

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Davenport 2025* planning process began with the identification of five phases of work: background research and issue identification, creation of a work plan, preparation of the plan, adoption of the plan, and implementation. Public comment and participation have occurred from the very beginning.

Background Research and Issue Identification

In preparation for the comprehensive planning process, the Community and Economic Development Department conducted a series of interviews with the public to identify issues which the public believed important to be addressed in the process and final product.

Beginning in October 2000 and lasting approximately eighteen months, representative members of the public were asked to participate in interviews. A total of forty-one interviews were conducted with more than sixty people participating. Following the interviews, staff compiled the data into categories of comments. Listed below are twenty-four planning issues the public believes Davenport's comprehensive plan should address:

- Distribution of Land Uses
- Infrastructure
- Traffic / Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Balance of Development
- Housing
- Neighborhood Preservation / Redevelopment
- Infill
- Sprawl
- Agricultural Land
- Annexation
- Flooding
- Brownfields
- Racial Distribution / Cultural Diversity
- Governmental Organization / Structure
- Public Safety
- Visioning
- Policies / Programs
- Regulations / Development Standards
- Design of Development
- Aesthetics / Appearance
- Population Characteristics
- Environment / Technology

- Market Opportunities / Challenges

Creation of a Work Plan

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

In April 2003, Mayor Charlie Brooke appointed citizens to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC). The steering committee was the principal group charged with directing the comprehensive planning process. The CPSC was responsible for relating its progress back to the Plan and Zoning Commission and the City Council. At the outset, the CPSC was composed of sixteen people representing different community interests; two additional members were appointed after the planning process began, bringing the total to eighteen members. Some members served continuously, others moved away or had to resign for other reasons. All told, twenty-three people served on the steering committee.

Work Plan

In October 2003, the CPSC developed a formal work plan outlining a two-year process to create the comprehensive plan. The work plan included time to develop a framework for the plan (including a vision statement and goals and objectives), additional background research, recommendations, and plans for implementation. The CPSC reserved time for regular public meetings, scheduled at three-month intervals, to keep interested members of the public informed of the committee's progress. The committee also established a preliminary timeline for final review and approval of the draft comprehensive plan by the Plan and Zoning Commission and the City Council, estimating a September 2005 completion.

Preparation of the Plan

Framework

The work plan's first stage involved the committee establishing a vision describing the community's aspirations. The vision includes the following paragraph:

Davenport is a thriving and growing community along the Mississippi River. We prosper with respectful consideration to our most valued and interconnected assets: our people, our land, and the services we provide. We collectively apply our unique talents and resources to make our city the premiere place to live, work, raise a family, and retire.

The committee then worked to brainstorm goals and objectives for the plan. Ultimately, nine goals were drafted:

- Strengthen the existing built environment.
- Identify and reserve land for current and future development.

- Reinforce downtown as the City’s recreational, cultural, entertainment, and government center.
- Create a transportation system that provides improved physical connections / access within the community for citizens and visitors.
- Establish Davenport as a place to receive a high-quality education.
- Conserve, protect, and enhance our natural resources.
- Create a positive business climate that encourages growth of existing and new businesses.
- Work closely with surrounding communities for the betterment of the region.
- Re-evaluate and update the comprehensive plan’s goals, objectives, existing conditions, and trends regularly.

The goals are supported by forty-one objectives, each of which describes actions which will lead towards achievement of the goals and vision. Further discussion of the goals and objectives can be found in the Framework section of *Davenport 2025*.

Background Research

City staff then assisted the steering committee with an examination of fifteen different topics:

- Population
- History and Background
- Housing
- Neighborhoods and Districts
- Historic Preservation
- Education
- Natural Resources
- Economy and Business
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Cultural Resources
- Transportation
- Public and Social Services
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Land Use
- Government

Staff conducted investigations and compiled “existing conditions” reports for committee review. Committee members in turn offered their perspectives on the reports and eventually reached consensus on the information presented therein. The committee sought input on the reports from the public as well, hosting more than thirty-five meetings with interested groups and organizations.

Recommendations

Following examination of the topics, the committee reviewed the complete body of research and began to develop recommendations for the comprehensive plan. More than 250 thoughts and suggestions were offered by committee members, city staff, and the public. Eventually the committee reached consensus on 144 individual recommendations, each of which directly relates to an objective. Thirteen recommendations were noted to be “critical,” and an additional sixty-two identified as “important.” The remaining sixty-nine recommendations are generally accepted as ways to improve the community.

Highlights from the recommendations, in the form of ten major themes and ideas, follow this summary.

Implementation Strategies

For each of the 144 recommendations, the CPSC outlined a priority level, a timeframe for implementation, lead and support organizations for follow-through, and referenced specific existing conditions reports where more information can be found.

An overview of the implementation plan, highlighting the thirteen “critical” recommendations, can be found at in the “Implementation” section of this report.

Response to Issue Identification

Over the course of developing *Davenport 2025*, the CPSC revisited the planning issues identified at the outset of the process, to ensure the plan created will address those concerns expressed by the public. The following paragraphs summarize how *Davenport 2025* responds to those issues:

- Distribution of Land Uses – the *Davenport 2025* land use maps were updated and the land use categories were reorganized. The categories reflect the community’s desire to plan with neighborhoods, districts, and corridors in mind. References to density were eliminated from the land use maps, as negative connotations of “density” were recognized in the planning process. Whereas commercial and industrial land use categories remain relatively unchanged, new residential categories (General, Limited, and Corridor) are used to better describe the desired context, function, and physical organization of Davenport’s housing areas.
- Infrastructure – the *Davenport 2025* recommendations note the importance of developing and maintaining infrastructure throughout the community. An “urban service area” is shown on the land use maps, serving as a visual summary to the community of where infrastructure is needed to support urban-density development and is likely to exist in the next twenty years. The plan also calls for development of new infrastructure studies and master plans.

- Traffic / Transportation – *Davenport 2025* calls for a transportation master plan to be developed by the city in conjunction with the Bi-State Regional Commission and surrounding communities. It is recommended that all modes of transportation, (vehicular and non-vehicular alike) receive planning attention, and that new projects include opportunities for multi-modal (e.g., more than one type) transportation. Special attention was given to greenways, as well as new vehicular corridors.
- Community Facilities – the comprehensive plan recommends setting aside land for future park / recreation / open space areas. Trails and corridors are shown in the plan to be extended and / or connected to other corridors. It is noted that public facilities like schools and city-owned property can be used to create connections across Davenport.
- Balance of Development – The plan provides for geographic balance of new development – with new development opportunities identified on the northern, western, and northwestern fringes – as well as encouragement of central city redevelopment in addition to new fringe development. *Davenport 2025* also endorses a full range of development, including conventional, traditional, single use, mixed use, and multi-use areas, in order to bring more opportunities to everyone within the community. The related ideas of adaptive re-use and infill development are identified within the plan.
- Housing – the comprehensive plan identifies strengths and shortcomings in Davenport's housing market. The plan calls for more attention to neighborhood issues, such as quality of housing, reinvestment in the existing built environment, and continued reliance on market demands for housing. The plan also notes that Davenport should make special efforts to influence the community's housing market, especially through economic incentives and rehabilitation programs, to better ensure Davenport's housing can meet the community's physical, economic, and social needs.
- Neighborhood Preservation / Redevelopment – *Davenport 2025* calls for the redevelopment of existing areas in conjunction with new development. Historic preservation is a topic addressed in the plan, as are design and maintenance standards for targeted areas of the community.
- Infill – infill is featured prominently within *Davenport 2025* as both a need and a desire of the community. The plan encourages the community to find ways to remove obstacles to development of closer-in areas where services and facilities are already in place.
- Sprawl – the “urban service area” will act as a partial check against sprawling development, offering guidance toward timing of development, infrastructure, and transportation. The plan identifies several ways the community can encourage infill development and more efficient fringe development.
- Agricultural Land – the plan recognizes that Davenport's agricultural lands are valuable natural resources, and should be appropriately managed using conservation and preservation programs. Agricultural land within city limits is considered a placeholder for future development: as Davenport grows, farmland will be urbanized. It is noted that land use policies at the county level effectively guard against urbanization outside of city limits.

- Annexation – *Davenport 2025* notes that annexation should be pursued when the twenty year “urban service area” eclipses the city limits. It is anticipated that just over 80% of the city’s 64 square miles will be developed by the year 2025, an increase of five square miles from the year 2005.
- Flooding – it is recommended that watershed studies be developed for creeks and streams across the city, and that stormwater management projects and programs should be developed to better control flooding within the community.
- Brownfields – several recommendations within *Davenport 2025* pertain to brownfields. It is important that Davenport begin tracking brownfields and offering them as opportunities for redevelopment, particularly through public / private partnerships and state / federal funding packages.
- Racial Distribution / Cultural Diversity – the plan highlights Davenport’s demographics and diversity within its “Population” and “Public and Social Services” chapters.
- Governmental Organization / Structure – *Davenport 2025* suggests several ways in which Davenport can become a city with progressive and proactive government and staff.
- Public Safety – the “Public and Social Services” chapter of *Davenport 2025* illustrates the challenges faced by public safety officials within the community. While no recommendations specifically target crime, it is expected that making Davenport’s built environment physically and socially stronger will keep Davenport safe.
- Visioning – during development of the work plan, the CPSC considered the form and content of the comprehensive plans of more than twenty North American communities. The vision advocated within *Davenport 2025* is tailored to the city, expressing the desire that Davenport become a great community within which to live.
- Policies / Programs – *Davenport 2025*’s recommendations offer insights into 144 policies, programs, and projects the community can undertake to improve the city.
- Regulations / Development Standards – many regulation / development standards are explored in the “Land Use” chapter; several are incorporated within the final recommendations and implementation strategies. It is recognized that Davenport’s development standards need to become more uniform across city departments, thereby eliminating duplication of efforts and in turn making government more efficient. Further, *Davenport 2025* notes that the community should develop an equitable way of assigning infrastructure and development costs, especially through better communication with stakeholders.
- Design of Development – design standards are one of *Davenport 2025*’s recommendations. These standards should not be uniformly enacted across the city: each neighborhood, district, and corridor is different, and design standards should be tailored accordingly.
- Aesthetics / Appearance – design and maintenance standards address this identified issue. Attention to public spaces, civic art, greenspaces, and wayfinding are notes as ways Davenport can capitalize on its appearance.
- Population Characteristics – *Davenport 2025* explores the community’s population in depth. Davenport’s population is, on average, growing older, much like the rest of the

nation. However, as a regional urban center, the community has a greater than average number of young people. The “Population” chapter considers the attributes of the community; other chapters offer ways the community can better plan for its diverse needs.

- Environment / Technology – the “Natural Resources” chapter explores opportunities for how the community can use Davenport’s environment to its advantage.
- Market Opportunities / Challenges – regional growth and development are highlighted in *Davenport 2025*. The community recognizes that, while Davenport is the largest individual city in the region, its fortunes are closely tied to those of other regional cities. By working with surrounding communities to market the Quad Cities, Davenport can contribute to the region’s quality of life.

Conclusion

Davenport 2025 tries to accommodate change by being a flexible document. There are assuredly many ways to accomplish some of the goals of the comprehensive plan; *Davenport 2025* attempts to spell out the “destination” for the community, leaving the actual road map to be charted by those driving the plan’s implementation. The comprehensive plan serves as an inclusive planning tool by coordinating other plans for the community. Plans for other areas or elements within Davenport (like storm water, neighborhoods, the riverfront, downtown, abandoned housing, etc.) can be individually updated and pursued, yet referencing them in a comprehensive plan helps ensure that the overall goals of the community are being met.

Davenport 2025 states that Davenport should re-evaluate and update the comprehensive plan’s goals, objectives, existing conditions, and trends regularly. This statement is likely the plan’s most important one, as it acknowledges that change is inevitable, and calls on the community to measure the change at a predetermined point in the future. By recognizing that change has occurred, citizens can then consider the current conditions, and make appropriate plans for the future. The end result of this cyclical process is a community in constant pursuit of its vision, to make Davenport “the premiere place to live, work, raise a family, and retire.”