ENVISIONING REGIONAL DESIGN

THE FLATWATER METROPLEX
it's time to shape a vision for our sustainable future...

Calendar of Events
Charrette Definition & Focus
Role of Facilitators & Stakeholders
The Six Charrette Environments
The Five Domains of Sustainability
Getting Started: The Day of the Charrette
Expected Outcomes

charrette workbook
Downtowns across America had a rough go over the last half of the 20th century as the lifeblood of the urban core was drained away into the suburban realm.

Fortunately, many towns and cities are rediscovering downtowns not only for their economic assets but also for their symbolic and cultural value. They are truly the heart and soul of a healthy and vibrant community.

The City of Lincoln has engaged in a number of planning studies that have sought a balance between a healthy, safe and prosperous core and an expanding community edge.

The Downtown Master Plan process sought to guide actions and decisions that will shape downtown Lincoln for the next 20 to 30 years.

The Antelope Valley Plan kicked off a major road and waterway construction effort that will entirely redefine the eastern edge of downtown and the UNL campus and provide new opportunities for growth.

How will Lincoln capitalize on these unprecedented opportunities? How will it redefine thoroughfares such as the P Street Corridor and revitalize critical public spaces such as the Centennial Mall?
I-80 Corridor Environs

This charrette will examine how this 50-mile, six-lane corridor linking Nebraska’s two largest cities will determine future quality of life for Metroplex communities and ecosystems.

Special focus will be given to interchanges at exits 420 (Greenwood exit) and 426 (Ashland, Mahoney Park and SAC Museum exit) and to a new interchange at Pflug Road in southwestern Sarpy County.

Conservative population estimates beyond the present 1.1 million in the region project the growth at more than 2 million residents by the year 2050. Omaha has recently reached a new “market distinction” of 400,000 people, while Lincoln/Lancaster County has eclipsed a 250,000 marketable distinction.

The dynamics of four counties (Douglas, Sarpy, Pottawattamie, and Lancaster) seem destined to insure a steady-to-dramatic growth potential for the region.

The pace, the rate of growth and its sustainability will greatly depend upon the public policy and governance decisions.
Ashland, Nebraska.

Great schools. Charming main street. Quiet neighborhoods that recall simpler times.

But like many other small communities that lie within the Interstate 80 Corridor or within the orbits of Omaha and Lincoln, Ashland faces myriad challenges as it seeks to preserve the best of small town life and culture while opening up to opportunities offered by rapid urban growth.

By 2050 it is estimated that as many as 250,000 commuters will travel from towns like Ashland to jobs in Douglas and Sarpy counties alone.

How will towns like Ashland keep up with housing demands and infrastructure costs and address growth pressures on farmland and historic and natural areas?

How can small communities like Ashland join with other communities to take on regional growth challenges and transform them into opportunities for preserving
Why should we be concerned about land conservation—protecting farmland, natural areas, and green vistas? Preserving these spaces protects streams and water quality, provides habitat, preserves rural atmosphere, provides recreational areas, protects home and community values, and reduces costs of municipal services.

Conservation communities involve small but significant changes to the subdivision design that encourage the preservation of open spaces and protect an interconnected network of conservation lands. Developers can easily become a community’s leading conservationists, as each new subdivision adds another link to an area-wide open space system. Conservation subdivision design is not only fair to developers, it actually enhances the value of development.

Studies comparing developments built according to conservation design principles with those following more conventional, land consumptive layouts show that houses tend to sell faster and real estate values appreciate more with conservation design.

Conservation subdivisions make it easier for municipalities to implement community-wide greenway plans, which may depend on developers to provide critical links along particular stream valleys or hilltop ridges.*

Conservation Community
Drake Court, Omaha, Nebraska.

Similar to many pockets of the greater downtown Omaha area, the Drake Court District is just one example of a formerly affluent and prosperous mixed-use neighborhood that has seen better days.

In the last thirty years Omaha has doubled in size, with the majority of its energy focused on developing services along the suburban fringe. Much effort has also gone into redeveloping the riverfront and areas north of downtown.

In the Urban Development Element of Omaha’s recently revised Master Plan, the need for inner-city revitalization is addressed and met with a commitment to try “arrest the spread of blight, stabilize and/or increase declining population densities and to restore appropriate tax revenues from this area”.

The Drake Court District and the neighboring area have great potential as a successful mixed-use community. The YMCA, Children’s Museum, Rosa Theater & Liberty Elementary School are all strong bastions, supportive of increased revitalization efforts.

Why then, does this area remain blighted? Why do the empty lots and dilapidated warehouses persist? What else can be done?
Fremont Mall

Conditions that led to the creation of shopping malls are changing rapidly. Most malls are now decades old and are becoming imbedded within an urban context. Some of these malls are small and obsolete and have limited ability to expand because demographics in their trade areas have become less favorable for reinvestment.

As traffic congestion reaches crisis proportions and fuel prices continue to climb, the perceived convenience of mall shopping is rapidly disappearing. Most malls can be reached by only one means—the automobile—and this puts them at a disadvantage in relation to locations that are walkable, linked to public transit, and/or offer more multidimensional urban environments.

Customers are now seeking authenticity and a deeper sense of connection to their community, culture, climate, and daily lives. Among many shoppers, there is also an emerging preference for an outdoor, streetfront shopping experience in either a new centers or in older shopping districts that are better integrated with other daily activities and are amenable to other forms of transit including buses/shuttles, trolleys, light rail as well as bicycling and walking.*
Bypass System
STRENGTHS

• Open Space - north retention pond reconfiguration?
  - development on north prompts change

• New Development - “empty nesters” residential

• Fremont Community - unique identity
  - no large city “hustle & bustle” - small town feel
  - Agricultural trade center

• Transportation Access - 23rd & Bell - main intersection
  - Hwy 275 & Hwy 30 intersection redevelopment

• Cinema - draw for the “non-shoppers”
  - connected/in-house for foot-traffic access?

• Ongoing Investment

• Political Priority
WEAKNESSES

• 23rd & Bell/Yager - future traffic congestion problems
• 60's mall “look” - no “cool-factor”
• Vehicle-oriented - isolated from pedestrian traffic (no connection)
  - very “cold” - no landscaping
  - no pedestrian/bicycle access
  - STREETSCAPE!
• Vehicle Access to Site - intersections problematic
• Streetfront - “sea of asphalt” parking lot - also environmental issue
  - gas station now the front piece/identifier
• Proximity to Omaha/Village Pointe
• No identity/branding - signage regulations
• Segregation of Uses - 23rd Street boundary from residential to retail
  - clear/hard use separation
• Diverse Appeal - social/cultural problem
  - possible strength - little town difficult to attack
OPPORTUNITIES

• 23rd Street Corridor
• Retention Pond
• Cater to Families - vs. downtown adult focus
• Connection to Senior Population - Hy-Vee connection
• Visual Connection/Perception Connection - redevelop the “look”
  - site furniture, landscaping, outdoor lighting, canopies
• Park/Recreational Facilities
• STREETSCAPE!!! - pedestrian!
• Transit Hub
• Future-orientation - community center/daycare/library
• Public Policy - owner, developer coordination
• Clarkson Intersection
• 32nd to be an Arterial
• New Residential - east on 32nd
THREATS
• Bypass
• Village Pointe, West Maple St., West Center Road
• Elkhorn
• East developments (i.e. Deer Pointe)
• Access Management on 23rd
• 23rd Street Capacity - future TRAFFIC load
• Vehicular Access to Site
3 OBJECTIVES

• Create an attractive community plaza that is the focal point of community events and activities with connections to the surrounding area and the entire community.

• Improving accessibility to the mall and the surrounding environs - creating easy pedestrian and vehicular access through new roads, trails, transit centers, and connections. Opening the mall up on all sides - making it an attractive destination.

• Reinventing 23rd Street as a pedestrian friendly boulevard from Highway 77 to Highway 275. Creating an attractive, continuous, commercial destination that will compete with west Omaha.
New "main street"

Civic Plaza
TRANSPORTATION STOP CANOPY IS FITTED WITH A 3 KILOWATT PHOTO VOLTAIC ARRAY BETWEEN LAYERS OF GLASS TO PROVIDE POWER.

LOW RIDER, HYDROGEN-Powered FUEL CELL BUS, WITH ELECTRICAL TRACTION MOTORS LOCATED IN EACH OF THE FOUR DRIVING/STEERING WHEELS PROVIDES LOW COST, EASY ACCESS, LOW POLLUTION, ENERGY INDEPENDENT PUBLIC TRANSIT.

LOW RIDING ARTICULATED TRAILER PROVIDES WALK ON/CURB SIDE ACCESS.

RIDERS ACCOUNT IS CHARGED VIA THUMB PRINTER READER UPON ENTERING BUS.

FREMONT MALL

FOUR WHEEL DRIVE, FOUR WHEEL STEERING, ARTICULATED TRACTION UNIT

HASTINGS: 14 SEPTEMBER 06

Public Transit
Purpose Statement

• Create a safe place for neighbors and visitors to the neighborhood.

FIVE DOMAINS
SWOT
FIVE DOMAINS

Environmental
Socio-cultural
Public Policy
Technology
Economic
Environmental

- Balance hardscape and greenspace
- Strengthen character of buildings and space
- Street trees
- Vacant lots
- Demolish dilapidated buildings. Identify
- Create a public green space.
Improvements should improve the quality of life for existing residents. In other words, redevelopment should minimize gentrification of the neighborhood

- Pedestrian-scale Character
- Neighborhood identity – sense of place (not Midtown, Downtown, or south Omaha)
- Parent/student education
- Identify and develop local leadership
Public Policy

- Encourage owner-occupied housing units
- Improved policing of the area
- Assisted
- Require street trees along major transportation routes.
- Strengthen communication between neighborhood residents and city. Inform neighborhood of policies that can assist them.
- Continue public investment into the area.
- Develop and adopt a neighborhood master plan
Technology

• Provide quality public services (water, sewer, street conditions)
• Create access to transportation services (bus, shuttle)
• Disaster contingencies
Economic

- Limited commercial services (drug store, clinic, grocery store)
- Attract and retain existing businesses.
SWOT

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats
Strengths

- Liberty Elementary School
- Children’s Museum
- The Rose
- YMCA
- Strong multi-family development
- Proximity to downtown
- Nearby art-based programs
- Area has interesting architectural detail
- Existing public interest for improving the area
Weaknesses

- Perception of safety; crime, drugs and transients.
- Absentee landlords - property reinvestment
- Poor and dilapidated buildings
- Perception brought on by prison
- Drive through neighborhood – not a destination
Opportunities

• Perception that St. Mary’s Avenue is uncomfortable
• Rehabilitation possibilities
• Possible sites for redevelopment
• Leverage private sector involvement
• Encourage involvement of Liberty PTA
• Public art along 20th Street
Threats

• Lack of Safety
• Possible displacement of low-income residents
• New development will have suburban characteristics (large setbacks, snout houses)
What is a Walkable Street?

- Good Sidewalks
- Green Space
  - Grass - Trees - Plants
- Human Scale
  - Awnings
  - Art
  - Lighting
Objectives

• Develop a unified program for improving the quality of life for the Drake Court Neighborhood, strengthening the physical, human, social, economic, and environmental capital.
Transportation Framework
Priority Pedestrian Framework
Possible Redevelopment Site
Master Plan
Housing

• Types
  – Condos
  – Apartments
  – Rowhousing
  – Lofts
  – Studio

• Fair Market & Affordable

• Group Homes
Retail

- Coffee Shops
- Café’s / Deli’s
- Dry Cleaners
- Hair / Nail Salons
- Restaurants
- Thrift Stores
- Jewelry Shop

- Bookstores
- Grocery Store
- Parcel Store
- Clothing
- Home Décor
- Florist
- Bakery
- Bar / Night Club
Leavenworth Street, Development west of Liberty School
Streets & Parking

- 2-way Streets
  - Leavenworth
  - 20th
  - 22nd
- Wider Sidewalks
  - Land / Street Scaping
- Parallel / Diagonal Parking
- Standard Lights and Signage
Streets & Parking

• Parking Garages
  – Mixed-Use Retail on Main Floor
  – Community Garden / Green Space on Top Floor

• Landscaping along Streets & Parking
Drake Court

The 20th and Howard Street Corridor:
“Linking the Drake Court area and Downtown Omaha for residents to live, work and play.”
Introduction

• The 20th and Howard Street intersection is the central point in the corridor
• This intersection is very viable due to its potential for growth and its ability to bridge the gaps between residents and business allowing citizens to live, work, and play in this neighborhood
• This intersection can provide many opportunities for business, community, and private endeavors
Sustainable Community & Drake Court

• Economic Domain
  – Increasing economic development by inventing new avenues for restaurants, cafes, or corporate organizations and also to strengthen existing business (Bank of the West)
  – By doing this, both residents and visitors (mixed use) from OMC, Rose Theater, and YMCA will feel more comfortable utilizing such amenities in the neighborhood
Socio-Cultural Domain

• By increasing green spaces and walkable corridors, the perception of safety will dramatically increase to a more positive level

• Being a very diverse neighborhood in the downtown area, it is important to provide amenities that community members can strongly identify with
  – Such amenities could include cultural centers, multi ethnic grocers, or entertainment facilities
  – Some amenities should be approved by community member prior to their development
Technological Domain

– Lighting sources that should be similar throughout the community (i.e. Dundee) which would provide a sense of safety and community boundaries and identity
– Reinforce security and structures throughout the community
– Power sources could be re-evaluated and moved underground
Environmental

• Green spaces and parks that can be utilized by every member of the community and extended community, i.e. local business members
  – These spaces should be well lit and provide community members with a sense of safety and entertainment (fountains and play areas)
  – Parks should be very open and deter crime
  – Trash and recyclable receptacles should be provided in parks, green spaces, and street corners
  – Parks should also be pet and child friendly
Public Policy

• Community Involvement
• Neighborhood Associations
• Needs Assessments should be incorporated in planning
• Encourage public participation
• Affordability and mixed income housing
6000 people

30% OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENT

CONSERVATION 50%

OPEN SPACE IN OUTFLOT

WOODLANDS

WETLANDS

BROADACRES CITY

FULL CONCEPT

COMMUNITY GARDENS

CAPACITY OF LAND

PATTERNS OF EXPANDING OMAHA

DENSITIES @

3 to 4 DU'S/AC.

FOL AREA 30% OPEN

SPACE (SUBURBAN DENSITY)

HAVE TO THINK ABOUT

MULTI FAMILY

SMALL LOTS

CLUSTERING

HIGHER DENSITY
Preserve sense of traditional farm cluster
Secondary road passing through landscape

Farmers Market @ Town Center
Mixed-use architecture: housing/retail
In rural elevation: vernacular

Buffer (wind break) between
Linkage path to commercial from areas outside site

Access to

By 36: Build to Bliv. standard with landscape
BIO DIVERSE FARMING CYCLE.
Downtown Lincoln Revitalization

The “P” Street Corridor
Connecting the Historic Haymarket to Antelope Valley
The “P” Street corridor is a zone that could be divided into three distinct districts: the Haymarket, “Middle ‘P’ Street,” and “East ‘P’ Street.”

The two transition zones are critical.
Key Issues

- Policy
- Technological
- Environmental
- Economic
- Socio-cultural
Policy

• Government needs to acknowledge the necessity of producing incentives for responsible development/growth. Leads to sustainable, livable, “Green” communities
  – Mayor’s Task Force
  – Educate Policymakers
  – Departmental Leadership
  – Reduce Policy Barriers
Technological

• Need to encourage and be open to both high tech and low tech solutions to redesign of the “P” Street corridor
  – Public Services
  – Innovative materials—use of post-recycled materials
  – Green Rooftops and best uses of Space
  – Waste Management
  – Energy Savings
P STREET TROLLEY - TYPICAL BLOCK
7TH ST. TO 27TH STREET.
Traffic

• Possible solutions
  – one-way vs. two-way
  – slow traffic down
  – parking on both sides?
  – median?
Environmental

• The natural environment can exist in the urban space and has the potential to be self-sustaining
  – Green building standards
  – Open spaces in unique places
What is sustainable retail?

- Housing - critical mass, university proximity
- University - connection, student housing
- Store type - college town, local owners
- Time - forward thinking, 3-5 yrs, 5-10 yrs
- Food - grocery store, service retail
- Connection - healthcare, retail
- Mixed use - retail, parking, housing all in one
- Transportation - public, how that connects
- Health care - access, availability
- Parking - public parking for retail, housing
Economic

- Housing is vital to sustaining the retail core and services must be there to support housing
  - Transit
  - Provide financial incentives or credits to promote sustainable redevelopment
  - Proper distribution of incentives
  - Priorities
Downtown

“Living Room”
Socio-Cultural

• Fun, safe community within a community
• True urban residential experience/core
• Public buy-In
• Live, work & recreation
“P” Street Corridor
IDEAS / ISSUES

- UTILITY
- FUNDING
- SUSTAINABILITY/GENERATIONS
- UNIFORM DEVELOPMENT
- ENVIRONMENT
- TOURISM
- TRANSPORTATION
- DEVELOPMENT GOALS-REGIONAL VISION
- REGIONAL PLANNING
STAKEHOLDERS

- MUNICIPAL
- FUTURE RESIDENTS/GENERATIONS
- CURRENT RESIDENTS
- LANDOWNERS
- OMAHA LINCOLN RESIDENTS
- STATE ECONOMY (ON-SITE USERS)
- REGIONAL USERS
- ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS
- RAILROADS
- DEVELOPERS
- AGRICULTURE
- UNIVERSITY
- GOVERNMENT JURISDICTION
- MINING
- COMMUTERS
NODES

- EXIT 420- ASHLAND/GREENWOODS
- EXIT-426- MAHONY /SAC
- PFLUG RD PROPOSED
- H370 –GRETNA,PAPILLION,SHARPY CO
- WAVERLY –HWG
- GRETNA
- 180TH ST- PROPOSED
- PLATTE RIVER
OVERALL GOALS

* INTERCHANGES ARE GATEWAY TO DESTINATIONS, ARE NOT DESTINATIONS THEMSELVES.

* LOCAL BUY-INTO REGIONAL VISION.
  (VALIDATE VISION THROUGH PARTICIPATION)

* IDENTIFY AND PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

* PROTECT THE VISUAL QUALITY OF I-80 CORRIDOR (EXTENSION ETC.)

* REGIONAL ECONOMIC ASSET MANTAIN TRAFFIC FLOW AND SAFETY

* CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES

* CONSIDER ROW/INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS
PROPOSAL FOR GRETNA EXIT
( HWY 6 )

* RENEWABLE ENERGY

* WANTED AS AN ENTITY / ASSET

* IDENTIFY -LAND MARKS
  - AESTHETIC ASSETS

* REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNING BODY

* DESTINATION ISLAND

* HWY AND SCENIC ROUTE

* STATE PARK AND RECREATION ZONES

GROUP - 1
PROPOSAL FOR - ASHLAND EXIT

* PLATTE RIVER VALLEY
  RESERVE VALLEY RIDGELINES
  IDENTIFY PARKS & PUBLIC ASSETS
  PRESERVE LOESS HILLS
  IDENTIFY& PRESERVE ENDANGERED SPECIES
  IDENTIFY PRIME FARMLAND

* LANDUSE
  PRIORITISE LANDUSE BY ZONING
  ( CLUSTER HOUSING ASHLAND, PUBLIC USE / GREEN SPACE ETC )
  TOURISM
  RESEARCH PARK
  ADDED R.O.W FOR I-80 AND H.W -6 ( GREEN BUFFER& FUTURE RAIL/ TRAM SYSTEM )

  DEVELOP POLICIES FOR CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS
  ASHLAND & SPRINGFIELD/ LOCAL COMMUNITIES PROVIDE RETAIL SUPPORT NEW DEVELOPMENT

  EMPHASIZE CONTIGUOUS DEVELOPMENT

GROUP - 2
WAVERLY - GREENWOOD EXIT

1 REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN BETWEEN OMAHA AND LINCOLN
2 PRESERVE FARMLAND/OPEN SPACE BETWEEN WAVERLY AND ASHLAND
3 NO NEW INTERCHANGES
4 REGIONAL FUNDING OF PRESERVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
ASHLAND - SPRINGFIELD EXIT

1 IDENTIFY AND PRESERVE PLATTE RIVER VALLEY RIDGELINE AND ADJACENT PARTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

2 PRIORITIZE LAND USE BY ZONING THRU CONSERVATION OF DIVISIONS - CLUSTER HOUSING/DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM/RECREATION USES, ETC.

3 PROVIDE INCREASED RIGHTS OF WAY BOTH SIDES OF I-80 AND HIGHWAY 6 FOR FUTURE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, MASS TRANSIT/RAIL USES, AND GREEN SPACE AS A BUFFER

GROUP -2
GREENWOOD - ASHLAND EXIT

*1 REGIONAL VISION
ZONING + DESIGN STANDARDS
2 LIGHT RAIL
3 FUTURE COMMUTER TRANSIT
REGIONAL PLAN FOR UTILITIES + INFRASTRUCTURE