

Introduction

The Issues and Opportunities Element provides the background information on the Village and the overall visions to guide future development and redevelopment over a 20-year planning period. Specifically, the Issues and Opportunities Element includes population, household and employment forecasts, demographic trends, age distributions, education levels, income levels and employment characteristics. This chapter presents the overall vision for Slinger, including an assessment of local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The community characteristics and general background information that form the basis for the Issues & Opportunities Element, is included in Chapter 3.

Community Survey

In March and April of 1998 the Center for Urban Initiatives and Research (CUIR) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee conducted a mail survey of Village residents. The purpose of the survey was to assess resident satisfaction with Slinger, including Village programs and services. The survey revealed most of the respondents were satisfied with Slinger. Nearly one in four respondents felt that the quality of the schools was the Village's best feature, while one in five listed the friendly people of the Village. Other common responses included Slinger's proximity to other areas (including Milwaukee, Hartford and West Bend), low crime rate, quietness and the ski hill. All of these attributes are included in the value statements provided in the previous chapter. Additional survey results are highlighted throughout this plan.

Visioning Process

Rather than solely develop a series of policy statements, the Village participated in an extensive visioning process to establish a framework from which to make future land use decisions. The result of this process was a vision statement for each of the nine required plan elements. This process was critical to establish a unified vision for Slinger and provide a direction and focus for the planning effort.

To create visions a three-step process was utilized. This process included: a community SWOT meeting, cognitive mapping and element vision development. What follows is a description of the activities and the major issues and opportunities identified through planning process.

What is a *Vision*?

Webster's Dictionary, defines a vision as: (1) *sense of sight*; (2) *something supposedly seen by other than normal sight; something perceived in a dream*; (3) *mental image*; (4) *The ability to perceive something not actually visible, as through mental acuteness or keen foresight [a project made possible by one man's vision]*.

In planning, the term "vision" is an expression or idea of the desired future.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT meeting is a planning exercise used to get communities thinking about:

- where they have been;
- where they are;
- where they want to be in the future; and
- how they want to get there.

On June 30, 2003, the Village of Slinger hosted a SWOT exercise as part of the Kick-Off Meeting. The objective of the exercise was to find out how residents, business owners, appointed and elected officials, as well as, neighboring community residents viewed various aspects of the Village. This could include their feelings on physical things such as roads, utilities, etc., and “quality of life” issues.

At the meeting, each participant was asked to write down what he or she thought were the Village’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Each person could list as many items as he/she wished under each category.

Next, participants broke into small groups to discuss their answers and decide on the most important strength, weakness, opportunity and threat. Prior to adjournment, each small group shared their answers with all participants. Many of the groups had identical ideas. A complete list of the ideas expressed is provided in the table. This information served as an action agenda for plan development.

What Does SWOT Stand For?

Strength
 Something that makes a community stand out when compared to other communities. Something that makes you proud to call the community home. A strength can be a physical asset, a program, or an environmental condition (i.e. friendly community atmosphere).

Weakness
 Opposite of strength. Problem that needs to be addressed

Opportunity
 Something that could be done to improve the community. A potential.

Threat
 A threat may be internal or external. A threat can be anything that could jeopardize the future success of a community.

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| Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Town Size • Served by Two Railroads • Schools • Sense of Community • Location • Access to Highways • Local Churches • Village Water, Sewer and Electric Utilities • Slinger Community Library • Responsive Village Government • Parks and Recreation Opportunities • Slinger Police Department • Infrastructure |
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| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Weaknesses</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid Developer Driven Development • Affordable Housing – Young People Can’t Afford Housing • Lack of a Stormwater Utility • Lack of Vision for Planning • Sense of Over Development • Lack of Downtown Parking • Growth and Development along Roads • Lack of Attention to Architectural History • Failure to Attract Industries • Dying Downtown • Lack of a Trail System |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Railroads Bring Opportunity for Industrial Growth and Challenges with Respect to Stormwater Management • Community Willingness to Work Together • Managed Growth • Working with Neighboring Communities, County and Regional Plan Commission • Increased Commerce and Industry • Balance Economic Development and Natural Environment • Prime Location – Access to Highways • Land Available for Development • On-Going and Planned Improvements to Utilities and Infrastructure |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Threats</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Hartford Overgrowing the Village of Slinger • Conflicts with Neighboring Towns • Crowding – Growing Too Fast • High Taxes • Over Development • Milwaukee Growing Toward Village • Inexperience with Growth • Joint Utilities • Loss of State Shared Revenue |

VISION DEVELOPMENT

To begin to develop vision statements for each of the nine required plan elements, a special meeting was held on July 30, 2003. During the meeting, participants were given a worksheet that included a series of open-ended statements to complete. The idea was to complete the sentences to describe conditions in the Village in 2025. What follows are the partial statements included on the worksheet.

- Residents of the Village take great pride in ...
- Attractive and desirable housing in the Village can be described as...
- The Village provides the following services for residents ...
- The Village offers (may be provide by others i.e. schools) the following facilities for residents ...
- Recreational opportunities include...
- For entertainment and cultural activities, residents of the Village ...
- Downtown commercial development in the Village includes...
- Commercial development adjacent to STH 60, near USH 41, includes....
- Industrial development in the Village includes.... and is located
- The Village works harmoniously with neighboring towns to...
- Looking down at the Village from an airplane a resident would see ...
- The *Slinger Comprehensive Plan* was ...

In small groups, everyone shared their ideas. Each group then developed a consensus answer. The meeting adjourned after each group had the opportunity to share their answers. The planning staff and OMNNI Associates used the ideas obtained during this meeting to create vision statements.

COGNITIVE MAPPING

A cognitive map, or mental map, is a map drawn by a person that geographically locates his or her memories, ideas and thoughts of a particular place. Since cognitive maps are based on individual's preferences and opinions there are no "right" or "wrong" maps. Cognitive maps are used to delineate geographic areas of a community people like, dislike, frequently visit, feel are important, travel through regularly, feel safe, etc.

At the January Public Meeting, participants were provided two maps of the Village of Slinger. On the first map, participants outlined portions of the Village based on their opinion of aesthetic appeal or special



July 30, 2003. Participants Work in Discussion Groups to Consider the Future of Slinger.

memories or experiences they have had. The most attractive places were colored in one shade and not attractive in another color. Areas with special meaning or memories were circled.

On the second map, participants outlined those areas where they would like to see new commercial/industrial development, new residential subdivision development, new recreation areas and open space in Slinger.

These maps were used in the development of the *Recommended Land Use Plan for 2025s* presented later in this plan. This approach was helpful in understanding community concerns and priorities for the future.

Issues & Opportunities Element Vision

Below is the overall vision statement, which represents the broad interests of Village residents, elected/appointed officials, business leaders and property owners. Supporting visions for each of the required plan elements are provided at the beginning of subsequent chapters. Supporting goals, objectives and program initiatives are described in Chapter 11 of this plan.

OVERALL VISION

In 2025, the Village of Slinger has grown to accommodate a balance of new residential areas and business opportunities. Its industrial and business parks, downtown, and TIF areas are thriving. Slinger is known for its high quality of living for residents of all ages, parks and recreation programs, school system, family atmosphere and community pride. Through effective planning, the Village has maintained its “small town” charm and friendly community character.