



Imagine Durant: PUBLIC Dialogue Harvest Report

Marilyn Hamilton
with Kara Hendrickson
Harvest Storyweavers

June 13, 2015

arts attract building business capacity
city college community connect
create culture development
dialogue diversity durant economy
education engaging future group growth help
housing imagine improve jobs makers nation
needs offer opportunities participants people plan
policy population public questions school service street
students support tax things together vision water work
years



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Imagine Durant Public Dialogue Participants

Chris Allen (Durant Daily Democrat/Prices
Printing)

Curtis Armor (Shamrock Bank)

Keith Barfiod (Calera PD)

Tim Boatmun (SOSU)

Michael Clements (Writer)

Katrina Daniels (AAA Tent Rentals)

Bert Davison (First United Bank)

Mike Delloro (Landmark Bank)

Ahmad El-Katib (Oklahoma Small Business
Development Center)

Janet Garret (First Texoma National Bank)

Teresa Golden (SOSU/Rotary)

Charla Hall (SOSU)

Destry Hawthorne (City of Durant)

Kara Hendrickson (Imagine Durant)

Dana Joines (Citizen)

Tommy Kramer (Durant Industrial
Authority)

Tom Marcum (Burrage Law Firm)

Chis Marett (SOSU)

Greg Massey (First United Bank)

Dell McLain (SOSU)

Duane Merideth (Durant Schools)

Tiffany Newton (Texoma Print)

Bill Orr (City of Durant)

Kay Parha (Retired professor)

Dan Pennington (Durant Daily Democrat)

Phillip Perkins (Durant Chamber/
Chickasaw Nation)

Greg Phillips (Insurance Agent/Owner)

Glenn Price (Citizen)

Janet Reed (Chamber of Commerce)

Kaitlin Rogers (REI)

Patrick Schoettmer (SOSU)

Ming-Shan Su (SOSU)

Sarah Sherrer (City of Durant)

Lynn Skocdapple (Veterans)

Sara Jane Smallwood (Choctaw Nation)

Jennifer Taylor (Tag Agency)

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Marilyn Hamilton (Integral City Team
Leader, Integral City Meshworks Inc.)

Scott Moore (Principal Community Builder
Blue Star Studio Inc., Integral City Team)

Imagine Durant – Convenes Public Dialogue

“What makes Durant a vibrant community? What makes it one today and 30 years in the future? It’s vibrant if the community has a voice and can say what they are passionate about.”

Greg Phillips

Why, What, When, Where, Who

On June 13, Imagine Durant convened a public dialogue to consider Durant’s future in regard to the issues of the economy and the community in 2045. Thirty-nine members of the general public attended the event, held at the Durant High school. Marilyn Hamilton and Scott Moore, Co-Facilitators (from the Integral City Meshworks Team), offered that their job was to design dialogues that “called out the brilliance of those who attended.”

Intentions

The purpose of the public dialogue was to build and expand upon the Imagine Durant Harvest Report. This report was the official record of Imagine Durant’s initial dialogue, which took place April 17-19 and included participation from twenty-four of Durant’s thought leaders.

The intentions of the public dialogue were shared with attendees as follows:

- Meet new people; circle up with new acquaintances; make new friends.
- Create interpersonal connections across the diversities of Durant: age, gender, students, workers, employers, ethnicity, race
- Create connections between people’s perspectives of the economy and community.
- Discover common ground to build on and respect differences that make a difference.
- Imagine how in 30 years we can improve the quality of Durant’s community and economy in a way that neither set of improvements is at the expense of the other.

Context of Dialogues

The context of the dialogue was set up with presentations by Ahmad El-Katib on the economy, Sara Sherrer on city infrastructure, Greg Phillips on community vibrancy and Tiffany Nelson on community diversity.

Attendees were also treated to four creative scenarios that had emerged from the Thought Leaders’ Dialogue. **Dark Days Ahead** imagined the worst possible future (e.g. SOSU students rebel). **Status Quo** imagined the “no-change-no-how” future (e.g. “We’ve always done it this way – it is good enough”). **Durant Leading the Way** painted a rosy future (e.g. Best city in the world 10th year in a row). And **Fresh Eyes**,

pushed the positive boundaries out even further and imagined Durant from an outsider's perspective of generative possibilities (e.g. the power of community creates best public market in US per TripAdvisor). (For detailed descriptions see [the initial dialogue here.](#))

How to Participate in Dialogue

To get started with the dialogue, Scott Moore, (Blue Star Studio Partner and Co-facilitator from the Integral City Team) gave attendees a brief lesson in how to have a successful dialogue. Key points he stressed included:

- Listen compassionately
- Honor and respect each person's contribution
- Speak from own experience
- Avoid criticism and persuasion
- Be aware of how often and how long you speak
- Seek to understand and learn
- Make sure everyone has a chance to talk

Small Groups Dialogue about Key Questions

After receiving instructions on how to dialogue, participants were invited to form groups of 6 to 8 people to discuss issues of the economy and community framed by the following questions.

- ***Tell us a story about a time when you had an emotional connection with Durant.***
- ***What level of growth do you think is sustainable for Durant in the next 30 years?***
- ***How will balancing the economy and the community matter to Durant's children and grandchildren?***
- ***What are the burning questions about Durant's future economy and community?***



Plenary Discussion Explores the Options

At the end of this breakout session, participants rejoined the larger group for a plenary “fish bowl” discussion. The room was rearranged into a larger circle surrounding 8 chairs in the middle. Marilyn and Scott asked others to join the center circle to share their thoughts with everyone on the following questions:

- ***What will you tell the future generations about how you approached these burning questions?***
- ***What would you tell policy makers we should do now?***
- ***What is your offer to start making change now? What can you do?***



Economy & Community: Key Themes

Seven themes emerged from an analysis of the notes taken from the break-out groups, the burning questions (see Appendix A), and the plenary “fish bowl” discussion about what we will tell future generations (see Appendix B). These seven interrelated themes were as follows:

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|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Population Growth | 5. Jobs |
| 2. Infrastructure | 6. Housing |
| 3. Community Engagement | 7. Culture & Recreation |
| 4. Business Development, Growing Economy | |

1. Population Growth

With the rapid population growth of Durant it is not surprising that it was a key concern on many minds. Interestingly Durant faces the opposite problem of many other communities its size – it has more jobs than qualified applicants to fill them (see below). On the other hand the resident population of Durant (14,000) can swell to 50,000 on occasions where entertainment events attract people. Such a variation in population size puts critical demands on infrastructure (see below). Participants

(echoing the first Dialogue) also recognized that “status quo” responses to the population pressures is not an option.

“Our population has grown 30% over the last 10 years whereas the state of Oklahoma has grown 14%. So we are growing twice as fast. We will continue to grow at that 1.5% to 2% population growth a year.”

“We are in a growth zone from the Dallas Fort worth. Eventually we will connect.”

“What is sustainable? If we don’t get aligned whether it’s the city or the county we will continue to grow but we will keep running into problems. We will need to build roads. We will have to work from the city out. Capacity of the water and waste water treatment [is a concern]. Our sustainability will depend on what happens within the city. Status quo is where we will run into a problem.”

2. Infrastructure

It was clear to many participants that balancing the economy with the infrastructural demands was critical for economic success. Water is a major issue and needs to be addressed now in order to meet both current and future economic needs. Questions were asked about what was needed to support a population growth of 30% to 60% over the next 30 (or even 20) years? There was recognition that the whole road system needs a Master Plan and the city needs to implement best operational practices. As in the first dialogue, there is a great longing for safe mobility options for biking and walking trails. Questions were raised about local transit services to improve public access to locations like the university and high school and entertainment and sports events. At the same time participants recognize the value of planning sustainably and supporting environmentally-wise practices like recycling.

“What’s the max to be able to sustain? Can we stay at the 2% growth for the next 30 years? There are things we have to do now to get to the next level. Part of this process is to try to plan for the future. If we are going to double the population here Blue River will not be sustainable for our water source. Lake Durant is not a long term option. Right now we are straining on some of our resources. It’s not impossible but we have to think about it now. We have to address our most basic needs. It’s the chicken or the egg. It’s a lot of balancing in how to figure out how to meet all the needs with limited resources.”

“I would drill water wells where the water towers are and use less treatment. You don’t need as much for wells. “

“Why aren’t we investing in service roads?”

“How do we seek out best practices?”

3. Community Engagement

The people who turned up for the dialogue wanted to extend the reach of community engagement beyond themselves. However, it was impressive that the 35 people who came on a Saturday morning (when many other events competed for

attention) actually represented thousands of other Durant residents including: the Rotary Club, SOSU athletes, Veterans, SOSU students, SOSU faculty, arts community, bankers, business, Native Americans, entertainment industry, city. In other words all four voices of Durant were well represented (Citizens, Civic Managers, Business, Not-for-Profits).

Ideas were discussed about attracting and keeping international students, finding solutions to keep young people from finding opportunities elsewhere. But to a person, everyone had emotional connections to Durant that attracted them, kept them there or supported their return. What is more, people expressed a supportive attitude of “passing it on”, “paying it forward”. People intend that the benefits/opportunities they have experienced can grow through mentoring others (especially young people).

“We don’t want our children to grow up and move off. Things are aligning to where the city is about to make some huge progress. Some of it is getting to know other people and make the connections.”

“...we are a college town but we don’t have a lot of the things that college towns usually have. We have no nightlife and I don’t understand why. Every weekend that college [crowd] floods Sherman. They all go to Buffalo Wild Wings or Cellermans. All of those young people and that money is leaving our community. We are not a 24 hour town. Are there local ordinance in place that keep places from starting up easily? (*Cellermans is a popular sports pub in Sherman that many college age and young professionals visit.)*

“When I went to Southeastern I commuted. A lot of people commute now too. When class was out for me I left and went home. Some of it [can be solved by] city planning.”

4. Attracting Business Development, Growing Economy

Lively discussion ensued around attracting business to Durant to address the unmet needs of a college town. Many were surprised to learn that Durant did not fit the typical psychographics used by national firms to make decisions for locating new outlets. At the same time a strong spirit of entrepreneurship was expressed to build on assets that Durant already enjoyed – such as the university, health facility, airport and casino. Everyone recognizes the value of building a diverse economic base.



"The first thing [national firms] look at is the population draw of the location draw. Its location location location. For example Ihop only wanted the location they were in or they weren't coming. A big factor is traffic. A lot of chains want to be close to Walmart because they draw so many shoppers. We are actually one of the most friendly cities in getting people in. Here we can get plans through city hall in 2 weeks. [But] another limiting factor is that we don't have affordable dirt. That's a big issue to do retail. We have 4 or 5 people who control the dirt around Walmart."

"Look where we are standing. I remember when the community taxed themselves to build this building. Now we are building the third high school. I challenge you to imagine Durant 30 years from now. Make those things happen. We can do this. I challenge you to have a vision for imagining Durant."

"[What/How] Can we attract with the lake and the airport? How can we help the growth of Durant?"

"...how can we maximize resources in Durant? What can we do for Durant? What about a community app?"



Durant Connect: App Concept by Dr. Ming-Shan Su

5. Jobs

Durant has the happy dilemma of more jobs than workers. But many participants commented that the training programs that students receive in the education systems are not those that are needed for the jobs on offer. (At the time of the dialogue the Choctaw Casino was advertising a job fair for 500 jobs.) Moreover, diversity opportunities seem to be underutilized in the services sector – where restaurant and retail opportunities may be being missed for/by local entrepreneurs. Questions were asked about finding the investors that Durant’s job-force needs. What would inspire them to invest in the opportunities?

“Interacting with and learning from people of diverse nationalities, cultures, faiths, and ethnicities is vital for having a deeper understanding of the world and developing global competencies. Doing so also helps us become less ethnocentric while raising self-awareness.”

“We run into the issue of education as well. My husband consistently has problems with finding qualified workers.”

“Another problem is so many people get to college and it’s not the right fit for them and it gets young people discouraged. It’s hard when you’re 18 years old and trying to decide what you want to be for the rest of your life.”

“Durant is finally attracting moderate to high paying jobs. We are at that edge. Will we miss that opportunity? I feel like it’s a lot of quality of life issues. We need to make sure our colleges and technology centers have the right programs.”

“That’s our biggest fear that our kids will move off and not come back. Our struggle right now is our water and streets. People want to have fun things to do. We have to balance those two things.”

“We don’t have to have chains we can have local. First Street needs new blood. How do you attract those people to build farther down?”

“[What if] all of our educators throughout different levels came together and said we want to figure out a way to produce the best product for the workforce. How can we do that together?”

6. Housing

Concern around housing was linked to population growth and jobs. Issues related to housing were related to population growth (not enough housing); job openings (little available housing for middle income earners); and the economic model for purchasing housing (down payments too high and/or mortgage rates). Bankers in attendance were concerned that housing costs were too high and others told stories about the compassionate approaches that some had taken to give deserving citizens their first housing opportunity. Genuine curiosity exists about how developers, prospective buyers, bankers and the city might work together to improve housing options.

“Another story that sticks out is working on a city housing grant that worked on down payment assistance. One of the ladies that qualified for assistance came into the office with her 4 year old daughter and was unable to pay the 10% that was required which was \$500. Tommy collected the money and was able to get them into the home. They had been living in the car for 2 months.”

“One of the biggest struggles I had as a young professional was finding good housing. There’s a lot of low quality housing and a lot of high quality housing. Nothing in the middle. If you aren’t ready to invest in buying a home you don’t want to pay \$800 a month for an apartment and \$200 for bad housing. The housing that attracts our young professionals are really hard to find in Durant. I think it’s important to have for young people who are finishing a degree and want to stay in the area.

“How do we connect policy makers with developers who are building the houses? So that things feel so much more intentional when we are building. How do we connect them and make things intentional?”

“Who do the developers go to for instructions on building?”

“[I intend to] -educate myself on affordable housing. A \$36,000 house in Durant needs \$7,500 to be able to close on [the sale]. Are there incentives and grants to help?”

7. Culture & Recreation

Many at the dialogue shared an intense pride in Durant’s Choctaw culture and vibrant arts community. Some recognized opportunities to link the university life with the arts life and others spoke of the connections already made. Yet others imagined new arts opportunities just waiting to happen such as film arts and active festivals that feature the Choctaw Nation. Dreams were shared about a YouTube Channel and an arts conference for Durant – as well as working on a grant to make such initiatives a reality. Strong family values were recognized as core to the Durant culture, supported by the faith community and spirit of volunteerism.

“What are the seeds of our future? We have lots of culture, Texoma Arts, Red River Arts Council, Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival. We have great schools. We have a great university.”

“We have a rich arts program here. We have rich talent here. How do we capitalize on that? Why can’t the film industry branch out to Durant? We have a diverse landscape. Walt Disney didn’t see swamp land he saw Disney World.”

“[We could] empower the arts district, the school district, the service groups for children, the faith based programs to work together to create activities and festivals to attract visitors along with the Choctaw Nation. “

Asking the Policy Makers

Participants gathered enough information and energy from their dialogue to ask Policy Makers to provide the following support for Developing Citizens, Building Civic Performance and Capacity, Engaging Community and Culture and Influencing Business Development (as summarized in Table 1.)

Participants imagined that in 2045 because of the choices made in 2015, “We developed the partnership with the city and the community with the greatest American tribe - with the Choctaw nation. We moved forward as a group and didn’t work independently.”

| Table 1. Imagine Durant Public Dialogue – What to Tell Policy Makers | |
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| <p><i>Developing Citizens—Leadership Vision, Personal Capacity, Education</i></p> <p>Find the thought leaders who can guide this [vision] down the road.</p> <p>Explore and develop adult sports teams in Durant.</p> | <p><i>Building Civic Management Performance and Capacity</i></p> <p>We need to have a city planner on staff.</p> <p>Seek out best practices in city planning.</p> <p>Connect policy makers with developers who are building houses.</p> <p>Actively enforce the codes we already have.</p> <p>Adapt/revise/change Oklahoma regulations for the selling and creation of craft alcohol to help facilitate that creativity in our communities.</p> |
| <p><i>Engaging Community – Cultural Diversity, NFP , Faith</i></p> <p>Utilize community members who are great resources. They can be thoughtful in the process of putting together a plan.</p> <p>Support, guide and mentor students that need to volunteer and don’t know where to.</p> | <p><i>Influencing Business Development & Economic Systems</i></p> <p>Make things more intentional for developers and builders when we are building,</p> |

Offering to Start Now

With enthusiasm and high energy the participants concluded the dialogue by making some very substantial offers to act now. These offers could be summarized in the same way as the requests to policy makers – supporting Citizen and Leadership Development, Building Civic Management and Engaging Policy Makers, Engaging Community and Culture and Influencing business – as summarized in Table 2.

| Table 2. Imagine Durant Public Dialogue – Generative Ideas - Offers | |
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| <p><i>Developing Citizens—Leadership Vision, Personal Capacity, Education</i></p> <p>I will educate myself so that when the meetings come along I can add specific things to the conversation especially around health. (Charla)</p> <p>I will be a possible thought leader at the health dialogue. (Charla)</p> <p>I will help with getting people here to the dialogue. (Stephanie)</p> <p>For change to happen we have to have a collective vision, and to have a collective vision we have to have the whole community involved. (Greg)</p> | <p><i>Building Civic Management Performance and Capacity, Engaging Policy Makers as Problem Solvers</i></p> <p>Work with policy makers, start the app to spread the word. (Scott)</p> <p>Be more involved in city government. (Curtis)</p> <p>Educate public about ordinances in place. (Sarah)</p> <p>Encourage and invite policy makers on being consistent on implementation of policy and it being enforced. (Sarah)</p> <p>Work with Sarah for policy makers. (Janet)</p> <p>I can [work on] the taxes. We have to change slowly so that people stay with us or we will be leading a parade and we're the only ones in it. (Bill)</p> |
| <p><i>Engaging Community – Cultural Diversity, NFP , Faith</i></p> <p>I will work with anyone to do a YouTube channel. (Dell)</p> <p>I will help create Arts conference in Durant. (Dell)</p> <p>I will work proactively with reaching out into the community. (Tim)</p> | <p><i>Influencing Business Development & Economic Systems</i></p> <p>I can develop an App and work on a 1 year vision, connect app with trail. (Ming)</p> <p>Help create One minute videos of all the places in town that you can use student id and get discount. (Tim)</p> <p>I'm going to eat at the restaurants. (Tim)</p> |

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| <p>Help with trail. (Charla)</p> <p>Help develop adult leagues, especially football program. (Greg Phillips)</p> <p>I will connect with volunteers within the fraternity. Can offer interns. Organize with new sports. Has had success with lacrosse. (Mike)</p> <p>A journey of a 1000 miles begins with a single step. I will help get more people interested in the community. (Kenny)</p> <p>Work on the art walk to add a farmers market (lost street). (Greg Phillips)</p> <p>I will explore how we get a weekly gathering of merchants who can give back to the community. (Greg Phillips)</p> <p>I will work on the missing chair [empty in the circle] and the voice not here.(Greg, Janet)</p> <p>Work on getting more people to the table that are my age [younger]. Try to communicate the message more. (Tiffany)</p> <p>I will be able to plug into Rotary projects. (Teresa, President of Rotary)</p> <p>Attend more community meetings and be a part. (Chris)</p> <p>Attract student veterans of America clubs. Volunteer work. (Lynn)</p> | <p>Work on grant with the arts with Sara Jane, Tiffany, and Kara. (Janet)</p> <p>Continue to work on graphic design work for Imagine Durant. (Tiffany)</p> <p>Educate self on affordable housing. \$36,000 house in Durant needs \$7500 to be able to close on a house. Are there incentives and grants to help? (Bert)</p> |
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Ideas Generate More Ideas

Following the dialogue, further capacity development ideas emerged in conversations that built on the dialogue discussions. They are summarized below in Table 3.

| Table 3: Post Public Dialogue – Generative Ideas re Capacity Development | |
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| <p><i>Developing Citizens—Leadership Vision, Personal Capacity, Education</i></p> <p>Small Business Incubators for (using high speed internet for global access)</p> <p>Aviators & Aviation Safety IT Arts</p> <p>Create Jobs Fair for all Industries and invite education institutions to learn job opportunities.</p> | <p><i>Building Civic Management Performance and Capacity</i></p> <p>Wire the city for high speed internet – city could own the internet service like Nebraska City NB</p> <p>Create progressive city transportation codes for independent shuttles/jitney service/ Uber.</p> <p>(Don't license taxi service so shuttles/Uber can work without resistance.)</p> <p>Connect (Ahmad? And/or Sarah) with Dr. Dawn Jourdan at OU re summer student intern work for Fall planning labs.</p> |
| <p><i>Engaging Community – Cultural Diversity, NFP , Faith</i></p> <p>Make engagement fun – e.g. Art of Hosting</p> <p>Try out “Parking Days” where streets self-organize “pop-up” fun – like street lounges, petting zoo, pocket parks. Invite City Staff to see what a difference the “pop up” culture can offer city.</p> <p>Support the spread of Community Gardens into brownfield sites, corners, large private gardens offered for community gardening to inner city folk.</p> | <p><i>Influencing Business Development & Economic Systems</i></p> <p>Attract Uber as self-organizing transportation service.</p> <p>Check out Car2Go car sharing.</p> <p>Set up independent completely flexible (anytime anywhere) shuttles/jitney.</p> <p>Set up Durant as a free Wi-Fi City like Ponca OK http://www.poncacityok.gov/wifi</p> |

What's Next?

The emerging visions for Durant's vibrant economy and community expressed by Thought Leaders in April and by the Public in June will be conveyed to the Policy Makers on September 11, 2015.

In November the next Round of Dialogues will start with the focus on Health and Environment.

**Stay tuned. Stay connected. Stay active ...
a Vision for Durant's Future is emerging.**

Appendix A: Burning Questions

| Imagine Durant Public Dialogue - Burning Questions re Capacity Development | |
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| <p>Developing Citizens—Leadership Vision, Personal Capacity, Education</p> <p>How can we foster creativity and innovation for local amenities?" Grow your own".</p> <p><i>We have the desire but do we have the will?</i></p> <p>Are our schools producing kids that can compete?</p> <p>How would we handle <i>school consolidation</i>?</p> <p>How do we expand education resources?</p> <p><i>How do we connect job creators (industries with education to give students vision for themselves and our future?</i></p> <p>How do we get better trained employees to fill jobs that are available?</p> <p>How do we attract the workforce for the jobs we already have?</p> <p><i>How do we keep our college grads?</i></p> | <p>Building Civic Management Performance and Capacity</p> <p>How do we pull together all factors of our community to have a Master Plan for our Future?</p> <p><i>What can we do to bring people together for long term planning?</i></p> <p><i>What are the plans for Durant if Choctaw Nation did not contribute as they currently do?</i></p> <p><i>Are there action steps that can be done now while continuing to go through this process of developing a plan?</i></p> <p>How can we improve Durant's infrastructure?</p> <p>First impressions are important. Does the City plan to hire a city planner?</p> <p>What is the city's plan to enforce Codes?</p> <p>Water BQ:</p> <p><i>What is Durant's plan to protect its water supply?</i></p> <p><i>Why not invest in water wells in anticipation of population increase?</i></p> <p><i>What is Durant's plan with Lake Texoma?</i></p> <p><i>How can we better connect with and use the lake as an asset?</i></p> <p><i>How much population can our water supply support?</i></p> <p>How do we improve street drainage for sanitation?</p> <p>How do we expand waste water plans?</p> <p>How can we begin recycling pick up service?</p> <p>How do prepare for tornado safety?</p> <p>Roads/Transportation BQ</p> <p><i>What is the long term plan to repair and maintain streets?</i></p> <p><i>How does the city plan to improve streets and traffic flow patterns?</i></p> <p><i>How can we improve traffic flow east-west artery?</i></p> <p><i>Why are we not investing in service roads?</i></p> <p><i>How do we obtain funds for local roads for the city?</i></p> <p><i>Why is Durant designed (or is it designed at all?) to make it hard to get around without a car?</i></p> |

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| | <p>Parks & Recreation BQ <i>What are the plans for creating and improving all our parks?</i> <i>Can the community work together to improve and build more parks?</i> <i>How can we increase recreation opportunities?</i> <i>How can we set up adult amateur sports leagues?</i></p> <p>Tax Related BQ <i>Are we using current tax revenue to its greatest advantage?</i> <i>What about new possible tax revenues?</i> <i>Why do sales taxes seem so high but property tax seem so low?</i> <i>What about a Lodging Tax?</i></p> |
| <p>Engaging Community – Cultural Diversity, NFP , Faith</p> <p>How can we boost civic and political participation?</p> <p>How can we engage people? <i>How do we engage and encourage citizens to become informed and get involved to become part of the solution?</i> <i>How can we make sure all voices are heard?</i></p> <p>What is the fundamental issue that limits this community from working together? <i>How do we break down these barriers?</i> <i>How are we encouraging involvement of those who might not normally be involved in answering this question?</i></p> <p>How do we create an atmosphere that generates community involvement and family fun?</p> <p>What is the city's plan to engage (truly embrace) the SE Community?</p> <p>What can we do to make Durant more inviting to minorities?</p> <p>Where are the religious leaders? <i>How do we include church support?</i></p> <p>How do we access youth activity funding?</p> <p><i>How can we keep college kids spending in Durant on weekends?</i></p> <p>What is youth future in Durant in the next decade?</p> <p><i>How do we keep our youth here?</i></p> | <p>Influencing Business Development & Economic Systems</p> <p>What industrial supply sources do we need to establish?</p> <p>How can Durant encourage more business growth near the University? <i>What can we do to attract new business owners to 1st street by SOSU?</i> <i>How can we revitalize 1st Street?</i></p> <p>How can Durant bring higher paying jobs to town? <i>How do we attract workers who will live in Durant?</i></p> <p>Why are there so few amenities (movies, supermarkets, etc.) in Durant as opposed to communities like Sherman? <i>How can we increase retail?</i> <i>How can we attract and operate more restaurants, Cinemax?</i></p> <p>What are our community development areas? (neighborhoods) <i>How do we connect developers to city government & community to build outstanding neighborhood?</i></p> <p>Housing BQ <i>Why does Durant lack affordable housing options?</i> <i>How can we build better affordable housing for young pros and mid-level incomes?</i> <i>Why don't we have more housing opportunities for people with disabilities?</i> <i>Why can't we have a homeless shelter?</i></p> <p>What are the plans for a better senior center?</p> <p>How do we access historical preservation funds?</p> |

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| <p>Can we do more to end hunger in Durant?</p> <p><i>What can Durant do to deal with the poverty in the county?</i></p> | <p>Branding/Messaging BQ:</p> <p><i>How do we make Durant a 24/7 town?</i></p> <p><i>I69 Highway "Dallas Tx to Joplin Mo"</i></p> <p><i>Why Durant instead of "North Texas"</i></p> <p><i>Why come to stay in Durant?</i></p> <p><i>How can we make Durant a destination?</i></p> <p><i>How can we make Durant a gateway city that involves SE and is service oriented?</i></p> <p><i>How can Durant succeed as a destination separate and apart from Choctaw Nation?</i></p> |
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Appendix B: In 30 Years, What We Tell Our Children That We Did

| Imagine Durant Public Dialogue – What We Will Tell Children in 30 Years | |
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| <p><i>Developing Citizens—Leadership Vision, Personal Capacity, Education</i></p> <p>Phillip - In Durant all your dreams can come true. Everyone has something they can in Durant. It's all about the future generations. Give back and help.</p> <p>Bert: we have a great history here. We have proud people here who have gone through a lot of hardships. That culture and that heart is here. There were people here that were very selfless and ask each other really hard questions and be really open and honest about what the needs were. They were willing to stand up and do things that were not always easy to do.</p> <p>Sarah: all of our educators throughout different levels came together and said we want to figure out a way to produce the best product for the workforce. How can we do that together? There was a group of citizens who came together and said the government can't take care of all of my needs. What can we do? We can get together and use the talent we have and put a plan in place. There were pioneers that said let's look outside the box. We don't have to wait for someone. We can do this on our own. We have a rich arts program here. We have rich talent here. How do we capitalize on that? Why can't the film industry branch out to Durant? We have a diverse landscape. Walt Disney didn't see swamp land he saw Disney World. Dream big and deep.</p> <p>Curtis: [We overcame] breakdown of our core families. Fractured families are no more and drug use is nonexistent now. It takes a town to raise a village.</p> | <p><i>Building Civic Management Performance and Capacity</i></p> <p>Phillip: When someone wants to start a business we have those that can mentor them in ways they have seen the success of others and can pass that on.</p> <p>Glenn: we utilized all our tax dollars to the best use of the community. We were stewards of our tax dollars.</p> <p>Ming: how can we maximize resources in Durant? What can we do for Durant? What about a community app? Can we attract with the lake and the airport? How can we help the growth of Durant?</p> |

| <i>Engaging Community – Cultural Diversity, NFP , Faith</i> | <i>Influencing Business Development & Economic Systems</i> |
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| <p>Sara Jane: Pass it on. Look to older people to mentor you. We took on a thoughtful process 30 years ago to help create a better environment for them. Help maintain that mentality. Continue to make this place a better place to live. It has to be intentional. Don't let it [stop].</p> <p>Tommy: We developed the partnership with the city and the community with the greatest American tribe with Choctaw nation. We moved forward as a group and didn't work independently.</p> <p>Tiffany: we took the time to approach the problems with community brainstorming and created solutions.</p> <p>Greg: it took a small group of committed citizens who committed themselves to make a difference and the voice of the whole community to create a vision process who stayed the course.</p> | <p>Katrina: We have a recycling program because in my day we realized that this was the easiest its every going to be to start implementation. We saw that and we did it.</p> <p>Ahmad: we are now putting together a life insurance policy for the future. We did this for you. We were selfless. We dedicated our time, money and effort to you. Pay it forward.</p> <p>Janet: look where we are standing. I remember when the community taxed themselves to build this building. Now we are building the third high school. I challenge you to imagine Durant 30 years from now. Make those things happen. We can do this. I challenge you to have a vision for imagining Durant.</p> <p>Dell: the reason we have become the nation's 4th largest banking community is because we empowered the schools to work together to develop training programs. The reason we became one of the fastest growing destination cities in the southwest not just the state is because we empowered the arts district, the school district, the service groups for children, the faith based programs to work together to create activities and festivals to attract visitors along with the Choctaw Nation. The reason why we had to specify the loop around Bryan County is because the Bryan County Fairgrounds grew so big.</p> |