

**Village of Linden
Town of Eden
Town of Linden
Town of Mifflin**

Community Vision Plan

Iowa County

**A Summary of Public Input
November 2002**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Prepared by:

**Paul Ohlrogge
Community Resource Agent
UW-Extension Iowa County**

On Wednesday November 6 the Towns of Eden, Linden and Mifflin as well as the Village of Linden participated in a community-visioning program called: ***“Community Vision: Looking to the Future.”*** This visioning exercise took place at the Village Hall in Linden. Paul Ohlrogge of the UW-Extension Office, Amy Knox of Regional Planning and Mary Jenkins of Regional Planning facilitated this program.

Communities today face any number of pressing concerns, including requests for rezoning, demands for affordable housing or the loss of a major employer. Unfortunately, decisions about these issues are frequently made in the absence of a real vision of how the residents want their communities to look in the future.

Planning for a community’s future can be a difficult, time consuming and costly job. Residents are often more concerned about daily tasks rather than think about a vision. Residents want good schools, decent jobs, safe and clean environments and safe neighborhoods in which to live. Without a vision, however, communities limit their ability to make decisions about these issues – somewhat like driving across the country without a roadmap.

Who should determine a community’s future, other than its residents? Should it be a consultant hired to develop a plan, a state or federal agency making decisions on highways or wetlands preservation, or a private developer constructing a shopping mall or a residential subdivision? All these could have a large impact on a community’s future without input from a broad range of residents. Residents need to participate in and actively envision the future of their communities – or other groups and individuals will determine it for them.

The community-visioning program lasted approximately three hours with good healthy discussions on what folks of these four municipalities envisioned their future to be. The program was broken down into three sections. The first section concentrated on: “Our Current Condition”. The second portion focused on: “Challenges and Opportunities.” The third portion focused on: “The Future.”

What follows is a summary of information gathered during the visioning session on a series of questions posed to the group of citizens in attendance. This information, along with other information gathered from a recent written county wide survey, will be used to assist the Regional Planning Commission in drafting a comprehensive plan for the participating jurisdictions. This visioning session will help guide the future of the participating town and village Plan Commissions in their efforts to work towards comprehensive planning.

Section 1: Our Current Condition

The following four questions were asked to the group regarding our current condition:

1. What do you like about living in this area of Iowa County?
2. What are some of the community values?
3. What do you want to preserve?
4. What is unique about your community that is not found anywhere else?

What do you like about living in this area of Iowa County?

- ◆ Feel secure
- ◆ Good services
- ◆ I like the privacy
- ◆ Rural setting
- ◆ Natural beauty
- ◆ Family and friends live here
- ◆ An interesting history
- ◆ Wildlife
- ◆ Relative ease to a metro area
- ◆ Wonderful people
- ◆ Clean environment
- ◆ No traffic jams
- ◆ I know the people
- ◆ A lot of agricultural land
- ◆ Access to public officials is here
- ◆ Good place to raise a family
- ◆ Lack of crime
- ◆ Pace of life
- ◆ Good schools

What are some of the community values?

- ◆ Neighborliness
- ◆ Not a spectator sport
- ◆ Independence
- ◆ Strong volunteer groups
- ◆ Shared responsibilities in raising children – the community cares
- ◆ Honest people
- ◆ Good work ethic
- ◆ Communities pull together when someone is in need

What do you want to preserve?

- ◆ Keep the woodland and forested areas
- ◆ Cold water streams
- ◆ Corn fields and agriculture
- ◆ I'd like to see the countryside preserved
- ◆ Keep rural look to things
- ◆ Preserve old mining sites
- ◆ Hunting lands
- ◆ Keep farms profitable
- ◆ Preserve old barns
- ◆ Preserve older church buildings
- ◆ Preserve old school houses
- ◆ Preserve open space

What is unique about your community that is not found anywhere else?

- ◆ Unglaciaded area/geology
- ◆ Sunrises and sunsets are visible
- ◆ Rolling hills
- ◆ Historic structures
- ◆ Cornish heritage
- ◆ Cleaner parks
- ◆ Good weed control
- ◆ Magnificent prairies - untouched
- ◆ Cold water streams
- ◆ God's country
- ◆ Parking not a problem
- ◆ Clean air
- ◆ Spaces and open spaces abundant
- ◆ Animal and wildlife sounds are heard
- ◆ Very little noise

Section 2. Challenges and Opportunities:

The second portion of the Visioning Program focused on the Challenges and Opportunities facing the Towns of Eden, Mifflin and Linden as well as the Village of Linden. The following questions were used to facilitate discussion on the upcoming challenges:

1. If development is inevitable where should it happen?
2. Where should it not happen?
3. What are some opportunities for your municipality to help create this desired future?

<u><i>If development is inevitable where should it happen?</i></u>	<u><i>Where should it (development) not happen?</i></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Within cities or villages or close to the village and city limits ◆ Should be decided by local control of the villages, cities and towns ◆ New residential area should be a cluster development ◆ New housing in the incorporated areas (cities and villages) ◆ Packing plants should be encouraged ◆ Ethanol plants to be looked at ◆ Agricultural related businesses should be researched ◆ Housing should happen on a 40 acre minimum ◆ Development should happen where environmental impacts are traceable (i.e. groundwater impacts, wetlands, etc.) ◆ Development should happen where infrastructure exists ◆ Where private sector takes care of the cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development should not happen on prime agricultural lands ◆ Development should not happen where it impacts groundwater quality and streams ◆ Development should not happen where it could destroy wetlands and woodlands ◆ Should not happen on ridge tops ◆ Not on steep slopes with highly erodible soils ◆ Not in scenic areas ◆ Not where it impacts habitat for wildlife ◆ No industrial development next to residential development

What are some opportunities for your municipality to help create this desired future?

- ◆ Control your own destiny
- ◆ Preserve the beauty of the area
- ◆ Build a better understanding among all residents (new and old) on what folks want for the future
- ◆ Plan for the future

What are some strengths of your municipality?

- ◆ Area has not been ruined yet by runaway development
- ◆ We have people with strong opinions
- ◆ We have a good work ethic
- ◆ Good participation in the planning process

Section 3. The Future

The final segment of the visioning process was to look ahead at a preferred vision of the future. Visioning is *a process* by which a community envisions the future it wants, and plans how to achieve it. Through public involvement, communities identify their purpose, core values and vision of the future. The following questions were asked to encourage discussion on the community's vision for the future.

1. What words do you want your grandchildren to use to describe your community?
2. What do you want to create?
3. What do you want your community to look like in 2022?

What words do you want your grandchildren to use to describe your community?

- ◆ A home
- ◆ Beautiful
- ◆ Quiet
- ◆ Idyllic
- ◆ See the stars
- ◆ Healthy
- ◆ Prosperous
- ◆ Safe
- ◆ Friendly
- ◆ Trust
- ◆ A place to explore
- ◆ A place to relax
- ◆ A place of community closeness
- ◆ Job opportunities exist here
- ◆ Pride of ownership
- ◆ A place they would like to live in
- ◆ A place that builds on its history
- ◆ Affordable
- ◆ Continued area that has farms and family farms

What do you want to create?

- ◆ Opportunities for businesses
- ◆ Golf courses
- ◆ More outdoor recreational opportunities (i.e. bird watching, boating and biking)
- ◆ Job opportunities throughout Iowa County
- ◆ Agricultural job opportunities
- ◆ Atmosphere that will not discriminate against agricultural areas
- ◆ Grand fathering of some existing land uses
- ◆ Atmosphere of reality based optimism – ability to work together
- ◆ Awareness of our connections with nature and each other
- ◆ Reasons for our children to stay and make their future homes here
- ◆ Different densities of housing

What do you want your community to look like in 2022?

- ◆ Like it is now but perhaps more prosperous
- ◆ Agricultural existence is important
- ◆ I want to see that an effort was made in planning
- ◆ To see that the work done in planning in 2002 was worth it
- ◆ Preserve the same values that we listed earlier
- ◆ New housing is clustered
- ◆ Housing is blended into the country side
- ◆ Diversified infrastructure
- ◆ Diversified economy to withstand the changes that we are feeling now
- ◆ Maintain buildings and land
- ◆ Diversified agricultural opportunities – i.e. bee farms, specialty crops, etc.
- ◆ Small scale sustainable agriculture
- ◆ Untapped tourism opportunities to be explored