

The background is a detailed topographic map with white contour lines on a light blue background. In the center is a large shield-shaped graphic. The shield has a dark red border with a diagonal hatched pattern. Inside the shield, there are three colored triangular sections: a teal one at the top, a light grey one on the right, and a teal one at the bottom. The text is overlaid on these sections.

***Town Of***

***Oldenburg***

***Comprehensive Plan***

***October 2019***

**Town of Oldenburg**  
**Resolution #1-2019**

**LOCAL RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Town of Oldenburg has identified adequate reason to analyze a comprehensive plan, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Oldenburg has hired HWC Engineering to define and describe the issues, advise us of our options, and make recommendations to address this issue in the near future, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Oldenburg has received federal Community Development Block Grant dollars from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs to fund this study and has contributed \$4,500.00 as local match for this project, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Oldenburg has reviewed the process and completed study thoroughly and is satisfied with the services performed, information contained therein, and methodology applied;

WHEREAS, the Town of Oldenburg has received three copies of this document for our records and will keep them on file in the town offices for future reference, and

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town of Oldenburg that the final document is hereby approved, contingent upon comments and approval received from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs. The Town of Oldenburg will fully consider all comments and feedback received from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs and will direct its consultant to provide amended copies of this plan reflecting all said comments.

  
Dennis Moeller, Council President

  
Dave Wahman, Council member

  
Gregory Struewing, Council member

  
Cynthia Laker, Clerk/Treasurer

# Acknowledgments

## **Steering Committee**

Adam Bedel  
Ashley Meyer  
S. Christa Franzer  
Dan Weigel  
Denny Moeller  
Diane Laake  
Gary Munchel  
Jeff Paul  
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Shawn Holtel

*Prepared for:*

**Town of Oldenburg**

**Adopted by the Oldenburg Town Council on  
October 7, 2019**

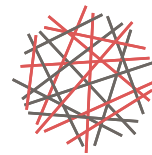
## **Town Council**

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Cindy Laker

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---

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An aerial view of a historic town, likely in Europe, featuring a large red brick church with multiple spires and a prominent tall steeple. The church is surrounded by lush green trees and smaller white buildings with red roofs. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The image is framed by a teal border on the right and bottom.

1

## ***Executive Summary***



# Purpose and Scope of the Plan

A comprehensive plan is a policy tool that a community can use to plan for the future. Comprehensive plans provide the steps for a community's vision to come to life. The town of Oldenburg has a rich social and cultural heritage that adds to the historic character of the community. The Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan focuses on the ideas for the future of the community as voiced by its residents. Public input formed the foundation for the goals and ideas found in this document. Many of Oldenburg's residents and visitors volunteered time to participate in a variety of planning activities including stakeholder interviews, a public survey, and a public workshop. Based on what was said during these activities, residents really cherish Oldenburg as it is, a small and friendly town. The Oldenburg community expressed a strong desire to stay small and remain true to its history, heritage, and charm. Oldenburg will stay a quaint community that welcomes new residents and visitors to experience all the town has to offer.



Source: Jeff Paul

## Key Points

- ***This is the first community comprehensive land use plan developed exclusively for the Town of Oldenburg.***
- ***This plan was derived directly from ideas generated by Oldenburg residents and visitors.***
- ***There is an overwhelming desire to keep the community small and friendly.***
- ***Growth in Oldenburg should stay focused on strengthening existing community assets, supporting small business prosperity, and enhancing the historic character of the community.***

# Plan Process

## **Public Workshop**

A public input workshop was held on January 23, 2019 at Holy Family Parish. Around 85 individuals attended the workshop to discuss the future of the community and to provide feedback. This meeting generated responses on the future of Oldenburg, possible development, what is missing in Oldenburg, and what is currently most cherished by the community.

## **Public Survey**

A public survey was also conducted to gather ideas from those who could not attend the public meeting. The survey received 636 individual responses which is very encouraging for a town with a population of 654. The survey was answered by more than 300 nonresidents which is important for Oldenburg since so much of its visibility, reputation, and commerce relies on tourism. A full summary of the public survey as well as the workshop can be found in the appendix.

## **Steering Committee**

A steering committee met four times throughout the comprehensive planning process to discuss plan development. The committee included 12 resident volunteers who provided insight and direction about opportunities and issues in the town. Discussions at these meetings involved the overall wellbeing of Oldenburg, land use, institutions within the town, what makes Oldenburg unique, what is missing in Oldenburg, public input and feedback, and the future of Oldenburg. This committee was instrumental in forming the final goals and action items contained in this plan.

## **Stakeholder Meetings**

A series of nine stakeholder meetings were held to receive more specific input from individuals and institutions within the community. Groups represented during these discussions included public safety, community institutions, environmental groups, educational groups, representatives from adjacent communities, town committees, and council representatives. Stakeholders were an invaluable resource for helping to understand how future community plans can have a positive impact on all organizations and individuals within the town.



Residents at a Public Input Meeting 1/23/2019



# Plan Summary

*The Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan* was created to help ensure a successful future as the town changes. Comprehensive plans allow towns to recognize opportunities for improvement within their communities. Oldenburg is a special community in Indiana given it's historical significance, German heritage, and the charm of the town among other things.

Several things had to be considered for this plan based on requirements from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA). Below are the chapters required by OCRA for a comprehensive plan:

- ❑ Land Use
- ❑ Government and Fiscal Capacity
- ❑ Public Facilities and Services
- ❑ Placemaking
- ❑ Economic Development
- ❑ Housing
- ❑ Transportation
- ❑ Agriculture
- ❑ Natural Resources
- ❑ Parks and Recreation
- ❑ Historical and Archaeological Resources
- ❑ Hazard Mitigation

Given the fact that this is Oldenburg's first comprehensive plan, an Action Plan was also added to this plan in the last chapter. The action plan provides a community with practical steps for achieving each goal of the plan.

During the public participation for this plan over 600 people participated in the survey. This rate of respondents is very telling to how important this community is to so many people. The public workshop had roughly 85 attendees who provided input and ideas for the community.

The Oldenburg Comprehensive plan was created as a tool to help secure the community's future. The goals in each chapter are intended to be achieved within the next 1-10 years. These goals were made based on public input as well as information gathered from the steering committee.

# Key Chapter Goals



## **3 : Land Use:**

- Gain more local control over future development decisions and community changes.
- Support the future plans of major community institutions



## **4 : Government and Fiscal Capacity:**

- Maintain Oldenburg's fiscal health through careful planning and implementation of future capital projects.



## **5 : Public Facilities and Services:**

- Maintain and enhance Oldenburg's reputation as being a convenient and safe community by making key improvements to town utility infrastructure, public safety services, and operations.



## **6 : Placemaking:**

- Undertake projects and improvements which help maintain Oldenburg's reputation as a warm and welcoming place for visitors and an appealing place for residents.



## **7 : Economic Development:**

- Encourage expansion of small scale and locally oriented economic opportunities which will increase Oldenburg's appeal as a tourism destination.



## **8 : Housing:**

- Establish property upkeep standards that apply to current housing as well as new housing that might be constructed in Oldenburg.



## **9 : Transportation:**

- Continue and expand safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian infrastructure.



## **10 : Natural Resources:**

- Maintain and protect the quality of Oldenburg's natural features.



## **11 : Parks and Recreation:**

- Provide appealing parks and open spaces for resident and visitor enjoyment.



## **12 : Historic and Archaeological Resources:**

- Work diligently to maintain the historic character and quality of the community.

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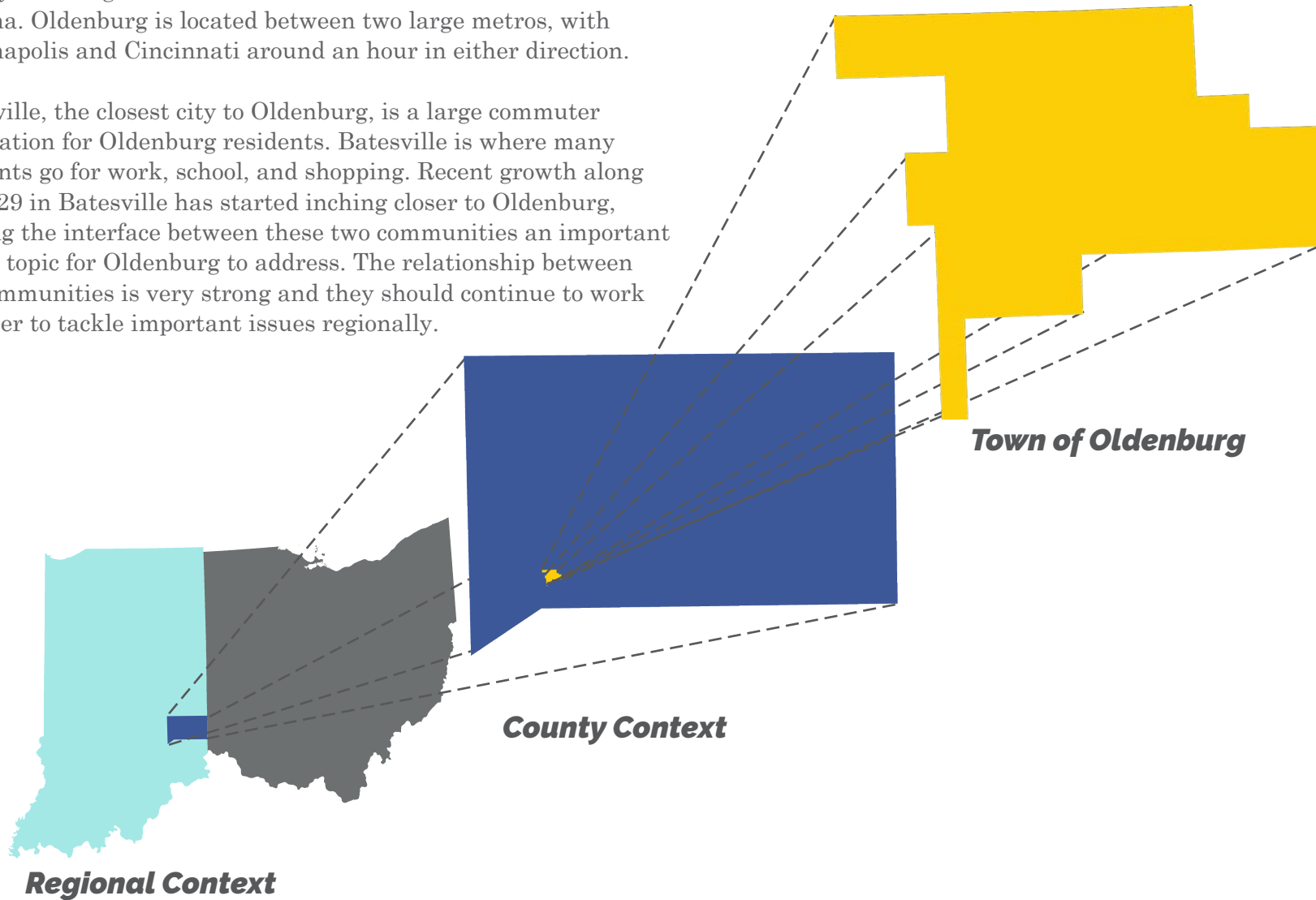
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## ***General Background***

# Community Context

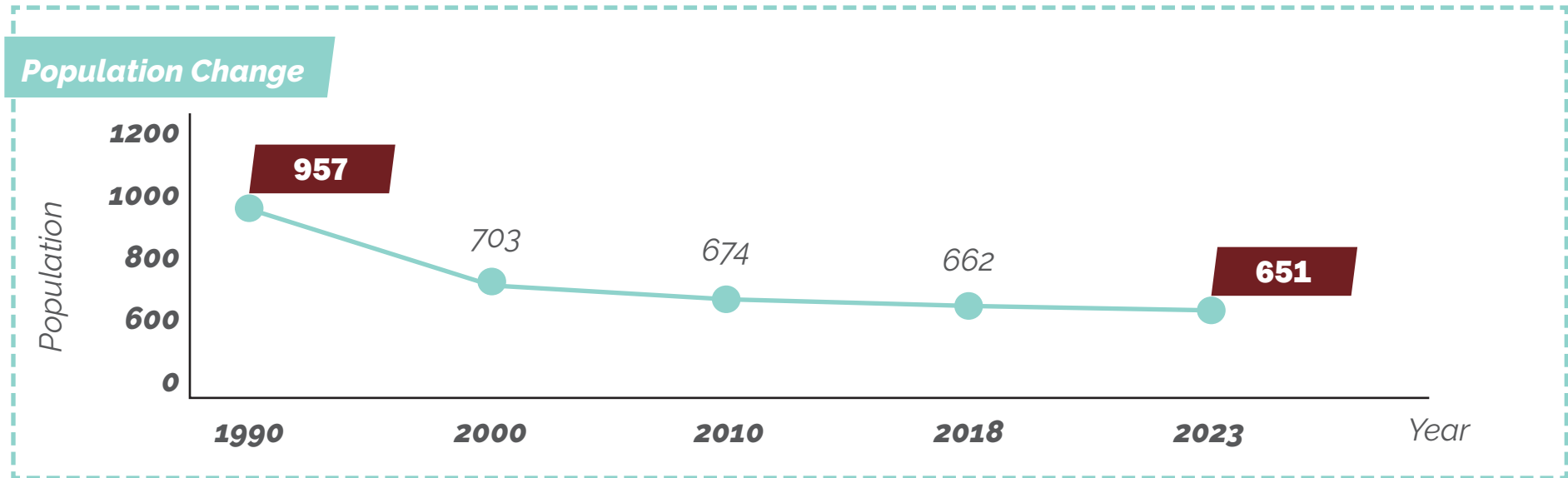
Oldenburg is located in the southeast corner of Indiana in Franklin County. This region is associated with Ohio as much as it is with Indiana. Oldenburg is located between two large metros, with Indianapolis and Cincinnati around an hour in either direction.

Batesville, the closest city to Oldenburg, is a large commuter destination for Oldenburg residents. Batesville is where many residents go for work, school, and shopping. Recent growth along S.R. 229 in Batesville has started inching closer to Oldenburg, making the interface between these two communities an important future topic for Oldenburg to address. The relationship between the communities is very strong and they should continue to work together to tackle important issues regionally.





# Key Population Features

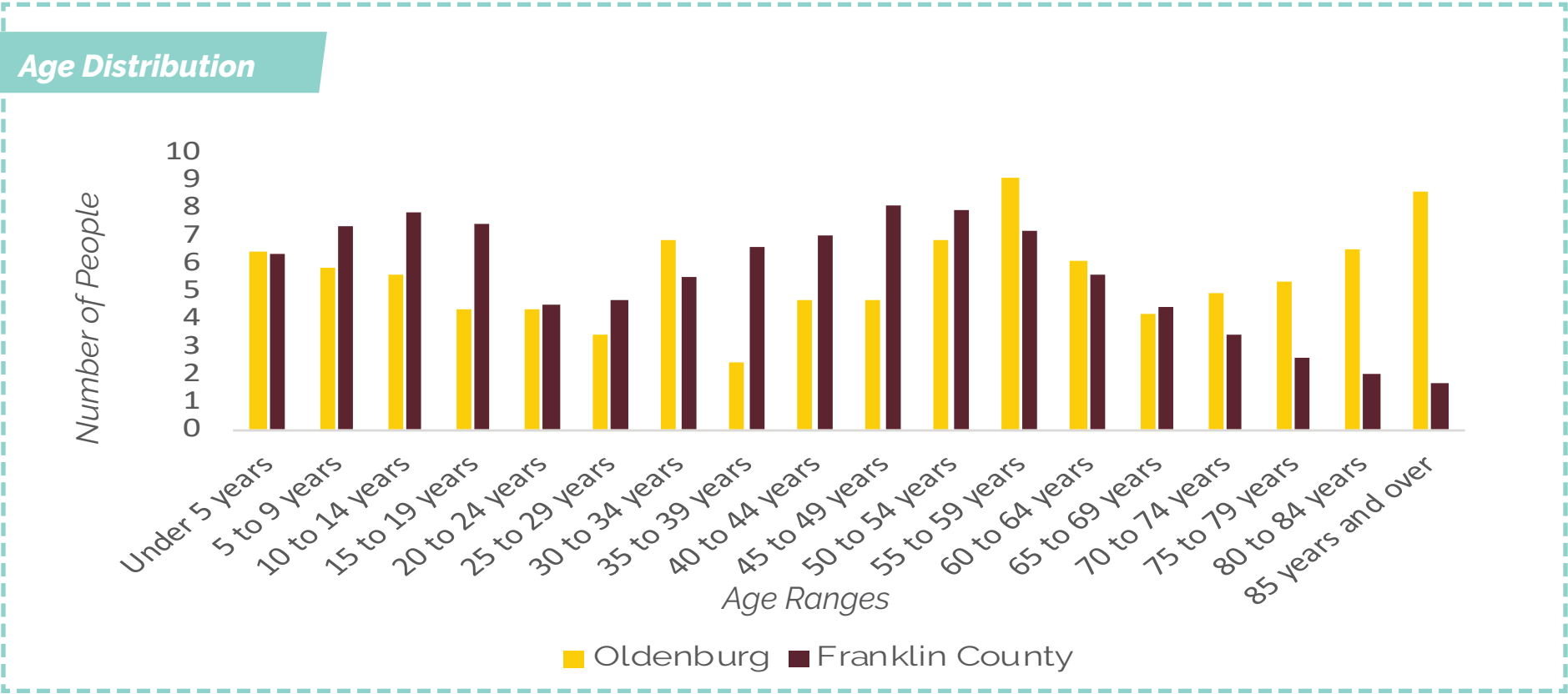


The largest age group found in Oldenburg is the 55 to 59 age group. This group makes up about 9% of the total population. The smallest age group in Oldenburg is 35 to 39-year group making up only 2.4% of the population. Based on this information as well as demographic projections, the population of Oldenburg is slowly declining. Finding ways to maintain or slightly increase population in Oldenburg is important for the continued success of the community. The combination of an aging population and very few new residents is the main contributor to the decline of Oldenburg's population. With no changes made, this decline is expected to get worse. The aging population is also an important factor for the community as it considers future plans since very few services are currently available to allow residents to age in place. This means that as residents lose their ability to be self-sufficient, they currently have very few options for remaining in Oldenburg.

# Aging Communities

The Age Distribution chart shown below showcases the various age groups in the town. Like many small towns in Indiana, Oldenburg is aging quickly and not gaining very many new residents. This is attributed to lack of new housing options and few employment opportunities, among other things. However, Oldenburg is different because people want to live in this community. Homes for sale in Oldenburg are only on the market for a few days before they are purchased usually by someone with a connection to the town or someone who just loves Oldenburg.

This is a time for residents to make a decision about the future. Based on public feedback, most residents do not want to see a large amount of population growth. Finding ways to sustain the current population without growing too quickly is important for the future success of the town. Based on information from Smart Growth America, it is seen that Millennials and Baby Boomers generally want the same thing in a community. In a sense, providing upgrades and changes for the current population will help bring in a younger generation as well.



# Economic Base

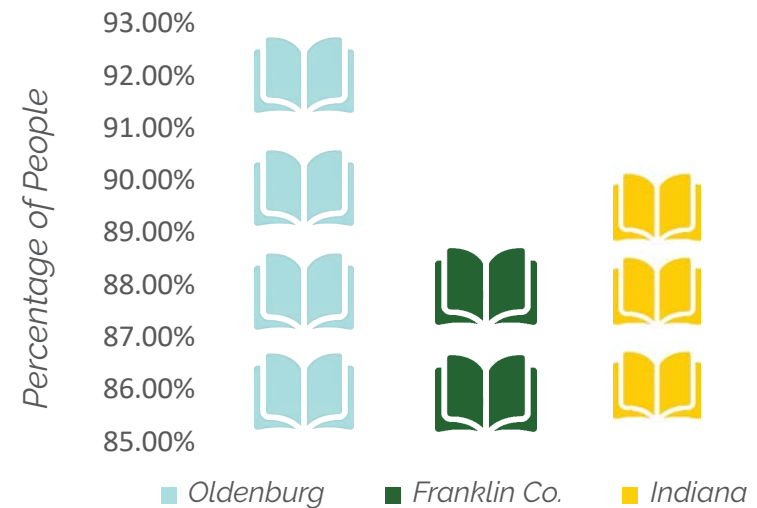
Based on a review of demographic information, Oldenburg is in an interesting position. The town currently has a diverse range of ages; however, the population is aging quickly with no younger population entering the community. Oldenburg has several amenities and characteristics that it can draw upon to help sustain current population, including:

- ❑ Oldenburg Academy
- ❑ Freudenfest
- ❑ Architecture
- ❑ Small businesses
- ❑ History

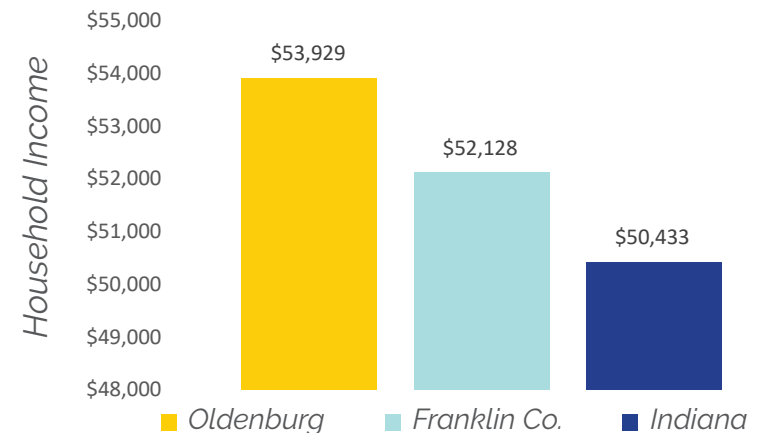
The median household income in Oldenburg is \$53,929 which is just slightly higher than in Batesville and the state of Indiana. A majority of residents commute out of Oldenburg to work although there are a few businesses and institutions that employ some residents. The Sisters of St. Francis is the largest employer in the town and the Oldenburg Academy also provides a high number of jobs, comparatively.



## Percentage of High School Diploma or Higher



## Median Household Income



# Key Anchor Institutions

## ***Historic Significance***

Oldenburg, founded in 1817 and incorporated in 1837, is one of the oldest towns in the state of Indiana. It was named after Oldenburg, Germany and the Germanic heritage is still referenced throughout the town. Almost the entire town is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic significance of the town has been mentioned by residents and visitors alike as the reason they enjoy Oldenburg.

## ***Sisters of St. Francis***

The Sisters of St. Francis is a ministry that has roots in Oldenburg reaching back to 1851. The Sisters have been a large part of Oldenburg's history and contribute greatly to the economy and charm of the town. The large complex that houses the Sisters is located right off Main Street in downtown Oldenburg. The historic structure and grounds offer a pleasant setting as well as walking paths for visitors. The Sisters actively contribute to the community and are very appreciated by residents. The Sisters also own a farm in the community, Michaela Farm. The farm was founded in the 1850s with land near the convent that was purchased by Father Rudolf. Though the farm no longer owns cattle, the farm still has large gardens, an orchard, and chickens. Michaela Farm provides the local community with fresh, non-GMO produce and eggs.

## ***Oldenburg Academy***

Oldenburg Academy was founded in 1852 when Sister Theresa arrived in Oldenburg. Since then, the Franciscan Catholic co-educational college preparatory high school has flourished. Oldenburg Academy contributes to the community by providing the lively presence of a younger generation. The students interact daily with the Sisters since some classes as well as the cafeteria are located on the Sisters of St. Francis campus. This interaction creates a bond and strong ties between students and the Sisters. Oldenburg Academy is currently constructing the Hillenbrand Family Feldhaus. This building will benefit the school's athletic program by providing more space and it will bring more teams and families to Oldenburg, contributing to the local economy.

## ***Holy Family Church***

Holy Family Church is located on Main Street in downtown Oldenburg. Holy Family Parish has been a part of the town of Oldenburg for over 180 years. Some traditions of the church, like the Corpus Christi procession date back to the 1840s. Many residents feel very connected to Holy Family Parish as they went to school there and still go to church there.

### ***Volunteerism***

Oldenburg owes a large part of its success to a strong spirit of volunteerism within the community. One doesn't have to look far to see the tangible results of the volunteer spirit that exists here. Some notable examples of this in action include the following activities and projects which have been completed with the time, talent, and treasure produced through volunteer efforts:

- Freudenfest
- Town Entry Signs
- Church steeple replacement (Onion Dome)
- Mai Baum (May Pole)
- Basketball Courts
- Street Lights
- German Street Signs
- Historic Oldenburg Indiana Brochure

This list barely scratches the surface of the positive impact that volunteers have had on Oldenburg throughout its history. There are no signs of this slowing down. However, with an aging population there is a need to recruit and train new people into the volunteer organizations that have so much influence on the community.

### ***Regional Relationships***

Oldenburg has a long-standing relationship with the City of Batesville that significantly influences daily life for residents and visitors alike. Batesville is just a short drive from Oldenburg and, because of its size, provides opportunities and assets that help Oldenburg residents conveniently meet their daily needs, including schools and employment. Many Oldenburg residents make a daily commute to Batesville for these activities and then return home in the evening to enjoy their home life in Oldenburg. This allows Oldenburg an opportunity to provide services and activities that meet the immediate needs of residents while also maintaining the small and quiet character of the community that people find desirable.

### ***Steering Committee***

The steering committee for this project is made up of a group of residents representing a diversity in age, occupation, and relationship to the town, among other things. Although the members of this committee are different in many ways, they all share a love and appreciation for the town of Oldenburg. The committee met four times to discuss various topics and share thoughts and ideas about the plan. A summary of steering committee meetings can be found on page 20 and full meeting minutes can be found in the Appendix of this document. The table on page 20 displays the name and role of each of the steering committee members for this process.



# Comprehensive Planning Committee

<b>Steering Committee Member</b>	<b>Entity Represented</b>
Adam Bedel	Youth, High School Student
Ashley Meyer	Business Owner, Historic Preservation
Dan Weigel	Real Estate, Local Business Owner
Denny Moeller	Town Council President
Diane Laake	Oldenburg Academy President
Gary Munchel	Historic Preservation, Freudenfest
Jeff Paul	Oldenburg Utilities, Local Business Owner
Mary Beth Kerker	Arts, Local Business Owner
Mike Wilhelm	Eagle Fire Company Directors, Freudenfest
Sister Christa Franzer	Sisters of St. Francis Leadership Team
Sister Rose Marie Weckenman	Sisters of St. Francis Archivist
Shawn Holtel	Health and Recreation

## ***Opportunities and Issues in Oldenburg***

The steering committee discussed how they are proud of the parks in Oldenburg and the town's historic district. The committee is also proud of the Oldenburg Academy and the Sisters of St. Francis Campus and presence in the town. The German Heritage and the small touches throughout the town are reasons why people love Oldenburg. A full summary of this meeting can be found on page 74 of the Appendix.

## ***Review of Public Input***

The steering committee reviewed a public input summary from the public meeting as well as the online survey. The online public survey received over 600 responses and over 70 people participated at the public meeting. The committee used this information to form goals for the future of Oldenburg. This information was reviewed at the second committee meeting.

## ***Land Use***

At the second steering committee meeting, land use was discussed in detail. This discussion included challenges of the current land use in Oldenburg and how that can be improved in a future land use plan. The group concluded that much of the existing land use in Oldenburg should remain the same, but minor changes should be included over time.

## ***Plan Development***

During the plan development portion of this process, the committee did not formally meet. The plan was sent to the committee for them to review and send back. During this time the plan was edited based on the revisions of the steering committee.

An aerial photograph of a small town. A large brick church with a tall steeple is on the left. A street runs through the center, where a large crowd of people is gathered, possibly for a parade. The town is surrounded by green trees and hills. A teal banner with the number 3 is in the lower left, and a dark red banner with the text 'Land Use' is at the bottom.

3

## ***Land Use***

# Summary

## **Introduction**

Land use plays an important role in the form, character, and development potential of a community. Land use in Oldenburg is largely influenced by the historic context, with key facilities such as the Sisters of St. Francis property, Holy Family Parish, and other buildings and homes in the community providing prominent character. Many survey respondents described the history and the look of Oldenburg as their favorite part of the town.

## **Public Input:**

- *Keep Oldenburg a small town.*
- *Not many areas need change in Oldenburg.*

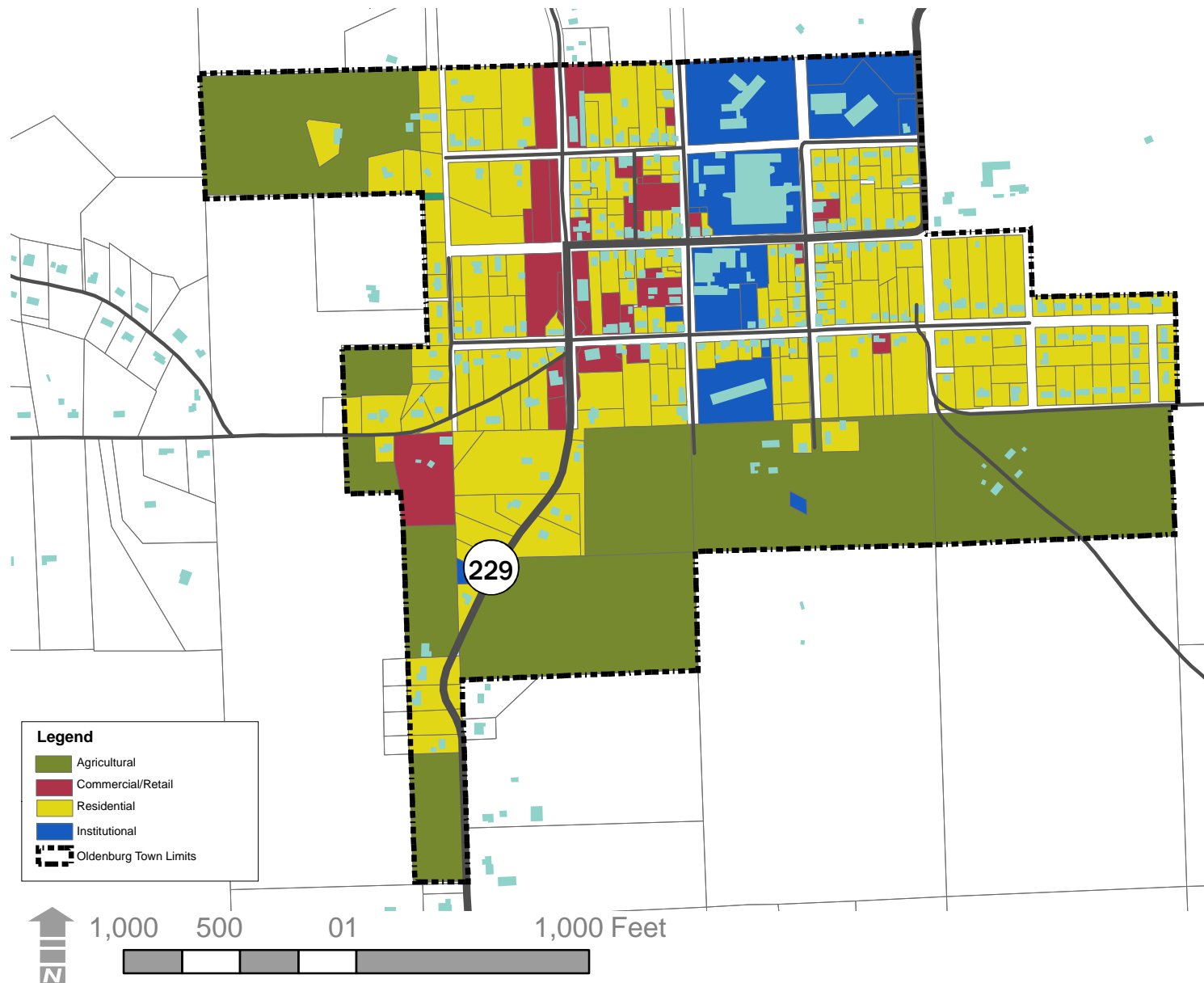
## **Local Context**

Finding ways to enhance and continue this feeling that individuals have when entering Oldenburg is a step in the right direction. Figure A: Existing Land Use Map, shows the existing land use of Franklin County. As seen, Oldenburg is made up primarily of public/semi-public places as well as some residential and natural areas. Although most of this is expected to stay the same, a few changes can be made to continue the success of the town. The town of Oldenburg is currently under county jurisdiction as far as new development surrounding the town. Franklin County has worked with Oldenburg in the past regarding new development, however local preferences can still be overruled by the county. The town does not currently have control over land use decisions surrounding the town. Gaining more local control over future development decisions and community changes will allow the town to be the primary decision maker for development decisions.

Oldenburg is made up of several prominent institutions that add to the community's charm and character. Supporting the changes that these entities will bring forth is important for the future of the town. A biannual round table discussion among these establishments will allow for an open discussion of plans and ideas. This will give the town time to respond and plan for new changes while allowing groups to show a mutual respect for decisions made to private property.



# Figure A: Existing Land Use Map





# Summary continued

## **Existing Land Use**

**Figure A: Existing Land Use Map**, shows the existing land use of the Town of Oldenburg. Identified land uses in Oldenburg are made up of primarily residential areas with some commercial and several institutional uses within the historic core of the town. Although most of this is expected to stay the same, a few changes should be considered to help continue the success of the town.

## **Current Land Use Policy**

Land use policy in Oldenburg is currently facilitated through the Franklin County Area Plan Commission. County planning is important, but it does not always adequately consider the future needs of smaller municipalities. Oldenburg needs town planning that is community driven. The town has taken the first steps towards this by undergoing the comprehensive planning process. Developing and implementing town level land use policies will provide more local control over future development decisions. Businesses in Oldenburg are primarily made up of retail and commercial shops within historic buildings. There are quite a few prominent restaurants and a handful of small specialty shops that add to the character of the community. Encouraging conversion of this first floor space back to commercial use is an opportunity for the town to expand its commercial diversity and tax base without requiring any new building. As seen in Figure A. Existing Land Use, the land use patterns in Oldenburg are typical of a traditional town center with commercial and institutional uses grouped in the center of the community and residential uses surrounding the activity core. There is a strong desire within the community to maintain this traditional development pattern into the future, making the location of future land use decisions critically important to fulfilling this goal.

## **Physical Characteristics**

Topography is important in determining where development can or cannot happen in the town of Oldenburg. The rolling landscape surrounding the town is a feature that makes Oldenburg unique although it is a limiting factor in where new building can occur. **Figure B** shows the topographical features of the town of Oldenburg. Contour lines on this map are based on 5 foot intervals. Building footprints are also shown to indicate the dominant development patterns in Oldenburg. Future building potential will be somewhat limited by topography within Oldenburg. Looking to open lots within town and along flatter portions of land currently outside of town limits will be the best options as new building sites are considered in the future.

## **Future Land Use Policy**

Oldenburg's future land use intent is to preserve the character, integrity, and quality of the existing town and invite changes which will add to the overall value of the Oldenburg experience for residents and visitors. As seen in **Figure C: Future Land Use Map**, not many changes are planned for the town. This is the first Future Land Use Map ever created by the Town of Oldenburg. Based on feedback, survey results, and stakeholder meetings, residents and visitors are interested in maintaining the current size of the community and are not interested in allowing major new construction projects. Land uses are expected to remain consistent with existing uses for the foreseeable future. Development in town might take the form of infill which is the process of developing underutilized, or vacant buildings rather than new construction. Although there are not very many vacant buildings in Oldenburg, those that are can contribute to blight which mitigates the character of the town.



# Figure B: Existing Topography

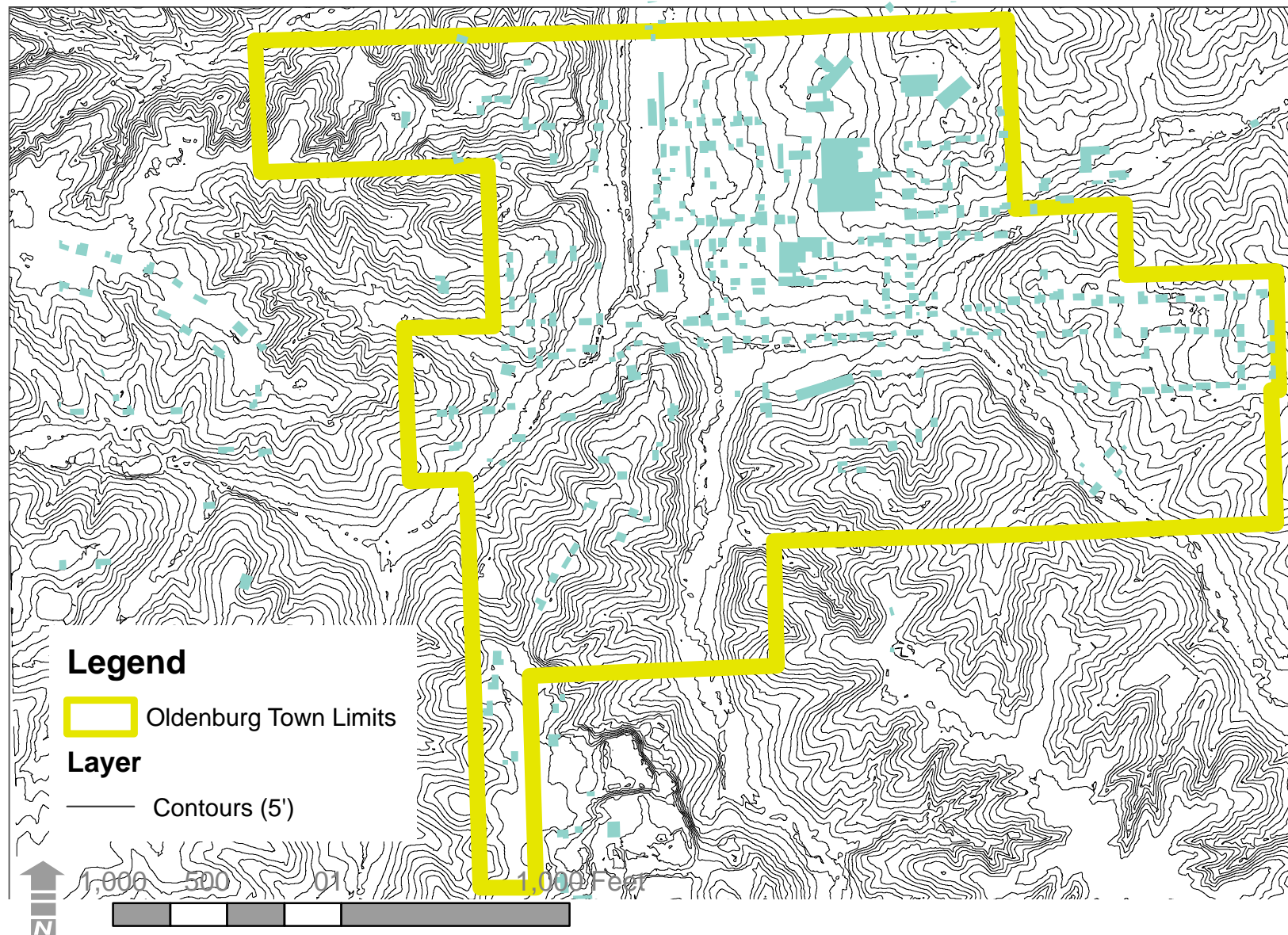
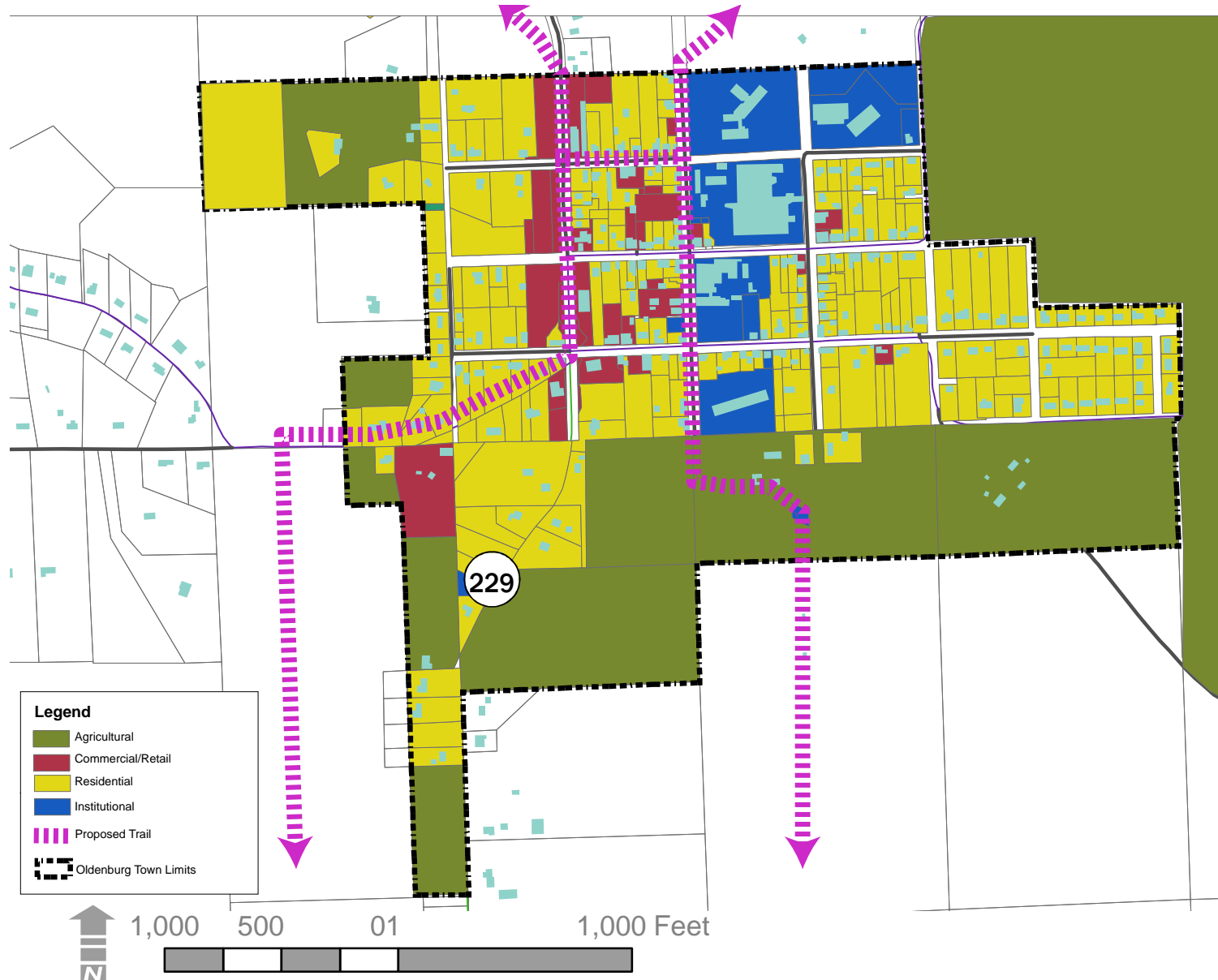


Figure C: Future Land Use





# Land Use Goals

- *Gain more local control over future decisions and community changes.*
- *Support the future plans of major community institutions including the following:*
  - *Holy Family Church*
  - *Sisters of St. Francis*
  - *Oldenburg Academy*
  - *Freudenfest*
  - *Eagle Fire Company*

## Implementation

Land use is especially important in Oldenburg because currently there is not enough protection for the town to keep things the same. According to the Indiana Citizen Planner's Guide, a county that has an area plan commission, like Franklin County, can exercise planning authority in any town or municipality that is not participating in the area commission. Gaining more control over the future changes of the town will start with adopting a comprehensive plan into the Franklin County comprehensive plan document. Working with Franklin County is important in ensuring that the town's wishes are heard and understood at the county level. From a local standpoint, prominent town groups and institutions should meet semi-annually to discuss future plans and changes.

## Action Items

- *Formalize adoption of the Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan into the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan document.*
- *Work with Franklin County officials on a formal town level review and approval process for proposed land altering activities within town limits.*
- *Plan a semi-annual meeting of prominent town institutions to discuss and communicate plans for the future.*

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A photograph of a brick building with a gabled roof. The building is made of red brick and has a white door and window. The text "OLDENBURG WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY" is mounted on the brick wall. In the foreground, there is a large pile of grey and white gravel. To the right, there is a chain-link fence and some industrial equipment. In the background, there are trees and a church steeple under a cloudy sky. The image is framed by a teal border on the right and bottom.

4

## ***Government & Fiscal Capacity***



# Existing Conditions

The Town of Oldenburg has a strong history of responsible fiscal management. Because of the size of the community and associated tax base the fiscal capabilities of the town are limited when compared to larger communities. Oldenburg does have a history of being able to accomplish a lot with its comparatively limited resources though. This success is amplified by the town's ability to successfully leverage available grant funding to expand its capacity to undertake capital projects.

Oldenburg has a number of successful grant funded projects including:

- OCRA funded water treatment facility upgrades
- INDOT Community Crossings street improvements
- Neighborhood Revitalization Grant - Brick Street, Vintage Street Lamps, and Town Hall Cupola

The town will continue to partially rely on available grant funding sources to help complete important capital projects identified in this plan. It should also be noted that Oldenburg's fiscal capacity is indirectly bolstered by the volunteer funded projects that are completed throughout town. These volunteer efforts provide an important source of capacity for the town to be able to complete very visible beautification and quality of life projects that likely would not be feasible under traditional town funding sources.

Currently most administrative concerns in the town of Oldenburg are taken care of by the Town Board and many citizens who care about the town. This method has been very successful in Oldenburg in the past but it is recognized that having additional town resources would provide additional capacity for the community. As the town continues to grow and change, a full-time staff person is something the town would like to work towards. This position will

assist with day-to-day maintenance tasks and other general operational needs. A full-time staff person was mentioned several times during the stakeholder interviews from numerous individuals in the community.

## **Public Input:**

- *Need a town welcome center.*
- *Possibly a full-time town staff person.*

## **Local Context**

Being a community of just over six hundred people, it hasn't always made sense to have a formalized plan for the future. As the community ages and changes planning for the future is now more important than ever. The town is in great fiscal health and can maintain this by planning for future expenses and budgeting costs, by making a list of priority improvements that should be taken care of to maintain the overall wellbeing of the community. As this is done it is important to understand how much each project will cost as well as how long the project will take.

Identifying project costs is the first step but acknowledging and capitalizing on supplemental funding sources, such as grants, is the most important part of completing the improvements. Indiana has several grant and funding opportunities that can be used for capital improvements in a community.





## Government & Fiscal Capacity Goals

- *Maintain Oldenburg's fiscal health through careful planning and implementation of future capital projects.*

### Implementation

Currently, there is no formal plan for the financial wellbeing of the town. Creating a plan for future projects and the costs of the projects is important in maintaining the fiscal health of the town. A capital improvements list will allow priority projects to be identified as well as the costs associated with them. Pursuing grant opportunities throughout the town is important in the funding of future projects.



### Action Items

- *Develop a mid-range capital improvements plan.*
- *Work to identify local and grant funding sources to make desired improvements.*

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## ***Public Facilities & Services***

# Existing Conditions

Various boards and committees currently oversee town functions in Oldenburg, however, there is no full-time staff person. This can make it difficult for facilities and services decisions to be made quickly. The Town Council and the Utility Board have done a great job keeping pace with various town needs in the past, however, both recognize how much more could be accomplished if a dedicated person could commit more time to daily maintenance and management needs. This was one topic among many that were discussed during stakeholder meetings. Other public facility and services needs that were discussed include the following:

- Building a larger building dedicated to emergency services including the fire station. This will allow smoother operations and more room to house emergency equipment.
- Adding a 24-hour emergency call station in the town. Currently, some calls to the station go unanswered for extended periods of time which can be detrimental to the safety of the people of Oldenburg.
- Expanding current Town Hall space to allow enough space for larger public meetings and town sponsored events.

## **Public Input:**

- *Keep the spirit of volunteerism.*

## **Local Context**

Survey feedback and public input have led to the conclusion that residents feel safe in Oldenburg. As the primary demographic shifts to an older generation, it is important to have a safety call center that allows residents to get help when needed. During stakeholder interviews, a new fire station was discussed as a necessity to house a new fire truck. A new fire station would allow town hall to expand and provide more community spaces which was also highly desired.

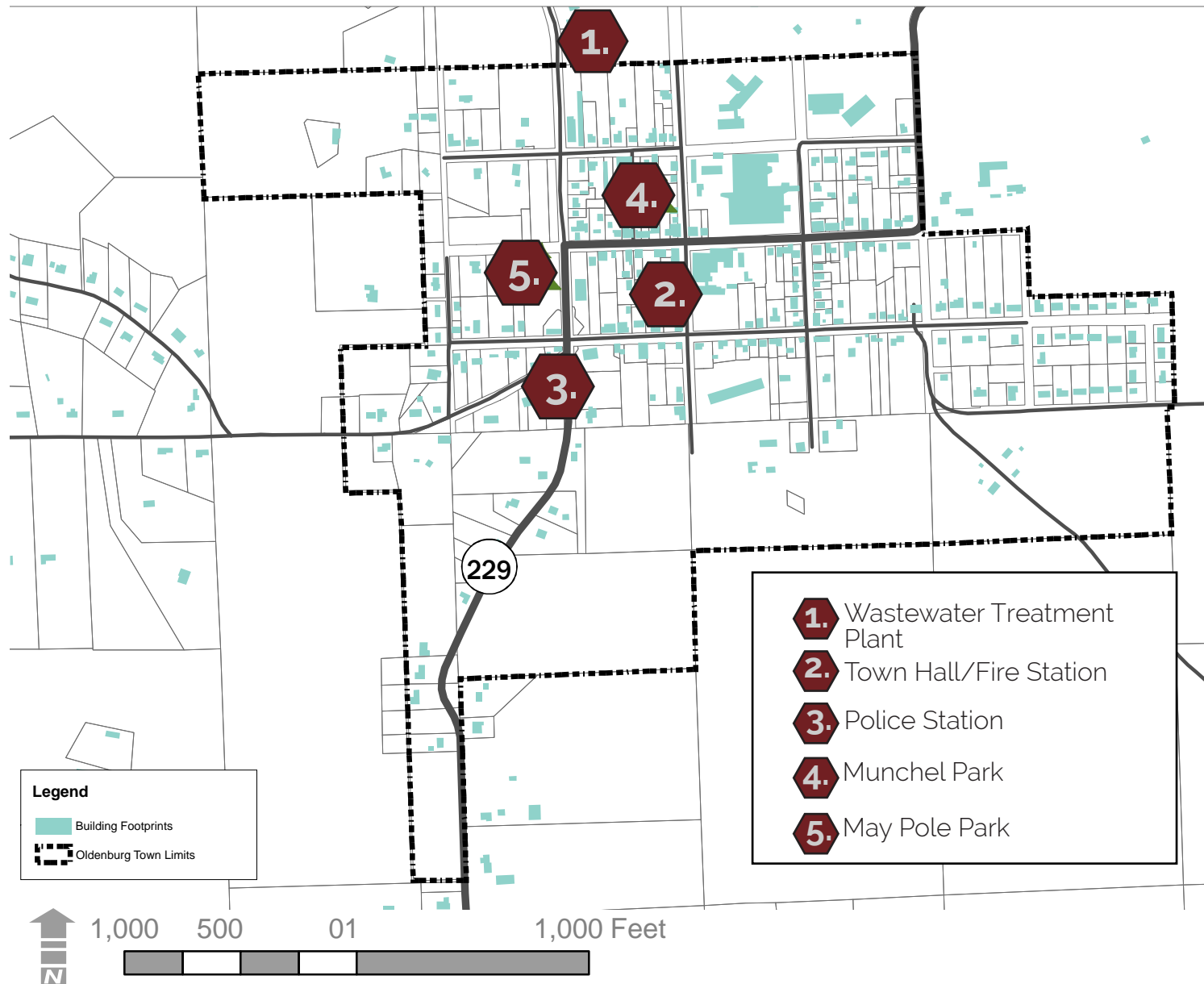
Currently, the town of Oldenburg has ideal utility services for a town of its size and still has capacity to expand, if needed. However, there are some minor issues with sewer screening, heavy inflow and pipe issues in some locations. An in-depth utility study to determine long term capital and operational needs should be conducted. There are also some areas of town where storm sewers are desired. These improvements would be best made in coordination with other town improvements such as sidewalk extensions and curb installation.

### **Fire Station**

- ***A desire was expressed during the plan to relocate the Eagle Volunteer Fire Department to a new facility. This would allow for expansion of the fire facilities to accommodate additional vehicles and equipment. This would also allow for conversion of the current fire facilities within the historic town hall building into expanded public meeting space.***



# Figure D: Current Public Facilities in Oldenburg







# Public Facilities and Services Goal

- ***Maintain and enhance Oldenburg's reputation as being a convenient and safe community by making key improvements to town utility infrastructure, public safety services, and operations.***

## **Implementation**

Oldenburg is known as being a welcoming, safe town and should remain so in the future. As residents of the town age, it is important from a resident standpoint to continue this tradition of providing safe and reliable infrastructure within the town. Having a formal plan for local public safety call center services will maintain the safety and ensure that calls are answered, and residents are safe. A feasibility study will help determine where a new fire station would be best located as well as if it is necessary in the community. Efficiency is important in saving the town money and if utilities can be better serviced in a different way it is important to consider that as an option.

### **Action Items**

- ***Formalize a plan and budget for adding local public safety call center services.***
- ***Conduct a feasibility study to review alternatives for constructing a new fire station and expanding the use of Historic Town Hall for more community functions.***
- ***Evaluate utility operations for greater service efficiency.***
- ***Budget for the hiring of a part-time or full-time town employee to assist with public works management, maintenance, and improvement projects.***

A large, diverse crowd of people is gathered on a street at night, likely for a festival or celebration. The scene is illuminated by warm streetlights and the glow of buildings in the background. Several flags are visible, including the American flag and the flag of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The crowd is dense, with people of various ages and ethnicities. The overall atmosphere is festive and communal.

6

## ***Placemaking***

# Summary

Although placemaking is a relatively new term, the town of Oldenburg has been placemaking since its founding. Oldenburg's rich history and character sets the town apart from many others throughout the nation. Continuing this tradition and expanding on it will allow Oldenburg to sustain the success that it has had in the past in attracting visitors to the community. Much of Oldenburg's character is drawn from the German heritage of the town.

Freudenfest, or the "festival of fun" in English, is also known as the Biggest Little German Festival in Indiana. This weekend long event celebrates the heritage of the community. The event regularly draws crowds of over 20,000 people from around the region and state. Freudenfest proceeds go back to the community in the form of scholarships and other capital projects. Over the years the festival has helped fund numerous quality of place projects and has lured countless visitors back to the community during other times of the year.

Other volunteer led programming within the community includes:

- Corpus Christi Procession in June (now in its 172nd continuous year)
- Volunteer Fireman's Festival in June
- Franciscan Fun Day at Motherhouse Campus and Michaela Farm in September
- Holy Family Church Festival in October
- Holiday Under the Spires in December
- Sisters of St. Francis Motherhouse Christmas Tours

Each of these events adds to the overall appeal of the community for both residents and visitors. As noted before, each of these events is organized by volunteers and is at risk of losing momentum in the coming years without the volunteer base being replenished with new leadership.

## **Public Input:**

- *Celebrate and continue the German Heritage of the town.*
- *Continue to reference history throughout Oldenburg.*

## **Local Context**

Historic character is an integral component to the overall placemaking approach for the Oldenburg. This topic, and how it relates to the community, is explored in more detail in the Historical and Archaeological Resources chapter.

Local placemaking efforts, such as the Mai Baum, have helped set Oldenburg apart from other towns and cities for years. The town offers visitors and residents an experience that is hard to find anywhere else in the state, which is a great benefit to the town. Based on this, it is important to take care of what makes Oldenburg a community that people want to live in and return to. Future projects should be careful to maintain the character which has been carefully cultivated in Oldenburg so the current sense of place can be enjoyed well into the future. Carefully expanding on recent placemaking efforts should also be considered as the town continues to adapt to external change.

# Summary

Oldenburg has several placemaking projects throughout the town that contribute to the town's overall appeal and charm. The image to the right, Figure 2, displays a mural in Oldenburg that showcases significant town entities. Art like this helps show visitors and residents the importance of the town to the overall regional character. Art of this nature creates a unique sense of place while simultaneously showcasing important points of community pride and history.

Another unique example of using art to increase education about the history of Oldenburg are the painted fire hydrants. As seen in Figure 3, the fire hydrants in the town have been painted as figures that reflect the German Heritage of the town. Small initiatives like this can make a huge difference in helping create a unique and whimsical sense of place that people will remember and desire to visit again. Other examples of unique placemaking efforts in the community include:

- ❑ Main Street brick paving project
- ❑ Community gateway signage and plantings
- ❑ German themed street signs
- ❑ Coordinated Christmas decorations
- ❑ Mai Baum (May Pole)

Each of these efforts individually helps establish a memorable sense of character and charm within the community. Collectively they help establish an identity that resonates with residents and that visitors find appealing and welcoming.



**Figure 2:** Mural in Oldenburg



**Figure 3:** Painted Fire Hydrants





## Placemaking Goal

- ***Undertake projects and improvements which help maintain Oldenburg's reputation as a warm and welcoming place for visitors and an appealing place for residents.***

### Implementation

Because of its unique role within Oldenburg, the Freudenfest committee has served as the primary placemaking task force for the community. This relationship should continue for as long as the Freudenfest committee is able to maintain this level of vigor. Over time it will be important to recruit new individuals to get involved with this group so the nature of this relationship can be continued. The formation of an additional placemaking task force should be explored to help identify more opportunities to combine town resources with outside funding sources to develop larger, higher impact capital placemaking projects for the town. This combination of activities could also blend with other committee activities to help ensure any new improvements are well rounded and accomplish various town goals such as historic character and environmental sustainability.

#### Grant Opportunities:

- Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority My Community My Vision
- The Southwest Airlines Heart of the Community Grant
- National Association of Realtors Placemaking Grant

### Action Items

- ***Maintain Oldenburg's visual character by undertaking only high-quality public improvements that will enhance the authentic experience of the town. Expand upon recent placemaking efforts such as the signage, painted fire hydrants, and historic street lights.***
- ***Work with local businesses and county tourism officials to re-establish a visible presence for Oldenburg along I-74 corridor east and west of Batesville.***







7

***Economic Development***

# Summary

Even with the absence of significant major employers within Oldenburg the community still boasts enough economic vitality to be able to comfortably support numerous local establishments including a grocery store and butcher shop, an auto service station, numerous restaurants and pubs, and multiple local retail shops. This is a significant accomplishment considering the fact that many significantly larger rural communities struggle to maintain this level of local economic activity. The primary contributors to the Oldenburg economy are major institutions such as the Sisters of St. Francis and Oldenburg Academy, tourism, and local retail and restaurant establishments. The lack of major chain stores and other major employers is a welcome feature of the community for the residents. Future economic expansion opportunities do exist in the community and should be explored but they will likely be most welcomed if they take the form of additional boutique retail shops and other attractions which can enhance the tourism appeal for visitors.

Tourism expansion is currently one of the best opportunities for the town to build upon for continued economic prosperity. A town history and welcome center was mentioned repeatedly during the planning process and would provide a good starting point for visitors. Finding additional ways to bring more local artisans to Oldenburg will bring new commercial life to the town and increase unique economic development opportunities. As mentioned in the land use chapter, most buildings and homes in the area can also be used for commercial retail spaces on the ground floor, which is also authentic to their original design. A makerspace facility is another option that was discussed to help bolster future economic expansion in Oldenburg. Makerspaces are collaborative community spaces usually found in schools, libraries, or other public or private facilities. These spaces are used for sharing resources and information. A makerspace could help attract artisans to Oldenburg who would like to practice their art but don't have the space to do so currently.

## *What is a Makerspace?*

A makerspace is a community amenity generally located in a public building like a library but can also be a part of a public private partnership. These collaborative spaces offer tools and resources to residents and those who are interested in learning and creating. Makerspaces often have power tools, scrap materials, as well as things relating to technology like printers, and computers with dynamic software. Makerspaces are great community assets as they provide a space specifically for community learning. In general, these spaces are funded by individuals, community groups, and grants. In many cases, a more experienced user in the community might host a class to teach residents how to use a certain tool or create a specific craft. Because of the amount of tourism Oldenburg receives makes it an ideal town for a Makerspace.



Source: <https://www.thegreenproject.org/makerspace>



# Summary

## Public Input:

- *Attract more local businesses downtown.*

## Local Context

Understanding and expanding economic development opportunities is important for Oldenburg as the main economic driver of the community is tourism. Very few workers commute into Oldenburg, and most residents commute out to neighboring cities, towns, and counties for employment. With that, bringing people into Oldenburg through economic development opportunities, primarily tourism, is crucial to the survival and expansion of the consumer-based services found in the town.

Expanding marketing operations for the town is a good first step in bringing more visitors to Oldenburg to experience what the town has to offer.

Currently, the largest event in the town is Freudenfest which takes place every summer. This festival brings anywhere between 20,000-25,000 individuals to town annually. Though this has been very successful for the town, the festival is only a weekend long. Sustaining some of that tourism throughout the year can have broader economic development benefits for the town and will also help incentivize the establishment of new local shops and services. Although there is not a lot of open property in the town, most of the homes were built and are zoned in a way that allows retail on the first floor and residential on the second floor. This can benefit current property owners who can lease their ground floor building space for retail purposes while maintaining their current residence on upper floors.



Oldenburg Academy  
Source: Diane Laake



## Economic Development Goal

- *Encourage expansion of small scale and locally oriented economic opportunities*

### Implementation

Economic opportunities help towns maintain their current success while making the future more comfortable. Small scale local businesses will help continue the tradition of small-town craftspeople work in Oldenburg while adding to the current market. Unique shops are the things that keep people coming back to an area. There are currently great local shops in town, however, they could market their shops more in order to bring more visitors to Oldenburg. Making sure the shops stay in the downtown area was also mentioned as important by residents. Underutilized buildings are wonderful opportunities to create something the town really needs. Exploring options for community spaces such as a welcome center or a makerspace could be a possible good use for these spaces.



### Action Items

- ***Work with building owners to convert first floor building space into unique commercial or retail uses.***
- ***Recruit unique local shops to establish in Oldenburg, focusing on placing them within existing buildings and store fronts.***
- ***Broaden community marketing and branding efforts to expand tourism generating potential.***
- ***Explore creative conversion of underutilized or unoccupied existing building space into uses which can help generate additional visibility and revenue for the community; some possible uses mentioned include maker spaces, expanded retreat space, and craft industry opportunities.***





8

***Housing***



# Existing Conditions

Housing was consistently mentioned as an ongoing community concern throughout the survey, public workshop, and stakeholder interviews. When homes go on the market in Oldenburg, they sell very fast and very few homes are actually ever listed. This is a sign that Oldenburg is a community that people want to live in, but also poses problems for people desiring to move back into the community. It is widely acknowledged that some new housing would provide long term benefit for the community, but it is also desired that any new building reflect a sustainable growth strategy that also reflects the character of the community. Providing measured new single-family housing options will help attract more people to live in the community and can be done using an infill strategy rather than in one or two large development tracts.

Senior housing has also been identified as a need in the town. With an aging population, senior housing would allow residents who can no longer live alone to continue to live and contribute to the community. Recent studies have been commissioned by the Sisters of St. Francis that reflect a growing need for affordable senior housing within the Oldenburg community. These studies should be reviewed to help identify appealing strategies and locations for providing more options to help Oldenburg's growing senior population comfortably age in place.

Another repeatedly mentioned concern within the community is the maintenance conditions of some rental properties. Although most of the town appears to be well-maintained a few locations stand out as needing upkeep. The small physical footprint of Oldenburg makes the visibility of poorly maintained properties stand out and reflects poorly on the remaining community. Formalizing a property upkeep standards policy would allow homeowners to know what is acceptable and what is not as far as home maintenance is concerned.

## **Public Input:**

- *More housing opportunities are needed.*
- *Senior living communities are desired.*

## **Local Context**

Housing in Oldenburg goes fast based on how infrequently housing is available on the market. Houses that do reach the market in Oldenburg are off of the market very quickly which is indicative of strong demand. However, as the demographics of the town change, it is important to consider new senior housing options as well as aging in place strategies.

Currently, there are no property upkeep policies that enforce maintenance of property in the town. Based on the tourism economy, property maintenance in Oldenburg is more than just being a good neighbor. Formalizing standards that require specific home appearance standards will benefit the town's overall placemaking approach and will help preserve the property values within the community.

Figure C, the Future Land Use Map, in the Land Use Chapter identifies potential locations for new housing. Many residents indicated that they would like their children to come back to Oldenburg, but they don't have anywhere to live in the town. Expanding housing opportunities will allow for small, sustained growth in the community.

### ***Aging in Place***

As found in the General Background chapter, the population of Oldenburg is aging with very few younger people moving to the community. Knowing the options of how to go about the next step is important in maintaining the presence of the community. Aging in place involves a person consciously deciding to stay in their home as they age rather than moving into an assisted living or senior care facility. This requires assessing and preparing a home for the next phase of life. Although it is impossible to predict every issue that may arise as a person ages, following aging in place strategies will help create a safer atmosphere for individuals wishing to stay in their homes longer. This can allow people to be closer to their families as well as their communities for as long as possible.

Most aging in place strategies require minor to medium home improvements. These should be thought about as individuals age starting as early as possible. Some aging in place strategies are:

- ❑ Including proper, sturdy grab bars through the house
- ❑ Increasing doorway width
- ❑ Lowered electrical switches
- ❑ Added ramp to home entrances

These strategies among others can help for a safer community as residents age.

### ***Grant Opportunity***

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) is an interest group based in the United States that helps individuals and communities “choose how they live as they age”. AARP currently has a community challenge grant that helps communities apply “quick-action” projects throughout cities and towns. These projects are often related to housing, transportation, smart cities, and public spaces. These projects are set to make communities livable for all ages.

Based on the projected growth for Oldenburg, this grant is suggested as a funding source to make the community more livable for all ages. Current livable communities in Indiana are the City of Fishers and City of Gary. These communities are very different in demographics but similar in the fact that they’re both taking steps to ensure their cities are accessible for all ages.





## Housing Goal

- ***Establish property upkeep standards that apply to current housing as well as new housing that might be constructed in Oldenburg.***

### ***Implementation***

Most of the homes are well maintained in Oldenburg by their owners. There are a few properties that could use some upkeep however, there is currently no way to enforce that. Establishing property upkeep standards will ensure that housing is maintained to reflect the architectural standards that are determined by the Historic Preservation Board which will be further discussed in the Historic and Archaeological Resources chapter. As residents age, proper housing is needed as well as aging in place strategies that will allow for residents to continue to live in their homes as they age. This generally involves updating homes to ADA standards.



### ***Action Items***

- ***Support opportunities for residents to age in place by encouraging the development of high-quality senior housing opportunities.***
- ***Promote community health, safety, and welfare by developing, adopting, and enforcing a property upkeep policy***
- ***Formalize the location, character, and quality of desired new single-family housing options that fit the character of the town.***





9

## ***Transportation***

# Existing Conditions

The primary roadway through Oldenburg is S.R. 229, which becomes Sycamore Street and Main Street within town boundaries. S.R. 229 has steady traffic flow through Oldenburg since it serves as the primary means of access to I-74 from more distant rural locations. According to Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) online traffic count data the average daily traffic volume on the 2.5 mile stretch of S.R. 229 between Oldenburg and I-74 is nearly 5,100 vehicles per day. The same data source also indicates that traffic volume on S.R. 229 beyond Oldenburg drops to just under 2,800 vehicles per day. This gives some indication of the number of pass through trips Oldenburg experiences and is also indicative of the number of times people raised concerns about pedestrian safety along Main Street.

Local roads in Oldenburg are arranged in a traditional grid pattern with blocks measuring roughly 500 feet (north/south) by 650 feet (east/west). Pearl Street, which is the primary location for the annual Freudenfest celebration, was updated about 15 years ago with new brick paving. There is a desire to update other streets in town with a similar brick treatment over time.

The walkability of Oldenburg provides more opportunities for informal interactions with neighbors and visitors and decreases instances of auto related issues such as congestion and parking. Being a walkable community also provides a more convenient and relaxed experience for tourists. A number of streets in Oldenburg do have sidewalks but there are areas within town where sidewalks are either missing or are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As the median age of the town continues to go up, making sure public spaces are ADA compliant is important.

It was also noted that some traffic signage within town does not meet current Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards

and needs to be updated. This condition can be dangerous especially for visitors who aren't used to navigating around town. Having predictable and consistent regulatory traffic signage will help navigation in a more predictable and comfortable transportation environment.

Many of the transportation related improvements desired within Oldenburg relate to sidewalks, trails, and visual enhancements. Improving and extending the sidewalk network, along with developing some off-street walking trails in key locations, will help enhance the overall level of walkability in town. Having safe, comfortable, and well-lit walking routes will allow visitors to feel more comfortable walking around the town. Implementing pedestrian safety tools as well as updating the regulatory signage of the town will increase safety for all.

## **Public Input:**

- **Sidewalks are needed in Oldenburg**

## **Local Context**

Based on how small Oldenburg is, it makes for a very walkable community. Experiencing a town by foot rather than driving through allows for more interaction opportunities between residents, visitors, and helps enhance the local shopping experience. Creating a safer walking environment throughout the community by continuing sidewalks will increase these interactions.

Trails help connect communities and increase outdoor recreation and health in a community. Oldenburg has wonderful trail potential that will drive visitors to the community. Figure E showcases a possible trail route in the town. This trail can eventually connect to the city of Batesville and beyond increasing connectivity between the municipalities.



# Figure E: Existing Sidewalk Map

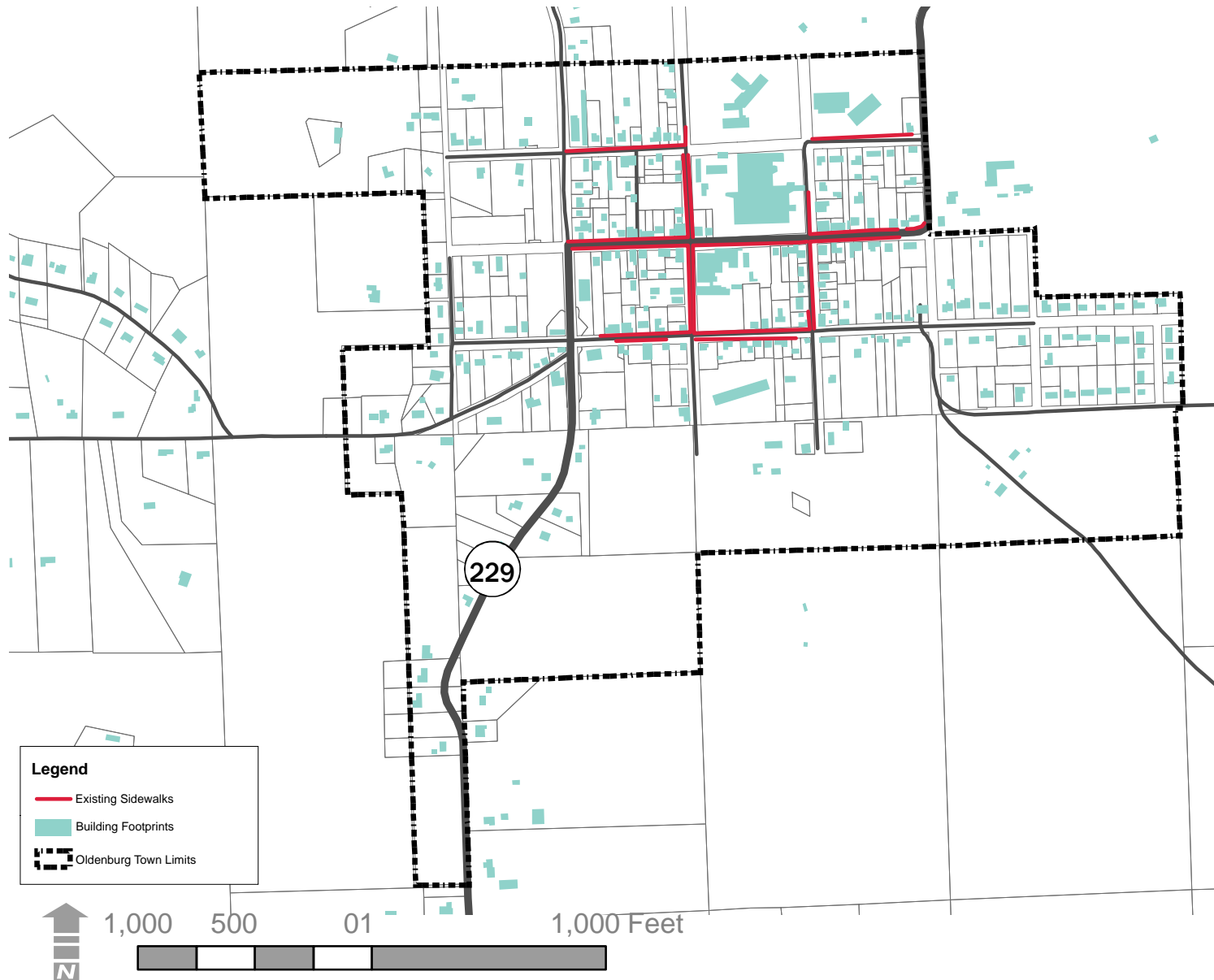
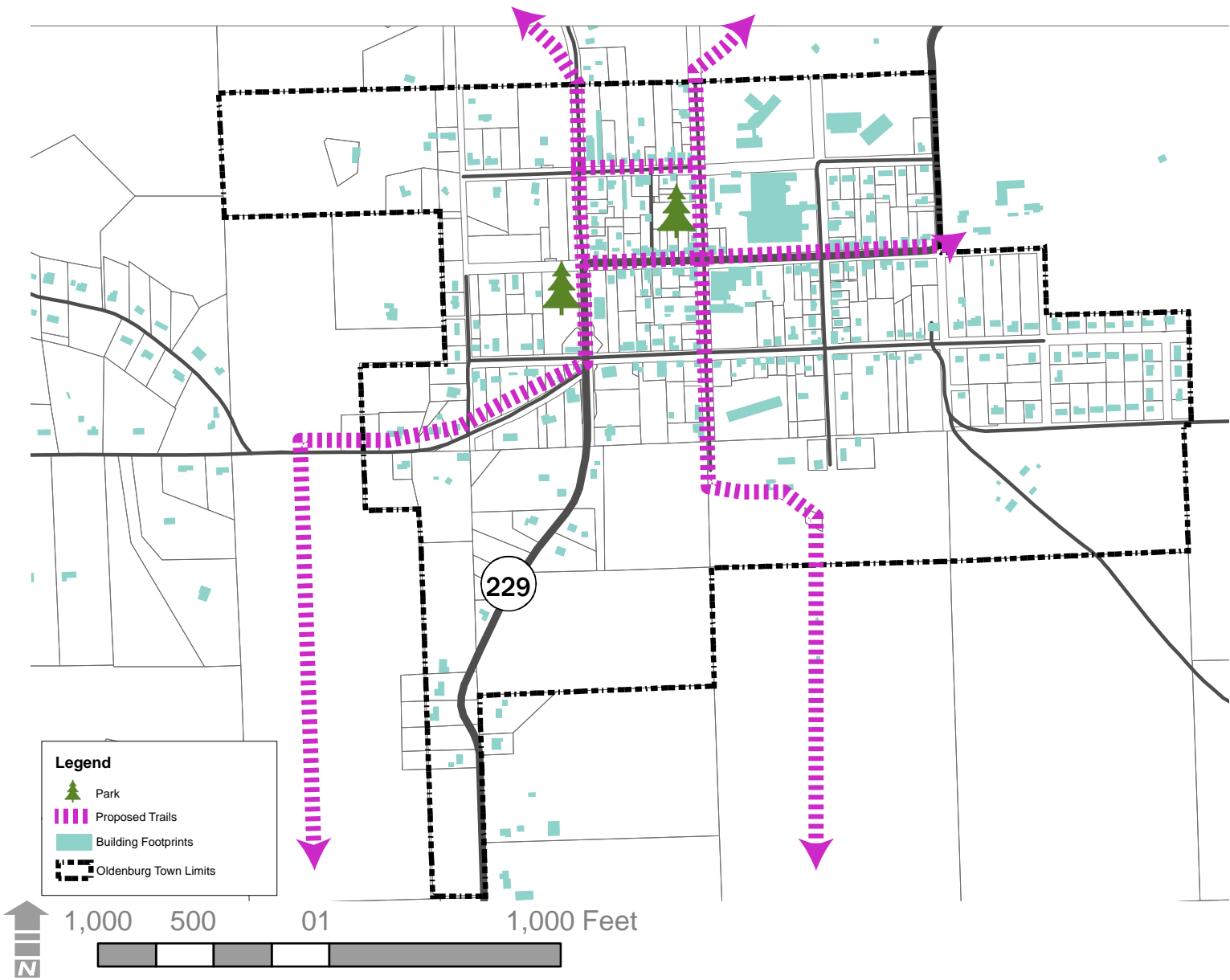


Figure F: Proposed Trails Map





## Transportation Goal

- ***Continue and expand safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian infrastructure.***

### Implementation

Based on how walkable Oldenburg is, pedestrian safety is very important in the community. Ensuring proper signage and crosswalks on main roads can increase predictability and decrease the likelihood of pedestrian/vehicle conflicts which helps keep everybody safe. Using decorative crosswalks are a good way to increase pedestrian crossing visibility while increasing the sense of place in Oldenburg. Lighting is also important to making pedestrians feel safe as they walk through town and can also reference the history of the town if done with quality in mind.



### Action Items

- ***Expand Pedestrian Connectivity and Safety by constructing new sidewalks and completing existing sidewalk networks.***
- ***Design and install pedestrian safety improvements across Main Street/S.R. 229***
- ***Plan for a local and regional shared-use trail network.***
- ***Update roadway regulatory signage to meet current MUTCD standards.***
- ***Add decorative pedestrian scaled street lighting along major roadways throughout town.***
- ***Increase pedestrian connectivity to Michaela Farm.***

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# AGRICULTURE

Not Applicable

Agriculture is an important part of many Indiana communities; however, it does not apply to the town of Oldenburg, therefore this chapter has been omitted from the Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan. The jurisdiction of the town does not extend beyond town limits and does not include any large-scale agricultural potential. Oldenburg should focus on the sections of this plan that apply more directly to the town.

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**10**

## ***Natural Resources***



# Existing Conditions

Oldenburg is located in a topographically significant part of the state which leaves a lot of land unsuitable for building and leaves the natural land well preserved. Hydrologically, Harvey Branch is the only water feature within town limits. Its main branch is located on the western edge of town and a secondary branch runs through town adjacent to Water Street. The creek is not large enough to be navigable however it is a nice visual natural feature in the town and serves an important drainage function. No floodplains exist within the town limits; however, Harvey Branch has experienced a few instances of swelling beyond its banks in recent years. On one occasion this caused damage to an existing pedestrian bridge and tennis courts. This should be factored in as new town improvements are being planned and designed.

Tree cover in Oldenburg is found mostly on the south side of town but large trees are found throughout. Protecting these natural areas was mentioned as important by many residents and is a goal of the community.

Oldenburg is also beginning to venture into more environmentally focused planning discussions as a community. A recently formed group called the Renewable Energy Commission has received official backing by the Town Council and has been working to build awareness and implement ideas that will help reduce the town's carbon footprint.

## **Public Input:**

- *Action needs to be taken to reduce the town's carbon footprint.*
- *The town should consider energy alternatives other than fossil fuels to be on the forefront of climate change.*

## **Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission (OREC)**

“The mission of Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission is to increase awareness in our local community of the urgency and importance of reducing our carbon footprint on all levels. OREC serves as a source of information and ideas to facilitate the transition to a carbon neutral future.”

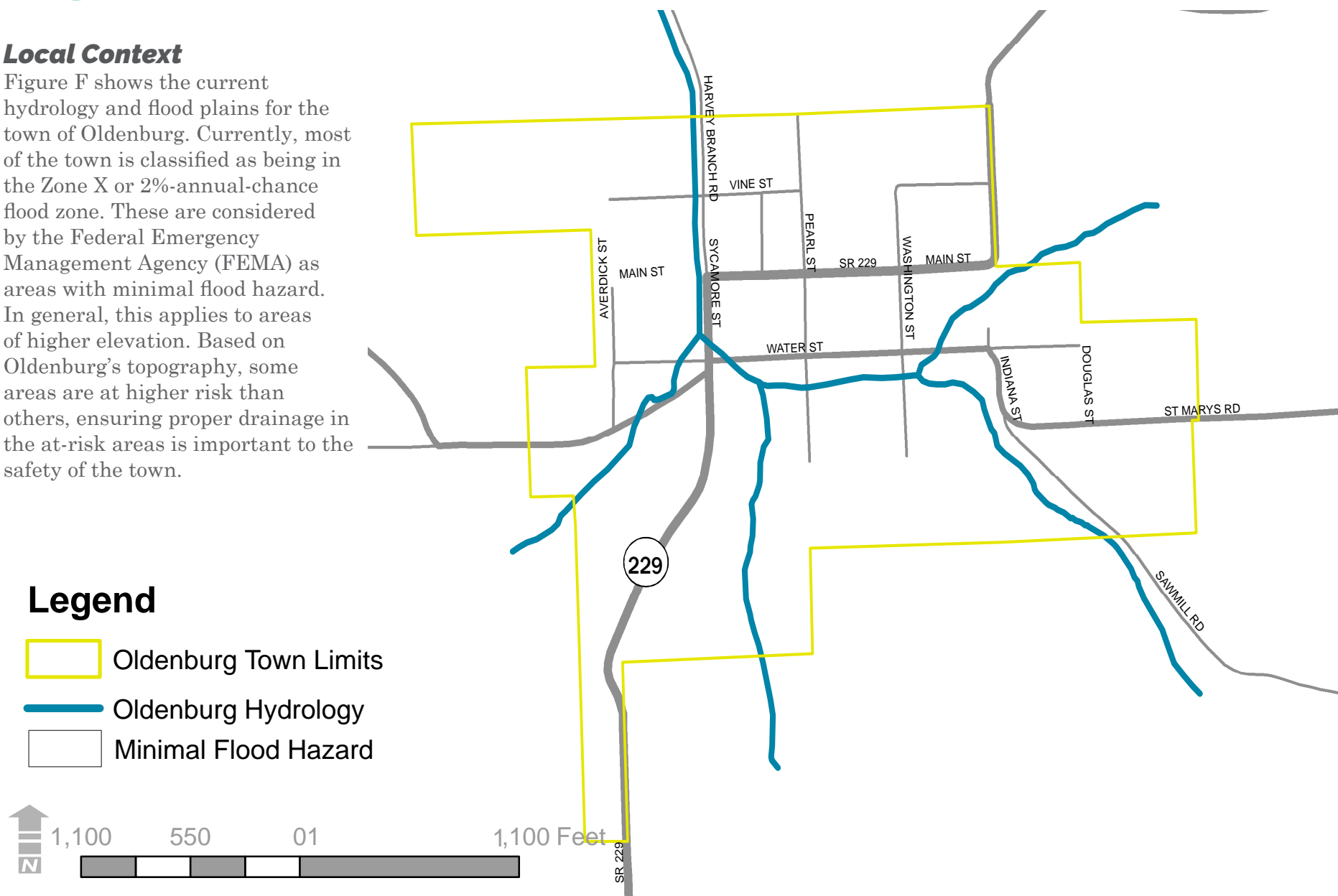




# Figure G: Existing Environmental Conditions

## Local Context

Figure F shows the current hydrology and flood plains for the town of Oldenburg. Currently, most of the town is classified as being in the Zone X or 2%-annual-chance flood zone. These are considered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as areas with minimal flood hazard. In general, this applies to areas of higher elevation. Based on Oldenburg's topography, some areas are at higher risk than others, ensuring proper drainage in the at-risk areas is important to the safety of the town.





## Natural Resources Goal

- *Maintain and protect the quality of Oldenburg's natural features.*
- *Work together as a community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the town of Oldenburg.*

### **Implementation**

The town's natural features are currently well maintained by residents and should continue to be. In general, the town can work with the Renewable Energy Commission to consider their proposals on how to make the town more environmentally friendly. The Renewable Energy Commission can also host educational events that allow the town to learn more about why it is important to protect the environment and what they can do to help. Identifying the areas in town that are in need of most environmental protection will be a good starting point. Local town clean-up days are a good community activity that help keep the natural areas litter free.

### **Action Items**

- *Identify and protect significant natural areas for the Town.*
- *Support efforts by the Renewable Energy Commission to decrease Oldenburg's carbon and ecological footprint.*
- *Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission will lead the town's efforts in building community support for this goal and in suggesting ways to reduce Oldenburg's carbon and ecological footprint.*

A photograph of a park with a large slide, a climbing structure, and a geodesic dome, with a light snow covering the ground.

**11**

## ***Parks & Recreation***



# Existing Conditions

Public parks are great community assets that provide an inclusive space for families and residents to visit and enjoy. Munchel Park is in downtown Oldenburg and has several amenities that draw visitors to the park. Munchel Park has opportunities for expansion because there is nothing in the lot north of the park. The Transportation chapter of this plan discusses possible trail options. Munchel Park could be tied into an effective trail route through the town.

The Maypole (Mai Baum) park, just west of downtown, references the significant European heritage and history of the town. This park greatly adds to the character of the town because of its authenticity and reference to culture. Because of its location along S.R. 229, Maypole Park would also be connected along the town's possible trail route. Having parks along a trail will bring more people to the park and gives a destination along the trail path.

The Sisters of St. Francis campus has a park like setting throughout the buildings. The trails and paths throughout the campus are open to the public and many residents walk through recreationally. Oldenburg Academy located on the north-east side of Oldenburg is a wonderful asset to the community. The grounds are well decorated and carry the charm found throughout the town.

## **Public Input:**

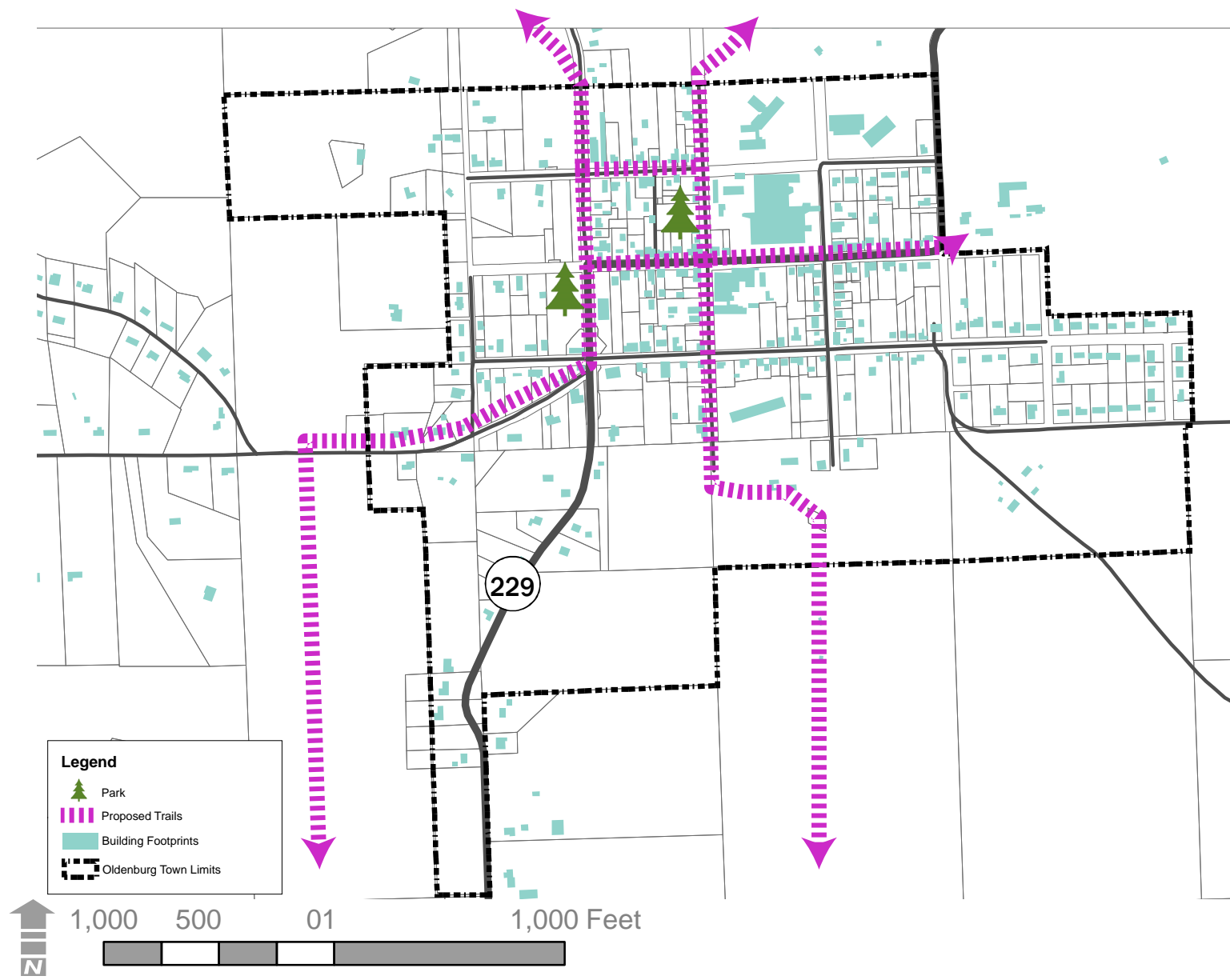
- *Upgrades to the park should be considered.*
- *Oldenburg should consider a splash pad.*

## **Local Context**

Oldenburg has two local parks but is also located near many regional and state recreational attractions. Brum Woods, located in Batesville, is an 80-acre wooded bike and hike trail network. North-east of Oldenburg in Brookville is the Mounds State Recreation Area. This recreation area has a lake-front park with hiking trails and a small beach. These are areas that are very accessible for those living in and around the town and have possible trail connection potential.



Figure H: Existing Parks & Open Spaces Map





## Parks & Recreation Goal

- ***Provide appealing parks and open spaces for resident and visitor enjoyment.***

### **Implementation**

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a community plan that is submitted to IDNR to recognize and help with park improvements, provide feedback, and create a parks action plan. There are guidelines on creating one of these documents the correct way on the IDNR website. It is important for small communities to use these resources because they offer more funding opportunities. The parks in Oldenburg are currently not on Google Maps and can be hard to find for visitors. Raising awareness about the parks in the town with signage could bring more visitors to the parks. There has been discussion in the town about expanding youth sports opportunities. Expanded youth sports opportunities can bring more people to visit the town and will boost economic development. A discussion needs to be had about if there is a real need for this expansion, and if so, where would this be in the town.



### **Action Items**

- ***Complete an IDNR Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify and formalize desired park improvements, updates, and enhancements.***
- ***Assess the need and feasibility for youth sports opportunities and expansion.***

A tall, yellow and red striped pole stands vertically, with six shields hanging from it in a 3x2 grid. The shields contain various symbols: a sun with rays and two crossed swords, a cross with a hand, a cowboy on a horse, a log on a sawhorse, a lighthouse, and a circus tent with a barrel and a wheel. The pole is surrounded by strings of colorful lights. A teal banner with the number 12 is on the left, and a dark red banner with the title is at the bottom.

**12**

## ***Historic & Archaeological Resources***

# Existing Conditions

History and heritage is a major tourism draw in Oldenburg today. People visit from all over the state and region to learn about the history of the town, and appreciate the architecture and placemaking efforts. The town is named after Oldenburg, Germany which is a small rural town and was founded by German immigrants. The town has been authentically maintained to reference its German heritage which is reflected in the street signs, fire hydrants, building materials, and overall small-town feel.

70% of the homes in the town were built before 1900 and the entire town has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1983. Public feedback has shown that preserving the history of the town is a top priority of residents.

## **Public Input:**

- *The town's history needs to be celebrated.*
- *Ensure new development matches the historic feel of the town.*

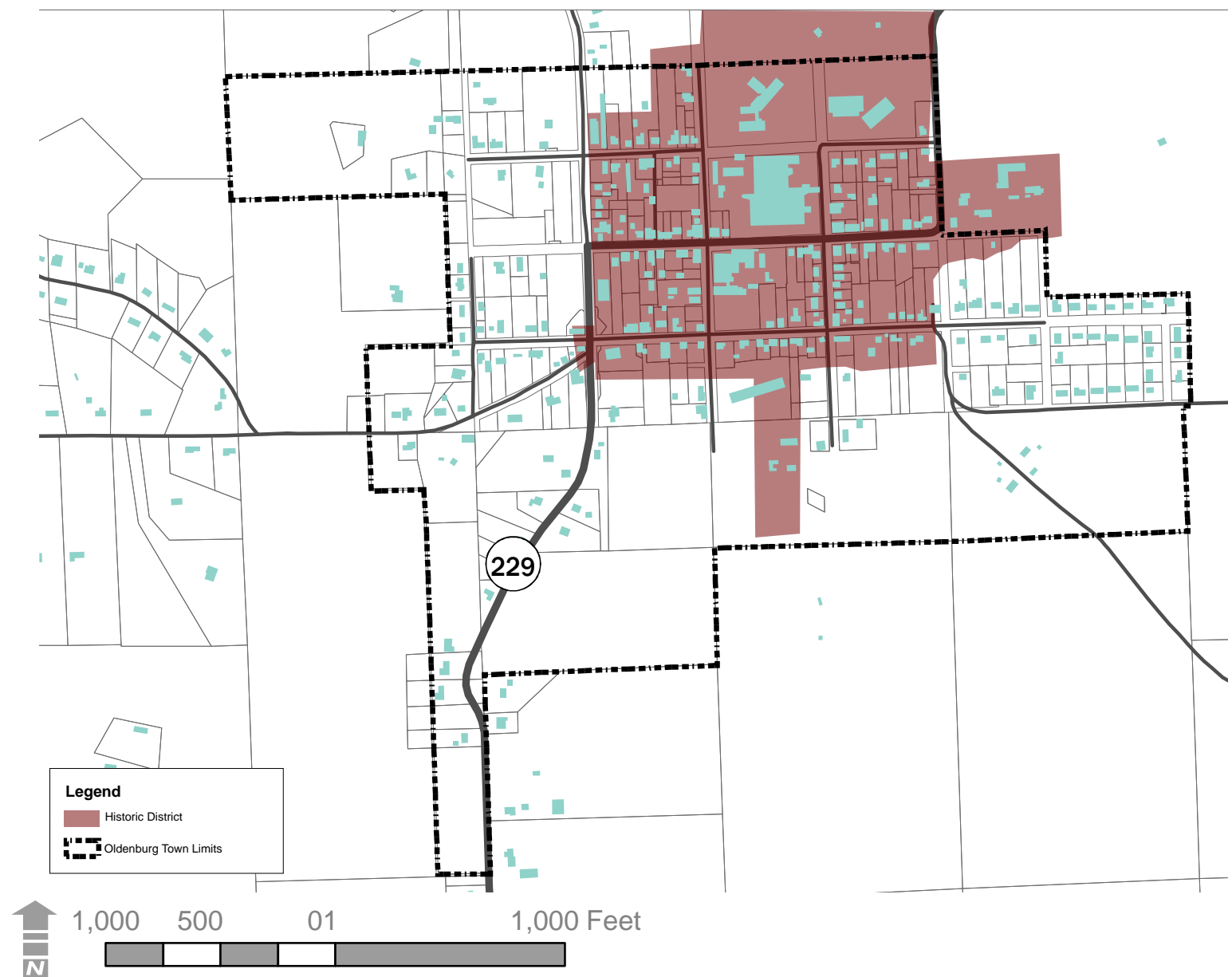
## **Local Context**

Oldenburg has several institutions that contribute to the town's historic significance. Figure H showcases the areas in town that are considered part of a historic district. Preserving these significant landmarks and areas in Oldenburg was identified by residents as something that is important to them.

A local historic preservation grant will benefit the community by providing a clear path to maintenance and upkeep of the historic buildings in town. Establishing a Historic Preservation Commission will allow the community to have more control



Figure I: Historic District Map





## Historic & Archaeological Resources Goal

- *Oldenburg will work diligently to maintain the historic character and quality of the community.*

### **Implementation**

Maintaining the historic character of Oldenburg is important to the future of the town because history is so important to the town's relevance. A formal Historic Preservation Commission should be created to oversee some of the town's future plans involving historic preservation. This commission can help create and enforce historic architectural standards that would be applied to historic buildings in town. Supporting the decisions of private institutions as they move into the future with a mutual respect for the town's wishes is important to keep the historic tradition of the town. A local historic preservation grant is a good way to ensure homeowners have what they need to maintain their homes to the standards set by the Historic Preservation Commission.



### **Action Items**

- ***Establish a formal Historic Preservation Commission to oversee the development and enforcement of specific historic architectural standards.***
- ***Support efforts of private institutions to maintain the integrity and quality of historic building and landscape features.***
- ***Establish a local historic preservation grant that will assist building owners with maintenance, upkeep, and Improvements.***

# HAZARD MITIGATION

Oldenburg is a small town with just over 600 residents. There are very few hazardous elements in the town that need to be addressed, therefore this chapter is not applicable.

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## ***Action Plan***

# Action Plan

<b>Goals</b>		<b>Actions</b>	
 <b>Land Use</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Gain more local control over future development decisions and community changes.</li> <li>□ Support the future plans of major community institutions.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Formalize adoption of the Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan into the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan document.</li> <li>□ Work with Franklin County officials on a formal town level review and approval process for proposed land altering activities within town limits.</li> <li>□ Plan a semi-annual meeting of prominent town institutions to discuss and communicate plans for the future.</li> </ul>	
 <b>Government and Fiscal Capacity</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Maintain Oldenburg's fiscal health through careful planning and implementation of future capital projects.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Develop a mid-range capital improvements plan.</li> <li>□ Work to identify local and grant funding sources to make desired improvements.</li> </ul>	
 <b>Public Facilities and Services</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Maintain and enhance Oldenburg's reputation as being a convenient and safe community by making key improvements to town utility infrastructure, public safety services, and operations.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Formalize a plan and budget for adding local public safety call center services.</li> <li>□ Conduct a feasibility study to review alternatives for constructing a new fire station and expanding the use of Historic Town Hall for more community functions.</li> <li>□ Evaluate utility operations for greater service efficiency.</li> <li>□ Budget for the hiring of a part-time or full-time town employee to assist with public works management, maintenance, and improvement projects.</li> </ul>	

<b>Goals</b>		<b>Actions</b>	
 <b>Placemaking</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Undertake projects and improvements which help maintain Oldenburg's reputation as a warm and welcoming place for visitors and an appealing place for residents.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Determine the most highly traveled areas throughout town and determine where opportunities for new placemaking projects could take place.</li> <li>□ Inventory existing art projects such as the fire hydrants and the mural and determine if any maintenance needs to be done.</li> <li>□ Work with local artists to establish decorative crosswalks across busy intersections</li> </ul>	
 <b>Economic Development</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Encourage expansion of small scale and locally oriented economic opportunities which will increase Oldenburg's appeal as a tourism destination.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Work with building owners to convert first floor building space into unique commercial or retail uses.</li> <li>□ Recruit unique local shops to establish in Oldenburg, focusing on placing them within existing buildings and store fronts.</li> <li>□ Broaden community marketing and branding efforts to expand tourism generating potential.</li> <li>□ Explore creative conversion of underutilized or unoccupied existing building space into uses which can help generate additional visibility and revenue for the community; some possible uses mentioned include maker spaces, expanded retreat space, and craft industry opportunities.</li> </ul>	
 <b>Housing</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Establish property upkeep standards that apply to current housing as well as new housing that might be constructed in Oldenburg.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Support opportunities for residents to age in place by encouraging the development of high-quality senior housing opportunities.</li> <li>□ Promote community health, safety, and welfare by developing, adopting, and enforcing a property upkeep policy.</li> <li>□ Formalize the location, character, and quality of desired new single-family housing options that fit the character of the town.</li> </ul>	



## Goals

## Actions



### Transportation

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Continue and expand safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian infrastructure.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Expand Pedestrian Connectivity and Safety by constructing new sidewalks and completing existing sidewalk networks.</li> <li>□ Design and install pedestrian safety improvements across Main Street/S.R. 229.</li> <li>□ Plan for a local and regional shared-use trail network.</li> <li>□ Update roadway regulatory signage to meet current MUTCD standards.</li> <li>□ Add decorative pedestrian scaled street lighting along major roadways throughout town.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|



### Natural Resources

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Maintain and protect the quality of Oldenburg's natural features.</li> <li>□ Work together as a community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the town of Oldenburg.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Establish biannual clean-up days to maintain the beauty and cleanliness of the town,</li> <li>□ Work with the Renewable Energy Commission to find feasible projects to decrease the town's carbon footprint.</li> <li>□ Allow Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission to lead the town's efforts in building community support for this goal and in suggesting ways to reduce Oldenburg's carbon and ecological footprint</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



### Parks and Recreation

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Provide appealing parks and open spaces for resident and visitor enjoyment.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Complete an IDNR Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify and formalize desired park improvements, updates, and enhancements.</li> <li>□ Assess the need and feasibility for youth sports opportunities and expansion.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|



### Historic and Archaeological Resources

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Work diligently to maintain the historic character and quality of the community.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Establish a formal Historic Preservation Commission to oversee the development and enforcement of specific historic architectural standards.</li> <li>□ Support efforts of private institutions to maintain the integrity and quality of historic building and landscape features.</li> <li>□ Establish a local historic preservation grant that will assist building owners with maintenance, upkeep, and Improvements.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



An aerial photograph of a town during a festival. A large crowd of people is gathered on a street and in a park area. In the background, a prominent church with a tall steeple is visible. The scene is set against a clear blue sky. The image is framed by a teal border on the right and bottom.

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***Appendix***



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# Steering Committee Meeting #1



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## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan

Steering Committee Meeting # 1 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: December 5, 2018

### Introduction and Roles

- Consultant Team
  - Cory Daly – HWC Engineering,
    - 317-981-1260
    - [cdaly@hwcengineering.com](mailto:cdaly@hwcengineering.com)
  - Amber Janzen – HWC Engineering,
    - 317-981-1284
    - [ajanzen@hwcengineering.com](mailto:ajanzen@hwcengineering.com)
- Steering Committee Introductions

### Communication Expectations

- This planning process is open to the public. All information shared at this meeting is encouraged.

### Visioning Exercise

- Proud of:
  - Parks- Very nice for a small town, but there is room for improvement
  - Historic District
    - Brick street
  - Oldenburg Academy
    - Quality school
    - Viable business that brings in many people
    - 3-million-dollar athletic facility in construction
      - Intended to increase enrollment
  - Sisters Chapel
    - Center of worship on Sundays
      - Open to the public
      - Very popular
  - Sisters of St. Francis Campus
    - Landmark that contributes to identity of town

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- History
  - Also contributes to the town
  - Well preserved
- Little Projects & Special Touches
  - These smaller beautification projects are a result of pride and volunteerism and have strengthened identity and pride within the town.
  - Freudenfest contributes a lot to these projects with grant money and festival fund.
  - Examples
    - Onion dome
    - May Pole
    - Park equipment
    - Tennis courts
    - Street signs
    - Fire hydrants
- Political will
  - Town council is open to ideas, but funding projects rests on those who wish to implement ideas.
- Holy Family Parrish
  - Still active
  - Father Rudolf established a vision for the town
- Freudenfest Committee
  - Responsible for several projects – Little and Big
  - Volunteer base- several outside of Oldenburg
  - Well connected, passionate people.
- Freudenfest
  - Celebration of town pride
- People want to live here
- Change
  - Rental properties
    - A few run-down properties, some in historic buildings, are not well taken care of.
  - Accessibility- Entrance to the post office makes it difficult for some to enter.
  - Curbing gutters
  - Space for civic engagement
    - Current space is too small which limits civic engagement potential.
  - More community amenities

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- Bank
  - Historical museum
  - Small shops/boutiques
    - Boutiques
    - Bakery
    - Antique shops
  - Places for younger people to hang out/do
    - Coffee shop closes at 12:30
    - Little league opportunities
  - Space
    - Not enough space for growth (both residential and commercial)
- Opportunities
  - “May Pole” Park
    - Walking track
    - Amphitheatre
    - Potential critical sub- area for plan
  - People visit all the time
    - Just to walk even
  - Trail connecting Batesville to Oldenburg in the works
  - Police station
    - Ideas for space?
      - Renting out smaller rooms
      - Hist. museum
      - Community center
  - Future of Sisters campus
    - How to help plan for campus as population ages
    - Big central part of village- must be preserved
- Other ideas
  - Exert local plan control over Oldenburg
    - Plan commission
    - BZA
    - Adopt own zoning/historic preservation regulations
  - Expand town boundaries
    - Water can accommodate
    - Or if plan commission established- extra- territorial jurisdiction may apply
  - Re-establish little league

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## **Schedule and Planning Process**

- **Public meeting 1- Wednesday to correspond with CCD**
  - **January 16<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup>**
  - **At Holy Parrish Cafeteria**
- **Stakeholder meetings Jan 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>**
- **2nd Steering Committee meeting Feb 13<sup>th</sup>**

## **Public Engagement**

- Draft of survey sent out to committee
  - Survey sent out before public meeting
- Marketing survey/events
  - Create Facebook event
  - Send link out to social media
  - Post event around town in utility bills.

# Steering Committee Meeting # 2



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## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan

Steering Committee Meeting # 2 Agenda

Meeting Date: February 20, 2019

### Welcome and Introductions

### Review Public Feedback

- Survey Summary
  - Q3 – There is an inverse relationship as far as appearance of town being very important and workforce development being not as important. However, workforce development is also noted as a reason why people leave the town.
  - Q3 - It is also noted that workforce development isn't unimportant as much as it's not seen as critical to Oldenburg since many people commute to work.
  - Q5 - It is a bit surprising that people said the downtown isn't vibrant.
  - Q6 - The neutral comments are very interesting, this could indicate not wanting to provide negative feedback.
  - Q7 - High speed data utilities are moving in slowly, but it hasn't been discussed as a huge issue in the town. However, it can be a deterrent for young families looking to move to the area.
  - General Comments:
    - Small town feel is important to a lot of people.
    - Outdoor recreation and walking are also important.
    - Rentals are mentioned as an issue.
    - A lot of people are curious about what will happen with the Sister's Property.
    - More activities for children and families.
    - Working with the Sisters and Oldenburg Academy is mentioned quite a bit.
    - Preserving the charm of the town is commented on a lot.
    - "nothing" - was mentioned for a lot of comments, the committee discussed what that means.
    - "Don't change anything" was also mentioned a lot.
  - Q11 - Sidewalks were mentioned a lot.



# Steering Committee Meeting #2



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- Q11 – The committee was surprised with “restaurants” mentioned as “missing” even though for a town this size there are quite a few very good restaurants with a decent selection.
  - Consistent hours for shops might be helpful for our downtown.
  - Finding things that will bring our families back to town is important.
- Open ended feedback discussion:
  - The “nothing” comments were discussed, and many may be leaving these comments because Oldenburg has most of what anyone could want. That is something to recognize as a good thing for the town.

## Discussion of Draft Goals

- General Discussion Summary:
  - Land Use:
    - The third goal to be worded “Support the Sisters of St. Francis as they plan the Future of their Property (Main Campus and Michaela Farms)”.
  - Public Facilities and Services:
    - Second goal to be worded, “Improve town Safety and Security Facilities and Operations (Call Center, Fire Station, Town Hall)”.
  - Housing:
    - First goal needs some work as far as wording is concerned. We don’t want to let it control us – we need to control it (development).
    - There is a need for senior housing. There was a survey done several years ago that showed a need for senior housing.
  - Transportation:
    - Mayor Bettis talked about a connection from Batesville to Oldenburg in his state of the city address.
  - Natural Resources:
    - This could possibly be a chapter with one broad goal and a few supporting action steps.
  - Historical and Archeological Resources:
    - Reword goal “Assist the Sisters of St. Francis in Preserving the Integrity and Quality of the Sisters of St. Francis Property Campus”.
  - Reduce and Refine goal statements

# Steering Committee Meeting # 2



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- Goals will be sent out again with rewording discussed at the meeting.
- The committee will be asked to prioritize goals as a separate exercise before the next meeting.

## Next Steps

- Finalize Goals and Discuss Land Use – this will be the topic of discussion at the next committee meeting.
- HWC to complete the draft plan and circulate it to the committee for review after

# Steering Committee Meeting #3



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## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan

Updated Goals and Action Items – **Committee Working Draft**

Revision Date: March 19, 2019

### Discuss Future Land Use in Oldenburg

During this discussion, committee members discussed possible future land uses in Oldenburg. The discussion took place in a “charrette” style meaning it was collaborative and involved drawing on maps to discuss the future of the town. Based on feedback received at the public workshop as well as survey data, most residents want Oldenburg to stay the same.

The Future Land Use map will be found in Final Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan.

Committee members then reviewed the following which are Updated Goals and Action Items:

#### Land Use:

Policy Statement:

Oldenburg’s future land use intent is to preserve the character, integrity, and quality of the existing town and invite changes which will add to the overall value of the Oldenburg experience for resident and visitors.

Land Use Goal:

- Gain more local control over future development decisions and community changes.
- Support the future plans of major community institutions including the following:
  - Holy Family Church
  - Sisters of St. Francis
  - Oldenburg Academy
  - Freudenfest
  - Eagle Fire Company

Action Items:

1. Formalize adoption of the Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan into the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan document.
2. Work with Franklin County officials on a more formal town level review and approval process for proposed land altering activities within town limits.
3. Plan a semi-annual meeting of prominent town institutions to discuss and communicate plans for the future.

### Government and Fiscal Capacity

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# Steering Committee Meeting #3

## Government and Fiscal Capacity Goal:

- Maintain Oldenburg's fiscal health through careful planning and implementation of future capital projects.

## Action Items:

1. Develop a mid-range capital improvements list
2. Work to identify local and grant funding sources to make desired improvements.

## Public Facilities and Services

### Public Facilities and Services Goal:

- Maintain and enhance Oldenburg's reputation as being a convenient and safe community by making key improvements to town utility infrastructure, public safety services, and operations.

## Action Items:

1. Formalize a plan and budget for adding local public safety call center services.
2. Conduct a feasibility study to review alternatives for constructing a new fire station and expanding the use of Historic Town Hall for more community functions.
3. Evaluate utility operations for greater service efficiency.
4. Budget for the hiring of a part-time or full-time town employee to assist with public works management, maintenance, and improvement projects.

## Placemaking

### Placemaking Goal:

- Undertake projects and improvements which help maintain Oldenburg's reputation as a warm and welcoming place for visitors and an appealing place for residents.

## Action Items:

1. Maintain Oldenburg's visual character by undertaking only high-quality public improvements that will enhance the authentic experience of the town.
2. Expand upon recent placemaking efforts such as the signage, painted fire hydrants, and historic street lights.

## Economic Development

### Economic Development Goal:

- Encourage expansion of small scale and locally oriented economic opportunities which will increase Oldenburg's appeal as a tourism destination.

## Action Items:

1. Work with building owners to convert first floor building space into unique commercial or retail uses.
2. Recruit unique local shops to establish in Oldenburg, focusing on placing them within existing buildings and store fronts.

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# Steering Committee Meeting #3

3. Broaden community marketing and branding efforts to expand tourism generating potential.
4. Explore creative conversion of underutilized or unoccupied existing building space into uses which can help generate additional visibility and revenue for the community; some possible uses mentioned include maker spaces, expanded retreat space, and craft industry opportunities.

## Housing

### Housing Goal:

- Establish property upkeep standards that apply to current housing as well as new housing that might be constructed in Oldenburg.

### Action Items:

1. Support opportunities for residents to age in place by encouraging the development of high-quality senior housing opportunities.
2. Promote community health, safety, and welfare by developing, adopting, and enforcing a property upkeep policy
3. Formalize the location, character, and quality of desired new single-family housing options that fit the character of the town.

## Transportation

### Transportation Goal:

- Continue and expand safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian infrastructure.

### Action Items:

1. Expand Pedestrian Connectivity and Safety by constructing new sidewalks and completing existing sidewalk networks.
2. Design and install pedestrian safety improvements across Main Street/S.R. 229
3. Plan for a local and regional shared-use trail network.
4. Update roadway regulatory signage to meet current MUTCD standards.

## Natural Resources

### Natural Resources Goal:

- Maintain and protect the quality of Oldenburg's natural features.

### Action Items:

1. Identify and protect significant natural areas for the Town
2. Support efforts by the Renewable Energy Commission to decrease Oldenburg's carbon and ecological footprint

# Steering Committee Meeting #3

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### Action Items:

1. Identify and protect significant natural areas for the Town
2. Support efforts by the Renewable Energy Commission to decrease Oldenburg's carbon and ecological footprint

# Steering Committee Meeting #3

## **Parks and Recreation**

Parks and Recreation Goal:

- Provide appealing parks and open spaces for resident and visitor enjoyment.

Action Items:

1. Complete an IDNR Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify and formalize desired park improvements, updates, and enhancements.
2. Identify opportunities for youth sports expansion through...

## **Historic and Archaeological Resources**

Historic and Archaeological Resources Goal:

- Oldenburg will work diligently to maintain the historic character and quality of the community.

Action Items:

1. Establish a formal Historic Preservation Commission to oversee the development and enforcement of specific historic architectural standards.
2. Support efforts of private institutions to maintain the integrity and quality of historic building and landscape features.
3. Establish a local historic preservation grant that will assist building owners with maintenance, upkeep, and Improvements.

# Public Workshop Summary



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## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan

Public Workshop Feedback Summary

Revision Date: March 19, 2019

### 1. What do you cherish most about Oldenburg (Post-it comments)?

- Small town x13
- Architecture x3
- Great to raise a family x2
- Love of neighborhood
- People are caring x2
- History x11
- Convent
- Family values
- Close community
- Pride
- Quaintness
- Safety x5
- Quiet
- Peaceful x3
- Restaurants x3
- The people x3
- Love the walkability x2
- Potential future
- "Village" atmosphere
- Friendliness x2
- Park
- Heritage
- Historic houses
- Historical preservation
- Everything I need is here
  - Grocery
  - Gas
  - Church
- Beer
- Raised my family here
- The village store

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# Public Workshop Summary

- Grocery
- Post office x2
- Gas Station
- Small Shops
- Religious presence/history x2
- Pearl street
- Historical district
- It's home
- Beautiful x3
- The Sister's property
- The natural setting
- All great people in town that love to help each other
- Classic
- Munchel Park
- Coffee shop
- The motherhouse, it's my home
- Family atmosphere
- Heritage
- German heritage
- Small
- Good sense of community

## 2. How do you want Oldenburg to be described in 20 years (Post-it comment summary)?

- Hospitable
- Open x2
- Inclusive
- Safe x6
- Positive
- Warm
- Friendly (people) x7
- Feels like home
- Amazing
- Active x2
- Alive
- A place where generations continue to raise families x4
- Small town charm x3
- Historic x4
- Preserved x2
- Community feel
- Still home of OA which contributes to economy
- Small
- German x2

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# Public Workshop Summary

- Shops for a variety of people
- Clean
- Family oriented
- “Touristy”
- Retained much of it’s integrity
- Good place to visit, even better place to live
- Historic but futuristic
- Lots of shops, restaurants, schools, families, children
- Caring for whole environment
- Most progressive small town in the Midwest
- With populations between 1,000-2,500 people
- Increasingly vibrant, not dying like many small Indiana towns
- Small town to be proud of x2
- Still proud of heritage
- Vibrant small business
- Place where young families want to located
- Integrity
- Authentic
- Awesome
- I envision Oldenburg as a welcoming, vibrant community that embraces its proud German heritage while moving forward to provide economic opportunity and growth in a responsible manner.
- Good stewards of the natural environment
- A role model for small towns with respect to energy efficiency and use of renewable energy resources
- Someone to take care of my grave
- Progressive
- Diverse
- Cultured
- One of the best places to live in the USA x3
- Protecting environment welcoming
- Wonderful small-town community who cares about their historic uniqueness
- A town known for its hospitality to all races and cultures living sustainably in this beautiful place.
- Religious
- Families
- Pride
- The awesome place I grew up
- Pristine

## 3. Comment Card Summary

- A great deal of the history of Oldenburg is tied to the Catholic Religious institutions that are here. Unfortunately, these institutions are shrinking. I’m

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# Public Workshop Summary

concerned there is no long-range plans to sustain these institutions. Without a plan, these will disappear, and the structures will likely be torn down.

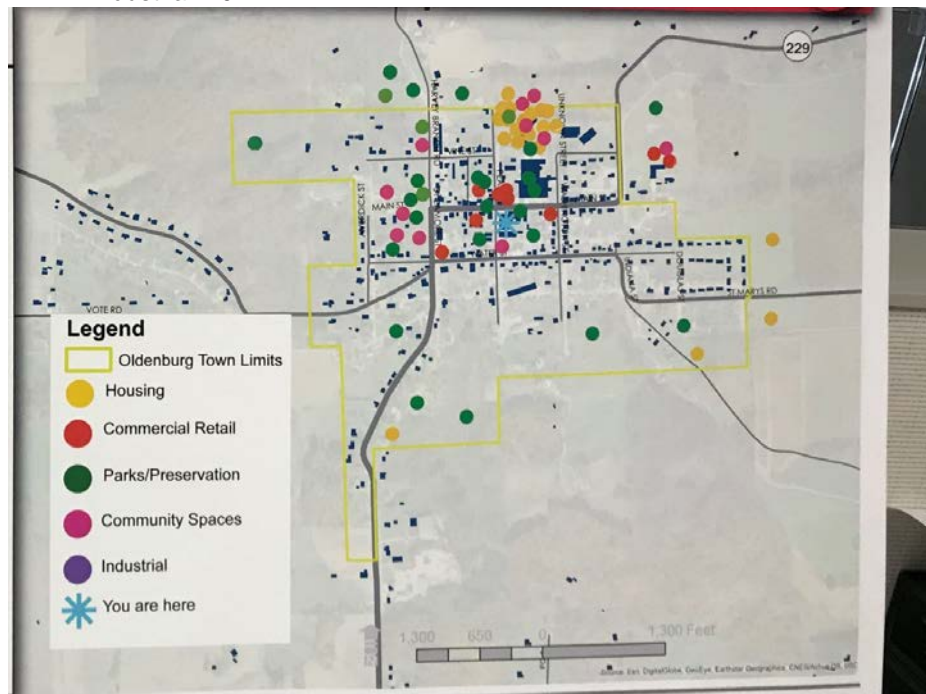
- Extend Oldenburg City Limits – Need a museum
- Would an “internet café” be a possibility in town for residents whose service is not available or inadequate?
- Internet service is terrible and/or not available in many areas just outside of town. That cripples the modern family as school work demand high speed internet.
- The retail space in town that is only occasionally “open to business” could be repurposed into full time retail space
- Keep Oldenburg as it is, what it was, small do not develop it will lose what separates it from other places. They lost the monastery in ten years they might lost the convent – the priests and sisters is what started Oldenburg.
- I think Oldenburg should really be looking into developing renewable energy sources, especially for our public buildings. It takes time to recover the initial costs of solar or wind power, but I’d like to think that Oldenburg will be around more than long enough to actually save money and help the planet at the same time.
- I spoke to Mallory about the black sludge that is evident in our unfiltered water coming into our house. I would like to know if this is of concern to any other town folk. Thanks, Paul MacFarlane ([paulmacfarlane1@gmail.com](mailto:paulmacfarlane1@gmail.com))
- Water backs up and floods because of pipes. Unfiltered water, spray out and black slime/sludge for unfiltered water.
- Housing at Olivia Hall or at nearby buildings is not a good idea. Those children need to be protected. No one knows the type of people that will move in there.
- Perhaps it would be better to start with the basics – In 20 years the largest employer will be gone is the town going to be residential. The housing has to be maintained or the income level of those that wish to live here will drop. There are few employment opportunities for professionals. Does the town become a desirable place for commuters, schools, life style, security, all things a population would want to consider.
- What’s missing? – Housing people express the fear they have about town development. In the town large enough to expand
- Small shops in town that promote our wonderful variety of craftsman and heritage. Clean up creek (rock) down to girl’s ball field.
- I would like to see development that would increase tourism to our town more quality small retail shops – an historic site or museum open to the public, walking biking, dog rails. And more rock to Harre Branch Creek down to girls’ softball diamond.
- New business brings in to the community – need community by the sidewalks, signage
- Slabs in Oldenburg new updates, creeks need widened and stone, sewers need updated
- Sewer need updating, sidewalks, Slab – creek on Washington Street
- I would like to see our town make an effort to encourage more demographic diversity in our population.

# Public Workshop Summary

- Please make energy efficiency renewable energy part of the comprehensive field.
- Utilities and Broadband – Smart meters are not good. I have had WiFi caused health issues. – no one in the neighborhood wants anything to do with one another.
- Need kindness and genuine concern for each other.
- Consider a town bypass – lots of traffic comes in on 229 from the north turns on Washington (right), then left on water to head out of town on St. Mary's or Sawmill Rd.
- I would like services attention to be put to the use of the convent buildings when the sisters no longer live there. As to this new partnership with the sisters own planning. Also local food grown sustainably would be needed. Take a look at how the town could assist Michael Farm and its development.

## 4. Should new development be encouraged in Oldenburg?

- Yes – 27
- No – 4
- Housing – 19
- Commercial Retail – 9
- Parks/Preservation – 26
- Community Spaces – 11
- Industrial – 0



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# Public Workshop Summary

## 5. If you had \$500 to invest in Town improvements what would you spend it on?

- Historic Preservation - \$4,800 (48 stickers)
- Landscaping - \$600 (6 stickers)
- Off-Street Trails - \$2900 (29 stickers)
- Sidewalks - \$3200 (32 stickers)
- Community Events - \$1700 (17 stickers)
- Bike Lanes - \$600 (6 stickers)
- Economic Development - \$2,600 (26 stickers)
- Housing - \$1,600 (16 stickers)
- Parks and Recreation - \$1,900 (19 stickers)
- Utilities/Broadband - \$1,400 (14 stickers)
- Road Improvements - \$500 (5 stickers)
- Employment Opportunities \$800 (8 stickers)

### Post-it notes:

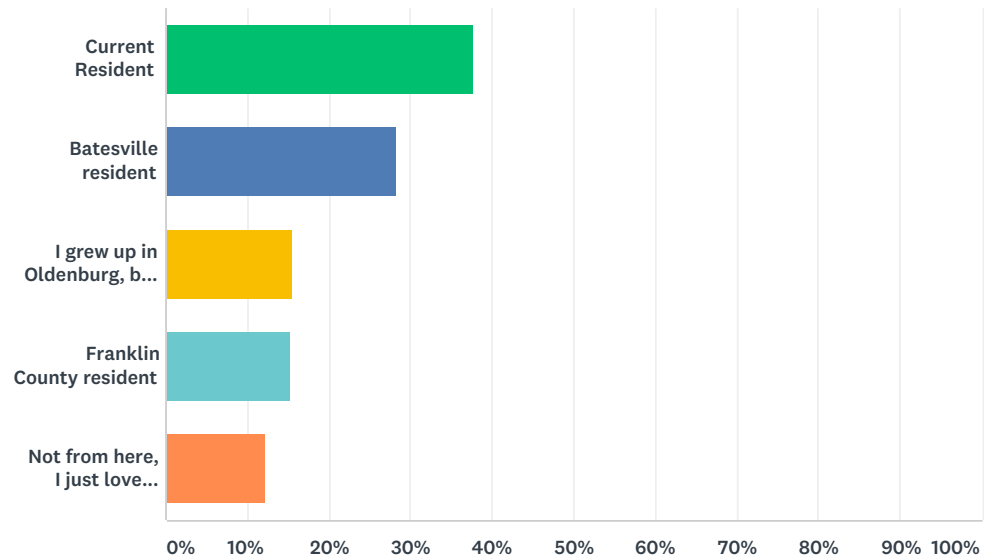
- Education - \$200 (2 stickers)
- Tourism - \$500 (5 stickers)
- Bank - \$400 (4 stickers)
- Renewable Energy - \$2,900 (29 stickers)
- Flooding - \$100 (1 sticker)
- Oldenburg Pipes - \$1,200 (12 stickers)

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

### Q1 What is your relationship to Oldenburg?

Answered: 612    Skipped: 2



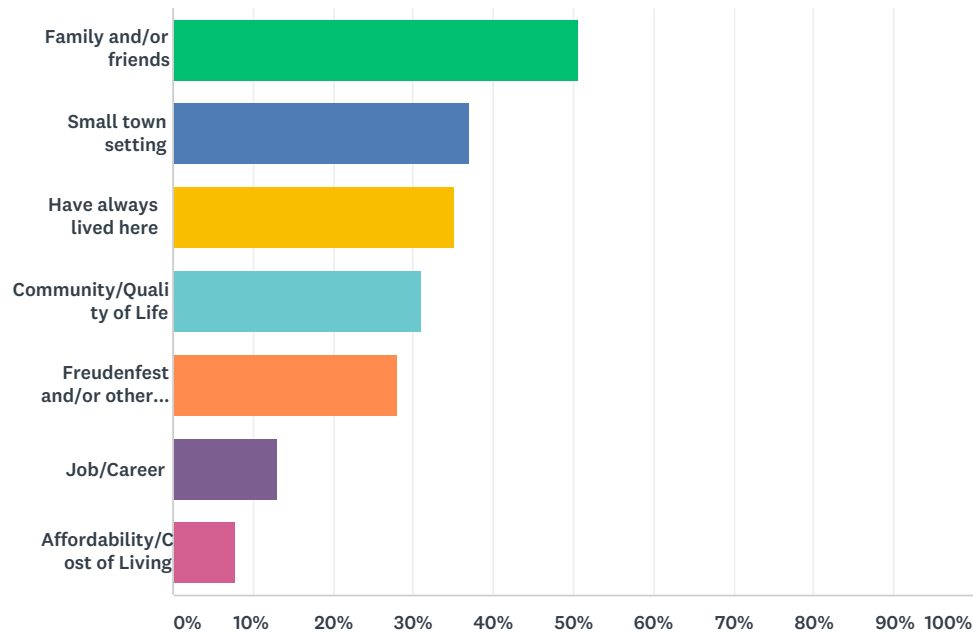
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Current Resident	37.75%	231
Batesville resident	28.27%	173
I grew up in Oldenburg, but live somewhere else	15.52%	95
Franklin County resident	15.20%	93
Not from here, I just love Oldenburg!	12.09%	74
Total Respondents: 612		

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

### Q2 What first brought you to Oldenburg? (check all that apply)

Answered: 540 Skipped: 74



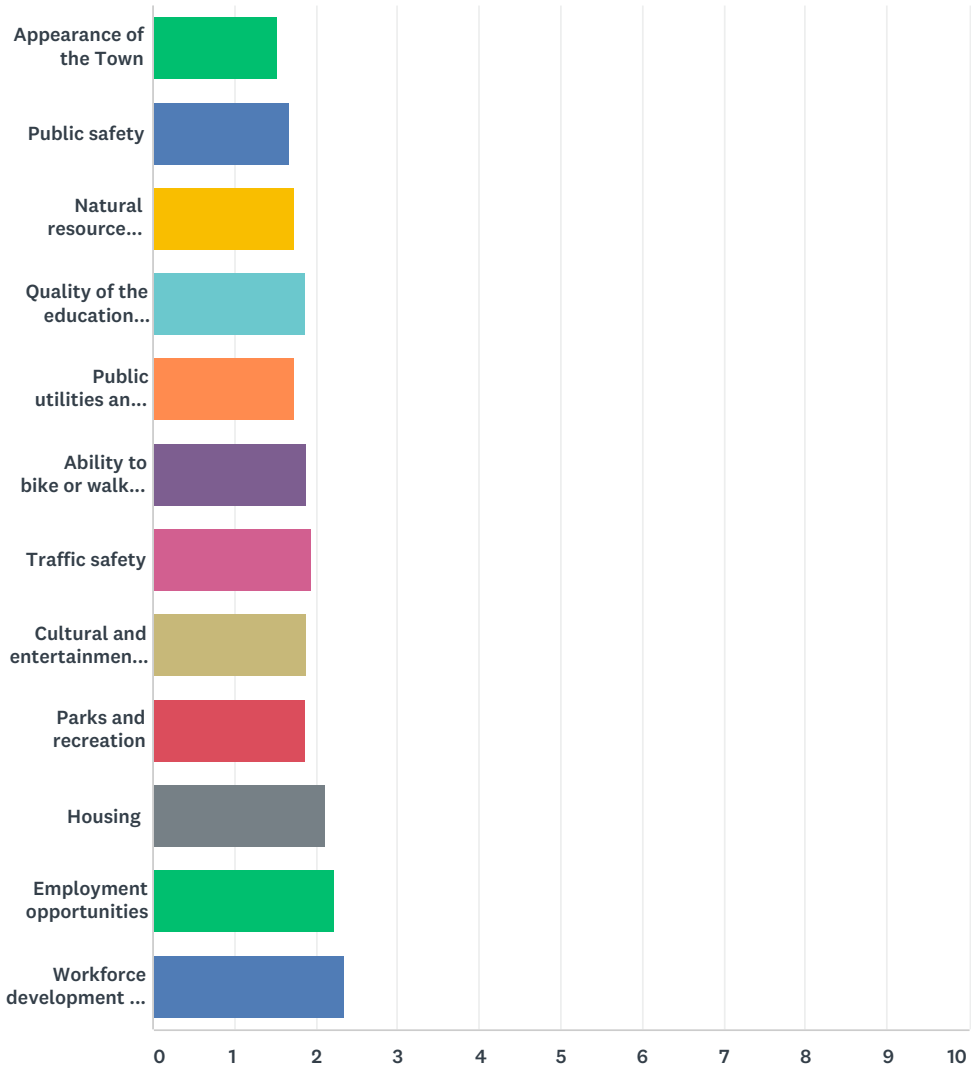
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Family and/or friends	50.56%	273
Small town setting	37.04%	200
Have always lived here	35.19%	190
Community/Quality of Life	30.93%	167
Freudenfest and/or other events	27.96%	151
Job/Career	12.96%	70
Affordability/Cost of Living	7.78%	42
Total Respondents: 540		

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

Q3 Below are some of the areas a comprehensive plan can influence. On a scale of “Very Important” to “Very Unimportant”, please indicate how important is it that the town takes measures to improve the following:

Answered: 611    Skipped: 3



	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	UNIMPORTANT	VERY UNIMPORTANT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Appearance of the Town	57.31% 349	35.63% 217	5.25% 32	1.31% 8	0.49% 3	609	1.52
Public safety	49.92% 303	34.76% 211	13.01% 79	1.98% 12	0.33% 2	607	1.68
Natural resource protection	45.07% 274	37.99% 231	15.13% 92	1.15% 7	0.66% 4	608	1.74

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

Public utilities and infrastructure	41.48% 253	44.59% 272	12.95% 79	0.82% 5	0.16% 1	610	1.74
Ability to bike or walk to work, shopping, schools, etc.	38.12% 231	39.93% 242	17.99% 109	2.64% 16	1.32% 8	606	1.89
Traffic safety	34.21% 207	42.31% 256	19.50% 118	3.14% 19	0.83% 5	605	1.94
Cultural and entertainment options	33.88% 206	47.37% 288	15.63% 95	2.30% 14	0.82% 5	608	1.89
Parks and recreation	29.98% 182	54.70% 332	14.00% 85	0.99% 6	0.33% 2	607	1.87
Housing	29.54% 179	38.12% 231	26.40% 160	3.80% 23	2.15% 13	606	2.11
Employment opportunities	25.00% 152	37.99% 231	29.28% 178	6.25% 38	1.48% 9	608	2.21
Workforce development and support	18.05% 109	39.24% 237	34.60% 209	6.29% 38	1.82% 11	604	2.35

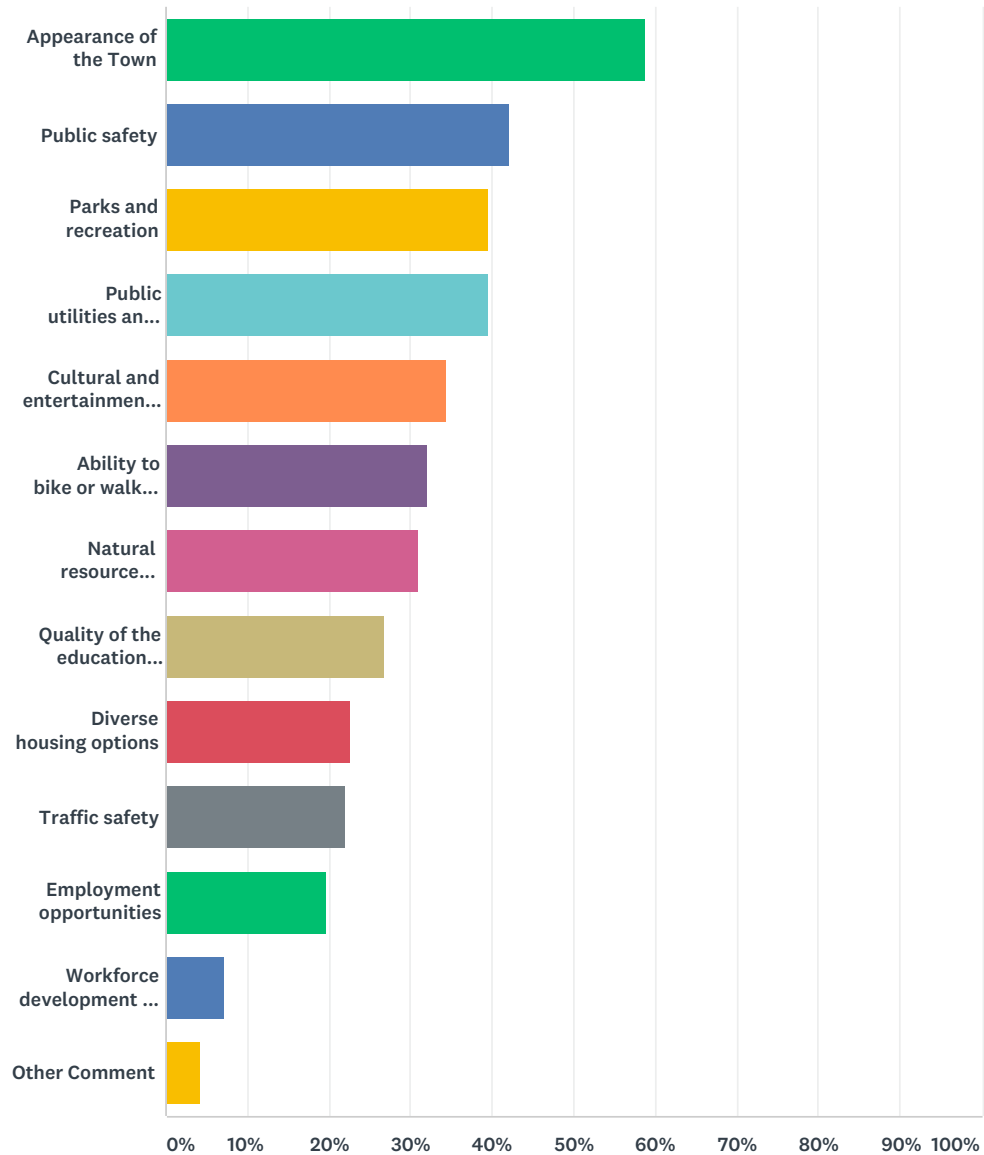


# Public Survey Summary

Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

Q4 Which four areas on the list in Question 3 do you feel are the MOST IMPORTANT to improve (choose 4 in any order)

Answered: 608 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Appearance of the Town	58.72%	357
Public safety	42.11%	256
Parks and recreation	39.47%	240
Public utilities and infrastructure	39.47%	240

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

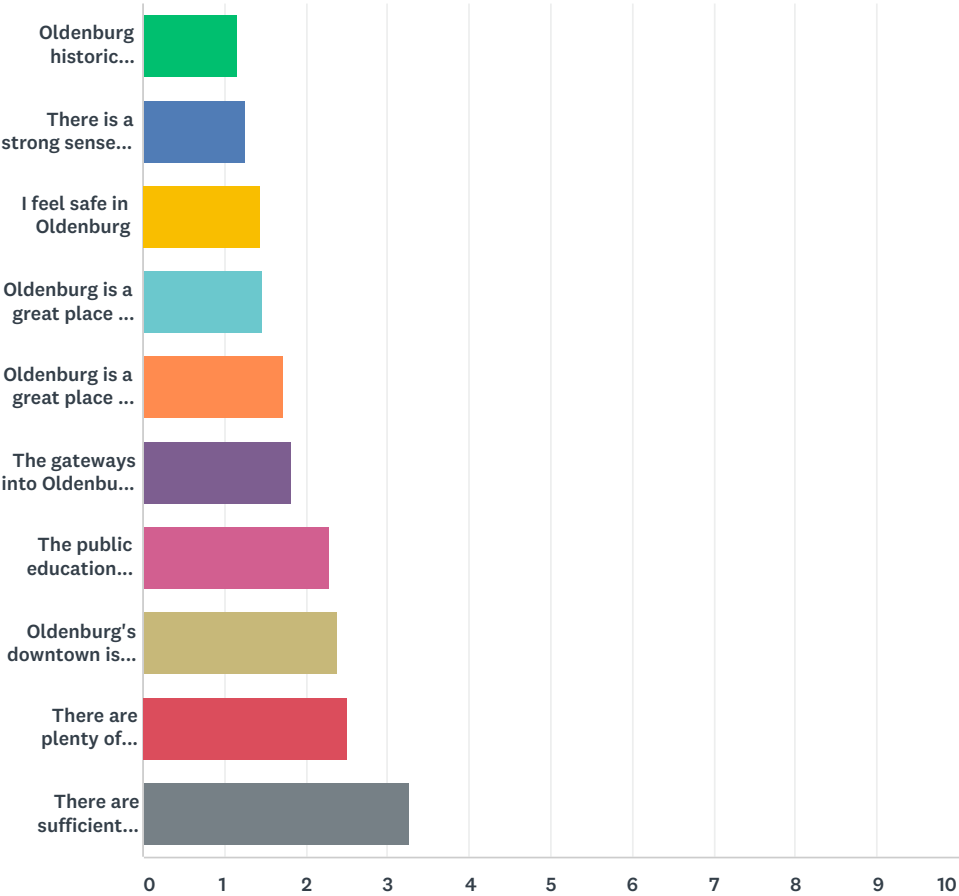
Ability to bike or walk to work, shopping, schools, etc.	31.91%	194
Natural resource protection	30.92%	188
Quality of the education system	26.81%	163
Diverse housing options	22.53%	137
Traffic safety	22.04%	134
Employment opportunities	19.57%	119
Workforce development and support	7.07%	43
Other Comment	4.28%	26
Total Respondents: 608		

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

Q5 Quality of Life: Please rate the level of agreement with the following quality of life statements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).

Answered: 612 Skipped: 2



	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Oldenburg historic character is a strong part of the community's identity	86.42% 528	11.95% 73	1.47% 9	0.00% 0	0.16% 1	611	1.16
There is a strong sense of community pride in Oldenburg	77.91% 476	19.97% 122	1.64% 10	0.33% 2	0.16% 1	611	1.25
I feel safe in Oldenburg	60.07% 367	36.17% 221	2.95% 18	0.49% 3	0.33% 2	611	1.45
Oldenburg is a great place to raise a family	60.23% 368	34.53% 211	4.75% 29	0.33% 2	0.16% 1	611	1.46
Oldenburg is a great place to retire	49.75% 303	31.86% 194	15.11% 92	2.79% 17	0.49% 3	609	1.72
The gateways into Oldenburg are attractive and welcoming visitors	35.80% 219	47.45% 290	14.45% 88	2.13% 13	0.16% 1	600	1.82

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

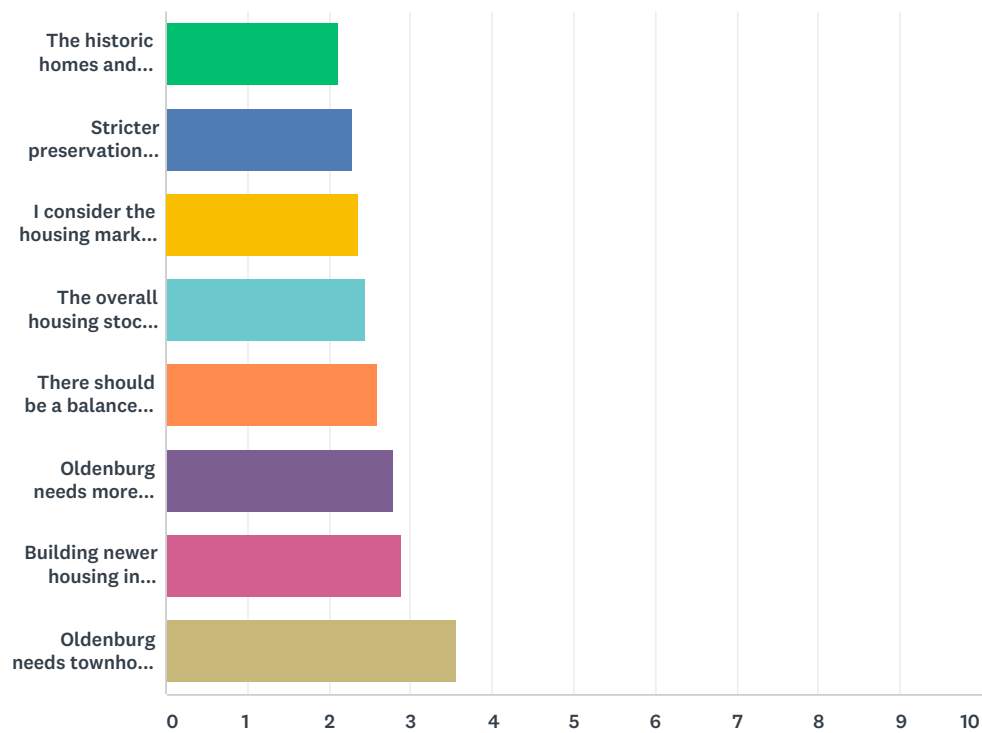
The public education system in Oldenburg/Franklin County meets the expectations of its residents	17.93% 109	46.05% 280	27.30% 166	7.73% 47	0.99% 6	608	2.28
Oldenburg's downtown is vibrant	14.78% 90	45.65% 278	27.09% 165	11.99% 73	0.49% 3	609	2.38
There are plenty of dining, shopping and entertainment options in Oldenburg	13.28% 81	43.11% 263	24.26% 148	17.87% 109	1.48% 9	610	2.51
There are sufficient activities for children under 18	3.44% 21	14.40% 88	39.44% 241	37.81% 231	4.91% 30	611	3.26

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

Q6 Housing: Please rate the level of agreement with the following housing statements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).

Answered: 610    Skipped: 4



	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
The historic homes and buildings in Oldenburg are well maintained and preserved	19.57% 119	55.43% 337	18.42% 112	6.58% 40	0.00% 0	608	2.12
Stricter preservation measures are needed to maintain Oldenburg's historic homes and buildings.	22.89% 138	35.49% 214	33.67% 203	6.80% 41	1.16% 7	603	2.28
I consider the housing market in Oldenburg affordable to me	11.00% 66	50.00% 300	31.50% 189	6.67% 40	0.83% 5	600	2.36
The overall housing stock is well maintained	7.00% 42	51.00% 306	34.00% 204	6.83% 41	1.17% 7	600	2.44
There should be a balance of housing types and prices in Oldenburg	12.96% 78	37.04% 223	32.72% 197	11.96% 72	5.32% 32	602	2.60
Oldenburg needs more living options for seniors	12.73% 77	24.79% 150	39.67% 240	16.53% 100	6.28% 38	605	2.79
Building newer housing in Oldenburg is important to growing the population base of the city	11.00% 66	28.67% 172	29.17% 175	23.67% 142	7.50% 45	600	2.88

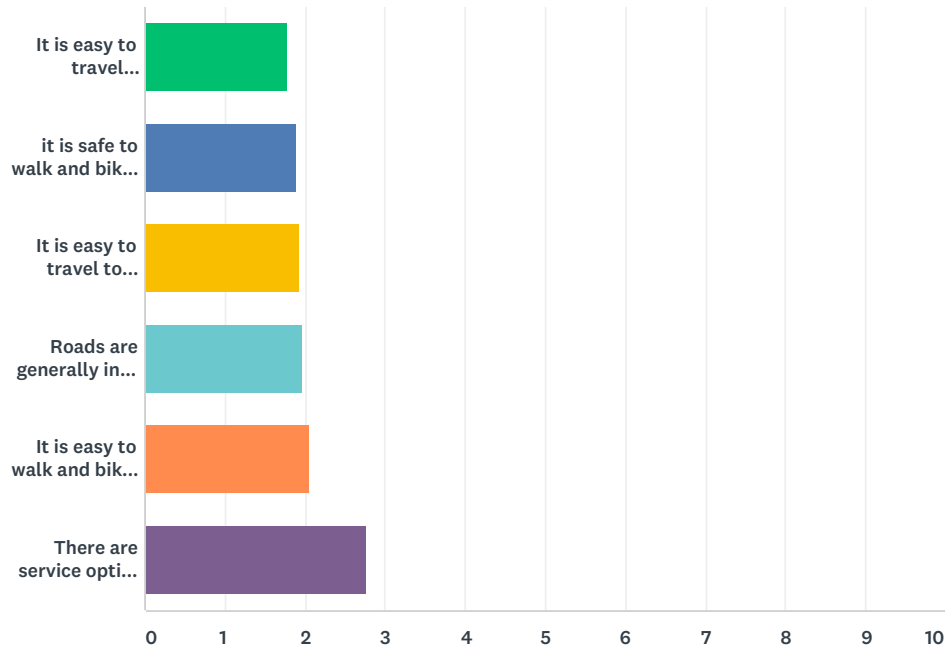


# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

**Q7 Utility and Transportation Infrastructure: Please rate the level of agreement with the following statements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).**

Answered: 609 Skipped: 5



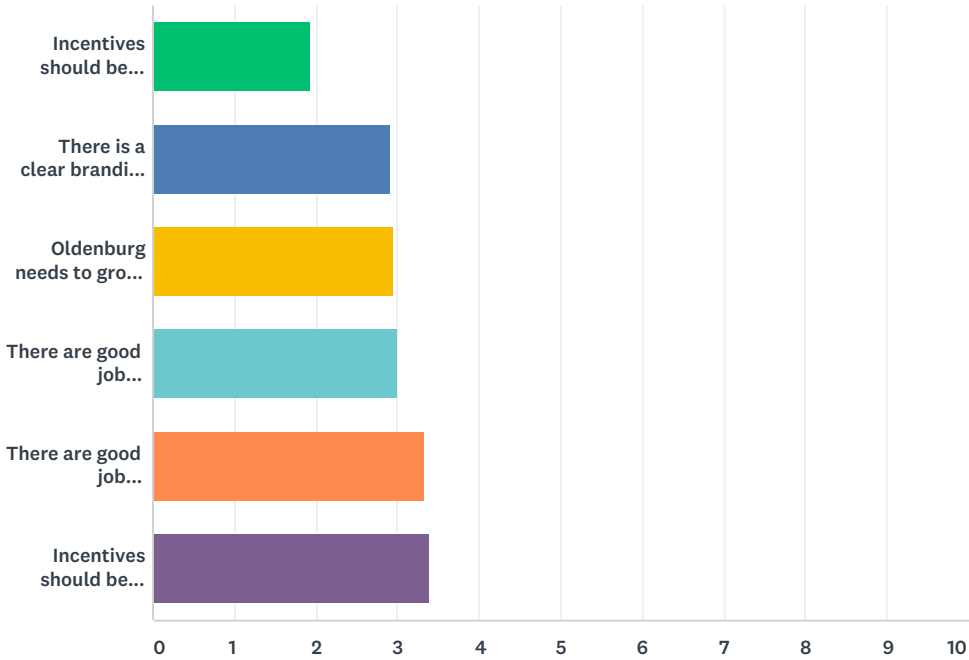
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
It is easy to travel throughout Oldenburg	31.40% 190	61.49% 372	5.62% 34	1.49% 9	0.00% 0	605	1.77
it is safe to walk and bike throughout Oldenburg	33.39% 203	50.16% 305	10.86% 66	5.10% 31	0.49% 3	608	1.89
It is easy to travel to destinations outside of Oldenburg	24.67% 150	62.83% 382	7.73% 47	4.11% 25	0.66% 4	608	1.93
Roads are generally in good condition	20.36% 124	65.68% 400	10.67% 65	3.12% 19	0.16% 1	609	1.97
It is easy to walk and bike throughout Oldenburg	26.44% 161	52.05% 317	11.66% 71	9.20% 56	0.66% 4	609	2.06
There are service options for high-speed internet	10.30% 62	27.08% 163	43.69% 263	12.96% 78	5.98% 36	602	2.77

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

Q8 Economic Development: Please rate the level of agreement with the following economic development statements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).

Answered: 606    Skipped: 8



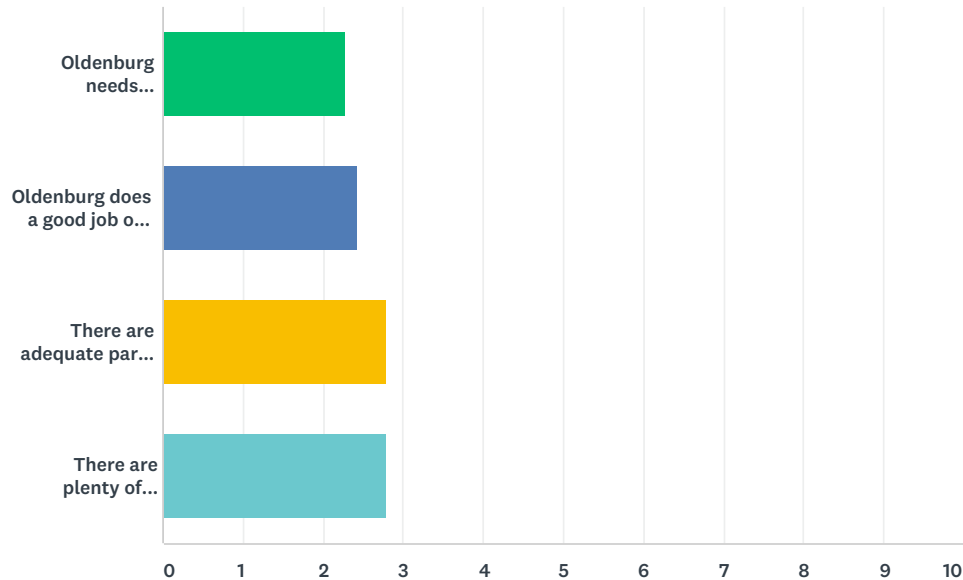
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Incentives should be offered to support small businesses	29.87% 181	52.81% 320	13.04% 79	2.81% 17	1.49% 9	606	1.93
There is a clear branding and marketing message for business attraction and retention	5.32% 32	23.26% 140	50.33% 303	18.27% 110	2.82% 17	602	2.90
Oldenburg needs to grow its population base for long-term sustainability	8.61% 52	28.81% 174	29.64% 179	25.17% 152	7.78% 47	604	2.95
There are good job opportunities in Franklin County	2.98% 18	23.84% 144	48.84% 295	20.36% 123	3.97% 24	604	2.99
There are good job opportunities in Oldenburg	1.49% 9	8.46% 51	49.59% 299	36.82% 222	3.65% 22	603	3.33
Incentives should be offered to attract large employers	4.49% 27	15.95% 96	32.06% 193	30.73% 185	16.78% 101	602	3.39

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

**Q9 Natural Resources and Recreation: Please rate the level of agreement with the following statements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).**

Answered: 609 Skipped: 5



	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Oldenburg needs additional bicycle and pedestrian trails and routes	19.11% 116	45.47% 276	23.56% 143	10.87% 66	0.99% 6	607	2.29
Oldenburg does a good job of protecting its natural resources	6.91% 42	49.51% 301	38.32% 233	5.10% 31	0.16% 1	608	2.42
There are adequate parks and recreation facilities in Oldenburg	4.93% 30	38.75% 236	30.71% 187	24.14% 147	1.48% 9	609	2.78
There are plenty of outdoor recreation opportunities in and around Oldenburg	5.93% 36	34.76% 211	34.76% 211	23.23% 141	1.32% 8	607	2.79

# Public Survey Summary

## Q10 What about Oldenburg do you MOST ENJOY?

setting housing heritage care keep presence good still Oldenburg Academy  
one another walk Michaela Farm historic buildings uniqueness village family oriented  
pride welcoming friendliness old buildings festivals school friendly people old

Freudenfest spires church visit live tradition historic feel home S

Frudenfest beautiful great love size charm know

atmosphere quaintness small look Oldenburg

appearance community always small town home

people food town environment small town feel

feel safe come friendly Pub history take quiet residents

small town atmosphere area safe architecture

restaurants overall German able walk German heritage

wonderful enjoy close sense community strong Culture unique family

Historic charm quaint values character well beauty together buildings shops safety  
friendliness residents historical little everyone Catholic everything maintained see peaceful



# Public Survey Summary

## Q11 What is missing in Oldenburg?

growth open see eat keep make missing nice way diverse use cultures outdoor  
outdoor recreation diversity something sure well things housing options live much area  
update trails think Additional visitors community also senior housing

Housing seniors entertainment go options Nothing think

businesses outside small events need public housing  
dining better many Oldenburg buildings town etc

Nothing attractions shops support park biking paths

activities apartments place variety people brewery

restaurants one kids bike walking trails opportunities space

small businesses time sidewalks school know new

job opportunities Better park great Tennis courts family food affordable housing  
children youth s walking trails really small shops lot run festivals little existing

Maybe fun bank things kids homes center Bike trails affordable



# Public Survey Summary

## Q12 Why do you think people move away from Oldenburg?

college feel big city life far school people want reason come back move away Oldenburg  
space maybe Better job opportunities move away shopping life market careers raise family  
people move away much move Want live go entertainment family business  
bigger economic opportunities home live bigger city know closer work need  
think people move people children better Job takes closer away Lack  
new enough community opportunities offer  
housing Batesville job opportunities Cost living  
Jobs different want don t know Oldenburg don t  
small options live young sure Probably town commute  
employment really city Lack housing leave housing options work  
Want live bigger big city usually employment opportunities s small town  
things think Aging better jobs Lack activities go college experience looking education  
area still change somewhere find Small town feel grow everyone older high  
Work opportunities many place move back

# Public Survey Summary

Q13 how would you hope to describe Oldenburg 10 years from now?

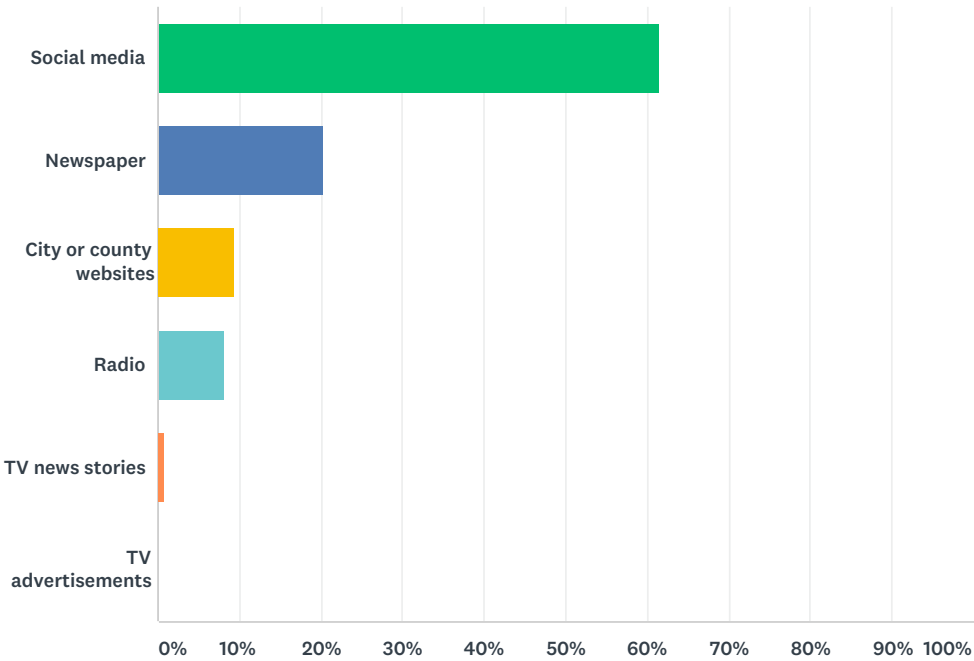
village OA nice also look similar now culture community safe will enjoy unique  
raise family German town place people buildings quiet German heritage  
values historical visitors businesses options live lots welcoming best  
people Still small good everyone hope housing today see place  
need thriving peaceful shops fun friendly ages now s  
still visit small town things quaint open town  
heritage community area small well vibrant strong  
historic residents charm traditions safe much beautiful  
history Oldenburg little keep cultural great place raise family family  
city growing go German opportunities homes activities preserved new  
feel old small businesses holding continues local Hopefully entertainment  
small town Still small  
clean roots feel restaurants town working school  
small town charm maintained want

# Public Survey Summary

Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

## Q14 How do you get information about events and activities happening around Oldenburg?

Answered: 508    Skipped: 106



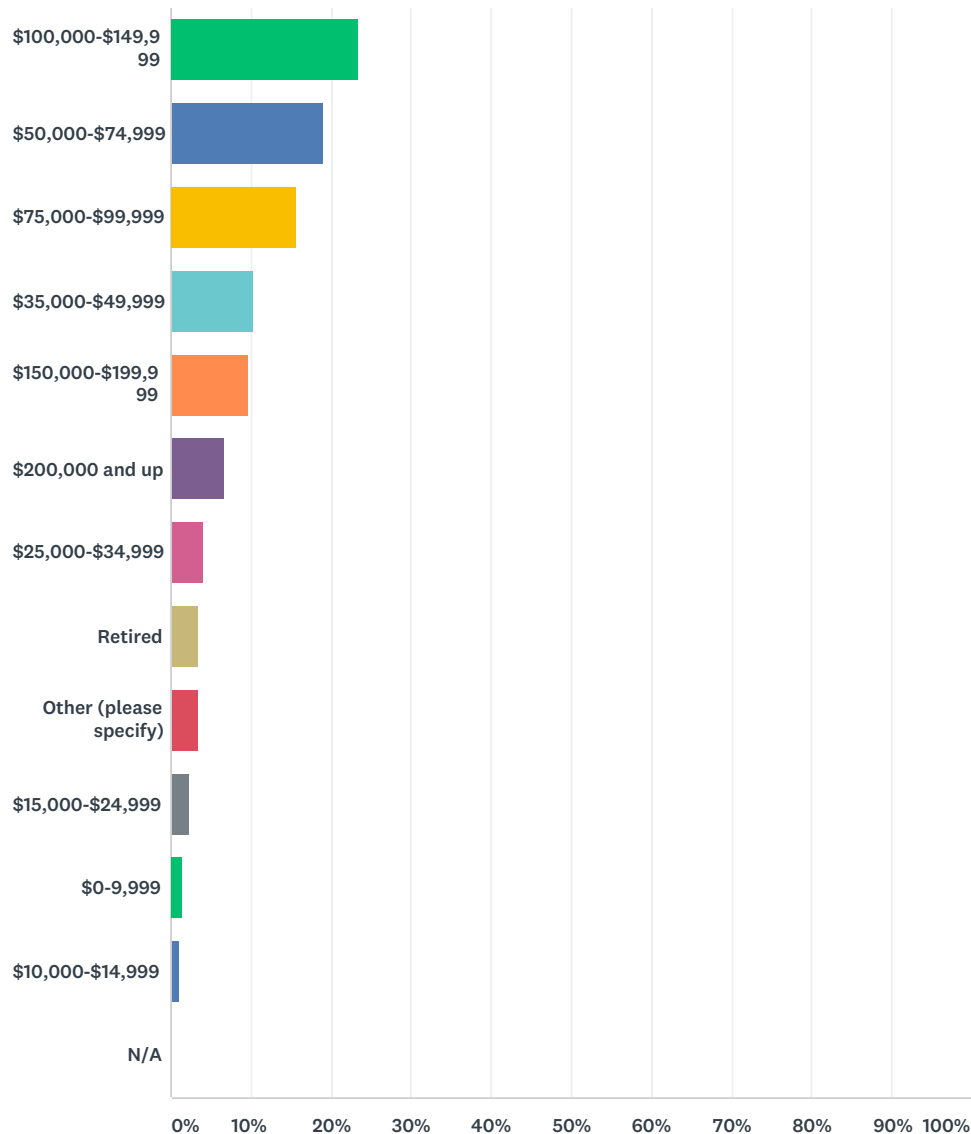
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Social media	61.42%	312
Newspaper	20.28%	103
City or county websites	9.45%	48
Radio	8.07%	41
TV news stories	0.79%	4
TV advertisements	0.00%	0
TOTAL		508

# Public Survey Summary

Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

## Q15 Which category below includes your approximate annual household income?

Answered: 588 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
\$100,000-\$149,999	23.47%	138
\$50,000-\$74,999	19.05%	112
\$75,000-\$99,999	15.65%	92
	10.20%	60

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

\$200,000 and up	6.63%	39
\$25,000-\$34,999	3.91%	23
Retired	3.40%	20
Other (please specify)	3.40%	20
\$15,000-\$24,999	2.21%	13
\$0-9,999	1.36%	8
\$10,000-\$14,999	1.02%	6
N/A	0.00%	0
TOTAL		588

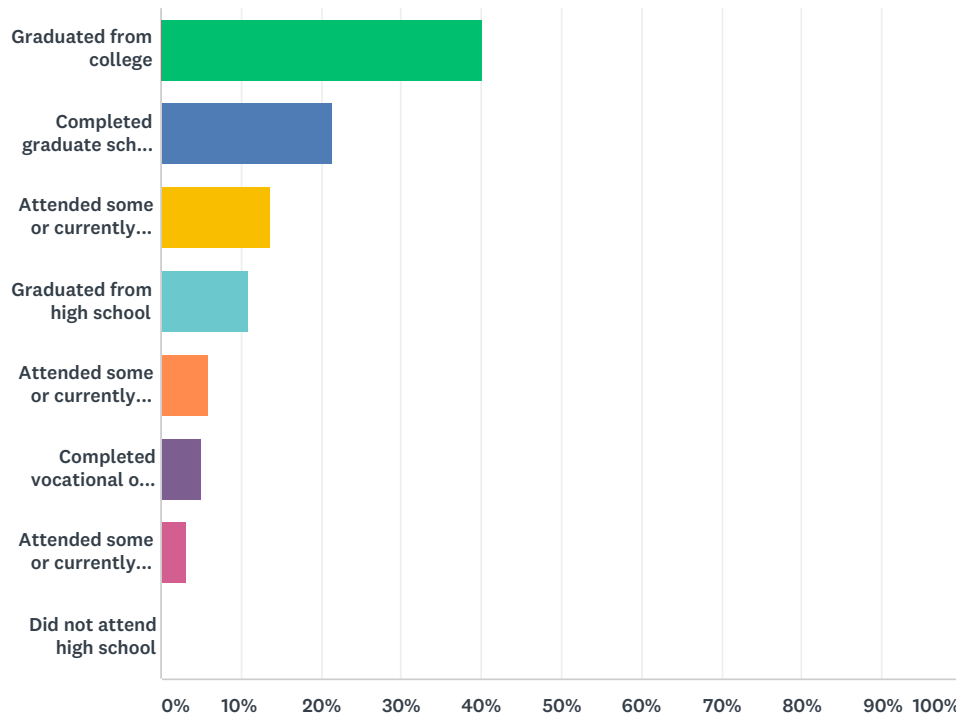


# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

### Q16 What is the highest education level you have completed?

Answered: 599 Skipped: 15



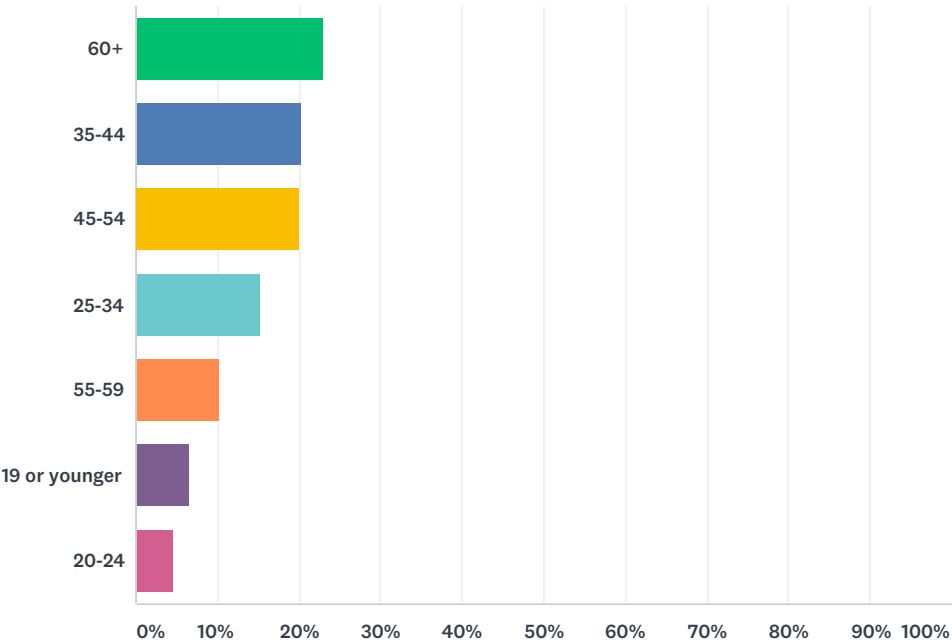
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Graduated from college	40.07%	240
Completed graduate school or beyond	21.37%	128
Attended some or currently enrolled in college	13.69%	82
Graduated from high school	10.85%	65
Attended some or currently enrolled in high school	5.84%	35
Completed vocational or technical training	5.01%	30
Attended some or currently enrolled in graduate school	3.17%	19
Did not attend high school	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>599</b>

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

### Q17 Which category below includes your age?

Answered: 599    Skipped: 15



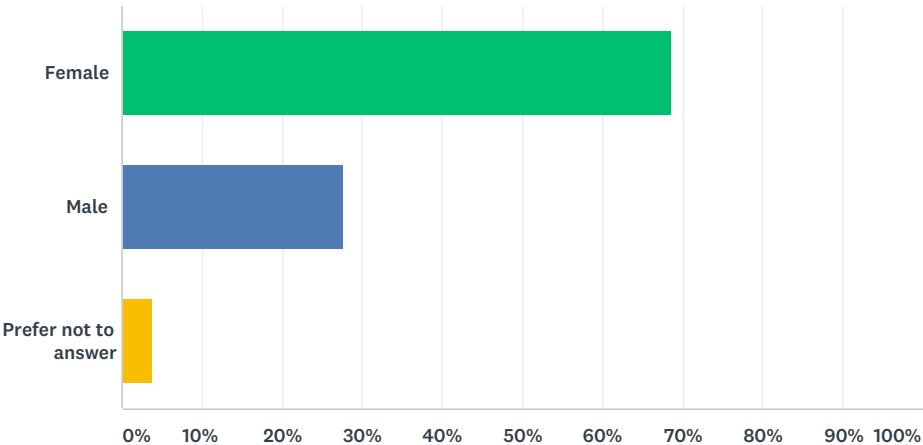
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
60+		23.04%	138
35-44		20.37%	122
45-54		20.03%	120
25-34		15.36%	92
55-59		10.18%	61
19 or younger		6.51%	39
20-24		4.51%	27
TOTAL			599

# Public Survey Summary

## Oldenburg Comprehensive Plan Survey

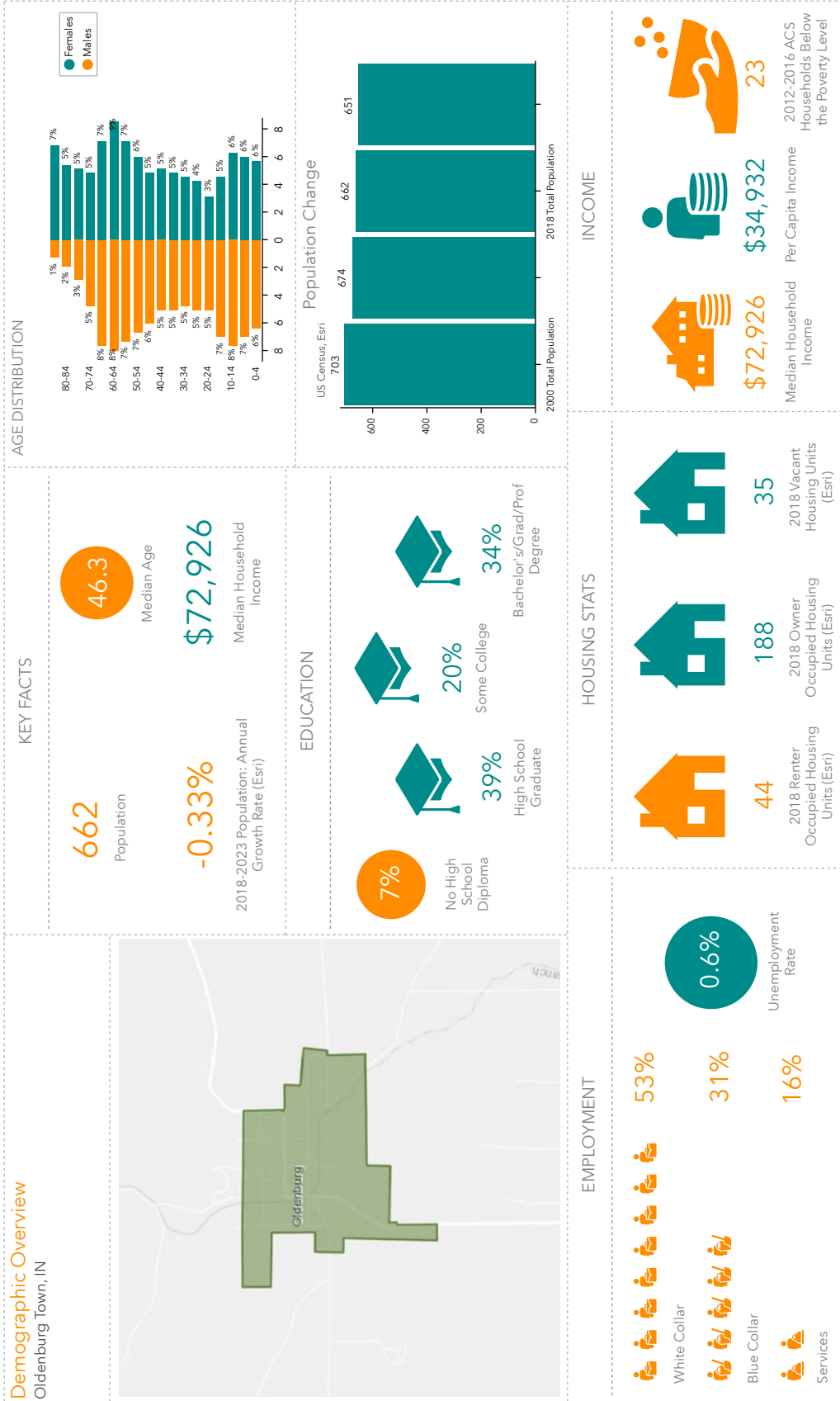
### Q18 What is your gender?

Answered: 599    Skipped: 15



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	68.61%	411
Male	27.55%	165
Prefer not to answer	3.84%	23
TOTAL		599

# Demographic Summary



Source: This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS), Esri, U.S. Census. The vintage of the data is 2000, 2010, 2012-2016, 2018, 2023.

# Demographic Summary





Figure A: Existing Land Use

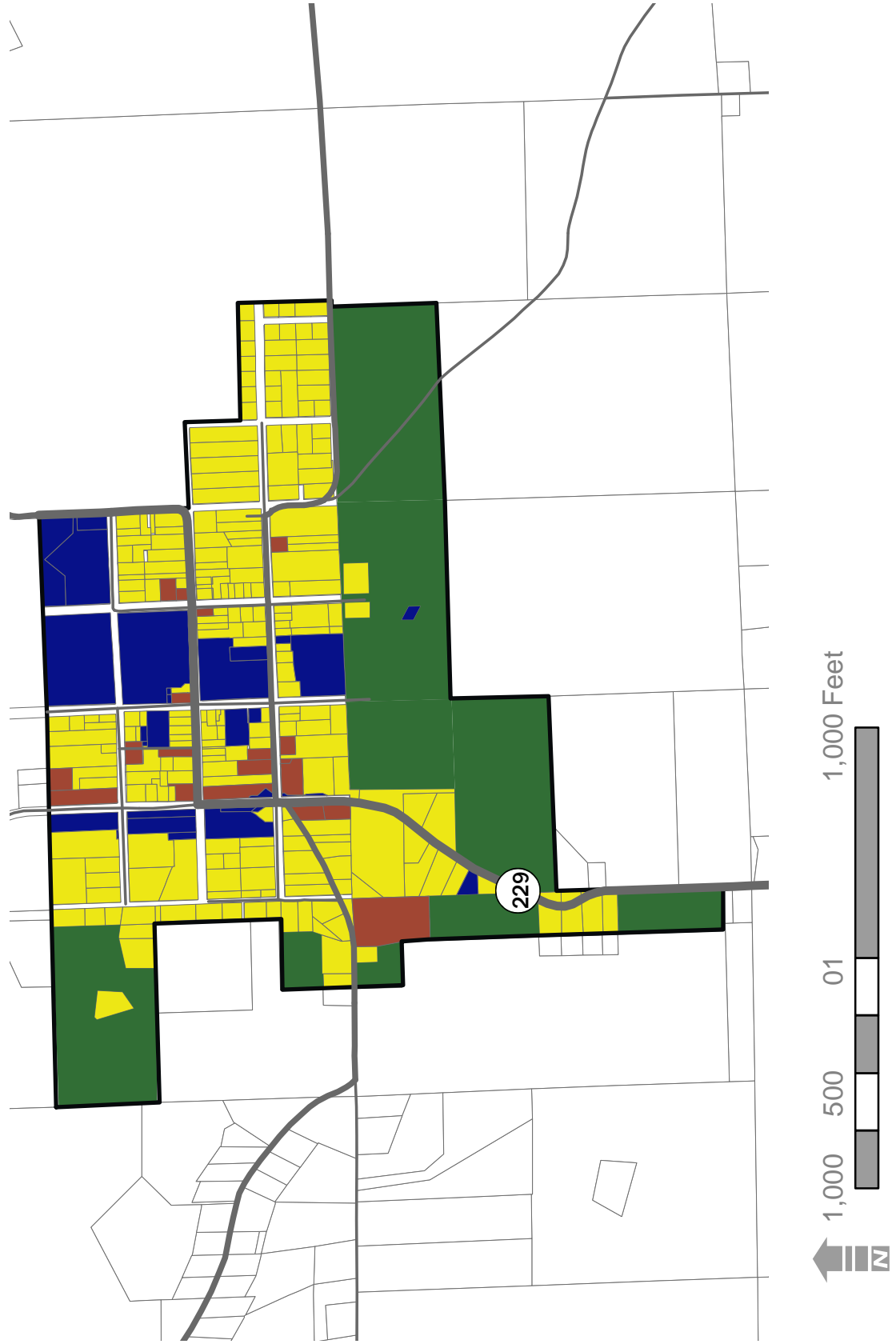
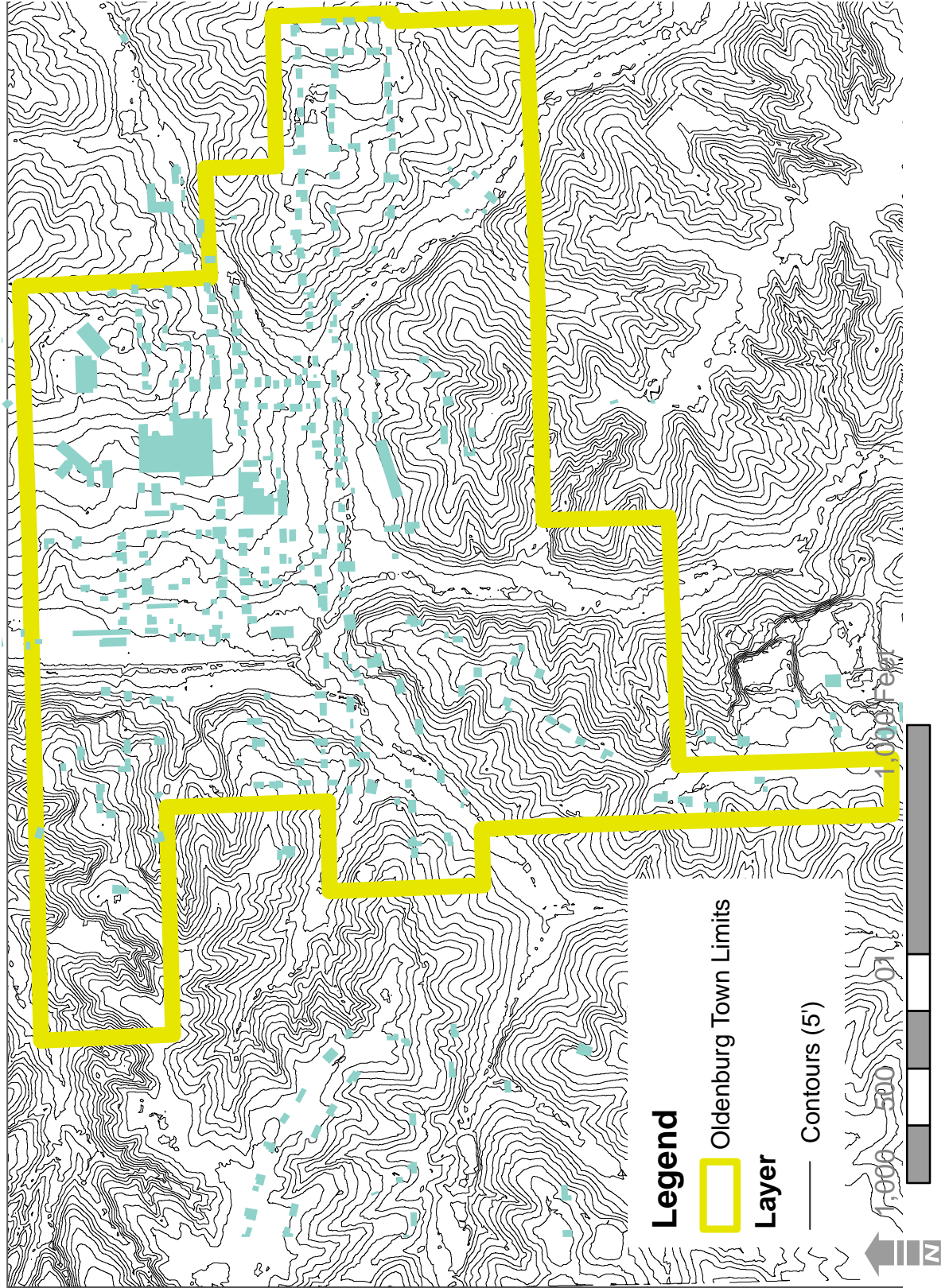
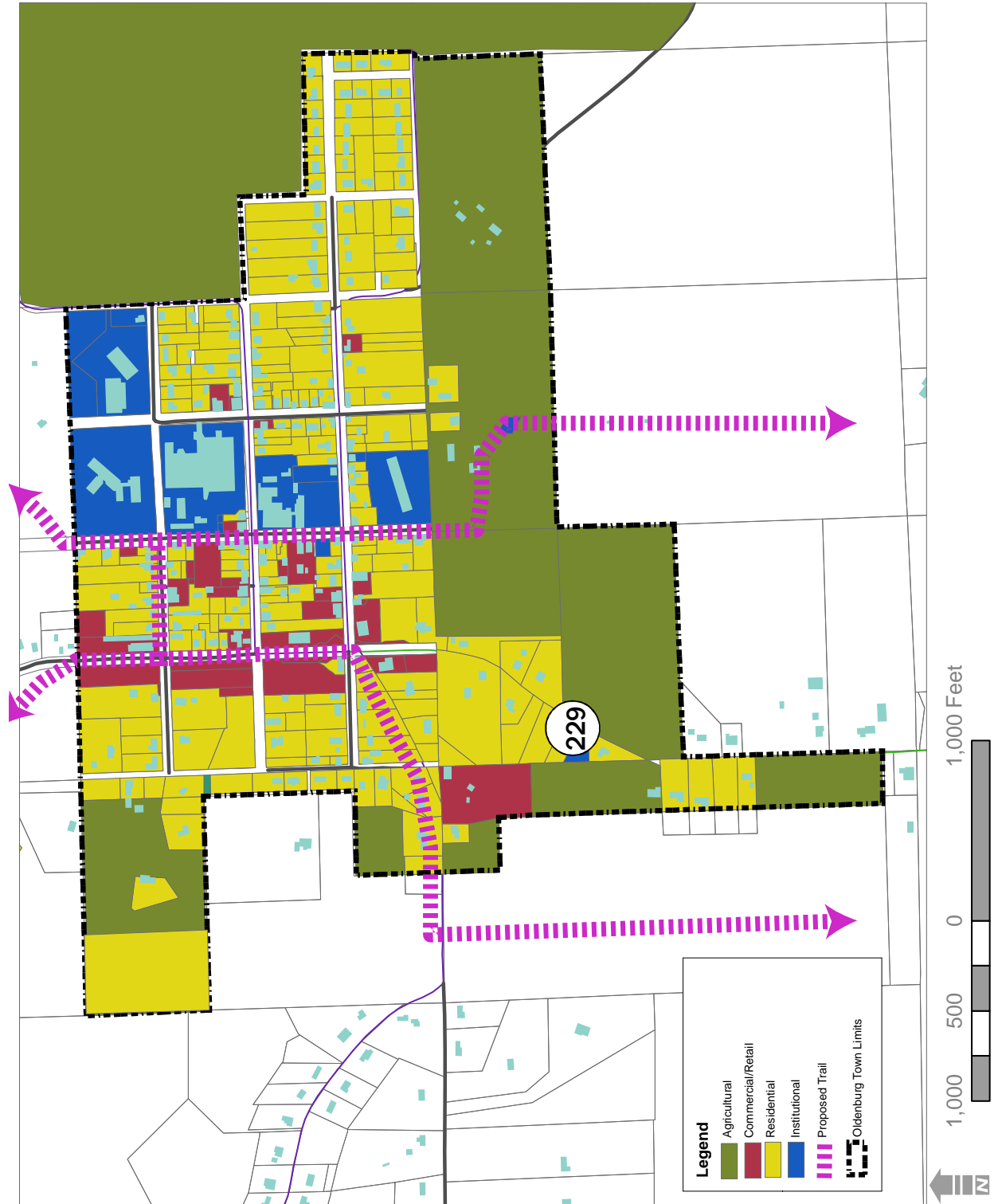


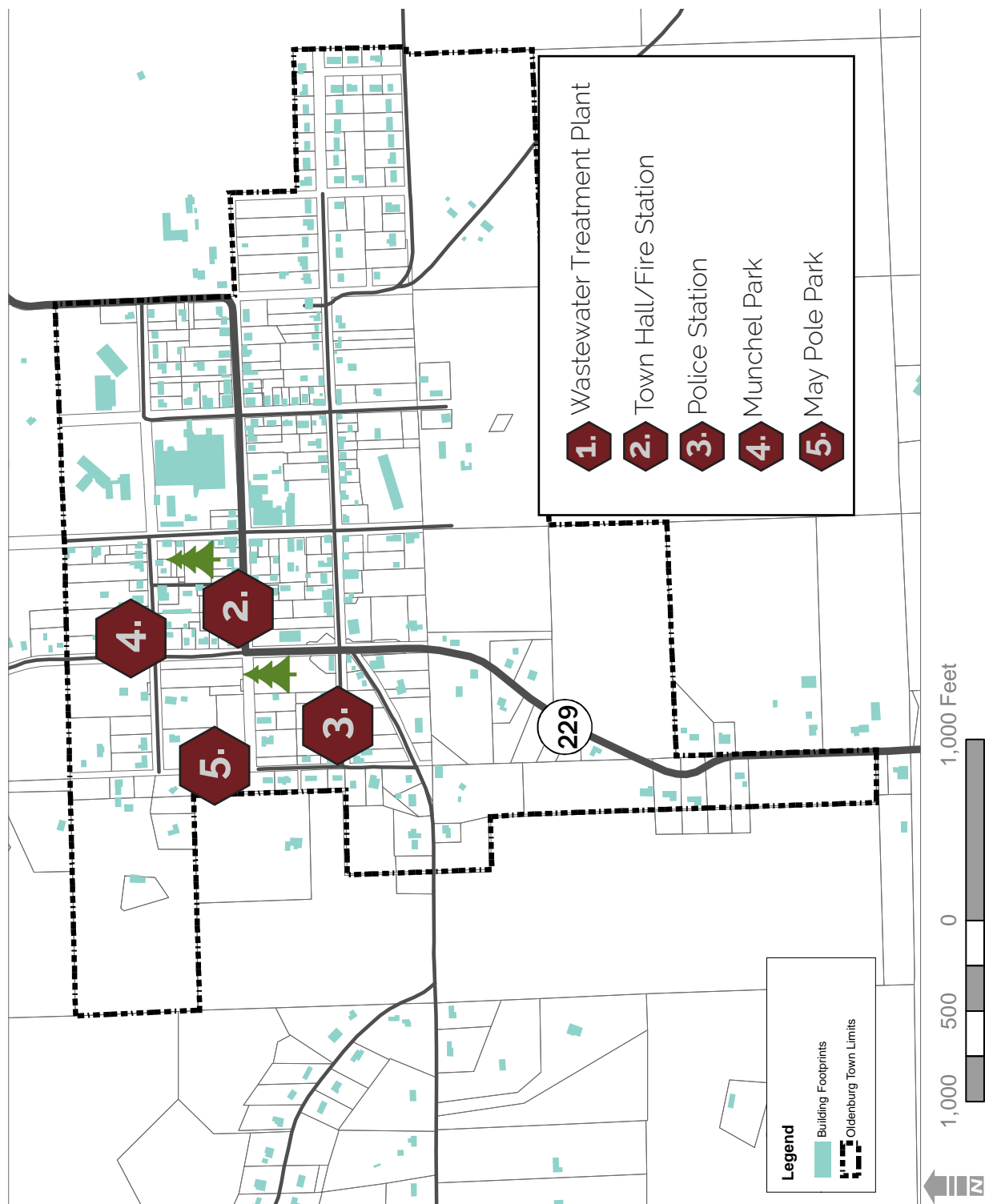
Figure B: Topography



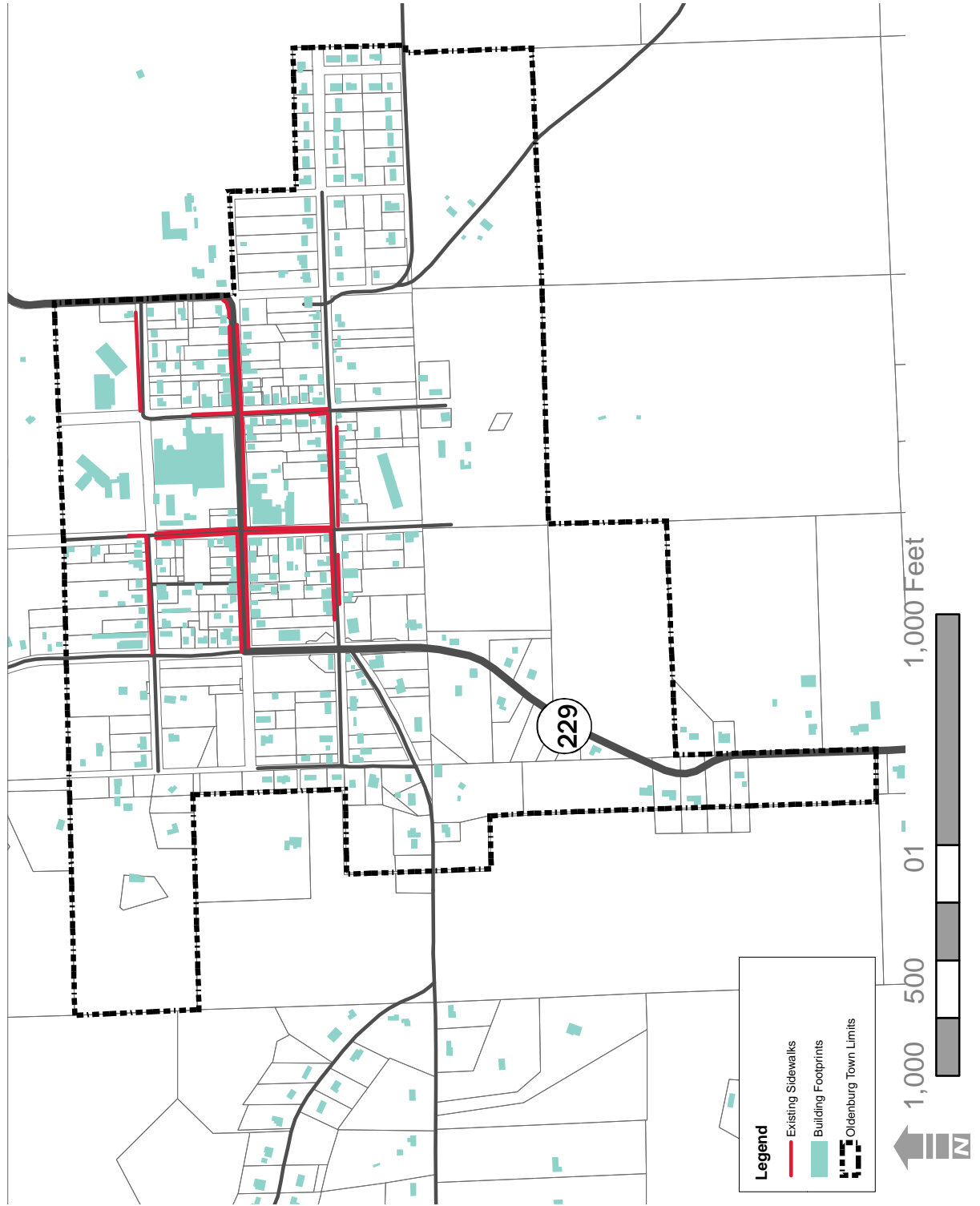
# Figure C: Future Land Use



# Figure D: Public Facilities in Oldenburg

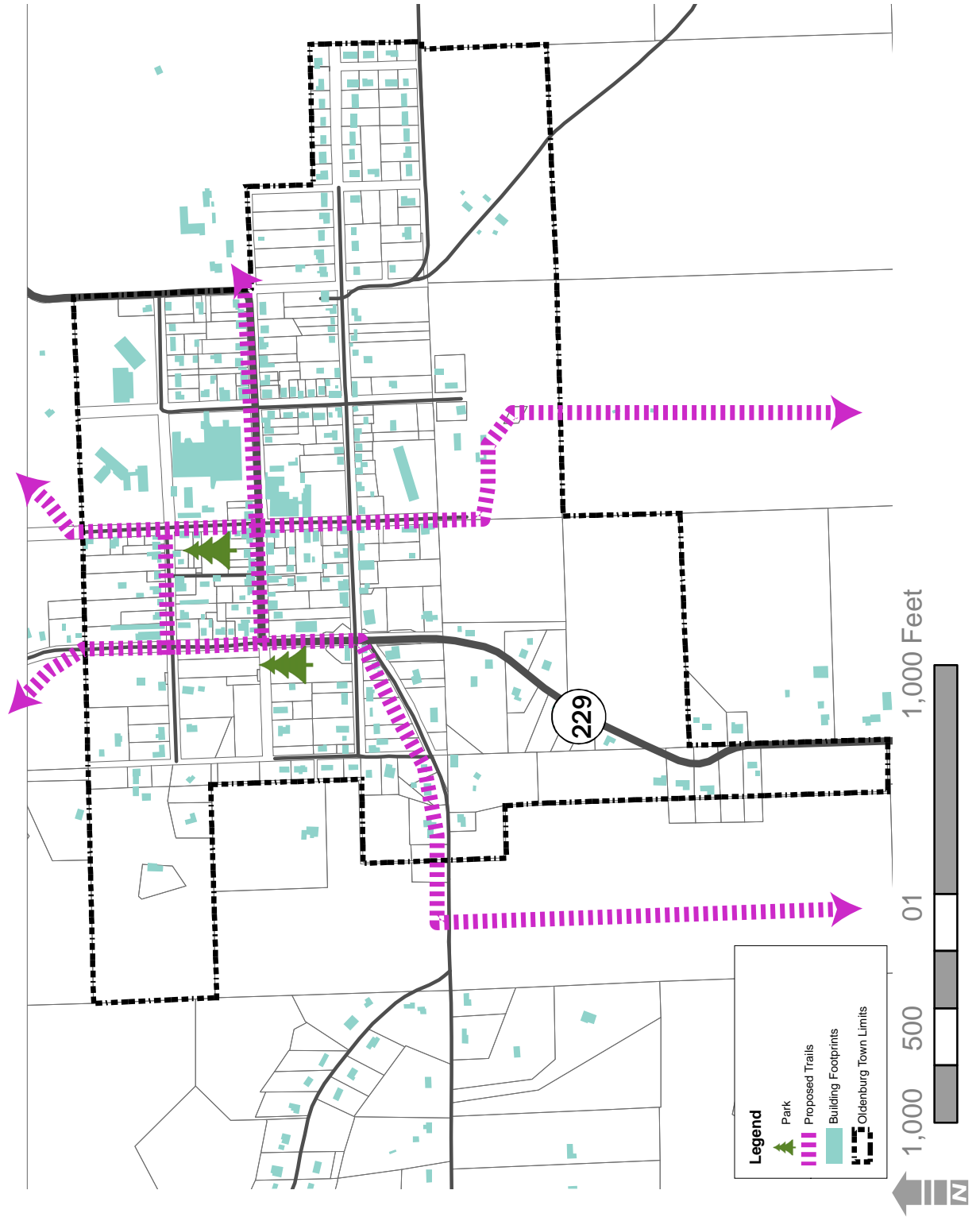


# Figure E: Existing Sidewalks

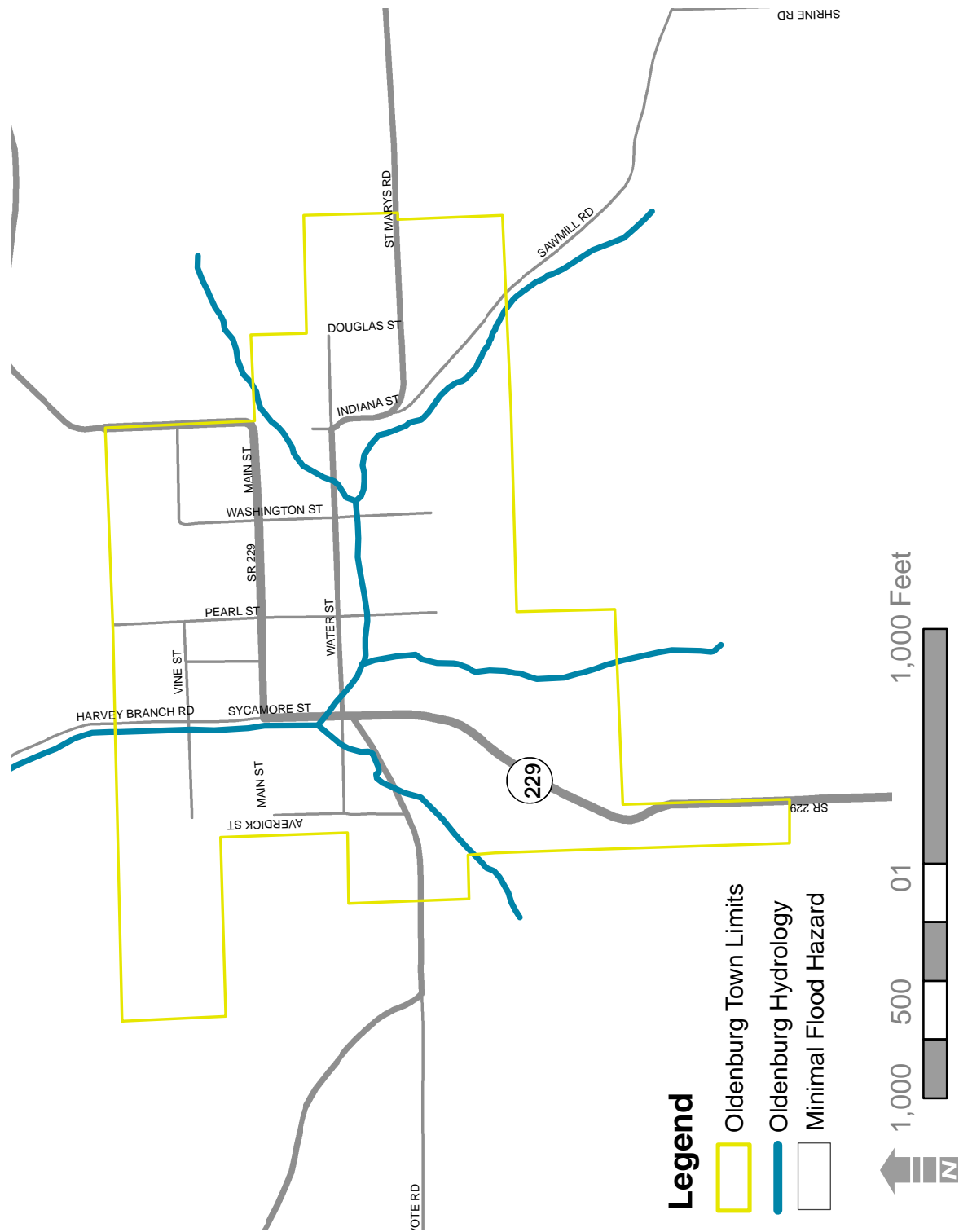




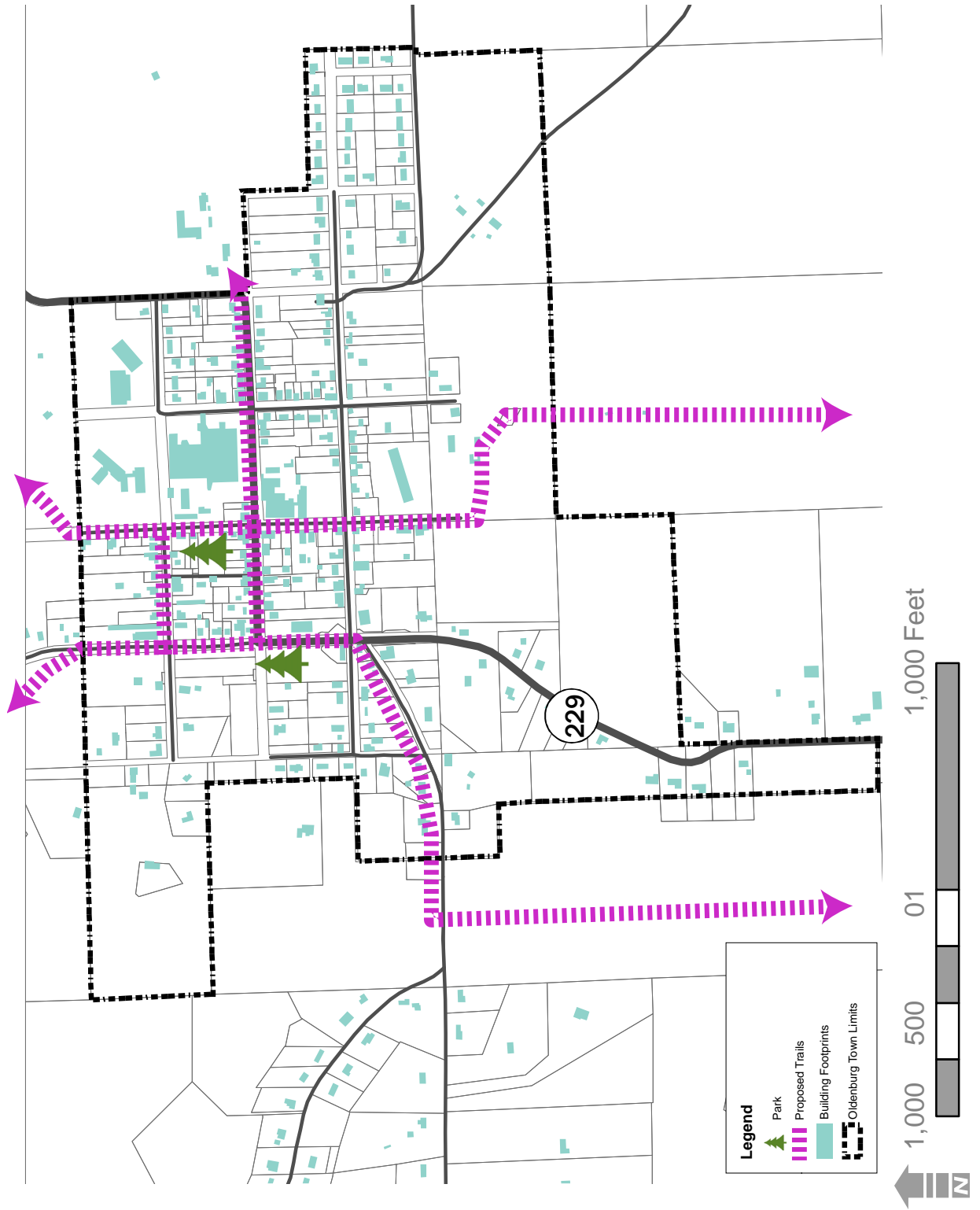
# Figure F: Proposed Trails



# Figure G: Natural Resources



# Figure H: Parks and Open Spaces



# Figure I: Historic District

