Village of Plain City, Ohio

UPTOWN PLAN

March 2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Prepared for:

Prepared by:

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01 *Introduction*

WHAT IS THE UPTOWN PLAN?

The Uptown Plan is a framework for future growth and development in the downtown core, tailored to Plain City's Uptown District. The goal of the Plan is to grow the local economy and unique sense of place by creating a plan that is rooted in community values and aspirations, balanced with today's market realities and proven public and private sector solutions.

In 2021, the Village of Plain City initiated the process to create a plan for the downtown core, locally known as the "Uptown", centered around Main Street and Chillicothe Street. The plan was created through the collaboration of Village staff, steering committee members, stakeholders, and input from the community. The resulting plan includes an analysis of existing conditions in Uptown, comparisons to communities in other regions, and conceptual plans for key redevelopment projects in strategic locations or priority projects.

The priority projects fill growing needs within the community, diversify the economy, and extend critical connections between regional trail networks and community resources. At the end of the report, a detailed implementation plan or toolkit is provided as a reference to encourage partnerships between the government and other organizations, and direct the development of an enhanced public and private realm.

The clocktower is a staple of Uptown and a wayfinding landmark.

STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

The Uptown study area is centered at the intersection of Main and Chillicothe Streets, extending east to Big Darby Creek, south to Nappa Alley, west to Park and Guy Streets, and north to the properties fronting First Avenue.

PLAIN CITY, OHIO

Legend

— ■ — Project Boundary

— ■ — Village Boundary

PROJECT PROCESS

The planning process was divided into five phases, with key dates and objectives identified to keep the project on time and within budget. The final plan is a culmination of existing conditions analysis, extensive research, and community discussions.

INVESTIGATE
Spring 2022

1. Project Kickoff
2. Area tour
3. Existing conditions analysis
4. Steering Committee #1 (Review study area, goals, and objectives)

INVENT
Summer 2022

1. Create vision and development principles
2. Steering Committee #3 (Concept development)

IGNITE
Fall - Winter 2022

1. Create marketing material and development incentives
2. Finalize plan

INFORM
Spring - Summer 2022

1. Stakeholder interviews
2. Steering Committee #2 (Review key findings)
3. Community survey

IMPLEMENT
Summer - Fall 2022

1. Form implementation strategies
2. Steering Committee #4 (Review draft plan)

WHO IS INVOLVED

Many community members provided valuable insights and perspectives during the planning process, and many groups will continue to be involved in the Plan's implementation. Most importantly, continued support and use of the Plan by the following groups is essential for the future of Uptown Plain City.

Village of Plain City Leadership & Staff

Village leadership initiated the process of creating an Uptown Plan and staff members assisted with outreach efforts. Staff should be familiar with the Plan when preparing annual work programs, budgets, capital improvement plans, and economic incentives.

Madison and Union Counties & State of Ohio Agencies

Local agency directors should familiarize themselves with the Plan to guide policy decisions pertaining to Plain City and seek opportunities where there are common goals to help with implementation.

Builders & Designers (Developers, Investors, Consultants)

Individual projects have the potential to greatly impact the overall character of Plain City. In the future, builders and designers should review the Plan to understand the community's vision.

Community Representatives (Local Organizations, Steering Committee, Stakeholders)

Many different perspectives were brought together at the steering committee meetings and through stakeholder interviews, which broadened the conversation about Uptown Plain City. Continued involvement of community representatives will be critical to implementing Plan recommendations.

Funding Sources (Charitable Organizations, Grant Providers)

The Plan proposes funding strategies for each of the concepts and will serve as a marketing method to attract future funding through local organizations and grant providers. Public and private sector partnerships will be key to fully realize the vision for Uptown.

Community Members

Over 400 community members contributed to the formation of the Plan through the online survey and many more will be involved in the implementation of the Plan. The people of Plain City are experts on their community and should continue to champion their priorities for Uptown.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The Plain City Uptown Plan is intended to guide decisions and manage long term growth and development in Uptown. The plan will be implemented over time by those who have been involved in its formation, as well as additional public and private entities. From time to time, unusual cases will arise and the use of flexible solutions is encouraged.

The plan guides **public entities during:**

- The administration of zoning and subdivision regulations;

- The location and classification of streets and thoroughfares;

- The location and construction of public and semi-public buildings and related community facilities and infrastructure;

- The acquisition and development of public and semi-public properties such as parks, trails, and open spaces;

- The preparation of annual work programs, budgets, capital improvement plans, and economic incentives; and

- Discussions with residents and private developers.

The plan guides **private entities during:**

- Land use and investment decisions;

- The formation of long-term goals for the community relating to land use and development;

- The design process through desired character of businesses, neighborhoods, and thoroughfares;

- Coordination between county and regional organizations seeking opportunities for common goals; and

- Community engagement to ensure new initiatives meet the needs and desires of residents.

The plan is a culmination of the Village's history and current conditions that results in a list of priority projects to diversify and grow Uptown. The Plan is organized as follows:

1 Introduction: General background on the plan

2 Uptown Yesterday: A brief history of Plain City and a review of previous planning studies

3 Uptown Today: Analysis of existing zoning, land use, transportation, and business conditions of Uptown, along with a comparison to similarly-sized downtowns

4 Community Views: A summary of public engagement that took place during the planning process, including steering committee meetings, community survey, and stakeholder interviews

5 Uptown Vision: Vision statement developed from community insights and technical analysis supported by goals, objectives, and action steps

6 Priority Projects: Concepts, character images, and implementation strategies for priority projects in Uptown

7 Implementation Toolkit: A list of recommended action steps alongside an anticipated timeframe and group or organization responsible for completion

8 Appendix: Compilation of public engagement results, peer communities comparison data, and design development concepts

02 *Uptown Yesterday*

OVERVIEW

To better understand the role Uptown has played with respect to the Village of Plain City, it is important to first review the Village's history. Its past is rich with Amish history, natural events, and more recent migration and growth. This chapter presents a brief narrative and timeline of Plain City's history.

Previous planning efforts related to Uptown are also summarized here to help inform the planning process. Key findings help form a more complete understanding of existing conditions presented in the next chapter, Uptown Today.

One natural event in Plain City's history was a tornado that passed through and caused major destruction Uptown in 1912. (Image credit: Leslie Perkins, Robert Bremer)

Plain City circa 1906, Main Street looking west

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PLAIN CITY

The land where Plain City sits today was first home to Native Americans who hunted and lived on in the Big Darby Creek Valley. The creek itself is named after Wyandot Chief Darby. As Europeans moved into the area, it became the Virginia Military District. Jonathan Alder, namesake of the school district, lived in a cabin on Chillicothe Road. Isaac Bigelow, the son of a New York doctor, visited the area in 1814 and founded the Village of Westminster. As Ohio was further developed and county lines were redrawn, the Village was renamed to Pleasant Valley.

Development in Pleasant Valley was centered around Post Road or SR 161, a popular route for travelers. Major growth occurred following the construction of a truck line railroad, which brought cheap transportation and even the funeral train of Abraham Lincoln. The area also played an important role in the Underground Railroad.

In an effort to distinguish the Village from others in Ohio named Pleasant Valley, the Village was renamed in 1877 to Plain City. In 1885, a brick building was constructed to house municipal offices on South Chillicothe Street, where municipal offices are still located today. The first streetlights were installed in 1883 and the town clock was installed in 1902.

Challenged by multiple natural events, including a tornado in 1912, widespread flooding in 1959, and a second tornado in 1966, the community has pulled together resources and united themselves in cleaning up and reconstructing their Village. The same collaborative spirit will be influential in the start of a new stage for Uptown Plain City.

Source: Village of Plain City

Plain City, 1938 (Ben Shahn)

Plain City, 1938 (Tom Dillion)

Plain City, 1960s (Regena Mitchell)

Plain City, 1913 (Regena Mitchell)

Plain City Presbyterian Church (Postcard)

Plain City, Farmers National Bank (Tom Dillion)

Plain City, 1938 (Time Detective Gallery)

Plain City after tornado, 1912 (Leslie Perkins)

Plain City, 1917 (Regena Mitchell)
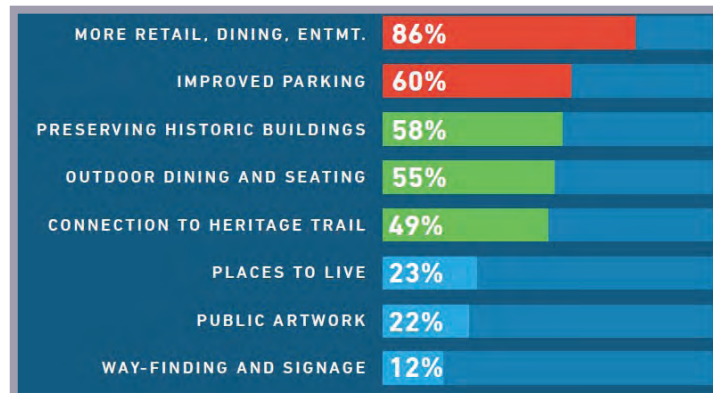
2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Understanding previous planning efforts and outcomes helps to create a cohesive and informed plan. As part of the existing conditions review, the team examined Plain City's planning related documents and factored relevant key findings into the Uptown Plan's recommendations.

GENERAL GOALS

The 2018 Comprehensive Plan created a new Village-wide plan for Plain City that reflected community ideas and insights for the future. The vision for the plan was to support a high quality of life, sustainable environment, and unique heritage. Goals include:

- planning for new sewer and water infrastructure,

- managing regional growth and development pressure,

- creating the framework to set the Village up to become a City, and

- responding to the changing needs and demands of residents.

Research indicated that the Village is growing and quickly approaching the size of a city. At the same time, preferences are also changing, such as a desire for smaller houses, increased walkability, greater housing type options, and stronger non-motorized connections.

In response to, "Which improvements could help reinvigorate Uptown?", a greater variety of land uses scored highest.
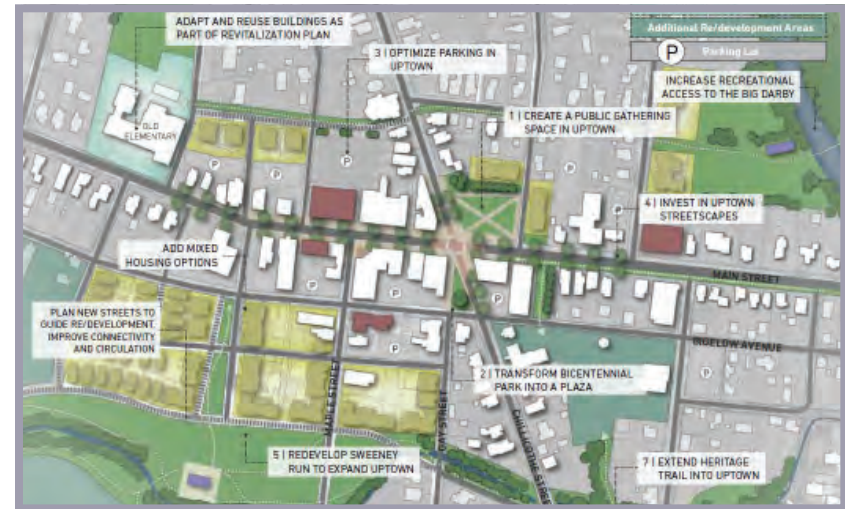
Map of Uptown initiatives in the Comprehensive Plan

UPTOWN INITIATIVES

The Plan also highlighted Uptown revitalization as a community priority. In the survey, 95 percent of respondents said the Village should work to improve Uptown. More specifically, community members expressed interest in repairing historic buildings, providing more amenities and business types, and improved parking.

Initiatives specific to Uptown include:

- Create a public gathering space,

- Transform Bicentennial Park into a plaza,

- Invest in streetscapes,

- Redevelop Sweeney Run with a greenway,

- Extend Heritage Trail, and

- Create neighborhood parks.

As the Uptown Plan was developed, the community's priorities and goals from the comprehensive plan helped form the basis of the recommendations.

2009 THOROUGHFARE PLAN

In 2009, the Village conducted a plan to analyze current traffic patterns in Plain City and propose more efficient strategies based on projected growth. After studying traffic volumes, level of service, and crash locations, critical intersections were identified as West Avenue and Jefferson Avenue, Jefferson Avenue (US-42) and Chillicothe Street, and South Chillicothe Street and West Avenue. Improvements include additional traffic signals, minimized curb cuts, and roundabouts. The data from this plan was helpful in understanding transportation conditions and projected traffic patterns.

Facility/Amenity Priority Rankings	Overall Ranking
Walking and biking trails	1
Greenspace and natural areas	2
Nature center and trails	3
Recreation center	4
Playground equipment	5
Small neighborhood parks	6
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	7
Large community parks	8
Amphitheater/outdoor entertainment area	9
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pool	10
Indoor running/walking track	11
Spray-pad	12
Off-leash dog park	13
Youth baseball fields	14
Outdoor basketball courts	15
Indoor lap lanes for exercise swimming	16
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	17

Parks facilities and amenities were prioritized for improvements in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

2020 PARKS AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

In 2020, the Village developed a parks and recreation master plan to align the growth of parks and recreation facilities with the growing population. The plan prioritizes an accessible network of trails, neighborhood parks, and greenspace, especially south of Uptown. It also emphasizes the importance of relevant programs, regular maintenance, and adequate funding and staffing. After considering existing conditions and national trends, facilities and amenities were prioritized based on community needs, with walking and biking trails and greenspace and natural areas considered most needed. These priorities were integrated into Uptown recommendations.

KEY FINDINGS

Researching the history of Plain City and existing planning studies provides context for Uptown and an initial understanding of community goals. Some key findings from the research are:

- Community members are excited about building Uptown into a strong Village core.

- Plain City has a rich history, which should be built upon in concepts for the future.

- Plain City must balance its unique character with increased growth, development, and traffic volumes.

- Parks and recreation will continue to be an important element to residents' quality of life.

Combined with an analysis of existing conditions found in the next chapter, these findings guided the public engagement effort and plan development.

03 *Uptown Today*

OVERVIEW

While the history of Uptown and past planning studies are helpful in understanding why the area is organized the way it is today, the next question becomes, "How is Uptown organized?". The answer is uncovered through a technical analysis of Uptown, mapping existing conditions such as zoning, land use, mobility, and natural features, and researching demographics and regional trends. The findings expanded the understanding of Uptown and informed the development of recommendations.

This chapter is divided into four sections:

- Demographics (population, households, income, etc.)

- Existing conditions maps (zoning, land use, mobility, natural features)

- Main Street America's Four Points of Revitalization

- Peer Communities Comparison

Combined with public engagement results presented in the next chapter, key findings form the basis of priority projects.

The Der Dutchman restaurant is located southwest of Uptown in Plain City and considered a major local attraction.

PLAIN CITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Plain City's demographics are key to understanding how the Village compares to a larger geography like the State of Ohio and how the plan can prepare Uptown for sustainable growth.

Between 2000 and 2021, the population of Plain City grew by almost 50 percent. Even in one year, the number of households and household size have both increased, leaving a solid foundation for growth into the future. Median household income and home value are higher than Ohio's average, indicating a population with disposable income and, at the same time, a community with limited access to a diversified hosing stock. Median age is lower than Ohio's average, a sign of a younger, working population. Demographic trends predict a need for increasing housing choices and other services to support Plain City's growing population.

4,235
Plain City Village
2021 Population
2010: 4,225
2000: 2,832

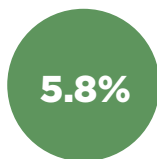**1,602**
Households
2020: 1,463

2.64
Household Size
2.42 in Ohio
2020: 2.62

$77,179
Median Household Income
$57,725 in Ohio
2020: $77,448

38.2
Median Age
40.5 in Ohio
2020: 36.4

5.8%
Housing Vacancy Rate
6.8% in Ohio (2020)

$247,291
Median Home Value
$175,857 in Ohio

$11,860
Average spent on Mortgage & Basics Annually
$9,046 in Ohio

2.4 mi²
in area

Source: ESRI Business Analyst (2021), U.S. Census (2020)

UPTOWN DEMOGRAPHICS

Key demographics within Uptown expand the understanding of specific needs within this unique portion of Plain City. In 2021, six percent of the Village's population resided Uptown, above the standard benchmark of five percent for a downtown to be considered resilient[1], indicating a strong foundation for revitalization. A concentration of households nearby and mix of land uses is key to a thriving downtown. At 0.07 square miles of land, the density of Uptown is 3,700 people per square mile, which presents an opportunity for additional business growth. In 2021, there were 54 businesses and over 500 employees in the study area, with a median household income and home value slightly lower than the Village as a whole.

259
Uptown Plain City
2021 Population
6% of Plain City's total population

.07 mi²
in area
2.9% of Plain City's total area

147
Households

$75,906
Median Household Income

$244,565
Median Home Value

54
Total Businesses

501
Total Employees

Source: ESRI Business Analyst (2021)
1 Downtown Success Indicators: A Review of the Literature, University of Illinois (2014)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Mapping existing conditions provides a more visual way to understand the physical conditions that shape Uptown today. This includes how the natural environment shapes or is shaped by the built environment and how Plain City is zoned and used for different activities.

McKitrick Park is located along Big Darby Creek, an important regional connection and natural habitat.

Legend

- Parks and Open Space
- Floodway
- Floodplain

01 // NATURAL FEATURES

The most dominant natural feature in close proximity to Uptown is Big Darby Creek, a 85-mile scenic river that connects to the Scioto River. According to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, the Creek is one of the highest quality waterways in the Midwest, with over 100 fish and 44 mussel species, 37 species of which are considered endangered or rare. McKitrick Park is in an optimal location to connect Uptown with the Creek and optimize use of a currently underutilized facility.

Single family homes are located outside of the commercial core.

Legend

- ■ Single Family Residential
- ■ Light Industrial / Warehousing
- ■ Natural / Open Space
- ■ Institutional
- ■ Commercial
- ■ Main Street Mixed Use
- ■ Multi-Family Residential

02 // LAND USE

There are a variety of land uses in Uptown. Commercial and mixed-use areas are centered around Main Street, surrounded by single family residential, light industrial to the southwest, and parks to the east and north. Institutional uses, vital to the long-term success of any downtown, are found in various locations throughout Uptown's core. There are only a few parcels used as multi-family residential, presenting an opportunity for more diverse housing options. Space for public gathering is restricted to a limited area around Bicentennial Park.

Most of Uptown is zoned as Uptown District or Traditional Neighborhood.

Legend

- **Uptown District**
- **Traditional Neighborhood**
- **Suburban Residential**
- **Commercial Corridor**
- **Innovation and Employment**
- **Open Space**
- **Historic Boundary**

03 // ZONING

With a recent update to the Village's zoning code, the districts are now easier to understand and more applicable to current land uses. The Uptown study area mainly consists of the Uptown and Traditional Neighborhood Districts, with Open Space to the east. Uptown's Historic District boundary is shown in blue and encompasses buildings fronting Main Street in the core of Uptown.

Almost all of Uptown is within a five minute walk.

Legend

[green] 5 minute walk (1/4 mile)

[tan] 10 minute walk (1/2 mile)

04 // WALKSHED

The majority of Uptown is within a five-minute walk, or quarter mile, of the intersection of Main and Chillicothe Streets, which creates the opportunity for increased connections and improved mobility. Although Uptown has the potential to be more walkable and bikeable, current streetscape conditions and lack of directional signage discourage non-motorized mobility.

MAIN STREET AMERICA'S FOUR POINTS TO REVITALIZATION

The framework for business district revitalization was inspired by Main Street America's Four Points, a program directed by the nonprofit National Main Street Center and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The goal of the program is to build vibrant and thriving communities across the country. To date, the organization has helped over 2,000 communities revitalize their downtown districts. The program's four pillars are shown to the right and expanded for Uptown below.

For more information, visit *mainstreet.org*.

Four Points to downtown revitalization.
(Main Street America, National Main Street Center)

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Economic vitality is important for attracting and retaining businesses, visitors, and residents Uptown. A diverse mixture of business types and land uses increases the resiliency of the economy during market fluctuations. Of the businesses currently located Uptown, about five are vacant, which creates an unwelcoming streetscape, decreases property values, and discourages mobility. Consistent building tenants are key to a healthy downtown.

There are a variety of land uses in Uptown today, but some of the main attractions are located just outside of Uptown, such as the Der Dutchman restaurant, Pastime Park, and Village offices. Additional paths and increased signage would encourage movement between these landmarks through Uptown.

DESIGN

The design of Uptown, including streetscape elements, architectural character, and cohesive branding all contribute to an inviting atmosphere. Plain City has the potential to build off existing historic elements for a strong brand. The 1902 clocktower is a local landmark and the Grainery offers modern food in a historic setting. These two examples act as wayfinding elements and build a unique and memorable experience.

Much of Uptown today is concrete and pavement, and lacks space for public gathering. Some of the green space that does exist is not easily accessible, presenting an opportunity to be more integrated with Uptown. Streetscaping and open space work together to encourage mobility and increase visits to Uptown.

Events like the classic car cruise-in and Miami Valley Steam Threshers show help promote Uptown and encourage visitors to walk around the area, dine at local restaurants, and support local businesses.

ORGANIZATION

Strong leadership is essential to promoting Uptown and organizing events and entertainment. For an event to be successful and attract many visitors, social media is very important for advertising. Plain City could build their presence online by posting events, news, and a business directory on their website or create a social media channel dedicated to Uptown.

Additionally, it is important for local businesses to support each other by being open consistently and at the same time to increase foot traffic. An Uptown management group could increase communication between businesses and create more cohesive offerings for visitors.

Leadership could also manage new development and seek funding to secure the community's vision for Uptown.

PROMOTION

The key to a vibrant and thriving commercial district is to promote businesses, events, and an overall brand to encourage local visitors and more long-distance tourists. One strategy to support Uptown is creating adequate parking that is easy to find and use. There is a common perception that Uptown lacks parking, but it could also be difficult to find or in a poor location. New signage and better placement of parking make it easier for visitors to access Uptown amenities.

In addition to a variety of businesses, welcoming street design, and strong leadership, Uptown should be featured in promotional materials such as brochures, postcards, or a business directory that shows what a unique and welcoming place Uptown Plain City is today.

PEER COMMUNITIES COMPARISON

Six communities around Ohio were chosen to act as comparisons to Plain City and were used to understand land uses, amenities, and events in small downtowns. The communities were chosen based on their population and location relative to metropolitan areas. The selection criteria is described in detail below.

The 2021 population of Plain City was 4,235 people, so the list of potential peer communities was first narrowed down to municipalities in Ohio with 2,000 to 10,000 people. Looking closer at municipalities with populations around 5,000 people, locations relative to major metropolitan areas were selected. Priority was given to communities on the outer edge of a metropolitan area, or within driving distance but far enough away to merit a separate downtown.

The selection process narrowed the list to Johnstown, Sunbury, West Jefferson, and Mt. Gilead in the Columbus Metro Area. For information on downtown conditions in different regions of Ohio, Barnesville and Martins Ferry were also chosen in the Wheeling, West Virginia Metro Area.

MartinsFerry was specifically chosen because it is a member of the Ohio Main Street Program, an organization that helps small towns in Ohio preserve their historic downtowns and stimulate economic development.

The six peer communities present similar demographic and geographic conditions, but each has different downtown strengths and opportunities to serve as examples for each other. A full set of data from the comparison can be found in the appendix and key findings are included at the end of the chapter.

Peer communities locator map.

1. STATE
Municipalities in Ohio

2. POPULATION
Municipalities with a population of 2,000 - 10,000 people

3. LOCATION
Municipalities within a major metropolitan area

4. PEER COMMUNITIES
Johnstown, OH
Sunbury, OH
West Jefferson, OH
Mt. Gilead, OH
Barnesville, OH
Martins Ferry, OH

Peer communities were chosen based on a step-by-step selection process.

Using building façades to creatively celebrate Halloween.

KEY FINDINGS

Comparing existing conditions in Uptown Plain City to other downtowns indicates Uptown's strengths and weaknesses. Some key findings from the analysis are:

- Uptown is currently growing and has the potential to anchor the community, with a variety of housing and land uses.

- Uptown has few zoning districts but a great variety of land uses.

- Uptown has potential to be highly walkable and bikeable.

- McKitrick Park currently serves as the main green space within Uptown, but could be better connected to the Village.

From the Peer Communities Comparison, key findings include:

- Plain City has many institutional uses Uptown, which supports a consistent flow of visitors.

- Uptown could support additional professional services, pedestrian amenities, and events.

- The economy of Uptown would benefit from a variety of shopping and dining options.

Key findings from current trends and regional comparisons form the basis of recommendations, ranging from streetscape improvements to new land uses that will support Plain City's growing population.

Trends indicate that Uptown growth will continue into the future.
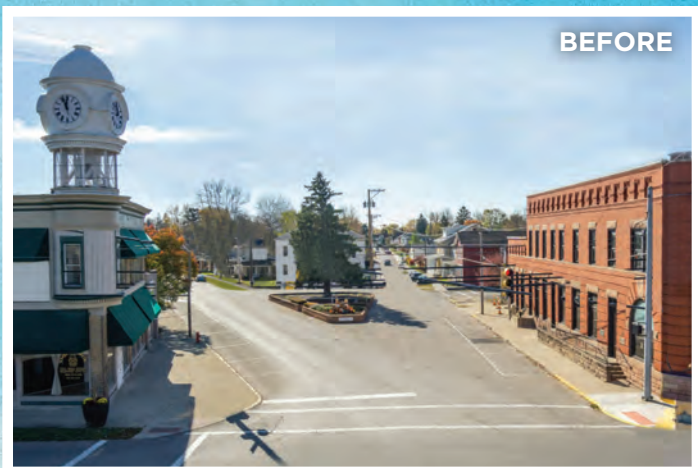
The design for the intersection of Main and Chillicothe Streets expands on community members' desire for safe connections. More information about this Priority Project can be found on page 68.

04 Community Views

OVERVIEW

The ideas and aspirations of the public are integral to plan development. The team conducted extensive public engagement to solicit feedback and develop a vision for Uptown which provided a foundation for forming goals and developing concepts.

Throughout the engagement process, over 500 community members contributed their voice to the plan. Engagement opportunities included steering committee meetings, stakeholder interviews, an online survey, and pop-up events at the local farmers market. The results formed the basis for how the Village should address growth, development, and preservation of Uptown in the future.

Key findings from public engagement are summarized in the following pages and provided at the end of the chapter, and a complete set of responses are located in the appendix.

5	**Steering Committee Meetings**
10	**Stakeholder Interviews**
479	**Survey Responses**
2	**Pop-Up Events**

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The 14-person steering committee met regularly through the planning process to guide the development of the plan and act as advocates as the process moves forward. The committee provided local knowledge, verified key findings, and participated in activities to develop the priority projects. Their feedback helped ensure the Uptown Plan reflects the true values of Plain City.

WHAT ARE SOME KEY *ISSUES* TODAY IN UPTOWN PLAIN CITY?

- Walkability (streetscape, safe paths)
- Parking (safety, organization)
- Limited business hours / availability
- Underutilized space around Uptown
- Lack of multimodal options (bike, walking, transit)
- Lack of diversity in housing choices (density, uses, character)
- Lack of a brand / identity (signage, wayfinding)
- Low density / population
- Lack of community-wide events / programs
- Bedroom community - majority of population leaves Plain City for work, entertainment, services, etc.

WHAT ARE SOME KEY *OPPORTUNITIES* TODAY IN UPTOWN PLAIN CITY?

- Timing of plan for fresh start
- Connections to Heritage Trail and other trailheads
- Bike / multimodal parking
- Business diversity and incentives
- Vacancy improving, drive more demand
- Public - private partnerships
- Proximity to Greater Columbus
- Access to green space with pocket parks
- Growing demand for housing
- Darby Station development

TOP PRIORITIES

EXTEND THE HERITAGE TRAIL TO UPTOWN

CREATE A PUBLIC GATHERING SPACE IN UPTOWN

IDENTIFY KEY RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

SECONDARY PRIORITIES

REDEVELOP SWEENEY RUN AREA TO EXPAND UPTOWN

RE-IMAGINE BICENTENNIAL PARK

IMPROVE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

IDENTIFY KEY MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT

IDENTIFY KEY COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

As part of the public engagement process, Village staff helped assemble a stakeholder group to inform the Plan's development. Members were selected because they had interests or activities relating to Uptown, could provide information and expertise required for effective policy making, or be a key player in ensuring successful plan implementation. Combined with feedback from the steering committee, the findings were helpful in understanding existing conditions and goals of the community.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Create Small Green Spaces

Reflect History

Plan for Funding

WHAT ARE SOME KEY *ISSUES* TODAY IN UPTOWN PLAIN CITY?

- Lack of parking - need for pedestrian walkways
- High traffic on OH-161 hinders outdoor seating, safety
- Lack of things to do at different times of the day
- Lack of signage / wayfinding
- Limited business hours and variety
- Lack of continuity between land uses and buildings
- Keep Uptown clean and safe

WHAT ARE SOME KEY *OPPORTUNITIES* TODAY IN UPTOWN PLAIN CITY?

- Expand farmers market
- Retain small town feel
- Maintain historic district
- Infill development
- Improved access for all age groups - trail extension project, trailhead, sidewalk connections, bike racks
- More family-focused events
- Positive communication about planning process
- Affordable housing, mixed-use

ONLINE SURVEY

At the heart of the planning process are the ideas and aspirations of the public. Village staff helped the planning team conduct extensive outreach to build local knowledge and develop a vision for the future of Uptown. The community survey received over 400 responses, which helped to develop priority projects.

84.6%

say things in
Uptown Plain City

ARE IMPROVING

The Grainery is an example of repurposing an existing building downtown, and it is well-supported by the community.

Uptown Plain City Master Plan

Plain City has initiated a process to create an **UPTOWN MASTER PLAN** which will guide Plain City for years to come.

This planning process is rooted in community values and aspirations. It creates a platform to guide and align local leaders, stakeholders, and the community toward a shared future.

Please take the **COMMUNITY SURVEY** to help form the content within the Uptown Master Plan.

Your perspective is crucial regarding public space, housing, trail connections, economic development, and much more!

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY AND HELPING US PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF PLAIN CITY!

Visit **ohmplanning.typeform.com/uptownplaincity** on your personal device or scan the QR code above with your smartphone camera to participate!

A flyer with a QR code for the survey was distributed in the community.

The majority of survey respondents lived in Plain City and visited Uptown frequently. Many were happy with the direction of Plain City and emphasized that the City is ready for growth and change. At the same time, certain characteristics should be protected, such as its small-town, friendly, safe feel. The Grainery and Clocktower in particular are staples of Uptown.

What are the primary reasons you visit Uptown?

Many survey respondents visited Uptown Plain City for restaurants, bars, and stores. In the survey, they expressed a desire to see more of these amenities Uptown, in addition to more green spaces and a greater variety of services.
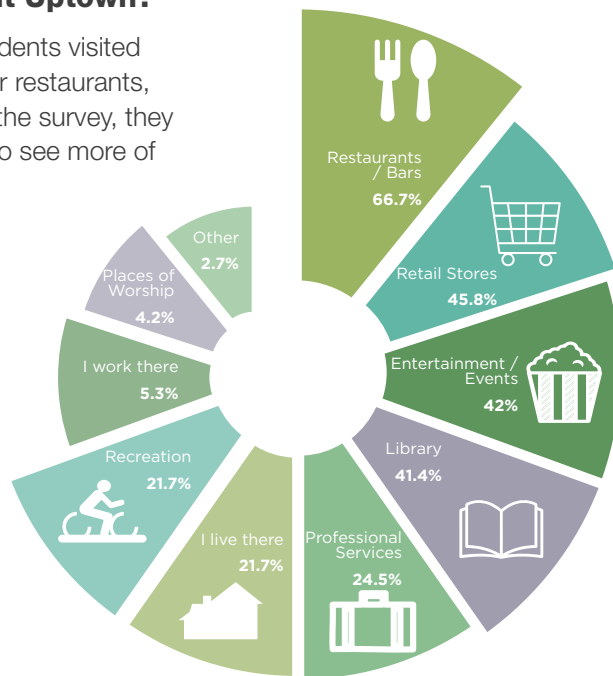
Restaurants / Bars
66.7%

Retail Stores
45.8%

Entertainment / Events
42%

Library
41.4%

Professional Services
24.5%

I live there
21.7%

Recreation
21.7%

I work there
5.3%

Places of Worship
4.2%

Other
2.7%

What types of services and activities do you not visit Uptown for?

Uptown Plain City features a number of restaurants and bars to visit after work, but may benefit from having more offices to keep people there on a consistent basis.

Work
88.0%

Sports and recreation
35.9%

Personal services
32.1%

Shopping
23.0%

Entertainment and events
16.0%

Dine Out
14.3%

Other
1.7%

How frequently do you visit Uptown Plain City?

36.5%
All the time

30.5%
A couple times a month

20.7%
Once a week

12.0%
A couple times a year

0.6%
Never

How frequently do you not visit the Uptown for these services and activities?

Daily
39.9%

Monthly
31.0%

A few times a week
17.5%

Once a week
11.6%

What would encourage you to visit Uptown more often?

Somewhat Important (26.6%)
Better business hours

Very Important (37.1%)
Entertainment & events

Very Important (50.2%)
Additional restaurants / bars

Very Important (35.4%)
More shopping

Very Important (45.1%)
Parks, gathering places, & recreation

Very Important (38.2%)
Other services such as gyms, salons, & grocery stores

Not Important (75.5%)
Living downtown

Are there any communities of similar size that you believe have downtowns that Uptown should strive to be like?

HILLIARD **POWELL**
HUDSON
MARYSVILLE
WORTHINGTON
SENECA FALLS
GRANVILLE DUBLIN

Which of the following groups should Uptown Plain City strive to attract more of?

77.8%
Families with children

61.8%
Young professionals

51.7%
Empty nesters

44.5%
Families without children

35.7%
Senior citizens

91.8%
of respondents own their home
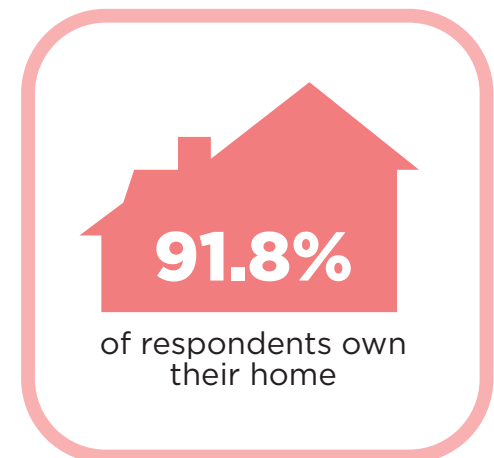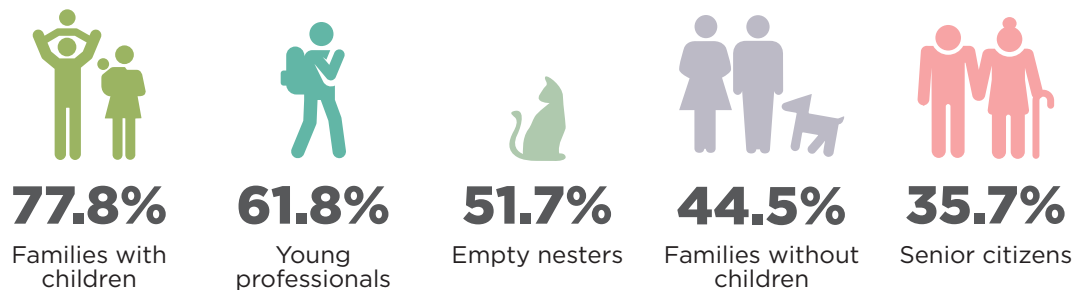
Do you feel there is adequate public / green space when you visit Uptown?

According to the survey, improvements in Uptown should include additional greenspace and easier parking. Green space could be small in scale, such as street trees and bike lanes, or larger in the form of parks and open space.

26.6%
Yes

73.4%
No

Do you feel there is adequate parking when you visit Uptown?

8.0%
I don't know

58.4%
No

33.5%
Yes
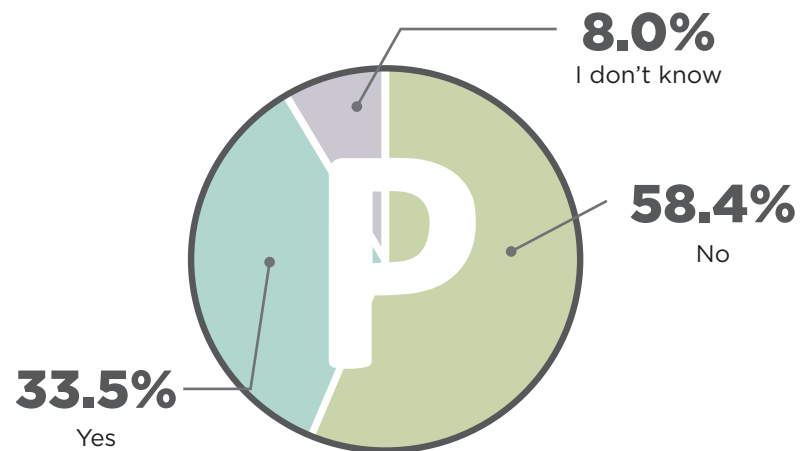
What kind of green / open space do you feel would be beneficial for Uptown?

5 = VERY BENEFICIAL

5 Improved Sidewalk Condition

5 Enhanced Property Maintenance

5 Street Trees

5 Lighting

5 Bike Lanes / Paths

5 Parks and Greenspace

5 More Dining Space

3 Seating

3 Additional On-Street Parking

3 Wayfinding

1 Public Art

1 = NOT BENEFICIAL
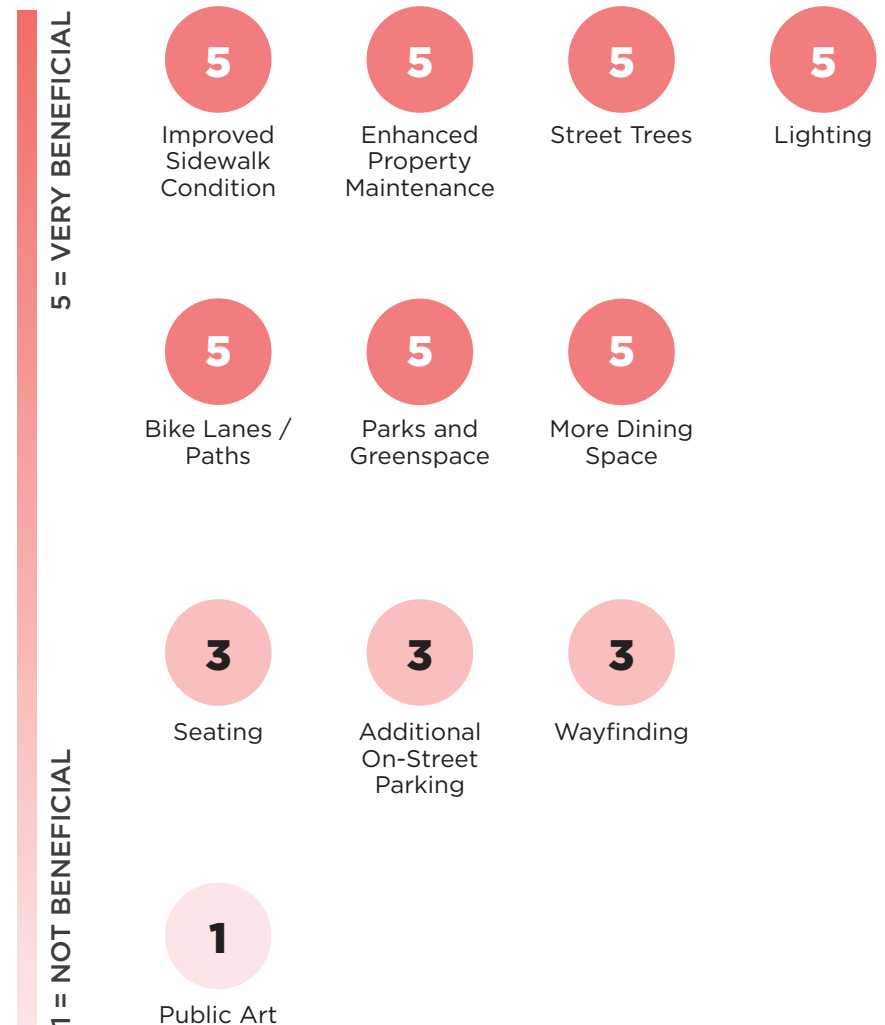
Please rate each of the following initiatives on their importance to the improvement of Uptown.

	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Adding public / green space	6.1%	28.7%	31.9%
Attracting commercial development	22.2%	27.4%	15.4%
Improving roads and traffic flow	6.3%	25.9%	26.8%
Expanding housing options	38.4%	22.2%	6.1%
Streetscape & landscaping improvements	7.0%	26.4%	26.6%
Additional marketing and branding	22.6%	30.0%	9.3%
Additional / optimized parking	11.8%	25.7%	24.9%
Signage improvements / wayfinding	21.1%	36.1%	8.2%

48.7%

believe Uptown Plain City has a distinct identity

If you were looking to move Uptown or within walking distance, which would you consider as a potential housing option?

Survey respondents thought Uptown should strive to attract more families with children and young professionals. The top three housing options for Uptown were single family homes, condos, and luxury lofts. Respondents were divided on whether they would consider living in or near Uptown if their housing choice was available.

TOP 3 HOUSING OPTIONS

75.5%
Single Family Home

24.4%
Condo

23.8%
Luxury Loft

OTHER HOUSING OPTIONS

Senior housing	17.7%
2-bedroom apartment	16.2%
Duplex	9.3%
1-bedroom apartment	8.6%
Studio apartment	8.4%
Other	3.4%

If your preferred choice of housing were available, would you consider living Uptown or within walking distance?

41.1%
No

58.9%
Yes

Where do you live currently?

13.7%
in Union County

4.4%
10-20 min away

0.4%
More than 45 min away

71.3%
in Plain City

0.4%
30-45 min away

9.7%
in Madison County
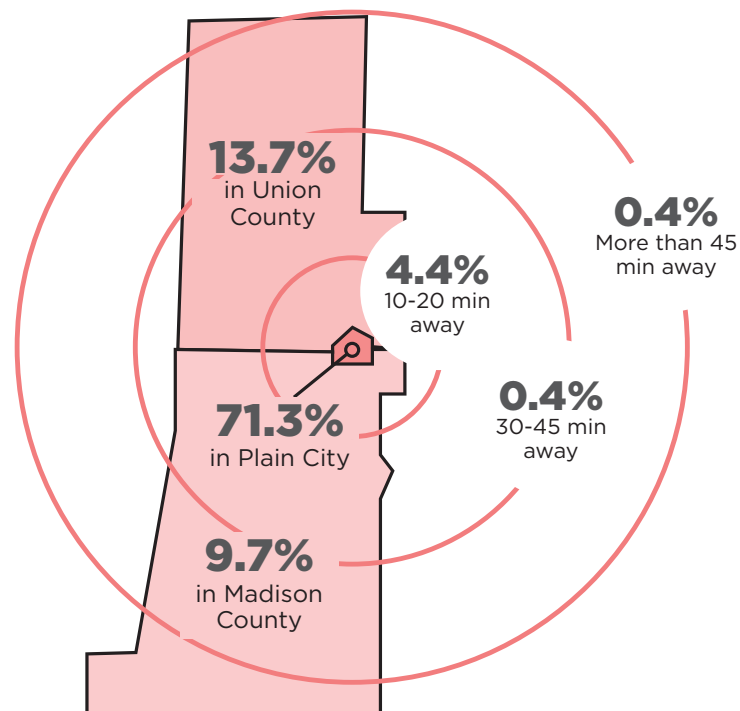
How do you feel about the current character of Uptown?

I want to maintain and improve the current character

79.7%

I want to see the character change

15%

I don't know

5.3%

Community members expressed a desire for more green space within Uptown, in addition to the existing parks.

What is the biggest strength of Uptown Plain City?

- Safety

- Small town feel with easy wayfinding and walkability

- History & iconic buildings (clocktower, Grainery)

- Location

- Businesses

Where is the most room for improvement in Uptown Plain City?

- Diversity of amenities / activities

- Consistent branding

- Infrastructure improvements and general maintenance

- Historical protections

- Less noise

- Increased streetscape space for dining and walking

- More housing and parking

POP-UP EVENTS

To further familiarize the public with the plan and vet recommendations, pop-up boards were used to present draft concepts and engagement findings. The boards were displayed at the local farmers market, where they were likely to capture a wider variety of community views. Detailed findings relating to each priority project are listed in the following chapter. Overall findings are:

- Main St / Chillicothe St intersection improvements are a priority for community members.

- There is a strong desire to make Plain City more bike-friendly.

- Uptown safety should be a top consideration.

- It is very important to maintain the historic character of Uptown.

- There is a desire for more green and community gathering spaces.

Feedback from the public at the pop-up events was very helpful in ranking the priority projects. As illustrated in Chapter 06, the two public spaces at the intersection of Main and Sandusky Streets (C) received the most votes.

Plain City residents had the opportunity to provide feedback on the concepts at the local farmers market.

" The history and infrastructure is there... with the right imagination of more eateries, breweries, local shops... the sky is the limit for what Uptown could become "

-Survey Respondent

KEY FINDINGS

After collecting public engagement input and summarizing the results, key findings were used to organize goals that helped develop and refine recommendations. These goals are:

- **Build on existing energy in the community**

- **Create local and regional connections (Heritage Trail connection, multi-use paths, streetscape, parking)**

- **Expand public spaces and access to recreation (central gathering space, pocket park, access to natural features)**

- **Incentivize and encourage development (residential density, commercial diversity)**

- **Establish a community brand (arts, culture, history, tourism, wayfinding & signage)**

05 *Uptown Vision*

OVERVIEW

The foundation of this plan is a vision statement developed from community insights and technical analysis. The vision statement is a statement of intent that describes what types of activities and conditions are desired in Uptown. The statement should be considered at a high level to support and inform future decisions about Uptown.

To make the vision statement more readily achievable, five goals were formed around the statement's core values. These goals are:

- Create a diverse and vital economy

- Mix compatible land uses

- Strengthen identity

- Enhance mobility

- Promote art, culture, and history

A series of key outcomes, objectives, and action steps support the goals and drive implementation. Key outcomes are indicators that allow the community to measure progress toward achieving goals and objectives within one to five years. In Chapter 07, the implementation toolkit provides timeframes, funding strategies, potential partners, and resources for each objective. The vision statement, goals, objectives, and action steps combine to set up the framework for the priority projects in the following chapter.

VISION STATEMENT

GOALS

OBJECTIVES

ACTION STEPS

VISION STATEMENT

As the heart of Plain City, Uptown will serve as the center for **arts, culture, shopping, recreation, and entertainment, with a well-balanced mix of uses, variety of mobility options, and strategically located public gathering places** that make Uptown economically, culturally, and socially vibrant.

GOAL 1: CREATE A DIVERSE AND VITAL ECONOMY

The economy of Uptown is an important indicator for the health of the area and the Village at large. A strong economy can attract residents and new businesses, creating a vibrant and active community hub. The following objectives aim to balance the importance of existing and new businesses through economic incentives, programs, and marketing opportunities.

KEY OUTCOMES (1-5 YEARS)

- Increase the number of businesses (currently 54) by **25%**
- Improve vacancy rate (currently 14%) to less than **10%**
- Increase the proportion of retail businesses to other businesses by **50%**

Objective 1.1:

Create opportunities for smaller, independent businesses Uptown.

1.1.1   Build and implement a business coaching/support program for businesses in Uptown.

1.1.2   Create a private capital fund to support microbusiness development within Uptown.

1.1.3   Pilot a pop-up merchants program during events and festivals.

Objective 1.2:

Provide economic incentives to businesses to decrease the cost of business location and help decrease investment risks.

1.2.1   Collaborate on programs with regional organizations to support and attract businesses.

1.2.2   Utilize tax incentives for businesses located within Uptown.

Objective 1.3:

Complement economic incentive programs with business and managerial enhancement programs for Uptown business owners.

1.3.1   Work with local educational institutions to identify entrepreneurship and educational growth opportunities (e.g. STEM academy, satellite campus).

1.3.2   Meet with local businesses to identify expansion opportunities and potential challenges.

Objective 1.4:

Nurture the talents that reside in the community itself and attract new talent from outside the community to create and start new businesses.

1.4.1   Identify anchor businesses that spur growth in the district.

1.4.2   Identify gaps in current business mix through quantitative and qualitative research.

1.4.3   Interview current leaseholders and create a retention plan based on the market/lease conditions.

Objective 1.5:

Help promote and market businesses using the Village website, newsletters, or an Uptown business directory.

1.5.1   Create a marketing and advertising support program for existing and new businesses as part of the business coaching/support program.

1.5.2   Utilize existing vacant storefronts to create business staging with the goal of attracting new businesses (e.g. pop up flower shop, co-work space, makers space, or shared studio).

1.5.3   Work with existing businesses to establish uniform hours of operation.

TRENDING DOWNTOWN USES

In addition to existing uses in the peer communities, more uses are popular in other downtowns and serve as community hubs and downtown anchors. One use is a makers space, or a shared studio fully equipped with all the technology and materials to allow people to craft, work on projects, or start their own businesses. The spaces could include high-speed internet, work tables, conference rooms, laser cutters, printers, scanners, a woodshop, sewing machines, and art supplies. Subscriptions to use the space are usually on a monthly basis and could be set up in different tiers depending on how many resources members want access to.

Makers Space

Day Care

Indoor Farmer's / Flea Market

Education

Visitor Center

GOAL 2: MIX COMPATIBLE LAND USES

The mixture of land uses in Uptown is essential in attracting people to Uptown and then encouraging them to stay. By having land uses such as residential and retail together, the Uptown can thrive at different times of the day and feel safer for those using it. The following objectives are intended to guide the expansion of mixed-use development through design, planning, and zoning decisions.

KEY OUTCOMES (1-5 YEARS)

- Increase population density (currently 259 people per 0.07 mi2) to **500 people per 0.07 mi²**
- Increase proportion of population residing downtown (currently 6%) to **10%**

Objective 2.1:

Foster an economically and culturally diverse Uptown environment by encouraging a wide variety of housing, commercial, workplace, and cultural experiences.

2.1.1   Encourage developers to review community priorities provided in the Uptown plan.

2.1.2   Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Uptown.

2.1.3   Promote the creation of high-quality housing that is connected to nearby amenities to attract young families.

Objective 2.2:

Provide harmonious transitions between core area functions and surrounding neighborhoods.

2.2.1   Create specific design and sign standards for the Uptown.

2.2.2   Look for opportunities to create small public spaces and amenities to bridge the gap between different land uses.

Objective 2.3:

Ensure Uptown functions both as a commercial district and a residential neighborhood, with a variety of housing opportunities.

2.3.1   Promote the creation and expansion of missing middle housing options.

2.3.2   Perform a detailed housing market analysis to understand current and future housing demand.

Objective 2.4:

Encourage mixed-use development throughout Uptown.

2.4.1 Develop marketing and communication tools to promote redevelopment of strategic Uptown sites.

2.4.2 Promote infill development that takes up a smaller footprint.

Objective 2.5:

Enforce zoning to create a comfortable environment for all Uptown users.

2.5.1 Ensure new development follows all guidelines and requirements in Plain City's zoning code.

2.5.2 Respond promptly to public complaints and issues as they arise.

*Local retailers return **52% of their revenues to the local economy**, compared to 14% for national retailers*
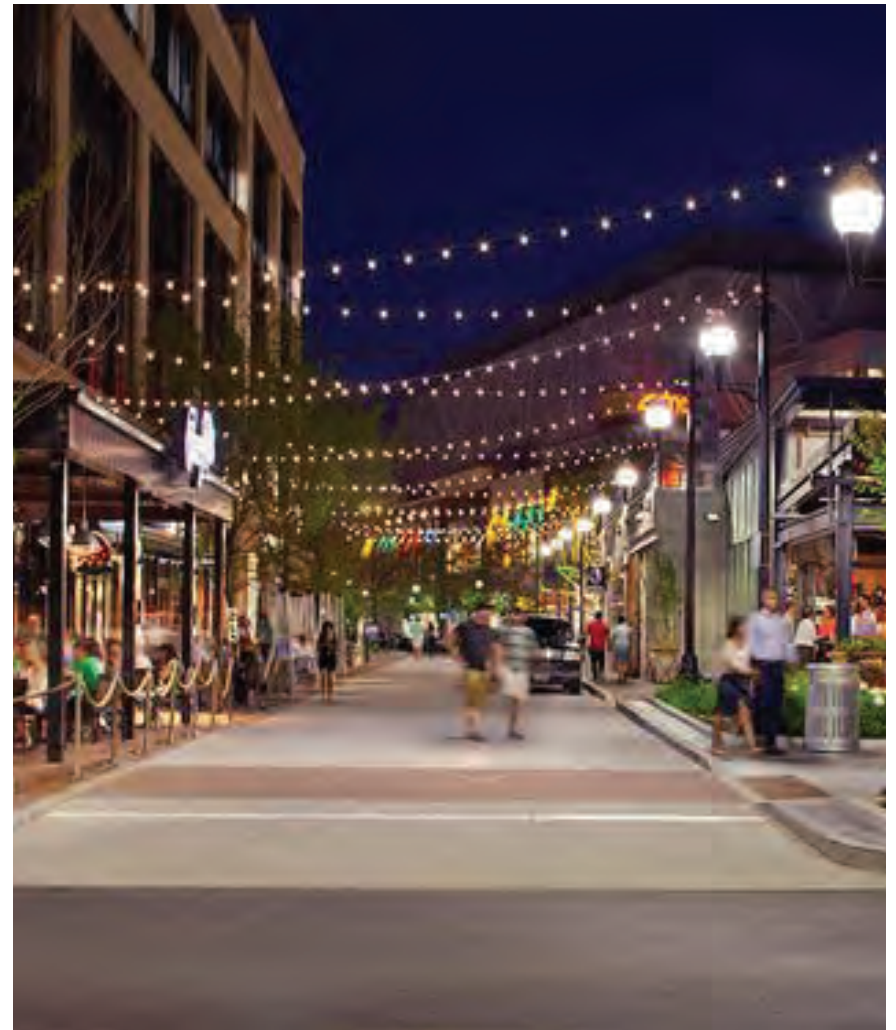
Mixing compatible land uses ensures an active Uptown at different times of the day.

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN IDENTITY

By strengthening the identity of Uptown, the district becomes a memorable and inviting place within the community. A strong identity can help with wayfinding, business marketing, and Village branding. The following objectives recommend strengthening identity through signage, public art, streetscaping, and landscaping.

KEY OUTCOMES (1-5 YEARS)

- Install **5 new wayfinding features** in Uptown (e.g., directional signage, business directory, historical plaque)
- Add **5,000 ft²** of new public green spaces
- Install **3 new pieces** of public art

Objective 3.1:

Focus attention on Uptown gateways through landmark buildings, public art, and public spaces that announce a visitor's arrival to Uptown.

3.1.1 Create gateways at or near entrances to the Uptown District (See Project Priority Map).

3.1.2 Apply the Plain City brand and image to signage and gateways.

Objective 3.2:

Encourage the use of sustainable materials, green infrastructure, and renewable energy resources in Uptown development.

3.2.1 Look for opportunities to install green infrastructure for stormwater management.

3.2.2 Require a certain percentage of sustainable design elements in new development.

3.2.3 Provide incentives for local businesses to adopt sustainable infrastructure and energy resources.

Objective 3.3:

Improve placemaking through streetscaping projects, public art, the provision of public gathering places, destination points, and landscaping.

3.3.1 Install lighting as a common element as part of both art installations, infrastructure projects, and private development, including multi-season tree lighting.

3.3.2 Create guidelines for consistent design and branding in Uptown.

Objective 3.4:

Create a consistent system of signage and wayfinding elements.

3.4.1   Design and construct wayfinding signage that complements gateways and streetscape improvements.

3.4.2   Create clear directions to parking and local destination points for visitors.

Objective 3.5:

Respect and build on the historic character of Uptown in new developments.

3.5.1   Create signature public space elements that complement the clocktower and other landmarks of Plain City.

3.5.2   Integrate historical education with new wayfinding signage.

Creative signage can help with wayfinding and establish a strong identity for Uptown.

GOAL 4: ENHANCE MOBILITY

Efficient, accessible, and safe mobility options are key to directing visitors to and around Uptown. Mobility options may take the form of bike amenities, pedestrian pathways, and wayfinding signage. The following objectives emphasize the importance of safe, non-motorized connections.

KEY OUTCOMES (1-5 YEARS)

- Install **5 new bike racks** and **2 bike repair stations** Uptown
- Increase the area of mixed-use development by **10,000 ft²**
- Repaint and **update signage** for all crosswalks within Uptown

Objective 4.1:

Reduce auto travel by providing services, jobs, and housing in proximity to each other.

4.1.1 Promote reuse and infill development within Uptown.

4.1.2 Encourage mixed-use development.

Objective 4.2:

Design Uptown streets for pedestrians first, followed by cyclists; encourage walking and bicycling by making Uptown safe and welcoming.

4.2.1 Plan for corridor improvements to enhance Main Street.

4.2.2 Install a clearly marked bike lane to protect cyclists traveling to and from Uptown.

4.2.3 Explore additional funding opportunities such as Safe Routes to Schools and Clean Ohio Trails Fund.

Objective 4.3:

Provide wayfinding to direct visitors to landmarks, parking, and other public venues.

4.3.1 Integrate wayfinding signage with the broader network of signage to create a Plain City brand.

4.3.2 Create both pedestrian- and auto-oriented wayfinding.

Objective 4.4:

Provide safe, non-motorized neighborhood connections to encourage walking and biking to and from Uptown.

4.4.1   Connect with the Heritage Trail to form regional connections.

4.4.2   Incorporate sidewalks into road repair plans.

4.4.3   Create additional alley connections between Uptown businesses, public space amenities, and neighborhoods.

Objective 4.5:

Ensure sidewalks, crosswalks, and public improvements are universally accessible and easy to navigate.

4.5.1   Perform a pedestrian safety and accessibility audit to understand strengths and weaknesses in the current non-motorized framework.

4.5.2   Include crosswalks, buffers, lighting, and pavement striping in new street designs.

4.5.3   Establish bike facilities, such as bike racks and repair stations, along non-motorized routes and in front of businesses.

Objective 4.6:

Reduce disruptions from truck traffic through Uptown using traffic calming strategies, such as road diets and bump-outs.

4.6.1   Install road diets or sidewalk bump-outs to slow trucks entering Uptown.

4.6.2   Enforce speed and traffic laws for all traffic.

Clearly marked crosswalks and bike lanes are important for safe and efficient mobility.

GOAL 5: PROMOTE DESIGN, ART, CULTURE, AND HISTORY

Design, art, culture, and history are unique to Uptown and contribute to its identity and economy. Public engagement proved how much community members value Plain City's history and character. The following objectives expand on the community's values by promoting opportunities for adaptive reuse and creative programming.

KEY OUTCOMES (1-5 YEARS)

- Increase proportion of civic and cultural uses to **20% of land uses**
- **Create educational signage** to be placed in front of each historical structure in Uptown
- Hold **10 community events** in Uptown within the next year

Objective 5.1:

Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of Uptown's historic structures.

5.1.1   Provide incentives to decrease the investment risk of restoring older structures.

5.1.2   Expand on the history of Plain City through historic tours and marketing materials.

Objective 5.2:

Expand cultural, historical, and artistic opportunities in Uptown.

5.2.1   Partner with local organizations and non-profit groups to collaborate on new uses in Uptown.

5.2.2   Promote programming such as community game night, movie night, or small educational classes.

Objective 5.3:

Maintain residential neighborhoods on the periphery of Uptown with compatible infill and redevelopment as well as preservation.

5.3.1   Encourage the reuse of historic homes Uptown, as well as historic character and materials in new development.

5.3.2   Enforce zoning and historic district regulations to preserve and build on existing residential neighborhoods.

Objective 5.4:

Encourage the installation of public art to build a unique brand for Uptown.

5.4.1 Create opportunities for performing arts through joint civic and cultural amenities.

5.4.2 Install temporary or permanent murals that work with landscaping and signage throughout the district.

Objective 5.5:

Utilize Uptown gathering space for public events that strengthen community values.

5.5.1 Look for opportunities to use large and small gathering spaces for public events.

5.5.2 Promote community art events, such as drawing or painting classes.

5.5.3 Partner with local businesses and community organizations to organize the events and support the local economy.

Public art builds on the character of Uptown and supports local artists.

06 *Priority Projects*

OVERVIEW

Priority projects are initiatives identified by the steering committee and confirmed by the community to advance Uptown Plain City. The concepts catalyze change in the public and private realms by building excitement in business owners and residents and inspiring new collaborations. The priority projects are:

- Housing at the Elementary School
- Housing & Connections
- Intersection of Main & Chillicothe
- Main St. Streetscape Improvements
- Structured & Surface Parking
- Heritage Trail Connection

The framework for the future of Uptown Plain City is grounded in intuitive knowledge from community members and research with the help of Village staff. These groups will continue to play an important role in the implementation of the priority projects, in addition to local interest groups, private developers, and any others who want to have a part in advancing Uptown.

The priority projects complement new development occurring around Plain City, such as Darby Fields.

PRIORITY PROJECT MAP

Park St

N Chillicothe St

W First Ave

Big Darby Creek

A

W Main St

E First Ave

E

N Mechanic St

Uptown Plain City Boundary

North Ave

C

D

W Bigelow Ave

E Main St

McKitrick Park

Maple St

B

Church St

Gay St

Jackson St

S Chillicothe St

F

PRIORITY PROJECTS

A HOUSING AT THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(PRIVATE REALM)

B HOUSING & CONNECTIONS TO
SW PLAIN CITY

(PRIVATE REALM)

C INTERSECTION OF MAIN &
CHILLICOTHE STREETS

(PUBLIC REALM)

D MAIN ST. STREETSCAPE
IMPROVEMENTS

(PUBLIC REALM)

E SURFACE & STRUCTURED
PARKING

(PUBLIC REALM)

F HERITAGE TRAIL
CONNECTION

(PUBLIC REALM)

A HOUSING AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The first focus area is located at the old elementary school building, on West Main Street between Park Street and West First Avenue. Many survey respondents and stakeholders brought up the opportunity for the property to be redeveloped to better serve the community. During pop-up events, community members expressed a desire to repurpose rather than redevelop the elementary school. It was important to them to maintain the history of the site while providing more housing options, and many emphasized the importance of green space.

The favored concept for the elementary school site provides diverse housing options for Plain City residents and maintains flexibility for the future of the elementary school building. The concept builds the character of Uptown and creates consistent activity in the area, which is important for the area's safety and the local economy. Additional concepts that were shown during pop-up events are included in the appendix.

View of the elementary school from Main Street
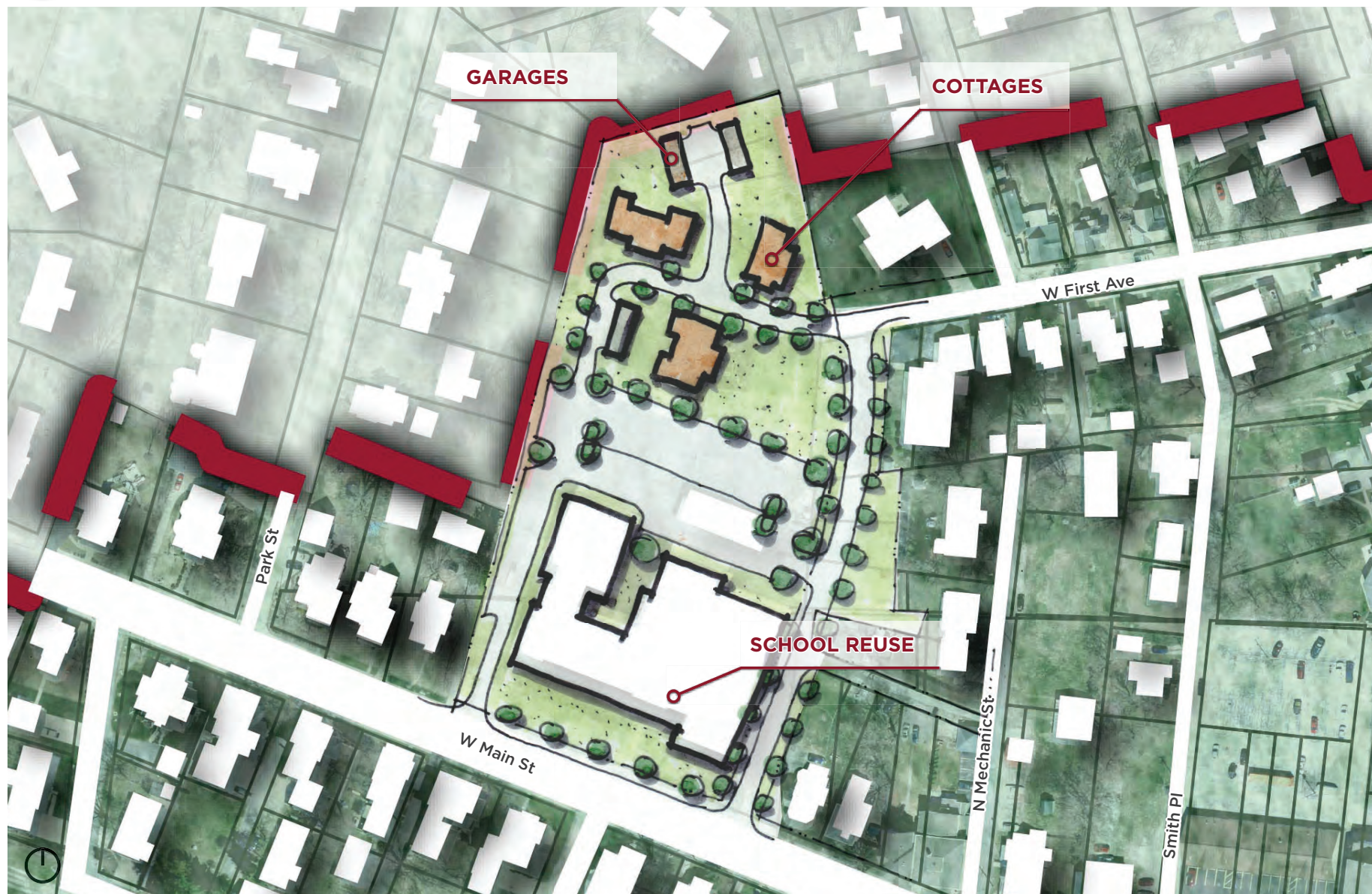
CHARACTER IMAGES

GARAGES

COTTAGES

W First Ave

Park St

SCHOOL REUSE

N Mechanic St

Smith Pl

W Main St

This conceptual site plan for the Uptown area is for illustration purposes only and is subject to change. The plan is not a legally binding document and does not guarantee the approval or implementation of the proposed features or designs. The plan is subject to revision and refinement as further studies, analysis, and discussions take place. Properties retain all existing rights.

B HOUSING & CONNECTIONS

The second focus area contains an underutilized industrial property on the outskirts of Uptown, south of West Bigelow Avenue. The area is in a unique position to connect Uptown Plain City to Der Dutchman, Village offices, and residential neighborhoods southwest. During pop-up events, community members indicated this option for the potential of townhomes to preserve the existing character of Main Street.

The concept includes a combination of townhomes and live/work units. The live/work units are two- or three-story structures that allow people to live on the upper floors and run small businesses or stores out of the ground floor. This provides flexibility for new entrepreneurs. In addition, townhomes offer more housing options near Uptown and a pavilion for gathering.

View of the industrial property from Maple Street
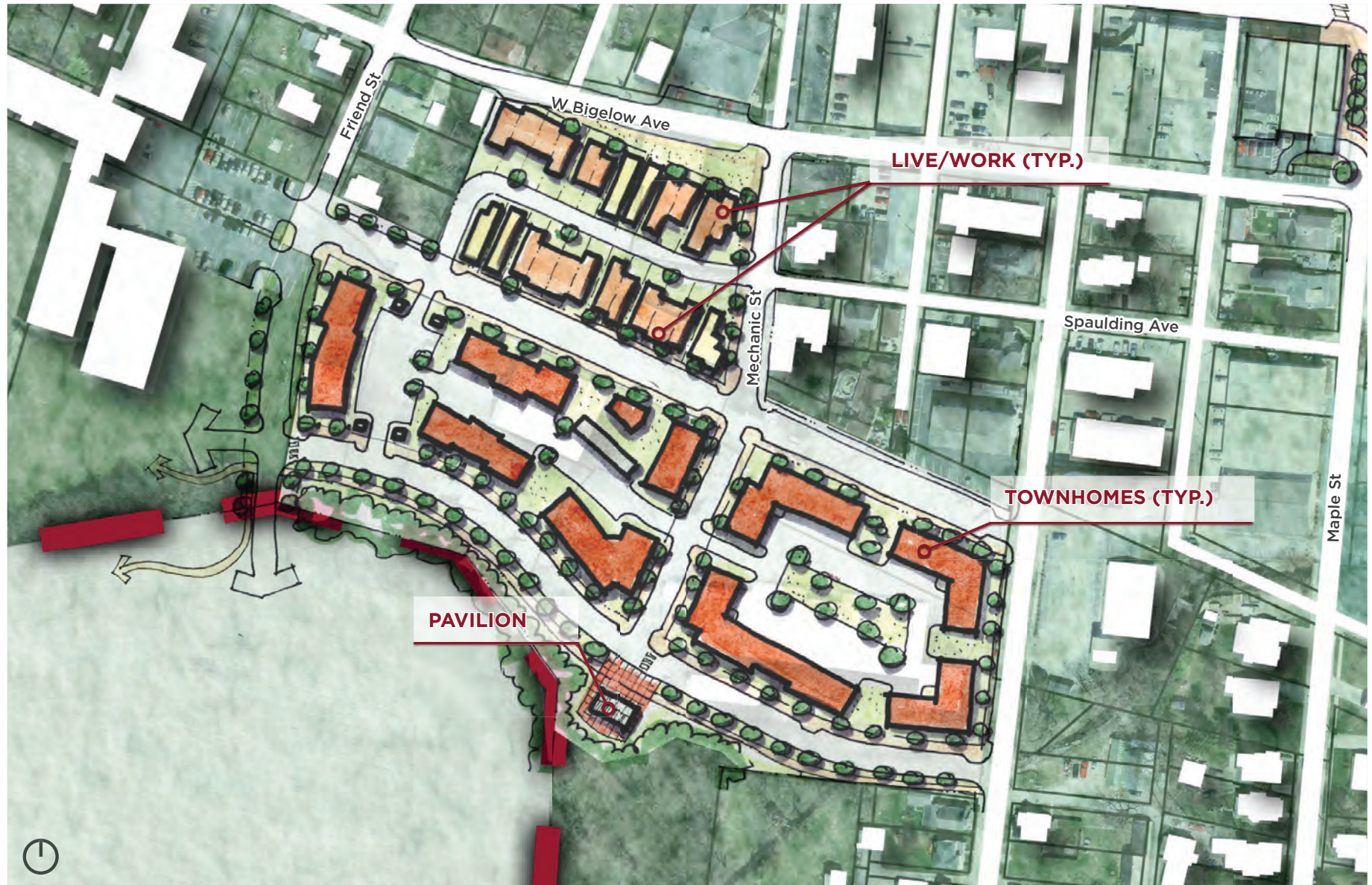
CHARACTER IMAGES

LIVE/WORK (TYP.)

TOWNHOMES (TYP.)

PAVILION

W Bigelow Ave

Friend St

Mechanic St

Spaulding Ave

Maple St

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C

INTERSECTION OF MAIN & CHILLICOTHE

Selected by pop-up attendees as the top priority area, the third focus area sits at the heart of Uptown, the intersection of Main Street and Chillicothe Street. The area has long been a staple in the Village's history. Today, it is well-traversed by residents and visitors, serving as a major connector between regional trails and attractions. During the pop-up events, community members supported adding more biking options and green space, but stressed the importance of safety and maintaining the unique character of Plain City.

The concept for the intersection of Main and Chillicothe Streets introduces new mixed-use buildings on the northeast corner and improved pedestrian circulation. Two plazas on either side of Chillicothe build on the character of Uptown with brick pavers, and new green space on the southwest corner creates more public gathering space. The location can also serve as a trailhead for hikers and bikers on the Heritage Trail to congregate. The concept includes additional street trees and enhanced crosswalks to create a consistent and comfortable street experience.

View of the existing intersection looking northeast

CHARACTER IMAGES
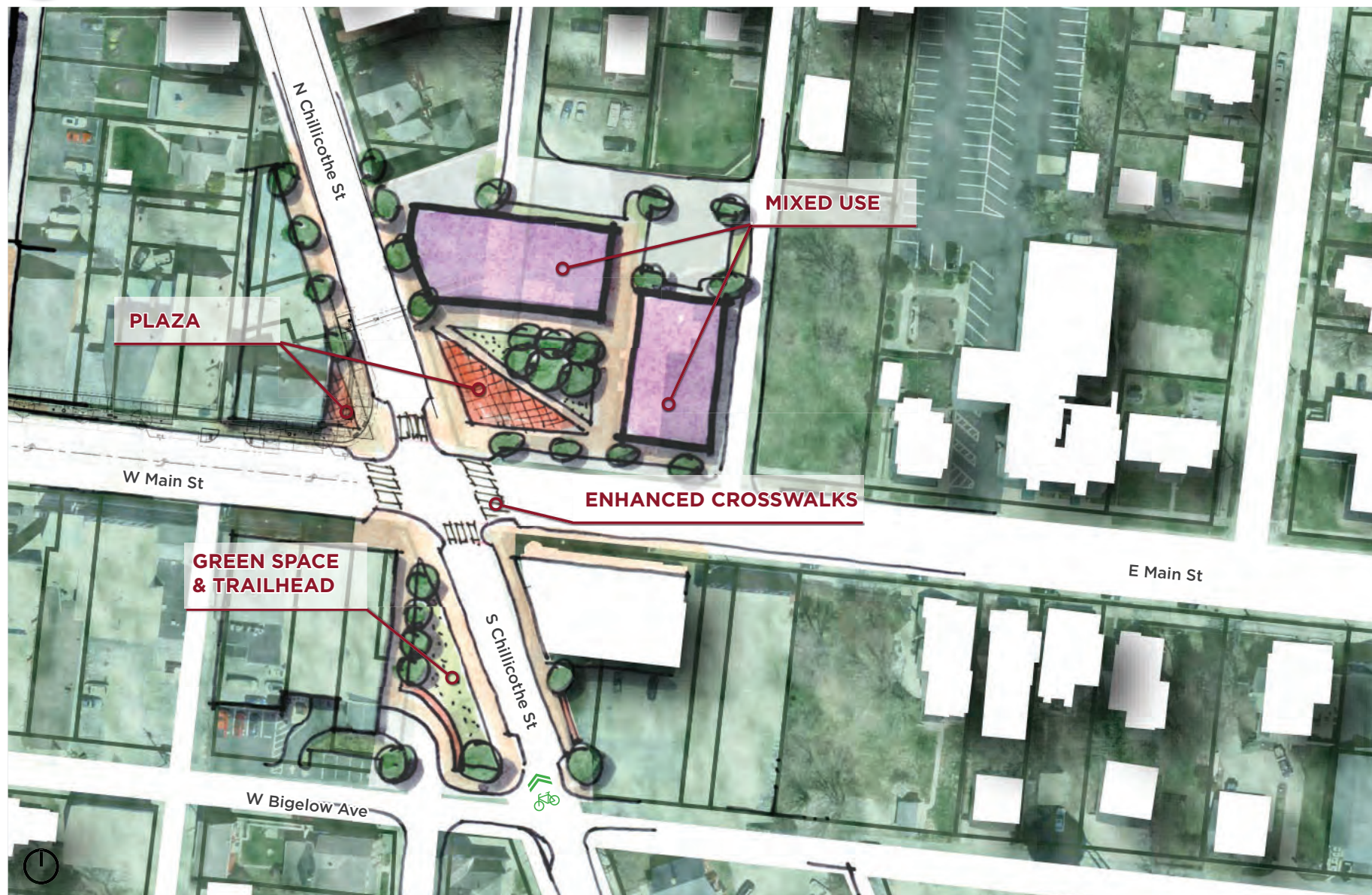
MIXED USE

PLAZA

ENHANCED CROSSWALKS

GREEN SPACE & TRAILHEAD

N Chillicothe St

W Main St

S Chillicothe St

E Main St

W Bigelow Ave

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RE-IMAGINING THE INTERSECTION

The design for the intersection of Main and Chillicothe Streets expands on community members' desire for safe connections. According to survey results, respondents said it was very important to add public or green space, improve roads, and improve streetscaping and landscaping. The intersection concept addresses all three priorities, while creating a signature space within Uptown for residents and visitors.

The concept reimagines the intersection of Main and Chillicothe Streets.

3 Additional Seating

5 Expanded Tree Canopy

4 Accessible Ramps — Integrated Lighting

6 Outdoor Dining — Enhanced Lighting — Bike Amenities

The concept includes an accessible plaza on the northeast corner of the intersection and a park and trailhead on the southwest corner.

D MAIN ST. STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The concept for streetscape improvements along Main Street includes additional street trees, plant beds, light poles, benches, new brick pavers, and concrete sidewalks. The concept improvements extend along Main Street through the core of Uptown, enhancing the pedestrian experience and increasing foot traffic for local businesses.

View of Main Street looking southwest
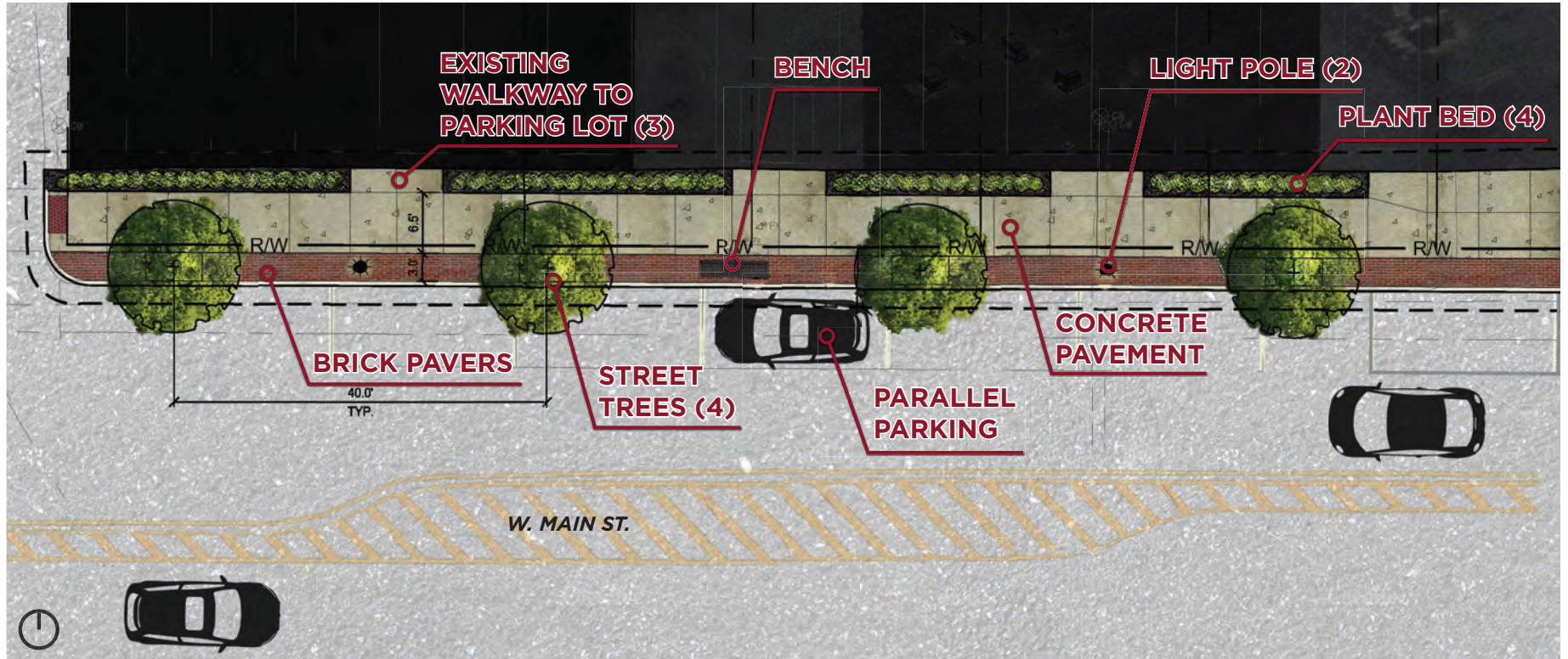
CHARACTER IMAGES

EXISTING WALKWAY TO PARKING LOT (3)

BENCH

LIGHT POLE (2)

PLANT BED (4)

BRICK PAVERS

STREET TREES (4)

PARALLEL PARKING

CONCRETE PAVEMENT

R/W

6.5'

3.0'

40.0' TYP.

W. MAIN ST.

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E STRUCTURED & SURFACE PARKING

The concept for additional parking off Main Street reimagines the site of an existing strip mall with a parking lot fronting the road. During the pop-up events, community members supported the idea of moving the building closer to the street and placing parking in the back. They also saw the potential to increase visitors to Uptown with easier parking.

The concept provides convenient parking for businesses and additional retail or mixed-use space. On the south side of Main Street, a surface parking lot is added behind retail space. On the north side, the existing parking lot is transformed into new retail space fronting the street, and parking is replaced with a small-scale parking garage behind the structure. The parking additions create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape and consistent building street frontage.

Existing parking along Main Street
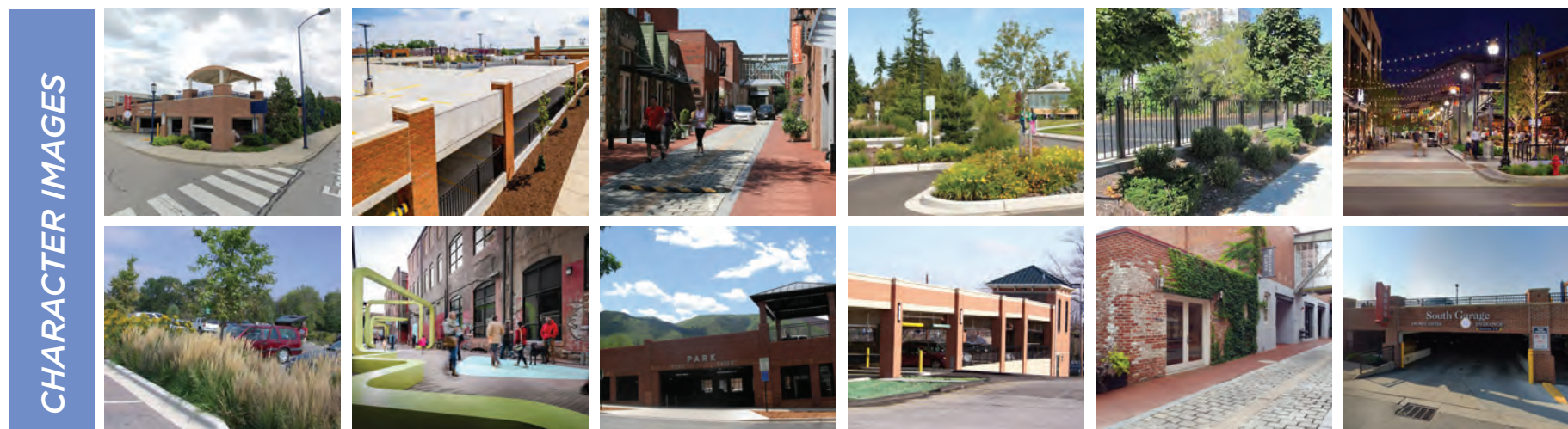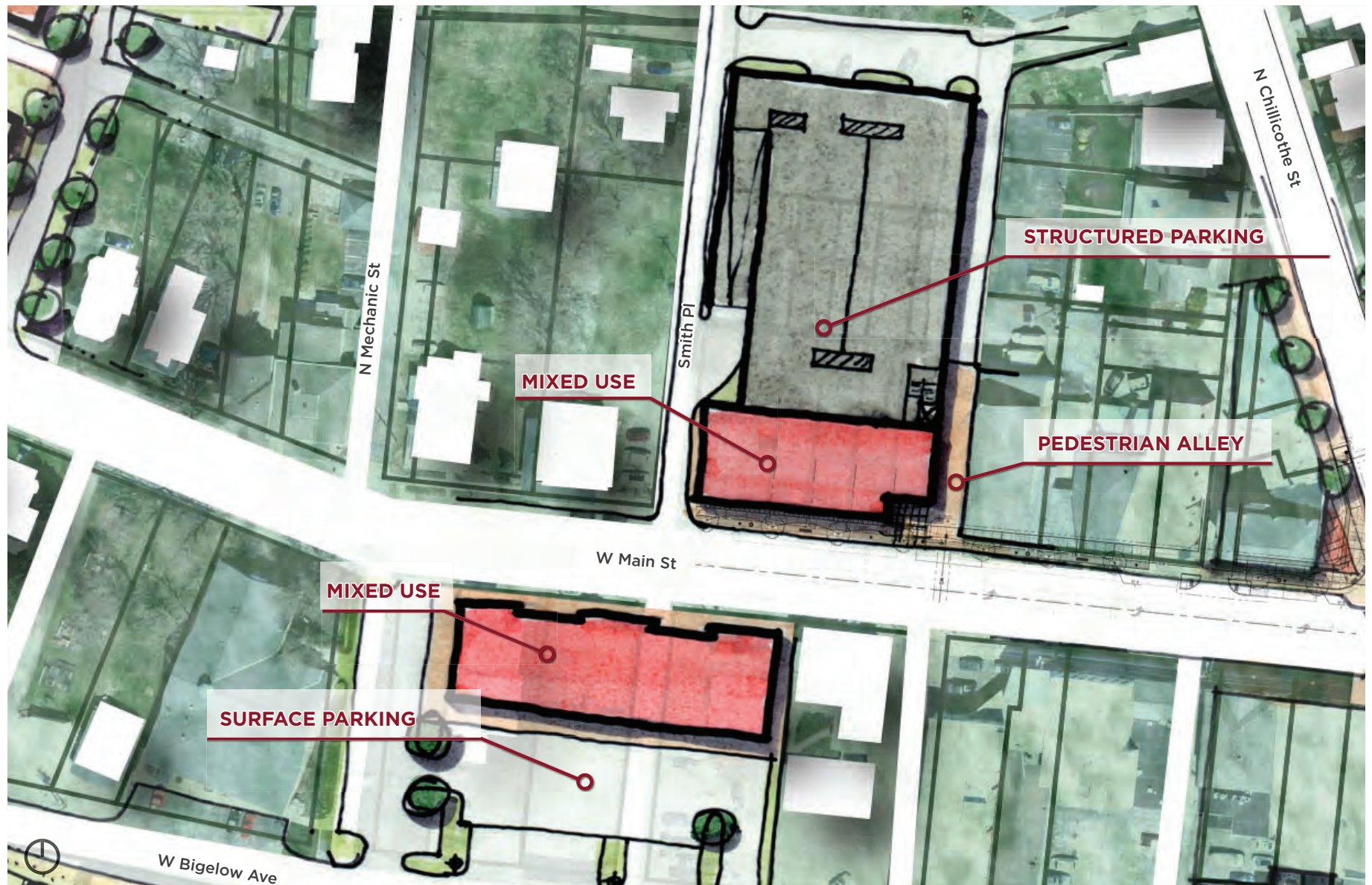
CHARACTER IMAGES

STRUCTURED PARKING

MIXED USE

PEDESTRIAN ALLEY

MIXED USE

SURFACE PARKING

N Chillicothe St

N Mechanic St

Smith Pl

W Main St

W Bigelow Ave

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F   HERITAGE TRAIL CONNECTION

Plain City's Comprehensive Plan from 2018 proposed a connection between Heritage Trail, which ended southeast of the Village, and Uptown. Additionally, community members, stakeholders, and steering committee members all stressed the need for more non-motorized connections within Uptown. The question became where the best location would be, taking into account traffic volumes, existing roadway widths, and pedestrian safety. During the pop-up events, community members expressed support for a trail on quieter, local roads rather than a main road.

The resulting concept serves as a temporary solution until a more direct and permanent route can be established. It follows local streets, taking travelers up and over Jackson Street, Church Street, and Bigelow Avenue, and terminating in a trailhead at the new green space from Concept C. The bike sharrow provides high visibility, and therefore safety, from motorists with minimal work and cost of installation. The connection also encourages visitors to come from Hilliard and Greater Columbus, navigating them directly to Uptown.

Existing right-of-way on Church Street

CHARACTER IMAGES

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07 *Implementation Toolkit*

OVERVIEW

The following pages serve as a guide to plan priority project implementation. They are designed to assist with outreach and communication, fiscal and capital planning, and attract private development.

This chapter should be used to:

- Communicate with the general public about the vision, purpose, and intent of the Uptown Plan,

- Support marketing and media communication efforts,

- Illustrate public investment and development opportunities to attract private investment,

- Support future funding efforts and collaborations, and

- Guide capital planning efforts.

The chapter is intended to quickly convey the main themes of each priority project and accelerate implementation in Uptown.

PARTNERS	
VA	Village Administration
DR	Design Review Board
ED	Economic Development Department
HR	Human Resources Department
IT	Income Tax Department
	Parks & Recreation Department
PZ	Planning & Zoning Department
	Police & Fire Department
	Public Works Department
	Union County Economic Development Partnership
	Waste & Wastewater Department
	Community Members
	Community Organizations
	Local & Regional Businesses
UP	Uptown Plain City Organization (UPCO)

COLOR KEY	
Village + County	
Community	

GOAL 1: CREATE A DIVERSE AND VITAL ECONOMY

Objective 1.1: Create opportunities for smaller, independent businesses Uptown.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
1.1.1 Build and implement a business coaching/support program for businesses in Uptown.	Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit, Ohio Micro-Loan Program	VA ED HR ($) UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	development.ohio.gov/business/minority-business/ohio-micro-loan-program
1.1.2 Create a private capital fund to support microbusiness development within Uptown.	Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit, Ohio Micro-Loan Program	VA ED ($) UP	Short-term 0-3 years	B	development.ohio.gov/business/state-incentives/ohio-job-creation-tax-credit
1.1.3 Pilot a pop-up merchants program during events and festivals.	Ohio Micro-Loan Program	ED ($) UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	development.ohio.gov/business/minority-business/ohio-micro-loan-program

Objective 1.2: Provide economic incentives to businesses to decrease the cost of business location and to help decrease investment risks.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
1.2.1 Collaborate on programs with regional organizations to support and attract businesses.	Offer fee waivers for permits or utility connections to potential businesses.	VA ED ($) UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	growunioncounty ohio.com
1.2.2 Utilize tax incentives for businesses located within Uptown.	Utilize the Uptown Community Reinvestment Area and tax abatements to help existing and new businesses.	ED IT ($) UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	plain-city.com/economic-development

Objective 1.3: Complement economic incentive programs with business and managerial enhancement programs for Uptown business owners.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
1.3.1 Work with local educational institutions to identify entrepreneurship and educational growth opportunities (e.g. STEM academy, satellite campus).	Ohio MEP High School Internship Program	ED $ UP	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	development.ohio.gov/ business/manufacturing/ ohio-mep-high-school-internship-program
1.3.2 Meet with local businesses to identify expansion opportunities and potential challenges.	Establish a Special Improvement District (SID) with a board of directors to lead outreach efforts.	ED PZ $ UP	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	codes.ohio.gov/ ohio-revised-code/ chapter-1710 downtownservices.org

Objective 1.4: Nurture the talents that reside in the community itself and attract new talent from outside the community to create and start new businesses.					
1.4.1 Identify anchor businesses that spur growth in the district.	Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit	ED $ UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	development.ohio. gov/business/state-incentives/ohio-job-creation-tax-credit
1.4.2 Identify gaps in current business mix through quantitative and qualitative research.	Main Street America	ED $ UP	Ongoing	N/A	www.mainstreet.org
1.4.3 Interview current leaseholders and create a retention plan based on the market/lease conditions.	Create a Rental Assistance Program to help business owners with the cost of rent and other payments.	ED $ UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/ assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/ emergency-rental-assistance-program

Objective 1.5: Help promote and market businesses using the Village website, newsletters, or an Uptown business directory.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
1.5.1 Create a marketing and advertising support program for existing and new businesses as part of the business coaching/support program.	SID or Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	VA ED $ UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	columbusddc.com
1.5.2 Utilize existing vacant storefronts to create business staging with the goal of attracting new businesses to the space (e.g. pop up flower shop, co-work space, makers space or shared studio)	Establish a DDA to manage vacant buildings.	DR ED $ UP	Short-term 0-3 years	C	columbusddc.com
1.5.3 Work with existing businesses to establish uniform hours of operation.	SID or DDA	ED $ UP	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	codes.ohio.gov/ ohio-revised-code/ chapter-1710 downtownservices.org

GOAL 2: MIX COMPATIBLE LAND USES

Objective 2.1: Foster an economically and culturally diverse Uptown environment by encouraging a wide variety of housing, commercial, workplace, and cultural experiences.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
2.1.1 Encourage developers to review community priorities provided in the Uptown plan.	Partner with a developer to serve as a "catalytic developer", which forms projects with high potential demand but above market risk.	VA PZ	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	Leinberger, Christopher B. (2005). "Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization". *The Brookings Institution*.
2.1.2 Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Uptown.	Recreate a strong office market in vacant buildings that provides employment opportunities.	DR PZ	Ongoing	A C	
2.1.3 Promote the creation of high-quality housing that is connected to nearby amenities to attract young families.	Expand rental housing market with repurposed buildings or new construction.	VA PZ	Ongoing	A B	

Objective 2.2: Provide harmonious transitions between core area functions and surrounding neighborhoods.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
2.2.1 Create specific design and sign standards for the Uptown.	Main Street America	VA DR PZ	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	www.mainstreet.org
2.2.2 Look for opportunities to create small public spaces and amenities to bridge the gap between different land uses.	Provide density bonuses to developers willing to include public space in their projects.	🌳 PZ $	Ongoing	B C E	

Objective 2.3: Ensure Uptown functions both as a commercial district and a residential neighborhood, with a variety of housing opportunities.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
2.3.1 Promote the creation and expansion of missing middle housing options.	Address affordability by creating a quota for affordable housing, such as 20 percent.	DR PZ	Ongoing	A B	
2.3.2 Perform a detailed housing market analysis to understand current and future housing demand.	Retain a consultant specializing in housing market analysis to provide a unbiased opinion on future demands.	VA ED PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	
Objective 2.4: Encourage mixed-use development throughout Uptown.					
2.4.1 Develop marketing and communication tools to promote redevelopment of strategic Uptown sites.	SID or DDA	HR PZ	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	columbusddc.com
2.4.2 Promote infill development that takes up a smaller footprint.	Encourage development with a TIF District (Tax Increment Financing) to provide economic incentives.	PZ UP	Ongoing	A B C E	development.ohio. gov/business/state-incentives/tax-increment-financing

Objective 2.5: Enforce zoning to create a comfortable environment for all Uptown users.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
2.5.1 Ensure new development follows all guidelines and requirements in Plain City's zoning code.	Main Street America	DR PZ 🔧	Ongoing	N/A	www.mainstreet.org
2.5.2 Respond promptly to public complaints and issues as they arise.	N/A	VA HR 🛡	Ongoing	N/A	

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN IDENTITY

Objective 3.1: Focus attention on Uptown gateways through landmark buildings, public art, and public spaces that announce a visitor's arrival to Uptown.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
3.1.1 Create gateways at or near the entrances to the Uptown District (See Priority Project Map).	Main Street America	DR PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	C F	www.mainstreet.org
3.1.2 Apply the Plain City brand and image to signage and gateways.	Main Street America	DR PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	www.mainstreet.org

Objective 3.2: Encourage the use of sustainable materials, green infrastructure, and renewable energy resources in Uptown development.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
3.2.1 Look for opportunities to install green infrastructure for stormwater management.	Ohio Department of Public Works, Ohio Department of Transportation, Onsite Stormwater Loan Program	PZ ⚒ 💧	Medium-term 3-6 years	C D	owda.org/Onsite-Stormwater-Loan-Program
3.2.2 Require a certain percentage of sustainable design elements in new development.	U.S. Green Building Council LEED	PZ ⚒ 💧	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	usgbc.org
3.2.3 Provide incentives for local businesses to adopt sustainable infrastructure and energy resources.	Ohio Department of Public Works, Ohio Department of Transportation, Onsite Stormwater Loan Program	VA ⚒ 💧 💲	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	pwc.ohio.gov/Programs/All-OPWC-Funding-Programs#56412-state-capital-improvement

Objective 3.3: Improve placemaking through streetscaping projects, public art, the provision of public gathering places, destination points, and landscaping.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
3.3.1 Install lighting as a common element as part of both art installations, infrastructure projects, and private development, including multi-season tree lighting.	Ohio Department of Transportation	DR PZ 🛠 ($)	Short-term 0-3 years	C D	www.transportation.ohio.gov/working/funding/11-funding#page=1
3.3.2 Create guidelines for consistent design and branding in Uptown.	Create a Facade Improvement Program to provide loans or grants to businesses for street frontage updates.	DR PZ	Short-term 0-3 years	D	

Objective 3.4: Create a consistent system of signage and wayfinding elements.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
3.4.1 Design and construct wayfinding signage that complements gateways and streetscape improvements.	National Park Service (Certified Local Government)	DR PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	D	nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/certified-local-government-program.htm
3.4.2 Create clear directions to parking and local destination points for visitors.	Ohio Department of Transportation	PZ	Short-term 0-3 years	C E	www.transportation.ohio.gov/working/funding/11-funding#page=1

Objective 3.5: Respect and build on the historic character of Uptown in new developments.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
3.5.1 Create signature public space elements that complement the clocktower and other landmarks of Plain City.	National Park Service (Certified Local Government)	DR 🌳 PZ	Short-term 0-3 years	A B C E	nps.gov/subjects/ historicpreservationfund/ certified-local- government-program. htm
3.5.2 Integrate historical education with new wayfinding signage.	National Park Service (Certified Local Government)	DR PZ	Ongoing	N/A	nps.gov/subjects/ historicpreservationfund/ certified-local- government-program. htm

GOAL 4: ENHANCE MOBILITY

Objective 4.1: Reduce auto travel by providing services, jobs, and housing in proximity to each other.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
4.1.1 Promote reuse and infill development within Uptown.	Minimize the amount of parking required for businesses in Uptown.	VA DR PZ	⏱	A B C E	
4.1.2 Encourage mixed-use development.	Roadway Development (629)	VA PZ	⏱ Ongoing	B E	development.ohio.gov/business/state-incentives/roadwork-development-629

Objective 4.2: Design Uptown streets for pedestrians first, followed by cyclists; encourage walking and bicycling by making Uptown safe and welcoming.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
4.2.1 Plan for corridor improvements to enhance Main Street.	Safe Streets for All, Roadway Development (629)	PZ 🛠 💲	⏱ Short-term 0-3 years	C D E	transportation.gov/grants/SS4A
4.2.2 Install a clearly marked bike lane to protect cyclists traveling to and from Uptown.	Safe Streets for All	🌳 PZ	⏱ Short-term 0-3 years	F	transportation.gov/grants/SS4A
4.2.3 Explore additional funding opportunities such as Safe Routes to Schools and Clean Ohio Trails Fund.	Safe Routes to School, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Natureworks, Recreational Trails Program, Clean Ohio Trail Fund)	ED	⏱ Ongoing	N/A	transportation.ohio.gov/programs/safe-routes-srts/safe-routes-to-school-srts#page=1 ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/apply-for-grants/grants/clean-ohio-trail-fund

Objective 4.3: Provide wayfinding to direct visitors to landmarks, parking, and other public venues.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
4.3.1 Integrate wayfinding signage with the broader network of signage to create a Plain City brand.	Safe Routes to School	DR 🌳 PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	transportation.ohio.gov/ programs/safe-routes-srts/safe-routes-to-school-srts#page=1
4.3.2 Create both pedestrian- and auto-oriented wayfinding.	Safe Routes to School	DR 🌳 PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	transportation.ohio.gov/ programs/safe-routes-srts/safe-routes-to-school-srts#page=1

Objective 4.4: Provide safe, non-motorized neighborhood connections to encourage walking and biking to and from Uptown.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
4.4.1 Connect with the Heritage Trail to form regional connections.	Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Natureworks, Recreational Trails Program, Clean Ohio Trail Fund)	🌳 PZ 🔧	Medium-term 3-6 years	C F	ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/apply-for-grants/ grants/natureworks ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/apply-for-grants/ grants/recreational-trails-program
4.4.2 Incorporate sidewalks into road repair plans.	Ohio Department of Transportation, Roadway Development (629)	🔧	Ongoing	D E	development.ohio. gov/business/state-incentives/roadwork-development-629
4.4.3 Create additional alley connections between Uptown businesses, public space amenities, and neighborhoods.	Public-private partnerships	🌳 PZ	Medium-term 3-6 years	E	

Objective 4.5: Ensure sidewalks, crosswalks, and public improvements are universally accessible and easy to navigate.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
4.5.1 Perform a pedestrian safety and accessibility audit to understand strengths and weaknesses in the current non-motorized framework.	Safe Streets for All	VA PZ 🛠	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	transportation.gov/grants/SS4A
4.5.2 Include crosswalks, buffers, lighting, and pavement striping in new street designs.	Ohio Department of Transportation, Safe Streets for All, Roadway Development (629)	PZ 🛠	Ongoing	C D E	development.ohio.gov/business/state-incentives/roadwork-development-629
4.5.3 Establish bike facilities, such as bike racks and repair stations, along non-motorized routes and in front of businesses.	Public-private partnerships	🌳 PZ 🛠 $	Short-term 0-3 years	F	Burayidi, Michael A. "Downtown Revitalization in Small and Midsized Cities". *American Planning Association, PAS Report 590*

Objective 4.6: Reduce disruptions from truck traffic through Uptown using traffic calming strategies.

Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
4.6.1 Install road diets or sidewalk bump-outs to slow trucks entering Uptown.	Ohio Department of Transportation, Roadway Development (629)	PZ 🛠	Medium-term 3-6 years	D	development.ohio.gov/business/state-incentives/roadwork-development-629
4.6.2 Enforce speed and traffic laws for all traffic.	Ohio Department of Transportation, Safe Streets for All	🛡	Ongoing	N/A	transportation.gov/grants/SS4A

GOAL 5: PROMOTE DESIGN, ART, CULTURE, AND HISTORY

Objective 5.1: Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of Uptown's historic structures.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
5.1.1 Provide incentives to decrease the investment risk of restoring older structures.	National Park Service (Certified Local Government), State of Ohio	VA ED	Short-term 0-3 years	N/A	nps.gov/subjects/ historicpreservationfund/ certified-local-government-program. htm
5.1.2 Expand on the history of Plain City through historic tours and marketing materials.	National Park Service (Certified Local Government)	HR PZ	Ongoing	N/A	nps.gov/subjects/ historicpreservationfund/ certified-local-government-program. htm
Objective 5.2: Expand cultural, historical, and artistic opportunities in Uptown.					
5.2.1 Partner with local organizations and non-profit groups to collaborate on new uses in Uptown.	SID or DDA	VA HR PZ ⚙ 🧍 👥 💲 UP	Ongoing	N/A	codes.ohio.gov/ ohio-revised-code/ chapter-1710 downtownservices.org
5.2.2 Promote programming such as community game night, movie night, or small educational classes.	SID or DDA	🧍 👥 💲 UP	Ongoing	N/A	codes.ohio.gov/ ohio-revised-code/ chapter-1710 downtownservices.org

Objective 5.3: Maintain residential neighborhoods on the periphery of Uptown with compatible infill and redevelopment as well as preservation.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
5.3.1 Encourage the reuse of historic homes Uptown, as well as historic character and materials in new development.	Focus on developing for-sale housing that appeals to young professionals and empty nesters.	DR PZ	Ongoing	A C	
5.3.2 Enforce zoning and historic district regulations to preserve and build on existing residential neighborhoods.	Follow Residential District Design Standards, Section 1137.07 of the zoning code.	DR PZ	Ongoing	N/A	
Objective 5.4: Encourage the installation of public art to build a unique brand for Uptown.					
5.4.1 Create opportunities for performing arts through joint civic and cultural amenities.	SID or DDA	VA 👤 👥 $	Ongoing	N/A	codes.ohio.gov/ ohio-revised-code/ chapter-1710 downtownservices.org
5.4.2 Install temporary or permanent murals that work with landscaping and signage throughout the district.	Implement a public art fund to support local artists and promote the installation of murals.	ED PZ 👥 $	Medium-term 3-6 years	N/A	

Objective 5.5: Utilize Uptown gathering space for public events that strengthen community values.					
Action Step	Funding Strategy & Resources	Partners	Timeframe	Applicable Priority Project	Reference
5.5.1 Look for opportunities to use large and small gathering spaces for public events.	Coordinate with transportation authorities to shut down local roadways for festivals and events to complement recommended public spaces.	🌳 🧍 👥 💲	Ongoing	B C E	
5.5.2 Promote community art events, such as drawing or painting classes.	SID or DDA	HR 🧍 👥 💲 UP	Ongoing	N/A	codes.ohio.gov/ ohio-revised-code/ chapter-1710 downtownservices.org
5.5.3 Partner with local businesses and community organizations to organize events and support the local economy.	Brand Uptown as an "Arts Entertainment District" and identify what type of entertainment options are best for Plain City (e.g., performing arts center, specialty retail, etc.)	VA ED HR ⚙ 🧍 👥 💲 UP	Ongoing	N/A	

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08 *Appendix*

CONTENTS

The appendix includes:

- Peer Communities Comparison data

- Alternative concepts

- Steering committee meeting results

- Stakeholder responses

- Pop-up events results

- Online survey results

PEER COMMUNITIES COMPARISON DATA

	Plain City, OH	Johnstown, OH	Sunbury, OH	West Jefferson, OH	Mt. Gilead, OH	Barnesville, OH	Martins Ferry, OH
Uses							
Dining							
Restaurants & Bars	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Bakery		★					★
Club (VFW, Knights of Columbus)						★	★
Beauty							
Hair & Nail Salons	★	★	★	★			★
Shops							
Arts & Craft						★	
Antique / Auction	★	★	★				
Clothing & Home Goods	★			★	★	★	★
Jewelry							★
Florist	★		★			★	
Hardware / Supply		★		★	★	★	
Record Store					★		
Services							
Contractor			★				
Lawyer			★		★	★	

	Plain City, OH	Johnstown, OH	Sunbury, OH	West Jefferson, OH	Mt. Gilead, OH	Barnesville, OH	Martins Ferry, OH
Uses Continued							
Services Continued							
Financial	★		★		★	★	
Printing		★					
Fitness							
Dance Studio	★		★			★	
Fitness / Wellness Center		★	★				
Karate / Martial Arts				★	★		
Financial							
Bank	★			★	★		★
Insurance Agency	★	★	★	★		★	
Realtor	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Tax Agency		★	★				

	Plain City, OH	Johnstown, OH	Sunbury, OH	West Jefferson, OH	Mt. Gilead, OH	Barnesville, OH	Martins Ferry, OH
Amenities							
Pedestrian-Oriented							
Walk Score*	67	66	56	53	45	61	76
Bike Score*	44	58	51	Not Available	36	42	45
Trash Cans	★	★	★				★
Alley	★						
Sidewalk Condition / Materials	Mix of concrete & brick	Concrete with brick buffer	Concrete with brick buffer	Concrete with brick buffer	Concrete with brick buffer	Concrete	Concrete w/ light brick around trees
Crosswalks		★		★			
Benches			★	★			
Lighting	None	Lamp Post	Poles	Post & Flag	Post & Banner	Posts	Posts
Signage					Banners		
Green Space							
Street Trees	★	★		★		★	★
Buffer			★				
Park / Pocket Park	★		★	★	★		
Community Garden							★
Flagpole / Plaza			★				

* Data obtained from Walk Score. A community with a score closer to 100 is more walkable or bikeable.

	Plain City, OH	Johnstown, OH	Sunbury, OH	West Jefferson, OH	Mt. Gilead, OH	Barnesville, OH	Martins Ferry, OH
Amenities Continued							
Green Space Continued							
Gazebo		★	★	★			★
Flower Arrangement			★	★		★	★
Auto-Oriented							
Parallel Parking	★	★		★	★	★	★
Head-In Parking			★				
Business							
Outdoor Dining	★						
Post Office Drop		★					
Design							
Number of Stories	2 stories	2 stories	1-2 stories	2 stories	2 stories	2-3 stories	1-3 stories
Sculpture / Public Art			★		★		

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS: HOUSING AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GARAGES

COTTAGES (TYP.)

W First Ave

TOWNHOMES

SINGLE FAMILY HOMES (TYP.)

Park St

N Mechanic St

Smith Pl

W Main St

This conceptual site plan for the Uptown area is for illustration purposes only and is subject to change. The plan is not a legally binding document and does not guarantee the approval or implementation of the proposed features or designs. The plan is subject to revision and refinement as further studies, analysis, and discussions take place. Properties retain all existing rights.

GARAGES

COTTAGES (TYP.)

W First Ave

TOWNHOMES

Park St

N Mechanic St

Smith Pl

W Main St

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STEERING COMMITTEE RESULTS

Issues

Walkability (streetscape, safe paths, etc.) XX
Parking (safety, organization, identifying areas, etc.) X
Business hours/availibilty (demand?)
Underutilized space (understanding uses)
Lack of multimodal options (bike, streetscape, transit)
Diversity in housing choices/character (density + uses)

Lack of a true brand/identity --> make a PLACE (signage, wayfinding, etc.)

Utility/infrastructure (storm, sewer, electrical lines, hydrants, water --> understand + optimize)
Lack of density/population today…
Uses in/around Uptown not highest/best uses
Lack of community-wide programs/events to drive population
OH-161 has some programming/development hurdles
bedroom community (majority of pop. leaves for work, entertainment, services, etc.)
lack of opportunities/community champions?

Opportunities

perfect time to start plan (not too far ahead, start fresh)
Connection to Herritage Trail, other trail heads, etc.
Bike/multimodal parking
Business diversity/incentives
Vacancy improving, opportunity to drive more demand
Public-Private Partnerships (incentives across sectors, developers, etc.)
demand exists, needs to be intentional (responsible) to properly move into future of Plain City X

Location! (proximity to greater columbus)
Pocket parks/access to green space
Demand for population and housing looming

Darby Station

Priority Initiatives

Herritage Trail Connection (multi-use path with targeted development)
Incentives for current/potential development/business (Public-Private partnerships/incentives)
Expanding public spaces/connectivity (parks, trails, open space, access, etc.)
Art, culture, destination, and brand
clear and intentional direction for business and uses (uptown identity, character, design guidelines?)
Increase residential density (type, density, etc.)

Objective Ranking	1 (Top Priority)	2	3	4	5
Goal 1:					
1.1	2	1		1	
1.2	2	1		1	
1.3		1	3		
1.4		1	1	2	
1.5					4
Goal 2:					
2.1	2	1	1		
2.2	1			3	
2.3	1	1	2		
2.4		2	1		1
2.5				1	3
Goal 3:					
3.1			3	1	
3.2					4
3.3	1	2		1	
3.4	1	1	1	1	
3.5	2	1		1	
Goal 4:					
4.1	1			1	2
4.2	1		1	1	1
4.3		1	1	1	1
4.4		3	1		
4.5	2			1	1
Goal 5:					
5.1	4				
5.2			1	2	1
5.3		2	2		
5.4				1	3
5.5		2	1	1	

Of the identified projects, please select your TOP FIVE priorities.
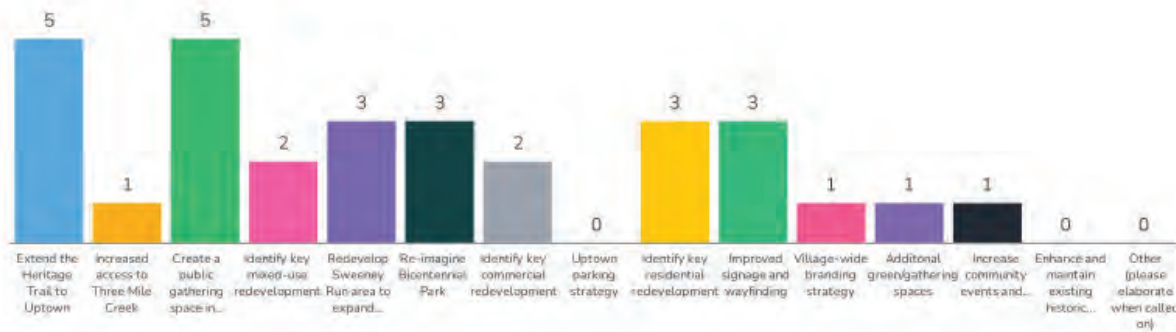
Vision Statement:

Love the vision being a mix of all those things. Might be nice to give the vision a slight lean towards the "historic" value… main street america

Recreation instead of recreating. Great vision statement

Good with this vision as it is dynamic in nature and provides a wide range of opportunities to grow.

Goal 4:

Reduce heavy truck traffic. How do we do this? Road diets, compress the road with pedestrian realm. Chilli and 161 intersection

Reduce slow truck traffic and cement truck traffic through the Uptown

Heritage Trail extension should be helpful for 2 and 3 respectively. Would actually love to see a roundabout at the 161/Main St and Chillicothe intersection to prevent the continues semi traffic in the downtown. There used to be a roundabout and a flagpole in that intersection a long time ago anyways.

Goal 1:

Thinks like Objective 1.2 and how we are working hand-in-hand to become a recognized local government to gain access to new…

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSES

Issues	Opportunities
Parking - creating new space now, ped walkway to space - need more parking, Traffic form 161 - outdoor searting is difficult Not much to draw in after hours (now only one rest.) Why do people want o come if there is nothing there to come to - intransition phase. Bike racks.	Fill buildings that add to economic vibrancy. Go after bus open in m, etc.
Traffic and safety - now unsafe on sidewalks, slow traffic down. Signage important- wayfinding. Parking in park area - especiaily on pool days, trails, walkways	Trail extension project. Now wroking on. Working on rebranding project.
Rearranging athletic fields, wasted space. Traffic and safety - now unsafe on sidewalks, slow traffic down. Traffic has caused some bus. to move. Hours limited Liimted retail variety; farmers market could expand	Access improved for age grpups, etc Conect sidewalks to downtown.
	Heritage important, acknowledge
	Numbre of families focus on events Need to communicate positively what is going on w/o negative spin. Need PR work. Not time to show positives.
Retain small town feel	Trail Head
Effort to remove historic district - should maintain Parking needed for new uses (e.g. Brewery)	Powell, but with evening activity Get more people in community.
Lack of continuity Eyesores,	

Priority Initiatives

Take little green spots and make into parks, flat iron, roses at entrance to park,some type of theme that pulls things together, Front of Kellar williams
Keeping amish heritage, maybe with green space, historic continuity with new.
CLG neede to get state and local grant funds.

What type of place do you want the downtown area to be?

Thriving
No vacancies
Clean
Friendly
Community
Walkable
DORA

What can hinder or help make that vision a reality?

Lack of communication and planning
Weak vision
If people don't want change
Remove power lines & poles

Issues & Opportunities - Land Use + Development

Restore Masonic building (potential for parking)
More public parking
Clean walkways
Well lit
Welcome center next to courthouse
Parking & landscaping on Old Elias property
Community center at old elementary school

Issues & Opportunities - Housing

Downtown lofts on 2nd story of buildings
Affordable housing to allow for long term residents
Mixed use

Issues & Opportunities - Parks & Public Space

Flat Iron

Proper time for events
Use empty realty office by auction house
Expand shops along Chillicothe
Use Masonic lodge & Old Elias properties for green space
Purchase and repurpose old elementary school on W Main
Expand Pastime Park

Issues & Opportunities - Mobility

More crosswalks
Light up pathways
Signage
Kiosk / map
Streets lined for crossings
Connection to Pastime Park & dog park
Make N Chillicothe brick again

Issues & Opportunities - Character & Image

Hometown
Similar to Powell
Welcoming
Safe
Friendly
Security
Old town but up to date
Want to visit & stay to relax
Comfortable
Casual
Crafty
Arts & events
Old Hilliard

Other Comments

Preserve heritage
Preserve small town feel
Include north & south Chillicothe, not just Main St

Priority Projects

Public improvements to spur investment - City willingness
Public private partnerships
Short and long term improvements

POP-UP EVENTS RESPONSES

A proud heritage, a promising future

A proud heritage, a promising future

Uptown Master Plan Pop-Up Events – Farmer's Market and Online Survey
In-Person Interactions and 26 Online Responses as of 9.21.22

Typeform results: https://ohmplanning.typeform.com/report/SfV0DufS/iEPaLQ0KqR5FmG9K

1. Priority Projects

- F, E, C
- C, D, F
- F (make Plain City more bike/pedestrian friendly), C
- C, D, F
- F, D, C
- F
- F
- A
- D, C, E
- C, D, E
- A, C, E
- F, C, D
- F, E, D
- Restaurants, Sidewalks, Lighting
- C, D, F
- C, E, B
- Maintain character, keep small, historic restoration
- Streets, family oriented
- C, B, E, D, A
- C, E, B
- D, C, F, E, B, A
- Zoning, restaurants, sidewalks
- Schools, zoning, variety of shopping / dining
- C, E, A
- D, C, E, A, B
- Community areas, bike paths, housing
- C, E, A
- B

2. Public Engagement Findings (In-Person Events)

- Skateboard ledges and amenities.
- No bad option, change is good.
- Don't like the bump out [on Main St], not safe.

3. Concept A – Which concept do you prefer and why?

- A3 would be first pick if the Village is going to keep the elementary school, otherwise A1 would be the first pick if the elementary school is not staying.
- A3 due to street continuity.
- A1
- A1, would like to see the school be repurposed.
- A1
- A1, keep the elementary school and add some smaller homes.
- A1, then A2
- Create park with playground and trees
- Green space
- Playground / recreation
- Consider existing businesses
- A1
- A1
- A3
- No lack of housing
- A2
- A1, A3
- A2
- A3
- A3
- A2
- No more housing
- A3- more cottages instead of townhomes
- A1
- A3
- A3
- A2
- A3
- Other

- A3
- A1 – less parking

4. Concept A – What would you like to see changed in each concept?

- No modern looking homes, would like to see something with historic character.
- More housing options at various income levels. The younger generation wants smaller homes.
- Keep the three floor townhomes away from Main St, push them back farther
- A2, the cottages are too small
- See the Powell Pavilion for an example of what this property could look like. Have the pavilion in the front, parking in the middle, an administrative building on the side, and apartments on the back. Have two entrances to the property.
- Would like to see a community center incorporated somehow.
- Park space is important, including green space and a playground.
- Would like to see a low noise level with whatever happens with the old elementary school.
- Believes "less is more" and that more green space on the elementary school lot is ideal.

5. Concept B – What do you like best about the concept?

- Small businesses, gathering places
- Pavilion
- Green space, road intersecting Maple
- Pavilion, walking paths
- Location
- Pavilion, live/work
- Outdoor seating
- Look more inviting
- Modern feel with industrial surroundings
- Pavilion (add playground)

6. Concept B – What would you like to see changed in the concept?

- Post office maybe?
- Keep townhomes off Main St.
- Reincorporate more of "old historic Plain City"
- Keep away from all the black buildings.
- No apartments or condos
- No more housing
- No more housing
- No multi family housing

- Looks like Hilliard or Dublin
- More upscale townhomes
- More single family near street
- Where is parking for live/work?
- Multi family implications (schools)

7. Concept C – What do you like best about the concept?

- Like the feel of the open town square.
- Walkable gathering places.
- Open green space
- Green space
- Park
- Mixed use
- Plaza
- Walking improvements
- Crosswalk
- Plaza
- Attract people without more housing

8. Concept C – What would you like to see changed in the concept?

- Keep Bicentennial Park, don't want it to look like Dublin.
- Keep Bicentennial Park.
- Keep Bicentennial Park, want the historic Plain City feel to remain the same.
- Do not want to see any more black buildings.
- Plaza with amenities for children with seating and maybe a fountain area.
- Narrowing Uptown streets for slower traffic.
- Keep Bicentennial Park, make it bigger, see Marysville pavilion for an example.
- More bump outs
- No power lines
- Bigger plaza, fountain
- Too much traffic / people
- Outdoor benches/tables
- Careful with character of buildings
- Don't close off street
- More benches
- Trouble with businesses on corner
- Keep Bicentennial Park

A proud heritage, a promising future

A proud heritage, a promising future

- More bike amenities

9. Concept D – What do you like best about the concept?

- Pavers, benches, foliage
- Trees, bricks
- Trees, lights
- All of it
- Trees, lights, benches
- Wide sidewalks, trees
- Destination, pedestrians
- Extending landscaping
- Greenery
- Pavers

10. Concept D – What would you like to see changed in the concept?

- Replace parallel parking with diagonal parking.
- More artistic installations
- More bollards near Grainery
- Bury power lines
- More shrubs
- Not enough for long term
- Restore buildings
- Angled parking
- More native trees, stamped concrete
- Protected crosswalk at Main & Maple

11. Concept E – What do you like best about the concept?

- Excited about small parking garage, it will increase visits to the downtown area.
- Like the moving buildings up to the street for continuity with parking behind.
- Safer and looks better
- Retail and more parking
- More parking
- Consistent building
- Grow businesses
- Garage
- Hidden garage

12. Concept E – What would you like to see changed in the concept?

- Get rid of seating from "silos", it blocks easy strolling and shopping.
- Not necessary
- More crosswalks
- Restore existing buildings
- Ice cream store
- Too expensive
- Outdoor gathering space
- Wider alley
- Don't like appearance of garage
- Condos instead of elementary school
- No garage
- Lighting
- Pedestrian safety
- Underground parking, more residential

13. Concept F – Which bike option do you like best?

- F2
- F2, like routing the bike trail on Church St.
- F2, bike trail on Church St.
- Would like to see more bike paths overall. Likes all concepts.
- Like Hilliard
- Connect around town
- Separate paths
- Separate trail
- F2
- F2
- F1 – remove parking, add bike racks
- Separate from street
- Bike lane
- F1
- F2
- F2
- F2
- Strengths in both options
- F2

- Separate lane
- F2
- None
- F2
- Bike lanes

14. Do you have anything else you would like to share relating to the Plain City Uptown Plan?

- No more housing – add green space
- No more housing – gathering spaces
- Reuse existing
- Business growth
- Gathering space
- DORA, reimagine intersection
- Need jobs
- More park space, walking trails
- No more houses
- Value historic homes
- Keep existing businesses
- Encourage biking
- Music venue disrupts downtown (many people brought this up throughout survey)

ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSES

Generally speaking, would you say that things in Uptown Plain City are going in the right direction, or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

479 out of 479 answered

Things are improving! 404 resp. **84.3%**

I don't like where things are heading. 38 resp. **7.9%**

Things have stayed the same. 37 resp. **7.7%**
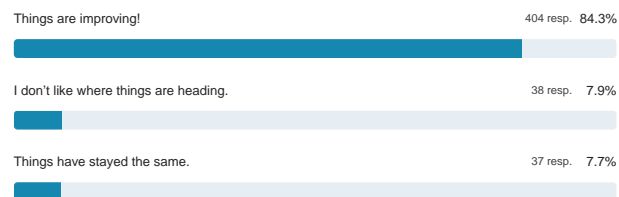
Where do you live currently?

479 out of 479 answered

In Plain City 341 resp. **71.2%**

In Union County 65 resp. **13.6%**

In Madison County 47 resp. **9.8%**

10-20 minutes away from Plain City 21 resp. **4.4%**

30-45 minutes away from Plain City 3 resp. **0.6%**

More than 45 minutes away from Plain City 2 resp. **0.4%**
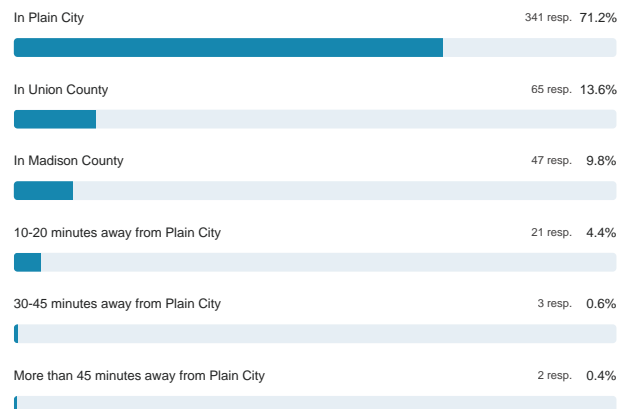
What are the primary reasons for you visiting Uptown? Select all that apply.
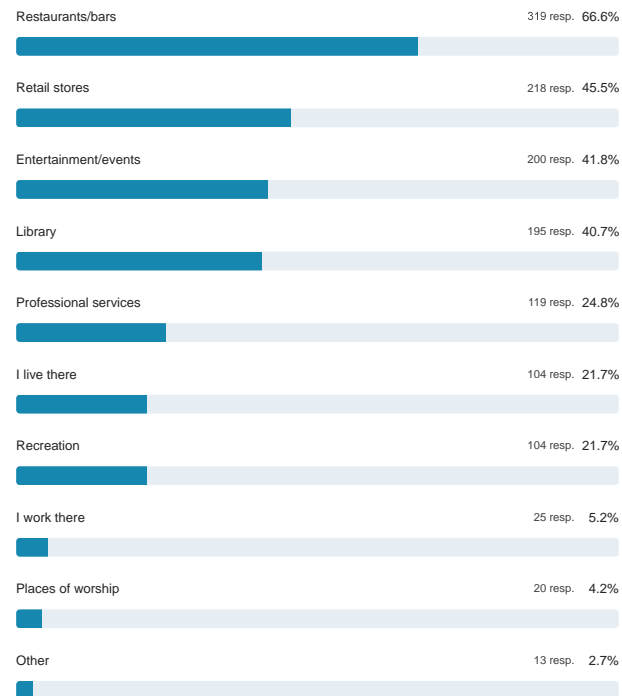
479 out of 479 answered

Restaurants/bars 319 resp. **66.6%**

Retail stores 218 resp. **45.5%**

Entertainment/events 200 resp. **41.8%**

Library 195 resp. **40.7%**

Professional services 119 resp. **24.8%**

I live there 104 resp. **21.7%**

Recreation 104 resp. **21.7%**

I work there 25 resp. **5.2%**

Places of worship 20 resp. **4.2%**

Other 13 resp. **2.7%**

How frequently do you visit Uptown Plain City?

479 out of 479 answered

All the time 176 resp. **36.7%**

A couple times a month 144 resp. **30.1%**

Once a week 98 resp. **20.5%**

A couple times a year 58 resp. **12.1%**

Never 3 resp. **0.6%**
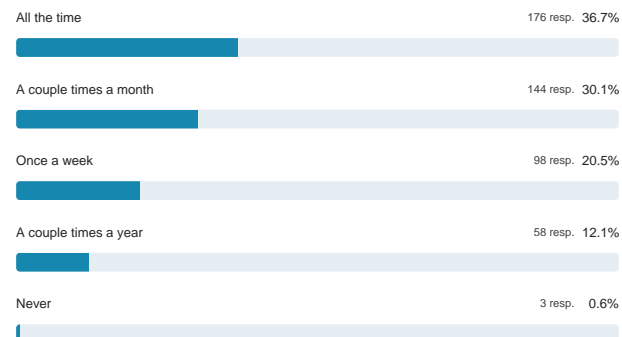
7. What types of services and activities do you **not** visit the Uptown for? Select all that apply.

479 out of 479 answered

Work — 421 resp. **87.9%**

Sports and recreation — 172 resp. **35.9%**

Personal services — 153 resp. **31.9%**

Shopping — 111 resp. **23.2%**

Entertainment and events — 78 resp. **16.3%**

Dine out — 69 resp. **14.4%**

Other — 8 resp. **1.7%**

8. How frequently do you **not** visit the Uptown for these services and activities?

479 out of 479 answered

Daily — 193 resp. **40.3%**

Monthly — 148 resp. **30.9%**

A few times per week — 83 resp. **17.3%**
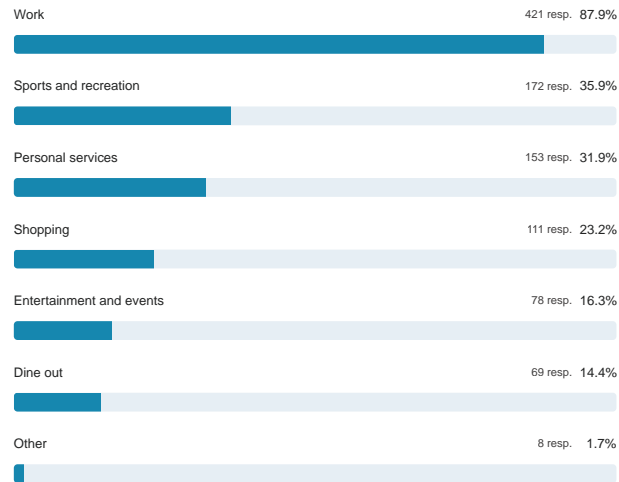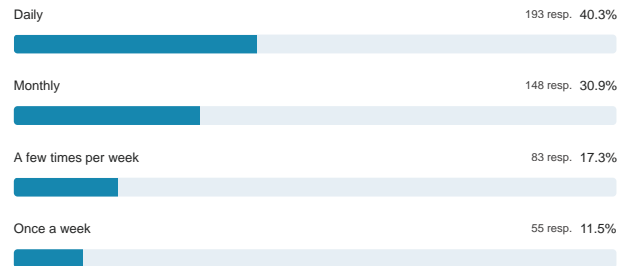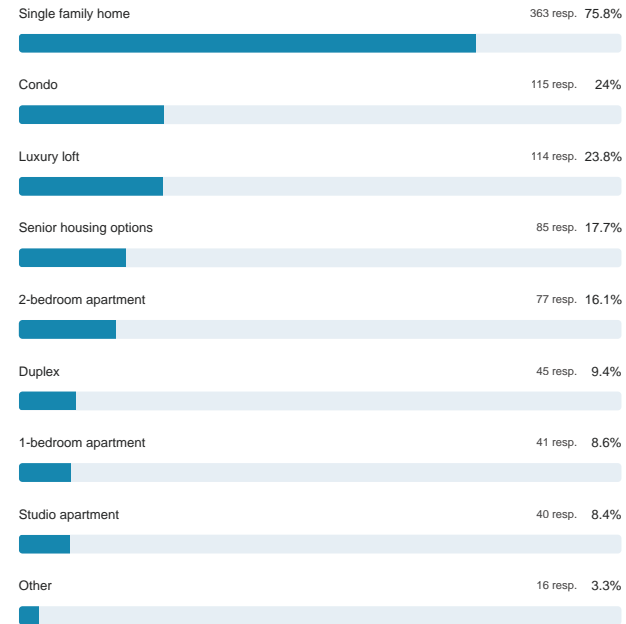
Once a week — 55 resp. **11.5%**

If you were looking to move Uptown or within walking distance, which would you consider as a potential housing option? Select all that apply.

479 out of 479 answered

Single family home — 363 resp. **75.8%**

Condo — 115 resp. **24%**

Luxury loft — 114 resp. **23.8%**

Senior housing options — 85 resp. **17.7%**

2-bedroom apartment — 77 resp. **16.1%**

Duplex — 45 resp. **9.4%**

1-bedroom apartment — 41 resp. **8.6%**

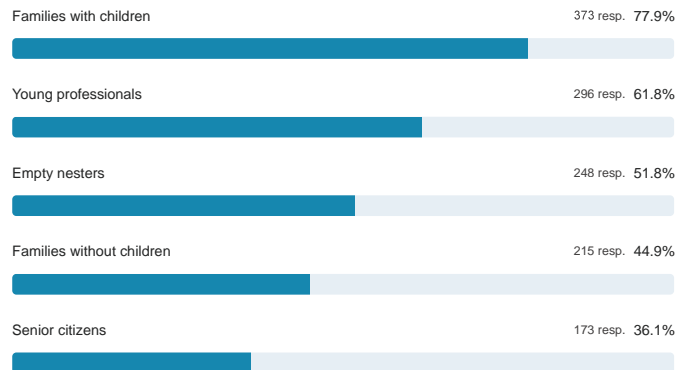Studio apartment — 40 resp. **8.4%**

Other — 16 resp. **3.3%**

If your preferred choice of housing were available, would you consider living Uptown or within walking distance?
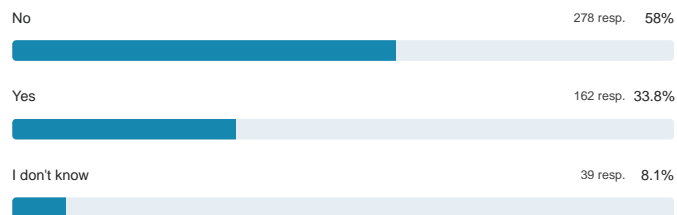
479 out of 479 answered

Yes — 283 resp. **59.1%**

No — 196 resp. **40.9%**

Which of the following groups should Uptown Plain City strive to attract more of? Select all that apply.

479 out of 479 answered

Families with children · 373 resp. · **77.9%**

Young professionals · 296 resp. · **61.8%**

Empty nesters · 248 resp. · **51.8%**

Families without children · 215 resp. · **44.9%**

Senior citizens · 173 resp. · **36.1%**

Do you feel there is adequate parking when you visit Uptown?

479 out of 479 answered

No · 278 resp. · **58%**

Yes · 162 resp. · **33.8%**

I don't know · 39 resp. · **8.1%**

Do you feel that there is adequate public/green space downtown?

479 out of 479 answered

Yes · 127 resp. · **26.5%**

No · 352 resp. · **73.5%**
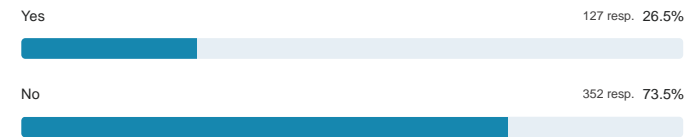
How do you feel about the current character of Uptown?

479 out of 479 answered

I want to maintain and improve the current character · 382 resp. · **79.7%**

I want to see the character change · 71 resp. · **14.8%**

I don't know · 26 resp. · **5.4%**
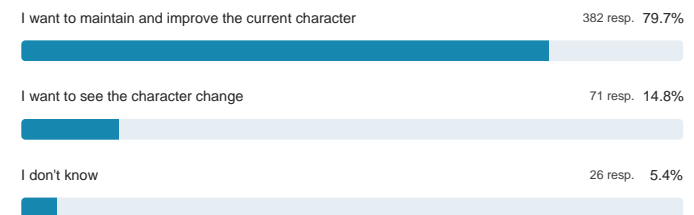
Do you believe Uptown Plain City has a distinct identity?

479 out of 479 answered

Yes · 235 resp. · **49.1%**

No · 174 resp. · **36.3%**

I don't know · 70 resp. · **14.6%**
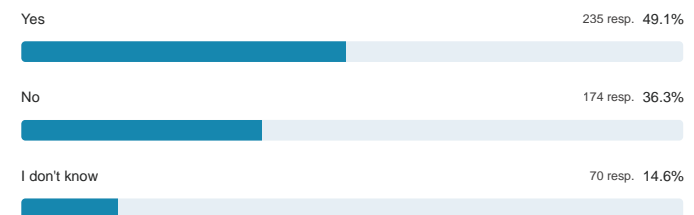
What do you consider your primary source for getting information about Plain City?

479 out of 479 answered

Social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)   234 resp. **48.9%**

Village website   117 resp. **24.4%**

Word-of-mouth (friends, family, neighbors, etc.)   107 resp. **22.3%**

I receive no information about Plain City   7 resp. **1.5%**

The newspaper   3 resp. **0.6%**

Radio   0 resp. **0%**

Other   11 resp. **2.3%**
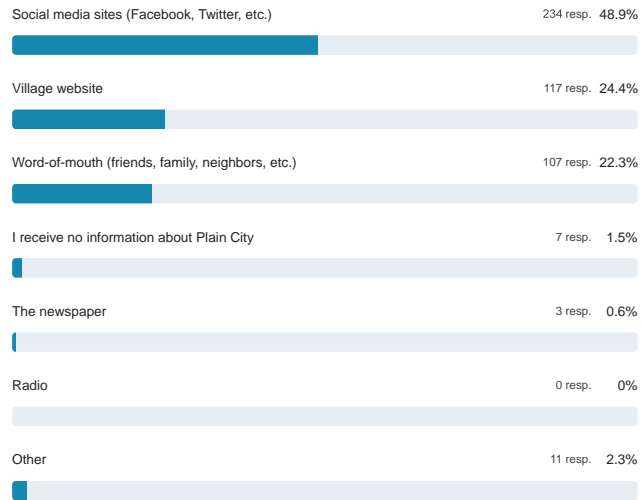
Do you or your family own or rent the home in which you currently live in Plain City/Madison/Union County?

479 out of 479 answered

Own   438 resp. **91.4%**

Rent   29 resp. **6.1%**

Not applicable   12 resp. **2.5%**

How long have you lived in Plain City?

479 out of 479 answered

1-5 years   142 resp. **29.6%**

Over 20 years   140 resp. **29.2%**

11-20 years   93 resp. **19.4%**

6-10 years   71 resp. **14.8%**

Less than 1 year   20 resp. **4.2%**

Not applicable   13 resp. **2.7%**
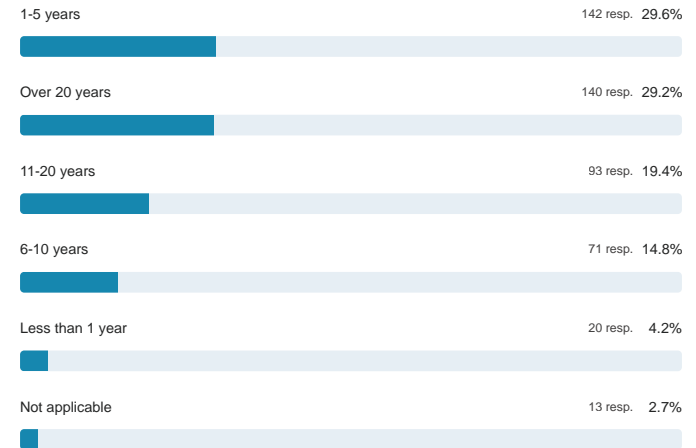
Which category best describes your age?

479 out of 479 answered

35-44   179 resp. **37.4%**

25-34   96 resp. **20%**

45-54   96 resp. **20%**

55-64   57 resp. **11.9%**

65+   44 resp. **9.2%**

18-24   6 resp. **1.3%**

<17   1 resp. **0.2%**