

Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

January 15 and February 20, 2020

Newport Assets:

1. History of the community, historic character / stock of quality historic architecture, legacy businesses (100+ years old), preservation efforts (museum without walls)
2. Prime location: two river fronts, large metro of Cincinnati and adjacent river cities; Purple People Bridge connector; views of Downtown Cincinnati
3. Small town living and traditional main street with big city amenities
4. Compact, walkable neighborhoods
5. Destination attractions: Aquarium, top 5 in attendance nationally; Newport on the Levee
6. Senior housing
7. Community facilities: library, local healthcare options (St. Elizabeth's)
8. Affordable cost of living: One of the last remaining cities with affordable homes for first time homebuyers (west, south)
9. Small, nimble local government. Similar problems to Cincinnati, Covington, but can respond faster, more fully
10. Diversity (land use, shopping, housing stock, population, buildings, arts/music, etc.)
11. Access provided by interstates (471, 275, 75, 71); easy access to Downtown Cincinnati
12. People- City staff, consistent quality political leadership

Newport Challenges:

1. Attracting and retaining young families: schools, past image. Needs positive branding
2. Vacant properties - how to incentivize redevelopment
3. Maintaining current level of housing diversity - not gentrifying/pricing out less affluent buyers (young renters, first time home buyers, and seniors)
4. Housing conditions, lack of property maintenance
5. Low homeownership rate
6. West side redevelopment opportunities leading to inflated prices, speculators, lack of maintenance
7. Conflicting land use – i.e., Jail in downtown location, challenging for surrounding development; industry/residential; music venues/residential
8. Traffic - Congestion. Limited parking. Pass-through (one-way) traffic prevails
9. Lack of connectivity to community amenities
10. Concentration of poverty, concentration of social services – need for additional related services (e.g. affordable, accessible healthcare)
11. Lack of central community space
12. Low community involvement, need to attract next generation of leaders; communication among community groups is difficult
13. Perceived unsafe environment - crime/drugs; poor lighting creates sense of danger, fear

14. Youth engagement, activities. Lack of family friendly recreation facilities (YMCA, swim, gym, activities). Quality daycare is hard to find.
15. Environmental issues related to stormwater management. Regular back-ups causing repeated flooding, sink hole
16. Challenging topography - Landslides on hillsides, need to stabilize and avoid future slips.
17. Potential loss of views due to new construction
18. City sometimes inefficient, lack of staffing (budgetary issue) can be barrier for new business

On Development Quality and Character:

1. Revitalize West End
2. New development or infill should fit in Newport context, in terms of scale, style, materials
3. Challenging Topography. Develop hillside development regulations / guidelines, to help manage / minimize slippages
4. Need appropriate zoning regulations and design guidelines in different zones, from riverfront, within neighborhood, Monmouth, to the south side, in terms of scale, style, connection, visual corridors, etc.
5. Promote diversity of housing stock to accommodate range of income and needs, e.g. affordable housing, workforce housing (60% AMI), first time home buyers, empty nesters, maintenance-free options, house size and yard size options
6. Improve home ownership (quality and quantity)
7. Restore corner properties, stabilize street / neighborhood
8. More, diverse entertainment options. Enhance/celebrate art/music scene
9. Improve public housing appearance
10. Consider visual aesthetic throughout, e.g. welcoming gateways, screening undesirable uses
11. Improve streetscape consistency, e.g. sidewalk cafes, wayfinding, trees, underground utilities, branding, etc.
12. Preserve views of Downtown Cincinnati

On Transportation:

1. Improve traffic pattern. Pass-through (one-way) traffic is undesirable
2. Traffic improvement focus areas: access to/from I-471; event traffic responses, especially for Ovation music venue; Newport shopping center, etc.
3. Route 9 new roundabouts, increases through traffic that bypassed Monmouth
4. Improve traffic calming in areas with high pedestrian / bicycle flow - install bump outs, increase green space, add more outdoor dining areas
5. Limited parking
6. Accommodate alternative modes, be prepared for electric vehicles, self-driving cars
7. Reconstruct 4th Street Bridge
8. Potential for new road along RR – quick approach to 275, 471

On Connectivity:

1. Walkable downtown and select neighborhoods
2. Bikeable, but bike infrastructure can be improved, potential for separated bike lane; create bike network
3. Make more pedestrian/bicycle friendly. Increase connectivity in general to extend to broader areas, east – west, north – south to connect to major anchors including 6th Street, schools, library, Kroger, etc.
4. Riverfront commons trail is great. Multi-use trail along Licking River (link to Bourbon Trail story), separate from Route 9, integrated into redevelopment strategies
5. Improve connection to Purple people bridge
6. Alternative transit options? Street car, TANK improvement
7. Connect Monmouth/York and Levee physically, economically, socially

On Parks and Recreation:

1. Riverfront is where existing events happen. Is underutilized and disconnected. Located further from neighborhoods and is considered a regional (rather than a local) attraction
2. Need for a central park / gathering place? Potentially on Monmouth St, 6th/York to 6th / Saratoga to 7th
3. Enhance existing neighborhoods parks with improved visibility, access, connections & programming; improve dog park
4. James Taylor park is oldest park in Newport, which needs celebration and improvements
5. Festival park needs more shade, further connection to neighborhoods
6. Only public pool in Campbell county, not in core location, needs to increase usage and connection to residents
7. World peace bell is great asset and can be more utilized
8. Tourism can be improved, map generated
9. Urban tree canopy, more shade in event spaces
10. Wooded hillsides offer opportunity for greenway/trails
11. Establish joint-use agreements with schools to enable community use of school recreational properties/facilities
12. Require new large-scale developments (e.g. Ovation) to incorporate public open/green space

On Economic Development:

1. Need more jobs at all levels, more diverse employment options, pursue tech sector jobs
2. Light industrial rather than heavy industrial; Develop Route 9 as high-tech corridor/light industrial area
3. Need offices (not high towers) with amenities / easy in-out to attract small businesses
4. Three main areas for shopping / retail. Downtown Monmouth, Newport Pavilion, Newport Shopping center. Online retail is hurting brick-mortar retails. Need strategies to boost local small businesses, promote entrepreneurial efforts and cross promotions



5. Strengthen Monmouth business district as civic and cultural center. Continue to clean up buildings and streetscape. Potentially extend / connect to Levee and further neighborhoods
6. Continue to remove unpleasant businesses: sketchy bars, adult entertainment businesses, etc.
7. Develop strong economic development strategy, with appropriate incentive package, and strong partnerships with developers/investors, nonprofits

Long-term goals (20 years):

1. Low vacancy both residential and commercial
2. Safe community
3. Balance between redevelopment and historic preservation
4. Beautiful gateways into the City, strong sense of community pride, visually cohesive tapestry
5. Improved streetscapes - underground utilities, limited signs, electric charging stations, improved parking strategies for business districts and neighborhoods
6. Local businesses / sustainable services / quality convenience stores (e.g. fresh food)
7. Attract and retain young families
8. Smart city corridor around US 27
9. Sustainable city, green city
10. Active, healthy community
11. Positive image - the envy of neighbor communities

Notable development opportunities and projects in progress:

1. Ovation Mixed Use Development
2. Skypoint (45 luxury condos)
3. Newport on the Levee
4. Pegasus (5.5 acre riverfront development site)
5. Peace Bell Site / Mixed Use Infill Opportunity
6. Baptist Home Residential Conversion
7. 13th Street Residential New Construction

Areas of potential development:

1. Route 9 corridor
2. South side
3. West end
4. Neighborhood infill
5. Newport Riverfront (Steel Site 17 acres);
6. Developable land in basin along 13th, 14th, 15th (in planning stages)
7. Shopping centers along US-27 could use more mixed-use, restaurants, entertainment in walkable environment – OR consider redevelopment with low-rise apartments;
8. Licking River corridor
9. York Street corridor
10. ReNewport property diagonally across from City building for outdoor classroom