

Focus Group 2
March 24, 2026

Meeting Summary

The project team held the second Focus Group Meeting for the Horizon 2035 Miami County Comprehensive Plan on March 24, 2026 virtually. The meeting was held from 8am to 9am. The purpose of the meeting was to gather insight from key members of the community to get a variety of perspectives on different topics within Miami County.

Project Team –

- Sam Wiser (TSW)
- Daniel Blondet (TSW)
- Deborah Luzier (Code Crafters)

Attendees –

- Corey Roser (Miami County – Planning Department)
- Mark Waite (Grissom Air Reserve Base)
- Matt Feller (Peru Police Chief)

Overview

The project team opened with introductions. Everyone went through and introduced themselves. The project team explained where the project is in the planning process. The project is currently in the existing conditions phase. During the meeting, key questions were asked to gather insight about the county.

Opening Questions

1. What is the identity of Miami County and what can be improved upon?
 - Tight-knit small community, know your neighbors
 - Agricultural community
 - Mom and pop shops
 - Trustworthy people
2. Are the towns interconnected socially in Miami County?
 - The city and towns are all connected in some way, but each have their own unique niches.
 - Miami County YMCA is a big hub that does a lot of programming for the county
 - Sports rivalry amongst each other but support overall
 - Many veterans in the county and connection to Grissom



- There are also events at Grissom that bring people from all over the county (Air show August 29 and 30th)

Topic Focused Questions

3. What are potential challenges or barriers within Miami County (physical or policy)?
 - Cost and lack of housing
 - Necessity of housing at every price point
 - Places for low-income and un-housed people to live
 - Lack of transportation (public) or ride-share
 - Not many options for higher education
4. Are there any trade or vocational opportunities within the county?
 - Yes, specifically for the high school students. Heartland community center in Wabash.
 - City of Peru developed a STEM lap in the old Jr. High building.
 - No trade schools in the county. Need to travel out of county for trade classes at other Ivy Tech locations.
5. Is there anything that has changed since the Joint Land Use Plan was established?
 - It has not changed. It is based on the type of aircraft that is used
 - AICUZ 2020 (environmental study) is the most recent. This will be sent to the project team. It contains an overlay with requirements (compatible uses, height requirements, etc.)
6. Are there any facility or emergency service improvements that can be made?
 - Support within the county through man power.
 - All three agencies are represented for larger events
 - Current building is outdated and overcrowded
 - How to provide services with less funding?
 - Technology is expensive and becoming a requirement for law enforcement
7. Are the emergency alerts county-wide or municipality focused?
 - This service is not available right now
 - Code red service was supposed to be implemented yet. It should be county-wide
 - There is no reliable newspaper anymore. Majority of communication goes out via social media.
8. Is there a desire to expand parks and programming?
 - This depends on who you ask.
 - There is a desire to increase green spaces and open spaces.
 - Riverwalk and nickel plate are phenomenal resources
 - There is a huge opportunity to connect business to the nickel plate trail.



- There could be better facilities such as restrooms along the trails.

Closing Questions

9. Are there any topics or comments that you have that we have not covered?
 - Protect the mission of the air force base from encroachment issues, but all for the needs of the community.
 - US 31 needs to be closed access from a public safety stand point. Many of the intersections are very dangerous with the speed and amount of traffic.

Closing

The project team shared the project website. The project timeline was highlighted. Currently, the project is at the end of the first phase, Existing Conditions & Visioning. The information gathered from the focus group meeting, stakeholder meetings, and public meetings will be used to create goals and strategies for the plan in the next phases. The public survey was shared and the focus group members were encouraged to share it and participate in it. Participants were thanked for their time and the meeting ended.

