

Community Committee Meeting 3

July 15, 2025

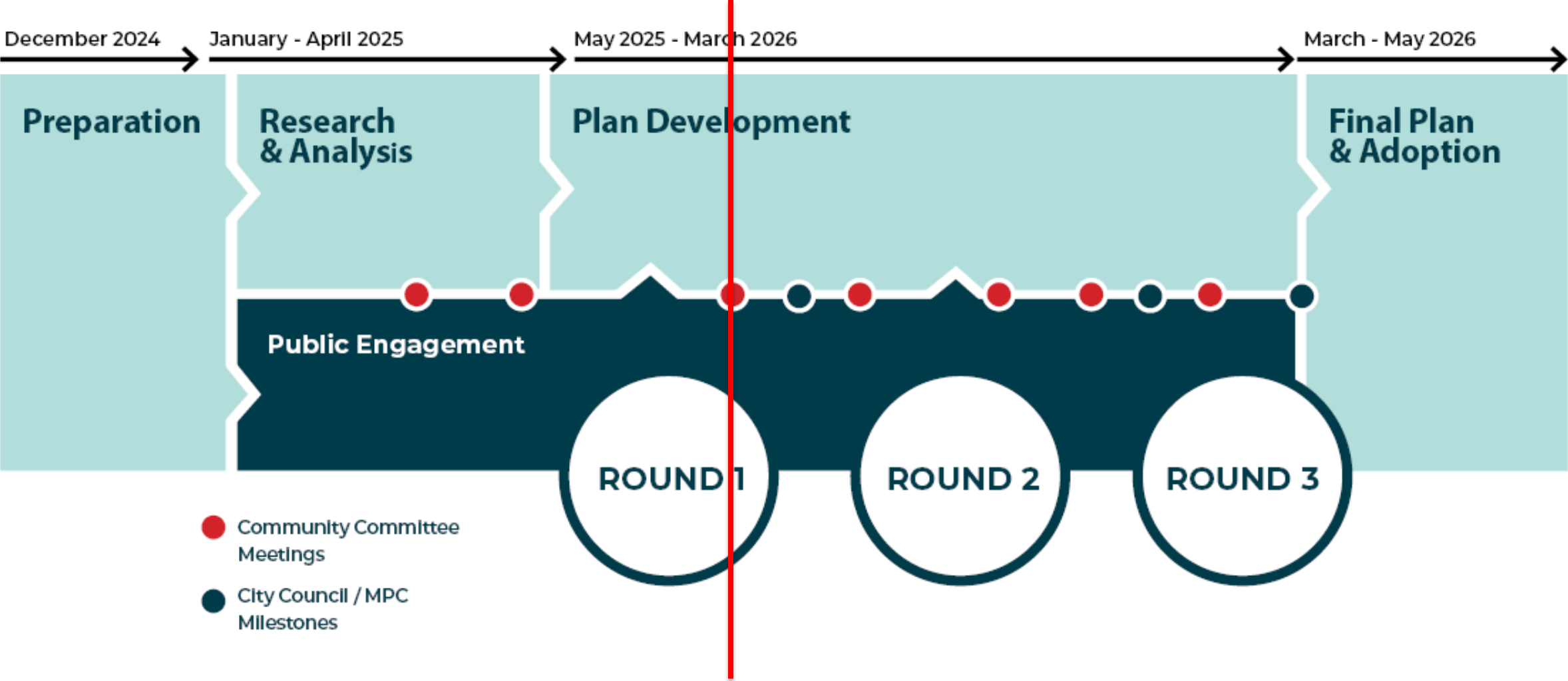


Agenda

1. Dinner
2. Welcome and process update
3. Highlights of conditions and trends
4. Update on public input round 1
5. Introduction to focus areas
6. Next steps

Welcome and Process Update

Process Overview



Speaker Series



Central Ohio Today:
Understanding a Period of
Incredible Growth & Change
By Michael Wilkos

July 23 | 6 p.m.

McConnell Arts Center
777 Evening Street

Purpose

- Inform the community about trends and forces shaping the region and the city.
- Learn from other communities.
- Help frame discussions about policies for Worthington.

Topics

1. Regional change with a focus on housing
2. Local government focus (creating quality places, panel)
3. Private development focus (plan/project implementation)

Highlights of Conditions and Trends

Contents

1. Overview

2. People

3. Places (Land Use and Character)

4. Housing

5. Transportation and Infrastructure

6. Economic Development

7. Parks, Natural Resources, and Sustainability

**Included in
Part 1**

Part 2

Questions for Consideration

1. What questions about the community's future does this information raise for you?
2. What else would you like to know about as we consider potential future policies?

We will come back to these questions at the end.

Housing

Connection to Vision Worthington



Worthington is a Diverse and Equitable Community.



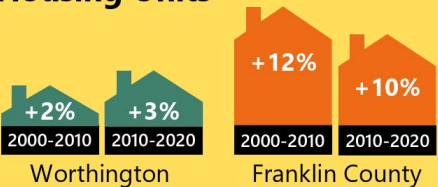
Worthington Offers a High Quality of Life.

CITY OF WORTHINGTON, OH HOUSING ASSESSMENT

May 2024

In response to increased housing demand, the City of Worthington commissioned this housing assessment to measure the conditions and needs of residents, the workforce, and aspiring residents of the city. Its goal is to frame strategy conversations to address these needs, informing a Comprehensive Plan Update and specific Housing Strategy development.

Limited Development of New Housing Units

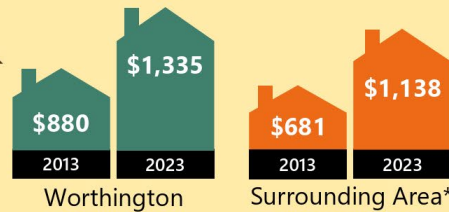


Median Home Prices are 40% Higher Than the County

	Worthington	Franklin County
2022	\$425,000	\$280,000
2023	\$420,000	\$299,000
% Change	-1.2%	+6.8%

Prices appear to be leveling off

Rents are 17% Higher Than the Surrounding Area



36%

of renters are cost-burdened (spending over 30% of their income on housing)

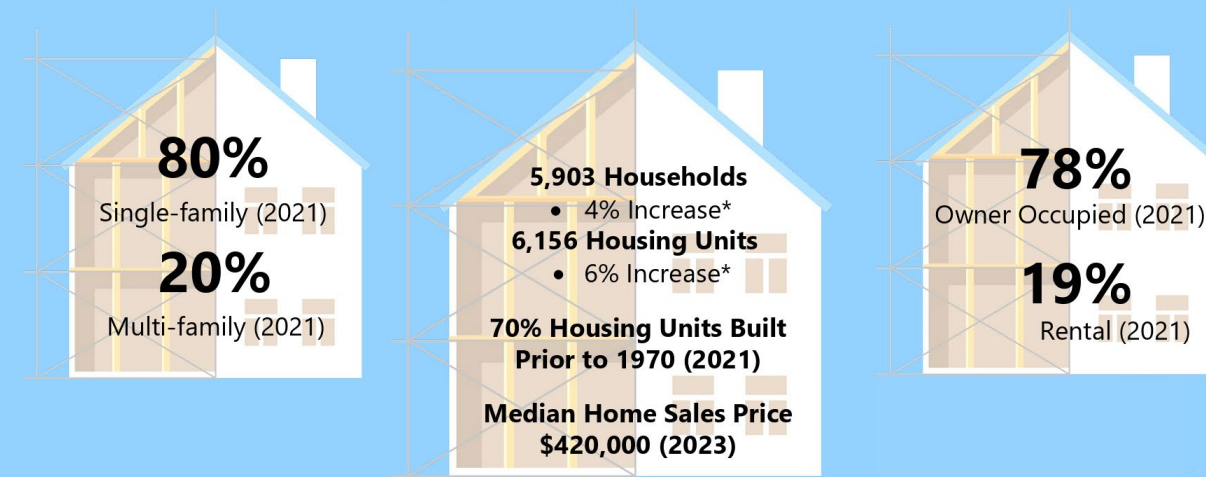
53%

of senior renters are cost-burdened

* Includes the following zip codes: 43085, 43202, 43214, 43220, 43221, 43224, 43229, and 43235



Worthington Housing Stock Demographics



* From 2000 to 2023

Public Survey

Top Housing Concerns: Price, Taxes, and Low Inventory



73%

of 676 survey respondents feel that the City of Worthington should be involved in assisting with housing goals

The Housing Needs Assessment also included a menu of strategies to consider.

[Housing Needs Assessment](#)

Our region is not building enough housing to support the recent and projected population growth.

THE NEED:



The Columbus Region needs to build **1 house for every 1 job** to accommodate growth and make up for our insufficient housing supply.

THE REALITY:



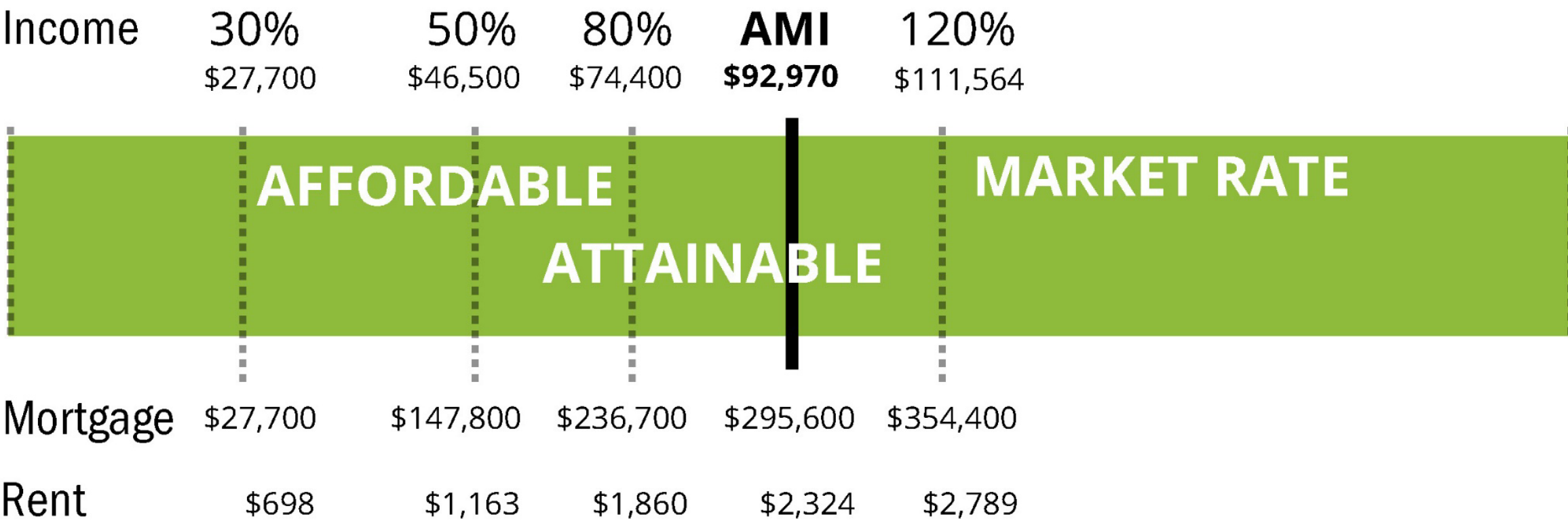
The Columbus Region only builds **1 house for every 2.5 jobs**.

Graphics from The Columbus Housing Strategy (2022)

Worthington's Housing Need

- The Housing Needs Assessment (2024) determined there may be demand for 2,000 units in Worthington.
- **Need for additional housing in Worthington exceeds land availability. Half of the housing need is for "affordable housing".**

What is affordable in the Columbus MSA? (for a 3-person household)



Economic Profile

Connection to Vision Worthington

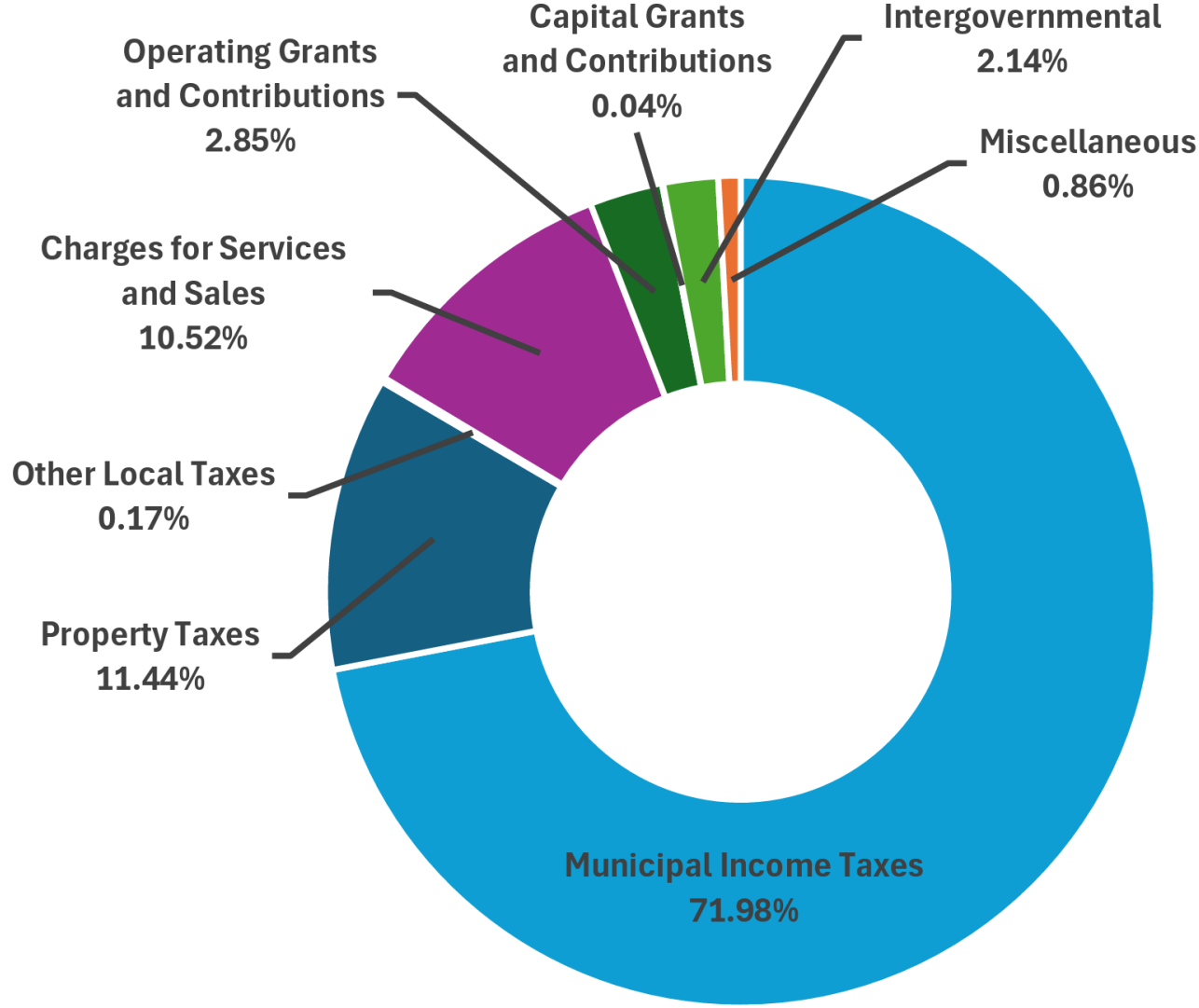


Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient.

Why are jobs important for the city?

- Income tax makes up over 70% of the city's revenue
- Income tax collections were flat until 2020, but have accelerated post-COVID
- Working from home could be a potential source
- Collections have grown by 49% in the last decade, faster than employment growth, indicating higher wages

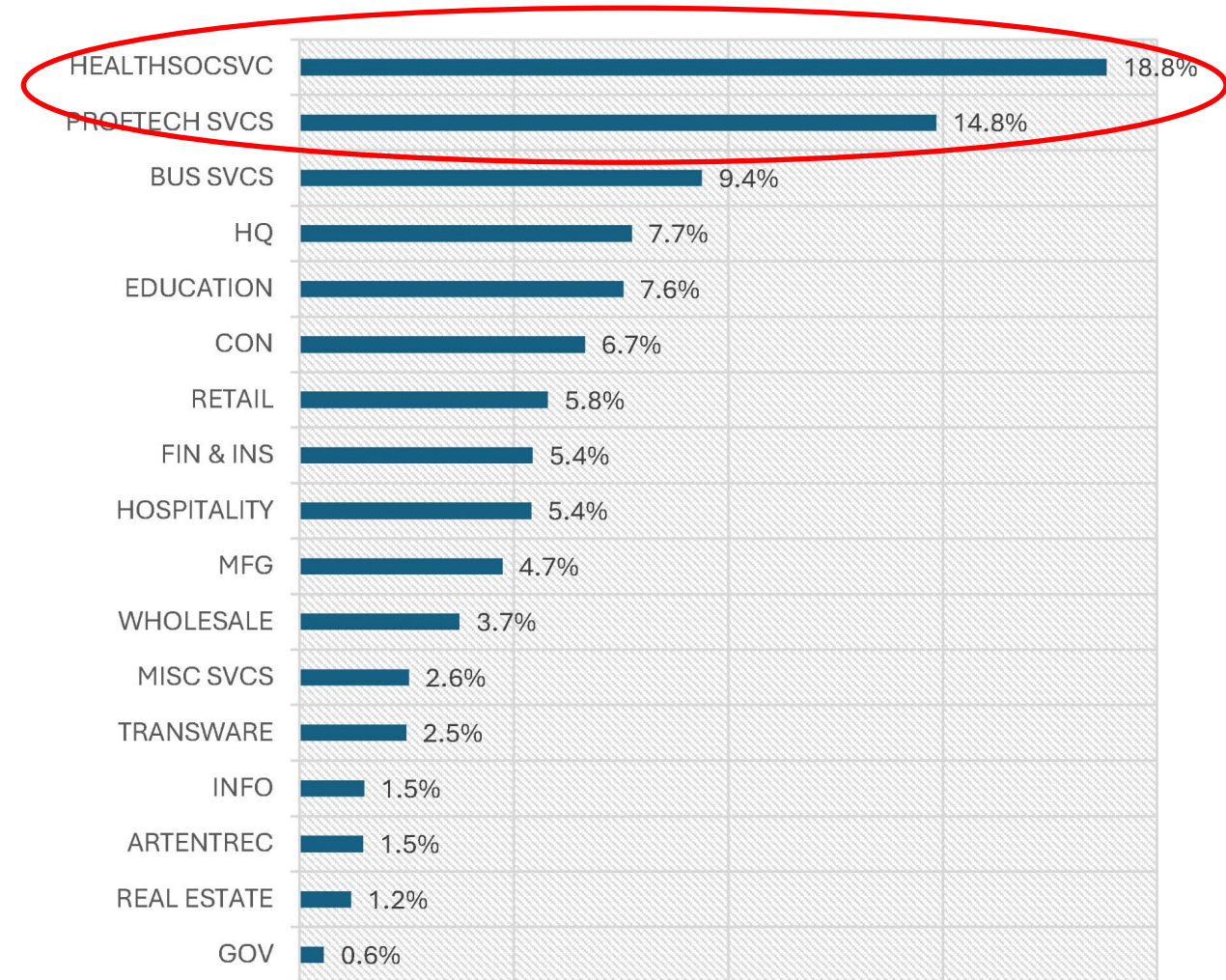
Sources of Funds (2024)





The largest employment sector in Worthington is healthcare-related services (18.8%). However, professional technical services (14.8%) drove recent job growth.

Key Industries in Worthington, % of jobs (2022)

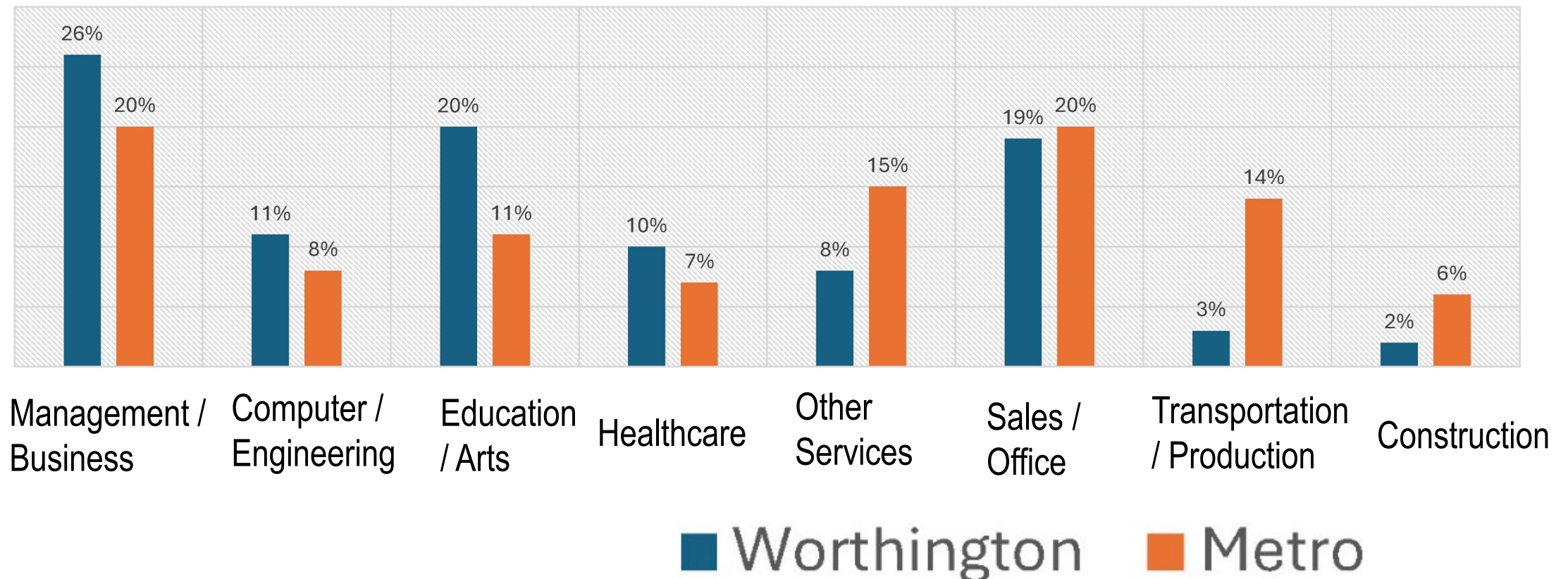


Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of ontheMap.gov data (2022 most recent available)

Note: This data uses primary jobs

Worthington residents have a more “white collar” occupational profile compared to the region.

Resident Occupations, 2023 (ACS 5-year estimate)

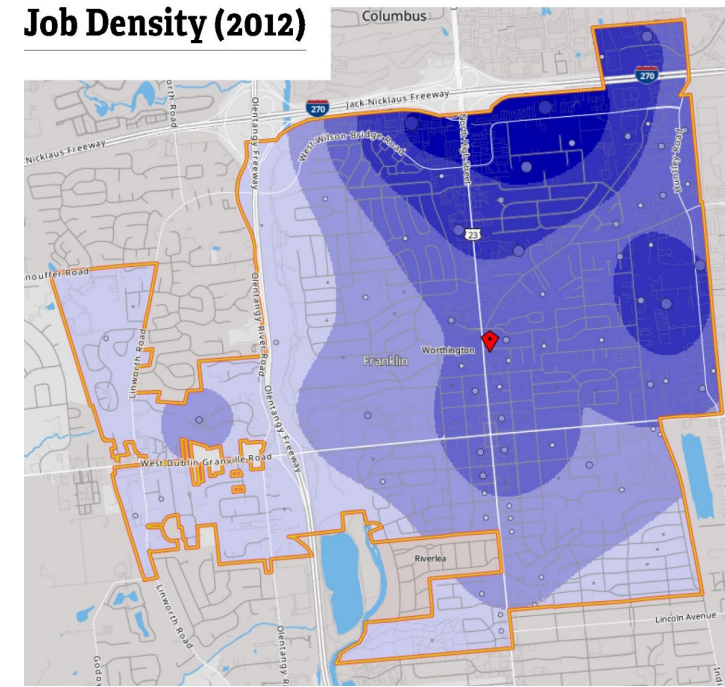


Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of ACS 5-year Occupational data (Table S2401)

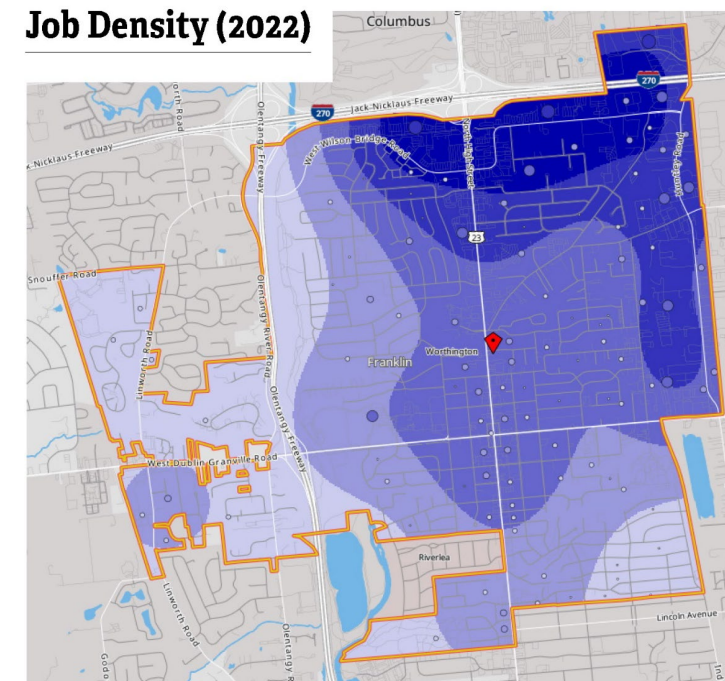
Worthington has fairly high job density compared to the region

- The concentration of office-based jobs is the key driver
- Given the “land-locked” nature of Worthington, job density is important
- Also important is having high-quality jobs.

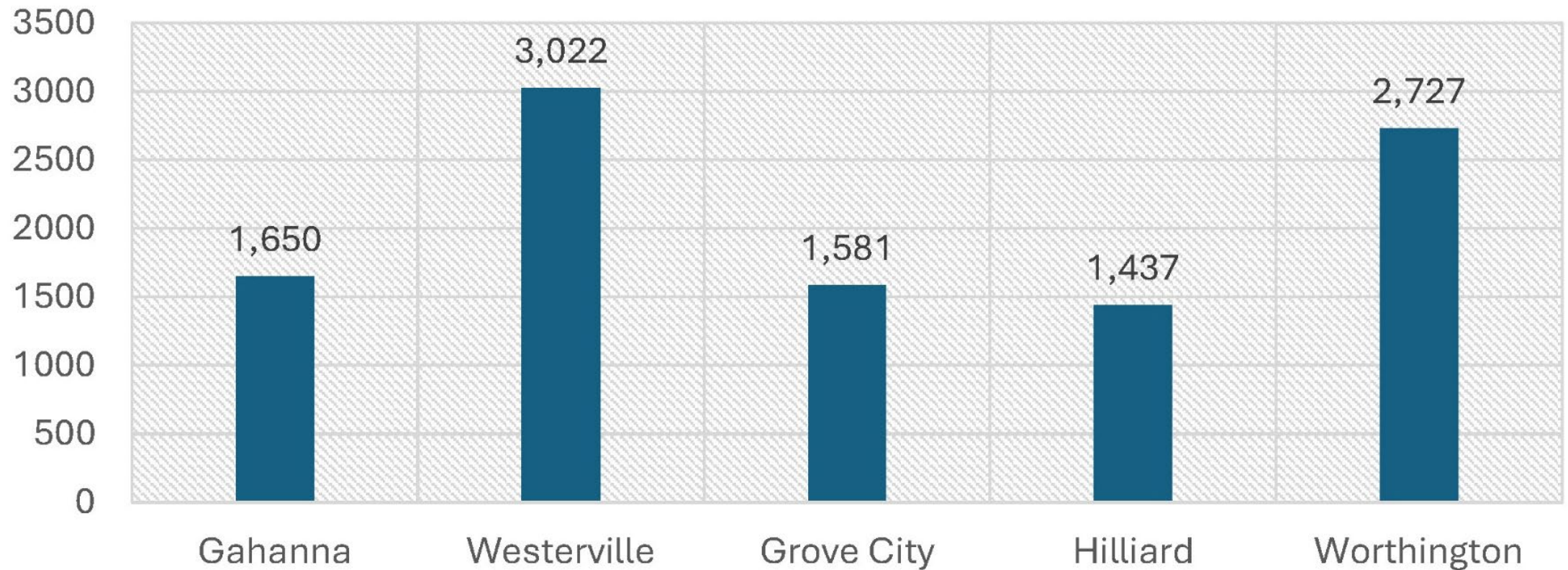
Job Density (2012)



Job Density (2022)



Jobs per land sq mile



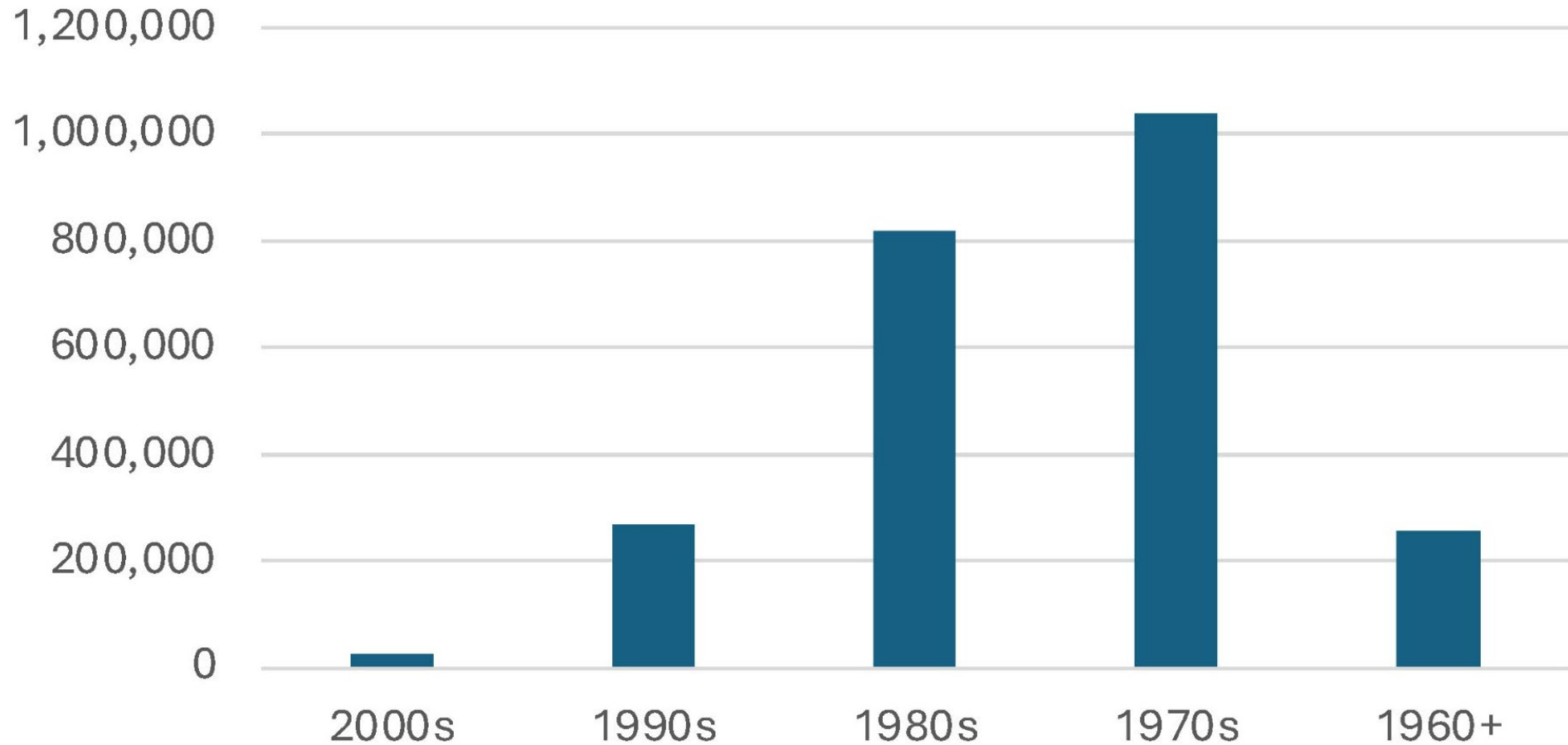
*Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of Census On-the-Map data
(January 2025, divided by land area)*

Worthington's office situation is challenging.

- The majority of this space is rated “Class C.” A relatively small amount (10-11%) of the city's office space is “Class A.”
- Less than 1% of the space was built in the 21st century; More than 50% was built before 1979
- 59 out of 72 buildings have undergone some form of remodeling (approximately 300 sq ft have been remodeled after 2010)
- The current office vacancy rate in Worthington is 21.7% as of Q1 of 2025, which is below the overall office vacancy rate for Greater Columbus of 23.9% during the same period (Cushman & Wakefield)
 - Note: Though a space may be leased, it may not be fully occupied.

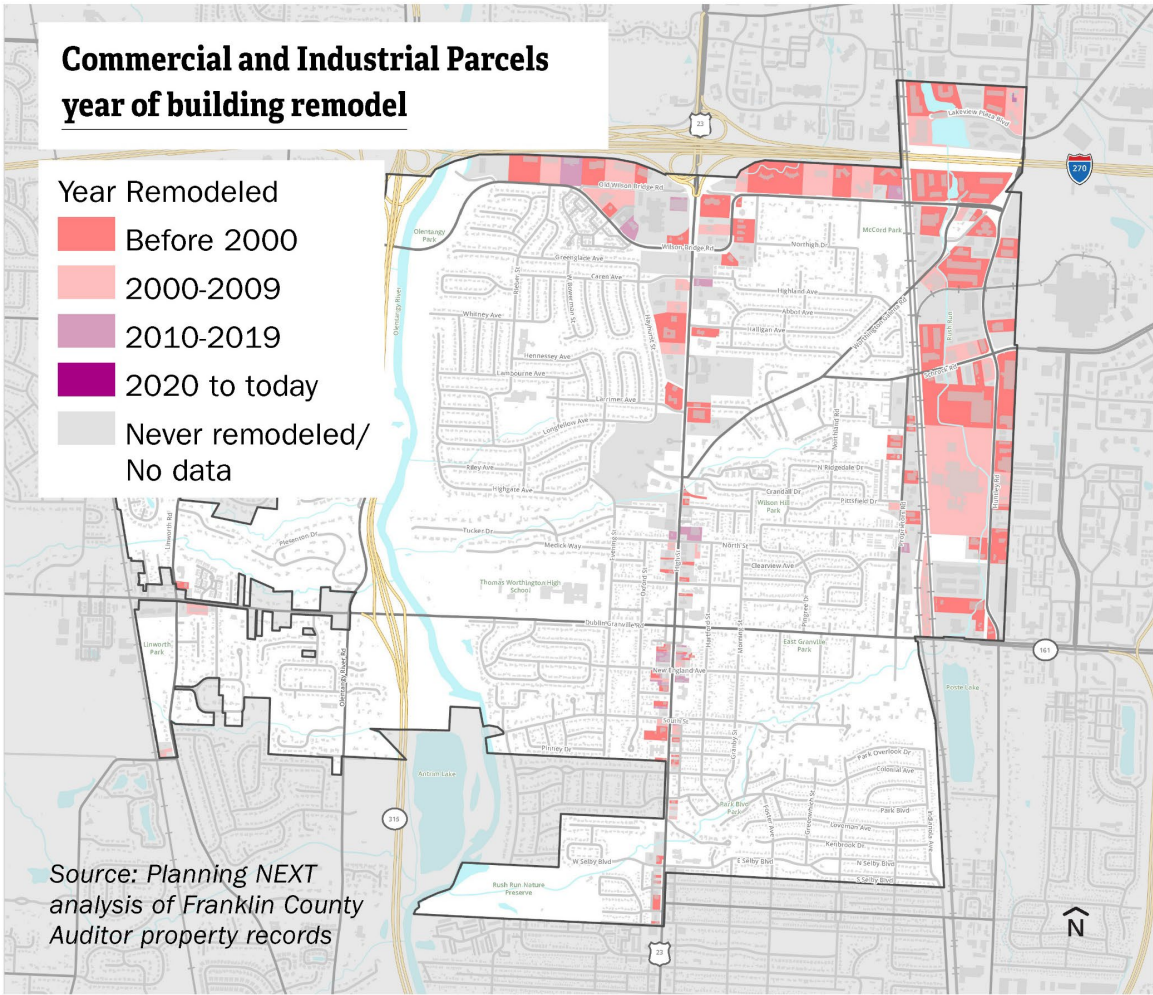
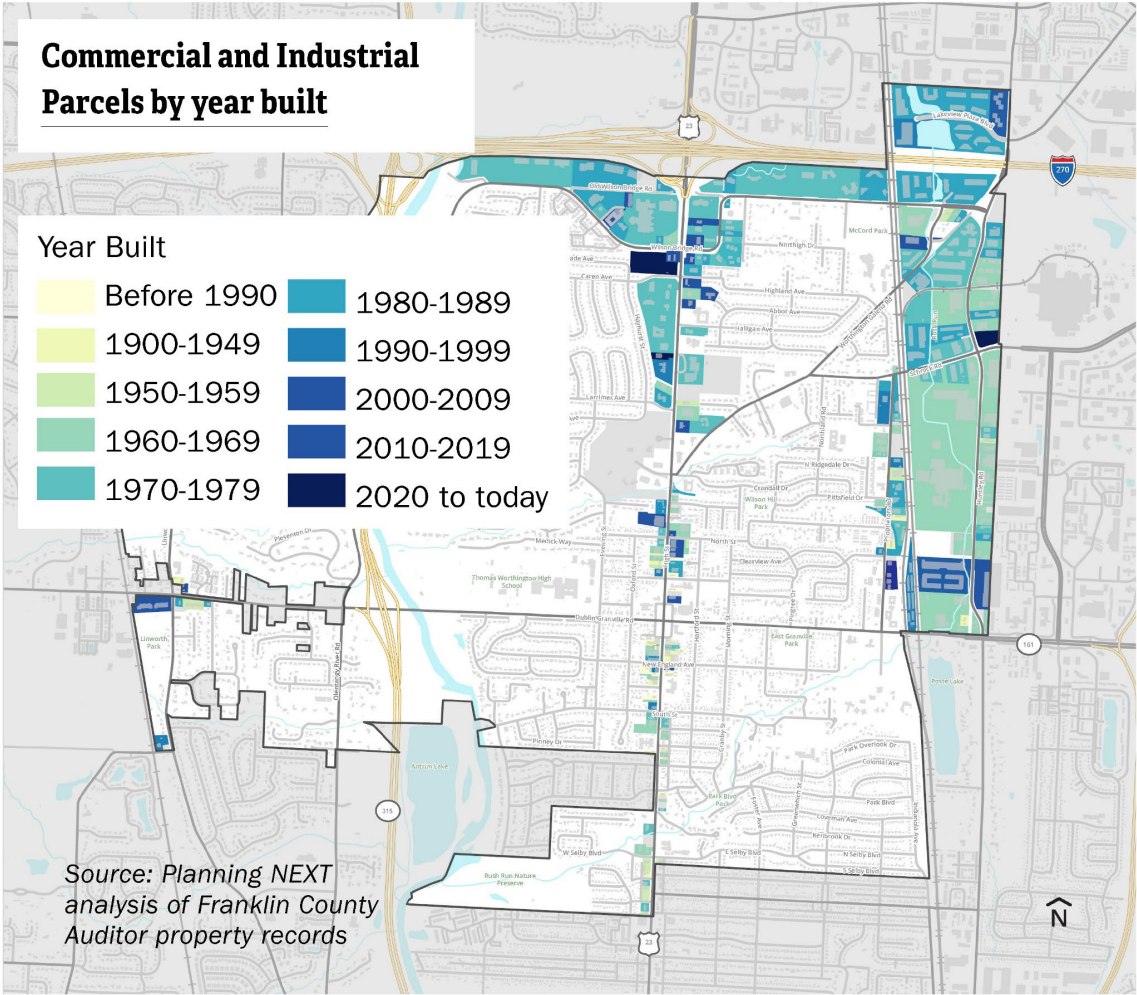
Age of Office Space

PLUC 447, 448, 449, 450



Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of Franklin County Auditor parcel records for Worthington (2024)

The age of commercial and industrial buildings may also indicate a potential for redevelopment or improvement.

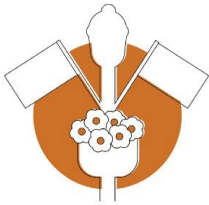


Parks, Natural Resources, and Sustainability

Connection to Vision Worthington



Worthington is a Model for Environmental Stewardship.



Worthington Offers a High Quality of Life.

Parks and open space comprise 8.9% of the land coverage in Worthington, totaling 255 acres.

- This gives Worthington 12.4 acres (City parks) per 1,000 residents.
- The National Recreation and Park Association recommends 6-10 acres per 1,000 residents.

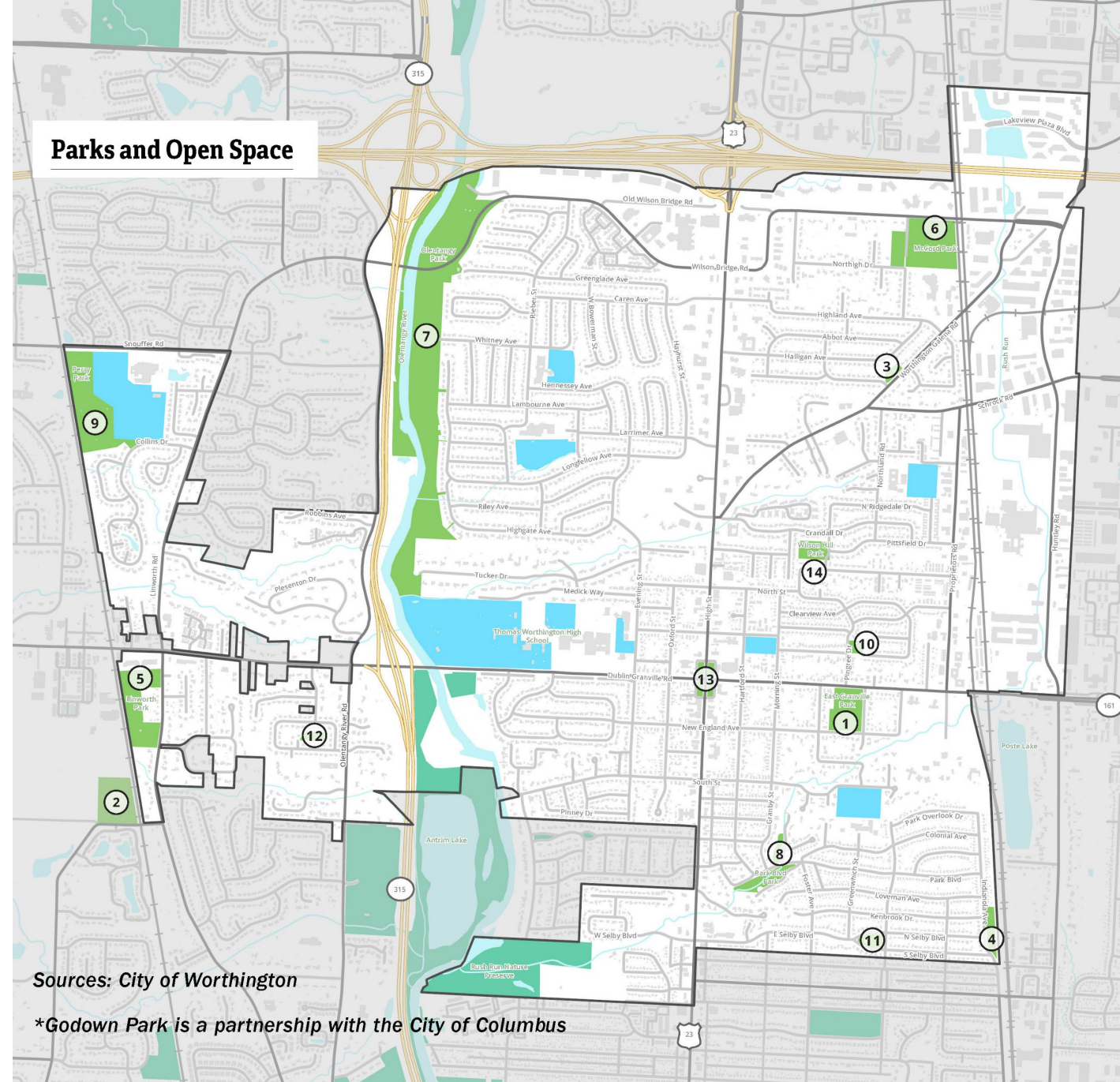
Legend

- Worthington Parks
- Other nearby Parks
- Other open spaces
- Water
- City Boundary

City Parks

1. East Granville Park
2. Godown Park*
3. Henschman Park
4. Indianola Park

5. Linworth Park
6. McCord Park
7. Olentangy Parklands
8. Park Boulevard Park
9. Perry Park
10. Pingree Park
11. Selby Park
12. Shaker Square Park
13. Village Green
14. Wilson Hill Park

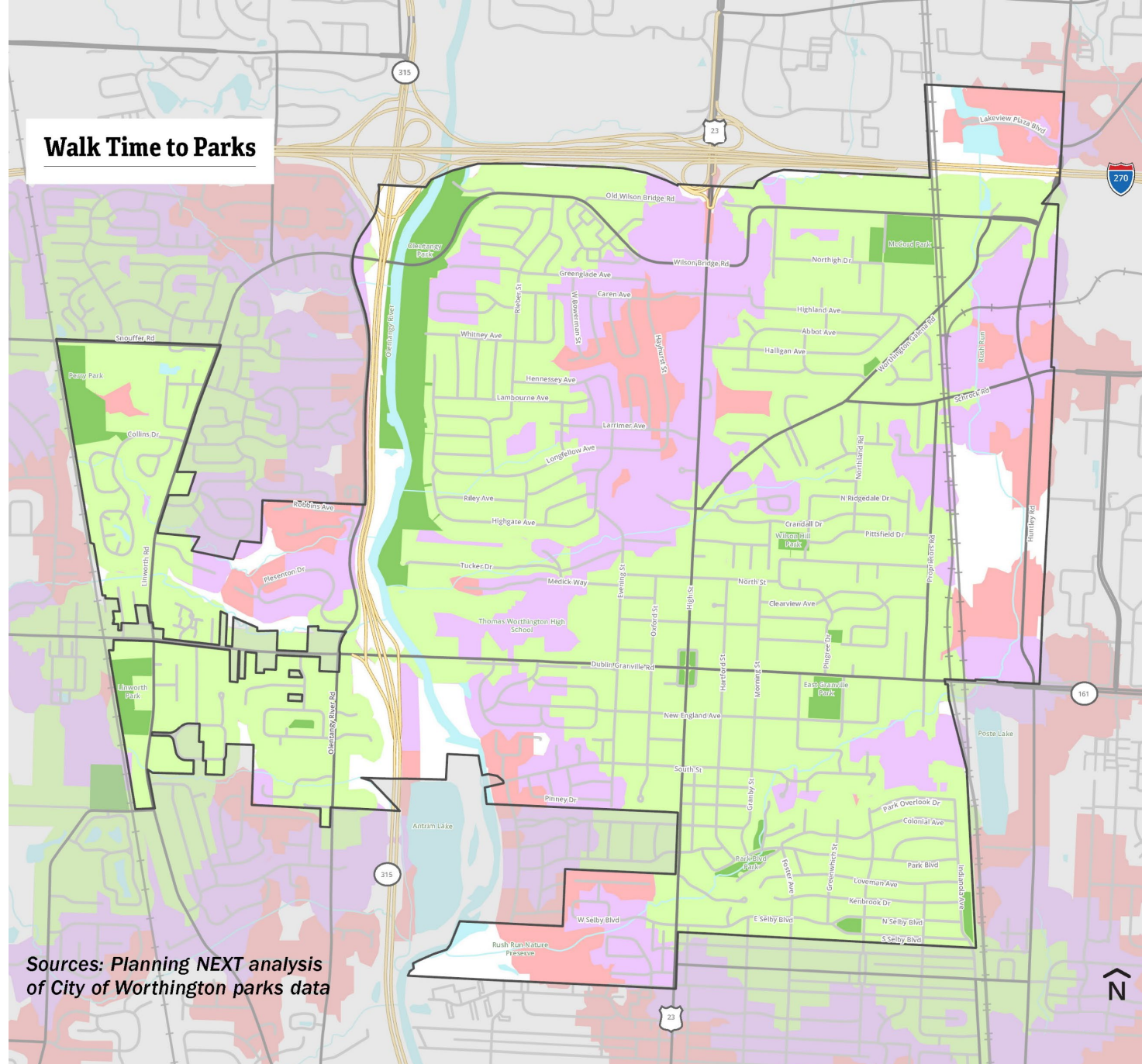


The City's park and open space network provides walkable access to a majority of the community.

- This map uses the sidewalk/trail network to estimate walk times to park access points.
- Most of the city is within a 10-minute walk to a park.

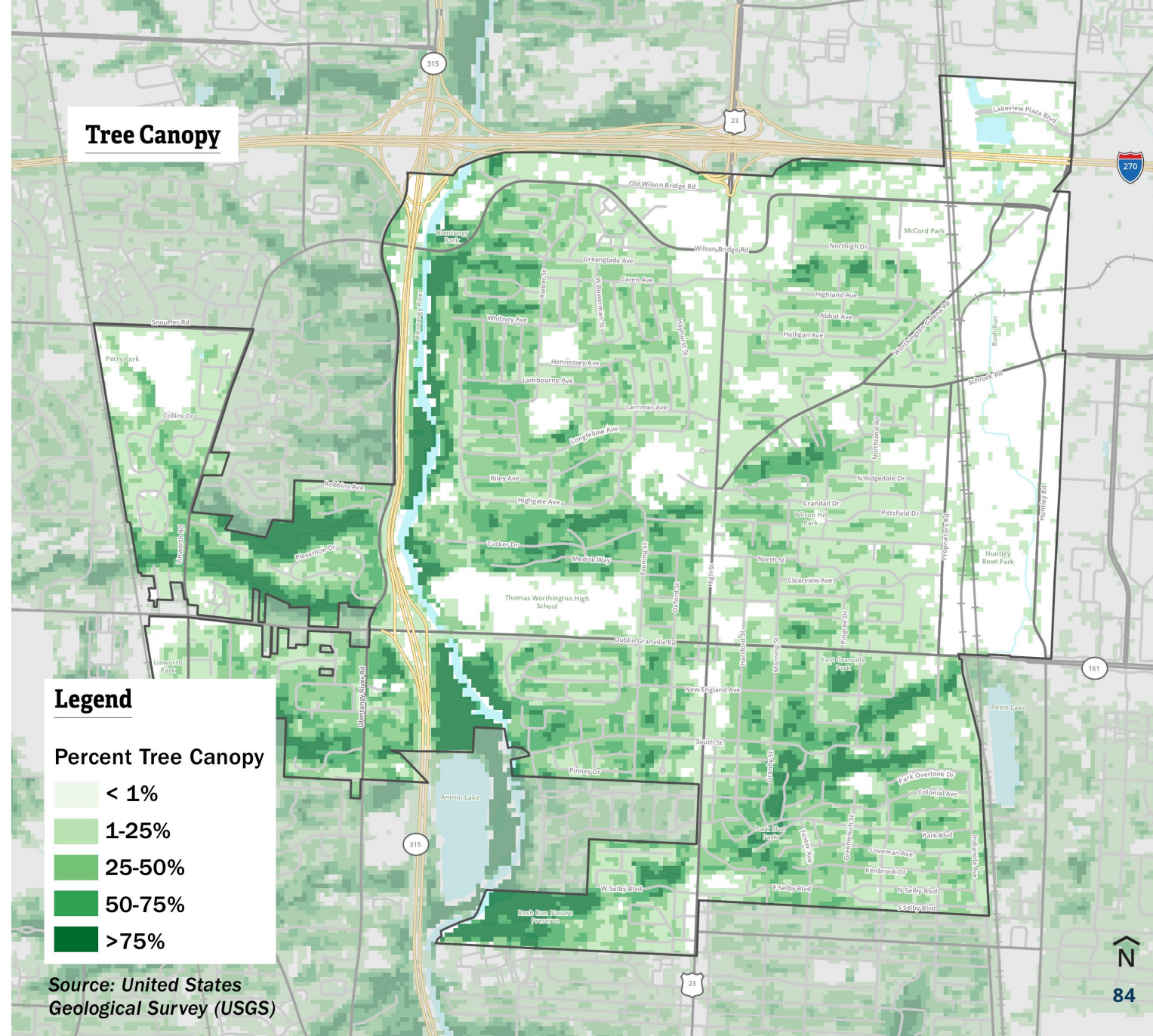
Legend

- Worthington Parks
- 10 minute walk to a park access point
- 15 minute walk to a park access point
- 20 minute walk to a park access point



Worthington has greater amount of tree canopy compared to Franklin County.

- 38% of land area (compared to 24% in Franklin County)
- Worthington lacks regulatory tools that some other cities use to protect natural resources, such as lot coverage limitations, stream buffers or protection zones, or tree removal/replacement standards.





Worthington's current sustainability initiatives include...

- Electric aggregation program.
- Upgrades to municipal buildings and parks.
- Incentives and outreach about green stormwater infrastructure.
- Promoting sustainable development through zoning.
- Worthington Arbor Advisory Committee.
- Worthington Green Team.
- Street Tree Program.
- The Compost Exchange.

Transportation

Connection to Vision Worthington



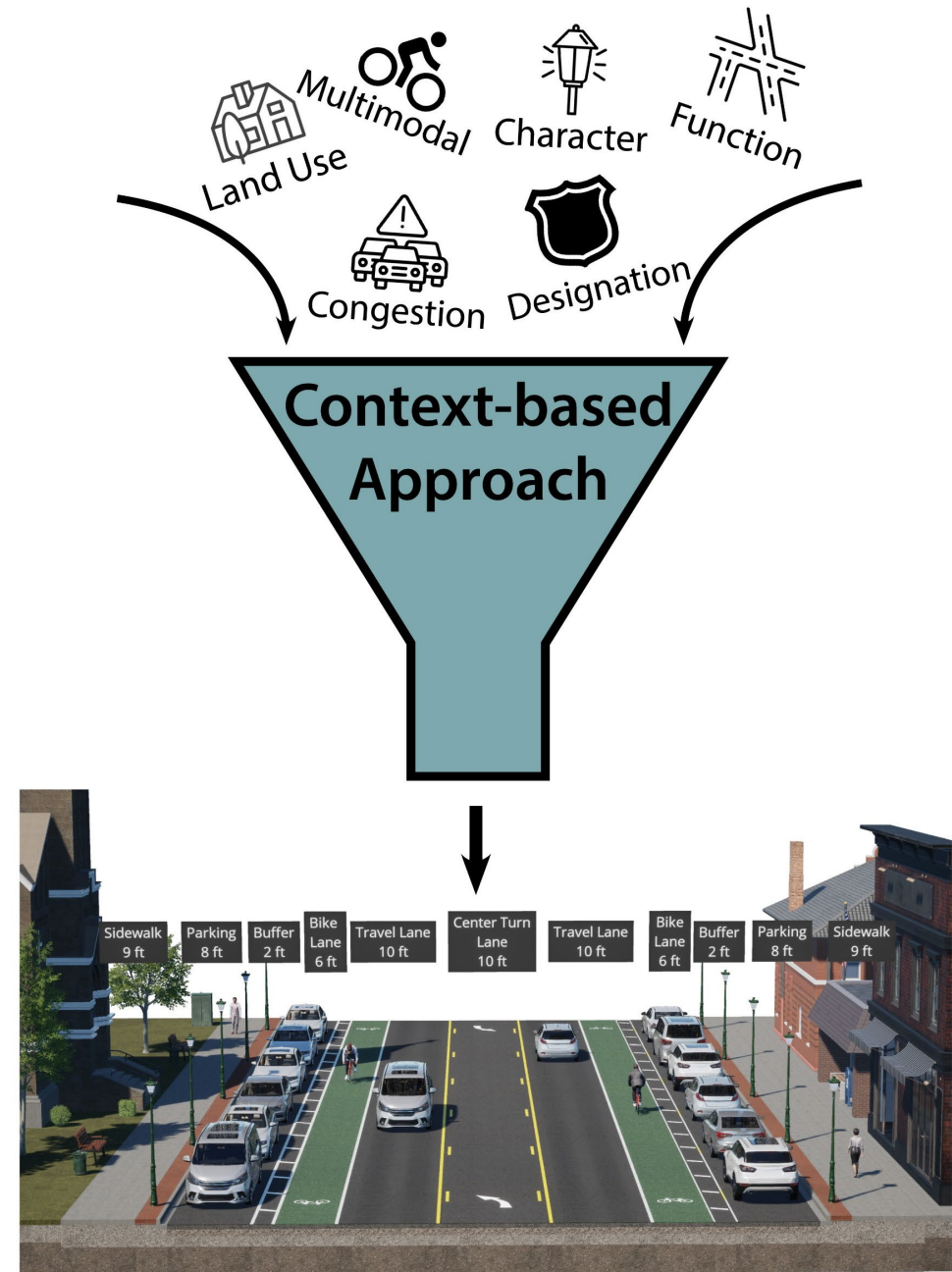
Worthington is Connected



Worthington is a Model for
Environmental Stewardship

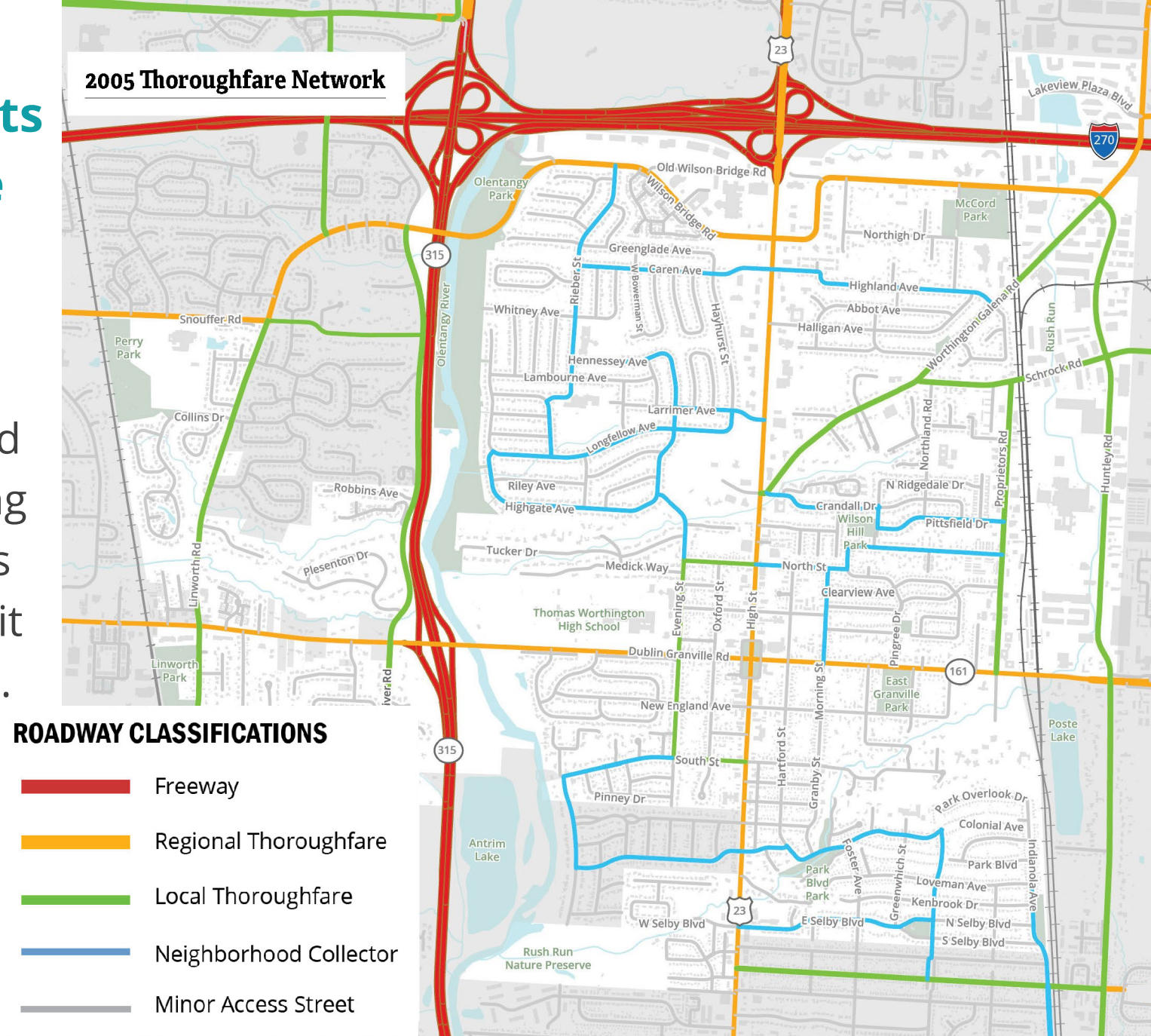
What is a thoroughfare plan?

- A thoroughfare plan is a long-term guide for developing and improving a community's transportation network.
- It defines road types, their functions, and sets design standards to support growth, mobility, and land use goals.
- A thoroughfare plan also identifies future connections and ensures transportation is compatible with future development.



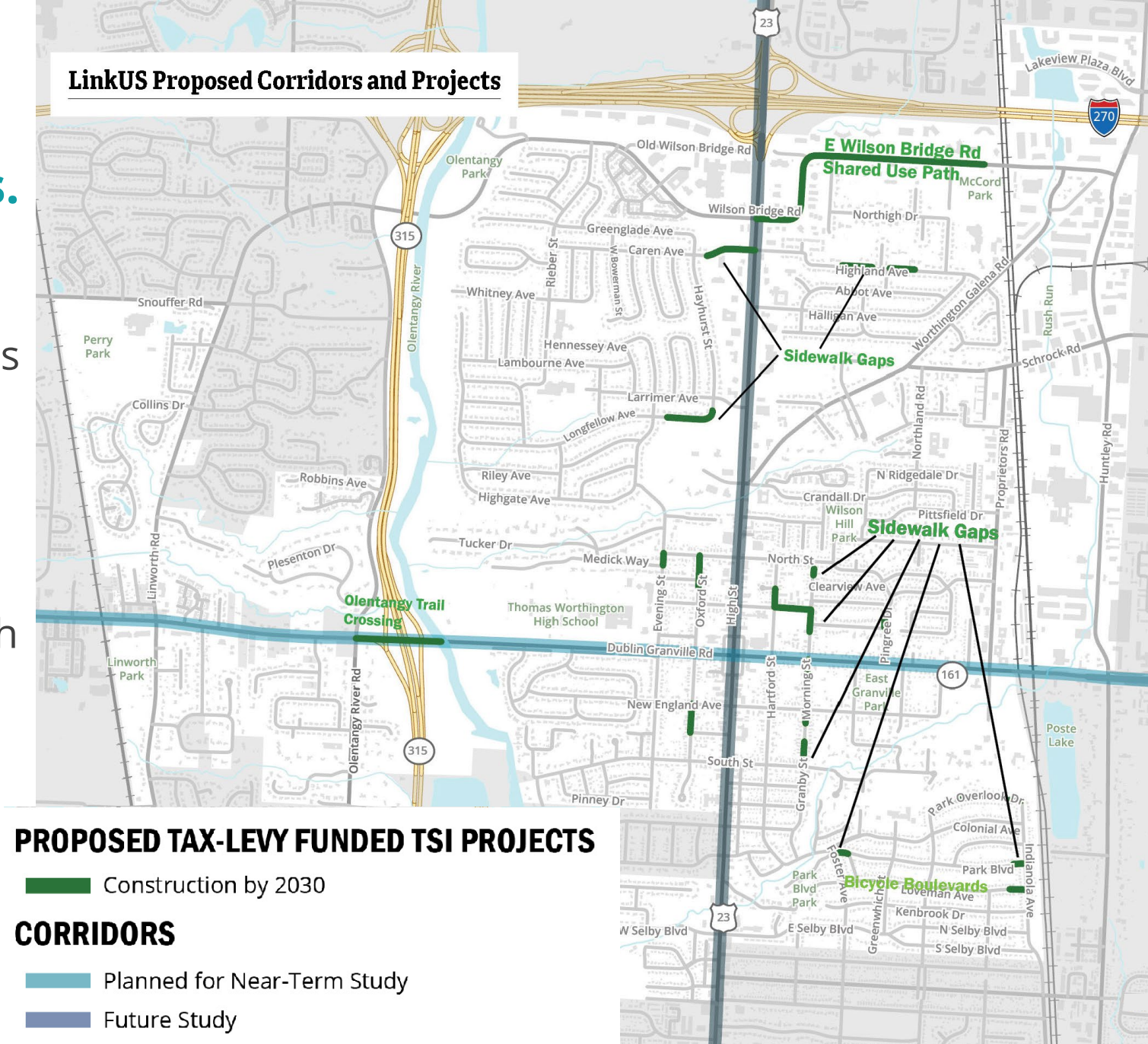
Worthington last updated its thoroughfare plan with the 2005 comprehensive plan.

- It emphasized the need to protect the city's historical and cultural assets by not widening main thoroughfares as well as supporting bicycles and transit as transportation alternatives.



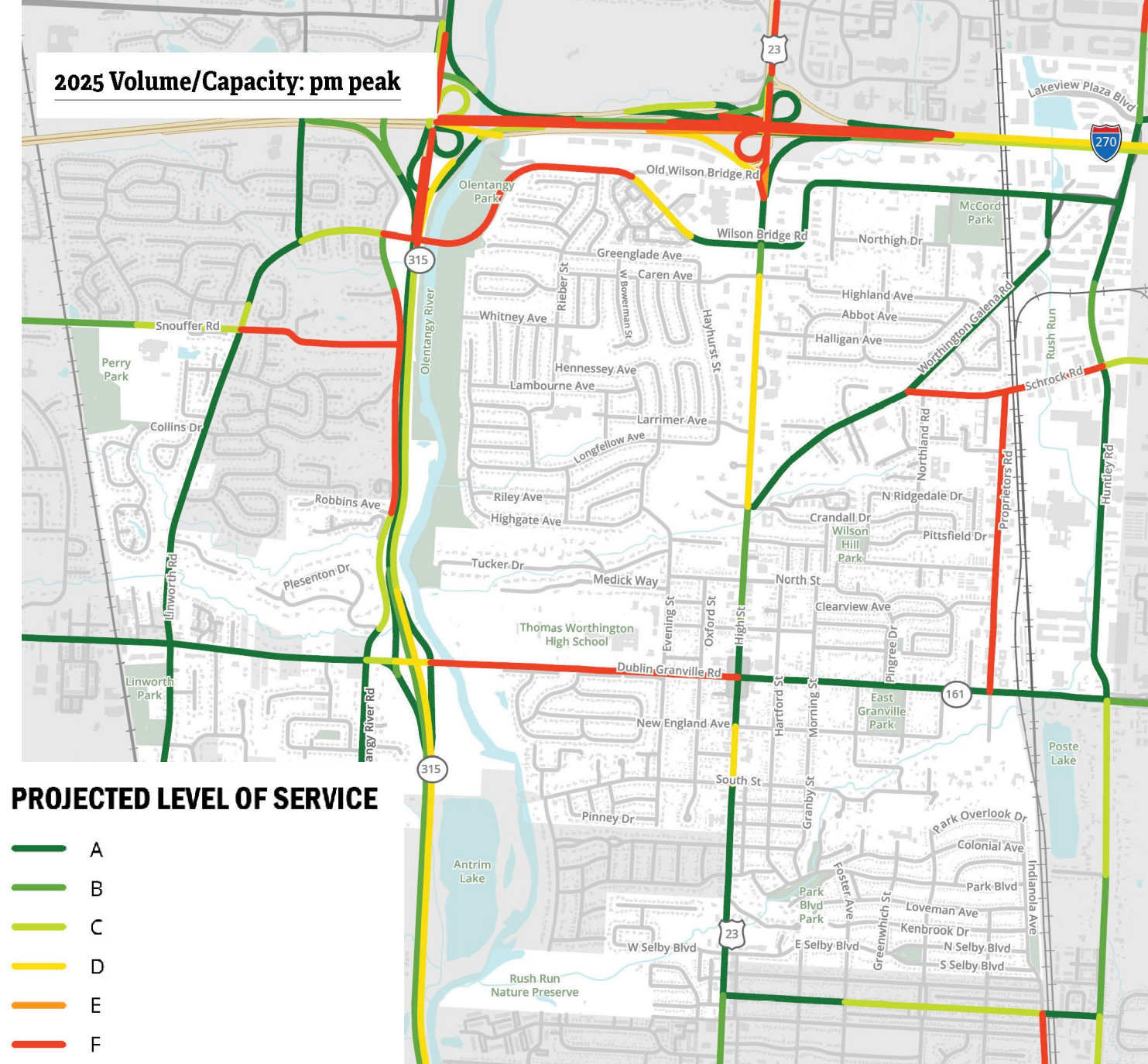
The approval of LinkUS has provided new opportunities.

- LinkUS includes new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridors as well as Transit-Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) such as sidewalks, bike trails, etc.
- In Worthington, SR-161 and High Street are candidates for future rapid transit corridors and several tax-levy funded projects are already underway.



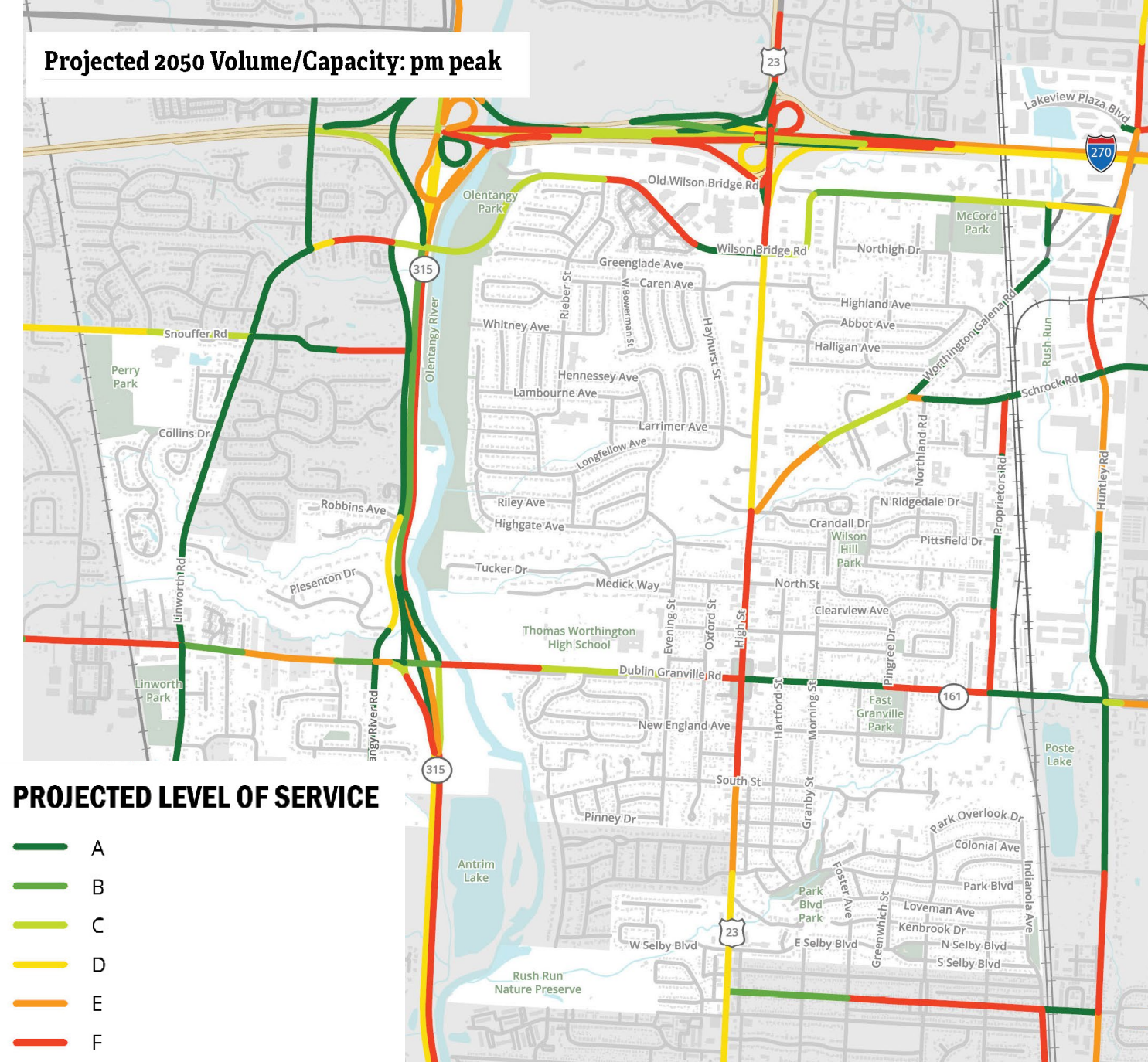
Most of the roadways in Worthington are operating at an acceptable level of service in 2025.

- Level of service is a qualitative measure describing how well a roadway accommodates traffic.
- In Ohio, a rating of "D" or better is considered an acceptable level of service, however, operating at "E" and "F" during peak commuting hours can also be acceptable.



Projected 2050 traffic forecasts show an increase in congestion.

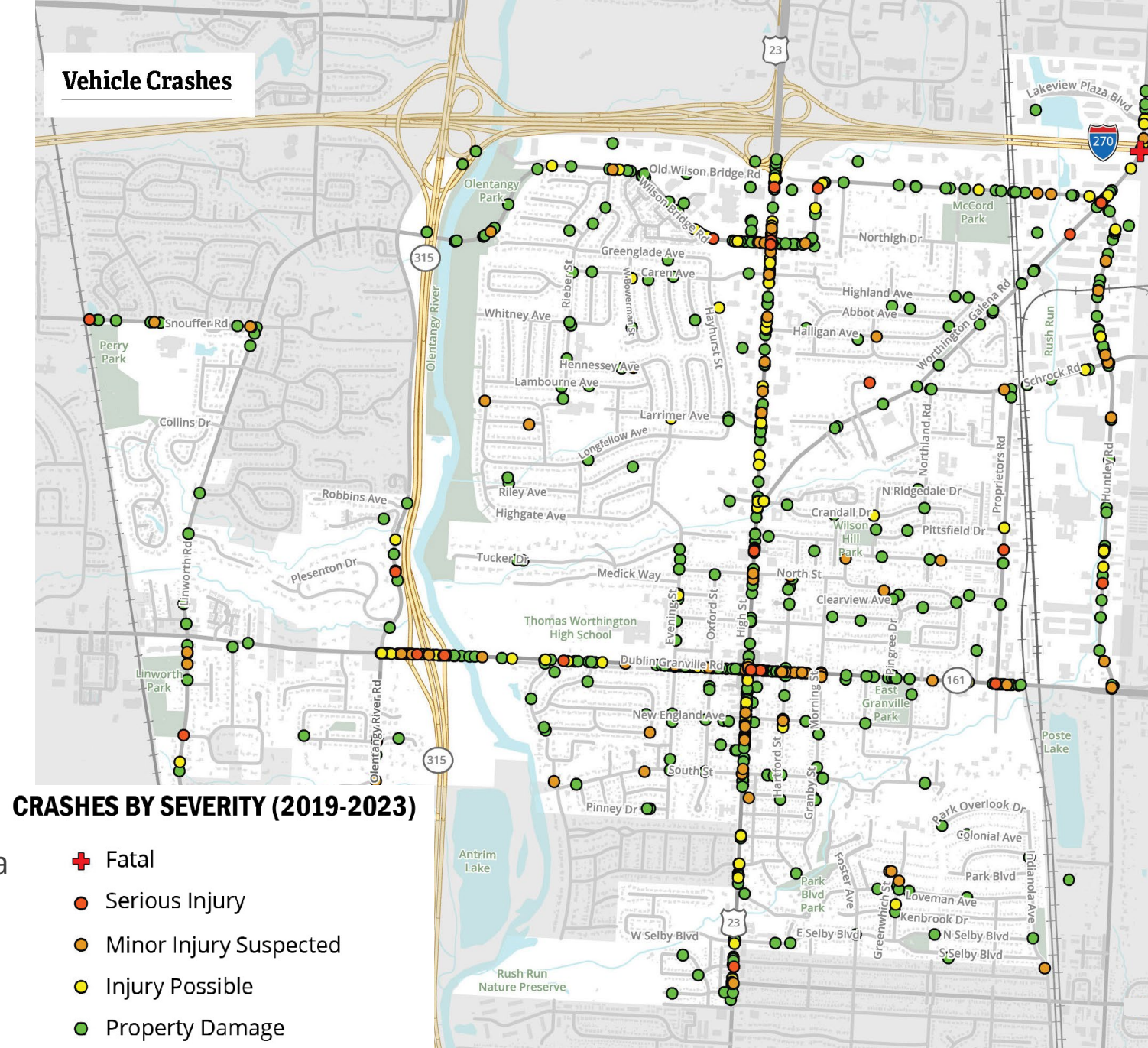
- Several roadway segments went from operating below capacity (LOS C-A) in 2025 to operating near or above capacity (LOS D-F) in 2050.
- Despite increases in traffic congestion on several roadways, many roadways continue to operate at an acceptable level of service.



The majority of vehicle crashes occur at major intersections.

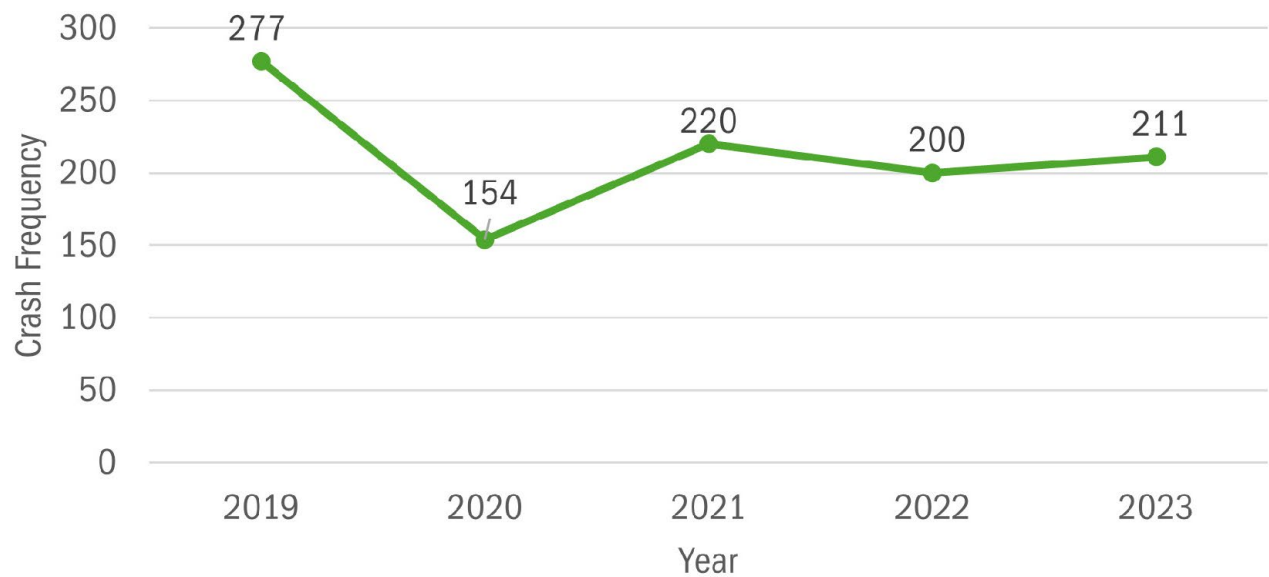
A large concentration of crashes occur along High Street, Dublin-Granville Road (SR-161), and Wilson Bridge Road. Key intersections include:

- High Street & Dublin-Granville Road
- High Street & Wilson Bridge Road
- Dublin-Granville Road & SR-315
- Wilson Bridge Road & Worthington Galena Road/Huntley Road
- Schrock Road & Huntley Road

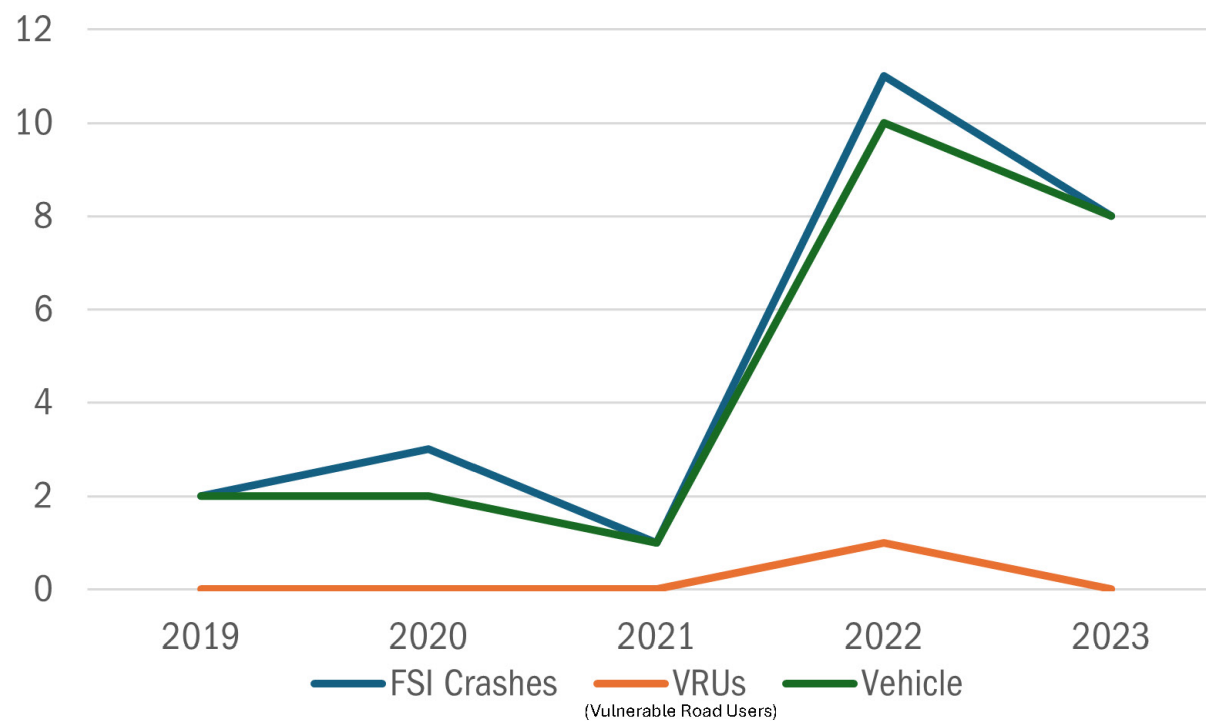


The total number of crashes have reduced from pre-pandemic levels, however, fatal and serious injury crashes have seen an uptick in recent years.

Citywide Crashes (2019 - 2023)

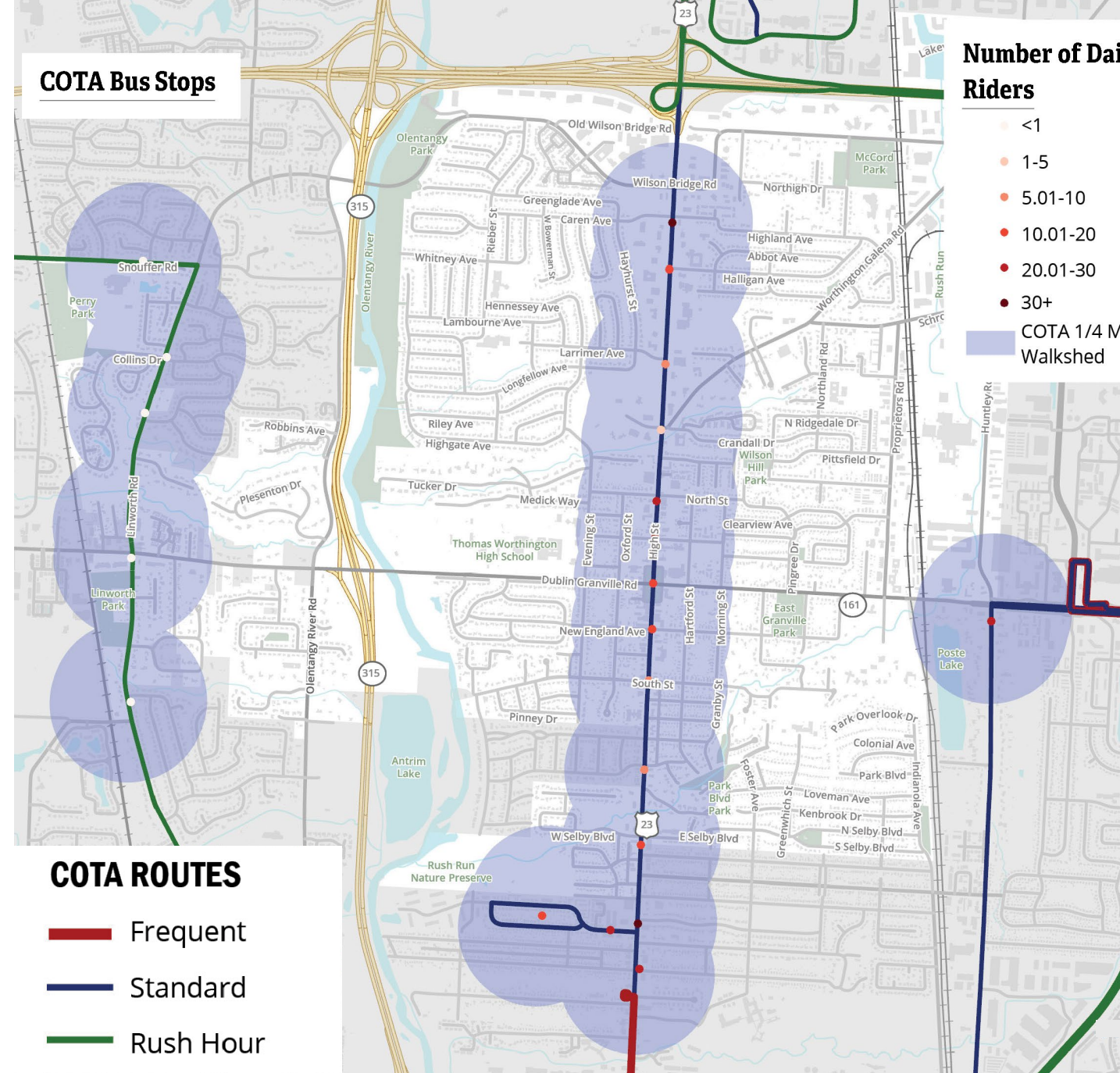


Citywide Fatal & Serious Injury Crashes (2019 - 2023)



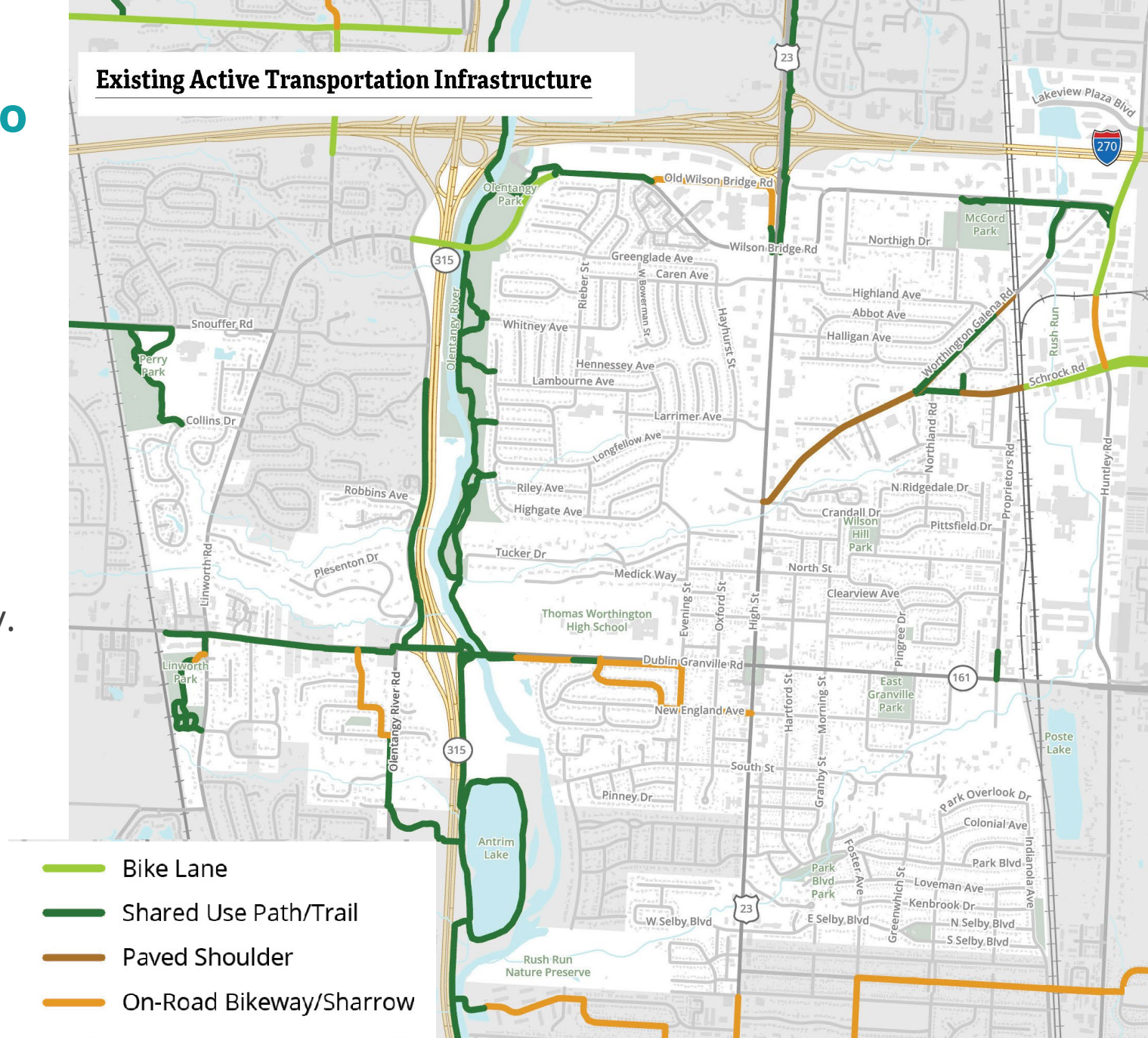
COTA primarily provides service along High Street in Worthington.

- Service in Worthington is not currently provided on any East-West connectors such as Dublin-Granville Road/SR-161.
- While all residential areas are within acceptable biking distance, many are located more than 1/4 mile from transit stops.



Worthington is connected to the region through the Olentangy Trail, but lacks protected on-road bicycle facilities.

- While Worthington has on-road bikeways (sharrows), there are not many protected bikeways in the City.
- Protected bikeways reduce travel stress for those who may have less biking experience and for young riders.

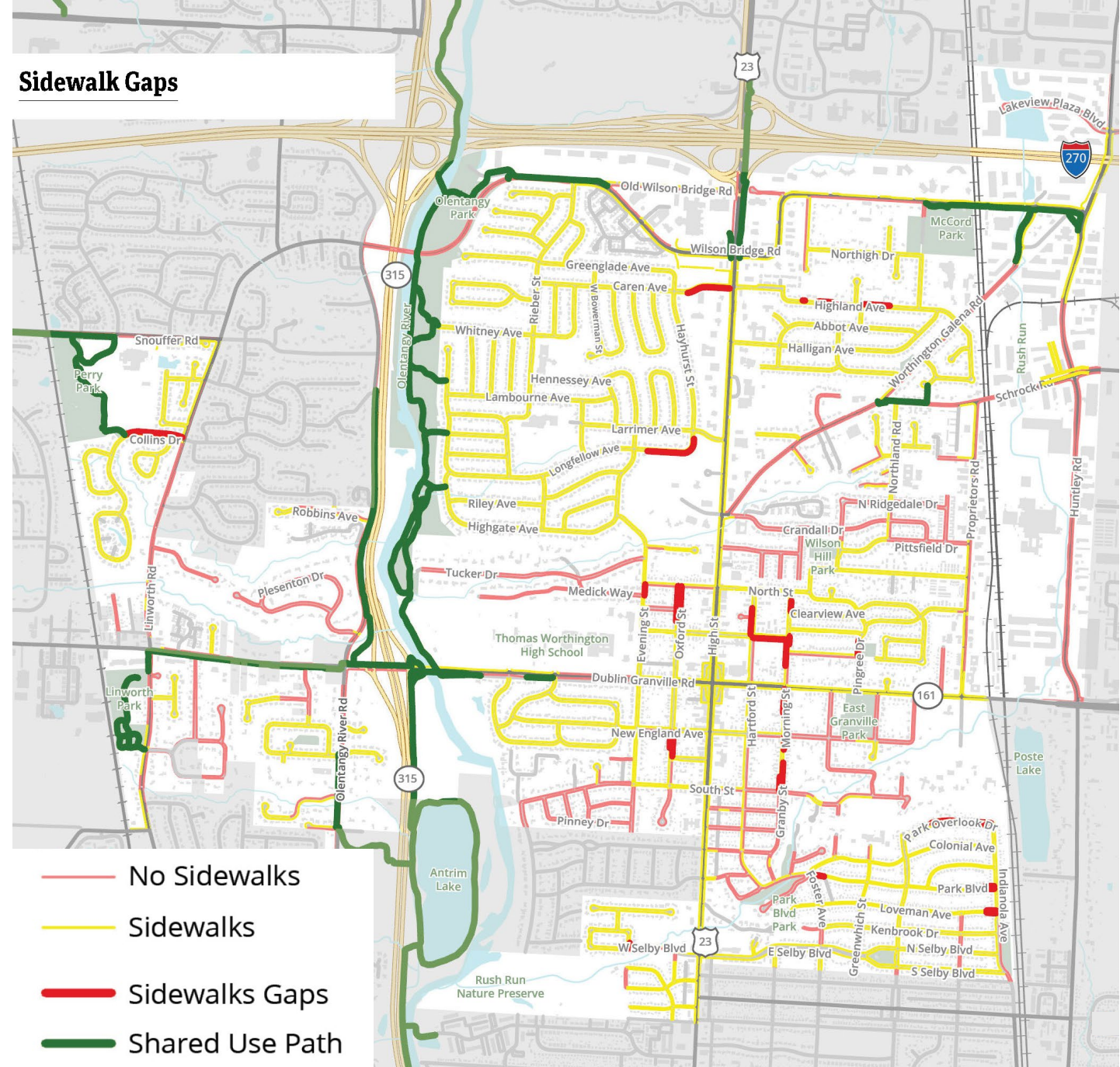


Sidewalks are well-established but there are gaps.

The locations identified as “sidewalk gaps” are where there are portions of sidewalk missing between completed sections of sidewalk. There are notable areas that lack sidewalks entirely including:

- Huntley Road, an important workforce corridor
- Linworth Road

Sidewalk Gaps



Takeaways from Public Input

Round one events

- In-person event: The Launch (June 11)
- Webinar (June 26)
- Online: WorthingtonTogether.org
- Additional small group meetings



Participation so far...

Total participants: **410**

- The Launch: 205
- Webinar: 40
- Online only: 165

Total treasures: **368**

Total map markers
and comments: **1,197**

Communication activities have included

- More than a dozen social media posts
- Targeted social ads
- Nearly 7,000 individuals reached through social media
- Village talks (print and e-news)
- Emails to 300+ subscribers
- Village Green banner
- Flyers at city facilities

How can you help

1. Promote the online opportunity on **WorthingtonTogether.org**
2. Conduct your own small group meeting.
 - We'll provide instructions, script, and other material.
 - You organize group, meet, and send responses to City by **July 31**

Get at least 10 people to participate.

Other groups may include

- Young professionals / Youth
- Business community
- Faith organizations
- Minority populations

What we've heard

All comments can be seen on the project website.

WorthingtonTogether.org/launch-results/



Representation gaps to date

Based on 253 responses to the “about you” questionnaire as of July 7...

Overall participation included most groups, though some were underrepresented. (in typical ways)

- Younger ages (under age 34)
- Non-white / racial minorities
- Those with lower levels of education
- Lower income households
- People who rent their home

Age	#	%	2023 ACS
15-24	4	1.6%	8.7%
25-34	21	8.4%	11.6%
35-44	62	24.7%	22.3%
45-54	42	16.7%	15.6%
55-64	40	15.9%	14.5%
65 or over	82	32.7%	27.4%
Total	251		

Racial Identity	#	%	2023 ACS
Asian	2	0.8%	2.0%
Black/African-American	4	1.6%	2.7%
Native American	0	0.0%	0.1%
White	238	95.2%	90.8%
More than one race	3	1.2%	4.3%
Other	3	1.2%	0.1%
Total	250		

Hispanic/Latino	#	%	2023 ACS
Yes	6	2.4%	1.8%
No	242	97.6%	98.2%
Total	248		

Education Level	#	%	2023 ACS
Less than a high school diploma	1	0.4%	1.2%
High school diploma	2	0.8%	5.6%
Some college, no degree	5	2.0%	16.2%
Associate's degree	4	1.6%	4.3%
Bachelor's degree	114	45.6%	38.4%
Graduate or professional degree	124	49.6%	34.2%
Total	250		

Household Income	#	%	2023 ACS
Less than \$50,000	8	3.4%	17.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	35	14.8%	22.5%
\$100,000 to \$199,999	105	44.3%	32.0%
\$200,000 or more	89	37.5%	27.9%
Total	237		

Home	#	%	2023 ACS
Own	229	94.6%	82.9%
Rent	12	5.0%	17.1%
Other	1	0.4%	-
Total	242		

Initial Themes: Treasures

Strong sense of community

- Friendly people
- Diversity and inclusivity

Parks, community amenities, green spaces, and nature

- Olentangy Parklands, Olentangy Trail, Village Green, etc.
- Community center, library, and pool
- Trees and landscaping

Walkability and Bikeability

Old Worthington

Small-town feel and character

Events and activities

- Farmer's Market, Third Thursdays, Memorial Day Parade, Art Fest, etc.
- Local restaurants and shops

Schools

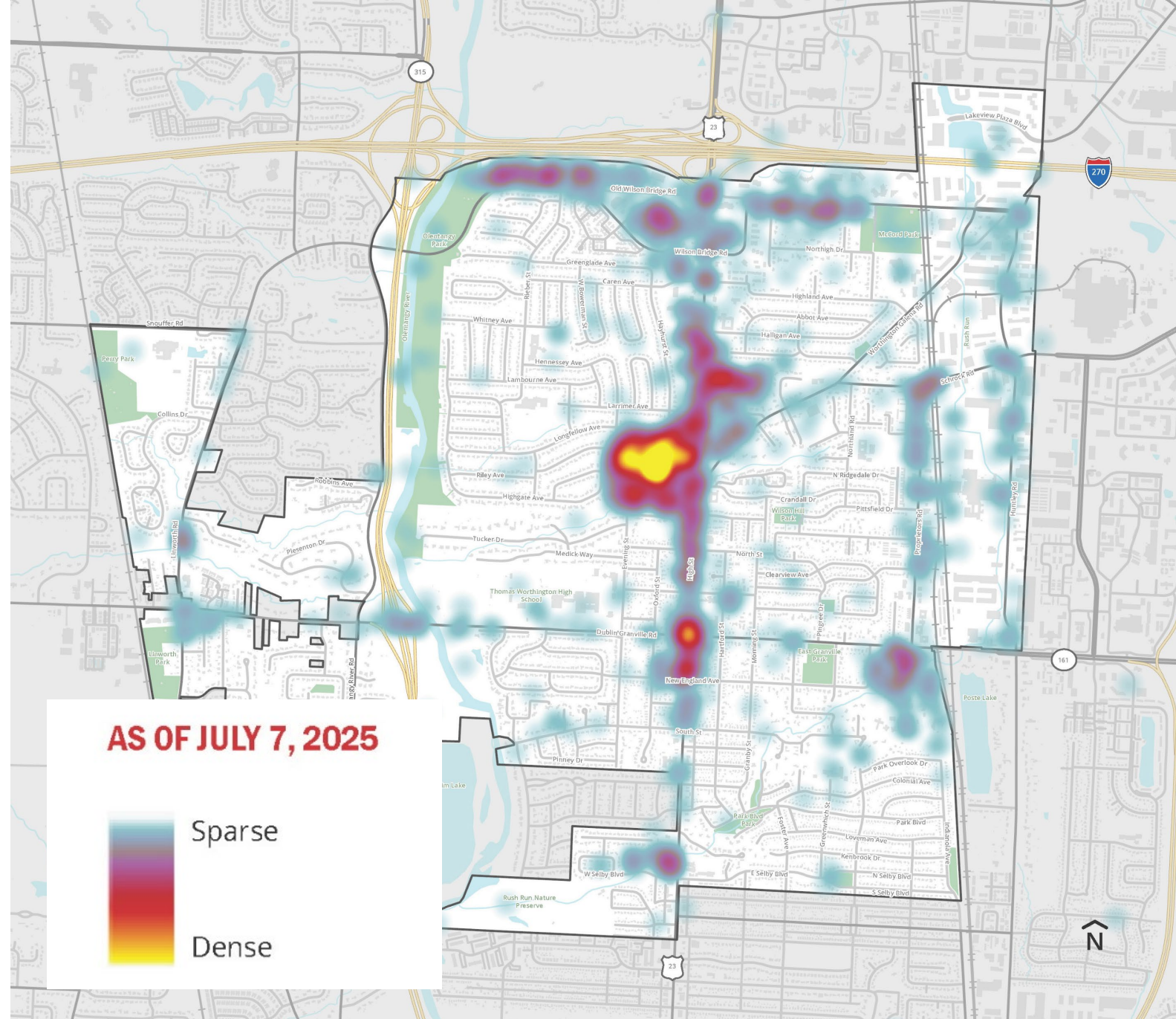
Location and access

Safety

Opportunities

Marked: 1,150

- **365** housing opportunities
- **191** transportation opportunities
- **313** commercial centers and corridors opportunities
- **218** placemaking and quality of life opportunities



Conflicting points of view

1. **Housing:** Some want high-end condos/townhomes, while others prioritize affordable and workforce housing. There's a debate over density—some favor higher-density development, while others want to see single-family homes similar to surrounding neighborhoods.
2. **Commercial Areas:** Some advocate for a vibrant, mixed-use commercial area, while others are concerned about over-commercialization and the impact on residential areas and would support a more suburban feel.
3. **Parks:** There's a divide between those who want to preserve the land for a large park/green space and those who believe mixed-use housing and commercial development should take precedence (that could include a small park).
4. **Transportation:** Support for better transit and walkability contrasts with concerns over traffic congestion from added development.



Initial Themes: Housing

Expand housing options beyond single-family homes

- New apartments, condos, townhomes, and patio homes
- Mixed-use developments with a diverse mix of housing types
 - Diverse styles, price-points, and people served
- Redevelopment of underutilized and vacant sites like the former UMCH and Anthem sites

Need for senior housing and affordable housing options

- Increased ability for people to stay in Worthington as they grow older
- More opportunities for home rentals and ownership at lower price-points

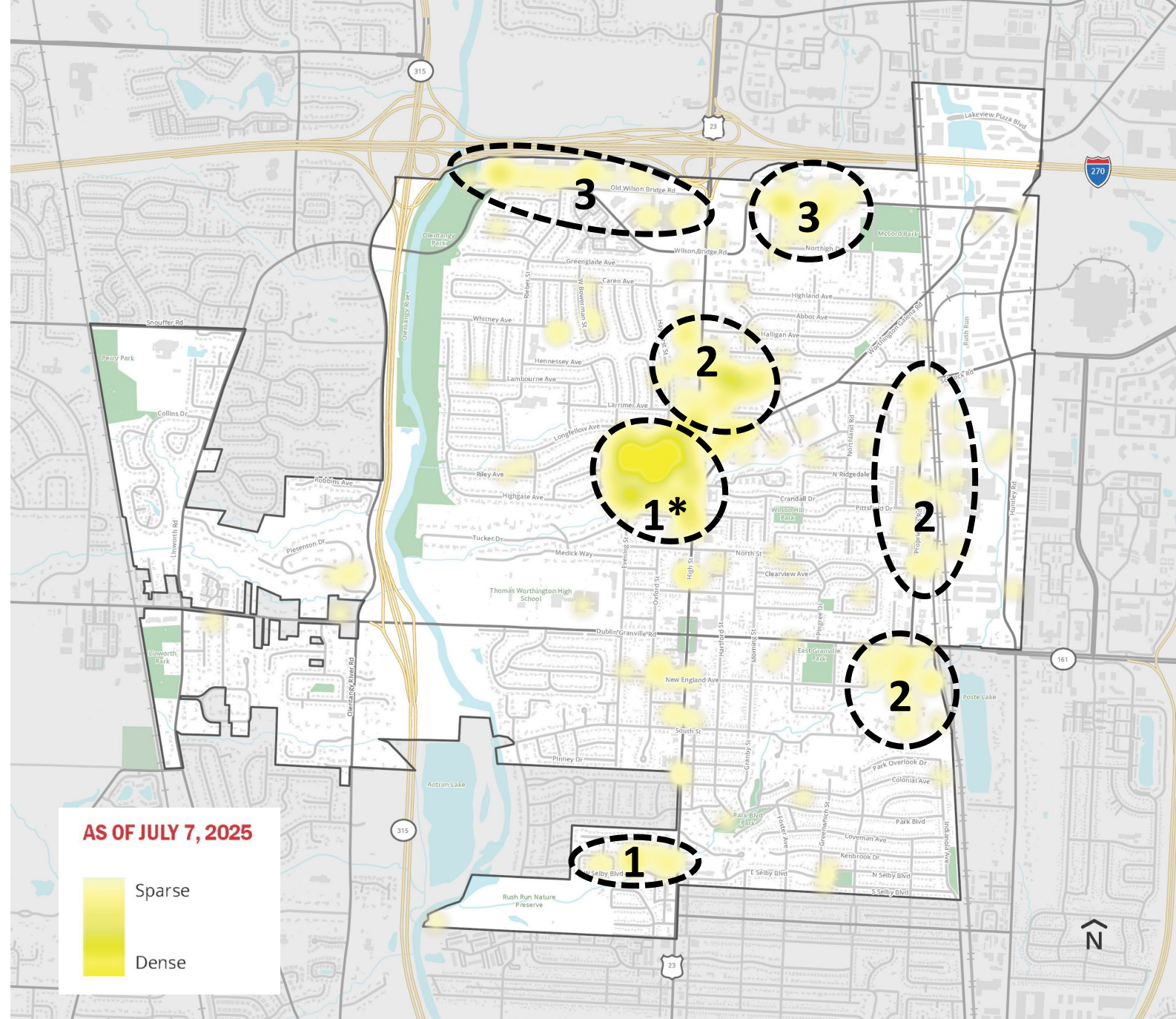
Protect existing character

- Concerns for how higher-density developments could change community character
- Some see single-family homes as harmonious with the community today

Housing (365)

1. Vacant land with opportunity for new housing and mixed-use development
2. Underutilized areas with opportunity for redevelopment
3. Areas with opportunity for increased density

*Note: this site's potential development was most contentious across comments made



Initial Themes: Transportation

Enhanced connectivity and safer ways for people to move around the community without cars

- Dedicated bike lanes and paths
- Wider, better-protected sidewalks
- Safer active transportation connections across the community
 - The Worthington Mile
- Safer street crossings for non-motorists

Increased and improved public transportation

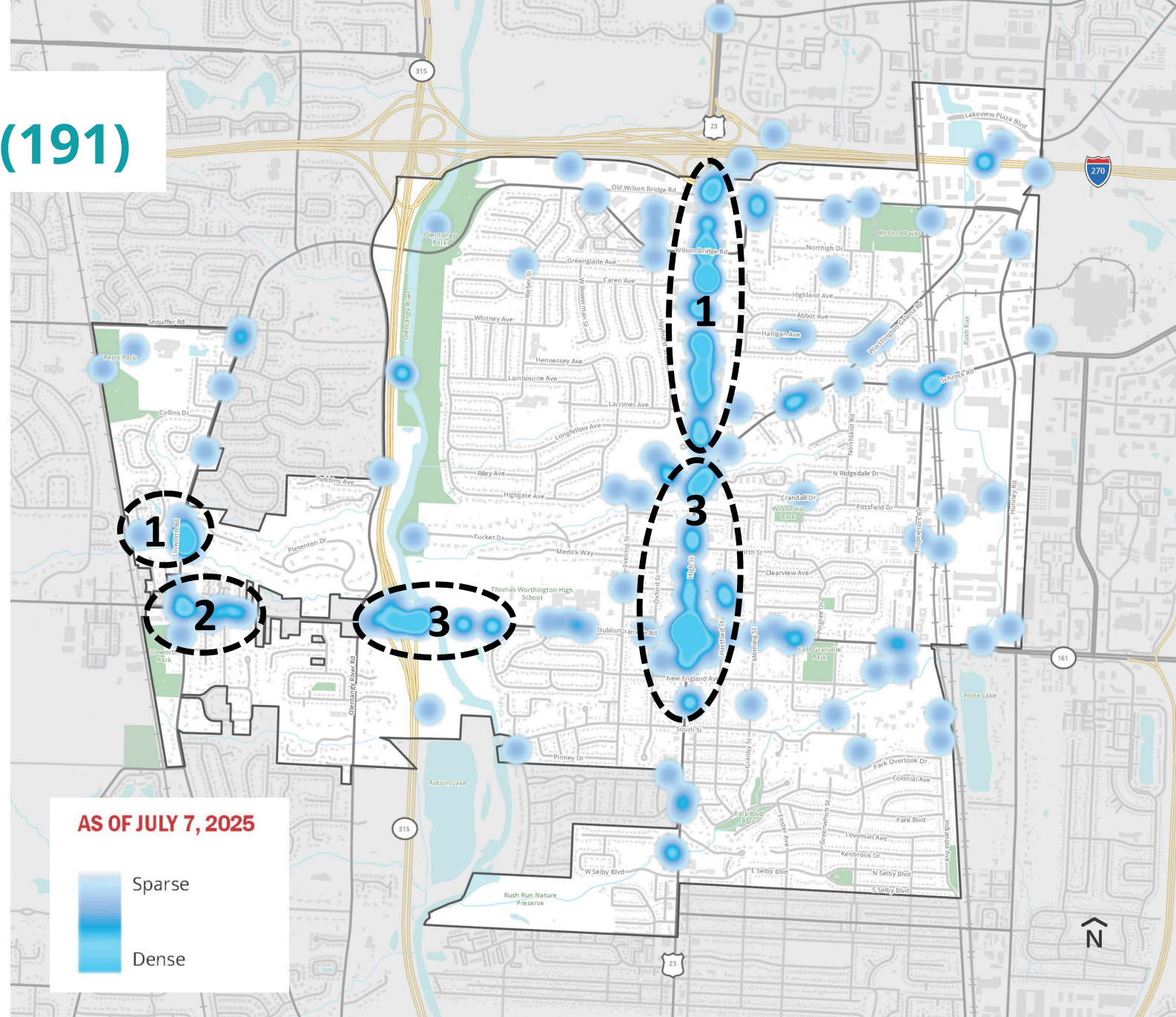
- Expanded COTA bus service
- LinkUS bus rapid transit (BRT) or light rail connection to other communities
- Local shuttle/trolley system

Traffic/congestion management

- Reduced speed limits
- Improved intersections of major routes (SR-161 and High Street, SR-161 and SR-315)
- Concerns over development fueling congestion

Transportation (191)

1. Opportunity for enhanced transportation connections for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders
2. Opportunity for traffic, congestion, and safety improvements
3. Both



Initial Themes: Commercial Areas

Diversify and expand commercial and entertainment offerings

- Locally owned businesses, unique shops, and entertainment opportunities
- Mixed-use developments to connect work, live, and play
- More local, unique, and sit-down restaurant options
- Food halls and breweries (like Center Street Market in Hilliard or North Market in Dublin)

Activate underutilized commercial and industrial spaces

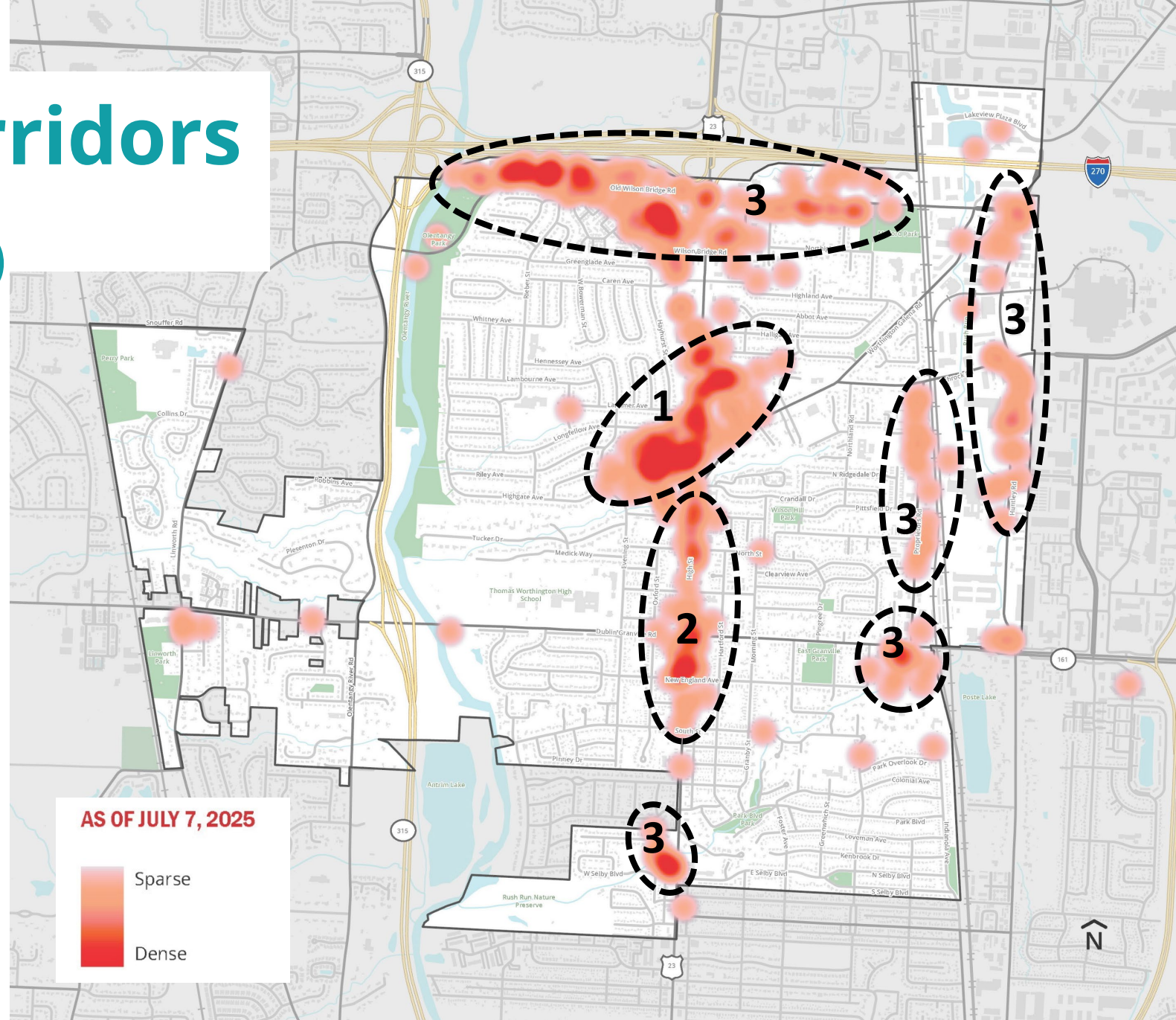
- Convert empty offices and parking lots to mixed-use development
 - Worthington Mall, Office Buildings on High Street and Wilson Bridge Road
- Renovate/revitalize older spaces

Pedestrian and cyclist-friendly commercial spaces

- More development like Old Worthington
- Less sprawling developments with oversized parking lots

Commercial Corridors and Centers (313)

1. Commercial and mixed-use expansion opportunity
2. Opportunity for enhancement of existing commercial
3. Opportunity for revitalization of underutilized areas



Initial Themes: Placemaking

Activate and expand existing community centers

- Connect development along High Street between Old Worthington and Wilson Bridge Road
- Encourage new development to be like Old Worthington
- Create more community gathering spaces with more programming and activities
- New mixed-use developments that incorporate green space and community amenities
 - Opportunities in underutilized areas like the former UMCH and Anthem sites

More and better parks, green spaces, and natural resources

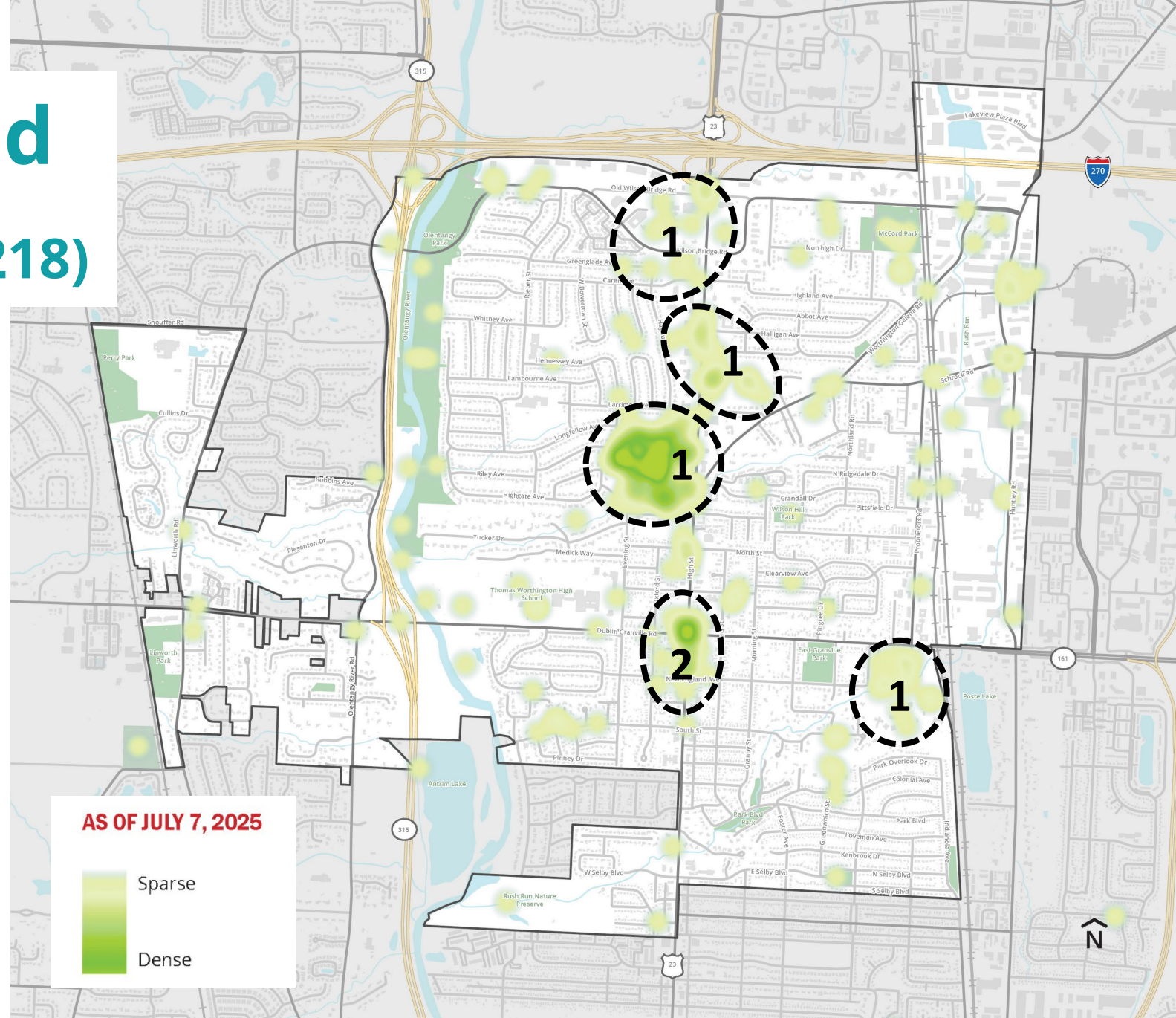
- New public amenities like splash pads, amphitheaters, and community gardens
- More sports fields/facilities and playgrounds
- Potential new park at former UMCH site

Enhance community identity

- Beautify major corridors and gateways
- More street trees across the city
- Concerns for preserving Worthington's identity in new development

Placemaking and Quality of Life (218)

1. Opportunity for potential development including parks and community amenities
2. Opportunity for enhanced community activity



Introduction to Focus Areas

What is a Focus Area?

A geographic area where the Comprehensive Plan can demonstrate design concepts and development recommendations more specifically

- Help to visualize potential/desired change
- Could be a site, small area, or portion of a corridor
- The Plan may include 3 to 5 focus areas
- Together, focus areas should demonstrate a wide range of design concepts that could apply to other places in the city (housing, open space, transportation, etc.)

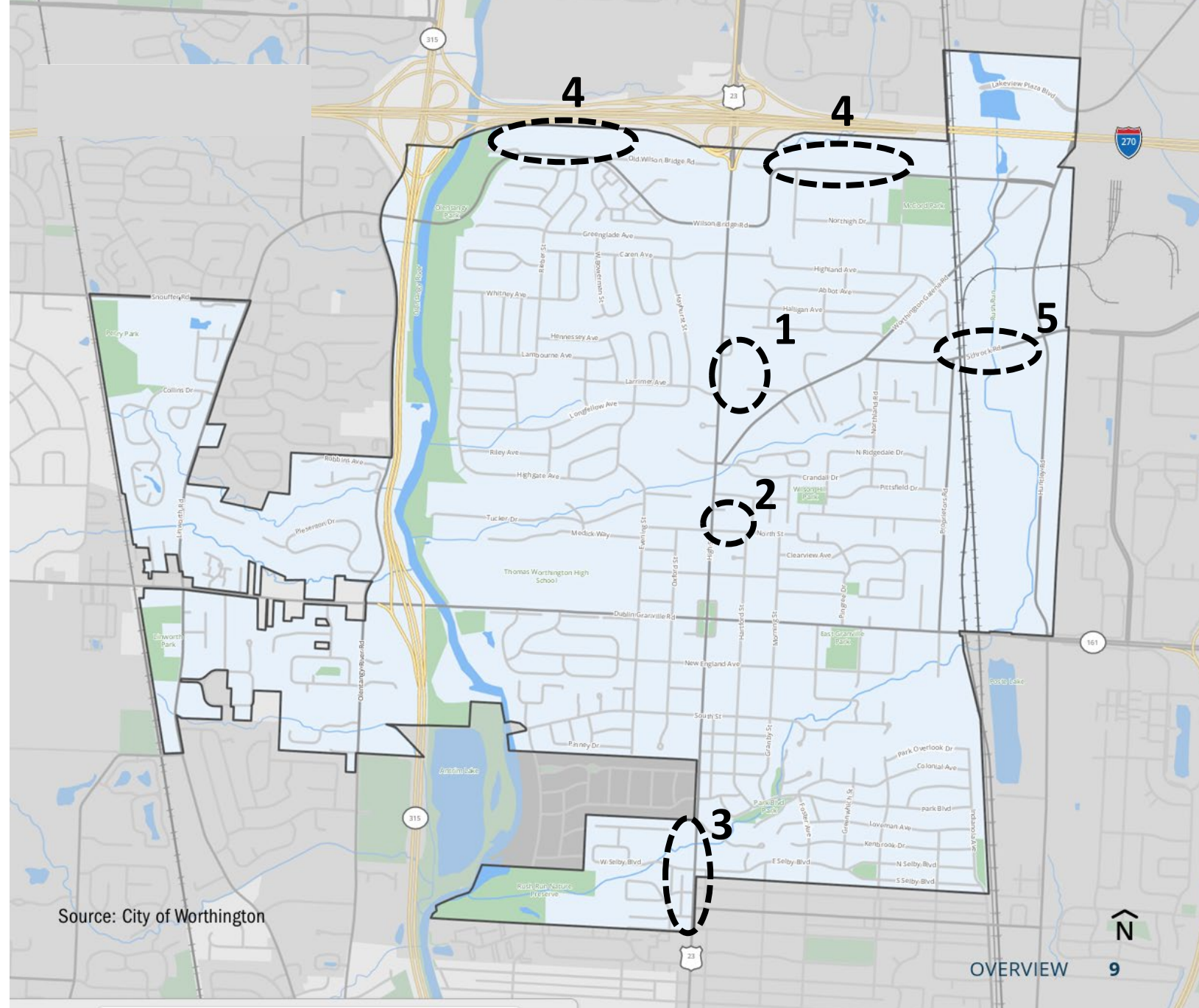


Discussion

What locations should we consider for focus areas?

Suggestions

1. North High St (section including the corridor and Anthem site)
2. High St and North St area
3. Southern gateway (several blocks along High St)
4. Site(s) within Wilson Bridge office Area
5. Site within Northeast Area



Next Steps

Next Steps

Engagement

- July 23rd: Speaker Series with Michael Wilkos
- June-July: Committee to host small group meetings
- Aug: Planning NEXT to assess first round of engagement results and prep for Round 2
- Sept: Committee Meeting 4 and City Council Update
- Oct-Nov: Second round of engagement (choices)

Next Meetings

Fourth Meeting: September 3rd

- Final takeaways from the first round of public input
- Prepare for the second round
- Discuss the plan's structure, goals, and focus areas

City Council Update: September 15th

Thank you!