


Section 2 Focus Areas

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- A map of Section 2 showing various focus areas and surrounding roads. The map is overlaid on a blue background with faint road names. The focus areas are numbered 35, 43, 53, 61, 71, 79, and 85. The roads shown include Morse Rd, Westerville Rd, Innis Rd, Agler Rd, Mock Rd, Cassady Ave, Stelzer Rd, and I-270. The map also shows the locations of Clinton Residential, Cleveland Avenue, West Mifflin Residential, Sunbury-Cassady, Drake Road, and Leonard Park.
- Clinton Residential 35
 - Cleveland Avenue 43
 - Westerville Road 53
 - West Mifflin Residential 61
 - Sunbury-Cassady 71
 - Drake Road 79
 - Leonard Park 85

Clinton Residential

Focus Area



Chapter highlights:

Promote safe neighborhoods by:

- Turning around abandoned properties to improve neighborhoods
- Installing gateway signs to encourage community pride
- Adding streetlights for nighttime safety

Support complete streets for all modes of transportation by:

- Adding sidewalks to make walking safer and more enjoyable
- Applying pavement markings for safer bicycling
- Installing schedule displays and trash cans for better bus stops

Current conditions

Land use

Single-family residences are the primary land use. In a few areas, there are collections of offices. Nine schools are located within the focus area; another six are less than one-quarter mile outside the border.

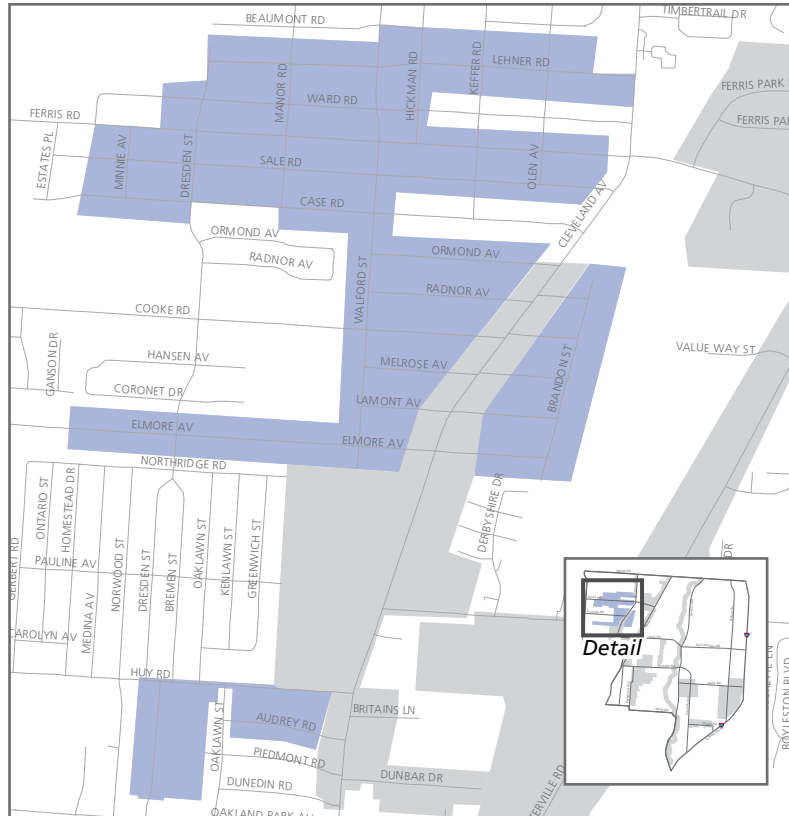


Figure 1
Geographic boundaries
of the Clinton Residential
focus area

Urban form

Most lots are small, with 40 to 60 feet of road frontage. The area has a grid street pattern, with many four-way intersections. Houses, most built in the 1950s, are close to the street. Car access is either by driveway or by rear alleyway.

Transportation

Most residential streets are two lanes, paved 20 feet wide. The speed limit on nearly all streets is 25 mph. Walford Street is a collector street.

Dresden Street is disconnected with an unpaved gap north of Elmore Avenue, where

Focus Area By the numbers

Focus area size	339 acres
Single-family homes	1,037
Typical lot area	$\frac{2}{10}$ acre
Median building age	50 years
Owner-occupied proportion	56%
Vacant lot proportion	8.5%
Park land area	9.3 acres

subdivisions of the 1950s and 1970s were to connect. There is a guardrail to prevent vehicle and bicycle traffic from passing. Pedestrians have a narrow passageway.

Pedestrian access: Most streets do not have sidewalks. Walford Street has sidewalks on one side. Elmore has sidewalks recently installed on both sides. Many streets in Columbus have sidewalks. Along some streets, such as Cooke Road, there is a sidewalk that stops at the township line.

Bicycle access: No roads have markings or signs for cyclists. Cycling is fairly trouble-free on most of the residential streets. Biking is more challenging on Walford Street, which has more traffic.

Transit access: COTA routes No. 35 and No. 87 serve the neighborhood, traveling along Walford Street. Residents also have access to numerous buses on Cleveland Avenue.

Vision

An attractive, safe and proud neighborhood. Travel within and through the neighborhood is easily accomplished by any mode of transportation.

Recommendations for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

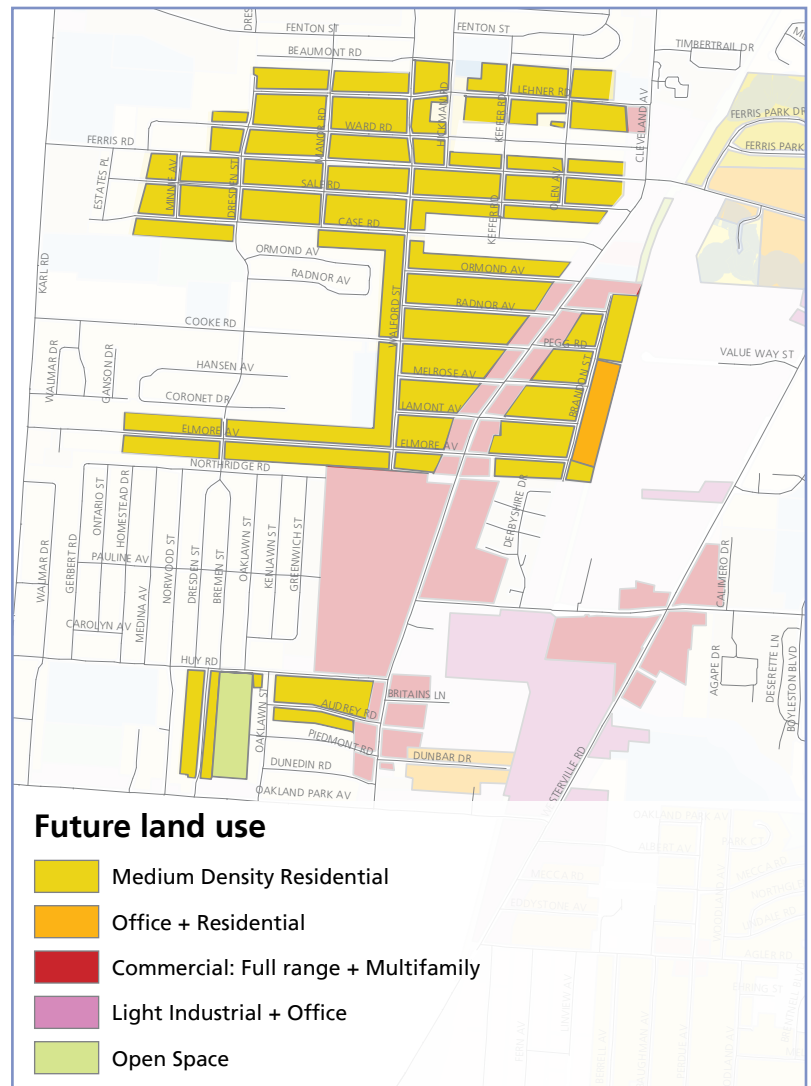
Minimize land use conflicts in exclusively-residential areas

In residential neighborhoods, commercial uses from adjacent corridors should not intrude on exclusively-residential areas. Consistency with this goal allows residents to maintain confidence that their community's character will remain intact.

Action 1

Allow only residential land uses in the neighborhoods beyond Cleveland Avenue

The land use map for this area shows residential land uses throughout the Clinton Residential



focus area. Residences are the primary land use and should remain that way. Nearby Cleveland Avenue offers a large amount of commercial space. Non-residential development proposals should only be approved outside the residential zones.

Goal B

Improve neighborhood safety

Community safety is a major influence on a community's attractiveness to residents and visitors. In commercial areas, perceived safety factors into a patron's decision to shop at a given destination. Better safety perception helps

Figure 2
Future land use map for the Clinton Residential focus area



Figure 3
Sidewalk priorities for the Clinton Residential focus area

both immediate and long-term neighborhood stability.

Action 2

Add streetlights for nighttime safety

Street lighting can reduce crime and help people feel safer. Many streets in the focus area lack lighting. Adequate lighting should be installed along streets and alleys. Depending on cost and the desires of residents, streetlights should be decorative, with a uniform type of decorative streetlight throughout the area. Costs could be paid with a mixture of public funds and property owner assessment.

Goal C

Achieve increased neighborhood safety by collaborating with safety partners and neighboring local governments

In adjacent neighborhoods, criminals do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. All focus areas share boundaries with a neighboring jurisdiction, usually Columbus. By building on existing multi-jurisdictional efforts, all communities can benefit from increased safety.

Action 3

Partner with Columbus on any neighborhood pride initiative

Neighborhood Pride is an effort by the city of Columbus to clean up neighborhoods and make them safer. Neighborhood Pride focuses city resources on a particular area, helping residents improve their neighborhood through enforcing zoning regulations, mowing grass, cleaning alleys, offering block watch and fire prevention outreach. Columbus targets a handful of neighborhoods each year. If the city targets the neighborhoods next to a township focus area, the county and township should join in the effort.

Goal D

Promote public health

Healthy people and healthy communities are strongly linked. In the definition of public health, officials include physical, social and mental health. Land use plans have the potential to strongly influence positive public health: recommendations can influence levels of physical activity, access to healthy food, medical services, education and employment, all of which factor in to healthy families and stable communities.

Action 4

Use healthy building materials

New and rehabbed houses should use building materials that promote a healthy indoor air environment. Conventional building materials sometimes uses chemicals and solvents that release harmful fumes in homes long after

installation. Carpet and pressed-wood products are common sources of harmful emissions. Re-formulated products are now widely available that offer significantly reduced emissions while maintaining material quality.

Houses built or rehabbed using any public funds should only use materials that result in clean indoor air. The county will communicate with its partners and vendors for publically-funded programs. For individual homeowners, the county can encourage healthy indoor air by offering information when homeowners and contractors apply for a building permit.

Goal E

Improve housing and the homeownership experience for long-term neighborhood stability

Many traits intersect and overlap to achieve strong, safe neighborhoods. Neighborhoods benefit from well-maintained homes, high occupancy rates, abundant green space and homeownership. Well-maintained homes are strongly associated with neighborhood stability. Furthermore, strong homeownership rates lead to safe and stable neighborhoods.

Action 5

Facilitate home rehabbing and construction of compatible infill housing

Well-kept housing stock is important to a neighborhood's stability. Neighborhoods with well-kept homes keep their value better than run-down ones. Despite pride in one's home, households with lower-than-average disposable income may be unable to keep up with maintenance of a home. Grants and loans available for minor renovations should be targeted to this area.

Vacant lots can sap a neighborhood's energy. Empty lots can signal lack of interest in a neighborhood. Regulatory and financial assistance should be directed to vacant lots, where appropriate, to provide housing and add to the neighborhood



Action 6

New home design and layout should be compatible with existing neighborhoods

This focus area has a variety of housing types. Even though houses are different, some consistent features give the neighborhood a unified feel. These features should remain in new or rehabbed housing: the range of styles, the placement on a lot (distance of the house to the street), garage placement and access to an alley.

As part of the development review process, builders of new infill housing should be aware of the expectation to have housing compatible with existing stock. The township and the

Figure 4
Proposed bikeways for the Clinton Residential focus area

county should communicate this clearly with developers.

Action 7

Increase the homeownership rate

Higher homeownership rates are associated with better neighborhood quality of life. Homeowners move less often, are more involved in their neighborhood and in civic affairs to protect their investment. Community involvement leads to less crime and better neighborhood upkeep.

Action 8

Use universal design features in home improvements and new construction

Universal design is a way of constructing new homes and home improvements for easy use by anyone regardless of age or physical ability. Designing living spaces for everyone is becoming increasingly popular as the baby boom generation grows older and the combat veteran population increases. Often times, universal design isn't even obvious: a well-placed handrail or a few extra inches in doorway width looks conventional, but goes a long way in helping people with limited abilities.

Universal design helps people stay in their homes as they age. As physical ability declines with age, barrier-free doorways and no-step entryways help prevent injury.

Single- or multifamily homes built or rehabbed using public funds should always comply with universal design principles. The county will communicate with its partners and vendors for publically-funded programs. For individual homeowners, the county can encourage construction using universal design by offering information when homeowners and contractors apply for a building permit.

Action 9

Turn around tax-delinquent properties in partnership with the Treasurer's Office

Vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties are a drag on a neighborhood and slows its improvement. The Franklin County Treasurer pursues properties for back taxes. Township officials should keep the Treasurer's Office informed of abandoned properties and partner to return them to productive use.

Goal F

Give areas a visual identity by nurturing a sense of place

Visual cues such as gateway signs and distinctive streetlights give neighborhood residents a sense of belonging. Cues build pride and ownership in a neighborhood. Since this focus area functions as a singular neighborhood. Visual cues should support a sense of community.

Action 10

Install gateway signage

Gateway signs will visually define the neighborhood and increase resident pride. The township should choose a design or theme to use throughout the area, preferably one compatible with gateway signs at Northern Lights. The township should partner with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to install the signs.

Goal G

Protect environmental resources and increase interaction between humans and the natural world

Careful treatment of the environment has a range of benefits in both the short- and long-

Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy, one of many schools in this focus area



terms. Conservation of waterways and green spaces provide areas where humans, plants and animals alike can enjoy a pleasing habitat. Preserving green areas for future generations aids the long-term health of the environment, ensuring humans and non-humans have enjoyable places to call home.

Action 11

Identify sites for new green space and outline a procedure for converting them to parkland, a community garden or other productive use

Green space gives residents a place for relaxation and enjoyment of the natural environment. The focus area is home to a few parks. Although this area is completely developed, vacant property can be used for resident enjoyment.

Instead of rebuilding housing on vacant lots, a building site can be converted to a community space. The space could be a small park or green area, or could be a community garden area where residents tend to a small garden plot. This could be a multi-party effort among the township, county, community groups, local charities and urban agriculture groups.

Recommendations for Complete Streets

Goal H

Improve transportation for pedestrians

Walking has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Travel on foot is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Walking through or about one's neighborhood helps neighbors get to know one another, strengthening neighborhood social ties. More eyes on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as walking and bicycling reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefiting people of all ages.

Action 12

Install sidewalks in targeted areas

Sidewalks are essential to public safety and beneficial to neighborhood stability. Clinton Township, working with the Engineer's Office



Franklin County

and the Ohio Department of Transportation, should plan for sidewalk installation.

Dresden Street is disconnected north of Elmore Avenue

First priorities should be in areas near schools, parks and playgrounds. This plan includes a map with first- and second-tier priorities for sidewalk installation. Road improvements should include sidewalk installation on at least one side of the street. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide.

Action 13

Slow traffic in residential areas with traffic calming

Traffic calming involves using physical measures to slow cars. Slowing traffic in residential areas reduces the likelihood of collisions with pedestrians and bicyclists. Slower traffic and the resulting safety benefits can also encourage more people to walk.

Without traffic calming, straight, wide roads encourage speeding traffic. Traffic calming and treatments at intersections are a cost-effective way to slow traffic. The township will work with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to install and maintain traffic calming measures on roads where speeding and safety is a problem.

Action 14**Connect Dresden Street for pedestrians and cyclists**

A choice of paths makes walking and bicycling more satisfying. On Dresden Street, north of Elmore Avenue, two subdivisions meet, one from the 1950s and one from the 1970s. The streets are disconnected by barriers, making the gap somewhat passable for pedestrians, but not for cyclists. Connecting the streets provides another path for those on a bike or on foot. More traffic and passers-through can discourage crime and loitering.

Goal I**Improve transportation for bicyclists**

Bicycling has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Traveling by bike is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Bicycling with friends and neighbors in one's neighborhood can help strengthen neighborhood social ties. Bicyclists' presence on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as bicycling and walking reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefitting people of all ages.

Action 15**Support an area-wide bicycle network by coordinating with the Columbus bikeway plan**

Columbus has completed its bicentennial bikeways plan. The plan proposes bike lanes, paths and signs for roads in several focus areas. Clinton and Mifflin townships support these recommendations. The county and the townships will work with the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation to implement this plan's recommendations in unincorporated territory.

Action 16**Provide paved shoulders for cyclists in areas without sidewalks**

In areas that don't have sidewalks, roads should have paved shoulders to increase safety for cyclists.

Goal J**Improve transit**

Transit is essential in the functioning of the urban neighborhoods in the planning area. Transit connects consumers with shops, students with schools and workers with employment. The Central Ohio Transit Authority operates buses throughout the planning area, including some of its highest-ridership routes.

Investing in transit improvements benefits local economies: research shows every \$1 invested in transit yields at least \$3 in increased business sales and \$6 in local economic activity.

Riding transit reduces energy consumption, traffic congestion and greenhouse gases. It is also a lifeline to the elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged.

Action 17**Improve pedestrian infrastructure to encourage transit use**

Commuting by transit becomes more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. More people use transit when they have a safe path from the bus stop to their destination rather than dodging cars in parking lots or climbing over physical barriers. Installing sidewalks can encourage more travel by transit.

Action 18**Encourage installation of bus shelters in areas without them and rebuild damaged ones. Elsewhere, add trash cans, recycling bins and schedule displays to bus stops**

COTA provides shelters at bus stops to protect transit users from weather and provide a place to sit. The presence of a bus shelter can encourage people to use transit, especially in periods of bad weather.

The township and the county should work with COTA to install bus shelters at bus stops, especially those with the highest ridership.

In areas without shelters, providing trashcans and recycling bins will help decrease litter. Adding schedule displays will increase convenience for transit users.

Cleveland Avenue

Focus Area



Franklin County

Chapter highlights:

Promote short- and long-term economic growth by:

- Allowing a diverse mix of land uses along Cleveland Avenue
- Improving the design and placement of new buildings
- Investing in a community main street with streetscape improvements

Support complete streets for all modes of transportation by:

- Installing a bike lane along Cleveland Avenue, consistent with the area-wide bikeways plan
- Improving the look of bus stops

Current conditions

Land use

The Northern Lights area, at the intersection with Innis Road, has a collection of strip shopping centers. Beyond the intersection, there are collections of single and multi-tenant commercial buildings with office and retail uses.

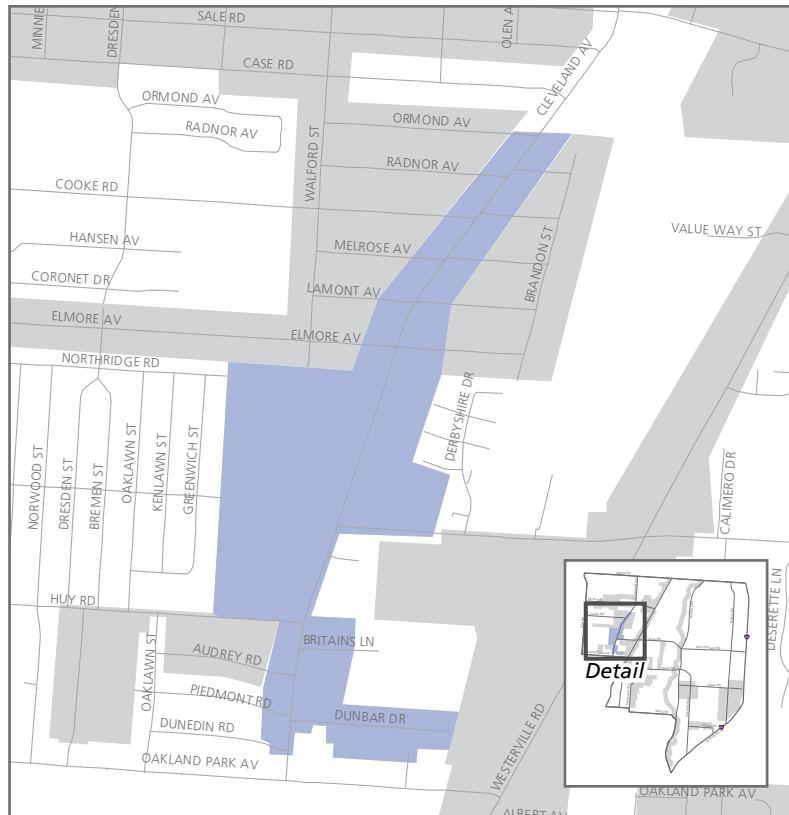


Figure 5
Geographic boundaries
of the Cleveland Avenue
focus area

North of the shopping centers, there are multi-unit residential buildings.

Urban form

Around the intersection with Innis Road, the strip shopping centers are set back far from the street with large parking lots in front. Outparcels in front of Northern Lights have restaurant uses with drive-through windows that face Cleveland Avenue. Most retail buildings are one-story.

Multi-family buildings are generally built close to Cleveland Avenue with parking located in the rear. Smaller retail/office buildings often have small parking areas in front. Landscaping,

Focus Area By the numbers

Focus area size	135 acres
Apartment units	≈510
Businesses	≈110
Median building size	5,000 sq. ft.
Median building age	51 years
Vacant lot proportion	10%

when present, is modest. In some areas, there is no landscaping, in others there is only grass.

Transportation

Cleveland Avenue is generally four lanes with 120 feet of future right-of-way. The speed limit is 35 mph. Pavement condition is good. Curb cuts are frequent and closely spaced. Along 2,000 feet of frontage at Northern Lights, there are 13 full access points. Outside the area, driveways are often spaced closely together.

Pedestrian access: Cleveland Avenue has sidewalks next to the road. No horizontal distance separates the sidewalk from the road. Besides intersections, pedestrians are exposed to traffic at each curb cut along Cleveland Avenue. Shopping centers have no defined pedestrian access. Pedestrians must navigate across parking lots. Some outparcels provide pedestrian paths, some do not. Multi-family buildings provide pedestrian access. Smaller commercial buildings without parking in front usually have pedestrian access, but those with parking lots in front usually do not. Adjacent neighborhoods have access to Northern Lights through the rear parking and loading area, but no separate pedestrian access is provided.

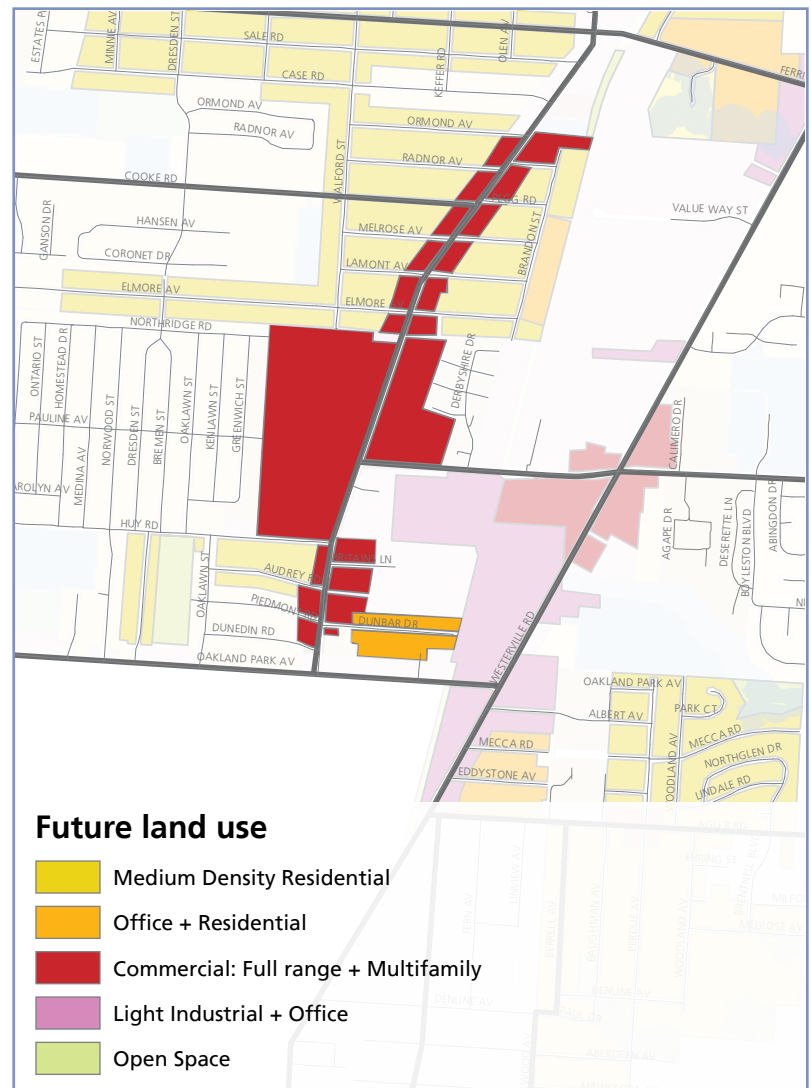
Bicycle access: No roads have markings or signs for cyclists. The large shopping centers have minimal bicycle parking. Bikes are often chained to poles.

Transit access: Several bus routes serve Cleveland Avenue, including the high-ridership No. 1 Cleveland Avenue. Other routes include another local bus, No. 9 Leonard/Brentnell, four express buses: No. 35 Tamarack, No. 37 Westerville, No. 38 Northeast, No. 40 New Albany Business Park and two cross town buses: No. 83 Oakland-Weber and No. 87 Agler-Cassady.

A large bus shelter and a park-and-ride lot is located at Northern Lights. A second park-and-ride is located one-quarter mile south on Cleveland Avenue.

Vision

An attractive, safe, bustling main street and retail destination with nearby housing.



Everything is easily accessible by any mode of transportation

Figure 6
Future land use map for the Cleveland Avenue focus area

Recommendations for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

Improve neighborhood safety

Community safety is a major influence on a community's attractiveness to residents and visitors. In commercial areas, perceived safety factors into a patron's decision to shop at a given destination. Better safety perception helps



Figure 7
Proposed bikeways for
the Cleveland Avenue
focus area

both immediate and long-term neighborhood stability.

Action 1 **Continue Project Safe and Clean and find ways to improve it**

Project Safe and Clean is a partnership between Clinton Township, Cleveland Avenue landlords and business owners, and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. The partnership has demonstrated success by sharing information and working together to reduce crime in the neighborhood. Parties should embark on a strategic planning process to set goals for the partner-

ship and lay out an action plan to achieve their objectives.

Goal B **Promote public health**

Healthy people and healthy communities are strongly linked. In the definition of public health, officials include physical, social and mental health. Land use plans have the potential to strongly influence positive public health: recommendations can influence levels of physical activity, access to healthy food, medical services, education and employment, all of which factor in to healthy families and stable communities.

Action 2 **Investigate the possibility of a farmers market at Northern Lights that accepts public assistance**

People with access to fresh produce tend to consume more of it, providing nutrients and encouraging healthy eating habits. Farmers markets and access to fresh local produce are often concentrated in higher-income neighborhoods. A farmers market could be located in the parking lot of Northern Lights with the support of the center's owner. Government agencies and non-profits are focusing resources on encouraging this sort of farmers market in low-income areas, especially ones that accept food stamps and WIC vouchers. This support could be leveraged in the creation of a market.

Goal C **Protect environmental resources and increase interaction between humans and the natural world**

Careful treatment of the environment has a range of benefits in both the short- and long-terms. Conservation of waterways and green spaces provide areas where humans, plants and animals alike can enjoy a pleasing habitat. Preserving green areas for future generations aids the long-term health of the environment, ensuring humans and non-humans have enjoyable places to call home.

Action 3

Property redevelopment should include stormwater best management practices

Hard surfaces such as rooftops and parking lots create stormwater runoff when it rains. Instead of spending money on engineering solutions for stormwater, the runoff should soak into the ground using planted areas known as rain gardens. This helps recharge ground water and also provides attractive areas of landscaping.

Recommendations for Complete Streets

Goal D

Improve transportation for pedestrians

Walking has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Travel on foot is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Walking through or about one's neighborhood helps neighbors get to know one another, strengthening neighborhood social ties. More eyes on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as walking and bicycling reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefiting people of all ages.

Action 4

Provide pedestrians and bicyclists with convenient movement within shopping centers and among destinations along commercial corridors

A community's main streets should have sidewalks. Sidewalks encourage people to walk, promoting public health while reducing traffic congestion and energy use. It also helps

connect workers with jobs, especially for those without a car.

In large shopping centers with lots of automobile traffic, defining walkways for pedestrians can prevent accidents. In turn, better pedestrian friendliness can lead more people to travel on foot.

When the large shopping centers develop on either side of Cleveland Avenue, pedestrians should have an easier time entering the center and navigating within it. Any redevelopment of the shopping centers should include pedestrian connections from the street to the shops and connections within the parking lot once people leave their cars. These connections should complement improved landscaping.

Action 5

Maintain and improve existing sidewalks in commercial areas

Fortunately, there are sidewalks all along Cleveland Avenue. Sidewalks should be well-maintained and accessible to the disabled. When in disrepair, sidewalks are unattractive to business patrons and make it more difficult for the elderly or disabled to reach their destinations.

High-quality sidewalk design can encourage people to choose walking instead of driving. Where possible, sidewalks should be separated from the road with plantings or other attractive means. Sidewalks should be a minimum of five feet wide generally and eight feet wide in heavily-trafficked areas.

Multi-family housing along Cleveland Avenue



Large signs dominate the Cleveland Avenue streetscape. Amos Center (left), Northern Lights (right)

All images: Franklin County



Action 6

Seek pedestrian-friendly design for major intersections along commercial corridors

Intersections should be safer and more attractive for pedestrians. Intersections are a primary place where pedestrians come into contact with automobiles. Pedestrian-friendly intersection design can prevent accidents and encourage more people to walk.

When high-priority intersections are rebuilt, designers should take care to improve pedestrian friendliness, using pavement markings, pedestrian refuge islands and signage. Since the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation are responsible for several main road intersections, they will be key partners in redevelopment.

The high priority intersection in this focus area is Cleveland Avenue and Innis Road.

Goal E

Improve transportation for bicyclists

Bicycling has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Traveling by bike is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Bicycling with friends and neighbors in one's neighborhood can help strengthen neighborhood social ties. Bicyclists' presence on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as bicycling and walking reduce the risk of

developing serious illnesses, benefitting people of all ages.

Action 7

Support an area-wide bicycle network by coordinating with the Columbus bikeway plan

Columbus has completed its bicentennial bikeways plan. The plan proposes bike lanes, paths and signs for roads in several focus areas. Clinton and Mifflin townships support these recommendations. The county and the townships will work with the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation to implement this plan's recommendations in unincorporated territory.

Action 8

Improve bicycle parking on public and private property

Properties subject to the community commercial overlay will provide bicycle parking as part of a rezoning or change in use. Convenient bicycle parking near destinations encourages cycling. The township and county should encourage existing business owners, especially the large shopping centers, to provide bicycle parking for their current development. Owing to the large bus stop at Northern Lights, COTA can be a partner in providing bicycle parking.

Goal F**Improve transit**

Transit is essential to the functioning of the urban neighborhoods in the planning area. Transit connects consumers with shops, students with schools and workers with employment. The Central Ohio Transit Authority operates buses throughout the planning area, including some of its highest-ridership routes.

Investing in transit improvements benefits local economies: research shows every \$1 invested in transit yields at least \$3 in increased business sales and \$6 in local economic activity.

Riding transit reduces energy consumption, traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. It is also a lifeline to the elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged.

Action 9**Improve pedestrian infrastructure to encourage transit use**

Commuting by transit becomes more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. More people use transit when they have a safe path from the bus stop to their destination rather than dodging cars in parking lots or climbing over physical barriers. Installing sidewalks can encourage more travel by transit.

Action 10**Encourage installation of bus shelters in areas without them and rebuild damaged shelters. Elsewhere, add trash cans, recycling bins and schedule displays to bus stops**

COTA provides shelters at bus stops to protect transit users from weather and provide a place to sit. The presence of a bus shelter can encourage people to use transit, especially in periods of bad weather.

The township and the county should work with COTA to install bus shelters at bus stops, especially those with the highest ridership.

Existing shelters at Northern Lights are old and in disrepair. They should be replaced.

In areas without shelters, providing trashcans and recycling bins will help decrease litter.

Adding schedule displays will increase convenience for transit users.

Recommendations for Economic Growth**Goal G****Adopt land use and development regulations that will serve as a foundation for economic growth**

Land use development regulations can lay a foundation for economic growth. Recommendations in this section intend to set common boundaries for the use and appearance of future development. The boundaries avoid over-regulation of individual properties; instead, they establish a foundation for individual and community-wide economic success.

Action 11**In retail areas, encourage buildings with street presence including inviting design, landscaping and display windows. Parking lots should not dominate the landscape**

Physical features of buildings along a commercial corridor can signal an area's relative economic strength: neat, well-kept, orderly development communicates strength. Avoiding a landscape of parking lots, blank walls and oversized signs will ensure commercial areas

Pedestrians and vehicles on Cleveland Avenue at Innis Road





Figure 8
Main shopping center
buildings are set back far
from Cleveland Avenue

continue to be an important part of the township's economy.

Action 12

Provide pedestrians and bicyclists with convenient access to buildings

Commercial development should have sidewalks. The presence of sidewalks encourages people to walk, which promotes public health and increases pedestrian safety. More people traveling by foot reduces traffic congestion and energy use. Pedestrian and bicyclist friendliness also helps connect workers with jobs, especially for those without a car.

Commuting by transit becomes more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. More people use transit when they have a safe path from the bus stop to their destination rather than walking along a busy road or through front yards.

Action 13

Apply the community commercial overlay to mixed-use commercial corridors

Community Commercial design standards include placing buildings closer to the street, locating parking on the sides and to the rear of buildings and providing landscaping. Design standards will apply to new buildings and changes of use. With the support of the township and county agencies, these standards should be incorporated in the Franklin County Zoning Resolution.

Goal H

Invest in the economic future of Cleveland Avenue as the community main street including “branding” the corridor

The concentration of retail, office and housing gives Cleveland Avenue a lively feel. Patrons arrive at Northern Lights shopping center and other commercial destinations by multiple modes of transportation: car, bicycle, foot and transit. Because of these, Cleveland Avenue takes on a main street feel. The main street identity should be reinforced by visual means such as district signage and improved streetscape.

The Cleveland Avenue-Northern Lights corridor is recognizable as a shopping destination. Adding sensory dimensions to the Cleveland Avenue identity helps create a sense of place. Branding the area reinforces identity among merchants and customers, plus it can help lure new businesses. The township should partner with businesses and county agencies to develop a brand and install gateway signs and other identifying physical features.

Action 14

Support small businesses

Numerous small businesses line Cleveland Avenue. The area is also home to many immigrants, which can be a rich source of entrepreneurship. Franklin County administers several programs to help small businesses. This focus area should be a target for investment in the area's economic future.

Action 15

Investigate the formation of a Special Improvement District

Special Improvement Districts are public-private partnerships in which businesses in a defined area elect to make a collective contribution to the maintenance, development, marketing and promotion of their commercial district.

Successful SIDs in the Columbus area have shown their potential to aid existing business and induce further private investment. A professionally-managed Cleveland Avenue SID can build off existing economic strength to provide common services, such as safety services, ambassadors, physical maintenance and beautification. The township and the county economic development department should collaborate in pursuing a SID.

Action 16

Perform a streetscape improvement plan

Despite its bustling commercial nature, the Cleveland Avenue streetscape is unattractive: pavement dominates the landscape. There is little landscaping, no street trees and utilitarian pole-mounted streetlights. An improved streetscape can draw more customers and attract new businesses. The township should partner with the County Engineer's Office to complete a streetscape improvement plan. This plan then the blueprint for attracting public funds to carry out the improvements.

Westerville Road

Focus Area



Franklin County

Chapter highlights:

Promote short- and long-term economic growth by:

- Allowing business growth along Westerville Road
- Improving the design and placement of new buildings
- Encouraging a mix of uses at the intersection of Westerville and Innis Roads

Support complete streets for all modes of transportation by:

- Adding sidewalks for safer travel along a busy arterial road
- Supporting a bike path in the abandoned railroad right-of-way
- Improving the look of bus stops to encourage transit use

Current conditions

Land use

Commercial businesses are the primary land use. The businesses are a mix of retail uses, some heavier commercial, light industrial and storage uses.

Residences are a secondary land use. The northern portion of the corridor has clusters of multi-



Figure 9
Geographic boundaries
of the Westerville Road
focus area

family housing; the southern portion has some single-family residential.

Other land uses include several churches, a golf course and ravines for tributaries of Alum Creek.

Urban form

Buildings along Westerville Road are largely one and two-story. Many are set back far from the street. The buildings are a wide variety of sizes. Most have little or no landscaping, including missing front greenbelts. Smaller properties have wall signs and pole mounted signs. Larger properties have large signs, often pole-mounted.

Focus Area

By the numbers

Focus area size	307 acres
Mobile home units	149
Businesses	≈73
Median building size	4,200 sq. ft.
Median building age	43 years
Vacant lot proportion	15%

Transportation

Westerville Road is two lanes in some areas and four lanes in others with 120 feet of future right-of-way. The speed limit is 35 mph in some portions and 45 mph in others. Pavement condition is very good. Many properties have oversized curb cuts.

Innis Road is generally four lanes with 100 feet of future right-of-way. The speed limit is 35 mph. Pavement condition is good. Several properties have oversized curb cuts.

Pedestrian access: Neither Westerville Road nor Innis Road have sidewalks. In several locations pedestrians have worn paths along roads, indicating sidewalk demand.

Bicycle access: No roads have markings or signs for cyclists. The newly-paved road surface encourages vehicle speed, making cycling difficult.

Transit access: Several COTA bus routes serve the area, traveling along Westerville and Innis Roads, including several high-volume routes. The stops have no shelters. The following bus lines serve the area: No. 1 Cleveland Avenue, No. 9 Leonard Avenue, No. 40 New Albany Business Park Express and No. 87 Agler/Cas-sady Crosstown.

There is an abandoned railway west of Westerville Road.

Vision

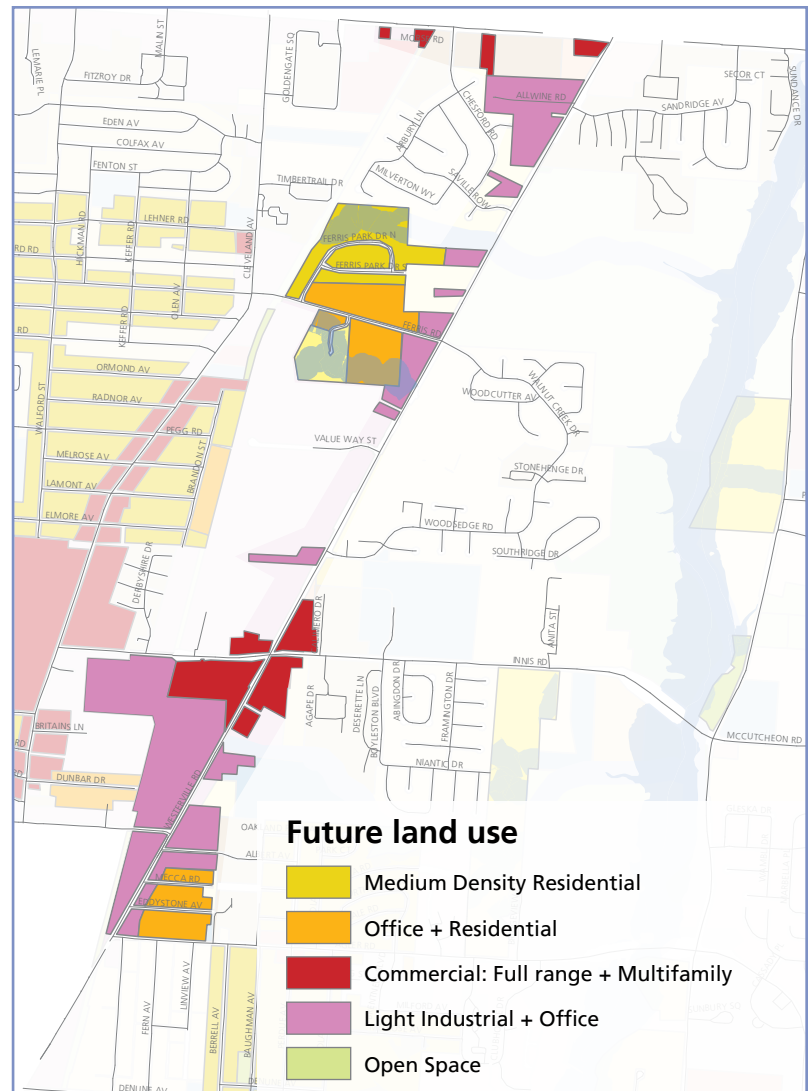
A commercial corridor with well-designed developments that are accessible to people traveling by any mode of transportation.

Recommendations for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

Improve neighborhood safety

Community safety is a major influence on a community's attractiveness to residents and visitors. In commercial areas, perceived safety factors into a patron's decision to shop at a given destination. Better safety perception helps



both immediate and long-term neighborhood stability.

Figure 10
Future land use map for the Westerville Road focus area

Action 1

Maintain and improve efforts with safety partners including the Franklin County Sheriff's Office and the Columbus Division of Police

Due to multiple changes in jurisdiction boundaries, safety responsibility can be confusing. Township police should continue the strong partnerships between the Sheriff's Office and Columbus Division of Police to comprehensively manage the area's safety.



Figure 11
Sidewalk priorities for the
Westerville Road focus area

Action 2

Form a multi-agency task force focused on code enforcement and cleanup, modeled on Columbus neighborhood pride.

Several properties along the Westerville Road corridor have been subjects of code-enforcement complaints. While officers will continue property-by-property enforcement, a comprehensive, attention-getting effort may help increase code compliance in the long run.

This effort should begin with an education push: providing property owners with access to information and a chance to clean up before enforcement action begins. Afterward, sweeps through

the neighborhood by code enforcement officers will identify violations.

Raising awareness among owners and tenants will encourage ongoing code compliance. In addition to coordinating with city agencies, partners in this effort will be the townships, and the Franklin County Board of Health, Planning Department, Treasurer's Office and Sheriff's Office.

Goal B

Give areas a visual identity by nurturing a sense of place

Visual cues such as gateway signs and distinctive streetlights give neighborhood residents a sense of belonging. Cues build pride and ownership in a neighborhood. Since this focus area functions as a singular neighborhood. Visual cues should support a sense of community.

Action 3

Perform an inventory of historic buildings and consult the inventory for any redevelopment proposal

Westerville Road is part of the 3-C highway, one of the first roads connecting cities from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. Several historic structures are located along the corridor. The township should partner with the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus Historical Society, Columbus Landmarks Foundation and the Ohio State University to perform an historic building inventory. The inventory can be a basis for future preservation efforts.

Goal C

Protect environmental resources and increase interaction between humans and the natural world

Careful treatment of the environment has a range of benefits in both the short- and long-terms. Conservation of waterways and green spaces provide areas where humans, plants and animals alike can enjoy a pleasing habitat. Preserving green areas for future generations aids the long-term health of the environment, ensuring humans and non-humans have enjoyable places to call home.

When the large shopping centers develop on either side of Cleveland Avenue, pedestrians should have an easier time entering the centers and navigating within them. Any redevelopment of the shopping centers should include pedestrian connections from the street to the shops and connections within the parking lot once people



Bicyclist along Westerville Road

leave their cars. These connections should complement improved landscaping.

Action 7 Install sidewalks in targeted areas

Sidewalks are essential to public safety and beneficial to neighborhood stability. Clinton and Mifflin townships, working with the Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation, should plan for sidewalk installation.

First priorities should be in areas near schools, parks and playgrounds, as reflected in the sidewalk priorities map. Road improvements should include



A lack of sidewalks deters transit use along Westerville Road

sidewalk installation on at least one side of the street. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide.

Action 8 Seek pedestrian-friendly design for major intersections along commercial corridors

Intersections should be safer and more attractive for pedestrians. Intersections are a primary place where pedestrians come into contact with automobiles. Pedestrian-friendly intersection design can prevent accidents and encourage more people to walk.

When high-priority intersections are rebuilt, designers should take care to improve pedestrian friendliness, using pavement markings, pedestrian refuge islands and signage. Since the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation are responsible for several main road intersections, they will be key partners in redevelopment.

The highest priority intersection is Westerville Road and Innis Road.

Goal E Improve transportation for bicyclists

Bicycling has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Traveling by bike is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Bicycling with friends and neighbors in one's neighborhood can help strengthen neighborhood social ties. Bicyclists' presence on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as bicycling and walking reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefitting people of all ages.

Action 9 Improve bicycle parking on public and private property

Properties subject to the community commercial overlay will provide bicycle parking as part of a rezoning or change in use. Convenient bicycle parking near destinations encourages cycling. The township and county should encourage existing business owners, especially the large shopping centers, to provide bicycle parking for their current development. Owing to the large

bus stop at Northern Lights, COTA can be a partner in providing bicycle parking.

Action 10

Locate buildings outside the railway corridor near Westerville Road

The former railroad right-of-way located west of Westerville Road is an opportunity for numerous types of alternative transit, including a bike path. Making sure buildings don't obstruct this direct path helps keep the corridor open for future options.

Goal F

Improve transit

Transit is essential in the functioning of the urban neighborhoods in the planning area. Transit connects consumers with shops, students with schools and workers with employment. The Central Ohio Transit Authority operates buses throughout the planning area, including some of its highest-ridership routes.

Investing in transit improvements benefits local economies: research shows every \$1 invested in transit yields at least \$3 in increased business sales and \$6 in local economic activity.

Riding transit reduces energy consumption, traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. It is also a lifeline to the elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged.

Action 11

Improve pedestrian infrastructure to encourage transit use

Commuting by transit becomes more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. More people use transit when they have a safe path from the bus stop to their destination rather than dodging cars in parking lots or climbing over physical barriers. Installing sidewalks can encourage more travel by transit.

Action 12

Encourage installation of bus shelters in areas without them and rebuild damaged shelters. Elsewhere, add trash cans, recycling bins and schedule displays to bus stops



IOWA NRCS

COTA provides shelters at bus stops to protect transit users from weather and provide a place to sit. The presence of a bus shelter can encourage people to use transit, especially in periods of bad weather.

The township and the county should work with COTA to install bus shelters at bus stops with the highest ridership. Existing shelters at Northern Lights are old and in disrepair. They should be replaced.

In areas without shelters, providing trashcans and recycling bins will help decrease litter. Adding schedule displays will increase convenience for transit users.

Parking lots can drain to rain gardens, reducing strain on storm sewers while helping the environment

Recommendations for Economic Growth

Goal G

Adopt land use and development regulations that will serve as a foundation for economic growth

Land use development regulations can lay a foundation for economic growth. Recommendations in this section intend to set common boundaries for the use and appearance of future development. The boundaries avoid over-regulation of individual properties; instead, they establish a foundation for individual and community-wide economic success.



Under-utilized land along Westerville Road is prime for office and light-industrial development

Action 13

In retail areas, encourage buildings with street presence including inviting design, landscaping and display windows. Parking lots should not dominate the landscape

Physical features of buildings along a commercial corridor can signal an area's relative economic strength: neat, well-kept, orderly development communicates strength. Avoiding a landscape of parking lots, blank walls and oversized signs will ensure commercial areas continue to be an important part of the township's economy.

Action 14

Buildings have convenient pedestrian access and friendliness to bicyclists

Commercial development should have sidewalks. The presence of sidewalks encourages people to walk, which promotes public health and increases pedestrian safety. More people traveling by foot reduces traffic congestion and energy use. It also helps connect workers with jobs, especially for those without a car.

Commuting by transit becomes more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. More people use transit when they have a safe path from the bus stop to their destination rather than walking along a busy road or through front yards.

Action 15

Apply the community commercial overlay to mixed-use commercial corridors

Community Commercial design standards include placing buildings closer to the street, locating parking on the sides and to the rear of buildings and providing landscaping. Design standards will apply to new buildings and changes of use. With the support of the township and county agencies, these standards should be incorporated in the Franklin County Zoning Resolution.

Action 16

Encourage commercial and light industrial land uses along Westerville Road, with retail and possibly multi-family at the intersection of Westerville and Innis

Westerville Road is largely commercial and contributes significantly to both townships' revenue bases. The intersection of Westerville and Innis Roads can be a desirable location for retail and office uses.

Adding multi-family housing at the intersection can support the retail and office uses by providing a customer base, especially one that can arrive without a car.

Outside the intersection, allowing heavier commercial and light industrial uses allows these businesses to function economically while avoiding conflict with residences. The land use map shows retail, office and multi-family uses at the Innis Road intersection and heavier commercial and light industrial uses in the remainder of the focus area.

Goal H

Work with other jurisdictions for maximum mutual economic benefit

The economy in Franklin County and central Ohio transcends jurisdictional boundaries. In recent years, cities, villages and townships have worked with one another to lay a foundation for economic growth while ensuring fair distribution of resulting tax revenue. The planning area includes several areas with potential for shared economic prosperity. By working together, jurisdictions can realize long-term shared economic sustainability.

West Mifflin Residential Focus Area



Franklin County

Chapter highlights:

Promote safe neighborhoods by:

- Turning around abandoned properties to improve neighborhoods
- Installing gateway signs to encourage community pride
- Adding streetlights for nighttime safety

Support complete streets for all modes of transportation by:

- Adding sidewalks to make walking safer and more enjoyable
- Applying signs and pavement markings for safer bicycling
- Improve roads for safer travel

Current conditions

Land use

Single-family residences are the primary land use. There are collections of commercial business at intersections along Purdue Avenue, most prominently at Agler Road. There is also multi-family housing, churches and vacant land. Parks nearby include Mock Park and Joan Park.



Figure 13
Geographic boundaries of
the West Mifflin Residential
focus area

Urban form

Most lots are small, with 50 feet of road frontage. Buildings are one- and two-story. Most of the area has a grid street pattern, with many four-way intersections. Houses are close to the street. Car access is either by driveway or by rear alley.

Transportation

Agler Road is a two-lane minor arterial with 100 feet of future right-of-way. Other streets are generally narrow. Most have 50 feet of right-of-way, but only 20 to 26-foot-wide streets.

Focus Area By the numbers

Focus area size	316 acres
Single-family homes	810
Typical lot area	¼ acre
Median building age	49 years
Owner-occupied proportion	53%
Vacant lot proportion	20%
Park land area	4.8 acres

Pedestrian access: A few streets have sidewalks. Agler Road and Parkwood Avenue have sidewalks on one side of the street. Purdue Avenue has sidewalks on both sides. In many areas, sidewalks along streets in Columbus stop once the street reaches the township.

Bicycle access: No roads have markings or signs for cyclists. Cycling is fairly trouble-free on most of the residential streets. Biking is more challenging on Agler Road with its heavier traffic and faster speeds.

Transit access: Three bus routes serve the area, No. 9 Leonard-Brentnell, No. 81 Hudson-Ohio Crosstown and No. 87 Agler-Cassady Crosstown.

Vision

A safe, busy and well-kept neighborhood. Travel within and through the neighborhood is easily accomplished by any mode of transportation.

Recommendations for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

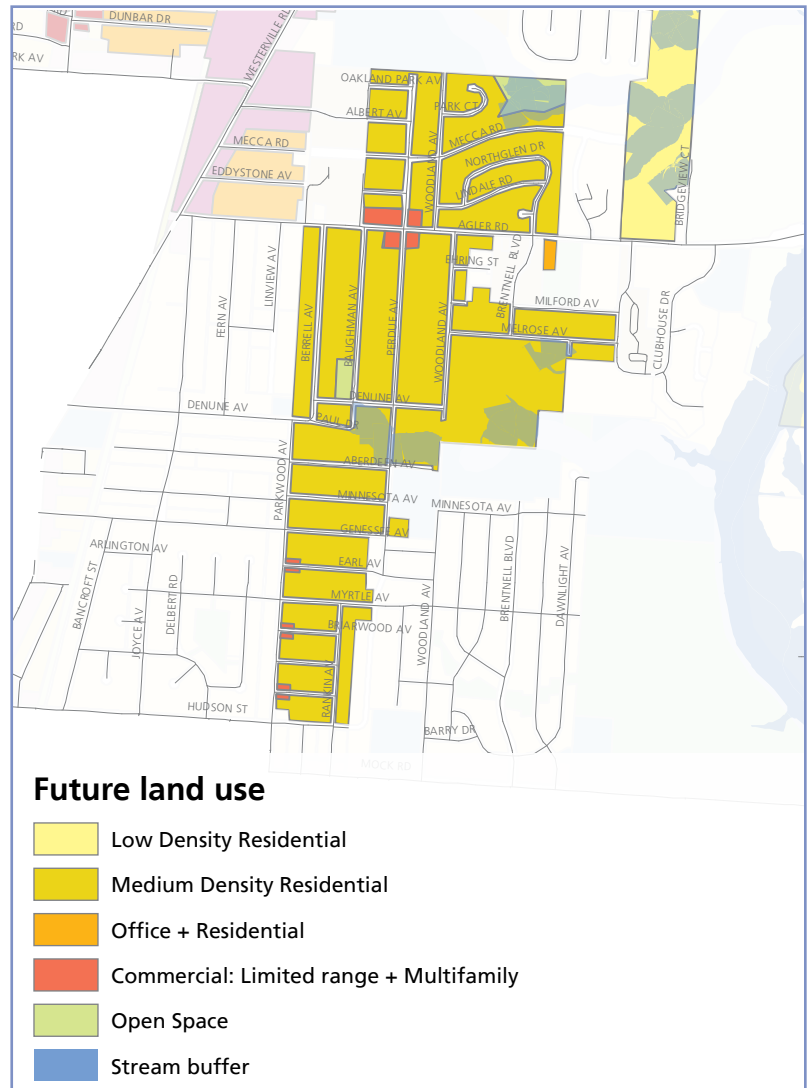
Improve neighborhood safety

Community safety is a major influence on a community's attractiveness to residents and visitors. In commercial areas, perceived safety factors into a patron's decision to shop at a given destination. Better safety perception helps both immediate and long-term neighborhood stability.

Action 1

Add streetlights for nighttime safety

Street lighting can reduce crime and help people feel safer. Many streets in the focus area lack lighting. Adequate lighting should be installed along streets and alleys. Depending on cost and the desires of residents, streetlights should be decorative, with a uniform type of decorative streetlight throughout the area. Costs could be paid with a mixture of public funds and property owner assessment.



Action 2

Improve road and drainage infrastructure

Roads and storm water drainage should be well maintained. Good roads improve the travel experience for motorists and also project a positive image for residents and visitors. Similarly, a well-functioning storm water drainage system is essential in urban areas. Rainfall collects from rooftops, driveways and streets and must travel efficiently to avoid flooding.

Figure 14
Future land use map for the
West Mifflin Residential
focus area

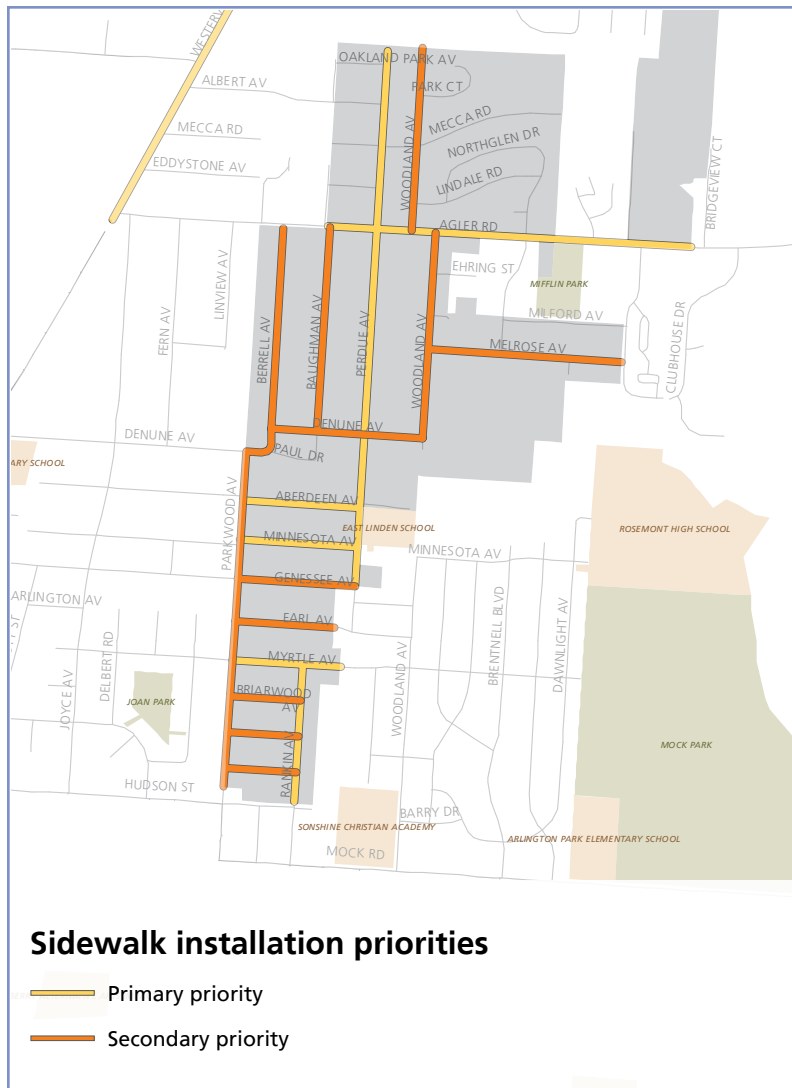


Figure 15
Sidewalk priorities for the
West Mifflin Residential
focus area

Goal B

Achieve increased neighborhood safety by collaborating with safety partners and neighboring local governments

In adjacent neighborhoods, criminals do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. All focus areas share boundaries with a neighboring jurisdiction, usually Columbus. By building on existing multi-jurisdictional efforts, all communities can benefit from increased safety.

Action 3

Partner with Columbus on any Neighborhood Pride initiative

Neighborhood Pride is an effort by the city of Columbus to clean up neighborhoods and make them safer. Neighborhood Pride focuses city resources on a particular area, helping residents improve their neighborhood through enforcing zoning regulations, mowing grass, cleaning alleys, offering block watch and fire prevention outreach. Columbus targets a handful of neighborhoods each year. If the city targets the neighborhoods next to a township focus area, the county and township should join in the effort.

Action 4

Promote public health

Healthy people and healthy communities are strongly linked. In the definition of public health, officials include physical, social and mental health. Land use plans have the potential to strongly influence positive public health: recommendations can influence levels of physical activity, access to healthy food, medical services, education and employment, all of which factor in to healthy families and stable communities.

Action 5

Provide connections to trails when properties redevelop. Redevelopment should include dedication along waterways for public use

To protect the environmental health and to support public use along Alum Creek and its tributaries, developing or redeveloping properties should dedicate waterway frontage. Since the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department manages most of the public land, the dedication should be done in close contact with them.

Action 6

Use healthy building materials

New and rehabbed houses should use building materials that promote a healthy indoor air environment. Conventional building materials sometimes use chemicals and solvents that

release harmful fumes in homes long after installation. Carpet and pressed-wood products are common sources of harmful emissions. Re-formulated products are now widely available that offer significantly reduced emissions while maintaining material quality.

Houses built or rehabbed using any public funds should only use materials that result in clean indoor air. The county will communicate with its partners and vendors for publically-funded programs. For individual homeowners, the county can encourage healthy indoor air by offering information when homeowners and contractors apply for a building permit.

Goal C

Improve housing and the homeownership experience for long-term neighborhood stability

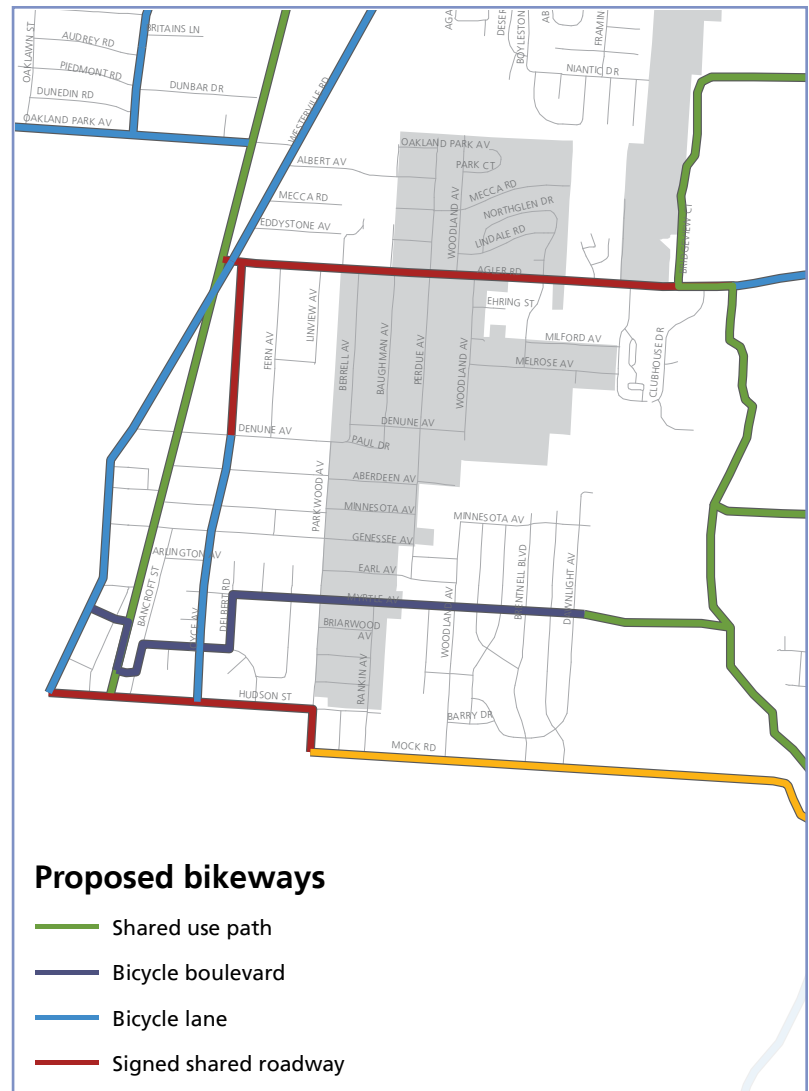
Many traits intersect and overlap to achieve strong, safe neighborhoods. Neighborhoods benefit from well-maintained homes, high occupancy rates, abundant green space and homeownership. Well-maintained homes are strongly associated with neighborhood stability. Furthermore, strong homeownership rates lead to safe and stable neighborhoods.

Action 7

Facilitate home rehabbing and construction of compatible infill housing

Well-kept housing stock is important to a neighborhood's stability. Neighborhoods with well-kept homes keep their value better than run-down ones. Despite pride in one's home, households with lower-than-average disposable income may be unable to keep up with maintenance of a home. Grants and loans available for minor renovations should be targeted to this area.

Vacant lots can sap a neighborhood's energy. Empty lots can signal lack of interest in a neighborhood. Regulatory and financial assistance should be directed to vacant lots, where appropriate, to provide housing and add to the neighborhood.



Action 8

New home design and layout should be compatible with existing neighborhoods

The focus area has a variety of housing types. Even though houses are different, some consistent features give the neighborhood a unified feel. These features should remain in new or rehabbed housing: the range of styles, the placement on a lot (distance of the house to the street), garage placement and access to an alley.

As part of the development review process, builders of new infill housing should be aware of the expectation to have housing compatible with existing stock. The township and the

Figure 16
Proposed bikeways for the
West Mifflin Residential
focus area



(top)
Abandoned houses
attract vandals—and
negative attention



(bottom)
New houses built on
previously-vacant
lots with help from
housing nonprofits

county should communicate this clearly with developers.

Action 9

Increase the homeownership rate

Higher homeownership rates are associated with better neighborhood quality of life. Homeowners move less often, are more involved in their neighborhood and in civic affairs to protect their investment. Community involvement leads to less crime and better neighborhood upkeep.

Action 10

Use universal design features in home improvements and new construction

Universal design is a way of constructing new homes and home improvements for easy use by anyone regardless of age or physical ability. Designing living spaces for everyone is becoming increasingly popular as the baby boom generation grows older and the combat veteran population increases. Often times, universal design is not even obvious: a well-placed handrail or a few extra inches in doorway width looks conventional, but goes a long way in helping people with limited abilities.

Universal design helps people stay in their homes as they age. As physical ability declines with age, barrier-free doorways and no-step entryways prevent injury.

Single- or multifamily homes built or rehabbed using public funds should always comply with universal design principles. The county will communicate with its partners and vendors for publically-funded programs. For individual homeowners, the county can encourage construction using universal design by offering information when homeowners and contractors apply for a building permit.

Action 11

Turn around tax-delinquent properties in partnership with the Treasurer's Office

Vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties are a drag on a neighborhood and slows its improvement. The Franklin County Treasurer pursues properties for back taxes. Township officials should keep the Treasurer's Office informed of abandoned properties and partner to return them to productive use.

Goal D

Give areas a visual identity by nurturing a sense of place

Visual cues such as gateway signs and distinctive streetlights give neighborhood residents a sense of belonging. Cues build pride and ownership in a neighborhood. Since this focus area

functions as a singular neighborhood, visual cues should support a sense of community.

Action 12

Install gateway signage

Gateway signs will visually define the neighborhood and increase resident pride. The township should choose a design or theme to use throughout the area, preferably one compatible with gateway signs at Northern Lights. The township should partner with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to install the signs.

Goal E

Protect environmental resources and increase interaction between humans and the natural world

Careful treatment of the environment has a range of benefits in both the short- and long-terms. Conservation of waterways and green spaces provide areas where humans, plants and animals alike can enjoy a pleasing habitat. Preserving green areas for future generations aids the long-term health of the environment, ensuring humans and non-humans have enjoyable places to call home.

Action 13

Identify sites for new green space and outline a procedure for converting them to parkland, a community garden or other productive use

Green space gives residents a place for relaxation and enjoyment of the natural environment. The focus area is home to a few parks. Although this area is completely developed, vacant property can be used for resident enjoyment.

Instead of rebuilding housing on vacant lots, a building site can be converted to a community space. The space could be a small park or green area, or could be a community garden area where residents tend to a small garden plot. This could be a multi-party effort among the township, county, community groups, local charities and urban agriculture groups.

Action 14

Use Alum Creek as a community asset by



Lack of sidewalks on
Purdue Avenue

increasing public access to the creek with a shared-use path or trail

Alum Creek stretches across Franklin County and runs close to this focus area. Public use of the waterway and its tributaries has numerous benefits. Mature trees should be maintained and public access to the creek and its tributaries should be enhanced to allow everyone to share in the enjoyment of these resources.

Waterways are often a community resource for recreation. Public paths along waterways allow walking, cycling and opportunities to enjoy nature. Public access should be encouraged to allow the community to jointly share in the benefits of Alum Creek.

Action 15

Establish a stream-buffer zone along the creek and its tributaries

A buffer zone should be established next to Alum Creek and its tributaries that is off-limits to development. The buffer zone will help filter pollution and replenish groundwater. In establishing this buffer, the county and township should work closely with other county agencies, the city of Columbus and environmental organizations.



Pavement in disrepair
on Melrose Avenue

Recommendations for Complete Streets

Goal F

Improve transportation for pedestrians

Walking has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Travel on foot is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Walking through or about one's neighborhood helps neighbors get to know one another, strengthening neighborhood social ties. More eyes on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as walking and bicycling reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefiting people of all ages.

Action 16

Install sidewalks in targeted areas

Sidewalks are essential to public safety and beneficial to neighborhood stability. Mifflin Township, working with the Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation, should plan for sidewalk installation.

First priorities should be in areas near schools, parks and playgrounds. This plan includes a map with first- and second-tier priorities for sidewalk installation. Road improvements should include sidewalk installation on at least one side of the street. Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide.

Action 17

Slow traffic in residential areas with traffic calming

Traffic calming involves using physical measures to slow cars. Slowing traffic in residential areas reduces the likelihood of collisions with pedestrians and bicyclists. Slower traffic and the resulting safety benefits can also encourage more people to walk.

Without traffic calming, straight, wide roads encourage speeding traffic. Traffic calming and treatments at intersections are a cost-effective way to slow traffic. The township will work with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to install and maintain traffic calming measures on roads where speeding and safety is a problem.

Goal G

Improve transportation for bicyclists

Bicycling has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Traveling by bike is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Bicycling with friends and neighbors in one's neighborhood can help strengthen neighborhood social ties. Bicyclists' presence on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as bicycling and walking reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefiting people of all ages.

Action 18

Support an area-wide bicycle network by coordinating with the Columbus bikeway plan

Columbus has completed its bicentennial bikeways plan. The plan proposes bike lanes, paths and signs for roads in several focus areas. Clinton and Mifflin townships support these recommendations. The county and the townships will work with the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation to implement this plan's recommendations in unincorporated territory.

Goal H

Maintain and improve road network

The road network is the primary mode of transportation throughout the planning area. Each road is maintained by one of three entities: the Ohio Department of Transportation, the Franklin County Engineer's Office or the respective township. Well-maintained roads and attractive views send a positive message to travelers and improves neighborhood pride.

people use transit when they have a safe path from the bus stop to their destination rather than dodging cars in parking lots or climbing over physical barriers. Installing sidewalks can encourage more travel by transit.

Action 19

Improve damaged roads and roadside drainage infrastructure

Roads and storm water drainage should be well-maintained. Good roads improve the travel experience for motorists and also project a positive image for residents and visitors. Similarly, a well-functioning storm water drainage system is essential in urban areas. Rainfall collects from rooftops, driveways and streets and must be efficiently conveyed to avoid flooding.

Goal I

Improve transit

Transit is essential in the functioning of the urban neighborhoods in the planning area. Transit connects consumers with shops, students with schools and workers with employment. The Central Ohio Transit Authority operates buses throughout the planning area, including some of its highest-ridership routes.

Investing in transit improvements benefits local economies: research shows every \$1 invested in transit yields at least \$3 in increased business sales and \$6 in local economic activity.

Riding transit reduces energy consumption, traffic congestion and greenhouse gases. It is also a lifeline to the elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged.

Action 20

Improve pedestrian infrastructure to encourage transit use

Commuting by transit becomes more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. More



Sunbury-Cassady

Focus Area

Chapter highlights:

Promote safe neighborhoods by:

- Maintaining residential land uses along Sunbury Road
- Protecting the environmental health of Alum Creek and increasing public access

Support complete streets for all modes of transportation by:

- Maintaining the scenic quality of Sunbury Road
- Partnering to establish a shared-use path along Alum Creek

Promote economic growth by:

- Establishing a high-density mixed-use center at Agler and Cassady

Current conditions

Land use

The area has a variety of land uses, including recreation, single- and multi-family residential, institutional, office and retail. Several tracts are undeveloped with stands of mature trees. Near Agler and Cassady, there are small retail businesses, offices, a school, a church, an industrial facility, a

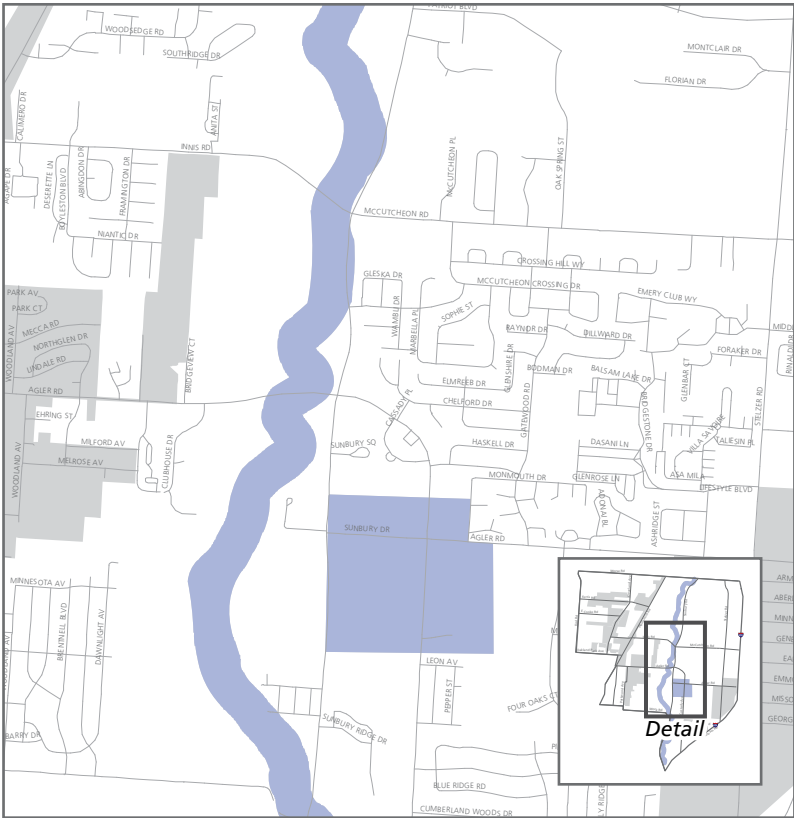


Figure 17
Geographic boundaries
of the Sunbury-Cassady
focus area

recreation center and multi-family housing.

Urban form

Most buildings have small to medium foot-prints. They are mostly one and two-story buildings with highly variable setbacks from the road. Many properties have varying amount of landscaping, although most residential properties have mature trees. Commercial properties have some parking lots near the road.

Focus Area

By the numbers

Focus area size	388 acres
Single-family homes	18
Typical lot area	4/10 acre
Length of streams	5.4 miles
Owner-occupied proportion	74%
Proportion in flood zone	68%
Park land area	190 acres

Transportation

Sunbury Road is a narrow two-lane road, with gentle curves and rising and falling topography. Along Sunbury Road, there are few sidewalks. Where they exist, sidewalks are found at major intersections and near multi-family housing. Speed limits are 35 mph and 45 mph.

Agler Road and Cassady Avenue are minor arterials with 100 feet of future right-of-way.

Pedestrian access: This area is not pedestrian-oriented. There is minimal pedestrian traffic between destinations. Sidewalks are mostly absent, but helter-skelter and disconnected where they are found.

Bicycle access: The narrow width and high speeds of Agler and Sunbury Roads discourages biking. Nearby, there is a partially-completed bicycle and pedestrian path along Alum Creek. There are no bicycle lanes or cyclist-oriented signs.

Transit access: Two buses serve the area, No. 16 Long Street and No. 87 Agler-Cassady Crosstown. No buses serve Sunbury Road.

Vision

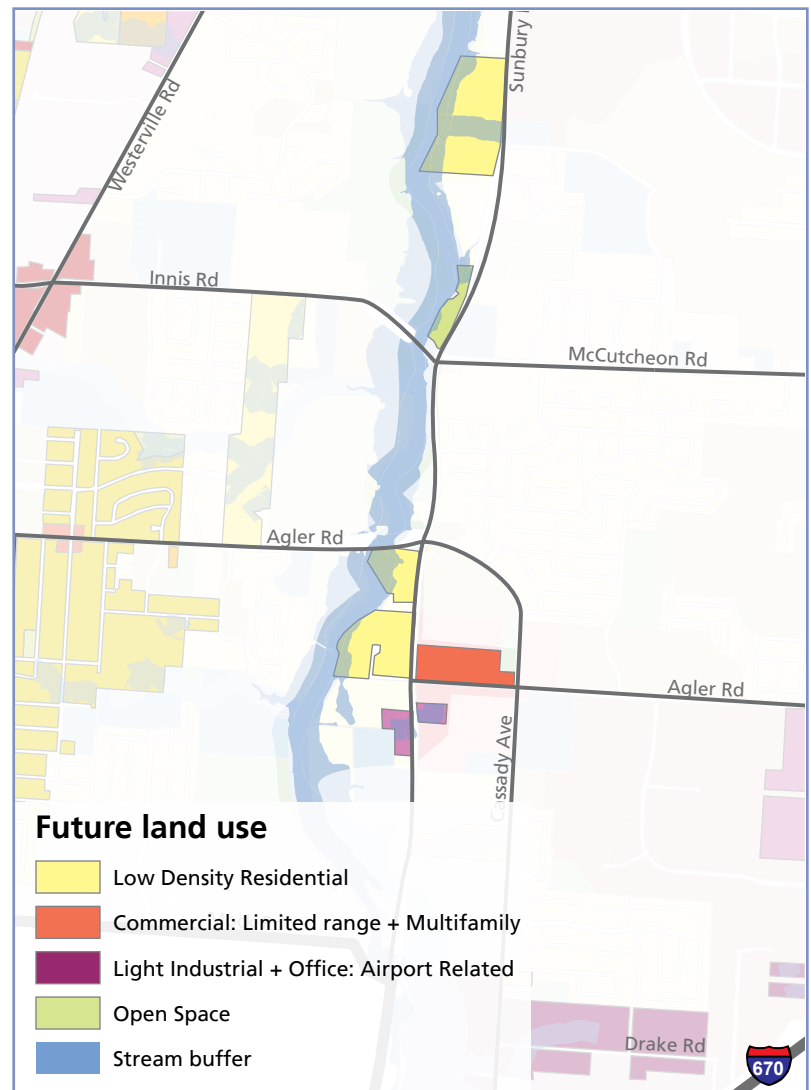
Alum Creek is a community asset, providing natural beauty and recreation opportunities while Sunbury Road continues to have a scenic, rural feel. The Agler-Cassady intersection is a vibrant, busy mixed-use activity center with pedestrian-oriented design.

Recommendations for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

Minimize land use conflicts in exclusively-residential areas

In residential neighborhoods, commercial uses from adjacent corridors should not intrude on exclusively-residential areas. Consistency with this goal allows residents to maintain confidence that their community's character will remain intact.



Action 1

Along Sunbury Road, land use should be mainly residential with office and neighborhood-level retail allowed at major intersections

To keep the Sunbury Road corridor's scenic quality, land use should continue to be residential. Buildings should be set back far from the road. Office and light retail uses are permitted at the intersections of Morse, Innis, Agler and Cassady.

Figure 18

Future land use map for the Sunbury-Cassady focus area

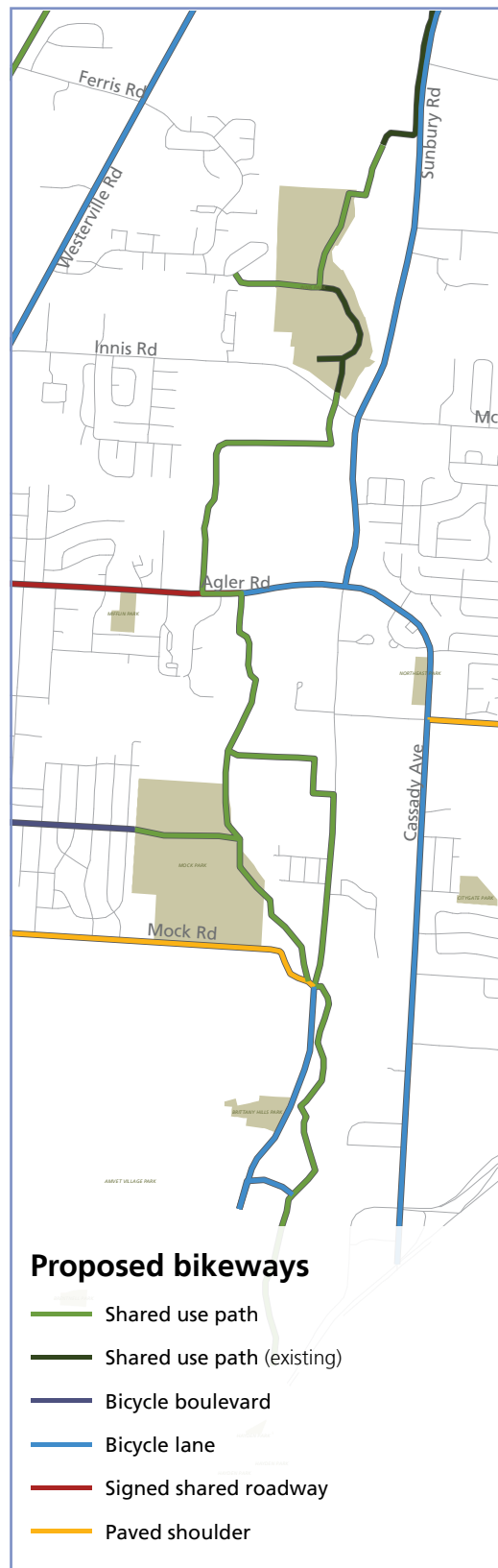


Figure 19
Proposed bikeways for the
Sunbury-Cassady focus area

Goal B

Promote public health

Healthy people and healthy communities are strongly linked. In the definition of public health, officials include physical, social and mental health. Land use plans have the potential to strongly influence positive public health: recommendations can influence levels of physical activity, access to healthy food, medical services, education and employment, all of which factor in to healthy families and stable communities.

Action 2

Provide connections to trails when properties redevelop. Redevelopment should include dedication along waterways for public use

To protect the environmental health and to support public use along Alum Creek and its tributaries, developing or redeveloping properties should dedicate waterway frontage. Since the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department manages most of the public land, the dedication should be done in close contact with them.

Action 3

Use healthy building materials

New and rehabbed houses should use building materials that promote a healthy indoor air environment. Conventional building materials sometimes use chemicals and solvents that release harmful fumes in homes long after installation. Carpet and pressed-wood products are common sources of harmful emissions. Reformulated products are now widely available that offer significantly reduced emissions while maintaining material quality.

Houses built or rehabbed using any public funds should only use materials that result in clean indoor air. The county will communicate with its partners and vendors for publicly-funded programs. For individual homeowners, the county can encourage healthy indoor air by offering information when homeowners and contractors apply for a building permit.

Goal C

Give areas a visual identity by nurturing a sense of place

Visual cues such as gateway signs and distinctive streetlights give neighborhood residents a sense of belonging. Cues build pride and ownership in a neighborhood. Since this focus area functions as a singular neighborhood, visual cues should support a sense of community.

Action 4

New development along Sunbury Road should have little impact on the scenic view

New buildings should be set back far from Sunbury Road. Development can take advantage of hilly topography to further hide buildings. Any new construction should take great care to avoid cutting down trees, especially old ones. Any trees that cannot be saved should be replaced.

Goal D

Protect environmental resources and increase interaction between humans and the natural world

Careful treatment of the environment has a range of benefits in both the short- and long-terms. Conservation of waterways and green spaces provide areas where humans, plants and animals alike can enjoy a pleasing habitat. Preserving green areas for future generations aids the long-term health of the environment, ensuring humans and non-humans have enjoyable places to call home.

Action 5

Protect the environmental health of Alum Creek and its tributaries

Keeping a waterway clean involves keeping pollution out of the creek itself and the small streams and drainageways that feed into it, known as tributaries. Pollution from septic systems, lawn fertilizers and dumping must be kept out of both the creek and its tributaries.

Action 6

Use Alum Creek as a community asset by increasing public access to the creek with a shared-use path or trail

Alum Creek stretches across Franklin County and runs close to this focus area. Public use of the waterway and its tributaries has numerous benefits. Mature trees should be maintained and public access to the creek and its tributaries should be enhanced to allow everyone to share in the enjoyment of these resources.

Waterways are often a community resource for recreation. Public paths along waterways allow walking, cycling and opportunities to enjoy nature. Public access should be encouraged to allow the community to jointly share in the benefits of Alum Creek.

Action 7

Establish a stream-buffer zone along the creek and its tributaries

A buffer zone should be established next to Alum Creek and its tributaries that is off-limits to development. The buffer zone will help filter pollution and replenish groundwater. In establishing this buffer, the county and township should work closely with other county

Rural feel along Sunbury Road (left to right): Bridge over Alum Creek, Mature trees, Houses set back from the road,



All images: Franklin County



Partially-completed Alum Creek shared use path in Innis Park

agencies, the city of Columbus and environmental organizations.

Action 8

Support acquisition of sensitive and scenic properties along the creek

Certain properties along the creek are especially environmentally sensitive. They may be habitat for plants or animals, or filter water and prevent pollution. The township and county should support public acquisition of sensitive land along the creek.

Action 9

Property redevelopment should include stormwater best management practices

Hard surfaces such as rooftops and parking lots create stormwater runoff when it rains. Instead of spending money on engineering solutions for stormwater, the runoff should soak into the ground using planted areas known as rain gardens. This helps recharge ground water and also provides attractive areas of landscaping.

Recommendations for Complete Streets

Goal E

Improve transportation for bicyclists

Bicycling has environmental, social and physical health benefits. Traveling by bike is pollution-free and avoids using non-renewable fuels. Bicycling with friends and neighbors in one's neighborhood can help strengthen neighborhood social ties. Bicyclists' presence on the street can also discourage crime. Physical activities such as bicycling and walking reduce the risk of developing serious illnesses, benefitting people of all ages.

Action 10

Support a shared-use path along Alum Creek as recommended in the Columbus bikeway plan

Columbus has completed its bicentennial bikeways plan. The plan proposes a shared-use path along Alum Creek. Mifflin Township supports this recommendation. The county and the township will work with highway and recreation partners to implement this plan's recommendations in unincorporated territory.

Goal F

Maintain and improve road network

The road network is the primary mode of transportation throughout the planning area. Each road is maintained by one of three entities: the Ohio Department of Transportation, the Franklin County Engineer's Office or Mifflin Township. Well-maintained roads and attractive views send a positive message to travelers and improves neighborhood pride.

Action 11

Maintain the scenic quality of Sunbury Road

Sunbury Road is a gently rolling, narrow road with mature trees and limited development. Similar to nature paths for people on foot, this type of scenic road is relaxing and enjoyable for drivers. New development should minimize disturbance to the driver's experience.

Action 12

Support efforts to designate Sunbury Road as a scenic byway

The Ohio Department of Transportation runs the scenic byway program to designate roads with exceptional qualities. The program recognizes road corridors that have outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational and/or archaeological qualities. Sunbury Road possesses these qualities. The townships will support an application to gain the designation for Sunbury Road.

Recommendations for Economic Growth

Goal G

Adopt land use and development regulations that will serve as a foundation for economic growth

Land use development regulations can lay a foundation for economic growth. Recommendations in this section intend to set common boundaries for the use and appearance of future development. The boundaries avoid over-regulation of individual properties; instead, they establish a foundation for individual and community-wide economic success.

Action 13

Encourage development of the Agler-Cassady area with a variety of land uses, pedestrian orientation and high-quality urban design using Urban Commercial Overlay development standards

The Columbus Northeast Area Plan recommends a high-density mixed use center for this intersection. The center will have housing, retail, offices and other uses. Only one of the three quadrants is in the township. The unincorporated portion of the focus area should follow the recommendations of the Columbus plan.

Urban Commercial Overlay standards require buildings to be oriented to people rather than cars. Buildings are built close to the street with easy access for pedestrians. Buildings are well-designed with large display windows that



Illustrations: City of Columbus Planning Division

Development possibility for the Agler-Cassady intersection, street views (top to bottom): northwesterly, northerly, southerly



provide attractiveness and interest to passers-by. Parking is located behind buildings.

The corner of this intersection in unincorporated territory has an existing building set back from the street. As on the other corners, this area should allow a variety of uses, allow mixing of uses on the same lots and within the same building. Building design should be prominent, reflecting the status of this corner as an anchor of a community center.



A former used car lot occupies the northwest corner of Agler and Cassady

Drake Road

Focus Area



Chapter highlights:

Ensure safe neighborhoods by:

- Softening the impact of new development on remaining residents
- Reconfiguring land use restrictions based on new airport flight patterns
- Lessening impact to sensitive environmental areas

Promote short- and long-term economic growth by:

- Facilitating land use changes from residential to airport-related
- Joining the multi-jurisdiction airport development partnership
- Stabilizing revenues to ensure public safety

Current conditions

Land use

Along Drake Road, land use is mostly single-family residential. There are commercial businesses, including some that are airport-related. There are also large areas of mature tree stands. Other land is simply vacant.

Urban form

The single-family homes are one- and two-story buildings, most about 50 feet from the road. Commercial businesses have larger buildings with minimal landscaping, with parking often in front of the building.



Figure 20
Geographic boundaries of
the Drake Road focus area

Transportation

Drake Road is a narrow road with 40-feet of right of way and limited connections to other roads. Pavement condition is average. Cassady Avenue is two lanes with 100 feet of future right of way. Neither road has sidewalks or bicycle accommodation. COTA routes Nos. 16 and 87 run along Cassady Avenue. Speed limits are 25 mph on Drake Road and 45 mph on Cassady Avenue.

Focus Area
By the numbers

Focus area size	67 acres
Single-family homes	41
Businesses	3
Median building age	34 years
Vacant lot proportion	13%
Proportion within airport high-noise zone	100%

Vision

An office/industrial area that supports the airport, is gentle on the environment with reduced impact on remaining residents.

Recommendations for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

Minimize land use conflicts in exclusively-residential areas

In residential neighborhoods, commercial uses from adjacent corridors should not intrude on exclusively-residential areas. Consistency with this goal allows residents to maintain confidence that their community's character will remain intact.

Action 1

In areas transitioning away from residential uses, soften the impact on remaining residents

As the transition to office/airport-related land uses continues along Drake Road, some residents will remain. New development and construction should use buffering, mounding, landscaping and other site design techniques to mitigate commercial and industrial impacts on remaining residential properties. Rezoning should only be approved for uses that follow the future map.

Action 2

In areas near the airport, reconfigure noise contours according to airport expansion plans and enforce use restrictions

Noise contours in the zoning resolution enforce the federal government's use limits in noisy areas around airports. In Franklin County, the restricted area is called the Airport Environs Overlay. Since flight paths are changing, noise areas will change. The county should revise zoning regulations to reflect the new noise patterns.



Goal B

Protect environmental resources and increase interaction between humans and the natural world

Careful treatment of the environment has a range of benefits in both the short- and long-terms. Conservation of waterways and green spaces provide areas where humans, plants and animals alike can enjoy a pleasing habitat. Preserving green areas for future generations aids the long-term health of the environment, ensuring humans and non-humans have enjoyable places to call home.

Action 3

Conserve environmental resources along Drake Road by requiring an environmental protection strategy as part of any new development.

The Drake Road area has many mature trees and water resources. Large areas of trees provide habitat for wildlife and filter pollutants from the air. New development should take great care in

Figure 21
Future land use map for the Drake Road focus area



Figure 22
Sidewalk priorities for the
Drake Road focus area

preserving natural features and mitigating where this is not possible.

New buildings should conserve environmental resources when possible, especially wetlands. When impossible, restorative measures should be taken. Where tree preservation is not possible, trees should be replanted at an appropriate ratio on the property or nearby.

Recommendations for Economic Growth

Goal C

Adopt land use and development regulations that will serve as a foundation for economic growth

Land use development regulations can lay a foundation for economic growth. Recommendations in this section intend to set common boundaries for the use and appearance of future development. The boundaries avoid over-regulation of individual properties; instead, they establish a foundation for individual and community-wide economic success.

Action 4

Adapt land use regulations to conform with airport plans

The Federal Aviation Administration helps local governments with noise compatibility planning—making sure land uses near airports are compatible with airport traffic patterns. The FAA prepares maps showing the noisiest areas around airports, which are the areas most unsuitable for residences.

Port Columbus International Airport is located southeast of the Drake Road focus area. The airport is changing its runway layouts, which will in turn change the areas affected by noise.

To make sure residences are not located in the noisiest areas, once the airport's changes are final, the county should change the zoning regulations to reflect the new noise areas.

Port Columbus airport supports a range of aviation-related uses

All images: Franklin County



Action 5**Along Drake Road, facilitate land use changes away from residential uses while easing the impact on current residents**

The future land use map indicates this area for office and airport-related development. Care must be taken to follow the plan while softening the impact on the remaining residents.

Goal D**Work with other jurisdictions for maximum mutual economic benefit**

The economy in Franklin County and central Ohio transcends jurisdictional boundaries. In recent years, cities, villages and townships have worked with one another to lay a foundation for economic growth while ensuring fair distribution of resulting tax revenue. The planning area includes several areas with potential for shared economic prosperity. By working together, jurisdictions can realize long-term shared economic sustainability.

Action 6**Join the multi-jurisdictional airport development partnership**

Port Columbus plays an important role in the region's economy. Local governments must work together to reap the airport's full economic potential. Recognizing this, in 2007 Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman launched an economic development partnership with the adjacent cities of Gahanna and Whitehall. Mifflin Township has a significant amount of land adjacent to the airport. The township should be a full participant in this multi-party effort. Township and county officials should approach Columbus to become a member of the partnership.

Action 7**Explore a formal agreement regarding land use and annexation**

Securing the property tax base is key to maintaining sufficient numbers of police officers and firefighters. As high-value commercial property is annexed and removed from the township's tax rolls, the township's public safety resources



All images: Franklin County

Figure 23

▲ Proposed bikeways for the Drake Road focus area

◀ While some businesses are located along Drake Road (left), residences are the most common land use (above left)



Figure 24
Most of the Drake Road focus area is in a noisy area unsuitable for residences

decline. This decline not only threatens the township residents but also the citizens of nearby communities.

Preserving the property tax base will preserve public safety. The township should enter into an agreement with Columbus to prevent erosion of this base. Several options are available, including a Joint Economic Development District or Cooperative Economic Development Agreement.

Entering into an agreement to preserve the township's ability to provide safety services is cost-effective for both the township and Columbus in the long run.

Mature trees along Drake Road

All images: Franklin County



Leonard Park

Focus Area



Franklin County

Chapter highlights:

Promote safe neighborhoods and economic growth by:

- Working with Columbus to extend water lines to Leonard Park
- Establishing a medium-density neighborhood with workforce housing
- Allowing Columbus input on new development in exchange for access to water
- Providing areas for neighborhood retail businesses

Current conditions

Land use

Residences are the primary land use in this focus area. There are retail businesses at the corner of Stelzer and Agler Roads. East of Stelzer Road, there are office uses along Agler Road. Within the Leonard Park subdivision, there are single-family homes and vacant land.



Figure 25
Geographic boundaries of
the Leonard Park focus area

Urban form

Houses in Leonard Park are located on small lots, usually 50 feet wide and 125 feet deep. Houses are in the front half of the lot. Along Stelzer Road, houses are set back large distances from the street. Lots often extend over 1,000 feet from Stelzer. Houses are one- and two-story. The retail businesses are one-story. Most have parking in the front.

Transportation

Stelzer Road was recently widened to five lanes and a 120-foot-wide right-of-way. Agler Road is two lanes with 100 feet of future right-of-way.

Focus Area

By the numbers

Focus area size	295 acres
Single-family homes	170
Vacant lots	347
Typical lot dimensions (ft.)	50 x 125
Median building age	60 years
Median building size	2,030 sq. ft.
Owner-occupied proportion	74%

Pedestrian access: Reconstructed Stelzer Road has sidewalks on both sides of the road. Outside the intersection with Stelzer Road, Agler Road has no sidewalks. Leonard Park has no sidewalks either.

Bicycle access: The narrow width and high speed of Agler Road discourages biking. Stelzer Road is wider, with room for bicycles. Bicycling is easily accomplished in Leonard Park with its light traffic and newly-resurfaced roads. There are no bicycle lanes or cyclist-oriented signs.

Transit access: The area is served by one bus route, No. 16 Long Street.

Vision

An attractive, affordable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood with easy access to employment.

Recommendation for Safe Neighborhoods

Goal A

Promote public health

Healthy people and healthy communities are strongly linked. In the definition of public health, officials include physical, social and mental health. Land use plans have the potential to strongly influence positive public health: recommendations can influence levels of physical activity, access to healthy food, medical services, education and employment, all of which factor in to healthy families and stable communities.

Action 1

Work with Columbus to extend water lines to Leonard Park

Extension of municipal water lines to Leonard Park will require an agreement between Columbus, Franklin County and Mifflin Township. Generally in the past, annexation was required for access to water. In the past several years however, Columbus has made exceptions to this rule when certain financial conditions were met.



Annexing Leonard Park to Columbus will change the school district from Gahanna to Columbus. One of the attractive features of the neighborhood is the suburban school district, which would disappear with annexation.

Columbus can avoid a drain on its financial resources by permitting Leonard Park to develop and remain unincorporated. By remaining in the township, Leonard Park can provide moderately-priced housing close to employment centers without the cost of infrastructure maintenance and municipal services. Columbus can avoid costs including police protection, trash pickup and road maintenance. In addition to avoiding costs, Columbus could enjoy financial

Figure 26
Future land use map for the Leonard Park focus area



Figure 27
Sidewalk priorities for the Leonard Park focus area

gain from water tap fees and higher suburban rates for water and sewer service.

Goal B

Improve housing and the homeownership experience for long-term neighborhood stability

Many traits intersect and overlap to achieve strong, safe neighborhoods. Neighborhoods benefit from well-maintained homes, high occupancy rates, abundant green space and homeownership. Well-maintained homes are strongly associated with neighborhood stability. Furthermore, strong homeownership rates lead to safe and stable neighborhoods.

Action 2

Use universal design features in home improvements and new construction

Universal design is a way of constructing new homes and home improvements for easy use by anyone regardless of age or physical ability.

Designing living spaces for everyone is becoming increasingly popular as the baby boom generation grows older and the combat veteran population increases. Often times, universal design isn't even obvious: a well-placed handrail or a few extra inches in doorway width looks conventional, but goes a long way in helping people with limited abilities.

Universal design helps people stay in their homes as they age. As physical ability declines with age, barrier-free doorways and no-step entryways prevent injury.

Single- or multifamily homes built or rehabbed using public funds should always comply with universal design principles. The county will communicate with its partners and vendors for publically-funded programs. For individual homeowners, the county can encourage construction using universal design by offering information when homeowners and contractors apply for a building permit.

Action 3

Encourage new housing in Leonard Park

Once connected to utilities, the neighborhood can begin attracting new housing. The neighborhood is a prime location for moderately-priced new housing. Unlike an undeveloped parcel, Leonard Park is already subdivided, has paved roads and a sewer connection. All that is missing is water.

The land is divided into lots 50 feet wide and 125 feet deep. Houses can be located near the street and spaced closely together, building the neighborhood and sense of community.

New moderately-priced housing has prime access to employment. The neighborhood is located between Easton and Port Columbus Airport and across Stelzer Road from the Citygate development. All three locations are large employment centers, allowing access to jobs without a car. Transit and future bicycle access along Stelzer Road makes non-automobile travel to work even easier.

Action 4

Work with the Franklin County Sanitary

Engineer's office and Treasurer's Office to return sewer-delinquent and tax-delinquent properties to productive use

Under the agreement to provide sewer service to Leonard Park, all residents were required to connect to the system and abandon their septic systems. For low-income households, Franklin County was able to use federal money to pay the \$3,000-plus tap-in fee. Some of the houses however, refused to connect and were not eligible for assistance. Some were owners of vacant houses who saw little need to pay a large sewer tap-in fee for an empty house without access to clean tap water.

As a result, after numerous warnings and efforts, Franklin County connected the houses, paid the tap-in fee and placed the charge on the residents' property tax bills. In turn, some of these owners have not paid their property tax bills and the houses lie vacant and abandoned. Efforts should be taken to foreclose quickly on absentee owners of dilapidated properties to return the land to productive use and allow the revitalization of Leonard Park to proceed.

Recommendations for Economic Growth

Goal C

Adopt land use and development regulations that will serve as a foundation for economic growth

Land use development regulations can lay a foundation for economic growth. Recommendations in this section intend to set common boundaries for the use and appearance of future development. The boundaries avoid over-regulation of individual properties; instead, they establish a foundation for individual and community-wide economic success.

Action 5

Provide areas for neighborhood-oriented retail and commerce-oriented uses in appropriate areas near Leonard Park

Retail uses help serve neighborhoods, and nearby neighborhoods help support retail businesses.



The intersection at Stelzer and Agler Roads should have retail uses to serve neighborhood residents and the large volume of auto traffic that travels along these roads. East of Agler Road, office uses should continue.

Figure 28
Proposed bikeways for the Leonard Park focus area

Goal D

Work with other jurisdictions for maximum mutual economic benefit

The economy in Franklin County and central Ohio transcends jurisdictional boundaries. In recent years, cities, villages and townships have worked with one another to lay a foundation for economic growth while ensuring fair distribution of resulting tax revenue. The planning area includes several areas with potential for shared economic prosperity. By working together, jurisdictions can realize long-term shared economic sustainability.

Action 6

Provide Columbus with input on future

History of Leonard Park

Leonard Park residents have no access to reliable, clean water. The subdivision was created with small lots in the 1920s. In the 1950s, as houses were built, instead of extending water lines under contract with Franklin County for unincorporated areas, Columbus began requiring annexation in exchange for access to water. Property owners in Leonard Park did not annex and instead relied on wells and septic systems. Wells provided reliable access to ground water and septic systems served the lightly-built area.

Interstate highway affects wells

Residents had been living in this quiet area for decades when the I-270 freeway was planned. Freeway planners located the route on the eastern edge of Leonard Park. As part of the construction, massive earth excavations changed the underground water flows. Residents noticed a drop in water pressure, but besides the freeway noise, little else changed.

By the 1980s, 10 years after the freeway was finished, Leonard Park residents began experiencing failing septic systems. The freeway that reduced their well productivity also prevented septic system liquid from having enough area to safely soak into the ground. Systems began failing and sewage backed up, causing a public health issue.

Access to sewer, but not water

Through an agreement between Columbus and the Franklin County Commissioners, Columbus agreed to allow Leonard Park residents access to the sewer system, but not the water, since wells were adequately functioning. Franklin County built sewer lines to connect residents to the sewer system and allowed them to abandon their failing septic systems. But the solution to one problem led to the worsening of another. In the effort to clean up the septic systems and install underground sewer lines, the barely-functioning

wells worsened. Water volume fell dramatically. The well water is undrinkable and even unsuitable for household chores—using the water for clothes washing left them with a brown tinge. The indoor plumbing is useful only for washing dishes and flushing toilets.

Residents physically retrieve each gallon of drinking water they use for their home. No one can wash clothes at home—they must take their clothes to a Laundromat. To ease the burden, Mifflin Township allows residents to bring large containers to its service building to fill up with water.



A Leonard Park resident fills his well with trucked-in water



A footbridge completes a never-built portion of Armuth Avenue



Figure 29
Leonard Park contains
over 300 vacant lots

Leonard Park development in exchange for access to water

In order to reassure Columbus that development in Leonard Park will occur in an agreeable manner, the township and county can offer Columbus the ability to jointly agree to development standards for Leonard Park redevelopment in exchange for water service. The agreement could be general or specific. The intent is to grant partial control to Columbus in exchange for allowing utility access.

The agreement could consist of a Memorandum of Understanding between Franklin County and Columbus or could be part of an annexation

agreement among the county, the township and the city.

New housing should adhere to urban design principles including:

- New buildings on single-width lots
- Front porches
- Retain the narrow roads to slow traffic
- Set aside an area for a park/community space
- Include universal design features

Natural resources should be protected by doing the following:

- Protecting the natural drainage ways
- Preserving mature trees

All images: Franklin County



Leonard Park homes

- Using storm water best management practices to handle runoff