

# GAMBIER, OH

## VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

FINAL DRAFT: JANUARY 13, 2020



Prepared by ms consultants, inc. in conjunction with the  
Area Development Foundation of Knox County and  
the Knox County Foundation

## 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 Gambier.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gambier Village Strategic Plan envisions the future of growth, development, and quality of life for the Gambier 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 data, local expertise, and regional trends to create tangible strategies and actions for the future.

The Strategic Plan revealed unique community assets which Gambier should aim to preserve and enhance; as well as challenges which should be addressed. Gambier's character as a small town anchored by a private college drove much of the underlying strategies within this Plan. It is not within the purview or intent of the Plan to provide recommendations for action to Kenyon College; rather the Plan considers Kenyon a partner in pursuing long-term objectives to strengthen the well-being of the Gambier community at-large.

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

- Gambier should diversify its economic base and expand economic development opportunities. This will likely require a physical expansion of municipal boundaries.
- Investments in housing to address market inefficiencies should be a priority for the community.
- A priority capital improvement project should be construction of a trail connection to promote tourism and enhance branding, improve safety, and provide alternative travel modes.
- Gambier should encourage regional collaborative efforts to expand recreational tourism.

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

## PRIORITY STRATEGIES TO GUIDE THE FUTURE OF GAMBIER:

### Land Use & Development:

Update Gambier's zoning code to reflect the Village's development goals and future growth.



### Housing & Neighborhoods:

Increase and diversify the housing stock.



### Mobility & Infrastructure:

Improve multi-modal access to, from, and within the Village.



### Parks & Recreation:

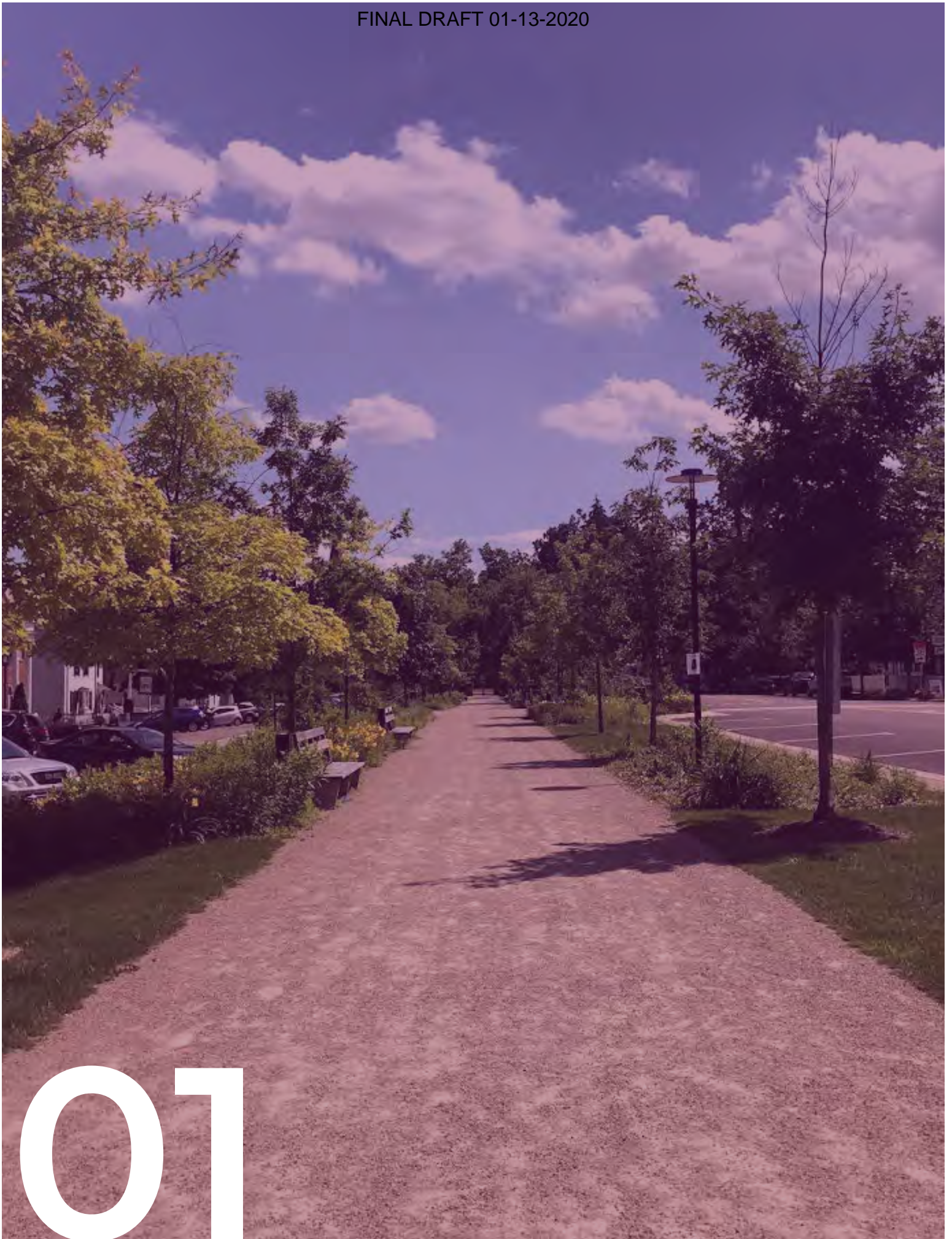
Connect the Kokosing Gap Trail to Downtown Gambier.



### Community Image & Brand:

Promote recreational and cultural tourism.





# 01

# PLAN OVERVIEW

THE PLANNING PROCESS



# PLAN OVERVIEW

## OVERVIEW

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 allocated to each Village from the Knox County Foundation over the next four years.

## WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

The Gambier Village Strategic Plan envisions the future of growth, development, and quality of life for the Gambier 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 members to establish long-term 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 Gambier. Upon its implementation, the Plan will provide immediate action steps on policy, projects, and programs, and will ultimately serve as a roadmap to help direct decision making in Gambier for years to come.

## A STRATEGIC PLAN...

### DOCUMENTS WHERE WE ARE



### DETERMINES WHERE WE WANT TO GO



### DIRECTS US HOW TO GET THERE





## WHY PLAN?

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.

Given its position as a small college town, the Village of Gambier is heavily impacted by county level and institutional planning processes. The Kenyon College Master Plan, last updated in 2014, includes a chapter on Village revitalization. The Plan provides recommendations on building character, land use, and site design for properties located Downtown.

The Gambier Village Strategic Plan aims to provide further insight and analysis to existing plans for the community, while expanding planning efforts to include the entire Village and land in College Township. Without a documented vision for the future, it is likely that the Village of Gambier will be guided by external forces and limited community input. This Plan seeks to avoid this situation by bringing together residents and community stakeholders to chart out a collective plan for the next five to ten years.

## HOW DOES A COMMUNITY USE A 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 and demographics, as well as long-term, inclusive 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.



*The Gambier Village Strategic Plan was influenced by previous planning efforts including the Kenyon College Master Plan, the Knox County Comprehensive Plan, and the College Township Plan.*



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

## 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. The following section describes how the Gambier Village Strategic Plan was created.

### Participants

The process was guided by the stewardship of a steering committee comprised of community leaders with local expertise and a passion for the future of Gambier. The steering committee collaborated with a planning team of Village employees, elected officials, and hired consultants to facilitate public engagement and ensure final recommendations properly reflect input gathered during the planning process.

The Plan recommendations are built from the pillars of community-wide participation. This involves all members of the community including:

- residents,
- students,
- businesses,
- employees, and
- local officials.

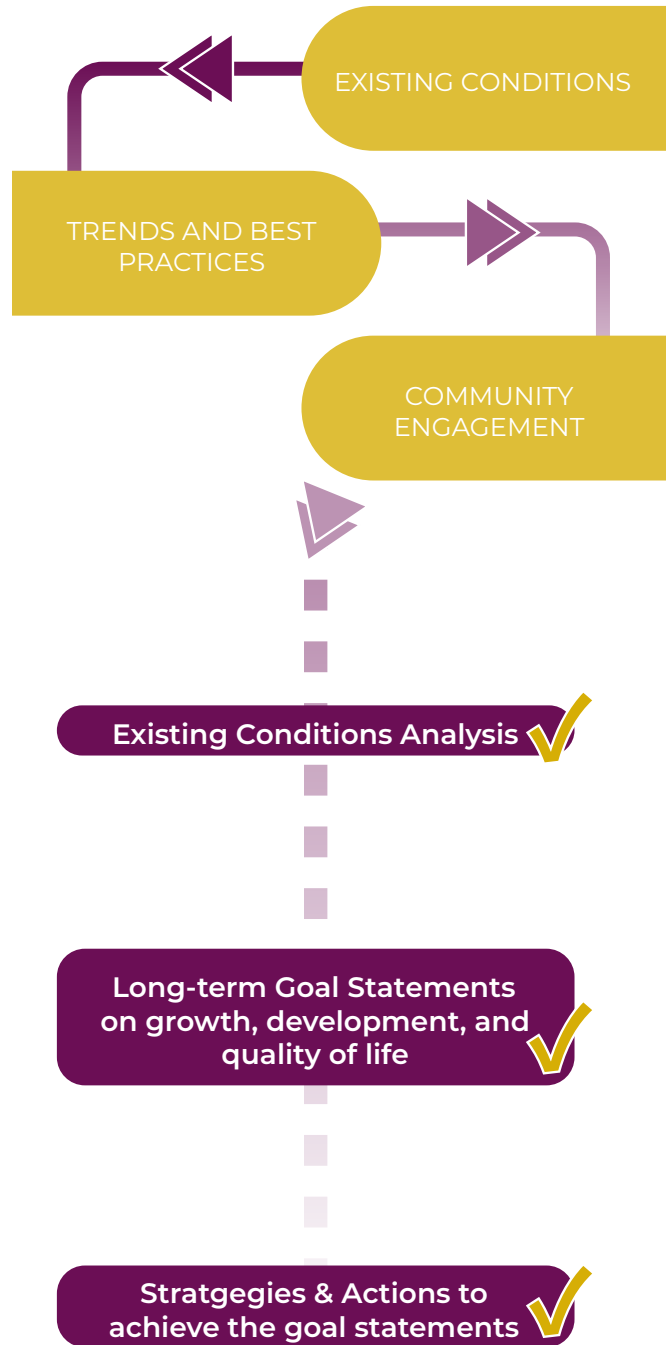
### Inputs

Multiple pieces go into the production of a strategic 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 and comprehensive public engagement.

### Outcomes



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

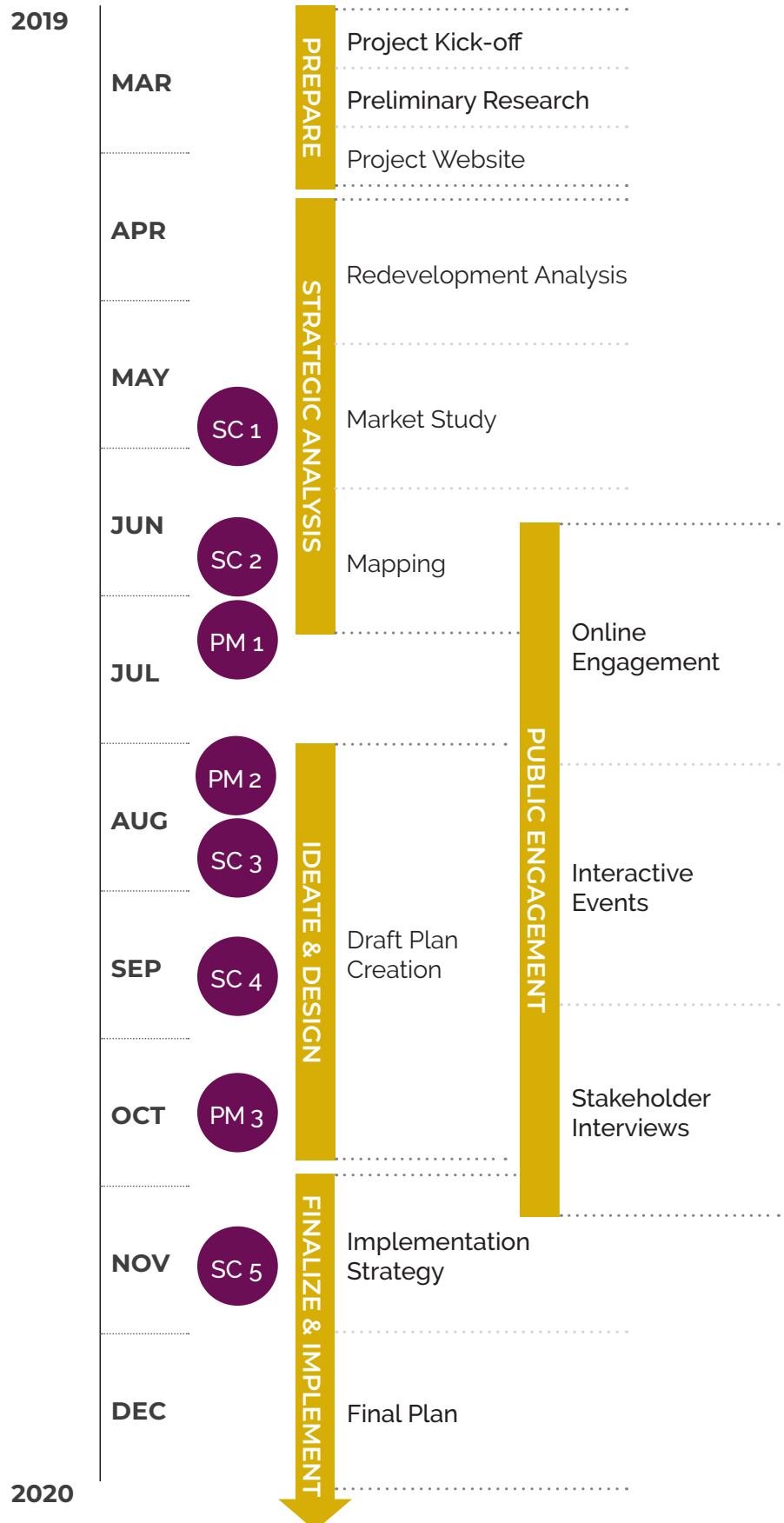
Figure 1. The Planning Process



## Schedule

The Village of Gambier Strategic Plan was completed during an eight-month planning process divided amongst five phases (as shown in the figure to the right). Each phase included distinct tasks and meetings which occurred at both discrete times and as ongoing actions throughout the process.

-  = **Steering Committee Meeting**
-  = **Public Meeting**








02



The background is a solid purple color. In the upper right, there are two gold circles connected by a thin gold arc. Below them, another gold circle is connected to the same arc. Further down, two more gold circles are connected by a thin gold arc. At the bottom right, a single gold circle is connected to a thin gold arc. The text is white and positioned in the lower left quadrant.

# COMMUNITY CONTEXT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

# COMMUNITY CONTEXT

## OVERVIEW

The Gambier Village Strategic Plan aims to achieve long-term ambitious goals for the future while remaining grounded in market realities and an accurate portrayal of the community. The existing conditions for Gambier are evaluated against regional and national trends and best practices related to land use and development to provide context and ensure objectives are implementable.

## THE VILLAGE OF GAMBIER

Gambier is located centrally in Knox County, Ohio, just fifty miles northeast of Downtown Columbus and only five miles from Mt. Vernon- the county seat. Gambier is known for its institutional ties, arts and historic significance, and natural beauty. The Village is home to Kenyon College, a private liberal arts institution with an approximate enrollment of 1,730. Kenyon once owned the entirety of the land in the Village and remains an important partner in land use and development decisions.

The Gambier community is also heavily impacted by its environmental assets and restraints, including the Kokosing River and hilly terrain. Much of Gambier's unique character comes from its ability to connect people with nature while retaining its close proximity to cultural and civic amenities.

The following pages expand upon Gambier's profile to provide a general overview of the community. It is worth noting that the demographic data- primarily estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau- is largely influenced by Kenyon College's student population and is provided as a general and broad snapshot of the community. As the Village works to implement the strategies and actions recommended in this Plan, it may wish to compare existing data with future, updated figures; including, but not limited to, the 2020 U.S. Census.



*Downtown Gambier, evidence of the strong “town and gown” environment, molds together uses for students, workers, and residents alike.*

Figure 2. Gambier Base Map





## THE PEOPLE

### Population

Gambier's population was 2,391 in 2010 and estimated at 2,458 in 2018.<sup>1</sup> The Village's population increased over the last few decades at a slightly quicker pace than Knox County from 2010-2018. Kenyon College students account for about 70% of the Village's total population which in turn is about 4% of Knox County's population.

Knox County's population is generally growing at a modest pace (~1% annually from 2000-2010), and Kenyon College has increased its number of students slightly over the last few decades (about 200 in the last 25 years)<sup>2</sup>. Given the local "town and gown" relationship, Gambier's future growth or decline will largely be influenced by external market conditions impacting enrollment at private higher education institutions. On a regional perspective, 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>

The Strategic Plan is designed to reflect current wants and needs of the community and capacity for future scenarios. This assessment is performed with the understanding of potential impacts from national trends in higher education and regional trends in growth and development.

### Households & Families

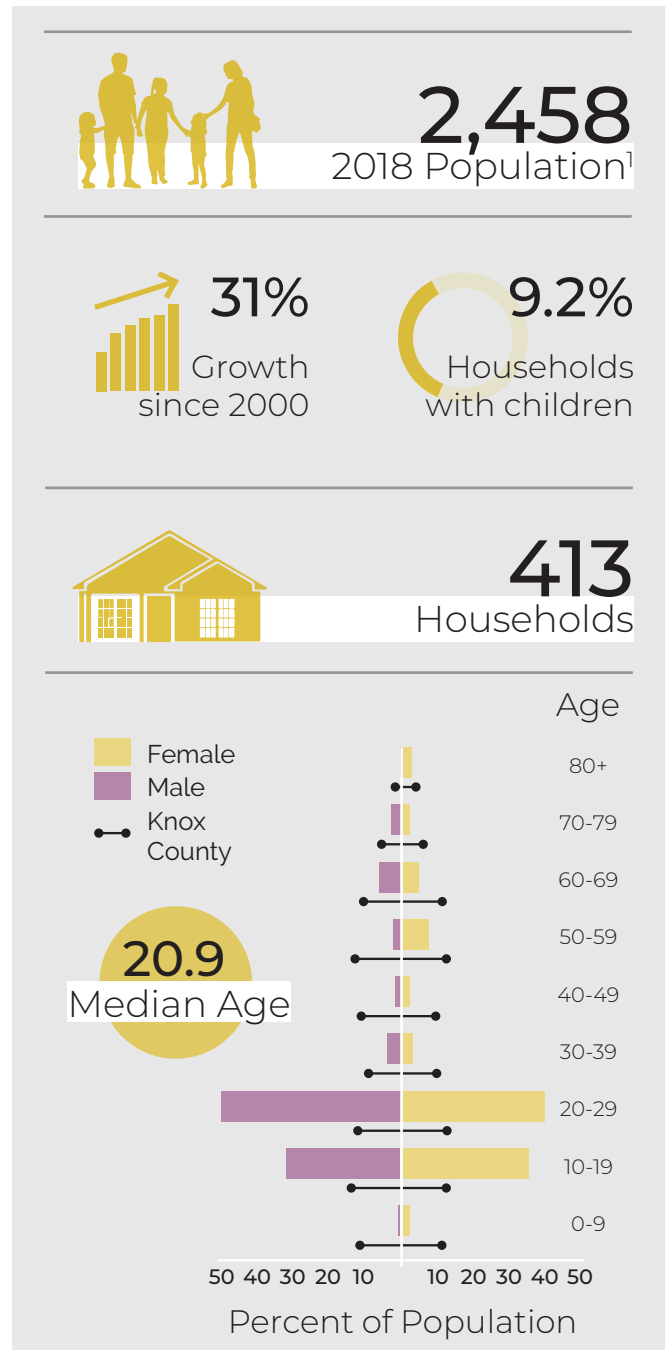
There are an estimated 413 households in Gambier. At roughly 2.06, the average household size in Gambier is less than that of Knox County (2.47) and around 57.9% (239) of its households classify as non-family, meaning the occupants live alone or with roommates to whom they are not related by blood or marriage (compared to 34.3% in Knox County). The variation between Gambier's household and family statistics and that of the County is likely due to the number of college students in the Village.

## THE ECONOMY

### Employment

Not surprisingly, the most common industry classification for employed Gambier residents is by

Figure 3. Gambier Population & Demographics



\*Unless otherwise stated, data is derived from the 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: Kenyon College, Enrollments and Class Size (1994-2019)

3. Source: MORPC, Insight 2050



far “educational services, health care, and social assistance” (58.8%), which is also the top category for the County as a whole. Student worker commute patterns are traditionally difficult to track, but U.S. Census Bureau estimates suggest that more non-resident workers are commuting into Gambier (755) than residents leaving for work (566).

### Income & Education

The median household income in Gambier is approximately \$65,438, compared to \$51,211 in Knox County. The higher median income is likely correlated with a higher educational attainment. For Knox County as a whole, about 90.9% of the population 25 years and older is a high school graduate and 22.7% have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Within Gambier specifically, those same figures are 99.3% and 74.1%, respectively.

## THE PLACE

### Housing

The influence of a private college and a tight housing market create limitations in painting a complete picture of housing in Gambier. Kenyon College housing (traditional residence halls, apartments, and programmatic houses) provides approximately 1,800 beds.<sup>1</sup> These buildings plus Village residential options equate to a census estimate of 495 housing units. According to those same estimates, the majority of occupied housing units in Gambier are owner-occupied (59.8%), compared to 71.3% in Knox County. Of the total estimated 495 units, about 68.3% are single-family detached homes. Though this number is lower than the County (80.1%), it is similar to other small college towns in Ohio, such as Hiram (72.2%), Oberlin (61.2%), or Ashland (60.2%).

The average sale of residential properties from January to October 2019 was \$109,047 in Gambier (approximately \$25,000 higher than the County average).<sup>2</sup> Relatively higher housing costs may be a reflection of Gambier as a desirable place to live, as well as limitations on the supply of available homes. Given the small sample size available for study in Gambier, the overall sales trends can fluctuate drastically with relatively few data points.

Figure 4. Gambier Housing

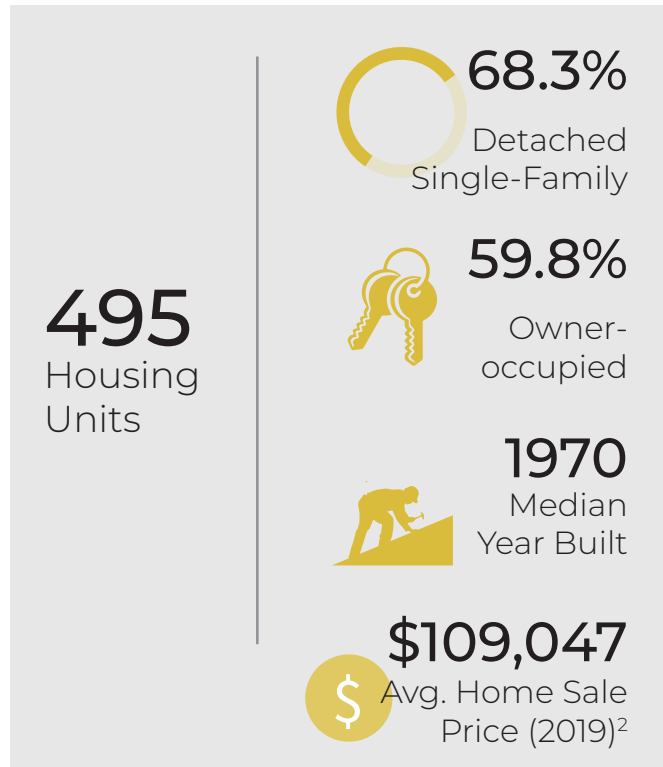


Figure 5. Knox County Housing Demand

Knox County For Sale Housing Demand (5-Year Projection)	
2019 Owner-occupied housing units	16,023
2024 Owner-occupied housing units	16,642
For-sale units needed for balanced market (98.5% occupied)	16,896
Existing occupied for-sale product (2019 households)	16,023
Existing vacant units for sale	130
Units needed to replace %1 of for-sale housing stock due to age	162
<b>Total new units needed county-wide over next 5 years</b>	<b>905</b>

Source: Urban Design Group (2019)

\*Unless otherwise stated, data is derived from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2013-2017)

1. Source: Urban Design Group (2019)

2. Source: Knox County Auditor, Sales Report (Jan - Oct. 2019)

Under current zoning regulations, existing undeveloped residential parcels could accommodate a maximum build out of 65 single-family homes in Gambier. Increasing the housing supply by 13% may seem daunting, but there is potential for Gambier to contribute to Knox County's housing shortage. According to recent estimates, the County will need 905 new for-sale units over the next five years to meet market demand (Figure 5, p. 13).

### Non-Residential Land Uses

The majority of land in Gambier which is not utilized for housing serves institutional purposes. Wiggins Street Elementary School, a property of the Mount Vernon School District, is an important local amenity. Other land uses primarily include civic, park, or commercial space. Almost all of the commercial activity in Gambier operates in the downtown (around the Middle Path), with much of the property owned by Kenyon College (Figure 7).

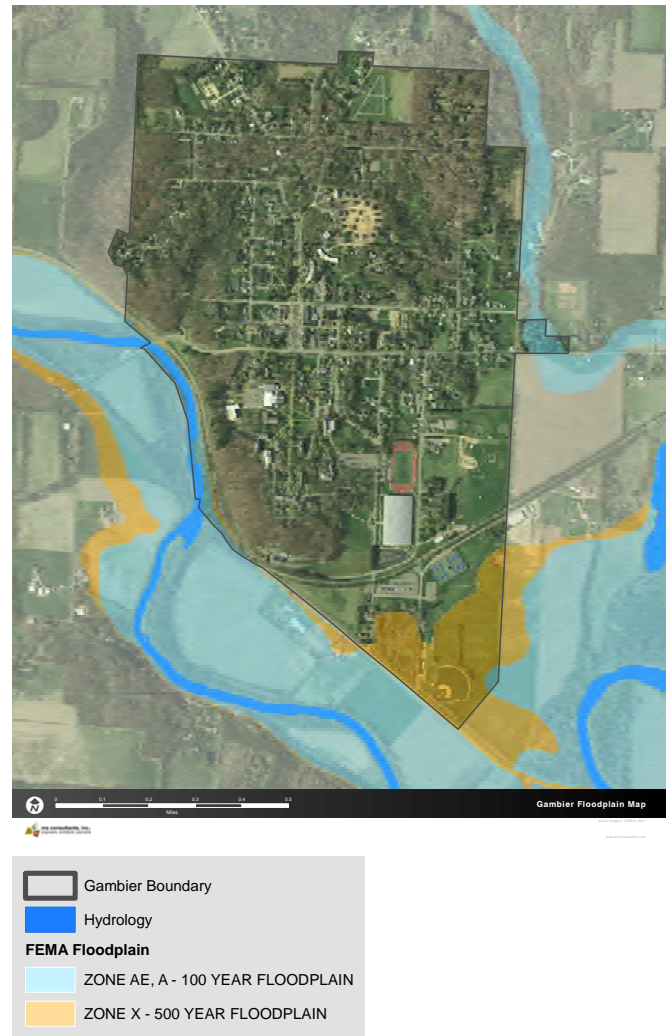
### Natural Environment

Gambier's natural beauty and ecological features were identified as community assets during the planning process. The community is heavily impacted by its environmental resources and restraints, including the hill upon which the Village sits and nearby flood hazard areas (Figure 6). The Philander Chase Conservancy and the Brown Family Environmental Center are local leaders in education and preservation of Gambier's natural features and sensitive land. Conservation easements currently exist for several of the parcels south of the Village in the 100-year floodplain. Current zoning regulations for the Village and College Township acknowledge conservation and agricultural land (Figure 9, p. 17).

### Historical Significance

The Village of Gambier includes several properties of historical and cultural significance (Figure 8, p. 16). The Gambier Historic District, which covers much of the Village, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000 and includes 139 contributing buildings. Three other properties- Christ Church at the Quarry, Kenyon College (including 11 contributing buildings), and the Kokosing House, are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places and there are four Ohio

Figure 6. FEMA Flood Map



Historical Markers in the Village. The Village also includes a significant number of historic structures (more than fifty years old). Adaptive reuse and historic preservation are highly relevant tools for the future of development in Gambier.

\*Unless otherwise stated, data is derived from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2013-2017)

1. Source: Knox County Auditor, Sales Report (Jan - Oct. 2019)



Figure 7. Property Ownership in Gambier

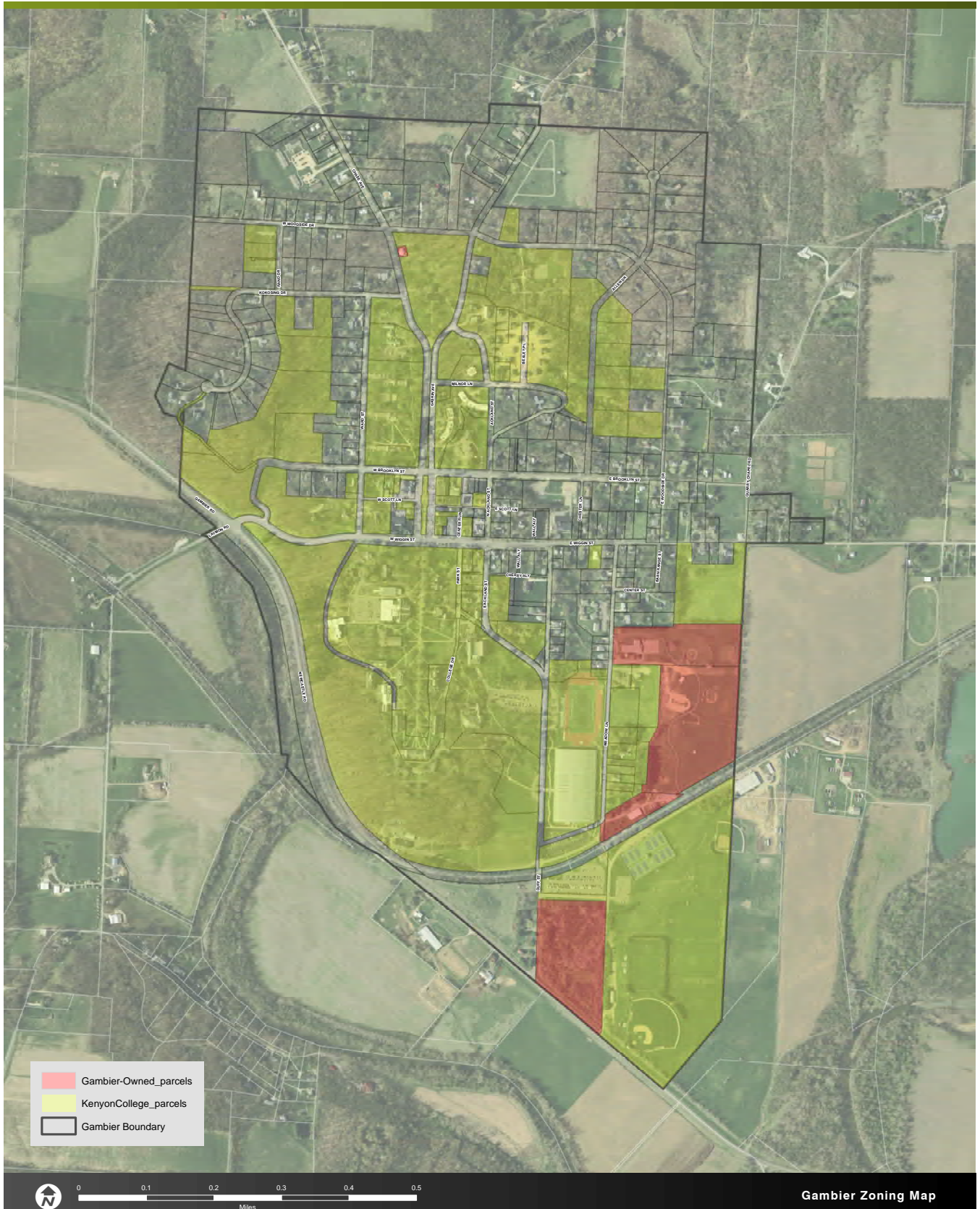




Figure 8. Cultural and Historical Resources

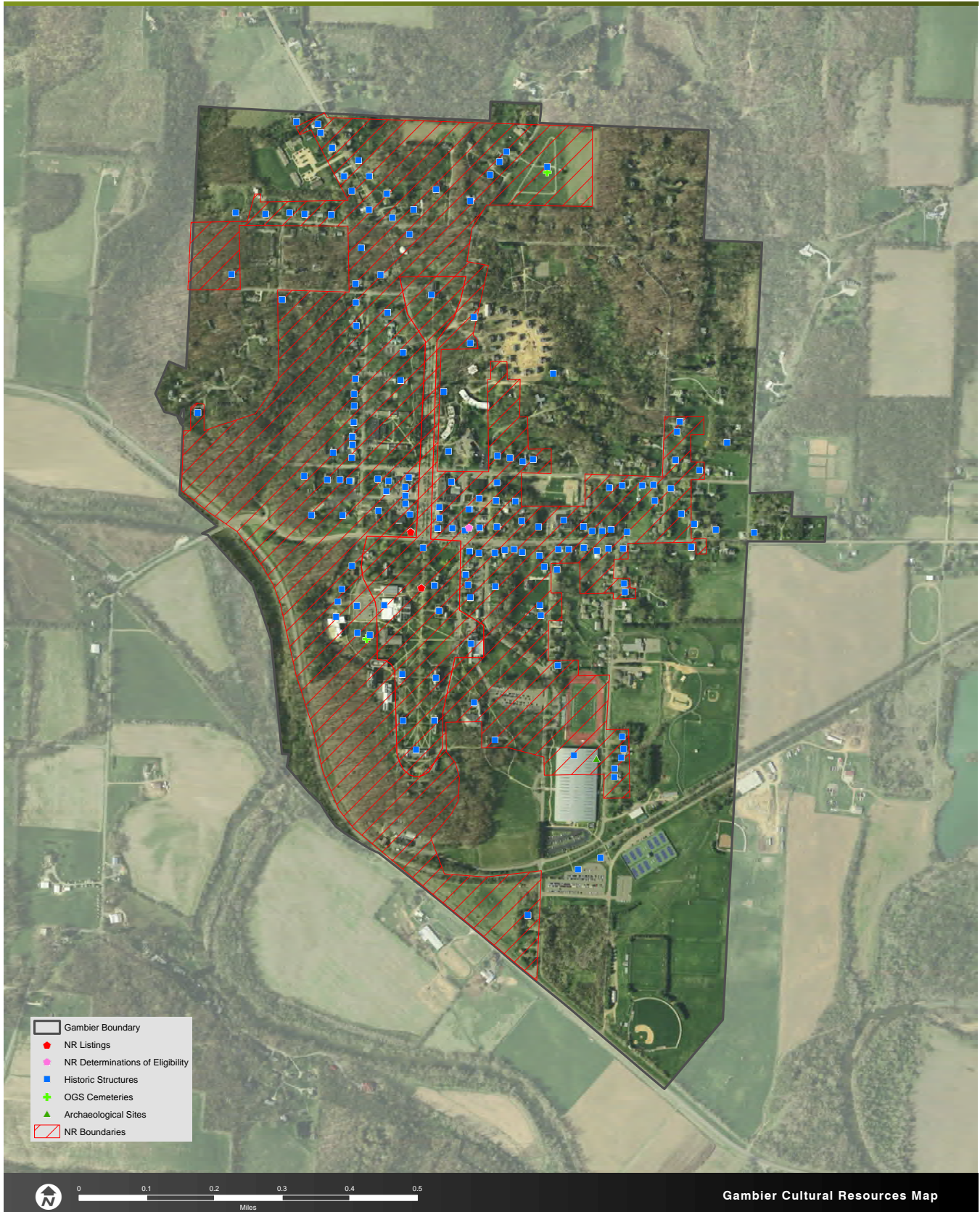
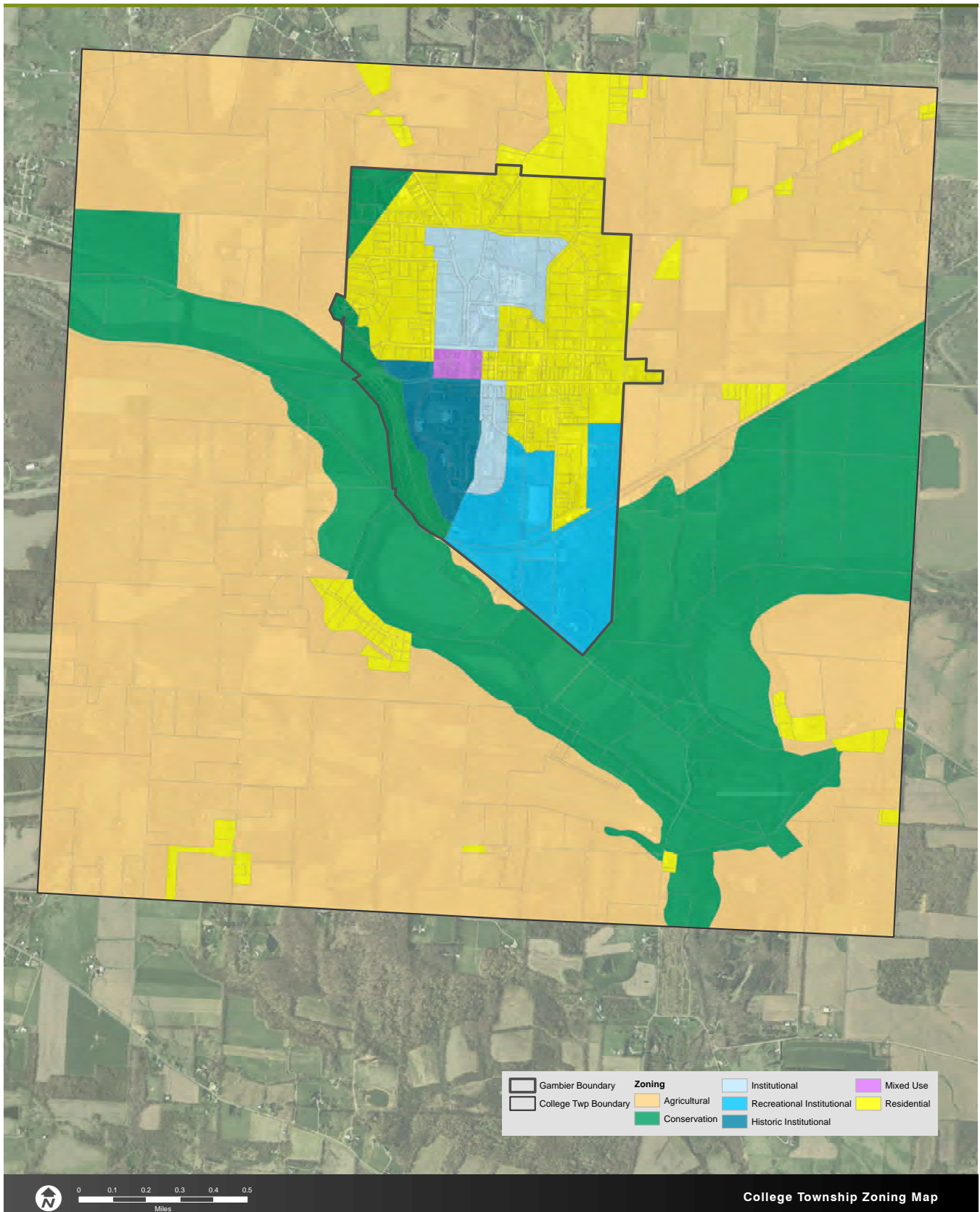




Figure 9. Gambier & College Township Existing Zoning





# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

WHAT WE HEARD



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## OVERVIEW

Inclusive and comprehensive public engagement helps ensure the Strategic Plan both reflects an authentic community-wide vision and is implementable in the long term. To make this mission a reality, the planning team actively engaged residents, businesses, employees, civic leaders, and the general public throughout creation of the Plan. This chapter summarizes the public engagement process and the feedback received.

## ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The strategic plan framework is founded in community-wide aspirations and shepherded by a steering committee comprised of leaders with local expertise and a passion for the future of Gambier. Steering committee members helped develop and test activities to engage the general public in the planning process and recommended additional community members for in-depth stakeholder interviews. The general public was invited to participate throughout the process; both in-person and online. An overview of each public engagement element is provided below, followed by a summary of results.

### Community Workshops

Bringing interactive engagement to existing community events helps ensure a wide audience is aware of the Gambier Village Strategic Plan and able to participate. The planning team set up a table at the annual July 4th Festival event and Party on the Patio (Saturday, Aug. 17th, 2019). The events offered an opportunity to introduce community members to the planning process and gather feedback on what the public would like to see in Gambier in the future.

## BY THE NUMBERS...



COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS	100
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS	15
COMMUNITY SURVEY	523
ONLINE ENGAGEMENT	500+

## Stakeholder Interviews

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

## Community Survey

Hard copies of the community survey were available at in-person public engagement events, as well as through distribution by Village staff and steering committee members. The survey was also available to complete online. Questions encouraged participants to consider future growth, development, and overall livability of Gambier.

## Online Activities

The project website, KnoxCoPlans.com, provided updates, planning materials, and the activities conducted at the community workshops. Business cards advertising the website were passed out at community events and left around the Village to spread the word about online engagement. As the Plan 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.

# ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

## Community Survey Respondents

Understanding some basic demographic information about participants in the community survey provides context to the responses. Numerically speaking, about 20% of Gambier's population participated in the community survey; though not all respondents live within in Gambier and may associate with the community through work, education, or as a visitor.

About 60% of survey respondents are Gambier residents and the same percent said they work within Village limits. The majority of those surveyed are affiliated with Kenyon College, with 43.8% current students and 40.5% a member of the



*The planning team attended Party on the Patio at Kenyon Inn to gather feedback from the public on how they envision the future of Gambier.*



*Steering committee meetings included activities to discuss challenges and generate ideas.*

faculty, staff, and/or board of trustees. About 25% live alone and just under 20% live with children.

## General

According to community survey results and general feedback received at the community workshops and stakeholder interviews, some of the community members' favorite things about Gambier are Kenyon College, its historical character, the rural and natural aesthetic, and Wiggins Elementary School. Some of the community's least favorite things are illustrated by what they would change, including more retail, dining, and entertainment, improved pedestrian safety, and an increase in housing options (Figure 10).

When asked broadly what the community would like to see in Gambier in the future, July 4th activity participants gave the most votes to community events, followed by retail and restaurants (Figure 11).

## Land Use & Development

When asked on the community survey "What do you think is the most important development priority for Gambier to focus on over the next ten years?", more than one-third of respondents said attract, grow, and retain small businesses (Figure 12). This aligns with results from the second community workshop in which the project prioritization activity revealed a strong desire for dedicating funds to support small businesses. Expanding small and/or local businesses may provide opportunities to increase commercial offerings within Gambier, such as food or retail establishments. Some existing business owners said they struggle in the summer when students are gone and their customer base shrinks.

The relationship between the Village and Kenyon College seemed to affect how the public perceives and talks about development issues. Ongoing construction at Kenyon, a singular architectural style, and a lack of diversity in developers and property ownership were frequent concerns voiced by survey respondents and stakeholders generally.

**Figure 10.** Community Survey Results: General

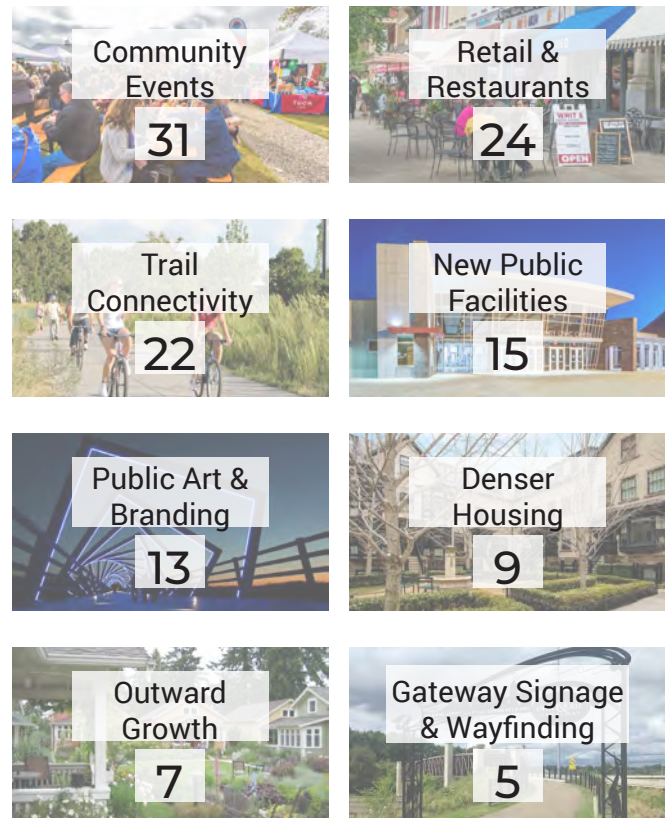
If you could change ONE thing about Gambier, what would it be?

Most common themes:

- More entertainment, dining, & retail options
- Improve parking
- Pave the Middle Path
- Expand regional connectivity
- Diversify the architecture
- Improve walkability
- Enhance public spaces
- Strengthen relationship between Kenyon & the Village
- More diverse and affordable housing
- Improve safety of 229 / 308 intersection
- Better lighting
- Revise traffic pattern
- Upgrade utilities

**Figure 11.** Community Workshop Results: General

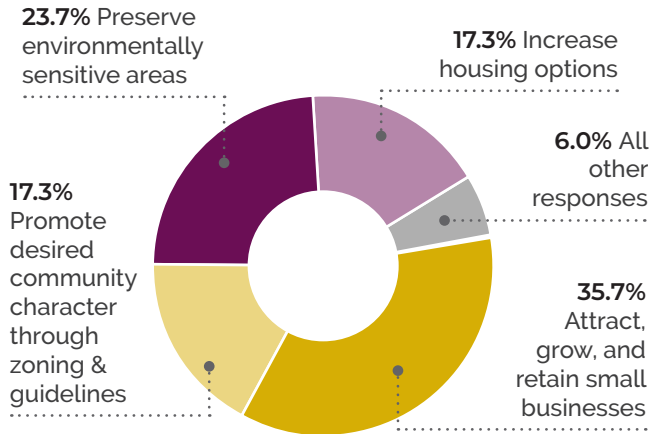
What improvements are most important for Gambier?





**Figure 12.** Community Survey Results: Land Use & Development

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



## Housing

The cost and limited supply of residential options in the Village was a common theme throughout the engagement process across household types. The public voiced a need for housing to accommodate many different segments of the population including students, faculty, retirees and aging adults, and young families; demonstrating a broad interest for more housing. This general desire for an increase in housing supply was also communicated in the survey. Around half of respondents said their preferred housing type is available in Gambier and a variety of different housing types were considered appropriate for future development (Figure 13). Opinions on the greatest housing issue for the future of Gambier were also diverse, with affordability and providing workforce housing for Kenyon faculty and staff receiving the highest number of votes.

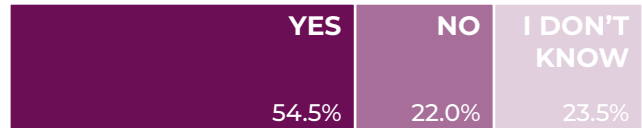
Redevelopment, infill development, and outward growth are options to consider in order to meet the community's demand and preferences relative to residential neighborhoods.

## Mobility, Infrastructure, & Services

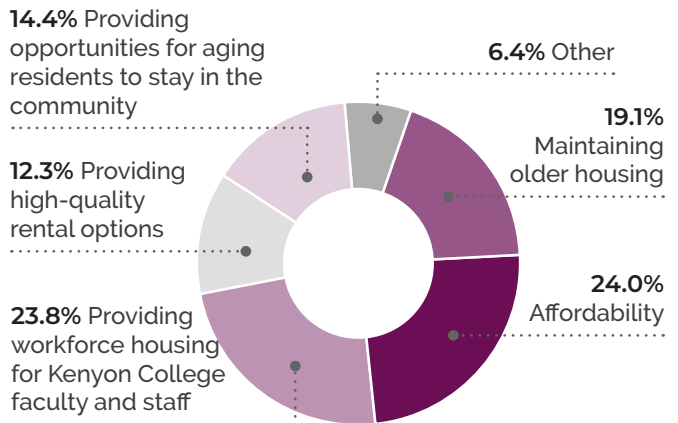
Connectivity, safety, and quality of utilities were the primary issues raised related to mobility,

**Figure 13.** Community Survey Results: Housing

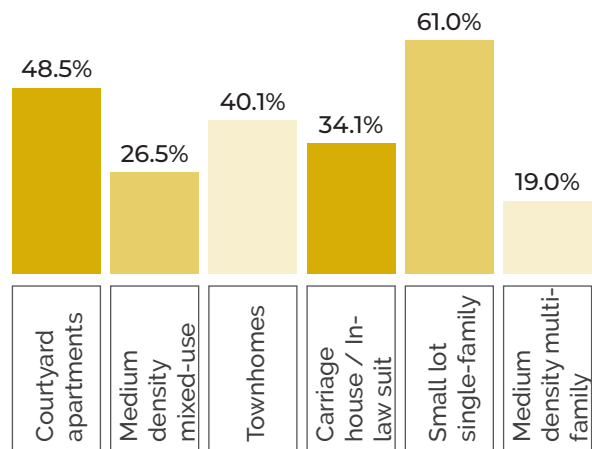
Is your preferred housing type available in Gambier?



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



What housing type is appropriate for future residential (re)development in Gambier? (select all that apply)



infrastructure, and services in Gambier. The greatest current challenge in Gambier according to about 21% of community survey respondents is the quality of, or access to, utilities (Figure 14). Frequent power outages and the cost and quality of water were infrastructure-related issues voiced by the community in open-ended survey questions. Looking to the future, planning and zoning services received the highest percentage of votes as the greatest challenge. Figure 14 shows the complete breakdown of responses for both current and future conditions. The majority of "other" responses were "I don't know".

These results are similar to feedback gathered at the community workshop and through stakeholder interviews. Generally speaking, community members value Gambier's quaint charm and its natural beauty; however, its isolated location is also one of their least favorite things. Its physical location atop a hill and limited transportation options (particularly for non-personal vehicular travel), create mobility barriers for residents.

Issues of safety also came up regularly in the engagement process. Examples include a lack of sidewalks, the speed at which vehicles pass through the Village, the intersection of 229 / 308, and the condition of roads and paths during winter weather.

### Parks & Recreation

The community emphasized the importance of parks, trails, and open space for the present and future quality of life in Gambier. Survey participants rated the quality of existing parks and trails relatively high at 3.8 and 4.1, respectively (Figure 15). The quality of the Middle Path was rated lower at 3.0. Safety and comfort concerns about the Middle Path were voiced in open ended responses of the survey in regard to respondents' least favorite thing about Gambier. Several community members shared a desire for the Middle Path to be paved in order to be accessible and more easily traversed in winter weather conditions. The Middle Path is owned by Kenyon College and therefore outside the purview of this Strategic Plan, but serves as an important public space within the center of the Village.

Strengthening connections to the Kokosing Gap Trail was also a common theme throughout the

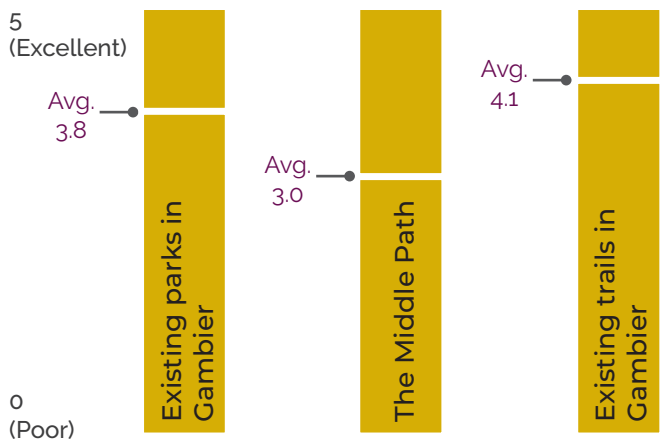
**Figure 14.** Community Survey Results: Mobility, Infrastructure, & Services

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

Issue	% (currently)	% (future)
Quality of, or access to, utilities	21.3%	7.5%
Traffic	15.5%	14.6%
Planning and zoning services	15.5%	23.0%
Road maintenance	13.8%	7.5%
Maintenance of public properties	8.5%	15.8%
Village fiscal operations / taxes	6.7%	9.7%
Public safety services	5.7%	4.3%
Other	13.0%	7.1%

**Figure 15.** Community Survey Results: Parks & Recreation

How would you rate the quality of the following parks and trails?

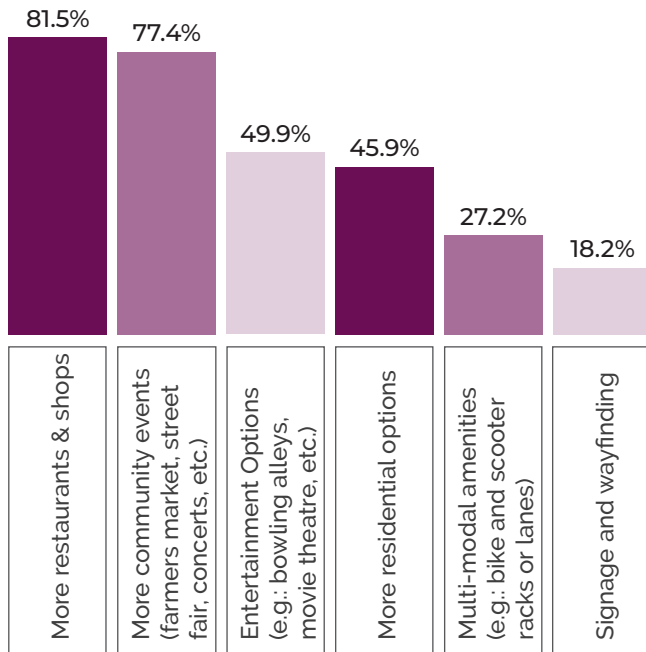


How would you rate the importance of parks and open space for the future of Gambier?



**Figure 16.** Community survey results: Downtown

Which three improvements do you think are the most important for the future of Downtown?



engagement. Trail connectivity ranked as the third most popular improvement at the July 4th Festival (Figure 11) and also ranked third at the Party on the Patio budget prioritization activity which provided more specific options.

### Community Image & Brand

Gambier's "town and gown" relationship lends itself to unique strengths and challenges. Kenyon College is an important driver of the local economy, and population; though residents expressed feeling a lack of control over their own community. Many survey respondents, both residents and students, expressed a desire for stronger communal connections and a more unified identity of Gambier. In addition to a general consensus on a need for more housing, there was strong support from the majority of survey participants, regardless of affiliation to Kenyon, on a need for more commercial offerings and events in the downtown district (Figure 16). Expanding public gathering spaces and community activities Downtown would help strengthen Gambier's image and brand as a cohesive community.

## SUMMARY

The following key takeaways serve as a summary of the feedback gathered from the Gambier community.

- Prioritize improvements in the downtown; including redevelopment of underutilized properties, parking upgrades, and public spaces;
- Improve connectivity of Gambier to the region through expanded trails, transportation options, signage/wayfinding, and events;
- Ensure a collaborative, symbiotic relationship between the Village and College;
- Expand housing options;
- Support small businesses;
- Enhance entertainment, dining, and retail options;
- Diversify development and architectural style;
- Preserve and capitalize on Gambier's historical charm and natural beauty;
- Utilize signage and wayfinding to increase safety and tourism; and,
- Improve the quality of utilities.

These opinions gathered from the community were used to guide and direct the recommendations provided in the Village Strategic Plan.





The background is a solid purple color. It features several thin, white, curved lines that sweep across the page. Interspersed among these lines are several circular dots in shades of gold and light beige. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

# PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

BUILDING A VISION FOR THE  
FUTURE

# PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

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## OVERVIEW

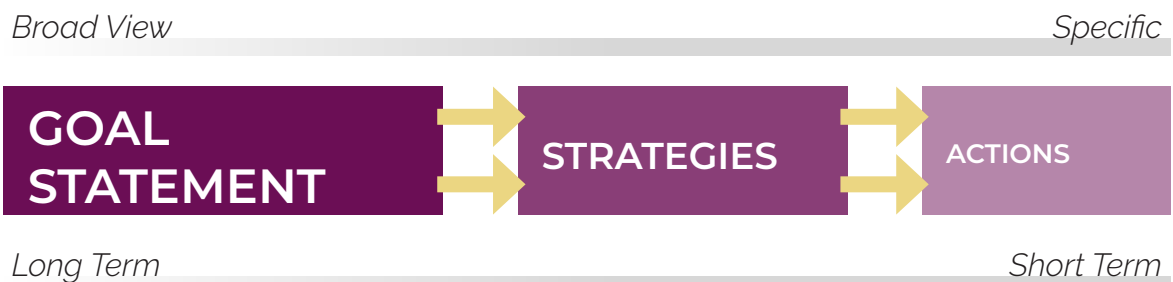
A successful plan acts as a roadmap by defining clear goals and strategic steps to achieve those goals. The following goal statements for the future of Gambier serve as a framework upon which the Village Strategic Plan was created and set the stage for the recommendations described in the Implementation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

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.

Gambier should strive to pursue each strategy in the long term, with an emphasis on the priority strategy which may serve as a catalyst in achieving the remaining strategies and actions.





# GOAL STATEMENTS

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

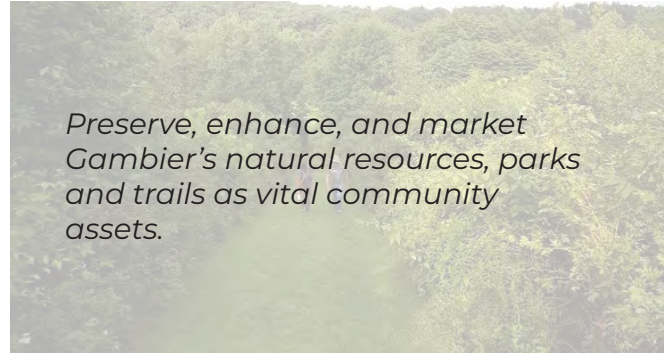
Pages 30-33



*Support a vibrant mix of institutional and Village-serving land uses which respect environmental restraints, promote a high quality of life, and plan for long-term growth.*

## PARKS & RECREATION

Pages 42-47



*Preserve, enhance, and market Gambier's natural resources, parks and trails as vital community assets.*

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

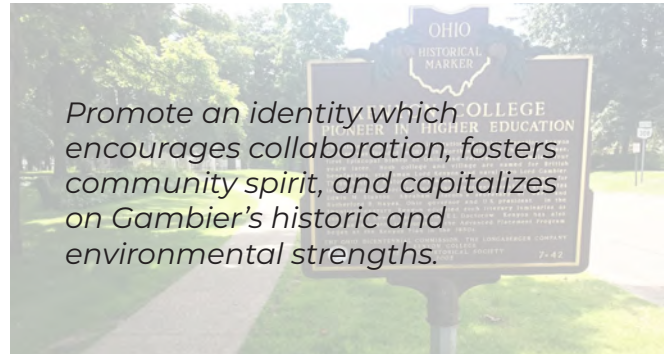
Pages 34-37



*Preserve existing neighborhoods while increasing opportunities for diverse housing options within the Village and conservation development on future residential land.*

## COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

Pages 48-51



*Promote an identity which encourages collaboration, fosters community spirit, and capitalizes on Gambier's historic and environmental strengths.*

## MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

Pages 38-41



*Strengthen the built environment to safely and efficiently move people, goods, and services within the Village and to regional destinations.*

Each goal statement is supported by strategies and corresponding actions. For a complete list of strategies and actions, you can view the Implementation Matrix (beginning on page 58).

# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

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## The Big Picture

Gambier is a relatively small community and Kenyon College is currently the largest land owner with both educational and institutional-adjacent uses (Figure 7, p. 15). How property owners use their land is both an organic process and a deliberate response to regulation, investment, and market conditions. In this way, both Village and College codes, policies, and the overall attitude toward development shape how the community evolves over time.

The relationship between the Village and Kenyon College seemed to affect how the public perceives and talks about development issues. Ongoing construction at Kenyon, a singular architectural style, and a lack of diversity in property ownership were frequent concerns voiced during the engagement process of this Plan. There is a general public appetite for more retail, dining, and office space in the Village; though local businesses cited challenges related to the drop in consumer base during the summer months. A desire for preservation of Gambier's historic character and scale, as well as the presence of elevated grades, floodplain zones, and conservation easements, are all important development considerations. Future land use and development decisions must strike a balance between serving the wants and needs of residents in order to strengthen the community's quality of life with land use policies which serve projected future development trends and realities.

Short and intermediate-term focus should be granted to repositioning underutilized properties, especially near the downtown, and to preparing undeveloped land for future productive use. The limited opportunities for direct intervention (due to Village size and parcel ownership) allow for the Village of Gambier to be deliberate and strategic in its investments. There are opportunities for collaboration with Kenyon, Mount Vernon Schools, and College Township to conduct land swaps, create shared spaces, and partner in economic development ventures to improve overall efficiency.

Formation of a cohesive and coherent vision for the future of land use and development will strengthen the impact of improvements, provide stability for property owners, garner a greater sense of community, and improve the overall quality of life for Gambier residents.

## Summary of Findings

- Community survey respondents think the most important development priorities for Gambier to focus on over the next 10 years are to support small businesses (35.7%) and preserve environmentally sensitive areas (23.7%).
- The public would like to see more entertainment, dining, and retail options in the Village.
- Kenyon College owns about half of the land in the Village.
- Conservation easements, flood hazard zones, and elevated grades limit developable land.
- Potential land swaps with Kenyon College, Mount Vernon Schools, and/or College Township may help efficiently revitalize properties.

# GOAL STATEMENT

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

---



# STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY 1

---

Update Gambier's zoning code to reflect the Village's development goals and future growth.

### STRATEGY 2

---

Transform underutilized properties.

### STRATEGY 3

---

Support attraction, retention, and expansion of small businesses.

### STRATEGY 4

---

Collaborate with local partners to identify parcels positioned for acquisition and/or redevelopment.



*There are 13 total businesses in Gambier; all but one of which are located on Kenyon College property.*



# PRIORITY STRATEGY

## STRATEGY

**UPDATE GAMBIER'S ZONING CODE TO REFLECT THE VILLAGE'S DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND FUTURE GROWTH.**



### ACTION 1

Collaborate with College Township on parcels appropriate for annexation(s), if any.

### ACTION 2

Investigate potential future merger with College Township.

### ACTION 3

Work with regional partners to identify potential joint economic development district (JEDD) opportunities.

### ACTION 4

Update zoning code to account for annexation procedures to expedite and streamline growth.

### ACTION 5

Update zoning map to reflect recent and/or future annexations.

## Why prioritize this strategy?

The terrain and conservation easements in and around Gambier constrain its growth. There are physical limitations to development (i.e. steep grades, flooding, singular ownership, legal barriers) and aesthetic limitations (i.e. desire to maintain Gambier's character and natural beauty). These factors limit the Village's ability to increase its tax base and influence local land use decisions. To ensure long-term solvency and agency of the Village, it is imperative for Gambier to develop a plan for future expansion and express this plan within its zoning regulations.

A community's zoning code provides teeth in producing the long-term goals illustrated in their plans and future land use map. Without regulatory changes, the Village is likely to continue its current land use patterns. A zoning code update allows for continued community conservations on the future of development and growth while ensuring local guidelines and policies appropriately reflect the stated objectives.

## How to prioritize this strategy

A formal zoning code update offers an opportunity to prepare for future growth and development, as well as strengthen procedures for infill redevelopment.

A complete audit, whether by Village staff or external counsel, should be completed to determine current regulatory barriers in implementing the recommendations of this Plan. Once discrepancies between community goals and the zoning code are identified, a steering committee of engaged community members can lead the zoning code rewrite process.

The Gambier zoning code update should consider future growth as outlined in this section, as well as other long-term strategies discussed in this Plan including, but not limited to, a greater diversity in housing type and density and support for lodging.

*\*You can view actions for all of the Land Use & Development Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 58).*

# PLANNING FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Opportunities for municipal expansion, including annexation, individual site agreements, and mergers, can be mutually beneficial for all involved parties. These partnerships allow for greater efficiency in the provision of public services, streamlining of economic development procedures, and reduced costs from economies of scale. The path forward for Gambier should be guided by the wants and needs of area residents; as well as public service needs determined by local governing bodies.

Annexation can be conducted in numerous ways as outlined in state law. As opposed to a regulatory taking or eminent domain, annexation involves petitioned consent of the property owner. An owner may request to be annexed into a municipality to receive public services such as sewer or water.

A JEDD is a partnership between a municipality and township that promotes economic development in a defined area. The land 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.

Piece-meal annexations and agreements present small scale and short-term methods to expand Gambier's boundaries and better serve its community. Should all interested parties determine a merger presents the best option moving forward, a merger between the Village of Gambier and College Township may offer a broader solution.

The merger process, in which a township joins with a Village, is outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). There are two processes in the state of Ohio by which Gambier and College Township could merge.

- Citizen-led petitioning (ORC 709.45)
- Local legislative approval (ORC 709.451)

Should the governing bodies of both College Township and the Village of Gambier pass resolutions proposing a merger, a proposed merger agreement would still need to be approved by voters.

In addition to accounting for the legal procedure, public involvement, and political considerations of an adjustment to Village boundaries, Gambier should also establish a plan for future zoning of unincorporated areas in the Township.

The Village Zoning Code does not currently provide a written explanation for dealing with annexation. The City of Mount Vernon's zoning code, for example, includes a provision outlining the process by which the Planning and Zoning Commission should update the zoning map to incorporate new territory (Sec 1151.09). Alternatively, some cities automatically assign a particular zoning classification to annexed territory (ex: all territory annexed to the City of Columbus is initially coded with a Rural zoning classification).

The existing zoning and land use, FEMA floodplain maps (page 14), and the recommendations of this Plan, should guide future zoning and land use determinations for annexed or acquired land.

## Expected benefits of a merger include:

- Greater efficiency in delivery of public services (i.e. police and fire, water and sewer, street maintenance)
- Clarity and stability for property owners and developers (i.e. one set of regulations / zoning code for the area)
- An increase in tax revenue to fund improvements which impact the entire community
- A stronger voice in regional decisions

*\*Note: Information provided within this Plan is solely for educational purposes and does not constitute legal advice.*

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

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## The Big Picture

The limitations placed on development in Gambier expand to the housing market. When there is not enough supply to meet demand, costs rise and quality may suffer. The need for more housing in Gambier is reflected in a higher average home sale price in the Village compared with that of Knox County, as well as anecdotally in conversations with stakeholders and the public. In addition to a low supply of for-sale housing, the residential options which do exist in Gambier are primarily of a singular size and type despite its diverse community including students, faculty, retirees and aging adults, and young families.

Changes in demographics, household type, size, and neighborhood preferences are factors which Gambier should account for in the future. The Village can encourage diverse residential development while still promoting Gambier's historic and agricultural charm. According to the Insight 2050 report by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), the majority of projected growth (75%) in Central Ohio to the year 2050 will be households without children; and more than 50% of the growth will be single-occupant households. With the senior population nearly doubling, household sizes shrinking, and the rise of smart technologies, housing needs will look very different in the coming decades.

Redevelopment, infill development, and outward growth are options to meet the community's demand and preferences relative to residential neighborhoods. The Village can proactively identify parcels appropriate for denser residential infill and prepare site plans or marketing materials for potential developers. The Village should also update its zoning regulations to promote greater diversity in housing type. Maintaining existing infrastructure and neighborhood amenities (i.e. sidewalks, street lights, trash removal, etc) should remain a priority for the Village as the residential stock grows and/or adapts.

## Summary of Findings

- The community consistently expressed concerns related to the cost and limited supply of residential options in the Village during the planning process.
- Single-family homes are the only permitted residential use in the Village; all other housing types are cited as conditional or prohibited by the zoning code.
- The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that 2035 will mark the first time in our country's history that seniors (65+) will 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

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS



## STRATEGIES

### **STRATEGY 1**

Increase and diversify the housing stock.

### **STRATEGY 2**

Identify outlying land in adjacent townships appropriate for future residential development.

### **STRATEGY 3**

Create a strategy for addressing short-term rental properties.

### **STRATEGY 4**

Preserve the historic and natural beauty of residential neighborhoods.



*The majority of housing in Gambier is located on or within a few blocks of Kenyon's campus, including new student housing (pictured above).*

# PRIORITY STRATEGY

## STRATEGY

### INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY THE HOUSING STOCK.



#### ACTION 1

Update the zoning code to permit residential uses beyond single-family.

#### ACTION 2

Identify vacant, or otherwise developable parcels appropriate for medium-density residential development.

#### ACTION 3

Ensure zoning regulations support development of any potential annexed land to clustered or conservation development patterns.

#### ACTION 4

Coordinate with nearby jurisdictions and regional partners to develop marketing materials for potential residential development.

## Why prioritize this strategy?

The planning process revealed long-standing concerns over the housing supply in Gambier. The Kenyon College 2014 Master Campus Plan Update included reference to the need for a mix of housing options in the Village to combat a static supply of units and an expanding demand which forces college faculty and staff to live outside of Gambier. As noted in the campus plan, "This displacement increases the need for parking, creates a less walkable community and further contracts retail viability."<sup>1</sup> An inadequate supply of diverse housing options impacts individual residents, detracts from neighborhood character, and undermines long-term fiscal solvency of the community.

Providing for a greater diversity in the size, type, and style of homes available in Gambier allows the community to better support local businesses. It also provides the option for existing residents to gracefully age in place by downsizing, reducing home maintenance, or transitioning to assisted living.

## How to prioritize this strategy

The Village of Gambier, in coordination with local and regional partners, should work diligently to prepare, promote, and attract residential development. The County Lank Bank and Knox County Area Development Foundation may act as an ally in acquiring underutilized parcels for redevelopment. Additionally, the community is well-positioned to accommodate a regional demand for senior and intergenerational living options. Regulations and policies which promote diverse housing should be coupled with educational and outreach efforts to ensure existing residents are engaged in planning decisions.

\*You can view actions for all of the Housing & Neighborhoods Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 60).

1. Source: Kenyon College Master Campus Plan Update (2014), p. 61



# CONSERVATION BY CLUSTER

Residential growth or increased density does not need to mean five-story apartment buildings. Maintaining Gambier's connection to the natural environment should be a priority in future residential (re)development. Diverse, high-quality, walkable housing which maintains Gambier's aesthetic can be achieved through cluster, or conservation, development practices.

Cluster development allows for a range of housing types situated around shared amenities and built with respect to environmental or natural assets. The cluster neighborhood does not prescribe to a particular floor-area ratio, but rather a form and scale which creates walkable, diverse, and affordable communities.

An emphasis on efficient site layout and shared communal land, rather than the isolated, large-lot homes of many suburbs, creates the opportunity for community gardens, farms, and other odes to country-style living. A particular style of cluster development, referred to as an "agrihood"

brings a rural setting to a more compact residential development through a shared farming model.

Conservation by cluster design can also serve aging residents by grouping age-friendly housing around open space and programming. Some assisted living concepts utilize shared green space for physical and mental therapy for its residents such as circular or looping gardens for dementia and Alzheimer's patients.

The concepts of cluster design can be produced at a range of scales and with different amenities or demographics in mind. Green space can be dedicated to anything from baseball diamonds to bird sanctuaries so long as the required percentage of land is left pervious and mostly undisturbed by development. In some cases, it may be appropriate and beneficial to Gambier and the greater community to allow conservation style development in land currently within an Agricultural or Conservation Easement by the Philander Chase Conservancy,



*Olivette, NC, is a planned community around an organic farm. Residents can access produce, honey, and eggs on site and attend local events on the farm. Homes are connected through paths, parkways, and a bikeshare program. The site's design preserves the nearby mountains and river while promoting a healthy, sustainable lifestyle.*



*Kendal at Oberlin is an intergenerational retirement community. Independent living options include cottages and apartments, while an advanced care center provides assisted living and nursing care options. Amenities focus on wellness and health programming and educational and cultural events in partnership with Oberlin College.*



# 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. Currently, the Village of Gambier buys its water from Mount Vernon and redistributes to its residents through its own metered system. Fire and EMS services are provided by College Township with the main service station located in the heart of Gambier. Funding for these emergency services are currently generated via real estate taxes and are thus limited due to the high percentage of tax exempt property in the area. The public engagement process revealed some concern regarding quality and cost of utilities, as well as maintenance of public spaces. Gambier's physical location atop a hill and limited transportation options (particularly for non-personal vehicular travel), create mobility barriers for residents. Issues of safety also came up regularly in the engagement process, citing concerns such as a lack of sidewalks and high vehicle travel speeds within the Village. Some utility concerns may be met through an increase in residents by allowing for a more efficient use of existing utilities and a general reduction in individual costs. Strategies for accomplishing this increase in residents are discussed in the previous section, Housing & Neighborhoods (p. 34).

This section will instead focus on infrastructure improvements that serve to strengthen livability in Gambier and attract new residents and visitors, namely by focusing on enhancing access. Re-imagining intersections of SR-229 can reinforce the notion of a gateway into Gambier, while also creating a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians. Gambier's historic pedestrian scale furthers the need for improved opportunities for non-vehicular travel. Crosswalk and roadway improvements, as well as new paths and connections, can help reduce safety issues while promoting community assets.

## Summary of Findings

- The greatest current challenge in Gambier related to infrastructure and Village services according to community survey respondents is the quality of, or access to, utilities. Looking to the future, planning and zoning services received the highest percentage of votes.
- The public generally expressed concerns about frequent power outages and the cost and quality of water.
- The Village of Gambier purchases its water from Mount Vernon and receives Fire and EMS services from College Township.



*Highlighting crosswalks with patterns and color can help to heighten the level of visibility to motorists.*

# GOAL STATEMENT

## MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE



# STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY 1

---

Improve multi-modal access to, from, and within the Village.

### STRATEGY 2

---

Increase connectivity to regional communities and attractions.

### STRATEGY 3

---

Prepare Village services and utilities for future growth.



*The Middle Path, owned by Kenyon, is a central component to the built environment of Downtown.*

# PRIORITY STRATEGY

## STRATEGY

**IMPROVE MULTI-MODAL ACCESS TO, FROM, AND WITHIN THE VILLAGE.**



### ACTION 1

Create a crosswalk, or ODOT approved safe crossing, on SR-229 for non-vehicular travel from Wiggin Street to Laymon Road.

### ACTION 2

Identify strategic locations for public parking adjacent to Downtown in order to encourage limited vehicular traffic in the center of Gambier.

### ACTION 3

Promote pedestrian safety at the intersection of the Middle Path and Wiggin Street through signage and roadway/crosswalk enhancements.

### ACTION 4

Ensure that publicly-traversed roads and paths are handicap accessible.

### ACTION 5

Encourage and incentivize new mobility options such as smart technology and ride-share platforms (i.e. bikeshare, electric scooters, etc.).

### ACTION 6

Utilize "paper streets" (public right-of-way that has been platted and mapped but never paved) as neighborhood amenities for biking and walking.

### ACTION 7

Explore implementation of a crossing at Duff Street and SR-229.

## Why prioritize this strategy?

Gambier is currently affected by limited routes in and out of the Village. Additionally, there are safety concerns related to the interactions between the large number of pedestrians, particularly college students, and vehicles traversing main thoroughfares (i.e. SR-308). Enhancing opportunities for all modes of travel provides health, environmental, and financial benefits; as well as improved connectivity and safety.

College students and aging residents may not have access to a personal vehicle. Additionally, the scale of Gambier and concentration of businesses in the Downtown encourages walking and biking to destinations. The Village, in collaboration with Kenyon College, should work to ensure the proper infrastructure and safety measures are in place to support this natural inclination for walkability and other non-vehicular modes of travel.

## How to prioritize this strategy

Data on existing traffic counts from ODOT and pedestrian counts from the Village of Gambier can be utilized to further understand traffic patterns in and around the Village. This information, along with public feedback and best practices in streetscape design, should guide implementation of actions to improve multi-modal access.

The enhancement of internal crosswalks through signage, lighting, and/or infrastructure improvements should be used to create a safer and more walkable connection between Kenyon and the larger community, and in the Downtown. The intersections of SR-229 and Laymon Road / Wiggin Street and Duff Street present opportunities to strengthen crossings on the outskirts of Gambier at Village gateways.

Improved crossings should be complemented by related efforts to increase signage and wayfinding, create new pathways, and encourage alternative modes of transportation.

*\*You can view actions for all of the Mobility & Infrastructure Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 62).*



# SAFE, MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS

## Enhanced Crosswalks

Multi-modal connections can be strengthened by improving the safety and comfort of users at places of convergence between modes of travel.

HAWK (High-intensity Activated crossWalk) signals are an effective alternative to enhance crosswalks at locations with high volumes of pedestrian traffic. HAWK signals are activated by pedestrians / cyclists to alert motorists of their crossing. Priority locations for installation include Wiggin Street and SR-229. These are two locations which experience steady traffic from college students and higher travel speeds.

A HAWK signal at the base of the hill to safely direct pedestrians and cyclists across SR-229 may also assist in strengthening the connection between the Kokosing Gap Trail and Downtown Gambier.

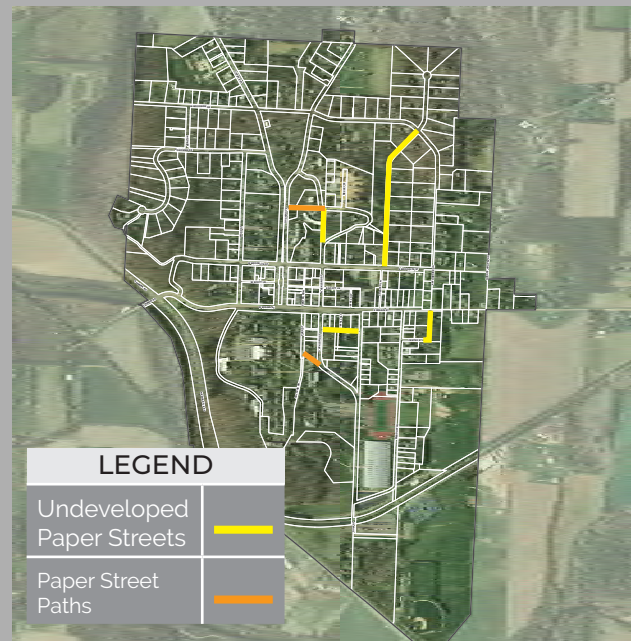


*HAWK signals are activated by pedestrians to increase motorists' awareness at crosswalks.*

## Paper Streets

Another option for Gambier to improve multi-modal connections in and around the Village are utilization of paper streets. A paper street is public right-of-way (ROW) which has been platted and therefore appears on the zoning map (hence, "on paper"), but was never paved. The Village of Gambier includes multiple paper streets throughout the community, including two segments on Kenyon College property which have been utilized for paths (see figure below).

Paper streets are logical options for trail connections because the Village already owns the property, eliminating the need to establish easements. Paper streets could be converted to walking or biking paths to improve Village connectivity and provide neighborhoods with additional recreation amenities.



*A paper street is a roadway that was platted and dedicated as right-of-way but not constructed.*



# PARKS & RECREATION

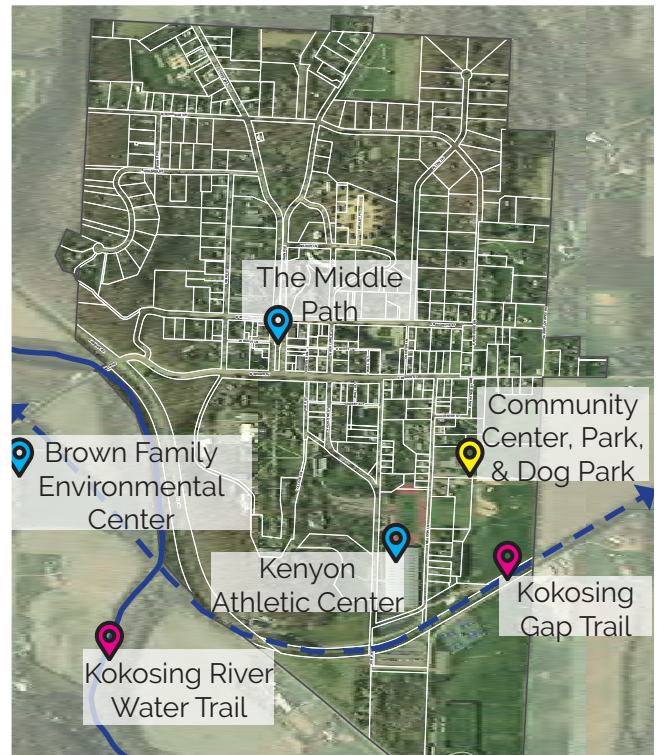
## The Big Picture

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. Industry professionals generally recommend park space be located within a 10-minute walk for all residents. The Village of Gambier features a variety of active and passive recreational assets throughout the community (Figure 17) as well as close proximity to those assets within the broader community of College Township. Strengthening connections between these assets and ensuring their protection and enhancement in the future will help Gambier strike a balance between healthy growth and development and conservation of environmental resources.

### Summary of Findings

- The Kokosing Gap Trail is a 14-mile paved path from Danville to Mount Vernon. The path, a former Pennsylvania Railroad line, is part of the Ohio to Erie Trail which traverses the state of Ohio.
- Community survey participants rated the quality of the Middle Path lower than existing parks and trails and expressed a desire for the Middle Path to be paved.
- Strengthening connections to the Kokosing Gap Trail was a common theme throughout engagement. Trail connectivity ranked as the third most popular improvement at both the July 4th Festival and the Party on the Patio.
- Trail-related activities have the highest participation rates of any outdoor recreation activity in the state of Ohio.
- Parks and recreation facilities are highly important to community members and there is an opportunity to expand amenities to better serve all ages year-round.

Figure 17. Parks and Recreation Amenities

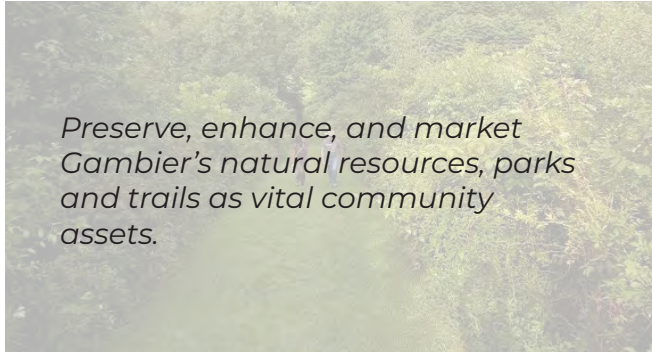


LEGEND	
Village property	
Kenyon College property	
Regional asset	

# GOAL STATEMENT

## PARKS & RECREATION

---



# STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY 1

---

Connect the Kokosing Gap Trail to Downtown Gambier.

### STRATEGY 2

---

Collaborate with local and regional partners to increase community events and programming in Gambier year-round.

### STRATEGY 3

---

Strengthen recreation amenities for a diverse age range.

### STRATEGY 4

---

Protect and enhance public and open spaces throughout the Village.



*The trailhead in Gambier features a retired locomotive and caboose.*



# PRIORITY STRATEGY

## STRATEGY

### CONNECT THE KOKOSING GAP TRAIL TO DOWNTOWN GAMBIER.



#### ACTION 1

Complete an engineering study to determine optimal route which will safely and comfortably reduce the impact of the grade change without disturbing environmentally sensitive areas.

#### ACTION 2

Package a range of regional, state, federal, and private funding sources to leverage local dollars for design and implementation costs.

#### ACTION 3

Install consistent signage and wayfinding to welcome trail users to Gambier and direct them to local destinations.

#### ACTION 4

Align efforts to connect the Kokosing Gap Trail and Downtown with gateway branding enhancements.

## Why prioritize this strategy?

Trails are highly popular community assets yielding recreational, economic, and environmental benefits. Nationally, one of the most popular activities among Americans is 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 the local community as well. Multiple activities during public engagement revealed trail connectivity as a popular priority for the community. The steering committee also identified the Kokosing Gap Trail as a community asset and a potential way to attract more visitors, and revenue, to the Village.

Creating a safe trail connection which reflects Gambier's image and brand may quite literally bridge the gap between regional trail users and Gambier's local attractions.

## How to prioritize this strategy

The actions provide guidance on a step-by-step process for creating the trail connection. Given the steep incline of W. Wiggin Street, a straight trail connection along the roadway may prove difficult or unsafe to the average traveler. A more scenic, gradual path from the Kokosing Gap Trail into Gambier would allow for greater flexibility in design and highlight Gambier's natural features. An enhanced crossing on SR-229 also offers a shorter-term and less costly alternative. Signage, wayfinding, and gateway elements should be treated as integral components of the selected connection in order to serve its mission of guiding and attracting visitors to Gambier.

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

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

\*You can view actions for all of the Parks & Recreation Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 64).

# FUNDING A REGIONAL CONNECTION

Benefits of a Kokosing Gap Trail connection include increased safety, enhanced connectivity between regional and local points of interest, extended opportunity for recreational tourism, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through promotion of alternative transportation modes, and increased support for local businesses.

The regional significance and vast benefits of the proposed trail connection expands the potential funding opportunities available for the project. The following sources may help offset and leverage local dollars.

- **The Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF)** is a state-funded reimbursement program which provides up to 75% project funding for eligible projects. Administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), COTF dollars may be used for acquisition, construction, and engineering and design of trail projects.
- **The Regional Trails Program (RTP)** is a federally-funded reimbursement program which provides up to 80% project funding for eligible projects. RTP is also administered by ODNR, but encompasses a wider range of eligible projects.

- **MORPC-attributable Funding for Transportation** is a regional process for allocation of federal transportation funding. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), of which Knox County is a member, selects eligible projects 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.
- **The State of Ohio's biennial 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.



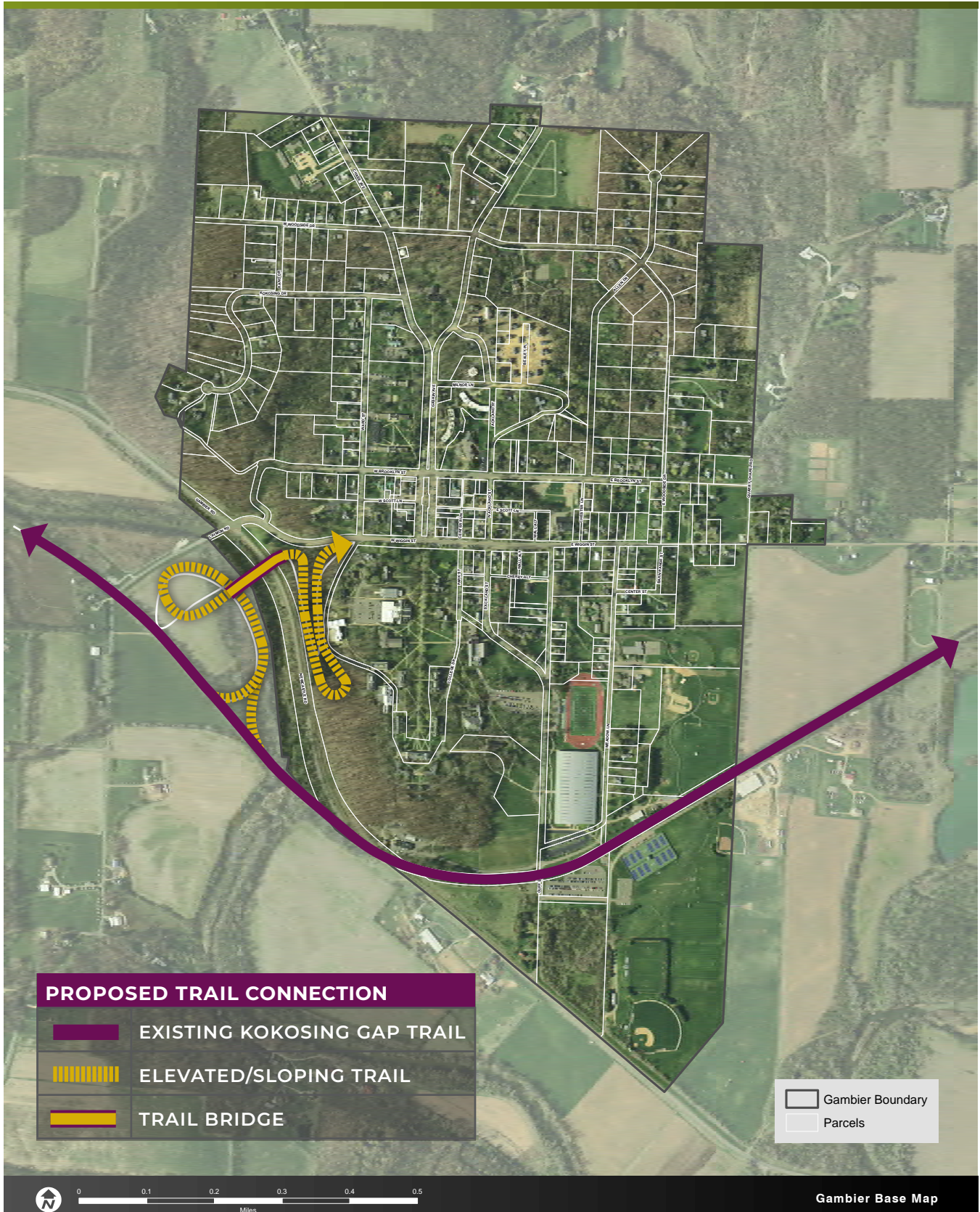
*The City of Athens utilized more than \$1.2 million in COTF and TAP funding for construction of a regional bikeway connection & pedestrian bridge.*



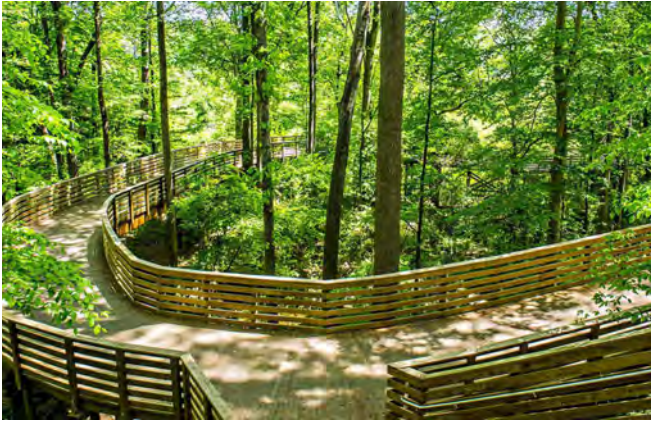
*The Raccoon Valley Park Bridge & Trail in Granville was awarded \$150,000 RTP dollars to help fund the project.*



Figure 18. Kokosing Gap Trail: Proposed Connection







The PATH Foundation of Atlanta is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit dedicated to developing a system of interlinking greenway trails for commuting and recreation. They often use elevated bikeways to mitigate slope, wildlife, and wetland concerns. Starting small in 1991, the group has since gathered wide public support with more than 90% of donations spent on trail building and improvements.



Recreational infrastructure can double as community signage and branding, calling attention to the trail asset as well as the existing downtown business core. Artistic installments along a trail can also induce more demand by attracting visitors of varying interests and abilities.



Signage on a trail can serve many purposes including maps of the area; directions to parking, bathrooms, and shelter houses; as well as habitat and species descriptions for the local flora and fauna. Signs come in varying sizes and materials but should be consistent along the trail for cohesiveness.



# 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 Gambier 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 Gambier, both in conjunction with and separate from, the identity of Kenyon College. The planning process also involved discussion on how the desired image can be marketed to enhance local quality of life and the attraction of businesses, tourism, or new residents.



*Community events may attract visitors from nearby communities such as Mount Vernon.*

## Summary of Findings

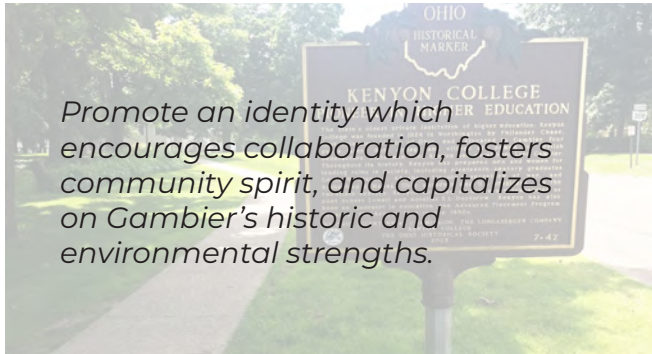
- The general public does not readily distinguish between physical improvements or development projects initiated by Kenyon College and those orchestrated by the Village.
- The Gambier community takes great pride in its historical, cultural, and recreational assets. These strengths should be projected to visitors and potential future residents.
- The Village of Gambier currently operates a website, but no social media accounts.
- The primary entrance to Gambier off SR-229 is marked by limited signage and wayfinding.



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

# GOAL STATEMENT

## COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND



# STRATEGIES

## STRATEGY 1

Promote recreational and cultural tourism.

## STRATEGY 2

Install a gateway feature to celebrate Gambier's identity and welcome visitors.

## STRATEGY 3

Increase opportunities for Kenyon students to engage with Village residents.

## STRATEGY 4

Create a Village marketing plan.



*Existing signage in and around Gambier, particularly at gateways, does not celebrate the local brand.*



# PRIORITY STRATEGY

## STRATEGY

### PROMOTE RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL TOURISM.



#### ACTION 1

Update zoning regulations to encourage lodging and temporary rentals in Gambier.

#### ACTION 2

Collaborate with Kenyon College and the Knox County Park District on opportunities to expand recreational classes to non-students.

#### ACTION 3

Amplify and enhance Gambier's digital marketing efforts.

#### ACTION 4

Assemble and leverage regional resources to secure additional grants and funding for parks and recreation improvements.

## Why prioritize this strategy?

Future growth of Knox County and stability of private higher education are not guaranteed. Attraction and marketing strategies will therefore continue to be important drivers in Gambier's local economy. The Village should also strengthen its distinctive identity separate from that of Kenyon College; though the two should act as partners in delivering a high quality of life for residents and students.

Capitalizing on Gambier's location on the Kokosing Gap Trail and nearby recreational attractions is an asset-driven approach to generating increased revenue and prominence. The Village is also positioned with several historically significant structures. Marketing of recreational and environmental strengths can be combined with celebration of its historical and cultural amenities to establish a holistic and uniquely Gambier image and brand.

## How to prioritize this strategy

The Village should work with regional partners, including the Knox County Visitors Bureau and other communities, to support increased investment in recreational tourism.

As demonstrated in the actions to the left, promotion of recreational tourism should involve improvements to the built environment, programming and events, and online content. The Village of Gambier should work with regional allies to combine resources, apply for grants and funding, and plan for long-term recreational capital investments.

*\*You can view actions for all of the Community Image & Brand Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 66).*

# ASSET-DRIVEN TOURISM

## Cullowhee, North Carolina

The rural town of Cullowhee, NC (pop. 5,753) credits its economic success to its asset-based approach of leveraging its natural recreation for business growth and tourism.

In an effort to address economic decline following the Great Recession, Cullowhee used creative partnership to invest in the community's recreational amenities to create a destination location.

Initiatives included a regional partnership among governments, private institutions, and community organizations which resulted in securing a \$1 million grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to start a program aimed at creating new outdoor businesses and expanding existing ones. At least 150 new jobs related to recreational tourism are anticipated to result from the efforts. Cullowhee also partnered extensively with the local institution of higher education to expand college degree programs in recreation and outdoor leadership and generate long-term training and support for the industry.



The local college in the rural town of Cullowhee expanded its internal marketing of outdoor recreation to include new community engagement and an Outdoor Economy Conference.

## Great Miami Riverway, Southwest Ohio

Closer to home, the Great Miami Riverway Coalition has united nineteen riverfront communities and several parks districts in a combined effort to increase recreational river use. The group began the Great Miami Riverway Placemaking Initiative to develop and implement marketing, planning, and programming of river-based activities and events.

The long-term goal of this organization is to boost economic development in the region utilizing the existing natural assets. In the last ten years, over \$500 million has been reinvested into riverfront properties, with a goal of reaching further into the \$43 billion tourism market in Ohio.

Gambier's location along the Kokosing Gap Trail and the Kokosing River provide the community with two recreational assets that draw visitors, and residents, to the area. Partnerships with Kenyon College and the Philander Chase Conservancy could help to elevate these amenities in the region as well as open more opportunities to expand connections to nearby communities.

**Water Trail Partners**  
All of the access point information is provided by the Miami Conservancy District and the following water trail partners. Please contact them for more information:

- Lucas County**  
Indian Lake State Park  
12750 Sun Road SW, N.  
Lakewood, Ohio 44130  
607-943-5717
- City of Sidney Parks**  
207 W. Maple Street  
Sidney, Ohio 44875  
937-536-7079  
www.cityofsidney.com
- Miami County Park District**  
2840 East State Route 41  
Silo, Ohio 43082  
Phone: 603-220-6272  
Fax: 603-220-6277  
www.miamicontyparkdist.com
- Blue River Watersheds**  
401 S. Main Street  
Canton, Ohio 44703  
330-270-7400 (330)740-1370  
www.bluewatersheds.org
- Madison County**  
2017 Columbus Road  
Harrison, Ohio 44633  
373-689-8895  
www.madisoncountyohio.net
- Great Falls of Hamilton County**  
10248 Whimper Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43221  
614-621-1076  
www.greatfalls.org

**Report Spills**  
Report spills (oil/chemical/fuels, etc.) while recreational users/paddlers  
24 hours a day at 1-800-282-6376

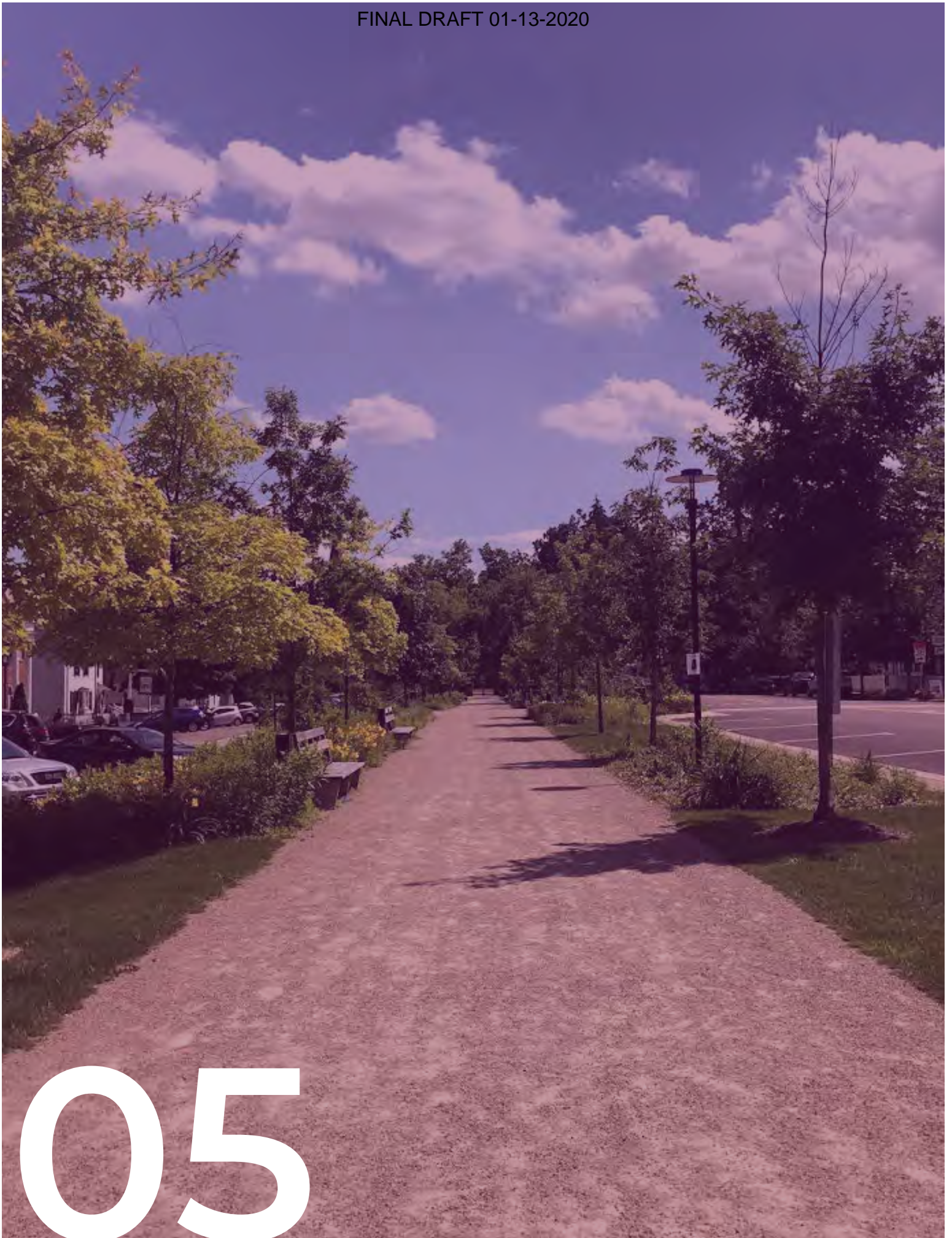
**Great Miami River Water Trail**  
ACCESS

**Great Miami Riverway**  
Map & Guide  
Web Edition

**MCD**  
MIAMI CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Brochures advertise the Great Miami Riverway while providing maps, river education, and safety tips to users of the regional asset.





05



The background is a solid purple color. It features several thin, white, curved lines that sweep across the page. Interspersed among these lines are several solid-colored dots in shades of gold and light grey. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

# IMPLEMENTATION

PUTTING THE PLAN TO ACTION

## Funding the Plan

The Knox County Foundation (KCF), in partnership with the Knox County Area Development Foundation (ADF), is investing a significant portion of its grant funding to proactively solicit this Strategic Plan and create a vision for the future. 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.

Funding has been set aside by the Knox County Foundation to implement the strategies of this Plan; however, it is likely that additional funding may be needed to see all strategies come to fruition. The Village of Gambier 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 KDF / ADF may be applied to secure initial engineering and design for improvements, a grant writing professional, or property / capital acquisition for catalyst projects.

## 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 (CLG) 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



*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.*

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



*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.*

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.

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 state and 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



**IMPLEMENTATION | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

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 the amount among multiple recipients. Examples of eligible projects include land acquisition, picnic/camping and support facilities, swimming and boating facilities, outdoor games and 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)*



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

**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>*

**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 matrix also provides insight to the responsible parties, projected timeline, and potential funding sources for each action. These recommendations should not be treated rigidly, but may adapt to accommodate future needs and circumstances within Gambier.

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
H	High Priority
M	Medium Priority
L	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

**Support a vibrant mix of institutional and Village-serving land uses which respect environmental restraints, promote a high quality of life, and plan for long-term growth.**

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
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**Priority Strategy: Update Gambier’s zoning code to reflect the Village’s development goals and future growth.**

<b>A1.1</b> Collaborate with College Township on parcels appropriate for annexation(s), if any.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.2</b> Investigate potential future merger with College Township.	M	0-3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> <li>• College Twp.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> </ul>
<b>A1.3</b> Work with regional partners to identify potential joint economic development district (JEDD) opportunities.	M	0-2 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Update zoning code to account for annexation procedures to expedite and streamline growth.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>A1.5</b> Update zoning map to reflect recent and/or future annexations.	H	0-1 yrs		

**Strategy 2: Transform underutilized properties.**

<b>A2.1</b> Modernize and relocate Village facilities.	H	1-3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• College Twp.</li> <li>• Kenyon College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan &amp; Grant Program</li> <li>• Certified Local Governments Grant</li> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• Knox County Commissioners</li> <li>• Historic Preservation Tax Credits</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Promote development of high-quality multi-family housing.	H	1-5 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Coordinate with College Township to relocate fire services and convert the existing building to commercial or mixed use, if economically viable.	H	1-3 yrs		
<b>A2.4</b> Promote adaptive reuse of underutilized historic buildings into offices or residential through strategic renovation; most notably Wiggin Street Elementary School.	H	Ong.		



	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Support attraction, retention, and expansion of small businesses.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Permit temporary retail and dining establishments.	M	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• College Twp.</li> <li>• One Columbus / JobsOhio</li> <li>• Knox County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• One Columbus / JobsOhio</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Increase the supply of small-scale office space through infill redevelopment.	H	0-3 yrs		
<b>A3.3</b> Prioritize and incentivize attraction of firms in the recreation and entertainment industries.	M	Ong.		
<b>A3.4</b> Support local businesses, in Gambier and elsewhere in Knox County, in collaborating with one another, as well as Mount Vernon and Knox County economic development agencies.	H	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 4: Collaborate with local partners to identify parcels positioned for acquisition and/or redevelopment.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Develop a strategy with Mount Vernon City School District to retain the historic Wiggins Street Elementary School building while also providing an upgraded elementary school facility in the community.	H	1-5 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Mount Vernon City Schools</li> <li>• Kenyon College</li> <li>• College Twp.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• State Capital Budget</li> <li>• Knox County Commissioners</li> <li>• Certified Local Governments Grant</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Expand coordination with Kenyon College on redevelopment of faculty/staff housing.	H	Ong.		
<b>A4.3</b> Collaborate with College Township on consolidation and redevelopment of public facilities including fire service stations, fleet storage, and water and sewer facilities.	H	1-3 yrs		

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

**Preserve existing neighborhoods while increasing opportunities for diverse housing options within the Village and conservation development on future residential land.**

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Increase and diversify the housing stock.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Update the zoning code to permit residential uses beyond single-family.	H	0-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> <li>• College Township</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Identify vacant, or otherwise developable parcels appropriate for medium-density residential development.	M	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.3</b> Ensure zoning regulations support development of any potential annexed land to clustered or conservation development patterns.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Coordinate with nearby jurisdictions and regional partners to develop marketing materials for potential residential development.	H	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 2: Identify outlying land in adjacent townships appropriate for future residential development.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Partner with the Knox County Auditor to inventory and map ownership of developable parcels.	H	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• College Township</li> <li>• Knox County Auditor</li> <li>• ADF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Prioritize development which utilizes existing water, sewer, and physical infrastructure.	H	Ong.		
<b>A2.3</b> Review discrepancies between the Future Land Use Map and College Township Zoning Code.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A2.34</b> Promote residential development that meets market demands, supports smart growth, and continues the region's sense of character.	H	Ong.		

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Create a strategy for addressing short-term rental properties.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Conduct a study to determine the scope of existing short-term rental properties in Gambier.	M	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Review regulation options utilized across the country including neighborhood quotas, rental period limitations, registration requirements, or hotel classification.	M	0-1 yrs		
<b>A3.3</b> In conjunction with the Knox County Convention & Visitors Bureau, evaluate the cost of administration compared to the benefit of bed tax revenue for short-term rentals.	M	0-1 yrs		
<b>Strategy 4: Preserve the historic and natural beauty of residential neighborhoods.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Maintain open and green space requirements in residential development.	H	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Ensure the zoning code permits sustainable living including community gardens, composting, and green energy improvements.	M	0-2 yrs		
<b>A4.3</b> Create a revolving loan fund to support home improvement projects; particularly for aging residents and historic homes.	H	0-1 yrs		



# MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

**Strengthen the built environment to safely and efficiently move people, goods, and services within the Village and to regional destinations.**

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Improve multi-modal access to, from, and within the Village.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Create a crosswalk, or ODOT approved safe crossing, on SR-229 for non-vehicular travel from Wiggin Street to Laymon Road.	H	1-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Kenyon College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• MORPC Attributable Funds</li> <li>• Safe Routes to School Grant</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> <li>• ODNR Recreation Grants</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Identify strategic locations for public parking adjacent to Downtown in order to encourage limited vehicular traffic in the center of Gambier.	L	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.3</b> Promote pedestrian safety at the intersection of the Middle Path and Wiggin Street through signage and roadway/crosswalk enhancements.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Ensure that publicly-traversed roads and paths are handicap accessible.	M	Ong.		
<b>A1.5</b> Encourage and incentivize new mobility options such as smart technology and ride-share platforms (i.e. bikeshare, electric scooters, etc.).	M	Ong.		
<b>A1.6</b> Utilize "paper streets" (public right-of-way that has been platted and mapped but never paved) as neighborhood amenities for biking and walking.	H	2-3 yrs		
<b>A1.7</b> Explore implementation of a crossing at Duff Street and SR-229.	M	1-2 yrs		

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 2: Increase connectivity to regional communities and attractions.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Create a safe, attractive connection between the Kokosing Gap Trail and Downtown Gambier for cyclists and pedestrians.	H	2-4 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Market Gambier businesses and events to all communities the Kokosing Gap Trail and connected trails intersect.	H	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Park District</li> <li>• Knox Area Transit</li> </ul>	
<b>A2.3</b> Collaborate with Knox Area Transit (KAT) to expand public transit options for Gambier residents.	M	1-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategy 3: Prepare Village services and utilities for future growth.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Determine any limitations of future development based on utility capacities.	H	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Evaluate College Township's fire and emergency services facilities, functionality, and funding for maintenance of services and potential expansion or upgrades as population increases.	H	1-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> <li>• College Twp.</li> </ul>	

# PARKS & RECREATION

**Preserve, enhance, and market Gambier’s natural resources, parks, and trails as vital community assets.**

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Connect the Kokosing Gap Trail to Downtown Gambier.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Complete an engineering study to determine optimal route which will safely and comfortably reduce the impact of the grade change without disturbing environmentally sensitive areas.	H	0-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Park District</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> <li>• ODNR Recreation Grants</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage Tourism Grant</li> <li>• MORPC Attributable Funds</li> <li>• State Capital Budget</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Package a range of regional, state, federal, and private funding sources to leverage local dollars for design and implementation costs.	H	2-3 yrs		
<b>A1.3</b> Install consistent signage and wayfinding to welcome trail users to Gambier and direct them to local destinations.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Align efforts to connect the Kokosing Gap Trail and Downtown with gateway branding enhancements.	H	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 2: Collaborate with local and regional partners to increase community events and programming in Gambier year-round.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Invest in signage to strengthen the connection between Gambier and the Kokosing Gap Trail and Kokosing River.	H	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Kenyon College</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Explore opportunities to align Kenyon courses and/or internship opportunities with regional recreation tourism efforts.	M	1-2 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Provide incubator and entrepreneurial support for new and emerging businesses.	M	0-2 yrs		
<b>A2.4</b> Implement cross-communication and promotion of Knox County community events.	H	Ong.		



	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Strengthen recreation amenities for a diverse age range.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Ensure sidewalks and/or bike sharrows connect residential neighborhoods to all park facilities.	H	1-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Kenyon College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• ODNR NatureWorks Grant</li> <li>• ODNR Recreation Grants</li> </ul>
<b>A3.2</b> Pursue funding for additional playground equipment.	M	1-2 yrs		
<b>A3.3</b> Partner with Kenyon College to expand education and awareness around shared public services (ex: new College library will be open to the public).	M	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 4: Protect and enhance public and open spaces throughout the Village.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> As the Village continues to grow, ensure adequate public greenspace is required in new developments.	H	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Pave multi-use paths in public right-of-way where sidewalks are not existent (ie. paper streets) to increase multi-modal connectivity.	H	2-3 yrs		
<b>A4.3</b> Determine priority areas for increased pedestrian-scaled lighting to promote safety and usability of sidewalks, parks, and trails.	M	0-1 yrs		

# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

**Promote an identity which encourages collaboration, fosters community spirit, and capitalizes on Gambier’s historic and environmental strengths.**

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Priority Strategy: Promote recreational and cultural tourism.</b>				
<b>A1.1</b> Update zoning regulations to encourage lodging and temporary rentals in Gambier.	H	0-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> <li>• Knox County Park District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage Tourism Grant</li> </ul>
<b>A1.2</b> Collaborate with Kenyon College and the Knox County Park District on opportunities to expand recreational classes to non-students.	M	0-2 yrs		
<b>A1.3</b> Amplify and enhance Gambier's digital marketing efforts.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>A1.4</b> Assemble and leverage regional resources to secure additional grants and funding for parks and recreation improvements.	H	1-3 yrs		
<b>Strategy 2: Install a gateway feature to celebrate Gambier’s identity and welcome visitors.</b>				
<b>A2.1</b> Conduct a public charatte to brainstorm design ideas.	M	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage Tourism Grant</li> <li>• National Endowment for the Arts' creative placemaking grants</li> </ul>
<b>A2.2</b> Complete plan preparation for funding applications.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>A2.3</b> Identify local artists and makers to be employed in the project.	M	0-1 yrs		
<b>A2.4</b> Create a long-term strategy for maintenance.	H	Ong.		

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
<b>Strategy 3: Increase opportunities for Kenyon students to engage with Village residents.</b>				
<b>A3.1</b> Expand existing programs around service-learning and student volunteerism; and continue hiring Village interns.	H	0-2 yrs		
<b>A3.2</b> Facilitate discussion between the Village and College faculty to brainstorm studio courses and research assignments relevant to community needs.	M	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• Kenyon College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> <li>• KCF</li> </ul>
<b>A3.3</b> Encourage co-mingling of residents and students through community events such as 5Ks, park clean-ups, parades, etc.	H	Ong.		
<b>Strategy 4: Create a Village marketing plan.</b>				
<b>A4.1</b> Expand and enhance Gambier's social media and web presence.	H	0-1 yrs		
<b>A4.2</b> Create a signage and wayfinding family consistent with the community brand.	H	1-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Gambier</li> </ul>
<b>A4.3</b> Ensure cohesion in branding across media platforms.	H	Ong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Knox County Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</li> </ul>
<b>A4.4</b> Create a marketing strategy to reach local, county, and regional visitors with news and events.	H	1-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kenyon College</li> </ul>	
<b>A4.5</b> Hire a communications intern through Kenyon College to assist with marketing efforts.	M	0-1 yrs		





# APPENDIX

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

# APPENDIX

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The following pages provide the complete raw results of the Gambier Village Strategic Plan Community Survey as summarized in the Public Engagement Chapter. An overview of the 523 survey respondents is shown first, followed by multiple choice questions then open-ended responses.

### Survey Participants

**Q: Do you live in the Village of Gambier?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I live in Gambier Village limits	58.13%	304
No, I live elsewhere	41.87%	219
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>523</b>

**Q: Do you work in the Village of Gambier?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I work in Gambier	58.81%	307
I don't work	23.95%	125
I'm Retired	8.24%	43
No, I work elsewhere	9.00%	47
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>522</b>

**Q: Are you affiliated with Kenyon College?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I am a student	43.76%	228
Yes, I am a member of the faculty, staff, and/or Board	40.50%	211
Yes, I am an alumnus	10.36%	54
No, I am not affiliated with the College	11.71%	61
<b>Total Respondents: 521</b>		

**Q: How would you describe your gender?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	34.10%	178
Female	58.81%	307
Non-binary / third gender	1.92%	10
Prefer not to say	5.17%	27
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>522</b>

**Q: How would you describe your household type? (select all that apply)**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live alone	24.28%	126
I live with children (under the age of 18)	18.88%	98
I live without children (under the age of 18)	4.62%	24
I live with my spouse / partner	37.57%	195
I live with at least one family member	12.14%	63
None of these apply to me	19.65%	102
<b>Total Respondents: 519</b>		

**Q: What is your age?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	1.15%	6
18-24	43.68%	228
25-34	8.62%	45
35-44	10.92%	57
45-54	10.15%	53
55-64	11.11%	58
65-74	7.85%	41
75+	3.07%	16
Prefer not to say	3.45%	18
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>522</b>

**Q: Do you rent or own?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I rent	27.33%	141
I own	51.16%	264
Prefer not to say	21.51%	111
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>516</b>



## Multiple Choice Responses

**Q: What is your favorite thing about Gambier?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Rural / natural atmosphere	35.37%	185
Historical character	10.13%	53
Parks and recreation	2.49%	13
Community events	2.49%	13
The public services (i.e. Fire, Police, Utilities)	0.57%	3
Kenyon College	40.92%	214
Location	3.06%	16
Other (please specify)	4.97%	26
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>523</b>

**Q: Is your preferred housing type available in Gambier?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.47%	280
No	21.98%	113
I don't know	23.54%	121
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>514</b>

**Q: Which housing type is appropriate for future residential (re)development in Gambier? (select all that apply)**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Courtyard apartments	48.50%	242
Townhomes	40.08%	200
Medium density mixed-use	26.45%	132
Carriage house / In-law suite	34.07%	170
Small lot single-family	60.92%	304
Medium density multi-family	19.04%	95
Total Respondents: 499		

**Q: Which housing issue do you think will be the most pressing for Gambier to address in the next ten years?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Maintaining older housing	19.10%	98
Affordability	23.98%	123
Providing workforce housing for Kenyon College	23.78%	122
Providing high-quality rental options	12.28%	63
Providing opportunities for aging residents to stay	14.42%	74
Other (please specify)	6.43%	33
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>513</b>

**Q: What do you think is the most important development priority for Gambier to focus on over the next ten years?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Attract, grow, and retain small businesses	35.65%	185
Outward growth through annexation or joint agreements with neighboring Townships	2.89%	15
Increase manufacturing / light industrial sites	0.39%	2
Increase housing options	17.34%	90
Preserve environmentally sensitive areas	23.70%	123
Promote the desired community character through zoning or development guidelines	17.34%	90
Increase office sites	0.39%	2
Other (please specify)	2.31%	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>519</b>

**Q: How often do you visit Downtown, Gambier?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
At least once a week	87.33%	455
A few times a month	8.64%	45
A few times a year	3.45%	18
I never visit Downtown	0.58%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>521</b>

**Q: Which three improvements do you think are the most important for the future of Downtown? (select your top 3)**

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More restaurants and shops	81.45%	426
Entertainment options	49.90%	261
Multi-modal amenities	27.15%	142
Signage and wayfinding	18.16%	95
More residential options	45.89%	240
More community events	77.44%	405
Total Respondents: 523		

Q: How would you rate the following:

The quality of existing parks in Gambier?

WEIGHTED AVERAGE				
3.78				
POOR QUALITY	(NO LABEL)	AVERAGE	(NO LABEL)	EXCELLENT QUALITY
1.54%	3.86%	33.59%	37.45%	23.55%
8	20	174	194	122

The quality of the Middle Path?

WEIGHTED AVERAGE				
3.02				
POOR QUALITY	(NO LABEL)	AVERAGE	(NO LABEL)	EXCELLENT QUALITY
15.80%	18.50%	26.59%	26.59%	12.52%
82	96	138	138	65

The quality of existing trails in Gambier?

WEIGHTED AVERAGE				
4.14				
POOR QUALITY	(NO LABEL)	AVERAGE	(NO LABEL)	EXCELLENT QUALITY
0.58%	2.14%	15.73%	45.83%	35.73%
3	11	81	236	184

Q: How would you rate the following:

The importance of parks and open space for the future of Gambier?

WEIGHTED AVERAGE				
4.50				
NOT IMPORTANT	(NO LABEL)	AVERAGE	(NO LABEL)	VERY IMPORTANT
0.57%	1.53%	10.15%	22.80%	64.94%
3	8	53	119	339

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

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sports fields	7.13%	37
Nature trails	42.00%	218
Passive parks (open, un-programmed space)	42.97%	223
Community garden	47.98%	249
Programmed community space	56.07%	291
Playgrounds	21.77%	113
Water activities (ex: canoeing, kayaking, etc.)	38.15%	198
Multi-use paths	35.45%	184
Pocket parks	21.97%	114
Other (please specify)	6.36%	33

Q: What do you think is the most important priority for Gambier to focus on over the next ten years regarding its parks, trails, and open space?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Promote recreational tourism	10.08%	52
Require new development to include green space	24.22%	125
Increase access and activities on Kokosing River	26.16%	135
Increase activities and events for residents	22.09%	114
Connecting to nearby communities	13.18%	68
Other (please specify)	4.26%	22
TOTAL		516

Q: What is the greatest challenge related to infrastructure and Village services currently in Gambier?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Road maintenance	13.82%	68
Quality of, or access to, utilities	21.34%	105
Village fiscal operations / taxes	6.71%	33
Traffic	15.45%	76
Planning and Zoning services	15.45%	76
Public Safety services	5.69%	28
Maintenance of public properties	8.54%	42
Other (please specify)	13.01%	64
TOTAL		492

**Q: What do you think will be the greatest challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in the future?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Road maintenance	7.51%	37
Quality of, or access to, utilities	18.05%	89
Village fiscal operations / taxes	9.74%	48
Traffic	14.60%	72
Planning and Zoning services	22.92%	113
Public Safety services	4.26%	21
Maintenance of public properties	15.82%	78
Other (please specify)	7.10%	35
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>493</b>



## Open-ended Responses

Q: What is your least favorite thing about Gambier?

RESPONSES
cold
Location
Village market doesn't have the best prices of food
Not enough student/community interaction
Nothing
The new white buildings on Chase Ave.
All the cars/traffic when students are in residence
Middle Path
Few options for food
All of the new buildings ar white.
that the post office does not deliver mail
I sense that some Gambier residents are not fond of the College. I would like to think this is a symbiotic relationship to some extent and we should all work to foster positive interaction and perceptions as much as possible.
Beauty, walking village, convenience
Lack of parking and lack of late night food options
Nothing.
Lack of good restaurants/shopping within 15 minute drive
College/big business runs most of Gambier, and continues to buy property with their tax exemptions.
It seems to have been taken over my graham gund and is being made to look like new england and not ohio
No grocery store
The intersection between 229 and 308
parking and ticketing system. I know you can't tell a student from staff/residents but ticketing isn't handled well.
Isolation from other cities
Too much 'college' in the village. It's as if the oxygen in the room is always in danger of being sucked out by the college.
I have no specific complaints.
Lack of variety and amenities.
All the stores are closed by midnight
People who don't walk their dogs on leashes

RESPONSES
308/229 crossing area
nothing
Middle Path
I just arrived on campus, so so far I do not have a least favorite thing!
Too much congestion for a small village. Too much parking in the village, especially now with the angled parking on Gaskin. It really isn't very pedestrian friendly. The crossings at Brooklyn/Gaskin/Chase are difficult for pedestrians and the one way part of Gaskin signage is hazardous. Many drivers and cyclists run through the stop signs. Cyclists sometimes ride in the wrong direction.
It is an island in Knox county in terms of diversity and openness.
the change in the new Kenyon architecture/design by singular entity that does not blend with the old
Not accessible for people with disabilities.
The impact that climate change is having on it through the severity of the storms it is experiencing.
It's hard to get to Columbus from Gambier if you don't have a car.
Isolated and very few activities for students. Lack of restaurants.
Seems like some stores change their hours on a whim/ have odd hours. (Ex. Deli close Sun&Mon)
Student culture at Kenyon
The relationship between Knox County Policy and students of color
none
The endless construction at Kenyon.
not lively enough
Traffic pattern
off campus housing.
There is not a lot to do recreationally.
Streets without proper crossing signage.
Lack of eating establishments
Lack of industrialized activities
Lack of retail, food, and activity options.

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RESPONSES
There is are so few food options
Transportation
Poor long term parking and shared P.O. boxes
Students thinking they own the streets. Having to pay Gambier tax. Housing prices
No grocery store
The Middle Path gets really nasty when it's rainy or snowy.
Lack of public transport
The loud noises brought by the library construction. Progress is progress though.
We could use a Thai restaurant, or something more interesting than ANOTHER Mexican restaurant.
Limited living amenities (such as parking, laundry, dining, etc) and limited public recreational spots (parks)
allergies
lack of dining/shopping nightlife options
Lack of entertainment for younger demographic
nothing--I love gambier!
Lack of sidewalks
I wish we had more sidewalks, and I wish that the new Middle Path were in better shape, especially north of the village where it continues to erode and get rutted (though I recognize that's Kenyon, not the village). Our walkability is one of our best characteristics, I think, and the sidewalks that have been added in the past few years have helped me feel much safer when I move around the village.
The uniform appearance of many of the newer buildings.
I have none
I would like if there were a Bank of America or another big bank
No Gas Station
Food choices
Not enough retail...
Power outages and boil advisories
The isolation
It's hard to get to
The gravel path
If I were to give something here, it would be how few shops and restaurants are around... However as an incoming freshman at Kenyon I can't really say much.
Distance from stores and places I would typically go

RESPONSES
Lack of access to commercial facilities
The continuous cycle of construction. Granted, most of that is from the College. Middle path not be fully paved.
That downtown seems to be losing some character
Lack of diversity of restaurants in the region. Lack of families with kids. (And yes I know that's two things.)
Everything there is too expensive.
Parking
Too much truck traffic
Access to affordable housing for all
Limited businesses "downtown" (restaurants, bars, etc.) and limited housing options.
No traffic light at 308 and 229
That there's only one coffee shop
Lack of amenities. It's like living in grapes of wrath where there's only a company store.
Isolation / lack of resources
The disconnect from the college and the actual town
price gouging at the market
Available parking for more than 2 hours
Available parking for more than 2 hours
Lack of restaurants and community space
Branding and limited commercial options
Wish there was a little more options for grab'n go food available in the town.
The weather
Lack of restaurants
Accessibility is limited for our students and professors who need accommodations.
Although this falls on the college, the surface of Middle Path. Worse now than ever.
Ivory tower mentality
Middle of nowhere
upkeep of gravel paths, i. e. ice and mud
Too small. A few more stores and/or food places would be nice.
Gravel middle path
It's size
Parking at Wiggin Street Elementary School

PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
The phone calls I get from the Village about collecting yard waste etc. I'm sure it's hard to segment out, but I'm a Kenyon employee and don't live here, and even if I ignore the call, they leave me a voicemail I then have to delete.
The size
The water infrastructure
No movie theater
How hard it is to get to.
there aren't very many places to go in town!
Amenities (dining options)
Lack of regard for foot traffic rules in the village (village vs campus)
Isolation
No Halal or Indian Restaurants. Few parks.
There always seems to be a lot of construction lately
No affordable grocery store
No affordable grocery store
construction mess
The slant-wise parking downtown, and occasional parking congestion generally.
Any attempt to distinguish it from Kenyon. They are one and the same.
Isolation from certain major city amenities
the lack of street cleaning in the warm months and snow removal in the cold months
Unsure
Frequent and heavy power outages
odd mix of college buildings and the town
Lack of diversity, beyond Kenyon College, in the "downtown" as to diverse vendors, purveyors, merchants, etc.
Lack of widespread public transportation
Limited dining options, no late night options
Not enough stores
College students can be very disrespectful
Lack of parking
Affordable housing.
Isolation. Surrounded by a community that supports guns and opposes women's rights.
I'm not sure that I have one. I think Gambier is pretty cool the way it is.

RESPONSES
Grass clippings on sidewalks
Not walkable--
The lack of dining variety.
Cars ... too many, too fast.
Unsure
Lack of private business
Those residents who automatically oppose any change within the village or on the Kenyon campus.
Gambier is losing its residentiality & vibrancy. The streets seem a bit desolate at times.
Lack of services
There's nothing to do, not enough stores, restaurants, or events
The current level of engagement with the wider local community is underwhelming
The lack of lights for athletic fields
NIMBY attitude
Style of new downtown construction. A lost opportunity to do something attractive and in line with historical heritage. Currently, this could be any bland development.
Lack of available childcare for workers in the village.
It needs a couple more necessities, such as a pharmacy, a larger grocery store, or a retail clothing store.
Lack of basic retail, and professional services
It's a little bit too small which leads to some boredom
Lack of clarity at the main intersection crosswalks.
Traffic back up by cross walks when students are in session at Kenyon College.
Expensive groceries and inconsistent public transportation
The lack of small businesses and choice of different restaurants/stores.
Limited parking for Wiggin Street Elementary
Would be nice if it were closer to Columbus.
Lack of options for anything to be purchased
I wish everything were not owned by Kenyon College. While Kenyon may (or may not be) a good employer, it is problematic for the school to have such a monopoly over the entire village.
Lack of things to do/places to eat
There aren't a lot of places to eat and drink out



RESPONSES
Jim Lenthe-he has been to jail, has a probation officer and won't leave people alone
Jim E. Lenthe
the Lenthe family-they are a menace to many members of the community
The lack of easy access to the interstate
Lenthe Family
on-going construction
The bike trail is at the bottom of the hill.
Parking is difficult
Over development
construction
Loss of open space, breathing room; attempt to create "New England" appearance with new construction
Parking
It's very annoying not to have mail delivery especially when I'm expecting a package. Also the garbage service has been a bit spotty recently.
Lack of resources (mental/physical health, groceries, entertainment, etc)
The lack of available parking.
Littering, Broken glass, trash around dorms, fraternity properties
Lack of racial diversity
lack of affordable housing
Jim Lenthe
Students walking in the road
The architecture with CHARACTER.
Lack of events and shops
Not enough residential housing, especially for those who are older/retired.
The new surface of Middle Path, moving the Market to less accessible parking, losing the cut through for driving east to west or vice versa
It would be nice if Chilitos opened soon.
Lack of non-college owned businesses
Some buildings, roads and other planning decisions (especially outside the main "downtown") don't fit as well with quaint and historic character of Gambier.
I did live in Gambier for a short time, and found some in the community to be cliquish and unwelcoming.
Lack of shops

RESPONSES
Lack of parking
lack of wayfinding signage, difficult to get around or tell people where to go.
Lack of sidewalks on some side streets (Kokosing, West Woodside, Ward)
There's a lot of construction, no bars/clubs, very few restaurants
There isn't much in the way of apparel nearby. One has to drive to Columbus to buy nice clothes.
It is hard to get to columbus on public transport
Neither the bookstore nor the market sell pregnancy tests. Least favorite thing might be a stretch, but I think this is a HUGE oversight.
lack of resources
Lack of transportation options to offset the isolation that results from its rural setting.
Restrictions placed on Wiggin Street Elementary student drop off /pick up access. (Signage).
The fact that students do not respect the traffic and parking laws. The walk in the middle of the road, drive bikes the wrong way down one way streets and park vehicles in 2 hour parking for extended periods of time with no tickets.
Not much to do
Lack of stores/ other facilities
That the Village folks get upset with Kenyon College. There is no Gambier without the college, the students, employees - the taxes paid!
the disconnect in the architecture between the academic buildings and the 'downtown' area
The relative lack of public transportation options
Lack of food options
Lack of amenities and resources in the downtown area, the hazardous nature of Middle Path, and lack of parking
Parking
Not enough businesses/restaurants etc
little amount of food options
The tendency of college associates to think they live in Kenyon, not Gambier--to not see the community as a village rather than as a college campus. To not compute the effects of college actions on the community as a whole.
Lack of multiple dining options (I always thought the best thing would be to have a good take-out Chinese restaurant)

PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
The anti-LGBTQ+ protesters that occasionally come onto campus.
Too much construction and traffic
traffic
I wanted to live in Gambier, but the housing prices were too high in the village. Gambier was inaccessible. Building more housing or raising land value taxes (to disincentive people who own houses or land but don't actually live there) would certainly help. We decided to live in Mount Vernon, because we could afford it, but also because we wanted to be a part of a community, and we didn't want to have to drive everywhere we go. Getting around Mount Vernon on foot or by bike is very easy, and the Kokosing Gap Trail helps to connect Mount Vernon and Gambier. Indeed, my wife regularly rides her bike to work in Gambier and I regularly ride there to go to the KAC, other Kenyon events, or to visit with friends. There should be more connections like the KGT around the county along with other non-car transportation connections. Overall, folks in Knox County should not have to pay several hundred dollars per month for car just to get around.
the cultureless all-white buildings. I wish more buildings looked like Pierce, Ascension, Bexley. With some character. Also, its super isolated from the rest of Mt. Vernon which can facilitate in -group / out-group pretentiousness, and probably anxiety about isolatedness.
the misconception that Gambier and Kenyon are identical, and that the needs of the two overlap 100%
Parking
The speed with which people drive through town/ careless driving in high-traffic pedestrian areas.
Small amount of food options and local business
Lack of parking
The preparation for the ice build-up on the roads and especially the sidewalks/Middle Path seems insufficient. It is incredibly difficult to walk where we need to walk during the winter, and it is unsafe often times. Slipping comes way too easily as it stands, and many students and I'm sure others have suffered from minor injuries and even concussions.
Lack of parking
None! Great place to go to college :)
Not enough restaurants nor places for entertainment purposes.
There is no good condo-type housing for retirees who want to remain in Gambier but can't handle single-family home upkeep.
One way streets not enforced

RESPONSES
The downtown area now looks like a town on Cape Cod. We're in Ohio
The construction
Sheriff deputies hanging out on 308.
Seeing green space being replaced and buildings getting higher. It's a village, not a city.
Lenthe
lack of a large grocery store / supermarket. I don't want a walmart / Kroger in gambier, but the market is a bit limited and it would be nice to not have to drive into town for certain things as car access can sometimes be hard especially in the winter
The principal of Wiggin Street School.
Pedestrian traffic
No sidewalk on Gaskin Avenue.
Insufficient retail
The Sheriff
The Sheriff
distance from Columbus
Construction. The new village looks like the suburbs
none
It could use more retail establishments
Lack of food establishments
The way it has become so monotonous. All the interesting buildings are being replaced by boring, white, new construction that all looks the same and completely lacks character.
Challenge with pedestrian cross walks and concerned when students or visitors don't pay attention or are on their phones.
There isn't much there in terms of non-Kenyon businesses and restaurants
Parking for events
lack of things to do in general
Construction
The shops up charge significantly for convenience. It is more financially responsible for me to go to Walmart or one of the shops in Mount Vernon.
lack of diversity
Construction
Not much parking. I wish there were more restaurants.
That the village doesn't offer much shopping or restaurants.

RESPONSES
Its rural location
How the roads are treated in the winter. Seems that our road - New Gambier Road never gets salt
Dearth of dining options
Walkability is not the best in certain weather conditions (icy, rainy with puddles, etc.).
Ice maintenance on sidewalks
The lack of easy public transport and access to food and shopping!
lack of street lights
Parking can be difficult.
Gund having the ability to make proposals/decisions about the college that affect the community (i.e. proposed parking lot in ravine between Ward and Kokosing).
Lack of activities not affiliated with Kenyon
All of the construction, how hard it is to get to Columbus
The aging infrastructure
lack of restaurants. limited parking.
On a purely personal level it's hard to see it change from my time there, but I recognize it does need to.
Students driving/parking in village.
Lack of sidewalks throughout the whole village, Kenyon students walking in front of cars even outside of crosswalks, and difficulty parking in village proper during daytime hours.
not enough diversions (restaurants, shops) outside of College events
parking
Lack of crosswalk visibility. Especially those at Village street and State Routes at night.
Not enough food options
Construction
Isolation
water bills
The fact that there is always construction going on.
Lack of understanding Kenyon can't live without Gambier and Gambier can't live without Kenyon.
the construction
finding parking
The Village Council
Lack of businesses such as a pharmacy, hair stylist women feel comfortable going to alone, etc. Also the unreliability of the KAT keeping to its schedule

RESPONSES
The intersection at 229 and 308. I realize that this is technically outside of the Village, but it impacts many people who walk and drive to/from Gambier.
All of the new buildings downtown are white and look like they're straight out of New Albany.
Very little program for local children (outside the BFEC). We specifically bought our house to be zoned for Wiggin and there's little family-focused events in Gambier proper
Parochial mindset of many of its residents
The students
Nothing!
Wish there were a few more amenities and restaurants for gathering and coming to Gambier
middle path-- not the path itself, but the way it floods, ices, gets rocks in my shoes, etc
Lack of dining and shopping options
Parking
Parking and driving around Gambier. Certain roads are difficult to see oncoming traffic when making turns.
The College's less than inspired architectural 'improvements' and lazyscaping... er... landscaping
lack of diverse food options.
Too many people driving around a walking campus!
traffic downtown (downtown looks like a parking lot)
isolation, terrible restaurants
The Community involvement in local activities
The fact that Middle Path is not paved.
At times it seems that the municipal government is averse to change, but that seems to be improving.
income taxes
Meadow Lane apartments
Lack of 24hr dining/recreation options
limited dining options
I really do not have a least favorite thing.
Too many cars, loss of village feeling, and trees.
The lack of long term parking and outdoor seating that's for open use
When the village goes out of its way to be obstructionist.
Students unaware of traffic and don't care to look



PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
The lack of accommodations: restaurants, message therapists, grocery stores, government buildings. I feel mount vernon has more to offer but maybe gambier can include more into that
Overly restrictive and sometimes confusing zoning code that limits diversity in development for the overall community and Kenyon College.
Middle Path hazards during winter weather - especially the ice.
Limited events and activities. Limited eating options
New buildings
Portions of the village and campus have become run down. Peeling paint, rough roads, weeds. All seem like relatively easy things to fix. Someone just has to care enough and have the will to do it.
Isolation
I don't have a least favorite thing
Disconnect between city and kenyon students during the school year.
Super high store prices
Not enough different kinds of housing and places to eat (or related retail) that are reliably open more hours of the day and more days of the week.
Frequent power outages
The white buildings, so bland!
The students seem to never have been taught to look both ways before entering an intersection.
I think the new Kenyon College buildings in town take away from the charm of Gambier. They look sterile and like they were put up without much thought.
difficulty with parking during construction
town-college tensions
all the complainers!
All the new buildings because there are so many
No parking during the school year
It is clique-ish and difficult to break into if you're not associated with Kenyon
The loss of residential housing
There needs to be more services and things to do for Kenyon students that do not involve alcohol and drugs.
Hodgepodge architecture
The isolation
I adore Gambier -- the residents and the students make it a warm and welcoming place. I wish, however, that there were a few more restaurants and businesses.

RESPONSES
Isolation
Disconnect between students and surrounding community
racism
Flooding/power outages etc
taxes are high
Middle path gravel
Very, very small
its distance from other cities
the new buildings look like they are made of cardboard... also they all look the same
rural location
N/A
Lack of connection to nearby towns
That the village is losing its character. Only the VI and the apartment next to it are not those boring white buildings you can find anywhere. Kenyon is quirky and it's architecture should show it. By putting in these white panel buildings found everywhere in planned communities, the village of gambier is losing its spark. Put some thought into it, replicate the historical style. Revive buildings instead of tearing them down. Keep the village special! Don't ever tear down the VI because it's the only building that's stayed true to itself
The paths get slippery in the winter.
Actually I can't really think of anything that's my least favorite. The month of March, maybe? :-)
My complaints were largely addressed by the village center redevelopment.
Not having more options for restaurants.
lack of places supplying basic-need items at affordable price.
The monotony of the new architecture
I feel like I live in a bubble on campus. How do I get to know people who live in the area?
Confederate flags, aggressive Trump supporters
lack of stores
Isolation. Not much you can do about it, but not having access to grocery store and stuff obviously isn't ideal
N/A
nothing
Unnecessary light pollution. Ex: sewage plant and maintenance building (by the salt shed) both have 24-hour spotlights that face away from buildings that impact star-watching in the sports fields.

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RESPONSES
Currently, the duration and scope of all the construction there is to navigate
the constant construction in such a small space
Limited Food Options
Lack of character in new buildings on main square
Poor public schools
There are very few stores/restaurants.
regularity of power failures and problems with water
no people
The lack of community events
I think it should play into the historical aspects of Kenyon College aesthetic more, but otherwise it's very nice.
The lack of abundant restaurants/retail.
Not all the roads have sidewalks and some of the existing sidewalks have been disrupted by tree roots
Construction! Lack of food choices...
Lack of parking, restaurants, a larger store. No, it doesn't make it more rustic, it makes it more inconvenient.
The lack of things to do and places to go. I'd love more businesses in town.
Lack of restaurants / social places
The sheriff
Most things close on Sundays. But of course I understand this. I really don't have many complaints about Gambier.
Lack of other forms of recreational activities.
Lack of street lighting and sidewalks
Lack of connection between Kenyon student body and Knox county at large
I wish there were more choices for food options.
Power outages :)
Limited ethnic restaurant
How the college dictates village life, particularly in relation to village development.
Isolation
I would love to see more small businesses or businesses in general.
Absolutely nothing.
That it goes to Mount Vernon's terrible schools for middle and high school.
Number of bars

RESPONSES
Does not offer much in the form of entertainment + dining
lack of grocery access
No food options.
Nothing to do.
construction :(
construction that is pointless and making all the new buildings look like NCA remixes
not a lot of places to eat
Lack of restaurants
Lack of stores and restaurants
The overwhelming presence of the college
Village market hours, middle path landscaping looks horrible!
Dangerous middle path during winter months making accessibility a real issue
Taxes
Lack of college-y bar/hangout options. There's not so much anything to /do/ if you aren't one of the rich kids.
nothing currently coming to mind
Too little restaurants
The lack of amenities
How few restaurants/bars are available
Slow Construction
lack of resources and unreliable transportation
How everything closes so early
Lack of restaurants and parking
Inaccessibility to Columbus Inaccessibility to a city of 50k+
I wish the village did a better job of de-icing the roads. They're quite hazardous during the winter.
The absolute loss of the old village's charm in favor of Gund's "grand vision."
Poor connectivity to environmental center and children services
Remoteness from a major urban area. Not a lot to be done about that, though.
Bicycles ignoring traffic rules.
lack of restaurants
Students walking as slow as they can across the streets.
Poor shopping opportunities in the area. I refuse to shop at WalMart!!!

PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
That the College holds all the cards, ie owns nearly all the downtown retail spaces and most of the real estate in the Village
truck traffic
No least favorite thing.
Lacking restaurants esp Italian
I am not at all impressed with the Village of Gambier changes on Chase Avenue. The charm of the Village has been significantly impacted by modernizing the main center path area. It is no longer a historical village but rather just Kenyon College.
The horrible, cheap, ugly construction that Kenyon is imposing on the Village.
New downtown street/parking arrangement and new downtown middle path and "gardens"
that the village architecture is becoming sameness/faceless and not unique
would like a few more resources, another bookstore (though I love the Kenyon Bookstore, eating places. A grocery that doesn't have such elevated charges. I walk everywhere, which I like.
Few public transportation options.
Congestion - traffic, students, cars lining Brooklyn St. behind school.
The new look of the village.
That Kenyon has such a disproportionate vote regarding Village matters like downtown development and land use.
The imbalance of control the village has with the college. It isn't an easily fixable thing. The college holds the cards.
Lack of food options and their hours (especially when school is not in session).
lack of good transportation and good eating places
Middle Path. Its current state is disgraceful.
Far from mid-sized city.
Too much destruction of housing by the College.
Unoccupied houses
Too small
Garbage delivery irregularities
Renovated downtown looks cheap and boring and doesn't offer useful services to residents, such as a market with items other than student convenience foods (at student hours) or photocopying and faxing facilities.
Parking near the elementary school
more eating options would be great

RESPONSES
Nothing
That we do not have mail delivery.
Isolation & lack of cultural diversity.
The sometimes gossipy nature of folks.
N/A
No mail delivery.
It seems like there are fewer community events lately.
I can't think of anything.
No housing for potential new residents, related exclusive nature of Kenyon community.
need more sidewalks
Lack of walking path from route 229 parallel to route 308 up to the village.m
Lack of signs to direct visitors.
No opportunity for service businesses like law office, doctor, massage, etc.



**Q: If you could change ONE thing about Gambier, what would it be?**

RESPONSES
none
More things to do!!
I don't know yet. So far I like everything.
better public space
Transportation at Kenyon
Better recycling / composting system
Like Cambridge, UK, a car park which would keep the streets/walkways clear.
Pave Middle Path
I would increase the variety of restaurants/cafes in the town limits.
Too many white buildings.
there would be a sidewalk leading from the hill down to the BFEC!
I don't know.
more diverse political opinions and tolerance of them
More parking
Nothing
The center of the village is truly disappointing. We put so much money into refurbishing Middle Path and rebuilding the market, deli, etc, and I LOVE those changes. But then, in the center of town, there are rickety gray tables that appear to be purchased second-hand. Why not make the center of town a nice, inviting gathering space? Maybe art could be incorporated in some way? Did the village consult any of the many talented artists in the local area? I don't understand why there wasn't more thought put into the center of the village.
For the college and community to have a better relationship and not be divided as elites and peasants.
Give power to the people who live there and not the millionaires that make the calls just because they can.
I wish you didn't always have to drive ten min to get basic necessities, like groceries. I wish there was off-campus housing for Kenyon students.
The dangerous intersection between 229 and 308
Better relations between village and college
Distance from Columbus
Restore first floor commercial to all Kenyon residences in the business district.
I have no specific complaints.

RESPONSES
I wish it were easier to build and modify homes.
More restaurants
Allow lights on the Kenyon turf fields so the students can have a better experience! They should be able to play night games and not miss classes! In Jan/Feb, sunsets before 5pm.
Dogs need to be leashed
We need a safe way for students and community members to cross 229 from campus. It is long over due. We had another accident this summer involving two of our student employees. There have been fatal accidents there over the years. Something must be done.
nothing
Pave middle path
Nothing so far!
Number of cars and trucks driving through the village. It would be more pleasant if large trucks were rerouted out of the center of the village.
Housing should be more available for Kenyon faculty.
Limit Kenyon's property ownership
Pave middle path.
I would expand its social/restaurant options.
Increase accessibility. Step one is paving middle path.
Lack of nightlife/ activities
I would add more restaurants/bars/places to get food.
Add a bar probably
Better relationship between students of color and local police.
Construction projects (specifically at Kenyon) should be completed in a more timely manner as some past projects have far exceeded the expected completion date.
A better coordination between "civilians" in the Village and Kenyon: so much of the College's construction drives the character of the village, and recently that has really obscured the charm of the place.
GUNS!!! in general though
More parking
No off campus housing
I wish there was better public transportation. The KAT is difficult to rely on.

PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
Add street signage and more opportunities like the community feast to engage between Gambier and Kenyon.
More variety of restaurants.
Maybe a small movie theater or a few shops
I would like a more extensive grocery store (in a dream world, a Chinese grocery store).
Need more lights on all walkways for nighttime lighting
More restaurants
better long term parking, kat runs on time, better lighting on streets off campus
Housing prices
Pick it up and move it to a coast. But really nothing. It's perfect
To pave the Middle Path and make it more accessible for people with disability.
Less construction
Enforce stricter smoking and littering limits. I dislike the number of cigarette butts I see near buildings and the secondhand smoke.
More affordable housing (for employees, but also for other adults). I wonder what happened to the idea of building condos on Wiggin Street (across from where we live)
Safer roads and sidewalks during the winter
It should have a movie theatre
have a larger village center/downtown area
More recreation for younger population
Having more places to eat would be great.
a sidewalk on the east side of Ward Street -- most of the foot traffic is the college students
I wish we had a better grocery store. The market feels to me like an overgrown convenience store, more so now than when it was in its old building, and that seems like a missed opportunity. There's so much more attention now to local foods, fresh foods, CSAs and co-ops, and almost none of that shows up in the village market.
More buildings at the center of the village that are not owned by Kenyon.
I have nothing
Nothing
An Outdoor study area
Lost a little charm with new stores.
finish upgrading the down town

RESPONSES
A second coffee shop, or expanded seating for Wiggin Street
Nothing
Pave Middle Path to make it more accessible and less slippery when it rains or snows.
The gravel path should be paved so that is more accessible in the winter months
I'd want more shops and restaurants and businesses around.
Access to commercial facilities
Don't make all of the buildings look the same
Well, to address my first "least favorite thing" I guess I would move it closer to Columbus by about 30 minutes.
I would make it more diverse.
Parking and taxes
Better housing
More businesses downtown
More housing options (condominiums, apartments) for young Kenyon faculty.
Put a traffic light at 308 and 229
Nothing
I would make the downtown slightly larger, but keep with the current aesthetic
Bring in a pharmacy
I would make it more accessible to all people, regardless of race, gender expression, gender identity, ability or disability, income, etc.
have a convenience store
more restaurants
I do not know
Haven't been here long enough to have an opinion.
I would like to see Kenyon students get more involved in the life of the Village and the county.
More restaurants
Middle Path is difficult for wheelchairs in general, and dangerously icy in winter. Is there anything we can do to make it safer?
Greater inclusion and outreach to local communities
More places to eat or shop
more community events/festivals
Adding more stores and food places.
Pave middle path

RESPONSES
It's size
Parking at Wiggin Street Elementary School
More stores
Dramatically reduce the cost of obtaining a building permit. The current fee of one percent of the cost of the project is exorbitant.
Add a movie theater
Maybe add one more restaurant.
add a CVS or another store!
Less car traffic
nothing - I like what we currently have in place
Organic grocery
Finish the projects in a timely manner
24 hour gas station
Only pedestrians on gaskin avenue in front of the VI, bookstore, etc
better parking
Aside from the parking, not sure.
fix the traffic, too many thorough fares through the main village
Creating more active Kenyon and non-Kenyon joint activity, maybe a community garden
Fix the electrical infrastructure
Nothing
More quality housing stock with an active buy/sell market
I would make the KAT run more regularly.
More dining options
Add more stores
Ratio of community to student housing
Speeding cars
Require that owners of AirBnBs live onsite. Other 'cities' are mandating this because people are turning more 'residences' into short-term housing only.
More restaurants.
Add sidewalks on streets that don't have them, particularly Gaskin Avenue north of campus.
Clean the sidewalks more often
new housing construction to welcome new permanent esidents
More retail businesses (especially restaurants).

RESPONSES
Post more speed limit signs and enforce the limit.
Unsure
That Kenyon didn't own everything
I'd make more housing, of several types, available in the village. If annexation of additional land is required, so be it, but there are areas now deemed sacrosanct by some that could be sensitively developed without injuring the rural ambiance of Gambier.
Gambier needs more families who are committed to the community
Better transport to Mt Vernon
Provide more spaces for community events
addition of lights to Kenyon College athletic fields
Additional housing options
Pave middle path so we can use it in bad weather
Construct an additional community/childcare center to allow children a place to play and be supervised by childcare staff.
The color of Wiggin Street Coffee's walls.
More housing
I'd like to see the Village get bigger in a sustainable way. Add something like 1000 residents.
Safer crosswalks.
nothing
Off-campus housing
I would add more non-college owned small businesses.
Access to kitchen at community center... update the community center in general. Make it a place for the community to hang out!
More housing for faculty, visiting faculty, staff and retirees
There would be another restaurant besides the VI
A
Add more vendors college kids would like for food, bar, or events
I would put a couple more restaurants/bars and maybe independent shops like Weather Vane in the town.
make Jim Lenthe move
make it easier to drive around when students (pedestrians) are back in the village
more affordable housing for people who would not be a menace to the community



PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
create more spaces downtown where people interact - a very small but innovative playground, a sculpture or two on Middle Path, a more inviting space to sit (current space with tables is pretty stark), a small amphitheater?, a small farmer's market...
Traffic
finish construction and return the street to 2-way in front of the Bookstore
A play area in the center of Gambier (rather than just at the bottom of the hill- too far for those of us who live at the other end of town for an easy walk to and from)
More Mount Vernon residents coming over to visit!
Limit amount of construction
less noise
limited housing available; no plans for retirement campus affiliated with or accessible to Kenyon
Make accessing businesses easier for folks coming from outside Gambier
Sidewalks on Duff street would be nice.
Accessibility to resources
Expand the downtown: more restaurants, more study spaces, and more parking.
More restaurant options
Financial incentives to attract minority residents
more housing
More family housing
A few more shops and restaurants
The new buildings downtown that look like you could be in an Ann Taylor.
Add more community events
We need more residents.
put back the drive through so you can navigate the Village more easily and also it's much safer to walk during snowy and icy weather
I would put some outdoor exercise equipment at the library park.
Another dining option with outdoor seating.

RESPONSES
Lack of food options as a college student for late-r at night. The market is extremely overpriced because they have a corner on the market for food south of 9 pm. Even though they do have snacks, a place not owned by Kenyon with hot food or snacks past 10 pm on campus would make people actually leave their dorms more often. It seems to be the case that whenever the night is winding down or you want a study break, the only options are to A.) heat up something or eat something you bought from Walmart earlier in the day (takes time/ car) or walk to the market and spend an absurd amount of money on a snack/frozen meal (Oreos are 6.66! Walmart = <3.00). Or B.) Leave campus (potentially unsafe post-party). Or C.) Order Dominoes and grow tired of it. Better food options for sure.
Move community center closer to "downtown" so it feels more connected to Kenyon and like more of a unified village.
Home mail delivery.
The degree of insularity.
More restaurants
Parking
Celebrate who we are, don't be ashamed to be a great little village/college town. Let people know where they are.
I'd add more sidewalks
I would get more businesses in the Village.
We should have an art and music festival. Also, bring back the colorful flowers on middle path.
Make the GOBus run more frequently
I wouldn't want there to be anti-gay protests that claim to be religious/for it to be alright to have someone allowed to harass people walking through or sitting on benches on middle path and call them sinners. It is not freedom of speech; it is harassment.
improve health/mental health resources
I can't think of much but transportation options, probably.
For the sherrif and the college to start issuing parking tickets like they should be.
Not sure
The construction
Bringing the towns people and the college community together.
make the architecture look less cookie cutter

RESPONSES
I'd love to see some sort of "trolley" (perhaps, in conjunction with the College) that makes a short loop within Gambier. It'd make getting to class better when it's colder out. A route that just cycled between the KAC and Bexley Hall would be great!
More entertainment
Pave Middle Path
Places to hang out/lounge
the number of things to do there, there should be more
Add more dining and shopping options (namely but not exclusively, a Chinese restaurant)
It would be nice to have more regular contact with the Mt. Vernon community.
less construction
I'm not happy with the way the new median/Middle Path doesn't easily allow you to cross from bookstore to Post Office. Also, the landscaping is not as attractive as it was before the old trees were felled.
More building lots
I wish there were more affordable housing options, and I wish the village was better connected (via non-car transit) to other parts of the county.
im honestly not sure. it would probably be like changing the mental health of everyone. also maybe more hands-on community activities like volunteerism stuff. but also the new buildings are so white and flavourless. so i dont know.
see above
More accessible Parking, west campus.
Reduce traffic and reduce speed limits where there is high pedestrian traffic and/or many children: along Wiggin St and Chase Ave, and along Meadow Ln by the library/community center and child care center.
More entertainment options
More parking. A fountain?
Better connections between the student body and Gambier residents. As a student, at times I wish I felt more connected to my non-student neighbors, especially as I'm someone who values knowing my neighbors as I walk down the street and feeling connected to their lives through community picnics and things of that sort.
parking
I would build a KTV somewhere near Kenyon college.
I'd have a Kendal or equivalent here
Safety issues of old trees when thunderstorms arise.

RESPONSES
Not have Graham Gun design everything
Fewer power outages- bury the electrical lines that are in the forrest.
Sidewalks extended to streets further from the village center. I'd like to retire in Gambier and want to be able to walk from home into village.
Stop with the new buildings already, keep the historical ones.
More sidewalks so all neighborhoods are connected.
more (low-budget) food options!
New administrator at Wiggin St school. He is driving out faculty of color. He has no idea what inclusion even means. And I fear that it is or will hve an impact on Kenyon's Ability to attract and retain a diverse faculty and staff.
Jim Lenthe
More housing available.
Create a better market for retail establishments
The Sheriff
The Sheriff
more signage - everyone is assumed to know where everything is and who everyone is
Keep some of the historical character in the new buildings going into the village. The market, bookstore, deli, etc all look the same
nothing
Nothing
Add one or two eating options
Allow overnight parking to make up for the fact that there is not nearly enough parking available on the North end of campus.
More welcoming atmosphere for the broader Knox County Community.
I wish that the village would be more flexible and accommodating to Kenyon, especially as it involves construction and general improvements to the campus and village.
I would add a few more local stores and restaurants to give it a little more of vibrant small town feel outside of the college.
Would love to see the assorted beautiful flowers that was once on middle path. To have a better middle walk path that is not muddy when it rains.
more public events
I would add a bar or a place to go dancing

PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
I think it should have a dollar store/thrift permanently. It would be extremely appealing to the college community who are both environmentally conscious and financially challenged.
More eating options and store options.
Make it more like Granville
More restaurants on or near Kenyon's campus
bigger budget for salt
I'd put in a few more restaurants!
Something about the paving or paths/sidewalks
Better public transport (free), that runs every hour every day to Columbus and Mount Vernon!
more street lights
Parking
Really, it is quite perfect. The addition of sidewalks was a brilliant community plan. And the improved (and less expensive) energy plan that the village negotiated as a community good.
More affordable dining options
More bus routes to Columbus
Cut down on the frequency of power outages
more small businesses.
The steps toward greater accessibility have been very positive, and I'd like to see that continue.
College Bookstore needs more casual seating; closes too early.
Sidewalks so can walk safely through the whole village
inducements for more younger persons, families to be able to live in the Village
needs to add a pharmacy
More lighting at walkways both for Village and College. AND available parking for visitors.
More food
Update The elementary school
More job opportunities outside of Kenyon College
less unoccupied homes
I would pave middle path
have a playground closer to the village instead of way off at the edge
The Village Council needs to work more favorably with Kenyon – without Kenyon, this village wouldn't exist. Kenyon's mission is noble – support it.
A few more businesses

RESPONSES
A traffic light at the intersection of 229 and 308.
I would love to see an independent hardware store in Gambier, thought not necessarily in the downtown.
More Gambier community events that bring together those that live, work, and have kids at the elem school
More entities owning property in the village center
Nothing
Nothing!
put all the electric lines underground
pave middle path
More restaurants
More parking
More updated housing for residents (and those who want to become residents!)
Better/safer access to the bottom of the hill to get to the Kokosing, KGT and BFEC trails.
A Thai or Sushi restaurant!
More housing availability.
same as #5
Having a more engaged "main street" which I believe could be achieved with more full time residents in Gambier
I would get the College to pave Middle Path.
More community events
no taxes for those who live outside of the village limits and do not use ANY of their services
Bringing back the Christmas lights on the downtown portion of middle path
Pave middle path!! It's inaccessible and becomes unsafe in rainy/cold weather
another restaurant
Parking
Move toward a carbon neutral community.
More clear crosswalks and better lighting v at night
A gazebo would be nice.
Something for the safety of traffic and pedestrians around the college during the school year. Especially during high pedestrian moments crosswalk signals
transportation. More shuttles for students and parking for the college



RESPONSES
The zoning code needs to be overhauled to clean up discrepancies in the code, to expand development of housing outside of single family dwellings, to grow new business, and to account for the needs of Kenyon College as the driving catalyst in the community.
Building structures with an historical aspect.
Add more restaurants
Reduce cars in the village and campus
See answer 5
Add more food options
Renovate the run down homes in an effort to make them desirable housing for purchase/rent for new staff/faculty (not students).
Nothing, keep it how it is.
It's a very small thing, but I'd put Christmas lights on the middle path trees!! When I visited they had some on there and it really made the space so much brighter and more magical.
More retail, such as places to eat, open at different times of day and night, a bike shop (with rentals), etc.
That the main street weren't so bland architecturally
More walkable ur sidewalks
The white buildings, even the off white ones Also, stop developing new buildings. It's ridiculous
More of a armed presence in the community and security force, to make a "firearm free zone" less of a target
I would change the new buildings, or at least make them look like they are part of the town.
increase/protect disabled parking
better relationship between some village members and the College
don't appreciate paying taxes without representation...I pay village taxes and have no vote.
Restore bexley
nothing
Afraid of change.
The metallic taste of the water.
A new building for the elementary would be wonderful! The district has done its best to maintain the building and adapt to new technology needs. My fear is that eventually Gambier will no longer be the home of the Elementary to save costs which would be detrimental to the community and not in the best interest of the kids. It may be best if Gambier initiates a new building or land before the decision has to be made for the community. I have no evidence of this concern but just a gut feeling.

RESPONSES
Lack of shopping alternatives
Add more businesses and restaurants.
Have a city be closer
I would add used bookstore that sells cheap books that could be used by both students and the community
lack of businesses
N/a
dedicate more land to parks
Make middle path pavement
More dining options
I would make its population more diverse
maybe one more resturant
it's location
N/A
More things to do
that the sherif has a poor relationship with the college
Provide more information about public transportation options.
I'd make the Kokosing more a part of village life - easier access to it, activities related to it, etc.
I would make Gaskin in front of the commercial district into a pedestrian mall.
I wish there was a few more restaurants and options to eat at.
Retain cultural / historical character!! Restore buildings without completely changing Gambier into a "perfect" little town with white houses and buildings that all look the same
Make it more open to people who actually live in and around Gambier, because right now Gambier just means Kenyon college.
No confederate flags or symbolism of a racist nature
a larger community
Make it 30 minutes from columbus
Fix the power lines
more eco friendly, more solar power
Commuters / non-residents speeding on Meadow Lane past library, parks, and a child care facility. This would be an excellent location for speed control structures.
Better access to health services
Pave middle path

PLAN OVERVIEW | GAMBIER VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

RESPONSES
Maybe add one more place to eat, or a place to hang out.
Add more places to eat and parking
Work on maintaining a more reliable power grid
More low income housing for socioeconomic diversity
More retail
more people
Have a greater sense of community with the Kenyon students
To add another casual eatery for an additional place to sit and work in a relaxing atmosphere.
Increasing the density of apartment-style residences.
The lack of nice and consistent sidewalks
Plant more flora around Middle Path in Downtown Gambier, and also add Christmas lights again to the trees!
Access to fairly priced groceries, the one store creates a monopoly and groceries are too expensive for 75% of all gambier residents, i.e. students
More businesses and restaurants.
the sheriff, yet again
The connection between students and community members.
Water sources. The village needs more reliable water infrastructure.
More sidewalks
Creating a stronger connection between students and residents
One or two more restaurants
Restrict the college's ability to build cheap structures that potentially undermine the quaint and imperfect character that once was Gambier.
More local events with accessible transport
Add more businesses.
More restaurant options/ or restaurants that are open later etc.
Better schools and home delivery of mail.
Add more student apartments
make produce / general groceries more readily available
more places to eat!!
Add more local restaurants.

RESPONSES
less building new more expanding and growing what exists
cobble middle path so that it drains better and looks better
add a 24 hour diner
Parking
More stores and restaurants
More places for community and college to interact. Wiggins street coffee is ideal in the summer for that, but when school comes around I lose sight of the community. The Gambier community
Add a brewery See some lots for more houses to be built
The winter condition of middle path
Safer crossings on Wiggins Street at the 3 crosswalks at Gaskin and Chace.
Likely more of the above (bar/places to hang out that do not cost a lot of money)
More transparency in building plans
Make middle path better to walk on in the winter, when it is muddy
Add more amenities
More restaurants/bars
more food options
Open up a waffle house
A bar for students
Move it closer to Columbus lmao
I would try to draw in/support more local business to create more things to do outside of the college.
I would stop knocking old buildings down in favor of new construction in the Hope's of keeping the Kenyon charm and just renovating them and making them accessible.
Street lamps would use reflectors and diffusers that produce less glare and illuminate more selectively.
Improve relations between Gambier and people who work in gambier (individuals not the employers). What percentage of Gambier tax revenue is paid by non-residents who work in Gambier? I would like to understand how our tax money is used. Does it only benefit local homeowners?
More dining options on Sundays.
Control College loudspeaker volume.
more amenities, including restaurants
More retail, specifically a pizza store.

RESPONSES
housing opportunities
Can't think of any.
That existing housing have full time residents (singles, couples and families) not so many absentee landlords. The health of the village/college depend on a diverse population.
like it the way it is
No change needed
Add Italian, Greek, and Indian restaurants
Stop the changes to the charm of the Village.
Reign the College in
Better/nicer restaurants
more diversity of shops and restaurants. A place that people can come and enjoy the college, while at the same time browse the interesting shops
Stated above, but, e.g. more low cost places to eat, and shop at.
Make ALL crosswalks forced stops when pedestrians present. IE Near the gap trail and near community center.
Move the public/alumni affairs staff to Bexley Hall.
Pave Middle Path
Nothing.
more restaurants and sources of good food (e.g., bakery)
Middle Path. The College should redo the flower beds and then commit to their proper maintenance.
Put it closer to Columbus! More retail space downtown- restaurants, cafe, gallery, etc.
Call a 3 year moratorium on new, non-residential construction.
A sidewalk on Gaskin Ave
Add more speed traps. Yes really.
Monthly news letter for residents
Have the college put a moratorium on building for a while. If we are talking about only what the Village can do, then provide the aforementioned services for residents.
No changes
more lower cost housing
The Village does well with most things.
That we had our mail delivered.
More & better dining options.

RESPONSES
A larger age spectrum of its residents, specifically more people in their 30s and 40s.
N/A
A couple more food options. And more involved, young families in the community.
More recurring community events (farmer's market, community picnics, kids' events, etc.)
Make all trails connected.
New housing for new residents, especially families w/ kids.
sidewalks
Install kiosk or signs by depot so visitors using Kokosing Gap Trail can learn about what's up the hill.
... can't think of anything. We love to visit Gambier.
More community/college cooperation



# APPENDIX

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## MARKET ANALYSIS REPORT

The following pages encompass the complete market analysis report as produced by Urban Decision Group as part of the Gambier Village Strategic Plan in November of 2019. Findings from this report can be found in the Community Context chapter as well as intermittently throughout the Plan.



## Background

Gambier is located centrally within Knox County, Ohio, in the appropriately named College Township. Gambier is approximately 1 hour and 10 minutes from Downtown Columbus via Interstate 71 or US Highway 36.

State Route 229 connects Gambier to Mount Vernon bending with the Kokosing River into the Kenyon College campus. US Highway 36 is just north of the village. Chase Avenue leads north from Gambier. Chase Avenue, also known as Kenyon Road or State Route 308, connects Gambier to US Highway 36. Mount Vernon and Centerburg are located along US Highway 36. US Highway 36 is known along its diagonal path through Knox County as Columbus Road west of Mount Vernon and Coshocton Avenue east of Mount Vernon. Newcastle Road, or State Route 229 (2,200 vehicles per day, ODOT 2017 estimate), heads east and south from the village in the direction of Newcastle. In the opposite direction, Gambier Street, or State Route 229 (3,800 vehicles per day) directly connects Gambier to Mount Vernon. Wiggin Street bisects the Village. The classrooms and athletic facilities for the Collage are located below Wiggin. Residences and commercial areas are located north of Wiggin Street. The college and village functions are indistinguishable from each other.

The Kokosing Gap Trail, a multi-use trail along a former rail line bends around the south edge of Kenyon College campus. The Kokosing Gap Trail is part of the regional trail system that connects to Downtown Columbus and other communities in the region. Kokosing Trail has recently been designated as part of the first multiuse Great American Rail-Trail that crosses the country.

The following describes how the Village compares statistically to the geographies within Knox County.

**Figure 1.**

Vehicles per day on major thoroughfares



## Population Characteristics

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The population of Gambier increased from 1,947 in 2000 to 2,391 in 2010, a change of 22.8%. The estimated population for Gambier in 2019 is 2,436 and projected to increase to 2,455 by the year 2024, at an annual rate of 0.16%. Gambier increases in size by 22 people each year. Centerburg is the fastest growing village in the county with a growth rate of over 40% from 2000 to 2024, or approximately 27 people per year in that time. The population increase between 2000 and 2019 of 33 percent outpaces the growth experienced in Danville (6.8%), Fredericktown (0.9%), Gambier (25.5%), Mount Vernon (5.1%), and Knox County (14.9%). Gambier is the second fastest growing community in Knox County. The State of Ohio has grown by 3.7% since 2000 but almost all of Ohio's growth during this time has been concentrated in and around Columbus and suburban Cincinnati.

The following table describes each village in Knox County in terms of population, by the number of households, the number of families, and the size of households and families. The 2000 and 2010 figures are from the Decennial U.S. Census. The 2019 and 2024 figures are estimates. A household includes all the people occupying a housing unit. The size of a family includes the family householder and all other people in the living quarters who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.<sup>1</sup> The column pertaining to Gambier Village is highlighted. Other places within Knox County and the county itself are included for comparison.

Nearly 1,500 residents (75% of the population) of Gambier live in group quarters, most likely all to be in student dormitories at Kenyon College. The total undergraduate enrollment for the school was 1,730 in the Fall of 2018 (National Center for Education Statistics, College Navigator). There were 213 full-time faculty and eight part-time faculty at the college in the Fall of 2018. Group quarters include college or university student housing, correctional facilities, residential treatment centers, and nursing facilities. No correctional facilities are known within the four villages. Gambier maintains a small-town feel in a compact village boundary and manages to house the total population at a density slightly higher than the other villages, at 4.1 people per acre.

Household composition within Gambier has slightly increased since 2000. The average household size is 2.81 persons. Family households account for only 44 percent of all households in Gambier.

The median age of the population of Centerburg, Danville, and Fredericktown is in the upper 30s. In Gambier, the median age is 22. Most of the residents are in school to earn a bachelor's degree. Nearly 50 percent of males and females are age 20 to 24. The population cohort charted below also shows a small bump in the 55 to 74 range, potentially reflecting the composition of the faculty at the college. The population characteristics of the village are unique to Gambier and are attributed to the orientation around Kenyon College.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Current Population Survey (CPS) subject definitions

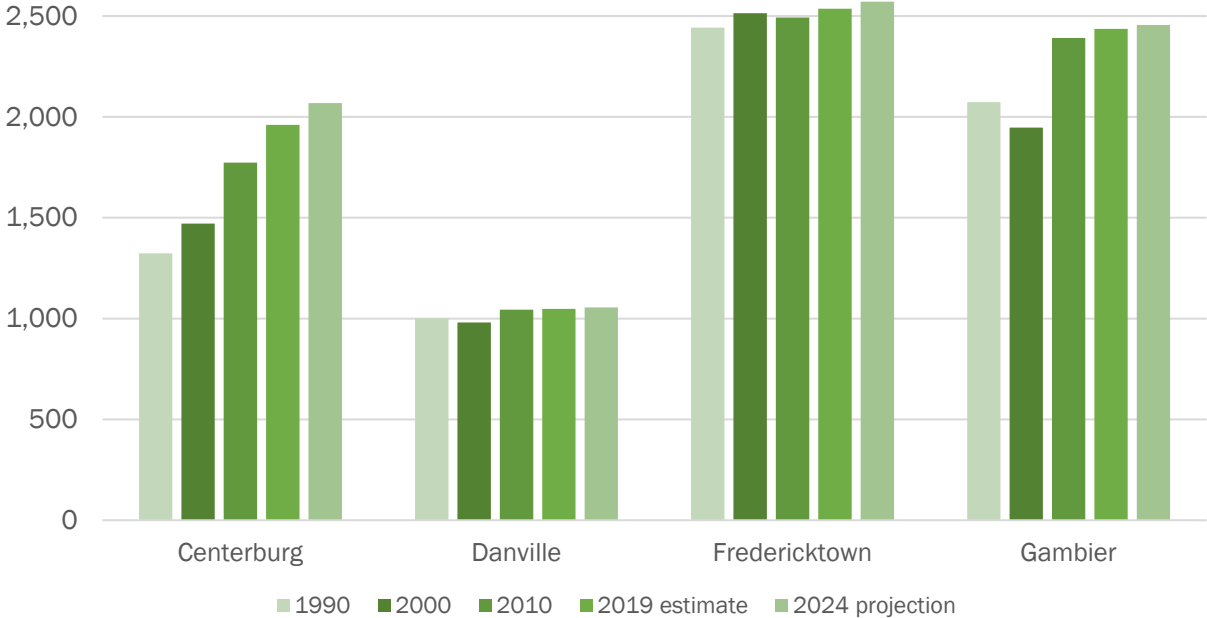


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	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
<b>Population Summary</b>						
2000 Total Population	1,471	981	2,514	1,947	16,196	54,500
2010 Total Population	1,773	1,044	2,493	2,391	16,904	60,921
2019 Total Population	1,960	1,048	2,536	2,436	17,022	62,611
2019 Group Quarters	51	0	2	1,448	1,295	3,510
2024 Total Population	2,068	1,055	2,571	2,455	17,191	63,751
2019-2024 Annual Rate	1.08	0.13	0.27	0.16	0.20	0.36
2019 Total Daytime Population	1,939	1,022	2,825	2,931	23,523	58,148
Workers	1,036	504	1,412	1,637	13,874	24,998
Residents	903	518	1,413	1,294	9,649	33,150
<b>Household Summary</b>						
2000 Households	506	402	1,056	295	6,496	19,975
2000 Average Household Size	2.79	2.44	2.38	2.54	2.27	2.56
2010 Households	622	425	1,050	343	7,064	22,607
2010 Average Household Size	2.77	2.46	2.37	2.78	2.21	2.54
2019 Households	699	426	1,076	352	7,163	23,377
2019 Average Household Size	2.73	2.46	2.36	2.81	2.20	2.53
2024 Households	740	429	1,095	359	7,263	23,868
2024 Average Household Size	2.73	2.46	2.35	2.81	2.19	2.52
2019-2024 Annual Rate	1.15	0.14	0.35	0.39	0.28	0.42
2010 Families	474	306	695	150	4,172	15,693
2010 Average Family Size	3.19	2.90	2.90	3.24	2.85	3.04
2019 Families	525	301	697	147	4,109	15,935
2019 Average Family Size	3.17	2.93	2.90	3.28	2.87	3.05
2024 Families	554	302	703	148	4,123	16,170
2024 Average Family Size	3.16	2.93	2.90	3.27	2.87	3.05
2019-2024 Annual Rate	1.08	0.07	0.17	0.14	0.07	0.29

**Table 1.** Total population, total number of families, total number of households, average family size, and average household size for geographies in Knox County in 2000, 2010, estimated for 2019, and projected for 2024.

### Population Summary



**Figure 2.** Population in each village counted in 1990, 2000, and 2010 US Census with third party estimates for 2019 and 2024.

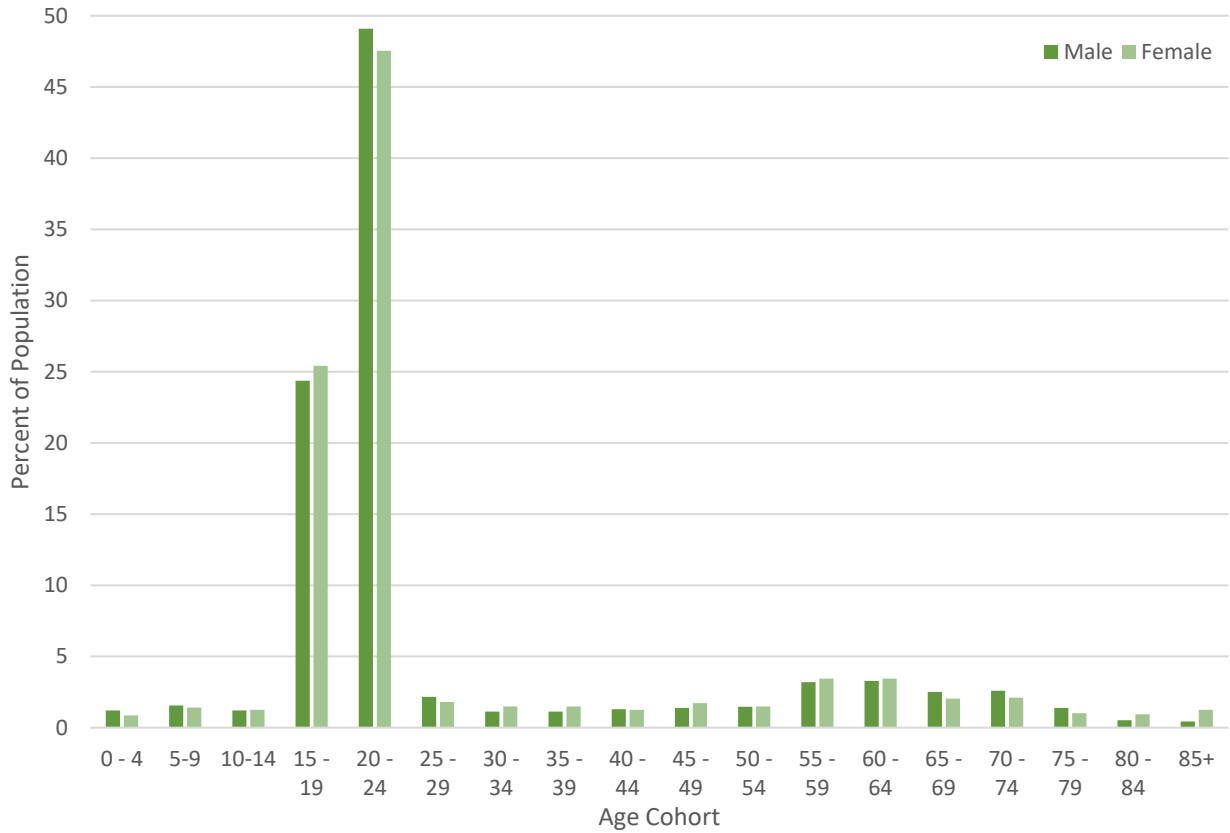


Figure 3. Population cohort for Gambier in 2019.

	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
Median Age 2010	36.6	35.9	37.2	22.1	38.6	38.1
Median Age 2019	37.6	37.4	38.1	22.2	40.2	39.7
Median Age 2024	36.0	39.0	38.5	22.3	41.5	40.7

Table 2. Median Age by year with accompanying chart to expand on the age by sex cohort for the village in 2019.



	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
Household Income Base	699	426	1,076	352	7,163	23,377
Percent within cohort						
<\$15,000	11.4	14.3	9.9	9.1	15.2	10.7
\$15,000 - \$24,999	8.9	10.1	10.2	7.4	12.3	9.1
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6.7	11.3	19.6	6.3	12.8	11.1
\$35,000 - \$49,999	9.4	21.6	16.2	12.5	17.5	16.3
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.7	19.2	17.0	19.6	20.5	20.2
\$75,000 - \$99,999	21.3	12.2	14.8	8.2	10.2	14.3
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19.2	6.8	8.1	27.3	7.6	12.0
\$150,000 - \$199,999	3.6	3.1	1.9	8.2	1.7	3.9
\$200,000+	0.7	1.4	2.2	1.7	2.1	2.5
Median Household Income	\$65,994	\$43,593	\$43,227	\$67,121	\$41,948	\$52,427
Average Household Income	\$70,581	\$56,788	\$59,494	\$80,772	\$56,399	\$67,814
Per Capita Income	\$25,187	\$20,761	\$25,090	\$14,986	\$23,592	\$25,425
Income Disparity Ratio	0.07	0.30	0.38	0.20	0.34	0.29

**Table 3.** Household Income

The average and median incomes for households within Gambier are \$80,772 and \$67,121. In Gambier, 37.2 percent of the households report an income greater than \$100,000. The median income is considerably higher than other geographies in the county. For reference, tuition for Kenyon College exceeds \$56,000 per year. On-campus room and board is \$12,500 per year. Kenyon College is a residential school where all students live on campus and eat in dining halls.<sup>2</sup>

Approximately 20 percent of households within Knox County live below the federal poverty guideline of \$25,100 (for a family of four). Within Gambier, that number is 16.5 percent, lower than all the other geographies. Nationally, the poverty rate has declined since 2014 when the rate was 14.8 percent. Today, the national poverty rate sits at 12.3 percent, which is almost identical to that in the State of Ohio.

<sup>2</sup> Financial figures from Kenyon College website and the National Center for Education Statistics College Navigator.

## Workforce Analysis

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Over 70 percent of Gambier residents have a bachelor's degree, a graduate degree, or a professional degree. As a college town, Gambier is statistically different where age and income cluster on the low end for most residents who live in group quarters for 9 months out of the year in pursuit of higher education. Data for Gambier also reflects the age, income, and education of professors at the college. The data for other villages in the study represents households across many life stages and experiences. For 13 percent of Gambier Villagers over the age of 25, a high school diploma is the highest level attained. In Knox County and the State of Ohio approximately 37 percent and 39 percent, respectively, have achieved a high school diploma as their highest level of educational attainment.

In Knox County, 17 percent are employed in manufacturing, 13 percent in health care, and 12 percent in educational services. In Gambier, employment is concentrated in the educational services industry (49.02%). Other sectors represented in this village include accommodations and food services (9.19%), construction (7.23%), and financial services (6.55%). At this level of analysis, we can ascertain that Gambier residents are compensated at a level commensurate to educational attainment and employment in higher education services.

	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
Total Age 25+	1,291	702	1,717	562	11,614	41,868
Highest Level Attained (%)						
Less than 9th Grade	0.62	4.42	1.34	0.53	3.27	3.34
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	<b>3.49</b>	<b>6.13</b>	<b>5.88</b>	0.00	6.90	5.14
High School Graduate	<b>40.98</b>	<b>41.31</b>	31.04	13.35	37.02	36.98
GED/Alternative Credential	2.40	2.85	2.21	0.00	4.72	4.10
Some College, No Degree	17.35	17.09	<b>26.21</b>	10.50	18.58	19.28
Associate Degree	<b>10.77</b>	<b>8.97</b>	<b>8.44</b>	2.67	6.39	7.40
Bachelor's Degree	<b>19.05</b>	15.10	14.15	<b>30.25</b>	15.00	15.89
Graduate/Professional Degree	5.34	4.13	<b>10.72</b>	<b>42.70</b>	8.12	7.86

**Table 4.** Educational Attainment

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	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
Total	1,089	557	1,179	1,220	7,866	31,064
Agriculture	7	33	3	0	16	535
Mining	3	3	0	0	3	34
Construction	157	38	94	85	313	2,590
Manufacturing	168	102	222	13	1,385	5,082
Wholesale Trade	44	4	16	0	65	690
Retail Trade	143	52	135	68	683	2,485
Transportation	34	5	30	0	221	1,101
Utilities	7	4	0	2	25	315
Information	11	11	50	19	68	487
Finance/Insurance	72	8	62	77	310	1,352
Real Estate	10	13	5	17	97	317
Professional/Tech Services	37	8	30	27	148	827
Management	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin/Waste	33	10	24	35	201	888
Educational Services	84	45	96	576	1,148	3,636
Health Care	99	110	207	74	1,179	4,010
Arts/Entertainment	6	0	0	10	46	195
Accommodation/Food Services	32	26	85	108	870	2,418
Other Services	72	34	53	58	438	1,744
Public Administration	47	31	26	6	199	1,027

**Table 5.** 2018 Employed Population 16+ by Industry

Commute for Work	Estimate	PCT
Worked in Place of Residence	728	72.0%
Worked Outside Place of Residence	283	28.0%
Worked in Knox County	912	90.2%
Worked outside Knox County	99	9.8%
Worked Outside Ohio	0	0.0%
Total Workers 16 and Over	1011	100.0%

**Table 6.** Commute for work. American Community Survey ACS 2013-2017

The Knox County Comprehensive Plan 2018 Update by reference to analysis within Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and Columbus2020 planning documents found that approximately 10,300 Knox County Residents commute to jobs outside the county. The majority of these commuters work in Licking and Franklin County. Those who travel north tend to work in Mansfield and Wooster. The majority of those who commute into Knox County work in manufacturing jobs concentrated in Mount Vernon. The largest employers in Knox County are also in Mount Vernon.

Among the most common job types in Knox County with the best pay, postsecondary teachers top the list with nearly 500 employed at an average annual wage over \$77,000. Over 400 registered nurses average over \$64,000 annually. Elementary and middle school teachers average nearly \$55,000 per year among the 440 counted in a study by Celmar in 2017<sup>3</sup>. Seven of the top ten most common jobs in Knox County paid wages less than 150 percent of the federal poverty threshold.

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<sup>3</sup> Turnover Basics and Wage Survey Trend Review. Bethany Celmar PHR. Referenced in The Knox County Comprehensive Plan 2018 Update



## Housing Analysis

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Through August of 2019, 18 homes were sold in Gambier at an average value approaching \$150,000. According to Zillow, half of the sales were turn-of-the-last-century homes with three bedrooms and generous porches and the other half were mid-century neocolonial style five- and six-bedroom homes on large lots. The average sales value for the 28 homes sold in 2018 was \$180,000. There are no contemporary subdivisions within or adjacent to Gambier. The newest developments, commercial and residential, on Chase Avenue to be associated with Kenyon College, evoke a traditional Shaker Village appearance. Mount Vernon may absorb demand for newer homes.

The Village has a compact shape. It is marked by understated clapboard sided homes, mature trees, and large lawns. The College also influences the shape of the town and availability of real estate with the Philander Chase Conservation. Thousands of acres around the college have been protected from development through this conservation easement. Historic homes have a certain appeal but may not have the bedrooms or amenities common in contemporary construction.

In Gambier Village, 29 homes have been sold since 2016. Sales as recorded with the Knox County Auditor are summarized in the table below. The three homes listed on Zillow in October 2019 were listed at an average price of \$188,000.

Market-rate rental housing within the study area includes accessory units for which some listings were found but details could not be substantiated. A 23-unit affordable apartment complex on Chase Avenue on the edge of town has a five-person waiting list. The base rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$400 per month. The map below shows median contract rent in the area reported to the American Community Survey (ACS).

Outside of Mount Vernon, Centerburg has the most multi-family rental options in Knox County. An account of the limited data on multi-family apartment communities is provided below. Mount Vernon is approximately a 10-minute drive via State Route 229 or a 35 minute bike ride on the Kokosing Gap Trail.

	count	Price (average)	Square Feet (average)	Number of Bedrooms (average)	Number of Bathroom (average)	Days on Market (average)	Price per Square Foot (average)	Year Built (average)	Acres (average)
Centerburg	2	\$144,450.00	2,128.00	4.00	2.00	62.50	\$71.80	1903	0.15
Danville	2	\$86,500.00	1,992.00	4.00	2.00	197.00	\$46.94	1961	0.24
Fredericktown	7	\$126,300.00	1,499.29	3.29	1.57	48.57	\$87.38	1949	0.35
Gambier	3	\$188,300.00	1,548.00	3.33	2.00	275.33	\$120.42	1969	1.29

**Table 7.** Homes for sale October 2019. Zillow.com

Year	Number of Sales	Average Sales Value	Average Living Area	Sales Value per Sq. Ft.
2019	5	\$208,780	1,479	141
2018	7	\$185,700	1,471	126
2017	8	\$178,750	1,598	112
2016	9	\$173,456	1,612	108
2015	4	\$212,750	2,078	102
2014	7	\$177,743	1,714	104
2013	6	\$288,194	2,332	124
2012	6	\$175,083	1,798	97
2011	6	\$207,583	1,891	110
2010	7	\$161,643	1,677	96
2009	3	\$151,333	1,443	105

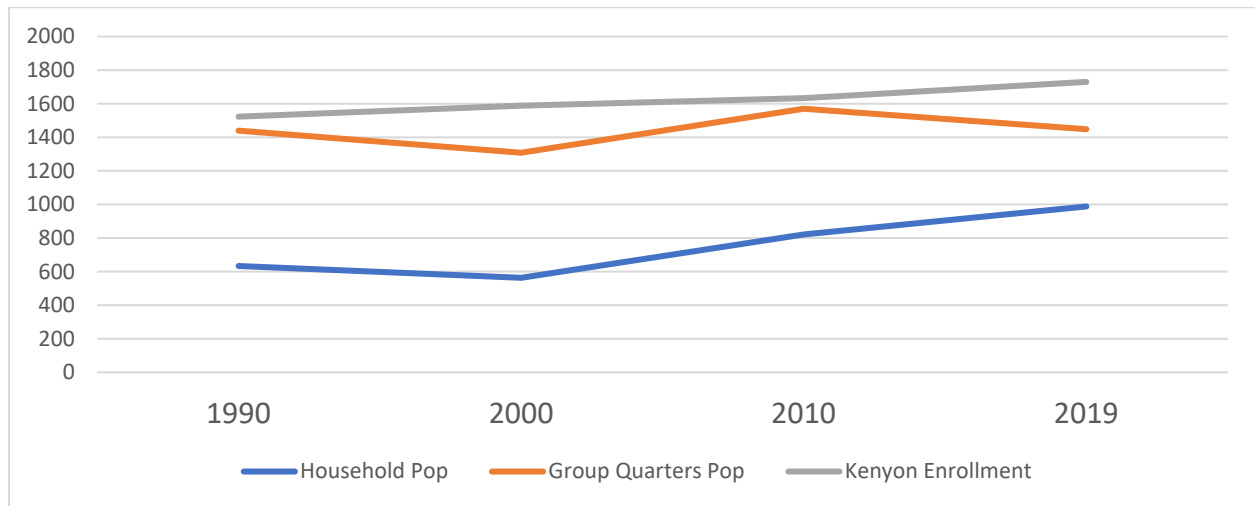
**Table 8.** Gambier home sales data.

Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure							
	Census 2010		Census 2019		Census 2024		
Gambier	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Total Housing Units	375		384		393		
Occupied	343	91.47%	352	91.67%	360	91.60%	
Owner	173	46.13%	157	40.89%	166	42.24%	
Renter	170	45.33%	195	50.78%	194	49.36%	
Vacant	32	8.53%	32	8.33%	34	8.65%	

**Table 9.** Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure.

Name/Address	Village	Total Units	Available Units	Age or Income Restrictions	Notes
Danville Commons	Danville	48	0	42 of 48 Units Income Restricted (RD 515 Subsidy)	Market-Rate: 2 BR \$550/month RD 515: Renters pay 30% of Household Income
Centerburg Court	Centerburg	36	0	no	would not disclose
Centerburg Commons	Centerburg	36	2	affordable	3-bedroom apartments \$451-\$478/month,
Heart of Ohio Homes	Centerburg	25	0	affordable	3 to 4-bedroom homes with garages \$556-\$682/ month
164 W Houck Street	Centerburg	20	0	62+, affordable	
4 Posey Drive	Fredericktown	32	0	no	2-bedrooms \$610 per month
411 Chase Ave	Gambier	24	0	affordable	5 person waiting list; 15 1-bedroom at \$400base, 8 2-bedrooms \$435
would not disclose	Gambier	2	1		\$675/month

**Table 10.** Limited data on apartments in Knox County from various sources including Apartments.com and interviews with property managers.



**Figure 4.** Kenyon College enrollment with US Census estimates of household population and group quarters population in Gambier.

The estimated total village population is 2,436 in 2019. Kenyon College enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year is 1,730 (71% of Village Pop.). Kenyon Academic Calendar runs mid-August to mid-May. The limited activities during summer months include camps, research, athletics, and weddings. It can be challenging for businesses to stay profitable during the summer and holiday breaks when a majority of students head home.

Professors and staff of Kenyon College live in Gambier and Mount Vernon. All Kenyon students are required to live in campus housing. Kenyon College offers a variety of housing options not included in the housing or household summaries above.

Kenyon College housing:

- 12 traditional style residence halls (singles, doubles, triples, est. 1,200 beds)
- 7 different apartment style areas (117 apartments total)
- 6 different programmatic houses
- 1 farm
- 1,800 beds
- May consider renovating dorms, but no new units planned
- Students required to live on campus.
- Most housing is located on or within a few blocks of campus.

### **Rental Housing Demand**

In order to understand the future demand for rental housing in Gambier, we first analyzed the rental housing supply and demand in Knox County. According to estimates from Esri, a third-party data provider, the number of renter occupied households in Knox County is projected to decline between 2019 and 2024 by 128 households after gaining 1,137 renter households between 2010 and 2019.

Although renter households are projected to decline overall, we anticipate demand for 323 new multi-family housing units within the next five years. In order to calculate the total units needed, we used the 2024 projected renter household figure and then added 5 percent, with the goal being a 5 percent vacancy rate needed for a balanced market. We then subtracted the existing rental units (both occupied and vacant) and any planned and proposed units. Through our research, we could identify only 16 units proposed in Mt Vernon. Finally, we estimated that around 3 percent of rental housing would need to be replaced in the next 5 years because of age and quality. This leaves us with 323 additional units needed to achieve a balanced market with a 5 percent vacancy rate.



Short-Term Rental Demand Scenario	Rental Housing 5-Year Demand					
	All Incomes	< \$30K	\$30K to \$60K	\$60K to \$100K	\$100K to \$150K	\$150K and up
Income Range						
2019 Households	7,974	3,447	2,368	1,822	210	127
2024 Households	7,945	3,227	2,348	2,030	188	152
Rental Units Needed for Balanced Market (95% Occupied)	8,363	3,397	2,472	2,136	198	160
- Existing Occupied Rental Product (2019 Households)	7,974	3,447	2,368	1,822	210	127
- Existing Vacant Units For Rent	265	116	80	61	7	0
- Planned & Proposed Projects	16	0	0	0	0	0
+ Units Needed to Replace Obsolete Rental Housing Stock	199	105	50	38	4	1
<b>Total Units Needed Over 5 Years</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>-61</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>35</b>

### For-Sale Housing Demand

Based on our understanding of the housing market through data analysis and field work, we have determined the Housing Market Analysis (HMA) for Gambier to be Knox County. While we understand that some support for new housing will come from outside of the county, any new housing development in Gambier will draw the majority of support from within Knox County.

In the for-sale housing market, we are projecting that demand will outpace supply by 2026. This scenario assumes a 0.8 percent vacancy rate in the for-sale market (based on Census data) and that 1.0 percent of the housing stock will need to be replaced within 5 years. Based on projected owner-occupied housing growth, we anticipate that 803 available single-family homes will need to be available in Knox County. We also anticipate that 131 homes will be available as “vacant for rent” and that 162 homes will need replaced because of age and quality. Once we take all of these factors into consideration, we anticipate demand for 905 new single-family homes in Knox County by 2024.

We anticipate that most of this growth will take place in and around Mt Vernon and in the southwestern portion of the county near Centerburg. According to County Auditor data, there are 29 parcels classified as “vacant single-family residential”. Of these 29, only 15 are large enough to be developable. Outside of Gambier, the only parcels zoned for “rural residential” uses are on the north side of town. All other parcels are either zoned “agricultural” or “conservation”.

Gambier also faces competition for new residents from Mt. Vernon, which is a 10-minute drive away and has more amenities and housing options. Given these constraints, we don’t anticipate long-term single-family housing growth in Gambier.

Based on projected income by tenure trends, the demand for homes will come primarily from those households making \$100,000 to \$150,000. It is projected that these types of homeowners will continue to grow through 2026.

Looking at the 10-year growth projections, we anticipate demand for single-family housing in Knox County to be 1,690 new homes.

Short-Term For-Sale Demand Scenario	For-Sale Housing 5-Year Demand				
	All Incomes	< \$50K	\$50K to \$100K	\$100K to \$150K	\$150K and up
Income Range					
2019 Households by Income	16,023	5,817	6,243	2,592	1,371
2024 Households by Income	16,642	5,867	6,315	2,883	1,576
For-Sale Units Needed for Balanced Market (98.5% Occupied)	16,896	5,957	6,412	2,927	1,600
- Existing Occupied For-Sale Product (2019 Households)	16,023	5,817	6,243	2,592	1,371
- Existing Vacant Units For Sale	130	47	51	21	11
+ Units Needed to Replace 1% of For-Sale Housing Stock	162	59	63	26	14
<b>Total Units Needed Over 5 Years</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>232</b>

Table 11. Short-Term for-sale housing demand scenario. Urban Decision Group.

Mid-Term For-Sale Growth Scenario	For-Sale Housing 10-Year Demand (Current Trends)				
	All Incomes	< \$50K	\$50K to \$100K	\$100K to \$150K	\$150K and up
Income Range					
2019 Income Qualified Households	16,023	5,817	6,243	2,592	1,371
2029 Income Qualified Households	17,261	5,918	6,387	3,174	1,782
For-Sale Units Needed for Balanced Market (98.5% Occupied)	17,524	6,008	6,485	3,222	1,809
- Existing Occupied For-Sale Product	16,023	5,817	6,243	2,592	1,371
- Existing Vacant Units For Sale	134	47	51	23	13
+ Units Needed to Replace 2% of For-Sale Housing Stock	323	117	126	52	28
<b>Total Units Needed Over 10 Years</b>	<b>1,690</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>453</b>

Table 12. Mid-term for-sale housing demand scenario. Urban Decision Group.

**Senior Living and Senior Care**

Although the median age of Gambier is estimated to be 22.2 years old, this figure is skewed by the number of Kenyon College students. Of the remaining population, a majority are over the age of 55. Given the age and quality of the single-family housing stock and lack of multi-family options within the village, we anticipate demand for other housing and care options for seniors living within Gambier. Currently, the closest options for senior living and nursing care are located in Mt Vernon. The table below illustrates the options for seniors broken down by type: independent living, congregate care, assisted living and nursing care.

<b>Independent Living/Congregate Care Facilities</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Year Open/ Renovated</b>	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Number Vacant</b>	<b>Occupancy Rate</b>
Ohio Eastern Star Home	1951	12	0	100.0%
The Living Center	1963/1986	41	6	85.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>88.7%</b>

<b>Assisted Living Facilities</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Year Open/ Renovated</b>	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Number Vacant</b>	<b>Occupancy Rate</b>
Brookdale Mount Vernon	2002	110	2	98.2%
Country Club Center II	1979	36	0	100.0%
Hamilton Assisted Living	1989/2013	19	0	100.0%
Mount Vernon Health & Rehab Center (Lower)	2007	11	0	100.0%
Mount Vernon Health & Rehab Center (Upper)	2019	11	11	0.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>187</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>93.0%</b>

Nursing Care Facilities				
Name	Year Open/ Renovated	Total Units	Number Vacant	Occupancy Rate
Buchenwald Healthcare Neighborhood	2016	62	0	100.0%
Centerburg Pointe	2009	66	6	90.9%
Centerburg Respiratory & Specialty Rehab	1979	42	5	88.1%
Country Club Center I	1979	76	0	100.0%
Country Court	1971	92	23	75.0%
Moreland Hughes Rehabilitation Center	2002	24	4	83.3%
Mount Vernon Health & Rehab Center	2013	20	1	95.0%
The Laurels of Mount Vernon	1948/1995	104	2	98.1%
Whispering Hills Care Center	1992	36	4	88.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>522</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>91.4%</b>

All of the independent living and assisted facilities in Knox County are located in Mount Vernon. The only two senior care facilities located outside of Mt Vernon are Centerburg Pointe and Centerburg Respiratory and Specialty Rehab.

For the purpose of forecasting demographic support, we have taken the range of the average monthly fees for the independent living and congregate care properties surveyed in Knox County.

Our calculations assume that up to 60.0% of annual household income would be directed toward these fees. Assuming a five-year stay, these fees yield total costs and required assets/income as follows:

- Independent Living -  $\$1,385 \times 12 = \$16,620 / 60\% = \$27,700 \times 5 \text{ years} = \$138,500$
- Congregate Care - Low -  $\$2,200 \times 12 = \$26,400 / 60\% = \$44,000 \times 5 \text{ years} = \$220,000$ .
- Congregate Care - High -  $\$2,650 \times 12 = \$31,800 / 60\% = \$53,000 \times 5 \text{ years} = \$265,000$ .

A wide variety of other options exists for seniors of generally good health. These options include homeownership and condominium/patio homes, as well as conventional apartments. Based upon these choices, we consider capture rates ranging from 5% to 10% of income-qualified households as achievable rates. As such, a conservative 10% capture rate was used in our demand estimates.

Support calculations are summarized in the following table:



Total Support For Senior Living					
Knox County					
Base Monthly Rate	Support	X 10.0% Capture Rate	/80% (20% Support From Outside Market Area)	Competitive Units	Net Support
Independent \$1,385	1,681 + 1,219 = 2,900	290	363	12	351
Assisted (Low) \$3,111	1,868 + 659 = 2,527	253	316	187	129
Assisted (High) \$4,472	1,699 + 383 = 2,082	208	260	187	73
Nursing \$218*	1,516 + 190 = 1,706	171	213	480**	-267

\*Denotes Daily Fee

\*\*Excludes Nursing units at Centerburg Respiratory & Specialty Rehab

As illustrated by the support calculations, Knox County could support 351 new independent living units by capturing ten percent of the income and age qualified population in the county. We believe this presents an opportunity for Gambier given the age of the other two independent living facilities in Knox County and the anticipated support. There is also support for assisted living units in Knox County, at both the low and high ends of the monthly rate based on existing facilities.

Oberlin College outside of Cleveland, Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, Florida University, Duke University, Notre Dame, and Stanford, among others, have opportunities for their alumni to return to campus upon retirement. Nationwide, retirees of the boomer generation are looking for intellectually stimulating, intergenerational retirement environments, or university-based retirement communities (UBRCs)<sup>4</sup>. Gambier Village with the support of Kenyon College may be able to capitalize on this trend.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/why-boomers-are-retiring-to-college>





The following includes a representative sample of residential building types for sale currently in Gambier.



Figure 6. Home for sale in Gambier  
211 E Woodside Dr



Figure 7. Home for sale in Gambier  
8885 Grove Church Rd



Figure 8. Home sold in Gambier  
304 E Woodside Dr



Figure 9. Home sold in Gambier  
207 Kokosing Dr



Figure 10. Gambier Dormitory



Figure 11. Multi-family apartment court in Gambier

## Commercial Analysis

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### Commercial Survey

In order to gain a thorough understanding of Gambier's local business climate, we physically surveyed every business within and immediately surrounding the village and attempted to gather feedback from every business owner and manager. During our field analysis, we collected data on building quality, convenience of access, visibility, number of parking spaces and parking quality. We scored each commercial property in these areas on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent. These scores are based on a visual analysis without any in-depth knowledge of structural quality.

In total we surveyed 13 commercial spaces in and around Gambier totaling roughly 44,000 square feet. There are 44,000 SF of Commercial space in Gambier. All of the commercial property, with the exception of the Rogan House Bed and Breakfast, People's Bank, the Gambier House, and the Weather Vane, are located on property owned by Kenyon College.

Kenyon is working to get all retail tenants to \$8/square foot, annually, and responsible for all utilities. Currently, Kenyon pays water/sewer for two tenants and picks up trash for all of them. Once the library project is complete (est. Spring 2021), two more retail spaces will be available for lease (1,200 and 1,500 square feet).

All 180 full-time faculty at Kenyon have an office and they have no surplus of faculty offices. They do not offer space in academic buildings to outside entities.

A majority of the businesses in Gambier fall under the category of Accommodation and Food Services. This is not surprising, given that college students comprise a majority of the customer base in Gambier. All three lodging facilities we spoke with said that their busiest times of the year are move-in, graduation, and alumni weekends. Their business during the summer comes from parent/student visits, weddings, and hiking/tourism.

Most of the business owners we spoke with lived outside of the village and mentioned that most of their employees did too. Almost all business owners would like to see more shops and restaurants in town, but conceded that these types of businesses have trouble staying open because of the summer and holiday lulls.

	ANNUAL RENT/SF LOW	ANNUAL RENT/SF HIGH	ANNUAL RENT/SF MEDIAN	AVG YEAR BUILT
RETAIL	\$7	\$19.50	\$13	1980
OFFICE	\$8	\$22.00	\$12	1983



The story of the commercial mix in Gambier is what is not in Gambier. There is no grocery or pharmacy in Gambier and no medical facilities. The Village Market serves as the only location to purchase some grocery-type items, but it is far from a full-service grocery store. The closest grocery and pharmacy are located roughly five minutes away in Mt. Vernon. However, Conway's Eastside Pharmacy does provide subscription delivery to Gambier. There is also a health center on campus that provides free services to Kenyon students.

Driving east down Wiggin Street from Gambier Street you find yourself suddenly in the middle of a picturesque college campus – Kenyon College. The primary commercial corridor is not just the center of commerce for the college but serves as the downtown for the village itself. The corridor is comprised of two streets, Chase Avenue to the west and Gaskin Avenue to the east with a median and sidewalk in between called the Middle Path. This strip is what connects the residence halls to the north with the university buildings to the south.

The corridor is clean, well landscaped and has a mix of newer and historic buildings. The strip includes the campus bookstore, Wiggin Street Coffee, the post office, and a handful of restaurants and places to eat. The Village Market serves as the de facto grocery store for the village, but it is the size of a large convenience store. Most people drive to Mount Vernon to do their shopping. The newest addition is a recently opened Mexican restaurant.

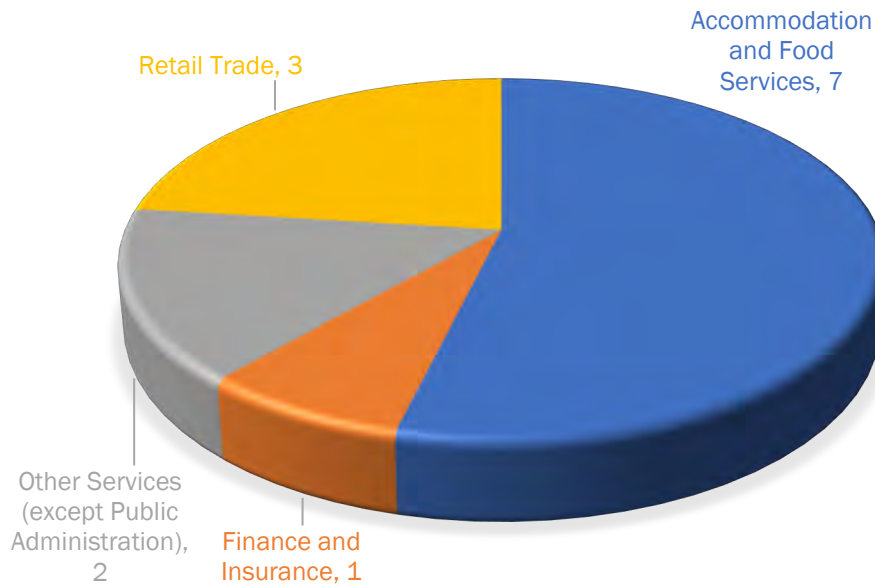
There is a 30-bed hotel at the intersection of Chase Avenue and Wiggin Street that also features a restaurant and bar. I spoke with the hotel manager who told me that it is a challenge for businesses in the area because a majority of the village's population leaves for the summer, but they do well when school is in session because students attending Kenyon College tend to have a lot of disposable income.

Speaking with the owner of Campus Auto and Tire, the only auto repair shop in the village, he recently took over the business for his dad who ran it for a number of years. His business is very slow during the summer when school is out. He seems to think that a bicycle shop would do well here because of the number of students that use bikes to get around. At the end of the school year, many students leave their bikes behind. This would present an opportunity to repair and resell bikes as well.

The scale of the college is favorable to getting around via bike or by foot, but according to several business owners there is a parking problem when school is in session. Because students come from all over country, many drive their own vehicle into town and keep them there for the school year. Even freshmen are allowed to park cars on campus. Some of the parking issues are anticipated to be alleviated when the new library and parking garage on campus are complete. Besides bike or car, there are no other transportation options on campus or in the village. Some kind of campus circulator shuttle service may be a viable option for decreasing the reliance on cars.

The athletic facilities at Kenyon College are exceptional. The Kenyon Athletic Center (KAC) opened in 2006 and includes an indoor track, and Olympic sized swimming pool, a 1,600 seat basketball arena and a 12,000 square foot fitness center. The KAC is free to not only students, but residents of Gambier who are not affiliated with the college. The KAC also hosts several community events including the local school district graduation. There is also a new turf field being constructed directly across the street from the KAC.

GAMBIER BUSINESS SUMMARY



**Figure 12.** Distribution industry sectors represented in Gambier.

Seemingly the only option for any commercial development not on college-owned property would be through annexation. According to the Mayor, they have had proposals for multifamily development in the past that have been strongly opposed by the villagers.

There are two bed and breakfasts here, one located on east Wiggin Street across from campus and further north on Chase Avenue. The two bed and breakfasts along with the 30-room hotel are the only lodging facilities in Gambier. According to people we spoke with, parents or perspective students who come to visit typically stay in Columbus. It certainly seems like there is demand for more lodging here.

The following table includes all of the commercial business within Gambier.

Business Name	Business Type	Address	Year Built	Year Renovated	Building Quality Rating	Visibility Rating	Access/Circulation Rating	Parking Spaces	Parking Quality Rating
Campus Auto and Tire	Auto Repair	101 W Brooklyn St	1964	-	5	5	-	0	0
Chillitos	Restaurant	108 Gaskin Ave	2018	-	5	3	-	0	0
Gambier Deli	Restaurant	110 Gaskin Ave	2018	-	5	5	-	0	0
Gambier House B&B	Bed & Breakfast	107 E Wiggins St	1845	-	5	5	-	0	0
Headquarters Hair Styling	Hair Salon	101 N Acland St	1890	-	3	5	-	0	0
Kenyon College Bookstore	Bookstore	106 Gaskin Ave	1967	2018	5	5	-	0	0
Kenyon Inn & Restaurant	Hotel	100 W Wiggins St	1985	2012	3	5	3	6	3
Peoples Bank	Bank	103 E Wiggins St	1998	-	5	5	-	0	0
Rogan House Bed And Breakfast	Bed & Breakfast	401 Chase Ave	1885	-	3	5	4	3	2
Village Inn	Restaurant	102 Gaskin Ave	1947	-	5	5	-	0	0
Village Market	Convenience Store	111 Chase Ave	2017	-	5	5	-	0	0
Weather Vane	Clothing Store	103 Scott Ln	1910	-	3	2	-	0	0
Wiggins Street Coffee	Coffee Shop	101 E Wiggins St	1890	2003	5	5	-	0	0

**Table 13.** Observations of commercial businesses within Gambier.

### Building Quality

The majority of the buildings along the main stretch of downtown Gambier have been remodeled within the last few years; including even some of the old buildings like the Gambier Auto and Tire and the Kenyon Inn and Restaurant, which is over 100 years old. The two bed and breakfasts are in good condition as well. The quality level of the buildings on campus speaks to the investment and care that has gone into maintaining buildings that are nearly 200 years old.

### Signage and Visibility

Signage and visibility are not major issues in Gambier. Most businesses in Gambier don't rely on drive by traffic to attract customers, because there simply isn't enough competition. The only business that could benefit from a more highly visible location is the Weather Vane, which is located off the main strip behind the post office.

### Ease of Access and Parking

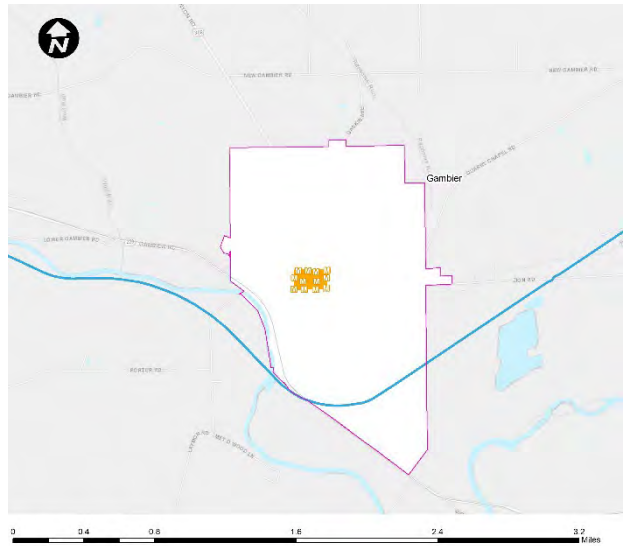
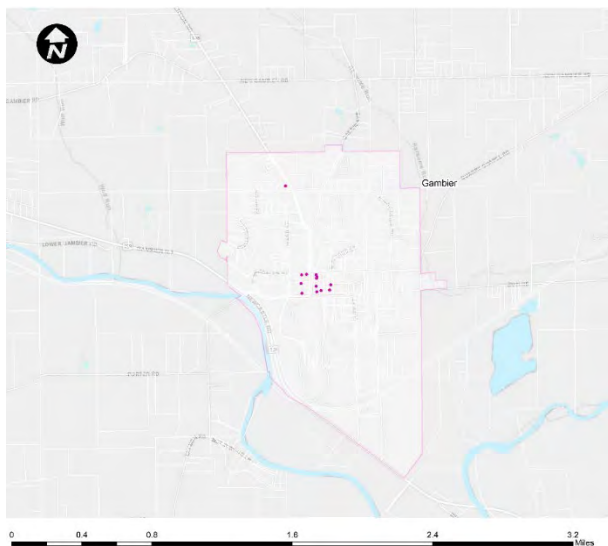
When we surveyed Gambier over the summer, parking did not seem to be an issue anywhere downtown. Free on-street parking is plentiful along Gaskin and Chase Avenues and Wiggins Street. However, we have been told that when classes are in session, parking can become an issue. Many of the students keep a car on campus and will drive and park near downtown. Another issue is the construction of the library on campus, which will add additional parking spots once completed, but

has forced some students to park on the street while construction is in progress. There is no bus service or other alternative transportation available in Gambier. Many students bike to class, but there is no bike shop or bicycle repair shop anywhere in the village.



**Figures 13 and 14.** Parking and businesses on Wiggins Street in Gambier.





**Figure 15.** Distribution of businesses within Gambier (bottom left) and the location of commercially zoned property in Gambier (bottom right).





**Figure 16.** Aerial close up of the business district within Gambier. Kenyon College dormitories are located to the north of Brooklyn Street. The campus is below Wiggins Street.

## Retail Marketplace

The Retail sector is divided into several groups or subsectors. Retail analysis usually takes the form of a supply and demand analysis. When demand exceeds supply, we refer to the market as experiencing “leakage,” which means sales are “leaking” outside of the trade area. Conversely, when supply exceeds demand, we refer to the market as having a surplus. This generally indicates that people residing outside of the trade area are absorbing the excess supply. A retail subsector experiencing leakage can indicate a market opportunity for new entrants. All retail subsectors have varying degrees of demand elasticity. In other words, consumers will travel a certain distance to procure a good or service, depending on its price and the scarcity of the good. This is best demonstrated by comparing two very different goods – grocery items and luxury goods.

Items found at a grocery are generally readily available (not scarce) and low cost. We call these low-order goods. Low order goods are *inelastic*. This means the consumer will generally travel to the closest establishment to procure the goods because differences in price among competitors is usually very small

Conversely, luxury goods are *elastic*, as those items (i.e. automobiles) are harder to find, and the scarcity usually results in higher prices. Consumers are generally willing to travel greater distances to procure a car if it means they are buying the car that they are explicitly seeking, and/or they are saving a significant amount of money by traveling the required distance to procure it.

Because goods and services have varying degrees of demand elasticity, their respective trade areas should vary accordingly. For example, the trade area for a convenience store is relatively compact – often less than five minutes in travel time. Conversely, the trade area for an automobile dealership may be as large as a one-hour drive from the dealership. In addition to demand elasticity, trade areas vary with travel friction (how easy or hard it is to get from one place to another) and the number of competitors.

Complicating matters even further is the impact of retail sales online. Although online sales currently account for less than 12 percent of all retail sales, that number is steadily increasing. Within the next five years, online sales may account for as much as 20 percent of all retail sales. Further, omnichannel sales are emerging as the platform of choice for retail sales. Omnichannel simply means a retailer is utilizing more than one channel for sales – generally a brick and mortar store with an online store.

For the purpose of simplicity, this exercise examines retail subsectors within the context of a single trade area – Gambier Village. Assessing the degree to which retail subsectors are affected by online sales is difficult; however, low-order goods (excluding most common grocery items) are currently more susceptible to online sales while high-order goods (like automobiles) are less susceptible.



**Figure 17.** The Village Market in Gambier.



FINAL DRAFT 01-13-2020

2017 Industry Summary	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$14,505,267	\$3,287,740	\$11,217,527	63.0	6
Total Retail Trade	\$13,050,002	\$1,574,740	\$11,475,262	78.5	4
Total Food & Drink	\$1,455,265	\$1,713,000	(\$257,735)	8.1	3
2017 Industry Group					
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$2,820,956	\$360,927	\$2,460,029	77.3	1
Automobile Dealers	\$2,297,682	\$0	\$2,297,682	100.0	0
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$247,540	\$0	\$247,540	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$275,734	\$360,927	(\$85,193)	(13.4)	1
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$386,891	\$436,378	(\$49,487)	(6.0)	1
Furniture Stores	\$259,637	\$0	\$259,637	100.0	0
Home Furnishings Stores	\$127,254	\$436,378	(\$309,124)	(54.8)	1
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$436,708	\$0	\$436,708	100.0	0
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$715,012	\$0	\$715,012	100.0	0
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	\$657,532	\$0	\$657,532	100.0	0
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$57,480	\$0	\$57,480	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	\$2,319,652	\$362,737	\$1,956,915	73.0	1
Grocery Stores	\$2,082,888	\$362,737	\$1,720,151	70.3	1
Specialty Food Stores	\$132,583	\$0	\$132,583	100.0	0
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$104,181	\$0	\$104,181	100.0	0
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$902,670	\$0	\$902,670	100.0	0
Gasoline Stations	\$1,547,092	\$0	\$1,547,092	100.0	0
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$641,068	\$414,698	\$226,370	21.4	1
Clothing Stores	\$417,968	\$414,698	\$3,270	0.4	1
Shoe Stores	\$91,918	\$0	\$91,918	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$131,182	\$0	\$131,182	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$303,557	\$0	\$303,557	100.0	0
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	\$238,719	\$0	\$238,719	100.0	0
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	\$64,838	\$0	\$64,838	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	\$2,229,442	\$0	\$2,229,442	100.0	0
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$1,554,999	\$0	\$1,554,999	100.0	0
Other General Merchandise Stores	\$674,443	\$0	\$674,443	100.0	0
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$558,830	\$0	\$558,830	100.0	0
Florists	\$17,758	\$0	\$17,758	100.0	0
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$115,082	\$0	\$115,082	100.0	0
Used Merchandise Stores	\$89,902	\$0	\$89,902	100.0	0
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$336,089	\$0	\$336,089	100.0	0
Nonstore Retailers	\$188,123	\$0	\$188,123	100.0	0
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$123,482	\$0	\$123,482	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	\$20,830	\$0	\$20,830	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	\$43,812	\$0	\$43,812	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$1,455,265	\$1,713,000	(\$257,735)	(8.1)	3
Special Food Services	\$39,368	\$243,272	(\$203,904)	(72.1)	1
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$54,096	\$0	\$54,096	100.0	0
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$1,361,801	\$1,469,728	(\$107,927)	(3.8)	2

Table 14. Retail Supply and Demand for Gambier.



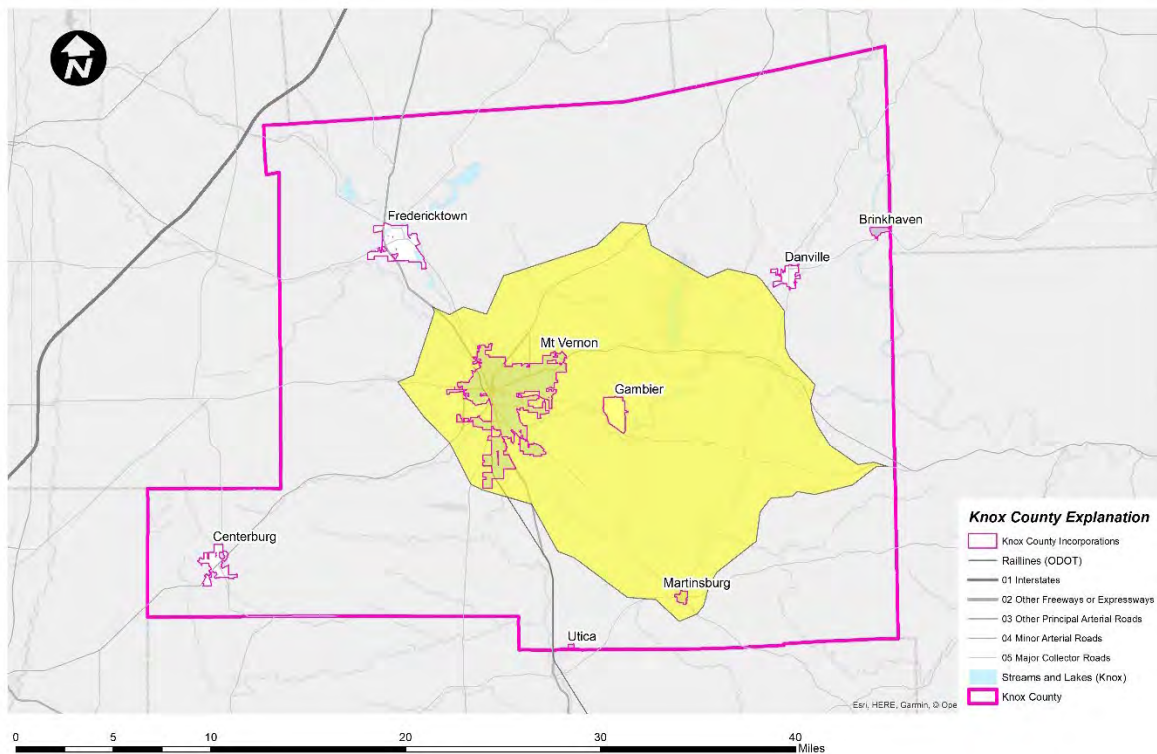
Overall, the various retail subsectors (including food, drink, and retail) are undersupplied in the Gambier market. Demand for the majority of retail sectors (where the value in the demand column is greater than the supply column) is fulfilled outside of the college town of Gambier. In these cases, the consumers residing within Gambier are traveling (or ordering online) outside of Gambier to procure these goods.

Many subsectors, including Sporting Goods, Office Supplies, and Electronics and Appliances Stores are not represented in Gambier, according to data aggregated on a national scale in 2017.

### Secondary Market Area Retail Analysis

In order to account for the demand for retail goods within the immediate area surrounding Gambier we examined supply and demands factors within a secondary market area – a 15-minute drive time from the grocery store in the center of Gambier (The Village Market). Gambier is less than 10 minutes from big box retailers, groceries, chain restaurants, hotels, and other services on US Highway 36 on the west side of Mount Vernon. The 15-minute drivetime market area of the Aldi grocery store in Mount Vernon envelopes Gambier.

The following map illustrates the nearest options for full-service groceries. Mount Vernon is centrally located within Knox County and has more options.



**Figure 18.** Location of major grocery stores in the region and their market areas as defined by 15 minute drivetimes.

FINAL DRAFT 01-13-2020

2017 Industry Summary	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$420,983,372	\$396,002,342	\$24,981,030	3.1	268
Total Retail Trade	\$382,373,074	\$343,669,638	\$38,703,436	5.3	193
Total Food & Drink	\$38,610,299	\$52,332,704	(\$13,722,405)	15.1	75
2017 Industry Group					
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$83,850,285	\$95,904,202	(\$12,053,917)	(6.7)	34
Automobile Dealers	\$67,645,216	\$78,428,192	(\$10,782,976)	(7.4)	19
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$8,029,936	\$8,656,972	(\$627,036)	(3.8)	4
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$8,175,133	\$8,819,039	(\$643,906)	(3.8)	11
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$10,795,994	\$5,193,897	\$5,602,097	35.0	7
Furniture Stores	\$6,599,699	\$3,996,675	\$2,603,024	24.6	4
Home Furnishings Stores	\$4,196,295	\$1,197,221	\$2,999,074	55.6	3
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$11,552,782	\$5,540,242	\$6,012,540	35.2	10
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$27,836,885	\$88,945,366	(\$61,108,481)	(52.3)	19
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	\$25,364,609	\$87,080,723	(\$61,716,114)	(54.9)	14
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$2,472,276	\$1,864,643	\$607,633	14.0	6
Food & Beverage Stores	\$66,178,316	\$9,958,212	\$56,220,104	73.8	19
Grocery Stores	\$59,576,173	\$8,145,603	\$51,430,570	75.9	14
Specialty Food Stores	\$3,744,073	\$1,008,606	\$2,735,467	57.6	4
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$2,858,070	\$804,003	\$2,054,067	56.1	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$28,691,854	\$25,051,289	\$3,640,565	6.8	18
Gasoline Stations	\$43,633,861	\$23,110,183	\$20,523,678	30.7	8
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$16,719,143	\$5,447,198	\$11,271,945	50.9	17
Clothing Stores	\$10,935,497	\$2,827,553	\$8,107,944	58.9	11
Shoe Stores	\$2,425,591	\$1,777,439	\$648,152	15.4	2
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$3,358,055	\$842,206	\$2,515,849	59.9	4
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$8,350,430	\$8,698,097	(\$347,667)	(2.0)	14
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	\$6,923,055	\$7,722,520	(\$799,465)	(5.5)	10
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	\$1,427,375	\$975,578	\$451,797	18.8	4
General Merchandise Stores	\$62,198,781	\$62,298,598	(\$99,817)	(0.1)	14
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$42,882,155	\$51,727,918	(\$8,845,763)	(9.3)	7
Other General Merchandise Stores	\$19,316,626	\$10,570,679	\$8,745,947	29.3	7
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$16,558,113	\$13,287,500	\$3,270,613	11.0	31
Florists	\$730,726	\$1,499,957	(\$769,231)	(34.5)	6
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$3,326,304	\$2,923,007	\$403,297	6.5	5
Used Merchandise Stores	\$2,172,681	\$2,564,747	(\$392,066)	(8.3)	9
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$10,328,402	\$6,299,789	\$4,028,613	24.2	12
Nonstore Retailers	\$6,006,629	\$234,855	\$5,771,774	92.5	2
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$3,627,777	\$0	\$3,627,777	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	\$569,922	\$206,087	\$363,835	46.9	1
Direct Selling Establishments	\$1,808,930	\$28,768	\$1,780,162	96.9	1
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$38,610,299	\$52,332,704	(\$13,722,405)	(15.1)	75
Special Food Services	\$1,121,313	\$2,194,526	(\$1,073,213)	(32.4)	3
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$1,388,350	\$896,754	\$491,596	21.5	7
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$36,100,635	\$49,241,424	(\$13,140,789)	(15.4)	65

Table 15. Retail Supply and Demand within 15 minutes of The Village Market

## Recreation and Tourism

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Many of the recreational and cultural assets in Knox County are located to the north of and along the Kokosing River. Gambier has created a culture around education and conservation. The Village is located along the Kokosing River and the Kokosing Gap Trail. The landscape is generally flat and agricultural in practice. A long distance cyclist could reach Gambier via the Kokosing Gap Trail and the Heart of Ohio Trail in approximately five hours. The trip to Westerville would take four hours. A trip for commuters and other weekend adventurers can be completed in 30 minutes one way from Mount Vernon. Judging by the limited number of parking spaces and the spatial distribution of student housing and classrooms, with 72 percent of Gambier reporting that they work in their residences, cycling may already be a big part of life in Gambier.

The Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition<sup>5</sup> developed a tourism strategy based on research involving state, local, and trail users in their network areas such as Cleveland and Pittsburg. The Coalition recommends states dedicate more funding to tourism and completing the trail network. Users and local officials emphasized the experiences and attractions along the route that capture the distinctiveness of the region. The report called attention to the industrial history, Underground Railroad tours, Native American history, agricultural tours, breweries, crafts, and the specific natural beauty of the region that could be explored through walking tours or while on route.

Self-selected survey respondents (majority male, age 46 to 65, and weekly trail users) preferred camping followed by hotels and bed and breakfasts for over-night trips. The nearest campground in the region is just outside of Mount Vernon. The nearest hotels were found in Mount Vernon. Several Inns and Bed and Breakfasts are located within Gambier. The per night rate is between \$150 and \$200.

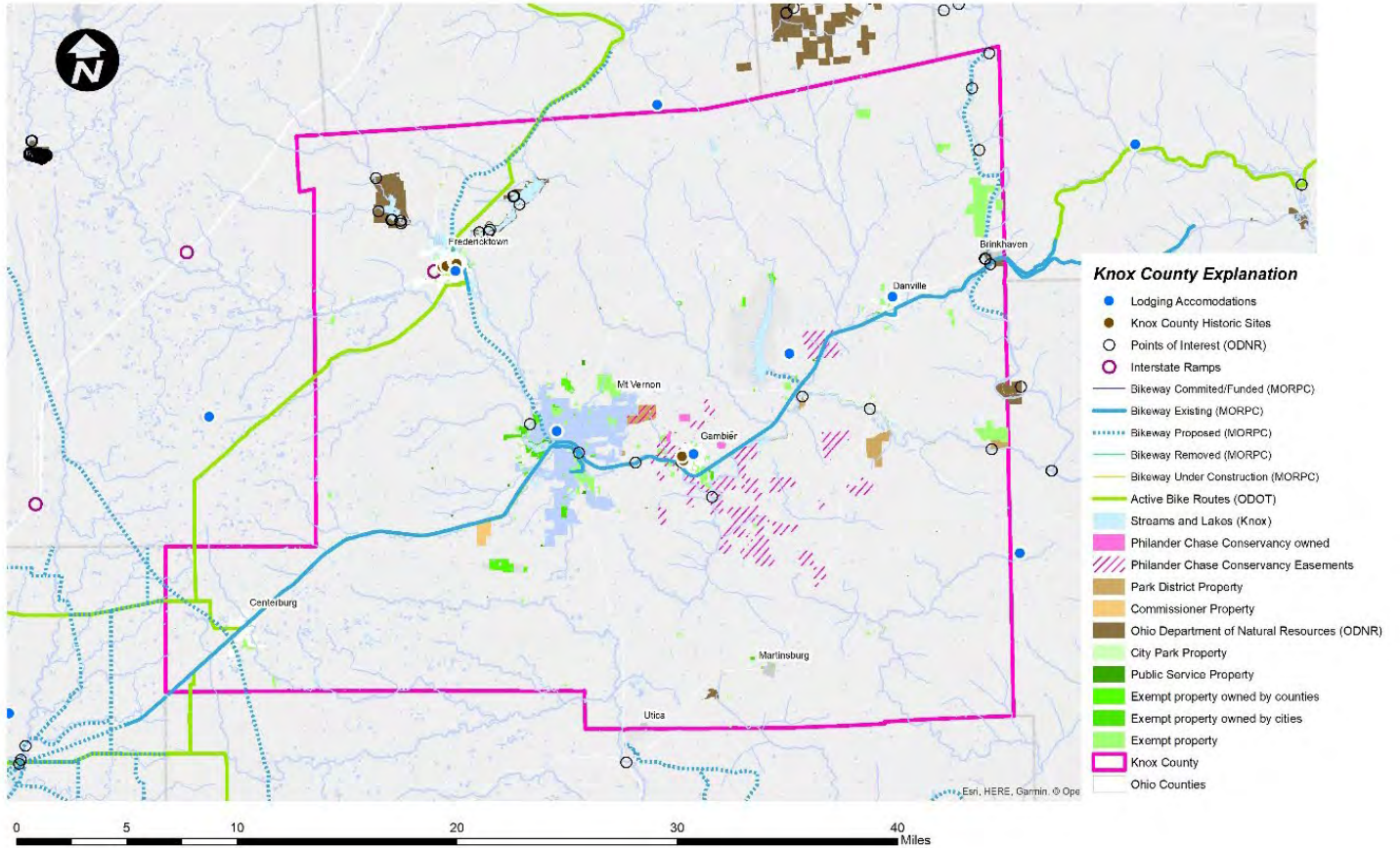


**Figures 19 and 20.** Scenes from around Kenyon College in Gambier.

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<sup>5</sup> Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition. I Heart Trails Tourism Strategy. January 2016.



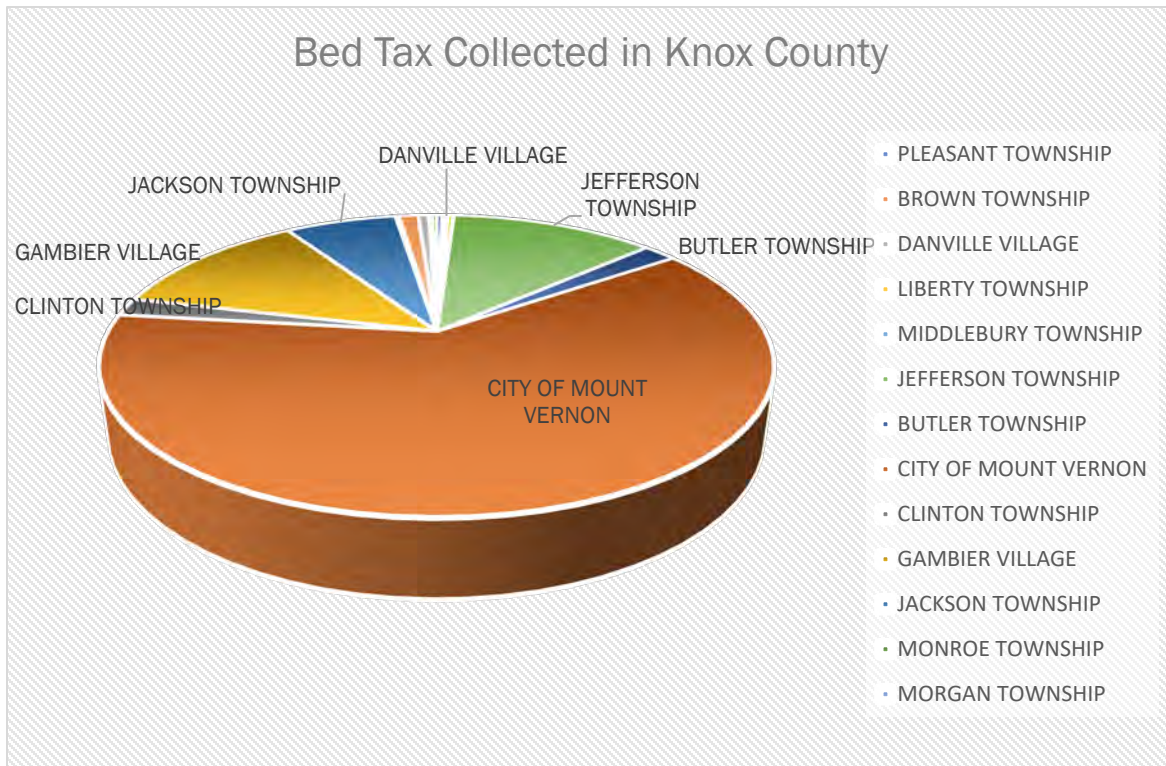


**Figure 21.** Map of recreational and cultural assets in Knox County with lodging options and multiuse trail routes. Note the extensive reach of the Philander Chase Conservancy.



**Figures 22 and 23.** Example of historic architecture in Gambier.





**Figure 24.** Bed Tax Revenue collected in August 2018 to August 2019 in Knox County by incorporated place or township. Revenue is aggregated by month by jurisdiction. This chart illustrates in relative terms where people stayed in Knox County in a 12-month period. Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Type	count	Weekday rate	Weekend rate
BNB	11	\$110.17	\$131.00
Lodge	2	N/A	N/A
Motel	2	\$67.50	\$72.00
Hotel	7	\$134.86	\$161.71
Campground	4	\$42.25	\$42.25
Cabin	6	N/A	N/A
Cottage	1	N/A	N/A
AirBNB House	1	\$99.00	\$99.00



**Table 16.** Lodging accommodations in Knox County with average weekday and weekend rates where available.

The Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition survey found that long distance (multi-day) cyclists likely bike two days on a single trail or visit multiple trails in hub-and-spoke fashion. Regional day-trippers and local trail users spend less than overnight visitors. The services and amenities respondents desired included restaurants and public restrooms/water. Those looking for food options seek out locally sourced and regionally favored foods. Convenience stores and bike shops were noted though trail users may be more likely to seek out a local brewery than the essentials.

The newly designated cross country Great American Rail Trail from the District of Columbia to Washington State would follow the Kokosing Gap Trail through Danville to the Ohio to Erie Trail through Downtown Columbus, Ohio. The trail is a new way to see the country and may attract tourists to shops, restaurants, and lodges along the way.

The Mon River Trail System in West Virginia links a series of “trail towns” that supports hikers with services, promotes the trail to its citizens, and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated. Trail Towns are built on a relationship between a town, the trail, and its volunteers.<sup>6</sup>

With the Knox County Comprehensive Plan focus of building up existing communities through the planning principle of ensuring responsible growth and preserving environmental character, Villages may enjoy continued distinct identities. The spatial separation protected by the comprehensive plan<sup>7</sup> reinforces the attractiveness of trails for the recreational cyclist looking for an escape into the rural Heart of Ohio.

Parkersburg, Fairmont, and Morgantown along the Parkersburg to Pittsburg (P2P) trail corridor in West Virginia have adopted comprehensive plans that recognize existing trails as tourist attractions.<sup>8</sup> The trails are the backbone of their shared-use path network which advances quality-of-life, transportation, recreation, and economic development objectives for those in each city. The Parkersburg Plan (2011) goes a step further in recommending bicycle and pedestrian facilities for all new and redevelopment projects.

The Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau estimates the total impact of tourism on the county to generate \$94 Million in sales which employees over 1,500 (5.8 percent in private sector employment) who earned over \$33 Million in 2017.<sup>9</sup> Tax revenues associated with tourism is estimated to exceed \$12 Million according to a report from 2018. Of the \$60.5 Million in direct sales in Knox County in 2017, approximately one third went to retail trade where over 200 were employed and another third to food and beverage sector where over 500 were employed. The report asserts that tourism supports 1 in every 17 jobs in Knox County.

More information on the trails in Gambier may be found at:

<https://knoxcountyparks.org/> and <http://www.railstotrails.org/greatamericanrailtrail/>

The efforts of the Philander Chase Conservancy are documented at <https://www.kenyon.edu/philander-chase-conservancy/>

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<sup>6</sup> North Country Trail Association.

<sup>7</sup> Knox County Comprehensive Plan 2018 Update.

<sup>8</sup> Connecting Parkersburg to Pittsburg by Rail-Trail – Bringing a world-class trail network to West Virginia. A rail-trail feasibility study of the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition’s Parkersburg to Pittsburg Corridor. Published April 24, 2018.

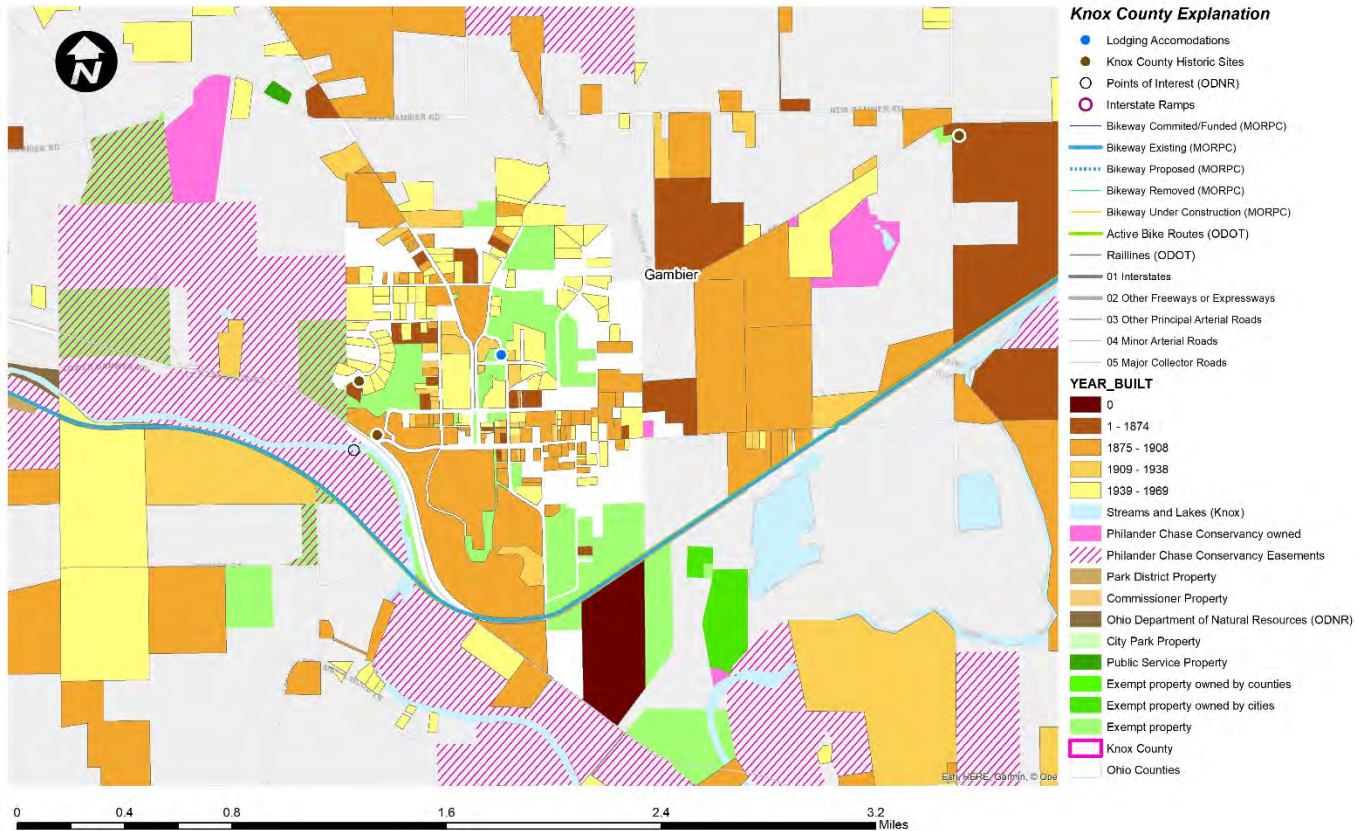
<sup>9</sup> The Economic Impact of Tourism in Knox County, Ohio by Tourism Economics, prepared for the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau. June 2018.

Taking steps to prepare is the first item the Village can undertake for tourism surrounding cycling. Others may, with or without incentives and encouragement, establish group rides based in Gambier. The regional trail network requires many actors to expand and maintain. Readiness is key.



Figures 25 and 26. The Kokosing Gap Trail recreational shelter and railroad cars along the river.





**Figure 27.** Trails (blue and green lines) and public use property (green polygons) in Gambier are shown with properties old enough to be considered historic (orange and yellow polygons). Note the extensive reach of the Philander Chase Conservancy.

## Recommendations

### Recreation

We recommend installing wayfinding signage at the edges of the village along the Kokosing Trail to direct recreational cyclists to downtown eateries and the grocery store. Ideally a highly visible and physically separated bike trail could be constructed from the trail and circulate through the village. Low cost and low stress solutions should be evaluated to allow cyclists to confidently leave the main trail to explore and spend money in Gambier.

Cyclists are self-sufficient. A restroom, drinking water, and a secure, robust, purpose-built bike rack at the main entrance of a place to rest suits most. Well-marked, well-lit, visible, sheltered, and secure bike parking at local eateries and the grocery store could establish a cultural identity around cycling for the village. A unified wayfinding plan that includes signage on State Route 229 may encourage car commuters to experience the trail and local businesses. A gateway concept at the



western edge of the Village where the trail crosses State Route 229 may enhance the visibility of Gambier and the attractiveness of cycling within the community in a signature project.

In addition to developing a culture around cycling, Gambier should promote its downtown and outdoor recreation options. Connecting local leadership with regional and national cycling coalitions may inform the feasibility analysis and strategies Gambier pursues. The Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Parks Commission will be integral to the success of the trail. Gambier should also promote a spectrum of all season and ability recreation options, including hiking the Kokosing Gap Trail or kayaking on the Kokosing River.

### *Housing*

We recommend developing multi-family housing with a commercial/office component targeted towards Kenyon alums and retired professors. There are other examples of these types of projects working throughout the country (see Purchase College in New York, Arizona State, Oberlin College). This could be a multi-generational community and also include an assisted living/nursing care component.

A new multi-family/commercial development could also include a commercial art space with a gallery. One of the businesses we spoke with in town mentioned the Kudos Art-Cop in Mt. Vernon as a popular destination for creative space and events.

Currently, all Kenyon College students are required to live on campus, severely limiting the demand for multi-family housing in Gambier. If this were no longer a requirement, demand for multi-family housing could change drastically. Demand for new, amenity rich communities sought out by college students with disposable income could drive development.

Gambier should take advantage of Gambier's Historic District's designation in the National Register of Historic Places and pursue historic preservation tax credits. These credits could be used to revitalize properties and revive them back their highest and best use. Many of these properties could be turned into bed and breakfasts and help promote the history of the community and support agri-tourism.

Any new single-family housing development through annexation should be towards Mount Vernon along Gaskin and Chase Avenues. This could require a zoning change from Rural Residential to a higher density.

### *Commercial*

We recommend more commercial uses geared towards outdoor and recreation that can be sustained year-round. There is no bike shop in Gambier and the only other bike shop in the county is located in Mt Vernon. Although there is not enough support in Gambier to support a grocery store, a specialty food shop or bakery could be successful. Examples in other parts of the county have proven that small shops can become sustainable with enough promotion done through social media.



GAMBIER, OHIO  
**VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**  
FINAL DRAFT: JANUARY 13, 2020



ms consultants, inc.  
engineers, architects, planners