



BLENDON COMMUNITY PLAN

Blendon Township, Franklin County, Ohio
DRAFT 1/11/2010

 **Franklin County**
Where Government Works
Commissioners
Paula Brooks
Marilyn Brown
John O'Grady

BLENDON
COMMUNITY PLAN
GROW SMART • LIVE WELL • GO SAFELY

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Paula Brooks
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John O'Grady

Blendon Township Board of Trustees

Stewart Flaherty, *Chairman*
Jan Heichel
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Blendon Community Plan

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QUICK START



If you're looking for...

...start here

General overview

Overall summary

A top-to-bottom summary of this plan



PLAN SUMMARY

page 11

Just the maps

Recommendations for future land use and transportation



MAP CENTER

page 21

Specific information

Detailed recommendations

The plan's recommendations, organized by theme

Grow Smart: Land use recommendations

Live Well: Housing, recreation and environment

Go Safely: Transportation recommendations



RECOMMENDATIONS

page 55

BLENDON COMMUNITY PLAN

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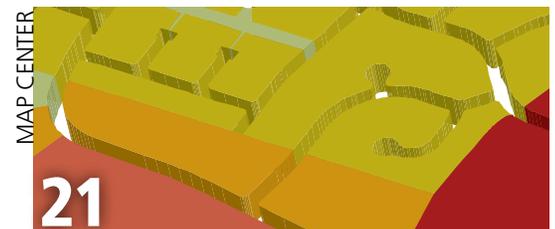
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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	9
Plan summary.....	11
Planning area maps	13
About this plan.....	15
Policy statements.....	17
<hr/>	
2. MAP CENTER	21
Future Land Use map.....	23
Bikeways map	27
Sidewalk Priorities map.....	29
<hr/>	
3. CURRENT CONDITIONS	31
People and Housing	33
Current Conditions maps	35
Public Meeting Results.....	45
<hr/>	
4. RECOMMENDATIONS	55
Grow Smart.....	57
Live Well.....	73
Go Safely.....	83
<hr/>	
5. IMPLEMENTATION	97
Implementation tables.....	99
New development checklist.....	109
Acknowledgements.....	111



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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Need a quick overview of the Blendon Community Plan? In this section you'll find a summary of the plan's recommendations, a map of the planning area, and the process we used to develop the plan.

For an in-depth look at the recommendations, see *Section 4, Recommendations* beginning on page 55.

Here's what you'll find in this section:

Plan Summary, p. 11

The Plan Summary highlights the key recommendations of the Blendon Community Plan. The recommendations follow the plan's three themes: Grow Smart, Live Well and Go Safely.

Planning Area map, p. 13

The Blendon Community Plan will guide future development and redevelopment in unincorporated Blendon

Township, Franklin County, Ohio. The regional context map shows the location of the planning area in central Ohio.

The planning area map shows the detailed boundaries of the planning area. The maps show you where the Blendon Community Plan's recommendations apply.

About this plan, p. 15

What is a community plan? This part of the introduction explains what a plan is, how it's created, and how recommendations are developed.

Policy statements, p. 17

Policy statements are the guiding principles we used to develop the Blendon Community Plan. The Franklin County Commissioners endorse the principles as best practices that form the foundation of community plans.



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PLAN SUMMARY

BLENDON COMMUNITY PLAN

The Blendon Community Plan is a guide for future development in Blendon Township. The plan includes recommendations for the community's future: where houses are built, what kind of businesses are allowed, how new buildings look and locations of parks and trails. The plan also includes desired public improvements such as streetscape enhancements and place making features.

Recommendations follow the plan's three themes:
Grow Smart, Live Well and Go Safely

GROW SMART

Growing smart means preserving natural lands, protecting the environment, and reusing already-developed land. Smart growth choices make vibrant places that are economically competitive. Recommendations for growing smart include:

- Improving development standards for new commercial buildings
- Implementing the Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan
- Installing gateway signage
- Using conservation-style development to preserve natural features



LIVE WELL



Living well means having a high quality of life. A variety of housing types for all people, parks and trails, and a healthy environment create a high quality of life for all residents. Recommendations for living well include:

- Using universal design elements to make housing accessible to all
- Improving the appearance of rental properties
- Conducting a parks master plan
- Establishing a buffer zone along Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and their tributaries

GO SAFELY

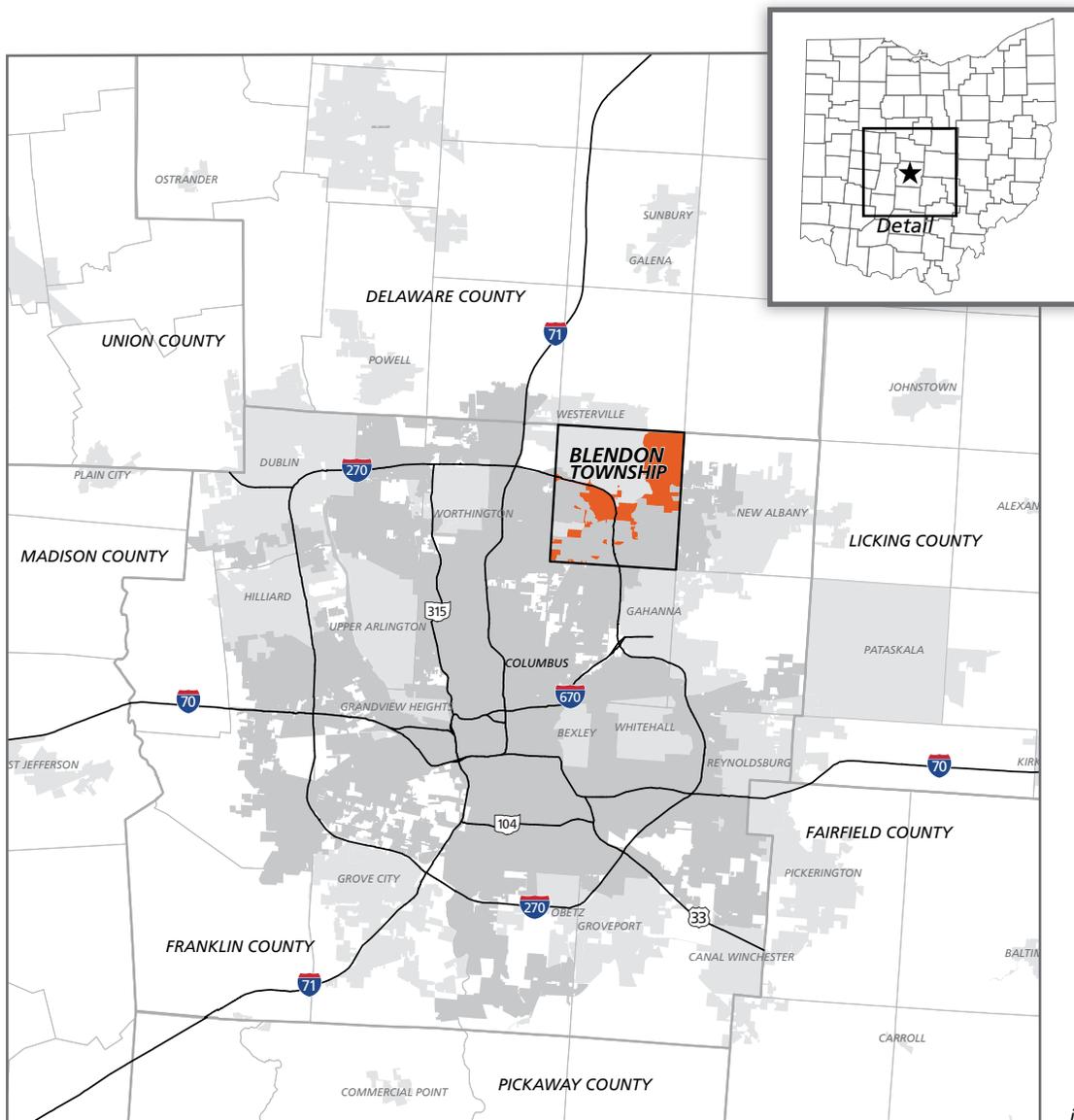


A complete transportation system allows people to travel safely and efficiently by car, foot, bicycle and transit. Recommendations help establish this system and include:

- Installing sidewalks in priority areas
- Providing connections to existing bicycle trails
- Adding amenities at bus stops
- Designing streets to accommodate all users

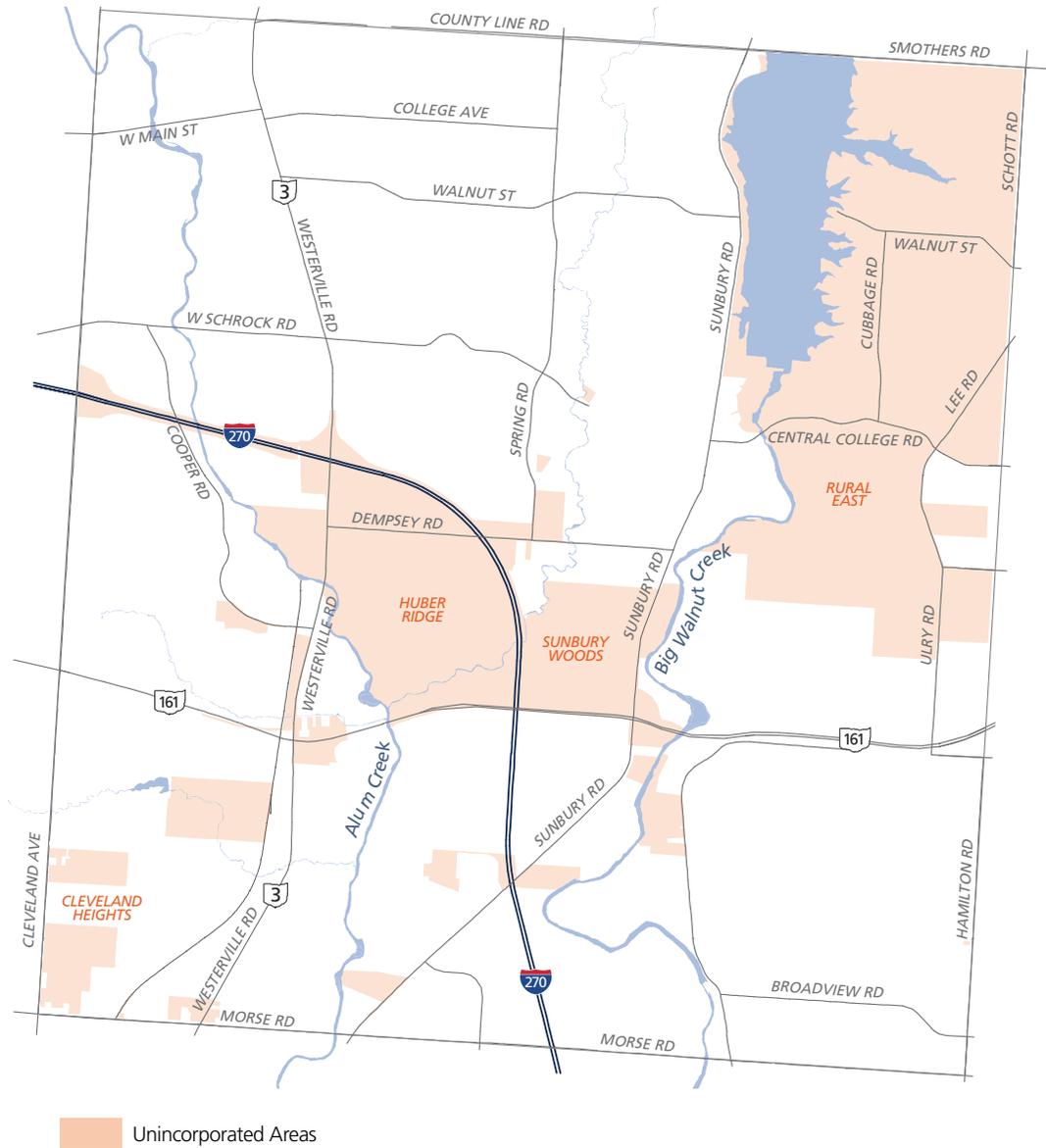
REGIONAL MAP

PLANNING AREA LOCATION



Blendon Township is bordered by multiple jurisdictions in two counties

PLANNING AREA



Blendon Township consists of 1,773 acres in northeastern Franklin County, Ohio

ABOUT THIS PLAN

What is a plan?

A land use plan represents a community's desires for the future: how land is used, what new buildings look like and how people travel around and through the community.

Steps in creating a plan

A plan begins by assessing a community's existing state—the current conditions of land use, building appearance, shopping areas and transportation network. The second step is deciding on a vision—a view of the community at a point 10 to 20 years in the future. The third step is developing the bridge from the present to the future: the plan's recommendations. The recommendations explain in detail how the community, starting in the present, achieves its desired vision for the future.

The recommendations: goals and action items

To develop the plan's recommendations, a community takes the desired vision for the future and divides it into smaller pieces, called goals. Each goal is a piece of the vision. Here's an example:

A community has a main street with a large shopping center. The shopping center is in poor condition and is only half-occupied. Arriving by car is the only convenient travel method. For its land use plan, the community imagines the



future: the vision for the shopping center is an attractive, fully-occupied shopping center with housing near or above the stores and convenient transportation for pedestrians. Taking its vision, the community breaks it down into goals for each vision and action items that explain what's needed to achieve each goal.

Just like the example, the Blendon Community Plan sets an overall vision and divides the vision into goals. The plan then lists action steps to achieve each goal. Each goal works both separately and together with the other goals to achieve the desired future for the planning area.

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POLICY STATEMENTS



Each of these statements describes how the Blendon Community Plan abides by policies, endorsed or adopted by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners.

SUSTAINABILITY RESOLUTION

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners passed resolution 683-06 stating its commitment to the mutually-compatible goals of environmental protection and economic growth. The resolution covers a range of county activities. For land use plans, the resolution states two important policy goals: practicing environmentally responsible land use and preserving natural resources. This plan complies fully with the resolution.

Environmentally responsible land use

The Blendon Community Plan recommends mixed-use centers in targeted areas along Westerville Road, Sunbury Road, Executive Parkway, Cleveland Avenue, and Morse Road. This pattern of development will create vibrant

places where residents and shoppers can easily travel by foot, bicycle or transit. This can improve air quality by reducing car trips.

By increasing density in already-developed areas with infill development, we can reduce the demand for land in outlying areas, known as greenfields.

In places where greenfield development may occur in the future, this plan recommends conservation style development to ensure environmentally-sensitive areas are protected.

Preservation of natural resources

The planning area includes Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and many environmentally-sensitive areas. This plan recommends the protection and preservation of these natural resources.

We recommend establishing a no-build zone around the creeks and their tributaries. This will preserve environmentally-sensitive land, wildlife habitats, and improve water quality throughout the watershed.

For new development, the plan recommends the use of stormwater best management practices.

Hard surfaces such as roofs and pavement create stormwater runoff when it rains. Instead of untreated water going directly into streams, the runoff should be directed to specially-planted

The Board of Commissioners will practice environmentally responsible growth when establishing policy on land use.

—Resolution 683-06

areas designed to help water soak into the ground gradually. This helps recharge ground water and provides attractive areas of landscaping—all the while keeping pollutants out of the water system.

In addition to preservation, the plan recommends more interaction between people and nature. The Blendon Community Plan aims to connect existing bike trails, build new ones and provide public access to stream-side areas. Having a closer relationship with nature allows people to appreciate the importance of green areas.

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT

We wrote this plan in plain language, with residents, developers, public officials, planners and all community members in mind. Plain language is a clear, straightforward way of writing.

The Central Ohio Green Pact recommends protecting rivers and creating walkable and bikeable communities



Plain language keeps documents simple, using only the necessary number of words. But plain language isn't overly-simplified English. It's a way of writing that lets a reader concentrate on the message, instead of being distracted by complicated language.

We wrote this plan in plain language to help you, the reader. Too often, government documents use long sentences and lots of jargon. Writing in plain language should allow everyone to understand what's in this plan.

For more information on plain language, visit these websites:

www.plainlanguage.gov

www.centerforplainlanguage.org

www.plainlanguagenetwork.org

CENTRAL OHIO GREEN PACT

Beginning in 2007, communities throughout Franklin County have adopted the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's Central Ohio Green Pact, a shared commitment to making the region more sustainable. The Green Pact addresses 10 subjects including: reducing household waste, building greener buildings and growing a green economy. One of the pledges is adopting sustainable land use policies.

From the Green Pact:



The way our communities grow can have a significant impact on the environment. We agree to examine our codes and policies to determine how we can: create walkable, bikeable communities; promote infill; protect natural resources such as trees; protect our rivers through stormwater controls; and create more green neighborhood infrastructure, such as green roofs, bio-swales and rain gardens.

The Blendon Community Plan fully complies with the Central Ohio Green Pact. The plan recommends infill and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods and stimulating private investment along already-built commercial corridors. The plan recommends installing sidewalks in targeted areas and connecting people to existing bikeways.

The plan aims to preserve natural resources through the use of stormwater best management practices, conservation-style development and protecting sensitive land along streams. The plan supports reducing energy consumption by recommending energy audits and promoting home weatherization programs.

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Regional Connections: A Regional Growth Strategy for Central Ohio is an effort to establish a plan for growth across the central Ohio region for the next 25 years

Regional Connections was formed by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and led by a 60-member steering committee of public and private leaders.

In 2006, MORPC published the Regional Connections report, a series of alternate future development scenarios, ranging from expanding sprawling outer suburbs to ultra-compact urban development centered around transit. The report gathered input from across the central Ohio region.

The report emphasizes the importance of local governments taking steps to anticipate growth. For urban communities, the report calls for increasing the development intensity in appropriate areas, especially near already-built roads and sewer lines.

MORPC is currently in the process of developing a Regional Plan for 12 central Ohio counties. The plan will address issues related to transportation, the environment and the economy. The plan is expected to be completed in 2012.

Four Visions

The Blendon Community Plan complies with the intent of Regional Connections. We show this by following Regional Connection's four visions: one for place, prosperity, people and leadership.

Vision for place

From Regional Connections:

The vision for place is a physical environment that accommodates future growth efficiently and is distinguished by high quality neighborhoods and communities and careful stewardship of natural resources and agriculture land. Integrated-uses and more intensive utilization of land in neighborhoods and communities are evident throughout the region. Development occurs concurrent with the extension of appropriately-sized utilities and roads and development policies are based on an understanding of the economic impacts to affected local governments. Places are connected by a range of transportation choices, including roads, public and private transit, and paths for walking and biking.

This plan meets that by:

- Increased density and high quality development along Westerville Road, Sunbury Road, Executive Parkway, Cleveland Avenue, and Morse Road.
- Improving transportation networks for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users
- Protecting Alum Creek and Big Walnut Creek and providing access to stream corridors

Vision for Prosperity

From Regional Connections:

The vision for prosperity is a diverse, healthy economy that provides job opportunities for residents and revenues to government to support the



provision of quality community services and facilities, including infrastructure. Approaches to economic and community development that respect the natural environment and strike a balance of regional and local needs through cooperation and sharing of costs and benefits.

This plan supports that by:

- Attracting and maintaining business and investment along main corridors
- Supporting small business
- Facilitating mixed-use developments

Vision for People

From Regional Connections:

The vision for people is a diverse and civically engaged population that enjoys a healthy environment and has access to affordable housing, a range of employment choices, recreational and cultural amenities, spiritual institutions, and life-long learning opportunities. Residents of the region have accessibility to civic life and more housing choices near jobs.

This plan supports that by:

- Supporting a local foods system
- Working to provide housing that is accessible to all
- Improving air quality inside homes
- Promoting the upkeep of properties

- Maintaining existing parks and establishing new parks

Vision for Leadership

From Regional Connections:

The vision for leadership is governance that is defined by shared understanding and aligned decision-making among all levels of government. Plans, policies and decisions related to growth, development and major infrastructure investments are made with a regional perspective, desire for improved efficiency of service delivery, and sense of mutual responsibility for providing services and protecting environmental resources. Residents and stakeholders are involved and well-informed about regional issues.

This plan supports that by:

- Working with environmental groups to preserve environmentally-sensitive areas
- Collaborating with other jurisdictions to create an area-wide bikeways system
- Receiving input throughout the planning process from regional stakeholders through the Regional Planning Advisory Group

MORPC’s Regional Connections emphasizes development’s regional nature. Development in each jurisdiction impacts neighboring communities near and far. The Blendon Community Plan embraces development’s regional nature to allow the entire region to prosper.

Regional Connections calls for increasing development intensity in appropriate areas



SECTION 2

MAP CENTER

The maps in this section reflect visions for the future: what land uses people want to see and how people travel by foot and bicycle. We developed the maps based on community input. You can see the detailed results from public input in *Section 3, Current Conditions*, beginning on page 31.

Future Land Use map, p. 23

This map shows what types of land uses the community wants to see in the future.

The future land use map is used most often when a landowner proposes a new development or redevelopment. If the proposal requires a rezoning or zoning variance, officials reviewing the proposal can see whether it matches the community's vision for their future.

Including a future land use map in the Blendon Community Plan allows residents to communicate their land use opinions to the appointed and elected officials who make zoning decisions.

Bikeways map, p. 27

The bikeways map shows locations of current and proposed bikeways in the greater Blendon Township area.

Since bikeways allow people to cover wide distances, it is critical to plan for bikeways on a region-wide basis. The Bikeways map is a compilation of various bikeway plans developed by area local governments.

The bikeways map represents the community's desired future bikeways network.

Sidewalk Priorities map, p. 29

Sidewalks have benefits for the entire community, including safety, physical fitness, and more walk-in traffic for businesses.

Installing sidewalks costs money. Since funds are limited, the sidewalks map prioritizes new sidewalks to balance usefulness and cost.

The sidewalk priorities reflect the community's stated desires for new sidewalks.



LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS



Low density residential

Allowed land uses: Single-family homes only

Density: Maximum of 1 unit per acre



Medium density residential

Allowed land uses: Single-family and two-family homes

Density: Minimum of 2 units per acre, maximum of 8 units per acre



High density residential

Allowed land uses: Townhomes and multi-unit buildings

Density: Minimum of 8 units per acre, maximum of 24 units per acre



Office + Residential

Allowed land uses: Offices, single- and multi-unit housing. Uses may mix within the same building.

Density: For buildings without offices, minimum residential density of 4 units per acre. For all buildings, maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Commercial: Limited range + Multifamily

Allowed land uses: Limited range of retail uses, mostly neighborhood-scale, plus offices and multi-unit housing and townhomes.

Density: Maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Commercial: Full range + Multifamily

Allowed land uses: Full range of retail and office uses, plus multi-unit housing and townhomes.

Density: Maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Light Industrial + Office

Allowed land uses: Range of uses from office, industrial, storage and warehousing.



Parks/Open Space

Intended for nature or recreation with minimal buildings.



Stream buffer

Environmentally-sensitive area that includes streamways and 100-year floodplain.

Prohibited land uses: Construction, parking lots, and dredging or filling.

Allowed land uses: Permissible uses are passive recreation and trails. If a stream buffer area is permanently protected, development density may be transferred elsewhere on the same property or an immediately-adjacent property.



Conservation development overlay

Preservation of natural features including trees and steep slopes is required for all new developments.

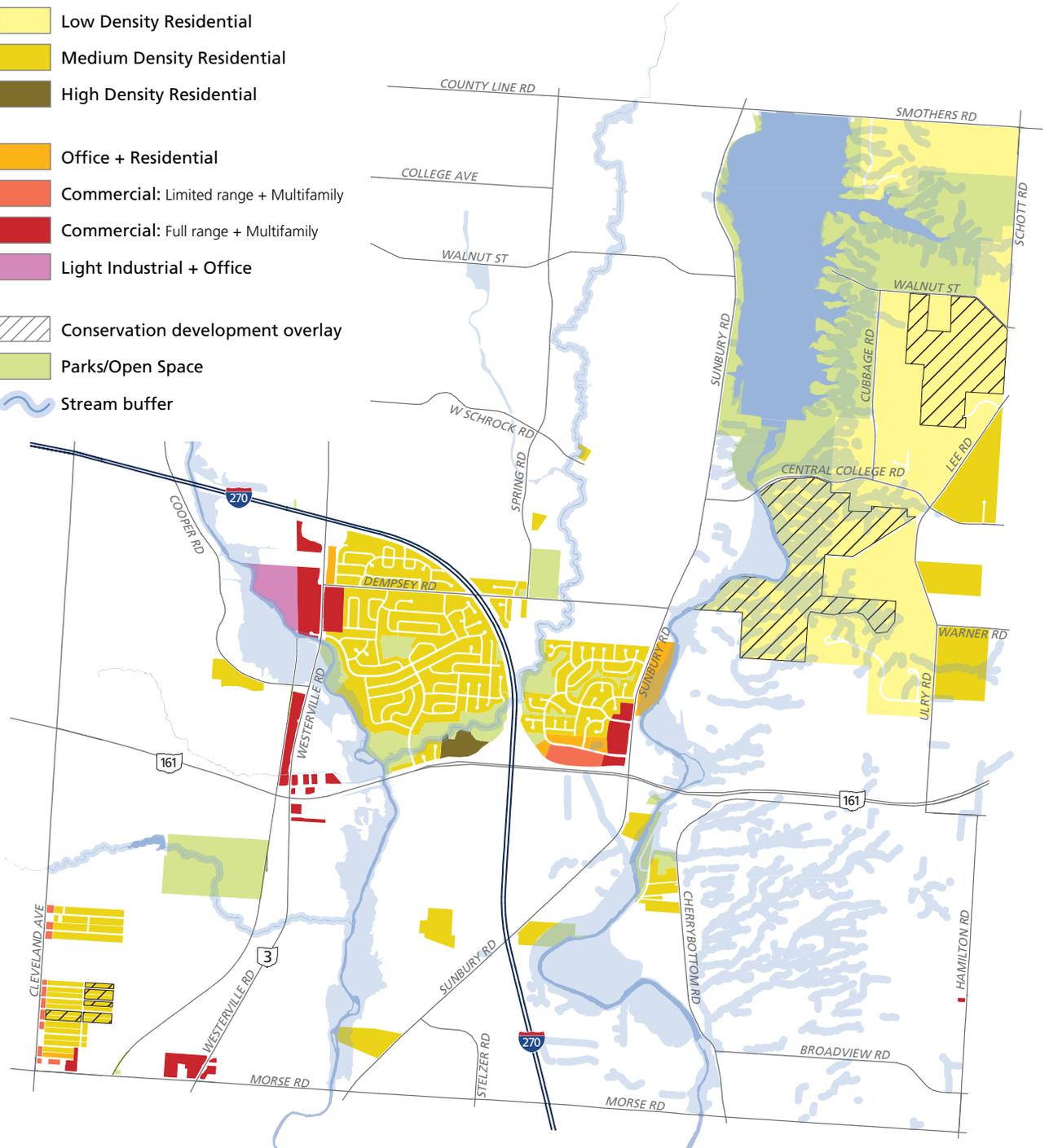
The dedicated open space requirement for Cleveland Heights is 25 percent and in the area east of Big Walnut Creek, 50 percent.

Dedicated open space consists of undisturbed woodlands, other natural areas or disturbed areas returned to a natural state. Open space may be used for passive recreation and trails with limited environmental impact.

Overall density not to exceed maximum density permitted in underlying district.

Future land use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Office + Residential
- Commercial: Limited range + Multifamily
- Commercial: Full range + Multifamily
- Light Industrial + Office
- Conservation development overlay
- Parks/Open Space
- Stream buffer



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

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CORRESPONDING ZONING DISTRICTS

Land Use Category	Zoning Districts											
	Residential						Commerical				Industrial	
	R-24	R-12	R-8	R-4	R-2	R-1	CS	CC	NC	SO	LI	RI
Low Density Residential						•						
Medium Density Residential			•	•	•							
High Density Residential	•	•	•									
Office + Residential	•	•	•	•					•			
Commercial Limited range + Multifamily	•								•	•		
Commercial Full range + Multifamily	•						•	•	•	•		
Light Industrial + Office									•	•		•

• Any use listed in this zoning district is permitted in the land use category

CORRESPONDING ZONING DISTRICTS MAP

What it is: The Blendon Community Plan’s future land use map categories are matched to existing zoning districts in the corresponding zoning district table.

The Future Land Use map shows the community’s desired future land uses. The zoning district regulations govern which uses are permitted.

Why we need it: When evaluating a development proposal, public officials use the table to determine whether a development proposal’s desired zoning district matches the Future Land Use map. Since the map represents the community’s desires for the future, following the map ensures the community’s wishes are followed.

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS

Residential

- R-24: Multifamily apartment
- R-12: Urban residential
- R-8: Restricted urban residential
- R-4: Suburban residential
- R-2: Limited suburban residential
- R-1: Restricted suburban residential

Commercial

- CS: Community Service
- CC: Community Commercial
- NC: Neighborhood Commercial
- SO: Suburban Office

Industrial

- LI: Limited Industrial
- RI: Restricted Industrial

TYPES OF PROPOSED BIKEWAYS

Bikeways map

What it is: The bikeways map shows locations of existing and proposed bikeways. The proposals support a bikeway network for transportation and recreation.

Why we need it: Since bikeways allow people to cover wide distances, communities plan for bikeways on a regional basis. This ensures we connect destinations for people in Blendon Township and throughout central Ohio.

In addition to Blendon Township bikeways recommendations, the map contains information from these sources: Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan, Westerville Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, MORPC Regional Bikeways Plan and Metroparks Trail Plan.



A path for bicycles and pedestrians, separate from a road. Generally 10 to 14 feet wide.



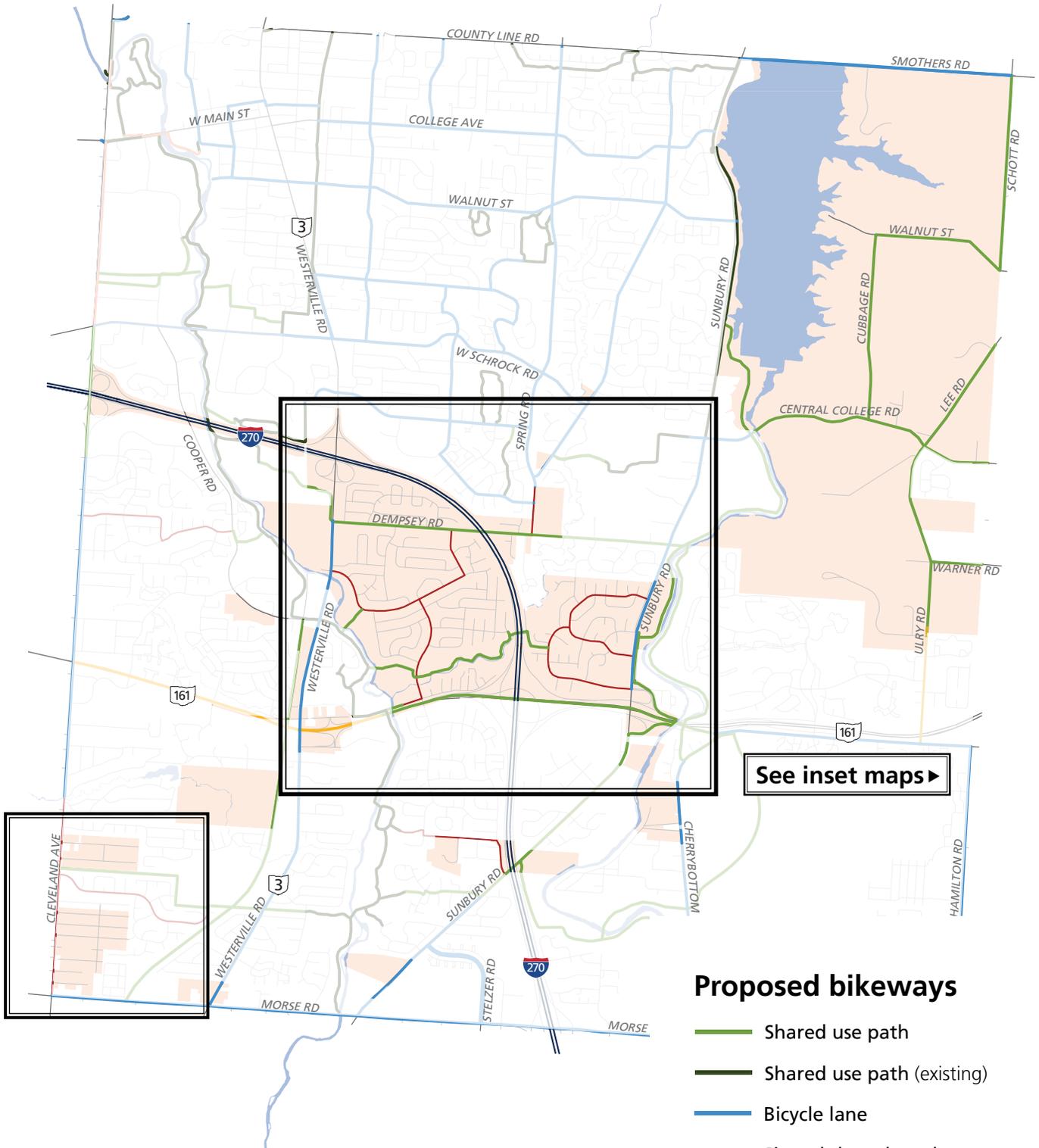
On-street striped lane for bicycles, 4 to 6 feet wide, usually next to the outermost travel lanes.



A paved area beyond outside travel lanes, 4 feet wide. Common on narrow rural roads.

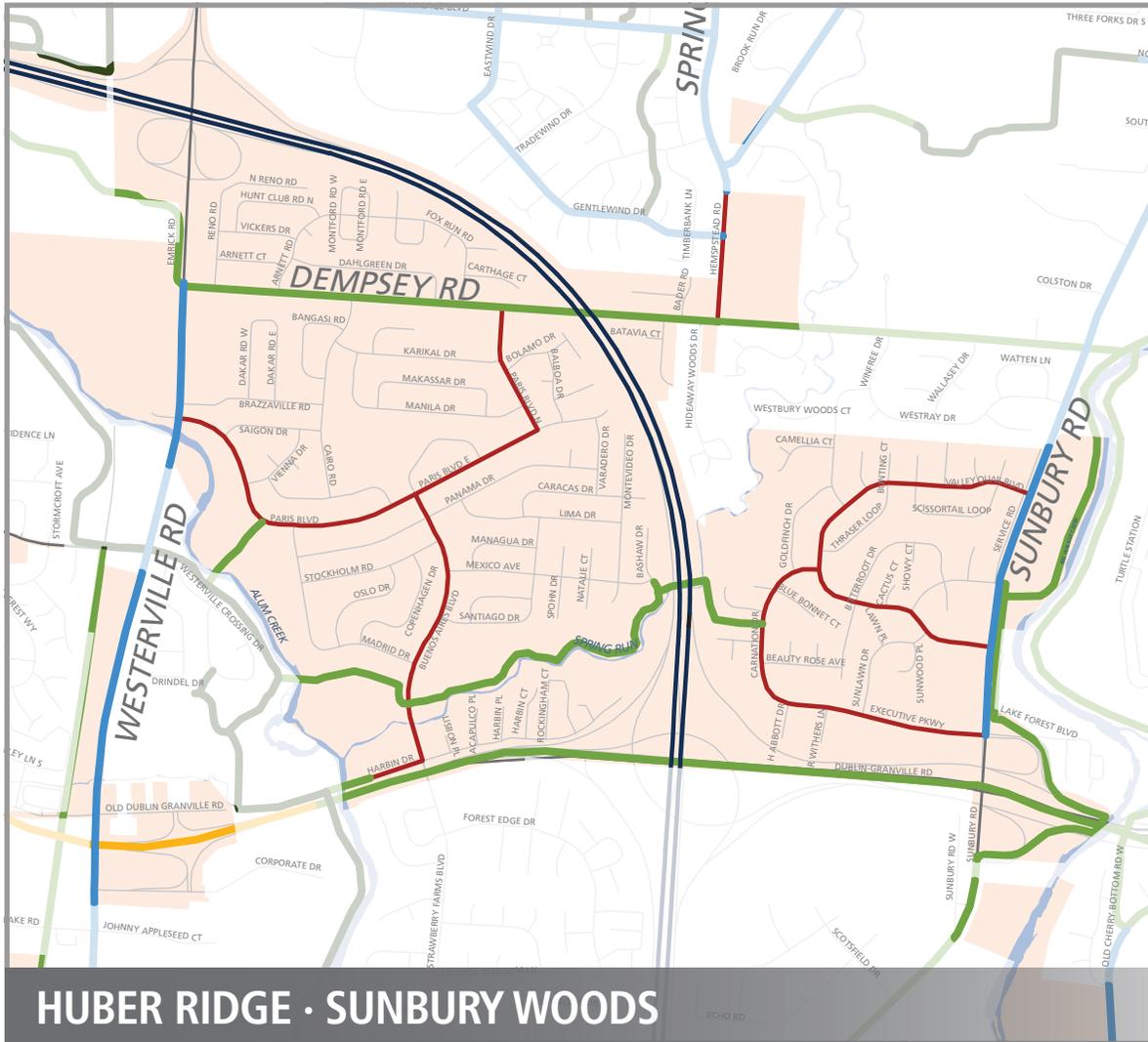


Standard road with a combination of traffic calming, signage and “sharrows” (shown at right), or a high-volume road with 14-foot or wider outside lanes.



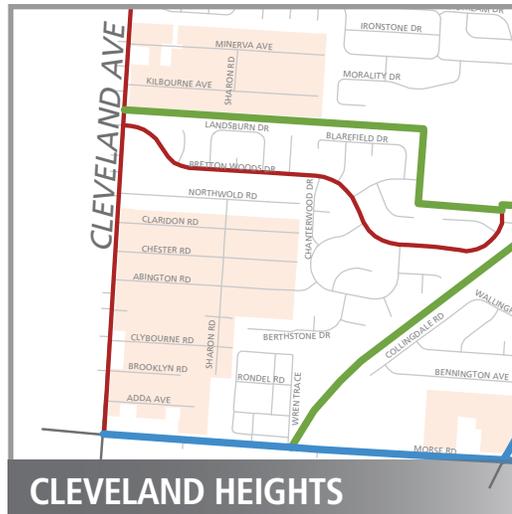
BIKEWAYS MAP

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Proposed bikeways

- Shared use path
- Shared use path (existing)
- Bicycle lane
- Signed shared roadway
- Paved shoulder



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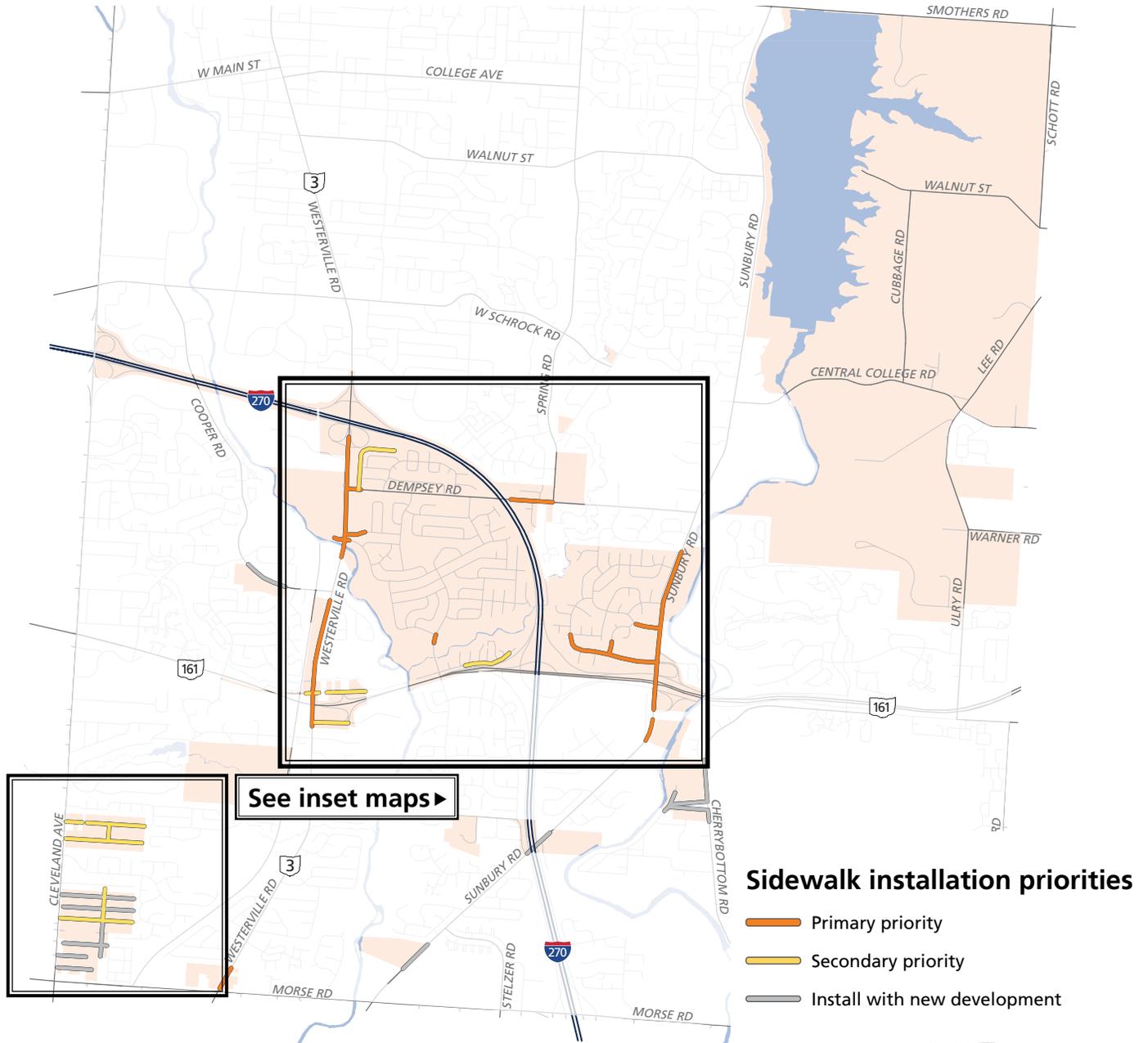
Sidewalk priorities

What it is: This map shows areas where the community would like new sidewalks.

Why we need it: Installing sidewalks costs money. Realizing that funds are limited, the sidewalk maps prioritize sidewalks: primary priorities are sidewalks that should be

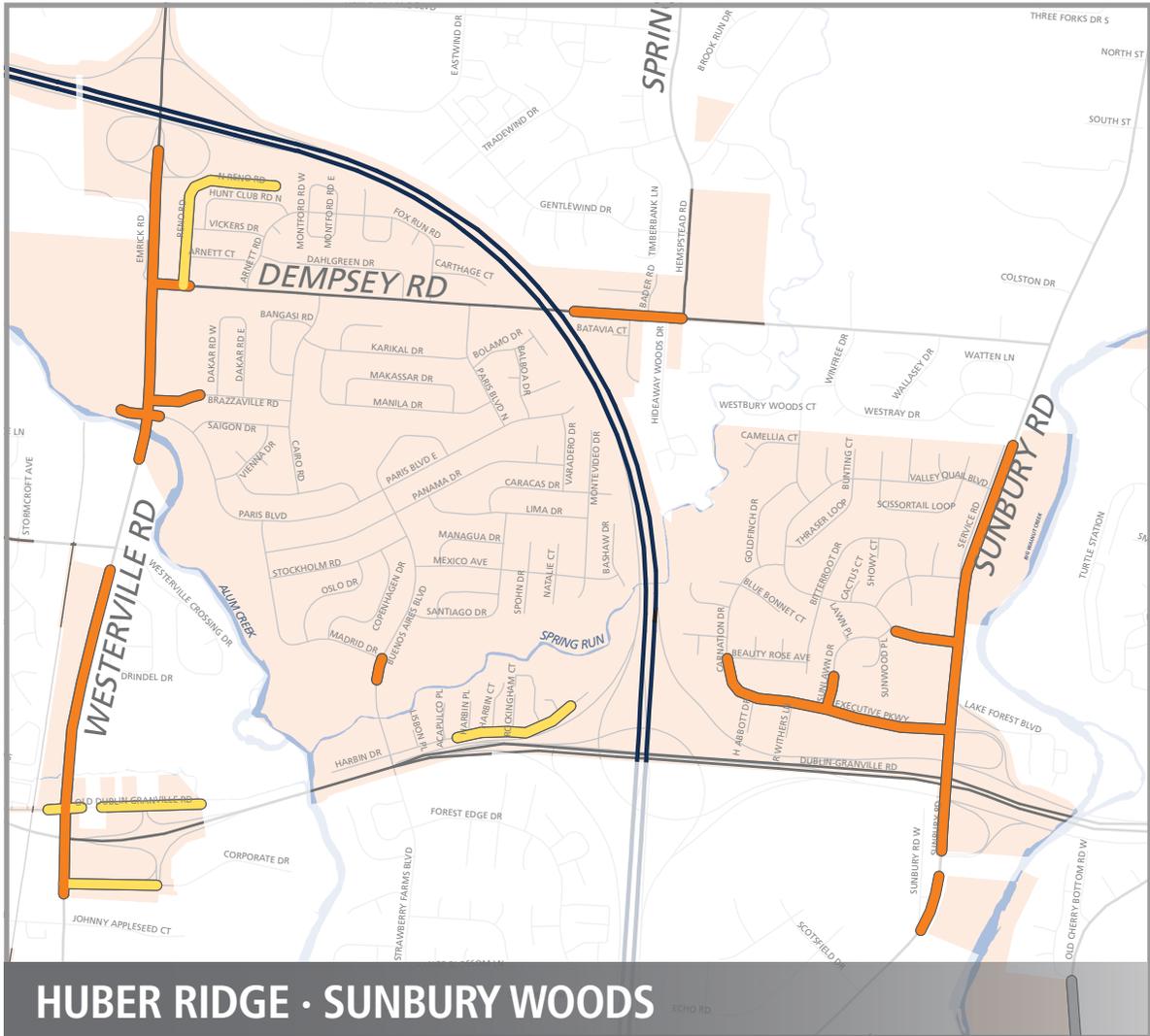
installed first. Secondary priorities are sidewalks that should be installed after all the primary priorities are installed. Sidewalks shown as “Install with new development” should be provided at any time new development or redevelopment is occurring.

The primary and secondary priorities reflect the community’s stated desires for new sidewalks.



SIDEWALK PRIORITIES MAP

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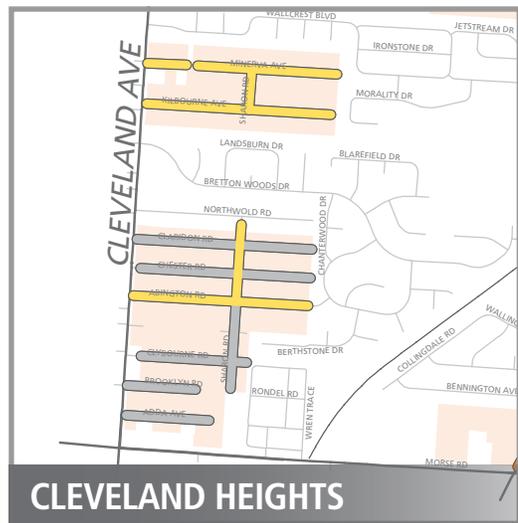


Sidewalk installation priorities

- Primary priority
- Secondary priority
- Install with new development

SIDEWALK PRIORITIES MAP

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CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

SECTION 3

CURRENT CONDITIONS

One of the first steps in creating a plan is finding out what a community is like today, also called the current conditions.

We gathered information from published sources such as the U.S. Census and from face-to-face interviews with community members.

After assessing the current physical conditions, we conducted a large-scale public input meeting. Over 150 attendees told us what they like about Blendon Township and what they want to see changed. The data, interviews and public input results set the strategic direction for the plan, providing the basis for the plan's forward-looking recommendations.

People and Housing, p. 33

People and Housing provides information on Blendon Township's population, age distribution, housing and businesses. The information is the first look into the community, providing a high-level overview.

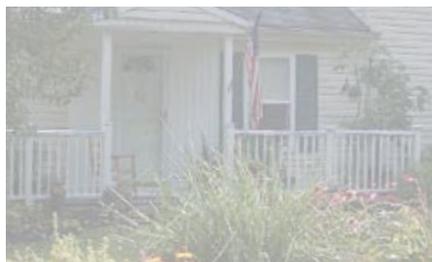
Current Conditions Maps, p. 35

The Land Use and Transportation portion of the Current Conditions section describes and shows the current land uses, zoning, bus routes, sidewalk locations, bikeways and paths, and community facilities in the township. This is the second level of research, showing Blendon Township's current conditions in greater detail.

Public Meeting Results, p. 45

The public meeting results provide an in-depth review of what the community thinks about various community aspects such as land uses, parks and the transportation network.

Gathering community opinion helps form the strategic vision for the future, and in turn the specific recommendations detailed in *Section 4, Recommendations*.



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PEOPLE AND HOUSING

PEOPLE

Population: Blendon Township's population was 7,905 residents in 2000. Projections from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission show a population growth of 9.5 percent from 2000 to 2030, compared to a 25 percent projected county-wide increase. This table shows the projected population change for the township.

Population density: Net population density for the township is 1,600 people per square mile, lower than Franklin County's overall density of 1,980 people per square mile. This means that Blendon Township has more land area per person than the county as a whole.

Households: 3,386 total households exist in Blendon Township. The township has a higher percentage of the population in family households than Franklin County, 90 percent compared to 77 percent. The average household size for the township is higher than that for the nation, state and county.

Age: Minors and middle-aged people make up a larger percentage of the population than in Franklin County as a whole. The high percentage of family households in the township likely contributes to this age distribution.

Race: The township's racial make-up differs from the county, with a higher percentage of whites and a lower percentage of all other races than the county as a whole.

Population and Housing Trends		
	Population	Housing Units
2000*	7,905	3,481
2005†	8,251	3,102
2030†	8,657	3,610
% Change	9.5%	3.7%

Sources: *2000 U.S. Census †Estimates, MORPC

Demographics				
	Blendon Township		Franklin County	
Race	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	7,243	91.6%	806,851	75.5%
Black	394	5.0%	191,196	17.9%
Asian	76	1.0%	32,784	3.1%
Other/ Multiple	192	2.4%	38,147	3.5%
Age				
Under 18	2,391	30.3%	268,321	25.1%
18 to 34	1,783	22.6%	308,545	28.9%
35 to 59	2,873	36.3%	353,461	33.1%
60 & above	858	10.8%	138,651	13.0%
Total	7,905		1,068,978	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

HOUSING

Geographic areas

We divided housing characteristics into the following geographic areas:

- Cleveland Heights
- Huber Ridge
- Sunbury Woods
- Area east of Big Walnut Creek

Housing age

Median year of housing construction shows the basic development progression over time. Median years of construction are:

- Cleveland Heights, 1953
- Huber Ridge, 1969
- Sunbury Woods, 1983
- Area east of Big Walnut Creek, 1971

This information shows a common trend seen throughout the United States. Populations have moved away from central-city areas since the end of World War II.

Occupancy

The occupancy rate for Blendon Township, 97.3 percent, is higher than Franklin County’s 93.2 percent. Blendon Township has a lower proportion of vacant housing compared to Franklin County overall.

Housing types

Common housing types are single-family, multi-family and apartments. Huber Ridge contains the largest apartment complex in Blendon

township. A 120-unit extended-stay hotel was recently constructed on Executive Parkway.

Rental Units: The table below shows the proportion of renter- and owner-occupied housing units by geographic area. While Huber Ridge has a higher number of rental units than Sunbury Woods, rentals account for a larger share of the overall housing in Sunbury Woods.

Housing units: In 2000, the township contained 3,481 housing units. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission projections predict an increase of 3.7 percent from 2000 to 2030.

EMPLOYMENT

Jobs in Blendon Township: Data from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission shows approximately 3,000 people work in Blendon Township.

Blendon Township residents: According to the 2000 census, most residents work in these industries: Professional, scientific/technical services, retail, education, and health/social services.

Approximately 194 businesses operate in Blendon Township. Business information was obtained from ReferenceUSA.

Primary Business Locations:

- Westerville Road from State Route 161 to Interstate 270
- Sunbury Road and Executive Parkway Area
- Pockets along Morse Road and Cleveland Avenue

Most common business types:

- Retail, 46 businesses
- Other services (including personal and auto repair services), 38 businesses
- Real Estate, 17 businesses

Owner and Renter Occupied Housing Units						
	Huber Ridge		Cleveland Heights*		Sunbury Woods	
Owner occupied	1,287	74.1%	791	91.4%	754	71.5%
Renter occupied	449	25.9%	74	8.6%	301	28.5%
Total	1,736		865		1,055	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census *Includes portions of Columbus

CURRENT CONDITIONS MAPS

Maps on the following pages show spatial data about Blendon Township.

Current Land Use map, p. 36

Shows how land within the township is currently being used.

Zoning map, p. 37

Shows existing zoning districts, which indicates the range of permitted land uses.

Roads and Transit map, p. 38

Shows major roads and bus routes

Sidewalks map, p. 39

Shows locations of existing sidewalks

Bikeways and Paths map, p. 40

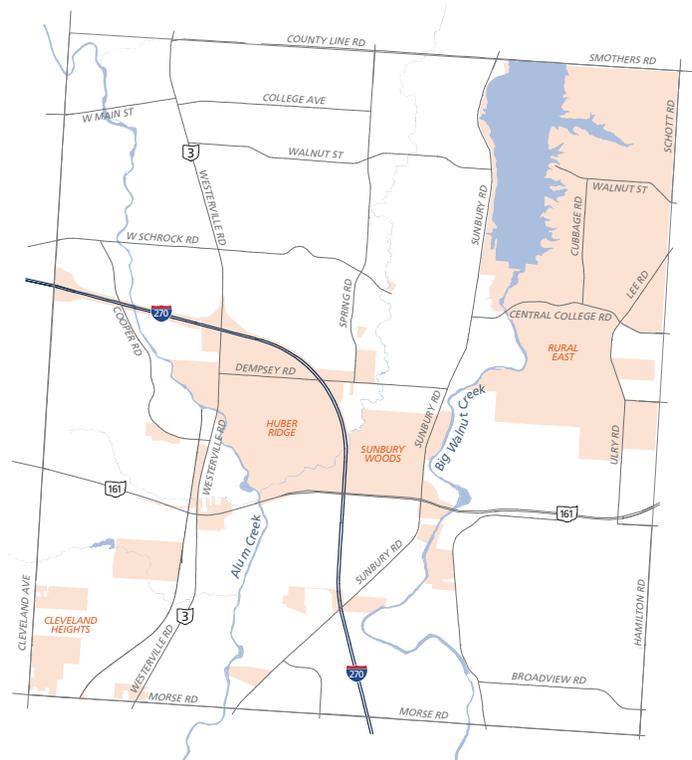
Shows existing and proposed locations of bikeways and paths.

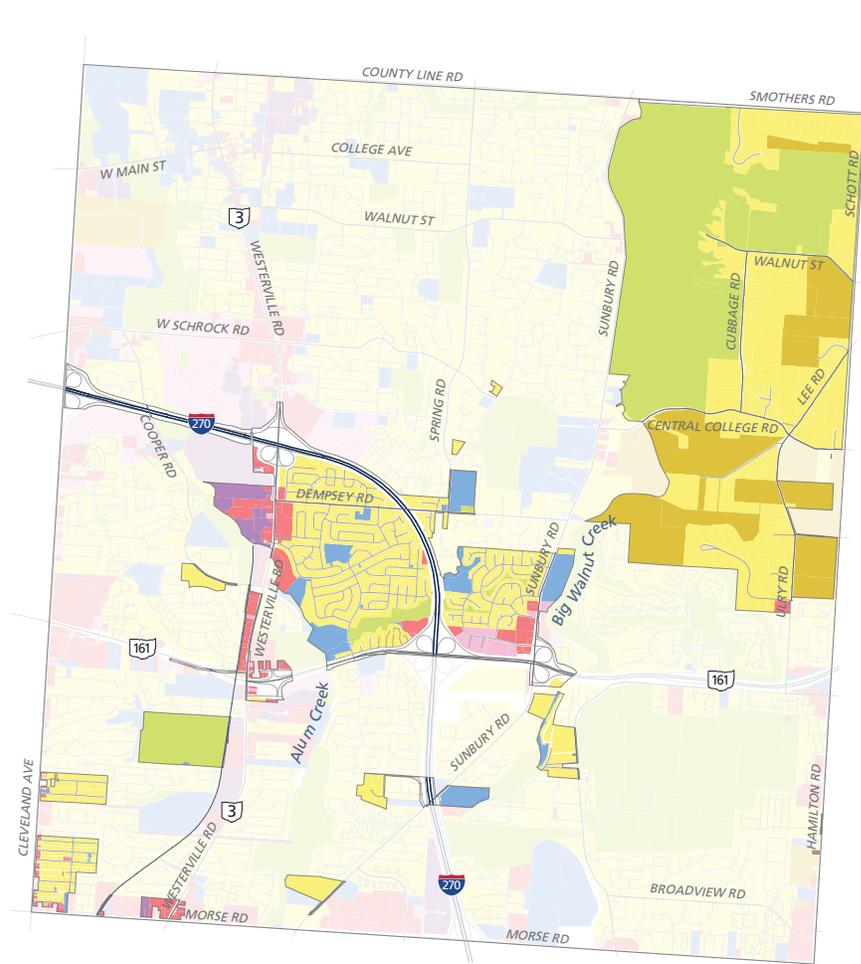
Community Facilities map, p. 41

Shows places residents rely upon for community services that enhance the quality of life.

Township Identity map, p. 43

Shows the areas and corridors that help to define Blendon Township.





Current Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Public Service
- Industrial
- Park/Open Space
- Agriculture

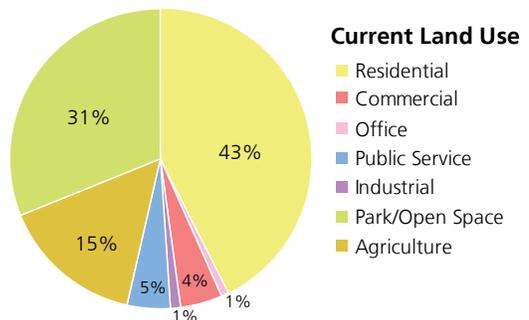
CURRENT LAND USE

The current land uses in Blendon Township are shown in this map and figure. Land in Blendon Township is predominately used for residential purposes. Parks and open space is the second-most-common land use.

Commercial uses make up approximately 4 percent of the planning area. Commercial uses are primarily found along main roads, especially Cleveland Avenue, Westerville Road and Sunbury Road.

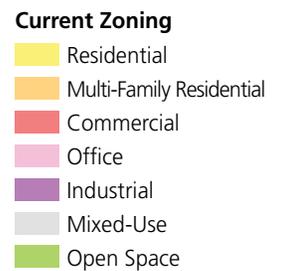
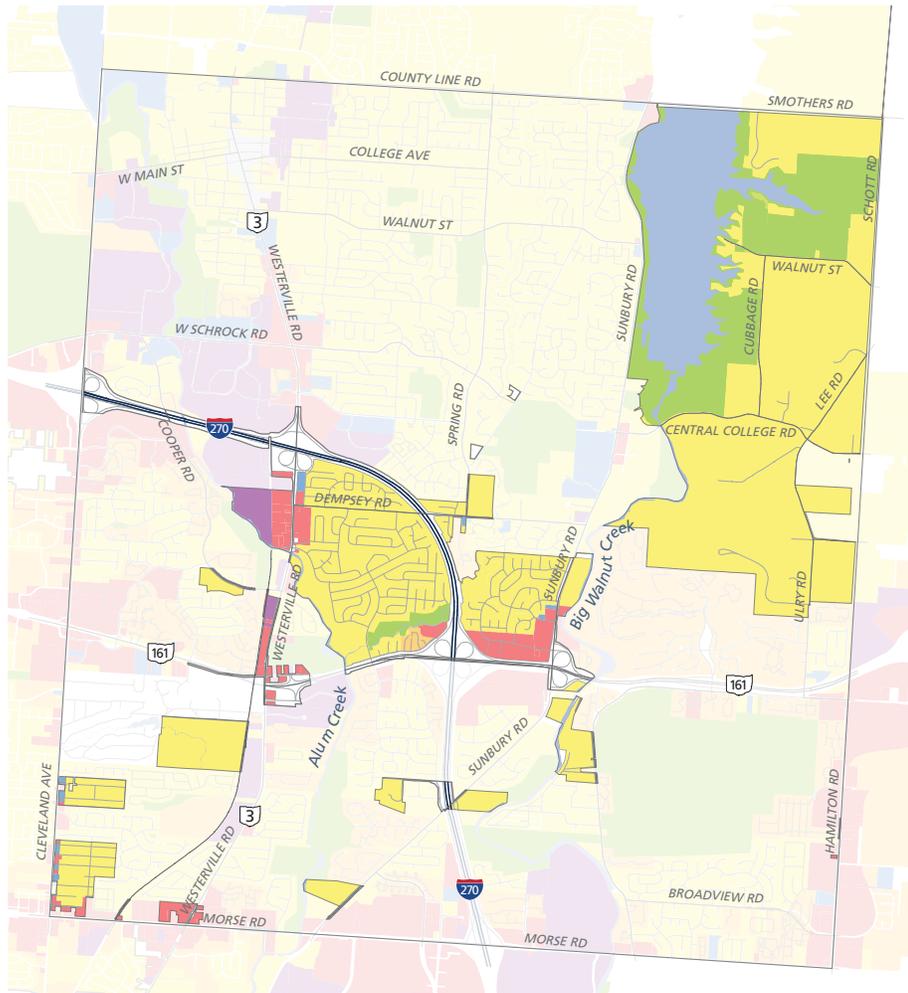
There is a significant amount of office space in Blendon Township, but office uses represent less than 1 percent of the overall land area.

When planning for an area’s future land use, it is important to ensure compatibility with existing land uses.



Current Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Public Service
- Industrial
- Park/Open Space
- Agriculture



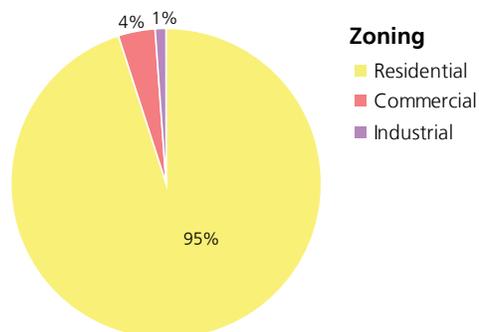
ZONING

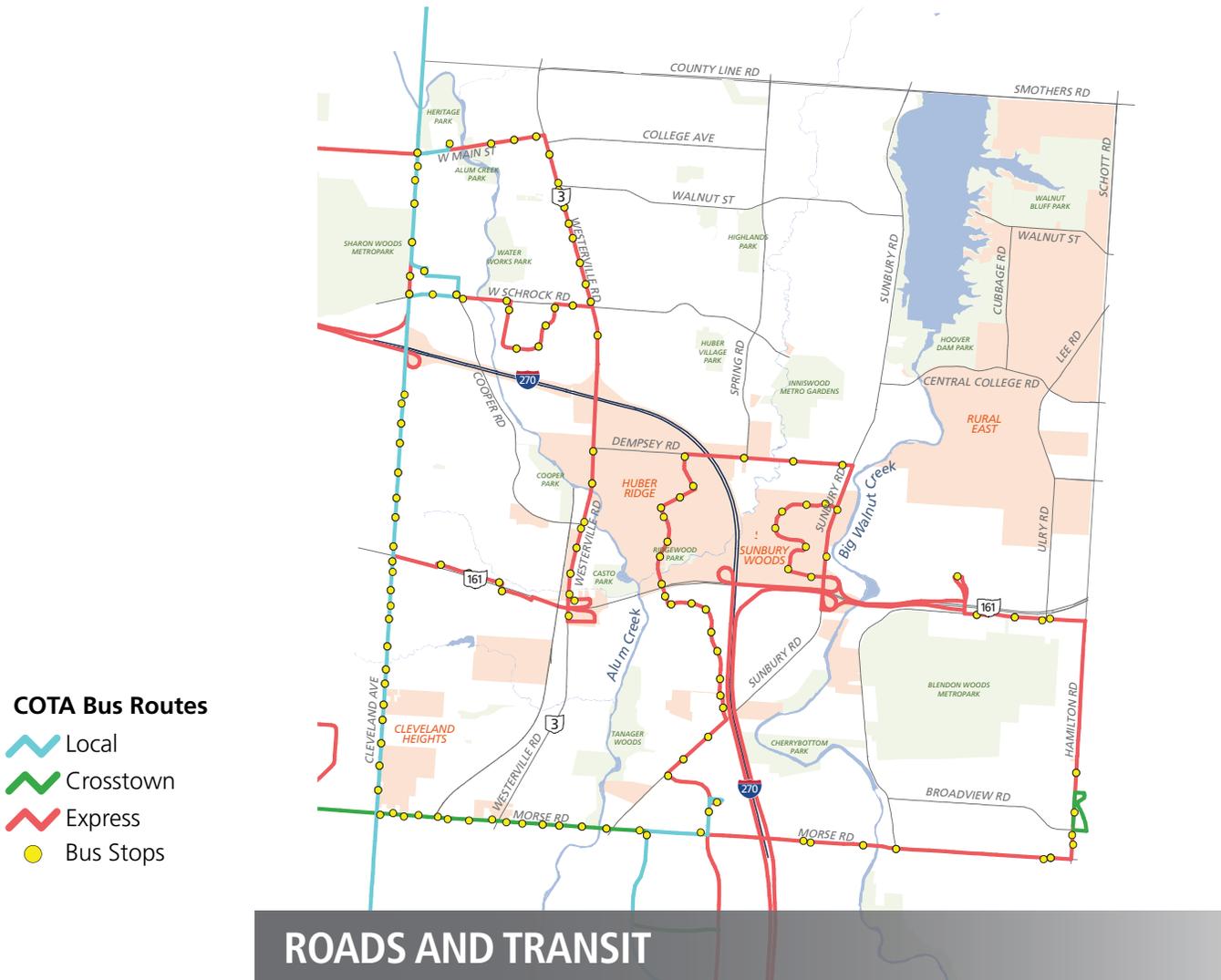
The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department administers zoning regulations in the planning area.

Nearly 95 percent of land in Blendon Township is zoned for residential and agricultural uses. The figure at right shows the percent of land in Blendon Township zoned for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

The map above shows the generalized zoning in the planning area. The generalized zoning map consolidates zoning classifications into general categories for residential, commercial and industrial zoning districts. Generalized zoning maps allow us to quickly see the permitted uses for an area.

Existing zoning tells how land can currently be used and therefore is considered when making recommendations for future land uses.





Highways, Road and Streets

The planning area has easy access to major highways.

Interstate 270 curves through the center of Blendon Township with three interchanges to the planning area. State Route 161 runs east to west through the center of Blendon Township. Major non-freeway roads include Morse Road, Cleveland Avenue, Westerville Road and Sunbury Road.

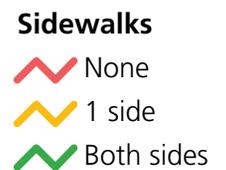
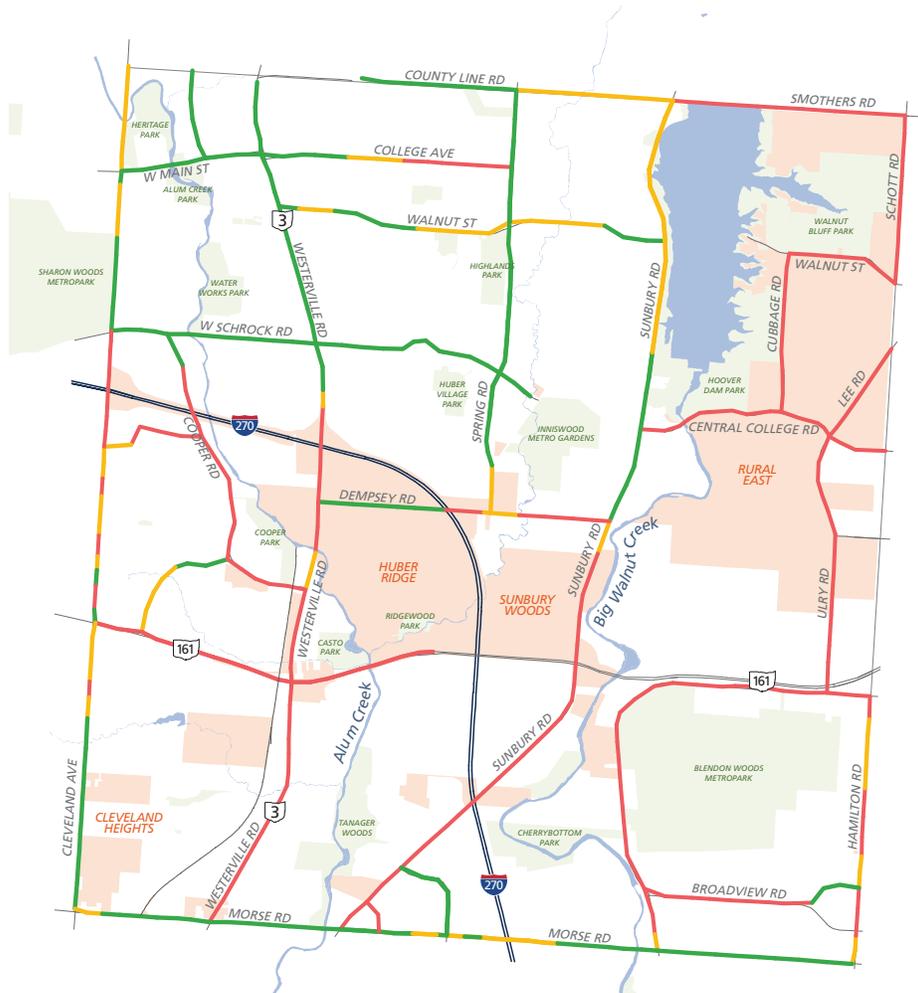
Planned road improvement projects include intersection improvements at Westerville Road and Dempsey Road, road widening and resurfacing on Dempsey Road from Interstate 270 to

Sunbury Road, and a bridge-replacement project on Central College Road at Big Walnut Creek. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission is conducting a study for Westerville Road, from State Route 161 to Interstate 270, to identify solutions for reducing traffic congestion.

Transit

The Central Ohio Transit Authority serves the Blendon Township area with five express routes, two local routes and one crosstown route. Bus routes are shown on the map above.

The express routes provide transportation for the morning and evening commutes from



SIDEWALKS

Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods to downtown Columbus. COTA is satisfied with the express routes' ridership, except route 38 which serves the Huber Ridge neighborhood.

Public transportation is an essential part of a healthy transportation network. Buses provide transportation for a wide range of people: those that do not want to drive, those without access to a vehicle and those unable to drive.

Rail

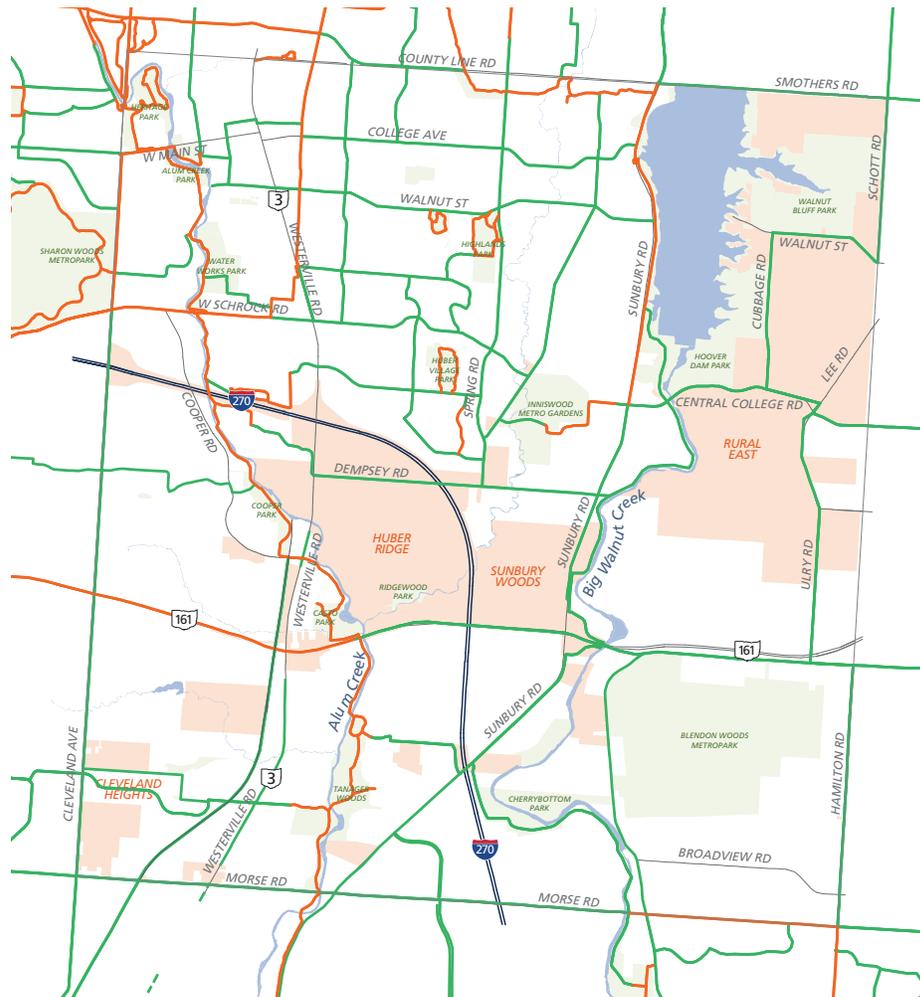
There are no active rail lines in the planning area. There is an abandoned railroad right-of-way located west of Westerville Road.

Abandoned railroad rights-of-way have a number of potential uses, including the installation of bike paths. The Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan proposes a bikeway in this location. Care should be taken to prevent uses encroaching on the railroad right-of-way.

Sidewalks and Multi-Purpose Trails

Sidewalks and trails serve important functions for communities. Sidewalks connect neighborhood residents to services, children to schools, provide opportunities for exercise and serve as an alternative mode of transportation.

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BIKEWAYS AND PATHS

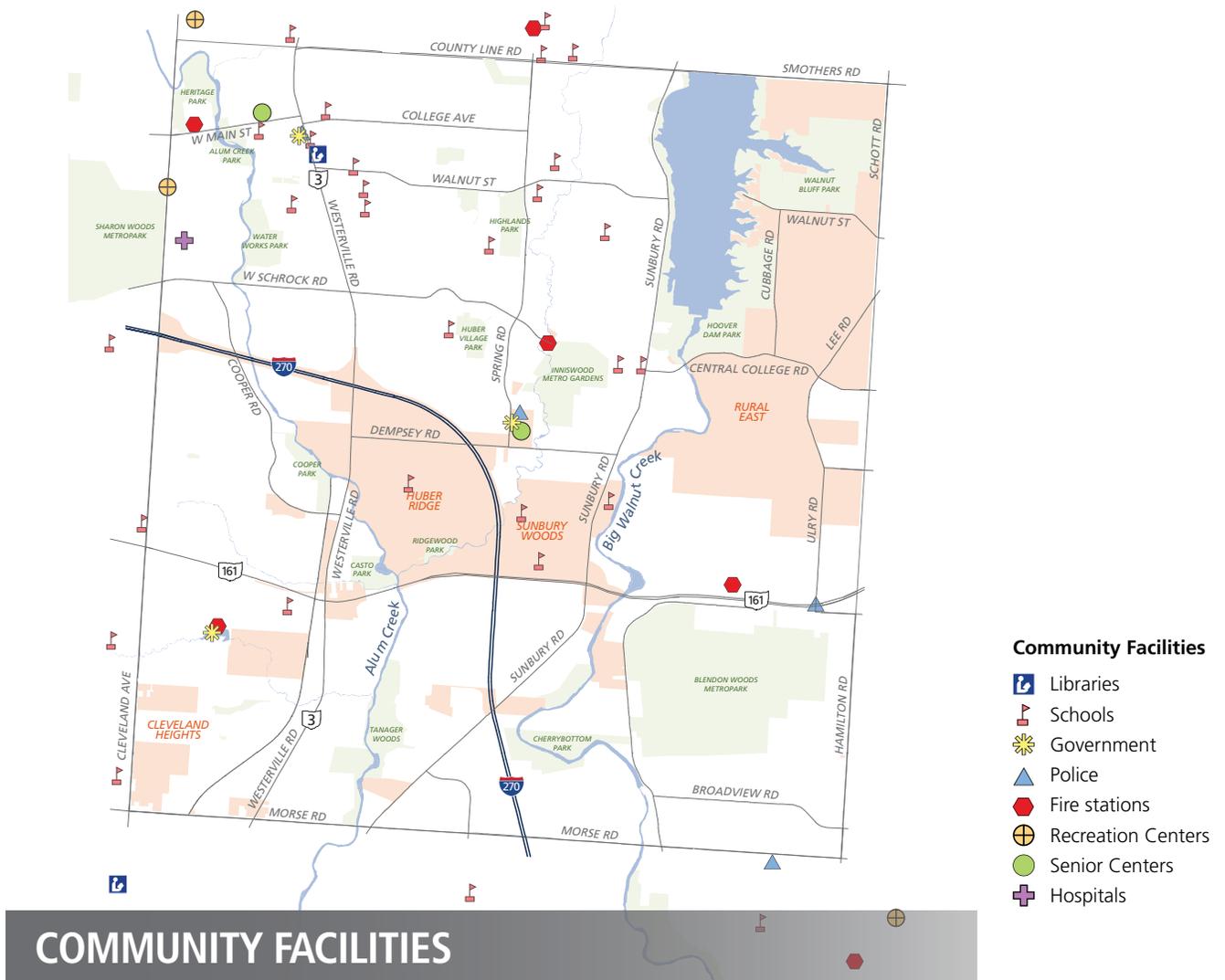
The sidewalks map on the previous page shows the presence of sidewalks along main roads, whether on both sides, one side, or absent altogether. The Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods neighborhoods have sidewalks throughout. The commercial corridors of Westerville Road, Sunbury Road and Executive Parkway are in the greatest need of sidewalks to allow residents from neighborhoods to access commercial destinations. Sidewalks exist on both sides of Cleveland Avenue.

Bikeways

This map shows the location of existing and planned bikeways in Blendon Township.

Existing bikeways are intermittent and typically not connected. The longest lengths of connected trails near the planning area are along Alum Creek and west of Hoover Reservoir. No bikeways directly serve Blendon Township. The Alum Creek Bikeway runs west of Huber Ridge, but the neighborhoods in the planning area do not have access.

Bikeways are proposed along many roads in the area east of Hoover Reservoir that would help connect parks and neighborhoods. Bikeway types can include shared roadway lanes, bicycle lanes along roadway shoulders and separate bicycle paths.



Parks and Recreation Facilities

Parks: Approximately 1,040 acres of park, parkland and recreational space exists in Blenden Township. Hoover Reservoir, Hoover Dam Park and Walnut Bluff Park account for 1,010 acres. Three metro parks and numerous neighborhood parks are located near Blenden Township.

Recreation facilities: The Blenden Township Board of Trustees owns and maintains Ridgewood Park in Huber Ridge and a commons area in Sunbury Woods. The park includes three baseball fields and the commons two play areas.

The Huber Ridge elementary school has basketball courts and a baseball field. Township

residents also use recreation facilities located in Westerville.

Recreation facilities are important to community health by allowing individuals the opportunity to be physically active.

Schools

Three school districts serve Blenden Township: New Albany-Plain Local Schools, Columbus City Schools and Westerville City Schools.

The planning area contains two Westerville schools.

Huber Ridge Elementary School: Huber Ridge Elementary serves the Huber Ridge neighborhood with an enrollment of approximately 550 students in grades K-5. Approximately 400 students walk to school each day. Two school buses provide transportation.

The school is located on a one-way street with parking on both sides which has led to motorist-pedestrian conflicts.

Wilder Elementary School: Wilder Elementary serves the Sunbury Woods neighborhood. Attendance is approximately 460 students. Wilder Elementary provides schooling for grades K-5 and offers a special needs preschool program.

Both schools offer after-school programs and are open to various groups.

One private school, Eastwood Junior Academy, is located in Blendon Township on Sunbury Road. The academy provides schooling for grades K-8. The school is operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Three schools of higher education are located in the planning area: Franklin University, Bohecker College and Hondros College. All three schools are located on Executive Parkway.

Safety services

Fire: The Westerville Fire Division provides fire suppression and emergency medical service to Blendon Township through a 20-year contract.

Three fire stations serve Blendon Township, providing a 4-minute average response time. Stations are located on West Main Street, East Schrock Road and North Spring Street.

Police: Blendon Township provides police services with a 20-member staff that includes 18 officers. The Blendon Township Police Department is located at the township complex on Hempstead Road.

Other Community Facilities

Blendon Township Senior Center: Located at the township complex, the center is open to anyone in the surrounding area that is 55 and over. There are approximately 140 members from Blendon Township. Most members drive to the center although transportation is provided to those unable to drive. The center offers programs Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

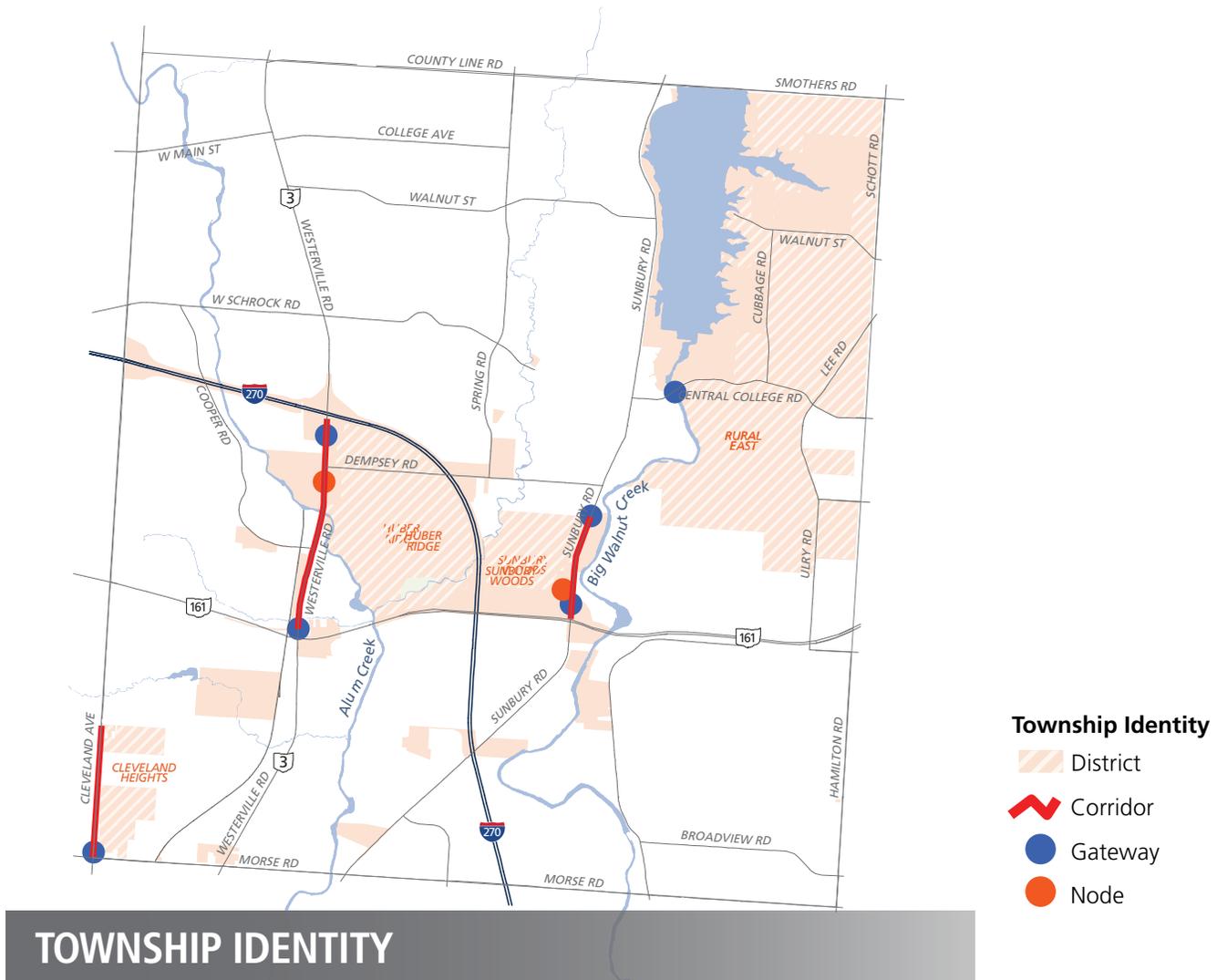
Postal Service: A post office is located at Glen-gary Shopping Center.

No libraries are located in the planning area. The Westerville Public Library is located on South State Street and the Northern Lights Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library is located on Cleveland Avenue south of Morse Road.

The preceding map shows the location of community facilities in the planning area.

Wilder Elementary School, located in the Sunbury Woods neighborhood





Gateways, corridors, nodes and districts are distinct areas that help form a community’s identity. The Township Identity map shows these areas for Blendon Township.

Gateways

Gateways are major entry points to the community and offer a community’s first impression to newcomers. Blendon Township’s gateways lack distinguishing features such as welcome signage or landscape treatments that inform travelers they are entering the area. There are six main gateways to the planning area, as shown on the map above.

Corridors

Corridors also convey a community’s image. Corridors are lengths of roadways that have similar characteristics and business activity.

Cleveland Avenue: A north-south road on the western edge of Blendon Township. The corridor has sidewalks on both sides of the road. Commercial properties lack street presence and many lack green space and landscaping.

Westerville Road: A north-south road through the western half of Blendon Township. Large volumes of traffic travel the corridor. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission is con-

ducting a capacity study for the portion between State Route 161 and Interstate 270.

Businesses on Westerville Road include restaurants, automobile-related uses and construction contractors. There are no sidewalks. High traffic speeds make travel unsafe for pedestrians. Commercial properties have limited landscaping and buildings are set back far from the road with parking in front.

Sunbury Road: A north-south road located east of Sunbury Woods. Sunbury Plaza is located here. A concrete barrier separates the road and plaza. Sidewalks do not exist and buildings lack street presence.

Nodes

Nodes are centers of attraction and activity. Glengary Shopping Center and Sunbury Plaza are nodes.

Glengary Shopping Center: The center has been a shopping destination for residents since the 1970s. The center is in a prime location and is fully occupied. Glengary Shopping Center occupies approximately 15 acres with limited landscaping. The shopping center lacks a pedestrian-friendly design. No bike racks or designated walking areas exist.

Landscaping reduces storm water runoff and helps reduce temperatures in urban environments. Bike racks encourage cycling. Designated walking areas allow safe pedestrian access to stores.

Sunbury Plaza area: The development of the shopping plaza and Executive Parkway began in the 1980s. This is a prime commercial area with access to the interstate system. Sixteen properties including Sunbury Plaza and businesses along Executive Parkway occupy approximately 45 acres.

One undeveloped property remains along Executive Parkway that serves as a buffer to the Sunbury Woods district. The property is zoned for commercial use. Businesses have an abundance of parking and there are no sidewalks. Most properties lack designated walking areas from parking lots to buildings.

Districts

Cleveland Heights, Sunbury Woods, Huber Ridge and the Rural East are districts, or areas with common design characteristics.

Cleveland Heights: Residential neighborhood platted in 1924 and 1925. The neighborhood contains approximately 480 properties of which approximately 370 are undeveloped. No sidewalks exist in the district. Existing homes are scheduled to have sewer service provided in the near future.

The neighborhood has a large amount of undeveloped land. Further utility service extension may be required for future development. Attention should be given to this area to ensure appropriate future development.

Huber Ridge: Residential neighborhood platted between 1960 and 1971. The neighborhood has approximately 1,500 developed properties. Neighborhood sidewalks connect residents to Huber Ridge Elementary and the township park.

Sunbury Woods: Residential neighborhood platted between 1972 and 1981. There are approximately 1,100 developed properties. Sidewalks exist throughout the neighborhood. Throughroadways in the neighborhood are wide and contribute to speeding.

Rural East: The rural area east of Big Walnut Creek has pockets of low to medium-density residential development. There are seven platted subdivisions in this district. A large amount of undeveloped land remains. Central sewer and water is not available. Natural features such as steep slopes, erodible soils and floodplains need attention when determining how the area should develop.

There are no sidewalks and no bikeways. Bikeways are planned for most of the major roads that will help connect residents to parks.

PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS



Public meetings allow community members to provide input on their community's future. For the purposes of the Blendon Community Plan, the future includes how land is used, how buildings look and how people get around.

First public meeting

We held the first of four Blendon Community Plan public meetings on July 13, 2009 at the Blendon Township Senior Center, 6330 Hempstead Road.

Over 150 residents, property owners, business representatives and other interested individuals attended the meeting.

Gathering input

After our project team gave a brief presentation, we divided meeting attendees into four groups according to where they live: Cleveland Heights, Huber Ridge, Sunbury Woods and the rural area east of Big Walnut Creek.

We conducted the following three exercises to gather detailed feedback from attendees.

1. Feedback form: Each attendee filled out a form, composed of two types of questions: questions to answer on a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree and open-ended questions asking attendees to list their general likes and dislikes about the community.
2. Group discussion: Within the small groups, attendees discussed their likes and dislikes then grouped their comments by general topic, to see which likes and dislikes are most common.
3. Favorite places maps: For the final exercise, attendees placed green and red dots on a map to show their top three favorite and least favorite places.

Using the results

We used the results from this meeting to establish a community vision for the future. After understanding what people like and what they want to see changed, we then begin to help shape policies and actions to achieve that future.

You can see the results of the public meeting on the following pages. In addition to the graphs, we also listed written and oral comments provided by attendees.



LAND USE: RESIDENTIAL

In general

Attendees reported a sufficient range of housing options and a desire to remain in their neighborhoods as they grow older.

Overall, attendees are satisfied with the current residential densities in their respective areas. Most attendees desire to see farmland preserved east of Big Walnut Creek.

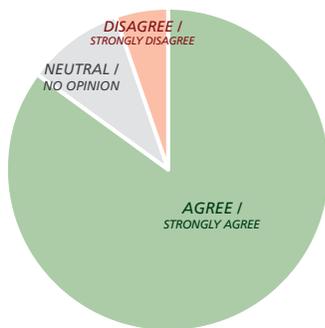
By area

Cleveland Heights: People enjoy nearby undeveloped land, open space and overall lower-density development.

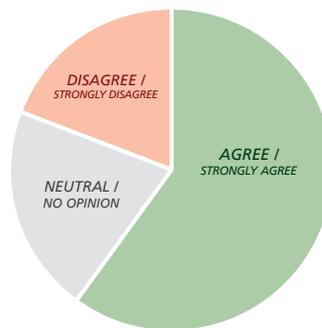
Huber Ridge: People enjoy Ridgewood Park and Huber Ridge Elementary School. People believe rental unit properties need better maintenance.

Sunbury Woods: People enjoy the two nearby parks, known as the large and small commons, and Wilder Elementary School. People do not desire increasing residential density.

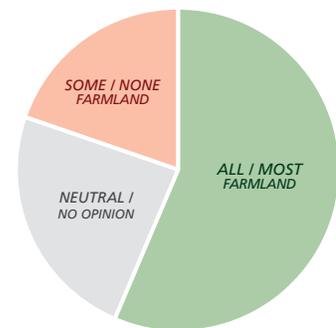
Rural East: People enjoy the area's low density, rural character. Some expressed worry about future development.



Staying in my neighborhood is important to me/my family as we get older



There are enough housing options available in my neighborhood to allow me to remain as I get older



How much farmland should be preserved in the area east of Big Walnut Creek?



LAND USE: COMMERCIAL

In general

Attendees report that a consistent visual appearance is important in commercial areas. Overall, attendees are satisfied with the number and variety of businesses.

By area

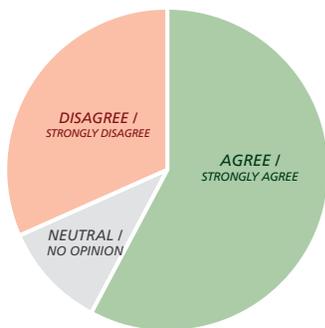
Cleveland Heights: Most people believe that nearby businesses have a poor appearance. Many said there are too many automobile-related businesses along Cleveland Avenue.

Huber Ridge: Most people believe that businesses along Westerville Road have a poor overall appearance, especially a lack of landscaping.

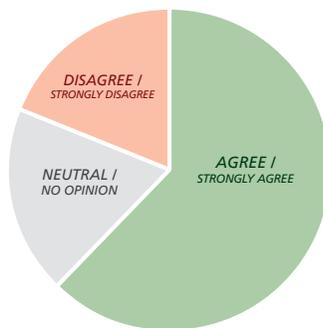
Similar to Cleveland Heights, many said there are too many automobile-related businesses.

Sunbury Woods: People are satisfied with the appearance of most businesses. Many said the recently-installed concrete barrier in front of Sunbury Plaza shopping center is unattractive.

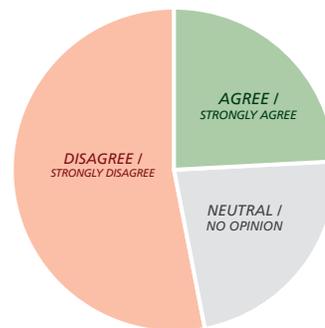
Rural East: People report satisfaction with the number, variety and appearance of nearby businesses. Most people shop for everyday items at Sunbury Plaza, in Westerville or New Albany.



The number and variety of businesses along commercial corridors nearby meet my needs



In commercial areas it's important to have a consistent appearance such as welcome signs, decorative street lights and building design



Commercial properties nearby look nice



PARKS AND NATURE

In general

Attendees overwhelmingly believe that clean streams, wooded areas and natural areas are important to the community.

Most attendees report a sufficient amount of parks, playgrounds and ball fields. The one clear exception is in the Cleveland Heights area where attendees strongly believe more natural areas and recreational opportunities would be beneficial.

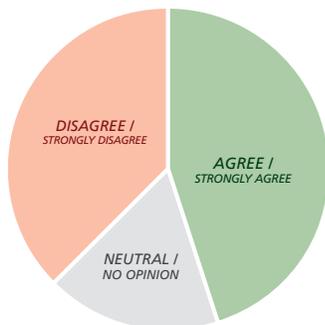
By area

Cleveland Heights: People visit parks on a regular basis and enjoy the trees and wildlife in their area.

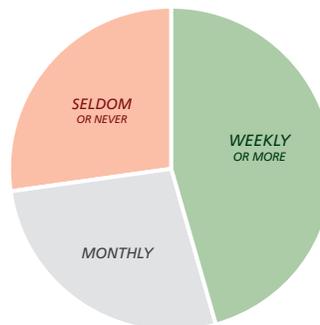
Huber Ridge: Most people visit parks on a regular basis. Many desire additional youth recreational facilities.

Sunbury Woods: Most people visit parks less than once a month. Many would like to see better maintenance of the commons.

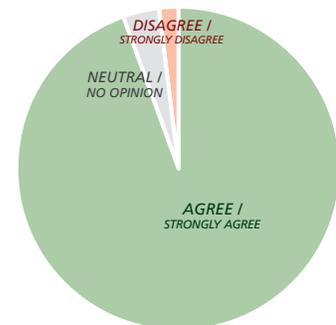
Rural East: Most people visit parks less than once a month but enjoy the nearby trees and wildlife.



There are enough parks, playgrounds, ball fields and other places to play in my neighborhood



How often do you/your family visit parks?



Having clean streams, wooded areas and natural areas is important to me



COMMUNITY

In general

Attendees would like to see a consistent appearance within their neighborhoods or general area. Most report that future residential development should be mostly single-family homes.

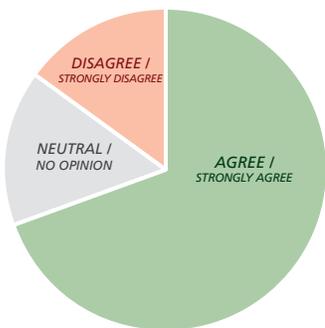
Rural East: People enjoy the open, rural character of the area with large, single-family properties.

By area

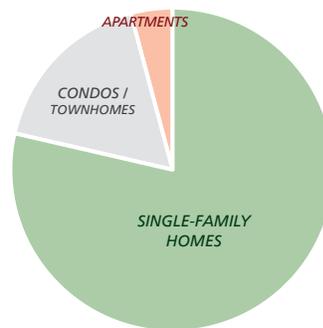
Cleveland Heights: People enjoy their neighbors and the prevalence of single-family homes.

Huber Ridge: People enjoy the active neighborhood association, friendly neighbors and the safety of the area.

Sunbury Woods: People enjoy the friendliness and safety of the neighborhood.



Having a consistent neighborhood look/feel such as neighborhood entrance signs, decorative street lights and uniform street signs is important to me



What type of housing would you like to see in your area?



PUBLIC SERVICES

In general

Attendees are pleased with township services including police, fire and snow removal. Most are satisfied with the effectiveness of Blendon Township's property maintenance code, except those living in Cleveland Heights and Sunbury Woods.

Attendees believe parks and playgrounds are well maintained and safe.

By area

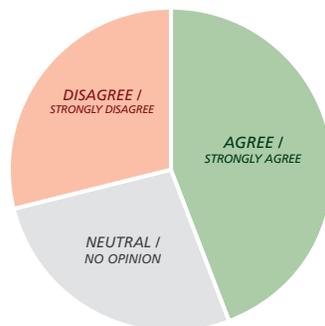
Cleveland Heights: People feel that the Blendon Township property maintenance code could be more effective. People, whose homes use

on-site aerators or septic systems, desire central sewer service but are apprehensive about the cost to install new sewers.

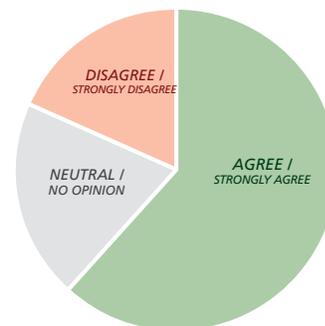
Huber Ridge: People are dissatisfied with costly water service.

Sunbury Woods: People feel that the township property maintenance code could be more effective. Most are dissatisfied with the cost of water service.

Rural East: Power outages and the lack of central water and sewer service concerns attendees.



The township's property maintenance code is working



Parks and playgrounds are well maintained and safe



TRANSPORTATION: WALKING

In general

Attendees reported it being easy to walk around their neighborhood, whether there were sidewalks or not. Walking to commercial areas presents a greater challenge.

Once they arrive at commercial areas, attendees find it difficult to walk, largely due to a lack of sidewalks.

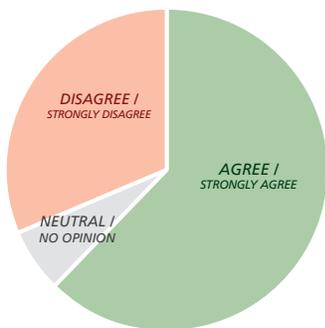
Huber Ridge: Sidewalks throughout the neighborhood makes walking generally safe. There are gaps in sidewalks between residential and commercial areas.

Sunbury Woods: Sidewalks throughout the neighborhood make walking generally safe. There are gaps in sidewalks between residential and commercial areas.

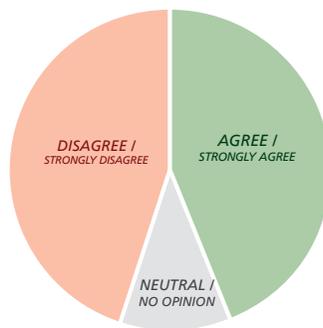
Rural East: Walking on some residential streets is safe, but walking longer distances is difficult since there are no sidewalks

By area

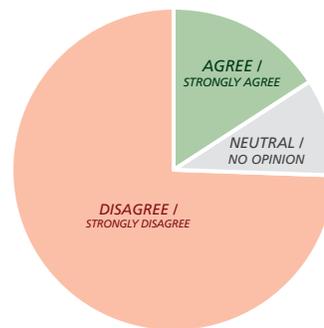
Cleveland Heights: Low vehicle traffic makes walking generally safe, even though there are no sidewalks on residential streets.



It is easy and safe to walk around my neighborhood



I can easily walk to commercial areas near my neighborhood



It is easy and safe to walk along main roads



TRANSPORTATION: BICYCLING

In general

Attendees reported it being easy to bicycle around their neighborhood. Adults mainly bicycle on the road, while children bicycle on sidewalks.

Accessing commercial areas is difficult on a bicycle. Attendees expressed a strong desire for better connectivity with bicycle trails. Several trails pass near Blendon Township neighborhoods, but a lack of connection forces bicyclists to travel long distances via highly-trafficked main roads to access the trails.

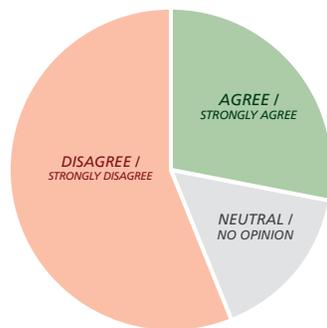
By area

Cleveland Heights: Bicycling to commercial areas is difficult. People desire an easy connection to the bicycle trail along Alum Creek.

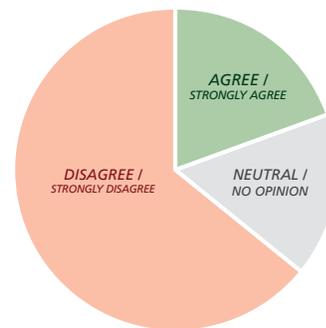
Huber Ridge: Bicycling to commercial areas is challenging. People strongly desire an easy connection to the bicycle trail along Alum Creek.

Sunbury Woods: People desire a connection to trails near Hoover Reservoir and to trails along Big Walnut Creek that connect to Blendon Woods Metro Park.

Rural East: Shopping is located too far to make bicycling practical. People desire connection to trails near Hoover Reservoir.



It is easy to ride a bicycle to commercial areas



It is easy to get to bicycle trails



TRANSPORTATION: TRANSIT

In general

Public transit opportunities are important to attendees in all four areas to connect people to jobs, shopping and recreation.

With the exception of Cleveland Heights, attendees do not believe bus stop upgrades would increase their use of public transit.

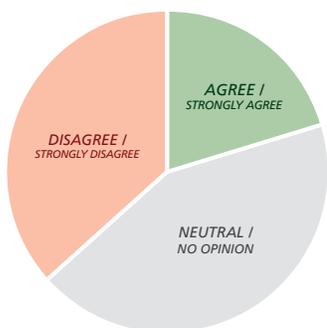
Sunbury Woods: People are generally satisfied with the number of bus routes.

Rural East: People believe there is a lack of transit routes in the area east of Big Walnut Creek.

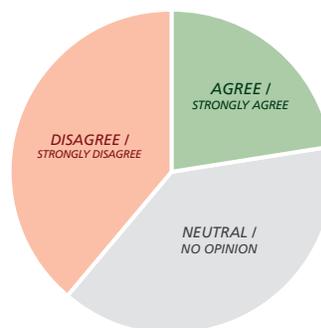
By area

Cleveland Heights: People believe sufficient public transit routes exist however upgrades to bus stops would increase ridership.

Huber Ridge: People feel a lack of transit routes exists and a wider variety of destinations is desired.



There are enough bus routes in my area to get where I need to go



Bus stop upgrades (benches, shelters, etc.) would increase my use of buses



TRANSPORTATION: CAR

In general

Attendees from all four areas enjoy the good access to main roads. Speeding is a safety concern in residential neighborhoods and along rural roadways.

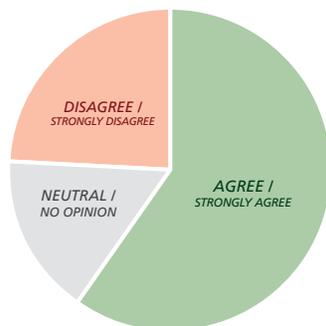
Sunbury Woods: Speeding cars are a problem along Sunbury Road, Executive Parkway and Valley Quail Boulevard.

Rural East: People note speeding cars on all main roads in the area.

By area

Cleveland Heights: People enjoy low traffic volumes experienced along residential streets. Speeding cars are a problem along Cleveland Avenue, Sharon Road and Chester Road.

Huber Ridge: Speeding cars are a problem along Dempsey Road, Paris Boulevard and Buenos Aires Boulevard.



Speeding is a problem in my neighborhood

Top speeding concerns:

- Cleveland Avenue
- Buenos Aires Boulevard
- Dempsey Road
- Paris Boulevard
- Executive Parkway
- Sunbury Road
- Valley Quail Boulevard
- Lee Road
- Smothers Road
- Ulry Road

SECTION 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

The *Recommendations* section includes:

- The community's vision for the future
- Goals to help achieve the vision
- Action items to reach each specific goal

How they were developed: We combined the data in the Current Conditions analysis with the results from our first public input meeting. Public meeting attendees told us what they want the future of Blendon Township to look like. Over the next 10 to 20 years, the recommendations help achieve that vision.

How they are used: Community members can use the recommendations to improve their neighborhoods. Government officials and others will use the recommendations when making decisions on land use proposals and capital improvements, all directed at realizing a unified community vision.

The recommendations are divided into three themes, *Grow Smart*, *Live Well* and *Go Safely*.

Grow Smart, p. 57

These recommendations address future development and desired community identity and streetscape improvements. The recommended *smart growth*-oriented actions will help the community become an attractive and economically vibrant area with a strong sense of community pride.

Live Well, p. 73

Recommendations in the *Live Well* chapter address housing, recreation and the environment. The actions help protect a sensitive environment, develop an accessible, well-maintained park and recreation system, and foster a community with a variety of housing types for all people.

Go Safely, p. 83

Go Safely means developing a complete transportation network that allows anyone regardless of physical ability or socio-economic status to travel to, from and within Blendon Township. The goals and actions will allow people to travel safely and easily by foot, bicycle, transit and car.



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GROW SMART

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Land uses that support and respect current areas, maintain quiet neighborhoods and support vibrant mixed-use areas

Commercial development that is attractive and economically sustainable

Neighborhood and commercial corridors with a strong sense of place

Achieve this vision by:

- Following the Future Land Use map for new development
- Keeping neighborhoods nearly exclusively residential
- Using conservation-style development to preserve natural features
- Adopting the Smart Growth Overlay for mixed-use corridors
- Implementing the Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan
- Installing gateway signage

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House size, type and lot placement contribute to community character



Goal A
Maintain residential character of existing neighborhoods

Huber Ridge, Sunbury Woods and Cleveland Heights are residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. The area east of Big Walnut Creek is characterized by low-density housing, farmland, old-growth forests and scenic waterways.

Action 1
Follow the Future Land Use map

The Future Land Use map shows the types of land uses the community wants to see in the

future. Franklin County Economic Development and Planning staff will reference the Future Land Use map when any new development or redevelopment is proposed. A rezoning or variance for a property should only be granted when the proposed use is consistent with the Future Land Use map.

Action 2
Discontinue conditional use home occupations

Non-residential development proposals such as more-intense home occupations currently available with a conditional use permit should only be approved outside residential zones. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department should pursue an amendment to the Franklin County Zoning Resolution to allow only permitted-use home occupations in these neighborhoods.

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

Conservation-style development rearranges development to preserve natural resources. Instead of dividing a large tract entirely into building lots, conservation-style development reserves some land for common enjoyment.

By making each lot slightly smaller, developers can build the same number of homes while protecting natural areas. Studies show homes in developments with protected open space sell for higher prices and better retain their value.



In a conventional development, land is divided into lots, with small amounts of open space on each lot. Most trees are cut down and there is no common open space.



In a conservation development, areas with trees and open spaces are set aside before land is divided into lots. Each lot is slightly smaller, resulting in larger open spaces the whole community can enjoy.

Action 3**Adopt the conservation development regulations in areas of Cleveland Heights and the area east of Big Walnut Creek**

Large parts of Cleveland Heights and the area east of Big Walnut Creek are undeveloped. The most heavily wooded and environmentally sensitive areas are subject to the conservation development overlay. This requires development to be arranged in a way that preserves

natural resources while ensuring efficient and responsible use of land. The Franklin County Zoning Resolution should be revised to include a conservation overlay district as recommended on the Future Land Use map.

SMART GROWTH OVERLAY

The *Smart Growth Overlay* is a set of design standards for building location, landscaping and parking that differs from the traditional suburban-style standards commonly found in zoning regulations. The overlay makes development more attractive and accessible to pedestrians and motorists alike. These improved standards will support economically successful commercial corridors.

Below is an outline of the *Smart Growth Overlay* design standards.

Building setbacks

- Approximate 25-foot consistent front building setback along main roads
- Maximum side-yard setbacks

Accessibility

- Sidewalks, 5 feet wide
- Bicycle parking
- Main building entrances face main roads
- Walkways from sidewalk to entrances

Building design

- Buildings are oriented toward a main road
- Minimum building height of 16 feet
- Large buildings incorporate architectural features to break up façade

Landscaping

- Front yard is landscaped
- Shade trees planted along street
- Trees and landscaping planted within interior of parking lot

Parking and vehicles

- Parking lots at side or rear of building
- Drive-thru windows facing side or rear
- Reduction in minimum required parking
- Screening parking lots with fence or shrubs

Signs

- Ground-mounted, monument-style signs
- Pedestrian-scale maximum sign height
- Oversized or numerous signs not permitted



Illustration of selected Smart Growth Overlay requirements

Action 4
Facilitate the creation of a neighborhood association in Cleveland Heights

A neighborhood association is a group of residents and property owners who advocate for and organize activities in a neighborhood. Associations are led by elected leaders and may have voluntary dues. A neighborhood association in Cleveland Heights would give residents a collective voice in the future of their neighborhood.

Action 5
Use site design techniques that preserve rural character

Using site design techniques helps prevent negative impacts on the rural landscape in the area east of Big Walnut Creek. Recommended site design techniques include:

- Setting back new development from rural corridors to preserve scenic vistas and minimize visual impact to travelers
- Building away from environmentally sensitive features such as streams, ponds, wetlands, trees and steep slopes

WESTERVILLE ROAD STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Part of the Blendon Community Plan is a streetscape improvement plan for Westerville Road. This plan makes both long- and short-term recommendations for improving the streetscape along Westerville Road and adding identity features in all areas of Blendon Township.

The recommendations for the streetscape focus on the Westerville Road corridor between State Route 161 and Interstate 270.

The vision for this corridor was developed with consideration of the following goals:

- Create an attractive streetscape
- Improve connectivity of sidewalks and crosswalks
- Offer easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Incorporate trees and green areas

- Provide community gathering space
- Enhance views of Alum Creek
- Buffer automobile related businesses

Public input was taken during public meetings for the Blendon Community Plan. The result is a series of design concepts showing possible improvements to the streetscape such as sidewalks, bicycle facilities, planted medians, improved landscaping, benches and improved signage.

The second part of the streetscape improvement plan involves identity features such as gateway signs, street signs, and logos for the four areas of Blendon Township: Cleveland Heights, Huber Ridge, Sunbury Woods and the area east of Big Walnut Creek.

The complete streetscape improvement plan will be available separately.



- Encouraging shared access drives to increase safety for motorists and bicyclists

Developers and builders should consult with Franklin County Economic Development and Planning staff during the development review process to ensure quality site design is used.



Goal B

Encourage attractive and economically sustainable commercial development

New commercial development should have street presence and inviting design to attract and retain business and investment, providing a strong, sustainable tax base for Blendon Township.

Action 6

Adopt the Smart Growth Overlay for mixed-use commercial corridors

The Smart Growth Overlay encourages attractive, pedestrian-oriented design through

reduced building setbacks, parking to the rear or side, landscaping and inviting building design. In consultation with Blendon Township and Franklin County agencies, the overlay standards should be incorporated into the Franklin County Zoning Resolution. The overlay standards should apply along the following corridors:

Cleveland Heights

- Cleveland Avenue
- Morse Road

Huber Ridge

- Westerville Road

Sunbury Woods

- Sunbury Road, *Valley Quail Boulevard North to Valley Quail Boulevard South*
- Executive Parkway
- Valley Quail Boulevard South, *Sunbury Road to Sunlawn Drive*

Well-designed commercial development looks nice and attracts customers

Action 7

Auto-related businesses should strictly adhere to development standards

The Westerville Road and Cleveland Avenue corridors have a high number of unattractive auto-related businesses. Variances to development standards should not be approved for any auto-related business. New auto-related businesses along these corridors will be required to develop using Smart Growth Overlay standards.

FACADE AND LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS

A major component of the Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan involves improving the appearance of existing businesses. The Plan recommends doing this by buffering parking lots, adding landscape features, improving

signage and making façade improvements. Minor improvements in the appearance of a business can draw more customers and in turn increase sales.



Action 8
Limit the number of access points along commercial corridors

A road with many access points is dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike. Common access points and shared parking arrangements consolidate and limit access points to make a safe, well-functioning street. In coordination with the Franklin County Engineer’s Office, regulations requiring these practices should be adopted.

Action 9
Implement recommendations of the Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan

The Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan makes design recommendations for streetscape improvements and identity-building features. Recommendations include adding sidewalks, bicycle facilities, planted medians, improved landscaping, benches, gateways and street signs (*for more detail see below*). Franklin County and Blendon Township should work closely with the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Mid-Ohio Regional Plan-

GATEWAYS AND STREET SIGNS

The Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan recommends decorative gateways and street signs for each of the four areas of Blendon Township: Huber Ridge, Sunbury Woods, Cleveland Heights and the area east of Big Walnut Creek. Gateways and street signs include logos with visual elements specific to each area, creating a consistent visual identity

for Blendon Township while also identifying specific areas.

At public meetings, residents chose among several design possibilities. The preferred designs for gateways, street signs and logos are shown below. The complete streetscape improvement plan will be available separately.



ning Commission to seek funding sources to implement recommendations of the plan.

Action 10

Conduct a market analysis of the Westerville Road corridor

Market studies identify realistic business and real estate development opportunities. A more-thorough understanding of the corridor will help implement the Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan and facilitate redevelopment.

Action 11

Support small business development

Small businesses are critical to local economies. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department administers several programs to help small businesses. Commercial corridors along Cleveland Avenue, Sunbury Road and Westerville Road should be targets for investment in the area's economic future.

Action 12

Establish a façade improvement program

Attractive building façades support and encourage local business development. Matching grants and low-interest loans are incentives for business owners to reinvest in existing commercial areas which are otherwise healthy. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department will work with local banks and business owners to establish a façade improvement program and locate funds for these improvements.

Action 13

Require installation of sidewalks and bicycle parking for new development

New office, commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential developments should be required to install sidewalks and provide bicycle parking. This will create a network that pedestrians and bicyclists can navigate safely while increasing business activity.

Action 14

Encourage installation of sidewalks and bicycle parking on public and private property

Convenient access to destinations by foot and bicycle reduces traffic congestion, promotes public health, improves safety and increases business activity. Public agencies in collaboration with bicycle advocacy groups should encourage existing business owners to provide sidewalks and bicycle parking.



Using visually consistent signs at key locations helps build pride and a sense of community

Goal C

Nurture a sense of place in neighborhoods and along commercial corridors

Features such as gateway signs, street signs and decorative streetlights give neighborhoods a common visual identity, which builds pride and ownership within a community.

Action 15

Install gateway signs in priority areas

Consistent gateway signs tell residents and visitors when they enter a community and also create a consistent visual identity. The Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan includes design recommendations for gateway signs throughout Blendon Township. The Franklin County Engineer's Office and Blendon Township should partner to install gateway signs.

Important gateways to the community include the following intersections:

Cleveland Heights

- Cleveland Avenue and Morse Road

Huber Ridge

- Westerville Road and State Route 161
- Westerville Road and Interstate 270

Sunbury Woods

- Sunbury Road and State Route 161
- Sunbury Road and Valley Quail Boulevard North

Rural East

- Central College Road and Big Walnut Creek

Sunbury Plaza to determine the best use of the wall.

Action 16**Install decorative street signs**

Installing decorative street signs builds visual consistency in a community. Priority areas for these signs include commercial corridors and neighborhood streets with higher traffic volumes. The Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan includes design recommendations for street signs which reflect the unique characteristics of each neighborhood while maintaining consistency throughout. Blendon Township should partner with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to install these street signs.

Action 17**Install consistent streetlights in priority areas**

Streetlights can improve public safety and build a community's visual identity. Blendon Township should partner with the Franklin County Engineer's Office and utility providers to install streetlights in priority areas such as commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods. Streetlights should have an attractive, consistent design.

Action 18**Convert the concrete barrier on Sunbury Road to a community amenity**

The concrete barrier is a highly visible, under-utilized space. It should be converted to a use that benefits the community such as a mural or vertical garden. Murals add visual interest and help define a community's identity. Vertical gardens are an attractive, low-maintenance landscaping feature that grow on walls and provide visual interest.

Blendon Township should work with the Sunbury Woods Neighborhood Association, Ohio Department of Transportation and owners of

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LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS



Low density residential

Allowed land uses: Single-family homes only

Density: Maximum of 1 unit per acre



Medium density residential

Allowed land uses: Single-family and two-family homes

Density: Minimum of 2 units per acre, maximum of 8 units per acre



High density residential

Allowed land uses: Townhomes and multi-unit buildings

Density: Minimum of 8 units per acre, maximum of 24 units per acre



Office + Residential

Allowed land uses: Offices, single- and multi-unit housing. Uses may mix within the same building.

Density: For buildings without offices, minimum residential density of 4 units per acre. For all buildings, maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Commercial: Limited range + Multifamily

Allowed land uses: Limited range of retail uses, mostly neighborhood-scale, plus offices and multi-unit housing and townhomes.

Density: Maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Commercial: Full range + Multifamily

Allowed land uses: Full range of retail and office uses, plus multi-unit housing and townhomes.

Density: Maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Light Industrial + Office

Allowed land uses: Range of uses from office, industrial, storage and warehousing.



Parks/Open Space

Intended for nature or recreation with minimal buildings.



Stream buffer

Environmentally-sensitive area that includes streamways and 100-year floodplain.

Prohibited land uses: Construction, parking lots, and dredging or filling.

Allowed land uses: Permissible uses are passive recreation and trails. If a stream buffer area is permanently protected, development density may be transferred elsewhere on the same property or an immediately-adjacent property.



Conservation development overlay

Preservation of natural features including trees and steep slopes is required for all new developments.

The dedicated open space requirement for Cleveland Heights is 25 percent and in the area east of Big Walnut Creek, 50 percent.

Dedicated open space consists of undisturbed woodlands, other natural areas or disturbed areas returned to a natural state. Open space may be used for passive recreation and trails with limited environmental impact.

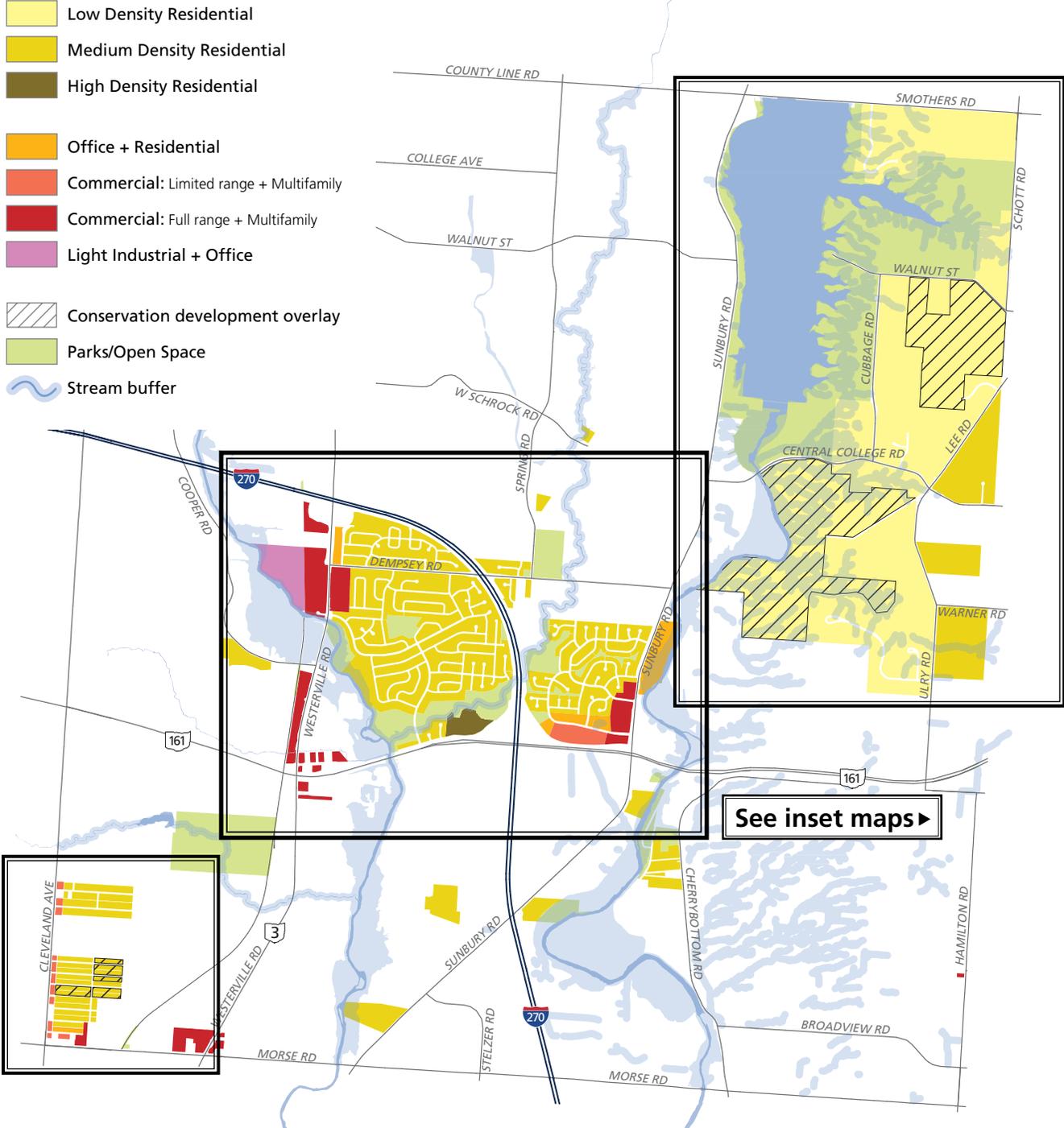
Overall density not to exceed maximum density permitted in underlying district.

Future land use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential

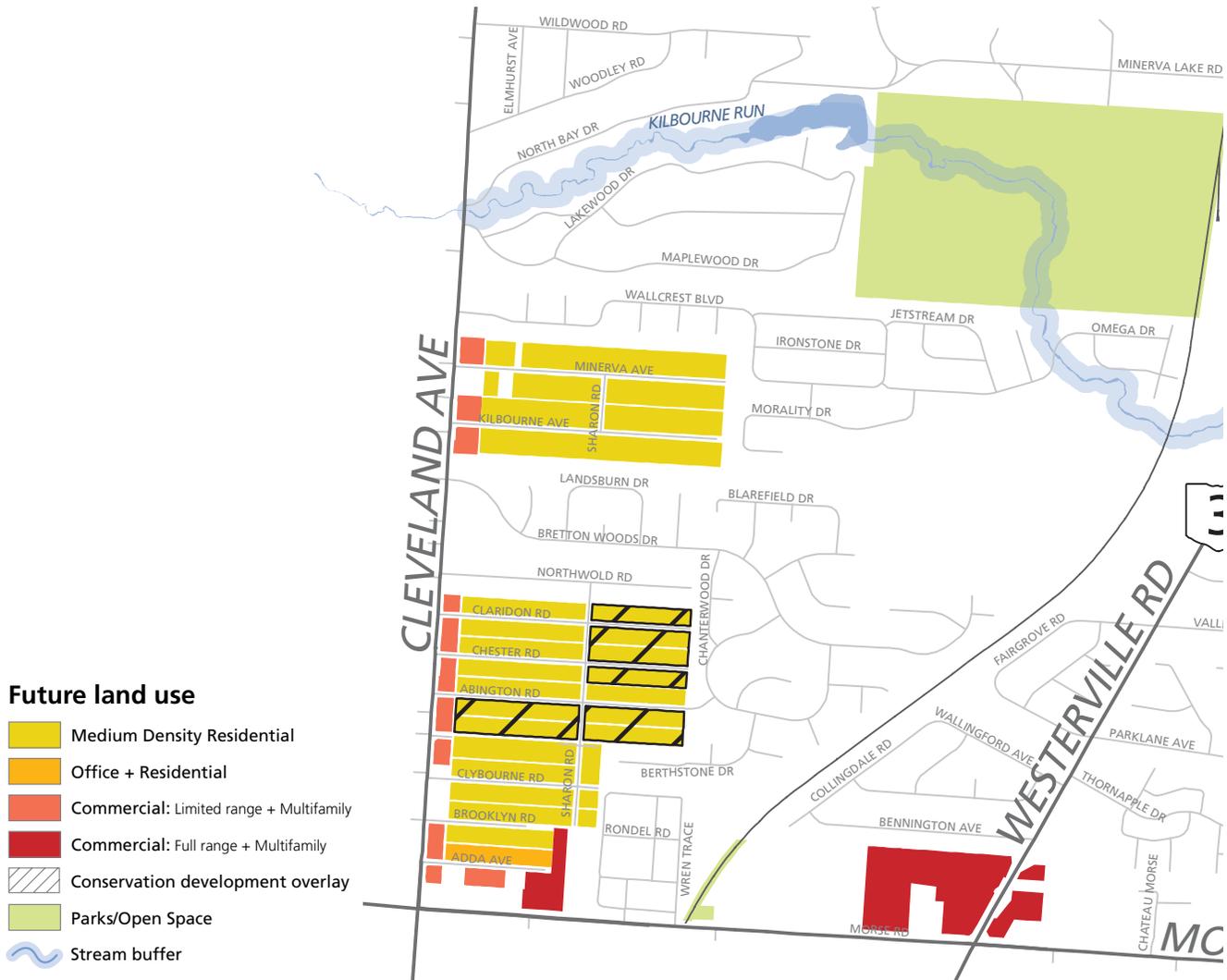
- Office + Residential
- Commercial: Limited range + Multifamily
- Commercial: Full range + Multifamily
- Light Industrial + Office

- Conservation development overlay
- Parks/Open Space
- Stream buffer



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

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CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

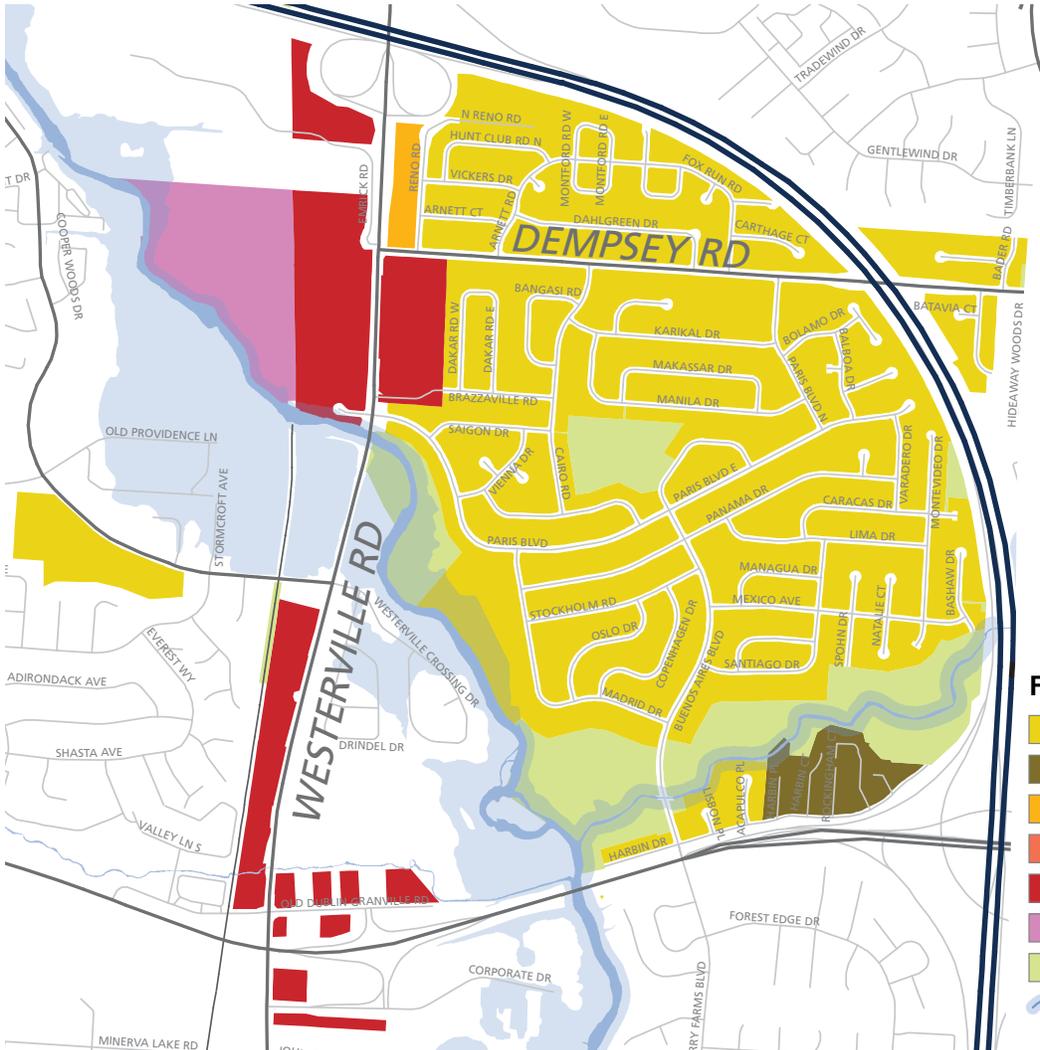
Cleveland Heights Conservation Area

The conservation area is intended to preserve trees by clustering new homes. Recommended housing types include townhouses, row houses and condominiums, with a maximum 3-story height.

The minimum project size for a conservation development should be 5 acres, with a maximum overall density of 8 units per acre. Twenty-five percent of the project site should be dedicated open space.

Cleveland Avenue

This corridor is intended to provide neighborhood scale retail and office opportunities. This complements an abundance of regionally-targeted retail establishments on Morse Road. Multi-unit residential development is permitted with a maximum density of 24 units per acre.



- Future land use**
- Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Office + Residential
 - Commercial: Limited range + Multifamily
 - Commercial: Full range + Multifamily
 - Light Industrial + Office
 - Parks/Open Space
 - Stream buffer

HUBER RIDGE

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Spring Run Open Space

The undeveloped areas along Spring Run should remain open space that will provide recreational opportunities to residents.

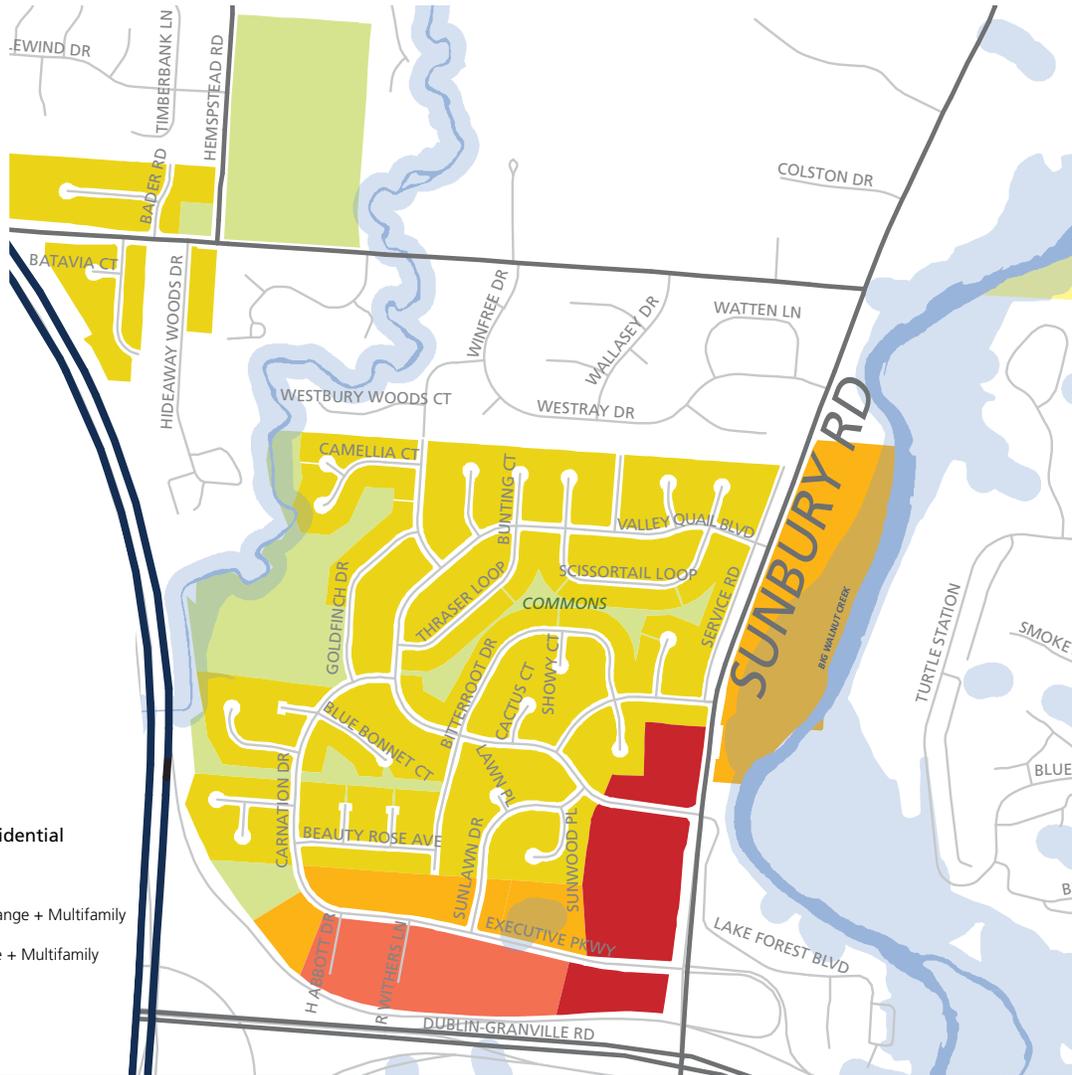
Westerville Road Office and Residential

The area north of Dempsey Road and east of Westerville Road is intended for office and residential uses that will buffer the medium-density residential neighborhood to the east.

Westerville Road Commercial

Businesses along the Westerville Road corridor attract local and regional customers. The corridor should be mixed-use in nature with a range of commercial and residential uses.

The area west of the Westerville Road and Dempsey Road intersection employs many people. Proposals for multi-unit uses in this area warrant special consideration.



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Future land use

- Medium Density Residential
- Office + Residential
- Commercial: Limited range + Multifamily
- Commercial: Full range + Multifamily
- Parks/Open Space
- Stream buffer

SUNBURY WOODS

Executive Parkway

Land uses along Executive Parkway should provide a transition from large-scale retail along Sunbury Road to residences in Sunbury Woods.

Buildings on the north side of Executive Parkway should be built closer to the road in order to buffer the adjoining residential uses.

New buildings should not exceed 3-stories in height and residences should be of the townhouse or condominium design.

Sunbury Open Space

The undeveloped parcel on the west end of Executive Parkway is recommended to be open space to buffer the neighborhood from commercial uses along the roadway.

Sunbury Road Office and Residential

The area east of Sunbury Road is recommended for office and residential uses. Development in this area must

consider steep slopes and floodplain in site design.

Wilder Elementary and Blendon Township Complex Open Space

Future land uses should be limited to open space, community recreation facilities and other park-type uses.

Rural East Conservation Area

The conservation area is intended to preserve trees and farmland by clustering new homes.

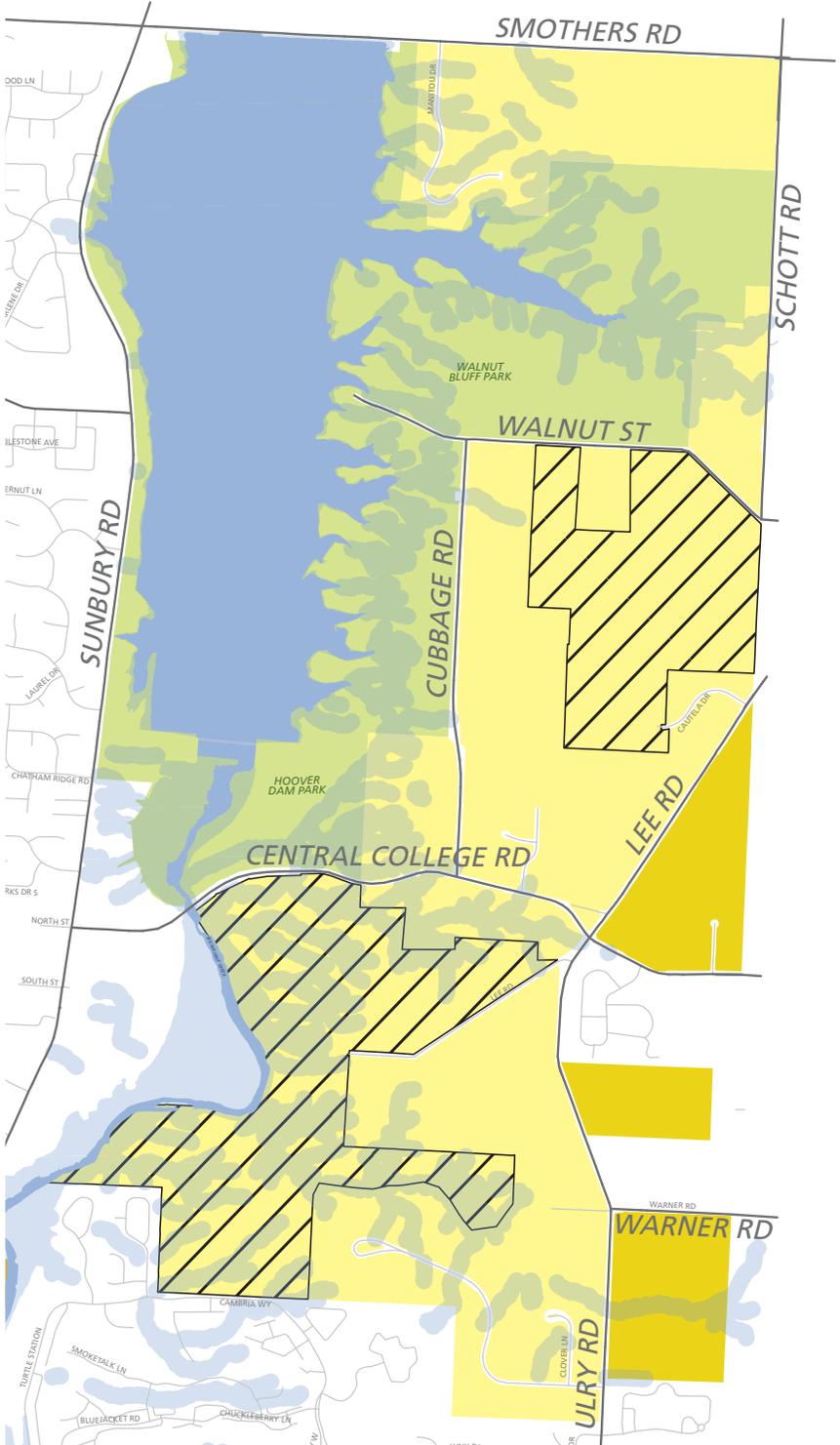
The minimum project size for a conservation development should be 20 acres, with a maximum overall density of 1 unit per acre. Fifty percent of the project site should be dedicated open space.

Medium-Density Residential

The area east of Ulry and Lee Roads is recommended for medium density residential development. Recommended housing types are single-family and two-family homes. The density is not to exceed 8 units per acre.

Future land use

-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Conservation development overlay
-  Parks/Open Space
-  Stream buffer



RURAL EAST

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LIVE WELL

HOUSING · RECREATION · ENVIRONMENT



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A variety of housing types that respect existing development patterns and allow people to age in place

An accessible, well-maintained park and recreation system

A healthy and protected environment

Achieve this vision by:

- Using universal design elements to make housing accessible to all
- Improving the appearance of rental properties
- Conducting a parks master plan
- Providing connections to bikeways
- Establishing a buffer zone along Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and their tributaries

No-step entryways ensure accessibility for all people regardless of physical ability



Goal A
Promote sustainable housing that facilitates aging in place

Sustainable and accessible housing is environmentally sensitive and allows seniors to

maintain their quality of life by growing older in their familiar surroundings.

Action 1
Require conformance with *AWARE* sustainability and universal design standards for projects receiving public funds

AWARE standards create sustainable, accessible homes that help maintain property values and keep neighborhoods strong. Franklin County developed the *AWARE* manual to standardize requirements for building and rehabilitating homes that are energy-efficient and accessible

AWARE STANDARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE, ACCESSIBLE HOMES

The *AWARE* Manual (Accessible, Water conservation, Air quality, Resource conscious, Energy efficient) provides building standards and contractor requirements for residential projects receiving federal funds through the city of Columbus and Franklin County.

Homes built to *AWARE* standards help people live better and stay in their homes as they grow older. The standards use environmentally-sustainable materials, keep indoor air clean and healthy, and make it easy to get around.

Standards apply to both new construction and housing rehabilitation. Below are examples of what the *AWARE* standards require.

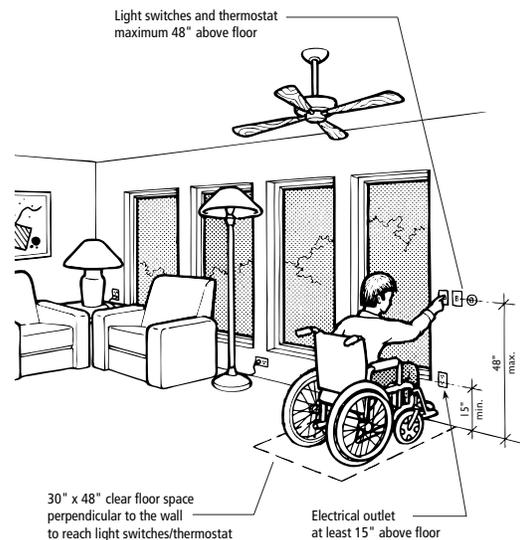
Accessible standards:

- No-step entries for easy access
- One bedroom and full-bath on the first floor, to avoid climbing stairs
- Lever-style doors, for lower door-opening effort
- Switches, phone jacks and thermostats within reach
- Low-step showers to prevent falls

Sustainable standards:

- Energy-star rated appliances and fixtures
- Low/no use of volatile organic compounds, avoiding harmful fumes
- Recycled building materials
- High-efficiency air conditioning

Following *AWARE* standards makes homes friendlier to people of all ages and abilities. This supports strong communities and benefits property values.



*Illustration of selected **AWARE** accessibility standards*

New or rehabilitated homes receiving public funds must follow AWARE standards. Privately-funded projects are encouraged to use the standards as guidelines (*for more detail see previous page*).

Action 2

Support the use of universal design standards in new construction and rehabilitation of residential units

Homes built with universal design features help people stay in their homes regardless of age or physical ability. Basic features such as zero-step entrances, wide doorways and a wheelchair-accessible bathroom on the first floor help make homes accessible for all. Franklin County will provide information to builders on these standards when applying for a building permit.

Action 3

Facilitate conversion and construction of accessory apartments

Accessory apartments, also known as ‘granny flats’ are additional housing units secondary to a main residence. They are ideal for extended families and make home ownership more affordable.

Currently, regulations allow accessory apartments in one residential district and require a special permit. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department should revise applicable sections of the Zoning Resolution to encourage more of this housing type.

Action 4

Provide information regarding energy efficiency programs

Reducing household energy consumption is environmentally friendly and reduces utility costs. Utility companies and public agencies offer a variety of financial incentives to retrofit buildings and purchase energy-efficient appliances, equipment and lighting.

The Home Weatherization Assistance Program replaces electric appliances, light fixtures, furnaces, water heaters, and gas cooking stoves which in turn reduces energy consumption and

utility costs. The program is administered by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. Services are free to income-eligible residents.

Action 5

Support the use of alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal

Alternative energy sources have no emissions, can reduce energy costs and reduce reliance on non-renewable resources. Franklin County can support the use of solar, wind and geothermal energy by providing information, incentives and referrals to public, private or nonprofit organizations.



Well-kept homes make quality neighborhoods and maintain property values

Goal B

Maintain quality neighborhoods by improving the housing stock

New development should complement the use, density, setback and scale of existing development. Existing development should be maintained and improved to retain property values and the quality of the neighborhood.

Action 6

Facilitate home rehabilitation and compatible infill housing

Well-maintained housing supports neighborhood stability. Building in existing neighborhoods is an efficient use of land. Regulatory and financial assistance should be directed to vacant lots and homes in need of rehabilitation to provide quality housing and maintain the neighborhood’s character.

Action 7**Turn around neglected properties**

Vacant, abandoned, tax-delinquent and foreclosed properties bring down the image and value of neighborhoods. The Franklin County Treasurer's Office pursues properties for overdue taxes. Blendon Township officials should keep the Treasurer's Office informed of vacant and abandoned properties and partner with them to return them to productive use.

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department administers the Neighborhood Stabilization Program which assists in acquiring and redeveloping foreclosed properties. Blendon Township and the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department should work together to identify foreclosed homes and apply for funds to acquire and rehabilitate these properties.

Action 8**Increase the homeownership rate**

Homeowners move less often and are more engaged in their neighborhood and civic affairs. Neighborhoods with high homeownership rates generally have less crime and better neighborhood upkeep. Several existing programs are available to aid first-time home buyers with the purchase of a house.

Action 9**Improve the appearance of rental homes**

Rental housing is an affordable option for singles, young families and seniors. Affordable rental housing should be preserved and rehabilitated when feasible to appear consistent with the surrounding housing. The curb appeal of rental homes can be improved through landscaping and home improvements. Franklin County, Blendon Township and local rental agencies should work collaboratively to target resources at improving the appearance of rental homes.

Action 10**Direct financial assistance programs to help low-income families perform home maintenance and resolve code violations**

Many property owners are unable to resolve violation issues due to limited financial resources. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department funds housing services partners that can assist property owners. The partners aid in performing home maintenance and helping to resolve violations.

Action 11**Continue enforcement of the Blendon Township Property Maintenance Code**

A property maintenance code establishes minimum standards for the maintenance of residential properties. Key requirements of Blendon Township's maintenance code include: no inoperable vehicles, keeping trash in approved containers, maintaining homes, gutters and roofs, and cutting grass. Continued code enforcement is essential to maintaining a safe environment and property values.

Action 12**Consider the feasibility of a rental housing inspection pilot program**

Neglected rental homes are eyesores and lower property values. An inspection program aims to help rental property owners comply with health and safety standards by conducting door-to-door inspections in focused areas.

Franklin County and Blendon Township Code Enforcement should partner in establishing a rental housing inspection program. Housing-maintenance program funds can be used to provide incentives for owners to address issues identified during the inspection.



Goal C

Maintain, improve and expand township parks and recreational facilities

Blendon Township's parks and recreational facilities are assets to township residents

providing opportunities to be physically active.

Action 13

Conduct a parks master plan

A parks master plan evaluates existing park facilities and outlines the recreational needs of a community. The master plan gives strategic direction for the future and includes recommendations for achieving the community's vision for the park system. Public input is essential during the planning process to ensure the vision for the parks system is consistent with residents' wishes. The Franklin County Economic

Parks are community assets, providing recreational opportunities to residents

STRATEGIC POLICY DIRECTION

The Blendon Community Plan abides by three adopted policies: the Sustainability Resolution, the Central Ohio Green Pact and Regional Connections. The common goal of each is to create sustainable economic growth.

Sustainability Resolution

The Franklin County Commissioners passed resolution 683-06 stating its commitment to environmental protection and economic growth. The resolution covers a range of county activities. For land use plans, the resolution states two important policy goals:

1. Practicing environmentally responsible land use
2. Preserving natural resources

Central Ohio Green Pact

Beginning in 2007, Franklin County communities have adopted the Central Ohio Green Pact, a shared agreement to make a more sustainable region. This is achieved by:

- Reducing household waste
- Building greener buildings
- Growing a green economy
- Adopting sustainable land use policies

Regional Connections

Regional Connections is an effort to establish a growth plan for the next 25 years in the central Ohio region

Formed by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission with input from public and private leaders, Regional Connections emphasizes the importance of local governments taking steps to anticipate growth. This is achieved by:

- Increasing development intensity in areas near existing roads and sewer lines
- Promoting economic and community development that respects nature
- Cooperating regionally and sharing development's costs and benefits
- Providing affordable housing near jobs, recreation and cultural amenities
- Making decisions with a regional perspective



Development and Planning Department can assist Blendon Township in conducting the master plan.

Action 14

Establish a parks advisory board

A citizen-led advisory board should be established to oversee the maintenance and development of the parks system. The parks advisory board would be responsible for making recommendations to the Blendon Township Board of Trustees on the distribution of parks funds and the implementation of the parks master plan.

Members should be appointed by the Blendon Township Trustees and should represent all areas of the township.

Action 15

Set aside general maintenance funds for each park

Residents enjoy visiting well-maintained parks. Without regular maintenance, parks fall into disrepair, eventually requiring large sums to restore damage.

Dedicating funds each year specifically for maintenance ensures the upkeep of parks and facilities.

Action 16

Consider a levy for parks

A property tax levy for parks is one option to generate more funds. If approved by voters, dedicated funds could be used for general maintenance, capital improvements or land acquisition.

Action 17

Establish a park in the Cleveland Heights neighborhood

Cleveland Heights residents expressed the need for a park in their neighborhood. There is a large amount of open space in the neighborhood that could be converted to a park.

A park gives residents opportunities to be physically active and facilitates more interaction

between residents. Future development in the neighborhood should provide open space for public use.

Action 18

Explore the feasibility of installing a wellness garden at the Blendon Township Senior Center

A wellness garden is handicapped-accessible green space that enables residents to engage in physical and mental activity. Amenities include exercise stations, walking trails and meditation gardens.

The wellness garden should also function as a rain garden, which is an area planted with natural vegetation that reduces stormwater runoff to storm sewers and waterways. Installation in a high-profile area can encourage residents to install their own rain gardens at home.

Action 19

Add sufficient bicycle parking at parks

Bicycle parking is limited at Blendon Township parks. Providing bicycle parking reduces vehicle parking demands and encourages more bicycling.

Blendon Township should provide at least one bicycle space for every 20 parking spaces. Temporary parking solutions such as a bike corral or portable bicycle racks could be used during peak bicycle parking periods such as special events.

Action 20

Provide connections to the existing trail system

The Alum Creek and Big Walnut Creek trails provide many recreational opportunities. Neither is easily accessible, however, from the residential neighborhoods. Connections to trails give residents access to more recreational opportunities. The Bikeways map shows proposed links from neighborhoods to the existing trail system.

Action 21**Utilize Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and Spring Run as recreational assets**

The scenic Alum Creek and Big Walnut Creek are biologically diverse aquatic systems. They can provide educational, environmental, and recreational opportunities if properly protected and utilized. Public access to stream corridors should be created where feasible.

Action 22**Work with local agencies to add land to the park system**

Franklin County and Blendon Township will work with local agencies to facilitate the addition of land to the parks system consistent with the Future Land Use map. Additional parkland will provide public access to nature and expand recreational opportunities for residents.

**Goal D****Protect Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and their tributaries**

The scenic Alum Creek and Big Walnut Creeks are biologically diverse aquatic systems which are assets to Blendon Township.

Action 23**Adopt regulations establishing a stream buffer zone along Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and their tributaries**

The buffer zone is a no-build area along creeks and tributaries that filters pollution and replenishes groundwater. The buffer zone should include the area adjacent to waterways, the 100-year floodplain and steep slopes.

Prohibited uses within the buffer include construction, parking lots, dredging and filling.

Permissible uses include passive recreation and multi-use trails.

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department and Blendon Township should work closely with other Franklin County agencies, Columbus, Westerville and environmental organizations in establishing watershed-wide stream buffer regulations.

Action 24**Promote the use of stormwater best management practices**

Stormwater best management practices such as rain gardens, bioswales, pervious surfaces and other techniques control stormwater runoff and stabilize soil to reduce pollution that runs off paved areas such as rooftops, driveways and parking lots.

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department and Blendon Township can work with environmental partners to promote the use of stormwater best management practices.

Action 25**Require dedication along Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and Spring Run for public use**

Development along waterways should protect environmentally-sensitive land through dedication of conservation easements that allow only trails and open space. This will ensure that the environmentally-sensitive land near the creeks is permanently protected.

Action 26**Support acquisition of scenic and sensitive land located along the creeks**

Lands along waterways are habitats for plants and animals, filter water and prevent pollution. Franklin County and Blendon Township should support public acquisition of these areas through grants and other resources to ensure their protection and future conservation.

Alum Creek and Big Walnut Creek are home to diverse fish and wildlife species

Action 27
Build and maintain relationships with local watershed groups

Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries and Friends of Big Walnut Creek are non-profit organizations that support watershed protection and stewardship. Collaboration among these groups and public agencies will help protect the creeks and their watersheds.



Community projects such as rain garden installations increase the public's awareness of environmental issues

Goal E
Promote environmental awareness and stewardship

Public awareness of environmental issues promotes the responsible use of natural resources.

Action 28
Sign the Central Ohio Green Pact

The Central Ohio Green Pact is a multi-jurisdictional commitment to make our region more sustainable. It outlines policies that enhance quality of life, protect the environment and facilitate economic development. By signing this agreement the Blendon Township Trustees affirm the community's commitment to a sustainable future.

Community gardens are a good use of undeveloped lots and help promote healthy eating

Action 29
Promote backyard conservation

Common backyard conservation practices include composting, tree planting, using native plants and water conservation. These practices both beautify and protect the environment.

Blendon Township will work with the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District and area watershed groups to promote backyard conservation.

Action 30
Conduct an energy audit of buildings at the Blendon Township Complex

An energy audit assesses a building's energy use to identify opportunities to reduce consumption.

Blendon Township can save money and promote energy efficiency by performing an energy audit and reducing energy consumption.

Action 31
Support participation in the GreenSpot program

The GreenSpot program is administered by the city of Columbus and recognizes residents, businesses and community groups for their work to promote a sustainable future. It also provides resources to help people meet their goals of sustainability through conserving energy, water and recycling. Residents and businesses in Blendon Township should be encouraged to participate in the GreenSpot program.



Goal F
Support a sustainable local food system

A local food system is a network of farmers, consumers and communities that partner to create a more locally-based, self-reliant food system.

Action 32
Establish a farmers market

Access to fresh food leads to better eating habits and a healthier community. Farmers markets connect producers and consumers of local foods. A farmers market could be located in the parking lot of Glengary Shopping Center, Sunbury Plaza or the Blendon Township Complex.

A farmers market could be supported through Community-Supported Agriculture, where customers buy a share of a farm's harvest and receive food throughout the season. This arrangement gives farmers capital up-front and enables consumers to receive a variety of fresh food.

Action 33

Revise zoning regulations to allow community gardens

Currently, zoning regulations do not allow community gardens on lots smaller than one acre. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department should pursue an amendment to permit community gardens on these smaller lots with reasonable regulations to protect public health and neighborhood stability.

Action 34

Identify and convert underutilized sites to community gardens

Community gardens are self-maintained by members of a neighborhood and community organizations. They build self-reliance, a sense of community and support local food systems. Franklin County, Blendon Township and neighborhood organizations should collaborate to identify and acquire properties for community gardens.

Action 35

Support the transition of yards, window boxes and rooftops into food production areas

Urban gardening creates independence from corporate food systems, fosters community involvement and gets people closer to the natural environment. The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department will provide information on resources to start gardens and education on urban gardening practices.

Action 36

Provide information to connect producers and consumers of local foods

Locally-grown food is often difficult to find and usually only available in farmers markets. Connecting local producers and consumers will increase access to locally grown foods and the economic vitality of local farming initiatives.

Action 37

Support local food production and processing enterprises

Franklin County has recently funded the *Growing Entrepreneurs Initiative*. The initiative will develop and expand food service enterprises by providing training, technical assistance and loans to income-eligible residents.

The initiative gives entrepreneurs access to the Ohio State University Food Industries Center for product development and marketing training. Participants work with local grocers, farmers markets and other distributors in selling their product. Information should be provided to Blendon Township to inform residents of this opportunity for entrepreneurship.

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GO SAFELY

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A complete transportation system where people can easily travel by foot, bicycle, transit and car

Achieve this vision by:

- Installing sidewalks in priority areas
- Connecting to existing bicycle trails
- Adding amenities at existing bus stops
- Designing streets to accommodate all users

Sidewalks allow residents to travel safely to nearby destinations



Goal A
Create and maintain a complete network for pedestrian traffic

Walking has environmental, social and health benefits. A complete network for pedestrians means that people can get to destinations safely on foot.

Action 1
Install new sidewalks and improve crossings in targeted areas according to the Sidewalk Priorities map

Sidewalks are essential to public safety and beneficial to neighborhood stability. They encourage people to walk, promoting public health while reducing traffic congestion and energy use. Sidewalks connect people to jobs, shopping and other destinations. Blendon Township in collaboration with the Franklin County Engineer’s Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation should plan for sidewalk installation according to the Sidewalk Priorities map. Road improvements should include sidewalk installation and sidewalks should be at least 5 feet wide.

Action 2
Maintain and improve existing sidewalks

The majority of streets in the existing residential neighborhoods have sidewalks. Sidewalks in disrepair are unattractive and dangerous to pedestrians. Sidewalks should be properly maintained to ensure safety and their continued use.

Action 3
Require sidewalks for new development

New office, commercial, industrial, and multi-unit residential developments should be required

to install sidewalks. This will create a network which pedestrians can navigate safely.

Action 4
Use pedestrian-friendly design for major intersections

Intersections are primarily where pedestrians come into contact with automobile traffic. Improving the safety of intersections will decrease accidents and encourage more people to walk.

A PedFlag program is one affordable tool to make intersections safer. It involves the placement of flags at each end of a cross walk. Pedestrians use them while crossing to increase their visibility therefore making crossing the street faster, safer and more pleasant.

Action 5
Use pedestrian-friendly design within shopping centers and along commercial corridors

In large shopping centers with lots of automobile traffic, defining walkways for pedestrians can prevent accidents. In turn, better pedestrian friendliness can lead to more people traveling on foot. Any redevelopment of existing shopping centers should include both pedestrian connections from the street to the shops and connections within the parking lot once people leave their cars. These connections should be accompanied by improved landscaping.

Action 6
Complete a Safe Routes to Schools Plan

A Safe Routes to School Plan aims to make walking and bicycling to school safer for children which can in turn enhance children’s health, ease traffic congestion and improve the quality of life in a community. A Safe Routes to School Plan can be completed as an amendment to the Blendon Community Plan with input from stakeholders and the public.



Goal B

Create a complete bicycle network for recreation and transportation

Bicycling has environmental, social and health benefits. A complete network allows bicyclists to travel safely to destinations.

Action 7

Use the Bikeways map to guide development of an area-wide bicycle network

The Bikeways map is a compilation of area and regional bikeways plans and specific recommendations for Blendon Township. Franklin County and Blendon Township should consult the Bikeways map when expanding bicycle

facilities or reviewing development proposals. This ensures the creation of a well connected bikeway system.

Action 8

Provide connections to existing bikeways

There are existing bikeway facilities near Blendon Township including the Big Walnut Creek and Alum Creek trails. However, neither is easily accessible from the residential neighborhoods. Connections to trails give residents access to more recreational opportunities. The Bikeways map shows proposed links from neighborhoods to the existing trail system.

Bikeways provide transportation and recreation opportunities

Action 9

Require new development to provide rights-of-way to accommodate shared use paths

New development along bicycle corridors should dedicate rights-of-way for bikeways in addition to requirements of the Franklin County Thoroughfare Plan. These rights-of-way should be a minimum of 20 feet to accommodate future

COTA LONG-RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

In 2005–2006 the Central Ohio Transit Authority hosted a series of public meetings seeking input on improving transit service in the region. Key stakeholders such as state and regional planning agencies, local municipalities, and business and community leaders provided additional input in identifying transit needs and possible solutions.

The long range plan makes recommendations that will help meet immediate transit needs and also create a viable, responsive and modern transit system for the future.



Key recommendations include:

- Using the newest technology to enhance the transit experience
- Increasing access, convenience and reliability for people with limited mobility
- Improving passenger convenience by providing real-time information at major bus stops and transit centers
- Expanding service to employment and activity centers
- Calling for strategic transit investments
- Adding several neighborhood-oriented, circular LINK routes

One proposed LINK route serves many areas of Westerville. The Blendon Community Plan recommends extending the LINK route to serve the Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods neighborhoods.

shared-use paths as designated on the Bikeways map.

Action 10
Establish bicycle routes through the Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods neighborhoods

Bicycle-friendly street design and signage direct bicyclists safely through a neighborhood.

Recommended bicycle routes include:

Huber Ridge

- Buenos Aires Boulevard
- Paris Boulevard

Sunbury Woods

- Executive Parkway
- Valley Quail Drive

Action 11
Improve bicycle parking on public and private property

Convenient bicycle parking near destinations encourages bicycling. Existing business owners should be encouraged to provide bicycle park-

ing. One bicycle space should be installed for every 20 parking spaces.

Action 12
Locate buildings outside the railway corridor near Westerville Road

The abandoned railway right-of-way has the opportunity to become part of the regional bikeway system. The proposed Westerville to Arena District Bikeway would connect existing trails, parks, schools, universities and places of interest. It will be a safe, convenient and fast way for commuting by bicycle. Locating buildings outside of this corridor ensures that it will be available for a future regional bikeway.

COMPLETE STREETS

A complete street is designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the roads. Communities that adopt a Complete Streets policy make a commitment to consider and provide appropriate facilities for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users during new and retrofit road projects.

By adopting a complete streets policy, a community can:

- Support economic growth by providing accessible and efficient connections between residences, schools, parks and businesses
- Reduce crashes and improve safety through safety improvements
- Ease traffic congestion by increasing travel options such as walking and bicycling

- Help children get physical activity and gain independence through bicycling and walking
- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by riding a bicycle or walking
- Save costs for retrofitting streets later by integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, transit amenities and safe crossings into the initial design of a project





Goal C

Support a transit network that offers sufficient destinations and frequent service

Transit complements other modes of transportation and provides options to those who do not drive.

Action 13

Improve pedestrian infrastructure near bus stops

Using transit is more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. A safe path to a bus stop encourages transit use. Blendon Township, the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Central Ohio Transit Authority should partner to install sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure to encourage more travel by transit.

Action 14

Improve existing bus stops

COTA provides shelters at bus stops to protect transit users from weather and provide a place to sit. The presence of bus shelters encourages more people to use transit. In areas without shelters, installing trash cans, recycling bins, benches and schedule displays can decrease litter and increase convenience for transit users.

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department and Blendon Township should work with COTA to install bus shelters and other amenities at existing bus stops.

Action 15

Investigate the possibility of locating a Park and Ride in the Sunbury Woods area

Park and Ride facilities allow commuters to avoid driving during the most congested times of the day. COTA's long range plan recommends

the addition of a park and ride facility in the Sunbury Woods area.

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department, Blendon Township and COTA should work together in planning and construction of Park and Ride facilities.

Action 16

Ensure the proposed Westerville LINK route serves Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods

LINK routes provide bus service within neighborhoods and activity centers using smaller buses. COTA's long range plan recommends a LINK route in the Westerville area which could be extended to include Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods.

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department, Blendon Township and COTA should work together to ensure the LINK route serves Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods.



Goal D

Maintain a safe, well-connected auto network

The road network is the primary means of transportation within the planning area. Blendon Township's easy access to freeways and major roads is an asset.

Action 17

Adopt a complete streets policy for future road improvements

A complete street is one designed for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists. A network of complete streets is safer, more livable and welcoming to everyone. Adopting a complete streets policy ensures

Amenities like benches make the use of transit services more appealing to residents

Physical treatments help calm traffic along neighborhood streets

that future road projects are designed and constructed with all users in mind.

Action 18 Improve damaged roads and roadside drainage infrastructure

Damaged roads and poor drainage pose a threat to motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Blendon Township and Franklin County agencies can work together to improve the condition of these roads. Streets needing immediate attention include:

Cleveland Heights

- Abington Road
- Adda Avenue
- Brooklyn Drive
- Chester Road
- Claridon Road
- Clybourne Road

Huber Ridge:

- Brazzaville Road
- Paris Boulevard

Action 19 Install traffic calming devices in priority areas

Traffic calming devices reduce vehicle speeds. They can also be visual amenities that beautify neighborhoods. Traffic calming devices should incorporate landscaping elements in their design. Blendon Township will work with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to install and maintain traffic calming measures in the following high speeding areas:

Huber Ridge

- Buenos Aires Boulevard
- Karikal Drive
- Paris Boulevard

Sunbury Woods

- Executive Parkway
- Valley Quail Drive

Action 20 Encourage speed limit reductions on high-accident roads

High-accident roads were identified through accident data and reports by residents. Blendon Township does not have direct authority to order a reduction in speed limits. Speed limit reductions must be applied for through the Ohio Department of Transportation. Roads recommended for review include:

Cleveland Heights

- Cleveland Avenue

Huber Ridge

- Dempsey Road

Sunbury Woods

- Sunbury Road

Rural East

- Central College Road
- Cabbage Road
- Lee Road
- Schott Road
- Smothers Road
- Ulry Road
- Walnut Street

Action 21 Encourage safety improvements at high-accident intersections

Safety improvements are recommended at intersections identified by residents that are difficult or impossible to cross. Although Blendon Township has limited authority on Franklin County roads and state routes, it is recommended that Franklin County and the Ohio Department of Transportation consider safety improvements at the following intersections:

Huber Ridge

- Westerville Road and Interstate 270
- Westerville Road and State Route 161
- Westerville Road and Dempsey Road
- Westerville Road and Paris Boulevard

Sunbury Woods

- Sunbury Road and State Route 161
- Sunbury Road and Executive Parkway

- Sunbury Road and Valley Quail Boulevard South

ON THE NEXT PAGES

The maps on the following pages show the bikeways plan and sidewalk installation priorities.

The Bikeways map shows locations of current and proposed bikeways in Columbus, Westerville and Blendon Township.

The Sidewalk Priorities map shows where sidewalks should be installed in Blendon Township.

TYPES OF PROPOSED BIKEWAYS

Bikeways map

What it is: The bikeways map shows locations of existing and proposed bikeways. The proposals support a bikeway network for transportation and recreation.

Why we need it: Since bikeways allow people to cover wide distances, communities plan for bikeways on a regional basis. This ensures we connect destinations for people in Blendon Township and throughout central Ohio.

In addition to Blendon Township bikeways recommendations, the map contains information from these sources: Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan, Westerville Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, MORPC Regional Bikeways Plan and Metroparks Trail Plan.



Shared Use Path

A path for bicycles and pedestrians, separate from a road. Generally 10 to 14 feet wide.



Bicycle lane

On-street striped lane for bicycles, 4 to 6 feet wide, usually next to the outermost travel lanes.



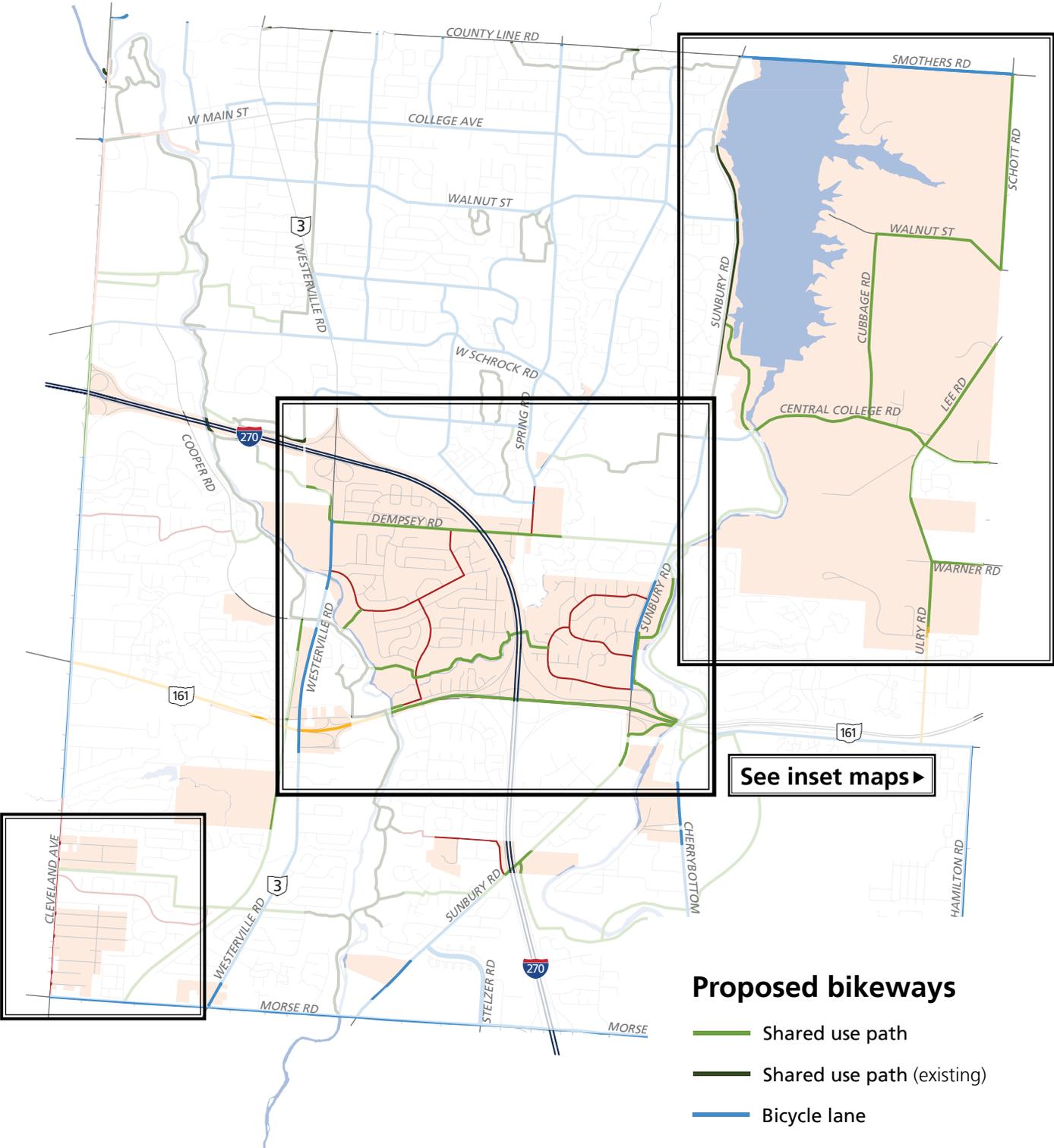
Paved shoulder

A paved area beyond outside travel lanes, 4 feet wide. Common on narrow rural roads.



Signed shared roadway

Standard road with a combination of traffic calming, signage and “sharrows” (shown at right), or a high-volume road with 14-foot or wider outside lanes.

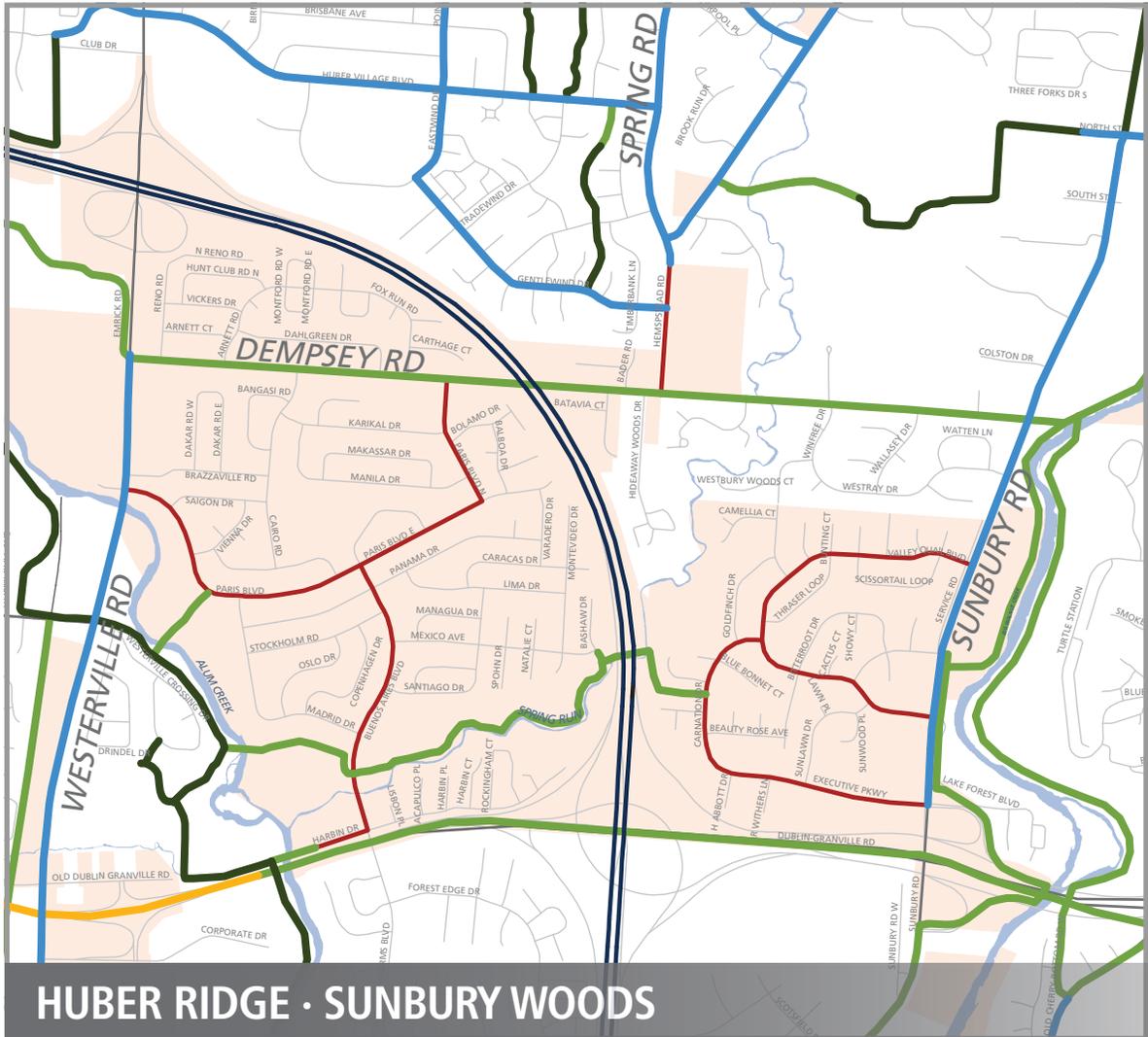


Proposed bikeways

- Shared use path
- Shared use path (existing)
- Bicycle lane
- Signed shared roadway
- Paved shoulder

BIKEWAYS MAP

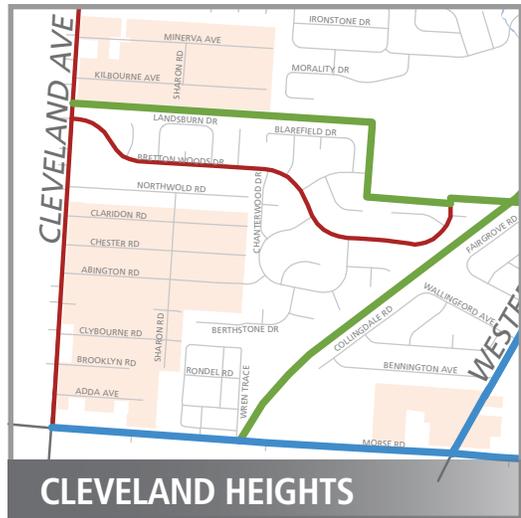
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HUBER RIDGE · SUNBURY WOODS

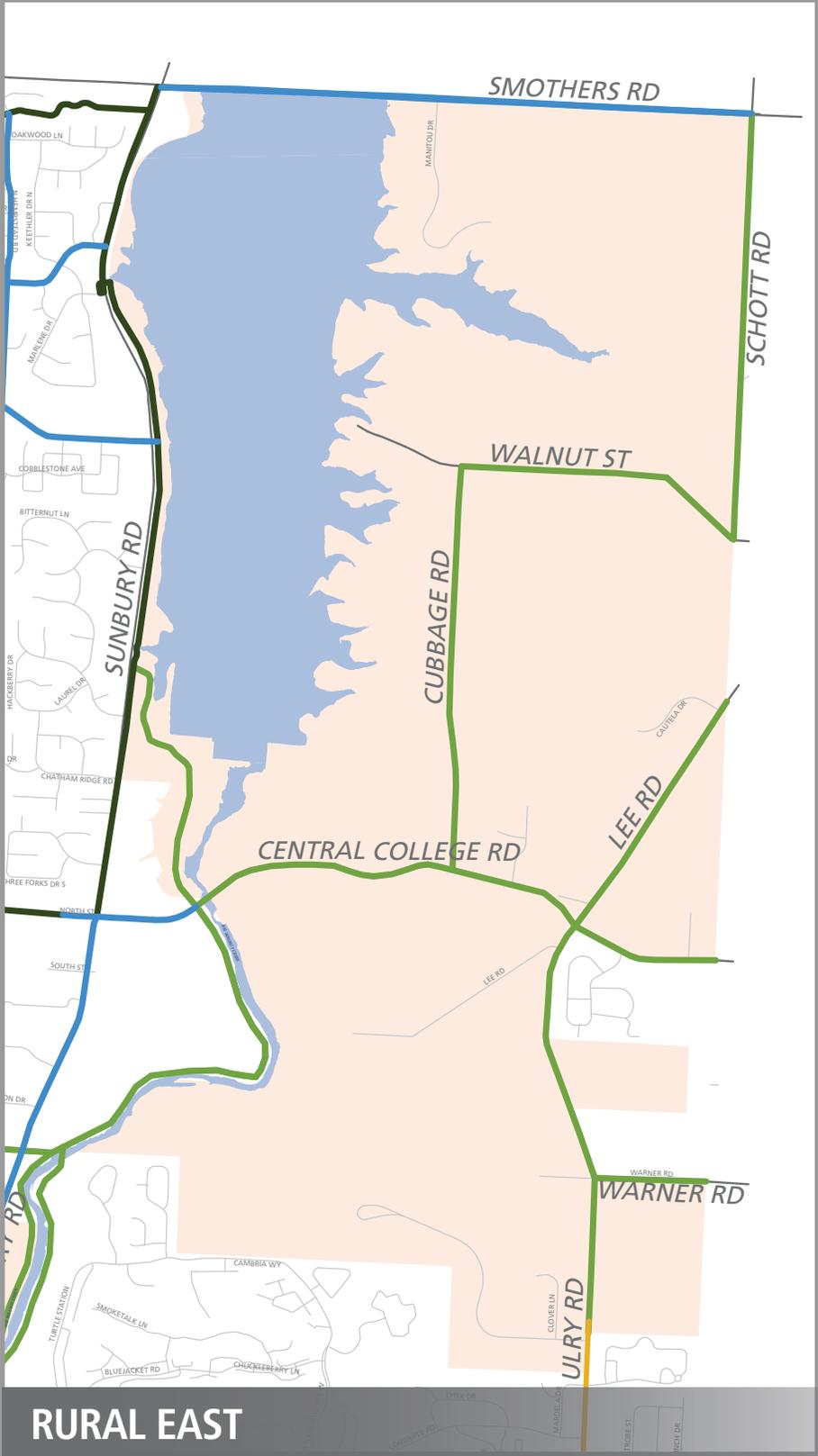
Proposed bikeways

- Shared use path
- Shared use path (existing)
- Bicycle lane
- Signed shared roadway
- Paved shoulder



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

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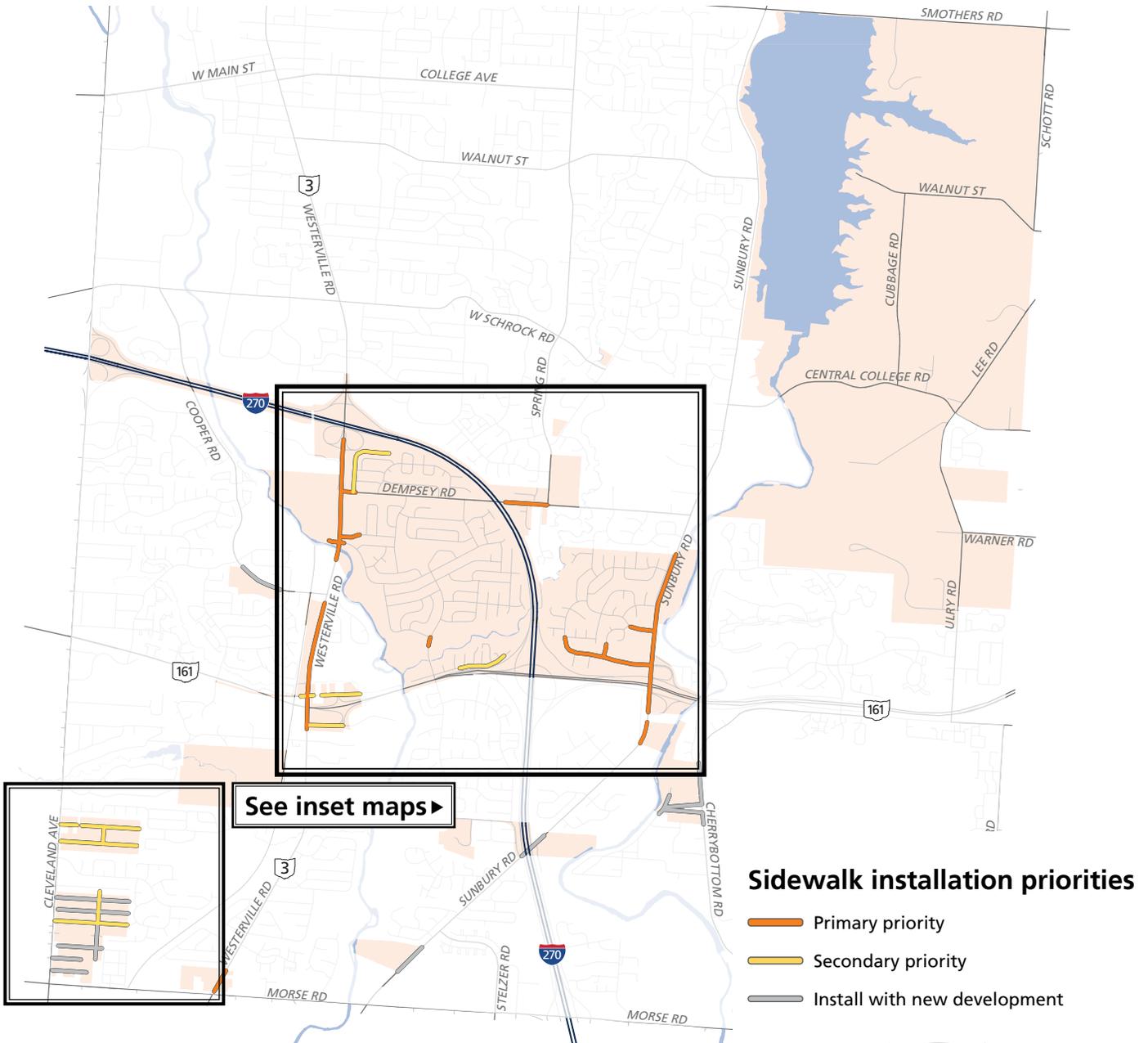
Sidewalk priorities

What it is: This map shows areas where the community would like new sidewalks.

Why we need it: Installing sidewalks costs money. Realizing that funds are limited, the sidewalk maps prioritize sidewalks: primary priorities are sidewalks that should be

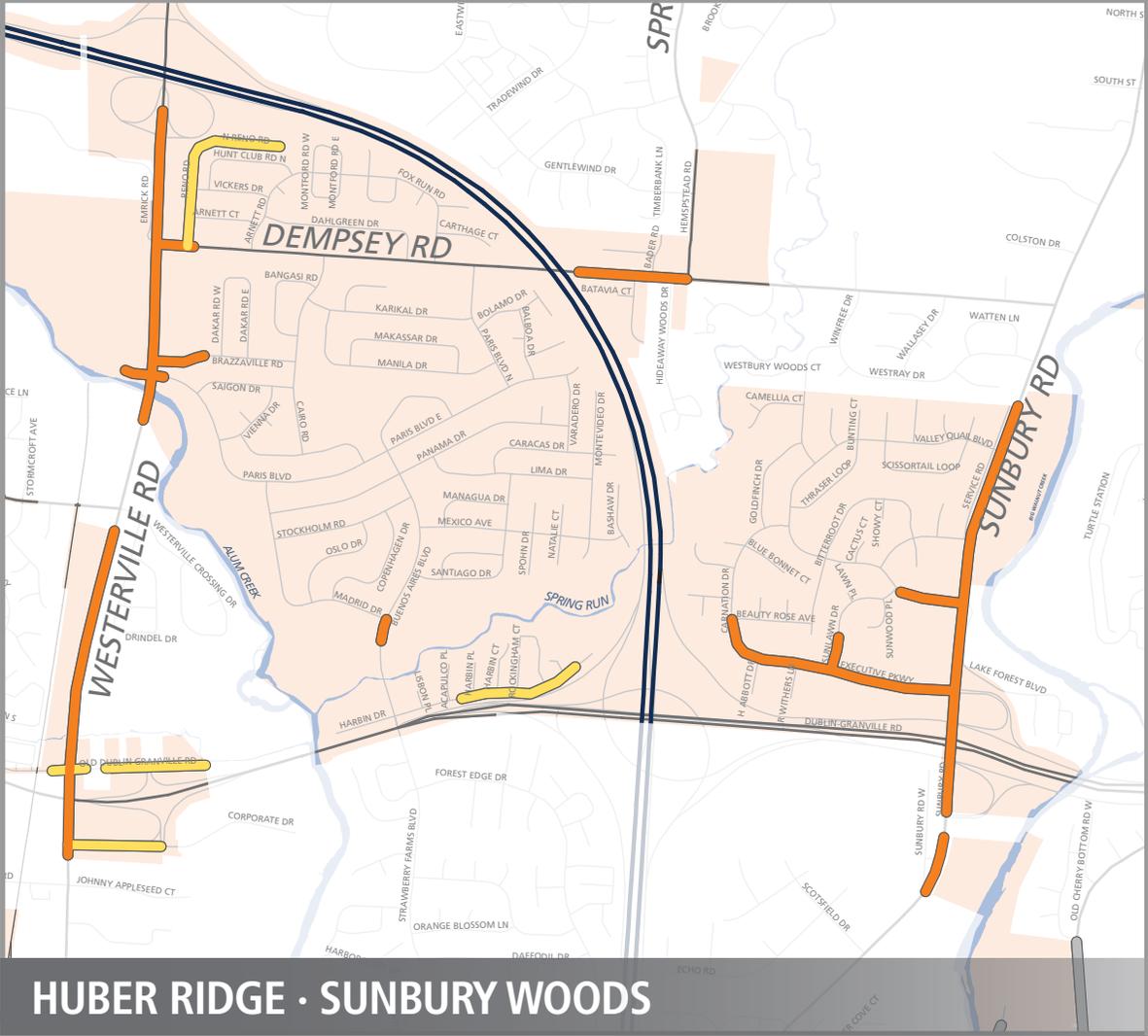
installed first. Secondary priorities are sidewalks that should be installed after all the primary priorities are installed. Sidewalks shown as “Install with new development” should be provided at any time new development or redevelopment is occurring.

The primary and secondary priorities reflect the community’s stated desires for new sidewalks.



Sidewalk installation priorities

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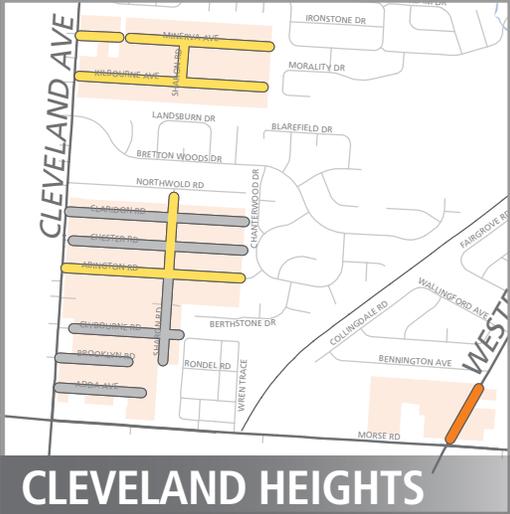


Sidewalk installation priorities

- Primary priority
- Secondary priority
- Install with new development

SIDEWALK PRIORITIES MAP

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SECTION 5

IMPLEMENTATION

How will the recommendations outlined in the previous section be achieved? This section contains recommendations to ensure the plan is carried out. This section:

- Assigns responsibilities for carrying out each action
- Establishes clear lines of communication among community stakeholders
- Lays out a predictable review process to ensure new development follows the plan

These items will ensure actions are completed to achieve the community's agreed-upon vision.

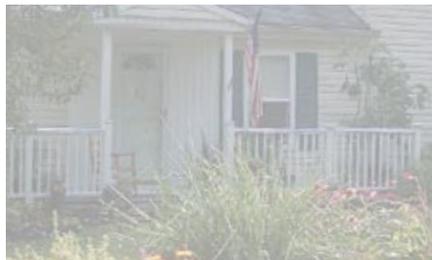
Implementation Tables, p. 99

Here, we identify the organizations involved in each action recommendation. The tables are an easy way to see the main parties involved in the actions.

New Development Checklist, p. 109

This checklist will ensure that new development proposals comply with the plan's recommendations listed in *Section 4 - Recommendations*.

Once a developer completes the checklist, officials with decision-making responsibilities make sure development proposals follow the community's wishes as described in the Blendon Community Plan.



Community Plan Success

Successful implementation of the Blendon Community Plan’s recommendations is essential in achieving the community’s shared vision. This will be made possible by:

1. Assigning responsibility
2. Establishing clear lines of communication
3. Accountability
4. Plan updates

Assign Responsibility

Responsible parties for each action item are listed in the implementation table. This table clearly identifies the specific government, non-profit and private sector entities responsible for implementing each action.

Development proposals should be reviewed for consistency with the plan’s recommendations. The new development checklist helps ensure that a proposed development is in line with the plan’s recommendations. It should be used by:

- Applicants for a rezoning or variance
- Agencies and stakeholders for development review
- Franklin County Economic Development and Planning staff during internal review of zoning and variance applications
- Franklin County and Blendon Township offices as community facilities and infrastructure investments are made

Communication

Clear lines of communication between Franklin County, Blendon Township and community residents is essential for the successful implementation of the plan’s recommendations. This can be achieved by:

- Designating a township official for transmittal of development and zoning-related information
- Designating a Franklin County staff member to be responsible for monitoring and implementing the plan

- Establishing a community plan implementation committee to take responsibility for plan implementation

Accountability

In order to track the progress of the plan’s implementation, each year a staff member from the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department should prepare a brief report to be presented to the Blendon Township Board of Trustees. This report should list the year’s development proposals and their conformance with the plan. It should also track progress on implementation of the plan’s proactive recommendations.

Plan updates

The Blendon Community Plan will guide development for the next 10-20 years. It should be revisited in 4 to 5 years and amended as applicable to ensure that the document continues to represent the vision of township residents. Minor updates of the Blendon Community Plan may be completed as necessary.



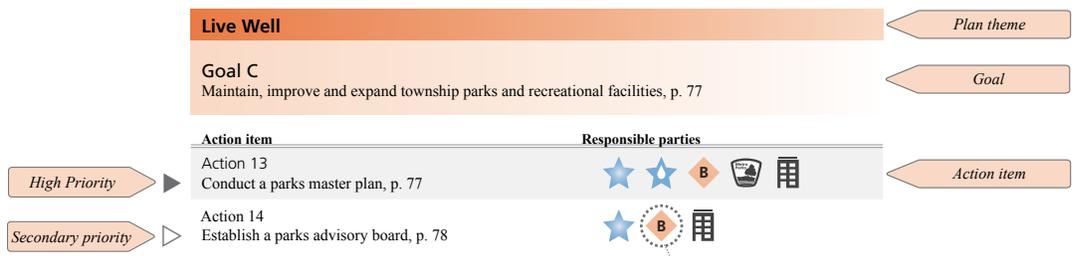
IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

This section explains who is responsible for completing the action items listed in this plan. Community improvement depends on a network of relationships among government agencies, non-profits and the private sector. Accordingly, we attempt to identify the parties best positioned to complete the action items.

How to use this section

We organized the action items by plan theme. Under each theme, you will find the action items from the Plan Themes section—in the same order they appear in that section. To the right of each action item we list the responsible parties: the organizations in the public, non-profit and private sectors who are best able to complete the action item.

By listing the parties we don't intend to be exclusive; other organizations are encouraged to help.



Legend

For each plan theme, we included a key to symbols. Refer to this key to find the party that corresponds to each symbol.

Key to symbols		
Franklin County	Other government	Private sector
★ Economic Development & Planning	ⓑ Blendon Township	🏠 Private property owners
★ Franklin County Soil and Water	🚚 Ohio Department of Transportation	
	🏡 Metro Parks	

Grow Smart

Goal A
Maintain residential character of existing neighborhoods, p. 58

Action item	Responsible parties
Action 1 Follow the future land use map, p. 58	
Action 2 Discontinue conditional use home occupations, p. 58	
Action 3 Adopt the conservation development regulations in areas of Cleveland Heights and the area east of Big Walnut Creek, p. 59	    
Action 4 Facilitate the creation of a neighborhood association in Cleveland Heights, p. 60	 
Action 5 Use site design techniques that preserve rural character, p. 60	    

Goal B
Encourage attractive and economically sustainable commercial development, p. 61

Action item	Responsible parties
Action 6 Adopt the Smart Growth Overlay for mixed-use commercial corridors, p. 61	   
Action 7 Auto-related businesses should strictly adhere to development standards, p. 61	
Action 8 Limit the number of access points along commercial corridors, p. 62	  
Action 9 Implement recommendations of the Westerville Road Streetscape Improvement Plan, p. 62	     
Action 10 Conduct a market analysis of the Westerville Road corridor, p. 63	
Action 11 Support small business development, p. 63	   
Action 12 Establish a façade improvement program, p. 63	
Action 13 Require installation of sidewalks and bicycle parking for new development, p. 63	    
Action 14 Encourage installation of sidewalks and bicycle parking on public and private property, p. 63	    

Goal C
Nurture a sense of place in neighborhoods and along commercial corridors, p. 63

Action item	Responsible parties
▶ Action 15 Install gateway signs in priority areas, p. 63	   
▶ Action 16 Install decorative street signs, p. 64	   
Action 17 Install streetlights in priority areas, p. 64	  
▶ Action 18 Convert the concrete barrier on Sunbury Road to a community amenity, p. 64	   

Key to symbols

Franklin County	Other government	Non-profit sector	Private sector
 Economic Development & Planning	 Blendon Township	 Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission	 Private property owners
 Engineer's Office	 Ohio Department of Transportation	 Economic and Community Development Institute	
 Soil and Water Conservation District	 Ohio Department of Development	 Neighborhood Associations	
 Board of Health		 Bicycle advocacy groups	

Live Well

Goal A

Promote sustainable housing that facilitates aging in place, p. 74

Action item	Responsible parties
<p>Action 1 Require conformance with AWARE sustainability and universal design standards for projects receiving public funds, p. 74</p>	
<p>Action 2 Support the use of universal design standards in new construction and rehabilitation of residential units, p. 75</p>	
<p>Action 3 Facilitate conversion and construction of accessory apartments, p. 75</p>	
<p>Action 4 Provide information regarding energy efficiency programs, p. 75</p>	
<p>Action 5 Support the use of alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal, p. 75</p>	

Goal B

Maintain quality neighborhoods by improving the housing stock, p. 75

Action item	Responsible parties
<p>Action 6 Facilitate home rehabilitation and compatible infill housing, p. 75</p>	
<p>Action 7 Turn around neglected properties, p. 76</p>	
<p>Action 8 Increase the homeownership rate, p. 76</p>	
<p>Action 9 Improve the appearance of rental homes, p. 76</p>	
<p>Action 10 Direct financial assistance programs to help low-income families perform home maintenance and resolve code violations, p. 76</p>	
<p>Action 11 Continue enforcement of the Blendon Township Property Maintenance Code, p. 76</p>	
<p>Action 12 Consider the feasibility of a rental housing inspection pilot program, p. 76</p>	

Goal C
Maintain, improve and expand township parks and recreational facilities, p. 77

Action item	Responsible parties
▶ Action 13 Conduct a parks master plan, p. 77	
▷ Action 14 Establish a parks advisory board, p. 78	
▶ Action 15 Set aside general maintenance funds for each park, p. 78	
▷ Action 16 Consider a levy for parks, p. 78	
▶ Action 17 Establish a park in the Cleveland Heights neighborhood, p. 78	
▶ Action 18 Explore the feasibility of installing a wellness garden at the Blendon Township Senior Center, p. 78	
▷ Action 19 Add sufficient bicycle parking at parks, p. 78	
▶ Action 20 Provide connections to the existing trail system, p. 78	
Action 21 Utilize Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and Spring Run as recreational assets, p. 79	
Action 22 Work with local agencies to add land to the park system, p. 79	

Key to symbols

Franklin County	Other government	Non-profit sector	Private sector
Economic Development & Planning	Blendon Township	Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission	Private property owners
Engineer's Office	City of Columbus	Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries	Building Industry Association of Central Ohio
Soil and Water Conservation District	Westerville	Friends of Big Walnut Creek	
Board of Health	Metro Parks	Housing nonprofits	
Auditor's Office	Ohio Department of Transportation	Bicycle advocacy groups	
Treasurer's Office			
Board of Elections			

Goal D
Protect Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and their tributaries, p. 79

Action item	Responsible parties
▶ Action 23 Adopt regulations establishing a stream buffer zone along Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and their tributaries, p. 79	
▷ Action 24 Promote the use of stormwater best management practices, p. 79	
Action 25 Require dedication along Alum Creek, Big Walnut Creek and Spring Run for public use, p. 79	
Action 26 Support acquisition of scenic and sensitive land located along the creeks, p. 79	
Action 27 Build and maintain relationships with local watershed groups, p. 80	

Goal E
Promote environmental awareness and stewardship, p. 80

Action item	Responsible parties
▶ Action 28 Sign the Central Ohio Green Pact, p. 80	
▷ Action 29 Promote backyard conservation, p. 80	
▷ Action 30 Conduct an energy audit of buildings at the Blendon Township Complex, p. 80	
Action 31 Support participation in the GreenSpot program, p. 80	

Goal F
Support a sustainable local food system, p. 80

Action item	Responsible parties
▷ Action 32 Establish a farmers market, p. 80	
▶ Action 33 Revise zoning regulations to allow community gardens, p. 81	
▷ Action 34 Identify and convert underutilized sites to community gardens, p. 81	
Action 35 Support the transition of yards, window boxes and rooftops into food production areas, p. 81	

Action 36
Provide information to connect producers
and consumers of local foods, p. 81



Action 37
Support local food production and processing enterprises, p. 81



Key to symbols

Franklin County	Other government	Non-profit sector	Private sector
Economic Development & Planning	Blendon Township	Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission	Private property owners
Engineer's Office	City of Columbus	Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries	
Soil and Water Conservation District	Westerville	Friends of Big Walnut Creek	
Treasurer's Office	Metro Parks	Local Food nonprofits	
	Ohio Department of Development	American Community Gardening Association	
	Ohio Environmental Protection Agency	Neighborhood Associations	

Go Safely

Goal A Create and maintain a complete network for pedestrian traffic, p. 84

Action item	Responsible parties
▶ Action 1 Install new sidewalks and improve crossings in targeted areas according to the Sidewalk Priorities map, p. 84	
▷ Action 2 Maintain and improve existing sidewalks, p. 84	
Action 3 Require sidewalks for new development, p. 84	
Action 4 Use pedestrian-friendly design for major intersections, p. 84	
Action 5 Use pedestrian friendly design within shopping centers and along commercial corridors, p. 84	
▷ Action 6 Complete a Safe Routes to Schools Plan, p. 84	

Goal B Create a complete bicycle network for recreation and transportation, p. 85

Action item	Responsible parties
▶ Action 7 Use the Bikeways map to guide development of an area-wide bicycle network, p. 85	
▶ Action 8 Provide connections to existing bikeways, p. 85	
Action 9 Require new development to provide rights-of-way to accommodate shared use paths, p. 85	
▶ Action 10 Establish bicycle routes through the Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods neighborhoods, p. 86	
▷ Action 11 Improve bicycle parking on public and private property, p. 86	
Action 12 Locate buildings outside the railway corridor near Westerville Road, p. 86	

Goal C
Support a transit network that offers sufficient destinations and frequent service, p. 87

Action item	Responsible parties
▷ Action 13 Improve pedestrian infrastructure near bus stops, p. 87	
Action 14 Improve existing bus stops, p. 87	
Action 15 Investigate the possibility of locating a Park and Ride in the Sunbury Woods area, p. 87	
▷ Action 16 Expand the proposed Westerville LINK route to serve Huber Ridge and Sunbury Woods, p. 87	

Goal D
Maintain a safe, well-connected auto network, p. 87

Action item	Responsible parties
▷ Action 17 Adopt a complete streets policy for future road improvements, p. 87	
Action 18 Improve damaged roads and roadside drainage infrastructure, p. 88	
▷ Action 19 Install traffic calming devices in priority areas, p. 88	
Action 20 Encourage speed limit reductions on high-accident roads, p. 88	
Action 21 Encourage safety improvements at high-accident intersections, p. 88	

Key to symbols

Franklin County	Other government	Non-profit sector	Public sector
Economic Development & Planning Engineer's Office	Blendon Township City of Columbus City of Westerville Metro Parks Ohio Department of Transportation Central Ohio Transit Authority Westerville City Schools	Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Bicycle Advocacy Groups	Private property owners

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NEW DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

BLENDON COMMUNITY PLAN

Purpose

This checklist helps developers and property owners comply with the plan. A completed checklist also informs appointed board members and planning staff whether a proposal complies with the Blendon Township Community Plan.

Directions

- ❶ Fill out Section 1 for all new developments
- ❷ Fill out the appropriate area for either residential or commercial development
- ❸ Fill out the Project Information box and return it to us with your development application

All New Development:

	Yes	No	n/a	Notes
Matches Future land use map	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Includes sidewalks where indicated on the Sidewalk priorities map	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Provides sufficient rights-of way for bikeways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Is set back from environmentally sensitive areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Provides dedication along waterways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Uses stormwater best management practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Provides a connection to existing bikeways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Locates buildings outside of the railway corridor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Complies with the <i>AWARE</i> standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Uses building materials that promote healthy indoor air	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

New residential development:				
	Yes	No	n/a	Notes
Is clustered to protect open space/environmental features	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Is set back from scenic corridors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Uses shared-access points	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Uses site design techniques to preserve rural character	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
New commercial development:				
	Yes	No	n/a	Notes
Is in line with the Smart Growth Overall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Is in line with the Westerville Road Streetscape improvement plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accommodates pedestrians	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accommodates bicycles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accommodates transit users	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Provides appropriate buffering, setback or screening from adjacent residential uses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Project information	
Case No.	
Project name	
Address	
Phone	Fax
Email address	
Checklist completed by:	
Signature	

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