

# CENTERBURG, OHIO VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

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APRIL 17, 2020

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

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KNOX COUNTY VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLANS  
CENTERBURG | DANVILLE | FREDERICKTOWN | GAMBIER

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

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

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

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

## PRIORITY STRATEGIES TO GUIDE THE FUTURE OF CENTERBURG:

### Land Use & Development:

Update the zoning code to promote desired development patterns.



### Housing & Neighborhoods:

Diversify the housing stock.



### Mobility & Infrastructure:

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



### Parks & Recreation:

Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.



### Community Image & Brand:

Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.



CHAPTER 01

# PLAN OVERVIEW



Circle 1920



# WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

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

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

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

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

## WHY PLAN?

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

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

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

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

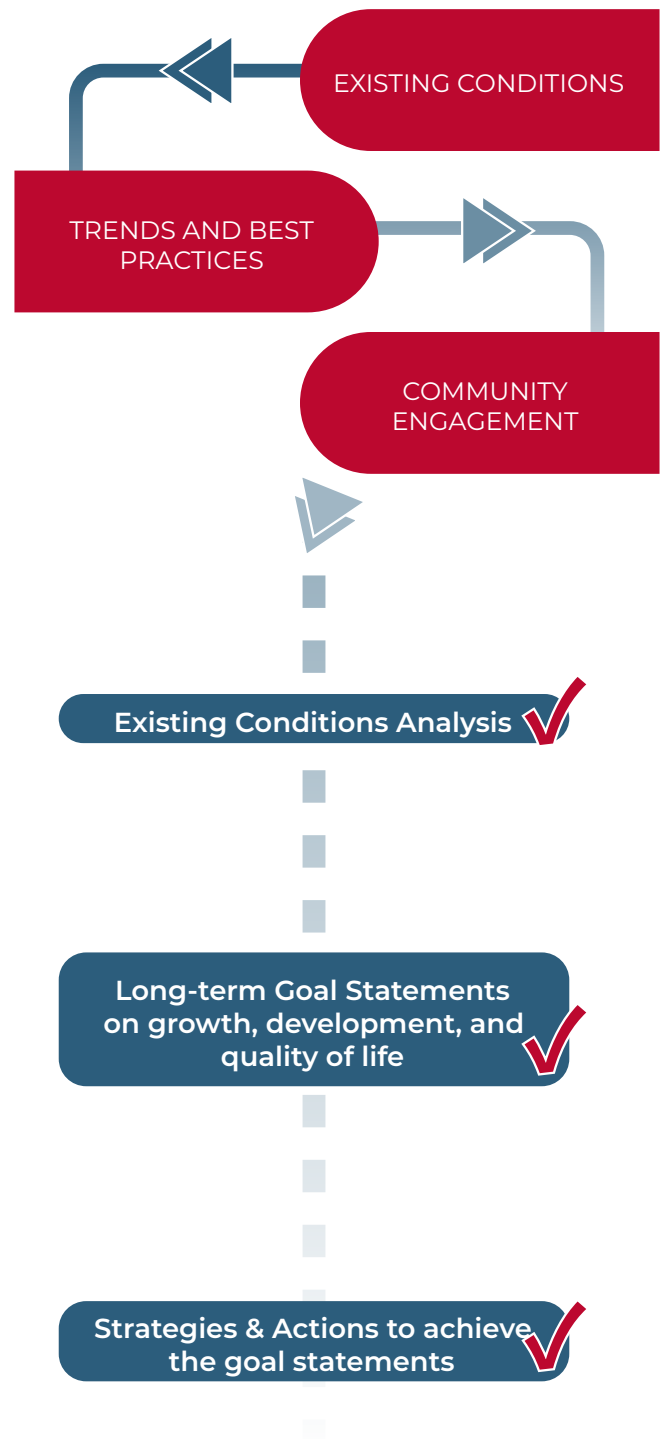
## HOW WILL CENTERBURG USE THE PLAN?

### Roadmap for the Future

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

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

Figure 1. Planning Process Summary





# WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR CREATING A PLAN?

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

## Inputs

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

## Outcomes

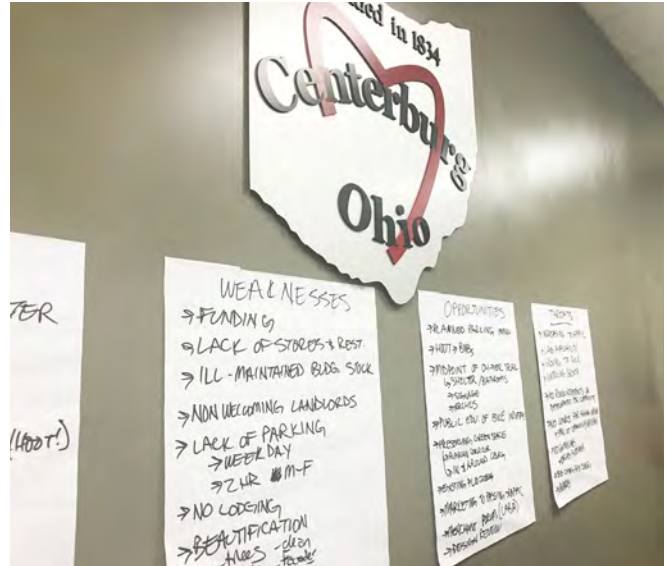
The planning process provides opportunities to consider and debate how the community would like to grow, adapt, and deliver its local brand of services and identity. These conversations culminate in the production of the plan document which includes guiding statements, maps, and objectives for the future.

## Participants

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

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

The process is guided by a steering committee comprised of community leaders with local expertise and a passion for the future of Centerburg. The steering committee collaborates with a planning team of Village employees and hired consultants to facilitate public engagement and ensure final recommendations properly reflect input gathered during the planning process.



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

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

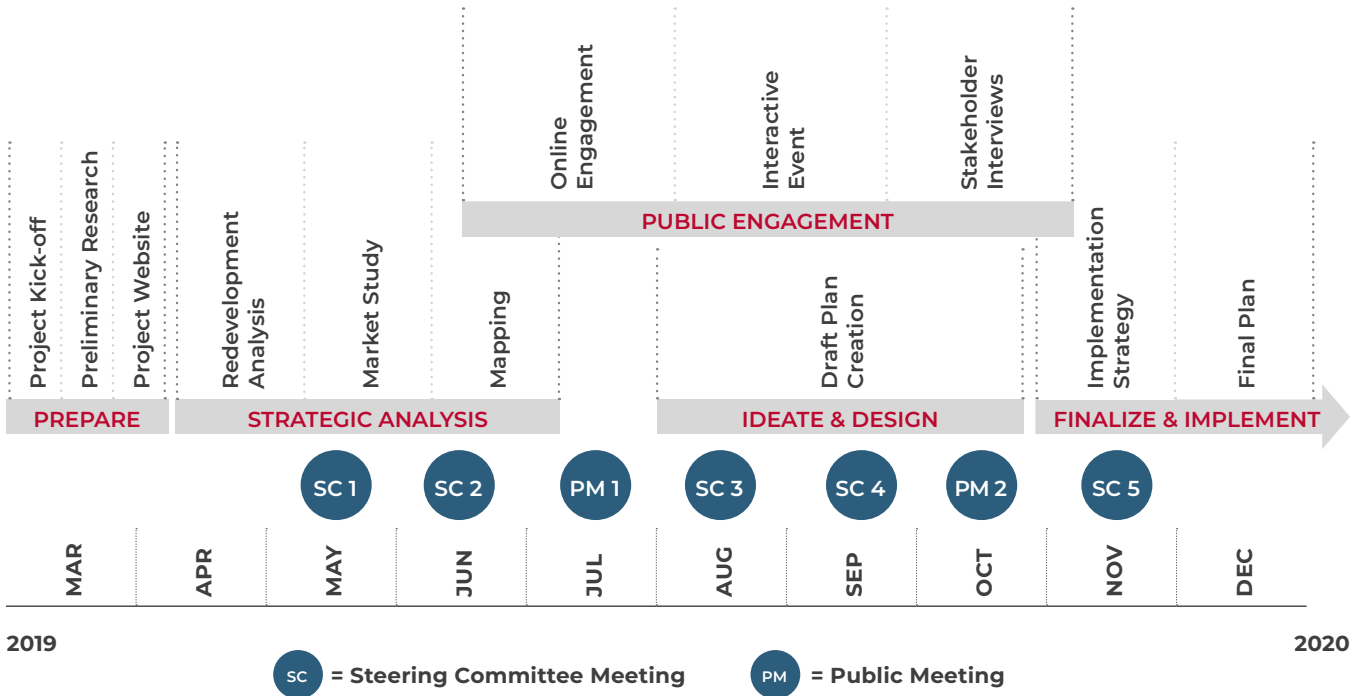


The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan should be consulted during routine village planning and zoning review processes, such as variance or permit requests.

## Schedule

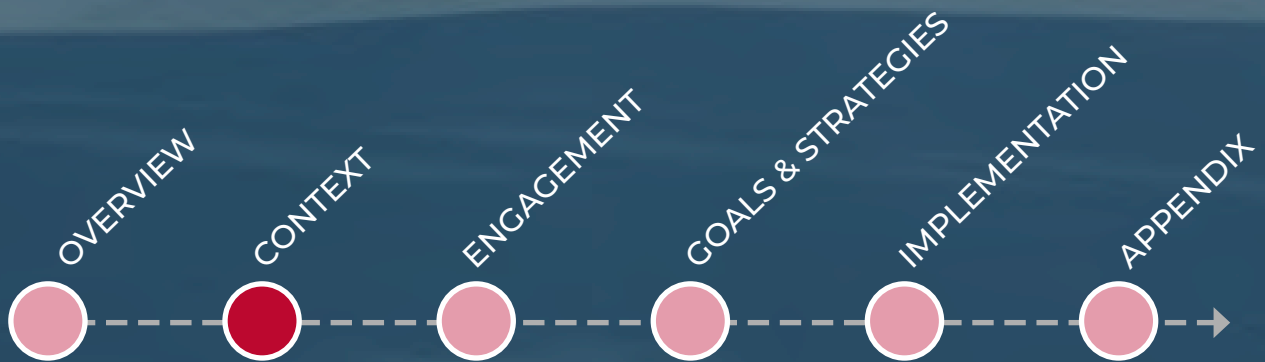
The Centerburg Village Strategic Plan was completed during an eight-month planning process divided amongst five phases (Figure 2). Each phase included distinct tasks and meetings in addition to ongoing actions which occurred throughout the process.

Figure 2. Plan Timeline & Schedule



## CHAPTER 02

# COMMUNITY CONTEXT

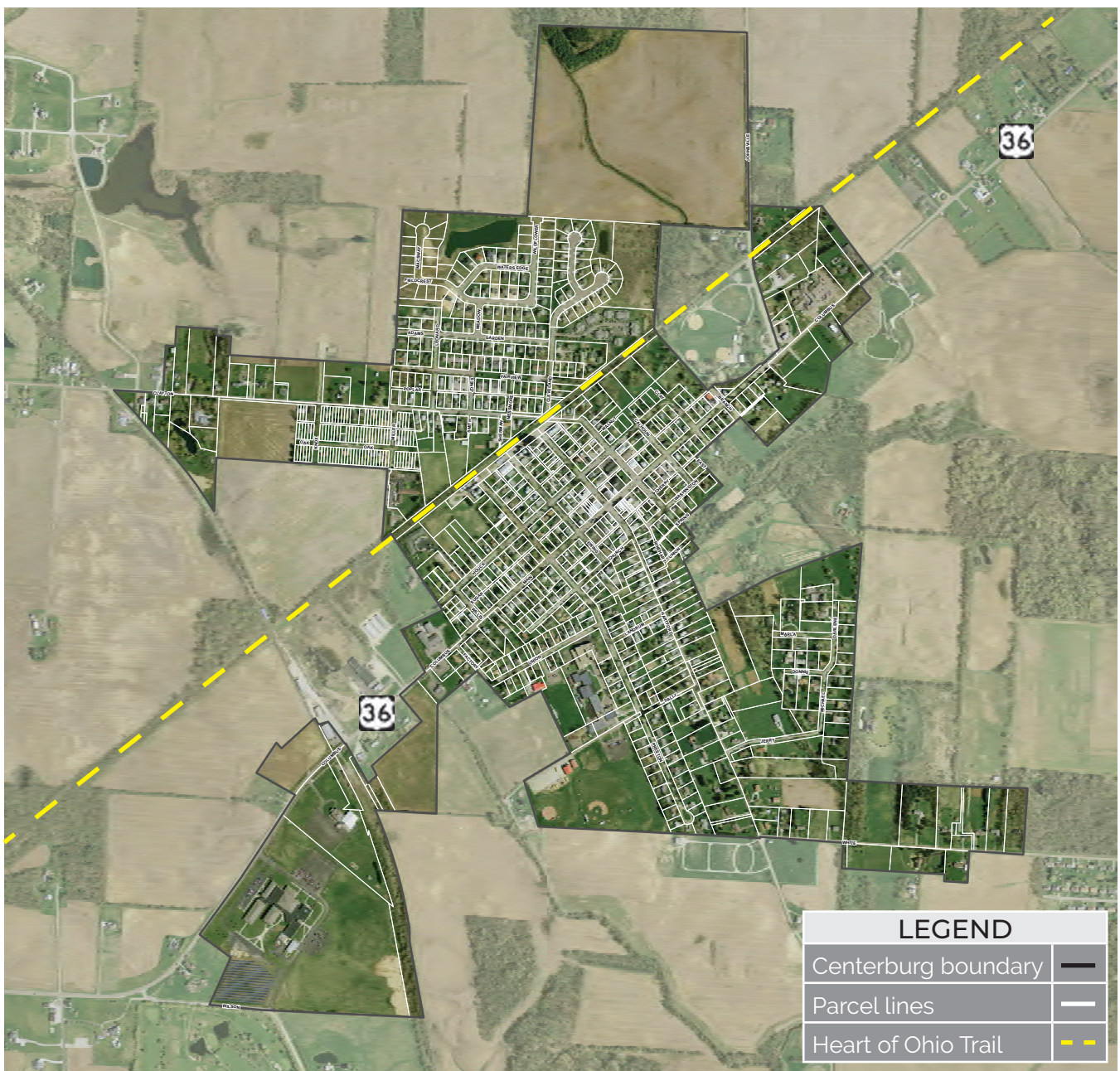




# THE HEART OF IT ALL

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

Figure 3. Centerburg Base Map



## OVERVIEW

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

## THE PEOPLE

### Population

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

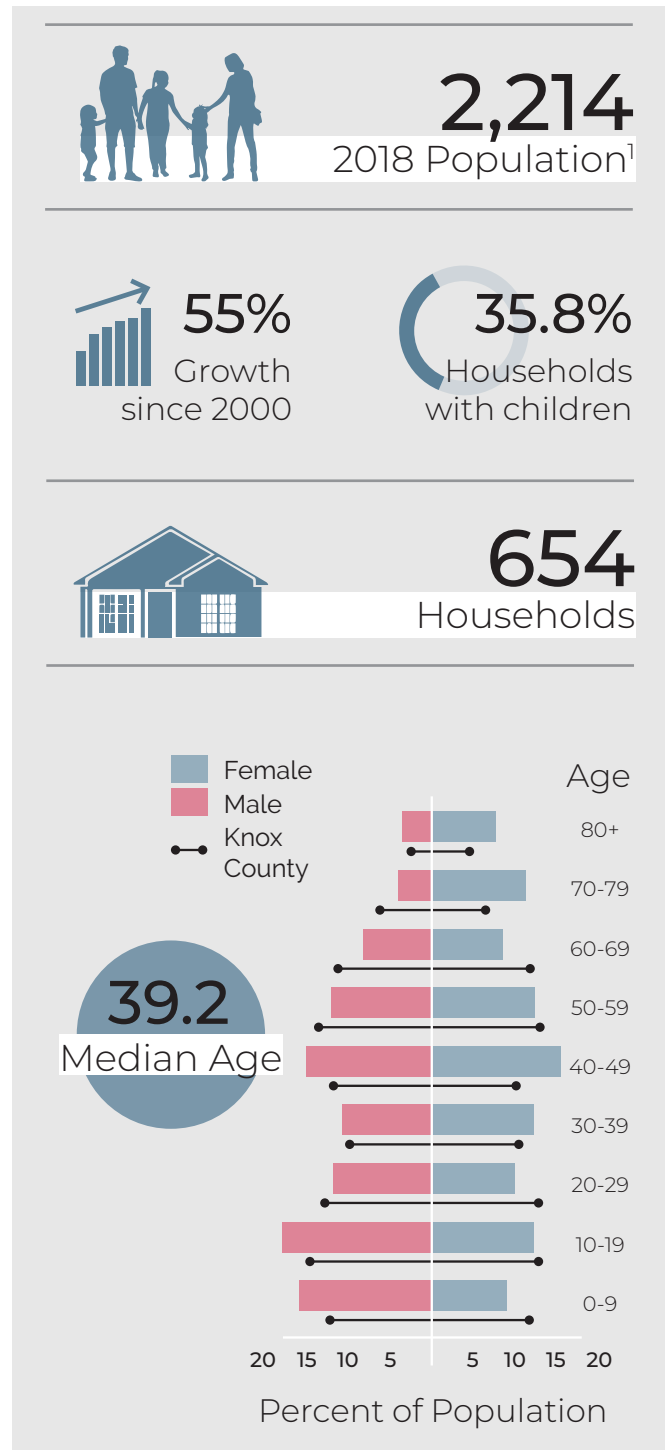
Though Knox County is generally growing at a modest pace, the Central Ohio region is poised for substantial growth in the coming decades. Estimates project up to an additional one million people will be added to the region by 2050.<sup>3</sup> Given its central location and proximity to the City of Columbus,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

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

### Households & Families

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

Figure 4. Centerburg Population Summary



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

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

2. Source: Urban Decision Group (2019)

3. Source: MORPC, Insight 2050

# THE ECONOMY

## Employment & Income

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

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

## Education

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

# THE PLACE

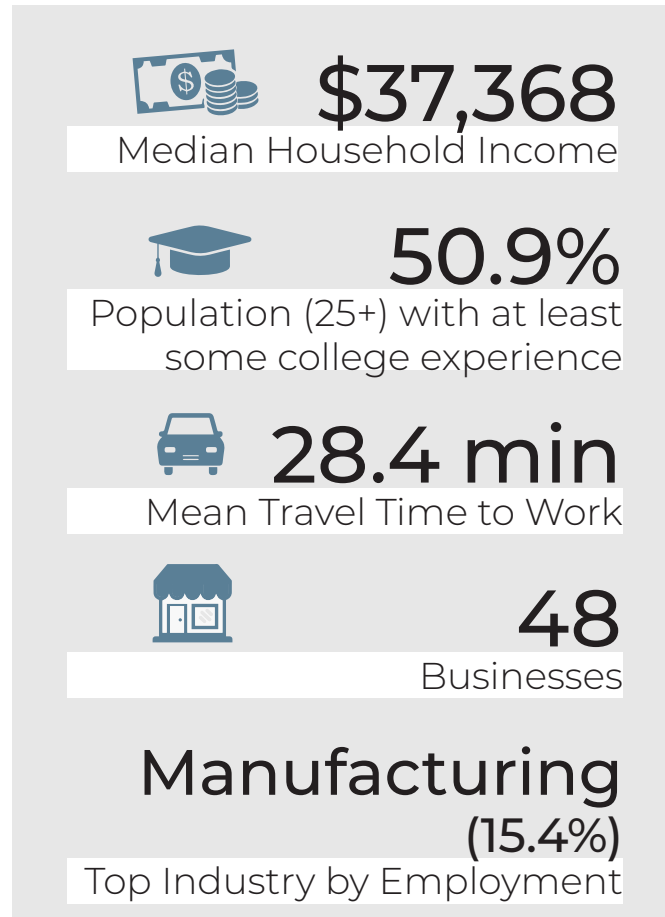
## Housing

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

## Natural Environment

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

Figure 5. Centerburg Economics Summary



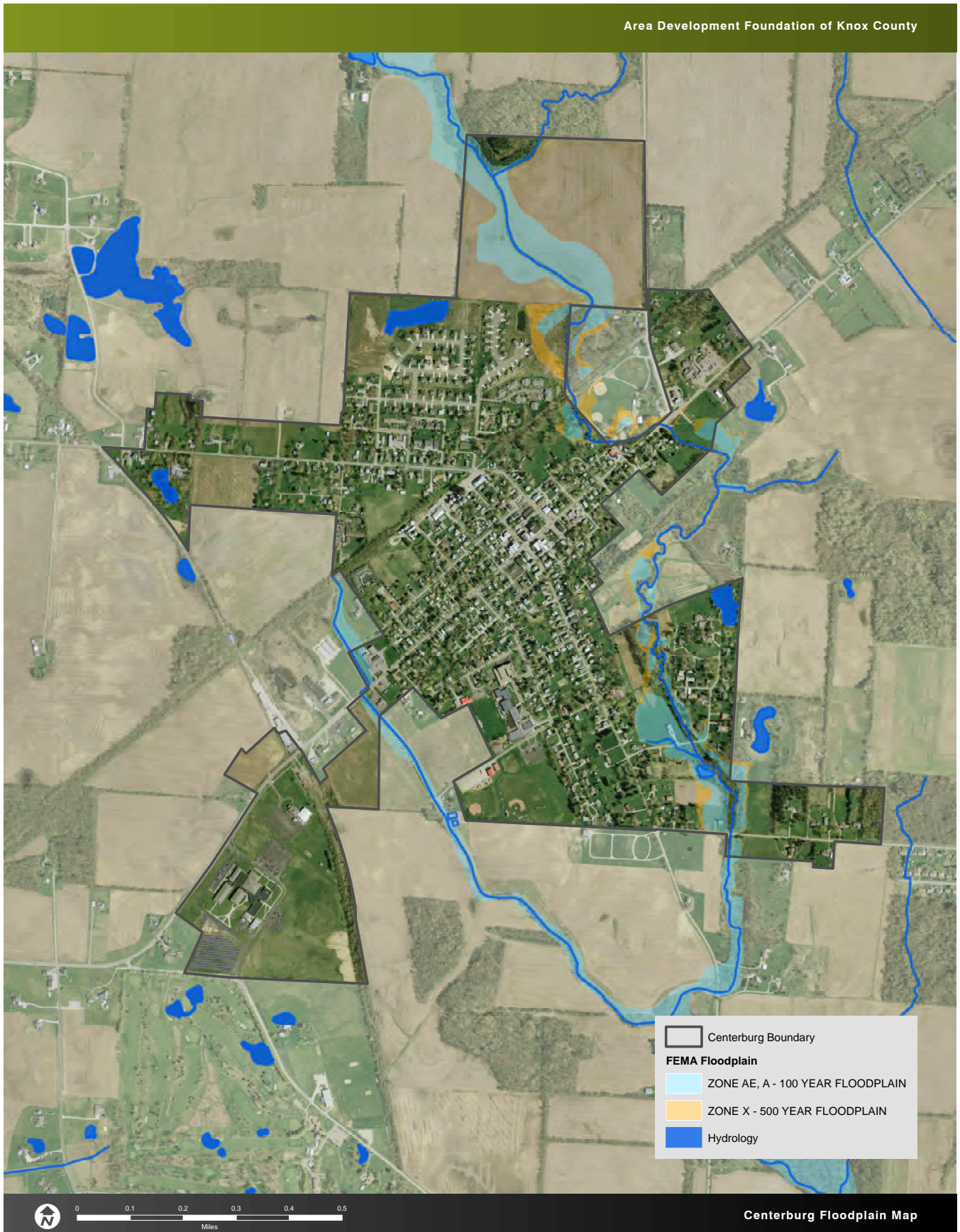
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2013-2017); Urban Decision Group (2019)

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

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

Source: Knox County Auditor

Figure 8. FEMA Flood Map





# CHAPTER 03

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT





# Plan & Re-Imagine

Area Development Foundation of Knox County

GREEN dots on areas you would RETAIN or preserve

Place RED dots on places you would like to RE-IMAGINE or enhance

INCREASE FESTIVALS

WALK RESTAURANTS & EVENTS

Centerburg Boundary  
Parcels  
Ohio to Erie Trail

Centerburg Base Map

FESTIVAL STAFF

ITALY Fried Tama

GWY 4845

# THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

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## Community Workshop

The planning team set up plan information and activities at the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festivals on Friday, June 21 2019. The event offered an opportunity to introduce community members to the planning process and gather feedback on what the public would like to see in Centerburg in the future.

## Stakeholder Interviews

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

## Community Survey

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

## Online Activities

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

## Public Hearing

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

COMMUNITY  
WORKSHOP



STAKEHOLDER  
INTERVIEWS



COMMUNITY  
SURVEY



ONLINE  
ACTIVITIES



OPEN HOUSE



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MORE THAN 500  
ENGAGEMENT  
RESULTS!

## ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### General

According to the community survey and general feedback received during engagement, community members' favorite things about Centerburg are primarily its convenient location and rural character. The most common concerns or issues to arise during the engagement process were related to the lack of entertainment (especially for youth), limited dining and retail options, the condition of Memorial Park, vacant storefronts, and state of the Downtown (Figure 9).

In general, the Centerburg community expressed a desire for more dining, retail, and parks amenities to serve residents; but is broadly skeptical of the growth necessary to accommodate those improvements.

### Land Use & Development

When asked on the community survey "What do you think is the most important development priority for Centerburg to focus on over the next ten years?", more than half of respondents said attract, grow, and retain small businesses (Figure 10). The second most popular response was to promote the desired community character through zoning or development guidelines. This may relate to current issues of property maintenance and vacant storefronts; as well as future concerns about maintaining a rural aesthetic with growth. The areas considered to be most appropriate by community workshop participants for redevelopment or transformation are community assets, such as parks, trails, and schools, the gateway into Centerburg on SR-36, and Downtown.

### Downtown

One area in which community members would like to see changes in land use and development is the Downtown. At the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festivals, activity participants voted on the improvements they would most like to see in Downtown, Centerburg. Dining was the most popular selection with 34 votes, followed by public art (17) and landscaping (14). These results are similar to survey outcomes in which three-fourth of respondents said more restaurants and shops would encourage them to visit Downtown more often (Figure 11). Though parking came up during

Figure 9. Community Survey Results: General

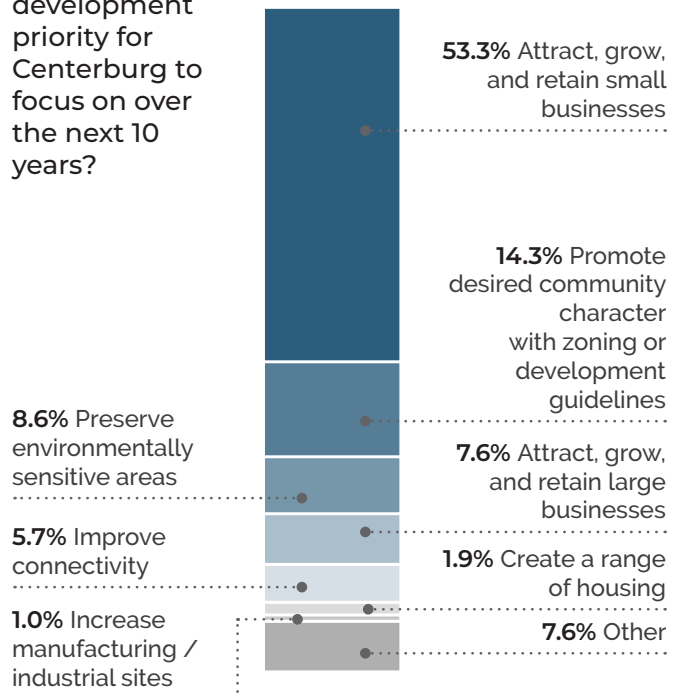
If you could change ONE thing about Centerburg, what would it be?

Most common themes:



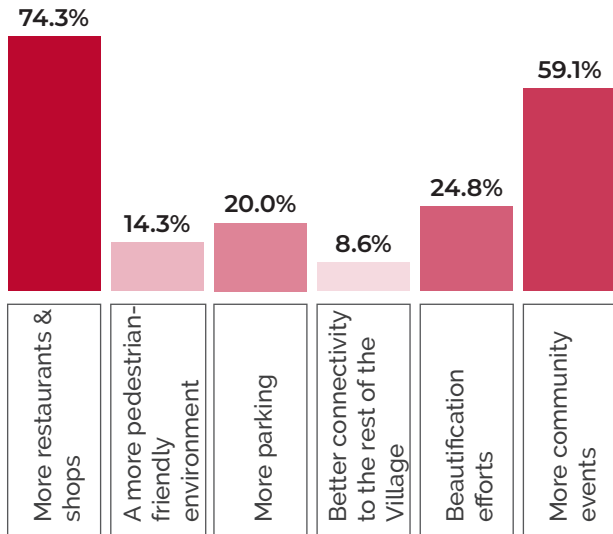
Figure 10. Community Survey Results: Land Use & Development

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



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

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



stakeholder interviews, 80% of survey participants *did not* select more parking as an incentive for them to visit the Downtown more often, even though they were able to select as many options as they'd like.

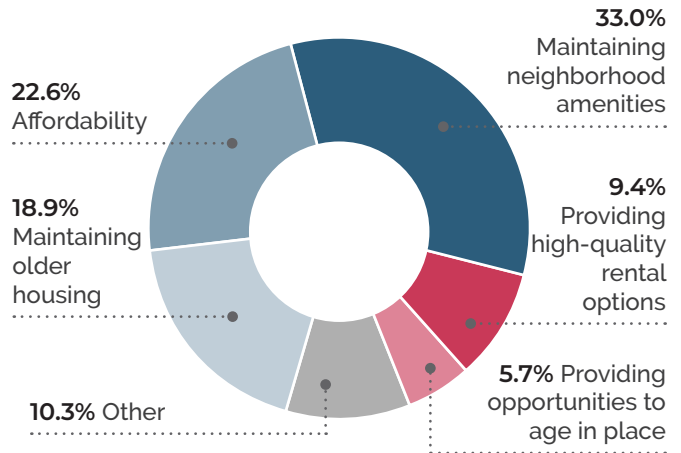
## Housing & Neighborhoods

The majority of community survey respondents (85%) said that their preferred housing type is available in Centerburg. Similarly, around 60% of respondents said they would not be willing to live on smaller lot than they currently do in order to be walking distance from parks, shops, or restaurants.

The divergence between the entertainment, commercial, and recreation amenities that community members would like to see in Centerburg and the attachment to low density or stagnant development may present a challenge in the future. Some support for more diversity in housing options was shared during engagement; specifically for high-quality rental options and opportunities for aging residents to stay in the community (Figure 12). The most pressing housing issue for Centerburg's future, according to 33% of survey respondents, will be maintaining neighborhood amenities, such as parks, sidewalks, and street lights (Figure 5). Affordability and the aging housing stock are also concerns.

**Figure 12.** Community Survey Results: Housing

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



## Parks & Recreation

The primary park and recreation amenities in or near the Village of Centerburg include Memorial Park, the Heart of Ohio Trail, and Centerburg school facilities. Existing parks and recreation opportunities in Centerburg were common themes among community members; specifically the condition of Memorial Park and a lack of programming for youth. As noted in the Land Use & Development section of this memo, parks and trails are viewed both as community assets worth preserving and as places in need of transformation.

Community survey participants rated the quality of existing parks in Centerburg at an average 2.5 on a 1 to 5 scale with "1" being "poor quality" and "5" being "excellent quality"; likely a reflection of survey complaints regarding the quality of Memorial Park and/or the football stadium. Using the same scale, the quality of existing trails in Centerburg were rated higher at an average of 4.1.

Looking to the future, about three-fourths of survey respondents said that parks and trails are important or very important for the future of Centerburg (Figure 13). The majority of survey respondents said that the overall most important parks priority for the future of Centerburg should

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

Feedback received at the Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival was generally consistent with the survey results in which community members expressed the importance of parks and recreation amenities, but indicated a preference for future improvements.

### Infrastructure & Services

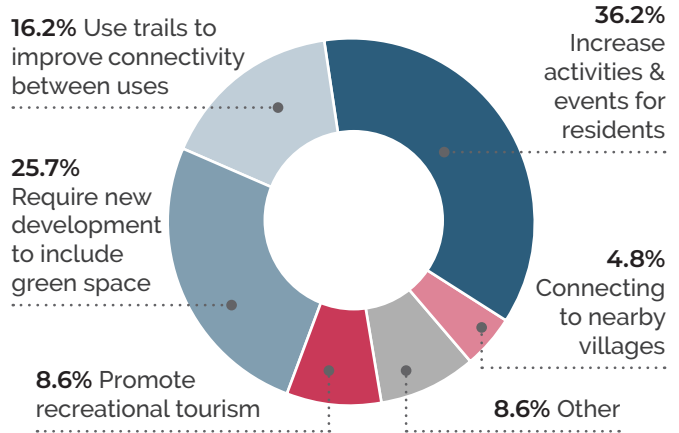
The most frequent mention of infrastructure, mobility, and Village services throughout public engagement related to the quality of roads and utilities.

The greatest current challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in Centerburg according to about 24% of community survey respondents is road maintenance (Figure 14). In thinking about what may be the greatest challenge in the future, traffic received the highest percentage of votes, which aligns with general concerns about growth and development. Figure 14 shows the complete breakdown of responses for both current and future conditions. When broadly asked their least favorite thing about Centerburg, roads were not a frequent theme, but rather the cost of water / sewer and the relationship between the Village and Township. Other popular "least favorite things" were not necessarily related to the built environment or Village operations.

These results are similar to feedback gathered at the community workshop and through stakeholder interviews. While the community seems generally content with Village services, there is a desire to improve the quality and appearance of Village-owned properties, especially in the Downtown area. There is also a strong appetite for planning efforts to ensure the community is effectively prepared for a future increase in population and/or businesses.

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

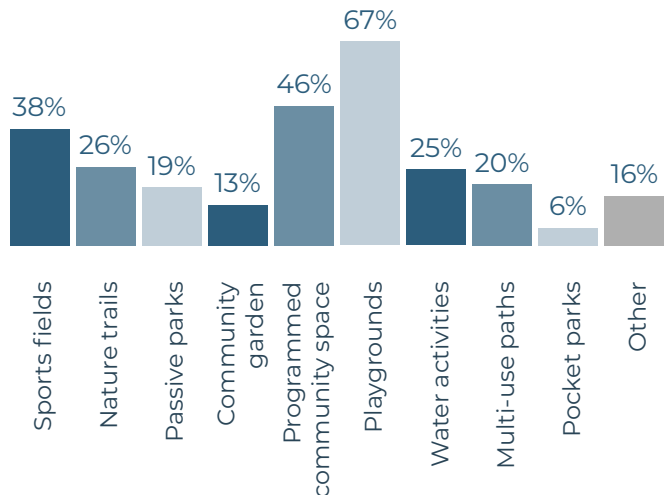
What do you think is the most important priority for Centerburg to focus on over the next 10 years regarding parks, trails, and open space?



How would you rate the importance of parks and trails for the future of Centerburg?



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



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

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

Issue	% (currently)	% (future)
Road maintenance	24.0%	11.3%
Quality of, or access to, utilities	20.2%	14.2%
Maintenance of public properties	20.2%	5.7%
Village fiscal operations / taxes	12.5%	11.3%
Planning and zoning services	11.5%	19.8%
Traffic	8.7%	32.1%
Public safety services	2.9%	5.7%

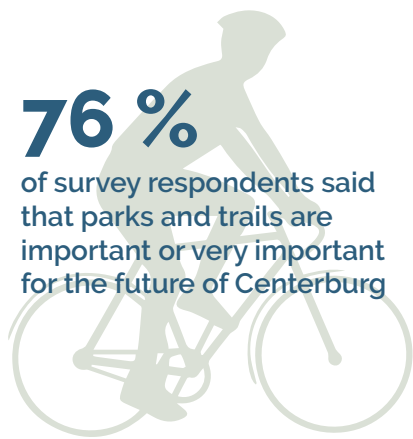
**Figure 15.** Community workshop: The Heart of Ohio USA Days Festival



## Summary

The following takeaways summarize the feedback gathered from the Centerburg community.

- Satisfaction around parks, trails, and recreation is mediocre, though these amenities are considered highly important.
- The community would like to see improvements to Memorial Park, as well as a strategy for cooperation between the Village and Township in the future.
- The strongest desire for redevelopment is in the Downtown. Community members would like to see more businesses, less vacancies, and improvements to the facades and streetscape.
- The public would like more dining and retail options in the Village.
- Community events and activities, especially those geared toward young residents, are desired.
- Businesses, though not necessarily residents, are concerned with availability of parking Downtown.
- Maintaining a rural feel in Centerburg is a priority for the community.
- Residents are concerned about the strain of potential future growth and development on the community's character and infrastructure.

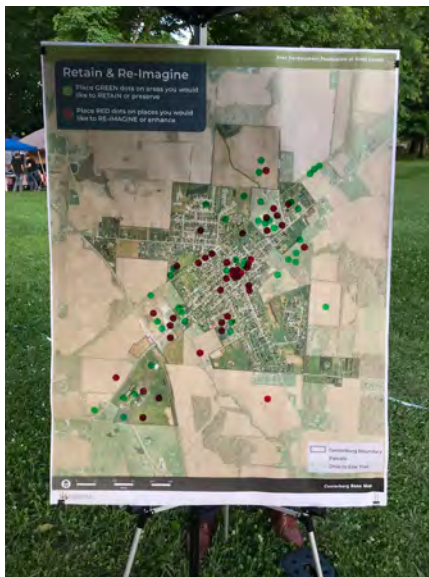


“

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

”

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



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



“

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

”

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



**67 %**  
of survey respondents said that Centerburg needs more playgrounds.



# CHAPTER 04

# PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES





# THE PLAN FOUNDATION

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

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

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

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

The recommendations of this Plan are structured around three parts:

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

*Broad View*

*Specific*



*Long Term*

*Short Term*

# GOAL STATEMENTS

Pages 26-29

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

“

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

”

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

Pages 30-33

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

“

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

”

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

Pages 34-37

## MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

“

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

”

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

## PARKS & RECREATION

“

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

”

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

## COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

“

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

”

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

# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

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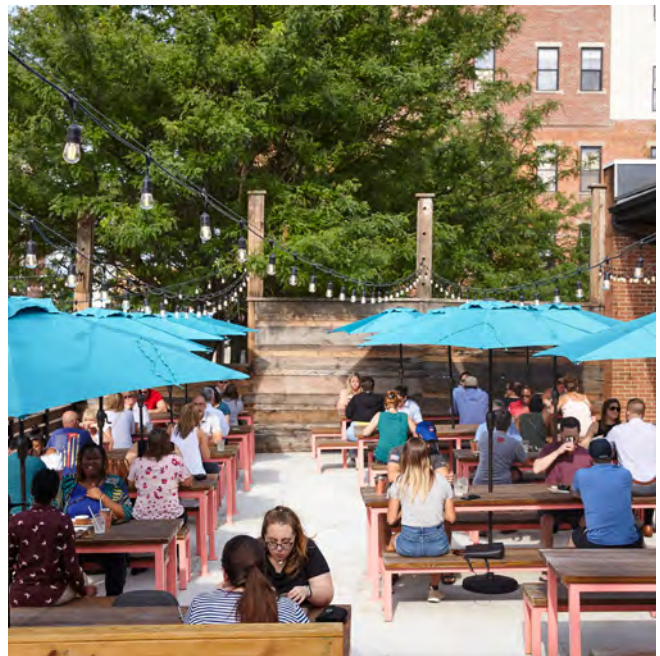
## The Big Picture

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

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

## Summary of Findings

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



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

## Goal Statement

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

## Strategies

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

1

Update the zoning code to promote desired development patterns.

2

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

3

Engage regionally with land use and development strategies.

4

Enhance parking options in the Downtown.



# PRIORITY STRATEGY :

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

### Priority Strategy

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

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

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

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

#### How to prioritize this strategy

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

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

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

#### Actions

- 1 Implement a zoning overlay along the Main Street corridor to encourage and enhance development in the Downtown and Village gateways.
- 2 Consolidate existing districts to allow for a greater mix of uses; particularly in the Downtown and commercial areas.
- 3 Reduce parking minimums (particularly for multi-family residential) to provide flexibility and reduce underutilized parking space.
- 4 Explore opportunities to institute exactions (i.e. developer fees or agreements) to fund preservation of parks and open space.

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



# ZONING OVERLAYS

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

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

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

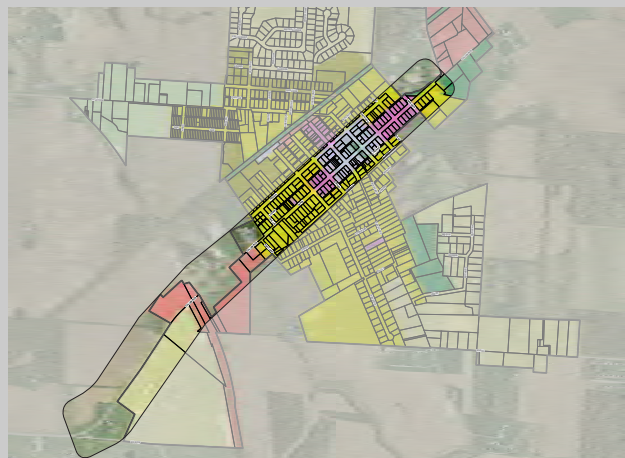
## SILVERTON

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

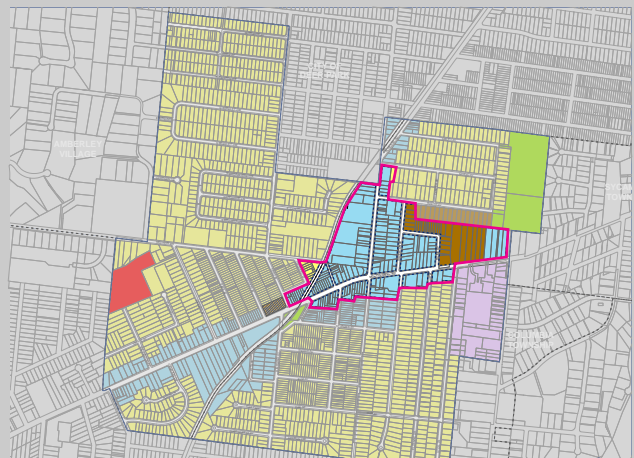
The overlay provides for greater flexibility in land use, yard size, and height restrictions than the base zoning code, while instituting additional architectural, material, and site design standards. It also explicitly permits residential units above commercial uses, even if this is not permitted by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

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

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



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



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

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

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## The Big Picture

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

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



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



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

## Summary of Findings

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

## Goal Statement

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

## Strategies

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

1

Diversify the housing stock.

2

Strengthen and enforce property maintenance.

3

Preserve and promote the rural character of residential neighborhoods.

4

Support opportunities for aging in place.



## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

### Priority Strategy

**Diversify the housing stock.**

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

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

#### How to prioritize this strategy

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

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

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

#### Actions

- 1 Update the zoning code to allow for residential uses in the Village Center District (i.e. apartments over retail or office).
- 2 Encourage development of affordable senior housing.
- 3 Acquire and assemble parcels to be redeveloped for multi-family housing via a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) and/or the Knox County Land Bank.
- 4 Conduct a full zoning audit of residential lot requirements to remove barriers to development of affordable two, three, and four-unit buildings.

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

1. Source: MORPC, Insight 2050

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

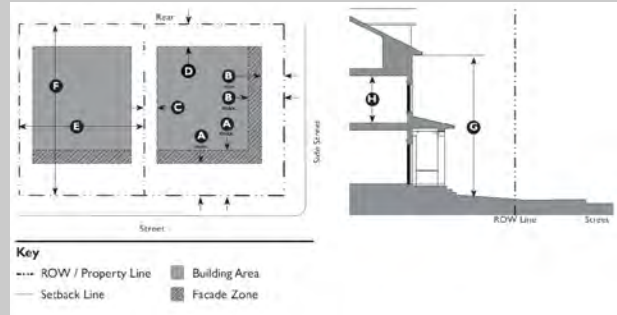
\* You can view actions for all Housing & Neighborhoods Strategies in the Implementation Matrix (p. 58)

# THE "MISSING MIDDLE"

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

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

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



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

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



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

# MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

## The Big Picture

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

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

### Summary of Findings

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



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

## Goal Statement

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

## Strategies

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

1

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

2

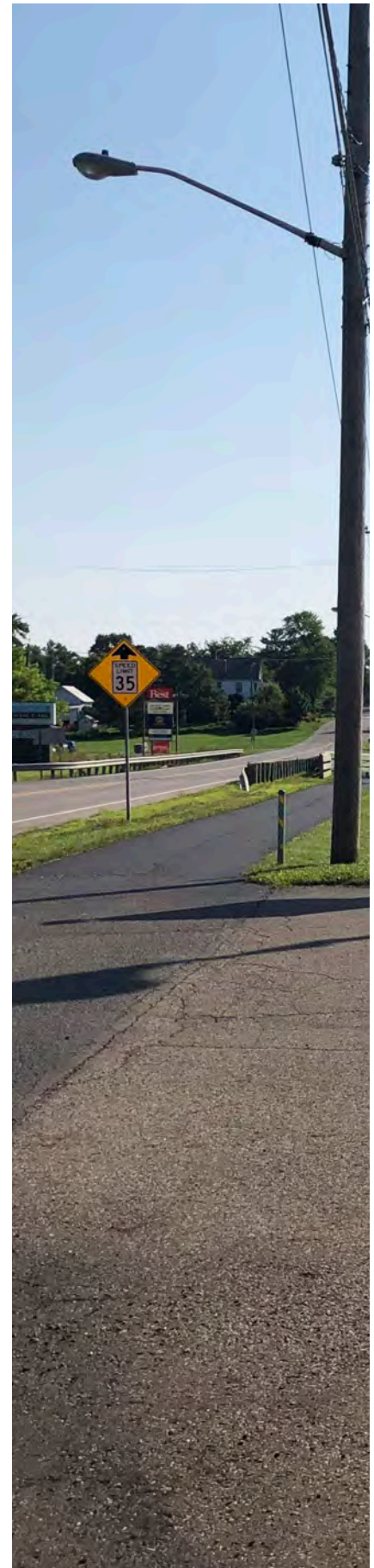
Improve connectivity of the Heart of Ohio Trail (HOOT).

3

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

4

Increase walkability throughout the Village.



## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

### Priority Strategy

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

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

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

#### How to prioritize this strategy

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

#### Actions

- 1

Install landscaping, street trees, signage, pedestrian refuge islands, and/or lighting in the right-of-way as a traffic calming strategy.
- 2

Promote a cohesive streetscape on US-36 / Main Street by partnering with future property private developers and Hilliar Township.
- 3

Install a signaled crosswalk to provide a pedestrian connection from Centerburg High School to commercial uses on the northeastern portion of US-36.
- 4

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

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

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



# PRIORITIZING FOR CHANGE

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

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

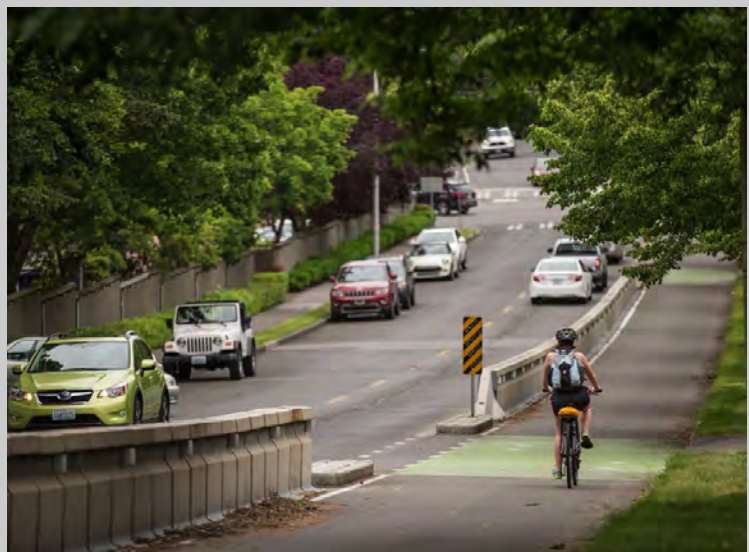
*By prioritizing pedestrians and bicyclists, Centerburg may be able to accomplish both a visually narrowed roadway and also a boost to local charm and mobility options.* Two excellent options to achieve this goal are pedestrian refuge islands and protected bike lanes, pictured below.

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

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



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



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

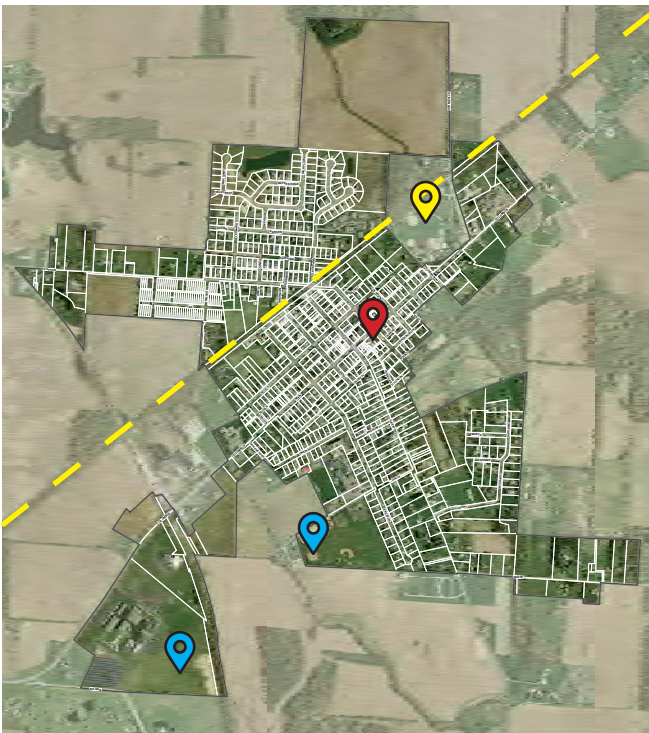
# PARKS & RECREATION

## The Big Picture

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

### Summary of Findings

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



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

## Goal Statement

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

## Strategies

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

1

Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

2

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

3

Support community and youth activities.

4

Enhance existing parks, trails, and open space.



# PRIORITY STRATEGY :

## PARKS & RECREATION

### Priority Strategy

Strengthen the fiscal impact of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

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

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

#### How to prioritize this strategy

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

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

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

#### Actions

- 1 Place signage and wayfinding along the HOOT adjacent to Downtown to direct trail users to local businesses.
- 2 Support redevelopment of properties along the trail to productive retail and restaurant establishments.
- 3 Permit lodging in the Downtown to encourage overnight trail traffic.
- 4 Increase access to cycling amenities such as racks, repair stations, restrooms, and public gathering spaces.

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

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

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

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

# TRAIL TOWNS

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

## YELLOW SPRINGS

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



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

## BELLVILLE

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

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

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



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

## Support for existing plans

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

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

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

Figure 16. Existing Welcome Center Elements



Figure 17. National Significance



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

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



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



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



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

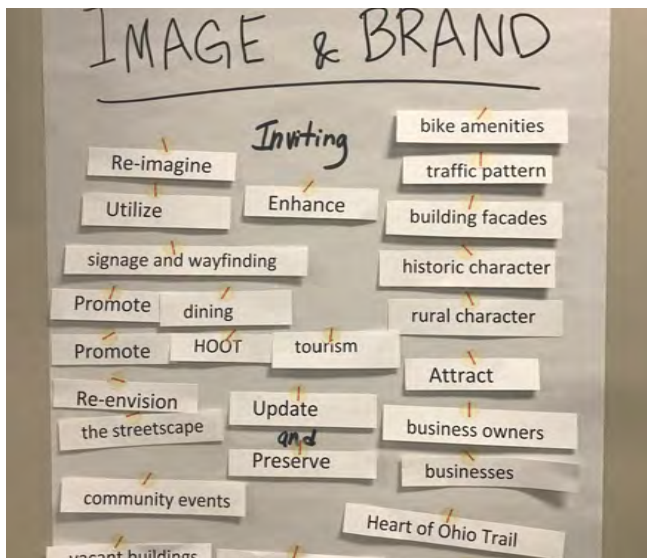
# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

## The Big Picture

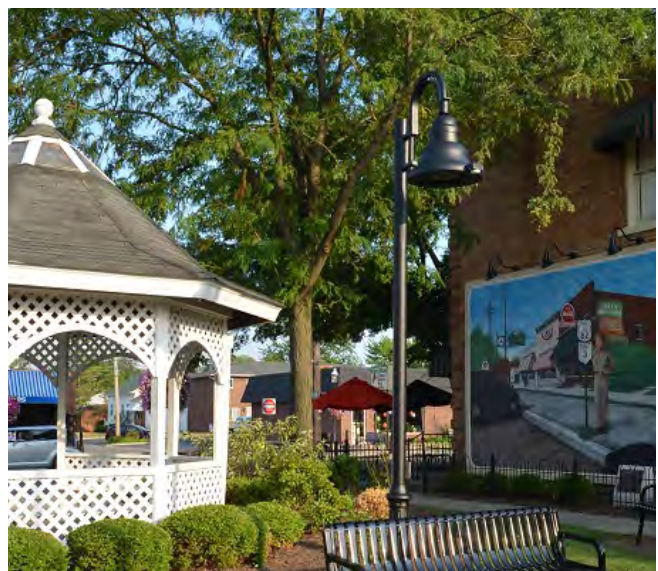
A community's image and brand describes the qualities which set it apart from other places. These qualities include both an aesthetic sense of place and the set of services and amenities delivered to residents, workers, and visitors. Every decision made within Centerburg should aim to align with an overarching,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

## Summary of Findings

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



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



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



## Goal Statement

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

## Strategies

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

1

Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.

2

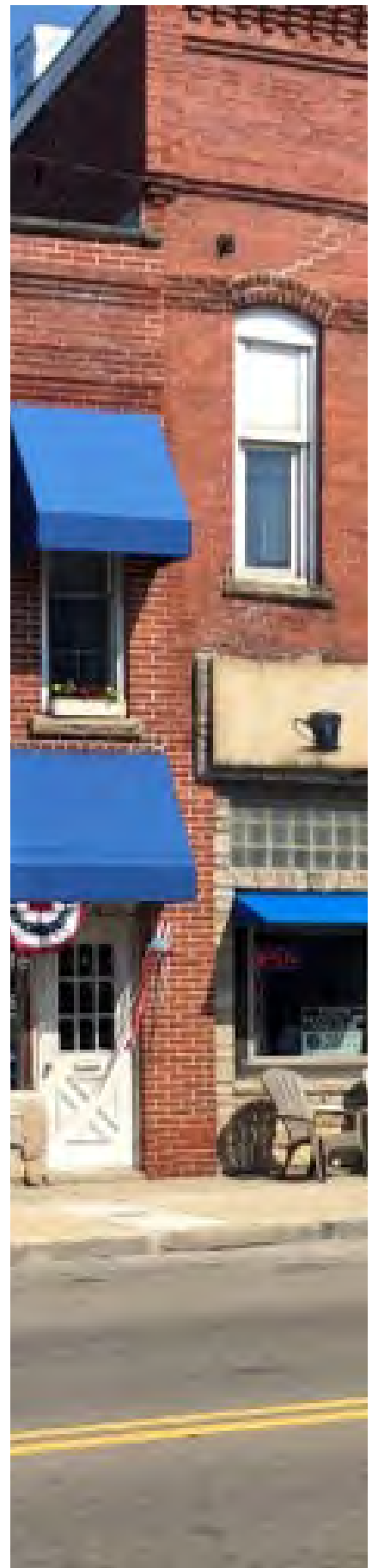
Expand regional marketing of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

3

Align physical improvements with Centerburg's image and brand.

4

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



## PRIORITY STRATEGY :

# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

### Priority Strategy

Enhance and promote Downtown as a feature image of Centerburg.

#### Why prioritize this strategy?

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

#### How to prioritize this strategy

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

#### Actions

1

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

2

Preserve and enhance the historic character of Downtown.

3

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

4

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

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

# CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

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

## **STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**

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

## **PUBLIC ART**

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

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

## **SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING**

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

## **ZONING**

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



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



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



# CHAPTER 05

# IMPLEMENTATION





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# PUTTING THE PLAN TO WORK

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## Collaboration & Leveraging Funds

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

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

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

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

## Additional Funding Resources

### Clean Ohio Trails Fund - ODNR

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

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

### Recreational Trails Program (RTP) - ODNR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Cultural Heritage Tourism Grants - Ohio Humanities

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

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

### Attributable Funding for Transportation - MORPC

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **NatureWorks - ODNR**

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

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

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

## **Additional Financing Tools**

### **Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDD)**

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

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

### **Special Improvement District (SID)**

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

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

### **Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)**

Ohio's CRA program provides real property tax

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

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

### **New Community Authority (NCA)**

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

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

### **Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)**

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

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

### **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

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

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



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

## The Implementation Matrix

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

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

# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

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

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

	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	FUNDING
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### Strategy 3: Engage regionally with land use and development strategies.

<b>A3.1</b> Coordinate with regional partners to identify potential Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs).	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs		
<b>A3.2</b> Support local businesses in collaborating with one another, as well as Knox County economic development agencies.	<b>H</b>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> <li>• Area Development Foundation (ADF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox County Foundation (KCF)</li> </ul>
<b>A3.3</b> Collaborate with Hilliar Township on zoning objectives, particularly at gateways.	<b>H</b>	0-2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hilliar Township Trustees</li> <li>• Local businesses</li> </ul>	
<b>A3.4</b> Explore creative opportunities to pursue funding sources for future development, such as Tax-Increment Financing (TIF), New Community Authority (NCA), Special Improvement District (SID), Community Improvement Corporation (CIC), or Downtown Redevelopment District (DRD).	<b>M</b>	Ongoing		

### Strategy 4: Enhance parking options in the Downtown.

<b>A4.1</b> Convert the Village-owned land at 27 N Hartford Ave (Parcel 18-00306) to public parking.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village of Centerburg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCF</li> <li>• Special Improvement District (SID)</li> <li>• Safe Routes to School</li> </ul>
<b>A4.2</b> Encourage shared parking agreements among compatible Downtown businesses.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADF</li> <li>• Downtown organization or representative (SID, CRA, CIC, etc.)</li> </ul>	
<b>A4.3</b> Implement signage to direct visitors to parking located off Main Street.	<b>M</b>	0-1 yrs		
<b>A4.4</b> Add crosswalk signals on Main Street in the Downtown.	<b>L</b>	0-2 yrs		

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

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

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

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

# MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

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

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



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

# PARKS & RECREATION

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

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

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

# COMMUNITY IMAGE & BRAND

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

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

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

CENTERBURG, OHIO  
**VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**  
APRIL 17, 2020



ms consultants, inc.  
engineers, architects, planners

# APPENDIX



# COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The following pages provide the raw results of the community survey which were summarized in the Plan. Multiple choice questions are shown first, followed by open-ended responses.

## Demographics

Q: How would you describe your gender?

Response	%	#
Male	19.81%	21
Female	76.42%	81
Non-binary / third gender	0.94%	1
Prefer not to say	2.83%	3

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

Response	%	#
I live alone	4.72%	5
I live with children (under the age of 18)	61.32%	65
I live without children (under the age of 18)	6.60%	7
I live with my spouse / partner	63.21%	67
I live with at least one family member	9.43%	10
None of these apply to me	1.89%	2

Q: What is your age?

Response	%	#
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	2.83%	3
25-34	15.09%	16
35-44	43.40%	46
45-54	22.64%	24
55-64	8.49%	9
65-74	3.77%	4
75+	3.77%	4

Q: Do you rent or own?

Response	%	#
I rent	7.55%	8
I own	89.62%	95
Prefer not to say	2.83%	3

## General

Q: Do you live in the Village of Centerburg?

Response	#	%
Yes, I live in Centerburg Village limits	34	32.08%
No, but I live in the Centerburg School District	68	64.15%
No, I live elsewhere	4	3.77%

No, I live elsewhere (please specify):

- Centerburg zip code, Highland Schools, porter twp
- Lived 62 years in the Burg, now Apple Valley
- my kids attend Centerburg schools. We border the district
- Utica

Q: Do you work in the Village of Centerburg?

Response	#	%
Yes, I work in Centerburg	21	19.81%
I don't work	14	13.21%
I'm Retired	13	12.26%
No, I work elsewhere	58	54.72%

No, I work elsewhere (please specify):

- Centerburg Middle/High
- Centerburg, it the village
- City
- Columbus (13)
- Delaware (2)
- Dublin
- From home and Whitehall
- Hilliar township
- I work as a remote associate for a Chicago based global company.
- Johnstown
- Knox county
- Kroger's
- Marysville
- Mount Vernon (3)
- Mount vernon, but I would choose to work in centerburg if it had any business locally
- New Albany (3)
- Newark
- OSU Wexner Medical Center relief RPH work in Mount Vernon, self-employed
- St louisville
- Sunbury (5)
- Upper Arlington (2)
- Westerville (10)
- Work from home (3)
- YMCA



Q: What is your favorite thing about Centerburg?

Response	#	%
The school system	7	6.60%
Rural character	65	61.32%
Parks and recreation	3	2.83%
Community events	6	5.66%
The public services (i.e. Fire, Police, Utilities)	0	0%
Job opportunities	0	0%
Location	20	18.87%
Other	5	4.72%

Other (please specify):

- Other than the increase in drug users, it's a relatively safe community
- pizza shops and twist & shake
- Spacious lot, people, location and proximity to big city amenities
- The bike path
- The people and their traditions

## Housing

Q: Is your preferred housing type available in Centerburg?

Response	#	%
Yes	90	84.91%
No	8	7.55%
I don't know	8	7.55%

Q: Would you be willing to live on a smaller lot than you currently do if it meant you would be in walking distance of parks, shops, restaurants, and other amenities?

Response	#	%
Yes	12	11.32%
No	64	60.38%
I don't know	12	11.32%
N/A (I already live in a walkable area)	18	16.98%

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

Response	#	%
Maintaining older housing	20	18.87%
Affordability	24	22.64%
Maintaining neighborhood amenities (parks / green space, sidewalks, street lights, etc.)	35	33.02%

Providing high-quality rental options	10	9.43%
Providing opportunities to age in place	6	5.66%
Other	11	10.38%

Other (please specify):

- All of the above!
- Creating solid, well thought out, feasible zoning regulations that are enforced and not varied
- I imagine that as Sunbury residents move further out, we'll not be about to keep up with the supply needed for the demand.
- Keeping high density housing developments away
- Keeping the village a village and not letting it turn into Sunbury.
- Protect the farming and rural community from over development. Keep it special.
- Providing new quality housing that matches our rural environment
- Senior living and better senior center
- Sewer bills! Affordability of homes.
- Space
- Use the empty stores in town. Forbid building on the outskirts while there are empty stores in town

## Downtown

Q: How often do you visit Downtown, Centerburg?

Response	#	%
At least once a week	73	68.87%
A couple times a month	24	22.64%
A few times a year	5	4.72%
I never visit Downtown	4	3.77%

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

Response	#	%
More restaurants and shops	78	74.29%
A more pedestrian-friendly environment (sidewalks, street furniture, crosswalks, etc.)	15	14.29%
More parking	21	20.00%
Better connectivity to the rest of the Village	9	8.57%
Beautification efforts (building facade improvements, street trees, planters, etc.)	26	24.76%
More community events (farmers market, street fair, concerts, etc.)	62	59.05%

## Land Use & Development

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

Response	#	%
Attract, grow, and retain small businesses	56	53.33%
Attract, grow, and retain large businesses	8	7.62%
Increase manufacturing / industrial sites	1	0.95%
Promote the desired community character through zoning or development guidelines	15	14.29%
Preserve environmentally sensitive areas	9	8.57%
Create a range of housing options	2	1.90%
Improve connectivity	6	5.71%
Other	8	7.62%

Other (please specify):

- Child care facility
- Fixing the cost of the Ridiculously overpriced Sewer costs. Seriously.
- Keep the small town feel
- Leave as is
- Long term survival
- No subdivision
- Promote the improvement of the current park areas. Help improve the high school/middle school campus for sports and recreation
- Retain space and keep the village small. Lot sizes should remain sizable to manage very slow growth.

## Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Q: How would you rate the quality of existing parks in Centerburg?

1 (Poor Quality)	2	3 (Average)	4	5 (Excellent Quality)
20.75%	28.30%	38.68%	9.43%	2.83%
22	30	41	10	3
<b>WEIGHTED AVERAGE: 2.45</b>				

Q: How would you rate the quality of existing trails in Centerburg?

1 (Poor Quality)	2	3 (Average)	4	5 (Excellent Quality)
0.00%	2.83%	26.42%	30.19%	40.57%
0	3	28	32	43
<b>WEIGHTED AVERAGE: 4.08</b>				

Q: How would you rate the importance of parks and trails for the future of Centerburg?

1 (Not Important)	2	3 (Average)	4	5 (Very Important)
3.77%	4.72%	15.09%	28.30%	48.11%
4	5	16	30	51
<b>WEIGHTED AVERAGE: 4.12</b>				

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

Response	%	#
Sports fields	38.10%	40
Nature Trails	25.71%	27
Passive parks (open, unprogrammed space)	19.05%	20
Community garden	13.33%	14
Programmed community space (ex: outdoor amphitheater, farmers market, etc.)	45.71%	48
Playgrounds	66.67%	70
Water activities (ex: canoing, kayaking, etc.)	24.76%	26
Multi-use paths	20.00%	21
Pocket parks	5.71%	6
Other	16.19%	17

Other (please specify):

- Community pool
- Dog Park (2)
- Dog park, skate park
- Na
- Places to eat
- Pool
- SHOW MOVIES IN THE PARK IN THE SUMMER, ONCE A MONTH SO LOCAL FOOD TRUCKS COULD SELL FOOD
- Splash pad (3)
- Splash pad/pool
- Think there is enough
- Water activity such as a splash pad or pool
- We've got a lot of the above mentioned available - we need a pool!

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

Response	%	#
Promote recreational tourism	8.57%	9
Require new development to include green space	25.71%	27
Use trails to improve connectivity between residential, commercial, and civic uses	16.19%	17
Increase activities and events for residents	36.19%	38
Connecting to nearby villages	4.76%	5
Other	8.57%	9

Other (please specify):

- Add more updates play grounds and maybe splash pad
- Add running water/facilities/lights to park to make it more attractive for special events/tournaments.
- All of the above!
- Improve the park
- It is fine the way it is
- Maintain small town feel
- Manage what we have with financial responsibility
- Repair the playground at the park, more parking areas/trail access along the trail

## Infrastructure & Services

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

Response	%	#
Road maintenance	24.04%	25
Quality of, or access to, utilities	20.19%	21
Village fiscal operations / taxes	12.50%	13
Traffic	8.65%	9
Planning and Zoning services	11.54%	12
Public Safety services	2.88%	3
Maintenance of public properties	20.19%	21

Q: Should the population increase, what do you think will be the greatest challenge related to infrastructure and Village services in the future?

Response	%	#
Road maintenance	11.32%	12
Quality of, or access to, utilities	14.15%	15
Village fiscal operations / taxes	11.32%	12
Traffic	32.08%	34
Planning and Zoning services	19.81%	21
Public Safety services	5.66%	6
Maintenance of public properties	5.66%	6

## Open-Ended Responses

**Q: What is your least favorite thing about Centerburg?**

What is your least favorite thing about Centerburg?
No recreation things to do, gym, pool, sports fields.
Needs more restaurants
Condition of the community park, a great resource that's gone to trash. I travel to other communities for my child to play.
Cliques
Development
Poor planning which leads to more expenses
The lack of businesses and the parks.
Conservative political attitudes
Lack of places for gathering. Coffee, places for kids to "hang" so they are staying out of trouble
That it doesn't seem to welcome new businesses which makes us go to other towns to shop or do things.
Nothing I love Centerburg
Empty store fronts, and people that complain about inevitable change.
The possibility of becoming the next Sunbury or New Albany
The lack of local businesses. Not interested in chain restaurants or stores though.
The old buildings falling apart and left vacant.
The Cost for Sewer and Water is Ridiculous.
Lack of parking and businesses in town.
Expansion
Empty store fronts
Crime. Park.
The shops up town are not usable because of the current owners.
Nothing to do ...we need a pool
Playground/ park facilities
Lack of places to eat
Drug users
All the people moving in trying to change it
The folks the own the downtown buildings not allowing small town businesses in.

People set in their ways, not capable of seeing the benefits of diversity or evolution of what country living could be. We need change, and that doesn't have to be a derogatory word, we don't need chain stores but we do need new blood and new ideas around here, and a willingness to work together to make something greater.
No business! I have to commute 45min-1 hr to do basics shopping for clothes, school supplies, home furnishings. It's at least a 25 min drive to an affordable grocery store. Park is falling apart, fewer and fewer community events and groups.
The threat of development moving in and destroying the things that make the town special.
Lack of Jobs and opportunity
Noobs wanting small town community with big city amenities - pool, playgrounds, no farm smells
Not much to choose from to eat. Pretty much pizza, Subway and Twist and Shake during the nicer time of year.
Parks and recreation
Park amenities and food options
Appearance of downtown
Lack of choices for places to eat out.
Wish it had more places To eat or to exercise
Just a little snobbish.
Inconsistent zoning
Vacant properties both business and residential and exponential rise in rental properties
Having to drive everywhere else for kids activities.
to many empty store fronts
The difficulty new businesses have in getting started
The amount of racist people who have the courage to roam freely and spread their hatred.
Nothing for children/teens to do to keep out of trouble Why is Main St buildings so empty?
Opposition to grow through the years
The bickering between the Village and Township.
The bickering between the Village and Township.
Empty storefronts- some residents have run down homes, tall grass in yards, junk in yards, etc. Need more places to eat to draw people to our village.
Poor decisions by Village government
None I can think of.
???
Lack of business
The out dated play ground equipment at the park.

What is your least favorite thing about Centerburg?
Water/sewer bill & lack of tax reciprocation
Playground needs overhaul
NO GROWTH
R.I.T.A.
Stop lights aren't timed right.
The community park.
Lack of ease shopping for basics
Need a few more amenities. Lack of in town activities/ events
There are more drug dealers and users now
Not enough for the youth to do.more to do as a family to
Village won't let new business in.
No internet
Not enough places to eat
Seeing empty and run down store fronts.
Potential for too much development leading to over crowding
High sewage bill.
Lack of food options, lack of activities for the kids. The park needs a lot of work
The amount of overdosing that I keep hearing about.
Wish the playground at the park was better or we had like a splash pad there. Wish there were more organized fun atuff down at the park
Empty storefronts.
No food to eat
Water and sewer bill
ThAt there can be more activities for the youth
None
Sewer bill
The play area of the park for the kids
Slow Internet
The outlying farming townships acting like homeless associations. More of a nuisance than a help.
No food options other than subs and pizza.
Sewer rates are a burden on us. We are paying more for sewer than when we paid for water and sewage together before delco. Water is reasonable but sewer is ridiculous. People are leaving because of it. At times the sewer charge is higher usage number than water usage. It should be equivalent to water usage not more.
Disappearing farmland

The aging park and downtown.
The changes trying to urbanize and make it more upscale
I love everything about this village!
The amount of drug use going unchecked.
Poor condition of playground equipment at the park
The bullshit between HILLIAR township and the village on the park. The park needs to be fixed/updated and modernized. But for now it seems to be a unruly feud between the two. The village and township claim it is due to the split between the two based off the water treatment plant.
Sewer Bills
Woman's Club ending and no Centerburg paper.
Lack of progress. There is very little to do in Centerburg. Too many empty storefronts. No new businesses. Need a new library, new park.
Downtown
Lack of vision. I am nervous that the village is unprepared/under prepared for growth. Lack of youthful leadership.

## Open-Ended Responses

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

If you could change ONE thing about Centerburg, what would it be?
Free WiFi!
More restaurants, high school soccer
Condition of the community park playground equipment
Nothing
Slow down development.
More shopping options.
Fast, reliable internet!!!!
Have more things for kids to do...pool, etc
Football field at the high school
People's closed mindset about reasonable changes.
Nothing, keep it the way it is
Downtown facelift
The park
The ridiculous cost of Centerburg Sewer and Water.
Parking

**APPENDIX | CENTERBURG VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

If you could change ONE thing about Centerburg, what would it be?
Better road care
Farmland would stay farmland
Better park and recreations. Pride.
The park.
Get a pool for the public and limited fast food
Where our children play football games
More places to eat. Empty buildings on Main Street be filled with a business
Fill the empty storefronts
Get rid of Dollar General
Nothing
We need to control the mosquito population here, it was unbearable this year, worse than ever.
Allow business to come in!!!!!! We NEED more commerce for this town to stay alive!
Better internet service options.
Job Availability within the town
Wake the hell up - the government can't mandate business only invest in the R3 corridor
Add a nicer restaurant to eat lunch/dinner
Updating the park
Better dining
If I had a magic wand I would create parking for the businesses that are downtown.
Fill the empty store fronts along the main drag and get a nice playground for the community!
Parking on Hartford
24/7 police dept
Addition of mai street small local buisnesses
Having a high school soccer team.
A brand new Senior Center
Arguments over the park... WE ALL use it, we should all pay for it
Give everyone social sensitivity training so it is a safer place for every type of person to live.
Honestly, politics and bullheaded people. Forget who did what to who and work together for a better future for the kids.
More businesses
It's just fine as is.
It's just fine as is.

To see business owners and homeowners have more pride in the appearance of their property.
Establish collaboration between the Village and Township to operate the Park, no matter what the lawyers say.
Have better park for kids to play at.
???
Business diversity
Add more chain restaurants
Taxes
Playground
MORE OPEN MINDED ON WHAT CAN COME IN, MORE YOUNG PEOPLE HERE NOW HAVE BETTER UNDERSTANDING ON WHAT THEY WANT, YOU WANT THIS TOWN TO GROW TO A POINT NOT CONTAIN. EXAMPLE THERE IS A PERSON DYING TO START A RESTAURANT HERE IN TOWN AND PEOPLE ARE HOLDING ON TO EMPTY BUILDING. FOR WHAT?
Better way of communication to all residents besides Mt Vernon News, i.e. newsletter, social media links, that include not only village activities but council updates.
Village share cost of park upkeep
The timing of the traffic lights.
Make the main town have more resources for people
More facilities/amenities that are generally sought out of town.
put speed bumps in the alleys
Drugs
More restaurants/ businesses.
Better use of community park. Playgrounds areas for kids of all ages.
Nothing
Improve sidewalks & lighting in certain areas
Park/pool
Food
Get rid of everyone that is on drugs and keeps overdosing. We don't need that here.
Traffic in morning and when school let's out, gets so backed up
A more intentional focus on local agriculture, craft, and artisans to draw people in.
Perhaps a few more small businesses but I do like how the existing ones are being very creative in offering a nice variety - food trucks, local-made gifts, etc.
Dining locations

If you could change ONE thing about Centerburg, what would it be?
The way the streets and alleys are patrolled. Rt 3 is a race track day in and day out.
More businesses on Main Street, every store front occupied and flourishing
Better roads
Fix up the park
A true coffee shop.
More community events.
Grocery store and restaurants.
Find alternative funding or donations or investments to fund sewer. Fill vacant store fronts.
More protected farm land
Update the park
Bring back the old intown restaurant and the old feel of the tavern
The rate of growth. Empty lots are being built on and I fear the day that Centerburg is no longer a small quaint village.
Better baseball and community facilities.
Upgrade playground equipment at the park
Why is the football stadium so antiquated? When the new track was built... why did they vote to keep the stadium at the elementary school? Now you have a track with no bleachers.
The Sewer Bills
Community paper
Open the minds of the locals to make Centerburg a better place to live.
Downtown
A community that is centered on working towards what is best for the people who live and work here with enough vision to welcome new thoughts and industry for growth.

## **MARKET ANALYSIS**

As part of the strategic planning process, Urban Decision Group (UDG) conducted a market analysis to evaluate current conditions and trends related to land use, development, economics, and housing. Key takeaways are integrated throughout the Plan and the complete report is provided below.



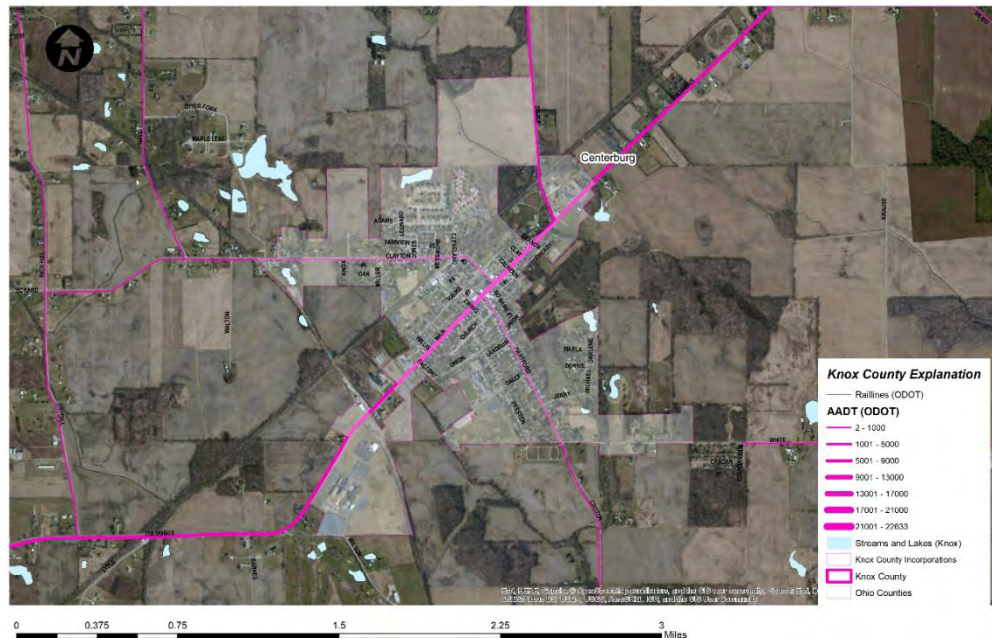
# Background

Centerburg is the geographical center of the State of Ohio. The village is in the southwest quadrant of Knox County, Ohio, in Hilliar Township. Centerburg, approximately 35 miles or 45 minutes by car, is the closest place in Knox County to Downtown Columbus. US Highway 36, also known as Columbus Road in the western half of Knox county Centerburg to Interstate 71 through Sunbury in the adjoining County of Delaware. Columbus is the fastest growing metropolitan region in the State of Ohio. US Highway 36, or Columbus Road, carries approximately 9,500 vehicles per day (AADT, ODOT 2017 estimate). Hartford Avenue leads south out of town in the direction of the Hartford Fairgrounds in Licking County. The elementary school for the Centerburg Local Schools district is south of the center of town, between Main Street and Hartford Avenue. The combined middle and high school campus is located at the edge of the village along Main Street.

The heart of Centerburg is the intersection of Main Street and Hartford Avenue. Small businesses, banks, and homes are clustered here. On the southwest side of town (in the direction of Columbus) small chains including the Village's grocery store have been established more recently. Most of the activity today, still is clustered between the Main Street and the parallel rail corridor. The rail line has been removed and is now the Heart of Ohio Trail which cuts diagonally through Knox County. The multiuse trail links Centerburg, Danville, and Mount Vernon with Columbus via Westerville. The Heart of Ohio Trail has recently been designated part of the first multiuse Great American Rail-Trail that crosses the country.

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

**Figure 1.**  
Vehicles per day  
on major  
thoroughfares



## Population Characteristics

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The population of Centerburg increased from 1,471 in 2000 to 1,773 in 2010, a change of 20.5%. The estimated population for Centerburg in 2019 is 1,960 and projected to increase to 2,098 by the year 2024, at an annual rate of 1.08%. Centerburg is the fastest growing village in the county with a growth rate of over 40% from 2000 to 2024, or approximately 27 people per year in that time. The population increase between 2000 and 2019 of 33 percent out paces the growth experienced in Danville (6.8%), Fredericktown (0.9%), Gambier (25.5%), Mount Vernon (5.1%), and Knox County (14.9%). The State of Ohio has grown by 3.7% since 2000 but almost all of Ohio's growth during this time has been concentrated in and around Columbus and suburban Cincinnati.

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

Fifty-one people in Centerburg live in group quarters. Potential locations for this population include the Centerburg Respiratory and Specialty Rehab Center on Fairview Avenue, Centerburg Pointe on Columbus Road, and Centerburg Place on Houck Street. More will be discussed in the section on Senior Living below. Group quarters include college or university student housing, correctional facilities, residential treatment centers, and nursing facilities. No correctional facilities are known within the four villages. Nearly 1500 (75%) of the population of Gambier live in group quarters.

Household composition within Centerburg has remained steady since 2000. The average household size for those within Centerburg is approximately 2.75 persons. Family households account for over 75 percent of all households in Centerburg. This characteristic is shared with Danville Village and rural Knox County.

The median age of the population of Centerburg, Danville, and Fredericktown is in the upper 30s. The median age of Centerburg is projected to decrease slightly by 2024, as new residents – young families – move into the area.

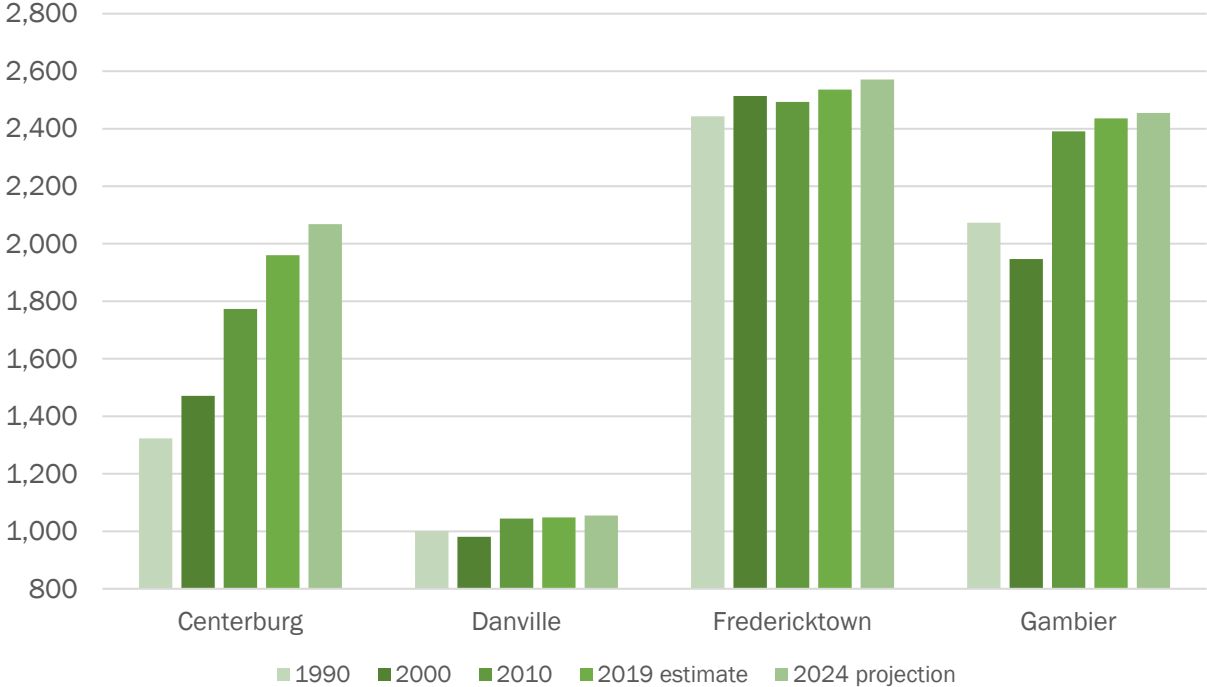
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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Current Population Survey (CPS) subject definitions

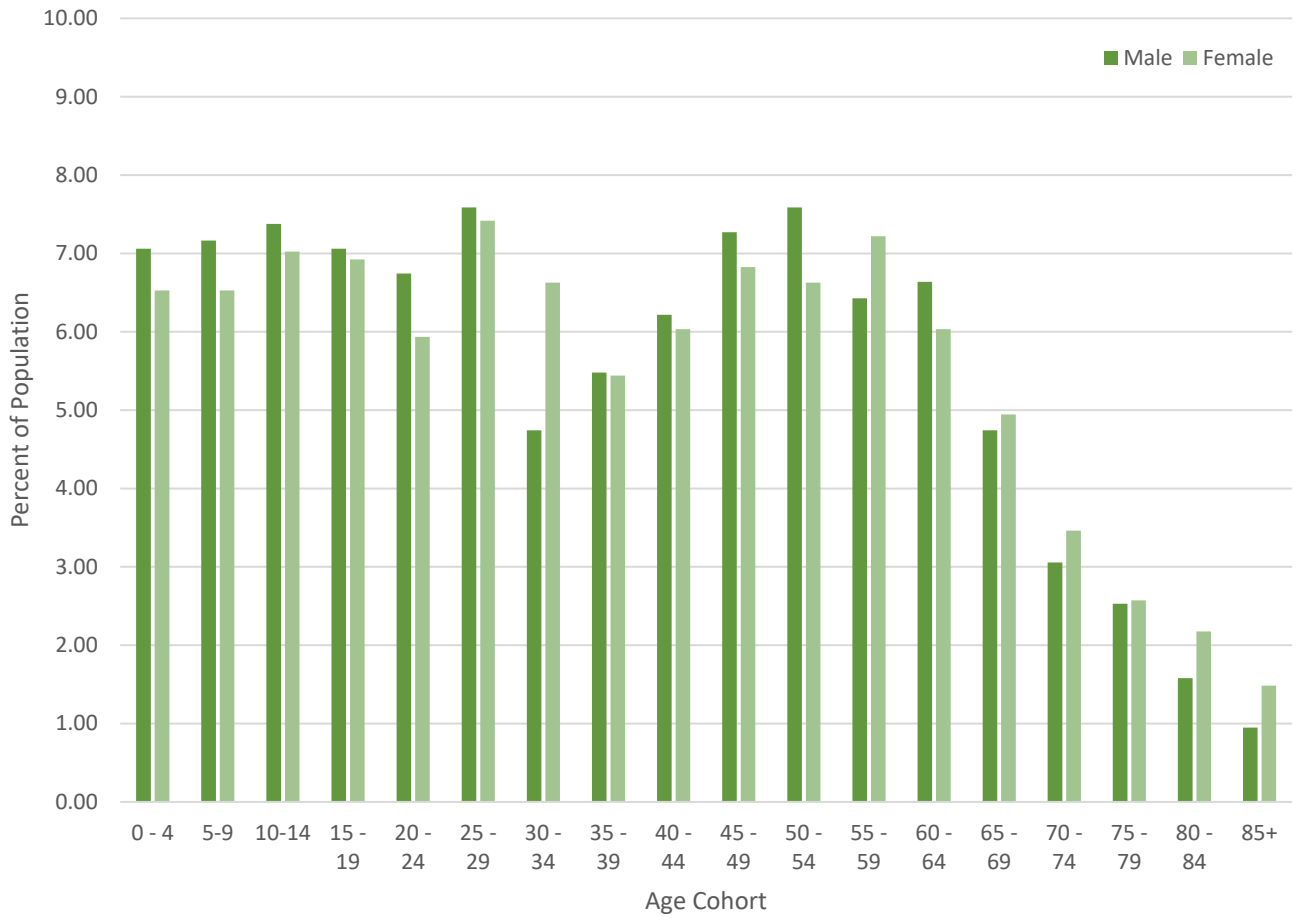
	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
<b>Population Summary</b>						
2000 Total Population	1,471	981	2,514	1,947	16,196	54,500
2010 Total Population	1,773	1,044	2,493	2,391	16,904	60,921
2019 Total Population	1,960	1,048	2,536	2,436	17,022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

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

# Population Summary



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



**Table 3.** Population cohort for village in 2019.

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

**Table 4.** Median Age by year with accompanying chart to expand on the age by sex cohort for the village in 2019.

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

**Table 5.** Household Income

The average and median income for households within Centerburg Village are \$70,581 and \$65,994.

Approximately 20 percent of households within Knox County live below the federal poverty guideline of \$25,100 (for a family of four). Within Centerburg Village that number is 20.3 percent. Nationally, the poverty rate has declined since 2014 when the rate was 14.8 percent. Today, the national poverty rate sits at 12.3 percent, which is almost identical to that in the State of Ohio.

## Workforce Analysis

Over 50 percent of Centerburg residents 25 and over have some college experience or have earned a degree. Nineteen percent in Centerburg have a bachelor's degree which is a rate ahead of all other municipalities villages and statistical units within Knox County except Gambier. Gambier is home to Kenyon College and as a college town is statistically different where age, and income cluster on the low end for most residents who live in group quarters for 9 months out of the year in pursuit of higher education. Data for Gambier also reflect the age, income, and education of professors at the college. In Centerburg and the other villages in Knox County, the data represent households across many life stages and experiences. For 40 percent of Centerburg Villagers over the age of 25, a high school diploma is the highest level attained. In Knox County and the State of Ohio approximately 37 percent and 39 percent respectively, have achieved a high school diploma as their highest level of educational attainment.

Over half of the residents of Centerburg have some college or have earned a degree. In Knox County 17 percent are employed in manufacturing, 13 percent in educational services, and 12 percent in educational services. In Centerburg, employment is concentrated in the construction industry (nearly 15 percent) and the retail industry (over 13 percent), proportions larger than that of any other community in the comparison chart. At this level of analysis, we can ascertain that Centerburg residents are compensated at a level commensurate to educational attainment and/or households typically have two income earners.

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

Note: percent values for each village greater than the percent value for the whole of Knox County, Ohio are emphasized.

**Table 6.** Educational Attainment

	Centerburg Village	Danville Village	Fredericktown Village	Gambier Village	Mount Vernon	Knox County
<b>2018 Employed Population 16+ by Industry</b>						
Total	1,089	557	1,179	1,220	7,866	31,064
Agriculture	7	33	3	0	16	535
Mining	3	3	0	0	3	34
Construction	157	38	94	85	313	2,590
Manufacturing	168	102	222	13	1,385	5,082
Wholesale Trade	44	4	16	0	65	690
Retail Trade	143	52	135	68	683	2,485
Transportation	34	5	30	0	221	1,101
Utilities	7	4	0	2	25	315
Information	11	11	50	19	68	487
Finance/Insurance	72	8	62	77	310	1,352
Real Estate	10	13	5	17	97	317
Professional/Tech Services	37	8	30	27	148	827
Management	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin/Waste	33	10	24	35	201	888
Educational Services	84	45	96	576	1,148	3,636
Health Care	99	110	207	74	1,179	4,010
Arts/Entertainment	6	0	0	10	46	195
Accommodation/Food Services	32	26	85	108	870	2,418
Other Services	72	34	53	58	438	1,744
Public Administration	47	31	26	6	199	1,027

Note: percent values for each village greater than the percent value for the whole of Knox County, Ohio are highlighted. Source: 2019 ESRI Business Analyst estimates.

**Table 7.** Employment by Industry



Commute for Work	Estimate	PCT
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Centerburg ACS 2013-2017

Worked in Place of Residence	205	26.5%
Worked Outside Place of Residence	569	73.5%
Worked in Knox County	322	41.6%
Worked outside Knox County	449	58.0%
Worked Outside Ohio	3	0.4%
Total Workers 16 and Over	774	100.0%

**Table 8.** Commute for work

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

Among the most common job types in Knox County with the best pay, postsecondary teachers top the list with nearly 500 employed at an average annual wage over \$77,000. Over 400 registered nurses average over \$64,000 annually. Elementary and middle school teachers average nearly \$55,000 per year among the 440 counted in a study by Celmar in 2017<sup>2</sup>. Seven of the top ten most common jobs in Knox County, paid wages less than 150 percent of the federal poverty threshold.

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<sup>2</sup> Turnover Basics and Wage Survey Trend Review. Bethany Celmar PHR. Referenced in The Knox County Comprehensive Plan 2018 Update

# Housing Analysis

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Through October of 2019, 22 homes were sold in Centerburg at an average value exceeding \$171,000. According to Zillow, the sales include newer homes on Fieldcrest and Waters Edge in the north and newer subdivision within the village where homes have 3, 4, and 5 bedrooms and at least 2.5 bathrooms. The average sales value for the 15 homes sold in 2018 was \$163,000. Reviewing the Zillow account of home sales in 2018 indicates that a sizable portion of property transfers included homes in the older section of the village. The three property transfers under \$40,000 in 2016 and again in 2017 kept the average sales prices for both years under \$100,000. There is a pronounced upward trend in the average sale value of homes sold in Centerburg. Historic homes have a certain appeal but may not have the bedrooms or amenities common in contemporary construction.

In Centerburg Village, 57 homes have been sold since 2016. Sales as recorded with the Knox County Auditor are summarized in the table below. Two of the three homes listed on Zillow in the summer of 2019 exceeded the average sales value for the year to date. Nearly 500 parcels are assessed as one-family dwellings on a platted lot, including the 25 Heart of Ohio homes on the north side of the village owned by Kno-Ho-Co Affordable Housing LLC. These three- and four-bedroom homes have attached garages and rent from mid-500s to under 700 dollars per month to qualified families.

Centerburg is on the southwest quadrant of Knox County. If metropolitan Columbus continues to expand outwards, Centerburg is the first place new residents may look for a home in Knox County. There are few homes listed on the market currently in the village. Of the homes on the market, those in Centerburg sell in about one month, faster than homes in other villages. Centerburg has a charming center built around the turn of the Twentieth Century and includes a fair representation of home styles through today's suburban home models. The historic nature of the village may be an asset worth preserving and enhancing while the abundance of flat farmland may become the homes of tomorrow.

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

**Table 9.** Homes for sale October 2019. Zillow.com

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

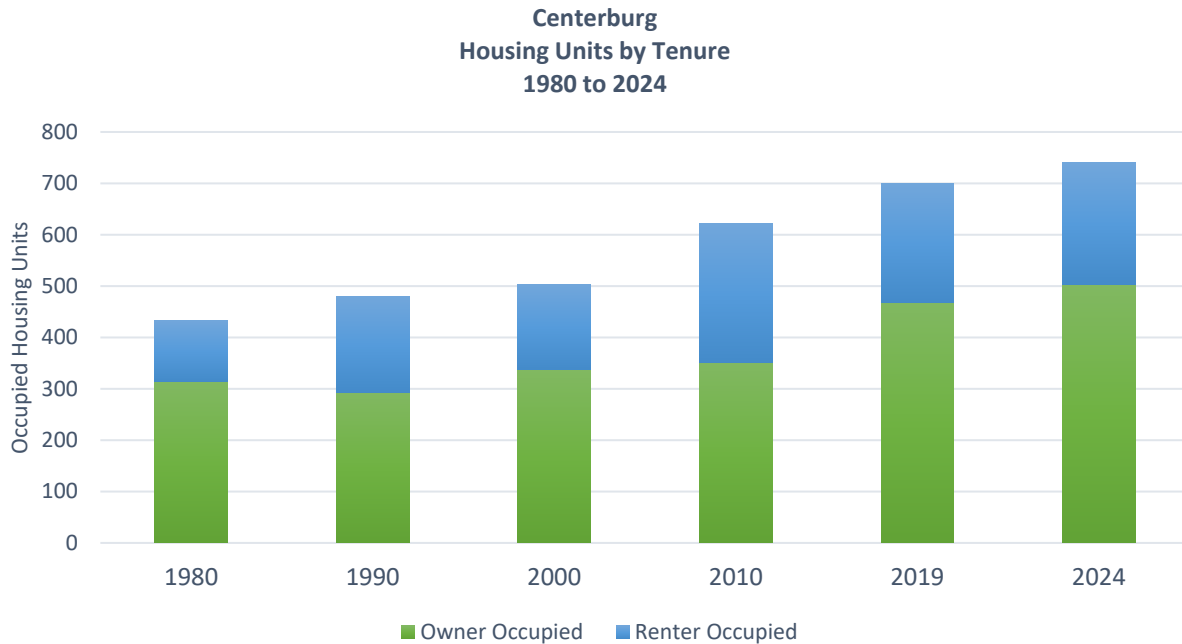
**Table 10.** Centerburg home sales data.

Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure						
	Census 2010		Census 2019		Census 2024	
Centerburg	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Housing Units	679		753		801	
Occupied	622	91.61%	699	92.83%	740	92.38%
Owner	447	65.83%	468	62.15%	503	62.80%
Renter	175	25.77%	231	30.68%	237	29.59%
Vacant	57	8.39%	54	7.17%	61	7.62%

**Table 11.** Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure

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

**Table 12.** Limited data on apartments in Knox County from various sources including Apartments.com and interviews with property managers. Of the property managers reached and willing to provide information in the four villages and Mount Vernon, a significant portion of the properties were affordable and did not have any vacancies.



**Figure 2.** Historic estimate of Housing Units by Tenure in Centerburg.

In the past 10 years, 55 new housing units were constructed (assessor), predominantly within the Centerburg Meadows and Hearts of Ohio subdivisions. The Housing Units by Tenure chart illustrates the percent housing units that are occupied by owners or renters. The chart also shows the over all increase in housing stock between 1980 and 2024. For context, Centerburg Court was built in 1999, Centerburg Place in 2000, Centerburg Pointe in 2008, and the Heart of Ohio homes in 2010.

Centerburg Court Apartments are adjacent to and managed by the same company as the Heart of Ohio homes. This affordable rental option includes 3-bedroom apartments for under \$500 per month. Centerburg Place on the Columbus side of town near contemporary retail options is an option for seniors 62 years of age on a fixed income.

Market-rate rental housing within the study area includes Centerburg Commons apartment community off Cleveland Avenue and townhome style products along Poplar Alley. A one-bedroom apartment rents for around \$500 to \$550 per month according to an owner of a dozen scattered apartments in Centerburg. American Community Survey (ACS) data estimates for Centerburg support the rent ranges reported in interviews. The median contract rent for the census tract north of US Highway 36 is \$450. For the tract south of US Highway 36 the contract rent estimate is \$660 per month.

Outside of Mount Vernon, Centerburg has the most multi-family rental options in Knox County. An account of the limited data on multi-family apartment communities is provided above. Of the property managers reached and willing to provide information in the four villages and Mount Vernon, a significant portion of the properties were affordable and did not have any vacancies. Several other properties were income and age restricted. Though there was no true standard defined or extensive discussion on the topic, the properties identified as affordable set rents in the range of 30% of gross income.

## Rental Housing Demand

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

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

Outside of Mt Vernon, Centerburg is in the best position to absorb some of market-rate multi-family housing demand because of its proximity to Columbus and higher incomes relative to other villages in the county. There are very few market-rate, multi-family housing options in and around Centerburg. The last market-rate apartment property was built in 1997 and is 100% occupied. Based on analysis of single-family home parcels in Centerburg that are not receiving the 2.5 percent owner-occupancy credit 44.9 percent, much of this demand is being absorbed by single-family homes being used as rental properties.

The ideal location for multi-family housing in Centerburg would be close to downtown, in close proximity to shops, services and the bike trail.

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

## For-Sale Housing Demand

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

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

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

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

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

**Table 13.** Short-Term for-sale housing demand scenario. Urban Decision Group.

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

**Table 14.** Mid-term for-sale housing demand scenario. Urban Decision Group.

### Senior Living and Senior Care

Given the age and quality of the single-family housing stock and lack of multi-family options within the area, we anticipate demand for other housing and care options for seniors living within Knox County. Currently, the closest options for senior living and nursing care are located in Mt Vernon. The table below illustrates the options for seniors broken down by type: independent living, congregate care, assisted living and nursing care.

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

Assisted Living Facilities				
Name	Year Open/ Renovated	Total Units	Number Vacant	Occupancy Rate
Brookdale Mount Vernon	2002	110	2	98.2%
Country Club Center II	1979	36	0	100.0%
Hamilton Assisted Living	1989/2013	19	0	100.0%



Mount Vernon Health & Rehab Center (Lower)	2007	11	0	100.0%
Mount Vernon Health & Rehab Center (Upper)	2019	11	11	0.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>187</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>93.0%</b>

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

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

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

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

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

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

Support calculations are summarized in the following table:

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

\*Denotes Daily Fee

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

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



	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number built	4	11	9	11	3	3	1	0	0
Lots available	75	71	60	51	40	37	34	33	33
Absorption Rate	5.33%	15.49%	15.00%	21.57%	7.50%	8.11%	2.94%	0.00%	0.00%
Average Sales Amount of homes			\$193,900	\$193,950	\$222,900		\$171,333	\$168,000	\$143,500
Count of Sales	0	0	1	2	1	0	3	2	1

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number built	5	0	0	1	0	9	1	0
Lots available	33	28	28	28	27	27	18	17
Absorption Rate	15.15%	0.00%	0.00%	3.57%	0.00%	33.33%	5.56%	0.00%
Average Sales Amount of homes	\$185,900	\$188,080	\$191,400	\$208,733	\$228,257	\$231,667	\$236,875	\$243,967
Count of Sales	5	5	3	6	7	3	4	9

Centerburg Meadows, adjacent to the Heart of Ohio Homes, and new multi-unit communities on the northwest side of the Village, begun in 2003. The chart above illustrates the number of homes built per year. With the Recession, development slowed to seven homes in the seven years between 2008 and 2015. Several lots have been consolidated. The typical lot size is 0.23 acres. Homes constructed between 2003 and 2018 range in size from 1,063 to 2,884 square feet. Seventy-five lots were counted between the various sections of Centerburg Meadows shown in the aerial map

above. Seventeen lots remain available after the recent uptick in activity in the subdivision. Nine homes were built in 2017. Nine homes were sold in 2019 at an average sales price of \$244,000.

### Build Out Analysis



**Figure 3.** Vacant residential parcels in Centerburg.

There are 700 housing units within Centerburg currently. Within the existing village boundaries, up to 206 single-family units could be built to R-2 zoning district standards on the vacant residentially zoned parcels in Centerburg. The R-2 zoning district includes the older section of the village. The minimum lot size is approximately 8,000 square feet. There are few large parcels within the Village to develop or subdivide.

The large, incorporated 70-acre lot on Johnsville Road (SR-314) currently zoned and used for agricultural purposes, mathematically, could be built out in the model of the Centerburg Meadows subdivision to 250 homes.

Single-family zoning districts outside the historic core requires larger lots. We spoke with some residents in Centerburg who would prefer larger estate type lots to reflect a rural charm. Anecdotally, we see that the quarter acre (10,000 square feet) lots in Centerburg Meadows are slow to build out.

Centerburg is surrounded by flat agricultural land. This simple calculation does not consider scenarios for annexation, rezoning, or more intensive development patterns. Nor is it prescriptive. This is illustrative. And intended to establish a baseline for housing that could be accommodated within the current limits of the village.

The following page contains images from a select sample of residential buildings types in Centerburg Village.



*Home for sale in Centerburg.*



*Home for sale in Centerburg.*



*Corner of Ewing and Church Streets in Centerburg.*



*Centerburg Point Senior Center on US Highway 36*

# Commercial Analysis

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We identified 48 businesses located in Centerburg Village in three distinct commercial zones: Downtown, Southwest Columbus Road, and Northwest Columbus Road. In Downtown Centerburg, an area defined as the blocks to either side of Main Street between Calhoun and Ewing Streets, 29 businesses representing all industry classifications were identified. West Columbus Road where small box retailers are located, 12 businesses were identified. Another 7 businesses are scattered about the village. Charts of businesses by industry type and location illustrate the variety of businesses in Centerburg.

We spoke with representatives of 13 Centerburg businesses. The primary concerns involved parking and the number of places to eat. Business owners perceive parking to be an issue when there isn't a spot available directly out front. Centerburg business owners would like more restaurant options in the village.

Centerburg is close to Columbus and to Interstate 71. There are no highways in Knox County. A portion of State Route 13 is built to a limited access highway standard as it bypasses Fredericktown between Mansfield and Mount Vernon. The main thoroughfares in Knox County, including US Highway 36 between Mount Vernon and Sunbury through Centerburg are two lane roads with sidewalks, curbs, and on-street parking that pass-through villages. The one rail spur still active in Knox County operates between industrial districts in Mount Vernon and Newark. This has limited the commercial warehouse, manufacturing, and commercial marketability of the county, and allowed Knox County to maintain a rural character.<sup>3</sup>

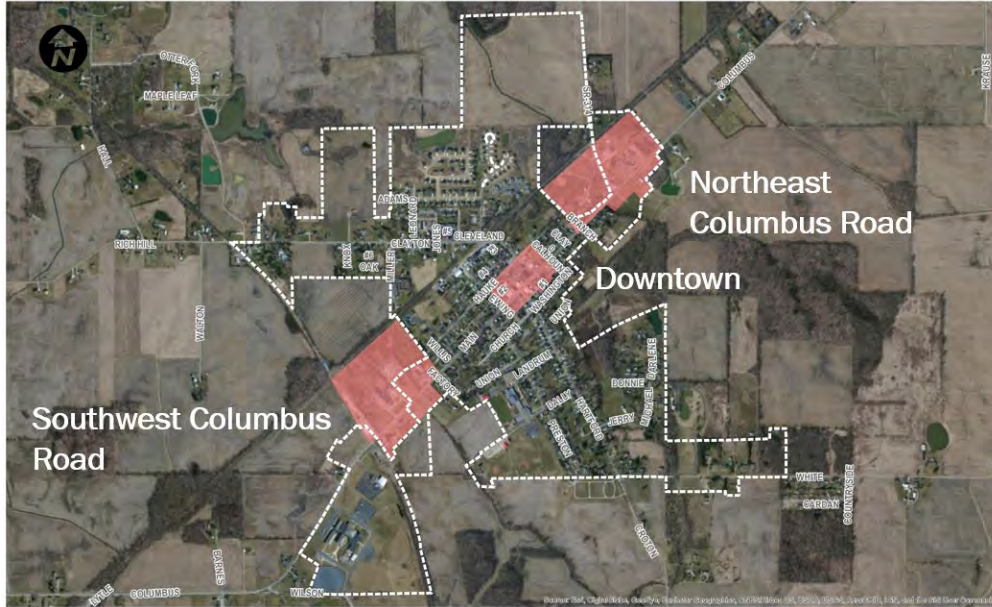
In several interviews of property owners we learned that 100 of square feet rent for approximately 100 dollars per month. Built out specialized spaces with higher utility demands such as restaurants rent for more per month. On an annual fee basis, commercial spaces rent at approximately \$7/ square foot. Warehouses rent in the range of \$5/ per square foot. Data for Centerburg is limited. Many buildings are owned by the on-site business. There are not many data points for this geography.

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

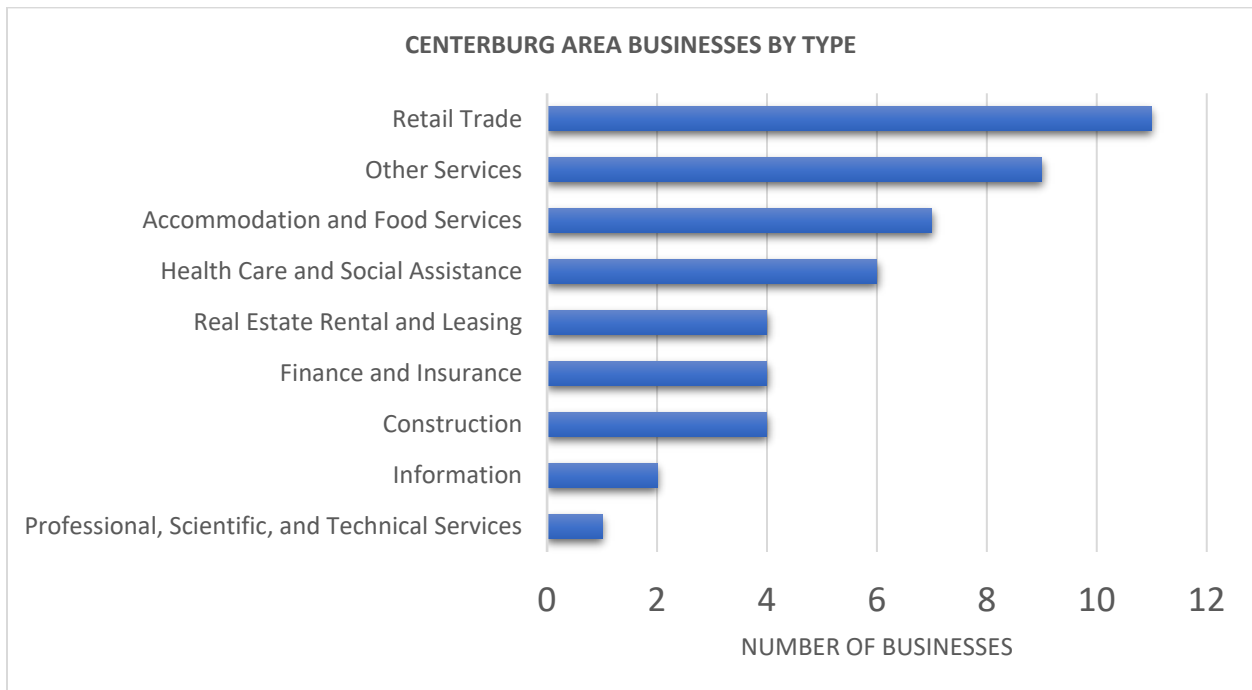
**Table 15.** Commercial lease rates in Knox County.

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<sup>3</sup> Foundations for the Future of Knox County. Report prepared by the Ohio State University City and Regional Planning Economic Development Studio for the Area Development Foundation of Knox County. April 2016.



**Figure 4.** Commercial Business Districts in Centerburg



**Figure 5.** Mix of industries represented in Centerburg Village

There are 48 businesses, primarily retail and other services, in Centerburg. Other services category includes nail salons, pet care, auto repair, funeral home. The Southwest Columbus Zone includes parcels in the village and township for analysis purposes. The businesses within the Village limits are Dollar General, Washington Auto Parts and Paint, Twist N Shake, and Whitey's Car Wash.

## Retail Overview

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

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

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

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

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

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

Excess grocery store demand is met by Kroger in Sunbury (15-minute drive), Johnstown (20-minute drive) and the Kroger, Walmart, and other options in Mt Vernon (20-minute drive). Excess restaurant demand is being met by Mt Vernon, Sunbury, and Columbus. The average restaurant in Knox County generates \$663K in annual sales volume. Mt Vernon is oversupplied in restaurant sales by \$26.2 million annually. Knox County is undersupplied in restaurant sales by \$9.9 million annually.



NAICS	2017 Industry Summary	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus	Number of Businesses
44-45,722	Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$26,316,076	\$12,536,261	\$13,779,815	35.5	17
44-45	Total Retail Trade	\$23,772,942	\$10,982,789	\$12,790,153	36.8	13
722	Total Food & Drink	\$2,543,135	\$1,553,471	\$989,664	24.2	4
2017 Industry Group						
441	Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$5,173,722	\$754,423	\$4,419,299	74.5	2
4411	Automobile Dealers	\$4,182,448	\$0	\$4,182,448	100.0	0
4412	Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$486,473	\$150,519	\$335,954	52.7	1
4413	Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$504,801	\$603,904	(\$99,103)	(8.9)	1
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$722,469	\$0	\$722,469	100.0	0
4421	Furniture Stores	\$440,030	\$0	\$440,030	100.0	0
4422	Home Furnishings Stores	\$282,439	\$0	\$282,439	100.0	0
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$750,657	\$1,077,952	(\$327,295)	(17.9)	1
444	Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$1,733,860	\$402,299	\$1,331,561	62.3	2
4441	Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	\$1,605,657	\$337,017	\$1,268,640	65.3	1
4442	Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$128,203	\$65,282	\$62,921	32.5	1
445	Food & Beverage Stores	\$4,057,699	\$1,024,679	\$3,033,020	59.7	1
4451	Grocery Stores	\$3,652,644	\$829,002	\$2,823,642	63.0	1
4452	Specialty Food Stores	\$229,957	\$195,677	\$34,280	8.1	1
4453	Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$175,098	\$0	\$175,098	100.0	0
4,464,461	Health & Personal Care Stores	\$1,713,844	\$1,870,338	(\$156,494)	(4.4)	1
4,474,471	Gasoline Stations	\$2,687,724	\$3,529,016	(\$841,292)	(13.5)	1
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$1,103,588	\$0	\$1,103,588	100.0	0
4481	Clothing Stores	\$715,650	\$0	\$715,650	100.0	0
4482	Shoe Stores	\$165,481	\$0	\$165,481	100.0	0
4483	Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$222,457	\$0	\$222,457	100.0	0
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$535,225	\$842,602	(\$307,377)	(22.3)	1
4511	Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	\$443,915	\$842,602	(\$398,687)	(31.0)	1
4512	Book, Periodical & Music Stores	\$91,309	\$0	\$91,309	100.0	0
452	General Merchandise Stores	\$3,956,025	\$781,508	\$3,174,517	67.0	1
4521	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$2,758,858	\$0	\$2,758,858	100.0	0
4529	Other General Merchandise Stores	\$1,197,167	\$781,508	\$415,659	21.0	1
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$995,346	\$699,973	\$295,373	17.4	3
4531	Florists	\$42,601	\$0	\$42,601	100.0	0
4532	Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$218,103	\$198,604	\$19,499	4.7	2
4533	Used Merchandise Stores	\$139,792	\$0	\$139,792	100.0	0
4539	Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$594,851	\$501,368	\$93,483	8.5	1
454	Nonstore Retailers	\$342,783	\$0	\$342,783	100.0	0
4541	Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$230,434	\$0	\$230,434	100.0	0
4542	Vending Machine Operators	\$36,628	\$0	\$36,628	100.0	0
4543	Direct Selling Establishments	\$75,721	\$0	\$75,721	100.0	0
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	\$2,543,135	\$1,553,471	\$989,664	24.2	4
7223	Special Food Services	\$71,702	\$0	\$71,702	100.0	0
7224	Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$89,931	\$0	\$89,931	100.0	0
7225	Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$2,381,502	\$1,553,471	\$828,031	21.0	4

Figure 6. Retail Supply and Demand for Centerburg.

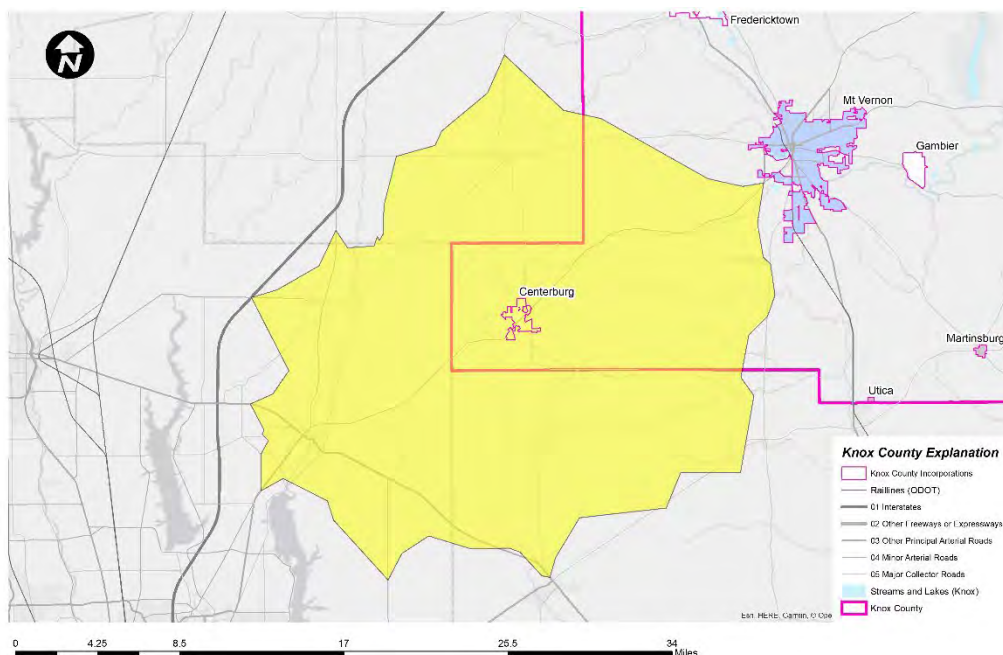
Overall, the various retail subsectors (including food and drink) are undersupplied in the market. Demand for the majority of retail sectors (where the value in the demand column is greater than the supply column) is fulfilled outside of the bedroom village of Centerburg. In these cases, the consumers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

Some subsectors, including Automobile Dealers, Furniture Stores, Clothing Stores, and Specialty Food and Drinking Places are not represented in Centerburg, according to data aggregated on a national scale in 2017. The population size of Centerburg and proximity to shopping districts in Columbus may continue to require villagers to go out of town for inelastic goods. There is opportunity in the Food Services and Drinking Places with demand undersupplied by nearly \$1 Million.

### Secondary Market Area Retail Analysis

In order to account for the demand for retail goods within the immediate area surrounding Centerburg we examined supply and demands factors within a secondary market area – a 15-minute drive time from the grocery store adjacent to the village (Home Town Market). Centerburg is 30 minutes from Mount Vernon where a variety of grocery stores including Walmart and Kroger are located. The 15-minute market area for the Kroger in Sunbury to the west reaches Centerburg, as does the 15-minute market area for the Kroger in Johnstown to the south.

The following map illustrates the nearest options for full-service groceries. Mount Vernon is centrally located within Knox County and has more options. Sunbury is on route to I-71, places of work, and wider retail options in Franklin County.



**Figure 7.** Location of major grocery stores in the region and their market areas as defined by 15 minute drivetimes.

NAICS	2017 Industry Summary	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus	Number of Businesses
44-45,722	Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$430,237,678	\$221,817,138	\$208,420,540	32.0	131
44-45	Total Retail Trade	\$388,622,824	\$197,693,673	\$190,929,151	32.6	94
722	Total Food & Drink	\$41,614,854	\$24,123,465	\$17,491,389	26.6	37
2017 Industry Group						
441	Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$83,351,264	\$15,083,014	\$68,268,250	69.4	10
4411	Automobile Dealers	\$67,031,201	\$3,519,414	\$63,511,787	90.0	1
4412	Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$7,960,014	\$1,285,195	\$6,674,819	72.2	2
4413	Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$8,360,049	\$10,278,405	(\$1,918,356)	(10.3)	7
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$11,732,841	\$2,417,018	\$9,315,823	65.8	5
4421	Furniture Stores	\$7,036,304	\$1,440,150	\$5,596,154	66.0	3
4422	Home Furnishings Stores	\$4,696,538	\$976,868	\$3,719,670	65.6	2
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$12,346,081	\$2,224,093	\$10,121,988	69.5	2
444	Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$29,150,754	\$18,544,570	\$10,606,184	22.2	18
4441	Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	\$26,784,425	\$17,225,850	\$9,558,575	21.7	13
4442	Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$2,366,329	\$1,318,720	\$1,047,609	28.4	5
445	Food & Beverage Stores	\$66,428,190	\$65,437,668	\$990,522	0.8	10
4451	Grocery Stores	\$59,738,541	\$63,931,519	(\$4,192,978)	(3.4)	7
4452	Specialty Food Stores	\$3,747,927	\$879,600	\$2,868,327	62.0	3
4453	Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$2,941,722	\$0	\$2,941,722	100.0	0
4,464,461	Health & Personal Care Stores	\$28,337,291	\$20,306,507	\$8,030,784	16.5	5
4,474,471	Gasoline Stations	\$42,840,734	\$44,019,094	(\$1,178,360)	(1.4)	6
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$18,369,351	\$11,948,654	\$6,420,697	21.2	8
4481	Clothing Stores	\$11,833,708	\$7,061,741	\$4,771,967	25.3	4
4482	Shoe Stores	\$2,664,874	\$4,645,148	(\$1,980,274)	(27.1)	3
4483	Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$3,870,769	\$0	\$3,870,769	100.0	0
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$8,871,547	\$3,264,013	\$5,607,534	46.2	9
4511	Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	\$7,376,050	\$3,234,920	\$4,141,130	39.0	8
4512	Book, Periodical & Music Stores	\$1,495,498	\$0	\$1,495,498	100.0	0
452	General Merchandise Stores	\$64,878,419	\$2,070,372	\$62,808,047	93.8	2
4521	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$45,362,505	\$0	\$45,362,505	100.0	0
4529	Other General Merchandise Stores	\$19,515,914	\$1,964,159	\$17,551,755	81.7	2
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$16,323,368	\$8,411,513	\$7,911,855	32.0	17
4531	Florists	\$794,969	\$116,996	\$677,973	74.3	1
4532	Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$3,570,672	\$384,584	\$3,186,088	80.6	4
4533	Used Merchandise Stores	\$2,289,057	\$1,323,560	\$965,497	26.7	4
4539	Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$9,668,669	\$6,586,374	\$3,082,295	19.0	9
454	Nonstore Retailers	\$5,992,984	\$3,967,157	\$2,025,827	20.3	2
4541	Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$3,818,379	\$2,599,031	\$1,219,348	19.0	1
4542	Vending Machine Operators	\$598,720	\$0	\$598,720	100.0	0
4543	Direct Selling Establishments	\$1,575,885	\$1,341,288	\$234,597	8.0	1
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	\$41,614,854	\$24,123,465	\$17,491,389	26.6	37
7223	Special Food Services	\$1,202,735	\$214,306	\$988,429	69.8	1
7224	Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$1,527,986	\$177,883	\$1,350,103	79.1	1
7225	Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$38,884,133	\$23,731,276	\$15,152,857	24.2	35

Figure 8. Retail Supply and Demand within 15 minutes of Home Town Market located in Centeburg.

## Downtown Centerburg

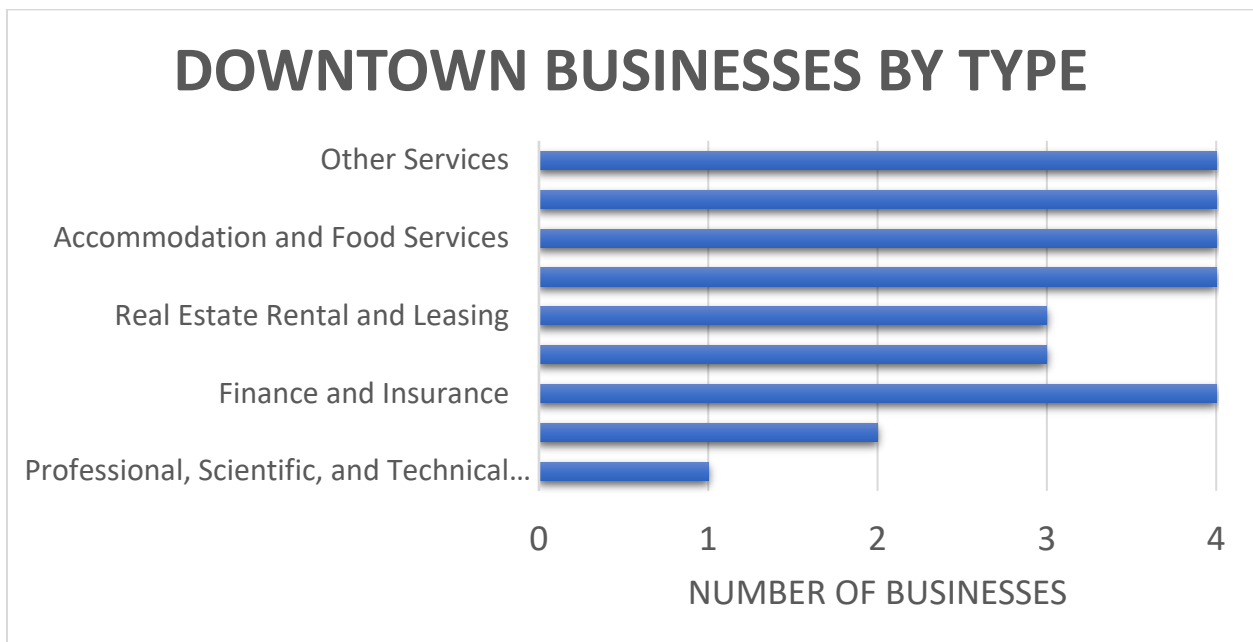


Figure 9. Mix of industries represented in downtown section of Centerburg Village

Downtown Centerburg is located on Columbus Road, or Main Street, and is the traditional center of the Village. The old mill is located along the former railroad corridor to the north side of Main Street. Downtown is several blocks deep by several blocks wide. Properties located off Main Street suffer from a lack of visibility. The Downtown is extremely walkable. Crosswalks and signage may help to overcome perceived parking and visibility issues.

Two restaurants opened within the past year (The Burg, Midway 1834 Village Tavern), while two restaurants closed within the past few years (Kristi's Bakery, InTown Restaurant). Still, of those surveyed, Downtown workers would like more variety among restaurants. Some businesses attract customers from a 25-30 Mile Radius. Several business owners with only on-street parking expressed concern over a shortage of parking. We did not observe a shortage of parking in the Downtown district.





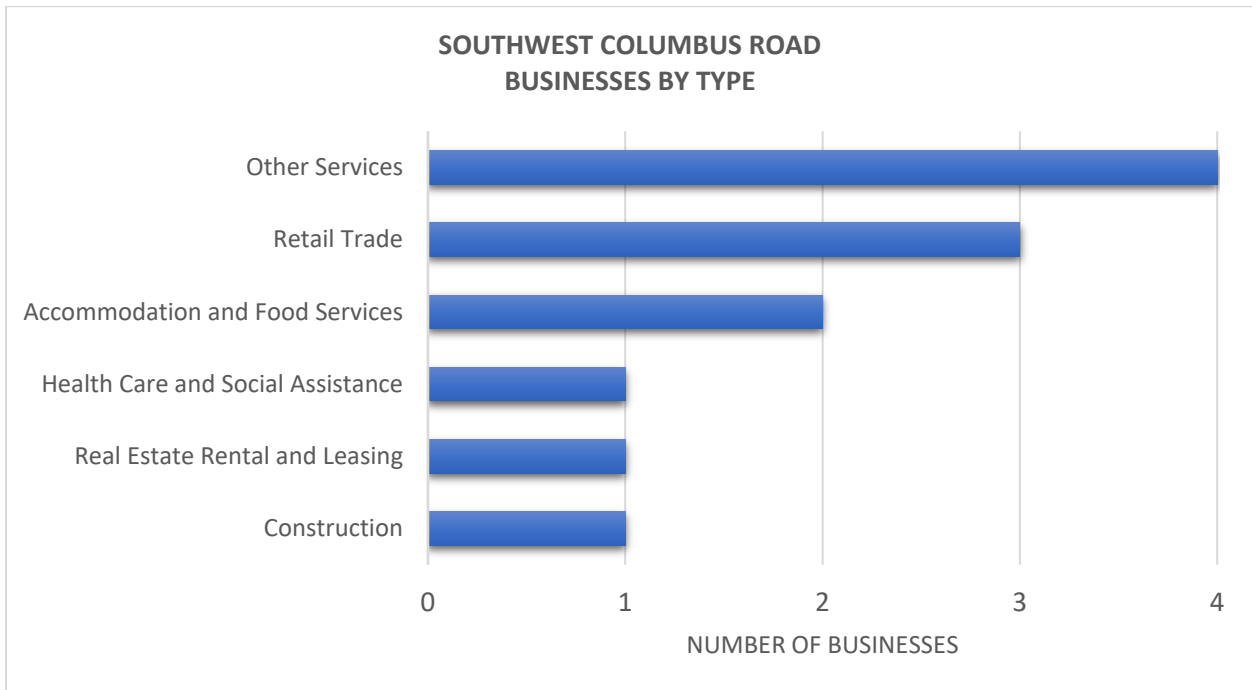
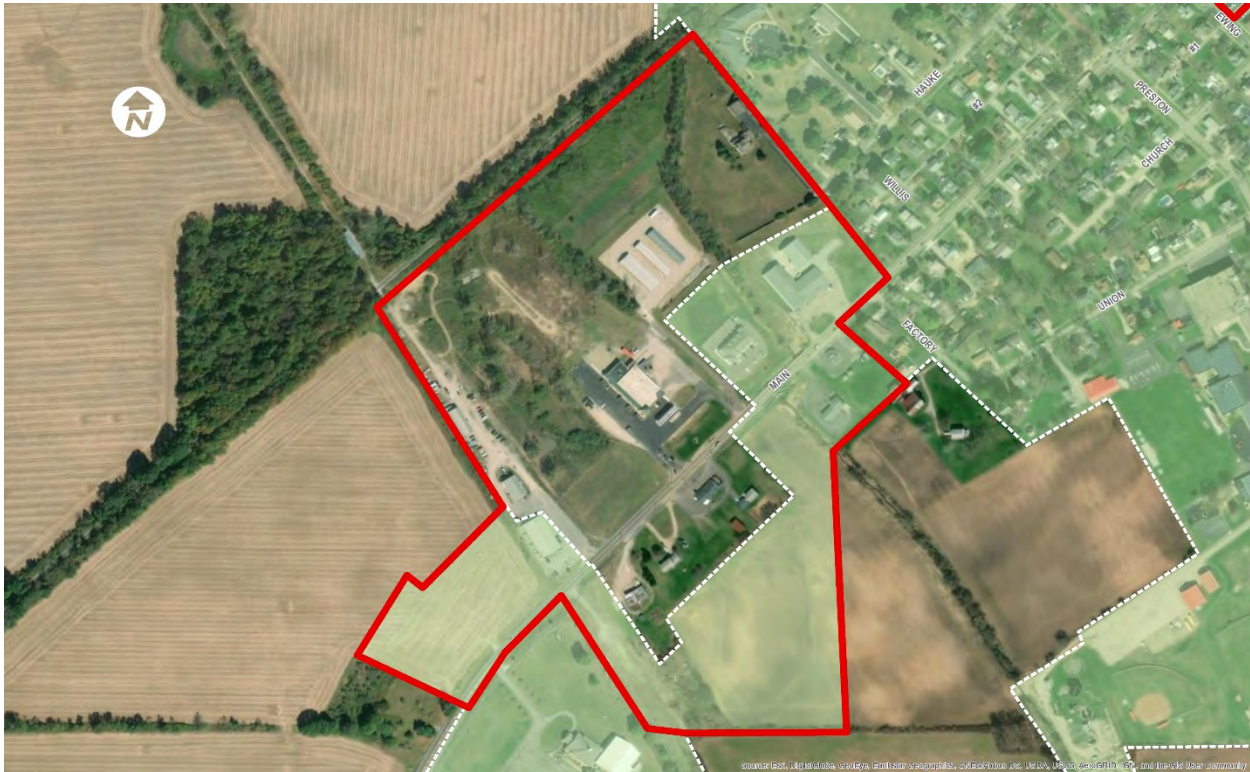


There are two vacant buildings – one is a village-owned property on Hartford Avenue – and one is the recently demolished structure adjacent to it. There is also one property with a for-lease sign at 15 West Main (Adjacent to 4 Seasons Air) and two more spaces that appear vacant on Main Street. Potential uses for village-owned property include open space, parking short term; multi-family/mixed use long term.

The “Brown Building” adjacent to First Knox National Bank, with 1,976 square feet ground floor retail, 2,800 sf residential above, has been vacant for at least 10 years. This is a potential use case for a vacant property registration ordinance, similar to the ordinance recently established in Mt Vernon.

COMMERCIAL ZONE	COMMERCIAL SQ FT	VACANT SQ FT	VACANT %	UNDEVELOPED ACREAGE
Downtown	77,335	9,781	12.6%	0
Southwest Columbus Road	42,291	0	0.0%	8.9
Northeast Columbus Road	8,710	0	0.0%	5.4

## Southwest Columbus Road



**Figure 10.** Mix of industries represented in the Southwest Columbus Road section of Centerburg Village





The Southwest Columbus Road commercial zone includes areas in and out of Centerburg incorporated boundaries including the grocery store (Village boundaries are shaded in green). No distinction between Village/Township Property. Hometown Market is outside of the village boundary. Dollar General is inside Centerburg.

Hometown Market is attempting to draw people in through events, wine tasting, and food trucks. Centerburg Dental Care is adding more operating chairs due to demand. The high school is located just south and west of this commercial zone. The Southwest Columbus Road zone is an auto-oriented area. The Heart of Ohio trail parallels Columbus Road. Future trails may increase the opportunities to travel through the zone. The developable land currently zoned commercial in the Southwest Columbus section totals 8.9 Acres. Potential uses for this area include senior living, restaurant, and retail establishments.

Northwest Columbus Road



The Northwest Columbus Road zone includes Memorial Park which is in the township. Developable parcels adjacent to the pharmacy are currently zoned Open Space. With a zoning change, potential uses may include Medical Office.

## Recreation and Tourism

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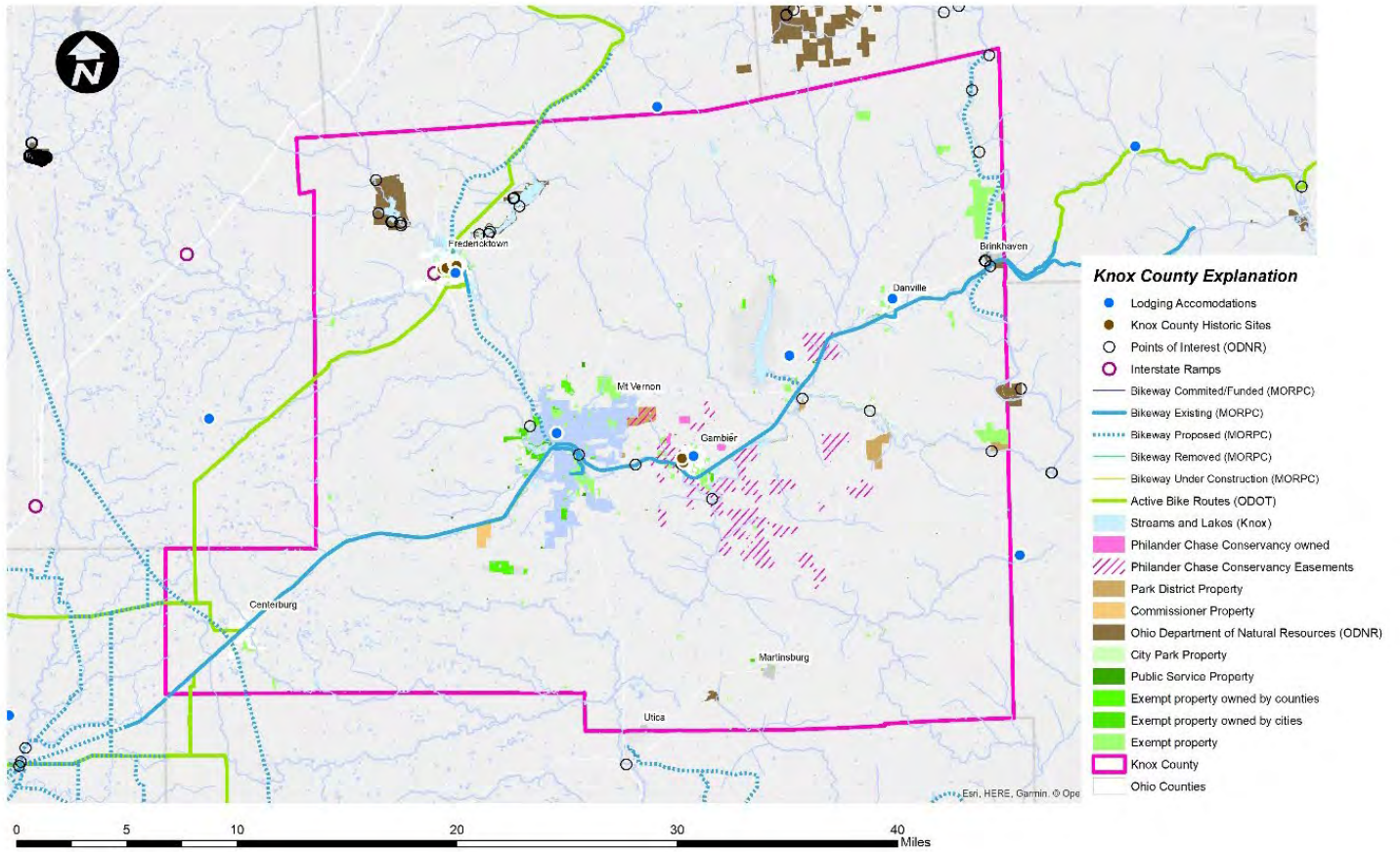
Many of the recreational and cultural assets in Knox County are located to the north of and along the Kokosing River. Centerburg neighborhoods have a traditional Nineteenth Century feel. The landscape is generally flat and agricultural in nature. Centerburg is located nearest to the northern suburbs of Columbus. A cyclist could reach Pizza Burg, adjacent to the Heart of Ohio Trail in approximately two hours, or 22 miles, from Westerville. A trip from downtown Columbus to Centerburg and back would require a commitment of most of a day. The one-way estimated trip time is 3 1/2 hours.

The Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition<sup>4</sup> developed a tourism strategy based on research involving state, local, and trail users in their network areas such as Cleveland and Pittsburg. The Coalition recommends states dedicate more funding to tourism and completing the trail network. Users and local officials emphasized the experiences and attractions along the route that capture the distinctiveness of the region. The report called attention to the industrial history, Underground Railroad tours, Native American history, agricultural tours, breweries, crafts, and the specific natural beauty of the region that could be explored through walking tours or while on route.

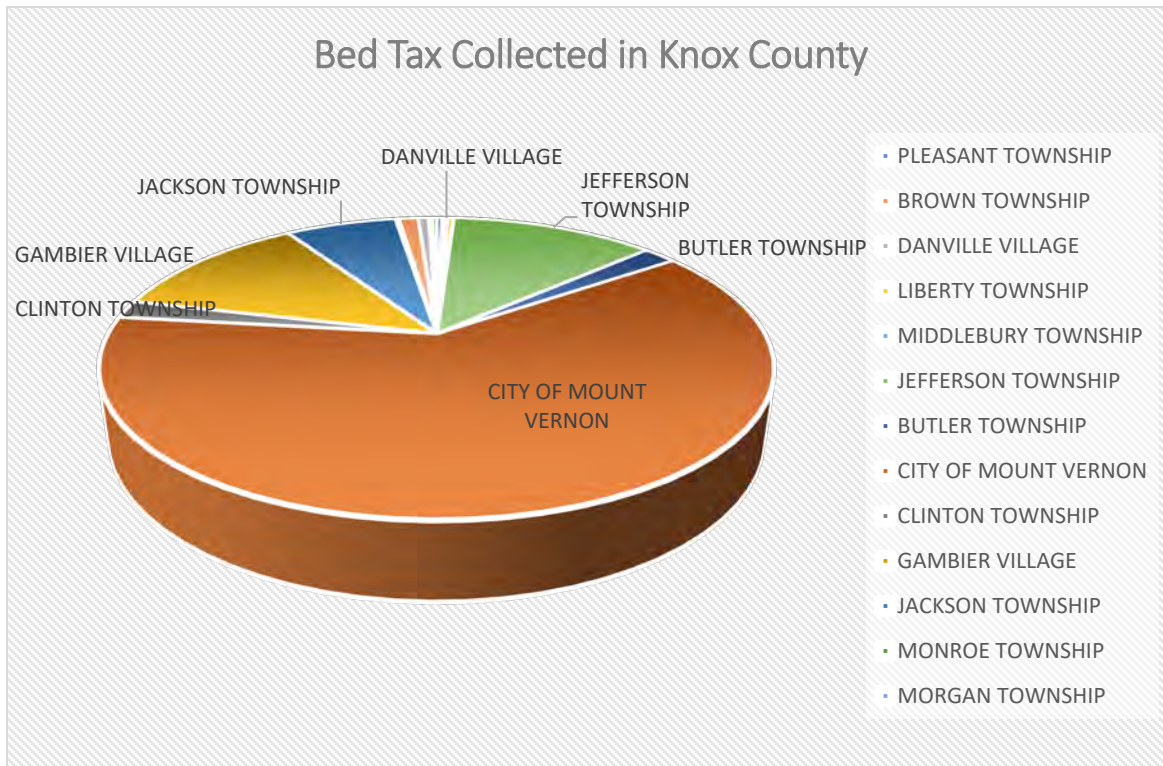
Self-selected survey respondents (majority male, age 46 to 65, and weekly trail users) preferred camping followed by hotels and bed and breakfasts for over-night trips. The nearest campground in the region is in Fredericktown which is off route. The nearest hotels and bed and breakfasts were found in Mount Vernon. No lodging was identified in Centerburg on several windshield surveys of the Village. No results were returned in online searches for hotels, campgrounds, or bed and breakfasts. A wide variety of lodging is available in the Columbus metropolitan region. Auto and cycling tourists alike may opt to continue through Centerburg for the full service hotels in larger cities close to other amenities. At the same time, the unique character and location may make it an attractive or necessary location to stay for an evening. A formal lodge or airbnb presence could connect Centerburg to active, outdoor enthusiasts.

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<sup>4</sup> Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition. I Heart Trails Tourism Strategy. January 2016.



**Figure 11.** Map of recreational and cultural assets in Knox County with lodging options and multiuse trail routes.



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

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

**Figure 13.** Lodging accommodations in Knox County with average weekday and weekend rates where available.

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

The newly designated cross country Great American Rail Trail from the District of Columbia to Washington State would follow the Heart of Ohio Trail through Centerburg to the Ohio to Erie Trail through Downtown Columbus, Ohio. The trail is a new way to see the country and may attract tourists to shops, restaurants, and lodges along the way. Centerburg is the midway point between Mount Vernon and Sunbury and may be a good location for regional cyclists to stop for a moment for a meal or refreshments.

The Mon River Trail System in West Virginia links a series of “trail towns” that supports hikers with services, promotes the trail to its citizens, and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated. Trail Towns are built on a relationship between a town, the trail, and its volunteers.<sup>5</sup>

With the Knox County Comprehensive Plan focus on building up existing communities through the planning principle guidelines to ensure responsible growth and preserve environmental character, Villages may enjoy continued distinct identities. The spatial separation protected by the comprehensive plan<sup>6</sup> reinforces the attractiveness of the trail for the recreational cyclist looking for an escape into the rural Heart of Ohio.

Parkersburg, Fairmont, and Morgantown along the Parkersburg to Pittsburg (P2P) trail corridor in West Virginia have adopted comprehensive plans that recognize existing trails as tourist attractions.<sup>7</sup> The trails are the backbone of their shared-use path network which advances quality-of-life, transportation, recreation, and economic development objectives for those in each city. The Parkersburg Plan (2011) goes a step further in recommending bicycle and pedestrian facilities for all new and redevelopment projects.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) has proposed a greenway trail between Johnstown in Licking County to the south and Mount Gilead in Morrow County to the north. The trail would follow a corridor that resembles a former rail corridor past the Centerburg High School, the Dollar General, before intersecting the Heart of Ohio trail and an Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Active Bike Route on Hall Road. The trail would cross US Highway 36, or Columbus Road, at the gateway to Centerburg. If this trail is built and intersection improvements include slowing and stopping drivers on US Highway 36 are constructed, new options for travel through the Village may develop.

The Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau estimates the total impact of tourism on the county to generate \$94 Million in sales which employees over 1,500 (5.8 percent in private sector employment) who earned over \$33 Million in 2017.<sup>8</sup> Tax revenues associated with tourism is

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<sup>5</sup> North Country Trail Association.

<sup>6</sup> Knox County Comprehensive Plan 2018 Update.

<sup>7</sup> Connecting Parkersburg to Pittsburg by Rail-Trail – Bringing a world-class trail network to West Virginia. A rail-trail feasibility study of the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition’s Parkersburg to Pittsburg Corridor. Published April 24, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> The Economic Impact of Tourism in Knox County, Ohio by Tourism Economics, prepared for the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau. June 2018.

estimated to exceed \$12 Million according to a report from 2018. Of the \$60.5 Million in direct sales in Knox County in 2017, approximately one third went to retail trade where over 200 were employed and another third to food and beverage sector where over 500 were employed. The report asserts that tourism supports 1 in every 17 jobs in Knox County.

More information on the trails in Centerburg may be found at <https://knoxcountyparks.org/> and <http://www.railstotrails.org/greatamericanrailtrail/>

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

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

Cyclists are self-sufficient. A restroom, drinking water, and a secure, robust, purpose-built bike rack at the main entrance of a place to rest suits most. Well-marked, well lighted, visible, sheltered, and secure bike parking at local eateries and the grocery store could establish a cultural identity around cycling for the village. A unified wayfinding plan that includes signs on US Highway 36 may encourage car commuters to experience the trail and local businesses. A gateway concept at the western edge of the Village where the proposed trail would cross US Highway 36 may enhance the visible of Centerburg and the attractiveness of cycling within the community in a signature project.

To develop tourism around the trail, we recommend establishing a bed and breakfast in the traditional center of the village that takes advantage of proximity to the trail. Candidate sites that may appeal to travelers looking to experience Centerburg include historic homes, the second stories of downtown storefronts, or even a novel adaptation of the grain silos for lodging. Connecting local leadership with regional and national cycling coalitions may inform the feasibility analysis and strategies Centerburg pursues. The Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Parks Commission will be integral to the success of the trail.

In addition to developing a culture around cycling, Centerburg should promote its downtown and historic neighborhoods.



*Pizza Burg, located in the Mill once served by the rail line now fronts the Heart of Ohio Trail.*

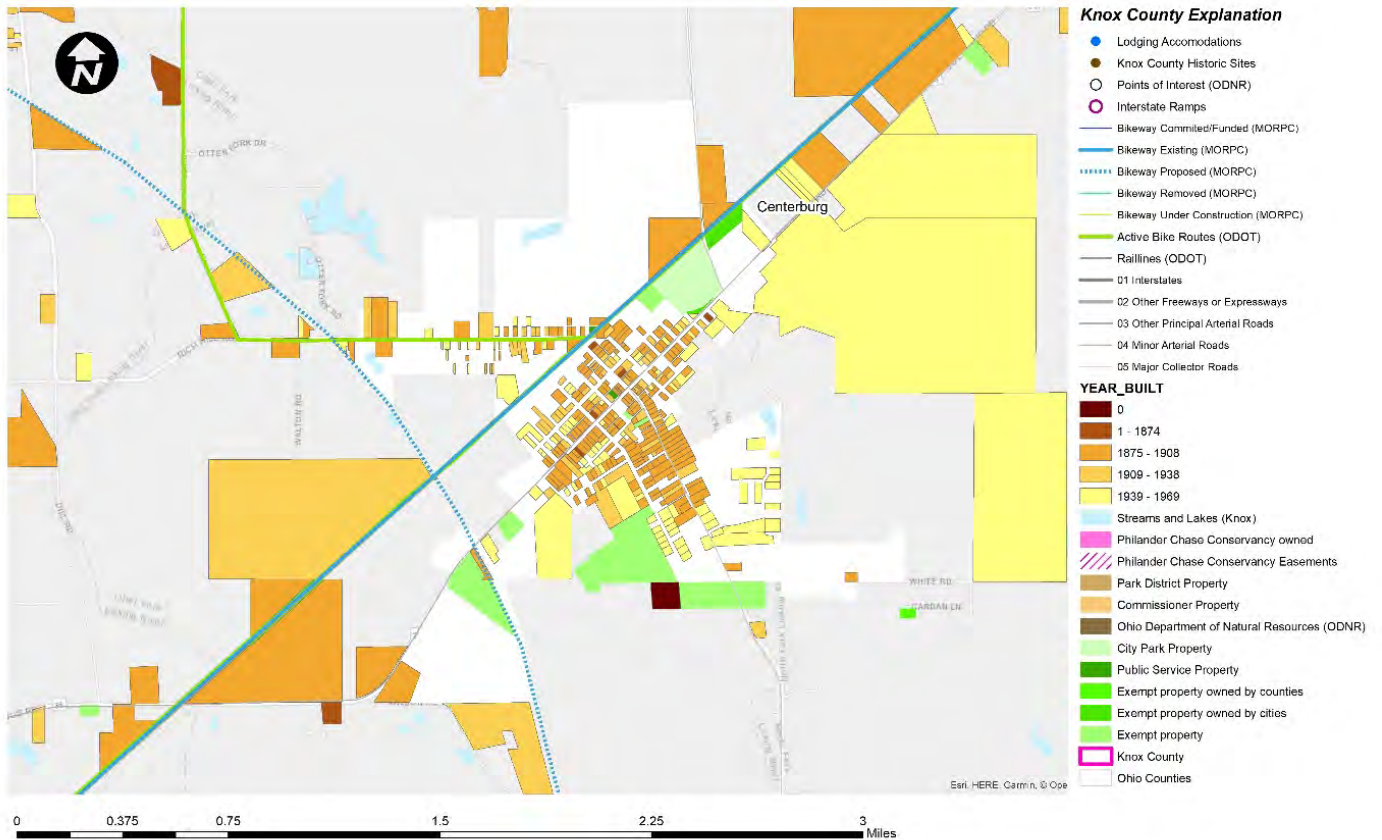


*Asphalt trail parallel to US Highway 36 connects the high school on the southwestern outskirts of the village to the sidewalk in the traditional center. A proposed multi-use trail would cross Main Street here and continue past the former passenger rail station*



*Multi-use facilities in Hillair Township Memorial Park between the Heart of Ohio Trail and Main Street.*





**Figure 14.** Trails (blue and green lines) and public use property (green polygons) in Centerburg are shown with properties old enough to be considered historic (orange and yellow polygons). Where the dashed blue line crosses US Highway 36 is an opportunity to create a gateway and enhance bicycle/pedestrian safety and comfort in Centerburg. Gateway to Centerburg pictured below.

