

Delaware **Together**

Building on Tradition, Planning for Tomorrow

City of Delaware Comprehensive Plan

May 10, 2021



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LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

On behalf of the City of Delaware community, the Delaware Together Steering Committee presents Delaware Together – Building on Tradition, Planning for Tomorrow.

Delaware Together is our community's Comprehensive Plan. It reflects ideas and insights for the future and is the broadest public policy document a community can create. It expresses the values and aspirations of who and what we want to become as a community over the next 10-15 years.

This Plan replaces the current Comprehensive Plan which has served the community well since 2003. Many of the core values, goals, and recommendations are still valid but trends, priorities, and needs change over time. This new Plan will help shape and direct growth and development, focus activities on key locations within our existing utility boundary, and align fiscal resources with the Plan.

The document incorporates input collected over more than two years from a wide range of community members and stake holders. It integrates more than 2,000 comments from our friends and neighbors with insights from technical analysis on a range of topics, including character and land use, economic development, housing, transportation, parks and recreation, and much more.

The Comprehensive Plan was developed thoughtfully and deliberately. The 31-person Steering Committee was carefully selected by City Council to reflect diverse backgrounds, interests, and areas of the City itself. It has resulted in 6 high-level goals, almost 60 objectives, and over 230 specific Actions (recommendations) that will be pursued, monitored, and adjusted as needed over time. It is meant to be a living document that will be revisited through the years and can be modified as needed while its core vision and goals continue to guide decision-making.

Outcomes can be measured individually, but the plan also leverages the potential for synergies between the individual recommendations. For example, land use decisions directly relate to fiscal health, providing housing opportunities in a broad spectrum, reflect the overall quality of life in the community, and the City's distinctive character. Each investment in the local economy has implications for jobs, personal prosperity, and more. Every action taken to promote quality housing that meets the population needs also relates to jobs, commuting patterns, the ability of the City to attract a diverse population and the potential to accommodate a range of housing choice. Where and how people live and work - as well as how much they benefit from being part of and contributing to the Delaware community - are all interwoven elements of the overall community Plan.

We want to thank every community member who offered their time and ideas to Delaware Together. We look forward to our continued collaboration over the coming years as we move through the hard work to implement this plan.

The City of Delaware is a great place, with a wonderful history, and exciting future. It will take each of us working individually and collectively to bring the Plan to reality in our ongoing effort to make Delaware the best it can be.

Sincerely,

Delaware Together Steering Committee

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Chapter 1

Introduction



1. INTRODUCTION

The Delaware Together planning process was designed to create a new city-wide plan for the City of Delaware that reflects community ideas and insights for the future. The resulting comprehensive plan puts forth a vision for the community for both the near and long term. This chapter presents why the process of creating a plan for the City was important to undertake, outlines the process, and highlights key actions recommended in the plan.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Delaware is in an enviable position relative to many other communities in the central Ohio region and the state. Known as a well-maintained and family-oriented community, Delaware has both a rich history and a supportive environment for new business and ideas. The City boasts a vibrant downtown and attractive neighborhoods, strong school districts and a location in a growing region with a strong economic base. But Delaware also faces challenges: maintaining affordability in a rising national housing market, building housing options that match changing preferences, attracting and supporting people of all age groups, responding to changing market conditions, and balancing new development with a preservation of the City's authentic character. All of these factors have been considered in preparing this plan, in addition to the dynamic conditions during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as well as national calls for racial justice that have reverberated locally in communities throughout central Ohio.



The mindset of the Delaware City Council is to think strategically about the future of the City. Four main pillars were identified as important to the future of the City of Delaware. This plan aims to reinforce these pillars.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

This plan is organized into 8 chapters:

1. Introduction
 2. Ideas and Input
 3. Conditions and Trends
 4. Development Framework
 5. Character and Land Use
 6. Fiscal Sustainability
 7. Goals, Objectives and Actions
 8. Implementation
- Appendices

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a long-term guide that expresses the values and aspirations of a community. It is the broadest public policy document a community can create for its future physical development. It considers the input of residents, workers, and other stakeholders. The plan helps the City respond to change and acts as a guidebook for decision-makers. It can also serve as a marketing tool to clearly convey the community's value and priorities for the City.

To achieve the vision and goals, the plan includes specific actions (projects, policies and programs) and identifies timing and responsibility for undertaking those actions. It also contains map-based recommendations through a Character and Land Use Plan broken into existing Character Areas (areas generally expected to maintain their existing characteristics over the next decade) and Focus Areas (areas where significant change is anticipated). These components of the plan help to answer critical questions regarding how the City should manage growth and new development.

WHY UPDATE THE PLAN?

Regular comprehensive planning is good stewardship and establishes a foundation for well-supported policies to create the best possible future. The existing (2003-2008) comprehensive plan provides an important foundation for this plan. Many of its values, goals and recommendations are still valid today. However, the existing plan for the City needed to be updated to reflect current trends while being focused on emerging priorities. Delaware Together focused on maintaining the City's position as a desirable place in which to live, work, play, and invest for the next ten years — and beyond.

RELATED STUDIES AND PLANS

Following are some of the documents that have informed Delaware Together:

- Access Delaware (2019)
- Building Industry Association of Central Ohio Housing Need Assessment (2018)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017)
- City Branding (2017)
- Delaware County Community Health Assessment (2018)
- Insight 2050 (2015)
- MORPC Corridors Study (2019)
- MORPC Regional Housing Strategy (2020)
- Recreation Needs Assessment (2020)
- Parks and Recreation Plan (2017)
- Route 23 Corridor Strategic Guide (2019)
- Sewer and Water Master Plans (2017)
- Thoroughfare Plan (2002)
- Trail System Master Plan (2017)

In addition, the following documents have been prepared in association with this comprehensive plan.

- Economic Baseline Report
- Southwest Industrial Analysis
- Residential Market Analysis
- Fiscal Sustainability Audit

See Appendix for full documents.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Fundamentally, this is the community’s plan. Throughout the process, community members were engaged and offered hundreds of ideas that helped to shape the plan’s actions. A summary of those involved in the plan is provided below.

CITY STAFF

Coordination

- City staff supported and helped to coordinate the work of all other groups and provided local knowledge and expertise to each element of the plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Process and outreach

- A 31 member citizen Steering Committee helped guide the public process and creation of the plan’s recommendations. Members were selected to reflect the City’s diverse backgrounds and interests through an open application process.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Guidance and Adoption

- Elected officials were updated throughout the process and the final plan was formally adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council.

PUBLIC

Input and feedback

- In-person workshops held in different locations throughout the City and online surveys offered a variety of ways for the community to give input throughout the process.

STAKEHOLDERS

Targeted input

- Various stakeholder groups were consulted to inform specific aspects of the plan, including business leaders, civic leagues, advocacy organizations, real estate professionals and developers, education professionals, students, young professionals and industry representatives, among others.

CONSULTANTS

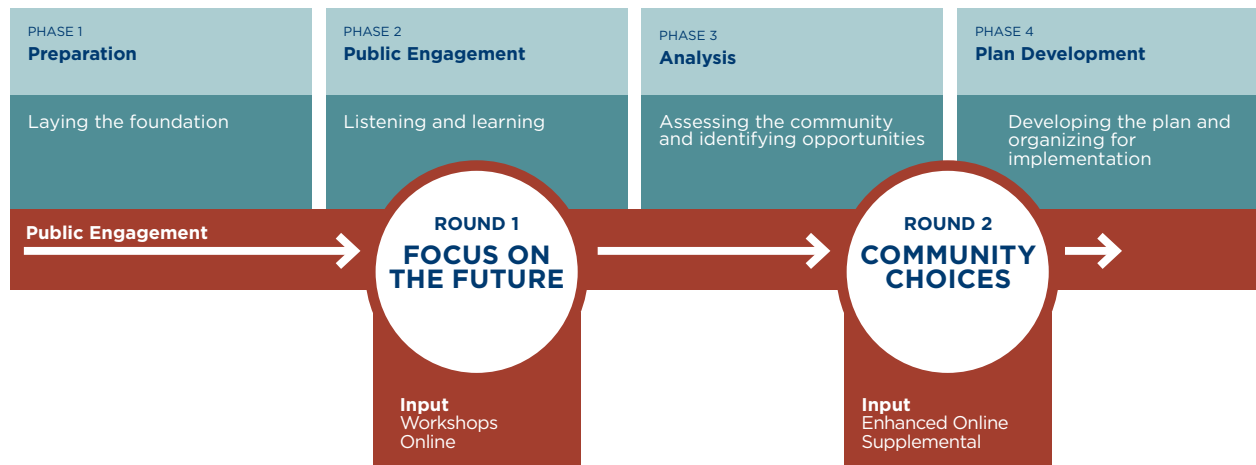
Process leadership and expertise

- A consultant team facilitated the process, conducted technical analysis and integrated experience from other successful communities in Ohio and nationwide.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

The plan was developed through a process that integrated input from community members and key stakeholders with technical analysis. The process began in early 2018 and culminated in Winter 2021.

PROCESS DIAGRAM





VISION

The City of Delaware strives to promote a high quality of life for all community members, protecting its unique character while embracing positive change.

GOALS

Building off of the vision, the plan's goals articulate the highest level of desired outcomes for the plan.

STRUCTURE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan includes six goals, which reflect themes from community input. Each goal is supported by several objectives that organize the plan's 235 actions.

GOALS

Intended results expressed in non-technical terms for the plan's six topic areas. These represent overarching desired outcomes for the plan.

OBJECTIVES

Sub-themes within the goals that serve to organize actions.

ACTIONS

Projects, policies or programs that are recommendations to be implemented.

A. MANAGE GROWTH AND CHANGE

- Direct, design and encourage new development to promote compatible land uses, create strong quality of place including a mix of uses where appropriate, support fiscal health and promote sustainability.

B. ADVANCE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

- Provide economic opportunity for all residents and support diverse, successful and resilient business and industry.

C. BUILD SOCIAL COHESION AND EQUITY

- Foster Delaware's sense of community across geographies, income categories and demographic groups and provide stable foundations for a high quality of life.

D. PROMOTE HOUSING QUALITY AND VARIETY

- Ensure a broad spectrum of housing options to meet the current and future needs of the population.

E. LEVERAGE RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

- Preserve and enhance key historic buildings and neighborhoods, natural areas and open spaces, transportation and mobility options, and quality facilities and services.

F. ENSURE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Promote development, land use, infrastructure and other policies that will support a healthy fiscal position.

Chapter 2

Ideas and Input



2. IDEAS AND INPUT

To ensure that the planning process for Delaware Together was open, inclusive, and transparent, a robust public engagement process was conducted with the help of a representative Steering Committee.

ROBUST, MULTIFACETED ENGAGEMENT

The Delaware Together process drew heavily from community ideas and insight. Central to the work was a 31 member Steering Committee representing a range of interests from throughout the City. This group provided substantive guidance and played a critical role in conducting outreach to the broader public.

There were two phases of public engagement throughout the planning process. In each phase, technical analysis was shared with the public and public input also helped to shape the technical analysis. Focus on the Future Workshops were held to stimulate big-picture thinking about the City in September 2018. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic a second round of engagement was conducted primarily through online activities. This provided a chance to share draft plan components and solicit feedback.

Supplemental engagement included presentations to City Council, self-guided engagement activities at venues throughout the City and focus groups.

OVERALL MEETING SATISFACTION

>99%

Nearly all participants who responded to exit questionnaires said they felt that their voices were heard.

“Loved hearing what others shared and having a dialogue about the possibilities/opportunities”

Workshop participant

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Let's work together to make Delaware the best it can be!

Join us for an interactive workshop to help shape a new plan for the City.

- Learn about the Delaware Together planning process
- Participate in activities through which you can share your vision for the future

Attend the session that is most convenient to you.

Sept. 17, Thursday - 6:30-8:30 pm
Willis Education Center
74 W William St, Room 212

Sept. 25, Tuesday - 6:30-8:30 pm
YMCA/Ohio National Guard
101 S Hook Rd, Rooms 1-3

Sept. 25, Tuesday - 6:30-8:30 pm
Congozi Elementary
10 Channing St, Gym

Sept. 26, Wednesday - 5:30-7:30 pm
SourcePoint
800 Cheshire Rd,
Riddiough Room

Sept. 27, Thursday - 6:30-8:30 pm
Second Ward Community Center
50A Ross St

Delaware Together
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What's next for Delaware?
 Involved in creating the City's new comprehensive plan and help shape the future of our community.
 For more:
www.DelawareTogether.net

Collateral materials were designed around a coherent brand and a website was established as the main "hub" for information about the process and ways to get involved.



The public engagement process targeted key interest groups like the Citizens Academy as a supplemental engagement opportunity.



Focus on the Future workshops were held throughout the City to ensure the process cast a wide net to reach community members.



STEERING COMMITTEE

Thirty-one members of the Delaware community were selected to provide key guidance and insight as part of the Delaware Together Steering Committee. After a broadly-advertised open call to community members, the final committee selection was made from over 90 submitted applications. Those who were not selected were invited to participate in public engagement.

Applicants were selected considering their interests, skills, demographic characteristics (age, gender, etc.) and places of residence. The goal was to bring a cross section of the Delaware community representing a diversity of relevant perspectives to the table. The committee was made up of 16 men and 16 women, with ages ranging from the early 20s to over 65. In addition to the age and gender diversity, each ward of Delaware had at least seven representatives on the committee.

The committee guided the public process and helped to shape the plan's recommendations. It acted as spokespersons for the planning effort, played a critical role in conducting public outreach, and provided direction feedback to the planning team at crucial moments in the process. The Steering Committee held 11 official meetings (including two virtual meetings due to COVID-19), and many members took on facilitation roles at



FOCUS ON THE FUTURE WORKSHOPS

The first round of public workshops were conducted early on in the Delaware Together planning process and were used to gather input from the community through both individual work and small group brainstorming.

The five workshops took place on four different evenings at different locations in the City to make the meetings as convenient as possible. The workshops had three distinct parts:

- 1. Setting the Stage:** Participants were given a brief introduction to the Delaware Together planning process and project timeline.
- 2. Small Group Work:** Participants were asked to answer the question “What are the greatest opportunities for the Delaware Community?” and discussed their answers in small groups. Workshop participants also worked together to map “strong places” and “weak places” in the City.
- 3. Reporting out:** At the end of the meeting all groups shared their strong and weak places and big ideas.



All individual comments collected were recorded in a database, indexed and categorized. The consultant team then identified common themes from which preliminary goals, objectives and actions were developed. A composite map was created from the top strong and weak places identified in the City to inform the land use planning work.

MAJOR OUTCOMES

1. Over 350 people attended the workshops
2. 470 Focus on the Future mapping comments
3. 1,300 total ideas
4. There was a high satisfaction rate based on exit questionnaires:
 - 100% of people felt comfortable working in their group
 - 100% felt their ideas were recorded accurately
 - 99% wanted to continue to participate in the process

KEY TOPICS

Infrastructure, walkability and connectivity
Identity, character and community
Growth, revitalization and targeted areas
Economics, employment and tourism
Sustainability, environment and parks & recreation
Downtown
Housing
University and education

ONLINE AND SUPPLEMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the planning process, additional opportunities were created to collect input outside of the formal workshop settings. This included both online engagement and face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders.

DEVELOPMENT TYPES PREFERENCE SURVEY

An online survey was conducted through a visual preference exercise for Steering Committee members. Participants were asked to identify desirable development types for infill or redevelopment of existing developed areas as well as undeveloped areas. They were provided with images of different designs for each development type and asked to rate how appropriate the style is or is not for Delaware.

TESTING DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Development types are the subdivision patterns and organization of individual properties including design and configuration of streets and other public spaces. The supplemental online engagement asked the opinion of members of the public on a broad range of development Types. More information on development types please see Chapter 4.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Traditional building materials/styles preferred and the quality of materials is important
2. Need for attainable housing and desire for a variety of housing types
3. Support a range of housing styles
4. Support mixed-use developments that integrate commercial with other uses
5. Institutional buildings should meet a very high standard for design
6. Some intensification of development is appropriate closer to downtown

TARGETED ENGAGEMENT

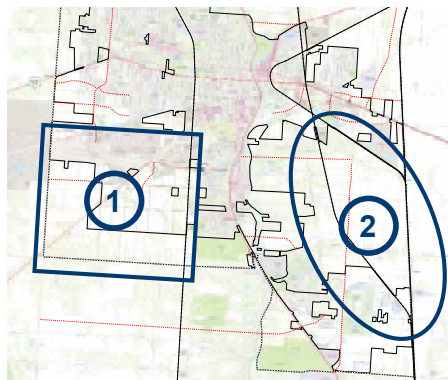
In addition to the supplemental online engagement, throughout the process special efforts were made to engage with key groups and individuals with a stake and an interest in the plan. This included in person and virtual meetings with City Council as well as community groups.



A display at the Delaware Community Center / YMCA allowed people to identify strong and weak places in the community.

FOCUS AREAS ACTIVITY

An online activity was conducted, and broadly promoted to the public, in order to test concepts for the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas. Participants had the opportunity to share their preferences out of a choice of several different concepts and to provide qualitative feedback.



Preliminary ideas for the Southwest (Area 1 above) and Southeast (Area 2 above) Focus Areas were tested online.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

① SOUTHWEST AREA

- Continue to attract a range of industries, recognizing shift to R&D and tech-oriented sectors
- Build and maintain infrastructure that supports new industry as well as amenities that create a vibrant, attractive working environment
- Provide the opportunity for housing, including workforce housing

② SOUTHEAST AREA

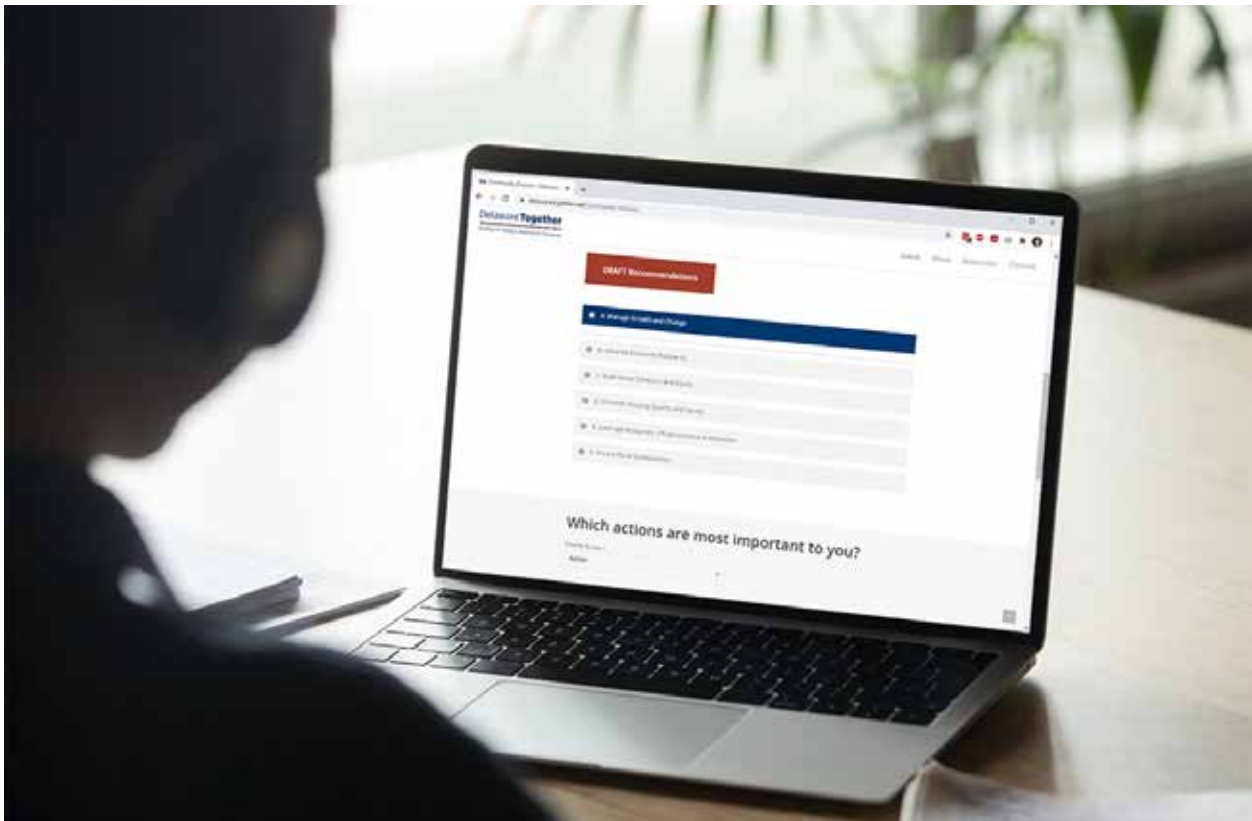
- Support for a neighborhood centers concept, which established multiple mixed-use centers surrounded by residential areas
- New residential development to reflect “traditional” neighborhoods and preserve rural character in other places
- Ensure key north-south thoroughfare connections and to preserve roadway connections to other areas

COMMUNITY CHOICES

Beginning in late-January 2021, the public was invited to view the draft plan and to provide comments on all elements of the plan online via the project website with a focus on the Actions in Chapter 7.

The City of Delaware's Communications Department produced a video and the planning team integrated it into the project website to explain the planning process to date, provide an overview of the plan, and give instructions for how to offer comments on the website. The website activities were broadly promoted through numerous channels, building upon the contacts and networks that were engaged throughout the planning process. All comments were databased and used to inform changes to the final plan.

Based upon input collected the planning team revised recommendations and other plan content to reflect additional ideas, key priorities and the clarity in presentation.



Chapter 3

Conditions and Trends



3. CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Over the past several decades, the City of Delaware has experienced significant changes with respect to people (population), place (physical environment), and prosperity (economics). This chapter presents information about the existing conditions and trends in the City and the region that have informed the plan's goals, objectives and actions.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter is organized into three sections:

1. People

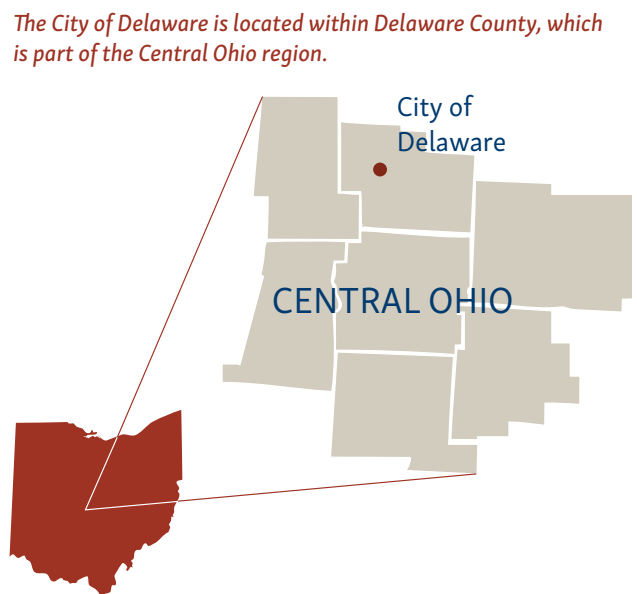
Population and household characteristics and demographic trends

2. Place

Development, land use and character, transportation and parks and open space

3. Prosperity

Economy, employment income, poverty, housing, education and fiscal health



Note: Most recent demographic data comes from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) unless otherwise noted.

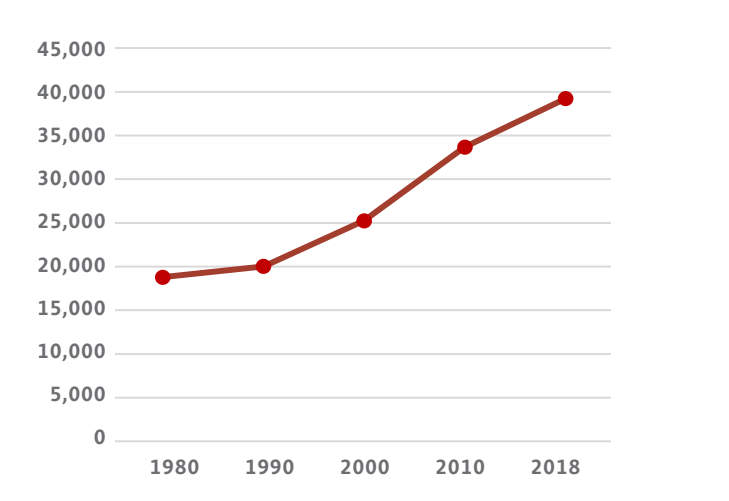
PEOPLE

Population growth and shifts in demographics have contributed to a dynamic environment for planning in the City of Delaware and the region.

CITY AND REGION GROWING

Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Delaware's population expanded by nearly 10,000, or almost 38 percent. While this rate has slowed in recent years, growth trends are still strong and regional growth projections support a strong likelihood that Delaware will continue to retain and attract more residents in the decades to come. Based on the US Census, the number of residents in the City is over 41,200 (over 18% growth since 2010), but based on City building activity, the population is even greater, nearing 44,000. This will place demands on the community with respect to housing, infrastructure, services and amenities. This will require thoughtful and deliberate planning to foster development.

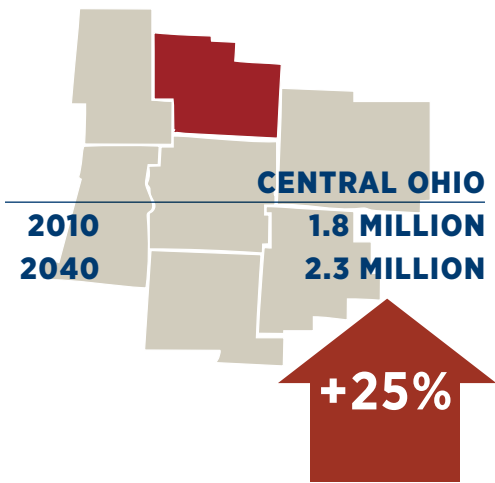
CHANGE IN POPULATION, CITY OF DELAWARE, 1980-2018



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018

Regional Growth Projections: insight2050

In 2014, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), Columbus 2020, and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Columbus undertook an initiative to project future growth in the region over the next 30+ years and to help communities proactively plan. In 2015, the insight2050 initiative projected in its initial report that the region would grow by 25% (1 million people) by 2050. The report included scenarios for development and an assessment of how each would impact a range of metrics, including fiscal, transportation, environmental, and public health measures. More information can be found at www.getinsight2050.org.

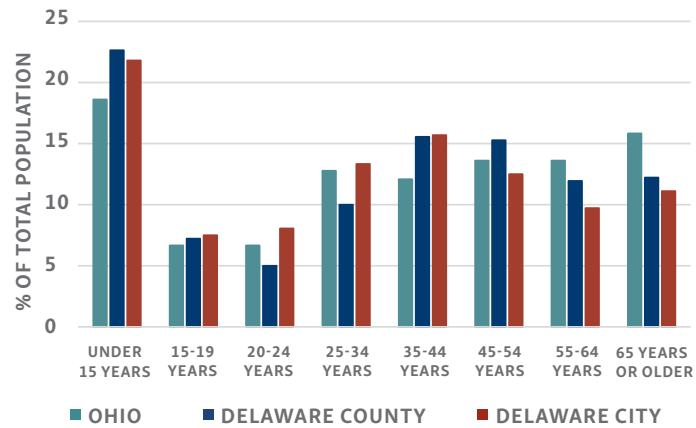


Source: insight2050, U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2012

POPULATION DIVERSE IN AGE

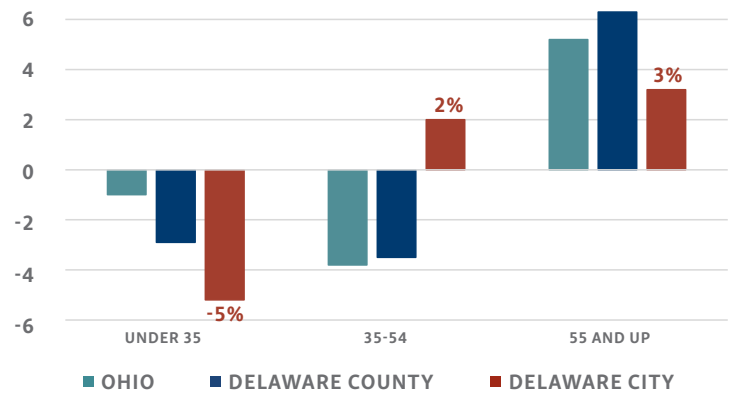
The City's median age is 34.5 years— younger than the County at 38.4 years and the State at 39.3 years. The 35-44 year-old cohort is the second largest, representing nearly 16 percent of the City's population. The proportion of residents in the City over 65 years (which is 11.7 percent) is lower than the County and the State (at 12 percent and 16 percent, respectively), but this population is growing. The City had an increase of just over one percent in the population over 65 between 2009 and 2017, reflecting national, State and County trends. If accommodating people of all ages is to be a priority for Delaware, it will be important for the City to plan for housing, infrastructure, services and amenities that support people at every stage of life.

AGE DISTRIBUTION, 2018



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018

% CHANGE IN POPULATION BY AGE GROUP, 2009-2018

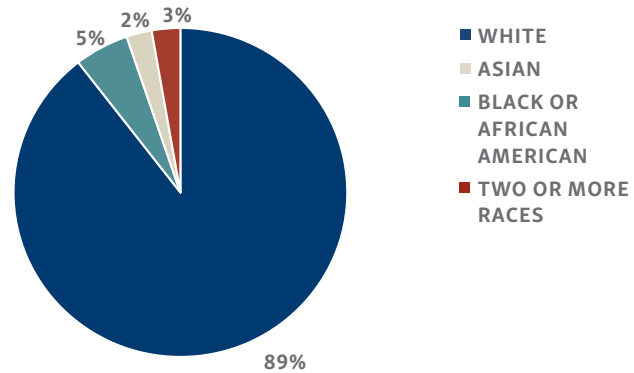


Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018

DIVERSIFYING

The City is more racially homogeneous than the County or the State, with 89 percent of Delaware identifying as White, compared to over 88 percent of the County and 82 percent of the State. Just over five percent of the population identifies as African American. However, the percentage of the population that identifies as a racial minority has been increasing. For example, the Asian population has doubled since 2018 (from .7 percent to 2 percent). While the racial minority population remains small, its growth will be important to monitor and understand to ensure that Delaware's planning and policies foster a welcoming environment for all.

RACIAL DISTRIBUTION, 2018

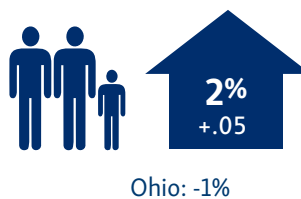


Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018

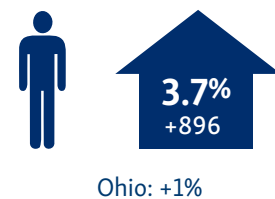
HOUSEHOLD SIZE INCREASING

The household size in Delaware is increasing with an average of 2.47 persons in 2010 and 2.52 persons in 2017. However, the percentage of single-person households in the City increased from 20 percent to 31 percent and the percentage of family households with children under 18 decreased from 40 percent to 36 percent in 2010 and 2017, respectively. Delaware still has a large number of family households and its family orientation, strong schools and other factors promise that it will continue to be an attractive community for families. As Delaware builds new housing it will be important to focus on providing a variety housing types to accommodate different household sizes and preferences.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE INCREASING



SINGLE-PERSON HOUSEHOLDS, CHANGE



What is a household?

The following definitions related to households are used by both the US Census Bureau and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Household: A person or group of people living together in one housing unit.

Housing unit: A house, apartment, mobile home, group of rooms or single room, which are intended as separate living quarters.

Family household: A group of two or more people living together in a housing unit who are related by birth, marriage, adoption, etc.

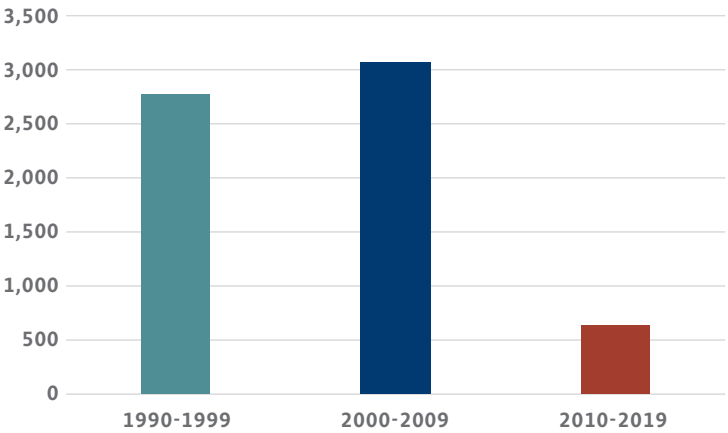
PLACE

New development has changed the physical environment of Delaware since the last comprehensive plan. In spite of these changes, the City retains a strong downtown character, attractive traditional neighborhoods and desirable new residential and commercial areas.

ANNEXATION OF PROPERTY OVER TIME

Since 1990, the City has annexed land adjacent to its boundaries, primarily to the south, southeast, east and west. Most of this annexation occurred in the 1990s and 2000s, with relatively little annexation taking place in the past decade. In 2020, the City has received numerous inquiries about potential annexations in the future with a few being advanced already. This reinforces the fact that the areas annexed in previous decades are starting to build out and the next wave of outward growth by annexation (within the utility boundaries of the City) is likely to occur during the next decade. Annexation has allowed the City to grow, has brought these properties into the City's jurisdiction for real estate and

LAND AREA IN ACRES ANNEXED BY CITY, 1990-2019

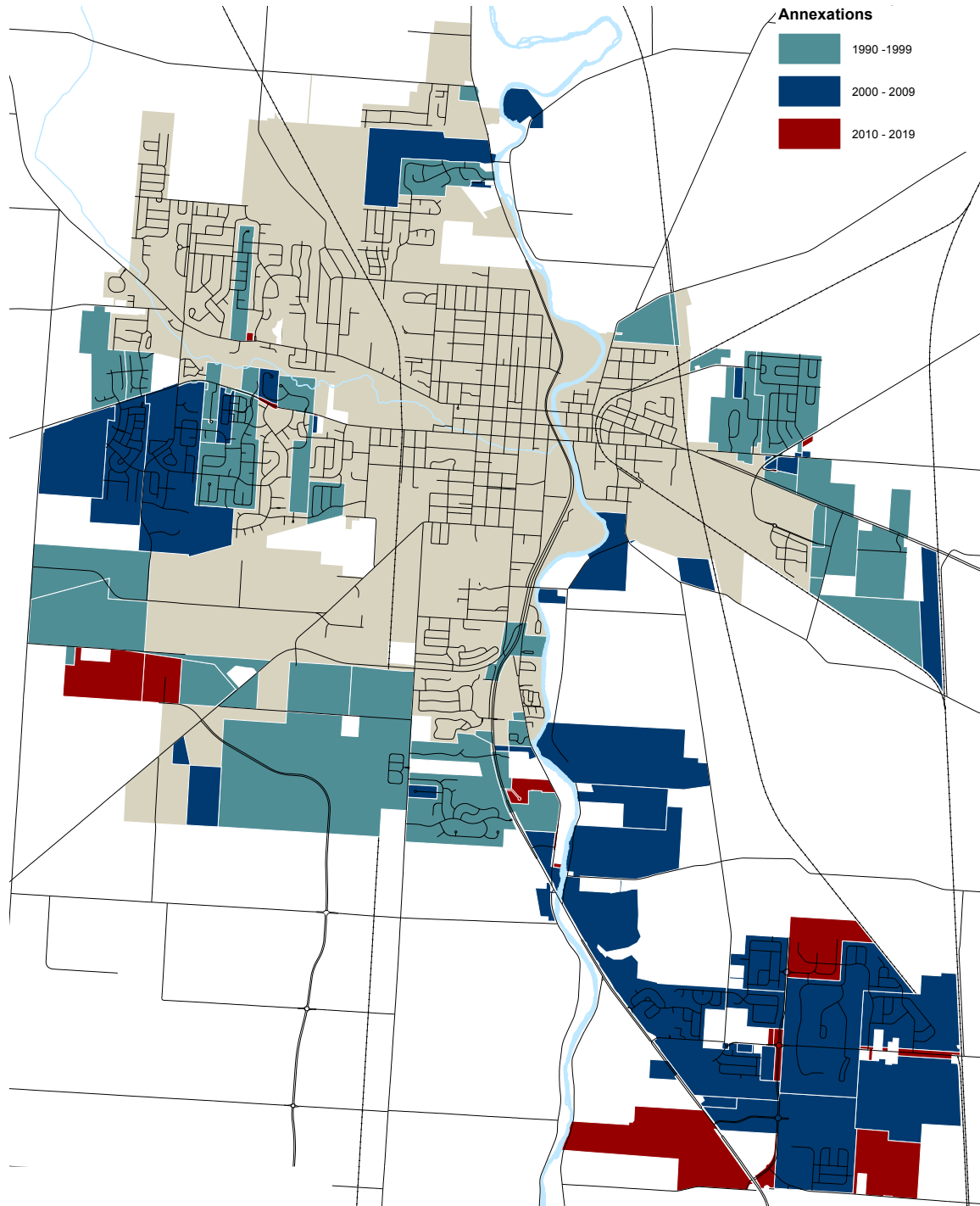


Source: City of Delaware

income taxation and has allowed the City to manage growth and development in these areas. The City in turn provides services and utilities to these areas, and they are incorporated into the City's school districts (Olentangy Local Schools and Delaware City School District).



ANNEXATION BY CITY OF DELAWARE, 1990-2019



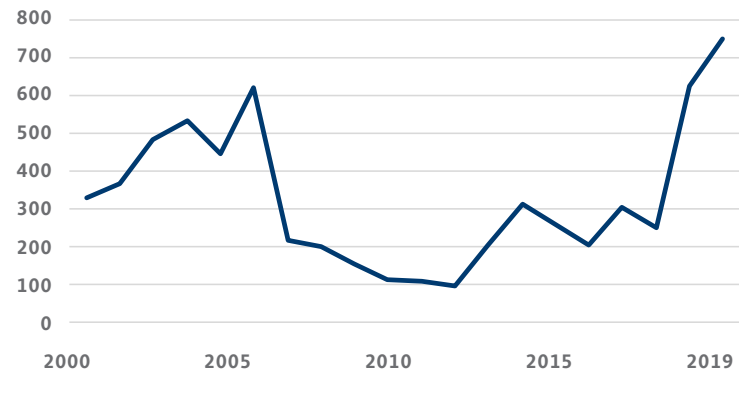
SIGNIFICANT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

From 1996-2004, the City saw a significant increase in housing construction, especially single family housing. Following the 2008-2009 recession, the pace of development slowed until recent record permit years, but since 2014 has been on the rise again. The character of residential development has been largely suburban, with wide and deep lots on curvilinear streets connected to arterial roads. Most homes are one to two stories with attached garages. However, some alternative products have also been developed, such as attached "landominiums," single family housing on smaller lots (infill and subdivision development), and multifamily housing.

MANY RENTAL HOUSING UNITS

In comparison to the County and the State, Delaware has a relatively high proportion of rental housing (37 percent, compared with 18.7 percent for the County and 34 percent for the State). This can benefit young people and those who are interested in buying but cannot afford to yet. It can also allow more of the workforce to live in the community. Maintaining the quality of existing rental housing is very important. Within the last decade or so the City has seen a significant number of rental projects developed or approved. Projects have included Seattle House, Preserve at Quail Pass, Burr Oak Commons, Flats on Houk, downtown second and third story apartments, Arthur Place, Riverside Landing at Delaware Place, Coughlin's Crossing, Meadows at Carson Farms, numerous Ohio Wesleyan University housing projects, various social-service agency housing projects, Del-Mor Dwellings projects including **Courage Court, and several senior housing projects.**

NEW RESIDENTIAL PERMITS, CITY OF DELAWARE, 2000-2019



Source: City of Delaware

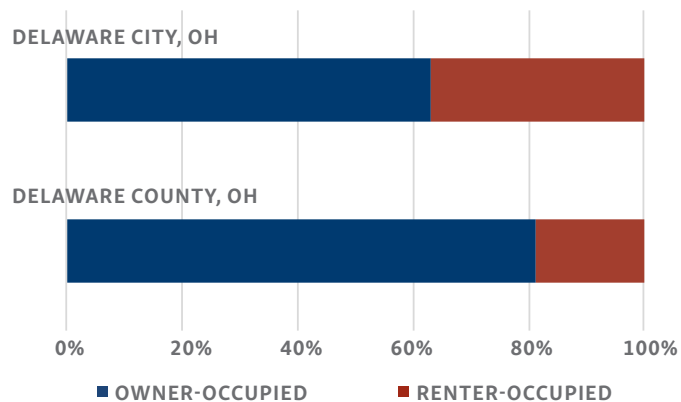
Building Industry Association of Central Ohio Housing Need Assessment

Conducted in 2018 by Vogt Insight Strategies, this report uses findings from insight2050 to estimate the need for new residential housing in the Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Statistical Area and the 10 surrounding counties.

The report concludes that with significant job growth expectations through 2050, additional housing will be needed to accommodate this growth. The report details Delaware County to also grow its housing stock to position itself for increased growth.

The assessment can be found at www.biahomebuilders.com.

OWNER VS RENTER-OCCUPIED, CITY OF DELAWARE, 2018



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018

CHARACTER OF NEIGHBORHOODS MAINTAINED

While allowing for new development, the City has prioritized historic preservation and the retention of the character of the built environment in traditional neighborhoods. This includes Northwest Delaware (National Register District), East Side (1920s era, plus Old Colony Estates), University District (anchored by Ohio Wesleyan), the Marvin/Delaware Meadows area (smaller, mid-century housing), and both the West Side and Southwest Side. Many of these traditional neighborhoods contain a variety of housing styles, lot uses and lot coverages. However, while new development has been allowed, the look and feel of these areas remains largely intact, guided by the existing comprehensive plan and zoning code.



Three housing units within the same block demonstrate the variety of housing existing within the same area. Lot sizes for the properties shown range from 7,000 to over 11,000 sf, with dwelling units per acre ranging from four to over ten.



The City has prioritized historic preservation, retention of existing character, and sensitive infill development in traditional neighborhoods.

CONSERVATION OF UNDEVELOPED AREAS

While the City has encouraged new residential subdivisions in certain locations, it has not been policy or practice to allow for uncontrolled growth. Rather, in order to encourage fiscal and environmental sustainability, and to not overburden existing roads, utilities and City services, efforts have been made to direct development to key locations while leaving other areas in use for agricultural, recreation or conservation purposes. Within City boundaries, 18 percent of land area remains in agricultural use (14 percent) or is dedicated to parks and open space (4 percent). Within the unincorporated areas that are inside the study boundary for this plan, 63 percent of the land area remains in agricultural use (59 percent) or is dedicated to parks and open space (4 percent). (Source: McBride Dale Clarion analysis of City of Delaware GIS data.) More information and a map showing sites that present opportunity for development, and those that are more appropriate for conservation, is presented in Chapter 4, Development Framework.

VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

In Delaware's downtown, the Architectural Standards for the Historic District and incentives such as the Facade Improvement Program, promote restoration and have contributed to a walkable, coherent and attractive environment that draws visitors, creates quality places for residents to enjoy, and supports small businesses. Key partners, such as Main Street Delaware, have also been critical to success in preserving the historic character of downtown while allowing for evolution over time.



Within the unincorporated portion of the planning area in the City there is significant undeveloped property.

GREAT PLACES IN AMERICA RECOGNITION

Each year for the past 12 years, the American Planning Association (APA) has designated specific neighborhoods, streets and public spaces as Great Places in America. In 2019, Downtown Delaware was named by the APA as one of four "Great Neighborhoods" in the country. (Downtown was also named a Great Place in Ohio in 2018.) This honor is testimony to the impact of decades of hard work by the City, property and business owners and community partners, as well as outstanding planning and implementation.



POCKETS OF DISINVESTMENT

In addition to the many areas of the City that have been preserved or improved upon since the last comprehensive plan, participants in the public engagement for this plan identified a number of areas that have experienced deterioration of the built environment. This includes some roadway corridors (e.g. Lake Street and Marysville Road), The Point (intersection of U.S. Route 36 and state Route 37), the London/Liberty Road industrial area, and the Delaware Square Shopping Center (along Route 23). In addition, while the near east side remains an active and important community in the City, the physical environment of the neighborhood has suffered over the past several decades from vacancy and deteriorated building conditions. Opportunities for physical improvements in each of these areas are important to consider because they can help enhance quality of place for residents to enjoy, inspire additional investment and improve the overall image of the City.



A stretch of properties along Lake Street exemplifies an area with potential for renovation.



Traffic congestion, an unappealing physical environment and a lack of amenities for pedestrians, have made The Point (intersection of U.S. Route 36 and state Route 37) one of the parts of the City that residents feel most needs improvement. A major rebuilding and gateway enhancement effort is currently underway.

CRITICAL NEW ROADWAYS CONSTRUCTED

Since 2004, nearly 50 intersection and road improvement projects have been completed or are in progress in the City (see map on following page). These projects have largely been completed by development and supported new development and alleviated traffic and congestion problems in key areas. A number of projects have also prioritized multimodal transportation, making changes to design to better accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and public transportation. The Glenn Parkway extension has been completed. The project involves extending the Glenn Parkway 2,400 feet from Sycamore Drive to a new roundabout intersection at Berlin Station Road. The extension will be constructed as a two-lane boulevard with a single lane in either direction, expandable to four lanes as traffic increases in the future. The parkway will have a multi-purpose path constructed along the west side, and an area along the east side for a future path.

A new Thoroughfare and Transportation Improvement Plan for the City is under development. It builds off of the previous plan and proposes future roadway projects for the City.

FOCUS ON MULTIMODALISM

Since the previous comprehensive plan was adopted the City has taken steps to support transportation by mode other than car. This has included new infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists and the continued critical service provided by Delaware County Transit (formerly DATAbus).

In 2019, the City adopted traffic calming guidelines which can be used to review options in neighborhoods on a case-by-case basis. The City has also adopted traffic calming measures in key locations such as along Hull Drive. A number of policies have also promoted multimodalism and complete streets. A complete streets policy was adopted in 2020. See Appendix.

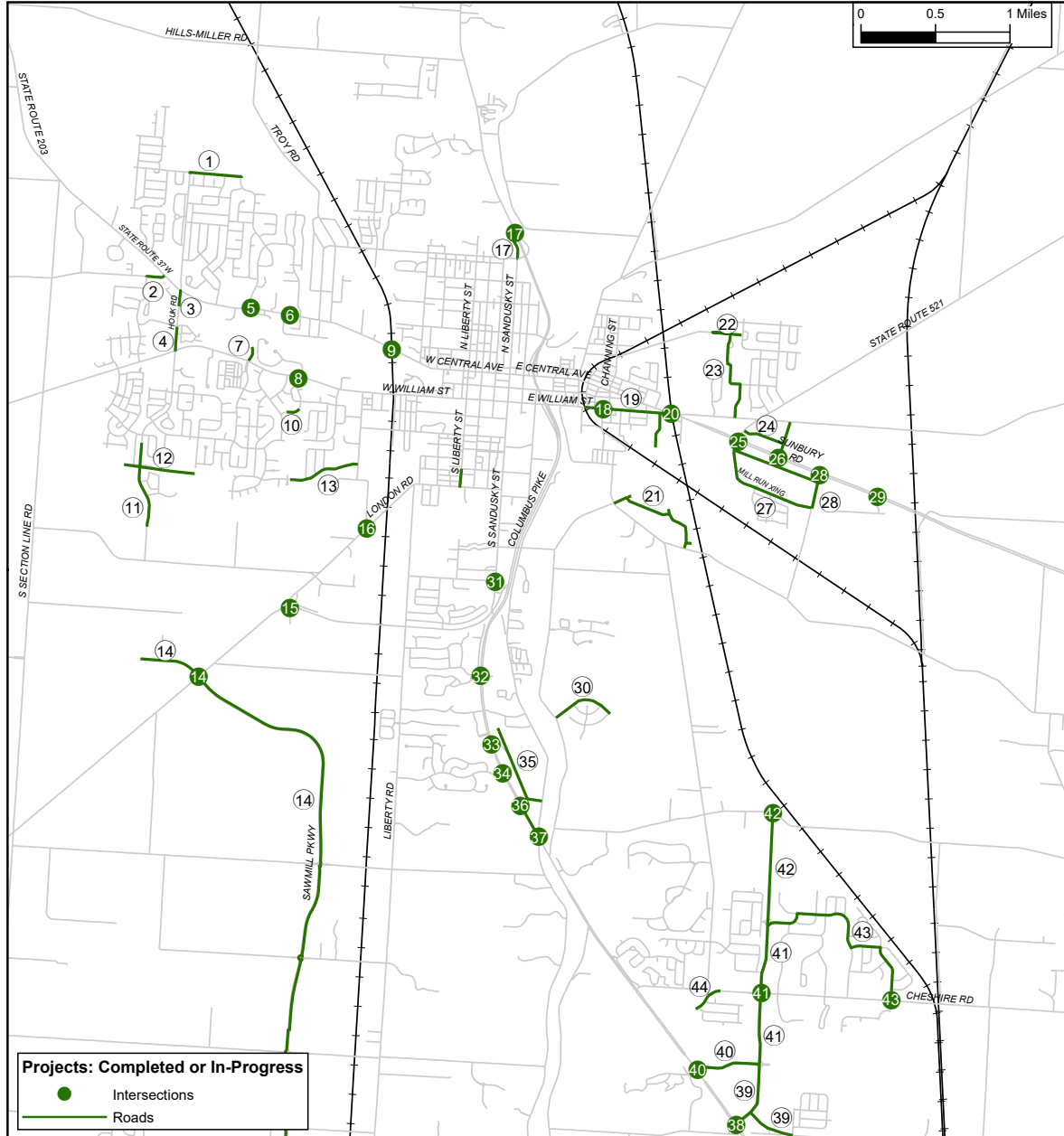


Nearly 50 intersection and road improvement projects have been completed in the last 16 years in the City, including the US23/Pennsylvania Intersection improvement.



Upon publication of this plan, the Glenn Parkway extension project to Berlin Station Road has been completed.

COMPLETED PROJECTS, HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



No.	Completed Project	No.	Completed Project
1.	Merrick Blvd. (Houk to Cambridge)	23.	Residential Collector Route
2.	Warrensburg Road Realignment at SR37	24.	Biltmore Drive Backage Road
3.	Houk Road Widening at SR37	25.	US36/SR37/SR521 Intersection Improvement
4.	Houk Road Widening at US36	26.	Glennwood Plaza Signalized Entrance & Backage Rd.
5.	Central Ave/Lexington Blvd Signal	27.	Mill Run Crossing
6.	Central Ave Turn lane (In Progress)	28.	Glenn Road Realignment
7.	Valleyside Drive Extension (Phase I)	29.	US36/SR37/Davidson Lane Intersection Improvement
8.	William/Applegate Signal	30.	Terra Alta Residential Collector (Phase I)
9.	Central/CSX Over Height Detection System	31.	Sandusky/Belle Ave Intersection Improvement
10.	East Street Connection to Applegate	32.	US23/Cottswold Intersection Improvements (In Progress)
11.	South Houk Road Connection	33.	US23/Stratford Drive Intersection Improvement (In Progress)
12.	Boulder Drive Extension (Phase I)	34.	US23/Hawthorn Blvd Intersection Improvement (In Progress)
13.	Firestone Drive Extension	35.	Commercial backage Road Improvement (In Progress)
14.	Sawmill Parkway & US42 Intersection	36.	Meeker Way Connector (US23 to Stratford)
15.	US42/Jegs Blvd Signal & Intersection	37.	US23/SR315/Stratford Intersection Improvement
16.	Curtis/London Intersection Improvement	38.	US23/Peachblow Road Intersection Signal (In Progress)
17.	US23/Pennsylvania Interchange	39.	Glenn Road/Peachblow Extension/realignment*
18.	E William/Cheshire Signal (In Progress)	40.	Ohio Health Blvd & US23 Intersection
19.	E William Street Improvements	41.	Glenn Road Extension (Ohio Health to Sycamore)
20.	The Point RR Bridge Widening (In Progress)	42.	Glenn Road Extension (Sycamore to Berlin Station) (In Progress)
21.	Residential Collector Route	43.	Residential Collector Route
22.	Vernon Ave Collector	44.	Cheshire Road Realignment (Phase I)

*Project Included in 2001 Thoroughfare Plan

IMPACTFUL SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

The City's commitment to sustainability in recent years has been demonstrated through numerous projects. Moving forward many community members hope that even more can be done. Projects have included a rain garden in collaboration with Ohio Wesleyan University near Branch Ricky arena, a small-scale solar array at the City's public works facility, and the conversion of street lights to LED. The City has also introduced permeable pavement in conjunction with upgrades at Blue Limestone Park. In conjunction with a developer, the City has constructed a wetland park on the south side of Mill Run Crossing behind the Glenwood Commons Shopping Center that included over 10,000 plantings. Beyond these physical improvements, Sustainable Delaware and other organizations have played a major role in promoting sustainability in the City. This work has included advocacy, education, special events and support for key projects ranging from bicycle racks to community gardens and electric vehicle charging stations.

MANY PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES

The City has 24 parks (including Mingo Park, which has a public swimming pool), 20 miles of trails, an executive golf course, a free splash pad and an urban forest consisting of more than 18,000 trees. In addition, the Delaware Community Center YMCA serves as an important community amenity. Beginning in 2020, the City engaged PROS Consulting to conduct a Recreation Needs Assessment. The work has involved an analysis of the City's needs in regard to recreational services, which has informed this plan's recommendations.



In 2015 the City opened a brand new, state-of-the-art water treatment facility. Community members can learn about the water treatment process at the facility's education center.



Solar panels power a recycling building on the Public Works campus, reducing the electric bill for the building by more than \$5,000 a year.



The Jack Florance Pool at Mingo Park is a major summertime amenity for Delaware residents.

PROSPERITY

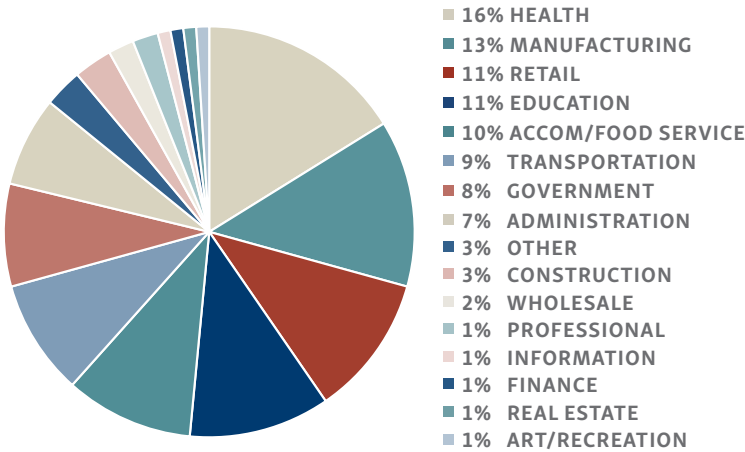
Delaware's economy has changed and diversified in recent years. Income has surged in the City of Delaware since the 2008-2009 recession, especially when compared to the region as a whole. Prior to the 2020 disruptions due to COVID-19, employment in many industries had remained steady and the City's fiscal position is solid.

DIVERSE ECONOMY

Delaware benefits from a relatively diverse economic base. No one sector dominates the local economy. Key Industries include manufacturing, health care, education, retail trade, tourism (accommodation & food service), transportation, and administrative services. Some industry sectors are less-represented, such as professional and technical services, finance, arts & recreation, information services, real estate, and management services.

The City's largest private employers also illustrate the diversity of economic activity present in Delaware. The largest private employer is Ohio Health, with about 1,500 people employed in hospital and ancillary functions. The Kroger Distribution Center employs 1,100 people while Ohio Wesleyan University has a total faculty and staff complement of about 600. Other large employers include such manufacturing concerns as PPG Industries and Vertiv (which conducts research & development activity in Delaware). JEGS Automotive has about 250 employees at its headquarters and administrative offices in the City.

INDUSTRY SECTORS



Source: U.S. Census, 2015

TEN LARGEST EMPLOYERS

EMPLOYER	EMPLOYEES	INDUSTRY
OhioHealth	1,500	Healthcare
Kroger Distribution Center	1,100	Logistics
Ohio Wesleyan	600	Education
Advance Auto	400	Logistics
Vertiv	350	Research & Development
PPG Industries	330	Manufacturing
Domtar / AHP	300	Manufacturing
JEGS Automotive	250	Headquarters / Admin
Liberty Castings	230	Foundry
International Paper	175	Manufacturing

Source: City of Delaware, 2019

MOST TRAVEL FOR WORK

Based on Census employment and commutation data, approximately 80% of working Delaware residents commute out of the City for their employment. Meanwhile nearly 80% of Delaware's at-place workers commute in to the City from other places. Only about 20% of the jobs in Delaware are held by Delaware residents.

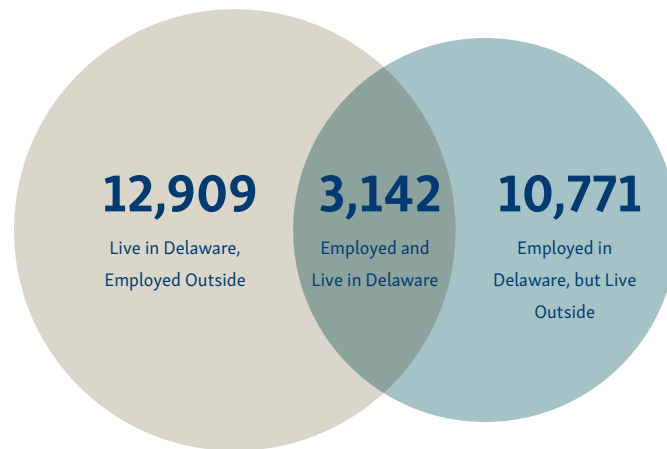
LABOR MARKET IMBALANCE

There are more than ten times as many management service professional workers residing in Delaware than there are management service jobs in the City. At the same time, Delaware remains relatively "heavy" in manufacturing employment as compared with the Columbus MSA as a whole. Nearly 14% of the City's employment base is in manufacturing, compared with just about one-half of that share at the regional level. Ultimately, if the City were to reduce the imbalance in resident versus at-place jobs, there would be a focus on attracting or growing more local jobs in management, professional & technical services, finance, arts & recreation, and a handful of other sectors.

INCREASING HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The global financial crisis and subsequent recession had a significant impact on household incomes in the City, County and State. However, by 2016, household incomes had rebounded to nearly \$71,000, a very healthy increase of 2.2 percent per year. Incomes throughout the County and region increased as well, but not as fast as in the City of Delaware.

EMPLOYMENT INFLOW-OUTFLOW



Source: US Census, 2015



There is opportunity for new high tech businesses in emerging business park areas located in proximity to existing industrial areas.

STRONG, BUT CHANGING, INDUSTRIAL MARKET

Columbus is a large distribution hub for the Midwest and beyond. For Columbus and Delaware economic development efforts related to distribution facilities are focusing more on existing facilities and their retention rather than growth from new facilities as land and labor force issues are pressing these uses much further out from the core metropolitan area. For example, the Kroger Great Lakes Distribution Center in the City recently added a 130,000 square foot addition. Located with access to the state highway system, Delaware has a significant industrial and R&D presence. This includes major facilities for EMS, PPG, Liberty Castings, Midwest AF, and others. Within Delaware, it is estimated that there are about 1.8 million square feet of industrial space, based on available inventory data coupled with employment factors. There is limited vacancy, estimated at 3.3% (mainly in Innovation Park), which is consistent with sub-market and market-wide data. Research and development and higher tech industry space have been identified as opportunity areas for the City and there is a desire to attract more of this type of industry. The market is shifting in this southwest area of the community to include more Business Park opportunities for innovative businesses and boutique manufacturers. Additionally, the labor force in Delaware and the Columbus metro area is shifting from traditional heavy manufacturing (a labor force that is increasingly difficult for employers to find in the Columbus area) to a more highly skilled work force. Innovation Park is a good recent example of this shift in use and labor force.



JEGS Performance is located in the Delaware Crossing Business Center, which has 848 acres potentially available for development on the south side of U.S. Route 42.

Delaware's Industrial / Business Park Market Strengths

- ▶ The proximity to a local airport, to Marysville (as an automotive production hub), and to Columbus.
- ▶ The geographically large and well educated labor market area, provides a potentially growing labor supply.
- ▶ Thousands of acres of available business park land to accommodate development in the area.

FAMILIES LOOKING TO STAY

Delaware tends to attract its market from a diverse set of demographic and geographic cohorts. Among these first-time buyers are many people born and raised in Delaware. Many of Delaware's high school graduates tend to stay in the area and rent for a time and then look to buy once they have families. Those young families are often looking for housing priced in the \$180,000 to \$220,000 range, but are often priced out of new build market at current price points. The pre-existing housing stock and median housing value of owner occupied housing units according to the Census (2014-2018) of \$175,400 are actually below the desired range expressed. This indicates that there is a large segment of the existing housing market that can satisfy this expressed desired price range that is attainable.

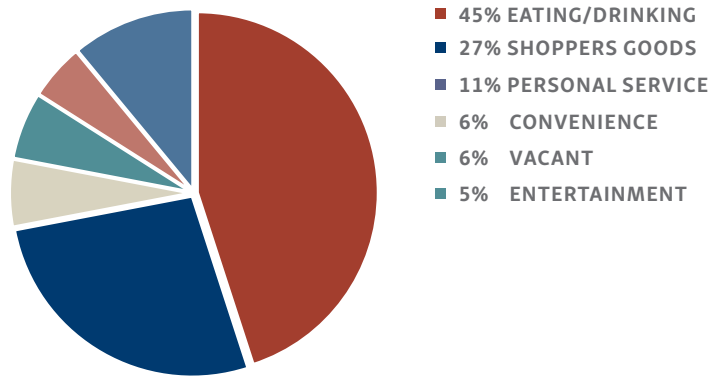
DOWNTOWN ON THE RISE

Downtown Delaware has developed, improved and thrived since the completion of the last Comprehensive Plan in 2003. Chapter 7 of this plan includes a number of recommendations specific to Downtown which recognize its vital importance to the City. The City's Downtown is 94% occupied, a healthy number relative to similar, older downtowns. The fact that only about 6 percent of Downtown retail space is vacant is a sign of great success considering that vacancy was once not long ago in the range of 40-50 percent. In total, there is approximately 310,000 total square feet of ground floor commercial space in Downtown. Of this, about 60 percent (190,000 square feet) is retail, restaurant, and entertainment use, including a vibrant mix of longtime and newer tenants. The success of Downtown is reflected in rising rents, which are averaging \$14-\$17 per square foot, up from \$8 per square foot in 2010.

RELIANCE ON EATING AND DRINKING

Downtown retail use is heavily oriented to eating and drinking establishments, which constitute roughly 45 percent of the total inventory of retail use. Restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues are often part of the first wave of businesses that help to re-establish downtowns as destinations, particularly in the absence of the large department stores that once dominated downtown retail business. Delaware has succeeded in building its downtown restaurant scene but the remaining retail categories have not yet caught up.

DOWNTOWN DELAWARE RETAIL USE



Source: City of Delaware



Downtown tenants include a number of local, independent, and start-up businesses as well as national businesses; and the City is becoming an affordable destination for specialty businesses.

Shopper's goods stores, businesses offering product for which consumers comparison shop, constitute just 27 percent of the retail mix. Ideally for a more competitive retail environment, shopper's goods should be closer to 45 percent.

HOUSING STOCK AND AFFORDABILITY ATTRACTS REGION

Brokers and others emphasize that Delaware attracts those from Columbus and Franklin County for several reasons including more affordability, lower income taxes, good schools and "small town living." The housing offered in Delaware has been successfully priced to attract homebuyers from locations closer to Columbus and other parts of the metropolitan area. Overlapping with this group is the age cohort of Millennials, with singles looking for housing with "less grass" but families with children more apt to purchase traditional suburban-style housing. Families with children are often moving based on the reputations of school districts.

Another important age cohort includes empty nesters of the Baby Boom generation, some of whom are moving "down" within the Delaware market while others are moving to Delaware from other parts of the Columbus region. Many are moving to Delaware for lower income taxes and one-floor living arrangements. Some are moving in from more rural areas in order to downsize and be closer to medical and other services. In 2019, households in this cohort appear to be seeking housing in the \$200,000 to \$225,000 price range, on average.



Delaware's attractive existing housing stock and the rapid pace of new construction in recent years continues to attract new residents, supporting the City's population increase.

OTHER ASSETS FUEL HOUSING INTEREST

In addition to the attractiveness of current housing stock in Delaware, a range of other factors drive interest in housing in the City. Delaware's location in the growing Columbus Metropolitan Area is a critical factor impacting overall competitiveness for housing. Unlike most other metro areas in Ohio, Columbus has a diversified economic base and appeals to young graduates, with a growing labor market. Second, several colleges are located in Delaware that graduate young people into the labor market and create opportunities for housing. Ohio Wesleyan University and its 1,600 students, Methodist Theological School of Ohio and Columbus State's Delaware campus, just outside of the City limits, are all assets. Delaware is also home to County Government, which helps stabilize the local economy and generate demand for housing government workers. Third, Delaware has an historic downtown that is attractive for those seeking a small-town lifestyle and walkable amenities. This provides a "sense of place" that is very attractive. Fourth, large employers including Ohio Health, Kroger, Advance Auto, Jags Automotive, Vertiv, PPG, International Paper and others help generate demand for housing in Delaware. This is bolstered by small businesses, including entrepreneurs and downtown retailers.

Finally, the City is fortunate to have two outstanding public school districts: The Delaware City School District and the Olentangy Local School District. Both are high quality school systems that focus on individual learning and excellence but operate at two very different scales with Delaware being the historic city school district serving about 6,000 students and Olentangy encompassing a huge geographic area covering several jurisdictions and serving over 22,000 students. Families looking to move into the community, therefore, have great choices with local school districts which are consistently highly rated. Additionally, there are several private schools in the City that are also highly regarded, such as St. Mary's and Delaware Christian School.

MORPC Regional Housing Strategy

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) conducted a Regional Housing Strategy that concluded in late summer 2020. The strategy's goal was to create a coordinated housing plan for the region that develops investment and policy recommendations to support mixed income neighborhoods and regional growth. The strategy reviews existing studies, recommends investment priorities, identifies gaps in funding streams, identifies structural impediments and sets forth metrics for individual communities and the region. The strategy was led by MORPC with a consultant team of national and local firms. This strategy will provide valuable data and insights that will help to provide regional context for understanding Delaware's housing needs in the future.

“As Central Ohio grows, now is the opportunity to get ahead of major challenges related to housing affordability that other regions our size are facing today. That said, we must act quickly as studies over the last few years, the most recent coming from the BIA, show we are not keeping up with the need for housing.”

MORPC Executive Director William Murdock

ATTAINABLE NEW-BUILD HOUSING A CHALLENGE

Brokers suggest that new housing prices are not aligned with demand generated by first-time buyers, empty nesters and local workers from within Delaware. Lenders estimate that 30% to 40% of prospective Delaware loan applicants cannot afford the note or don't have cash for down payment. Community input from the planning process affirmed a lack of new-build housing that is attainable for many local residents and workers, even as Delaware's housing prices are found to be lower than those in Columbus and southern Delaware County. This is likely more reflective of a regional population boom that has driven market prices past traditional points as developers have not kept pace with demand in recent years. It is a regional issue being addressed by MORPC's Regional Housing Strategy.

The difference between what new-build housing costs and what people can pay is due to a complex combination of factors, including an increase in land prices increasing in addition to a growing economy, a maturing real estate market, lack of adequate supply and low unemployment (at just 3.7% nationally before COVID-19). Compounding the issue of affordability is that Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) tax credit income thresholds have increased, with a fairly high range of \$75,400 (in non-target areas) to \$91,680 in target areas. This means that people with lower incomes would not qualify. All of this contributes to an emerging "affordability gap" in Delaware within the new-build sector.

ATTAINABLE HOUSING

According to the Urban Land Institute, attainable housing is defined as non-subsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable to households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the area median income. Creating and supporting attainable housing helps to provide more housing options. This could include smaller homes, value housing, missing-middle attached housing, and high-density detached cluster housing. Attainable housing is a complement to conventionally named affordable and/or subsidized housing, which is generally targeted to those with lower incomes.



Smaller scale homes on smaller lots have helped to partially meet demand by young people, empty nesters and others. Demand for such houses is anticipated to continue.



Multifamily, rental housing that functions like single family attached housing developed at Carson Farms (above) has provided a housing alternative for those seeking lower maintenance option.

ALL GROWTH DOESN'T PAY FOR ITSELF IN OHIO

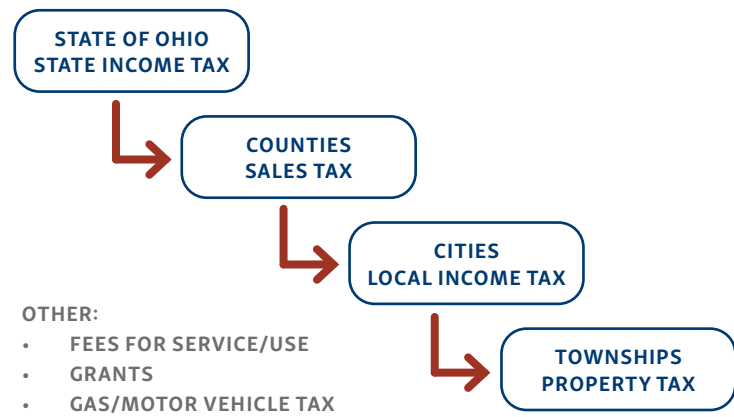
Different types of growth produce different fiscal impacts in the State of Ohio. Generally, residential development impacts vary. Costs of schools and services can generate fiscal drain on budgets, but some types of residential development can help offset costs (e.g. through estate taxes). Office and industrial uses often generate positive net gain, whereas retail development often generates a net fiscal loss. However, local fiscal structure matters and every local government has different fiscal dynamics. There are wide variations in levels of service in Ohio communities and local governments have tools they can use to generate revenue (e.g. income tax).

DELAWARE'S FISCAL POSITION IS SOLID, BUT GROWTH MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL REVENUE

Delaware's largest funding source is income tax. The City levies a 1.85% income tax on gross wages and salaries as well as on the net profits of Delaware businesses. In 2019, income tax collections totaled almost \$29 million. Of this amount, approximately \$10.9 million (38%) is dedicated to pay for fire/EMS, \$2.3 million (8%) is dedicated to recreation, and \$15.6 million (54%) is dedicated to the general fund, much of which pays for police services.

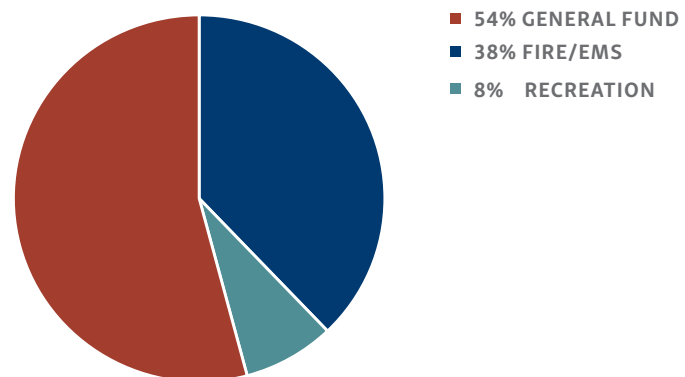
The City also gains revenue from engineering fees, water capacity fees, sewer capacity fees, building permits, and growth management fees (park impact, police/fire, transportation municipal). While these fees currently keep the City budget balanced, they need to be continually assessed as

PRIMARY SOURCES OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING IN OHIO



Source: City of Delaware

INCOME TAX EXPENDITURES



Source: City of Delaware

expenses change over time (typically they go up) due to growth and other factors. (See Chapter 6, Fiscal Sustainability for more.) Additionally, many of the fees are for services related to permit activities and are therefore attributable directly to offset the cost of these activities.

Chapter 4

Development Framework



4. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

This chapter puts forth a development framework that underpins the plan’s Character and Land Use Plan (Chapter 5) and Goals, Objectives and Actions (Chapter 7).

APPROACH

In the following pages information about the existing physical environment within the planning area is presented, including the following:

- 1. Development Context.** The Development Context describes overall guidelines that should inform new development in applicable areas of the City. These are presented with text descriptions and illustrative photos.
- 2. Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities.** There are opportunities for infill (development of vacant parcels within an existing built environment), redevelopment (conversion of existing property into another use) and new development within the existing City limits. These are presented in a map.
- 3. New Development Opportunities.** There is potential for new development opportunities outside of the City limits but within the planning area for this plan. These are presented in a map.
- 4. Community Network.** Existing parks, open space, government, institutional and other public or publicly accessible property are key amenities for the public. This is presented in a map.
- 5. Transportation Network.** This map shows the existing road network as well as proposed arterials and intersection improvements.

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY

The planning area used in this plan includes all property within the City of Delaware’s jurisdictional boundary as well as property that falls outside of the City as well as property that a) is serviceable by water and sewer infrastructure, and b) has been identified as potentially developable within the ten-year time horizon of this plan based on market trends and anticipated population growth. (Note: just because property has been identified as potentially developable, does not mean that this plan *recommends* development.)

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The Development Context describes the overall purpose and general guidelines that should inform any change within each Character Area and Focus Area described in Chapter 5. A major focus in the future for the City of Delaware will be preserving and protecting what makes Delaware special, including undeveloped areas, existing parks and open spaces, historic neighborhoods and other unique places that contribute to the City's quality of place. At the same time, new development must be directed to help build connections, enhance vibrant neighborhoods and improve neighborhoods, commercial corridors and other areas experiencing disinvestment. New development is also encouraged in the focus areas.

The five contexts identified are:

- ▶ Preservation
- ▶ Adaptive Re-use
- ▶ Infill
- ▶ Redevelopment
- ▶ Suburban Edge Development

Any new development should be evaluated based on its context. This will ensure that new development is compatible and consistent with the established character of Delaware while providing new opportunities for future residents and businesses and being responsive to shifting demands in the marketplace.



The building at 20-26 E. Winter Street was originally built to house multiple businesses, eventually including the New York Cash Store. The Strand Theatre was added to it in 1916 and became the oldest continually-running movie theater in Ohio. A portion of the building has been adapted for re-use and provides gallery space and office space for non-profit organizations.

PRESERVATION

Preservation is accomplished through special protection of existing significant landscapes, buildings, or natural features. Examples include protection of flood zones, special wildlife habitat, wetlands, river corridors, woodlands, agricultural landscapes, historic structures, landmarks, and the unique architectural character of the traditional neighborhoods in the core of the city.

- ▶ **Benefits:** The special man-made and natural environmental features that contribute to Delaware's sense of place, character, and quality of life are protected for current and future generations. Long-term protection of these features contributes strongly to the quality of life, culture of place, and sustainability of the City.
- ▶ **Challenges:** Property in private ownership may have greater economic value to the individual owner if it is developed for other uses. Costs for preservation and rehabilitation of historic features can also be significant.

GUIDELINES

- ▶ Evaluate the cultural, environmental, and social value of maintaining the property in its current form.
- ▶ Assess applicable protective measures.
- ▶ Perform a cost-benefit analysis for preservation.
- ▶ Work with partner organizations to purchase, protect and/or and restore the property(s).
- ▶ Adopt local standards to protect key features from destruction, removal, or loss, when appropriate.
- ▶ Use crowd funding or other non-traditional programs to raise resources for preservation or rehabilitation.
- ▶ Encourage the use of historic tax credits for projects in National Register districts.
- ▶ Consider the fiscal impacts of the development along with other factors.



In 2008, a plaque was installed on Sandusky Street dedicated to African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass and General William T. Sherman. Frederick Douglass spoke in Templar Hall (17-19 N. Sandusky Street) in 1856, and General Sherman spoke in the building after the Civil War. Above: The former Templar Hall with the plaque today after renovation with funding from the City's Facade Improvement Program. Below: Plaque dedication ceremony.

ADAPTIVE RE-USE

Adaptive re-use is the re-use of existing occupied or vacant structures for purposes other than those for which they were originally built. Examples include conversion of large homes for use as office or retail space, retrofitting big box retail stores for a variety of smaller uses and/ or tenants, and renovation of former institutional buildings for residential use.

- ▶ **Benefits:** The existing built form and architectural character of a building or series of buildings is maintained, retaining its contributions to the uniqueness of the built environment. Resources are conserved, contributing to sustainability objectives.
- ▶ **Challenges:** The new use may have different site demands than the original use, increased or decreased parking demand for example. The new use also may not be as compatible with the surrounding uses, such as residential next to certain types of manufacturing. Market conditions and overall project costs may favor demolition and redevelopment.



Through adaptive re-use the historic Delaware Gazette building on E. William Street has been transformed into the home of COhatch, which provides flexible workspace for small businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs.

GUIDELINES

- ▶ The overall exterior appearance, footprint or scale of existing structures should not be substantially altered unless a specific project design is demonstrated to be desirable.
- ▶ Where changes or additions are made to a structure, they should be clearly distinguished but compatible in materials and style from the original.
- ▶ If increased parking is required for the proposed use, it must be accommodated on the existing lot or through a shared parking agreement with other uses in the area. On-street parking or public parking lots and garages may accommodate a portion of the increase, provided a demonstration of adequate capacity for the new development.
- ▶ If decreased parking is required, potentially reclaim parking areas for new use to maximize existing infrastructure.
- ▶ If there is more than a 20 percent increase in floor area the project should be evaluated as a redevelopment.
- ▶ Negative impacts on adjacent properties due to use change should be avoided, minimized and/or mitigated.
- ▶ All parking, waste containers or mechanical equipment associated with retrofitting for the adaptive re-use should be screened or camouflaged to reduce impacts from noise, odor or light to adjacent properties.
- ▶ A vehicular trip generation study and local road capacity assessment should be submitted for consideration.
- ▶ A bicycle and pedestrian trip estimate should be submitted to help evaluate the need for supporting facilities in the vicinity.
- ▶ Consider the fiscal impacts of the development along with other factors.

INFILL

Infill is development within an existing developed area on vacant lots that is generally consistent in form and scale with its surroundings. It can also include construction on a mostly built-out lot that intensifies the use. Examples of infill are where a new home is built between two older homes or a new building is constructed on an empty lot in a commercial district between two existing structures. Infill will usually occur in areas with an established housing or business base that is experiencing an increased demand and has a supply of available lots or underutilized lots. Infill requires sensitive design guidance to ensure compatibility in character with surrounding buildings.

- ▶ **Benefits:** Infill projects increase development intensity in areas with existing infrastructure and public services and provide additional housing options, commercial space or retail/services. They can help to re-knit existing built fabric of an area, such as when built on a vacant lot between two existing uses.
- ▶ **Challenges:** Infill projects are surrounded by established development. Larger-scale buildings and an increased level of activity can be viewed as encroaching on established lifestyles and character.

GUIDELINES

- ▶ New buildings should be built at a similar scale and with similar lot configuration (setbacks and location of parking and outbuildings), as well as with architectural proportions in context with the block and street.
- ▶ If infill takes place on lots at the edge of an area with more intense development, buildings may be constructed in between the scale of the two areas to provide a transition.
- ▶ The style of new structures should take cues from the existing context, but should be distinguishable and reflect the era in which it was built rather than mimicking older styles.
- ▶ All features of the rights-of-way, including sidewalks, curbs and gutters, curb cuts, and access should be consistent with the existing context if it is of a desirable quality. In contexts where the surrounding environment lacks desired features or amenities, new development should (and may be required by City regulations to) include a higher standard in such features.
- ▶ Consider the fiscal impacts of the development along with other factors.



Infill housing located between an older residential area and a shopping center (Redwood / Glenwood Commons) has a contemporary style but is compatible with the scale and character of existing development.

REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment is development where the existing pattern is modified on lots that already contain some buildings through lot consolidations or subdivisions, multiple new buildings, or a single, significant change in buildings or use on a site. This could occur where most of a city block is purchased and subdivided and new internal streets are designed. It can also be where a larger property (like a school, golf course or hotel) is developed for housing or a senior living facility.

- **Benefits:** Redevelopment projects offer the greatest potential to meet demand for intensification of uses and activities. These projects are usually limited to targeted areas where the original buildings have been degraded or underutilized or as identified in specific area or corridor plan.
- **Challenges:** Redevelopment can dramatically change an area unless properly managed for context-appropriate design and density. The transition to surrounding uses is vitally important to ensure sensitive integration of uses and buffering may be required.

GUIDELINES

- The established street and block network should guide building scale and the orientation of new construction. Reverse frontage (where a building is oriented toward a different street than others on the block) should be avoided.
- The use of alleyways or smaller secondary streets and private drives is encouraged to provide intensification of development within a site.
- A similar scale, lot configuration (setbacks and location of parking / outbuildings), and architectural proportions should be used. In select locations, such as street corners, new buildings may be of a larger scale than adjacent existing buildings, but should avoid overwhelming established development.



Ohio Wesleyan University's Ditttrick House is a redevelopment project that provides duplex-style small living units (SLUs) for students.



A commercial redevelopment improved the side and back frontages of a building with landscaping to create a more welcoming approach from all directions.

- A vehicular trip generation study and local road capacity assessment should be submitted for consideration.
- A bicycle and pedestrian trip estimate should be submitted to help evaluate the need for supporting facilities in the vicinity.
- Consider the fiscal impacts of the development along with other factors.

SUBURBAN EDGE DEVELOPMENT

Suburban Edge Development is when a large piece of land (usually more than 50 acres in size) that was previously used for agriculture or forestry, and is surrounded by at least two sides of other large parcels, is developed. The property could be subdivided, condominiumized or part of a Planned Unit Development (PUD). A new street network, infrastructure, and buildings are built. This type of development has been common in Delaware in recent decades and typically involves annexation from one of the surrounding Townships in accordance with the City's plans and utilities.

- ▶ **Benefits:** Suburban Edge Development does not require demolition or adaptive re-use of existing structures except in cases where land needs to be cleared, for example, where there is an old farm or barn. It can accommodate large format uses or larger residential developments at a time of high demand for more housing or other uses. The initial cost of land can be less expensive than in redevelopment or infill projects because there is no existing infrastructure or no significant structures present.
- ▶ **Challenges:** Establishing connectivity to existing public road networks through adjacent development can be difficult. It can have adverse, long-term fiscal implications for local government from a maintenance perspective. The cost of infrastructure, improvements in rights-of-way and new services can outweigh the marginal cost difference in the land. Achieving the most appropriate balance between the existing character of Delaware while meeting demand for housing and other types of development will require thoughtful development standards or PUD. While PUDs can create valuable oversight and flexibility they can increase the need for City staff resources. They can also make approval processes lengthy, uncertain and costly for land owners.

GUIDELINES

- ▶ Multimodal transportation connectivity to adjacent areas should be emphasized.
- ▶ Protected and accessible open spaces and connections to nearby open space networks should be provided.
- ▶ Private sector applicants should build new roads following the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan to accommodate multimodal travel and include sidewalks, bike lanes, and on-street parking consistent with the City's Bike and Pedestrian Plan.
- ▶ New development should be coordinated and timed relative to infrastructure availability. Infrastructure, particularly sewer and water service, should be available concurrently with new development or developers must pay to extend it within a project.
- ▶ When development occurs adjacent to existing development an appropriate transition is needed and adjacent lots should be consistent in use and size. Smaller lots or more intense uses may be located in the interior of the development.
- ▶ While accommodating development, preservation of (or mitigation of) impacts to significant environmental features, wetlands, streams, large stands of trees, and the like (where appropriate) is expected.



Suburban Edge Development on the west side of Delaware incorporates open space and recreational amenities.

INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN CITY LIMITS

This map shows areas within the City boundary where redevelopment and/or infill opportunities may be possible. It is a first step in an analysis of where and how Delaware has potential to grow within its current limits. There are clear fiscal, sustainability, transportation and other advantages of directing growth to locations that are already partially developed or adjacent to existing development.

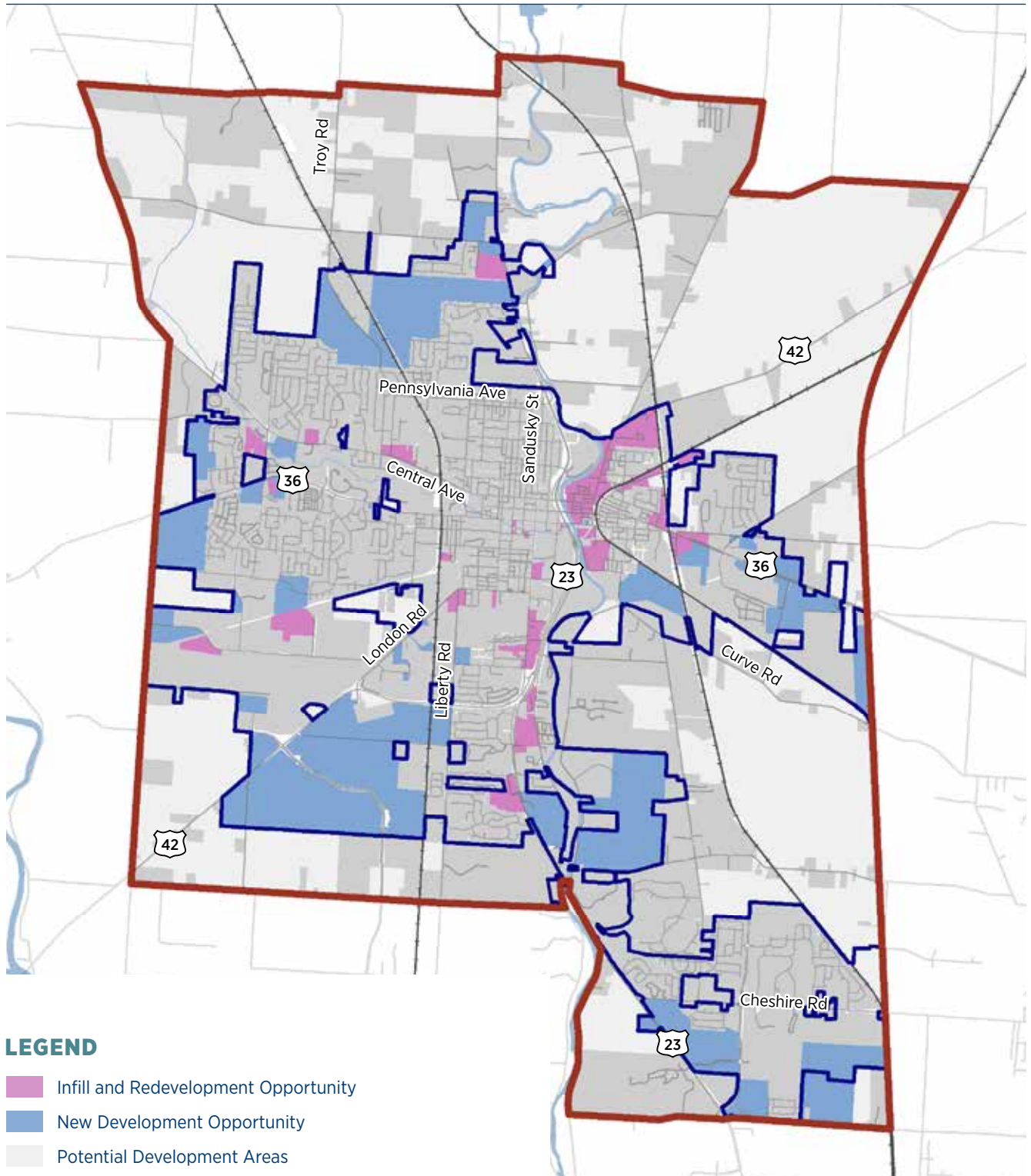
Areas in pink (Infill and Redevelopment Opportunity) are platted lots with structures that generally have a ratio of less than 2:1 improvement (house plus structures per the County Auditor) to land value and can therefore be deemed “underutilized” or are legacy retail or shopping centers with room for Infill or Redevelopment. Also included are residential properties that generally have fewer than five acres that were absent of any structures and commercial land since it tends to move as communities grow and most commercial uses update or change every 5-10 years. Parcels identified would likely be developed as traditional single lot infill sites unless consolidated.

Areas in blue (New Development Opportunity) are either vacant / partially vacant or agricultural in use and are generally greater than five acres (in most cases greater than 20 acres). Some of these properties are already in the City's pre-development pipeline (meaning they may be zoned, they have appeared in plans or development might have started). It is important to note that some may be more advantageous for development than similar sites outside of current City limits because they are adjacent to or surrounded by existing development and are currently or readily served by infrastructure. Their development could therefore provide a natural continuity with and complement developed areas. Guidance by the applicable Development Context designations should help to transition from existing development to new development.

Areas in light gray (Potential Development Areas) are locations outside of City limits where new larger-scale development is possible as detailed in the following map (New Development Opportunities).

Areas in dark gray (Committed) are platted but unbuilt subdivisions (pipeline development sites).

INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN CITY LIMITS



LEGEND

- Infill and Redevelopment Opportunity
- New Development Opportunity
- Potential Development Areas
- Committed
- Planning Area
- City of Delaware
- Roadway
- Railway



NEW DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE OF CITY LIMITS

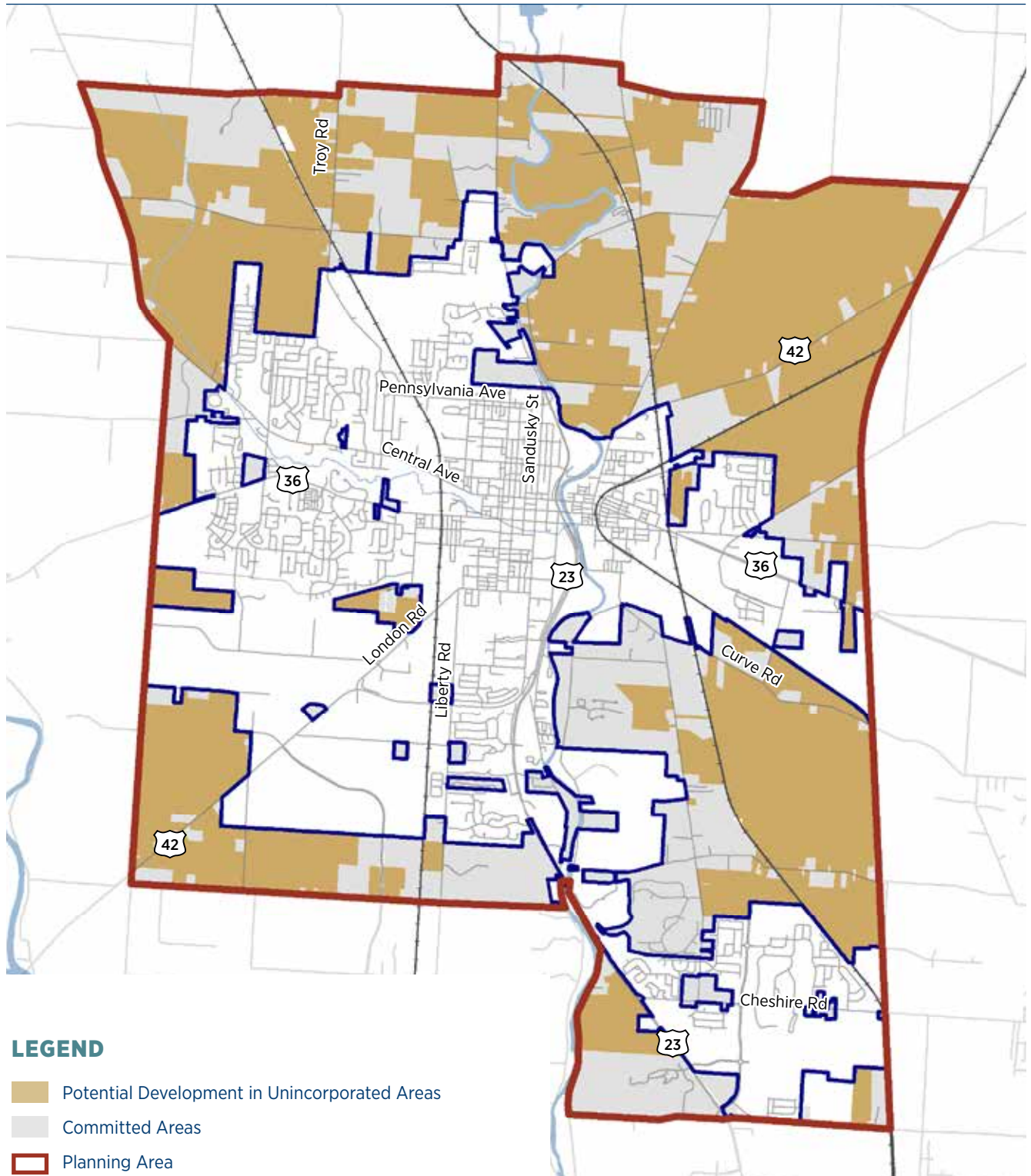
This map highlights locations where significant new development could take place outside of City limits but within the long-standing City utility boundary. These locations generally fall at the periphery or beyond existing development and represent areas where significant changes might occur (for example, new and/or more intense land uses such as larger format mixed-use buildings, business parks or housing that is of a different scale or architectural style).

Areas in brown (Potential Development in Unincorporated Areas) are places where significant new development is possible. As detailed in Chapter 5, Character and Land Use, some areas, such as to the north, are appropriate to preserve as undeveloped in order to focus development, retain a strong urban-rural edge (limit sprawl), and protect agricultural and natural resources such as watersheds and wildlife habitats as noted within the plan.



Public Utilities state of the art water plant

NEW DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE OF CITY LIMITS, BUT INSIDE UTILITY BOUNDARY



LEGEND

- Potential Development in Unincorporated Areas
- Committed Areas
- Planning Area
- City of Delaware
- Roadway
- Railway

↑ North

.75 1.5mi

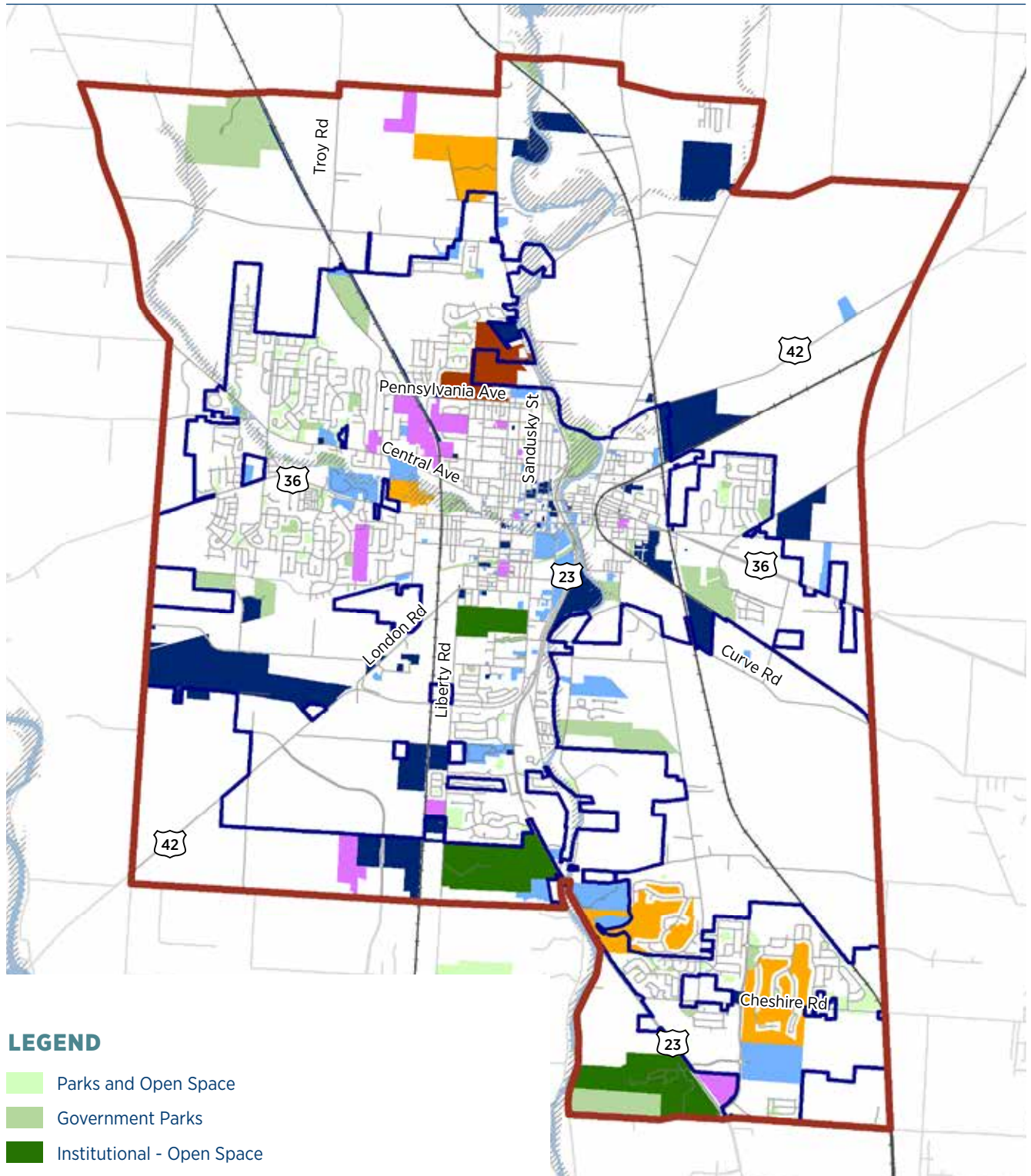
COMMUNITY NETWORK

The Community Network is a combination of existing public parks, protected private green spaces, clubs, and golf courses, proposed future green spaces, parks, and common spaces, and the potential corridors to connect these locations for wildlife and people via trails. The character of these areas varies from very natural to more urban and developed parks and plazas. Also included is institutional and government property, public schools, fairgrounds and golf courses. The Community Network is overlaid on other areas, as it represents specific characteristics and uses that exist within other types of development and established neighborhoods in Delaware. The map presents a picture of existing resources that can provide a foundation for future land use planning.



City Wetland Park and Dog Park in the Far East Side Focus Area.

COMMUNITY NETWORK MAP



LEGEND

- Parks and Open Space
- Government Parks
- Institutional - Open Space
- Institutional - Public Schools
- Institutional - Other
- Government
- Golf Courses
- County Fairgrounds
- Floodplains
- Planning Area
- City of Delaware
- Roadway
- Railway



TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

This map provides an overview of the transportation context, including existing major and minor roads as well as proposed arterials and intersection improvements (either as part of the City's Draft Thoroughfare Plan or that have been discussed in association with development of this plan). This map helps to show infrastructure that currently supports existing development or could support additional development in the future. The map is important because as new areas for development are considered it will be essential to ensure that sufficient infrastructure can support it. Conversely, there are locations where infrastructure exists or is planned that can help to inform where development should be encouraged.

There are several ongoing or planned significant transportation projects and studies which will impact the network and map on the adjoining page moving forward. These include:

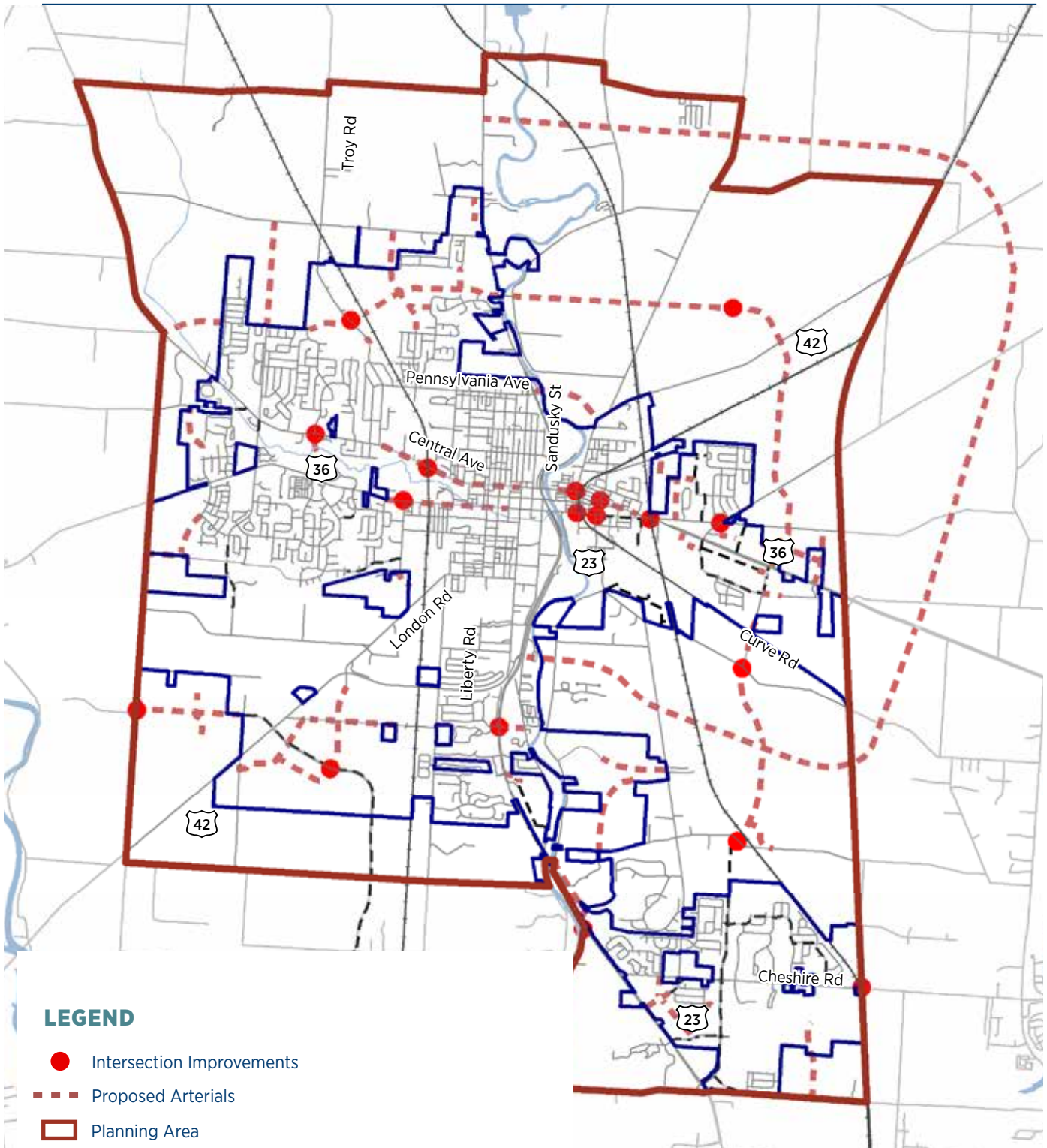
- ▶ Byxbe Road (aka Glenn Road North) – This is a County led project building a new arterial from US 36/37 to SR 521 in the next 2 years. The intersection at US 36/37 will align with Glenn Road. Eventually, Byxbe Road will extend beyond SR 521 and will terminate at US 23 where Panhandle Road currently intersects US 23.
- ▶ The Point Improvements – These improvements will replace the “bottleneck” at the railroad bridge where US 36 and SR 37 converge on the east side of Delaware. The project will start early in 2023 and will take 2.5 years to construct.
- ▶ Central Avenue Improvements – The project will replace the pavement and widen the roadway from The Point to the Olentangy River with significant intersection improvements at Lake Street (US 42) and Channing Street. It is in the early planning stages and will include coordination with state and federal agencies.

- ▶ Merrick Parkway Alternatives Study – The study will examine alternatives to extending Merrick Parkway as an arterial beyond Troy Road. The study will analyze alternatives using other transportation network links and if (or how) the road should extend over the railroad tracks.
- ▶ Glenn Parkway Connection - This project will create a grade separation between the parkway and Norfolk & Southern railroad tracks as it extends from Berlin Station Road north to match the existing alignment of Glenn Road on the north at Curve Road and northward to US 36/37. The intersection of Glenn and Curve Roads will be a roundabout, as will all major intersections between Curve and Berlin Station.



View of Glenn Parkway at Berlin Station Road, which has been completed.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK MAP



LEGEND

- Intersection Improvements
- - - Proposed Arterials
- ▭ Planning Area
- ▭ City of Delaware
- Roadway
- + + + Railway

↑ North



Chapter 5 Character and Land Use



5. CHARACTER AND LAND USE

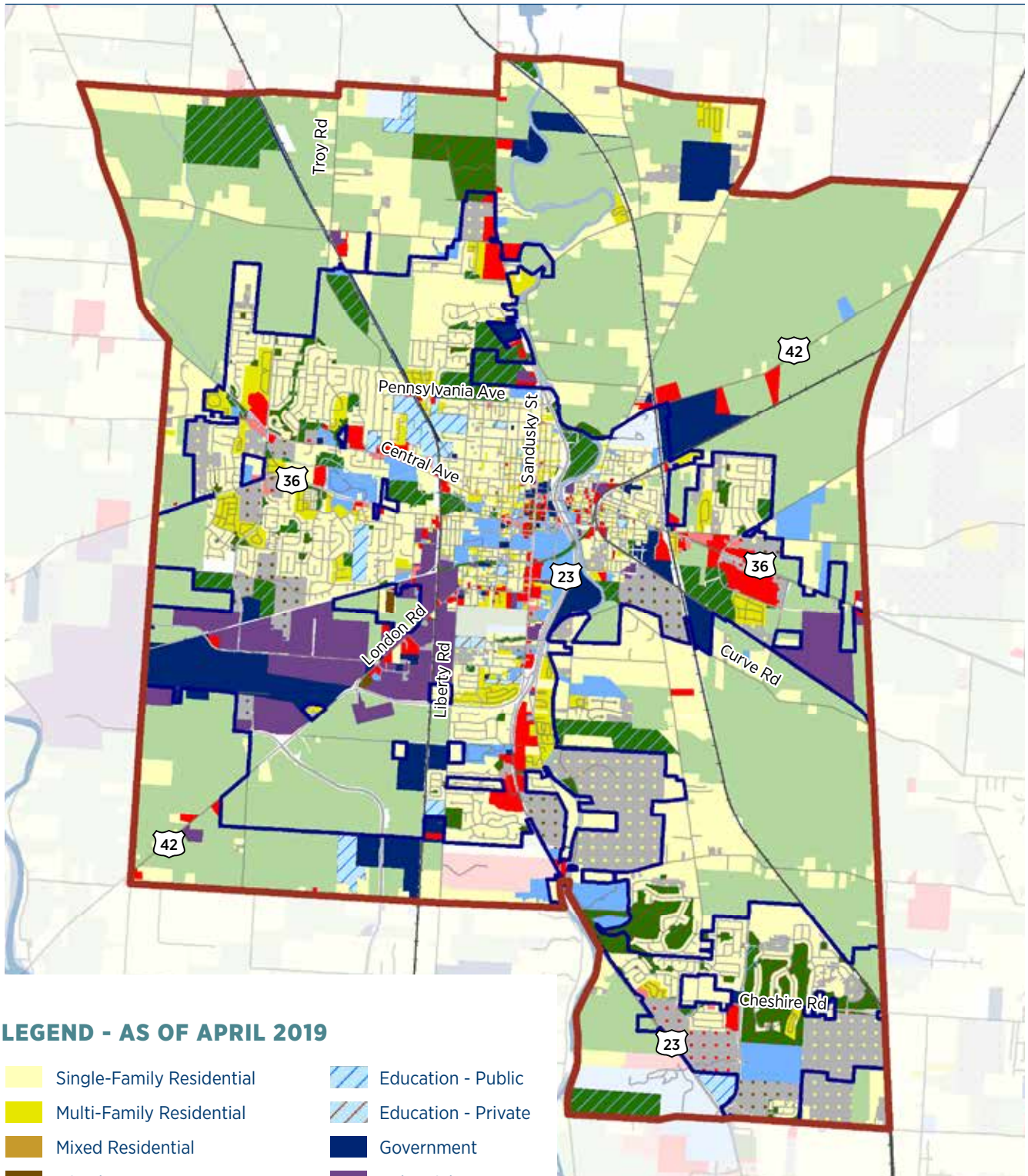
The Character and Land Use Plan is a tool through which decisions can be made throughout the City regarding where and how new development should take place. It has been developed in consideration of a range of factors including anticipated population growth, economic development objectives, the desire for high quality of life, housing trends, and fiscal needs. It has been informed by both technical analysis and input from the community.

APPROACH

Building off of the Development Framework (Chapter 4), this chapter includes three main components:

- 1. Existing Land Use Map.** The map on page 57 shows existing land uses in the City using current land use classifications. Land use in the City of Delaware changes regularly and often. Thus this map represents only a snapshot in time in April 2019 but is useful to provide context and the overall complexity of land use in the community.
- 2. Character and Focus Areas.** This section begins on page 58, followed by a map on page 59 that shows existing Character Areas in parts of the planning area that are not anticipated to experience significant change within the next ten years, as well as Focus Areas where change is anticipated. It is followed by more detailed information about each area.
- 3. Development Types.** Development Types are the kinds of land uses, built character and intensity of development that describe the physical environment. Multiple Development Types have been determined to be appropriate in the future in each of the plan's Focus Areas. These are presented with text descriptions, illustrative photos, and figures, starting on page 81.

EXISTING LAND USE MAP



LEGEND - AS OF APRIL 2019

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Single-Family Residential | Education - Public | Planning Area
City of Delaware
Roadway
Railway |
| Multi-Family Residential | Education - Private | |
| Mixed Residential | Government | |
| Mixed Use | Industrial | |
| Office | Transportation / Utilities | |
| Commercial | Residential Vacant | |
| Agriculture | Commercial Vacant | |
| Parks and Open Space, Public | Mixed Use Vacant | |
| Parks and Open Space, Private | Agricultural Vacant | |
| Semi-Public Institutions | Industrial Vacant | |



CHARACTER AND FOCUS AREAS

This plan identifies Character Areas, which are neighborhoods, districts, or corridors that share similar attributes in their form and function. These areas are expected to remain relatively unchanged in character within the next ten years and the Development Types within them are anticipated to remain largely the same within this period.

In addition to the Character Areas, six Focus Areas have been identified. The Focus Areas are locations where significant change can reasonably be expected to occur within the next ten years. This plan presents specific Development Types for the Riverfront, Near East Side Gateway, South Sandusky Street and Far East Side Focus Areas and Concept Maps for the Southwest and Southeast Focus Areas. It is the recommendation of this Comprehensive Plan that Area Plans are completed for the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas following the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan to determine the specific Development Types for these areas.

Both Character Areas and Focus Areas are comprised of different Development Types. Character Areas are anticipated to generally retain the same development types over the next decade whereas Focus Areas could reasonably expect to see significant change in development types.

Character Areas

Neighborhoods, districts, or corridors with similar attributes in form & function. Expected to remain largely unchanged in character within ten years.

- Traditional Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Rural Conservation
- Activity District
- Downtown
- Business Campus
- OWU (Ohio Wesleyan -University) District

Focus Areas

Locations where desired significant change expected within ten years.

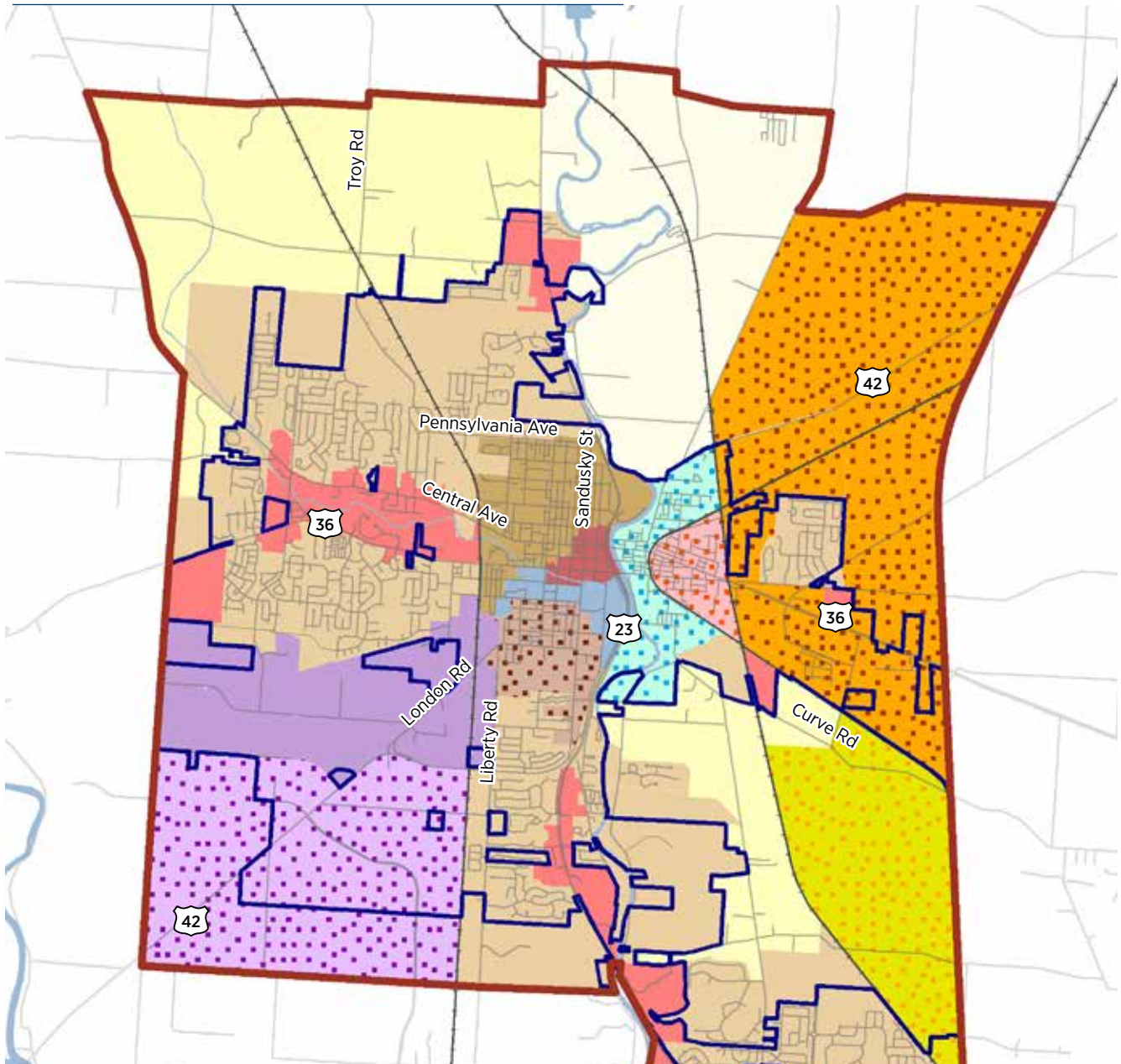
- Riverfront
- Near East Side Gateway
- South Sandusky Street
- Far East Side
- Southwest
- Southeast

Development Types

Kinds of land uses, built character, & intensity that define an area.

- Traditional Town/Urban
 - Traditional Small Lot-Single Family
 - Traditional Medium Lot-Single Family
 - Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
 - Neo-Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
 - Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
 - Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)
- Suburban Neighborhoods
 - Early Suburban Single-Family
 - Late Suburban Single-Family
 - Multifamily Complex
 - Suburban Mixed Residential
- Suburban Activity & Employment Destination
 - Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center
 - Community-Scale Activity Center
 - Regional-Scale Activity Center
 - Commercial Corridor
 - Business Campus Activity Center
- Special Districts & Master Planned Campuses
 - University Campus
 - Government Campus
 - Hospital/Medical Campus
 - Fairgrounds
 - Camps or Ecological Conservation Campus
 - Eco-Village
- Rural/ Agricultural
 - Rural Subdivision
 - Rural Frontage (Legacy Township Development)
 - Agriculture

EXISTING CHARACTER AREAS AND FOCUS AREAS MAP



CHARACTER AREAS

- Traditional Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Rural Conservation
- Activity District
- Downtown
- Business Campus
- OWU District

FOCUS AREAS

- Southeast
- Southwest
- Riverfront
- Near East Side Gateway
- South Sandusky Street
- Far East Side

- Planning Area
- City of Delaware
- Roadway
- Railway

↑ North



TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL

Traditional Residential Character Areas are found in the central city, inner-ring areas and within a couple of blocks off major corridors throughout Delaware. They include the earliest residential development in the City and the more historic neighborhoods. Traditional and contemporary architectural styles have a place in Traditional Residential Character Areas, but scale is generally consistent with older style homes. The density, height, and scale of buildings in Traditional Residential Character Areas typically decrease the further from the central business district they are.

KEY ATTRIBUTES

- ▶ Neighborhoods are walkable and pedestrian-oriented as they developed primarily before automobiles were the dominant transportation option.
- ▶ Streets and rights-of-way are wide and typically straight with wide sidewalks and tree lawns found on both sides of the street.
- ▶ There is a clear and interconnected network of streets and a rectilinear or grid pattern with varied block sizes (but generally larger than the blocks in the Downtown).
- ▶ Alleys are not common but can be retrofitted in redevelopment or infill projects in these areas.
- ▶ The subdivision of lots is semi-regular within a block with small, equally sized parcels, typically meeting mid-block. In some locations, multiple smaller lots are consolidated to accommodate larger buildings. Deeper lots are typically found along major roads.
- ▶ Buildings are set back from the street by small to medium front yards with front doors or entrances located on the main facade. Front yard setbacks are typically consistent along a block. Exceptions are for larger buildings like schools that occupy most of a block.
- ▶ Individual lots may have only one narrow side yard and have a zero-lot line setback (structure comes up to, or very near to, the edge of the property) from front or side property lines, especially close to the Downtown or on narrow blocks.
- ▶ Building types may be mixed on a block but setbacks are typically consistent, and the scale of adjacent buildings is similar, unless multiple lots have been consolidated to provide a larger yard around a larger building.
- ▶ Many lots have dedicated driveways and/or parking areas, such as surface parking, driveways, or detached garages, located in the interior of the block. On-street parking is also common.
- ▶ Open spaces in the form of neighborhood parks, linear parks, and greens are important open space elements in a more densely developed neighborhood.
- ▶ Architectural detailing is human scale, shares many characteristics with single family development proportions including frequent windows, front entrances, porches, stoops, and/or balconies. The majority of buildings are one to three stories.

PLANNING GUIDELINES

Traditional Residential Character Areas are established areas in Delaware. The development context is generally preservation or adaptive re-use. The preferred planning approach for these areas is to protect and enhance the existing character, focusing on property maintenance, architectural preservation of contributing buildings, context-sensitive infill, and adaptive re-use. When warranted by significant decline in occupancy or condition of existing properties, context sensitive redevelopment is also appropriate.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- Traditional Small Lot-Single-Family
- Traditional Medium Lot Single-Family
- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Neo-Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed-Use)

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



Houses in Delaware's Northwest Neighborhood.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Suburban Residential Character Areas are found toward the perimeter of the current city limits and along corridors. These areas include existing, post-1940s subdivisions and the car-oriented, non-residential corridors associated with them. They are primarily characterized by individual subdivisions or neighborhoods with a specific street and block patterns adjacent to other subdivisions or neighborhoods with a different patterns. A common characteristic of these neighborhoods is homogenous housing types and architectural styles in a block, along a street, or clustered in pods around a common open space. However, types vary between areas, ranging from detached single-family to multi-family complexes. Driveways, garages, and accommodation of the car is predominant.

KEY ATTRIBUTES

- ▶ The street network is typically curvilinear with irregular block structure. It may have limited points of connections and frequent use of cul-de-sac, especially in subdivisions developed between 1980 and 2000.
- ▶ Streets vary in width from 30-foot rights-of-way to 60-foot rights-of-way. Sidewalks are common.
- ▶ Blocks vary in dimension by subdivision and may be similar to an urban block or be less defined and more organically shaped by the landscape or former parent lot (lot that existed prior to development).
- ▶ The pattern within each subdivision is typically very consistent in terms of lot size. Lot shape may vary and include rectangular parcels, wedge/pie shaped parcels consistent with a more curvilinear street network, or other shapes.
- ▶ Buildings are typically located near the center of the lot, with similarly sized front and back yards, and often present the wider façade to the street with the greatest dimension of the lot being the frontage width.
- ▶ Attached garages with driveways are common.
- ▶ Housing types are typically developed in separate subdivisions (multi-family, single-family, townhouses). Mixing of housing types within a block or along a street is uncommon.
- ▶ Buildings are typically one to three stories, with some four-story buildings in multi-family complexes.
- ▶ Architectural details may vary within each subdivision depending on the mix of residential types and era of construction. Infill development respects the existing horizontal and vertical proportions of homes as well as location and orientation of buildings on the lots.
- ▶ Open space, when present, is provided in an informal and passive manner as well as through neighborhood recreation facilities and clubhouses. In older, larger lot Suburban Residential Character Areas there is usually limited public open space. More recently built areas are more likely to have common open spaces and parks.

PLANNING GUIDELINES

Existing Suburban Residential Character Areas represent established and stable development in Delaware that are not likely to see significant new development and change. For this reason, the applicable development context is infill and the planning approach for these areas should be to maintain and enhance the character of existing development. New Suburban Residential Character Areas should embrace the trends of more recent subdivisions toward incorporating public open space and pedestrian accommodations, adhering to high quality design standards and integrating conservation development principles, such as retaining natural features and encouraging more clustered development to allow for more open space. Where feasible, integrating or promoting proximity to Activity Districts is also desirable to maximize residential access to commercial goods and services and reduce car-dependence.

The critical factors to consider in design and any improvements include:

- Maintaining or improving the connectivity of roads to provide alternative routes and reduce traffic congestion on major roads.
- Improving the connectivity between destinations and residential areas through completion of sidewalk and trail connections.
- Providing adequate common open spaces in developments with small individual yards to offset the compact character of the built areas.
- Encouraging the use of alleys and rear loaded garages whenever feasible to increase the walkability of new neighborhoods by removing driveways and curb cuts from residential streets.
- Establishing transitional zones in each new subdivision that allow for step up or step down between types of housing to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Requiring tree lawns along all residential streets or consider deep enough front yards that large species shade trees can be planted and maintained in front yards.
- Requiring infill projects to match the size, scale, and setback of existing homes.
- Addressing stormwater impacts and mitigation.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- Traditional Small Lot-Single-Family
- Traditional Medium Lot Single-Family
- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
- Early Suburban Single-Family
- Late Suburban Single-Family (Existing)
- Multi-Family Complex (Existing)
- Commercial Corridor (Existing)
- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Fairgrounds
- Camps or Ecological Conservation Campus
- Eco-Village
- Natural Conservation/Preserves

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Rural Residential Character Areas are found in a few areas outside the current City limits in adjacent Townships. These areas are comprised primarily of existing subdivisions that were developed in the township under township zoning. Individual homes may rely on on-site septic and wells for water or may have on-site sewage treatment and City water. Individual lots range from one to ten acres in size. These areas are primarily characterized by one or two local streets or private drives with a modest number (ten to 30 homes) or lots with direct access to township or county roads with no internal local streets (frontage lots). These development patterns are common in areas where frontage was sold off from a farm over time, or when a moderate sized piece of farmland was developed. Rural Residential Character Areas accommodate primarily detached single-family homes ranging in style from brick ranches common in earlier decades to contemporary, luxury custom homes. Larger lots allow for side and rear loaded garages, wide-façade homes, sizable accessory structures, landscaping and in some cases integration of natural features into the private properties.

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

Rural Residential Character Areas include established and stable development within the planning area but currently outside of the City's jurisdiction. (As the City continues to grow outward, these areas are at risk of being left as unincorporated islands unless appropriate zoning and other regulations are in place.) The planning approach for these areas is to maintain and enhance the character of development. The most likely Development Context for these areas will be Infill or Suburban Edge Development.

Suburban or urban design standards should not be enforced on these areas. It is not anticipated that these areas will be annexed within the ten-year timeframe of this plan but if annexation is to occur, future subdivision of large lots is discouraged, unless wholesale redevelopment and infill is adopted. This is not a recommended Character Area for new subdivisions.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- Rural Subdivision
- Rural Frontage
- Natural Conservation/Preserves
- Fairgrounds
- Camps or Ecological Conservation Campus
- Eco-Village

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



RURAL CONSERVATION

Rural Conservation Character Areas are found in Troy Township in the unincorporated northern part of the City's planning area. This development type primarily represents existing agricultural and natural landscapes with areas of low density rural residential development in frontage lots or large lot subdivisions. Both the Scioto and Olentangy Rivers and their floodplain and riparian corridors are significant corridors in the Rural Conservation Area.

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

The City has no immediate plans to annex land in this area and supports the County and Township's efforts to maintain agricultural production in this area with very limited rural residential development. The concept is not just to retain these areas for future growth, but to conserve the rural heritage and agriculturally productive land that is important to the region and City's identity and character.



APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- Agriculture
- Rural Subdivision
- Rural Frontage
- Natural Conservation/Preserves
- Fairgrounds
- Camps or Ecological Conservation Campus
- Eco-Village



* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



ACTIVITY DISTRICT

Activity District Character Areas are nodes that provide local and regional destinations for the community. Some include retail and commercial uses that are smaller scale, serve a local population and are more pedestrian-oriented. Others accommodate community or regional-scale commercial uses, are more car-oriented and larger in scale. Some also serve a "gateway" function, marking entrance points into the City. In addition to commercial activities, these districts incorporate a mix of other uses, including institutional, residential and open space/recreational.

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

Both Infill and Redevelopment are appropriate development contexts for Activity District Character Areas. In many cases, taking advantage of infill opportunities can help to intensify uses in such a way as to maximize the potential of existing infrastructure and limit the need for suburban edge development in other locations. Redevelopment is appropriate in locations where certain types of buildings are functionally underutilized or market conditions changed. In some activity districts public realm improvements and amenities (such as pocket parks, bicycle lanes, street furniture, lighting, public art, etc.) offer the potential for improving quality of place and making areas more appealing as destinations for both residents and visitors.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Regional-Scale Activity Center
- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Multifamily Complex
- Commercial Corridor
- Fairgrounds
- Camps or Ecological Conservation Campus
- Hospital/Medical Campus
- Natural Conservation/Preserves

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



DOWNTOWN

Downtown Delaware is the historic, civic and cultural center of the City. Buildings are located very close to one another and in many cases are adjoined. It accommodates a wide variety of intense land uses and is expected to see additional intensification to house a growing residential population in the future to go along with the mixed land uses already in the Downtown. Street pattern is a grid with short blocks and frequent intersections established in the early 1800s. Streets accommodate moderate traffic at slow speeds and include on-street parking.

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

The Development Context is a combination of Preservation, Adaptive Re-use, and Infill and Redevelopment. New development is encouraged to fill in vacant sites such as underutilized parking areas or unused buildings. Redevelopment opportunities that promote street-level activation and the productive use of upper stories for commercial or residential space are especially encouraged. Demolition of historic fabric is strongly discouraged. Amenities for pedestrians such as wide sidewalks, street trees and benches should be incorporated.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- ▶ Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)
- ▶ Traditional Small Block Mixed Neighborhood
- ▶ Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



BUSINESS CAMPUS

Employment-oriented uses in this Character Area are characterized by light industrial-style development, office, business park, and boutique manufacturing. Large footprint structures offer flexible space to accommodate market demand for various users. Buildings are oriented to the street and can be adapted to support different uses such as light manufacturing, high-tech industries and research & development.

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

For the existing built-out portions of the Character Area the Development Context is a combination of Infill, Redevelopment and Adaptive Re-use in recognition of the fact that there are opportunities for development on certain properties, that some facilities may be obsolete and need to be demolished so that newer facilities can be built and that some facilities could be repurposed as industry demands change. For other portions of the area that are undeveloped, the Development Context is suburban edge development.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- Industrial Campus Activity Center
- Industrial (Corridor Industrial)
- Commercial Corridor
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Regional-Scale Activity Center
- Late Suburban Single-Family (on greenfield sites)
- Multifamily context (on greenfield sites)
- Suburban Mixed Residential (on greenfield sites)

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY (OWU) DISTRICT

Centered around the fountain, a "town square," between Beeghly Library and the Hamilton Williams ("Ham-Wil") Campus Center, the Ohio Wesleyan (OWU) Campus is an attractive, welcoming environment directly south of Delaware's downtown. The core of the campus clusters buildings in a walkable pattern. It contains an academic core, as well as residential facilities on the west side of campus. Parking areas are integrated throughout but generally located in more peripheral locations

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

The Development Context for the OWU District is a combination of Preservation and Infill and Redevelopment. Close coordination between City and campus planning activities is essential to create edge conditions between the campus and City that benefit both the University's functions and the quality of place in the surrounding community.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

- ▶ University Campus
- ▶ Traditional Small Lot Single-Family
- ▶ Traditional Medium Lot Single-Family
- ▶ Traditional Small Block Mixed Neighborhood
- ▶ Traditional Large Block Mixed Neighborhood
- ▶ Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)



* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.

COMMUNITY NETWORK

The Community Network is comprised of public parks and a wide variety of recreational spaces as well as institutional and government property, public schools, fairgrounds and golf courses that serve as amenities for community members.

APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTEXT GUIDELINES

Preservation and enhancement of these spaces should be prioritized with special attention to creating opportunities for connections between spaces and between them and residential areas. New opportunities to build upon the network should be identified, especially in new residential subdivisions or mixed-use areas. The Development Context for existing spaces will primarily be Preservation.



SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

The large (approximately 1,500 acres) undeveloped southeast district is a portion of the planning area that could be a focus for new development that includes a combination of development types. It provides significant opportunity to increase the number and variety of housing units while also integrating a range of other uses. Significant planned infrastructure improvements, such as the Glenn Parkway Extension, and the adjacency to several existing amenities offer great potential for this area to meet a range of needs for the City in the next ten years. A detailed area plan is needed in order to further develop the specific character and land use plan for this area.

GUIDANCE FOR AREA PLANNING

- ▶ Support development around the Glenn Parkway Extension that allows for commercial and mixed use development as well as some residential development.
- ▶ Create different scale activity nodes within neighborhoods the area.
- ▶ Use landscaping buffers between adjacent neighborhoods and new development in this area and adjacent neighborhoods where appropriate.
- ▶ Encourage walkability and connectivity by extending the Community Network into the area and integrating neighborhood-scale parks.
- ▶ Transition from suburban commercial to rural residential as it is located farther away from Glenn Parkway.
- ▶ In residential areas allow a range of block sizes, including large to medium “blocks” with some curvilinear streets to continue the suburban character found in other portions of Delaware while also allowing mixed residential and multifamily closer to activity nodes, Glenn Parkway, US36/37, and along the major backbone road network such as the concept roads shown on the following diagram
- ▶ In some nodes, there may be a village pattern similar to how Delaware historically developed, as a denser core with smaller blocks, and neighborhoods that get slightly less intense in use further from the center.
- ▶ In other nodes community scale activity centers integrated with their surrounding medium and low density neighborhoods in both pattern and character.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES*

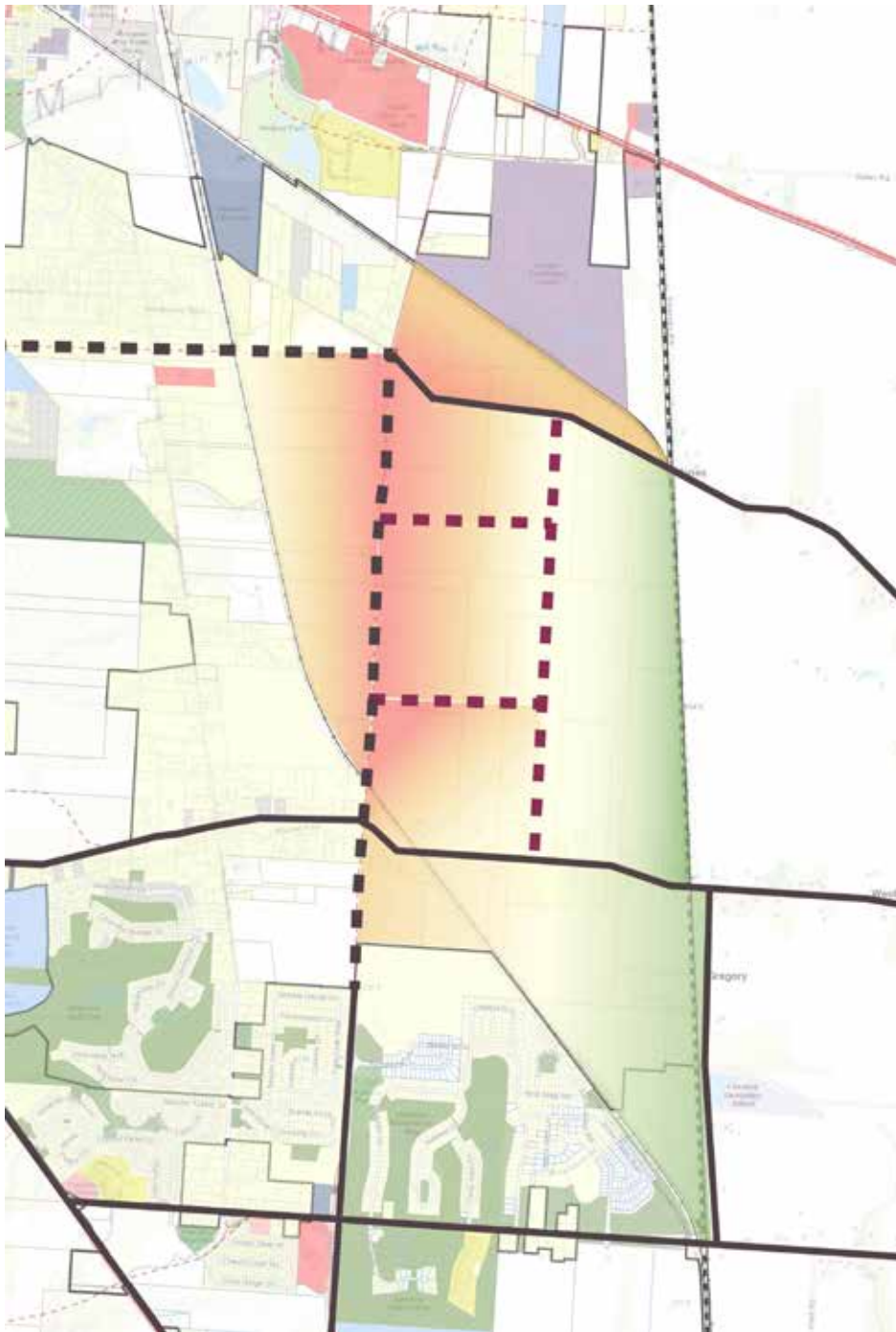
- ▶ Commercial Corridor
- ▶ Suburban Neighborhoods
- ▶ Industrial (Corridor Industrial)
- ▶ Suburban Mixed Residential
- ▶ Suburban Residential
- ▶ Rural Subdivision
- ▶ Community-Scale Activity Center
- ▶ Regional-Scale Activity Center
- ▶ Suburban Neighborhood
- ▶ Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)
- ▶ Neo-Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- ▶ Traditional Large Block Neighborhood

* Development Types are described in detail on pages 81-90.



Ranch style Garden Apartments, like those that have been developed at Quail Pass behind the Glennwood Commons shopping center, could provide an opportunity for accessible housing in the Southeast Focus Area.

SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA CONCEPT



LEGEND

-  Suburban Residential
-  Commercial Corridor (Neighborhood)
-  Suburban Mixed Use / Traditional Small Block Residential
-  Suburban Mixed Residential
-  Concept Roads

Note: Map created in 2019. Concept roads do not reflect current thoroughfare plan and will be adjusted through area planning process.

SOUTHWEST FOCUS AREA

The large (approximately 2,000 acres) southwestern quadrant of Delaware has three areas that are loosely categorized or marketed as the “business parks” delineated below: the Delaware Business Park, the Innovation Park and the Delaware Crossing Business Center. The Delaware Business Park includes a number of the City’s large and small industrial businesses. The newer Innovation Park (including Symmetry II) is located on the south side of the Delaware Municipal Airport. Some of these areas have a conventional pre-existing industrial park character that is expected to largely remain. South of the airport and US 42, however, there is opportunity for a more mixed-use environment in and around the Delaware Crossing Business Center, and the hundreds of acres south of this area and east of US 42. This should be the focus for an area plan.

GUIDANCE FOR AREA PLANNING

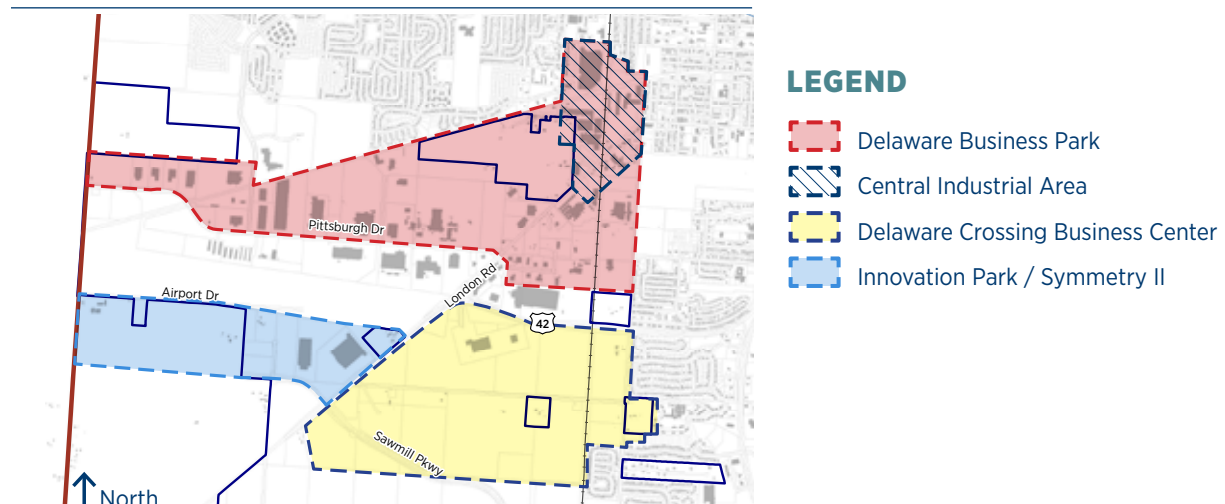
- Support mixed employment uses in certain locations including large lot subdivisions (over 100,000 square feet) to accommodate existing and potential new types of businesses.
- Accommodate flex buildings that allow for a wide range of office and warehouse uses.
- Strengthen the existing Delaware Industrial Park by assembling sites in undeveloped portions and creating amenity value (e.g. trailways).
- Create nodes and gateways in the Delaware Industrial Park (London Road at Pittsburgh and US 42).
- Strengthen Delaware Crossing to focus on tech/ industrial West of US 42, an amenity node at US 42 and Sawmill Road and a corporate business park east of US 42.
- Redefine the Central Industrial Area as a mixed-use urban industrial district with streetscape improvements and corridors (e.g. London Road to Sandusky, Curtis Street).

- Integrate new uses at key nodes (e.g. London Road at Liberty Road) and provide opportunities for new industries such as food and beverage (e.g. craft brewery, restaurants)
- Re-envision low-performance office buildings as maker/tech spaces.
- In the Central Industrial Area, integrate residential uses, especially workforce housing.
- Work with non-profit partners on projects that help to create amenity value through delineated greenways and fitness trails.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Industrial Campus Activity Center
- Industrial Corridor
- Commercial Corridor
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Rural Subdivision
- Activity Center
- Traditional Small / Large Block Neighborhood

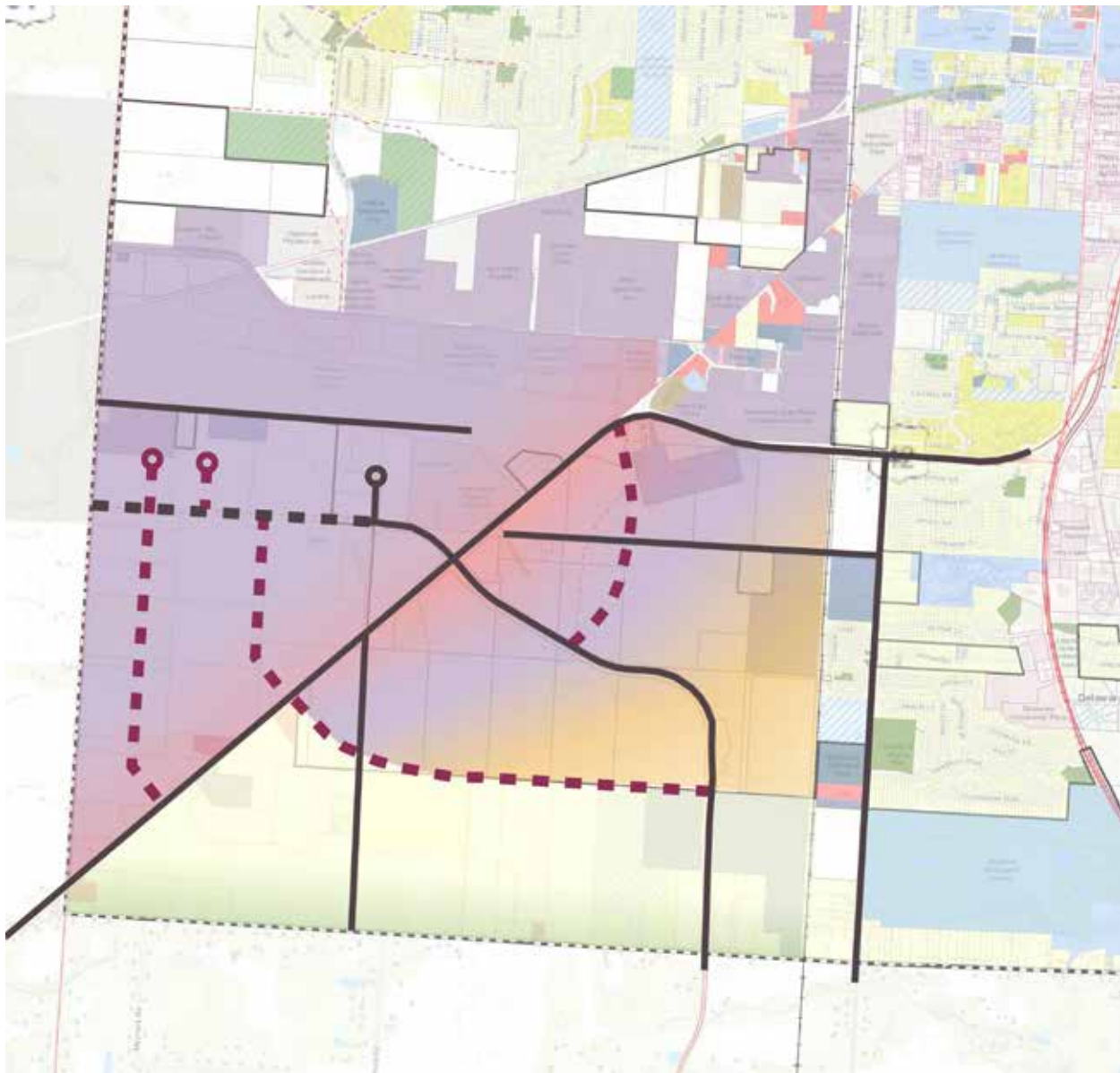
SOUTHWEST INDUSTRIAL AREA MAP



LEGEND

- Delaware Business Park
- Central Industrial Area
- Delaware Crossing Business Center
- Innovation Park / Symmetry II

SOUTHWEST FOCUS AREA CONCEPT



LEGEND

- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Mixed Use / Traditional Small Block Residential
- Commercial Corridor (Neighborhood)
- Business Campus
- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Concept Roads

Note: Map created in 2019. Concept roads do not reflect current thoroughfare plan and will be adjusted through area planning process.



RIVERFRONT AND NEAR EAST SIDE GATEWAY FOCUS AREAS

This is the existing neighborhood and business district east of Downtown, starting at the Olenyangy River as its western boundary. It includes traditional and suburban residential development, major neighborhood and community scale commercial corridors, and railroad-oriented industrial and service businesses in a compact walkable area.

GUIDANCE FOR AREA PLANNING

- Encourage character and land use changes to support riverfront redevelopment.
 - Improve riverfront access from both Mingo Park and the neighborhoods on the west side of the river.
 - Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections between the eastern and western portions of downtown over the river.
 - Identify areas for protection, preservation and enhancement and areas in need of comprehensive redevelopment.
 - Promote attainable housing.
 - Allow for selected intensification of uses where appropriate, including mixed-use, multistory buildings.
 - Ensure redevelopment and infill in this area does not overburden infrastructure (such as roads and utilities) and does not detract from overall community character.
 - Promote contextually sensitive redevelopment of the Greenwood Lake Camp on the northern boundary.
 - Allow for the continued City Sewer Plant industrial use with possibility of long-term expansion southeast of Armstrong Road.
- Integrate historic preservation of significant buildings and features with revitalization of neighborhood-scale commercial space, entertainment venues and open space to promote neighborhood revitalization without loss of unique community character.
 - Redevelop, re-use and reconfigure key areas in association with the US Route 36 improvements.
 - Consider reducing parking requirements and allowing shared parking arrangements to enhance walkability while accommodating parking needs.

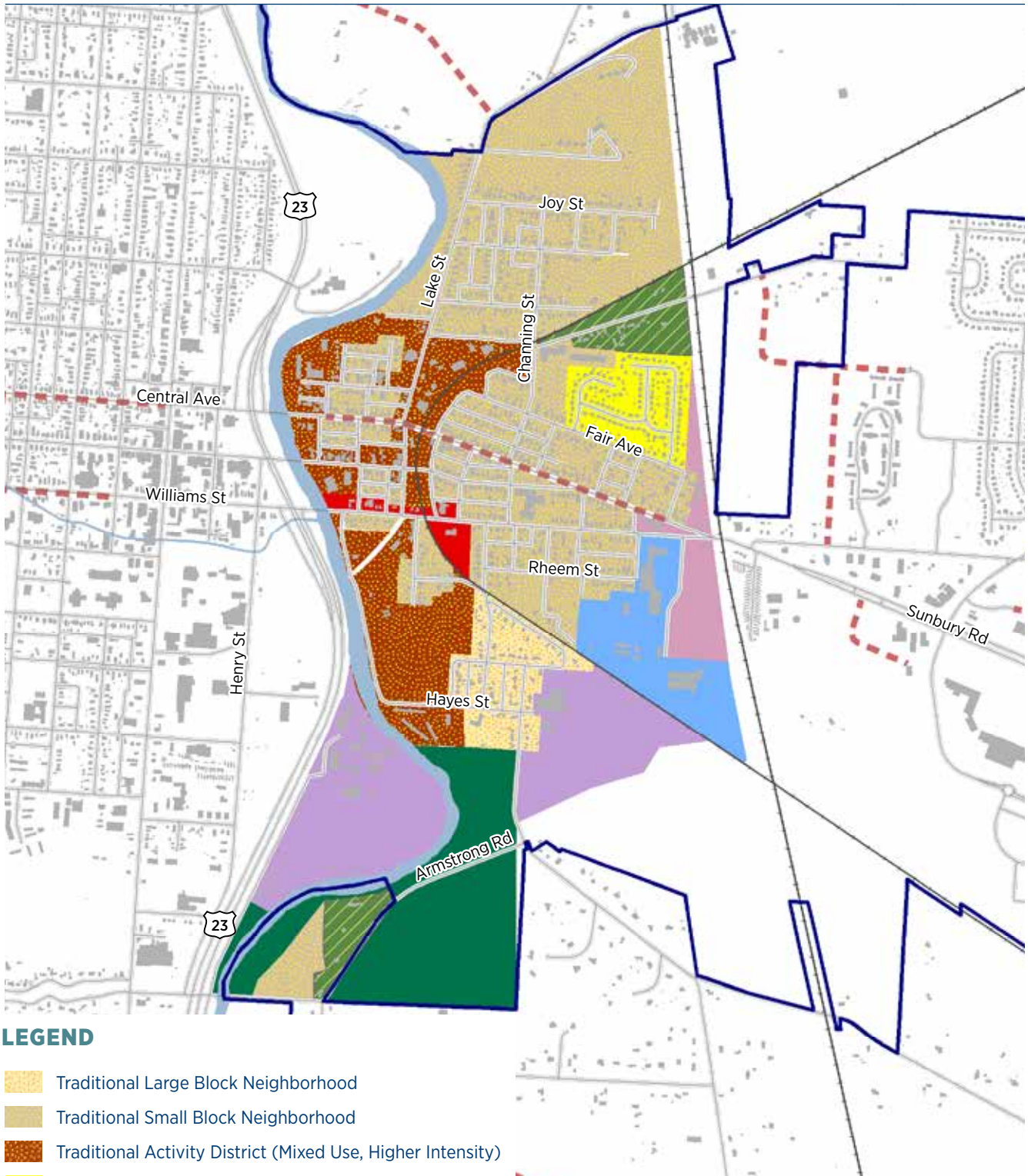
APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Traditional Small Lot Single-Family
- Traditional Medium Lot Single-Family
- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)
- Early Suburban Single-Family
- Regional-Scale Activity Center
- Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Master Planned Developments
- Rural Subdivision
- Rural Frontage



The Downtown Riverfront area presents an opportunity for infill and redevelopment that takes cues from the scale and character of the existing scale and character and knits it together with compatible new construction.

RIVERFRONT AND NEAR EAST SIDE GATEWAY FOCUS AREA FUTURE CHARACTER MAP



LEGEND

- Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use, Higher Intensity)
- Late Suburban Single-Family
- Commercial Corridor (Neighborhood)
- Industrial
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Government Campus
- Natural Conservation/Preserves
- Rural Frontage
- City of Delaware
- Roadway
- Proposed Roadways
- Railway



SOUTH SANDUSKY STREET FOCUS AREA

This area includes a traditional neighborhood and one of the City's earliest automotive corridors along South Sandusky Street (formerly US Route 23). The neighborhood generally retains the historic street grid and uniform lots. Woodward Elementary School provides a civic anchor in the center of the neighborhood and adds to other civic anchors such as the large cemetery, the Second Ward Community Center, and the new headquarters for the Delaware Public Health District. Over time, much of the commercial development along Sandusky Street has become obsolete in its format and style. The primary focus of this area should be to encourage incremental redevelopment of the commercial properties along Sandusky Street and London Road and to maintain and enhance the neighborhood with stronger gateways, pedestrian-oriented design and access to housing improvement programs.

GUIDANCE FOR AREA PLANNING

- Redevelop and redesign the automotive corridors with more character appropriate uses.
 - Improve existing housing in the area through maintenance, and upgrade financing options and community improvement programs related to energy efficiency upgrades, to reduce operating costs for homeowners.
 - Protect and maintain the established community character including density, architectural scale, and tree cover.
 - Promote attainable housing.
 - Allow for selected intensification of uses where appropriate, including mixed-use, multistory buildings.
 - Improve walkability of the Sandusky Street and London Road corridors.
 - Provide attractive and functional gateways into the neighborhood.
- Maintain and enhance central community amenities including Ross Street Park and Woodward Elementary School.
 - Support community enhancing retail, services and entertainment along Sandusky Street.
 - Explore community needs to identify possible redevelopment opportunities along London Road.

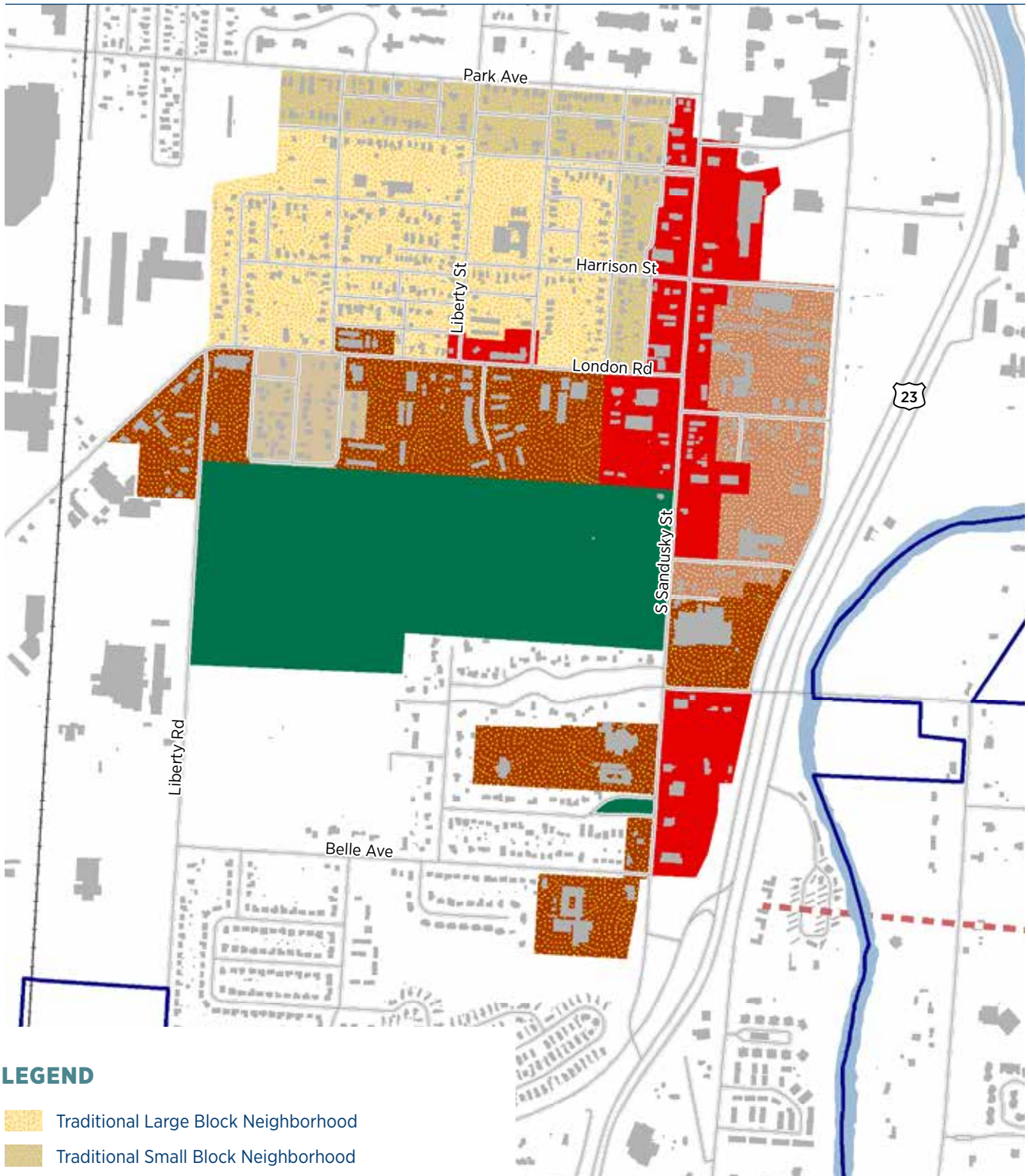
APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Traditional Small Lot Single-Family
- Traditional Medium Lot Single-Family
- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)
- Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Regional-Scale Activity Center



Woodward Elementary School provides a civic anchor in the center of the neighborhood

SOUTH SANDUSKY STREET FOCUS AREA FUTURE CHARACTER MAP



LEGEND

- Traditional Large Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Small Lot-Single-Family
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use, Lower Intensity)
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use, Higher Intensity)
- Commercial Corridor (Neighborhood)
- Commercial Corridor (Community)
- Natural Conservation/Preserves
- City of Delaware
- Roadway
- Proposed Roadways
- Railway



FAR EAST SIDE FOCUS AREA

This large area includes two distinct parts which have the opportunity to be integrated into a cohesive area over time. In the east-southeast portion of the Near East Side Gateway Focus area is an area that contains a mix of residential, commercial, industrial and open space bisected by US Route 36 and bounded by existing railroad tracks on all sides. The area provides opportunity for enhancements that would better knit the built fabric together and improve quality of place through public realm improvements (sidewalks, amenities, etc.). Farther to the north is a largely undeveloped area with both rural and agricultural landscape. It is mostly unincorporated and actively farmed, but offers long-term potential for limited residential growth and some economic development areas situated along planned major transportation corridors and at key planned transportation nodes. Preserving space for these planned transportation improvements is vital to achieving long term transportation goals. As there have been fewer investments in sewer, water, and road infrastructure in comparison to areas in the south, this area is not anticipated to be developed within the next ten years. (However, it is very important to consider how this area could develop in the longer term without sacrificing the current agricultural functions of the land or before annexation if possible.)



Major upgrades are planned for the Point in the Far East Side.

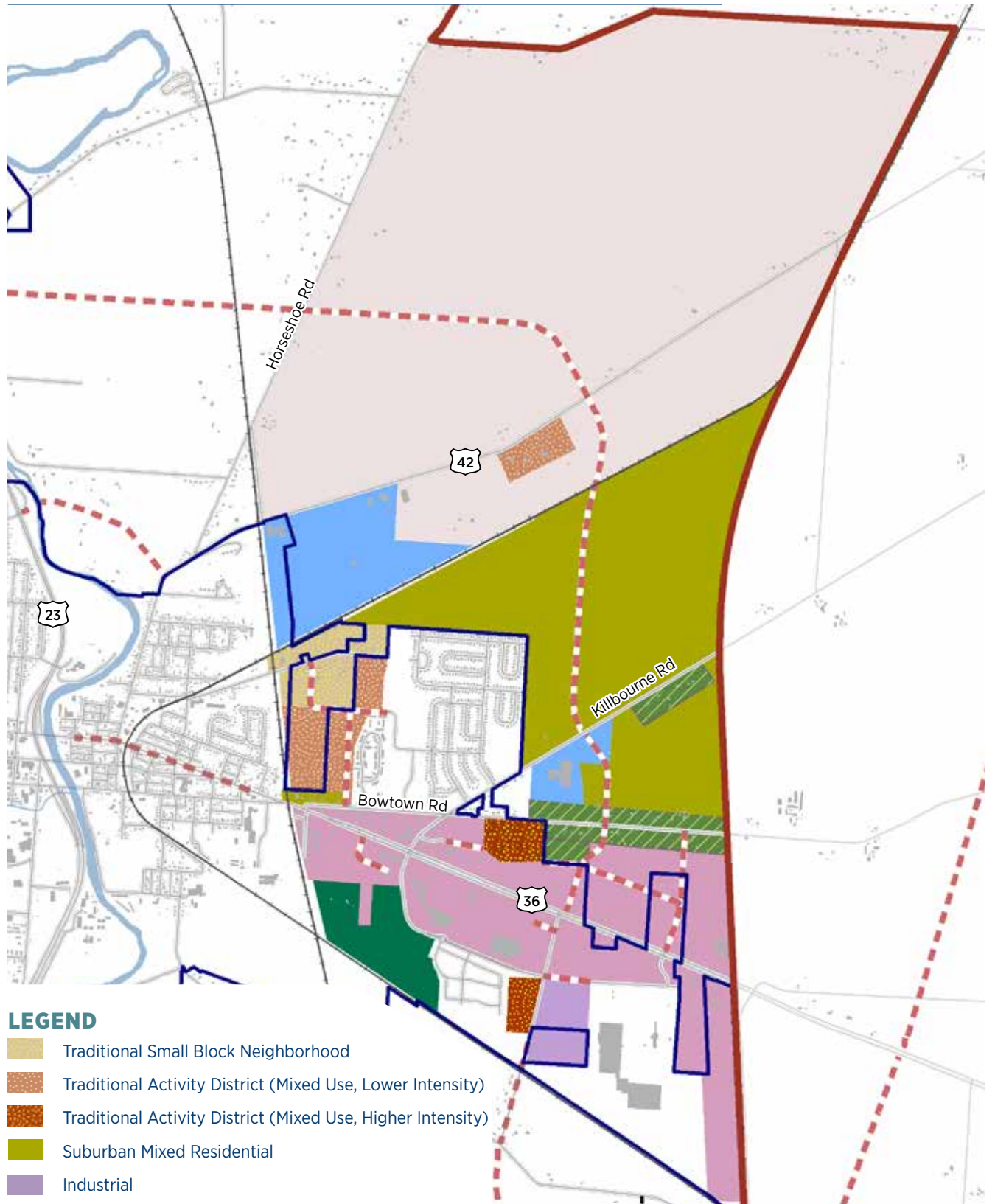
FAR EAST SIDE FOCUS AREA

GUIDANCE FOR AREA PLANNING

- ▶ Support the development of the emerging Delaware County Campus on the former Delaware Area Career Center site and surrounding area including the extension of Bixby Parkway (aka Glenn Road) through this area.
- ▶ Encourage single family development to the east of the existing Kensington Subdivision with intensification or potential varied residential use in proximity to planned transportation corridors.
- ▶ Focus mixed-use development along the US36/SR37/Sunbury Road corridor to create a vibrant, high-quality environment with supportive amenities and services for nearby residential areas.
- ▶ Create infrastructure connections and ensure cohesive development to help integrate the more undeveloped northeastern and more developed southwestern portions of the Focus Area.
- ▶ Consider future neighborhood activity centers to support the daily needs of residents of this area.
- ▶ In the east-southeast, allow for selected intensification of uses where appropriate, including mixed-use, multistory buildings.
- ▶ In the northern part of this Focus Area, maintain the existing rural and agricultural uses and reserve them for potential development in the long term.
- ▶ Ensure redevelopment and infill in this area does not overburden infrastructure (such as roads and utilities) and identify key locations for business enterprises that have infrastructure and access to regional networks.
- ▶ Create a master plan for transportation with relevant jurisdictions that will support potential future development with an interconnected street network with considerations for multimodal travel to reduce long-term transportation impacts on the City and region.
- ▶ Pursue agreements with neighboring jurisdictions to support shared, long term goals for the area, such as a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD, an arrangement through which the City can work with townships on a shared plan for development).
- ▶ Integrate preservation of open space and creation of parks for integration into design of new subdivisions and districts.
- ▶ Establish a unique and high-quality architectural character for infill, redevelopment and new development in this area.
- ▶ Integrate a variety of housing types to meet the future demands of the community.
- ▶ Allow for potential long-term evolution of industrial areas to include housing, commercial or other uses.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- ▶ Traditional Small Lot Single-Family
- ▶ Traditional Medium Lot Single-Family
- ▶ Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- ▶ Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use)
- ▶ Suburban Mixed Residential
- ▶ Commercial Corridor
- ▶ Regional-Scale Activity Center
- ▶ Neighborhood-Scale Activity Center
- ▶ Community-Scale Activity Center
- ▶ Regional-Scale Activity Center
- ▶ Industrial (Corridor Industrial)
- ▶ Agriculture



LEGEND

- Traditional Small Block Neighborhood
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use, Lower Intensity)
- Traditional Activity District (Mixed Use, Higher Intensity)
- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Industrial
- Community-Scale Activity Center
- Government Campus
- Rural and Agricultural Reserve
- Rural Frontage
- Natural Conservation/Preserves

- City of Delaware
 - Planning Area
 - Roadway
 - Proposed Roadways
 - Railway
- ↑ North

DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Development Types, patterns that can be found in Delaware, are identified in this section in order to present the palette that exists today. The Development Types confer density, character and land uses. They can be seen as the 'building blocks' that comprise neighborhoods. The Development Types can be found both in the existing eight Character Areas, which are anticipated to remain relatively stable over the next five to ten years, and the six Focus Areas where change in the existing development types is anticipated and desired.

TRADITIONAL TOWN / URBAN

TRADITIONAL SMALL LOT - SINGLE FAMILY

Intensity

- ▶ Lot size ranges significantly with gross density typically within the 8-12 dwelling units per acre range (most in 8-9 units per acre range)
- ▶ Future development should be generally consistent with broader neighborhood area and a wider range may be appropriate in some circumstances, including in new development areas.

Character

- ▶ Narrow façade homes sitting at average setbacks on small to medium sized blocks. On street parking is common.

Land Uses

- ▶ Single-Family Detached



TRADITIONAL MEDIUM LOT - SINGLE FAMILY

Intensity

- ▶ Lot size ranges significantly with gross density typically within the 5-8 dwelling units per acre range (most in 6-7 units per acre range)
- ▶ Future development should be generally consistent with broader neighborhood area and a wider range may be appropriate in some circumstances, including in new development areas.

Character

- ▶ Narrow or wide façade homes sitting at average setbacks on medium to large blocks. Often with detached garages.

Land Uses

- ▶ Single-Family Detached



TRADITIONAL SMALL BLOCK NEIGHBORHOOD

Intensity

- Small lots for small buildings / larger lots for larger buildings (allows for attached and detached homes)
- Blocks are usually smaller than 250 x 600 feet

Character

- A mix of residential types with two and three-story homes sitting at the sidewalk edge with small rear yards or alleys. On street parking common.

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached, Attached, Two and Three-Family, Multi-Family Apartment



NEO-TRADITIONAL SMALL BLOCK NEIGHBORHOOD

Intensity

- Blocks are usually smaller than 250 x 600 feet
- Small lots for small buildings / larger lots for larger buildings (allows for attached and detached homes)

Character

- A mix of residential types with two and three-story homes sitting at the sidewalk edge with small rear yards or alleys. On Street parking common.

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached, Attached, Two and Three-Family, Multi-family apartments



TRADITIONAL LARGE BLOCK NEIGHBORHOOD

Intensity

- Varies, but lot widths are consistent in a block. Larger blocks in these areas allow for deeper lots.

Character

- One to three-story buildings with wide sidewalks, deeper back yards, and on street parking. More front yard than in small block neighborhoods.

Land Uses

- Mix of small and medium-scale housing types



TRADITIONAL ACTIVITY DISTRICT (MIXED USE)

Intensity

- Varies based on context
- Block pattern similar to “Small Block Neighborhoods”

Character /Land Uses

- Compact districts with a mix of entertainment and service uses with residential in upper floors or at edges Multi-Family apartments
- Square blocks common



SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

EARLY SUBURBAN SINGLE-FAMILY

Intensity

- Small to medium lots that are usually deeper than in the Late Suburban neighborhoods

Character

- Wide and deep lots on curvilinear streets often still with a grid or inner connections
- One and two-story homes with deep front and rear yards
- Attached garages are common

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached



LATE SUBURBAN SINGLE-FAMILY

Intensity

- Similar to Early Suburban, but homes are typically larger and cover more of the lot. Garages also use more lot area as they get larger.

Character

- High lot coverage with attached garages, small yard
- Tall two-story homes are common
- Sidewalks and shallower front yards are common
- Culs-de-sac are prevalent

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached



MULTIFAMILY COMPLEX

Intensity

- Based on units per structure more than lot sizes. Could include up to 12-20 units in three- or four- story buildings are common or be smaller in scale.

Character

- Full block apartments or smaller townhouses and “flats” usually in concentrations of 60+ total units within a development

Land Uses

- Townhouses, Small and Large-Scale Multi-Family



SUBURBAN MIXED RESIDENTIAL

Intensity

- Varies by housing type in each segment (gross density can be calculated).

Character

- Can range, with a variety of housing types in one development often segregated into segments of like housing

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached, Single-Family Attached, Multi-Family



SUBURBAN ACTIVITY & EMPLOYMENT DESTINATIONS

NEIGHBORHOOD-SCALE ACTIVITY CENTER

Intensity

- ▶ Three to ten thousand square feet of commercial space, maximum 3,000 square-foot buildings

Character

- ▶ Residential-style of neighborhood-compatible architecture that provides a local destination for an area of one mile or less. Generally, pedestrian-oriented with very limited parking.
- ▶ Usually located on a major road with no internal street network. May include mixed-use buildings or be adjacent to small apartments or townhouses.

Land Uses

- ▶ Retail, Office, Services, Restaurants, Recreation, Open Space, etc.



COMMUNITY-SCALE ACTIVITY CENTER

Intensity

- ▶ Up to 100 acres of land designed as a destination for daily needs. Buildings up to 40,000 square feet like small groceries may anchor these areas.

Character

- ▶ Neighborhood compatible architecture designed to capture many local car trips. Usually located every 3-5 miles within a community. Located at crossroads of major roadways.
- ▶ May have internal street network.

Land Uses

- ▶ Retail, Restaurants, Services, Entertainment, Recreation, Open Space, Community Centers, Places of Worship, Residential including Multi-family and other "Missing Middle" Housing, Other



REGIONAL-SCALE ACTIVITY CENTER

Intensity

- ▶ Up to 300 acres of land designed as a destination for special trips. Buildings in excess of 100,000 square feet are appropriate in these areas as well as supporting smaller buildings.

Character

- ▶ Large-scale architecture with an institutional and commercial character is dominant. Sites are designed to accommodate heavy automotive traffic and use garages and large surface parking lots.
- ▶ Typically ten or more miles between locations. (Usually only one or two of these destinations is in a community the size of Delaware.)
- ▶ Will have internal street networks

Land Uses

- ▶ Retail, Restaurants, Services, Entertainment, Recreation, Open Space, Community Centers, Places of Worship, Apartments, Town homes, Other



COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Intensity

- ▶ Varies based on location (three to 300 acres of commercial uses).

Character

- ▶ Commercial frontage (along the road) development often in shopping centers. Surface parking is located between the street and buildings. Screening walls or landscaped berms are used between these areas and adjacent neighborhoods.
- ▶ Can vary in scale (neighborhood, community, regional).

Land Uses

- ▶ Retail, Office, Services, Restaurants, Recreation, Other



BUSINESS CAMPUS ACTIVITY CENTER

Intensity

- .15 to .35 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) average (6,500 square feet to 15,250 square feet per acre).

Character

- Large lot subdivision with infrastructure and lot sizes designed to accommodate flex buildings with large footprints in excess of 100,000 square feet.
- Roads are designed for easy access and weight of freight and heavy truck traffic.

Land Uses

- Manufacturing, Warehousing, Research & Development, Distribution, Office, Services, Wholesale, Sales, Transportation, Utilities, Mining, Other



DEFINITION: FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

The ratio of a building's total floor area (gross floor area) to the size of the property on which it is built. It is one way of measuring density.

INDUSTRIAL (CORRIDOR INDUSTRIAL)

Intensity

- .15 to .35 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) average (6,500 square feet to 15,250 square feet per acre).

Character

- Large lots designed to accommodate a single building or use in excess of 100,000 square feet.
- No internal road network. Access is from primary road.

Land Uses

- Manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, office, services, wholesale, sales, transportation, utilities, mining, etc.



SPECIAL DISTRICTS AND MASTER PLANNED CAMPUSES

UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

- Several blocks or large edge sites dedicated to the buildings and landscape associated with a university of educational function. The internal uses, configuration and maintenance are regulated by the university's master plan, and not impacted by the City's zoning or development regulations.
- The Ohio Wesleyan Campus is an example of an existing University Campus.



GOVERNMENT CAMPUS

- Sites that include several blocks dedicated to buildings with a government function, normally also consisting of open space and/or parking to support the use.



HOSPITAL/MEDICAL CAMPUS

- Large sites at the edge of the City along major corridors dedicated to multiple buildings for the provision of health care.



FAIRGROUNDS

- Several blocks dedicated to the provision of open spaces and large buildings to accommodate horse racing, fairs, events, trade shows, in a mix of outdoor and indoor spaces.



CAMPS OR ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION CAMPUS

- There are several unique uses at the southern end of the City that utilize the natural landscape to provide educational and recreational opportunities at camps.
- Internal streets may be present and follow the natural topography of the sites.
- Development in these areas is minimal and buildings typically blend in with the surroundings to allow the use of outdoor recreation and natural resources.



ECO-VILLAGE

- A designed community that enables people to live in a way that minimally impacts the environment.



The Enright Ridge Urban Eco-village is a cooperative, farm project on the edge of East Price Hill neighborhood in Cincinnati, Ohio. It is an intentional community leading urban revitalization and sustainability. Members of the community strive to use less energy and use transportation in efficient ways. Residents grow food on community plots.

RURAL/AGRICULTURAL

RURAL SUBDIVISION

Intensity

- Homes typically sit on one to five-acre (or sometimes larger) lots.

Character

- Medium to large single-family detached homes sit on large lots. Homes are accessed by a public or private street(s) created to provide access to individual lots. No curb and gutter are used.

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) Agriculture



DEFINITION: ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT

A smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone residence.

RURAL FRONTAGE (LEGACY TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT)

Intensity

- Homes typically sit on one to five-acre (sometimes larger) lots.

Character

- Medium to large single-family detached homes sit on large lots that may be irregularly sized. Farm land and fields are found to the rear or interior of the country block. Sometimes subdivisions are developed behind these homes. Homes have direct access to the primary county road.

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached, ADUs, Agriculture



AGRICULTURE

Density

- Usually parcels in excess of 10 acres

Character

- Typically large parcels used for agriculture with limited structures however, some properties may have homes, barns or other accessory structures.

Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached, ADUs, Agriculture



Chapter 6

Fiscal Sustainability



6. FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

This section outlines the City’s ability to fiscally sustain the long-term objectives set forth under the comprehensive plan and is a critical component of the plan.

UNDERSTANDING FISCAL HEALTH

The City of Delaware has long used smart growth fiscal management techniques as well as traditional funding sources such as income tax to pay for services, amenities and infrastructure. Delaware historically has had one of the lowest income tax rates for comparable cities in the region—today that rate stands at 1.85%. Having the resources to meet citizen demands has long been a struggle for the City. In recent years, a proposed income tax increase to help support roadway maintenance and needed new sections of roadways was defeated by voters. Thus, the City will have to face the difficult decision in the future to either not provide the same level of quality services, amenities, and infrastructure or cut back on their provision, including potentially not being able to keep up with the expansion and growth of the community. At the same time, the City anticipates utilizing smart growth fiscal management techniques, seeking out grant and alternate funding from other sources, partnering with the private sector—particularly on infrastructure improvements as well as on businesses, jobs, and industry opportunities—to help augment the tax base. In 2016, the City sought an income tax increase to help fund road construction and maintenance. This was not approved by voters. The City has received feedback to better define what an increase would be used to fund and anticipates returning to the ballot within the implementation timeframe of the Comprehensive Plan.

PAYING FOR GROWTH

The City uses the following to help growth better pay for itself: Impact Fees, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDD), and New Community Authorities (NCA). Several of these are discussed in the Chapter in more detail as well as throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

Impact Fees. Impact fees are one-time payments used to construct system improvements needed to accommodate development. Impact fees must be proportionate and reasonably related to the capital facility service demands of new development. Established in 2001 for Fire/EMS, Parks, and Police, the one-time fees and the underlying analysis were updated in 2005, resulting in a fourth fee category being added: Municipal. These fees have been utilized for capital needs impacted by growth such as adding community parks, fire stations, new vehicles, etc. In 2018, the City commissioned another update, which is currently in draft form. As part of that update, the City has also contemplated, but has not imposed at this time, a Transportation Impact Fee.

Tax Increment Financing. Tax Increment Financing, a reallocation of taxes, has been used to accommodate financing typically for capital infrastructure. This has been used by the City, the private sector, and in partnership between both depending upon the need, area, or project. These have a defined expiration date as defined within each ordinance establishing the TIF.

There are currently several district and project based TIF's being utilized for varying purposes including:

- ▶ Braumiller, Cheshire North, Cheshire South, Cheshire West and Evans Residential Districts. Used to fund infrastructure improvements in the area including Glenn Parkway.
- ▶ Airport Jet Stream and Airspace. Used to fund improvement of intersection, utilities, and ramps
- ▶ Southeast Commercial – Commercial District. Used to fund infrastructure improvements within the southeast area along US23. (No properties have been developed to date in this area and no TIF revenues have been received nor spent.)
- ▶ Skyclimber and V&P Hydraulics – Industrial Development. Used to fund costs for acquiring V&P and Skyclimber parcels
- ▶ Zaremba–Mill Run Crossing – Commercial Development. Used to fund costs related to Glenn Parkway and Mill Run Crossing in the vicinity of Glennwood Commons Shopping Center.
- ▶ Sawmill Parkway – Roadway Extension. To be used to fund costs related to the construction of the extension of Sawmill Parkway through the City.
- ▶ Seattle House – Residential Development. To be used to fund costs related to the Point railroad/roadway improvement project.
- ▶ Buehler's – Commercial Development. To be used to fund costs related to Central Avenue roadway and turn lane improvements.

JEDD. Beginning in 2014, the City and Berkshire Township (the site of the Tanger Outlet Mall among other developments) entered into a Joint Economic Development District Agreement. This allows the imposition of the City's income tax in this area (that is not within the City) for the purpose of facilitating economic development including job creation and retention. This essentially allows the City to account for the impacts of such a large regional development upon the City, principally traffic in this case.

NCA. New Community Authorities have been utilized since about 2007 in the City to help fund various improvements including Glenn Parkway. There are also NCAs more oriented toward private development enhancements. Typically, these involve a millage charge imposed against the property value in a defined area to help fund specified costs. These have an expiration date as defined within each ordinance establishing the NCA, which can be as long as 30 years. The City currently has three NCAs:

- ▶ Delaware South NCA. Area around Glenn Parkway in the far southeast area. Proceeds to be used to fund costs related to the construction of Glenn Parkway.
- ▶ Delaware North NCA. Area around Glenn Parkway in the area around US36/SR37 and Glenn Parkway. Proceeds to be used to fund costs related to the construction and enhancement of Glenn Parkway.
- ▶ Terra Alta NCA. A developer-driven NCA encompassing the large Terra Alta development.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND USE AND FISCAL HEALTH

The City of Delaware is composed of numerous land use types and will certainly continue to be in the future even as the market changes patterns of land use. The City has been fiscally resilient and remains in good overall fiscal health. There is every reason to believe that it will continue to maintain good fiscal health moving forward while implementing this plan and continuing to utilize the growth management tools it has been using.

This plan focuses growth and development in key areas including infill, redevelopment, and new development, all within the context of a dynamic region. The plan is fiscally sustainable in that growth in the planning period is contemplated only within the historic City utility boundary. Allowing for a broader range of uses and even changing some uses in areas once slated for essentially single-use typologies serves to broaden the fiscal sustainability of the community in the long term while being responsive to the changing marketplace, providing business opportunities and providing housing opportunities in a wide range and area.

Implementing the smart growth-oriented and mixed-use components of this plan in key areas can generate significantly more tax revenue per acre. At the same time, this approach will utilize existing and even new infrastructure more efficiently over time and create the sense of place and, in some cases, more compact and walkable environments citizens have said they desire. This can also help the City deliver ongoing services in a more efficient manner to the same number of people and businesses if development is more compact than if it is more spread out.

However, there will always be a diversity of people, uses, and development types within the community. The current fiscal health of the community demonstrates that there is fiscal strength in land use diversity. Coordinating land use decisions and service provision within a larger context rather than singular project specific analysis alone will ultimately place the community in the strongest fiscal position. At the same time, this approach will help in implementing the many (and varied) goals and objectives contained within this plan.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY OF LAND USES

Numerous factors influence the fiscal results for different land uses. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- Local revenue structure,
- Services provided,
- Local levels of service,
- Capacity of existing infrastructure, and
- Demographic and market characteristics of new growth.

LOCAL REVENUE STRUCTURE

A key determinant in calculating net fiscal results from new development is the local revenue structure, which affects fiscal findings through both its composition and revenue distribution/collection formulas. Every community has at least one major revenue source, and, in some cases, several on which it is reliant. Examples include property tax, local sales tax, and state shared revenues.

An important component of revenue structure is the distribution/collection formulas for various sources. With the exception of property tax, the distribution/collection formulas for common revenue sources can vary greatly from state to state. For example, in states where sales tax is collected, communities can assess a local option sales tax, which is usually collected on a situs-basis (point of sale basis). Other states collect sales tax at the state level and distribute the revenue to communities using a population-based formula. A similar situation exists with income tax, where some states allow a local income, or “piggyback” tax on top of the state income tax. In certain states, such as Maryland, this tax is collected by place of residence. In others, such as Ohio, it is collected by place of employment.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Another important factor in the fiscal equation is the services provided by the jurisdiction. Jurisdictions provide different services and the fiscal impact analysis will reflect this—and stakeholders and the audience for the study will need to understand this. For example, in many states, school districts are separate entities with their own tax rates (e.g., Florida, Ohio). In other states, schools get their local funds from County General Fund taxes (e.g., Virginia). Fiscal analyses will obviously reflect the services provided and funding streams, and audiences need to be aware of this to prevent both unintentional and deliberate confusion.

LEVELS OF SERVICE

Another factor in fiscal impact analysis is an understanding of the levels of service currently being provided in a community. Existing levels of service are defined as the facility or service standard currently being funded through the budget. Examples of level of service standards are fire/EMS response times, road miles paved annually, parkland per capita, etc. This is an important factor since levels of service generally vary from community to community.

CAPACITY OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

The capacity of existing infrastructure in a community also has a bearing on the fiscal sustainability of new development. For example, a community may have the capacity to absorb a large number of additional vehicle trips on its existing road network or may be significantly under capacity with regards to high school enrollment. In either of these situations, the community could use a case study-marginal cost approach that accounts for existing facilities and levels of usage to assess fiscal impacts. A community with excess capacity could absorb substantially higher growth over time without making additional infrastructure investments than a community without these capacities. This excess capacity results in lower capital costs over time. This is an important factor in the fiscal equation, since the largest cost associated with capital facilities are the annual operating costs, which typically account for approximately 80 percent of a community's budget.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND MARKET CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW GROWTH

Next to a community's revenue structure, no other factor has as great an impact on the net fiscal results as the demographic and market characteristics of different land uses. Examples of demographic and market variables for residential development include average household sizes, pupil generation rates, market value of housing units, trip generation rates, density per acre, and average household income. Important demographic and market characteristics for nonresidential development include square feet per employee, trip generation rates, market values per square foot, sales per square foot (retail), and floor area ratio.



EXISTING FINANCIAL CONDITION

The balance of revenue to expenditures is a complex process, the details of which are best reviewed in either the City's annual budget or Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The budget process for the City is generally a balanced process from year to year. However, some expenditures and investments in infrastructure can occur over several years. The framework established to distribute these revenues towards the various costs to serve development consists of several Funds. These Funds include: the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Capital Projects Funds, Debt Service Funds, and Enterprise Funds.

The City has several funds/revenue sources in place to contribute to and address the cost of development.

Following is a description of some of the revenue sources the City has established to fund infrastructure. Impact Fees, NCAs, JEDDs, and TIFs have been detailed previously on pages 92 and 93.

Enterprise Funds. These are funds where user fees are set to recover the cost of providing services and facilities such as water distribution and wastewater collection to the City's utility customer base. These revenues are used to cover operating and some capital items such as debt service. The City augments these revenues with impact fees, designed to recoup new growth's share of needed infrastructure.

Capital Improvement Funds. Other funding for improvements includes pay-as-you-go funding out of current revenues for lower cost improvements. Grants are used to bridge funding gaps and leverage additional funds. Bonds also provide a way to finance large scale projects with long life cycles. The City transfers bond sale proceeds to Debt Service Funds that account for principal and interest payments on major, debt-financed infrastructure projects such as roadway construction.

GENERAL FUND

The General Fund is the City's primary operating fund. It accounts for the majority of the financial activity of the City including all its departments, which are listed in the budget expense charts.

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BY SOURCE—3 YEAR COMPARISON

According to the City of Delaware's 2019 Popular Annual Financial Report, over 77% of the City's General Fund revenue is derived from income tax (70%) and property and other local taxes (7%). Eight percent (8%) of City revenue resulted from a variety of license, fees and permits, including building permits, engineering fees, liquor permits and franchise fees. Intergovernmental revenue was primarily from homestead and rollback reimbursements from the State of Ohio, and local government fund distributions.

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BY SOURCE—3 YEAR COMPARISON

Also according to the City of Delaware's 2019 Popular Annual Financial Report, the General Fund is the main operating fund of the City and pays a significant amount of the personnel costs of City employees, as well as the day-to-day operating expenditures. Public safety is the largest category of expenditures, which includes the City's Police Department. The City accounts for Fire/EMS expenditures in a separate special revenue fund, because there is a voted income tax to support these costs. The General Government is the other significant expenditure category. These expenses include: City Council, the City Manager's Office, Administrative Services, Finance, Planning and Community Development, and Municipal Building and Ground Maintenance.

GENERAL FUND REVENUES (IN THOUSANDS)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Income taxes	\$14,827	\$14,558	\$13,550	\$13,151	\$12,036	\$11,349	\$10,845	\$10,718	\$10,136	\$9,836
Property and other local	\$1,485	\$1,423	\$1,260	\$1,310	\$1,251	\$1,200	\$1,265	\$1,252	\$1,340	\$1,410
Charges for services	\$879	\$1,656	\$2,153	\$1,449	\$763	\$912	\$610	\$731	\$596	\$977
Licenses permits and fees	\$1,761	\$1,590	\$1,133	\$1,268	\$1,026	\$932	\$886	\$806	\$711	\$706
Fines and forfeitures	\$108	\$155	\$140	\$140	\$142	\$92	\$77	\$74	\$57	\$61
Intergovernmental	\$936	\$490	\$881	\$826	\$875	\$912	\$1,246	\$1,385	\$1,857	\$2,554
Special assessments	\$44	\$13	\$14	\$13	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Investment income	\$942	\$797	\$388	\$144	\$46	\$156	\$77	\$15	\$31	\$18
Reimbursements	\$116	\$135	\$79	\$90	\$160	\$50	\$180	\$39	\$73	\$259
Other	\$122	\$207	\$67	\$90	\$107	\$1,296	\$272	\$163	\$170	\$91
TOTAL	\$21,219	\$21,023	\$19,662	\$18,481	\$16,406	\$16,899	\$15,458	\$15,182	\$14,971	\$15,953

Source: City of Delaware

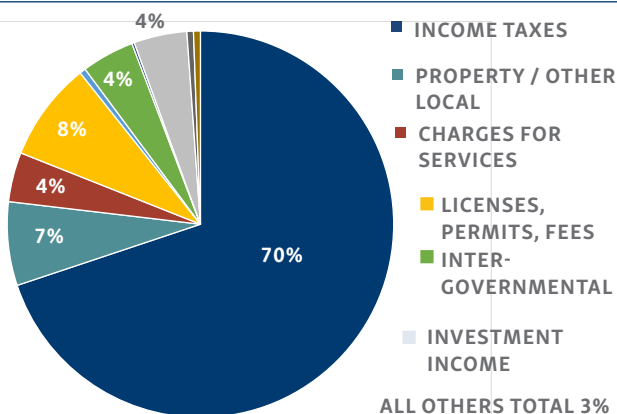
GENERAL FUND EXPENSES (IN THOUSANDS)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
General Government	\$6,714	\$6,157	\$6,403	\$5,528	\$5,053	\$4,545	\$4,727	\$4,214	\$3,893	\$3,838
Public Safety	\$9,262	\$9,132	\$8,047	\$7,571	\$7,248	\$7,082	\$6,783	\$6,827	\$6,827	\$7,893
TOTAL	\$15,345*	\$15,289	\$14,450	\$13,099	\$12,301	\$11,627	\$11,510	\$11,041	\$10,720	\$11,731

* Includes \$369 other

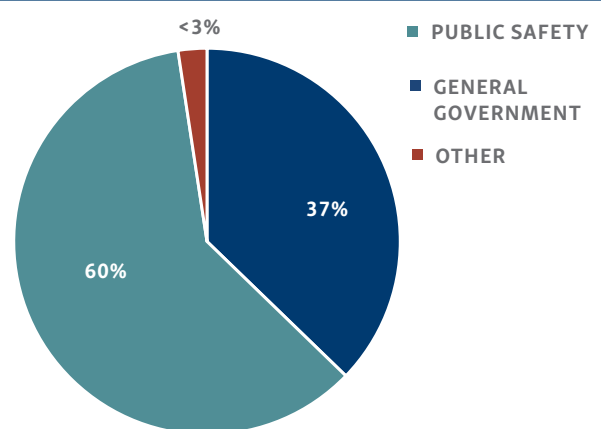
Source: City of Delaware

GENERAL FUND REVENUES 2019 (ROUNDED TO NEAREST 1%)



Source: City of Delaware Popular Annual Financial Report, 2019

GENERAL FUND EXPENSES 2019 (ROUNDED TO NEAREST 1%)



Source: City of Delaware Popular Annual Financial Report, 2019

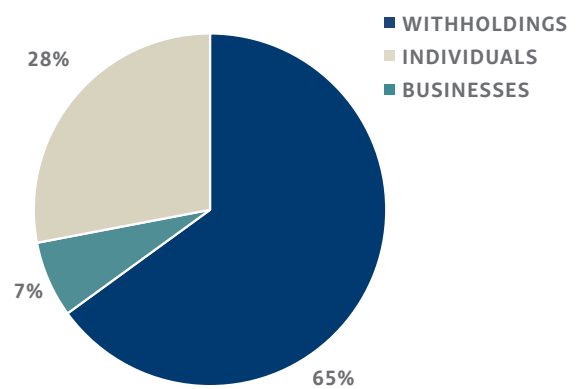
REVENUES

Like all Ohio cities, the City of Delaware’s main source of discretionary funding is its local income tax. The discretionary portion of the income tax is accounted for in the General Fund. It is used to pay the majority of administrative salaries, as well as for many capital projects in the City. Other portions are used to fund the City’s fire department operations and recreation improvements, which are accounted for in Special Revenue Funds.

INCOME TAX

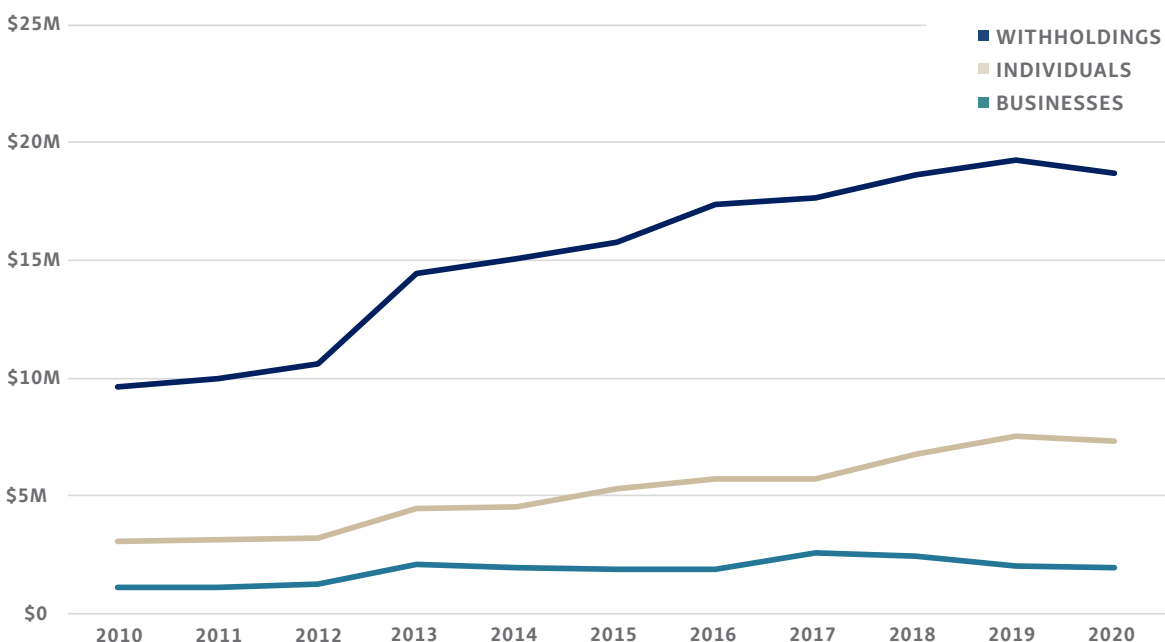
Income tax represents the largest source of revenue for the City. The City’s current income tax rate is 1.85%. Of this percentage, 1% is for general operations, 0.7% is for fire/EMS and .15% is for parks and recreation. Approximately 65% of income tax comes from withholdings, followed by individuals (28%) and businesses (7%).

INCOME TAX SELECTIONS BY SOURCE



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2018

INCOME TAX COLLECTIONS



Source: City of Delaware

SOURCE OF INCOME TAX REVENUE (IN THOUSANDS)

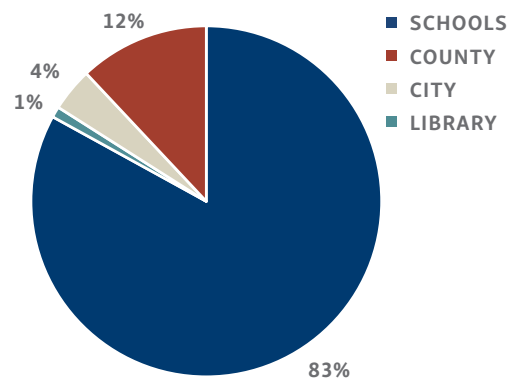
	WITHHOLDING	%	RESIDENTIAL	%	BUSINESS	%	TOTAL
2019	\$20,339	65.61%	\$8,505	27.44%	\$2,156	6.95%	\$31,000
2018	\$18,775	73.23%	\$4,995	19.48%	\$1,867	7.28%	\$25,637
2017	\$18,719	73.27%	\$4,805	18.81%	\$2,025	7.93%	\$25,549
2016	\$16,797	69.58%	\$5,538	22.94%	\$1,807	7.48%	\$24,142
2015	\$15,610	68.86%	\$5,219	23.02%	\$1,840	8.12%	\$22,669
2014	\$15,161	70.08%	\$4,534	20.96%	\$1,940	8.97%	\$21,635
2013	\$14,126	69.36%	\$4,250	20.87%	\$1,989	9.77%	\$20,365
2012	\$13,467	71.19%	\$3,933	20.79%	\$1,516	8.01%	\$18,916
2011	\$13,322	72.26%	\$3,775	20.48%	\$1,338	7.26%	\$18,435
2010	\$10,854	69.85%	\$3,425	22.02%	\$1,264	8.13%	\$15,553

Source: City of Delaware

PROPERTY TAX DISTRIBUTION

The City of Delaware also assesses a property tax. However, the vast majority of property taxes (96%) paid by City residents goes to the County, School District, and various County agencies and special districts. The City of Delaware only receives about 4% of property taxes collected. The City’s property tax is allocated to the General Fund, as well as a dedicated amount to police and fire pensions.

PROPERTY TAX DISTRIBUTION



Source: U.S. Census, American Communities Survey 2018

ANNUAL TAX IMPACT OF A \$200K HOME IN DELAWARE

Olentangy Local School District	\$3,596.37
Delaware County	\$447.37
Delaware Area Career Center	\$136.65
City of Delaware	\$64.31
Berlin Township	\$361.43
Delaware County District Library	\$47.80
Preservation Park District	\$47.39
TOTAL	\$4,701.32

Delaware City School District	\$3,457.24
Delaware County	\$484.96
Delaware Area Career Center	\$138.26
City of Delaware	\$165.38
Delaware County District Library	\$53.11
Preservation Parks District	\$52.76
TOTAL	\$4,351.71

Source: City of Delaware Popular Annual Financial Report, 2019

HOW \$100 OF PROPERTY TAX IS ALLOCATED

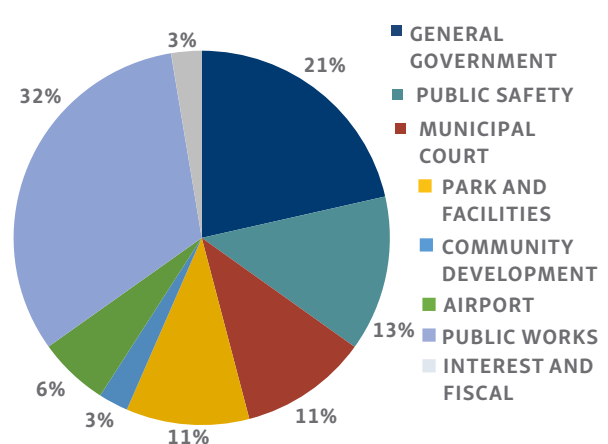


Source: City of Delaware Popular Annual Financial Report, 2019

OTHER SOURCES

The City also receives revenue from engineering fees, water capacity fees, sewer capacity fees, building permits, and growth management fees (park impact, police/fire, transportation municipal). While these fees currently keep the City budget balanced, they need to be continually assessed as expenses change over time due to growth and other factors.

TOTAL EXPENSES 2019 (ROUNDED TO NEAREST 1%)



Source: City of Delaware Popular Annual Financial Report, 2019

EXPENDITURES

The City provides a range of services to residents and workers including police and fire safety services, public works facilities development and maintenance, water treatment and distributions, storm water and sanitary sewer maintenance, solid waste collection, parks and recreation maintenance, and community development services. It should be noted that the City is not responsible for funding school costs.

Almost \$27 million in 2019 was budgeted for capital investments necessary to accommodate growth and to provide a consistent level of service to residential and nonresidential development. These expenditures are accounted for in the Capital Improvement Funds and reflect programming for investments in general government, public safety, streets, water, parks and recreation, and airport infrastructure and equipment. Funding for improvements includes pay-as-you-go funding out of current revenues for lower cost improvements. Grants will be used to bridge funding gaps and leverage additional funds. Bonds provide an inexpensive way to finance large-scale projects.



TOTAL EXPENSES BY DEPARTMENT/FUNCTION (LAST TEN YEARS IN THOUSANDS)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
General Government	\$8,017	\$8,484	\$6,708	\$5,525	\$5,143	\$4,861	\$5,381	\$4,746	\$4,825	\$4,710
Public Safety	\$5,024	\$23,576	\$18,710	\$19,992	\$15,552	\$14,273	\$15,142	\$12,794	\$11,745	\$1,262
Municipal Court	\$4,124	\$3,282	\$3,121	\$3,856	\$3,681	\$3,400	\$2,841	\$2,785	\$3,006	\$3,117
Park and Facilities	\$3,958	\$3,283	\$3,557	\$3,054	\$3,208	\$2,539	\$2,742	\$1,849	\$5,156	\$1,811
Community Development	\$965	\$676	\$1,168	\$1,364	\$744	\$1,907	\$1,383	\$674	\$706	\$291
Airport	\$2,268	\$2,148	\$1,620	\$1,268	\$1,116	\$1,453	\$1,774	\$1,322	\$1,187	\$1,134
Public Works	\$12,049	\$2,603	\$5,821	\$5,035	\$3,976	\$5,959	\$5,210	\$10,348	\$6,553	\$3,876
Other	\$5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Interest and Fiscal Charges	\$975	\$1,074	\$1,056	\$1,178	\$1,273	\$1,237	\$1,332	\$1,636	\$1,370	\$1,389
TOTAL	\$37,376	\$45,126	\$41,761	\$41,272	\$34,693	\$35,629	\$35,805	\$36,154	\$34,548	\$28,490

Source: City of Delaware

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

The City currently enjoys a strong fiscal position as a result of local and regional economic growth and the implementation of thoughtful fiscal and land use policies. The Comprehensive Plan has identified strategies that maximize the benefits of projected growth by balancing fiscal priorities with quality of life improvements. The planning process reveals a tolerance for densification through infill development as well as a desire to see the targeted redevelopment of areas that are considered blighted or otherwise underutilized.

INFILL

The Comprehensive Plan identifies a community desire to encourage infill development to slow outward growth, to create vibrancy in commercial districts, and to stabilize districts. Typically, infill development takes advantage of already existing public infrastructure like streets, water, and utilities with the capacity to absorb the growth in a vacant or underutilized property. By encouraging investments to be made within developed areas the property values of the surrounding neighborhood may benefit. Increased property values is a net gain for Delaware; however, because property tax is not a large revenue stream for the City, the purpose of infill is more to encourage vibrancy and create demand for additional commercial/office/service sector land uses that generate employment and thus income tax revenue.

Tools such as Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) and Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) can fund some public infrastructure in infill areas (although it is understood that parcel TIFs are currently in favor with the State). The City of Delaware has experience using both TIFs and CRAs to support the redevelopment of blighted or underutilized areas. Land acquisition and property aggregation are also tools that can be utilized to facilitate development and better equalize development and new construction costs.

REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment of areas that are not currently utilized for residential, industrial, or agricultural purposes provides the City with an opportunity to expand its tax base and accommodate growth through the provision of additional housing or services. The comprehensive planning process has identified over 591 acres for infill and redevelopment. Compared to infill, redevelopment can require more significant up front capital investment, depending on the extent to which the area was already served by public infrastructure. As with infill development, tools such as TIFs and CRAs can be used. Land acquisition and property aggregation are additional tools that can be utilized to help facilitate development and better equalize development costs to those of new construction areas.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Focus areas have been identified in the plan for significant new development, including the Southeast, Southwest and Far East Side. These areas have been identified to help encourage development in locations that support the goals and objectives of this plan in a way that is fiscally responsible. By delineating these areas as most suitable for new development, resources and attention can be focused on them. While each of the three areas is unique regarding the specific mix of uses that is most appropriate and desirable, similar financial tools could be appropriate for all three in order to promote fiscal sustainability, including TIFs and New Community Authorities (NCAs) to encourage and support beneficial projects.

FISCAL IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT TYPES

The Comprehensive Plan identifies development types that currently exist in the City of Delaware. These development types serve as the building blocks for the Character and Land Use Plan and recommendations. Traditional Town/Urban development types tend to reflect higher density, more pedestrian-friendly land uses than Suburban development types, which reflect low-density, auto-oriented land uses. The City is and will continue to be composed of both types.

Given the revenue structure and capital demands of land uses in the City, the best means to maintain fiscal sustainability is to diversify and intensify the land uses where appropriate with an emphasis on nonresidential uses where appropriate. Because the City relies heavily on income tax from workers who are employed within the municipality, it is fiscally beneficial to prioritize mixed-use and nonresidential land uses and to target high-income industries, in particular, from a fiscal impact perspective. However, the fiscal impacts need to be balanced with other equally important community goals, objectives, and policies that may not produce net fiscal benefits when viewed on their own or in the short term.

However, as shown in the table on the following page, no single land use provides strictly positive fiscal results. The City collects property tax and income tax from nonresidential establishments, but per the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

nonresidential development tends to generate more vehicle trips, stressing the street infrastructure, and typically has higher rates of public safety calls compared to residential uses.

Suburban residential development types (low density) typically generate higher property tax revenues with potentially higher income earning households and individuals from an income tax perspective, but often require extension and maintenance of streets, water, and utilities out to greater distances than Traditional Town / Urban (higher density clustered development). According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) sprawling development generates more vehicle trips per housing unit than a unit in a multi-unit structure. Additionally, on average single residential units in Delaware have more persons per household than units in multi-unit structures, which generates more vehicle trips, and demands for public safety, and parkland capital investments.

Industrial employment is assumed to pay higher wages and salaries than retail per nationwide averages and given regional trends for the industrial employment sector discussed in Chapter 3. Office employment tends to generate higher income than retail jobs. Of the nonresidential development prototypes, only Suburban Neighborhood Scale Activity Center includes office land uses, which contributes to its positive net fiscal benefit.

RELATIONSHIP OF FISCAL AND NON-FISCAL BENEFITS

It is important to acknowledge that fiscal impacts should not be the only consideration in determining which development types are appropriate. A range of other factors must be considered. This Comprehensive Plan sets forth numerous goals and objectives that should be taken into consideration. While it is essential that fiscal impacts are well-understood and are a part of the decision-making process, ultimately this plan advocates for a variety of uses depending on the context in order to influence quality of life. On the following two pages are examples of other factors that may be taken into consideration relative to development types.

Role of Annexation

The annexation of developable land has also been identified as a potentially fiscally beneficial growth management strategy, although the cost of expanding infrastructure and services must be carefully considered. Moreover, the Comprehensive Plan recommends annexation within existing utility boundaries and within Focus Areas within the next ten years but does not recommend indiscriminate or unfocused annexations in order to prioritize Focus Areas and City resources during the planning period. Both growing from within and by annexation will be important tools used within the policy framework outlined in this plan moving forward for the City. The fiscal sustainability of annexation will depend on the development plan for the annexation area.

HIERARCHY OF HIGHER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT PROTOTYPES AND FISCAL BENEFITS

TRADITIONAL TOWN / URBAN DEVELOPMENT TYPE	TAX REVENUE				FISCAL BENEFIT
	PROPERTY	INCOME	DEMAND FOR SERVICES	DEMAND FOR INFRASTRUCTURES	
Residential (per Unit)					
Small Block Neighborhood - Traditional	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Neutral
Small Block Neighborhood - Neotraditional	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Neutral
Large Block Neighborhood - Traditional	Medium	Low	High	High	Negative
Nonresidential/Mixed Use					
Traditional Activity District	High	High	Medium	Medium	Neutral/Positive

HIERARCHY OF LOWER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT PROTOTYPES AND FISCAL BENEFITS

SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT TYPE	TAX REVENUE				FISCAL BENEFIT
	PROPERTY	INCOME	DEMAND FOR SERVICES	DEMAND FOR INFRASTRUCTURES	
Residential (per Unit)					
Single Family - Early Suburban Neighborhood	High	Low	High	High	Negative
Single Family - Late Suburban Neighborhood	High	Low	High	High	Negative
Multifamily Complex	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Negative
Mixed Residential	Medium	Low	Low/Medium	Low/Medium	Negative/Neutral
Nonresidential/Mixed Use					
Neighborhood Scale Activity Center	Low	L/M	Low	Medium	Positive
Community Scale Activity Center	Medium	L/M	Medium	High	Neutral/Positive
Regional Scale Activity Center	Medium	Medium	High	High	Neutral
Commercial Corridor	Medium	Low	High	High	Negative
Industrial					
Industrial Campus	Low	High	Low	Low	Positive
Industrial Corridor	Low	High	Low	Low	Positive

HIERARCHY OF HIGHER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT PROTOTYPES AND NON-FISCAL BENEFITS

TRADITIONAL TOWN / URBAN DEVELOPMENT TYPE	WALKABILITY	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SOCIAL INTERACTION	CAR DEPENDENCY
Small Block Neighborhood - Traditional	High	Low	High	Low
Small Block Neighborhood - Neotraditional	High	Low	High	Low
Large Block Neighborhood - Traditional	Medium	Low	Medium	Low
Nonresidential/Mixed Use				
Traditional Activity District			Medium	Medium

HIERARCHY OF LOWER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT PROTOTYPES AND NON-FISCAL BENEFITS

SUBURBAN				
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	WALKABILITY	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SOCIAL INTERACTION	CAR DEPENDENCY
Residential (per Unit)				
Single Family - Early Suburban Neighborhood	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Single Family - Late Suburban Neighborhood	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Multifamily Complex	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Mixed Residential	High	Medium	High	Medium
Nonresidential/Mixed Use				
Neighborhood Scale Activity Center	High	Medium	High	Medium
Community Scale Activity Center	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Regional Scale Activity Center	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Commercial Corridor	Low	High	Low	High
Industrial				
Industrial Campus	Low	High	Low	High
Industrial Corridor	Low	High	Low	High

LOOKING AHEAD

Maintaining the fiscal stability of the City is critical for the fulfillment of the objectives set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. Balancing fiscal sustainability objectives with overall and longer-term growth and development objectives is vitally important for the future of the community. Managing the City's budget in conjunction with the continuation of population growth is important due to the impact that growth has monetarily on service levels and infrastructure investments. As such, the City should look to expand partnership opportunities with both commercial and residential developers to leverage economic development tools including tax abatements, tax increment financing and community authorities to aid in the financing of infrastructure costs as linked to growth.

In addition, it is important to implement the broader goals and objectives of this plan, including the transportation elements. Longer term or broader policy and community priorities may not generate net fiscal benefits (at least not immediately) but they may be equally worthy of consideration and approval. Taking a longer term and larger view of fiscal sustainability will allow for the most flexible and responsive means to account for changes that are either out of the control of local jurisdictions or are impossible to account for at this time. A more comprehensive assessment of benefits and costs must be made in order to implement the various land use and policy objectives contained within this plan and is recommended in Chapter 7. To this end, the City has contracted with Regionomics LLC to estimate the fiscal impacts of selected specific development types and the overall fiscal sustainability of the City of Delaware in the Comprehensive Plan. The development type analysis will provide the basis for the Return on Investment (ROI) analysis contemplated in Action A.3.1 of the plan.

Chapter 7

Goals, objectives and actions



GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

This chapter includes the plan's goals, objectives and actions. The six goals present the highest-level desired outcomes for the future of the City and provide overarching structure for the objectives and actions.

GOALS

- A Manage growth and change.** Direct, design and encourage new development to promote compatible land uses, create strong quality of place including a mix of uses where appropriate, support fiscal health and promote sustainability.
- B Advance economic prosperity.** Provide economic opportunity for all residents and support diverse, successful and resilient business and industry.
- C Build social cohesion and equity.** Foster Delaware's sense of community across geographies, income categories and demographic groups and provide stable foundations for a high quality of life.
- D Promote housing quality and variety.** Ensure a broad spectrum of housing options to meet the current and future needs of the population.
- E Leverage resources, infrastructure and amenities.** Preserve and enhance key historic buildings and neighborhoods, natural areas and open spaces, transportation and mobility options, and quality facilities and services.
- F Support fiscal sustainability.** Promote development, land use, infrastructure and other policies that will support a healthy fiscal position.

STRUCTURE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan includes six goals, which reflect themes from technical analysis and community input. Each goal is supported by several objectives that organize the plan's actions.

GOALS

Intended results expressed in simple terms for the plan's topic areas. These represent overarching desired outcomes for the plan.

OBJECTIVES

Sub-themes within the goals that serve to organize actions.

ACTIONS

Projects, policies or programs that can be implemented.

GOAL A: MANAGE GROWTH AND CHANGE

Direct, design and encourage new development to promote compatible land uses, create strong quality of place including a mix of uses where appropriate, support fiscal health and promote sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

- A.1 Encourage a greater mix of land uses in selected locations.
- A.2 Encourage quality, higher density development in selected locations.
- A.3 Promote fiscally sustainable development practices.
- A.4 Manage outward growth beyond the existing corporate boundary.
- A.5 Ensure transportation infrastructure investments that are sufficient to support new and existing development.
- A.6 Coordinate with countywide and regional planning efforts.
- A.7 Enhance design quality of residential subdivisions.
- A.8 Improve design quality and align the design of major corridors.
- A.9 Maximize compatibility between existing and new development, while allowing for appropriate changes.
- A.10 Limit commercial sprawl to maintain land values.
- A.11 Encourage development of vacant and underutilized parcels.
- A.12 Encourage standards for new development that promote sustainability.
- A.13 Encourage remediation and redevelopment of designated or perceived brownfield sites.
- A.14 Enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections in association with growth and development.
- A.15 Encourage infill and redevelopment in the Riverfront, Near East Side and South Sandusky Street Focus Areas.
- A.16 Focus new development to the Southeast, Southwest and portions of the Far East Focus Areas.
- A.17 Direct public realm improvements in "high impact" locations.
- A.18 Guide and allow contextually sensitive change in Downtown including intensification of uses where appropriate.
- A.19 Foster synergies and enhance connection between the Ohio Wesleyan University campus, Downtown and the South Sandusky Street Focus Area.
- A.20 Update the Zoning Code and development policies to conform to the Comprehensive Plan.
- A.21 Align the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with the Comprehensive Plan.

OBJECTIVE A.1

Encourage a greater mix of land uses in selected locations.

Mixed-use development—which can blend residential, commercial, cultural, institutional and/or entertainment uses into one area—can create vibrant environments with a high degree of social interaction. In selected locations in Delaware, mixed-use districts can also help to promote more walkable, less infrastructure-burdened, more environmentally sustainable (less car-dependent) and economically stable (more diversified) development. In order to be mixed-use, not all uses must be present but a diverse enough array of uses must be included in an area to fulfill the goals of this plan. Additionally, uses need not mix solely on a single parcel of land if size, scale and design do not support it. The City has several different examples of mixing uses, constructed at differing points, from which to draw inspiration. Utilizing these examples, as well as examples elsewhere in the field, will inform best practices about mixing uses moving forward. Examples can be found Downtown, along Houk Road South at Glennwood Commons and at Coughlin's Crossing.

Actions

A.1.1

Adopt mixed-use zoning districts.

Updates to the Zoning Code (see Objective 20) should encourage Planned Mixed Use Districts (PMUs) or equivalent that are consistent with the specific locations and generally desirable types of areas as described in Chapter 5, Character and Land Use. If Focus Area Plans are adopted as recommended in this Comprehensive Plan, overlay districts allowing by-right mixing of uses where appropriate should be considered.

A.1.2

Provide regulatory incentives. Regulatory incentives such as density bonuses, transfer of development rights (TDR) or an expedited review process could be used to promote and direct mixed-use development in selected locations. Incentives should be consistent with housing incentive policies and the City's Economic Development Incentive Policy as described in Objective B.7.



Many residents have expressed a favorable opinion about the mix of uses in Downtown Delaware. A similar mix could be promoted in selected other locations.

A.1.3 Allow mixed housing types within new neighborhoods. In locations where this Plan (and any subsequent Strategic Plans) indicate mixed use is appropriate and desired, the zoning for such areas should allow for the desired mixed use. If the City's Zoning Code is updated, it should clearly define the criteria for mixed used and consider allowing it by-right.

A.1.4 Work with experienced developers. While not appropriate or desirable for all new residential subdivisions, recent development projects in the region demonstrate a demand for housing that is developed within a walkable, connected, mixed use setting. The City should seek to attract and work with developers that have experience and interest in developing such communities and who are willing to work collaboratively with the City in identified locations where mixed-use development is desired.



OBJECTIVE A.2

Encourage quality, higher density development in selected locations.

As a complement to encouraging mixed use development in selected locations, allowing for higher density in desired locations can help to support more sustainable and desirable growth (for example, the addition of in-demand housing units) while minimizing strain on expanding infrastructure and protecting open and agricultural space. It can help to provide a range of housing including attached housing for residents who work in the local community, enhancing the City's economic development goals. However, in order for higher density development to integrate into the existing environment, it will be critical that it is located so as to not adversely impact existing single-family only neighborhoods. It also must meet high standards for design quality of the units and the site, including landscaping, layout, roads, pedestrian paths, trees and other features.

Actions

A.2.1 Identify appropriate locations for quality, higher-density development.

In accordance with the recommendations in this plan, locations in Downtown and certain areas in the vicinity may be appropriate for some additional density. In addition, mixed-use Activity Centers (nodes within or adjacent to existing development) can be appropriate for higher density if edge development conditions provide a buffer with single-use residential areas and design is of a high quality. In addition to the mixed-use Activity Centers identified in this plan, as Area Plans are developed for the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas, specific locations for higher density should be identified, generally around transportation corridors. This should include decreasing density in reasonable ranges moving outward from these corridors, culminating in single family detached development.



The conservation of existing open space, especially to the North of the City, will be aided by clear annexation policies that prioritize certain areas for development while encouraging the preservation of the existing rural condition in others.

A.2.2

Create design guidelines. Create guidelines to be applied to any locations where higher density is allowed that demonstrate how it can be integrated without adversely impacting existing lower-density areas. The guidelines may consider the building envelope (including height and massing), streetscape elements, circulation, building services, parking, open space, buffering, connectivity and other elements.

A.2.3

Create policies regarding density bonuses for developers. As articulated in this plan, providing attainable housing, encouraging mixed-use nodes of activity and integrating parks and amenities into development are priorities. These types of benefits could potentially be offered in exchange for allowing greater density in selected, appropriate locations, effectively clustering activity in proximity to major transportation corridors.

DENSITY BONUS

A density bonus is an incentive-based tool that permits a developer to increase the maximum allowable development on a site (or a portion of a site) in exchange for in-kind support for specified public policy goals or lowering density on another portion of the site or preserving open space.



Coughlin's Crossing, which is being built in phases on roughly 80 acres on the City's southeast side, is a mixed use development that includes housing, offices and retail space. The project also involves infrastructure improvements, open space and a bicycle path. It provides appropriate transition from single-family, traditional development on two sides to the major transportation, auto-oriented corridor of US 23. Smaller housing units in a more compact, walkable setting promise to attract young professionals and others looking to live in a high-quality community with the convenience of nearby amenities. (Image above shows plans as of 2019.)

OBJECTIVE A.3

Promote fiscally sustainable development practices.

As the City continues to grow, it will be important to understand its impacts and what sources of potential revenue can be used to offset them. (Guidance on this topic can also be found in Goal F.) Without appropriate and well-planned growth, fiscal sustainability is nearly impossible. On the other hand, if taken to the extreme and return on investment is the only consideration the City would serve no residents and only allow income tax producing uses. This extreme would ignore goals in this plan to create a diverse, populated, mixed-use connected community of people. Therefore, balancing fiscal objectives and other considerations is essential.

Actions

A.3.1

Conduct a “return on investment” analysis for major development proposals. Not all development projects bring net fiscal benefits to the City over the long term. For large-scale development proposals that require changes to zoning, public infrastructure investment or other financial incentives from the City, an assessment of the net fiscal impact should be conducted to evaluate the proposal. A fiscal return on investment (ROI) analysis would determine the net fiscal benefits to the City relative to costs for providing public improvements to support a development. This could be one factor in determining the viability and acceptability of a proposal. In order to support this Action an estimate of the fiscal impact of different development types should be completed as described in Action F.2.3. The City has used a similar ROI analysis for Economic Development related projects in the past.

FISCAL IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Beyond land use, different development patterns have different fiscal impacts. Low density, dispersed development can lead to higher costs of infrastructure and community services. (The converse is also true.) Growth focused on existing urban areas can often utilize existing infrastructure and generate fiscal efficiencies, though has its own costs of service as well. See Chapter 6, Fiscal Sustainability, for more.

A.3.2

Allow TIF districts in selected locations.

The City currently has 10 TIF Districts in place. While state-wide legislation enacted since the last comprehensive plan has made some changes to how TIF districts work, reducing some of their benefits to municipalities, in certain cases TIFs may still be desirable in selected locations. They can be an important tool in helping municipalities to afford needed infrastructure related to every development type.

A.3.3

Study increase in fees for services. The City collects engineering fees and building and zoning fees for development, among others. Increasing fees could help generate revenue to off-set operational costs. However, fees should be reasonably related to the costs of providing the service. In some cases technology or other tools and changes may necessitate a decrease in fees. Each fee should be studied and set specifically as a result.

A.3.4

Consider increasing development impact fees. Development impact fees are one-time payments from developers to cover a calculated cost of the new development. They provide a source of revenue that can assist with maintaining fiscal health as communities grow. In 2001, the City of Delaware began collecting impact fees. In 2018, the City commissioned an update to the original study. The update is currently in draft form. Increasing fees could help generate revenue to support new development as it takes place. Fees need to be carefully and specifically set to ensure their defensibility and their connection to the community's need for the capital items to which they relate.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

This tool provides a means of capturing the net increase in property taxes generated by new non-residential development and allocates those funds to pay for related infrastructure (roads and utilities). This mechanism benefits the buildout of major roads, infrastructure, etc. associated with large developments. The City establishes Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to help fund infrastructure related to specific projects. This is typically through allowing a developer to re-coup a portion of costs associated with installation of major infrastructure with broader community benefits. The net increase in property taxes for a defined time period is captured and allocated to a portion the related improvements.

IMPACT FEES

The City collects impact fees for police, fire, parks and municipal facilities. The fees could be expanded to include roads as well as other capital needs. Fees cannot be used for operational needs. As a result, the City can collect impact fees to build and equip a new fire station, for example, but must provide general fund dollars to staff such new facilities.

OBJECTIVE A.4

Manage outward growth beyond the existing corporate boundary, but within the utility boundary.

Unchecked, unplanned and unconstrained annexation and outward expansion of development beyond current City limits can strain municipal finances (due to the cost to service areas), the environment (due to the impacts on natural resources, and other factors) and quality of life (due to the potential for greater social isolation from disconnected communities and less choice for amenities and recreation within close proximity). Growth should be directed when possible to the Focus Areas identified in this plan. Other potential development in unincorporated areas should be carefully considered. There are several large areas of potential, focused annexations which are within the long standing utility boundaries of the City and within the Focus Areas. The City has made large investments in its utility infrastructure to be able, in part, to service these areas in anticipation of annexation when appropriate.

Actions

A.4.1 Create guidelines for supporting annexations. An annexation policy would identify priority areas for potential future annexation and outline terms for properties annexing into the City. Those terms should include rezoning of a property in accordance with this plan as well as any subsequent area plans that are created. This means that the unincorporated portion of the Southeast Focus Area and the unincorporated portion of the Southwest Focus Area would be the priority for potential new annexations over the planning period of this plan. Annexation policies should also be considered in light of school district synergies.



A.4.2 **Develop criteria to be used for development outside of Focus Areas.** Development located outside of Focus Areas should be based upon the following criteria for the proposal (See Chapter 5 for Focus Area Maps):

- ▶ It meets the goals, principles and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan;
- ▶ It is consistent with the Zoning Code and development policies of the City;
- ▶ It does not conflict or compete with current development and infrastructure needs of the City; and
- ▶ It fulfills fiscal sustainability goals and/or a strategic need for the City.

OBJECTIVE A.5

Ensure transportation infrastructure investments that are sufficient to support new and existing development.

In close association with any new development, transportation infrastructure is needed in order to provide adequate access and connections within and between newly developed areas. The City should also recognize changes to commuting patterns, including increases in telecommuting, in concert with these investment decisions. It is important to consider uncertainties regarding long-term work-from-home trends following from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Actions

A.5.1 **Pursue recommendations of the City’s Thoroughfare and Transportation Improvement plans.** The City is currently undertaking new Thoroughfare and Transportation Improvement plans (to be adopted concurrently with this plan) that include new roadway and infrastructure improvements for anticipated long term growth. Delaware City Council has also adopted a complete street strategy and policies that accommodate demand for new travel alternatives, including bicycles / bicycle sharing, car / ride sharing, electric vehicles, and others. Innovative engineering solutions to roadways and the application of smart technology are also prioritized.

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete streets meet the needs of people in all forms of transportation: walking, cycling, driving, and taking transit. Complete streets aim to create safer interactions for all users, despite age or abilities. In some situations where road traffic is dominated by fast traveling vehicles, traffic calming measures can help to make an area more pedestrian friendly. Examples may include, curb bulbs, landscaped medians, on-street parking or narrowed travel lanes. Complete streets may look different in a rural context versus an urban one, assuming the design follows the same core principle.

A.5.2

Assess potential for an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). The City uses a number of tools to mitigate infrastructure impacts in particular areas. This includes requirements for the provision of water and sanitary sewer service, certain road improvements, sidewalks, bike paths and park facilities concurrent with development. By formally adopting an APFO, the City would establish clear Level of Service (LOS) standards for all municipal facilities and services and require the provision of these facilities and services at certain LOS standards concurrent with development.

ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE (APFO)

An APFO is a tool that a city can use to manage growth by establishing a process for analyzing a proposed development's impacts on public infrastructure, including water and sewer line capacity, roads and schools.

A.5.3

Support recommendations in Goal E, Leverage resources, infrastructure and amenities. Transportation infrastructure is further addressed in Goal E and Actions under that goal will serve to reinforce those put forth in this objective.



OBJECTIVE A.6

Coordinate with countywide and regional planning efforts.

The City of Delaware will benefit from coordinating closely with others in the region in order to address where and how the City should grow relative to the broader context. Specifically, on issues such as housing and economic development, a regional approach promises to create opportunities for advancing shared interests.

Actions

A.6.1 Become full member of Delaware County Regional Planning Commission (DCRPC). The City should become a full dues-paying member of the DCRPC when funds become available. The DCRPC provides a forum for addressing countywide growth issues. It is also the formal mechanism for providing a recommendation on township zoning matters and county subdivision matters. As a full member, the City can bring comments regarding zoning and subdivision matters within its planning area and can share issues for discussion with the DCRPC board. This is particularly important as growth is now headed into the City utility boundary edges from the south.

A.6.2 Coordinate with Route 23 Corridor Strategic Guide. The Route 23 Corridor Strategic Guide addresses US Route 23 corridor from the southern county line of Delaware County to the City of Delaware. The City should work with other local jurisdictions to advocate for and become part of a regional task force to help guide the work, particularly for areas inside the City or the City's utility boundary, while working toward shared goals for the gateway corridor as a whole.



The planning area for the US Route 23 Corridor Strategic Guide includes an area with multiple jurisdictions that is poised for continued residential growth as well as opportunity for non-residential development. A consensus-driven approach to building a shared vision for the corridor will be critical to its success. (Source: Presentation of Route 23 Corridor Strategic Guide by MKSK)

A.6.3 Prepare joint land use plans with DCRPC in priority locations. The City should work collaboratively with DCRPC to plan for priority locations, potentially including but not limited to the US Route 36 / State Road 37 Corridor.

A.6.4 Continue to participate in the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) as a member. MORPC is central Ohio’s regional council of governments and includes more than 70 members comprised of counties, cities, villages, townships and regional organizations. MORPC leads in developing plans and studies in coordination with its members on a range of topics, including transportation, housing and sustainability. The City of Delaware should continue its membership in MORPC in order to maintain opportunities for regional collaboration on issues of shared interest and advocacy.

A.6.5 Participate in key regional studies and plans. In addition to general coordination with members, MORPC regularly invites members and other regional stakeholders to participate in regional studies and plans. The City of Delaware was a contributing stakeholder in a Regional Housing Strategy, which addressed a range of considerations, including regional supply, affordability and market gaps and opportunities. The City should continue to participate in this and similar efforts and implement recommendations where appropriate.

REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

MORPC, the City of Columbus, and other regional partners, including Delaware, completed a housing strategy for Central Ohio in Summer 2020. It includes the following:

- ▶ Reviews existing studies regarding current housing supply and lack thereof, and supplements those studies with additional data to provide a comprehensive view of today’s housing market.
- ▶ Recommends investment priorities for the region’s public and not-for-profit housing dollars to achieve the greatest impact on affordability in our market.
- ▶ Identifies gaps where new funding streams can be developed based on strategies from other markets around the country.
- ▶ Identifies impediments to the development of sufficient housing to meet demand in the market and suggests regulatory strategies.
- ▶ Sets forth metrics for individual communities and the region as a whole to judge the performance of the regional housing market in meeting the needs of residents.

OBJECTIVE A.7

Enhance design quality of residential subdivisions.

Delaware’s residential subdivisions vary significantly with respect to design quality. As new subdivisions are built it will be important to draw from examples from the past (positive and negative) and support a high quality of design while being mindful of overall affordability.

Actions

A.7.1 Update design guidelines for residential subdivisions. The City should update design guidelines for residential subdivisions, which inform review and construction permitting decisions. The guidelines should help to create residential neighborhoods that are cohesive, attractive and have a human scale that encourages opportunities to socialize with neighbors. They should also help to create variety between subdivisions, to make them distinguishable from each other and improve both marketability and sense of place. Cues should be taken from the recently adopted Planned Mixed Use Overlay Zoning Districts (PMUs) to begin updating design guidelines.

A.7.2 Review and assess conservation subdivision overlay district. The Planning Department has prepared requirements for a zoning overlay district that explicitly permits conservation subdivisions (also known as open space subdivisions), but more importantly, guarantees a gross density comparable to a “straight” residential district, while providing for smaller lots that are clustered. Open space set asides normally equal about 50% of a site. They should be reviewed to determine if changes should be made to enhance them or improve their effectiveness. The goal should be to promote sensitive development on sites with significant natural resources primarily in the northern portion of the Far East Focus Area. (See Chapter 5 for Focus Area Maps.)

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS

Conservation or open space subdivisions are a type of clustered development in which large portions of a site are set aside in perpetuity as open space. This open space can be natural such as a wood lot, wooded ravine or meadow, or used for agricultural purposes, such as a fruit tree orchard. Home sites are clustered and smaller than allowed by code to provide for a greater set aside of open space. The gross density of the site is comparable as if the site were divided into traditional lots. Studies find that homes in such developments are higher valued, often with price tags comparable to golf course communities, which tend to be higher-priced housing units.



A.7.3 Create an entranceway matching grant program. The City should support pre-existing Homeowner Associations' efforts to enhance their neighborhoods through matching grants for high-quality, sustainable neighborhood entranceway beautification and maintenance projects.

OBJECTIVE A.8

Improve design quality and align the design of major corridors.

More robust standards for building design, landscaping, signs and lighting should be developed for corridors citywide, with specific standards along key corridors.

Actions

A.8.1 Update corridor design guidelines. The City's Gateway and Corridor Plan should be updated and applied to specific corridors to address access, parking, lighting, landscaping, signage and a range of other characteristics and features that can greatly impact both the functionality and the overall design quality of corridors. Potential corridors that could benefit from specific design standards include U.S. Route 23 South and North, US Route 36/State Route 37 east, and South Sandusky Street. These design standards should be in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan and any Focus Area plans.



There is a striking contrast between the design of legacy (top) and more recent (bottom) commercial development along corridors. More recently, higher standards for amenities and landscaping have been required.

OBJECTIVE A.9

Maximize compatibility between existing and new development, while allowing for appropriate changes.

As new development takes place, it will be vitally important to the City's character that edge conditions between areas create buffers between incompatible uses to ensure compatibility. It is equally important to create a connected and seamless community when uses are generally compatible and where a certain mixing of uses is desired. This will require enhanced use of design parameters instead of buffering.

Actions

A.9.1 **Require transition areas at edges of development.** As the plan is implemented, it will be important that Development Types allowed for at the edges of new development areas, including but not limited to the Southeast and Focus Areas, are compatible in use, character and scale with existing neighborhoods. In historic neighborhood patterns, these transitions can often be created in subtle ways using transitional uses designed expertly to provide connections between core development type areas. Future zoning code changes in these areas should specifically require that only Development Types that are appropriate to the surrounding context are located at edges, which could include the use of missing middle development housing to provide for appropriate density transitions. (See Chapter 3 for more information on missing middle housing). In addition, landscape buffers including parks, trails and natural areas should be encouraged in transition areas and transitional uses should be utilized.



OBJECTIVE A.10

Limit commercial sprawl to maintain land values.

Disconnected linear development along major corridors will create a sprawl-type pattern that will negatively impact traffic flow, devalue private investments in the long term, and create management issues for the City (such as service issues). Compact, clustered, connected and better-integrated development could accommodate a wider range of uses, create meaningful open spaces and coordinate services.

Actions

A.10.1 Require coordinated development on larger parcels. Through the use of design guidelines for corridors, as described in Action A.8.1, the City should require coordinated development with consistent architecture, materials, signage, and landscaping, consolidating access and utilities. (This may not be possible for all lots and developments where there are pre-existing small lots.) The use of Planned Mixed-Use Development Districts (PMUs) may also be appropriate at selected locations. Finally, corridor plans should be pursued for key corridors that align with the elements of this Comprehensive Plan.



The Riverfront District provides a prime example of an area where infill and redevelopment can be encouraged.

A.10.2 Assess impact of post-COVID-19 impact upon commercial development. Beginning prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and accelerating as a result of it, changes to working preferences and business operations have impacted demands for office and retail space. The City should assess whether trends are expected to be long term. If demand for office and retail is expected to decrease, the City should identify opportunities for infill development. In pre-existing legacy commercial centers ("gray fields") the introduction of other land uses (e.g. residential) may be appropriate. In areas contemplating new commercial and office development ("green fields"), a mix of compatible uses may promote long term health and vitality of these areas.

OBJECTIVE A.11

Encourage development of vacant and underutilized parcels.

There are many vacant and underutilized parcels throughout the City. Some of these areas are smaller parcels that would be appropriate for infill. Others are much larger and could accommodate significant new development or redevelopment. These areas should be targeted for their economic development opportunity and potential to revitalize neighborhoods while ensuring that they add to the fabric of a neighborhood as opposed to replacing or destroying it.

Actions

A.11.1 Implement Action A.17.2, Target property tax incentives. Use of incentives can assist not only in improving the physical environment in key locations, including the Riverfront and South Sandusky Street Focus Areas identified in this plan, but also in providing economic development opportunity.

A.11.2 Establish a City CIC and Partner with the County Land Bank. One of the City's major competitive factors is the price of industrial/business land. It is crucial for the City's long-term viability. The City should consider actively holding property through the creation of an industrial/business land bank. This could serve as the motivation to develop a City-owned or developed business park, which is a common economic development strategy for local government. A Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) can serve as a land bank. The City would use a host of financing tools to fund the acquisition and development of the park and not only general fund dollars. Partnerships with private developers, land owners and financing agencies are a critical component to success. This could also be accomplished through a partnership model tying incentives to outcomes.



Vacant property on the Near East side and other developed areas in the City presents an opportunity for new development that can re-knit the urban fabric while minimizing the need for new infrastructure.

A.11.3 Create a commercial vacancy inventory. An inventory should be created regarding vacant commercial property including operational status (vacant, partially vacant, occupied), property ownership, for sale vs. for lease, existing zoning, market value, and property condition. The data should be organized and associated with GIS mapping to identify ‘hot spots’ of commercial vacancy and worsening areas based on current conditions. This information can be used as a tool for working with property owners and potentially providing incentives. This is especially important to conduct in light of a potential increase in vacancies or use transition due to the COVID-19 global health crisis and what it, or future crises, might do to traditional commercial development.

A.11.4 Assess incentive options for vacant storefront utilization. The City will work with retail center owners/managers to address ongoing tenant space vacancies. In addition to vigilant code enforcement to ensure such properties continue to be well maintained, specific incentive programs will be identified and implemented.

A.11.5 Establish a pop-up retail program. A pop-up retail program should be developed that includes small grants, assistance with occupancy permitting and/or resources to match entrepreneurs with available space. In light of potential vacancies due to the COVID-19 global health crisis such a program may be especially attractive. This program could potentially be coordinated with the Entrepreneurial Center. The City could also consider a fee for vacant storefronts to discourage landlords from intentionally leaving a storefront vacant for tax purposes.

POP-UP RETAIL PROGRAM

Temporary uses can activate underutilized retail areas and their surroundings and build excitement about the future. They can also provide an opportunity for local entrepreneurs to incubate business ideas and gain experience while limiting risk and to test unique concepts that have the potential to turn into long-term, successful businesses. (Photo by Gilda from London, UK - Marmite pop-up shop. Uploaded by Edward, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11833977>)



OBJECTIVE A.12

Encourage standards for new development that promote sustainability.

The City values energy efficiency and sustainable development practices. Since the last comprehensive plan, there has been a growing interest in integrating sustainable development practices into new development. Such practices can include incorporating green infrastructure / stormwater management, preserving existing open space and natural resources, integrating green energy and creating building patterns that allow for a range of modes of transportation and access. While some private developers have willingly and enthusiastically embraced such practices, more work can be done to further enhance sustainable development efforts.

Actions

A.12.1 Maintain current required environmental analysis. Developers for major developments are required to submit information regarding the environmental impacts of any proposed new development. Standards have been adopted to discourage development of significant slopes and mitigate development on poorly drained soils. Development is also generally prohibited in the regulatory floodplain. Development has also worked to address environmental goals such as preserving trees, enhancing green space, buffering waterways, and allowing more compact development, thereby limiting sprawl. These requirements should be continued.



The Delaware City Wetland Park was built as part of large mixed use development project including in-line retail and services, 'big box' retail, and an apartment complex, and is a significant natural asset and public amenity.

A.12.2 Develop a program to promote energy efficient buildings. Energy efficient buildings can lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduce water consumption and provide financial savings to owners. The City, in coordination with local organizations, could develop a program to explore incentives, education or other methods of encouraging greater energy efficiency in both new construction and existing buildings (via renovation/retrofits). Care should taken to consider costs associated with efficiency upgrades.

A.12.3 **Revise requirements for landscaping and species listings.** Currently, the City requires that new development proposals include measures for conservation and mitigation of species habitats as well as a list of plant species to be used in landscaping. More specific requirements are needed to ensure that native species are protected and that introduction of new landscaping is generally compatible with native species (free from invasive species). The tree preservation code should be updated to better balance preservation and new planting and to reasonably exclude requirements where public infrastructure is required. The current regulations should be reviewed, revised, and adopted in accordance with this.



The City has used permeable pavers in parks, in ways that can be a model for private developers.

A.12.4 **Develop new standards for roads in subdivisions.** Sustainable neighborhood road design can help residential communities to minimize stormwater runoff, improve conditions for multimodal transit and protect natural resources. This may involve considering narrower roadways in certain developments. The standards for new subdivisions may differ from other contexts (rural areas, more urbanized areas and/or areas that require higher traffic volumes and speeds). Dimensional standards, configuration (including specific cul-de-sac standards), construction guidelines (e.g. to minimize erosion) and use of LID strategies such as riparian buffers should all be considered. This could have the benefits of reducing long-term maintenance to the City as well.

A.12.5 **Require developers to show greenspace connectivity.** Greenspace connectivity and identified greenway corridors should be required to be provided, similar to road connectivity, for new subdivisions and developments. The City should maintain flexibility with respect to what is deemed to be acceptable based on the specifics of each proposal.

A.12.6 **Audit Zoning Code to identify opportunities for Low Impact Development (LID).** LID approaches to managing stormwater runoff integrate a site's natural features and emphasize conservation as ways to minimize adverse impacts on water quality. By mimicking natural processes, LID can complement hard infrastructure to reduce the overall volume and speed of water runoff as and the amount of pollution released into waterbodies. Integrating LID into the Zoning Code or engineering requirements would broaden the use of these practices while meeting state and federal requirements. This should begin with an audit of the existing code to identify opportunities to make changes that would promote LID followed by making any recommended changes.

A.12.7 **Pursue pilot LID projects.** Sometimes the best way to demonstrate the value of LID is to start small. The City can work with interested community members to identify opportunities for pilot projects, and secure funding, to incorporate LID into public spaces. These small scale projects can be used to garner public support and showcase the potential of such projects.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID)

LID (also sometimes referred to as Green Infrastructure) emphasizes conservation and the protection of on-site natural features while allowing development to occur. Five core principles include:

- ▶ Conserve natural areas wherever possible;
- ▶ Minimize the development impact on hydrology;
- ▶ Maintain runoff rates and duration from the site;
- ▶ Scatter integrated management practices throughout the site; and
- ▶ Implement pollution prevention, proper maintenance and public education programs.

Some examples of Low Impact Development that can be integrated into new projects or existing areas include:

- ▶ Allowing usable green roofs on large format flat roofed buildings;
- ▶ Encouraging sustainable design of ponds or other water features;
- ▶ Integrating bioswales, rain gardens or other stormwater retention interventions;
- ▶ Minimizing impervious surfaces;
- ▶ Introducing pollinator gardens; and
- ▶ Allowing solar panels as-of-right.



OBJECTIVE A.13

Encourage remediation and redevelopment of designated or perceived brownfield sites.

Brownfields are properties for which use and/or development may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant. Vacant brownfield sites are found in the City due to its industrial history, and also include sites with past petroleum or other chemical history. In order to support objectives of this plan to focus development on infill opportunities, promote economic development and enhance sustainability, brownfield remediation should be encouraged when possible.

Actions

A.13.1 Conduct an inventory and audit of brownfield sites in the City. A detailed inventory should be undertaken to identify these sites, document their characteristics, and recommend options for cleanup and redevelopment. This is an important first step in managing a successful program to target sites for remediation and redevelopment.

A.13.2 Prioritize vacant brownfield sites for redevelopment. Based on the survey work described in Action A.13.1, the City should work with property owners to identify top priority sites. Several sites are located in the oldest neighborhoods of the City and could hamper revitalization efforts if environmental concerns are found to be present and are not addressed. Economic incentives could be focused on these sites to jump start clean-up and reinvestment.

WHAT IS A BROWNFIELD?

The Ohio Environmental Protection keeps an inventory of brownfields throughout the state. These properties have received funding through the Clean Ohio Assistance Fund (COAF), Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund (CORF) or U.S. EPA's Brownfield Grants. In addition, cities, counties, townships, villages and private property owners are encouraged to list their brownfield properties on this Inventory. It is important to note, however, that the term "brownfield" is often misunderstood, as well as often used more generally to identify abandoned or underutilized properties whose redevelopment is hindered due to real or perceived environmental contamination. Under a broader definition, properties can range from more traditional, large-scale manufacturers to vacant neighborhood gas stations. These properties also can often benefit from identification in order to increase their potential for future funding, as well as to help focus redevelopment and sometimes clean-up efforts.

A.13.3 **Establish a brownfield remediation program.** The City should create and facilitate a program to promote brownfield sites for remediation and potential redevelopment. This would include undertaking the inventory and analysis noted above, locating state and federal grants to assist with clean-up and packaging and marketing sites for redevelopment. The City should investigate economic options for encouraging cleanup and redevelopment. This would also involve working collaboratively with property owners. A package of economic incentives should be consistent with the City's Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP). Once the package is adopted, marketing material that promotes incentives should be prepared and circulated to property owners and potential developers.



Sites such as old gas stations are ideal candidates for remediation.

OBJECTIVE A.14

Enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections in association with growth and development.

As the City grows and develops it will be important to link new areas with desired bicycle and pedestrian connections, including enhanced sidewalks, multimodal paths, greenways and other accommodations. This objective should be pursued in combination with other efforts to support multimodal travel as described in Goal E.

Actions

A.14.1 **Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2027.** As described in Action E.10.1, the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan proposes both overarching approaches and specific recommended connections for people traveling by foot and bicycle. It anticipates further growth of the City and its implementation will be a key way in which growth can be accommodated while supporting high quality of life.

A.14.2 Update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as needed to address growth and development. As new areas of the City are developed, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan should be assessed and adapted as a living document that embraces and responds to change.

A.14.3 Provide connections from newly developed areas to greenway corridors. As new neighborhoods and employment centers are built, connecting them to greenway corridors will support bicycle and pedestrian travel. The City should work with developers and others to anticipate future needs and accommodate them as feasible within and between new developments as they are built (or even prior to construction) as opposed to designing and constructing them later. This will help to ensure that travel patterns are established and other investment decisions coordinated as new communities are emerging.



A.14.4 Create Greenway Master Plan. Pedestrian connectivity and linear greenway preservation are important objectives of this Plan. A Greenway Master Plan should be created to identify corridors, include public input into the process, and ensure an interconnected greenway system. The Olentangy River and its tributaries, such as the Delaware Run, form natural greenways. However, other types of greenways are not centered around water corridors, such as forested areas, that could provide interconnection opportunities. Once created, the Greenway Master Plan should be advanced for formal adoption by City Council. It should be incorporated into the overall Parks and Recreation Master Plan as note in action E.2.3.

OBJECTIVE A.15

Encourage infill and redevelopment in the Riverfront, Near East Side and South Sandusky Street Focus Areas.

The Riverfront, US 36 East Gateway and South Sandusky Street Focus Areas fall primarily within City limits and have been identified as having significant opportunity for infill and redevelopment. (See Chapter 5 for more information about these areas.) Encouraging sensitive infill and redevelopment provides an opportunity for improving the built environment, supporting economic development and providing needed housing and amenities within these areas. These areas are established neighborhoods that are already served by infrastructure and have existing residents and businesses that have a stake and an interest in their future and should be consulted on future plans. Strategies to avoid displacement of current residents should be a priority.

Actions

A.15.1 Prepare Area Plans. A community-driven process should be conducted to create detailed area plans that build upon the recommendations for each Focus Area in Chapter 5, Character and Land Use.

A.15.2 Align zoning overlay district regulations to area plans. Prepare zoning overlay districts in accordance with area plans as recommended in this plan to facilitate and streamline their implementation.

A.15.3 Consider incentives. Consider specific incentives to facilitate implementation of area plans consistent with this plan.



OBJECTIVE A.16

Focus new development to the Southeast, Southwest and portions of the Far East Focus Areas.

In addition to the Focus Areas of the City that should be prioritized for infill and redevelopment, two areas should be prioritized for new development. The Southwest Focus Area, which is partially within City limits and partially outside of them, includes a vital concentration of industrial and business uses as well as property that is currently undeveloped. The area provides the potential for limited residential uses to be integrated as a transition to other residential areas and to support area businesses with attainable housing. The Southeast Focus Area falls outside of current City limits but remains within the longstanding City utility boundary. The area provides opportunities for new development that is adjacent to infrastructure and appropriate uses.

Actions

- A.16.1 Prepare Area Plans.** A community-driven process should be conducted to create detailed area plans for these areas. The plans should begin from policies and recommendations for each Focus Area in Chapter 5, Character and Land Use. The area plan for the Southwest Focus Area should include information described in Action B.8.2.

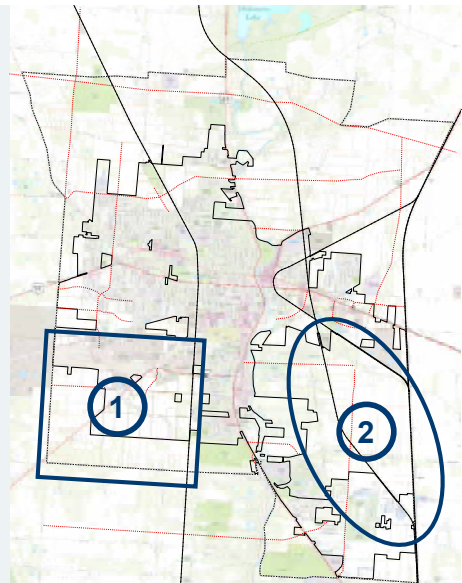
MANAGED GROWTH AND AREA PLANNING

① SOUTHWEST

The Southwest Focus Area is dominated by industrial and business uses, which fan along US Route 42 West and nearby streets. Older industrial areas within the “Central Industrial” triangle formed by London Road, Liberty Road, and U.S. Route 42 accommodate a handful of heavy industrial facilities alongside residential neighborhoods and under-utilized buildings and land. Newer areas south of the airport have attracted several light industrial, high-tech and business uses and plans for land along Sawmill Parkway have envisioned more industrial and business development further south. There are transitions and land uses to consider which differ between the west and east sides of US 42, south of the airport. Activity nodes and residential uses should be considered appropriate in this area.

② SOUTHEAST

The Southeast Focus Area is almost entirely agricultural with larger lots and some single family residential uses, mostly along Curve, Braumiller, and Berlin Station Roads. More intense development should be located around major transportation corridors such as the future Glenn Parkway with mixed-use nodes that transition to less intense uses.



OBJECTIVE A.17

Direct public realm improvements in "high impact" locations.

The comprehensive planning process revealed a number of locations in the City that suffer from disinvestment, a poor quality built environment and/or a lack of public amenities such as sidewalks. These areas include the Point (intersection is located at the location where U.S. 36 and State Route 37 converge on the east side), the London Road and South Sandusky Street corridors, the Lake Street Train Station area, the Southwestern Gateway (Sawmill Parkway), and the Northern Gateway (U.S. 23 N coming from the North). Directing public investment and incentivizing private investment in these areas can have a significant positive economic impact (increased housing values in neighborhoods, increased patronage of businesses in commercial areas and increased housing diversity) and can catalyze change in these areas to make them more attractive, vibrant and better connected to the rest of the City.

Actions

A.17.1 Focus beautification efforts. The City should focus beautification efforts on "high impact" areas that have been identified as being in need of improvement. Each of these areas is important because of its visibility to the community but suffers from quality of place concerns and therefore does not inspire people to want to live, work or spend time there. Public realm improvements should include capital improvements to the streetscape such as lighting, wayfinding and branding, landscaping, pedestrian facilities and utilities.



The proposed "Point" project will relieve congestion and increase safety along US 36 and SR 37 by increasing the number of vehicular lanes beneath the Norfolk Southern Railroad bridge. The roadway improvements should be leveraged for additional improvements in the immediate vicinity. It will also include pedestrian connections. Above is a rendering of the anticipated completed project.

A.17.2 **Target property tax incentives.** The City should offer property tax incentives to projects on the property improvements made to parcel(s) within Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) or Enterprise Zone Areas that align with "high impact" areas. Incentives should be consistent with the City's Economic Development Incentive Policy as described in Objective B.7.1. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts should also be pursued.

A.17.3 **Create design guidelines.** "High impact" areas should be improved through design guidelines that support higher quality design and pedestrian-friendly development. Landscaping improvements and branding/signage should also be included. This would help to promote improved quality of place as development takes place.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREAS (CRA)

Community Reinvestment Areas are areas of land in which property owners can receive tax incentives for investing in real property improvements. The Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program is a direct incentive tax exemption program benefiting property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings. This program permits municipalities or counties to designate areas where investment has been discouraged as a CRA to encourage revitalization of the existing housing stock and the development of new structures. Source: City of Delaware, Department of Economic Development.



The City's historic, vacant train depot provides an opportunity for catalytic redevelopment.

OBJECTIVE A.18

Guide and allow contextually sensitive change in Downtown including intensification of uses where appropriate.

Delaware’s historic Downtown architecture is one of its greatest and most valued assets. Since the last comprehensive plan, Downtown Delaware has not only developed to support thriving small businesses, including restaurants and retail, but has maintained—and indeed enhanced—its historic character. This has been due to a combination of careful planning, collaborative efforts to support local businesses and successful initiatives to preserve character-defining features of the built environment. It is important that the City continue and build upon these practices.

Actions

A.18.1 Continue to pursue sensitive infill and redevelopment. Downtown Delaware has benefitted from many investments in Downtown in recent years, which have helped to support a desirable environment for small businesses to locate and people to reside and visit. By continuing to apply current review processes and policies for new development, in addition to pursuing new preservation and economic development efforts, the City can expect to continue to see downtown continue to develop in ways that maintain and enhance its existing character.



In 2019, the City of Delaware was honored with a recognition of Downtown as one of America's Great Places by the American Planning Association. City leadership traveled to Washington DC to accept the award.

A.18.2 Follow best practice in historic preservation. In addition to continuing to ensure that infill and redevelopment projects are sensitive to the existing context, strategies should be pursued for preserving existing historic buildings, as described in Goal E. This will help to leverage resources, infrastructure and amenities and streamline regulations where feasible.



Renovations and redevelopment in Downtown should respect its existing scale and massing within existing historic areas. Infill sites where the context has already been significantly altered may present some opportunity for increased intensity of development if carefully designed.

A.18.3 Study the expansion of the downtown area's planning boundary. The City should conduct an assessment of whether the downtown area's boundary should be expanded for planning and regulatory purposes. (This does not necessarily mean that the historic district overlay would change.) This would account for potential infill or redevelopment opportunities around the edges of the current Downtown primarily to the south and west and to better connect the core Downtown to these similar adjacent areas.

A.18.4 Identify potential sites appropriate for intensification. Within the larger Downtown planning area, there are sites that are suitable for intensified uses. Provided a high level of design quality is required and compatibility with adjacent uses is ensured, this presents an opportunity to support activity and vibrancy in a way that will build upon and enhance existing uses and provide for a larger, permanent Downtown residential population.

A.18.5 Support economic development efforts. An attractive vibrant physical environment is directly linked to the economic health of downtown. In order to maintain downtown's aesthetics, it will be critical to also pursue the actions for downtown's businesses as described in Goal B, "Advance economic prosperity." This should include consideration of establishing a Special Improvement District (SID) in the Downtown area.

DOWNTOWN FACADE GRANT PROGRAM

The goal of the Downtown Facade Program is to help business owners invest in their properties, while improving the appearance and historic character of Downtown Delaware.

Over \$1 million has been invested in over 30 projects. Up to a 50-percent matching grant is available to Target Area business or building owners who construct eligible improvements to the facades of their buildings. The City will match dollar-for-dollar an owner's investment in the appearance of their building's storefront facade up to a maximum amount of \$20,000 per project.



OBJECTIVE A.19

Foster synergies and enhance connection between the Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) campus, Downtown and the South Sandusky Street Focus Area.

The City of Delaware, especially Downtown, benefits greatly from the physical campus of Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU). The campus provides both OWU community members and the community at-large with the chance to enjoy the 200-acre campus, including well-maintained buildings (ten of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places), landscaping and open space and walking paths. Additionally, Downtown Delaware, which is only a two-minute walk from campus, provides students with restaurants, shopping and entertainment in a vibrant setting.

Actions

A.19.1 **Coordinate with campus master planning.** The City should coordinate with institutional uses with campus settings, including but not limited to OWU, that create harmonious landscaping, gateways, furnishings, and walks that present a unified theme that reinforces each particular setting. They should reinforce pedestrian orientation and circulation, provide good transitions along campus edges, and create linkages with the community.

A.19.2 **Ensure campuses do not isolate, but rather foster social and physical connections with the built environment.** OWU has a unique opportunity to connect and transition between Downtown and the South Sandusky Street Focus Area. The City, OWU and citizens should work together to further these connections, physically and socially.

OWU STRATEGIC PLAN

Ohio Wesleyan University continually engages in strategic planning and campus master planning to further advance itself as one of America's premier liberal arts colleges. OWU aims to fulfill its vision and plans as well as raising the University's profile by creating new programming, enhancing the student experience, improving campus buildings and residential facilities, and securing the University's financial future. OWU and the City of Delaware actively engage in a town-gown collaborative process to ensure coordinated and complete communication and to help each entity fulfill goals and objectives of mutual interest.



OBJECTIVE A.20

Update the Zoning Code and development policies to conform to the Comprehensive Plan.

The City's Zoning Code is the primary regulatory means of implementing the future land use recommendations illustrated in Chapter 5. An update to the Zoning Code should include standards that prescribe the form of development as well as allowable uses while rewarding developers who fully comply through decreased regulatory process requirements.

Actions

A.20.1 **Formulate a task force.** A task force should be created in order to develop an approach to zoning changes. This group should include staff from relevant City Departments, representatives from key stakeholder groups and community members. Strong consideration should be given to hiring professional consultants to assist in a community driven process.

A.20.2 **Develop zoning strategy.** The overall approach to updating zoning should be determined, including whether a complete zoning code update is needed or whether a more strategic approach to updates in key parts of the City and/or the creation of overlay districts is best. The strategy may be partly dependent on the outcomes of Area Plans. (See Actions 4.1 and 5.1.) Depending on the timing for creating such plans, zoning code updates may need to be done in phases. This could include streamlining development review processes.

BEST PRACTICES IN ZONING CODES

A common shortcoming of traditional zoning codes is that they emphasize separation of land uses and prescribe little direction for the appearance of development. Contemporary zoning codes that are intended to implement a character-based land use plan will place a high emphasis on the form of development such as building design characteristics and placement on a site. In these codes, regulating specific land uses is often secondary. Such “form-based” standards or codes have been adopted in various degrees by communities of all sizes as a flexible way to carry out their visions for a vibrant built environment while fostering predictable results for both developers and residents. It is also not uncommon for a hybrid approach to be pursued with form-based standards underpinning a more conventional code.

A.20.3

Assess potential form-based approach.

While the specific zoning approach to be pursued requires further assessment, it is clear that the current code needs to be more consistent with approved planned developments and commercial/industrial development plans. The City should explore the incorporation of form-based standards. Such standards would naturally follow the Development Type descriptions provided in this plan, which address not only land use but character, intensity and design. Form-based standards can be useful to communities because they can clearly indicate the type of development intended using easy-to-understand illustrations and tables.



A.20.4

Assess potential of a Unified Development Ordinance.

The City should consider if a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is appropriate. A UDO combines into one document traditional zoning and subdivision regulations, along with other City regulations, such as design guidelines, sign regulations, and floodplain and stormwater management. A UDO can improve the efficiency of the development process and can focus on the quality of development, without the normal distractions of the bureaucracy of approving development. Development standards do not change, but the process is streamlined, with zoning and subdivision processes more closely integrated. The City is effectively doing this in many cases already by combining process and cases and encouraging applicants to submit items concurrently. Formalizing this approach while decreasing some of the steps involved may prove more efficient and effective.

The City of Upper Arlington merged development regulations and procedures through a Unified Development Ordinance into one unified code thereby simplifying the development process, streamlining administration procedures and practices, and creating a more user-friendly review and approval process for developers. Development along Lane Avenue in Upper Arlington, which was partially enabled by the UDO, could serve as a model for Delaware's corridors.

A.20.5 Implement preferred Zoning Code change.

Once the zoning strategy noted in A.20.2 is determined, the zoning code changes should be made in accordance with the City's standard regulating process.

OBJECTIVE A.21

Align the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) presents the City's capital investments for a five-year planning period and is required to be updated annually as part of the City's budget process. In order to connect the specific recommendations in the plan to funding, it is important that the CIP reflect the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and integrate the most and time-sensitive important priorities. This will help ensure that the focus remains on implementation of the plan especially for long term capital intensive projects.

Actions

A.21.1 Review and revise CIP. The first next CIP following adoption of this Plan should incorporate the plan's recommendations, including anticipated development in the Focus Areas. Subsequent updates should also align with plan recommendations, as well as key recommendations that may developed as part of an update to the plan.



GOAL B: ADVANCE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Provide economic opportunity for all residents and support diverse, successful and resilient business and industry.

OBJECTIVES

- B.1 Prioritize target industries and businesses.
- B.2 Strengthen relationships between the City and economic development partners in the region and State.
- B.3 Capitalize on the Delaware Municipal Airport.
- B.4 Support small and medium-scale businesses and encourage entrepreneurship.
- B.5 Support growth of the tourism industry.
- B.6 Support workforce development.
- B.7 Maximize benefits from economic incentives.
- B.8 Improve economic development opportunity in the Southwest Focus Area.

OBJECTIVE B.1

Prioritize target industries and businesses.

The City should continue to prioritize attracting and retaining target industries and businesses in accordance with the current Economic Development Plan.

Actions

B.1.1 Continue to conduct marketing and recruitment. The City's Economic Development Plan identified target industries and businesses including boutique manufacturers, research & development, other professional, scientific & technical services, finance & insurance, wholesale trade, information services and specialty aftermarket automobile businesses. Secondary targets were also identified, mainly as an approach to fill the gap in available jobs in Delaware in these sectors, including retailers and arts, entertainment, and recreation employers. Current marketing and recruitment efforts should be sustained and enhanced.



Continued development along and near Sawmill Parkway presents an opportunity for new target industry growth.

B.1.2 Create strong economic development brand. The City should pursue marketing for economic development as put forth in the City's Economic Development Plan. This should include online marketing, public relations, branded collateral and relationship building efforts as described in the Plan. Implementation of the completed Southwest Wayfinding and Branding Plan is also a critical component of this action.

B.1.3 Advance infrastructure into Focus Areas when possible. This action should be in accordance with the City's Thoroughfare Plan and fiscal sustainability goals. It may involve promoting public-private partnerships to maximize investment, share costs, and promote development opportunities.

OBJECTIVE B.2

Strengthen relationships between the City and economic development partners in the region and State.

The continued development of a strong and diverse economic base for the City and all of Delaware County is enhanced when all of the entities with this responsibility work together in a cooperative environment. The City should seek to establish and/or maintain collaborations with economic development partners with similar goals in order to align policies.

Actions

- B.2.1** **Continue work of the Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce economic development advisory team.** The City of Delaware is actively involved with the Chamber including its economic development team. Participation should be continued so that the City can remain informed and active in identifying and addressing issues of community and regional concern.
- B.2.2** **Continue participation in the Mid-Ohio Development Exchange (MODE).** The City should continue its membership and involvement in MODE in order to participate in information-sharing and identify opportunities for collaboration with others in the region.
- B.2.3** **Establish a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).** The City should consider establishing a CIC that can effectively serve as a Citywide Economic Development Council to support development of vacant and underutilized land and promote economic development objectives. A partnership approach with the Delaware County agencies should be established to maximize and coordinate efforts in this region.

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL FUTURE PARTNERS

The Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce serves the needs of the business community in Delaware County, including within the City of Delaware. It provides a range of programs and services benefiting our members by promoting and advocating a favorable business climate, quality of life and the orderly growth and development of the Delaware area community.

The Mid-Ohio Development Exchange (MODE) is a membership group of local economic development organizations throughout the 11-county Columbus Region. MODE provides programming to increase awareness of economic development issues, resources, and best practices with the goal of strengthening and growing local economies.

Community Improvement Corporations (CICs) are quasi-governmental non-profit corporations authorized under the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). There are two types of CICs: traditional CICs for economic development, as well as CICs organized as County Land Reutilization Corporations (County Land Banks).

B.2.4 Continue participation in One Columbus. One Columbus is the economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region. As a member, the City supports a range of initiatives focused on attracting and retaining business to Central Ohio and supports its economic competitiveness.

OBJECTIVE B.3

Capitalize on the Delaware Municipal Airport.

There is an opportunity to focus on the airport as an asset for attracting business and aviation assets to the area. Certain types of economic activities are attracted to locations near general aviation airports. These activities provide a basis for planning and economic development associated with the airport and surrounding areas.

Actions

- B.3.1 Develop a recruitment strategy for industries that benefit from airport proximity.** The City should generate a plan for attracting certain companies. The focus should be on the following opportunity areas.
- ▶ Extensive and immediate travel needs. There are several types of manufacturing companies that have employees with extensive and immediate travel needs that are met through direct proximity and access to private planes. Among the types of companies that form a target base for recruitment in southwest Delaware are consulting, law, medical, advertising, and financial services firms, transportation services companies, agri-businesses and executives and boards of manufacturing companies, particularly those engaged in electronic equipment manufacturing, miscellaneous machinery manufacturing, and other selected industries.
 - ▶ High-attention marketing. Certain firms require a high-level of personalized attention for their clients as well as frequent visits by clients and potential customers. These firms have a high demand for private, general aviation services.
 - ▶ General aviation freight. There are several types of manufacturing companies that tend to utilize the services of general aviation airports on a regular basis because of the type of product or specific requirements for distribution. The factors and types of manufacturing businesses associated with high general aviation freight use are critical needs (medical emergencies and supplies); high-value product (high-tech electronic) equipment and parts, medical equipment, precious stones; and perishables (seafood, fruit). General aviation is also needed for businesses such as aircraft manufacturers, repairs, and outfitters.
 - ▶ Specialty aviation contractors and businesses.

B.3.2

Support recommendations of the Airport Master Plan, Facility Plans, and the Strategic Business Plan. The Delaware Municipal Airport (DLZ) is a public-use airport owned by the City of Delaware. The airport is situated on approximately 325 acres and is about 2 miles southwest of Downtown Delaware. The FAA designates the airport as a Regional-General Aviation airport. It is denoted as a State of Ohio Level 1 facility. Currently the airport is home to about 100 based aircraft and handles an estimated 39,900 operations per year. The runway is approximately 5,800 feet after an expansion during the last planning period. The City completed an airport Master Plan in 2006. Recently, the city has produced an update to that plan called the Airport Strategic Business Plan, January 2020 that should work in conjunction with the facility planning required by the FAA. The Strategic Business Plan should be advanced for formal adoption. Thereafter, its recommendations should be implemented in support of the objective to capitalize on the municipal airport.

DELAWARE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Delaware Municipal Airport Jim Moore Field is a leading Central Ohio general aviation facility. It is home to approximately 100 aircraft and handles an estimated 40,000 operations per year, including corporate activity, training and pleasure flying. The City oversees all aspects of the airport. The airport is strategically located to serve the region, including commercial centers in Delaware, Dublin, Westerville and Powell. The City has aggressively pursued airport enhancements that include an expanded 5,800-foot runway and the Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS), allowing precision approach for horizontal and vertical navigation. Other upgrades include a grooved runway and improvements to the flight terminal, lounges and weather briefing areas. (Source, City of Delaware, <http://www.delawareohio.net/about-the-airport/>)



B.3.3

Establish a Delaware concierge airport

hub. A “Concierge Airport” hub associated with the airport should focus on providing corporate and personal services that would appeal to the target clientele identified in Action B.3.1. For example, a partnership could be formed with the nearby YMCA and other regional institutions with amenities to provide member access to fitness facilities for those using the airport. On-site business and personal services would also be made available that are targeted to companies using the airport facilities.

The City’s Economic Development office should examine opportunities for creating transportation, construction, and electronic equipment manufacturing and distribution clusters relating to recruitment of airport-dependent businesses. Economic Development should also identify institutional, government, and corporate partnerships in establishing technology anchors such as an incubator, associated with the airport. The focus of the anchor would be to recruit entrepreneurs and small tech businesses in the transportation, construction, electronic or medical equipment arena that could be nurtured locally and graduate into larger spaces in the industrial park.

OBJECTIVE B.4

Support small and medium-scale businesses and encourage entrepreneurship.

In addition to the larger industrial and corporate employers, Delaware benefits from small and medium-scale businesses that generate employment, provide goods and services and support the local economy. There are existing programs trying to address this issue, such as through the Delaware Entrepreneur Center, that should be built upon.

Actions

B.4.1 Expand small business infrastructure and incentives. Delaware’s business infrastructure should be enhanced including soft programs or incentives (fast-track, financing, training, and technical assistance) as well as “hard” infrastructure (e.g., affordable building space and broadband infrastructure) to accommodate the needs of “location-independent businesses” like IT consultants, web designers, and artisans.

B.4.2 Develop an entrepreneur mentorship/partnership program. Existing industrial businesses contract with a variety of suppliers and services, and there are opportunities for expanding mentorship and partnership programs that match large businesses with emerging entrepreneurs.

B.4.3 Broaden Planned Business Overlay Zoning District. The City should broaden the Planned Business Overlay Zoning District (or a new such district) to include retail and services uses to provide a flexible zoning tool to accommodate large or unusual retail development projects. Planned Mixed Use Districts (PMUs) could also be used to provide flexibility while also ensuring a high design standard.

DELAWARE ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER

The Delaware Entrepreneurial Center is a partnership of City, County, and Ohio Wesleyan University. The Center’s mission is to create a collaborative, innovative, and imaginative space that facilitates value creation and professional development.

It includes rentable office spaces, a shared work area for center members, a conference center with digital meeting capabilities, and educational programming to support entrepreneurial understanding and success.

The Center has been so successful that it is already at physical capacity. This demonstrates the purpose and need as well as the importance of this facility. The university and its partners are discussing the opportunity to address the need for additional space as a result.

B.4.4 **Create a pop-up retail support program.**
Establish a pop-up retail program that could be associated with the existing Delaware Entrepreneur Center. A program to provide technical assistance could help to give entrepreneurs important business advice to make pop-up retail possible. (This could address needs in areas deemed food deserts until more permanent businesses can be attracted to these areas.)

B.4.5 **Provide trainings on other non-traditional financing options.** While many small businesses may be challenged to receive a loan from a conventional bank, other financing options may be available. Training sessions provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to learn about both ways to improve chances of receiving a bank loan as well as alternative funding sources.

B.4.6 **Implement entrepreneurship recommendations as stated in the Economic Development Strategic Plan.**
The plan's recommendations support entrepreneurship as an employment and economic development driver.

OBJECTIVE B.5

Support growth of the tourism industry.

The tourism economy within the City has grown in recent years and has additional potential. The City's traditional Victorian-era downtown and presence of Ohio Wesleyan University are draws for day trippers as well as out of town visitors. In addition to the rich, historic architecture, the City also offers arts opportunities and historic venues such as the Strand Theatre, the oldest continually operating cinema in the US. The City has many dining opportunities and vintage businesses like The Hamburger Inn Diner that add a local flavor to the City's offerings. Recent branding efforts undertaken by the City have also helped to build on the City's heritage as a foundation for growth.

Actions

B.5.1

Create a tourism development plan.

The City and Convention and Visitors Bureau should work with partners who can assist in guiding the process as well as contribute resources. This may include local organizations and businesses, Delaware County, and foundations. Once funding is identified, a consultant should be hired to manage the process of creating the study. The consultant will work with key stakeholders in preparing the strategy, including the City and County, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Delaware, Delaware Historical Society, Ohio Wesleyan, the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, and local businesses and artists.

B.5.2

Implement cultural arts strategies.

Enhancing the City's cultural arts offerings has potential to bolster tourism. Actions to support the cultural arts as described in Goal E.

B.5.3

Establish a welcome center. A welcome center in the former Engineering Department building (20 E. Williams Street) has been established with a local partner Main Street Delaware and should be supported to full build-out.

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Numerous events and festivals support the tourism industry in the City and can be the basis for a more strategic approach to tourism industry development.



OBJECTIVE B.6

Support workforce development.

Companies tend to follow the workforce in a tight labor market such as is anticipated in the future in central Ohio, so attracting a workforce—especially younger, well-educated and skilled people—helps in securing opportunities for business development. If directed toward current residents, workforce development also supports local employment. Delaware lacks the necessary labor pool (un/semi-skilled and skilled production workers) to support industrial growth beyond the amount that already exists. Key issues relate to the lack of services and amenities, housing, and the environment that is created around industrial zones for attracting workers to Delaware.

Actions

- B.6.1 Strengthen ready-for-work programs.** Local businesses have identified a serious deficiency in workforce readiness, soft skills and essential skills. While there are efforts underway to close this gap, there is a need for more program operating resources in this area as part of the City’s business retention and expansion efforts. The City should work closely with area colleges, state vocational / technical training programs (including at the Delaware Area Career Center and Columbus State’s Delaware Campus programs), and local manufacturers to ensure that labor supply issues are being addressed.
- B.6.2 Expand workforce-oriented transit.** There is a need for better transit or public transportation to get workers to their places of employment. These types of activities are typically coordinated with service providers such as Delaware Transit, Damascus Staffing, COTA, Uber, and MORPC. New partnership opportunities are available with emerging initiatives such as SHARE and COTA Plus. Related actions as specified in Goal E should be pursued.

B.6.3 Increase the amount of workforce housing. While many units exist today, local employers and other community members have expressed a need for more attainable workforce housing to attract and retain quality workers in Delaware. Actions as specified in Goal D should be pursued to address this action.

B.6.4 Conduct and periodically review analysis pertaining to Workforce of the Future. In alignment with City Council’s goal to increase professional, managerial, administrative and highly technical jobs in the community, continue targeting high growth industries such as technology, research and development and those based on the knowledge worker. Delaware City and County’s demographics continue to be highly educated, so connecting the existing residents and local universities with these businesses as they increase in the community will be critical in realizing this action. This action should include preparing a detailed market analysis and periodically reviewing and updating it to ensure this and other actions align with longer term changes in the marketplace as well as any subsequent changes to workforce needs.

B.6.5 Expand mentorship programs. Mentorship programs should be developed for school and college students, pairing them with local businesses. The Point at Otterbein could potentially serve as a connector between individuals seeking mentorships and businesses in need of assistance. The current Delaware Entrepreneurial Center—a collaboration between the City, County, and OWU—could help fulfill this role.



Continued efforts to align educational and training opportunities with workforce needs will strengthen the City's economic position.

OBJECTIVE B.7

Maximize benefits from economic incentives.

The City has had success in using economic incentives and should continue to utilize these tools. At the same time it is essential to provide clarity, transparency and efficiency in granting economic incentives and align these with Comprehensive Plan's Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions. Creating a base-level of understanding regarding the cost and benefit of every economic development project to a school board and City Council helps in decision-making, accountability and shared understanding of why certain decisions are made.

Actions

B.7.1 Implement Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP). The City has an Economic Development Incentive Policy that has not yet been formally approved but is used for general guidance. It should be passed as a living document (can be adjusted over time) so that implementation can be prioritized and aligned with Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions. The incentives relative to economic incentives contained therein should then be pursued, including recommendations to expedite, review and improve the process.

B.7.2 Link incentives to fiscal return requirement. Using a fiscal return analysis as described in Action A.3.1, the City should continue to require that projects receiving economic assistance meet minimum fiscal returns. This is consistent with the EDIP. It is worth noting that some exceptions, as outlined in the EDIP, could be considered for targeted startup and higher risk companies that align with the Economic Development and Comprehensive plans' goals and objectives.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE POLICY (EDIP)

In 2014, the City developed an Economic Development Incentive Policy that incorporates incentive guidelines, formulas and processes in one document. It has been updated several times since then. The purpose is to maximize incentives while also achieving maximum return on investment (ROI) for the community leading to greater wealth for all. Partner organizations included the City of Delaware, Delaware City School District, Olentangy School District and Delaware Area Career Center. The EDIP is currently under consideration.

B.7.3 Continue to use CRA and tax abatements.

These tools are part of the basic set of incentives offered by most communities in Ohio and throughout the nation. The City will continue to offer them to qualifying businesses whose proposals are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development Plan and EDIP. The EDIP addresses how they will be utilized in a formulaic and return-on-investment based approach.

B.7.4 Continue to work with Delaware County and the State to structure incentives.

The City is a partner with Delaware County and the State of Ohio in structuring incentive packages that utilize County or State funds, including tax abatement agreements. The City will continue to work with its partners (such as Delaware County Finance Authority, Community Improvement Corporation, One Columbus and JobsOhio) and will coordinate projects within its corporate boundaries.

B.7.5 Support Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) where appropriate.

Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) in association with neighboring townships should be pursued and supported where they support the City's land use and economic development policies.

B.7.6 Pursue TIFs where appropriate.

TIFs may be pursued in selected locations to allow for a more cost-effective and partnership-based approach to infrastructure development while ensuring development continues to pay its appropriate share of costs.

JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (JEDD)

JEDDs are special purpose districts that are created between a combination of municipal corporations and townships. One or more municipal corporations and one or more townships may enter into a contract to create a JEDD. The purpose is to facilitate economic development. They allow for the levying of a district-wide income tax and the provision of municipal services in unincorporated areas. See Chapter 6 Fiscal Sustainability for an explanation of the City's use of JEDD.

OBJECTIVE B.8

Improve economic development opportunity in the Southwest Focus Area.

The Southwest Focus Area is comprised of a combination of industrial and business uses. The focus area is important to the City as an employment base and has many assets, but also has significant unrealized potential that should be capitalized on. The Delaware Industrial Park is within this Focus Area and it is one of the oldest and most established industrial areas in the City. Existing businesses must be protected and retained while allowing for improvements, innovations and compatible new uses. The Central Industrial Area, also in the Focus Area, is an undefined area of central/southwest Delaware that includes several industrial businesses and related activities plus a residential neighborhood. The area has significant potential as a mixed use district that may include industrial, office and other uses, including potentially workforce housing. Finally, the Delaware Crossing Business District (Sawmill District) and area south and southwest of this district includes thousands of acres potentially available for development. The area would benefit from a focused planning effort in order to develop a shared vision for its future.

Actions

B.8.1 Implement strategies to diversify the economic base. There is a need to continue to diversify the City's economic base and the business base within the southwestern portion of Delaware. Diversification and balance helps reduce or mollify the impacts of a downturn in any one sector. This also helps to address changes to the macro marketplace. Diversification can also lead to collaboration and new product development, where diverse companies work together to share technologies for example on open platforms. The City should prepare strategies for diversification that build off the Economic Development Plan and the City's existing strengths. Those strengths include its central location and its clusters in transportation and construction. As described in Objective B.3, another key strength is Delaware's airport as a marketing anchor for recruiting the types of businesses identified above that are attracted to general aviation airports. (Enhancing the airport's services and "perks" will increase its competitiveness and the business recruitment potential for southwestern Delaware.)

B.8.2

Create a Southwest Area Plan. As described in Chapter 5, an Area Plan should be created for the entire Southwest Focus Area (larger than the map on the following page; see Chapter 5 for a complete map) in order to more specifically address land uses and the physical environment through a process that engages property owners, business owners, employees and others. This should include exploration of desired mixed-use development. The following components should be included (See map on following page):

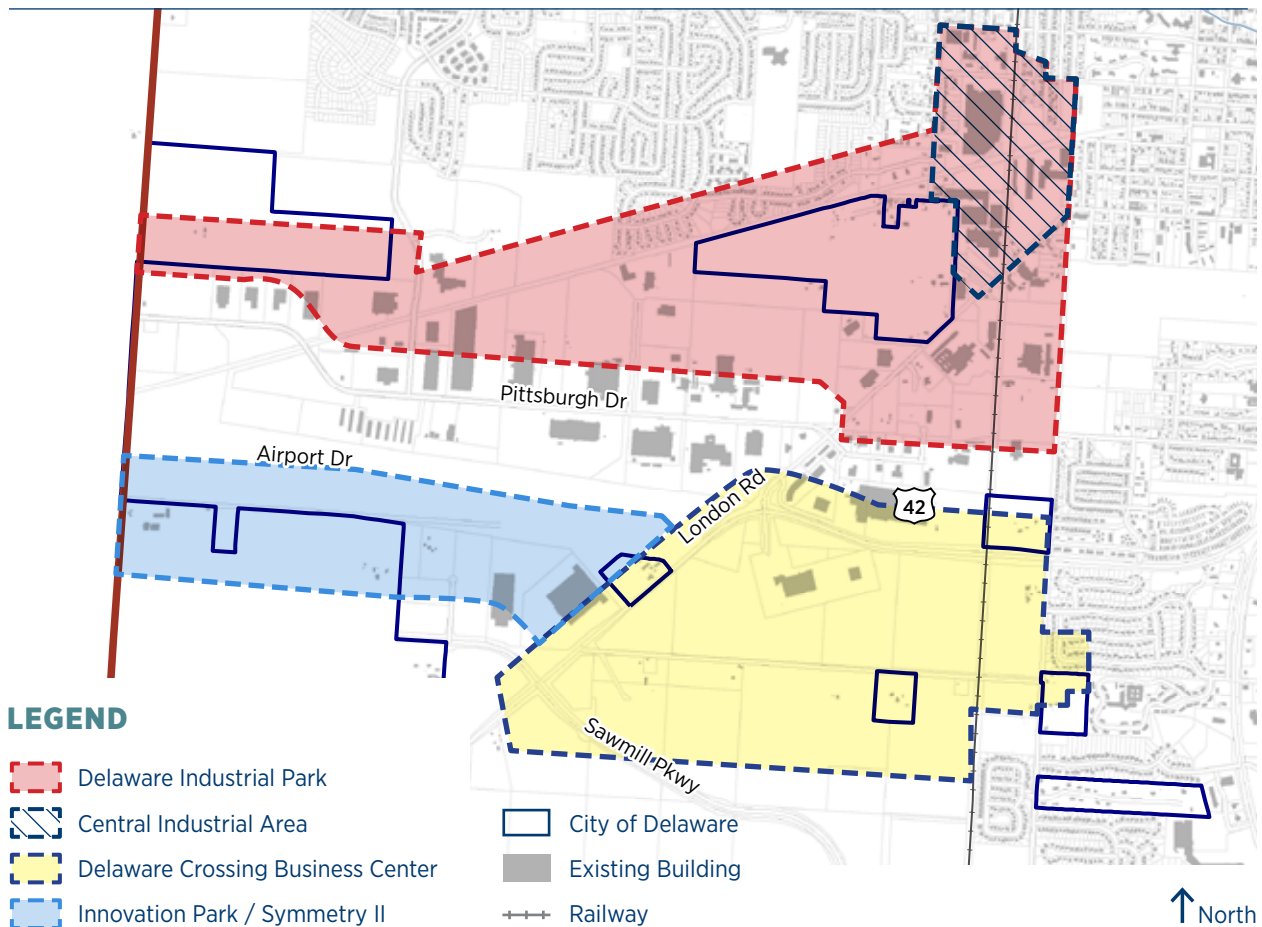
- **Central Industrial Area.** This area is the least defined of the existing industrial zones. There is an opportunity to create a more urban, mixed-use district that provides amenity value and positively supports the surrounding residential neighborhoods. It would focus on enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the area overall including improving streetscapes along the London Road Corridor to Sandusky Street, and along Curtis Street.
- **West of U.S. Route 42: “Tech/Business.”** The area west of U.S. Route 42 is already developing as a mini-business park area, incorporating Innovation Park and Symmetry II. There is an opportunity to build on the industrial technology testing cluster and to promote advanced manufacturing in this area. The area could benefit from branding and services associated with the “Concierge Airport” concept, since it is situated adjacent to the airport property and could potentially offer a south entrance to the airport.



EMS Adhesives has remained in the City of Delaware, adapting over time, including consolidating operations into one, new building.

- ▶ **“Amenity Node” at Sawmill and U.S. Route 42.** Development of a mixed-use node at Sawmill Parkway and U.S. Route 42 is recommended to provide amenity value to this southwestern “corner” of the City in support of both residential and economic development. A mixed-use node at this location would also provide a southern “gateway” into the City’s existing industrial business area. The node would offer convenience and shopper’s goods retail, personal services, and restaurants if proven to be supported by the market. There is also the possibility of integrating workforce residential development into the node and establishing an attractive environment that would attract workers to live in the area.

MAP OF KEY AREAS WITHIN THE SOUTHWEST FOCUS AREA



- East of U.S. Route 42 “Corporate” Corridor. The portion of the Sawmill District east of US Route 42 would have a more “corporate” business park character, although it would still accommodate a mix of uses and would need to appropriately transition to residential (perhaps workforce housing) in the far southern and eastern portions since residential development predominates in Liberty Township to the south along Sawmill Parkway. The City would help facilitate site assembly by working with area property owners, similar to the effort recommended in the Central Industrial Area. Light manufacturing and back office administrative service uses could be among the types of businesses recruited to this area. Recruitment targets would include management consulting services in human resources, marketing, and process management; as well as firms engaged in logistics and associated consulting, consistent with the types of companies likely to locate near a general aviation airport. The district would have consistent character and design throughout, with branded elements and marketing.

B.8.3

Create an infrastructure plan. The City has completed discreet pieces of infrastructure plans, but there is not one coordinated and consolidated plan for all components. As part of the area plan for the Southwest Focus Area, the City should develop a detailed infrastructure plan to support office / commercial uses, small manufacturing, housing, amenities and greenspace. To promote fiscal sustainability, public-private-partnerships and cost sharing should be pursued.

FLEX OFFICE

Flex office space includes flexible employment uses, including the mix of retail, service, and other commercial development along major streets and highway corridors. The classification targets existing strip centers, “Big-box” stores, drive-thru restaurants, and/or similar auto-oriented commercial uses along major thoroughfares. Flex loosens the use requirements along these corridors to encourage redevelopment or re-use of existing buildings and combat vacancy through incorporation of office and light industrial uses. The Flex classification increases permissible density and height restrictions with an emphasis on high quality design of buildings, grounds, and landscape. Flex districts seek to limit access through consolidated intersections and improve pedestrian connectivity between and across parcels.

B.8.4

Create southwest business consortium.

Important to diversification of the economic base in the Southwest Focus Area (as per Action B.8.1) is the need for collaboration, including institution building and partnering among and between businesses in the area. Creating a southwest Delaware business consortium that promotes cross-pollination of ideas between businesses should be pursued. This consortium might also provide the opportunity for more interaction between consumers and production, such as through food & beverage as well as the “maker” culture that brings an audience and consumer appetite for local products. A key focus would be on how the area can respond to greater demand for new industries, including technology-oriented companies.

B.8.5

Create strategy to attract resident employers.

The Economic Development Plan identified a need to recruit businesses that employ local residents, since there is significant out-migration of residents and reverse in-migration of workers to Delaware (as noted in Chapter 3, Existing Conditions and Trends). Several specific industries are recommended to augment the target industry effort, including the following:

- ▶ Management Services;
- ▶ Scientific & Technical Services, with a more specific emphasis on Industrial Testing, which could be recruited to the southwest area; and
- ▶ Finance & insurance back office processing and services.

The work should be coordinated with a strategy to bring additional, varied housing to the area to help support targeted industries and existing businesses.

ECO-INDUSTRIAL PARK

An eco-industrial park is a group of businesses that strive to enhance environmental and economic performance through sharing and collaborating the management of energy, water and waste.

B.8.6 **Brand the area.** There are opportunities to enhance recruitment power by strengthening the Southwest Area's brand and identity. This effort would build off the overall branding work for the City conducted in 2014. It should be marketed in association with the transportation and electronics industrial sectors, since these sectors are represented by clusters that suggest a competitive advantage for the area in attracting those industries. A name that reflects the changing nature of the area, a graphic identity and key messages would add value. The branding should be tied to efforts to improve the physical environment of the area, including delineating districts and nodes and enhancing amenity value to create more "cache".

B.8.7 **Create sustainability targets.** In an effort to demonstrate leadership in sustainability, the City should identify metrics and standards for integrating sustainable development practices into the area. It will be important that such measures do not reduce competitive advantage of developers or businesses, but complement and enhance marketability.

B.8.8

Create Activity Districts, gateways and physical improvements. The City should define and strengthen commercial and Mixed Use Activity Districts, enhance gateways and make other physical improvements as described in Chapter 5. More specifically for this area, the following is recommended:

- ▶ Better define and strengthen commercial/Mixed Use Activity Districts along London Road at the intersections with Pittsburgh Drive and at U.S. Route 42 West. These nodes can help focus attention so that the area does not seem as disparate and ill-defined.
- ▶ Enhance the image along the London Road corridor so that it has a character and image that is equally attractive to Pittsburgh Drive.
- ▶ Create a sense that one has entered a more deliberate, master-planned area, to enhance the image of this corridor and the sites and buildings adjacent to it. Gateway features and signage should build off of the 2014 City branding work and be unique and consistent within the Delaware Industrial Park area, especially along London Road and within the Activity Districts.
- ▶ Introduce landscaping and moderate buffering at the key locations (such as between heavier industrial and residential uses) to help “upgrade” the image of the area and enhance the overall aesthetic context.

B.8.9

Assemble sites. The City should continue to work with property owners to facilitate a collaborative, shared-equity based site assembly strategy among private property owners that helps to create a more coherent collection of parcels for development or redevelopment. Some specific steps to achieving this could include:

- ▶ Examining the market and investment potential for use of these sites and to develop a request for proposals from developers on behalf of the owners, who could work in a shared equity arrangement with a prospective developer or user (public-private partnership); and
- ▶ Creating an infill development strategy focused on recruiting compatible uses along London Road. As part of this strategy, the City would work to define heavy industrial areas that are protected from encroachment through zoning and other regulatory mechanisms.



Liberty Casting Company facility on Liberty Road.

B.8.10 Integrate new uses at key locations. In addition to the physical improvements described in Chapter 5, the City should protect industrial uses but integrate commercial and residential uses where appropriate to create mixed use environments. The Southwest Focus Area is relatively close to downtown Delaware and could become one of the City’s exciting, mixed use urban neighborhoods while supporting the existing neighborhood. New uses could be concentrated in a “signature” mixed use node located at London Road and Liberty Road. The Howald Industrial Park could be redeveloped for mixed use, potentially beginning with the sizeable, undeveloped parcel at the front of the Park, pending favorable market conditions. A use such as a microbrewery or small-scale distillery could complement the mix but should not adversely impact the adjacent, long-standing neighborhood. There is also the opportunity to integrate rental apartments or other residential into these mixed-use nodes.

B.8.11 Convert office to maker/tech space. Low-performing office space in the area could be converted to use by makers, small tech firms, particularly those originating from the adjacent neighborhood entrepreneurs. This space might provide an opportunity for move-up among incubator firms or small companies looking for affordable start-up space in the area, including those originating in other parts of the northern Columbus market. Amenities will help in marketing this space, especially for small start-ups, makers, and entrepreneurs. In association, a neighborhood entrepreneurial center may be explored in this area or along

BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES

One of the possible opportunities for integrating commercial / industrial “maker” uses into the Central Industrial Area would be through food and beverage facilities including a small-scale brewery or distillery. A microbrewery, along with restaurants, could help establish a hub for residents and workers in southwest Delaware and could also attract other consumers from throughout the City and beyond.

THE MAKER SPACE AT THE POINT

The Point at Otterbein University is a maker space in Westerville, Ohio, that is made up of five creative spaces for community members. The Maker Space has a design studio, woodshop, metal shop, computer lab and an advanced manufacturing lab. Community members can utilize the many machines and resources to create their own projects.



GOAL C: BUILD SOCIAL COHESION AND EQUITY

Foster Delaware’s sense of community across geographies, income categories and demographic groups and provide stable foundations for a high quality of life.

OBJECTIVES

- C.1 Make new residents feel welcome.
- C.2 Recognize diversity.
- C.3 Foster a sense of citywide togetherness and pride.
- C.4 Support aging in place.
- C.5 Empower residents to engage in civic life.
- C.6 Support equity in health outcomes.

OBJECTIVE C.1

Make new residents feel welcome.

Many Delaware residents feel great pride in their community and a strong sense of belonging. As new residents move to Delaware from elsewhere, it will be important to welcome them into the community so that they develop the same sense of attachment and feel accepted.

Actions

C.1.1 **Create and distribute welcome packets.**

Through a partnership between local businesses, HOAs and neighborhood or civic associations, welcome packets could be assembled and provided to new residents. The welcome packets could include community, local business and other information of interest for people who have recently moved to Delaware, including information about basic regulations and permits. There should be an emphasis on creating a citywide sense of belonging and pride.

OBJECTIVE C.2

Recognize diversity.

Delaware's population is mostly Caucasian but includes residents of all ages, income levels, races and ethnic groups. The percentage of minorities is also increasing. (See Chapter 3 for a summary of key demographic trends in the City.) Reflecting broader regional demographic changes, the City has been attracting more individuals with a country of origin outside of the United States. It also has been physically growing and includes two school districts. In order to build a stronger and more accepting community, the City should embrace and recognize this diversity.

Actions

C.2.1 **Organize implicit bias trainings.**

Government agencies, community organizations, school administrations and others may benefit from opportunities to collaborate and participate in training aimed at fostering an understanding of how implicit bias and cultural insensitivity can adversely impact certain segments of the population. This should include a focus on residents of different races, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities and sexual orientations.



A recent community art project resulted in a mural on the existing Ross Street building, owned by the City.

C.2.2

Conduct a research initiative focused on ways to acknowledge the history of underrepresented populations.

Organizations such as the Delaware African American Heritage Council and the Delaware County Historical Society have worked to raise awareness about the African American experience and to support the County's (including the City's) African American population today. A research initiative focused on ways to commemorate, recognize and/or preserve the heritage of minority populations should be pursued. Its outcomes could be a list of historic preservation priorities, historical markers, public art and/or virtual means of acknowledging the important contributions that minority groups have made to Delaware.



C.2.3

Hold heritage festivals. Delaware residents enjoy many festivals and special events. Organizing entities, in partnership with the City, should organize heritage festivals designed to bring an appreciation for different cultures and traditions to the community. Downtown has traditionally been the location of such events, but neighborhood-specific activities could also be encouraged. It may be beneficial to partner with cultural organizations based in Columbus or other larger cities.

C.2.4

Prepare a diversity, equity and inclusion plan. The City should hire an independent consultant to assist with creation of a diversity, equity and inclusion plan. The plan will explore past and current efforts. A commission on diversity and inclusion could be explored as a possible outcome to implement the plan.

OBJECTIVE C.3

Foster a sense of citywide togetherness and pride.

Many Delaware residents have a desire to build relationships across neighborhoods, school districts and geographic areas. Fostering these connections will improve pride in the City and commitment to working together to address shared interests. This can lead the community to celebrate the uniqueness of areas and people while promoting a singular Delaware Together ethos and broader community frame of mind.

Actions

C.3.1 Continue City newsletter. The City's quarterly newsletter serves as a source of information on topics of importance to people who live and work in the City. This resource could be expanded over time and incorporate specific information aimed at promoting a sense of citywide togetherness.

C.3.2 Host annual civic leadership awards. A citywide awards program would celebrate leadership in the community and could be geared toward both individuals and organizations. An event, organized by the City in collaboration with community partners, such as OWU, could bring people together and could serve as a fund raiser for community initiatives. It would support a sharing of information about people who have positively contributed to the City and in so doing would foster greater pride in and across all parts of the community.

C.3.3 Recognize homeowner and neighborhood improvements. A program should be created to recognize home improvements or maintenance efforts. This will encourage pride in homeownership and one's neighborhood. Initial focus could begin with individual homeowner recognition expanding to larger neighborhood awards. Ancillary activities such as an annual trash clean-up day could be organized. Local leaders could be selected as part of the reviewing committee for awards.



The City's newsletter is a tool that can be used to advance a sense of togetherness and pride.

C.3.4

Implement programs to make Downtown comfortable for all. Downtown is the community's gathering place and center of civic life. It is a place where the entire community should feel comfortable and welcome. Main Street Delaware and other City organizations should collaborate to ensure marketing and activities reach and the entire City population. Organizations should also work together to advance other actions that are a part of Goal C in this plan as they relate specifically to Downtown (for example, Action C.2.3, Hold heritage festivals). There should also be a strong emphasis on accessibility for all.



Events downtown should consider cultural programming that and focus on opportunities to make sure all feel welcome.

OBJECTIVE C.4

Support aging in place.

Older adults in Delaware have special needs that must be met if they are to feel welcome and safe. Actions can be taken to proactively address physical and social barriers for them and to make the City a place where they can thrive.

C.4.1

Create an age-friendly strategy. As the number of Delaware residents over the age of 65 grows, citywide guidelines for aging in place can help to ensure that the community is safe, comfortable and appealing to older adults. An age-friendly strategy for the City should be developed that aligns with and builds off similar Countywide efforts. (See sidebar on next page for details.) Elements of this strategy might include guidance on changes that can be made to homes based on mobility issues, as well as transportation, recreational amenities, social needs and other topics that emerged as important through the community planning process. The strategy would help in determining where to direct public resources. The City should continue to work closely with SourcePoint, the Delaware Public Health District and other partners.

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

The World Health Organization and AARP Livable Communities established eight domains or focus areas to organize the work of making a community more Age-Friendly.

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- Social Participation, Respect and Inclusion
- Employment and Civic Participation
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

For more information, visit www.aarp.org/livable-communities

C.4.2

Support Countywide age-friendly initiatives. Age-Friendly Delaware County is a local initiative led by the Delaware Public Health District aimed at creating a community in which residents of all ages can lead happy, healthy lives. The City should actively participate and support these ongoing efforts. This should also include collaborating with SourcePoint and the Delaware Public Health District.

C.4.3

Research multigenerational housing models. Models from throughout the country demonstrate an emerging trend of housing that brings people together across generations. Many different arrangements have proven successful. Benefits may include increasing attainability by providing cost savings, increasing social interactions, and improving safety, among others. Multigenerational housing may be designed to accommodate family units or others who are not part of the same family but desire and would benefit from such arrangements. They can include sharing an individual home, or living within the same duplex, multifamily complex or other single-family development. Increasingly, social services, programming and/or communal design features are integrated into multigenerational housing.

AGE-FRIENDLY DELAWARE COUNTY (AFDC)

Age-Friendly Delaware County's mission is to collaborate to innovate and improve key elements of livability that support healthy aging in our community. The Age-Friendly Delaware County process is guided by a framework provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) and is part of a national network facilitated by AARP. AFDC decided to focus on 6 domains of livability- Housing, Transportation, Community Engagement, Community Health & Safety Services, Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Communication & Information. The County completed an assessment in 2018 and is currently in year three of the five-year cycle in becoming an age-friendly community, which includes completing an age-friendly plan, implementing it and reassessing it every five years. Based on survey results and assessment, The AFDC Action Plan has 27 strategies and 82 action steps all specific to Delaware County and its residents. The plan can be viewed at: mysourcepoint.org/age-friendly.



SourcePoint, located in the City's southeast area, is a multifaceted senior center that offers a broad range of services and programs including in-home care services adult day care, chore services, emergency response systems, homemaker services, Meals on Wheels, medical transportation, mental health counseling, nursing services, personal care, respite care, and more.

OBJECTIVE C.5

Empower residents to engage in civic life.

A strong community will depend on the active involvement of residents in civic life. Actions should be taken to lower any barriers to involvement and foster a sense of commitment to government and organizational activities. This should include efforts to enhance diversity in both employment and involvement on a volunteer basis.

C.5.1 Create a forum for continued engagement in long-term community planning. Using the Delaware Together Steering Committee or an expanded platform, create an ongoing committee or forum for community input into long-range planning issues. The group would meet periodically to provide input on City policy and needs. They would also act as City champions or ambassadors to reach out to the community to obtain input and spread success stories. There could be multiple groups or task forces established to help with implementation of this plan's action items, potentially organized around the plan's goals or key topics.

C.5.2 Prepare principles for equitable engagement. The Planning & Community Development Department, in collaboration with neighborhood representatives, should prepare a set of principles to promote equitable engagement across demographic groups and neighborhoods. These principles could be utilized in planning processes throughout the City to help create a more level playing field for all who wish to be involved. Particular attention should be paid to groups who are traditionally underrepresented in planning processes.



A community process led to the creation of a mural on Andrew's House in Downtown Delaware that speaks to community ideals around social cohesion and togetherness.

C.5.3

Create a council of neighborhoods. A council of neighborhoods is an umbrella organization that would consist of representatives from Delaware's various neighborhood groups or formal neighborhood associations. Liaisons from each of the City's elected ward geographies or neighborhood associations would meet regularly to share information and ideas, and to collaborate on initiatives for common benefit. The council would also work with the City and other agencies to advocate on neighborhood issues, provide an effective forum for bringing such issues to public attention and promote implementation. It will be important to bring representatives together at least annually to foster a sense of togetherness between people from different neighborhoods.

C.5.4

Develop mentorship opportunities. The City Departments should collaborate to develop shadowing, mentorship, or internship opportunities for students to learn about employment opportunities both with the City and with local businesses. An internal mentorship program could include re-establishing a formal Youth in Government program with Delaware City Schools and the Olentangy Local School District.



OBJECTIVE C.6

Support equity in health outcomes.

Community public health has been a major focus area for the City during the recent COVID-19 pandemic. But even beyond the impact of acute public health emergencies, there is strong evidence that environmental, social and other factors impact individual health risks and outcomes (known as social determinants of health), and that these factors vary across any given population. The Delaware Public Health District and others have conducted numerous studies and plans focused on public health. This plan supports these recommendations through collaborative work and also specifically calls out priority actions that can be undertaken at the citywide scale.

Actions

C.6.1 Integrate data and recommendations from recent health assessments and related studies into planning and public policy. To create long-term healthier communities, planners, design professionals, engineers, developers, and public health professionals need to work together to address health needs and disparities. Recent data collected by the Delaware Public Health District makes a strong case for taking action in mental health and addiction, food insecurity, obesity and physical inactivity, and several other critical areas for the County. The City should work closely with the Health District and partners to integrate data and recommendations in these studies and plans into ongoing planning, policymaking and implementation strategies.

KEY HEALTH-RELATED STUDIES AND PLANS

At the countywide level studies and plans focused on public health include the following:

- ▶ Community Health Assessment (2017)
- ▶ Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP, 2019)
- ▶ Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL MAPPS, 2019)
- ▶ Age-Friendly Assessment (2018)
- ▶ Community Profiles (2019)

For more information visit www.delawarehealth.org/data

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Social determinants of health describe the relationship between conditions of place and their ability to influence a wide range of personal health outcomes. Examples of these conditions include safe housing, access to education, availability of fresh food, and quality public services. Local communities that pursue strategies that improve homes, schools, and workplaces, can promote better health for their residents and enhance quality of life.

C.6.2

Identify pedestrian improvement projects. Through zoning, building codes, planning, and policy, Delaware can make physical activity like walking and biking an easier choice. The City has a Complete Streets Policy and a “Safe Walks Program,” a sidewalk improvement initiative to provide safe pedestrian routes in all City neighborhoods. This program should continue as the primary way in which to identify and implement minor sidewalk improvements. At the same time, area plans proposed in this plan should include a sidewalk strategy that focuses on a high standard for sidewalk connections in both existing and proposed new neighborhoods. The City is also on the second adopted version of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017). This plan should be updated regularly and its recommendations should be implemented including by developers as developments are planned.

C.6.3

Develop marketing strategy for parks targeting disadvantaged and minority populations. In order to promote the City's parks to a broad spectrum of individuals, and to demonstrate that all are welcome, the City should create and implement a strategy to encourage the use of parks by all segments of the population. This could be implemented in association with recommendations regarding other general efforts to make parks inviting and accessible.

DELAWARE COUNTY HEALTH MAPPS

To understand the impact that obesity and food insecurity has on our residents, OSU Extension and Delaware Public Health District conducted a participatory obesity and food insecurity study for Delaware County. Community members mapped features of the built environment using the HEALth MAPPS process (Healthy Eating Active Living: Mapping Attributes using Participatory Photographic Surveys). It identified and described food insecurity issues in the County. The City should consider this work as it relates to the City and identify opportunities to collaboratively address challenges identified with the Delaware Public Health District.

For more information visit
<http://arcg.is/K0Ij5>

C.6.4

Adopt policies to address obesity and help alleviate food deserts. In 2018-2019, OSU Extension and Delaware Public Health District led important research on obesity and food insecurity in Delaware County. (See Delaware County HEALTH MAPPS sidebar on previous page.) The work resulted in eight final recommendations for the County. Each recommendation should be considered relative to the City of Delaware and specific actions identified in order to advance them. The recommendations are:

- Create an orientation guide to food resources
- Offer diabetic friendly options (or label) at food pantries
- Offer diabetic education cooking class
- Install signs to warn drivers of walkers
- Install a safe crossing between Aldi and Meijer grocery stores
- Add more fresh produce at food pantries
- Invite residents to participate in meetings of the coalition working on this initiative.



The Second Ward Community Initiative's community garden provides the opportunity for residents to grow vegetables.

PITTSBURGH'S 412 FOOD RESCUE PROGRAM

The mission of the 412 Food Rescue is to prevent good food from entering the waste stream by redirecting it to those in need. The organization that manages the program partners with food retailers, volunteer drivers and nonprofit organizations to connect surplus food with individuals and families who are experiencing food insecurity.

C.6.5 Prepare public health emergency information sharing strategy that derives knowledge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Delaware Public Health District has collected and made available via its website (delawarehealth.org/covid-19) resources relating to the recent COVID-19 pandemic, including information about testing, school/facility closures, businesses, travel restrictions and more. A hotline has also been created. Over time, it is anticipated that recommendations and regulations will change and that the resources the community needs will evolve. However, the disease is expected to continue to impact Delaware for the foreseeable future and the City's responsiveness to similar situations in the future should be adjusted to take into account what has been learned. The City has a page on its website where COVID-19 information is shared that could serve as a model for information-sharing with community members in the future, particularly those in vulnerable demographic groups (e.g. the elderly).



GOAL D: PROMOTE HOUSING QUALITY AND VARIETY

Ensure a broad spectrum of housing options to meet the current and future needs of the population.

OBJECTIVES

- D.1 Provide more attainable housing.
- D.2 Provide more affordable housing
- D.3 Diversify the housing stock.
- D.4 Maintain and protect housing value and character.
- D.5 Foster open communication with the building industry.
- D.6 Enhance linkages between housing and amenities.
- D.7 Encourage housing investment downtown.

OBJECTIVE D.1

Provide more attainable housing.

Meeting the housing needs of existing and potential residents, including workers at Delaware’s manufacturing and business facilities, is a priority. Addressing the need for attainable housing will ameliorate the cross-commutation patterns (number of people working in Delaware but living elsewhere because they cannot afford to live there and vice versa) that characterize Delaware’s labor market. It will also help to make Delaware a more complete community with a population that is diverse in income levels.

Actions

D.1.1 Provide incentives for attainable housing.

Regulatory incentives such as density bonuses or expedited review could be used to promote redevelopment of existing residential areas with promise for attainable housing (based on property values, house size and location). Incentives should be coordinated with the City's Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP).

DENSITY BONUS

A density bonus provides an increase in allowed dwelling units per acre (DU/A), Floor Area Ratio (FAR) or height which generally means that more housing units can be built on any given site. It’s a tool that’s often used to achieve certain community goods (e.g. attainable/affordable housing or more open space) in exchange for greater density.

D.1.2 Integrate workforce housing into plans for the Southwest and Southeast Focus Areas. As these areas are further developed, attainable housing should be part of the development in the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas to accommodate potential workers.

D.1.3 Provide grants, incentives and other financial support to maintain existing attainable housing. One of the most effective strategies for maintaining affordable / attainable housing is to ensure that existing stock remains in good condition. The City and housing advocates should lobby for State and Federal grants for improvements to existing affordable / attainable housing. Incentive programs (working with key partnership entities such as Community Development Corporations and Community Development Financial Institutions) could also be explored targeting key neighborhoods or areas.

D.1.4 Create a housing upkeep community education program. This program would be designed to encourage the maintenance of current housing stock by spreading awareness of available tools and programs (such as Federal and State loans). It could be coupled with a recognition program for beautification (e.g. annual awards) that acknowledges property owners with awards for maintaining attractive properties. It can be used to keep housing that might otherwise deteriorate in decent condition, helping to preserve attainable housing.

D.1.5 Review zoning requirements to identify changes that could support "missing middle" housing. The City should review its zoning code to determine if there are opportunities to encourage more missing middle housing (such as duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and multiplexes) especially in appropriate Focus Areas such as the Southeast and Southwest to improve transitions between uses.

ATTAINABLE PRODUCTS

“Attainable” housing has been defined by the Urban Land Institute as housing that meets the needs of those with incomes between 80-120% of the Area Median Income. However, other definitions can also be used. Key products include:

- ▶ More rental apartments, preferably those built in mixed-use or walkable formats that are well-integrated with the community;
- ▶ Higher-density single-family development, such as in the form of townhouses, vertical mixed-use, and O-lot line developments;
- ▶ Cottage-style communities, which include smaller units, duplexes and quads with smaller yards but high amenity value through shared open space, recreation amenities, and walkable development patterns;
- ▶ Rehabilitated existing housing in older neighborhoods within the city (could be leveraged through incentives and infrastructure investments).



The term "Missing Middle" was coined by Daniel Parolek of Optikos Design. Missing middle housing is "a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood." Many communities throughout the country, including Delaware, have recognized that providing more missing middle housing can assist in meeting increase demands for housing that is in a walkable environment and serves shifting demographics, including both younger and older populations seeking less maintenance and access to amenities.

D.1.6. Provide incentives for missing middle housing development. Developers can be incentivized to construct missing middle housing through targeted support. The City provides tax abatements for housing developers within certain targeted zones in the City, such as the Downtown. However, such incentives are subject to State policy as well as to constraints in the City’s budget. Incentives, such as density bonuses, might only be applied to projects of a certain scale and housing price, restricting use of the policy to a small number of units and thereby limiting its fiscal impact.



New multifamily housing north of U.S. Route 36/State Route 37 and south of Bowtown Road responds to growing regional demand for rental housing.

OBJECTIVE D.2

Provide more affordable housing.

In addition to attainable housing that is targeted to moderate income households, there is also a need in Delaware to support the provision of affordable housing targeting low-income households. This housing provides a critical safety net for people who are experiencing financial hardship and is especially important in light of the ongoing challenges caused by the COVID-19 crisis.

D.2.1 Continue to work with community organizations. The City should continue to work with non-profit community organizations to provide affordable and transitional housing, not only for the financially challenged but also for physically and developmental challenged individuals. The City should continue to actively participate in the Delaware County Housing Alliance. This will be an ongoing activity.

D.2.2 Study homelessness. The City and its partners should conduct a study of homelessness and recommend appropriate strategies. The study should be conducted in collaboration with the non-profit housing community to achieve an accurate, realistic picture of the extent and nature of the problem. It should suggest practical, implementable and approvable solutions.

D.2.3 Provide grants, incentives and other financial support to maintain existing affordable housing. Strategies similar to those described in Action D.1.3 should be pursued specifically to support affordable housing. The City might also encourage façade repairs to residential units by establishing a grant program to facilitate rehabilitation.

OBJECTIVE D.3

Diversify the housing stock.

Encouraging the retention and construction of a variety of housing types will help the City to attract new residents and accommodate the existing population as preferences and needs change over time. This will create a more robust housing market and provide the choice in lifestyles that will continue to make the City desirable in the upcoming decades.

Actions

D.3.1 Support senior and multigenerational housing. The City worked to bring to fruition the senior affordable housing project Riverside Landing at Delaware Place. The City should continue to work with for-profit and non-profit housing providers to facilitate the development of senior housing that is consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the City should support appropriate multigenerational housing products. This work should be conducted in association with creating an age-friendly plan for the City. (See Objective C.4.1.)

D.3.2 Support "empty-nester" housing. Some empty nesters of the Baby Boom generation are moving "down" (with respect to house size) within the Delaware market while others are moving to Delaware from other parts of the Columbus region, including more rural areas, in order to downsize and be closer to medical and other services. There is overlap in the types of housing in demand among this cohort with other attainable housing. (See Objective B.1).

AGING-IN-PLACE STRATEGIES

Aging in place strategies allow people to live in their place of choice while maintaining a high quality of life as they age. These strategies help to plan and overcome challenges relating to health, social and emotional needs to maintain a well-rounded lifestyle. Strategies should provide resources and amenities for the aging population in the community to encourage an improved quality of life.

Ensuring that housing accommodates older adults should be a cornerstone of any such strategy. Ideal housing products for this cohort include condominiums (especially two-bedroom / two-bath condominium units, according to brokers), 0-lot line developments, and "cottage homes" or small-lot single-family units in HOAs or similar shared maintenance arrangements. As this population cohort ages, then efforts will need to ensure that housing remains accessible, since the vast majority of seniors prefer to "age in place" rather than relocate to independent or assisted living developments.

D.3.3 Attract master planned developments with a mix of housing types.

Delaware can position itself as a more competitive community of choice for young professionals, families and others by avoiding “cookie-cutter” housing development, and encouraging more walkable developments that incorporate some mix of uses. Where possible, new communities should be integrated seamlessly with existing neighborhoods but not in a way where drivers are “lost” within cul-de-sac developments that are indistinguishable from each other. Delaware has the opportunity to attract master-planned development that offers a mix of single- and multi-family housing (including “missing middle” housing types) along with commercial uses in a walk-able environment. This is especially important in the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas.

D.3.4 Support traditional neighborhood development (TND) in the Southeast.

The Southeast Focus Area is well-suited for a traditional neighborhood development (TND) with its accessibility to employment and shopping nodes to the south around Polaris and Dublin and “backbone” road network as planned. TND in this location would need to be amenity-rich and offer a mix of housing products (single-family detached, duplexes, quads, apartments, condominiums, residential-over-commercial townhouses and cottage homes), along with Community-Scale Activity Centers as defined in Chapter 4. Ultimately, this will provide Delaware one of its best opportunities for attracting housing to meet the needs of young professionals, empty-nesters and others seeking alternative housing types.

D.3.5

Allow for smaller units on smaller lots in proximity to Downtown and in other selected locations. Cottage-style communities, which include smaller units with smaller yards are becoming a popular product not only as an affordable alternative but also for empty nesters and others looking to lower maintenance costs. Some areas close to Downtown, including the Riverfront and Near East Side Gateway Areas, are an appropriate location for such infill development. This would complement opportunities for rehabilitation of existing housing in these neighborhoods within the City by either for-profit developers or nonprofit entities. These development types should also be considered, where appropriate, in the Southwest and Southeast focus areas.



Delaware has many examples of high quality, smaller scale new housing that can serve as examples for future developments.

D.3.6

Create toolkit for increasing executive / high-end housing. There are opportunities to encourage housing to meet the needs of executives and professionals, such as those who commute into Columbus/Polaris/Dublin or who might establish offices in a newly branded Sawmill District corridor. The previous comprehensive plan indicated a need for this housing type, a need which still exists into the current planning period. The toolkit could include a number of components aimed at reducing costs and producing economies of scale for smaller niche housing developers. This may include one-stop design approvals (Action D.3.8).

D.3.7 Implement cost sharing on utility extensions. Within certain targeted areas, which would need to be further defined, the City could partner with builders who build specific, desired housing and require utility extensions to their projects. Such partnerships might be predicated on housing sales price, size or other requirements that meet the City’s objectives to encourage a specific housing development type by reducing the marginal cost burden that is currently borne by small builders.

D.3.8 Implement one-stop design development and approvals. “Fast-tracking” or “green taping” approvals can target developers, areas, and development types that are desired. This would minimize costs associated with development permitting.

D.3.9 Define and permit a wide range of housing types in the Zoning Code. An update to the City’s Zoning Code should include definitions for a range of housing and other building types, their design characteristics and their appropriate land use context. This can help support desired missing middle housing as described in Action D.1.5. Residential development intensity could be determined by design characteristics such as building type, height, distance from the street, location along arterial roadways, architectural variety and streetscape features (form-base characteristics) rather than by units-per-acre alone.



The Terra Alta subdivision, which was approved in March 2020, includes elements of a conservation subdivision.

D.3.10 Allow mixed housing types within new neighborhoods. While the City’s current zoning classification “planned mixed use overlay (PMU)” allows for flexibility in neighborhood design with multiple housing types, the PMU process is more involved than a conventional zoning district. An update to the City’s Zoning Code should build off the Suburban Mixed Residential Development Type presented in Chapter 4 of this plan and clearly define criteria for mixed or “traditional” neighborhood development and allow such development through a standard approval process. This can help support desired missing middle housing as described in Action D.1.5.



Delaware's traditional neighborhoods include a range of housing sizes and styles, allowing for different preferences to be met. This idea of housing variety within the same area can also be applied to new developments.

D.3.11 Ensure quality rental apartments. The City of Delaware has a higher proportion of rental housing than the County. However, the housing market analysis has identified a potential need for additional rental housing in the future due to increased demand. The need for more rental housing dovetails with the need for more attainable housing generally as well as changing demographics for home ownership. New rental units could help to retain and attract recent graduates entering the work force or employees at Delaware’s manufacturing and other industrial facilities, many of whom cannot otherwise find affordable, new single-family detached housing in the City. While the City must appropriately balance rental with for sale housing, quality of rental housing should also be a priority regardless of rent rate. Several actions can be taken to incentivize the amount and kind of rental housing that is available, including providing incentives for rehabilitation (Action D.3.12), incorporating rental housing into area plans for Focus Areas (Action D.3.13) and licensing rental properties (Action D.3.14).

D.3.12 Provide incentives for rehabilitation. Incentives could encourage rehabilitation of existing rental housing stock so long as it meets certain requirements and is brought fully up to current standards. Such incentives could help leverage improvements and upgrading to existing stock to enhance its overall competitiveness.

D.3.13 Incorporate rental housing into area plans for Focus Areas. As area plans are developed for the Southeast and Southwest Focus Areas, specific numerical targets and potential locations should be identified for new rental housing. To the extent possible, rental housing should be integrated with owner-occupied housing and should include missing middle housing types.

D.3.14 License rental properties. A rental registration program can assist in addressing some identified issues as well as facilitate code enforcement efforts. Such a program could require landlords to register rental properties before leasing them as well as assist the City in code enforcement efforts related to rental property. The City could provide inspections to ensure that properties are well-maintained, compliant with codes, and safe for habitation. The program should be designed to minimize the burden on and expense to responsible landlords.



Neighborhoods like the East Side have housing stock in a variety of conditions. Investment in housing on these areas will help to provide a greater variety of quality, attainable options.

D.3.15 **Conduct survey on first time home buyers' housing choice.** A survey of people who have chosen and have not chosen to live in Delaware (but instead opted to live in other similar communities in central Ohio) could be instructive in understanding what qualities of the community factor into housing choice. This could assist the City, realtors, the development community and key policy makers to understand what housing types, amenities, employment opportunities, costs and/or other considerations play a role in determinations about where to live. The survey could be re-conducted periodically to account for changing market conditions.

D.3.16 **Implement relevant recommendations from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's 2020 Regional Housing Strategy.** The City should review and identify recommendations from the study that should be supported through policies, programs or projects. A Local Housing Action Agenda should be undertaken with MORPC as a next step.

OBJECTIVE D.4

Maintain and protect housing values and character.

Current and potential future residents of Delaware desire to live in neighborhoods that retain high quality housing. This is important both to maintain housing values and to preserve existing character.

Actions

D.4.1 Continue code enforcement. Violations of code should be addressed in order to require property owners to maintain housing stock to a high standard. This will involve property maintenance as well as Zoning Code issues.

D.4.2 Discourage unsympathetic changes to successful existing neighborhoods. The preservation of existing housing stock that contributes positively to neighborhoods, especially in areas with a high concentration of attractive housing like the Northwest Neighborhood, should be a priority. New construction that is vastly different in scale and/or character should be avoided.



Renovating older homes helps preserve the character of existing neighborhoods while advancing fiscal and economic sustainability goals.



Entry feature of the new development Ravines of the Olentangy.

OBJECTIVE D.5

Foster open communication with the building industry.

Continuing to build the strong relationship between the City and the building industry will help to support clear communication and the sharing of ideas about critical development issues in the City. This should include, but not be limited to, coordination with the Building Industry Association (BIA) of Central Ohio.

Actions

D.5.1 Establish a city-builder work group. A city initiated and led work group of City Staff and builders should be appointed to create an open line of communication. The work group would include the region's builders and developers to introduce the City's regulatory process and to ensure an open line of communication on issues of concern to the building community. Members of this group should include several of the region's more active custom (smaller-scale, boutique) builders, including those that have not had extensive building experience within the City.

OBJECTIVE D.6

Enhance linkages between housing and amenities.

Planning and constructing housing that allows for easy access to services and amenities will help Delaware to continue to differentiate itself as a community of choice in central Ohio. This will require both innovating with respect to new housing and fostering connections between existing housing and amenities.

Actions

D.6.1 Incorporate Community-Scale Activity Centers into new residential neighborhoods when possible. As indicated in the presentation of the Southeast and Southwest Managed Growth Areas in Chapter 5, new residential areas should include nodes with commercial, civic and other uses that provide amenity value. This can help to market potential new residential development, reduce the need for car travel and improve the quality of life of residents.



Integrating community amenities within residential developments allows for easy access without requiring additional trips by car.

D.6.2

Explore opportunities to enhance neighborhoods through well-connected street networks and walkable blocks. The City’s land development policies should be reviewed relative to their ability to promote development that utilizes a street pattern of walkable blocks with minimal use of cul-de-sacs. Specifically, opportunities to increase connections to adjacent neighborhoods should be explored including retrofitting existing neighborhoods to provide connectivity. Preferences for neighborhood streets to include sidewalks on both sides of the street should continue to be expressed.



Connecting new residential development with sidewalks promotes travel by foot.

OBJECTIVE D.7

Encourage housing investment Downtown.

Delaware's historic downtown is attractive for those seeking a small-town lifestyle and walkable amenities. Historic architecture and unique destinations (the Strand Theater, Hamburger Inn Diner, Buns Restaurant, and a myriad of other shops and dining establishments) form part of the appeal. Overall, Downtown Delaware provides a “sense of place” that is very attractive and has potential especially to capture the millennial / Generation Z and empty nester markets. This includes targeted sites in the Riverfront District and South Sandusky Street areas.

Actions

D.7.1

Facilitate land assembly. The City should facilitate land assembly by working with property owners to package land and buildings that will support residential investment. A City Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) could prove especially useful in this effort.

D.7.2 Integrate expanded areas into Downtown. Integrate expanded areas into the traditional Downtown area as noted in this plan and consider opportunities to intensify uses in selected adjacent areas including permanent residences.

D.7.3 Establish a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the Downtown and part of the Riverfront and South Sandusky Street areas. A TIF district can be used as a mechanism for funding site-specific infrastructure improvements. This tool will serve as an incentive to encourage investment in new construction and substantial rehabilitation that may trigger infrastructure upgrades. It must be linked to an appropriate public infrastructure project, such as a parking garage.

D.7.4 Market Downtown to investors. A marketing package should be prepared that promotes the Downtown to residential investors and builders. This should include information on incentives, potential sites and demographics. Site tours should continue to be conducted by City Staff with potential investors and builders as requested.



There is great potential for housing areas in close proximity to Downtown like the Riverfront and South Sandusky that will attract residents for its proximity to Downtown's amenities.

GOAL E: LEVERAGE RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

Preserve and enhance key historic buildings and neighborhoods, natural areas and open spaces, transportation and mobility options, and quality facilities and services.

OBJECTIVES

- E.1 Continue to build city-schools relationship.
- E.2 Enhance parks and open space.
- E.3 Preserve natural environments.
- E.4 Enhance the urban tree canopy.
- E.5 Protect water quality.
- E.6 Bolster the public art scene.
- E.7 Preserve and reinvest in valued historic buildings, features and neighborhoods.
- E.8 Reduce energy demand.
- E.9 Create better roadway and vehicular connections throughout the City.
- E.10 Support multimodal transportation (bicycles, pedestrians and transit).
- E.11 Improve trash and recycling service.
- E.12 Provide safe and sufficient water and sanitary sewer facilities.
- E.13 Enhance fire services and safety.

OBJECTIVE E.1

Continue to build city-schools relationship.

The quality of schools is of paramount importance to the quality of life of residents and in marketing housing in Delaware. Since the last comprehensive plan, the relationship between the schools and other City departments has strengthened. Real Estate Agents, property Brokers, and others who had input into the generation of this plan agreed that good schools are one of the factors that contribute to the decision that people make to choose to live in Delaware over other communities in central Ohio. The City should continue to build upon its strong relationship with the schools to increase the City's competitiveness as one of the region's most desirable communities.

Actions

E.1.1 **Continue collaborations between City staff and local school districts.** The City should build upon relationships with local school districts (Delaware City, Olentangy and Buckeye Valley). This should include continuation of existing work groups and collaborations between City staff and School officials, and also representative Council members, housing developers and business leaders. School needs and tax issues will be proactively addressed. The City should support the Districts on planning and bond issues to fund capital facilities and programs. Local business partnerships with Delaware Schools should be enhanced and expanded.

GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT IN DELAWARE AND OLENTANGY SCHOOLS

Since the last comprehensive plan was completed, the Delaware City School's population growth and strategic investments in programs and facilities have led to a significant increase in students as well as a number of new and improved facilities. The City has seen an annual increase of around 100 students per year for more than twenty years and the trend is expected to continue. The reputation of the school system has been enhanced and a greater number of students are now benefitting from the schools than ever before. The Olentangy Local School District (OLSD) covers part of the City of Delaware and portions of the planning area within the utility boundary of the City in the southwest, south, and southeast. The District scores at the top of many metrics including having three of its four high schools (the 4th being too new to rank) ranked in the top 20 high schools in Ohio by US News and World Report. Multiple levies have been passed over the years by taxpayers to support the schools.

OBJECTIVE E.2

Enhance parks and open space.

The City's existing public and private parks and open spaces are key amenities that support a high quality of life. Their benefits for recreation, environmental quality and public enjoyment have been well-supported through the comprehensive plan process. This includes the preservation and enhancement of existing parks and open space that are accessible from the City's neighborhoods, as well as ensuring accessibility of parks and open space in new neighborhoods to the benefit of potential future residents of these areas as well as the public generally.

Actions

E.2.1 Develop and implement strategic master plan. During 2020, the City worked with a consultant to conduct an assessment of parks and recreational resources. A critical component to implementing a strategic master plan is consideration of renewing the Park Levy (.15% of the total income tax). The Recreation Needs Assessment 2020 should be leveraged for a strategic master plan for Open Space and Recreation that will update the existing plan and identify specific opportunities and recommend actions that should be taken to improve and expand upon existing resources. This plan will also address park and recreational operations. Finally, it should incorporate a Greenway Corridor element / plan as well.



Recreational amenity needs are better understood following the Recreation Needs Assessment 2020 and can provide a foundation for a strategic master plan for parks and open space.

E.2.2 Identify new park opportunities for the Southeastern part of the City. The Recreation Needs Assessment conducted in 2020 found a need for a community-scale park in the Southeastern part of the City. Every predominantly residential segment of the City has a community-scale park except the Southeast. In part, this is because the area is still developing. However, in the long term there should be a concerted effort to identify new parkland opportunities in this area and to better connect residents to existing parks (such as via trailways).

E.2.3

Prepare a riverfront access strategy. As part of the parks and recreation master plan, or as a separate, stand-alone effort, the City should develop a plan focused on how to expand and enhance opportunities for residents to access the riverfront and river. There is a high demand for recreational opportunities along and in the river. A coherent strategy should be developed that explores the breadth of options and recommends key physical and programmatic elements in order to maximize opportunity while protecting environmental quality and ensuring compatibility with other land uses and activities. For example a greenway corridor with bike paths should be established, secured and developed. It should connect and integrate with the larger regional and statewide network.



Throughout the planning process community members identified the river as an underutilized asset.

E.2.4

Revise and improve open space/ parkland dedication requirements for new development. Following the previous comprehensive plan, qualitative standards for parkland dedication requirements were established. However, the requirements should be revisited and revised in order to reflect the most up-to-date thinking about what kinds of parks best serve communities. From a regulatory perspective, establishing a "menu" of options based on type of park would allow for flexibility and a range of acceptable options while providing more explicit direction to the development community, enhancing likelihood of approvals.

E.2.5 Use Level of Service standards to identify need for new recreation facilities. The Recreational Needs Assessment 2020 includes monitoring and quantifying recreational facility needs and demand is needed to understand the Level of Service (LOS) for existing facilities. The City should incorporate expansion of facilities and services as population grows based on an identified standard so that the LOS can guide requirements and needed improvements. This information could also help inform an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) as described in Objective A.5.2.



The 13,000-square foot Mingo Park skatepark was funded through a unique partnership with local businesses and organizations, and through the fund-raising efforts of community youths.

E.2.6 Partner with local public and private institutions with large land holdings to maintain and protect their open spaces. Private institutions (as well as other public entities within the City's borders) often hold significant land that is or could be used as open space. The City should work with institutions to determine what is needed to ensure that these spaces are protected both for the benefit of the institutions and potentially the general public.

E.2.7 Collaborate with the schools to provide neighborhood-level recreation opportunities. The way in which recreational opportunities are provided to the public will be considered as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that is expected to follow from the Recreational Needs Assessment 2020. As part of this assessment, consideration should be given to how schools and the City can work together in providing the opportunities, sharing public resources without duplicating efforts.



Creative approaches to providing neighborhood-level recreation will be considered in future park planning.

E.2.8

Ensure open space and active recreation provisions in development standards.

Standards for new development currently include standards for open space and active recreation provision. In light of the desire by residents to ensure and better connect open space and active recreation, quantitative and qualitative standards should be provided and better defined.

E.2.9

Identify new urban natural area opportunities.

Since the previous plan was adopted, community gardens have become very desirable by communities seeking to increase green space, improve environmental conditions, provide for urban agriculture, and more. A proactive plan and strategy for expanding the number of community gardens in the City would benefit this growing interest. This would require working with relevant community groups and neighbors to discuss opportunities, mitigate potential adverse impacts, identify potential sites and form a network of individuals who are interested in helping to coordinate the effort. Pollinator gardens, where appropriate and not likely to cause a disturbance to adjacent property or people, could be included potentially to support bees, butterflies and other insects that sustain these species and the biodiversity they help to support.

PITTSBURGH'S ADOPT-A-LOT PROGRAM

The Adopt-a-Lot Program was established by City Council and implemented by the Department of City Planning to allow residents access to city owned vacant lots for food, flower, or rain gardens.



Image source: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/>

E.2.10 Expand programming partnership with Preservation Parks of Delaware County.

The Recreational Needs Assessment 2020 revealed a strong interest in ensuring that the City maximize its existing park spaces to meet the community's needs of more nature, environment, and outdoor recreation programming. One opportunity identified is to strengthen the relationship between the City and Preservation Parks of Delaware County (PPDC). PPDC performs this type of programming and increased participation could be arranged within the City of Delaware. Ensuring connections and trails between and to City and Preservation Park facilities has also been identified as desirable. The Stratford Ecological Center has been a major asset for the City and Hickory Woods Park on Pollack Road was slated to open soon after the adoption of this plan. Opportunities to continue to expand programming in these and other parks would be of great value.



OBJECTIVE E.3

Preserve natural environments.

Through a combination of managing new development and pursuing policies and programs, the City should seek to preserve natural environments and the habitats they support. This should be pursued while connecting and integrating them (where appropriate) to the larger community network.

Actions

E.3.1

Continue river and stream protection measures.

The City will continue to promote conservation along rivers and streams through the location of parks and open space, floodplain preservation, requirement of forested buffers, and promotion of conservation easements. This will include continuation of the following policies and programs:

- ▶ Public parkland and private open space along the Olentangy River and its tributaries should be acquired/ designated. Park impact fee funds should be set aside to acquire identified natural areas and preserves to protect the resources, provide for their connection to Greenway networks (where appropriate), and integrate them into the larger community.
- ▶ Development continues to be strictly regulated within in the 100-year regulatory floodplain. However, it should be recognized that portions of the built urban environment such as Downtown are within this area and should be allowed to continue and be enhanced over time.
- ▶ Permanent conservation easements are designated on public and private property along riparian corridors as appropriate and/or concurrent with development.



Coordinated river clean-up efforts help to raise awareness, while building community pride and improving the condition of the river.

RIPARIAN AREA

“Riparian area” means the transition area between flowing water and terrestrial (land) ecosystems composed of trees, shrubs and surrounding vegetation that serve to stabilize erodible soil, improve both surface and ground water quality, increase stream shading and enhance wildlife habitat.

Source: Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

E.3.2

Study the Delaware Run Stream Corridor.

The portion of the Delaware Run from approximately Blue Limestone Park east to the Olen tangy River is a highly channelized urban stream corridor with development dating back to the founding of the City along it. The entire Run area itself which extends past the western boundary of the City is also an opportunity for a greenway corridor, as per Action A.14.4. For the urban stream section, there may be opportunities to day light sections of the stream that are piped underground today, better channelize the Run to account for stormwater needs, and improve water quality within the Run. There are many existing property owners, businesses and residents adjacent to the Run which need to be allowed to expand, modernize and maintain their established use of property as well. The channelized portion of the Run itself in this area also has areas which need basic maintenance or improvement where the walls of the Run or the piping is in disrepair. As a complex urban channelized stream literally running through the Downtown, this portion of the Run requires specific study from a variety of perspectives in order to balance all the diverse interest and needs, prioritize improvements, determine sections appropriate for day-lighting (if any), determine practical and feasible water quality improvements, and account for basic stormwater management. The City should initiate such a study and proceed with its implementation during the planning period.



Images of the Delaware Run in Downtown.

E.3.3 **Ensure species habitat protection measures.** Revisit landscaping and species listing for permitted plantings to be more specific about excluding invasive species of plants. This will help to provide ongoing balance of the existing natural ecosystems.

E.3.4 **Prepare a detailed inventory and analysis of natural resources.** As a growth management tool potentially as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the inventory could be used to manage natural resources and limit development impacts. Such a database could include soil classifications, slope, vegetation, species habitat, riparian corridors, water features, and other resources. As part of her graduate studies work, Delaware Together Steering Committee member Stephanie Hauck extensively studied and inventoried natural areas, which could provide a starting point for the work in this action. Her work would integrate information from City Departments and field research within the planning area. This research could be integrated into the City's GIS data and could lead to revised regulations.

E.3.5 **Consider a natural resources zoning overlay district.** A Natural Resources Overlay District could provide compensation for setting aside critical identified land to protect such resources through an on-site density transfer. This would involve amending regulations to permit the transfer within a site of the gross density otherwise allowed by Code, to permanently preserve a portion of a site while allowing increased development on more appropriate portions of a site. This would need to be used only in cases where very high value critical reserves would otherwise be impacted not in association with normal and customary development.

INVASIVE SPECIES

An invasive species is an organism that is not indigenous, or native, to an area or habitat. Many cities have worked to discourage invasive species as new development takes place. In Delaware and the central Ohio region, invasive species such as Honeysuckle and Callery Pear are commonly used non-native species. Honeysuckle is especially problematic in riparian zones. These and other invasive species can change the ecosystem down to the microbial level, impacting aquatic, insectoid, avian, amphibian and terrestrial life. The City has occasionally removed invasive species but sustaining this effort and resource allocation remain significant issues.



The Stratford Ecological Center includes 236 acres of nature preserve and non-profit educational organic farm.

E.3.6 Create standards for Downtown and Riverfront District development. As part of a Focus Area Plan for the Riverfront District, the City should develop standards for development that will protect water quality and preserve public access. At the same time the plan should allow development to take advantage of proximity and connection to this currently underutilized resource. These standards can also be applied more broadly to the riverfront areas in the City. This effort should be connected to a riverfront access strategy as described in Action E.2.3.

E.3.7 Support existing State and City requirements for identified critical wetlands for preservation or mitigation. While conservation and mitigation of existing wetlands has remained a priority for the City, there is opportunity to potentially incorporate new, pocket critical and identified wetlands. These shallow marsh systems are designed to assist with stormwater management and support biodiversity. They can also serve as a valuable community asset for education if large enough and significant in nature (for example, if they include interpretive signage) and public enjoyment.

E.3.8 Conduct an anti-litter campaign. While anti-litter laws are in effect within the City, enforcement can be challenging. In addition to an ongoing effort to improve enforcement, a public education campaign to combat littering should be implemented, in coordination with Public Works, the Police Department, and the Delaware Public Health District. This could include a collaborative City and neighborhood effort to have a one-day clean up, such as a "Clean Up Delaware Day" similar to programs in other communities.



Delaware hosts many volunteer clean-ups, tree plantings and other opportunities for public involvement in environmental stewardship.

OBJECTIVE E.4

Enhance the urban tree canopy.

Delaware benefits from an urban tree canopy in many locations that provides aesthetic value, contributes to shade, reduces the urban heat island effect, provides stormwater benefits and provides natural habitat. Improvements can be made to the urban tree canopy in key locations.

Actions

E.4.1 Maintain and adjust policies and standards for the City's tree canopy. The City has policies in place to help preserve, enhance and maintain its tree canopy. However, specifications regarding ongoing maintenance, tree types and the number of trees in certain parts of the City should be revisited to determine if adjustments should be made. Methods of encouraging alternative site designs to reduce tree loss should also be developed and pursued. Other adjustments may include accounting for new street trees and required on-site trees to count toward replacement trees for any new development. In addition, trees that must be removed due to specific and unavoidable City utility placement requirements could be potentially exempted from the replacement tree requirements.



E.4.2

Prepare an urban forest plan. The Parks and Natural Resources Department should update its urban forest plan. It should be adopted by City Council and updated regularly to address ongoing and future issues. The Plan should outline resources and methods to adequately manage, plan for, and maintain the City's urban forest. Key elements of the plan should include addressing the following:

- ▶ Identify and Implement adequate funding for street tree maintenance. This should include examining if an additional monthly amount is reasonable within the stormwater maintenance user fee to fund street tree maintenance activities as street trees provide a direct benefit to stormwater management for the community.
- ▶ Ensure adequate width of street tree lawns. The space generally within the right-of-way reserved between the curb and the sidewalk is known as the tree lawn. This is where trees are typically planted. This area should be of a width that allows for good tree health and maintenance as well as minimizes the potential negative impacts on the adjacent public sidewalks.
- ▶ Consider changes to sidewalk construction standards. Sidewalk construction standards should also be considered that might help mitigate tree damage while being mindful of overall costs.
- ▶ Create a maintenance plan to care for the urban forest through various programs, such as a pruning plan, the removal of hazardous trees, and creating a more diversified tree canopy.

OBJECTIVE E.5

Protect water quality.

The quality of Delaware's water plays a major role in supporting a healthy natural environment for all community members to enjoy.

Actions

E.5.1

Maintain forest buffers along identified streams and tributaries. Forest buffers are important to filtering stormwater, which improves water quality by removing silt and dissolved chemicals that pollute surface water. The City amended its Code since the previous plan was adopted to require buffers. Development was also subsequently required to comply with new Ohio EPA regulations which the City is additionally compelled to enforce. Care should be taken to allow mitigation as provided for in regulations for ditches and minor stream resources while focusing preservation efforts on major identified resources within the regulations. Likewise, existing urban areas should be allowed to remain and reasonable enhancements made such as along the Delaware Run Downtown. (See Action E.3.2.) Code requirements should continue to be met and, where feasible, reforestation should also be encouraged.



Forest buffers along riverfronts help to filter stormwater and protect water quality.

E.5.2

Adopt stronger standards to minimize impervious surfaces. Impervious surfaces (e.g. parking lots, rooftops, driveways, streets) should be kept to a minimum to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff that is generated. This would also reduce the amount of storage required such as for stormwater retention/detention ponds. Green pavement types, reduced parking, decreased pavement widths, where appropriate, and other measures should be considered. The City should adopt standards that allow alternative surface treatments and/or reductions in parking lot requirements (such as a parking space limit). Consideration should be given to emerging management techniques such as rain gardens in the tree lawn. Demonstration projects could help inform the community of these benefits while enhancing the potential for acceptance.



An eco-paver used at an assisted living facility is an example of a permeable surface that can help with stormwater management.

E.5.3

Potentially integrate lower impact development into new development. The City should encourage Low Impact Development in new development projects. This will help to slow and filter stormwater to protect water quality. Green stormwater infrastructure can utilize natural areas, green spaces and parks to infiltrate stormwater at a neighborhood scale.



Permeable pavement has been installed at Blue Limestone Park helps to manage stormwater and provide numerous environmental benefits.

OBJECTIVE E.6

Bolster the public art scene.

As a complement to the City's vibrant downtown, Delaware boasts a number of high-quality arts-related venues and supports arts-oriented activities, including the Strand Theater, the Ross Arts Museum and the Central Ohio Symphony on the Ohio Wesleyan University campus, the Arts Castle, the Boardman Arts Park and independent galleries. Recent public art, including a series of murals, have also contributed positively to the City. These assets support the cultural arts in many forms and provide numerous opportunities for public enjoyment.

Actions

E.6.1 Establish an Arts Council. The coordinated development of the arts is a fundamental economic development strategy and enhances the quality of life of the community. This can be a complex and difficult undertaking. Many communities committed to this idea have utilized an arts council to coordinate and promote the various arts-related activities and events. In Delaware, the Arts Council would work closely with the City, OWU, and schools to implement initiatives. The City could also explore a Percent for Arts Program and could seek and develop outside funding for local arts organizations.

E.6.2 Designate an Arts District. An arts district in and potentially around Downtown Delaware would help to promote economic development, support artists and contribute to cultural opportunities in the City. There are numerous arts-related facilities and businesses in the Downtown. A formal Arts District designation should be made as a way of recognizing these facilities, attracting additional facilities, enabling grant and funding opportunities (such as art spaces, galleries, and artist lofts) and marketing the District. Following designation, an ongoing marketing effort should be implemented.



Public art in the City contributes cultural, aesthetic and economic value.

E.6.3

Amend City regulations to allow for and provide guidance on public art. Currently, there is no explicit direction provided for if and how public art can be approved in the City. Clear standards and requirements would assist the City in encouraging and considering new public art particularly in/on public property.



OBJECTIVE E.7

Preserve and reinvest in valued historic buildings, features and neighborhoods.

The City has a strong historic character defined by the Downtown, the neighboring residential districts, and extending east of the Olentangy River into the Riverfront District as well as the Ohio Wesleyan University campus. There are two districts on the National Register of Historic Places (Sandusky Street and Northwest), one area of the City that could meet the criteria to be placed on the National Register (Eastside Historic Area), and one locally designated district (the Downtown and portions of the Riverfront District) under the regulatory authority of the Historic Preservation Commission. There are also numerous individual structures that have been placed on the National Register. Finally, a number of historical markers, statues, murals and other features help to commemorate the City's history.

Actions

E.7.1

Expand the Downtown Facade Grant program. The City's successful Downtown Facade Grant program could be expanded to other parts of the City as an economic development tool. The program could be utilized to promote improvements to commercial properties in other targeted areas, supporting revitalization of these areas while encouraging preservation partnerships. Local funds could be used to streamline regulatory processes and demonstrate enhanced local commitment. The program has been funded to date with federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds recharacterized from Revolving Loan Funds (RLF).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of historic buildings, districts, sites, structures, and objects worthy of preservation in the United States. The National Register recognizes more than 90,000 properties for their significance in American history, architecture, art, archeology, engineering, and culture.

National Register Districts are distinct from local historic districts. Whereas local districts confer regulations that may restrict demolition or significant alteration of contributing buildings, National Register designation can allow property owners to take advantage of Federal Historic Tax Credits, which can be an important financial tool to support economic development and preservation goals.

E.7.2

Review and reassess East Side National Register Nomination or Local Historic District Overlay. A previous (2006) National Register nomination for Delaware's East Side was unsuccessful due to lack of community support. While this may still be the case, expansion of the local district could allow for expansion of historic tax credit opportunities, facade programs and preservation of investment through common and required standards.



Adaptive re-use of historic structures helps to retain the City's character while putting buildings into viable new use, often supporting businesses and the local economy. The church pictured above has been renovated for an architecture office.

E.7.3

Launch neighborhood preservation workshop program. In association with neighborhood and preservation-oriented organizations, a program should be developed that engages residents in the City's neighborhoods in learning about local historic buildings and places, educating them about the array of tools available to help them care for these assets, and to support them as they take action to ensure their preservation. The program would help in identification of historic assets that are most valued by community residents with an eye toward building neighborhood pride and empowering residents to document and articulate priorities for historic preservation to City agencies and property owners. Of special focus might be places associated with traditionally underrepresented segments of the population, such as racial minorities, immigrants and women. The Northwest Neighborhood Association has been engaged in these practices for many years and could serve a resource and a model for other neighborhoods. This has proven to be an economic development tourism vehicle and way to enhance visitation and spending from people coming from outside of the community.



The preservation of contextual buildings within neighborhoods helps to create distinctive and appealing communities that attracts resident and supports civic pride. Such preservation should also allow for sensitive change over time.

E.7.4 **Align private projects with State Historic Tax Credit requests.** The City can help facilitate private projects to align with State of Ohio Historic Tax Credit regulations to enhance the economic viability of projects while working to preserve valued structures in an appropriate manner. This could additionally support the expansion of local historic districts where appropriate.



The Arts Castle is an iconic historic structure in the City.

OBJECTIVE E.8

Reduce energy demand.

Many Delaware residents have expressed a strong desire for the City to be a leader in the region for reducing energy demand as a commitment to a sustainable long-term future. A number of specific actions can be taken to support this effort that will require local government coordination with residents and businesses.

Actions

E.8.1 **Research incentives for energy aggregation.** Sustainable Delaware (a private, local environmental advocacy group) and community members have been researching energy aggregation opportunities for the City of Delaware. City Council has even heard some initial presentations in this regard. Other cities in Central Ohio have successfully implemented such programs, which could be models for the City of Delaware. While the benefits of a program (financial and environmental) have been documented, the specific structure of an effective and appropriate incentive program for the City of Delaware has not yet been developed. The City should work with individuals who are knowledgeable about such programs to determine if and how incentives for energy aggregation could and should be pursued by the City of Delaware. Any aggregation policy should be designed so as to not discourage individuals or organizations from producing distributed energy.

CITY OF WORTHINGTON'S ENERGY AGGREGATION PROGRAM

Aggregation is when a group of customers join together to form a single, larger customer that buys energy for its members. The City of Worthington has adopted an electric aggregation program to lower household electric bills and increase renewable (green) energy usage. After receiving a number of proposals from energy suppliers, City Council entered into an agreement with AEP Energy that is intended to reduce the electric bills of participants and include the use of green energy certificates. Such programs could be a model for the City of Delaware.

E.8.2

Develop a local incentive program for green energy. Green energy includes sources of energy that are renewable, such as wind, solar and hydroelectric. Communities can benefit from increasing their share of green energy, ensuring local environmental benefits including improved air quality, fewer carbon dioxide emissions, decreased long-term costs, fewer service disruptions and the creation of jobs, such as research positions, technology developers and installers. In addition to existing Federal and State incentives, local incentives could be introduced to encourage businesses and homeowners to implement green technology. This program could be tied to a program to encourage green building standards including LEED certification.

E.8.3

Conduct an education campaign for Home Owners Associations (HOAs).

Improvements to address energy efficiency are often not well understood, and in some cases not allowed, by HOAs. For example, many HOAs do not allow solar panels. An education campaign should be created involving presentations that are understandable to local residents and supported by data from trusted sources. A task force of interested residents, City staff and others could take leadership for compiling information, scheduling meetings and presentations and providing resources online. Relevant industry representatives may be engaged to sponsor and/or assist with data gathering and information. HOAs could revise and align their restrictions to allow for these improvements and work with the City to remove any regulatory barriers to their implementation.



In recent years solar technology has advanced such that it can be added to existing homes without significantly detracting from their overall aesthetics. Above are photos showing the before condition of a house prior to solar panel installation and the condition after installation of panels that minimally impact its overall character.

E.8.4 Identify opportunities for a local Energy Special Improvement District (ESID). Ohio law provides for the creation of an ESID. The ESID provides for Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing (PACE) projects by working with a property owner to develop a plan for projects. The City of Delaware should either identify City-owned property that could benefit from creation of an ESID and/or discuss with developers their interest in creating an ESID for a particular development proposal. The City could identify entire districts that might benefit from this approach as well such as some of the Focus Areas identified in this plan.

**PROPERTY ASSESSED
CLEAN ENERGY
FINANCING (PACE)**

The State of Ohio's Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing (PACE) Program can finance investments in energy related improvements in new and existing real estate property, thereby reducing the operating costs of the borrower through energy cost savings. Eligible improvements include heating and cooling systems, roof, insulation, windows, and solar and geothermal projects. The PACE bonds are paid by the property owner with special assessments levied on the project. The program can provide up to 100% fixed-rate financing for a term not to exceed the expected useful life of the improvements.

OBJECTIVE E.9

Create better roadway and vehicular connections throughout the City.

Many improvements have been made to roadways and intersections since the last Comprehensive Plan was adopted. However, many long term roadway improvements remain to be completed. Additionally, with recent and anticipated new development further changes are recommended along with funding and implementation strategies to help plan for the costs of roadway construction and maintenance.

Actions

E.9.1 Continue roadway and intersection improvements, including those recommended in the 2021 Thoroughfare Plan. The City's 2021 Thoroughfare Plan delineates specific roadway and intersection improvements that are recommended in order to facilitate safer and more convenient travel throughout the City while enhancing economic development opportunities. Improvements as indicated in the Thoroughfare Plan should be prioritized in support of the other objectives put forth in this Plan and/or as funding is available. Pedestrian access points and supplemental transit infrastructure opportunities should also be integrated with roadway improvements.

E.9.2

Implement recommendations of Access Delaware. The goal of the Access Delaware engagement, planning and research effort, which began in 2018, was to seek input from the community on transportation challenges facing the City of Delaware, and also to get the public's thoughts on why the 2016 'Moving Delaware Forward' levy for street maintenance and transportation improvements did not succeed. The initiative delineated what a future initiative should do if it is to move forward. There are many initiatives and recommendations stemming from Access Delaware that should move forward, including consideration of a road levy to secure resources needed for roadways to be fiscally sustainable.

E.9.3

Consider adopting a Road Impact Fee. A road impact fee charge covers the cost of off-site road improvements necessitated by new land development. In 2018, the City conducted an Impact Fee Assessment and identified a potential road impact fees for its potential to strengthen the fiscal position of the City in light of anticipated continued population growth and development and needed capital projects as a direct result.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ACCESS DELAWARE

For future initiatives to move forward, they should adhere to the following guidance from public input:

- Adopt a 'Fix it First' approach to maintaining existing roadway infrastructure as a priority with available funds
- Potential Roads Levy should be limited to 5-year terms with renewal options pending public acceptance
- Large capital roadway improvement should have a firm time frame, reasonable budget, clear plans, and community support
- Projects with a high percentage of federal/state funding should be prioritized
- When City Council builds trust with the community, the community will fund subsequent projects.
- Current business plan isn't working (i.e. development pays for initial road and then years later City has to pay to maintain them).
- Provide the community with a feasible alternative for an 'outer belt', which will save existing roads from trucks.

E.9.4 Implement the Recommendations of the Downtown Parking Plan. The City should work to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Plan and regularly update it. One major item of the plan is to determine the viability of a Downtown parking garage. A parking garage Downtown could help alleviate parking demand during peak times and potentially support hotel and/or residential development such as more Downtown apartments. A study of the viability of this option should be conducted in order to inform decision making including identifying potential locations, costs and funding mechanisms.

E.9.5 Collaborate with adjacent jurisdictions regarding a potential Route 23 Bypass. Strategic planning has begun for the Route 23 Corridor from the southern Delaware County line to far north of the City. This work is focused on the alleviation of traffic congestion as well as development opportunity. The City should remain actively engaged in ongoing planning, including working closely with the County and surrounding townships as plans move forward. ODOT is in the initial stages of studying alternative routes for bypass travel along this Corridor and the City should be an active participant in this process.

E.9.6 Prepare for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) integration. The City has begun to plan for the adoption and implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) including signal system operation, dynamic messaging signs, traffic cameras and detection, and the continued advancement of semi and fully autonomous vehicles. The City should also remain active in participation at the local and state level in the development of policies to address increasing concerns over driver distraction.



Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) integration ensure more efficient and safe transportation in the future.

OBJECTIVE E.10

Support multimodal transportation (bicycles, pedestrians and transit).

Many Delaware residents have shared through the planning process that they would like to see an enhancement of transportation alternatives via improvements to infrastructure and service. These improvements, coupled with an effort to prioritize infill and redevelopment and to focus new development in key Focus Areas, is part of a fiscally sustainable, more sustainable and quality-of-life-centered approach to planning.

Actions

E.10.1 Implement bicycle master plan recommendations. The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2027 was adopted in 2017. This was the second such Citywide plan, updating previous efforts. It included an assessment of existing conditions, a public engagement and visioning process, and recommendations to implement the vision. The plan put forth a series of infrastructure projects, as well as program and policy recommendations that should be pursued in conjunction with this Comprehensive Plan.

E.10.2 Implement bicycle paths to link neighborhoods to destination points such as schools, business districts, the Delaware Community Center/YMCA and to community parks such as Mingo and Smith Park. Improved bicycle connections to these two community assets would assist residents in accessing them by means other than car. The active transportation route connections should consider more than recreation uses but also transportation corridors. The recommendations in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, including where bicycle paths could be built, should be implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN 2027

Following is a summary of plan recommendations, which include over \$14 million in projects to be implemented over the next 10 years as well as other programs and policies.

- Short and medium term safety and gap-closing projects;
- Miles of on-road facilities such as bike boulevards;
- Defining neighborhood streets as bikeways;
- Road diet projects where wide or under-utilized travel lanes may be repurposed as bike lanes, a center turn lane, and/or on-street parking;
- Projects that focus on better connections across the City and in the Olenangy River Corridor such as along Delaware Run, the Springfield Branch rail spur, and along US-23, to be implemented as grants and roadway improvements allow; and
- Program and policy changes to improve biking in the City of Delaware.

E.10.3 Implement a variety of pedestrian connections. Connections should serve both travel and recreation demand. Routes should include a variety of surfaces from paved ADA compliant routes to primitive recreation trails that make connections between higher level pedestrian ways and bikeways.



High quality pedestrian connections make travel by foot more convenient, safe and enjoyable.

E.10.4 Prepare and implement a plan focused on the pedestrian and roadway experience Downtown. Downtown Delaware is the urban core of the community. The streets, including US and State routes, carry a tremendous traffic volume for local and thru traffic. The area is home to residents, businesses, restaurants, civic anchors (such as City Hall) and several Delaware County facilities. With the growth of Downtown, there is a tremendous amount of pedestrian traffic. Downtown hosts sidewalk patios, festivals, farmers markets and many special events, which take place within the streets themselves.

The City should specifically study Downtown to account for this diverse array of needs and activities. This could be accomplished through a stand-alone Downtown transportation plan or in concert with a more general and encompassing Downtown strategic plan which is the preferred method to account and balance all interests, some of which could be competing for limited physical space. Elements to account for in such a study include ‘road diets’, extension of the sidewalk space, pedestrian friendly enhancements, access for multimodal opportunities such as bicycles and transit, as well as future opportunities with emerging vehicle technology related to autonomous vehicles parking and drop needs.

This effort must be co-sponsored by representatives of the downtown business associations as significant changes to parking, accessibility, vehicle travel etc. would be likely components of a plan. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants, for example, have found pick-up only street side spaces to be invaluable to maintain business and providing for customer needs.

E.10.5 Implement “complete street” design for new and existing roads. A complete streets policy was adopted by the City of Delaware in October 2020. The policy considers the public right-of-way, including sidewalks and streets, as infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and smaller motorized vehicles in addition to cars. The policy should inform new street design in association with the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan and will be especially important for new streets that may be constructed in Focus Areas where significant new development is anticipated.



E.10.6 Consider a shift to maximum parking standards in certain locations.

Conventionally, and in Delaware's current Code, zoning codes include parking minimum standards in order to ensure adequate supply of parking. However, in some locations, minimums can contribute to "over-parking," encouraging more vehicle trips that could otherwise be made by other modes of travel. It can also contribute to more hardscape surfaces, which results in more stormwater runoff. Maximums establish an upper limit on parking supply, either at the site level or across an area. Maximums may not be appropriate throughout the City. As zoning codes are revised the City should explore using maximums in locations where access by other modes is to be encouraged. Maximums could be implemented in association with transferable parking entitlements, so that the allowed number of parking spaces can be transferred or sold to another development if they are not needed. The City could also work with property owners to explore reductions in existing parking surface areas for the same reasons described above and to reduce maintenance costs to owners. (Examples might be Delaware Square, Delaware Community Plaza, Georgetown Center, Westfield and the Glenwood Commons shopping area.)



Over-parking can increase vehicle trips unnecessarily and should be avoided when possible.

E.10.7

Maintain bicycle and pedestrian connectivity requirements for new residential development. As part of a review of the City's Zoning Code, the City should continue to include requirements for sidewalks, bike paths and other accommodations for people traveling to, from and within these areas by modes other than car. Improvements should be in accordance with the most recent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. There may be very limited times when cash-in-lieu payments from development could be available to general citywide multimodal trail planning and construction.



E.10.8

Embrace and accommodate demand for new travel alternatives. Throughout the central Ohio region, alternative modes of transit are growing in popularity, including ridesharing and carsharing as well as shared bicycle and scooter services. Such services should continue to be taken into account as part of the City's transportation planning efforts, especially as new development increases demand.

E.10.9

Support Delaware County Transit Services. Delaware County Transit provides critical transportation throughout Delaware County, including fixed route, demand response and paratransit services. The City should continue to work with Delaware County Transit to sustain current routes to, from and within the City and to explore potential service enhancements to complement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. This is also an important transportation alternative from an economic development perspective to connect workers and jobs as described in Goal B. Similar partnerships with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) should also be pursued.



OBJECTIVE E.11

Improve trash and recycling service.

While the City takes pride in providing a high level of service, residents have identified opportunities to enhance existing service, borrowing from examples in other communities in central Ohio and beyond. This includes both examining opportunities to enhance what already exist and supplementing it.

Actions

- E.11.1 Study composting service alternatives.**
Composting has become popular nationally and within Delaware as a way of directing food waste to replenish and stabilize soil rather than adding it to landfills and incinerators. Other cities have set an example through partnering with private industry leaders in establishing a monthly composting service that could be instructive for Delaware. The City should undertake a study and cost benefit analysis to determine if a similar program could be initiated in Delaware.
- E.11.2 Study enhancements to recycling service.**
In an effort to reduce the City's overall waste, the City should study potential enhancements to existing service. This may include a study and cost benefit analysis in exploring a program to provide recycling services to schools and restaurants. The City has recently moved to pilot providing single stream (co-mingled) residential curbside recycling collection in response to industry demand. The City will further be piloting the use of tip cart residential curbside recycling collection in 2021, an effort receiving large community support in advance of the first phase roll out. Together, these initiatives should enhance recycling services and improve participation rates.

E.11.3 **Make hazardous waste recycling more convenient.** More convenient and regular service to recycle hazardous waste (such as paint, batteries, etc.) has been identified as a community priority. Additional locations and-or pick-up days could be explored as well as volunteer-led efforts to supplement City services. The City has been working closely with both Delaware County and the Delaware, Knox, Marion, Morrow Waste District to establish such services within the Delaware Community, likely in association with the development of the new Waste Transfer Facility just north of the City. These additional services will need to be marketed to the community.

E.11.4 **Assess zero waste policies.** The United States Environmental Protection Agency defines zero waste as "The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health." Cities throughout the U.S. have adopted zero waste standards to strive toward zero waste through a combination of policies and projects. The City should review the policies of other cities to determine if similar standards should be adopted in Delaware.

E.11.5 Explore a “Downtown collection district.”

Waste management in urban cores present a host of difficulties in the provision of a uniform, dependable and cost-effective solution to refuse collection. The City should explore opportunities to develop a “Downtown collection district” whereby collection is managed by a single operator through city contract and with private access agreements with property owners. The City has been successful in piloting publicly accessible dumpster collection for several blocks downtown. Expanding this initiative would result in competitive pricing, reduced number of refuse vehicles in the core, and greater control over waste management aesthetics and illegal dumping.



OBJECTIVE E.12

Provide safe and sufficient water and sanitary sewer facilities.

Planning for water and sanitary sewer must be considered in parallel with land use planning in order to promote development that is fiscally prudent, environmentally sustainable and makes the best use of land resources. Utilities decisions should inform land use decisions and, conversely, land use decisions should take into account available utilities. The City can proactively coordinate these efforts.

Actions

- E.12.1 Implement water and sewer master plans.** The City must implement water and sewer master plans in order to assess the current service relative to demands placed by land uses and activities and to provide a framework for future actions. The plans provide an important roadmap to ensure a match between where, how much and what type of service is provided.
- E.12.2 Keep water and sewer plans updated.** Water and sewer plans should be regularly updated including in accordance with the adoption and implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.
- E.12.3 Assess policies requiring annexation.** Currently annexation is generally required when utilities are to be extended. In particular, as Focus Areas identified in this plan are developed, it will be important to be strategic about annexation relative to water and sanitary sewer provision. In addition, there may be other unique situations that may require an approach that differs from what is usually pursued.

WATER AND SEWER SERVICE IN DELAWARE

The City of Delaware's primary water source is the Olen tangy River. The City has the capability to blend this river water with groundwater from wells drilled to more than 200 feet deep. Delaware's water plant treats and distributes an average of 3.3 million gallons per day to more than 12,000 customers through 190 miles of water lines and 2,000 fire hydrants. The sewer, or wastewater, division collects and treats domestic and industrial wastewater discharge and returns it to the Olen tangy River in an environmentally safe and clean way. The system includes 175 miles of sewer line, 3,250 manholes and 12 pump stations. (Source: City of Delaware)

OBJECTIVE E.13

Enhance fire services and safety.

As the population of the City continues to grow, an emphasis on maintaining and expanding citywide fire services will be important for public safety.

Actions

E.13.1 Incentivize sprinkler systems for historic buildings. Although not a requirement for the State of Ohio, installing sprinkler systems in historic buildings, especially in the downtown core, could become an important fire safety standard for the City in the future. Grant funding could incentivize the installation of these sprinkler systems. One of the potential funding streams the City could consider is a portion of an income tax that is directed toward the fire department.

E.13.2 Construct a new fire station in the Far East Side Focus Area. As growth and development continues in the Far East Side Focus Area, there will be a need for another fire station. This new fire station will ensure the health and safety of residents as the area is populated.



Fire Station 304 was completed in 2019 at Cheshire Road and Glenn Parkway designed to increase public safety in the southeast corner of the City, where the population has grown to more than 5,000 residents.

GOAL F: ENSURE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Promote development, land use, infrastructure and other policies that will support a healthy fiscal position.

OBJECTIVES

- F.1 Continue practices that support sound fiscal planning.
- F.2 Build upon existing fiscal policies with new tools and strategies.
- F.3 Link land use planning to fiscal policy.
- F.4 Improve data collection to support fiscal analysis and decision-making.

OBJECTIVE F.1

Continue practices that support sound fiscal planning.

Delaware is in a strong fiscal position, but long-term fiscal health will require ongoing attention. The City has a number of procedures and practices in place that should be maintained.

Actions

- F.1.1** **Maintain the City’s history of receiving clean audits and adhering to financial policies.** Delaware has an exemplary record of conducting appropriate auditing and following policies to ensure that the fiscal conditions are well understood and transparently communicated. Current policies and protocols should be continued.
- F.1.2** **Continue management practices for distributing revenues toward costs.** The City should continue current practices for managing and reporting on revenue distribution through the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Capital Projects Funds; Debt Service Funds, and Enterprise Funds.
- F.1.3** **Continue pay-as-you-go practices.** Funding for improvements includes pay-as-you go funding out of current revenues for lower cost improvements. This includes grants, bonds and impact fees. These practices should continue to be utilized in order to maintain levels of service as new development takes place and new demands arise.

OBJECTIVE F.2

Build upon existing fiscal policies with new tools and strategies.

As Delaware continues to grow and evolve, it will be important to adapt and adopt new policies that will help to promote fiscal health.

Actions

F.2.1 Obtain a credit rating enhancement from Moody's. The City currently maintains a good credit rating of Aa2. However, the City should seek to obtain an Aa1 rating from Moody's on its general obligation department to reduce interest expense on outstanding and future long term debt. This will allow the City to sell its bonds to investors at lower interest rates, thereby reducing the cost of financing capital improvements over time.

F.2.2 Develop a long term and sustainable funding source for the maintenance of the City's roadway infrastructure. As presented in this Comprehensive Plan, the most recent effort to pursue a tax levy to support roadway infrastructure was not successful. With information gathered through Access Delaware, and in accordance with the recommendations in this plan, the City should pursue road impact fees and/or other mechanisms that may be used to support new roadway infrastructure that will be required to realize the new development anticipated in this plan.



The renovated south entranceway to City Hall welcomes community members to the new utility counter.

F.2.3 Prepare estimate of fiscal impacts of development. As follow-up to this Comprehensive Plan, the City should hire a consultant to prepare an analysis of the City's general fund account for the last ten or more years. This analysis will be used to conduct a Return on Investment analysis as described in Action A.3.1. The purpose is to have a more nuanced understanding about which development will and will not pay for itself. The findings can then be used and weighed alongside with other considerations, to make decisions about which development types should be pursued in which locations in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan.

OBJECTIVE F.3

Link land use planning to fiscal policy.

In making future land use decisions and implementing the recommendations in this plan, it will be essential to consider and take into account fiscal impacts. A series of recommendations are presented in Objective A.3, which are also summarized below.

F.3.1 Conduct a “return on investment” analysis for major development proposals. A fiscal return on investment (ROI) analysis would determine the net fiscal benefits to the City relative to costs for providing public improvements to support a development. In order to support this Action an estimate of the fiscal impact of different development types should be completed as described in Action F.2.3. See Action A.3.1 for more information.

F.3.2 Allow TIF districts in selected locations.
The City currently has 10 TIF Districts in place. While state-wide legislation enacted since the last comprehensive plan has made some changes to how TIF districts work, reducing some of their benefits to municipalities, in certain cases TIFs may still be desirable in selected locations. They can be an important tool in helping municipalities to afford needed infrastructure related to every development type. See Action A.3.2 for more information.

F.3.3 Study increase in fees for services. The City collects engineering fees and building and zoning fees for development, among others. Increasing fees could help generate revenue to support new development as it takes place. See Action A.3.3 for more information.

F.3.4 Consider increasing development impact fees. In 2001, the City of Delaware began collecting impact fees. Increasing fees could help generate revenue to support new development as it takes place. Fees need to be carefully and specifically set to ensure their defensibility and their connection to the community's need for the capital items they relate to. In 2018, the City commissioned an update to prior fee study. The update is currently in draft form. The City should work to finalize the update and determine any subsequent implementation. See Action A.3.4 for more information.

OBJECTIVE F.4

Improve data collection to support fiscal analysis and decision-making.

The ability to make sound fiscal decisions depends on accurate and useful data. The City should strive to keep existing data current and, when possible, should implement new data collection strategies.

Actions

- F.4.1** **Develop a strategy for income tax data collection.** Currently, the City does not have an accurate and reliable way of capturing income tax data. However, having solid income tax data could provide valuable information that could tie to land use types. The City should look to other communities and explore options for better income tax data collection.

Chapter 8 Implementation



8. IMPLEMENTATION

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used on a day-to-day basis to guide the work of the City of Delaware's Planning and Community Development Department, other City departments and a range of organizations with a stake and an interest in seeing the plan's recommendations come to fruition. Following is a summary of how decisions and processes should align with the Goals, Objectives and Actions of the plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Goals, Objectives and Actions.

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

Economic incentives should be considered and prioritized relative to their consistency with the Comprehensive Plan's Goals, Objectives and Actions and especially the Focus Areas identified in the plan.

DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS

Administrative and legislative approvals for development proposals may be pursued as a means of implementing the plan. Decisions by planning entities should reference relevant Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives and Actions as well as the Character and Land Use recommendations.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS

Property owners and developers should consider the Goals, Objectives and Actions of the Comprehensive Plan in their land planning and investment decisions. Public decision makers can use the Comprehensive Plan as a guide to consider whether private development is meeting the needs and aspirations of the City.

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMS

Individual departments, administrators, boards and commissions should be cognizant of the Goals, Objectives and Actions in the Comprehensive Plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Revisions to existing tools for implementation should be made in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Consideration of any potential new regulatory or non-regulatory tools should also reflect the plan's recommendations.

MATRIX

The following table provides more information on each Action including timeframes and identification of a lead coordinating entity.

TIMEFRAME KEY

- O = Ongoing
- S = Short term (0-3 years)
- M = Med. term (3-6 years)
- L = Long term (6+ Years)

LEAD AND SECONDARY CPOORDINATOR KEY

- CMO = City Manager's Office
- DPHD = Delaware Public Health District
- ED = Economic Development
- FIN = Finance Department
- MSD = Main Street Delaware
- NNA = Northwest Neighborhood Association
- ODOT = Ohio Department of Transportation
- Partners = a range of public and private partners and agencies
- PCD = Planning & Community Development
- PNR = Parks & Natural resources
- PPDC = Preservation Parks of Delaware County
- PSG = Public Service Group – CMO, PCD, PW, PU, PNR, ED, FIN
- PU = Public Utilities
- PW = Public Works
- OWU = Oho Wesleyan University



Actions	Timeframe	Lead	Secondary
A.1.1 Adopt mixed-use zoning districts.	S	PCD	
A.1.2 Provide regulatory incentives.	M	PCD	ED
A.1.3 Allow mixed housing types within new neighborhoods.	S	PCD	
A.1.4 Work with experienced developers.	O	PCD	
A.10.1 Require coordinated development on larger parcels.	O	PSG	
A.10.2 Assess impact of post-COVID-19 upon commercial development.	S	ED	
A.11.1 Implement Action A.17.2, Target property tax incentives.	S	ED	FIN / PCD
A.11.2 Establish a City CIC and Partner with the County Land Bank.	S	ED	
A.11.3 Create a commercial vacancy inventory.	S	ED	
A.11.4 Assess incentive options for vacant storefront utilization.	S	ED	
A.11.5 Establish a pop-up retail program.	S	ED	
A.12.1 Maintain current required environmental analysis.	O	PCD	
A.12.2 Develop a program to promote energy efficient buildings.	S	PCD	FIN
A.12.3 Revise requirements for landscaping and species listings.	S	PNR	PCD
A.12.4 Develop new standards for roads in subdivisions.	M	PW	PSG
A.12.5 Require developers to show greenspace connectivity.	S	PCD	PNR
A.12.6 Audit Zoning Code to identify opportunities for Low Impact Development (LID).	S	PCD	
A.12.7 Pursue pilot LID projects.	M	PCD	
A.13.1 Conduct an inventory and audit of brownfield sites in the City.	L	ED	PCD
A.13.2 Prioritize vacant brownfield sites for redevelopment.	O	ED	
A.13.3 Establish a brownfield remediation program.	L	ED	
A.14.1 Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2027.	O	PNR	
A.14.2 Update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as needed to address growth and development.	L	PNR	
A.14.3 Provide connections from newly developed areas to greenway corridors.	O	PNR	
A.14.4 Create Greenway Master Plan	S	PNR	PCD
A.15.1 Prepare Area Plans.	M	PCD	
A.15.2 Align zoning overlay district regulations to area plans.	M	PCD	
A.15.3 Consider incentives.	M	ED	
A.16.1 Prepare Area Plans.	M	PCD	
A.17.1 Focus beautification efforts.	O	PSG	
A.17.2 Target property tax incentives.	S	ED	
A.17.3 Create design guidelines.	M	PCD	
A.18.1 Continue to pursue sensitive infill and redevelopment.	O	PCD	ED
A.18.2 Follow best practice in historic preservation.	O	PCD	
A.18.3 Study the expansion of the downtown area's planning boundary.	S	PCD	ED
A.18.4 Identify potential sites appropriate for intensification.	S	PCD	ED
A.18.5 Support economic development efforts.	O	ED	
A.19.1 Coordinate with campus master planning.	O	PSG	OWU
A.19.2 Ensure campuses do not isolate, but rather foster social and physical connections with the built environment.	O	PSG	OWU
A.2.1. Identify appropriate locations for quality, higher-density development.	M	PCD	
A.2.2 Create design guidelines.	M	PCD	
A.2.3 Create policies regarding density bonuses for developers.	M	PCD	
A.20.1 Formulate a task force.	S	PCD	
A.20.2 Develop zoning strategy.	S	PCD	
A.20.3 Assess potential form-based approach.	S	PCD	
A.20.4 Assess potential of a Unified Development Ordinance.	S	PCD	
A.20.5 Implement preferred Zoning Code change.	M	PCD	
A.21.1 Review and revise CIP.	O	CMO	FIN
A.3.1 Conduct a "return on investment" analysis for major development proposals.	S	PCD	ED
A.3.2 Allow TIF districts in selected locations.	O	PSG	FIN
A.3.3 Study increase in fees for services.	S	CMO	PCD / PW
A.3.4 Consider increasing development impact fees.	S	CMO	
A.4.1 Create guidelines for supporting annexations.	S	CMO	PSG
A.4.2 Develop criteria to be used for development outside of Focus Areas.	M	PCD	
A.5.1. Pursue recommendations of the City's Thoroughfare and Transportation Improvement plans.	O	PW	
A.5.2 Assess potential for an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO).	M	PSG	
A.5.3 Support recommendations in Goal E, Leverage resources, infrastructure and amenities.	O	CMO	PSG
A.6.1 Become Full Member of Delaware County Regional Planning Commission (DCRPC).	S	CMO	PCD
A.6.2 Coordinate with Route 23 Corridor Strategic Guide.	M	PCD	PSG
A.6.3 Prepare joint land use plans with DCRPC in priority locations.	O	PCD	
A.6.4 Continue to participate in the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) as a member.	O	CMO	
A.6.5 Participate in key regional studies and plans.	O	CMO	PSG

Actions	Timeframe	Lead	Secondary
A.7.1 Update design guidelines for residential subdivisions.	M	PCD	
A.7.2 Review and assess conservation subdivision overlay district.	M	PCD	
A.7.3 Create an entranceway matching grant program.	M	PCD	ED
A.8.1 Update corridor design guidelines.	M	PCD	
A.9.1 Require transition areas at edges of development.	O	PCD	
B.1.1 Continue to conduct marketing and recruitment.	O	ED	
B.1.2 Create strong economic development brand.	S	ED	
B.1.3 Advance infrastructure into Focus Areas when possible.	O	PSG	OWU
B.2.1 Continue work of the Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce economic development advisory team.	O	ED	Partners
B.2.2 Continue participation in the Mid-Ohio Development Exchange (MODE).	O	ED	
B.2.3 Establish a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).	S	ED	
B.2.4 Continue participation in One Columbus.	O	ED	
B.3.1 Develop a recruitment strategy for industries that benefit from airport proximity.	S	ED	PW
B.3.2 Support recommendations of the Airport Master Plan, Facility Plans, and the Strategic Business Plan	S	ED	PW
B.3.3 Establish a Delaware concierge airport hub.	L	ED	PW
B.4.1 Expand small business infrastructure and incentives.	O	ED	
B.4.2 Develop an entrepreneur mentorship/partnership program.	S	ED	
B.4.3 Broaden Planned Business Overlay Zoning District.	M	PCD	
B.4.4 Create a pop-up retail support program.	S	ED	PSG
B.4.5 Provide trainings on other non-traditional financing options.	O	ED	
B.4.6 Implement entrepreneurship recommendations as stated in the Economic Development Strategic Plan.	O	ED	
B.5.1 Create a tourism development plan.	M	ED	
B.5.2 Implement cultural arts strategies.	O	PSG	
B.5.3 Establish a welcome center.	S	MSD	CMO
B.6.1 Strengthen ready-for-work programs.	O	ED	
B.6.2 Expand workforce-oriented transit.	M	ED	
B.6.3 Increase the amount of workforce housing.	L	PSG	
B.6.4 Conduct and periodically review analysis pertaining to Workforce of the Future.	O	ED	
B.6.5 Expand mentorship programs.	S	ED	OWU
B.7.1 Implement Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP).	O	ED	
B.7.2 Link incentives to fiscal return requirement.	O	ED	
B.7.3 Continue to use CRA and tax abatements.	O	ED	
B.7.4 Continue to work with Delaware County and the State to structure incentives.	O	ED	
B.7.5 Support Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) where appropriate.	O	CMO	ED
B.7.6 Pursue TIFs where appropriate.	O	CMO	
B.8.1 Implement strategies to diversify the economic base.	O	ED	
B.8.10 Integrate new uses at key locations.	O	PCD	ED
B.8.11 Convert office to maker/tech space.	M	ED	
B.8.2 Create a Southwest Area Plan.	M	PCD	PSG
B.8.3 Create an infrastructure plan.	S	PSG	
B.8.4 Create southwest business consortium.	S	ED	
B.8.5 Create strategy to attract resident employers.	O	ED	
B.8.6 Brand the area.	S	PCD	ED
B.8.7 Create sustainability targets.	M	PSG	
B.8.8 Create Activity Districts, gateways and physical improvements.	L	PNR	PCD / ED
B.8.9 Assemble sites.	M	ED	
C.1.1 Create and distribute welcome packets.	S	CMO	
C.2.1 Organize implicit bias trainings.	O	Community	
C.2.2 Conduct a research initiative focused on ways to acknowledge the history of underrepresented populations.	S	Partners	CMO
C.2.3 Hold heritage festivals.	S	Partners	CMO
C.2.4 Prepare a diversity, equity and inclusion plan.	S	CMO	
C.3.1 Continue City newsletter.	O	CMO	
C.3.2 Host annual civic leadership awards.	M	CMO	
C.3.3 Recognize homeowner and neighborhood improvements.	M	CMO	
C.3.4 Implement programs to make Downtown comfortable for all.	O	MSD	CMO
C.4.1 Create an age-friendly strategy.	M	PSG	Sourcepoint / DPHD
C.4.2 Support Countywide age-friendly initiatives.	O	PSG	Sourcepoint / DPHD
C.4.3 Research multigenerational housing models.	M	PCD	
C.5.1 Create a forum for continued engagement in long-term community planning.	M	PCD	
C.5.2 Prepare principles for equitable engagement.	M	PCD	
C.5.3 Create a council of neighborhoods.	L	PCD	CMO
C.5.4 Develop mentorship opportunities.	O	CMO	Partners

Actions	Timeframe	Lead	Secondary
C.6.1 Integrate data and recommendations from recent health assessments and related studies into planning and	M	CMO	DPHD
C.6.2 Identify pedestrian improvement projects.	O	PW	PNR
C.6.3 Develop marketing strategy for parks targeting disadvantaged and minority populations.	S	PNR	
C.6.4 Adopt policies to address obesity and help alleviate food deserts.	L	CMO	DPHD
C.6.5 Prepare public health emergency information sharing strategy that derives knowledge from the COVID-19 pandemic.	S	CMO	DPHD
D.1.1 Provide incentives for attainable housing.	M	PCD	ED
D.1.2 Integrate workforce housing into plans for the Southwest and Southeast Managed Focus Areas.	L	PCD	
D.1.3 Provide grants, incentives and other financial support to maintain existing attainable housing.	O	PCD	
D.1.4 Create a housing upkeep community education program.	M	PCD	
D.1.5 Review zoning requirements to identify changes that could support for "missing middle" housing.	S	PCD	
D.1.6 Provide incentives for missing middle housing development.	M	CMO	PCD
D.2.1 Continue to work with community organizations.	O	CMO	
D.2.2 Study homelessness.	M	Partners	PCD
D.2.3 Provide grants, incentives and other financial support to maintain existing affordable housing.	O	PCD	
D.3.1 Support senior and multigenerational housing.	O	CMO	PCD / Partners
D.3.10 Allow mixed housing types within new neighborhoods.	O	PCD	
D.3.11 Ensure quality rental apartments.	M	PCD	
D.3.12 Provide incentives for rehabilitation.	M	PCD	
D.3.13 Incorporate rental housing into area plans for Focus Areas.	M	PCD	
D.3.14 License rental properties.	S	PCD	
D.3.15 Conduct survey on first time home buyers' housing choice.	S	CMO	Partners
D.3.16 Implement relevant recommendations from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's 2020 Housing Strategy.	O	PCD	
D.3.2 Support "empty-nester" housing.	O	CMO	PCD
D.3.3 Attract master planned developments with a mix of housing types.	L	PSG	
D.3.4 Support traditional neighborhood development (TND) in the Southeast.	L	PSG	
D.3.5 Allow for smaller units on smaller lots in proximity to Downtown and in other selected locations.	M	PCD	
D.3.6 Create toolkit for increasing executive / high-end housing.	M	PCD	FIN
D.3.7 Implement cost sharing on utility extensions.	M	PU	
D.3.8 Implement one-stop design development and approvals.	L	PCD	PSG
D.3.9 Define and permit a wide range of housing types in the Zoning Code.	S	PCD	
D.4.1 Continue code enforcement.	O	PCD	
D.4.2 Discourage unsympathetic changes to successful existing neighborhoods.	O	PCD	
D.5.1 Establish a city-builder work group.	S	PSG	
D.6.1 Incorporate Community-Scale Activity Centers into new residential neighborhoods when possible.	L	PCD	
D.6.2 Explore opportunities to enhance neighborhoods through well-connected street networks and walkable blocks.	M	PW	PCD
D.7.1 Facilitate land assembly.	O	ED	PSG
D.7.2 Integrate expanded areas into Downtown.	M	PCD	ED
D.7.3 Establish a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the Downtown and part of the Riverfront and South Sandusky Street areas.	S	CMO	ED
D.7.4 Market Downtown to investors.	O	ED	
E.1.1 Continue collaborations between City staff and local school districts.	O	CMO	Partners
E.10.1 Implement bicycle master plan recommendations.	O	PNR	
E.10.2 Implement bicycle paths to link neighborhoods to destination points such as schools, business districts, the Delaware Community Center/YMCA and to community parks such as Mingo and Smith Park.	O	PNR	
E.10.3 Implement a variety of pedestrian connections.	O	PNR	
E.10.4 Prepare and implement a plan focused on the pedestrian and roadway experience Downtown.	L	PW	MSD
E.10.5 Implement "complete street" design for new and existing roads.	O	PW	
E.10.6 Consider a shift to maximum parking standards in certain locations.	S	PCD	
E.10.7 Maintain bicycle and pedestrian connectivity requirements for new residential development.	O	PCD	PNR
E.10.8 Embrace and accommodate demand for new travel alternatives.	O	PW	PCD
E.10.9 Support Delaware County Transit Services.	O	CMO	
E.11.1 Study composting service alternatives.	S	PW	
E.11.2 Study enhancements to recycling service.	S	PW	
E.11.3 Make hazardous waste recycling more convenient.	O	PW	
E.11.4 Assess zero waste policies.	M	PW	
E.11.5 Explore a "Downtown collection district."	S	PW	
E.12.1 Implement water and sewer master plans.	L	PU	
E.12.2 Keep water and sewer plans updated.	O	PU	
E.12.3 Assess policies requiring annexation.	S	PSG	
E.13.1 Incentivize sprinkler systems for historic buildings.	M	ED	

Actions	Timeframe	Lead	Secondary
E.13.2 Construct a new fire station in the Far East Side Focus Area.	M	ED	
E.2.1 Develop and implement strategic master plan.	S	PNR	
E.2.10 Expand programming partnership with Preservation Parks of Delaware County.	O	PNR	PPDC
E.2.2 Identify new park opportunities for the Southeastern part of the City.	S	PNR	
E.2.3 Prepare a riverfront access strategy.	M	PNR	
E.2.4 Revise and improve open space/parkland dedication requirements for new development.	M	PCD	PNR
E.2.5 Use Level of Service standards to identify need for new recreation facilities.	M	PNR	
E.2.6 Partner with local public and private institutions with large land holdings to maintain and protect their open spaces.	O	PNR	
E.2.7 Collaborate with the schools to provide neighborhood-level recreation opportunities.	M	PNR	Partners
E.2.8 Ensure open space and active recreation provisions in development standards.	M	PCD	PNR
E.2.9 Identify new urban natural area opportunities.	M	PNR	
E.3.1 Continue river and stream protection measures.	O	PNR	PSG
E.3.2 Study the Delaware Run Urban Stream Corridor.	S	PU	PSG
E.3.3 Ensure species habitat protection measures.	S	PNR	PCD
E.3.4 Prepare a detailed inventory and analysis of natural resources.	M	PNR	
E.3.5 Consider a natural resources zoning overlay district.	M	PCD	PNR
E.3.6 Create standards for Downtown and Riverfront District development.	M	PNR	PCD
E.3.7 Support existing State and City requirements for identified critical wetlands for preservation or mitigation.	O	PW	PU
E.3.8 Conduct an anti-litter campaign.	S	PNR	Partners
E.4.1 Maintain and adjust policies and standards for the City's tree canopy.	S	PNR	PCD
E.4.2 Prepare an urban forest plan.	M	PNR	
E.5.1 Maintain forest buffers along identified streams and tributaries.	O	PW	PNR
E.5.2 Adopt stronger standards to minimize impervious surfaces.	M	PW	PU
E.5.3 Potentially integrate lower impact development into new development.	L	PCD	
E.6.1 Establish an Arts Council.	M	PCD	
E.6.2 Designate an Arts District.	M	PCD	ED
E.6.3 Amend City regulations to allow and provide guidance on public art.	M	PCD	PW
E.7.1 Expand the Downtown Facade Grant program.	M	PCD	FIN
E.7.2 Review and reassess East Side National Register Nomination or Local Historic District Overlay.	L	PCD	
E.7.3 Launch neighborhood preservation workshop program.	M	PCD	MSD / NNA
E.7.4 Align private projects with State Historic Tax Credit requests.	O	PCD	
E.8.1 Research incentives for energy aggregation.	S	CMO	
E.8.2 Develop a local incentive program for green energy.	M	CMO	
E.8.3 Conduct an education campaign for Home Owners Associations (HOAs).	M	PCD	CMO
E.8.4 Identify opportunities for a local Energy Special Improvement District (ESID).	M	ED	
E.9.1 Continue roadway and intersection improvements, including those recommended in the 2021 Thoroughfare Plan.	L	PW	
E.9.2 Implement recommendations of Access Delaware.	O	PW	
E.9.3 Consider adopting a Road Impact Fee.	M	CMO	
E.9.4 Implement the Recommendations of the Downtown Parking Plan.	O	PSG	
E.9.5 Collaborate with adjacent jurisdictions regarding a potential Route 23 Bypass.	L	ODOT	PW
E.9.6 Prepare for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) integration.	M	PW	
F.1.1 Maintain the City's history of receiving clean audits and adhering to financial policies.	O	FIN	
F.1.2 Continue management practices for distributing revenues toward costs.	O	FIN	
F.1.3 Continue pay-as-you-go practices.	O	FIN	CMO
F.2.1 Obtain a credit rating enhancement from Moody's.	M	FIN	CMO
F.2.2 Develop a long term and sustainable funding source for the maintenance of the City's roadway infrastructure.	M	CMO	FIN / PW
F.2.3 Prepare estimate of fiscal impacts of development.	S	CMO	
F.3.1 Conduct a "return on investment" analysis for major development proposals.	S	PCD	ED
F.3.2 Allow TIF districts in selected locations.	O	CMO	PSG
F.3.3 Study increase in fees for services.	S	PSG	
F.3.4 Consider increasing development impact fees.	S	CMO	
F.4.1 Develop a strategy for income tax data collection.	S	FIN	

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