

Elevate Eaton

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Recently, a meeting was held on a City of Eaton development plan.

Conducting the meeting were two consultants hired by the City of Eaton to facilitate the development of such a plan (external links provided). It was stated by Ms. Wendy Moeller, consultant that she was involved in the plan development underway in Hamilton involving the former International Paper headquarters.

The meeting was conducted in the Eaton Youth Bldg. on Park Avenue. The facility was just big enough to accommodate the attendees numbering approximately 45. Among those in attendance were some City Council members (former & present), members of both Democrat and Republican Central Committees, some business & commercial property owners, an unknown #of city residents.

It was proposed by the consultants that each of the 6 or so tables collectively discuss ideas to enhance the City of Eaton. A volunteer from each discussion table shared a couple of their suggestions with the small gathering. These were written on poster boards and displayed for all to see. All in attendance were encouraged to indicate their individual preferences in rank order from left to right 1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice.

Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area	1	2	
Monument program r/t community history			
Pioneer Days (bring it back)			
Amphitheater (gathering event space)	1		2
Community gardens			1
Memorial spaces for people & pets			1
Trade School expansion into Preble County			
More collaborative work amongst business & local agencies	3	1	3
Housing options at all levels of \$\$\$	5	4	4
Youth Recreation Center		1	1
Splash pad			
Improving stormwater control to reduce pooling and drainage problems	5	4	4

Address vacant homes		1	
Rethinking the Pork Festival			
Expanding sidewalk and path network	1	1	
Public transit hub	1		
Promoting industrial growth		1	
Measured controllable growth to keep small town character		1	2
Reliable wi-fi/broadband infrastructure			1
Housing assessment of needs			1
Traffic mitigations			1
Incentives for building investment/redevelopment	8	3	4
Business incentives that are balanced so city doesn't pay for everything			1
Park programming (events at parks)		2	
Promoting civic, arts & entertainment activities	1		
Police department upgrade			
Maintaining public safety - it is a safe community () and keep it that way			
Multi-use event space/conference space	2	2	2
Child care/ preschool opportunities (all hours)	4	5	4
Recreational seating/place to take reeks along sidewalks & paths			
Park maintenance			
More community events		3	

A question was prompted by a statement from the consultants that the last development plan had not been updated in 20 years. What was in the last development plan? Was that plan implemented and evaluated? What was the outcome? That plan is available online (see external links provided).

It would certainly be in the best interest of the residents of the City of Eaton to take an active role in this process that has been initiated by our city officials. No doubt, there will be a burden placed on taxpayers regardless of whatever seed money or “other people’s money” (OPM) that

can be gleaned to start a project. There are relevant concerns related to maintenance, and liability. Do these projects pay for themselves or is there sufficient value to the enhancement to offset the initial and long term investment? What are the measures we will use to qualify this value?

Since the taxpayers of the City of Eaton will constitute the majority stake-holder position, our position is to provide information that can best be used to arrive at the best informed decision for the residents of Eaton.

External links:

<https://www.cityofeaton.org/meetings>

<https://www.elevateeaton.com/>

https://www.cityofeaton.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_board/page/2406/eatonplan2003_wholeplan.pdf

<https://localgovconsultants.com/>

<https://www.compasspointplanning.com/>