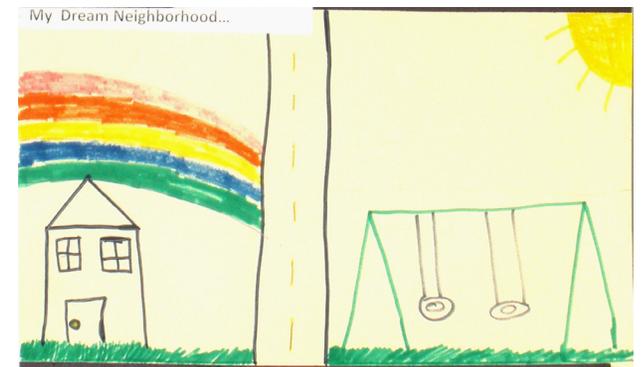


Chyna B. "Neighborhood Now"

MY DREAM NEIGHBORHOOD:

The perfect neighborhood would be the best neighborhood ever. This is the way I would want my neighborhood to be. The parks would be clean. There would be no litter or drugs and I would make sure there are signs that say, "No drugs or litter allowed." There would also be leaf blowers to blow the leaves away. There would be litter monitors so they can pick up the litter kids and adults drop on the ground. The litter monitors would have the job of picking up litter and the leaf blowers will have the job of blowing leaves away. I will also make sure the kids aren't at the park before 9:00 am and after 10:00 pm because I don't want their parents or whoever lives with them to get worried.

I would make sure there are more crossing guards on my street. They would make sure nobody gets crashed over and tell other cars to stop when somebody's crossing the street. If the person in the car isn't paying attention, they might take somebody's life. In my perfect neighborhood there would be nothing but kind people and no litter bugs. Everybody's houses and yards would be spotless and not one piece of litter anywhere. There would also be garbage cans on my street so nobody would litter. This is my perfect neighborhood and the way I would want it to be so nobody feels disgusted when they see it.



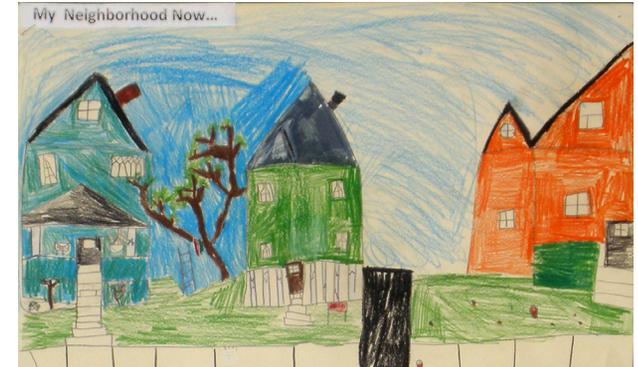
Chyna B. "Dream Neighborhood"

KIRSTEN G.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOW:

My neighborhood has changed a lot over time. I know that with more efforts it can improve even more. Two years ago my neighborhood was a mess. It was horrible; I even wanted to move far away. Garbage was everywhere. There were

bottles, cans, cigarette butts, and leaves. No one would rake or cut their grass. College kids lived everywhere on my street. They always had parties. One day it was 2 o'clock in the morning and there were about 100 people.



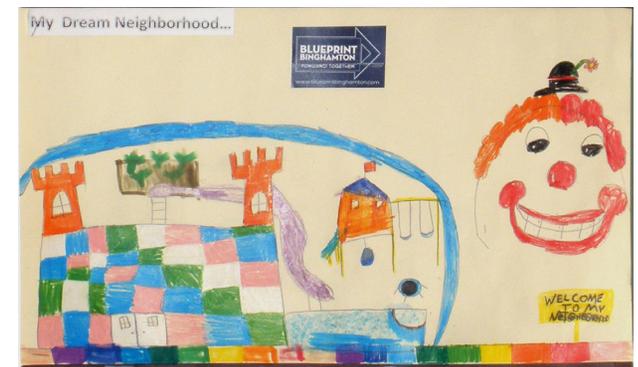
Kirsten G. "Neighborhood Now"

MY DREAM NEIGHBORHOOD:

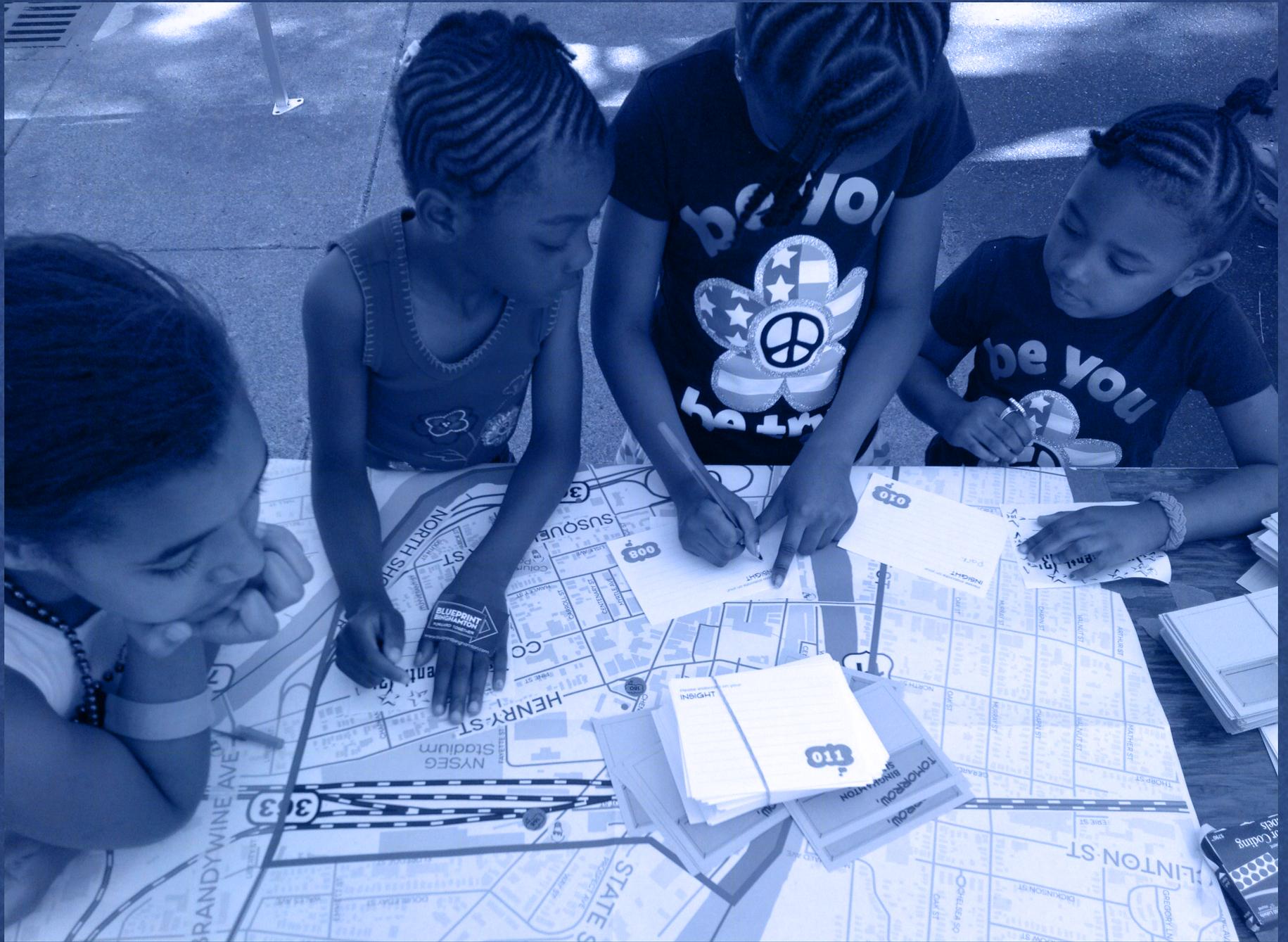
I want the perfect neighborhood. It would have everything nice. It would have nice people, flower beds, and mowed lawns. It would be perfect. People would be very nice. They would never get in fights. They would always clean their yards. The people would have kids that would be my best friends. Some of the people would have candy houses.

The houses would be blue, white, green, and pink. The houses would be castles. There would be water slides out of the houses into the pools. The yards would have pools, hot tubs,

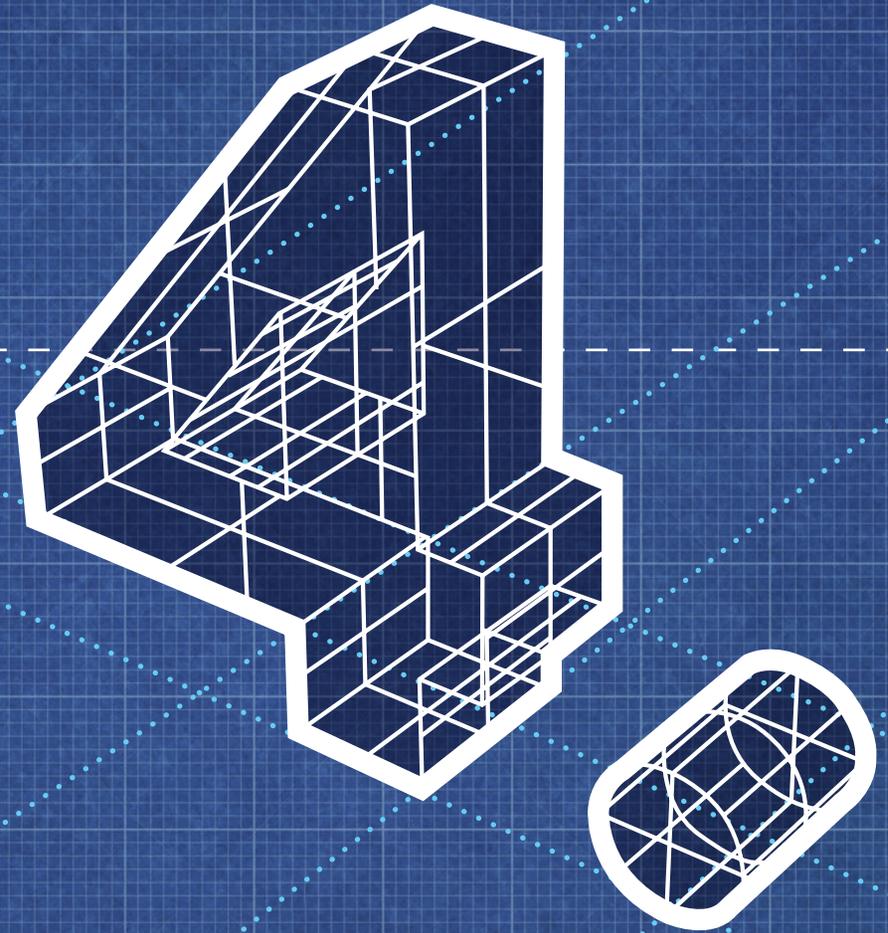
playgrounds, gardens, and trampolines. The yards would be huge. These would be irrigation systems in the yards too. It would be awesome. The streets would have blue lines. The blue lines would mean flying cars only. The flying cars would not create pollution. The cars would just hover. They would run on bad air and create clean air. The sidewalks would be colorful and would say "WELCOME TO MY NEIGHBORHOOD!" Everyone would be so happy. Any the end of the street there would be a big fun house, with an arcade. Fun! The perfect neighborhood is right there and it's perfect for me



Kirsten G. "Dream Neighborhood"



4



VISION

BLUEPRINT
BINGHAMTON

VISION

04

Over the course of the planning process, which commenced in Fall 2012, thousands of people who live, work, learn, and play in Binghamton have made time to share their visions for the next ten years in the life of the City and its evolving story.

Resident experts and people with professional expertise, life-long Binghamtonians and newcomers, collegestudentscallingBinghamton

home for now and city youth who embody the Binghamton of tomorrow touched the planning process in myriad ways: through interviews and focus groups, online and door-to-door surveys, in classrooms at elementary, middle, high school, and college levels, at community meetings and community discussions, and at citywide events like the First Fridays Art Walk. Those passionate about this City have shared countless ideas and concerns, hopes and dreams for the future.

The vision statement below translates the rich collection of community inputs into a collective vision for the City -Binghamton has spoken up, and this is what our City said:

OUR PLAN FOR MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER CALLS FOR A BLUEPRINT FOR A BINGHAMTON THAT IS:

THRIVING

- with a bustling Downtown and home-grown businesses that create local jobs, driven by our spirit of entrepreneurialism coupled with the flexibility afforded by technology and the digital marketplace that allow workers and creative makers to locate where the living is good

RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE PROUD

- a city of safe neighborhoods nestled within a beautiful landscape, where greener design renders the City more resilient to changing weather patterns, housing policies preserve neighborhoods for future generations, and local institutions support a continuum of learning and opportunity for all

HEALTHY

- with active citizens who take advantage of the City's walkability and bikeability, proximity to natural assets and recreation along the rivers and among the hills, and access to affordable, fresh, local foods

- with the authenticity of place fostered by our rich cultural and architectural history, empowered by our progress in effecting positive change, and emboldened by the growing sense of possibility, we celebrate and project a renewed self-image, and most of all

ALIVE

- one of a cadre of small cities across America experiencing a resurgence based on quality of life and livability driven by an engaged public and grassroots activism, Binghamton today and tomorrow is a great place in which to raise a family and grow old, a welcoming home to people of all ages, races, ethnicities, and incomes who choose to live here, and more importantly, stay here.

YOU SAID, WE BELIEVE IN A BINGHAMTON THAT IS:

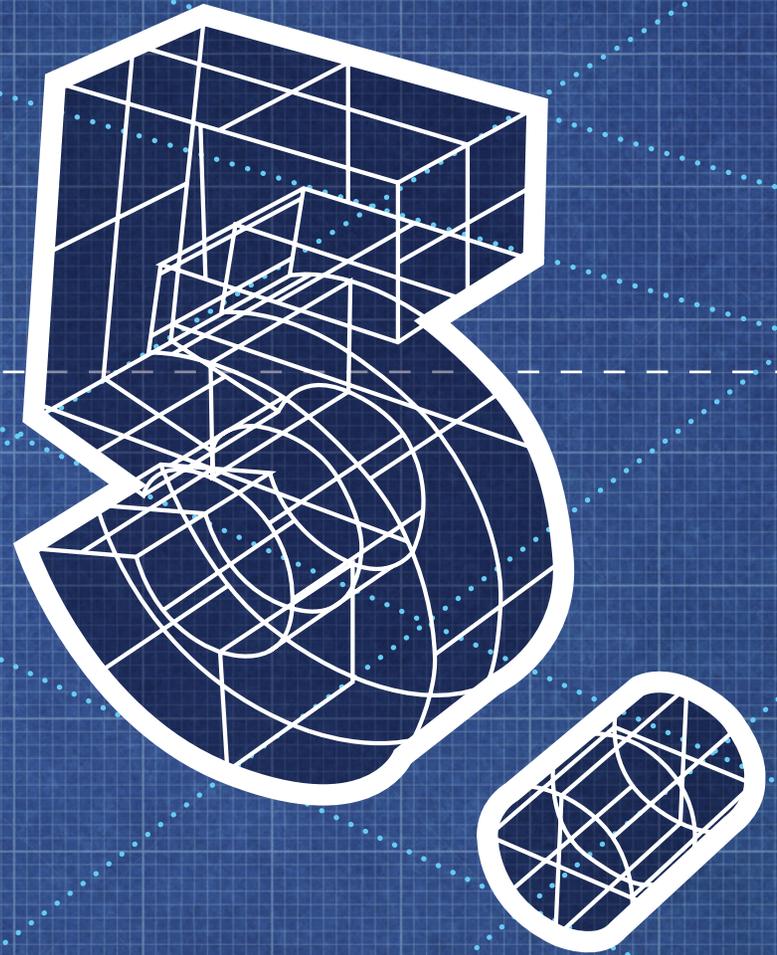
thriving
RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE
healthy
PROUD
ALIVE



Open House attendees expressing their vision for Binghamton



5



BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: THE PLAN

BLUEPRINT
BINGHAMTON

BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: THE PLAN

05 OVERVIEW

This chapter of **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: FORWARD TOGETHER** is the Plan, itself, with seven topic-specific sections or mini-plans that together comprise the City's new Comprehensive Plan. Each mini-plan speaks to elements of the community's vision with:

- An analysis of **EXISTING CONDITIONS** and summary of key issues
- An overview of your input in special spreads documenting the **COMMUNITY'S VOICE**
- A series of **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES** that organize the recommendations and relate them back to the vision, and
- A set of **RECOMMENDATIONS** or strategies, including policy changes and action steps, that will help make the community's vision a reality in the years to come.

BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON'S seven mini-plans include:

A

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A PLAN FOR A CITY THAT PROSPERS speaks to residents' primary concerns about local jobs and businesses. The plan addresses the need to create jobs (and training) for workers of varied skill and education levels, the importance of encouraging new jobs at big companies that require big sites as well as small businesses and start-ups, strategies

for promoting businesses that restore vibrancy Downtown, and the benefits of expanding connections between businesses and major institutional anchors. This plan strives to position Binghamton as a city that businesses choose for its business-friendly environment, creative vibe, and high quality of life offered to employees.

B

HOUSING: A PLAN FOR THOSE AT HOME IN THE CITY addresses the needs of homeowners, landlords, renters, policy makers, public agencies, investors, and developers, alike - all people affected by Binghamton's housing stock and housing market. Recommendations encompass

strategies for maintaining the City's aging housing stock, opportunities to diversify housing typologies to bring beautiful buildings back to life and better serve certain market segments, and tactics to preserve affordability and the integrity of neighborhoods.

C

TRANSPORTATION: A PLAN FOR A CITY THAT WALKS, BIKES, RIDES TRANSIT... AND DRIVES TOO is about how Binghamton moves - more specifically about the multiple ways in which people travel through the City and how the City can better balance its public rights-of-way to serve those traveling on foot or by wheelchair,

by bicycle, by bus, and by car to get where they need to go for work, for school, and for fun. The transportation strategies address the existing network of streets and parking areas, trails and transit services while seeking to add amenities, options, and alternatives to boost safety, convenience, and mobility via multiple modes.

D

INFRASTRUCTURE: A PLAN FOR WHERE THE RIVERS MEET THE CITY recognizes the realities that Binghamton faces as a city trisected by rivers. In addition to strategies that address energy, utilities, and operating costs in an era of budget cuts, this portion of the Plan puts forth strategies to address the volume and quality

of water flowing downstream which threaten Binghamton's riverfront and low-lying properties during riverine flood events; stormwater regulations and opportunities for smaller-scale interventions that mitigate flash flood events caused by rainfall; and the relationship between water and urban land use decisions in the future.

E

ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE: A PLAN FOR PRESERVATION AND PLAY focuses on the City's natural landscapes - rivers, riparian edges, and park spaces - as well as opportunities in daily life for Binghamton's citizens to contribute to a healthier city, region, and planet by reducing

waste output, increasing the urban forest and flora, and strengthening the connection between people and the parks, playgrounds, rivers, and trails, that welcome healthy play so long as they remain clean and safe spaces themselves.

F

LAND USE & ZONING: A PLAN FOR THE LAND includes one of the most important elements to emerge from a comprehensive planning process, a future land use map, which is a tool that indicates where existing land uses should be preserved, and where property should be positioned for redevelopment to accommodate a mix of new uses. The future land use recommendations will inform updates to the City's Zoning Code as well

as decisions by the Planning Commission and Zoning Board regarding development proposals for properties throughout Binghamton. With recommendations about housing, commercial, and industrial property, parklands and floodplains, as well as the development and design review processes, this mini-plan highlights where Blueprint Binghamton's recommendations hit the ground.

G

COMMUNITY BUILDING: A PLAN FOR NEIGHBORS AND NEIGHBORHOODS stems from the energy and momentum built during the planning process with strategies that seek to harness the community's interests and ideas with tools that foster actions for change - at the block level, the community level, the neighborhood level. With ideas that pertain to your backyard, your streetscape, your children, and your health, these quality of life recommendations establish a common ground that will bring each part of the Binghamton community to the implementation table to help make **BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON: FORWARD TOGETHER** a reality.

WANT TO KEEP
READING?

BLUEPRINT BINGHAMTON
HAS 7 MAIN CHAPTERS

A ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

B HOUSING

C TRANSPORTATION

D INFRASTRUCTURE

E ENVIRONMENT &
OPEN SPACE

F LAND USE &
ZONING

G COMMUNITY
BUILDING

