

# COMMUNITY DESIGN SESSION FEEDBACK

City of Brainerd – Comprehensive Plan Update

**Two Community Design Sessions were held on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 617 Laurel Street in Downtown Brainerd.** The purpose of these session was to share with community members the public input that has been collected to date, verify that our project team has indeed heard their recommendations correctly, work to identify project and/or initiative locations within the city, and to generally education guests on the purpose and schedule for the Comprehensive update process. The following information was logged at the event(s).

## “BIG IDEA” – STATION

***Purpose:** to identify project-related needs and ideas and where they can be built or implemented throughout the community. lastly, to proactively plan (or invest) for these ideas.*



Click the icon for the station boards.

### Right Now (0-2 years)

- Address daycare
- New zoning ordinance (more flexible for business owners & residents)
- Children’s Museum – Add on to our current library
  - Put it downtown, we have great spaces available
- Broadband Expansion (2)
  - Live, Work, Play
  - Here vs metro area
    - More affordable
    - More recreation
    - Sell to businesses

### Short Term (3-5 years)

- Create neighborhood identities (1)
  - Focus on neighborhood scaled projects
- Downtown Streetscaping/ Planters (3)
  - General aesthetics – community brand
  - Make community pay- not just downtown owners (bigger impact)
- More murals- can do on downtown mall alleyway
- Take advantage of the Mississippi River (5)

### Long Term (6-9 years)

- In concert with Baxter, Crow Wing County and other stakeholders, become a world-class destination by connecting trails, the river, history and culture. (7 dots, 2 stars)
  - Focus on the Mississippi as the backbone of that destination
- Public Library expansion (2)

## IDENTIFYING OUR VALUES – STATION

*Purpose: to learn about your core values. these values will determine how the plan is shaped and written.*

- 10—Be the hub for cultural events, experiences, public art and music
- 10—We recognize the importance of the Mississippi River
- 8—To be a walkable and bikeable community
- 6—A place with economic opportunity
- 6—We're a community where you can live, work, play and stay
- 5—Celebrating a strong, diverse and growing downtown
- 4—Become the recreation destination
- 4—A community that is continuously improving
- 4—A community for all ages
- 3—We pursue technology advancements
- 2—A city rooted in a deep, rich history
- 2—We develop in harmony with our environment
- 2—Our residents make government work effectively
- 1—We aren't just a gateway city
- 1—We're centrally located and plan to have an impact

### What other values should be considered?

- Community pride—upkeep of property
- Teaching and learning of Crow Wing, Brainerd Lakes, past, present, future to community

## DID WE HEAR YOU CORRECTLY? – STATION

*Purpose: to illustrate the common themes we have heard through the variety of input we have received as a part of the comprehensive plan update process. also, to gather feedback to make sure we interpreted your comments correctly.*

What We Heard   Housing	Did we hear you correctly?		
	YES	No	Priority
Additional housing options for all different housing types, needs and incomes	8		7
Improved rental housing maintenance	4		2
Increased number of large lot, single family homes	3	4	1
Respond to the demand for senior and millennial housing options	3		
Improve housing conditions, neighborhood blight and exterior maintenance	7		2
Code enforcement and maintenance of housing stock	3		1

What We Heard   Parks & Natural Resources	Did we hear you correctly?		
	YES	No	Priority
Cherish our natural resources and increase access	8		3
We love our trail network, but improve walkability within our neighborhoods and to downtown	12		5
Improve our trail network and wayfinding	11		5
Extensive park system but can always strive to improve	3		1

What We Heard   Community Design	Did we hear you correctly?		
	YES	No	Priority
Improve the overall community image and attractiveness of Brainerd	11		3
Transform downtown into the cultural and social hub of Brainerd and the region	13		6
Build on our vibrant history and the cultural aspects of our city	10		2
Ensure that our neighborhoods are safe	10		2
Capitalize on our reputation and name recognition	8		

What We Heard   Economic Development	Did we hear you correctly?		
	YES	No	Priority
Need for adequate employment for a variety of income levels	5		2
Increase the median annual income for Brainerd	7		
Need to capitalize on and improve Brainerd's brand	7		1
Invest and revitalize downtown Brainerd	7	1	3
Work with existing businesses to expand employment opportunities	5		
Attract new businesses to the city	10		5

What We Heard   Transportation	Did we hear you correctly?		
	Yes	No	Priority
Need for increased walkability	17		5
Connect our neighborhoods, downtown and the Mississippi River	18		7
Address the barriers that separate us from our destinations (TH HWY 210, South 6 <sup>th</sup> Street)	8		4
Improve public transit opportunities	5	1	1
The City of Brainerd's transportation needs differ from the transportation needs of the Brainerd lakes area	1		
Improve the aesthetics of our gateway corridors	10		4

### What were we missing?

- Development—large convention/hotel/restaurant on river

### No, here's what you should add:

- Connect Cuyuna Lakes State Trail to Brainerd from Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area (2)
- Find a way to engage young high school graduates to keep them in the community (18-24 years) (2)
- Support and enhance objectives of school referendum (1)
- Reduce ACEs (2)
- Bicycle friendly community (national rating) with several bicycle friendly businesses (1)
- No more parking lots

## MAPPING FOR THE FUTURE – STATION

**Purpose:** to illustrate areas throughout the city where change can occur to improve the quality of life of residents. also, to learn where opportunities exist through **your lens**. How should we design our city?



Click the icon for the mapping responses.

A series of three maps were available for interaction and comment. Each map addressed a specific question pertaining to development. The following three questions were answered:

- Can your “big idea” be constructed?
- Is there an area in town where you would like to see improvement?
- Are there areas where you want to see growth?

A corresponding chart was available for residents to write their comments and correspond with their dot that was placed on each map. Responses have been logged in a separate document. Click the icon to review the content.

## IMAGEINbrainerd

The responses and feedback gathered from the community design session will be used to influence the goals, policies, and actions within the Comprehensive Plan. The community design session(s) were viewed as the last step for “part I” of the comprehensive plan update process. The feedback from this session will be added to the prior input gathered as a part of this project. These recommendations can be read at the project’s landing page at [www.IMAGINEbrainerd.org](http://www.IMAGINEbrainerd.org).