

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on September 25, 2015, beginning at 8:30 a.m., at Morven Farm, (Meeting Barn), 791 Morven Drive, Charlottesville, Virginia, for purposes of holding a Strategic Planning Session. The meeting was adjourned from September 10, 2015.

PRESENT: Ms. Jane D. Dittmar, Ms. Ann Mallek, Ms. Diantha H. McKeel, Ms. Liz A. Palmer and Mr. Brad L. Sheffield.

ABSENT: Mr. Kenneth C. Boyd.

OFFICERS PRESENT: County Executive, Thomas C. Foley, County Attorney, Larry W. Davis, Senior Deputy Clerk, Travis Morris, Assistant County Executive, William Letteri, Assistant County Executive, Doug Walker, Assistant County Executive, Lee Catlin, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Lori S. Allshouse, and Organizational Development Manager, Louise Wyatt.

The following agenda was used for the meeting:

Clarifying The Board's Vision for County Urban Areas

Purpose

To assist Board Members in clarifying the Board's broad collective vision for the County's urban areas and to identify an initial framework for strategic thinking regarding it

Goals

1. Gain a perspective on some of the approaches that other localities have used in creating quality urban places
2. Identify the County's urbanizing areas, trends and needs that are affecting them, and the desired focus of attention
3. Clarify a broad vision for urban areas of the County, to incorporate the Board's direction about desired characteristics and what should be included/avoided
4. Review Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives to determine alignment with the Board's Vision for Urbanization and articulate any additional guidance from the Board as required
5. Identify next steps to be taken to act on the Board's vision for urbanization

Welcome and Overview

- Review Goals, Agenda, Roles for the Session (Facilitator)
- Local Elected Leadership Model

An Overview of Urban Place-Making Possibilities and Considerations

- Videos and Photo Essay
- Applicability Discussion

Identify the County's Urban Areas and Identify Trends

- Identify County's Urbanizing Areas
- Identify Trends, Needs, and Desired Focus of Attention

Clarify Broad Board Vision for County Urbanization

- Urbanization Vision Exercise
- Report Out/General Observations

Lunch with the Group – The group recessed for lunch at 12:30 p.m., and reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

Identify County Urbanization Vision Elements (Form/Function)

- Identify Desired Characteristics/Qualities of County's Urban Areas
- (i.e. Appearance, Amenities, Levels of Service, Integration)

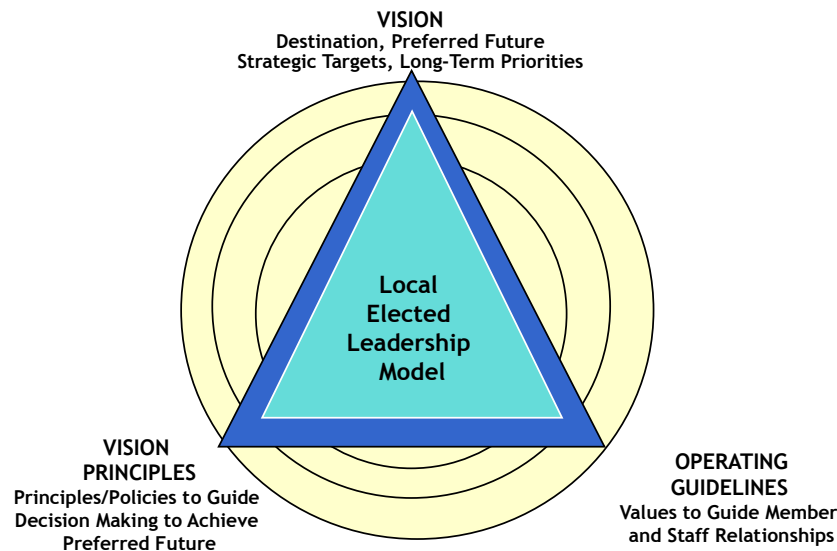
Align Strategic Plan with Vision for Urbanization

- Review Strategic Plan Objectives to Assure Fit with Vision
- Consider Further Board Direction to Put Vision into Action

Identify Next Steps

- Identify Further Discussions that are Needed
- Identify Board and Staff Actions to Integrate the Board's Vision for Urbanization

LOCAL ELECTED LEADERSHIP MODEL



Ms. A. Tyler St. Clair, Facilitator, called the group to order at 8:30 a.m. Ms. St. Clair provided the following retreat report:

CLARIFYING THE COUNTY URBANIZATION VISION

1. **WHY:** What are the trends and needs that tell us we must develop a vision for urbanization in Albemarle County? What makes it good for us?
2. **WHERE:** What are geographic areas of the County that present the greatest need for this vision?
3. **WHAT:** What are the big, aspirational outcomes we are trying to accomplish when we create/shape the County’s urban areas? What features/characteristics should define the County’s urban communities or spaces in order to meet the “Albemarle County standard?” What do we NOT want to do/avoid in creating our desired urban spaces?
4. **HOW:** What themes/principles should drive the way that we approach urbanization in the County? Are we on the right path for urban place-making with the Board’s strategic objectives?

WHY?

What are the trends and needs that tell us we must clarify a vision for urbanization in Albemarle County?

- Over the last 6 or so years, the great majority of building permits and demand for new housing has been for denser housing with sidewalks and smaller lots. The quarterly reports that we receive have reflected this and thus we must have the ability for businesses to be nimble and to have housing units that suit all sizes and needs. People say that they want to put down roots here and they want alternatives to support that.
- There is a tremendous interest in pedestrian friendly features that support biking and walking to schools with children. People are using sidewalks heavily; we want to have wider sidewalks so that people can gather and see the mountain view.
- In urban ring, people see us improving streets and say, “Where are the bike lanes?” People want urban amenities and infrastructure and it is not really happening.
- My kids and their friends don’t want to have a car; they want to be able to bike and walk where they want to go.
- Even those who live in already live in Albemarle are moving closer to the City as housing becomes available (in migration.)
- Neighbors in rural areas with children of driving age see the opportunity to move closer to town and to reduce the distance that kids have to travel to enhance their safety.
- Most of the people who are new to the area are moving into the more dense areas.
- When gas hit \$4 a gallon, that was a touch point, and it created a new trend/reality.
- We have been talking about smart growth for years; our planning set the precedent and had the momentum to be a reality except for the recession. Albemarle County could have been the national model, but we took a detour and now we are back on it.

- We have aging infrastructure and blight and have to address that. There is trend away from owner-occupied housing to rental property and many rental owners are not keeping their properties up properly.
- We also have neighborhoods with Charlottesville right next door, so it will take cooperation with the City to make an urban vision successful. We must also work closely with VDOT and UVA because solutions will require cooperation.
- We have infrastructure that is blighted because it has been abandoned; it has a low priority with its owners and no funding to improve it.
- We also have areas with aging residents who may not be able to maintain or improve their homes; while some issues come from lack of income, there are also other causes.
- There is an increase in crime and gang activity in our deteriorating areas, including some of the broken window syndrome. The Police Department is concerned about these issues. If we want businesses to locate in these areas, they will not do that if there is crime; we have to do something about safety in order to have economic development.
- Sociologically, we are seeing that people want to come to community spaces; they want to gather and they want public spaces for it. We are building those into new development, but not always addressing this need in older areas.
- People are willing to move into mixed use housing with a variety of income levels
- People want green space, especially if it is public space.
- We are not connecting people to their jobs with transit opportunities. People say to me that the City has bus stops/transit and why don't we have that?
- People want access to healthy living and active amenities, including facilities and jogging paths. Many cities have had those for years and we don't have them. Many of our opportunities are on school grounds.
- Over the last 10 years, the City had had many housing units built. What this did around was to move many the University tenants who lived in rural areas into the City into those units. There was a dramatic drop off of rentals in old farmhouses/rural areas, thus changing the use of our housing stock.
- With our aging trends, we need to be very deliberate about infrastructure changes and make them match the nature of our population. We should use universal design and make them good for everyone and not just younger people.

WHERE?

What are geographic areas of the County that present the greatest need for this vision? Is there a “priority” in addressing these needs? What areas are we already addressing?

- Some areas need much smaller things, but there are others that need a larger attack such as the urban ring
- Hollymead and Crozet have had the most attention in terms of urban place-making

Our urbanizing areas include:

Crozet

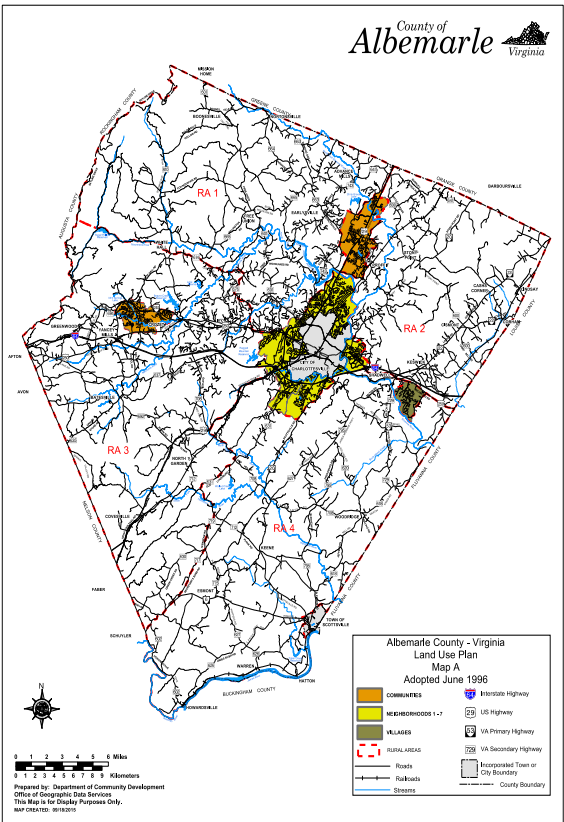
Urban ring - North, East, West, South

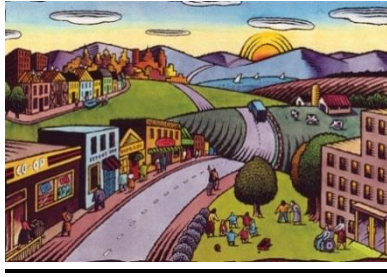
Hollymead

Town of Scottsville (while a separate locality, we have a transportation connection issue to consider)

Rivanna

Piney Mountain/Rivanna Station





WHAT?

1. What are the big, aspirational outcomes that we are trying to accomplish when we create and shape the County's urban areas?
2. What features/characteristics should define the County's urban communities or spaces in order to meet the "Albemarle County standard?"
3. What do we NOT want to do/avoid in creating our desired quality urban spaces?
4. Create an idealized picture of any urbanized area in the County that you choose, highlighting the wishes, components, and players that would contribute to its success.

Green Group

Diantha McKeel, Ann Mallek, Jane Dittmar, Mark Graham, Lee Catlin (recorder)

1. What are the big, aspirational outcomes that we are trying to accomplish when we create and shape the County's urban areas?
 - Live/work/play balance
 - Create opportunities for community connection in public spaces
 - People feel safe and comfortable
 - Multi-modal to encourage mobility and access
 - Increase property values and investment
 - Intergenerational living in urban areas
2. What features/characteristics should define the County's urban communities or spaces in order to meet the "Albemarle County standard?"
 - Mixed housing opportunities
 - Well maintained housing
 - Employment opportunities; organic local business growth, market stability
 - Incubator space; business start ups
 - Pop-up markets/business space
 - Meet needs for different lifestyles for millennials; need for flexibility
 - Recreation – both active and passive
 - Attract visual/performing arts, creative cultural class, performance-based economy
 - Visually attractive and desirable places to live, with urban ring as a destination – a viable alternative to downtown Charlottesville connected to downtown and UVA
 - Parks, green spaces, public areas
 - Multi-modal
 - Entertainment, activities, and vibrancy (i.e. Friday Movies in the Park, etc.)
 - Public gathering spaces
 - Create some catalyst/pioneer activities; this could be a small investment that is either public or private
 - Encourage possibilities for nodes
3. What do we NOT want to do/avoid in creating our desired quality urban spaces?
 - Challenge of gentrification – balance
 - Don't exclude involvement
 - Large tax increases
 - Stay in step with the private sector
 - Avoid segregated socio-economic neighborhoods
 - Keep our identity – don't "Austinize"
 - Don't work in a silo without Charlottesville and UVA
 - Don't over-reach; prioritize to actively accomplish something

Purple Group

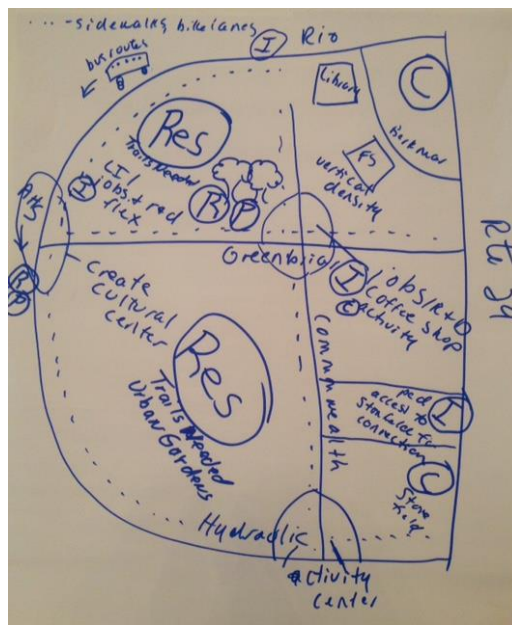
Brad Sheffield, Liz Palmer, Wayne Cilimberg, Louise Wyatt (recorder)

1. What are the big, aspirational outcomes that we are trying to accomplish when we create and shape the County's urban areas?
 - Opportunities for healthy living (i.e. exercise, walkability)
 - Safety and welfare; open spaces with people interacting in positive ways
 - Quality of life – places to go, good schools nearby, having a short commute not necessarily by car
 - Some folks are moving for place, some for jobs
 - Balance of business and residential

September 25, 2015 (Adjourned Meeting)
(Page 5)

- Focus on nodes and places – “centers” rather than main streets and corridors
 - Multi-modal connectivity/transportation (How to get development community to see this value?)
 - Redevelopment strategies that are effective
2. What features/characteristics should define the County’s urban communities or spaces in order to meet the “Albemarle County standard?”
- Commute that is easy; multi-modal
 - Green space/green nodes/green centers with connection (i.e. pocket parks, trails)
 - Nodes/mixed use
 - o Dense with verticality
 - o Public space with a pedestrian system and parks
 - o Tree-lined to be part of the pedestrian experience
 - o Appropriate placement of parking (street, rear, hidden)
 - o Buildings near local roads with street parking
3. What do we NOT want to do/avoid in creating our desired quality urban spaces?
- Multitude of curb cuts and driveways
 - Too much concrete and asphalt – impermeable space
 - Single level/one story buildings
 - Unsafe and unhealthy (i.e. not being able to cross the street)
 - Disconnection between adjacent parcels
 - Single use (i.e. all business or residential)

ALBEMARLE COUNTY URBAN PLACE-MAKING IDEALIZATIONS

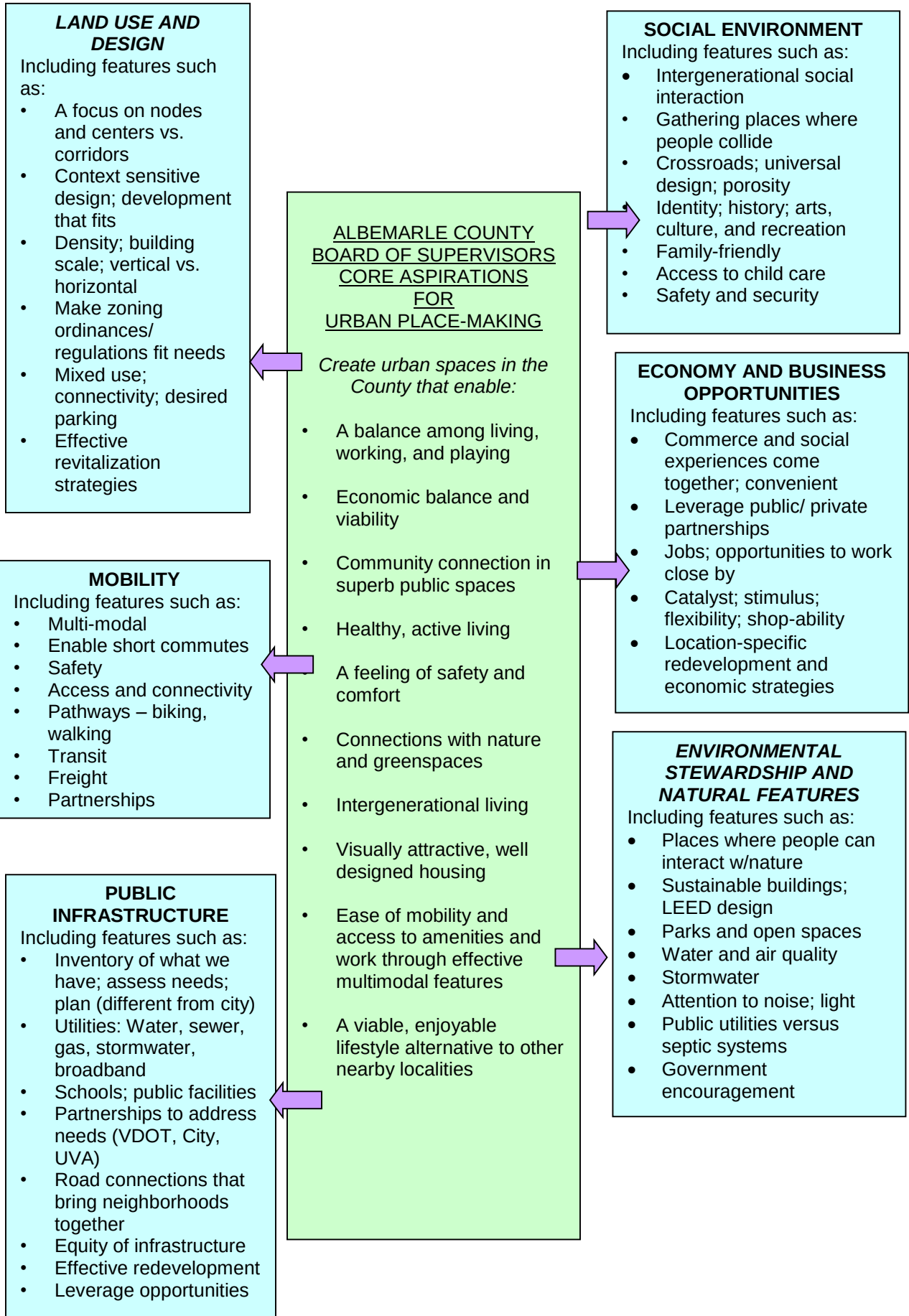


Green Group



Purple Group

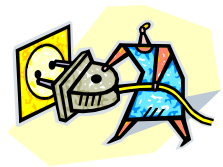
ALBEMARLE COUNTY URBAN PLACEMAKING VISION FRAMEWORK



HOW?

If these are our urban place-making aspirations and the areas that we will need to address, what principles or strategies would help us be successful with moving forward with our urban place-making vision?

- **Business Enhancement and Retention:** Facilitate our home grown businesses to grow to support the revenue side and allow us to make improvements, along with providing jobs
- **Redevelopment Strategies:** Pursue redevelopment strategies for housing stock, commercial areas, and brownfields
 - Examine our current policies and regulations to see if they incentivize or de-incentivize redevelopment, to include infill
 - Include in those redevelopment strategies how to best utilize land in the development area
 - Determine if incentives are missing and whether there is a best practice approach that will enhance redevelopment
 - Develop public/private partnerships to enhance redevelopment
 - Develop public partnerships to enhance redevelopment (i.e. roads, City, UVA)
- **Blight Reduction Strategies:** Pursue strategies to reduce blight
 - Determine the focus of our attention. Are we looking at property blight or infrastructure blight or both? These require two different strategies.
 - Consider whether to put code enforcement ordinances in place
 - County does not currently have staffing to do code enforcement
 - County needs to be responsible for how it maintains its own infrastructure when it takes actions to force citizens to address their own private property
- **Consider Re-Prioritization:** Consider re-prioritizing capital projects/infrastructure projects. Look at our decision making and actions around projects to make sure that we are not spreading our dollars too thin and thus not achieving our goals. We should weigh the cost of new improvements (i.e. new sidewalks) against repairing old ones (i.e. deteriorating sidewalks.)
- **Crowdfunding:** Look at crowdfunding for specific projects. We could potentially expand this concept to create competitive funding/grants that will achieve our project funding goals. This also creates ownership and fosters community building.
- **Partnerships in Service Delivery and Infrastructure:** Look for partnerships that will reduce costs (i.e. mowing with City; UVA development activities; new sites for business development)
- **New Development Strategies:** Make areas that we want to develop easy to develop
- **Homeowner Revitalization:** Consider strategies to provide incentives to homeowners to upgrade physical structures such as homes or water/sewer (i.e. tax incentives, paint program, financing for hook up to public sewer)
- **Partnerships:** Enhance partnerships/programs with community agencies to leverage smaller amounts of funding to improve housing
- **Consider Strategic Zones:** Investigate tax advantages that could come from designating strategic zones (i.e. Technology Zone) – look at local and state options
- **Consider TIFs and Service Districts:** Investigate funding solutions that could come from designating special tax districts
- **Seek Assistance from the EDA and Other Relevant Approaches:** Consider how to use the EDA in financing projects related to the vision
 - EDA has the capability to finance some types of projects
 - May be able to create a community development authority
 - Look at possibilities of seeding revitalization projects to initiate them
- **Lobbying:** Look at our current strategies for lobbying at the state level; consider whether there is a different way to go about our lobby efforts to have more impact
- **Consider the Results of the Citizens Resource Advisory Committee:** Results to come in in November 2015



NEXT STEPS

1. Facilitator will send the Session Report
2. County Administrator will distribute to Board Members and staff
3. Staff will take Board's input and synchronize it with other planning efforts, to include:
 - Strategic Plan Objectives – fold into current strategies, include new ideas/guidance
 - Budget/Resources – consider as County moves into the budget cycle
 - CIP preparation and prioritization
 - Community Development Work Plan
4. Staff will come back to the Board about what may be missing in order to enhance efforts on the urbanization vision (i.e. what is possible and not possible; what makes sense; what is needed to prop up specific efforts)
5. Continue implementation

Adjourn. With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Chairman

Approved by Board
Date: 11/11/2015
Initials: EWJ