

Reedsburg Comprehensive Master Plan 2042 – Stakeholder Interview Notes

Questionnaire:

1. What is something that you wouldn't change about the City of Reedsburg?
Probes:
 - What do you like?
 - What should be maintained?
2. What is something that you would like to change about the City of Reedsburg?
Probes:
 - What do you dislike?
 - What needs to be changed?
3. What are Reedsburg's top issues related to growth and development that the City should focus on for the future?
4. What opportunities do you envision for the City of Reedsburg in the next 20-years?
5. Are there any areas of the City or planning concepts that the team should focus on during this planning process?
6. How would Reedsburg Residents best be engaged in the planning process?
7. Is there anything else you would like to tell the project team about your expectations for the development of the Comprehensive Master Plan?

Other Questions (may be pertinent to their perspective):

- Housing Questions
- Recreation/Conservation Questions
- Business Questions
- Land Use Questions
- Economic Development (Business) Questions
- Beautification Questions
- Safety Questions
- Transportation Questions

Date / Time of Interview: Wednesday, 8.25.21, @ 3:00 p.m.

1. Sense of volunteerism and togetherness
We do things Reedsburg's way
Resilient
Always gather together to support each other
2. More retail
3. Need more multi-family housing developments
Where will the next single-family subdivision go and who will develop it?
4. There are opportunities for retail
Industrial growth – just need to attract talent
Smart Growth
More opportunities for parks and recreation programming
5. Can do more with the river corridor
West side (not just 23, but also 33)
Neighborhood commercial development
6. Reedsburg Community Facebook page
Community channel
Local radio station (News & Views)
7. I think your doing a great job
Keep me in the loop

Date / Time of Interview: Friday, 8.13.21, @ 10:30 a.m.

1. Independence (self-reliance)
2. Less reliance on “how we’ve always done things”
3. Affordable housing
Senior housing options with unique amenities (e.g., long hallways for walking, community room, library, etc.)
4. Could grow to the size of Baraboo or larger
Quirky downtown that draws visitors
More traditional commercial development along the east gateway
Jurisdictional transfer between CTH H & STH 23
Expand rail service
Merge with the Baraboo Wisconsin Dells Airport
5. TID 10
Newly annexed land along HWY 33
6. Reach 30-year-olds
7. Would like a document that the Plan Commission has confidence in and uses
Historical baseball mural planned for the back of the new scoreboard at Nishan Park

Date / Time of Interview: Friday, 8.13.21, @ 9:00 a.m.

1. People
Quality of life is key (e.g., family friendly, fun, and free events)
Civic pride (e.g., citizens take pride in their properties and keep them well maintained)
Proactive in apartment and affordable housing development
2. More retail, especially downtown
Growing up in the area, Friday nights were spent shopping in town thanks to extended retail hours
Main retail businesses downtown
 - Antiques on Main
 - Country Charm
 - Brides N' Belles
 - The Flower Shop
 - Lucy's Mainstreet MercantileLoosing Lorraine's Hallmark due to retirement (only one between La Crosse & Madison)
Need more core businesses downtown
Not in favor of big box retail (e.g., Walmart), but mid-box retail can coexist (e.g., Shopko Hometown)
Former BMO Bank building would be a good location for a Reedsburg Museum
3. West side needs some development (e.g., restaurants or retail). Currently only served by Kwik Trip.
East Gateway
Need new hotels
Without proactive leadership (e.g., Tim & Kurt) the City could stagnate
4. Attracting new residents
Need more houses to sell
5. Continued managed growth
Supporting agricultural service businesses (farmers built this community)
6. Use the newsletter of local organizations with large reach (e.g., City, hospital, utility, school district, churches)
Radio
Send something out with people's tax bill (simple survey with a self-addressed stamped envelope)
7. Chamber has 230 members (good retention)
Credits the Industrial Commission for attracting new businesses
Agnes Moorehead mural in the works for the back of Beastro & Barley

Date / Time of Interview: Emailed questionnaire

1. The old-fashioned charm and community spirit.
2. I would like to see more emphasis on marketing and tourism to bring people into town and the Reedsburg area. The City needs to reach out to attract more diverse shopping experiences. We also need to improve our appearance to greet people. Many cities focus more on beautification with flowers, pretty lights at Christmas time etc... These touches provide a warm and welcoming experience for the community and visitors. People remember these things when thinking about a town. Our Christmas lights and decorations for example are shabby and lackluster. Many of our sidewalks need repair, the river area could be invested in more and beautified. All these things contribute to the community experience.
3. Attracting diverse shopping experiences for the community and visitors. Saving the downtown! Our downtown with the beautiful historic buildings should be a haven for quaint shops and eateries. I believe the city needs a marketing director to promote this city and attract the kinds of places people are looking for. More events and a central hub to promote these events. The city should be working for the businesses and residents alike. At the very least we need a general store with clothes, supplies, and gifts.
4. I think we have the opportunity to become a destination for tourists and expand our small business if we develop our retail, event opportunities, and outward charm. We are so close to the thriving Wisconsin Dells and Baraboo area. We should be drawing more of those crowds to our town. We have very little foot traffic and that needs to change, or Reedsburg will lose the downtown which is the heart of any city. Look at Baraboo as an example of how the city, chamber, and businesses work together.
5. Beautification, Retail, Cultural Experiences, and Tourism.
6. Social Media is the best way to reach the majority. People like polls and discussions online.
7. No

Date / Time of Interview: Friday, 8.20.21, @ 11:00 a.m.

1. Park system (expansion would be good, but don't lose any greenspace)
2. Dependent care – long wait lists (30 kids deep) at existing facilities
3. Housing
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - \$900 - \$1,200 per month rent for new apts.
 - On the Community Facebook page people are looking for 2-3 bedroom apts. For \$700-800 per month, but that doesn't exist
 - People are staying in their homes longer – 65+ community

Hotels – Need better options for out-of-town guests

Downtown – Revitalize and bring in new business

Transparency – City could do better (e.g., promoting the incubator program)
4. New sports complex is a huge opportunity
 - Business park expansion
 - New wastewater treatment plant
 - Need more bar athletics (e.g., softball, bags, etc.)
5. Downtown
6. Reedsburg Community Support Group page on Facebook
 - Newspaper for residents 65+
7. Need more activities for teens
 - Maybe partner the incubator program rent/mortgage incentive with a mentor

Date / Time of Interview: Thursday, 8.19.21, @ 8:30 a.m.

1. Proactive approach to development (instead of reactive)
Leadership in the City (City Council is very supportive of proactive development)
Streamlined process for working with developers
2. Would like the airport to be regional – combine with existing Dells/Baraboo airport
 - Certain pilots & insurance companies won't allow folks to fly into the Reedsburg Airport
 - Prime developable land served by infrastructure and rail
 - Down to the last 5-acre developable parcel on rail
 - Possible future connections at Dewey, Viking, and Veterans
 - Land lease from BOA & FAA required for the Viking Drive extension
 - Airport developed with federal funds. A buyout may be required if converted to another use, (~\$1.5 M)Invest in redevelopment of blighted properties
Improve housing stock
Convert existing senior homes into work force housing (goal of 100 homes within 5-years?)
Create a quality senior retirement community - affordable apartments, duplex, or 4 plex
3. Workforce shortage
Housing (connected at the hip with workforce shortage)
More aggressive school to work program
4. Baraboo River
Route 23 – Darlington to Wisconsin Dells (like Route 66)
Remote work
5. Gateways – 2018 plan missed the mark
 - Need a plan that identifies underutilized properties
 - Create a design theme or vision for how those properties could be developed
 - Streetscape enhancements
 - Unified design theme
 - RenderingsDowntown is special
 - The former streetlights illuminated the building facades. Current full cut off lights don't
 - Pop up parks
 - Planters
 - Riverwalk – Connect 400 Trail to downtown, swimming pool, etc.
 - Flood levy
 - Use former theater site as a gather place / outdoor event space
6. Go to where seniors congregate
Public workshops (handouts for people to fill out individually)
7. Approach for the document to have more graphics and less text is spot on
 - Should be a tool that developers and staff can easily usePlan should address sustainability
The City should proactively continue to use public funding programs

Date / Time of Interview: Wednesday, 8.25.21, @ 9:00 a.m.

1. Friendliness of people
Welcoming nature of the people
2. Change open and uninhabited store fronts
Change attitude of residents who don't support local businesses
 - People want local businesses, but still drive to the dells or baraboo to shopA sense of vibrancy is missing, specifically in the downtown
3. More community support of local (cultural issue and difficult to change)
Attract more business and industry
Doing a nice job with park system
Lots of rundown housing (Have an assistance program, make it easy to use, and have an ambassador to assist people and promote it well)
Stand by your ordinances (e.g., enforcement of nuisance ordinances)
4. Beautification opportunities (take advantage of available grants)
Opportunities for the community to become more healthy
 - Opportunities for more public private partnerships (e.g., wellness park)
 - Walking and biking opportunities
 - More opportunities for youth (e.g., Kenosha's park directors' program for summer programming)
5. Former Star Cinema along river (opportunity for gathering space here)
Downtown
 - Ghost town when businesses close
 - Put lighting on buildings
 - Consistency in signage
 - Make downtown more inviting
6. Don't know if people would come to listening sessions
 - Same proactive people usually attend these events
 - Tap into social media
 - Go door to door
 - Have a financial incentive for survey
 - How do we go to people rather than have them come to us
 - Internal hospital newsletter "The Grapevine" maybe a possibility
7. Provide opportunities for seniors
 - Safe things to do to promote healthy living
 - Wishes hospital had more room for retirement community

Date / Time of Interview: Thursday, 8.26.21, @ 8:00 p.m.

1. Commitment to programs and staffing facilities that support kids (e.g., pool, Boys & Girls Club, etc.)
2. Lack of quality hotels
 - Lots of programs that bring people to town, but they don't stay overnight
 - Missed opportunityImproved communication with civic groups (emotional support)
 - Try to align goals with what the City is trying to accomplish
3. Continue to attract business and industry
Housing (think homeownership is better for long term stability of the community)
New Middle School
4. Attract a new hotel developer
 - Reedsburg could be a good alternative to Wisconsin DellsCity should support School District in efforts to build a new Middle School (emotional support)
5. Industrial Park
Mainstreet businesses
Airport
6. School District conducted a community survey prior to going to a referendum for the Prairie Ridge & other facilities
 - Survey helped guide priorities
 - District communicated the results of the survey back to residents
 - People want to trust you and want a say in what you are doing
 - People want to know what you are doing is in line with community needsPeople won't come to meetings
Go where people are (i.e., online)
7. Wish the School District had done a better job explaining why certain projects were proposed by the District for folks to prioritize as part of the survey (e.g., artificial turf for the athletic field would improve safety, reduce maintenance, reduce amount of labor necessary, etc.)

Date / Time of Interview: Friday, 8.20.21, @ 9:30 a.m.

1. Small town feel
 - People know each other
 - Good sense of community
 - Not a bedroom community (have a little bit of everything)
2. Less flooding
 - Pave 400 trail (gravel is not ideal for road bikes)
 - New residential developers
3. Control measures may be warranted at certain intersections
 - STH 23 & STH 136
 - Golf Course Road & STH 33
 - Huntington Park Dr. & Viking Drive (CTH H)
 - 19th Street & Viking Drive (CTH H)
 - New wastewater treatment plant
4. New DPW building has room to grow
 - New treatment plant would be designed for additional capacity to handle growth
 - Police Department just expanded
 - Fire Department may need space for future growth
5. Look at North and East sides of town (maybe west)
6. Online should be good
 - Harvest Fest will get lots of locals
7. Would be helpful if the project team looked at utility needs to serve future development

Date / Time of Interview: Thursday, 8.19.21, @ 10:30 a.m.

1. Small town feel (that's its charm)
2. Indoor pool (expand programming)
No recreation supervisor. There is an additional staff person in budget for next year.
Retail
3. Programming for seniors
4. Opportunity to grow
Retail
Marketing as an alternative to the Dells
5. Downtown
 - Former movie theater site
 - Former DPW site
6. Parks & Rec has done surveys in the past, but doing one online would be great
7. Reedsburg is known for baseball (first little league) & farming

Date / Time of Interview: Wednesday, 8.18.21, @ 8:00 a.m.

1. Independent operation of the Utility Commission
Rural independent nature of the community
2. Cleanup/freshen up run down properties in high visibility areas (e.g., main street)
More self-promotion of the fiber network
3. Workforce
Water (elevation issues)
Electric (territory issues with competitors)
City needs to grow in a way that allows the Utility to grow with it
4. There's an opportunity for industries to adapt and change in-order-to grow. Foundry and support businesses serve the auto industry, which is moving to electric vehicles.
Opportunities for remote work to be leveraged (need to balance that w/ rural character)
5. N. of Prairie Ridge Intermediate School
Area adjacent to the High School
6. Utility's social media
Local tv channels
Can livestream events
7. Utility is rolling out 10 Gig service (waiting for the equipment)
Cost for 10 Gig will be compatible with competitor's 1 Gig service

Date / Time of Interview: Thursday, 8.26.21 @ 3:15 p.m.

1. Small hometown feel
2. City should help developers more than they do
 - Give an incentive to developers (e.g., interest free loans)
 - City used to put in electric at no cost to the developer
3. Labor
 - Retail & restaurants
 - Taxes are too high
4. Need a replacement for Don Lichte
5. See development going to the north and west (hard to keep going east)
 - Need neighborhood scale commercial
6. Wait until the middle to end of the process
7. Would like to schedule a meeting with the City to talk about future residential subdivision development

Date / Time of Interview: Wednesday, 8.18.21, @ 11:00 a.m.

1. Friendly Vibe
Neighbors help neighbors
2. City is stuck in their ways and we need more forward thinkers
3. Expand boundaries to accommodate growth
Housing
Employers can't find people to fill positions (Don't need more employers...need employees)
Tri-city airport with Baraboo & Wisconsin Dells (open 176 acres from airport for development)
Create a truck route around downtown
4. 400 Bike Trail (needs more marketing regionally and nationally)
Controlled growth
5. Truck route
Downtown (need retailers for clothing, shoes, electronic goods, etc.)
6. Talk to residents (these issues are not on a lot of people's radar)
7. MadREP is trying to turn Sauk County into a feeder for Madison
Have something meaningful come out of this process
Do the best you can with what you have to work with