

Meeting Summary

Community Committee Meeting 2

April 23, 2025

The following is a summary of the second meeting of the community committee for Worthington's comprehensive planning process. Attached to this summary is the agenda and presentation slides.

Welcome and process update

Committee members who could not attend the first meeting introduced themselves and described their feelings about the project process they were about to undertake.

The consultant team provided a quick summary for the first meeting and indicated that there would be a follow-up email with the details of today's presentation.

Prepare for public input

The consultant team described the approach to the first round of engagement. The project website was shared as a central hub for communication about the planning process. During the discussion portion of the agenda, the team asked the committee for feedback about the approach to engagement:

What name should be used to generate excitement for the in-person kickoff event?

- "Kickoff"
 - Concern that "kickoff" may signal a lengthy process,
 - The focus should be on why people should care and engage
 - Be thoughtful about how we engage the community
 - What are we asking them to do
 - Workshop = be involved in a back-and-forth
 - Kickoff = talking at you
- "Focus on the future" or "what's next" may better capture the intent
- "What do you think?"
- The committee discussed the role/purpose of the people coming
 - The team is working with staff on a messaging document
 - Messaging should clarify what a comprehensive plan is to the public
 - Businesses want to know if we are waiting for progress,

- What methods have worked in prior projects? What makes a city great? What do you love about it? (specific issues)
 - Three rounds allow residents to go from a general overview to specific details throughout the planning process
- “Help us plan our future”
- “Launch” is good, better than kickoff
- Avoid being too broad, which helps gather attendees
 - Community conversation (or is this too static)
 - Tell us what you think, what is next (use actionable words)
- “Worthington Together Action Launch”
- Is the expectation to stay on board, or are we just picking their brains?
 - We want them to come back for rounds 2 and 3
 - Round 3 will ask if you want to be part of the solution, community/government dynamic
- “Generate” - Make the goal of engagement clear
- We should outline the three steps
 - People may care about attending specific meetings
 - FAQ included with messaging, can provide details on the following rounds
- “Now”
 - Looking for a document with action items
 - The federal/state government is making significant changes today. People are worried about how the local government will keep up.
 - What will leadership do now
 - Emphasize that progress will happen between now and then
 - Urgency for all communities is happening, whether they have a plan or not
- Conversation about MORPC/region/Rapid 5

Key word summary:

- Join the LAUNCH
- First round, community conversations
- What’s next
- What do you think
- Help the community committee (city)

What priority topics should be focused on with a speaker series?

- Housing
- Business / economic development
 - Specifically, placemaking and how to get what you want
- Zoning / Columbus ZoneIn
 - How will Columbus ZoneIn impact Worthington?

- Educate on mixed-use and financial well-being for Worthington
- The team asked for feedback on a panel vs individual speaker
 - Either option would work
 - The committee would prefer somebody local who understands what is happening here
- Insight into development best practices
- Broadening on placemaking and opportunities for public art

Highlights of conditions and trends

The consultant team gave an initial presentation about existing conditions and trends in Worthington. A detailed snapshot covering a regional overview, people, places (land use and character), and housing would be shared after this meeting. A second snapshot covering transportation and infrastructure, economic development, parks, natural resources, and sustainability would be shared in June.

Regional overview/people

- Discussion about live/work data
 - The committee would like details about how working from home impacts this
 - The committee would like more information about the dynamics in inner ring suburbs
 - Are people choosing to live in places like Worthington to be close to Columbus amenities

Places (land use and character)

- The existing character analysis lays the groundwork for thinking about future land use in terms of physical character attributes. The existing character types were briefly described. The plan may make recommendations to maintain existing types while also encouraging changes in other types, or introduce new character types that do not exist today. The names of these types (e.g. county residential) could be changed based on community, staff, and committee discussion.
- Important to note that while Worthington has a high percentage of single-family residential land use, the amount is less than that of other inner-ring suburbs in Columbus.
- The committee asked why the Boundless site was not included on the vacant properties map
 - This is a nuance as portions of the site are developed and portions of the site are not. This map only displays entire parcels that are vacant.
- Opportunity Areas in Worthington were covered
 - The presentation focused on properties with recent plans/activity/etc. This process will revisit these areas.
 - Wilson Bridge is a great example of the planning/zoning relationship

- Ideally, the zoning would have more closely followed the plan
- This is an example of how implementation may need adjustments. Plans are guiding documents and not law, so there can be adjustments.
- The Worthington Mall was a location where height/density was identified as acceptable to the community.
- The team and staff advise that the committee does not need to process everything in real time. These discussions will continue throughout the process.
 - Reviewing the Worthington Northeast Area Plan would be good homework for this process.
 - The geographies in this section will be the focus of further review.

Housing

- This topic was not covered during the presentation.

Next Steps

- Dates for the next two meetings were provided:
 - Third Meeting will be July 15th
 - Share conditions and trends highlights (part 2)
 - Update on community input
 - Fourth Meeting will tentatively be September 3rd
- There will be a City Council update following these meetings and additional updates throughout the planning process.
 - The committee will always be welcomed and encouraged to attend these.
 - Council wants to hear the committee's feedback
 - It's a document for the community
 - The dates will be shared as they are finalized

Attachments

Community Committee Attendance

Agenda

Presentation Slides

Snapshot Part 1

