



7. Visioning Session

Table Drawings

On Saturday morning of July 25, 2009, approximately 60 people gathered at the Jena Town Hall to roll up their sleeves and play “planners” for the day. Following a brief introductory presentation, participants divided into six groups, and gathered around tables with a facilitator. The groups worked on large maps of the area that included Trout, Midway and Good Pine, drawing diagrams and sketches to convey the character of the area today and describe what they would like to see in the future. To conclude the session, each group selected a spokesperson, who presented their table’s ideas to the larger group. To get the conversation started participants were asked the following questions:

- What makes Jena the place it is today?
- What do people like to do for fun, recreation, and entertainment?
- Are there special locations? Places where people like to gather?
- What is Jena missing? What would you like to see here in the future?
- Does Jena need additional housing or shopping options?
- Does Jena need additional employment opportunities?
- Does Jena need additional recreational facilities?
- What does Jena need to do to keep and attract younger people?
- What is missing from downtown?
- Are their buildings in downtown that should be saved or copied?
- What should happen to the expansion of Highway 84?
- Are there natural areas that should be preserved?
- Are there things that should disappear? Are there things that should never be allowed to be replicated?

The results from each table are shown on the following pages.



Table 1

DOWNTOWN

- Preserve Oak Street, fill in the gaps downtown
- Attract retail business

NATURE

- Preserve and enhance the creek system; add trails
- Need pedestrian bike connections between park and downtown

RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

- New recreation center, Fair Barn, proms, weddings
- Expand park system
- Indoor swimming pool, lifeguard training, swim team, scuba diver training
- Public swimming pool

HOUSING

- Need more housing options
- Improve older houses over by the hospital, incorporate assisted living
- Water Recreation
- Old mill pond opportunity for sailing, fishing and having fun.
- Man made lake, compete with Catahoula Lake



Table 2

TEENAGERS/CHILDREN

- Need additional recreational, entertainment opportunities
- Need a bowling alley somewhere
- Strand theater could show movies in the evening and on the weekends
- Expand sports, arts and education programs
- Need day care facilities

HOUSING

- Need more housing
- Better quality affordable housing
- Need subdivisions with real housing to attract and keep people working in Jena but not living in Jena: prison, hospital workers
- More multifamily (apartments), need more rental opportunities
- Assisted living, retirement living

HIGHWAY 84

- Like the one-way couplet
- Need to slow traffic down through downtown
- Truck traffic the biggest problem in downtown
- Need dedicated truck route that by-passes downtown, keep cars going through downtown

DOWNTOWN

- Create a destination place with a theme “come see the yellow brick road”
- Distinctive place
- Business must be readily accessible
- Downtown needs to become a civic center for the young and old
- Attract more locally-owned business

OUTLYING COMMUNITIES

- Need better access to basic retail services: Midway, Trout, Good Pine
- Need better access to the park system
- Concerned about the expansion of Highway 84
- Need sidewalks and street lights along LA 8
- The airport is a great asset for the entire community



Table 5

HIGHWAY 84

- Short bypass with one-way couplet just south of downtown - Pine Street.
- Parking a problem in downtown
- Put parking in between the two couplets – structured, easy access

SYCAMORE

- Important street – connects Highway 84 and LA 127.
- Entrance to the park on both ends
- Access to the high school
- Connects to walking path, swimming pool
- Need an indoor swimming pool, swimming program for children, swimming lessons

HEALTH

- Bike paths
- Walking paths
- Adequate sidewalks
- Community Center
- Multi-use center
- Gorgeous, pretty
- Meetings, weddings
- Place to drink wine and champagne
- Right now you have to rent the country club if you want to drink (private club)
- Family reunions

RESTAURANTS

- Need restaurant that you can have a glass of wine with your meal
- Social drinking
- Losing revenue and activity – people go out of town to eat at nicer restaurants that serve alcohol

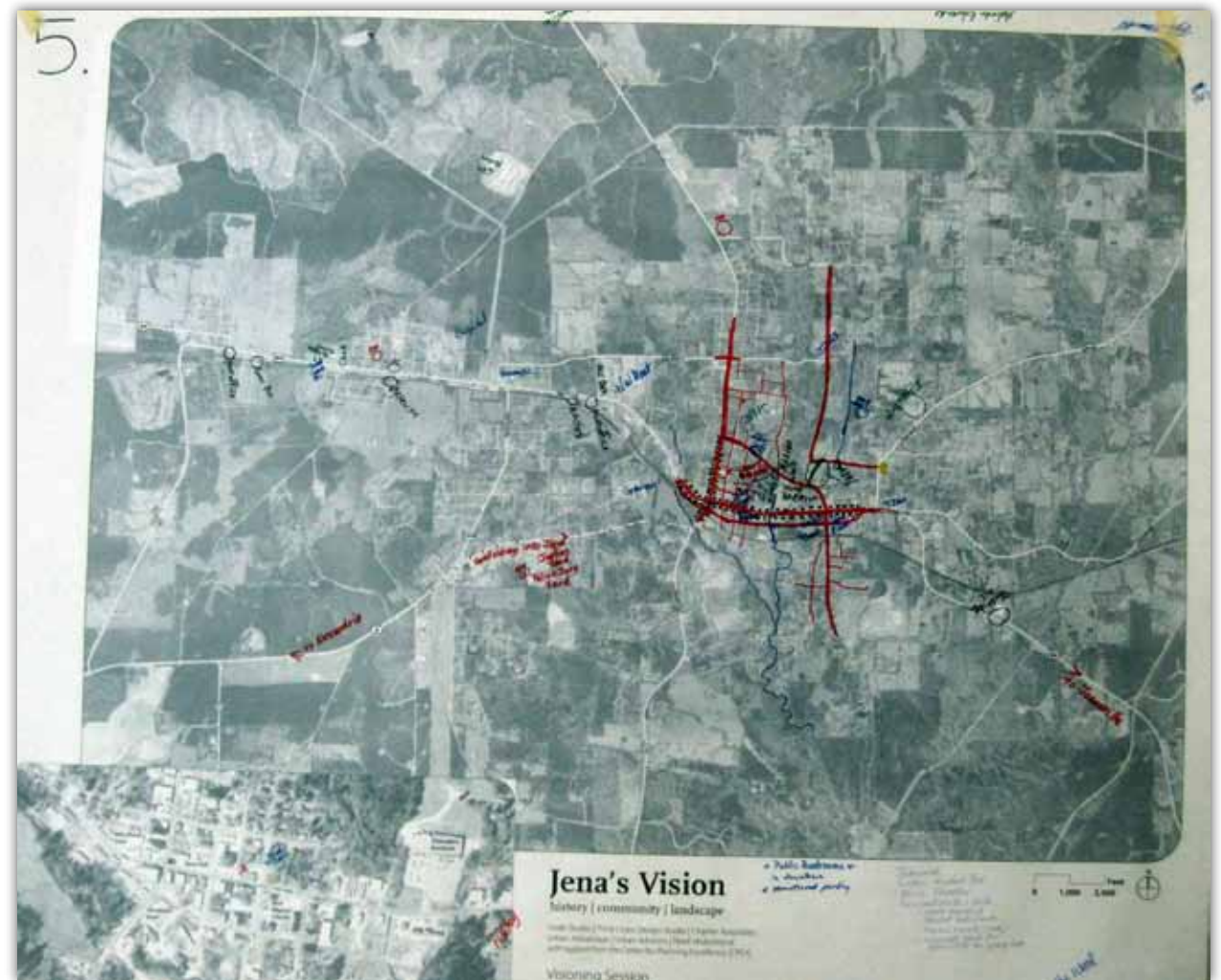


Table 6**ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS**

- Keep kids off the streets but still in town
- Utilize the creek behind the old video store
- Kids hang out area – soda pop stand

ACTIVITY CENTER

- Old fair barn
- Rodeo arena great asset
- Need places for people stay and a place for their horses to stay

TRAIL SYSTEM

- Extend trail down behind sewer treatment plant to falls along Hemp Creek
- Walk and ride
- Skateboard accessible
- Wheels and foot traffic

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- May have to move school
- Existing site not big enough
- Choctaws looking to build a regional baseball facility
- Possible incorporation with new elementary school
- Need day care

ASSISTED LIVING

- Second behind day care in need
- Growing elderly population that needs accommodating
- Good location behind hospital

