

# Memorandum

**To:** Antwerp Township Board  
**Date:** May 5, 2022  
**From:** David M. Jirousek, AICP – Horizon Community Planning  
**RE:** Community Opinion Survey Summary

## Responses

The Antwerp Township Community Survey attracted 333 respondents. Almost half have lived in the Township for over 20 years, and approximately 71% have lived in the Township for 11 years or more. Younger adults less than 35 years of age were less represented than older generations. Over 90% of respondents lived in single-family detached dwellings, and 97% owned their homes.

Comparison	2008	2021	Result
Participants	398	333	Decrease
Lived in community 11+ years	47%	71%	Increase
Population	12,182 (2010)	13,425 (2020)	Increase

## Agriculture and the Environment

Overall, respondents valued farmland most for the production of fresh local food (89%). Farmland was also valued for the jobs it creates for residents and the economic impact in the Township (76%). While important to most respondents, open space (58%) and scenic (54%) values were noted less than local food production and the economic value of farms.

Comparison	2008	2021	Result
Economic value of farms is important	82%	76%	Decrease
Open space is important	68%	58%	Decrease
Scenic value is important	56%	54%	Decrease

Most respondents were very supportive of farm markets and farm stands (81%) within agricultural areas, which are permitted in all areas based on the Right to Farm Act and GAAMPS. Agribusiness uses were (66%) were also viewed as important as support businesses for farming operations. While just over half of respondents saw recreation and wedding venues as important in agricultural areas, there was not overwhelming support for non-agricultural uses in these areas. Subdivisions (14%) and storage (22%) were not well supported.

<b>Comparison</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Result</b>
Support farm markets and stands	82%	81%	Decrease
Support agribusiness	66%	66%	Same
Support residential subdivisions	23%	14%	Decrease

Most respondents (78%) strongly agreed or agreed that stricter environmental protection ordinances should be passed, and 92% felt preservation of natural resources within developments should be prioritized. Most respondents (64%) support a special millage for environmental protection purposes.

<b>Comparison</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Result</b>
Support for stricter regulations	74%	78%	Increase
Support for special millage	53%	64%	Increase

## **Housing**

Just over half of respondents (52%) strongly agreed or agreed that residential developments should have a mix of housing options (single-family, attached housing, and apartments). However, it should be noted that denser housing types will require community septic systems or sewer connections, and many strongly agreed or agreed that a water and sewer feasibility study should be conducted (69%).

<b>Comparison</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Result</b>
Support a mix of housing options	28%	52%	Increase
Support with water and sewer study	67%	69%	Increase

A significant number of respondents (76%) strongly agreed or agreed that neighborhoods and commercial areas should be connected by pedestrian and bike paths. Concerning commercial use, home occupations were supported by the vast majority of respondents (81%), possibly a perspective affected by the recent pandemic. However, less than half of respondents supported smaller principal commercial businesses within neighborhoods (48%). Additionally, most respondents did not support residential areas set aside on Red Arrow Highway and M-40, meaning these corridors are acceptable for commercial development under the Commercial Corridor Overlay District.

Comparison	2008	2021	Result
Support with pathway connections	80%	76%	Decrease
Support home occupations	76%	81%	Increase
Support commercial businesses within neighborhoods	52%	48%	Decrease

Concerning specific housing types, the following ranking shows support or opposition:

1. Senior housing (50% said more needed, 41% said same needed, 9% said fewer needed)- **low ranking in 2008**
2. Single-family homes on one acre or greater (47% said more needed, 43% said same needed, 11% said fewer needed)- **top ranked in 2008**
3. Affordable housing for lower-income families (34% said more need, 44% said same needed, 22% said fewer needed)- **fourth ranked in 2008**
4. Apartments (22% said more need, 46% said same needed, 32% said fewer needed)
5. Condominiums (21% said more need, 47% said same needed, 32% said fewer needed)
6. Single-family homes on lots smaller than an acre (20% said more need, 48% said same needed, 32% said fewer needed)- **second ranked in 2008**
7. Modular/manufactured homes (7% said more need, 49% said same needed, 44% said fewer needed)
8. Manufactured home parks (4% said more need, 38% said same needed, 58% said fewer needed)

**Commercial and Industrial Uses**

The vast majority of respondents (90%) supported the need for local businesses that meet the everyday needs of residents are supported (strongly agreed or agreed), and commercial buildings should be held to design standards that preserve community character (81%). Interestingly, just over the majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that development along with Red Arrow (51%) and M-40 (53%) was adequate to support local needs. However, just less than half of the respondents felt that needs were not met.

<b>Comparison</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Result</b>
Agree that local businesses are important	89%	90%	Increase
Agree that commercial is adequate to meet local needs	39%	51-53%	Increase

Just over half of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that industrial areas are adequate to meet community needs (51%), but the vast majority (89%) felt that where new industrial development is proposed, it should be concentrated in existing planned areas and on vacant industrial sites. Approximately 64% of respondents were supportive of industrial development in general within the Township.

<b>Comparison</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Result</b>
Agree that industrial should be concentrated in planned areas	77%	89%	Increase

**Marijuana**

Commercial marijuana growing in agricultural areas was not well supported (42%), but a slight majority of respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree that medical marijuana (59%) and recreation (adult use) marijuana (54%) dispensaries should be allowed in commercial areas. While medical marijuana businesses are already authorized within the Industrial zoning district along LaGrave and Derhammer Parkway, just over half (54%) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with allowing recreational (adult use) marijuana establishments in the same area.

## Recreation

The majority of respondents felt that recreational opportunities within the Township are not adequate for the community (75%), and 59% would be willing to contribute to parks and recreation facilities, improvements, and programs financially.

Comparison	2008	2021	Result
Agree facilities are not adequate	63%	75%	Increase
Agree to contribute to parks financially	52%	59%	Increase

The survey resulted in the following rankings of importance (very or somewhat important).

1. Neighborhood parks (95%)- **also top 3 in 2008 (89%)**
2. Nature trails/passive recreation areas (94%)- **also top 3 in 2008 (88%)**
3. Pedestrian/bike paths (91%)- **also top 3 in 2008 (87%)**
4. Senior citizen center (89%)
5. Teen/youth center (87%)
6. Indoor recreation/sports facility (77%)
7. Ball fields (77%)
8. Soccer fields (74%)
9. Dog park (68%)
10. Tennis courts (64%)
11. Golf courses (39%)

### **New Regulations and Policies**

The top priorities for new regulations or efforts include code enforcement, environmental protection, and traffic safety. The survey resulted in the following rankings:

1. Blight and litter (64%)
2. Loss of natural features (58%)- **also top 3 in 2008 (61%)**
3. Groundwater pollution (56%)- **also top 3 in 2008 (60%)**
4. Traffic congestion (52%)- **top 3 in 2008 (60%)**
5. Surface water pollution (51%)
6. Loss of farmland (50%)
7. Urban sprawl (43%)
8. Noise (27%)
9. Outdoor storage- commercial (25%)
10. Signs (25%)
11. Home occupations (25%)

### **General Priorities**

Concerning general priorities and issues of importance, the survey resulted in the following rankings of importance (very or somewhat important).

1. Quality of neighborhoods (98%)- **also top three in 2008 (94%)**
2. Available open space/parks (96%)
3. Rural nature of the Township (96%)- **also top three in 2008 (90%)**
4. Quality of schools (94%)
5. Housing in a price range I could afford (94%)- **also top three in 2008 (90%)**
6. Convenience of services, shopping, etc. (89%)
7. Job location (88%)
8. Family living nearby (83%)
9. Living in a growing community (77%)