

## Perkasie Borough – Economic Development Plan Update

### Public Meeting Summary

A Public Visioning meeting was held on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at Perkasie Borough Hall to gather input and feedback for the Borough's Economic Development Plan Update. Forty-three (43) attendees participated in the meeting, consisting of property owners, business owners, residents and stakeholders. Linda Reid, Assistant Borough Manager, opened the meeting by explaining the project was funded, in part, by a Keystone Communities Grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development. Judy Stern Goldstein, RLA, ASLA from Gilmore & Associates, facilitated the meeting with staff support, by partitioning the participants into three (3) groups using the nominative group technique to gather input from each person. This process involved each individual in each group having the opportunity to provide their response to strategically posed questions. All responses were documented, and then group members had the opportunity to provide their response to the questions by 'voting' for the response they felt most closely aligned with their opinions relating to the plan during the meeting. We often find community consensus forming around several themes, which can then be incorporated into the Plan's goals and objectives.

The following four questions were asked:

1. What are Perkasie Borough's greatest economic strengths?
2. What are Perkasie Borough's biggest economic development challenges or weaknesses?
3. What are the biggest opportunities (in economic development) we have to improve our town?
4. What are the detriments or key areas (in terms of economic development) we need to improve or invest in?

### Response Summary

Many of the responses had similarities and were repeated between groups, with a few unique answers that were very specific. The most common answers for question one, "what are the Borough's greatest economic strength" related to events, walkability and local businesses as strong assets of the Borough. The participants also ranked parks and green spaces as economic strengths.

The highest-ranking responses for the second question "the borough's biggest economic development challenges" related to parking, hours of operation and how to maintain charm in the face of growth as notable challenges. Property owner vision versus community vision, and large commercial retailers were also identified as challenges.

Alternatively, a number of opportunities presented themselves from discussions in the third question "what are the biggest opportunities we have to improve our town". Top-

## Perkasie Borough – Economic Development Plan Update

ranking responses included encouraging use of empty buildings with more restaurants and nightlife, and increased walkability to support businesses.

For the final question “what are the detriments or key areas of economic development we need to improve or invest in?”, the overarching themes were investment in the development of Shelly’s Complex, bike paths, and communication within the community. Investment in small businesses, with connections to improve public/traffic safety, rounded out the items that were most frequently mentioned.

In conclusion, the recurring themes that emerged from the visioning exercise were that people liked the walkability of the Borough with its local businesses, parks and events. The attendees identified parking, limited hours of operation, and maintaining charm in the face of growth, as the main challenges to overcome. They see opportunities in activating empty buildings with restaurants and more nightlife. They want to see future investment in the development of Shelly’s complex and/or a town center, communication and support for small businesses, and investment in bike paths and walkability to enhance the unique qualities of the Borough.

To view all the responses, please see below.

PERKASIE BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING RESULTS	
QUESTION #1: What are Perkasie Borough’s greatest economic strengths?	
GROUP 1 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
<b>The breweries</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Rich Historical Heritage</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Events in Borough</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The traffic count on 5th St. and Constitution Ave.</b>	<b>5</b>
Menlo Pool	0
Electric Department	1
Public works maintenance	2
<b>Geographic Location</b>	<b>5</b>
The people	1
School District	1
<b>Walkability/Paths</b>	<b>7</b>
Borough Council	0
GROUP 2 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
Concise Downtown	4
<b>Green Spaces walking path by creek</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Growing population</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Diverse events</b>	<b>6</b>
Not a pass-through community	2
Saving business owners	1
<b>Walkability</b>	<b>14</b>

## Perkasie Borough – Economic Development Plan Update

<b>Local businesses</b>	<b>10</b>
Diversity of industry	0
<b>Smalltown feel</b>	<b>6</b>
The mills	1
GROUP 3 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
<b>Farmer's market</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Festivals</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Parks</b>	<b>11</b>
Downtown businesses	0
Loyalty of residents	4
<b>Local businesses</b>	<b>13</b>

### PERKASIE BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING RESULTS

<b>QUESTION #2: What are Perkasie Borough's biggest economic development challenges or weaknesses?</b>	
GROUP 1 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
<b>Lack of affordable restaurants - not pizza</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Lack of local support for retail</b>	<b>6</b>
Lack of retail walkability	5
<b>Current mindset/culture</b>	<b>7</b>
Loss of industry/workers	3
Old vs. new ownership and less upkeep	2
<b>Maintain charm in face of growth</b>	<b>10</b>
Infrastructure and road maintenance/parking	4
GROUP 2 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
Off the beaten path	3
<b>Underdeveloped town center</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Not enough parking</b>	<b>10</b>
Lack of a community center	4
Lack of alternate transportation to business centers	6
Siloed economic hubs	5
Lack of collaboration with neighboring towns	0
<b>Large commercial retailers</b>	<b>9</b>
Public water safety	4
Lack of active business organization	7
GROUP 3 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
Businesses underutilized by local population	2
Existing infrastructure	4
<b>Changing trends in retail</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Empty/Unused buildings</b>	<b>7</b>
Unnecessary regulations	2
<b>Property owner visions vs. community vision</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Limited hours of operation</b>	<b>10</b>
Consumer cost	1
Lack of parking	3
Limited choice	1

# Perkasie Borough – Economic Development Plan Update

## PERKASIE BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING RESULTS

### QUESTION #3: What are the biggest opportunities (in economic development) we have to improve our town?

GROUP 1 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
More small business	4
<b>More coordination among businesses</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>More effort to bring in people to spend money</b>	<b>7</b>
Christmas tree lighting	4
Electric company	3
Street crosswalks	5
Town's geography	2
<b>Expect more from incoming developers</b>	<b>9</b>
Historical history	4
GROUP 2 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
Growing population	2
<b>Increasing walkability</b>	<b>8</b>
Community involvement	1
<b>More nightlife</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Use of vacant buildings</b>	<b>11</b>
Room to grow	1
Historical districts	5
More restaurants	4
More diverse businesses	5
Higher standard of living	1
Businesses to collaborate with schools for education	7
GROUP 3 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
<b>Utilizing empty/unused buildings</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Loyalty of Borough residents</b>	<b>6</b>
Old town history	4
<b>Walkability of downtown</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Encourage additional restaurant</b>	<b>10</b>
Attracting anchor businesses	5
Utilize market center for arts and musical events	4

## PERKASIE BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING RESULTS

### QUESTION #4: What are the detriments or key areas (in terms of economic development) we need to improve or invest in?

GROUP 1 RESPONSES	# OF VOTES
<b>Invest in small business</b>	<b>8</b>
Retail is dependent on non-residents	1
Digital footprint/marketing	5
Lack of rental density on high traffic count road	5
Lack of cohesiveness	2

## Perkasie Borough – Economic Development Plan Update

Need for anchors	1
Lack of connectivity - need crosswalks	5
Change without eminent domain	0
Better signage	6
Zoning/Business friendly	4
Willingness of people to pay for value of service	7
<b>GROUP 2 RESPONSES</b>	<b># OF VOTES</b>
Risk of overdevelopment	5
Public services closing events	1
Family support	1
Gaps between destination areas	3
<b>Communication within the community</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Bike paths</b>	<b>12</b>
Historical districts	3
<b>Improve public/traffic safety</b>	<b>6</b>
Rehabilitation of commercial buildings	3
Smooth road surfaces/road repairs	3
<b>Wayfinding Signage</b>	<b>6</b>
Main Street manager program to support small businesses	4
<b>GROUP 3 RESPONSES</b>	<b># OF VOTES</b>
<b>Shelly's complex</b>	<b>13</b>
Lack of parking	4
<b>Lack of incentive to attract business</b>	<b>7</b>
Unattractive/Dated shopping center	3
Overdevelopment	3
Empty buildings	4
<b>Handbook for prospective business owners</b>	<b>8</b>
Inconsistent marketing of businesses	1