

CITY OF WOOSTER

CHAPTER 2—COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

The process of preparing this Comprehensive Plan involved an extensive and wide-ranging citizen participation process along with detail analyses of Wooster's demographic and development trends. The process was designed and conducted to provide opportunities for interested citizens to participate and to give input to the final Comprehensive Plan Policies. Figure 2-1 illustrates the process used to complete the City of Wooster Comprehensive Plan.

A process was set up that involved two parallel tracks—a public input process and a research and evaluation process. The public input process involved scheduled citizen participation, review, and inquiry into the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The process began with the appointment of a diversified group of citizens to serve on a “Plan Forum” consisting of a cross section of representatives from all parts of the City and a wide variety of interests and backgrounds. The purpose of the Plan Forum was to act as a sounding board to the City of Wooster periodically during the course of the planning process. The Plan Forum represented an important component of citizen participation in that the fifteen community members selected represented differing views and all aspects of Wooster, including City Council, the Wooster School District, City Planning and Design Boards, business groups and landowners.

Additionally at the outset of the project, community leadership interviews were conducted to identify key community issues.

- ▶ The Plan Forum met on a monthly basis starting in November 1999 and continued through May 2000. This citizen group worked with the City of Wooster to provide feedback and give reality checks on various issues within the community.
- ▶ The Plan Forum was further subdivided into four study groups: land use and zoning, infrastructure, parks and recreation, and downtown and historic preservation. Each sub-committee met over a period of three months to formulate Vision Statements, Goals, and Policies that focused on the different issues. The subcommittees' reports are discussed in detail in the Goals and Policy Chapter within this Comprehensive Plan.
- ▶ At the conclusion of the Plan Forum discussions, three public meetings were held to introduce the Plan concepts and policies to the community at large. The first two meetings were small public meetings focused on downtown business interest and industrial development. The third public meeting, which focused on retail, commercial and residential development, was broadcast live and shown numerous times in the following weeks. After the broadcast was shown, a questionnaire was mailed to all Wooster residents in their utility bill for further input, in particularly about downtown redevelopment and parks and recreation.

Parallel to the public input process, the City of Wooster conducted research and analysis of the existing conditions in Wooster. Population, housing, development trends, parks, recreation, and public infrastructure data were collected and analyzed. On-site land use surveys were conducted to determine parcel usage and identify areas of conflicting land uses. The Land Use Survey data was also compiled within the three-mile Planning Area from data provided through the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

The combination of the public input and direction provided by the Plan Forum and the research and analysis conducted by the City resulted in the Comprehensive Plan summarized in this document. This Comprehensive Plan represents many hours of dedicated volunteer effort by the Plan Forum, the commitment of the Wooster leadership and City staff, and the input of hundreds of Wooster citizens.

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Figure 2-1
Comprehensive Plan Process

