

# CENTERBURG, OHIO VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Thank you to the members of the community who were involved in this planning process including the steering committee, residents, and members of Council. This plan is a reflection of their dedication to the future of Centerburg.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan envisions the future of growth, development, and quality of life for the Centerburg community over the next five to ten years. The planning process, spearheaded by a steering committee of community members and spanning approximately eight months, blended hard data, local expertise, and regional trends to create tangible strategies and actions for the future.

The Strategic Plan revealed unique community assets which Centerburg should aim to preserve and enhance; as well as challenges which should be addressed. The Village is conveniently located for those wishing to commute to Columbus, Westerville, New Albany, and other nearby centers of employment while enjoying small-town living at home. The community lies on the cusp of current Central Ohio growth; creating opportunity for an increase in jobs, revenue, and population in the future.

The strategic planning process revealed overarching themes to promote healthy, safe, and economically viable communities. The key takeaways are:

- Existing neighborhoods and future residents would benefit from a more diverse housing stock which accounts for aging in place and a range of household types.
- There are opportunities to enhance the Downtown and Village gateways with landscaping, street furniture, street trees, signage, and pedestrian-oriented improvements.
- Centerburg should encourage regional efforts to expand recreational tourism, particularly for trails.
- Priority capital improvement projects should focus on revitalizing the Downtown and promoting the Heart of Ohio Trail.

The key takeaways are guiding principles in development of the Plan. The ultimate function of the Village Strategic Plan is to serve as a road map to prioritize and identify funding of future improvements. The Priority Strategies for the future of Centerburg, categorized by general theme and developed from the premise of the aforementioned key takeaways, are displayed in the table below and expanded upon within the Plan.

## PRIORITY STRATEGIES TO GUIDE THE FUTURE OF CENTERBURG:

### Land Use & Development:

Update the zoning code to promote desired development patterns.



### Housing & Neighborhoods:

Diversify the housing stock.



### Mobility & Infrastructure:

Enhance the gateway to Centerburg on US-36 / Columbus Rd.



### Parks & Recreation:

Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.



### Community Image & Brand:

Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.





# CHAPTER 01

# PLAN OVERVIEW





Circa 1920



# WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

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The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan seeks to envision the future of growth, development, and quality of life for the Centerburg community. Rooted in community aspirations and implementable goals, the Plan provides an honest evaluation of present and future needs. The planning process brings together community experts – including residents, employers, and community organizations – to establish long-term, multi-faceted goals around several topics. The strategic planning process allows for a dynamic conversation around the issues that matter most to the future of the community, but generally involves the following subject areas:

- Land Use & Zoning
- Economic Development
- Community Character
- Historic Preservation
- Mobility & Infrastructure
- Quality of Life and Place

Though initiated at a county level, the Plan is asset-based and community-driven to ensure its success in addressing the specific strengths, opportunities, and challenges for Centerburg. Through its implementation, the Plan will provide immediate action steps on policy, projects, and programs, and will ultimately serve as a road-map to help direct decision making for years to come.

In 2019, the Area Development Foundation of Knox County, through funding from the Knox County Foundation, initiated the process to create guiding land use documents for the Villages of Centerburg, Danville, Fredericktown, and Gambier. The resulting documents - strategic plans for each village - are intended to reflect both county-wide and village-specific visions, market conditions, and long-term goals. The Village Strategic Plans will help guide the allocation of funding pledged to each Village from the Knox County Foundation over the next four years.



## WHY PLAN?

Deliberate planning for the future delivers agency to communities to enable collective construction of vibrant, healthy, and intentional places.

The Ohio Constitution provides for municipalities to enact zoning and land use regulations as an exercise of police power. The impetus for local planning has generally been tied to the health, safety, and well-being of residents in that community. In addition to improving the lives of local residents, planning also helps ensure efficient allocation of resources by looking to the long-term goals and needs of the community.

The Village of Centerburg is also impacted by County-level planning processes. The Knox County Comprehensive Plan, last updated in 2018, referenced development pressure or "hot spots" near Centerburg as growth occurs in Sunbury, Delaware, and nearby townships. The Plan emphasized a desire to preserve and protect Knox County's agricultural resources, while diversifying its economic base through investment in infrastructure, education, and development and marketing of commercial or industrial sites.

The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan aims to provide further insight and analysis to the Knox County Comprehensive Plan by honing in on the specific strengths and weaknesses for the Centerburg community.

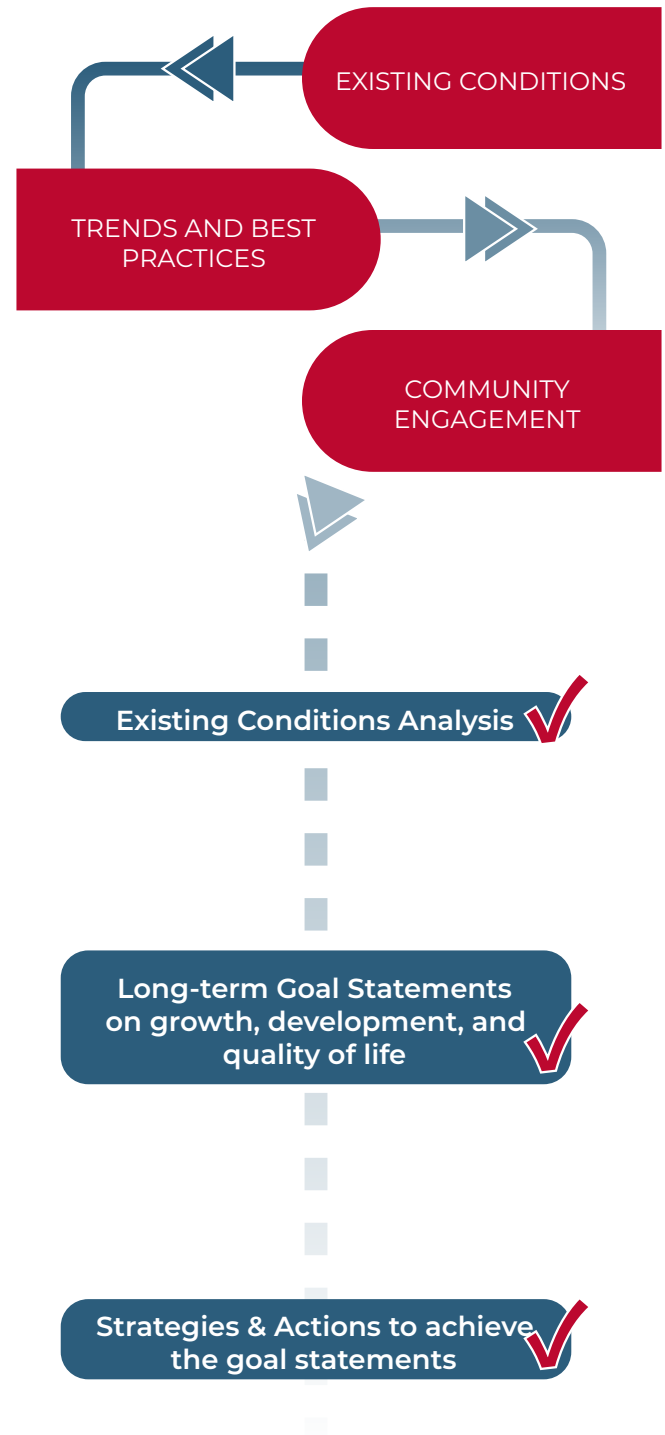
## HOW WILL CENTERBURG USE THE PLAN?

### Roadmap for the Future

Strategic plans are legally-adopted documents used to guide decision-making in a community. Local officials should consult the strategic plan when making determinations about policies, projects, and programs; particularly as it relates to zoning, land use, and development. The plan provides a one-stop shop for understanding local conditions, as well as long-term objectives.

The plan should be treated as a living document which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis so that it most accurately reflects the dynamic views, aspirations, and needs of the community.

Figure 1. Planning Process Summary



## WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR CREATING A PLAN?

Creating a successful plan requires a careful balance of art and science; as well as the proper resources to develop a grand vision into a reality.

### Inputs

Multiple pieces go into the production of a plan. Extensive data on the local community is reviewed through the framework of regional trends and national best practices in planning and development. The local existing conditions are then guided by community-led visioning which is informed by ongoing public engagement.

### Outcomes

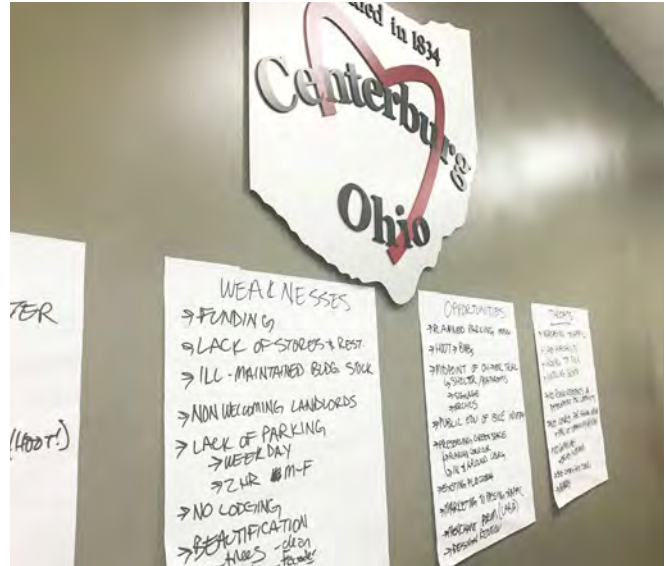
The planning process provides opportunities to consider and debate how the community would like to grow, adapt, and deliver its local brand of services and identity. These conversations culminate in the production of the plan document which includes guiding statements, maps, and objectives for the future.

### Participants

The strategic plan framework is built from the pillars of community-wide participation. This includes all members of the community. Plan objectives and implementable actions are derived through conversations involving:

- residents,
- businesses,
- institutions,
- neighborhood and civic groups,
- employees, and
- local officials.

The process is guided by 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 planning process involves bringing together community members to identify local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.*

*The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan can help guide land use, zoning, and development processes; and prioritize funding of capital improvement or other projects.*

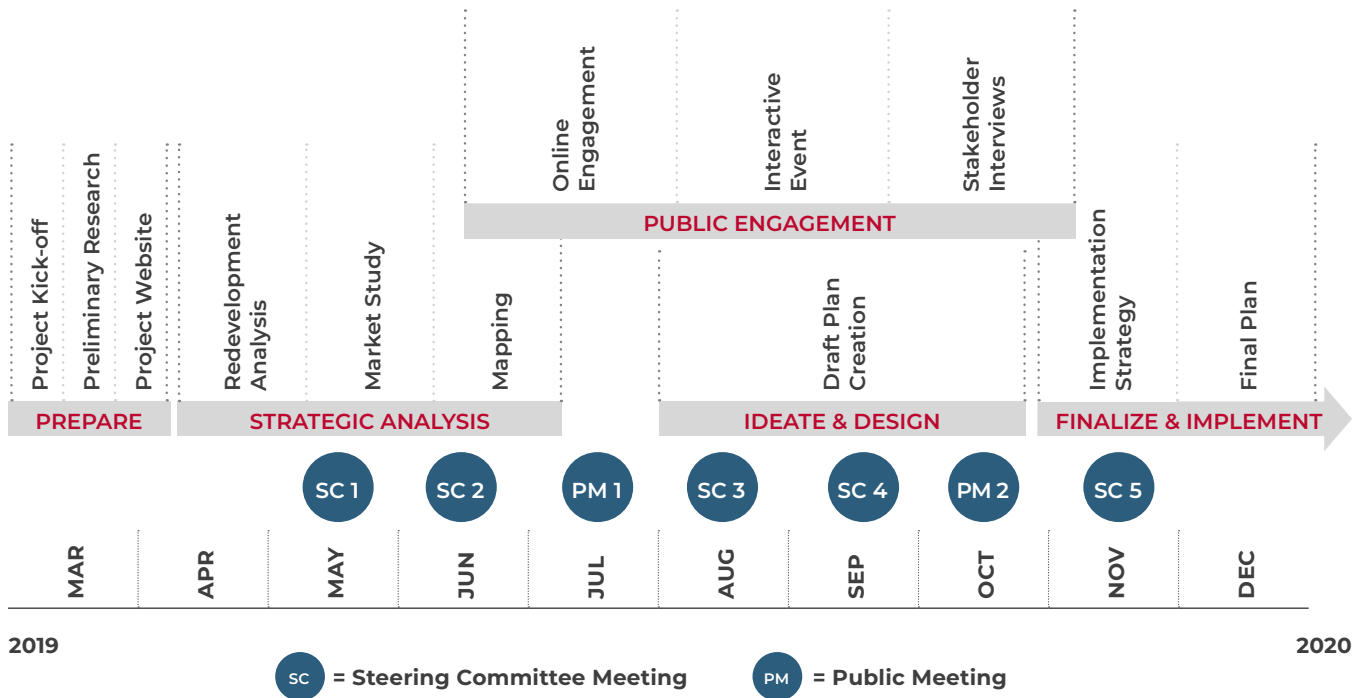


*The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan should be consulted during routine village planning and zoning review processes, such as variance or permit requests.*

## Schedule

The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan was completed during an eight-month planning process divided amongst five phases (Figure 2). Each phase included distinct tasks and meetings in addition to ongoing actions which occurred throughout the process.

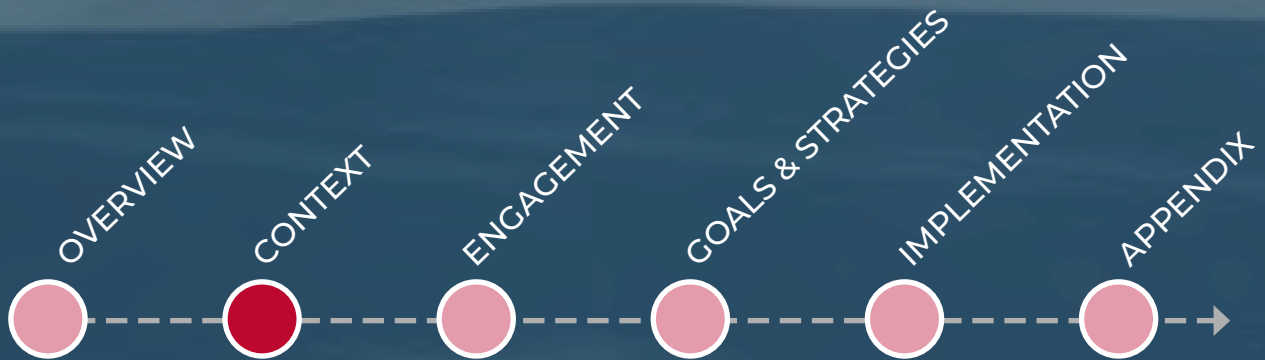
Figure 2. Plan Timeline & Schedule





## CHAPTER 02

# COMMUNITY CONTEXT



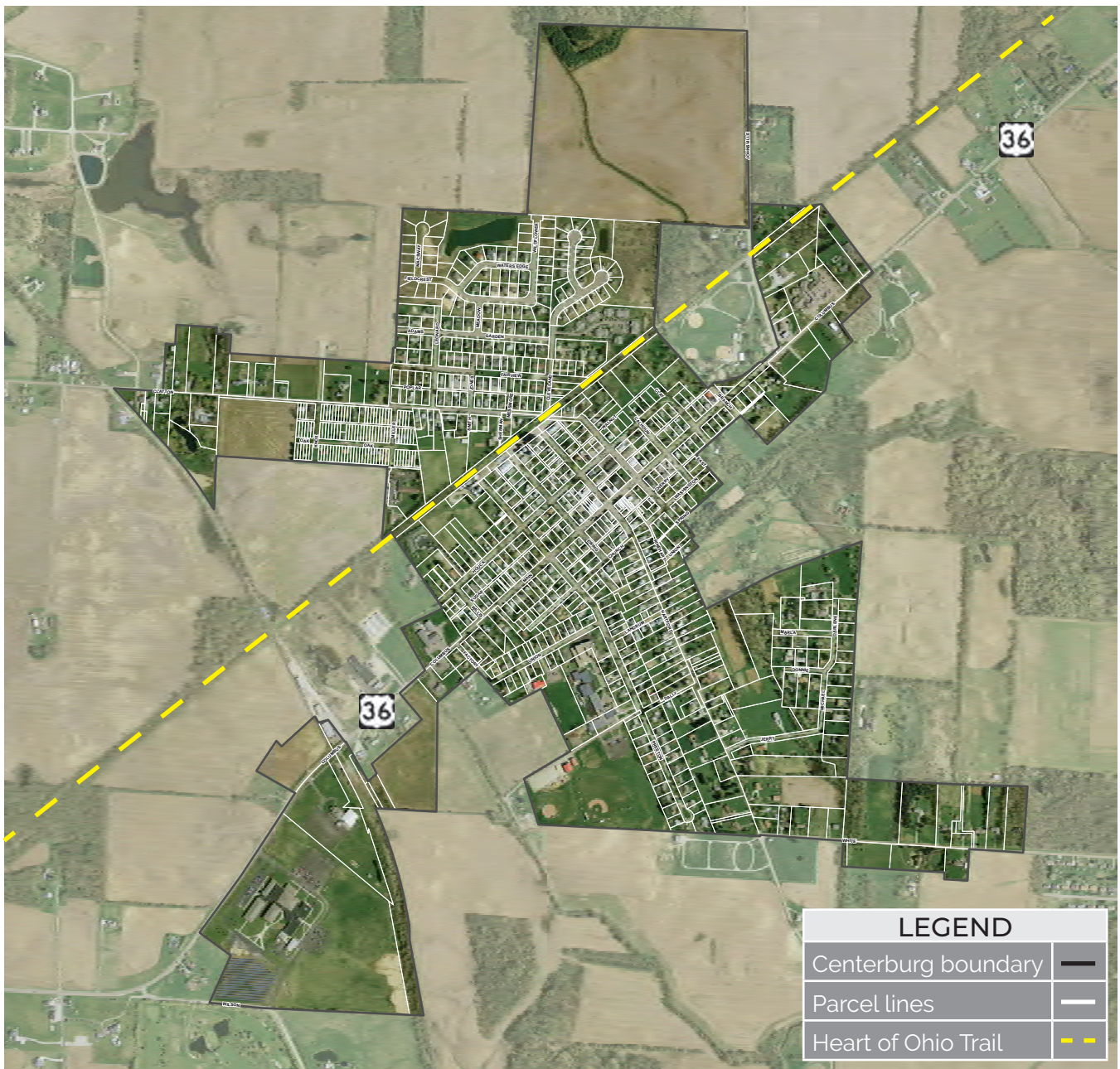


# THE HEART OF IT ALL

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The Village of Centerburg, located just 35 miles northeast of Columbus, is the geographic center of Ohio. The family-friendly small town hosts two popular annual festivals and is a destination along the Heart of Ohio Trail.

Figure 3. Centerburg Base Map





## OVERVIEW

The following section is a brief synopsis of the Centerburg community. The demographic data is largely based on U.S. Census Bureau 2013-2017 estimates and is provided as a general snapshot of the community. As the Village works to implement the recommendations of this Plan, it may wish to compare existing data with future, updated figures; including, but not limited to, the 2020 U.S. Census. A more detailed technologically-informed market analysis is provided in the Appendix.

## THE PEOPLE

### Population

Centerburg's population was 1,773 in 2010 and estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau at 2,214 in 2018.<sup>1</sup> Analysis using a greater array of sources estimates the current population closer to 1,960.<sup>2</sup> The Village grew faster than Knox County from 2010-2018, currently accounting for 3.6% of the County's total population.

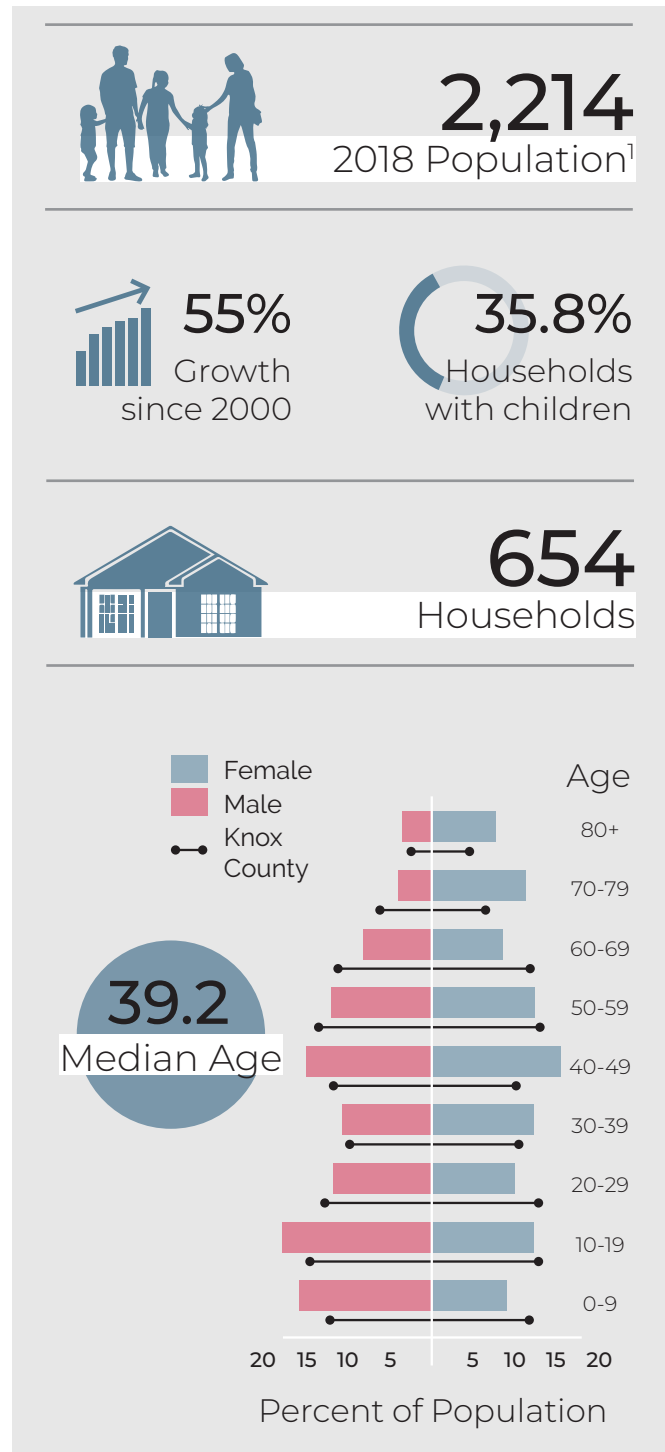
Though Knox County is generally growing at a modest pace, the Central Ohio region is poised for substantial growth in the coming decades. Estimates project up to an additional one million people will be added to the region by 2050.<sup>3</sup> Given its central location and proximity to the City of Columbus, Centerburg will likely be impacted by this growth- either directly, or as a result of current Central Ohio residents moving outward from Columbus in search of a setting more rural than the growing metropolis. More detailed population projections are provided in the market analysis (See Appendix).

The Strategic Plan is designed to reflect current wants and needs of the community, in addition to assessing capacity for growth and development.

### Households & Families

There are an estimated 654 households in Centerburg with the average household size at 2.49. Around 37.2% (243) of its households classify as non-family, meaning the occupants live alone or with roommates to whom they are not related. About the same amount of households, 35.8% (234), include children under the age of 18 years to which the householder is related. More detailed estimates on household composition are provided in the market analysis (See Appendix).

Figure 4. Centerburg Population Summary



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2013-2017)

1. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; & Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2018

2. Source: Urban Decision Group (2019)

3. Source: MORPC, Insight 2050

## THE ECONOMY

### Employment & Income

The most common industries for employed Centerburg residents are manufacturing, construction, and retail trade. The majority of Centerburg residents work outside the Village and the mean travel time to work is about 28 minutes.

U.S. Census data estimates the median household income for Centerburg at \$37,368, compared to \$51,211 in Knox County. Analysis from Urban Decision Group using a greater array of sources estimates the median household income to be much higher at \$65,994 in Centerburg.

### Education

In correlation to a relatively higher income, Centerburg residents are relatively well-educated in comparison with other communities in Knox County. More than 50% of residents ages 25 and older have some college experience and 15.6% have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Those figures are 49.4% and 22.7%, respectively, for the County. A more thorough workforce analysis, including educational attainment for communities across the County, is provided in the Appendix.

## THE PLACE

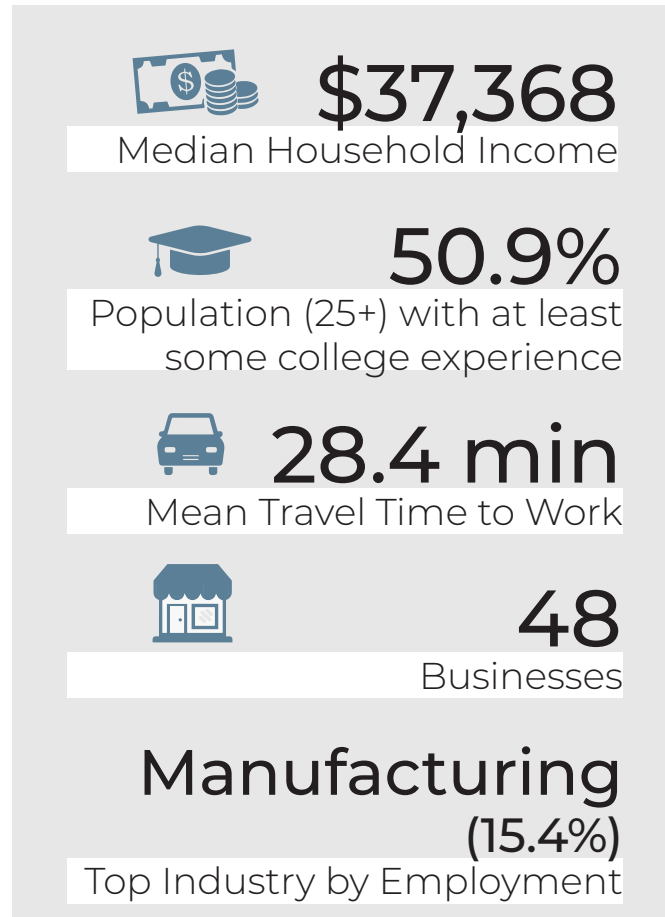
### Housing

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the Village has about 760 units, of which about 56.5% are single-family detached homes. Additionally, appropriately 35.9% of occupied housing units in Centerburg were built prior to 1940. Recent constructions include the Centerburg Meadows and Heart of Ohio subdivisions. The sales value for homes sold in Centerburg over the last decade has increased steadily, while size has remained fairly similar (Figure 6).

### Natural Environment

Centerburg's natural features were identified as a community asset during the planning process. The North Fork Licking River and correlated 100-year floodplain impact properties on the eastern portion of Centerburg (Figure 7). In order to protect the health and safety of both residents and the environment, this Plan aims to promote green and open space and respect development barriers poised by waterways and floodplains.

Figure 5. Centerburg Economics Summary



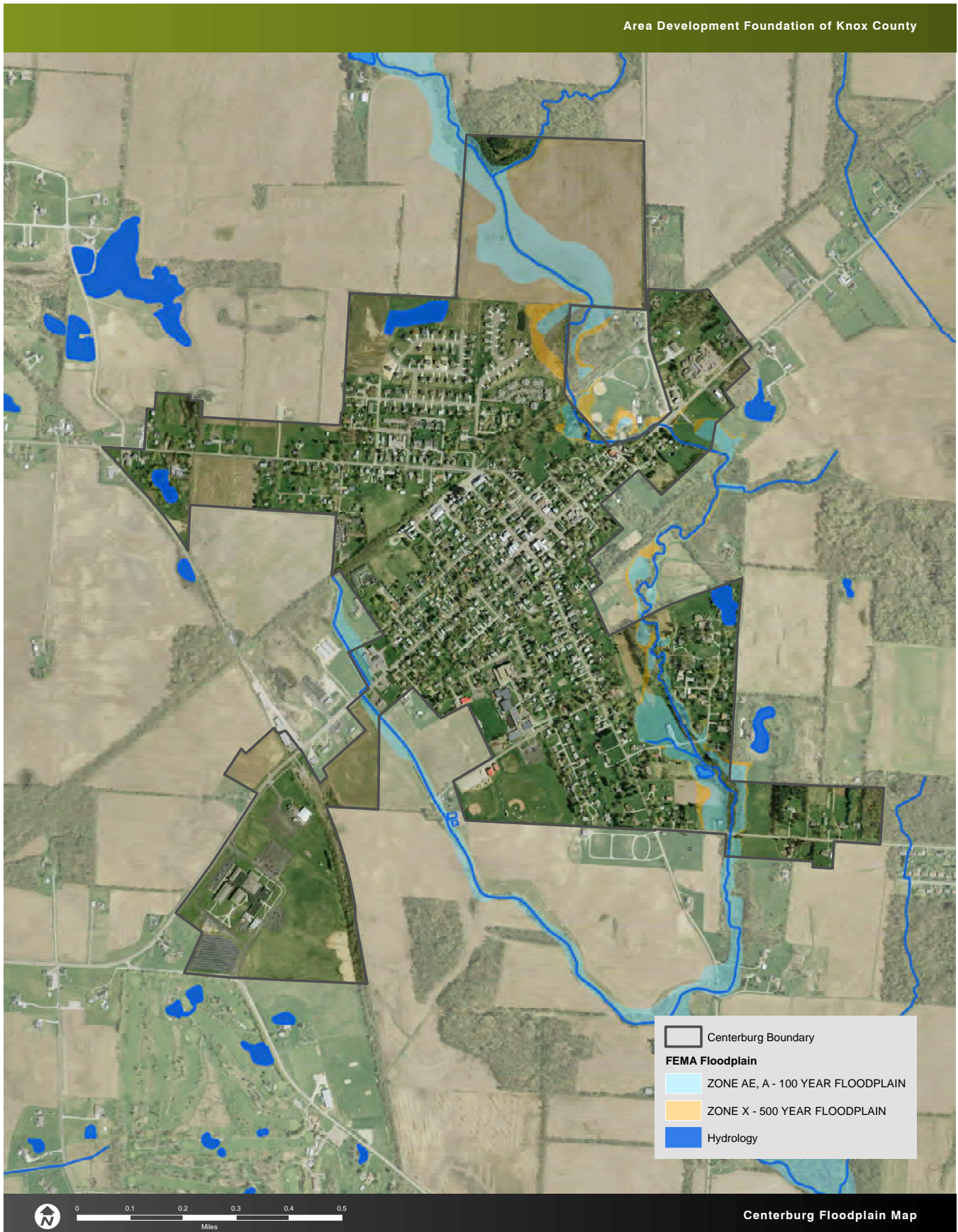
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2013-2017); Urban Decision Group (2019)

Figure 6. Centerburg Home Sales Data (2009-2019)

Year of Sale	Number of Sales	Average Sales Value	Average Living Area	Sales Value (per sq. ft.)
2019	22	\$171,087	1,534	112
2018	15	\$163,627	1,634	100
2017	20	\$141,684	1,524	93
2016	18	\$159,541	1,701	94
2015	29	\$146,843	1,647	89
2014	17	\$121,365	1,530	79
2013	13	\$130,466	1,530	85
2012	10	\$137,230	1,572	87
2011	15	\$88,750	1,450	61
2010	8	\$122,888	1,425	86
2009	13	\$131,531	1,612	82

Source: Knox County Auditor

Figure 8. FEMA Flood Map





# CHAPTER 03

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT







# THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

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## Community Workshop

The planning team set up plan information and activities 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

The survey gauged perceptions on growth, development, and measures of livability in Centerburg. Paper copies were available at local events and through distribution by Village staff and steering committee members. The survey was also available to complete online.

## Online Activities

The project website -KnoxCoPlans.com- provided updates, meeting materials, and the activities conducted at the community workshops. Business cards advertising the website were distributed to spread the word about online engagement. As the Plan was created, draft ideas were also available online for viewing and comment.

## Public Hearing

A complete draft of the Plan was presented to the public at a Village Council meeting before formal adoption of the Plan.

COMMUNITY  
WORKSHOP



STAKEHOLDER  
INTERVIEWS



COMMUNITY  
SURVEY



ONLINE  
ACTIVITIES



OPEN HOUSE



MORE THAN 500  
ENGAGEMENT  
RESULTS!



## 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 state of the Downtown (Figure 9).

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 10). 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.

### 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 Festivals, activity participants voted on the improvements they would most like to see in Downtown, Centerburg. Dining was the most popular selection with 34 votes, followed by public art (17) and landscaping (14). 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 11). Though parking came up during

Figure 9. Community Survey Results: General

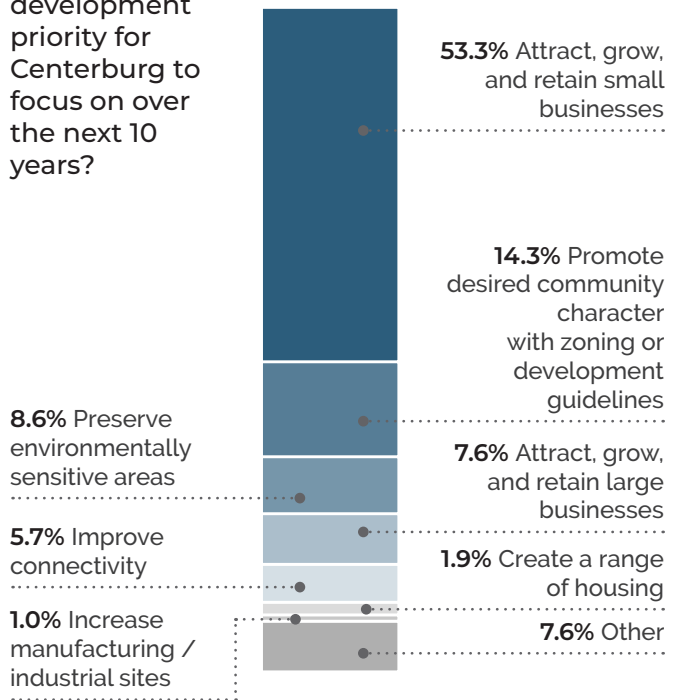
If you could change ONE thing about Centerburg, what would it be?

Most common themes:



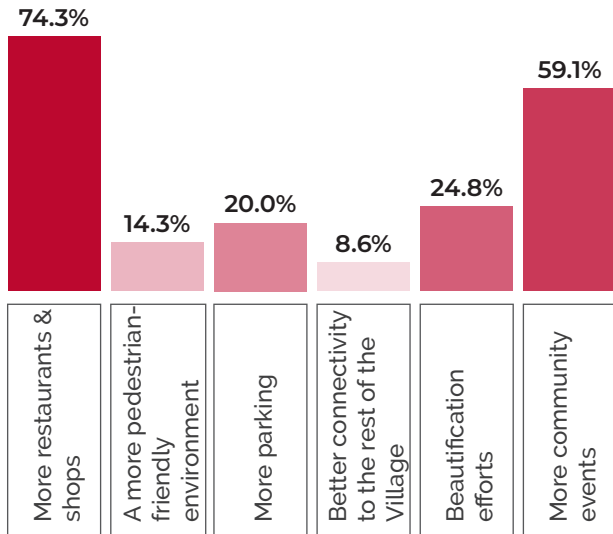
Figure 10. Community Survey Results: Land Use & Development

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



**Figure 11.** Community Survey Results: Downtown

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



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.

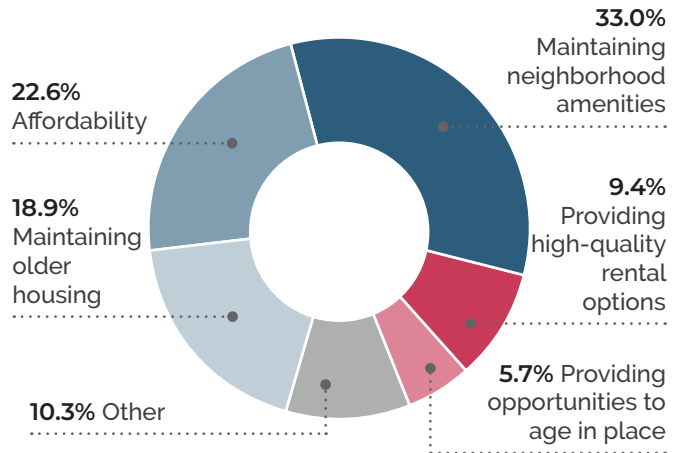
## Housing & Neighborhoods

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 12). 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 12.** 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.

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 13). The majority of survey respondents said that the overall most important parks priority for the future of Centerburg should

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT | CENTERBURG VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

be increasing activities and events for residents or requiring new development to include green space (Figure 13). When asked what types of parks or open space Centerburg needs more of, the most popular options were playgrounds and programmed community space (Figure 13). "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**

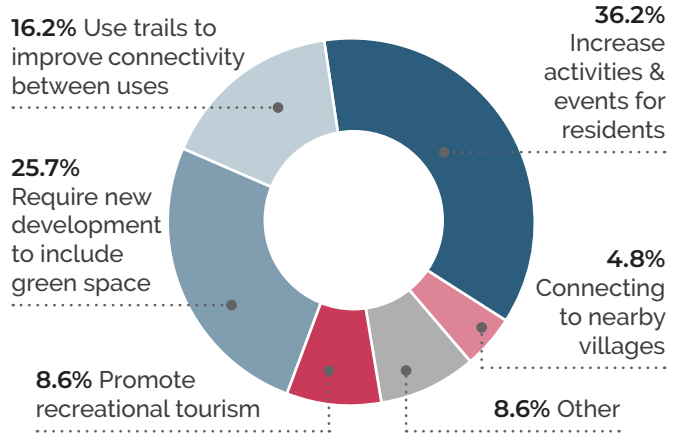
The most frequent mention of infrastructure, mobility, and Village services throughout public engagement related to the quality of roads and utilities.

The greatest current challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in Centerburg according to about 24% of community survey respondents is road maintenance (Figure 14). In thinking about what may be the greatest challenge in the future, traffic received the highest percentage of votes, which aligns with general concerns about growth and development. Figure 14 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.

**Figure 13.** Community Survey Results: Parks & Recreation

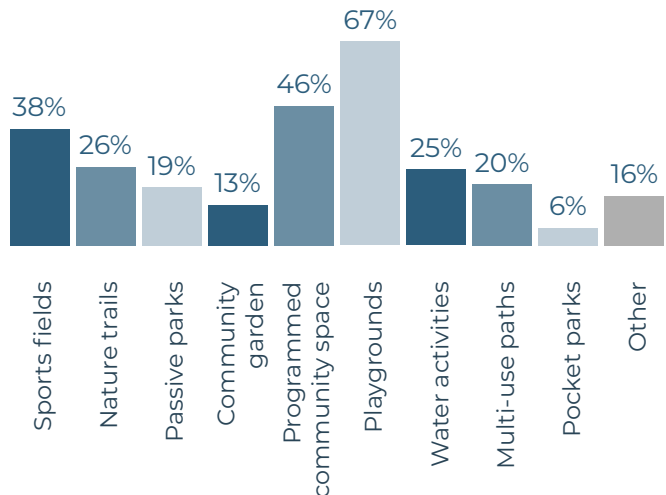
What do you think is the most important priority for Centerburg to focus on over the next 10 years regarding parks, trails, and open space?



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)





**Figure 14.** 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%

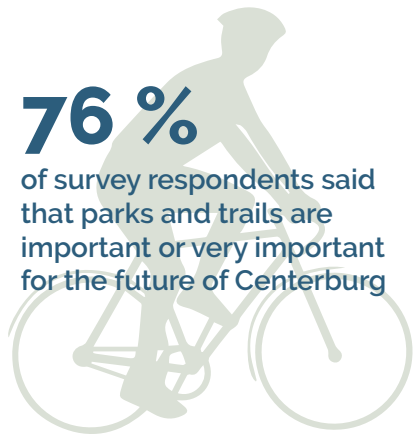
**Figure 15.** Community workshop: The Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival



## 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.

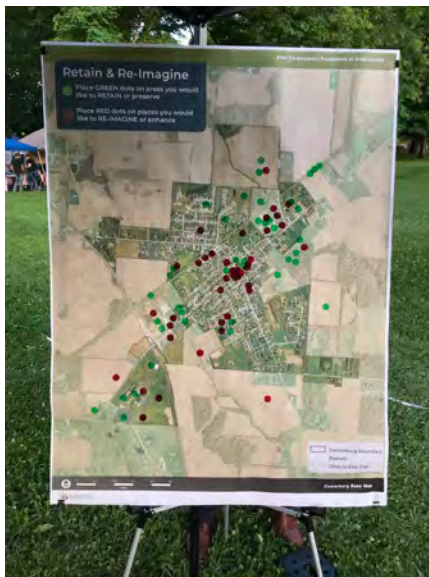


“

A community...working towards what is best for the people who live and work here with enough vision to welcome new growth.

”

-a local resident's description of their vision for Centerburg.



**More than 50%**  
of survey respondents said that rural character was their favorite thing about Centerburg.



“

A hub for local farming and artisans- indoor, year-round market, expanded education, and support for local growers.

”

-a local resident's description of their vision for Centerburg.



**67 %**

of survey respondents said that Centerburg needs more playgrounds.





## CHAPTER 04

# PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES









# THE PLAN FOUNDATION

The goal statements generally express how steering committee members and public engagement participants would like to see the community evolve, while the strategies offer a realistic path forward. Each strategy was identified during the planning process through a combination of public engagement, steering committee discussions, existing conditions research, and market analysis.

Centerburg should strive to pursue each strategy in an effort to work toward the long-term and inclusive goal statement. This Strategic Plan highlights a priority strategy which may serve as a catalyst in achieving the remaining strategies and actions.

For a complete list of strategies and actions, please see the Implementation Matrix (p. XX).

A successful plan acts as a roadmap by defining clear goals and strategic actions to achieve those goals. The following goal statements for the future of Centerburg serve as a framework upon which the Village Strategic Plan was created and set the stage for the strategies and action steps described in the Implementation Matrix.

The recommendations of this Plan are structured around three parts:

- A **GOAL STATEMENT** describes the long-term, broad objective around an overarching theme.
- The **STRATEGIES** break down the goal into smaller components.
- The **ACTIONS** provide straight-forward and specific items to work toward the initial Goal Statement.

*Broad View*

*Specific*



*Long Term*

*Short Term*

# GOAL STATEMENTS

Pages 26-29

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

“

Encourage a mix of land uses and site design which support a vibrant Downtown, a diverse economic base, and a high-quality of life for residents.

”

**4 STRATEGIES**  
**1 PRIORITY STRATEGY**  
**16 ACTIONS**

Pages 30-33

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

“

Provide safe, healthy, and affordable housing options for all residents while maintaining Centerburg's Village identity.

”

**4 STRATEGIES**  
**1 PRIORITY STRATEGY**  
**15 ACTIONS**

Pages 34-37

## MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

“

Provide utilities, services, and a built environment which connect to the region, safely transport residents, and support a walkable Downtown.

”

**4 STRATEGIES**  
**1 PRIORITY STRATEGY**  
**13 ACTIONS**



Pages 38-43

## PARKS & RECREATION

“

Provide high-quality recreation amenities for residents and visitors which complement the area's rural aesthetic and promote commercial activity.

”

**4** STRATEGIES  
**1** PRIORITY STRATEGY  
**18** ACTIONS

Pages 44-47

## COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

“

Strengthen and expand Centerburg's branding efforts to encompass the Downtown, its rural identity, and small-town community environment.

”

**4** STRATEGIES  
**1** PRIORITY STRATEGY  
**14** ACTIONS

# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

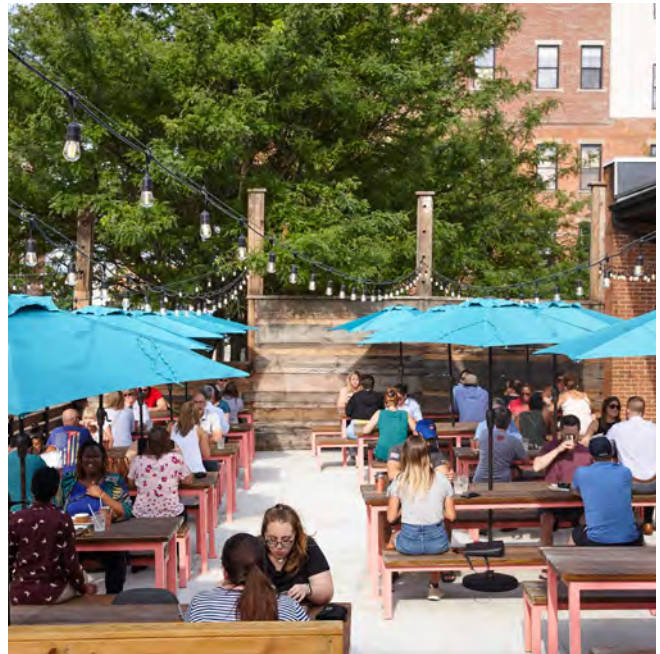
## The Big Picture

Land use and development patterns define a community through function and form. How Centerburg property owners, including the Village and private developers, use their land is both an organic process and a deliberate response to regulation and investment. In this way, Centerburg codes, policies, and the overall attitude toward development shape how the community evolves over time. Formation of a cohesive and coherent vision for the future of land and development strengthens the impact of improvements, provides stability for property owners, garners a sense of community, and improves the overall quality of life for Centerburg residents.

The population, and subsequent development, in Centerburg grew steadily over the last few decades, and there is further pressure on the community to accommodate residents who work in nearby cities such as Westerville, New Albany, or Columbus. Population growth requires additional services and amenities to ensure a well-rounded and vibrant community. Centerburg's geographic location at the conflux of urban, suburban, and rural communities presents opportunities to expand revenue and improve its standard of living.

## Summary of Findings

- Maintaining a rural feel in Centerburg is a priority for the community.
- There are three identifiable commercial districts in Centerburg: West Columbus Road, Downtown, & East Columbus Road
- The strongest desire for redevelopment by the public is in the Downtown.
- Residents are concerned about the strain of potential future growth and development on the community's character and infrastructure.
- Local businesses are concerned with the availability of parking Downtown.
- The Knox County Comprehensive Plan recommended diversifying the economic base through investment in infrastructure, education, and marketing of developable commercial / industrial sites.



*The Centerburg community expressed support for the development of additional dining and retail options in the Village.*

## Goal Statement

**Encourage a mix of land uses and high-value site design which support a vibrant Downtown, a diverse economic base, and a high-quality of life for residents.**

## Strategies

The following strategies are designed to break down the goal statement into tangible subcomponents. Each strategy is then further supported by a list of actions.

1

Update the zoning code to promote desired development patterns.

2

Acquire and/or reposition underutilized properties as catalyst for development.

3

Engage regionally with land use and development strategies.

4

Enhance parking options in the Downtown.





## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

### Priority Strategy

**Update the Zoning Code to promote desired development patterns.**

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

Given its location and the projected growth for the region, Centerburg will likely see pressure to grow and transform in the coming decades. A complicated or overly burdensome zoning code may attract unwanted development patterns or deter developers from investing in Centerburg at all. For example, the 1.5 mile stretch of US-36 (Main Street) includes five different zoning districts. It is critical for Centerburg to ensure its codes and regulations are aligned with the long-term goals and well-being of the Village in order to attract, but still control, the potential growth.

The planning process revealed a general concern for growth and expansion, although the amenities, services, and quality of life which residents would like to see in the community are best supported through strategic economic development decisions- including support for smart growth and controlled development.

#### How to prioritize this strategy

The actions listed in this section demonstrate logical steps the Village of Centerburg can take to modernize and simplify its zoning code in order to attract the type of development the community would like to see.

Emphasis should be placed on allowing a mix of uses in the Downtown, such as residential units above commercial space, with careful attention given to the design and layout of new or renovated construction. Parking should be relegated to the side or rear yard and well-screened. Landscaping, open space, and pedestrian amenities should be encouraged, if not required.

Additionally, efforts should be made to coordinate with Hilliar Township to create consistent regulations, especially in regards to development along US-36 where parcels bounce back and forth between jurisdictional boundaries.

#### Actions

1

Implement a zoning overlay along the Main Street corridor to encourage and enhance development in the Downtown and Village gateways.

2

Consolidate existing districts to allow for a greater mix of uses; particularly in the Downtown and commercial areas.

3

Reduce parking minimums (particularly for multi-family residential) to provide flexibility and reduce underutilized parking space.

4

Explore opportunities to institute exactions (i.e. developer fees or agreements) to fund preservation of parks and open space.

*\* You can view actions for all Land Use & Development Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 56)*

# ZONING OVERLAYS

*A zoning overlay is applied on top of a base zoning district to create special standards or regulations in land use and development for a specified area.*

Zoning overlays are often applied to downtowns, commercial corridors, historic areas, or other districts in which the style of development is important to the community overall, but more flexibility is needed in use and site design. For example, an historic district overlay may include design guidelines to preserve a community's historic architectural style.

A zoning overlay supersedes, but does not alter the underlying district, making it much simpler to pass legislation creating an overlay than to update the existing zoning code. In the long-term, Centerburg may consider substantive updates to its zoning code in conjunction with other revitalization initiatives. In the near-term, creating a Main Street Corridor overlay could help attract preferred development and preserve the desired community identity.

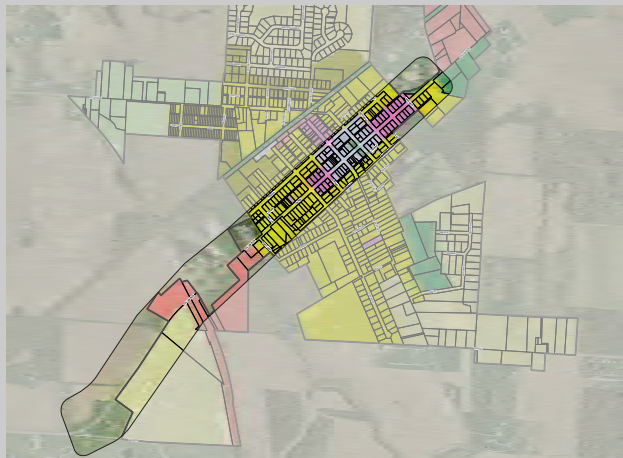
## SILVERTON

The Village of Silverton, Ohio in Hamilton County (population 4,750), instituted the Silverton Renaissance Overlay District in 2009 to provide for a "planned, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use district"<sup>1</sup>

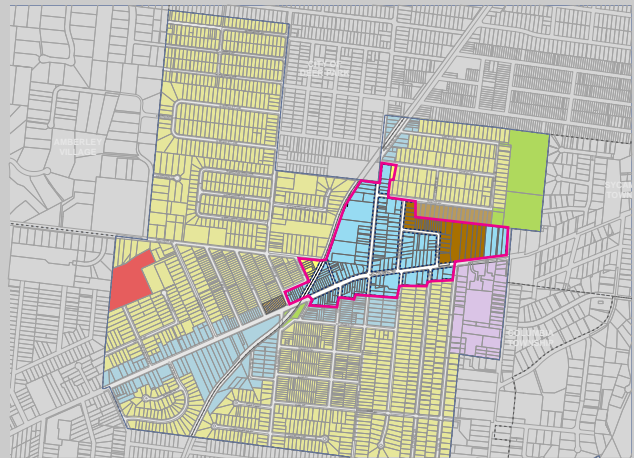
The overlay provides for greater flexibility in land use, yard size, and height restrictions than the base zoning code, while instituting additional architectural, material, and site design standards. It also explicitly permits residential units above commercial uses, even if this is not permitted by the underlying district.

The overlay district is part of a broader effort to revitalize the downtown and main commercial corridor, including strategic land acquisition and sale for catalyst projects. Design standards are aligned with the Village's Streetscape Plan and Comprehensive Plan.

1. Source: Village of Silverton, Ohio Code of Ordinances 153.110



*Centerburg's main corridor, featuring Downtown and gateways, includes five different zoning districts which vary greatly in design standards and regulations.*



*The Silverton Renaissance Overlay District creates additional development standards to protect and enhance the community character and attract quality investment.*



# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

## The Big Picture

The character and condition of neighborhoods speaks to the overall ability for people to thrive within the local community. Centerburg should be concerned not only with delivering quality housing and neighborhood services to the existing population, but also ensuring its residential options align with the wants and needs of future residents. Convenient, multi-modal access to work, recreation, retail, and other amenities is vital in shaping the livability of residential communities. Furthermore, walkability and affordability are driving market demands across the Central Ohio region.

Outside of Mount Vernon, Centerburg has the most multi-family rental options in Knox County; however, few of these options are market-rate. An estimated 323 additional rental units and 905 for-sale single-family homes are needed in the next five years in Knox County to achieve a balanced market. Centerburg is one of the communities best positioned to absorb some of this demand due to its proximity to the City of Columbus and its higher incomes relative to other villages in the County.



*Similar to communities across Ohio, the majority of housing in Centerburg is single-family on large lots.*



*The 24-unit Centerburg Commons is one of only a few market-rate multi-family housing in Centerburg.*

## Summary of Findings

- Centerburg maintains very limited options for market-rate multi-family housing.
- The average home sales value in Centerburg increased by 55% from XXX to XXX.
- The public expressed concerns with maintaining the quality of neighborhood and residential amenities over time.
- The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that 2035 will mark the first time in our country's history that seniors (65+) outnumber children. Knox County is not meeting the demand for senior housing.
- Household sizes are shrinking and people prefer walkability. The National Association of Realtors 2017 Community Preference Survey found that the majority of respondents would prefer to live in a house with a small yard versus a similar house with a large yard if it enabled them to walk to more places.

## Goal Statement

**Provide safe, healthy, and affordable housing options for all residents while maintaining Centerburg's Village identity.**

## Strategies

The following strategies are designed to break down the goal statement into tangible subcomponents. Each strategy is then further supported by a list of actions.

1

Diversify the housing stock.

2

Strengthen and enforce property maintenance.

3

Preserve and promote the rural character of residential neighborhoods.

4

Support opportunities for aging in place.





## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

## Priority Strategy

### Diversify the housing stock.

### Why prioritize this strategy?

The majority of residential land use currently in the Village of Centerburg is classified as detached single-family. Changes in demographics, household type, size, and neighborhood preferences will change the future shape of communities. According to the Insight 2050 report, the majority of projected growth in Central Ohio (75%) will be households without children and more than 50% of the growth will be single-occupant households.<sup>1</sup> Smaller households, including the growing population of empty-nesters, may not need the traditional space allocated for single-family homes or want the maintenance they require. Nationally, more than half of people- across generations- said they would prefer to live in a house with a small yard versus a similar house with a large yard if it enabled them to walk to more places.<sup>2</sup> Addressing the gaps in Centerburg's housing supply will help protect future property values, Village revenue, and the overall well-being of the community.

### How to prioritize this strategy

The actions demonstrate logical steps the Village of Centerburg can take to better meet the housing needs of existing residents and attract future employers and residents.

Additionally, Centerburg should coordinate with regional efforts, including the residential building code study recommended by the Knox County Comprehensive Plan as part of its goal to diversify the County's housing stock.

The planning process revealed some support for enabling residents to "age in place" (remain living in Centerburg as their needs and preferences evolve with aging). However, there is general concern for increased density and an increase in multi-unit buildings. It will be critical for the Village to enforce high-quality design standards

### Actions

1

Update the zoning code to allow for residential uses in the Village Center District (i.e. apartments over retail or office).

2

Encourage development of affordable senior housing.

3

Acquire and assemble parcels to be redeveloped for multi-family housing via a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) and/or the Knox County Land Bank.

4

Conduct a full zoning audit of residential lot requirements to remove barriers to development of affordable two, three, and four-unit buildings.

and property maintenance, as well transparency and education related to supporting a variety of housing types.

1. Source: MORPC, *Insight 2050*

2. Source: National Association of Realtors (2017), *Community and Transportation Preferences Survey*

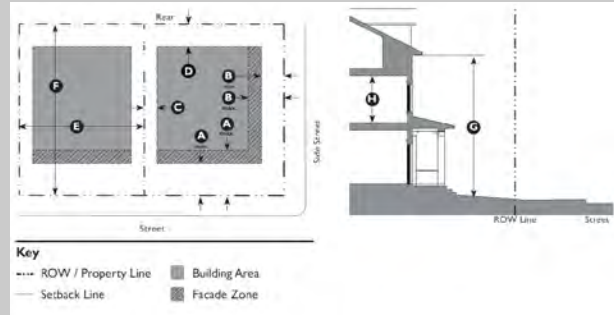
\* You can view actions for all Housing & Neighborhoods Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 58)

# THE "MISSING MIDDLE"

The "missing middle", a phrase coined by the firm Opticos Design, refers to a limited supply of housing to meet the demand of shifting demographics and neighborhood preferences. Both nationally and in Ohio, households are aging, diversifying, shrinking, and looking to live in walkable communities. *A "missing middle" product such as duplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, or courtyard apartments, presents changing households with affordable options while supporting high-quality, livable neighborhoods.*

Centerburg's housing market, in step with Knox County and the majority of Ohio, is dominated by detached single-family homes. This is an issue for aging adults who would like to remain in Centerburg, but are unable or unwilling to maintain a large home or lot. It also creates a barrier to attracting young professionals who want to live in a walkable neighborhood and work nearby in places such as Westerville or Columbus. By restricting the development of multi-unit properties of single-family form, Centerburg's zoning code acts as a barrier in both retaining current and attracting new residents.

Beaufort County, South Carolina adopted a multi-jurisdictional form-based code to



The Beaufort County Development Code includes illustrations to depict the desired form of each zone's built environment.

reflect the desired community character expressed in its comprehensive plan. Form-based codes regulate development not based on land use, as is traditional for zoning ordinances, but by the scale and intensity of the neighborhood environment. In Beaufort County, the code was utilized as a tool to promote walkable, mixed-use village and town centers, while preserving rural communities, and protecting vulnerable coastal areas.



"Missing middle" regulations prioritize the form of development, rather than use, in order to create walkable and affordable neighborhoods that reflect the scale of single-family residential communities.



# MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

## The Big Picture

While land use and development considers the overall form and function of the community, mobility and infrastructure encompasses the utilities, services, and transportation networks of the built environment. The public engagement process revealed some concern regarding quality and cost of water and sewer, as well as access to high-quality internet services. Though water and broadband are provided by private entities, their quality and access impacts the future of growth, development, and quality of life for Centerburg.

The Village's main street operates as a major thoroughfare, US-36, providing access from nearby communities, including Columbus. Alternatively, the roadway creates challenges to fostering a pedestrian-friendly downtown district and maintaining appropriate travel speeds.

### Summary of Findings

- Municipal services (fire, safety, water, and sewer) are provided by a joint fire district, the Knox County Sheriff, the Del-Co Water Company, and the Village of Centerburg, respectively.
- The greatest current challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in Centerburg according to about 24% of community survey respondents is road maintenance.
- Centerburg's Main Street is a federal highway and has an average annual daily traffic count of more than 7,000 cars.
- The Heart of Ohio Trail travels northeast-southwest through northern Centerburg. The trail is a segment, and approximate midpoint, of the Ohio to Erie Trail which covers the entire state.
- There is not currently any dedicated bike infrastructure (i.e. bike lane, sharrow, multi-use path, etc.) in the Village; apart from the Heart of Ohio Trail.



*The Heart of Ohio Trail, a segment of the Ohio to Erie Trail, offers a route into the Village for cyclists.*

## Goal Statement

**Provide utilities, services, and a built environment which connect to the region, safely transport residents, and support a walkable Downtown.**

## Strategies

The following strategies are designed to break down the goal statement into tangible subcomponents. Each strategy is then further supported by a list of actions.

1

Enhance the gateway to Centerburg on US-36 / Columbus Rd.

2

Improve connectivity of the Heart of Ohio Trail (HOOT).

3

Plan for utility upgrades and extensions in a cost-effective manner.

4

Increase walkability throughout the Village.





## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

**MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE****Priority Strategy****Enhance the gateway to Centerburg on US-36 / Columbus Rd.****Why prioritize this strategy?**

The US-36 / Columbus Road gateway, which includes Centerburg High School, has an average annual daily traffic count of more than 7,000 cars.<sup>1</sup> The road welcomes visitors into the Village and carries travelers through the Downtown. Despite its significance as the entryway to the community, the area lacks a defined character and design. Additionally, the 45 to 55 speed limit along the corridor is accompanied by a largely vacant right-of-way encouraging even higher speeds. Feedback gathered during the community engagement process noted concerns over the look and function of the corridor segment.

**How to prioritize this strategy**

As a highway which is maintained by the state of Ohio and crosses between Village and Township ownership, the Village of Centerburg is limited in its ability to control streetscape design in its entirety. However, there are traffic calming techniques which can be employed in the right-of-way held by the Village to slow down car traffic and eventually lead to a reduction in the speed limit. The Village can also take the lead in promoting streetscape improvements which highlight Centerburg's charm and create cohesive branding along the corridor through the Village. Examples may include street trees, landscaping, signage, green infrastructure, public art, and similar elements. An emphasis on both aesthetics and safety will help strengthen the function of the gateway for residents and promote improved property maintenance which can carry across other areas of the community.

**Actions**

1

Install landscaping, street trees, signage, pedestrian refuge islands, and/or lighting in the right-of-way as a traffic calming strategy.

2

Promote a cohesive streetscape on US-36 / Main Street by partnering with future property private developers and Hilliar Township.

3

Install a signaled crosswalk to provide a pedestrian connection from Centerburg High School to commercial uses on the northeastern portion of US-36.

4

Implore ODOT to conduct an official traffic study in order to lower the posted speed limit.

1. Source: ODOT, Transportation Data Management System (2019)

\* You can view actions for all Mobility & Infrastructure Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 60)

# PRIORITIZING FOR CHANGE

Although lowering a posted speed limit on a state road is challenging, the methods for accomplishing this change can also aid the community's aesthetics and transportation options. Centerburg already prides itself on its proximity to and shared namesake with the Heart of Ohio Trail, so capitalizing on this non-motorized transportation option is an ideal choice for the Village.

Best practices for reducing vehicle travel speed all point to "visually narrowing" the roadway. Travel lanes may be at their minimum width already, but wide shoulders, parking lots flanking the roadway, and a lack of vegetation can lead to motorists viewing the road as wider than it actually is, leading to a false sense of security and higher travel speeds.

*By prioritizing pedestrians and bicyclists, Centerburg may be able to accomplish both a visually narrowed roadway and also a boost to local charm and mobility options.* Two excellent options to achieve this goal are pedestrian refuge islands and protected bike lanes, pictured below.

Refuge islands allow for pedestrians to cross one direction of vehicle traffic at a time, reducing overall wait time. The island is generally placed within the portion of a vehicle turn lane not used for stacking cars at an intersection, this area is often striped as a buffer zone as it is on US-36 in front of Centerburg High School. Replacing striping with a raised concrete median with added elements of a fence, lighting, or signage elevates this crossing in motorists' vision, reducing travel speeds.

A protected bike lane utilizing permanent concrete barriers would promote the trail tourism industry of the HOOT and provide sufficient safety from high vehicle speeds. The current frequency of curb cuts may impede the ability to properly create a cohesive bike lane and barrier, however, it is recommended that curb cuts be limited on the corridor moving forward and new buildings be located closer to the street with parking in the rear, as outlined in the Land Use & Development section.



*Pedestrian refuge islands are added to portions of the right of way dedicated for extended turn lanes.*



*A permanent, concrete barrier separates this bike lane in Seattle, Washington from vehicles of high travel speed, providing sufficient protection and space for increased use.*



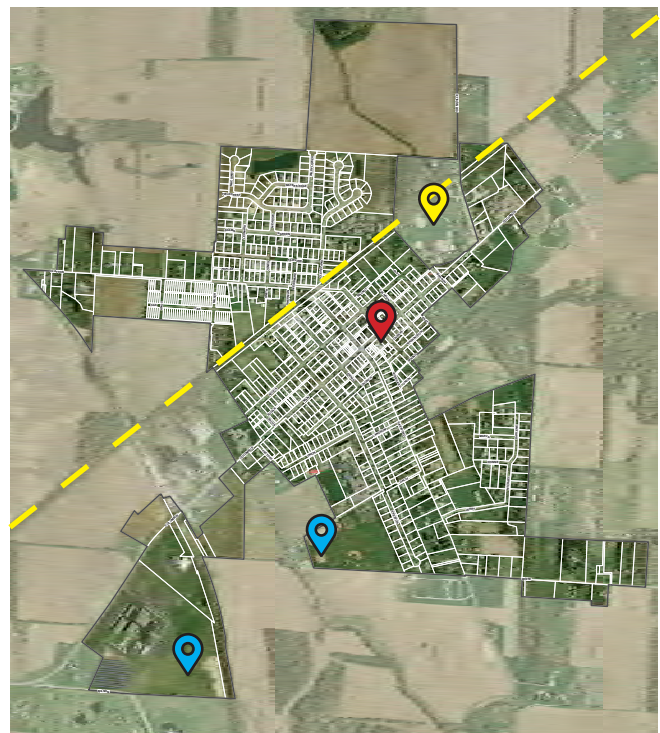
# PARKS & RECREATION

## The Big Picture

Ample quantity, high quality, and accessibility of parks and recreation amenities are significant contributors to a community's well-being. Parks, trails, open space, and recreation programming serve both residents and employers; providing health, environmental, and financial benefits. There are not currently any public parks within the Village of Centerburg boundaries, excluding public school facilities and a gazebo parklet which provides green gathering space in the Downtown. Memorial Park, at the corner of E. Main Street and Johnsonville Road in Hilliar Township is utilized by the community for events such as the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival. Running past Memorial Park and parallel to Main Street is the Heart of Ohio Trail (HOOT). The HOOT's approximate 16-mile section of the Ohio-to-Erie Trail connects Centerburg to Mount Vernon and brings regional visitors to Centerburg. The planning process presents the Village an opportunity to strengthen existing recreation assets to increase the health, safety, and value of its neighborhoods.

### Summary of Findings

- The Heart of Ohio Trail, a primary feature of the Village, extends roughly 15 miles from Mount Vernon to Memorial Park.
- Centerburg is the approximate halfway point of the Ohio to Erie Trail.
- In Ohio, trail-related activities have the highest participation rates of any outdoor recreation activity.
- Public satisfaction around parks, trails, and recreation is mediocre, though these amenities are considered highly important.
- Survey respondents said that the overall most important parks priority for the future of Centerburg should be increasing activities and events for residents.
- The community would like to see improvements to Memorial Park, as well as a strategy for cooperation between the Village and Township.



#### LEGEND

Public park		Centerburg boundary	
School recreation facility		Heart of Ohio Trail	
Downtown parklet			

## Goal Statement

**Provide high-quality recreation amenities for residents and visitors which complement the area's rural aesthetic and promote commercial activity.**

## Strategies

The following strategies are designed to break down the goal statement into tangible subcomponents. Each strategy is then further supported by a list of actions.

1

Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

2

Develop a long-term plan for operation of Memorial Park.

3

Support community and youth activities.

4

Enhance existing parks, trails, and open space.





## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# PARKS & RECREATION

### Priority Strategy

Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

Trails are highly popular community assets yielding recreational, economic, and environmental benefits. Nationally, running (including trail running) was the most popular activity among Americans, followed closely by bicycling in which more than 47.5 million people participate.<sup>1</sup> In Ohio, trail-related activities have the highest participation rates of any outdoor recreation activity. Additionally, a statewide survey found that the percentage of Ohioans which bicycled on a trail as a means of transportation increased from 13% in 2013 to 25% in 2018.<sup>2</sup>

Trails are an important part of Centerburg's local community as well. Multiple activities during public engagement identified the Heart of Ohio Trail as a unique community asset with potential to attract more visitors, and revenue, to the Village. Regionally, the average expenditure per visit on Central Ohio trails is \$17.60.<sup>3</sup> With nearly 1.2 million miles traveled annually on the Ohio to Erie Trail, there is an opportunity for Centerburg to improve the linkage between this recreational asset and commercial activity in the community.

#### How to prioritize this strategy

Strengthening the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail encompasses three essential pieces:

- An increase in trail users
- Attraction of trail users to Centerburg
- Spending by trail users on amenities and accommodations in Centerburg

These three objectives can be worked toward simultaneously by the four actions listed to the right. The actions demonstrate local steps within the Village's control, though regional collaboration is essential for the long-term success of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

#### Actions

1

Place signage and wayfinding along the HOOT adjacent to Downtown to direct trail users to local businesses.

2

Support redevelopment of properties along the trail to productive retail and restaurant establishments.

3

Permit lodging in the Downtown to encourage overnight trail traffic.

4

Increase access to cycling amenities such as racks, repair stations, restrooms, and public gathering spaces.

1. Source: Outdoor Foundation, *Outdoor Participation Report* (2018)

2. Source: ODNR, *Ohio Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (2018)

3. MORPC & COG, *The Impacts of Central Ohio Trails* (2015)

\* You can view actions for all Parks & Recreation Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 62)

# TRAIL TOWNS

*The term "trail town" generally describes a community which supports and promotes trail use. A successful trail town maintains a high-quality path, connects the trail to community points of interest, ensures lodging and accommodations for travelers, and coordinates with regional partners to market and preserve the trail network.*

## YELLOW SPRINGS

Yellow Springs, Ohio (pop. 3,700) was designated an official trail town of the Buckeye Trail in 2017. Located in Greene County, the community offers extensive recreation amenities including hiking, cycling, and nature exploring. The Little Miami Scenic Trail passes through the eastern portion of the Village providing bicycle access to local points of interest. The Village completed an Active Transportation Plan in 2019 to enforce a transportation system which supports non-motorized modes of travel such as sidewalks, trails, and ADA-compliant infrastructure. Public investments are supported by bike-friendly initiatives in the private realm. A local brewery located on the trail engages directly with cyclists through a welcoming entrance off the trail, patio seating, and bike parking.



*The Yellow Springs Brewery, located just steps off the Little Miami Scenic Trail, features a patio facing the path and plenty of bike storage.*

## BELLVILLE

Bellville, Ohio (population 1,800), located about 30 miles north of Centerburg, is situated on the Richland B & O Trail. The trail is built on the former route of the Baltimore & Ohio Railway. In keeping with the "rails to trails" tradition, the community renovated the historic train depot for operation as a welcome center with restrooms, parking, drinking fountains, a bicycle repair station, and picnic tables. The depot's interior showcases local artifacts and provides information on nearby attractions. The renovation was completed with extensive help from the community including donated materials from an old school facility and local businesses and donated labor.

The Richland B & O Trail is located a block away from the Village's Main Street which features a bed and breakfast, drug store, restaurants, and a market. Additionally, the parcel immediately adjacent to the trail depot offers a unique local antique shopping experience.

Regional marketing efforts include information on Bellville shops, restaurants, and other attractions; all with an emphasis on their relation to the regional trail network.



*The Village of Bellville transformed an old train depot to a bike-friendly station on the Richland B & O Trail complete with restrooms and local histories.*



## Support for existing plans

There is already strong momentum in the Centerburg community for the Heart of Ohio Trail and trail-related investment. A collaborative partnership including the Heart of Ohio Trail Friends, the Knox County Foundation, and The Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up Foundation installed the early phases of a trail welcome center near the center of the Village. The welcome center also serves as the approximate midpoint of the Ohio to Erie Trail and will be the part of the planned Great American Rail-Trail (Figure 16).

Recently completed phase 1 of the project includes a welcome sign, benches, a repair station, and a bike rack (Figure 15). Future phases of the project may include additional amenities for trail users, such as restrooms and picnic tables as well as information on local attractions. The completed welcome center should be well-landscaped, reflect Centerburg's brand, and be well-connected to nearby points of interest.

The Village of Centerburg can further support existing efforts to enhance the Heart of Ohio Trail by strengthening the connection between the trail and Downtown. Connections can be enhanced through physical improvements including bike infrastructure (i.e. bike lane, multi-use path, or sharrows) and wayfinding elements. Enhancements in the physical realm should be complimented by marketing efforts to further unify marketing strategies for local businesses and events with that of trail tourism. Additionally, future land use and development strategies should encourage uses along the trail which are compatible with trail users such as bike repair shops, cafes, specialty restaurants and drinking establishments, lodging, etc.

Figure 16. Existing Welcome Center Elements



Figure 17. National Significance



The Great American Rail-Trail would connect nearly 3,700 trail miles from Washington, D.C. to Washington State. The preferred route released by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy includes the Ohio to Erie Trail of which Centerburg is the approximate midpoint.



**Figure 18.** Future Elements to Enhance Centerburg's Bikeability



*Bike lanes or sharrows can safely direct trail traffic to commercial uses in the downtown. A sharrow is a shared environment indicated by road markings in which bicycles are entitled to full access of the travel lane. Bike lanes can be made more comfortable for cyclists with physical barriers, such as bollards.*



*Signage and wayfinding help ensure that trail users can easily identify and locate area attractions. Trail signage should be informative and aesthetically-pleasing and be oriented to the cyclist so that it is easy to read on bike or on foot. It is also an opportunity to creatively display the community's image or history.*



*Trail welcome centers may pay homage to the trail's history by replicating former rail stations as in Mount Vernon and Xenia, Ohio (pictured above). Alternatively, Centerburg may opt for a more modern look which incorporates elements of the Heart of Ohio branding.*



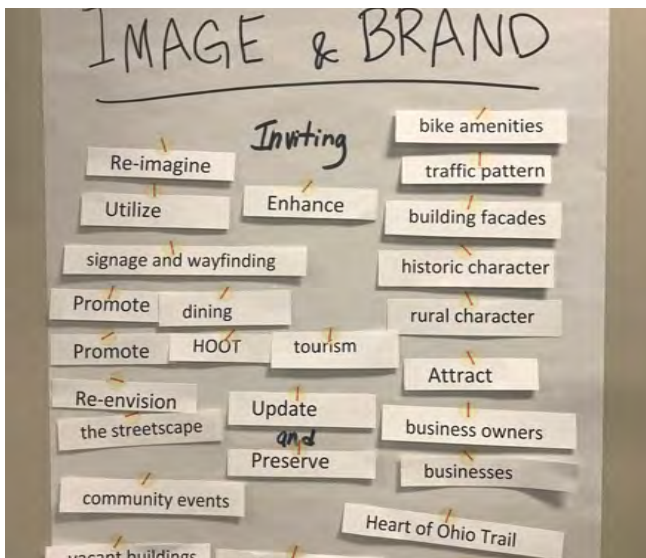
# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

## The Big Picture

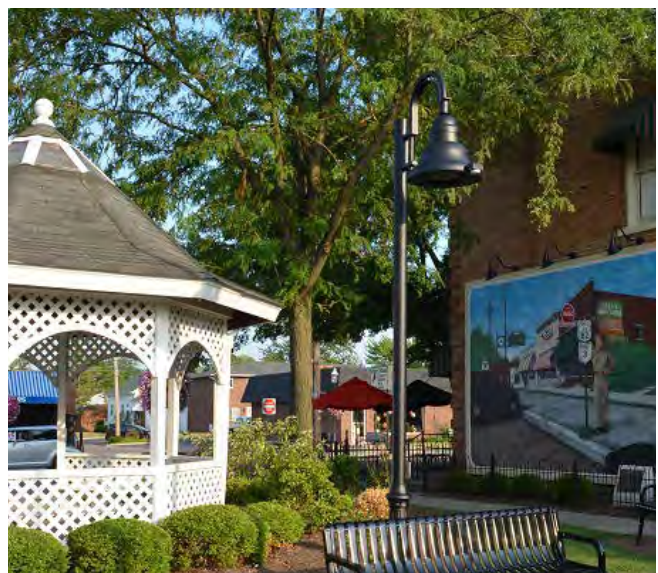
A community's image and brand describes the qualities which set it apart from other places. These qualities include both an aesthetic sense of place and the set of services and amenities delivered to residents, workers, and visitors. Every decision made within Centerburg should aim to align with an overarching, unified vision for the direction of the community. The strategic planning process involved analysis of how community members would like to brand Centerburg and how this defined image can be marketed to enhance local quality of life and the attraction of businesses, visitors, or new residents.

## Summary of Findings

- Centerburg's brand is currently defined as the "Heart of Ohio" supported by consistent signage, the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival, and the Heart of Ohio Trail.
- The community largely defines itself as rural and considers its "small-town country" charm to be an important part of Centerburg's image.
- A community's image and brand is often displayed through signature places, such as a downtown. The public expressed a desire for physical improvements to the downtown and more entertainment.
- The Village maintains a website but no social media accounts.



Steering Committee members brainstormed goals and ideas related to Centerburg's image and brand.



A community's image and brand can be reflected in streetscape design, signage, and public art.

## Goal Statement

**Strengthen and expand Centerburg's branding efforts to encompass the Downtown, its rural identity, and quaint small-town charm.**

## Strategies

The following strategies are designed to break down the goal statement into tangible subcomponents. Each strategy is then further supported by a list of actions.

1

Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.

2

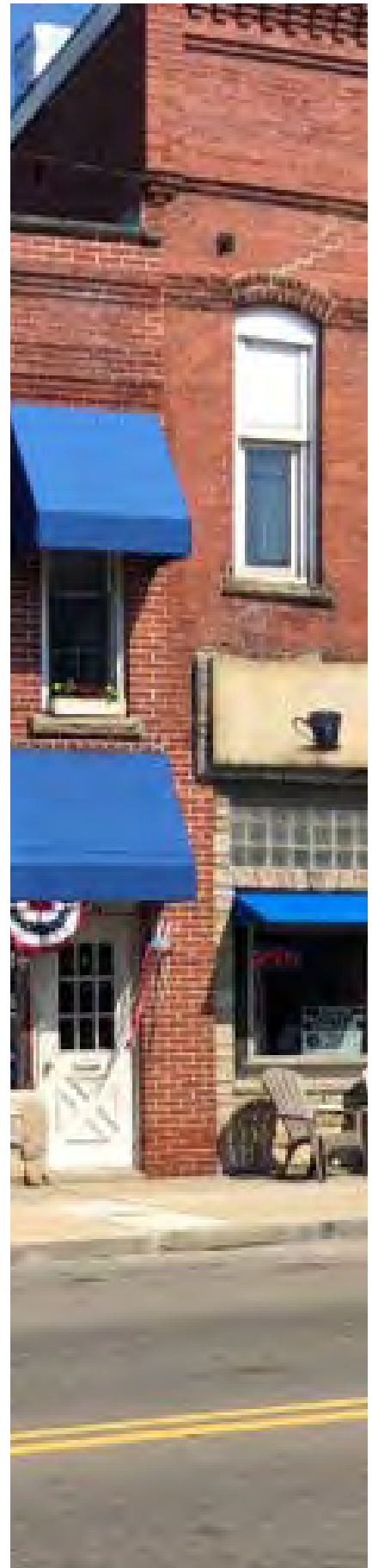
Expand regional marketing of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

3

Align physical improvements with Centerburg's image and brand.

4

Continue to promote "The Heart of Ohio" as a collaborative branding strategy.





## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

### Priority Strategy

Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

Central gathering spaces present prime opportunities to showcase a community's values and the type of development it would like to attract. Downtowns also often serve as the "face of a community" or the image conjured up in the mind of a non-resident. Several strategies and actions in this Plan support the increase of pedestrian activity in the Downtown, and a desire to enhance the Downtown was consistently voiced by community members during the planning process. Prioritizing physical improvements, programming, and branding of one area allows for a streamlined and leveraged approach which can then be used to attract additional funding and resources.

#### How to prioritize this strategy

Transforming Downtown Centerburg to a vibrant district which both reflects and serves as the community's image and brand requires a myriad of actions. Some actions should be local, while others will involve a regional framework. Work is already in progress by the Centerburg Downtown Revitalization Committee to identify and plan for the implementation of Downtown improvements. Existing efforts should be supported and strengthened through this Plan. The community should also encourage regional collaboration of marketing and economic development efforts to leverage local resources. For example, new signage related to the Downtown, HOOT, and gateways may be financed and designed in part through the Knox County Convention & Visitors Bureau signage and wayfinding package.

#### Actions

1

Support and encourage the Centerburg Downtown Revitalization Committee in its efforts to improve the district.

2

Preserve and enhance the historic character of Downtown.

3

Allow temporary uses in the Downtown such as pop-up retail, markets, or concerts.

4

Strategize with local businesses to create long-term funding mechanisms for beautification (ex: Special Improvement District (SID), Main Street Program, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), business association, etc.).

*\* You can view actions for all Community Image & Brand Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 64)*

# CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

*A "sense of place" describes a distinct character of a community typically experienced through emotion. It explains how a visitor perceives and recognizes its surroundings.*

## STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

A sense of place is established in the mind of those visiting, but can be cultivated by deliberate intervention to the built environment. An enhanced Downtown streetscape can help shape a unified, walkable, and inviting commercial district. Improvements include street trees, benches, bike racks, underground utilities, lighting, curb cuts, bike lanes, and other efforts which increase the attractiveness and pedestrian comfort in the downtown.

## PUBLIC ART

Adding local flare to a quality streetscape can be achieved with integration of public art. Centerburg's historic mural facing Main St. serves as an example of using the Downtown to showcase local history. Another tactic to installing public art is to create functional art, such as a sculptural

bike rack or an interesting bench, which becomes a useful tool in the streetscape. Other methods, such as a rotating art display, can be updated annually to create renewed interest and intrigue when visiting the Village.

## SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

Signage and wayfinding elements should be treated as integral components of Downtown improvements to promote local destinations and safely guide cyclists from the Heart of Ohio Trail. Signage should be informative and aesthetically-pleasing and be oriented to both the motorist and pedestrian. Signage and wayfinding should be consistent in design across locations to further solidify a coherent and cohesive community image.

## ZONING

Centerburg can ensure that future development incorporates elements of the desired brand such as landscaping, lighting, and signage standards through zoning regulations. Downtown design guidelines and/or a zoning overlay (p. 33) help reinforce the sense of place established by the elements described above.



Troy, Ohio annually installs temporary "Sculptures on the Square" to encourage residents and visitors to explore the Downtown. The sculptures also provide photo opportunities to increase the Downtown's social media presence.



Downtown Tiffin, Ohio was recognized by Heritage Ohio as a National Main Street Community for its historic preservation and revitalization efforts. Tiffin's approach involved City-led improvements, private investment, and community organizations.





# CHAPTER 05

# IMPLEMENTATION







# PUTTING THE PLAN TO WORK

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## Collaboration & Leveraging Funds

The Knox County Foundation, in partnership with the Knox County Area Development Foundation, is investing a significant portion of its grant funding to proactively invest in local communities in order to help drive economic growth in the County. In addition to funding the creation of the Village Strategic Plans, the Knox County Foundation will continue its support of the plans by strategically funding prioritized projects, contributing matching funds, and assisting to leverage additional funding sources throughout the Plans' first four years.

A county-wide commitment to Plan implementation helps ensure long-term success, a collective vision for economic development, and pooling of resources. The Village of Centerburg can also proactively work to gain the greatest return from the planning process by using planning funds to secure additional grants and loans. **Investment received from the County may be applied to secure initial engineering and design for improvements, a grant writing professional, and/or property or capital acquisition for catalyst projects.**

The following pages provides a brief summary of potential additional funding resources to maximize the impact of planning in Centerburg, as well as an implementation matrix to outline the specific strategies and actions recommended for each of the Plan's themed goals.

**The Centerburg Strategic Plan offers a vision forward for the community. Seeing that vision through to reality can be achieved by a myriad of local, regional, state, and federal financing sources. Collaborative partnerships will also be critical in efficiently and effectively delivering the intended outcomes.**



## Additional Funding Resources

### Clean Ohio Trails Fund - ODNR

The Clean Ohio Trails Fund works to improve outdoor recreational opportunities for Ohioans by funding trails for outdoor pursuits of all kinds. Up to 75% matching State of Ohio funds are reimbursed under Clean Ohio Trails Fund. Eligible projects include: land acquisition for a trail, trail development, trailhead facilities, engineering and design.

For more info, visit: <http://realestate.ohiodnr.gov/outdoor-recreation-facility-grants>

### Recreational Trails Program (RTP) - ODNR

The RTP is a reimbursement grant program that provides up to 80% project funding. This grant program is federally funded and is administered by the ODNR in cooperation with the FHWA. Funds can be used to assist government agencies and trail groups in the rehabilitation, development, maintenance, and acquisition of recreational trails and related facilities. The trails may be motorized, non-motorized, or multiple use trails. RTP funds can also be used for environmental protection and safety education projects related to trails.

For more info, visit: <http://realestate.ohiodnr.gov/outdoor-recreation-facility-grants>

### Rural Community Development Initiative Grants – U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

RCDI grants are awarded to help non-profit housing and community development organizations, low-income rural communities and federally recognized tribes support housing, community facilities and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

For more info, visit: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>

### Certified Local Governments (CLG) Grant Program – State Historic Preservation Office

Certified Local Governments may compete annually for grants to help carry out a wide range of historic preservation activities. Funding for grants to Certified Local Governments comes from the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Historic Preservation Fund (CFDA 15.904), administered by the National Park Service, which provides

financial support to State Historic Preservation Offices. Under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act, 10% of the annual appropriation to Ohio is set aside for CLG grants. Eligible projects include those which strengthen community historic preservation, protect and preserve cultural resources, or promote economic development.

For more info, visit: <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserve/state-historic-preservation-office/clg/clggrants>

### Cultural Heritage Tourism Grants - Ohio Humanities

Ohio Humanities, a private nonprofit organization, promotes the humanities in Ohio through collaborations with cultural and educational institutions. The cultural heritage tourism grant supports projects which explore history, highlight culture, and foster appreciation of local tourism assets. Proposed projects should work toward enhancing community life and focus on tourism as a learning opportunity for travelers and local residents.

For more info, visit: <http://www.ohiohumanities.org/grants-2/>

### Attributable Funding for Transportation - MORPC

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission uses a regional process for allocation of federal transportation funding. MORPC, of which Knox County is a member, selects eligible projects



In 2018, ODNR granted over \$9 million dollars through both the Clean Ohio and Recreational Trails programs, including for connections along the Ohio to Erie Trail.

to receive federal dollars from the **Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)**, the **Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**, and the **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**. Each funding source differs slightly in purpose and eligible projects, but all have potential to assist Gambier in preparing for and completing a trail connection.

For more info, visit: <http://www.morpc.org/tool-resource/funding-grants/>

### The State of Ohio's biennial Capital Budget

The capital budget provides appropriations for the maintenance, repair, and construction of capital assets of public interest in context of the state's Capital Improvements Plan. Previous budgets included a portion for projects of local or regional significance. Funding is determined through coordination with local economic development agencies, the State Legislature, and the Administration.

For more info, visit: <https://budget.ohio.gov/Budget/capital/>

### BUILD - U.S. Dept. of Transportation

BUILD Transportation grants are for investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. BUILD funding can support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports or intermodal transportation.



ODOT's Safe Routes to School program provides grants up to \$400,000 for infrastructure projects that improve the built environment for students to walk and bike to school.

For more info, visit: <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>

### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) - ODNR

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant program provides up to 50% reimbursement assistance for local government subdivisions for the acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of recreational areas. Funding is issued to the state and it is at the state's discretion how much of that funding will be made available for local government. To be eligible for federal LWCF grant assistance, Ohio prepares and updates the Ohio Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Ohio reviews LWCF grant applications and submits recommended projects to the National Park Service for final approval. All recommended projects must be in accord with Ohio's SCORP priorities.

For more info, visit: <http://realestate.ohiodnr.gov/outdoor-recreation-facility-grants>

### Safe Routes to School (SRTS) - ODOT

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program encourages and enables k-8 students to walk or ride their bicycle to school. In order to apply for funding, a community must develop a School Travel Plan or Active Transportation Plan. There are three categories of funding: 1) Infrastructure Projects, including planning, design and construction; 2) Non-Infrastructure Projects including education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation activities; and 3) School Travel Plan Development Assistance, available in the form of ODOT consultant assistance or reimbursed funding for a locally selected consultant.

For more info, visit: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/ProgramManagement/HighwaySafety/ActiveTransportation/Pages/SRTS>

### NatureWorks - ODNR

The NatureWorks grant program provides up to 75% reimbursable assistance to local government subdivisions for the acquisition or development of public outdoor recreation areas. Each county receives a \$150,000 allocation each year and can award that amount to one project or spread it among multiple recipients. Examples of eligible projects include land acquisition, camping and



**IMPLEMENTATION | CENTERBURG VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

support facilities, swimming and boating facilities, outdoor sports field, and recreational trails.

*For more info, visit: <http://realestate.ohiodnr.gov/outdoor-recreation-facility-grants>*

**Additional Financing Tools**

**Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDD)**

A JEDD is a partnership between municipalities and townships to promote economic development in a defined area. The land in the area remains unincorporated, but the services provided and the income tax revenue generated in the area are shared among the jurisdictions per terms of a contractual agreement.

*For more info, visit: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/715.70>*

**Special Improvement District (SID)**

A SID is an economic development tool which allows private property owners in a self-defined area to establish a program for services paid for with assessments on all properties in the defined area. This area can be any size, as long as it is contiguous. SIDs are governed by a private, nonprofit corporation created by the property owners and run by an elected board. Government-owned properties and churches are exempt from SID assessments, however, they may contribute voluntarily.

*For more info, visit: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/1710>*

**Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)**

Ohio's CRA program provides real property tax

exemptions for property owners who renovate or construct new buildings. A municipality or county government can establish a CRA in order to allow property owners to receive these tax benefits. CRAs are approved by the State of Ohio via an application process administered by the Development Services Agency.

*For more info, visit: [https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs\\_comreinvest](https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_comreinvest)*

**New Community Authority (NCA)**

An NCA is an area established by a developer that owns all of the property within the area, allowing for the assessment of a community development charge. The community development charge is used to finance community facilities, public infrastructure improvements, and almost any other improvement that benefits the community. NCAs are often combined with TIFs to maximize infrastructure improvements.

*For more info, visit: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/349>*

**Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)**

A CIC is a nonprofit organization created to advance, encourage, and promote the industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development of an area. Once designated as an agent for a political subdivision, CICs may sell land owned by that subdivision for development without advertising and bidding. This allows political subdivisions to choose how to develop property they own, in the interest of public welfare and economic development.

*For more info, visit: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/1724>*

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

A TIF is an economic development tool used to finance public infrastructure improvements. It works by locking in the taxable worth of real property at the value it holds at the time of the TIF's implementation. The increase in value, typically over a 30-year time period, is then captured and directed to a fund used to finance public infrastructure.

*For more info, visit: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/5705>*



*Special Improvement District funds can be used for beautification and landscaping in commercial areas.*

## The Implementation Matrix

The implementation matrix on the following pages summarizes the strategies and actions for each goal statement. In addition to consolidating the Plan recommendations into an easy-to-follow table, the implementation matrix also provides insight to the responsible parties, projected timeline, and potential funding sources for each action. Though the matrix is designed to be simple and straightforward, these recommendations should not be treated rigidly, but may adapt to accommodate future needs and circumstances within Centerburg.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX KEY	
<b>PRIORITY</b>	Measures the importance of the listed Action in fulfilling the Goal Statement and may be used to determine the order of investments
<b>H</b>	High Priority
<b>M</b>	Medium Priority
<b>L</b>	Low Priority
<b>TIMELINE</b>	Provides an estimate on how long it may take to complete an action
<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	Lists potential partners in implementation of the strategy
<b>FUNDING</b>	Lists potential sources or financing strategies in funding implementation of the strategy



# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

**Encourage a mix of land uses and high-value site design which support a vibrant Downtown, a diverse economic base, and a high quality of life for residents.**

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Update the zoning code to promote desired development patterns.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Implement a zoning overlay along the Main Street corridor to encourage and enhance development in the Downtown and Village gateways.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Consolidate existing districts to allow for a greater mix of uses; particularly in the Downtown and commercial areas.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.3</b> Reduce parking minimums (particularly for multi-family residential) to provide flexibility and reduce underutilized parking space.	<b>M</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Explore opportunities to institute exactions (i.e. developer fees or agreements) to fund preservation of parks and open space.	<b>M</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>Strategy 2: Acquire and/or reposition underutilized properties as catalysts for development.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Create an inventory of property ownership and parcel data in the Downtown.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• Knox County Historical Society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Knox County Land Bank</li> <li>• USDA Community Facilities Loan &amp; Grant Program</li> <li>• Certified Local Governments Grant Program</li> <li>• Historic Preservation Tax Credits</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Work with the Knox County Land Bank to identify tax delinquent and/or underutilized parcels.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Assemble, reuse, and redevelop property within Downtown and along the commercial corridor.	<b>M</b>	1-5 yrs		
<b>A2.4</b> Encourage historic preservation and façade improvements of private property where applicable.	<b>M</b>	0-2 yrs		

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Engage regionally with land use and development strategies.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Coordinate with regional partners to identify potential Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs).	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>A3.2</b> Support local businesses in collaborating with one another, as well as Knox County economic development agencies.	<b>H</b>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> </ul>
<b>A3.3</b> Collaborate with Hilliar Township on zoning objectives, particularly at gateways.	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hilliar Township Trustees</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> </ul>	
<b>A3.4</b> Explore creative opportunities to pursue funding sources for future development, such as Tax-Increment Financing (TIF), New Community Authority (NCA), Special Improvement District (SID), Community Improvement Corporation (CIC), or Downtown Redevelopment District (DRD).	<b>M</b>	Ongoing		
<b>Strategy 4: Enhance parking options in the Downtown.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Convert the Village-owned land at 27 N Hartford Ave (Parcel 18-00306) to public parking.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Special Improvement District (SID)</li> <li>• Safe Routes to School</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Encourage shared parking agreements among compatible Downtown businesses.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• Downtown organization or representative (SID, CRA, CIC, etc.)</li> </ul>	
<b>A4.3</b> Implement signage to direct visitors to parking located off Main Street.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A4.4</b> Add crosswalk signals on Main Street in the Downtown.	<b>L</b>	0-2 yrs		

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

**Provide safe, healthy, and affordable housing options for all residents while maintaining Centerburg’s Village identity.**

STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Diversify the housing stock.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Update the zoning code to allow for residential uses in the Village Center District (i.e. apartments over retail or office).	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• Knox County Land Bank</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Encourage development of affordable senior housing with a range of services.	<b>M</b>	Ong.		
<b>A1.3</b> Acquire and assemble parcels to be redeveloped for multi-family housing via a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) and/or the Knox County Land Bank.	<b>H</b>	1-3 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Conduct a full zoning audit of residential lot requirements to remove barriers to development of affordable two, three, and four-unit buildings.	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>Strategy 2: Strengthen and enforce property maintenance.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Ensure Village-owned properties meet or exceed building and zoning code requirements.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Raise property maintenance standards above state minimums and create a sliding scale of penalties for repeat offenders.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Educate residents on existing state and regional resources including the Home Weatherization Assistance Program, Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), or a Medicaid grant (SCHIP) for lead paint hazard testing and removal.	<b>H</b>	Ong.		



STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Preserve and promote the rural character of residential neighborhoods.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Prioritize infill redevelopment over greenfield development.	<b>H</b>	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Utilize zoning regulations and annexation policy to ensure future residential development includes open and green space.	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>A3.3</b> Explore opportunities for conservation easements to protect environmentally-sensitive areas.	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>A3.4</b> Encourage shared green spaces, such as community gardens.	<b>H</b>	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 4: Support opportunities for aging in place.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Partner with regional agencies to expand programming for property maintenance of senior-owned and/or aging homes.	<b>H</b>	0-3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• Area Agency on Aging and other senior service agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Create more flexibility in the standards for accessory dwelling units to allow for efficiency apartments and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) of varying design.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A4.3</b> Support local businesses, events, and programming aimed at serving older residents.	<b>H</b>	Ong.		
<b>A4.4</b> Conduct a sidewalk assessment to ensure accessibility of existing pedestrian infrastructure.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs		

# MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

**Provide utilities, services, and a built environment which connect to the region, safely transport residents, and support a walkable Downtown.**

STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Enhance the gateway to Centerburg on US-36 / Columbus Rd.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Install sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, signage, pedestrian refuge islands, and/or lighting in the right-of-way as a traffic calming strategy.	H	1-3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Hilliar Township</li> <li>• ODOT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• MORPC Attributable Funding for Transportation</li> <li>• Safe Routes to School Grant</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Promote a cohesive streetscape on US-36 / Main Street by partnering with future property private developers and Hilliar Township.	H	Ong.		
<b>A1.3</b> Install a signaled crosswalk to provide a pedestrian connection from Centerburg High School to commercial uses on the northeastern portion of US-36.	M	1-2 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Request an updated traffic study from ODOT in order to lower the posted speed limit.	M	0-1 yrs		
<b>Strategy 2: Improve connectivity of the Heart of Ohio Trail (HOOT).</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Install signage and wayfinding features to connect HOOT users to the Downtown and vice versa.	H	0-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Friends of the Heart of Ohio Trail</li> <li>• Hilliar Township</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• ODNR Recreation Grants</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Coordinate with Hilliar Township to identify and establish a connection between the HOOT and Centerburg High School.	L	1-4 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Support regional efforts to expand and promote the HOOT.	H	Ong.		

STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Plan for utility upgrades and extensions in a cost-effective manner.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Encourage public-private partnerships to fund new utility and roadway connections.	<b>H</b>	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• One Columbus / JobsOhio</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Evaluate fire and emergency services facilities and functionality for potential expansion or upgrades as population increases.	<b>H</b>	1-3 yrs		
<b>A3.3</b> Work with local business and workforce leaders to identify infrastructure needs for leading industries.	<b>M</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>Strategy 4: Increase walkability throughout the Village.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Promote creation of a School Travel Plan to pursue Safe Routes to School Funding.	<b>M</b>	1-3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Centerburg School District</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Safe Routes to School Grant</li> <li>• MORPC Attributable Funding for Transportation</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Encourage local businesses to include outdoor seating.	<b>H</b>	Ong.		
<b>A4.3</b> Utilize the Shade Tree Commission to evaluate opportunities for enhanced shade cover of public right-of-ways.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		



# PARKS & RECREATION

**Provide high-quality recreation amenities for residents and visitors which complement the area’s rural aesthetic and promote commercial activity.**

STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Place signage and wayfinding along the HOOT adjacent to Downtown to direct trail users to local businesses.	H	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Friends of the Heart of Ohio Trail</li> <li>• Knox County Commissioners</li> <li>• Knox County Parks District (KCPD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• ODNR Recreation Grants</li> <li>• USDA Community Facilities Loan &amp; Grant Program</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage Tourism Grants</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Support redevelopment of properties along the trail to productive retail and restaurant establishments.	H	1-5 yrs		
<b>A1.3</b> Permit lodging in the Downtown to encourage overnight trail traffic.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Build a bike shelter along the HOOT to welcome trail users to the Village and accommodate cyclist needs (restrooms, seating, etc.).	H	1-3 yrs		
<b>A1.5</b> Increase access to cycling amenities in the Downtown such as racks, bike-friendly operating hours, and public gathering spaces.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>A1.6</b> Create bicycle infrastructure (i.e. sharrow or dedicated bike lane) connecting the trail to Downtown.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>Strategy 2: Develop a long-term plan for operation of Memorial Park.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Create a joint jurisdiction parks planning committee.	H	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Hilliar Township</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Hilliar Township</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Conduct an analysis of existing costs and revenues.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Identify and select feasible opportunities for shared maintenance (i.e. independent board, County acquisition, etc.).	H	1-2 yrs		

STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Support community and youth activities.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Expand regional promotion of existing events including the Heart of Ohio USA Festival and the Oldetime Farming Festival.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Local recreation agencies / leagues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• ODNR NatureWorks Grant</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Engage with local youth recreation leagues to identify future facilities needs.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A3.3</b> Utilize public events to showcase improvements / investments in the public right-of-way and Downtown.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A3.4</b> Create a centralized calendar for both Village and non-Village sponsored events.	<b>H</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>Strategy 4: Enhance existing parks, trails, and open space.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Provide new play equipment for a range of ages.	<b>M</b>	1-3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Knox County Parks District (KCPD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• ODNR NatureWorks Grant</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Increase space for passive uses (non-structured public land).	<b>L</b>	1-3 yrs		
<b>A4.3</b> Expand programming around agricultural, natural, and recreational resources.	<b>M</b>	Ong.		
<b>A4.4</b> Work with stakeholders to identify future capital investments in park and recreation facilities.	<b>H</b>	1-2 yrs		
<b>A4.5</b> Require appropriate park space per capita in future annexations and developments.	<b>H</b>	Ong.		

# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

**Strengthen and expand Centerburg's branding efforts to encompass the Downtown, its rural identity, and small-town charm.**

STRATEGY / ACTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Support and encourage the Centerburg Downtown Revitalization Committee in its efforts to improve the district.	<b>H</b>	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> <li>• Knox County Historical Society</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• Certified Local Governments Grant Program</li> <li>• Historic Preservation Tax Credits</li> <li>• Business association</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Preserve and enhance the historic character of Downtown.	<b>H</b>	Ong.		
<b>A1.3</b> Allow temporary uses in the Downtown such as pop-up retail, markets, or concerts.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Strategize with local businesses to create long-term funding mechanisms for beautification (ex: Special Improvement District (SID), Main Street Program, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), business association, etc.).	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>Strategy 2: Expand regional marketing of the Heart of Ohio Trail.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Use Village spaces and online platforms to display HOOT branding.	<b>H</b>	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Friends of the Heart of Ohio Trail</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ODNR Recreation Grants</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage Tourism Grants</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Leverage existing resources for the Ohio to Erie Trail.	<b>M</b>	Ong.		
<b>A2.3</b> Partner with nearby communities to identify opportunities for trail-centered events (i.e. trail runs, cycling tours, themed business promotions, etc.).	<b>M</b>	Ong.		



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<b>Strategy 3: Align physical improvements with Centerburg’s image and brand.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Ensure future streetscape enhancements reflect the desired community identity.	H	Ong.	• Village of Centerburg	• Knox County Foundation (KCF)
<b>A3.2</b> Promote integration of open and green space throughout the Village to preserve Centerburg’s rural character.	H	Ong.		
<b>A3.3</b> Encourage and support private property owners in enhancing their facade and frontage (i.e. planters, seating, etc.).	H	Ong.		
<b>A3.4</b> Prioritize development which supports the goals and strategies of this Plan.	H	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 4: Continue to promote “The Heart of Ohio” as a collaborative branding strategy.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Encourage marketing coordination among local businesses and organizations (i.e. cross promotion of events/operations, shared staffing of marketing personnel, etc.).	H	Ong.	• Village of Centerburg • Knox County Convention & Visitors Bureau	• Cultural Heritage Tourism Grants • KCF
<b>A4.2</b> Enhance Centerburg’s digital and social media presence.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>A4.3</b> Create a marketing strategy to reach local, county, and regional visitors with news and events.	H	0-1 yrs		

CENTERBURG, OHIO  
**VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**  
FINAL DRAFT: JANUARY 6, 2020



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