

What does “Business as Usual” look like?

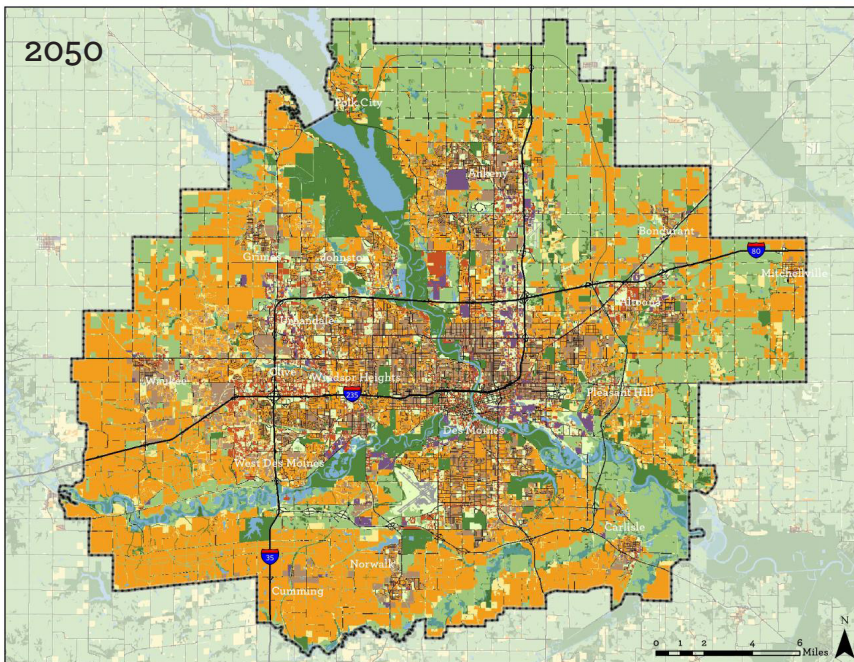
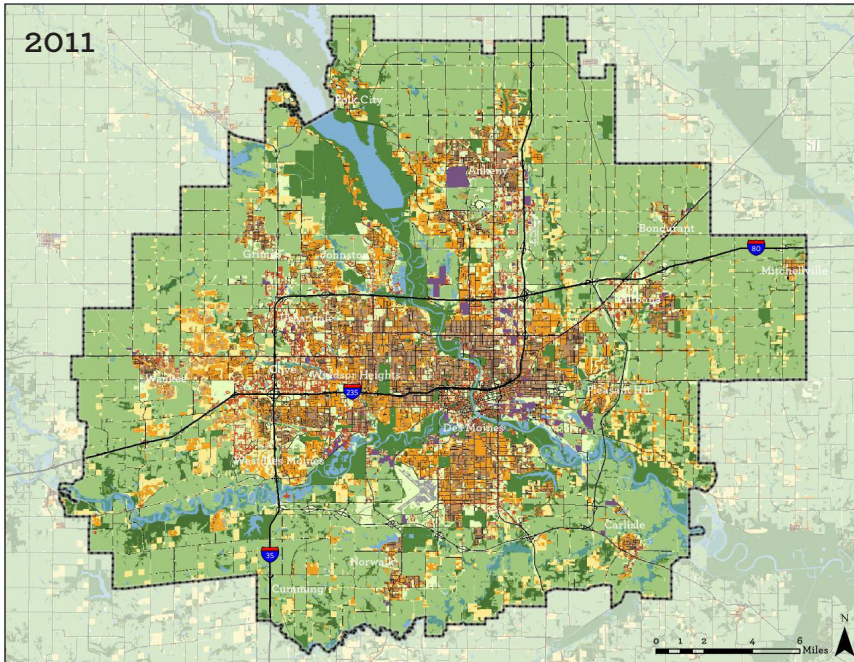
What do you like about the “Business as Usual” future?












What would you change?

The “Business as Usual” scenario...

...is a picture of what the **region as a whole** might look like in 2050 if current development practices continue; the model is **based on current trends and policies**.

The baseline is not a destination, but rather **a starting point** in considering what **a more sustainable future** for Greater Des Moines would look like.



		% OF STUDY AREA	
LAND USE		2011	2050
	Commercial	2.9%	3.4%
	Industrial	1.0%	1.3%
	Urban residential	4.6%	8.0%
	Suburban residential	8.4%	33.8%
	Rural residential	6.4%	4.4%
	Water	2.9%	2.9%
	Barren or shrub	1.6%	1.1%
	Forested	5.0%	2.7%
	Agriculture	46.0%	23.9%
	Wetlands	3.4%	3.4%
	Other	17.7%	15.0%

Missing data, roads, parking lots, government buildings, stadiums, golf courses, etc.

What did we hear?

Initial reactions to “Business as Usual” included a mix of observations, questions, and judgements:

- A number of people agreed that the “Business as Usual” pattern looks about as they would expect
- Many are concerned by what appears to be a lot of sprawl
- In general, growth in jobs and population is received positively, though some question the nature of that growth
- Most people commented on the amount of residential growth to the southwest is very noticeable, and some suggested it could be a financial opportunity
- Some surprise and concern that development is not more balanced among land uses
- Concern about potential decrease in green space, open space, and agricultural land
- Concern and questions about a number of topics:
 - Cost of providing services and infrastructure
 - Impact of peripheral development on downtown
 - Impact on walkability and transportation networks

“What is driving this pattern and what can we do to change it?”

“Business As Usual is a sad loss of that much agricultural and green space ”

Attendees expressed many ideas and opinions on major regional issues:

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Climate, hydrology, landscape

- Interest in protecting greenbelts along rivers, flood plains, and upstream watersheds
- Concern around stormwater runoff and water quality
- **“Flooding is a quality of life issue”**
- Solutions to flooding and drainage issues could range from policies to keep water where it falls (on-site collection) to encouraging more permeable surfaces

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Recreation, air, water, land use, transportation, infrastructure, public health

- Recognize need for natural areas and habitat

- Desire for more parks, or at least not a future reduction in amount of park space per person
- **“Need a coordinated look at where and how future parks could be developed”** (especially as it ties to development requirements and schools)
- Trails are a significant regional resource and should be proactively planned for and maintained
- Wide range of approaches to agricultural land use, from protecting farmland at all costs to encouraging other uses
- Interest in agricultural diversification and local food production, including urban gardens
- Some support for “balanced growth,” but more general interest in dense, compact development as well as infill/redevelopment of existing sites and buildings

- Downtown Des Moines benefits the region as a whole and its vitality should be a regional priority, especially as a large proportion of downtown cultural amenities are tax-exempt
- Strong desire for more transportation mode choice: **“Need ways to connect the communities that aren’t car based”**
- General interest in light rail or BRT, though questions about cost and feasibility
- Support for increased walkability
- Recognition that the cost of infrastructure generally relates to the density of development, but question around who should bear that cost
- Awareness of competition for tax revenue amongst municipalities

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Jobs, economy, education, spending

- Recognition of relationship between locations of jobs and housing, and questions around how that might change with technological advances

- Range of suggestions on how to increase the number of jobs, with particular interest in manufacturing/ industry
- Education has an important role in regional planning

SOCIAL EQUITY

Housing, community, place, governance

- Recognition that changing demographics will greatly impact the need for increased housing choice, with particular concern around housing the aging population and the future workforce
- Unique community identities are appreciated, and attract different types of people
- Having a sense of community is central to living in Greater Des Moines
- Call for increased civic engagement, political leadership, and regional coordination
- Recognition that regional cooperation is a challenge, but that common ground does exist
- **“The competition is not each other, it is other regions”**

The public meeting presentation covered land supply, employment centers, housing choice, open space, and flooding, so it is not unexpected that these themes came up regularly in discussion.

Priorities from Outreach Series #2 discussions:

HIGH	Transportation— <i>transportation choice, public transit, walkability</i>	
	Hydrology— <i>watershed protection, flood control, runoff and water quality</i>	
	Parks, Recreation & Open Space— <i>maintaining and improving trail system, protecting natural resources</i>	
MEDIUM	Land Use/Development	
	Community	
	Governance	
LOW	Agriculture & Food Systems	Infrastructure
	Education	Downtown
	Housing	Economy
	Air Quality	Energy