

Welcome to the Community Review

1

Review

Please review the draft plan posters at your own pace. If you have questions, ask a member of the planning team, City staff, or Community Committee.

2

Mark what's most important

Use sticker dots to mark recommendations that you think should be priorities.

3

Provide written comments

Let the City know what you like, what you would change, or other thoughts you'd like to share.

4

Continue online

Explore the draft plan in detail and provide comments during this round through June 3.

The comprehensive plan builds on Vision Worthington through ten guiding principles that provide overall direction to where and how the City should develop.

As Worthington develops, it is our intent that:

1. The City's unique character is strengthened.

We will respect and build upon the cherished character of historic places and create a strong sense of place in other areas. The specific character, expressed through building design and materials, public spaces, landscaping, signage, lighting, historic preservation, and public art, will vary between different areas, but it will be intentional, context-appropriate, and contribute to community pride.

2. Growth focuses on underperforming commercial, office, and industrial areas.

We will pursue intentional redevelopment for aging retail/office areas, older industrial districts, and corridor reinvestment sites. We will encourage other corridor areas to evolve in character through incremental, opportunity-driven redevelopment and phased infrastructure and public-realm upgrades. When developing vacant land, we will look to preserve meaningful green space to complement new buildings so the area doesn't feel overbuilt.

3. Walkable mixed-use places, with uniqueness and purpose, are created.

We will shape new places that combine shops, restaurants, services, employment space, diverse housing, and a high-quality, pedestrian-scale public realm, converting large blocks and surface parking lots into connected streets and walkable blocks in targeted nodes and corridors.

4. A broader range of housing serves the community.

We will broaden housing types and price points, preserve and encourage reinvestment in naturally occurring affordable housing, and encourage accessible, age-friendly homes; so young people, families, and long-time residents can reside here through every life stage. New housing will be focused on reinvestment areas, corridors, and mixed-use nodes.

5. The character of established neighborhoods is honored while accommodating growth.

We will help established neighborhoods maintain their character while corridors evolve, supporting context-appropriate infill and additions, requiring transitions in scale at neighborhood edges, encouraging preservation and reinvestment in existing homes, and limiting traffic on neighborhood streets.

6. Major destinations are connected by safe walking, biking, and transit.

We will close sidewalk gaps, expand trail connections, improve crossings, calm traffic, expand bikeways, enhance streetscapes, and integrate COTA (and potential bus rapid transit or BRT) with land use—linking Old Worthington's Central Business District with schools, parks, employment areas, and new development along High Street, SR-161, and the regional trail network.

7. The City's parks and public spaces are enhanced.

We will enhance the quality, accessibility, and utilization of existing parks and civic spaces and, where appropriate, deliver new public spaces as part of redevelopment, so these places reflect community values for nature, culture, education, and civic life.

8. Development and the public realm demonstrate environmental stewardship and resilience.

We will protect natural systems (riparian areas, woodlands, steep slopes), expand the tree canopy, apply green infrastructure and on-site stormwater management, promote energy-efficient buildings and site design, and encourage native plants, recycling, and composting as baseline expectations for all significant projects.

9. Business corridors are modernized to support a resilient economy and workforce.

We will expect new employment-focused mixed-use development in key corridors. In the High Street and Wilson Bridge Road corridors, new mixed-use office development should serve as the primary use, with complementary uses that support the viability and vibrancy of these areas. In the Northeast Area, we will pursue clean and flexible light-industrial and innovation space, provide small-business and incubator opportunities, and create smaller mixed-use nodes to serve these employment areas.

10. Redevelopment supports long-term fiscal responsibility.

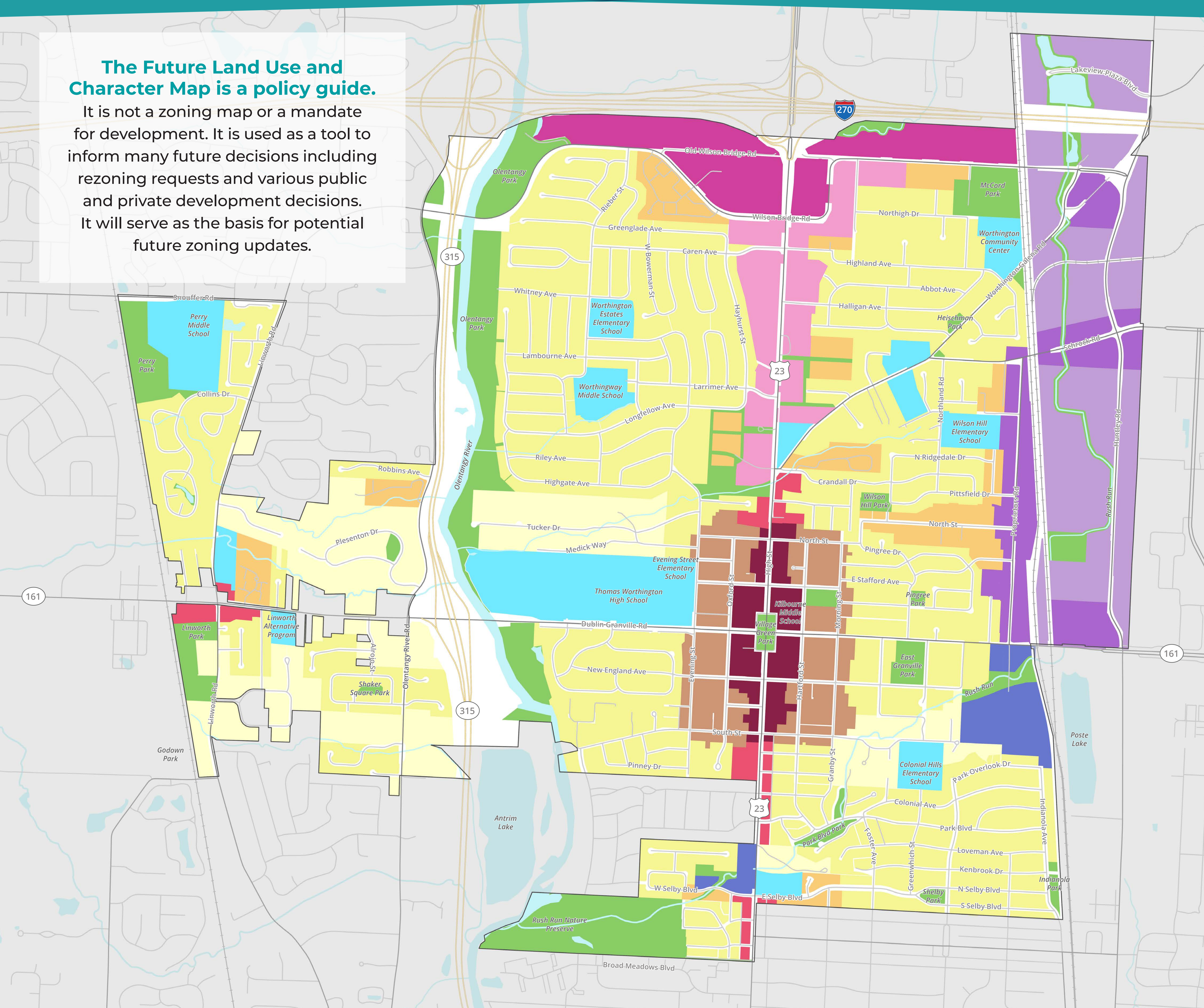
We will use land and infrastructure efficiently, right-size utilities, evaluate life-cycle costs, and align land use with service costs, creating a citywide mix of uses that strengthens Worthington's long-term finances and capacity to deliver outstanding services.

Land Use and Character

The Future Land Use and Character map is a policy guide that describes the City's expectations and intent about future land use and development character over time.

The Future Land Use and Character Map is a policy guide.

It is not a zoning map or a mandate for development. It is used as a tool to inform many future decisions including rezoning requests and various public and private development decisions. It will serve as the basis for potential future zoning updates.



Future Land Use and Character Map

- Residential, Large-Lot
- Residential, Suburban
- Residential, Small-Lot & Attached
- Residential, Old Worthington
- Old Worthington Core
- Corridor Transition
- Corridor Mixed Use
- Wilson Bridge Mixed Use
- Rush Run Mixed Use
- Forge Fields Mixed Use
- Forge Fields Flex
- Institutional Campus
- Parks and Green Space

To see complete text for the future character types, please visit:

WorthingtonTogether.org



Land Use and Character

3

The Future Land Use and Character map is a policy guide that describes the City's expectations and intent about future land use and development character over time.

Residential, Large-Lot

Residential areas characterized by large lots (greater than one acre) that are developed in a pattern that feels like rural living. Homes are set far back from streets. Blocks are long and streets are narrow and lack curb and gutter systems. Some areas (west of the Olentangy River) are on septic systems. Residential, large lot areas represent established development patterns that are not intended to change.

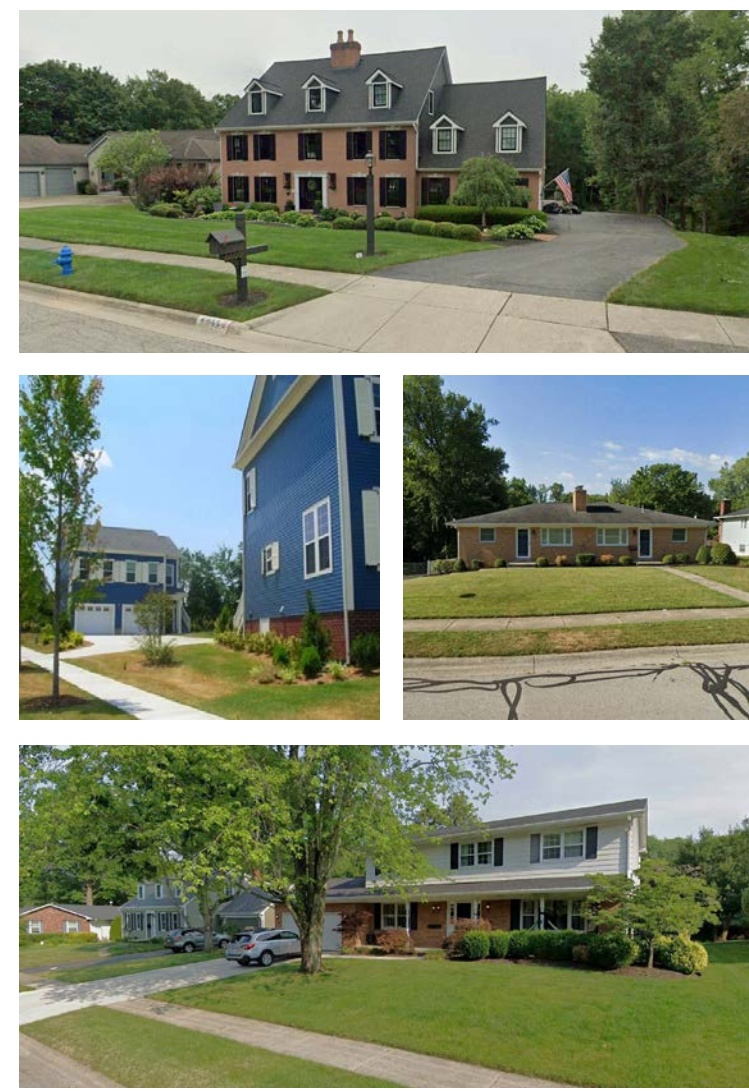
Example Character



Residential, Suburban

Residential areas with primarily single family homes on a wide range of lot sizes and housing styles that reflect the era in which they were developed. These areas typically have a connected network of blocks, curb and gutter systems and sidewalks.

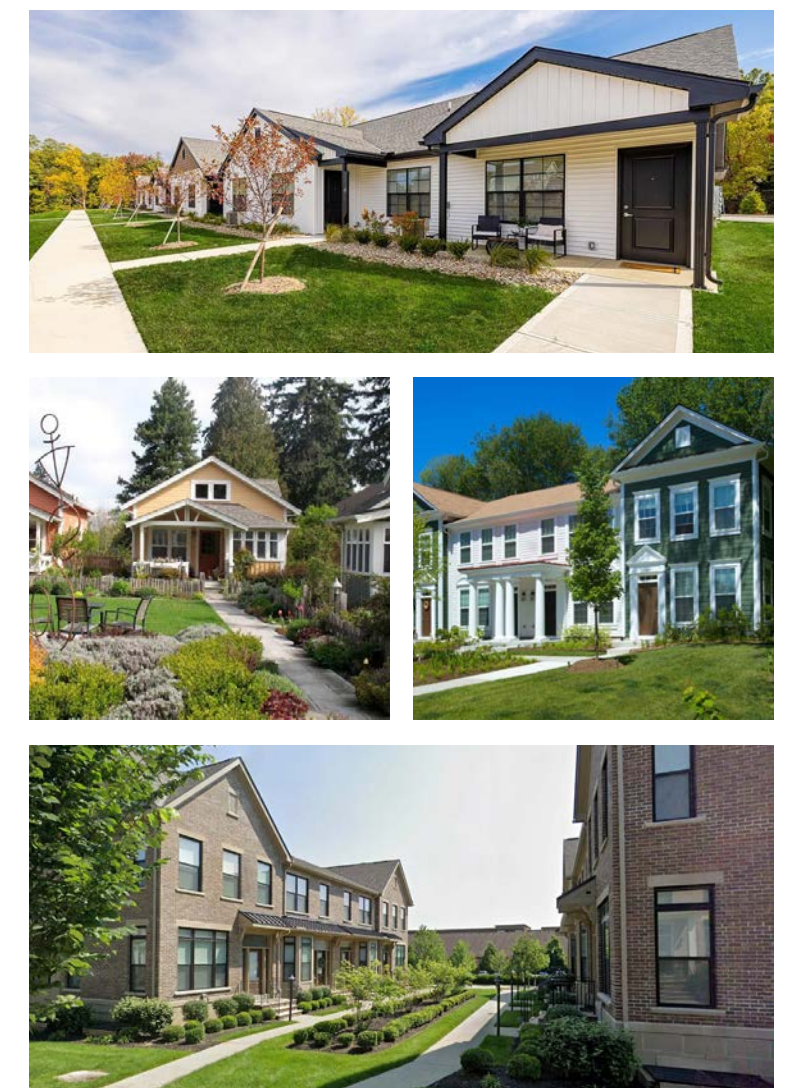
Example Character



Residential, Small-Lot & Attached

Residential areas characterized by small lot single family and attached housing at a scale and orientation that is compatible to single-family. They are appropriate at the edge of suburban neighborhoods as a transition to activity centers and corridors.

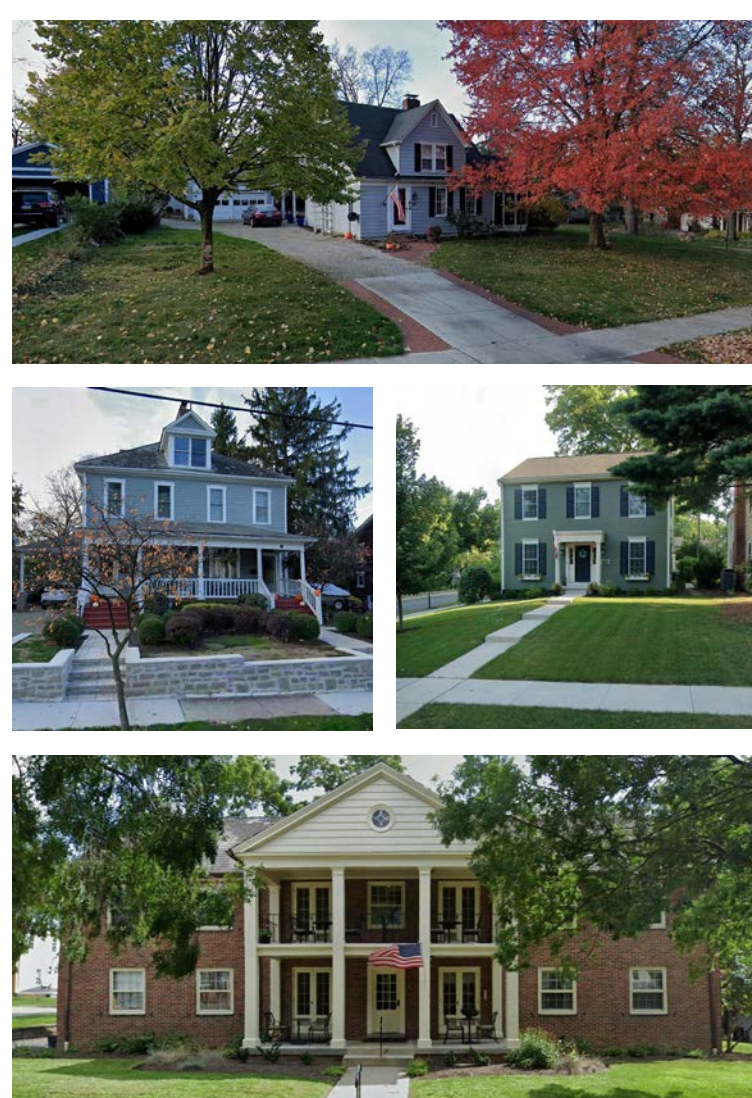
Example Character



Residential, Old Worthington

The residential areas of the Old Worthington Historic District, characterized by a mix of traditional housing types in a walkable gridded street pattern following the city's original plat.

Example Character



Old Worthington Core

Worthington's historic walkable, mixed-use core along High St between North St and South St. 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.

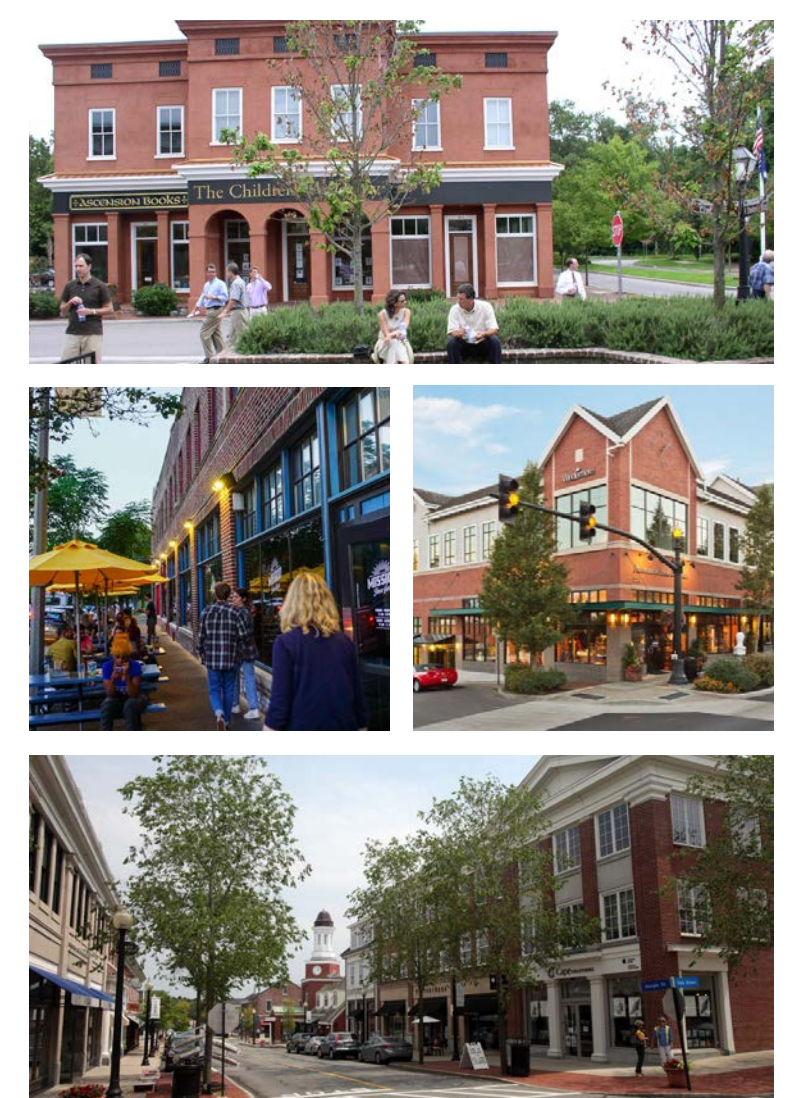
Example Character



Corridor Transition

Areas of smaller scale commercial and mixed use development along High Street or SR 161 that are well connected to neighborhoods and serve as gateways into or transitions within Worthington. Future development should locate buildings closer to the street to improve the pedestrian experience and consolidate parking and curb cuts.

Example Character



Corridor Mixed Use

Areas along the northern portions of High Street, focused on a mix of office with retail and supporting services. Through incremental redevelopment, these areas should evolve to a pattern with buildings closer to the street that frame a safe and appealing pedestrian experience, fewer curb cuts, and shared parking located behind buildings.

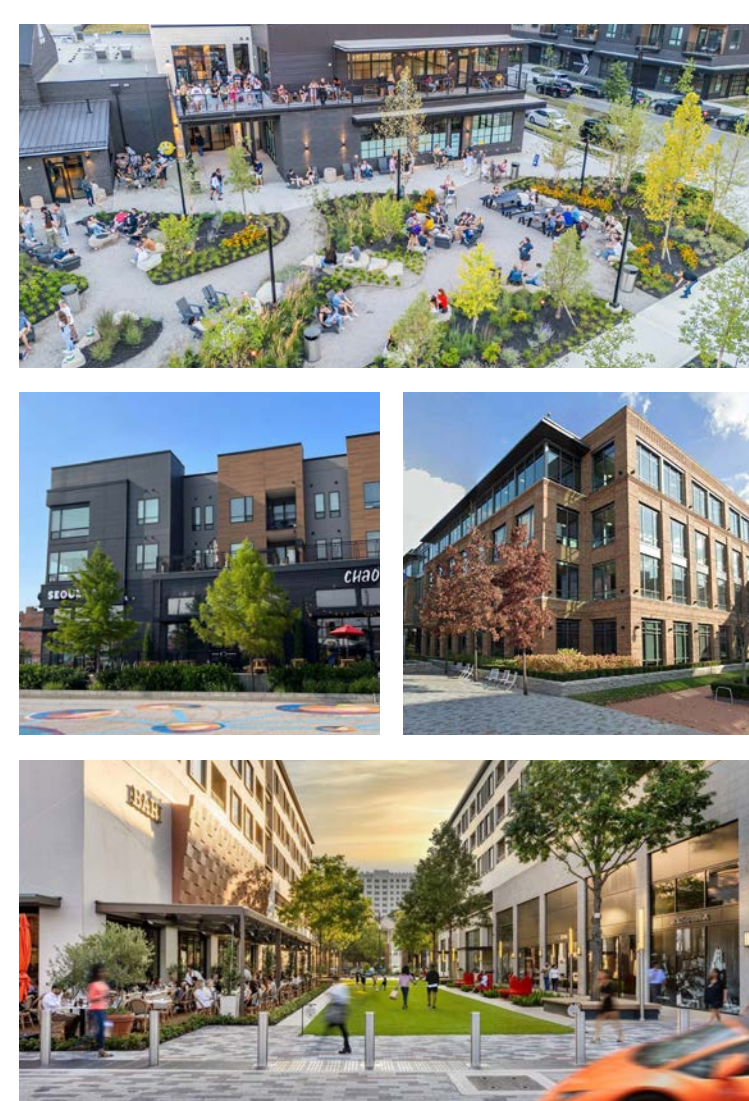
Example Character



Wilson Bridge Mixed Use

A signature activity center defining the northern gateway along High Street and Wilson Bridge Road. This area is intended to redevelop from underutilized suburban office and retail area into a walkable hub, with new class-A office, retail, shopping, dining, activated public spaces, and residential options mixed horizontally (across a site) and vertically (within buildings). A wide range of uses is appropriate, but the area should have an overall employment emphasis.

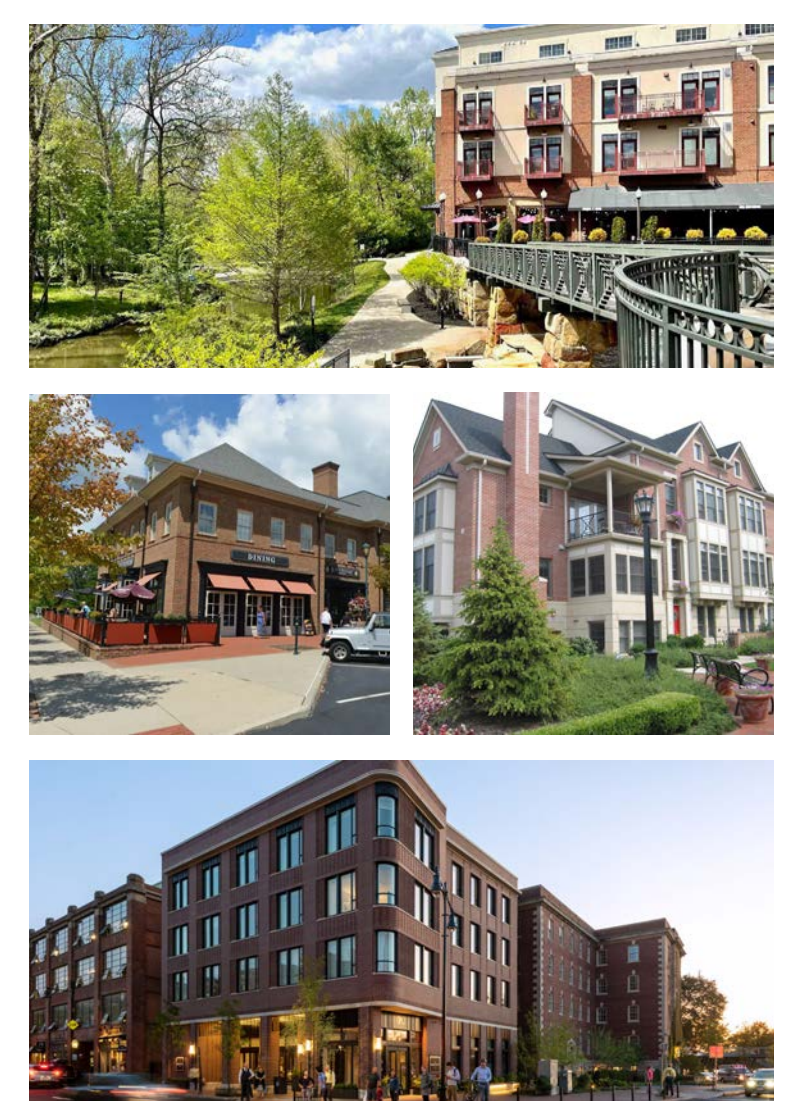
Example Character



Rush Run Mixed Use

Employment-oriented mixed-use areas along High Street or Route 161 where Rush Run creates an opportunity to integrate ecological amenity, active transportation, and coordinated campus-scale development. These areas accommodate office uses as primary drivers, with residential and limited retail integrated into a live-work environment. Larger parcel sizes support coordinated redevelopment rather than lot-by-lot infill.

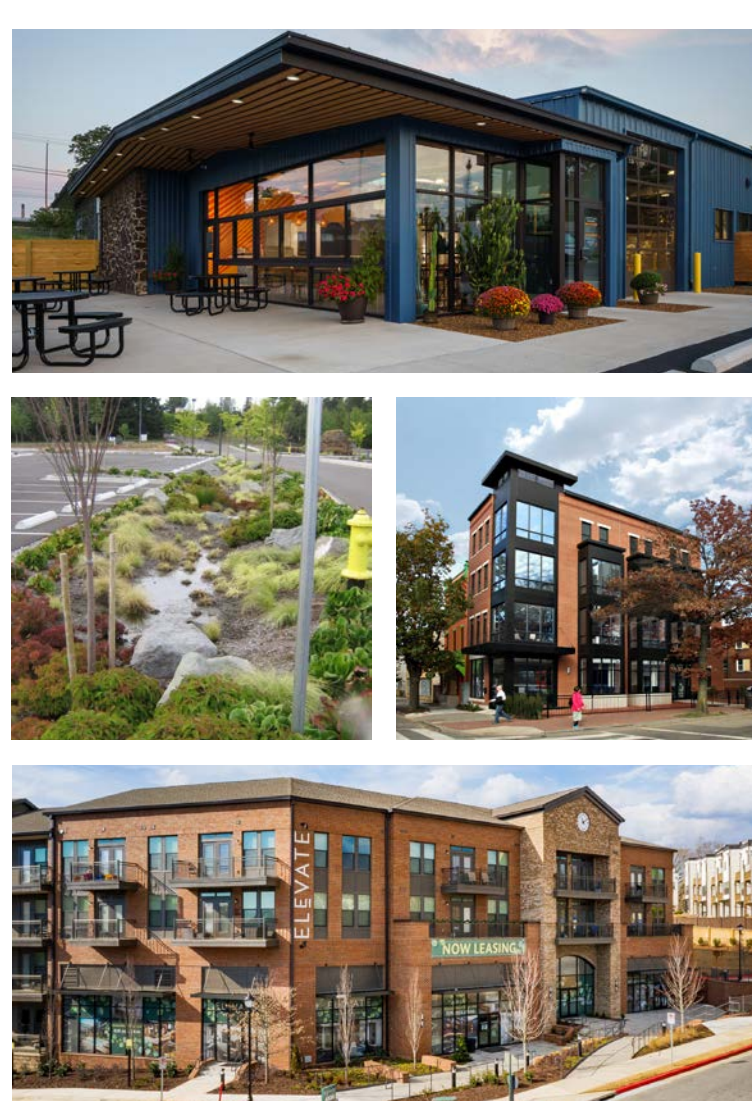
Example Character



Forge Fields Mixed Use

Employment-focused mixed use areas designed to support a live-work environment within the Northeast area of the city. As described in the Northeast Area Plan, these areas should combine light manufacturing uses with commercial and residential areas to support the larger employment uses in the area.

Example Character



Forge Fields Flex

Employment area identified in the Northeast Area Plan, supporting light manufacturing, advanced industries, renewable and clean energy industries, tech-flex spaces, class-A office space, and research & development

Example Character



Institutional Campus

All public and private institutional and civic campuses outside the Old Worthington Core, including schools, churches, and City civic buildings.

Parks and Green Space

All active and passive public parks, trails, amenities, and green spaces. Additionally, some privately-owned undeveloped land within the flood plain is included.

Park-like and preserved green spaces are often integrated with other land uses, especially neighborhood and mixed use areas, which are not included in this place type.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

COMPREHENSIVE ZONING & DEVELOPMENT CODE REFORM

Zoning and development regulations are the primary tools for implementing this plan. A coordinated update ensures land use, housing, design standards, and procedures work together to support reinvestment, protect neighborhood character, and provide predictable expectations for property owners and residents.

1.1 Conduct a comprehensive regulatory assessment.

Evaluate the existing Planning and Zoning Code, Design Guidelines, and engineering standards, identifying conflicts and barriers to implementing the comprehensive plan and establishing clear priorities for future updates.

1.2 Undertake a coordinated rewrite of the Planning and Zoning Code.

Rewrite the 1971 Planning and Zoning Code to align with the Future Land Use and Character Map, removing barriers to mixed-use development and setting clearer, more predictable expectations for property owners and the City.

1.3 Update Architectural Review District standards.

Revise the 2003 Worthington Design Guidelines to reflect current design standards and modern building materials, ensuring new development reinforces the community's cultural heritage while accommodating contemporary needs like mixed-use, walkability, and sustainability.

1.4 Modernize engineering and infrastructure standards.

Update the City's outdated engineering and infrastructure standards to support mixed-use redevelopment, Complete Streets principles, shared parking, and stormwater coordination, ensuring routine infrastructure improvements consistently advance the plan's long-term vision.

place priority stickers below



place priority stickers below



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

CATALYZE AND SUPPORT MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT

A successful flagship mixed-use project can demonstrate the community's vision, strengthen the tax base, and build confidence in change. While priority locations are identified today, additional sites may emerge over time. To succeed, catalytic projects must be supported by coordinated infrastructure planning, financing tools, and clear public objectives.

2.1 Proactively advance a catalytic redevelopment project.

Prioritize a targeted site in one of the identified opportunity areas soon after the plan's adoption to signal to employers, investors, and developers that Worthington is committed to high-quality, mixed-use redevelopment that grows the income tax base while reinforcing community character.

2.2 Align public policy to support the Opportunity Areas.

Proactively update policies and processes to reduce barriers and increase the marketability of the Opportunity Areas, coordinating closely with the development community to ensure public and private investments work together.

2.3 Prioritize Capital Improvement Program (CIP) investments in the identified Opportunity Areas.

Update the five-year CIP to reflect the comprehensive plan's strategies and recommendations, sequencing capital improvements to support a catalytic project.

2.4 Plan for shared and district-scale infrastructure.

Coordinated infrastructure systems — such as shared parking, stormwater facilities, and connected greenways — that can serve multiple properties.

2.5 Use financing tools strategically.

Expand and strategically deploy economic incentives and financing tools such as TIFs, infrastructure cost-sharing, and public-private partnerships to support redevelopment, emphasizing transparency and requiring measurable public benefits from projects that receive incentives.

place priority stickers below



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

ENABLE INCREMENTAL AND COORDINATED MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT

Clear standards, flexible tools, and coordinated infrastructure allow smaller-scale and phased redevelopment to occur in a predictable, context-sensitive manner aligned with community expectations.

3.1 Facilitate coordination among property owners.

Encourage shared access and parking agreements among property owners, using model agreements, streamlined approvals, and incentives to reduce underutilized space and improve walkability over time.

3.2 Establish incentives for parcel consolidation.

Use tools such as density bonuses, flexible standards, and expedited review to encourage property owners and developers to consolidate fragmented parcels, enabling larger, more cohesive redevelopment projects.

3.3 Align infrastructure with long-term intended character.

Proactively coordinate streets, utilities, stormwater, and parking investments to guide incremental redevelopment toward the plan's long-term vision rather than responding on a site-by-site basis.

place priority stickers below



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

SUPPORT GREAT PLACES AND SPACES THAT PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE, WORK, SHOP, AND EAT

Companies competing for talent increasingly make location decisions based on the amenity mix and character of the communities where they locate. Old Worthington's authentic, pedestrian-scaled environment, the City's trail network, and the potential for world-class mixed-use development on key opportunity sites are genuine competitive assets in the regional market for jobs and investment.

The strategic actions under this priority set the economic rationale for place-based investment. The physical implementation, through land use, regulations, and opportunity area plans, is addressed through Strategic Priorities 2 and 3 in the Land Use and Character chapter and within each Opportunity Area section.

4.1 Promote "Trophy" Mixed-Use Development on key opportunity sites

Pursue world-class, Class A++ mixed-use developments on sites with assembled acreage, highway access, and trail proximity to compete with peer Central Ohio suburbs like Grandview Yard and Bridge Park, attracting high-value employers and talent to Worthington.

4.2 Keep Old Worthington healthy and vibrant.

Protect Old Worthington's role as a high-quality, regionally distinctive economic asset by monitoring parking demand, people density, and car usage as activity grows, and improving wayfinding to underutilized parking to ensure continued growth enhances rather than degrades the district's experience.

4.3 Promote infill redevelopment of selected commercial and industrial properties.

Strategically support mixed-use infill redevelopment in identified opportunity areas where land is underutilized, allowing infrastructure investments to build market confidence over time and grow the City's tax base and population.

4.4 Support modernization and diversification of employment space options.

Update zoning and development standards to accommodate flex space, co-working, innovation space, and light industrial uses that reflect evolving business models, particularly in areas like Forge Fields at Rush Run.

place priority stickers below

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

TARGET INDUSTRIES THAT SUPPORT CENTRAL OHIO'S DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AND THE CONTEXT OF WORTHINGTON'S OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Worthington has limited opportunity for the type of mega-site development occurring in other parts of suburban Columbus. But within its commercial corridors and opportunity areas, the City has competitive advantages: its geographic position along I-270, a highly skilled resident workforce, and a high-quality place. Focusing recruitment on industries that match these assets and on sectors consistent with One Columbus regional targets ensures that the City pursues opportunities it can actually win, rather than competing on every front.

5.1 Update and apply a target industry framework.*

Periodically refine Worthington's target industry list every three to five years based on regional economic trends and competitive positioning, using it to guide marketing, recruitment, and incentive decisions.

*Refer to the chapter for a current list of target industries.

5.2 Maintain a structured Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program

Proactively engage existing employers through regular outreach, a CRM-based tracking system, and an up-to-date commercial space inventory, coordinating with regional partners to address emerging needs and reduce the risk of business relocation or contraction.

5.3 Work with regional partners to analyze income tax filing patterns and ensure the City is fully capturing its tax base.

Collaborate with regional partners and peer municipalities to investigate discrepancies between employment figures and municipal tax filers, identifying whether gaps reflect data issues or missed revenue and determining appropriate corrective steps.

place priority stickers below

To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

ENSURE WORTHINGTON PROACTIVELY STRENGTHENS ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Worthington has an economic development capacity profile similar to many communities in metro Columbus. But the City is likely to face an unusually large number of major development projects over the next several years, which will consume substantial staff time and compete directly with day-to-day business retention, small business support, and recruitment functions. At the same time, realizing the redevelopment potential of Worthington's opportunity areas will require tools and organizational structures that the City does not yet fully have in place.

6.1 Invest in the City's Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).

Capitalize and align Worthington's CIC with the plan's priority investment areas so it can actively support land assembly, gap financing, and master developer roles at key redevelopment sites like Wilson Bridge, North High, and Forge Fields.

6.2 Ensure adequate staffing capacity for economic development functions.

As economic development activities expand through the BRE program, target industry framework, and major redevelopment projects, assess whether additional staff capacity — through direct hiring, contracted support, or shared services — is needed to execute the full range of plan activities.

6.3 Expand the small business development toolkit.

Broaden the existing facade program into a more comprehensive assistance toolkit covering exterior improvements, ADA upgrades, and tenant fit-out costs, offering flexible financing structures such as grants, low-interest loans, or forgivable loans alongside technical assistance partnerships.



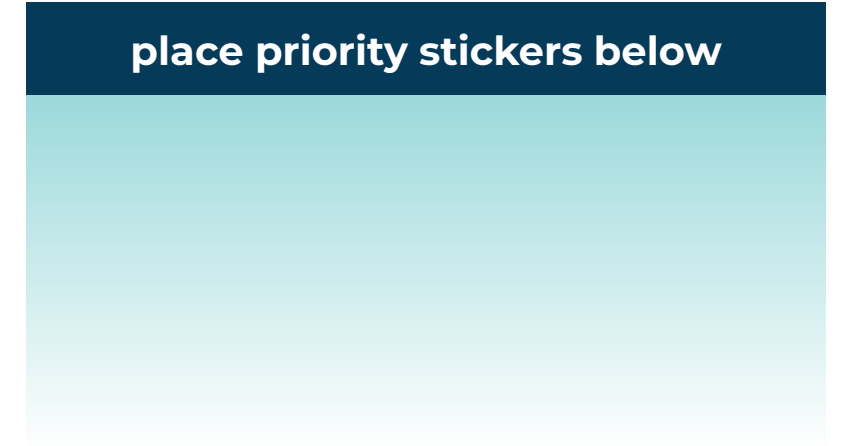
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

ESTABLISH CLEAR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF INCENTIVES AND OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Worthington currently uses a range of economic development tools, including TIF, CRA agreements, NCA financing, the Venture Grant program, and negotiated incentive packages evaluated on a project-by-project basis. As redevelopment activity intensifies and the scale of individual projects grows, clear policies are important to avoid inconsistent outcomes and difficult negotiations with schools and other taxing entities. Establishing clear criteria for when and how tools are deployed protects both the City and its partners, signals to the development community that Worthington operates predictably and professionally, and ensures that public resources are directed toward projects that advance community goals.

7.1 Formalize incentive policies and evaluation criteria.

Adopt a written set of guiding principles and evaluation criteria governing the deployment of incentive tools, ensuring consistency and transparency through key provisions such as "but for" determinations, TIF hold-harmless guarantees, gain-share provisions, pre-negotiated CRA agreements with Worthington City Schools, and alignment with the Comprehensive Plan.



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



Estimated Annual Fiscal Impact of Future Land Use Types in Worthington

Each land use type plays an important role in creating a complete community, but not all land uses have the same financial impact on the City. While fiscal impact is important, other issues such as the environment, housing affordability, jobs/housing balance and quality of life must also be considered. In the Economic Vitality chapter, the assumptions and findings of Worthington's Cost of Land Use analysis prepared in 2025 by TischlerBise were applied to this plan's Future Land Use and Character Types. The mixed-use character types, like the example shown here, have a highly variable fiscal impact that depends on the mix of uses, the number of jobs, and wages of those jobs. Per acre impacts are rounded. **These figures should be interpreted as "order of magnitude" annual impacts to the City of Worthington. See the Economic Vitality chapter for detail.**

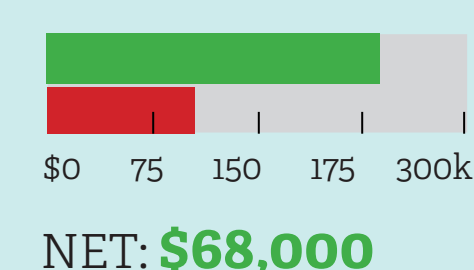
Example:

Corridor, Mixed Use

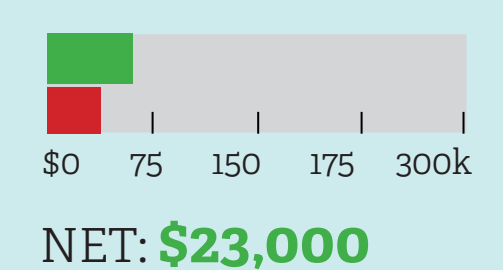


Existing conditions assume: 65% Class B&C Office and 35% Retail at FAR 0.25. Target assumes a district-wide FAR of 1.0, an average residential density: 12-24 DU/acre (about 25%), 55% office use by floor area and 20% retail.

Target Case Per Acre



Existing Conditions Per Acre



Worthington's 2005 Thoroughfare Plan defined roadways by their role in the vehicular network — an approach that doesn't account for adjacent land uses, historic character, or the needs of different users. This Plan introduces a context-based framework with four land use contexts and four street types that shape roadway design around a street's character and function.

Street Context Classification Map

RESIDENTIAL

- Boulevard
- Avenue
- Neighborhood Connector
- Street

OLD WORTHINGTON

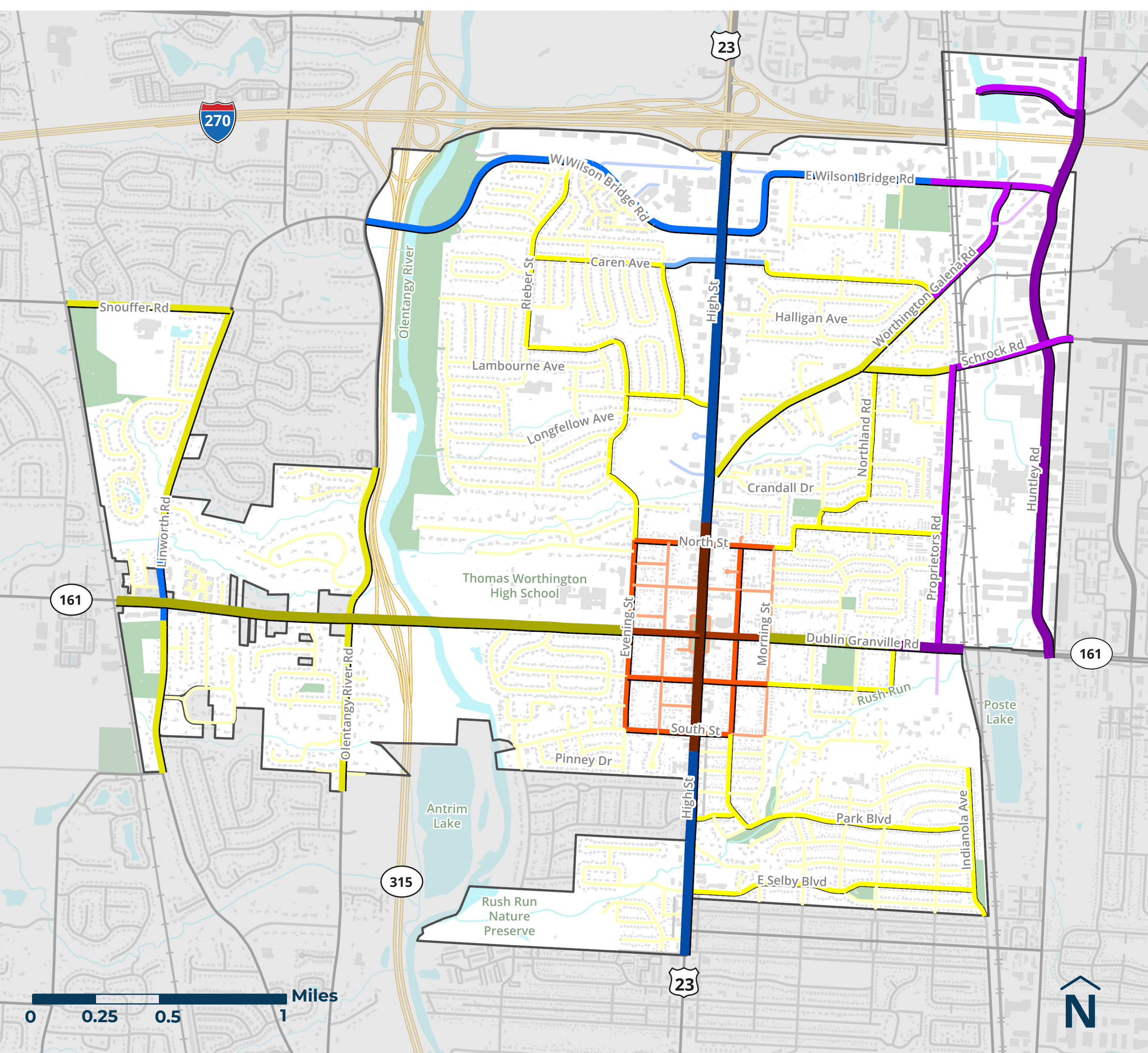
- Boulevard
- Avenue
- Neighborhood Connector
- Street

MIXED USE

- Boulevard
- Avenue
- Neighborhood Connector
- Street

INNOVATION

- Boulevard
- Neighborhood Connector
- Street

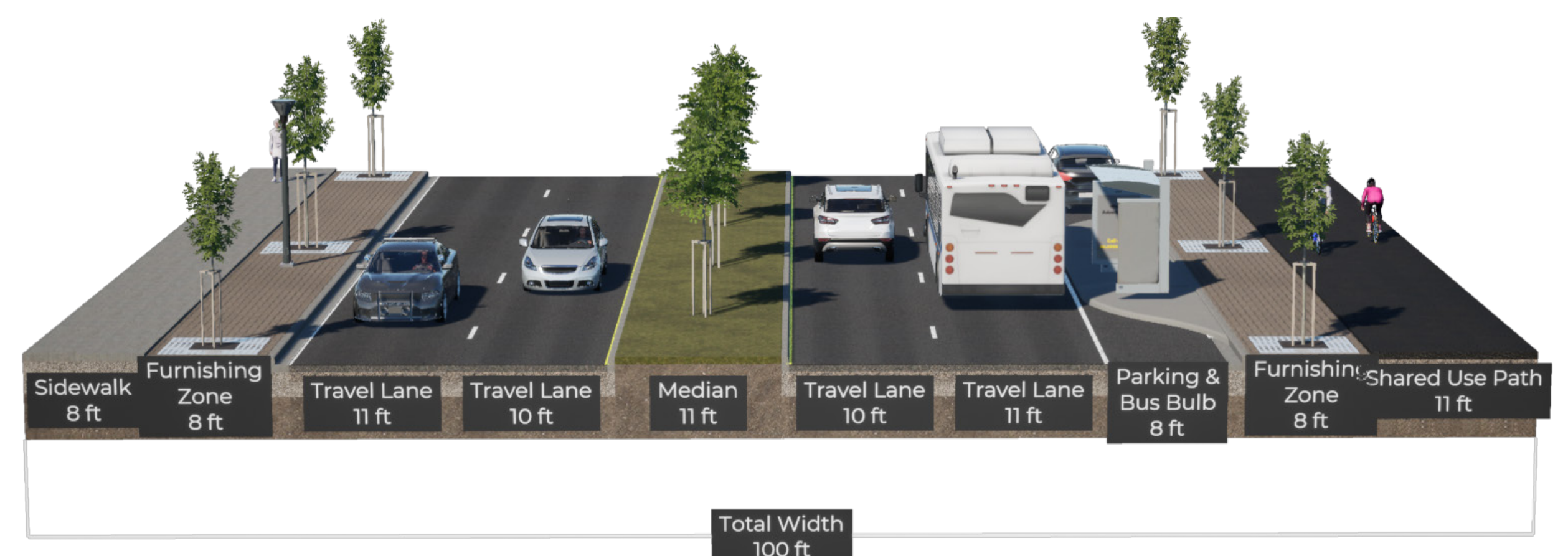


High Street's Future

Below are several street cross-section diagrams depicting how High St in Worthington could change in the future. See the Mobility and Connectivity and the Opportunity Areas chapters of the plan for more details about High Street and other streets across the City.

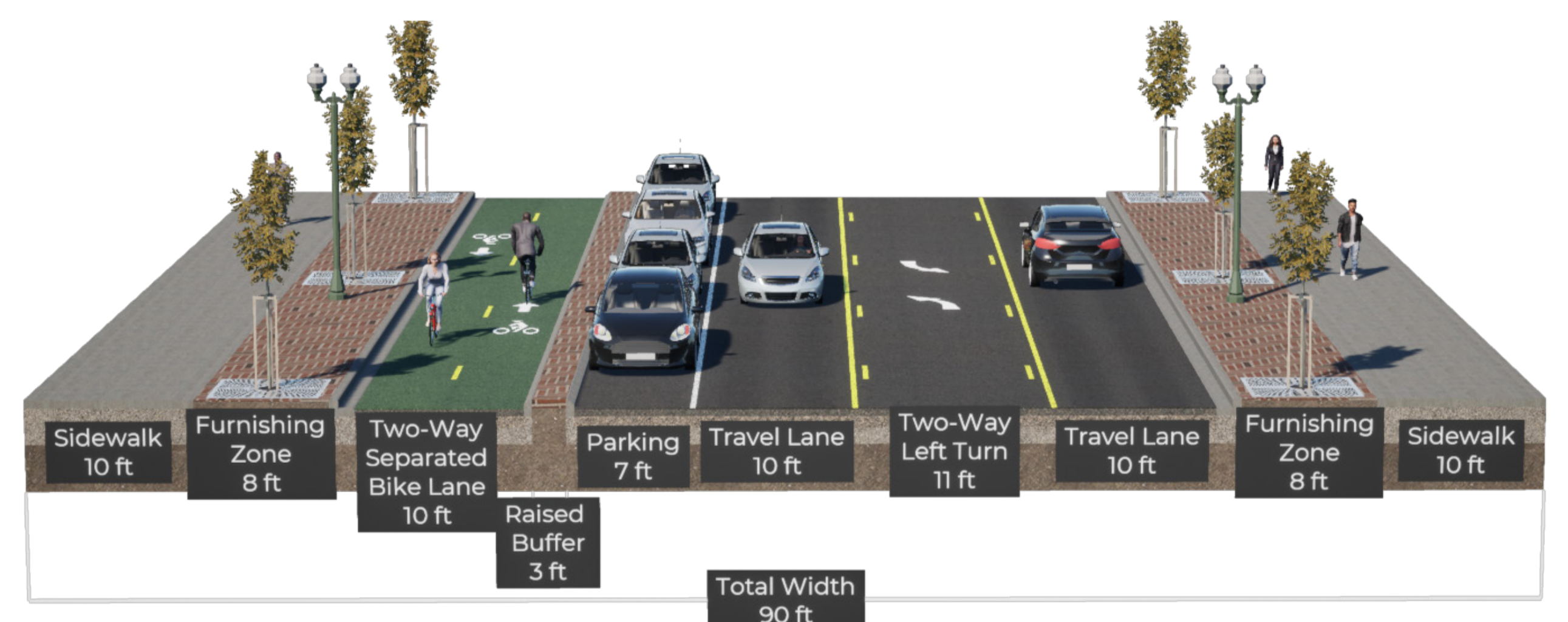
North High St (Mixed Use Boulevard)

North High St's current roadway design does not support a walkable, mixed use environment as defined in the Strategic Direction. Sidewalks are narrow and close to moving traffic, marked crossings are far apart, transit stops lack shelters, and there are no dedicated bike facilities. Initiatives such as the Worthington Mile have proposed adding medians and a shared use path to support a more safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. The below typical sections reflect these elements in their design.



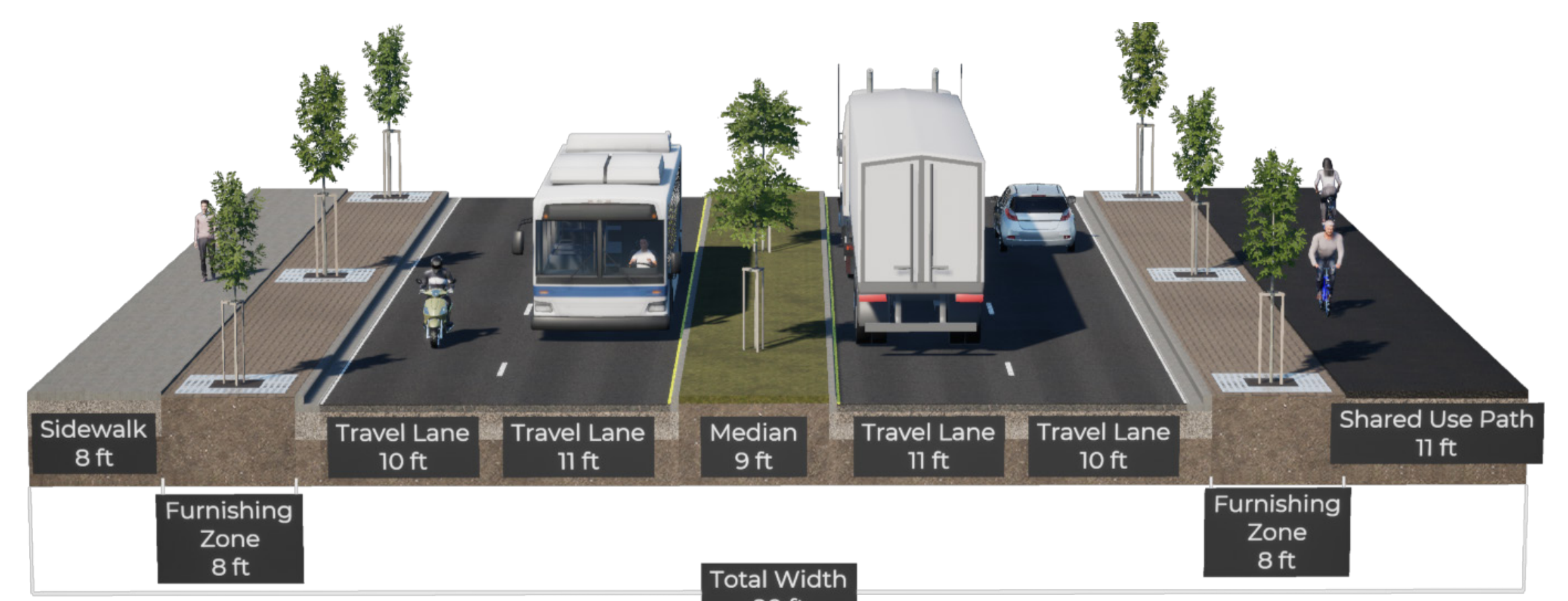
High St (Old Worthington Boulevard)

High St serves as the historic Main Street for Old Worthington. It serves not only a transportation function but as a critical public space for the community. The typical sections for this roadway typology emphasize wide sidewalks, historic materials, street parking, dedicated bike infrastructure, and traffic calming.



South High St (Mixed Use Boulevard)

South of Old Worthington High St returns to a less walkable roadway design similar to High St north of Old Worthington. Development along this segment of High St transitions from historic residential and commercial structures to more traditional suburban strip development as it nears the border with Columbus. As traffic volumes are lower on this segment of High St, this may be an opportunity for lane reductions to allow for the reallocation of that space for parking, pedestrian, bicycle, or transit infrastructure.



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



Refer to the chapter to see additional street cross-section diagrams.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 8

ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT THE UPDATED THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Adopting and implementing a thoroughfare plan matters because it gives the City a clear and consistent way to make decisions about its transportation network over time. It helps ensure that new development, roadway projects, and everyday improvements all work toward the same vision instead of being handled case by case.

8.1 Adopt the Thoroughfare Plan.

Adopting the Thoroughfare Plan establishes a long-term framework for street network growth and design, guiding consistent decisions about roadway classification, capital improvements, and development review to ensure Worthington's streets evolve in a coordinated way that reflects community priorities.

8.2 Update Access Management Standards.

Update driveway and curb cut standards to align with the Thoroughfare Plan's roadway classifications, establishing clear guidelines for access spacing, shared driveways, and turn lanes to improve safety, reduce conflicts, and support a more efficient and connected transportation network.

place priority stickers below

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 9

ADVANCE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AS A CORE NETWORK

When walking and biking are treated as key modes of travel, streets are designed to better support people of all ages and abilities, not just drivers. This helps reduce crashes, improves access to everyday destinations, and gives residents more options for getting around. It also supports healthier lifestyles, strengthens connections between neighborhoods and community destinations, and helps create a more active, people-focused streetscape.

9.1 Close priority sidewalk gaps.

Strategically target short gaps between existing sidewalks to create continuous walking routes connecting neighborhoods to key destinations, leveraging potential funding through MORPC and COTAs Transit-Supportive Infrastructure program for cost-effective, high-impact walkability improvements. See the chapter for a map of the sidewalk network.

9.2 Study bike and pedestrian improvements on Active Transportation Corridors.

Prioritize detailed study of safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian facilities along corridors identified in the updated active transportation map, focusing on routes most likely to see high use due to proximity to trails, schools, transit, and parks.

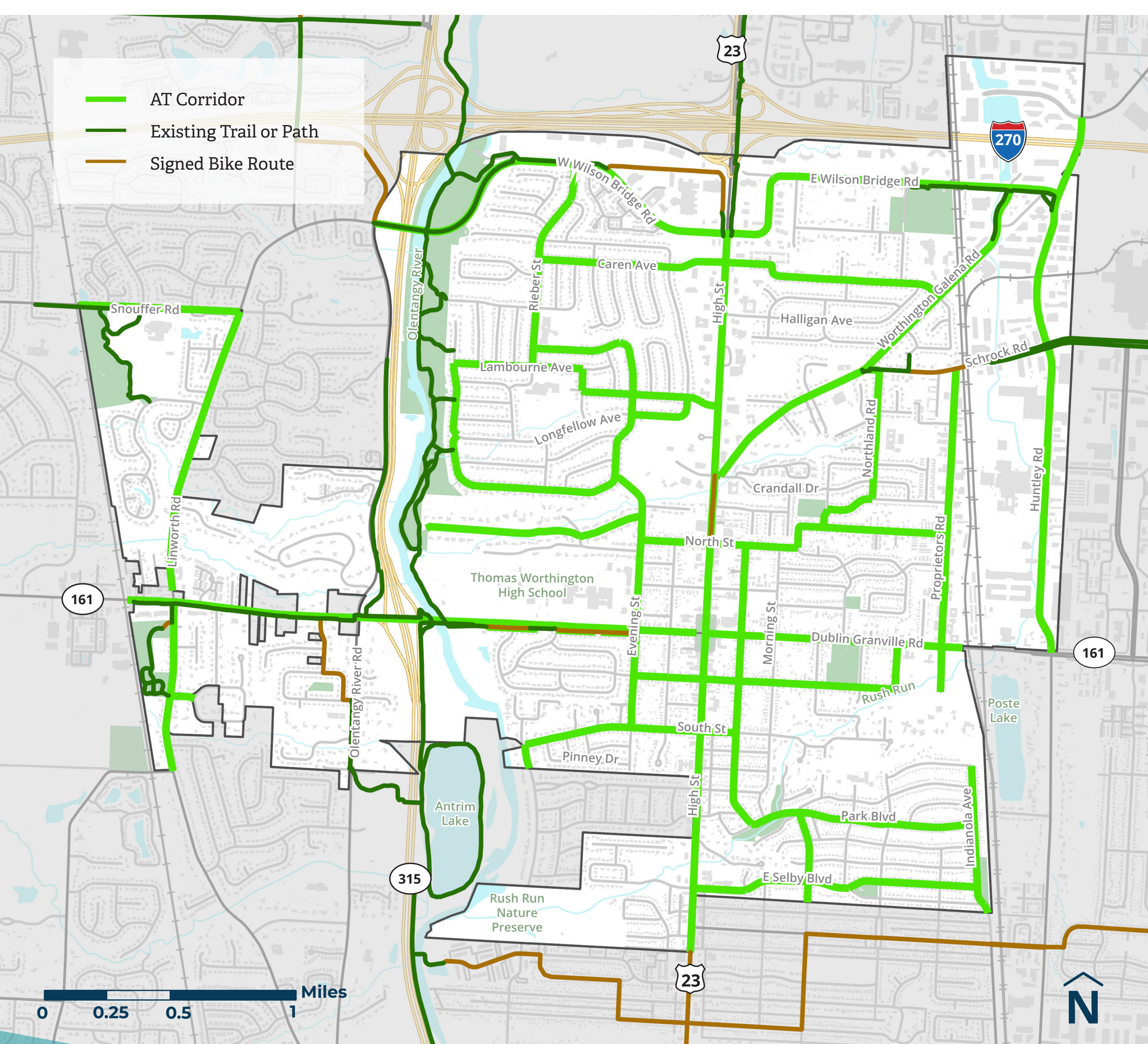
9.3 Advance regional trail connections.

Improve connectivity between Worthington and the broader regional trail network, such as Central Ohio Greenways, to support longer walking and biking trips and make it easier for residents and visitors to access destinations beyond City limits.

9.4 Coordinate with Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee on an Update to the City's Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Update the 2019 Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan using current data and conditions to identify new gaps, refine priorities, and ensure investments remain aligned with the Thoroughfare Plan and the community's evolving needs.

Active Transportation (AT) Priority Corridors



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



place priority stickers below

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 10

ADDRESS SAFETY AT PRIORITY INTERSECTIONS AND CORRIDORS

Corridors such as High Street, Huntley Road, and Wilson Bridge Road have the greatest potential for change due to adjacent land use reinvestment. However, detailed cross-sections and design decisions require engineering feasibility, alternatives analysis, and significant capital investment beyond the scope of this plan. Pairing this with targeted intersection safety improvements allows the City to address important locations while preparing for long-term change.

10.1 Prioritize and study corridors in Opportunity Areas.

Proactively study street design, access management, and multimodal improvements in the Opportunity Areas to establish a clear vision that guides coordinated redevelopment, supports private investment, and creates a more walkable and economically productive environment.

10.2 Prioritize and study high-risk intersections.

Analyze crash data to identify patterns and underlying causes of conflicts, then implement targeted improvements such as signal timing changes, improved crossings, and intersection redesigns to reduce crashes and improve safety for all users.

10.3 Integrate Complete Streets and safety principles into routine projects.

Incorporate walking, biking, and transit improvements into resurfacing, reconstruction, and utility projects as they occur, making better use of available funding and allowing the transportation network to improve incrementally over time.

10.4 Coordinate safety improvements with redevelopment.

Use redevelopment opportunities to address safety concerns — such as access points, crossings, and street layouts — more efficiently than post-construction retrofits, ensuring new projects contribute to a safer overall transportation network.

To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



place priority stickers below

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 11

COORDINATE AND ADVOCATE FOR TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

Transit service is controlled regionally, but the City plays an important role in advocating for desired service levels and improving local access to existing and future service. The City should advocate for additional standard service but also for enhanced services such as Bus Rapid Transit and demand response.

11.1 Continue regular coordination with COTA.

Maintain scheduled check-ins with COTA to align transit service planning with the City's development activity and transportation priorities, identifying opportunities to adjust service and improve stops where they will have the greatest impact.

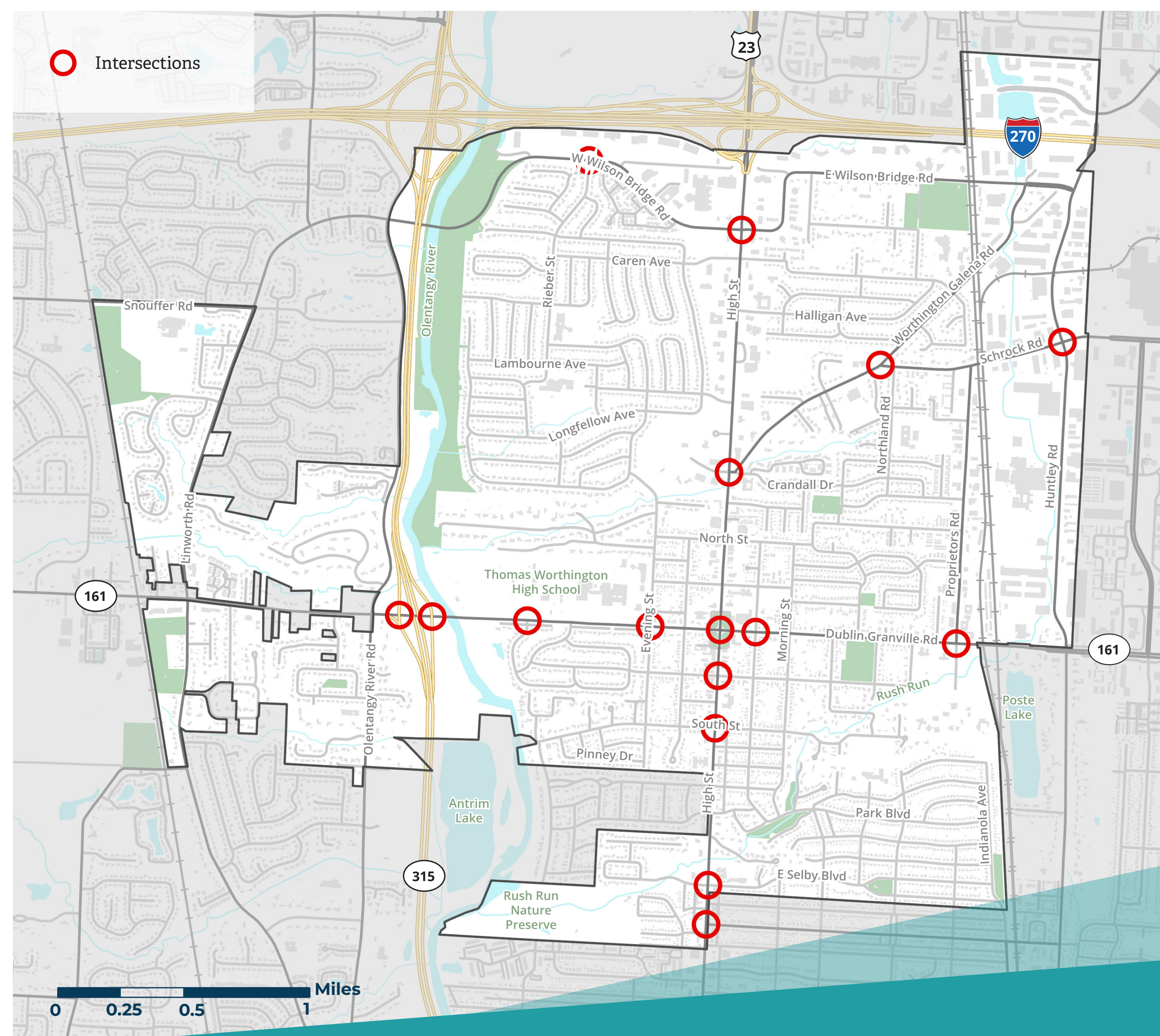
11.2 Prepare corridors for higher-capacity transit.

Proactively plan right-of-way, intersection design, and streetscape improvements along High Street and the 161 corridor to accommodate potential Bus Rapid Transit, supporting transit-oriented redevelopment and stronger connections along these key corridors.

11.3 Upgrade access to existing transit stops.

Close first- and last-mile gaps by investing in sidewalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, accessible crossings, lighting, and bicycle infrastructure, prioritizing high-ridership corridors and areas near housing, employment, schools, and other key destinations.

Intersections for Further Study





STRATEGIC PRIORITY 12

SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND SUPPORT REINVESTMENT IN EXISTING HOUSING

Worthington's established neighborhoods are a defining community asset. Supporting their character while allowing thoughtful reinvestment ensures long-term stability, housing quality, and opportunities for residents to remain in the community.

12.1 Refine compatibility standards for infill housing or additions in the Zoning Ordinance update.

Update the Zoning Ordinance to include context-sensitive standards for infill housing and additions, such as scale, height, and setbacks, that preserve neighborhood character while allowing meaningful reinvestment and flexibility to accommodate contemporary housing needs.



12.2 Allocate future tax revenue to establish a dedicated housing program.

As tax revenue grows from implementing the plan's land use and economic recommendations, designate a portion of those revenues to fund targeted housing programs, pursuing them one at a time to ensure effectiveness before expanding.



Opportunistic Tools

As tax revenue grows from implementing the plan, the City should consider funding options from this menu.

Options for Homeowners

- Home repair program.
- Down payment assistance.
- Nonconforming use formalization.
- Historic and older-home rehabilitation program.

Options for Renters

- Deed-restriction program.
- NOAH (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) preservation program.
- Rental assistance partnerships.

Options for the Community

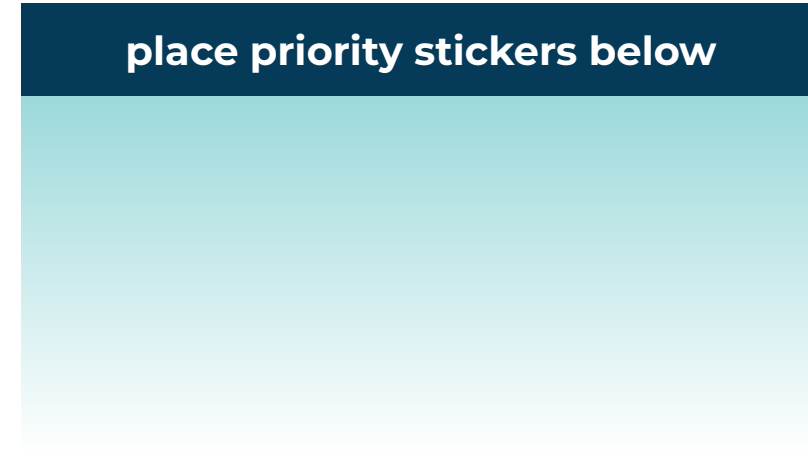
- Accessibility and aging-in-place resources.
- Neighborhood-level improvement initiatives.
- Nonprofit and CDFI partnerships.
- Families Flourish program.
- Housing fund cash contributions.
- Pilot programs in targeted areas.

To see descriptions of these tools, see the full plan.

Worthington's Housing Unit Target: 1,300 Units

In adopting the Workforce Housing Tax Abatement Program in December 2025, City Council set a pause-and-reevaluate threshold of approximately 1,300 new housing units, a figure grounded in both local assessment and regional context.

Worthington City Council considered three approaches when setting Worthington's target: fully meeting the potential demand identified in the Housing Assessment (2,000 units); Worthington's proportional share of the regional goal based on its current population (1,300 units); and its share after accounting for Columbus's commitment to deliver half the regional total (1,100 units). Council selected 1,300 units as the program threshold, reflecting Worthington's responsibility as a regional partner while remaining grounded in what the City can realistically support.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 13

EXPAND HOUSING OPTIONS IN CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS

A broader range of housing types supports young adults, families, empty nesters, and long-time residents at different life stages. 1,300 new housing units across various types should be introduced in locations that align with the Future Land Use and Character Map, infrastructure capacity, and community expectations for scale and design.

13.1 Focus higher-intensity housing in the opportunity areas.

Strategically concentrate multifamily and mixed-use residential development within the five identified opportunity areas along key corridors, aligning housing growth with walkability, transit, and live-work-play goals rather than pursuing scattered, smaller opportunities citywide.



13.2 Enable small-scale housing types and ADUs within the rewrite of the Planning and Zoning Code.

Incorporate missing-middle housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units, into the updated Zoning Code by replacing density requirements with design-based standards, broadening the housing supply while ensuring appropriate transitions between uses.



13.3 Monitor housing conditions and trends.

Establish baseline housing indicators following plan adoption and update them when major development occurs, maintaining a concise master spreadsheet that allows City Staff to track the real impacts of redevelopment on existing neighborhoods over time.



13.4 Evaluate and refine the Workforce Housing Tax Abatement Program based on Tax Incentive Review Council findings.

Continue annual TIRC reviews of the 2025 Community Reinvestment Area residential tax abatement program, pausing for re-evaluation once approximately 1,300 units are reached and incorporating program updates into the broader implementation tracking spreadsheet.



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 14

LEAD BY EXAMPLE IN ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND RESILIENCE

Worthington's tree canopy, creek corridors, and open spaces are defining community assets. The City can lead by example, demonstrating environmental stewardship and resilience through its own capital projects, development standards, and operational decisions. Integrating sustainability and lifecycle thinking into both public and private investment strengthens long-term performance, reduces costs over time, and protects community character.

14.1 Develop a coordinating sustainability plan.

Build on Worthington's existing environmental achievements by creating a unified sustainability plan that establishes priority focus areas, measurable targets, lead responsibilities, and a reporting cadence, scoping the level of effort appropriately with input from City Council and potential partners such as MORPC, SWACO, and the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District.

14.2 Strengthen environmental protection standards.

As part of the comprehensive regulatory assessment, evaluate and clarify existing environmental standards for stream corridors, steep slopes, and woodlands, mapping protected natural resources to set clear expectations for applicants and provide staff with effective tools without creating disproportionate barriers to infill and redevelopment.

14.3 Integrate green infrastructure into projects.

Encourage the use of bioretention areas, rain gardens, bioswales, tree canopy, and green roofs in redevelopment projects establishing clear standards for maintenance responsibilities, cost-sharing, and seasonal aesthetics to ensure green infrastructure enhances corridor and site character over time.

14.4 Adopt standards and incentives to preserve tree canopy.

Build on Worthington's 26 percent tree canopy baseline by establishing a City Council-approved coverage target, incorporating tree planting and preservation into capital projects and site plan review, and offering a fee-in-lieu option where on-site canopy requirements are physically impractical.

place priority stickers below

14.5 Embed resilience into capital planning.

Integrate climate change adaptation into infrastructure decision-making by updating CIP criteria to evaluate projects based on lifecycle costs, energy use, and performance under extreme weather, ensuring that infrastructure investments are durable, cost-effective, and aligned with the community's long-term vision.

place priority stickers below

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 15

UPDATE THE PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The current Parks & Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2017 and has guided meaningful investment in Worthington's park system. The next plan should build on that progress while broadening its scope to address both parks and recreation facilities, reflecting the full range of the City's responsibilities in this area. The update should incorporate current community needs, equity considerations, and evolving recreation trends, while remaining grounded in what the City can realistically deliver and sustain over time. Aligning park and recreation investments with this Comprehensive Plan will ensure that future decisions reinforce the community's long-term vision for quality, accessibility, and design.

15.1 Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Conduct a comprehensive update to the 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan that includes a community visioning process, peer benchmarking, facility improvement priorities, partnership opportunities with schools and nonprofits, realistic budget and lifecycle cost planning, and integration of parks and trail connections with the Opportunity Area redevelopment strategies.

place priority stickers below

To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org















Wilson Bridge

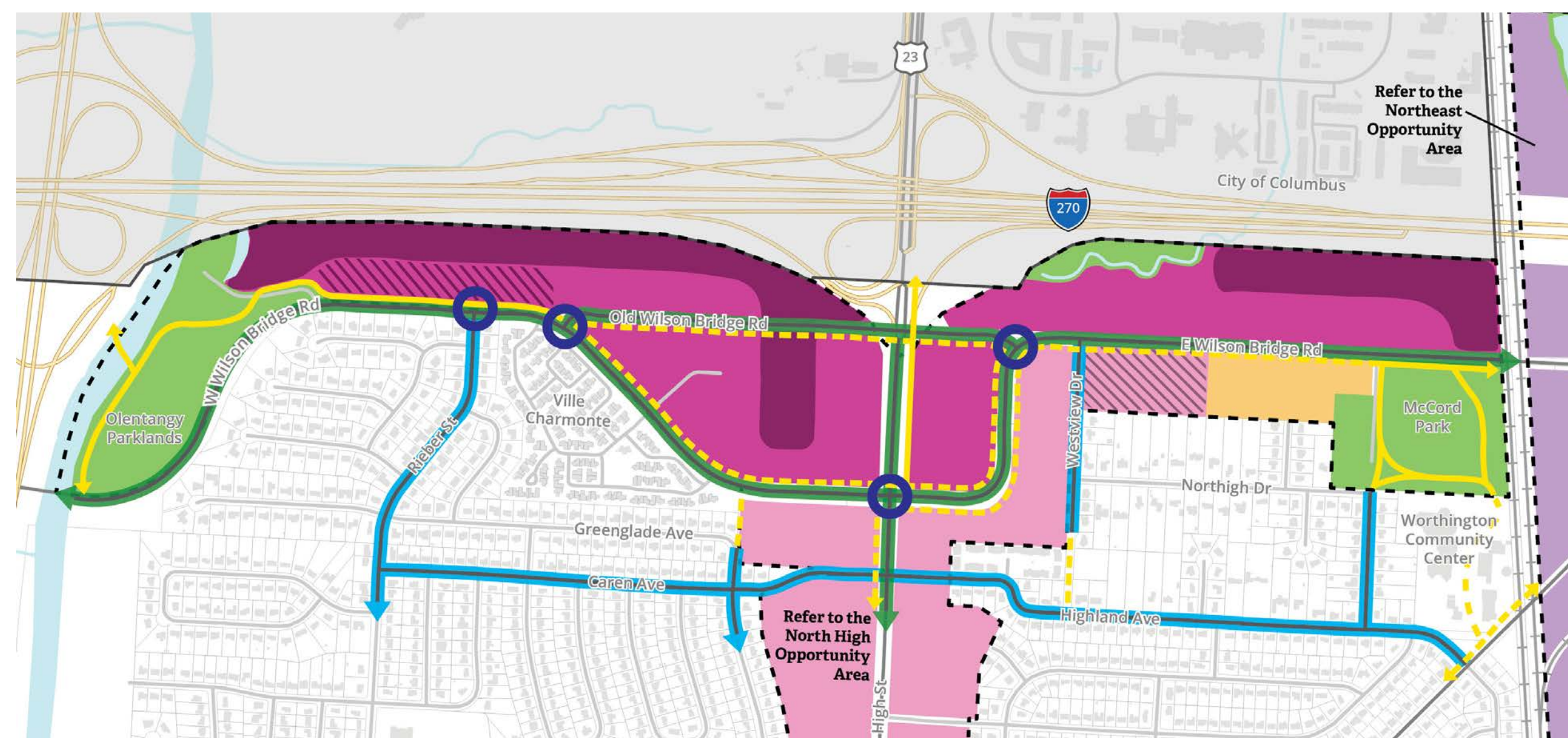
Opportunity Area

Strategic Direction

1. Advance coordinated reinvestment in major redevelopment sites.
2. Support higher-intensity employment and vertical mixed-use development in appropriate locations.
3. Integrate shared parking, structured parking, and coordinated stormwater strategies.
4. Implement corridor design improvements incrementally.
5. Align redevelopment sequencing with fiscal capacity.

Future Land Use

 Wilson Bridge Mixed Use General	 Corridor Neighborhood Office	 Potential Streetscape Improvements
 Wilson Bridge Mixed Use Core	 Residential, Small-Lot & Attached	 Active Transportation Routes
 Wilson Bridge Mixed Use Edge	 Parks and Green Space	 Existing Multi-use Paths
 Corridor Mixed Use General	 Potential Intersection Improvements	 Potential Multi-use Paths



Wilson Bridge Mixed Use General

- A broad mix of employment, hospitality, supporting residential and retail is appropriate.
- Development intensity should support structured parking. Building heights range from 3 to 6 stories.
- Office and job-generating uses should be a primary component of the area. Uses may be mixed vertically within buildings with office or residential above ground-floor commercial, or mixed horizontally across a connected campus-like site.



Wilson Bridge Mixed Use Core

- The most intense portion of the corridor centered on the Worthington Mall and including highly visible sites along I-270.
- Employment-focused including office, mixed-use with an office emphasis, or hotel.
- Greatest height and density in the corridor are appropriate here. Generally, 6 to 10 stories, depending on site configuration, access, and transitions.



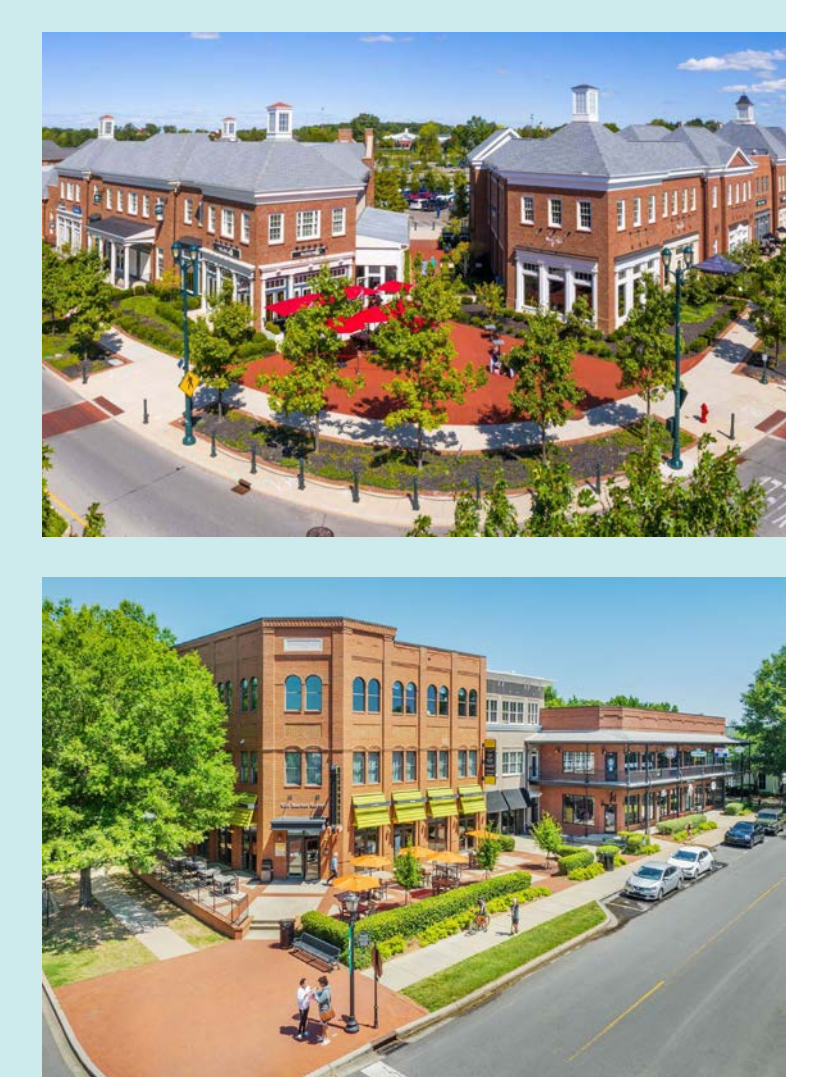
Wilson Bridge Mixed Use Edge

- Areas fronting on West Wilson Bridge Road across from established residential areas.
- Uses should focus on smaller office, attached residential, live-work, or neighborhood-scale commercial.
- Development here should provide a transition in scale to nearby neighborhoods, with building heights typically 3 stories with flexibility based on building and site design and location.



Corridor Mixed Use General

- A mix of employment uses with supporting retail and limited residential is appropriate.
- Redevelopment should orient buildings to the street to frame a safe and appealing pedestrian experience, with building heights ranging from 2 to 4 stories.
- Due to smaller parcels and lower building heights, structured parking is unlikely to be feasible. Shared parking should be located behind buildings.



Corridor Neighborhood Office

- In this area of E Wilson Bridge Road, building scale should be reduced as a transition to nearby neighborhoods.
- Small office buildings up to 2.5 stories are appropriate for this area.
- Parking should be located behind buildings and shared when possible.



Residential, Attached

- While this character type includes building heights up to 3 stories, appropriate heights for this area are 2 to 2.5 stories.
- Recent developments like Granby Place illustrate an appropriate future character for this area.



Public Space & Placemaking Vision



Social plaza space



Small social green



Outdoor dining



Space for community events

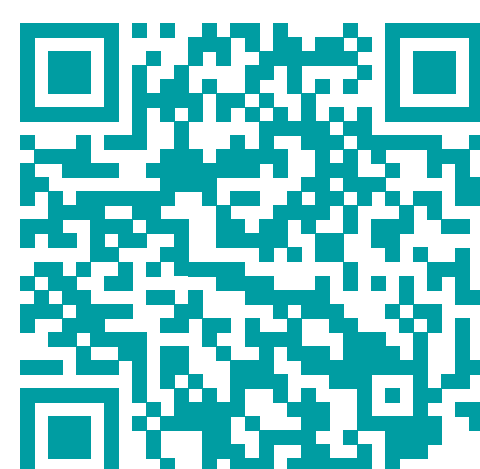


Paths through developments



Canopy trees

To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



AREA DIRECTION

ACROSS THE WHOLE OPPORTUNITY AREA

The following recommendations describe the future of the whole opportunity area:

Strategic Role

North High serves as a transitional corridor between Old Worthington and larger-format commercial areas to the north. Two major reinvestment sites anchor the long-term evolution of North High, while incremental redevelopment along smaller parcels should improve walkability and reinforce a cohesive mixed-use character.

Two major reinvestment sites anchor the long-term evolution of North High:

- 1033 High Street.
- 6700 North High Street.

Strategic Direction

1. Support a mix of office, retail, residential, and supporting uses.
2. Support gradual redevelopment that brings buildings closer to the street.
3. Punctuate High Street with visible plazas and green spaces through varied setbacks.
4. Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections to Old Worthington.
5. Encourage shared access and strategic parcel consolidation where feasible.

SITE-SPECIFIC DIRECTION

MAJOR REINVESTMENT SITES (1033 HIGH AND 6700 NORTH HIGH)

The following principles apply to both major reinvestment sites and should guide any future redevelopment proposals:

1. Concentrate mixed-use development along High Street.

- Focus higher-intensity and non-residential uses along the High Street frontage.
- Frame High Street with buildings that create a defined and walkable edge.
- Incorporate shared parking strategies or structured parking where appropriate to support vertical mixed-use development.

Corridor Mixed Use

The High Street corridor includes many different site conditions, owners, and ages/conditions of existing buildings. Transforming the corridor will occur incrementally and involve a mix of complete redevelopment on some sites and retrofit and infill development in other sites.



Complete redevelopment. Large sites under a single owner where existing buildings are not feasible for reuse could be completely redeveloped. Such redevelopment would include a mix of uses with buildings addressing High Street and creating usable public space.

Retrofit. In other areas, existing buildings may be retrofitted while underutilized portions of sites including surface parking areas see new development. New mixed use development could address High Street, while existing buildings set back behind large green areas could create intentionally designed green spaces.

2. Emphasize meaningful and connected green space.

- Prioritize usability and amenity value over raw acreage.
- Protect environmental features, including the creek corridor, and clearly establish permanent no-build areas.
- Ensure green spaces are visible from public streets and integrated into the overall site design.
- Create internal trail or pedestrian systems that connect to surrounding neighborhoods where appropriate.

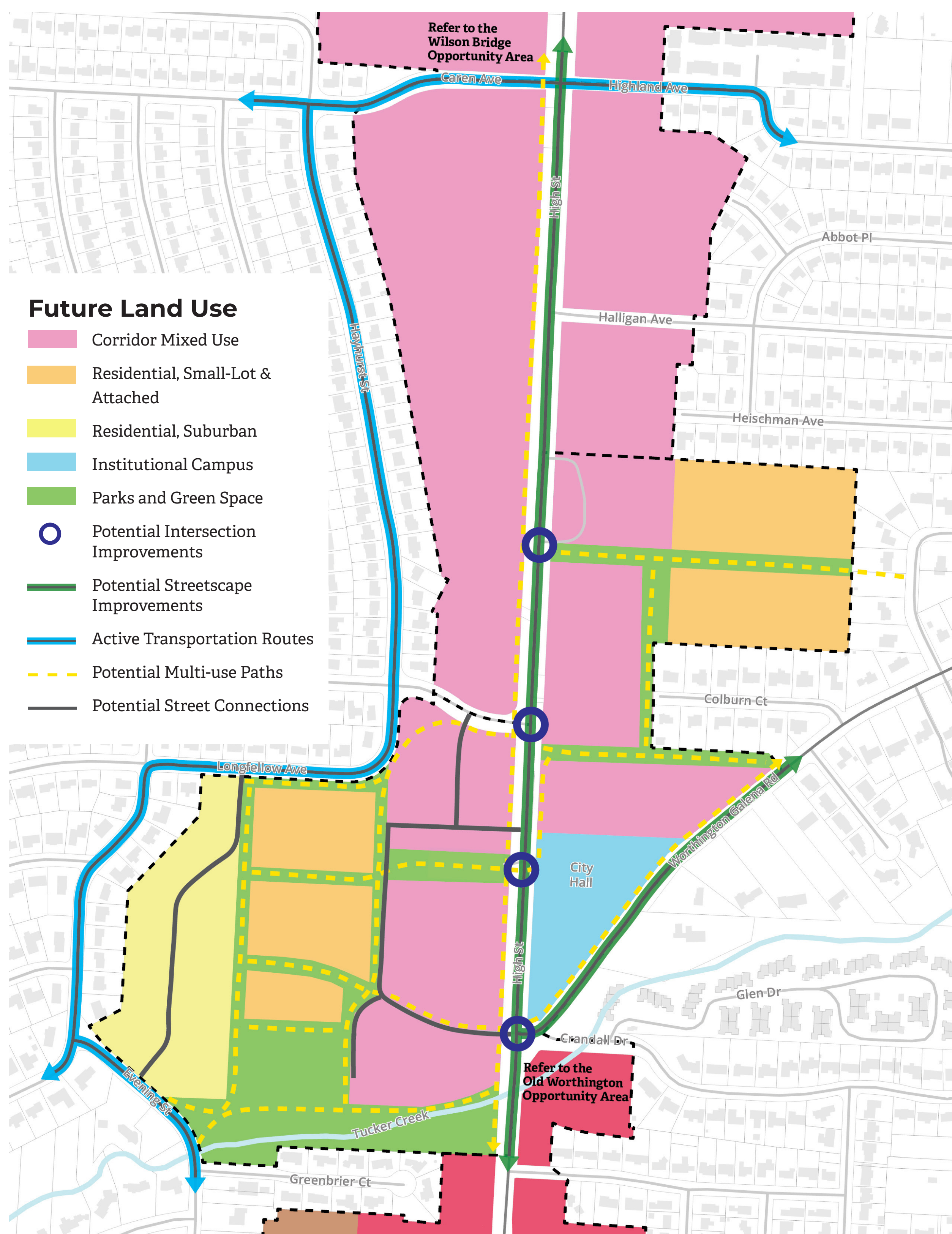
Tucker Creek Park and Preserve. Green space could take various forms but should include both a preserved natural area and a usable public park space. This illustration shows approximately five acres of passive preserve around Tucker Creek and another six acres of active park space.



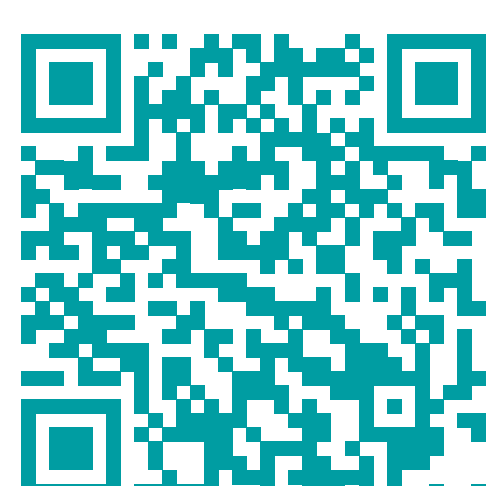
Civic Green/Plaza. Mixed use development along the west side of High Street creates an opportunity for a park/plaza for community gathering across from City Hall.



Connected Greenways. Public trails and landscaped linear green spaces should connect through the area.



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit:
WorthingtonTogether.org



3. Include a mix of housing types that respect context.

- Provide housing options that serve a range of community needs.
- Use lower-intensity housing types, such as townhomes or duplexes, as transitions near existing neighborhoods.
- Locate higher-intensity residential uses closer to High Street and internal mixed-use areas.

Appropriate Housing Types



4. Require clear transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.

- Step down building height and mass toward residential edges.
- Use green space, local streets, landscape buffers, and lower-intensity building forms to create compatible edges.
- Ensure buildings along neighborhood boundaries reflect residential scale and orientation.



Residential Transition and Connection. New residential areas should transition in scale to be compatible with existing neighborhoods. Multi-use paths can connect existing neighborhoods to the green spaces and mixed use areas found in new development.

5. Improve connectivity while minimizing cut-through impacts.

- Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to surrounding neighborhoods and destinations.
- Limit vehicular access points that could increase regional through-traffic.
- Design internal connections to feel local and context-sensitive rather than functioning as regional shortcuts.

To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit:
WorthingtonTogether.org



6. Provide public benefit with long-term fiscal responsibility.

- Ensure new development contributes proportionately to infrastructure, public amenities, and ongoing maintenance costs.
- Recognize each site's role in providing citywide public benefits, including housing choice, environmental protection, and economic vitality.
- Seek development outcomes that demonstrate a net-positive fiscal impact over time.

7. Reflect Worthington's character in architecture and landscape.

- Use high-quality, durable materials and authentic design approaches.
- Organize building form, placement, and massing to reinforce a coherent and pedestrian-scaled environment.
- Incorporate generous tree canopy and coordinated landscaping throughout the site.

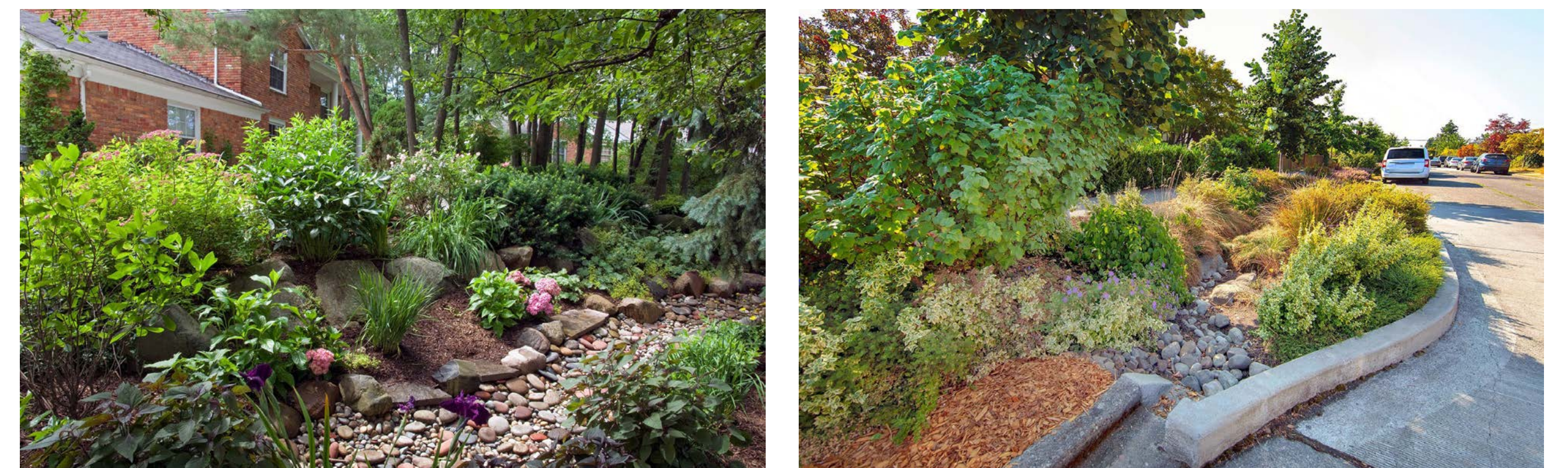
8. Integrate visible, low-impact environmental features.

- Use low-impact development techniques to manage stormwater on site and protect downstream systems.
- Incorporate rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavements, native plantings, and tree canopy as visible and functional components of the public realm.

Visible environmental features and quality materials



Pedestrian-scale environments with ideal building form, placement, massing, and high-quality materials



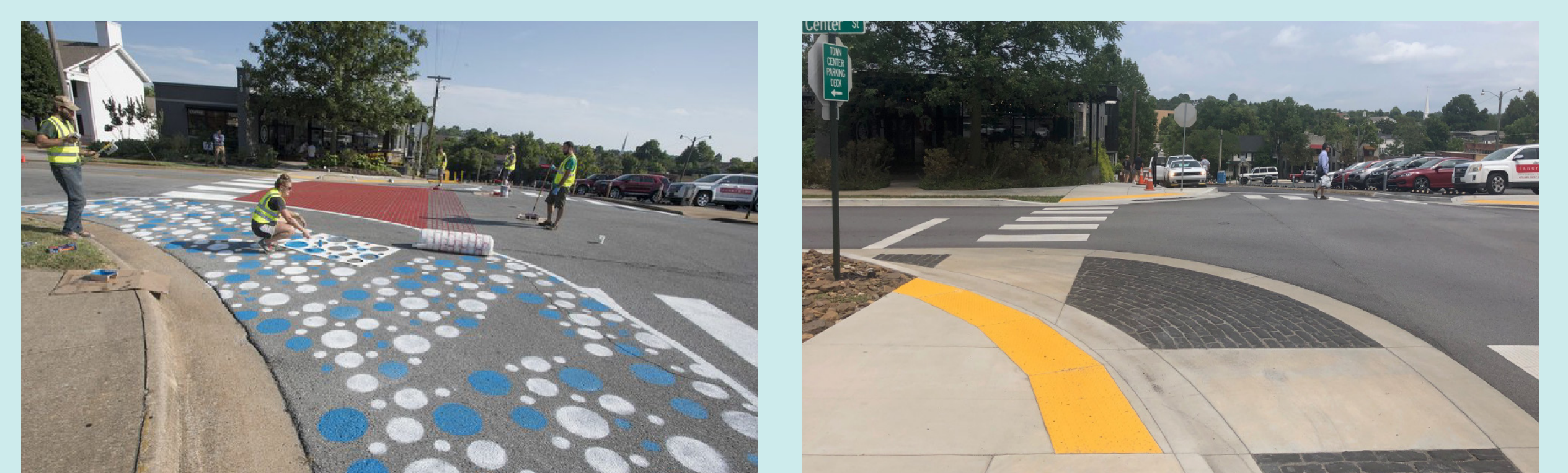
Low-impact stormwater management techniques like rain gardens (left) and bioswales (right)

High St and Worthington Galena Rd Intersection

The intersection's current alignment can be improved using the methods listed below, however, the current alignment causes several operational and safety issues that can only be solved by larger changes. Since the properties northeast of the intersection are owned by the City, there may be opportunities to realign Worthington Galena Rd so that it meets High St at a perpendicular angle without the need to acquire private property. However, these changes require significant study of the feasibility of shifting the roadway as well as the implications on City properties and services.

Potential Enhancements

- Dedicated turn lanes
- Curb extensions
- Protected intersections
- Refuge islands
- Leading pedestrian intervals
- Bicycle and pedestrian passive detection
- Quick-build or temporary safety enhancements



Temporary curb extensions at an intersection using paint (left), and same intersection after permanent infrastructure was installed (right)

Old Worthington

Opportunity Area

Strategic Direction

1. Support development and adaptive reuse that respect and celebrate Old Worthington's historic character.
2. Protect the Village Green as the civic and symbolic heart of the community.
3. Encourage active ground-floor uses along High Street.
4. Maintain the prevailing one- to three-story scale along High Street.
5. Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
6. Manage parking strategically and expand supply only if clearly justified.

Future Land Use

- Old Worthington Core
- Corridor Transition
- Residential, Old Worthington
- Parks and Green Space
- Potential Intersection Improvements
- Potential Streetscape Improvements
- Active Transportation Routes
- Existing Multi-use Paths
- Potential Multi-use Paths



Old Worthington Core

- Worthington's cherished historic center, primarily made up of retail and office spaces with some residential mixed in.
- Priority should be placed on maintaining the desirable existing conditions of much of this area with strategic redevelopment where appropriate.
- When redevelopment and infill occur in this area, it should have the same scale and aesthetics as the area today. Examples of appropriate redevelopment in the past 20 years include Dewey's Pizza and the commercial buildings near the intersection of North Street and High Street.



Corridor Transition

- This transition area north of the Old Worthington Historic District should evolve through gradual redevelopment to echo desirable characteristics of the Old Worthington Core.
- Redevelopment should create wide pedestrian spaces with active ground floors that have real street access, avoiding inoperable entrances or long building frontages without activity.



Residential, Old Worthington

- The neighborhood areas of the City's original plat could expand housing availability through appropriate, historically-scaled housing, such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), two-family homes, and four-family homes.
- ADUs add an additional housing unit to an existing home's lot and can look like a small cottage or a carriage house above a garage.
- The Hartford at Stafford Village represents a high-quality, context-sensitive redevelopment project that gently increased the density to provide needed expanded senior housing options.



Public Space & Placemaking Vision

As this area already exemplifies high-quality public space and placemaking, new investment should maintain and enhance the existing network of public and publicly accessible spaces that support gathering, events, and daily activity. These elements include:

- Preservation and expansion of the tree canopy
- Continued protection of the Village Green
- Comfortable pedestrian zones with seating and lighting
- High-quality, durable materials consistent with the historic character
- Public art
- Year-round programming



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org



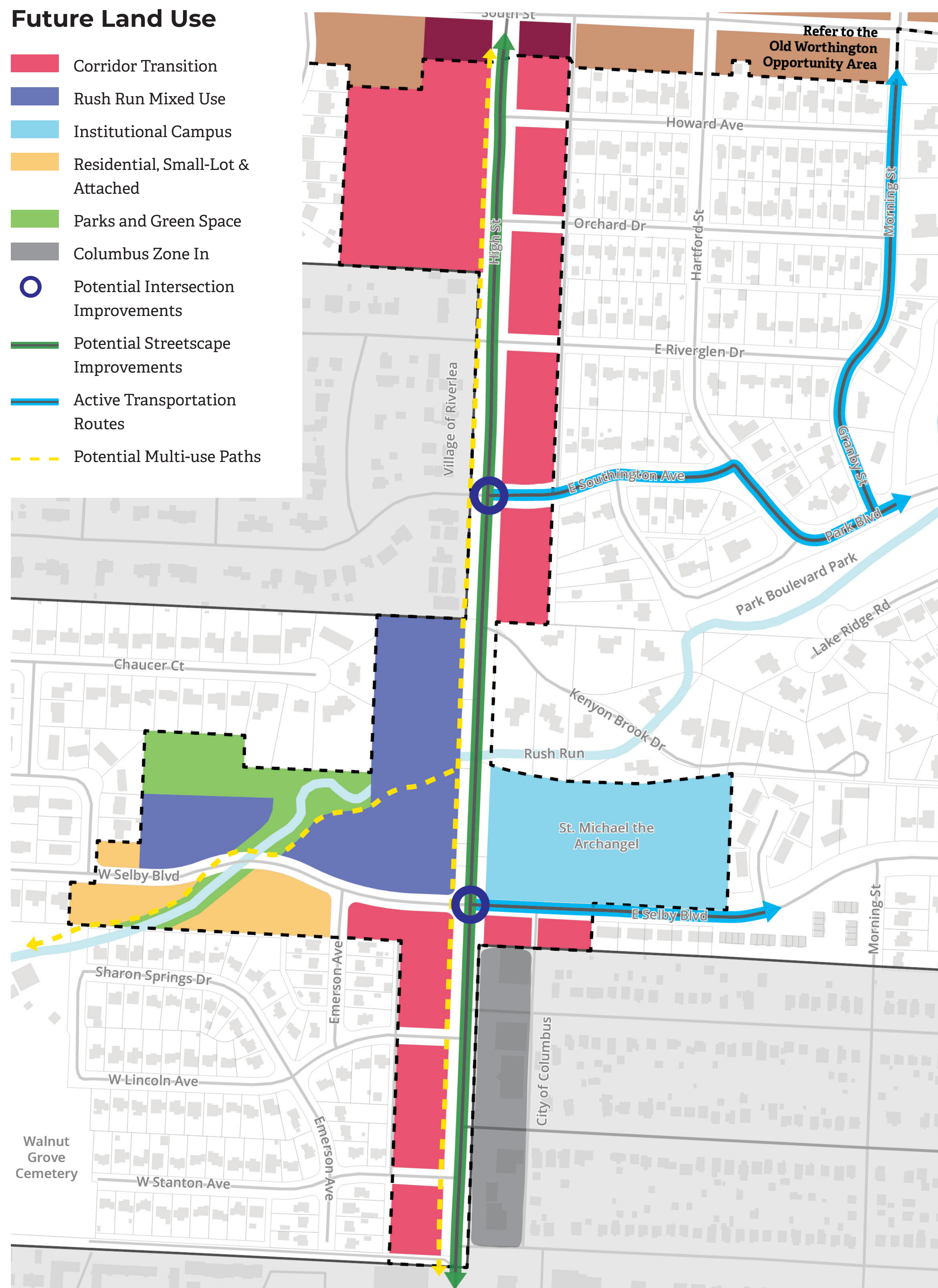
South High Opportunity Area

Strategic Direction

1. Establish a clear southern gateway identity at High Street and Selby Boulevard.
2. Support true vertical mixed-use redevelopment over time.
3. Transition building scale thoughtfully between districts.
4. Expand and rebalance the public realm toward pedestrian comfort.
5. Improve access management and frontage cohesion.
6. Encourage incremental reinvestment that strengthens the tax base.

Future Land Use

- Corridor Transition
- Rush Run Mixed Use
- Institutional Campus
- Residential, Small-Lot & Attached
- Parks and Green Space
- Columbus Zone In
- Potential Intersection Improvements
- Potential Streetscape Improvements
- Active Transportation Routes
- - - Potential Multi-use Paths



Public Space & Placemaking Vision

High Street is Worthington's civic spine. Along South High Street, the public realm should reinforce that identity by maintaining a comfortable pedestrian environment with generous sidewalks, street trees, and opportunities for seating and gathering.



Building Placement & Pedestrian Zone

New development should be oriented toward High Street and help define the corridor, but it need not create a continuous urban street wall.

Building placement may include:

- Modest setbacks that allow for expanded pedestrian zones
- Space for seating walls, landscaping, and outdoor dining
- A consistent building edge that reinforces enclosure while preserving openness

The goal is a street that feels walkable and well-defined, but not overly dense.

Corridor Transition

- Primarily office and retail, with secondary residential. Typical building heights of 1 to 3 stories, with transitions to respect adjacent neighborhood areas.
- The existing short, walkable blocks and alley access should be utilized during redevelopment to minimize curb cuts and maximize the pedestrian space along High Street.
- Buildings should be oriented to the street with shared parking located behind.



Rush Run Mixed Use

- Mixed use and multi-family buildings of 2 to 4 stories are appropriate in this area, with opportunity for a coordinated redevelopment.
- Areas east of Rush Run along High Street should be mixed use and embrace the stream as a linear green space with outdoor dining and multi-use paths along the stream.
- Areas west of Rush Run along W Selby Blvd should be residential and transition with respect to the existing adjacent neighborhoods.
- Active transportation (walking, biking) should be prioritized throughout the area.



Residential, Attached

- Redevelopment in this area should create a mixed residential neighborhood, with buildings up to 3 stories.
- Duplexes, fourplexes, and townhomes are appropriate as a transition to the existing neighborhood to the west.
- Areas along Rush Run should become a passive green space to protect the stream and steep slope areas.
- Multi-use paths could run along the stream corridor to connect to the mixed-use development along High Street.

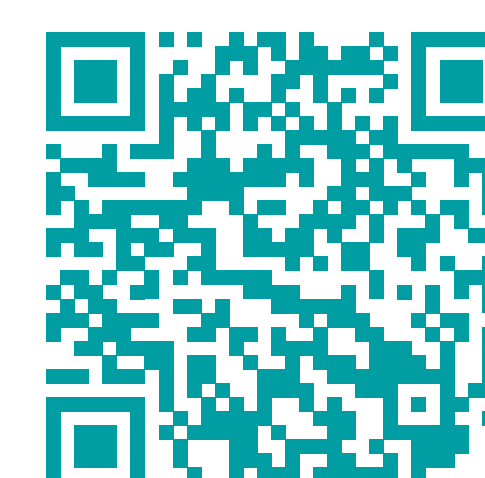


Columbus Zone In

- Through the City of Columbus's Zone-In initiative, this area directly adjacent to Worthington has been upzoned to the Urban General 1 district, allowing buildings up to 4 stories with limited to no setbacks.
- The intent of this district is to create "...a predominantly walkable district comprised of attached and detached buildings, accommodating low and medium-rise buildings on smaller blocks and parcels."



Zone In descriptive illustration from Columbus's updated zoning code



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org

Northeast / Forge Fields

Opportunity Area

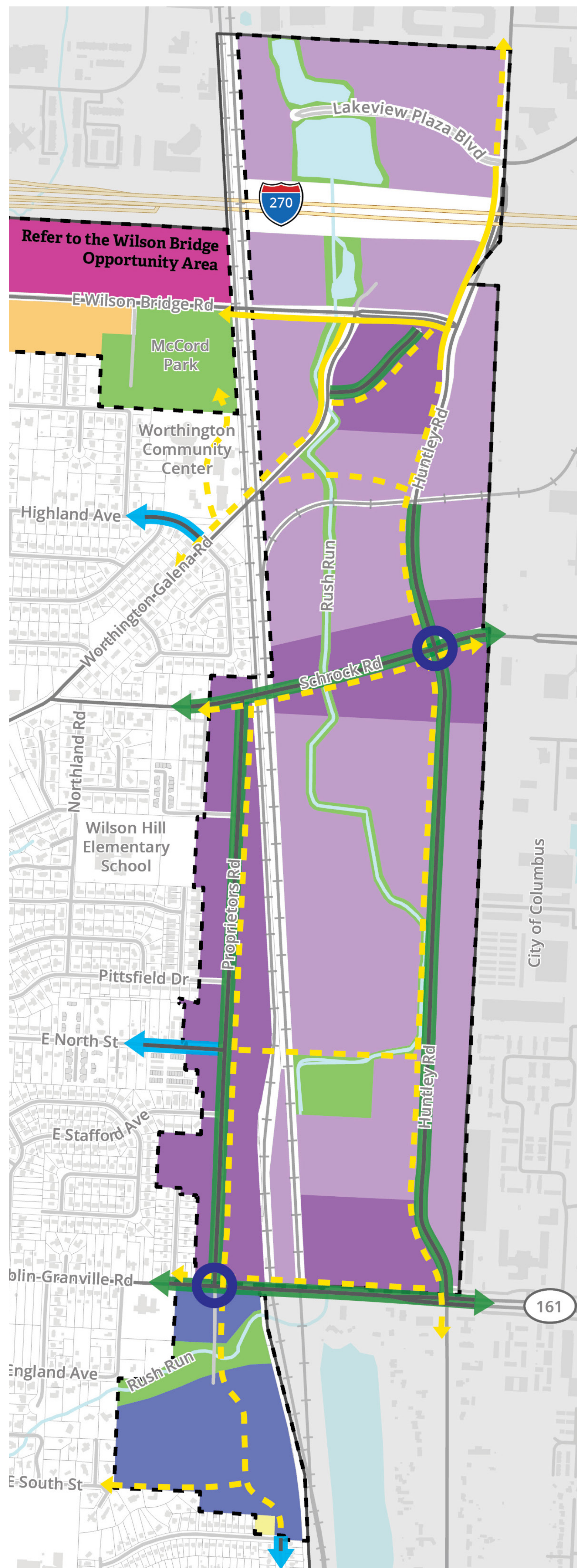
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Strategic Direction

1. Reinforce employment preservation through zoning and land use policy.
2. Implement the adopted subarea framework from the 2024 Northeast Area Plan.
3. Facilitate strategic parcel consolidation where substantial reinvestment is desired.
4. Modernize building inventory to support target industries.
5. Align infrastructure investment with employment growth objectives.
6. Strengthen internal connectivity and coordinated site design.
7. Enhance environmental performance and compatibility at edges.

Future Land Use

- Forge Fields Mixed Use
- Forge Fields Flex
- Rush Run Mixed Use
- Residential, Suburban
- Parks and Green Space
- Potential Intersection Improvements
- Potential Streetscape Improvements
- Active Transportation Routes
- Existing Multi-use Paths
- Potential Multi-use Paths



Rush Run Mixed-Use (Boundless area)

- Support a coordinated mixed-use campus that includes office along Route 161, office / institutional uses, and residential integrated into a live-work environment.
- Allow moderate-density residential within the interior of the campus, while providing lower-density residential forms along edges adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods.
- Preserve and enhance Rush Run as a central ecological corridor and green space amenity integrated into redevelopment.
- Concentrate vehicular access at the Route 161 and Proprietors Road intersection, while improving pedestrian and bicycle connections within the district and to surrounding areas. No new vehicular connections to Indianola Avenue.

Forge Fields Mixed Use

- As redevelopment occurs, the larger parcels in this area create an opportunity for a larger-scale development of up to 6 stories.
- While employment uses are the focus of this area, some residential would be permitted within these mixed use areas to support a live-work environment.
- This development could define Worthington's western entrance, a key identifier that you have entered the City.
- The presence of Rush Run in this area could be embraced to create a stream-oriented green space with outdoor dining and multi-use paths along the stream.



Forge Fields Flex

- These areas were identified as the eco industrial zone of the district in the Northeast Area Plan.
- Redevelopment should embrace innovation and ecology to create an environmentally and fiscally sustainable economic engine for the City.



Rush Run Mixed Use

- A campus-style redevelopment approach that mixes office, residential, institutional, and limited commercial is appropriate in this area, up to 4 stories.
- Along Route 161, buildings should be located near the street with wide pedestrian areas.
- Off the corridor, nearer to Rush Run, building placement and site design should respect and reveal the stream corridor, with setbacks used to create connected green space and active transportation infrastructure.



Residential, Suburban

- The parcel frontage area on Park Overlook Drive near the end of Indianola Avenue should remain in the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- A small scale infill development could be appropriate, creating a few new homes at the same scale as the Colonial Hills neighborhood.



To see complete text for these recommendations, please visit: WorthingtonTogether.org