

City Council Update

February 9, 2025



Purpose and Agenda

Provide initial plan direction

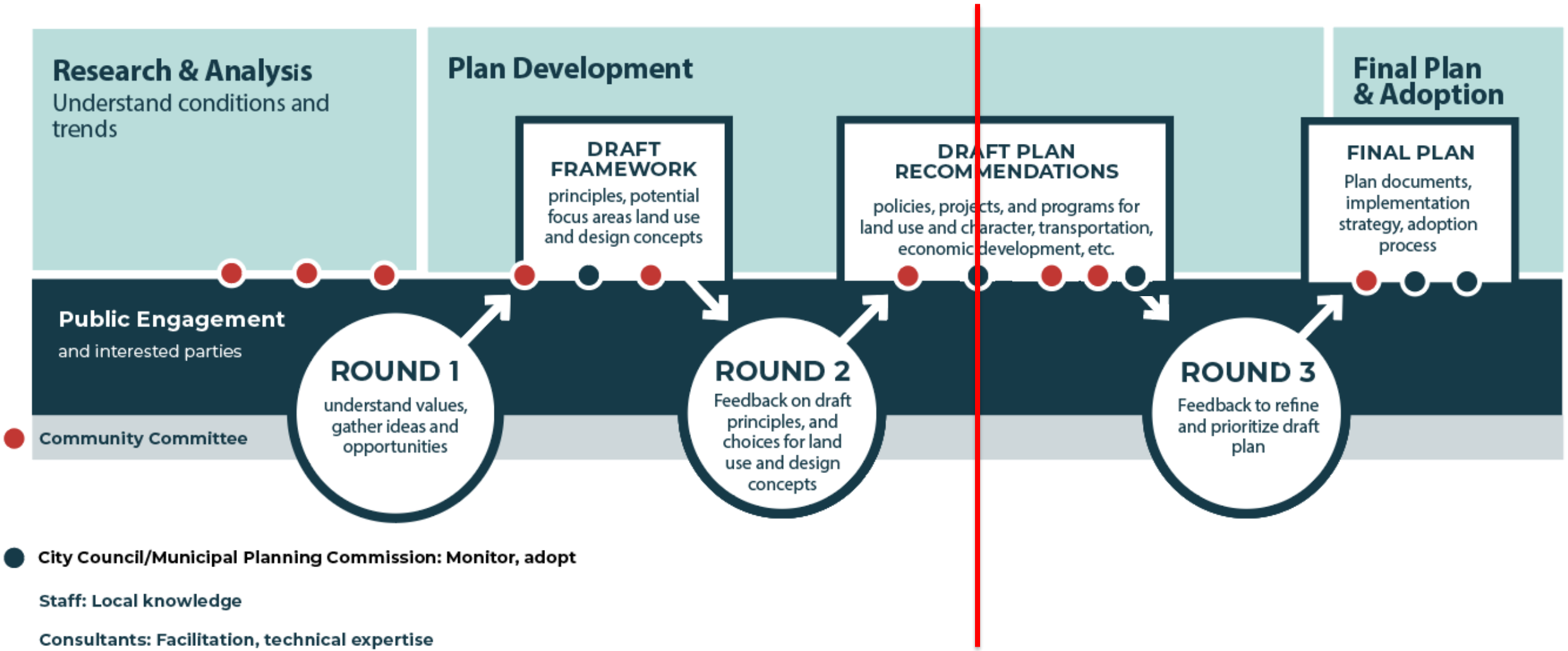
Describe the path forward

Affirm the direction of the work

1. Process Update
2. Current Direction
3. Next Steps

Process Update

Process



Keep in mind...

1. The engagement is self-selected, qualitative research.
2. The Community Committee, staff and consultants are weaving together a large amount of inputs.
3. The consultants are facilitators, not deciders.
4. The Community Committee is charged with making recommendations to MPC and City Council.
5. Some recommendations will be straightforward. Others will be difficult.

What we learned from Round 2 public input

1. Some participants carried strong pre-conceived views and often interpreted unrelated survey questions through the lens of a specific site or concern. They focused on one topic/area versus addressing the whole city.
2. Opinions vary widely. On some topics, there are divergent and conflicting opinions. (Not unusual)
3. **Over 100 comments expressed frustration, and the results are challenging to interpret due to efforts to undermine the process.**

Community Committee sentiments (Jan 14)

How are you feeling at this point in the planning process?

Hopeful

Thankful

Wary

Encouraged

Anticipation

Engaged

Better

Conflicted

Curious

Comfortable

Excited

Anticipatory

Optimistic

Satisfied

Educated

Current Direction

Vision Worthington

Principles

Plan topics and recommendations

Land Use and Character (focus areas)

Housing and Neighborhoods

Mobility and Connectivity

Economic Vitality

Environment and Resiliency

Implementation

Guiding Principles

When considering the physical aspects of Worthington, it is our intent that...

- 1. The City's unique character is strengthened.**
- 2. Growth focuses on underperforming commercial, office, and industrial areas.**
- 3. Walkable mixed-use places—unique and purposeful—are created.**
- 4. A broader range of housing serves the community.**
- 5. The character of established neighborhoods is honored while accommodating growth.**

Guiding Principles

When considering the physical aspects of Worthington, it is our intent that...

- 6. Major destinations are connected by safe walking, biking, and transit.**
- 7. The City's parks and public spaces are enhanced.**
- 8. Development and the public realm demonstrate environmental stewardship and resilience.**
- 9. Business corridors are modernized to support a resilient economy and workforce.**
- 10. Redevelopment balances the mix of uses to enhance fiscal responsibility.**

Community Preferences

Key Sentiments

- 1. To provide more options for living in Worthington “through all life stages”:**
 - all types of housing are important
 - participants were most enthusiastic about new age-friendly housing (smaller single-story units like patio homes)
 - less supportive of multi-family buildings.
- 2. For multi-family or mixed-use development, important design factors are:**
 - Building scale and site design is appropriate for its context
 - Quality materials and landscaping (large trees)
 - Design that avoids fake features
- 3. Assuming that the City’s future revenue streams are supportive, which of these types of “quality of life” improvements are most important to you:**
 - High Street improvements to make the corridor more attractive and accessible for all users (Most often ranked one, least often ranked last)
 - New large parks with gathering spaces (second most often ranked 1, but also most often ranked last)

Future Land Use and Character

Draft 2/09/2026

Residential Areas

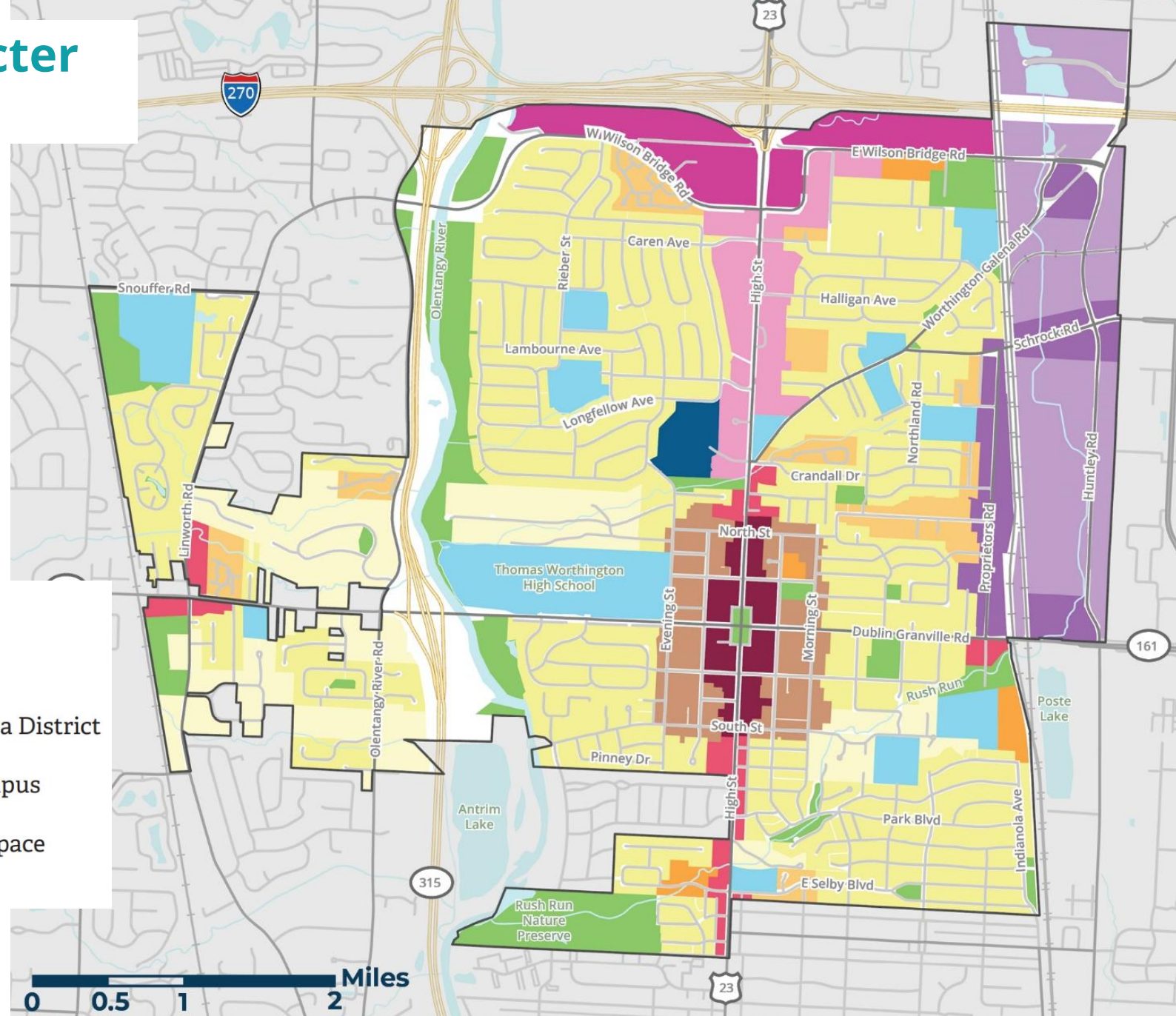
- Residential, Large-Lot
- Residential, Suburban
- Residential, Attached
- Residential, Mid-Rise
- Residential, Old Worthington

Mixed Use Areas

- Old Worthington Core
- Corridor Transition
- Corridor Mixed Use
- Wilson Bridge Mixed Use
- Forge Fields Mixed Use

Other Areas

- Forge Fields Flex
- Central Focus Area District
- Institutional Campus
- Parks and Open Space



Defining Future Character Types

1. Description of character and intent
2. Photos (preferred examples)
3. List of appropriate uses
4. Physical attributes
 - Building height range
 - Building form and relation to streets
 - Street and block structure
 - Transportation context
 - Open space forms

Old Worthington Core

Worthington's historic walkable, mixed-use core along High Street between North Street and South Street. Future development should mimic the scale, proportions, and orientation of historic development. Buildings should be oriented near High Street, be designed with authentic and pedestrian-oriented features like functional street entrances, and frame attractive and usable public spaces. Vehicle access and parking should be located behind buildings and may be shared.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Mixed Use	Residential
Office/Commercial	Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

A mix of single-family homes, accessory dwelling units, two, three, and four-family homes, townhomes, and some multi-family

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-3 stories	0-15 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Modes	Secondary Modes
Walk, Bike, Transit	Automobile

Streets

Blocks are small and walkable with alleys in some areas

Parking

On-street; shared surface or structured parking, oriented behind buildings

OPEN SPACE

Village green and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street) feature landscaping, street trees, and pedestrian amenities such as benches and outdoor dining.

Example Character



Areas with Opportunity

Activity 1

Wilson Bridge

Old Worthington

North High

South High

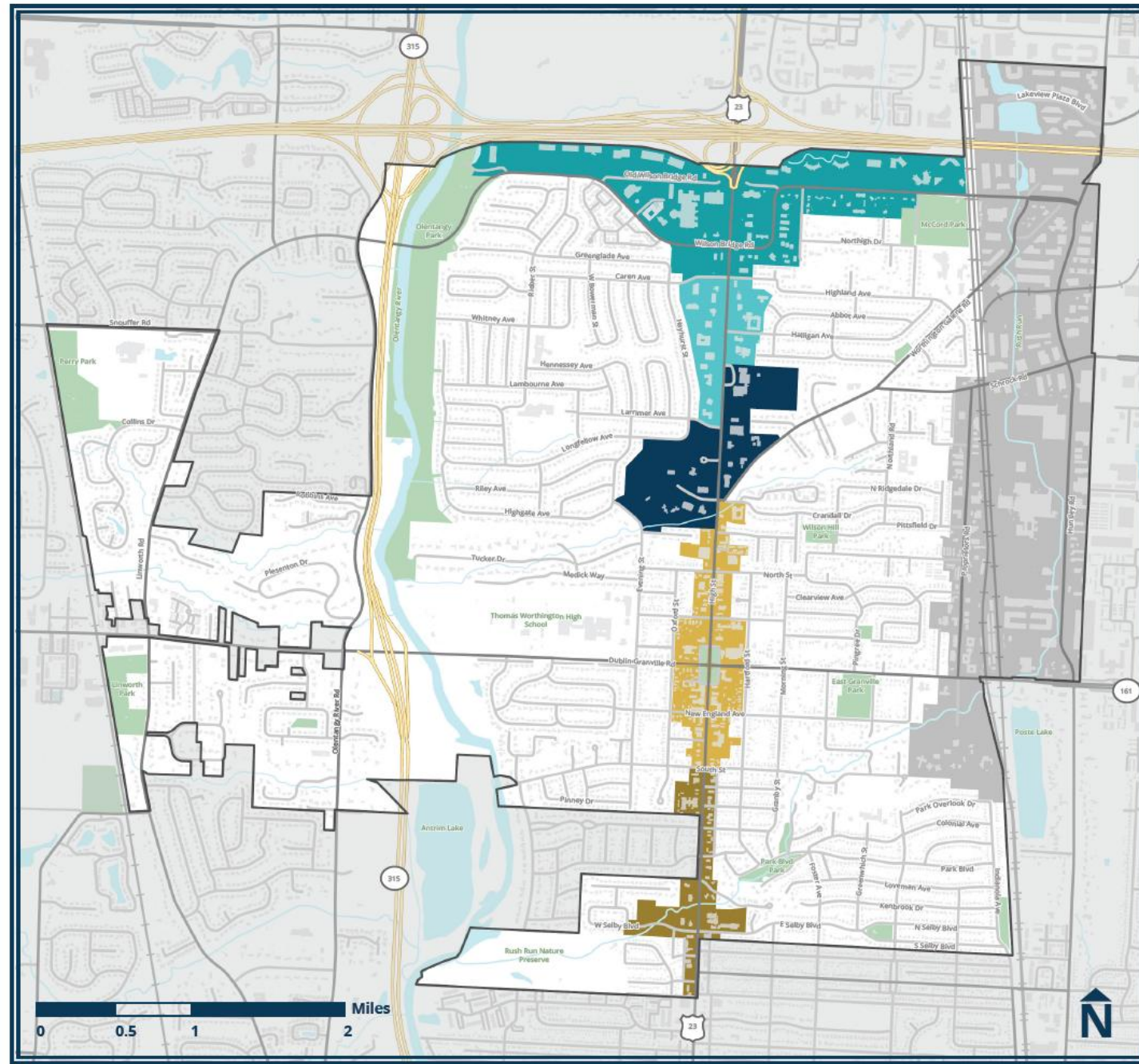
Other Areas

Central Focus Area

Activity 2 will take a closer look at this area.

Northeast Area

A vision for this area was set in the Northeast Area Plan, adopted in July of 2024.



Wilson Bridge

- 1. A signature activity center defining the northern gateway into Worthington
- 2. Intended to redevelop from an underutilized office and retail area into a walkable hub with a mix of uses
- 3. A wide range of uses is appropriate but area should have an overall employment emphasis to generate a strong positive fiscal impact for the city
- 4. Allow greater building heights, high-quality building materials, and architectural styles that are distinct to this area of Worthington. Reduce building scale as a transition to nearby residential areas.
- 5. Create better pedestrian and bike connections with trails throughout the area and safer paths across High Street.

Heights: 3-6+ stories (depending on identified context)



North High

1. Mix of office, retail, and supporting uses.
2. Support gradual redevelopment to bring buildings closer to the street, with parking behind, creating a more walkable, inviting, and well-connected streetscape.
3. Allow varying building setbacks to punctuate High Street with open spaces, rather than a consistent “street wall.”
4. Create a stronger pedestrian and bike connection to Old Worthington with improved landscaping and other streetscape elements.
5. Strategically consolidate properties, parking lots, and access points to High Street between properties to create space that is more attractive for future redevelopment.

Heights: 3-5 stories

Example Character



Old Worthington

1. Support development that respects and celebrates the historic character of Old Worthington.
2. Pursue sensitive infill and redevelopment with housing and commercial options that are appropriate with Old Worthington's historic character, such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), attached single-family homes, three-four-family homes, and boutique hotels.
3. Create a stronger pedestrian and bike connection to the surrounding neighborhoods with improved landscaping and other streetscape elements.
4. Improve the public realm to encourage social interaction through enhanced streetscape features such as street furniture, public art, and covered bus stops.



Heights: 2-3 stories

South High

1. Create a vibrant gateway into Worthington at or near the intersection of High Street and Selby Boulevard with distinct building and public realm design elements that welcome people into the community.
2. Support gradual redevelopment to maximize underutilized space, bringing buildings closer to the street with parking behind to create a more active ground floor.
3. Transition building scale and heights along High Street between the historic character of Old Worthington to the north and the Zone-In efforts completed by Columbus to the south, where four-story buildings are permitted.
4. Create a stronger pedestrian and bike connection to Old Worthington with wider sidewalks, improved landscaping, and street furniture such as benches and covered bus stops.

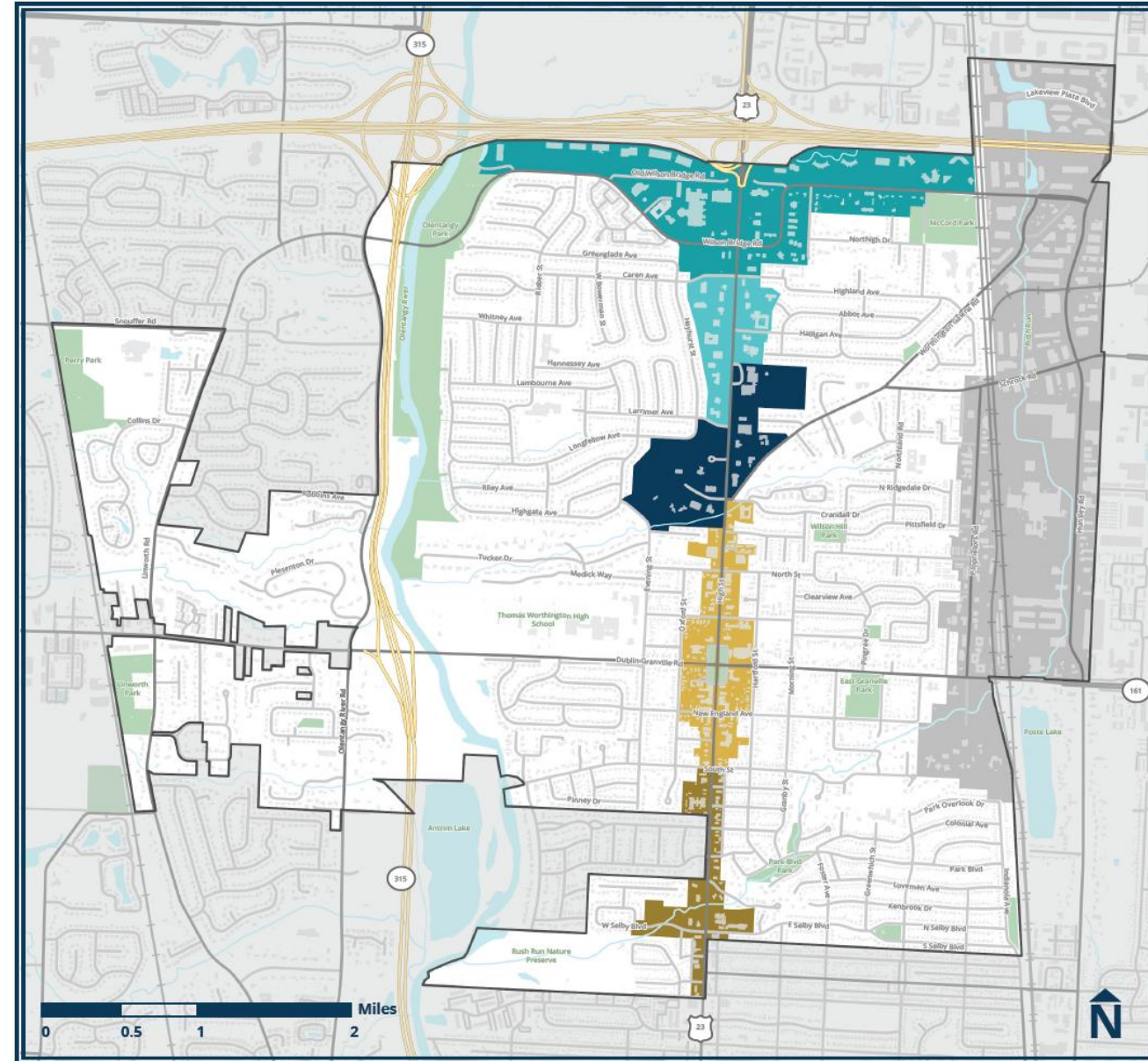
Heights: 2-4 stories



Central Focus Area

Using previous public input and analysis, the Community Committee drafted **three land use and character concepts** for feedback.

Purpose: Gain a better understanding of what the community does and doesn't support, like the other areas.



Based on what we've heard, plans for this area should...

1. Concentrate mixed-use development along High Street

- Focus higher intensity and non-residential uses along High Street
- Include shared parking or parking structures to serve mixed use development

2. Emphasize meaningful open space

- Ensure open space is visible, usable, and connected—not fragmented or residual
- Usability and amenity value is more important than acreage
- Protect the creek corridor and clearly identify permanent no-build areas
- Create a trail system as a continuous feature of the area

Based on what we've heard, plans for this area should...

3. Include a mix of housing types, at a scale and location that respects their context

- Include housing that can serve various community needs
- Use lower-intensity housing types—such as townhomes or duplexes—as transitions near neighborhoods
- Residential could be a supporting component of the mixed-use areas along High Street

4. Require clear transitions to surrounding neighborhoods

- Step down building height and mass near residential edges
- Use open space, local streets, and lower-intensity building types as buffers
- Ensure buildings along neighborhood edges reflect residential scale and orientation

Based on what we've heard, plans for this area should...

5. Improve connectivity and minimize cut-through impacts

- Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to surrounding neighborhoods
- Limit vehicular access points that could increase through-traffic
- Design connections to feel optional and local, not regional or high-volume

6. Provide public benefit with long-term fiscal responsibility

- Ensure that new development contributes to the cost of infrastructure, amenities, and ongoing maintenance
- Recognize the site's role in providing citywide public benefits, including open space, housing options, and environmental protection
- Recognize that this location should have a net positive fiscal benefit

Based on what we've heard, plans for this area should...

7. Architecture, materials, and landscaping should reflect Worthington's charm and quality

- Building form, placement, and massing that reflects Worthington's historic character, feel authentic, and avoid "fake" features
- Building and site materials should be high quality and durable
- Site and street landscaping includes large trees

8. Integrate low-impact, visible environmental site features

- Use low-impact development techniques to manage stormwater on site and protect the creek corridor and downstream impacts
- Incorporate features such as rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavements, native plantings, and tree canopy as visible, functional elements of the public realm

Are we on the right track?

Next Steps

Schedule

- **March 11:** Committee meeting 8 (recommendations)
- **April:** Committee meeting 9 (recommendations)
- **April:** City Council Update 3
- **April/May:** Public Input round 3
- **June:** Committee meeting 10/11
- **June/July:** City Council/MPC joint work session (pre-adoption)

Questions