

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION





■ INTRODUCTION

The Campbell County Comprehensive Plan serves as a visionary policy document, that outlines long-term planning strategies for development through the year 2045. It establishes the fundamental policy framework necessary to guide future development and preserve significant resources within unincorporated Campbell County and the County's Partner Cities, which are; Crestview, Silver Grove, Southgate, Melbourne, and Woodlawn.

Designed to be a dynamic and evolving document, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a valuable reference for residents, businesses, and local officials to make informed decisions around development and business activity throughout the life of the plan.

This initial section of the Comprehensive Plan outlines the significance of the document, how to utilize the information within, the planning resources and materials that guided its development, and a summary of community participation in each aspect of the plan's creation. Consequently, this plan reflects the community's aspirations and provides a roadmap for coordinating future growth and services while preserving the unique characteristics of Campbell County.

IMPORTANCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a foundational guide for actions and decisions, in that it evaluates the merits of proposals over time. While it is impossible to foresee all future development scenarios, residents, property owners, planning commissions, city councils, and the Fiscal Court seek to address development opportunities that influence the quality of life in the County. This plan offers guidance for decision-making and establishes a framework for planning for and evaluating development proposals, capital improvements, infrastructure investments, policy changes, and other similar actions.

This plan is designed to address land use needs through 2045, supporting orderly and managed growth throughout the planning period. Each Partner City has adopted a growth policy for the land under their zoning authority through the comprehensive plan process. The County maintains a participatory and cooperative relationship with all its municipalities to guide the successful implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

Statutory Requirement

The comprehensive planning process is a fundamental requirement for a planning commission, as outlined in Chapter 100 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS). This update has been structured to meet these statutory requirements and specifically fulfills the mandates of KRS Chapter 100.197, which calls for the research and review of the Comprehensive Plan's elements, with amendments made as necessary, at least once every five years.

The contents of the Comprehensive Plan are intended to guide both public and private actions and decisions, aiding in the development of public and private property. Due to its conceptual nature, the future land use plan element is not meant to provide precise boundaries between proposed land uses. Instead, it offers land use recommendations for general areas, allowing flexibility to adapt to ongoing market changes and the evolving desires of the County's residents.

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used by residents and property owners, businesses and developers, and local officials to provide guidance on suitable land uses. This evaluation should take into consideration not only the future land use map but the plan in its entirety, including the goals and objectives for each plan element, policy areas, other elements, capital improvement needs, and implementation plans.

Plan Sections

This Comprehensive Plan is organized into six (6) sections.

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION:

This section provides information on the plan's purpose and use, jurisdictional boundaries, coordination efforts, and engagement processes.

SECTION 2 PLANNING CONTEXT:

This section provides context on the County including demographic data and existing conditions, which helped inform the goals for the area.

SECTION 3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES, VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

This section describes the overall vision for the County and the Partner Cities, as well as the guiding principles that provide direction in implementing the goals and objectives to meet the vision for the community. The goals and objectives are organized by the plan element topics.

SECTION 4 FUTURE LAND USE PLAN:

This section describes the framework for development in the County and the Partner Cities. Maps of designated future land uses along with definitions of those land uses are provided.

SECTION 5 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN:

This section includes the projects identified by community leaders as a result of engagement activities and needs identified during the existing conditions review.

SECTION 6 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

This section describes the future steps for implementation of the plan. Due to the frequent updates to the Implementation Plan necessitated due to budgets, work plan priorities, staff capacity, and external variables, the Implementation Action Plan is to be maintained as part of each annual budget cycle for the County and each Partner City.

Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

- ***Economic Development, Employment, and Education***
- ***Housing and Residential Development***
- ***Public Health and Safety***
- ***Cultural and Recreational Facilities***
- ***Public Infrastructure and Utilities***
- ***Interagency Cooperation***
- ***Agriculture and Conservation***
- ***Land Use and Zoning***



Zoning Updates

The County's and the Partner Cities' zoning ordinances are used to regulate and guide development. Future updates to the zoning code should comply with the desired land uses described in this plan. The appropriateness of zoning map amendments with the plan is the first statutory test to be used to determine the appropriateness of proposed amendments. If a request is not in compliance with the Zoning Map, KRS provides two other criteria for consideration: 1) that the existing zoning classification given to the property is inappropriate and that the proposed classification is appropriate; and, 2) that there have been major changes of an economic, physical, or social nature

within the area involved which were not anticipated in the adopted Comprehensive Plan and which have substantially altered the basic character of such area.

In terms of the general nature of the Comprehensive Plan, several zoning classifications may be appropriate to implement the recommendations found in the plan. Should the existing zoning and the proposed zoning both implement these recommendations, it may be necessary to review the adjoining or other nearby areas to determine if the proposed zoning classification or the existing classification is most appropriate.

Users of the Plan

RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS: This plan documents the values and vision for the future of Campbell County; allowing residents and property owners to participate as informed and active contributors to the County's overall physical development and land use decisions that impact them directly.

BUSINESSES AND DEVELOPERS: The plan provides guidance on achieving the community's vision, allowing businesses and developers to grow, adapt, and implement their development and business plans effectively.

COUNTY STAFF: County staff will work with applicants and stakeholders to review development proposals and provide decision-makers with information on how these proposals align with the plan's intention, vision, and policies. They will also:

- Create and implement County initiatives, including code changes and process improvements, to advance the plan's goals and objectives.
- Collaborate with stakeholders on detailed plans and projects necessary to achieve the plan's goals.
- Monitor and report on the plan's implementation and success through measurable indicators and adapt this information as needed.

COUNTY LEADERS AND OFFICIALS: County leaders and officials will position the County for the future by establishing annual work plan priorities, developing partnerships, ensuring accountability of County departments, and making thoughtful and informed decisions in harmony with the plan's goals.

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**Southern Campbell
County needs to have
development of
business, industry,
restaurants along
with housing.**

PLANNING PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT

Throughout this update, public participation was encouraged through a variety of channels using a Four-Phase approach. Starting in September 2023, meetings were held with local officials and the public to help identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. This outreach included leadership interviews, surveys, focus group meetings, and visioning sessions. By early 2025 focus group meetings were held to review the plan element topics and guide the development of goals and objectives. In the fall of 2025, open houses were held to share the draft plan goals and in November of 2025, another survey was distributed to provide an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the draft plan.

The following is a summary of the public involvement process utilized as part of this update.



Website

Throughout the plan process the County maintained a website where interested parties could receive updates on the plan development including information about events and a link to the plan survey.

Roving Display

County staff utilized a Roving Display that was moved to various County buildings and events to promote the plan.





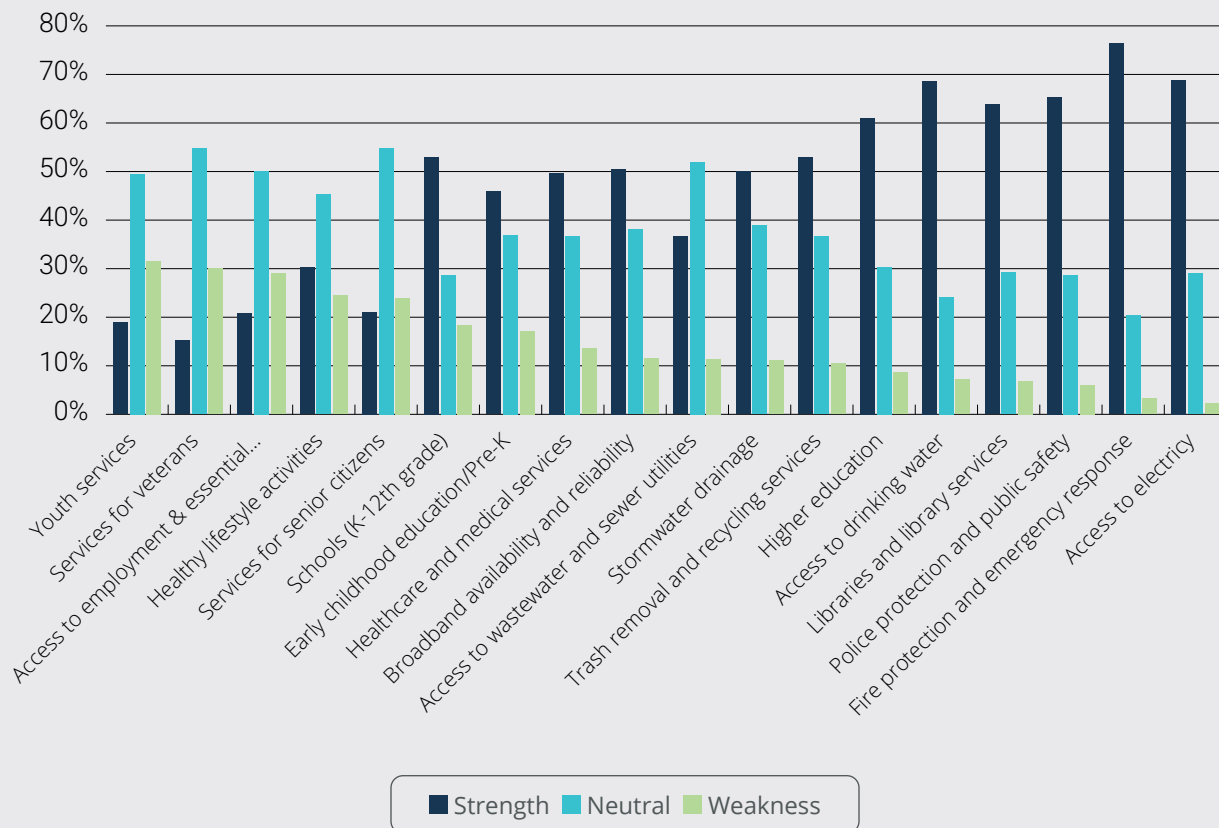
Community Survey

Last August and September, a county-wide survey was conducted and had approximately 800 respondents, out of which 350 provided open-ended responses. Respondents were asked to rate if they perceive certain services as a strength, weakness, or neutral asset of Campbell County.

Strengths and Weaknesses

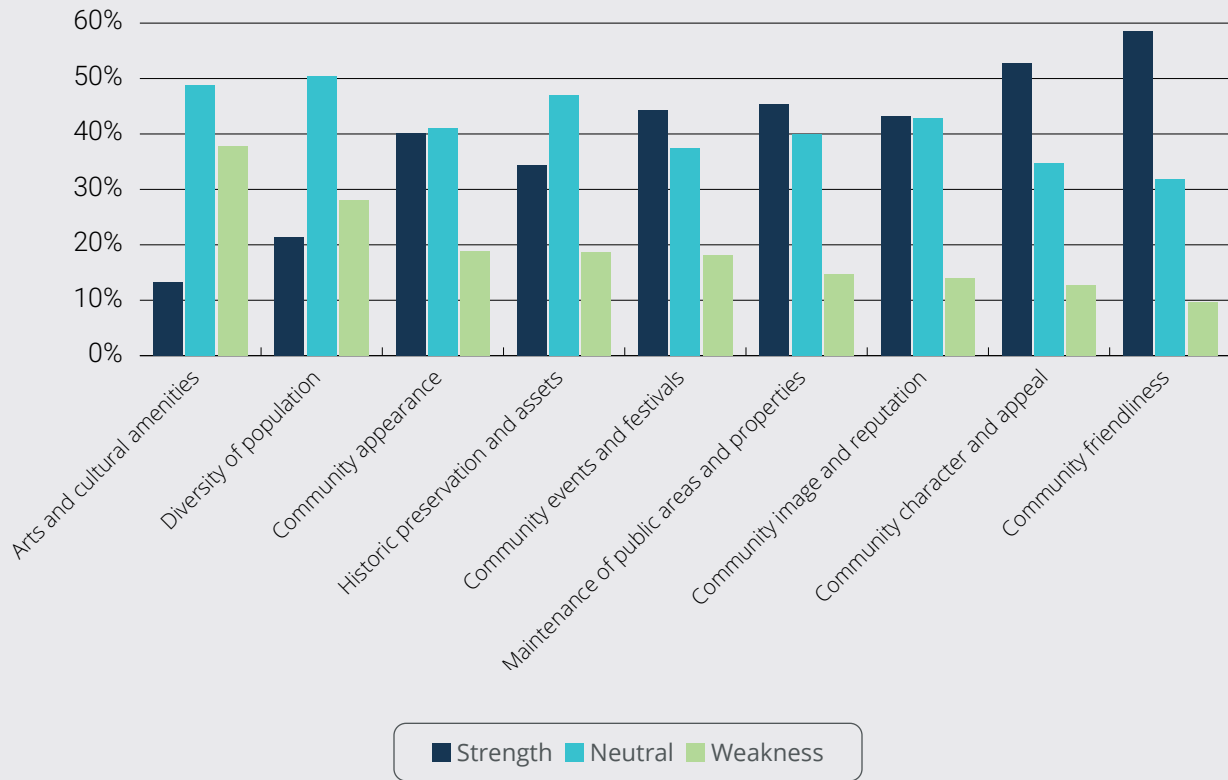
Fire and emergency response and access to electricity and water were most commonly seen as strengths of the community, whereas services for veterans, youth, essential services, and access to employment were all most frequently seen as weaknesses.

? Please rate each of the following as a strength or weakness as it relates to your perception as a resident of your community.



Additionally, respondents were tasked with identifying strengths and weaknesses in Campbell County's image and identity. Overall, Campbell County's friendliness and community character and appeal are its strengths, but arts, culture, and diversity are all viewed as weaknesses. Residents also expressed the desire to protect the community's historical heritage.

? When considering Campbell County's image and identity, please define each of the following as a strength or weakness within the County.



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Schools are important. Like to see more consolidation of services between cities and county and school districts while maintaining their own identities.

Agricultural Development, Conservation/Environmental Stewardship

The survey results highlight a strong sentiment among respondents to preserve the rural and agricultural character of Campbell County. Farmlands are highly valued, and there is a significant concern about urban sprawl and the loss of agricultural land. Respondents expressed a desire to maintain the county's rural, small-town feel and enhance access to natural resources through agritourism and environmental tourism.

? How would you say you agree with each of the following statements?

It is important that Campbell County preserves its rural character and small-town feel.

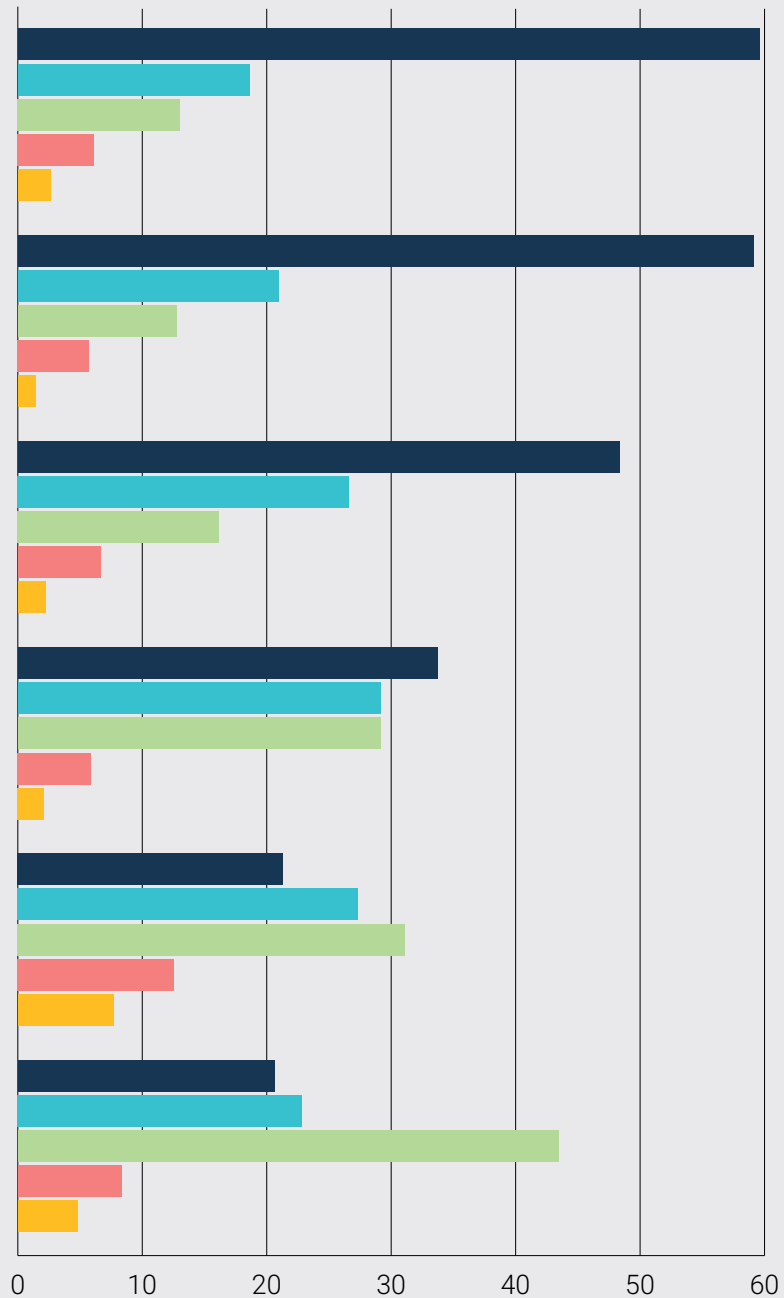
Campbell County should encourage the protection of existing agricultural land from future commercial or residential development outside of the urban service boundary.

Campbell County should preserve the right of the landowner to make choices for development.

Campbell County should prioritize agritourism as an important economic development strategy.

Campbell County should allow for special use agricultural purposes (for example: utility-scale solar farming).

Campbell County should increase the minimum zone size of 1-acre lots where new individual septic systems are being considered.



Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

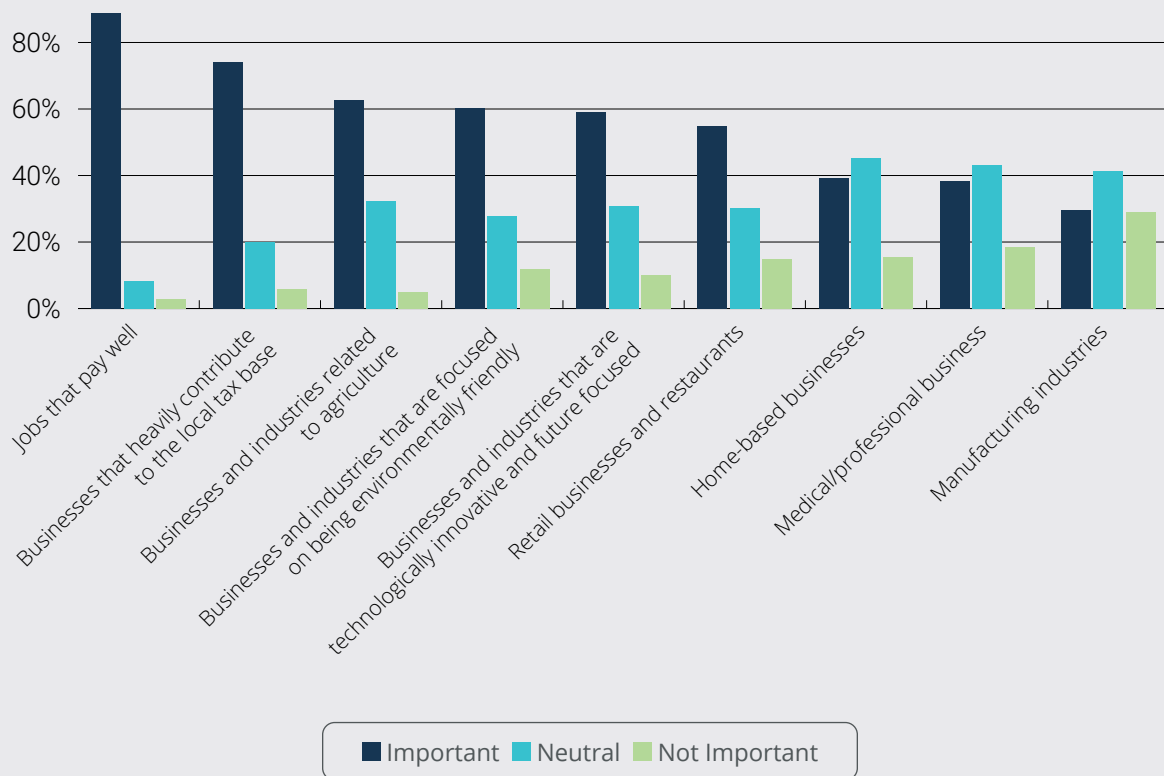
The opposition to urban sprawl includes perceived negative impacts of new subdivisions and commercial developments on the environment and the rural character of the county including the loss of trees, harm to wildlife, and increased traffic. Some respondents suggested infrastructure improvements, such as better transportation infrastructure and eco-friendly recreation, were needed.

Finally, there was strong support to preserve homeowners' rights to make decisions about the redevelopment of their property. Overall, the survey results reflect a strong desire to protect and enhance the rural and agricultural heritage of Campbell County while addressing environmental concerns and promoting sustainable development.

Economic Development and Employment

When asked about attracting jobs, businesses, and industries, respondents overwhelmingly emphasized the importance of well-paying jobs. Despite this, there was still a significant interest in retail businesses and restaurants, which, while beneficial, do not address the employment base issue. Discussions on manufacturing showed a neutral stance. Environmentally friendly and innovative businesses and industries were both labeled as important by more than 50% of respondents, suggesting the community's desire to stay modern when adding new jobs.

? How important do you think it is to attract the following types of jobs, businesses, or industries to Campbell County?



Regarding agriculture, 60% of respondents mentioned its importance, although the actual presence of full-time farmers in the county is minimal. Most farmers also have other jobs. The agricultural community is valued for contributing to the county's mix of urban and rural characteristics.

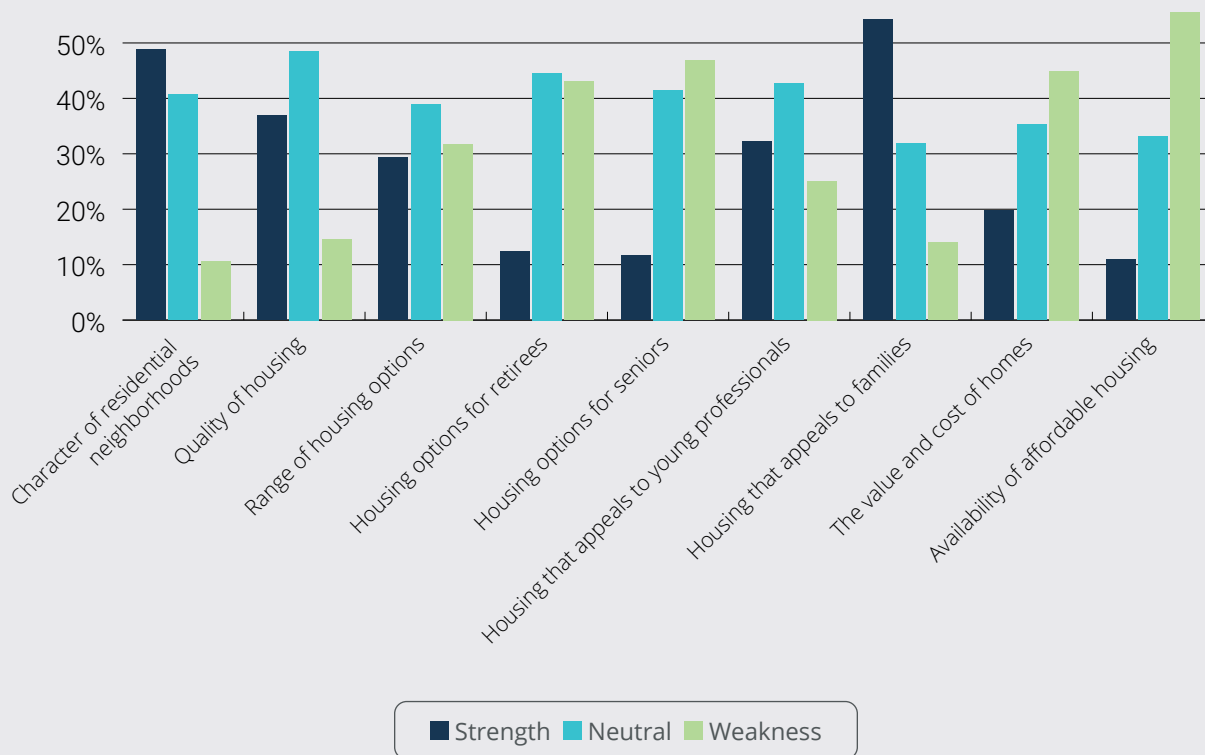
Education

A significant topic of discussion in the survey comments was Campbell County schools, particularly the demand for a new middle school. While this is under the jurisdiction of the Campbell County School Board, the feedback highlighted the community's interest in educational development.

Respondents also shared their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the community. Early childhood education and pre-K were seen as strengths, while youth services, access to employment, essential services, and services for seniors were identified as areas needing improvement. Higher education and K-12 schools were also noted as strong points valued by the community. Transportation emerged as a major concern, with many respondents mentioning the lengthy travel times for students commuting to and from school.

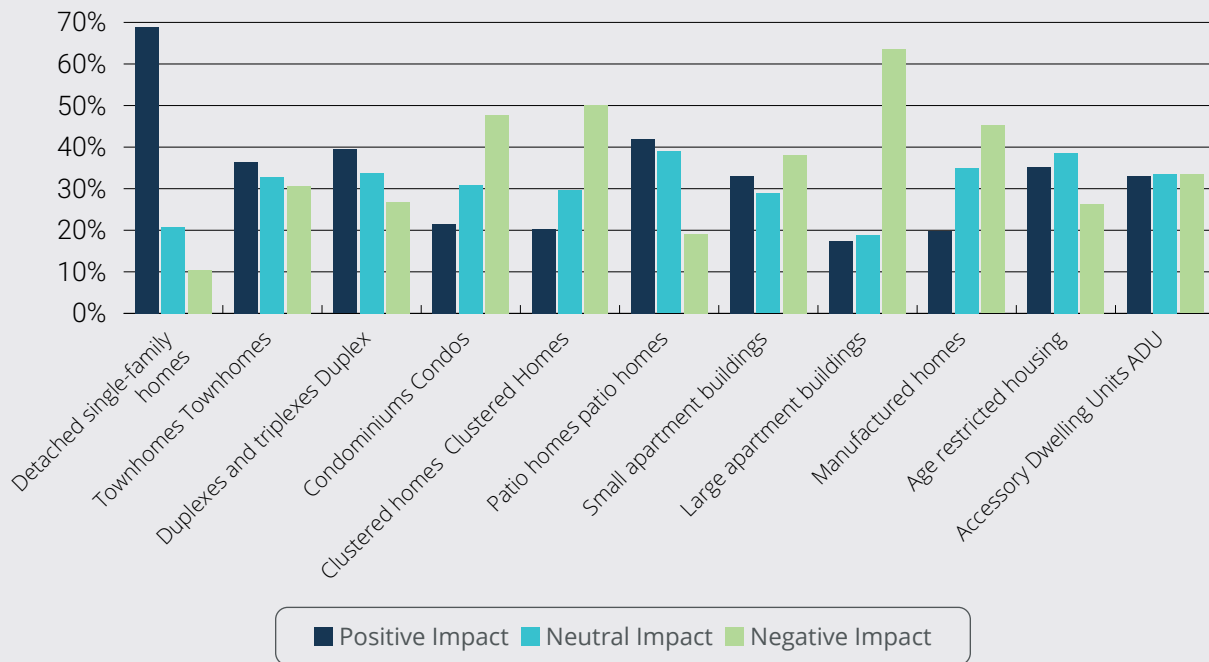
Housing/Residential Development

? When considering the existing quantity of available housing and residential areas, how would you identify each of the following as a strength or weakness for Campbell County?



Affordability was a common theme among respondents. Many individuals, especially those just starting out in life, felt that there was a lack of housing stock that fit their income, whether it be apartments, single-family homes, or rental homes. This sentiment was echoed by many who expressed difficulty in finding affordable housing options. Despite this, housing and residential options were also seen as one of Campbell County's strengths. While residents were proud of the existing housing, they also noted that there wasn't enough of it to meet current demand. This theme was consistent throughout the responses.

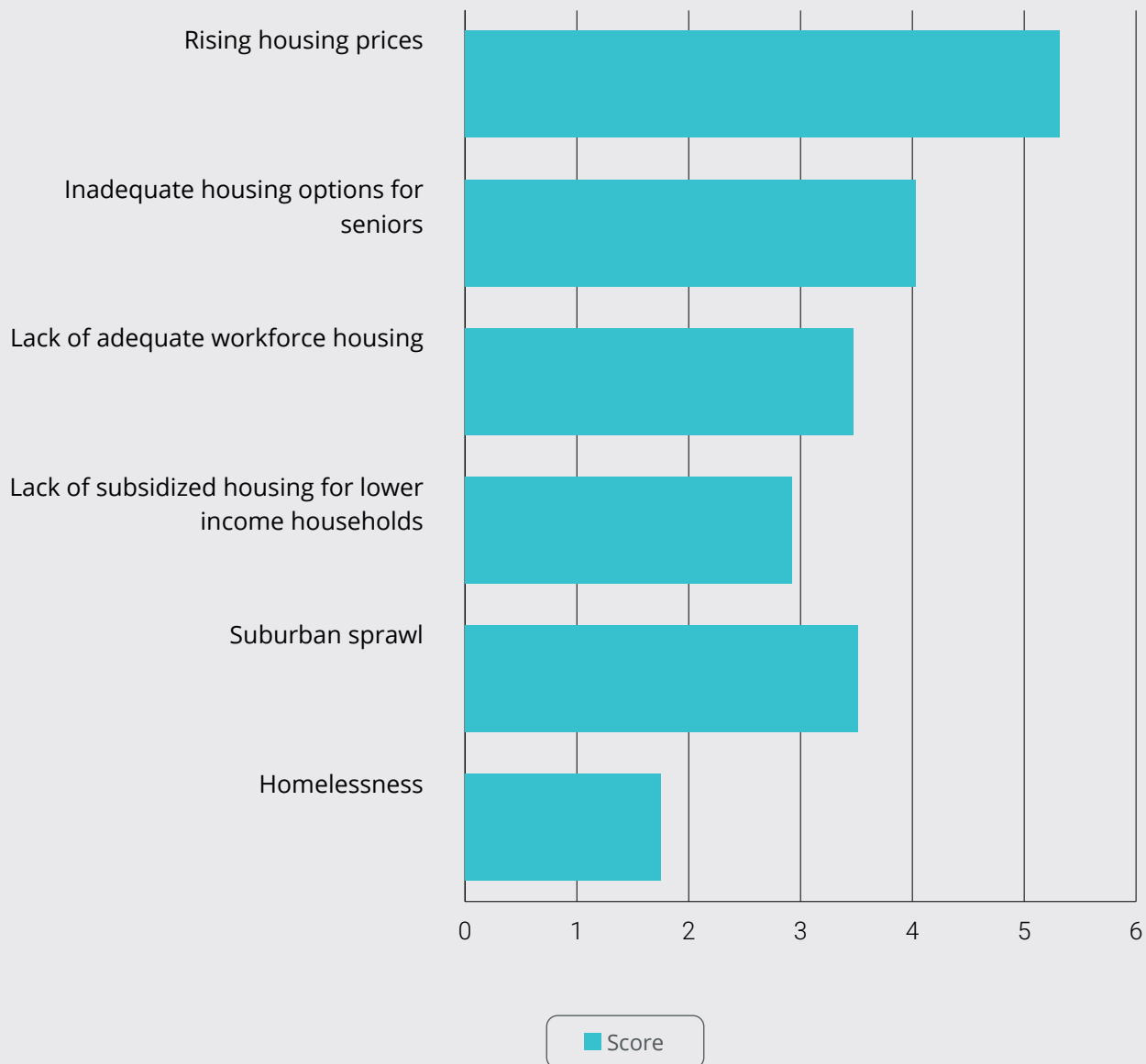
? How important do you think it is to attract the following types of jobs, businesses, or industries to Campbell County?



The survey also highlighted the importance of addressing the availability of affordable housing, which was identified as a significant weakness. Housing options for seniors were another area of concern, with many respondents feeling that there were insufficient opportunities for downsizing. This was similarly noted for retirees, with affordability being a key issue.

In terms of overall strengths, housing that appeals to families was seen positively, and the character of neighborhoods was generally viewed favorably. The quality of housing was considered to be on par, and there was some appeal for housing among young professionals, although the supply was not sufficient.

? How would you rank the following issues related to housing in Campbell County from most concerning to least concerning?



Rising housing prices were the top concern for respondents, followed by inadequate housing for seniors and suburban sprawl. There exists a need for better education on different housing types, as some respondents had mixed feelings about various options such as patio homes, duplexes, triplexes, small apartment buildings, and condominiums. Overall, while there is a variety of housing available, the main issue remains the lack of affordable options.

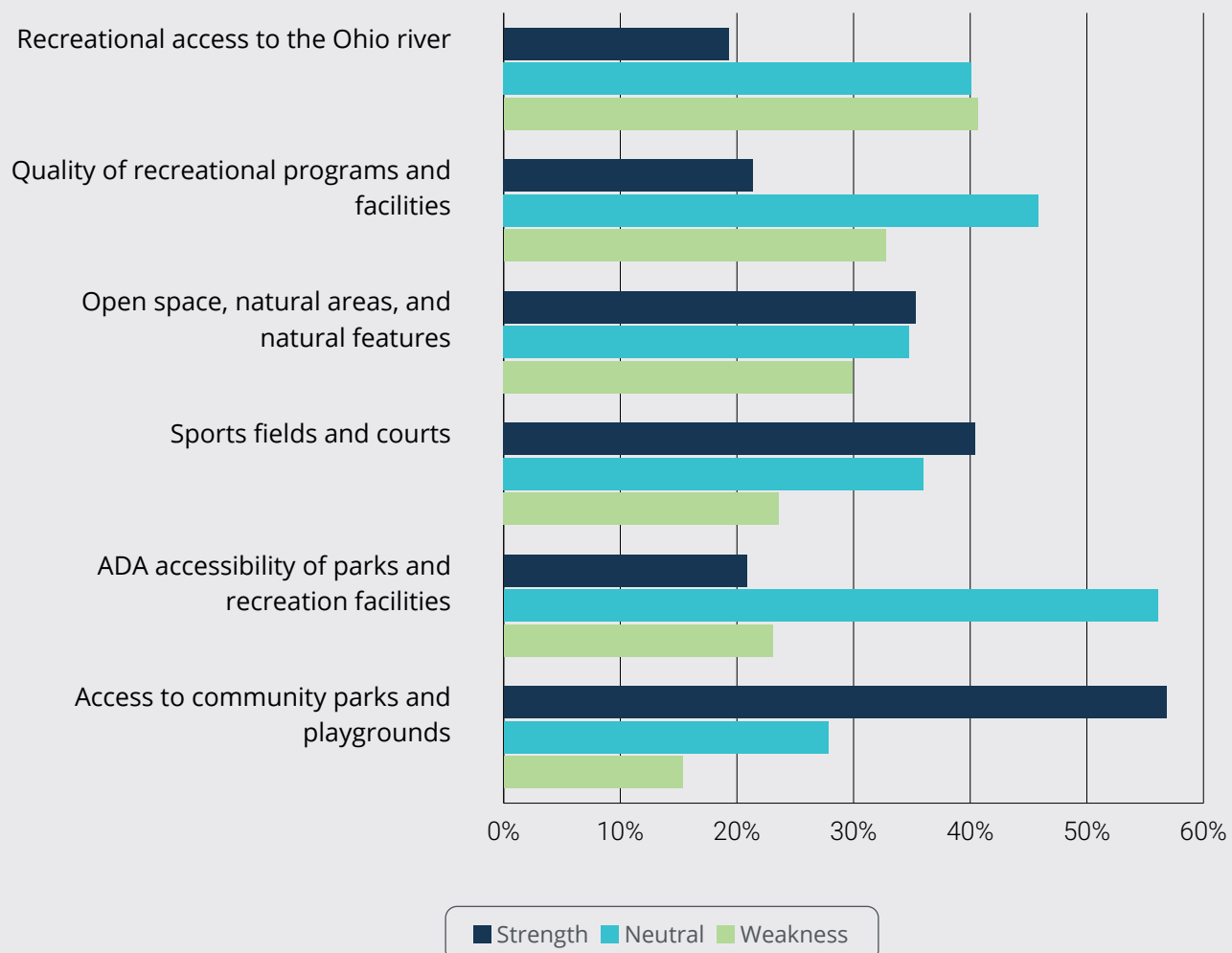
Public Health and Safety

The survey results indicate that the fire departments are performing well and are considered a strength of Campbell County. Parks and Recreation facilities, along with community facilities, also received positive feedback. However, when it comes to lifestyle services, the results were mixed. While fire protection and emergency response were seen as strengths, services for seniors, youth, and veterans were viewed as weaker areas. Healthy lifestyle activities were primarily rated neutral. Overall, the survey highlights areas where the county has made strong investments and suggests continuing to focus on these strengths.

Recreation and Quality of Life

The survey results indicate that access to community parks and recreation facilities is considered a strength of Campbell County. Community facilities also received positive feedback. Overall, residents are satisfied with the quality of life in the County, but there were specific comments highlighting the desire for more usable green spaces, improvements to AJ Jolly Lake parks, and better access to the Ohio River. Community friendliness and character were seen as strong points, while arts and cultural amenities were not as highly valued. There were also suggestions for improving playground equipment, urban recreational areas, sidewalks, and trails.

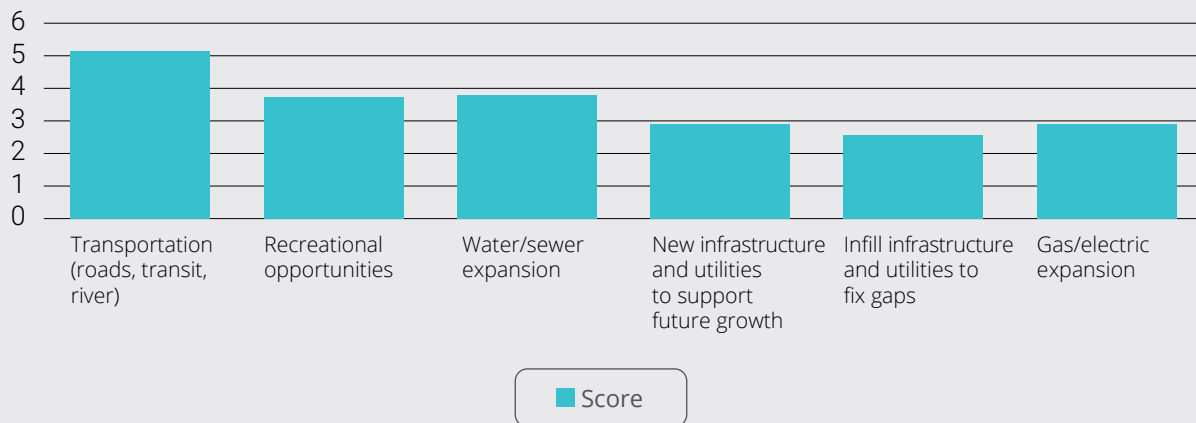
? When thinking about the existing parks and recreational opportunities in your community, how would you rate each of the following as a strength or weakness?



Public Utility Services and Transportation

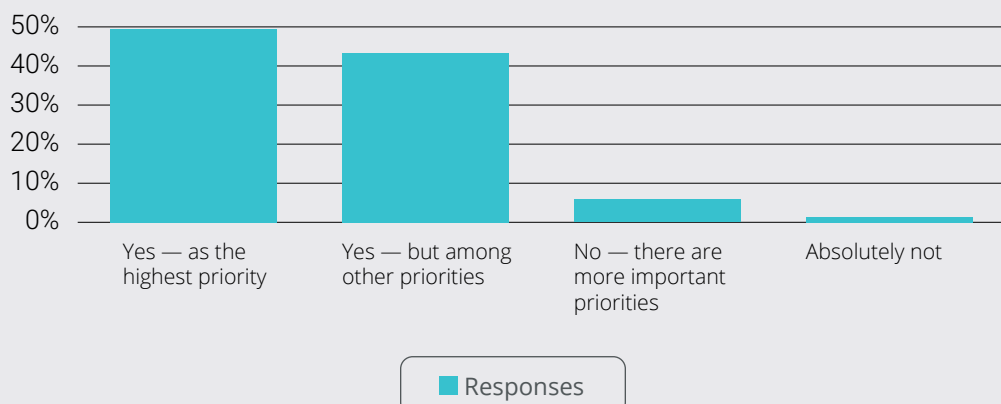
The survey highlighted that while transportation and utility services are often taken for granted, they are crucial for daily life. The need for investment in transportation infrastructure, gas, and electric utilities was emphasized. Results also indicated the importance of addressing gaps in infrastructure, particularly in areas that were previously overlooked due to lack of necessary utilities. The aging infrastructure and the need for infill development were significant concerns.

? In which of the following areas do you think that Campbell County should focus its investments? (Select all that apply)



Additionally, respondents underscored the importance of investing in new infrastructure, with a high priority placed on improvements in transportation and utilities. There were also discussions about the need for better water availability in southern Campbell County and improvements in stormwater management and sewer systems.

? Do you believe that Campbell County and its communities should invest in new infrastructure or infrastructure improvements? (roads, water, sewer, gas, electric, etc.)



Highlights of the strong desires included:

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
|  <p>Protecting and promoting our vision and identity</p> |  <p>Address demand for affordable housing for families, seniors</p> |  <p>Support schools and strengthen school services through both investments and consolidations</p> |  <p>Improve sports facilities and parks</p> |  <p>Support land conservation including farming and forested areas</p> |  <p>Protect historical heritage</p> |
|  <p>Support privacy and natural landscapes</p> |  <p>Strengthen transportation</p> |  <p>Support alternative transportation (TANK)</p> |  <p>Enhance water infrastructure</p> |  <p>Address unsewered areas</p> |  <p>Enhance shopping, dining, and entertainment</p> |
|  <p>Expand library services</p> |  <p>Reinvest in small towns</p> |  <p>Capitalize on navigable waterways with recreational & water tourism</p> |  <p>Support small businesses</p> |  <p>Support development and investments in our community</p> | |

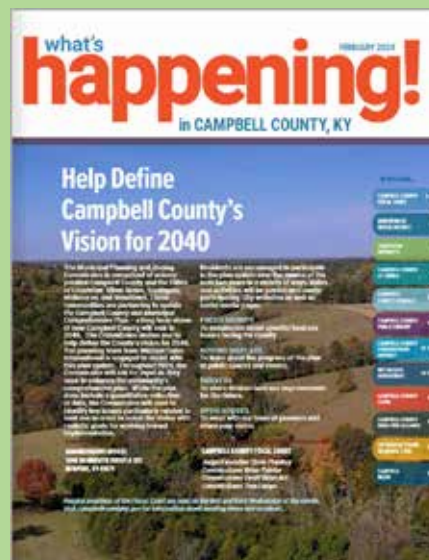
Visioning Events

A Visioning Week, which involved intensive multi-day public events at several of the Partner Cities, provided opportunities for meaningful conversations about key issues.



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Please bring in
more higher end
commercial/
restaurants



Goals & Objectives and Zoning Workshops

Workshop were held to discuss the goals and objectives for each plan element. Members from the community representing various groups and agencies provided input into these documents. Focused topics included: Public Utility Services, Transportation Services, Public Health & Safety, Recreation & Quality

of Life, Agricultural Development, Conservation/ Environmental Stewardship, Educational, Economic Development and Employment, and Housing/ Residential Development. In addition, land use and zoning and its intersection with the plan elements was also discussed along with future land use maps.



Open House

Two formal open house events were held to provide an overview of the planning process and share the goals for the plan.





COORDINATED PLANNING

Campbell County Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Campbell County Hazard Mitigation Plan provides information and direction for evaluating the natural hazards that present a threat to Campbell County and to select the appropriate strategies to mitigate the vulnerability to these hazards. The plan outlines procedures for identification of mitigation opportunities that will eliminate or reduce future damage from these hazards. The plan is intended to serve as a guide for those agencies that have capabilities and resources to develop mitigation programs within their areas of responsibility.

Northern Kentucky Area Development District CEDS 2023 Update

The Northern Kentucky Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a strategy-driven plan developed by a diverse workgroup of local representatives from private, public, and nonprofit sectors to identify regional economic and community development priorities. The CEDS covers eight counties: Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, and Pendleton and comprises fifty-two (52) local governments.

2023 NKADD Housing Data Analysis

The Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) released a comprehensive housing data analysis in 2023 for the region. The study examined housing, inventory, costs, and their relationship to economic conditions and job markets across the eight-county areas of Northern Kentucky.

TANK Updates

As of 2020, the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) has undergone a network redesign study to help reimagine the agency's network structure. The expectation for the System Redesign Study is that a newly modified and enhanced system and service structure for TANK will have a near-term beneficial effect on service productivity and efficiency. Additionally, it will impact transit ridership in a positive fashion by improving transit operability and providing better mobility options for residents and visitors in the Northern Kentucky region. As of 2024, TANK has launched TANK+, an on-demand transit service that has been extremely well received by the community.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana (OKI) Regional Bike Plan

The OKI Regional Bicycle Plan is a component of the region's multi-modal Regional Transportation Plan. The Regional Transportation Plan summarizes the existing bicycle facilities and recommendations for improving cycling conditions in the region. Towards this end, it is the vision of the Regional Bicycle Plan that vehicular travel by bicycle could become an integral mode of travel, both by its inclusion in OKI's regional transportation planning process, and by its consideration as a choice for trip-making by residents of the OKI region.

AJ Jolly Park Master Plan

Located just off US 27 south of Alexandria, A.J. Jolly Park is an award winning 1,000-acre parking that is owned and operated by the County. The master plan update process was initiated by the Jolly Park Community Development Council (CDC) under the endorsement of the Campbell County Fiscal Court in 2019. As part of this master plan process, the CDC sought to inventory conditions, assess needed improvements, garner a consensus of practical and desirable improvements, and balance these items against the overall assets of the Park.

2020 NKU Master Plan

Northern Kentucky University, the only university in Campbell County, is located in Highland Heights, just south of the Interstate 471 and 275 interchange. The 2020 Campus Master Plan will inform decision making and guide the implementation of physical improvements to the campus over the next 10-15 years. The plan was developed through a consensus-driven process guided by the engagement of both camps and local community stakeholders.

Kentucky Complete Streets Manual

The manual, published by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) in 2022, provides pedestrian and bicycle travel policy guidance for state-maintained roads. It may be used by communities

to improve safety, accessibility, comfort, and connectivity for all modes of transportation. The manual also provides guidance on evaluation of locations for future bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

UK Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK), Cost of Community Services Study and Agricultural Industry Profile

In 2024, the Campbell County Conservation District, Farmland Work Group partnered with the Kentucky Farm Bureau to conduct the Cost of Community Services (COCS) study. Kentucky Farm Bureau has begun a program, the Kentucky Farmland Transition Initiative, this Initiative addresses the loss of Kentucky Farmland

and the decline in Kentucky farmers. In the last 20 years, Kentucky has lost 1.4 million acres of farmland and 17,000 farms. Kentucky farms are disappearing. The UK Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) conducted a Cost of Community Services Study and Agricultural Industry Profile to assess the economic impact of agriculture in the county.

The COCS study examines the fiscal year 2023-24 revenue and expenditures of Campbell County, focusing on three categories of land use: residential, commercial/industrial, and farmland properties. The study evaluates the amount of money generated by each category and the corresponding public services costs (e.g., public safety, government administration, schools, courts, etc.). According to the study, for every \$1 of revenue





generated from residential properties in Campbell County, \$1.20 was spent on providing services for those properties. For commercial/industrial land, .62 cents were spent for every \$1 received, and for farmland, 50 cents were spent for every \$1 received. Notably, 74% of the revenue came from residential properties, 25% from commercial/industrial, and 1% from farmland. Out of total expenditures exceeding \$228 million, 85% was allocated for services related to residential land use, 15% for commercial/industrial uses, and less than 1% for farmland.

The Farmland Work Group surveyed Campbell County landowners, revealing that 60% prefer to keep their land for agricultural purposes even after they no longer own it. Furthermore, 84% of landowners would be inclined to preserve their land if a tax benefit was available. Residents believe rural Campbell County is significant and plays an integral role in the county's identity, the century-old history of agriculture needs to be protected and encourages the preservation of farmland. Preserving the shrinking agricultural area is crucial for

maintaining the county's cultural heritage. Preservation of rural Campbell County is critical to safeguarding rural communities, protecting watersheds from residential development, minimizing construction and development, and maintaining air and noise quality. Rural Campbell County is vital for future generations to have access to sustainable communities, access to safe and healthy locally grown food, and maintain a balanced ecosystem. By prioritizing the preservation of rural lands and supporting local farms, we can work towards a more sustainable and resilient future.

City of Southgate Strategic Plan

The City of Southgate engaged with the Kentucky League of Cities' Community and Economic Development team in the fall of 2024 with the intention of creating a new strategic workplan for the city. Coming off previous efforts for envisioning how Southgate can continue to move forward from 2025 to 2030, this plan utilizes city and community input to build a vision for where the city is today and where it would like to be in 2035. KLC staff has conducted

meetings with the Mayor and Council as well as numerous community stakeholders, city department heads, and key individuals within the city that can help to shape Southgate's future and implement the strategies found within this plan.

The City of Southgate engaged with the Kentucky League of Cities' Community and Economic Development team in the fall of 2024 with the intention of creating a new strategic workplan for the city. Coming off previous efforts for envisioning how Southgate can continue to move forward from 2025 to 2030, this plan utilizes city and community input to build a vision for where the city is today and where it would like to be in 2035. KLC staff has conducted meetings with the Mayor and Council as well as numerous community stakeholders, city department heads, and key individuals within the city that can help to shape Southgate's future and implement the strategies found within this plan.

The plan highlighted plans for Residential and Business Development, City Governance and Facilities, Quality of Life and Downtown Development.