



Visual Quality Assessment

At its initial meeting, the Mount Vernon Visioning Committee discussed the community's motivations and goals for creating a vision for the community.

The Visual quality assessment (VAQ) is the bridge between the motivations and the vision. Committee members identified and mapped areas in the community that they perceive as "favorable", as well as areas that they believe could be improved in the community.

This analysis, combined with the cultural, historical, and bioregional assessments, reveals areas in the community that the vision should address. It also shows the resources available to support the community concept plan and what restraints may exist. The committee used this information to set goals to guide the concept plan development.

Clusters of "favorable" and "opportunities for improvement" images become easy to identify. Mount Vernon has many "favorable" areas in the

community including parks, the Historic Uptown District, Trail Greenbelt, and the Visitor Center. Understanding what are considered "favorable" qualities offers critical insight into what will be valued and supported by the community. In addition, these assets provide inspiration and motivation for the future developments that have the same design challenge.

The Community members also identified areas where visual quality improvement is desired:

- Entrances into town
- Intersection of Highway 1 and 30
- An improved trail along Lisbon Rd
- School greenspace without trees

Some improvements will be easier to achieve than others and should be prioritized to allow the greatest immediate impact and allow appropriate planning and funding to be identified to tackle larger issues.

The prioritized areas are focused on improving the town's identity, drawing in new residents and satisfying the needs of current residents.



Prairie Park and the Old Lincoln Highway Bridge. Source: Craig Allen



Historic Main Street in Mount Vernon. Source: Craig Allen



Trail to Nature Park. Source: Slaton Anthony



The congested intersection of Highway 30 and Highway 1. Source: Craig Allen



Nature Park Lake. Source: Slaton Anthony

Mount Vernon

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Landscape Architect: Loren Hoffman, ASLA, Hall and Hall Engineers, Inc.

LA Intern: Nicholas Gulick and Robin Hamadani, ISU Landscape Architecture Extension

Iowa Department of Transportation

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ISU Landscape Architecture Extension

ISU Extension Community and Economic Development

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