



**The Research and Consulting Center
Government Finance Officers Association**



***City of Stoughton, WI
Appreciative Inquiry Report***

**The Government Finance Officers Association
Research and Consulting Center
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Introduction

As part of its Budgeting for Outcomes initiative, the City of Stoughton hosted a one-day meeting on February 19, 2011 to gather information from civic leaders. The key task the group worked on was the identification of factors related to what is working well in Stoughton today that can serve as the foundation for a sustainable future for the City. The results of this meeting will be used to assist the City's Leadership team to develop a small number of high level priorities that it will recommend to the Mayor and City Council as the basis for the Budgeting for Outcomes process.

The method used to elicit information in this meeting is called *Appreciative Inquiry*. This tool is intended to foster a positive perspective and build relationships and is therefore a good way both to avoid group think and to pave the way for eventual acceptance of the priorities chosen by the City. The key difference between this approach and a more traditional "problem-solving" approach is that appreciative inquiry places most of the focus on building a future on what is working well in the community and how to keep those elements and enhance them. This approach is heavily weighted toward collaboration rather than confrontation.

Appreciative inquiry has been used successfully by businesses, educational institutions, local governments, and other for-profit and not-for profit entities when they are considering major restructuring, changes in direction or other decisions that will have long term implications. Although this is just one way for the City to get citizen input for the priority-setting process, appreciative inquiry works well where participants are accustomed to group process and are well informed regarding the issue or issues at hand.

The appreciative inquiry meeting brought together more than 30 individuals who are active in Stoughton's civic and commercial life. In addition to civic leaders, several City Council members, the Mayor, and city staff participated in the meeting. The results of the appreciative inquiry are discussed in this report, which is intended to provide themes and key factors for the City to consider in identifying citywide priorities. However, the direct results of the appreciative inquiry are provided in an appendix to this report.

In the morning session individuals worked together in small groups to identify positive factors or characteristics of Stoughton, then the small groups met together to organize responses into categories such as the economy, community involvement and the like. In the afternoon the small groups went into more detail by discussing those characteristics about Stoughton identified in the morning that they thought would be key to Stoughton's success in the future. Individuals were then given five "votes" that would indicate groupings of factors each individual felt were most important to the City's future, and were asked to prepare a short sentence that City staff and officials could use in establishing priorities.



Six Themes

Participants placed a very high value on Stoughton as a self-sufficient community in which residents are involved in their community and in their government. During the course of the meeting, several themes emerged, which GFOA has sorted into six categories, or themes. It is important to note that participants' input from the meeting could have been sorted into 4, 5, 6 or even more categories. Further, several categories have contributing factors in common; some factors GFOA has placed in one category might as easily have been placed in one or more other categories by someone else. GFOA has identified these themes as a way to organize meeting feedback so that it can relatively quickly be reviewed by City staff, officials and other readers. However, we also present the raw information resulting from the meeting in an appendix so that readers can look for other themes or categories.

The six themes we have identified include:

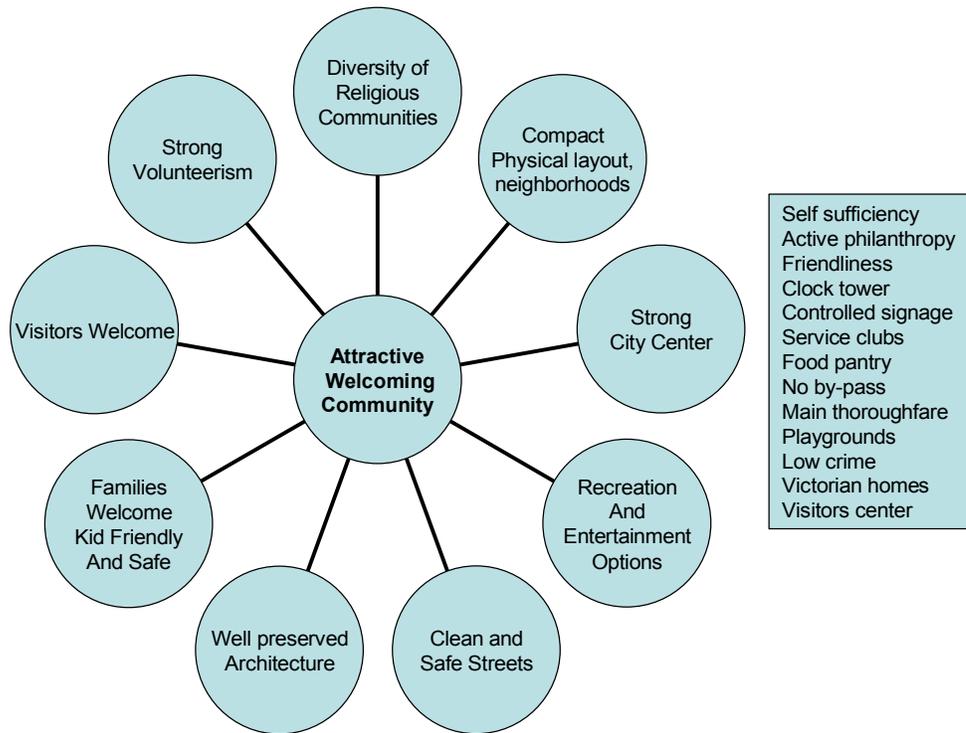
1. *An attractive welcoming community that works together.*
2. *A stable, self-sufficient local economy.*
3. *A safe, healthy and secure city.*
4. *A citizen-focused, well-run government.*
5. *Active arts and cultural heritage and institutions*
6. *A community that values the physical environment and provides recreational opportunities*

The following sections discuss each of the above themes based on discussions at the appreciative inquiry meeting, identifying specific features participants identified at the meeting. Each theme is accompanied by a diagram that shows factors frequently mentioned at the meeting.

1. An Attractive Welcoming Community that Works Together

Participants described many factors that reflected this theme. There were many mentions of Stoughton as being a self-sufficient and balanced community that was just the “right size” – large enough to have business and entertainment choices, small enough that people could know their neighbors and form a cohesive community. Many groups mentioned the active philanthropy throughout the community, from service groups to individual donations to business giving.

Exhibit 1 – An Attractive, Welcoming and Cohesive Community

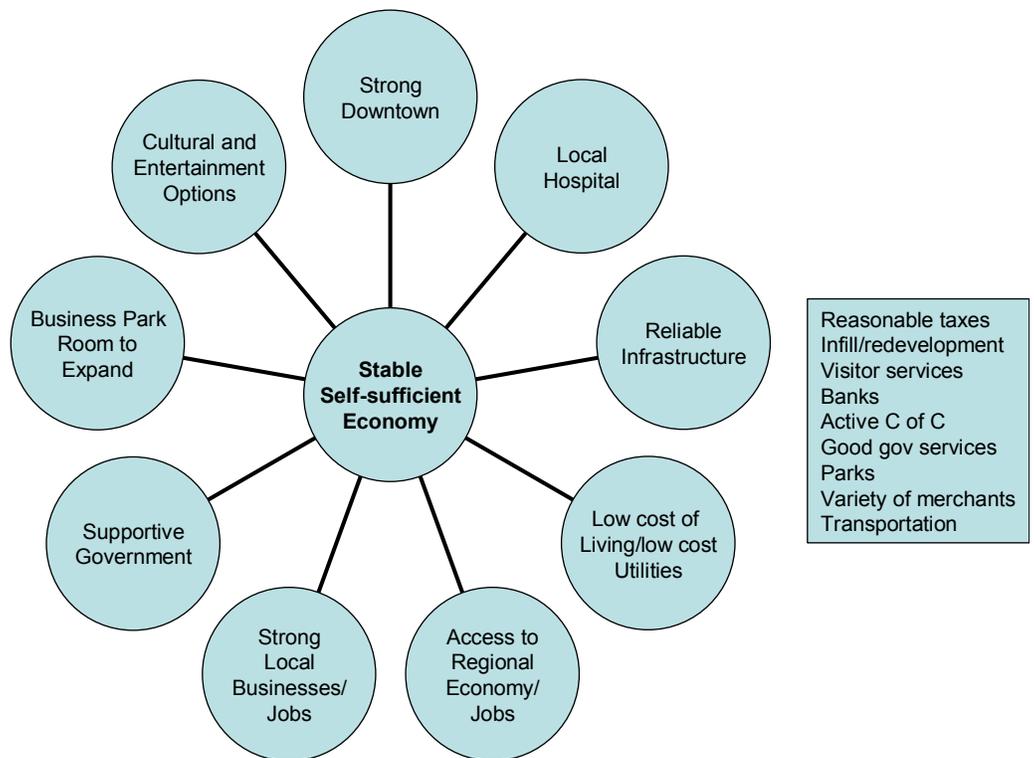




2. A Stable, Self-sufficient Economy

A stable, self-sufficient economy is important to supporting many of the other themes discussed at the meeting. Key components of the stable economy discussed by the small groups included those shown below in the illustration, supported by more details. For example, diverse and competitive education included the presence of MATC, support for K-12 schools as shown in the recent referendum, and the sense of the group that schools did a very good job within a low budget. The group emphasized also the importance of government support for business and business development, with the room to expand seen as an important component of maintaining a self-sufficient economy. The proximity of Stoughton to other major job centers, including Madison, Janesville, and Milwaukee were also cited as important factors in a stable economy for Stoughton. Thriving independent local businesses such as Stoughton Trailer were viewed as a critical factor in maintaining the self-sufficient economy as well.

Exhibit 2 – A Stable, Self-sufficient Economy

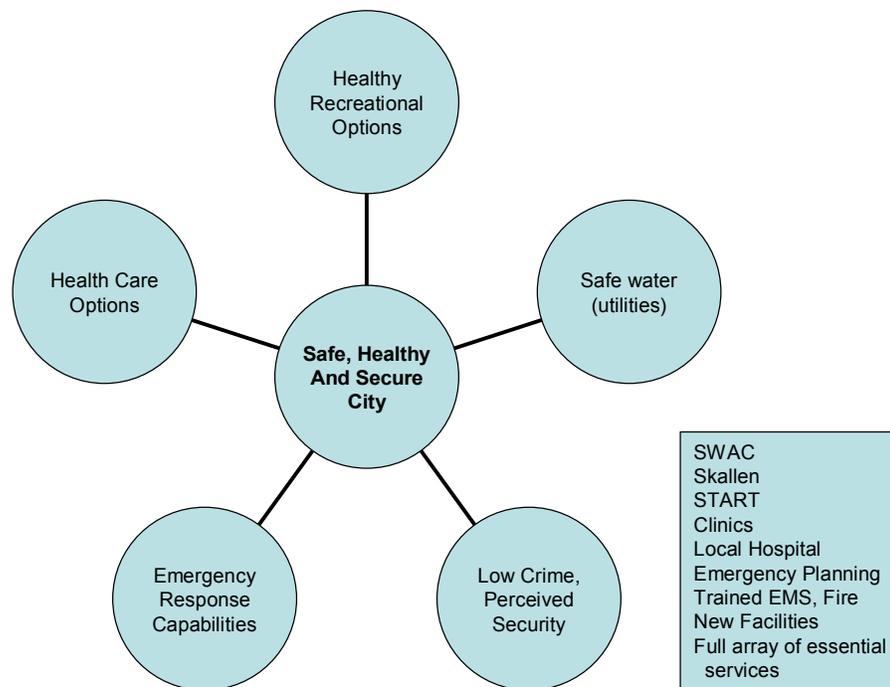




3. A Safe, Healthy and Secure City

While participants did not organize individual factors into this category, it was named in nearly every grouping that was created during the meeting. Groups mentioned the city's excellent history of response to emergencies and natural disasters both by citizen volunteers and government. New fire and ERS facilities were provided as examples of the community's support for and availability of emergency response services. Low crime was mentioned as important to the economy as well as to having an attractive, welcoming community. Support for senior citizens, both activities and facilities, were also cited.

Exhibit 3 – Safe, Healthy and Secure City

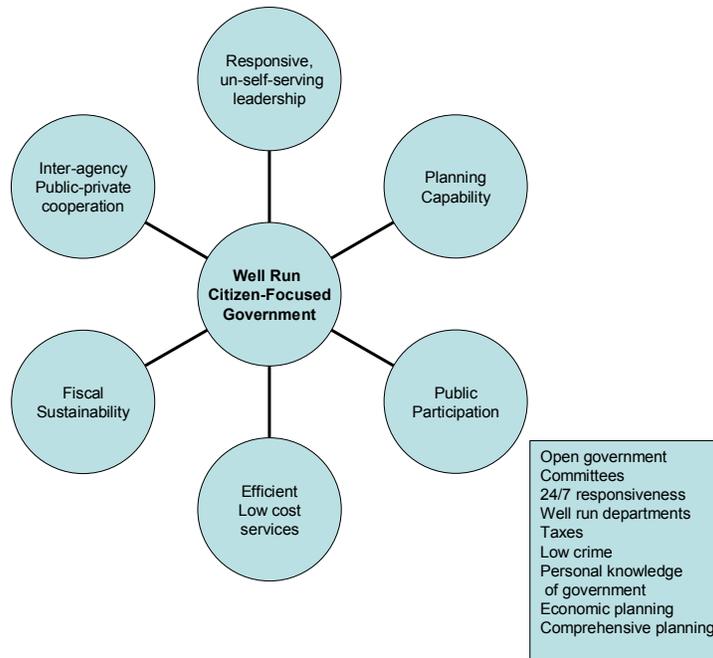




4. A Well Run, Citizen-Focused Government

The importance of the government to a sustainable future was mentioned many times in different contexts at the meeting. GFOA therefore identified this as an important theme. Participants mentioned factors such as the importance of government support for developing and retaining businesses, the fact that government officials are not self-serving, well run city departments, the openness of the government to participation by citizens, and the responsiveness of government leaders as important components of this category.

Exhibit 4 – A Well Run, Citizen-Focused Government

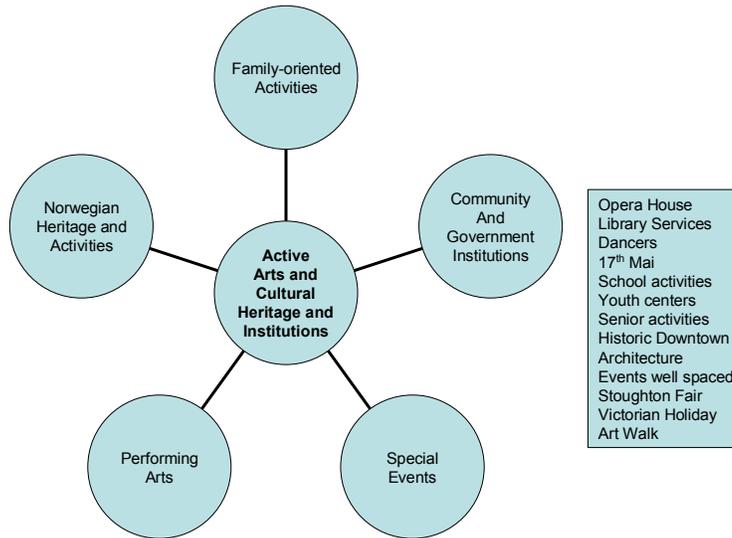




5. Active Arts and Cultural Heritage and Institutions

Participants uniformly identified the arts and culture of Stoughton as a positive factor for the City’s future. The Norwegian heritage, celebrated in a festival, dancing group, and arts and crafts is a unique factor in Stoughton’s history and culture. In addition, the City has a diverse religious heritage and active performing arts scene. Architecture, especially the historic downtown and well-preserved Victorian houses also make Stoughton unique. Arts and cultural institutions, such as the library, senior center, youth center, library services, and the Stoughton Fair all work together to make Stoughton a vibrant center of arts and culture. This category was frequently also cited as supportive of the economy and the high level of community involvement in the City.

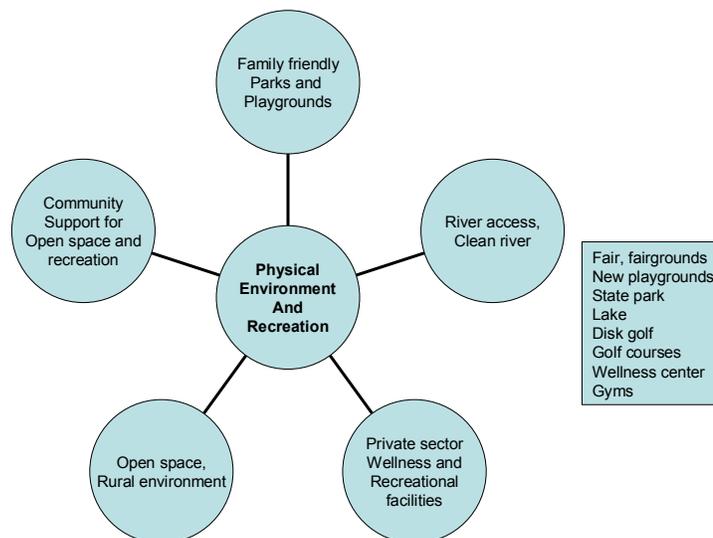
Exhibit 4 – Active Arts and Cultural Heritage and Institutions



6. A Community that Values the Physical Environment and Provides Recreational Opportunities

This category included specific factors such as the existence of private and public recreational and wellness facilities such as the wellness center, private gyms, the disk golf course and golf courses (wellness facilities would also be consistent with the health and safety theme), walking and riding paths, river access and the cleanliness of the river, the rural environment, state park, and nearby lake. This category also supports a sustainable economy. Studies have cited recreational opportunities and open space as one of the top 3 business location factors considered by businesses.

Exhibit 6 – A Community that Values the Physical Environment and Provides Recreational Opportunities



Conclusion

At the end of the meeting several individuals stated that they saw this meeting as a “good first step.” Clearly more information, including objective data on the economy and demographics must be collected to provide government leaders information related to the public’s priorities. However, this information from community leaders and volunteers provided many points of departure for identifying priorities, as well as for Results Teams as they begin their deliberations. The more prescriptive information that participants provided in the final exercise of the day, when they posted sentences on their top 5 selected categories, should be carefully reviewed as results teams conduct cause-and-



effect analysis and establish purchasing strategies. We strongly recommend that decision makers and results-team members review these detailed meeting notes.



Appendix 1 – Appreciative Inquiry Participants

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>	
Baumbach	Ralph	Retired Pastor Active Volunteer/Retired
DeGroot	Bob	Military
Gilbert	Mike	Cummins
Howard	Homer	Vennevold Spokesperson
Hund	Kristi	Stoughton Hospital
Ketterer	Amy	Community Representative
Marsh	Darrin	Dane County Parks
Novak	Tom	Opera House Volunteer
O'Connor	Pat	Retired Police Chief
Padfield	Deb	Benefits Administration
Peters	Audrey	Matson Realtors
Pundt	John	School Board
Roethe	Matt	Attorney
Ruck	Rachael	Phy Ed Teacher
Staats	Allan	Community Representative
Stokes	Scott	Stoughton Trailers
Swadley	Tim	Business Owner
Viets	Randa	Community Representative
Bader-Fleres	Tamarah	Staff
Camacho*	Hollee	Staff
Glynn*	Dan	Staff
Hoops*	Brian	Staff
Jennings*	Kim	Staff
Stacey*	Mike	Staff
Veum	Barb	Staff
Chenoweth	Carl	Council Member
Christianson	Ron	Council Member
Hohol	Eric	Council Member
Jenson	Greg	Council Member
Lawrence	Paul	Council Member
		Council Member/Business
McKichan	Dave	Owner
Olstad	Eric	Council Member
Swangstu	Sonny	Council Member
Tone	Steve	Council Member



Appendix 2 – Appreciative Inquiry Meeting Notes

1. What Works in Stoughton

Thinking about Stoughton’s culture, community, government, and other characteristics about the city, what is working well? Small groups were asked to prepare lists to provide the basis for discussions for the remainder of the day. Lists are shown below by group.

GROUP # 1

- Cultural
 - Norwegian Heritage
 - Opera House
 - Village Players
 - Norski Stompers
 - Historic Downtown
 - Senior Center
 - Youth Center
 - Library
 - Services Clubs
 - School Activities
 - Stoughton Fair
- Parks and Recreation
 - Disc Golf
 - Skateboard Park
 - Bike Trail
 - Dog Walk Paths
 - Mandt Center
 - Lake and River Access
 - Golf Courses
- Economy
 - Strong Employee Basis
 - Cost of Living (tax – cost housing ↓)
 - Hospital
 - Municipal Utilities (low rates)
 - Close to Madison and Interstate
 - Rail Corridor
 - Business Park (expansion?)
 - Space – room to expand
- Government
 - Public Input/Committees
 - Police – Fire – Ems (new fire house and EMS building)
 - Low crime
 - Municipal Utilities – water tower
 - Street – clean, snow removal



- Other
 - High level of volunteerism
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Visitor services
 - Generous individuals willing to donate and volunteer
 - Movie theater
 - Beautiful old Victorian homes
 - Choice of restaurants
 - Wellness center
 - Gym space
 - Food pantry and Holiday Fund
 - City pool and HS pool
 - Many playgrounds
 - Kid friendly and safe

GROUP #2

- Small community feel
 - Friendly
 - Volunteering
- Wide variety of ways to practice faith
- Norwegian heritage
 - Syttende Mai
 - Norwegian dancers
- Main Street – Stoughton’s center
- Physical environment
 - Parks
 - River
- Utility infrastructure
 - Reliable
- Extra curricular
 - Youth center
 - Stoughton wellness
 - Performing arts
 - Mandt center
 - State park/lake kegonsa
 - Theaters/opera house
- Stoughton schools
 - Passing referendum
 - Great staff
 - Academic improvements
 - Wide range services on low budget
- Stoughton hospital
 - Senior care
 - Anchor for business
- Taxi



- Climate of openness
 - City departments approachable
 - Provide sense of respect and ownership (pride)
 - Local rep at the county level
 - Balanced community
- Location
 - Close to Madison and Janesville
 - UW nearby
- Banks/Businesses
 - Donations to district
 - Stoughton Trailers
 - Economic base of citizens is strong and generous (good leaders)
 - City services
- Service clubs
 - Scholarships for students
 - Library
 - A good balance with people and services

GROUP #3

- Good things
 - Syttende Mai
 - Sports
 - Celebrate traditions
- Volunteers
 - Committee participation
 - Generous
- Elderly friendly
 - Senior center
 - Taxi
 - Hospital
 - Clinics
 - Skaalen
 - Support groups
- Comprehensive services
 - Mandt community center
 - Stoughton Jr Fair
 - Opera house (city owned)
 - Hospital (med flight)
 - Utilities
 - SWAC
 - Recreational programs
 - Chamber of Commerce
- Generosity
 - Donations
 - Scholarships



- Opportunities for growth
- Self sustaining community
 - Core businesses
 - “Smart” people and businesses
 - Opportunities for small/startup business
 - Arts community
 - Good mix/diverse educational levels
- Farming history, remains vital
- Open to change
- Citizen forums (input – participation)
- Welcoming Main Street
- Reasonable taxes for services provided
- Community programs
 - START
 - Seniors in Need
 - Quality schools
 - Community support
- Proximity
 - Madison
 - Chain of lakes
 - River
 - State Park
- Beautiful area
 - Main Street
 - City parks
 - Bike paths
 - Historic buildings
 - Clocktower
 - Well preserved historical buildings
- Community
 - Safe
 - Peaceful
 - Feeling of security
- Strong economy
- Personal knowledge of government and community leaders
 - Responsiveness
 - “good bang for your buck”
 - Willing to respond to needs
- Competent community
 - All have unique gifts

GROUP #4

- Architect uniform
- Controlled signage downtown
- Seasonal/holiday décor



- Volunteer fire dept/EMTs
- Police services
- Food pantry
- Hospital
- Schools
 - Great sports
 - Music
- Library
- Opera house
- Parks/recreation
 - Regional
 - Local
- Utilities
 - Few interruptions
- Snow plowing
- Safety
 - No fears
- Norwegian culture
 - Syttende Mai
 - Norwegian dancers
 - Good artistic base
- Bike trails
- Youth Center
- Senior services/Senior center
- Resources for need
- Great place to raise children
- Streets
- Government
 - Progressive leadership
 - Leadership Stoughton
 - Chamber of commerce
 - Visitor services
 - Represent out best interest
 - Leaders are not self serving
 - Attempt to preserve values
 - Strong community pride
 - Industrial parks
- Good parking
- Adequate/variety of merchants
- Small city atmosphere
- Close to things not provided
- Good geography/reasonable weather
- Friendly citizens
- Generous community
- Opportunities for new business
- Variety of grills, beverage opportunities



- Sense of community around river/lake
- Green space around river
- Rural environment
- Fair/fairgrounds
- Clean/beautiful
- Stable economic area
- Employment opportunities
- Celebration
 - Coffee break
 - Victorian holiday
 - Art walk
 - Etc

GROUP #5

- City takes food advantage of the natural features we do have
 - River
 - Trails
 - Park space
- Community festivals
 - Family oriented
 - Diverse
 - Events well spaced on calendar
- Historical element
 - Downtown
 - Residential
 - Heritage
- Well maintained
 - Attractive
 - Main thoroughfare
 - No bypass
 - Pride in business
 - Family/small business
- Neighborly
 - Not to spread out
 - Physical layout
 - Hood groupings
- Location
 - Proximity to Madison
 - Chicago
 - Milwaukee
 - We're our town by they are at our fingertips
- Self sustainable
- Our own hospital
- Full, inhouse essential services – PD, Fire, EMS
- Government facilities are known and accessible, officials are accessible 24/7



- Opera house
 - Strong historical value
 - Cost – not sure that is substantial enough to be an advantage
- Benefits are nicely distributed
 - Parks
 - Schools
 - Family feel
- Library programs and clubs
- Job opportunities in and around Stoughton

GROUP #6

- An all ages friendly community
- Self sustaining
 - Safe (emergency services)
 - Schools/hospital/government
 - Wide range of services and opportunities
- Location
 - Near Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago
 - And far enough away
 - Proximity to larger hubs helps with sustainability
 - Provides good mix of people (urban and rural)
 - Culturally diverse
 - Attractive city
- Pride
 - Welcoming to newcomers
 - City's design
 - Historic downtown and buildings (opera house)
 - Festivals and cultural draws
- Neighborly
 - Caring and responsive
 - Supportive services
 - Agency coordination
 - Working together cooperatively

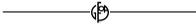
2. Grouping the Factors

Based on the earlier small group work, the large group was asked to organize factors into categories. The following groupings show the results of this discussion:



Geography - Location

- Proximity to other cities
- Physical characteristics – river, lakes
- Size – balanced – complete package of service, facilities, interests and culture with smallest population that could be done in. Other towns don't have the mass. 12,000-ish, we've got it all.
- Bike trails
- State park

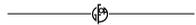


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Culture-Heritage

- Festivals
 - Coffee Break Festival
 - Victorian Holiday
 - 17th of May
- Cultural Arts and crafts
 - Schools, youth, all age groups
- Theaters
- Businesses based on Norwegian Culture
- Stoughton Fair
- Strong religious community – diverse
- Community ethics and values
- Norwegian Dancers
- Family friendly culture

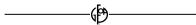


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Community Services

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Fire • EMTs • Police • Community service organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Food Pantry • Library • Hospital • Service Clubs • Senior Center • Youth Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funeral Home • City Parks • Utilities – affordable and reliable • Snow Plowing • Health Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clinics – Assisted living apartments – Skaalen retirement services – high ratio of elderly to gen population (support for elderly, it's a draw for the community) • Chamber of Commerce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Visitors' Service • Dane County Services |
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Economy

- Stoughton trailers
- Strong economic base
 - Local jobs
 - Industry
 - Low cost utilities
- Opportunities for small businesses
- Two industrial parks at least
- Educated population
- Responsive city government
 - Regulatory agencies business friendly
- Proximity to UW Madison
- Facilities and businesses to draw other communities to Stoughton
- Low taxes
- Financial institutions – credit, investment advisors
- Competitive/variety of merchants
- Blend of local and national chains
- Proximity to interstate system and rail corridor
 - Madison airport 5 min away
- Great main street
 - Architecture from City Hall to River is uniform (Yahara)
 - Sign regulations (uniformity)
 - City responds with proper décor for seasons
- Diverse opportunities for future growth
- Household income above average adds discretionary spending to support economy



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Community Involvement

- High level of volunteerism
- Generous population, lot of donations
- Philanthropy-to people in need and to resource the community (gifting schools and other needs)
- Schools give most \$\$ for scholarship yearly
- Participation in strategic planning for schools and in this process for the City
- Plethora of City and community committees
- Leadership Stoughton
- Service groups
- The people
- Great reaction to community disasters
 - Tomado 6 years ago
 - Families who need support from disasters, fires
 - Coordinated emergency response
- Community members organize for school referendums



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Neighborliness

- Relatively low crime
- Snow shoveling help with neighbors
- Friendly community all around
- Generational community, families stay, children and their children
- People knowing each other all their life adds to security of neighbors
 - Church
 - Shopping
 - Interaction
- General layout of the city feeds into feeling of neighborliness
 - Sidewalks in good shape
 - Open back yards
 - Parks
- Community gathering places
 - Theater
 - Opera House
 - Fairgrounds
- Philanthropic giving



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Government

- Progressive leadership
- Open
- Represent community's best interests (our)
- Willingness to include general public
- Accessible
- Attempt to preserve values
- Conscientious about spending taxpayers' money
- Relationship of city and townships
- Helpful approach rather than worrying whether we do "that kind of thing" just helping
- Leaders are not self-serving
- Variety of services provided
- Good city employees, been with city a long time
- Public safety, police, fire EMT
- Public works – snow plowing, road repair
- Get a good bang for your buck
- Good relationship between city and school district

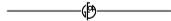


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Self-sustaining community

- Award-winning hospital and several medical clinics
- Can live here without going somewhere else for what you need
 - Grocery stores, hardware, lumber
- Taverns - 21 liquor licenses
- Taxi service
- Education (secondary extension classes, school system, MATC)
- City owned utility service

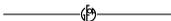


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Planning

- City has comprehensive plan
- Economic dev plan
- School strategic planning
- Senior center strategic plan
- City well laid out with segregation of industry and residential
- City has a parks and open space plan
 - Bike trail to connect to Madison, lots of bikers
- Updated ordinances in planning department
- RDA is active
- Comprehensive emergency management plan that's community based, not just City gov

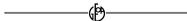


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Schools

- Quality schools
 - HS has AP
 - HS has music
- Variety of public and private
- Home schooled population large
- Award-winning programs
- Good facilities
 - Track
 - Pool
- Cost effective management
- Good teachers



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3. Identifying Factors that provide a sustainable foundation for the future of Stoughton.

Small groups met again to discuss and decide on factors from the previous discussion that they believe will provide a foundation for Stoughton’s future – those factors that, if supported, can sustain Stoughton’s survival and success. The results, by group, are shown below.

Small Group Results

Culture/Heritage



- Stoughton will remain unique.
- People would continue to be drawn to Syttende Mai.
- It's a great thing that Syttende Mai is not funded by the city (with the exception of services used that weekend) Net worth city resources.

Self-sustaining Community

- Communities that are not, die.
- People are used to having everything at their fingertips. Being self sustaining will help to draw those people here.
- We have to make it worthwhile for business to come here.
- Taxi service ought to be privatized.

Planning

- Very important to have an economic plan to prevent city bankruptcy.
- Without a plan, we get nowhere.

Recreational Opportunities

- Kids and adults benefit at a reasonable price.
- If the city doesn't cover organized Rec. through the Rec. Dept., it would/could be privately picked up or volunteers could take over.
- Park maintenance & development would be/could be assumed by volunteer group's service groups, which would increase neighborliness and town pride.

Small Group Results

Economy

- Diverse opportunities (business/residential mix)
- Responsive City Government, assist in development growth
- Maintain low cost utilities /low taxes.
- Develop infrastructure to support businesses.
- Redevelopment/infill (RDA)

Planning

- Using comprehensive plan – promote environment for existing business to flourish.
- improve access to community.
- Review and update ordinances.
- Economic development plan, identify the right businesses
- support/incent small business growth.

Community Involvement

- Maintain community reaction to needs of others.
- Encourage volunteerism through awareness.
- Developing community leaders.
- Inviting citizen participation.

Small Group Results



Priority for the future:

#1 priority = sustained growth, families & businesses

Attract Businesses

- Low cost, reliable utility
- Reasonable taxes
- Places to build/business park space
- Competent workforce
- Accessibility via transportation, partner with State DOT

Attract Families

- Public safety
- Strong/competitive schools
- City services
- Employment opportunities

Specific Actions

- Through Chamber, advertise low cost Utility position
- Public safety is a priority
- Interface with private entrepreneurs to identify actions needed to make Stoughton attractive to businesses.
- Strong schools are a priority.
- Strengthen the school's athletic programs.
- Strengthen interaction between school board & City Council (Fund 80 & TIF 4)

Small Group Results

Location/Geography

-Use it to emphasize why people and businesses would want to locate here. Capitalize on this as an asset (proximity to larger cities, U.W., close to interstate etc.) Need to consider this in planning.

Cultural Heritage

- Attracts people to spend money in community.
- Can be a reason people come here or stay here.
- City should provide facility support personnel support.
- Seek support of foundations.
- Seek feedback.

City Infrastructure

- Core! Basic function of government, streets, lights, sewer, water, waste removal.
- Pedestrian safety.

Government

- Be attentive to diversity.
- Planning is key.
- Communication.
- Expand volunteer opportunities.

Community Services

- Maintain senior services to keep people here and to attract senior to move here.
- Cost/benefit analysis should be.



Economy

- Promote economic growth.
- Business friendly is important.

Community Involvement

- Promote leadership growth and sense of ownership.

Small Group Results

Geography Location

- Promote physical characteristics. This will help promote local businesses, attract potential businesses.

- Be able to commute and bring dollars back. Also able to get to education.

Culture Heritage

- Maintain current agenda and look to both enhance and promote additional ideas. This will help local businesses and give people a reason to visit community.

Community Services

- Maintain services by coordinating cooperative agreements.
- Cannot live or work without good supportive services.
- Identify services from the bottom-up.

Economy

- Closely monitor federal & state by-pass plans.
- must be able to both keep and attract businesses. Vital from tax & keeping/gaining population. Incentives and “space” important.

Community Involvement

- Have people stay involved to help and continue to offset budgetary constraints.
- Pride & volunteerism for a sense of ownership.
- Coordinate projects for service club participation.

Government

- Leadership role and identifying the needs.

Small Group Results

Economy

- Public & Private Investments
 - Continued majority of private support & investment in community.
- Climate for new business growth
 - Sustainable, diversified businesses.
 - Promoting the City.

Continued Community Commitment to Schools & Government

- Responsible citizenship
- Educated work force - attracts more businesses/residents

See flow chart- Need to get from Laurie



4. Individual “Votes” and Comments by Category

In the final exercise of the day, participants were given five “votes” in an effort to get some idea of the group’s priorities related to the categories shown above. Each participant was asked, as they indicated their 5 preferences, to also write a sentence to provide guidance to the City as it proceeds with the Budgeting for Outcomes Process. Results, by category, are shown below. The number in parenthesis for each category represents the number of participants who showed that category as one of their 5 priorities. Categories are shown in order of total scores.

ECONOMY = 25

1. Support and help existing business expand.
2. Keep main street diversified and a center for business
3. Provide locations for business to build
4. Advertise and build on strong efficient Utility services
5. Provide locations for business to grow and expand within the community
6. Must be able to both keep and attract businesses.
7. Identify and attract business that support community involvement
8. Brings in new business and allow for existing to expand.
9. Prepare infrastructure and incentives for new businesses.
10. Work to make Stoughton an attractive place for businesses that have living wage jobs.
11. Tax base. Minimize taxes to attract businesses and families
12. Provide a friendly growth environment to grow job opportunities and tax base.
13. The economy must thrive and continue to grow. Planning is needed.
14. Allow creative people to implement their dream business
15. Businesses must be encouraged to come and nurtured to expand and continue to flourish
16. Keep main street business area unique and inviting for business and customers. Keep taxes low.
17. Provide a well educated workforce and market the strengths of the community.
18. We need to be friendly and inviting towards new business in order to grow our tax base and continue to be self sustaining.
19. Emphasize our location to new and emerging technologies and businesses. (UW Madison, etc)
20. Continued majority of private support and investment in community.
21. A climate in which government, business, and personal investment in community grow and provide tax dollars to fund the government.
22. Create City policies that help currant business to succeed and attract new ones.
23. Attracting professional / technical jobs to the City
24. Gather information to accurately establish the current economic health of the community. Identify measures to sustain existing levels and grow the economy of the community.
25. The community needs to be business friendly and bring in new jobs.
26. Entertain UW projects.

GOVERNMENT = 20

1. Movers and shakers of activities and commerce
2. Government must be business friendly
3. Government should assure that needed services are provided by itself or others



4. Promote diversity within the government
5. Needs to identify all services from major down to the smallest in order to create opportunity for community involvement.
6. Must be accessible and open to community input. This will help create trust between City and Citizens.
7. Identify the difference between government and community services. Develop support mechanism to maintain these services.
8. Provide a business and consumer friendly environment that encourages partnerships
9. Build stronger interface between school board and city council
10. City government should be involved with schools in the overall planning process.
11. Stress public safety and add a school liaison officer.
12. It will be important going forward that the city listen to what the people of the community want, what direction they would like to see the city headed in.
13. Expand city government dialogue shared resources with schools and neighboring townships
14. Promote volunteer jobs and positions to support city services.
15. Receive more support when working with community to change/improve the City
16. Provides the support, dollars and legislation that keep the balance in other areas.
17. Reduce our council from 12 members to 8.
18. Coordination between city and schools must expand
19. Leaders of government must be educated and involved of community needs. Research and knowledge is key to making good decisions. Community members and organizations opinions should be sought out.
20. Government is an important factor, makes the decisions that decide the future. Leaders must be open and responsive to the community's needs and wishes, not self serving.

PLANNING = 20

1. Grow future leaders
2. Create the future we want
3. Be willing to spend money to make money
4. Remain relevant within Dane County, Madison area
5. Lessen restrictions on new growth
6. Planning for smart growth
7. There should be an individual or group looking at grant opportunities for the City.
8. Make sure that monies are spent wisely. No overlapping of services.
9. Don't hunt down projects, but react to times and recommendations. Same small group discussions.
10. Mix City/Private operator gyms etc. include certain ?????, i.e. bikes
11. Evaluate current regulations; make all efforts to establish clear paths for business and residential growth.
12. Planning for the future is key for the City, Schools, business. Using the comprehensive plan and economic development plan.
13. Make use of the City's comprehensive plan by updating it based on the current economic situation.
14. Most trusted group to maintain core values and move forward.
15. Less City restrictions on building contractors
16. Emphasizing planning ensures that the City infrastructure is solid, reliable an efficient.
17. Planning for the future allows us to help mold and design that future, its outcome. We need to be prepared for what is coming next if we expect to thrive.



18. Issue a city wide survey about the issues discussed today. Why/how was this group chosen, the invite group – how did it develop. Why was this not in the paper.
19. Increase/enhance opportunities for community input as we plan a future for all
20. We need to promote Stoughton as an area, the business and industries should come too. It needs to be attractive to them and beneficial.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT = 16

1. Greater volunteerism and giving should be encouraged to create pride in our community. Encourage more businesses and citizens to participate.
2. Take advantage of the communities' willingness to donate and volunteer.
3. Continue to nurture community by communication.
4. Coordinate annually projects for service groups.
5. Keep people involved to offset budgetary constraints.
6. Use the time, talents and resources of citizens to support government.
7. It takes a village to raise a child. By in is crucial.
8. Identify all resource sources available. Create a mechanism to best use all resources without overlap. Identify need and look for help to fill all needs.
9. The city should utilize volunteers in ways it could save us money. Some activities done by staff could be done by volunteers.
10. Foster community services by having each service group member start a project or recruit 2 more people into community involvement.
11. Use volunteer projects because they offer a good value.
12. Slogan – We R Stoughton – creates a sense of ownership and pride.
13. Continue to utilize citizen leadership and generosity to support or future prosperity.
14. Important to Stoughton's success in future. Citizens, groups and business have much to offer and dollars can be saved if these resources are pooled effectively. Strong leadership and organization is needed to be effective.
15. Support and strength volunteerism and community involvement to fill the need and bridge the gaps.
16. Expand the role of community involvement to education, and government to meet the needs.

CULTURE/HERITAGE = 12

1. Fight to maintain this, it sets us apart
2. Maintain City's traditions and heritage, this helps to create a city's identity and will attract others to visit.
3. Tradition, history, roots, community of ages
4. Support and provide syttendai mai and all related cultural programs and activities
5. Put Stoughton on the map, it gives people a reason to come here.
6. Create liaisons to coordinate successful interactions among groups with common goals.
7. Remember our culture, but seek out and welcome other cultures.
8. Work harder to welcome diversity. This group would have been a good start.
9. Promote the festival to bring outside money to the community.
10. Maintain a connection of our community cultural heritage
11. Maintain current agenda and look to both enhance and promote additional ideas.
12. Provide resources for a stronger quality of life and support persons wanting to live here.
13. Capitalize on our proud past and incorporate the heritage into our future sustained growth.



SCHOOLS = 12

1. Invest in strong schools.
2. Revitalize the math program. No more IMP.
3. Trains the population to become responsible citizens, which in turn builds the economy and community involvement.
4. Maintain athletic program. Boost perception of quality.
5. Have quality schools to attract families to move her.
6. Education people = stronger economy + future growth.
7. Need for more cooperation from city and school system.
8. Quality education is necessary to ensure a good work force base and future leaders
9. Continue support of quality academic and cultural programs with quality teachers.
10. Invest in and support a strong school district.
11. Schools as partners – learning facilitators, information fountain – coordinators of services.
12. Schools emphasize 21st learning by using additional language, science, computer, technology and apprenticeship classes.

COMMUNITY SERVICES = 11

1. Prioritize public safety
2. Support community services ability to sustain culture and heritage
3. Unique opportunities of service, volunteers that draw people in and attract those elsewhere
4. Do cost benefit on each service regularly. Get rid of sacred cows. Focus on services most logically provided by City.
5. Create partnerships and joint financing for community based projects.
6. We rely heavily on good supported vital services – Police, Fire, EMS, Access to health care facilities, safe roads and safe drinking water.
7. Take a serious look at those services that could be privatized and make decisions knowing we have a multitude of community service groups looking constantly for work – volunteer work.
8. Future business to revitalize the City.
9. The public and private sectors cooperate and coordinate the functions necessary to sustain the community.
10. Expand the taxi services to include night time rides.
11. Continue to provide and improve current City services and facilities

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES=6

1. Develop and expand our river and park trail facilities.
2. Develop the river corridor and encourage people to have fun and participate in activities
3. Needed for business growth and quality of life
4. Diverse recreational opportunities will retain and bring new citizens to our community.
5. Improves quality of life and healthy life styles.
6. Promote active healthy lifestyles/parks and recreation paths and natural resource areas.

SELF SUSTAINING COMMUNITY=4

1. Need for more growth



2. Promote a diverse business community to attract families to make Stoughton their home.
3. Do not grow into an extension of Madison
4. By providing citizens with access to goods and services we are keeping the money in the community. Respect the current balance of business that Stoughton has when considering zoning and development so as not to make extinct the long standing members of our business community.

City INFRASTRUCURE = 4

1. An emphasis on City infrastructure will attract more businesses and residents to the City.
2. Maintain existing infrastructure at a high level. Plan for new infrastructure for new growth. This is an overall reflection of the City's health and will attract businesses and families.
3. Must be maintained to be a great place to live and to be able to recruit new businesses.
4. Infrastructure must be coordinated and expanded.

OTHER FACTORS = 3

1. The quality of life that Stoughton provides must be promoted.
2. A safe peaceful community will be maintained through strong governmental services.
3. Explore transportation links, ie. Bus

NEIGHBORLINESS=1

1. Mission statement for citizenship: involvement, volunteer, donation, support, duty.