

01

community services

Chapter Overview

The Community Services chapter is an important first chapter because it provides a progressive vision to continue to provide and develop critical infrastructure, services and access as the City of Bloomington grows and develops. Community Services is the first chapter of narrative, goals, and policies that are rooted in the Vision and Goal Statement, which is located in the Executive Summary. This chapter highlights Municipal Services, Local Government Partnerships, Open Government and Transparency, and Annexation subsections, which are introduced below:

Municipal Services | The City of Bloomington has multiple essential and non-essential governmental services that are integral to the function of the Community as a whole and describes a significant role of local government in Bloomington. This subsection identifies their function and role within the governmental structure.

Local Government Partnerships | Bloomington has long strived to create a collaborative approach towards functioning both as a local and regional leader in government, managing resources, and long-range regional. This subsection identifies existing functionality and key

components within existing partnerships, as well as new opportunities to collaborate.

Open Government and Transparency | Bloomington's innovation-based approach towards local governance focuses on providing a more efficient, transparent and engaging services to residents, students, and visitors alike. This subsection provides a description of the City's policies as well as resources geared towards optimum outreach.

Annexation | The City of Bloomington is investigating how to be more efficient in providing Community Services. Currently, a patchwork of unincorporated areas exists within the City of Bloomington's Corporate Boundaries and as further growth and development occur it may make sense to annex strategic properties to maximize potential. This subsection discusses a policy defining an annexation direction for the City going forward.

This chapter also includes Goals, Policies, and Programs that are implementation based and focus on creating quantifiable outcomes. Outcomes and indicators are tailored to track effectiveness and Goals, Policies and Programs with measurable results.



Municipal Services

A wide variety of services provided by municipal governments directly impact many facets of residents and businesses daily lives – whether it is simply going to the kitchen for a glass of water, having your street plowed during a late night snowstorm, finding a new dog or cat for your family, having a place for the kids to go swimming on a hot summer night, providing a fitness center for adults to stay fit, ensuring rental properties in a neighborhood are safe or hearing a dispatcher answer a 911 call during an emergency. These services not only allow a community to function, but also impact its overall quality of life. In order to efficiently deliver these services without interruption, municipal governments must actively plan and budget for necessary infrastructure, facilities, employee training, and program delivery to the community.

Local government provides two types of services. First those that are essential and must operate effectively non-stop 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. These are police and fire protection provided by their respective departments, and the wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater services of the City of Bloomington Utilities.

These services must be provided at all times of the day and all days of the year non-stop. They are considered essential services.

Public Safety is a fundamental local service. Both the Police and Fire Departments have recently met important staffing goals: the Police Department now has a force of 100 officers and the Fire Department has added a technical rescue company. For example, a Crime Statistics Analyst, along with six Downtown Resource Officers, are ways the Police Department has responded to community needs. These also demonstrate innovative approaches to deliver basic services.

The Fire Department recently achieved a prestigious national rating. The Insurance Service Office (ISO) is a national source of information about property and casualty insurance risk. Using a number of specific criteria, the ISO inspects and ranks fire departments across the United States on their ability to suppress fires. Based on the inspections, it assigns fire departments a Public Protection Classification rating (Class 1 – 10). This range spans between ratings of Class 1 (exemplary fire protection) to a Class 10 (not meeting ISO minimum standards). Among other things, the ISO public

protection Classification ratings are utilized to help calculate and set the insurance premium rates for communities. The Fire Department currently has an ISO Class 3 rating and is extremely close to being able to obtain a Class 2 rating.

The City of Bloomington Utilities (CBU) is responsible for providing a safe and adequate supply of drinking water, fire suppression infrastructure, and waste and storm water delivery and treatment. The CBU Department has a long history of meeting or exceeding all local, state, and federal EPA regulatory standards. Over the past several years, increasing levels of Disinfectant By-Products (“DBPs”) have become a concern. DBPs are created when certain disinfectants interact with organic and inorganic materials during the treatment process. CBU is committed to providing excellent water quality and protecting the public health. Recently, a \$42 million expansion of the water intake and treatment facilities improved the maximum raw water intake capacity from 24 MGD (millions of gallons per day) to 30 MGD. Now that longer-term capacity needs have been addressed, additional work is needed to ensure the highest levels of water quality are maintained consistently.

The CBU has also made a substantial investment in recent years to develop water conservation programs, notably with the hiring of the first ever dedicated Conservation and Energy Resource Manager. Bloomington, like many communities across the nation, is challenged with eliminating SSO (sanitary sewer overflows) events. The CBU executed a revised Agreed Order in 2010 with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management to provide a detailed schedule for capital improvements that will fully eliminate future SSO events by no later than 2025. Prior to and since 2010, the CBU has spent \$22 million eliminating SSO events by 60%. Further infrastructure work will be completed between 2016 and 2025 to completely eliminate SSO events.

While the City of Bloomington Utilities is responsible for safe and sufficient drinking water and collecting and properly treating wastewater, it is also their responsibility to manage storm water as Bloomington has an NPDES (national pollution discharge elimination system) permit that provides the necessary goals and management program to minimize water quality contamination from storm water runoff. The CBU has illustrated that the use of a porous

parking lot in their administrative parking lot is an example of what other parking improvements could do to minimize stormwater impacts to water quality. CBU will be reviewing how to best provide further innovative projects throughout the City in the coming years to minimize storm water impact to stream water quality.

During storm events the City of Bloomington Public Works and Streets Department may be activated on a 24-hour basis to ensure City roads, sidewalks, and pedestrian facilities are safe and accessible.

Solid waste management and collection and street clearance and repair are under the purview of the Department of Public Works. The City provides trash and recycle pick-up on a regular basis for City residents. Street improvements and upgrades are under the direction of Public Works as well. This department acts as the lead department for requiring sustainable and complete street designed public realm improvements for the City’s street right-of-way.

Other services provided by the City focus on non-essential services. These non-essential services are critical to maintaining and improving the Quality of Life of the City overall. These services are provided normally during regular business hours of the week or during specially programmed times of the week to serve community interests such as on a Saturday for a park program. These departments are Planning and Transportation, Economic and Sustainable Development, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Transit, and Social Services. The balance of the comprehensive plan addresses non-essential services of the other City departments.

Local Government Partnerships

Across the nation, many local governments are looking to maximize efficiencies and reduce costs by exploring joint services or contract agreements with other local governmental units. The City of Bloomington currently works in close cooperation with nearby units of local government and anchor institutions. These include Monroe County, Indiana University, IU Health / Hospital, Monroe County Community Schools – Bloomington, Town of Ellettsville, and township governments. For example, officers from

the Bloomington Police Department routinely work with personnel from Indiana University Police Department and Monroe County Sheriff's Office on a daily basis to accomplish shared crime reduction tasks.

Outside of close working relationships, a number of formal partnerships and negotiated agreements are in place that allow joint services to be provided by the City of Bloomington and other local governmental entities. Examples include building inspection services that are conducted by Monroe County for the City. The City's animal shelter serves as the primary provider of animal-related services for both Monroe County and the Town of Ellettsville. The City's Fire Department provides fire protection services for Indiana University, Salt Creek Township, and Polk Townships which are outside of the City's corporate limits. The City and Monroe County have a combined Central Emergency Dispatch Center (CEDC). In fact, the CEDC has been relocated to the second floor of the new downtown bus transit center which is operated by the Bloomington Transit. This collaborative partnership maximizes the use of a new shared facility, located downtown, and was assisted by procuring federal funding via the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Additionally, federal law requires that any urbanized area with a population of greater than 50,000 people create a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPOs are regional transportation policy-making organizations which consist of representatives of local governments and transportation authorities. Congress created Metropolitan Planning Organizations in order to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning processes. Locally, the Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPPO) serves the greater Bloomington area. The BMCMPPO consists of representatives from the City of Bloomington, Town of Ellettsville, Monroe County, Indiana University, and Bloomington Transit as planning partners. All federal funding for the area's transportation projects is programmed through the BMCMPPO planning process.

Open Government and Transparency

The City continues to explore initiatives that provide efficient and forward-thinking government services. Administration created a task force to focus on government innovation. Given the constant pressure to solve problems and deliver basic services for residents with limited resources, city government must be more efficient, more transparent, and more engaged with its residents. Periodic town hall meetings provide frequent and informal opportunities for residents to let the City know about their interests and concerns about the community. Furthermore, "B Clear", an online data portal accessible to all, is a community resource to share good information and help foster good decisions. Through innovation and openness, restoring, and sustaining public trust in local government is not only possible but essential for effective local governance.

Providing open processes and a transparent government allows for residents to become more knowledgeable, involved, and engaged with their community's future. Creating more opportunities for residents to easily access policy-making materials, important documents, and public meetings is very important. The City has participated in both on-going and more recent initiatives to increase government transparency at the local level. The City has a website, completely redesigned in 2008 and again in 2016, that contains an extensive amount of both current and achieved information. In 2009, the City's redesigned website was recognized for having one of the most progressive and innovative municipal websites in the county by the Center for Digital Government (CDG), a national research institute on information technology policies and best practices in state and local government. Websites were analyzed for accessibility of information, efficiency, ease of use, and exceptional service to the public. Thousands of cities participated, with only ten being selected as a finalist. In 2010, the City was selected by Google to participate in the Summer of Code program, a national service organization that infuses top talent from the tech sector in local governments to help build capacity for innovation. As part of this program, the City received a Google-funded intern to assist in developing an information technology center of innovation. The City also began a practice of sharing open source computer code and developing code in partnership with other communities. An Open 311 platform was created

for a wide range of mobile devices. This included the “UReport” system, which allows residents to notify the City of potholes, graffiti, malfunctioning street lights, and other community issues via their mobile devices.

Many of the City’s board, commission and council meetings are televised via the Community Access Television Services (CATS) channel, which can be accessed via cable television or online. Government meetings from Monroe County, the Monroe County Consolidated School Corporation, and the Town of Ellettsville are also available on CATS. However, not all of the cable television providers in the area presently offer CATS channel, and some area residents cannot view these meetings who do not have access to television, cable or the internet. A few examples of the meetings that are not currently available for the public to view on CATS include the Animal Control Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Redevelopment Commission, and Traffic Commission.

Annexation

Over the past generation, Bloomington has continually extended city services to support economic development which has benefited the City and the unincorporated areas outside of the City’s limits. With this growth and development have come additional requests by adjoining developments to be considered within the City’s boundaries. This has over time created a “patchwork” of properties inside and outside the city limits that now presents confusion and service inefficiencies. The City should consider studying the feasibility, advantages, and disadvantages of annexing these patchwork properties.

Chapter 1 | Community Services

Goals, Policies, and Programs

Goal 1.1 Prioritize programs and strategies that sustain the health, well-being, recreation and safety of residents and visitors



Policy 1.1.1: Promote City stewardship of its parks, facilities, programs and services to serve both present and future generations.



Policy 1.1.2: Recognize and respond to the City’s ever-changing population in order to meet the needs of Bloomington’s diverse community.

- Program: Survey the community regularly about the health and satisfaction levels, including quality of local services, and to identify the changing needs of the community.

Goal 1.2 Engage the community, work with regional partners, reach out to schools, collaborate with non-profits and create business partnerships in order to provide community services and programs for all age groups.



Policy 1.2.1: Encourage partnerships within Monroe County and adjacent communities to seek effective solutions to shared problems and community service needs and leverage available State and Federal Resources.



Policy 1.2.2: Continue to foster partnerships between the City and Indiana University to enhance the quality of life for a united Bloomington by increasing opportunities for shared use and the development of programs, facilities, and community services.



Policy 1.2.3: Collaborate with the Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC) and private schools to better integrate the use of school services, playing fields and facilities for public benefit, particularly for young people, families, and seniors.

- Program: Assess the potential for complementary use of City and MCCSC facilities such as libraries, playing fields, pools, gymnasiums, recreational facilities, community meeting space, education, health care, culture, and computer resources.
- Program: Work with MCCSC to identify ways that weekend, after-school and evening use of school facilities such as gyms, pools and fields can enhance community program opportunities.



Policy 1.2.4: Sustain the high education values and standards of local schools as they continue to contribute to the social and economic vitality of the City.

- Program: Explore ways to collaborate with public and private schools in providing programs, services and facilities that enhance the social and economic vitality of the city.

Goal 1.3 Recognize the intrinsic value and everyday importance of City parks and community centers/ spaces, libraries and civic buildings by investing in their maintenance and improvement.



Policy 1.3.1: Increase access to parks and recreation facilities.

- Program: Strive to provide parks within one-third mile of residents to increase walkability.
- Program: Work with the City Council, Administration, Parks, and Public Works departments to provide safe and enjoyable sidewalks or side paths as routes to parks.
- Program: Look for opportunities to partner with Indiana University to provide parks near the campus for students and visitors.
- Program: Watch for land acquisitions in the far eastern periphery of the corporate boundaries of the community and around city edges and downtown to fill in gaps in service in growing areas

 Policy 1.3.2: Maintain existing facilities where such investment improves their usefulness, efficiency and appearance. Avoid deferred maintenance of City infrastructure.

- Program: Leverage City capital funds where possible by aligning capital improvement projects with statewide and regional grants and outside funding sources.
- Program: Develop improvement plans to maintain, restore and enhance key community assets, by investing and attracting necessary resources.
- Program: Continue implement an infrastructure management system to analyze the costs associated with the City's infrastructure, including maintenance, operation, depreciation and replacement.
- Program: Incorporate a standard related to pedestrian usage as an additional criterion for prioritizing sidewalk repairs.

 Policy 1.3.3: Facilitate universal access by a variety of transportation modes for our residents and visitors to parks, recreation programs, athletic fields, libraries, arts and cultural centers.

- Program: Continue to implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements as mentioned in the Bloomington ADA Transition Plan within City facilities including accommodation for those with non-physical disabilities.

Goal 1.4 Plan for a future in which the services we provide to our community continue to thrive and adapt to the growth and change of Bloomington.

 Policy 1.4.1: Ensure that our growth does not eclipse our ability to provide equitable community services.

- Program: Develop an annexation policy centered on urban areas to best provide efficient community services in order to maintain a fair

level of service to all citizens of Bloomington.

 Policy 1.4.2: Encourage and partner locally to ensure quality wired and wireless connectivity availability throughout the City of Bloomington.

 Policy 1.4.3: Parks and open space should be included and prioritized in the planning process to preserve the natural environment and reduce the number of carbon emissions.

 Policy 1.4.4: Plan new public community facilities and parks to meet the needs of the City's multi-generational community.

- Program: Seek opportunities to provide intergenerational activities and programs that increase senior activity within the community.

 Policy 1.4.5: Seek opportunities to develop new parks and recreation facilities to meet the emerging needs of residents and visitors to the City of Bloomington.

- Program: Plan for potential open space and park sites per the Parks Master Plan when preparing coordinated area plans.

 Policy 1.4.6: In conjunction with new public development proposals, pursue creation of park, plaza, or other public gathering places that meet neighborhood needs.

 Policy 1.4.7: Encourage private development proposals to include creation of park, plaza, or other recreational and art facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Goal 1.5 Commit to transparency, open government, and high quality public engagement so that exemplary services are provided to our residents, businesses, and visitors.

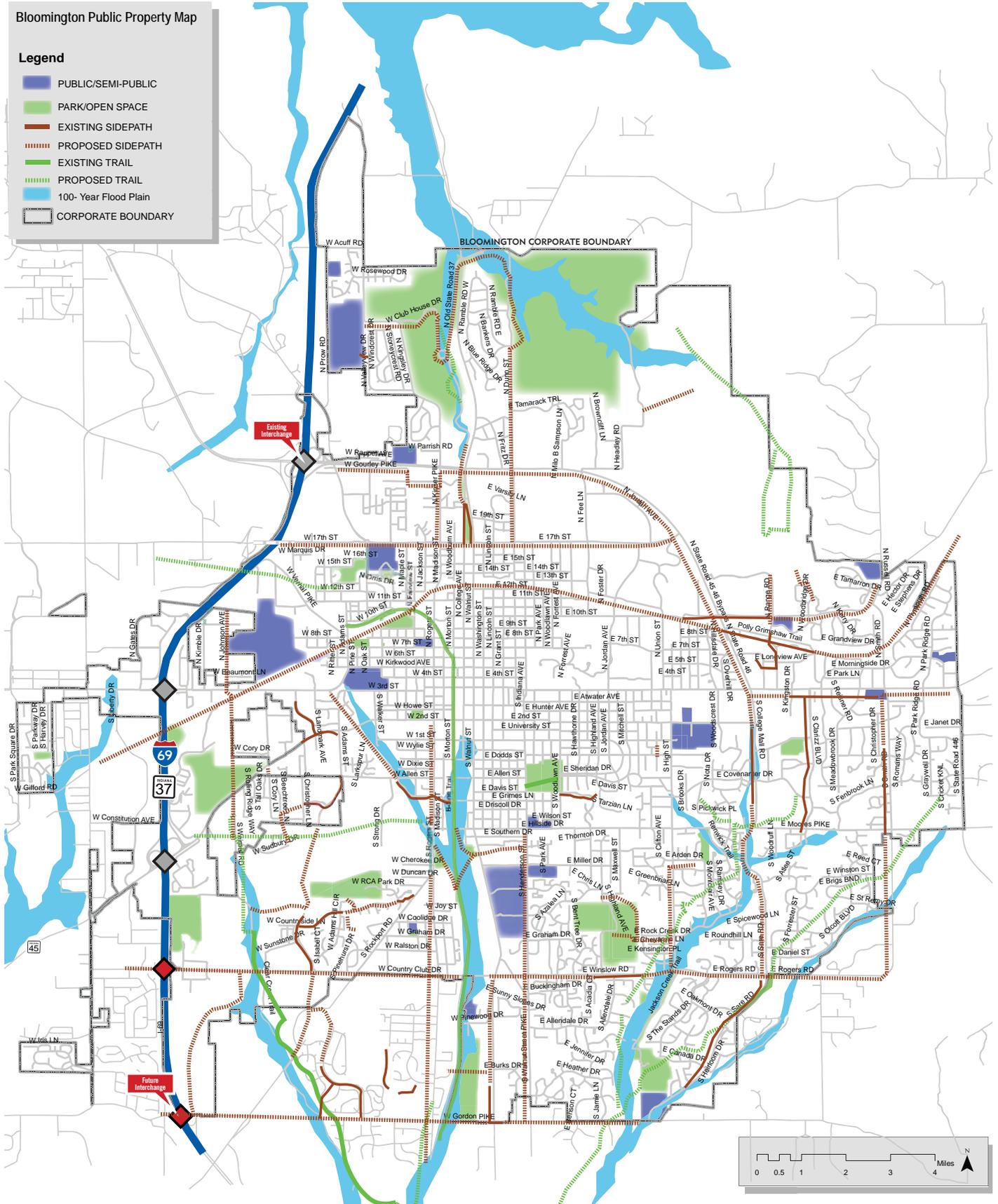
 Policy 1.5.1: Foster inclusive and representative engagement within all development processes.

Bloomington Public Property Map

Bloomington Public Property Map

Legend

- PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
- PARK/OPEN SPACE
- EXISTING SIDEPATH
- PROPOSED SIDEPATH
- EXISTING TRAIL
- PROPOSED TRAIL
- 100-Year Flood Plain
- CORPORATE BOUNDARY



- Program: Analyze and audit the City's current venues of engagement to assess what is working, what is not, and what has not been attempted as of yet.
- Program: Create opportunities for additional public access such as online document search, permit application, and inspection scheduling.
- Program: Engage the public through public notice, road/trail project, and closure maps located on the website.
- Program: Engage Housing & Neighborhood Development and their existing Council of Neighborhood Associations meetings to determine how the City can be more engaged on the neighborhood level.



Policy 1.5.2: Maintain highly motivated, professional, engaged staff and volunteers who are valued for their integrity, commitment and contributions towards the City and community.

- Program: Continue education, training, and skill building for employees in order to assure a knowledgeable, professional, and responsive staff.
- Program Explore job level incentives tied to consistent assessments and feedback on overall performance and accountability.

Chapter 1 | Community Services

Outcomes & Indicators

1.1 Public safety is enhanced

- Annual composite index score of crimes against persons and property

1.2 Engagement process are inclusive and representative

- Percent of population engaged in public consultation processes (e.g. attendance rates, social media, subscribers)
- Demographic makeup of engagement participants

1.3 Civic engagement is strong

- Number of hours per capita volunteered annually by residents and business employees
- Percent of eligible residents voting in most recent local elections

1.4 Quality wired and wireless connectivity is available throughout the City

- Percent residential and nonresidential users with Internet download speeds at least 100 megabyte and one gigabyte
- Number of free Wi-Fi hot spots per square mile
- Percent of public spaces with Wi-Fi capabilities

Profile

Safe Growth Audit

A Safe Growth Audit analyzes the impacts of current policies and ordinances on community safety, and evaluates the extent to which a jurisdiction is growing safely relative to the natural hazards it faces.

The process of conducting a safe growth audit is similar to that of preparing a comprehensive plan, in that it requires public participation to generate the overall safe growth vision and to gain consensus on the findings and recommendations. It differs, however, in the amount of research and analysis required to identify the key contributors to safe growth and to determine their strengths and weaknesses.

To ensure adequate public involvement, it is useful to create a safe growth steering committee made up of representatives of affected interests. This committee can offer guidance throughout the process, including the step of creating a safe growth vision for the community. For that purpose, a community safe growth workshop could be held or safe growth visioning could be piggybacked onto a comprehensive plan or strategic plan visioning workshop. Information and reports could be posted on the local government website. It is important to ensure an ongoing community safe growth forum by disseminating information, receiving feedback, and developing potential safe growth champions.

Examples of Growth Audit items:

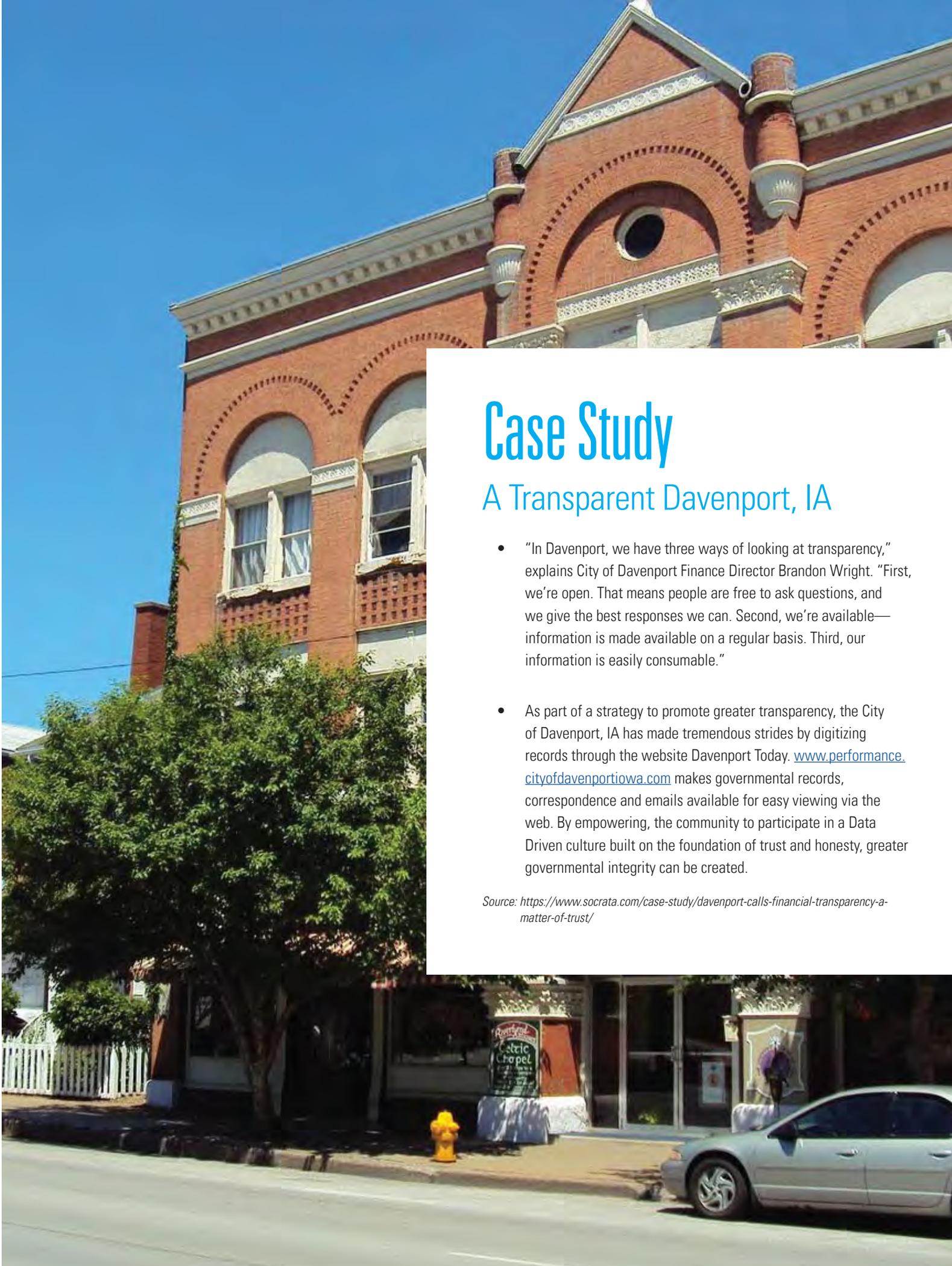
Land Use

- Does the Future Land-Use Map clearly identify natural hazard areas?
- Do the land-use policies discourage development or redevelopment within natural hazard areas?
- Does the plan provide adequate space for expected future growth in areas located outside natural hazard areas?

Public Safety

- Are the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan related to those of the FEMA Local Hazard Mitigation Plan?
- Is safety explicitly included in the plan's growth and development policies?
- Does the monitoring and implementation section of the plan cover safe growth objectives?





Case Study

A Transparent Davenport, IA

- “In Davenport, we have three ways of looking at transparency,” explains City of Davenport Finance Director Brandon Wright. “First, we’re open. That means people are free to ask questions, and we give the best responses we can. Second, we’re available—information is made available on a regular basis. Third, our information is easily consumable.”
- As part of a strategy to promote greater transparency, the City of Davenport, IA has made tremendous strides by digitizing records through the website Davenport Today. www.performance.cityofdavenportiowa.com makes governmental records, correspondence and emails available for easy viewing via the web. By empowering the community to participate in a Data Driven culture built on the foundation of trust and honesty, greater governmental integrity can be created.

Source: <https://www.socrata.com/case-study/davenport-calls-financial-transparency-a-matter-of-trust/>