Forward 2040 Town Hall Meetings – Summaries

Introduction

Three town hall style public meetings were held to foster community discussion around three intentionally broad subjects: sustainability, diversity and engagement, and community amenities. The intent of these meetings was to provide an opportunity for community members to discuss what they believe are the most important issues relative to these subjects and share their ideas about how the City should address them over the next 20 years. Input received at these meetings will help inform the drafting of policies, strategies, and priorities in the Forward 2040 plan.

At the start of each town hall meeting, staff provided a brief overview of the comprehensive plan and the Forward 2040 update. An overview of key trends relative to the meeting subject was also provided. These are summarized below under the headings for each town hall meeting.

Approach: The town hall meetings were organized as facilitated discussions. At each meeting a question was posed specific to the meeting topic. Participants worked first individually, and then in groups, to suggest ideas to address the question. Ideas were shared and clustered into groups based on similarity. Clusters were then named and refined around clear action steps. The resulting list of actions and ideas were compiled into tabular form, shown on pp 5-15.

Town Hall Meetings

1. *Sustainability – June 22, 2016, 6:00-8:00 pm*

This meeting, held at Jefferson High School, was attended by approximately 54 people.

Key Trends:

- Climate change
  - Average temperatures are rising, which increase the likelihood of weather-related natural disasters.
- Water quality
  - Recent headlines have included the water contamination in Flint, MI and wells being closed in St. Anthony and New Brighton.
- Energy consumption
  - MN has the potential to produce 150 times as much electricity from solar power as the state consumes each year.
- Waste
  - As a growing population, we have a lot of stuff that we use for a short amount of time before tossing it into the landfill (example – consumer electronics/cell phones). What are some ways we can do more to use less, reuse and recycle?

A number of the major sustainability issues may be beyond or outside of the City's control; however, local strategies may still have an impact.

Suggested Actions:
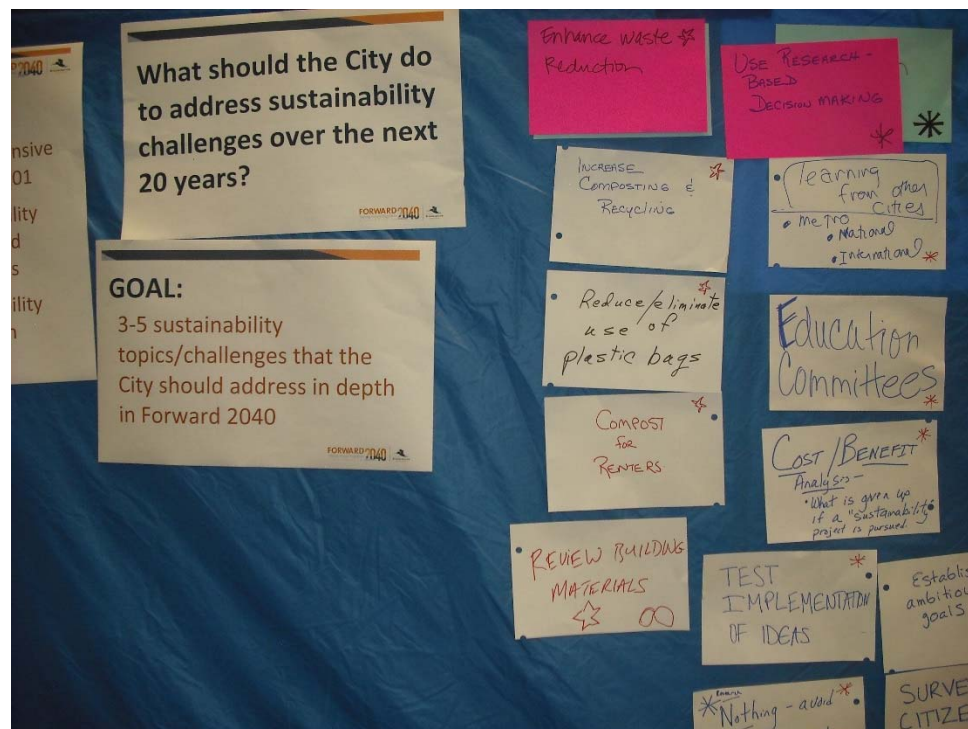
2. *Diversity & Engagement – July 13, 2016, 6:00-8:00 pm*

This meeting, held at Kennedy High School, was attended by over 60 people.

Key Trends (also see graphics on pp 16-18):

- Bloomington is a "fully-developed" suburb and experienced its largest population growth in the 1960s. Since 1970, the population has experienced limited growth, but the character of the population has changed significantly:
    - Increasingly diverse racially/ethnically – between 1970 and 2010 the City's non-white population increased from 1% to 20%
    - Aging population – between 1970 and 2010 the City's senior population (over age 65) increased from 3% to 18%
    - Household size has declined from 3.7 persons per household in 1970 to 2.3 persons per household in 2010.
- Socio-demographic changes varied between the east and west sides of Bloomington between 2000 and 2010:
    - West Bloomington has experienced a decline in population, while east Bloomington experienced some increases
    - West Bloomington residents are older than east Bloomington residents
    - Household sizes declined most in west Bloomington and increased in east Bloomington
    - East Bloomington has higher rates of poverty than west Bloomington
    - East Bloomington has more non-white residents than west Bloomington
    - There are more non-English speaking households in east than west Bloomington

Suggested Actions: see pp 9-13.

3. *Community Amenities – July 20, 2016, 6:00-8:00 pm*

This meeting, held at Olson Middle School, was attended by about 30 people.

Key Trends (also see graphics on pp 19-20):

- Much of Bloomington's infrastructure and community facilities are over 35 and 45 years old.
- Many park facilities, fire stations, sewer and water pipes were constructed during the 1960s and 70s and will need to be replaced over the next 20 years.
- Bloomington's housing supply is also aging; however, private owners routinely upgrade.
- Bloomington contains a wealth of amenities that residents highly value, including: great parks and recreation programs, ample open space, and a growing network of bicycle and pedestrian trails.
- The City has long-standing partnerships with other agencies and service providers such as the School District, Hennepin County libraries, the US Fish & Wildlife Refuge, Three Rivers Parks District, Artistry, Historical Society, and others.

Suggested Actions: see pp 14-15

Sustainability
June 22, 2016
Group A

What should the City do to address sustainability challenges over the next 20 years?

Enhance Waste Reduction	**Use Research Based Decision Making**	**Maximize Citizen Involvement**	**Improve Mobility Options**
• Increase composting & recycling • Reduce/eliminate plastic bag use • Compost for renters • Review building materials	• Learn from other cities, nationally and internationally • Education Committees • Cost benefit analysis (what is given up if a sustainability project is pursued?) • Test implementation of ideas • Do nothing (avoid intrusion into citizens lives)	• Citizen involvement and buy in • Advisory committees • Enhance meaningful rather and menial volunteer opportunities • Include young people • Schools emphasizing environmental and dual languages • Establish ambitious goals • Survey citizens and businesses	• Mobility • Multi-modal transportation (include shaded walk) • Adequate public transportation • Reduce need for cars • Traffic congestion • More bike friendly roads • Bike path expansion • Traffic circles • City-wide fiber optic (telecommuting) • Improve local roads

What should the City do to address sustainability challenges over the next 20 years?

Broaden Community Development	**Revisit City Services**	**Protect Natural Resources**	**Improve Energy Management**
• Walkable mixed use development • Aging population housing options • Food support (lower barriers for chicken coops, $ for school gardens) • $ for sustainable improvements to homes • More City built raingardens for run off • Diversify tax base • New intergenerational community center with the YMCA	• Make code more flexible • Resilience (power, heat flood, energy planning) • Maintenance and preservation of aging infrastructure • Sustainable building codes • Maintenance and upgrades of open spaces and water management systems • Include all ideas to be for all business, government, renters, residential, non-profits, and large residential complexes • Services	• Integrated with state, county, city US Fish and Wildlife • Sell fruit and resin trees • Water conservation quality • Implement wild/native lawns • Pesticides • Maintain water quality • Advocate / prioritize policies to protect water source quality • Reimbursement for rain barrel purchase • Keep MN Valley trail natural • Salt training for maintenance • Low flow toilets reimbursed for residential, mandated commercially • Landscaper training (no green in streets) • Clean up polluted lands	• Energy action plan (smart grid) (partners in energy with Excel) • Convert city/public building to renewable energy • Shared solar gardens • Solar tech for renters • Alternative energy choices

What should the City do to address sustainability challenges over the next 20 years?

Provide a Range of Sustainable Transportation Options	Conserve our Natural Resources	Reduce Waste	Provide a Range of Diverse Housing Options	Frameworks
• Trails/bike trails – traffic calming • Improve transportation option • More transportation options • Promote Biz WFH	• Drinking water • Surface water • Preserve nature • More pollinator friendly gardens/native plants • Increase recycling rates • Promote rain gardens • Water conservation and quality	• Composting • Decrease Food Waste • Reduce water usage • Eliminate plastic bag usage	• Affordable housing • Keep Bloomington as an affordable place for current residents to live • Ensure housing mix matches projected employment opportunities and vice-versa	• Dashboard for transparency • Join Green step cities • Appoint sustainability commission • Create neighborhood identities • Work together with neighboring cities • Climate action plan • Benchmark city utility usage • Renew initiative program to track gas / carbon emissions

What should the City do to address sustainability challenges over the next 20 years?

Environmental Friendly & Functional Infrastructure	Act of 1871?	Range of Job Opportunities	Reduce Economic Disparities
• Promote LEED certified building development • Zero emission city services • City contract with Ten K Solar for community solar • Replacing aging infrastructure • Green energy expansion • Infrastructure / energy • Solar roadways	•	• Continue what we have?	•

What should the City welcome, support, and engage our changing population over the next 20 years?

Increase Civic Engagement	Refocus to meet Educational Needs of Everyone	Recruit in Diverse Areas to Improve Staffing	Design Intentional Community Events	Improve Communication	Build A Community Center
• Engage Voters	• Education • ESL Groups • Professional Role Models for High School Students (similar background / culture) • Diversity Training in Schools • Summer/After School Programs for 13-16 year-olds • Strengthen Pre-K	• Diversity among Elected, Teachers, Leaders • Intentional Diversity of City Staff and Officials • Diverse Workforce (Government)	• Diverse Community Events (Culture) • Events for a Diverse Population • Community Forums on Issues of Similarities rather than Differences • Listen, Learn, Engage to Create Improved Community Relationships	• Social Media • Provide Resources (parks, public health, community events in different languages, job opportunity, etc.) • Communication Information Improvements • Getting the Word Out	• Central Community Attraction • Intergenerational Y and Community Center

What should the City welcome, support, and engage our changing population over the next 20 years?

Improve Local Transportation	**Provide Wide Variety/Range of Housing**	**Improve Community Police Relationships**	**Create More Robust Community Collaboration**	**Broaden/Enhance Employment Opportunities**	**Strengthen Neighborhoods**
• Mobility, accessibility, bike lanes • Transportation options • Improve pedestrian safety and amenities	• Affordable housing (West Side) • Housing options for aging in place • Adjust zoning and promote affordable home ownership	• Build trust with police and judicial • Education to police of diverse populations • Strengthen safety net (domestic violence, poverty, homelessness, trafficking) • Representation • Cultural competency training	• Easier access to public facilities for recreational activities • Formalized regular meetings between school district and City government regarding synergies • Enhance/ increase City and School District involvement / services that ensure inclusive diversity (particularly in recreation / out of school	• Increase minimum wage	• Park improvements • Neighborhood meeting • Belonging • Increase neighborhood volunteer projects • Neighborhood – led gathering spaces • Reach out to new people in your community • Welcome Wagon • Commercial (re)-development along southern corridor • Organize identifiable neighborhoods

What should the City welcome, support, and engage our changing population over the next 20 years?

Provide World Class Education System	**Build Inclusive Programs**	**Provide Clear Accessible Communication**	**Expand Intercultural Communications**	**Encourage Flexible Affordable Housing**
• Kids in Class (Not Kicked Out) • Homeless youth • World class education system – inclusive	• Age in place (communication, services) • BAA (sports, soccer) • Healthcare facilities for aging population • Awareness of DO program • Two-way cultural training • City orientation every month • Provide cultural orientation • Oldest and youngest populations	• Survey the people often (every 6 months)– (open ended, not scripted) • Better information sharing • Free City internet and homepage – City site • Enhance web and social media resources	• Translated websites • We Care message (multi-lingual) • Multiple languages in all City communications	• Affordable welcoming housing • Culturally appropriate housing • Affordable housing and transportation with no sudden (rent) increases • Avoid huge housing complexes

What should the City welcome, support, and engage our changing population over the next 20 years?

Create More Flexible Infrastructure	Provide Community Resources	Improve Police and Community Interactions	Support and Engage Newcomers	Develop Neighborhood Identity
• Pedestrian Friendly Paths (sidewalks, handicapped motorized vehicles) • Improve Park Shelters • Transportation for Older/Ill	• Volunteer Hub • Resource Lists • Welcome Centers	• Disengage Bloomington Police from ICE • Personal Relations need to be Encouraged • Kids and Police Early Engagement	• ESL Classes for Adults in English • Cultural Liaison Program • Diversity Education	• Develop More Local / Neighborhood Resource Identity • Local Park Activities

**What should the City welcome, support, and engage
our changing population over the next 20 years?**

Develop One or More Multi-use Community Centers	Events	Family Park Activities
• Meeting spaces • Locations available for activity • Community Center o Multi-generational	• City-wide events (National Night Out, Heritage Days) • Cultural festivities • City events	• Green spaces • Affordable/accessible programs in parks • Encourage more youth participation in summer activities

What amenities and services do stakeholders want to see the City invest in and maintain into the future?

Build a Community Center	Beautify the City	Enjoy the River Valley	Promote Community Building	Improve Parks
• Modern Community Center • Community Centers • Teen Center	• Attention to Aesthetics • Flower Parks • Expand Art Resources	• Scenic Overlooks into MN River Valley • MN River Access	• Neighborhood Identification • Community Activities (Seniors, Kids, Farmers Market) • Promote Community Buildings • Neighborhood Input (local voice, representation, alderman style, local input in planning, zone and coding, community needs, neighborhood stewardship, reconnect neighbors)	• Update/Add Playground Equipment • Maintain Parks • Improved Moir/Central Park • Revitalize Moir Park • Parks • Green Space/Parks

What amenities and services do stakeholders want to see the City invest in and maintain into the future?

Become Local Business Friendly	Practice Stewardship	Foster Commercial Revitalization	Update Infrastructure	Increase Walkability & Bikeability
• Small Business Friendly • Restaurants not franchises • Foster Family Businesses • New Employers (with jobs that pay more than the minimum wage)	• Water • Preserve what we have • Historic Resources • Invest in City Buildings • Preserve / Promote Green Space • Build on Existing Assets	• Revitalized Neighborhood Nodes • Update Old Cedar & Old Shakopee Area	• Traffic Management • Street Infrastructure • Update Sewer and Water • Public Wi-Fi	• "Walkable" City • Safe Biking Corridors • Improved Bicycling Network • Trails • Improved Trail System • Walkable Events/Shoppes • Walkable Neighborhoods

Demographic Trends – Town Hall #2

Bloomington has changed significantly since 1970. While overall population growth has remained relatively stable, the City's population has become increasingly diverse and older.
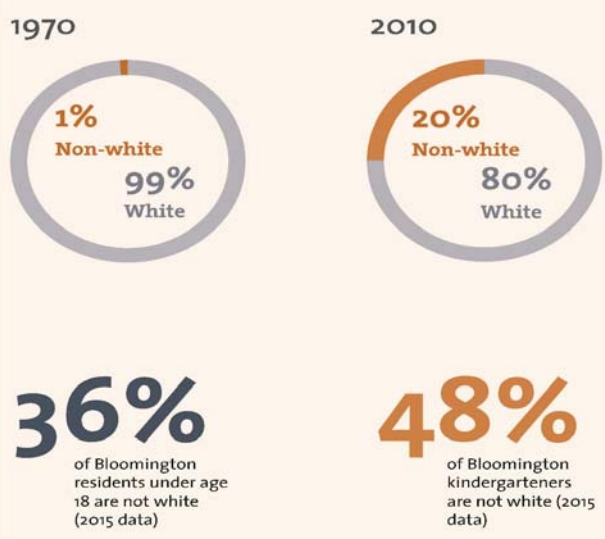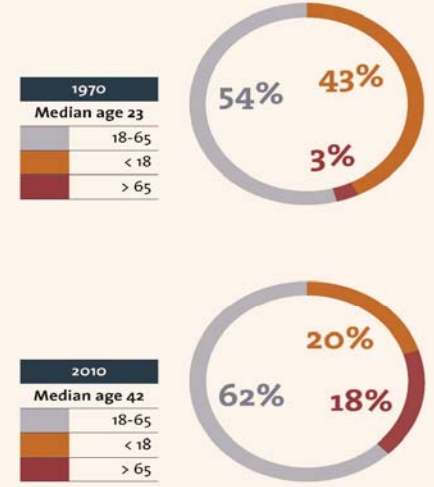
Demographic Changes

Population Growth
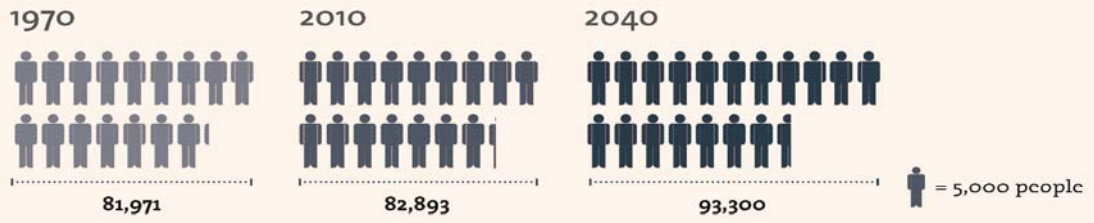
1970	2010	2040
81,971	82,893	93,300

= 5,000 people

Smaller Households

1970	2010	2040
3.7	2.3	2.25

Increased Diversity

1970
1% Non-white
99% White

2010
20% Non-white
80% White

36% of Bloomington residents under age 18 are not white (2015 data)

48% of Bloomington kindergarteners are not white (2015 data)

Increased Diversity

1970	
Median age 23	
	18-65
	< 18
	> 65

54%   43%
3%

2010	
Median age 42	
	18-65
	< 18
	> 65

62%   20%   18%

BLM.MN/FORWARD2040

FORWARD 2040
Taking Shape Together

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
MINNESOTA

Demographic Trends – Town Hall #2
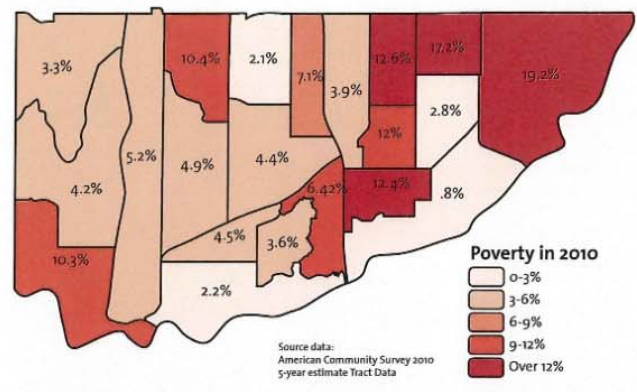
Demographic changes vary between east and west Bloomington.
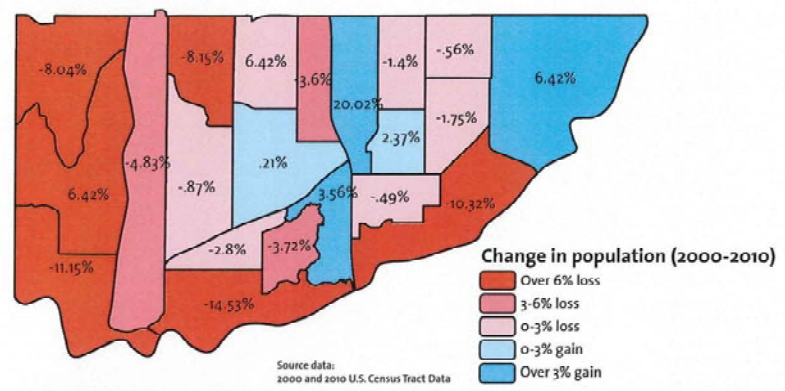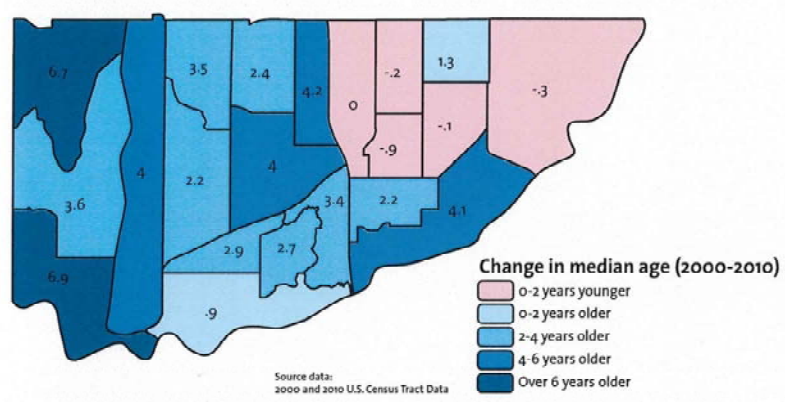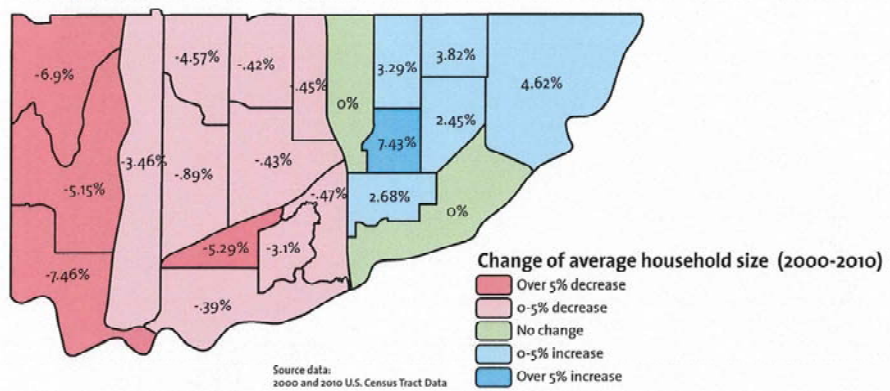
Demographic Trends – Town Hall #2

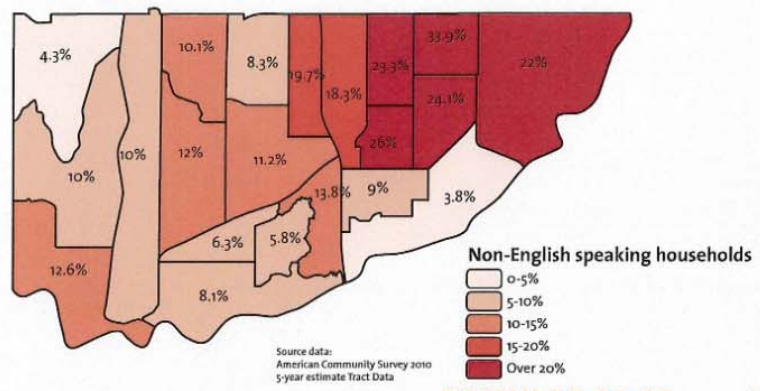Demographic characteristics are different between the east and west sides of Bloomington.
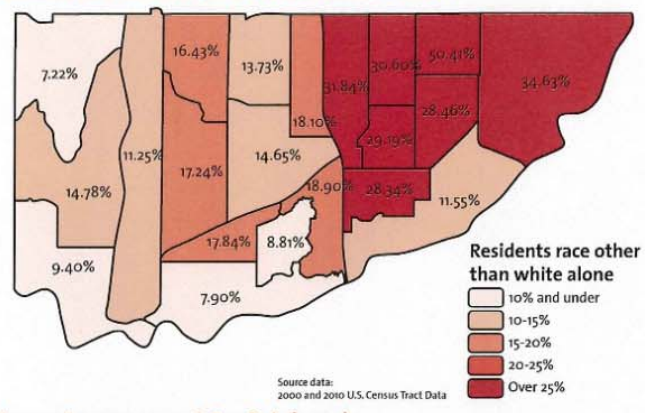
Aging Infrastructure – Town Hall #3

Much of Bloomington's public infrastructure (roads, sewers, parks, fire stations) and housing were built to accommodate the City's rapid growth during the 1960s and 70s. Roads are routinely upgraded through the City's Pavement Management System and private homes are continually renovated by their owners. However, other public infrastructure will be nearing the end of its serviceable life over the next decade or two. These public facilities are critical to the quality of life in Bloomington and upgrades and replacement must be done in a strategic manner.
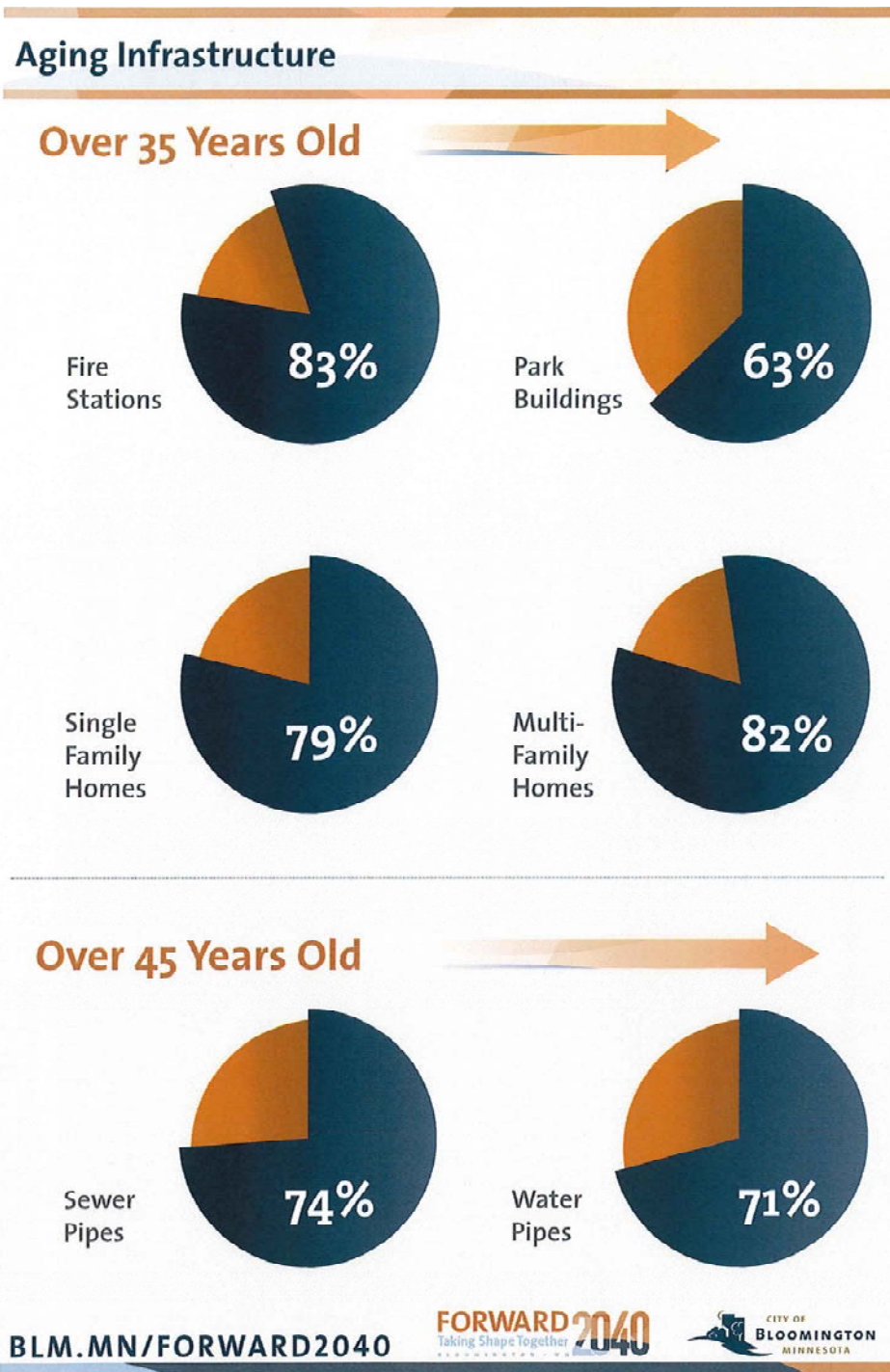
Community Assets – Town Hall #3

Bloomington enjoys a wealth of amenities that residents and visitors highly value. These include physical amenities like great parks, trails, and ample open space; cultural assets; and strong partnerships with a variety of community organizations, institutions, and service providers, such as the School District, Hennepin County library system, and others.