

**Town of Irondequoit Comprehensive Plan
Public Kickoff Meeting – October 2, 2008**

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Exercise

During the meeting, attendees participated in a brainstorming exercise to identify the town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The exercise was conducted with the following guidelines:

- There are no wrong answers in brainstorming, every idea gets on the list
- Issues can appear on more than one list and maybe all four

Once the group brainstormed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, each person was given 4 sticker dots to identify their top issue(s). The number in parenthesis represents the number of dots that issue/statement received in the exercise. The issues that received one or more dots are compiled in a separate list below.

Strengths

- Location (3)
- Open waterfront
- Schools (2)
- The neighborhoods are tight knit
- Mixed uses
- Housing diversity
- Economic diversity
- Sea Breeze
- Maturity of neighborhoods (1)
- Housing quality
- Sense of history (i.e. blacksmith's shop, oldest miniature golf course, etc)
- "Hot dog row"
- House of Guitars
- Durand Eastman Park proximity
- Sidewalks
- Proximity to water (4)
- Camp Eastman
- New bike path
- Community (1)
- Libraries
- Fourth of July celebration
- East Irondequoit H.S.
- People
- Attitudes
- Balance
- Churches
- Demographic diversity
- Integration of people

- Housing
- Police Department **(2)**
- Mature street trees
- No McMansions; smaller homes.
- Smaller lots
- Whispering pines
- Recreational Opportunities (golfing, boating, etc) **(2)**
- Beach
- Affordable housing **(2)**
- Reasonable taxes **(1)**
- Access to City **(1)**
- Expressway access **(2)**
- Public transportation
- Summer recreation
- Hospital **(2)**
- Helmer Nature Center
- McAvoy Park
- Seneca Park
- Seneca Park Zoo
- Seasonal bridge to Webster
- No dumb Town mottos (e.g. “Where life is worth living”)
- Open government **(1)**
- Two Wegmans
- Marges
- Walkable schools
- “the Flats”
- The pier
- Boat launch
- Senior center and outreach
- Charlotte proximity
- Restaurants
- Night life

Weaknesses

- Empty mall **(5)**
- Stench along beach due to the WWTP **(1)**
- City proximity
- State Route 590 is all torn up **(1)**
- Weak zoning **(1)**
- Retail encroachment on residential neighborhoods **(1)**
- No railroad
- Ridge Road is hard to negotiate; there is a lack of access management
- No Town center **(3)**
- Children leave the area after high school
- Schools and the perception of the schools outside the community. **(10)**
- Organized sports recreation.

- Lack of an aquatic center.
- No bike lanes on the roads.
- Location of the existing Post Office **(1)**
- Two school districts **(3)**
- No youth center **(1)**
- Lack of industry
- Recreational facilities **(5)**
- Lack of east-west routes **(1)**
- Lack of public transportation **(1)**
- Division of the Town into east and west **(5)**
- Seasonal swing bridge
- Empty commercial stores
- Increase in the number/amount of rental units **(1)**
- Empty rentals and houses that are not seasonal units.
- No bookstores or coffee shops
- The Town is transitional; people move after buying their first house here.
- Not a lot of big home opportunities.
- Lack of a Panera Bread
- Sidewalk repair
- Paving of side streets
- Scattered sidewalks and dim lighting in certain areas of the Town. **(1)**
- Manhole covers are not at grade.
- Lack of community involvement at Town functions.
- Too much wildlife
- Not enough commercial revenue, which leads to an increased burden on the residential areas. **(2)**
- Lack of public relations
- Slow population decline **(1)**
- Lack of affordable senior housing.
- No Aldi's
- Perception of schools **(1)**
- Lack of code enforcement

Opportunities

- Utilize mall **(1)**
- YMCA
- Develop Town center areas that currently exist but are underdeveloped (i.e. community nodes) **(3)**
- Truly green community, such as incorporating bike lanes or expanding the size of tree lawns along side roads. **(2)**
- Sustainable design **(1)**
- Walking/biking opportunities
- New zoning codes to allow sustainable design
- Corridor redevelopment (i.e. physical design) **(2)**
- Other agency/municipal cooperation
- Keep undeveloped areas along the waterfront green and open.

- Centralized library **(3)**
- Limit the number of redundant stores, especially drugstores.
- Increase access to the River. **(1)**
- Keep waterfront connections open and balance them with future development. **(1)**
- Make more of a “green” movement with new and redevelopment. **(2)**
- Keep libraries non-centralized **(3)**
- Good paying jobs
- Tourism
- Better schedule for seasonal bridge
- Cooperation with the City on appearance of the travel routes into the Town.
- No parking along Titus Avenue
- Utilities below ground on Ridge Road
- Reuse of existing structures **(2)**
- Maximize the space that currently exists in the Town
- Mass transit improvements **(2)**
- Improve the beauty of Ridge Road

Threats

- Cost of running the Town **(2)**
- Negative perceptions/attitude overall **(1)**
- Loss of the little farmland that’s available
- Lack of code enforcement **(1)**
- Unfair County distribution of resources (e.g. more seems to be given to outlying suburbs). **(1)**
- Unequal Sheriff protection (less available to the Town).
- The number of people available for code enforcement
- Lack of metropolitan planning
- Lack of support for redevelopment/unwilling to change.
- NIMBY’s **(1)**
- Lack of community involvement or feedback **(1)**
- Lack of adequate mass transit
- Brownfields are unremediated **(1)**
- Uncooperative State officials
- Brownfield cleanup resources **(1)**
- Suburban sprawl
- Lack of attractions or recreation for families
- Increasing loss of jobs all over the County, region, State, etc. **(1)**
- Racism
- Urban blight encroachment **(4)**
- Crime **(1)**
- Control of taxes/increase in taxes **(2)**
- Deteriorating neighborhoods **(3)**
- Stable and unstable neighborhoods
- Demographic changes (i.e. high senior population that is moving out of the Town).
- Families moving out **(1)**
- Quality of education declines which could result in a threat.

- East-west school imbalance
- Narrowing roads and lower speed limits (2)
- Duplication of services in schools
- Two school districts
- Divide between east and west (2)
- Aging Town facilities (e.g. library, community center, etc.)
- Aging infrastructure (2)
- Aging housing stock and lack of community's investment/improvements to homes.
- Unwilling to change or a fear of change. (3)
- Developers that overrun greenspaces (1)
- National economy

 The following are the top responses from above that received a ranking of more than one colored dot during the group exercise.

Top Strengths

- Proximity to the water (4)
- Location (3)
- Schools (2)
- Police department (2)
- Recreational opportunities (golfing, boating, etc.) (2)
- Affordable housing (2)
- Expressway access (2)
- Hospital (2)

Top Weaknesses

- Schools and the perception of the schools (10)
- Empty mall (5)
- Recreational facilities (5)
- Division of the Town into east and west (5)
- No Town center (3)
- Two school districts (3)
- Not enough commercial revenue, which leads to an increased burden on the residential areas. (2)

Top Opportunities

- Develop Town center areas that currently exist but are underdeveloped (i.e. community nodes) (3)
- Centralized library (3)
- Keep libraries non-centralized (3)
- Corridor redevelopment (i.e. physical design) (2)
- Make more of a “green” movement with new and redevelopment. (2)
- Reuse of existing structures (2)
- Mass transit improvements (2)

Top Threats

- Urban blight encroachment (4)
- Deteriorating neighborhoods (3)
- Unwilling to change or a fear of change. (3)
- Control of taxes/increase in taxes (2)
- Cost of running the Town (2)
- Narrowing roads and lower speed limits (2)
- Divide between east and west (2)
- Aging infrastructure (2)