

# WOOD COUNTY

## FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

## Appendix B: Public Input Round 1

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*The input from the first open house and online surveys.*

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### SUMMARY

On Wednesday February 10, the team held an open house for the first round of public engagement. About 30 people attended the event held from 5:30-7:30 at the Junior Fair Building. The event was scheduled to be self-guided and a looping presentation provided direction and background on the land use planning process. Two major questions were asked: What are the County's biggest opportunities for the future, and what are the County's biggest challenges? Participants were also asked to show us on maps where they thought we should encourage growth and development, where we should reinvest and redevelop areas, and where we should protect and preserve areas. A survey with the same questions was posted on the Planning Commission's website from late January through early March 2016. We received 12 completed responses.

The following is a record of the results and a summary of the findings.

Key findings:

- Significant opportunities were noted in relationship to agricultural production as a fundamental economic contributor including agribusinesses, local food production, and agricultural preservation.
- Support for growth management concepts particularly that focuses on redevelopment and reinvestment over outward growth, and in concern for maintain quality of life (increased traffic, demand for schools, services, etc.).
- Many see potential opportunities for economic development associated with the CSX inland port in Henry Township.
- Transportation networks both for personal and freight movement should be planned and coordinated.

## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS

- Protection and improvement of the natural environment including water quality are important.
- Concern about balance of workforce (high employment rate) and potential to attract new jobs to the region.
- Desire to see recreational opportunities with bike trails, and parks.

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## RECORDS

### Opportunities

#### Open House Comments:

- Specialty Farm
  - Promote variety of farm ideas
- Crossroads area
  - Additional developable land opportunities
- Farming/Ag. Educational opportunity-kids/students
- Vineyard opportunities
- Retreat area/B&B
- Learning Area
- Corn maze/Hay maze
- Flat treeless land (fertile)
- Located near transportation
- CSX Intermodal-Inland port
- Infrastructure
- Planned Business Districts
- Local food production processing
- Historical museums
- Bike trail
- Ohio Turnpike, I-75, N/S/E/W rail lines-easy access
- Room to expand
- Strong smaller communities
- College(s)
- Vocational school
- Fertile farmland
- Parks
- Ag. Incubator Foundation
- Northern OH Co-op Kitchen

#### Survey Responses:

- Preserve our agricultural landscape and economy. Cows don't go to school and corn doesn't call the police, meaning that agricultural lands contribute

## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS

to tax revenue without increasing tax expenditures. It is also an important part of our identity, and adjacent open spaces increase home values.

- Do we WANT to grow, population wise? WHY is this AUTOMATICALLY, by default, considered a GOOD thing?
- intersection of main roads
- The biggest opportunity is farmland preservation, since once land is developed it is pretty much gone - try to focus on redevelopment and density in areas that are already highly-populated. Could there be county-led program to enhance or incentivize preservation?
- High quality agricultural land for farm production.
- I am concerned over the influx of development/traffic within Middleton Township. There's a "quality of life" issue at jeopardy: 1) farmland is getting sucked up due to sporadically placed subdivisions, 2) the peaceful country atmosphere of the Middleton Township farming community is getting ruined due to an influx of subdivisions, constant cars, speeding, etc.; 3) concerned about home values; 4) rural character of Middleton Townships is getting ruined. Traffic patterns are ridiculously high throughout the day and night, as well as speeding cars throughout the country roads. The homes currently in Middleton Township are there due to the rural, away-from-the-city type feel ... and to avoid city-related congestion issues. They didn't build to be the last person in that area; many (like me) just want to see the area preserved for what it is meant for. Unfortunately city and county planning seem to be forgetting what makes the entire area great ... our rural setting. Soon, there will be nothing "rural" ... only suburbs and subdivisions. As a sign on Route 25 describes: "Farming is the state's biggest industry." Why are city planners letting this get sucked up to more unwanted, unneeded subdivisions just to meet their personal goals?
- Increase and/or improvement of natural wetlands and protection of the Maumee River and other waterways.
- There are ample opportunities to develop residential and commercial space in Bowling Green. I would like to see growth and development to be centered within Bowling Green existing city limits. I would like development to "fill in" and rehabilitate areas of the city and for zoning to be set that would preserve open space outside of the existing city borders.
- CSX, I-75 & Cygnet
- Access to 75/6/Turnpike

- Transportation Rail & Hwy
- CSX
- Redevelop existing commercial and industrial properties. Work with the cities to rebuild on parcels that have already been taken out of production instead of turning a corn field into a car dealership, leaving an empty parking lot somewhere else that can't be used for corn and isn't needed to sell cars.
- Shouldn't we instead be trying to attract PRODUCTIVE and CAPABLE people? Profitable businesses?
- open areas providing flexibility for development
- Another opportunity is using farmland as a way that links industry and entrepreneurial opportunities, such as food-related industries or using by-products of farming for creative ideas.
- Unique historical and natural sites (museum, Maumee River, etc).
- The addition of bike paths and walking paths throughout the county, but especially in Perrysburg. Riding your bike or walking anywhere in Perrysburg is nerve racking adventure. Never, ever appropriate for children.
- The Wood County fairgrounds is an asset especially with its location that is within easy commute of BG downtown and BGSU. However the fairgrounds does not appear aesthetically pleasing. I believe there could be an effort to landscape the entryway with native plantings.
- Excellent/productive farmground
- Make sure that additional residential development occurs in places where infrastructure - especially wastewater - already exists. We have too many failing septic systems already, and too many areas that still need sewers to correct water pollution problems.
- Isn't the best way to do that ... is just to simply ensure low tax rates and low regulatory burden?
- good development areas such as the crossroads
- Transportation choices could be enhanced with a linked county to county transportation system, focusing in on denser areas and various transportation modes, to include bicyclist safety. Land use should support where transportation nodes are/could be and vice versa.
- A county plan that improves the environment, reduces developments and traffic.
- Renewable energy is a growth area. I support Wood County's movement toward clean energy. I believe there needs to be a commitment made to a

goal for decommissioning the existing fossil fuel power plants by a certain date. (Likely to be ten or more years in the future, but the time to start planning is now.)

- rural work force
- Hotels/lodging is a growth area. BGSU's facilities welcome many sports teams, regional conferences, and small-to-mid-sized events every year. Also families from Northwest Ohio often travel to BG for athletic events. However, there is not a wide variety of hotel options within Bowling Green. There needs to be options for good quality, well run hotels from the \$50/night price point and upward. I think BG can also support a larger hotel with for instance an indoor water park. To ensure that hotels at all price points are well managed, there needs to be tightening of the laws and rules concerning hotel operation and standards for cleanliness and service. (To avoid another scenario like the Victory Inn presented. good, stable schools/trade schools, community college, university)
- Travel can be improved. I feel that highway/road/street infrastructure in Bowling Green and Wood County in general, is above average. I believe that when transportation funding allows, there should be safety studies so that we can improve some of the county and state highways and upgrade them to modern safety standards, for instance Ohio 105 east of Bowling Green. Those older highways have often been "grandfathered in" and as long as the county or state repaves them using their current footprint they will remain exempt from modern highway standards. This should change and these highways, despite their exemptions, should be upgraded so that we have safer travel throughout the county.)

### Challenges

#### Open House Comments

- Balance of ag: & ind.—where it begins, how much, etc.
- Industry near rail and highway access on undesirable ag. Land
- Clustering residential near existing development (villages/cities)
- Desirable city developments places where people want to live
- Pipelines
- Utilities-impact on roads/land
- Preserve farmland—Keep priority
  - Incentivize farmland preservation

- Extension of utilities to entice economic development
- Soil health
- Housing
  - Improve stock (what is needed)
  - Options
- Countywide transportation
  - Public
  - Medical access
- Preserve natural areas
- Sprawl
- Preserve farmland
- Scrutinize annexation
- Maintain infrastructure
  - Bridges, roads
  - Sewers
- Drainage
- Bridges
- Roads
  - Maintenance
  - Capacity-Liberty High Rd
- No jobs
- Economic Development
- Wide spectrum of job needs
- Truck/train congestion
- Water (quality, treatment, availability)
- Sanitary (extend to areas, quality)

## **Survey Responses**

- Surface and subsurface drainage - development shouldn't overtax the existing systems, or should have to pay to upgrade or enlarge drainage infrastructure.
- Prevent the crime and welfare mentality of Lucas County from migrating South
- visibility
- Community responses to a proposed change are generally negative.
- Trend is for stagnant population growth, with an aging population. Some homes may need to be turned back into farmland in rural areas.

## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS

- It appears that zoning laws can be changed at the drop of the hat.
- Sprawl north and south of BG along Highway 25.
- Planned Growth
- Farm taxes
- zoning and other development restrictions
- Trying to protect farmland (money will talk).
- New development should be limited to existing residential and business sites, so save limited and valuable farmland.
- Aging road infrastructure outside the Bowling Green city limits, that is not up to modern highway standards.
- bridges
- low unemployment (limitations of available work force)
- Trying to control sprawl - it is expensive financially, is not a sustainable growth model, yet is generally cheap and easy to do.
- We need the rivers and ditches cleaned to keep the swamp from coming back. Good job so far. But Portage river through Pemberville needs to be dredged.
- Maintaining a strong sense of community and a welcoming atmosphere for all ages/generations. Bowling Green has traditionally been a safe and a friendly community. We want to maintain that. All age groups should have options to be connected and participate as members of the community.
- drainage
- rooftop concentrations often desired for commercial ventures
- Providing affordable housing - people generally fight any type of affordable housing do to perceived lowering of property values and any type of rental properties.
- No new homes or buildings (or in-fill of soil) in river or flood plains (like Pemberville does).
- Pollution in BG and Northwest Ohio in general. Sources include trucks, trains, the BGSU Heating Plant, restaurant cooking vents. In the county there are factory farms that increase our air and water pollution.
- Not enough quality white-collar jobs in the NW Ohio area to retain graduating Bowling Green and University of Toledo students in the area permanently.

### Map Comments:

- Opportunity for growth in Henry Twp. By CSX
- Opportunity for growth north of Fostoria along SR 199 & Sternis/Jones Rd.
- Residential growth should occur where there is water and sewer infrastructure
- Reinvest/Redevelop the south side of SR 18 at 1-75 interchange outside North Baltimore
- Reinvest/Redevelop the Plaza area between 199 & 23 in Fostoria
- How do we preserve the greenfield around our communities and focus growth in the cities and towns?
- Challenge: Small village viability: What do we do in the future as the residential population declines—how do we make decisions about utility provision
- Protect the unique features of Grand Rapids
- How do we deal with the effects of food deserts in the rural areas

### Additional Comments

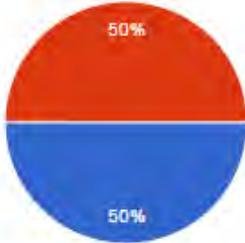
- Wood County is a great place... the govt of the county has done a good job. We just need to make sure we remain clean and agricultural... and that the urban blight stays north of the river. In-fill development to save farm land is a must for us long term. Thank you for this opportunity.
- Just so tired of subdivisions popping up everywhere. Can you please stop this rapid rate?
- Perrysburg does not need another strip mall, fast food place, subdivision, etc. Members of this planning committee should take a drive down route 20 to see how quickly the area has deteriorated. It is nothing but empty stores (or bargain stores) and acres and acres of blacktop.
- The more that natural spaces can be maintained and preserved, the better it is for all of us. Because the area went through extensive logging and clearcutting many generations ago, there is ample opportunity to restore natural habitat, starting with small pieces of land and eventually expanding those restorations. There are many organizations that can provide a model or guidance for this. One that comes to mind is the Shirley Heinze Land Trust in Northwest Indiana.
- Any plans for road or development directly east of Waterville Bridge?

## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS

## SURVEY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

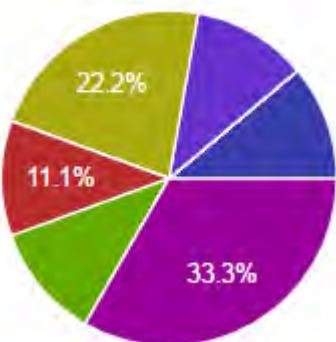
16 survey responses were recorded between paper copies left with us at the open house and online respondents. The following is the profile of the respondents.

### Where do you live?



I live in unincorporated Wood County in a township.	8	50%
I live in a city or village in Wood County.	8	50%
I do not live in Wood County.	0	0%

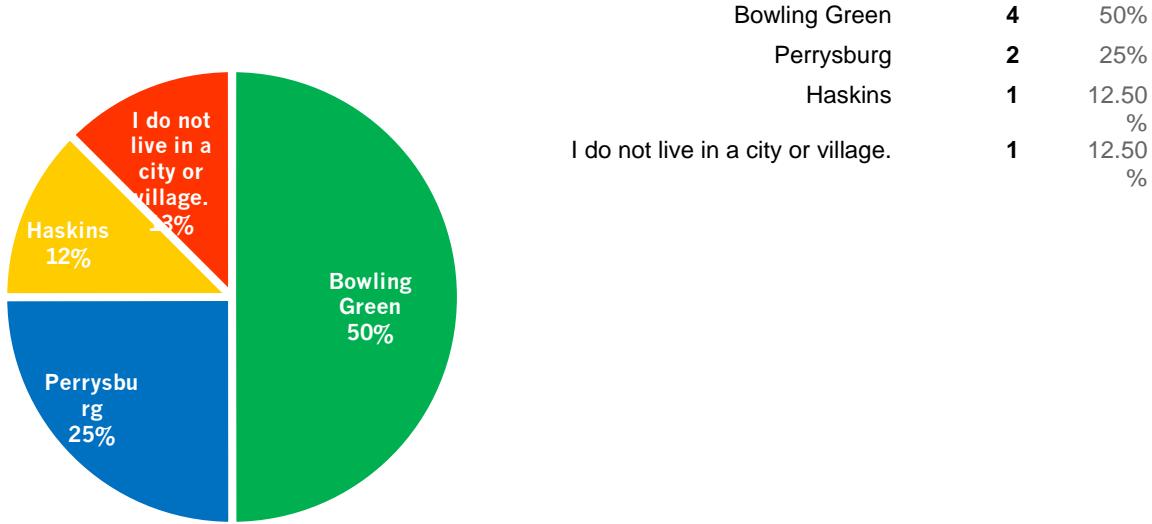
### Township of residency



Bloom Township	0	0%
Center Township	0	0%
Freedom Township	0	0%
Grand Rapids Township	0	0%
Henry Township	3	33.3%
Jackson Township	0	0%
Lake Township	0	0%
Liberty Township	1	11.1%
Middleton Township	1	11.1%
Milton Township	0	0%
Montgomery Township	0	0%
Perry Township	0	0%
Perrysburg Township	2	22.2%
Plain Township	1	11.1%
Portage Township	0	0%
Troy Township	0	0%
Washington Township	0	0%
Webster Township	0	0%
Weston Township	0	0%
I do not live in any of these townships	1	11.1%

### Cities and villages of residency

## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS



### Gender



### Age



## OPEN HOUSE ARCHIVES



Opportunities:

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Specialty farm

- promote variety of farm ideas

Crossroads area

additional developable land opportunities

Farming / Ag. Educational

opportunity - kids/students

Vineyard opportunities

retreat area / B&B

learning area

corn maze / hay maze

- Ohio Turnpike, I-75,  
N|S|E|W rail lines - easy access
- Room to expand
- Strong smaller communities
- College (s)
- Vocational School
- fertile farmland
- Parks\*
- Ag incubator Foundation
- Northern OH Co-op Kitchen

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Challenges

②

- Balance of ag. + ind. - where it belongs, how much, etc.
- Industry near rail + highway access on undesirable ag. land
- Clustering residential near existing development (villages/cities)
  - Desirable city developments (places where people want to live)
- Pipelines
- Utilities - impact on roads/land
- Preserve farmland - keep priority
  - Incentivize Farmland preservation
- Extension of utilities to entice econ. development

Where or on what could the county improve?

- Soil Health (2)
- Housing
  - Improve stock (what is needed?)
  - Options
- Countywide transportation
  - public
  - medical access
- Preserve natural areas
  - sprawl
  - preserve farmland
  - scrutinize annexation
  - maintain infrastructure
    - bridges
    - roads
    - sewers

- Drainage
- Bridges
- Roads

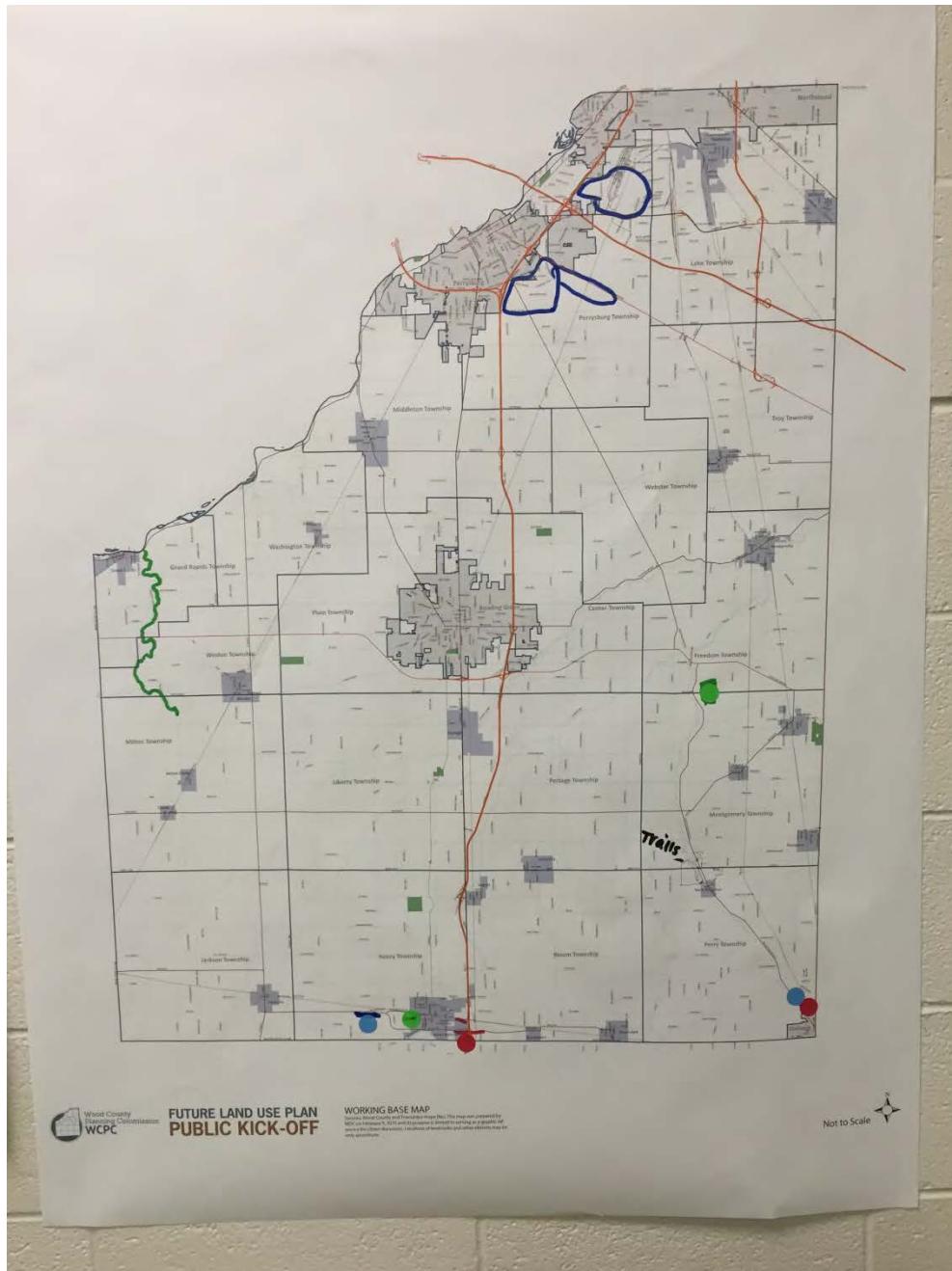
Maintenance  
Capacity - Liberty High Rd

- NO jobs
- Economic Development
- Wide spectrum of job needs
- Truck / Train congestion
- Water (Quality, treatment, availability)
- Sanitary (extend to areas, quality)

②

- condition of  
Jenner St rd

## Maps



## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS

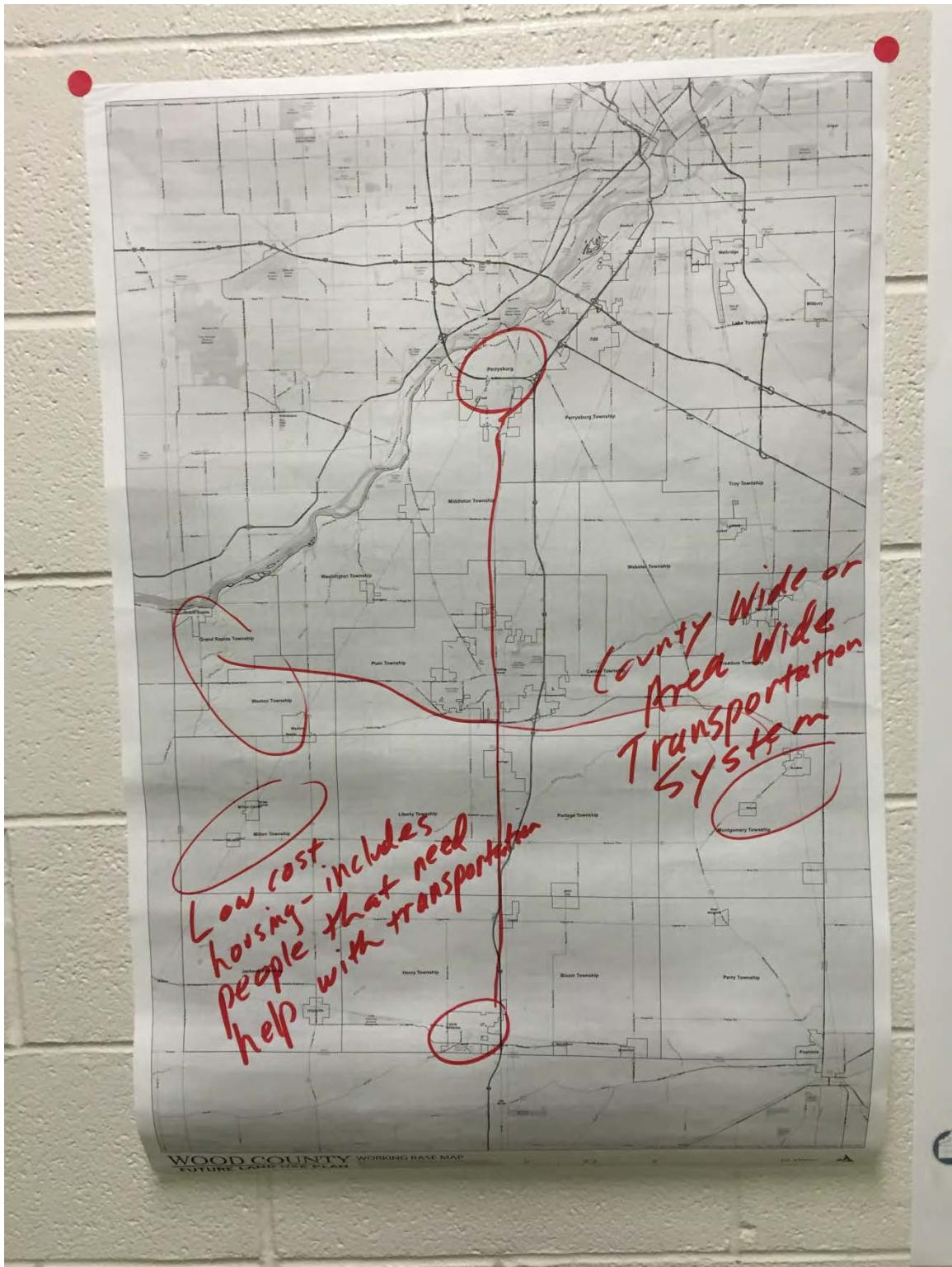


Opportunity for growth in Henry Twp. by CSX  
opportunity for growth North of Fostoria along  
SR 199 & STEARNS/JONES Rd.

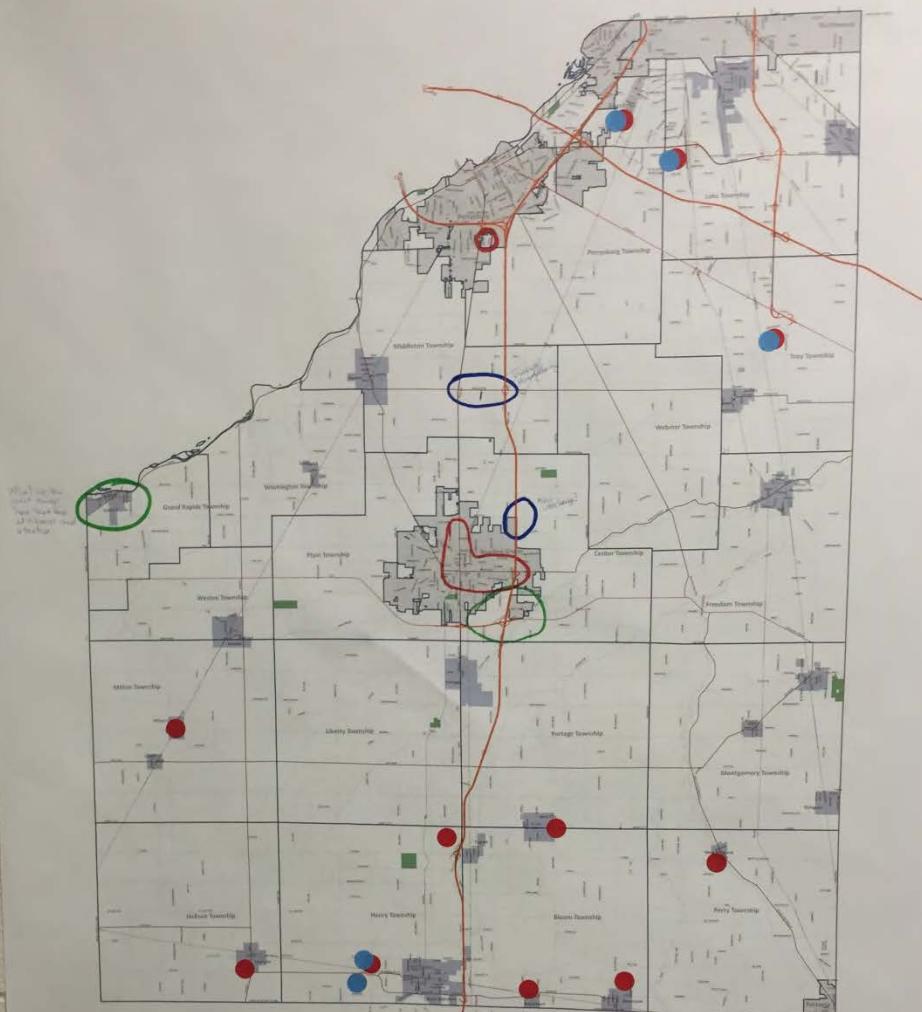
- Reinvest / Redevelop the South side of SR 18 at I-75  
interchange outside North Baltimore
- Reinvest / Redevelop the Plaza area between 199 & 23  
in Fostoria.



## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT ROUND 1 | KEY FINDINGS



2



**FUTURE LAND USE PLAN  
PUBLIC KICK-OFF**

WORKING BASE MAP  
Source: Wood County and Township Plat files. This map may contain legal boundaries, which may not be accurate. This map is not a survey map. It is a working base map for the Future Land Use Plan. It is not to be used for surveying, zoning, or other official purposes. It is the responsibility of the user to consult the appropriate local government for accurate information.

Not to Scale

2 Residential growth should occur where there is water & sewer infrastructure

How do we preserve the greenfield around our communities and focus growth in the cities and towns

## 2 Small Village Viability:

What do we do in the future as the residential population declines

- how do we make decisions about utility provision

Protect the unique features of Grand Rapids

How do we deal w/ the effects of food deserts in the rural