



**Eastside Sustainable Developments Group Plan:
A Vision for the Future**

11-29-2008

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Vision Statement

Within the framework of the RW Comprehensive Plan and the related Natural Step Statement of Sustainability Principles, we desire to create a neighborhood of mutual respect and support, active citizen participation, timely and judicious resolution of problems, enhancement of the beauty of the natural resources of our area and of our homes and property, provide contexts for the enjoyment of a wide range of social/cultural activities, and enhance the livability of the neighborhood in every way our collective creativity may inspire.

Sustainability Principles

An understanding of sustainability is as fundamental as physics and as basic as our democratic values such as the worth and dignity of the individual. This is of great economic, social, environmental and political significance. It requires thinking globally and acting locally.

While we continue to use the definitions and framework described in *The Natural Step for Communities* book and the Red Wing Comprehensive Plan, we have abbreviated them here for our purposes.

In a sustainable society, we apply some common sense notions in a systematic way:

1. Avoid creating toxic environments by the use of natural material extracted from the earth.
2. Avoid creating toxic environments with synthetic materials.
3. Preserve the natural surroundings that give us life.
4. Meet human needs worldwide starting with our own communities and neighborhoods.

Objectives From the Natural Step Program:

1. Eliminate our community's contribution to fossil fuel dependence and to wasteful use of scarce metals and minerals.
2. Eliminate our community's contribution to dependence upon persistent chemicals and wasteful use of synthetic substances.
3. Eliminate our community's contribution to encroachment upon nature (e.g. land, water, wildlife, forests, soil, ecosystems).
4. Meet human needs fairly and efficiently.

Recommended Resources:

North American Eco-Municipality Network
<http://www.1kfriends.org/Eco-Municipalities.htm>

The Natural Step
<http://naturalstep.org/>

Minnesota Sustainable Communities Network
<http://www.nextstep.state.mn.us/index.cfm>

Effective Participation in Eastside

Why Citizen Participation is Important

The citizens of a neighborhood know their neighborhood and have a lot invested in improving the livability of the neighborhood. Active citizens form the link between the people and the municipal government. The social network of a neighborhood can enrich life and thereby contribute to good health. Mutually supportive relationships create the environment for creative accomplishments.

Eastside Sustainable Developments Group

The Eastside Sustainable Developments Group started as continuation of a Natural Step Sustainability Study Group. This group was started on the request of Councilman Gary Peterson after a member of another Natural Step group testified before the Red Wing Planning Commission in support of the idea of Red Wing becoming an Eco-Municipality. Councilman Gerald Cook joined the group along with other residents of the Eastside. As the group discussed the topics of the Natural Step book and Study Guide we all became aware of fact that there is no better place than the Eastside to put sustainability principles into action on a personal and community level.

Membership is open to anyone who cares about the Eastside. Call Jerry Cook or Barry Moen for information. The monthly meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month, 5:30 pm @ the Colvill Family Center, 269 E 5th St, Red Wing, MN.

The core group is creating a newsletter and website to create communication tools for all residents of the Eastside. One survey has been completed and others are being discussed.

Various task groups will be formed to work on specific topics such as the

trail system and community gardens. Additional Natural Step Sustainability groups will be offered for residents.

Eventually we would like block leaders who could help facilitate the communication between residents and the city council in accord with the RW Comprehensive Plan.

Public Space

Introduction

The Eastside has long been recognized for its natural beauty. It is nestled within two landmark bluffs and connects three major parks. It is the area of Chief Red Wing's village. The Dakota community gardens were once where the City Hall and other businesses to the west stand now. Later, the neighborhood was a place of "heart and hard work" and supplied the manpower for many early industries of Red Wing, such as, the quarries. Many people have good memories of times when it was a community of mutually supportive relationships.

The Function of Outdoor Space

- Aesthetic, Health, Social, Recreational
- Habitat and Wildlife

Eastside Framework for Public Space and Infrastructure Action Plan

- Map and inventory existing resources
- Reference Best Practices Models
- Prepare Recommendations for City Council

Current Topics:

Eastside Parks and Trail System

Brian Peterson has updated the ESDG on extensive plans underway that would connect Barn Bluff Park with Levee Park and Colvill Park.

Goals:

The group will write to the City Council with additional recommendations.

- *Connect 5th Street with the Barn Bluff Trail Head*
- *Add 5th Street from the Barn Bluff Trail Head to Central Park as an integral part of the RW Trail System*
- *Provide a branch line from 5th St. to the end of Bluff St. where the Cowpath Trail begins.*
- *Add the Cowpath as a part of the Trail System*
- *Remove brush around stone gate entrance to the Cowpath Trail*

Current Topics Continued:

Community Gardens

John Anderes is task group leader for community gardens and neighborhood beautification. He will be working with the Becky Alsop, community garden city coordinator.

Housing

Introduction

The Eastside has an opportunity to be a model of sustainable housing development and renewal.

Every effort can be made to use the existing housing rather than clear and rebuild.

All building and refurbishment within the area should be assessed throughout the construction process e.g. carrying out environmental appraisal (including ecological audits) of sites at procurement; assessing and advising on design and specification; providing high levels of site supervision to maintain quality of construction and building operating systems.

There are opportunities to conserve energy with our homes. One of the largest uses of energy is with the heating of homes and hot water and in the

use of appliances. It may be that about 75% of the energy is in the heating of homes alone and most of this is lost through walls, windows, and doors.

A useful tool may be to do a professional efficiency assessment of each home to calculate potential savings.

Current Topics:

- **Green Housing Opportunities**
- **Lack of Capital**
- **Lack of Organization**

Goals:

- **Goal: One "green house" per year for ten years**
- **Goal: Apply for a MHP capacity building grant for the development of housing in the East End.**
- **Goal: Establish a Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDO**

Community Relations and Resources

Introduction

Our vision statement calls for a "... a neighborhood of mutual respect and support, active citizen participation, timely and judicious resolution of problems...and enjoyment of a wide range of social activities...that enhance the livability of the neighborhood in every way our collective creativity may inspire."

Social

Mutually supportive relationships are the essence of neighborhood. All residents need to feel connected with the neighborhood as a whole. Particularly vulnerable are the elderly living alone. Young families are often faced with economic, health, and other challenges that can be overwhelming. All families need access to social, cultural, recreational resources as well as basic food, education, health, and employment resources.

Health

Prevention is more powerful than treatment in reducing illness or early death. Simple behavior changes can bring good results. Public health efforts can contribute significantly to a more sustainable and equitable world.

An Eastside Plan for Healthy Living could bring benefits to all. Healthy individuals make for a healthy community.

Education

Neighborhood Image

Topics Under Discussion

- **Natural Step Sustainability Groups**
- **Technical College Possibilities**
- **United Way Resources**
- **Family Center Resources**
- **Neighborhood Myth and Fact**

Goals

- **Create ways to get information to residents: website and newsletter**
- **Offer Natural Step Groups this Winter**

Waste/Material Resources Management, Pollution and Recycling

Introduction

Waste/material management involves the elimination, reduction, recycling, and disposal of materials that have served one purpose and in turn may be reused in a productive way. It involves energy efficiency, resource management, and process control.

There are substantial issues of soil, water, and air pollution that endanger the food system and all of our natural systems. Climate change is of immediate and fundamental concern. The concentration of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases must be controlled to prevent catastrophic consequences.

Topics Under Discussion

- Smells from processing plants
- Residents having problems breathing
- Composting of household waste for gardens
- XCEL Energy Plant
- ADM
- Reduce use of fossil fuels in transportation and housing

Goals

Resources/Models

- MN Pollution Control Agency
- <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/>

Economy, Business and industry

Introduction

Small, diverse business are to be encouraged as a basis for employment, positive local competition, and as a way to free residents from dependence on long commutes. A neighborhood that is socially supportive and culturally and environmentally active encourages business and investment.

Current Topics

- **Tale of Two Sisters Tea Room**
- **Coffee shop gathering place**
- **Tourist/Resident Attractions**
- **Farmers' Market Site**
- **Food Co-op Site**
- **Employment Training Resources**

Goals

Resources and Models

- **MN Department of Employment and Economic Development**
 - **<http://www.deed.state.mn.us/>**

Appendices

SWOT Analysis East End Group Spring, 2008

Vision of East End

- Amana Colony Concept
- Beautification
- o Access- Parks
- o Landlords vs Ownership
- o Walkable Neighborhoods to downtown
- o Housing Stock (rental vs ownership)
- o Residents to be organized
- o Connect to downtown through Redevelopment
- o Small Community –condos with garden/green space
- o Community
- o Linkage to Memorial Park
- o Quality Housing Stock
- o Increase neighborhood reputation

Strengths

- Well established
- Access to Parks
 - Memorial
 - Covill
 - Barn Bluff
- Residents desire to work toward the goal of a better reputation
- Incredible natural beauty
- Proximity to downtown
- Historical richness
- Diversified area of business/residences
- Sidewalk connectivity
- Riverfront connection

Weaknesses

- Reputation (The place not to buy your house!)
- People don't have pride in housing maintenance and upkeep (landlords and owners)
- Income of residents
- More people who reluctant to change

- Lack of community
- Perception of being less safe
- Small lots, small homes
- Barrier accessed to downtown
- Not enough store fronts on the street (suburban model)
- Ugly buildings near downtown
- **Weaknesses (continued)**
- Economics of residents
- o Self-improvement
- o Underutilization
- o Unaware of programs
- o Incinerator –Ugly/Pollution
- o XCEL energy plant
- o Smell from ADM
- o Dog Food smell from Wisconsin
- o Lack of land-green space

Opportunities (external)

- Greening the neighborhood
- Rain gardens
- Red Wing in Bloom
- Comprehensive Plan
- Riverfront Trail
- Reconstruction funding of houses
- Create historical district
- HRA
- Foundation in Red Wing
- Greater Minnesota Housing Fund
- Green Communities

Threats (internal)

- Business Community (Sales Tax)
- MnDOT- Bridge
- Economic slowdown
- Housing price decrease
- Foreclosures
- City Budget restraints
- Taxpayer revolt
- Lack of help from federal and state resources
- School costs/referendum
- County(Lack of immediate representation)
- Landlord lawsuit
- “Company town” with old money

Common Themes

- Proximity to downtown/parks
- Self-improvement of residents

- Ugly, smell, lack of green space
- Green housing opportunities
- Lack of capital
Lack of organization
Who drives the bus?
Who are the fire souls?

East Side Survey					
62 adults participated in the survey					
1st Choice		2nd Choice	1st Choice		2nd Choice
What do you like the most about the Eastside?			What is lacking the most in the Eastside		
The People	20%	27%	Neighborhood watchdog groups	14%	28%
The Parks	18%	40%	Grocery store	17%	26%
Convenience of the area?	28%	15%	Restaurants	10%	13%
Housing/rental costs (affordability)	27%	10%	Crime Prevention	41%	13%
Community involvement	7%	8%	ADM pollution control	18%	20%
What resources would you like to see on the East side: 1st Choice and 2nd Choice					
Health Clinic		13%	16%		
Day Care		6%	9%		
Community		51%	4%		

fix-up program		
Community help line	15%	27%
Grocery store	15%	44%

Red Wing's Eastside Sustainable Development Group Goals, Strategies and Action Steps

This is a list of goals, strategies and action steps based on the community input. They are designed to guide the implementation process for the vision and priorities which were originally identified by the Eastside Sustainability Group during the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) Analysis held in the spring of 2008 and further reiterated during the groups' meetings. The action steps are intended to address the concerns of the neighborhood and provide a framework for the neighborhood residents and other agencies including the City.

Goal 1) Create a physical environment that utilizes the proximity to parks and downtown

Strategy 1: Create political recognition of neighborhood and its goals

- Adopt a sustainable neighborhood charter for the Eastside
 1. Create a sustainable neighborhood charter for the Eastside
 2. Present sustainable neighborhood charter to city council
 3. Ask the city to adopt the charter either on the local or city scale
- Request planning department to create a 'neighborhood' standing for the whole city (could also be represented as districts). See the Comprehensive Plan under Community Initiatives page CI-6 for more information.

Strategy 2: Identify the Eastside as a place for active and healthy people

- Adopt an Eastside Healthy Community Charter
- Work with the YMCA and others such as public health to offer activities
- Increase safety for pedestrians by providing well-marked stop bars and crosswalks
- Advertise Red Wing as a place where healthy place to live

Strategy 3: Create a 'parkway' connection between parks and the downtown

- Focus areas of improvement on one street (as focus point):
 1. sidewalks/bike paths
 2. decorative lightening
 3. boulevard trees
 4. road improvements including paint

5. strengthening destinations (parking, bike racks, signage, ect)

Strategy 4: Improve parks, trails and trail connectors into neighborhoods

- Improve the cow path trail
- Meet with the mountain bike group to see which trails they take care of and how they connect with others
- Ask city to install trail signs
- Start a walking or hiking club; could be via a youth or community group
- Improve sidewalks in the neighborhood, ensuring no gaps, broken sidewalks, and ADA compliance
- Apply for funding for trail (including signage, bike racks, ect)

Goal 2) Develop educational self-improvement classes for residents

Strategy 1: Offer seminars and classes right in the neighborhood

- Offer educational classes at the Covill Community Center; such as nutrition based classes such as cooking, shopping, and diet
- Create project based education "Hands On" educational classes
- Develop nutrition based classes such as cooking, shopping, and diet
- Advertise the resources of Covill Community Center (Headstart, Three Rivers Office, ect)
- Work with the community college to hold classes at the Covill Community Center
- Project based education such as MPowered (Hennepin County Tech Model)

Strategy 2: Provide an indoor play space for children at the Covill Community Center

- Design summer program
- Create after school gym time for local students
-

Goal 3) Encourage improvements to the neighborhood to target pollution and encourage maintenance of public and private green space.

Strategy 1: Complete one beautification project per year for 10 years

- Establish landscape at entrance to Eastside
- Work with Red Wing in Bloom to create green places with flowers, shrubs and benches in strategic locations
- Apply for funding for neighborhood

Strategy 2: Encourage general maintenance of yards and gardens

- Utilize youth group to volunteer to help elderly and disabled families
- Advertise programs already available in Red Wing that help elderly and disabled households with yard work
- Create a lending library of tools and information
- Start a garden tour in the neighborhood to showcase examples
- Apply for funding for neighborhood greening initiatives

Strategy 3: Reduce overall pollutions in neighborhood including smells and visual detractions of buildings

- List pollution concerns
- Meet with ADA, Xcel and other companies that contribute to pollution concerns
- Request a meeting with company representatives
- Discuss concerns and find areas that can be improved

Strategy 4: Create a community garden

- Partner with the Red Wing Community Garden group
- Locate land to create a community garden
- Contact seed companies that donate seeds to community groups such as Seed Savers Exchange in Iowa
- Establish the garden plots
- Advertise lots for local individuals and determine group educational area

Goal 4) Create green housing opportunities

Strategy 1: Build one new "green house" per year for ten years.

- Educate community on green housing
- Apply for a MHP capacity building grant for the development of housing on the Eastside
- Identify potential sites
- Find Capital
 1. Contact Greater Minnesota Housing Fund for assistance
 2. Apply for grants
 3. Ask the Housing and Redevelopment Authority for support
- Find Partners

Strategy 2: Implement environmentally sustainable practices in single family housing.

- Advertise loan opportunities for energy improvements
- Provide regularly updated information regarding state and federal sources of rehabilitation funds via yearly printed newsletters and online resources
- Contact local representative for U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service for assistance with the development of storm water management techniques such as rain gardens and rain barrels

- Pursue funding and technical support programs for solar and wind energy devices
- Request creation of recycling drop-off center in Eastside or near core of Red Wing

Goal 5) Support the local economy

Strategy 1: Identify business opportunities on the Eastside or downtown

- Communicate with the downtown Red Wing Association
- Consider a Business Incubator Program

Strategy 2: Support current business owners in the area

- Utilize services and businesses when working on projects