



CURRENT CONDITIONS REPORT



Draft 8/22/2019



Franklin County
Board of Commissioners

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& PLANNING**



URBANCREST
COMMUNITY PLAN

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ABOUT THIS PLAN

Land use planning helps improve communities by empowering residents to collectively envision their future.

The planning process involves identifying current conditions, creating a vision for the future, and developing ways to achieve that future.

About the Urbancrest Community Plan

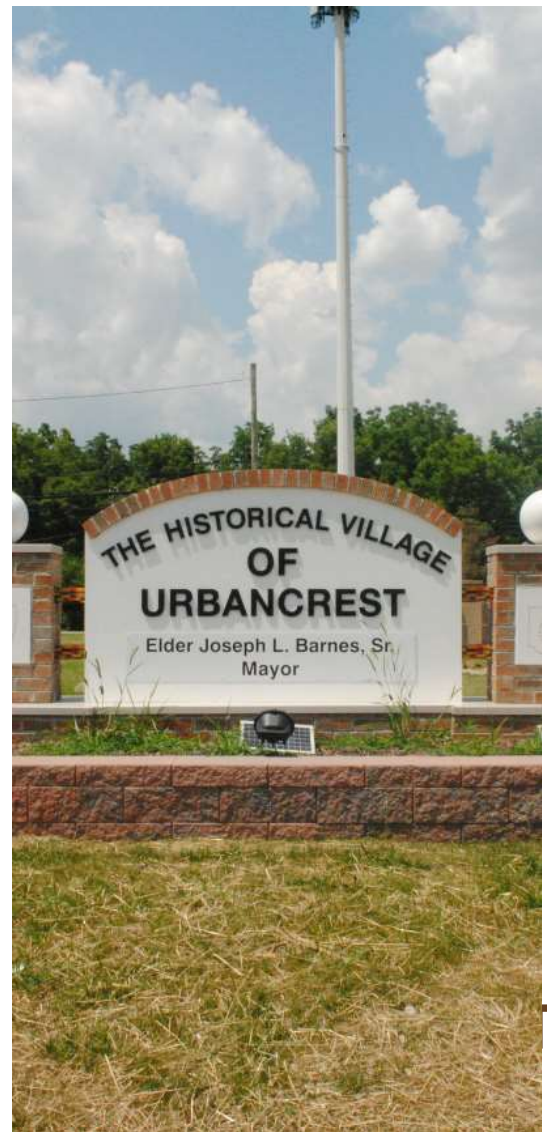
The Plan for the Village of Urbancrest includes three phases: current conditions and visioning, developing policies, and writing the plan. Three public meetings will be held during the planning process to ensure the Plan reflects the community's vision.

Current Conditions and Vision Report

This report is a product of information gathering from published data and stakeholder interviews. Data sources included the U.S. Census Bureau, ESRI and Franklin County. Draft vision statements were developed based on this data review and stakeholder input.

Next Steps

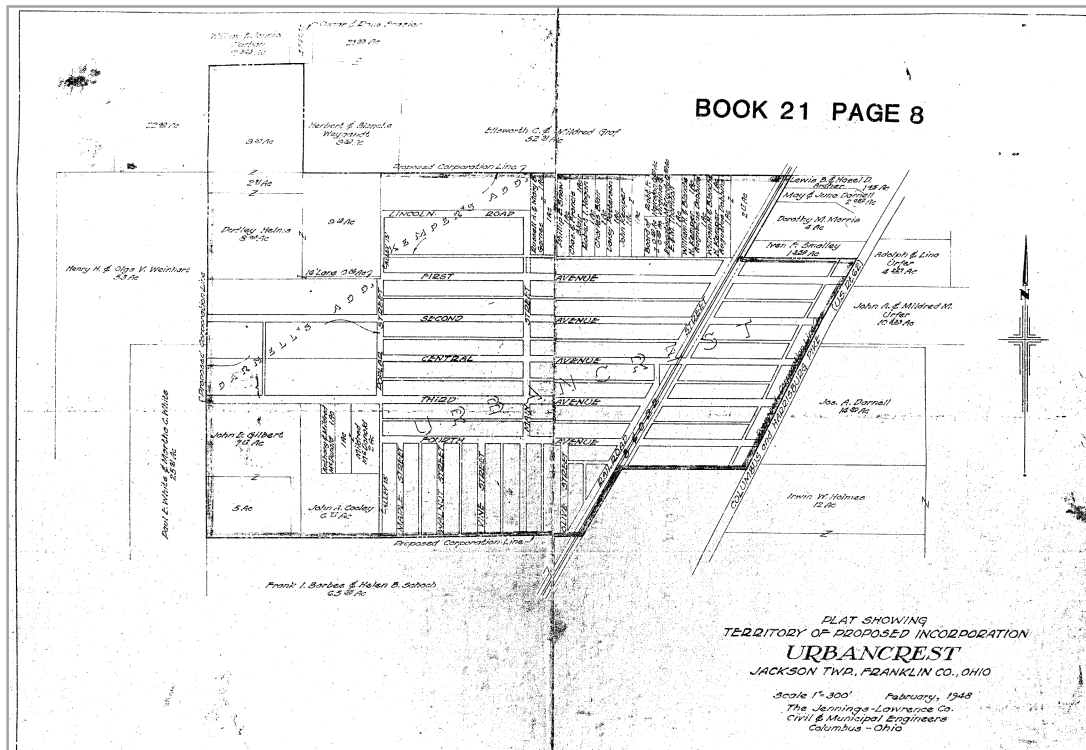
The project team will use the Current Conditions and Vision report as a basis for the remainder of the planning process. A public meeting will follow this report to gather further input on the current state of the Village of Urbancrest and confirm the vision statements.



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VILLAGE HISTORY



The land that now includes the Village of Urbancrest was platted in 1890 from 99.94 acres of land subdivided into 1,171 lots. An additional 33 acres of land was platted in 1923 and 1924 adjacent to the original platted area. Urbancrest was incorporated as a Village in 1948 with Eugene Seabury appointed as the first Village mayor.

An additional 173 acres has been annexed to the Village since its original incorporation as a Village in 1948 for a total land area of approximately 306 acres today.

The Village has a strong African-American history which includes Ellen Craig-Jones having been the first African-American woman to be elected mayor of a municipality in Ohio, and possibly in the nation, in 1972. The Village has had a total of 11 mayors.

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EXISTING PLANS REVIEW



OVERVIEW

The Current Conditions and Vision Report includes research of relevant documents. It is essential to understand other planning documents in the area so the goals for development patterns can blend well with those ultimately created for Urbancrest.

The research included in this Section includes area and topical plan reviews. Topical plans address a certain issue throughout the County, while area plans make specific recommendations for a certain local geography.

Topical Plans

Various public and nonprofit entities have produced topic specific plans in recent years. Each of these topical plans aim to address large-scale, community-wide issues. These issues include: affordable housing, poverty, food access, infant mortality, energy use, incentive programs, sustainability and resiliency, and population growth. Land use and transportation decisions made at the local level can help to address these issues. The plans below have been reviewed and applicable plan recommendations will be incorporated in the Urbancrest Community Plan project.

- Franklin County Poverty Study
- Columbus and Franklin County Joint Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (2019)
- Franklin County Economic Development Strategic Plan (2019)

- Celebrate One (2017)
- Franklin County Energy Study (2018)
- MORPC Insight 2050 (2015)
- COTA 2019-2024 Strategic Plan
- MORPC Corridor Concepts (2019)
- Columbus and Franklin County Local Food Action Plan (2016)
- Columbus Climate Adaptation Plan 2018

Area Plans

Area plans from municipalities surrounding the Village were reviewed in order to inform the Urbancrest Community plan process. Applicable area plans included the Southwest Area Plan (2009), Jackson Township Comprehensive Plan (2010), and the Grove City 2050 Community Plan (2018). This research allows us to better understand the future land use, transportation needs, infrastructure improvements, and other recommendations for the areas directly surrounding Urbancrest. Reviewing these plans will help guide recommendations for The Urbancrest Community Plan and allow for cohesive, complementary development in the area.

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PEOPLE AND HOUSING

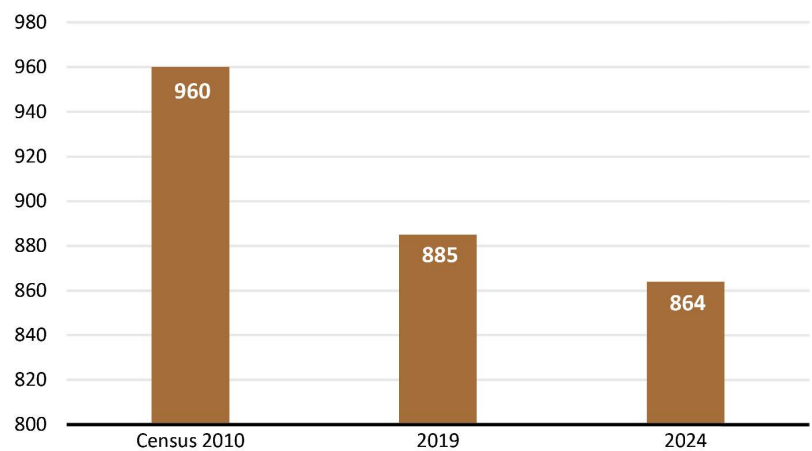


PEOPLE

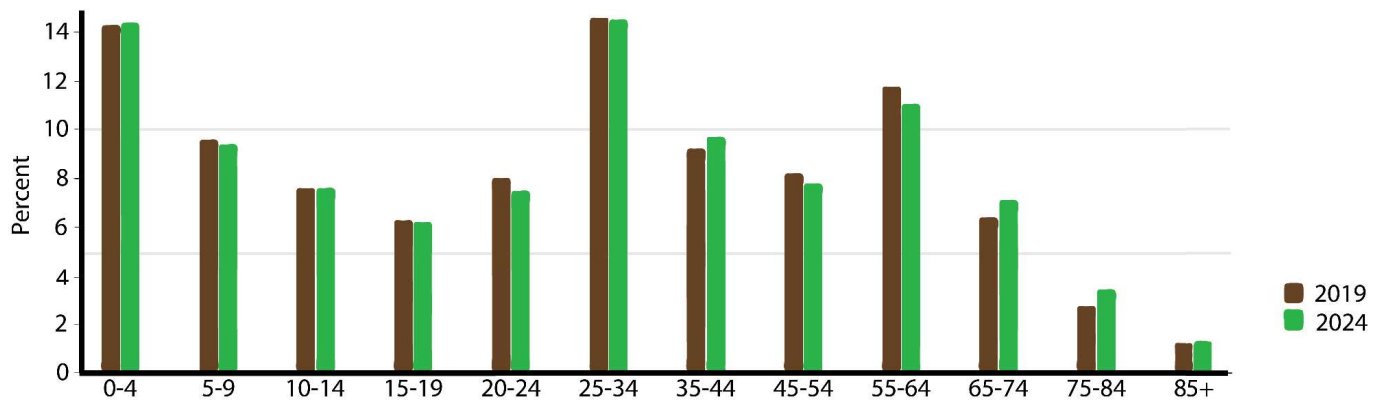
Population: The Village of Urbancrest's population was 960 in 2010. Data from ESRI and the Census project a 9 percent decrease in population from 2010 to 2024. This is in contrast to the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's Insight 2050 estimates that show the Central Ohio Region growing by as many as one-million people by the year 2050.

Age: Approximately 14 percent of the total population are children 4 years old and under, and an additional 14 percent are adults ages 25-34. The 2024 population projections show a less than 1 percent average change among all age groups.

PROJECTED POPULATION



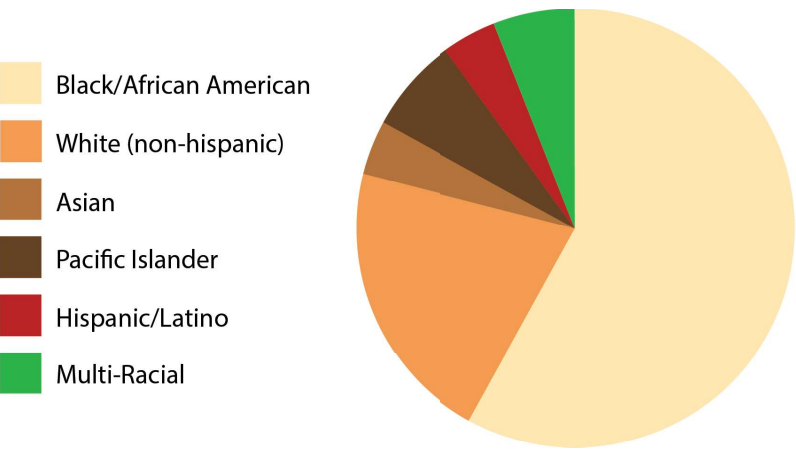
POPULATION AGE TRENDS



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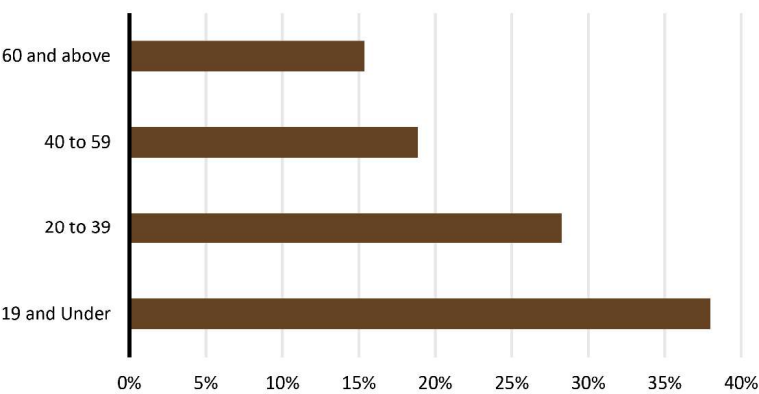
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RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS



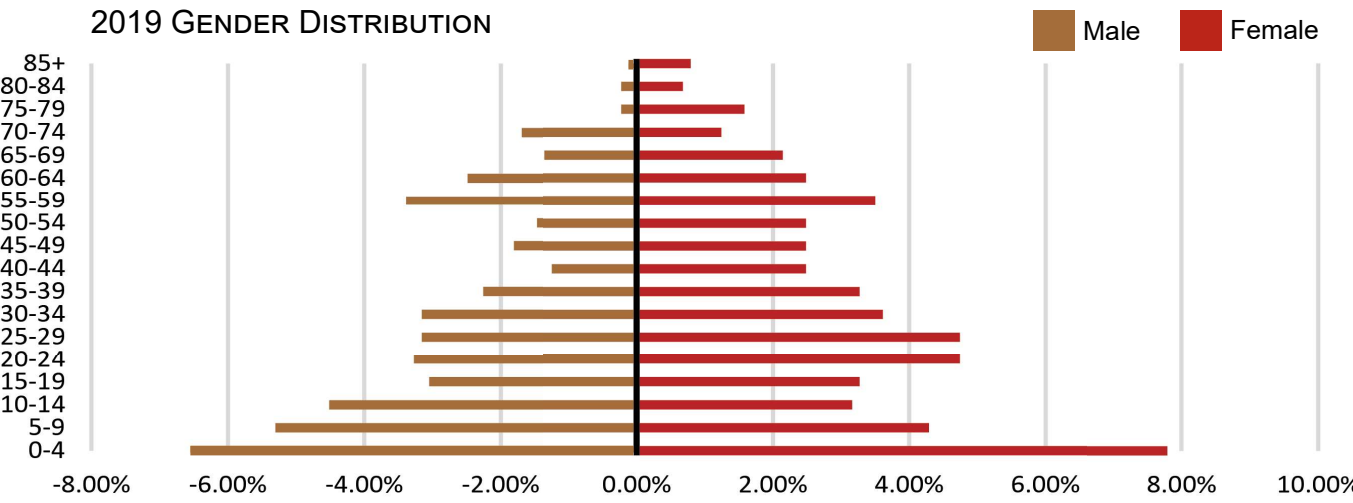
Race: The Village’s racial make-up has historically had a higher percentage of African-Americans than all other racial groups, which is projected to continue into 2024. Currently, African-Americans make up approximately 58 percent of the total Village population; the white population being the second largest demographic group with nearly 23 percent.

POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION



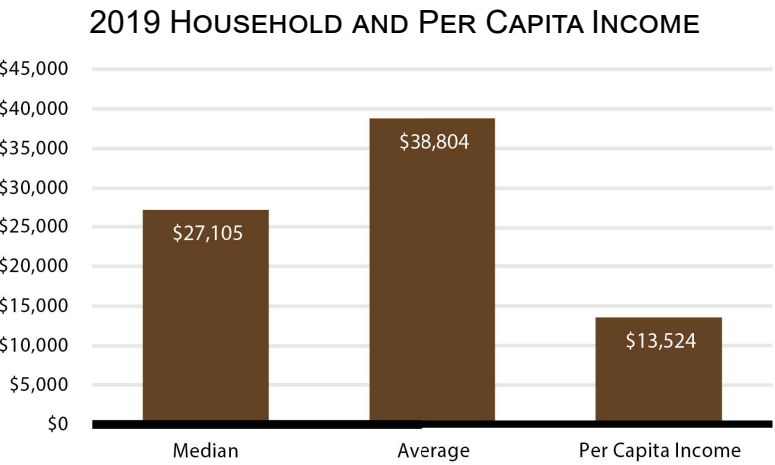
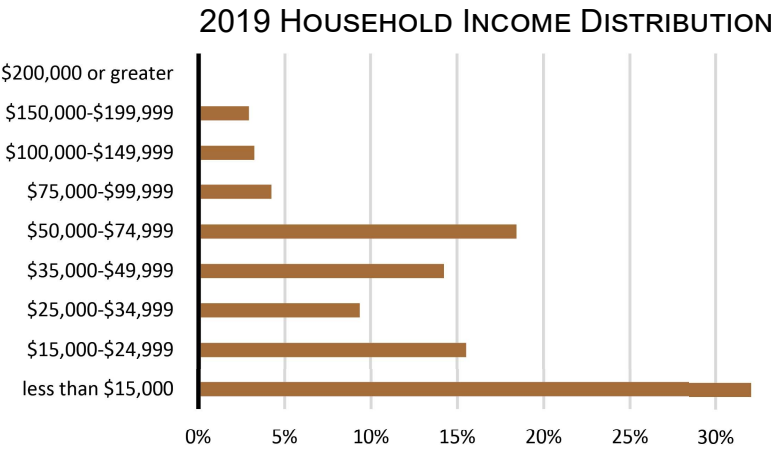
Age/Gender: The Village has a unique age breakdown with the largest age group being 19 and under according to census data. There are more women than men in the Village and, on average, women tend to be younger. There is also a large group of residents at or near retirement age, which means the Village is in the unique position of having many young children as well as a large aging cohort in its population.

2019 GENDER DISTRIBUTION



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Income: The average household income of residents is \$38,804, which is less than the national average of approximately \$59,000 and the Ohio average of approximately \$54,000. Approximately one-third of households in Urbancrest earn less than \$15,000 per year. However, the second largest group of households in the Village earn between \$50,000 and \$74,900 per year.



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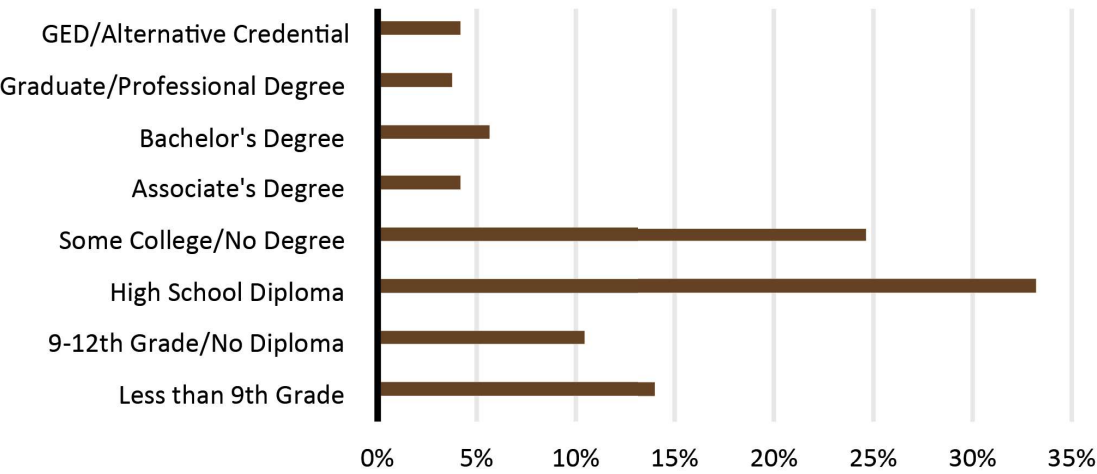
Marital Status: Of the 605 residents that are 15 years of age or older, 49 percent have never been married, 37 percent have been married, and 14 percent are either divorced or widowed.

Education: Of the 479 residents that are of the age to receive a high school diploma or higher education, 25 percent did not graduate high school, 33 percent received a high school diploma or GED and 42 percent received higher education.

2019 MARITAL STATUS



2019 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

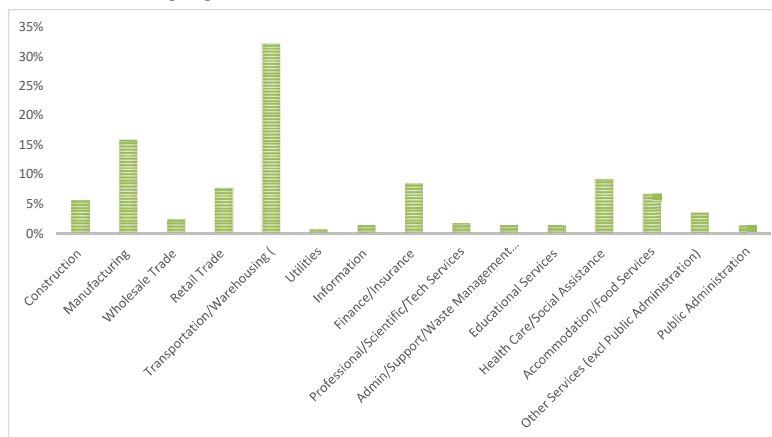


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Employment: The unemployment rate for the Village is 2 percent and the primary fields of employment are transportation/warehousing and manufacturing. Census data indicates that 50 percent of employed residents travel outside of the Village for employment.

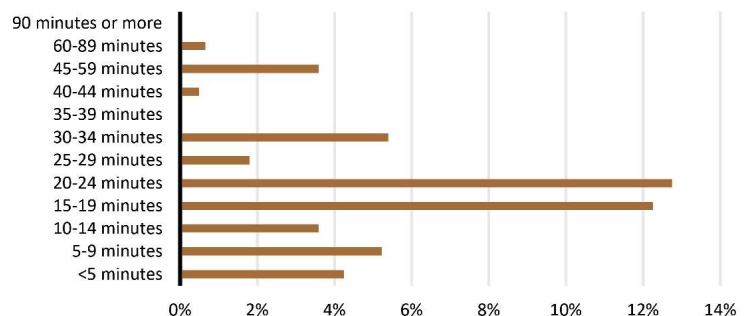
Businesses: Census data indicates that 53 businesses operate in the Village and these businesses employ 1,374 workers. The Wholesale Trade and Manufacturing industries employ the most people.

2019 LABOR FORCE BY INDUSTRY



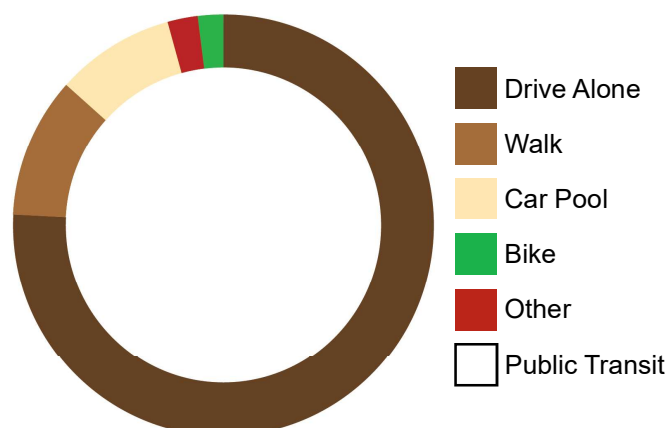
Commutes to Work: The average commute time to work for residents is just over 19 minutes. Fifty percent of residents commute for between 15 and 24 minutes and another 16 percent commute for less than 15 minutes. This is significantly lower than the national average commute time of over 26 minutes.

JOURNEY TO WORK



Means of Transportation: The vast majority of Urbancrest residents, 75.8 percent, drive by themselves as their primary means of transportation to work. Walking is the next highest percentage of commuting to work at 10.8 percent and carpooling accounts for 9.2 percent. While the data suggests no residents use public transit as a mode of transportation, it was brought up as a viable option by many stakeholders.

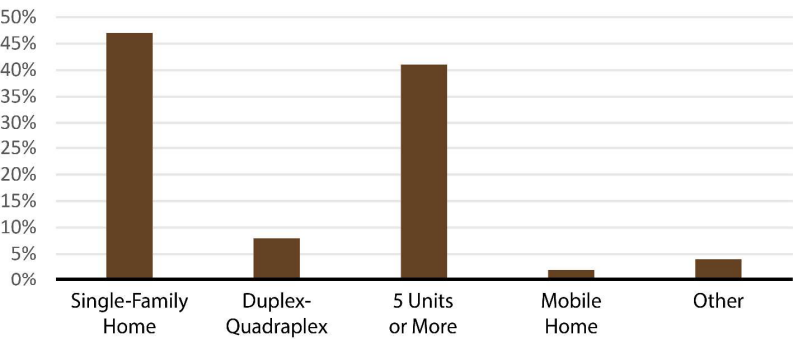
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION



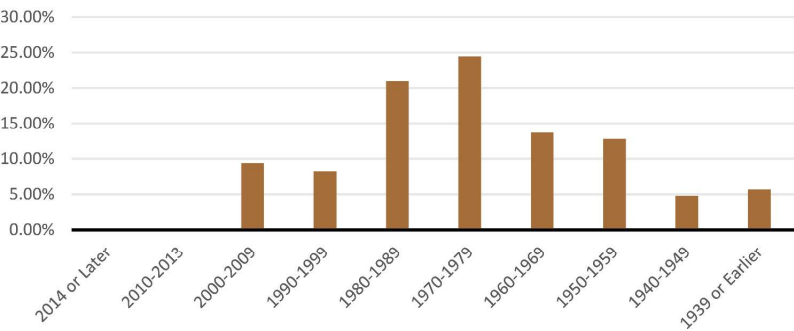
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HOUSING BY TYPE



HOUSING BY YEAR BUILT



HOUSING

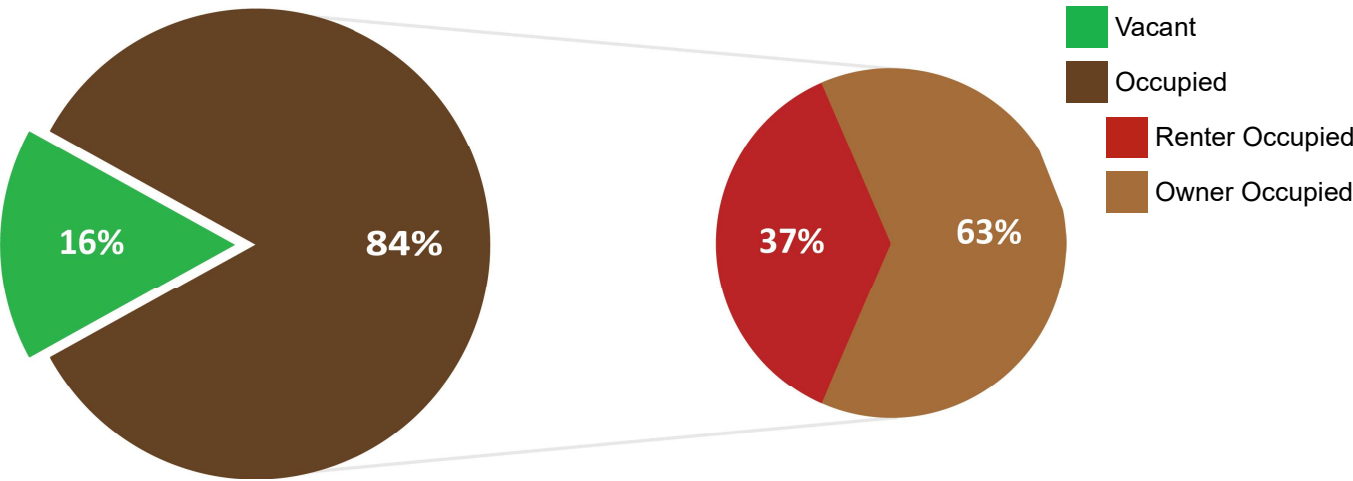
Housing Stock: There are 438 total housing units in the Village. 48 percent are single-family homes, while 42 percent include buildings with 5-units or more. Approximately 16 percent of all housing units are vacant, while 84 percent are occupied. The Franklin County vacancy rate is approximately 9 percent.

Housing Age: Approximately 61 percent of the housing stock in the Village was built in 1979 or earlier. Census estimates indicate that no new homes were built between 2010 and 2017. However, Franklin County building permit data shows 3 permits were issued for new homes in 2016 and 2017.

Based on the percentage of homes built prior to 1979 there is a high likelihood of lead within the Village's housing stock.

Occupancy: Of the occupied housing units, 63 percent are renter occupied, while 37 percent are owner occupied. This is likely attributable to the Bending Brook apartment complex that skews the data toward a high percentage of rental units.

VACANCY RATES AND OCCUPANCY BREAKDOWN



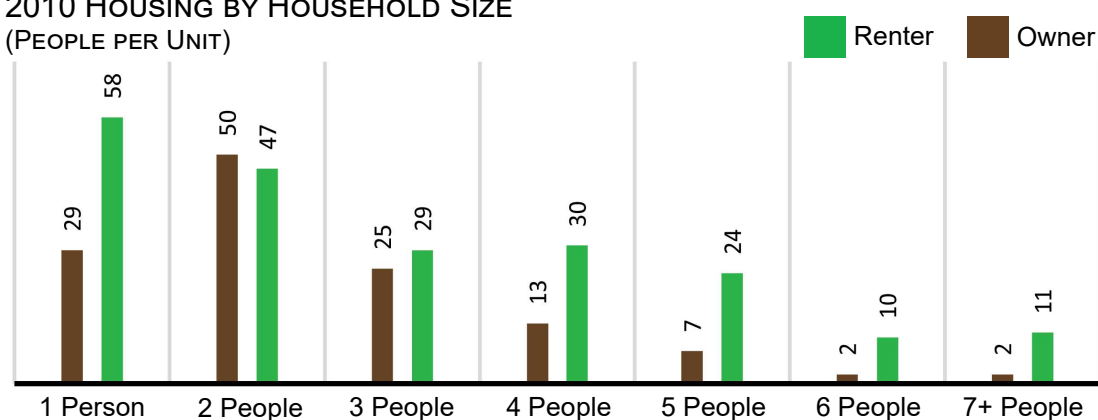
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Housing Market Study: In 2019 a housing market study was commissioned by the Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation (COCIC). This study focused on the housing market within the Urbancrest Primary Market Area (PMA). The study, prepared by Vogt Strategic Insights, describes the number and type of housing units that the the Primary Market Area can support. The Primary Market Area extends well beyond the boundaries of Urbancrest and includes an area of approximately 52 square miles, the Village is 0.49 square miles in size. The study describes the number of units that can be absorbed into the local community, expressed in terms of Area Median Household Income (AMHI). Area Median Household Income is a statistic dictated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the relationship between housing price and an individual's income. The table belows shows the potential market demand for housing to the year 2023 in the Primary Market Area.

Potentially Supportable New Housing Units – 2023 Conclusions				
Housing Type and Targeted Age	Targeted Household Size	Minimum Income	Maximum Income	Supportable Units
Affordable For-Sale Homes (\$250,000 and Under) (30% to 120% AMHI)	All Sizes	\$40,000	\$111,000	Up to 40 Homes
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Apartments (30% to 80% AMHI)	1-through 5-Person Renter Households	\$18,000	\$74,000	~ 170 – 250 Units
Affordable “Workforce” Apartments (80% to 120% AMHI)	1-through 5-Person Renter Households	\$48,000	\$111,000	~ 85 – 130 Units
Senior (Age 55+) Low Income Housing Tax Credit Apartments (30% to 80% AMHI)	1 & 2 Person Renter Households	\$16,500	\$55,000	~ 70 – 110 Units
Senior (Age 55+) Affordable Apartments (80% to 120% AMHI)	1- & 2-Person Renter Households	\$40,000	\$82,000	~ 60 – 90 Units

Household Size: The average household size in the Village is 2.85 people. This is slightly higher than the Franklin County and National averages of 2.38 and 2.58, respectively. It is important to note, however, that several stakeholders indicated that multi-generational families are common in Urbancrest, especially in neighboring houses.

2010 HOUSING BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE
(PEOPLE PER UNIT)



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LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION



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CURRENT LAND USE



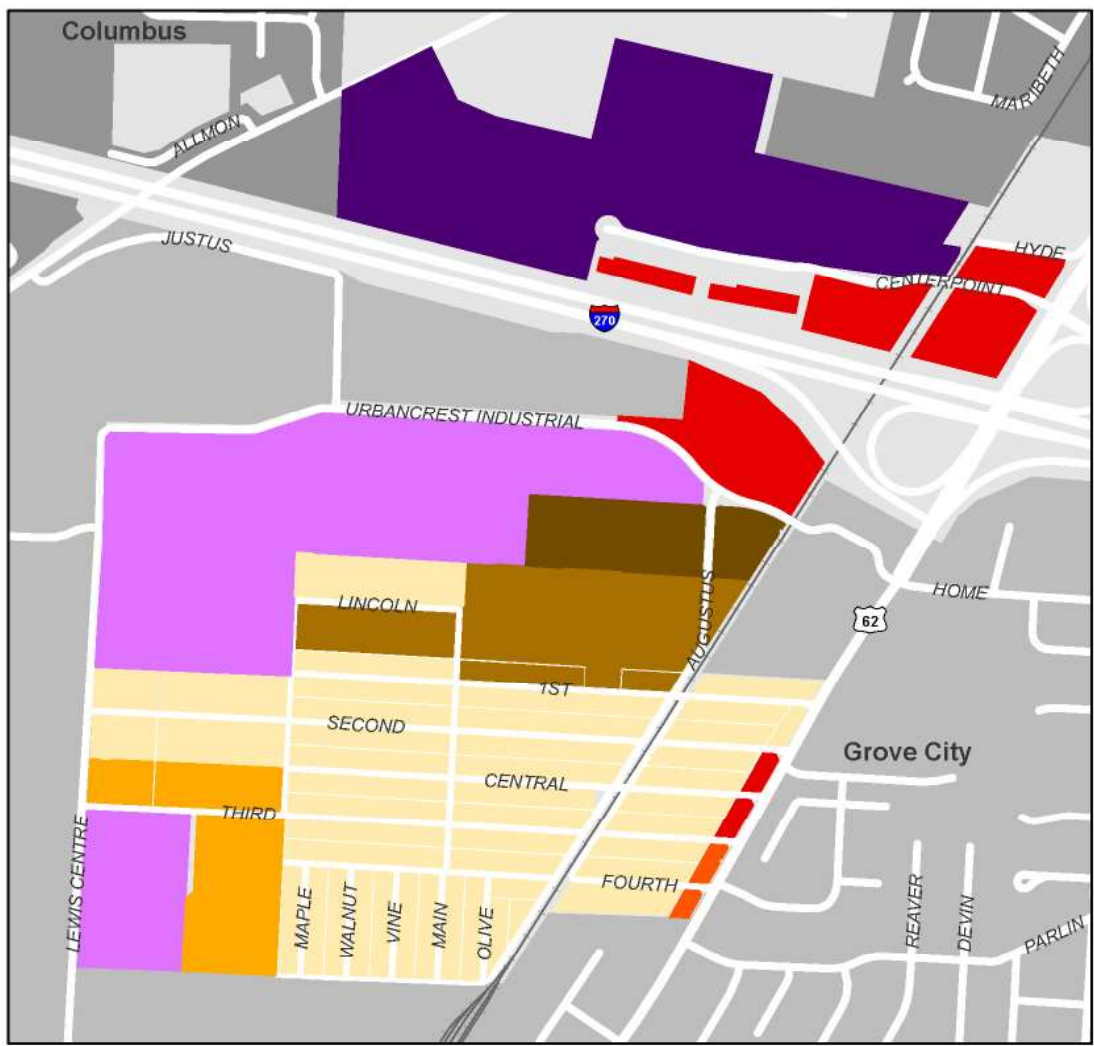
Current Land Use

- Commercial
- Industrial and Office
- Institutional
- Parks and Recreation
- Residential

The current generalized land uses in the Village are shown in the map above. Land in the Village has been developed predominantly for residential and industrial purposes. Commercial uses exist along Broadway and Centerpoint Drive.

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ZONING



Zoning

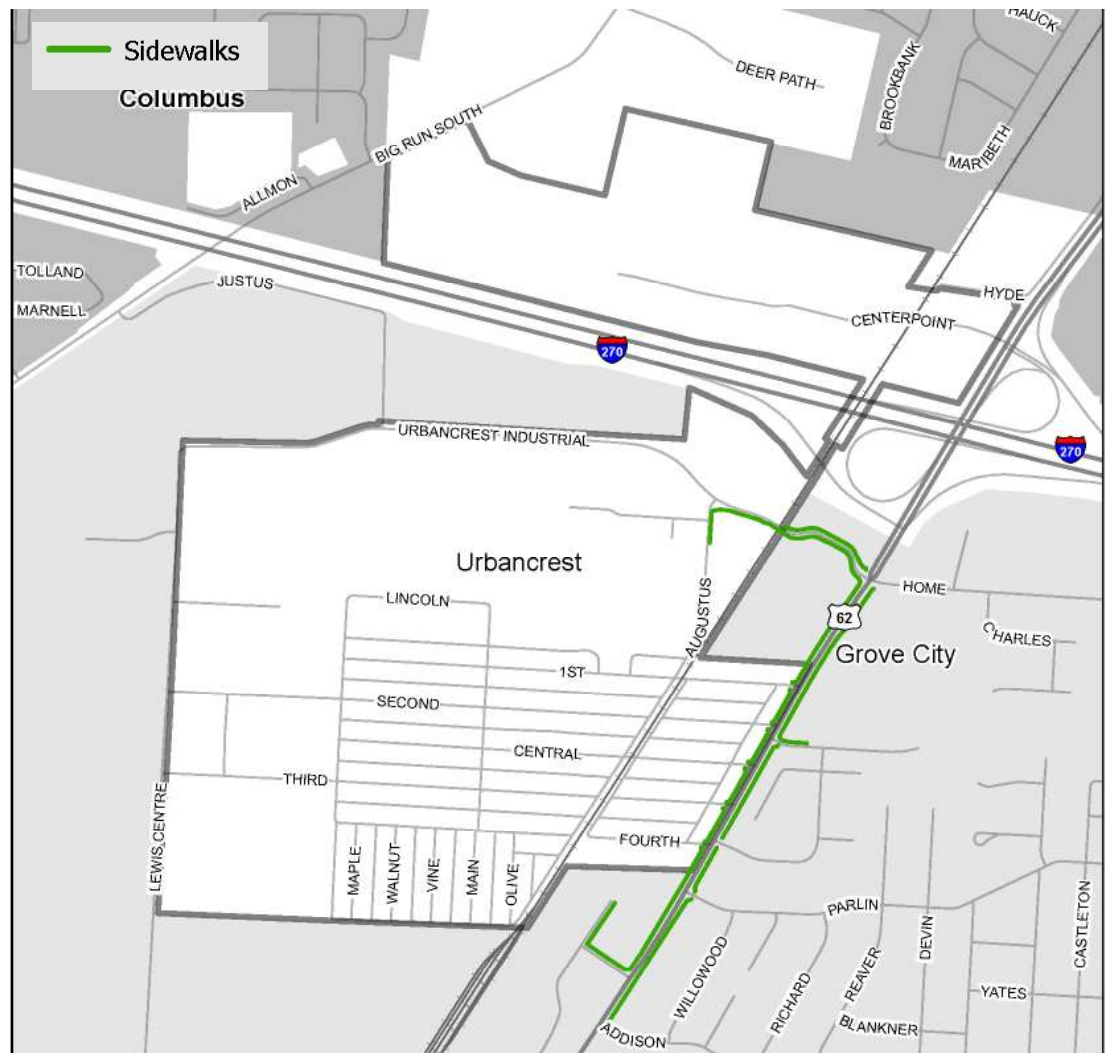
- C-1
- C-2
- I-1
- I-2
- R-1
- R-2
- R-3
- R-4

The map above shows the generalized zoning in the Village. Existing zoning tells us how land can currently be used and, therefore, is considered when making recommendations for future land uses. Comparing the existing zoning and current land use maps together, it appears as though there is little to no discrepancy in how land is being used and how it can legally be used.

For a community of its size, Urbancrest has a significant amount of land area zoned for Industrial and Commercial uses. This can benefit the Village by generating tax revenue, providing places of employment for residents, and providing places for businesses to operate that serve the everyday needs of residents.

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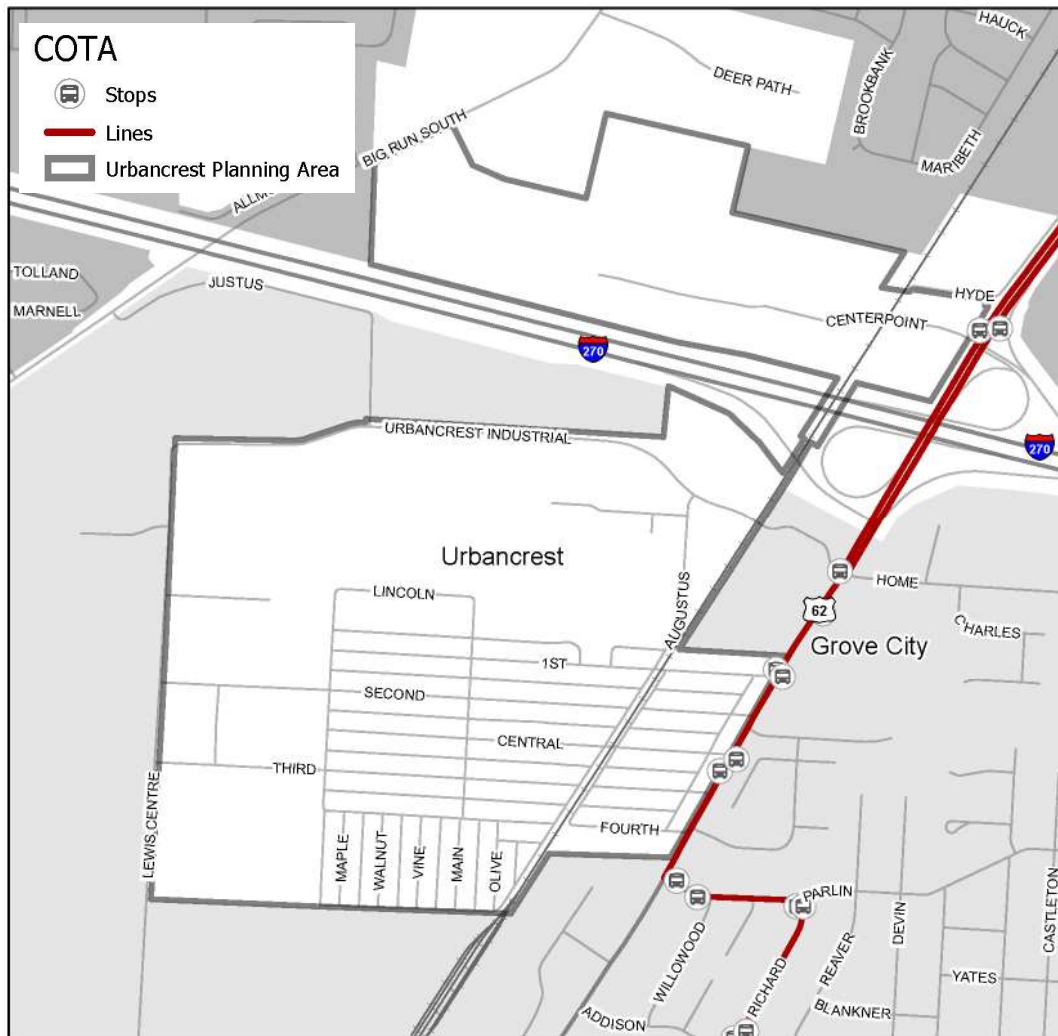
SIDEWALKS



Sidewalks serve important functions for communities. Sidewalks promote physical activity, present an affordable and safe transportation option for those that do not drive, and encourage community interaction. The map above shows the presence of sidewalks (shown in green) along Broadway and portions of Urbancrest Industrial Drive. No sidewalks are present elsewhere in the Village. A lack of sidewalks in the residential area forces residents to walk on the streets or drive to their destinations.

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ROADS AND TRANSIT



The planning area has easy access to major highways. Interstate 270 bisects the north side of the Village, with on and off ramps for east and west bound interstate traffic.

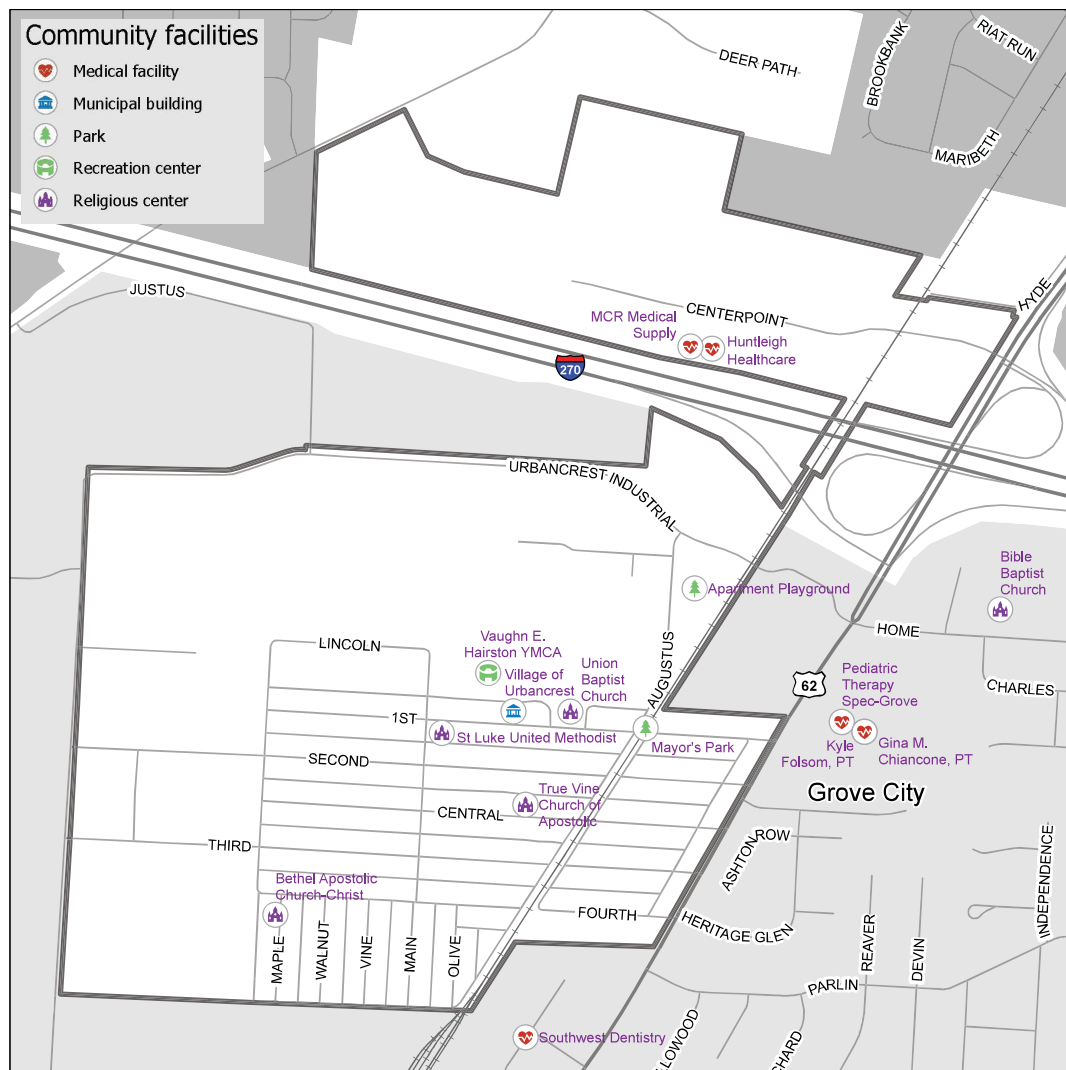
The Village streets are primarily low-speed, Village maintained roadways providing access to single-family and multi-family homes. These streets are uncurbed, open ditch roadways. Urbancrest Industrial Drive and Centerpoint Drive primarily serve industrial uses.

COTA bus line 3 runs from Grove City through Urbancrest along Broadway to downtown Columbus and eventually to Upper Arlington. There are bus stops along Broadway within walking distance for residents.

The CSX Rail Line runs just west of and parallel to Broadway. First and Central Avenues cross the railroad and have new crossing gates and lights.

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES



The Village has a number of religious institutions, and a few parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, the Village recently constructed a pavilion for community events.

There are no hospitals or urgent care facilities in the Village however there is a Mount Carmel primary healthcare facility located less than a mile south of the Village on Broadway.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development is a set of programs and policies that promote the economic well-being and quality of life of a community's residents. This is accomplished by strengthening relationships between public and private actors, using targeted tax incentives and public financing tools, and strategically investing to improve the wealth and economic security of the community.

One incentive the Village has used is a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program that allows local governments to exempt the increased value of property improvements from the property's taxes. Increasingly communities have begun using CRA programs to encourage businesses to locate in a community so that the community can increase its tax revenue. However, the original purpose of these programs was to encourage reinvestment in communities through residential and community improvements.

The entire Village became a CRA in 1996, and in 2002, the Village expanded the CRA to include 92 acres of land north of Interstate 270.

The Village's CRA offers the following tax exemptions:

- Residential – Up to 50% tax exemption for up to 5 years for the new construction and/or remodeling of residential buildings containing no more than 2 housing units.
- Commercial and Industrial – Up to 100% tax exemption for up to 15 years for the new construction or remodeling of commercial and industrial facilities, to be negotiated on a case-by case basis.

The Village currently has 17 active CRA Agreements for commercial and industrial projects: 7 will expire at the end of 2020, 8 will expire at the end of 2022, 1 will expire in 2026, and 1 will expire in 2030.

Not enough information is available about these Agreements at this time to evaluate the performance of the Village's CRA program.

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STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



The project team interviewed over 20 members of the public including residents, business representatives, Planning Commission members, Village Council Members and other local leaders. This section includes the highlights of those interviews categorized into major themes. These themes, which are included in the following pages, will be used to create preliminary Vision Statements that capture the community's desires for the future of the Village. The three major themes are: Community Development, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Parks and Recreation.

Community Development: Stakeholders stated that they would prefer to see a majority of single-family residences in the interior of the Village. Some also stated that there may be potential for duplexes or townhomes located near Broadway or east of the railroad tracks. There was a large consensus around the need for additional senior living facilities so that residents are able to age in place.

Stakeholders almost universally agree that there is potential for commercial development or additional stores and shops along Broadway. Specific land uses identified as being desirable included a community grocery store, a restaurant, and other small businesses that would serve the residents of the Village. Some stakeholders also mentioned that properties fronting on Broadway would support multi-story development with a mix of small businesses and residential

development.

Stakeholders agreed that the community could do a better job coming together. There is a sense that not enough residents are engaged in the affairs of the Village. People need to be better informed about their community and the Village needs to encourage greater involvement of residents. A sense of community and sense of place are greatly desired.

Transportation and Infrastructure: Stakeholders stated that vehicle travel through the Village is not complicated, especially in the center of the Village, due to the grid pattern. Most truck traffic is to service the industrial and commercial facilities on Urbancrest Industrial Drive or Centerpoint Drive.

COTA service used to come through the Village but no longer does. Stakeholders overwhelming agreed that bus service would be good for Village residents. COTA is currently working on a pilot program that includes a shuttle to and from certain bus stops and locations in Grove City. This service is currently not available in Urbancrest, but several stakeholders expressed interest.

Most stakeholders discussed the need for infrastructure improvements, both public and private. On the private side, stakeholders mentioned blighted housing, ash tree removal, and unkept yards as issues. The public improvement issues brought up by stakeholders were often wide-ranging. Conversations included sidewalks, road pavement,

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cross-walks, and public safety items (including increased presence from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office).

Sidewalks are a somewhat contentious issue among stakeholders. Of the stakeholders interviewed, roughly half were in favor while half opposed or thought sidewalks would be too expensive. Those in favor stated that sidewalks were needed for safety and convenience (especially because speeding and running stop signs were mentioned as issues in the Village). Stakeholders who opposed sidewalks stated, in some cases, that they would be too expensive, while others did not want sidewalks to encroach on people's front yards. Several stakeholders also mentioned a need for cross-walks due to safety concerns, especially along or near Broadway.

A few stakeholders stated that pavement and road maintenance were needed in the Village, however there is also a sense that this issue has gotten better in the recent past.

Parks and Recreation: There are mixed feelings about the available parks and recreation facilities in the Village. Some stakeholders say the Village needs more parks and green space, although recent progress has been made. Others say that there is already enough. Mixed feelings also exist with regard to the YMCA. Some stakeholders feel that it serves the Village well, while others feel that the YMCA could do more, especially for residents. Other stakeholders mentioned that the YMCA already has discounts available to Urbancrest residents and provides summer camp and a food pick-up program. Almost all stakeholders said that the YMCA and the Village could work together to help solve problems.

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VISION STATEMENTS

Vision statements describe the desired future for the community related to how land is used, what new development and redevelopment looks like, how people get around, and how the community builds pride and a sense of community.

The draft Vision statements presented here are based on the information gathered and presented in this document. These statements will be presented for public feedback and will change based on that feedback.

Vision statements are grouped into the same three themes used in the Stakeholder Interviews on the previous pages.



Vision for Community Development

Land Uses: Land uses that support and respect current areas, the country feel and quiet neighborhoods, and vibrant mixed-use areas where appropriate.

This vision promotes confidence that the character of an area will not dramatically change while allowing development in strategic locations to support the residents of the Village and nearby areas.

Quality of Development: Commercial development should complement existing land uses and promote economic vitality while respecting people-friendly design standards.

This vision will ensure that future commercial uses are strategically developed and are meant to best serve the local residents.

Sense of Community: Nurture a sense of place by creating visual appeal that builds on the Village's strong history, while bringing residents together to foster a sense of shared responsibility in the Village's future.

This vision will bring people together while simultaneously creating pride in their community.

Housing: A variety of housing options for residents to choose a home that best meets their needs while allowing seniors to age in their communities.

Vision for Transportation and Infrastructure

Transit: A network offering frequent bus service and sufficient destinations, especially job centers.

This vision will ensure that there are appropriate transportation opportunities for those who do not drive.

Walking: A safe and well maintained network for those who do not drive and for those who want to walk around the Village.

This vision promotes safety, a healthy lifestyle and community interaction.

Vision for Parks and Recreation

Parks: Sufficient parks and green space for all residents.

Recreation: Sufficient recreation activities and programs that are available to all and bring people together.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



The Project Team thanks the following people and groups for input and assistance with the Urbancrest Community Plan Current Conditions and Vision Report.

Village Council

Steve Larkins
Deborah Larkins-Jackson
Shawn Moore
Alicia Skinner
Henry Warr
Alicia Wiggins

Mayor

Elder Joseph L. Barnes

Local Stakeholders

Kathy Thimmes
Gretchen Carpenter
Pastor Sullens
Ray Dalton
Lisa Burlison
Donna Bogue
Carl Smith

Working Committee Members

Elder Mayor Joseph L. Barnes
Randall Bogue
Derek Combs
Edward Cooley
Tashea Holmes
Kantina Hughes
Abdi Issa
Brad Johnson
Kim Jordan
Steve Larkins
Saundra Saunders
Lester Scott
Curtiss Williams
Vera Ziglar-Zimmerman