

Item No. **6G**

at the meeting as to how to engage in the presentation. If you do not have a cell phone, staff will provide other means of participating in the exercise.

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**Word Cloud Exercises Can:**

1. Simplify Complex Ideas • Reduces lengthy discussion into clear, one-word descriptors that capture the essence of how people view the Village.
2. Encourage Broad Participation • Easy for all participants to engage, regardless of background or expertise. Each person contributes equally to the exercise.
3. Reveal Shared Themes • The word cloud highlights common words that reflect the Village's strengths, challenges, and identity. This creates a starting point for deeper discussions about goals and priorities.
4. Promote Visual Understanding • The visual output provides a quick and accessible way to interpret community sentiment. It can be used in meetings, reports, and public presentations to show consensus or diverse viewpoints.
5. Support Comprehensive Plan Development • The results of the word cloud can inform the plan's vision statement, goals, and narrative by grounding them in community perspectives.

**Application to the Comprehensive Plan Update**

The Village will utilize Word Cloud Exercises with the Special Comprehensive Plan Committee, Plan Commission, and Village Board to capture initial impressions of Caledonia's character and direction. Similar exercises will also be conducted at public pop-up events and with stakeholder groups to ensure broader input. The compiled word clouds will serve as a visual foundation for identifying community values and guiding the development of policies and strategies within the updated Comprehensive Plan. Caledonia Special Comprehensive Plan Committee Report Meeting Date: September 17, 2025 Item No.: 3a Conclusion A Word Cloud Exercise is a simple but powerful tool for building a shared understanding of the Village's qualities. By translating many individual perspectives into a single visual product, it strengthens committee discussions and enhances public engagement during the Comprehensive Plan update

**What is a S.W.O.T. Analysis?**

A S.W.O.T. Analysis is a structured planning tool used to evaluate a community's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It provides a framework for identifying internal characteristics of the community as well as external conditions that may influence future growth, development, and quality of life.

- Strengths – Positive attributes and resources within the village (e.g., strong schools, community identity, quality infrastructure).
- Weaknesses – Internal challenges or areas needing improvement (e.g., limited housing options, aging infrastructure, traffic congestion).
- Opportunities – External factors or trends the village could leverage (e.g., regional job growth, funding programs, redevelopment potential).
- Threats – External pressures or risks that could negatively affect the community (e.g., economic downturns, loss of farmland, environmental challenges).

**Why Use a S.W.O.T. Analysis?**

The S.W.O.T. process helps ensure that the comprehensive plan is grounded in a realistic assessment of current conditions and future possibilities. It encourages broad participation, allowing residents, stakeholders, and officials to share perspectives on what defines the community today and what challenges or opportunities lie ahead.

**How Will it be Utilized in the Comprehensive Plan Update?**

1. Assessment of Current Conditions
  - The S.W.O.T. exercise will guide discussions among the Plan Commission, staff, and community members about the village's current standing.
2. Identification of Community Priorities

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- By highlighting strengths and opportunities, the village can prioritize areas for investment, preservation, and enhancement.
3. Problem-Solving and Risk Management
    - Recognizing weaknesses and threats early allows the comprehensive plan to propose policies and strategies to address or mitigate them.
  4. Foundation for Goals and Strategies
    - The results of the S.W.O.T. analysis will guide the development of the vision statement, goals, and action items in the updated comprehensive plan.
  5. Community Engagement Tool
    - Conducting a S.W.O.T. analysis provides a structured, easy-to-understand way for residents and stakeholders to contribute ideas, ensuring the plan reflects community input.

A S.W.O.T. analysis is a valuable tool in updating the comprehensive plan because it balances realistic assessment with forward-looking opportunities. By integrating the results into the planning process, the village can create a plan that builds on its strengths, addresses its weaknesses, capitalizes on opportunities, and prepares for future challenges.



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Respectfully submitted:

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Development Director