



Park Ridge Community Engagement Summary



What is **ALREADY** great about Park Ridge? Where are **OPPORTUNITIES** for improvement? What does Park Ridge **WANT** and **NEED** in the future?

Community engagement helps provide answers to some of these questions. Fundamentally, effective outreach means effective communication - active listening, reporting back, reworking ideas, refining concepts, and ultimately producing a set of actionable items and goals that speak to what the community wants, needs, can and should aspire to achieve. To understand the what, where, and why of Park Ridge's opportunities, possibilities, and community desires requires the interplay of different engagement mediums:

1. Community awareness and education;
2. Effective project marketing and design;
3. Interviews and focus groups with local organizations, stakeholders and businesses;
4. Interactive tools that help cultivate ideas and build consensus; and
5. Workshops and events to connect with residents, business and stakeholders; and

It is the collective sum of these "parts" that together allows us to:

- Build awareness about the what and why of the Comprehensive Plan;
- Provide choices in the way residents can share their perspective and collaborate;
- Effectively facilitate idea sharing; and
- Prioritize opportunities.



Process

Park Ridge's Comprehensive Plan, 'Park Ridge Wonderful, spanned a total of X months, with project initiation beginning in Spring of 2019 and plan adoption by City Council in ___ of 2020. Park Ridge's community input campaign lasted throughout the duration of the project.



Getting the Word Out: Community Awareness + Education + Marketing

From project kick-off to Plan adoption, the City took an active stance in educating residents, businesses and stakeholders about the importance of the Comprehensive Plan, and their voice in guiding it. Marketing and promotion of the plan included press releases and news coverage, pop-up events at the Park Ridge Farmers Market, interactive focus groups with local students, and plentiful posts via the project and City's Facebook pages. Thanks to these ongoing efforts in conjunction with creative marketing of the website, interactive idea tools, quick polls and other community events, the Comprehensive Plan was readily understood and embraced by the Park Ridge community!

Within the first month of planning, major work was already underway to gear-up outreach efforts and thoughtfully pace engagement to maintain project momentum. With City guidance and preferences in mind, the project name and logo were established, workshop dates confirmed, community events flagged, and an interactive, educational website built. Handy project cards were designed, printed and distributed throughout the City to market the project, the website, and further awareness of and attendance at workshops and events.



getting the word out MARKETING

-  Project Website
-  Promotion Cards
-  Workshop Posters
-  Press Release
-  Facebook Promotion
-  Instagram Marketing
-  Community Partners
-  Spokesman Newsletter



Stakeholder Interviews

A series of interviews were conducted with residents, business owners, City staff, and area stakeholders to better understand existing and future opportunities and generate local insights from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives. These conversations offered a wealth of knowledge that inspired new ideas, important questions to ask the community, and insights on how to shape workshop content.

Workshops + Events

In-person community engagement in the form of workshops, stakeholder interviews, and pop-up idea booths were pivotal components in hearing from the community. Speaking with residents face-to-face provided an intimate understanding of local issues and opportunities and the things people want and need (and why). Kick-off activities included a “Big Picture Visioning” poll, community-wide workshop, and a pop-up idea booth at the bustling Park Ridge Farmers Market.

Following these initial kick-off activities, community outreach continued! The Park Ridge Wonderful team hosted interactive brainstorm sessions with students at Lincoln Middle School, Emerson Middle School, and Maine South High School. A second community-wide “Priorities” workshop was held in October 2019 to review and refine preliminary recommendations related to economic development, housing, transportation, placemaking, and sustainability. Workshop activities included presentations from the project team, collaborative idea murals, place-based mapping activities, and sticker dot-voting. A Final Community Open House was hosted in [redacted] that invited residents to view and comment on the Draft Plan prior to its review by City Council.



**meeting people where they are...
618 FARMERS MARKET BOOTH**



**thinking big picture...
6125 WORKSHOP**

- ★ Community Character
- ★ Environment + Infrastructure
- ★ Transportation + Safety
- ★ Economic Development



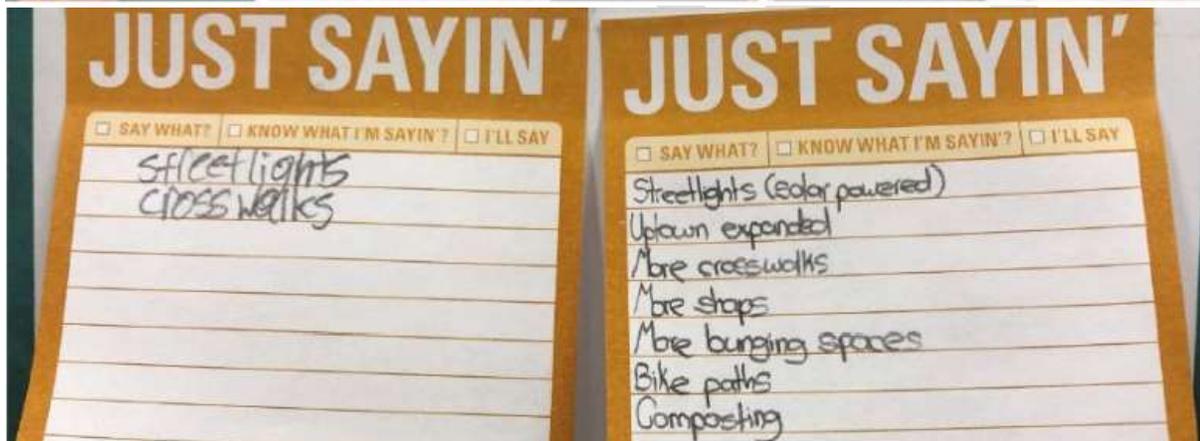
Schools should welcome and leverage growing multi-lingual population. Dual language programs are good for all kids!

Would a Streets Alive (event/amount?) be a great collaboration with our Business Community (?) This could also be written on Economic Development poster by "increased foot traffic brings in better business."

PR needs full community buy in to recycle correctly. It's got many details, but so doable and important. I feel so sad ☹️ when I see the misuse of recycling in public places. Educate. We can all do this better.



**tell us what you love, want, need...
WHAT DID WE LEARN?**



Community Polls

Three community polls were posted to the website, promoted via social media, and marketed at workshops, events, and via community partners. The polls allowed residents to rank, vote and comment on Park Ridge’s assets, challenges and priorities across different issue areas (which correspond with the chapters in this plan). Topics pertaining to recreation and entertainment, transportation and mobility, business development, future growth considerations, and quality of life in general were also explored. Poll #3 asked participants to review the draft plan recommendations, rank their top priorities, and add additional ideas on implementation, community partners, and action items.



community pulse POLL 1

Greatest Assets

1. Location, Access, Mobility
2. Great Schools
3. Family-Friendly

Opportunities for Improvement

1. Economic Development/Business Vitality
2. Parking
3. Sustainability/ Green Infrastructure

Elements of Vibrant Communities

1. Open Space, Parks + Recreation
2. Social Activities + Community Cohesion
3. Business + Workforce Development

I want 'Future Park Ridge' to be...



diving deeper into priorities ... POLL 2

Open July 30th - Sept 9th

956 
PARTICIPANTS





Timeline

The timeline below highlights the varying engagement components utilized throughout the Comprehensive Planning process, from plan commencement in April of 2019 to plan adoption in _____.

April – May 2019

- Website www.ParkRidgeWonderful.com goes live!
- Project Branding + Identity Completed
- Marketing + Press Release
- Poll #1 Opens
- Stakeholder Interviews

June – July 2019

- Plan Commission Check-In + Presentation
- Farmers Market Pop-up Idea Booth
- Community Visioning Workshop @ the Library
- Poll #1 Results Posted | 160 Responses
- Poll #2 Opens

September – November 2019

- Student Focus Groups at Lincoln Middle School
- Student Focus Group at Emerson Middle School
- Community Priorities Workshop @ the O'Connor Community Building
- Poll #2 Results Posted | 965 Responses
- Plan Commission Check-In + Presentation
- Student Focus Group at Maine South High School
- Poll #3 Opens
- Poll #3 Results Posted | 110 Responses

January – March 2020

- Plan Development
- Final Open House
- Plan Adoption