



BRAIDWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OPEN HOUSE

FOSSIL RIDGE LIBRARY

THUR. NOV 30

6-8PM

**Report on Input from
Open House Participants**

INTRODUCTION:

Over 100 Braidwood community members attended the Braidwood Comprehensive Plan Open House on the evening of November 30, 2023, at the Fossil Ridge Library. Within minutes, the meeting room was packed with residents engaged in lively conversation, debate, and questioning – providing their opinions and insights in response to a series of activities placed at stations around the room (similar to the setup at a school science fair).

A great turnout:

The large turnout and spirited participation of community members was unique and especially impressive given that Braidwood is a small town of just over 6,000 people. It was a clear demonstration that Braidwood's residents care deeply about the future of their community.

A hard-working Steering Committee:

The members of the project's Steering Committee are volunteering their time to help guide development of the Comprehensive Plan. It is noteworthy that they *led* the open house, engaging their neighbors in active conversation about Braidwood's challenges and opportunities over two lively hours.

This report:

The purpose of this report is simply to document the extremely valuable community input that was received at the open house, in two ways:

- First, in the interest of transparency, the CMAP project team has taken photographs of each open house poster that asked participants for their opinions and input. The photographs were taken with a professional camera, with the goal of giving everyone the opportunity to zoom in and examine all of the input that was received.
- Second, following the photographs of each poster, the CMAP project team has tried to faithfully transcribe every Post-it note comment and document the total count of dot sticker "votes" in response to various questions on the posters.

Open House handout:

At the end of this report, you will find the one-page (front-and-back) handout that was given to every person attending the open house. It includes a quick summary of the Comprehensive Plan project, including information about what a "Comprehensive Plan" is (and what it is not), the members of the project's Steering Committee, the timeline for the rest of the plan, who is CMAP, and how to read the full [Existing Conditions Report](#) and learn more about the plan on the project's website at engage.cmap.illinois.gov/braidwood-comprehensive-plan (or just search for "braidwood plan" in Google).

Market analysis presentation at City Council meeting on December 12:

The open house handout also notified open house participants of an important upcoming event related to the project. To assist in the development of the Comprehensive Plan, CMAP hired Kretchmer Associates, Inc. to conduct an independent, expert market analysis in four key areas: Commercial, Residential, Industrial, and Hotel. Kretchmer Associates presented their findings to the City Council at

its meeting on December 12. The presentation, along with the full market analysis report and full hotel market feasibility study, are all available on the [project website](#) or at the direct links below:

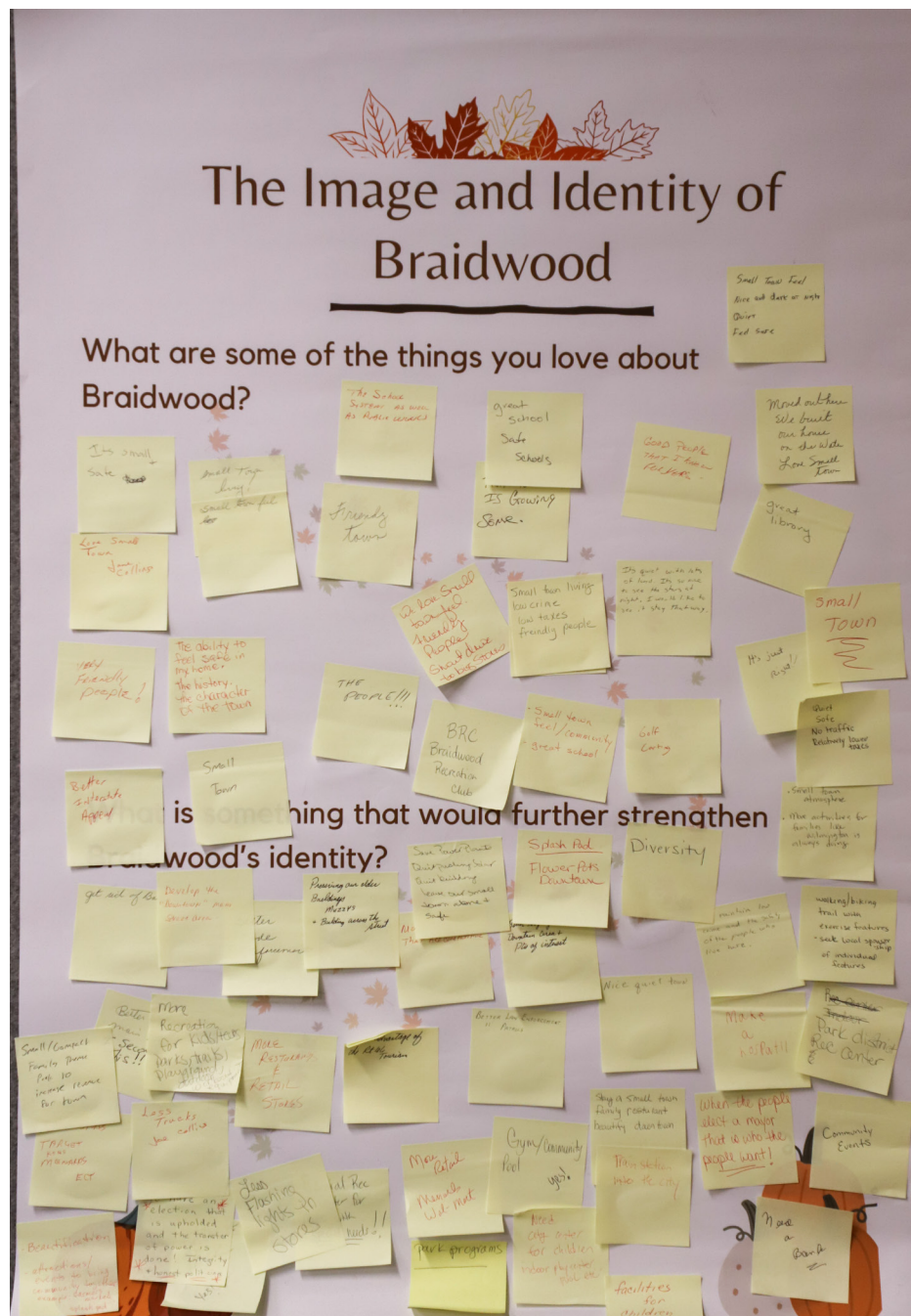
- [Market analysis presentation - City Council, December 12, 2023](#)
- [Full Braidwood Market Analysis Report](#)
- [Full Braidwood Hotel Market Feasibility Study](#)

NOTE: A video recording of the December 12 City Council meeting (including the market analysis presentation by Kretchmer Associates) is available on Braidwood's Facebook page.



<p><i>Question: What do you do for a living?</i></p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homemaker • Nuclear • Retired • Mechanical Engineer • Retired • Banker 	<p><i>Question: What are some of your favorite activities in Braidwood?</i></p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low crime; small town; nice neighbors • Trading • Camping @ BRC • The quiet • Small town atmosphere; fishing; friendly neighbors; low crime • BRC • Shadow Lakes; fishing; swimming; boating • Walking near rivers • Library Programs • Seeing stars • Construction remodeling • Shadow Lakes area; away from the busy city
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Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Question: What are some of the things you love about Braidwood?

Comments:

- It's small + safe
- Love small town

- Very friendly people!
- Small town living! Small town feel
- The ability to feel safe in my home; the history; the character of the town
- Small town
- The school system as well as public works
- Friendly town
- The people!!!
- Great school, safe schools
- That town is growing some
- We love small town feel; friendly people; short drive to big stores
- BRC Braidwood Recreation Club
- Small town living; low crime; low taxes; friendly people
- Small town feel/community; great school
- Good people that I've known for years
- It's quiet with lots of land; it's so nice to see the stars at night; I would like to see it stay that way
- Golf carting
- Small town feel; nice and dark at night; quiet; feel safe
- Moved out here; we built our house on the water; love small town
- Great library
- It's just right!!
- Small town
- Quiet; safe; relatively lower taxes
- Small town atmosphere

Question: What is something that would further strengthen Braidwood's identity?

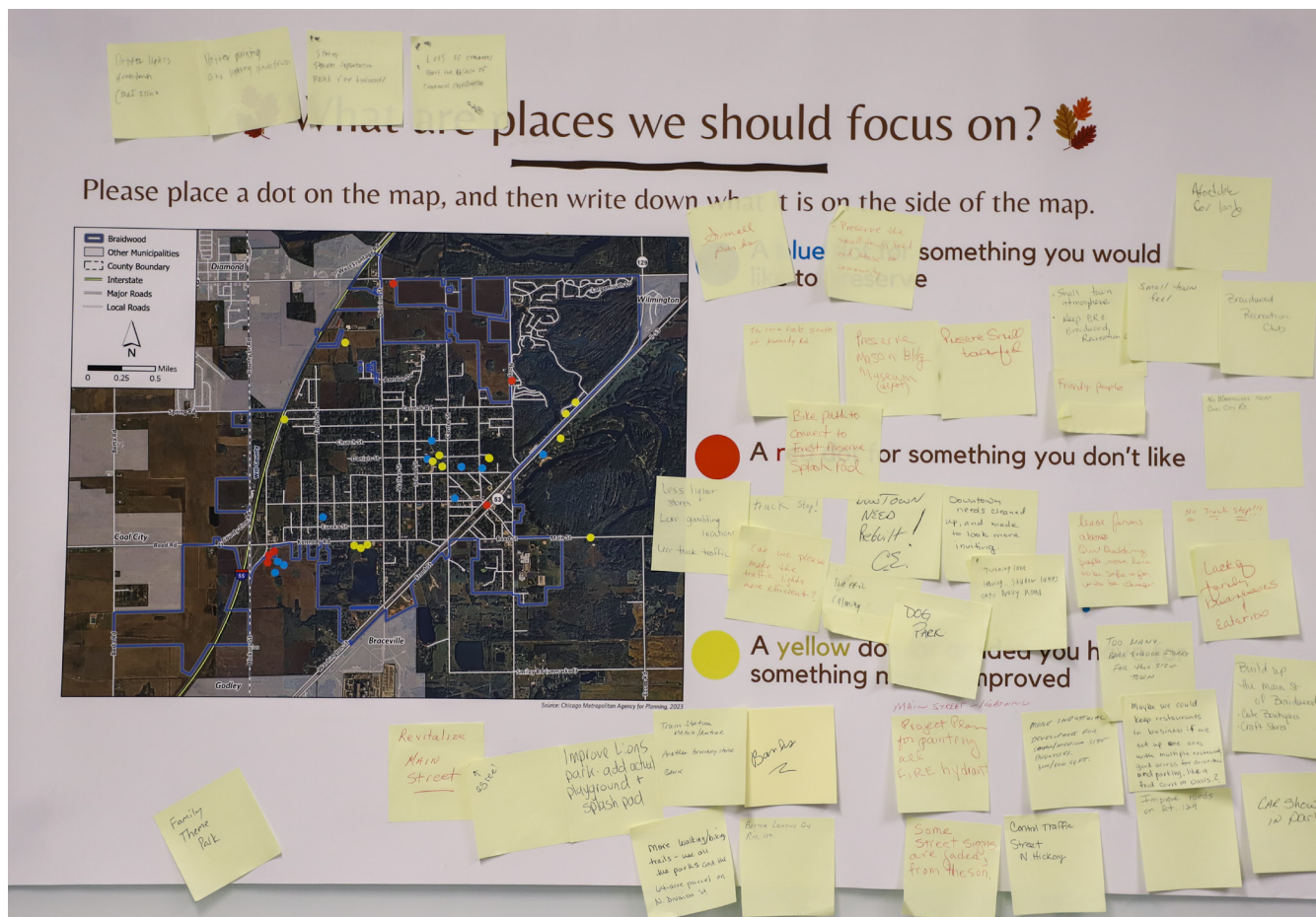
Comments:

- More activities for families like Wilmington is always doing
- Better interstate appeal
- Get rid of bars
- Better Main St [someone else added "I second this!!"]
- Small/compact family theme park to increase revenue for town
- Retail stores; Target; Kohls; Menards; etc.
- Beautification; attractions/events to bring community together (example: farmer's market, splash pad)
- Develop the "downtown" main street area
- More recreation for kids/teens; parks; trails; playground; outdoor workout equipment
- Less trucks
- To have an election that is upheld and the transfer of power is done! Integrity + honest politicians
- Splash park [someone else added "Yes!"]
- Better code enforcement
- More restaurants & retail stores
- Less flashing lights in stores

- Preserving our older buildings (Muzzys and building across the street)
- Take advantage of the Rt 66 tourism
- Special rec center for people with special needs!!
- Save power plants; quit pushing solar; quit building; leave our small town alone + safe
- More business that are competitive
- More retail; Menards; Wal-mart
- Park programs
- Splash pad; flower pots downtown
- Better signage to downtown area + pts of interest
- Better law enforcement; better patrols
- Gym/community pool [someone else added "Yes!"]
- Need city center for children; indoor play center; pool; etc.
- Diversity
- Nice quiet town
- Stay a small town; family restaurant; beautify downtown
- Train station into the city
- Facilities for children, teens & senior citizens
- To maintain low crime and the safety of the people who live here
- Make a hospital
- When the people elect a mayor that is who the people want!
- Walking/biking trail with exercise features; seek local sponsorship of individual features
- Park district, rec center
- Community events
- Need a bank

What are places we should focus on?

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Please place a dot on the map, and then write down what it is on the side of the map.

- A **blue** dot for something you would like to preserve
- A **red** dot for something you don't like
- A **yellow** (yellow) dot for an idea you have for something new or improved

[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

A **blue** dot for something you would like to preserve

Comments:

- Small parks
- Preserve the small town feel and the sense of community
- The corn field south of Kennedy Rd
- Preserve Mason Bldg Museum (depot)
- Preserve small town feel
- Small town atmosphere; keep B.R.C. Braidwood Recreation Club
- Friendly people

- Affordable for land
- Small town feel
- Braidwood Recreational Club
- Bike path to connect to forest preserve; splash pad

*A **red** dot for something you don't like*

Comments:

- Less liquor stores; less gambling locations; less truck traffic
- Truck stop!
- Can we please make the traffic lights more efficient?
- Traffic calming
- Downtown need rebuilt!
- Downtown needs cleaned up, and made to look more inviting
- Turning lane leaving Shadow Lakes onto Novy Road
- Leave farms alone; quit building; people move here to be safe & for it to be cheaper
- Too many bars-liquor stores for this size town
- No truck stop!!!
- Lack of family businesses & eateries

*A **yellow** (yellow) dot for an idea you have for something new or improved*

Comments:

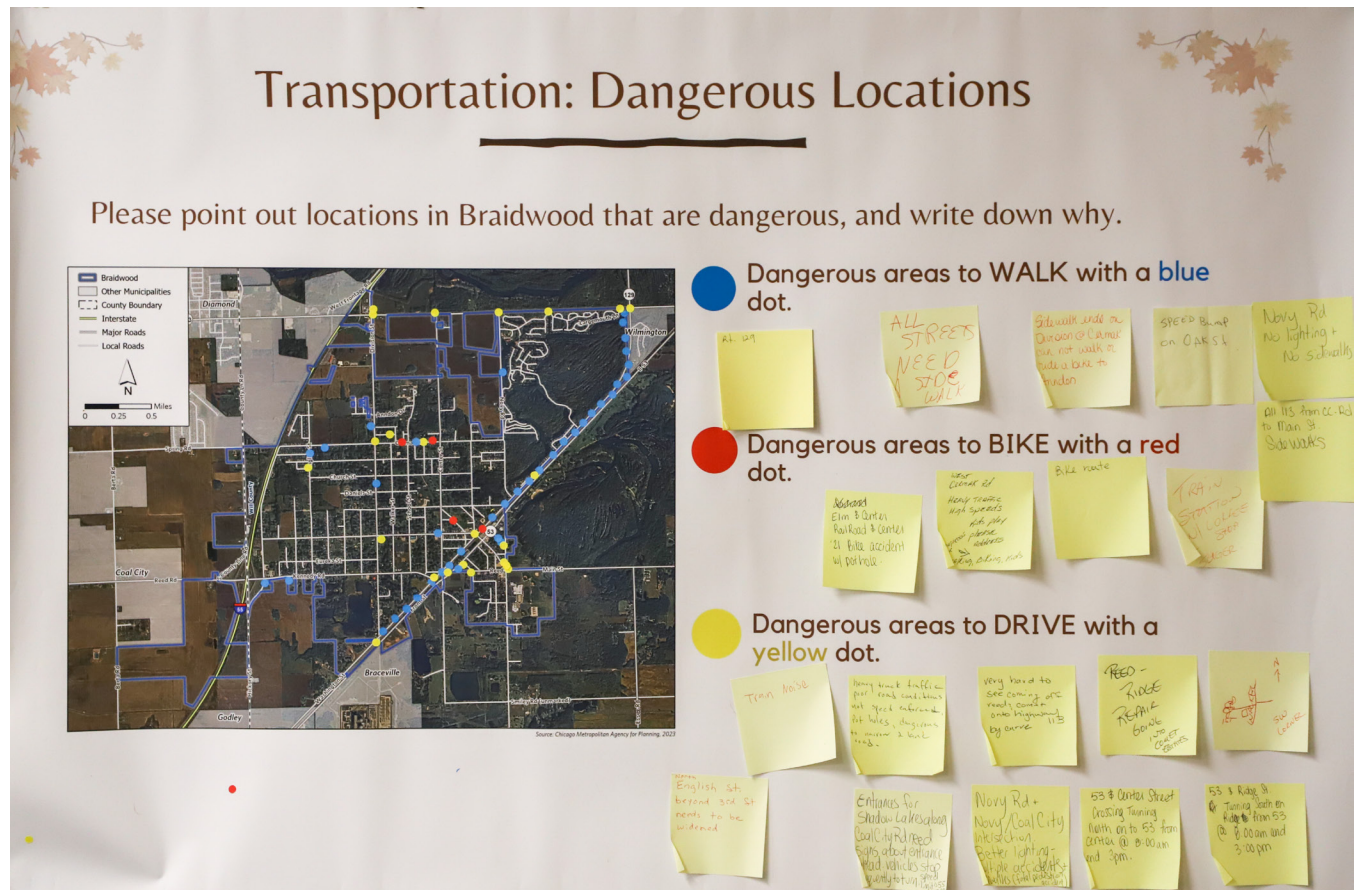
- Family theme park
- Revitalize Main St [someone else added "Agree!"]
- Improve Lions Park; add actual playground + splash pad
- Train station (Metra/Amtrak); another grocery store; bank
- More walking/biking trails; use all the parks and the 64-acre parcel on N. Division St.
- Banks
- Better lighting on Rte 129
- Dog park
- Main Street lighting
- Project plan for painting all fire hydrant
- Some street signs are faded from the sun
- More industrial development for small/medium size businesses 3000/6000 sq ft.
- Control traffic street N. Hickory
- Maybe we can keep restaurants in business if we set up one area with multiple restaurants; good access for drive-thru and parking, like a food court or oasis?
- Improve roads on Rt. 129
- Build up the Main St of Braidwood; cute boutiques; craft stores
- Car show in park

Unassigned comments (posted in upper left corner of poster):

- Better lights downtown; ROI issue
- Better parking and lighting downtown
- Street signage improvement; paint fire hydrants
- Lots of comments about absence of commercial businesses

Transportation: Dangerous Locations

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Please point out locations in Braidwood that are dangerous, and write down why.

- Dangerous areas to WALK with a **blue** dot.
- Dangerous areas to BIKE with a **red** dot.
- Dangerous areas to DRIVE with a **yellow** (yellow) dot.

[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

Dangerous areas to WALK with a **blue** dot.

Comments:

- Rt. 129
- All streets need a sidewalk
- Sidewalks ends at Division @ Cermak; cannot walk or bike to Anndon
- Speed bump on Oak St.
- Novy Rd; no lighting + no sidewalks
- All 113 from CC Rd to Main Street sidewalks

*Dangerous areas to BIKE with a **red** dot.*

Comments:

- Elm & Center; Railroad & Center; '21 biking accident w/ pothole
- West Cermak Rd; heavy traffic high speeds; kids play; dangerous for walking, biking, kids; please address
- Bike route
- Train station with coffee shop

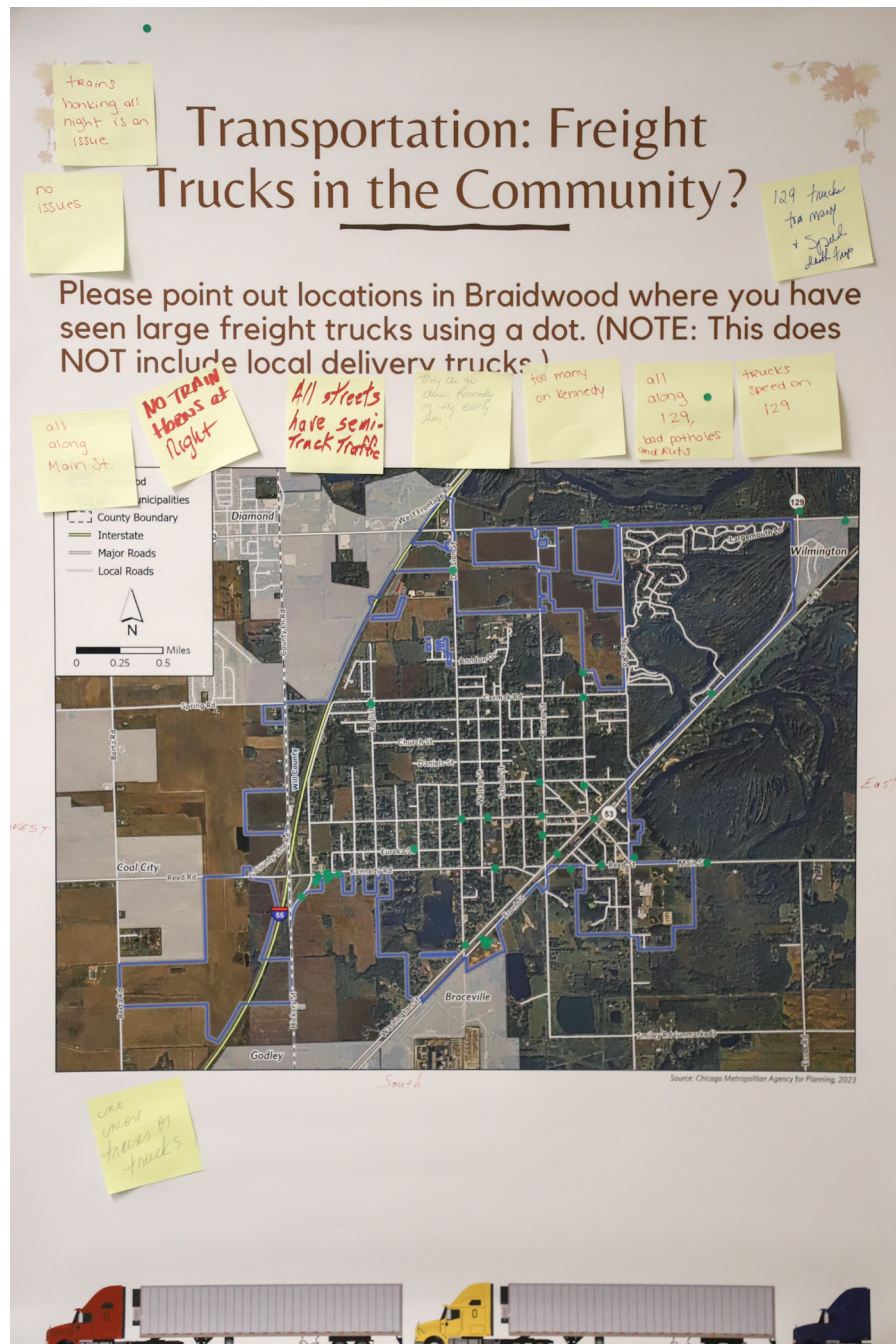
*Dangerous areas to DRIVE with a **yellow** (yellow) dot.*

Comments:

- Train noise
- North English St beyond 3rd Steet needs to be widened
- Heavy truck traffic; poor road conditions; not speed enforced; potholes; dangerous; too narrow 2 lane road
- Entrances for Shadow Lakes along Coal City Rd need signs about entrance ahead; vehicles stop frequently to turn; speed limit is 55 mph
- Very hard to see coming off Reed and Comet onto highway 113 by curve
- Novy Rd + Novy/Coal City Rd intersection; better lighting - multiple accidents + sidewalks (fatal pedestrian accident)
- Reed Ridge repair going into Comet Estates
- 53rd & Center St crossing turning north on to 53 from Center @8am and 3pm
- [Drawing highlighting SW corner of intersection of Walker and 1st Streets]
- 53rd & Ridge St turning south on Ridge from 53 @8:00 am and 3:00 pm

Transportation: Freight Trucks in the Community?

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Please point out locations in Braidwood where you have seen large freight trucks using a dot. (NOTE: This does NOT include local delivery trucks.).

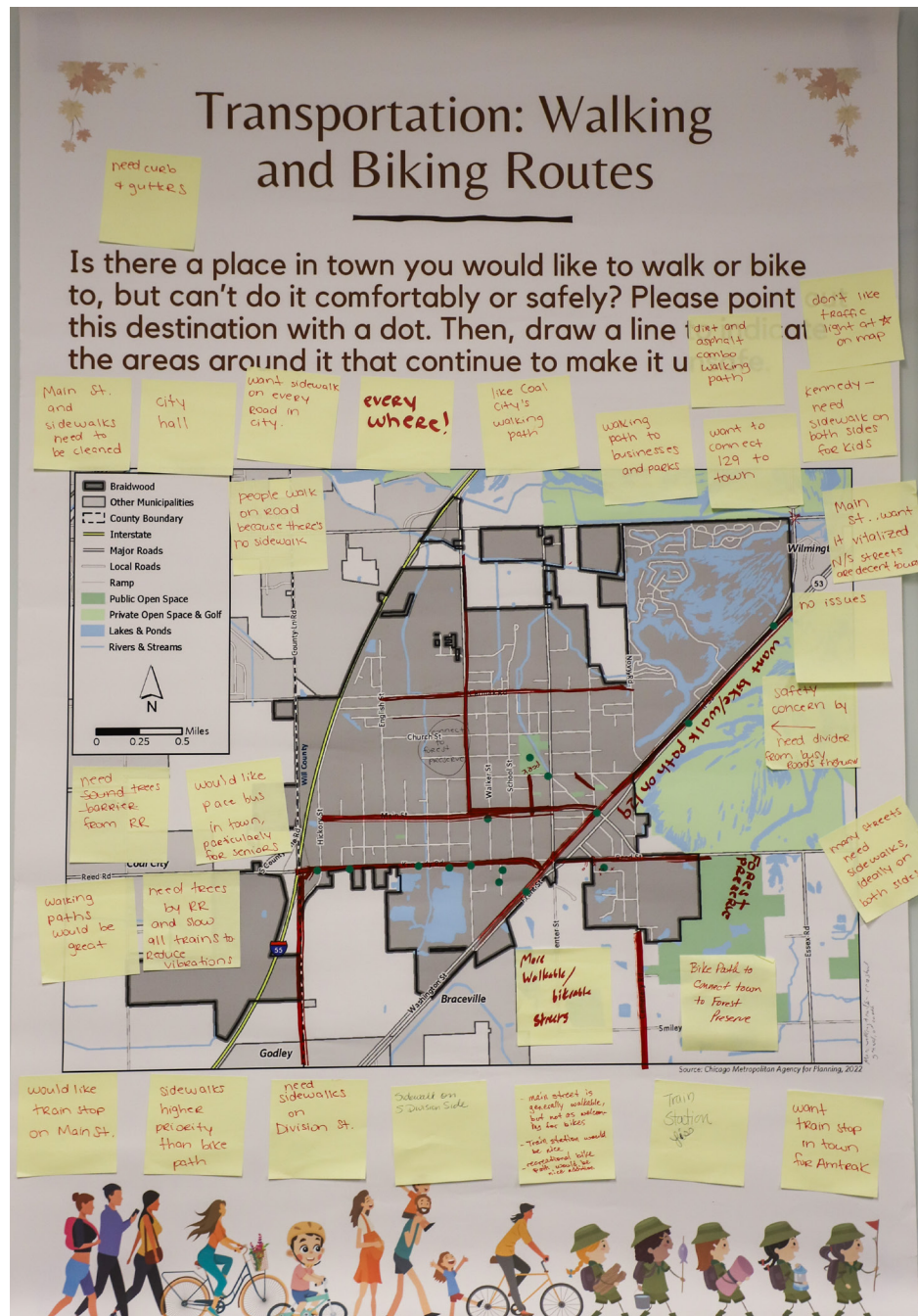
[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

Comments:

- Trains honking all night is an issue
- No issues
- 129 trucks too many + speed death trap
- All along Main Street
- No trains horn at night
- All streets have semi-truck traffic
- They do go down Kennedy in the early AM!
- Too many on Kennedy
- All along 129; bad potholes and ruts
- Truck speeds on 129
- No more trains or trucks

Transportation: Walking and Biking Routes

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Is there a place in town you would like to walk or bike to, but can't do it comfortably or safely? Please point out this destination with a dot. Then, draw a line to indicate the areas around it that continue to make it unsafe.

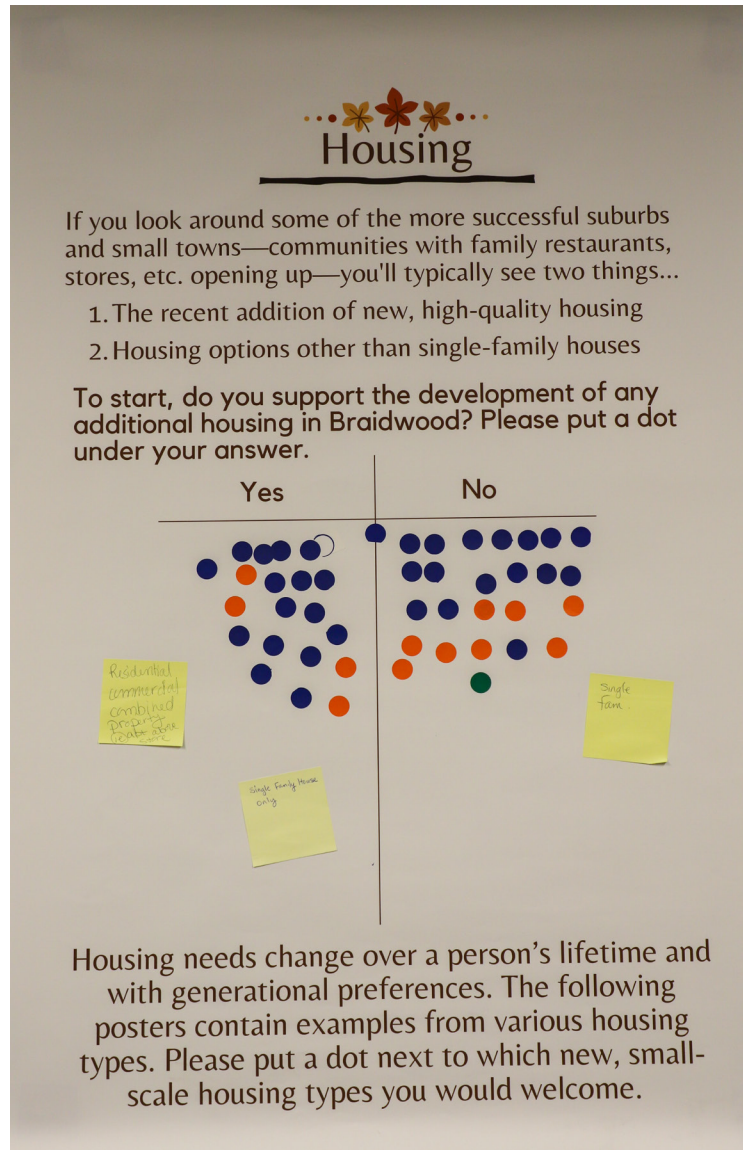
[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

Comments:

- Need curbs & gutters
- Main St. and sidewalks need to be cleaned
- City hall
- Want sidewalk on every road in city
- Everywhere!
- People walk on road because there's no sidewalk
- Like Coal City's walking path
- Walking path to businesses and parks
- Dirt and asphalt combo walking path
- Want to connect 129 to town
- Don't like traffic light at the (star) on the map
- Kennedy - need sidewalks on both sides for kids
- Main St. want it vitalized; N/S streets are decent to walk
- No issues
- Safety concern by [IL-53]; need divider from busy roads + highway
- Many streets need sidewalks, ideally on both sides
- Need trees from RR
- Would like Pace bus in town, particularly for seniors
- Walking paths would be great
- Need trees by RR and slow trains to reduce vibrations
- Would like train stop on Main St.
- Sidewalks higher priority than bike path
- Need sidewalks on Division St.
- Sidewalk on S. Division side
- More walkable/bikable streets
- Main Street is generally walkable, but not as welcoming for bikes; train station would be nice; recreational bike path would be nice addition
- Bike path to connect town to forest preserve
- Train station
- Want train station for Amtrak

Housing: (Additional Housing in Braidwood – Yes or No?)

Photograph of poster:

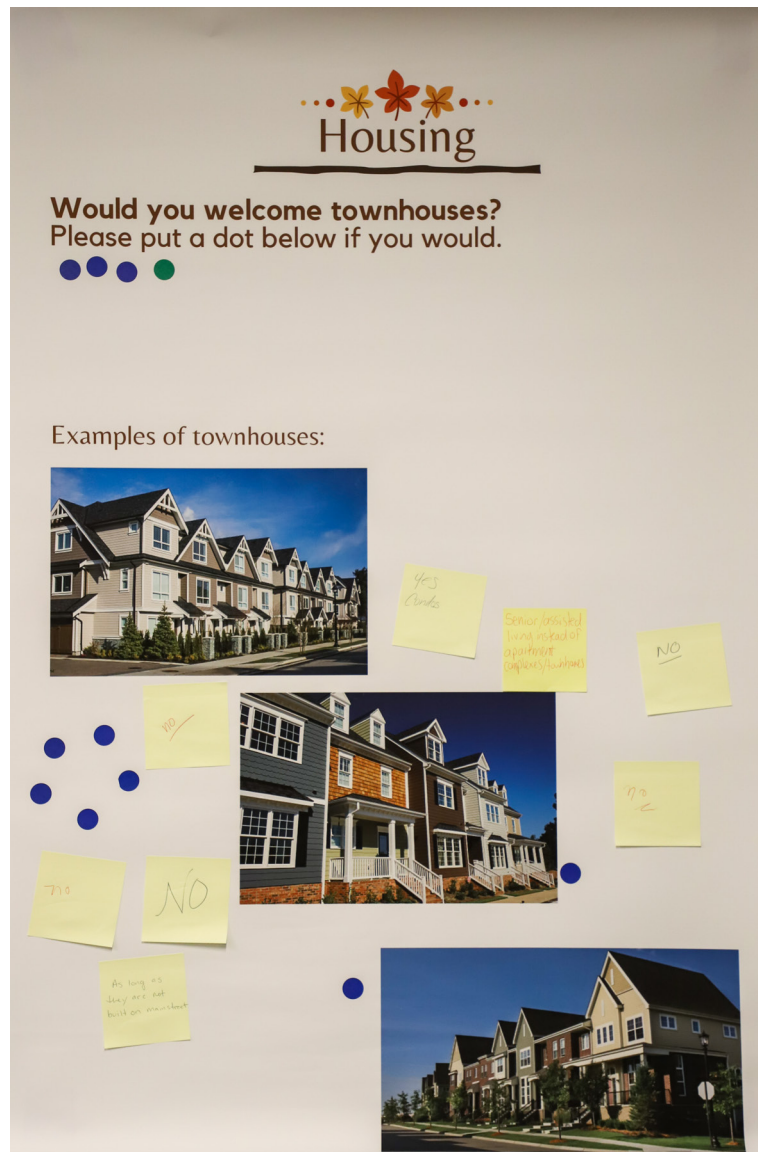


Transcription:

<p><i>Question: To start, do you support the development of any additional housing in Braidwood? Please put a dot under your answer.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes 21 dots• No 25 dots• [1 dot was placed in the middle]	<p>Comments under Yes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential commercial combined property (i.e. apt above store)• Single family house only <p>Comments under No:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single fam.
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Housing: (Townhouses)

Photograph of poster:

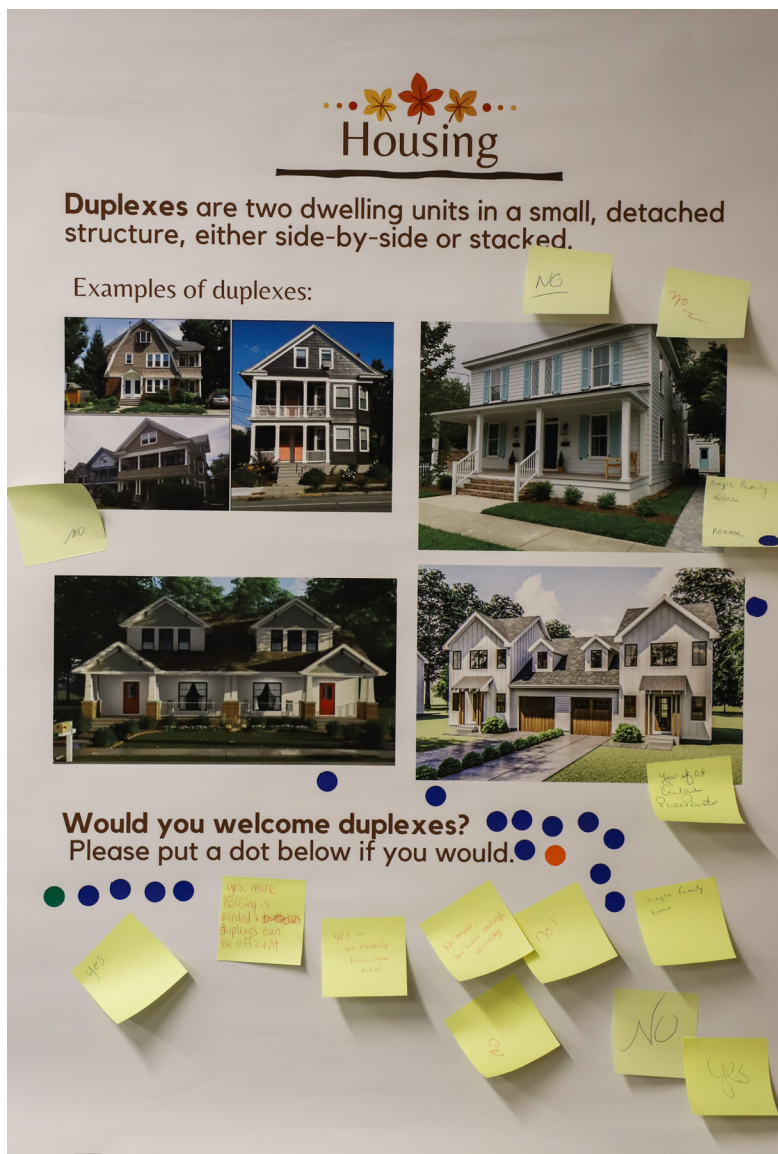


Transcription:

<p><i>Question: Would you welcome townhouses? Please put a dot below if you would.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">11 dots were placed on the poster	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Yes condosSenior/assisted living instead of apartment complexes/townhomesAs long as they are not built on Main Street"No" (x 5)
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Housing: (Duplexes)

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Question: Would you welcome duplexes? Please put a dot below if you would.

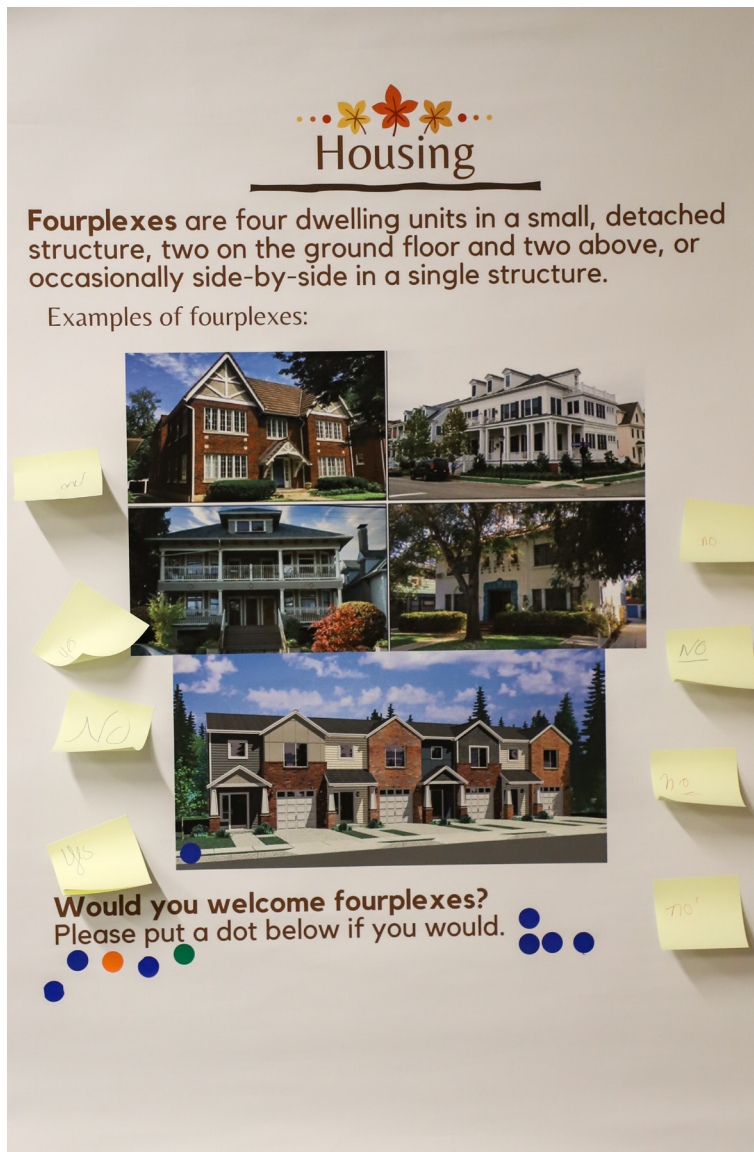
- 18 dots were placed on the poster

Comments:

- Single family homes; rental
- Yes if at certain pricepoints
- Yes, more housing is needed + duplexes can be efficient
- Yes – we already have some now
- No more, we have enough already
- Single family homes
- “Yes” (x 2) “No” (x 6)

Housing: (Fourplexes)

Photograph of poster:




Transcription:

<p><i>Question: Would you welcome fourplexes? Please put a dot below if you would.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">10 dots were placed on the poster	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">"Yes" (x 2) "No" (x 6)
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Housing: (Rental housing, Senior communities, 55+ communities)


Photograph of poster:

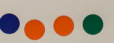
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Housing

One significant change in the housing market is increasing demand for high-quality rental housing by couples and families who could afford to buy a home. With that in mind...

How would you feel about limited development of new smaller-scale, high-quality rental housing?
Please place a dot next to your answer.




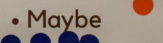

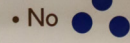
• Yes 

• Maybe 

• No 

Braidwood's resident population is getting older. The community is also a popular destination for older and retired people choosing to leave busier areas of the region for the charms of small-town life. With that in mind...

Please place a dot by your answers: Would you welcome the creation of new...

Senior and assisted living residential communities?	55+ communities?
• Yes 	• Yes 
• Maybe 	• Maybe 
• No 	• No 

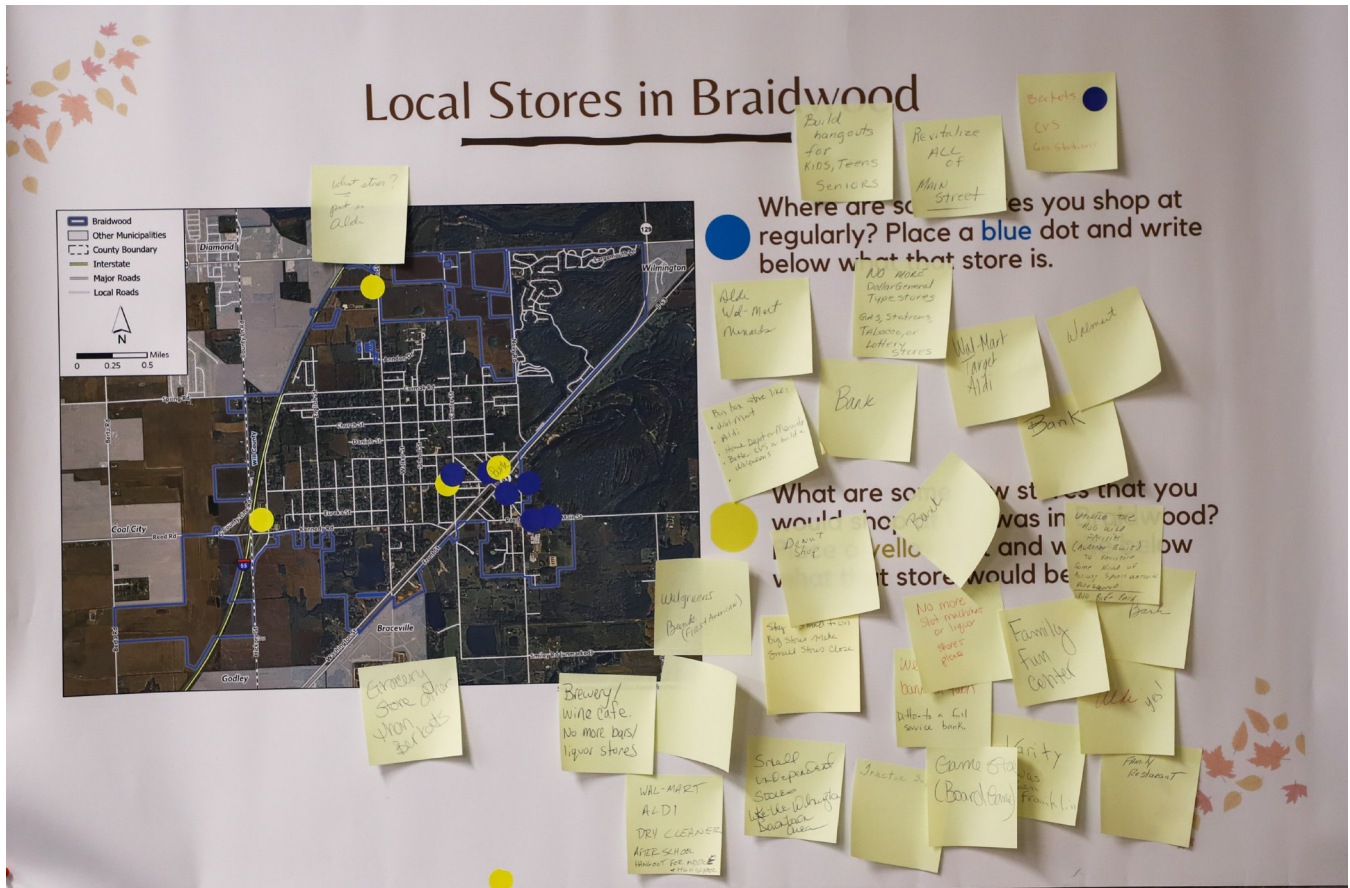
Transcription:

<p><i>Question: How would you feel about limited development of new smaller-scale, high-quality rental housing? Please place a dot next to your answer.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes 7 dots• Maybe 4 dots• No 22 dots	<p>Comments:</p> <p>"No" (x 3)</p>
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<p><i>Question: Please place a dot by your answers. Would you welcome the creation of new senior and assisted living residential communities?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 24 dots • Maybe 4 dots • No 3 dots 	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No” (x 1)
<p><i>Question: Please place a dot by your answers. Would you welcome the creation of new 55+ communities?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 18 dots • Maybe 6 dots • No 3 dots 	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No” (x 1)

Local Stores in Braidwood

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Question: Where are some stores you shop at regularly? Place a **blue** dot and write below what that store is.

[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

Comments:

- What stores? Put in Aldi
- Build hangouts for teens, kids, seniors
- Revitalize all of Main St
- Berkots, CVS, gas stations
- Aldi, Wal-Mart, Menards
- No more Dollar General type stores, gas stations, tobacco, or lottery stores
- Wal-Mart, Target, Aldi
- Walmart
- Big box stores like: Wal-Mart, Aldi, Home Depot or Menards, better CVS or build a Walgreens
- "Bank" (x 2)

Question: What are some new stores that you would shop at if it was in Braidwood? Place a yellow (yellow) dot and write below what that store would be.

[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

Comments:

- Bank
- Grocery store other than Berkots
- Brewery/wine café; no more bars/liquor stores
- Walgreens; bank (First American)
- Wal-Mart; Aldi; dry cleaner; after school hangout for middle and high school
- Donut shop
- Stay as small town; big stores make small stores close
- No more slot machines or liquor stores please
- We need a bank in town [someone else added "ditto to a full service bank"]
- Small independent stores, like the Wilmington downtown area
- Tractor supply
- Game store (board game)
- Family fun center
- Variety [store] as was Ben Franklin
- Utilize the Hog Wild facility (already built) to facilitate [unclear] to facilitate some kind of activity sports watching; playground; no bike path
- Aldi; bank
- Aldi [someone else added "Yes!"]
- Family restaurant

Photograph of poster:



[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

- Mexican restaurant
- Mexican restaurant family
- No chains
- All four
- Polka dot; Rosatti's; Main St
- Aldi's; ATM center; major banks [NOTE: this comment was probably intended for other poster focused on stores]

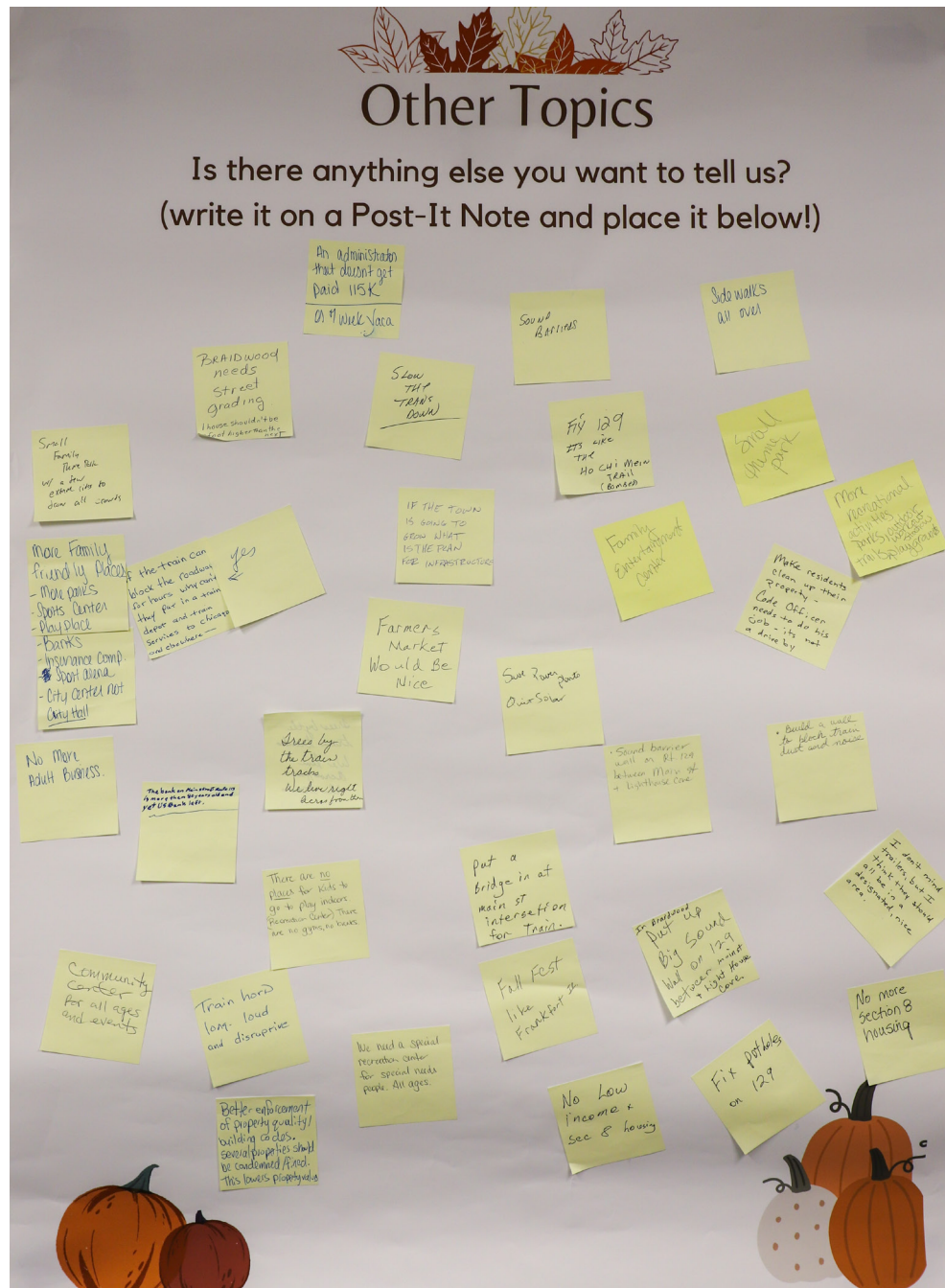
*Question: Where would you like new restaurants in Braidwood? Place a **yellow** (yellow) dot and write below what that restaurant would be.*

[Please see map above for highlighted locations]

Comments:

- Mod Pizza
- More chains; fast food; fast casual + sit-down; as well as more mom and pop one-offs
- Family restaurant, non-alcohol
- Healthy options with a more interesting environment
- Family restaurant
- Good family diner with a lot of parking
- Olive Garden; Heroes & Legends
- Authentic international food
- Palermo's Italian Restaurant
- Restaurant corner of Rt 113 and Division
- Arby's
- Restaurant - family; Chick-fil-A; Panda Express; Starbucks
- Restaurants for families
- We need Cracker Barrel please
- Vegetarian
- White castle
- Arcade gaming; one set price for hours; nothing for kids to do

Photograph of poster:



Transcription:

Question: Is there anything else you want to tell us? (write it on a Post-It Note and place it below!)

Comments:

- Small family theme park w/ a few extreme rides to draw all crowds

- More family friendly places; more parks; sport center; play place; banks; insurance comp.; sport arena; city center not city hall
- No more adult business.
- Community center for all ages and events
- If the train can block the roadway for hours why can't they put in a train depot and train services to Chicago and elsewhere [someone else added "Yes"]
- The bank on Main Street Route 153 is more than 80 years old and yet US Bank left.
- Train horn long, loud and disruptive
- Better enforcement of property quality/building codes; several properties should be condemned/fined; this lowers property values
- Braidwood needs street grading; 1 house shouldn't be a foot higher than the next
- Trees by the train tracks; we live right across from them
- There are no places for kids to go play indoor (recreation center); there are no gyms, no banks
- We need a special recreation center for special needs people; all ages
- An administrator that doesn't get paid 115K; or 7 week vaca
- Slow the trains down
- If the town is going to grow what is the plan for infrastructure
- Farmers market would be nice
- Save power plants; quit solar
- Put a bridge in at Main St intersection for train
- Fall Fest like Frankfort IL
- No low income + Sec 8 housing
- Sound barriers
- Fix 129 it's like the Ho Chi Mein Trail (bombed)
- Family entertainment center
- Sound barrier wall on Rt 129 between Main St + Lighthouse Cove
- In Braidwood put big sound wall on 129 between Main St + Light House Cove
- Fix potholes on 129
- Sidewalks all over
- Small theme park
- More recreational activities, parks, outdoor workout stations, trails, playgrounds
- Make residents clean up their property - code officer needs to do his job - its not a drive by
- Build a wall to block train dust and noise
- I don't mind trailers, but I think they should all be in a designated, nice area
- No more Section 8 housing

OPEN HOUSE HANDOUT

Here is the one-page (front-and-back) handout that was given to every person attending the open house...

The Braidwood Comprehensive Plan (a quick summary)

The City of Braidwood is working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to develop a new "Comprehensive Plan" for Braidwood (the last one was in 2004).

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan establishes a 10-year vision for the community and provides recommendations on how to get there.

The topics typically covered by a Comprehensive Plan are:

- Land Use and Development (such as commercial, residential, and industrial)
- Transportation
- Parks and Open Space
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Community Facilities
- Image and Identity of the Community

Braidwood's Comprehensive Plan's will serve as a guide for elected and appointed officials, City staff, community residents, local business owners, and potential investors, allowing each to make informed administrative and implementation choices regarding land use, transportation, infrastructure, and capital improvements throughout the City.

The comprehensive plan is a statement of policy; it is not a regulatory document. This plan should be flexible and able to adapt to change. At any time, this plan can be updated to better match shifting local needs, interests, and opportunities. It is recommended that the plan be reviewed every five years to ensure the document remains relevant.

What geographic area does the plan cover?

The proposed study area will include the entire incorporated area along with those areas within 1.5 miles of Braidwood corporate limits.

Who is developing the Braidwood Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is being developed by the City of Braidwood in partnership with CMAP. The plan's development is also guided by the project's steering committee, which consists of the following members:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Mayor Karen Hart | • Kim Earling |
| • Tony Altieri | • Melissa Micklos |
| • Josh Bollatto | • Dale Walsh |
| • Greg Cholek | • Ron Wilczak |
| • Pam Dell'Aquila | |

(please turn over)

What is the timeline for the rest of the plan?

- November 30: Community Open House and release of Existing Conditions Report
- December 12: Presentation of Market Analysis at City Council (please see event details below!)
- Winter: Development of Plan Recommendations
- Winter/Spring: Public Review of Plan Recommendations
- Spring: Plan Adoption

Who is CMAP?

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the regional planning agency for northeastern Illinois. CMAP serves seven counties, 284 municipalities, and over 1,200 units of government—the third largest metropolitan region in the United States. The agency was established in 2005 with the mission to plan comprehensively for economic prosperity and quality of life.

Most recently, CMAP and its partners developed and are now implementing ON TO 2050, a new long-range plan to help the region implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues. To learn more about CMAP, visit www.cmap.illinois.gov.

How do I learn more about the plan?

You can learn more about Braidwood's Comprehensive Plan, [read the full Existing Conditions Report](#), and correspond with the team on the project's website at:

engage.cmap.illinois.gov/braidwood-comprehensive-plan

(or just search for “braidwood plan” in Google!)

Important upcoming event!

**Presentation on results of Market Analysis
City Council meeting – December 12 (7:00 pm)**

To assist in the development of the Comprehensive Plan, CMAP has hired Kretchmer Associates, Inc. to conduct an independent, expert market analysis in four key areas: Commercial, Residential, Industrial, and Hotel.

Kretchmer Associates will present their findings to the City Council at its meeting on December 12. NOTE: In addition to their presentation, Kretchmer Associates welcomes questions from the City Council and the general public (attending the meeting in-person).

We hope to see you there!

