



AMBERLEY GREEN 2026 FUTURE VISIONING REPORT



Prepared for:



Prepared by:



Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Introduction	2
Defining the Future	5
Use of Demographics in This Study.....	8
Survey Analysis Using Personas	9
Data Source and Approach.....	9
Overlap Across the Personas.....	11
Fiscal Realists.....	12
Change-Ready Residents.....	13
Community Hub Builders.....	14
Nature Stewards.....	15
Young Family Connectors.....	16
Athletics Advocates.....	17
Aging-in-Place Advocates.....	18
Dog-First Power Users.....	19
Persona Distribution.....	20
A Path Toward Creative Stewardship.....	21
Final Perspective	23
Rebuilding Green Space Through Partnership.....	24
The Community Land Trust.....	26
A Long and Connected Life.....	27
Acknowledgements	28

Introduction: The Path of Creative Stewardship

For more than a decade, the 133-acre Amberley Green, a premier community asset acquired by Amberley Village in 2008, has been the subject of numerous studies and much debate. Unity of purpose has not emerged despite many reports and conversations. One resident group supports evolution; another argues for maintaining existing conditions.

Meanwhile, budgetary constraints control what can actually be done. Amberley Village has been successful in attracting funding for several beneficial changes, but large-scale initiatives are infeasible without additional investment from some source.

Recognizing the need for decisive action, even if that is a final determination to do nothing different, Village leadership commissioned Urban Fast Forward to conduct public engagement. The objective was to capture a true and current snapshot of community opinion, listening to every willing voice. Unlike prior efforts that focused primarily on conceptual planning or partner-led implementation proposals, this work was designed to reach out to every household and capture a contemporary record of resident priorities, aspirations, concerns, and limits.

More than 650 individual inputs were gathered through in-person conversations, intercept engagement, and a Village-wide survey. That process highlighted many of the ideas residents have and the tradeoffs they are—or are not—willing to make.

Folks had a lot to say.

This report synthesizes those findings and surfaces options for the range of community desires including usage, infrastructure, and funding. It is fair to say that most participants had no defined vision of what change might look like, though many had thoughts about specific applications, benefits, and objections.

For those advocating momentum, there were proposals for what might make life in Amberley Village more vibrant. Many of these came from those with young families seeking ways in which they and their children could access more recreational opportunities close to home. These residents identified a need for community anchors, such as athletic and social facilities, to keep young families rooted in Amberley Village.

Because there is no central gathering hub, families are often forced to travel to other areas for sports, recreation, and social events, leaving them feeling disconnected from their neighbors and unsupported by proximate amenities.

Those more preservation-focused value the wildness and open space as an end in itself. For them, there is an intrinsic value in 133 wild acres that transcends utility; they are driven by the sense that once the acreage is altered, that character is forever lost. This perspective aligns the

preservation of the land with a preference for stability and fiscal caution—arguing that the most responsible path is to maintain the land as is, even as some of these same individuals request better care and basic amenities.

As stewards of the land, leadership is tasked with finding a way through these divisions by **balancing the needs of different generations** and reconciling the inevitability that the future generally looks quite different from the past.

Set against that is another dilemma. Consultants frequently heard complaints about inaction, either in maintaining the current state of Amberley Green (“It’s an embarrassment”) or of failure to act (“They’re not doing anything”).

What often appears to be missing from these conversations is **a broadly shared recognition of Amberley Village’s fiscal limits**. While residents are passionate about their specific goals, there is an irreconcilable gap between those ambitions and the current budget. At present, Amberley Village is essentially funded to mow the grass and handle routine upkeep; there isn't additional revenue for new projects beyond the very minor.

This creates a stalemate that debate alone cannot resolve. Whether the goal is to maintain and improve the natural space or to create new athletic and social amenities, **success will almost certainly require new funding sources and/or partnerships**.

Without these, **Amberley Village remains stuck between a community that wants better and a budget that is already fully committed**.

Whether or not anything is done to change the character of Amberley Green, failing to undertake and manage difficult conversations creates potential for a rift in Amberley Village that will continue to grow.

But that is an unnecessary outcome.

Much of previous deliberations appear to have reduced potential resolutions to **“either/or”**. This is a false dilemma, assuming that there are only two options, black vs. white, and by choosing one, the other is negated.

As will be outlined in the research following, the reality of current consumer sentiment trends much more strongly to a preference for **“both/and”**. This framing assumes that multiple options can coexist, allowing for a 'best of all worlds' approach where different goals are combined. The vast space afforded by its 133 acres, the equivalent of 100 football fields, lends itself to exploring the “both/and” approach at Amberley Green.

The "both/and" approach surfaces in three primary areas:

- Both Preservation and Activation: Many residents value the wildness of the Green, but also want it to be more usable. This may look like maintaining the vast majority of the

natural footprint while adding low-impact amenities, such as improved walking trails or a modest gathering hub, that add vibrancy without eroding its character.

- **Both Tradition and Evolution:** The data shows a desire to respect the memories of long-term residents while acknowledging the needs of young families. This isn't about replacing one with the other; it's about creating community anchors that allow different generations to cross paths in the same space.
- **Both Aspiration and Fiscal Reality:** This is the most critical "both/and." While the current budget is extremely limited, the community expressed an openness to creative partnerships. The path forward involves finding external funding or unique management models that allow for improvements without placing an undue tax burden on Amberley Village.

Rather than choosing between preservation and progress, Amberley Village leadership has the opportunity to pursue a strategy of creative stewardship. By looking for innovative ways to bridge the gap between community aspirations and fiscal limits, they can protect the character valued by those seeking continuity while providing the vitality required to keep Amberley Village a valued community asset for future generations.

Defining the Future

Limitations of Scope: Third-Party, Unbiased Reporting

Urban Fast Forward was engaged to gather perspectives on Amberley Green from as many residents as possible. The scope of this work was limited to information gathering and vision development, followed by a summary report including recommendations for next steps.

In this stage, consultants were to act as a neutral third-party **to listen, document, and present resident input rather than advance a specific proposal or outcome**. The resulting visioning work is intended to establish a baseline of resident opinion, enabling leadership to identify key priorities and constraints before considering more detailed planning of the site itself.

The Investigative Process: Residents Shaping the Survey

Consultants began with qualitative outreach, inviting Village residents to participate in one-on-one conversations and small-group discussions. This was to better understand how residents experience and use Amberley Green, the identity they associate with Amberley Village, and the concerns shaping views about the site's future.

Insights gathered directly then informed the design of the Amberley Village-wide survey, ensuring that the quantitative research reflected topics raised by residents themselves, rather than being developed by non-residents.

Timeline of Engagement: From Small Groups to All Residents

Work began in August 2025 with in-person intercept engagement at the Amberley Village Ice Cream Social. Comments collected during this event helped surface initial themes and informed the direction of subsequent engagement.

Next, one-on-one conversations and small group discussions were conducted. Using Village communication channels, residents were invited to participate and **the response was strong**. Approximately 125 residents engaged across a range of group sizes and settings.

A village-wide survey was then developed and distributed to all Amberley Village addresses. 478 survey responses were submitted by residents, the equivalent of 1/3 of the households of Amberley Village. Survey findings are analyzed in subsequent sections of this report.

Throughout all phases of the engagement process, participants spoke both from personal experience and on behalf of their families, in many cases reflecting shared perspectives. These conversations provided a broad qualitative foundation of recurring themes, areas of alignment, and points of dispute.

Community Identity: Common Themes, Shared Priorities & Divergent Aspirations

Amberley Village was defined by residents as a quiet, residential enclave with mature trees and mid-century architecture. It is valued as a relatively pastoral locale just minutes from an urban center. It has a very small number of businesses, primarily on the outskirts, with none of them directly oriented to consumers.

Common Concerns: Overlapping Goals

Though previous samples were much smaller, analysis of public sentiment regarding Amberley Green has sometimes been characterized as majority rules. Not only would such a conclusion be unfair to minority voices, it is fundamentally a misrepresentation of the thoughtfulness with which residents approached the work here.

There is no actual majority.

Rather, residents share a common love of Amberley Village but diverge on whether the future should look the same as the past. One group is focused on **History and Stewardship** while another is advocating for **Momentum and Vitality**.

Within these two main clusters are multiple shared themes and considerable overlap. There are also widely held concerns which are not necessarily points of disagreement, but rather guardrails held in common. Even residents who want significant change still worry about key persistent issues.

Those who favored substantially maintaining present circumstances focused primarily on site improvements relating to safety, convenience and the natural world:

- **Improved walking and hiking trails**
- **Controlled invasives**, both flora and fauna
- **Essential Amenity Upgrades** with water fountains, restrooms, trash cans, and signage.
- **Enhanced Connectivity** including the need for crosswalks and dedicated bike paths
- **Maintenance Upgrades** including walkways and parking areas, tennis courts, and trees
- **Continued Dog Park access, possibly with modifications for safety**

Those looking for change often agreed with the suggestions above but added a broader array of recommendations:

- **Intergenerational Recreation facilities**
- **Modern Playgrounds** incorporating opportunities that support everyday use
- **Nature-Based Play and Wild Areas** that allow for interaction with the site's natural character
- **Court and Field Sports**
- **A Gathering Place** such as a café, event space, great lawn or small amphitheater
- **Housing that allows for Aging-in-Place**

Across both groups there are several factors which have historically delayed progress that continue to be active concerns:

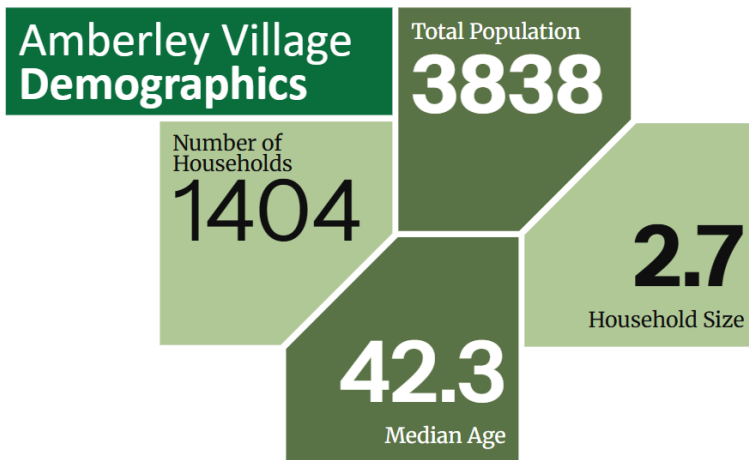
- **Fiscal Challenges**
- **Preservation and Incremental Change Concerns**
- **Traffic and Infrastructure Constraints**

The persistence of these issues suggests that they function less as points of disagreement than as shared reference points that must be part of any evaluation of potential change.

For this reason, they are treated in this report as cross-cutting constraints or factors that influence nearly all perspectives and set the conditions under which support for any future action is considered.



Use of Demographics in This Study



Demographic data are provided to establish context, not to infer motivations or preferences. **Age, household composition, and tenure alone do not explain how residents use Amberley Green or what supports its future.**

Herein, demographics serve only as a background condition to personas, which reflects patterns across multiple life stages rather than mapping preferences to age groups alone.

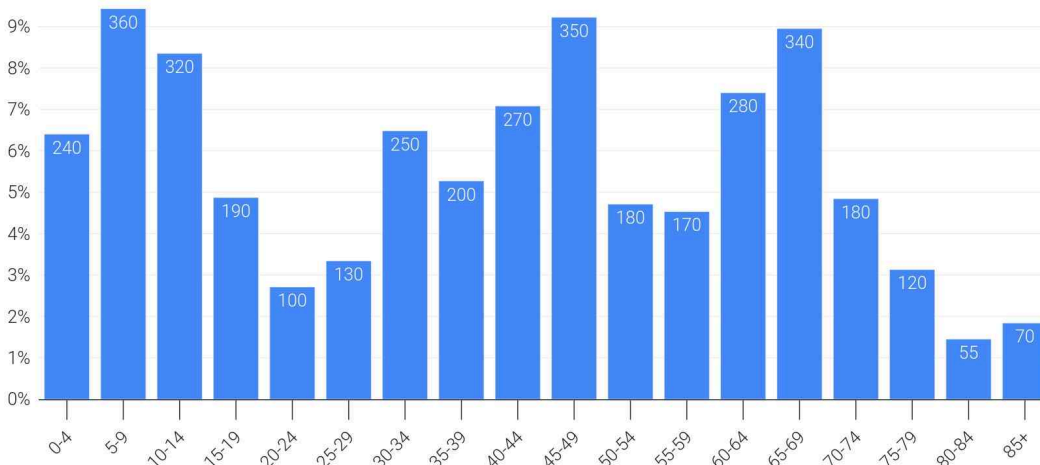
Amberley Village is a small, stable, community. As of the 2020 Census, Amberley Village has a total population of **3,838** residents across **1,404 households**, with an average household size of **2.7** and a median age of **42.3**. These figures indicate a community that includes both families and long-tenured adult residents, rather than a predominantly transient or single-life-stage population.

Age Structure and Change Over Time

Over the past two decades, Amberley Village’s age structure has remained relatively balanced,

Amberley, OH population by age group

The largest age group is 5-9 years with a population of 358 (9.43%)



with modest shifts rather than sustained demographic change.

The share of residents under age 18 declined between 2000 and 2010, then rebounded by 2020 to levels comparable to 2000. During the same period, the share of residents age 65

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2017-2021 5-Year Estimates

increased through 2010 and then moderated by 2020.

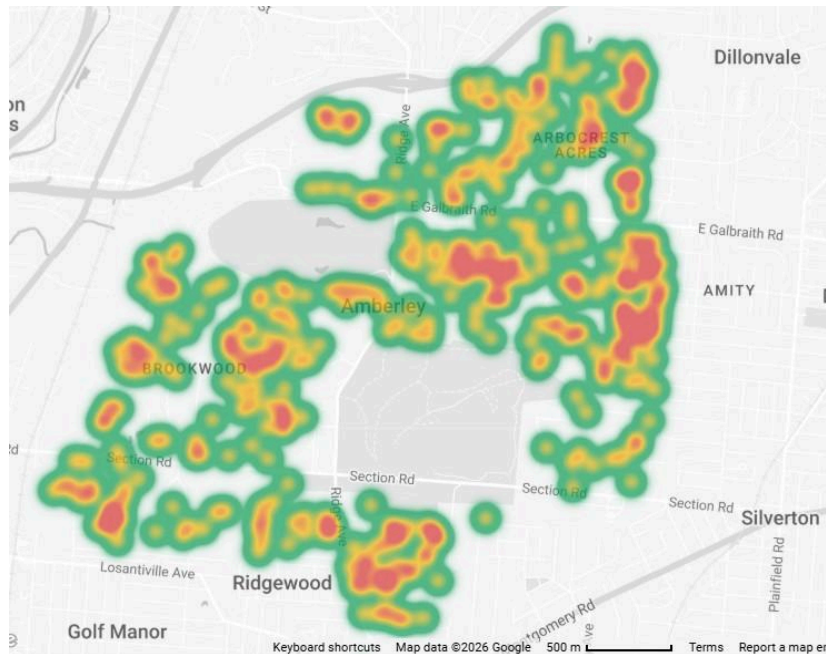
However there is one element worth highlighting: Between 2010 and 2020, the median age dropped by almost 14% (49.1 to 42.3 years). This shift suggests an increase in younger households during the past decade and indicates that **Amberley Village is NOT substantially a graying community.**

Survey Analysis Using Personas

Data Source and Approach

The Amberley Green survey was open to all residents and distributed village-wide in both paper and digital formats. As noted, questions were informed by earlier qualitative engagement and focused on priorities, concerns, and conditions raised therein by residents. A total of 478 responses were recorded.

Responses reflected a wide range of views. Many residents expressed conditional or overlapping priorities, supporting some ideas while raising concerns about others. Because single-question results can mask patterns, the analysis here organizes responses using a persona framework.



Heat map visualizing survey response by resident addresses; red represents higher density.

Why Personas Were Used

Personas are not types of people. Rather, they represent recurring patterns in preferences and concerns. References to a share of a persona indicate how frequently an idea appears within that pattern, not unanimous agreement or a fixed classification.

Most residents will recognize some portion of their views across more than one persona. None of us is ever fully defined by a single consideration.

Following are the eight personas specifically developed for this study. Each persona was derived by examining how individual responses are aligned across multiple related questions rather than from any lone answer, reflecting that any respondent can have especially strong views about one topic but also important thoughts about others.

Respondents were grouped based on consistent patterns in what they prioritized, supported, or about which they expressed concern. **Survey responses are the sole data source used in this analysis.**

Rather than categorizing people by rigid demographics like age, these personas represent clusters of shared viewpoints across multiple life stages. They also represent the reality of Amberley residents. There were older residents who wanted playgrounds but not age in place housing and young parents who advocated for the reverse.

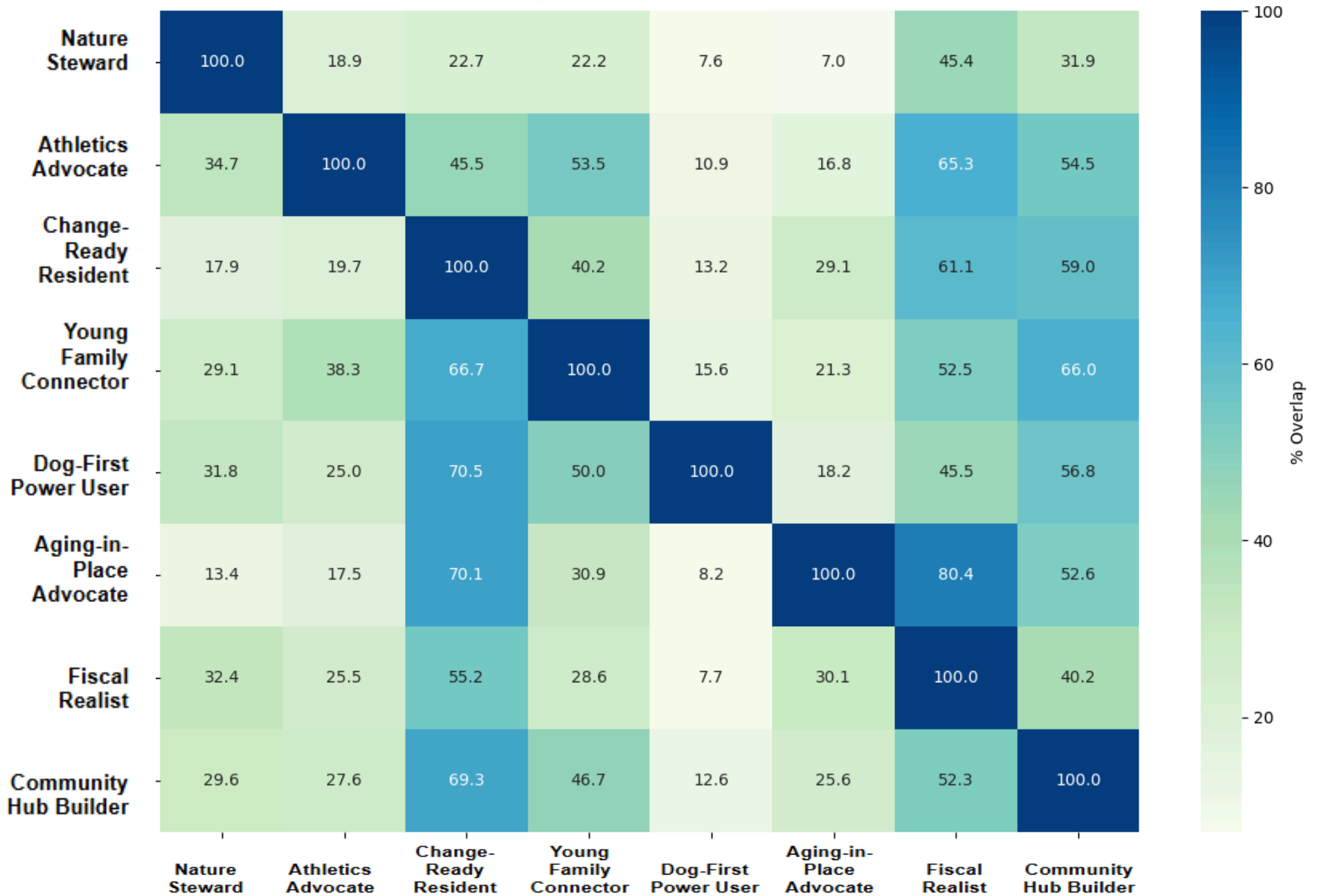
This approach highlights how support shifts based on conditions, scale, and context, rather than reducing community opinion to yes-or-no positions.

The counts below show how many respondents aligned with each of the identified eight personas, with the average respondent finding themselves in about three persona groups.

- **Fiscal Realists:** 259
- **Change-Ready Residents:** 234
- **Community Hub Builders:** 199
- **Nature Stewards:** 185
- **Young Family Connectors:** 141
- **Athletics Advocates:** 101
- **Aging-in-Place Advocates:** 97
- **Dog-First Power Users:** 44

Together, the demographic context and persona framework provide a clearer picture of Amberley Green: not what any defined group wants, but the specific priorities, tradeoffs, and conditions residents raise, often in combination, when they imagine the site's future.

Overlap Across the Personas



Most respondents fit multiple personas, and this heat map shows the percent overlap between any two personas. Darker squares indicate greater overlap; lighter squares indicate less overlap in the goals and priorities expressed for Amberley Green. For example, Dog-First Power Users and Young Family Connectors show a 50% overlap, meaning 50% of Dog-First Power Users also qualify as Young Family Connectors (and overlap varies by direction across the table).

Fiscal Realists - 259



“The area needs maintenance and infrastructure improvements however this will cost money and could increase taxes (likely) so I’m supportive of some limited commercial development to help fund ... a well maintained green space for the community.”

- Springvalley Drive Resident

Fiscal Realists evaluate any proposal for Amberley Green through the lens of long-term cost and obligation. They are cautious about permanent tax increases and ongoing maintenance burdens. Many are open to change if funding is clearly defined and risk is limited. Their focus is financial discipline rather than a specific land use.

This perspective reflects residents who consistently emphasized long-term financial responsibility and clear funding structures when responding to survey questions. Their selections show a focus on cost awareness and manageable commitments rather than automatic support for or opposition to change.

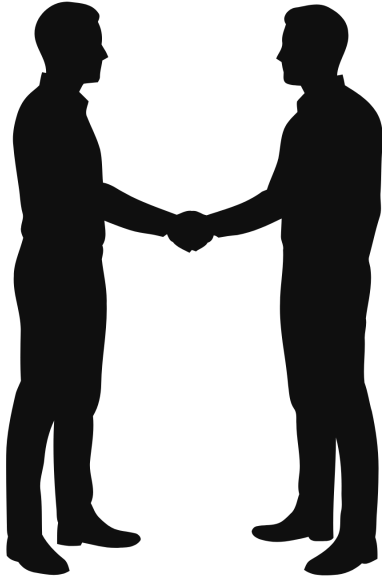
Fiscal Realists Persona Facts

- **Mandate for Private Funding Partnerships** Reflecting a strong aversion to tax increases, this group overwhelmingly favors leveraging external investment rather than public levies to support the site. 74% (192 of 259 Fiscal Realist Residents) selected “Engage with for-profit development partners” as a funding priority.
- **Link Between Development and Sustainability** Recognizing that “doing nothing” carries its own costs, a significant majority views active development as necessary to justify Amberley Village’s continued ownership. 77% (199 of 259) respondents rated the development of some portion of the site as “Important” or “Very Important.”
- **Desire for Commercial Viability** This group supports amenities that can generate operating income, such as dining or retail, reducing the reliance on the general fund for upkeep. 70% (181 of 259) respondents selected “Coffee or dining options” as a future wish.
- **Alignment with Senior Retention** Fiscal discipline is strongly tied to the desire for age-appropriate housing, framing downsizing options as an economic asset that retains taxpayers within Amberley Village. 80% (78 of 97) Aging-in-Place Advocates co-align.

“The development and maintenance could be funded with business partners. Taxes or levies is unacceptable”

- West Aracoma Drive Resident

Change-Ready Residents - 234



“This is the perfect opportunity to refocus and rebrand who we want to be as a community. I support building the infrastructure that is needed for our continued growth and success.”

- Fontaine Court Resident

Change-Ready Residents believe Amberley Village is ready to move from study to visible action. They expressed support for expanded community purposes or new amenities. Many showed frustration with delay or repeated planning efforts. They prioritize forward movement over maintaining current conditions.

This perspective reflects residents who signaled readiness for implementation and openness to structured next steps. Their responses emphasized momentum and progress

rather than continued planning alone.

Change-Ready Residents Persona Facts

- **Mandate for Visible Action** These respondents overwhelmingly reject the status quo, viewing the undeveloped site as a missed opportunity rather than a preserved asset. 90% (210 of 234 Change-Ready Residents) rated the development of some portion of the site as “Important” or “Very Important.”
- **Prioritizing Usable Amenities** The drive for change is centered on creating functional spaces for gathering and activity rather than passive conservation. 82% (192 of 234) selected “Expanded community-oriented purposes” as their #1 or #2 priority.
- **Openness to Residential Growth** Unlike preservation-focused personas, this segment views housing as a viable component of Amberley Village’s future infrastructure. 63% (148 of 234) selected “Housing in some form” as a top #1 or #2 priority.

“Prior to sitting in on discussions, I was very against any housing development...learning a little bit more about what percentage of the land is available for development, my perspective completely changed. I love the idea of it being a usable community space.”

- Willowbrook Lane Resident

Community Hub Builders - 199



“Amberley Village is a great place to live, but there’s really no central gathering place for community and community events.”

- West Aracoma Drive Resident

Community Hub Builders see Amberley Green as a place for everyday gathering and informal connection. They expressed interest in coffee, dining, or small-scale social space. At the same time, they avoided regional or high-intensity uses. Their goal is a village-scaled commons rather than a destination venue.

This perspective reflects residents who paired interest in social amenities with clear limits on scale and intensity. Their responses favor connection while maintaining neighborhood character.

Community Hub Builders Persona Facts

- **Desire for "Third Places"** Reflecting a wish for casual social interaction, this group strongly favors amenities that foster daily community mixing rather than just solitary recreation. 79% (158 of 199 Community Hub Builders persona) selected “Coffee or dining options” as a future wish.
- **Mandate for Visible Action** These residents are looking for tangible improvements to the site rather than continued passive preservation, viewing Amberley Green as a space that should be actively enjoyed. 69% (138 of 199) in this persona also align with the Change-Ready Resident persona.
- **Focus on Intergenerational Gathering** The drive for a central commons is significantly fueled by households seeking connection for both adults and children, framing Amberley Green as an extension of family life. 47% (93 of 199) in this persona also align with the Young Family Connector persona.
- **Balanced by Financial Caution** Support for new social amenities is checked by a desire for financial prudence, suggesting a preference for right-sized projects that do not create unmanageable tax burdens. 52% (104 of 199) also align with the Fiscal Realist persona.

“We love this community and its inclusiveness. Additional community oriented options would only make it even more attractive to those already living here and those considering a move.”

- Lynnehaven Drive Resident

Nature Stewards - 185

"It is important to have green space in a city... It brings peace of mind and an appreciation of nature. Everyone can enjoy it as it is now. If it is developed, it will be disappointing."

- **Sagamore Drive Resident**



Nature Stewards view Amberley Green primarily as an ecological and walking space. They selected trails or nature-based activities as priorities. Many also rated maintaining the site's current character as important. Their focus is long-term conservation and quiet use.

This perspective reflects residents who consistently emphasized preservation, trails, and stewardship in their responses. Their selections reinforce Amberley Green's identity as open space first.

Nature Steward Persona Facts

- **Simple and Accessible Exercise Usage** [Walking is the primary way this group engages with Amberley Green.](#) 92% (170 of 185 Nature Stewards) currently use the site for "Trails (hiking, walking)."
- **Prioritizing Stewardship Over Expansion** [Rather than seeking new amenities, these residents focus funding priorities on taking care of what already exists.](#) 84% (155 of 185) selected "Basic maintenance" or "Infrastructure improvements" as a top #1 or #2 priority.
- **Desire for Continuity** [Nature Stewards' future vision mirrors their current use, emphasizing simple access to nature over complex development.](#) 56% (104 of 185) selected "Trails (biking, hiking, walking)" as a specific future wish.
- **Financial Pragmatism** [While dedicated to ecological preservation, nearly half of this group also prioritizes budgetary discipline, suggesting their support for conservation is tied to fiscal responsibility rather than "preservation at any cost."](#) 45% (84 of 185) in this persona also align with the Fiscal Realist persona.

"I like the undeveloped portions of Amberley Green, it's a nice respite visually and seems right to do environmentally. At the same time the area is underutilized and not well developed for the community."

- **Springvalley Drive Resident**

Young Family Connectors - 141



"I think more young families like ours are moving into Amberley and having some family friendly recreational spaces would be a huge benefit and draw."

- Beech Hollow Drive Resident

Family Connectors experience Amberley Green through daily family life. They selected child-focused amenities and emphasized safety, access, or connectivity. Predictability and clear boundaries matter to them. Their priorities center on practical, everyday use.

This perspective reflects residents who connected family amenities with safety and infrastructure considerations. Their responses highlight daily usability rather than occasional events.

Family Connectors Persona Facts

- **Priority on Child-Centric Amenities** Reflecting the need for age-appropriate recreation close to home, this group is the primary driver for playground and water features. 69% (98 of 141 Young Family Connectors) selected "Family and child amenities (playground, splash pad)" as a future wish.
- **Desire for Safe Connectivity** Prioritizing safe access over internal trails alone, these residents highlight the need for paved connections to and within the site. 30% (43 of 141) in this persona selected "Infrastructure (sidewalks, neighborhood paths)" as a future wish.
- **Seeking a Social Commons** For these families, Amberley Green is viewed as a venue for interaction and community gathering rather than solitary use. 79% (111 of 141) in this persona also align with the Community Hub Builder persona.
- **Alignment with Change** Unlike groups focused on preservation, the majority of these residents support active intervention to create usable spaces. 68% (96 of 141) also align with the Change-Ready Resident persona.

"My daughter is 9 and I have had to take her to other neighborhoods and trails to learn how to bike."

- Crestdale Court Resident

Athletics Advocates - 101

“It would be great to have more sport activity. Our current tennis courts are not in great shape. We have no true pickleball courts, and that is becoming increasingly popular.”

-Ambercreek Drive Resident



Athletics Advocates use Amberley Green for regular physical activity. They selected athletic amenities or described exercise as a primary use. Many indicated frequent use or infrastructure needs. Their focus is reliable, well-maintained facilities for active living.

This perspective reflects residents who consistently linked the site to sports, exercise, and structured recreation. Their responses emphasize functionality and upkeep.

Athletics Advocates Persona Facts

- **Mandate for Sport-Specific Facilities** These respondents explicitly prioritize active use over passive preservation, identifying specific gaps in Amberley Village's current offerings. 67% (68 of 101) in this persona selected “Athletics (Swimming, Pickleball, Golf)” as a future wish.
- **Link to Family Retention** The drive for active amenities is heavily linked to households with children, suggesting sports facilities are viewed as essential infrastructure for family life. 54% (54 of 101) respondents in this persona also align with the Young Family Connector persona.
- **Preference for Communal Recreation** For this group, exercise is strongly tied to social interaction, with a majority viewing Amberley Green as a venue for gathering and connection as well as sport. 55% (55 of 101) in this persona also align with the Community Hub Builder persona.
- **Commitment to Financial Viability** Support for new facilities is paired with a strong sense of fiscal discipline, indicating a preference for responsible, funded investment over unchecked spending. 65% (66 of 101) in this persona also align with the Fiscal Realist persona.

“I think we need to make it a place that brings together all generations of people in the village. Living options for older generations, fun/unique playgrounds and explorative activities for younger generations, and outdoor congregation and sporting options for all generations.”

- Springvalley Drive Resident

Aging-in-Place Advocates - 97



“Developing senior focused housing or housing on smaller lots may provide older residents the opportunity to stay in Amberley without the burden of caring for larger properties.”

- **West Beechlands Drive Resident**

Aging-in-Place Advocates are focused on remaining in Amberley Village as housing needs change. They selected senior or downsizing housing options. At the same time, they avoided large-scale change or permanent tax increases. Their interest is modest, character-aligned housing.

This perspective reflects residents who paired interest in senior-focused housing with caution about scale and fiscal impact. Their responses prioritize stability and continuity.

Aging-in-Place Advocates Persona Facts

- **Specific Demand for Age-Targeted Inventory** Reflecting the need for housing that supports the lifecycle of long-term residents, this group is near-unanimous in identifying a specific gap in Amberley Village’s current stock. 87% (84 of 97 Aging-in-Place persona) selected “Senior-Focused” as an ideal housing addition.
- **Prioritizing Residential Solutions** Unlike groups focused solely on recreation or conservation, this segment views the site primarily as a solution to housing needs. 70% (68 of 97) respondents selected “Housing in some form” as a top #1 or #2 priority.
- **Specific Design Preferences** There is a clear stylistic demand found in the comments for “patio homes,” “condos,” or “single-story” living that allows for independence without the maintenance of traditional Amberley estates.
- **Fiscal Conservatism** Support for new housing is strongly linked to financial sustainability, suggesting a desire for development that contributes to the tax base rather than increasing financial burden. 80% (78 of 97) in this persona align with the Fiscal Realist persona.

“Senior housing would allow us to stay in Amberley without managing a large home.”

- **North Farmcrest Drive Resident**

Dog-First Power Users - 44



"It is very important to me to have a portion of Amberley Green be undeveloped and available for walking with dogs off-leash."

- **Willowbrook Drive Resident**

Dog-First Power Users rely on Amberley Green as a primary space for exercising dogs. They identified dog access as a central value.

Their responses balance access, management and safety. Many supported managed solutions rather than unrestricted use. Their concern is preservation of access with clear rules.

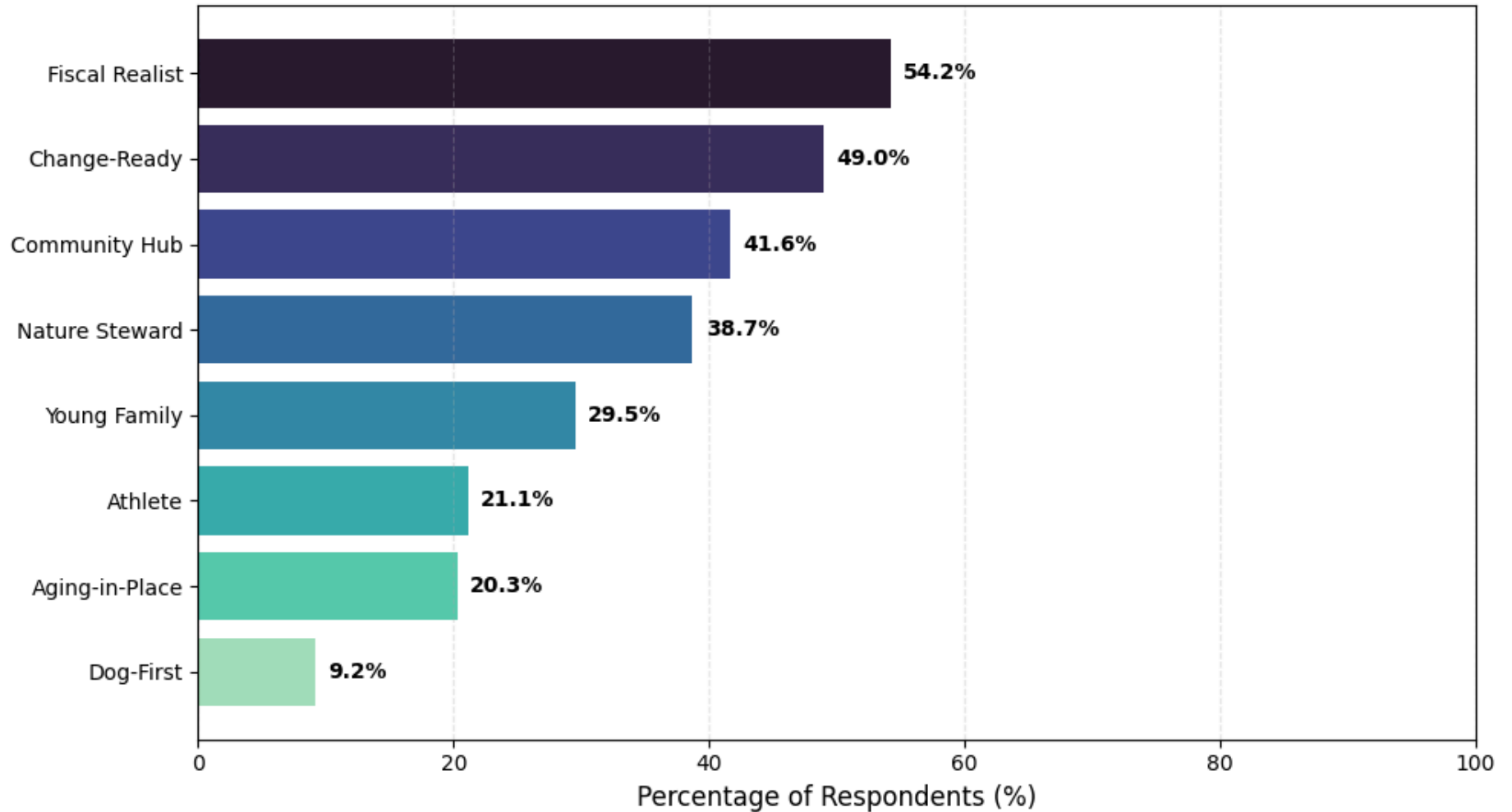
Dog-First Power Users Persona Facts

- **Demand for Dedicated Facilities** Recognizing the conflict with other users, a strong majority favor creating specific, contained infrastructure for pets rather than relying solely on open fields. 72% (32 of 44 Dog-First persona) selected "Fenced-dog park" as a future wish.
- **Alignment with Active Development** These users overwhelmingly support active intervention to create usable amenities (such as paths, fences, and water) rather than leaving the site entirely wild. 70.5% (31 of 44) in this persona also align with the Change-Ready Resident persona.
- **Openness to Pay-to-Play Models** Distinct from other groups, a significant portion of this segment voluntarily proposed user fees to ensure high-quality maintenance and manage access. 23% (10 of 44) respondents specifically wrote in suggestions for "fees," "membership," or "stickers" in their funding comments.
- **Social Connectivity** For this group, Amberley Green is a venue for interaction, with the majority viewing the site as a social hub for people as well as pets. 56.8% (25 of 44) respondents also align with the Community Hub Builder persona.

"I believe all pets are to be leashed. Let's first get that under control!! ...My wife and I do not walk Amberley Green space due to this violation of AV ordinances."

- **South Whitetree Circle Resident**

Persona Distribution



Percent of respondents aligned with each persona (totals exceed 100% because respondents can align with more than one persona).

Personas are not exclusive: one respondent may appear in multiple bars if their answers matched multiple persona definitions. As a result, the percentages will not add up to 100%. Taken together, the results suggest a community defined less by single camps and more by overlapping priorities. Many respondents support change, often with clear conditions related to cost, scale, and fit with the site. The most workable path forward is to focus on options that serve multiple personas at once rather than designing for any one group alone.

A Path Toward Creative Stewardship

For nearly two decades, Amberley Green has been a subject of study and community debate, often characterized by a perceived choice between preservation and progress.

However, the 650 individual inputs gathered for this report reveal a more complex reality: many in the community want to move away from “either/or” thinking and toward a “both/and” approach referred to here as Creative Stewardship.

As leadership is often cautious regarding conflict, many residents expressed concern that only the loudest voices would be heeded in decision making. There is a strong mandate for Council led momentum that respects Amberley Village’s history while envisioning a more nuanced future.

The following steps are recommended to transition from a long period of study into a phase of visible, structured action.

1. Share the Report

The first step is a public community-wide meeting to share these findings in full. This will inevitably be a lively event as this is a community of engaged residents. But hosting a discussion which brings concerns, cautions and ambitions out into the open lays the groundwork for the next step.

Transparency is the foundation of trust; by publicly acknowledging the range of priorities, from the Nature Steward’s focus on preservation to the Athletics Advocate’s desire for modern amenities, leadership can establish a common baseline of information.

Strong opinions may surface, from all sides, but this meeting should not be a venue for re-litigating old arguments. Rather it should be an exploration of the shared guardrails and priorities identified by the residents themselves, and reported here.

2. Pursue Strategic Partnerships

Progress does not require Amberley Village to shoulder every financial burden alone, even if that were possible. To address fiscal constraints, Council should immediately empower professional leadership to investigate possible partnerships which might support the most desired outcomes:

- **Preservation:** To satisfy the residents focused on stewardship, Amberley Village should investigate conservation easements with partners like The Hillside Trust and/or Cardinal Land Conservancy. This could provide at least a measure of the certainty which Nature Stewards seek.

- **Amenity Anchors:** Following models like Cincinnati's public-private park partnerships, Amberley Village should seek collaborators to develop a range of intergenerational amenities which were suggested by a significant number of residents in this work process.

3. Resolve the Dog Usage Conflict

The tension between Dog-First Power Users and Family Connectors (who frequently cite off-leash dogs as a primary safety concern) is deep and must be addressed through a formal system rather than informal tradition.

Amberley Village should empower a specific citizen committee or task force, supported by professional staff, to devise a managed solution. This could involve:

- Establishing fenced-in areas or dedicated trails to separate uses
- Investigation into a companion dog-run
- Maintaining awareness of Nature Steward concerns.

Final Perspective: Shared Values, Varying Combinations

Amberley Village is a community that values stability and its pastoral identity, but the 14% drop in median age over the last decade indicates a changing demographic with lifestyle preferences centered on modern community anchors.

The divergence of resident opinion and reality of financial limits are not insurmountable obstacles; they are the conditions under which Amberley Village must operate.

Leadership's task is to act as representatives for both those long-tenured residents who have sustained Amberley Village and the younger families who will lead it going forward.

The status quo is a choice, but one no longer seen as valid for many respondents. Their voices - and choices - matter and should not be ignored because they challenge history or call for change.

It is time to move forward with a transparent, deliberate process that honors Amberley Village's past while actively building its bright future.

Residents expressed a range of priorities, including fiscal responsibility, environmental stewardship, active recreation, and family-friendly amenities. The survey data shows that these priorities often overlap. Most respondents align with more than one persona, which means the community is not neatly divided into separate groups. For example, many residents who emphasize financial sustainability also support thoughtful change. Likewise, those who want community gathering spaces often also value nature preservation and amenities that serve families. Even more specific viewpoints, such as Aging-in-Place and Dog-First, show meaningful overlap with broader community goals.

This means the data does not point to competing groups with incompatible interests. **Instead, it points to a community with shared values that show up in different combinations.**

The size of Amberley Green also matters. With 133 acres available, the data suggests there is room to accommodate multiple priorities without requiring intensive development across the entire site. A small portion of the property, if planned carefully, could support amenities that appeal to several personas at once. Features such as accessible walking paths, preserved green areas, flexible recreation space, and community gathering spots can support environmental goals, encourage wellness, foster connection, and remain consistent with residents' expectations for fiscal prudence.

The takeaway is encouraging. Amberley residents are more aligned than divided, and the overlap among personas supports a balanced, intentional path forward. Amberley Green does not require choosing one priority over another. It calls for a plan that protects what makes the site special while creating practical opportunities for the future.

Background Research #1:

Rebuilding Green Space Through Partnership

In the heart of any community, parks are the living rooms where neighbors gather, children play and people choose to spend time in shared activities. Thus when one falls into disrepair, it does more than just look bad; it creates a gap in the civic heart and signals weak community pride.

Revitalizing these green assets is not merely about planting grass. It is about reclaiming the space so that neighbors feel welcome and connected again. When Cincinnati set out to fix its urban core, community leaders realized a fundamental need to turn Washington and Ziegler parks into high-energy anchors that could support themselves financially while serving the people living nearby.

This happened when three strong entities recognized the need for the right collaborators. Rather than work in isolation, they chose to partner on an outcome larger than any one could have achieved alone.

The Cincinnati Park Board owned the land and provided historical oversight and the legal framework to ensure the parks remained permanent civic assets. The City of Cincinnati established long-term leases and development agreements to create a framework for a public-private partnership. 3CDC acted as lead developer, assembling funding and establishing and managing the development of these assets.

The result is a model where a dedicated team ensures longevity and daily management with continuous attention to detail.

Washington Park: 8-acres which serve as a front porch for downtown:

- **Interactive Water Feature:** A 7,000 square foot dry-deck fountain with lights and music.
- **The Porch:** A permanent outdoor gathering space with beverages, games, and lounge seating.
- **Civic Lawn:** A two-acre green space designed to host community events.
- **Children's Plaza:** An 18,000 square foot playground with structures and unique elements.
- **The Dog Park:** A fenced-in area with a large water basin for dogs to play in and a water fountain.

Ziegler Park serves as a neighborhood hub. Key amenities prioritize wellness and active play:

- **Ziegler Pool:** A world-class public pool featuring lap lanes, zero-depth entry, and a climbing wall.

- **Milton Kantor Courts:** Basketball and futsal courts that serve as a gathering point for local youth.
- **Game Grove:** A shaded social area equipped for ping-pong, chess, and bocce.
- **Pedestrian Green Space:** Permanent community lounging areas.

3CDC has a highly defined area of interest: downtown Cincinnati and Over the Rhine. Thus, while they can certainly advise, they are not an operating partner for Amberley Village.

But as an example of what can be achieved with the right partner, they are a sterling example.

The true value of this collaboration is the outcome. Deteriorated land has been restored and expanded. Washington and Ziegler Parks remain green assets but are now also lively community hubs. Skilled management provides constant hospitality and sanitation. Financial sustainability is woven into the model, ensuring these civic assets remain inclusive and accessible to all neighborhood residents for generations to come.

Background Research #2:

The Community Land Trust

The future of the 133-acre Amberley Green has historically been a point of community concern, but utilizing data from the 2020 Conservation Study Plan, offers insights on moving past debate.

For example, by working with a partner and placing a perpetual conservation easement on a portion of the land, its future use is both limited and defined. This offers the possibility to pursue responsible development on the balance. **The community determines what that portion is and who a responsible partner might be.**

A conservation easement acts as a structural compromise that provides specific guarantees:

- **Permanence:** For preservationists, the easement is irrevocable. Unlike a council vote or zoning change, it cannot be undone, ensuring key portions of Amberley's Green heart are safe forever.
- **Regulatory Certainty:** For development proponents, the easement creates a hard boundary. By legally defining off-limits zones, Amberley Village simplifies the planning and approval process for desirable projects.

To ensure the Conservation Zone, Amberley Village could seek a third-party partner. Locally there are The Hillside Trust and Cardinal Land Conservancy, each mentioned by residents in community conversations. Ideally the partner would align with the character of the land:

	The Hillside Trust	Cardinal Land Conservancy
Focus	Technical preservation of steep slopes and wooded ridges.	Holistic habitat management (ponds, forests, and prairies).
Best Use	Protecting the unbuildable perimeter to prevent erosion/landslides.	Managing the transition zones and buffers for "active" nature use.
Village Benefit	Professional monitoring of geological hazards.	Expertise in invasive species removal and trail stewardship.

Through such partnerships leadership could permanently protect the steepest slopes and most vital habitats. This could safeguard wild acreage for generations while providing the legal and regulatory clarity required to install community amenities on the remaining developable land.

This moves the conversation from a debate of 'If' to a plan of 'Where,' responding to resident calls for both preservation and change.

Background Research #3:

A Long and Connected Life

Amberley Village currently faces a housing lock. Many long-term residents live in homes that no longer suit their physical needs. By providing a high-quality local option for downsizing, Amberley Village not only addresses their concerns but also liberates residential inventory for a new generation of families. This sustains demographic vibrancy without requiring major expansion.

Many survey respondents discussed the possibility of a small senior housing development on the west side of Amberley Green. This could be, for example, a 60-unit cottage court style development, individually owned within a Home Owners Association structure. This offers the advantage of ownership without burdens. Designs would be for a future-proof space specifically engineered for the realities of aging, ensuring a secondary move later is considerably less likely.

Beyond physical structure, this initiative could preserve the social capital and deep community ties cultivated over decades, allowing residents to downsize while retaining social connectivity. This continuity, combined with a lifestyle where an association handles all exterior upkeep, grants seniors a newfound freedom within the community they love.

The following developments are a sample of active senior housing models:

- **NewBridge on the Charles (Boston, MA):** Village-style detached cottages, priority on intellectual wellness and intergenerational connectivity.
- **The Knolls of Oxford (Oxford, OH):** Midwest leader demonstrating that independent villas can coexist with nature trails and university-linked lifelong learning.
- **Spring House Village (UT):** Homes face shared green, focus on social connectivity.
- **Starhaven Villas (UT):** Maintenance-free model so residents can age in place indefinitely.

Amberley Village has, to date, been reluctant to consider selling any portion of Amberley Green. Amberley Village could seek a partnership which would be based on continued land ownership with a long term ground lease for a development site of about 15 acres. This structure might even offer a superior fiscal outcome compared to traditional land-use models.

To capture a portion of the appreciation inherent in Amberley real estate, the ground lease could include a community contribution transfer fee. A 1.5% fee could be assessed on the gross sale price every time a cottage leasehold interest is sold, originally or from one resident to the next. These funds then could be dedicated to the maintenance of open spaces or general fund, ensuring that the development provides a perpetual revenue tail.

Acknowledgements

The preparation of this report was made possible through the time, care, and participation of many individuals and groups who share a commitment to the future of Amberley Green and to the long-term vitality of Amberley Village.

First, sincere thanks to Amberley Village Council and its professional staff for its leadership, stewardship, and continued willingness to engage in a thoughtful and transparent public process. Council's support for a Village-wide engagement effort created the conditions for a broad, inclusive conversation and ensured that resident perspectives were gathered comprehensively and responsibly.

Deep appreciation is extended to the **residents of Amberley Village** who shared their time, ideas, concerns, and personal hopes for Amberley Green. Residents participated with care, candor, and respect, often holding and expressing nuanced views that reflect a deep attachment to both the land and the community.

It is remarkable that the equivalent of 1 in 3 Amberley Village households completed the survey and that 125 residents participated in more than a dozen preparatory group conversations.

Amberley Village Residents

All residents who gave their time and thoughtful ideas

Amberley Village Council

Bob Rosen, Mayor

Richard Bardach, Councilmember

Adam Frankel, Councilmember

Ben Hunt, Vice Mayor

Keely Paul, Member-At-Large

Jay Shatz, Member-At-Large

Dara L. Wood, Councilmember

Village Administration & Staff

Scot Lahrmer, Village Manager

Tammy Reasoner, Exec. Assistant/Clerk of Council

Ken Smallwood, Tax Administrator

Carolyn Wallis, Administrative Assistant

Debbie Eldridge, Finance Administrator

Chris Fritsch, Zoning Administrator

Project & Community Partners

Urban Fast Forward

Community Leaders