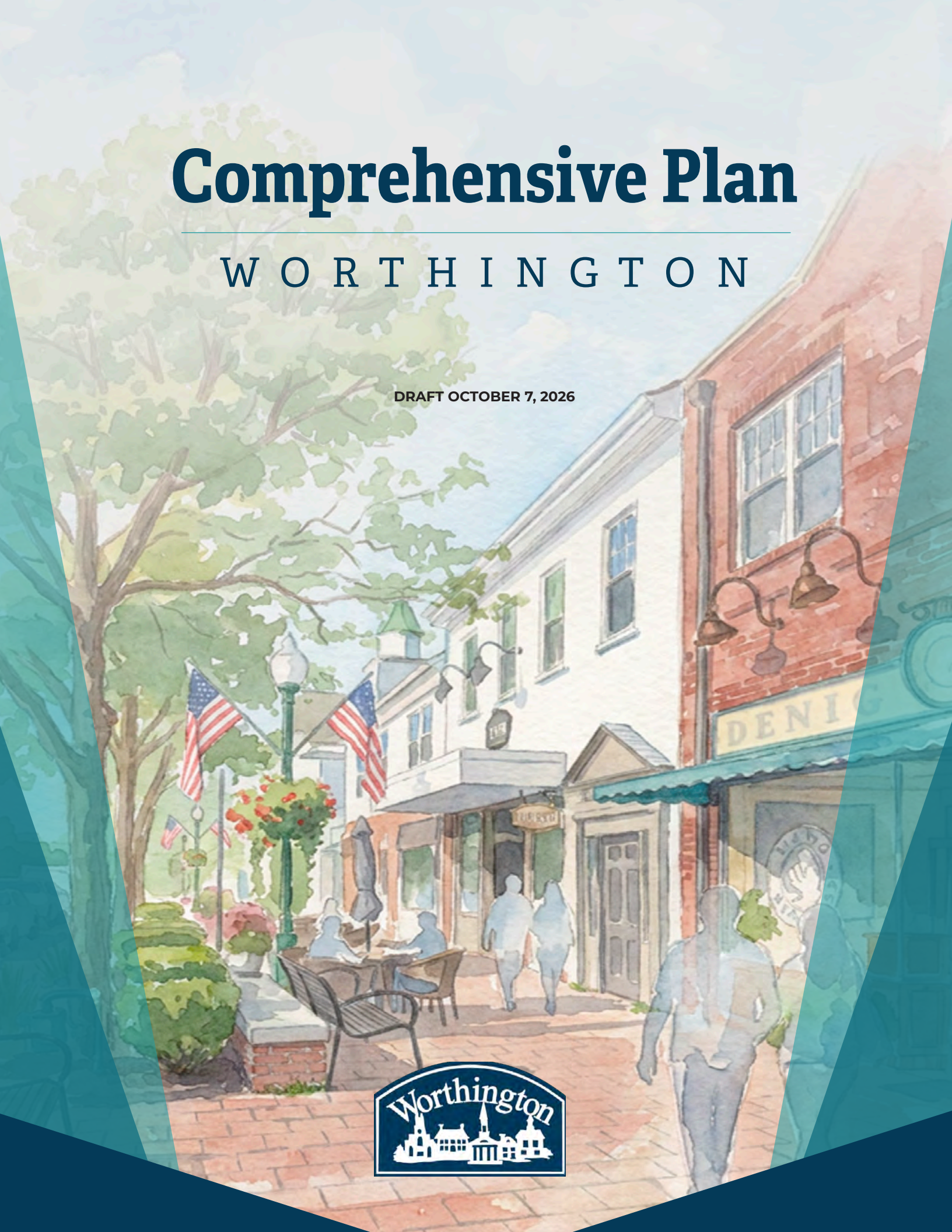
Comprehensive Plan

WORTHINGTON

DRAFT OCTOBER 7, 2026



ADOPTION RESOLUTION TO BE ADDED

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Worthington would like to thank the following individuals and groups for their commitment and dedication in assisting with the comprehensive plan initiative. Worthington Together was shaped by hundreds of residents, business owners, and community members who participated in surveys, open houses, and public engagement throughout the process. Their time, ideas, and investment in Worthington's future are reflected on every page of this plan.

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Worthington Green Team
The Worthington Partnership
Worthington Alliance for Responsible Development (WARD)
Building Worthington's Future (BWF)
Project Community Park Worthington (PCPW)
Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW)
Worthington Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board
Parks and Recreation Commission
Speaker series panelists
- Michael Wilkos
- Kelly Dannenfelser
- Herb Koehler
- Letty Schamp
- David A. Collinsworth
- Joe Hayek
- Matt McCollister
- Ashley Solether

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OHIO
HISTORICAL MARKER
WORTHINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICT
(Continued from other side)
The Worthington Historic District has evolved over more than 200 years from the center of a small village to the hub of a suburban community. The district includes numerous architectural styles: Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, American Four Square, Colonial Revival, Cape Cod, and vernacular styles. The Worthington Historic District, framed by North, South, Morning, and Evening Streets, encompasses the original village. The district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2010.
CITY OF WORTHINGTON
OLD WORTHINGTON ASSOCIATION
THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2012
116-25

Introduction

In 2025, the City of Worthington launched Worthington Together, a process to shape the community's future and update the City's 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The Worthington Together process carried forward the community engagement momentum that began with the Vision Worthington plan, adopted in 2021. The plan builds on Vision Worthington's community values by outlining actionable steps the City can take to improve the quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is a long-term guide that expresses a community's values and aspirations. It is the broadest public policy document a community can create for its future physical development, incorporating input from residents, businesses, subject matter experts, and others. It sets a vision for the City's future, establishes principles and desired strategic priorities for topics such as land use, housing, economics, parks, and transportation, and outlines specific actions to achieve those strategic priorities. The plan is a tool for preparing for change and serves as both a business plan and a guidebook for decision-makers to create predictability within the community.

Worthington's Comprehensive Plan is regularly used to guide many City decisions, including budgeting, zoning, regulations, and infrastructure investment. The plan will be implemented over time through capital improvements, development approvals, city budgets, departmental work programs, economic incentives, private development decisions, and other measures.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- What is a Comprehensive Plan?
- Worthington Today
- The Need for a New Plan
- Vision Worthington
- Plan Structure
- Guiding Principles
- Process
- Planning History
- Key Existing Conditions and Trends

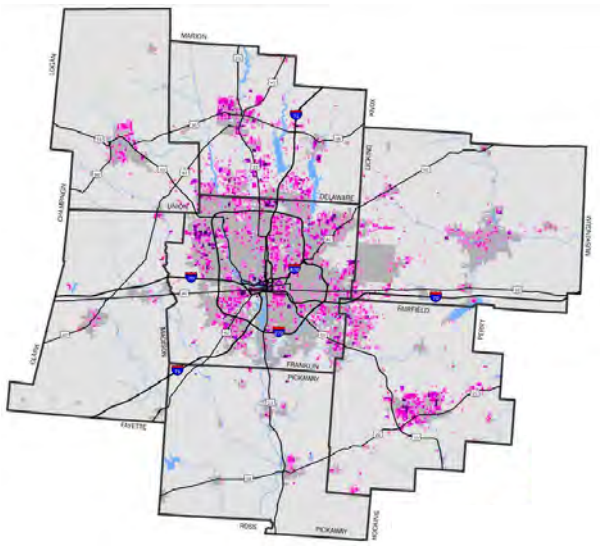
Worthington Together
Our City, Our Plan, Our Future

WORTHINGTON TODAY

Worthington is a well-established first-ring suburb with a strong sense of place, a historic downtown, and a well-established tradition of planning. The community has maintained a stable population of approximately 14,800 residents since 2000, supported by high-quality public services, excellent schools, generous park space, and an attractive character that has made it one of the most desirable communities in Central Ohio. Increasing home values reflect the community's desirability and the strength of its neighborhoods.

At the same time, the Central Ohio region is experiencing significant change. The seven-county region is projected to add more than 550,000 residents by 2050, driven by major private investments, a growing job market, and increasing migration from across the country and abroad. The Columbus MSA is expected to average over 14,300 new jobs per year through 2050. This growth brings both opportunity and pressure, which Worthington is well-positioned to manage with a community-driven plan.

HOUSEHOLD GROWTH 2020-2050



Source: MORPC Regional Transportation Plan

THE NEED FOR A NEW PLAN

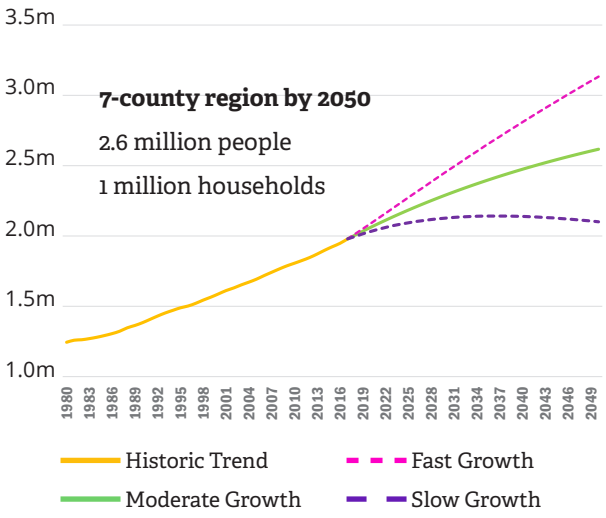
Worthington last completed a full update of the Comprehensive Plan in 2005.

Since that time, portions of the plan have been revised, and more narrowly focused plans have been adopted (e.g., the Northeast Area Plan, the Wilson Bridge Corridor Study, the Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, and the Parks Master Plan). Given the changing and continually evolving national, regional, and local conditions, now is the time to lay a foundation for achieving broad policy goals.

The new plan will build upon Vision Worthington, adopted in 2021, reflect changes that have occurred within and around the City over the past 20 years, and set the direction for the City's development in the coming years. This plan is built on the community's values, needs, and aspirations.

Now is the time to update Worthington's Comprehensive Plan. Worthington Together builds upon the momentum of Vision Worthington and the many plans and investments that have come before it, providing a clear path forward for the community's development in the years ahead.

7-COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS



VISION WORTHINGTON

Vision Worthington was a community visioning effort led by a visioning committee comprised of Worthington residents appointed by City Council. It was a citizen-led process with broad community engagement, culminating in the adoption of vision statements across seven vision areas in March 2021. The visions highlight the community's values and describe the community's desired future. Vision Worthington focused on overarching interests to pursue over the long term.

The Comprehensive Plan did not start from scratch; it incorporated the vision statements as direction since the inception of the planning process. The guiding principles, plan topics, strategic priorities, and actions were all directly shaped by the momentum started from the visioning process.



More information about Vision Worthington can be found at worthington.org/visioning

Plan Structure

Worthington Together carries forward the momentum initiated by Vision Worthington. The City's seven vision statements are supported by the plan's 10 guiding principles, which provided direction for the plan. The essential themes from the three rounds of community input are reflected in the plan's 15 strategic priorities and 48 actions, organized across five topics.

VISION Worthington

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
10 principles shaping direction

PLAN TOPICS

- Land use and Character
- Economic Vitality
- Mobility and Connectivity
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Environment and Resilience

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
15 priorities across the five topics

ACTIONS
projects, policies or programs to advance the priorities

OPPORTUNITY AREAS
guidance for areas where change is anticipated, encouraged, or should be strategically managed (see page 8)

IMPLEMENTATION
summary of actions with timing and other expectations

Guiding Principles

Principles describe the intent about "how" (generally) and "where" (conceptual location) growth and development in Worthington should occur in the future. They are based upon community input and reflect several mutually reinforcing themes, including the type, quality, appearance, pattern, character, and organization of development; environmental quality; efficient use of infrastructure; and expanding connectivity and mobility choices. The principles were prepared with the community committee following the first round of public input. They were later refined through the planning process and guide the plan's recommendations.

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.

DEFINITIONS

Green Space. Green space is the broad category that includes any park, natural preserve, or other undeveloped space, such as lawns and yards. These spaces do not have to be publicly accessible.

Park Space. Park space refers to all publicly accessible green spaces, including both active and passive spaces. Active spaces are programmed with a specific purpose, like a playground or sports field, while passive spaces are unprogrammed, like a trail. These spaces could be publicly or privately owned as long as they are open to anyone.

Public Realm. The public realm refers to all publicly accessible outdoor spaces, including streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks, and civic spaces, that are open and available to everyone, regardless of ownership.

Mixed-Use. Development that combines two or more uses, such as retail, office, and residential, in a single building or at single location. Mixed-use development supports walkability by placing everyday destinations in close proximity and can strengthen a city's tax base by layering uses on underutilized land.

Infill. Development that occurs on vacant, underutilized, or previously developed land within an existing built-up area, rather than on undeveloped land at the urban edge.

Green infrastructure. Stormwater management systems that use natural processes, such as rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavement, and tree canopy, to filter and absorb water on site. Green infrastructure is distinct from gray infrastructure like pipes and detention basins and from green space, which refers to vegetated areas more broadly.

Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH). Existing privately owned rental housing that is affordable to moderate-income households because of its age, size, or condition. NOAH is often the first housing stock lost to rising rents or redevelopment pressure.

Strategic Priorities

The 10 guiding principles on the preceding pages describe what Worthington values and where change should occur. The 15 strategic priorities below translate those principles into direction for action, organized across the plan's five topics. Each priority is supported by specific implementation actions found within its chapter.

Land Use and Character

1. Comprehensive Zoning & Development Code Reform

2. Catalyze and Strategically Support Mixed-Use Redevelopment

3. Enable Incremental and Coordinated Mixed-Use Redevelopment

Economic Vitality

4. Support great places and spaces where people want to live, work, shop, play, and eat

5. Target industries that support Central Ohio's development focus and the context of Worthington's Opportunity Areas

6. Ensure Worthington proactively strengthens its economic development capacity

7. Establish clear policies and procedures for the use of incentives and other economic development tools

Mobility and Connectivity

8. Adopt and Implement the Updated Thoroughfare Plan

9. Advance Active Transportation as a Core Network

10. Prioritize and Plan Complete Streets Studies and Safety Improvements

11. Coordinate and Advocate for Transit Improvements

Housing and Neighborhoods

12. Support Neighborhood Character and Support Reinvestment in Existing Housing

13. Expand Housing Options in Context Appropriate Locations

Environment and Resilience

14. Lead by Example in Environmental Stewardship and Resilience

15. Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

OPPORTUNITY AREAS

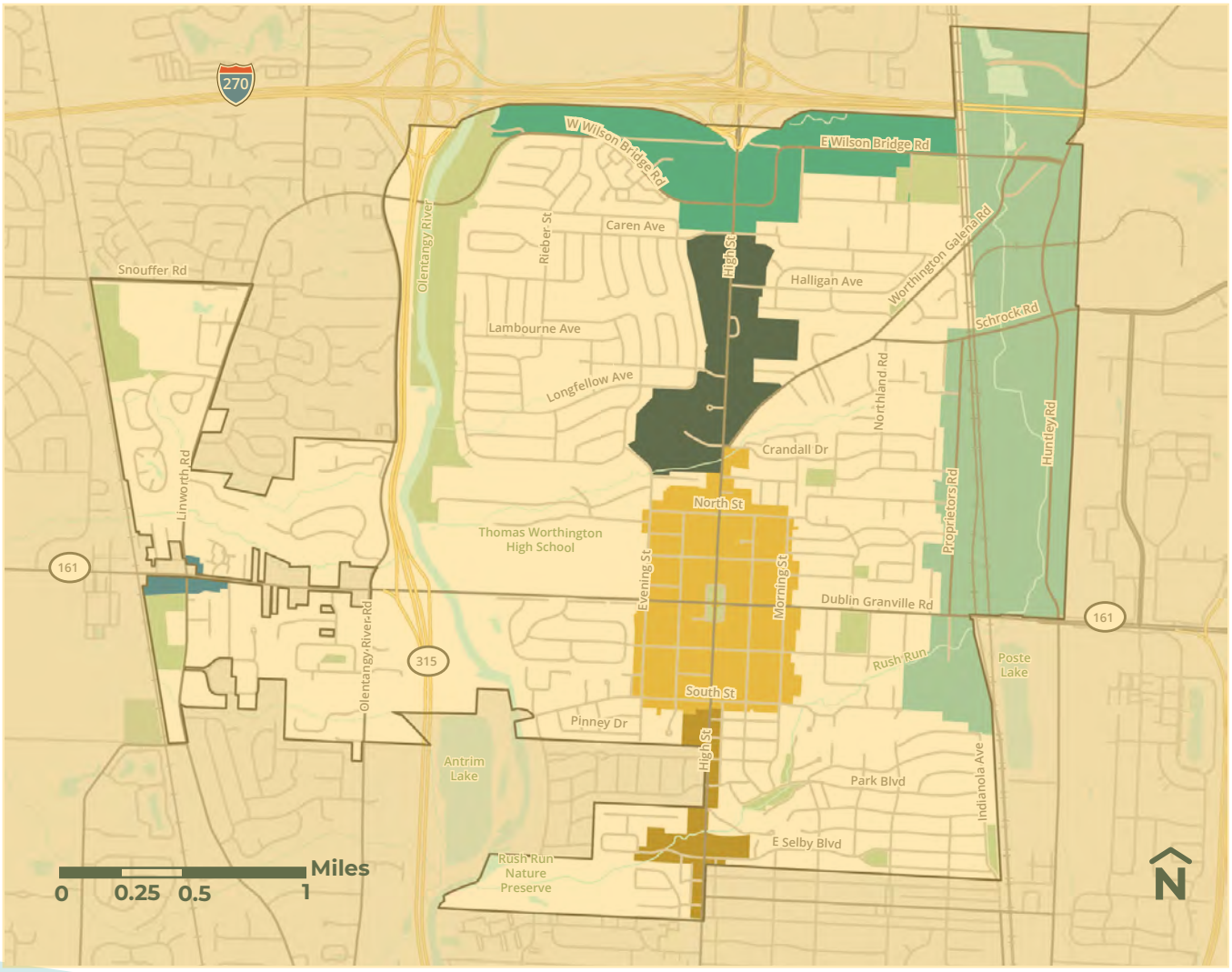
The Opportunity Areas chapter provides geographic guidance for areas where change is anticipated, encouraged, or should be strategically managed. These areas build upon the Citywide Strategic Priorities and translate them into place-specific direction.

Each Opportunity Area includes:

- Strategic Role
- The Area Today
- Strategic Direction
- Public Space, Land Use and Character
- Mobility and Connectivity

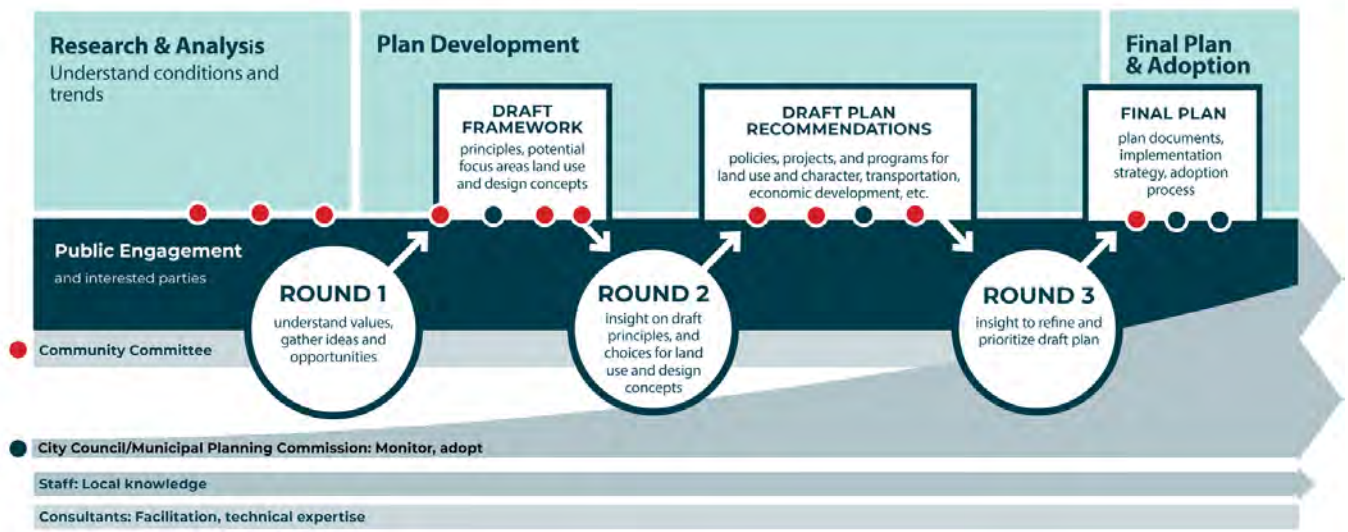
The Opportunity Areas are:

- **WILSON BRIDGE**
- **NORTH HIGH**
- **OLD WORTHINGTON**
- **LINWORTH**
- **SOUTH HIGH**
- **FORGE FIELDS / NORTHEAST**



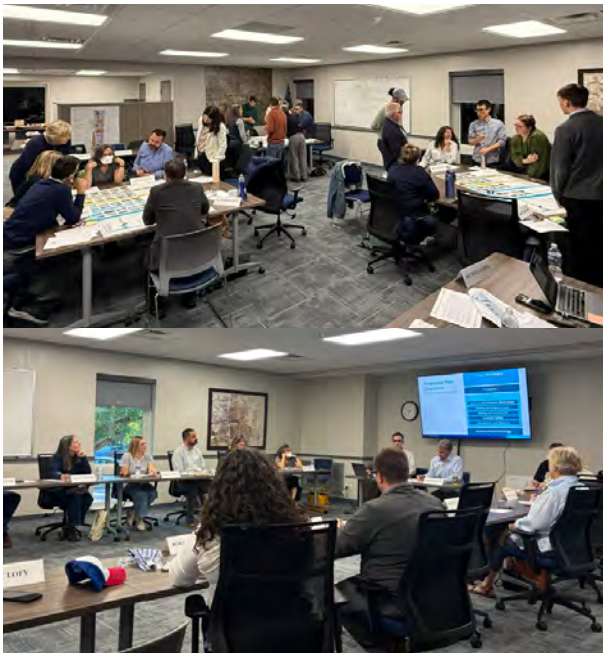
Process

The planning process for *Worthington Together* was iterative, inclusive, and representative of the community, with each round of public engagement built directly on the community's previous input. The plan was shaped by quantitative analysis of existing conditions and input from the community. City Council received formal updates on the plan's progress throughout the 24-month process. A community committee was appointed to oversee *Worthington Together*, and every step was made highly visible to the public.



Community Committee

A diverse group of 18 community members was appointed by City Council to provide guidance and direction regarding the plan process and substance. The committee members were either nominated or selected through an open application process that yielded many talented, passionate, and qualified individuals. The committee members collectively represented many interests, geographic areas, professions, and demographic groups within the City's population. The committee served as advocates for the plan, attended 10 official meetings, and assisted with the three rounds of public engagement. Their direction and input were essential to creating this plan.



Public Input Round 1 (The Launch)

The first round of engagement, called The Launch, was designed to introduce Worthington Together to the community, build on the community values from Vision Worthington, and gather initial topical and location-based ideas to inform the planning process. Activities were the same across all formats and included asking participants what they treasured about Worthington. An interactive mapping activity had participants mark opportunities for change and improvement, indicate the type of opportunity (housing, transportation, commercial centers/corridors, or placemaking/quality of life), and provide reasoning for the selections.

During the first round of engagement, 801 participants shared a total of 1,055 treasures and 3,098 places marked on the map. The results were shared with the community committee and the public and were used to create the plan's guiding principles and identify the Opportunity Areas.

Format for the first round:

- The Launch in-person event was held on June 11, 2025.
- The Launch webinar was held on June 26, 2025.
- Online activities were available on the project website from June to August 2025.

Small group meetings hosted by the community committee were held from July to August 2025.





COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH EFFORTS

The overall goal of public engagement was: "to ensure that participation in the Comprehensive Plan process is a choice for anyone who cares about the future of Worthington." To ensure the plan reflected all demographic groups, civic networks, and geographic areas of the community, three distinct rounds of public engagement were implemented across multiple formats. The strategies utilized to energize the public and ensure engagement was a success involved:

- A project brand, Worthington Together, and graphic identity
- A project website: worthingtontogether.org
- Word-of-mouth to bring people into the process
- Social media posts and targeted social ads yielding over 12,000 impressions
- Presentations to community groups
- Village Talks (print and e-news)
- Emails to 370+ subscribers
- Emails to schools, city boards, and commissions
- Business cards
- Village Green sign
- Flyers at city facilities and events
- Speaker series
- Social group and interested party presentations

Public Input Round 2 (Community Choices)

The second round of engagement, called Community Choices, was designed to gather insights into the draft guiding principles and the key questions that emerged from the first round of public engagement. Activities were the same across all formats and included asking participants to rate and respond to draft statements of intent and character images for the identified Opportunity Areas. In addition, participants were provided with three concept maps of the Central Opportunity Area for review, rating, and comment.

During the second round of engagement, 820 participants shared a total of 2,854 comments across all activities. The results were shared with the community committee and the public and were essential in creating the plan's recommendations.

Format for the second round:

- The Community Choices in-person engagement event was held on November 12, 2025.
- The Community Choices webinar engagement event was held on November 20, 2025.
- Online activities were available on the project website from November to December 2025.



Public Input Round 3 (Community Review)

The third round of engagement was designed to share the full draft plan with the community and prepare for implementation. Activities were the same across all formats and included reviewing and commenting on the plan's future character and land use map, actions within each of the plan topics, and the Opportunity Area statements of intent. The full draft plan was made available to every participant.

During the third round of engagement, over 300 participants shared written comments about what they liked and what they would change, and identified which actions they felt are most important. The results were shared with the community committee and the public and were used to refine the plan document in preparation for adoption.

Format for the third round:

- The Community Review in-person open house was held on May 13, 2026.
- The webinar was held on May 20, 2026.
- Online activities were available on the project website from May 13 to June 13, 2026.

Speaker Series

Worthington Together included a three-part speaker series. Three speaker series events were held, at which experts discussed their experiences related to community planning. These events helped inform the community about trends and forces shaping the Central Ohio region and Worthington, provided opportunities to learn from other communities, and helped frame discussions about policies for Worthington. These three events included:

1. **Central Ohio Today: Understanding a Period of Incredible Growth & Change.** This was a speaker event on July 23, 2025, at which Michael Wilkos (The Columbus Foundation and United Way of Central Ohio) discussed regional change, with a focus on housing.

2. **Quality of Place.** This was a panel event on October 1, 2025, at which Jamie Greene (Planning NEXT) hosted a discussion with Kelly Dannenfelser (Franklin, Tennessee), Herb Koehler (Granville, Ohio), and Letty Schamp (Hilliard, Ohio) about communities that have created and nurtured quality places over time with changing demographics and market forces.

3. **Economic Development.** This was a panel event on October 27, 2025, at which David Collinsworth (Management Advisory Group LLC) hosted a discussion with Joe Hayek (Worthington Enterprises), Matt McCollister (One Columbus), and Ashley Solether (ULI Columbus) about the role economic development and fiscal responsibility play in community development, with a focus on balancing high-quality public services with a healthy and diverse tax base.

Interested Parties

At several stages in the process, the planning team and City Staff discussed the plan with local interested parties. The interested parties provided focused input from individuals and groups with specific, locally based, professional knowledge. Discussions were designed to gain insight into local knowledge and discuss the plan's Opportunity Areas.

These parties included:

- Worthington City School District
- Students from Worthington Kilbourne and Thomas Worthington High Schools
- Local businesses and property owners
- Regional organizations (One Columbus, COTA, MORPC, and the Building Association of Central Ohio)
- The City of Columbus
- Worthington Green Team
- The Worthington Partnership
- Worthington Alliance for Responsible Development (WARD)
- Building Worthington's Future (BWF)
- Project Community Park Worthington (PCPW)
- Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW)
- Worthington Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board
- Parks and Recreation Commission



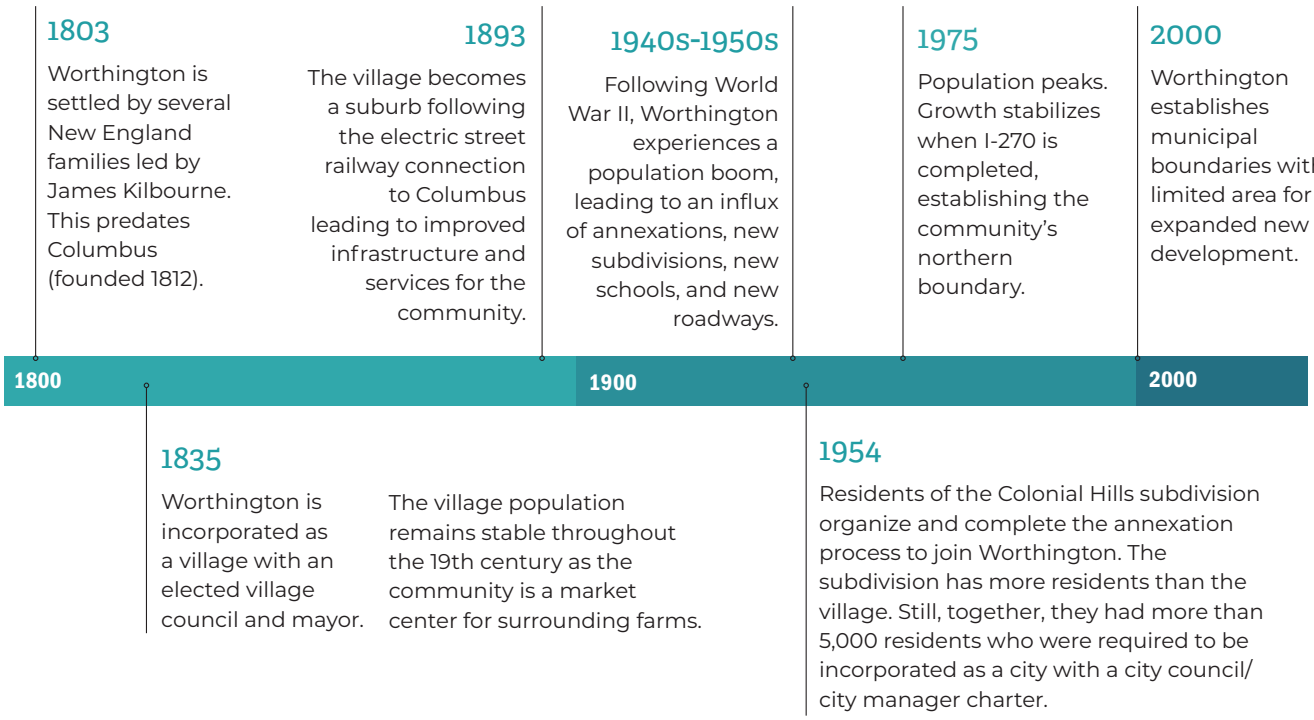
Context

PLANNING HISTORY

Worthington predates Columbus itself. The community was settled in 1803 by a group of New England families led by James Kilbourne, and from the beginning it was designed with intention: a central public square platted for religious, educational, and civic purposes, surrounded by lots and streets laid out in the tradition of a New England town. The village was named in honor of Thomas Worthington, one of Ohio's first senators and a future governor, who helped identify the land. That original design instilled a sense of order, identity, and civic life that still shapes the community today.

Worthington was incorporated as a village in 1835 and remained a stable agricultural market center through the 19th century. The connection of an electric streetcar line to Columbus in 1893 marked the beginning of its transition from a rural village to a suburb, bringing improved infrastructure and drawing new residents. Growth accelerated dramatically after World War II, when a wave of annexations, new subdivisions, new schools, and new roads transformed the community. By 1954, the recently annexed Colonial Hills subdivision alone had more residents than the original village, and together they crossed the 5,000-resident threshold that required

KEY MILESTONES IN WORTHINGTON'S HISTORY

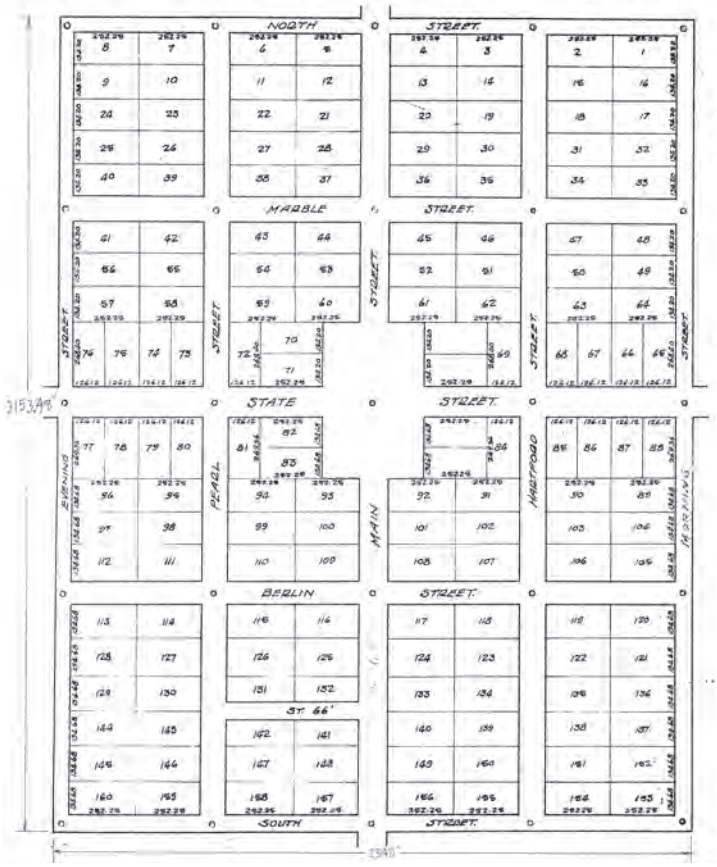


incorporation as a city. Worthington adopted a city council and city manager form of government that it has maintained since.

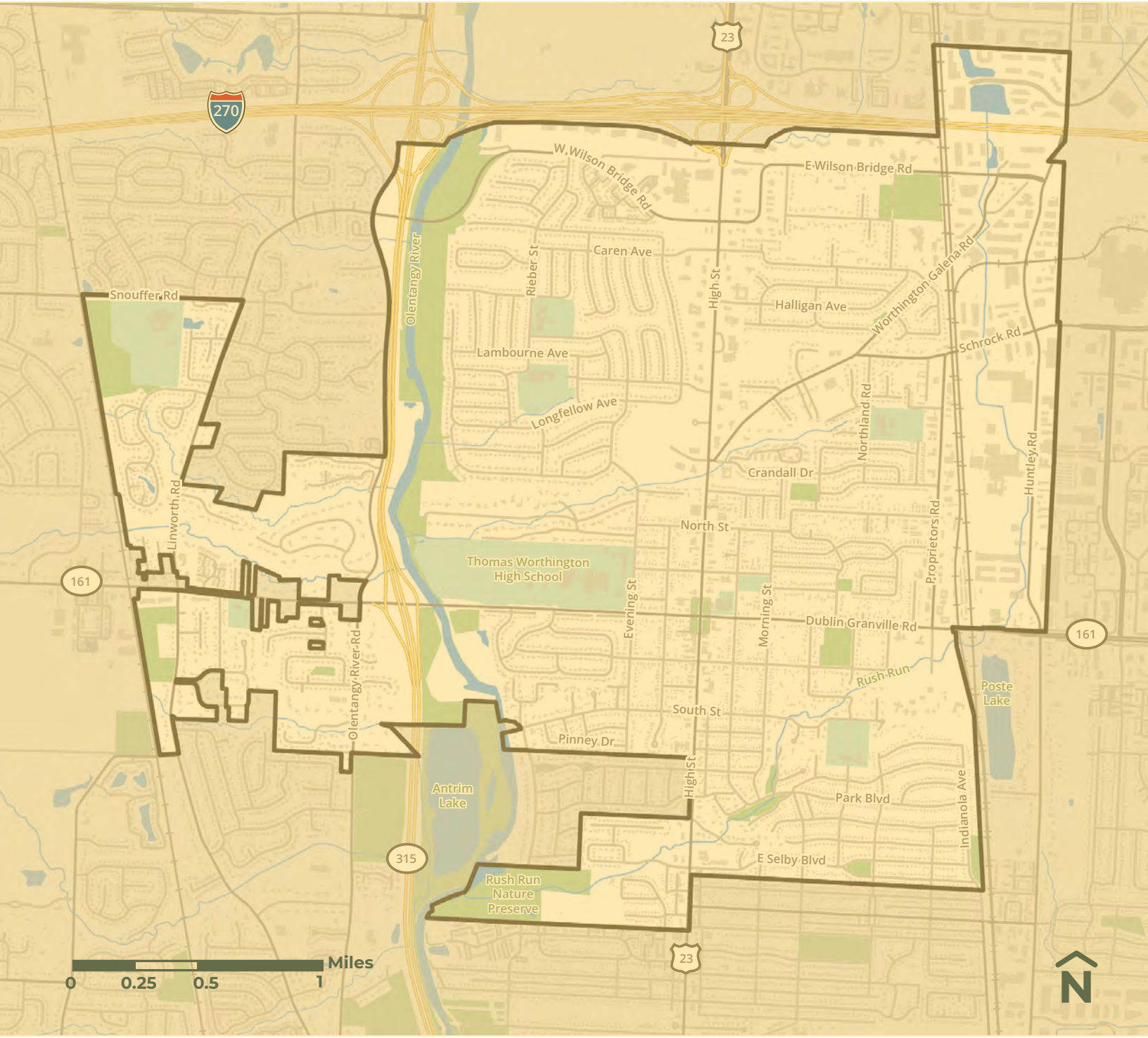
The community's physical boundaries were effectively established with the completion of I-270 in 1975, which set the northern edge of the city and ended the era of major annexation. Population peaked around that time and gradually declined through 2010 before modest growth resumed, driven by infill and a small number of new multifamily and senior living developments. Worthington has been fully built-out for nearly half a century, which means that planning here is not about accommodating growth at the edges but about managing reinvestment, change, and quality within an established community.

Worthington has a long tradition of formal planning. The 2005 Comprehensive Plan guided the community for two decades and spawned a series of focused plans and studies, including the Wilson Bridge Corridor Study (2011), the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2019), the Vision Worthington community visioning effort (2020), the Parks Master Plan (2017), the Northeast Area Plan (2024), and the Housing Needs Assessment (2024). Worthington Together builds on that foundation, updating the community's policy framework for the years ahead and reflecting the changes in the region and the city over the past 20 years.

Map of the original plat of the city



A New England-type village was platted around a central public square designated for religious and educational purposes and a spot for community gatherings. The village was named in honor of Thomas Worthington (one of Ohio's first senators and a future governor), who helped locate the land that became Worthington.



PLAN AREA

The plan area encompasses the City of Worthington's boundaries, approximately **5.6 square miles**. The current population of the City is **14,804 people** across **approximately 6,400 housing units** (MORPC estimates, 2025).

Legend

- City Boundary
- Water
- Parks
- Public School Sites

KEY EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Worthington Together was informed through a highly data-driven technical analysis of the community's existing conditions in relation to regional trends. The findings of this analysis were assembled in a snapshot report (see Appendix for more), which was made publicly available on the project website early in the process. The following is a summary of that analysis. Additional relevant findings and maps are located in each topical chapter.

A community that is growing older, more affluent, and slowly more diverse. Worthington has a population of approximately 14,800 residents in 6,143 households, spread across 5.6 square miles. After a gradual population decline from the 1970s through 2000, the City has added residents since 2010, growth of about nine percent, driven primarily by infill and the development of a small number of apartment and senior living facilities.

The community's demographic profile has shifted meaningfully since the last plan. The median age is now 42.4, and more than one in five residents is over the age of 65, a share that has grown by more than a third since 2010. At the same time, the 35-44 age cohort has grown, suggesting that young professionals are increasingly choosing Worthington. Single-person households have increased while households with children have declined, consistent with regional trends toward smaller household sizes.

Worthington is considerably more educated and more affluent than Franklin County as a whole. Nearly 73 percent of residents over age 25 hold a bachelor's degree or higher, nearly twice the county rate, and the median household income of $124,700 is roughly 70 percent higher than the county median. These characteristics reflect a community with high expectations for services, amenities, and quality of place.

The City is less racially and ethnically diverse than the surrounding region. Approximately nine percent of residents identify as non-white, compared to nearly 40 percent in Franklin County. That share has grown since 2010, and the community's Vision Worthington statement explicitly calls for creating conditions that increase diversity and remove barriers for people of all ages, abilities, and income levels. Approximately 18 percent of households earn less than $50,000 per year, and roughly a third of renters are cost-burdened. These households have distinct housing needs that the plan is designed to address.

A built-out community with limited land for new development. Worthington is largely developed, with the community's boundaries effectively established since I-270's completion in 1975. Few open tracts of land remain. Future growth and reinvestment will rely on infill construction and the redevelopment of underutilized commercial, office, and industrial areas.

An aging commercial and office inventory. Worthington has approximately 2.5 million square feet of office space, the majority of which was built before 1979 and less than one percent of which was built in the 21st century. Aging commercial corridors and office parks represent the community's greatest opportunity for reinvestment and transformation, and modernizing this inventory is a fiscal priority, not just an economic development goal.

Growing demand for a broader range of housing.
Worthington is largely characterized by single-family neighborhoods developed in the 1960s and 1970s. Residential homes are in high demand but supply is constrained, and home prices and rents are higher here than in surrounding areas. Addressing the need for diverse housing types and price points, including missing middle and workforce housing, will be essential to ensure that Worthington remains a community for all ages and life stages. The plan supports concentrating new housing in the City's identified Opportunity Areas, where it can be integrated with walkable mixed-use environments rather than introduced into established neighborhoods.

A strong local economy with opportunities to evolve.
Worthington hosts approximately 15,000 jobs, with healthcare-related services as the largest sector and professional and technical services driving recent growth. Income tax collections have grown by 49 percent over the past decade, though when adjusted for inflation real revenue growth has been modest. Approximately 97 percent of those jobs are filled by people living outside the City, and the commercial tax base faces pressure as office vacancies and an aging building stock challenge long-term fiscal stability. A focused strategy targeting industries that match Worthington's competitive advantages of quality of place, a skilled workforce, and proximity to the regional core, is essential to sustaining economic vitality.

A transportation network that needs to catch up with community priorities.
The City's Thoroughfare Plan was last updated in 2005 and no longer reflects current approaches to street design, multimodal accommodation, or the relationship between roadways and land use. This plan introduces a new context-based classification system and updated street typologies to guide future roadway design. Traffic forecasts indicate increased congestion during peak hours by 2050. COTA service is concentrated along High Street with limited east-west connections, and sidewalk gaps remain in several residential neighborhoods. Closing those gaps, expanding protected bicycle facilities, and aligning street design with the character of surrounding land uses will be central to achieving the community's mobility goals.

A strong foundation of parks and natural resources, and a community that cares deeply about both.
Worthington's parks, green spaces, and tree canopy are among its most valued community assets, and public input confirmed that residents have strong views about protecting and improving them. The City meets or exceeds most of the benchmarks established in the 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and many of that plan's recommendations have been carried out. But the planning process revealed that the community's expectations for parks, recreation, and open space have evolved, and that the 2017 plan is due for an update.


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Land Use and Character

Land use patterns shape how people experience a community, how neighborhoods evolve, where businesses locate, how people move from place to place, and how natural systems are protected. In Worthington, guiding land use requires balancing thoughtful reinvestment with respect for the City's historic character, walkable neighborhoods, and natural landscape.

Worthington's historic fabric is one of its most durable assets. The original plat of Old Worthington, laid out in the tradition of a New England town, remains the civic and symbolic heart of the community. Many neighborhoods beyond the formal historic district contain homes, streetscapes, and building patterns that reflect the community's growth across two centuries and contribute meaningfully to its character. This plan affirms that reinvestment is the preferred approach to maintaining that character, and that new development in and near historic areas should relate to and strengthen what makes those places distinctive.

This chapter establishes the framework for land use decisions across Worthington. It reflects the themes that emerged through Vision Worthington: reinvesting in key employment and commercial corridors, creating more walkable and connected places, and ensuring that change reinforces the qualities that make Worthington distinctive. The Future Land Use and Character Map and accompanying character descriptions define expectations for the scale, form, and design of development across the City, which are further refined in the Opportunity Areas chapter. The chapter concludes with a set of Strategic Priorities and actions that identify the key steps Worthington should take to align policy,regulations, and investment with the community's vision for its future physical development.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1. Comprehensive Zoning and Development Code Reform

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2. Catalyze and Strategically Support Mixed-Use Redevelopment

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3. Enable Incremental and Coordinated Mixed-use Redevelopment

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- Context
- Future Land Use and Character
- Strategic Priority 1
- Strategic Priority 2
- Strategic Priority 3

Context

Throughout the Worthington Together process, the City's built and natural environment was assessed through data analysis, insights from interested parties and the general public, as well as review of recent plans and studies completed.

THEMES FROM PUBLIC INPUT

During the first round of public input, participants were asked to identify on a map where they saw opportunities in the city for Housing, Transportation, Commercial Centers and Corridors, or Placemaking and Quality of Life. The most common themes across the opportunity types were:

HOUSING

- Broad need for more housing, citing opportunities on underutilized/vacant land
- Apartments, condominiums, duplexes, or other multifamily options to diversify the housing stock
- Opportunities for mixed-use developments and higher-density housing, especially near corridors and nodes
- Housing suited towards seniors and empty-nesters, like patio homes, single-story units, or other retirement-friendly options
- Workforce housing, lower-income options, and ensuring that new housing meets a range of price points
- New single-family homes

TRANSPORTATION

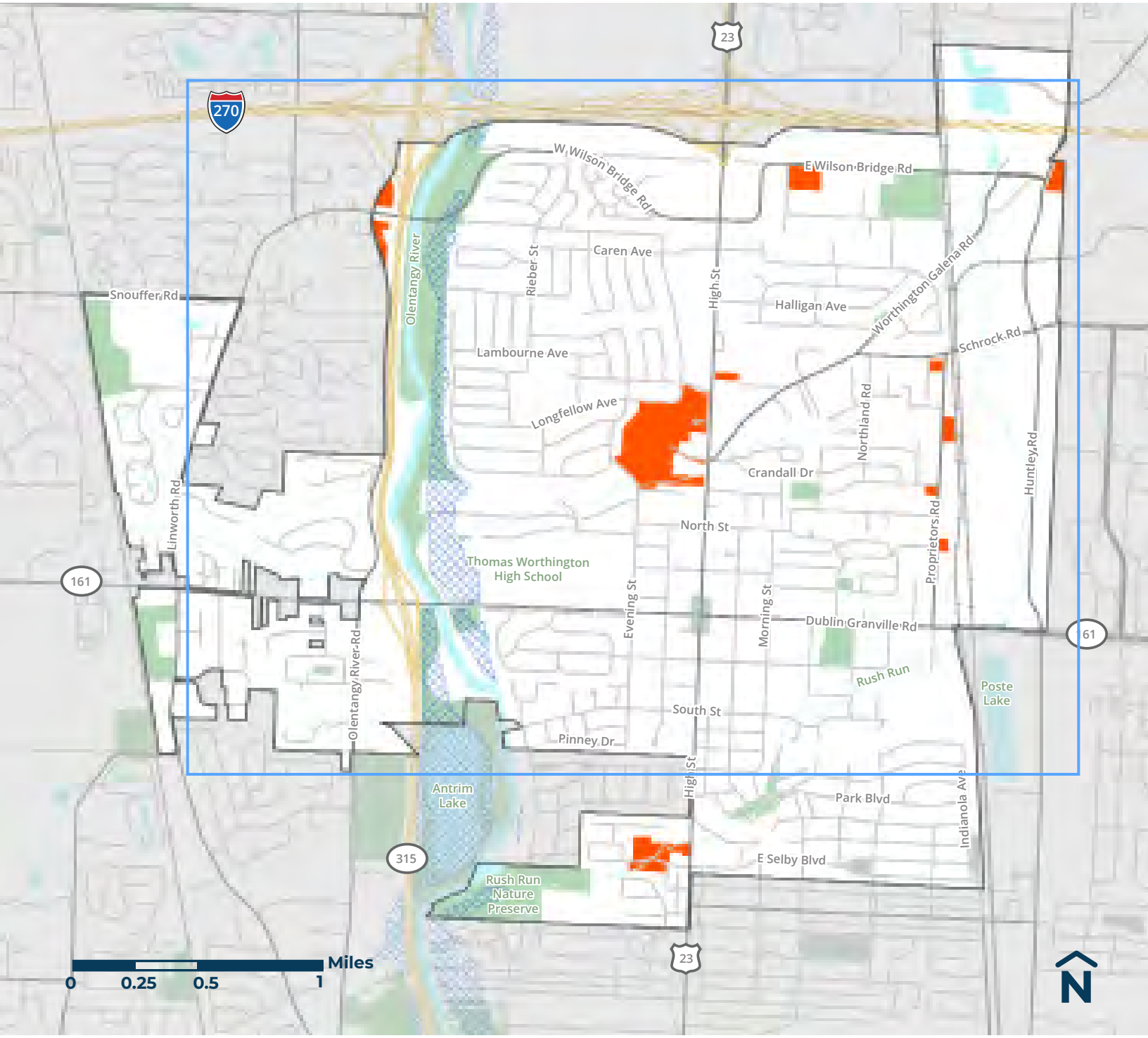
- Safer and more complete pedestrian connections, including new sidewalks, crosswalks, and walkability improvements
- Problem intersections, bridges, and road segments where improvements are needed to ease congestion, improve safety, or modernize infrastructure
- Expand bike lanes, bike paths, and bicycle connectivity throughout the community
- Strengthen COTA service and better integrate transit into the City's transportation network
- Concerns about traffic congestion, speeding, and the need for calming measures to improve safety on local streets

COMMERCIAL CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

- More retail options, including shops, stores, and revitalized shopping areas
- More dining opportunities, including restaurants, cafes, breweries, and food halls
- Redevelop existing sites into mixed-use districts that combine housing, retail, offices, and civic amenities, especially in key commercial nodes
- Vacant or underutilized commercial buildings and lots as opportunities for reinvestment and new community-serving uses
- Improve or expand office space and employment centers, including interest in modern workspaces and coworking opportunities

PLACEMAKING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

- Preserve, enhance, and expand parks, open spaces, and green areas
- Protect natural resources (trees, rivers, creeks), improving environmental sustainability, and promoting green practices
- More community spaces, plazas, and gathering places for events, festivals, and social connection
- Traffic calming, safer streets, improved streetscapes, and better pedestrian infrastructure
- Expand trail systems, bike connections, sidewalks, and overall walkability throughout the City



There is little undeveloped land in the City.

There is only about **63 acres of undeveloped land** in the City today. Undeveloped land is classified as "vacant" but is not a park, preserved open space, or floodplain. **The largest site is the 37-acre 1033 High Street property** in the center of the City. Some sites may have development limitations.

Legend

- Vacant Parcels
- 100-Year Flood Plain

EXISTING LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Worthington distinguishes itself from other communities in part by its development character. The historic and walkable downtown business district and Village Green establish the community's identity. Design guidelines that apply along the community's major corridors (High Street and Dublin-Granville Road) and within the original plat of Old Worthington, reinforce that character through building and site design.

Traditionally, Comprehensive Plans look at land use, but fall short in conveying character. For example, not all commercial or office land uses look and function the same (for example: Old Worthington compared to the Worthington Mall).

The following existing land use and character assessment classifies the City's existing land by both use and character attributes such as building types and locations, lot size and coverage, street patterns, and other characteristics.





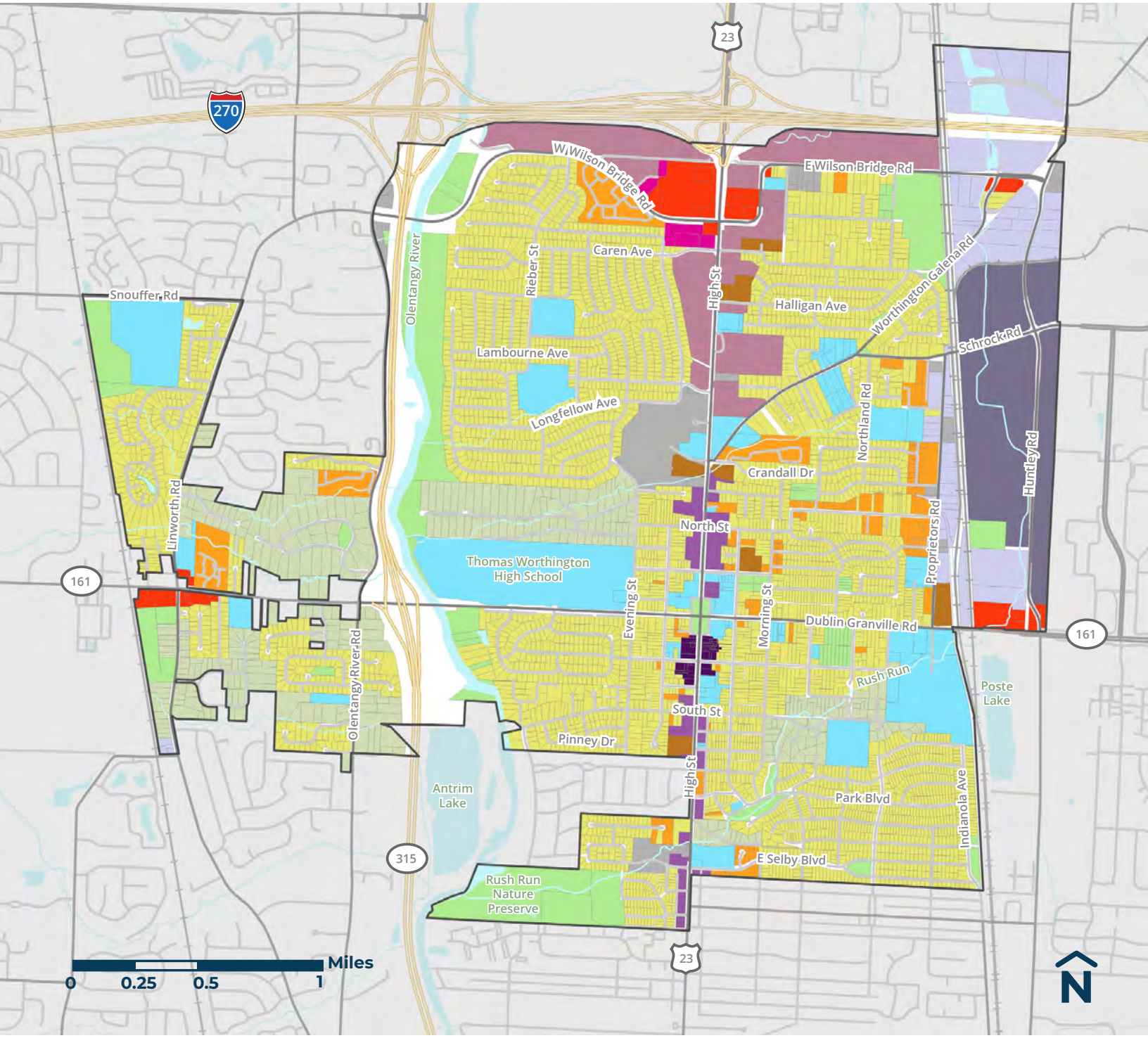
By The Numbers

Over half of the City's land today is developed for single-family residential neighborhoods (the Single-Family Residential and Large-Lot Residential categories).

To view more details about each Existing Land Use Type, see Existing Conditions Snapshot Part 1 in the Appendix.

Existing Land Use and Character Type	Acreage	% of City
Single-Family Residential	1,240	43.4%
Large-Lot Residential	303	10.6%
Duplex and Small Multifamily	54	1.9%
Senior Residential	23	0.8%
Old Worthington Village Center	10	0.4%
High Street Transition	30	1.1%
Corridor Mixed Use	9	0.3%
Corridor Commercial	52	1.8%
Corridor Office	157	5.5%
Hybrid Commercial	151	5.3%
Industrial	159	5.6%
Civic / Institutional Campus	294	10.3%
Park / Open Space *	255	8.9%
Vacant	63	2.3%

* includes conservation areas, cemeteries, and active/passive parks



Existing Land Use and Character Map

- Parks / Open Space
- Large-Lot Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Duplex and Small Multifamily
- Senior Residential
- Old Worthington Village Core
- High Street Transition
- Corridor Mixed Use
- Corridor Commercial
- Corridor Office
- Hybrid Commercial
- Industrial
- Civic / Institutional Campus
- Vacant

Future Land Use and Character

The Future Land Use and Character map defines the types of development that are appropriate in the future and where. It is a tool for the City to guide decisions about future land use and development over time. It is not a mandate for development or redevelopment but describes the City's expectations regarding the use and character of future development. It is implemented over time through the administration of the City's zoning regulations and various public and private development decisions. It will serve as the basis for potential future zoning updates.

Each of the Opportunity Areas have additional guidance that should be consulted when considering development in those locations. All places in the City will have a character type, even if that place is not intended to significantly change.

Residential Areas

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

Mixed Use Areas

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

Other Areas

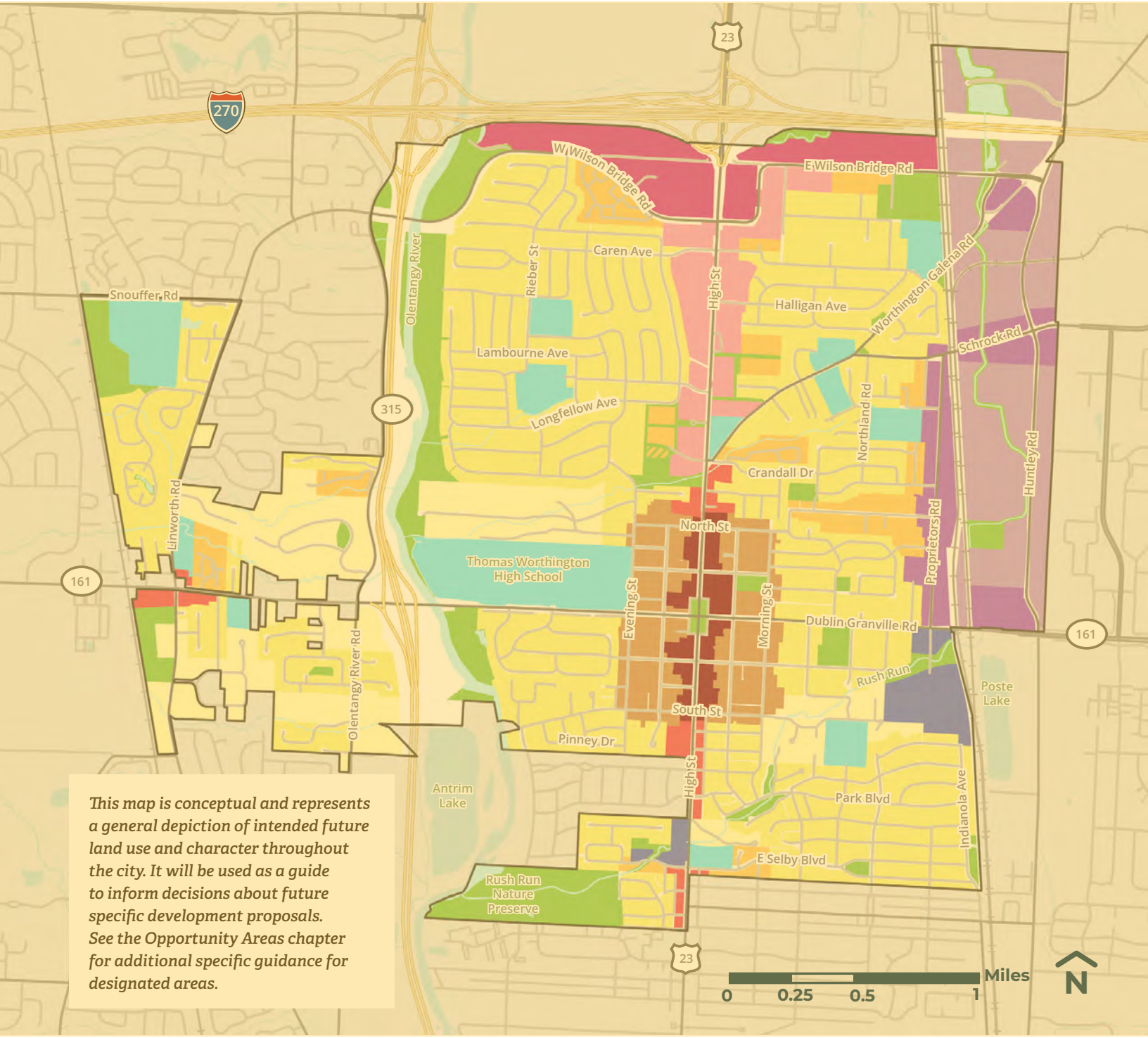
- Forge Fields Flex
- Institutional Campus
- Parks and Green Space

Implementing the land use vision through zoning

Zoning is a legal tool that regulates land use and the intensity of development, including types of structures that may be built, how they are to be built, where they are to be built, and how they may be used. Each property in the City is assigned to a zoning district. There may be more than one appropriate zoning category for a particular future land use category. For example, there is one "Residential, Suburban" future land use category, but there may be two or more appropriate zoning districts to account for various lot sizes and contexts.

The land use vision is implemented over time through many distinct public and private development decisions. For example, property owners seeking to redevelop or change the use of their property often have to seek rezoning. Rezoning decisions are evaluated with respect to how they conform to the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use and Character Map.

Plan	Zoning
• Future Intent	• Currently allowed
• Policy guide	• Legal rules
• General desired Character	• Specific uses and standards
• Advisory	• Enforceable



This map is conceptual and represents a general depiction of intended future land use and character throughout the city. It will be used as a guide to inform decisions about future specific development proposals. See the Opportunity Areas chapter for additional specific guidance for designated areas.

Future Land Use and Character Map

- Residential, Large-Lot
- Residential, Suburban
- Residential, 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

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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Residential	Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

Single-family homes of varied sizes and accessory dwelling units

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-2.5 stories	30+ feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Residential Street

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Mostly private green spaces such as lawns and wooded areas with trail access in some areas.

Example Character











Residential, Suburban

Residential areas with primarily single-family homes with varying 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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Residential	Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

Primarily single-family homes, with some two-family and accessory dwelling units that are designed to mimic the style of single-family homes.

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-2.5 stories	20-30 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Residential Street

Residential Neighborhood Connector

Residential Avenue

Residential Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

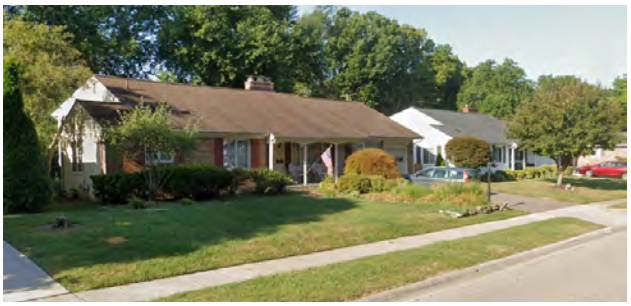
Mostly private green spaces such as lawns and yards, with additional community green spaces and access to trails in some areas. Most public parks and school sites that include playgrounds/green space are integrated into these neighborhoods as well.

Example Character











Residential, Small Lot and 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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Residential	Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

Small-lot single-family, cottage courts, duplex, three, and four-family homes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units.

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-3 stories	10-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Residential Street

Residential Neighborhood Connector

Residential Avenue

Residential Boulevard

Old Worthington Neighborhood Connector

Mixed Use Avenue

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Mostly private green spaces such as lawns and yards, with additional community green spaces and access to trails in some areas.

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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Residential	Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

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

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-3 stories	10-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Old Worthington Street

Old Worthington Neighborhood Connector

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

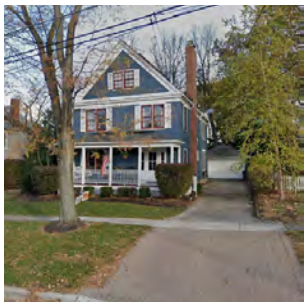
GREEN SPACE

Mostly private green spaces such as lawns and yards, with additional community green spaces and access to trails in some areas.

Example Character













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	Civic/Institutional
Retail/Restaurant	

Housing Types

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

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-3 stories	0-15 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Old Worthington Street

Old Worthington Neighborhood Connector

Old Worthington Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN 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











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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Mixed Use	Residential
Office	Civic/Institutional
Retail/Restaurant	

Housing Types

Multifamily and mixed-use buildings

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
1-4 stories*	0-15 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Mixed Use Street

Old Worthington Neighborhood Connector

Old Worthington Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Integrated parks, plazas, and public realm areas (spaces between buildings and the street) act as green space, both public and private.

Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Mixed Use	Residential
Office	Civic/Institutional
Retail/Restaurant	Hotel

Housing Types

Multifamily and mixed-use buildings

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
2-4 stories*	10-30 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Mixed Use Street
Mixed Use Neighborhood Connector
Mixed Use Boulevard
See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Integrated parks, plazas, trails, and public realm areas (spaces between buildings and the street) act as green space, both public and private.

Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

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, hotels, activated public spaces, and residential options mixed horizontally (across a site) and vertically (within buildings). A broad mix of uses is appropriate, but the area should have an overall employment emphasis to generate a strong positive fiscal impact for the City. **For specific subarea guidance, see the Wilson Bridge Road Opportunity Area.**

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Mixed Use	Residential
Office	Retail/Restaurant
Hotel	Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

Multifamily and mixed-use buildings

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height

3-10 stories*

Setback

5-20 feet, dependent on scale

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Mixed Use Street
Mixed Use Neighborhood Connector
Mixed Use Avenue
Mixed Use Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Integrated parks, plazas, trails, and public realm areas (spaces between buildings and the street) act as green space, both public and private.

Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

Example Character















Rush Run Mixed Use

Employment-oriented mixed-use areas along High Street or SR 161 where Rush Run creates an opportunity to integrate ecological amenity, active transportation, and coordinated campus-scale development on relatively large parcels. These areas accommodate office uses as primary drivers, with residential and limited retail integrated into a live-work environment. To realize development potential while protecting stream corridors, woodlands, and other site constraints, greater building heights, shared or structured parking, and low impact site design may be appropriate.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Office	Mixed Use
Retail/Restaurant	Civic/Institutional
Residential	

Housing Types

Multifamily and mixed-use buildings

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height	Setback
2-5 stories*	Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Innovation Street
Innovation Boulevard
Mixed Use Street
Mixed Use Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Trail connections, park and plaza spaces, green infrastructure (like bioswales), and passive preserved land, especially oriented along Rush Run; generally private.

****Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.***

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.

Land Uses

Primary	Secondary
Light Manufacturing	Mixed Use
Office	Retail/Restaurant
Tech-Flex	Residential
Research & Development	

Housing Types

Multifamily and mixed-use buildings

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-6 stories*

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Innovation Street
Innovation Avenue
Innovation Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Trail connections, park and plaza spaces, green infrastructure (like bioswales), and passive preserved land, especially oriented along Rush Run as referenced in the Northeast Area Plan; generally private.

Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

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 and development

Land Uses

Primary

Light Manufacturing
Office
Tech-Flex
Research & Development

Secondary

Civic/Institutional

Housing Types

None

Form Attributes

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-4 stories*

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Street Types

Innovation Street
Innovation Avenue
Innovation Boulevard

See Mobility and Connectivity Chapter for detail

GREEN SPACE

Trail connections, park and plaza spaces, green infrastructure (like bioswales), and passive preserved land, especially oriented along Rush Run as referenced in the Northeast Area Plan; generally private.

Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

Example Character











Institutional Campus

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

Example Character





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.

Example Character





Strategic Priorities and Actions

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT CODE REFORM

Why This Matters

Zoning and development regulations are the primary tools for implementing this plan. Rather than addressing zoning piecemeal across multiple chapters, Worthington should undertake one coordinated update that aligns land use, housing, design standards, and procedures with the Future Land Use and Character Map. 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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 1, 2, 5, 8, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Clear, predictable standards ensure that new development reinforces the quality, design expectations, and livability residents value. Strong implementation tools protect neighborhoods while allowing thoughtful reinvestment.



Worthington is a diverse and equitable community. Transparent processes and accessible development guidance reduce barriers and create a more understandable system for residents, small property owners, and businesses. Clear rules support housing variety and inclusive growth.



Worthington is connected. Aligning zoning, infrastructure standards, and Complete Streets principles ensures that land use decisions support walkability, bikeability, and coordinated public investment.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Modernizing regulations through a transparent and coordinated process reflects proactive governance and thoughtful long-term planning.

Implementation Actions

1.1. **Conduct a comprehensive regulatory assessment.** Currently, the City of Worthington Planning and Zoning Code, Worthington Design Guidelines, and engineering standards do not align with the Comprehensive Plan. Updating these

regulatory policies after adopting the new plan is essential to align day-to-day decisions with the community's long-term vision and guiding principles. The first step in this process is to create a Task Force to guide the process and ensure transparency with the public. The Task Force should be comprised of City Staff, representatives of the Municipal Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, and Board of Zoning Appeals, as well as additional community representatives (e.g., former members of the Worthington Together Community Committee). The Task Force would evaluate the existing Planning and Zoning Code, Worthington Design Guidelines, and engineering standards to identify conflicts, redundancies, and barriers to implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Input should be collected from members of the City's board and commissions, as well as City Council, regarding obstacles they have encountered when reviewing development projects against the City's regulations. A clear set of priorities (e.g., modernizing code definitions, streamlining procedures for review and approval of development projects, and making the organization more logical) to inform future updates should be determined upon completion of the assessment.

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

The City of Worthington Planning and Zoning Code was originally adopted in 1971. Since that time, sections of the Code have been modified; however, a complete rewrite has not occurred. The City should align the districts, standards, and procedures of the Planning and Zoning Code with the Future Land Use and Character Map. The Task Force can advance this action by testing conceptual development projects reflective of the plan's recommended character types against current Code requirements to identify barriers to approval. The Code rewrite will address these barriers and allow the City to directly implement key actions of the plan to ensure that regulations do not undermine desired mixed-use development within the community. Aligning the Code with the plan will also set clearer expectations for property owners, more predictable outcomes for the City, and a more efficient path to implementing the Guiding Principles.

ZONING CODE UPDATE SHOULD ADDRESS

- Mixed-use and corridor reinvestment and building design standards
- Small-scale housing types (e.g., ADUs, duplexes, cottage housing) in appropriate locations
- Compatibility standards for infill and additions
- Parking flexibility and shared parking tools
- Transition and buffer standards between redevelopment areas and neighborhoods
- Standards for large format retail
- Lot split and subdivision review for large sites
- Administrative and procedural improvements, and opportunities for administrative streamlining

LARGE FORMAT RETAIL

Large format retail, a single retail store larger than 40,000 square feet, is strongly discouraged in Worthington, particularly auto-oriented stores designed around large surface parking lots. These formats do not support the walkable, mixed-use places and employment-focused redevelopment this plan calls for. Where a larger store is proposed, it should be integrated into a mixed-use development, with buildings that address the street and parking that is shared, structured, or located behind buildings.

1.3. **Update Architectural Review District standards.** The City of Worthington Design Guidelines for the Architectural Review District were originally adopted in 2003. Since that time, the City has undergone two Comprehensive Plan review processes to determine long-range strategies and actions for the community. Once the Planning and Zoning Code has been rewritten, the City should refine the Worthington Design Guidelines to reflect current standards while maintaining Worthington's design expectations. The update should consider advancements in modern building materials over the last 20 years to identify potential updates and, where feasible, utilize more objective standards and criteria. Updating the Design Guidelines for Worthington's Architectural Review District will help ensure that new development and reinvestment reinforce the community's cultural heritage while accommodating contemporary needs such as mixed-use, walkability, sustainability, and modern building functionalities. The update should also reinforce Worthington's commitment to rehabilitation over demolition. Historic buildings, including those outside the established Architectural Review District, should be encouraged to be rehabilitated rather than demolished. Where demolition does occur, new construction should relate to and strengthen the core characteristics of the neighborhood through thoughtful building scale, materials, and site design.

HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY

Worthington's Architectural Review District covers Old Worthington and the High Street and 161 frontages, but many neighborhoods outside the district contain homes, streetscapes, and building patterns that contribute to the community's character. A historic resources survey would document these assets, establish their significance, and provide an evidentiary basis for evaluating whether additional protections or voluntary preservation tools are warranted. Completing a survey before or alongside the Zoning Code and Design Guidelines updates would ensure those documents reflect a full picture of Worthington's historic fabric, not just the areas already under formal review.



Worthington's Historic Character

Historic does not simply mean old. It refers to places that help tell the story of our community: places that reflect the people, events, architectural traditions, and patterns of development that have shaped Worthington over time. A building, neighborhood, or landscape can be historic because of what it represents, not only when it was built.

Worthington was platted in 1803 by James Kilbourne, who laid out a New England-style town centered on a public green. More than two centuries later, that original vision remains recognizable. The Village Green, the historic storefronts along High Street, and the tree-lined residential streets radiating from Old Worthington's core are not just pleasant features of community life. They are the foundation of Worthington's identity and one of its most genuine competitive advantages. Communities that preserve authentic historic character attract the employers, residents, and visitors who value quality of place.

Preservation and prosperity are not in tension in Worthington. They reinforce each other. This plan's commitment to preservation extends beyond the Architectural Review District. Many established neighborhoods contain homes, streetscapes, and building patterns that contribute to community character without formal designation. The standard is the same across all of them: support reinvestment, discourage unnecessary demolition, and ensure that change strengthens rather than erodes what makes Worthington distinctive. New development near historic fabric should relate to and strengthen what is there, without imitating historic character through artificial or decorative means.

The following actions across this plan reflect that commitment:

Rehabilitation preference for historic structures. SP 1, Action 1.3 establishes that buildings contributing to neighborhood character, inside and outside the ARD, should be rehabilitated rather than demolished, and that new construction where demolition does occur must relate to the surrounding context. A sidebar on the previous page identifies a future survey to document contributing structures outside the formal district, providing the foundation for any future protections or voluntary preservation tools.

Investment in older homes. SP 12, Action 12.2 includes a historic and older-home rehabilitation program in the Opportunistic Tools menu, available for funding as City revenues grow.

Old Worthington development review. The Old Worthington Opportunity Area establishes that contributing structures should be evaluated for rehabilitation before demolition is considered, communicated through pre-application conversations and review criteria.







1.4. **Modernize engineering and infrastructure standards.** The City of Worthington's engineering and infrastructure standards largely pre-date the previous Comprehensive Plan. Since that time, some sections of these Code standards have been modified; however, a complete review of these standards in the context of a long-range plan has not occurred. Once the Planning and Zoning Code has been rewritten to align with the plan, the City should refine the engineering and infrastructure standards to support mixed-use redevelopment, shared parking strategies, stormwater coordination, and Complete Streets principles. The Task Force can advance this action by testing the four citywide map-based frameworks in the Mobility and Connectivity chapter against current Code requirements to identify implementation barriers. Updating Worthington's engineering and infrastructure standards will ensure that streets, utilities, and other right-of-way improvements are designed to support the plan's Guiding Principles. Aligning these standards with the new Comprehensive Plan will ensure that routine replacements and upgrades steadily advance the community's long-term vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

CATALYZE AND SUPPORT MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT

Why This Matters

Several of this plan's Opportunity Areas present opportunities for a catalytic mixed-use redevelopment project that could set the tone for reinvestment citywide. A successful flagship 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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. Strategic reinvestment strengthens the tax base, diversifies revenue sources, and enhances long-term fiscal stability.



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Well-designed mixed-use destinations create active places to live, work, and gather, reinforcing the amenities and experiences residents value.



Worthington is connected. Concentrating growth in walkable nodes improves access to daily needs and strengthens connections between neighborhoods and business districts.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Coordinating infrastructure, financing tools, and public-private partnerships reflects proactive and strategic governance.

Implementation Actions

2.1. **Proactively advance a catalytic redevelopment project.** Since the adoption of Worthington's 2005 Comprehensive Plan, several major mixed-use development projects have been undertaken in the Central Ohio region (e.g., Bridge Park in Dublin, Grandview Yard in Grandview Heights). To stay competitive in Central Ohio's rapidly evolving market, Worthington must demonstrate that it can deliver high-quality, mixed-use environments that grow the income tax base while reinforcing community character. A targeted site in one of the identified Opportunity Areas should be prioritized soon after the plan's adoption. This catalytic

development should be "trophy" caliber (as described further in the Economic Vitality chapter). This will signal to employers, investors, and developers that the community is serious about significant redevelopment. This process can be initiated by convening property owners, developers, and community partners to explore feasibility, redevelopment concepts, and implementation pathways. Focusing limited Staff and financial capacity on a singular initial flagship project can demonstrate early, visible success, build community confidence, and help ensure that redevelopment in later, incremental Opportunity Areas is guided by knowledge gained.

2.2. **Align public policy to support the Opportunity Areas.** The identified Opportunity Areas have the greatest potential for redevelopment, bringing desired amenities to the public while also increasing the City's income tax base. Due to the unpredictable nature of development and the time it can take to complete site work, careful coordination between City Departments and the development community is needed to spur catalytic redevelopment. Proactive policy updates that reduce steps for future development in the Opportunity Areas will increase their marketability. This includes updating the Planning and Zoning Code, planning capital infrastructure projects, and refining development agreements to successfully support an initial flagship project. Coordination with the development community on these items can increase the likelihood that public and private investments will dovetail, creating a cycle of value for the community. When aligning public policy to support the Opportunity Areas, careful consideration must be given to ensuring a mix of uses, including employment-based uses.

2.3. **Prioritize Capital Improvement Program (CIP) investments in the identified Opportunity Areas.** The five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) presents the City's plan for infrastructure development and improvements and is updated annually as part of the City's budget process. To connect the specific strategies of the plan's Opportunity Areas to funding, it is critical that the CIP reflect those strategies and integrate the most time-sensitive items. The next CIP update process should review the Comprehensive Plan and align capital projects with the plan's strategies and recommendations. The sequencing of capital improvements should reinforce redevelopment priorities, especially for a catalytic redevelopment project in an Opportunity Area.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT THAT IS "TROPHY" CALIBER

Not all mixed-use development is created equal. Catalytic development sets a higher standard across every dimension, specifically including.

Class A++ office space: flexible floor plates, advanced systems, and a level of finish that attracts headquarters and high-value employers

A regional destination: restaurants, retail, hospitality, and entertainment that draw visitors from across the area

Exceptional public space: plazas, parks, and streetscapes that are central to the design

Walkable and human-scaled: organized around people on foot, with ground-floor activation and connections to trails and transit

Quality materials and design: architecture and materials held to a higher standard, distinctive without being out of place

True live-work-play mix: residential, hospitality, dining, and office woven together so the district functions around the clock

See examples of "Trophy" Mixed-Use Development in the Economic Vitality chapter.

2.4. **Plan for shared and district-scale infrastructure.**
In a future round of CIP updates, Worthington should identify where coordinated infrastructure systems (e.g., shared parking, district-scale stormwater facilities, connected greenways, utility improvements) can effectively serve multiple properties. As proactive steps are taken to prepare the Opportunity Areas for development, the City should evaluate the cost-benefit of initiating these improvements; cross-implementation of recommendations from other City plans and studies (e.g., 2026 parking study) should be prioritized. This will allow the City to set clear expectations for how these improvements will be funded, sequenced, and maintained. Use of financing tools may be necessary to advance a catalytic redevelopment project.

2.5. **Use financing tools strategically.**
The City has been successful in using economic incentives and should continue to use these tools. Given the range and scale of potential redevelopment projects within the identified Opportunity Areas, additional financing tools and capacity should be considered. This could include applying TIFs, infrastructure cost-sharing for new projects, expanding the role of the Worthington CIC, or public-private partnerships to align public investment with measurable public benefit. Strategic use of these tools should emphasize clarity, efficiency, and transparency when approving incentives. This could include requiring minimum fiscal returns (e.g., adding jobs, increasing payroll, building infrastructure) from projects receiving incentives, subject to claw-backs or other regulatory mechanisms.

Opportunistic Tools

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects, policies, and programs that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. Where applicable, current strategies that the City should continue are described below.

- Development agreements
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Infrastructure cost-sharing strategies
- Shared parking districts or structured parking strategies
- District stormwater or green infrastructure solutions
- Utility coordination agreements
- Phased implementation plans

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

ENABLE INCREMENTAL AND COORDINATED MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT

Why This Matters

In many reinvestment areas identified in this plan's Opportunity Areas, change is likely to occur incrementally rather than through a single large project. Fragmented ownership, small parcels, legacy lot patterns, and infrastructure constraints can make high-quality mixed-use outcomes difficult to achieve. 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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 3, 5, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Measured, incremental change allows reinvestment without destabilizing neighborhoods or corridors.



Worthington is connected. Walkable patterns and coordinated infrastructure reinforce mobility choices and cohesive development.



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. Supporting adaptive reuse and small-scale reinvestment strengthens long-term economic sustainability

Implementation Actions

3.1. **Facilitate coordination among property owners.**
The identified Opportunity Areas contain a high number of access points along key corridors as well as many individual parking lots that appear underutilized. The City can facilitate shared access and parking agreements by updating the Planning and Zoning Code, engineering standards, and other development policies to explicitly allow, encourage, and, where appropriate, require shared arrangements. The City can provide model agreements, streamline approvals, and use incentives (e.g., reduced parking minimums or infrastructure cost-sharing) to streamline the process. These improvements would not occur until a property undergoes redevelopment; however, over time, this approach can reduce underutilized space and impervious surfaces, maximize site design, and improve walkability between properties.

3.2. **Establish incentives for parcel consolidation.**
The identified Opportunity Areas contain a large number of individual parcels, which makes it difficult for redevelopment to implement the plan's Guiding Principles. Larger sites allow development projects the flexibility to include appropriate transitions between uses, accommodate modern stormwater standards, and provide amenities such as green space, walking trails, and landscaping that the community desires. The City can facilitate parcel consolidation by setting clear policy guidance for the community and using tools such as density bonuses, flexible standards, or expedited review for coordinated multi-parcel proposals that include consolidated parcels. This creates a clearer path for property owners and developers to move from fragmented sites to cohesive redevelopment projects.

3.3. **Align infrastructure with long-term intended character.**
A complete build-out of the plan's Opportunity Areas is expected to take longer than the typical 10-15-year life cycle of a Comprehensive Plan. This is due to the majority of these parcels containing a mix of active uses. While this condition helps maintain community stability, it limits the number of immediate opportunities for large-scale development to implement the plan's highest aspirations. The City can facilitate incremental, coordinated redevelopment within the Opportunity Areas by aligning policies to enable small-scale projects to move toward a long-term vision. This would include coordinating streets, utilities, stormwater facilities, and shared parking investments to support cohesive redevelopment reflective of the plan's character types over time rather than site-by-site reactions.

Opportunistic Tools

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects, policies, and programs that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. Where applicable, current strategies that the City should continue are described below.

- Density, height, or lot coverage tied to parcel consolidation
- Flexible parking and setback standards for assembled sites
- Expedited review for multi-parcel proposals
- Shared parking agreements or districts
- District-scale stormwater or green infrastructure solutions
- Development facilitation or convening role
- Infrastructure participation agreements
- Strategic acquisition or land banking (if warranted)


CROSSWALK

Economic Vitality

Economic vitality in Worthington is not primarily a story of growth. It is a story of reinvestment. As a fully built-out community, Worthington cannot expand its way to a stronger tax base. Instead, the City's long-term fiscal health depends on the quality and productivity of the employment that already exists here, on its ability to attract businesses aligned with its opportunity sites and regional advantages, and on the strength of the places where people choose to work, shop, and spend time.

This chapter establishes the economic development strategy for Worthington's next planning horizon. It reflects a core theme from Vision Worthington and the planning process: that economic vitality is inseparable from quality of place. The environments where people want to work, shop, and spend time are the same environments that attract employers competing for talent.

The chapter is organized around four strategic priorities:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4. Support great places and spaces where people want to live, work, shop, play, and eat

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5. Target industries that support Central Ohio's development focus and the context of Worthington's Opportunity Areas

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6. Ensure Worthington proactively strengthens its economic development capacity

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7. Establish clear policies and procedures for the use of incentives and other economic development tools

These priorities and the actions that follow are designed to work alongside the Land Use and Character chapter, which addresses the physical development standards and Opportunity Area frameworks that make Worthington's economic vision achievable.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- Context
- Fiscal Impact of Land Use
- Strategic Priority 4
- Strategic Priority 5
- Target Industries
- Strategic Priority 6
- Strategic Priority 7

Context

THEMES FROM PUBLIC INPUT

During the first round of public input, participants were asked to identify on a map where they saw opportunities for Housing, Transportation, Commercial Centers and Corridors, or Placemaking and Quality of Life. Economic vitality was not a standalone category, but strong economic themes emerged through the Commercial Centers and Corridors responses. The most common themes were:

- Redeveloping aging and underutilized office buildings and commercial corridors, particularly along High Street, Wilson Bridge Road, and Huntley Road, where participants identified significant opportunity for reinvestment
- Attracting destination-quality restaurants, entertainment, and gathering places, with many participants noting that residents currently leave Worthington to find these experiences in Dublin, Hilliard, and other communities
- Supporting mixed-use development that layers retail, dining, office, and housing on key sites, rather than continuing patterns of single-use commercial development with surface parking and deep setbacks
- Improving the walkability and pedestrian experience along commercial corridors, including bringing buildings closer to the street, reducing parking minimums, and creating connections between destinations
- Activating major underutilized sites including the 1033 High Street property, the 6700 N High Street, Worthington Mall, and the Wilson Bridge corridor, which participants consistently identified as missed opportunities for the community

KEY CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

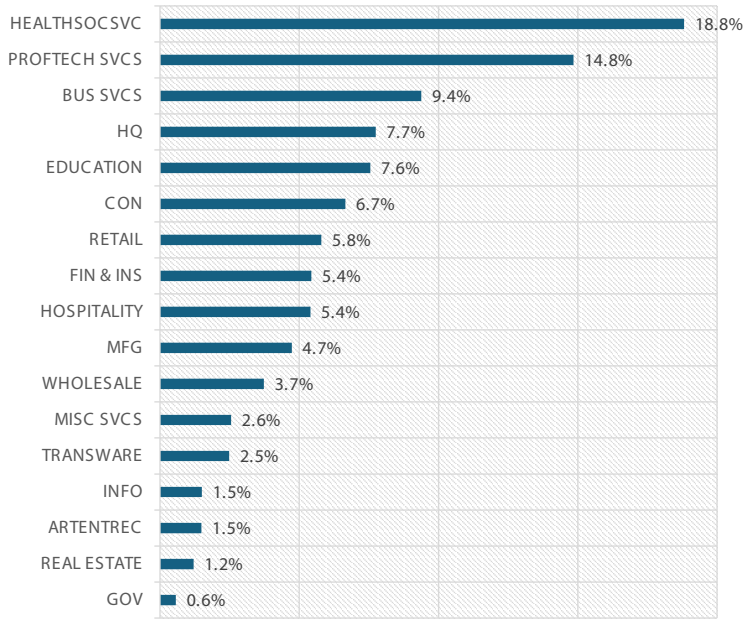
The Economic Vitality chapter is informed by primary research conducted in early 2025, including interviews with economic development partners and real estate experts, an Economic Development Speaker Series, and analysis of secondary data including existing market reports and fiscal studies.

Worthington must grow its income tax base across payroll withholdings, business income, and work-from-home residents.
Worthington's income tax collections have grown steadily, rising from $23.5 million in 2014 to $35.1 million in 2024. In nominal terms that trajectory looks healthy, but when adjusted for inflation the picture is considerably more sobering. Real revenue growth over the decade has been modest at best. The City's operations are heavily reliant on income tax revenue, and sustaining (let alone growing) revenue base requires expanding employers located within the City, business income, and residents who work from home and pay tax where they live.

Worthington's employment mix is shifting, with implications for the type of space the City needs to attract and retain.
Healthcare is Worthington's largest employment sector at nearly 19 percent of jobs, but faces potential headwinds from reductions in federal spending. Professional and technical services, which carry among the highest average wages in the region at over $95,000, are growing both locally and across the Columbus MSA. However, many of these firms serve local clients rather than regional or national markets, which affects the scale and type of office space they require. Headquarters and high-value employers, which carry an average MSA wage of over $129,000, represent a smaller but disproportionately important segment of the employment base.

Worthington competes for a specific slice of the regional economy, and positioning matters.
One Columbus, the regional economic development organization, targets eight industry sectors for the Columbus MSA, ranging from semiconductors and logistics to life sciences and headquarters operations. Not all are a fit for Worthington. Sectors requiring large land areas, freight access, or industrial infrastructure are better suited to other parts of the region. Worthington's competitive advantages, like its position along I-270, a highly skilled resident workforce, and a high quality of place, align with sectors that value walkable environments and proximity to talent: headquarters and operations centers, professional and technical services, ambulatory medical, biopharma, software and AI, and creative and design firms. The Forge Fields area adds additional capacity for sectors oriented toward R&D, advanced manufacturing, and supply chain functions in growth industries.

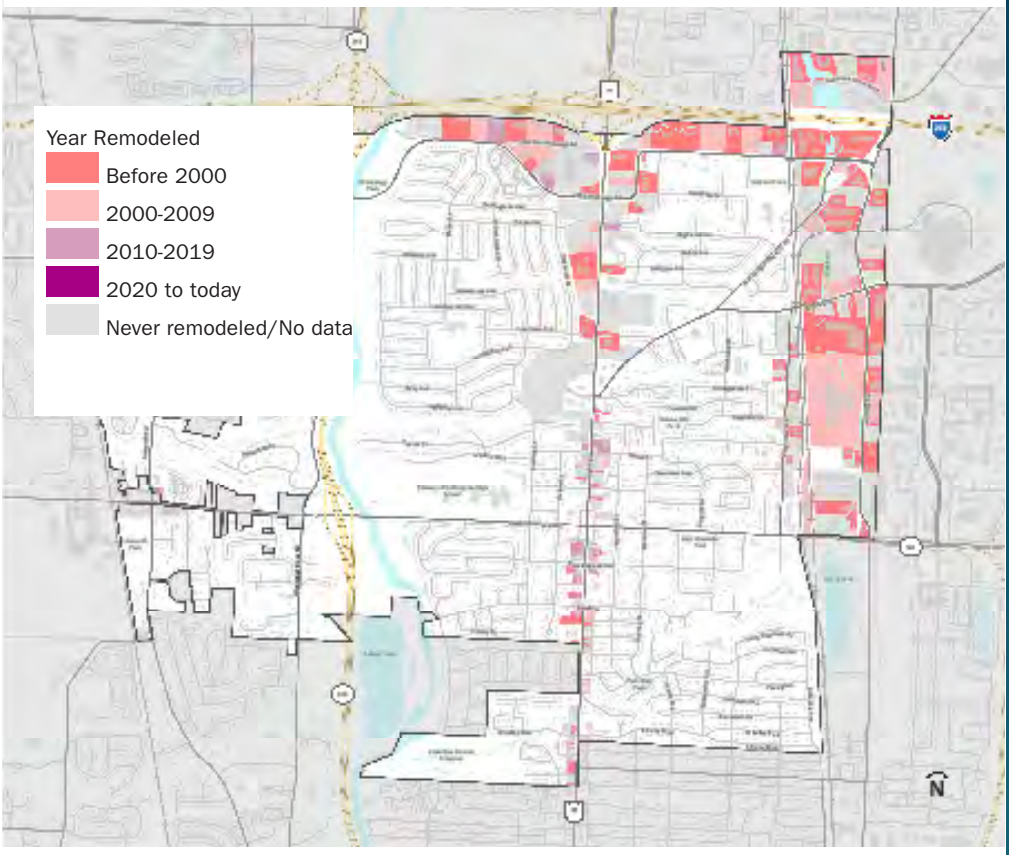
KEY INDUSTRIES IN WORTHINGTON, % OF JOBS (2022)



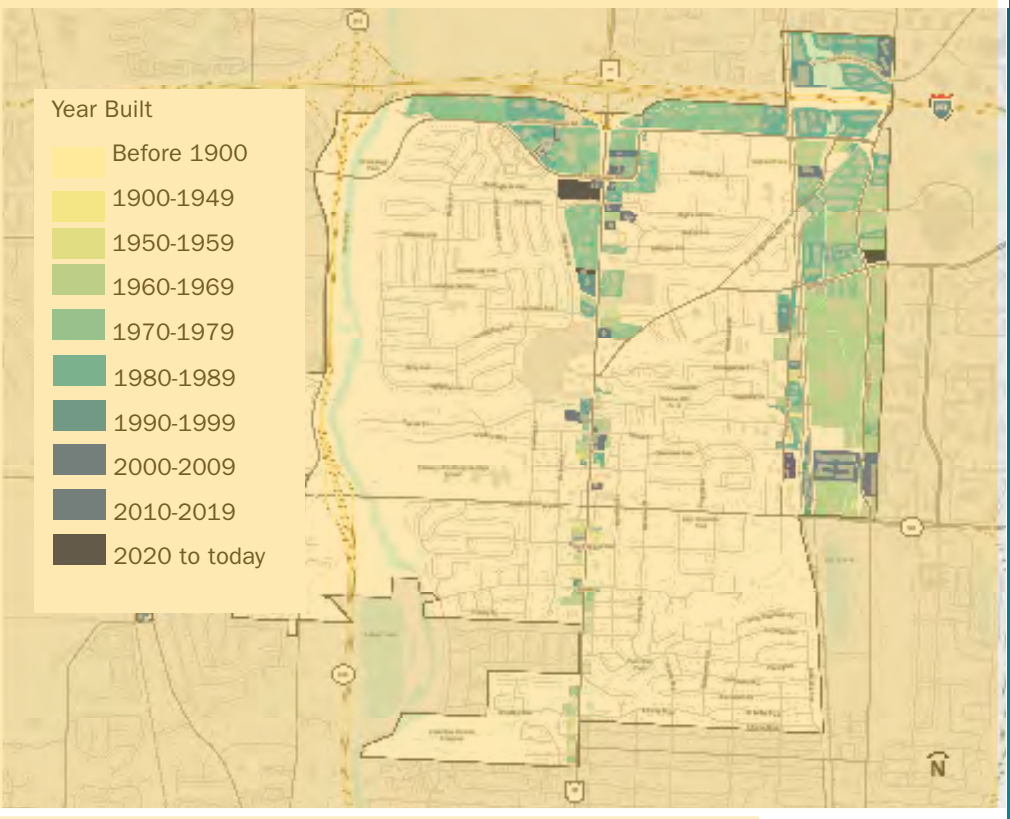
Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of ontheMap.gov data (2022 most recent available)
Note: This data uses primary jobs

Worthington's existing office stock is aging and largely Class C, making redevelopment and modernization a fiscal priority. Nearly 2.5 million square feet of office space exists in the City, but the majority is Class C, less than 11 percent is Class A, and less than one percent was built after 2000. The commercial parcel maps tell the same story spatially: most of the City's employment areas were built before 1979, and recent remodeling activity has been limited and scattered. The current vacancy rate of 21.7 percent, while below the Greater Columbus average of 23.9 percent, reflects a stock that is increasingly difficult to lease without investment. Occupied office buildings are a direct contributor to the City's tax base.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PARCELS YEAR OF BUILDING REMODEL



COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PARCELS YEAR BUILT



Source: Planning NEXT analysis of Franklin County Auditor property records

Topical Definitions

This section provides definitions for planning and economic development terms used throughout the chapter. These definitions are written generically so that the remainder of the chapter can focus on Worthington-specific conditions and recommendations.

Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)
Established under Ohio's nonprofit corporation law (ORC Chapter 1702), a CIC may be created on a stand-alone basis or in partnership with a municipality, township, or county. CICs have broad authority to borrow money, make loans, acquire and dispose of real property, and enter into contracts with local jurisdictions. They can acquire or sell land owned or conveyed by the local jurisdiction, and they operate without advertising or bidding requirements. CICs are designed to promote public welfare, stabilize the economy, provide employment, and assist in community development. CICs benefit from a strategic framework like this Comprehensive Plan to guide and prioritize their efforts.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
Authorized under ORC Chapter 5709, a TIF exempts an agreed upon percentage of the increased property value resulting from a development project from taxation. Instead, the property owner makes payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) equal to what would have been paid on the exempted value. Taxes on the pre-existing property value continue to be collected. The PILOTs are directed into a TIF fund managed by the local jurisdiction to pay for public infrastructure improvements that serve the development. Generally, a TIF exemption cannot exceed 75 percent over a 10-year period, though a higher percentage or longer term may be permitted with school district consent. The widespread use of TIF across Central Ohio has effectively created an environment in which non-TIF areas grow more slowly than their TIF-supported counterparts. Residential development is generally not eligible for TIF exemption unless the property is located in a designated blighted area. TIF is most commonly applied to commercial, industrial, and mixed-use improvements.

New Community Authority (NCA)
Established under ORC Chapter 349, NCAs were created to finance the construction and ongoing maintenance of infrastructure (roads, utilities, schools) and community assets (swimming pools, recreation centers, plazas). An NCA can acquire, hold, or dispose of property; collect charges to cover costs; apply for grants and loans; and issue bonds. NCAs are initiated by a developer and approved by the corresponding local jurisdiction. They typically involve a millage charge against property value within a defined area to fund specified costs, and they carry an expiration date, established in the creating ordinance, of up to 30 years.

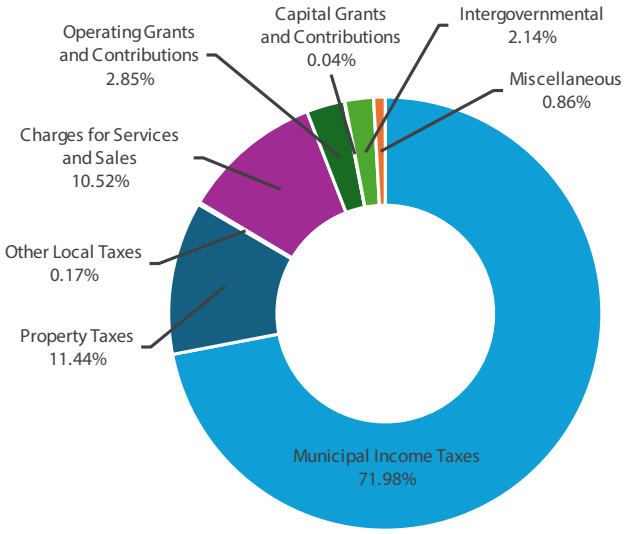
Public-Private Partnership (PPP)
A contractual arrangement or contract between a local jurisdiction and a private entity to oversee negotiations with landowners and guide development according to an adopted plan. A PPP involves a formal legal agreement, investment of City staff time for contract management, and public communication. The private entity typically negotiates with property owners, conducts real property transactions, and manages debt issuance for development costs and public infrastructure construction. The local jurisdiction defines contract terms, monitors compliance, and communicates with the public. Under the Ohio Revised Code, the powers associated with a PPP may also be administered through a CIC or an NCA.

Fiscal impact of land use in Worthington

The City's long-term revenues and costs are substantially shaped by how land is used. To understand those relationships, the City commissioned a cost-of-land use study with TischlerBise to analyze the fiscal impact of various land use types. The central question was: what type of development pays for itself? Key takeaways include:

- The City is heavily reliant on income tax to fund operations. This reliance creates a strong need for quality nonresidential land uses that generate employment within Worthington's boundaries.
- Residential areas currently do not pay their own way, because income tax is assessed in the jurisdiction where a person is employed, and 93 percent of Worthington residents work outside the City.
- Remote and hybrid work presents a fiscal opportunity. As more residents work from home, the City captures a greater share of income tax that would otherwise flow to outside jurisdictions. This reinforces the importance of quality of place. Residents who choose to live in Worthington because of its neighborhoods, amenities, and walkable environments and work from home are potential contributors to the City's tax base.
- Mixed-use development can generate positive fiscal impacts when the mix of uses is calibrated to do so. These projects can deliver community amenities while supporting the City's revenue base.
- Fiscal outcomes must be balanced against non-fiscal priorities, including environmental stewardship, housing affordability, quality of life, and a range of services. The goal is an appropriate mix of land uses, not fiscal optimization alone.

SOURCES OF FUNDS (2024)



Source: City of Worthington Annual Comprehensive Financial Report 2024 pg. 9
Note: excludes $2,380,019 in investment earnings

WORKING FROM HOME: A FISCAL OPPORTUNITY

Ohio municipalities collect income tax based on where a person works, not where they live. When a Worthington resident works at an office in another jurisdiction, that income tax goes elsewhere. When they work from home, Worthington collects it.

This makes quality of place: great neighborhoods, walkable amenities, parks, and housing variety. These are direct fiscal assets. Residents who choose Worthington for its livability and who work remotely are among the City's highest-value taxpayers, contributing income tax revenue that would otherwise flow to Columbus, Dublin, or other employment centers.

Investments that make Worthington an attractive place to live and work from home are also investments in the City's long-term revenue base.

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. The following pages apply the assumptions and findings of Worthington's Cost of Land Use analysis prepared in 2025 by TischlerBise to this plan's Future Land Use and Character Types. The mixed-use character types on the follow page have a highly variable fiscal impact that depends on the mix of uses, the number of jobs, and wages of those jobs. Per unit and per acre impacts are rounded. **These figures should be interpreted as "order of magnitude" annual impacts to the City of Worthington.**

Residential

Residential areas are essential for a complete community. Due to the way cities in Ohio are funded, however, they generate less income tax revenue than the cost to serve them. This analysis reflects the fiscal impact of existing residential development. It is backward-looking and should not be interpreted for opposition to new housing. Because most service costs are fixed, adding residential units to an already-served community would spread costs over more units, improving per-unit fiscal performance. Higher-density residential has a meaningfully better per-unit fiscal impact than lower-density development.



Residential, Suburban



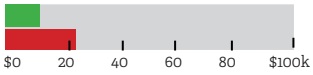
Conventional single-family detached subdivision. Assumes 4 DU/acre, the same density as modeled in the analysis.

Per Unit



NET: **-$3,200**

Per Acre



NET: **-$12,900**

Residential, Small lot and Attached



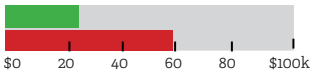
Assumes a single-family attached at an average density of 12 DU/ acre, the same density as modeled in the analysis.

Per Unit



NET: **-$3,000**

Per Acre



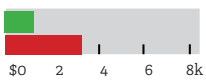
NET: **-$36,700**

Multifamily (24-41 units per acre)



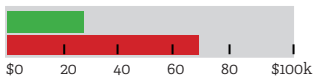
Multifamily at this density could occur within the residential component of a mixed-use area.

Per Unit



NET: **-$2,100**

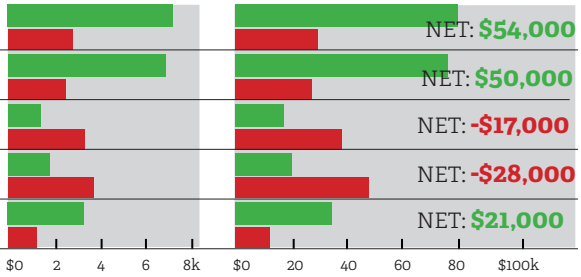
Per Acre



NET: **-$50,600**

Commercial & Employment

		Per 1,000 sf	Per Acre (at current patterns (0.25 FAR))
Class A Office	NET: **$4,900**		NET: **$54,000**
Class B & C Office	NET: **$4,650**		NET: **$50,000**
Retail (shopping center with anchor)	NET: **-$1,600**		NET: **-$17,000**
Retail (pad, strip, or outlot)	NET: **-$2,500**		NET: **-$28,000**
Light Industrial (flex)	NET: **$2,000**		NET: **$21,000**



Mixed Use

The future mixed use land use types yield different fiscal outcomes depending on various assumptions. To ensure that these areas have an overall net benefit, a target is described below. The target case includes an allowance for residential and retail, which increases costs and decreases revenue, but still likely yields a net benefit.

FAR = Floor Area Ratio, a measure of non-residential density.

Corridor Transition



Existing conditions assume: 45% Class B&C Office, 20% Residential Attached, 35% Retail at FAR 0.25. Target assumes a district-wide FAR of 0.60, an average residential density: 12-24 DU/acre, a district-wide minimum of 45% Class B & C office use by gross floor area with a mix of retail and residential.

Target Case Per Acre — NET: **$30,000**

Existing Conditions Per Acre — NET: **$6,000**



Wilson Bridge, Mixed Use



Existing conditions assume: 90% Class B&C Office and 10% Retail at FAR 0.25. Target assumes a district-wide FAR of 2.0 with an average residential density of ≤25 DU/acre, 60% minimum office employment by floor area (Class A) with remaining space as retail and residential.

Target Case Per Acre — NET: **$141,000**

Existing Conditions Per Acre — NET: **$43,000**



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 — NET: **$68,000**

Existing Conditions Per Acre — NET: **$23,000**



Forge Fields, Mixed Use



Existing conditions assume: 80% Flex/Light Industrial and 20% Class B&C Office. Target assumes a district-wide FAR of 0.75, with 30% residential at 12 DU/acre 30% Class B & C office, and 30% Flex/Light Industrial use by gross floor area.

Target Case Per Acre — NET: **$43,000**

Existing Conditions Per Acre — NET: **$12,000**



Forge Fields, Flex



Existing conditions assume: 80% Flex/Light Industrial and 20% Class B&C Office. Target assumes a district-wide FAR of 0.5 and 100% Flex/Light Industrial, no residential or retail.

Target Case Per Acre — NET: **$34,000**

Existing Conditions Per Acre — NET: **$28,000**



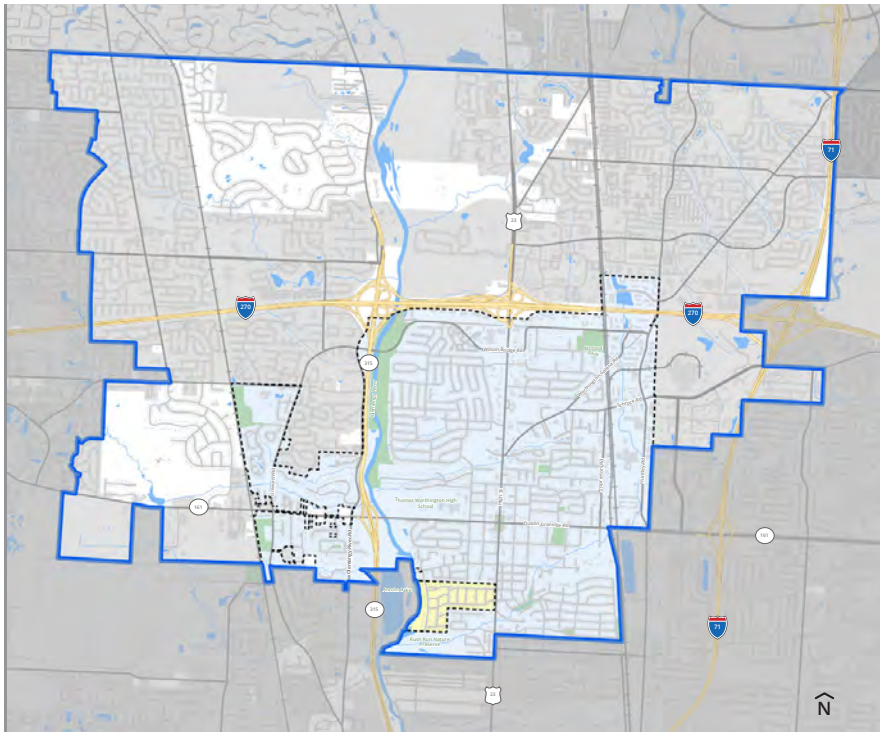
Impact of development on Worthington schools

School districts in Ohio are primarily funded by property taxes, making land uses that generate high property values per acre especially important to school revenue. Costs, as they relate to land use, are largely driven by the number of students generated. But most costs are not linear and would only be significantly impacted by large changes to student yields in a certain area.

Regional development patterns indicate that single-family neighborhoods and older multifamily developments have a significantly larger share of units with three or more bedrooms than new multifamily developments, which are typically marketed to young professionals and move-down empty-nesters. As a result, single-family neighborhoods generate more students per unit and per acre than new multifamily developments.

The Worthington City School District serves an area of approximately 20 square miles, extending well beyond the City's jurisdiction to include portions of the City of Columbus, the Village of Riverlea, and two adjacent townships. The district has approximately 10,700 students and is the 14th-largest in the State. The district is currently in the second phase of a three-phase capital improvement program, with construction underway at both high schools, the natatorium, and athletic fields.

The Worthington City School District's strong academic reputation makes the area attractive to young families. However, the 2026 Enrollment Projections Report indicates that enrollment is expected to decline slightly over the next ten years across all modeled scenarios. Given the variable nature of enrollment projections, close coordination between the school district and adjoining jurisdictions regarding future development is critical to ensure proper planning for facilities and services.



WORTHINGTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT MAP

- Worthington City School District
- City of Worthington
- City of Columbus
- Village of Riverlea
- Other Municipalities
- Unincorporated Areas
- Water
- Parks

Strategic Priorities and Actions

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:
SUPPORT GREAT PLACES AND SPACES WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE, WORK, SHOP, PLAY, AND EAT

Why This Matters

Worthington's ability to attract and retain employers depends on more than available land and incentives; it depends on the quality of place. Companies competing for talent increasingly make location decisions based on the walkability, 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 regionally competitive mixed-use development on key opportunity sites are genuine competitive assets in the regional market for jobs and investment.

The strategic directions 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. This priority should be read alongside those chapters as an integrated whole.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 9, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. High-quality places attract high-quality employers, strengthening the tax base and reducing fiscal dependence on any single sector or land use type.



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Walkable, mixed-use environments and a healthy Old Worthington enhance daily experience for residents, workers, and visitors alike.

Strategic Directions

Unlike the Implementation Actions in Strategic Priorities 5-8, which describe specific administrative steps the City should take, the directions below describe economic development outcomes that depend on physical place-making addressed in other chapters of this plan. Each is accompanied by a cross-reference to the relevant Strategic Priority or Opportunity Area section where implementation is addressed.

4.1. **Promote "Trophy" Mixed-Use Development on key opportunity sites.** Central Ohio competes with peer metropolitan areas including Raleigh-Durham, Dallas-Fort Worth, Indianapolis, and Austin, for talent, jobs, and investment. Suburbs in each of these markets have demonstrated that walkable, amenity-rich destinations can attract high-value employers that would otherwise locate in a downtown core. Legacy West in Plano, Texas and North Hills in Raleigh, North Carolina illustrate what highway-visible suburban sites can yield when office, residential, retail, and public space are developed together: corporate headquarters, Class A office tenants, and a critical mass of daily activity that reinforces itself over time.

See examples of "Trophy" mixed-use development outside of Central Ohio on the following pages.

Worthington has the site conditions to compete for this tier of development: assembled acreage, direct highway access, high visibility, and proximity to existing trail and park networks. Realizing that potential requires attention to structured parking and how that infrastructure is funded. See Strategic Priorities 2 and 3 (Land Use and Character) and the relevant Opportunity Area sections for the physical development framework.

4.2. **Keep Old Worthington healthy and vibrant.** Old Worthington represents the heart of the community and provides a high-quality, authentic, walkable experience that is a genuine economic asset. The Worthington Partnership



TROPHY MIXED USE EXAMPLES

"Trophy Mixed-Use" development combines Class A++ office space alongside retail, dining, residential, and hospitality in a walkable, destination-quality environment. These places attract headquarters, product development, and high-value employers by offering workers and residents a live-work-play experience that suburban office parks cannot match. Central Ohio competes with Raleigh-Durham, Dallas-Fort Worth, Indianapolis, and Austin for talent and investment, markets where this development type is already well established. Closer examples exist in the region, but the examples on the following pages represent the broader competitive set to which Worthington should aspire.

ELEMENTS

- **Class A++ office space:** flexible floor plates, advanced systems, and a level of finish that attracts headquarters and high-value employers
- **A regional destination:** restaurants, retail, hospitality, and entertainment that draw visitors from across the area
- **Exceptional public space:** plazas, parks, and streetscapes that are central to the design
- **Walkable and human-scaled**: organized around people on foot, with ground-floor activation and connections to trails and transit
- **Elevated design quality that earns its context**: architecture and materials held to a higher standard, distinctive without being out of place
- **True live-work-play mix:** residential, hospitality, dining, and office woven together so the district functions around the clock

North Hills — Raleigh, NC
Since its Main District opened in 2004 on the site of a demolished regional mall, North Hills has become the defining presence of Midtown Raleigh, distinctive in character, with office towers, hotels, residential, and street-level retail organized around parks and gathering spaces that give the district a genuine sense of place. It is perhaps the strongest analog to Worthington's situation: a first-ring suburban location that chose reinvestment over sprawl and kept raising the bar.



Visitnorthhills.com

Michael Hsu Office of Architecture



RO River Oaks District — Houston, TX
Situated on 18 acres in Houston's Uptown corridor, River Oaks District is compact and intensely curated: a pedestrian-oriented street grid of luxury retail, dining, boutique offices, and residential above, framed by wide sidewalks, shade trees, and a level of finish that makes the experience feel more like a great urban neighborhood than a development. It demonstrates that Trophy Mixed-Use is defined by quality and distinctiveness, not acreage.



The Domain — Austin, TX
Redeveloped from a former industrial campus, The Domain has grown into a vertically integrated mixed-use development that Austin now calls its "second downtown." Major tech employers anchor Class A office space woven together with retail, residential, hotel, and a dining and entertainment district with a strong local identity, active from early morning until late night.

Yard at Fishers District — Fishers, IN
Spread across 123 acres, Fishers District anchors the downtown of one of Indianapolis's fastest-growing suburbs. It weaves together apartments, office, hotel, retail, dining, and entertainment into a walkable district organized around pedestrian paths and activated public spaces.



Yardatfishersdistrict.com

River Park — Austin, TX
At 109 acres, River Park is reimagining a fully built-out urban infill site from the ground up in southeast Austin. Still under construction, it integrates housing, employment, over 30 acres of green space and trails, and a major entertainment venue into a transit-connected neighborhood, an example of the ambition possible when a large opportunity site is approached comprehensively.



Austin Business Journal

Legacy Town Center — Plano, TX
The first development in the U.S. to create a mixed-use town center within an existing suburban office park, Legacy Town Center transformed a corporate campus environment into a walkable district of offices, retail, restaurants, housing, and hospitality, complete with parks, plazas, and a street grid designed for people, not cars. It demonstrated that employment-anchored suburban locations could become true urban destinations.

Crocker Park — Westlake, OH
Spanning 120 acres in Cleveland's western suburbs, Crocker Park was conceived to fill the downtown void left by suburban office migration and succeeded by committing to authentic urban design: a real street grid, varied architecture, short blocks, and ground-floor retail alongside residences and Class A office. It has drawn nearly 20 million annual visitors and anchored the identity of the entire region.



notes that more than half of visitors to events are non-Worthington residents, and significant growth in Farmer's Market attendance underscores the district's regional draw. As activity continues to grow, it will be important to monitor the density of people, parking demand, and car usage to ensure that growth enhances rather than degrades the quality of the experience.

The Worthington Parking Needs and Garage Feasibility Study found that people have trouble locating available parking spaces, long-term parkers tend to limit access to parking, and that expected growth may impact the existing parking situation. Appropriate wayfinding and navigation to underutilized parking options will be critical. See the Old Worthington Opportunity Area section for the physical development framework.

4.3. **Promote infill redevelopment of selected commercial and industrial properties.** Worthington is essentially built-out, with limited opportunities for greenfield development. Several properties have been identified as Opportunity Areas where land is underutilized, with surface parking, buildings that no longer meet contemporary employment needs, or changing ownership, making them candidates for reinvestment. Market uncertainty makes speculative office development unlikely in the near-term. However, patience in the identified Opportunity Areas and allowing infrastructure investments to build investment potential will maximize future vibrancy. Supporting infill redevelopment through mixed-use development can build the City's tax base and population, helping sustain a vibrant retail and employment sector. See Strategic Priorities 2 and 3 (Land Use and Character), as well as the individual Opportunity Area sections, for the physical development framework.

4.4. **Support modernization and diversification of employment space options.** Business models and work environments are evolving rapidly. Worthington's zoning and development standards should support flex space, hybrid smaller office suites, innovation space, and co-working environments that reflect changes in how and where people work. This is particularly important for the City's industrial areas, such as Forge Fields at Rush Run, where updated standards can accommodate light industrial, maker, and supply-chain tenants. See Strategic Priority 1 (Zoning Code Reform) and the Forge Fields Opportunity Area section for the physical development framework.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5:

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

Why This Matters

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 real 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.

A focused target industry strategy also makes Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) outreach and incentive decisions more effective: staff know which businesses to prioritize, and Council has a clear basis for evaluating incentive requests. Technology and industry are constantly evolving, so the target list should be revisited every three to five years.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 9, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. A targeted, diversified employment base reduces fiscal vulnerability to economic cycles in any single sector.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking, and collaborative. Aligning with One Columbus and regional partners on target industries reflects coordinated, strategic governance rather than ad hoc recruitment.

Implementation Actions

5.1. **Update and apply a target industry framework.** Periodically refine the City's target industry list based on regional economic trends, the available building inventory, and Worthington's competitive positioning, and use it to guide marketing, recruitment, and incentive decisions. The recommended target industries for 2026 are identified in the Target Industries section of this chapter. The list should be reviewed by the Economic Development Team every three to five years to assess continued relevance and identify emerging sectors.

Target Industries

The Worthington Together planning process evaluated the economic profiles of both the community and the region. The assessment found that Worthington offers geographic advantages along I-270 and near I-71 and SR 315, and that its high quality of place makes it competitive for skilled workers as office demand shifts across the region. To build on these advantages and advance the City's fiscal goals, the following industry sectors should be targeted. These industries are consistent with One Columbus targets and reflect the existing talent pool in the north Columbus metropolitan area.

CITYWIDE TARGET INDUSTRIES

Software Systems. Examples include cybersecurity, AI applications and orchestration, customer service support centers, software-as-a-service (SaaS) businesses, and modeling and simulation.

BioPharma Sector. Examples include research labs, product development, regulatory and clinical trials management, and administrative operations.

Creative / Design Sector. Examples include industrial design, architecture, engineering, advertising and marketing, and digital production.

Professional / Technical Services. Includes accounting, legal, and consulting firms not captured in other target industry categories.

Headquarters and Operations Centers. Includes corporate C-suite functions, regional leadership, and internal support functions such as accounting, human resources, and data processing.

Ambulatory Medical Services. Distinct from a standard medical office, this category includes ambulatory surgery centers, infusion services, medical labs, and radiology.

FORGE FIELDS AREA TARGET INDUSTRIES

In addition to the citywide target industries, several sectors are well-suited to Worthington's Forge Fields area, given its strengths in R&D, advanced manufacturing, technology, start-ups, and eco-friendly characteristics.

Life Science Supply Chain. Businesses that provide equipment, services, and logistics supporting biotech, pharmaceutical, and research laboratory operations.

Aerial Autonomous Vehicle (AAV) Supply Chain. Component manufacturers, sensor and control systems suppliers, and logistics functions related to crewless aerial vehicles.

Electric Systems Supply Chain. Businesses that design, manufacture, distribute, or support equipment for electrical power and control systems in electric vehicles, battery storage, and the power grid.

"Cottage" Food & Beverage Manufacturing. Small-scale food production or beverage businesses requiring combined manufacturing, distribution, and management space.

Specialty Packaging Materials and Services. Businesses that design and/or manufacture packaging solutions for products ranging from electronics and biopharma to food.

Cold Chain Services. Businesses that provide specialized storage, handling, and transportation of temperature-sensitive products such as vaccines, biologics, or fresh food.

THE SPACE ECONOMY AS A POTENTIAL TARGET INDUSTRY

Central Ohio is emerging as a node in the growing commercial space economy. The Voyager Institute for Space, Technology and Advancement (VISTA), the nation's first science park dedicated to in-space research and manufacturing, is located at The Ohio State University and is already attracting aerospace companies, startups, and federal agencies to the region. As VISTA grows, it will generate demand for supply chain tenants, engineering firms, and advanced manufacturing operations that do not need to locate on the OSU campus. Worthington's highway-accessible, developable sites position the community to capture this spillover, particularly for employers in aerospace supply chain, defense technology, and precision manufacturing.

5.2. **Maintain a structured Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program.** Proactively engage Worthington's existing employers through regular outreach to track emerging space and workforce needs, identify early signs of potential relocation or contraction, and respond with coordinated problem-solving across City departments. Key elements include: tracking interactions through a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to replace the current informal spreadsheet-based approach; maintaining an up-to-date inventory of available commercial and industrial space to assist businesses that need to grow or transition within the City; and coordinating with regional partners, including One Columbus and JobsOhio, to draw on resources beyond the City's own capacity. The target industries should guide BRE outreach priorities.

5.3. **Work with regional partners to analyze income tax filing patterns and ensure the City is fully capturing its tax base.** A recurring pattern observed across Ohio municipalities is a discrepancy between at-place employment figures reported in federal sources and the number of business income tax filers reported through RITA. The gap may reflect businesses that are present and operating in the City but not fully captured in the municipal tax base, whether due to filing complexity, lack of awareness of local tax obligations, or other factors. For a city as reliant on income tax revenue as Worthington, even a modest gap has meaningful fiscal implications. The City should work with trusted regional partners and peer municipalities to better understand the nature and scale of this discrepancy in Worthington relative to comparable communities. This collaborative approach can help identify whether the gap reflects a data alignment issue, a structural or characteristic of the local employment base, and what, if any, targeted outreach or administrative steps would be appropriate in response.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6:

ENSURE WORTHINGTON PROACTIVELY STRENGTHENS ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Why This Matters

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. Investing in capacity now (in the CIC, in staffing, and in small business support tools) positions Worthington to respond to opportunities rather than react to them.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 9, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking, and collaborative. Building organizational capacity reflects a proactive approach to governance, one that anticipates demands rather than scrambling to meet them.



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. A well-resourced economic development operation ensures the City can both steward existing businesses and actively shape new investment.

Implementation Actions

6.1. **Invest in the City's Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).** A Community Improvement Corporation is a state-authorized tool that gives a municipality the ability to act at the speed of the private market. A CIC can support land assembly and disposition, gap financing, and master developer roles, among other functions. Neighboring Hilliard has used its CIC, the Hilliard Development Corporation, to significant effect, including supporting the development of the Center Street Market. Worthington's CIC should be capitalized with additional funding and aligned with the priority investment areas identified in this plan. As major development projects move forward at Wilson Bridge,

See the Topical Definitions section of this chapter for a full description of CIC authority under Ohio law.

North High, and Forge Fields, the CIC can serve as the City's primary instrument for actively shaping outcomes rather than simply responding to private proposals.

6.2. **Ensure adequate staffing capacity for economic development functions.** Many peer inner-ring suburbs maintain two full-time economic development staff members. As the BRE program is expanded, the target industry framework is deployed, and major redevelopment projects advance at priority sites, the City should assess whether additional staff capacity, through direct hiring, contracted support, or a shared services arrangement, is needed to execute the full range of activities identified in this plan.

6.3. **Expand the small business development toolkit.** The City's existing facade program has had notable successes but should be broadened to serve a wider range of space-development needs for small businesses and smaller commercial property owners. An expanded toolkit should address facade and exterior improvements; ADA compliance and accessibility upgrades; selected tenant fit-out costs, including City- or County-required items such as fire suppression and grease traps. Assistance could be structured as a grant, a low- or no-interest loan, a forgivable loan, or a special assessment payback, with terms tied to the nature of the improvement. The City should also pursue technical assistance partnerships through small business support organizations to complement direct financial assistance.

Opportunistic Tools

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects, policies, and programs that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. Where applicable, current strategies that the City should continue to utilize are also listed.

- **Workforce development partnerships.** Coordination with Columbus State Community College, OhioMeansJobs, and area employers to align training programs with the target industry sectors and support business retention.
- **Facade improvement program**. Direct financial assistance for exterior improvements to commercial properties, as a component of the broader small business toolkit described in Action 6.3.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7:

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

Why This Matters

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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 9, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Transparent incentive policies reflect accountable governance and build trust with residents, businesses, and partner institutions.



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. Disciplined use of incentives ensures that public investment generates measurable fiscal and community returns.

Implementation Actions

7.1. **Formalize incentive policies and evaluation criteria.** The City should adopt a written set of guiding principles and evaluation criteria to govern when and how incentive tools are deployed, creating consistency and transparency. Key policy elements should include:

- **"But for" determinations:** a finding that the project could not occur, or would not occur in the desired form, without the incentive.
- **Hold-harmless guarantees on TIF projects:** ensuring TIF financing does not reduce existing school district revenue.

- **Gain-share provisions**: capturing a share of project revenues that exceed original projections and debt service requirements for public benefit.
- **Pre-negotiated CRA agreements for residential development**: establishing a standing agreement with Worthington City Schools so that housing CRA requests are evaluated against consistent, agreed-upon terms rather than negotiated individually for each project.
- **Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan**: affirming that incentive agreements advance the land use, economic vitality, and community character goals of this plan.

DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES IN WORTHINGTON

Worthington offers a comprehensive package of economic development incentives. The City's Economic Development Team evaluates each project on its own merits to determine whether incentives are appropriate. Key evaluation factors include the quality of jobs created, a business's growth prospects, community compatibility, the level of private investment, whether the project could not occur, or could not occur in the desired form, without the incentive, and commitment to remaining in Worthington. If incentives are warranted, the Economic Development Team negotiates a package tailored to each business's circumstances. The incentive policies established through Action 7.1 will provide a consistent framework within which this project-level evaluation occurs.

Opportunistic Tools

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects, policies, and programs that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. Where applicable, current strategies that the City should continue to utilize are also listed.

- **Targeted incentive agreement**s. Negotiated agreements that tie public incentives to specific performance commitments, such as job creation, wage thresholds, or capital investment targets.
- **Public-private partnerships.** Formal arrangements to co-invest in major redevelopment projects, share risk, and align development outcomes with community goals.
- **Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).** A state-authorized entity that can conduct land assembly, provide gap financing, and take on master developer roles. See Action 6.1 and the Topical Definitions section for full details.
- **Periodic fiscal impact and employment-based analysis**. Regular updates to fiscal impact analysis and employment data to track progress against goals and inform future incentive and land use decisions.
- **New Community Authority (NCA)**. Primarily used to fund infrastructure that supports development through a millage charge on property within a defined area. See the Topical Definitions section for full details.


CROSSWALK
STOP ON RED
PROCEED ON
FLASHING RED
WHEN CLEAR
WORTHINGTON JEWELERS
692

Mobility and Connectivity

Mobility and connectivity shape how people experience Worthington as a place to live, work, and gather. In this plan, mobility represents the freedom for people of all ages and abilities to move comfortably and safely using a range of transportation options, while connectivity reflects how well streets, sidewalks, trails, and transit come together to link neighborhoods, destinations, and the region. Together, they create a transportation system that invites walking and biking, supports local life, strengthens community relationships, and ensures Worthington remains an accessible and welcoming city for everyone.

This chapter establishes a framework for a balanced and connected transportation system that serves all users. It builds on the City's existing network while responding to evolving travel patterns, development trends, and community priorities. Through a context-based approach and street typologies, the plan aligns roadway design with surrounding land uses and desired character, moving away from one-size-fits-all solutions toward streets that reflect their unique settings.

The chapter also identifies four strategic priorities each with supporting implementation actions to guide future transportation decisions and investments.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 8. Adopt and Implement the Updated Thoroughfare Plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 9. Advance Active Transportation as a Core Network

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 10. Prioritize and Plan Complete Streets Studies & Safety Improvements

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 11. Coordinate and Advocate for Transit Improvements

These recommendations emphasize safety, expanded active transportation options, stronger transit connections, and closer coordination between land use and transportation planning. Together, they provide a clear path for evolving Worthington's transportation network in a way that enhances connectivity, supports a high quality of life, and reflects the community's long-term vision.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- Thoroughfare Plan
- Context Classification
- Street Typologies
- Strategic Priority 8
- Strategic Priority 9
- Active Transportation Priority Corridors
- Strategic Priority 10
- Intersections for Further Study
- Strategic Priority 11

Context

Throughout the Worthington Together process, the City's transportation system was assessed through data analysis, insights from interested parties and the general public, as well as review of recent plans and studies completed.

THEMES FROM PUBLIC INPUT

During the first round of public input, participants were asked to identify on a map where they saw opportunities in the city for Housing, Transportation, Commercial Centers and Corridors, or Placemaking and Quality of Life. The most common themes across Transportatioon places marked were:

- Improving pedestrian safety and connectivity through new sidewalks, crosswalks, and walkability investments
- Addressing problem intersections, bridges, and road segments where improvements are needed to ease congestion, improve safety, or modernize infrastructure
- Expanding bike lanes, paths, and bicycle connectivity throughout the community
- Strengthening COTA service and better integrating transit into the City's transportation network
- Addressing traffic congestion, speeding, and the need for traffic calming on local streets

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Functional Classification. A system to categorize roadways based on their role in the transportation network, ranging from arterials focused on moving vehicles to local roads that prioritize access to adjacent properties.

Context Classification. A system to categorize roadways based on surrounding land use, character, building types, lot dimensions, and density, which inform the design needs of that roadway.

Right-of-Way (ROW). The land used for a road and the public areas alongside it, including sidewalks and utilities, owned and maintained by a public agency.

Typical Section. A cross-sectional diagram of a roadway showing the standard layout and widths of each element: lanes, curbs, sidewalks, and so on.

Access Management. Regulation of vehicular access to land adjacent to roadways, including limits on driveways, medians, turn lanes, and intersections.

Street Typology. A system for classifying streets based on form or character rather than traffic volume. Examples include Boulevard and Avenue.

Design Speed. The speed used to determine a roadway's geometric features, which should be close to or slightly above the posted speed limit to ensure safe travel speeds.

Mid-Block Crossings. Designated pedestrian or bicycle crossings located between intersections.















Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB). A traffic control device at mid-block crossings or uncontrolled intersections that stops vehicular traffic to allow pedestrians to cross. Also known as a HAWK beacon.

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). Yellow flashing lights at a crosswalk, activated by button, that alert drivers to a pedestrian intending to cross.

Shared Use Path. A two-way path for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other low-speed users, either alongside a roadway or separate from it. Also referred to as trails, greenways, or multi-use paths.

Separated Bike Lane. A bike lane physically separated from vehicular travel lanes or parking by vertical barriers such as a raised median, curb, or bollards.

Buffered Bike Lane. A painted bike lane paired with a striped buffer zone, without physical vertical barriers between the bike lane and travel lane.

Sharrow. A shared lane marked with pavement symbols and signage to alert drivers to the presence of bicycle traffic.

Bus Bulb. A curb extension that allows a bus to pick up passengers without pulling away from the travel lane.

Complete Streets. Streets designed and operated to enable safe use by all users of all ages and abilities, whether drivers, pedestrians, or bicyclists.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). A high-capacity, high-frequency bus service using dedicated lanes, signal priority, and off-board fare payment to provide faster, more reliable transit. COTA is developing multiple BRT routes through the LinkUS initiative.

CRASH TRENDS

Crash data from 2019 to 2023 was collected and analyzed to determine areas with a high rate of crashes and/or more severe crashes. There were 1,062 reported crashes in the City of Worthington from 2019 to 2023, and of those crashes, 24 of them caused serious injuries and 1 crash caused a fatality. The below map shows the locations of these fatal and serious injury crashes along with crash rate. Crash rate shows where crashes are occuring disproportionately based on that roadway's traffic volume.

Several intersections have a high crash rate including: High Street and Worthington-Galena Road, High Street and Wilson Bridge Road, and Schrock Road and Huntley Road. Huntley Road and Wilson Bridge Road is also highlighted, but this data is from before its reconfiguration.

Crashes (2019 - 2023)

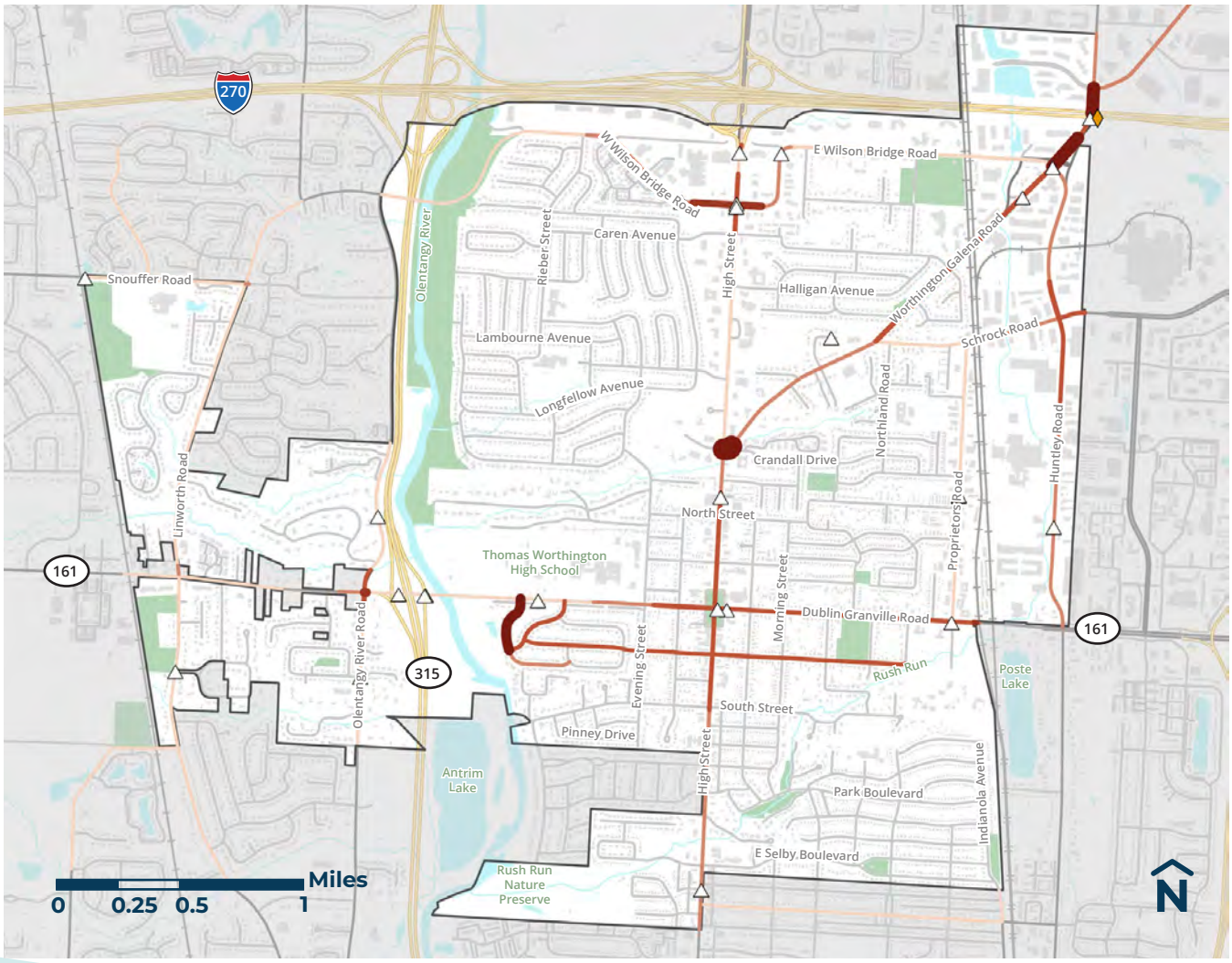
Fatal Crash

Serious Injury Crash

Crash Rate

High

Low

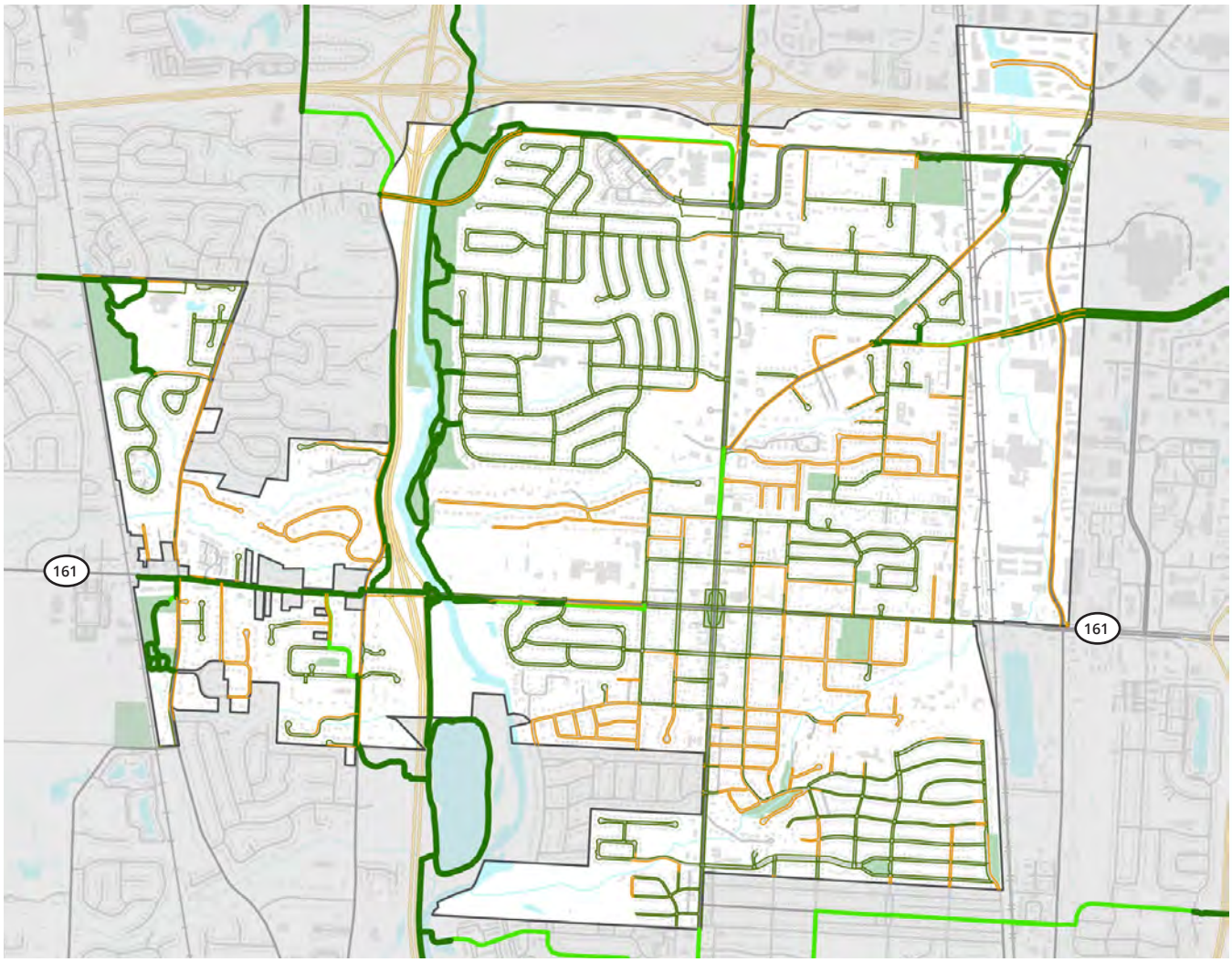


ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK AND GAPS

An active transportation network is a system of sidewalks, shared use paths, bike lanes, and any other bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure. The below map shows Worthington's existing network as well as areas with sidewalk gaps. These include where sidewalks only exist on one side of the road as well as those areas that entirely lack sidewalks.

Active Transportation

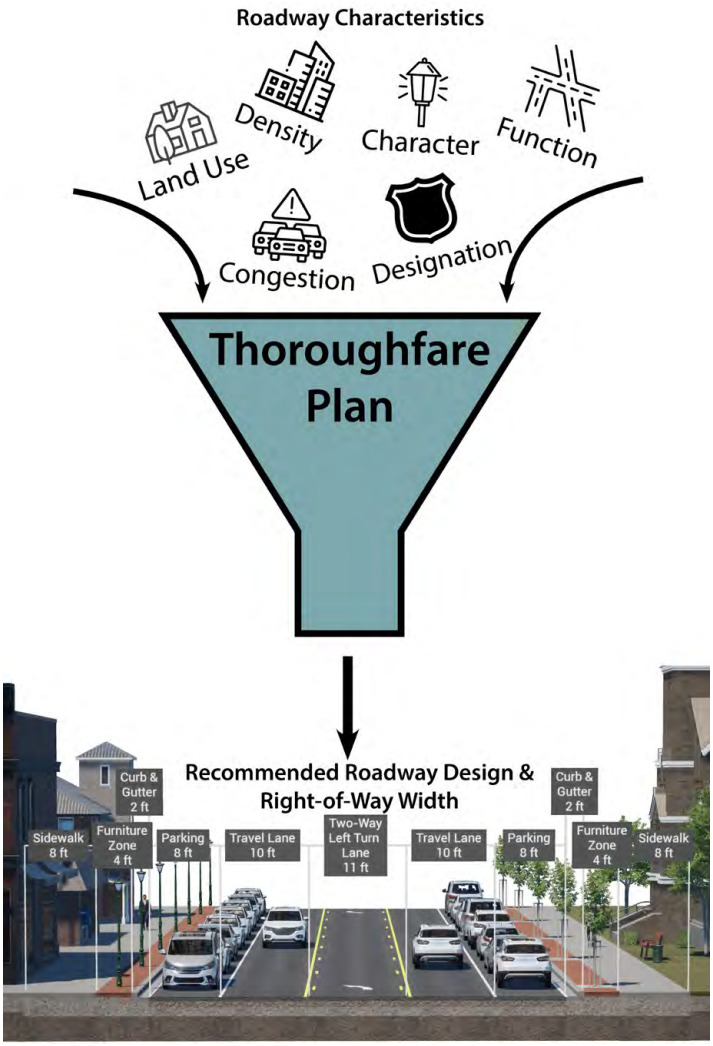
- Shared Use Path, Trail, or Bike Lane
- Sharrow or Signed Route
- Sidewalk
- Sidewalk Gap or Missing Sidewalk



THOROUGHFARE PLAN APPROACH

A thoroughfare plan establishes standards for right-of-way width and roadway design to guide development, maintenance, and improvement of the City's transportation network. The basis of the thoroughfare plan is a classification system. Every public road in the City is categorized according to this system to determine its right-of-way width, lane configuration, multimodal accommodations and more. When adopted into City code, the thoroughfare plan ensures the City's transportation infrastructure evolves in a way that is consistent, connected, and aligned with the community's overall vision.

A Comprehensive Plan update provides an ideal opportunity to update a City's thoroughfare plan. The thoroughfare plan update ensures changes to land use, urban design, and other recommendations in this document are supported by and harmonious with the future roadway network. The update is also an opportunity to reflect changes in transportation preferences and best practices in transportation planning.

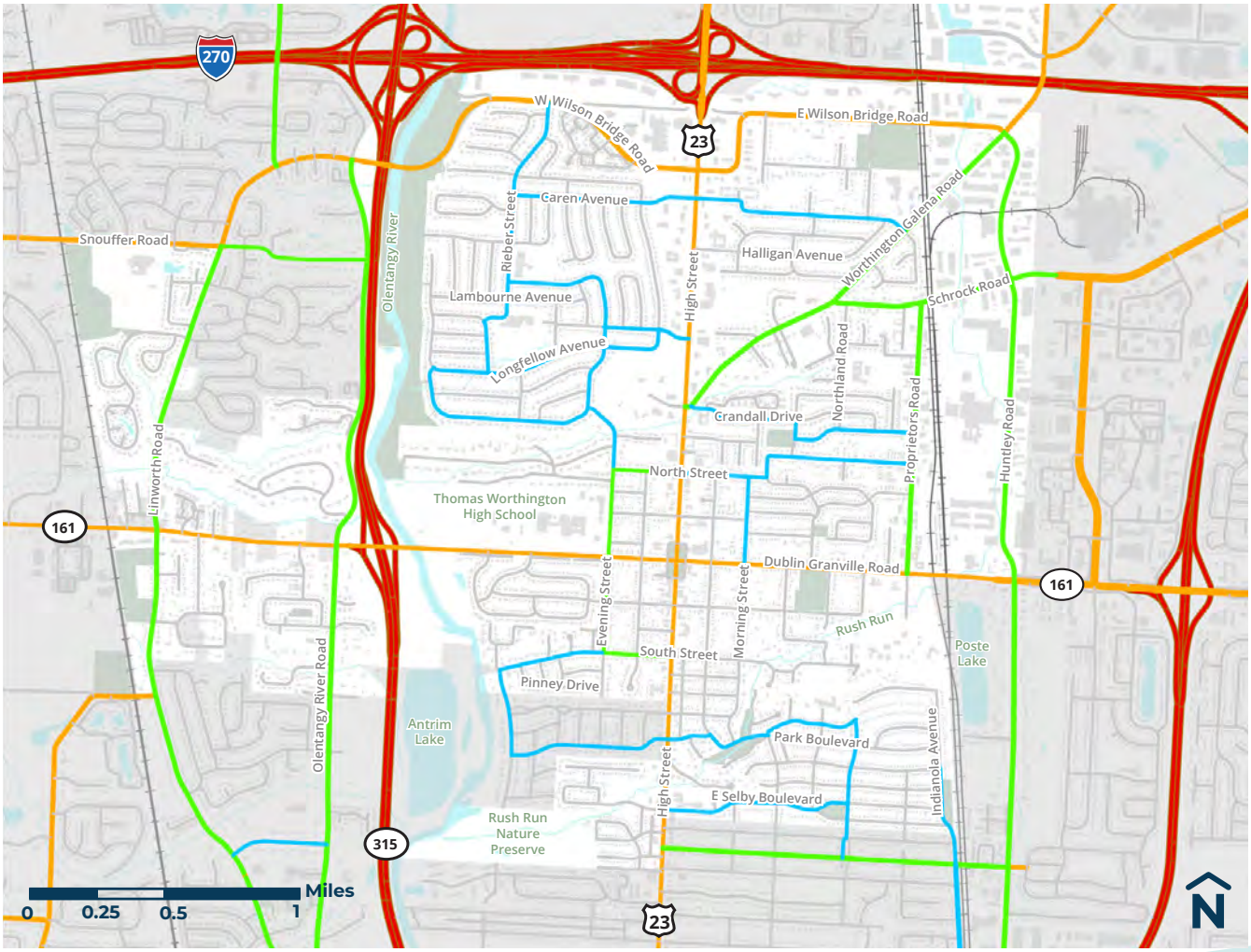


2005 THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The current Thoroughfare Plan for the City of Worthington was adopted in 2005. The Plan designates five main roadway classifications: Freeways, Regional Thoroughfares, Local Thoroughfares, Neighborhood Collectors, and Minor Access Streets. The roadway classification is based on the traditional functional classification approach (arterials, collectors, local roads) but adapted to the City's needs. As part of City code, the thoroughfare plan's right-of-way (ROW) widths are used to determine the amount of right-of-way to be maintained during the platting and development process. In addition, these roadway classifications are referenced in the City's Zoning Code where they inform width of setbacks, street access, and more.

2005 Roadway Classifications
(Min. ROW Width)

- Freeway - 200 feet
- Regional Thoroughfares - 80 feet
- Local Thoroughfares - 80 feet
- Neighborhood Collectors - 50 feet
- Minor Access Streets - 50 feet



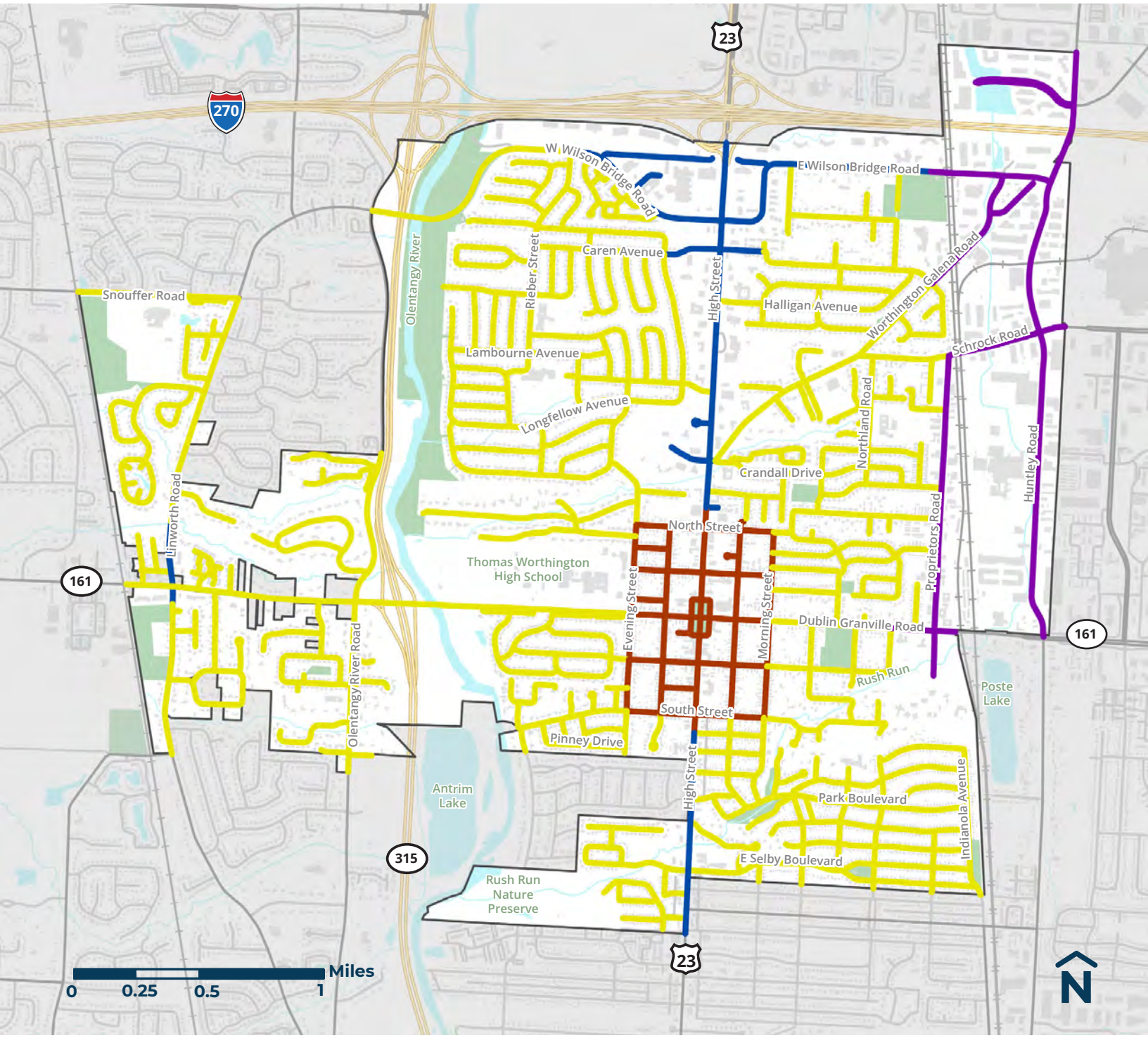
Context Classification

The 2005 Thoroughfare Plan defined roadways largely according to their functional classification. However, functional classification only addresses a roadway's role in the vehicular transportation network and it does not account for other critical factors that shape a roadway, such as adjacent land uses, development patterns, and historic character. Collectively, these factors define a roadway's context and form the basis of this plan's context classification system.

By incorporating context, roadway design can better reflect local conditions, aligning cross-sections, multimodal accommodations, and streetscape features with community priorities. For instance, a context-based approach distinguishes High Street in Old Worthington from other segments of High Street, allowing for more tailored and appropriate design solutions.

The contexts identified for Worthington are based on the future character recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan. The thirteen categories were grouped into four contexts: Residential, Old Worthington, Mixed Use, and Innovation. This grouping is because contexts are focused on broader shifts in land use and development rather than parcel-level distinctions. These four contexts were then assigned to every street in the roadway network.

Contexts	Future Character
Residential	Residential, Large-Lot Residential, Suburban Residential, Attached Institutional Campus Parks and Open Space
Old Worthington	Residential, Old Worthington Old Worthington Core
Mixed Use	Corridor Mixed Use Wilson Bridge Mixed Use Corridor Transition Rush Run Mixed Use
Innovation	Forge Fields Mixed Use Forge Fields Flex



Context Classification Map

- Residential
- Old Worthington
- Mixed Use
- Innovation

Street Typology

Street typologies, along with context, guide the selection of a thoroughfare's design elements and physical configuration. They allow streets to be distinguished based on their intended function, scale, and character. Typologies acknowledge that not all streets serving the same context should look or operate the same.

For example, some roadways may prioritize regional mobility and higher traffic volumes, while others emphasize local access, walkability, and placemaking. Street typologies provide a more nuanced framework for thoroughfare design than context or functional classification alone. The thoroughfare network was categorized into four typologies: Boulevard, Avenue, Neighborhood Connector, and Street. These terms do not have any connection to street suffixes such as boulevard, street, drive, or avenue.

Boulevard: Walkable, low-speed thoroughfares, functionally classified as either Major Arterials or Minor Arterials depending on the context. They typically have three to five travel lanes. These roads are designed to accommodate both local traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists, and high ridership transit corridors. Boulevards provide connectivity and provide vehicle mobility for long to moderate length trips. They are the primary routes for goods movement and emergency response routes.

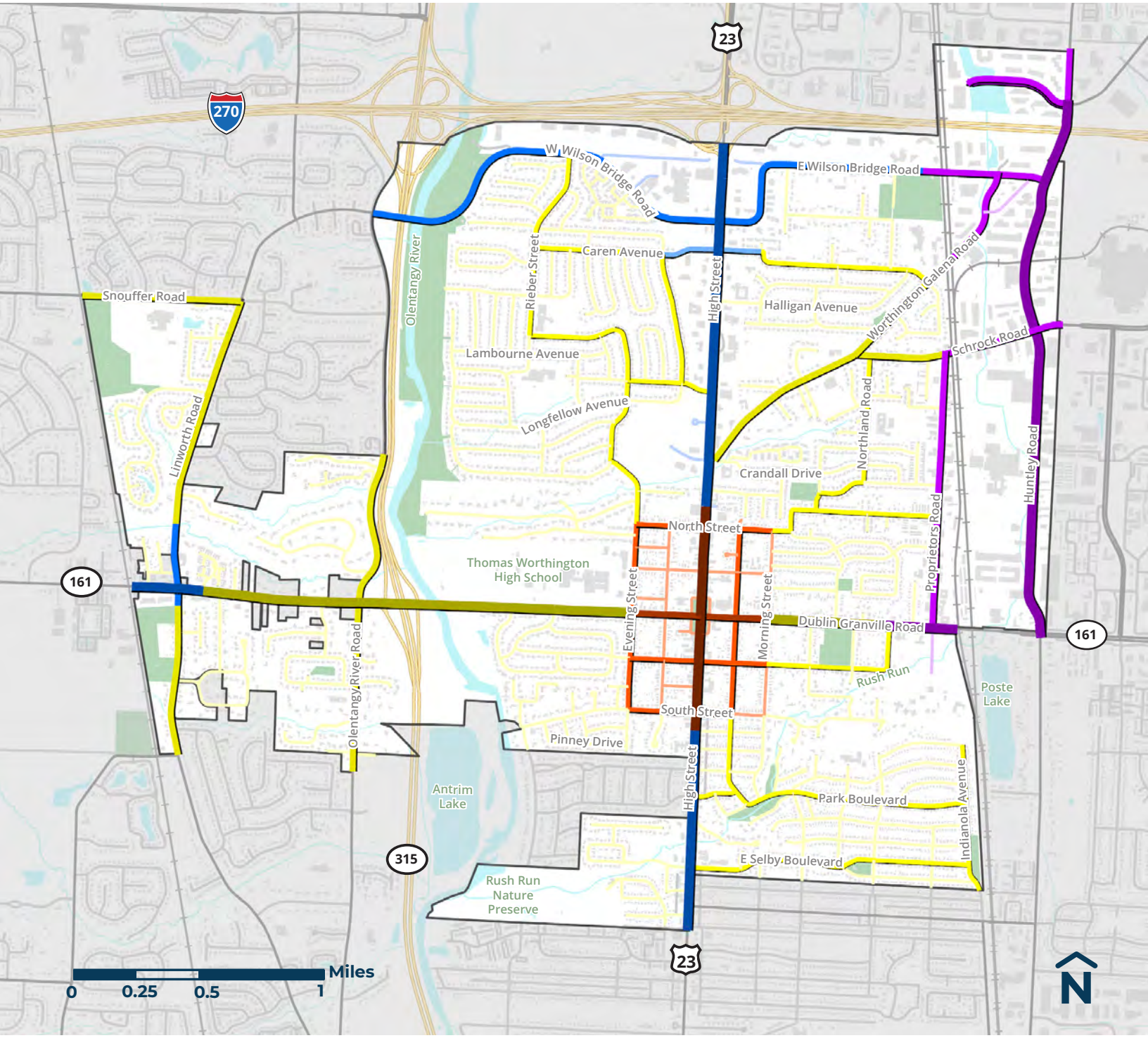
Avenue: Avenues are low-to-medium speed walkable roadways that generally have two to four travel lanes. They provide vehicle mobility for moderate to short trips, while offering primary pedestrian and bicycle routes. They are classified as either Minor Arterial or Collector roads. Avenues provide connections between the arterial network and local roads and provide access to abutting local development is a main function.

Neighborhood Connector: Neighborhood Connectors are functionally classified as local roads but they distribute traffic throughout the neighborhoods and connect to higher-capacity avenues and boulevards. They are low-speed and typically two travel lanes, providing access to adjacent parcels and accommodating pedestrian and bicycle travel, while carrying higher volumes of traffic than streets.

Street: Streets are categorized as low-speed, walkable roadways which primarily function to provide access to adjacent land for local vehicle, pedestrian, or bicycle traffic. Streets are designed to connect residential areas with other neighborhoods and may also offer connections to the arterial network. Streets are functionally classified as local roads and typically have two travel lanes. In urban contexts, streets include alleyways and private roads.

A NOTE ON STREET TYPOLOGIES

The following pages show design priorities for various street types. Many corridors, including Schrock Road and Worthington-Galena Road, do not have enough right-of-way to accommodate every element shown in a typical section. In these cases, the typology serves as a guide for prioritization: identifying which elements (travel lanes, bike facilities, sidewalks, tree lawns) matter most given the corridor's context, and how available space should be allocated among them when the street is repaved or reconstructed. The result will often be a modified version of the typology that fits within existing constraints.



Context Classification Map

Residential	Old Worthington	Mixed Use	Innovation
Boulevard	Boulevard	Boulevard	Boulevard
Avenue	Avenue	Avenue	Avenue
Neighborhood Connector	Neighborhood Connector	Neighborhood Connector	Street
Street	Street	Street	

Residential Boulevard

Residential Boulevards are walkable, low-speed thoroughfares, functionally classified as arterials in the Residential context. These roads are designed to accommodate both local traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists, and high ridership transit corridors. These roadways prioritize greenspace and traffic calming to enhance residential safety.

Notable Examples

W Dublin Granville Road

E Dublin Granville Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width

70' minimum

90' maximum

Lane Width

10' - 11'

Design Speed

35 mph

Travel Lanes

2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane

11' - 14'

Active Transportation

Sidewalk

Shared Use Path

Separated Bike Lane

Mid-Block Crossings

Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

On-Street Parking

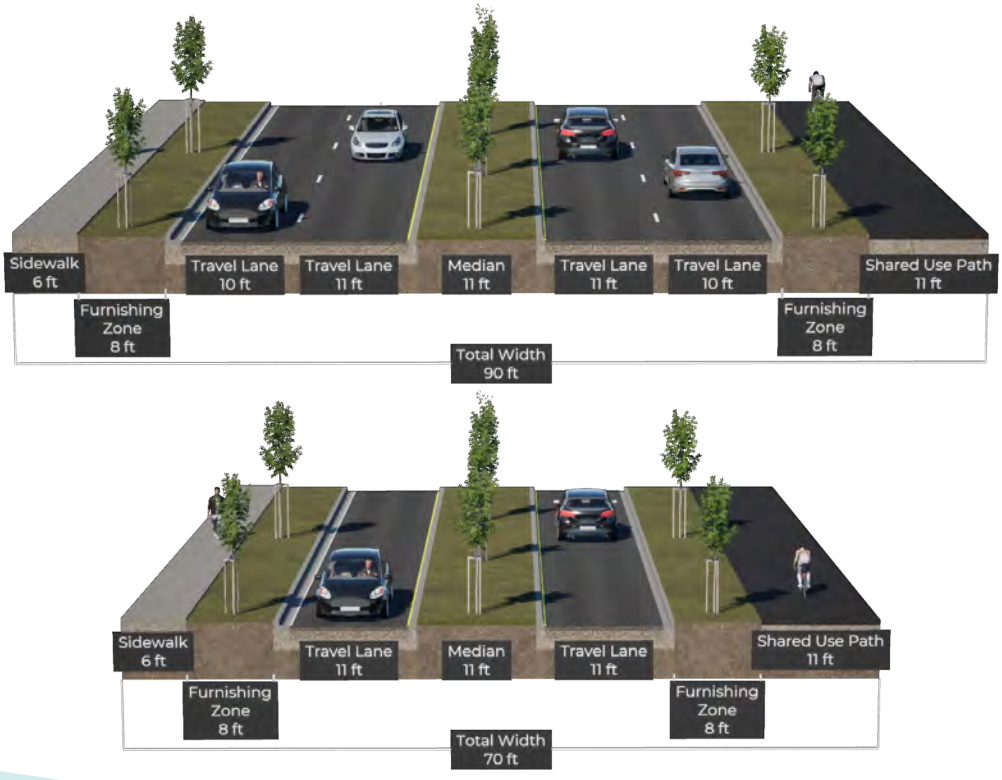
Not Recommended

Transit

Bus Shelters

Bus Bulbs

Typical Sections



Residential Avenue

Residential Avenues are low-to-medium speed roadways. They provide vehicle mobility for moderate to short trips, while offering primary pedestrian and bicycle routes. They are functionally classified as either Minor Arterial or Collector roads. These roadways prioritize greenspace and traffic calming to enhance residential safety.

Notable Examples

Olentangy River Road
Linworth Road
Worthington-Galena Road
Snouffer Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
60' minimum
70' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
11' - 14'

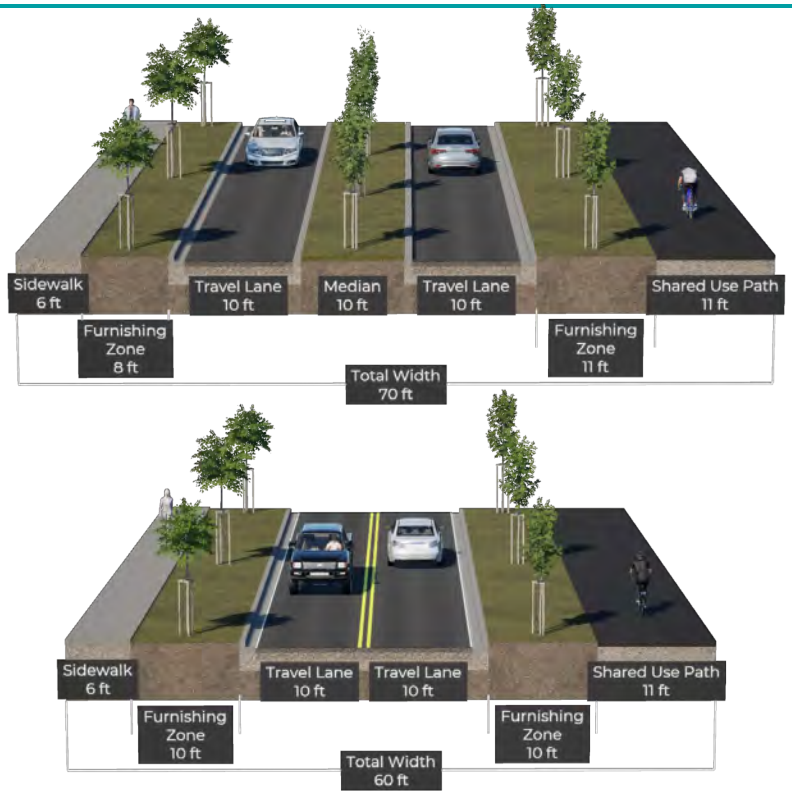
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Separated Bike Lane
Buffered Bike Lane

Mid-Block Crossings
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Not recommended

Transit
Bus Shelters

Typical Sections



Residential Neighborhood Connector

Residential Neighborhood Connectors are functionally classified as local roads but they distribute traffic throughout the neighborhoods and connect to higher-capacity avenues and boulevards. These roadways prioritize greenspace and traffic calming to enhance residential safety.

Notable Examples

Rieber Street
Northland Road
Park Boulevard
E Selby Boulevard
Caren Avenue

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
50' minimum
60' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Median Only 3' - 14'

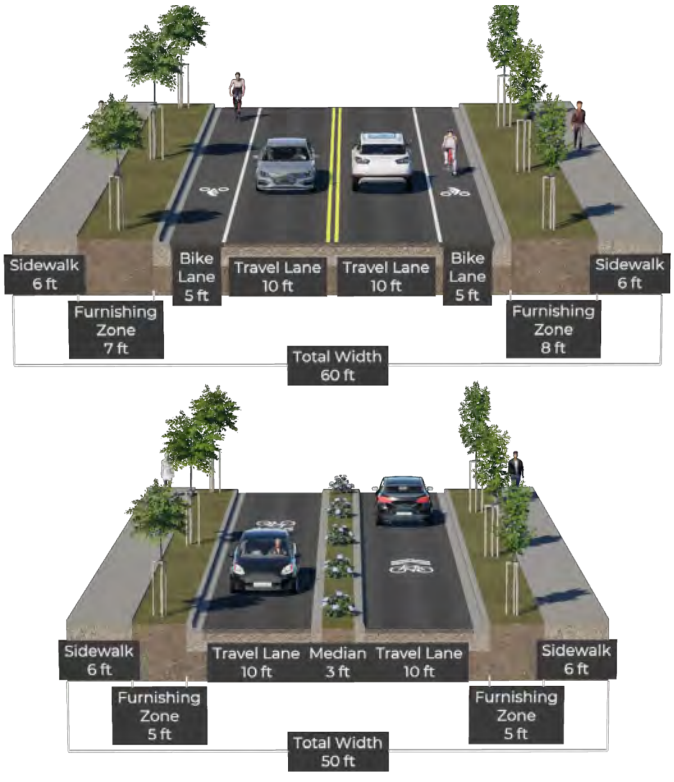
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Buffered Bike Lane
Bike Lane
Sharrows

Mid-Block Crossings
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Optional

Transit
None

Typical Sections



Residential Street

Residential Streets are categorized as low-speed, walkable roadways which primarily function to provide access to adjacent land for local vehicle, pedestrian, or bicycle traffic. These roadways prioritize greenspace and traffic calming to enhance residential safety.

Notable Examples

Longfellow Avenue
Lambourne Avenue
Crandall Drive
Pinney Drive

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
50' minimum
50' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Not Recommended

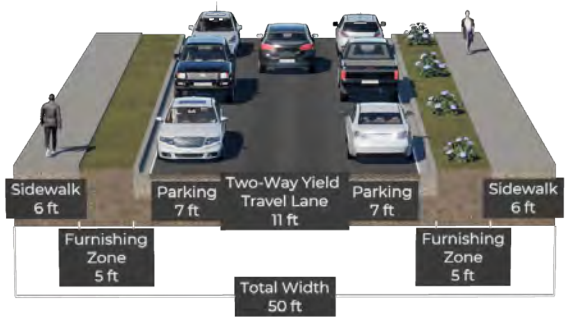
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Sharrows

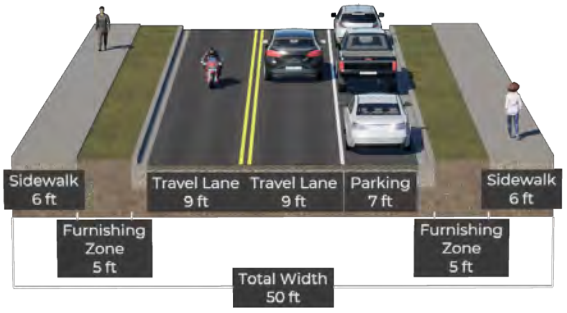
Mid-Block Crossings
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Optional

Transit
None

Typical Sections





Old Worthington Boulevard

Old Worthington Boulevards are walkable, low-speed thoroughfares, functionally classified as arterials in the Old Worthington context. These roads are designed to accommodate vehicle traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, and high ridership transit corridors. These roads prioritize historic character and enhanced streetscape elements such as trees, sidewalks, lighting, and pavers.

Notable Examples

High Street

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
90' minimum
100' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2 - 4

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Optional; 11' - 14'

Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Separated Bike Lane

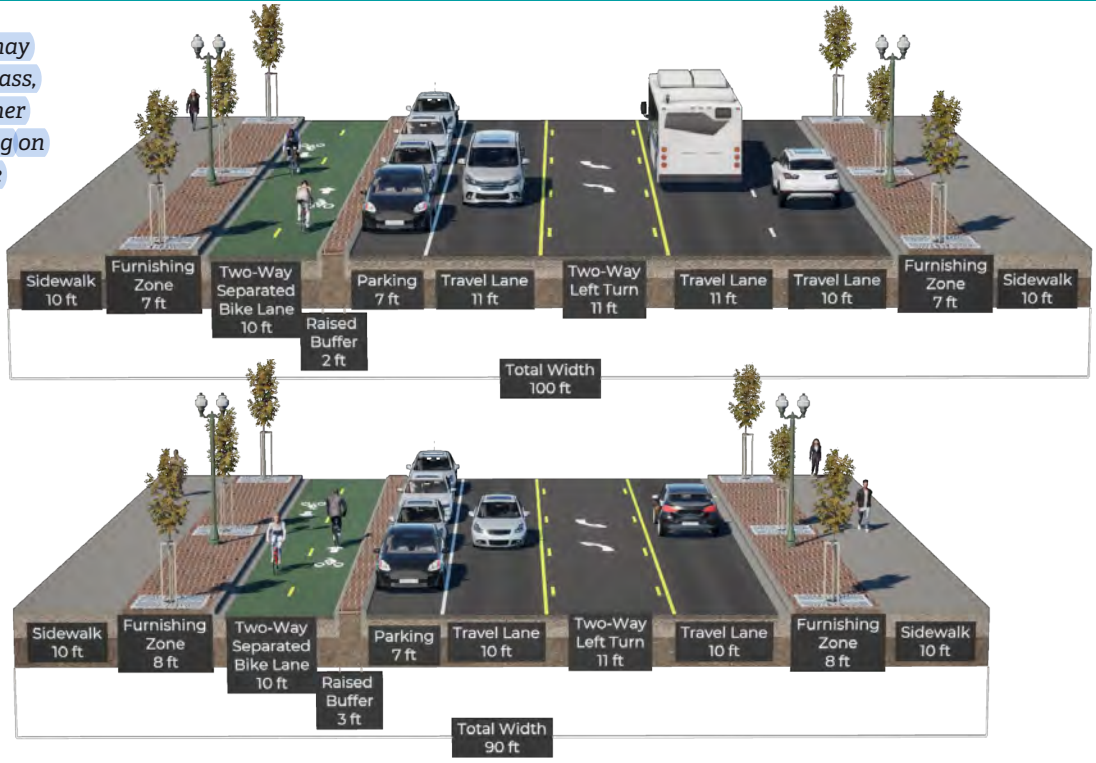
Mid-Block Crossings
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

On-Street Parking
Optional

Transit
Bus Shelters
Bus Bulbs

Typical Sections

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.



Old Worthington Avenue

Old Worthington Avenues are walkable, low-speed thoroughfares, functionally classified as arterials or collectors in the Old Worthington context. These roads are designed to accommodate bike, pedestrian, transit, and vehicle traffic while preserving historic character and streetscape. These elements include street trees, lighting, and pavers.

Notable Examples

W Dublin Granville Road

E Dublin Granville Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
80' minimum
100' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
11' - 14'

Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Separated Bike Lane

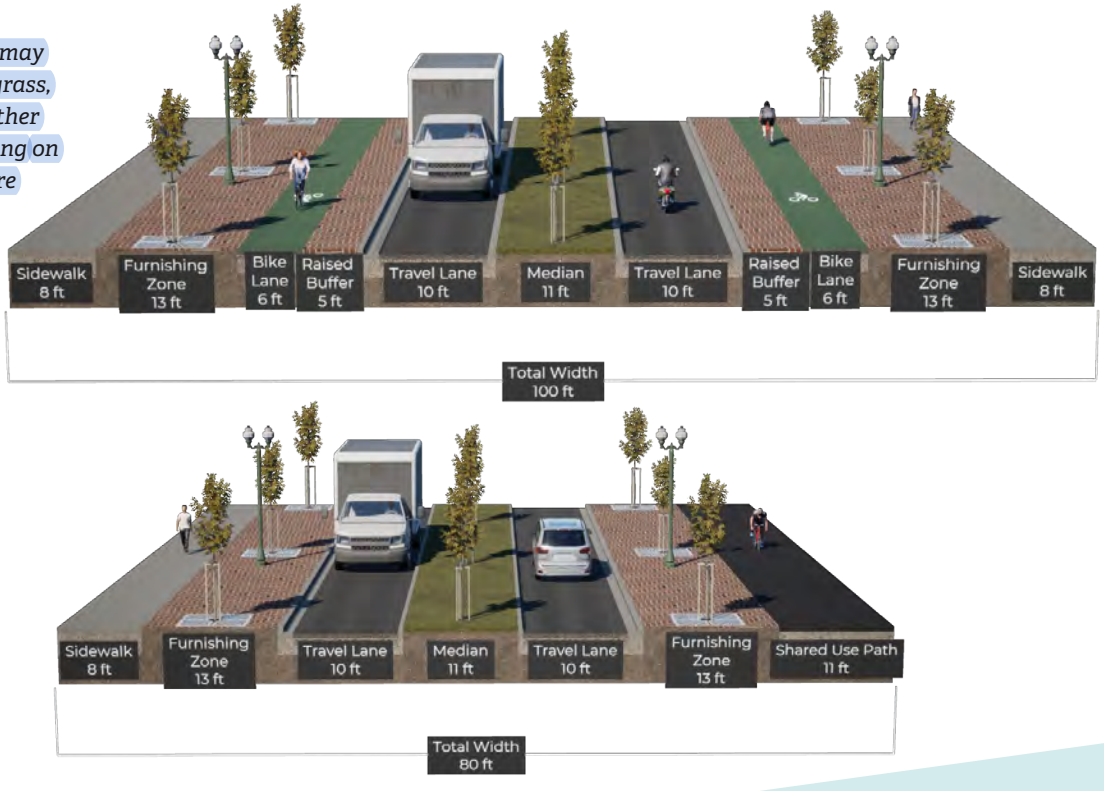
Mid-Block Crossings
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

On-Street Parking
Not Recommended

Transit
Bus Shelters

Typical Sections

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.



Old Worthington Neighborhood Connector

Old Worthington Neighborhood Connectors are low-speed roadways that emphasize historic character. While functionally classified as local roads, they play an important role in distributing traffic and connecting to higher-capacity boulevards. These streets are designed with an emphasis on enhanced streetscape elements such as trees, sidewalks, lighting, and pavers, while supporting slightly higher traffic volumes than typical residential streets.

Notable Examples

Evening Street
North Street
Hartford Street
South Street

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
50' minimum
60' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Not Recommended

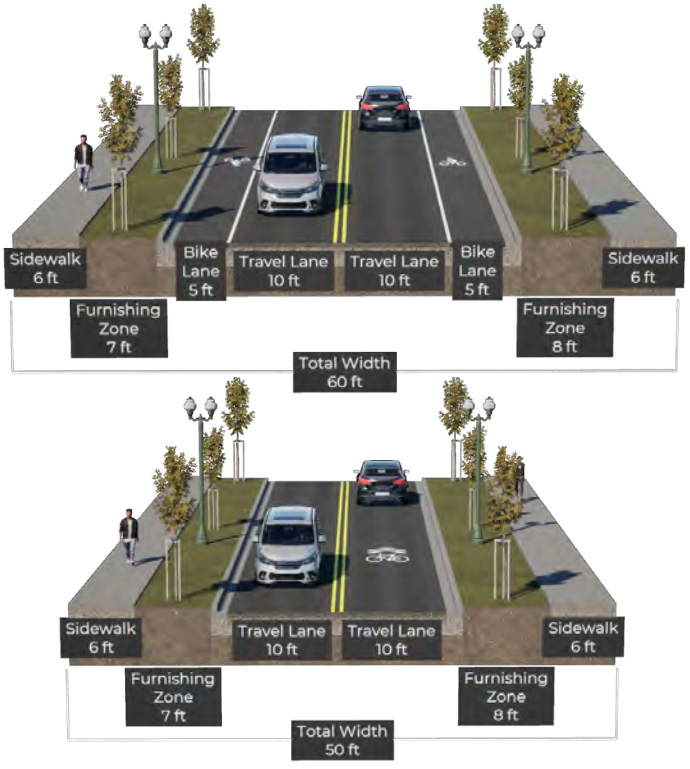
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Sharrows
Bike Lane

Mid-Block Crossings
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Optional

Transit
None

Typical Sections



Old Worthington Street

Old Worthington Streets are safe, low-speed, walkable roadways that reflect the area's historic character and support daily neighborhood life. They primarily provide access to homes while accommodating local vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic in a calm, shared environment. As local roads, they emphasize traffic calming, street trees, sidewalks, and streetscape elements that create a comfortable, inviting setting for walking and outdoor activity.

Notable Examples

Stafford Avenue
Oxford Street
Morning Street

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
50' minimum
50' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Not Recommended

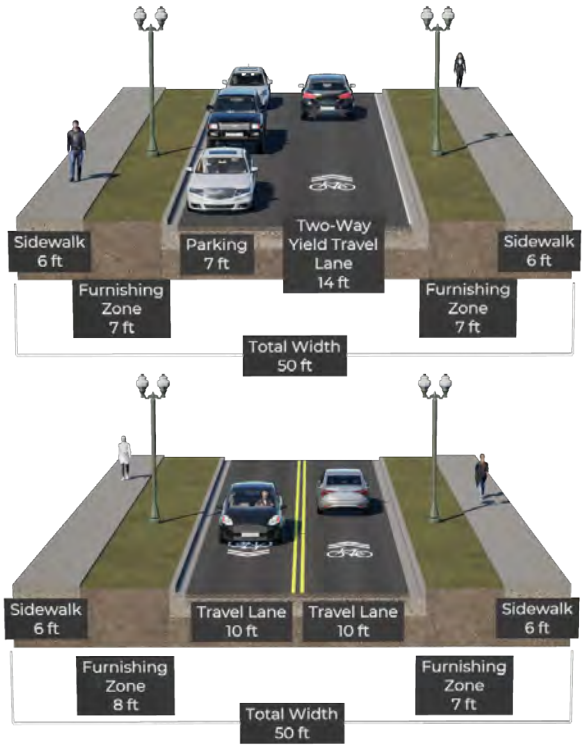
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Sharrows

Mid-Block Crossings
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Optional

Transit
None

Typical Sections



Mixed Use Boulevard

Mixed Use Boulevards are multi-functional corridors that support a mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses. These streets accommodate local traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, and high-ridership transit, while providing access to shops, services, and destinations along the corridor. They also provide an enhanced streetscape to support walkability and improve comfort.

Notable Examples

High Street

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
90' minimum
100' maximum

Lane Width
11'

Design Speed
35 mph

Travel Lanes
4

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
9' - 16'

Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Separated Bike Lane

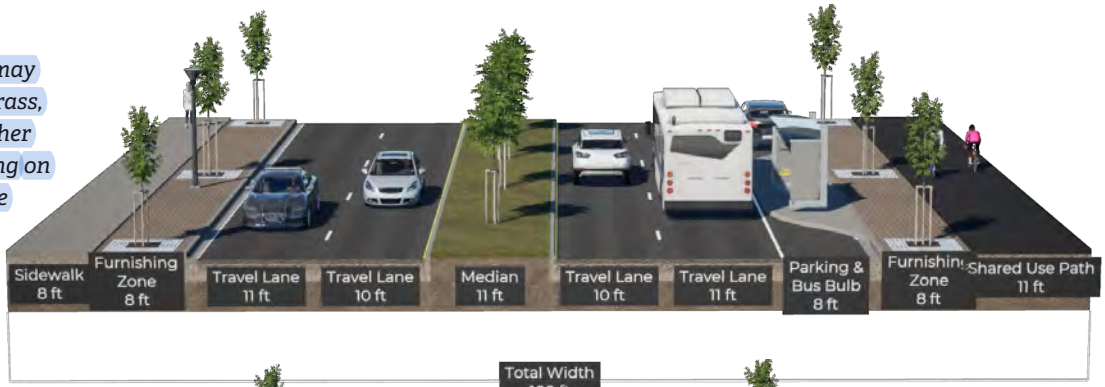
Mid-Block Crossings
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

On-Street Parking
Optional

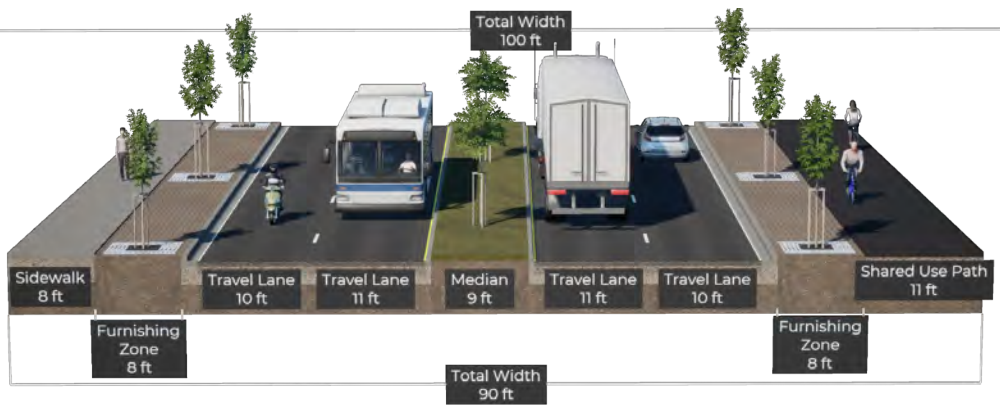
Transit
Bus Shelters
Bus Bulbs
Dedicated Bus Lanes/ Bus Rapid Transit

Typical Sections

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.



ODOT requires at least one lane to be 11' on state routes like High Street.



Mixed Use Avenue

Mixed Use Avenues are low-to-medium speed multi-functional corridors. These roadways accommodate moderate amounts of local traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, and some transit, while providing access to shops, services, and destinations along the corridor. These corridors provide an enhanced streetscape that supports walkable, mixed-use development.

Notable Examples

W Wilson Bridge Road

E Wilson Bridge Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
70' minimum
80' maximum

Lane Width
11'

Design Speed
35 mph

Travel Lanes
2 - 4

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
11' - 14'

Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Separated Bike Lane
Buffered Bike Lane

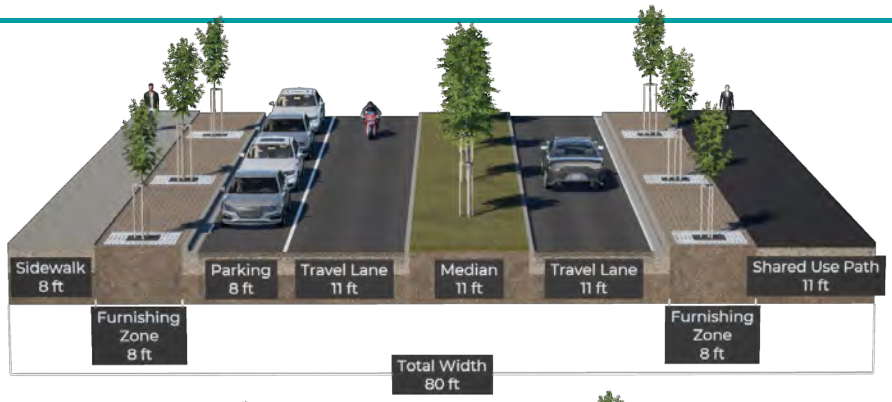
Mid-Block Crossings
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

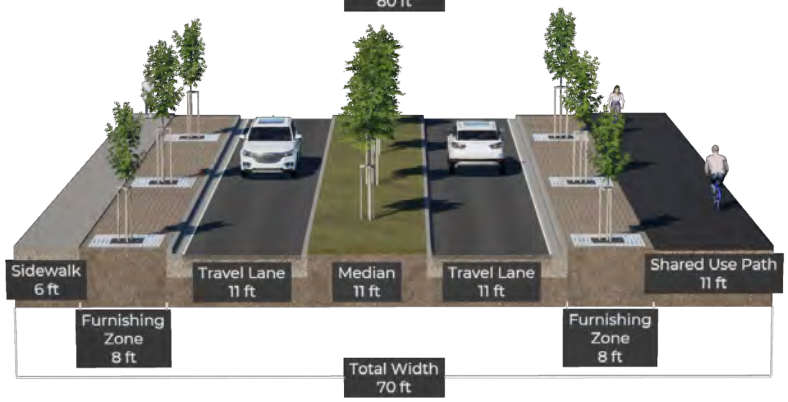
On-Street Parking
Optional

Transit
Bus Shelters
Bus Bulbs

Typical Sections

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.





Mixed Use Neighborhood Connector

Mixed Use Neighborhood Connectors are functionally classified as local roads but they distribute traffic throughout the local road network and connect to higher-capacity avenues and boulevards. They support mixed use neighborhoods by providing an enhanced streetscape that allows for a more active streetlife.

Notable Examples

Caren Avenue

Highland Avenue

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width

50' minimum

60' maximum

Lane Width

10' - 11'

Design Speed

25 mph

Travel Lanes

2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane

Median Only

Active Transportation

Sidewalk

Shared Use Path

Buffered Bike Lane

Bike Lane

Sharrow

Mid-Block Crossings

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking

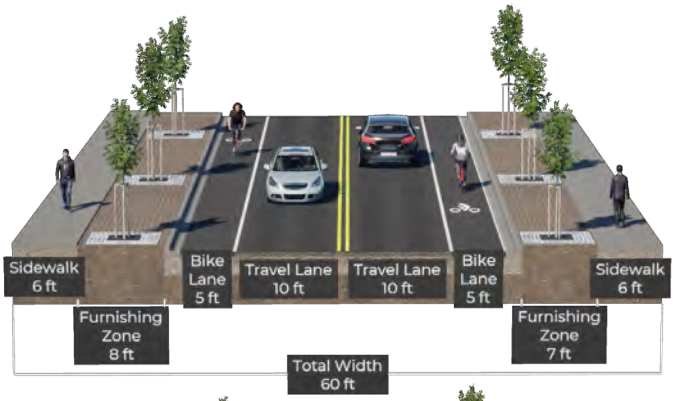
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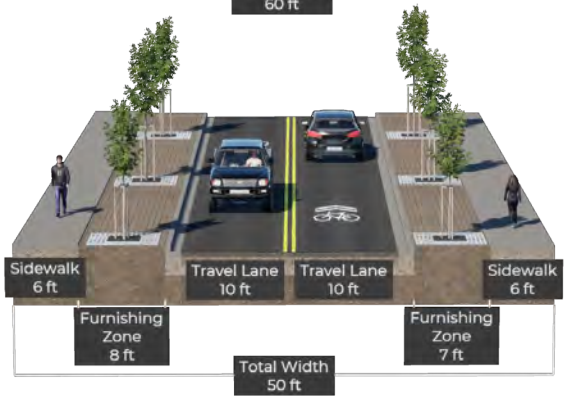
Transit

None

Typical Sections

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.





Mixed Use Street

Mixed Use Streets are low-speed, walkable roadways that prioritize pedestrian activity and a vibrant streetscape supporting commercial, residential, office, and civic activities. Functionally classified as local roads, they are meant to provide access to adjacent land.

Notable Examples

W Old Wilson Bridge Road
E Old Wilson Bridge Road
Wesley Boulevard

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
50' minimum
50' maximum

Lane Width
10' - 11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Not Recommended

Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Bike Lane
Sharrow

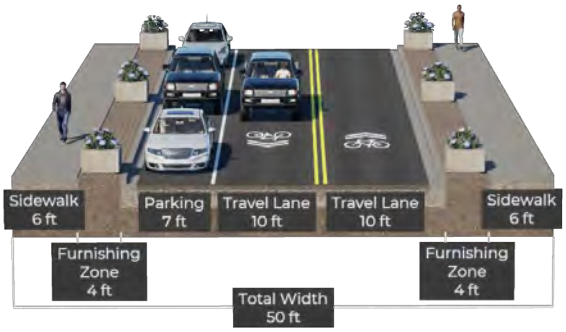
Mid-Block Crossings
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

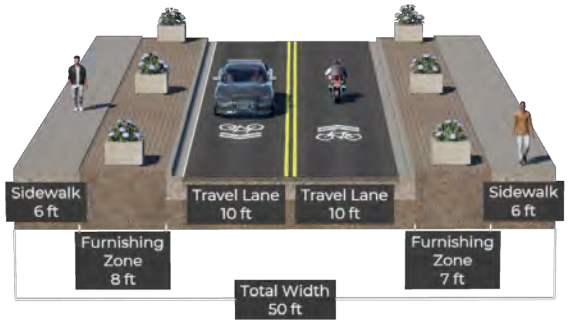
On-Street Parking
Optional

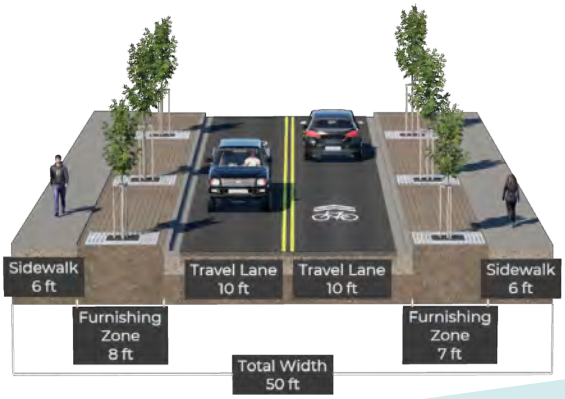
Transit
None

Typical Sections

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.







Innovation Boulevard

Innovation Boulevards are higher-capacity corridors designed to support a dynamic mix of manufacturing, warehousing, and emerging mixed-use development. These roadways prioritize efficient goods movement and regional connectivity. They accommodate larger vehicles such as semi-trucks while providing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities for access to employment centers.

Notable Examples

Huntley Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
60' minimum
80' maximum

Lane Width
11' - 12'

Design Speed
35 mph

Travel Lanes
2-4

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
11' - 16'

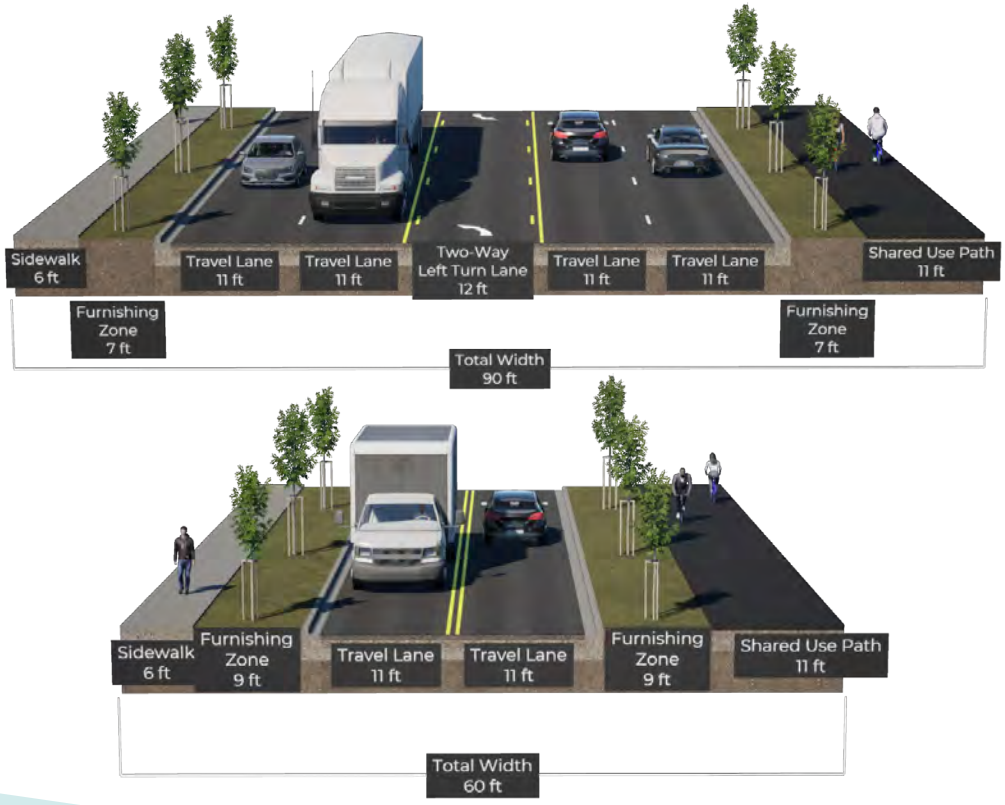
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Buffered Bike Lane
Separated Bike Lane

Mid-Block Crossings
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

On-Street Parking
Not Recommended

Transit
Bus Shelters
Bus Bulbs

Typical Sections



Innovation Avenue

Innovation Avenues are low-to-medium-speed corridors that support a mix of light manufacturing, warehousing, office, and mixed-use development. Functionally classified as Minor Arterial or Collector roads, they provide mobility for moderate to short trips. These avenues connect higher-capacity boulevards to local streets and must accommodate truck traffic.

Notable Examples

Schrock Road
Worthington-Galena Road
Proprietors Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
60' minimum
70' maximum

Lane Width
11' - 12'

Design Speed
35 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
11' - 14'

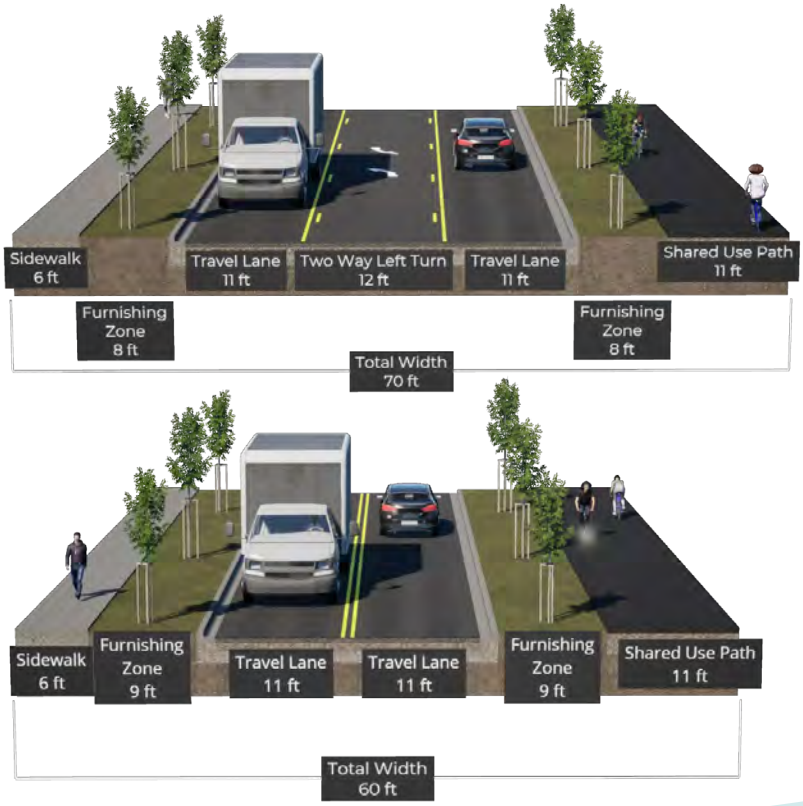
Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path
Buffered Bike Lane
Separated Bike Lane

Mid-Block Crossings
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Not Recommended

Transit
Bus Shelters
Bus Bulbs

Typical Sections



Innovation Street

Innovation Streets are categorized as low-speed, roadways which primarily function to provide access to adjacent land. Streets are functionally classified as local roads and should accommodate semi-trucks and large delivery vehicles while providing separate facilities for bicycles and pedestrians.

Notable Examples

Old Worthington-Galena Road

For additional guidance on roadway element choice, width, and design, please reference the ODOT Multimodal Design Guide or NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.

Roadway Design Standards

Right-of-Way Width
50' minimum
50' maximum

Lane Width
11'

Design Speed
25 mph

Travel Lanes
2

Median/Two-Way Left Turn Lane
Not Recommended

Active Transportation
Sidewalk
Shared Use Path

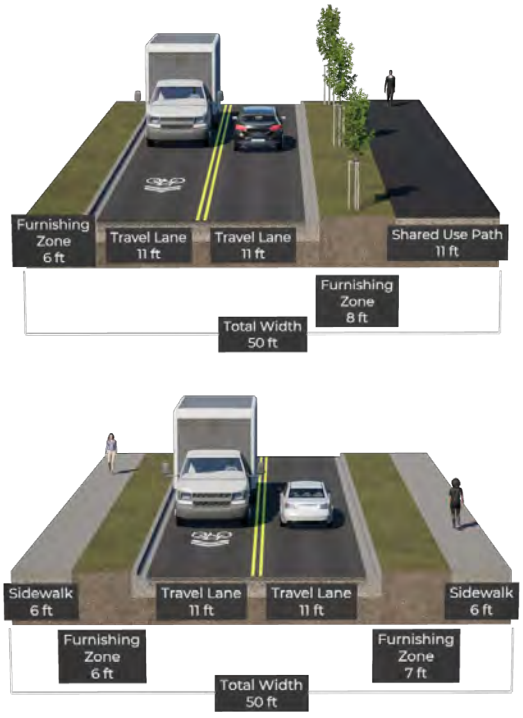
Mid-Block Crossings
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Marked Crosswalk

On-Street Parking
Not Recommended

Transit
None

Typical Sections

Where space allows, street trees should occupy the furnishing zone.



Strategic Priorities and Actions

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 8:
ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT THE UPDATED THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Why This Matters

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. By following the plan, the City can create a safer and more connected system for all users while supporting growth, economic activity, and the overall character of the community.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 3 and 6.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. The thoroughfare plan helps create a transportation system that is safe, comfortable, and well integrated with the community. By investing in streets that are functional, attractive, and responsive to local context, the City strengthens livability, supports economic vitality, and reinforces the sense of place that defines Worthington.



Worthington is connected. The thoroughfare plan improves how people move between neighborhoods and destinations without relying solely on a car. by strengthening walking, biking, and access to transit. By focusing on these connections, it helps create a more accessible and connected community for everyday travel.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Providing a clear framework encourages community input and informed decision-making. It supports proactive planning and helps guide future changes in a transparent and coordinated way.

Implementation Actions

8.1. **Adopt the Thoroughfare Plan**
Adopting the Thoroughfare Plan provides a clear, long-term framework for how Worthington's street network should grow and function. It helps the City make consistent, informed decisions about roadway design, land use, and infrastructure investments, ensuring that individual projects support a shared vision for mobility, safety, and community character. Once adopted, the Thoroughfare Plan is used as a guide for evaluating development proposals, planning

capital improvements, and designing streets. City staff reference it when reviewing site plans and infrastructure projects to ensure they align with the intended roadway classification and design standards. It also informs budgeting and prioritization for roadway improvements, helping direct resources to projects that best support the overall transportation network. Over time, this ensures that Worthington's streets evolve in a coordinated way that reflects community priorities and supports a connected, well-functioning system.

8.2. **Update Access Management Standards**
Updating the City's access management standards, according to the Thoroughfare Plan, ensures that driveway and curb cut decisions align with each roadway's functional classification, context, and street typology. The update process evaluates where and how access should be provided on different types of streets to support safety, reduce conflicts, and maintain the capacity of key corridors. This includes establishing standards for access spacing, shared driveways, medians, and turn lanes that reflect whether a roadway is intended to prioritize mobility, access, or a balance of both. Once updated, the standards are used during development review, subdivision design, and roadway improvements to guide how properties connect to the street network. City staff apply these standards to ensure that new access points do not compromise traffic flow or safety and that they are appropriate for the surrounding context and street type. This helps create a more predictable, efficient, and connected transportation system that supports the long-term goals of the Thoroughfare Plan.

TRAFFIC STUDIES

As part of development review, the City requires traffic impact studies for projects that meet established thresholds for trip generation or site complexity. These studies evaluate whether proposed development can be accommodated by the existing network or whether improvements are needed as a condition of approval. The Thoroughfare Plan provides the framework against which those studies are evaluated, ensuring that individual development decisions are assessed in the context of the City's long-term transportation vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 9:

ADVANCE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AS A CORE NETWORK

Why This Matters

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 vibrant and people-focused streetscape.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 6 and 8.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Advancing active transportation supports Worthington's commitment to a high quality of life by making it safer and easier to walk and bike. It improves access to everyday destinations while encouraging healthier lifestyles. It also helps create more welcoming streets that strengthen the community's character and livability.



Worthington is connected. Improving how people move between neighborhoods and destinations without relying on a car makes the City more connected. This is especially true for those who do not have access to a car or are unable to drive who may now be safely able to access all parts of Worthington independently.



Worthington is a model for environmental stewardship. Advancing active transportation supports Worthington's commitment to environmental stewardship by reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles which lowers greenhouse gas emissions and improves air quality.

Implementation Actions

9.1. **Close priority sidewalk gaps.**
Closing priority sidewalk gaps is important because it focuses on improving connections where they are closest to being complete. By targeting short gaps between existing sidewalks, the City can create continuous, safe walking routes that connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, and other key destinations. This approach improves safety and accessibility without requiring the construction of entire new sidewalk networks at once. It allows the City to make strategic, cost-

effective improvements that have an immediate impact on walkability and connectivity. The City has already identified several of these gaps as part of MORPC and COTA's Transit-Supportive Infrastructure program and there may be funding through this program to address these gaps.

9.2. **Study bike and pedestrian improvements on Active Transportation Corridors.** This plan includes an updated map of active transportation corridors, based on the 2019 Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. Active transportation corridors are those roadways that due to their proximity to existing trails, schools, transit, parks, and other factors are likely to see higher numbers of bicycles and pedestrians. These corridors help form a cohesive network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and should be prioritized for detailed study of safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

9.3. **Advance regional trail connections.** Strengthening links between Worthington and the broader trail network in the region, such as the Central Ohio Greenways, would improve active transportation connectivity. By focusing on improving connectivity, the City can create continuous routes that support longer trips for walking and biking. This makes it easier for residents to access destinations beyond City limits and for visitors to reach Worthington. These targeted improvements provide meaningful benefits to connectivity without needing to build entirely new trail systems.

9.4. **Coordinate with the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee on an Update to the City's Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.**
The Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan was completed in 2019, and since then conditions, development patterns, and community needs have continued to evolve. Updating the plan allows the City to use current data and best practices to guide safe and effective walking and biking infrastructure. It also helps identify new gaps, refine priorities, and align investments with the Thoroughfare Plan and other City goals. This keeps improvements focused, relevant, and responsive to how people use the network today.

Opportunistic Tools

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. Where applicable, current strategies that the City should continue are described below.

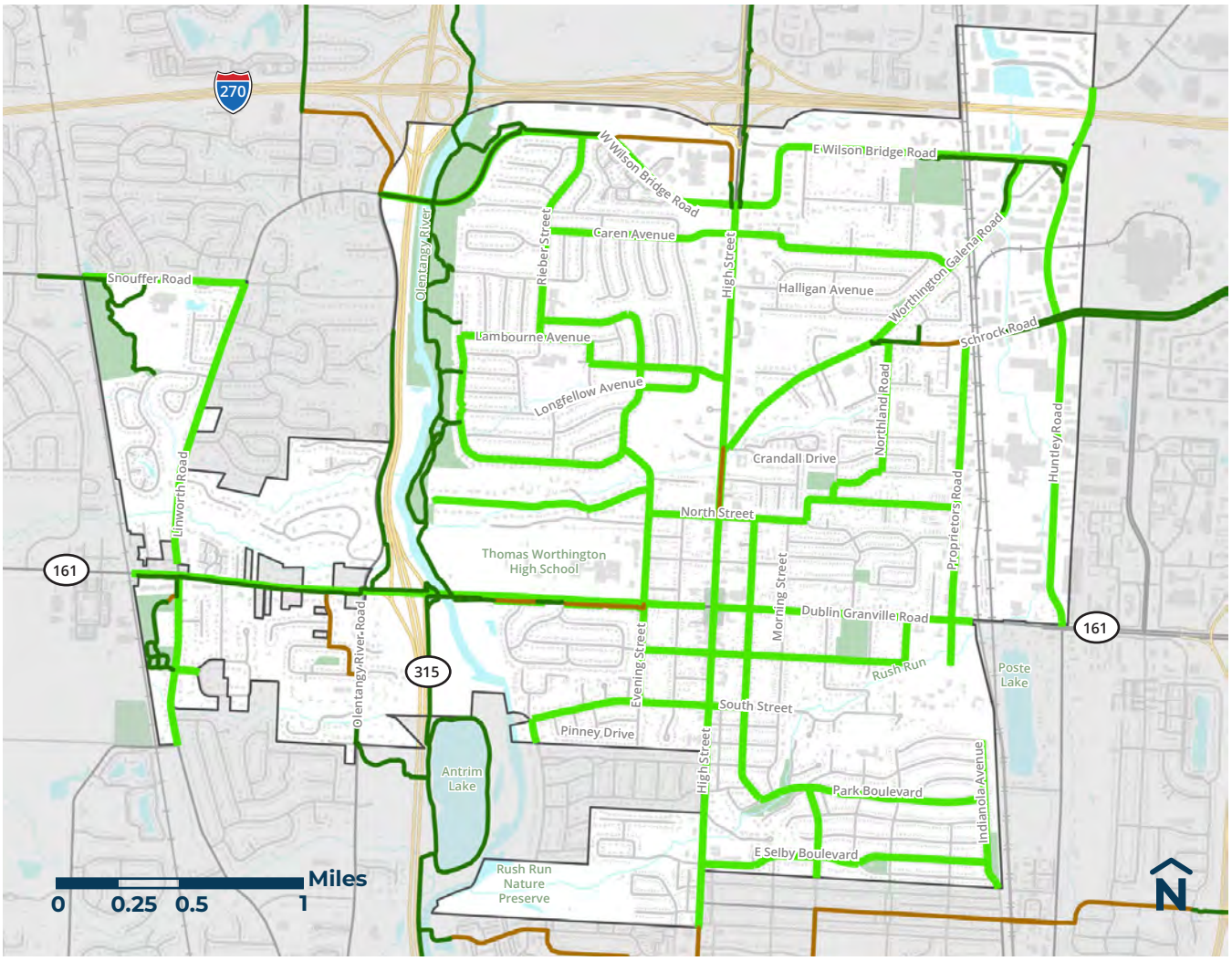
- **School Travel Plans.** A School Travel Plan is a type of plan focused on getting kids to school safely and efficiently. The plan identifies issues such as sidewalk gaps, dangerous crossings, or long pick-up/drop-off times and identifies potential solutions. Solutions include a combination of infrastructure improvements, policy changes, education programs, and encouragement efforts that support walking, biking, transit use, carpooling, and safer drop-off and pick-up operations. A school travel plan is required to be eligible for federal and state Safe Routes to School grant funding. This plan would require close coordination with Worthington City Schools and could be completed as part of a larger plan, such as an Active Transportation Plan.
- **Road Diet.** Also known as a road reconfiguration, a road diet refers to a reduction in the number and/or width of travel lanes and the reallocation of that space towards other needs such as sidewalks, bike infrastructure, transit infrastructure, street trees, and more. Road diets are a low-cost way to improve safety on a roadway by reducing speeding, narrowing crossing distances, and reducing turning movement crashes. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends road diets for roadways with four or more lanes with an Annual Average Daily Traffic of less than 20,000 vehicles.
- **Walk and Bike Audits.** Walk and bike audits are on-the-ground assessments used to evaluate how safe, comfortable, and accessible an area is for people walking, biking, or rolling. These audits typically involve reviewing streets, sidewalks, crossings, trails, intersections, and bicycle facilities to identify barriers such as missing sidewalks, poor pavement conditions, inadequate crossings, speeding traffic, visibility issues, or gaps in connectivity. Audits should be conducted regularly by City staff who design or plan multimodal infrastructure. Elected officials and community members can also attend and conduct these audits along with staff or be trained to perform them independently.

Active Transportation (AT) Corridors

As part of the 2019 Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan, active transportation corridors were identified to further implementation of a safe bicycle and pedestrian network. These corridors were identified as high priority due to their proximity to existing trails, schools, parks, transit stops, and other factors. Below is an updated map of active transportation corridors based on additional data and community input throughout this plan. This plan does not identify the specific type of bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure needed on these corridors, other than what is included in the roadway's thoroughfare plan designation, as this will need to be identified during a future AT plan or feasibility study.

AT Corridor
Existing Trail or Path
Signed Bike Route

Active Transportation Priority Corridors



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 10:

PRIORITIZE AND PLAN COMPLETE STREETS STUDIES AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Why This Matters

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 higher-risk locations while preparing for long-term change.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 3, 6, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Studying corridors like High Street, Huntley Road, and Wilson Bridge Road ensures that future investment responds to how these streets actually function today and how adjacent land use is likely to change. Pairing these studies with targeted intersection safety improvements addresses the locations where residents are most at risk now, rather than waiting for a long-term redesign.



Worthington is connected. Corridor studies give the City the engineering basis to make these streets work better for all modes as redevelopment occurs, rather than locking in decisions before the data and community input are in hand.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Pursuing alternatives analysis and feasibility studies before committing to design decisions reflects a deliberate, accountable approach to high-stakes, high-cost corridor investments.

Implementation Actions

10.1. **Prioritize and study corridors in Opportunity Areas.** Opportunity Areas are where redevelopment is most likely to occur and where transportation decisions will have the greatest impact. Taking a closer look at these corridors helps the City understand how street design, access, and multimodal improvements can support future land use and redevelopment goals. It also allows for proactive planning around issues like access management, streetscape design, and infrastructure capacity, rather than reacting to

individual projects as they arise. By focusing on these areas early, the City can create a clear vision and set of expectations that guide redevelopment in a coordinated way, support private investment, and ensure that corridor improvements contribute to a more walkable, connected, and economically productive environment.

10.2. **Prioritize and study intersections.** Intersections are where crashes are most frequent and where the potential for serious injuries is highest. By analyzing crash data and identifying patterns, the City can better understand the underlying causes of conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. This allows for targeted improvements such as signal timing changes, improved crossings, visibility enhancements, and intersection redesigns that directly address safety concerns. Focusing on these areas helps reduce crashes, improve overall traffic operations, and create a safer transportation network for all users.

10.3. **Integrate Complete Streets and safety best practices into routine projects.** Any project can contribute to a safer and more balanced transportation network. Instead of treating improvements for walking, biking, and transit as standalone efforts, the City can incorporate these elements into resurfacing, reconstruction, and utility projects as they occur. This approach makes better use of available funding, reduces the need for costly retrofits, and allows the network to improve steadily over time.

10.4. **Coordinate safety improvements with redevelopment.** Redevelopment is an optimal time to address safety improvements as mixed-use developments will increase the number of vulnerable road users. Changes to access points, crossings, and street layouts can be incorporated more efficiently during redevelopment than after construction is complete. This helps ensure new projects fit into a safer overall network and avoids missed opportunities to fix known issues.

Opportunistic Tools

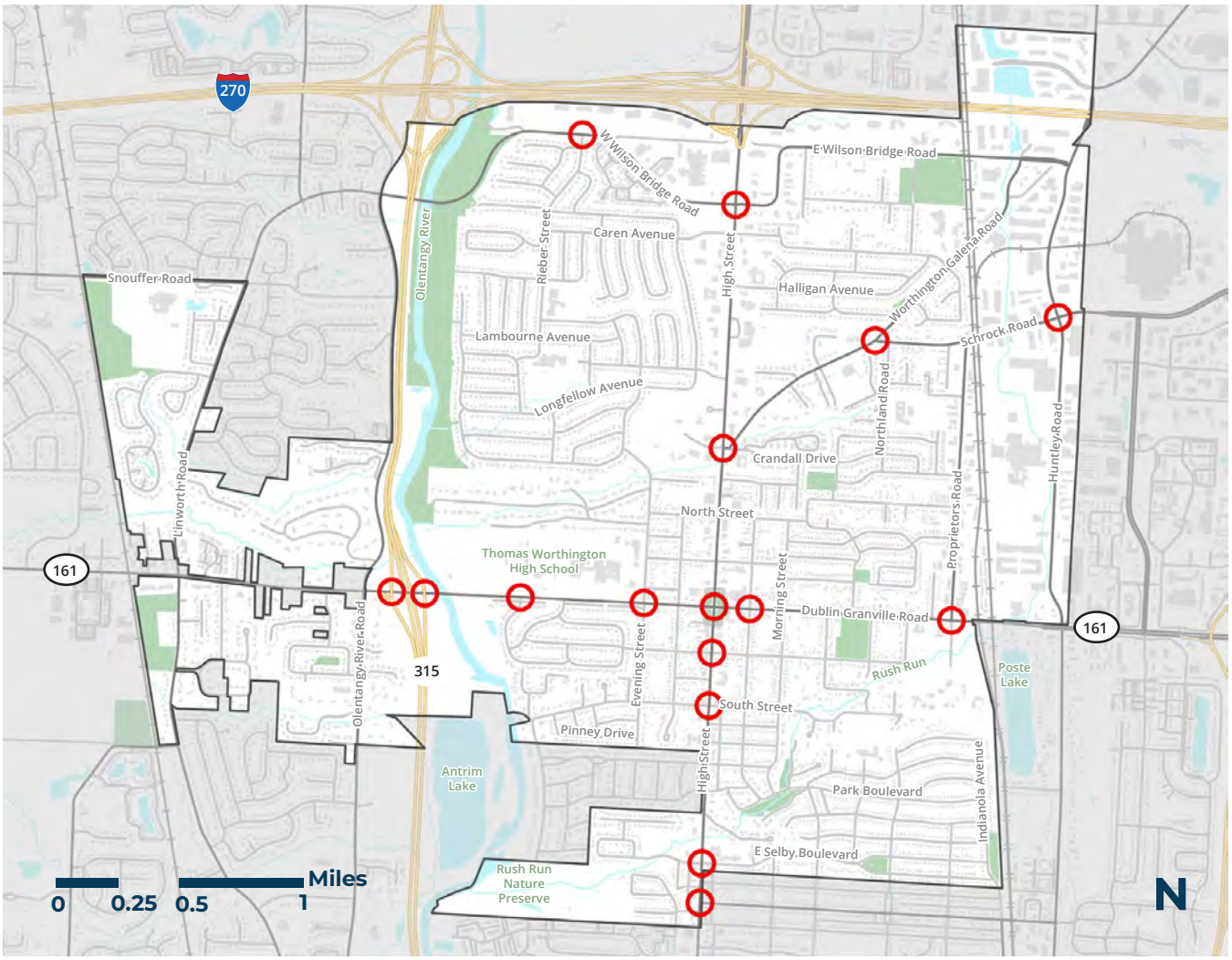
The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. Where applicable, current strategies that the City should continue are described below.

- **Quick Build projects.** Quick build or pilot projects are temporary or semi-permanent interventions used to improve transportation safety in a fast and flexible way. They are typically deployed using low-cost, adjustable materials such as paint, signage, flexible posts, or temporary curb extensions to quickly address known safety issues like high vehicle speeds, unclear crossings, limited visibility at intersections, or conflicts between drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Because these projects can be installed and adjusted rapidly, they allow communities to test safety treatments in real-world conditions, observe how users respond, and make improvements before committing to permanent construction. This approach helps cities reduce crash risk sooner, respond to urgent safety concerns, and build evidence for long-term infrastructure changes that better protect all road users.

Intersections for Further Study

Several intersections were identified for further study to address safety improvements. These intersections were identified, in part, based on an analysis of crash data collected from the Ohio Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) The crash analysis identified areas of concern based on several factors including: crash hot spots, crash severity, crashes per mile, and crash rate. This data was compared with community map input during the first round of engagement.

Intersections for Further Study



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 11:

COORDINATE AND ADVOCATE FOR TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

Why This Matters

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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 3, 6, and 8.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington is a diverse and equitable community. Expanding access to opportunity for residents who may not have reliable access to a car, including seniors, people with disabilities, youth, and lower-income households. Transit,helps ensure that essential destinations such as jobs, schools, healthcare, and community services are reachable for all residents.



Worthington is connected. Accessible and reliable transit, supported by strong walking and biking connections, allows residents of all ages and abilities to travel safely and conveniently without relying solely on a car.



Worthington is a model for environmental stewardship. Transit reduces the City's reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and improves air quality.

Implementation Actions

11.1. **Continue regular coordination with COTA.**
Conducting scheduled check-ins with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) helps ensure that transit service planning is closely aligned with the City's development activity and transportation priorities. Regular coordination allows the City and COTA to share updates on redevelopment projects, roadway improvements, and changing travel patterns, so transit service can be adjusted to better serve emerging needs. It also creates an opportunity to identify and prioritize stop improvements, such as shelters, sidewalks, and safe crossings, in locations where they will have the greatest impact. This ongoing partnership supports a more reliable, accessible, and well-integrated transit network that works in tandem with the City's broader transportation system.

11.2. **Prepare corridors for higher-capacity transit.**
High Street and the 161 corridor are both well positioned for enhanced transit, including potentially Bus Rapid Transit. Planning ahead allows the City to identify where right-of-way, intersection design, and streetscape elements may need to accommodate dedicated lanes, improved stops, and better pedestrian access. By taking a proactive approach, Worthington can take full advantage of future transit investments, strengthen connections along these major corridors, and support more walkable, transit-oriented redevelopment.

11.3. **Upgrade access to existing transit stops.**
This action focuses on closing first- and last-mile gaps through targeted investments such as new and repaired sidewalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, high-visibility and accessible street crossings, improved lighting, and the removal of physical barriers along routes to transit stops. Bicycle access can be strengthened through shared-use paths, bike lanes, wayfinding, and secure bicycle parking at stops. Improvements should prioritize high-ridership corridors, locations with safety concerns or missing infrastructure, and areas near housing, employment, schools, and neighborhood destinations.



Housing and Neighborhoods

Worthington's neighborhoods are among its most valued assets. The City's tree-lined streets, well cared for homes, and strong sense of place have long attracted residents who seek stability, walkability, and community. Maintaining that character while creating pathways for thoughtful reinvestment, and for residents at different life stages to find a home here, is one of the central challenges and opportunities of this planning effort.

This chapter addresses how Worthington will approach housing and neighborhood quality over the coming years. It reflects two complementary themes from Vision Worthington: preserving what makes existing neighborhoods distinct and livable, and expanding options for the range of households who want to be part of the community. The chapter is organized around two strategic priorities and includes actions focused on zoning tools, financial assistance programs, and ongoing monitoring.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 12. Support Neighborhood Character and Support Reinvestment in Existing Housing

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 13. Expand Housing Options in Context-Appropriate Locations

These priorities work in direct support of the Land Use and Character chapter, which establishes the physical frameworks and Opportunity Areas where new housing types and higher-intensity development are directed.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- Context
- Strategic Priority 12
- Strategic Priority 13

Context

Throughout the Worthington Together process, the City's housing and neighborhoods were assessed through data analysis, insights from interested parties and the general public, as well as review of recent plans and studies completed.

THEMES FROM PUBLIC INPUT

During the first round of public input, participants were asked to identify on a map where they saw opportunities in the city for Housing, Transportation, Commercial Centers and Corridors, or Placemaking and Quality of Life. The most common themes across the places marked for housing opportunities were:

- A general need for more housing, citing opportunities on underutilized/vacant land
- Interest in opportunities for apartments, condominiums, duplexes, or other multifamily options to diversify the housing stock
- Interest in opportunities for mixed-use developments and higher-density housing, especially near corridors and nodes
- Interest in housing suited towards seniors and empty-nesters, like patio homes, single-story units, or other retirement-friendly options
- Interest in workforce housing, lower-income options, and ensuring that new housing meets a range of price points
- Interest in new single-family homes

During the second round of public input, participants were asked, "To provide more options for living in Worthington “through all life stages” how important is it that Worthington encourage the following housing types beyond single-family homes?" Participants showed support for a broader range of housing types, but gave preference to new age-friendly housing, accessory dwelling units, and attached housing. Participants also indicated that buildings quality, scale, and site design were very important to new construction.

KEY CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Regional Change

Our region is not building enough housing to support the recent and projected economic and population growth. The Ohio Housing Policy White Paper (2023), prepared by The Montrose Group, found that housing demand eclipses supply in Central Ohio.

- The Columbus MSA is expected to average over 14,300 new jobs annually through 2050.
- Decreasing home construction has strained Ohio’s social, economic, and demographic standing.

The Columbus Housing Strategy (2022), prepared by the City of Columbus, stated that the City of Columbus cannot solve Central Ohio’s housing crisis alone

- The region needs to build one house for every job created.
- The region currently builds only one house for every two-and-a-half jobs.



Graphics from The Columbus Housing Strategy (2022)

Local Need

Worthington's housing supply has been growing, but it is limited by a lack of available land. There are approximately 6,400 housing units in the City today; 80 percent are single-family and 70 percent were built before 1970. Franklin County saw a 12 percent increase in new housing units between 2000-2010 and another 10 percent from 2010-2020. Worthington's total housing stock only grew two percent and three percent, respectively.

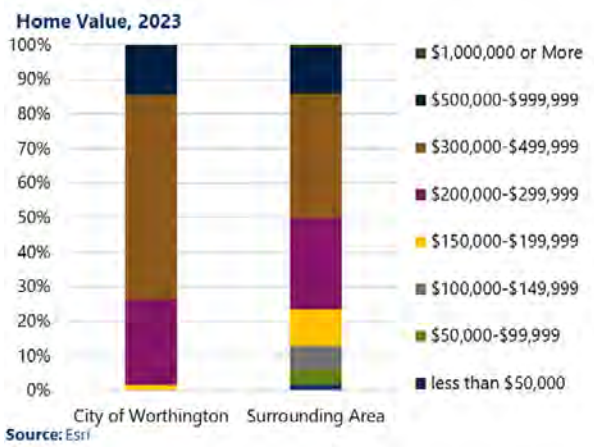
The US Census Bureau states that nearly half of renter households in the United States are cost-burdened, or paying 30 percent or more of their household income each month on rent or their mortgage. In Worthington, 17 percent of households are considered cost-burdened. This hardship is most affects:

- Households that rent (36%)
- Householders* under age 24 (100%)
- Householders* over age 65 (25%)
- Households with income under $75,000 (96%)

The Housing Needs Assessment (2024) determined there may be demand for 2,000 units in Worthington, with the community needing nearly half of these units to be affordable housing.

- Worthington does not have the land available to build 2,000 new units in the short term.
- Constructing new houses for less than $200,000 is not financially feasible.

Home prices and rents are higher in Worthington than in surrounding areas. Housing in Worthington has a higher median property value ($359,101 in 2023) than other geographies. Over 70 percent of homes are valued at $300,000 or more. Worthington rents are 17 percent higher than the Surrounding Area, at $1,335 versus $1,138 (2023).





Strategic Priorities and Actions

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 12:
SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND SUPPORT REINVESTMENT IN EXISTING HOUSING

Why This Matters

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. Worthington's neighborhoods also contain homes of historic and architectural significance, both within and outside formally designated historic districts, whose reinvestment and preservation are important to community character.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 1, 4, and 5.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Stable, well-maintained neighborhoods provide the foundation for livability and community pride.



Worthington is a diverse and equitable community. Providing a range of housing across life stages supports residents who wish to age in place and families seeking long-term stability.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Clear expectations and thoughtful transitions reflect responsible and transparent decision-making.

Implementation Actions

12.1. **Refine compatibility standards for infill housing or additions and transition standards in the Zoning Ordinance update.**
The City's Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary tools for supporting and maintaining neighborhood character. The update to the Zoning Ordinance (see Strategic Priority 1) should consider context-sensitive standards for infill



CONTEXT-SENSITIVE AND TRANSITION STANDARDS

The Zoning Code update should introduce contextual compatibility standards so that new development responds to the scale, massing, setbacks, materials, and street presence of its surroundings. For example, the code could require new buildings to fall within a set range, such as plus or minus 20 percent, of the block-face average for height and setback. Transition standards should also be added to govern how non-residential development meets adjacent residential neighborhoods, addressing building height step-downs, buffering, and site layout at that edge.

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

or redevelopment in certain districts to ensure that new homes built in existing neighborhoods "fit" in terms of the new structure's scale, building height, setbacks from the street and adjoining properties, and other physical features. These standards should serve a dual purpose: Preserving neighborhood character while also supporting reinvestment in the existing housing stock. Other rules should address building heights and massing and site landscaping or lighting where non-residential development meets a neighborhood.

Older homes must remain viable for future occupants, which often requires additions or modifications to meet contemporary needs. Standards governing the location of additions, setbacks, and massing should provide a framework that enables meaningful reinvestment without compromising the surrounding context. Context-sensitive standards should provide flexibility for changes in housing preferences (e.g., larger homes) while also accounting for the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

12.2. **Allocate future tax revenue to establish dedicated housing programs.** As tax revenue grows from implementing the Land Use, Opportunity Area, and Economic Vitality recommendations in this plan, the City should designate a portion of those revenues to fund housing programs that address community needs. The City should pursue programs one at a time to ensure effectiveness before expanding. Further evaluation of the community's housing needs may be necessary to identify which program will have the greatest impact, especially given potential changes in local and regional housing markets in the coming years. The Opportunistic Tools below offer a menu of options to consider.

HOUSING BONDS

The City of Columbus has pursued housing bond programs as part of a broader regional strategy to address a significant affordable housing shortage. Columbus's bond programs have provided direct cash contributions to affordable housing projects, helping finance new construction and preservation of existing affordable units that would otherwise be financially unviable for developers. For Worthington, a bond could fund new development and redevelopment of affordable housing projects within the City. Taking a bond to voters would empower residents to democratically secure funding for housing projects and programs in the community. The City would need to identify a repayment source of revenue as part of such a program.

Opportunistic Tools

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional projects, policies, and programs that Worthington may consider for implementing the Strategic Priority. As tax revenue grows from implementing the plan, the City should consider funding options from this menu.

OPTIONS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Home repair program. Financial assistance (grants or low-interest loans) that targets income-qualified homeowners for critical repairs (e.g., roofs, furnaces, accessibility ramps).

Down payment assistance. Targeted help for first-time, income-qualified buyers. This could include a partnership with a regional or Columbus-partnered program.

Nonconforming use formalization. During the Planning and Zoning Code update, residential property (single-family, duplexes, multiplexes, etc.) that is currently designated as nonconforming is classified as legal conforming.

Historic and older-home rehabilitation program. Financial assistance (grants or low-interest loans) to support owners of older or historically significant homes in making structural, accessibility, or character-preserving improvements.

OPTIONS FOR RENTERS

Deed-restriction program. A voluntary deed-restriction program that offers grants or low-interest loans to landlords who cap rents at a level targeting income-qualified renters. The funds could be used to improve the property, and the deed restriction would limit the annual percentage increase for rent. This program could also be used to provide down payment assistance to potential homebuyers who work in Worthington and cannot afford a market-rate home.

NOAH (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) preservation program. A low-cost loan program that funds the revitalization/rehabilitation of naturally occurring affordable housing while ensuring rent stability. The loan would be forgiven if the property remains affordable for the full term of the agreement.

Rental assistance partnerships. Organizations such as Families Flourish, IMPACT Community Action, and Rentful614 provide assistance with rent, utilities, and evictions to build housing stability in communities.

OPTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Accessibility and aging-in-place resources. The Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA), Franklin County Senior Options Programs, and the Ohio Department of Aging provide education, resources, and services to help older adults and individuals with disabilities live independently and safely at home.

Neighborhood-level improvement initiatives. Localized efforts to enhance the physical, social, and economic quality of life in a community, such as the City of Worthington's SEEN Grant Program.

Nonprofit and CDFI partnerships. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Mid-Ohio, Modcon Living, or local CDFIs that can deliver programs not offered by the City.

Families Flourish program. A program that enables lower-income individuals to live in higher-Opportunity Areas.

Housing fund cash contributions. A dedicated reserve that can be deployed as gap financing on affordable or workforce housing projects (e.g., Columbus housing bond model).

Pilot programs in targeted areas. Test new housing types or zoning standards in a limited geography before applying them citywide.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 13:

EXPAND HOUSING OPTIONS IN CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS

Why This Matters

A broader range of housing types supports young adults, families, empty nesters, and long-time residents at different life stages. 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. Expanding housing options and supporting redevelopment must be balanced against the risk of displacing existing residents. Cost-burdened renters and long-time homeowners on fixed incomes are most vulnerable to rising housing costs as neighborhoods change. The tools in this section are designed to expand supply and improve affordability while keeping Worthington accessible to the residents who already call it home.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 2, 3, 4, and 10.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington is a diverse and equitable community. Expanding housing options creates opportunities for residents across ages, abilities, and income levels.



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Providing appropriate housing in walkable locations strengthens neighborhood vitality and supports daily convenience.



Worthington's economy is balanced and resilient. Efficient land use patterns and housing diversity contribute to long-term fiscal health and service sustainability.

Implementation Actions

13.1. **Focus higher-intensity housing in the Opportunity Areas.** The Comprehensive Plan has identified six Opportunity Areas (Wilson Bridge, North High, Old Worthington, Linworth, South High, and Forge Fields-Northeast Area) along key corridors where a walkable mix of uses is encouraged. The City should resist pressure to pursue numerous small opportunities simultaneously and instead be strategic in allocating resources (e.g., infrastructure investments or incentives) where they will have the biggest

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's 2024 Housing Assessment identified potential demand for up to 2,000 units. At the regional scale, Columbus Mayor Ginther's 2025 State of the City Address set a target of 200,000 new housing units across the region over the next decade, based on MORPC growth projections, job growth goals, and the units needed to restore market elasticity. In 2010, the region had seven percent more housing units than households, a functional, naturally affordable market

By 2020 that cushion had shrunk significantly, contributing to the escalation of home prices and rents regionwide. The 200,000-unit goal is designed to restore that balance to approximately six percent.

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.

impact. On the Future Land Use and Character Map, a range of multifamily residential development is supported in the mixed-use categories. A handful of significant projects could move the City close to its housing goal. Concentrating intensity in these identified areas also aligns with the Mobility and Connectivity recommendations for a transit-supportive, walkable development pattern and the Economic Vitality recommendations for creating live-work-play environments.

13.2. **Enable small-scale housing types and ADUs within the rewrite of the Planning and Zoning Code.** These changes are not self-executing. An amendment to the Zoning Code, which follows a public process including Planning Commission review and City Council action, is needed before any new housing type is permitted. The 2024 Housing Assessment found considerable housing demand in the Worthington market. The use of missing-middle housing development (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units) can introduce a range of housing types to bolster the supply of units on the market while also facilitating appropriate use transitions. The comprehensive zoning and development code reform (Strategy 1) should emphasize introducing these development patterns into the community.

The Future Land Use and Character Map recommends that a combination of these housing types be supported everywhere that residential uses are appropriate. This action can be accomplished by replacing density requirements (units per acre) with design requirements (e.g., height, distance from the ROW, architectural design, streetscape features) for residential development.

13.3. **Monitor housing conditions and trends.** Worthington should establish baseline indicators immediately following plan adoption and update them when major development projects occur, rather than on a fixed annual schedule. This lets City staff maintain a concise document that tracks actual change rather

than generating routine reports that vary little year to year. Indicators should span four areas:

- **Housing supply and production.** New units permitted and constructed by type, location, and affordability level; progress toward the 1,300-unit target; and the pace of missing-middle and ADU development relative to zoning reforms.
- **Housing costs and affordability.** Median home values and rents relative to surrounding communities; the share of cost-burdened households by tenure; and changes in the distribution of housing by price point over time.
- **Displacement risk**. Renter turnover in neighborhoods adjacent to active redevelopment sites; changes in the share of cost-burdened renter households; and any documented loss of naturally occurring affordable housing. If monitoring reveals accelerating displacement pressure, the City should convene a review of available tools (including SP 12's Opportunistic Tools menu) to assess whether an immediate response is warranted.
- **Neighborhood conditions.** Code enforcement activity, vacancy rates, and reinvestment in existing housing stock as indicators of stability.

Baseline data should draw from the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment and the 2025 Worthington Together Snapshot Report. Updates on the Workforce Housing Tax Abatement Program should be incorporated as recommended in Action 13.4. Monitoring reports should be shared with Worthington City Schools to support enrollment planning and facilities decisions.

13.4. **Evaluate and refine the Workforce Housing Tax Abatement Program based on Tax Incentive Review Council findings.** In 2025, the City of Worthington adopted a resolution (57-2025) to add residential development eligibility to the criteria for tax exemptions in the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA). This program is designed to increase income-restricted workforce units in new multifamily projects, especially as part of mixed-use developments that also include office or other non-retail commercial space that generates income tax.

The program has a built-in review mechanism, the Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC). The TIRC should continue to conduct annual reviews of each abatement, and the program should pause for re-evaluation once it reaches approximately 1,300 units. Updates on the program could be included with the tracking recommended in Action 13.3.

PARTNERSHIP WITH WORTHINGTON CITY SCHOOLS

Worthington City Schools has demonstrated a sustained commitment to thoughtful facilities planning, including ongoing capital improvements at both high schools, the natatorium, and athletic facilities. The district's 2026 Enrollment Projections Report reflects the kind of forward-looking analysis that allows the community to plan proactively rather than reactively.

The City and the School District have maintained a strong working relationship, and that partnership should continue as redevelopment activity increases. Sharing housing monitoring data with district staff on a regular basis ensures that both institutions are working from the same picture of community change and supporting better decisions on both sides.

HOUSING TERMINOLOGY

Cost-burdened: A household that spends more than 30 percent of its income on rent/mortgage, utilities, and other fees. Source: US Census Bureau. 2022. "More Than 19 Million Renters Burdened by Housing Costs." See more at https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2022/renters-burdened-by-housing-costs.html

Affordable Housing: Housing available to individuals who qualify for the Section 8 Housing Voucher Program or Low-Income Housing Tax Credit programs. Source: Urban Land Institute. RCLCO Real Estate Consulting. 2024. "The Terwilliger Center Home Attainability Index 2024 Release." See more at https://public.flourish.studio/story/2142404/

Workforce Housing: Housing that can be afforded by households earning between 60% and 120% of their area median income (AMI). This is sometimes also referred to as attainable housing. Source: Urban Land Institute. RCLCO Real Estate Consulting. 2024. "The Terwilliger Center Home Attainability Index 2024 Release." See more at https://public.flourish.studio/story/2142404/

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): A small residence that shares a single-family lot with a larger, primary dwelling. ADUs are self-contained living spaces that can be attached to or detached from the main residence. Source: AARP. 2021. "The ABCs of ADUs." See more at https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2019/accessory-dwelling-units-guide-download.html

ADA Housing: The Fair Housing Act outlines accessibility requirements for housing units in buildings with four or more units. Guidelines from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) detail these requirements, some of which include:

- Accessible building entrance on an accessible route.
- Accessible common and public use areas.
- Usable doors (usable by a person in a wheelchair).
- Accessible route into and through the dwelling unit.
- Light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats, and other environmental controls in accessible locations.
- Reinforced walls for grab bars.
- Usable kitchens and bathrooms.

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

A range of house-scale buildings with multiple units that are compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes and typically located in a walkable neighborhood. This housing may be market-rate or affordable/workforce. Source: Opticos Design, Inc. 2024. See more at https://missingmiddlehousing.com



Accessory Dwelling Unit. An accessory structure typically located to the rear of a lot providing a small dwelling unit or office space. The unit can be located above a garage or on the ground level, whether attached or detached.



Townhouse. A small- to medium-sized structure consisting of usually three to eight attached single-family homes placed side-by-side. Each townhome would face the street and be accessed by a private entrance.



Duplex. A small- to medium-sized structure consisting of two dwelling units, either side-by side or stacked one on top of the other, which face the street and have separate entrances.



Cottage Court. A series of small, detached structures providing multiple units arranged around a shared court that is perpendicular to the street. The shared court replaces the private backyard as a shared amenity by all the units.



Fourplex. A medium-sized structure which consists of four dwelling units, typically stacked with two on the ground floor and two above, that face a street and are accessed through a shared entrance.



Neighborhood-Scale Mixed Use. A small- to medium-sized structure, attached or detached, consisting of a residential dwellings above or behind a ground floor space for use as an office or retail business.



Environment and Resiliency

Worthington's natural systems, including its tree canopy, creek corridors, parks and natural areas, are defining features of the community's character and quality of life. They provide ecological function, moderate stormwater and heat, and contribute to the sense of place that residents and employers value. Environmental stewardship in Worthington is not a standalone concern, it is woven into the choices the community makes across every chapter of this plan.

Land use decisions that support walkable, mixed-use development reduce vehicle miles traveled and concentrate infrastructure more efficiently. Mobility investments in sidewalks, trails, and transit reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles. Design standards that require tree canopy, green infrastructure, and quality public space directly protect natural systems while improving daily life. Good planning and environmental responsibility reinforce each other rather than compete.

Worthington has a genuine track record of environmental stewardship. The City maintains more than 5,000 street trees managed by certified arborists, operates a native tree nursery in partnership with the Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed, and has participated in an electric aggregation program since 2019 that matches 100% of participating households' electricity use with wind Renewable Energy Certificates. The City has also reduced road salt use, expanded composting and recycling programs in partnership with SWACO and the Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District, and used its development review process to preserve mature trees, manage stormwater, and promote green infrastructure.

This chapter builds on that foundation. It is organized around two strategic priorities:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 14. Lead by Example in Environmental Stewardship and Resilience

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 15. Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- Context
- Strategic Priority 14
- Strategic Priority 15

Context

THEMES FROM PUBLIC INPUT

Environmental quality and access to parks and green space were not a standalone mapping category during the first round of public input, but they emerged among the most consistent themes across all categories. These themes were echoed in the second round of public input. The most common themes were:

- Protecting and expanding green space and tree canopy, with residents across many neighborhoods calling for more shade trees along streets and sidewalks, native plantings, pollinator pathways, and the preservation of existing open space on redevelopment sites
- Activating and improving access to Worthington's waterways, including the Olentangy River and Rush Run, with interest in drop-in points for watercraft, trail connections, and naturalized corridors that protect stream environments while making them more accessible
- Incorporating sustainability and green design into new development and public spaces, including rain gardens, green roofs, pollinator gardens, composting, and environmentally conscious design standards for new construction
- Improving and investing in existing parks, with participants noting aging playgrounds, a desire for splash pads, and improved lighting and restrooms
- Creating a new, large gathering park that could accommodate events, concerts, and informal recreation in a central location

KEY CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Worthington's park system is well-established and well-maintained, but community expectations have evolved since the 2017 Parks Master Plan. The City maintains 255 acres of parks and open space across 14 parks, providing approximately 12.4 acres per 1,000 residents, well above the national benchmark and above the median of peer communities measured in the 2017 plan. Most of the City is within a ten-minute walk of a park, though gaps exist along the North High Street corridor, the eastern Worthington Estates neighborhood, and the Northeast Area. Parks and Recreation represents the second largest category in the City's operating budget, after public safety, and the Capital Improvements Program has funded improvements to roughly half of the City's parks since 2017. The 2017 plan's benchmarks have largely been met, but acreage alone does not measure quality, condition, or access. The planning process confirmed that residents have evolving expectations for facilities, programming, and new gathering spaces that the existing plan does not fully address.

Worthington's tree canopy is a significant asset, but regulatory tools to protect it are limited. Tree canopy covers 38 percent of Worthington's total land area, higher than Franklin County's 24 percent. Residential neighborhoods carry the highest canopy density; commercial and industrial areas, large-footprint buildings, surface parking lots, and active parks account for the lowest coverage. Despite this strong baseline, Worthington currently lacks the regulatory tools that peer communities use to protect canopy over time, such as lot coverage

limits, stream buffer requirements, and tree removal and replacement standards. This gap is particularly relevant as redevelopment pressure increases on commercial corridors and opportunity sites.

Worthington has an established record of environmental stewardship, but lacks a coordinating sustainability framework. The City and its partners have implemented a broad range of sustainability initiatives across City operations, development review, parks management, and community programs, catalogued in the table below. These efforts span energy efficiency, waste reduction, green infrastructure, urban forestry, and alternative transportation. These initiatives have developed organically across departments and community organizations without a unifying sustainability plan or measurable targets. The Vision Implementation Team recommended that the City address sustainability in the development and infrastructure planning process through the Comprehensive Plan update, and to develop a long-term sustainability plan that addresses other operational tactics and measures.

Worthington has achieved Platinum status in MORPC's Sustainable 2050 program, the region's highest sustainability certification. Sustainable 2050 is a MORPC program that benchmarks member communities' sustainability efforts and recognizes progress through a tiered certification system: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. Platinum status reflects the breadth and depth of Worthington's existing initiatives across energy, urban forestry, waste reduction, water quality, and green infrastructure. This standing puts Worthington among the region's leaders in local government sustainability and provides a foundation for continued progress. It also underscores the case for a more coordinated sustainability framework: a community that has earned the region's highest certification is well-positioned to set formal targets, measure outcomes, and build on what it has already accomplished.

CURRENT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Initiative	Category
Provides an opt-out electric aggregation program; 100 percent of participating households' electricity matched with wind Renewable Energy Certificates	Energy
Converted all City building, CBD street lighting and traffic signals to LED	Energy
Upgraded efficiency of municipal buildings through performance-based energy conservation programs	Energy
Contracted preventative maintenance of 200+ HVAC components; replacing outdated systems at Fire Station, Griswold Center, and Community Center	Energy
Maintains two public DC fast charging stations	Energy / Transportation
Conducted fleet electrification analysis with Clean Fuels Ohio in 2023	Energy / Transportation
Adopted Complete Streets Policy and Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	Transportation
Sidewalk Gap Program: City pays full cost of filling small gaps through the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board	Transportation
Promotes Bike to Work Day annually	Transportation
Maintains 5,061 street trees with certified arborist staff; Street Tree cost-sharing program available to residents	Urban Forestry
Maintains designation as a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation since 1989	Urban Forestry

CURRENT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Initiative	Category
Reviews landscape plans and guide urban forestry decisions through the Worthington Arbor Advisory Committee	Urban Forestry
Operates a native tree nursery at Godown Park in partnership with Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed	Urban Forestry
Provides curbside recycling program and operates Recycling Convenience Center which accepts e-waste, motor oil, food waste, and Styrofoam	Waste Reduction
Collects over three million pounds of leaves annually to be composted	Waste Reduction
Operates a food waste composting program for Community Center and City Hall staff	Waste Reduction
Established permanent recycling at McCord Park	Waste Reduction
Annual inspections for illicit stormwater discharge	Water Quality
Participates in 9-element plan for the Rush Creek HUC 12 watershed	Water Quality
Issues free rain barrels through Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District	Water Quality
Enforces floodplain protections through NFIP and local F-1 zoning district	Water Quality
Required stormwater management in recent PUD projects including Stafford Village, Worthington Gateway, and Fresh Thyme	Water Quality
Reduces road salt use during snow events through direct liquid application and beet juice extract technologies	Water Quality
Implemented air quality alert day operations plan and Idle-Free Policy	Air Quality
Installed bottle fillers in all City buildings and include them as standard when replacing park drinking fountains	Resource Conservation
Provides 30 community garden plots at the Community Center and 20 plots at Snouffer Park	Food Systems
Year-round farmers market with 70+ vendors through Worthington Partnership	Food Systems
Offers PACE Assistance Program to support property-assessed clean energy financing	Economic / Development
Incorporated solar panel design guidance into Worthington Design Guidelines	Development
Used the PUD process to preserve trees, manage stormwater , and incorporate sustainable features in recent developments	Development
Supports the Worthington Partnership's Green Team, a volunteer group implementing sustainable community initiatives	Community Programs
Conducts monthly street sweeping program	Operations

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 14:

LEAD BY EXAMPLE IN ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND RESILIENCE

Why This Matters

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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 7 and 8.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington is a model for environmental stewardship. Protecting waterways, tree canopy, and open spaces, along with a focus on walkability and bikeability to reduce emissions, reinforces the City's commitment to sustainability.



Worthington offers a high quality of life. Healthy natural systems contribute to physical wellbeing and community identity.



Worthington's leadership is open, forward-thinking and collaborative. Integrating resilience and lifecycle planning into public decisions reflects forward-looking governance.

Implementation Actions

14.1. **Develop a coordinating sustainability plan.** Worthington has achieved significant environmental outcomes across City operations, development review, parks management, and community programs, earning Platinum status in MORPC's Sustainable 2050 program, the region's highest certification. These efforts have developed organically across departments and partner organizations without a unifying framework, measurable targets, or a mechanism to track progress over time. A sustainability plan would provide that coordination layer. The Vision Implementation Team's sustainability-focused workgroup specifically identified this as a top priority, reflecting broad community

support. A sustainability plan can be scoped to reflect Worthington's capacity and context. At a minimum, it should establish priority focus areas, identify measurable targets (such as canopy coverage, waste diversion rates, or greenhouse gas reductions), assign lead responsibilities, and define a reporting cadence so that progress can be tracked and communicated to the public. The plan should build on the City's existing initiatives rather than creating a parallel effort. The City has already initiated this work through its participation in Power a Clean Future Ohio's (PCFO) Climate Action Planning 2025-2026 Cohort. Staff are developing the components of a potential Sustainability Plan through the cohort, which will conclude with a 20-page Climate Action Roadmap that can serve as the foundation for a future Sustainability Plan. A more focused plan may be achievable with existing staff capacity and regional partners; a more comprehensive effort would likely require external consultant support. Council should determine the appropriate level of effort, drawing on the Climate Action Roadmap and comparable plans from peer communities, before committing to a specific planning process.

MORPC, SWACO, the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, and Power a Clean Future Ohio are potential partners in this sustainability plan effort.

14.2. **Strengthen environmental protection standards.** Worthington's stream corridors, steep slopes, woodlands, and other sensitive areas are defining community assets that warrant clear and consistent protection. The comprehensive regulatory assessment (Action 1.1) should evaluate the City's existing environmental standards, including any applicable provisions, to identify gaps, redundancies, or outdated requirements. The goal is to ensure that existing standards are clear, enforceable, and well-calibrated for a built-out community where most development takes the form of infill and redevelopment. Where the assessment identifies improvements, the City should consider mapping protected natural resources in a format that can be integrated into development guidance materials, making it easy for applicants to understand applicable standards early in the process. Clear, accessible guidance sets expectations up front, reduces uncertainty for property owners and developers, and provides Staff with effective tools for early pre-application conversations. Any new or refined standards should be designed to protect sensitive areas without creating disproportionate barriers.

14.3. **Integrate green infrastructure into projects.** green infrastructure uses natural and nature-based systems to manage stormwater, reduce urban heat, improve air and water quality, and enhance the character of public and private spaces. Unlike conventional gray infrastructure, it serves multiple functions simultaneously, making it a resilient and cost-effective long-term investment when properly designed and maintained. See the sidebar for examples of common techniques.

Redevelopment within Worthington's Opportunity Areas presents a chance to move beyond the typical lot-by-lot pattern of stormwater management. Coordinated projects that incorporate green infrastructure across multiple parcels can reduce impervious cover, preserve more usable open space, and contribute to the comfort and character of corridors and public spaces in ways that conventional detention cannot.

Action 1.3 should establish enforceable standards that give the City tools to address maintenance of green infrastructure over time.

Green Infrastructure Techniques

Green infrastructure performs multiple functions at once: filtering runoff, cooling the urban environment, and building resilience against more intense rain events and heat. Common techniques include:



Bioswales: vegetated channels that slow and clean stormwater along roadways and corridors



Green roofs: vegetated roof systems that absorb rainfall, reduce the heat island effect, and extend roof life



Bioretention areas and rain gardens: planted depressions that capture and filter runoff from streets, parking lots, and rooftops



Permeable pavement: surfaces that allow water to infiltrate rather than run off, reducing peak flows and downstream flooding risk



Tree canopy: the City's most cost-effective and multipurpose green infrastructure asset, providing stormwater interception, cooling, air quality improvement, and carbon sequestration simultaneously

Green infrastructure can carry higher maintenance costs than conventional systems if not designed and managed carefully. As a general principle, green infrastructure installed on private property as part of a development project should be the ongoing responsibility of the property owner, with maintenance obligations established through development agreements or conditions of approval. Where shared or district-scale systems cross multiple ownerships, maintenance responsibilities and cost-sharing arrangements should be clearly defined before those systems are approved. Aesthetics are a related concern, particularly for systems that can appear weedy, overgrown, or dormant during certain seasons. Development standards should address plant selection, seasonal appearance, and weed management to ensure that green infrastructure enhances corridor and site character.

Since Worthington does not currently operate a stormwater utility, funding for shared facilities would most likely flow through capital improvement programming, development agreements, or infrastructure cost-sharing arrangements. District-scale coordination is a best-case scenario that depends on multiple properties redeveloping in proximity and within a similar timeframe, conditions that may not materialize in a community where change is incremental and ownership is fragmented. Even so, it is worth establishing the framework now so that when larger or coordinated projects do come forward, the City is positioned to pursue a more integrated approach rather than defaulting to site-by-site solutions. Where district-scale systems are not feasible, the techniques described above can still be applied at the individual project level to meaningful effect.

14.4. **Adopt standards and incentives to preserve tree canopy.** Worthington's tree canopy is a measurable community asset. The City's 2021 Tree Canopy Assessment found that tree canopy covers approximately 38 percent of the City's total land area, with space for canopy coverage to grow. The assessment also documented the canopy's quantifiable benefits, including carbon sequestration, air quality improvement, stormwater interception, and avoided public health costs. Protecting and growing this canopy as redevelopment occurs has both environmental and economic benefits.

TREE CANOPY COVERAGE

The top layer of an individual or group of trees (branches, stems, and leaves) that creates cover over the ground when viewed from above. The total area of a site covered by a tree canopy should be determined by a certified arborist or landscape architect.

HERITAGE TREES

Individual or group of trees of exceptional size, age, rarity, or significant historical value to the community. They can be recognized as a community landmark and contribute to local identity.

The City should establish a target canopy coverage percentage, building on the 38 percent baseline. The target should be set by City Council, with input from the Arbor Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission, with attention to what is practically achievable given development patterns, impervious-surface constraints, desires for active park space, and the time required for newly planted trees to reach meaningful canopy size. The target should be tracked and reevaluated every five years.

Capital projects for streets, parks, and public facilities should include generous street and shade tree planting, as well as the protection of significant trees during construction. For private development, applicants should provide details on tree canopy coverage as part of the site plan review process. Coverage requirements should account for the character of each use, recognizing that building footprints, parking, and stormwater areas constrain canopy differently across site types. Where it is impractical to meet minimum canopy requirements on site due to physical or engineering constraints, a fee-in-lieu option should be available to direct contributions toward canopy investments elsewhere in the City.

The City should also evaluate whether additional tree preservation tools, such as requirements for approval prior to removal of significant trees (heritage trees) on private property, are appropriate and feasible. Any such measures should be carefully scoped to avoid creating undue burdens on property owners while still protecting the canopy assets that most contribute to community character and resilience.

14.5. **Embed resilience into capital planning.** Worthington should integrate climate adaptation into infrastructure decisions by evaluating major projects on total lifecycle cost rather than upfront expense alone. This means factoring in long-term operations, maintenance, energy use, replacement costs, and performance under extreme weather, flooding, and heat. Capital budgeting and CIP criteria should be updated to score projects on these factors alongside land use and mobility goals. Embedding resilience criteria in procurement, design standards, and staff guidance ensures that infrastructure investments serve the community well over time.

RESILIENCE

The long-term ability of communities and citizens to prepare and plan for, recover from, and adapt to adverse conditions and events.

The Opportunistic Tools are a menu of additional strategies, programs, and partnerships that Worthington may pursue to advance this Strategic Priority. Some reflect work already underway that the City should continue and strengthen; others represent opportunities to expand existing efforts or explore new approaches over time.

- **Grant funding to restore and enhance local waterways**. Rush Run and the Olentangy River corridor face ongoing pressures from urban stormwater runoff, legacy development patterns and sewer overflows that have reduced water quality and ecological function. Restoration of these corridors is capital-intensive and largely beyond what the City's operating budget can absorb alone. Federal and state grant programs, however, have supported this type of work in peer communities across Ohio. The City could designate waterway restoration as a grant priority and pursue funding through available sources including the EPA's Section 319 Nonpoint Source Program, ODNR's Recreational Trails Program, MORPC's Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside, and Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District partnership programs. Grant pursuit should be coordinated with the Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed, Franklin County Metroparks, and other regional partners who bring technical expertise, matching resources, and established relationships with funding agencies.
- **Native landscaping standards.** Encouraging native plantings in new development, City facilities, rights-of-way, and parking lots can support biodiversity, reduce water and maintenance demands, and improve stormwater performance. Standards in this area should be carefully scoped to promote native plants without creating overly prescriptive requirements that are difficult to administer or that limit reasonable design flexibility.
- **Sustainability recognition programs**. Recognizing residents, businesses, and institutions who have completed sustainable projects can motivate others to make their own investments. Over time, a recognition program can become a branding tool for the City, further attracting residents and employers who share the community's values. This could be a program established by the City or a partnership with LEED building credentials, SolSmart Communities, Tree/Bee City USA, etc.
- **Regional environmental partnerships**. Worthington already engages with regional organizations, including MORPC, the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed. Continuing these relationships allows the City to draw on regional expertise, share resources, and advance environmental goals that extend beyond municipal boundaries.
- **Energy efficiency grants and facility benchmarking**. Establishing an energy benchmarking program for City facilities using tools such as ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (a free tool from the EPA) to compare against peer communities, while also pursuing available federal, state, and utility incentives for energy-efficiency upgrades over time, can reduce energy costs and reinforce Worthington as a regional leader in sustainability.
- **Regional waste reduction and recycling partnerships**. Worthington already partners with SWACO, the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, and other organizations on recycling and waste reduction. Continuing to expand these efforts, particularly in areas such as food waste reduction and public education, aligns with the City's broader sustainability vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 15:

UPDATE THE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Why This Matters

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.

IMPLEMENTS THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles 6, 7, and 8.

Alignment with Vision Worthington

This Strategic Priority advances several Vision Worthington commitments:



Worthington offers a high quality of life. High-quality parks and civic spaces enhance daily experience and community pride.



Worthington is connected. Linked parks, trails, and public spaces strengthen social and physical connections.



Worthington is a model for environmental stewardship. Thoughtful park planning protects natural resources and supports sustainable design.

Implementation Actions

15.1. **Update the Parks and Master Plan.** The update should incluude the following elements:

- **A community visioning process to prioritize improvements and investments.** Since the adoption of the 2017 plan, many of its recommendations have been implemented. An updated, in-depth analysis, vision, and planning process for existing parks and

recreation facilities, along with potential improvements, should be conducted to provide the City and the community with a clear vision and recommendations for these spaces.

- **A survey and benchmarking of amenities in peer communities.** The Parks & Recreation Master Plan update process should build on the extensive public engagement that has occurred through Vision Worthington and Worthington Together to maintain strong community buy-in. The use of benchmarks reported by the National Recreation and Parks Association (e.g., the amount of parkland per 1,000 residents) compared with similar jurisdictions can provide regional insight into what community members may expect.
- **Facilities and improvements at existing parks, with a focus on quality, usability, and long-term maintenance feasibility.** Park accessibility has many health and recreational benefits to neighborhoods and communities overall. These facilities, as well as the Community Center, Griswold Center, and Selby Shelter, should encourage use by all community residents, offering a range of opportunities and activities through updated amenities. As new facilities are installed, careful consideration must be given to their long-term maintenance to ensure they continue to bolster neighborhood livability for years to come.
- **Partnership opportunities with schools, nonprofits, and private entities.** Community members noted a desire to improve parks and open spaces throughout the community. Expanding partnerships with the School District, non-profit organizations, and others can maximize the use of shared resources to bolster these treasured amenities and reduce costs.
- **Awareness of budget constraints and lifecycle cost implications.** A clear schedule for improvements and maintenance should be determined through the updated Parks & Recreation Master Plan. This process must consider the realistic funding available for these projects so that the sequencing of improvements establishes a consistent, predictable pattern for the community and evaluates the City's ability to maintain existing parks and facilities alongside potential new investments.
- **Integration of parks, trails, and civic spaces with Opportunity Area redevelopment strategies.** Key trail connections include Wilson Bridge Road and High Street. Cooperation with Franklin County, Franklin County Metroparks, Columbus, MORPC, and other partners will facilitate integration into regional plans, which will be essential to achieving a connected network that draws visitors and widens residents' access to nature. A connected network will not only enhance walkability in the identified Opportunity Areas, but can also improve property values.





Opportunity Areas

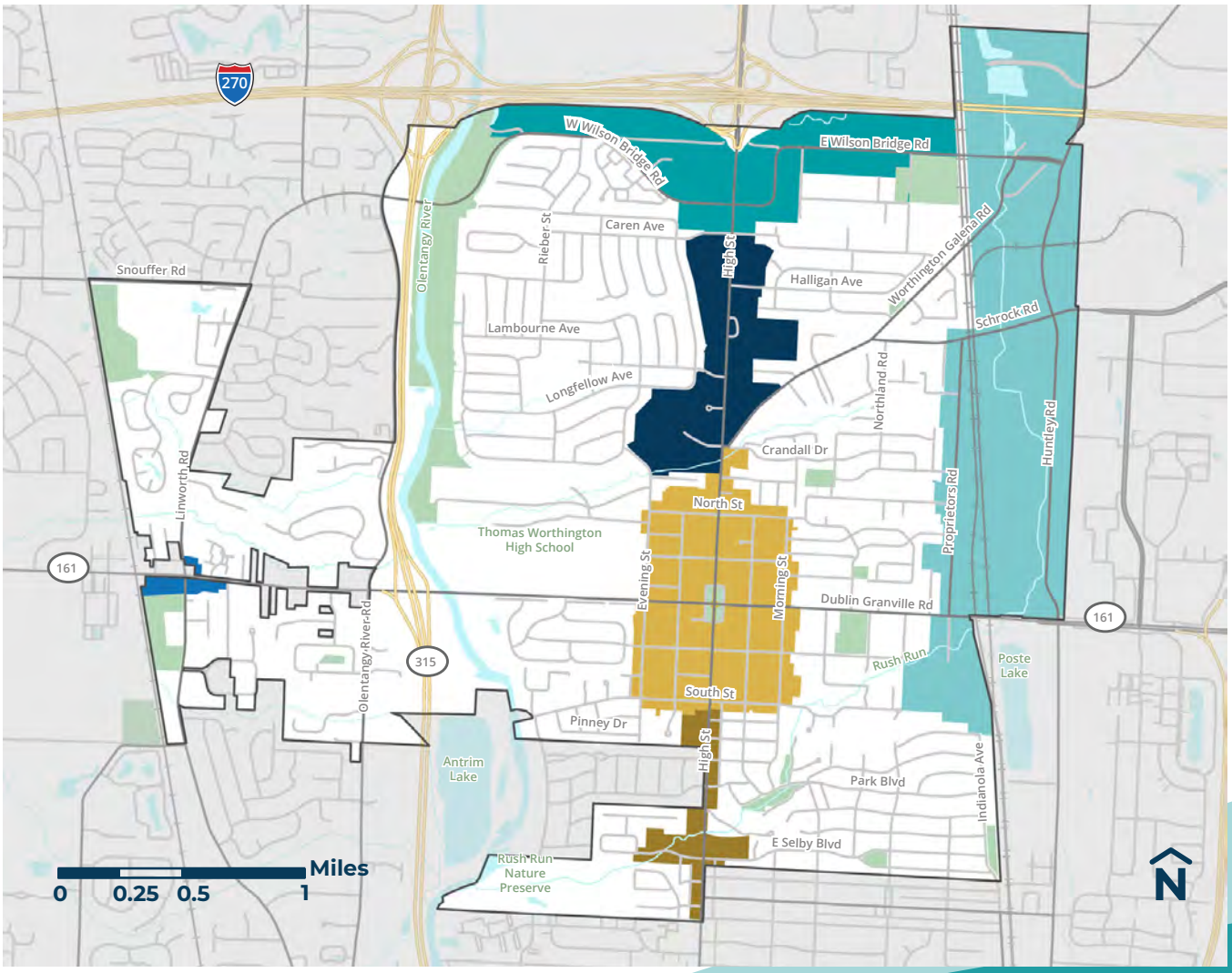
This chapter provides geographic guidance for areas where change is anticipated, encouraged, or should be strategically managed. These areas build upon the Citywide Strategic Priorities and translate them into place-specific direction.

Each Opportunity Area includes a Strategic Role, The Area Today, Strategic Direction, Public Space, Land Use and Character, and Mobility and Connectivity.

Several Opportunity Areas serve as gateways into Worthington: High Street at Wilson Bridge Road, High Street at Selby Boulevard, and SR 161 at Linworth Road. Redevelopment and capital projects in these areas should signal arrival through building placement, landscaping, lighting, signage, and public realm improvements.

The Opportunity Areas are:

- **WILSON BRIDGE**
- **NORTH HIGH**
- **OLD WORTHINGTON**
- **LINWORTH**
- **SOUTH HIGH**
- **FORGE FIELDS / NORTHEAST**



Wilson Bridge Opportunity Area

STRATEGIC ROLE

The Wilson Bridge area is Worthington's primary economic engine and one of its most significant reinvestment corridors. It serves as the City's front door from I-270 and is positioned to evolve into a walkable, employment-focused mixed-use district that strengthens the tax base while signaling arrival into Worthington.

This corridor can accommodate greater intensity than most other areas of the City, provided development transitions carefully to adjacent neighborhoods and infrastructure capacity is aligned with redevelopment timing.

THE AREA TODAY

The Wilson Bridge corridor features a concentration of office, retail, medical, and commercial uses that generate a substantial portion of the City's income tax revenue.

The corridor remains auto-oriented in form, with wide roadway sections, large surface parking lots, and limited pedestrian comfort in many segments. While regional visibility and access are strong, walkability and cohesive placemaking are inconsistent.

The Shops at Worthington Place (Mall) property represents the largest single redevelopment opportunity in the corridor. A redevelopment plan was previously approved; however, market conditions have delayed implementation. The site remains a long-term reinvestment opportunity whose timing will depend on financing, tenant demand, infrastructure coordination, and broader economic trends.

In addition, a regional developer has recently acquired multiple aging office properties along the corridor, signaling incremental reinvestment potential. Over time, change may occur through a combination of catalytic redevelopment at major sites and repositioning of underperforming office properties.

Aerial view of W Wilson Bridge area from the Olentangy Parklands



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1. **Advance coordinated reinvestment in major redevelopment sites.** Work proactively with property owners and development partners to align proposals with corridor design expectations, multimodal improvements, fiscal goals, and infrastructure capacity.
2. **Support higher-intensity employment and vertical mixed-use development in appropriate locations.** Encourage buildings that bring activity to the street while strengthening income tax performance and long-term fiscal sustainability.
3. **Integrate shared parking, structured parking, and coordinated stormwater strategies.** Reduce excessive surface parking over time and promote shared facilities that support more efficient land use.
4. **Implement corridor design improvements incrementally.** As redevelopment occurs, streetscape enhancements should be incorporated to improve connectivity over time.
5. **Align redevelopment sequencing with fiscal capacity.** Prioritize improvements and partnerships that deliver clear public benefit and ensure that redevelopment supports long-term costs of infrastructure and services.

Street-facing entrances are sometimes designed in ways that make them unused or impractical in daily practice. Future development standards should require functional, active entrances oriented to the street.



The Shops at Worthington Place



Existing office



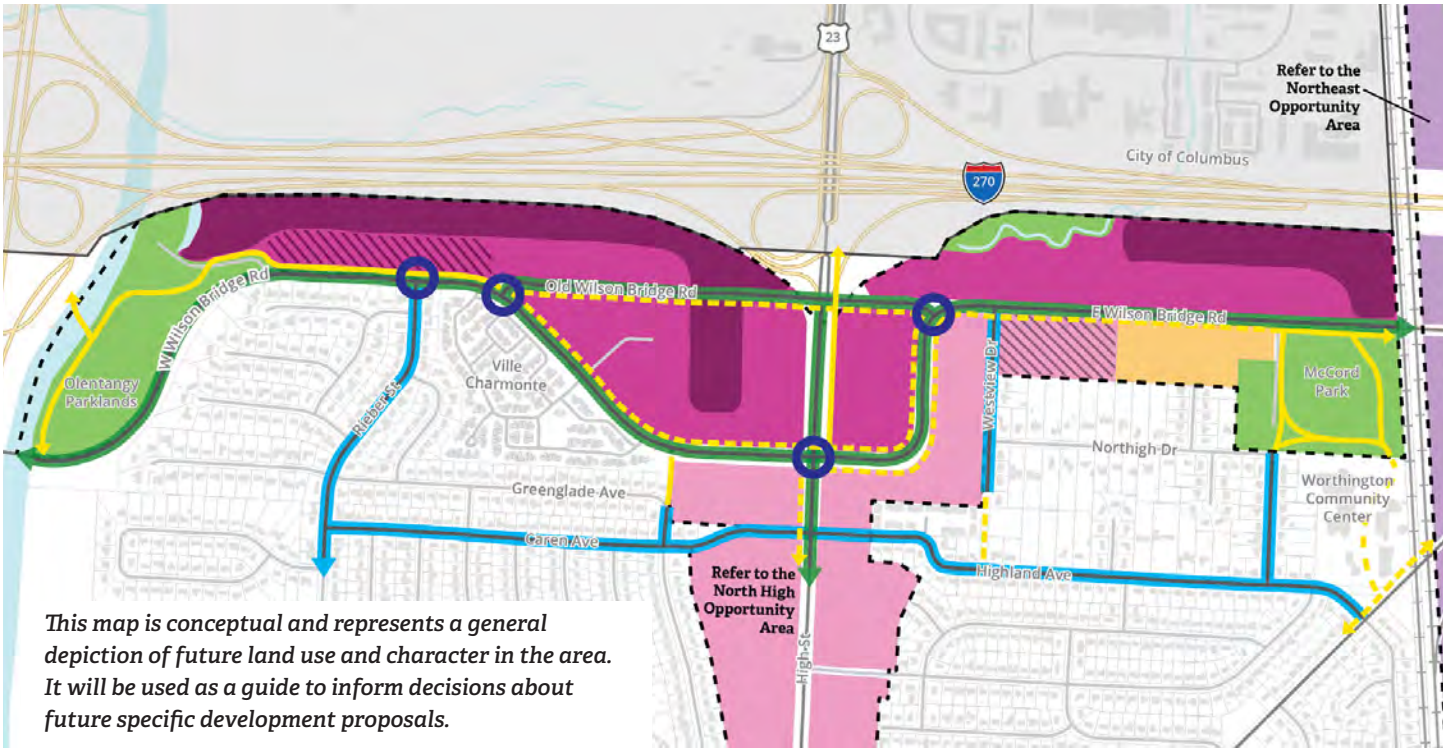
Olentangy Trailhead at W Wilson Bridge Road



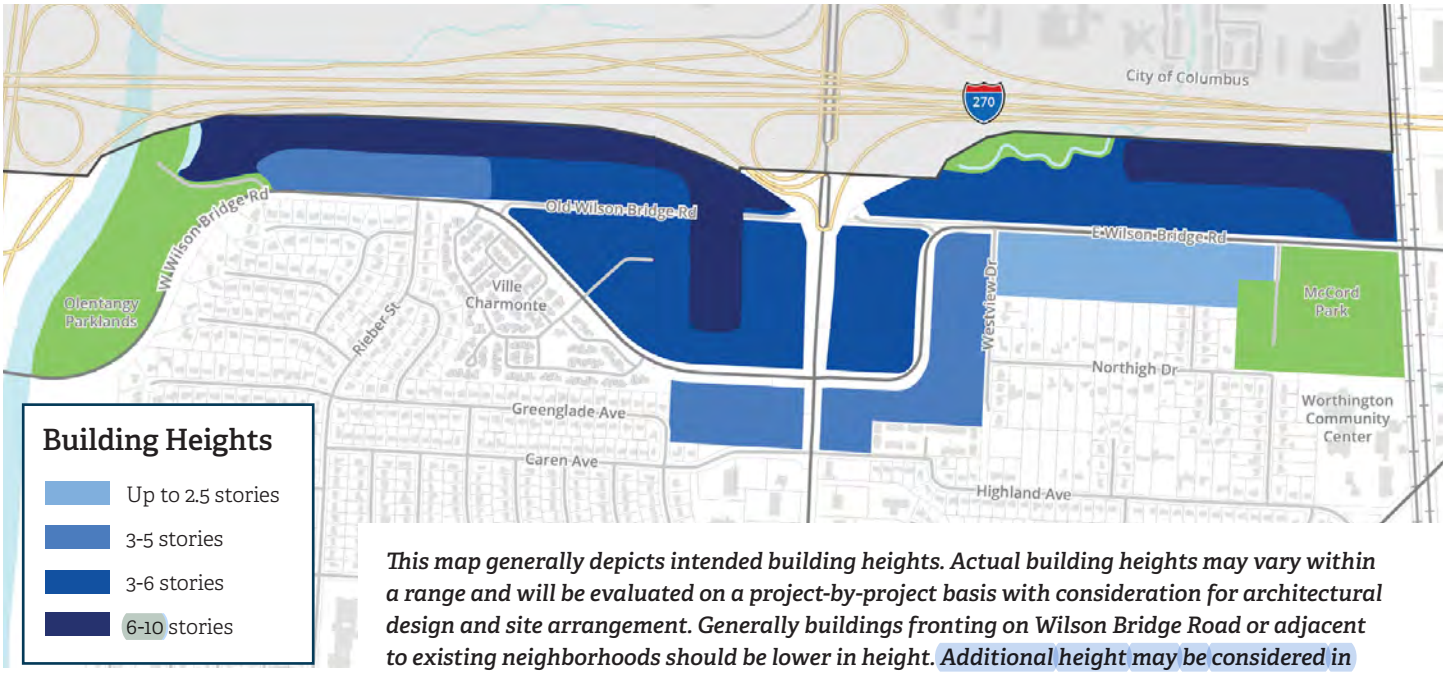
Worthington Gateway

Future Land Use

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



This map is conceptual and represents a general depiction of future land use and character in the area. It will be used as a guide to inform decisions about future specific development proposals.



This map generally depicts intended building heights. Actual building heights may vary within a range and will be evaluated on a project-by-project basis with consideration for architectural design and site arrangement. Generally buildings fronting on Wilson Bridge Road or adjacent to existing neighborhoods should be lower in height. Additional height may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

Public Space & Placemaking Vision

As redevelopment occurs, new investment should create a network of publicly accessible spaces (owned publicly and privately) that support gathering, events, and daily activity. These elements include:

- Plazas, small greens, and social spaces
- Outdoor dining opportunities
- High-quality materials, particularly in the public realm
- Native landscaping and large canopy trees
- Multi-use paths through the developments connecting east-west and to existing neighborhoods



Social plaza space



Small social green



Outdoor dining



Space for community events



Multi-use paths through developments



Canopy trees

Land Use & Character Guidance

The areas shown on the concept map apply the Citywide future land use types. Within the area, additional direction is provided to clarify how building scale, site design, and the public realm should reinforce the area's role as a gateway, employment center, and destination. Each future land use type depicted on the map is called out below with the corresponding map color.

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.



4-story office



4-story mixed use

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.
- Generally, 6 to 10 stories, depending on site configuration, access, and transitions.
- Employment-focused including office, mixed-use with an office emphasis, or hotel.
- Avoid large format, auto-oriented retail; any larger store should be part of a walkable mixed-use development.



High North (Worthington Mall Redevelopment)



6-story mixed use office

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.



3-story mixed use



3-story townhome

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.





Appealing pedestrian experience: buildings oriented to the street with usable front entrances, wide sidewalks, incorporated green space, and parking 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.



2-story office

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 (shown here) illustrate an appropriate future character for this area.



Granby Place 2-story stacked townhomes

Mobility & Connectivity

CORRIDORS

Wilson Bridge Road

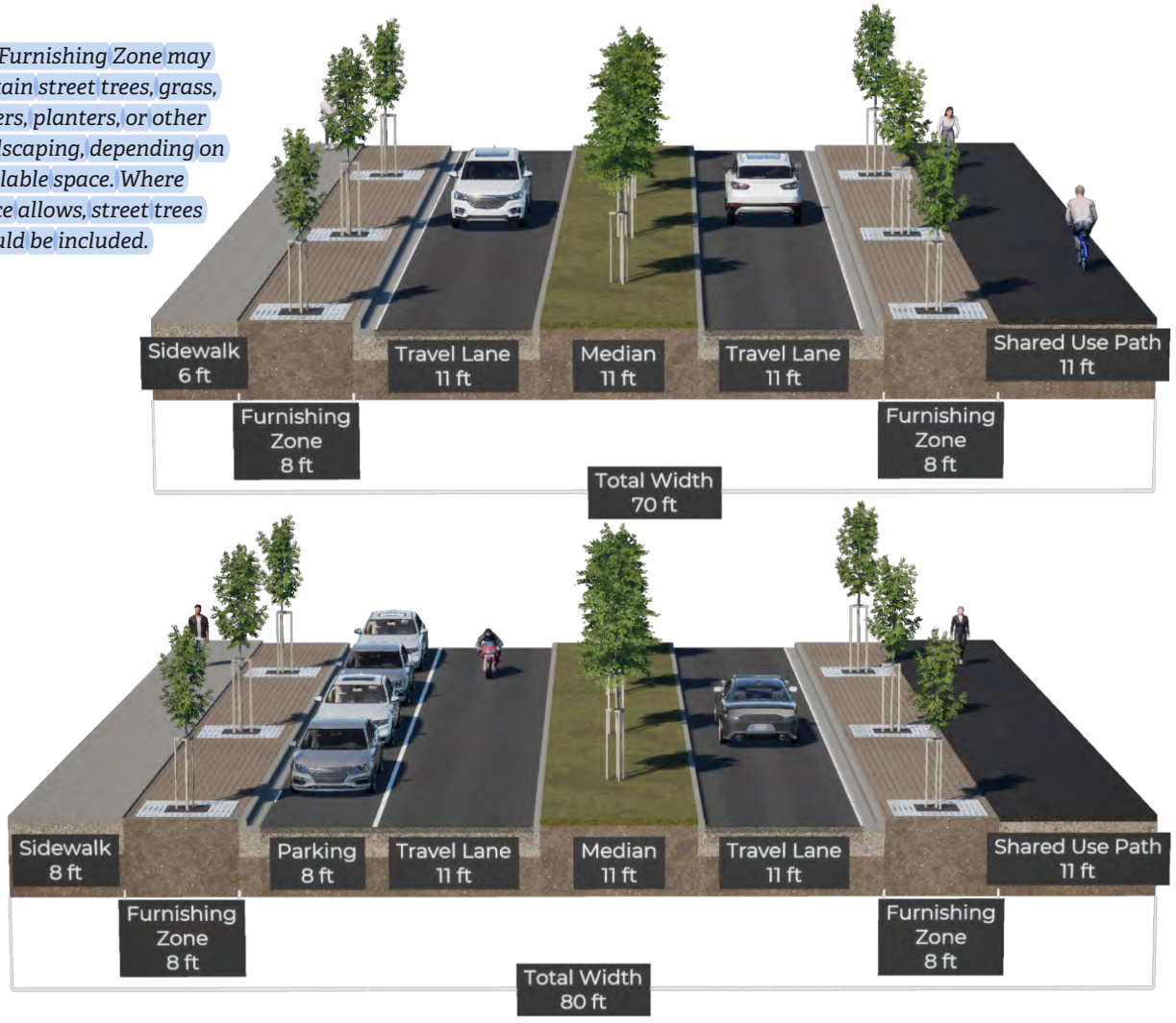
Wilson Bridge Road is a critical corridor for the City as it is one of two east-west connections along with SR 161. Wilson Bridge Road is expected to see significant redevelopment to a more mixed use and walkable development pattern which requires changes in design of the roadway to support an active, pedestrian-focused area.

Wilson Bridge Road is designated as a Mixed Use Avenue typology in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Key Roadway Elements

- 70' min. and 80' max. right-of-way
- 10' to 11' travel lanes
- Street parking optional
- Enhanced streetscape: street trees, medians, pavers
- Active transportation: sidewalks, wide furnishing zones, shared use paths

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.



Wilson Bridge Road typical roadway section for 70' and 80' of Right-of-Way

INTERSECTIONS

High Street and Wilson Bridge Road

This intersection was identified in the Mobility and Connectivity chapter as a higher-risk intersection for crash safety. Additionally, this intersection is the primary entry point to the Wilson Bridge Opportunity Area and a gateway to the City of Worthington. As of 2026, a feasibility study for this intersection is currently underway.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

- Dedicated turn lanes
- Curb extensions
- Protected intersections
- Refuge islands
- Leading pedestrian intervals
- Pedestrian scramble phase
- Bicycle and pedestrian passive detection
- Longitudinal bar or ladder-style crosswalk markings



Curb extension or bumpout



Protected intersection for bike and pedestrian crossings

Wilson Bridge Road and Rieber Street

This intersection was also identified as a higher-risk intersection, though with fewer crashes and traffic volumes. This intersection provides access to proposed mixed use redevelopment, existing residential neighborhoods, and the Olentangy Trail via the shared use path along Wilson Bridge Road.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

- Dedicated turn lanes
- Curb extensions
- Raised crosswalks or intersection
- Refuge islands
- No turn on red
- Leading pedestrian intervals or dedicated crossing phase
- Longitudinal bar or ladder-style crosswalk markings



Pedestrian refuge islands



Raised crosswalk

North High Street 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.

THE AREA TODAY

North High reflects suburban development patterns, including deeper building setbacks, front-loaded parking, and fragmented parcel ownership. While the corridor includes important civic anchors like City Hall, its physical form does not consistently support walkability or cohesive placemaking.

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

1033 High Street.
This more than 40-acre property represents one of the largest remaining undeveloped tracts in Worthington and has long held symbolic and strategic importance. Historically part of a larger property that was sold to support the United Methodist Children's Home mission, the site has been the focus of sustained public attention for more than a decade.

In 2012, a proposed grocery-anchored development generated significant community dialogue and ultimately led to a Comprehensive Plan amendment emphasizing holistic master planning, preservation of Tucker Creek, meaningful and connected green space, and clear transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.

More recently, a mixed-use rezoning proposal was denied by City Council and subsequently challenged through litigation. In early 2026, the City prevailed on all appeals, resolving the legal uncertainty that had surrounded the site. Despite that resolution, the site remains one of the most closely watched properties in Worthington. Its size, location, and visibility along High Street ensure that any future proposal will have substantial influence on the character, housing mix, environmental outcomes, and fiscal performance of the North High corridor.



City Hall

Community Input

1033 High Street was the most frequently identified Opportunity Area in the first round of public input, and community views on what should happen here span a wide range. A notable number of participants expressed an interest in creating a large park on the site. Others expressed desire for more housing and employment uses in addition to park/green/gathering spaces on the site. This plan's strategic direction and land use concept incorporate those ideas supporting a range of uses. The amount of park space that may be created on the site may depend on the mix of other uses and the overall site design.

6700 North High Street.
This former corporate campus represents a significant reinvestment opportunity. As market conditions shift for traditional office space, the site may transition to a more flexible mix of employment, residential, or supporting uses over time. Its visibility and scale position it as an important contributor to corridor identity and fiscal performance.

Outside of these two sites, most parcels are smaller and independently owned. Fragmented ownership suggests that change will likely occur incrementally rather than through comprehensive assembly, reinforcing the need for coordinated access management and shared parking strategies.

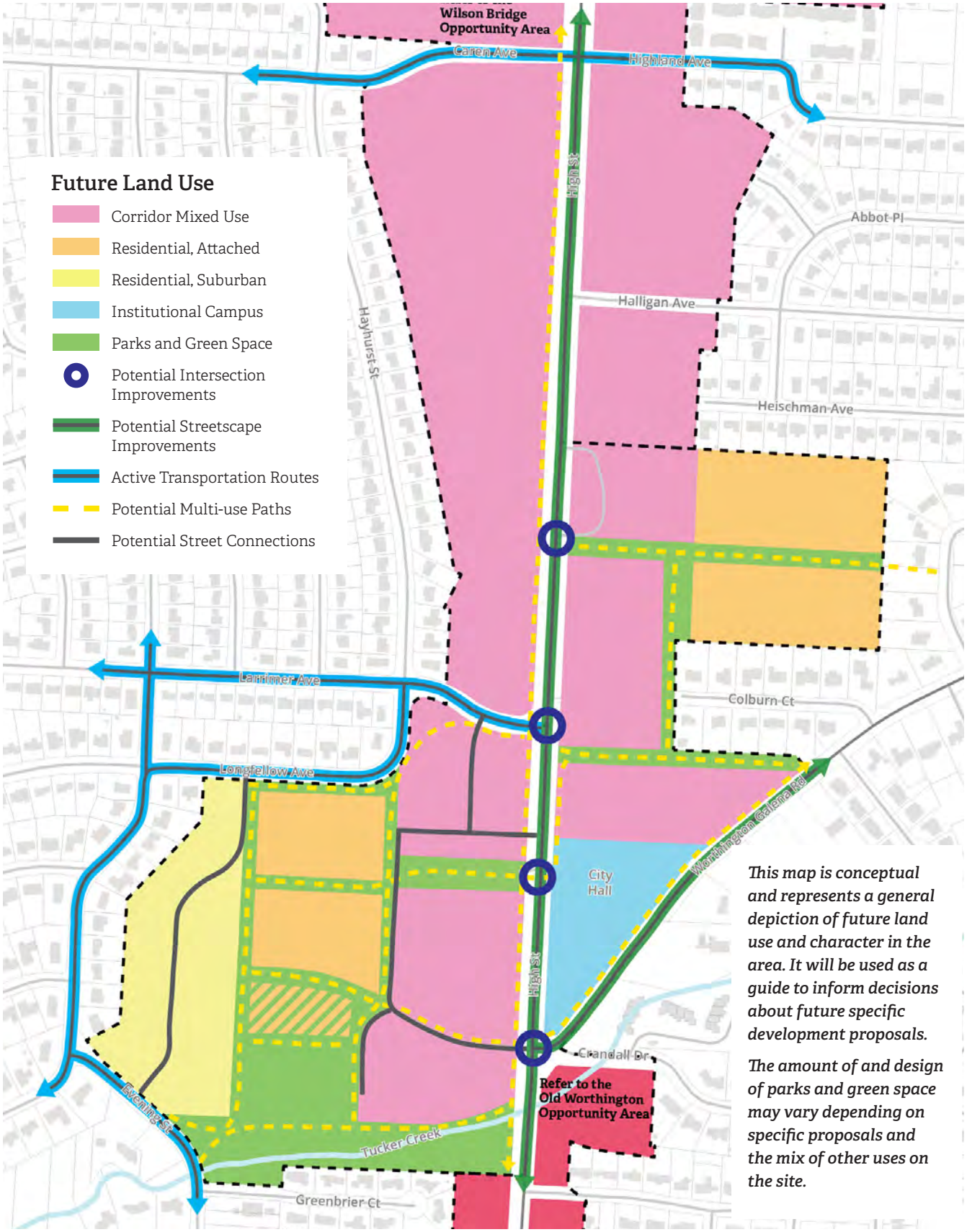
Strategic Direction

The following statements of intent apply to the entire Opportunity Area.

1. **Support a mix of office, retail, residential, and supporting uses.**
   Encourage employment-generating uses as the primary driver of fiscal performance while allowing complementary retail, service, and residential uses. Residential development, supports housing choice and activates the corridor while remaining compatible with long-term fiscal goals.
2. **Support gradual redevelopment that brings buildings closer to the street.**
   Shift over time from deep setbacks and front-loaded parking toward buildings that frame High Street, with parking located to the side or rear.
3. **Punctuate High Street with visible plazas and green spaces through varied setbacks.**
   Avoid a continuous street wall; instead, frame visible and usable green spaces that enhance character and pedestrian comfort.
4. **Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections to Old Worthington.**
   Improve sidewalks, crossings, lighting, and landscaping, and add new multi-use paths, to create a cohesive link between North High and the historic core.
5. **Encourage shared access and strategic parcel consolidation where feasible.**
   Promote coordinated driveways, shared parking, and voluntary parcel assembly to create conditions that support redevelopment over time.

High Street near the office building at 6700 North High Street





This map is conceptual and represents a general depiction of future land use and character in the area. It will be used as a guide to inform decisions about future specific development proposals.

The amount of and design of parks and green space may vary depending on specific proposals and the mix of other uses on the site.

Major Reinvestment Sites – Site-Specific Direction (1033 High and 6700 North High)

The following principles apply to the two 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.

Additional height for Corridor Mixed Use may be considered in exchange for greater green space, public space, or other community amenities.

2. **Emphasize meaningful and connected green space.**
   - Prioritize usability and amenity value over raw acreage.
   - Ensure green spaces are integrated into the overall site design in various forms and are inviting to the public.
   - Protect environmental features, including the creek corridor, and establish permanent no-build areas.
   - Create internal trail or pedestrian systems that connect to surrounding neighborhoods where appropriate.



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 and between existing neighborhoods and High Street.*

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.
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.*

Appropriate Housing Types

RESIDENTIAL, SUBURBAN



Cottage courts



Small-lot single-family homes

RESIDENTIAL, ATTACHED



Duplex or Multiplex



Townhomes

CORRIDOR MIXED USE



Multifamily buildings



Multifamily within mixed use

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.
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.

Development program and fiscal impact (1033 High Street)

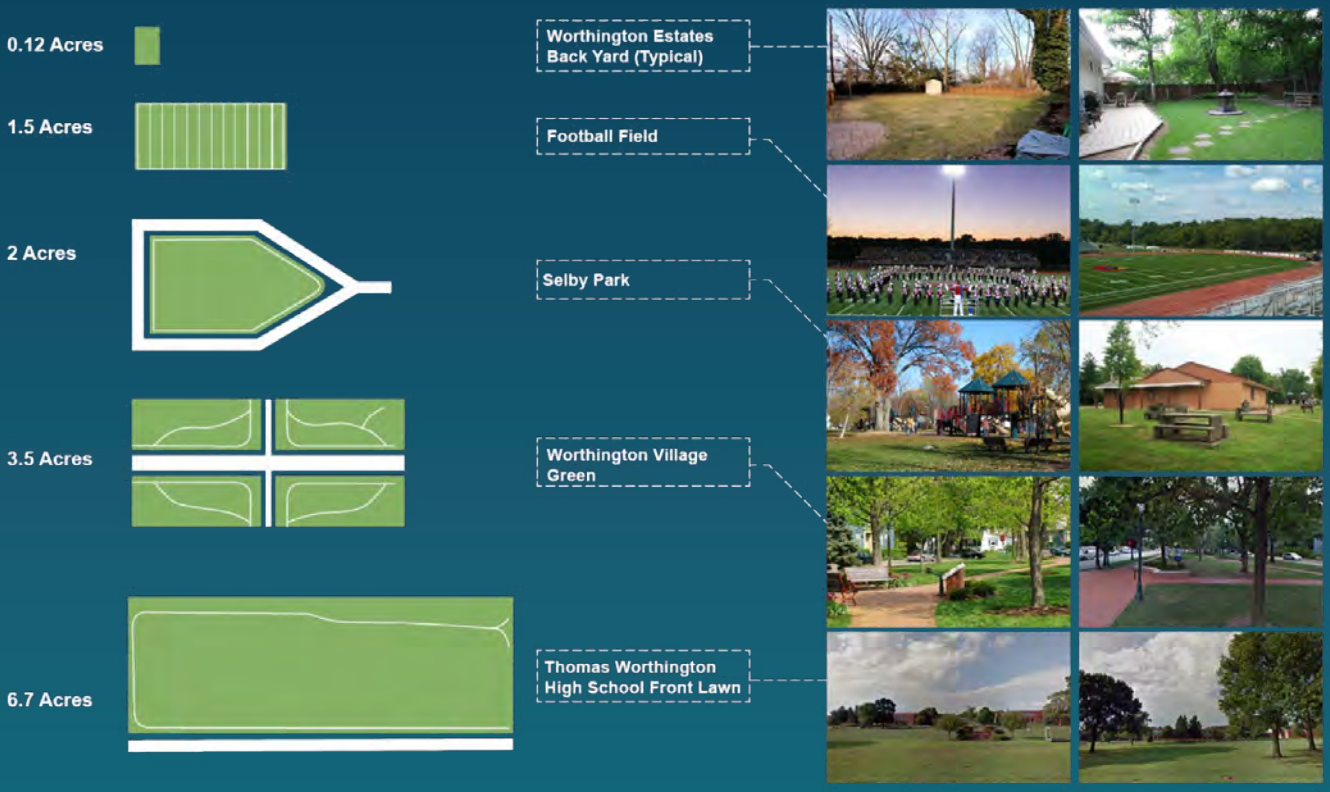
Below is an illustrative development program providing a low and high estimate for the net annual fiscal impact of a development at 1033 High Street on the City's finances. This site is bounded to the east by High Street, west by the existing homes on Evening Street, south by Tucker Creek, and north by Longfellow Avenue/Larrimer Avenue. This illustration assumes that the existing United Methodist Center West Ohio Conference building and the Bickford of Worthington would remain, excluding them from the calculation.

The intent of this illustration is to show one development program that would yield a consistent fiscal benefit for the City without considering the cost of park/green space. More office space (more jobs or higher paying jobs) would lead to a larger annual benefit, while more residential units or retail space will reduce the net benefit.

		Net Annual Fiscal Impact	
Land Use Prototype	**Yield Estimate**	**Low Estimate**	**High Estimate**
Mixed Use (Office with 25% or less Retail)	200k - 300k sq. ft.	$861k	$1,292k
Multi-Family Residential (within Mixed Use)	150 - 200 units	-$316k	-$421k
Attached Residential (like Townhomes)	100 - 150 units	-$305k	-$457k
Single-Family Residential	20 - 30 units	-$64k	-$96k
Active Park Space	3 - 7 acres	*	*
Trails, Greenways, and Civic Plaza (in addition to above)	3 - 5 acres	*	*
Tucker Creek Nature Preserve Area (in addition to above)	5 acres	*	*
	Overall	**$176k**	**$318k**

*Net annual fiscal impact estimates are not shown for parks and green space areas because the impact of those areas is highly dependent on what amenities are included and who owns and maintains them.

Park size references



Residential density references



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)

Mobility & Connectivity

CORRIDORS

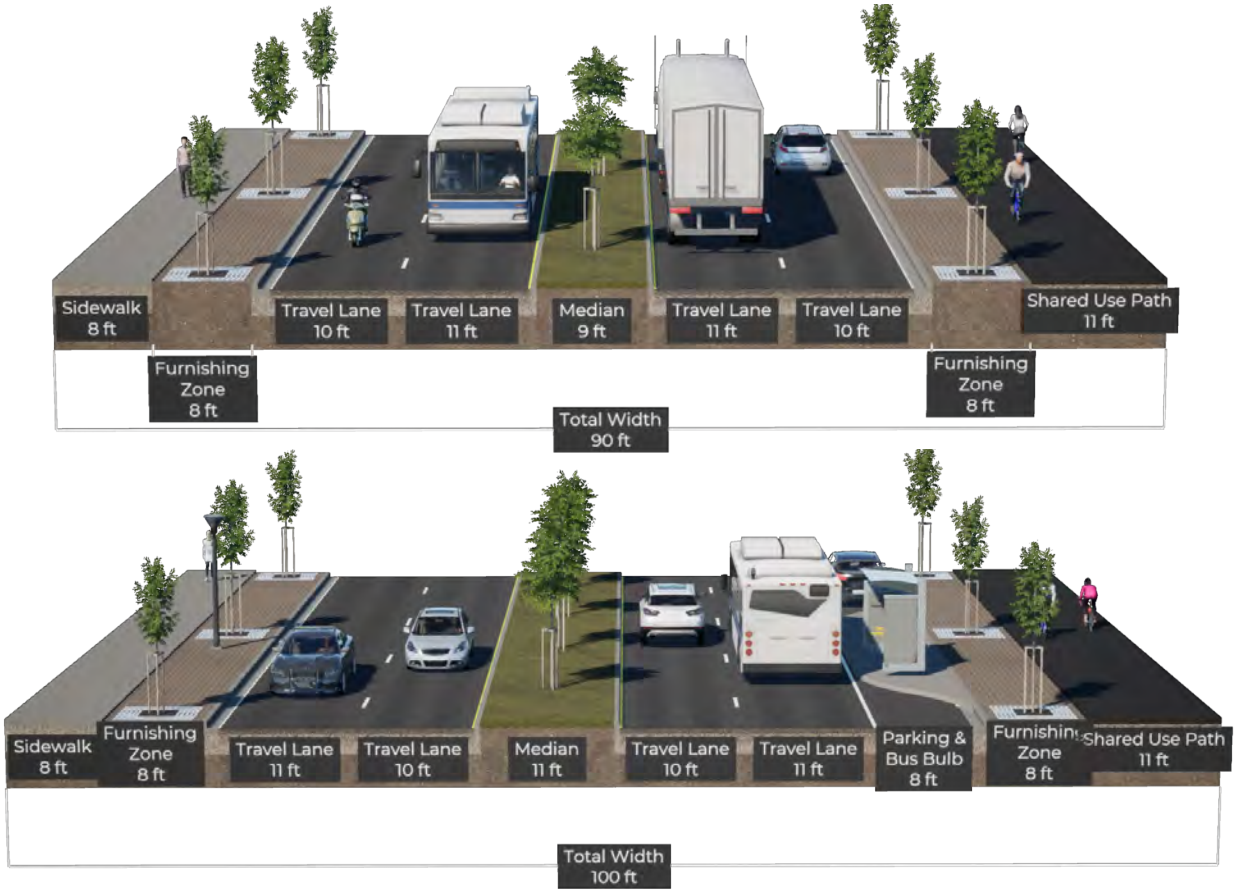
North High Street

North High Street'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, some 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 Street is designated as a Mixed Use Boulevard typology in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Key Roadway Elements

- 90' min. and 100' max. right-of-way
- 10' to 11' travel lanes
- Street parking optional
- Enhanced streetscape: street trees, medians, pavers
- Active transportation: sidewalks, wide furnishing zones, shared use paths
- Transit: bus shelters, bus bulbs



High Street typical roadway sections for 90' and 100' of Right-of-Way

INTERSECTIONS

High Street and Worthington Galena Road

This intersection was identified in the Mobility & Connectivity chapter as a higher-risk intersection for crash safety. This intersection is complex due to the sharp angle of Worthington Galena and the proximity of Crandall Drive to the intersection. Additionally, this intersection provides access to a large undeveloped parcel that is the focus of reinvestment.

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 Road so that it meets High Street 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.

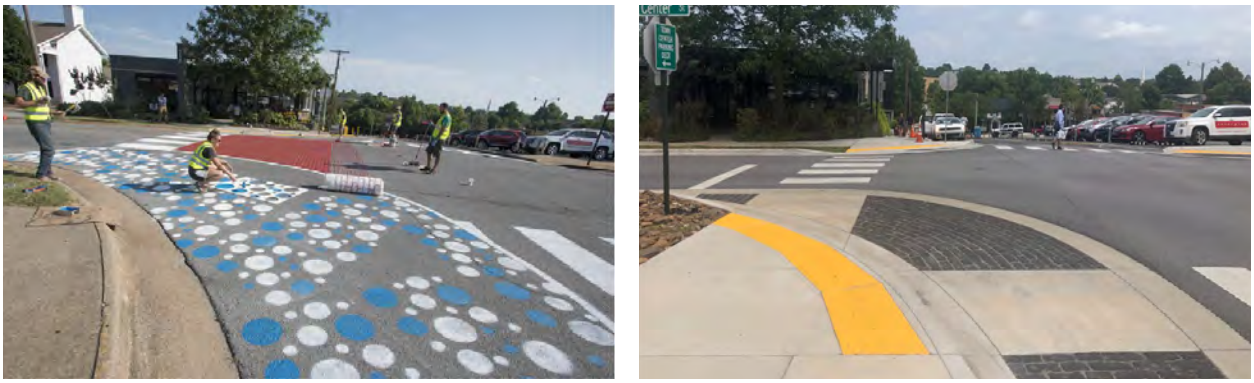
While more significant changes are being studied, temporary improvements can be made using inexpensive materials such as paint, parking curbs, and flex-posts. This is also an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of these countermeasures to inform the planning process.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

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



Passive bicycle detection and signage. Passive detection is most often accomplished through video cameras or induction loops.



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

Old Worthington Opportunity Area

STRATEGIC ROLE

Old Worthington is the historic and symbolic heart of the community. Anchored by the Village Green and defined by a traditional grid street pattern, it functions as Worthington's Main Street district and primary civic gathering space.

THE AREA TODAY

North Old Worthington contains a mix of small-scale retail, restaurants, professional offices, institutional uses, upper-story residential, and historic homes within and adjacent to the commercial core. Building stock is generally one to three stories, with many contributing historic structures governed by Architectural Review District standards. The district's traditional grid street network and relatively shallow building depths reinforce its pedestrian-oriented scale.

Anchored by the Village Green, Old Worthington functions as the symbolic and civic center of the community. The Green hosts community events, seasonal markets, and civic gatherings that draw residents and visitors from across the region. Public buildings, churches, and long-standing local businesses contribute to a strong sense of continuity and place.

Economically, Old Worthington serves as a niche Main Street district rather than a regional retail center. Many businesses are locally owned and destination-oriented, relying on foot traffic, events, and the area's historic identity. Upper-story offices and residential units contribute to daytime activity, though vacancies can fluctuate with broader market conditions.

The district benefits from strong identity and walkability that distinguish it from other commercial areas in the City. At the same time, it faces ongoing pressures typical of historic downtowns, including aging building systems, evolving retail patterns, accessibility expectations, and the need to balance reinvestment with preservation standards.

Aerial of Old Worthington



High Street functions as both a historic Main Street and a regional north–south corridor. Traffic volumes, pedestrian crossings, and event-related congestion require ongoing management to maintain safety and comfort for all users while preserving the intimate character of the district.

A recent parking study found that overall utilization is moderate under typical conditions, with peak demand concentrated in specific lots and during special events. This reinforces the importance of management strategies, shared parking coordination, and wayfinding improvements before expansion of supply.



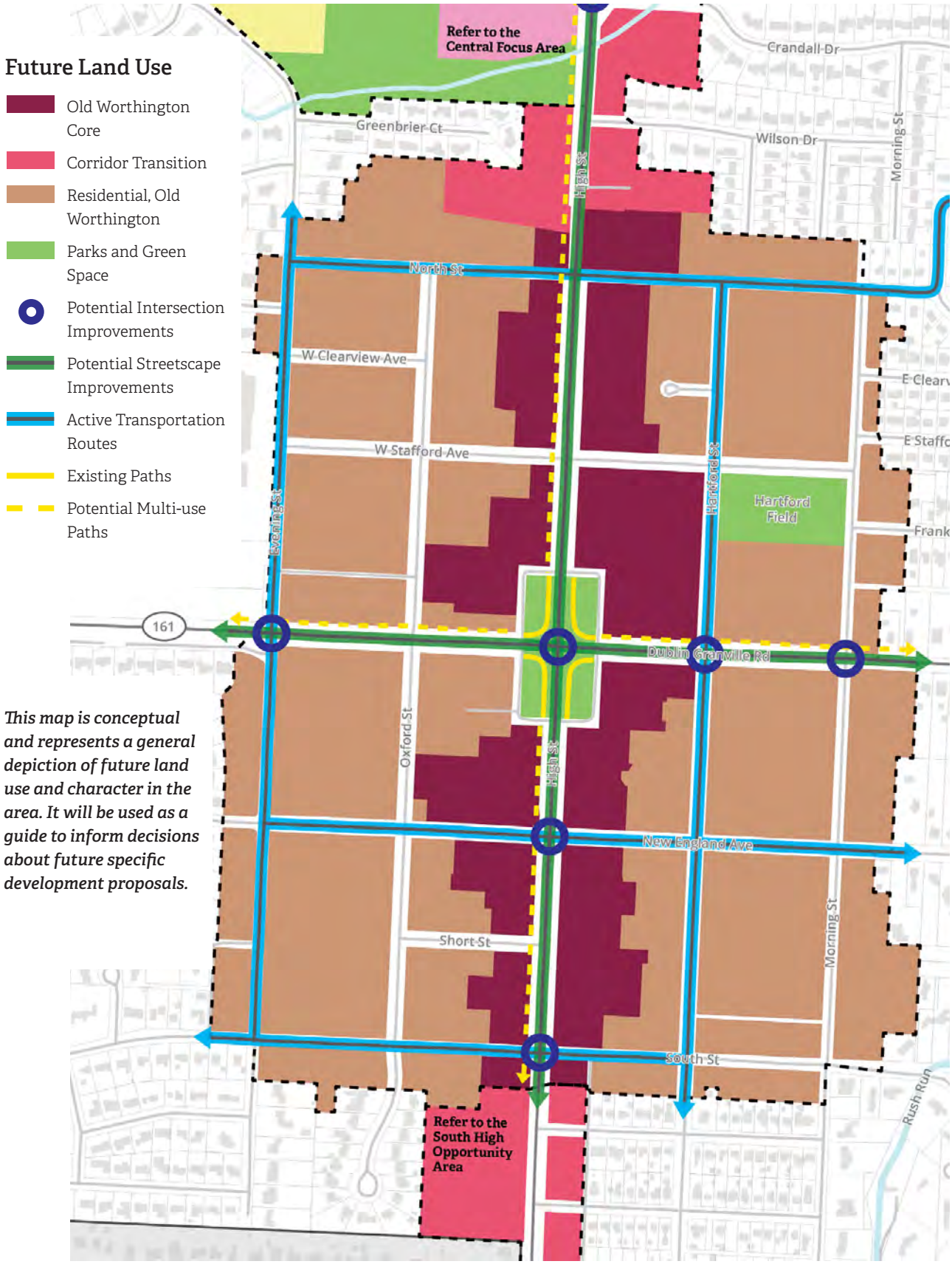
The Village Green



High Street crossing south of the Village Green

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1. **Support development and adaptive reuse that respect and celebrate Old Worthington's historic character.** Encourage sensitive infill, upper-story residential, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), small multifamily homes, and compatible commercial or hospitality uses in line with Architectural Review District standards.
2. **Establish a clear rehabilitation preference for contributing structures.** Properties within or adjacent to the Architectural Review District that contain contributing historic structures should be evaluated for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse potential before demolition is considered.
3. **Protect the Village Green as the civic and symbolic heart of the community.** Ensure adjacent development and public realm decisions reinforce its historic scale, openness, and role as a gathering space.
4. **Encourage active ground-floor uses along High Street.** Prioritize storefront retail, dining, and other pedestrian-oriented uses at street level.
5. **Maintain the prevailing one- to three-story scale along High Street.** Ensure infill and additions respect established building heights and view corridors.
6. **Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections to surrounding neighborhoods.** Improve sidewalks, crossings, and traffic calming measures to reinforce Old Worthington as a walkable destination.
7. **Manage parking strategically and expand supply only if clearly justified.** Implement shared parking agreements, time management, enforcement, and wayfinding before pursuing new supply. Consider structured parking only if demand projections and fiscal analysis demonstrate clear need and long-term feasibility.



This map is conceptual and represents a general depiction of future land use and character in the area. It will be used as a guide to inform decisions about future specific development proposals.

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 Villlage Green
- Comfortable pedestrian zones with seating and lighting
- High-quality, durable materials consistent with the historic character
- Public art
- Year-round programming



Existing tree canopy in the Village Green



Wide sidewalks with seating and lighting

Land Use & Character Guidance

The areas shown on the concept map apply the Citywide future land use types. Within the area, additional direction is provided to clarify how building scale, site design, and the public realm should reinforce the area's role as the historic and cultural center of Worthington. Each future land use type depicted on the map is called out below with the corresponding map color.

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.



Dewey's Pizza near New England Avenue and High Street



2-story commercial building near 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.



2-story mixed use

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.



The Hartford at Stafford Village



Existing carriage house



Existing four-family home

Mobility & Connectivity

CORRIDORS

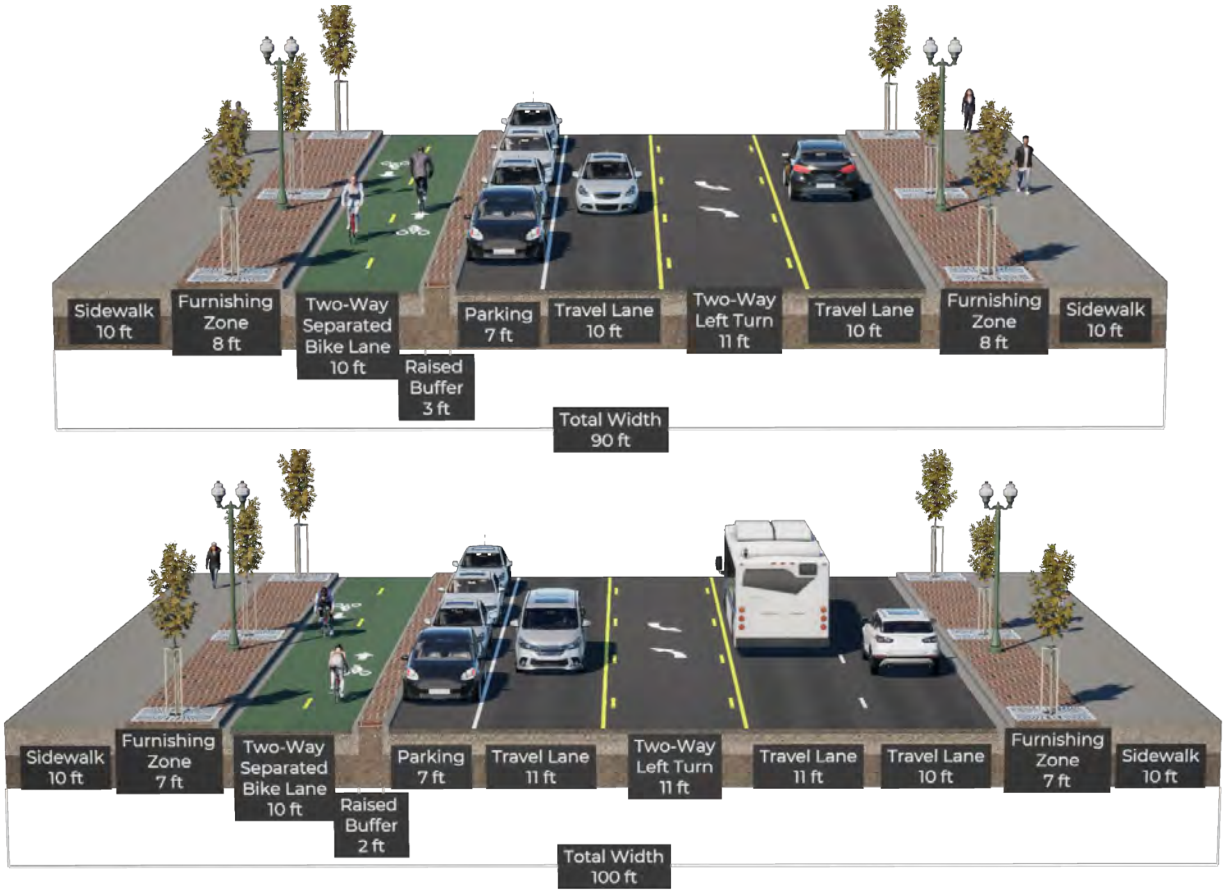
High Street

High Street serves as the historic Main Street for Old Worthington. It is both a transportation route and 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.

High Street is designated as an Old Worthington Boulevard typology in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Key Roadway Elements

- 90' min. and 100' max. right-of-way
- 10' to 11' travel lanes
- Street parking where possible
- Enhanced streetscape: street trees, brick pavers
- Active transportation: wide sidewalks, separated bike lanes



High Street typical roadway sections for 90' and 100' of Right-of-Way

INTERSECTIONS

High Street and Dublin-Granville Road

High Street and Dublin-Granville Road is a major intersection for the City of Worthington. High Street and Dublin-Granville Road are the primary north-south and east-west corridors, respectively, through the City. They are also the primary connections to the region. This intersection is also the heart of Old Worthington and the location of the Village Green.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

- Dedicated turn lanes
- Curb extensions
- Protected intersections
- Raised crosswalks or intersections
- Refuge islands
- Bike boxes
- Leading pedestrian intervals
- Pedestrian scramble or all-walk phase
- Bicycle and pedestrian passive detection

High Street and South Street

High Street and New England Avenue

W Dublin-Granville Road and Evening Street

E Dublin-Granville Road and Hartford Street

These minor intersections with High Street and Dublin-Granville Road were also identified as higher-risk intersections. As these are neighborhood streets crossing major roadways, they are strong candidates for additional pedestrian safety elements such as raised crosswalks, curb extensions, and refuge islands.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

- Curb extensions
- Raised crosswalks or intersections
- Refuge islands
- Bike boxes
- Leading pedestrian intervals
- Bicycle and pedestrian passive detection



Pedestrian refuge island



Raised crosswalk



Curb extension or bumpout

Linworth Opportunity Area

STRATEGIC ROLE

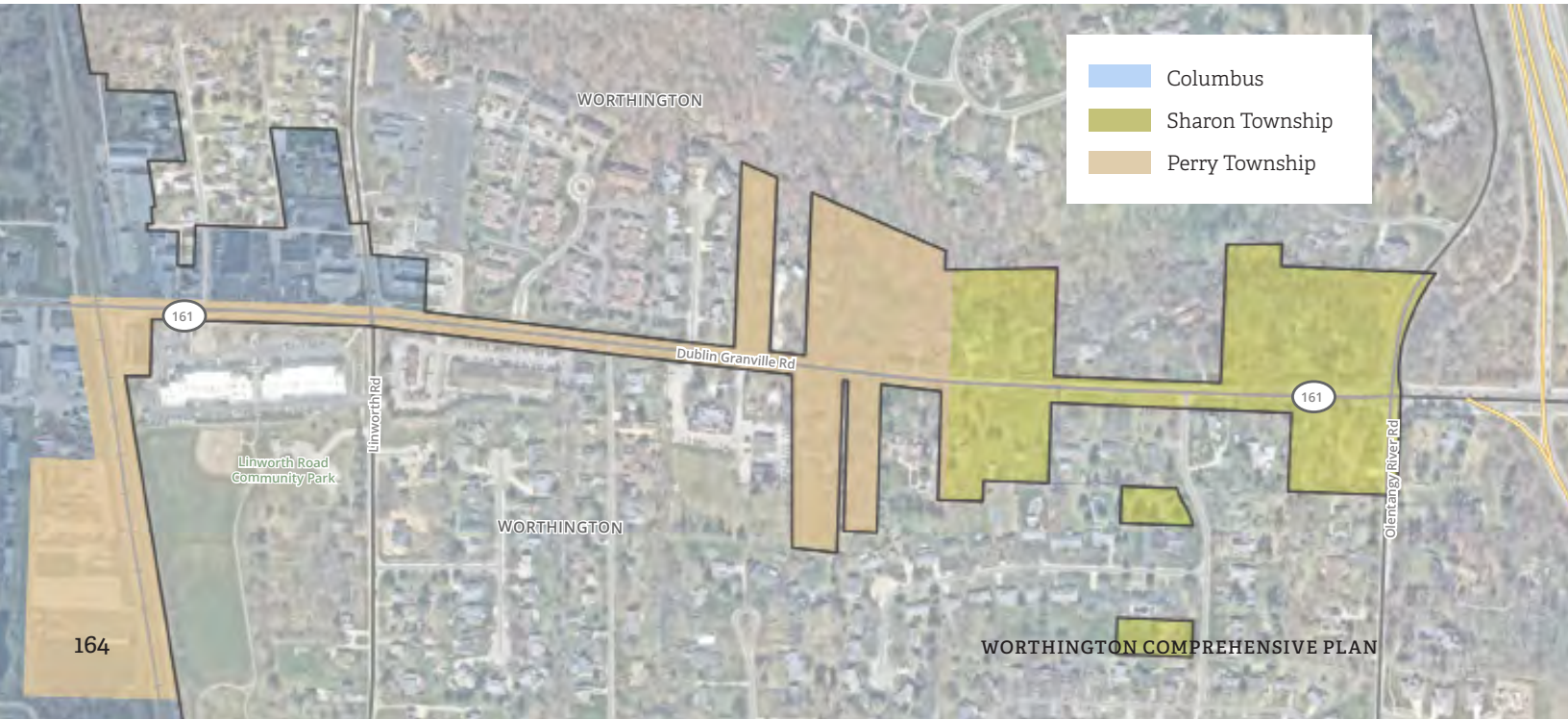
Linworth is the western edge of Worthington, where the City's stake in a place exceeds its control over it. Sitting due west of Old Worthington along SR 161, the area is unusually divided: much of the right-of-way is unannexed township land, the state route falls under ODOT, and frontage parcels to the west lie in Columbus. Zoning splits too, with Franklin County administering Sharon Township and Perry Township administering its own. What happens here shapes the western entry into Worthington, yet the City cannot direct it alone.

Worthington's part follows from that divided authority: to coordinate with the jurisdictions and agencies that share the corridor, support the established commercial area at the SR 161 and Linworth Road intersection, hold the surrounding areas within its own limits residential, improve how people move through the corridor by car, bicycle, and on foot, and mark the western gateway. The corridor's future rests on partnership as much as on policy.

THE AREA TODAY

The Linworth area centers on the SR 161 and Linworth Road intersection, where commercial frontage meets institutional and residential uses. Key sites include Worthington School District's Linworth Experiential Program, a veterinary facility, and two commercial centers: Linworth Crossing, the redevelopment of the former Segna Volvo dealership site into a retail center, and Linworth Center, anchored by Cameron's, the first restaurant in the Cameron Mitchell restaurant group. Recent residential investment nearby, including the District at Linworth apartments in the City of Columbus, has added households at the corridor's edge. Columbus has approved at least 500 housing units in this area that are not yet built. Building form along the corridor is auto-oriented and much of the corridor lacks sidewalks.

Inside Worthington's jurisdiction, the area is commercial at Linworth Road and



SR 161 and residential elsewhere. The plan supports continued commercial activity near the intersection and continued residential character in the surrounding area. The City has fielded steady interest from auto-oriented commercial users along SR 161, including fast food and fuel stations, and prefers to keep the areas away from the intersection residentially focused rather than let commercial uses spread. Extending City services to unannexed parcels would require annexation, and parts of the area, even within Worthington's boundaries, remain on septic systems. These conditions make coordination with Columbus and the townships a precondition for almost any meaningful change.

The Linworth Road and SR 161 intersection is the subject of a planned improvement project. The project will add a two-way left-turn lane on SR 161 and left-turn lanes at the Linworth Road intersection. It will also add a shared-use path on the south side and a sidewalk on the north side of SR 161 from Thompson Street to Bellbrook Court, and a sidewalk on the east side of Linworth Road from Westbrook Court north to near Mason Alley. Franklin County submitted a MORPC funding application for the project in 2020; ODOT is funding the design in full, and Worthington, Columbus, and Perry Township are sharing the local match for right-of-way and construction. Franklin County will handle construction administration and inspection. The study that shaped the project found that traffic movement through the area is most constrained by the intersection itself. Several sidewalk gap projects are also underway elsewhere along Linworth Road.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1. **Coordinate planning across jurisdictions.** Work with Columbus, Perry Township, Sharon Township, Franklin County, and ODOT toward a cohesive approach to land use, design, and infrastructure along the corridor. Pursue shared standards or intergovernmental agreements where one jurisdiction cannot act alone, and maintain continued interaction with Franklin County and ODOT on the roadway projects.

2. **Steer land use toward the established pattern.** Use the future land use designations and the City's review of proposals to concentrate commercial activity at the SR 161 and Linworth Road node and to keep the surrounding areas residential, resisting the auto-oriented commercial interest that would otherwise spread down the corridor.

3. **Establish a western gateway.** Signal entry into Worthington through coordinated streetscape, landscaping, lighting, building design, and public-realm improvements near the SR 161 and Linworth Road intersection.

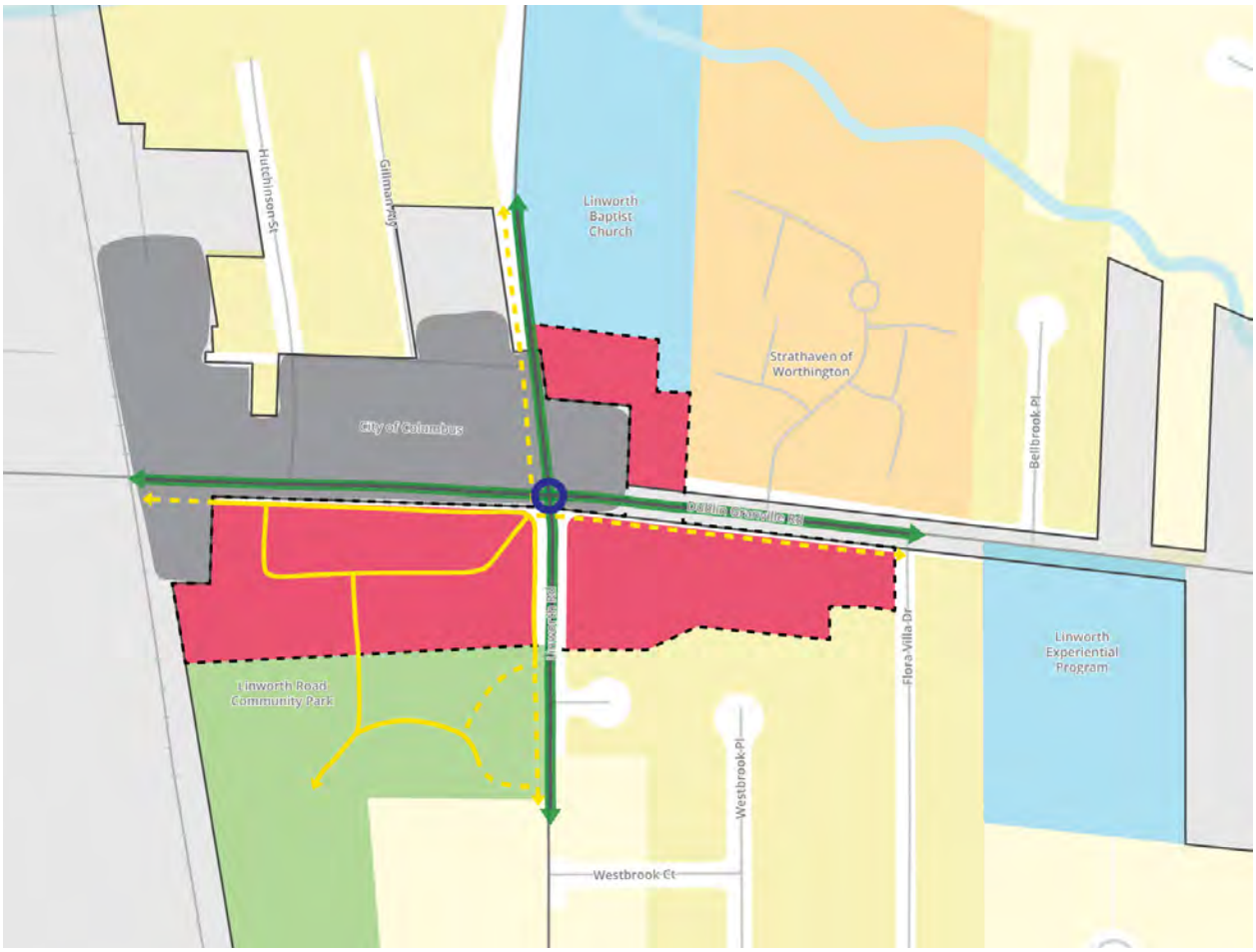
4. **Complete the corridor for walking and biking.** Build on the shared-use path and sidewalks coming with the SR 161 and Linworth Road intersection project and the sidewalk gap projects underway along Linworth Road, then close the remaining gaps. Advance the recommended bicycle and pedestrian improvements along SR 161 and along Linworth Road north toward Wilson Bridge Road.

5. **Extend Worthington's design influence beyond the review district.** Along SR 161, where the corridor already falls within the Architectural Review District, continue to apply the City's design standards. Offer that standard as a model for coordination with partners on parcels beyond the Architectural Review District.

Future Land Use

- Corridor Transition
- Residential, Attached
- Residential, Suburban
- Residential, Large-Lot
- Institutional Campus
- Parks and Green Space
- Columbus Zone In
- Potential Intersection Improvements
- Potential Streetscape Improvements
- Existing Paths
- Potential Multi-use Paths

This map is conceptual and represents a general depiction of future land use and character in the area. It will be used as a guide to inform decisions about future specific development proposals.



South High Opportunity Area

STRATEGIC ROLE

South High functions as a transitional mixed-use corridor between Old Worthington and higher-intensity development in Columbus. Over time, it should evolve into a more walkable, vertically mixed-use environment that strengthens Worthington's southern gateway while carefully managing scale transitions and jurisdictional differences.

THE AREA TODAY

South High Street today reflects an auto-oriented suburban development pattern characterized by shallow parcels, multiple curb cuts, front-loaded parking, and buildings set back from the street. While several properties are underutilized, fragmented ownership and lot configuration make large-scale redevelopment unlikely without coordinated reinvestment.

The Village of Riverlea touches the western edge of the corridor mid-way along South High, introducing additional coordination considerations and sensitivity to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

In the southernmost portion of the corridor, south of Selby Boulevard, the west side of High Street lies within Worthington while much of the east side lies within the City of Columbus. Columbus recently adopted updated zoning through its Zone In initiative, permitting four-story mixed-use development with no required on-site parking in adjacent areas. This regulatory context creates both opportunity and development pressure, requiring Worthington to thoughtfully manage building scale, frontage character, and pedestrian conditions along its portion of the corridor.

Despite its auto-oriented form, South High benefits from proximity to Old Worthington and existing transit service. Its location positions it to absorb moderate redevelopment that introduces vertical mixed-use buildings, improved pedestrian environments, and stronger visual identity as a southern gateway into the community.

High Street view facing north towards Old Worthington



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1. **Establish a clear southern gateway identity at High Street and Selby Boulevard.** Use building placement, architecture, landscaping, lighting, and public realm elements to signal arrival into Worthington and create a distinct sense of place.
2. **Support true vertical mixed-use redevelopment over time.** Encourage buildings with active ground floors and residential or office uses above along High Street, while locating parking to the side or rear.
3. **Transition building scale thoughtfully between districts.** Step building heights and massing between the historic scale of Old Worthington to the north and the four-story context permitted in Columbus to the south, ensuring compatibility with the scale and function of adjacent neighborhoods and Riverlea.
4. **Expand and rebalance the public realm toward pedestrian comfort.** Where feasible, pursue wider sidewalks, street trees, enhanced lighting, and buffering from traffic to create a more walkable corridor environment.
5. **Improve access management and frontage cohesion.** Reduce curb cuts, encourage shared driveways, and coordinate signage and landscaping to reduce visual clutter and improve safety.
6. **Encourage incremental reinvestment that strengthens the tax base.** Support phased redevelopment and property improvements that sustain or increase the amount of employment space to yield a net fiscal benefit across the corridor.



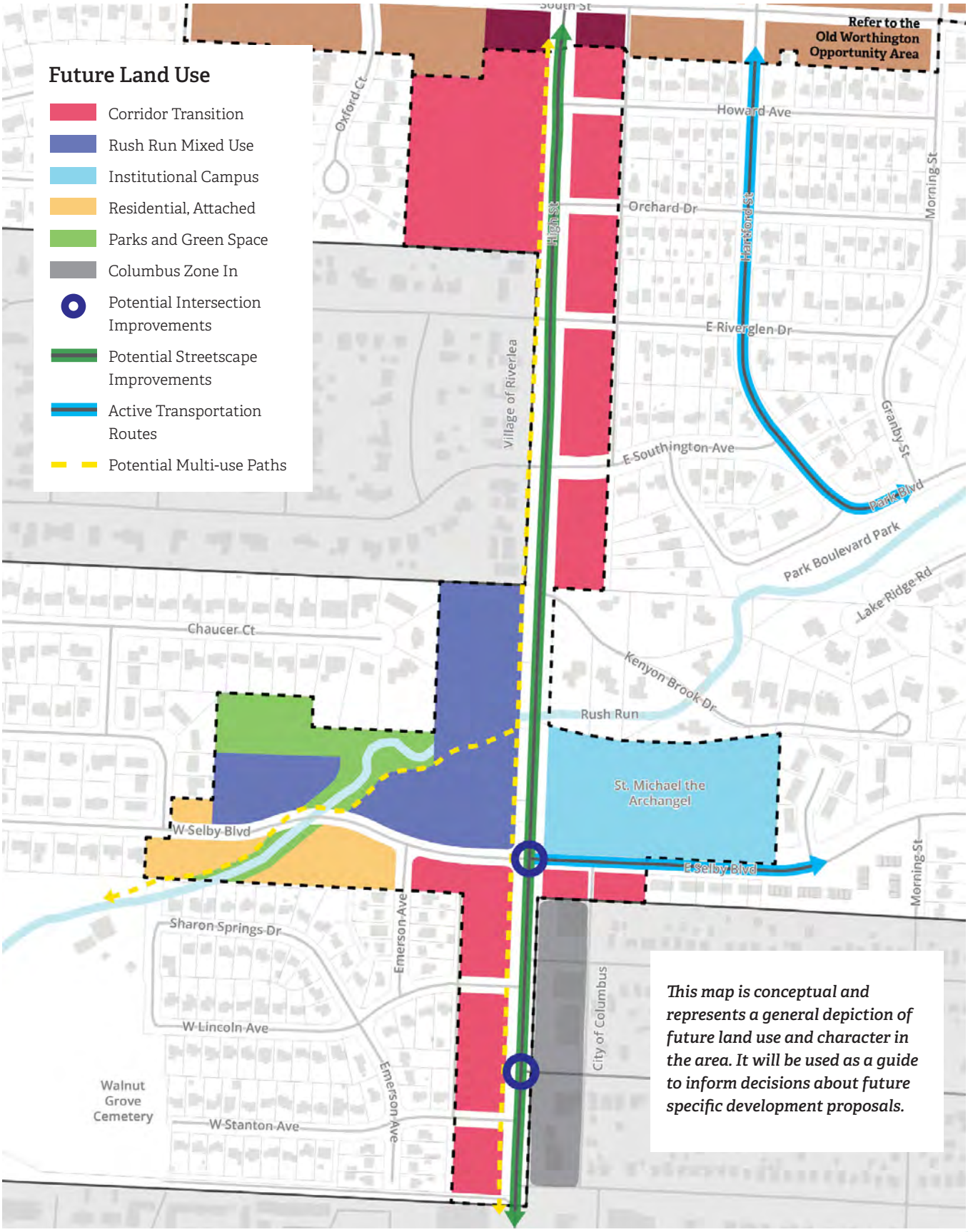
St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church



Residences of Worthington Condo Complex



W Selby Avenue near Rush Run


Future Land Use
Corridor Transition
Rush Run Mixed Use
Institutional Campus
Residential, Attached
Parks and Green Space
Columbus Zone In
Potential Intersection Improvements
Potential Streetscape Improvements
Active Transportation Routes
Potential Multi-use Paths
Refer to the Old Worthington Opportunity Area
South St
Oxford Ct
Howard Ave
Orchard Dr
High St
Hartford St
Morning St
E Riverglen Dr
Village of Riverlea
Granby St
E Southington Ave
Park Blvd
Park Boulevard Park
Lake Ridge Rd
Chaucer Ct
Kenyon Brook Dr
Rush Run
St. Michael the Archangel
W Selby Blvd
E Selby Blvd
Morning St
Sharon Springs Dr
Emerson Ave
W Lincoln Ave
City of Columbus
Walnut Grove Cemetery
W Stanton Ave
Emerson Ave
This map is conceptual and represents a general depiction of future land use and character in the area. It will be used as a guide to inform decisions about future specific development proposals.

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.



Expanded pedestrian zone



Consistent building edge with modest setback

Land Use & Character Guidance

The areas shown on the concept map apply the Citywide future land use types. Within the area, additional direction is provided to clarify how building scale, site design, and the public realm should reinforce the area's role as a gateway and connection to Columbus. Each future land use type depicted on the map is called out below with the corresponding map color.

CORRIDOR TRANSITION GENERAL

- 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.



Walkable commercial

RUSH RUN MIXED USE

- Mixed use and multifamily buildings of 2 to 5 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 Boulevard should be residential and transition with respect to the existing adjacent neighborhoods.
- Active transportation (walking, biking) should be prioritized throughout the area.



Stream-oriented mixed use with multi-use path



3.5-story multifamily

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.



Townhome



Duplex

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

Mobility & Connectivity

CORRIDORS

South High Street

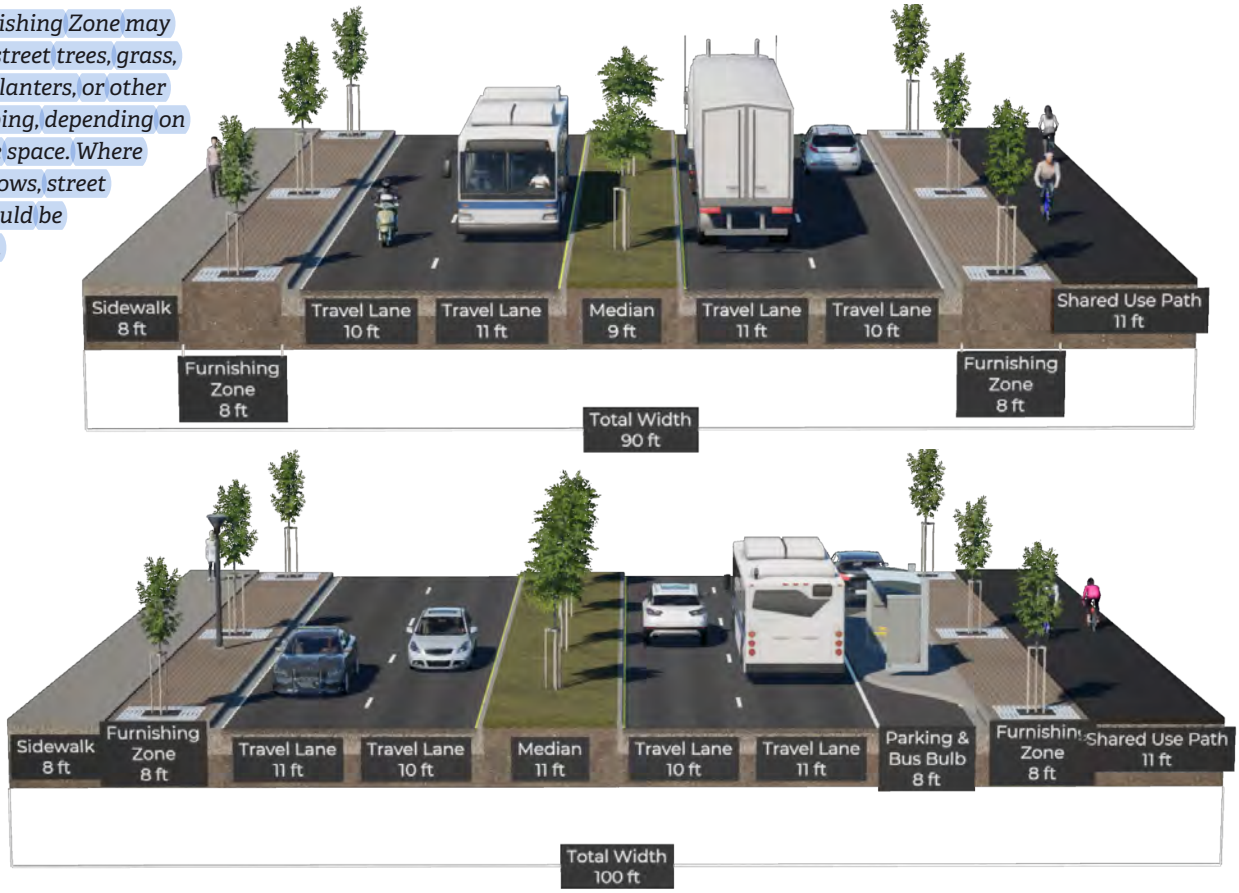
South of Old Worthington High Street returns to a less walkable roadway design similar to High Street north of Old Worthington. Development along this segment of High Street transitions from historic residential and commercial structures to more traditional suburban strip development as it nears the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

South High Street is designated as a Mixed Use Boulevard typology in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Key Roadway Elements

- 90' min. and 100' max. right-of-way
- 10' to 11' travel lanes
- Street parking where possible
- Enhanced streetscape: street trees, medians, pavers
- Active transportation: sidewalks, wide furnishing zones, shared use paths
- Transit: bus shelters, bus bulbs

The Furnishing Zone may contain street trees, grass, pavers, planters, or other landscaping, depending on available space. Where space allows, street trees should be included.



High Street typical roadway sections for 90' and 100' of Right-of-Way

INTERSECTIONS

High Street and Selby Boulevard

High Street and E Lincoln Avenue

These minor intersections with High Street and were identified as higher-risk intersections. Selby Boulevard and Lincoln Avenue distribute more traffic than other local streets and have higher rates of crashes. These intersections would benefit more than others from additional pedestrian safety elements such as raised crosswalks, curb extensions, and refuge islands. These are also key opportunties to enhance the streetscape in this area. High Street and E Lincoln Avenue would require additional coordination with the City of Columbus as E Lincoln Avenue is part of Columbus.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

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



Protected intersection for safer bike and pedestrian crossings



Raised crosswalk



Quick-build or temporary curb extensions



Passive bicycle detection and signage. Passive detection is most often accomplished through video cameras or induction loops.

Northeast Opportunity Area

STRATEGIC ROLE

The Northeast Opportunity Area is a strategic employment district positioned to support advanced industries and long-term economic diversification. Building on the adopted 2024 Northeast Area Plan, this area is intended to accommodate higher-value job growth in sectors aligned with the City's Target Industries while reinforcing Worthington's role within the broader regional economy.

This district is not envisioned as a residential-led mixed-use area. Its primary function is to preserve and strengthen employment capacity, modernize aging building stock, and ensure infrastructure readiness for innovation-oriented and supply-chain industries.

THE AREA TODAY

The Northeast Area contains a mix of light industrial, flex, office, and limited commercial uses with strong visibility and direct access to I-270 and regional freight corridors. Its location provides a competitive advantage for logistics-dependent industries, research and development activities, and advanced manufacturing uses.

Development patterns vary across the district. Some sites function as larger campus-style properties, while many others are divided into smaller, independently owned parcels. The 2024 Northeast Area Plan identified fragmented ownership and limited coordinated access as constraints to significant reinvestment in certain subareas. As a result, redevelopment potential varies significantly across the district and may require strategic consolidation in targeted locations.

The Northeast Plan identified several key opportunity subareas, including:

- **The Boundless Campus and Adjacent Properties.** A significant institutional and landholding presence that could evolve over time through coordinated master planning, modernization of facilities, and potential redevelopment of surplus or repositioned properties.
- **Aging Flex and Office Clusters.** Properties with repositioning potential to accommodate research and development, life science supply chain, light manufacturing, and related target industries.
- **Underutilized Industrial Parcels.** Sites capable of supporting higher employment intensity if infrastructure and access improvements are coordinated.

While regional access is strong, internal circulation, pedestrian connectivity between properties, stormwater systems, and coordinated streetscape character are uneven. In some locations, aging infrastructure and site design limit the district's ability to attract higher-value employment uses without reinvestment.



Ohio Railway Museum

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

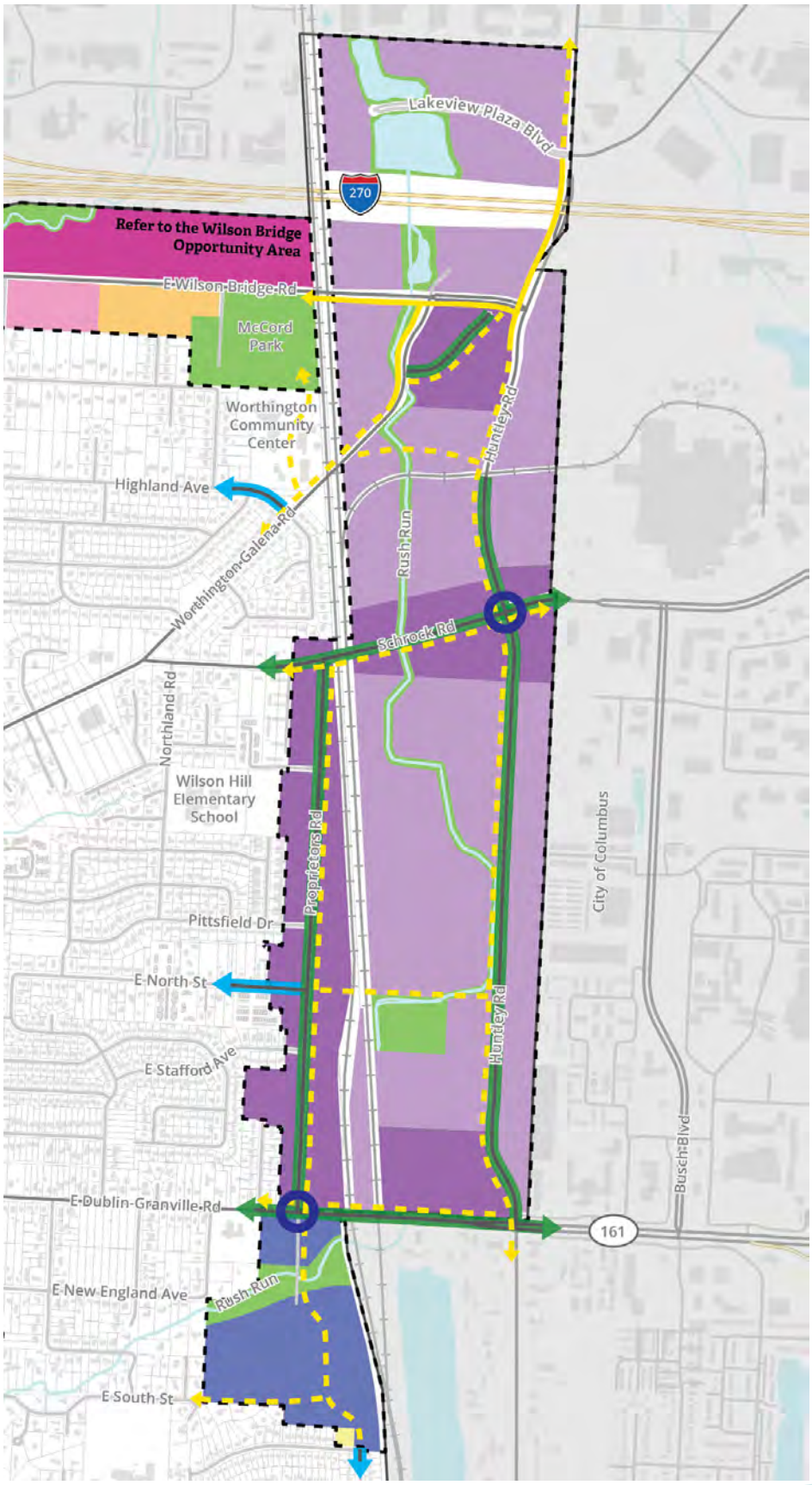
1. **Reinforce employment preservation through zoning and land use policy.** Maintain a clear policy framework that prioritizes job-generating uses and limits encroachment of non-employment uses into core industrial and flex areas.
2. **Implement the adopted subarea framework from the 2024 Northeast Area Plan.** Direct higher-intensity employment uses to identified opportunity subareas, particularly where coordinated reinvestment can increase job density and fiscal productivity.
3. **Facilitate strategic parcel consolidation where substantial reinvestment is desired.** Support voluntary assembly, coordinated site planning, and shared access agreements in targeted locations to overcome fragmentation constraints identified in the Northeast Plan.
4. **Modernize building inventory to support target industries.** Encourage adaptive reuse, expansion, or redevelopment of aging flex and office properties to accommodate advanced manufacturing, life science supply chain, electric systems support, and professional/technical services identified in the Economic Vitality section.
5. **Align infrastructure investment with employment growth objectives.** Prioritize water, sewer, stormwater, roadway, and utility upgrades in subareas where capacity constraints limit higher-value employment development.
6. **Strengthen internal connectivity and coordinated site design.** Improve shared access, internal street networks, and pedestrian connections between properties to create a more cohesive employment district environment.
7. **Enhance environmental performance and compatibility at edges.** Integrate stormwater management standards, landscape buffering, and building orientation strategies to minimize impacts on adjacent neighborhoods and natural systems.

Aerial of Huntley Road looking south towards Columbus



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



Public Space Vision

Public space in the Northeast Area should support its evolution into a modern employment district that integrates green infrastructure, connectivity, and everyday amenities for workers and residents.

ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Rush Run is the defining natural feature of the district and should be preserved and enhanced as both an ecological corridor and a green space amenity. Improvements should emphasize native plantings, expanded tree canopy, and sustainable stormwater management practices. These enhancements should strengthen environmental performance while improving the overall setting of the district.



Rush Run rendering from the Northeast Area Plan

CONNECTED DISTRICT

Streetscape and infrastructure improvements along Huntley Road, Proprietors Road, and Schrock Road should introduce sidewalks, shared-use paths, and safer crossings. The goal is to create a more walkable and bikeable employment area that connects businesses, mixed-use hubs, and surrounding neighborhoods.



Multi-use path with landscaping

PLACEMAKING IN MIXED-USE AREAS

Mixed-use hubs should incorporate small plazas, greens, and outdoor gathering spaces that serve employees, residents, and visitors. These spaces may be publicly accessible but privately maintained and should be integrated into redevelopment projects rather than developed as standalone civic parks.

Public space in the Northeast Area should feel contemporary, landscape-oriented, and campus-scaled. The intent is to create an attractive and environmentally responsible setting that supports long-term economic growth.



Mixed-use hub plaza rendering from the Northeast Area Plan

Mobility & Connectivity

CORRIDORS

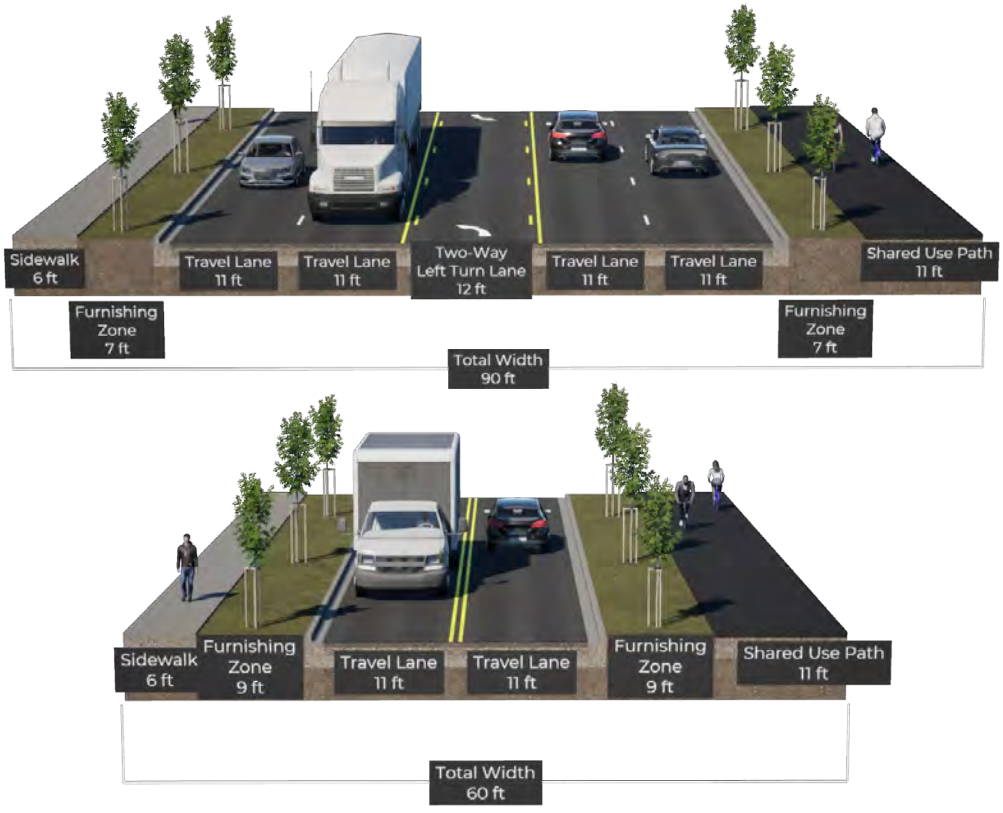
Huntley Road

Huntley Road is the primary north-south corridor through the Northeast Opportunity Area. This corridor supports advanced industries and flexible mixed-use development. The roadway design provides adequate space to allow for large commercial vehicles and for wide turns. However, it also enhances the active transportation connectivity of the area by including shared use paths and sidewalks.

Huntley Road is designated as an Innovation Boulevard typology in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Key Roadway Elements

- 60' min. and 90' max. right-of-way
- 11' travel lanes: allows adequate space for trucks
- Two-way left turn lanes
- Active transportation: sidewalks, shared use paths



Huntley Road typical roadway sections for 60' and 80' of Right-of-Way

CORRIDORS

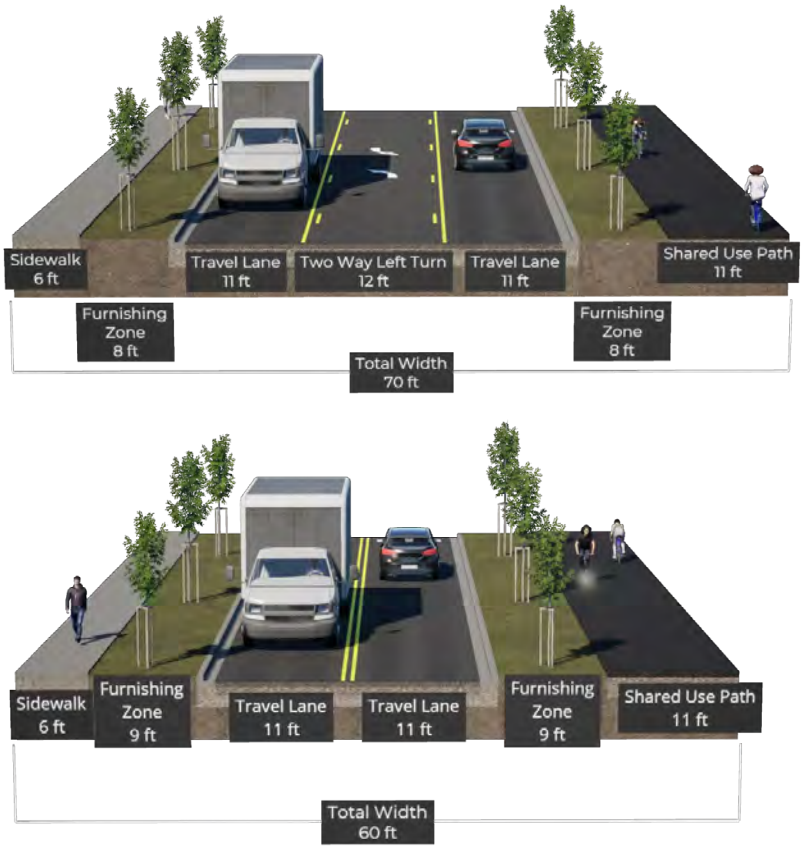
Proprietors Road

Proprietors Road provides a secondary north-south corridor and provides access to several commercial and light industrial properties. This corridor borders residential neighborhoods which makes it a transitional corridor between the residential and flex industrial areas. This corridor's design maintains space for truck movements while providing additional space for active transportation to allow for vulnerable road users to safely access these places of employment.

Proprietors Road is designated as an Innovation Avenue typology in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Key Roadway Elements

- 60' min. and 70' max. right-of-way
- 11' travel lanes: allows adequate space for trucks
- Two-way left turn lanes
- Active transportation: sidewalks, shared use paths



Proprietors Road typical roadway sections for 60' and 70' of Right-of-Way

INTERSECTIONS

Huntley Road and Schrock Road

This is a major intersection in the center of the Forge Fields/Northeast Area. This intersection has to balance maintaining traffic flow, permitting truck turning movements, and improving safety for vulnerable road users. Minor improvements to this intersection were made when the City of Columbus added a protected bike lane to Schrock Road. However, there is still a need to provide safe crossings for this additional bicycle traffic at this intersection.

Potential Intersection Enhancements

- Dedicated turn lanes
- Curb extensions
- Protected intersections
- Refuge islands
- Leading pedestrian intervals
- Bicycle and pedestrian passive detection
- Bike boxes



Bike boxes to permit two-stage left turns



Passive bicycle detection and signage. Passive detection is most often accomplished through video cameras or induction loops.



Protected intersection for safer bike and pedestrian crossings

Rush Run Mixed-Use Zone

The Rush Run Mixed-Use Zone represents a unique redevelopment opportunity within the Northeast Area due to its frontage along SR 161, its relationship to Rush Run, and its adjacency to established neighborhoods. This area should function as a mixed-use campus environment that integrates employment, residential, and institutional uses in a coordinated live-work setting.

This subarea is intended to:

- Support a coordinated mixed-use campus that includes office along SR 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 SR 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.



Future Land Use

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

Land Use & Character Guidance

The areas shown on the concept map apply the Citywide future land use types. Within the area, additional direction is provided to clarify how building scale, site design, and the public realm should reinforce the area's role as a major economic engine for the City. Each future land use type depicted on the map is called out below with the corresponding map color.

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.



4-story mixed use residential



4-story mixed use office

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.



3-story office

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 SR 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.



4-story office



2-story mixed use



3-story multifamily

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.



Existing single-family homes

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Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-term guide that expresses the community's values and aspirations. Implementation of this plan will involve a host of City Departments, boards and commissions, non-profits, businesses, and residents. This chapter includes guidance on managing and using the plan, and a summary of its actions, assigning anticipated timing and responsibilities to each.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

- Plan Management
- How to Use the Plan
- Implementation Actions
- Summary and Prioritization

PLAN MANAGEMENT

Monitoring

The plan should be monitored regularly to assess its implementation effectiveness and relevance. It should be referenced annually in departmental work programs, annual reports, budgets, and capital improvements planning. A formal review of the plan's accomplishments and relevancy should occur within five-year intervals.

Updating

A major update of the plan should be scheduled by City Council every ten years or following a formal recommendation from the Planning Commission. If key milestones are achieved before the completion of a ten-year cycle, an earlier update may be necessary. Such instances should be considered on a case-by-case basis. There may be circumstances warranting a formal amendment to the plan. Amendments to the plan should be made only with careful consideration and compelling justification.

Collaborating

Many actions in the plan will require the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private, and civic sectors of the community. An active citizenry will help to ensure actions are included and pursued as part of the public agenda. The plan's achievements should be celebrated with the public.

How to Use the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used daily in making public and private decisions regarding development, redevelopment, capital improvements, economic incentives, and other matters affecting the City. The following summarizes how decisions and processes should align with the plan's strategic priorities and actions.

Annual Work Programs and Budgets

Individual departments, administrators, boards, and commissions should consider the plan's recommendations when preparing annual work programs and budgets.

Capital Improvement Plan

The five-year capital improvement plan (CIP) should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations.

Development Approvals

Administrative and legislative approvals for development proposals will be reviewed for consistency with the plan. Decisions by the Municipal Planning Commission and reports by the Planning & Building Department will reference relevant recommendations from the plan and the Future Land Use and Character Map. The zoning code and development regulations should be updated to align with the regulatory strategies presented in the plan. City Council should collaborate with the City staff to ensure consistent interpretation of major items in the plan.

Economic Incentives

All economic incentive programs should be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with the plan's recommendations. They should reinforce the land use and economic-development recommendations outlined in this plan.

Private Development Decisions

Property owners and developers should consider the plan's guiding principles and the Future Land Use and Character Map when making land development and investment decisions. The City will be using the plan as a guide in development deliberations, such as zoning matters and infrastructure requests. Property owners and developers should be aware of the plan's recommendations and work toward achieving the community's vision.

Implementation Actions

The actions outlined below support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan through initial rollout, monitoring, and tracking progress.

Promote awareness and understanding of the Plan

1.1. **Provide the Plan across the community.** Upon adoption, copies of the plan should be available on the City's website and at locations around the community, such as City Hall, the library, and the community center. A brief, accessible summary of the Plan's principles and strategic priorities should also be prepared and made available alongside the full document. Promoting broad familiarity with the Plan builds the shared understanding needed to support consistent, community-backed implementation.

1.2. **Provide ongoing training to staff.** Training should familiarize staff across all departments with the Plan's strategic priorities, Opportunity Areas, and implementation actions relevant to their responsibilities. Consistent staff literacy ensures that day-to-day decisions reflect the Plan's long-term direction.

1.3. **Create a training program for commission and board members.** Upon appointment and periodically thereafter, members of the Municipal Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, and other advisory bodies should receive orientation on the Plan's goals and how their roles support implementation. Informed decision-makers are essential to translating the Plan's vision into consistent, well-reasoned outcomes.

Monitor and share implementation progress

1.4. **Prepare implementation progress reports periodically.** On a regular basis, the City should assess progress made towards the Plan's actions for each Strategic Priority. A summary report should be prepared and shared with the community following this review, highlighting progress made and identifying potential updates needed.

Require incorporation of the Plan into current planning processes.

1.5. **Require staff reports to reference the Plan.** Staff reports accompanying development applications, policy recommendations, and budget requests should include a brief assessment of how the proposed action aligns with relevant plan priorities. This practice embeds the Plan into routine governance and creates a clear record of how decisions connect to the community's long-term vision.

Provide implementation resources.

1.6. **Identify funding sources for implementation actions and opportunistic tools.** Beyond allocating resources through the City's budget, CIP, and annual work programs, the City should continue to seek funding from grants, private investment, public-private partnerships, and other opportunistic sources when possible. Not all implementation actions require dedicated City funding. some can be advanced through regulatory updates, partnerships, or low-cost pilot efforts. Prioritizing actions by feasibility and resource readiness allows the City to make meaningful progress even within constrained fiscal conditions.

Community Priorities

The following strategies and actions were most frequently identified as priorities in the Community Review Round of public input. These topics should be considered along with other factors as City Council establishes an implementation plan.

Modernize the Zoning & Development Code. Action 1.2 is the enabling action for many of the plan's ideas (top rated Action). It is the vehicle for compatibility standards (Action 12.1), ADUs (Action 13.2), and environmental standards (Action 14.2).

Build Great Places & Catalytic Mixed-Use. This includes Strategic Priority 4 (#2 overall), trophy mixed-use development (Action 4.1), a vibrant Old Worthington (Action 4.2), infill (Action 4.3).

Expand Housing Variety in the Right Places. Includes ADUs/small-scale types (Action 13.2), focus intensity in the six opportunity areas (Action 13.1), neighborhood-compatible infill (Action 12.1).

Make Worthington More Walkable. Includes Strategic Priority (#4 overall) sidewalk gaps (Action 9.1), Complete Streets (Action 10.3), transit-ready corridors (Action 11.2).

Lead on Green Infrastructure & Resilience. Includes Strategic Priority 14 (#3 overall), green infrastructure in projects (Action 14.3), tree canopy (Action 14.4), the sustainability plan (Action 14.1).

ACTION SUMMARY AND PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

The following is an initial implementation priority matrix of the plan's action items. For each action, it indicates the recommended implementation timeframe and the City department or other entity that will lead each effort. This prioritization will likely change over time and should be updated annually or bi-annually by staff and City Council as implementation progresses.

TIME-FRAME

The indicated time-frames reflect an initial prioritization and are intended to reflect the expected start for an action. Various factors impact the ultimate timing such as funding availability, private development interests, market conditions, staffing and other opportunities.

Immediate	Upon plan adoption or years 0-2
Short-Term	Years 2-5
Medium-Term	Years 5-9
Long-Term	Years 10+
Continuous	Actions that do not have a definitive endpoint once begun

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS

Many actions will require coordination across multiple departments. Leading role are assigned based on each department's core responsibilities.

- **Planning & Building**
- **Economic Development**
- **Service & Engineering**
- **Parks & Recreation**
- **City Manager's Office**

Action		Time-frame	Lead Department
SP 1	**Comprehensive Zoning and Development Code Reform**		
1.1	Conduct a comprehensive regulatory assessment.	Immediate	Planning & Building
1.2	Undertake a coordinated rewrite of the Planning and Zoning Code.	Immediate	Planning & Building
1.3	Update Architectural Review District standards.	Short-Term	Planning & Building
1.4	Modernize engineering and infrastructure standards.	Medium-Term	Service & Engineering
SP 2	**Catalyze and Support Mixed-Use Redevelopment**		
2.1	Proactively advance a catalytic redevelopment project.	Immediate	Economic Development
2.2	Align public policy to support the Opportunity Areas.	Immediate	City Manager's Office
2.3	Prioritize Capital Improvement Program (CIP) investments in the identified Opportunity Areas.	Short-Term Continuous	Service & Engineering
2.4	Plan for shared and district-scale infrastructure.	Medium-Term Continuous	Service & Engineering
2.5	Use financing tools strategically.	Short-Term Continuous	Economic Development
SP 3	**Enable Incremental and Coordinated Mixed-Use Redevelopment**		
3.1	Facilitate coordination among property owners.	Short-Term	Economic Development
3.2	Establish incentives for parcel consolidation.	Short-Term	Economic Development
3.3	Align infrastructure with long-term intended character.	Medium-Term	Service & Engineering
SP 4	**Support Great Places and Spaces Where People want to Live, Work, Shop, Play, and Eat**		
4.1	Promote 'Trophy' Mixed-Use Development on key opportunity sites.	Short-Term	Economic Development

Action		Time-frame	Lead Department
4.2	Keep Old Worthington healthy and vibrant.	Immediate Continuous	Economic Development
4.3	Promote infill redevelopment of selected commercial and industrial properties.	Medium-Term Continuous	Economic Development
4.4	Support modernization and diversification of employment space options.	Short-Term	Planning & Building
SP 5	**Target Industries That Support Central Ohio's Development Focus and the Context of Worthington's Opportunity Areas**		
5.1	Update and apply a target industry framework.	Short-Term Continuous	Economic Development
5.2	Maintain a structured Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program.	Immediate	Economic Development
5.3	Work with regional partners to analyze income tax filing patterns and ensure the City is fully capturing its tax base.	Medium-Term	Economic Development
SP 6	**Ensure Worthington Proactively Strengthens Its Economic Development Capacity**		
6.1	Invest in the City's Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).	Short-Term	City Manager's Office
6.2	Ensure adequate staffing capacity for economic development functions.	Short-Term Continuous	City Manager's Office
6.3	Expand the small business development toolkit.	Short-Term	Economic Development
SP 7	**Establish Clear Policies and Procedures for the Use of Incentives and Other Economic Development Tools**		
7.1	Formalize incentive policies and evaluation criteria.	Short-Term	Economic Development
SP 8	**Adopt and Implement the Updated Thoroughfare Plan**		
8.1	Adopt the Thoroughfare Plan.	Immediate	Service & Engineering
8.2	Update Access Management Standards.	Short-Term	Service & Engineering

Action		Time-frame	Lead Department
SP 9	**Advance Active Transportation as a Core Network.**		
9.1	Close priority sidewalk gaps.	Short-Term	Service & Engineering
9.2	Study bike and pedestrian improvements on Active Transportation Corridors.	Short-Term	Service & Engineering
9.3	Advance regional trail connections.	Medium-Term	Service & Engineering
9.4	Coordinate with the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee on an update to the City's Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.	Short-Term	Service & Engineering
SP 10	**Address Safety at Priority Intersections and Corridors**		
10.1	Prioritize and study corridors in Opportunity Areas.	Short-Term	Service & Engineering
10.2	Prioritize and study intersections.	Medium-Term	Service & Engineering
10.3	Integrate Complete Streets and safety best practices into routine projects.	Medium-Term Continuous	Service & Engineering
10.4	Coordinate safety improvements with redevelopment.	Short-Term Continuous	Service & Engineering
SP 11	**Coordinate and Advocate for Transit Improvements**		
11.1	Continue regular coordination with COTA.	Immediate Continuous	Planning & Building
11.2	Prepare corridors for higher-capacity transit.	Long-Term	Service & Engineering
11.3	Upgrade access to existing transit stops.	Medium-Term	Service & Engineering
SP 12	**Support Neighborhood Character and Support Reinvestment in Existing Housing**		
12.1	Refine compatibility standards for infill housing or additions in the Zoning Ordinance update.	Immediate	Planning & Building
12.2	Allocate future tax revenue to establish a dedicated housing program.	Long-Term	City Manager's Office

Action		Time-frame	Lead Department
SP 13	**Expand Housing Options in Context-Appropriate Locations**		
13.1	Focus higher-intensity housing in the opportunity areas.	Medium-Term Continuous	Planning & Building
13.2	Enable small-scale housing types and ADUs within the rewrite of the Planning and Zoning Code.	Immediate	Planning & Building
13.3	Monitor housing conditions and trends.	Immediate Continuous	Planning & Building
13.4	Evaluate and refine the Workforce Housing Tax Abatement Program based on TIRC annual findings.	Short-Term	Economic Development
SP 14	**Lead by Example in Environmental Stewardship and Resilience**		
14.1	Develop a coordinating sustainability plan.	Short-Term	Service & Engineering
14.2	Strengthen environmental protection standards.	Short-Term	Planning & Building
14.3	Integrate green infrastructure into projects.	Medium-Term Continuous	Service & Engineering
14.4	Adopt standards and incentives to preserve tree canopy.	Short-Term	Planning & Building
14.5	Embed resilience into capital planning.	Long-Term	Service & Engineering
SP 15	**Update the Parks & Recreation Master Plan**		
15.1	Update the Parks & Recreation Master Plan	Short-Term	Parks & Recreation