

# City of Bowling Green



## Future Land Use Section 2014 Update Comprehensive Plan

# Purpose – Update on Land Use Plan

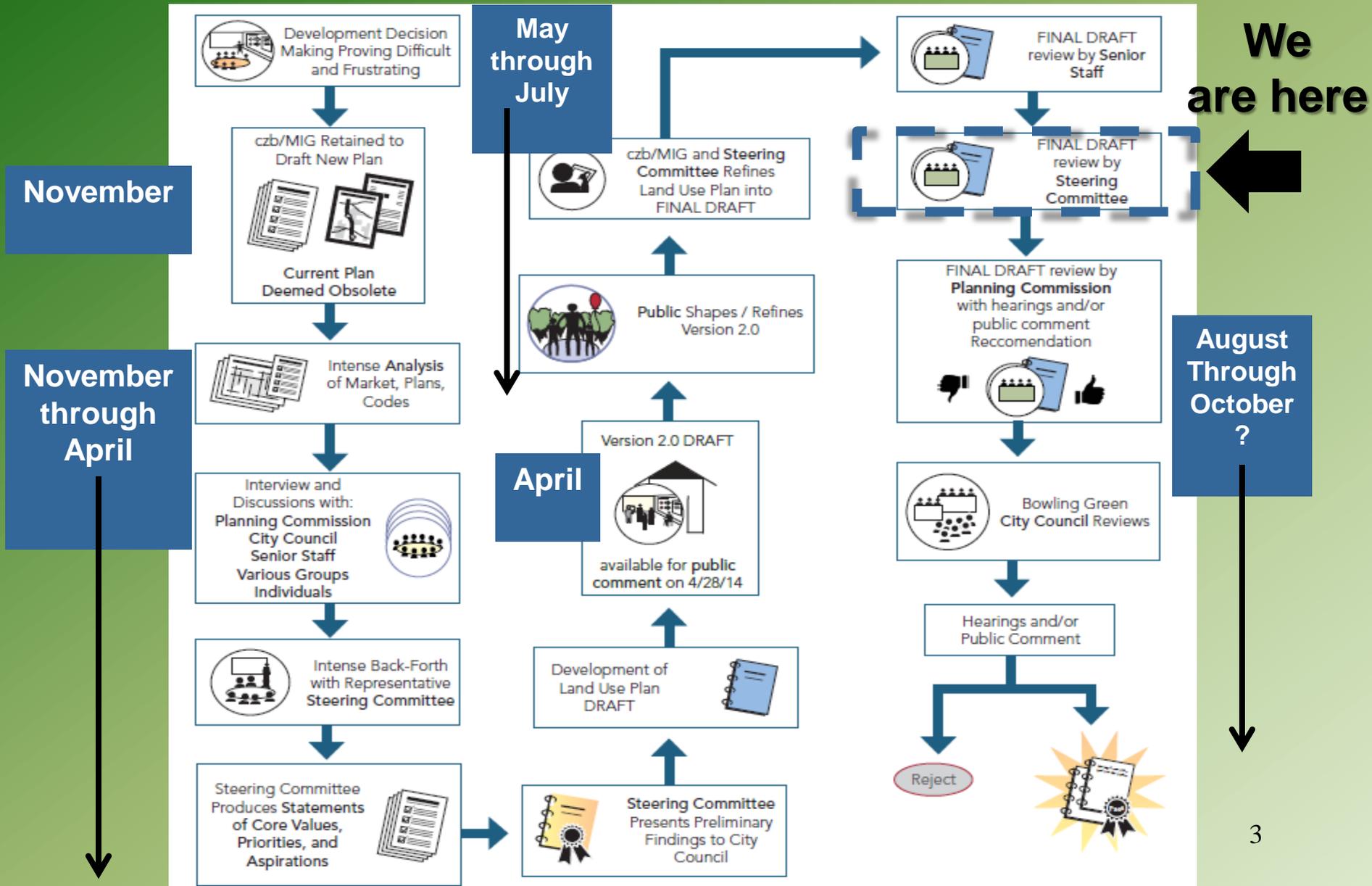
---

It is the intention of the Bowling Green community to be a distinct family-friendly, college town comprised of a diverse community of residents, business owners, shopkeepers, and students.

It is our intent to be an economically viable and environmentally sustainable place comprised of households and businesses alike that work together to steward scarce natural resources.

It is our intent that our neighborhoods be walkable, safe, and vibrant, and our streets beautiful and appealing.

# Purpose – Update on Land Use Plan



# Why Bother?

---

**“If you don’t know exactly where you’re going, how will you know when you get there?” – Steve Maraboli**

**“It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan.” -Eleanor Roosevelt**

**“If you don’t know where you are going, you will wind up somewhere else.” -Yogi Bera**

**“Whether you think you can or whether you think you can’t, you’re right!”  
-Henry Ford**

**“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” – Benjamin Franklin**

**“Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all is a form of planning.” – Gloria Steinem**

**“Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” – Warren Buffet**

**“The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining.”  
– John F. Kennedy**

# Purpose of Planning

---

**Get the “big stuff” right**

(avoid paying 3x’s-install, undo, re-install)

**Anticipate future needs**

**Consistent, predictable decisions**

(get everyone on the same page)

# Asking the Tough Questions

---

What's "working" and "not working"

- What is our current trajectory?

How can BG better compete in the region?

- Just like businesses, cities are also in competition with each other

How can we better coordinate with BGSU

- Universities are also facing competition. Can we have greater mutual benefit?

What is our Target "Market"?

- Who do we want to attract and what will appeal to them?

*Thinking critically, focusing on current demographics, and looking at 5, 10, 15, and 20 years from now*

# Focusing on Assets



## Civic Engagement



## BGSU



## Parks



## Downtown

## Well-Kept Homes & Neighborhoods



## Arts BLACK SWAMP Arts Festival Culture

## Pride

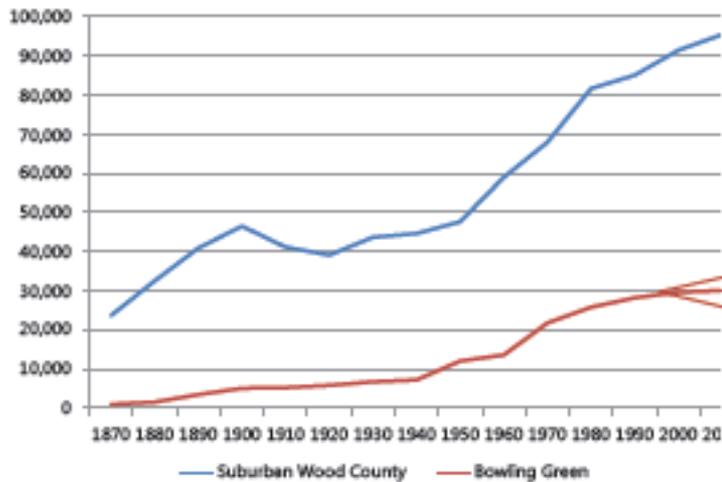


## Abundant shaded neighborhood streets



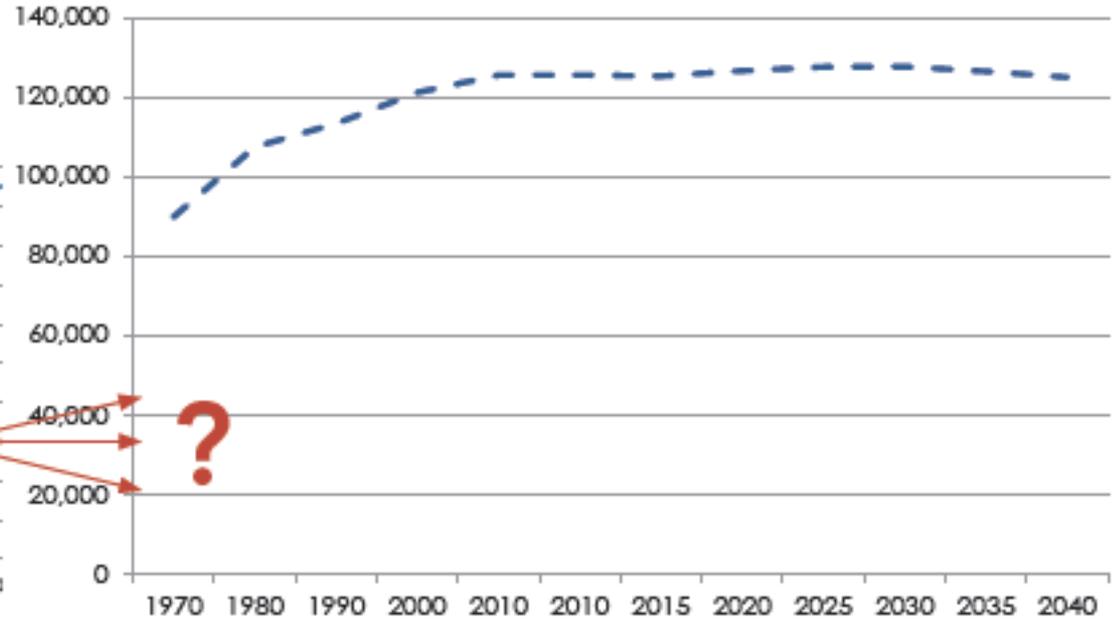
# Data Analysis: Population

### Population Trends in Bowling Green and Suburban Wood County 1870 - 2010



Source: US Census

### Estimates for Wood County 1970 - 2040



Source: <http://development.ohio.gov/files/research/P6090.pdf>

## Population Outlook: Flat

# Data Analysis: City Fiscal Condition

47%

% of City revenue that comes from Income Tax

Generally, the city where you live gets 1%

The city where you work gets 1%

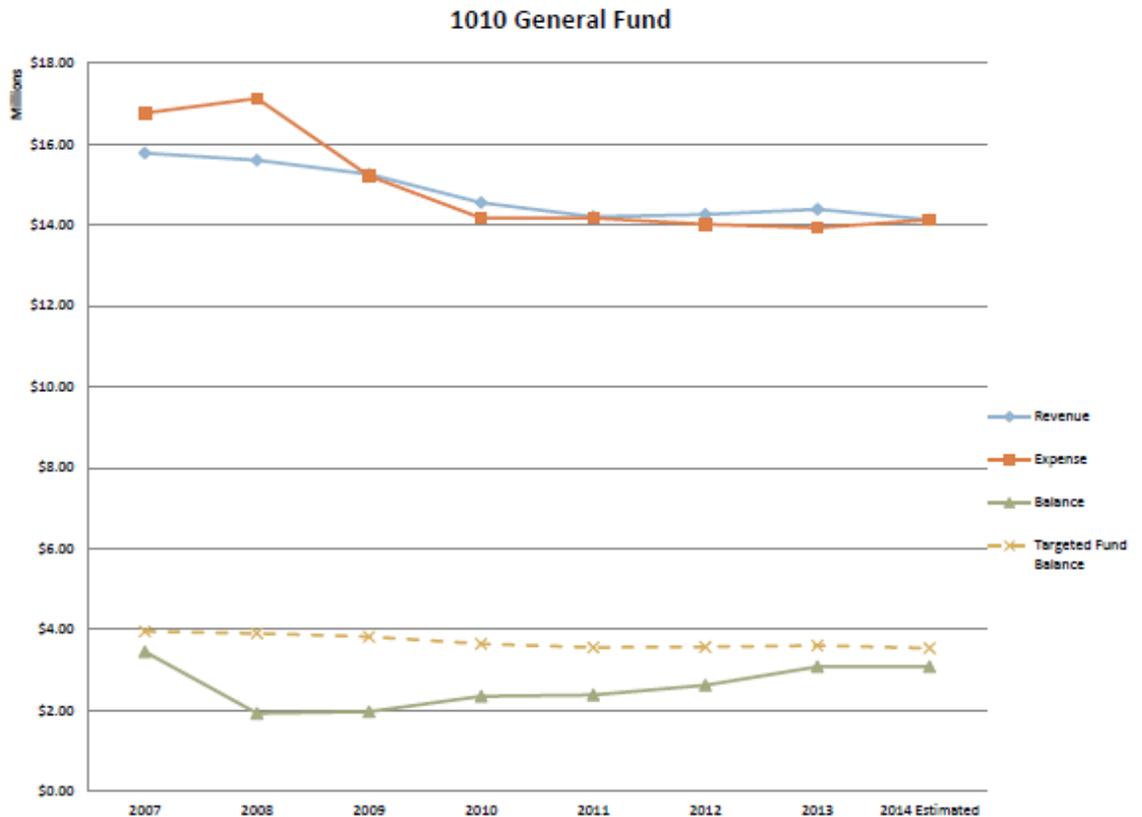
...having people live AND work in BG has the biggest revenue impact

14%

% of City revenue that comes from Property Tax

0%

% of City revenue that comes from Sales Tax



**In the City's General Fund, 2014 Revenue is \$2 Million Less than 2007 Revenue**

# Data Analysis: Housing/Neighborhoods

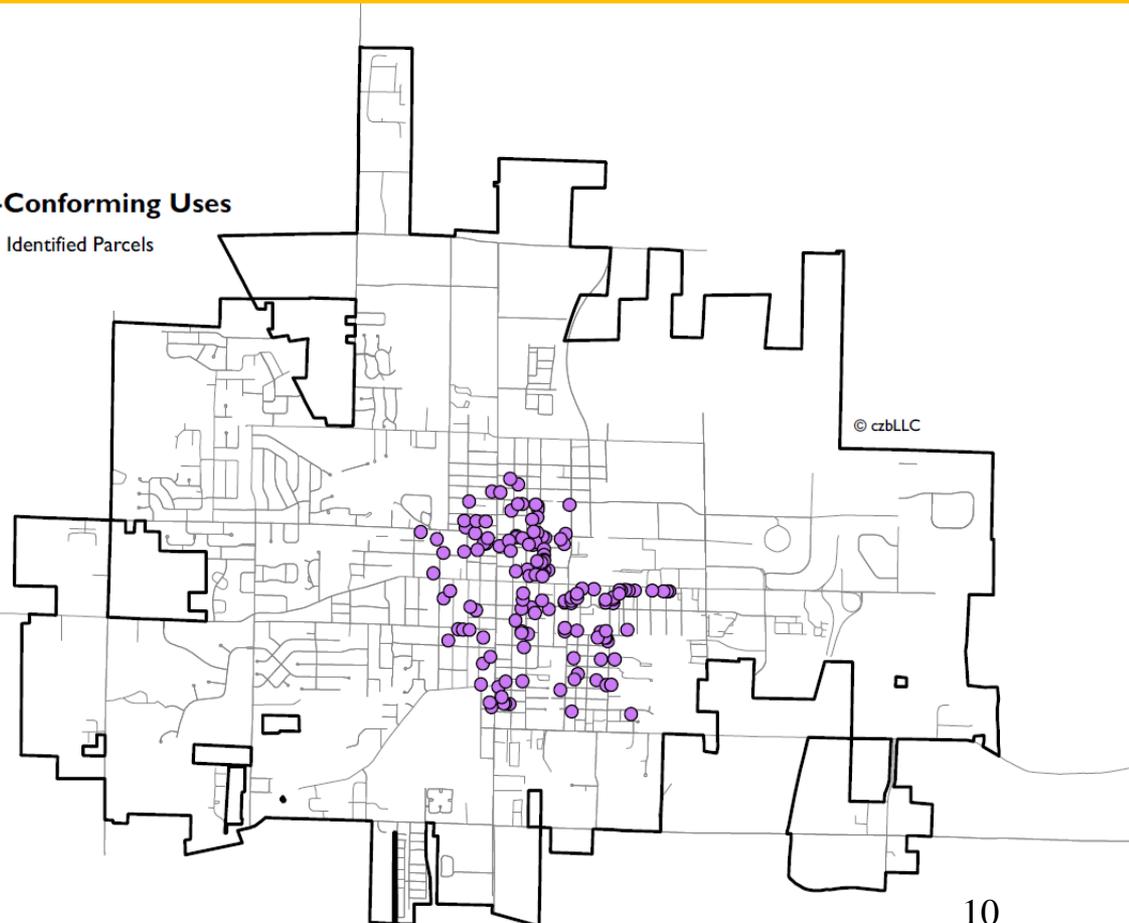
60% of BG  
Housing is  
Renter  
Occupied

90% of renters  
adjacent to  
and south of  
BGSU are  
under 25 years  
old

## Non-Conforming Uses Impact Neighborhoods

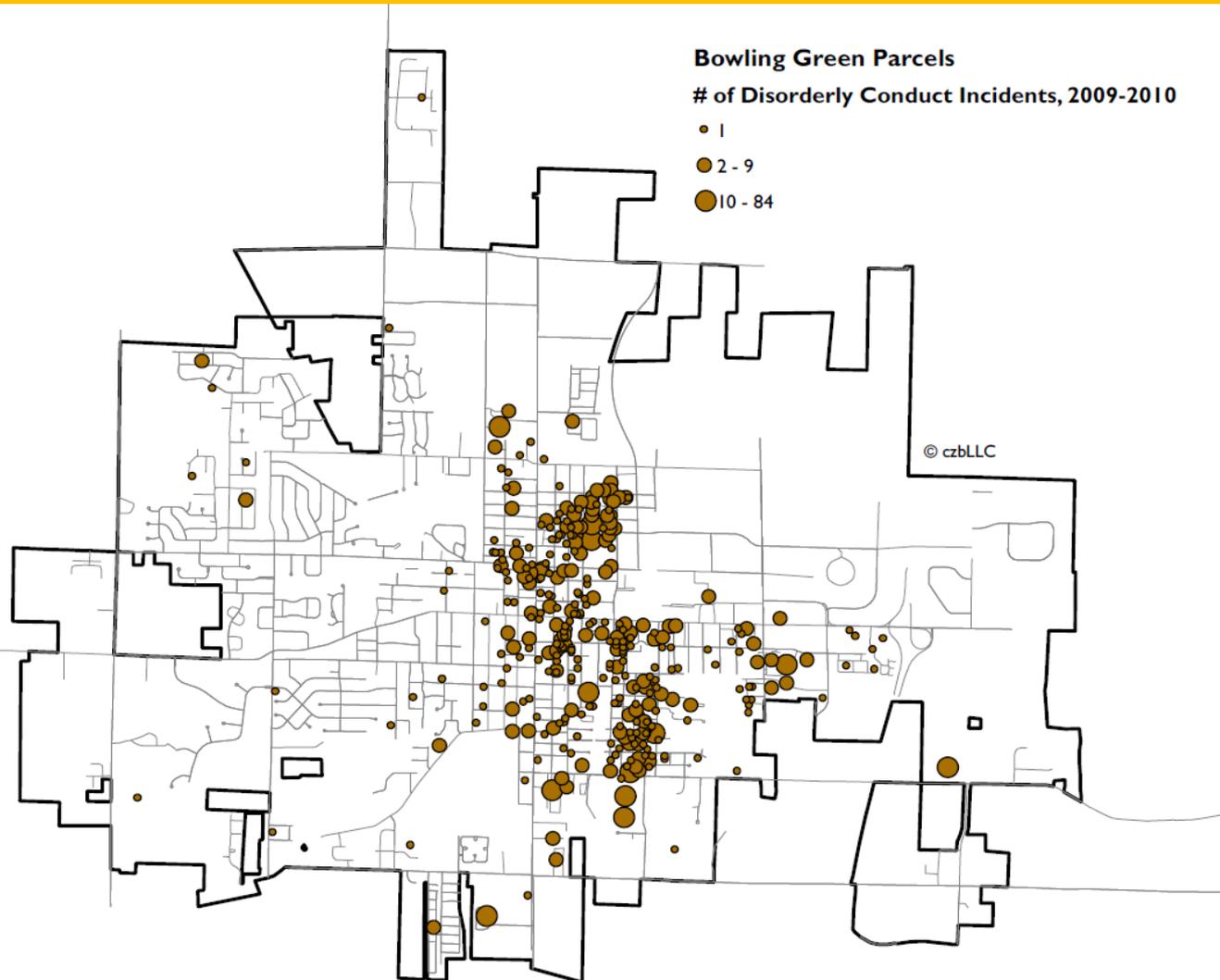
### Non-Conforming Uses

● Identified Parcels



# Data Analysis: Housing/Neighborhoods

## Disorderly Conduct Reports By Neighborhood





The fiscal health and success of Bowling Green and BGSU are interrelated

Cities and Universities are in Competition with global, market, and economic forces at work.

### BGSU

6,000

# of students living on campus

70

countries represented by BGSU students



~19,000

students at BGSU



147

BGSU "Bang for Buck" ranking of 349 national universities, highest of Ohio public institutions



800+

BGSU faculty, a significant portion of whom live elsewhere and commute into BG



BGSU

16%

% of BGSU students are non-traditional<sup>1</sup> (the national average is approaching 50%)

<sup>1</sup> Non-traditional = one or more of the following: over 25, working full time, married with children, taking less than ¾ of normal class load.

Assets + Data Analysis + SC + Small Group Input =  
**Areas of Focus for Public Input**

Steering  
Committee

Open House

Surveys

Written  
Comments

City Staff

Small Groups

Conversations

Consultant  
Meetings

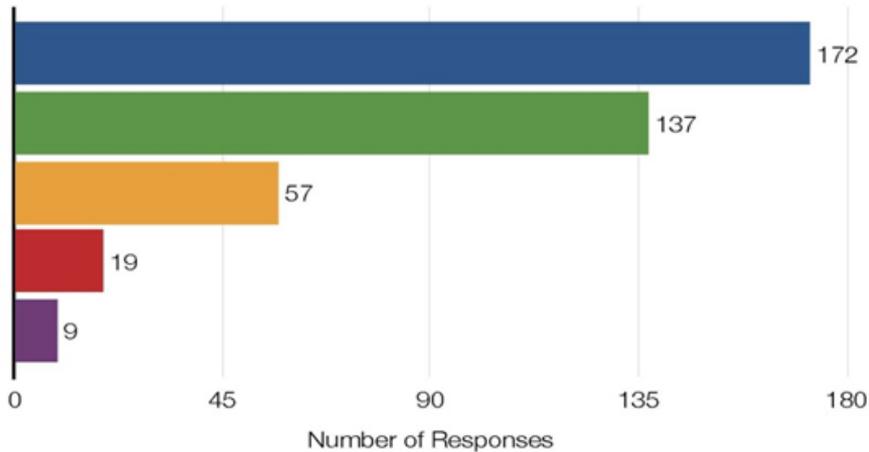


# Community Open House: 250+ attendees



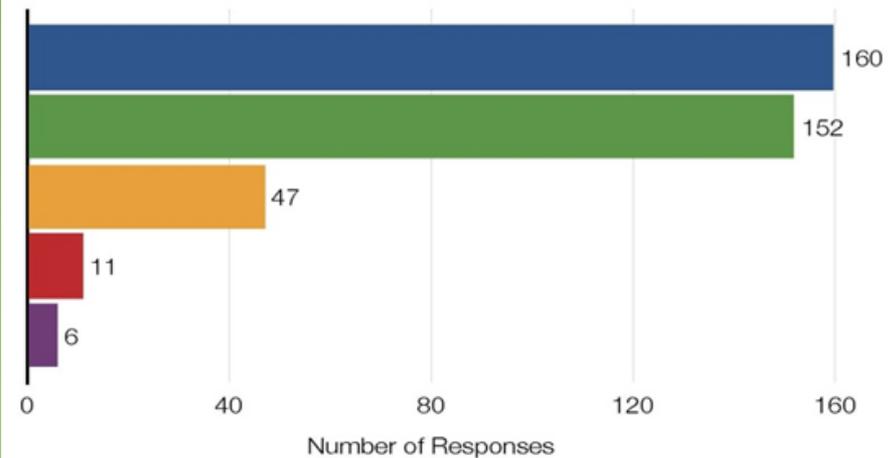
# Public Input: Survey Results (423)

Bowling Green needs to have new development (zoning) regulations that are up to date and capable of addressing today's contemporary market and development challenges



Public input supports the need for the plan update

Bowling Green needs a new comprehensive plan to direct growth and re(development) activities



● Agree Strongly ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Disagree Strongly

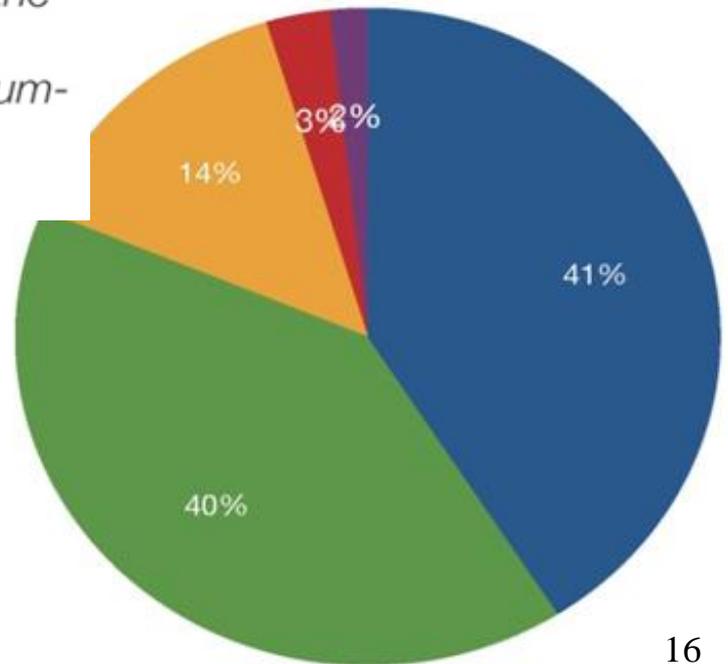
# Public Input: Northeast

*"Please help families who live south of Wooster near Crim school. In recent years many of those single family homes have been turned in to rental housing and are falling into disrepair. With a great public school nearby, this neighborhood should be attractive to BGSU faculty and staff with families, but it's quickly becoming a party ghetto."*

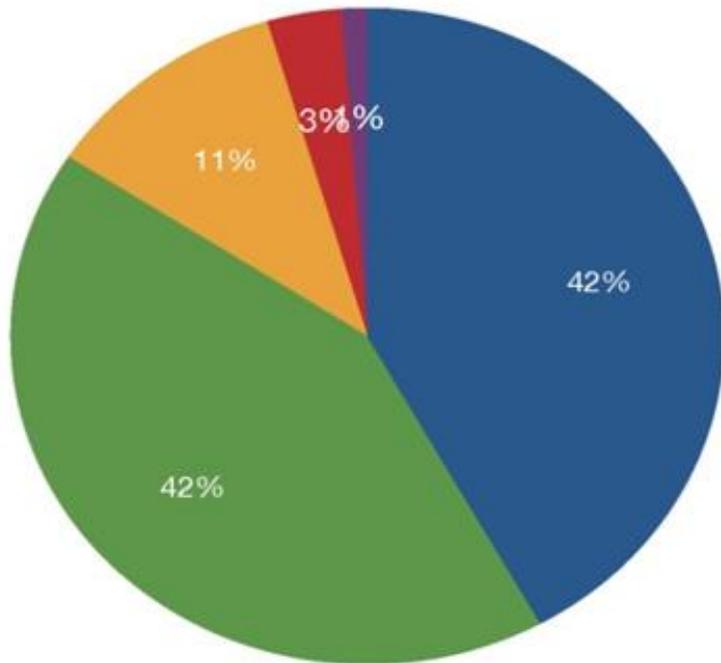
*"Landlords need to be held accountable for the properties that they own. Upkeep of those properties is essential. I am tired of seeing slum-like conditions in the NE and SE areas of my community."*

*"We think that the time has come to consider trading with landlord/developers, allowing re-zoning of selected areas in Wards 1 and 2 so as to allow townhouses or even apartment buildings, IN EXCHANGE for the landlords/developers converting their R-2 rental houses back to single family use. This should be a guaranteed trade; the City should extract real progress toward restoration of our older neighborhoods in exchange for the higher density zoning."*

**81% said they "Agree Strongly" or "Agree" with the proposed approach for Northeast Neighborhood**



# Public Input: Southeast



82% "Agree Strongly" or "Agree" that the Conditions in the SE Neighborhood Need Attention

*"How will we protect these areas when people are allowed to park on the grass, not mow their lawns, not trim or cut their bushes, not repair homes and buildings, not control pets... I would happily invest back into my property and my rental homes if I knew my neighbors weren't going to park junk cars in their back yard..."*

*"Be mindful of pre-existing non-conforming uses. People own and purchase their property expecting to be able to continue current uses. Provided they maintain their property reasonably well government should not try to void those uses, at least until they are legally abandoned."*

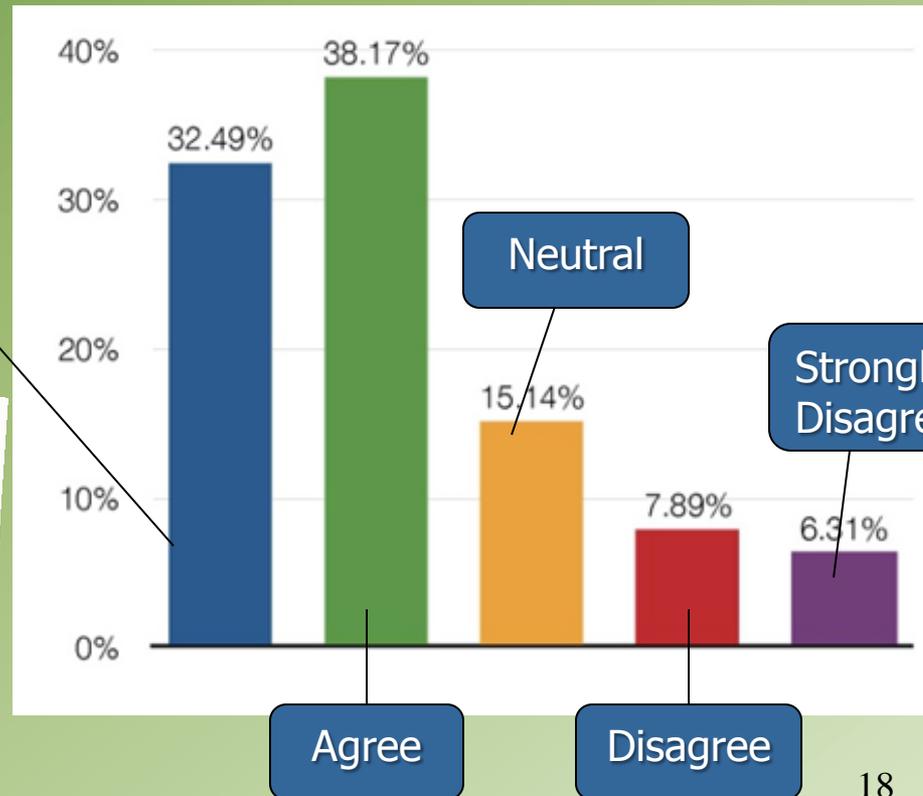
# Public Input: Downtown

"I believe that it is within our abilities to make BG a more appealing and trendy place to live. I visit Ann Arbor as much as I can when the weather is nice. That city has a healthful vibe. They have safe, wide bike lanes, outdoor seating with umbrellas in the downtown area. They appear to have found a balance between accommodating cars and bikes/walkers."

Strongly Agree

"I think a parking garage would be beneficial to the downtown area. There are ways that other cities have successfully done this without it sticking out like a sore thumb... a college down with a lot of downtown activity that has successfully done this is Athens, OH. They have a multi-level parking garage that is sort of hidden and nobody notices that it's a parking garage but it is utilized by many."

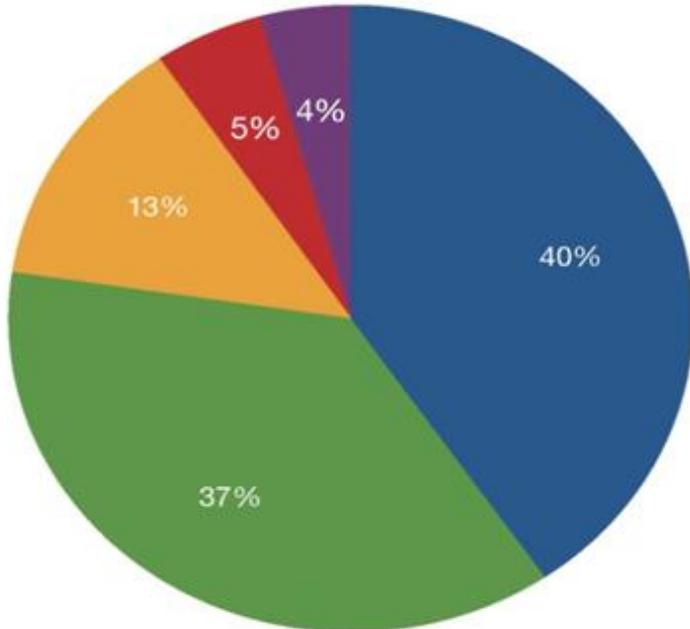
"I support the proposed approach for BG's Downtown"



# Public Input: East Wooster

77% "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" with the proposed E. Wooster Approach

The proposed approach for redeveloping E Wooster will be good for Bowling Green's future



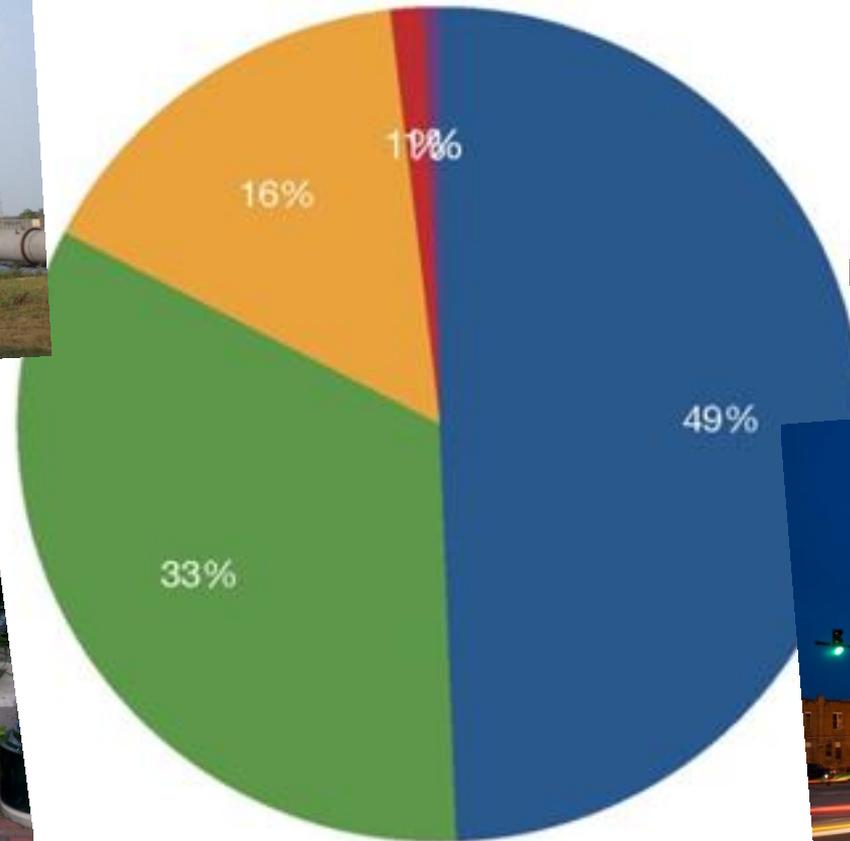
*"BGSU must be encouraged to invest in E. Wooster corridor. Private investment and/or joint private/government projects are necessary. Need to be creative to accomplish project goals."*

*"Please balance the aesthetic and ideal with the practical and realistic. A pretty median at the expense of a recent (and hard-won) turn lane could again clog traffic and imperil safety (rear-end crashes) as drivers slow and stop to turn."*

*"The east side of Bowling Green needs attention, especially east of I-75. When you get off the ramp there is nothing there and it looks like this city has nothing to offer."*

# Public Input

I believe it's time for Bowling Green to increase its level of reinvestment in itself



● Agree Strongly ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Disagree Strongly

# Public Input

---

*“Landlords should not be viewed as the enemy.  
Students should not be viewed as the enemy. Bars  
should not be viewed as the enemy.”*

*“Quality of life is the most important issue affecting Bowling Green, and that issue most clearly impacts the east side of town. Most of the energy spent updating the plan should be focused on the east side and bringing it up to par with the west side. It'd be great if we could see some creative thought and willpower going toward creating bike lanes and connecting the city and campus, more parks/green spaces, better housing, and more cultural amenities to make BG a vibrant city that attracts and retains young people.”*

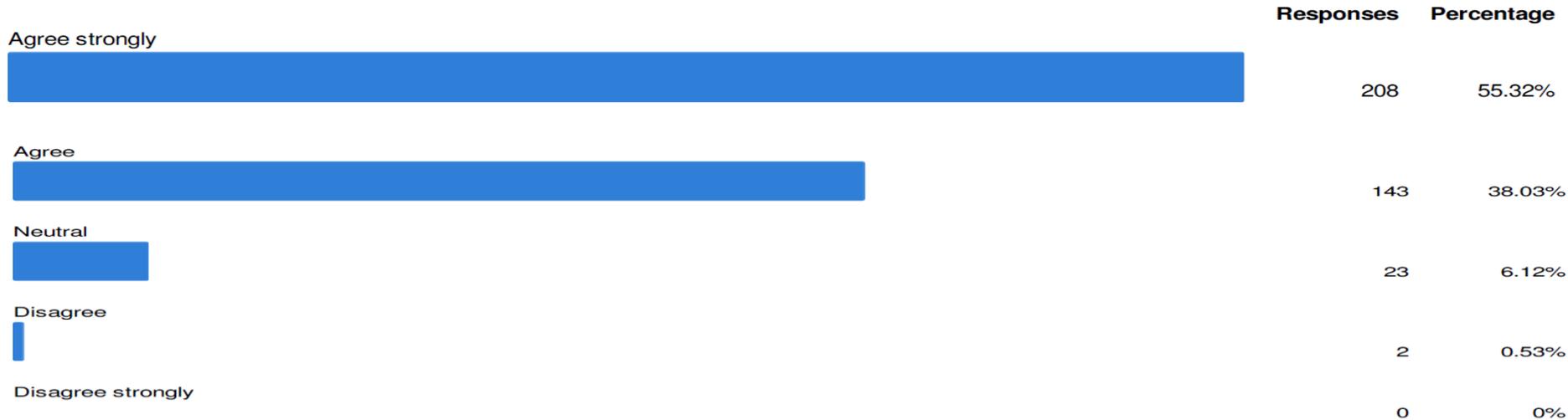
*“Someone said that the City needs to decide whether it wants to be married to the university and have industry as a mistress or vice versa. I feel that by making changes that make BG more appealing to college students, young professionals and young families we are actually making the community more attractive to industry as well.”*

*“BG needs to encourage a progressive vision yet maintain the charms of an 'olde' town - preserve the past, but offer QUALITY. A Levis Commons instead of our dying mall would be great. More bike paths and much more attention to the 'poor side' of town needs to be paid. Kudos to the planning commission for seeing this and FINALLY doing something about it!!!”*



# DRAFT Plan Highlights: Competition & Target Market

## BG Needs to be able to retain & attract young professionals



### Target Market

(who we most want / need to retain, and to attract)

**EXISTING BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS**

+

**SPECIAL FOCUS ON:**

professional  
educated and skilled  
24-34

work in, or have ties to BG or the region

93% of those surveyed agree that BG needs to be able to retain & attract young professionals

# DRAFT Plan Highlights: Target Market

---

## Why this Target Market?

- City has older demographic
- Strong entrepreneurial, professional workforce opportunity
- BGSU (opportunities to retain strong households now and into their life cycle)



## This Translates into...

- Walkable neighborhoods
- Quality of Life / Amenity-Rich Neighborhoods
- Vibrant Downtown
- Community Character and Aesthetics



## More Specifically...

- Health & fitness  
(bike paths, sidewalks, parks)
- Entertainment (athletics, events, theaters)
- Local flavor/character  
(unique places, gathering spaces)  
Form (Landscaping, interconnectivity, hip/dense/affordable housing near DT)

# DRAFT Plan Highlights: The 7 BG Principles

---

Highly livable urban form

Positive, appealing first impressions

Local flavor

Strong business base

Broad Housing Spectrum

“Good Neighbor” neighborhoods

Easy access to health and fitness

# DRAFT Plan Highlights: Applying the Principles

- Urban form
- Positive first Impressions

- Housing Spectrum

E. Wooster

Northeast

Downtown

Southeast

- Local character
- Strong business base

- "Good Neighbor" Neighborhoods
- Access to Health & Fitness

# DRAFT Plan Highlights: Applying the Principles

## Northeast

strong need to **connect BGSU to downtown** (via pedestrian/bicycle) to increase patronage



## Southeast

development potential

- local-serving commercial (mixed use)
- neighborhood parks
- interconnected local streets



## E. Wooster

**strong gateway features** (planting, sculpture) create a striking 'first impression' of Bowling Green



## Downtown

# Proposed Timeline

---

**Planning Commission – August and September (Public Hearing on 9/3/14 and potential recommendation that night).**

**Polished Draft to Planning Commission and public by mid-August (deadline 8/15/14).**

**City Council – September and October (Public Hearing TBD)**

# This is hard work...

---

If there is no sense of urgency, people will allow the status quo to continue

Fear of "rocking the boat" could stop the process

Not "everyone" will agree on "everything"

Easier to do nothing. But is that best for Bowling Green?

All progress requires work and cost...financial, political, and energy

Implementation: Action is required for the success of any plan