

Community Engagement

The Imagine Warsaw participants took several steps to have gain a better understanding of where Warsaw would like to go and how it might get there. The process was accomplished using input gained from meetings with the steering committee. Certain exercises were conducted to bring up important issues and concerns which helped shaped the goals, objectives, and ultimately the recommendations provided.

SWOT Exercise

The term SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A SWOT exercise attempts to identify these characteristics in any given location or idea. A SWOT exercise was conducted for Warsaw to help analyze the area.

The SWOT analysis was completed based upon the feedback received from the steering committee.

Strengths

- The Ride + Walk Warsaw + Winona Lake program
- First Friday events
- The Wagon Wheel Theatre
- Several homes surrounding Winona Lake are lived in year round by their owners

- The senior citizens who live within the northern portion of the study area.

Weaknesses

- Kosciusko Community YMCA
- Limited public access to the lakes
- A significant portion of the city's economy is based on tourism and the orthopedic industry
- Parking
- The bypasses created by U.S. 30

Opportunities

- Kosciusko County Fairgrounds
- Gatke Building
- The expansion of the Ride + Walk Warsaw + Winona Lake Program
- The Little Crow Foods building
- The current railroad lines, along with lines used in the past
- The vacant structures and properties throughout the designated study area provide opportunities for redevelopment
- Winona Avenue

Threats

- The soil in the area, particularly around Center Lake
- Businesses/chain corporations are purchasing structures and having the zoning altered



Community Workshop

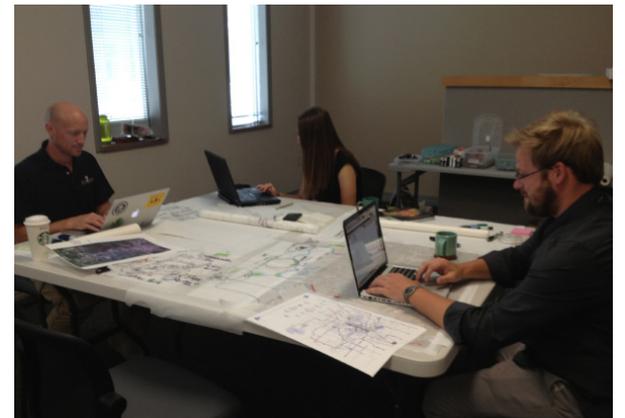
The Imagine Warsaw Community Workshop was held at City Hall from June 20-22, 2013. The outcome resulted in many ideas and input from the Imagine Warsaw team and the town residents. These ideas were collected to not only improve and enhance the town, but to make Warsaw a memorable, livable, sustainable destination community.

To start the public participation process, the community workshop was conducted to clearly identify the entire community's vision for Warsaw and acceptance of the process. Therefore, public meetings were conducted to create discussion questions that were then answered through visual diagrams and graphics created during the community workshop.

This process involved many sectors of the community identifying and discussing issues of importance and what actions could be taken to achieve progress. Over two hundred individuals participated in the workshop. Each individual filled out a survey, if he or she had not done so previously, and was then led to leave comments on a gallery of posters focusing on a variety of ideas. Participants were highly enthusiastic and incredibly helpful and

creative with their ideas and proposals.

By keeping Warsaw citizens involved, these plans and any future plans have a significantly higher chance of becoming a reality. Through the implementation of projects that aim to improve transportation circulation, connect existing assets within the community, expand upon the existing culture, improve standards of health, and promote sustainability, community involvement will certainly increase throughout the city of Warsaw.



Survey Results

For more, see tables in *Appendix B*.

Respondent Profile

The total number of respondents was 234 Warsaw residents. 58% of those respondents were males and 42% were females. Of those respondents, 41% have attained a bachelor's degree and 46% have a household income of \$80,000 or above. In terms of employment status, 84% of respondents were employed at the time the survey was taken and of those respondents, 81% work in Warsaw. Regarding residential longevity, 66% of respondents have lived in Warsaw for more than 10 years. When concerning attaining information about community events or happenings, 69% of respondents stated that word of mouth is their primary source of information while 54% replied that the Internet is where they go to gain information about events occurring in Warsaw.

City Perception Survey

In this set of eight questions, respondents were asked to give their opinions of Warsaw and its amenities.

A significant number of respondents regularly visit a variety of attractions within Warsaw (see Figure 17). Popular

attractions include the Village at Winona with 151 respondents confirming they frequently visit there, and the Lake City Greenway with approximately 100 respondents saying they use the greenway on a regular basis. Even though respondents use several attractions within the city frequently, 126 respondents would like to see more social and cultural amenities in Warsaw, as well as more shopping and dining options. Jobs and businesses are also crucial to the city of Warsaw, with 70% of respondents saying they live in the city primarily due to a job or business. This trend continued to be seen throughout the survey results, with respondents stating that the feature that needs the most improvement within the downtown is attracting new businesses.

More than 75% of respondents rely on gasoline-fueled vehicles to commute to their job or business even though the majority of respondents work within the city. Additionally, several respondents choose to travel to other locations within the region for entertainment; 169 travel primarily to Fort Wayne for entertainment, where 106 prefer to travel the 122 miles to Chicago (see Figure 18).

Visual Survey

Each respondent was given a set of images, each with a specific question, and were asked to check the image or images that correspond most accurately to their preferences.

There were 130 respondents in favor of implementing townhomes or single-family homes, while 59 respondents would also like to see apartment complexes in Warsaw. 157 of the respondents thought that traditional downtown storefronts would be the most appropriate type of retail in the city, preferably specialty and local stores.

Of the residents who completed the visual preference portion of the survey, 151 said indoor restaurants would be the most appropriate in Warsaw, although outdoor restaurants or cafés were a close second with 141 votes. When concerning entertainment, 120 respondents thought that opening an art gallery or museum would be most beneficial to Warsaw, while 115 respondents would like to see more nightlife in the downtown area. 111 respondents would like to see a bike rental facility that could be used throughout the city.

The majority of respondents supported implementing sustainable measures throughout the city, such as recycling and energy conservation. The sustainable initiative that had the most interest, however, was local food. 158 respondents would like to see local food grown and sold throughout Warsaw.

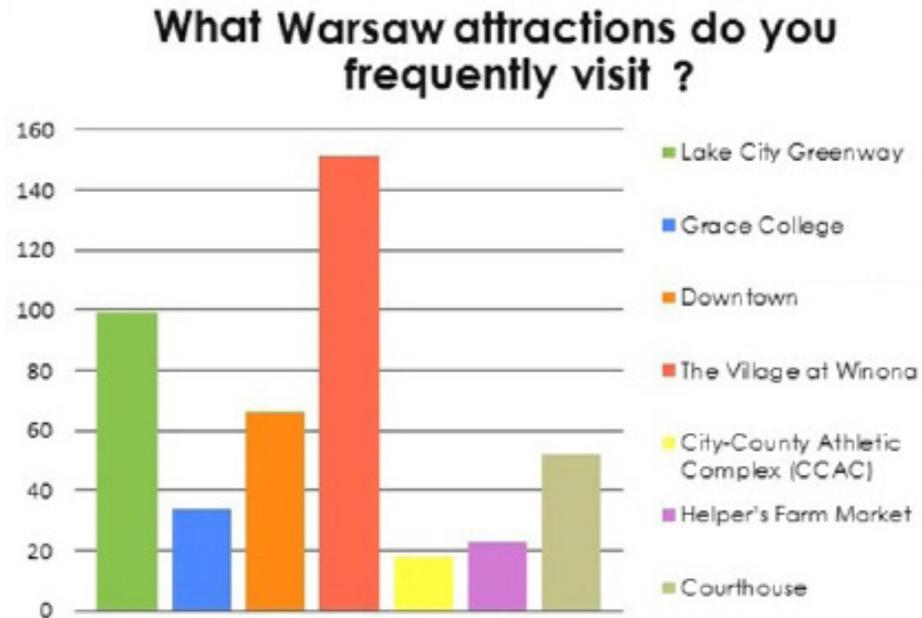


Figure 17: Warsaw attractions chart

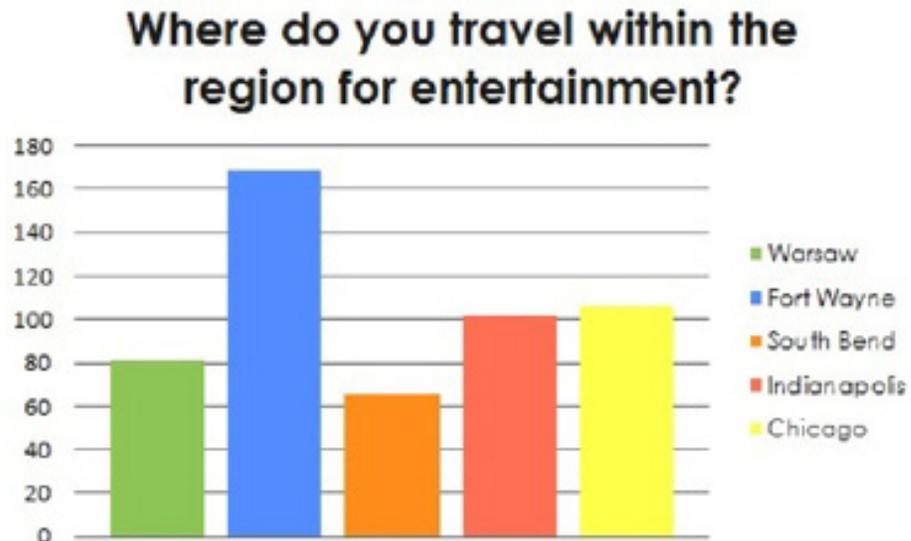


Figure 18: Entertainment chart