



Comprehensive Plan Update Public Workshop

The first Public Workshop of the Comprehensive Plan Update process was held at 6:30pm on Monday, December 12, 2016 at the Holiday Inn, 301 Foxcroft Avenue in Martinsburg. Attendees were asked to participate in a small group exercise with their fellow citizens to identify Strengths, Challenges, a Vision Statement, and Goals for the City. The results of this exercise were reported to the full group of attendees, and are summarized below:

Workshop Group 1

I. Top strengths for the community listed in order of importance to the group.

- Location
- Employment opportunities within close proximity
- Historical / architectural character or design
- Diversity
- Education

II. Top challenges for the community listed in order of importance to the group.

- Drug epidemic / homeless / panhandling / perception of “unsafe”
- Lacking identity or “cool factor”
- Marketing programs available
- Lack of publicly funded re-investment program
- No incentive for first time home buyers
- Lack of lighting at night

III. What should be the city’s Vision Statement?

Revitalize the city to promote economic development and enhance the quality of life through reinvestment in the architectural and historical designs.

List three goals to implement this Vision.

- Diversify leadership roles
- Identity aligned with vision statement
- Attract and retain millennials and upcoming youth

Workshop Group 2

- I. Top strengths for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Proximity to metro DC
 - Historic aspects
- II. Top challenges for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Improving gateway entrances (i.e., strip club, prison)
 - Negative connotations of local residents toward downtown
- III. What should be the city's Vision Statement?

Need central venue for entertainment

List three goals to implement this Vision.

 - Bring young people to downtown

Workshop Group 3

- I. Top strengths for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Transportation – planes, trains, and automobiles
 - Affordability
 - Growing healthcare sector
 - Good parks and recreation
- II. Top challenges for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Attracting businesses to the area
 - Promote local attractions – i.e. Roundhouse, Arts Center
 - Promote awareness of community arts – Apollo Theater
 - Lack of parking
 - Re-do city zoning
- III. What should be the city's Vision Statement?

To celebrate the diverse history of the community to promote a high quality of life and a safe, friendly environment.

List three goals to implement this Vision.

 - See section II & III

Workshop Group 4

- I. Top strengths for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Location
 - Infrastructure – trains, airport, EPTA, I-81
 - History
 - Recreation
 - Sense of community
 - Medical facilities

- II. Top challenges for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Vacant buildings
 - Rundown residential areas
 - Exaggerated perceptions
 - Parking and accessibility
 - Roundhouse

- III. What should be the city's Vision Statement?

To be the engine of innovation and economic development for the region.

List three goals to implement this Vision.

 - Implement the Garner Plan
 - Align city regulations and enforcement with vision for the city with consistency
 - Actively and honestly seek public input

Workshop Group 5

- I. Top strengths for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Location / transportation (MARC train to DC)
 - Rich history and architecture (foster artistic endeavors)
 - Federal agencies and industry
 - School system
 - Comfortable small town feel / sense of community
 - Natural environment (beautiful area)
 - Washington's closest faraway place

- II. Top challenges for the community listed in order of importance to the group.
 - Need for economic development / diversifying our resources
 - Vacant buildings and the cost to redevelop
 - Drug problems of the area / comfort level of ordinary citizens

- Additional clean, hi-tech industries needed
- Need an influx of money to revitalize
- Code enforcement
- Need for community resource center; grant writing
- Lack of development of current resources

III. What should be the city's Vision Statement?

Martinsburg's vision over the next 20 years is to grow in an orderly way to create a more vibrant, healthier city.

List three goals to implement this Vision.

- Obtain funding – grants, new industries, visitors
- Education and up-skilling of the population to meet new challenges of the global workforce
- Promotional material

Additional Ideas for City Beautification:

- Establish street cleaning dates/times. Ticket cars that are not moved during these times.
- Issue tickets to residents and businesses who leave garbage cans out after pickup, or who leave garbage in yards.
- Reward residents for beautiful and/or well kept homes. See "Beautification Award" signs in Huntsville, Alabama.
- Attract more art and beauty to the city. Martinsburg can offer much more affordable art studios and spaces to Baltimore/DC artists, but they must be made to feel welcome.

Workshop Group 6

I. Top strengths for the community listed in order of importance to the group.

- Location – proximity to Washington DC
- Clean downtown, infrastructure / broadband
- Historic buildings / architecture / Roundhouse
- Sense of community / Main Street Martinsburg / downtown activities
- Diversity

II. Top challenges for the community listed in order of importance to the group.

- Absentee landlords, lack of code enforcement, empty storefronts
- Perception of danger
- Poor education system
- Lack of funding for youth programs

- Distance from state capitol

III. What should be the city's Vision Statement?

Martinsburg is a vibrant community with natural beauty which embraces the history of the area. Martinsburg, while dealing with the reality of the present, has an eye on the future while maintaining small town charm and personality.

List three goals to implement this Vision.

- Expanded marketing
- Designate home rule money to expand community amenities
- Provide code enforcement
- Provide entrepreneurial incentives to attract and retain young people in the area