Thematic Feedback/Table Notes

Vibrant NEO 2040
"Business As Usual" Scenario Workshops
April 30 – May 2, 2013

This document is a record of the notes taken by volunteer note-takers during the mapping exercise conducted at the Vibrant NEO 2040 "Business As Usual" Scenario Workshop Series. The Workshop Series consisted of six events:

Tuesday, April 30	The Oberlin Inn Oberlin	John F. Kennedy High School Warren
Wednesday, May 1	Third Federal Savings & Loan Cleveland	The Metropolitan Center Canton
Thursday, May 2	Akron Urban League Akron	Cuyahoga Community College – Corporate College East Warrensville Heights

The quantity of notes produced by each table ranged from 0-2 handwritten pages; of the total 88 tables at the six workshop locations, approximately 24 tables did not submit notes. The notes were accompanied by an annotated map depicting the table group's preferred vision for the future of Northeast Ohio.

The notes have been organized into ten categories to help reveal recurring themes from the feedback received:

1. Abandonment
2. Outward Migration
3. Fiscal Impacts
4. Economy/Jobs
5. Environment
6. Housing
7. Transportation/Connections
8. Land Use
9. Issues
10. Broad Themes

When a similar comment was made at multiple tables, the total frequency of that comment is indicated in parentheses, i.e. (4).

The feedback received via the table notes is being synthesized with the results of the online polling that occurred at the workshops, the outcomes of the mapping exercise, and other comments received in the feedback surveys and email. Together, this feedback will be used to help inform the development of alternative scenarios for the future of Northeast Ohio.

Thematic Feedback/Table Notes
Team West Site #1 - Oberlin Inn

Abandonment
- Develop inner-ring suburbs of Cleveland to decrease Cuyahoga County population decline
- East Cleveland is a huge area of vacancy – almost easier to raise it and start over
- Redevelop all types of abandoned properties in urban areas (3)
- Deter development of "Business Parks" to keep businesses in central cities

Outward Migration
- Population dropping like a "rock" and not just in our urban areas
- Create community "centers"
- Expand the Emerald Necklace to slow some suburban sprawl

Fiscal Impacts
- Consolidate government bodies across the region
- It is a waste of money for Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) and Lorain County Community College (LCCC) to build right on county lines

Economy/Jobs
- Cleveland is the region's economic base
- Columbus is the state's economic hub
- Develop more jobs in Oberlin area
- Create more jobs in NEO (5)
- Once one business relocates back to the city center, more will follow

Environment
- Preserve Cleveland's green spaces
- Protect Chippewa Lake and overall water integrity
- Protect the watersheds
- Protect and expand parks (2)
- Invest in Lake Erie (3)
- Expand parks to follow Black River
- Invest in Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNPS) and Emerald Necklace

Housing
- Senior housing – make it easier for seniors to live in urban areas (2)
- Mentor is a "one bedroom" community

Transportation/Connections
- Light rail connecting Cleveland to the rest of the region (From Cleveland down I-71, along Rt. 18 and Rt. 3) (5)

- Expand all public transportation
- Invest/expand Cleveland Hopkins International Airport
- Bike paths throughout the region (6) (Lorain-Elyria, Mentor-Painesville – less than 30-minute trips)
- Connect Indianapolis to Cleveland with bike paths
- Better maintenance on current roads – no more new highways
- Transportation must have to access jobs
- Expand I-490 to University Circle
- Widen Rt. 42 – dead zone around Medina and Wadsworth

Land Use
- Protect farmland (6)
- Mixed-use development in parts of Lake County
- More compact development in Cleveland and Akron (2)
- Conserve/protect region's historic districts (3)
- Allow some suburban style growth/do not get rid of all of it (Akron, Westlake, etc.)
- Reinforce and develop along I-77 in Greater Cleveland
- Dense development in downtown centers and along transit routes

Issues
- Columbus impacts Lorain County more than Cleveland does
- Concern about property rights and eminent domain
- Invest in schools (3)
- It costs more to reinvest than to build new compact communities
- High Speed Rail (HSR) would be nice but we missed that boat when Governor Kasich returned funding to the federal government
- What about people who do not pay taxes?
- Handle this at a local level – private property rights (5)

Broad Themes
- How will this be implemented, if at all?
- How do we build collaboration between government bodies and other planning entities?
- "Don't want people living in my community making decisions about it."

Thematic Feedback/Table Notes
Team West Site #2 - Metropolitan Centre

Abandonment
- Reinvest in the region's urban cores/where there is already development
- Cleveland is beginning to look up (positive trajectory)
- Compact development in Alliance with MAJOR reinvestment
- Arlington Road, north of Waterloo, needs reinvestment
- North Hill needs investment
- Cuyahoga Falls, east of the river, needs development

Outward Migration
- Attract young people back to Stark County – what do they want?

Fiscal Impacts
- Update the IX Center in Cleveland – bring regional tourism and stimulate economy
- Reinvest in Medical Center in Cleveland to stimulate funds

Economy/Jobs
- Hospital jobs are the future of the region's economy
- Alliance needs new industrial and services jobs
- Create jobs – Rubbermaid, Hoover, Timken, Diebold have all downsized
- More tourism needed (Waterpark in Wayne/Stark?) (2)
- Artificial boom due to oil and gas (fracking) in the area

Environment
- Protect lakes and watersheds (2)
- Hiking and biking trail from Turkey Foot Park to the Tow Path
- Bike paths between Canton and Massillon and Louisville and Alliance
- Promote the Erie Canal Tow Path
- Connect Wooster and Massillon with a trail, also to Rittman and Lodi
- Eat local – urban farms

Housing
- More retirement communities in Amish Country

Transportation/Connections
- Light rail connections to other job centers/urban areas (from Canton to Cleveland) (2)
- Rt. 57 to Smucker's plant – road gets really congested
- Rt. 585 should be an expressway
- Expand all roads in Wooster (Rtes. 575, 57, 83, and 3)
- Widen berms for safety issues – dangerous for Buggies
- High-speed rail from Cleveland to Cincinnati along the I-77 corridor and Rt. 30 to I-71

Land Use

- Protect farmland (near Wooster) (3)
- Protect historic areas
- Protect currently undeveloped areas (between Canton and Akron/between Canton and Alliance)
- Suburban development only along Rt. 62 (near Louisville), around Green, and Rt. 18
- Like what Akron has done downtown (Ballpark, Lock 3, etc.)
- Dense development in urban centers

Issues
- How do we communicate more of this information to the younger generations?
- Who are we planning for – who will be here at 2040?
- City resources need to be extended beyond City of Canton lines.

Broad Themes
- Light rail would be nice but would enough people use it in order for it to sustain itself?
- How will you deal with any resistance the local government entities provide – these are our hopes!
- How will the Agenda 21 people impact the progress of this initiative?

Thematic Feedback/Table Notes
Team West Site #3 - Akron Urban League

Abandonment
- Reinvest in major cities as regional anchors (3)
- De-annexation as a way to cope with excess space
- Due to predatory lending trends – future foreclosures/abandonment will not continue to be as severe
- Incentivize vacant storefront renovation
- Preserve Highland Square (3)
- Invest in Summit Lake area
- Protect Fairlawn area – keep it suburban
- Invest in Downtown Canton, Wooster, Kenmore, Alliance, Kent, Rolling Acres and Copley (4)
- Repair Garfield Heights, East Cleveland (used to be a great area)
- Reduce abandonment with innovative, new land uses

Outward Migration
- Our current policy system incentivizes sprawl (Townships with JEDDs)
- Create development rings to keep areas of development the same size they are today and promote infill development
- Align growth with existing infrastructure (between Canton and Cleveland)
- Walkable neighborhoods/cities
- Develop all of Cuyahoga Valley National Park – will attract new residents
- Smart/Balance growth in Medina and Northern Stark County

Fiscal Impacts
- Impossible to coordinate regional (and local) government bodies
- Reduce government fragmentation
- Funding and regulation concerns: Who pays for this?

Economy/Jobs
- How will upcoming retirees impact the number of jobs available in the region's future?
- Invest in Cleveland as the economic core of the region
- Must create more jobs with liveable wages (8)
- Need to diversify – region too reliant on hospitals and social services for jobs
- Prevent "leaky bucket effect" – keep money circulating within the region
- Akron is going to be a college and hospital town – is this a good thing?

Environment
- We use too many toxic resources to maintain roadways
- Create more greenspace – find ways to plant more trees in all areas

- Protect watersheds – improvements in rivers that drain into Lake Erie will improve Lake Erie itself
- Leverage Akron waterways as tourist/greenspace (Canal System)
- More park space in urban centers
- Land conservancy issues versus property rights of owner

Housing
- If abandonment is an issue – stop building more homes
- Younger people desire "urban" housing and lifestyle (3)
- More needed in downtown Akron
- No shopping for basic amenities to support housing in urban areas
- Invest in senior housing regionally

Transportation/Connections
- Add bike trails (5)
- Connect Canton to Cleveland and Youngstown and Columbus with rail or create "Express Bus" (15) (European Style Public Transit) (Make steel for this in NEO)
- Akron/Canton Airport needs to be tied to public transportation (3)
- Improved maintenance of current roads – stop building more of them (4)

Land Use
- Preserve all current greenspace and farmland (6)
- Increase accessibility of urban agricultural zoning
- More compact development in/between Barberton and other high growth, urban centers (Akron, Medina, Copley, Green, Rt. 18 corridor)
- Prevent industrial growth in suburban areas
- Plain Township (Stark County) should be traditional development/reinvestment
- Home Rule
- Make larger lot sizes available (if desired) in urban areas
- Preserve current low-density between Massillon and Barberton

Issues
- Invest in safety in central cities – main deterrent to people coming back to them
- Must keep the region affordable for everyone
- Improve schools in ALL major cities – will help draw people back to them

Broad Themes
- "As goes Cleveland, so goes the region." (3)
- Brain drain!
- Multi-organizational collaboration (zoo and neighborhood nonprofits)
- Private property rights: who decides what goes where?

Thematic Feedback/Table Notes
Team East Site #4 - Third Federal Savings

Abandonment
- No need for city
- Save Parma before it declines
- Look at clusters or circles of reinforcement and reinvestment so they can reinforce each other
- Dispersed growth leads to abandonment and can be dangerous
- Urban Growth Boundary – may make the Cleveland too expensive to grow (2)
- Infill development is predominantly in the existing places
- Focused developments in the purple
- Lots of opportunities to reinvest and sustain what we have
- Abandoned areas lend themselves to multiple uses (2)

Outward Migration
- Attitudes of young people have changed – want to be downtown (Is the theory that this trend will continue?)
- The majority of people are moving out of cities

Fiscal Impacts
- No money where people do not already live
- Tax abatements, storefront renovations
- Unsustainable patterns of sprawl
- Lower taxes
- Industry that can bring in tax revenue and fits a particular community

Economy/Jobs
- Bring jobs back to Akron and Cleveland
- Old economy based on heavy manufacturing is gone
- People work at home
- Services growth

Environment
- Protect national parks and metroparks (5)
- Reinvest in Forest Hills and Rockefeller Park
- Realize that Lake Erie is one of our greatest assets (3)
- Need green infrastructure throughout, especially for river
- sheds and watersheds
- Green space in Rockefeller Park and through Shaker Lakes, Black River, Cuyahoga River
- Protect water sources: include headwaters and capillaries that feed rivers and lakes (2)
- Protect and provide public use of lakefront

Housing
- Need to market inner ring suburban neighborhoods (2)

- Some room for exurban/dispersed growth (5-10%)
- New compact housing in downtown areas
- Repair struggling neighborhoods in Parma, East Cleveland, Garfield Height and Euclid (2)
- Who is moving downtown – DINKS and Retirees?
- Need to reinvest in the areas with hyper abandonment (4)
- We need to consider all lifestyles and in the past it has been urban versus suburban
- Sustain investment/growth in University Circle, Little Italy, Coventry, Gordon Square, Downtown, Waterloo, and Ohio City (3)
- Reinvest in East Cleveland
- Protect old, strong neighborhoods
- E 185th Street – reinvestment
- Compact housing in University Circle, Kent, Akron, Oberlin, and historic town centers and in downtown Cleveland, Akron, and Youngstown (3)
- Compact housing in University Circle, existing areas with some density (downtown areas)

Transportation/Connections
- Extend RTA redline and Health Line to Euclid and Mentor to connect downtown (2)
- Better connections East and West (especially Tremont and Slavic Village)
- Rail is more reliable – expand it and public transportation in general (5)
- Cleveland to Akron rail/transit – connect major city centers (build upon what exists in Cuyahoga Valley National Park) (4)
- Compact growth next to transit hubs (3)
- Increase ability to be mobile without being dependent on cars and gas with reality of rising gas prices
- Light rail extension – redline or a new line from E. 55th Street (2)
- Complete the Ohio Canal Corridor – Towpath Trail and create greenway links, green-rings and lakefront bike paths
- No new highway development; reinvest in the current transportation infrastructure
- Need more safe, bike-able repairs to existing roads – need maintenance and improvements to existing roads – along Lake Erie in Lakewood, along Martin Luther King Boulevard/Rockefeller Park and Clark Avenue (7)
- While we have ODOT resources from turnpike revenue sharing public transit is forgotten
- Lakefront Park – bike/walking all along lakefront
- Transit in Lorain County

Land Use
- Compact development, reinforcement and reinvestment in inner ring suburbs and major regional arteries
- Reinvestment in stable communities, reinforcement in struggling urban core
- Move forward on Cleveland Public Square improvement project
- Preserve parks and farmland (3)

- Put low density development near parks, near urban centers, fronting green space
- Reinforce mid-20th century suburbs
- We need to be careful in finding a balance between adequate roads and too much roadway making it easy to leave
- Urban agriculture is replacing something
- Ring of dense reinvestment around central Cleveland (2)

Issues
- Who will pay for this?
- Why do policy decisions differ from what people want?
- Is abandonment a bad thing?
- Is dispersed growth ever a good thing?
- We don't want the government taking our property
- This never happens in reality?

Thematic Feedback/Table Notes
Team East Site #5 - Corporate College East

Abandonment
- Fix what we have got in all our communities
- Do what it takes to stop abandonment
- Reinvest in core cities – high density

Outward Migration
- These trends make it hard to want to invest in cities like Cleveland
- Explore the idea of the Portland Urban Growth Boundary

Fiscal Impact
- Government waste is an issue in NEO
- Reinforcement is much more expensive than new development

Economy/Jobs
- The market will decided
- Create jobs!!
- Job growth possible along I-480 corridor
- Will regionalism create competition between the cities for jobs?
- Taxes will have to go up if development continues outward
- Need job growth to support any type of redevelopment, reinvestment or stabilization

Environment
- Better beaches along the lake
- Preserve parks and farmland (3)
- Connect Metroparks
- Protect Lake Erie (2)
- How much growth can our water basin support?

Housing
- Single family housing in safe neighborhoods
- Invest in housing in central, urban areas
- Suburban development along parks to support use and maintain a pleasing aesthetic
- Suburban development will continue if developers willing to pay for infrastructure

Transportation/Connections
- Create public transportation along the lakeshore
- Expand public transportation in all directions (South to Akron, to Euclid/Mentor, West to Lorain/Oberlin, and to Ashtabula) (3)
- Multimodal transportation hubs in the 4 metros (Cleveland, Akron, Canton, Youngstown)
- Use bike paths as a way to connect places/urban areas

- No new highways needed
- Greenway connections
- I-480 is horrible – widen and repave

Land Use
- Build around the infrastructure that is already in place (3)
- A central "district" is desirable in all communities
- Grow existing town centers – mixed-use development appropriate here
- Preserve historic districts (2)
- Dispersed development in Geauga County and that's okay

Issues
- What about property owner's rights? (3)
- Better government functioning is needed – property use is none of their business (2)

Thematic Feedback/Table Notes
Team East Site #6 - John F. Kennedy High School

Abandonment
- No new development, except in Youngstown where housing has been abandoned
- Invest in existing communities and urban cores (6)
- Build multi-use property on already abandoned lots
- Really bad areas should be bulldozed (2)
- Protect historic districts regardless of their current condition

Outward Migration
- Redevelopment should use existing infrastructure
- Want smart growth; infrastructure exists in Lordstown but capacity remains for growth that never happened
- Starting to see young people moving back into city centers
- Attract Cleveland commuters to the area

Fiscal Impacts
- Current trends result in unaffordable infrastructure
- 4 MPO's compete amongst one another instead of collaborate
- All spending goes to Warren – new schools with poor results
- Keep rural, urban and shoreline revenue in the region – property tax sharing enables the elimination of competition
- Schools are the critical anchor
- Need to lower taxes and cut regulations on businesses
- Taxes are high

Economy/Jobs
- Salem example: has potential to be a walk-able downtown but so much of the business district has been lost
- Jobs are what we need to focus on, regardless of density
- Get back some of the lost industrial jobs
- Sales tax is a policy issue – no tax in PA so people go there for shopping

Environment
- Protect Parks (4)
- Increase/Invest in bike trails (4)
- Protect agricultural areas/wineries
- Protect all water resources – Meander/Mosquito/Erie (4)
- Develop Mahoning River bike trails (2)
- Highlight the lakefront

Housing
- There is plenty of housing in the area, no need for more new home building
- Storefronts/rental units – take better advantage of Kent State campus in Ashtabula
- People from Pittsburgh coming to distressed neighborhoods because they can get homes for dirt-cheap
- Reinvest in Warren – need to market/leverage historic homes in cities to other areas (outside of region)

Transportation/Connections
- Dream would be to have light rail connections (8)
- Train station in downtown Youngstown
- Rt. 422 in Niles needs some "love"
- New businesses that may locate to NEO look for infrastructure, transportation becoming a big issue
- Fewer cars, interstate falling apart (tolls as a revenue to maintain?)
- Maintain current infrastructure and develop connections and the master transit system
- Public transit investment (3)
- Route 11 is the artery between Youngstown and Warren to Ashtabula
- Companies that want to move here need to have places with transportation, therefore compact growth was emphasized and rail connecting major city centers

Land Use
- Not to this region's advantage to develop on periphery
- Protect rural areas
- Kinsman needs more neighborhood reinforcement, especially with new sewer treatment
- Neighborhood reinvestment needed in Warren and Youngstown – reinforcement needed in some Youngstown areas (Liberty and Canfield)
- Compact growth needed in central business districts of Warren and Youngstown
- Compact growth in Andover
- Keep our agriculture land protected, more farmers growing food for our region's people (5)
- Balanced development – dispersed and compact
- Clean up brownfields

Issues
- More social services need to be provided close to residential areas
- Problem in Ashtabula – Crime
- Spending money we don't have is a concern (2)

Broad Topics
- Why take a rural setting and make it dense?
- Landbank as a way to mediate growth?