



Picture Plain City

2026 Comprehensive Plan Update

Engagement Summary

August 2025 - March 2026

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Public Engagement

The following methods of community engagement were used throughout the planning process. Input from residents, businesses, and stakeholders built broad support for the plan, offered unique targeted insights, and helped shape a plan that reflects community priorities.



Advisory Committee: Meetings with community representatives to review findings and strategies and ensure that the plan reflects the community's values.



Stakeholder Roundtables: Small group discussions with key community members and organizations to dive deeper into specific issues and opportunities.



Public Meetings: Two in-person community meetings will be held at key points to share updates, gather feedback, and spark conversation.



Online Platform (Social Pinpoint): A dedicated website with interactive tools and updates to make it easy to participate anytime, from anywhere—maximizing reach

A stylized, colorful illustration of a cityscape. In the foreground, there are several buildings in shades of yellow, orange, and red. Behind them, a large, multi-colored rainbow arches over a body of water. The background features rolling hills and more buildings, all rendered in a soft, painterly style. The overall color palette is warm and vibrant, with a mix of yellows, oranges, reds, greens, and blues.

Round 1 Summary

Fall 2025

Round 1 Emerging Themes

Engagement efforts from August to October 2025 revealed important insights from the community, and several recurring themes emerged from this round.



Preserve Agricultural Land

Strong desire to preserve farmland and maintain the village's semi-rural surroundings.



Expand Community Gathering & Recreation

Invest in park improvements and other public spaces, community events, and recreation opportunities.



Improve Connectivity & Mobility

Expand sidewalk coverage to enable safe pedestrian and bicycle travel. Connect Plain City to the greater regional bikeways system.



Manage Housing Development

Opinions toward housing are mixed, but the majority are against significant housing development, particularly multi-family housing.



Grow Local Services & Amenities

Interest in more essential services like a grocery store and pharmacy while keeping the small-town feel.



Protect Natural Assets

Protect the biodiversity of the Big Darby Creek and other natural resources from future development.



Balance Growth with Preservation

Focus on growth and development that enhances livability without compromising Plain City's small town charm.



Build on the Uptown Momentum

Support for mixed-use infill that enhances local retail and dining options while maintaining historic character.

Open House Overview

- + Hosted a community-wide Open House on August 18th to kick-off the Comprehensive Plan update process.
- + The evening began with a presentation on the “moment in time” followed by the activity stations.
- + Three activity stations were set up around the room, each included an interactive activity to gather input and spark ideas:
 - + **Mapping the Future:** Identify areas with opportunities and share why you selected them.
 - + **Picture Plain City:** Choose an image, explain why it resonates, and suggest where it could happen in the village.
 - + **Shaping the Future:** Share your big idea for Plain City’s future.



OPEN HOUSE

Attendees at the
Open House

+65



OPEN HOUSE

Activities Contributions

172

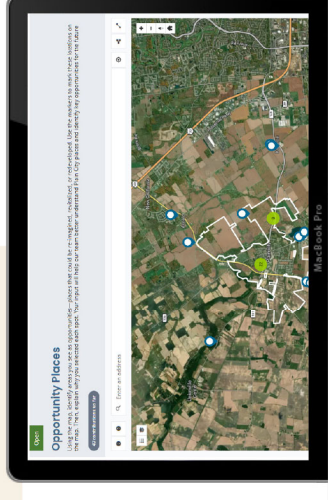
Online Survey Overview

- + Between mid-August and the end of October, Plain City residents had the opportunity to share their input virtually via an online survey and mapping platform.
- + Four survey activities were available to users to gather input and spark ideas:
 - + **Mapping the Future:** Identify areas with opportunities and share why you selected them.
 - + **Picture Plain City:** Choose an image, explain why it resonates, and suggest where it could happen in the village.
 - + **Shaping the Future:** Share your big idea for Plain City's future.
 - + **Exit Questionnaire:** A survey with questions about residents' perceptions of Plain City today and for the future.

ONLINE SURVEY

Unique Participants

124



ONLINE SURVEY

Activities Contributions

215

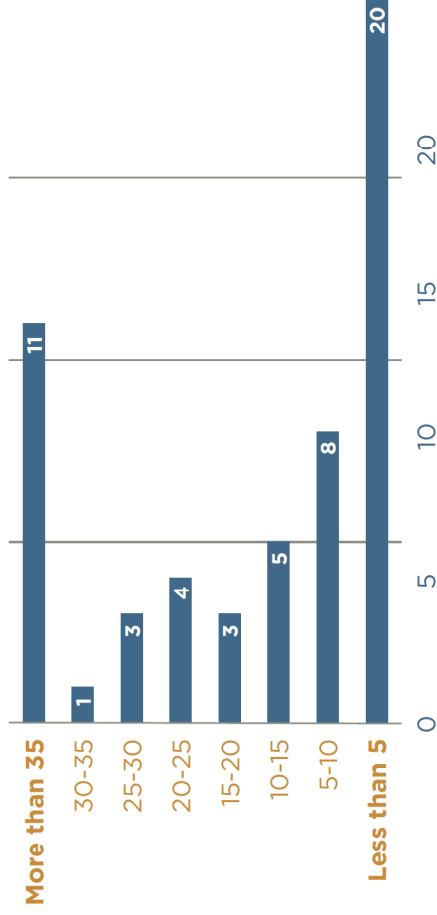
Who We Heard From

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

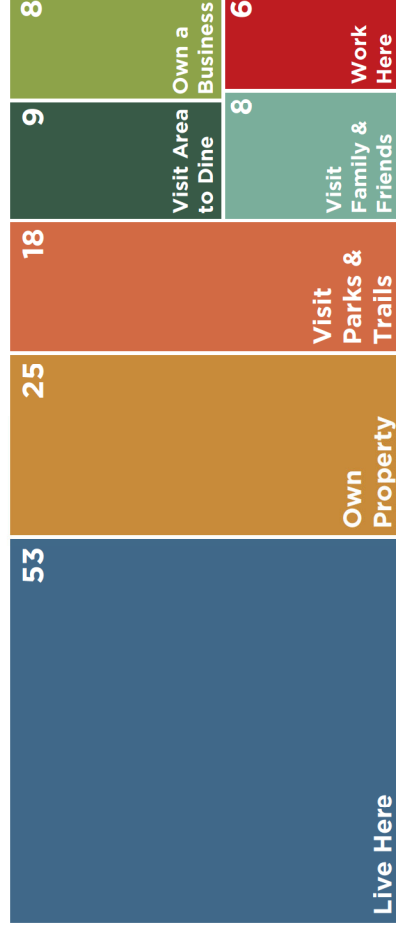
+185

In-Person & Online

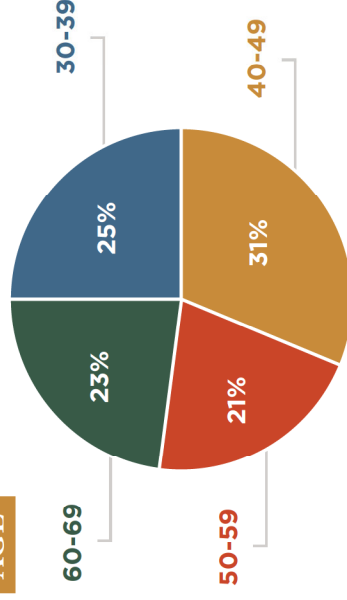
YEARS LIVED IN PLAIN CITY



RELATIONSHIP TO PLAIN CITY



AGE

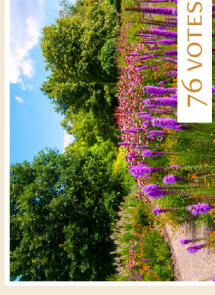
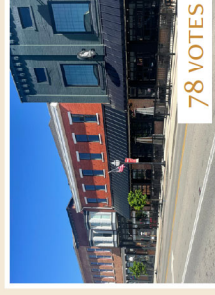
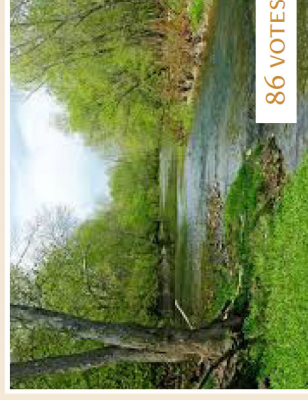
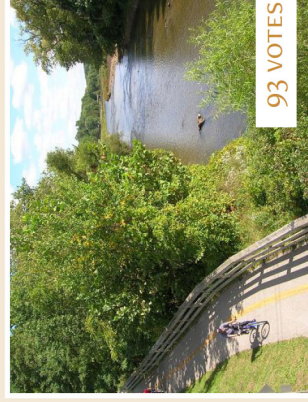


Picture Plain City

- + The **most popular** images depict **outdoor recreation, rural scenery, and small town historic character**
- + When asked why they chose the photos, the top 3 themes among responses were natural assets and green space, walkability, and rural character.

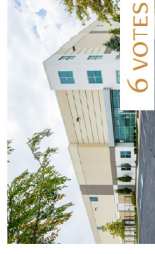
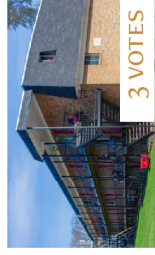
TOP PHOTOS

Which images match your vision for Plain City?



LOWEST RATED PHOTOS

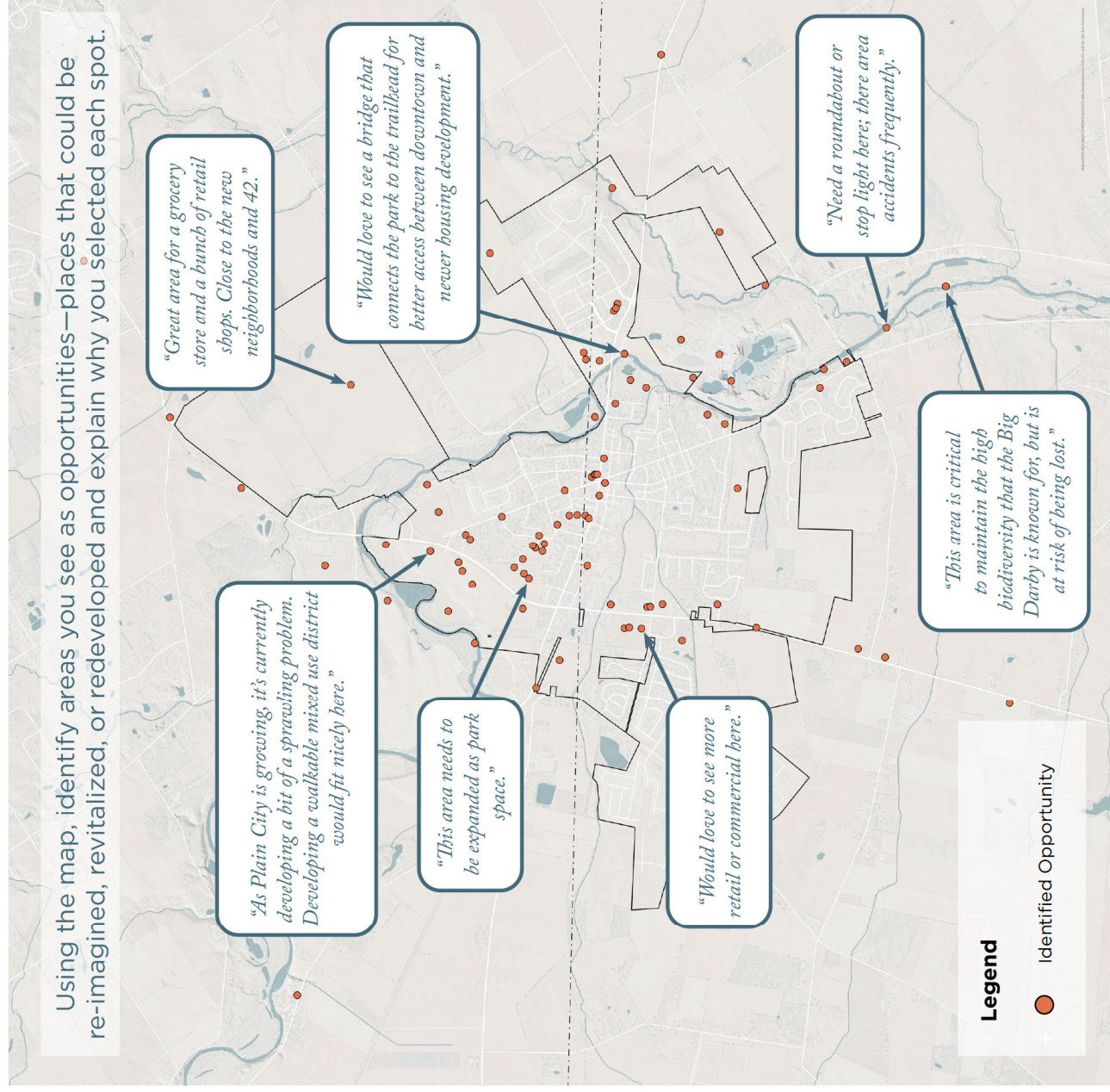
- + The **least popular** images are photos of **modern office buildings and multi-family housing.**



Mapping the Future

Common Opportunity Themes

- + **Parks and Natural Space:** New parks, expansion of existing park and recreation facilities, and protection of surrounding ecosystem.
- + **Thoughtful Growth:** Strategic infill opportunities, new retail and amenities, and farmland preservation.
- + **Connectivity and Mobility:** Shared-use paths, pedestrian bridges, streetscape enhancements that improve safety and accessibility.



Shaping the Future

Write your big idea or hope for Plain City's future on the Vision Wall. Tell us where in the village this idea should happen.

Rural Identity

"Keep Plain City rural and less developed. We don't want density and lots of development, we want a rural, small town feel!"

Retail and Dining

"Walkable shopping district with upscale food options, green spaces to sit/walk about, utilize the Big Darby as an attraction but protect her."

Affordable Housing

"Affordable houses for young adults in single-income households. The only houses under \$300k in Plain City are in trailer parks."

Limited Development

"Strictly limit dense development, including apartments."

Big Darby Conservation

"Value and preserve Big Darby Creek and surrounding watershed, we are making decisions that affect the next century of the creeks life!"

Connectivity

"Improve sidewalks that exist now, and connect to the Heritage Bike Trail."

Community

"Inclusive and welcoming for a growing, diverse community. Walkable, thriving Uptown with small businesses, restaurants, and shopping. More green spaces and parks"

Stakeholder Groups Overview

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

Hosted

9

Focus group sessions on
September 16th & 17th

+ **Business Coffee House**

+ **Public Safety**

- + Chief of Police
- + Fire Chief, Pleasant Valley Fire

+ **Education**

- + Jonathan Alder LSD Superintendent
- + Tolles Career & Tech Center Superintendent

+ **Neighboring Community Leaders**

- + Jerome Township Administrator
- + Darby Township Trustee

+ **Leaders in Plain City**

- + Planning & Zoning Commission
- + Economic Development Committee
- + Plain City Area Development Corporation

+ **Local Property Owners**

+ **Local Developers**

- + Arbor Homes
- + Wilcox Communities
- + McCabe Companies
- + M/I Homes
- + Highland Real Estate

+ **Neighboring Government Leaders**

- + Union Co Economic Development Dept
- + Union County Engineers
- + Mid-Ohio WSD
- + City of Dublin Planners
- + Madison Co Engineers

+ **Environmental, Recreation, & Tourism**

- + Union County Health Dept
- + ODNR/Scenic Rivers
- + Tourism Union County
- + Plain City Area Ball Association

Engagement Round 1: Key Takeaways

The following takeaways highlight what residents value about Plain City and where they see opportunities for growth and improvement. Understanding these priorities will help guide the Comprehensive Plan Update and ensure that the plan reflects the community's long-term vision.

1. Preserve and elevate natural and recreational assets. Residents value the village's natural landscapes, parks, and the Big Darby Creek ecosystem.

+ **Key takeaway:** Prioritize environmental conservation and park investment as a foundation of future land use.

2. Manage growth to protect small town and rural character. Residents expressed concerns about losing Plain City's small town charm to suburban-style sprawl or high-density development.

+ **Key takeaway:** Prioritize context-sensitive infill, protect agricultural land, and reinforce the historic core. Align land use planning and policies with these values.

3. Strengthen connectivity and safety. The village lacks pedestrian and bicycle access between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and Uptown.

+ **Key takeaway:** Develop safety improvements like pedestrian crossings, roundabouts at high-traffic intersections, sidewalks, and trail linkages.

Engagement Round 1: Key Takeaways

4. Support local retail and essential services. Residents want more amenities and conveniences such as a grocery store, pharmacy, and retail without turning the city into a commercial hub.

- + **Key takeaway:** Seek opportunities for neighborhood-scale commercial and mixed-use nodes. Pursue local retail and dining that aligns with village character over large modern developments.

5. Balance housing needs with community values. Many residents oppose large multi-family developments but some are open to limited development of single-family, mixed-use or diverse housing types if they fit the village character and help maintain affordability.

- + **Key takeaway:** Develop a housing strategy that expands options through design-sensitive infill and prioritizes single-family over multi-family.



A stylized, colorful illustration of a cityscape. In the foreground, there are several buildings in shades of blue, green, and yellow. A large, dark green tree stands prominently on the left. The background features a large, light blue sky with soft, white clouds. The overall style is modern and artistic, with a focus on geometric shapes and a vibrant color palette.

Round 2 Summary

Winter 2026

Round 2 Emerging Themes

This round of engagement was built on findings from the first round, and many of the major themes and priorities from Round 1 were reinforced by respondents in Round 2.



Preserve Natural and Agricultural Resources

Let conservation inform land use decisions by prioritizing environmental stewardship, preserving farmland, and maintaining the village's semi-rural surroundings.



Balanced Economic Development in Uptown

Attract more businesses and amenities, with an emphasis on locally oriented businesses and more offerings in Uptown, including grocery stores, restaurants, and small businesses over industrial development.



Invest in Parks, Recreation, and Community Spaces

Invest in expanding parks and recreation amenities, including trails, natural areas, recreation facilities, and community spaces that cater to families and seniors.



Traffic, Infrastructure, and Uptown Functionality

Proactively plan transportation and infrastructure, managing through-traffic, improving safety and speed limits, adding parking in Uptown, and planning for future utility capacity.



Manage Growth Thoughtfully

Plan future growth with intentionality, establishing clear limits and policies to prevent overdevelopment, avoid strain on infrastructure, and maintain Plain City's small-town identity.

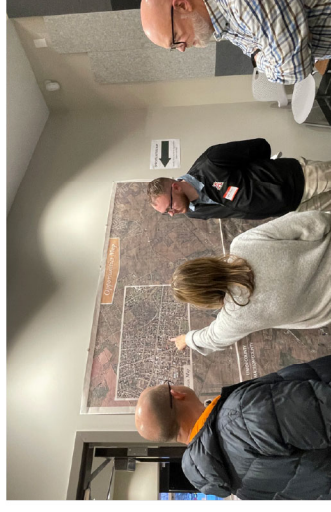


Improve Connectivity & Walkability

Expand sidewalks, trails, and safe crossings along major corridors and between neighborhoods, parks, Uptown, and regional trails.

Open House Overview

- + A community-wide Open House was held on January 28, 2026 to shape emerging draft goals and recommendations.
- + The event followed an open house workshop format, allowing participants to arrive at any time and move through activities at their own pace.
- + Two activity stations were set up around the room to gather input and spark discussion about the future of Plain City:
 - + **Opportunities Map:** Identify locations across the community where they see opportunities for improvement, growth, or investment.
 - + **Building the Path Forward:** Review eight Plan Pillar boards and provide feedback on draft performance indicators and recommendations.



OPEN HOUSE

Activities
Contributions

45



OPEN HOUSE

Attendees at the
Open House

+23

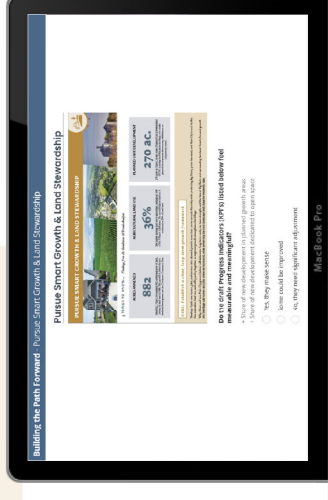
Online Survey Overview

- + Following the open house in January, Plain City residents had the opportunity to share their input virtually via an online survey and mapping platform until early March.
- + Three survey activities were available to users to gather input and spark ideas:
 - + **Opportunities Map:** Identify locations across the community where they see opportunities for improvement, growth, or investment.
 - + **Building the Path Forward:** Review eight Plan Pillar boards and provide feedback on draft performance indicators and recommendations.
 - + **Exit Questionnaire:** A survey to recap the activities and learn more about who is engaging in the Picture Plain City process.

ONLINE SURVEY

Unique Participants

93



ONLINE SURVEY

Activities Contributions

197

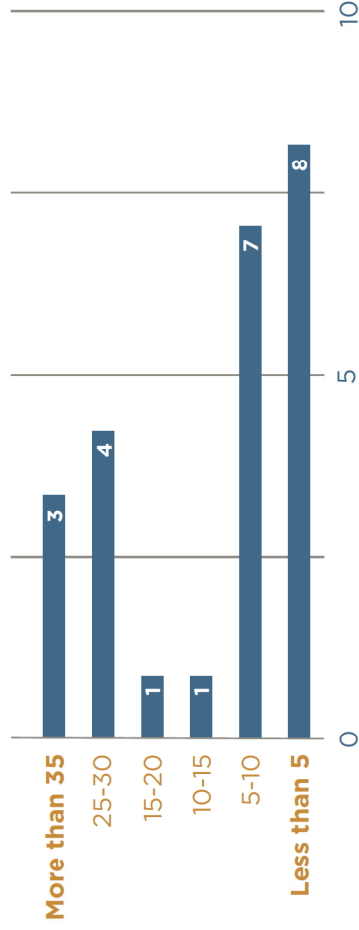
Who We Heard From

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

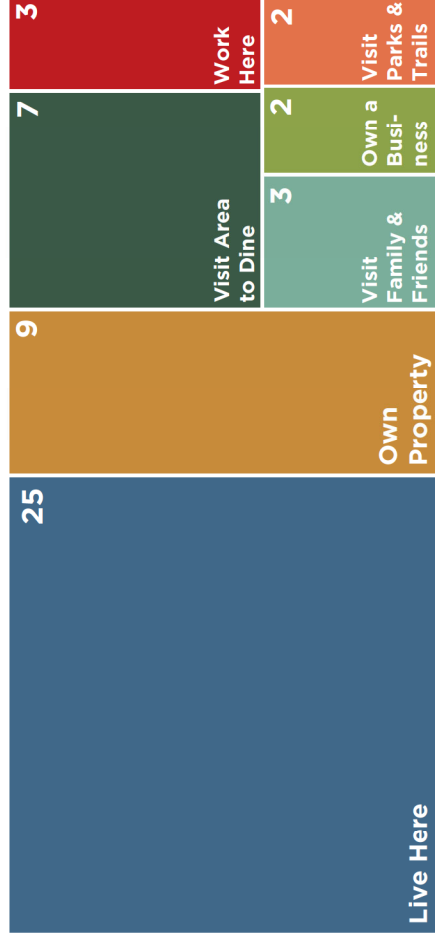
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In-Person & Online

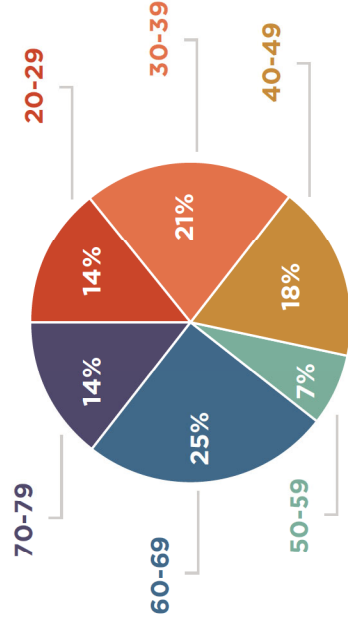
YEARS LIVED IN PLAIN CITY



RELATIONSHIP TO PLAIN CITY



AGE



Building the Path Forward

- + The **most popular** recommendations signal interest in:
 - + **Intentional Growth**
 - + **Environmental Stewardship**
 - + **Maintaining Character**
 - + **Civic Engagement**
 - + **Regional Trail Connectivity**
- + Participants desire **proactive planning** to accommodate expected growth and development that complements the current landscape

MOST POPULAR RECOMMENDATIONS

Highest Number of Votes Overall

1.1 Growth and Conservation Framework & Annexation Map Refresh 33

Determine where and how Plain City should grow over time by aligning annexation priorities with conservation goals to protect rural character.

8.5 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey 32

Collect resident feedback to guide future priorities and investments.

1.4 Big Darby & Farmland Stewardship Toolkit 30

Provide tools, strategies, and policies to protect sensitive natural areas and preserve working farmland.

5.1 Connect the Heritage Trail to Uptown 30

Develop a trail connection within Village boundaries that links to the Heritage Trail to the east.

2.6 Materials and Design Standards 30

Establish standards for building quality, architectural character, and site design to maintain community character.

Number of respondents who said this was a priority

"Protect the Darby, it can bring in outdoor revenue, and minimum 1-acre lots and a farmtown feel."

"Ensure that development is done in a limited, intentional way with a stronger focus on quality than quantity."

"There need to be standards and plans to make Plain City seem less disjointed."

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 57

Building the Path Forward

- + Preferred recommendations in each pillar provide insight into participants' priorities within each topic area
- + Even among the most popular recommendations per pillar, the total number of votes varies from 25 to 33, indicating that **some pillars are of greater concern to residents than others**

Number of respondents who said this was a priority recommendation

MOST POPULAR RECOMMENDATIONS

In Each Pillar

1.1 Growth & Conservation Framework 33

Determine where and how Plain City should grow over time by aligning annexation priorities with conservation goals to protect rural character.

2.6 Materials and Design Standards 30

Establish standards for building quality, architectural character, and site design to maintain community character.

3.3 Local Business & Entrepreneur Program 26

Provide support, incentives, and resources for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

4.5 Trails & Greenway Spine 25

Build a comprehensive trail and greenway network that links neighborhoods, parks, and Uptown.

5.1 Connect the Heritage Trail to Uptown 30

Develop a trail connection within Village boundaries that links to the Heritage Trail to the east.

6.5 Uptown Access & Parking Strategy 27

Balance parking supply and walkability to improve access to Uptown and support businesses and residents.

7.2 Public Safety & Civic Services Capacity Plan 30

Evaluate current service capacity and identify strategies to ensure that service quality keeps pace with anticipated growth.

8.5 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey 32

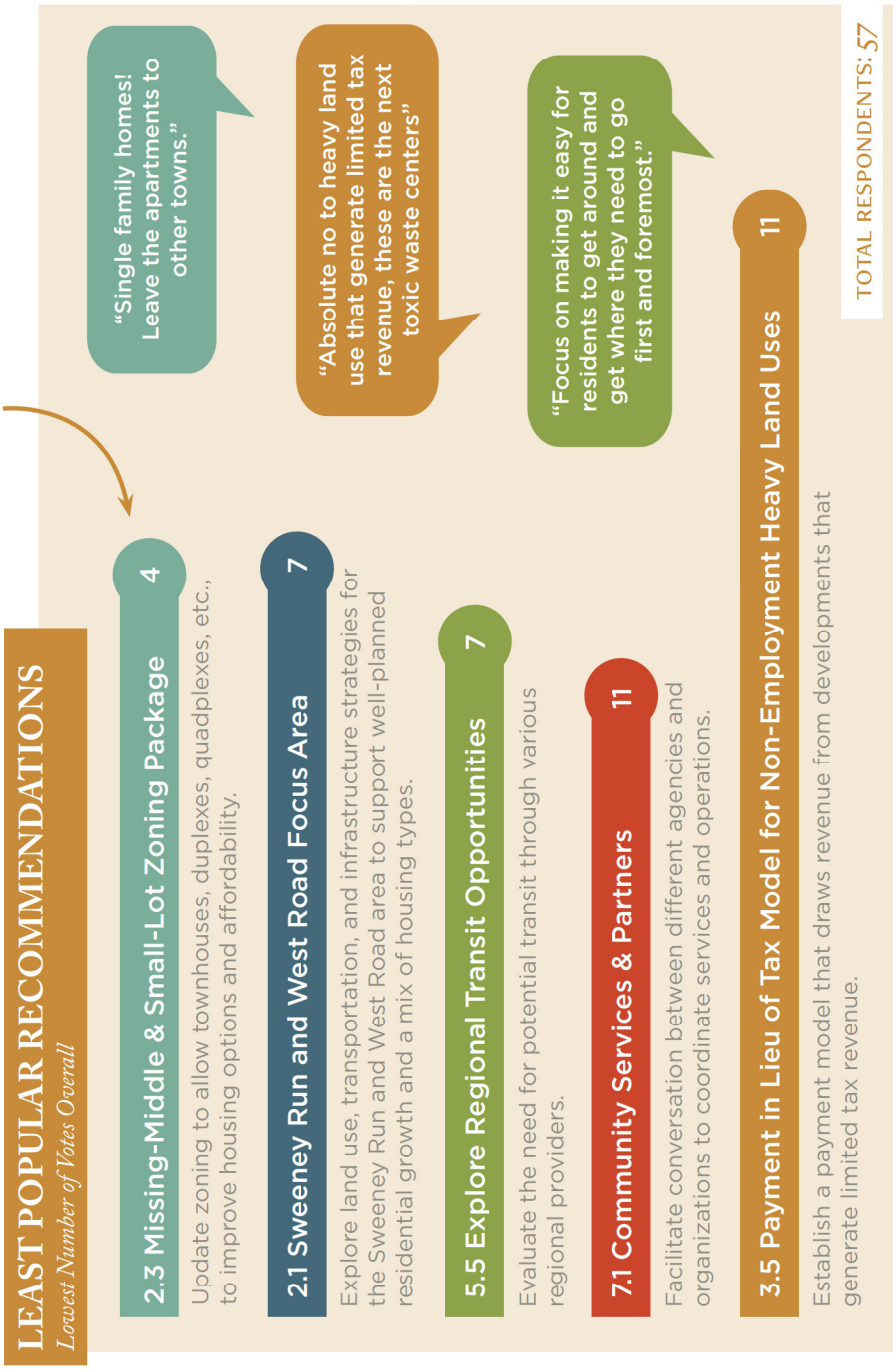
Collect resident feedback to guide future priorities and investments.

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 57

Building the Path Forward

- + The **least popular** recommendations suggest that Plain City residents are hesitant to embrace:
- + **Diversity in housing options**
- + **Public Transportation**
- + Many comments express worries about overburdening utility systems, encroaching on farmland and environmentally sensitive areas, and losing Plain City's small town charm

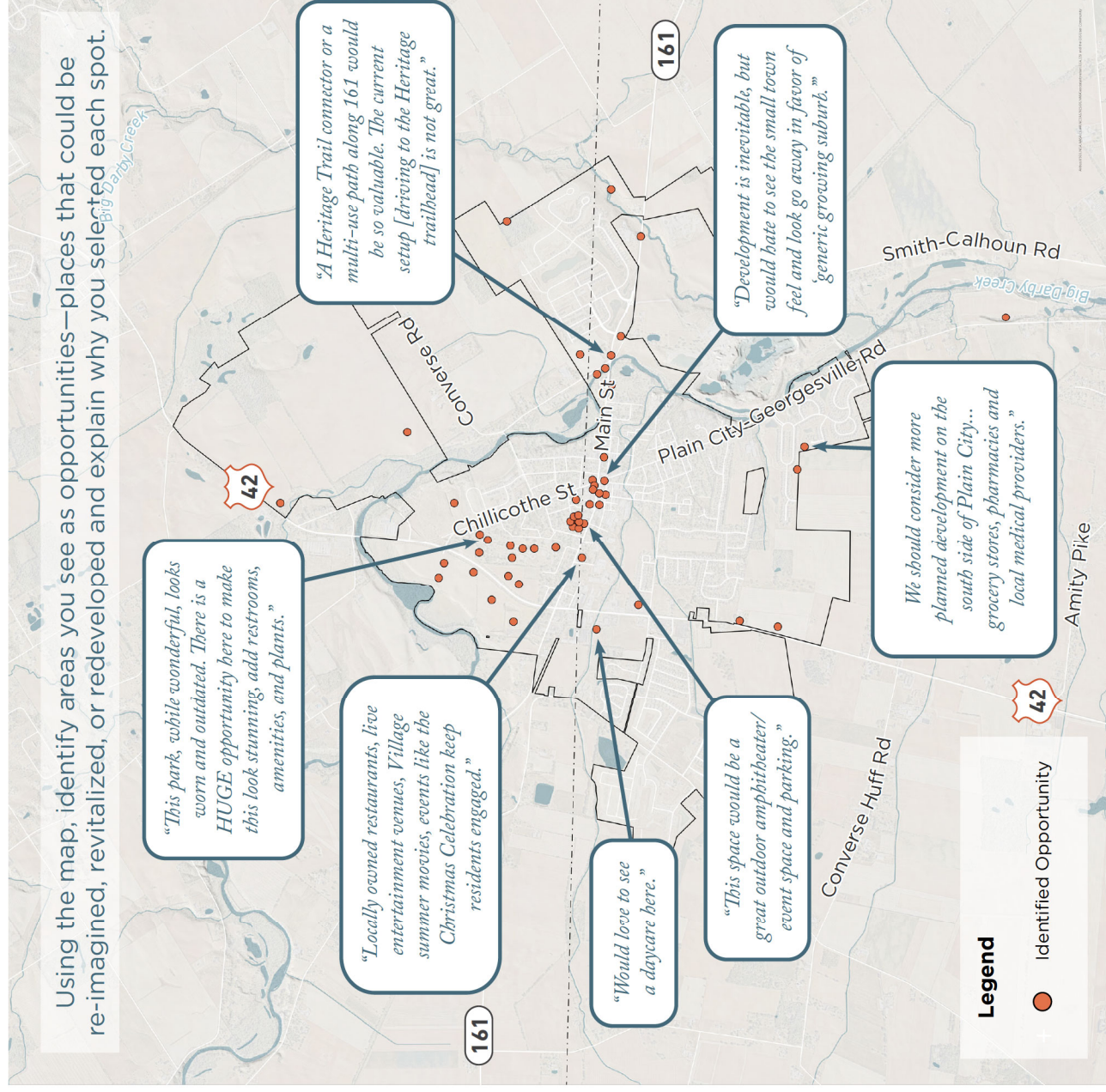
Number of respondents who said this was a priority recommendation



Mapping the Future

Common Opportunity Themes

- + **Parks and Natural Space:** New parks, expansion of existing park and recreation facilities, and protection of surrounding ecosystem.
- + **Thoughtful Growth:** Strategic infill opportunities, new retail and amenities, and farmland preservation.
- + **Connectivity and Mobility:** Shared-use paths, pedestrian bridges, streetscape enhancements that improve safety and accessibility.



Engagement Round 2: Key Takeaways

The following takeaways highlight what residents value about Plain City and where they see opportunities for growth and improvement. Resident's feedback on initial recommendations can ensure that the plan reflects the community's long-term vision.

1. Preserve and elevate natural and recreational assets. Residents value the village's natural landscapes, parks, and the Big Darby Creek ecosystem.

- + **Key takeaway:** Develop strong policies that support environmental conservation and highlight park investment as a foundation of future land use.

2. Manage growth to protect small town and rural character. Residents expressed concerns about losing Plain City's small town charm to suburban-style sprawl or high-density development.

- + **Key takeaway:** Prioritize context-sensitive infill, protect agricultural land, and reinforce the historic core. Align land use planning and policies with these values.

3. Focus on community spaces. Residents appreciate the public spaces and community events that exist, but they want more of these amenities.

- + **Key takeaway:** Invest in projects that bring the community together, take advantage of opportunities to build more public space, and prioritize family-friendly places.

Engagement Round 2: Key Takeaways

4. Support local retail and essential services. Residents want more amenities and conveniences such as a grocery store, pharmacy, and retail without turning the city into a commercial hub.

- + **Key takeaway:** Seek opportunities for neighborhood-scale commercial and mixed-use nodes. Pursue local retail and dining that aligns with village character over large modern developments.

5. Balance housing needs with community values. Many residents oppose large multi-family developments but some are open to limited development of single-family, mixed-use or diverse housing types if they fit the village character and help maintain affordability.

- + **Key takeaway:** Develop a housing strategy that expands options through design-sensitive infill and prioritizes single-family over multi-family.

5. Continue to engage with residents beyond the planning process.

Residents are eager to partake in planning processes and value feeling heard.

- + **Key takeaway:** Create more outlets for civic engagement and let residents in on the “why” when making development decisions.



Strategic Insights

- + **Plain City has the opportunity to chart its own, unique pathway.**
- + Balancing growth with Plain City's identity is a shared priority.
- + Public safety remains a community strength.
- + Growth brings opportunities to plan ahead.
- + **Partnerships are key to long-term success.**
- + Clear policies and consistent administration create confidence for investment.
- + Housing options will need to evolve with the community.



- + Quality of life depends on connections and gathering places.
- + More amenities enhance daily life and attract new residents.
- + Marketing, awareness, and involvement strengthen community connection.
- + **Fiscal opportunities and challenges require thoughtful management.**
- + Planning for demographic and cultural shifts is essential.



A stylized, colorful illustration of a town nestled in a valley. The town features various buildings in shades of yellow, orange, and red, with green roofs. A winding river flows through the center of the town. The surrounding landscape is filled with dense green foliage and trees. The sky is a mix of teal and yellow. The entire scene is framed by a light beige border.

Picture Plain City

2026 Comprehensive Plan Update