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ROCKY RIVER MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC MEETING 1 RESULTS REPORT



May 26, 2017



County Planning

Cuyahoga County Planning Commission

2079 East 9th Street
Suite 5-300
Cleveland, OH 44115

216.443.3700
www.CountyPlanning.us
www.facebook.com/CountyPlanning
www.twitter.com/CountyPlanning

About County Planning

The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission's mission is to inform and provide services in support of the short and long term comprehensive planning, quality of life, environment, and economic development of Cuyahoga County and its cities, villages and townships.

Planning Team

Alison Ball, *Planner*
Glenn Coyne, FAICP, *Executive Director*
Patrick Hewitt, AICP, *Senior Planner*
Nichole Laird, *Planner*
Dan Meaney, GISP, *Manager, Information and Research*
James Sonnhalter, *Manager, Planning Services*
Robin Watkins, *Geographic Information Systems Specialist*

Interns

Natalie Finn, *Planning Intern*
Olivia Helander, *Planning Intern*
Charles Hogan, *Planning Intern*
Kayla Kellar, *Planning Intern*
Patrick McMahon, *Planning Intern*
Amelia Visnauskas, *Planning Intern*

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City of Rocky River

Pamela E. Bobst, Mayor
21012 Hilliard Boulevard
Rocky River, Ohio 44116

440.331.0600
www.RRCity.com

2016 City Council Members

Thomas J. Hunt, *President Pro tem, Ward 1 Councilmember*
James W. Moran, *President, Ward 2 Councilmember*
Michael P. O'Donnell, *Ward 3 Councilmember*
John B. Shepherd, *Ward 4 Councilmember*

David W. Furry, *At-Large Councilmember*
Brian J. Sindelar, *At-Large Councilmember*
Christopher J. Klym, *At-Large Councilmember*

Project Team

Pam Bobst, *Mayor*
Andy Bemer, *Law Director*
Bill Bishop, *Planning Commission*
Jill Brandt, *Design and Construction Board of Review*

Mary Kay Costello, *Director of Public Safety Service*
Ray Reich, *Building Commissioner*
Kate Straub, *Secretary to Boards & Commissions*
Christopher Wolf, *Board of Zoning and Building Appeals*

Working Group

Dan Bogre
Bill Brink
Scott Cowan
Jenny Deiringer
Mike Fruchey
Sam Gifford
Jim Gross

Gloria Hardington
Liz Harmath
John Hosek
Chris Klym
Liz Manning
Jamie Mason
Gregg Mylett

Ron Papajcik
Geof Pelaia
Jim Riedl
Joe Roszak
Mick Shoaf
Anna-Katrin Strauss
Jon Voight

INTRODUCTION

PUBLIC MEETING

The first Public Meeting for the Rocky River Master Plan was held on April 19, 2017, at the Memorial Hall. Approximately 120 residents, business owners, and public officials were in attendance.

During the Public Meeting, representatives from County Planning gave a presentation on Current Conditions in the City, and outlined a potential vision for the future in various focus areas and citywide. At the end of the presentation, County Planning asked the attendees for their comments and feedback about goal statements as they related to the five Focus Areas and Citywide. To gather feedback, individual boards featuring Citywide and Focus Area goals, along with pictures of potential development types for each Focus Area, were positioned around the room.

Equipped with dots, sticky notes, pens, and pencils, attendees were asked to leave comments and feedback about the goal statements as they related to the five Focus Areas and Citywide goals and to cast a vote for which development types they preferred for each Focus Area.

Following the Public Meeting, materials were posted online to allow additional residents to read the materials, comment on them, and provide feedback. The survey was open from April 19 to April 30, 2017.

This Results Report outlines the common themes derived from the Public Meeting comments for each of the Focus Areas and the Citywide goals.

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AND COMMENTS

The first Public Meeting was attended by over 120 residents, and these attendees submitted approximately 150 written comments and hundreds of dots on the boards at the meeting. The online survey was taken by 160 people and included more than 650 individual comments.

COMMON THEMES

Respondents' individual comments were categorized by theme and preferred development type. The number of comments in each category was summed to understand common trends among the comments. These themes are described for each Focus Area and Citywide goals.

STRUCTURE OF DOCUMENT

This document is organized by Focus Area and Citywide goals. Each Focus Area includes the initial vision statement, the number of dots placed on boards at the meeting and online votes cast by attendees and respondents for each preferred development type, and themes that were gleaned from the comments.

NEXT STEPS

This document, as well as the specific comments provided by respondents, will be used to update the vision statements and goals, and to guide policy development. The most common topics will help inform the analysis, priorities, and recommendations in the upcoming Master Plan document.

DOWNTOWN RIVER

Respondents were asked to comment about corridor goals specific to a Focus Area. The Downtown River Corridor Goals were as follows:

- **Expand the vibrancy of Old Detroit** further west along Detroit Road by enhancing small retail offerings.
- **Develop seating areas or pocket parks** outside of existing pocket parks along Old Detroit.
- **Provide new residential and office uses** as a way to support retail by growing the number of potential shoppers.
- **Improve walking and biking links** into nearby neighborhoods, the Metroparks, Lakewood, and regional trails
- **Improve existing crosswalks** and add additional ones at targeted intersections to enhance pedestrian safety
- Implement streetscape and road recommendations from previous plans, including **removing the Marion Ramp**
- **Maintain Downtown's strong walkability** by limiting new driveways, creating shared parking options, and keeping wide sidewalks
- Continue to cultivate the sense of place through **gateway signs, decorative street signs, banners, and lighting**
- **Ensure that parking is available** to support Downtown amenities

COMMON THEMES

The common themes for this Focus Area included senior housing, parking issues, City aesthetics, pedestrian and biking paths, and the Marion Ramp.

Respondents noted that **senior housing** is a necessity that is not being accommodated by the current stock. Respondents wanted to see smaller, one-story options for seniors since many senior residents do not want to move out of Rocky River.

In terms of **parking**, the comments were equal between respondents saying, "Parking is not needed" to "Add underground parking or multi-level parking." However, the respondents identified a need for ADA-accessible parking in public parking areas in Downtown River.

Respondents wrote that the **aesthetics** of Downtown River could improve if overhead utilities were reinstalled underground.

Respondents commented that **pedestrian and biking paths** are needed in the Downtown River area; however, a few respondents felt that due to the condition of the roads, adding the paths and trails would narrow the width of roadways for vehicles and increase the likelihood of accidents for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Respondents also had concerns or questions about how the removal of the **Marion Ramp** would affect traffic flow into and out of the City, how increased automobile traffic would affect the surrounding residential streets or, as an alternative, how the Marion Ramp could be reused in the future.

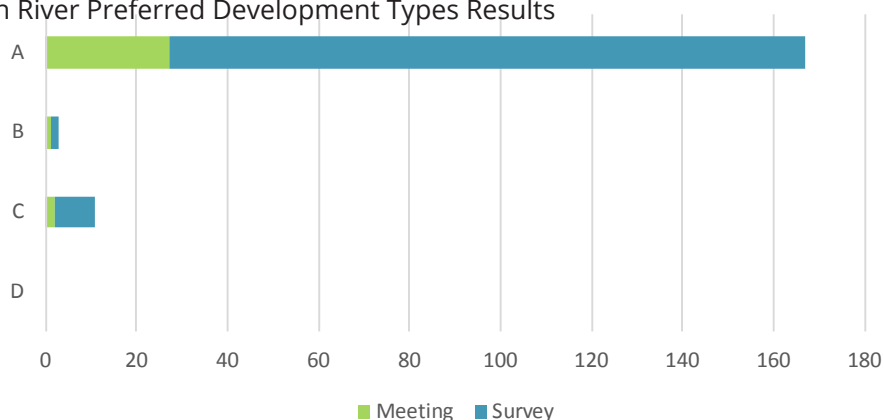
PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Respondents were presented with four images that represented different potential development types for the Downtown River corridor. Next, respondents were asked to look at development types for scale, materials, parking, walkability, and design and make a selection to which one they would prefer if development were proposed for that area.



Figure 1

Downtown River Preferred Development Types Results



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

As shown in Figure 1, a majority of respondents selected Development Type “A” for the Downtown River focus area.

Respondents noted that they preferred Downtown River to retain its small town charm with local businesses and stay away from big chain stores with a “cookie-cutter” appearance.

DETROIT ROAD

Respondents were asked to comment about corridor goals specific to a Focus Area. The Detroit Road Corridor Goals were as follows:

- Provide **additional recreational amenities** or passive open spaces to green the corridor and provide park space
- Support **improved residential** offerings and renovations or structures on the North side of Detroit Road
- **Improve walking and biking links** into nearby neighborhoods, Downtown River, the Municipal Center, and regional trails
- **Improve existing crosswalks** to enhance pedestrian safety
- Continue to cultivate the sense of place through **decorative street signs, banners, and lighting**
- Develop a **gateway at the I-90 interchange** that includes directional signage, lighting, and the City logo
- **Add street trees** to “green” the corridor

COMMON THEMES

The common themes revolved around traffic flow on Detroit Road, City aesthetics, pedestrian and biking paths, and City signage.

The **traffic flow** on Detroit Road was a concern. Many respondents were concerned about traffic speeds on Detroit Road as well as traffic flows coming on and off the I-90 ramps on Detroit Road. Respondents would like to implement traffic calming measures in order to improve safety along the road.

Respondents wrote that the **aesthetics** of Detroit Road could improve if overhead utilities were relocated underground. They also noted that they would like to see more trees and green spaces, as these features would add to the existing historical charm of Rocky River.

Respondents commented that **pedestrian and biking paths** are needed along Detroit Road, however, a few respondents felt that adding the paths and trails would narrow roadways and increase the likelihood of accidents for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.

For the topic of **City signage**, respondents stated that they would like signage for the I-90 on and off ramps on Detroit Road, however, most respondents felt overall, Detroit Road didn’t need additional signage or banners.

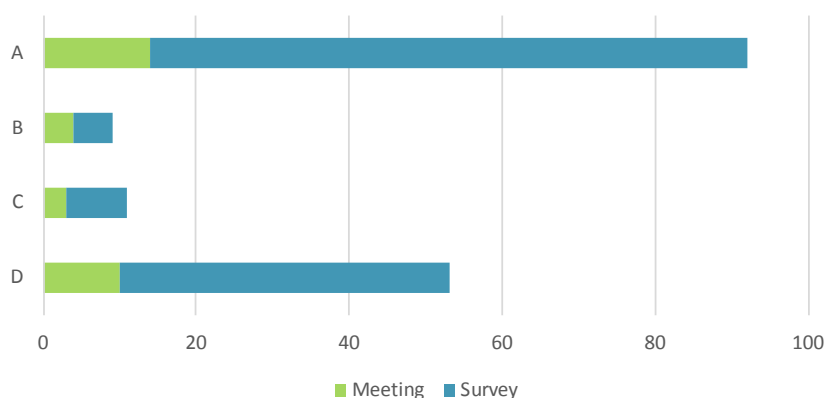
PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Respondents were presented with four images that represented different potential development types for the Detroit Road corridor. Next, respondents were asked to look at development types

for scale, materials, parking, walkability, and design and make a selection to which one they would prefer if development were proposed for that area.



Figure 2
Detroit Road Preferred Development Types Results



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

A majority of respondents selected Development Type “A” for the Detroit Road focus area, as displayed in Figure 2.

Respondents commented they like front porches because they represent variety, while still keeping with Rocky River’s charming community aesthetic. Other common themes included development types that could offer affordable housing options and that were not necessarily townhomes. These options would include one-story residential with a first floor master suite. This would allow seniors and “empty-nesters” the opportunity to transition out of their larger homes and still remain in Rocky River.

CENTER RIDGE ROAD

Respondents were asked to comment about corridor goals specific to a Focus Area. The Center Ridge Road Corridor Goals were as follows:

- **Cultivate nodes of activity along the corridor** through placemaking efforts – events, outdoor spaces, and vibrant storefronts
- **Enhance the overall appearance of the district** through design standards that improve building appearance
- Work with the City of Fairview Park to implement a **cohesive retailing strategy**
- Develop a **walkable shopping and residential district** at the eastern edge of the corridor
- Support **retail and housing uses near the Westgate Transit Center** to support transit use
- **Improve walking and biking links** into nearby neighborhoods, Downtown River, the Metroparks, and regional trails
- **Implement existing streetscape plans** that reduce the number of driveways and add landscaping
- **Improve existing crosswalks** and add additional ones to enhance pedestrian safety
- Ensure safe sidewalks that **provide access from the street to the entrances of setback commercial buildings**
- Continue to cultivate the sense of place through **gateway signs, decorative street signs, banners, and lighting**
- **Add planted medians and street trees** where possible to develop a greener corridor

COMMON THEMES

The common themes revolved around condition of roads, City aesthetics, and pedestrian and biking paths.

The **condition of the roads** in Rocky River were a concern – with Center Ridge Road being the highest priority for repair. Respondents felt that the condition of Center Ridge Road, along with the numerous driveways and curb cuts, give the City a negative reputation.

Respondents wrote that the **aesthetics** of Center Ridge Road could improve if overhead utilities were relocated underground and if more greenspaces were created to soften the appearance of the area. However, respondents commented that planted medians could contribute to the already dense traffic flow along Center Ridge Road.

Respondents commented that **pedestrian and biking paths** are needed to create a more walkable corridor; however, a few respondents felt that adding a bike path would increase the already dense traffic flow on Center Ridge Road and increase the likelihood of accidents for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.

PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPES

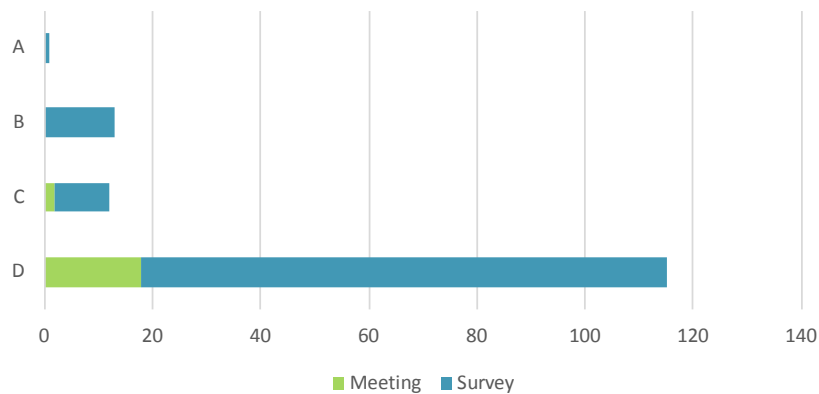
Respondents were presented with four images that represented different potential development types for the Center Ridge Road corridor. Next, respondents were asked to look at development types for scale, materials, parking, walkability, and design and make a selection to which one they would prefer if development were proposed for that area.

West of Wagar/South of Center Ridge



Figure 3

Center Ridge Road Preferred Development Types Results - West of Wagar/South of Center Ridge



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

Most respondents selected Development Type “D” for Center Ridge Road, west of Wagar Road, as shown in Figure 3.

Most respondents felt that Center Ridge Road needed more landscaping, green space, and mixed use development.

East of Wagar/North of Center Ridge

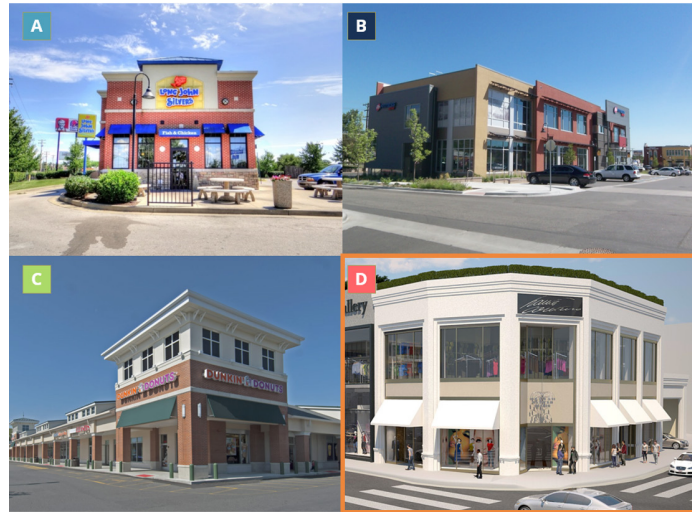
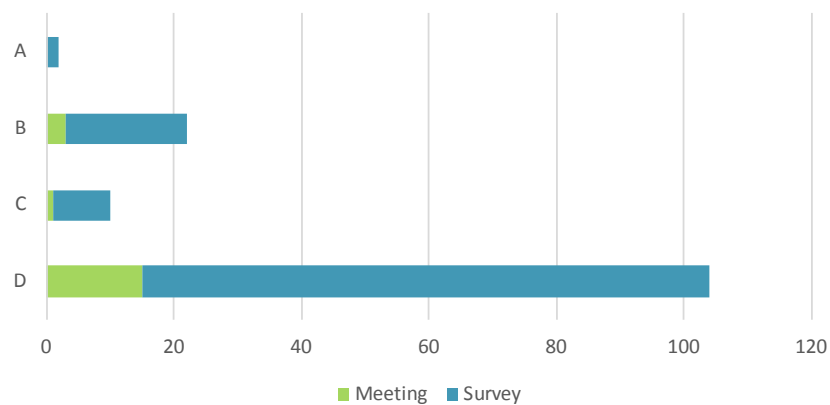


Figure 4

Center Ridge Road Preferred Development Types Results - East of Wagar/North of Center Ridge



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

Most respondents selected Development Type “D” for Center Ridge Road, east of Wagar Road, as displayed in Figure 4.

Respondents would like to see development geared toward more local businesses and less towards chain or big box stores. This would allow businesses to be located at the street and create more parking in the back of stores. The respondents noted that they would like to see future development not be “cookie-cutter,” but have a continuity and uniformity in design.

HILLIARD BOULEVARD

Respondents were asked to comment about corridor goals specific to a Focus Area. The Hilliard Boulevard Corridor Goals were as follows:

- **Encourage benches and outdoor patios** near the commercial district at the intersection of Wooster and Hilliard
- **Support new construction in the business district that is walkable** – front doors, windows, parking to the side or rear
- Support renovations or new **residential construction that takes advantage of views** into the River Valley
- **Improve walking and biking links** into nearby neighborhoods, Downtown River, the Metroparks, and regional trails
- **Improve existing crosswalks**, and add additional ones at targeted intersections, to enhance pedestrian safety
- Continue to cultivate the sense of place through **gateway signs, decorative street signs, banners, and lighting**
- **Improve access and sight lines into the Rocky River** and the Cleveland Metroparks through paths and overlooks
- **Enhance and expand existing medians** to develop a greener corridor

COMMON THEMES

The common themes revolved around access to the Rocky River Reservation of the Metroparks, condition of roads, City aesthetics, and pedestrian and biking paths.

Respondents noted that **access to the Rocky River Reservation of the Cleveland Metroparks** is desired.

The **condition of the roads** along Hilliard Boulevard was a concern as respondents commented that the road is in need of repair. Overall, respondents felt that the condition of the streets give the City a negative reputation.

Respondents wrote that the **aesthetics** of Hilliard Boulevard could improve if there were landscaping and more greenspace along the I-90 corridor. Additionally, respondents noted that they like the idea of benches and outdoor patios in the commercial district.

Respondents commented that **pedestrian and biking paths** are needed along Hilliard Boulevard for easier access into and out of Rocky River and to existing paths and trails to surrounding cities.

PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Respondents were presented with four images that represented different potential development types for the Hilliard Boulevard corridor. Next, respondents were asked to look at development types for scale, materials, parking, walkability, and design and make a selection to which one they would prefer if development were proposed for that area.

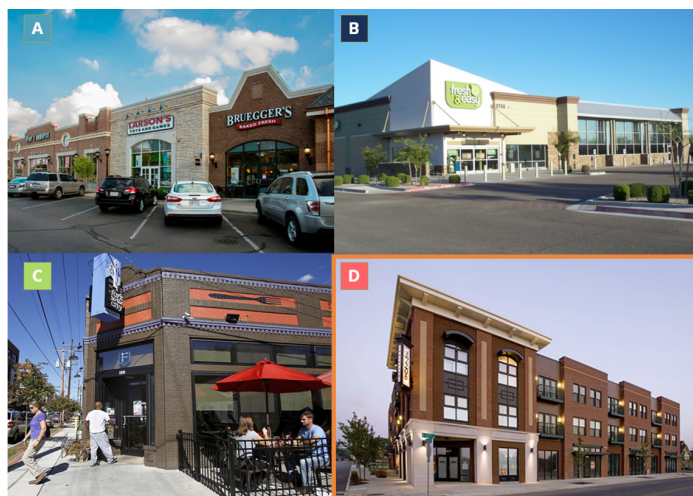
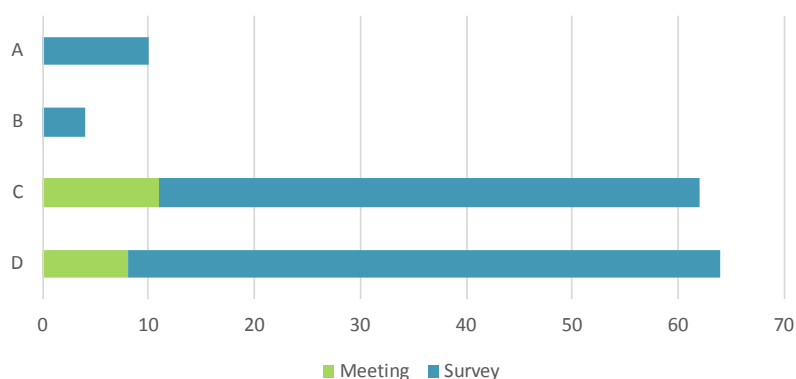


Figure 5
Hilliard Boulevard Preferred Development Types Results



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

Figure 5 shows that respondents were almost evenly split between Development Type “C” and Development Type “D” with development Type “D” receiving more votes than Type “C.”

Respondents commented that they would like to see Hilliard Boulevard remain residential. However, respondents noted that Hilliard at Wooster would benefit from outdoor patios, as this would add vibrancy to this particular access point to the Metroparks.

WOOSTER ROAD

Respondents were asked to comment about corridor goals specific to a Focus Area. The Wooster Road Corridor Goals were as follows:

- **Develop seating areas or pocket parks** at overlooks at the Rocky River Reservation
- **Support new construction in the business district that is walkable** – front doors, windows, parking to the side or rear
- Support renovations or new **residential construction that takes advantage of views** into the River Valley
- **Improving walking and biking links** into nearby neighborhoods, Downtown River, Cleveland Metroparks, and regional trails
- **Improve existing crosswalks** and add additional ones to enhance pedestrian safety
- Continue to cultivate the sense of place through **gateway signs, decorative street signs, banners, and lighting**
- **Add street trees** where possible

COMMON THEMES

The common themes revolved around access to views into the River Valley and the Rocky River Reservation of the Metroparks, and City aesthetics.

Respondents noted that **access to views into the River Valley and the Rocky River Reservation of the Metroparks** were the most important themes for this Focus Area. Respondents felt that having places along Wooster Road with views into the River Valley would be beneficial to the overall appearance of Wooster Road.

Respondents wrote that the **aesthetics** of Wooster Road could improve if buildings were renovated.

PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPES

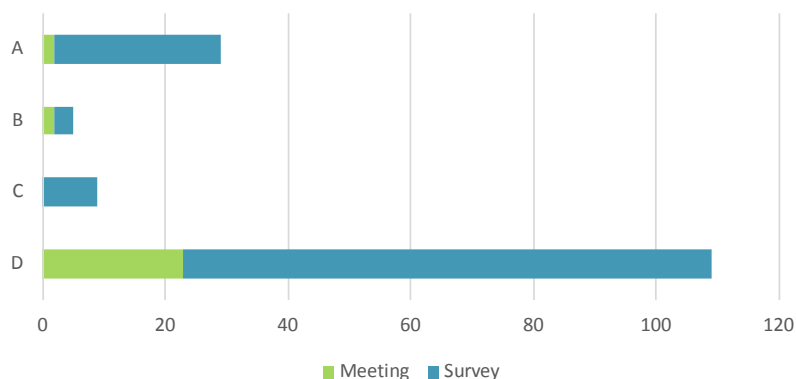
Respondents were presented with four images that represented different potential development types for the Wooster Road corridor. Next, respondents were asked to look at the developments for scale, materials, parking, walkability, and design and make a selection to which one they would prefer if development were proposed for that area.

Residential



Figure 6

Wooster Road Preferred Development Types Results- Residential



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

As shown in Figure 6, respondents selected Development Type "D" for Wooster Road Residential.

Even though most respondents commented that multi-story housing works best for optimal views into the River Valley, this type of housing is not beneficial for diverse housing options along Wooster Road. Respondents also commented that they would like to see the City maintain affordable housing in Rocky River.

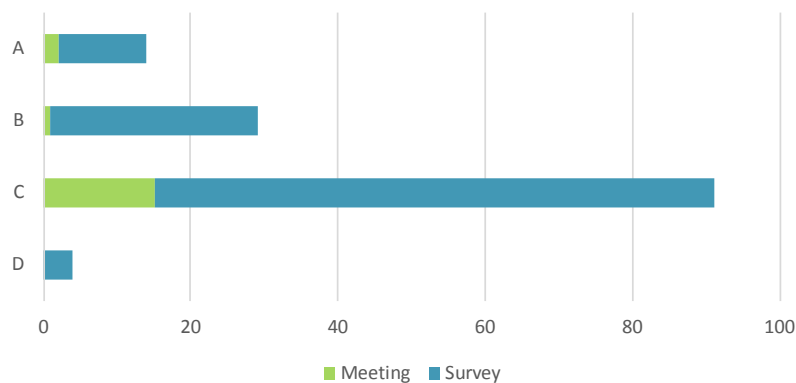
PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Commercial Node at Shoreland Avenue



Figure 7

Wooster Road Preferred Development Types Results- Commercial Node at Shoreland Avenue



PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT TYPE COMMON THEMES

Most respondents selected Development Type "C" for Wooster Road – Commercial Node at Shoreland Avenue, as presented in Figure 7.

The comments for this Development Type varied between "None of the options" to "Keep this area small and local," in order to retain the neighborhood feel of the area.

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CITYWIDE GOALS

The respondents were asked to review the Citywide visions and make comments relating to a specific vision. Below are the common themes from each of the Citywide visions.

ENHANCING DOWNTOWN RIVER – IMPROVING THE TOWN CENTER

Rocky River now has a thriving town center in Downtown River. This goal aims to expand the vibrancy of Downtown by adding new residential, office, and retail uses that enhance a strong, walkable town center.

Respondents commented that any future development should not contain any chain stores but remain local businesses that utilize mixed-use buildings with residential on upper floors.

Another common theme was the need for more greenspace, trees, and plants in the Downtown Area.

Finally, respondents stated that the area needed a reduction in traffic volumes in order to add bike paths and safer walking paths.

QUALITY HOUSING – MAINTAINING HIGH RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

Homes in Rocky River are attractive and well-maintained. This goal aims to maintain those strong standards by encouraging home upkeep and maintenance to ensure neighborhoods remain their strong quality long into the future.

Respondents overwhelmingly felt that property maintenance is very important in retaining the high standards of Rocky River. Respondents felt that the best ways to achieve this included rehabilitation of outdated residences, penalties or fines as a way to enforce home maintenance, and better code enforcement of properties throughout the City.

HOUSING DIVERSITY – ACCOMMODATING A BROAD RANGE OF LIFESTYLES

Housing diversity means having a range of housing types such as traditional single-family homes, accessible housing options, apartments, townhouses, or condominiums. This goal aims to ensure that Rocky River maintains its diverse housing stock so all people--young professionals, seniors, large families--can find the type of housing they desire in Rocky River.

Common themes included maintaining the styles of existing buildings in new developments and to implement universal design for new construction to accommodate residents that desire one story homes with a first floor master suite.

COMMERCIAL VIBRANCY – REINVESTING IN BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Outside of the City's Downtown, other business districts range from brand new shopping centers to older commercial buildings. This goal aims to encourage upkeep of and reinvestment in commercial shopping centers.

In order to create commercial vibrancy outside of Downtown River, respondents wrote that reinvestment in existing spaces and redevelopment of vacant spaces are the best ways to achieve this goal, along with retaining local businesses around the City and moving away from chain stores.

PARKS & PUBLIC SPACE – ENHANCING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Rocky River's parks range from lakefront open spaces to smaller neighborhood parks. This goal aims to ensure parks have the features residents would like and are accessible to the public.

Overall, respondents felt that the City has great parks. Respondents noted that there needs to be a focus on updating existing park amenities such as restrooms and water fountains. However, respondents wrote they do not want the parks to be overdeveloped. Additionally, respondents expressed a need for additional parking at Rocky River Park.

PARKING SOLUTIONS – DEALING WITH THE AUTOMOBILE

Parking should not be a detriment to shopping in Downtown River and in the City's business districts. This goal aims to ensure parking is available for residents and visitors while ensuring large parking lots do not detract from the walkability of business districts.

Respondents had different thoughts on parking solutions in Downtown River and in the City's business districts. The most common theme was that ADA parking was needed. Respondents desired centralized parking areas with walkways to businesses, a multi-level parking garage, or eliminating the need for additional parking lots by creating safer pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS – CREATING GREAT STREETS

Rocky River invests heavily in maintenance of its streets and infrastructure. This goal aims to ensure those investments are well-coordinated, advertised to residents, and include features such as street trees, lighting, and pedestrian and bike infrastructure to maximize those investments.

The most common theme regarding infrastructure improvements was the condition of the City's streets and roads. Respondents noted that street repair and maintenance were important. They also commented that controlling speed and traffic flow was important as well. Respondents were split about additional lighting, bike lanes, and trees.

CONNECTIVITY – CREATING A COHESIVE ENVIRONMENT

Transportation via bicycle, walking, automobiles, and transit are important to residents. This goal aims to develop a coherent network of trails, sidewalks, and roads that get residents around Rocky River safely and comfortably.

A majority of respondents wrote that Center Ridge Road was a priority for safety improvements.

Respondents wrote that they would like to see safer walkways, crosswalks, and bikeways around the City, and specifically around the schools. Additionally, respondents commented they would like stronger bike lane connections into surrounding cities.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY – COMMUNICATING A SPIRIT OF ROCKY RIVER

Rocky River has a strong sense of identity and pride. This goal aims to ensure that physical layout of the City's streetscapes include landscaping, gateway signs, and other features that convey that strong sense of pride to others.

Respondents agreed that community identity helps to communicate the spirit of Rocky River. They also wrote that they City needed improved gateways to and from Rocky River, and appealing streetscapes through the City.

ENGAGEMENT – CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER

Engaging neighbors and City government is an important way of connecting with the community. This goal outlines a desire to improve communication between City Hall and residents, as well as providing the events and spaces that encourage residents to connect with each other.

Respondents wrote that the City should have a stronger social media presence and could make the website more informative and user-friendly.

FINAL THOUGHTS - HOW TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS

Lastly, respondents were asked to give any final thoughts on how to achieve these goals. Below are the common themes from those comments.

Overall themes included the Marion Ramp, communication with and input from residents, and maintenance of streets and roads.

Respondents expressed their concerns about how the potential removal of the Marion Ramp would influence traffic in and out of the City, and the effect that removal would have on surrounding residential streets.

Respondents, also commented that they would like the City to continue with its communication efforts with residents, and encourage residents to provide their input on matters concerning their neighborhoods and the City.

Finally, respondents wrote about how it is important for the City to focus on the repair and maintenance of streets and roads, since deteriorated streets could have a negative impact on the City's reputation.

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