

2013 MORROW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Building a Better Tomorrow



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This plan would not have been possible without the involvement and support of members of the Morrow community including members of the public, elected officials, and Village and County staff. We gratefully acknowledge every person who invested their time and ideas in creating this plan. Thank you.

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PREFACE

Communities consist of a group of residents with a shared geography, a shared identity, a shared past, and a shared future. They cannot help but to acquire distinct identities that are a product of their surrounding areas and their residents. Morrow is one of many settlements in the Ohio River Valley that have taken root, flourished, and matured much like settlements throughout the country and world. Pioneers built new homes and livelihoods in response to natural resources, topography, transportation links, and proximity to neighboring population centers.

Communities great and small mature and evolve in no small part thanks to new technologies such as canals, railroads, and highways. Communities harness the new technologies, are changed by them, and are often times buffeted by innovations and development patterns that seem beyond the control of any individual person or community. But trends in themselves can be harnessed, and efforts by residents and local officials can reinvigorate places that for a time seem left behind by circumstances larger than themselves.

In order for a community to be a part of new innovations and trends, residents and local officials alike craft thoughtful and comprehensive plans for the future. These plans do not dictate change, but instead share a community vision that will guide future developments and activities that help Morrow realize its vision for itself through flexible code standards, Village programs, leveraging of outside resources, and resident participation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2013 Morrow Comprehensive Plan is the guiding document for the future development, redevelopment, and key projects in the Village. It is the culmination of a yearlong project including 10 public meetings including a fall open house.

A clear message heard during these meetings is that Morrow has undergone significant transition since its heyday in the 1950's and 60's: The railroad closed in 1979, Interstate 71 took traffic and commerce from US22/SR3, Morrow Elementary School closed in 2002, and the downtown has become mostly vacant.

The clear message heard during the public participation process was also that these changes challenge the Village to rediscover its assets and reinvent itself. Morrow is a community of diverse assets. The rugged scenery, Little Miami River, regional bike trail, and the ingredients of a quaint downtown make Morrow an ideal place for a rebirth as a charming community that is a refuge from the monotonous fabric of suburbia. Residents expressed a desire for a fully revitalized downtown with multiple festivals and events, improved park space and activities, safe and well groomed neighborhoods, and reinvestment in existing commercial areas on US 22/ SR 3.

The ideas generated during the public meetings have been organized into five topics: *Downtown, Neighborhoods, Economic Development, Quality of Life, and Infrastructure*. Each topic is broken into 4-5 major goals that, once achieved, will help Morrow realize its vision for itself. At the conclusion of this document is an implementation chapter where strategies are listed that will support the completion the major goals. The goals promoting each topic are as follows:

DOWNTOWN

1. Authentic Historic Main Street

Downtown Morrow is an iconic part of Morrow's built environment. While many communities such as Deerfield or West Chester Township build new town centers, Morrow already has an authentic one. Make this the social and cultural center of attention in the Village.

2. Vibrant Business Mix that Complements the Historic Character of Downtown

Downtown is perfect for certain kinds of businesses that cater to tourists or specialize in niche retail markets. Small shops, restaurants, or professional offices also thrive in small village centers and often seek healthy downtown locations to enhance their image. These businesses will complement the character of a historic main street and help make downtown an active place again.

3. Downtown Vibrancy and Events

Downtown is the ideal focal point for concerts, festivals, and other events. Encouraging events in this location will help activate Morrow's downtown and brand it as a place where there is always something fun to do. Passionate residents should take the lead organizing and championing these events.

4. Cohesive Vision for Downtown Design and Land Uses

Downtowns are special because of the unique built environment – buildings are built up to the sidewalk and the street, buildings, and spaces come together to create a comfortable and pedestrian friendly place to shop or recreate. Zoning tools should be used to preserve this environment by encouraging new development that is compatible neighboring buildings, and open spaces must be well designed.



NEIGHBORHOODS

1. Strong, Unique Neighborhood Identities

Property values and neighborhood pride will benefit if the identity of each neighborhood is further enhanced. Make neighborhoods distinct and unique by using small, tasteful neighborhood gateways or landscaping. Quality lampposts, banners, sidewalks, and neighborhood block parties all strengthen neighborhood identity.

2. Proud Property Owners and Well Maintained Neighborhoods

The appearance of a healthy neighborhood reflects and inward pride. Property owners who have well groomed lawns and flowerbeds, clean siding, and maintained gutters and downspouts can have a dramatic impact on the appearance of their property. The Village and neighbors can reinforce this behavior by helping the elderly or other physically limited property owners to help them bring their home into compliance. The Village should also work with landlords to ensure their property is well maintained.

3. Economically Stable Neighborhoods

Desirability of neighborhoods can fluctuate over time – the key is to maintain desirable neighborhoods and revitalize those that show signs of stress. County, State, and nonprofit resources should be strategically targeted at homes with the greatest vacancy or blight. Single family neighborhoods are most suited for owner occupied housing and multifamily is best integrated into the community when it is well maintained and each unit is personalized.

4. Neighborhoods that Accommodate all Ages, Family Sizes, and Economic Backgrounds

Neighborhoods that provide options for all ages, families, and backgrounds will withstand changing consumer preferences better than neighborhoods made of only one housing product. It also allows residents to continue living in their preferred neighborhood even as they age or if they transition to a higher or lower income.

5. Complete Pedestrian & Bicycle Network

Sidewalks and trails are now recognized as one of the most desirable neighborhood amenities and have been linked to increased property values and better health. Tomorrow's small size will mean that a complete pedestrian network will tie the Village closer together, link all neighborhoods to regional bike trails, and connect residents to schools, parks, and businesses.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Attract and Grow Private Businesses

It is recommended the Village consider a tax incentive programs, including local incentives initiated by Tomorrow as well as State incentives. Tax or other development incentives should be used in targeted locations and for key businesses. The Village should consider how long it will take to recover its financial investment while also weighing other considerations such as quality of life or the value of an intangible image associated with the business.

Businesses and Activities that Complement the Historic Character of Downtown

Downtown revitalization will be most successful if the businesses on Main Street support the image of



what Morrow wants its town center to be. Small retail or restaurants catering to bike trail users, visitors, and locals as well as small professional offices will consider downtown to be a prestigious location. Partnership with the local chamber and several County agencies will help advertise real estate opportunities on Main Street.

Healthy, Diverse Business Mix outside Downtown

US 22/SR 3 enjoys significant market potential from motorists which can support a diversity of commercial businesses. Zoning should be used to guide market driven redevelopment that may happen naturally over the next 20 years. Morrow can use social media such as Facebook or Twitter more aggressively to promote business events or sales.

Visible Signs of a Proud Community

Businesses and residents are both attracted to communities that suggest they have an pride in where they live and work. Code standards should be used to improve the appearance of a minority of businesses that detract from their neighbors, and signage and landscaping should be held to the highest standard. This section also discusses the importance of Village gateways, landmarks, and clean parks.

Reuse of Existing Structures and Land

Not all development is new development. Morrow has a variety of sites where road and utilities are already in place such as the Morrow Lumberyard site on Pike Street, the Morrow Elementary School, and numerous locations in downtown or on US 22. The Village can work with investors to reuse functional structures (like the school) or plan for quality redevelopment (such as the lumberyard site).

QUALITY OF LIFE

Outdoor Recreation as a Centerpiece of Morrow's Identity

One of Morrow's best opportunities for economic development and branding is to capitalize on the natural environment. The hills, river, and mature trees make Morrow one of the most scenic places in Warren County. Outdoor recreation based on the bike trail, river, or parks should be used as a starting place for events and activities that will bring people to the Village.

Improvements to Existing Parks

The public participation process indicated community desire for a number of improvements to existing parks such as permanent restroom facilities, concession stands, repaving or parking lots, or canoe launches. The Village should prioritize park improvements based on need and value to the public. Outside funding sources such as state grants are to be used. Joint park districts with nearby Townships or the County should be explored as a way to reduce maintenance costs.

Year-Round, Family Friendly Events

Numerous events should be organized throughout the year to be enjoyed by residents and to attract visitors. Dedicated residents and volunteer groups will be the lead organizers and champions for the events given that the Village does not have staff resources to plan for numerous events. Social media should be used to help promote these events to the widest audience possible.

Strong Community Organizations

The Village and residents will need to work together to strengthen existing community organizations



(e.g. Morrow Historical Society, Morrow of Tomorrow, Veterans of Foreign Wars, or local churches) to tackle the issues that Village staff cannot realistically address. This must be an ongoing goal that will require collaboration and a civic spirit. The Plan's vision will be shared with private organizations to demonstrate how their mission can support an element found within the plan.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure that Accommodates Existing, Future Development

Roads or utilities that need expanded can be supported by the Village, either financially or by publicly endorsing the project. When funds are to be spent, the Village should perform a cost-benefit analysis to determine the length of time required to recover the public investment. Investments should be made only if they generate a positive return, but this can be balanced with other issues such as quality of life and convenience to residents.

A Safe, Well Maintained Road Network

It is recommended the Village create a road maintenance schedule assessing the condition, traffic volume, and network importance of all Village streets. Prioritization of road repairs will help the Village consider road maintenance with all other Village expenditures. Road maintenance is capital intensive, and funding sources from the County, OKI, and State of Ohio should be used wherever possible to help Morrow's dollars go further.

Effective Stormwater and Floodwater Management

Much of Morrow lies in the floodplain, which impacts insurance rates and the rate of return on investments.

There are no easy solutions to this challenge; however it can be addressed by seeking amendments to the floodplain map and by introducing comprehensive stormwater management measures to slow the rate of runoff into rivers and streams. This should be collaboratively with neighboring Townships, Warren County, and if possible Clinton County.

Inter-jurisdictional Agreement for Shared Use of Infrastructure

Morrow and Salem Township share a sanitary sewer system, operated by Warren County. The capacity of this sewer system is far below the development potential in Morrow and Salem Township and risks becoming a hindrance to future growth. It is necessary to reach out to Warren County Sewer and Water Department to explore if, how, and when capacity can be added. In the mean time Morrow and Salem Township should begin a dialogue to discuss how to coordinate land use and development within their area served by sewer. A comprehensive approach to development cannot simply be "first come, first serve".

Partner with Local Businesses or Non-Profits to Improve Infrastructure

The Citizens Advisory Committee recommended reaching out to workforce training organizations to determine if they can practice their vocational skills by completing small projects in the Village. The improvements may include park improvements or small building renovations.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

PURPOSE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Comprehensive plans are broad statements of a community's goals and policies that guide future development, parks, and natural areas, and economic revitalization. In order for a comprehensive plan to serve as a viable guide for a community it must be kept up to date, reflect current community values, and respond to existing economic and natural conditions.

Morrow's current comprehensive plan was adopted in 1979. Comprehensive plans such as this were a federal requirement at the time and were often written and adopted without fully analyzing a community's unique character or needs. Despite this, the 1979 plan has considerable merit. It encourages community reinvestment, downtown revitalization, historic preservation, floodplain management, growing a local employment base, and addressing a lack of diversity in housing types, particularly multifamily.

Many of these topics remain pressing issues. However, many policies outlined in the 1979 plan are now obsolete or difficult to implement due to circumstances markedly different from those of 1979. For example, the existing comprehensive plan anticipated a Village population of 3,500 to 4,500. Instead it has declined from an estimated 1,675 in 1979 to 1,188 in 2010. A scenic railroad was proposed but never realized; instead the tracks were removed and a regional multiuse trail installed. In 1979 the Woodlands at Morrow residential development was decades in the future; Morrow Plaza was full of tenants; and there were no industrial businesses in the Village. Today over 900 homes are approved (with 800 unbuilt) for the Woodlands at Morrow; Morrow Plaza has multiple vacant spaces and the Village has annexed land eastward where several low-intensity industrial businesses exist.



These dramatic changes have rendered policies in the 1979 plan obsolete and require a fresh vision and policies to address economic development, neighborhoods, infrastructure, and quality of life.

PROCESS

Morrow's last comprehensive plan was completed and approved in 1979. Believing the time was right for a new plan emphasizing community revitalization, quality of life, and economic development, the Mayor and Village Council requested the Warren County Regional Planning Commission work with residents to create a new comprehensive plan for the Village. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan was completed and adopted by the Village Council on Month Day 2013, ending a year-long process. Over the course of a year, the following planning process was followed:

1. Data Collection & Analysis of Existing Conditions

County staff collected a wide range of data relating to the Village's local labor market, transportation, housing stock, demographics, and socioeconomic statistics. The data was organized using charts and maps to visually communicate the information to the steering committee and interested members of the public during the first several public meetings.

2. Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Following the review of the existing conditions in Morrow, the steering committee participated in several "SWOT" exercises to brainstorm the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Morrow. Throughout the duration of the plan, all meetings of the Citizen's Advisory Committee were open to the public and advertised in the Morrow E-Newsletter, on the Village website, and a website created for the Comprehensive Plan. The extensive material produced in these meetings later served as a foundation for the Visioning process and for creating goals, objectives, and strategies.

3. Visioning

The advisory committee produced and edited a vision statement stating the intent of the 2013 Morrow Comprehensive Plan. All goals, objectives, and strategies laid out in the document were made to conform to the Vision statement.



4. Formulation of Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies were drafted based on responses derived from the Citizens Advisory Committee, SWOT analyses, and public input.

5. Public Open House

A first draft of the plan was presented to the public during an open house event; attendees reviewed the goals, objectives, and strategies as well as renderings and concepts presented in the plan. Surveys and interaction with steering committee members and staff provided opportunities to share feedback and suggest changes.

7. Final Review & Adoption

Staff proceeded to make changes to the draft plan in response to feedback gathered during the public open house, online surveys, and following advisory committee meetings. After final changes were made the plan was presented to the Morrow Village Council and adopted on Month Day 2013.



PLAN ADOPTION PICTURE

HOW TO READ THE PLAN

A comprehensive plan may be a large document, but the function of the plan should be straightforward and easy for elected officials, staff, and residents to understand and implement. It communicates a clear vision for where the community wants to go, tells a story about major themes that are central to the Village's identity and future wellbeing, and presents strategies to make the envisioned future a reality. The major themes presented in this plan include the following topics:

- *Downtown*
- *Neighborhoods*
- *Economic Development*
- *Quality of Life*
- *Infrastructure*

The reader will find each chapter is organized into major goals for the Village to achieve in the plan's 20 year time horizon. The goals are based on 7 months of public meetings and surveys. Each chapter discusses the importance of each goal and illustrates the importance of these goals to Morrow.

Using data and public input presented in each chapter, a clear picture of Morrow's present and potential future unfolds. The final chapter, *Implementation*, outlines concrete steps and policies the Village and residents will need to undertake to realize the community's Vision.

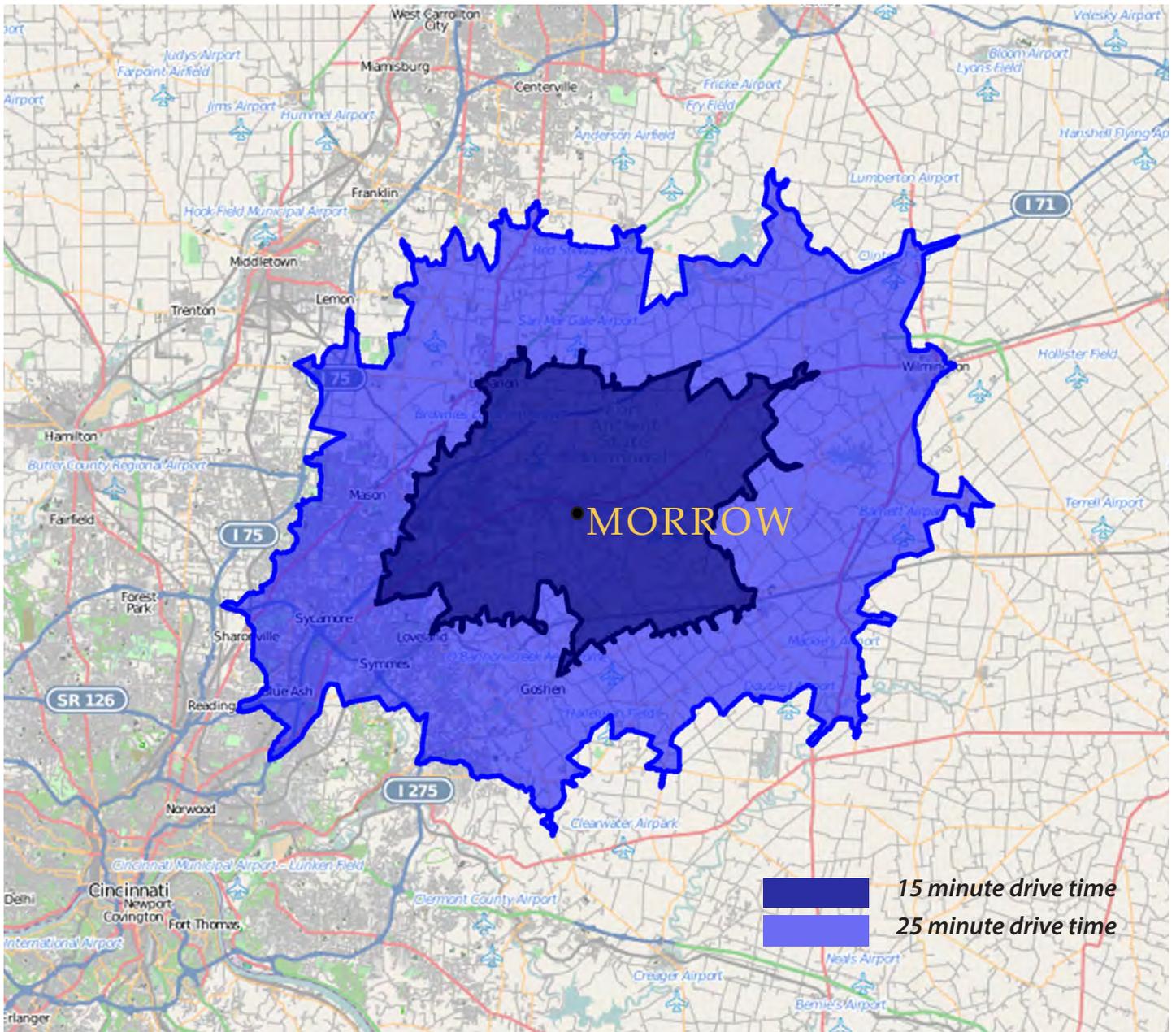
POLICY TERMS

Goal: a goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome.

Objective: a refinement of the goal. It gives more detailed policy direction to strategies.

Strategy: an specific action, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective

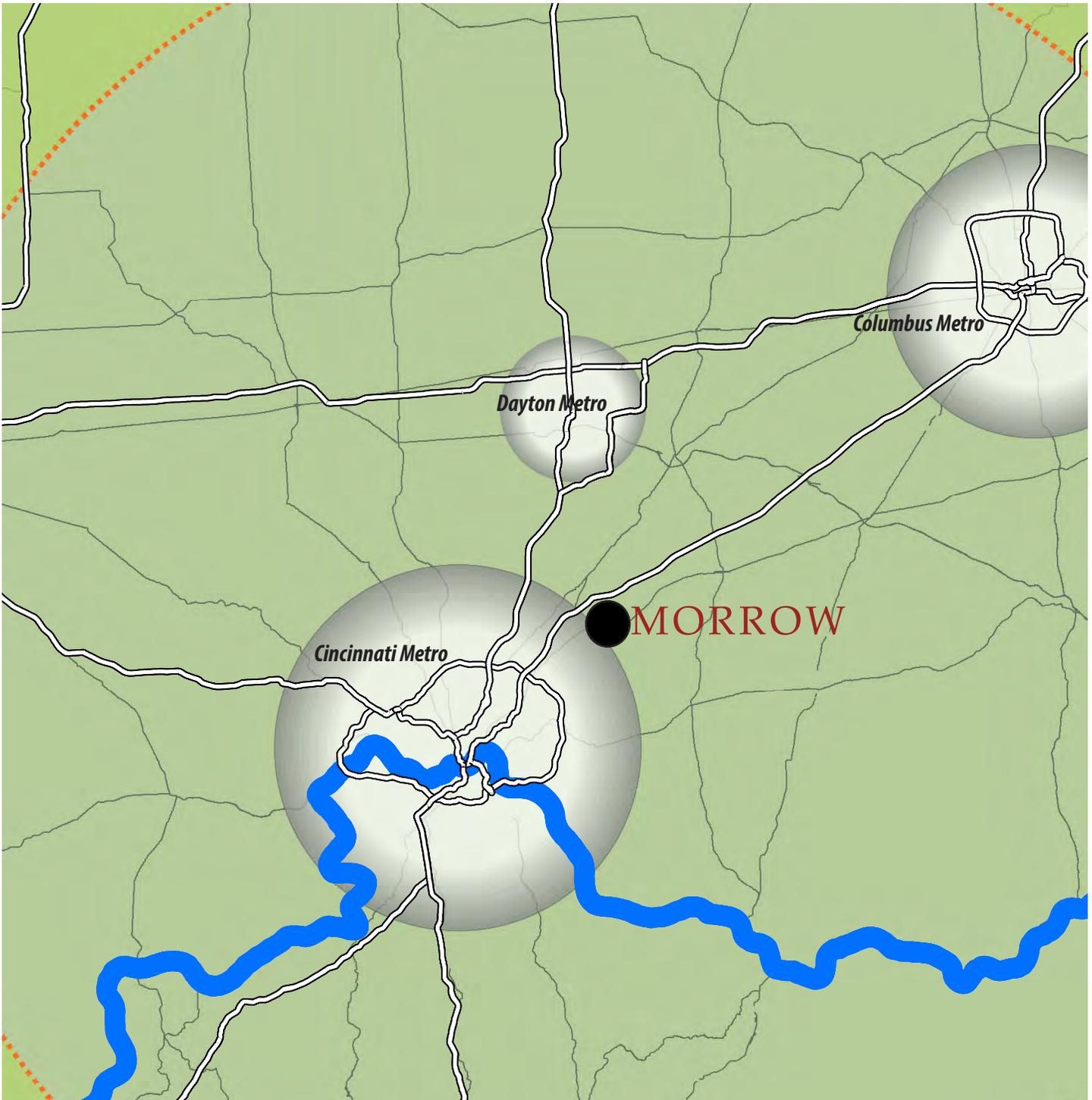




AREA AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Located between the geographic center of Warren County and its southeast corner, Morrow rests in the heart of Salem Township. US22/SR3, named Pike Street in the Village, is a major transportation artery that threads its way from Wilmington through the Little Miami River Valley and on to the Fields Ertel commercial hub in Deerfield Township. Motorists traveling by way of US 22/SR3 can also access Interstate 71 to travel south to Cincinnati; motorists traveling north access Interstate 71 by way of SR 123.

Consequently Morrow is well connected to the rest of Warren County and the Cincinnati region beyond. Over 300,000 people lie within a 25 minute drive, a geography that includes major retail and entertainment centers, industrial parks, and office buildings. This 25 minute drive time extends all the way to the outskirts of the City of Cincinnati and extends out to other communities including Monroe, Franklin, Waynesville, and Wilmington. A closer 15 minute drive time covers a local geography that includes parts of Lebanon, Mason, and Loveland.



The Citizen's Advisory Committee concluded that Morrow's rural location, just beyond the suburban fringe, provides a unique opportunity. This is based on the Village seeming removed from the urban and suburban character of the Cincinnati metro. Warren County's land uses evolve from high intensity commercial and suburban residential in the western

half of the County to rural fields and forested hills in the eastern half. It is in this rustic setting that Morrow is nestled on the southern bank of the Little Miami River at its confluence with Todd's Fork.

The Village can capitalize on the nearby critical mass of people and commerce by becoming a haven for unique businesses that seek a quiet, business friendly location. Likewise, Morrow's neighborhoods can also become a refuge for residents who wish to live in a comfortable small town neighborhood beyond the expanse of suburbia.

Morrow's location within the region and its distinct identity evokes the image of the quintessential small American town. Enhancing this image will be the foundation for most strategies supporting Morrow's goals for downtown, neighborhoods, economic development, quality of life, and infrastructure. These strategies will assist Morrow in rediscovering its identity as home to significant social and commercial activity. While this activity was in the past built on rail and highway connections, in the future it will be built on newly attracted businesses, outdoor recreation, and Morrow's authentic image of a small American town.





THE VISION

Vision statements are utilized by diverse organizations to think long term and consider the big picture. This comprehensive plan uses a vision statement as a foundation for all its goals, objectives, and strategies. Vision statements broadly lay out what a community wants to become by anchoring the present to a vision of the future. It guides residents, elected officials, and Village staff to follow the planning strategies devised by residents and community stakeholders to make Morrow's vision a future reality.

Morrow's Vision Statement was based on input from the advisory committee and approved by residents. It is a bold statement emphasizing economic and social revitalization as well as a high quality of life. The comprehensive plan as a whole will have value only after years of implementing concrete strategies through the collaboration of a wide cast of actors including residents, officials, staff, and supporting governmental and civic organizations.

MORROW 2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION STATEMENT

The Village of Morrow is built on a foundation of small town values. It will progress by embracing a historic identity, revitalizing downtown, and capitalizing on outdoor recreation. The Village will promote economic development by attracting conventional businesses to commercial areas and by attracting niche businesses to downtown. Neighborhoods will be strengthened by making extensive pedestrian connections, building unique neighborhood identities, and reinvigorating Morrow's image as a historic community. Well organized, family friendly events and festivals will improve the quality of life for residents and attract visitors to support economic development. Village policy will support this vision to make Morrow the best community in southwest Ohio to live, work, and play.

HISTORY

Morrow is in many ways a product of historic settlement patterns that were based on the availability of natural resources such as the Little Miami River, transportation links such as the railroad and early roadways, and some element of chance. Early settlers capitalized on the natural power of the Little Miami River to build a grist mill in 1836. Prior to the founding of Morrow, neighboring villages such as Roachester, Millgrove (renamed Senior), Hammel, and Fredericksburg were settled and built around grist, paper, and lumber mills. These settlements consisted of several dozen to several hundred residents and were vibrant activity centers of commerce and trade. The early settlements thrived on the new stagecoach line connecting Cincinnati to Lancaster on a road known today as US22/SR3. By 1844 the Little Miami Railroad laid track from Cincinnati to the grist mill at the confluence of Todds Fork and the Little Miami River.

Morrow was founded in response to this new commercial life vein on the site of James Miranda's farm. Such was Morrow's success that it overshadowed neighboring communities such as Roachester, which fell from 230 residents in 1850 to only 100 in the 1880's. By this time Morrow had swelled to over 900 residents, benefiting tremendously from traffic on Pike Street and the need to break up freight train cargoes. Transportation routes extended to neighboring communities such as Lebanon (SR 123) and South Lebanon (Mason-Morrow-Millgrove) in response to the Little Miami River Valley's burgeoning industry and growing population.

Beginning in the late 19th century and on into the



Left: The bike trail on Main Street was once a main line for the Little Miami Railroad. Later in history the line was owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad, followed by the Penn Central.

Photo courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society.



Morrow Roller Mills, Morrow, Ohio.

Above: The historic mill, once located on the river near present day SR 123.

Photo courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society.

first half of the 20th century, Senior, Millgrove, and Fredericksburg began to slowly vanish as small water-powered mills were abandoned and recurring floods created challenging development conditions. Aside from a considerably smaller Roachester, Morrow was relatively alone in Salem Township except for scattered farm houses along country roads. Morrow by contrast remained stable due to the presence of the railroad, highway, and community schools.

During the postwar years, Morrow began a period of transition. Historically dependent on the critical railroad junction, the Village faced economic headwinds as passenger service ceased in 1948. Increasing traffic on US22 gave birth to Morrow Plaza and other auto-oriented commercial uses, which sprouted just east of downtown. The highway was also attractive to small homegrown commercial businesses, which took root there amidst scattered single family homes. Much of the commercial activity that was historically centered on downtown vanished from the Village core, reappearing in the new commercial plazas.

The balance between Morrow and Salem Township was transformed beginning in the 1970's. The completion of Interstate 71 resulted in US 22 (formerly known as the 3C Highway) experiencing a steep decline in traffic and the travel-related business. The Penn Central Railroad ceased freight service in 1979 and with it a number of jobs required to unload and reload cargo.

Meanwhile, Salem Township experienced signs of scattered exurban development as threads of suburbia radiated outward from Hamilton County's urban core. The face of Salem Township was transforming from a fundamentally rural township with Morrow as its dense center into a exurban township surrounding a village that found itself in a state of unexpected transition.

MORROW TODAY

Morrow moves into the future with a number of strengths; a variety of businesses continue to prosper along US 22/SR 3 and several pioneering entrepreneurs have successfully invested in new downtown locations. The Little Miami Multi-use Trail and Little Miami River bring significant numbers of outdoor tourists, and several large parks periodically attract in excess of 1,000 visitors to sporting events and festivals.

The Village also faces realities brought on by changing development patterns and the spatial reorganization of industry, schools, and transportation arteries. These changes have created a headwind to Morrow's future security and prosperity. These issues will not be resolved over night, but will be thoughtfully addressed by implementing innovative policies and strategies found in this plan.



CHAPTER 2: DOWNTOWN



INTRODUCTION

Historically downtowns were the commercial and social heart of a community. They were activity hubs where most of the major lending institutions, government buildings, libraries, churches, civic uses, shops, and offices were tightly clustered in a dense, walkable neighborhood. It was where new arrivals alighted from the train or where neighbors bid farewell to loved ones traveling to distant places. Downtowns became the iconic image of a community such that many hold a picture of downtown in their mind when trying to visualize a community.



Courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society.

BACKGROUND

Downtown Morrow stretches roughly two blocks from Front Street along Todds Fork to Center Street near Phegley Park. A historic building stock composed of a mix of uses lines both sides of Main Street. The vintage train depot and caboose remind visitors that a busy main line of the Penn Central Railroad once brought steam trains roaring alongside shoppers. This historic commercial corridor once featured a continuous line of buildings, some standing three stories tall. While much of historic Main Street survives, many buildings have been lost including all three story buildings. Some of the remaining buildings have undergone significant exterior modifications that have covered or destroyed original architectural details. Of the buildings that remain, many are vacant or underutilized.

The result of these changes is that downtown Morrow is not currently being used to its fullest potential. Despite periodic marathons or business events that bring considerable crowds, downtown often sees little activity. The built environment also does not instill a great sense of “vibrancy”. Many buildings are noticeably unoccupied and several vacant lots create holes in the physical fabric of downtown. These vacant buildings and lots also present opportunities for future investment and hold a promise for a more vibrant community core. The adjacent lumberyard site, though currently still used, also holds great potential for future redevelopment if the existing owners choose to sell the property.

The Citizens Advisory Committee, which consisted entirely of residents and always had open membership, spent considerable time studying and discussing these issues. All goals included in this chapter are the product of their recommendations.

Goal #1: Authentic Historic Main Street

Downtown Morrow is not the neighborhood with the greatest number of residents or the greatest concentration of businesses. It is, however, the most psychologically important and iconic neighborhood in the Village and in some sense is “everyone’s neighborhood”. Many communities such as Deerfield Township or West Chester Township spend considerable resources to recreate a traditional town center; Morrow already has an authentic one.

The Village of Morrow should encourage increased business and residential activity in its historic downtown through a combination of tax incentives, communication with existing and potential business owners, reuse of vacant or underutilized land, and improvements to existing sidewalks, roads, and streetscaping. It will be essential to communicate the downtown revitalization efforts to the public. The public in this case includes the larger community and local business organizations such as the local chamber or the Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Keeping local residents and businesses informed of the vision for downtown will establish high expectations for the future. As the first small improvements are made, additional investors and residents will also begin using the downtown.

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION: TRAIN STATION AND CABOOSE

The historic train station and caboose are perhaps the most unique physical structures on Main Street. The station is in good condition and currently houses a florist business and dance studio with additional space to spare. Discussion regarding the importance of the station and caboose was a recurring theme during the meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The Committee recommends that the Village leverage the station by organizing tours of the premises and by using the available space in or around the station for small scale events that are suited to the setting. Close partnership and collaboration will be required between Morrow of Tomorrow (the current property owner) and the Village in order to establish a shared vision and action plan for the facilities.



Goal #2: Vibrant Business Mix that Complements the Historic Character of Downtown

The Citizen's Advisory Committee concluded that downtown's greatest potential for new economic activity lies in attracting businesses with a niche market that complements the historic character of downtown. For example, homemade goods, retail catering to tourists, or a shop catering to the many bicyclists who pass through on the regional trail. A sustainable downtown is one that includes a diverse mix of businesses and avoids a concentration of one business type such as gift shops or antique stores. A downtown lacking business diversity is susceptible to changes in consumer tastes.



Above: Two examples of Ohio downtowns that participate in the Main Street Ohio program

The Village cannot directly create or attract businesses, but it can create an attractive environment for entrepreneurs. Creating this environment will require communicating the downtown vision to business associations such as the local chamber or the Warren County Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Businesses will also need to communicate with each other, creating opportunities to share ideas such as shared advertising or coordinated planning of business events and sales.

Programs to support economically vibrant downtowns include the Ohio Main Street program. In addition to business recruitment, the local Main Street program requires a program coordinator that facilitates cooperation between the groups that play a role in downtown. The program has a comprehensive approach to design improvements and also focuses on branding and marketing the downtown as a unique place for shoppers, investors, tourists, and entrepreneurs.

PLANNING TIPS: OHIO MAIN STREET PROGRAM

The Main Street program is administered by Heritage Ohio, a statewide nonprofit organization. The purpose of the program is to revitalize historic downtowns by fostering public participation, recruiting new businesses, working with existing businesses, rehabilitating buildings, and making downtown a recreational destination through a four point methodology.

- OPERATIONS (Building consensus between groups)
- DOWNTOWN DESIGN
- DOWNTOWN MARKETING
- BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT

The Main Street program is designed in part to change public perception and habits to improve existing economic conditions. Changing public perception will lead to public support as projects are completed and incremental changes are made.

Goal #3: Downtown Vibrancy and Events

As the historic cultural and social center for the community, downtowns play a unique role as a place where residents and visitors wish to recreate, socialize, or enjoy a leisurely shopping excursion at small local businesses. Visually attractive and historic downtowns will not become appealing places for new visitors unless others are already recreating or shopping there.

The Citizens Advisory Committee recommended making the downtown a focal point in the community for festivals, concerts, and other outdoor events. To help create this vibrant downtown atmosphere, the Village will need the assistance of private individuals or organizations who are motivated to organize these events. Achieving this will require reaching out to residents or groups of residents who have a long term passion for the activities that can take place in downtown Morrow.

Downtown Morrow will lend itself well to this outdoor social activity; it is the only location in Salem Township where diverse storefronts, park spaces, and the Little Miami Multi-use share a common space on a public street. The result is a distinct place where the sidewalk and street create an enclosed, pedestrian friendly environment. To help bring residents and visitors alike to the physical and figurative heart of the Village, the Citizen's Advisory Committee recommends programming Main Street and Phegley Park with diverse activities. Some activities may be major events that take place only once a year (e.g. a Christmas festival) while other activities may happen weekly (e.g. summer block parties). The intent of aggressively programming downtown with events is to ensure that residents and visitors know there is always an activity or event planned for that week, providing consistency to those looking for fun events as well as a constant generator of economic development for local businesses.

PLANNING TIPS: DOWNTOWN EVENTS

The ingredients of a vibrant downtown are highly interdependent and reinforce one another in a virtuous positive feedback loop. Events are an important tool to attract people to downtown. Once there, event visitors should feel comfortable in a vibrant, pedestrian friendly environment. Then they will be more likely to walk, shop, and linger.

Over the course of multiple discussion with the Citizens Advisory Committee, a wide array of possible events and activities was suggested for downtown. The list of suggestions is by no means exhaustive, but serves as a beginning for brainstorming how to best capitalize on downtown. The most notable among these are provided below.

- Open Air Concerts
- Open Air Movies in the Park (or on Main Street)
- Marathons
- Bicycle events
- Cruise-ins
- Bannanarama
- Christmas on Main Street
- Fall Festival
- Easter Egg Hunt in Phegley Park
- Tours of the Historic Train Station and Caboose
- Summer Block Parties
- Fourth of July Festival
- Halloween Festival
- Saint Patrick's Day Celebration



Goal #4: Cohesive Vision for Downtown Design and Land Uses

Good building design and a cohesive vision for building forms and land uses is an important consideration in any neighborhood or zoning district. These elements of urban design influence the psychology of pedestrians and affect the way we “feel” as we walk or drive through a neighborhood. Downtown Morrow lends itself to pedestrian activity more than any other commercial area in the Village given its multiple storefronts, bike trail, and park space. Building on these existing assets to create a more pedestrian friendly environment will be more impactful in downtown than in any other neighborhood.

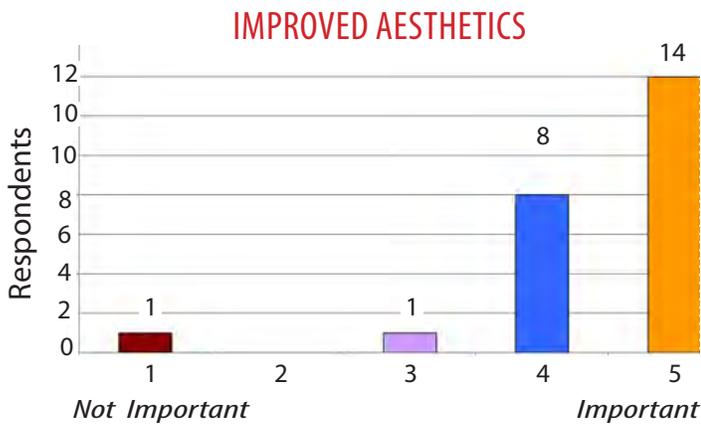
Creating a more pedestrian friendly downtown will require an array of building design and land use strategies. First among these strategies is calling for a cohesive design for downtown in which the physical environment is visually unified by use of street trees, sidewalk furnishings, and colorful landscaping from Phegley Park to the truss bridge. New buildings are to be brought up to the sidewalk (referred to as zero-lot setback), with any exterior modifications being compatible with the historic downtown. Signage and façade design should be tasteful and directed to pedestrians more than motorists. By creating this pedestrian-friendly environment, the Village will encourage residents to walk, window shop, and eat outside.



Above: Intact downtowns create a “pedestrian envelope” that creates a public space that is well suited to an outdoor social gathering



Above: Signage should use materials and design that are compatible with a historic downtown and directed toward pedestrians more than motorists.



The Morrow Comprehensive Plan online survey asked participants to rank the importance of the aesthetic quality of buildings, trees, streets, trees, and sidewalks. All but two of the 24 surveyees selected “4” (important) or “5” (very important).

Implementing this goal will require action from a range of actors including the Village, property owners, and civic-minded residents. For its part, the Village will need to undertake select revisions to the zoning code to ensure that future building modifications, new structures, and signage is compatible with the historic character of downtown. Existing empty lots can be attractively designed with small scale improvements such as benches and landscaping to create a more appealing and pedestrian friendly environment.

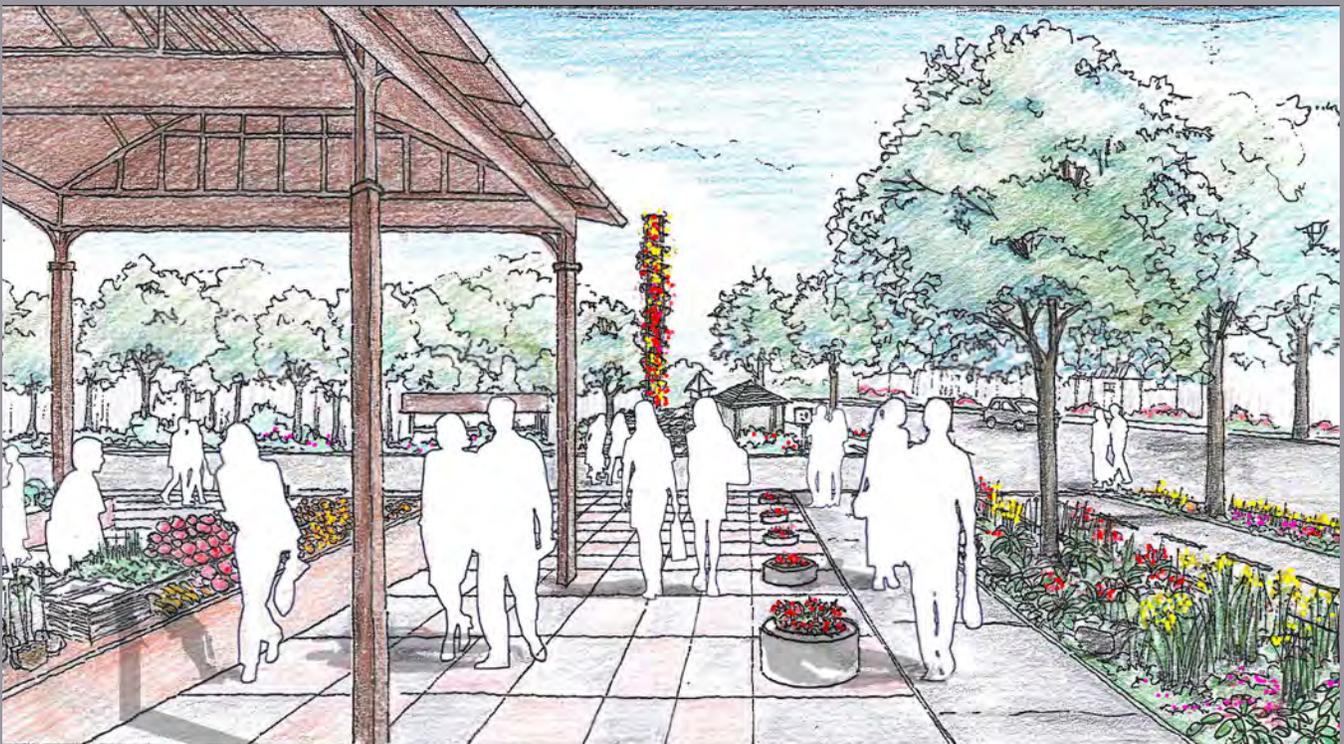
PLANNING TIPS: PROGRAMMING

An important element of making a public space desirable is the “programming” element. To “program” open space is to furnish or design the space to encourage a desired behavior. For example, a vacant lot can be “programmed” by installing benches, lighting, sidewalks, and quality landscaping. The improvements will influence the behavior of pedestrians by encouraging them to stop and relax. Public sidewalks can also be programmed by allowing restaurant owners to provide outdoor seating, by installing planters, benches, and high quality trash receptacles. Though these changes seem small, their cumulative impact is the difference between a “dead zone” and a mentally engaging street environment that invites you to relax, stop and chat, or window shop.

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION: MORROW'S FARMER'S MARKET

Morrow enjoys the benefits of a small Farmer's Market currently located on Main Street. In neighboring communities such as Lebanon, the farmer's market has become a major attraction that generates foot traffic for downtown businesses and provides a source of fresh produce for local residents. Considering the farmer's market is an irreplaceable source of activity, it is ideal to keep in downtown and allow Main Street's businesses to benefit from the foot traffic generated by the farmer's market.

Strategies to improve the farmer's market include reaching out to additional members of the farming and artisan community who can sell new products such as new varieties of produce, honey, soap, jam, or flowers. In time, it would be ideal to pursue a dedicated space and permanent shelter for the farmer's market, perhaps between Main Street and Pike Street, to create a more substantial space for this cultural and business anchor of downtown.



CHAPTER 3: NEIGHBORHOODS



INTRODUCTION

Morrow's community life is well organized into distinct areas: places for shopping, places for working; places for living. It is the latter, the residential neighborhood, where most of us spend the majority of our time. It is where we rest, spend time improving our home, and raise our families. Given the importance of neighborhoods in our daily life, the Citizens Advisory Committee made various recommendations that will strengthen the identity of Morrow's neighborhoods. The recommendations are to maintain neighborhood stability as it relates to property values and maintenance and ensure there are housing opportunities for residents of all family sizes and income levels.

BACKGROUND

Despite Morrow's relatively small size, the Village's neighborhoods represent the full spectrum of housing architecture in use between Morrow's founding in 1844 to the present. Settlement originally began around present day Main Street. Architectural styles are typical of the mid 1800's to the turn of the 20th century. Residential development then spread to the south side of Turnpike Street (near what is now Pike Street) in the western portion of what is now known as the Thompson Addition. Homes for Morrow's more affluent residents were constructed as part of the Clements Addition in today's Prospect Hill neighborhood as well as a several homes on Southgate Avenue which overlook the downtown below.

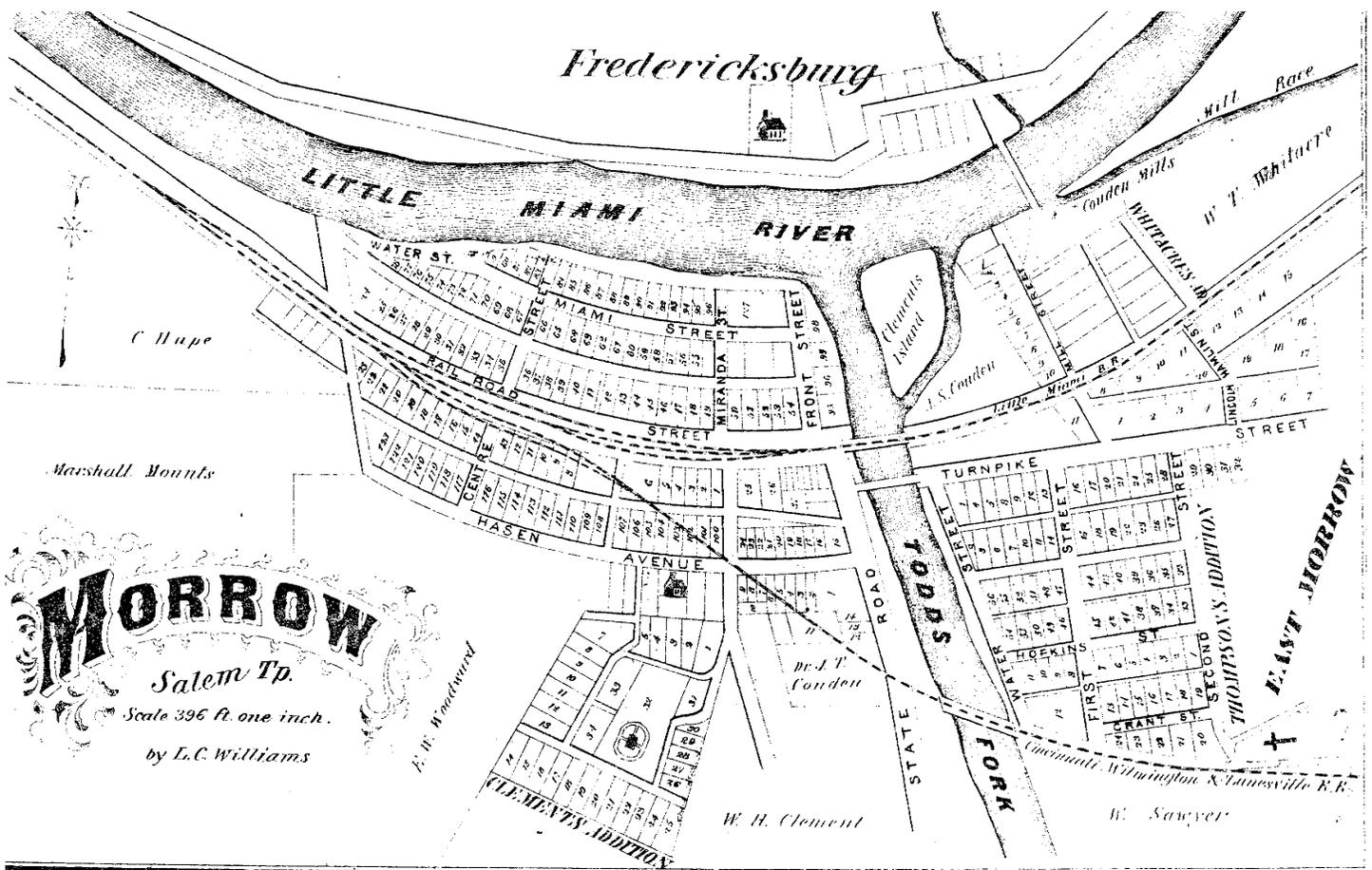
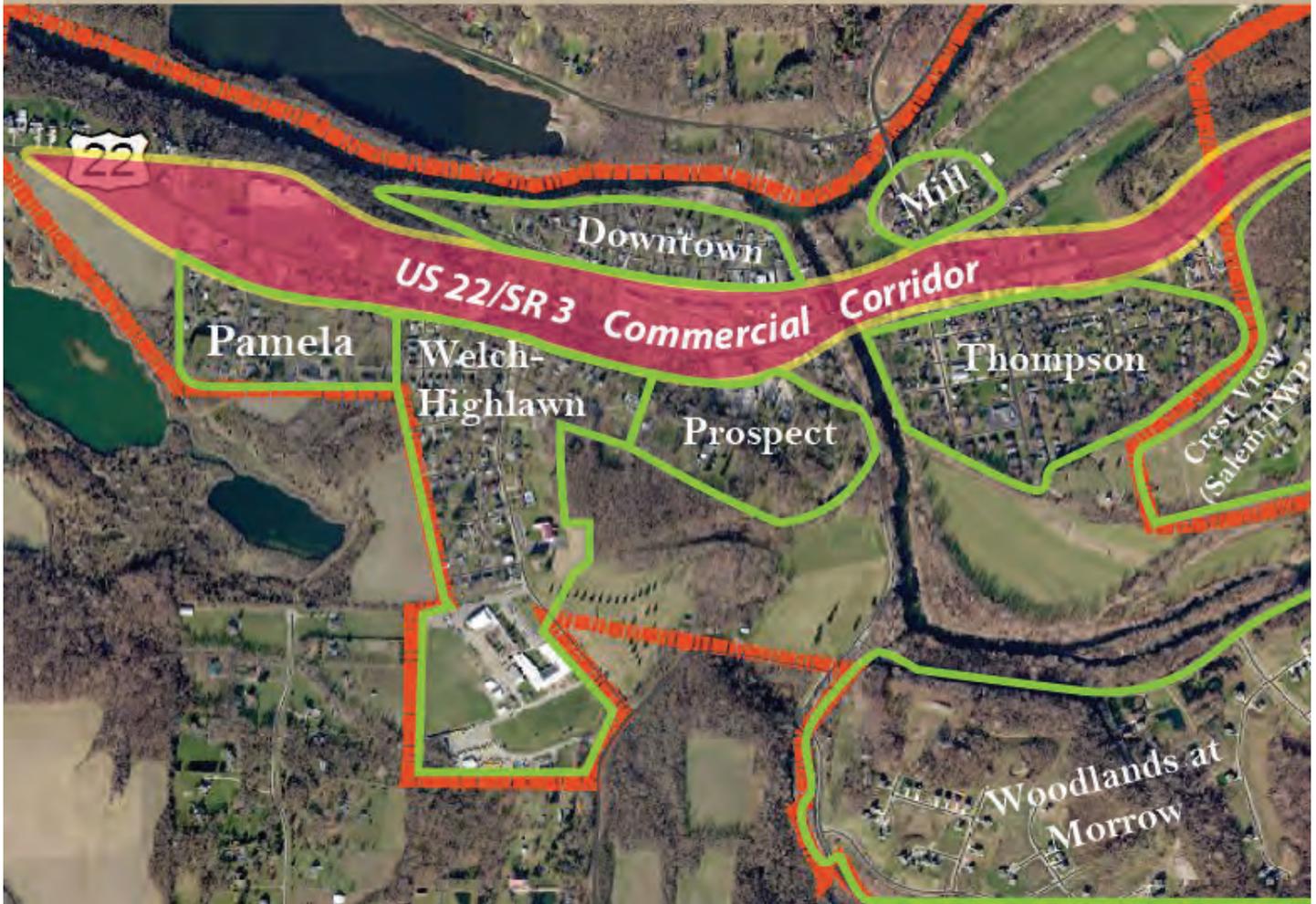


Photo courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society.

Morrow Neighborhoods



Morrow's neighborhoods were developed in various eras over the course of the Village's history. Their architectural styles are a reflection of the period in which they were built.

As in most American communities, the post World War II era brought change to how new residential developments in Morrow were constructed. The Welch-Highlands neighborhood expanded southward from Pike Street to accommodate new families in the 1940's and 1950's. This partially overlapped the development of the adjacent, smaller Pamela neighborhood whose houses mostly date to the 1950's and 1960's. Suburban development continued in the 1970's with the eastward expansion of the Thompson Addition, a middle class neighborhood with a large number of brick and stone ranch homes which were popular products at that time.

Most recently, the Village has continued to grow as homes are constructed in the Woodlands at Morrow neighborhood, a planned unit development in the south half of the Village. The Woodlands neighborhood is currently accessible only by car from Morrow Woodville Road or Morrow Blackhawk Road and is far from fully built out – only approximately 120 of 900 planned homes have been constructed. Like all unfinished developments, the plans for the Woodlands at Morrow may be changed subject to a legislative approval from the Village.

Goal #1: Strong, Unique Neighborhood Identities

Morrow is characterized by a handful of small but well defined residential areas. Their unique identities make them highly distinguishable from each other and create opportunities to build on the unique identity of each.

Neighborhood gateways or landscaping will encourage a greater sense of ownership in their neighborhood and home. Pride in one's property and ones immediate surroundings are a critical first step in building an emotional stake in the maintenance of one's home and neighborhood.



PLANNING TIPS: MARKERS OF OWNERSHIP ENCOURAGE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Property owners become more emotionally invested in their property when there are clear indications that their neighborhood (or personal property) is distinguished as their own. Visually defining ownership can be achieved by landscaping, making defined neighborhood entrances, banners, and unified lamppost styles.



Goal #2: Proud Property Owners and Well Maintained Neighborhoods

Charming small town neighborhoods draw on multiple strengths for their appeal. One of these is an outward appearance that reflects an inward pride indicating property owners are emotionally invested in the neighborhoods. For example, well groomed lawns and flowerbeds, clean siding, or repaired gutters and downspouts are all that is needed sometimes to dramatically improve the appearance of a property or neighborhood. While most of Morrow's property owners already show this pride in their property, strategies can be taken to reinforce this positive behavior.

The Citizens Advisory Committee discussed several target groups of property owners with whom the Village can work to make a difference in neighborhood image. One key group with which the Village should collaborate is property owners who are outside code compliance due to health or age-related issues. The Village may work with volunteer groups to make key maintenance improvements or provide a free paint grant.

Another target group the Village should reach is non-resident rental property owners – Morrow has much to gain by incenting these property owners to make reasonable investments in the property to maintain the physical viability of both their own property as well as the surrounding neighborhood.

As the Village works with these key property owners, neighbors will appreciate the impact on their own property and the overall impression of the neighborhood. It may even encourage voluntary improvements from surrounding property owners over time.



PLANNING TIPS: MAINTENANCE AND PROPERTY VALUES ARE CONTAGIOUS

Research on this subject indicates the market value of new homes declines over time. The extent of depreciation is influenced by the quality of property maintenance. Well maintained properties depreciate more slowly than those that are not well maintained¹. Other studies indicate that if one property owner improves property maintenance or landscaping, it influences their neighbors to improve the appearance of their property, too². Consistent code enforcement standards will result in higher levels of property maintenance, which will in turn have a positive impact on the property values of not only individual homes but also the neighborhood as a whole.

Public investment in infrastructure such as freshly paved roads, curbs, and sidewalks also add to a clean neighborhood appearance and have also been shown in studies to influence improvements in private property maintenance and result in higher property values.

Goal #3: Economically Stable Neighborhoods

As villages and cities age, they evolve in unexpected and surprising ways. Neighborhoods that once were known as economically distressed or “rundown” suddenly become desirable again, while other neighborhoods that were once prestigious slip out of fashion. The goal in any community is to maintain the viability of healthy neighborhoods while lifting up those that have fallen into disrepair.

This plan recommends the Village Council, staff, and community members discuss the long term trends and trajectories of Morrow’s neighborhoods. Trends to review include the balance between owner and renter-occupied housing, average housing prices, vacancy rates, and the geography of reported crimes. It is crucial to review this data from a spatial perspective to determine which neighborhoods (or parts of neighborhoods) show progress or decline.

Financial resources for home improvements from the County, State, or nonprofit organizations should be targeted in areas that show signs of distress. Simple measures such as new street lamps, sidewalks, or landscaping improvements funded with state or federal grants are often all that is needed to change the course of a neighborhood for the better. Effective communication on the part of the Village can also lead to partnerships with local volunteer groups, faith-based organizations, and the school district. These organizations can use donated resources or labor to transform key properties in Morrow neighborhoods.

Balancing Rental and Owner Occupied

The stability of a neighborhood is influenced by the balance of rental and owner occupied housing. The primary reason for this is that rental units are often subject to a lower level of property maintenance than owner-occupied housing and usually have a higher turnover rate. While rental options are an important part of a well-rounded housing market, this makes single family units poorly suited for renting.

Therefore, neighborhoods that are mostly single family are best suited for owner-occupied due to high maintenance requirements. Strategies should be taken by the Village, County, and nonprofits to intervene in neighborhoods that are experiencing a noticeable transition away from owner-occupied to renter occupied in an effort to stabilize the neighborhood³. To read more on preferred options for designing and maintaining rental buildings, see “Planning Tips” on opposite page.



Welch Highland Neighborhood



Range Neighborhood



Downtown Neighborhood

PLANNING TIPS: THE EFFECT OF HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES ON NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY

The balance between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing influences the character of a neighborhood by influencing housing turnover and exterior maintenance.

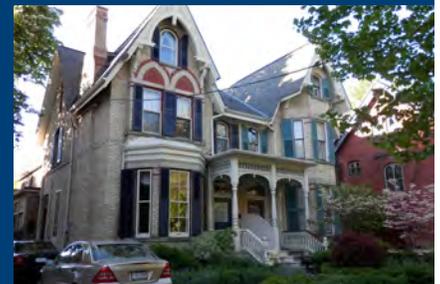
At issue is that some neighborhoods are more suited for rental units depending on which housing types are most prevalent. Multifamily or mixed-use developments lend themselves to renter-occupied units better than single family neighborhoods. They more readily accommodate higher turnover rates and require less maintenance by occupants. By contrast, single family residences demand much more maintenance from the occupants. Importantly, a resident who owns a home is likely to perform more maintenance than a resident who rents the home. This is perhaps because owners tend to stay in the house for longer periods of time and are financially invested in the home.

This should not be misconstrued that renter occupied housing is not desirable. A combination of rental and owner occupied units is desirable to create a variety of options for residents who find themselves in different walks of life. Neighborhoods that are predominantly renter-occupied, if well designed and properly managed, will be safe, attractive, and comfortable places to live.

PLANNING TIPS: WELL DESIGNED RENTER-OCCUPIED NEIGHBORHOODS

Poorly maintained and designed multifamily developments fail to instill a sense of “ownership” of the property on the part of residents. Well designed multifamily uses a combination of landscaping and exterior design elements such as door color and design, or various façade materials to reflect the individuality of each unit (see below).

This supports the perception that each unit is “unique” and promotes a greater sense of ownership by the tenant. Other important design elements include landscaping that defines the space as being private and not open to the public. Multifamily housing also benefits from a high standard for property maintenance and cleanliness. While these recommendations are well suited to renter-occupied multifamily housing, it is equally appropriate for owner-occupied multifamily such as condominiums.



The text above refers to research indicating renters take greater pride in their home when the unit is clearly defined and personalized (see examples on left and right). Single family homes (center) are best suited to owner-occupied due to high maintenance requirements.

1 Wilhemsson, Mat. House Price Depreciation Rates and Level of Maintenance. *Journal of Housing Economics* 17 (2008) 88–101. August 2007.

2 Ionnides, Yannis M. Residential Neighborhood Effects. Department of Economics, Tufts University. April 2000.

3 Rohe, William M.; Stewart, Leslie S. Homeownership and Neighborhood Stability. *Housing Policy Debate*, Volume 7, Issue 1. Fannie Mae Foundation. 1996.

Goal #4: Neighborhoods that Accommodate all Ages, Family Sizes, and Economic Backgrounds

Neighborhoods can be susceptible to long term changes in consumer preferences. For example, the predominant housing preference in the mid and late 20th century consisted of single family homes. Today, households with two parents and children constitute a minority of all households countrywide, contributing to lower demand for single family homes in certain market areas. Meanwhile the overall market for multifamily residential, including high-end units, has remained strong. These and other factors, such as changes in architectural tastes and higher fuel prices, are resulting in a decline in some neighborhoods while leading to reinvestment in others.

Economically and socially sustainable communities feature a diversity of housing types and price points. This creates a more resilient housing market that is capable of weathering changes in consumer preferences and our society's changing demographics. To this end, Goal #2 recommends the Village encourage a diversity of high quality, privately developed housing with a range of price points and housing types. There are many opportunities for implementing this recommendation, including:

1. *Well crafted zoning standards*
2. *Inclusionary zoning standards for PUDs.*
3. *Area plan revisions for the Woodlands at Morrow Planned Unit Development*
4. *Infill development in downtown Morrow*
5. *Other examples of new residential development or redevelopment*



A community's housing stock ideally accommodates a range demographic and economic backgrounds. Large single family homes, smaller homes, and multifamily housing are all parts of a balanced housing stock.

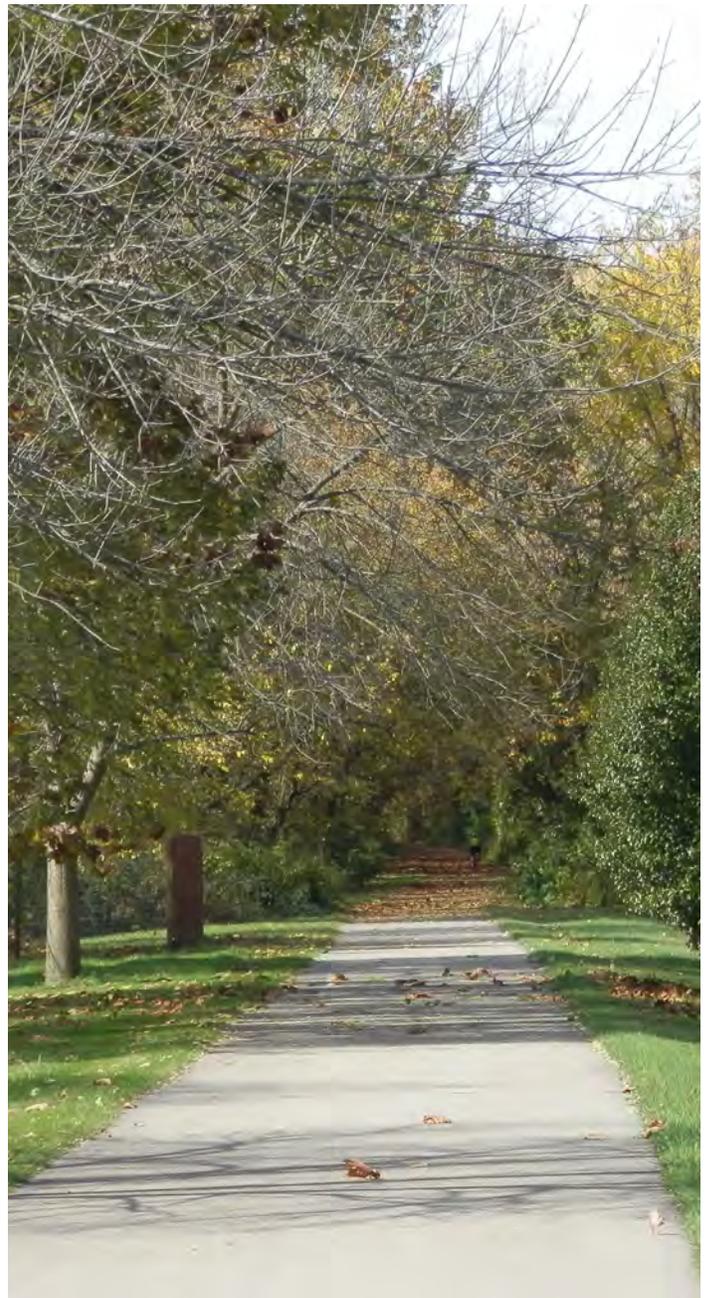
PLANNING TIPS: THE BENEFITS OF MIXED HOUSING TYPES

A community with diverse housing options does not necessarily require different housing types to be mixed on a single street. Instead, it indicates that a neighborhood as a whole offers a variety of housing options for residents in different stages of life. The increased options mean residents do not have to leave the community as they age or if they transition to a higher or lower income. Mixed-age, mixed income communities are increasingly recognized as being more resilient to housing trends and fluctuations in housing prices.

Goal #5: Complete Pedestrian & Bicycle Network

Sidewalks, trails, and walking paths are among the most desired neighborhood amenities for property owners. They provide an enjoyable, healthy, and inexpensive means of transportation to schools, parks, neighborhoods, and local businesses. In a community the size of Morrow a complete pedestrian network will also serve to tie the Village together. Presently there are many streets lacking sidewalks or trail access despite the short distances between all points in the Village.

Morrow also has a unique opportunity to capitalize on the existing and proposed multi-use trails that follow defunct railroad lines. The opportunity provided by the regional multi-use trails is twofold. First, they will be a convenience to residents by connecting local trails with regional trails. Second, they encourage economic development by bringing trail users from outside Morrow to local businesses. Capitalizing on the economic benefits of the regional trails will require the area around the bike trails to feature a streetscape with a pedestrian centered design, encouraging cyclists to stop and visit the surrounding businesses.



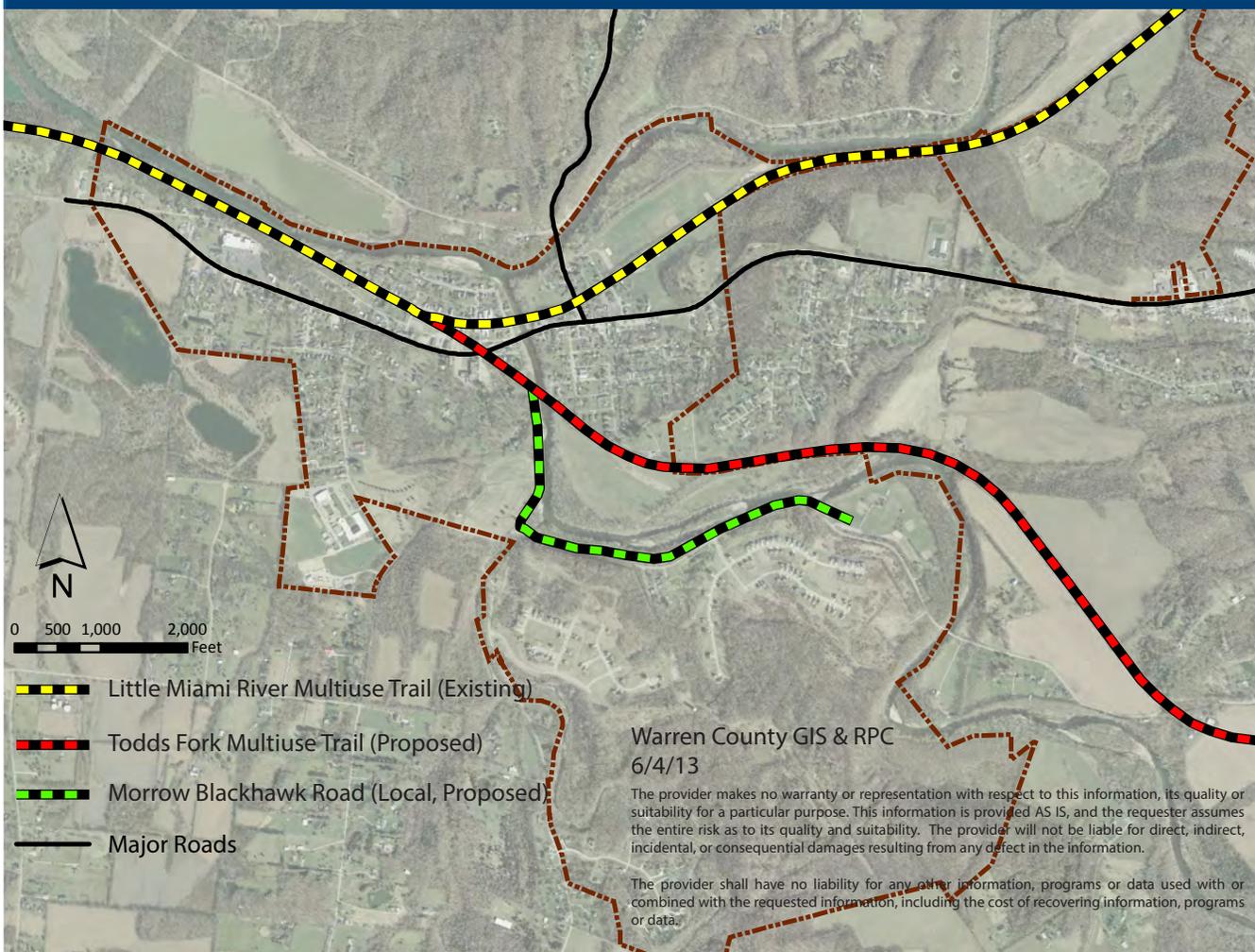
Above: These pictures illustrate the differences in sidewalk conditions in various parts of the Village. Goal #3 proposes to gradually repair and expand Morrow's pedestrian infrastructure.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT: MORROW'S LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK

The **Little Miami River Multiuse Trail** is an existing paved trail for bicyclists, pedestrians, roller skaters, and (in certain locations) horseback riding. The overwhelming majority of the trail follows the now defunct Penn Central Railroad line, converted as part of the Ohio Rails-to-Trails program. Stretching 75 miles from Springfield in the North to Newtown in the south, the trail runs through highly scenic river corridors, small towns, and farmland.

The **Todd's Fork Multiuse Trail** is a proposed multiuse trail that will connect Morrow to Wilmington. Approximately half this distance, the stretch between Clarksville and Wilmington, is already completed. The planning process for this trail is currently underway and will be constructed using grant funding from the State. Although this trail also follows a defunct railroad route, much of the route has fallen into extreme disrepair and multiple bridges will need reconstructed. The trail will be completed in phases over a 5-10 year time span. Once completed, trail users will be able to travel directly from Morrow to Wilmington, and from there to Washington Court House and Chillicothe.

Morrow-Blackhawk Road Local Trail is a proposed trail that, once constructed, will connect Thornton Park to the planned Todd's Fork Multiuse Trail by way of Morrow-Blackhawk Road and Front Street. Local trails play an important role in integrating local sidewalks to the regional multiuse trails, as well as connecting parks and neighborhoods in the Village.



CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of economic development in Morrow is to attract and grow business, but the Citizens Advisory Committee recognized that not all business is suited to all places. For example, a used car lot is not appropriate for Main Street across from the train station. Each economic development strategy will be promoted in the appropriate geography. The result will be a variety of business districts, each with their own character, each capitalizing on their locational strengths. If properly implemented the economic value of Morrow's commercial areas will be greater than the sum of its parts. This is the benefit of a comprehensive and strategic approach to branding, marketing, tax incentives, and inter-organizational collaboration.

In Morrow, economic development has been interpreted in a twofold manner. First, the Citizen's Advisory Committee indicated a need to revitalize downtown Morrow by attracting small businesses and making the downtown a vibrant social and cultural center for the community once again. The Citizen's Advisory Committee also indicated a need to revitalize the Village's commercial corridor along US 22/ SR 3. Strategies to revitalize this area include attracting new and expanding existing businesses with tax incentives and rejuvenating Morrow's image with new streetscaping, signage standards, gateways, and making positive use of local media.

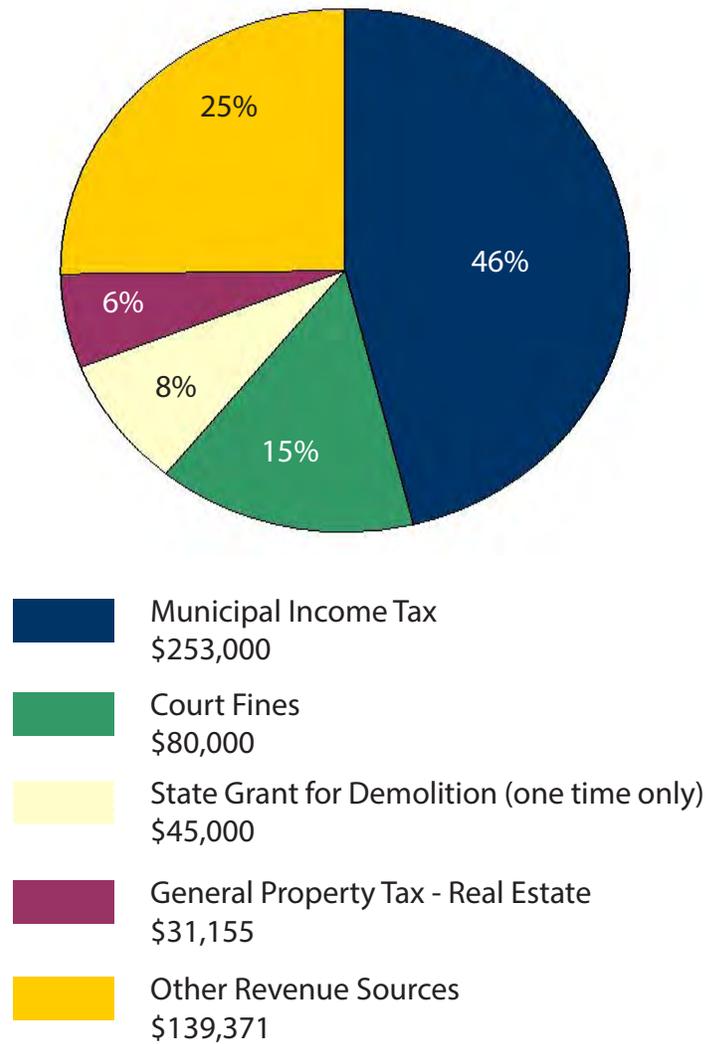


VILLAGE REVENUE

Like all Ohio cities and villages, Morrow derives the largest share of its revenue from local income taxes. This is in contrast to counties, which generate most of their revenue from a sales tax, or Townships that rely predominantly on property taxes. Therefore cities and villages require significant employment centers within their borders to sustain a budget needed to fund services such as police protection, fire protection, street maintenance, and administrative functions.

Due to their dependency on income taxes for revenue, municipalities strive to attract businesses or institutions with large number of well paid workers including offices, schools, and certain kinds of industrial uses with a high concentration of highly paid employees. Other commercial uses such as retail generate less revenue per employee given that wages are usually lower and retail consumes more local government resources, particularly police protection. It is easy to appreciate how Morrow's budget was dramatically impacted by the departure of Morrow Elementary School in 2002. Preserving the remaining school, Salem Township Primary, is of extreme importance to preserve a revenue source that allows Morrow to provide quality public services such as police, fire, infrastructure, and park maintenance.

Morrow 2012 Revenue

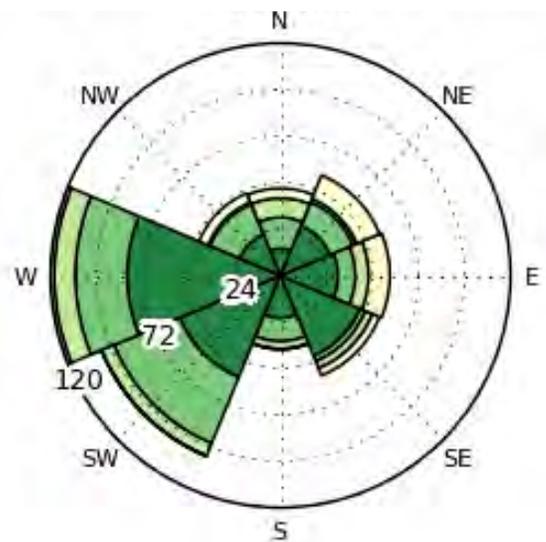


COMMUTING PATTERNS

The figure on the opposite page illustrates the inflow and outflow of Morrow's commuters. The Village labor force of 608 individuals in 2010 and 493 jobs located in the Village limits, with only 16 individuals were reported to both live and work in Morrow. This result is not unusual for small communities where even a short commute takes residents outside the Village. Even so, Morrow commuters generally do not work far from home. Over half of all residents commute less than 30 minutes to work and three quarters less than 45 minutes.

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2010

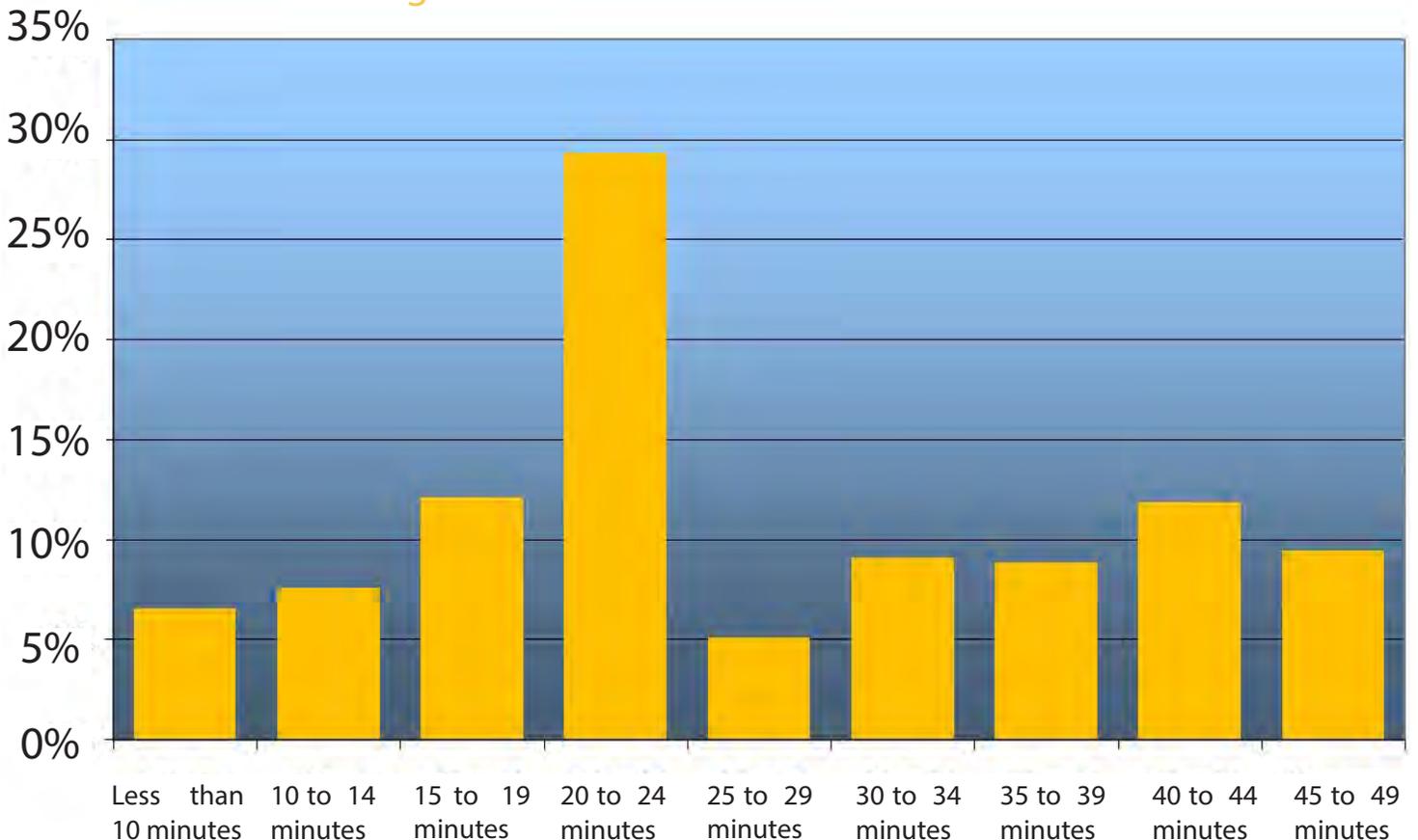
All Workers



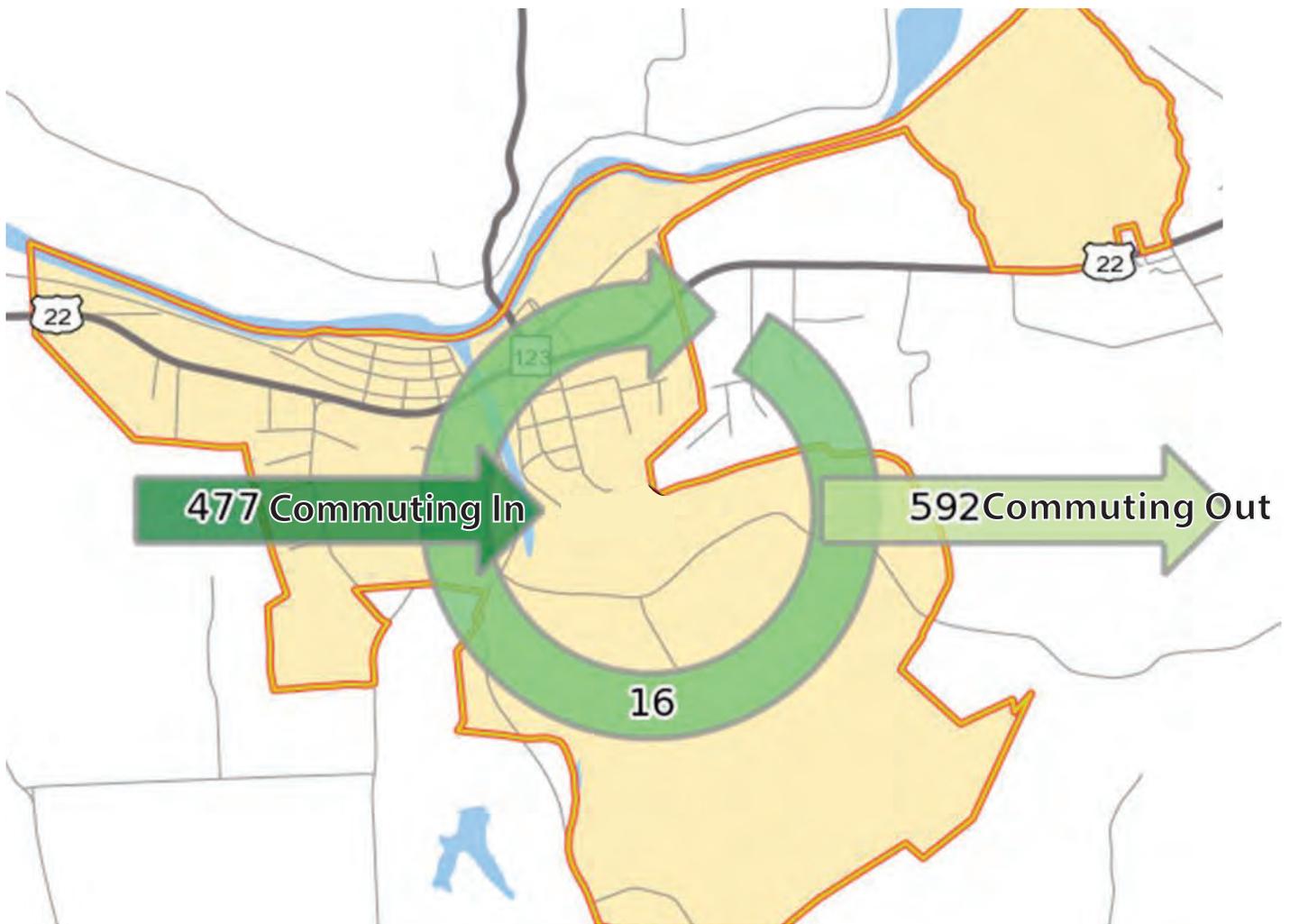
- less than 10 miles
- 25 to 50 miles
- 10 to 24 miles
- more than fifty miles

This illustration indicates directional commuting patterns by distance. Numbers on the chart indicate number of commuters.

Length of Commute for Morrow Residents



WORKER INFLOW & OUTFLOW

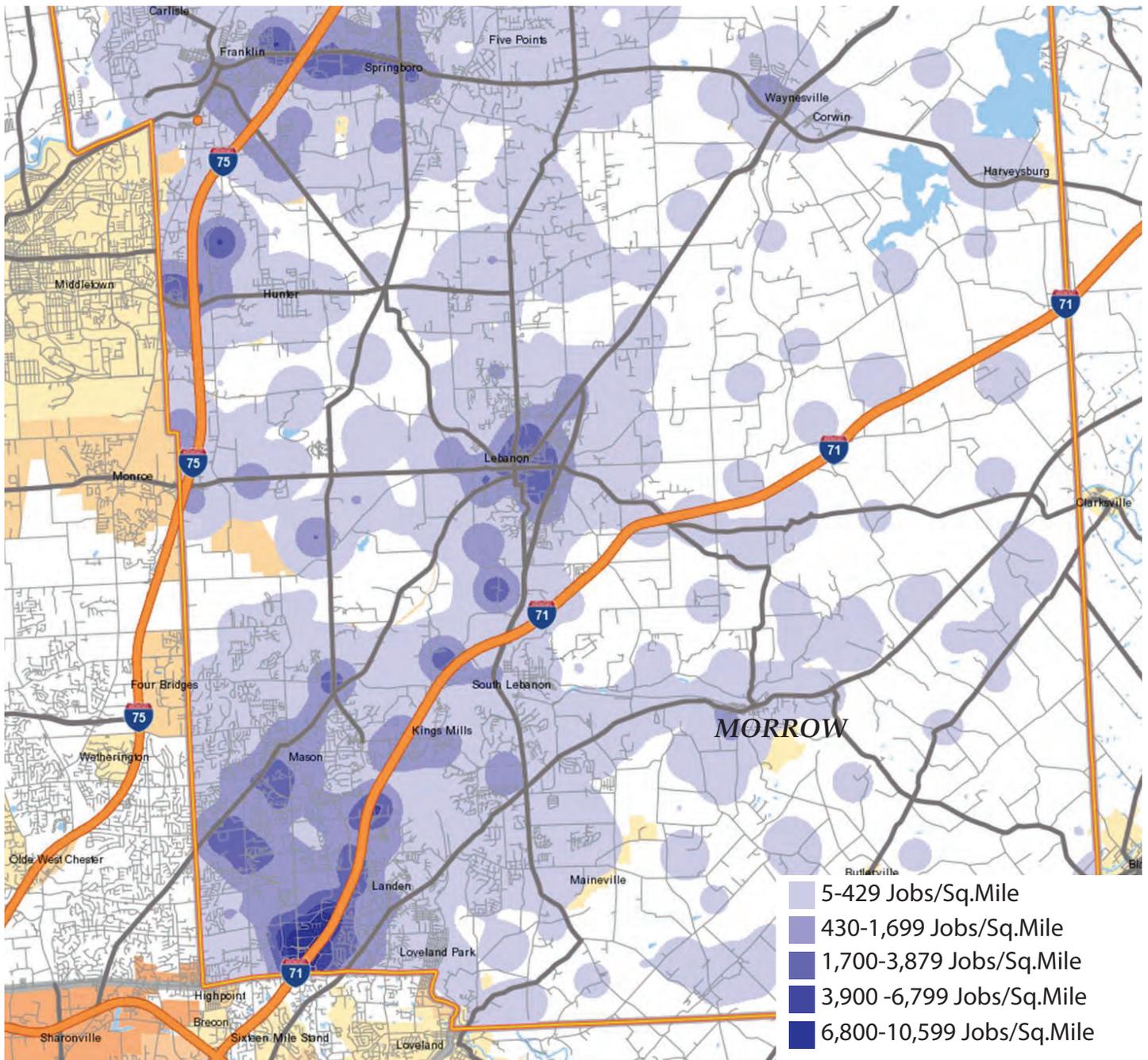


Discussion during meetings of the Community Advisory Committee indicated that many Morrow residents view themselves as a bedroom community. Contrary to this notion, Morrow is home to a wide range of private businesses as well as home to Salem Elementary, a primary school located south of the Welch-Highland neighborhood. 493 residents and nonresidents are employed in the Village, or 81% of the Village's labor force of 608. For comparison, Warren County's employment base totals less than 63% of the County's labor force.

While Morrow compares favorably to Warren County, the Village remains slightly unbalanced due to the greater number of residents commuting out than workers commuting in. The Village's reliance on income taxes to fund emergency services and other

public goods highlights the benefits of growing the employment base to balance the number of jobs to the number of residents in the labor force.

It is important to note that the intent of growing Morrow's employment base is not primarily to provide jobs to Village residents, as there are already hundreds of thousands of positions within a 30 minute drive time. Rather, the most substantial benefit to the Village is to grow the Village's tax base, enabling for improved service provision, and reduction in the tax rate, or a combination of the two. It will also provide employment options to residents who want a shorter commute.



REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

As stated in the introduction of this plan, Morrow is often perceived as being remote and isolated from Southwest Ohio’s employment centers. Although it is true that Morrow enjoys a secluded location in the scenic Little Miami River Valley, census data does not support the notion that Morrow is “remote”. Residents who choose to live in Morrow are within an approximately 30 minute drive from Mason, Deerfield Township, and Hamilton Township which account for the bulk of Warren County’s office and industrial employment. These and other communities within a 30 minute drive are home to over 200,000 jobs. This data indicates that growing Morrow’s employment base will likely not affect the Village’s employment rate or directly affect the desirability of the Village as a place of residence. Rather, Morrow must rely on attractive neighborhoods and a high quality of life to be as desirable a community as possible. The value of growing Morrow’s employment base is still of critical value, however, to support the municipal budget, provide quality public services, and provide options to residents who desire shortened commute times.

Goal #1: Attract and Grow Private Businesses

Just as residents seek a broad range of desirable neighborhood amenities to enjoy a high quality of life, businesses seek a wide variety of economic development amenities. To make the Village’s commercial areas more attractive, strong tax incentive packages may be judiciously offered if a cost-benefit analysis justifies the subsidy.

Other business amenities include an optimal business environment where zoning and permitting are wisely and expeditiously administered in an easy-to-understand fashion. Community image and branding is also a crucial element of site selection – many businesses, particularly niche retail, will be attracted to a historic downtown. The US 22/ SR 3 commercial corridor is well suited to regional businesses that will be attracted to Morrow’s identity of a quiet community in the scenic Little Miami River Valley.

PLANNING TIPS: EXAMPLES OF TAX INCENTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): This program uses increased tax revenue generated from an increase in the property value to fund public infrastructure improvements such as roads, street lights, sidewalks, or other infrastructure. Note that TIFs do not entail an increase in tax rates.

Community Revitalization Area (CRA): The CRA locks in the property taxes paid for an improved or expanded building for a specified amount of time. It temporarily leaves the new improvements untaxed. The CRA zone is created by the Village but must be approved by the State.

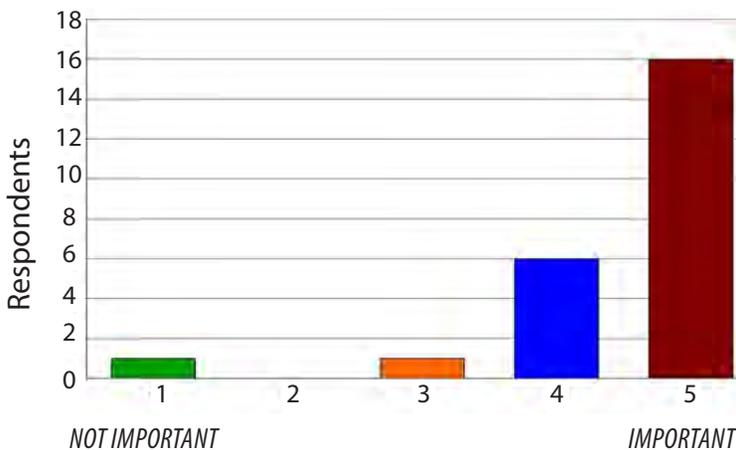
Ohio Collateral Enhancement Program (CEP): This program improves access to capital for small businesses by providing lenders collateral deposits to use as additional collateral. The additional collateral may amount to 30% of the loan amount or up to 50% in certain cases.

Ohio Capital Access Program (OCAP): OCAP encourages lending to businesses creating or retaining jobs by contributing to a fund that may be available to the lender in the event there are losses associated with the loan.

Ohio Enterprise Zone (EZ): This program provides property tax incentives for new or expanding businesses in a designated zone created through the State. Applications must be made prior to the investment.

Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit (OHPTC): OHPTC provides a one-time 25% tax credit for rehabilitation expenses of historically significant buildings. Eligible structures must be individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, contribute to a federal historic district, or a Certified Local Government historic district. Properties that qualify for the state historic tax credit also generally qualify for the federal historic tax credits, providing an additional one-time tax credit that covers 20% of the project’s rehabilitation costs.

INCENTING DEVELOPMENT



The online survey asked participants to rank the importance of tax incentives and other development strategies where “1” indicated no importance/no change needed and “5” indicated high importance/change needed. Sixteen individuals selected “very important” and 6 more chose “important”.

Goal #2: Businesses and Activities that Complements the Historic Character of Downtown

The Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the Village implement strategies to capitalize on the historic character of downtown by attracting businesses that are uniquely suited to this environment. Small retail businesses that cater to tourists and bike trail users as well as small office businesses such as accountants or lawyers often find historic downtowns to be a prestigious location to set up shop.

To this end the Village will need to communicate its vision for downtown with local business associations and County agencies. These organizations can advertise real estate opportunities on Main Street. The Village should increase awareness of Morrow's downtown by increasing the visibility of its publicly owned signage on US 22/ SR 3, and should consider similar signs in highly visible locations.



This example demonstrates use of downtown wayfinding signage to direct pedestrians and motorists to key destinations.

Goal #3: Healthy, Diverse Business Mix outside Downtown

Morrow enjoys an abundance of commercial space along the US 22/SR 3 corridor. Key to harnessing the market potential of motorists on this road is encouraging drivers to stop and visit Morrow's businesses. To cultivate a diverse business mix in Morrow, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the Village develop a creative marketing strategy to promote the Village and surrounding area as a business friendly environment. Social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter can be used more aggressively as well as the Morrow E-Newsletter to renew Morrow's image a.



The US 22/SR 3 Corridor constitutes the greatest concentration of commercial activity in Morrow. Morrow Plaza, now largely vacant, represents the largest concentration of useable retail space in the Village.

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION:

MORROW PLAZA

A comprehensive marketing approach will benefit all commercial areas within the Village, however several commercial properties in Morrow represent such an opportunity that they require individual consideration. One such property is Morrow Plaza; without an anchor and with several other smaller spaces vacant, reuse of this retail center will require innovative solutions such as partitioning large retail spaces into smaller ones or inviting entrepreneurs to experiment with creative uses such as budget theaters or temporary business.



WOODED LAKE SITE

Another site to consider is the vacant land zoned commercial at the western extent of Morrow's territory. The land borders a former quarry that is now a pond and could be attractive to a high quality professional office building that would capitalize on the water and mature trees (see example concept below). Small annexations may increase the development options on the site by enabling multiple building configurations.



Goal #4: Visible Signs of a Proud Community

Potential investors and residents alike seek communities that demonstrate an outward sign of an inward pride of place. Expressions of community pride include competent property maintenance, well kept businesses and homes, and landscaping on both private and public properties. These indicators will reveal Morrow to be a desirable and convenient place to do business.

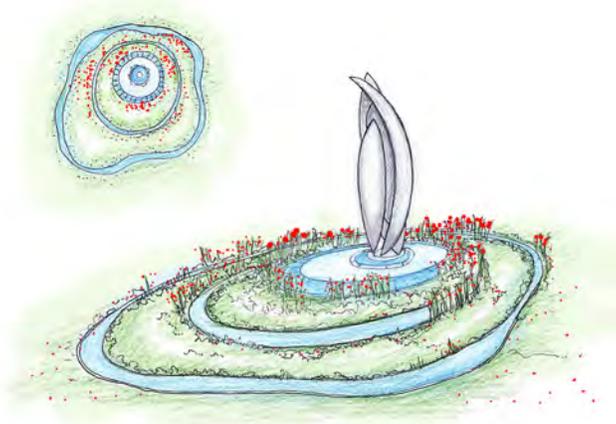
The intent of this goal is to build a stronger and more positive image for Morrow. While most of Morrow is kept in good repair, the overall image of a community is largely determined by its weakest properties. For example, several highly visible properties along US 22/SR 3 are not contributing to the overall image of Morrow as a modern and desirable place to do business. The Citizens Advisory Committee recommends revisions to the zoning code that will enable the Village to require high quality property maintenance. The Committee also recommends effective and consistent enforcement of existing polices outlined in the Code.

Not all strategies relating to maintenance and landscaping must be the result of government action. Faith-based or other volunteer organizations may make civic improvements such as cleaning parks or maintaining landscaping. Local businesses may sponsor civic improvements in exchange for free publicity from the Village or local sports teams.

PLANNING TIPS: GATEWAYS AND LANDMARKS

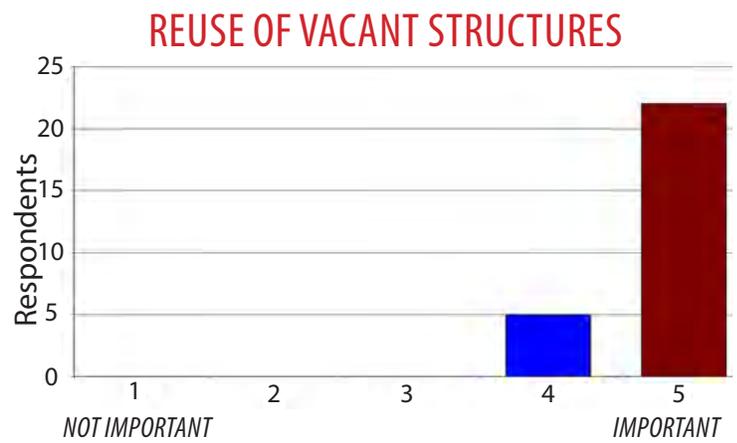
GATEWAYS: Gateway features may be installed either at key community entrances or on the boundary of a neighborhood or commercial district. Their purpose is twofold; gateways clearly communicate that one is entering a distinct area or subarea, which reinforces the perception of a unique local identity. Their second function is to associate a positive image with the community or neighborhood. Some gateways feature a bold design that speaks to the community's history or recreation opportunities. For example, a bold gateway example for Morrow may include a sculpture using kayaks. Less radical gateway examples may be little more than a high quality sign with landscaping, which is also capable of communicating a positive image of the community.

LANDMARKS: Landmarks are prominent features that create natural focal points. The nature and character of landmarks can vary widely, though generally they are highly visible and unique, which makes them suitable to branding and place-making. Some landmarks also effectively function as community gathering places; a small square with a fountain is an example of this. Other landmarks may be an existing features such as the truss bridge or caboose.



Goal #5: Reuse of Existing Structures and Land

It has long been the paradigm since the middle of the 20th century that any development ... is new development. Today there is an emerging consciousness that there are excellent redevelopment opportunities found in existing neighborhoods and commercial areas. Recognizing that Morrow features major opportunities for redevelopment, the Citizen's Advisory Committee recommends the Village prioritize reuse of existing structures and properties within the Village.



22 residents, or three quarters of all survey participants, indicated reuse of Morrow's vacant structures was "very important" with remainder voting that this issue is "important."

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION: MORROW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Morrow Elementary School is perhaps the most historically and culturally significant structure in the Village of Morrow. Though vacant since 2002, Morrow residents recall when it served as a functioning elementary school and previously as a 1-12 grade school. Constructed in 1913, the school was partially renovated in 2000 by the school district prior to being shuttered two years later. Many important building components such as the heating/cooling system and windows are consequently in good condition.

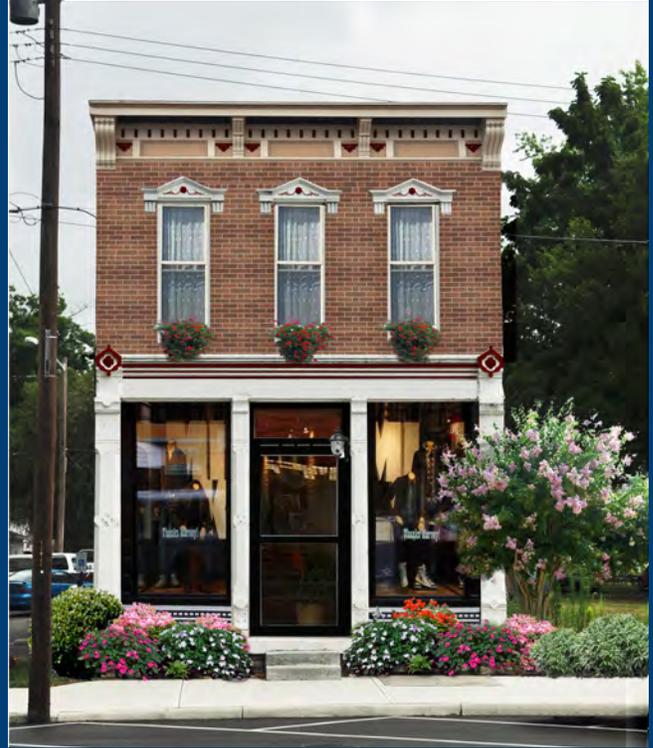
Given the high level of community significance, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommended exploring several options for reuse of this site. One such reuse is to explore the feasibility of using the school as a business incubator; another is to refurbish the building as a community center with space for performances, public meetings, classes, indoor recreation, and possibly space for the local library. The community center may also include space for philanthropic uses such as a food pantry or clothing depot. The Village may also consider some combination of community center space while preserving part of the building for business start-ups.

To increase the redevelopment potential of this site, the Village should consider listing the building on the National Register of Historic Places, thereby making the building eligible to receive state and federal tax credits that cover 35-40% of project costs.



PLANNING TIPS: HISTORIC REHABILITATIONS

In some cases, the reuse of a structure will require a full rehabilitation including new ventilation systems, electrical systems, and interior/exterior furnishings and fixtures. Many of the buildings in downtown Morrow are not capable of realizing their full potential without this kind of rehabilitation. Fortunately there are several tax credit and incentive tools that can give private property owners a boost if they seek to overhaul their historic buildings.



To increase the likelihood that redevelopment will take place, the Village may enact policies that will make certain areas eligible for tax credits or tax abatements. These may be targeted in locations with the greatest concentration of existing vacant structures such as downtown or around Morrow Plaza. Other vacant or underutilized properties in the Village are significant enough that they warrant individual attention in the form of development incentives and concept plans that may be presented to potential investors.



Commemorative plaques can brand historic buildings or neighborhoods. It is an affordable, highly effective means of reminding residents of a neighborhood's history.



Historic downtowns can draw on their unique character and building design to house clusters of small, tourist oriented businesses that serve as both a regional and local destination.

PLANNING TIPS: HISTORIC PRESERVATION TOOLS

HISTORIC DISTRICTS: Historic districts are used throughout the country as a strategy to identify and advertise historically significant neighborhoods. Standards designed to protect historically significant structures vary widely in their stringency because historic preservation standards are made by the community for the unique needs of each community. Some historic preservation ordinances regulate outdoor furniture or fencing, while other historic districts have almost no associated regulations.

HISTORIC TAX CREDITS: Aside from reinforcing the identity of a historic neighborhood, perhaps the most attractive benefit to historic districts are state and federal tax incentives which may be used for building rehabilitation. Structures that contribute to state-certified local historic districts are eligible to apply for state tax credits equal to 25% of the rehabilitation costs. If the structure contributes to a federally designated historic district, it is eligible for federal tax credits equal to and additional 20% of the rehabilitation costs. Structures that contribute to a local historic district are also eligible for state tax credits if the district is created by a Certified Local Government.

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION: MORROW LUMBERYARD SITE

The Morrow Lumber Company in downtown Morrow has been a longstanding anchor of Morrow's retail industry. While the company continues to prosper, large properties such as this change ownership over the long term. When this comes to pass, the Village will discover that a large and highly strategic site between Salem Township's most heavily traveled road and Morrow's downtown is changing hands. As an existing business, it would be inappropriate for the Village to suggest the business leave or close. It is, however, appropriate for the Village to devise long term plans for the site on the basis that property ownership may change over the long term. Concept plans may be devised to give direction to potential future investors or developers of the site. This will allow the community to encourage development that is consistent with the Vision Statement and Comprehensive Plan, but does not require the Village expend funds or effort directly on the site. Given its central location, possible uses may include outdoor recreation or an enlarged, permanent space for the Morrow Farmer's Market, or a mixed use development compatible with the existing buildings on Main Street.



PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION: MORROW LUMBERYARD SITE (CONT.)

A conceptual illustration of redevelopment is shown below. It suggests commercial uses, possibly with second story residential, developed according to traditional design principles. Buildings are brought to the street with parking in the rear. This particular concept suggests decks where people may dine and watch visitors using the bike trail. In particular, the Village should promote reuses that will complement the adjacent downtown but also leverage the high traffic volume on Pike Street. In order to thoughtfully consider all development options, this plan recommends the Village engage in a public participation process such as a charrette to create sketch plans based on public input.



CHAPTER 5: *QUALITY OF LIFE*



INTRODUCTION

Morrow is uniquely blessed in Warren County due to the diverse elements of the natural landscape present in the Little Miami River Valley. Other communities in this County also have attractive scenery or a scenic river, but none have the combination that Morrow enjoys. Two major waterways, steep forested hills, regional parks, and an existing and proposed regional multiuse trail culminate in a picturesque outdoor-recreation hotspot.



COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT: PARK & RECREATIONAL SPACE

Morrow Veteran Memorial Park: Formerly owned and operated by the Village of Morrow, this 34 acre park was purchased by the Warren County Parks District (WCPD) in 2004, which now maintains all park furnishings and the property. Park visitors can enjoy bird watching, photography, and fishing near the Little Miami River. This park's athletic fields are also heavily used, with some youth sporting events attracting upwards of 1,000 visitors to the park. The park's location near downtown and businesses on Pike Street represent an untapped opportunity to bring visitors to Morrow's businesses.

Thornton Park: At 41 acres, Thornton is the largest of Morrow's parks. It is owned by the Village and features soccer fields, restroom facilities, a concession stand, and a picnic shelter. The Village currently has an agreement with the Little Miami Youth Football in which this private organization maintains the property in exchange for use of playing fields for practice. Nonetheless, the park is open to the all members of the public.

Phegley Park: Phegley Park is a small neighborhood park located in downtown Morrow. The park is less than one acre in area. Despite its small size it features a variety of amenities such as a picnic shelter, gazebo, playground, permanent heated restroom facility, parking, and a basketball court. Though Phegley Park is already heavily used by the local community, its downtown location and proximity to the Little Miami River Multi-use Trail make Phegley Park an ideal location for additional events and activities.

Little Miami River Multi-use Trail: This multi-use trail has been constructed in phases as part of the federal "Rails to Trails" program. The trail follows the path of the defunct Penn Central rail line along Main Street and proceeds east past Morrow Veterans Memorial Park. Connecting Newtown to Springfield, the trail accommodates pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized transportation.

Todd's Fork Multi-use Trail (Planned): The currently planned Todd's Fork trail will follow the defunct Pennsylvania Railroad line from Wilmington by way of Clarksville to downtown Morrow. There it will join the existing Little Miami River Multi-use Trail near the train station. Like the existing trail, the Todd's Fork trail will be paved and sufficiently wide to accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians, and other forms of non-motorized transportation.

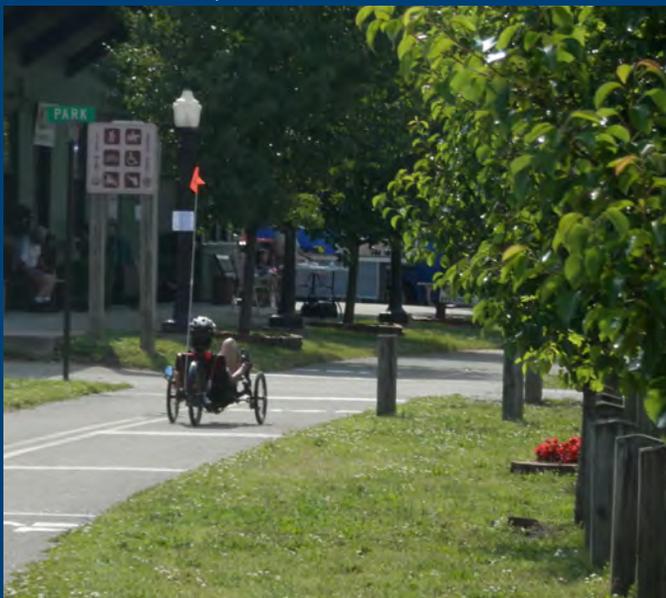
Goal # 1: Outdoor Recreation as a Centerpiece of Morrow's Identity

Morrow's location along existing and future regional trails, the river, and surrounding scenic beauty represents a significant opportunity for outdoor recreation. This applies equally to local residents and visitors. In recognition of this potential, the Citizen's Advisory Committee recommends the Village establish outdoor recreation as a centerpiece to Morrow's identity. It should use outdoor recreation as a starting point for events and activities that will bring people to the Village.

Strategies to achieve this must address several topical areas. Branding efforts to raise awareness of the existing recreational opportunities will be paramount. Branding efforts include installation of way finding signage to advertise park locations and events as well as making outdoor recreation a major element of the Village's website. It is recommended the Village encourage additional events that use the bike trail or the river not only to drive economic development directly and improve quality of life, but also as a way of identifying Morrow uniquely with these features and effectively remaking the Village's identity.

PLANNING TIPS: HOW OTHER COMMUNITIES HARNESS REGIONAL BIKE TRAILS

The City of Xenia has capitalized on its role as a hub in southwest Ohio's regional trail network. Four regional trails converge on Xenia and the city has branded itself as the bike capital of the Midwest. This has been instrumental as a selling point for prospective businesses. Several bicycle shops have established themselves in downtown near the trail as well as in a restored mansion used as a bread and breakfast catering primarily to trail users. Xenia has installed wayfinding signage and bike racks using grant money at several strategic locations to ensure it maintains its position as a desirable stopping place for cyclists. A map of downtown near the trail as well as a downtown business directory connect trail users to shopping opportunities. Additionally, Xenia's comprehensive plan recommends installation of local trails to connect local neighborhoods to each other and to the regional trails, improving alternative transportation options for the entire city.



Goal # 2: Improvements to Existing Parks

Improvements to existing parks takes two forms; the first is to physically improve park space by refurbishing play equipment, playing fields, or other physical aspects of the park itself. The second is to find new or innovative ways to maintain the park space.

Physical improvements to Morrow's park space will require cooperation with the Warren County Parks District (responsible for maintenance of Morrow Veteran's Memorial Park), and should be a collaborative effort with Salem Township. Many of the strategies found in the implementation chapter will benefit Township residents just as much as they will benefit residents of the Village.

Improvements to park space will vary widely in cost, with some improvements consisting of little more than landscape improvements. Other more substantial changes may include new playground equipment or other structures. It is recommended the Village use grant sources such as the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to fund these projects rather than rely predominantly on Village resources.

Given the expenses associated with park upkeep and maintenance, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the Village discuss with surrounding Townships the possibility of creating a joint park district. All participating jurisdictions would contribute funds for the upkeep of the region's park space. The basis for the recommendation is that a joint park district will be more efficient and achieve economies of scale in labor and maintenance. A similar option is to support a County-wide park district.



Goal # 3: Year-Round, Family Friendly Events

One side of creating a lively culture of recreational activities and events relates to physical improvements in parks. The other side of this coin is to fill parks and public spaces with well organized and fun events. To this end the Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the Village, together with residents, organize numerous events throughout the year that make memorable experiences for residents and attract visitors. Effective event planning will not be a one-time undertaking. It will require the Village to find dedicated residents who are willing to champion community events that are important to them. It will also require some level of consensus from event supporters, the Village, and local businesses when selecting which kinds of community events to promote. For example, should the Village emphasize a Fourth of July celebration on Main Street or prioritize a marathon that uses the bike trail, or both? Fulfilling this goal will require effective and enduring communication with a variety of actors in the Village.

In addition to organizing events, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the Village or event organizers capitalize on social media such as Facebook or Twitter, permitting residents to organize events and post comments. This will serve both as an advertisement and as a technique to increase community engagement for the event.

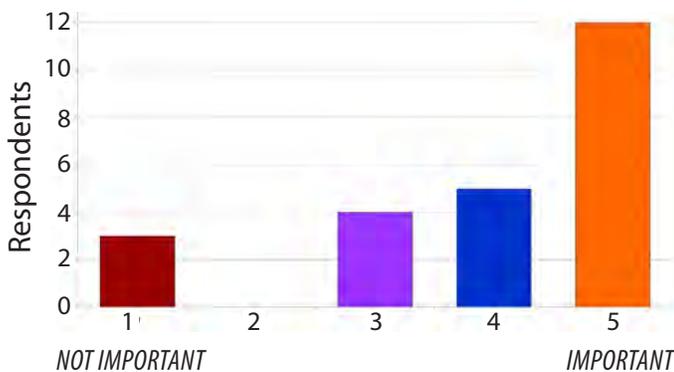
PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION: MORROW COMMUNITY CENTER

As noted elsewhere in this plan, the vacant Morrow Elementary School has been the subject of several innovative ideas as part of this planning process. Reusing the school as a business incubator has been one of the most intriguing ideas (see Economic Development, Goal 5). Another popular suggestion for the site is to reuse the school as a community center. Converting the school to a community center would create a local destination for continuous indoor recreational opportunities for Village residents as well as residents of the surrounding townships. The gymnasium, classrooms, and other spaces could see new life for indoor sports, classes, workshops, community meetings, and possibly a new space for the local library. The community center would also be an appropriate location for philanthropic uses such as a clothing depot or larger space for the local food pantry.



A community center can include space for classes, indoor sports, performances, or a new home for the local library.

COMMUNITY CENTER



Resident desire for a community center was mixed but generally positive. A proposal for a community center should rely on citizen input to ensure the amenities and cost reflect the community's values.

Goal # 4: Strong Community Organizations

An important role of local governments, in addition to ensuring the public's safety and maintaining public infrastructure, is to improve the quality of life for its residents. However there is a host of social and community issues that the Village can not easily address as a governmental entity. The Citizens Advisory Committee determined that a healthy community is not only predicated on having a competent local government but also strong community organizations who have a clear mission in improving different aspects of community life.

Different community organizations focus on specific issues. For example, a tree beautification committee

should consist of volunteers who wish to plant street trees, hold fundraisers, and donate time and money to the effort. Faith-based organizations may focus on issues of substance-abuse or outreach to the economically disadvantaged. Other civic organizations such as the Kiwanis Club or Rotary Club may donate time and funds to refurbish playground equipment or paint the house of a senior citizen.

When partnering with private organizations it is important to directly reach out and share the Plan's vision and how it must be implemented. The Village must ask these organizations how they see themselves contributing to the plan's implementation.



"Morrow of Tomorrow" is one of the Village's best examples of a robust community organization. Founded in 1977, Morrow of Tomorrow was responsible for the rehabilitation of the historic train station and caboose. They currently maintain these facilities as well as sponsor the annual "Railroad Days" festival.

CHAPTER 6: INFRASTRUCTURE



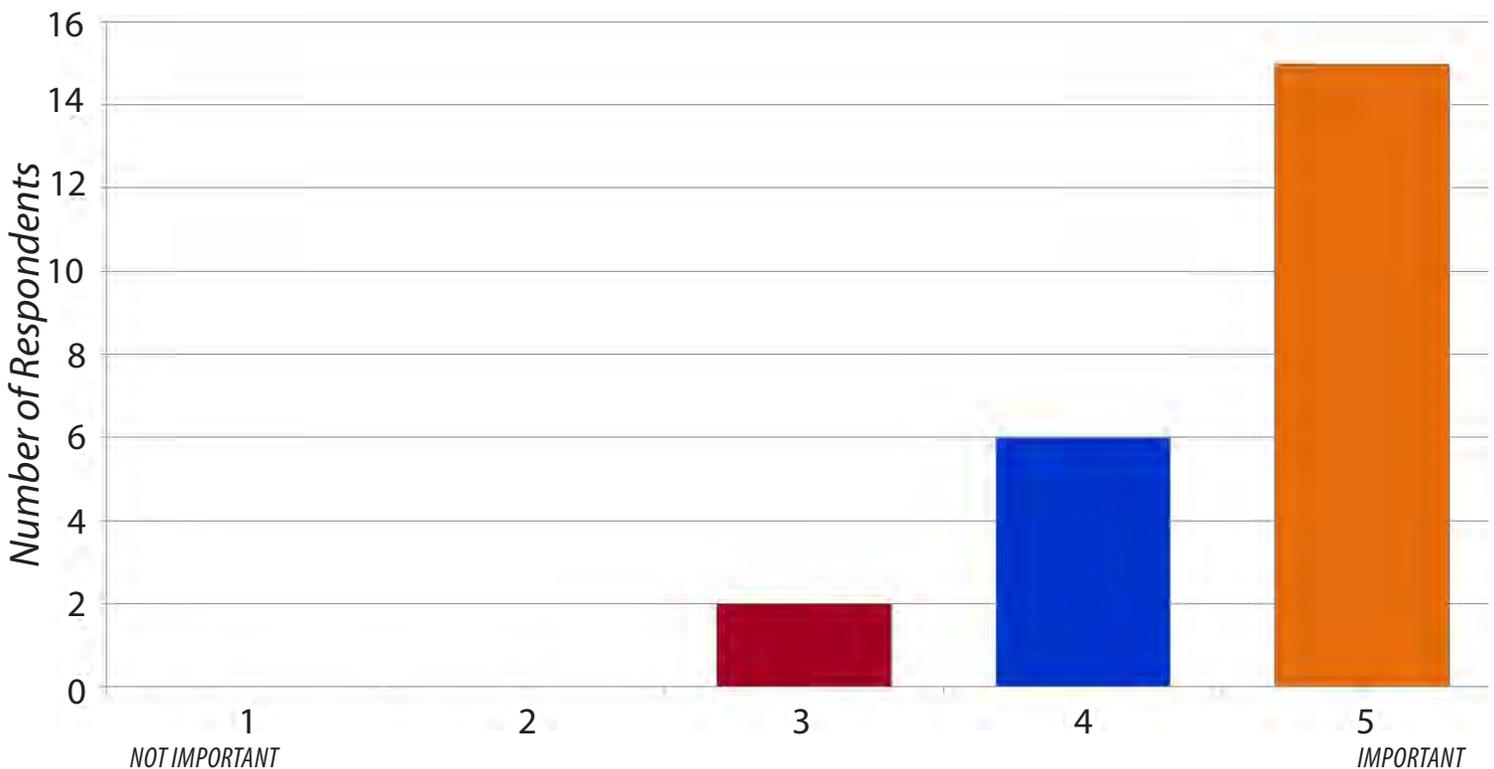
INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure provision at the local level constitutes one of the most basic roles of government. Quality infrastructure provision such as well paved streets, level sidewalks, and uninterrupted utility service are public goods that instill a sense of confidence in the Village government and in the community itself. Infrastructure provision is also one of the most expensive services local governments strive to provide. Not all communities have the financial resources to provide the most desirable level of infrastructure provision, regardless of how efficiently the local staff may work.

Therefore, the Village will need to communicate and reach agreements with other area service providers such as Duke Energy and Warren County Sewer and Water Department¹. The Village will also need to devise more specific plans to prioritize which infrastructure projects are most valuable to attracting business and improving quality of life, and pursue grants to make these high-value infrastructure improvements a reality.

¹ The Warren County Sewer and Water Department only provides sewer service in the Village, as Morrow operates its own water system for residents.

ADDRESSING ROAD MAINTENANCE

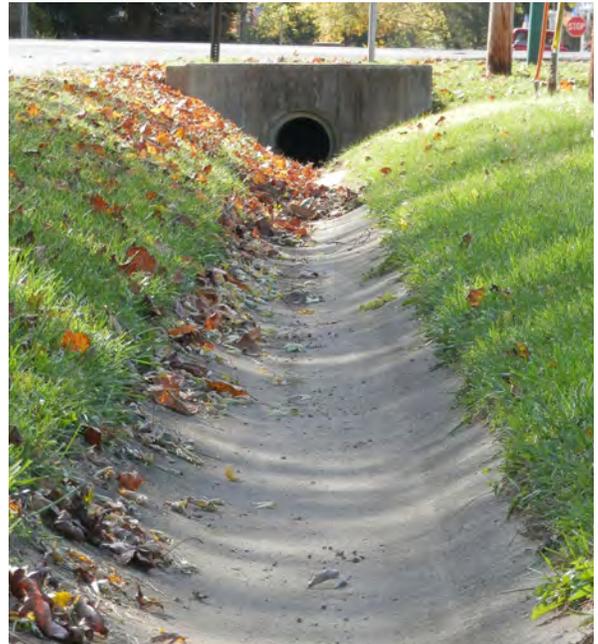


Surveyees were express their opinion using a scale from 1 to 5. "1" indicated the goal or action is not important and a "5" expresses belief that the item is very important to address. Fifteen residents said road improvements and road maintenance are very important/should be addressed; 6 surveyees indicated this is "important" and one surveyee indicated it is somewhat important.

Goal 1: Infrastructure that Accommodates Existing, Future Development

In addition to maintaining the existing infrastructure systems in the Village, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommends the Village promote several road or utility improvements to accommodate future businesses or improve service to existing development. Expanding some infrastructure systems will require the action of outside organizations; for example, the Village may encourage the completion of a fiber optic cable trunk line that runs through the Village.

Other infrastructure expansions will be implemented by the Village such as certain road or water main extensions that are needed to serve new development. Road and utility lines within the development is the responsibility of the developer, but occasionally the Village may find itself required to extend utilities or roads to a development site on some occasions. In these instances it is recommended the Village perform a cost-benefit analysis to determine the length of time needed for Morrow to recover its investment. It is recommended the Village only make major public infrastructure investments that generate a positive return for the Village. At times this must be balanced with other community priorities such as quality of life and convenience to residents.



Goal 2: A Safe, Well Maintained Road Network

Roadbeds are complex structures whose depth and composition is a reflection of traffic loads and planned maintenance intervals. It is important to understand the relationship between proper roadway maintenance and costs; deferred road maintenance will be more costly in the long run given that costs increase exponentially the longer roads are left without repairs.

It is recommended the Village evaluate the condition of Morrow's streets and create a maintenance schedule based on pavement condition and traffic volumes to ensure that road maintenance is considered comprehensively in conjunction with other Village services. The Citizen's Advisory Committee recommends using outside funds whenever possible to make necessary road repairs. The CAC also recommends endorsing legislation at the county, regional, or state level that will help fund road improvements by working with Warren County, OKI, and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION

The following capital improvement projects were developed by the Citizens Advisory Committee as high priority road or improvement projects.

1. KIBBEY AVENUE: This road once linked to downtown but has long since been disconnected. Suggestions included concerting the former roadway to a well lit walking trail or reconstructing the road to downtown. Consultation with property owners is imperative.

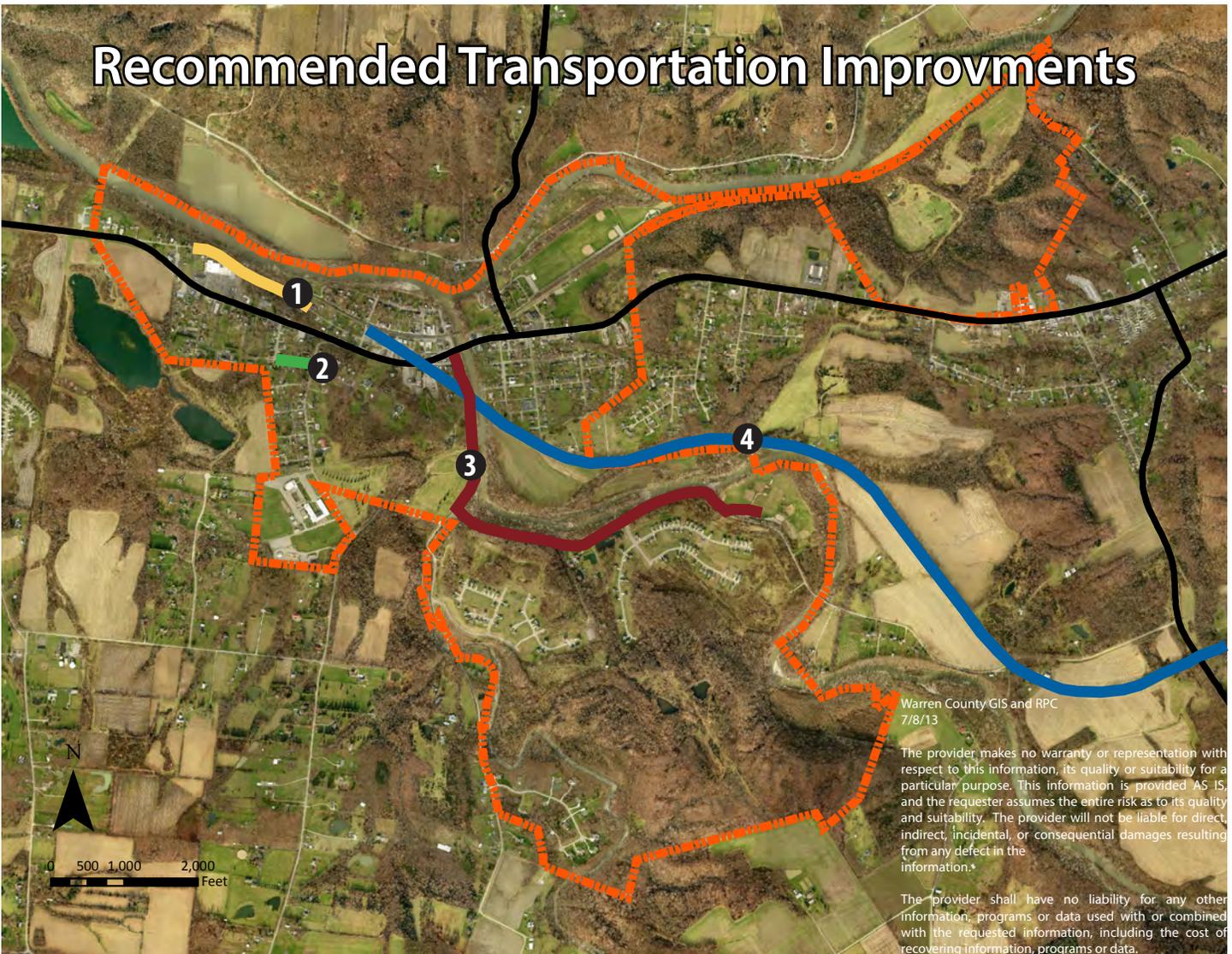
2. HIGHLAWN AVENUE: Widen the pavement on this residential street to accommodate on-street parking.

3. MORROW BLACKHAWK LOCAL TRAIL: A trail connecting Thornton Park/The Woodlands neighborhood to the rest of the Village will create an important pedestrian connection as well as a scenic trail for recreational. Using mulch instead of pavement would help manage project cost.

3. TODDS FORK MULTI-USE TRAIL: Construction of this planned trail will be completed in installments over a 5-10 year period. Funding will be provided by outside organizations. Morrow will still have a role to play by supporting the project until the trail is completed.



Recommended Transportation Improvements



The Citizens Advisory Committee discussed a handful of transportation projects whose importance warrants the Village's highest priority. The map above illustrates the location of these high priority projects discussed on the previous page.

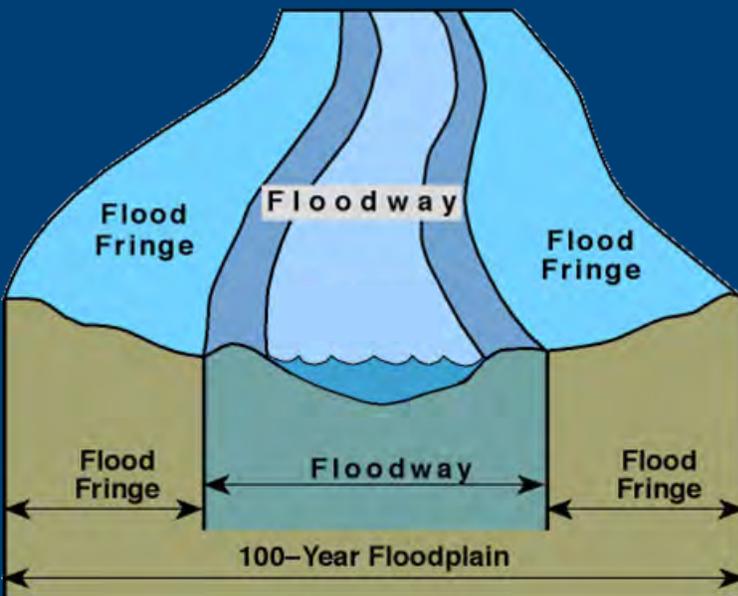
1. Kibbey Avenue
2. Highlawn Avenue
3. Morrow Blackhawk Local Trail
4. Todds Fork Multiuse Trail

Goal 3: Effective Flood and Stormwater Management

Like many historic communities founded along the banks of a river, much of Morrow lies in the floodplain of the Little Miami River and Todd's Fork. Structures located in the floodplain pay higher insurance rates, making investing in these structures considerably less favorable to the property owner. Development in the floodway itself is rarely permitted unless engineering measures, such as elevating the structure on stilts or on an unfinished garage, have been taken to satisfy requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Development constraints associated with floodplains is a common challenge faced by communities throughout the country, yet there are no easy solutions to address flooding events or the associated insurance rates. Nonetheless, comprehensive stormwater management measures can still be implemented to reduce the severity of flooding events and the damage to property. The Citizens Advisory Committee recommends Morrow take measures to reduce localized flooding events by modifying stormwater drains and grading to prevent stormwater from ponding in neighborhoods and entering homes. Regional action should also be taken to reduce urban surface runoff through zoning and subdivision regulations. The Village may also explore the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of construction of low earthen levees after consulting the US Army Corp of Engineers and other technicians.

PLANNING TIPS: COMPONENTS OF A 500 YEAR FLOODPLAIN



Source: Ohio Department of Natural Resources http://www.ohiodnr.com/water/pubs/fs_div/fctsht12/tabid/4095.=/Default.aspx

The risk of damage to property or loss of life is a serious consideration when evaluating locations conducive to development. When assessing an area's risk of flooding, engineers divide the floodplain into several areas.

The floodway is the portion of the floodplain where the floodwaters flow most strongly and quickly when the stream is at flood stage. Movement of soil and development is highly restricted in the floodway according to regulations established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Beyond the floodway lies the flood fringe, which includes all the floodplain outside the stream channel and floodway. State and federal regulations do not prevent local governments from allowing development in the floodfringe. Like most municipalities, Morrow allows development in the floodfringe. Flood insurance can be costly for development located in the floodplain, however, and many communities have additional regulations or prohibitions on building in the floodplain.

Floodway & Floodplain

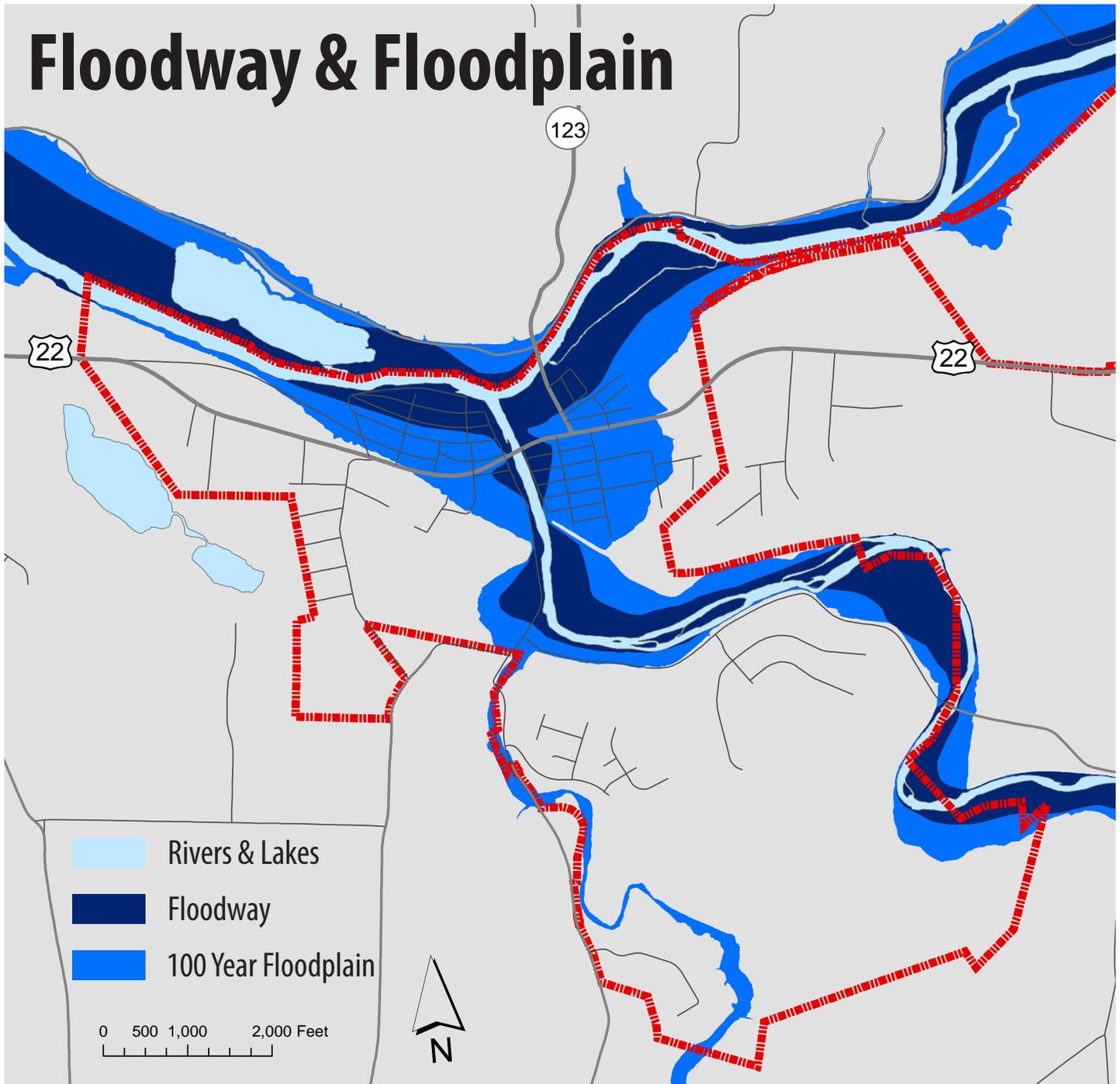


Photo courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society.



Photo courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society.

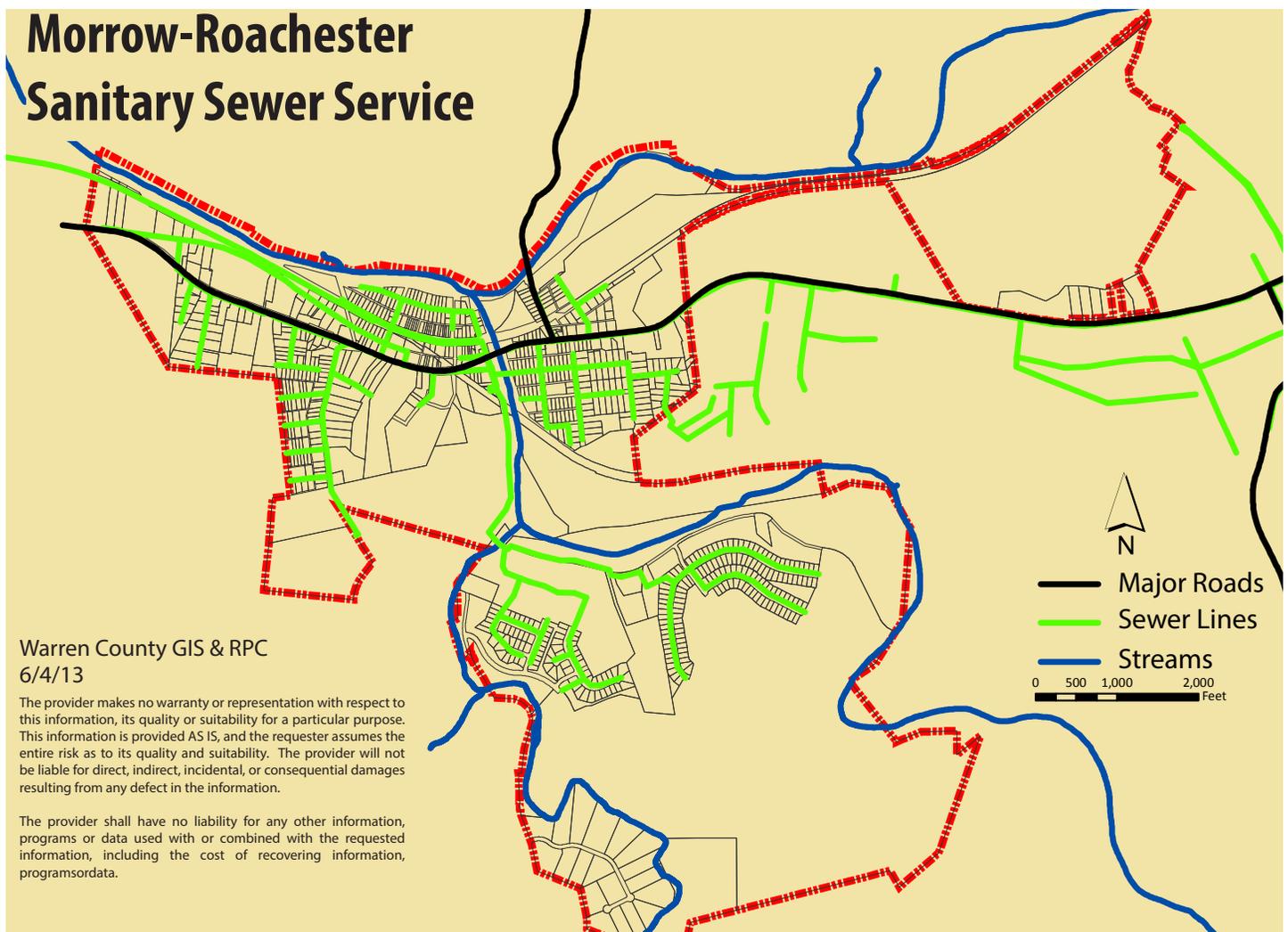
Goal 4: Inter-jurisdictional agreement for shared use of infrastructure

The presence of a sanitary sewer system is often the most important public infrastructure provided to a development. No other infrastructure (electricity, water, or roads) is as constrained by topography as the sanitary sewer system. Except in instances where pumping stations are used, sewer systems operate using gravity to bring waste-water to a treatment plant.

Morrow will benefit from collaborating with other jurisdictions to provide adequate infrastructure provision to its residents. The Warren County Sewer and Water Department and Salem Township will be

the most important partners when coordinating how sewer requirements in this area will be served.

At issue is that the Village lies within the Morrow-Rochester Urban Service Area, a territory which includes portions of Salem Township and is served by a common sanitary sewer system. All wastewater generated within the urban service area flows out through one sewer main along the Little Miami River Multiuse Trail. This sewer main is several miles in length and would be costly to enlarge. This sewer main does not have a pipe diameter capable of accommodating all future development potential in the Morrow-Rochester Urban Service Area. An example of development that is constrained by existing sewer capacity is the Woodlands at Morrow, a residential development. In spite of approved plans to construct over 800 homes, there is adequate sewer capacity for only about 500 homes.





To comprehensively address this issue the Village will need a twofold approach. One is to begin a long term discussion with the County (which owns and operates the sanitary sewer system) to determine how the urban service area's sewer capacity can be increased. The most feasible solution is installing a second sewer main, probably when the bike trail is being repaved. The Village must also begin a long term dialogue with the Township to discuss how zoning will be used to control the intensity of development in this territory. Village-Township discussions should address where it would be appropriate to prioritize and phase development. Doing so will prevent approving plans for which there is insufficient sewer capacity.

Goal 5: Partner with Local Businesses or Non-Profits to Improve Infrastructure

An innovative idea from members of the Citizens Advisory Commission is a recommendation to reach out to local workforce training organizations such as the Warren County Career Center. It may be possible for these organizations to make small scale park or stormwater drainage improvements or a partial renovation of the Morrow Elementary School as part of their practice regimen.

CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION



The implementation chapter outlines strategies for the Village to enact over the course of the plan's 20 year time horizon. These strategies are organized according to the goals found in each chapter of this plan.

Each strategy is a specific action, program, project, or policy the Village can implement to realize the Vision statement outlined in the Introduction. A time-frame (short, medium, or long term) is attached to each strategy as well as agencies/organizations that will likely be involved in the strategy's implementation.

The Village may find it helpful to review the Implementation chapter when updating a capital improvement plan or annual work program to maximize the number of strategies that are incorporated into the Village's annual agenda.

POLICY TERMS

Goal: a goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome.

Objective: a refinement of the goal. It gives more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Strategy: a specific action, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective

Readers will notice that many strategies will require initiation by Village staff, particularly the Village Administrator. But staff alone cannot complete the majority of these tasks outlined in this document. Instead, Council and staff will need to reach out to passionate residents and civic organizations to take ownership for many of these actions. Morrow may be surprised at the capacity of its residents and civic groups to contribute to this plan once asked by a Council member.

Other actions can be completed by outside agencies such as County agencies. In this case Village staff and officials may serve as a liaison or provide direction on how to implement strategies. The list of all the organizations that will contribute to this plan's implementation is not exhaustive. For those County, State, and other agencies that are found in the implementation tables, refer to the key on this page for clarification agency acronyms.

TIME FRAMES

Short Term: 1-3 years

Medium Term: 4-7 years

Long Term: 8-20 years

Ongoing: Usually implies a policy change that requires short term action and continuous enforcement thereafter.

ACRONYMS

BOCC: Board of County Commissioners

LMSD: Little Miami School District

MOT: Morrow of Tomorrow

ODNR: Ohio Department of Natural Resources

ODOT: Ohio Department of Transportation

ODSA: Ohio Development Services Agency

OKI: Ohio Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Governments

RPC: (Warren County) Regional Planning Commission

SBDC: Small Business Development Center

USACE: United States Army Corp of Engineers

WCCAA: Warren County Community Action Agency

WCCVB: Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau

WCEDD: Warren County Economic Development Department

WCHC: Warren County Housing Coalition

WCGD: Warren County Grants Department

WCGIS: Warren County Geographic Information Systems Department

WCPD: Warren County Parks District

WCSWD: Warren County Sewer and Water Department

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

1099 Group: This volunteer group monitors neighborhoods for code violations. It is recommended the group also reach out to the elderly or others unable to rectify code violations and notify them of funding solutions or volunteer their own assistance.

Business Association: This may refer to the local business chamber but also can refer to any well organized group of business representatives capable of promoting Morrow to the outside world. A downtown organization could share or fulfill many of the tasks relating to business and branding strategies affecting downtown.

Business Innovators: Entrepreneurs and business leaders in the region who have experience with the creative redevelopment of buildings. Individuals familiar with business incubators or microlending also fit in this category. The WCEDD and local chamber can be a source of contacts.

Civic Organizations: Any existing or new local organizations. Examples include the VFW, Rotary, Kiwanis, Garden Club, Freemasons, Tree Committee, Friends of the Park, Keep Morrow Beautiful, school-based organizations, or the outreach arm of a faith-based organization. Some of these will be located outside Morrow but may still include the Village in their service/membership area.

Downtown Organizations: Can refer to a downtown business group, Morrow of Tomorrow, or future Main Street program. A Main Street program will be especially effective at carrying out many of the strategies found here.

Historical Society: Refers to the Morrow Historical Society unless otherwise specified. At times the Warren County Historical Society can also lend assistance, as it has more resources and staff time at its disposal.

Interested Residents: Refers to passionate residents who are willing to lead an effort to implement a strategy. For example, a resident passionate about beautifying Morrow with street trees may form a street tree committee. A "friends of the park" committee is another example.

Neighborhood Association: Can refer to a homeowners association but could include neighborhood watch organizations or other neighborhood based groups. Many strategies will require a person or group to represent the neighborhood.

Staff: "Staff" implies the Village Administrator with support from other staff. He or she may delegate tasks to other qualified staff or committed residents. For most strategies the role of staff is to serve as a liaison between agencies/residents, initiate projects and pick leaders, and to ensure lead organizations are achieving their respective strategies.





DOWNTOWN

Goal 1: An authentic, revitalized downtown

Strategy	Lead Organizations	Time Frame	Miscellaneous Notes
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Objective 1: Upgrade public infrastructure

1. Create a priority list for downtown infrastructure improvements such as hanging baskets, banners, benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, other street furnishings, sidewalks, or road repair. Grade as high, medium, or low priority.	Village Administrator, Morrow of Tomorrow	short term	
2. Apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding in accordance with priority list.	Village Administrator, WC Grants Department	ongoing	
3. Draft the Village's Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Budget to reflect the importance of projects according to the priority list.	Village Administrator, Council, Fiscal Officer	short term	
4. Evaluate the viability of a special improvement district (SID), or other voluntary property owner's organization, for funding infrastructure improvements.	Village Administrator, RPC, Tax Administrator, Fiscal Officer	short term	

Objective 2: Increase the public's awareness of revitalization efforts

1. Continually update the County, local chamber, and all other relevant business organizations on current and proposed business activities, available real estate, downtown programming, tax or other development incentives offered by the Village, Township, County, or civic organizations.	Village Administrator, local business owners and business associations	ongoing	
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<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
2. Use the Morrow E-Newsletter to (a) brief readers on the progress of individual building rehabs or other business investments, (b) provide updates on downtown revitalization priorities and plans, and (c) create a new section in the newsletter describing available downtown real estate.	Village Administrator, downtown association	short term/on-going	
3. Use publicly displayed banners or signage to depict proposed building modifications. When a project is completed, use quality signs or plaques that explain how the structure or space was rehabilitated.	Village Admin., downtown association	as needed	

Objective 3: Capitalize on Morrow’s cultural heritage

1. Historic rehabilitation (see Downtown: Goal 1, Objective 4).	Village Council, neighborhood associations,	short term	Publicly reward owners who have made extra effort to substantially improve the appearance of their property.
2. Install plaques or monuments that commemorate significant places, people, stories, or events.	Historical Society, interested residents	short term	
3. Distribute free historic photos for commercial property owners to display in their business space.	Morrow or Lebanon Historical Society	short term	initiated by interested resident or Village Administrator.
4. Add to the collection of the Morrow Historical Society and consider locating its historical artifacts in the train depot. Work with residents and private organizations who can loan or grant historical photos or artifacts to the Historical Society.	Morrow Historical Society, residents	ongoing	
5. Evaluate the benefits of creating a locally designated historic district, whose standards and stringency is suited to the taste of Morrow’s property owners. If deemed more practical, Morrow instead may create a zone where a design review board makes recommendations regarding exterior building modifications.	Village Admin., Council, RPC, Historical Society, residents, Heritage Ohio	medium term	

Objective 4: Incent property owners to carry out rehabilitation of historic structures

1. Incentive minor improvements such as new (historically accurate) paint schemes and window boxes.	Village Admin, Council, neighborhood associations	ongoing	Publicly reward property owners who have made extra effort to substantially improve the appearance of their property.
2. Advertise the CRA as a downtown revitalization tool.	WCED, Dept., local chamber, Village Admin	ongoing	
3. Evaluate the benefits of listing individual buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, of creating a Federally Designated Historic District, or of becoming a Certified Local Government.	Interested resident, ODSA, Heritage Ohio, Historical Society, downtown organizations	ongoing	Meet with the Ohio Development Services Agency and Heritage Ohio to discuss the practicality and required procedures of this strategy.
4. Create an Ohio Enterprise Zone that covers the downtown area. Misc. Note: Enterprise Zone boundaries may extend beyond downtown.	Village Council, Fiscal Officer, LMSD, WCEDD	medium term	
5. Fund a very small façade grant; require a match as determined by the Village Council.	Village Council, downtown association, Heritage Ohio	short term	
6. Fund a low interest revolving loan for exterior improvements.	Village Administrator, Fiscal Officer	short term	The seed money for a small fund may come from a local bank, community foundation, or fundraising activities.
7. Use proceeds from a Village sponsored marathon or other fundraisers to fund matching grants or low interest small loans.	Interested residents, recreation or downtown associations, Village Admin.	medium term	
8. Make exterior improvements with the help of volunteer groups.	Interested residents, faith-based organizations, students	ongoing	May include individuals or students that must fulfill community service requirements, churches, or other volunteers.

Strategy

Lead
Organizations

Time
Frame

Miscellaneous Notes

Objective 1 : Healthy business environment for niche retail that complements the historic character of downtown and avoids a concentration of businesses that focuses on one market (e.g. Waynesville and antique stores)

<p>1. Create a Main Street Ohio program for Morrow. If possible, find other smaller Main Street communities to share a director and/or seek grants to fund a director.</p>	<p>Heritage Ohio, Historical Society</p>	<p>short term</p>	
<p>2. Start a monthly or quarterly roundtable meeting of all downtown commercial property owners. Discuss collaborative advertising, co-sponsoring, and coordinated planning of business events and sales.</p>	<p>Downtown property owners, Main Street Program</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	

Goal 3: Downtown vibrancy and events

Objective 1: A culturally rich downtown with events for residents and visitors throughout the year. (See also Quality of Life: Goal 3)

<p>1. Schedule activities or events every weekend to the extent possible. Encourage diverse activities to accommodate all age; youth, seniors, families with young children, and young adults.</p>	<p>Interested residents, Morrow of Tomorrow, WCPD</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Examples may include school parades on holidays, summer block parties with live music, "Movies in the Park", or events that capitalize on downtown's image such as "Christmas on Main", or vintage car shows.</p>
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Objective 2: A Farmer's Market that is a major Village attraction; generates foot traffic for downtown businesses; and is a source of vegetables and produce for the local area

<p>1. Strongly consider downtown as a permanent location for the Farmer's Market.</p>	<p>Salem Twp., Village Council, downtown residents, business owners</p>	<p>short term</p>	<p>A successful farmer's market is a inimitable activity center. Moving it from downtown will deprive Main Street of immense business spillover effects.</p>
<p>2. Cooperate with Salem Township to ensure the Village and Township considers the Farmer's Market as a shared interest that requires their joint support for success. Make compromises to ensure downtown is the chosen location.</p>	<p>Village, Salem Twp.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	

Strategy

	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
3. Work with participants of the Farmer's Market to offer a broader range of products, crafts, and arts.	Farmer's Market participants, motivated resident or Council members	ongoing	Additional products may include artisan crafts, honey, soap, paintings, produce grown in greenhouses, flowers, eggs, cheese, and cider.
4. Solicit the participation of other farmers and artisans from the Village, Township, and region. Encourage them to bring produce and vegetables to help fill the gap left by no grocery store.	Farmer's Market participants, motivated resident or Council members	short term, or as needed	
5. Encourage the Farmer's Market to open on certain special days to coincide with other downtown events. Conversely, encourage live entertainment and other attractions at scheduled Farmer's Market hours.	Farmer's Market participants, other event leaders, downtown association	ongoing	
6. Consider physical improvements to make the Farmer's Market more substantial: shelters, planters, pavers, a decorative clock, etc.	Farmer's Market participants, Council	short term	
7. Contact additional groups to seek technical support or advertising connections.	OSU Ag. Extension Office, WCCVB, local business associations, LMSD, Farmer's Bureau, business associations, local farmers, etc.	ongoing	
8. Encourage downtown businesses to remain open when the Farmer's Market is in operation. Encourage businesses to use a vendor's booth, if practical, to participate in the Farmer's Market.	Downtown business owners, market participants, downtown association	short term, ongoing	
9. Encourage faith-based organizations to support the Farmer's Market and local food initiatives by making purchases where possible.	faith based organizations, market participants	ongoing	
10. Create a website for the farmer's market.	Interested resident	short term	Delegate responsibility for keeping website current and relevant to one, responsible person.

Objective 3: A regulatory environment that is conducive to a vibrant street life

1. Permit and encourage sidewalk vendors.	Council, Zoning Inspector, business owners	short term	
2. Permit and encourage businesses to use sidewalk space for (limited) chairs, tables, and aesthetically appropriate signage such as "A-frame" sidewalk signs.	Council, Zoning Inspector, business owners	short term	

Objective 4: A train station and caboose that serve as a major attraction and functional landmark

1. Organize tours of the train station and caboose.	Morrow of Tomorrow, historical society	short term	Consider students or volunteers to guide the tours.
2. Initiate a long term, committed partnership with all members of the Morrow of Tomorrow organization (MOT), the current owner of the station and caboose. Communicate an understanding of a shared vision for downtown.	Morrow of Tomorrow, Council and staff, downtown businesses and residents	ongoing	
3. Collaborate with Morrow of Tomorrow to envision what organization(s) may be a responsible, committed steward for the train station and caboose when MOT considers selling the property.	Morrow of Tomorrow, Council and staff	short term	
4. Make a portion of the station a museum, complete with historical photographs and educational signage.	Morrow of Tomorrow, historical society	short term	
5. Consider the train depot as a location for the creative niche businesses seeking downtown space.	Morrow of Tomorrow, local chamber, downtown association	short term	

Goal 4: Cohesive vision for the downtown design, aesthetics, and land uses.

Objective 1: Incentives that establish a high standard for property maintenance

1. Reward property owners who set a high standard for property maintenance.	Neighborhood associations, Council	ongoing	
2. Follow maintenance standards established in the Village Code.	Zoning Inspector, Village Admin.	ongoing	

Objective 2: Effective communication with residents in the downtown residential areas when planning improvements in their neighborhood

1. Reach out to every property owner in the area bounded by Front St., Miami St., Kibbey Ave., and Vine St. Share the Village's vision for downtown.	Council	short term	
2. Conduct an outreach session where residents around downtown can share their vision for their neighborhood. Synthesize and when necessary reconcile the vision for their residential area with the overall vision for downtown.	Council, Village Admin, downtown association	short term	Consider an informal evening neighborhood meeting/

Objective 3: Consider aesthetic value of open space and landscaping in downtown

1. Make Phegley Park and the truss bridge as starting/stopping points for landscaping and streetscaping designs that carry across Main Street and visually unify downtown.	downtown association, downtown business owners and residents, Council	medium term	Landscaping examples may include ornamental grasses and flowers.
2. Improve open space lots on Main Street to make visually attractive spaces that are aesthetically unified with surrounding buildings.	Downtown association, downtown business owners/residents	medium term	Volunteers or student can use donated materials to beautify open spaces.
3. Hang attractive banners or other appropriate adornments on the truss bridge to brand both it and the Village.	Downtown association, Council	short term	

Objective 4: Materials, uses, and urban design compatible with a historic mixed-use downtown

<p>1. Expand upon and improve the form based standards for the B-1 (Downtown Business) zoning district.</p>	<p>Zoning inspector, Village Admin, downtown association</p>	<p>short term</p>	<p>See also: Economic Development, Goal 2.</p>
<p>2. Enhance zoning standards for the form, and massing, and lot coverage standards for new buildings.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	
<p>3. Encourage dense 2-3 story mixed use buildings on Main Street's vacant lots. Encourage parking on the first floor to decrease the damage in case of a flooding event. This will enable property owner to select flood insurance with a high deductible.</p>	<p>Council and Staff, WCEDD, downtown association, qualified developers</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	
<p>4. Brainstorm development options for the lumberyard site such as recreational uses, an enlarged space for the farmer's market, or mixed use development. Employ a public participation process such as a charrette to harness public input to give future developers of the site direction.</p>	<p>Council and Staff, WCEDD, downtown association, qualified developers, property owner, RPC</p>	<p>short term</p>	<p>Any concept plans that are created for the site can be used as the basis for a zoning overlay or PUD. These tools provide standards and direction to the developers.</p>
<p>5. Create sign design examples to distribute to commercial property owners in downtown. Encourage use of signs of a historic character, scale, and material that are compatible with a historic downtown and effectively brand downtown Morrow as the quintessential "Main Street".</p>	<p>Downtown association, Zoning Inspector, RPC</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	
<p>6. Demolish downtown structures only as a last resort and after great scrutiny. Do not remove structures that could produce a "hole" in the downtown building fabric.</p>	<p>Council, Planning Commission, staff</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	



NEIGHBORHOODS

Goal 1: Strong, unique neighborhood identities

Objective 1: Maintain Morrow's neighborhoods' distinct identities and small town charm

<p>1. Install small neighborhood gateways at key locations. Encourage the gateway design to be made by residents and determine if they will be maintained by the village, volunteers, or homeowner's association.</p>	<p>Neighborhood associations,</p>	<p>short term</p>	
<p>2. Make comprehensive design improvements of US 22/SR 3 by replacing utility poles, planting quality street trees, and using quality fencing in certain locations to soften the appearance of the road.</p>	<p>Council and staff, ODOT, businesses along US 22</p>	<p>medium term</p>	
<p>3. Communicate with residents when the Village is seeking to use State or County resources to improve a property or neighborhood. Explain the options and possibilities available and determine if the neighborhood desires the potential improvements.</p>	<p>Village staff, neighborhood associations</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>For County and other resources, see Goal 5.</p>
<p>4. Design the future street, lot layout, open spaces, and walking paths of any future residential areas to complement Morrow's small town image so that they are well integrated into the rest of the community. Design elements that achieve this include small block sizes, reduced building setbacks, architecture sensitive to Morrow's small town image, and traditional neighborhood design.</p>	<p>Council, staff, Planning Commission, RPC</p>	<p>short term</p>	<p>A likely location for implementation includes revisions made to the Woodlands at Morrow Planned Unit Development (PUD).</p>

Goal 2: Proud property owners and well maintained residential areas

Objective 1: Create policies and organizations that foster high quality exterior maintenance

<p>1. Create a beautification committee that rewards property owners who show extra pride in their property.</p>	<p>interested residents, neighborhood associations, beautification committee</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>The property of a proud owner will show a positive influence on surrounding property owners. Rewards may be for best landscaping, window boxes, or best Christmas lights.</p>
<p>2. Work with property owners to help them stay in code compliance. Seek or fund very small grants for responsible property owners who show a willingness to repair their property.</p>	<p>interested residents, 1099 group, neighborhood associations, staff</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Funds may come from the Village. They can also be donated by local businesses or faith based organizations.</p>
<p>3. Create a contact list of rental property owners to use as a reference when complaints are filed or code violations require communication with owners.</p>	<p>Zoning Inspector, Village Admin.</p>	<p>short term</p>	
<p>4: Require a Home Owner’s Association (HOA) for all new neighborhoods. Encourage existing neighborhoods to form strong neighborhood organizations (not necessarily an HOA).</p>	<p>interested residents</p>	<p>short term, when needed</p>	
<p>5. Prevent a “broken window” phenomenon by aggressively addressing noticeable zoning violations that create a milieu suggesting property owners are not personally invested in the appearance of the property.</p>	<p>Zoning Inspector, Village Admin., Council, 1099 group</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	
<p>6. Support the operations of the local 1099 volunteer group by providing educational training on funding solutions for various code violations in cases where the property owner lacks resources or ability to make required improvements. Encourage well-rounded membership in the group from all of Morrow’s neighborhoods. Members may also refer cases to local churches to help make certain required improvements.</p>	<p>1099 group, staff</p>	<p>short term</p>	

Goal 3: Economically stable and safe neighborhoods

Objective 1: Use tax incentive programs, and outside funds, to rehabilitate strategic properties to maintain stable neighborhoods

1. Always discuss neighborhood stability, socioeconomic trajectory, owner occupancy rates, and other issues when creating the Annual Budget. Discuss actions that positively address neighborhood stability over the long term.	Village Admin, Council, Planning Commission	ongoing	
2. Use programs administered by County or county based non-profits such as NSP, low interest home improvement programs, down payment assistance, or lead remediation.	Staff, WCGD, WCHC, WC Community Action Agency	ongoing	
3. Use tax incentives such as a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to rehabilitate residential structures or neighborhood infrastructure.	Staff, WCEDD, RPC	ongoing	Both programs are more commonly used for commercial areas but may also be used in residential areas in certain circumstances.
4. Discuss with representatives of the LMSD, vocational schools, or churches the feasibility of students contributing to rehabilitating or renovating strategic properties.	Interested residents, staff, LMSD, faith based or other organizations	short term, ongoing thereafter	A strategic property is one that is highly visible, such as on a corner, or is architecturally significant. Its renovation will be expected to have a positive impact on its surroundings.
5. Explore funding options from diverse funding sources including local governments, nonprofit organizations, or private donations to fund small-scale exterior improvements such as a free paint grant.	interested residents, staff	ongoing	
6. Work with faith-based organizations, civic groups, and other community groups to make exterior maintenance repairs for responsible property owners in need.	interested residents, neighborhood organizations, faith based or other organizations	as needed	

Objective 2: Maintain a balanced housing stock while accommodating both renters and owner-occupied tenants in Morrow

1. Maintain single family neighborhoods as predominantly owner-occupied. Misc. Note: Utilize tools found in Neighborhoods Goal 5 Objective 1.	neighborhood organizations County agencies	ongoing	County agencies include WC Housing Coalition, WCGD, WC Community Action Agency
2. Use low interest loans, CDBG resources, or County funds or local non-profits to rehabilitate single family rental units for sale and market the units to home buyers in neighborhoods with a disproportionately high number of rental units.	staff, County agencies, charitable organizations	ongoing	County agencies include WC Housing Coalition, WCGD, WC Community Action Agency.
3. Use zoning and development requirements to encourage higher new quality rentals for middle class renters.	Staff, Council, RPC	short term	Requirements may include minimum floor areas and quality exterior materials.

Goal 4: Neighborhoods accommodate all ages, family sizes, and economic backgrounds

Objective 1: Housing choices for empty nesters, young professionals, and a variety of housing typologies

1. Amend the PUD process to encourage housing options for diverse demographics for large developments	Village Admin, Council, Planning Commission, RPC	short term	Not practical for some small residential developments.
2. Ensure the Woodlands at Morrow development plan includes options for empty nesters and young professionals if the PUD is revised.	Council, Planning Commission, staff	when needed	
3. Use CDBG or other funds or to make visitability improvements as needed for all residential.	WCGD, WCHC, staff	ongoing	
4. Ensure downtown includes residential options for empty nesters and young professionals.	Council, Planning Commission, staff	long term	

Objective 2: Schools that are well integrated into the community

1. Cooperate with the school district to keep Salem Township Primary School as an operational school in the long term.	Council, Village Admin., LMSD	ongoing	
2. Connect all residential neighborhoods by pedestrian paths to local schools.	Staff, neighborhood organizations	long term	Transportation Alternatives Program is an ideal funding source.

Goal 5: Complete sidewalk, trail, and bikeway network

Objective 1: Pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and between residential/nonresidential areas such as business areas, library, parks, and schools

1. Create a sidewalk and pedestrian plan.	Village staff, LMSD, RPC	ongoing	
2. Co-sponsor plans that connect Village trails and sidewalks to nearby County bike trails.	Village Admin., RPC	ongoing	
3. Collaborate with the Township to connect the Village pedestrian network to ONDR's regional bike trails.	Township Trustees, Village Admin., interested residents	ongoing	

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
4. Install local trail along Morrow Blackhawk Road connecting Thornton Park to the regional bike trails.	Village Admin., Public Works	ongoing	
5. Install a local trail connecting the Little Miami River Multi-use trail to Morrow Plaza and the surrounding commercial area.	Village Admin., Public Works, any nearby residents	ongoing	

Objective 2: Fund sidewalk construction/rehabilitation

1. Seek funds including CDBG and Transportation Alternative Program grants.	WCGD, Village Admin., OKI, RPC	ongoing	
2. Review all road maintenance and new development to review feasibility of simultaneously funding new pedestrian routes.	Village Admin., Fiscal Officer, Streets Dept.	as needed	
3. Use bonds to fund sidewalk improvements. Assess beneficiaries to allow them to repay the bonds in manageable amounts over time. Implement this policy only in locations where beneficiaries support the proposed improvements.	Fiscal Officer, Streets Dept.	medium term	
4. As an alternative to Strategy 3 above, use a point-of-sale requirement for sidewalks to be repaired when a property is sold. The owner will have the funds available to make the required payment from the property sale.	Village Admin., Council	ongoing	

Objective 3: Support creation of the new multiuse trail to Clarkesville

1. Cooperate with neighboring Townships and Warren County during the creation of plans for the new multiuse trail.	RPC, neighboring Townships, Clinton County Rails-to-Trails	ongoing	The Village is not expected to contribute financially to this project, but it can contribute letters of support and speaking publicly in favor of it.
2. Provide letters of support to other jurisdictions pursuing new multiuse trails that will benefit Morrow.	Council	as needed	



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: Attract and grow private businesses

Objective 1: Tax incentive to grow and attract businesses

<p>1. Use the OKI fiscal impact analysis to determine the effects of a CRA on the Village and school district budget under various scenarios. Then work with a committee of Village officials, school district officials, and significant property owners to redraw CRA boundaries.</p>	<p>RPC, staff, Council, owners within affected area</p>	<p>short term</p>	
<p>2. Judiciously use Tax Increment Finance (TIF) to provide public infrastructure needed for business expansion. Use the OKI fiscal impact analysis to determine the impact on the Village's total budget.</p>	<p>RPC, WCEDD, staff, WC Port Authority</p>	<p>when needed</p>	
<p>3. Explore creation of an Enterprise Zone (EZ) at a strategic location on the US22/SR3 commercial corridor.</p>	<p>Staff, ODSA, WCEDD</p>	<p>short term</p>	<p>The EZ is a property tax abatement program administered by local governments. The EZ may include downtown if technically justified.</p>
<p>4. Consider using a local income tax credit as part of a tax incentive package. Only consider if a cost-benefit analysis justifies the credit.</p>	<p>Staff, WCEDD</p>	<p>when needed</p>	<p>Use the OKI fiscal impact analysis to evaluate the cost-benefit ratio.</p>
<p>5. Explore collaborating with Hamilton or Salem Township to create a JEDD as a means of generating revenue and bringing businesses to the general area.</p>	<p>Staff, Council, Townships, RPC</p>	<p>short term/ as needed</p>	
<p>6. Include claw-back provisions when rewarding tax incentives to protect the Village's investment.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	
<p>7. Use the strategies above to target key commercial properties such as retail areas, developable parcels near downtown, or other locations as appropriate.</p>	<p>Staff, Council, business owners</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	

Objective 2: Non-tax related development incentives to attract or grow business

1. Use Warren County resources such as topography, soil, sewer, or other maps when meeting with potential developers or business owners.	WC GIS Dept., RPC, WCEDD	as needed	The County can provide extensive technical data and maps for Morrow's use.
2. Adopt expedited permitting to encourage select business activities such as office, manufacturing, or a grocery store.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector, Council	short term	
3. Encourage businesses to host fundraisers for school programs.	business owners, business association, LMSD	ongoing	Students can organize a car wash at a business location.
4. Rehabilitate real estate most likely to house a new business.	Staff, commercial property owners, WCEDD	ongoing	Namely, commercial space in Morrow Plaza or downtown. Consider CDBG or outside funding sources, local business, or a special improvement district. Tax incentives are another tool.
5. Explore the feasibility of a small business incubator.	Village Admin., WCEDD,	short term	Morrow Plaza and Morrow Elementary School are the most strategically valuable locations to locate an incubator.

Objective 3: Identify the needs of existing businesses required for expansion

1. Periodically conduct a Business Retention and Expansion Survey.	staff, business association, downtown association	ongoing	
2. Host small business roundtable discussions. Include major Village businesses, local banks, major businesses, major commercial property owners, and Village staff/council. Learn what the Village can do for these businesses.	business association, business leaders, staff/council	ongoing	
3. Entrust implementation of a long term, comprehensive economic development plan to the Village Administrator. Redefine the role of the Village Administrator to ensure he/she has adequate time and resources to oversee implementation.	Village Admin., Council, other staff	short term	

Objective 4: Small businesses that can obtain access to credit for business expansion

1. Find creative solutions to address tight lending requirements for small businesses.	local chamber, WCEDD, local banks, SBA	short term	Reach out to local banks or connect local businesses to the lending assistance provided by the Small Business Administration.
2. Connect local businesses to the counseling and business services provided by the Small Businesses Development Center of Warren County.	WCEDD, local chamber, SBDC	short term	
3. Connect businesses that seek to retain or add jobs to pertinent state programs.	local chamber, WCEDD, staff	ongoing	Examples include the Collateral Enhancement Program (CEP) and the Ohio Capital Access Program (OCAP). The programs enable businesses to access credit for working capital and fixed asset financing needs.
4. Identify small business resources from State, County, Village, local chamber, Main Street Program, and downtown business association; present the information to existing businesses and to all new businesses as a "welcome". Update and re-present the information every 1-2 years.	local chamber, other business associations, WCEDD, staff	ongoing	

Objective 5: Capitalizing on outdoor recreation

1. Constantly inform business of Village sporting events, outdoor recreation, and other planned recreational activities (schedules, general descriptions) so they may be open for business during events.	WCPD, interested residents	ongoing	post on Village website,
2. Encourage cooperation between businesses and Village events.	business associations, business owners, event coordinators	ongoing	

Goal 2: Encourage the Creation and Growth of Catalytic Businesses that spurs additional business activity

Objective 1: Catalytic businesses that spur additional business activity

1. Periodically conduct a market analysis to identify entrepreneurial opportunities aligned with the Village's vision as outlined in the Plan.	WCEDD, local business association	on occasion	
2. Contact individuals in the applicable field to discuss what Morrow offers. Include tax incentives and the community's vision as described elsewhere in this chapter.	Village Admin., local business association, WCEDD	ongoing	Examples include bicycle shops or bicycle research (to capitalize on trails), bed & breakfasts (for tourism and downtown business).
3. Encourage local businesses to develop market strategies that benefit one another.	business association	ongoing	For example, the canoe livery can offer coupons to Miranda's Ice Cream.
4. Actively seek a grocery store such as Aldi, Dots, or an independent grocer.	Village Admin., WCEDD, business association	short term	
5. Actively seek restaurant uses in 1) downtown or 2) other commercial areas. Note some restaurants will be more suited to downtown and others, to US 22/SR 3.	Village Admin., WCEDD, business association	short term	

Goal 3: Businesses uses and activity that complements the historic character of downtown

Objective 3: Realtors and business associations that contribute to the vision for downtown (walkability, specialized retail, and historic character)

1. Educate the local chamber, Visitor's Bureau, and County Economic Development Department of downtown's unique benefits and opportunities for small offices and certain kinds of retail. Update the organizations on significant business activity and current opportunities for prospective businesses.	Village Admin., local business association, WCCVB, WCEDD	ongoing	
2. Make the Farmer's Market a major Village attraction that generates foot traffic for downtown businesses and is a source of vegetables and produce for the local area. See also Downtown Goal 3, Objective 2.	Council and staff, market participants, business association, downtown organizations	ongoing	
3. Use prominent, Village-owned signage to advertise downtown businesses and the farmer's market.	Staff, business owners	ongoing	Require tasteful, high quality signage.

Goal 4: Healthy, diverse business mix in commercial areas outside downtown

Objective 1: Exploit US 22/SR 3 as a major artery to the region

1. Attract businesses with a regional market to bring “outside” dollars to Morrow’s economy.	WCEDD, business associations, staff	short term	
2. Amend Zoning Code to allow highly visible, quality signage that advertises Morrow as a place to do businesses.	Zoning Inspector, Village Admin.	short term	
3. Ensure business uses associated with significant car and truck traffic are permitted in appropriate zones while taking care to prevent nuisance uses.	Zoning Inspector, Village Admin.	short term	

Objective 2: Collaboration with the current (and future) owners of Morrow Plaza to renovate the building and property

1. Encourage creative tenant solutions.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector	short term	May subdivide available space with partitions.
2. Allow creative uses for Morrow Plaza.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector	short term	Examples include community events, a budget theater, or temporary businesses.

Objective 2 : Plan for high quality office uses around the lake at the west end of the Village near US 22/SR 3

1. Craft zoning standards that specifically cater to relatively intense office development that incorporates elements of conservation design. If advantageous, encourage any proposed office development in this site to apply as a PUD.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector, Council, RPC	short term	
2. Create a zoning overlay for this site specifically for office uses or create a PUD overlay that achieves the same effect.	Village Admin., Council, property owner	short term	

Objective 3: Market Morrow to the SW Ohio business community

1. Develop creative marketing program to promote Village and Township as a business friendly environment. Make clear the Village is moving quickly and in the right direction. Allow residents/business owners to post events or sales.	Business associations, business owners, interested residents Council and staff	short term	Example 1: Students compete to produce best advertising/branding scheme. Example 2: Consider using public media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr; allow residents/business owners to post events or sales on the public media site.
2. Organize a "Morrow Business First Committee", consisting of local business owners who discuss how to retain and expand businesses in Morrow and the surrounding area.	business owners, interested residents	short term	
3. Work with Township to brand Morrow as "The Place Where Outdoor Recreation Begins".	Salem Township, Village Admin., WC-CVB, WCPD	ongoing	Social media and existing websites and newsletters are an ideal avenue. This or a similar slogan can be included on signage.
4. Emphasize that Morrow feels like a refuge from suburbia but at the same time is well within the Cincinnati area's radius of business activity. Certain businesses will be attracted to this setting.	WCCVB, business associations, WCEDD, staff	ongoing	
5. Install a second Village-owned sign on Pike Street to advertise downtown business or improve the existing sign.	Staff, downtown business owners	short term	Make signage attractive and durable.
6. Explore feasibility of appointing a responsible and capable person the responsibility of writing the Morrow E-Newsletter other than the Village Administrator so that more time may be dedicated to its content. Continue to refine the newsletter and expand its scope. Village Administrator should still review the content.	Committed resident, Village Admin.	ongoing	The newsletter is becoming one of the most cost effective means of business, cultural, and school related information in Morrow.
7. Modernize the Village website with additional information and a visually attractive design.	Staff, interested residents	short term	Warren County Data Processing is a potential resource, though a fee may be required.

Goal 5: Visible Signs of a Proud Community

Objective 1: Revise the Code to adopt zoning standards most optimal to a successful business environment

1. Create high design standards for development in the B-2 Zone including buffers, screening, landscaping, lighting, and building design.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector, Council, RPC	short term	
2. Expand upon and improve the form based standards for the B-1 (Downtown Business) zoning district.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector, Council, RPC	short term	

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
3. Anticipate future businesses that do not easily fit into any defined categories and ensure the Zoning Code is sufficiently flexible to accommodate all possible business uses consistent with the character of downtown.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector, Council, business owners	medium term	
4. Encourage development and redevelopment that is nodal rather than strip in character in the B-2, B-3, and industrial zones.	Staff, RPC, ODOT	as needed	
5. Enforce existing code maintenance standards for commercial areas.	Staff	ongoing	
6. Amend B-2 Zone to permit more intense, mixed use development.	Staff, Council, RPC	short term	
7. Solicit input from user groups to uncover provisions in need of reform.	staff, general public	ongoing	
8. Review zoning provisions for home occupations. Examine if these regulations are suited to the Village.	Village Admin., Zoning Inspector, Council, residents	short term	
9. Amend the Zoning Code to define and permit small-scale lodging such as bed & breakfasts.	Staff	short term	
10. Amend the Zoning Code to define and permit ecotourism (outdoor recreation related business).	Staff, owners of recreation-related business	short term	

Objective 2: Facilitate and organize civic improvements such as landscaping, flowerboxes, or refurbishing park amenities

1. Make comprehensive design improvements of US 22/ SR 3 by replacing utility poles, planting quality street trees, and installing quality fencing in certain locations to soften the appearance of the corridor.	Staff, ODOT	ongoing	some items such as trees, fencing, or landscaping can be donated by businesses or residents.
2. Organize community volunteers (students, churches, etc.) to make civic improvements.	faith-based organizations, civic organizations, student, schools, charitable residents and businesses	ongoing	The scale of these contributions can be small (cleaning litter) to great (refurbishing a playground).
3. Encourage local businesses to sponsor civic improvements or sports teams in exchange for advertising space or publicity.	local businesses, sports teams	ongoing	
4. Install creative Village gateways and/or landscaping at strategic locations. Use existing landscape plans or devise creative new designs.	Staff, ODOT, interested residents	short term	Ideal locations include US22/SR3 at both ends of town and SR 123 crossing over the Little Miami. Consider holding school contests to select designs and logos.

Goal 6: Reuse of existing structures and land

Objective 1: Find alternative uses for the Morrow Elementary School

1. Explore feasibility of using the building as a business incubator.	LMSD, Salem Twp., business innovators, interested residents, Council, WCEDD	medium term	
2. Explore feasibility of using the building as a community center. See also Quality of Life: Goal 3, Objective 2.	LMSD, Salem Twp., WCPD,	medium term	
3. List the building individually on the National Register of Historic Places to make it eligible for tax credits.	LMSD, Heritage Ohio, historical society	short term	Federal and state tax credits can cover ~40% of rehab costs.

Objective 2: Find alternative uses for the lumberyards site

1. When making future plans for the site, make clear the Village is not taking any action to encourage the lumberyard to leave.	Staff, Council	short term	
2. Brainstorm uses and designs for the site; only consider uses that will complement and contribute to a vibrant, historic, and revitalized Main Street.	Staff, Council, residents, RPC	short term	
3. Create alternative sketch plans for the site for the purpose of showing future developers or investors the Village's vision for the site. Proposals should conceptually align with the sketch plans and the downtown chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.	Staff, downtown association, business owners, RPC	medium term	Consider a charrette or similar public outreach strategy to generate ideas for the site

Objective 3: Enact measures to increase feasibility of building reuse

1. Create a locally designated historic district.	historical society, property owners, Council, staff	short term or when appropriate	
2. Acquire "Certified Local Government" status.	Heritage Ohio, Ohio Historical Society, local Historical Society, staff	ongoing	



QUALITY OF LIFE

Goal 1: Outdoor recreation as a centerpiece of Morrow's Identity

Objective 1: Leverage the Village/County Parks for recreational use and spin-off business activity

<p>1. Brand Morrow and Township as "The Place Where Outdoor Recreation Begins". Reflects Economic Development Goal 4, Objective 3, Strategy 3.</p>	<p>Council, Staff, Salem Twp., WCPD, WCCVB</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Social media and existing websites and newsletters are an ideal avenue. This or a similar slogan can be included on signage.</p>
<p>2. Promote all Parks in the Village by adding a Parks & Rec. tab to the Village Website. Display information of recreational amenities and events.</p>	<p>Staff, interested residents, WCPD</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	

Objective 2: Leverage the Little Miami River for branding and business activity

<p>1. Support businesses directly related to river recreation by contacting canoe/kayak businesses to determine how the Village may support their operations or by encouraging non-existing businesses such as bait shops.</p>	<p>Staff, river-recreation businesses</p>	<p>short term</p>	
<p>2. Advertise existing locations and/or create new locations to access the river and/or launch a small watercraft.</p>	<p>Staff, nearby property owners, WCPD</p>	<p>ongoing/as needed</p>	
<p>3. Make the river access located at Miami and Miranda a significant community focal point by providing good pedestrian access and a place to launch kayaks. Consider issues of acquisition or use of easements.</p>	<p>Staff, affected property owners, WCPD</p>	<p>short term</p>	
<p>4. Install benches at key vantage points along the river to allow visitors to enjoy the river and scenery.</p>	<p>Staff, nearby property owners, any applicable committees</p>	<p>long term</p>	<p>Benches may be privately sponsored.</p>

Objective 3: Leverage the Little Miami Multiuse Trail and the future Morrow-Wilmington bike trail

1. Organize new marathons, bicycling events, or activities that also involve the river (triathlons).	interested residents, downtown association, WCCVB	ongoing	
2. Support and aid existing events that use the bike trail and their organizers.	interested residents, downtown association, WCCVB	ongoing	
3. Fund quality landscaping along the bike trail. Visually unify Main Street with landscaping in addition to streetscaping and restored buildings.	downtown association, interested residents	ongoing	A TIF, SID, contribution from a downtown association, or donated labor/materials/funds, tree committee.
4. Explore the possibility of a new park near where the new regional bike trail will cross Todd's Fork.	Staff, Salem Township, Council, WCPD, RPC	long term	
5. Contact neighboring communities to discuss what initiatives these communities have successfully undertaken to harnesses the Little Miami Multiuse Trail.	communities capitalizing on the LMR Trail	ongoing	Examples include the City of Xenia and the Village of Loveland.

Objective 4: Leverage the historic truss bridge for branding

1. Post a survey on the Village website asking residents what their preference is for a new paint color for the bridge. Use temporary signage along the bike trail to notify people of the survey and generate excitement.	Staff, interested residents	short term	
2. Consider additional design features such as quality banners that will further distinguish the bridge as a gateway to downtown.	Staff, interested residents	short term	Banners can serve several purposes, such as welcoming visitors (i.e. Welcome to Historic Morrow) but also advertise the community (i.e. Visit us and learn more at vil.morrow.oh.us).
3. Research feasibility of using the bridge as a performance location, with seating on the banks of Todd's Fork.	interested residents	long term	
4. Investigate benefits of granting the bridge a historic designation with commemorative plaque or informational signage.	interested residents, historical society	medium term	

Goal 2: Outdoor recreation as a centerpiece of Morrow's Identity.

Objective 1: Collaborate with Salem Township, the Little Miami School District (LMSD), Warren County, and Warren County Parks District (WCPD) to share and/or jointly provide recreational resources

1. Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to program park space with athletic events for all ages.	Interested residents, neighboring jurisdictions, WCPD	ongoing	
2. Initiate a dialogue with Salem Township, RPC, and WCPD to create a joint park plan for the Township and Village. Determine the project scope, duration, and necessary resources.	Salem Twp., RPC, WCPD, staff, Council	medium term	
3. Create joint agreement with Township and School District on how to share park and school recreational amenities.	LMSD, staff, Council	short term	
4. Create a joint park district with any/all townships adjacent to and inclusive of Salem Township.	WCPD, neighboring jurisdictions, staff/Council	medium term	
5. In lieu of strategy 4 (above), support a County-wide park district that maintains all park space except land managed by Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and private park space.	WCPD, participating jurisdictions, staff, Council	medium term	
6. Coordinate with the library to utilize computers for educational purposes such as classes for youth or adults.	Local library, interested residents, business association, LMSD	short term	
7. Work with the library to remain open during weekends to increase use.	local library	short term	

Objective 2: Make physical improvements to Morrow Veterans Memorial Park (MVMP)

1. Install a boat ramp and fish cleaning area at the east tip of MVMP.	WCPD, staff, interested residents, ODNR	medium term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
2. Improve/add additional signage at both entrances to park. Ensure motorists know its there for their use.	WCPD, staff	short term	

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
3. Provide additional parking east of Hamlin Street.	WCPD, staff, WCCVB	long term	Grant opportunities through ODNR may be available. The WCCVB also may be able to provide funds.
4. Install trail and picnic area between new boat dock and new parking at the east tip of park.	WCPD, staff	medium term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or LWCF.
5. Build permanent restroom (and possibly shower) facility near the existing picnic shelter.	WCPD, staff	long term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or LWCF.
6. Build concession facilities on western portion of park.	WCPD, staff, interested residents	long term	especially seek donated labor and materials.
7. Identify a location for a dog park within MVMP.	WCPD, staff, interested residents	medium term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or LWCF.

Objective 3: Make physical improvements to Thornton Park and resolve public vs. private use issues

1. Increase paved parking space to accommodate larger crowds.	staff, interested residents	medium term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or LWCF.
2. Install additional playground equipment and family area to balance out the many sports fields.	staff, interested residents	long term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or LWCF.
3. Install more visible and quality signage, including offsite. Ensure motorists know the park is available for their use.	staff, interested residents, park association	short term	Funding opportunities are available through ODNR or LWCF.

Objective 4: Make physical and programming improvements at Phegley Park

1. Install benches and refurbish the playground/picnic shelter.	interested residents, park association, staff	medium term	seek donated/in-house materials and labor.
2. Install equipment such as bike racks or storage lockers to make the park the perfect place to start a bike ride or take a long break.	downtown association, Friends of the LMR Trail	short term	
3. Install publicly owned, high quality signage on US 22/SR 3 near Canal St. to advertise Phegley Park.	downtown association, park committee, Village Admin.	ongoing	
4. Use the existing brochure rack to advertise Morrow's cultural events, and Main Street businesses.	interested residents, downtown association	ongoing	

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
5. Create a landscaping landmark or gateway feature to increase the parks visibility. Create a visual connection with the rest of downtown from the park to the bridge.	interested residents, downtown association	ongoing	Examples of landscaping landmarks may be a flower pole or ivy pole, visible from US 22/ SR 3.
6. Program Phegley Park with small events. Encourage activity by encouraging vendors to sell merchandise such as popcorn or ice cream at appropriate events.	interested residents, downtown association, WCPD	ongoing	Examples include Easter egg hunts, a picnic in the park, and movie night in the park, or events scheduled by the Village.

Objective 5: Make physical improvements to the area around Flat Rock while preserving its natural beauty

1. Pave small area off road to create parking spaces for 2-4 vehicles.	Village Admin., Fiscal Officer, Public Works, WCEO,	long term
2. Install benches and trash receptacle at an optimal location.	Village Admin., WCPD	long term
3. Work with Township or Warren County to acquire land and make the space a formal park.	Staff/Council, WCPD, RPC	long term

Goal 3: Year-round events that are family-friendly, fun, and well organized. Events should make memorable experiences for residents and attract visitors that support economic development

Objective 1: Numerous events throughout the year, including several major events and frequent smaller events

1. Use social media such as facebook and twitter to advertise all events. Let event organizers and residents also post events and create groups using the sites.	interested residents	ongoing	The resident will need to touch base with all event organizers regularly to ensure notifications are up to date.
2. Ensure events are championed by a dedicated, emotionally involved, core group of residents. Find, create, or be the core group.	interested residents, relevant committees or associations	ongoing	Staff or Council should reach out to passionate residents but thereafter delegate control to them.
3. Create a subcommittee to brainstorm, plan, and organize 1-3 major annual events that complements the character of Morrow. Use input from local businesses when organizing events.	interested residents, relevant associations, staff, Council, WCCVB	short term	

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
4. Organize events that celebrate key holidays or seasons (Fourth of July, autumn, Christmas, Saint Patrick's Day, Halloween, etc.).	interested residents, downtown association	ongoing	Use social media tools to determine what events residents desire most.
5. Organize regular small events such as weekly summer block parties or movies-in-the-park. Use input from local businesses when organizing events.	interested residents, downtown association	ongoing	Use social media tools to determine what events residents desire most.
6. Identify strategies to organize sporting activities for youth and adults in MVMP and Thornton Park. Communicate with local businesses to maximize the business potential derived from these park visitors.	WCPD, sports leagues and organizations, business owners	short term	

Objective 2: Re-use Morrow Elementary School, possibly the Village's most historically and socially significant building, as a community center

1. Assess the state of the school including its structural integrity, roof, HVAC systems, piping, electrical system, or the presences of asbestos or lead.	Village Admin., LMSD, Heritage Ohio, outside expertise	short term	
2. Create a concept plan to determine what functions and activities the community center will include. Hold a charrette for the public.	ongoing	short term	Use assistance of the WCRPC or other outside group for additional assistance.
3. Consider individually designating the building on the national register of historic places.	interested residents, Ohio historical society, local historical society, Heritage Ohio	short term	
4. Acquire funding for rehabilitation and operation.	Staff, WCGD, WCEDD, historical society	medium term	Options include Federal and State Historic tax credits, private foundations, and grants/donations from diverse sources.
5. Create partnership with Salem Township as well as neighboring townships to maintain the community center.	Council/staff, neighboring jurisdictions	medium term	
6. Incorporate space in the community center for diverse age groups and uses: youth, seniors, indoor sports, class space, dance or other lessons, concerts, and if desired the local library.	residents, organizations that can use the space	long term	
7. Reserve space in the building for philanthropic purposes such as a clothing depot, food co-op, or food pantry.	faith based or other charitable organizations	long term	

Objective 3: Emphasis on Morrow’s cultural heritage as a community asset

1. Use plaques or commemorative signage in appropriate locations to advertise historically or culturally significant people, places, structures, or events.	historical society, downtown association, property owners	short term	
2. Collaborate with the Warren County Historical Society and the Morrow Historical Society. Determine if either can provide photos, maps, or information.	interested residents and both historical societies	short term	The information/items can be made available to property owners to display, or be commemorated in plaques, signage, or simply shared between historical societies.

Goal 4: Strong community organizations and private institutions that facilitate or provide services to residents.

Objective 1: One or more civic organizations that provides a social function whose mission includes community service

1. Create a list of possible projects for various social missions to undertake such as house painting, landscaping, paint-and-ladder grants, playground improvements, or landscaping. Consider that diverse groups and interests will naturally focus on some, not all, possible projects.	faith-based organizations, student organizations, civic organizations	short term, as needed	
2. Partner with an existing group (e.g. VFW, Morrow of Tomorrow, Freemasons, Garden Club, and Morrow Progress Club) to see how the organization’s scope and mission can be expanded to more fully satisfy the above objective.	all existing civic organizations	short term, as needed	
3. Reach out to existing civic organizations such as Kiwanis or Rotary Clubs in Lebanon or Mason; encourage their involvement in Morrow on the basis the Village is within the boundaries of their local community.	all regional civic organization whose geography covers Morrow	short term, as needed	
4. Encourage civic/social organizations to address social needs in the community to address issues of drug abuse, parental abuse, or poverty.	ongoing	short term, as needed	Possibilities include Alcoholics Anonymous, improving the Roachester food pantry, or lightly used clothing depot.
5. Work closely with religious organizations to address social needs in the community. Speak with their clergy and councils/vestries/trustees to share the Village’s vision and see how these faith-based organizations can play a part.	faith-based organizations, Village Admin., Council	short term, as needed	

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Lead Organizations</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Notes</i>
6. Work with the Little Miami School District to find how civic-minded students can contribute to a revitalized and socially vibrant community.	LMSD, interested residents, downtown or neighborhood organizations, Council	ongoing	
7: Initiate new organizations that help fulfill this objective.	Interested residents, Council/staff, downtown association	as needed	Examples may include a Keep Morrow Beautiful organization. Find one or two champions that will tenaciously and passionately lead the organization.

Objective 2: Facilitate services for seniors, economically disadvantaged residents, and local grade-school students

1. Work with townships, volunteer groups, and local churches to identify any senior services that are lacking in the community. Collaborate to devise solutions when possible.	Townships, volunteer groups, faith-based organizations, WC Housing Coalition	short term	
2. Identify funds available for residential buildings that can be refurbished for the elderly or mobility impaired. Make the information readily available to residents who may benefit from this.	interested residents, Village Admin., WCGD	short term	Funding sources can be faith-based organizations, local community foundations, some civic organizations, state/federal grants.
3. Alert property owners to the availability of grants to incorporate universal design features into their home.	Village Admin., WC Housing Coalition	ongoing	Applicable staff should have a basic familiarity of funding sources to improve accessibility of homes for seniors. When contacted, they are ready to point residents to programs/funding solutions.
4. Create a scholarship endowment fund for Morrow students.	Interested residents, business association, LMSD	short or medium term	Funds may come from business sponsorships, private donations, or fundraising. Scholarships will likely be small and so should be carefully awarded.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 1: Infrastructure that accommodates existing and future development

Objective 1: Exploit the fiber optic cable that passes through Morrow

<p>1. Encourage completion of the trunk line to maximize the network's efficiency.</p>	<p>Village Admin., business association, neighboring communities</p>	<p>short term/as needed</p>
<p>2. Include information on the fiber optic cable as part of advertising Morrow discussed in Economic Development Goal 2 Objective 4.</p>	<p>Staff, business associations, WCEDD</p>	<p>short term</p>

Objective 2: Work with Warren County Sewer & Water Department (WCSWD) to plan and fund increases in sewer trunkline capacity between Morrow and the wastewater treatment plan

<p>1. Meet with WCSWD and continually encourage capacity issues to be addressed when the opportunity arises.</p>	<p>Village Admin., Council, WCSWD, Salem Twp.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>An opportunity for installing a second line would coincide with when the LMR multi-use trail is repaved.</p>
<p>2. If there is any PUD modification for the Woodlands at Morrow, encourage the developer to follow a cluster design that would lower the number of units and avoid development that exceeds sewer capacity.</p>	<p>Staff, Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Inspector</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>It is likely the Woodlands plan will need revised due to sewer capacity constraints. A cluster design is a logical solution to decrease density while preserving the home and lot types currently planned by the developer.</p>

Objective 3: Determine what infrastructure improvements, if any, are needed in potential growth areas

1. Create a long term maintenance and potential expansion plan for the Village's water plant.	Village Admin., Village Engineer, Council.	long term	Determine under what conditions an expansion is justified. Additional expertise may be required.
2. Establish the cost-benefit relationship between infrastructure improvements, Village revenue, and the public good. Not all improvements generate an adequate return on investment.	Village Admin., Village Engineer, Fiscal Officer, Council, RPC	as needed	Use OKI's fiscal impact analysis program to assist in gathering information on fiscal impact of development.
3. Always use code provisions that require developers to provide a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for PUD's, commercial/ industrial site plans, and preliminary plans.	Village Admin.	as needed	
4. Require developers to pay for their entire share of costs for infrastructure extensions/improvements including sewer or water necessary to serve their development.	Village Admin., Council	as needed	

Objective 4: Additional street lighting in key areas

1. Evaluate street lights to determine where bulb replacements or other repairs are needed; work with Duke Energy to make the necessary repairs.	Public Works	short term; periodically thereafter	
2. Install additional street lighting on Miami Street.	Staff, Duke Energy	medium term	This expenditure may be paid for by the Village, or from an assessment on Miami St. residents.
3. Install additional street lighting along US 22/SR 3.	Staff, Duke Energy	medium term	This expenditure may be paid for by the Village, or from an assessment on US 22 property owners.

Goal 2: A safe a well maintained road network

Objective 1: Evaluation of the condition and sufficiency of Village streets

1. Prioritize the need to repave or otherwise improve Village streets.	Village Engineer, Public Works, Council	short term; periodically thereafter	
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Strategy

Lead
Organizations

Time
Frame

Miscellaneous Notes

Objective 2: Secured funding sources to pay for necessary road improvements

1. Apply for available funding sources to fund road improvements.	Village Admin., Village Engineer, RPC	ongoing	Funding sources include OKI or ODOT.
2. Endorse and track progress of legislation that can help fund road improvements.	Village Admin., Council, RPC	when needed	Work with OKI, W.C., and ODOT when implementing this strategy.

Objective 3: Improvements to key streets

1. Make improvements to Kibbey Avenue. Speak to residents on the street to determine what if any improvements are desired.	Kibbey Ave. residents, Village Engineer, Public Works, other staff/Council	medium or long term	Examples include new lighting; creating a trail connection to downtown and LMHS; reconstructing the roadway to downtown; or (if so desired by the residents) no action.
2. Widen pavement on Highlawn Avenue to accommodate on-street parking.	Village Engineer, Public Works, other staff/Council	medium term	

Objective 4: Access management that follows recognized best practices

1. Revise the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations to ensure that commercial development is nodal rather than strip in character. Ingress/egress points should be shared for multiple properties and conform to transportation engineering best practices.	Village Engineer, ODOT, other staff, Council, Planning Commission	short term	This may not be appropriate along the entire corridor. It is ideal for development/redevelopment of the most traffic intense uses. A shared parking policy will complement shared access points.
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Goal 3: Effective stormwater and floodwater management

Objective 1: Mitigation of water damage by making stormwater infrastructure improvements inside the Village

1. Revise zoning code and subdivision regulations to increase standards for stormwater; specifically, to retain more stormwater on site and encourage designs that allow as much as possible to permeate the soil.		ongoing	ongoing
2. Collaborate with Salem Township to prevent stormwater from unincorporated areas adversely impacting the Thompson Addition neighborhood.	Village Engineer, Council, Salem Twp., residents	short term	The WCED or RPC may be a mediator.
3. Install new, properly graded stormwater grates in the Thompson Addition neighborhood.	Village Engineer, Public Works	short or medium term	Timeframe may depend on funding availability.

Objective 2: Address stormwater management on a regional basis

1. Prepare a study that evaluates stormwater drainage in Salem, Harlan, and Washington Townships on a watershed basis. Identify alternatives for managing stormwater in study area.	ongoing	ongoing	
2. Consult the US Army Corp of Engineers to determine if and where the Village can benefit from installing a flood control levee along Todds' Fork. Fund the levee design and installation if permitted by the Army Corp of Engineers.	Staff, USACE, FEMA, ODNR	short term	Consultation with ODNR and FEMA may also be required, as both have some jurisdiction on actions that impact the floodplain
3. Identify upstream locations for implementing surface runoff control measures.	Warren, Clinton Counties, upstream townships within them	medium term	Meetings should discuss the importance of standards that reduce surface runoff (storage basins, swales, permeable pavement), maximizing percolation.
4. Work with zoning jurisdictions in Salem, Harlan, and Washington Townships to encourage zoning amendments that more effectively address stormwater management, erosion, and sedimentation.	Staff, Affected Townships, RPC	medium term	
5. Work with WC Engineer's Office to devise a regional stormwater retention plan.	WCEO, RPC	medium term	The Village should contact the WCEO and RPC well in advance of the planning process.
6. Participate in collaborative funding and implementation of stormwater management solutions with neighboring jurisdictions.	BOCC, WCEO, RPC	medium term	A small County-wide assessment can fund comprehensive stormwater management improvements.

Objective 3: Floodplain boundaries as determined by FEMA that accurately reflect the probability of flooding events

1. Encourage Warren County to petition FEMA to accurately redraw boundaries of the Little Miami River (LMR) and Todd's Fork floodway and floodplain.	Staff, RPC	short term	Caesar's Creek Dam has improved flood control in the LMR valley, possibly making current floodplain map obsolete.
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Objective 4: Emergency Plan for Downtown and other locations in floodway

1. Devise a sandbag barrier plan and secure necessary supplies needed for emergency implementation.	interested residents, staff	short term	
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Goal 4: Inter-jurisdictional agreement for shared use of infrastructure capacity

Objective 1: Meet with Salem Township to determine how sewage capacity will be used within the Morrow-Roachester Urban Service Area

1. Meet with Warren County to evaluate how much sewer capacity is available to serve future development within the Urban Service Area.	WCSWD, Salem Twp., RPC	short term	
2. Meet with Salem Township to establish how available sewer capacity will be shared. A long range, strategic approach to sewer capacity utilization will be more sophisticated than "first-come, first-serve".	Salem Twp. , RPC	short term	
3. Only approve development proposals for which there is adequate sewer and water capacity.	Staff, Council, Planning Commission	as needed	

Goal 5: Partner with local businesses or non-profits to improve infrastructure

Objective 1: Coordinate with any local workforce training organization that works with excavating equipment.

1. Discuss with workforce training organizations if they are willing to contribute time and labor to the rehabilitation of Morrow Elementary School.	WCCC, regional vocational institutions	short term	Currently the WCCC carries out practice projects with no utility.
2. Create a list of other possible projects on which these organizations may work.	ongoing	short term	Contact potential partners first to determine how they may help.

APPENDIX: PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

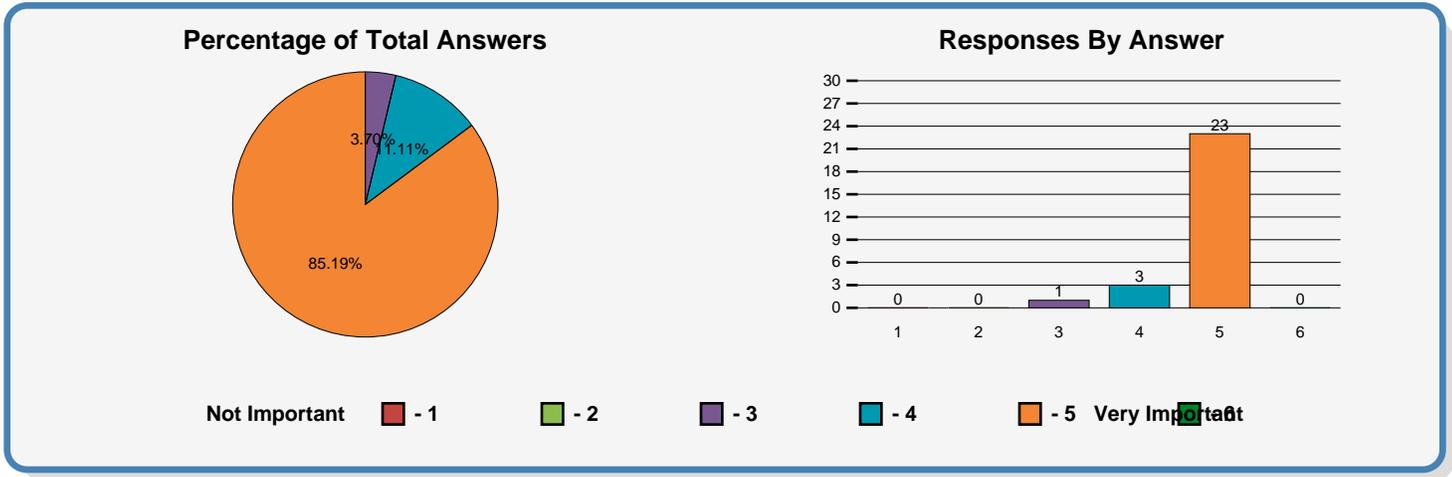
The Morrow Comprehensive Plan website featured a survey addressing all major topics discussed in the Plan. The online survey was active for approximately 10 months.

The survey format was redesigned shortly after the website was created to be more user friendly. As a consequence there are two surveys included that follow a different format than others. These first two surveys are included last in the appendix.

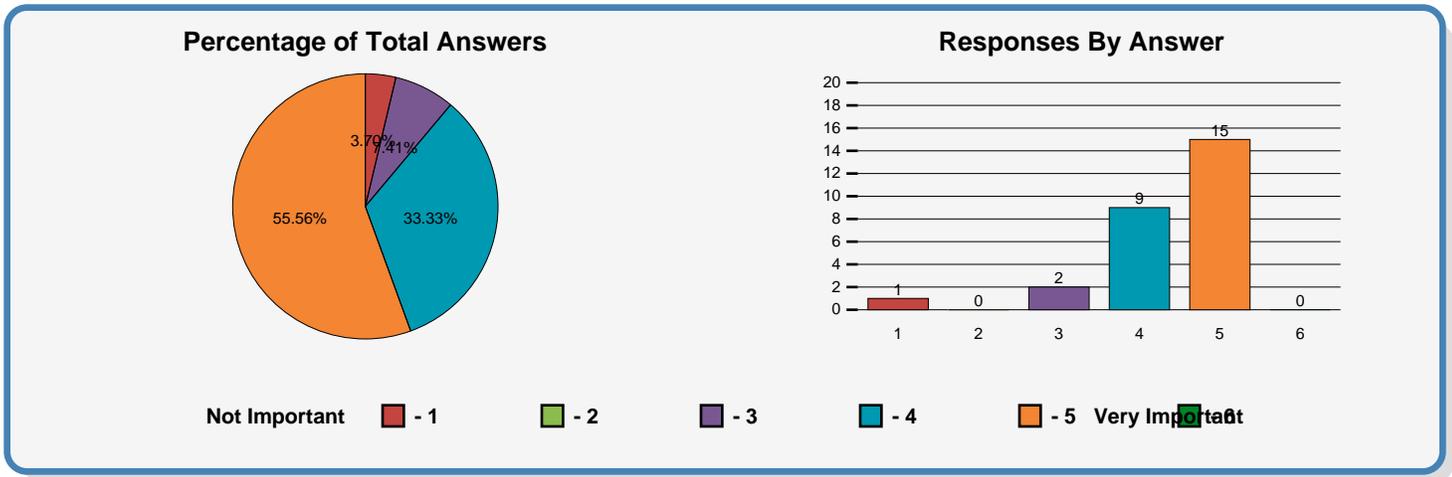


Village of Morrow Comprehensive Plan

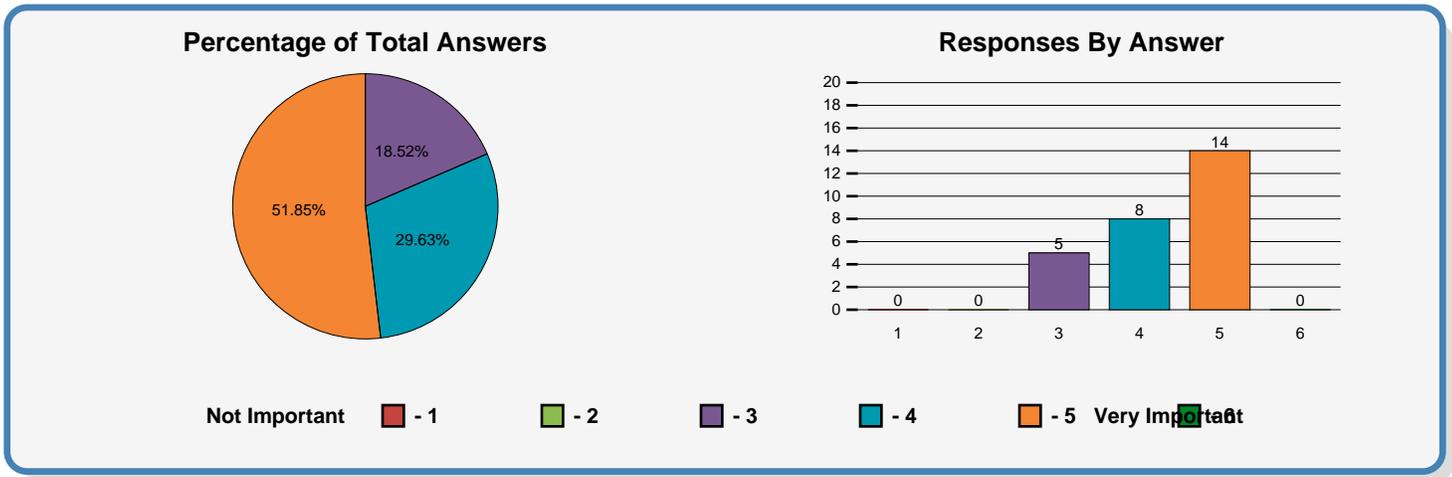
1.) Downtown revitalization



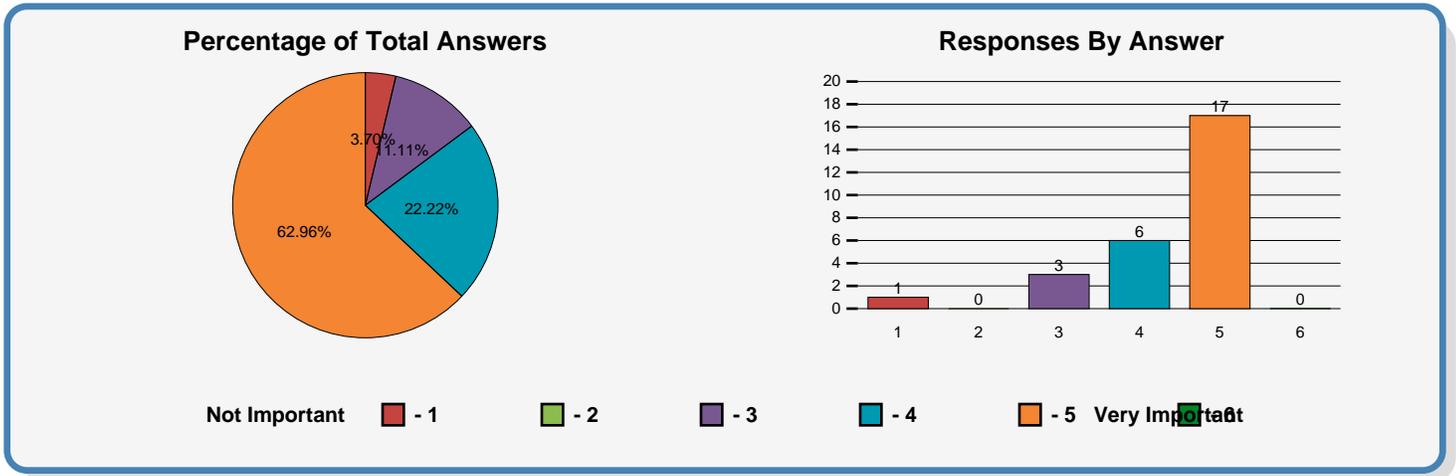
2.) Enhanced aesthetic quality of buildings, streets, trees, and sidewalks



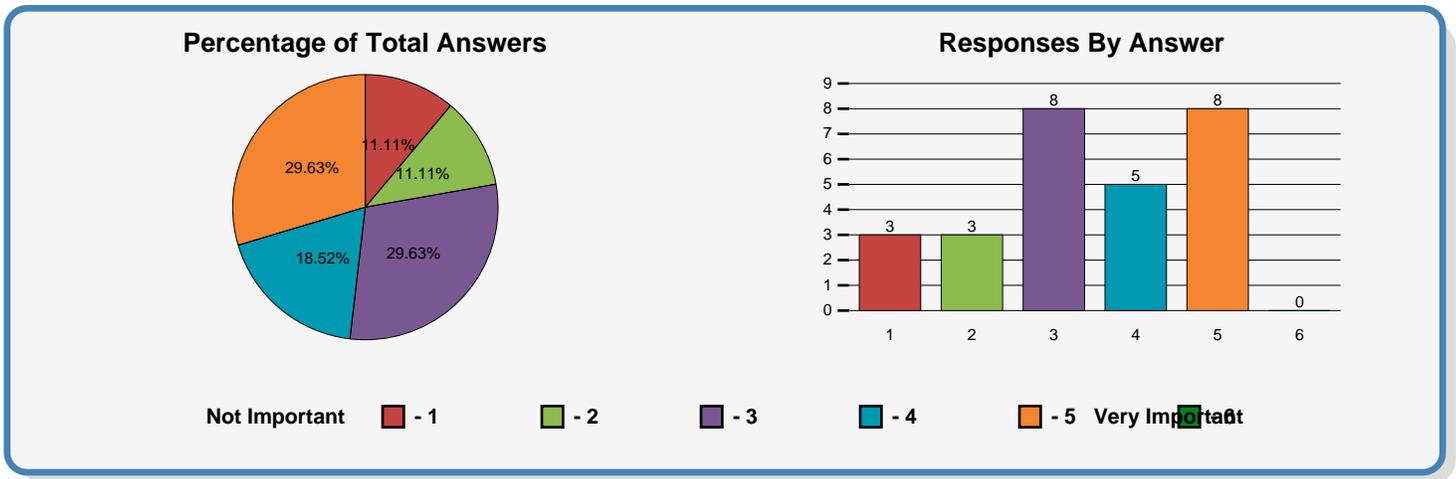
3.) Emphasis on historical and cultural heritage



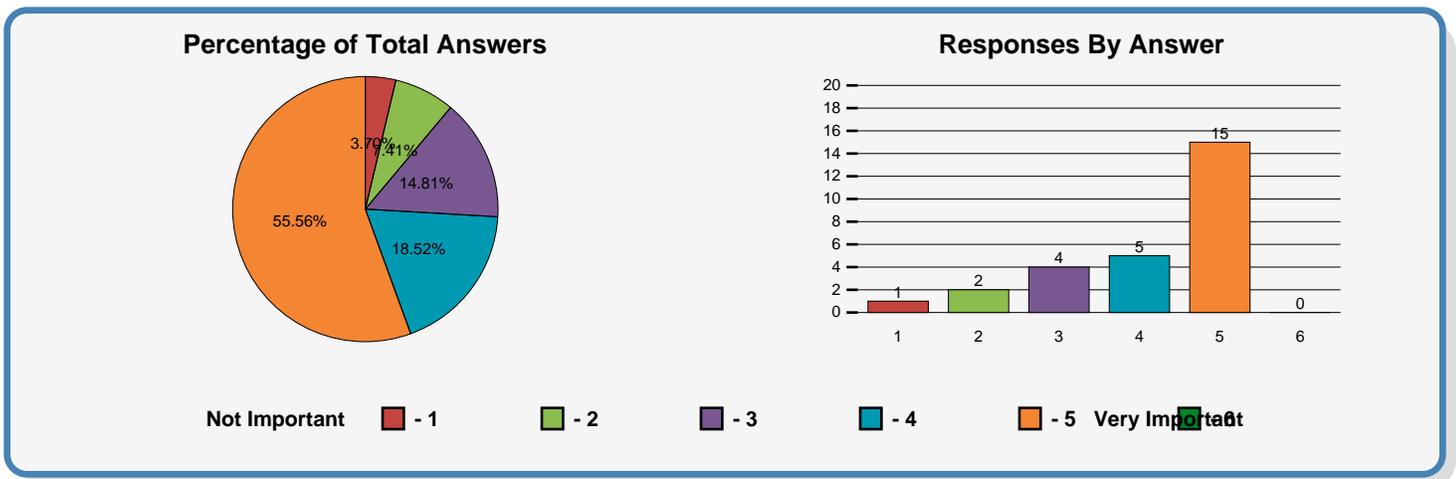
4.) Reduced vacancy rates



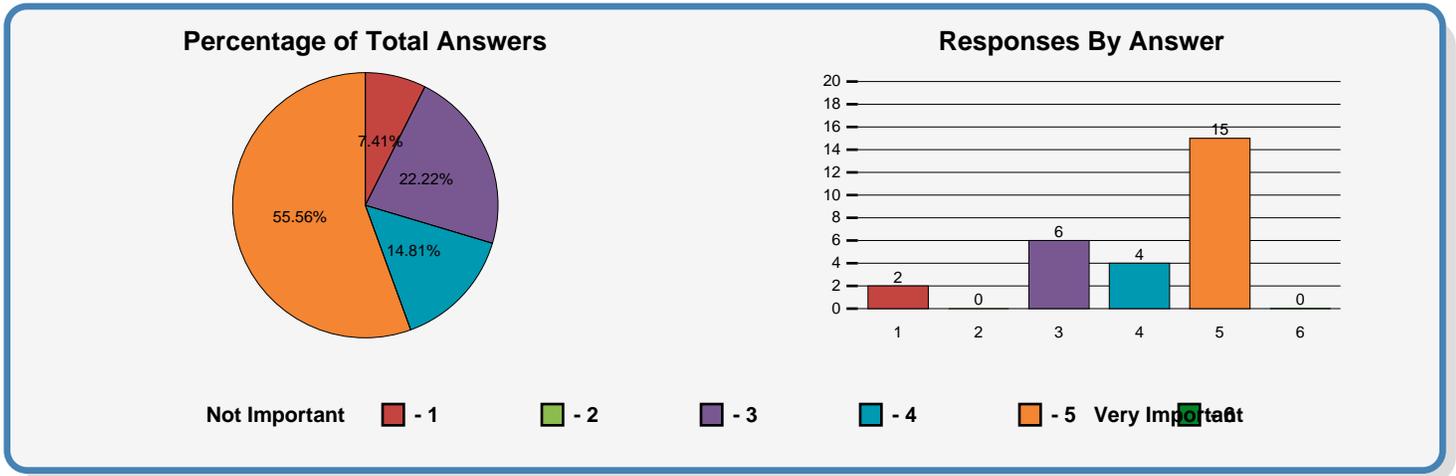
5.) Use of banners and signage to promote downtown



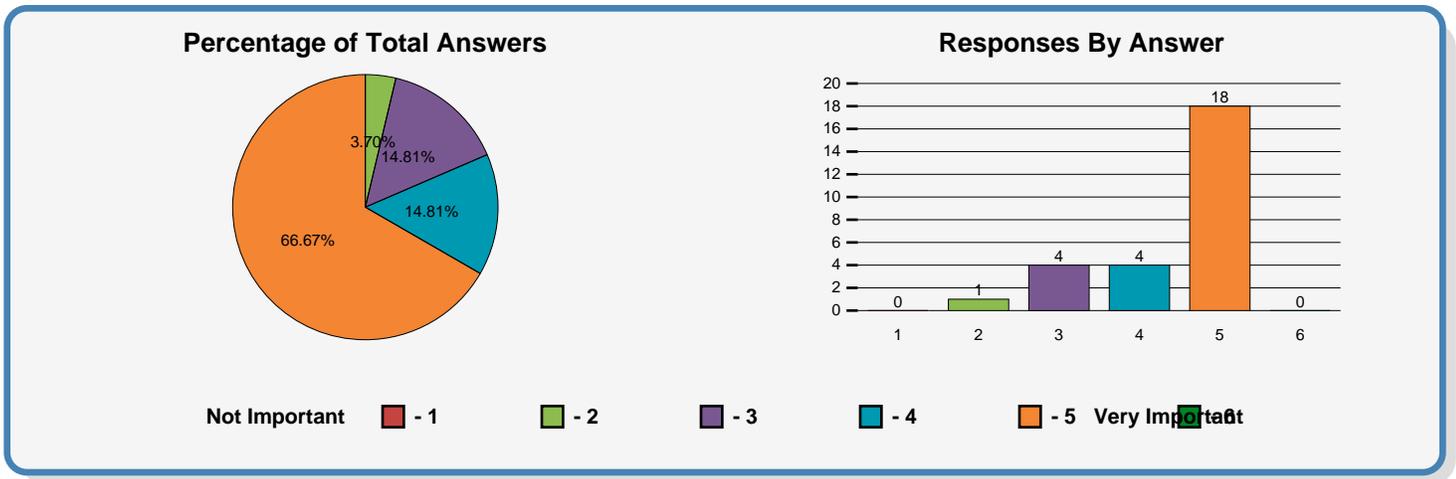
6.) More activities and events



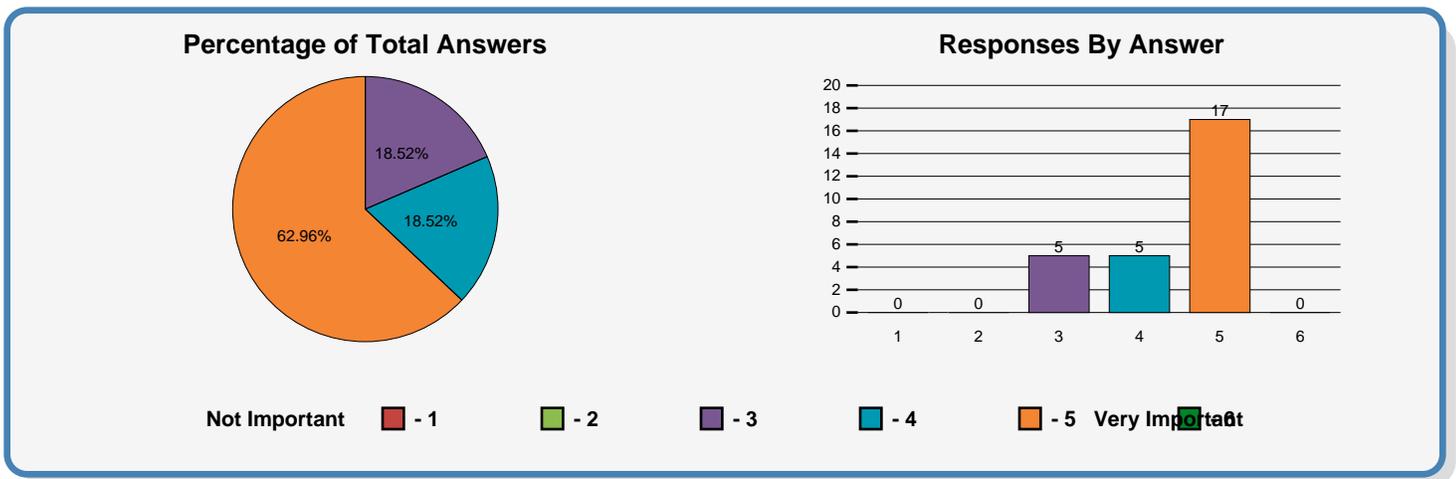
7.) Promotion and expansion of the downtown farmer's market



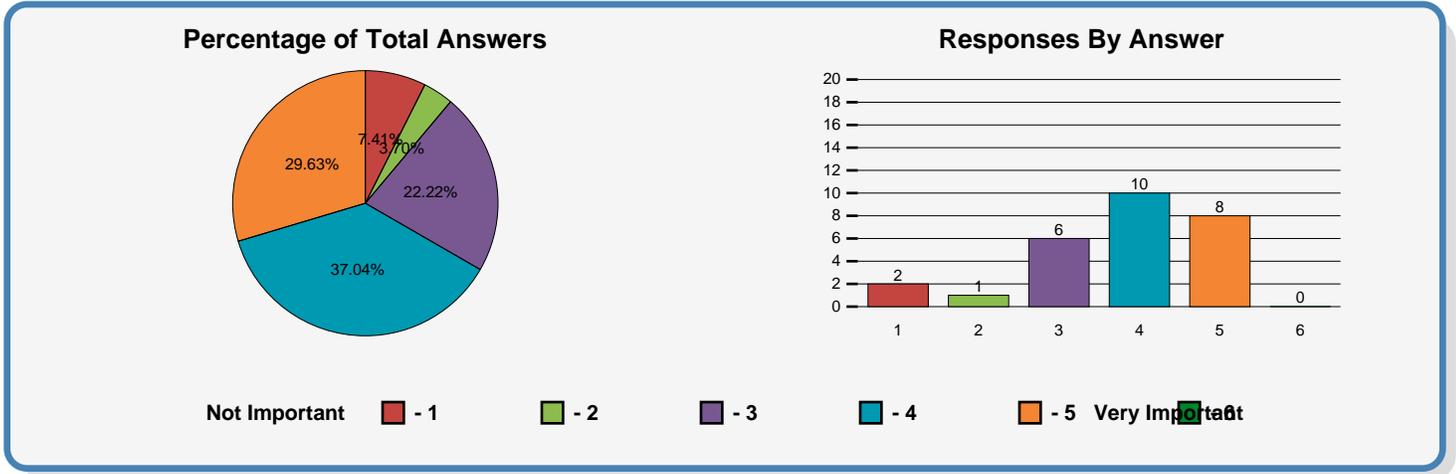
8.) Small-town charm



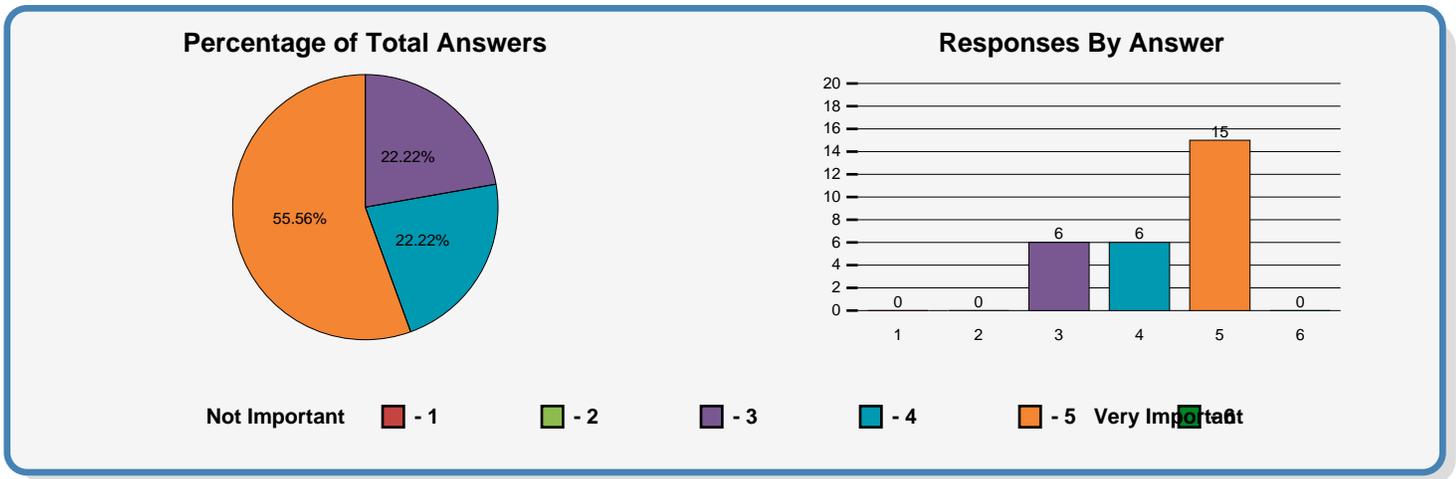
9.) Pedestrian friendly environment



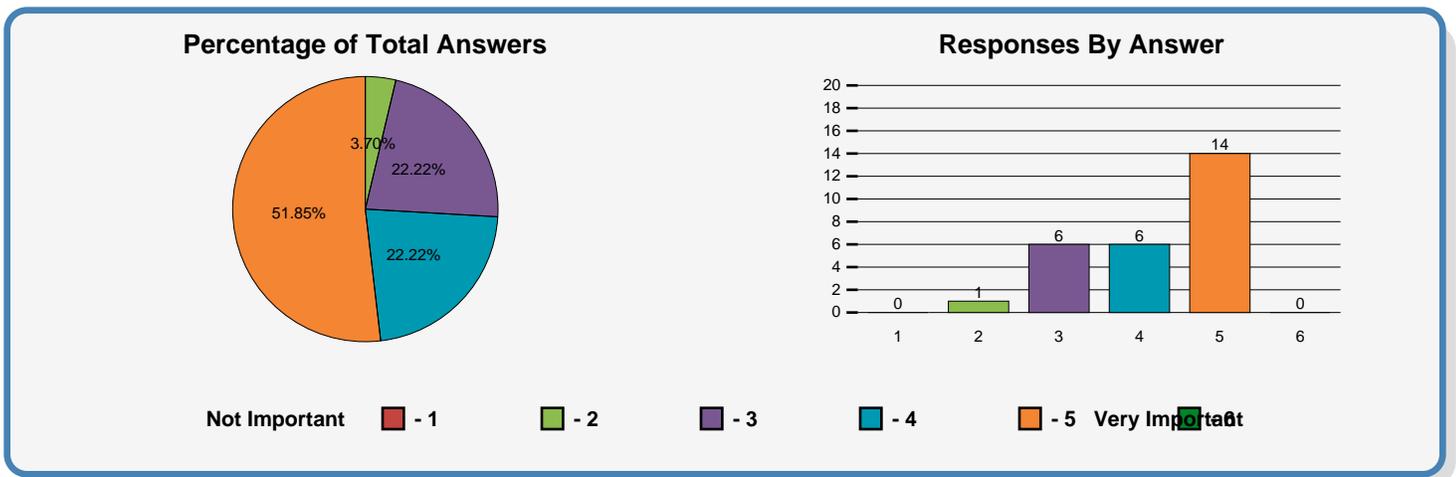
10.) Diverse housing stock for all ages, family sizes, and incomes



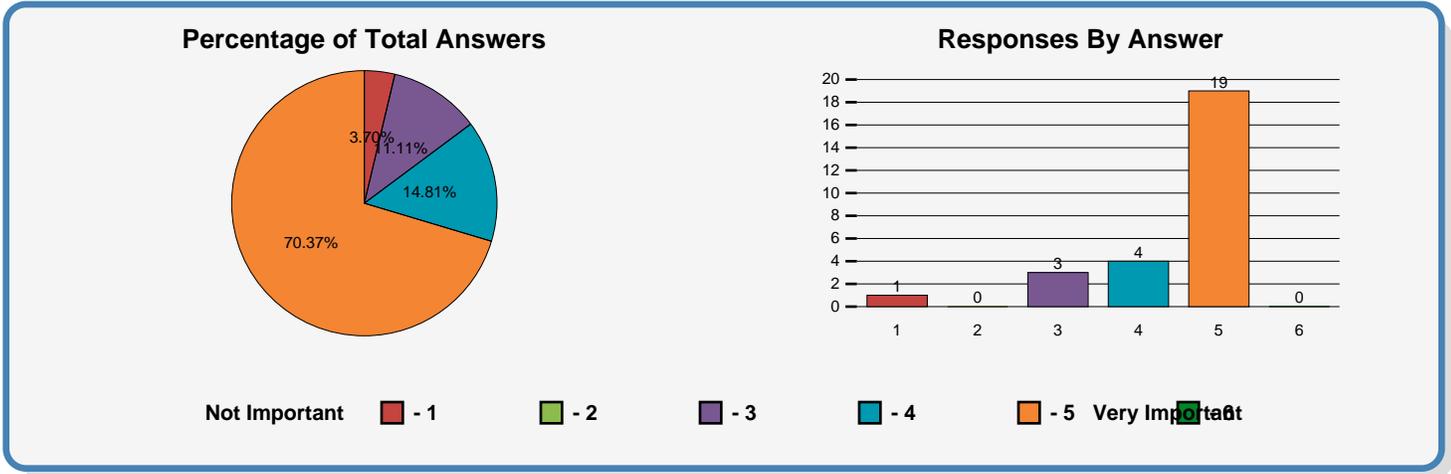
11.) Neighborhood beautification



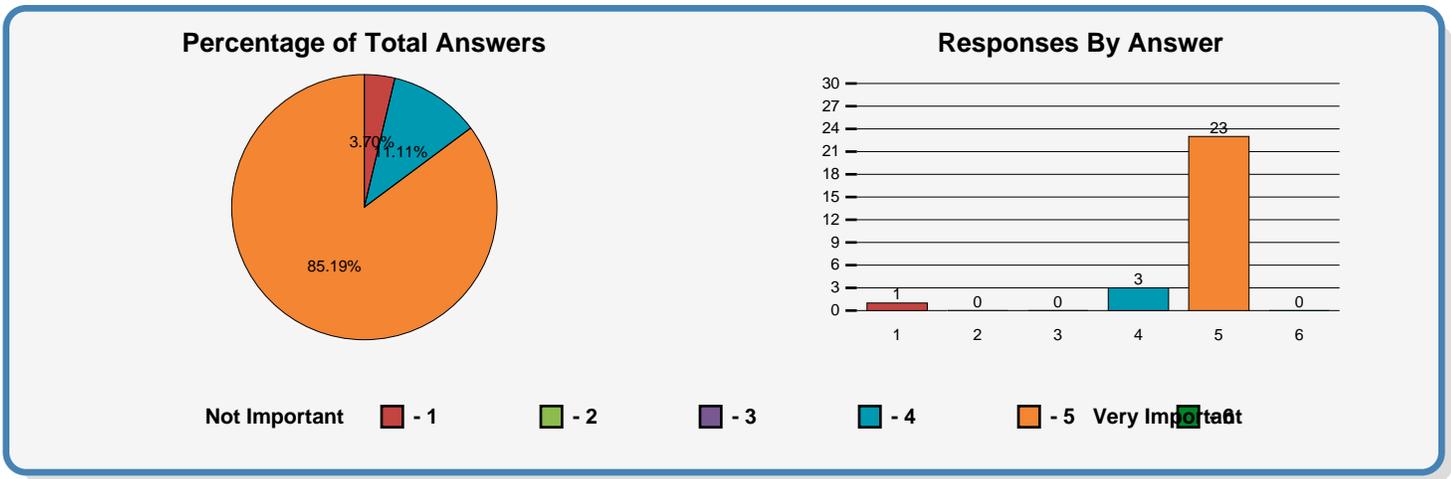
12.) Well maintained and landscaped yards and houses



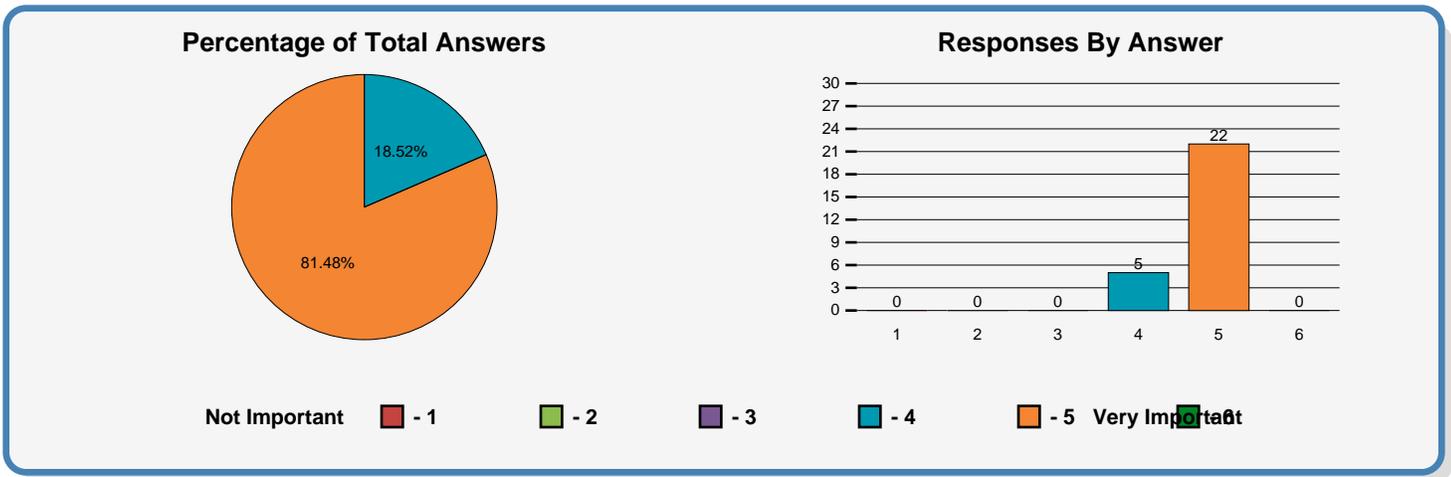
13.) Reduction of criminal activity



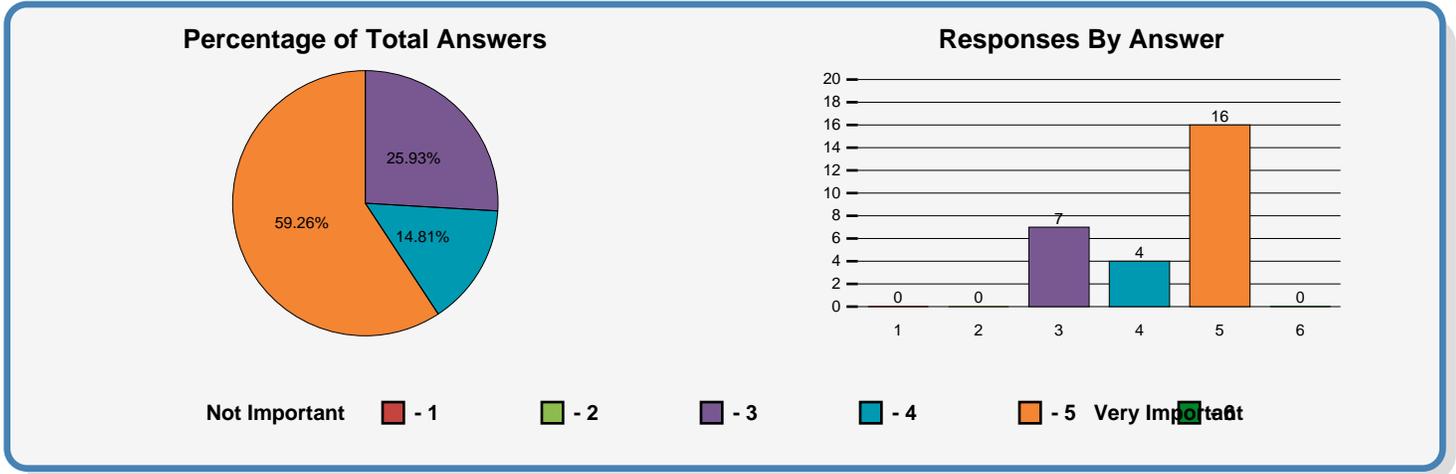
14.) New business development



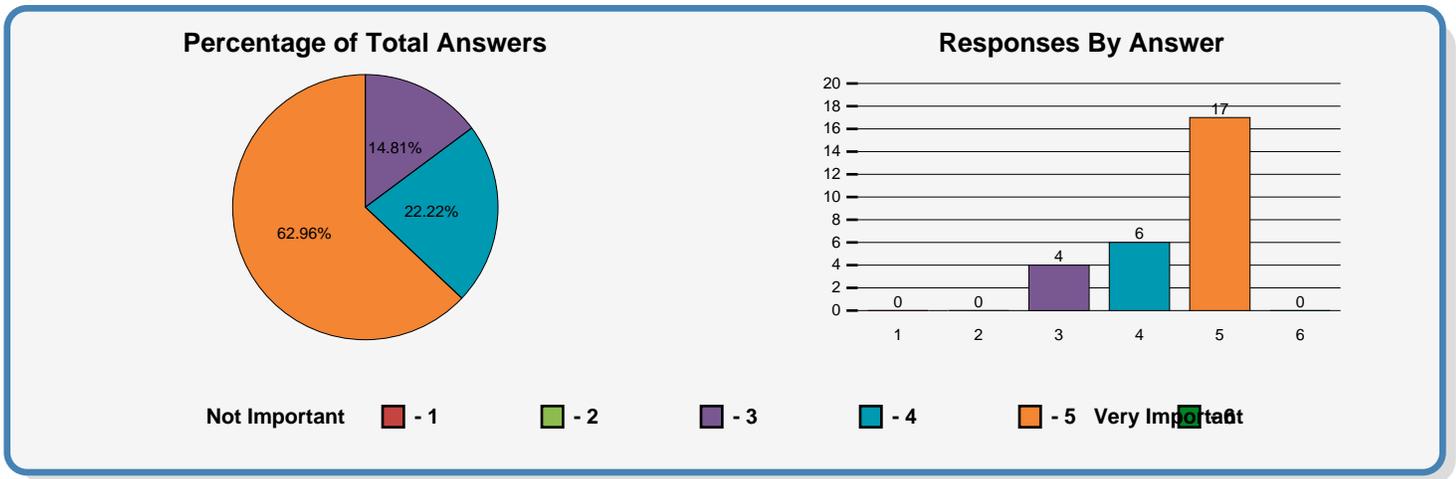
15.) Re-use of vacant structures



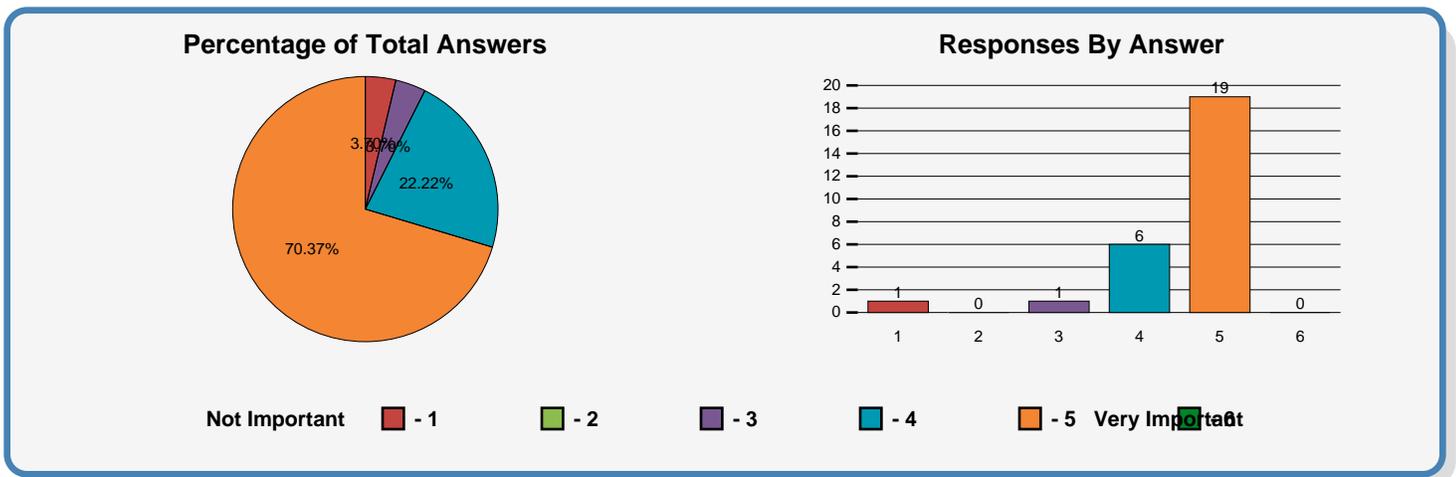
16.) Recreational tourism and agritourism



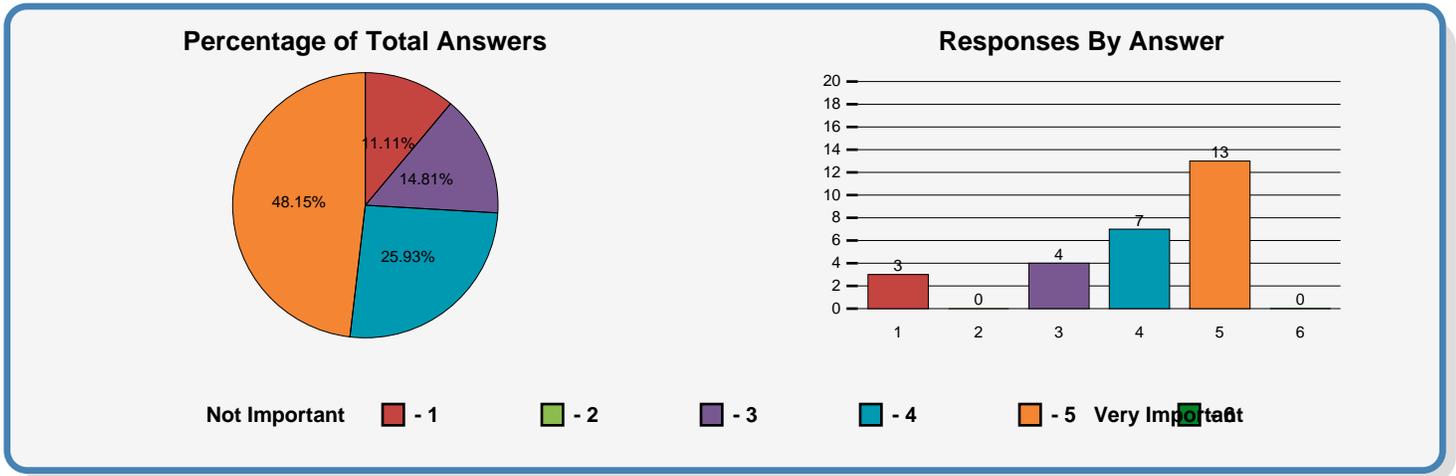
17.) Collaboration between The Village and Townships



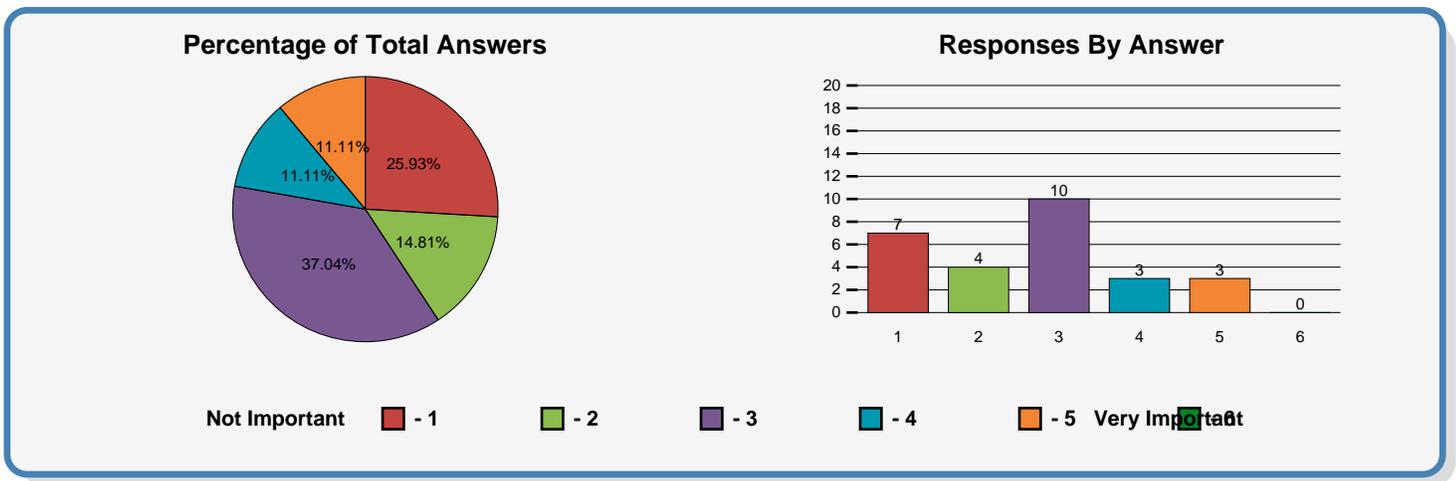
18.) Tax incentives and similar strategies to encourage business development



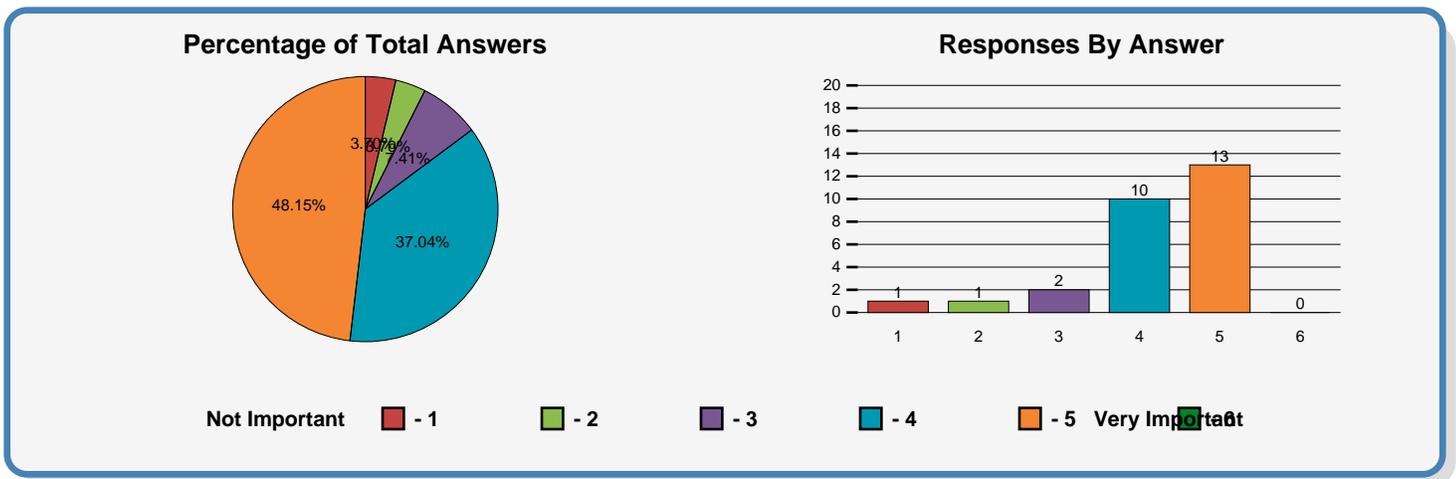
19.) Create a community center (i.e. a Rec Center and a social gathering place)



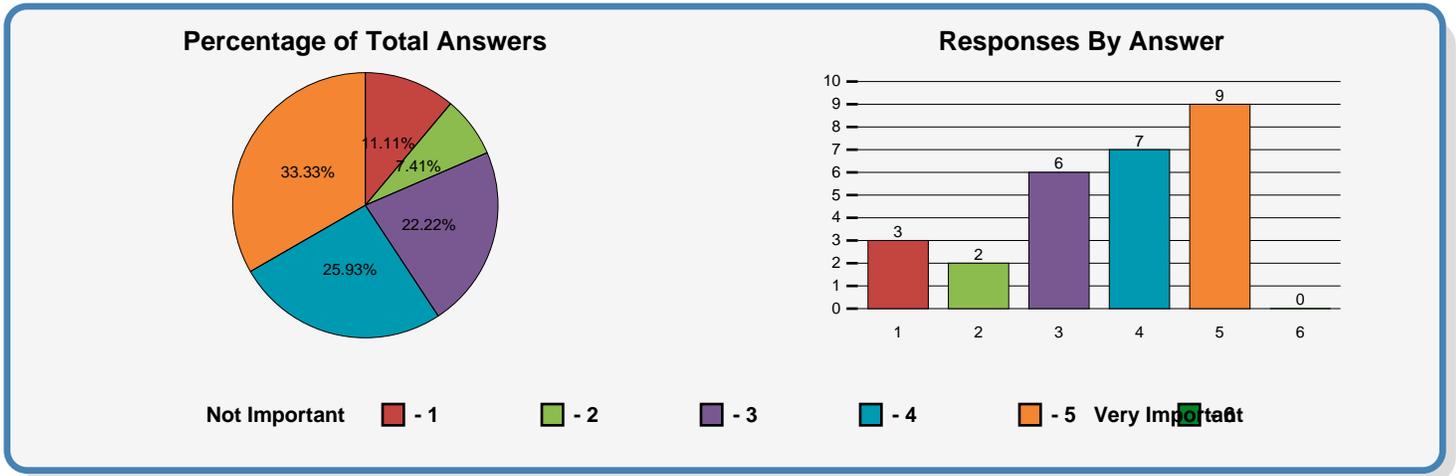
20.) Build a public pool



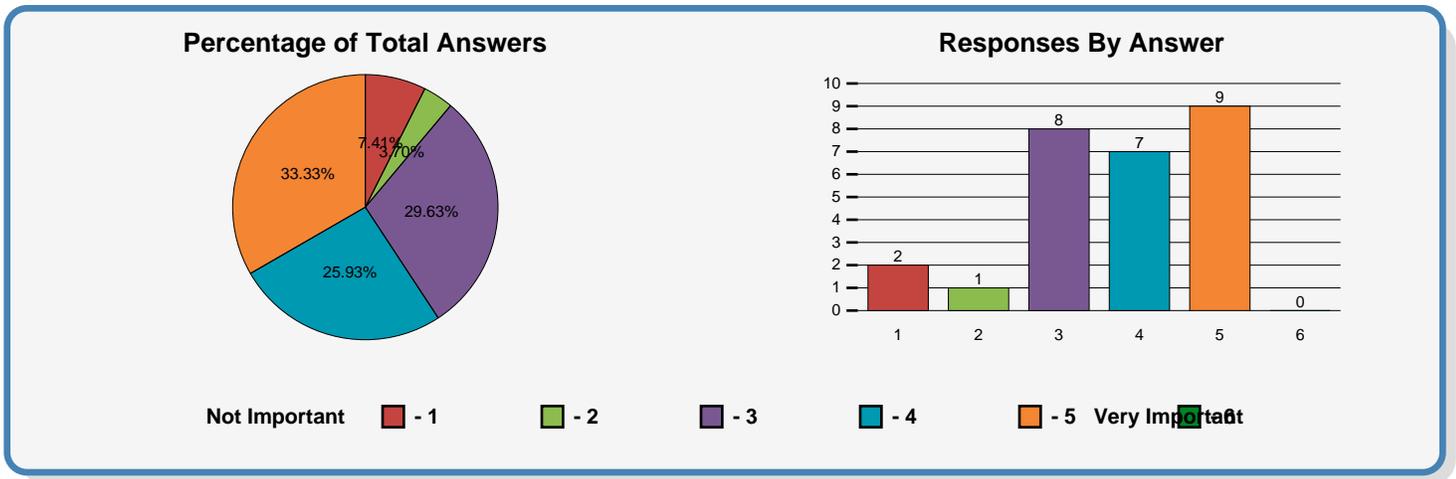
21.) Improvement of existing parks (restrooms, parking, landscaping, play equipment)



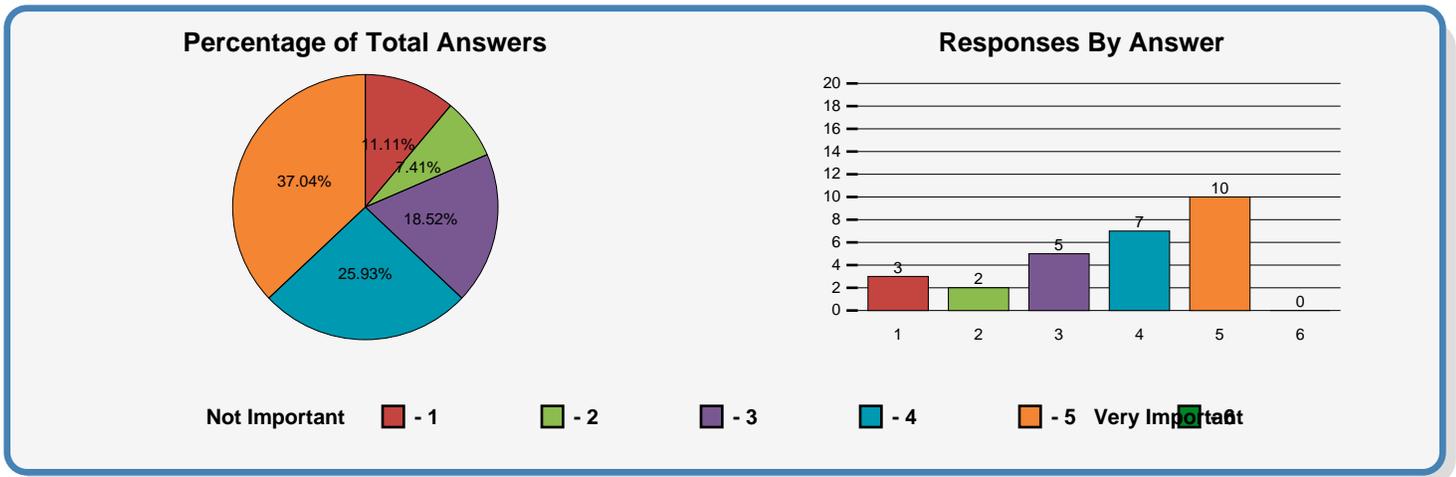
22.) Make Flat Rock and the surrounding area an official park



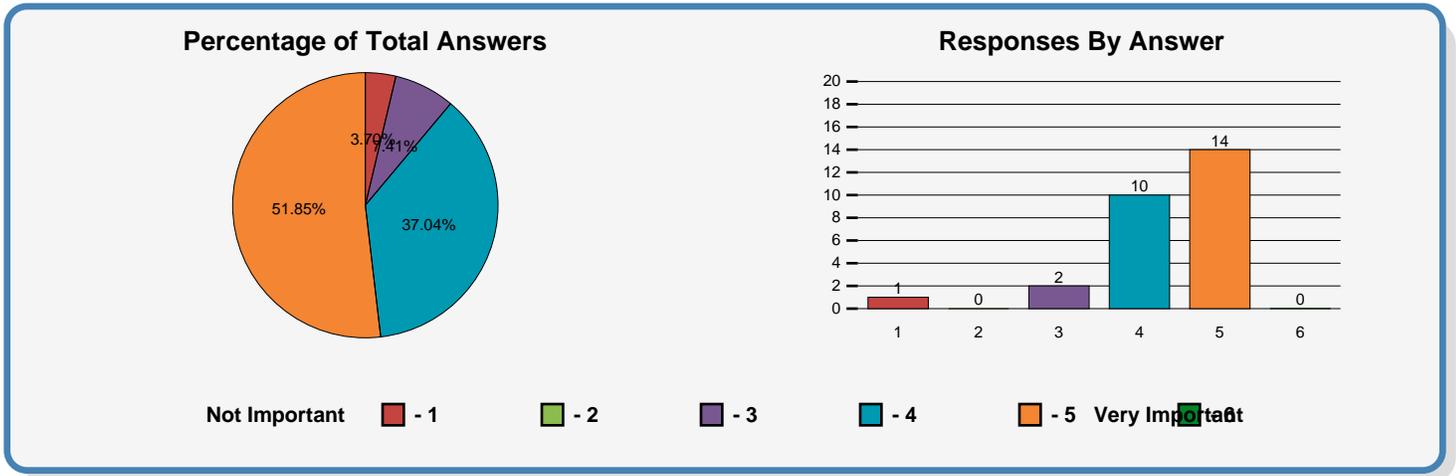
23.) New pedestrian and bike trails



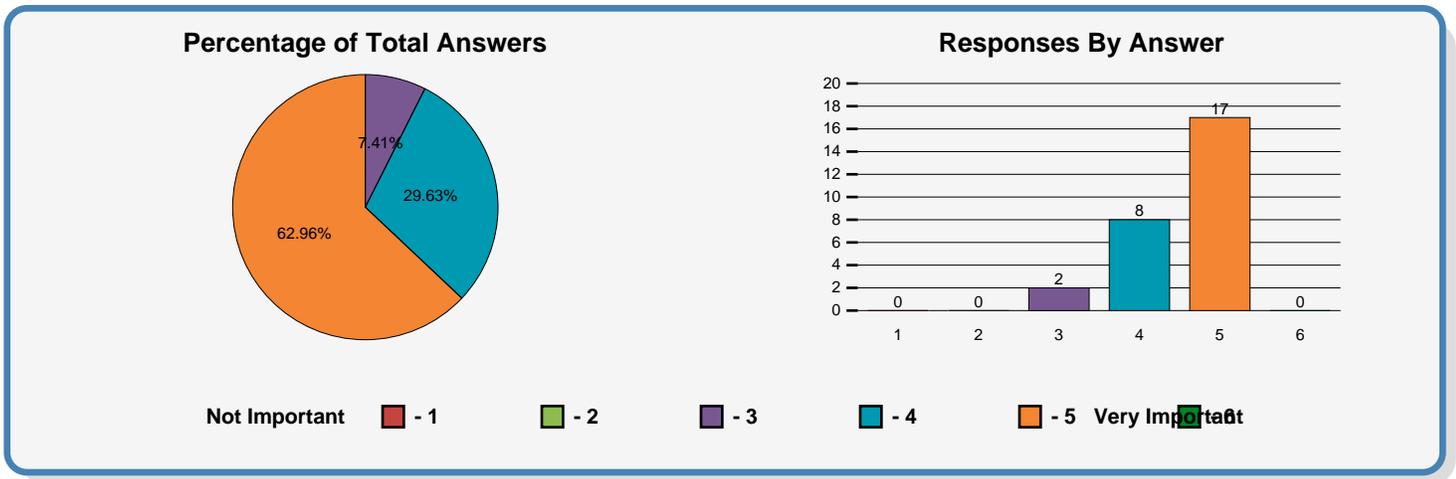
24.) Youth and adult sports programs



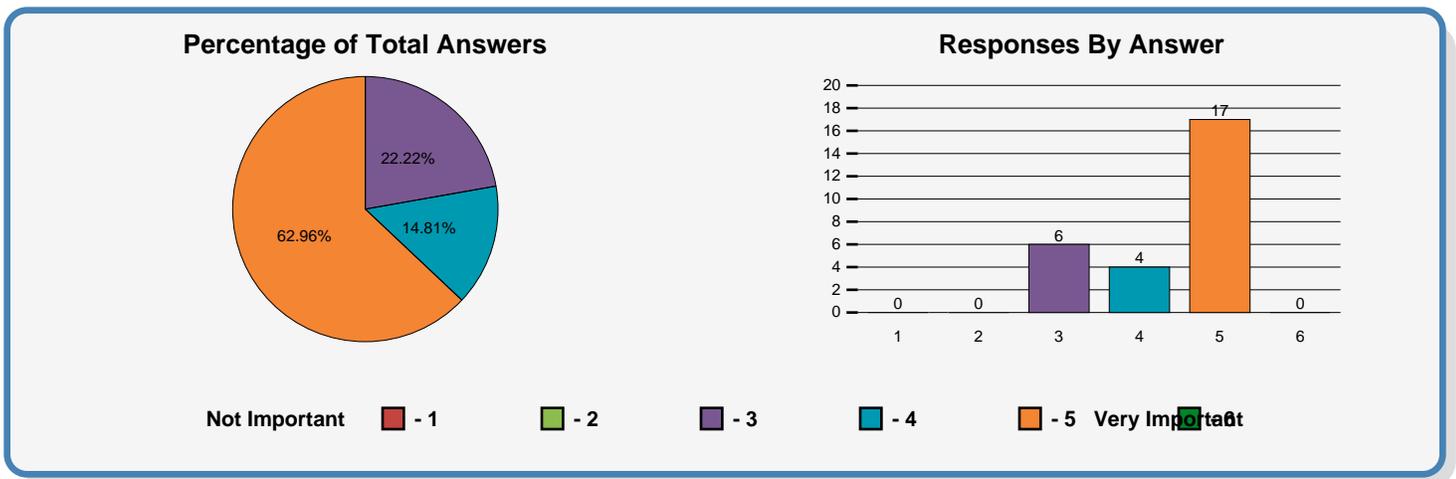
25.) Flood mitigation and stormwater management



26.) Road improvements/maintenance



27.) Better utilization of the fiber-optics line along US 22/3



28.) Please share any additional comments, suggestions, or priorities you believe the 2013 Morrow Comprehensive Plan should address.

"I moved to Morrow in 2011. I think Morrow has the potential to be a beautiful little small town with some TLC. I'm excited to watch it grow with this new plan."

"Expand the bike trails to surrounding neighborhoods before development gets in the way! Wouldn't it be great if kids could bike from Saddlebrook or Classicway by bike trail all the way to downtown Morrow? Think of the families on the weekend walking/riding to downtown Morrow to the shops(hopefully there will be more) and farmer's markets and canoe rental places. One of the biggest reasons I moved from Forest Park to Morrow was the access I had to the bike trail and other rural roads to cycle on."

"Make Morrow a place where people want to come. Main Street is where you should start. That is where people get their first glimpse of Morrow. Have something unique that people want to come to or want to see."

1. Must have a reputable grocery store closer than Kroger in Maineville or Wilmington
2. Fill vacant buildings (old dry cleaners, Elementary School, strip center)
3. Continue working to eliminate blighted properties
4. Bring back some of the "charm" that Morrow used to have and eliminate the reputation of corruption and good ol' boy politics"

"I believe that the counsel is over looking the best thing that Morrow offers and that is the river we are lucky to be a small town on a scenic little Miami river we need to use it and the bike trail to bring people and events to town Morrow would be the perfect place to host a charity walk and run a outdoor craft flea market type event and ofcourse with more people coming in to town more money that will go into our economy we need to celebrate what our town is and not try to change into something new"

"Bringing more businesses (stores, restaurants)
Improvement of electrical infrastructure (less power outages)"

"I believe cleaning up is important. Downtown Morrow plays an important role/part in the future of Morrow. However, the main perspective of Morrow right now is what is seen on the drive through town on 22 & 3. A half utilized plaza, a BIKER BAR, empty buildings and places that needed cleaned up. This area is the first image of the Village of Morrow. I know the clean up has begun and it is starting to look much better."

"The existing parks are well maintained and usually in good shape.

While I think that historic aspects of the village need to be maintained, if the structures cannot feasibly be repaired, then reconstruction would be the better option.

Enhancement of the existing parks and bikeways along with the redevelopment of the business district with businesses and shops would seem to be viable.

The existing renovation of the train station was very well done; however, additional redevelopment is needed in order to add growth to the community.

I think the current efforts in progress are an excellent start and will help to revitalize the downtown area."

"survey has covered all options as far as I can see. for the present residents of Morrow an emergency flood plan needs to be put into place, to start maybe who has the ability to use a canoe to assist older residents to higher ground, placement of sandbags to hold back water until people can evacuate and an evacuation route 'marked' would be good to have.. just another thought for us to work on."

"Create events that are of interest to the locals and the general public that highlight what Morrow has. More ideas on this will be coming from me soon."

"My biggest concern with improvements of at least downtown Morrow is the renovation costs versus return on investments. With the high costs to meet flood plain renovation standards, will the town see a decent return. Revitalizing will force some homeowners to move out which in turn will bring in a different level of homeownership which in turn will change the perception of the town.

Biggest concern is Morrow Elementary eye sore (and the hazmat costs involved) and a small strip mall that doesn't really pull the community in."

The Village of Morrow 2012 Comprehensive Plan Survey Questions for Morrow Residents

While these questions were tailored for residents who live in or near the Village of Morrow, the survey input of visitors who have a strong familiarity with Morrow is also welcome and appreciated!

1. If you are interested in serving on the Citizens Advisory Committee, please provide your name, phone number, and email address. The Citizens Advisory Committee meets monthly to guide planning staff on how to create the Comprehensive Plan.

Name:
Phone:
Email:

2. Please select one of the following to indicate your place of residence:

- a. Inside the Village of Morrow
b. Outside Morrow but inside Salem Township
c. Outside Salem Township

3. What future amenities or development would you and your family like to see in Morrow?

Please check all that apply

- a. More retail and office uses on US 22/SR 3
b. Restoration of historic buildings and attracting business tenants to downtown
c. New/improved parks facilities
d. Community center
e. Public pool
f. Festivals and events
g. Additional long distance trails
h. Other (*please describe*)

4. What aspects of the Village of Morrow do you like best? Check all that apply.

- a. Small town charm
b. School district
c. Downtown amenities and activities
d. Pleasant neighborhoods
e. The Little Miami River and Todds Fork
f. Little Miami River Trail
g. Parks
h. Restaurants
i. Other (*please describe*)

5. What are your ideas for reusing the vacant Morrow Elementary School on Pike Street? Suggestions heard to date are a small business incubator, a community center, or a private use.

Hospital

6. What would you most like to improve or change in Morrow?

Pike Street. Plaza is an eyesore. Mis-matched stone on the historical retaining wall?

7. Do you feel there are ample shopping and dining amenities conveniently located in the Village? Please explain.

Well uh, no.

8. Morrow currently has a local farmers' market located in downtown. What would make you likely to visit the farmers' market more often?

I would have been attending already, had I known there was one.

9. What kind of products would you like to see sold at the farmers' market? (e.g. a wider variety of produce, specialty jams, soaps, honey, locally grown produce, organic produce, other?)

10. What types of services or retail establishments do you believe are important to *bring* or *keep* in the Village? Indicate the level of importance according to the following scale:

- (1) Very important
- (2) Somewhat important
- (3) Not very important

- a. Grocery store
- b. Bakery/deli/produce establishments
- c. Pharmacy
- d. Dollar Store or Convenience Store
- e. Bank
- f. Library
- g. Professional offices (doctors, dentists, real estate agents, etc.)
- h. Other (*please describe*)

11. Please describe your opinions of downtown Morrow as it relates to restoring buildings and filling downtown with business.

- In your opinion, what business complement downtown?
- What will it take to create a successful business environment and vibrant community gathering place?

We are not conveniently located so professional businesses are not going to do well here. We need to focus on our strengths which are the bike trail, river and the beauty of our rolling hills through town. A few really quality festivals a year would be much better than a bunch of little junky ones. The Todds Fork Bluegrass Festival was pretty cool back in the day. How about a big bananarama bike thing in the spring along the bike trail, country/bluegrass/gospel fest in the fall at Todds Fork and Christmas at the train depot?

12. What Downtown business would you be most likely to patronize? Please select no more than three of the following.

- a. Small non-chain restaurants
- b. Chain restaurants
- c. Boutique and specialty shops
- d. Bakery, deli, etc.
- e. Antique stores
- f. Real estate agent, financial advisor, doctor or dentist offices
- g. Other (*please describe*)

grocery

13. Though all the following are important to a healthy community, how would you rank the following according to the scale below:

- (1) Very important
- (2) Somewhat important
- (3) Not very important

- a. Parks & Recreation (bike trails, river, and park programs)
- b. Quality housing choices for all age groups (singles, families, and seniors)
- c. Downtown revitalization
- d. Growing/attracting businesses on the US 22/SR 3 corridor
- e. Public Facilities (Emergency services, utility services)
- f. Festivals, events, and concerts
- g. Other (*please describe*)

14. What do you believe are necessary actions or events that must take place to fully revitalize the Village?

Limited funds are our weakest link so how can we encourage volunteerism and private funding? Get the schools and churches involved whenever possible. Encourage teachers to give credit and promote involvement. Meet with church leaders to see how they can help. Keep a running list of things groups and individuals can do to help and advertise it- at the library, in this newsletter, at the high school, in church bulletins. Lets build community. Evertone is afraid to come to meetings or commit cause they're afraid it will take more time than they have to offer, but if you give them a list of things to choose from then it is less over-whelming. Promote, promote, promote, get people talking about it. Put a stack of fliers on the counter at every business. Have a community clean up/volunteer day. It's fun and free. Choose one community project per year and talk about it long in advance, getting the word out.

15. Please share any specific strategies or ideas you have regarding any of the five (5) major elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

a. Downtown

Focus on Pike Street cause if it looks like ----, no one will look any further.

b. Neighborhoods

c. Economic Development

Festivals might lead the way to making us kinda like Yellow Springs (minus the liberalism), not a rich community, but realtively healthy. Really promoting a farmer's mkt hard could be a key to success since we are already a farming community. The elementary parking lot would be a great location. Then we could use the building as a craft bazaar maybe too.

d. Quality of Life

e. Infrastructure

Thank you for sharing your comments and goals for the community! Your input is invaluable as we develop the 2013 Morrow Comprehensive Plan. Please contact us under the *Submit Comments & Questions* section if you have any additional comments or questions about the Comprehensive Plan or our public outreach methods.

*To submit a survey, please save the completed survey to your desktop then email as an attachment directly to: daniel.geronk@co.warren.oh.us
Doing so will require selecting the second option (Internet Email) after clicking "Submit Survey".*

The Village of Morrow 2013 Comprehensive Plan Survey Questions for Nonresidents & Visitors

While these questions were tailored for nonresidents and visitors to Morrow, Village residents are also welcome to complete this survey.

1. Please select one of the following to indicate your place of residence.

- a. Inside the Village of Morrow
- b. Outside Morrow but inside Salem Township
- c. Outside Salem Township

2. What are the *two* most common reasons you visit or pass through the Village of Morrow?

- a. The Little Miami Bike Trail
- b. To visit a business in downtown Morrow
- c. To visit a business in Morrow outside the downtown
- d. I use one of the parks located in Morrow (Thornton Park, Phegley Park, or Veteran Memorial Park)
- e. Other (*please describe*)

I work in Morrow

3. Do you typically stop and use any businesses when passing through Morrow? If so, please list the three (3) Morrow businesses you most frequently use.

Morrow Lumber

Post Office

Anglo's Pizza

4. Which of the parks in Morrow do you use? Please select all that apply.

- a. Veteran Memorial Park
- b. Phegley Park
- c. Thornton Park
- d. Other parks
- e. None

f. How do you use the parks (e.g. walking, sports, playgrounds)?

5. If you are familiar with Morrow's parks, how do you recommend the Village improve existing park space?

- a. Install permanent restrooms and water fountains
- b. Refurbish or add additional playground equipment
- c. Add or improve landscaping, benches, or picnic areas in parks
- d. Designate space for a dog park
- e. Install walking trails in or near parks
- f. Other (*please describe*)

Add concession stands or vending machines and recycling bins. Post a calendar of community events (concerts, parades, festivals, etc.).

6. Please check the choice below that best describe your opinions of downtown Morrow.

- a. Main Street is generally well cared for and most owners appear to take pride in their property.
- b. Main Street is generally not well cared for and most property owners do not show pride in their property.

7. Please describe your opinions of downtown Morrow as it relates to historic restoration and filling downtown with future business.

- What businesses complement your idea of a revitalized downtown?
- What is required for a successful business environment and vibrant social gathering place?

Miranda's has done a terrific job of restoring their building, but there is much more work to do all along Main Street. The houses on the streets behind Main Street have been restored nicely, as well. It would be nice to have a self-guided walking tour of the downtown area, including the streets between Main and the Little Miami that tells when the homes were built, historical figures who lived there, previous uses, etc. The Village should hire a Historic Preservation consultant to create guidelines for restoring properties back to their original condition (i.e. paint colors, light fixtures, exterior trim, windows, etc.). This could serve as a helpful guide to someone wanting to reinvest in downtown properties. Make downtown feel warm and inviting for visitors, not like you're daring them to go downtown.

8. Festivals and events create a sense of community and can bring economic development opportunities. What kinds of events do you personally want to see in Morrow? What kinds of events do you believe would attract visitors to Morrow?

Free community concerts at Phegley Park, horse drawn carriage rides up and down Main Street, parades

9. What can the Village of Morrow and residents do that will make you likely to visit Downtown Morrow more often? Please indicate the level of importance according to the following scale:

1. Very important.
2. Somewhat important
3. Not very important

- a. 1 Restore buildings and attract new business tenants
- b. 1 Preserve historically significant architecture
- c. 1 Improve downtown sidewalks or roads
- d. 1 Revitalize the residential areas adjacent to downtown.
- e. 1 Hold festivals and events in downtown
- f. 1 Improve landscaping or play equipment at Phegley Park
- g. 1 Improve landscaping along Main Street
- h. Other (please describe)

people
Install trees, planters, flags, trash cans, benches, etc. to make feel like they are welcomed downtown. Put plaques on buildings that have been restored and on historic buildings.

10. Please share your honest, overall impression of the Village of Morrow.

I see a community with a great deal of promise and a rich history, but without a unified vision for the future. The Mayor has brought the community light years from where they were just a few years ago. Council needs to follow the Mayors lead and be more progressive in terms of promoting the community. Council must get rid of those who do not want to help the community progress, especially the cowardly councilman who spends his time hiding behind an anonymous blog and sending a newaletter full of negative opnlons and misinformation to only a handful of rabble who share his pessimistic view of life. If Morrow wants to succeed, they must have leaders are willing to fight for their community, not spread slanderous lies like a little schoolgirl. Morrow needs to update their planning and zoning code, develop a commerce park for new businesses (office and light industrial), increase their marketing efforts to attract new residents, visitors, investors and businesses.

11. If there is one thing you could change in Morrow that would encourage you to visit or live here, what would it be? Please explain.

Significantly improve the main roads through town (22/3 & 123), such as: gateway entrances that welcome you to town and invite you back as you leave; sidewalks on both sides of the street; crosswalks at intersections; trees along the streets; new utility poles to replace the old, leaning, wooden posts; street lighting that offers a warm, safe glow; put some sort of unique LED lighting on the side of the bike trail bridge facing Pike Street; get rid of all the signs in the right-of-way and offer businesses standard business signage all along 22/3 and 123 (understated elegance v. anything goes); install decorative sign posts and street signs; install a white wooden fence along 22/3 and 123 within the Village limits on both sides; etc.

Thank you for sharing your comments and goals for the community! Your input is invaluable as we develop the 2013 Morrow Comprehensive Plan. Please contact us under the *Submit Comments & Questions* section if you have any additional comments or questions about the Comprehensive Plan or our public outreach methods.