

City of Racine Comprehensive Plan Survey

Results Overview



Date: 2/6/2009 6:34 AM PST

Responses: Completes

Filter: No filter applied

16. In the space below, please write any comments you may wish to add for consideration regarding the questions and statements posed in this survey. If you require more space, feel free to email comments to Kristen Lie, UW-Extension Community Planning Educator.

#	Response
1	Promote city/community ownership and pride; this requires a campaign under the leadership of several civic organizations galvanized by the healthy vision/goal for our City/community wellbeing. The process requires community input and approval to insure its acceptance and success; including all segments of our community, diversity.
2	We need good paying jobs for the young people to keep them here. We do not do enough to bring in new Businesses we can not sustain on Art alone
3	The City of Racine needs to adopt a vibrant, energetic and creative approach to the issues of commercial and residential development. There appears to be no strong vision of how the future looks or how to move efforts forward at a pace that will save the city, especially in the current economic climate. Racine cannot wait for Chicago investors to come North to save it. The city has not been able to invest it's residents in the vision of progress it is trying to develop. Too many natives are satisfied with status quo. Small steps over the last few years have given way to a sideways drift. More storefronts downtown are empty. No new building is being proposed. Existing mixed use space sits unfilled largely due to the perceptions of a largely poor unsafe city.
4	
5	We've been too focused on transforming vacant land to industrial parks when there is no industry to be had. The city should be more open to other ideas. Case in point the old Jacobsen land on De Koven. A few years ago we had a party interested in a commercial development, including grocery, that we brushed aside in favor of an industrial park. There are no grocery stores of size in that entire southside area. We also need to ditch the old ideas that foundries and manufacturers are going to one day reappear around here. Look to establish a new identity, bedroom community, artists' colony, harbor and winter recreation, whatever.
6	No additional comments.
7	I found the survey annoying in that it kept moving me back to the top of the page and I'd have to scroll down to get to the next question.
8	City should be more supportive of small businesses and home owners who are trying to make it. Stop wasting time harasing nice neighborhoods with unnecessary fines for simple things when there is an overwhelming number of horribly run down homes and properties of slum loards that should be dealt with all over the city. The city is over taxing and fining the few people who are trying to make something of this city and leaving alone the ones who let thier property completley rot draining what equity is in them.
9	I would love to see a concert hall built, a new History Museum, and see the community adopt a vision for better education/ standard of living for people of Racine. with such a rich tradition of invention, can't we invent several new products that could bring more money into the city. It is sad to see our visionary Mayor fail in his personal life. Let us not settle for a lack luster replacement.
10	good format. this should be done more often - if City actions are truely impacted.
11	We need light rail. We need to attract more people to Racine because we have the Lake and relatively inexpensive property (compared to the NortShore of Chicago). We shoulf be "selling" ALL of Racine not just one area or another.
12	keep services in downtown & south racine. We need an emergency room; keep the main branch of the library downtown; help keep YMCA services in downton-south Racine. Public transportation is useless. Parking is needed at the bus terminal. We need light rail to connectwith Milwaukee and Chicago. We don't need a widened I-94 so Racine can be bypassed by everyone going from Illinois to Door County or other "up north" destinations!

13	I have lived in Racine since 1970 and have seen the reputation of its schools suffer and industrial jobs lost. On the other hand, its reputation as a "beer and pretzels" town (I quote a former attorney prominent in local politics) has faded, and our downtown, with its emphasis on original facades, gorgeous new architecture, lakefront development, and museums is a wonderful improvement. I also believe the Towerview project of NHS is important as community/neighborhood building is a keystone of a livable city.
14	If I could wave a wand, I would improve the schools. However, I fear that the problem is not the schools or teachers so much as the parents and the home environments. I see no ready solution.
15	Clean up City government.
16	I don't believe in "If you build it, they will come" mentality...the fact is, when gas prices start to sky rocket and water supply decreases, people will have no choice but to live in more dense urban areas. Build it so Racine will exist and be born again in 10-20 years
17	After our citizens, our two greatest assets are Lake Michigan and Root River. I would take our assests and make them be the best that they can be.
18	I am delighted that the City has a plan and is seeking input from its residents! Keep up the great work!
19	always thought a plan should be implemented to help landlords get tenant "approval" and not be "allowed" to or "required" to rent to more bad elememt moving into this town.
20	Racine needs to try some things that haven't been done before. It needs to take a lead. Doing the same will bring more of the same. We have a great City, low sales tax, low cost of living, affordable housing (\$300,000 lake front property, \$150,000 historic homes), personality and great people.
21	1) Parking should not be allowed on major streets during the day - especially Washington Avenue. 2) The historic districts in Racine need more of an identity. This could be achieved through effective use of signage, street lights, brick streets, etc.
22	I think the city of racine should have more nursing homes stop building all those codos
23	I feel we have been blemished by our Mayor and now we have to clean that first! Our land is disappearing and we have nothing to show our children of nature. We have taken land and now we need to give back. I think every area North, South, East, and west should be pleasing to the eye. People want to stay not leave us as fast as possible. We have no items that look appealing to the travelers. I want our parks and golf course to have the appeal. We need to fund this and give back to mother nature. I have seen the park by our mall being cut back and the tree count is disappearing and not one plant to replace the removal. Dumb move on our part. Lazy ! I would like to see very area in racine to look wonderful and be safe to enjoy nature. I feel we have not taken care of the correct issues in this area and it is hurting us. I want to see neighbors caring about the look in the yard. I want them not to fear that the tax bill will be higher. I would like to think we can do better. We are lazy when it comes to figuring out a way to make this happen. people on a budget - share or grown seeds talk to people on how to do it cost effective. I sharedthis and people are amazed. I have a budget and boy I would love to spend on plants and garden items. I find things and use my mind to make it me. Our city has items they can use for decorating and planting. Reuse items - Doors or windows add a board for a shelf. Old yard items can be used in gardens and for many uses. It takes someone time and it just requires thinking time. The dollar is not always the answer for paying full price. We use what we are dumping. We should recycle items from homes. We can help each other in reusing old wood to make something great. I would like to see in the next 10-20 yrs Racine thinking on how to reuse items and make them work in our community. We lead by example. I want my grandchildren to know I cared. What do you care about?? What can you give?? We want someone to give us a freebe. Someone else to pay for it. We the tax payer is the someone. We need to give ideas and use what we are wasting. We talk the talk and that is all we do in Racine.
24	Racine is a beautiful city with many positives. We need to take advantage of the proximity to the lake and to Chicago and Milwaukee. I think we should capitalize on our lower sales tax rate than Chicago to entice Illinois shoppers to the area. I also think this area needs an indoor water park/hotel.
25	Thanks for asking.
26	The streets would be safer if we did not have the drug addicted population. Gangs would not be so strong without drug money. We need people to enjoy the outdoors and each other. It would be great to have the newest thing in parks. Get Fit types of equipment, rather than swings and slides. We need to look at ways to save money in city operations and put money toward debt.
27	There is not a playground adequte from toddlers in the Southside area. Yes, a few parks (most in sketch places) but these do not have the equipment for small children. More and more young families moving in and dissatisfied about this. It would be a draw for more investment in the area.
28	The timing of this survey, right when our Mayor has been arrested, will sway residents' responses. I hope there's a way to weight that separately. Thanks!
29	special attention should be made to improve Mead street.

30	I have moved to this city from the Pacific Northwest almost three years ago, and I am not seeing a movement to make commuter rail happen. I have seen the only grocery store in the city close less than six months after my arrival; I have seen quality restaurants downtown close and no replacements. I have seen retail specialty shops close and storefronts unoccupied. I do not see this as a growing community that will attract people to this area and increase tax base and improve the quality of life for all residents.
31	Get on track and stay on track.
32	Learn to love historic preservation. accelerate recycling and move toward greening the city
33	Bike paths City swimming pools City ice rinks Healthy places to eat Healthy foods Library access improvements More public use of the lake shore area More Higher education : college/university Special focus High Schools : automotive, health, engineering
34	We need to eliminate gangs and come down hard on criminals. The city is turning into a low income ghetto. Develop the lake front so middle income people can afford to live there not just the rich and government subsidised low income people. It seems all the new condos and apartments being developed downtown are out of the middle class's reach because we do not make enough to pay full price and we make too much to get assistance. How is that fair that some one can pay \$200 a month for an apartment that I would have to pay \$1200 a month for?
35	IMPLEMENT CPTED (CRIME PREVENTION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN). WE NEED KEY PLAYERS EDUCATED ON THE CONCEPT SO THE CONCEPTS ARE PART OF THE BUILDING PROCESS NOT EXPENSIVE ADD ON'S.
36	My biggest concern regarding the current state of affairs in Racine is the high level of criminal activity. The presence of gangs has risen noticeably in the last five years. I hope it is not an indication of the future of Racine.
37	I hope the City takes this survey to heart & makes some changes...this City really needs work.
38	Ask visitors what their impression is. You can get your most objective view from them rather than from people who have lived with it for a few years. New perspective can really help. What do you want Who to think about the city? Are we bedroom? Are we manufacturing? Are we Tourists? I realize we can not be all things to all people, but right now, we can be so wishy-washy we lack direction and appear dysfunctional.
39	Surveys are OK to get people's input but what this city needs is a plan of action to get many of these things done or we will be doing another survey in 10 years with the same results.
40	We must find a way to brand Racine as the place to start a business and we must create an entrepreneurial culture among the citizenry.
41	Downtown Racine could benefit if they had a strong leader in the executive director's position. Devin Sutherland refuses to work with the merchants.
42	Thank you for asking for resident input! We have lived in Racine for almost 10 years, and really appreciate the bike trails and downtown improvements.
43	Fairly good questions. Now if only listened to and acted on would be nice. ALL these studies done in the dark; meaning lack of the neighborhood involvement. Sense of place is only accomplished by inclusion...
44	Racine needs a College like Parkside or UW-Waukesha. This community needs to improve education and not continue accept poor results in school.
45	I would like to see the local newspaper to be more sensitive to the needs of the community in its reporting and choice of articles to present to its readers. It should neither be a community cheerleader nor should it preach doom and gloom. It is an important influence in the community and should take its role seriously. The attention and outlet that it gives to its so-called "blogs" is just one of many examples of its lack of sensitivity and failings to the community.
46	I found the question format a bit confusing - especially part I. The "City of Racine" may be strongly focused on a particular issue, but there may not be noticeable improvement.
47	The City of Racine is rapidly declining due to lack of jobs, gangs, unkempt storefronts on State and Washington Ave to travel downtown. Need a good mayor, city council and ramp up Unified to become self-sufficient and envy of other districts. Jobs, education, businesses, the only thing that will save Racine from its steady decline. I am embarrassed for family to see parts of this town when they come to visit.

48	The poorer the neighborhood, the more likely it is to be ignored during heavy snows. We need to plan for more heavy snows. It looks like they will be a fact of life in winters to come. We also need to continue the forward thinking and urban redevelopment that was begun by our former mayor, Gary Becker. We need to realize that he did much good for Racine and build upon his initiatives.
49	KRM is vital offering safe transportation and a physical, psychological link to MKE/CHI. Bike lanes are desperately needed, how many more casualties? Community gardens and Farmers Markets hold the keys to urban revitalization.
50	We absolutely have to create 'ownership' in this community. Too many people are in Racine, but "not of it". They live here, but don't necessarily feel embraced as part of it. There are subcultures here, often split along racial or socioeconomic lines, that have an "us and them" mindset. This mindset has led to more serious issues. If we can unify the community, so that everyone is a true Racinian with just as much 'ownership' of this city as the next person, then many of our issues of safety and neighborhood appearance would likely be positively affected.
51	The latest project for West Racine is irresponsible, the area needs a small grocery store and that's it. The city keeps looking at visions of grandeur, however something so large will be out of control, filled with crime and riddled with police calls. Similar to the Pick & Save area off rapids. Plus, everyone knows these projects in Racine don't work. How many buildings sit partially empty? Before the local bosses get the picture.
52	Is it important that Racine spend time and resources to combat the negative impact that has been created by the recent arrest of our top elected official. Racine needs to do more to culturally diversify the community in every level of government.
53	Look at long term trends. You did nothing to stop the demolition of the old downtown firehouse-- it was replaced by a warehouse for the JT. Now Lee Enterprises is on its way to bankruptcy. We lost a great asset, and will be stuck with an ugly block building. Look ahead, develop ways to support low carbon use-- bikes, walking, fewer streetlights (or at least LED) We have had 60 years of car-friendly planning, and now we have a person-unfriendly city.
54	The City of Racine has great potential for a retirement community, bedroom community for Chicago and Milwaukee as well as a vacation destination. Retirees like attractive affordable housing and low taxes so they can stay in their homes. I do not believe we are going to attract very many new employers to Racine. If we begin to understand this, we could do a better job of helping some relocate to other cities that have jobs available. Our taxes are way too high and a real big reason why people are leaving the City instead of moving in.
55	Please pay special attention to my thoughts on Uptown, I believe we are draining money from a viable area (6th ST), for a duplicate "Arts" area in Uptown. A wide 3 lane Blvd overlooking the Valley with shops on the south side of Street, Saving, Corner House etc. Would make a smoother transition into the Main part of Downtown. And would gradually improve the Housing stock in the entire Near South side, an Tower View area.
56	This could actually be # 1. Hire a staff of grantwriters and set up a fund to assist interested parties - private and business - to introduce solar, wind, geothermal, hydrothermal, and other green technologies in their homes and businesses. It's not as difficult for large corporations and non-profits to assign someone to this task, but it's harder for small businesses and homeowners to have the time and/or the know-how to find funding avenues. And it's important for all of us - not just the big guys and the non-profits. This could/should become a division in the City Public Works Dept. I know the City has limited funds too, but we have to do a better job of spending what we do have more efficiently.
57	Thank you for caring about my hometown!!!!
58	this can be a great city, we need to invest in our inner-city youth more. get them more involved in sport activities, that's going on out in the county area, with transportation. Help support community programs that help kids stay out of trouble.
59	Better distribution of basic services would be great; grocery store, bank, variety store in underserved areas. There are no banks in Uptown, Southside, or West Racine, only a no-frill grocery on State and no others in the city's older neighborhoods.
60	less duplication of certain businesses like liquor stores gas stations bakery stores in so close of an area even groceries stores
61	We have to encourage our young people. Getting an excellent education is available to all and it is free. Students must be taught there is value in their education. Education lifts us out of poverty. Pride in ourselves and encouragement from our families is needed to achieve excellence. Dress codes and good manners should be expected from all students. Everyone should visit the schools in town. Perhaps even set up evening programs for adults and family activity nights. People should be encouraged to walk the streets and neighborhoods. Get out of their homes, more than one night a year, and meet their neighbors. Communities are built one block joining another. Let's try it!
62	I think the city needs to be a bit more open to public transport. Not everyone in the area has a car, but as it stands, everyone needs one. The spread of jobs, resources, housing, and neighborhoods that you simply don't want to walk through make it hard for people without cars or who are trying to use cars less to get around and conduct day to day business. Particularly with the economy and the oil issues, public transportation should be

	a top priority. What difference does it make how beautiful the city is if people can't get anywhere to see it?
63	living in west racine i would like to see a grocery store (where durangos, and cvs is) also where the old park movie theater is that block should be raised nothing is really kept up and the space could be used for something more constructive, even if it is just a nice park, all of the places there could be moved to the 3100 block when it is built
64	Alternate side parking. I would like to do away with it in the summer months. I feel it is not necessary. In the winter months fine. The city plowers do the city injustice.
65	I feel that you could also have gained benefit from this survey by including a "not applicable" option and by giving people a chance to rate the importance of the items on your lists. While I did provide answers to the questions, I did not necessarily agree that some of the items should be things that are areas of focus in a 10-20 year plan.
66	You should make the questions easier for a Layperson to understand. Some of those questions a resident will not be able to answer intelligently. It made me feel that if you really wanted feedback, you would have asked questions that people could really answer.
67	I have an idea that as they rebuild Hwy 32 on the south side they should make the route from 24th St to the lakefront more accessible and attractive. Most people would rather stay along the lakefront, especially on their way to downtown or the marina area and especially when the alternative is to follow Racine street which is extremely unattractive.
68	As above, change the route to down from Washington ave to 14th st then Main Racine is great - keep up the good work
69	The City has recently outpriced the use of the Festival grounds. So much that festival goers, like myself, are finding the Festival grounds going to waste. Is this intentional? Does someone, or some business, wish to purchase this property? This would be a great loss for the residents of Racine and I hope the City is not working toward justifying the sale of this property.
70	Please also consider a library branch some where on Washington Ave between Hwy 31 and Ohio.
71	if we do not attract jobs to racine city not county racine will be lost. The partnership we have with the county does little to improve life in the inner city. the actual unemployment rate in the city is considerably worse than our published data shows. Please help us attract labor to racine
72	We need better street access to downtown if we want to develop this area. i.e. the Washington Avenue/West Racine through uptown bottlenecks. The streets need to be widened or creating a limited access highway to and from downtown Racine.
73	An extensive study of street trees using student volunteers from Parkside, Gateway and the Public schools to be involved in the work of a plan for the city.
74	We should work as one government mind in the Racine,Caledonia,Mt Pleasant areas.
75	The Uptown Artist Relocation program is an exciting and feasible plan. Attracting Chicago area artist to make Racine their home would considerably boost our standing as a culturally forward community with very affordable housing and studio space, short commute to Chicago and Milw. To generate more interest to all that Racine has to offer the Artist in Residence would provide much needed exposure at a fraction of a cost for marketing Racine. Word travels fast among artist. RAC's Main Gallery has been a huge success. Use this model to create a student business group during the summers. As with the Main Street Gallery half the kids would be inner city kids. Visitors Convention Center continue to bring world class events to Racine.
76	continue the efforts of the police department to improve community safety more enforcement of the traffic laws (especially in regards to pedestrian safety and bicyclist safety) continue to move forward with the lakefront development (the old Walker property development)
77	I was born and raised in Racine and have lived here all my life. I also own a building and a business for 29 years in downtown Racine and have seen numerous downtown and business plans come and go. All with great expense to the city. The plans that are submitted all were wonderful with making the city beautiful and a destination place. The only problem I have ever seen, is that there is no one, I mean no one, that has implemented and followed through with all of the ideas proposed. If they had, the city would have become something wonderful long time ago. It is a great waste of the tax payers money if these valuable plans are not used and completed. Something the city could do very easily would be to build an indoor waterpark. Where is the closest one? Sheboygan, Blue Harbor Resort? They are packed. They are utilizing their lake front in the winter. I am sure the Illinois people would love to drive a shorter distance to Racine, than Sheyboygan!
78	The City needs to focus its energy on promotion of the City, not charging for every service and park and zoo. We are driving people out of the City because of all the fees. We need to stop the emphasis on what we can collect from residents to what can we give them for all the tax dollars they contribute. We have gotten a lot of bad press and we need to high light something other than the beach. That gets old after awhile and is not the only

	good thing about the city.
79	I have heard over and over that this community needs more family friendly features, i.e. community swimming pool, ice skating area back to Johnson's park and much better planning. There is abandoned theatres, mini malls, buildings.
80	I think the sections of the city are too large/broad. I found it difficult to answer several questions because the section had 2 or more distinct, drastically different "zones" - downtown especially
81	So much to do, so many politics, so few visionary and responsible leaders.
82	I used to be proud to say I was from Racine. I am shocked that Kenosha has surpassed us as a desirable destination. They lost so many jobs, yet seem to deal with it and grow and improve.
83	What software is being used to run city gov't ops? If it's Microsoft, check with Kenosha. They've successfully been using Linux and open source software for some time now saving licensing costs, better security, better stability. Other city gov'ts, fed agencies, whole countries are making the move and experiencing lower TCO and better performance. If you want the truth about this, ask Ruth Schall and Tig Kerkman in Kenosha. Tell them Paul Nass (Mt Pleasant) sent you. You can reach me here if you'd like to discuss further: pnass@wi.rr.com
84	I have nothing more.
85	None.
86	I like that the city is seeking input from the residents, but I think each question should have a comment area so you can give details about the responses. Yes and no questions, even if strongly yes or no, are not a good indicator. I had difficulty answering some of the questions because I felt that explanations of my answers were warranted.
87	The recent West Racine proposal that was defeated was a completely misguided effort. West Racine is a stable community that could use a little help. Put in something that will draw the people that live in the community like a good restraurant, grocery, other specialty shops. Housing is not needed. Maybe a community center.
88	need better streets, do not use city money to buy foreclosed houses, Property taxes are to high, where does all the money go ? STOP DUMPING SEWAGE INTO THE LAKE.
89	None.
90	I have read the paper every day for the past 25 years and most of these plans are unfamiliar to me- they should be in the forefront of every neighborhood planning article
91	The downtown area and Douglas Avenue need to become a better place to live, work, and go to. Downtown has died.
92	Actually do something, instead of just talking about it!!
93	Racine has great potential. We've come a long way in the last decade, but we still have a way to go. Downtown has become a place to drive to, rather than drive through. Too many negative people here.
94	The survey was very good, but will the will of the people be implemented.
95	Racine needs more industry. It is as simple as that. Find out how other cities attracted companies and follow their lead.
96	The first part of the survey could be confusing. There are issues in there that are being addressed, but that does not mean they are getting resolved or even close to getting resolved.
97	In many ways Racine has really improved. But we still have a long way to go
98	Racine has serious issues and problems; we need jobs and a really visionary mayor and city council. Our current aldermen are average, dull, and not visionary at all
99	Cooperation among govt. organizations mandatory with limited resources
100	We can do it. Racine is facing same problems as many small cities. Let's make it a destination. Lets get Jon S. back from Florida and do a citywide destination plan. He spoke at Golden Rondelle to local biz's 2 years ago. He changed my biz by 2-fold just with that one hour lecture.
101	none