

## Focus Group #5 – Senior Residents Attendees

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## Seniors

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### *How do you feel about this community as a place for retired people to live?*

#### **City Management**

Small ordinances are on the books, but they don't get enforced.

#### **Housing**

Housing arrangement? One present resident lives in a duplex, but it's not senior property

#### **Outdoor Recreation**

But if you are looking 20 years out and trying to attract seniors, you need places for seniors to walk. I do my walk up and down B Ave.

parking lot, it would be nice walk around in the park by the trees, etc., but right now there is no sidewalk.

gym which is boring or just walking up and down my street.

#### **Overall**

much at home.

I have been retired for 22 years and as far as being a senior citizen in this town I have no complaints.

If I didn't like it here I would have been gone a long time ago.

Most of us grew up in the area or came here earlier for other reasons.

There are things that do bother me as an older adult that I hope doesn't get completely away from us.

When we moved here we thought we found a place to raise our children and get them thru school.

#### **Parking**

I am getting to the point where I will drive to Washington or the mall in Iowa City to shop because I do not like the parking situation downtown.

Angle parking downtown does not work out because when great big trucks and SUVs are parked there I cannot see when I try to back out; it's dangerous.

I wish our post office could be positioned so there was off street parking.

space for people to get out that pull in.

Public off street parking would help.

Would be nice to drive into the post office and have parking there.

#### **Traffic**

With a cane and I live at the other end of B Ave, if I forget to get my mail till 4:30, I am taking my life in my hands to cross B Ave. within the first block off the highway.

Speeding is not necessarily the kids.

If I go to the Post Office I go out through the community center and then come up and turn back onto the street because you cannot see even when you are in the street because of all those flying cars.

Other Areas where speeding has gotten out of hand? Downtown area.

terrible situation when there is a fire.

give them 2 lanes to go faster they will.

There wouldn't necessarily be two lanes of traffic in this town.

accommodate those tourists.

#### **Transportation**

would get us to local people.

Any town you go to that is building, sidewalks are important.

Can't believe you could put in any addition without putting in some sidewalks.

ride a bus downtown.

Sidewalks and bike paths are important and need to be connected to parks and you can get around

### ***What other issues are downtown?***

#### **Housing**

Are there enough options for alternative housing for people in different life stages?

I lived in an apartment for 17 years and I don't want to live in one again.

I own my half of the duplex outright, don't have those maintenance agreements and I like where I live because the people who built it built it right and I don't have to deal with the noise.

#### **Housing Market**

upgrading it now. Tenants are a little variety; used to have older people but low income took them away.

I have apartments for rent that aren't too pricey.

I have quite a few empty apartments at the moment, which is unique.

If Kalona is going to attract seniors, they are going to have to have alternative housing options.

Is there a line up of people who want low rent housing? We always have a line up.

Low income housing is always full.

The people we run around with in Iowa City have those types of housing (condo/multi-family).

#### **Infrastructure**

Improve the roads, put blacktop over the top.

Look at whole community, we have excellent streets.

traffic.

Streets around town need improving; 12th St. went out, just sunk, I think it has something to do with the storm sewer they put in on the corner a few years ago.

They need to cut down the curbs and make them all level for seniors.

#### **Traffic**

Look at the depth and the cracks in the concrete?

### ***What do you think about the new developments/growth?***

A dairy yard was at the corner of Highway 22.

Don't mind the growth but I do hate to see farmland eaten up.

seem like too many years ago-before 1950.

***Are there many seniors living in new homes?*** There are some that have moved in to live there.

***Are some seniors building?*** I know of 8 or 9 right off hand.

### ***Do you think more bi-attached or condo housing is really needed?***

Bi-attached by JW's and Highway 2 are empty.

I don't know because I don't think people understand the outline; I got my half for a song because it had been on the market for years and everyone was afraid of the outline.

One of the reasons I sold my condo because I was on the second floor (steps). At first I loved it but by the time I moved out the people in there were of much less quality.

not they can get along with their close neighbors. I came from Omaha and I wasn't afraid because that was what I was used to.

***Do you have any thoughts about transition housing?***

Doesn't Pleasantview always have waiting list? Right now they got 4 empty of the duplexes. I wouldn't buy it because they are no longer giving back 80% of what you invested in it. I have 5 children, hat to buy something like that at my age and not have any inheritance for my children. longer get a percentage back because of how it is set up. Senior living homes were all sold when they were being built and now these people passed away.

***Do you have any trails/connections input?***

once a year he walks home from work.  
water all too often.  
for trails there'd be nothing there, but it was an old RR bed.  
Riverside.

***Where do you walk for exercise?***

Middle of the street.  
No sidewalks in our area (9th St, 12th St. )  
People don't use the sidewalks that do exist in town.

***Is there any sidewalks north of H Avenue?***

J Ave has some sidewalks.  
You can't put sidewalks on one side; need to put them on both sides.

***What are your comments on recreational needs?***

Could senior activities be worked through the library?  
I also walk in the gym, but if it's a day the kids are in school, the hours aren't really good.  
I don't walk in the gym at all on Saturdays.  
I walk in JW's on Saturdays because I have to walk.  
Our rec center could offer more opportunities for senior citizens.  
Wellman's senior citizen center has activities for seniors; our rec center doesn't have any of those.

***Are there adequate activities/groups/clubs for seniors in town?***

I came in 68 and I am still an outsider because this is a very close knit community and parents have kids and the kids stay in the area, which is very rare.  
I have to force my neighbors to say hello to me.  
If there are, I don't know about them.  
happenings.  
There are things, but they aren't publicized.

***Other thoughts, an idea about the community in terms of input for this comprehensive plan/what bothers you about Kalona?***

**Burning in Town**

It's not just Yard Waste that are being burnt, its trash and it smells terrible.

DNR told me you can burn anything that doesn't smoke (i.e. dried wood)

One day I could not stay downtown because somewhere trash was being burned and was hanging over the downtown; I have asthma so I left and went somewhere else.

Trash burning, never suppose to burn trash, my neighbors burn trash.

**City Management**

If there are some laws on the books that aren't being enforced, they need to do it.

Need to do more planning than reacting because we can't always be like we've always been.

Public buildings should look nice, somebody has to set the tone; I think it's a shame city hasn't run anyone around to pick up some limbs that fall down.

anything.

Only ways you make improvement are to look far out and see what changes need to be made.

**Yard Waste**

People dump Yard Waste in the road ditches.

People Yard Waste them in the streets all the time, it's no wonder they're clogged all the time, half day a week.

**Public Appearance**

We need more streetlights; we are a little weak on lights.

Cleaning: Clean up these junk yards, cars, trash.

Had a guy pull in a junk car to my apartment parking lot.

Junk cars are one ordinance that is on the books and says they have to be moved that is not enforced.

Some areas look bad.

you have.

Yards are pathetic and getting worse.

**Publicity**

Many people passing by have no idea what is going on here.

***What things about Kalona should be reinforced?***

**Events**

Horse show.

Quilts

**Local Amenities**

Good school.

Kalona voted on it 5 times before the bond passed to get a swimming pool.

Library supporters did a lot of leg work and talking to get the vote out.

New general store coming and I hope people patronize it.

We didn't have a swimming pool and my kids wish they could have had one.

**Local Businesses**

people into town.

Kalona now has a wide variety of choices of where you want to go to eat, even on Sunday.

We appreciate the grocery store.

We have to use stores to keep them here.

When I grew up we had 3 car dealerships and 5 implement dealers. Today we have one implement dealer and no automotive; we have used, but not a new car dealership.

Local Services

It would be very bad if this town didn't have a nice grocery store. Some people complain, but they have a variety and we have to keep them in town.

It's nice to have a nice grocery store in town.

### **Overall**

Must be some positive things because visitors want to come see me and spend some time in Kalona.

Don't know if we have a place where gangs hang out.

Nice clean people.

We have a good clean town here, people wise.

### **Publicity**

is going on in Kalona.

### ***What do you think about the Riverside Casino?***

benefit ourselves.

As far as the Casino, I don't care if it's there.

Hope Kalona people don't shut the casino out.

I think whether we were for or against, it's done now we need to learn how to live with it.

It seems like towns are already benefiting from it.

### ***What would be the image on that sign directing people to Kalona?***

Indicate what's going on downtown.

Sign out there is tasteful.

Sign with names, museum.

We still have a sign south of town that says something about the burned variety store.