

ENGAGEMENT MEMO

OVERVIEW

The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan process is guided by the stewardship of a steering committee comprised of community leaders with local expertise and a passion for the future of Centerburg. The steering committee collaborates with a planning team of Village employees and hired consultants to facilitate public engagement and ensure final recommendations properly reflect input gathered during the planning process. The general public was invited to participate throughout the summer; both in-person and online.

This memo provides an overview of the engagement process and summarizes feedback received thus far. A complete copy of community survey results will be provided in the final Plan document.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Community Workshop

Bringing interactive engagement to existing community events helps ensure a wide audience is aware of the Plan and able to participate. The planning team set up a table at the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festivals on Friday, June 21 2019. The event offered an opportunity to introduce community members to the planning process and gather feedback on what the public would like to see in Centerburg in the future.

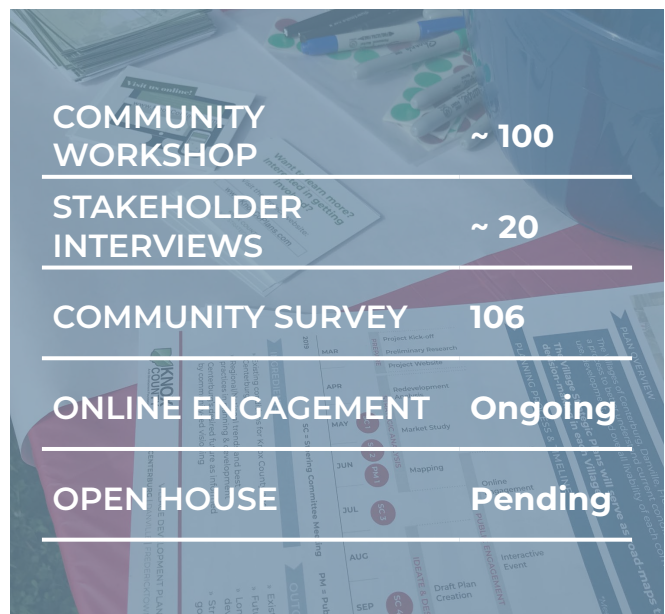
Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews, including both formal and informal discussions, were conducted with business owners, employers, and other prominent community members to add detail and specificity to the feedback received from the general public.

Community Survey

Hard copies of the community survey were available at in-person public engagement events, as well as through distribution by Village staff and

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



steering committee members. The survey was also available to complete online. Questions encouraged participants to consider future growth, development, and the overall livability of Centerburg.

Online Activities

The project website -KnoxCoPlans.com- provides updates, planning materials, and the activities conducted at the Heart of Ohio Festival. Business cards advertising the website were passed out at community events and left around the Village to spread the word about online engagement. As the Plan is created, draft ideas will also be available online for viewing and comment.

PLAN REVEAL

A complete draft of the Plan will be presented to the public in the form of an open house before the final document is provided to Village Council for adoption.

ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

General

According to the community survey and general feedback received during engagement, community members' favorite things about Centerburg are primarily its convenient location and rural character. The most common concerns or issues to arise during the engagement process were related to the lack of entertainment (especially for youth), limited dining and retail options, the condition of Memorial Park, vacant storefronts, and the state of Downtown (Figure 1).

In general, the Centerburg community expressed a desire for more dining, retail, and parks amenities to serve residents; but is broadly skeptical of the growth necessary to accommodate those improvements.

Land Use & Development

When asked on the community survey "What do you think is the most important development priority for Centerburg to focus on over the next ten years?", more than half of respondents said attract, grow, and retain small businesses (Figure 3). The second most popular response was to promote the desired community character through zoning or development guidelines. This may relate to current issues of property maintenance and vacant storefronts; as well as future concerns about maintaining a rural aesthetic with growth. The areas considered to be most appropriate by community workshop participants for redevelopment or transformation are community assets, such as parks, trails, and schools, the gateway into Centerburg on SR-36, and Downtown (Figure 2).

Downtown

One area in which community members would like to see changes in land use and development is the Downtown. At the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival, activity participants voted on the improvements they would most like to see in Downtown, Centerburg. The results are as follows:

What do you want to see Downtown?

- Dining: **34**
- Public art: **17**
- Landscaping: **14**
- Bike amenities: **9**
- Lighting: **9**
- Parklet: **7**
- Benches: **6**
- Signage & Wayfinding: **6**

Figure 1. Community Survey Results: General

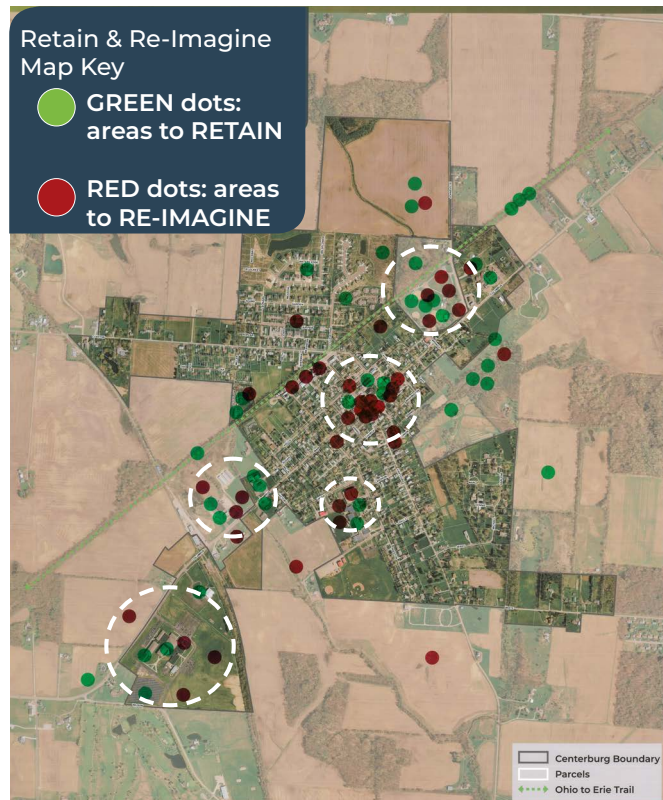
If you could change ONE thing about Centerburg, what would it be?

Most common themes:

- Add dining & retail options
- Increase entertainment / activities for youth
- Enhance Downtown
- Improve the quality of existing parks and sports fields
- Plan for long-term, collaborative maintenance of Memorial Park
- Fill vacant storefronts
- Improve internet service
- Increase parking
- Reduce crime and/or drug use
- Support more businesses
- Nothing / The Village should continue as is

Figure 2. Community Workshop Results: Land Use & Development

Which areas of Centerburg should be retained?
Which areas should be re-imagined?



These results are similar to survey outcomes in which three-fourth of respondents said more restaurants and shops would encourage them to visit Downtown more often (Figure 4). Though parking came up during stakeholder interviews, 80% of survey participants *did not* select more parking as an incentive for them to visit the Downtown more often, even though they were able to select as many options as they'd like.

Housing & Neighborhoods

The majority of community survey respondents (85%) said that their preferred housing type is available in Centerburg. Similarly, around 60% of respondents said they would not be willing to live on smaller lot than they currently do in order to be walking distance from parks, shops, or restaurants.

The divergence between the entertainment, commercial, and recreation amenities that community members would like to see in Centerburg and the attachment to low density or stagnant development may present a challenge in the future. Some support for more diversity in housing options was shared during engagement; specifically for high-quality rental options and opportunities for aging

residents to stay in the community (Figure 5). The most pressing housing issue for Centerburg's future, according to 33% of survey respondents, will be maintaining neighborhood amenities, such as parks, sidewalks, and street lights (Figure 5). Affordability and the aging housing stock are also concerns.

Figure 4. Community Survey Results: Downtown

What would encourage you to visit Downtown more? (select all that apply)

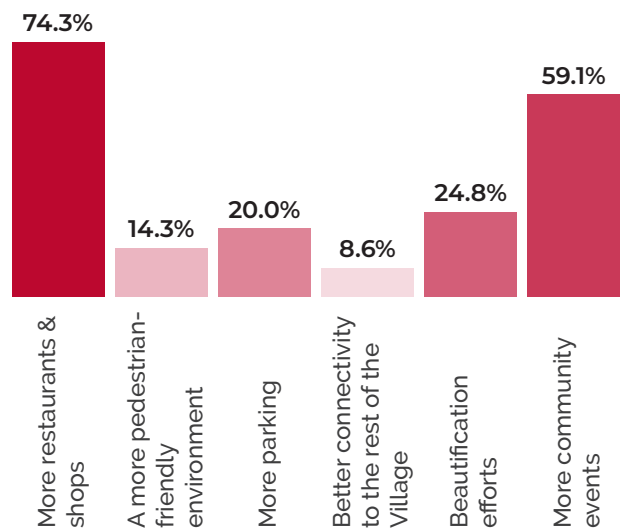


Figure 3. Community Survey Results: Land Use & Development

What do you think is the most important development priority for Centerburg to focus on over the next 10 years?

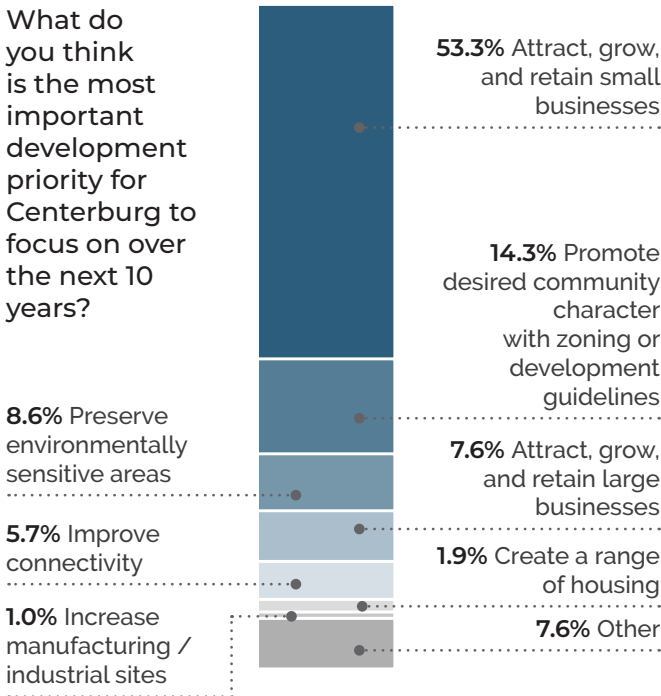
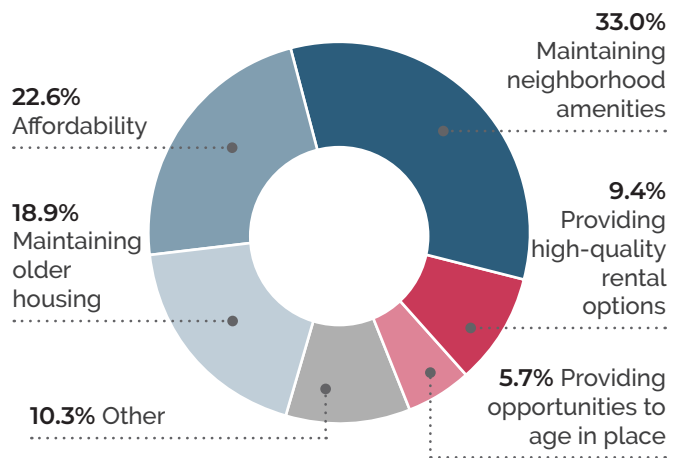


Figure 5. Community Survey Results: Housing

Which housing issue do you think will be the most pressing for Centerburg to address in the next 10 years?



Parks & Recreation

The primary park and recreation amenities in or near the Village of Centerburg include Memorial Park, the Heart of Ohio Trail, and Centerburg school facilities. Existing parks and recreation opportunities in Centerburg were common themes among community members; specifically the condition of Memorial Park and a lack of programming for youth. As noted in the Land Use & Development section of this memo, parks and trails are viewed both as community assets worth preserving and as places in need of transformation (Figure 2).

Community survey participants rated the quality of existing parks in Centerburg at an average 2.5 on a 1 to 5 scale with "1" being "poor quality" and "5" being "excellent quality"; likely a reflection of survey complaints regarding the quality of Memorial Park and/or the football stadium. Using the same scale, the quality of existing trails in Centerburg were rated higher at an average of 4.1.

Looking to the future, about three-fourths of survey respondents said that parks and trails are important or very important for the future of Centerburg (Figure 6). The majority of survey respondents said that the overall most important parks priority for the future of Centerburg should be increasing activities and events for residents or requiring new development to include green space (Figure 6). When asked what types of parks or open space Centerburg needs more of, the most popular options were playgrounds and programmed community space (Figure 6). "Other" responses included a dog park and splashpad.

Feedback received at the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival was generally consistent with the survey results in which community members expressed the importance of parks and recreation amenities, but indicated a preference for future improvements.

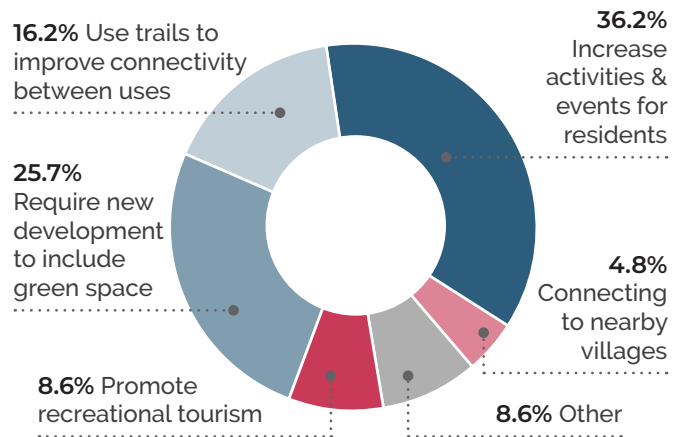
Infrastructure & Services

The most frequent mention of infrastructure, mobility, and Village services throughout public engagement related to the quality of roads and utilities.

The greatest current challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in Centerburg according to about 24% of community survey respondents is road maintenance (Figure 7). In thinking about what may be the greatest challenge

Figure 6. Community Survey Results: Parks & Recreation

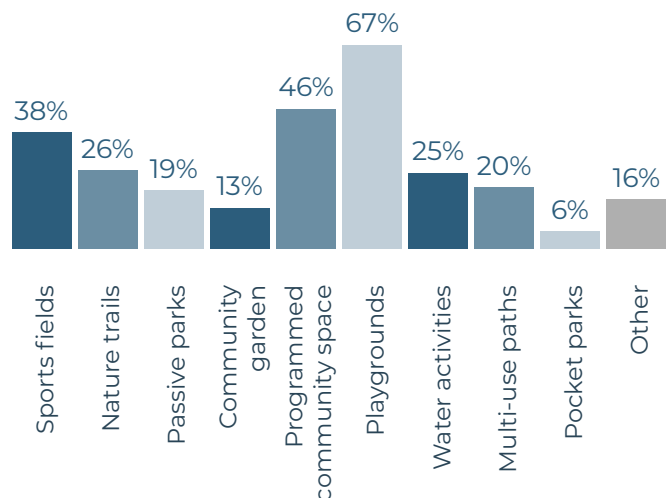
What do you think is the most important priority for Centerburg to focus on over the next 10 years regarding parks, trails, and open space?



How would you rate the importance of parks and trails for the future of Centerburg?



What types of parks/open space do you think Centerburg needs more of? (select all that apply)



in the future, traffic received the highest percentage of votes, which aligns with general concerns about growth and development. Figure 7 shows the complete breakdown of responses for both current and future conditions. When broadly asked their least favorite thing about Centerburg, roads were not a frequent theme, but rather the cost of water / sewer and the relationship between the Village and Township. Other popular “least favorite things” were not necessarily related to the built environment or Village operations.

These results are similar to feedback gathered at the community workshop and through stakeholder interviews. While the community seems generally content with Village services, there is a desire to improve the quality and appearance of Village-owned properties, especially in the Downtown area. There is also a strong appetite for planning efforts to ensure the community is effectively prepared for a future increase in population and/or businesses.

Summary

The following takeaways summarize the feedback gathered from the Centerburg community.

- Satisfaction around parks, trails, and recreation is mediocre, though these amenities are considered highly important.
- The community would like to see improvements to Memorial Park, as well as a strategy for cooperation between the Village and Township in the future.
- The strongest desire for redevelopment is in the Downtown. Community members would like to see more businesses, less vacancies, and improvements to the facades and streetscape.
- The public would like more dining and retail options in the Village.
- Community events and activities, especially those geared toward young residents, are desired.
- Businesses, though not necessarily residents, are concerned with availability of parking Downtown.
- Maintaining a rural feel in Centerburg is a priority for the community.
- Residents are concerned about the strain of potential future growth and development on the community's character and infrastructure.

Figure 7. Community Survey Results: Infrastructure & Services

What is / will be the greatest challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in Centerburg?

Issue	% (currently)	% (future)
Road maintenance	24.0%	11.3%
Quality of, or access to, utilities	20.2%	14.2%
Maintenance of public properties	20.2%	5.7%
Village fiscal operations / taxes	12.5%	11.3%
Planning and zoning services	11.5%	19.8%
Traffic	8.7%	32.1%
Public safety services	2.9%	5.7%

Figure 8. Community Workshop: The Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival

