



HEART & SOUL ACTION PLAN 2025



Prepared by the Arlington Heart & Soul Team July 2025

Welcome to Arlington, Ohio!

Arlington, established in 1844 by Robert Hurd, has grown from a modest farming settlement into a vibrant and close-knit village known for its strong community bonds and deep-rooted values.

Situated in northwest Ohio, the quaint little village originally named "Hurdstown" in honor of its founder, was later renamed Arlington, reflecting its aspirations for progress and unity. Over the decades, the village has preserved its rural charm while steadily embracing change and growth.

One of the pillars of Arlington's identity is its unwavering love and respect for its history and traditions. Generations of families have called the village home, and many residents take great pride in preserving local stories, buildings, and customs. Whether it's the annual Arlington Homecoming Festival, Friday night football games, or the familiar ringing of the church bells downtown, these traditions foster a strong sense of belonging and continuity.

QUICK FACTS

- Arlington has had modest annual growth of 0.71% since 2010 in ages 64 and younger!
- 56% of the population is 18-64 years old
- Arlington is home to Arlington Local School, enrolling approximately 550 students



MEDIAN
AGE

38

SCHOOL
DISTRICT
COVERS

57

SQ. MI

MEDIAN
INCOME

\$61K



Residents of all ages contribute to honoring the past while ensuring that the village's legacy remains a living, breathing part of daily life.

Arlington has embraced the Community Heart & Soul initiative, a resident-driven process that engages the entire population in shaping the village's future. This approach focuses on identifying what matters most to residents and translating those values into actionable plans. By involving everyone, focusing on shared values, and committing to long-term development, Arlington aims to ensure a prosperous and inclusive future for all its residents.

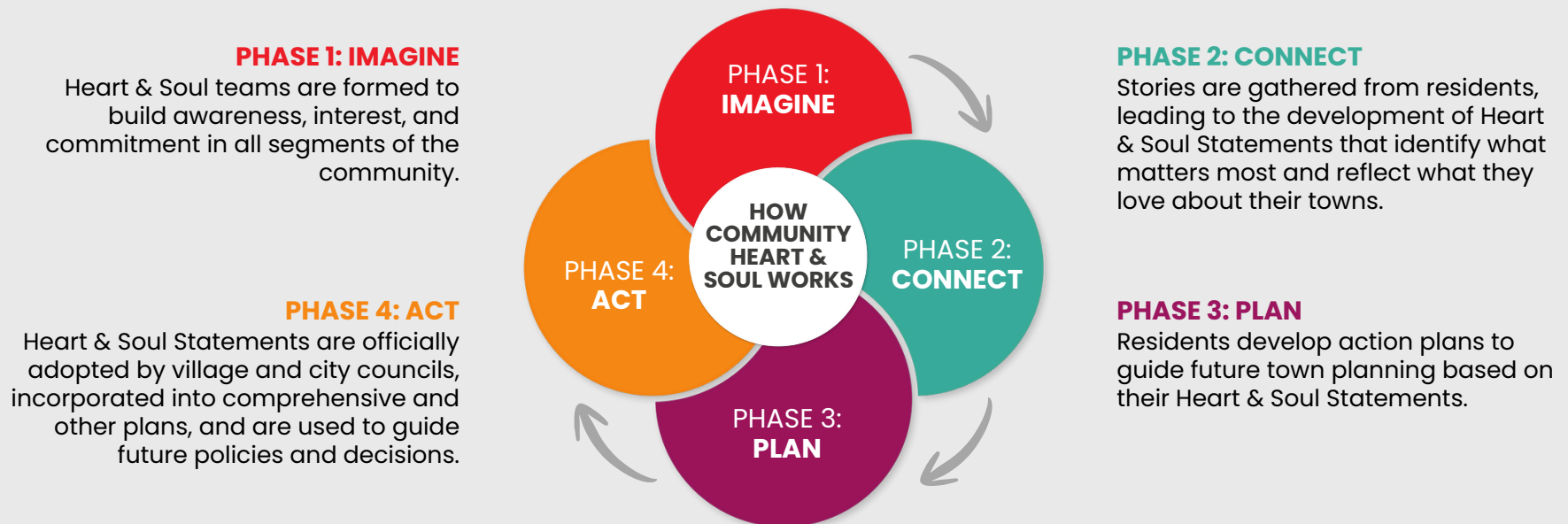
Through these collective efforts, Arlington continues to honor its rich history while proactively planning for a vibrant and sustainable future.

Overview of Community Heart & Soul

Heart & Soul focuses on three main principles:

- 1 Involve Everyone:** Hear from ALL residents of the community. Make sure those whose voices are often missing or overlooked in community dialogue are a priority throughout the process.
- 2 Focus on What Matters Most:** When residents share what they love about their community and identify their hopes for the future, common themes emerge. These are the issues that matter most to residents and become the foundation for sound decision making.
- 3 Play the Long Game:** The Heart & Soul process has an impact on the way towns view themselves, how they govern, and how they make decisions about their future. Communities become equipped for the long run with the skills, tools, and actionable plans to continue moving forward, guided by what matters most—their Heart & Soul.

***Community Heart & Soul** begins with a four-phase, step-by-step process that brings residents together to identify and honor the unique character of their town and emotional connection of the people who live there.*



Arlington Heart & Soul Timeline



FALL 2022

TEAM FORMED & FOCUS SET

Team launched; focus area set as Arlington Local School District. Core goals, messaging, and logo created.



SPRING 2023

PUBLIC LAUNCH

Heart & Soul introduced at local events and the Arlington Homecoming Festival.



SUMMER-FALL 2023

STORY LISTENING & DATA ENTRY

Volunteers listen to stories; data sorted, categorized, and entered into the system.

WINTER 2023- SPRING 2024

IDEAS FOR ACTION PRIORITIZED

Residents share ideas at festivals and events; ideas narrowed down with AI and community voting at Dave Rossman Chili Cook-off and online.



ONGOING 2025 & BEYOND

BRINGING IDEAS TO LIFE

Residents, partners, and volunteers work together to grow projects that reflect what matters most to Arlington.

SUMMER 2022

GRANT AWARDED

Residents apply — \$140,000 awarded through Hancock Community Foundation.

WINTER 2022-23

COMMUNITY NETWORK ANALYSIS

Demographics, organizations, and people groups identified to guide outreach.

SUB-TEAMS ORGANIZED

Volunteers join Communications, Story Gathering/Listening, Events, and Data teams.

SPRING-SUMMER 2023

STORY GATHERING STARTS

Stories, surveys, chalkboards, and sticky notes gather “what matters most,” hopes, concerns, and ideas.

FALL-WINTER 2023

HEART & SOUL STATEMENTS FINALIZED

Draft statements created, vetted, and validated with community feedback.

SPRING-SUMMER 2024

CONNECTING IDEAS TO ACTION

Team meets with groups, businesses, and residents to build support and plan implementation.



Community Engagement the Heart & Soul Way

Arlington's Heart & Soul journey began with a group of community members who got together to apply for the Community Heart & Soul grant through the Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation. The application was successful, and our village was awarded \$140,000 to fund the Heart & Soul process.

PHASE 1

The individuals who first championed the grant for Heart & Soul came together to form Arlington's Heart & Soul team, laying the foundation for this community-led journey. Early on, Lauren Etler and Amber Newlove were hired as Process Co- Coordinators to help guide and organize the work. Cassie Turner, of the Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation, joined as Arlington's certified Heart & Soul Coach, offering training, coaching sessions, and ongoing support that kept the team focused and motivated.

Recognizing that Arlington's sense of community extends far beyond the village limits, the team decided to center the Heart & Soul process around the **Arlington School District** area, ensuring that voices from the village and the rural countryside are heard and represented. A **Community Network Analysis** mapped out the people, organizations, and connections that make up our community – helping the team understand who they needed to reach.

As big-picture goals were set, sub-teams formed to focus on specific areas: **Communications, Story Gathering & Listening, Events,** and **Data.** The team likened Heart & Soul to working the ground, planting seeds, watering, and anticipating growth – inspiration that took root in Arlington’s Heart & Soul logo, a reminder that as we branch out, we remain rooted in who we are.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR COMMUNITY LAUNCH

Arlington Heart & Soul made its public debut at the annual Arlington Homecoming Festival parade, inviting residents to share what they love about Arlington and what they hope for the future.

Heart & Soul Booth – Festival-goers shared ideas on a community chalkboard.

Arlingtonian Newsletter – Created as a new source for stories, updates, and celebrating our history.

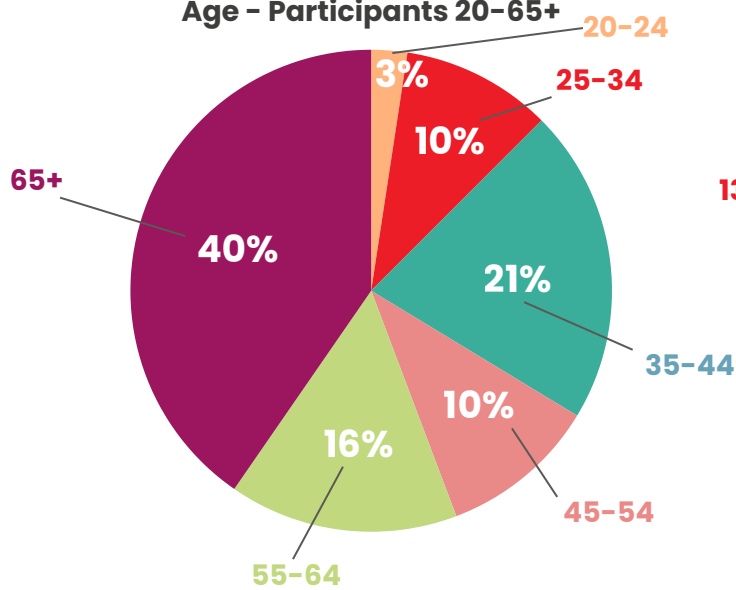
Sip-N-Share Gatherings – Events like Stella’s Night, Blizzard Night, and Share The Love brought neighbors together to talk, connect, and build trust.



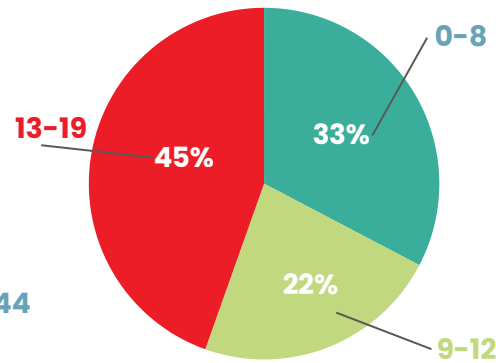
WHO PARTICIPATED OVER TIME

Heart & Soul teams are encouraged to collect basic demographic information from participating individuals in order to understand who - and who is not - participating in the process. Collecting demographic data can be tricky in a community; individuals don't often feel comfortable sharing certain aspects of their identity and some of the events and activities planned can make it difficult to collect data.

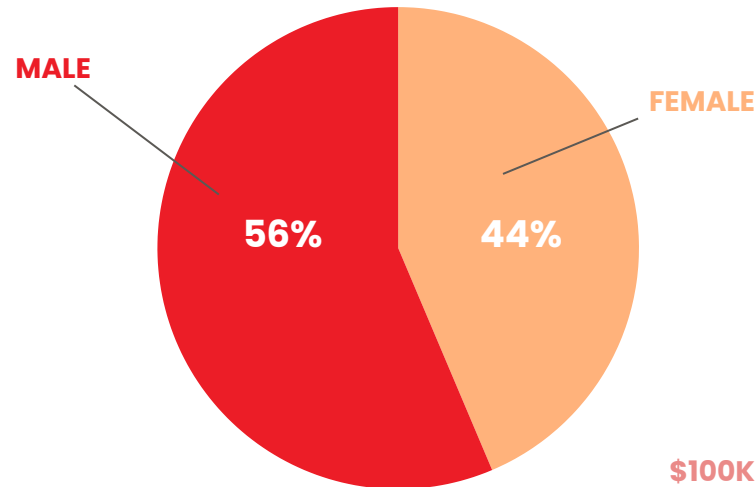
Age - Participants 20-65+



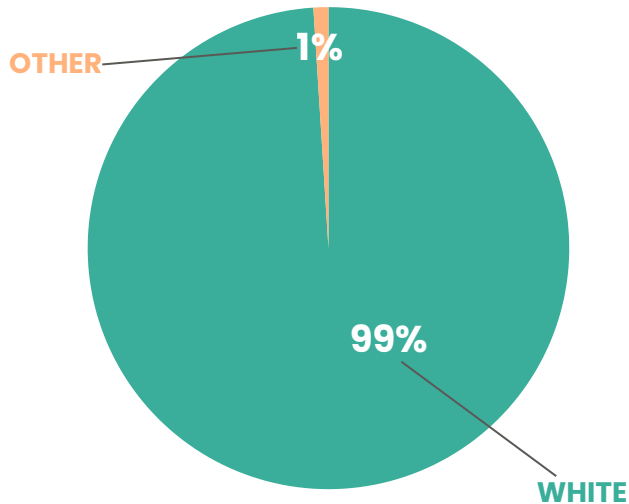
Age - Participants 0-19



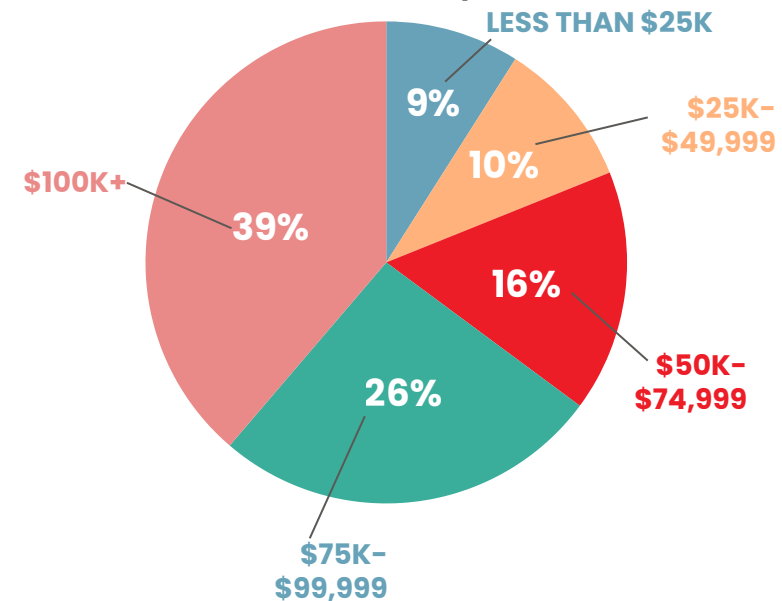
Gender - Participants



Race/Ethnicity - Participants



Income - Participants



DIGGING DEEPER

Phase 2 of Arlington's Heart & Soul journey focused on discovering what truly matters to our community – the values, traditions, places, and connections that make Arlington unique. To do this, our team used Story Gathering, the essential tool at the heart of the Heart & Soul approach.

Our goal was to collect three types of information: **thin data**, **thick data**, and **demographic data**. Thin data came from quick activities like surveys, comment cards, and ideas shared on traveling chalkboards at community events. Thick data came from deeper conversations – one-on-one interviews, story circles, and even essay writing contests where neighbors shared meaningful stories in their own words. We also tracked demographic data to make sure we were hearing from all parts of our community, staying true to the principle of involving everyone.



ARLINGTON HEART & SOUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

Captured over
2,200
**COMMENTS &
FEEDBACK**
from
community
members

Interviewed
over
300
INDIVIDUALS
from youth to
seniors

2,000+
Volunteer Hours
spent serving
HEART & SOUL

Identified
5
**COMMUNITY
VALUES**

Gathered over
**1,700 DATA
POINTS**
relating to
ideas for action


Heart & Soul Statements: Listening to What Matters Most

Volunteers from our Story Gathering & Listening Sub-Team conducted **hundreds of interviews**, asking questions that invited people to reflect on their personal experiences, what they loved about Arlington, and their hopes and concerns for the future. Once stories were collected, separate volunteers carefully listened to the recordings and pulled out what was shared, organizing it into the three Heart & Soul data categories.

The Data Sub-Team then entered all of this information into a Master Spreadsheet — a single place to sort, analyze, and spot patterns in what people care about most. This helped us **see the bigger picture: the themes that connect us, the concerns we need to address, and the ideas for action** we could begin to explore. To keep the community involved, we shared highlights through the *Arlingtonian Newsletter*, banners, signs, and social media posts.

After gathering, listening to, and sharing stories back, the next step was to craft our Heart & Soul Statements – clear, community-based statements that capture what matters most to Arlington. The Core Team used the data to draft statements that felt true to our village and school district area. Volunteers then took these drafts to different groups to get feedback and make sure the statements felt authentic. Community members also shared their thoughts on social media.

To reach even more people, we hosted a community-wide event – “Meet In The Street: Kick Off To Summer” – where residents could see the statements, ask questions, and offer ideas. With that feedback in hand, the Core Team met again to make final adjustments. The resulting Heart & Soul Statements express **what makes Arlington special, what we love, and what sets our community apart.**



**“SEEING THE
ARLINGTON
SIGN MAKES ME
FEEL HAPPY TO
BE HOME”**



**“I AM THANKFUL
FOR ALL THE
AMENITIES AND
BUSINESSES IN
OUR
COMMUNITY”**



**“OUR SMALL
SCHOOL
ALLOWED MY
SELF-
CONFIDENCE
TO GROW”**



**“WE MOVED
HERE FOR A
TRUE
HOMETOWN
FOR OUR KIDS”**

ARLINGTON HEART & SOUL VALUE STATEMENTS

These Heart & Soul Value Statements serve as the guiding principles for brainstorming community ideas, actions and projects.



SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Arlingtonians value our sense of community. Built on connection and familiarity, our community extends beyond the village borders while maintaining a small town feel. We strive to unite through supportive relationships, events and community involvement and aspire to be a welcoming community to all.



TRADITION & HISTORY

We respect our community's beginnings, the foundation it has established, and the shared past it has provided. We strive to celebrate our history and tradition as we weave together all residents' experiences to create a shared future.



SCHOOL

With a deep sense of pride and heritage, Arlington Local School anchors life in our community. A slate of educational and extra-curricular offerings, along with planning towards the future, propels this tradition of excellence. Arlington school embodies all that makes our community what it is.



RECREATION

Outlets for recreational opportunities are multi-generational and offer a healthy channel for our community.



BUSINESSES

The charm and character of local businesses and services sets Arlington apart. With essential amenities easily accessible, businesses enhance life in our community while creating and maintaining relationships, and stimulating the local economy.

CROWD SOURCING IDEAS FOR ACTION

PHASE 3

After listening to stories and finalizing our Heart & Soul Statements, the next step was to turn what matters most into real action. These statements became our guide for sorting and organizing action ideas — projects and initiatives that community members believe will help Arlington grow stronger and more connected.

Many ideas came directly from story circles and interviews, but new ones kept coming in too! At the Village Homecoming Festival, neighbors wrote down ideas on sticky notes. Each idea was carefully recorded by the Data Team and matched back to our Heart & Soul Statements to make sure they reflected what matters most.

The team then grouped similar ideas and worked to narrow them down. Residents helped prioritize which ideas were most important at the Dave Rossman Chili Cook-Off Event, where they voted for their favorites – over 2,900 in a single day! An online voting option made it easy for even more people to get involved.

Finally, the team focused on **connecting these ideas with people who can help make them happen**. We've met with local organizations, businesses, and residents — finding supporters, leaders, and partners to move these ideas forward. By staying rooted in our Heart & Soul Statements, we're ready to grow real projects that reflect our community's vision for Arlington's future.



Arlington Community Ideas for Action

After gathering ideas from story circles, interviews, and community events, Arlington Heart & Soul created a survey to help residents prioritize these ideas for action. Community members were encouraged to think not just about their favorite ideas, but about which ones would make the biggest positive impact on Arlington and how much support, funding, and partnership they would need to succeed. Many of these ideas have been talked about in Arlington for years and connect with efforts already happening in our village and school district. It's also important to remember that these ideas don't stand alone — many of them strengthen more than one Heart & Soul Statement at a time, helping us build on what matters most to our community.

EARLY ARLINGTON “WINS”



1 Arlingtonian Newsletter established:

As part of our commitment to keeping the community informed and connected, the Heart & Soul team created *The Arlingtonian* – a local newsletter designed to share updates, celebrate stories, and highlight what matters most to the Arlington community. From spotlighting local events to sharing voices gathered through the Heart & Soul process, *The Arlingtonian* has become a trusted resource and a valuable tool for strengthening community pride and engagement.

2 H&S data assisted the Park and Recreation Committee in securing grant dollars for playground equipment at the Arlington Park:

Using data gathered through story circles and community input, the Arlington Heart & Soul team provided valuable insight to the Village Park and Recreation Committee — helping demonstrate strong resident support for improved public spaces. This community-backed data played a key role in securing grant funding for new playground equipment, turning a shared priority into a visible investment in Arlington's future.

3 Open an ice cream shop and diner:

Heart & Soul data consistently highlighted the community's desire for more dining options — especially a diner and ice cream. Main Street Eats owners used this input to shape their vision, from setting hours to crafting the menu. Their hard work has paid off, and Arlington now enjoys a new local favorite that reflects what Arlingtonians truly wanted.



Recreation

Outlets for recreational opportunities are multi-generational and offer a healthy channel for our community.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Enhance pool facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a committee to spearhead this initiative Explore cost and feasibility of suggested ideas: splash pad, slide, seating Discuss other ideas for improvements and enhancements Explore funding options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Local residents Arlington Homecoming Festival Committee Village Council 	3-5 years
Implement regular swim lessons and activities for children and adults at the pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore steps and requirements involved to host swim lessons Discuss implementing games/contests for swimmers Discuss use of pool before public swim hours for adult swimming (laps, water aerobics) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Lifeguards American Red Cross Village Council 	1-2 years
Invest in management of the pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a committee to assist with the task of exploring and discussing options for searching for candidates, as well as making the position more desirable <p><small>*Has been historically difficult to find an adult for this position*</small></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Local resident committee Village Council 	1-2 years
Expand and upgrade park amenities, including basketball and pickleball courts (ie: disc golf, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New basketball hoops were installed and court lines painted Discuss improvements and enhancements to courts that need to be made Area Pickleball enthusiasts have expressed interest in pursuing proper all-weather surface for pickleball courts and creating a "Pickleball Ambassador" to offer instruction for those who want to learn Individuals have expressed interest in exploring the creation of a disc golf course in the park—with potential plans drawn up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Local residents Arlington Homecoming Festival Committee Village Council Pickleball Enthusiasts 	
Continue to develop walking path for community use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and discuss funding needs and fundraising opportunities to pave path Provide volunteer opportunities to improve current path by removing big rocks Explore ideas to enhance walking path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Village Council Street & Parks Supervisor Arlington Homecoming Festival Committee 	3-5 years

Progress is being made! Keep an eye out for the projects already completed using Arlington Heart & Soul data marked in our action plan with a ✓

Recreation cont.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Invest in new playgrounds with inclusive equipment for all ages with improved safety features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S data assisted in securing grant dollars to fund the construction of a new playground next to the swimming pool Explore improvements to additional playground sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Village Council Street & Parks Supervisor Arlington Homecoming Festival Committee 	3-5 years
Explore feasibility of developing "pop-up recreation"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pop up ice skating event was held at Sycamore Springs with great success and attendance Explore opportunities for future events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart & Soul Events Team 	Ongoing
Expand Parks, Pool & Recreation Committee to include residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the re-establishment of a committee to assist the Park Chairman with park related action items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Village Council Street & Parks Supervisor Local residents 	1-2 years
Improve restroom access and concessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arlington Rec Council has taken on the task of revitalizing and organizing the park concessions ✓ Concession stand building was repaired ✓ Village Council waived the normal expected 30% of profits fee Explore security measures that would deter vandalism of restrooms, and discuss improving access/time of availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Village Council Street & Parks Supervisor Rec Council 	Ongoing
Host sports tournaments and camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A local business owner expressed interest in organizing a 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament at the park Explore feasibility and interest in organizing softball tournaments Explore partnering with local businesses who would benefit from traffic these events would bring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool & Parks Committee Village Council Street & Parks Supervisor Local businesses 	2-3 years
Increase opportunities for adult community sports and youth-focused recreational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Youth soccer, baseball, and softball programs are available Adult Softball League has returned Explore additional options for adult community sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rec Council Pool & Parks Committee Village Council Street & Parks Supervisor Local businesses 	3-5 years

Business

The charm and character of local businesses and services sets Arlington apart. With essential amenities easily accessible, businesses enhance life in our community while creating and maintaining relationships, and stimulating the local economy.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Reintroduce a grocery store with fresh produce in town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data given to Dollar General Manager to provide corporate headquarters to support bringing produce to our local DG store • Explore opportunities for other local businesses to carry fresh produce • Approach FFA to consider revitalizing the school greenhouse to grow and sell produce • Land has been offered to establish a community garden ✓ Plant and produce swap site available in town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Dollar General and other businesses • Hurdwell • Arlington FFA • Local land owner • Local growers 	1-2 years
Establish a coffee shop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Main Street Eats is now open and serving coffee • Provide H&S data supporting this idea to owners of Hull's Trace to consider expanding their services to include a coffee shop or to share this data with potential buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Business Association 	Ongoing
Open an ice cream shop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Main Street Eats is now open and serving ice cream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Street Eats 	Complete
Focus on business development that compliments the town's character and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference H&S data that identifies Arlington's character and values, and begin developing a plan for business development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Economic Development Committee • Arlington Business Association • Village Council 	5 years

Business cont.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Take measures to attract new businesses by rejuvenating buildings downtown and offering incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Buckeye Company, Mila Grey The Salon, and Main Street Eats have rejuvenated existing buildings • Explore incentives and ways to attract new businesses • Explore offering tax incentives for new businesses that open in town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Council • Arlington Business Association • Arlington Economic Development Committee • Beautification Committee 	1-2 years
Promote and support local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Include local businesses in “Arlington Welcome Packet” • Explore collaborative business events in town among our local businesses • Encourage local businesses to participate in WFIN community days • Encourage local organizations to use local businesses for their endeavors and events • Provide training and resources for small business owners to enhance their online presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Business Association • Arlington Economic Development Committee • Local organizations • Hancock County Convention & Visitors Bureau 	1-2 years
Open a daytime diner that serves breakfast and lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Main Street Eats is now open and serving breakfast items and lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Street Eats 	Complete

School

With a deep sense of pride and heritage, Arlington Local School anchors life in our community. A slate of educational and extra-curricular offerings, along with planning towards the future, propels this tradition of excellence. Arlington school embodies all that makes our community what it is.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Expand curriculum to include real world application (ie: life skills, personal finance, home economics, taxes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Speech Classes and Vo-Ag are currently offered ✓ Leader In Me Program is implemented K-12 ✓ School has one of the few Industrial Arts programs in Ohio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore career based intervention program *Scarcity of home economics and life skills teachers forced school to eliminate these programs* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration • Teachers • Industrial Arts Instructor • Ag Science Instructor 	Ongoing
Create non-sports activities and clubs to ensure all youth feel included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Current Opportunities include: Band, Choir, Select Ensemble, E-Sports Program, Jr. High and High School Quiz Bowl, FFA, Academic Clubs (National Honor Society, French Honor Society, Science Honor Society), Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Teen Breakfast ✓ School has hired a STEM coordinator for grades K-12 ✓ Robotics and Coding will be offered in future curriculum ✓ Industrial Arts and Ag Science building will be constructed with the new school ✓ Exploratory Specials will be offered to middle school students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration • STEM Coordinator • Industrial Arts Instructor • Ag Science Instructor • Club Advisors • Coaches 	1-2 years
Invest in new playground and recreation equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This is planned for new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration • School Board 	2 years
Expand sports and extracurricular opportunities with better facilities in the new school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New outdoor sports complex will include new track and new baseball and softball fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration 	1-2 years
Construct a new track facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Top of the line all-weather eight lane track will be constructed with the new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration 	1-2 years

Progress is being made! Keep an eye out for the projects already completed using Arlington Heart & Soul data marked in our action plan with a ✓

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Prioritize building relationships between high school and elementary students and teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ French students currently teach weekly lessons to elementary students ✓ Ag Day, Farm Day, and Science Day are all held by high school students for elementary students ✓ Older students currently help tutor younger students and help in elementary classrooms ✓ High School football players help with elementary football camp ✓ High School cheerleaders help with "Mini-Cheer" ✓ Pep rallies and "Spirit Weeks" involve students K-12 ✓ Activities such as "Pass The Spirit," "Walk Of Fame," and Grad Walk involve K-12 together ✓ Synergy Sessions and Town Hall involve older and younger elementary students building relationships ✓ Monthly staff breakfasts are held for all staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement ideas from NHS and FFA to build relationships with elementary students to engage them and promote future interest in these organizations. i.e. "NHS Goes to Recess", Reading Buddies, NHS Mentoring Program, Town Hall, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration • Principals • Teachers • Coaches • Advisors • Counselor 	1-2 years
Create a partnership between school and community for community connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for local businesses to partner with school by offering reading rewards and other incentive programs • Explore connecting with FFA for fresh produce action idea • Explore establishing reading/visiting programs between Senior Living campuses to create intergenerational programming • Discuss community use of track for walking ✓ Arlington VFD hosts Fire Safety sessions and "Santa at The Fire Station" for children of our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration • Elementary principal • Teachers • Industrial Arts Instructor • Ag Science Instructor 	1-2 years
Prioritize student safety and school security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School employs a full-time School Resource Officer ✓ School has a full-time school counselor ✓ School has a part-time school nurse ✓ School currently has a new walkie-talkie and radio system ✓ New school will have top of the line camera system and fire doors ✓ Two entrances will be accessible during the school day and will be monitored-guests will be buzzed into a vestibule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration • School Resource Officer 	1-2 years

History & Tradition

We respect our community's beginnings, the foundation it has established, and the shared past it has provided. We strive to celebrate our history and tradition as we weave together all residents' experiences to create a shared future.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Repurpose and integrate parts of the old school into the new school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify viable items in current school to utilize in new school Provide design comps from other school districts that have successfully prioritized community history Work with school designers to integrate history into design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Committee Arlington Local Schools Arlington School Board 	1-2 years
Preserve the History and Heritage of Arlington through such means as local museums, history markers, and memorabilia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arlington to be featured in an exhibit at Hancock Historical Museum ✓ Heritage Committee representatives are working with Superintendent and Technology Director to create a history wall in the new school ✓ Local History to be included in Hancock County America 250 Celebrations ✓ Local businesses (Hull's Trace, MSE, and Hurdwell) display Arlington's history and heritage through wall photos, memorabilia, and memory wall. Pursue opportunity for a documentary of current school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hancock Historical Museum Heritage Committee Heart & Soul 	Ongoing
Expand opportunities for veterans to be recognized and honored through memorials and local events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A local family wishes to fund and oversee hanging banners on Main Street to honor our veterans Arlington High School has committed to continuing the school program honoring veterans with NHS serving breakfast Establish Elementary Veterans Day program NHS plans to implement digital tribute and military display in new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arlington Local Schools - NHS Arlington Elementary Principal Veteran Engagement Committee Hancock County Veterans Services 	Ongoing
Develop educational programs that teach youth about community history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversation had with school board members, this class would be welcomed if volunteers were provided Develop plans with school, including frequency, grades, curriculum, etc. Identify volunteers willing to teach program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals History Teachers Elementary Teachers Heritage Committee Community Volunteers 	1-2 years

History & Tradition cont.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Increase multi-generational collaboration opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Residents of Arlington Manor have expressed interest in after school programs for kids that could include help with reading, playing games, doing puzzles, teaching gardening, and just having fun and connecting with kids. ✓ Fall Frenzy Event held at Arlington Manor in Fall 2023 ✓ Sip & Share events were attended by several generations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Arlington Manor and Serenity Spring to identify opportunities for collaboration • Work with school to revive program like "Adopt a Grandparent" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Manor • Arlington Local Schools • Arlington Elementary Principal 	Ongoing
Create an alumni organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify alumni leaders to steer creation of alumni organization • Work with school to create a landing page on website for alumni, detailing engagement opportunities • Work with school to gather alumni information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Local Schools 	2-3 years



Sense of Community

Arlingtonians value our sense of community. Built on connection and familiarity, our community extends beyond the village borders while maintaining a small town feel. We strive to unite through supportive relationships, events and community involvement and aspire to be a welcoming community to all.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Keep Arlington H&S as a permanent, non-profit organizational umbrella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply and receive 501c3 status • Create and implement formal business plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation • Community Committees 	6 months-1 year
Host regular community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Heart and Soul has established movie night/Meet in the Street, and other events in the fall and the last day of school • Formally create an Events Committee under the Heart & Soul umbrella • Create a budget for events • Partner with local businesses for in-kind assistance, as well as sponsorships • Support and promote already existing events like Arlington Homecoming Festival, Trick-or-Treat, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation • Village Council • Business Association • Arlington Homecoming Festival 	Ongoing
Promote town cleanups and beautification projects to enhance the appearance of Arlington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Beautification Committee has successfully completed several projects, including installing a mural and cleaning up the town square • Support and Promote Beautification Committee's Enhancement Projects • Support Eagle Scouts looking to work on areas in Arlington for projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautification Committee • Arlington Boy Scouts 	Ongoing
Develop a community center for children, teens, and families to gather and engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally create an Outreach Committee under the Heart & Soul umbrella • Foster relationship with Best Family, who have expressed interest in turning the Best Building into a community connection and outreach center • Explore grant opportunities for gathering spaces through the Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation • Best Family 	5 years
Improve transparency by providing regular updates on council plans and decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a "Council Corner" to Arlingtonian Newsletter • Post Council updates and minutes online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Village Council • Heart & Soul Newsletter Team 	Ongoing

Sense of Community cont.

KEY ACTION STEPS:

Objective	Action Steps	Potential Partners	Timeline
Continue and maintain the Arlingtonian Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Published Arlingtonian Newsletter at least quarterly since December 2022 • Establish a Newsletter Editor to oversee creation • Formalize Newsletter Team • Formalize Newsletter Publishing & Content Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart & Soul Newsletter Team • Community Writers 	Ongoing
Recognize and nurture endeavors that maintain Arlington's rural feel and agricultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feature and highlight local farmers, rural businesses, FFA activities in social media and newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington FFA • FFA Alumni • Local Farmers 	Ongoing
Work with local authorities to address safety concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore fencing to create a barrier between R.R. tracks and soccer fields, walking path • Create safe walking paths for community members • Establish strong partnerships with area providers • Ensure safe walking routes to new school ✓ Village has created an online form for community members to report issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hancock County Sheriff's Department • Appleseed Joint Ambulance District • Arlington Volunteer Fire Department • Village Council • Arlington Local School • Local residents 	Ongoing
Develop a strategic plan to balance growth while preserving community values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide local entities with data for specific community planning efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Economic Development Committee • Village Council 	1-2 years
Organize initiatives where families support one another and help new residents integrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Worked with Hancock County Convention & Visitors Bureau to create a Welcome Packet for new residents • Implement a distribution plan for the Welcome Packet • Explore interest in a formal "Welcome Wagon" program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hancock County Convention & Visitors Bureau 	Ongoing
Create a community volunteer program to offer and find service opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Rolled out "It Takes a Village" messaging through facebook page and Arlingtonian Newsletter • Create a formal Heart & Soul website with a landing page for organizations to list volunteer opportunities for community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Committees • Arlington Homecoming Festival • Arlington PTO • Other Community Organizations 	2-3 years

Progress is being made! Keep an eye out for the projects already completed using Arlington Heart & Soul data marked in our action plan with a ✓

Stewarding Arlington Heart & Soul for Future Growth

PHASE 4

Members of Arlington Heart & Soul will continue to work with volunteers, community groups, local businesses, the school, and local government to develop a detailed implementation plan for each action idea the community has prioritized. The success of this plan will depend on the continued **involvement of the entire Arlington community**. This will involve the following steps:

- Present the Arlington Heart & Soul statements to Village Council to be officially adopted by the community. Present final action plan to get a resolution passed to recognize work.
- Build a stewardship team. The role of the stewardship team is to communicate and celebrate the implementation of actions and continue to find people or organizations to lead new efforts. The current Arlington Heart & Soul Core Team will work to engage new residents to help steward Heart & Soul.
- Map out details for each action idea. Objectives and tasks will need to be thought through and identified for each of the prioritized action ideas. The community will have to work together to further refine each action idea and lay out clear steps and processes for accomplishing the work.
- Connect with potential partners. Completing action ideas will require collaboration and communication between implementation partners. Arlington Heart & Soul will continue to share the action plan with key stakeholders and partners and identify points of connection so that action ideas can be accomplished.
- Identify funding needed to complete projects. Seek out funding sources and opportunities at the local, state and national level to support the implementation of action ideas.



FUTURE VISION & WORK

The Arlington Heart & Soul Action Plan represents a shared vision for the Arlington community's future. Through extensive community engagement, the team identified the values and priorities that matter most to the community's residents. This plan lays the foundation for a more connected, prosperous, and vibrant Arlington, where everyone has a voice and a role in shaping a collective future.

As the team wraps up this process, the success of this plan will depend on the continued involvement of the entire community. By working in partnership, we can ensure our community thrives, businesses grow, and residents feel proud and connected.

Stay connected! Arlington Heart & Soul wants to hear from you. It's never too late to get involved. Visit the Arlington Heart & Soul website: www.arlingtonheartandsoul.org.

Acknowledgements & Gratitude

The **Arlington Heart & Soul** Action Plan results from the hard work, dedication, and collaboration of many individuals, organizations, and community members. We are deeply grateful to the following:

HEART & SOUL CORE TEAM

Thank you to the dedicated members of our Heart & Soul Core Team who devoted countless hours to this process. Your tireless efforts—and the love for community and teamwork you brought to every step—made this journey possible.

HEART & SOUL VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to the many Heart & Soul volunteers —especially those serving on the Communications, Events, Story Gathering/Listening, and Data Sub-teams. Your time, energy, and efforts have been essential throughout this process.

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to the youth volunteers who gave their time and energy to assist with events

HEART & SOUL COACH

Thank you to our Community Heart & Soul Coach, Cassie Turner, for your guidance, direction, and support throughout this journey. Thank you for helping us stay the course. We couldn't have done it without you

ARLINGTON COMMUNITY

Thank you to everyone in the Arlington Community who took part in the Heart & Soul process. Thank you to all who shared their stories, attended meetings, participated in surveys, wrote essays, attended events, and provided valuable input.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Thank you to our local businesses, churches, and organizations for your support and collaboration—especially in providing spaces for events and meetings. Your generosity helped bring our work to life.

ARLINGTON LOCAL SCHOOL

Thank you to the school board, administrators, teachers, and coaches of Arlington Local School. We're grateful for your involvement in the process through providing event space and helping to facilitate student, faculty, and alumni participation.

FUNDING PARTNERS

A heartfelt thank you to the **Findlay-Hancock Community Foundation** for awarding the grant dollars to support our community's Heart & Soul process. Your belief in us—and your investment—has made a lasting impact. This process has inspired a clearer vision for our future and is helping to shape a more intentional and hopeful community. We are deeply grateful you chose us.

ARLINGTON VILLAGE COUNCIL

Thank you to the Arlington Village Council for your partnership, cooperation, and for providing office space and fiscal oversight. Your support was key to moving this process forward. Special thanks to Greg Glick.

Thank you to **Community Heart & Soul** for the tools, materials, and direction to navigate this process. A special thank you to Leanne Tingay for her expertise and enthusiasm along the way.

We're grateful to the **Findlay-Hancock County Convention and Visitors Bureau** for awarding additional grant dollars and sharing essential comfort resources that helped make our gatherings welcoming and functional.

