

# LAND USE AND INFRASTRUCTURE OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

*On March 27, 2014 a public open house was held in the North Adams Public Library to present the draft goals, policies and strategies for the Land Use and Infrastructure and Services chapters of the plan for review and comment. In addition, a poster display presented two future land use scenarios for review and comment with the aid of a comment form. The results of these two activities are summarized below. Despite the city having learned that the North Adams Regional Hospital was closing just two days before this scheduled open house, approximately 25 people attended, although not all completed the comment form in response to scenarios.*

## SCENARIOS

### POSTER: ROUTE 2 (WEST) CORRIDOR

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#### Preference for Scenario 1: 1 vote

- Encourages economic development. Helps promote the city to out of area visitors.

#### Preference for Scenario 2: 6 votes

- I prefer the protective designation for the wilderness areas (conservation)
- Better differentiation between use areas
- More likely to be pedestrian friendly with better river access possibilities
- Wildlife corridor to the north
- Area needs work!
- Better focus on community development
- Frees up unused industrial space
- It's a better mix for North Adams
- Improves the look of the city

### POSTER: ROUTE 8 (SOUTH) CORRIDOR

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#### Preference for Scenario 1: no votes

#### Preference for Scenario 2: 7 votes

- Create more recreational activities, promote conservation and preservation of resources
- Enhances natural beauty attracting more people
- I like the break between the industrial park and developed areas. I hope that this is both an aesthetic improvement and a way to mitigate possible environmental hazards.
- Less ugly sprawl (hopefully)
- Wildlife corridor to east – possible wetland wildlife viewing area
- Possibly better aquifer protection
- Area needs work! Rail/bikepath is proven draw as shown with Ashuwillticook Trail success
- There's too much wetland for option 1 to work
- Provides a better first impression of the city also keeps industrial traffic and noise away from downtown and neighborhoods

## POSTER: DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

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### Preference for Scenario 1: 1 vote

- Preserve the beauty of downtown

### Preference for Scenario 2: 5 votes

- Less sprawl, more distinct
- I prefer the mixed use option of business/residential, especially along River Street, keeping in mind increased residential safety and noise issues following increased commercial traffic. Instead of above/below or side by side (mixed use), could the residences be located behind the businesses?
- Either option would only serve if improvements to existing buildings happened. Option 2 sounds good by not so realistic. Parking and access to businesses on Route 2 east present a problem. Ashland/Church more feasible.
- Either way neighborhood (building) improvements needed to make things more welcoming.
- Creating bigger downtown and surrounding mixed used spaces gives the image of a business, more vibrant area.
- I like this choice because it offers more diversity and options. Transitions more thoroughly from an industrial area into a cultural and artistic area.

## POSTER: WINDSOR LAKE

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### Preference for Scenario 1: 2 vote

- Windsor Lake is one of the few natural recreation areas North Adams has and should be protected – environmental concerns.
- This plan seems more conservative in preserving the lake and surrounding area. I am concerned about removing green space for parking lot and other recreational supports.

### Preference for Scenario 2: 5 votes

- More green and less negative environmental impact. My home is in the woods and that is why we bought it. Also, we love natural outdoor activities.
- Preserving natural beauty and wildlife reflecting a greener and forward-looking economy.
- Better use of natural resource
- Better protection of environmental and recreation interests
- Although I do not overall prefer this option, I like the idea of implementing vegetative buffers. I am not sure about imposing landscaping guidelines on homeowners.
- More recreational activities, greater access to the lake.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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- I really think the improvements and resolution to existing infrastructure is the most critical concern.
- Zoning issues should be considered on an individual basis with input from existing businesses and residents taken into consideration.
- North Adams' greatest assets for attracting people are natural resources. Mount Greylock, Hoosac River, Hiking, Biking, Canoeing, etc. Employment opportunities seriously limited. Art-based community slowly but surely becoming a draw. Architecture a potential draw but so much is run down and needs renovation. No easy path but aesthetic work so desperately needed.
- I feel that the options presented in scenario 2 reflect a change in times and a metamorphosis in the economy and the environment. Industry as it once was is withered and dying. This brings change and a hope for a better future.

## GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

### LAND USE COMMENTS

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(LU1.4) Native Landscaping to include edible plantings (nut and fruit trees, berry shrubs)

(LU1.7) Straight forward application to hear issues of local public safety

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

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(IS2.2) These goals and policies are great, I feel that building inspector should encourage green use to help the public facilitate these upgrades. I would also consider forward-thinking along these lines with use of shipping container homes.



*Shipping container homes refers the practice, gaining momentum globally, of recycling freight containers into a wide variety commercial and residential structures. The strong boxes are used as “building blocks” of sorts and can be easily modified into various designs.*

(IS 5.1) We need greater access to transportation.

(IS6.1) Remove Rte 2 Bypass and reroute traffic along Main Street.

(IS6.2) All new paving projects should be evaluated for walking and biking prior to the start. A little paint can go a long way for safety.

(IS 9.1) Coordinate disaster planning with both Williams and MCLA – use existing programs in place

(IS10.1) We need better broadband access.