

October 7, 2019

[NAME]
Worthington City Council
6550 N. High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085

Dear [NAME],

It is our pleasure to deliver the following materials, and to address you, the elected representatives of the Worthington public.

Over the last year, a group of Worthington residents has engaged community members on the subject of the UMCH property. This group of citizens, all of whom care deeply about our community, share a common vision for the UMCH property: a balanced, multi-use outcome that has at its core a significant community-oriented green-space vs. an outcome dominated by high-density residential with only remnants of green-space for public use.

Our group—calling itself Project Community Park Worthington—has set about the task of determining whether other members of the community share our vision. We have held gatherings at our neighbors' homes and have discussed our city, how the land at UMCH will impact its future, and how the residents may make an actual difference in shaping the outcome of this crucial issue.

When it became clear to us that there is significant support for our basic vision within our community, we decided to transform the verbal support into tangible evidence by way of a petition campaign.

To date, this volunteer-led effort, largely comprised of a door hanger and word of mouth, has resulted in over 1,000 petition signatures, from over 750 Worthington households. To those familiar with petition campaigns, and average response rates to cold-call literature (such as a door hanger), this number of 1,000 in a city of 5,000 households is striking and an indicator of a broader public sentiment that would emerge if prompted with the necessity of a choice.

Today, we present the Petition and the first 1,000 signers, to you, our city leadership, for consideration.

Attached, you will find the following materials:

- The Project Community Park Worthington Mission Statement
- A copy of the Petition
- A map that includes a pin for every single unique household that contains 1 or signature
- A small selection of the comments shared by petition signers
- A copy of a proposed and theoretical design for the mixed-use property
- A list of the first 1,000 petition signatures

We thank you for your review and your consideration, and look forward to continuing this important conversation.

Sincerely,

Kacey Brankamp	Project Community Park Worthington co-chair
Andy Hutter	Project Community Park Worthington co-chair
Scott Taylor	Project Community Park Worthington co-chair

Mission Statement & Guiding Principals

Mission

In accord with our city's long history, we advocate for bequeathing to future generations a valuable public asset at the UMCH property— a signature, multi-use community green-space— for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

Our Guiding Principles

- We embrace this goal because the UMCH property is a uniquely important site—due to its location, size, and physical features—for the future of our city, and we have just one opportunity to get it right.
- We believe that the developed site should reflect the interests and values of our city's residents—those who have sunk roots, made their homes, and both know and express the character of our city.
- We are committed to obtaining full disclosure of relevant information, in the service of informing a robust and reasoned public dialog about the future of this property and its impact on our community.
- We envision for the land a multi-use development featuring 1) a large, signature public green-space with community amenities, 2) commercial space and service-oriented retail along the High Street frontage (generating revenue for the city), and 3) appropriate residential properties (owner-occupied, empty-nester) immediately adjacent Longfellow Avenue.
- We urge our city government to embrace this once-in-history opportunity by acquiring the property, thereby gaining full creative control of this public-private project for the benefit of our city and its residents for generations to come.

Support From Residents

A partial sampling of some of the comments shared by Worthington residents in support of the PCPW vision.

It is time for Worthington and it's leaders to step up and consider this proposal. This is the time to create something that will be unique and make Worthington a community that others will look up to and mimic.

— Phil Raynes

Many of us are still reeling in the wake of what was promised and what was delivered in the downtown area in the heart of Old Worthington. Bolstered by that experience, suffice it to say future proposals by eager developers motivated by monetary gain rather than preserving the spirit of this city will continue to be looked at with a keen eye towards preserving green space, and sad to say with a healthy dose of earned mistrust.

— Dr. James Smith

Open green spaces are vital to our community, it's citizens and the environment. Allowing this space to be built up with high density development would change the character and ambiance of the area. While his proposal would enhance our community and at the same time it would provide and preserve open space for birds and other wildlife.

— Jeanette S.

I think this would be a great space for our community. It is in keeping with what Worthington stands for. Keeping the community together, walkable, social and active. It's just perfect!

— Cindy Kington

We wholeheartedly support your vision for Worthington, and are totally in favor of the city acquiring the UMCH property for multi-use public green-space for the BENEFIT OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY!!!

Chet and I have been residents of Worthington for over fifty years. It is a unique , historic city, very family centered ,,,among many other worthy attributes. We love Worthington and cannot think of a better use of the UMCH property than your vision/mission.

— Dr. Mary Winter & Dr. Chester Winter

This would be a wonderful addition to our community which our family would enjoy regularly. This project would continue to attract younger families, making Worthington a primary choice of destinations around Columbus to raise a family.

— Ryan McChesney

We moved to Worthington a year ago for the amenities and community atmosphere. This community park would be something that continues to encourage young families to come to the area and my two young sons would love it!

— Breanne Huss

I love this idea! Worthington NEEDS a community park like this. Coming from Denver, I miss Wash (Washington) Park being a vibrant, safe and gorgeous place to walk, bike or sit. This would be wonderful for our community to bring people together.

— Michelle Neely

Best use of space for long term positive impact on the ENTIRE community of Worthington.

— Adam Gibson

A public green-space of this size and with the above listed community amenities is GREATLY needed in Worthington. My family and neighborhood would benefit in so many ways from this type of green-space development.

— Kelly Blevins

This is a great idea. A community park of this magnitude will leave a legacy for Worthington's future.

— Eric Hoover

I support the Project Community Park Worthington because...

It is a brilliant investment for the future of our lovely city Worthington.

It is forward-thinking city design to create a people-centered neighborhood that achieves precedent-setting levels of sustainability, affordability, mobility, and economic opportunity.

— Noel Zawadi Kigaraba

We don't have any usable parks on High street. We need an Event Venue that can be used for family fun activities, sport fields, and outdoor gardens .

Westerville's sports park on Cleveland Ave is always full of people with restroom facilities.

Let's make our park even better proud people of WORTHINGTON.

— Sondra Schwotzer

I support the idea of green space and community recreational areas in this plot. It enhances the city, gives a walking-distance space for people to gather, allows for small homes and some businesses along the High St.

— Norma Lang

What a wonderful (and rare) opportunity to secure the UMCH property as protected space for Worthington residence and its visitors. This will, without doubt, be a legacy to the community as a whole for years to come.

— Glen Sullivan

We are excited about the community park proposal. As resident who uses High Street everyday, and many times must turn left, the idea of a 300 hundred unit apartment complex is not appealing. It's also a good idea because Worthington doesn't really have an area like this.

— Amie Giampouranis

Native trees and native green space are vitally important to the health and wellbeing of the residents of Worthington, including the resident wildlife. Once lost, this kind of treasure is extremely difficult to restore. We have a unique opportunity to secure this area for the long term benefit of all. It is time for new and creative approaches, and this is definitely a vision many of us dreamed of.

— Mechtelina Mitchin-Verhoef

Green-space near high street is desperately needed. For the homes near high street the Olentangy trail is almost a mile away, not a reasonable journey for a 4-6 year old riding their bike, especially in regards to the massive hill they would need to climb on the way back. Additionally, it [UMCH] is located in close proximity to the downtown so that people from either Worthington or other nearby communities would potentially use the public space and then visit our downtown area for lunch, dinner, drinks etc.

— Ryan Beck

This would be a prize in the heart of Worthington...many generations from now will thank us.

— David Gifford

This sounds like a great proposal and is well thought out. If the plan evolves with further input, my key concern is to avoid any increase to the residential density to this central area of Worthington. Worthington currently has a great feel to it, and this community space will preserve—and greatly enhance—this central part of the city. Kudos to the group that developed this land-use option that had not been considered before.

— John Byrnes

This area is perfect to make into green space including a park, trails, etc. Adding more apartments, office buildings into such a small space will increase traffic, put extra strain on the school system and be very displeasing to the eye. That is not a good solution for this property, a park system and green space is the perfect solution.

— Gertrude Snediker

To those making the decisions that impact our community, our neighborhood, and our families – please acquire this property for the purpose of providing the multi-use green-space as described by this petition. A high-density development threatens our schools, encourages transient living, creates a heightened need for greater public safety, and will bombard our neighborhood streets.

We do LIVE here, have supported taxes and schools for 25+ years, and want to continue to do so.

— Constance McCarthy

Primarily as I see it, the strength beyond all else is the assistance to the environment that this plan offers, maintaining green space doesn't increase the heat, offers good drainage for rain in addition to adding to the community and activities for the family. while I understand the need for the city to derive some revenue from this property I question more retail when it appears that we have many open retail spaces in the city, such as the two next to CVS and the mall has open spaces. I do hope this goes through and the city can see the value to the community and the environment.

— Karen Geizer

This is a WONDERFUL plan! Thank you for the obvious thoughtful work That has gone in to the creation of this park space. I would be happy to help promote it in any way I can!!

— Melissa Weber

Multi-Use Design Concept

This design is not in any way formal, but is instead a basic concept that reflects core elements of our mission, designed to stimulate our imaginations and foster public dialog.

