



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This Comprehensive Plan was initiated by the *Owensville Town Council* to improve the ability of the Town of Owensville to adequately respond to development, growth, land use, and other issues the community may face in the future. Further discussion between the Clerk-Treasurer and the *Owensville Town Council* also helped to initiate this Comprehensive Planning Process.

Many people participated throughout the Comprehensive Planning Process including members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Town Council, Town staff, local business owners, and a variety of community representatives and residents.

A. Initial Owensville Comprehensive Plan Meeting

The first meeting was held with the Owensville Town Council to explain the components, reasons, and intended uses of a Comprehensive Plan. The preferred meeting location, times and dates for future meetings were established at this time. The group also began to discuss plans for the Community Workshop.

B. Owensville Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meetings

The Owensville Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee met throughout the Comprehensive Planning Process. Their first major task was to help coordinate the Community Workshop and serve as scribes for the ad hoc teams developed at this workshop. The second major task of the Steering Committee was to review the results of this Community Workshop and to create and then finalize a set of goals, objectives and strategies to serve as the foundation of the Owensville Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee also provided project assistance by giving direction to the consultant concerning the Town's desired project outcome, coordinating meetings, and providing background information about the Town of Owensville.

Additional Steering Committee meetings were held to review drafts of the Comprehensive Plan and its elements. Below is a list of all of the Steering Committee meeting dates.

- March 17, 2008
- April 4, 2008
- April 28, 2008
- April 29, 2008
- May 13, 2008



C. Owensville Community Workshop

On **April 3, 2008**, a public meeting was held at the *Owensville Community Center* as an opportunity for the community to provide input into the Comprehensive Planning Process. Attendees were asked to evaluate different aspects of the community. The meeting was publicized and all members of the community were encouraged to attend and participate in the activities at the Community Workshop.

Approximately 60 members of the community attended the Community Workshop. The participants were randomly divided into 7 groups, with each group having approximately 9 people. The participants were then asked a series of community-related questions. Several Steering Committee members and community volunteers were designated as “scribes” and were placed at each table. These scribes were asked to record all of the comments and suggestions expressed by the members of their group regardless of difference in opinions held within their group or by the Steering Committee member themselves. Each group discussed community Strengths (Likes), Weaknesses (Dislikes), Opportunities, and Threats. Once a new topic was asked, the group posted their list on the wall nearest to their table.

The lists on the following pages are a synopsis of the comments that were made by the attendees. They have been sorted into different topic groups. Because it is important to recognize the list that each comment originated from, comments have been color-coded as follows: Black = Strengths, Red = Weaknesses, Blue = Opportunities and Orange = Threats. The lists also include comments that had been gathered at a similar Community Workshop held in 2005. These comments are represented by the lighter-shades with the same color-coded format described above. *(The lists are comprised of comments taken directly from the meeting sheets; they have generally not been altered; some duplication exists due to the same comment being made by multiple groups.)*



Local Economy

Business Retention

- Bank
- Bank
- Bank
- Businesses are friendly
- Car Repair
- Community supports businesses
- Convenient stores
- Dental office
- Dentist
- Dentist in town
- Dewig meats
- Dollar General
- Dollar general Store
- Dollar store
- Dr. Nelson Dentist Office
- Fifth Third Bank
- Flower shop
- Funeral home – Cemetery
- Holders Furniture Store
- Kenny Dewig Meats
- Nursing Home
- Nursing home
- Nursing Home
- Nursing Home
- Our stores – Flower, DG, Holders
- Owensville Auto
- Owensville Body Shop
- Preschools
- Small diners
- Tax service
- Taylor's Garage
- 2 beauty shops
- Apartments
- Apartments/Williams
- Bank
- Bank
- Bank
- Bank (any)
- Beauty shop
- Beauty shop
- Child care
- Child care
- Dentist
- Dentist





- Dewig Meats
- Dollar general
- Dollar general
- Florist shop
- Flower shop
- Funeral home
- Funeral home
- Funeral home
- Furniture store
- Good local businesses
- Nursing home
- Nursing home
- Nursing home
- Nursing home
- Service stations
- Poor car wash
- Upgrade carwashes
- Businesses leaving
- Businesses leaving
- Closing of businesses
- Lack of community support
- Lack of community support (businesses)
- Loss of daycare
- Nursing home
- Nursing homes improved
- People not shopping locally
- People not shopping locally
- Nursing Home
- Service businesses – beauty shop – bakery – artists – antiques
- Dollar general
- Dollar general expansion to food
- Loyalty to businesses
- Businesses leaving
- Businesses leaving
- Wal-Mart
- Wal-Mart



Business Attraction

- Lack of great gas station
- Liquor store
- No beauty salon
- No doctor
- No doctor
- No Doctor in town
- No Dr's Office
- No Drs Office
- No drug store
- No full service gas station
- No Gas station – full service
- No grocery
- No Grocery Store
- No grocery store
- No grocery store
- No grocery store
- No grocery store
- No hardware
- No Hardware store
- No hardware store
- No local doctors
- No pharmacy
- Not enough restaurants
- Exercise facilities
- Lack of childcare
- Lack of restaurants
- Need more child care
- No café
- No doctor
- No doctor
- No doctor
- No doctor or medical facilities
- No good general retail opportunities
- No grocery
- No grocery store
- No grocery store
- No grocery/café
- No grocery/café
- No hardware/lumber company
- No medical facilities/drug store
- No pharmacy
- No pharmacy
- No restaurants
- No RX store
- No workout place





Bed & Breakfast
Better/more business in city
Grocery store
Amusement/Theme Park
Convention Center
Lots of old people
New business/more jobs
New businesses/jobs
New store - Just stuff
New store – just stuff
Old people
Small businesses
Theme or amusement park
Workout place
Workout Place
Lack of development
No new businesses
No new businesses
No stores – with higher cost of transportation/having to travel further/
increased inflation
Overall lack of businesses (grocery/hardware)





Employment & Industry

Good employment in community area

Economic dollars

Farmers

Fertilizer plant

Fertilizer plant

Grain elevator

Grain elevator

Large industry

Large industry

Strong supporting industries

Town work force

Work force

Workforce

Coal mine being located north of town – Gibson Co. Coal

Lack of employment opportunities

Lack of employment opportunities

People work out of town

People work outside town

Agriculture employment opportunities (many grain and melon farms in area)

Coal Mine

Coal Mine

Duke Energy power plant

Gibson County Coal (coming to town)

Coal Mine

Coal mine

Coal mine starting

New coal mine

Big business

Coal mine

Coal Mine

Coal Mine (Gibson County Coal, polluting our water, air pollution, people living around mine property)

Lack of work - work for teens

Limited industry – jobs

Coal mine

Coal mine



Community Services

Crime Prevention

Low violent crime rate

Law enforcement

Law enforcement – on top of things

Police Department

Police department

Police & Police Car

Police Department

Law enforcement

Law enforcement

Law enforcement

Law enforcement

Low crime rate

Curfew should be enforced

Drug problem

Drugs, meth labs

Drugs, meth.

Increase in Meth problem

Meth. Issues

Response time of law enforcement

Less security

Security

Alcohol

Animals (cats/dogs) – laws need to be enforced – should be licensed

Drug Problems

Drugs

Drugs

Drugs

Drugs

Meth

Drugs

Drugs - illegal

Drugs (meth)

Drugs/narcotics

Meth –drugs



Public Safety

- Fire department
- Fire Department
- Fire department & ambulance
- Fire department and First Responders
- Fire district
- Medic – ambulance
- Own ambulance service
- Ambulance
- Ambulance service
- Fire Department
- Fire District
- Fire district
- Fire Protection
- Fire Protection

May lose ambulance service

No emergency plan

Disaster prepared

Disasters (natural)

Earthquakes

Town Management

- Town Employees
- Fair Tax Rate
- Tax rate
- Enforcement of town ordinances
- Enforcement on town ordinances
- Government relations and communications
- Inter-governmental communications (county)
- Website usage/internet exposure
- Tax rate
- Website
- Website
- Increased property taxes
- Government involvement





Local Services

- Clean water – We own system
- Dump
- Good response from utilities – phone, electric, etc.
- New sewer plant
- New water plant
- New water tower
- Trash dumping facilities
- Waste Disposal
- Water Supply – town owns their own wells
- Natural gas
- Natural gas Company
- Sewage and water infrastructure
- Sewer upgrades
- Sewer upgrades
- Water – utilities
- Water supply
- Water supply – community-owned
- Hard water
- More bars for Verizon
- Need spreader for sand and salt when it snows
- No home delivery of mail
- No mail delivery in town
- No trash pick-up
- No wifi hotspot
- Water – taste and chemical content
- Good utility infrastructure
- Sewer Plant
- Utilities
- Utilities
- Water is available to entire community





Physical Character & Land Use

Community Appearance

Clean town – no junky property

Clean up day

Clean-up day

Downtown is clean

Town-wide clean-up

Clean community

Home appearance

Home appearance

Nice clean community

Pride of ownership

Abandoned houses – in disrepair

Littering

Littering along highways entering town

Poor maintenance on downtown buildings

Properties need to be cleaned up – businesses and homes

Run-down condition of some properties

Several homes with clean-up needs

Trashy lots

Trashy yards

No positive town image

Personal home appearance

Town image

Small town appeal

Abandoned houses

Neighbors

Poor housing/property

Lack of caring people

Littering

Littering/appearance



Community Identity

Closeness of Community

Do not have to worry about security of our kids

Friendly

Good People, you can count on

Great place to raise a family

Patriotism

People

Quiet Community

Quiet, open, friendly community

Rural lifestyle

Rural lifestyle

Safety

Safety

Security – don't fear leaving your home

Small town – know everyone

Small town Atmosphere

Small Town Values

Smallness of community

South Gibson Area works well together

Supportive Community

Wouldn't live anywhere else

Close-Knit community

Close-knit community

Crime is low

Quality of life

Religious diversification

Safe community

Safe community

Safe environment for kids

Small town

Small town living

Tight-Knit Community

New people in town feel unwelcome

"Country" living

Quiet – peaceful

Small Town



Downtown

Centralized business district

Landscaping – Library, bank

Layout of Town Square

Library and Town Square

Library centerpiece of town

Town Square

War memorial

War memorial

Not enough parking around square

Semi & School Buses parked on town square

Unoccupied buildings

Unoccupied buildings uptown

Downtown Area – more businesses

Tourism

Town services





Future Growth

Housing Prices

- Cheap place to live
- Community expanding
- Developers
- Expandable
- Expandable
- In town developers

No duplex rentals with attached garages

Transitional housing for seniors – between downsizing and nursing home

Annexation

Annexation

Availability for homebuilding

Buildable space

Buildable space/business

Land for sale

Plenty of room for growth

Room to expand

Annexation

Housing/affordability

Housing/affordable/availability of different levels or types

Increased housing subdivisions

Subdivisions/housing opportunity

Annexation – leave city in the city and country in the country

Annexation – not expanding the residential base

Growth – if not done reasonably

Lack of Growth (population)

No annexation

No Annexation (higher priced homes being built outside city limits)

No temporary housing

Rising Real Estate Prices

Land Use Controls

Land use

Lack zoning

Not enough ordinances

No zoning

No zoning

Zoning

Zoning

No land use planning and controls - allowing uses to co-exist

Undesirable businesses (land use control)

Zoning

Zoning

Zoning



Natural Environment

Ammonia plant – odor – Is someone stealing for drugs

Fertilizer plant ammonia smell

Air quality

Natural resources

Air quality

Ammonia plant – explosion

Ditches – flooding

Fertilizer Plant – leak issues

Flooding

Flooding – South Main - Lift station near Pat’s Place

Pollution (air/water) – environmental threats

Pollution (close to GE and power plant)

Pollution of Natural Resources (Air & Water)

Air quality

E.Q. Zone

Environment

Environment/pollution

How new businesses may affect our environment

New businesses affect environment

Pollution





Transportation

Local Roadways

Streets

Good Streets

Too much truck traffic

Coal trucks going through town

Coal trucks

State road traffic – turn at Brummitt and First, trucks not obeying speed limit

Congestion around post office

Pavement ends at 700W needs to go to 350 County Road

Traffic

Too many vehicles parked on streets – not using driveways

Bad county/state roads

Bad county/state roads/traffic

Traffic problems

Bypass road

By-Pass Road

Speeding – especially down by the dump

Traffic at the grain elevator

Traffic

Coal trucks – traffic

Too many coal trucks

Traffic

Traffic – semi's

Traffic – trucks





Accessibility

Location

Close to Interstate

Close to interstate

Close to River

Close to river

Location

Location

Distance from major roads

Location from major roadways

3 highways that enter town (168, 65, 165)

30 miles from Evansville

7 miles from Toyota

Close and easy access to several communities

Close to several larger communities

Distance to Evansville and Princeton

Easily accessible

Highway 41

Hwys. – 168 -165 – 65 – I-64 – 41

Interstate 64

Gas prices

Physical location

Mass Transit

No train service

No transportation for elderly to Dr. visits – ADA/Wheelchair

No active railroad

No airport

No airport

No railroad

No railroad

Rail service

Rail service is accessible

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Poor sidewalks

South main needs curbs, sidewalks, etc.

Bus stop signs for S.G student

Broken sidewalks

Bad curbs

Not enough street lights

No bike trail

No walking trail

Bike lanes (using old railroad tracks)

Bike trails/jogging

Recreation trails – jogging/bike

Street lights – sidewalks





Community Programs & Facilities

Teen Center & Youth Activities

Ball Park – sports, etc.

Sports Programs – baseball, basketball, soccer

Several ball events – spring b-ball, biddy ball

Sports programs

Sports programs

Not enough entertainment for kids

Activities for 12 – 16 yr-older

Beside sports no activities for middle school – teen center

Lack of recreation for young people

Sunday morning baseball

No youth programs

Youth center (programs)

Younger population for more entertainment needs

Kids

For young people to play sports (Owensville Summer Ball League/Owensville School/REH Center)

Parks & Recreation

Community parks

Parks

City Park

Baseball Fields

Montgomery Park

REH Center

REH Center

REH Center/Community Center

REH Center

REH Center

REH Center – Museum

Community center

Community Center



- Community center
- Community center
- Community Center
- Access to environmental areas @ Duke Energy
- Park & park trails
- Library
- Library
- Library
- Library
- Reading Program at Library
- Community center
- Community center
- Community center
- Library
- Library
- Library
- Library
- Nice recreational facilities
- Nice recreational facilities
- Park/REH
- Parks
- Parks
- REH
- REH Center
- REH Center
- REH Center/community center
- Resources (Park board, OMA, Library)
- Don't have intramural sports for Adults
- Quiet rooms in library
- Library community meeting room
- Play area – safe mulch – no sand
- Community pond
- No pool
- No swimming pool
- Environmental attractions around power plant
- Soccer field
- Tennis court
- Horseshoe court
- Pool
- Improved playgrounds
- Public bathrooms (?)
- Skate Park
- Recreation
- REH
- REH Center





Local Schools

- School
- School system
- School (Owensville Community)
- School
- Schools – K-8, GSHS
- Good Schools
- School
- School Corporation
- Schools
- Schools
- Schools
- Overcrowding in schools
- Bullying in schools
- School
- Nutrition program
- School locations
- School out of city limits
- School outside town
- Theater program
- School system (South Gibson)
- Sports, band – extra-curricular activities
- Better attendance at school
- School
- Strong education system
- Evansville College
- Vincennes University
- Oakland City University
- Wabash Valley College
- USI - University of Southern Indiana
- Vincennes University (tech center in Ft. Branch)
- Evansville and Vincennes colleges



Community Participation

Social Values

- Freedom to do what you want
- More accepting of newcomers
- Better acceptance of new comers

Community involvement

- Not enough youth with local involvement
- Lack of public participation
- Lack of interest in young people to stay
- Lack of Willingness to change
- Lack of diversity – cultural
- Negativity/lack of vision
- Lack of community involvement/local government
- Lack of diversity
- Decline in public morality – specifically public media
- Threats to family time
- Can't afford to look a gift horse in the mouth
- Apathy
- Fight changes
- Negativity to growth/not open-minded

Community Events

- Town-wide yard sale – community event sponsored by merchants
- Town-wide yard sale
- Town-wide yard sale
- City-wide yard Sale
- Town-wide Yard Sale
- Christmas light-ups
- Watermelon festival
- Watermelon fest
- Watermelon festival – community centered
- Watermelon Festival
- Watermelon festival
- Watermelon festival
- Watermelon Fest
- Halloween Festival
- Flower Donations
- Watermelon festival
- Watermelon Festival
- Watermelon Festival
- Festival
- Farmers market
- Downtown events
- Concerts in the park
- Music festivals
- Watermelon Festival
- Watermelon Festival





Local Organizations

Owensville Merchant Assoc. – sponsor several community events

Merchants association

Merchant association events

Churches – diverse

Several churches

Churches

Lots of churches

Churches

Churches

Park Board

Churches

Churches

Churches

Churches

Clubs

Merchants Association

Owensville Merchants Association (OMA)

Park board

Park boards

American Legion/Auxiliary

Swingers club

Swingers club

Friendly churches with room for growth – lots of ministerial assets

Active Merchants Association

Adult civic clubs

Churches leaving

Churches leaving

Once all of the groups had compiled their lists of Strengths (Likes), Weaknesses (Dislikes), Opportunities, and Threats, each group was asked to make a “Top 10” List of the most important issues that their group had discussed. These lists were posted on a wall and each person was given the opportunity to cast five votes directly onto the lists with different-colored dot stickers. The attendees were advised that they could vote on any of the lists, using their one “red dot” for the most important issue and then the four “green dots” for the other concerns that they considered to be the next most important.

The next page shows a table with a compilation of these “Top Ten” List items and the number of red and green votes for each item, along with a combined total of red and green dots for each item. The items on the list are ranked by a total number of points with each red dot assigned a value of three points and each green dot assigned a value of two points.



Top Ten List Statements	Red	Green	Total
	3 pts	2 pts	
Lack of businesses (no grocery store, no hardware store, no pharmacy, no Laundromat, no beauty salon)	13	12	63
Opportunities for youth		18	36
Drug Problem - Availability of drugs - Law enforcement needs to be tougher	2	11	28
Drug Problem (meth)	4	8	28
Clean-up Town (residences & businesses - paint, clean-up trash, repair abandoned vehicles)	8	1	26
Junky Property - Abandoned Houses	3	7	23
Freedom - don't have zoning	4	4	20
Community Events - Watermelon Festival, Town-Wide Yard Sale, Halloween Festival, Easter, Christmas		8	16
Drug Problem (meth issues, theft, family problems)	2	5	16
Trashy Lots - enforce ordinances that are in place - town beautification, self pride in residence		8	16
Keep small town atmosphere	1	6	15
Community Pride - cleanliness - REH/Community Center - Law Enforcement	1	6	15
No Grocery Store - No Doctor		7	14
Need Business Growth (Dr.'s services, car wash, pharmacy, t/n grocery store)		7	14
Growth - land use controls	3	2	13
Need new businesses, support the ones in town keeps community alive	2	3	12
Activities for pre-teens, teens - opening REH - Community Center	1	4	11
Law Enforcement - No Response - response, timing	1	4	11
Preparation for coal mine		5	10
Lack of and opportunity of Bike Trails, parks, pool		5	10
Room to expand - annexation		5	10
Zoning	2	2	10
Fire - first responder - first class department - keep ambulance in town (police dept. - great)		5	10
Recreation (city parks, ball fields, REH Center, Watermelon Fest) (Funding)		5	10
Problem of drugs		4	8
Square - downtown untapped potential		4	8
Entertainment for kids (youth center, swimming pool)		4	8
Need grocery store - in Owensville		4	8
Lack of Jobs and Industry	1	2	7
Small Town values - keep and important	1	2	7
Overcrowding in Elementary School (K-8)		3	6
Reasonable tax base		3	6
Rising Property Taxes (threat)		3	6
Maintaining Small Town Appeal	2		6
Lack of teen center (activities)		2	4
School - great, but how can we help improve		2	4
Maintain existing businesses and attract new ones		2	4
Fire Department and Police Department		2	4
3 Highways - widen 65 to I-64		2	4



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