

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

ADOPTED DECEMBER 20, 2011
ORDINANCE NO. 11-055



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The undersigned Clerk of Council, City of Wadsworth, Ohio does hereby certify that this is a true and accurate copy of Ord. Am. No. 11-055 of the City of Wadsworth, Ohio, as duly passed by said City Council.

AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 11-055
Sponsored by Council Member Dennis Shultz

Jenny Kewenter 12.20.11
Clerk of Council Date

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, the City of Wadsworth contracted with McBride Dale Clarion to prepare and update to the City's Comprehensive Plan as a guideline for the future development of the City, and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update has been reviewed at various public meetings and presentations before City Council and the Planning Commission, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recommended that City Council adopt the 2011 Comprehensive Plan on July 5, 2011, and

WHEREAS, this Council has determined that it is in the public interest to amend the comprehensive plan update to change it from the form in which it was recommended by the Planning Commission; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WADSWORTH, STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That this Council hereby adopts the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update as prepared with the guidance and assistance of McBride Dale Clarion and recommended for adoption by the Planning Commission on July 5, 2011 but incorporating the following ten (10) amendments to the text:

THEME 1: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Amendment #1: The following sentence shall be added to the end of the paragraph starting with the word **Goal**: "*Wadsworth will guide current and future land use and development so as to enhance the growth of our community in all areas of the City*".

Amendment #2: In the first bullet point in the section titled **Policies for Land Use and Development** the word "Emphasize" shall be replaced with the words: "*Encourage, when economically viable...*"

THEME 6: PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Amendment #3: In the second bullet point in the section titled **Policies for Parks, Recreation and Open Space**, the words "*...and directing new development to appropriate locations*" shall be deleted.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, URBAN CORE AREAS, CHARACTER AREA 1: DOWNTOWN AND SOUTH END

Amendment #4: In the section titled **Development Policies, Sub-area A: The Central Business District (CBD)**, the following sentence shall be deleted from item #3: *“There is currently not a strong priority to mandate the architectural appearance of new structures but owners looking to redevelop are encouraged to work with the city to design buildings that are consistent in terms of height, scale, building mass, etc., with existing structures and will enhance the overall streetscape”*.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, ACTIVITY CENTERS, CHARACTER AREA 5: I-76/AKRON ROAD INTERCHANGE

Amendment #5: In the section titled **Development Policies**, the following words shall be deleted from Item #1: *“...be allowed to expand north of the interstate nor...”*

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, ACTIVITY CENTERS, CHARACTER AREA 7: BROAD STREET COMMERCIAL CENTER

Amendment #6: In the first paragraph of this section, the final sentence shall be deleted. Such sentence reads as follows: *“Redevelopment in the former suburban-oriented style (e.g. large parking areas being a focal point on the site) should be discouraged”*.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH, CHARACTER AREA 8: WADSWORTH INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Amendment #7: In the section titled **Development Policies**, Item #3 shall be amended to read as follows: *Sidewalks, trails, and bike paths should be incorporated into all new developments, when appropriate, to provide non-vehicular access to employment as documented by other planning documents adopted by the City (e.g. the Park and Recreation Plan, and Multimodal Transportation Plan).*

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH, CHARACTER AREA 9: NORTHWEST INTERCHANGE (I-76 & SR-57)

Amendment #8: In the first bullet point in the section titled **Primary Objectives**, the words *“until adequate public services and utilities are available”* shall be deleted and replaced with the following words: *“...unless a development project includes plans for adequate public utilities and services necessary to serve the proposed project”*.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, NEW GROWTH AREAS, CHARACTER AREA 11: NEW GROWTH AREA EAST

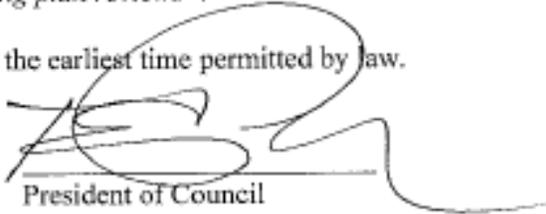
Amendment #9: In the section titled **Development Policies**, Item #8, which reads: *“There should be no expansion of nonresidential uses, beyond civic and institutional uses, (including parks) into this area”*, shall be deleted. The remaining development policies shall be consecutively renumbered beginning with #1.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Amendment #10: In section titled **III. SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**, the following words shall be added to the fourth strategy under the heading "Strategies to Enhance City Programs and Policies": "...including "fast-track" processes for Planning Commission and engineering plan reviews".

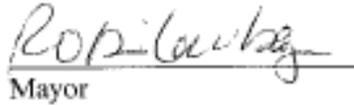
Section 2. That this ordinance shall be effective at the earliest time permitted by law.

Passed: December 20, 2011


President of Council

Attest: Tammy Guenther
Clerk of Council

Approved: December 20, 2011


Mayor

1st Rdg. 7.19.11
2nd Rdg. 8.3.11
3rd Rdg. 8.16.11
Passed: yes 4 no

10.4.11 Public Hearing
12.20.11 Amended

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION

I, Tammy Guenther, Clerk of Council of the City of Wadsworth, State of Ohio, do hereby certify that the forgoing ordinance was duly published in *The Gazette* on _____ and _____, which is for two consecutive weeks as required by section 731.21 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Tammy Guenther
Clerk of Council
City of Wadsworth

Acknowledgements

This plan update is the product of several months of dedication and hard work by numerous people throughout the City of Wadsworth. The plan would not have been possible without the involvement from the following groups and people:

WADSWORTH CITY COUNCIL 2010-2011

PRESIDENT	Tom Palecek
WARD #1	Tim Eberling
WARD #2	Dennis Shultz
WARD #3	John Sharkey
WARD #4	Bruce Darlington
AT-LARGE	Jim Riley
AT-LARGE	Susan Hanlon
AT-LARGE	Beth Workman
CLERK	Tammy Guenther

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ASS'T DIRECTOR – PUBLIC SVC	Harry Stark
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DIRECTOR OF LAW	Norman Bague
PLANNING DIRECTOR	Jeff Kaiser

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Shirley Casey	Jim Cummings	Bruce Darlington
Chris Easton	Tom Grace	Kristy Jack
Jeff Kaiser	Robin Laubaugh	Michelle Masica
Virgil Mochel	Laura Narduzzi	Jack Ollom
Amanda Ondrey	Jim Riley	Jim Rivers
Patrice Theken	Tom Tucker	Brian Williams

All the residents of Wadsworth who took the time to return a community development survey and/or attend a public meeting to express their opinions.

The plan was prepared with the guidance and assistance of McBride Dale Clarion, a planning and zoning consulting firm located in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Introduction

Every community is dynamic, whether it is a maturing community with a strong core; a community facing a rapid expansion of its residential and business uses; a community with a stable population & business base; or even a community that is losing population. Wadsworth is no different in the fact that there are numerous influences occurring in and around the city that have changed the city over the past decades and will continue to create forces that must be addressed long into the future. In order to plan for the future and to address changes that have occurred both within the city and in the surrounding region over the last ten years, the City of Wadsworth embarked upon this planning process to update the 1996 Wadsworth Comprehensive Plan.

WHY PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a long-term planning tool that identifies a series of broad policies to help guide future decisions about the physical, economic, and social aspects of the community. A comprehensive plan attempts to balance quality of life and livability, economic health and prosperity, private property needs, and public fiscal responsibility through a consensus building process that allows the public to guide the outcome.

Comprehensive plans are general in nature and are purposely long-term, recognizing that some visions cannot be achieved immediately but take years to accomplish. This plan is designed to provide a vision of the community over a 20-year planning horizon. The overall purpose of a comprehensive plan is to answer the following questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

The city has a long history of planning efforts, both at a comprehensive level and at a more strategic level. This planning process is intended to serve as an update to the 1996 Wadsworth Comprehensive Plan which, in turn, was an update to a previous plan developed in 1984. This plan update is supplemented by numerous other planning efforts that have taken place, or are currently underway, outside of the context of a comprehensive plan and which, for the most part, evaluate specific issues within the city. Some of the plans and documents adopted by the city include:

- The Wadsworth Parks and Recreation Plan
- The Wadsworth Multimodal Transportation Plan
- The Wadsworth Sanitary Sewer Study
- The Medina County All-Hazard & Flood Mitigation Plan
- The Municipal Airport Master Plan

- A variety of transportation, corridor and access management studies, especially for the Great Oaks Trail/High Street corridor (including the most recent High Street Corridor Access Management & Safety Plan, which is still in the development stage);
- The Transportation Plan element from the 1996 Comprehensive Plan Update, which has been updated and included in this plan as Appendix A; and
- Zoning, Subdivision, Stormwater Management and other land use ordinances.

These documents were important to the creation of this plan update and should continue to act as guides to decision-makers in the community.

BENEFITS OF PLANNING

The desired outcome of a planning process is to improve the quality of life for the community. The Planning Themes and Goals and the Land Use Character Area Development Policies presented in this plan are intended to guide development patterns in Wadsworth, but also to result in quality of life benefits. While most of the recommendations of the comprehensive plan are by nature targeted toward physical elements in the built environment, there are a range of other less tangible benefits from planning. Planning efforts that lead to well-designed places can have positive impacts on public health, quality of life, economic development, affordable housing, and public safety. Good physical planning can even improve the fiscal health of a community by lowering the cost of delivering public services and maintaining public infrastructure.

For example, planning recommendations that encourage infill and mixed-use developments are clearly related to “physical design”. These policy recommendations also have non-physical benefits. Infill and mixed-use developments can provide affordable housing options by allowing for housing on the upper floors above retail or office uses. Such housing can provide options for students, single person households, or empty nesters looking for alternatives to detached single family dwellings, but wanting to stay in Wadsworth. Mixed-use developments can also increase density in key areas, providing a concentration of population and activities that can stimulate economic growth. Infill and mixed-use development can also reduce automobile trips, thereby providing positive environmental impacts by reducing congestion.

Recommendations for street and sidewalk connectivity are another physical design element that can have positive secondary benefits. Construction of additional sidewalks and multi-use paths allow residents to walk to parks, shops, schools and other activity areas that may currently be accessible by vehicle only. Walking can improve the health of residents, and replacing vehicle trips with pedestrian or bicycle trips can reduce congestion and improve air quality. Street connectivity can result in reduced traffic congestion by dispersing traffic in many different directions and thus, potentially lower the rate of vehicle accidents. Public safety may also be improved by shortening emergency responder times via street connectivity.

These are just a few examples of how comprehensive plan recommendations, if implemented, can benefit the community. While the focus of the recommendations presented in this plan are generally based on policies for development and physical design, there are social, health and fiscal benefits that can be derived from these policies.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

This plan update process was initiated because the city has experienced a lot of growth and change in the last decade. While this change has occurred, the city has undertaken a number of successful planning projects, many of which are outlined above, all of which have an impact on the recommendations laid out in the original 1996 comprehensive plan. In an effort to review and evaluate current community values and make sure that issues or concerns are “on the table” and “up for discussion,” the city made the decision to update its comprehensive plan utilizing a wide mix of public outreach.

The plan update process began in the spring of 2009 with a series of initial public meetings to highlight the process and allow citizens to identify issues of concern and opportunities they see for the future of the city. The results of this process are discussed in later sections of this plan and are also included in Appendix C of this plan. During the summer of 2009, the city also conducted a visual building and development survey to gauge citizens’ views on various aspects of land use and development in the city, including newer development forms such as mixed-use and attached residential near downtown.

During this same time period and throughout the process, staff and the consultants worked with a steering committee comprised of a cross-section of residents, property owners, and business owners from the community. This steering committee provided detailed review and feedback on draft elements of the plan. Beyond these initial meetings, additional public feedback was gathered through public meetings, which were held at key points in the process to serve as “checkpoints” to make sure the plan was reflective of the community’s vision. The result is this comprehensive land use plan update that provides more decision-making policies and a refined future development plan, which is focused on the quality and character of new development.

Growth and Development Trends

One of the first steps in updating a comprehensive plan is updating and re-evaluating pertinent demographic data and mapping information. This type of information is important to the planning process because it provides an understanding about how the city and surrounding area have changed in the past while also looking at how the city might continue to change into the future based on the choices the city makes now. This section provides information on basic population, housing, and land use trends in Wadsworth as well as related information for Wadsworth Township, Sharon Township, and Medina County, where appropriate.

POPULATION TRENDS

Founded in 1814, Wadsworth became a village in 1866 and was incorporated as a city in 1931 when there were approximately 5,930 residents living within its boundaries. Since then, Wadsworth has seen steady growth, and forty years later in 1970, the population had more than doubled to 13,142 residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the city's 2010 population has grown to 21,567 residents.

HISTORICAL POPULATION

Wadsworth's growth appears to have been fairly steady over the decades, with the city generally experiencing an annual population increase of 1.0% to 1.6% with the exception of the 1980s when the city's annual growth slowed to less than one-half percent. [Table 1](#) illustrates the historical population changes since 1960 in the city and both the neighboring Wadsworth and Sharon Townships, including their average annual growth rate. Based on the 2010 U.S. Census data, Wadsworth has continued to maintain an average annual growth rate of 1.6% since 2000 (See [Table 2](#)).

TABLE 1: HISTORICAL POPULATION 1960 – 2010						
Year	City of Wadsworth Population	Average Annual Growth Rate*	Wadsworth Township Population	Average Annual Growth Rate	Sharon Township Population	Average Annual Growth Rate
1960	10,635	--	4,882	--	2,285	--
1970	13,142	2.1%	4,371	-1.1%	2,764	1.9%
1980	15,166	1.4%	3,563	-2.0%	3,398	2.1%
1990	15,718	0.4%	3,375	-0.5%	3,234	-0.5%
2000	18,437	1.6%	3,996	1.7%	4,244	2.8%
2010	21,567	1.6%	4,191	0.5%	5,111	1.9%

Sources and Notes:
 All decennial populations are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau
 * Compounded average annual growth rate, calculated by McBride Dale Clarion

TABLE 2: ANNUAL WADSWORTH GROWTH SINCE 2000		
Year	City of Wadsworth Population	Annual Growth Rate
2000	18,437	---
2001	18,854	2.3%
2002	19,185	1.8%
2003	19,436	1.3%
2004	19,643	1.1%
2005	19,875	1.2%
2006	20,138	1.3%
2007	20,435	1.5%
2008	20,771	1.6%
2009	21,001	1.1%
2010	21,567	2.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Annual Rate of Growth calculated by MDC

AGE COMPOSITION

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the size of different age groups within the city and what proportion each age group represents of the overall city population. This data is based on information from the 2010 Census. The same information is provided for Medina County as a point of comparison.

TABLE 3: CITY OF WADSWORTH AGE COMPOSITION (2010)				
Age Bracket	City of Wadsworth		Medina County	
	Residents	Percentage	Residents	Percentage
Under 20	6,016	27.9%	47,675	27.7%
20 to 44	6,738	31.2%	50,845	29.5%
45 to 64	5,405	25.1%	51,211	29.7%
65 and over	3,408	15.8%	22,601	13.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

This information is important to a community because there are often special needs and impacts related to the number of residents who are under the age of 20 (e.g., schools, parks, etc.) and those over 65 (e.g., senior services, different recreational needs, and housing options). It is also important to understand how the population in each of those age groups is changing over the years because that may translate into different priorities in the future. Table 4 shows how the age of Wadsworth's population changed in just one decade. While the population of all the age groups increased, the population of residents between the ages of 45 and 64 increased the most, followed closely by those residents under 20.

TABLE 4: COMPARISON OF AGE COMPOSITION IN WADSWORTH (2000-2010)			
	2000	2010	% Change
Under 20	4,847	6,016	14.8%
20 to 44	2,210	6,738	10.3%
45 to 64	3,131	5,405	32.3%
65 and over	2,000	3,408	13.6%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

HOUSING TRENDS

In 2010, there were 9,320 total housing units in the City of Wadsworth. That is a 22% increase from 2000 when there were only 7,613 units. Within those homes there is an average of approximately 2.51 persons per occupied housing unit (2010 Census). Beyond having an understanding of how many housing units exist in the city, or how the number of housing units has grown, much of which can be interpreted from the previous discussion on population, it is important to have a better understanding of what that housing stock looks like. The following is a brief summary of the housing composition in Wadsworth and the implications of changing trends.

HOUSING TYPES

Types of housing in Wadsworth (based on Census data) can be categorized as: single-family detached homes, single-family attached homes, structures with two to nine units, structures with 10 to 19 units, structures with more than 20 units, and/or mobile homes. Single-family detached units represent the largest proportion of housing units in both the city and county, with 74% of the dwelling units in the city classified as single-family detached. [Figure A](#) illustrates the housing compositions by number of units per structure for Wadsworth and Medina County. Wadsworth has a higher proportion of attached, multi-unit structures compared to the county but this is not unusual given the availability of services and infrastructure to accommodate the higher densities within the boundaries of the city.



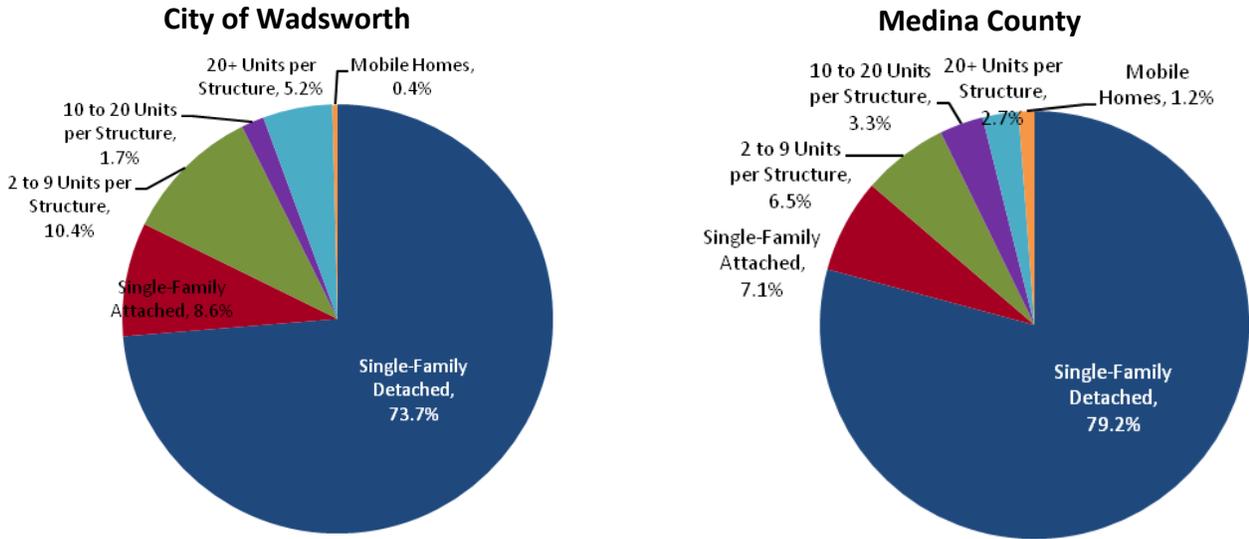


Figure A: The above charts show the different breakdowns of housing types, as a part of the total housing stock, for the City of Wadsworth and Medina County in 2009. (Source: U.S. Census)

AGE OF HOUSING

The U.S. Census provided data on the age of housing units based on the decade that the unit was constructed. The most recent information from the 2005-2009 U.S. Census American Community Survey shows that nearly 52% of the housing units in Wadsworth are almost 40 years old or older. On the opposite end of the spectrum, only 12% of the total housing stock was built between 2000 and 2009. See Figure B.

This type of base analysis is important because the amount of housing that was built prior to 1970 could signify that housing and property maintenance issues will increase in importance in order to maintain a stable, viable housing stock. However, “older housing” can also be a sign of character and variety - attributes that contribute to the attractiveness of the city and ones that the city will want to maintain long into the future.

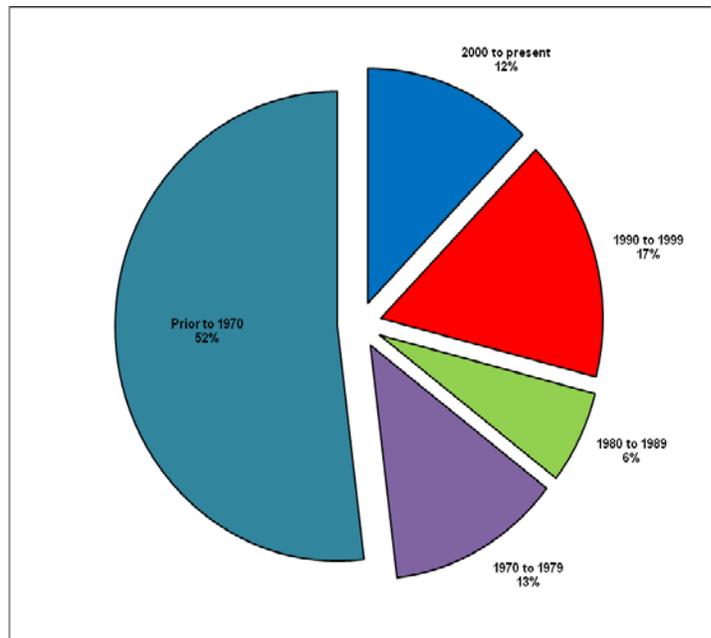


Figure B: The above chart illustrates the age of housing within the City of Wadsworth (U.S. Census 2005-2009 American Community Survey).

POPULATION AND HOUSING FORECASTS

The city has grown at variable annual rates over the past decades as described in [Table 1](#). One method for forecasting future growth is to look back at the historical annual rate of population growth and evaluate whether such growth rates reflect anticipated trends for the future. A related, but slightly different, approach is to examine annual housing permits as a means for extrapolating potential future growth trends. These methods are examined below.

ANNUAL RATE OF POPULATION INCREASE

While Wadsworth's rate of population growth has been steady over the last 40 years, there have been fluctuations. The average annual growth rate of population increase, presented in [Table 1](#), shows that "annualized" growth rates have fluctuated from a low of 0.4% between 1980 and 1990 (during a previous economic downturn) to a high of 1.6% between 1990 and 2000, and between 2000 and 2010.

In the 20 year period from 1990 to 2010, the average annual rate of population increase in Wadsworth was 1.6%. If the city were to experience an average annual rate of growth similar to the rate since 1990, then the population of Wadsworth by 2025 will be approximately 27,400. If the average growth rate is more like the rate over the last 40 years (1.2%), then by 2025 the city's projected population will be approximately 25,700. These estimates are intended to demonstrate that projections of future population levels differ based on which historical rate of growth is assumed. [Table 6](#) illustrates the forecasted future population for Wadsworth used for this plan.

HOUSING PERMIT DATA

Housing permit data is another method of identifying past growth trends. [Figure C](#) illustrates the number of building permits issued for new single-family and multi-family dwelling units in the city per year from 1980 through 2010. Since 1980, the city has averaged 77 building permits for new single-family dwelling units and 31 for new multi-family dwelling units. By comparison, when looking at only the last 10 years, these numbers average 114 permits for new single-family dwellings and 44 permits for new multi-family dwellings, annually. These numbers have dropped off significantly due to the current slow economy.

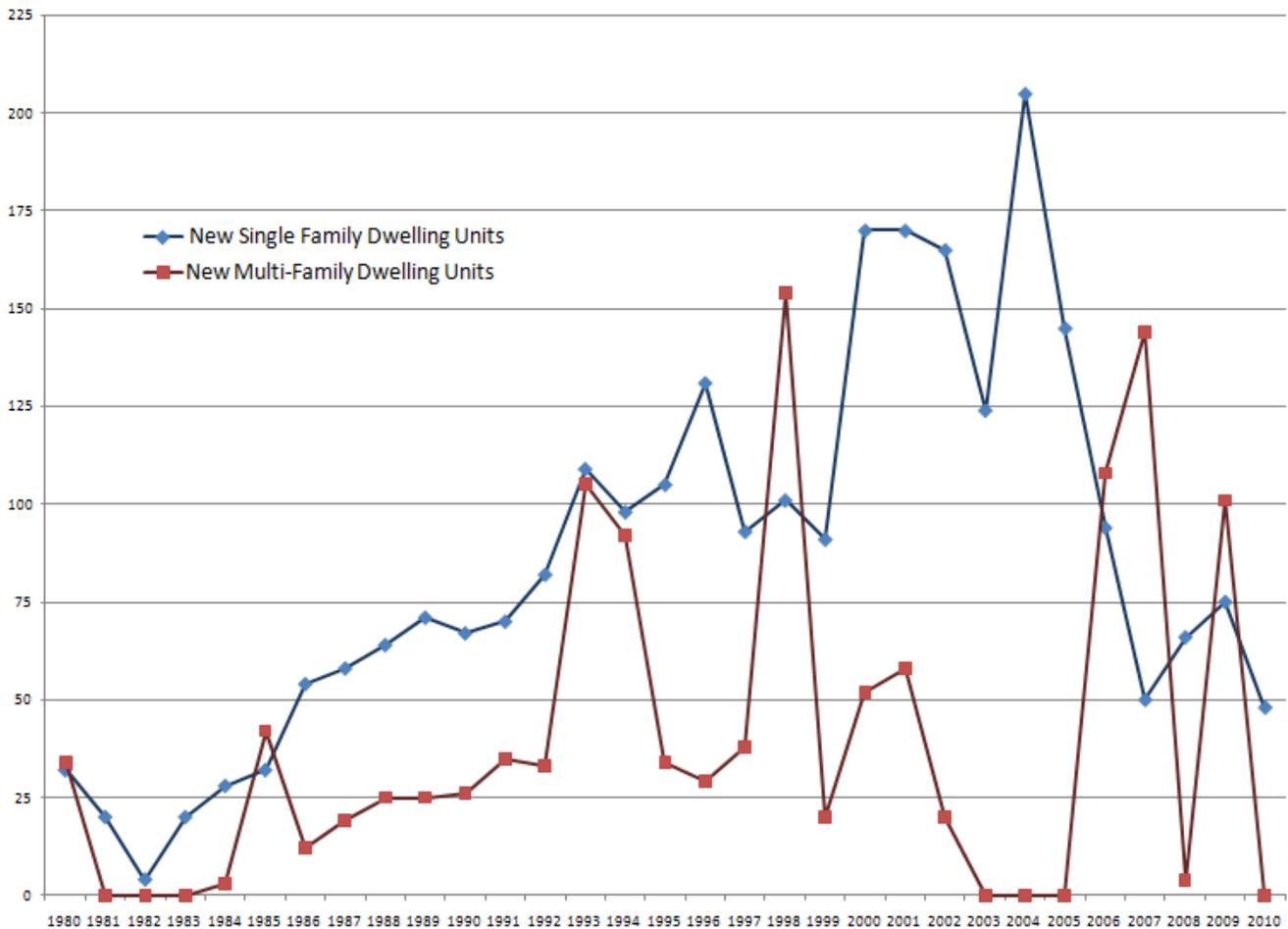


Figure C: Annual building permit activity in the City of Wadsworth 1980-2010

The above housing and population data can be used for the purpose of planning for the future by forecasting potential growth scenarios. An issue with this type of forecast is that building activity fluctuates from year to year as illustrated in Figure C. Evaluating a range of forecasts provides a broader perspective on potential future outcomes. Two permit activity-based scenarios have been prepared including a “low rate” of building for the future based on the average permits issued in the city since 1980, and a “high rate” that reflects the building activity in the last 10 years. The forecasted population is derived by assuming a vacancy rate of 5% (which is slightly less than the 7.6% rate reported in 2010), and an occupancy of 2.51 persons per dwelling (which is the average persons per occupied dwelling in the city in 2010). The population forecasts in Table 5 are based on building permit trends and are rounded to the nearest ten.

TABLE 5: POPULATION FORECAST BASED ON BUILDING PERMIT TRENDS						
			2010	2015	2020	2025
Low Permit Rate			21,576	23,010	24,490	25,970
High Permit Rate			21,576	23,480	25,400	27,320

POPULATION GROWTH ASSESSMENT

Forecasting population is a challenge because it is impossible to predict the future. However, using historic trends to create an estimate of future growth that may occur provides a point of comparison for how long it may take a community to reach a certain population or to reach “buildout”. These forecasts were developed for planning purposes and are intended to provide a basis for discussion about what is seen as an appropriate, acceptable amount of growth in the future. Too much growth in a short amount of time may overwhelm the city’s resources, but growth that is less than projected can also impact projected tax revenues.

Based on the summary of possible growth rates and historical building permit and population growth trends above, along with the knowledge that the current economy will impact housing starts in the next few years, two alternative growth forecasts have been developed. The “low rate” forecast represents an average annual growth rate of 1.0% - a growth rate that is significantly lower than that experienced over the last four decades. The “high rate” forecast represents an average annual growth rate of 1.6%, a rate closer to what the city has experienced in the last two decades. Each scenario is summarized below in [Table 6](#) and illustrated in [Figure D](#). A key concern to note is that if the high rate of growth is achieved, it will require the city to accommodate an additional 926 dwelling units over a 15 year period (approximately 62 units per year) more than the low rate.

TABLE 6: FUTURE POPULATION FORECAST SCENARIOS FOR WADSWORTH TO 2025

Forecast	2010	2015	2020	2025	<u>New</u> Population (2010-2025)	<u>New</u> Dwelling Units *	<u>New Dwelling</u> Units Annually
Low Rate (1.0%)	21,567	22,667	23,823	25,039	3,472	1,384	93
High Rate (1.6%)	21,567	23,348	25,277	27,365	5,798	2,310	154

* The number of new dwelling units was calculated based on the assumption of 2.51 persons per dwelling unit.

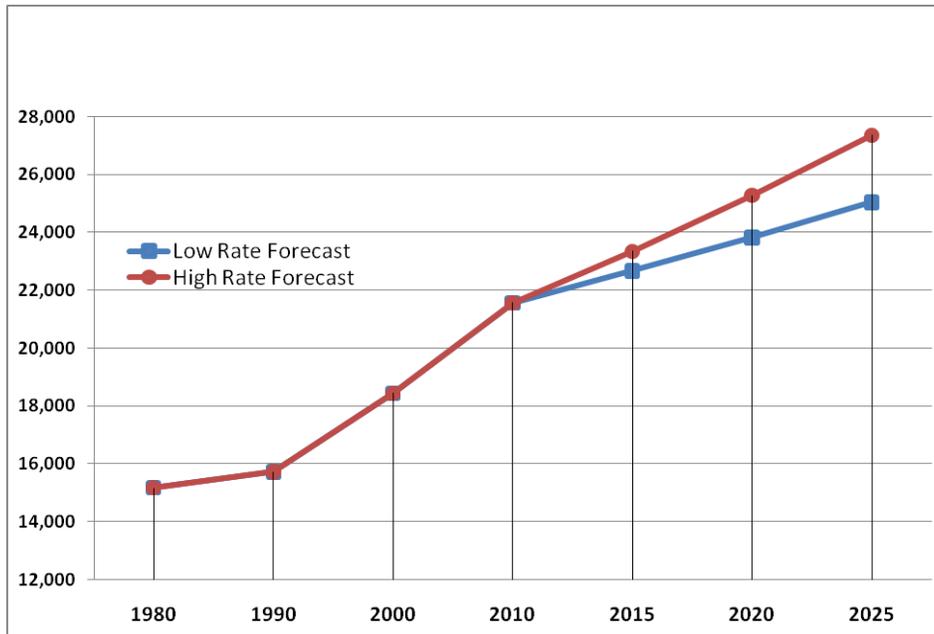


Figure D: Illustration of a low rate growth forecast and high rate growth forecast for the City of Wadsworth.

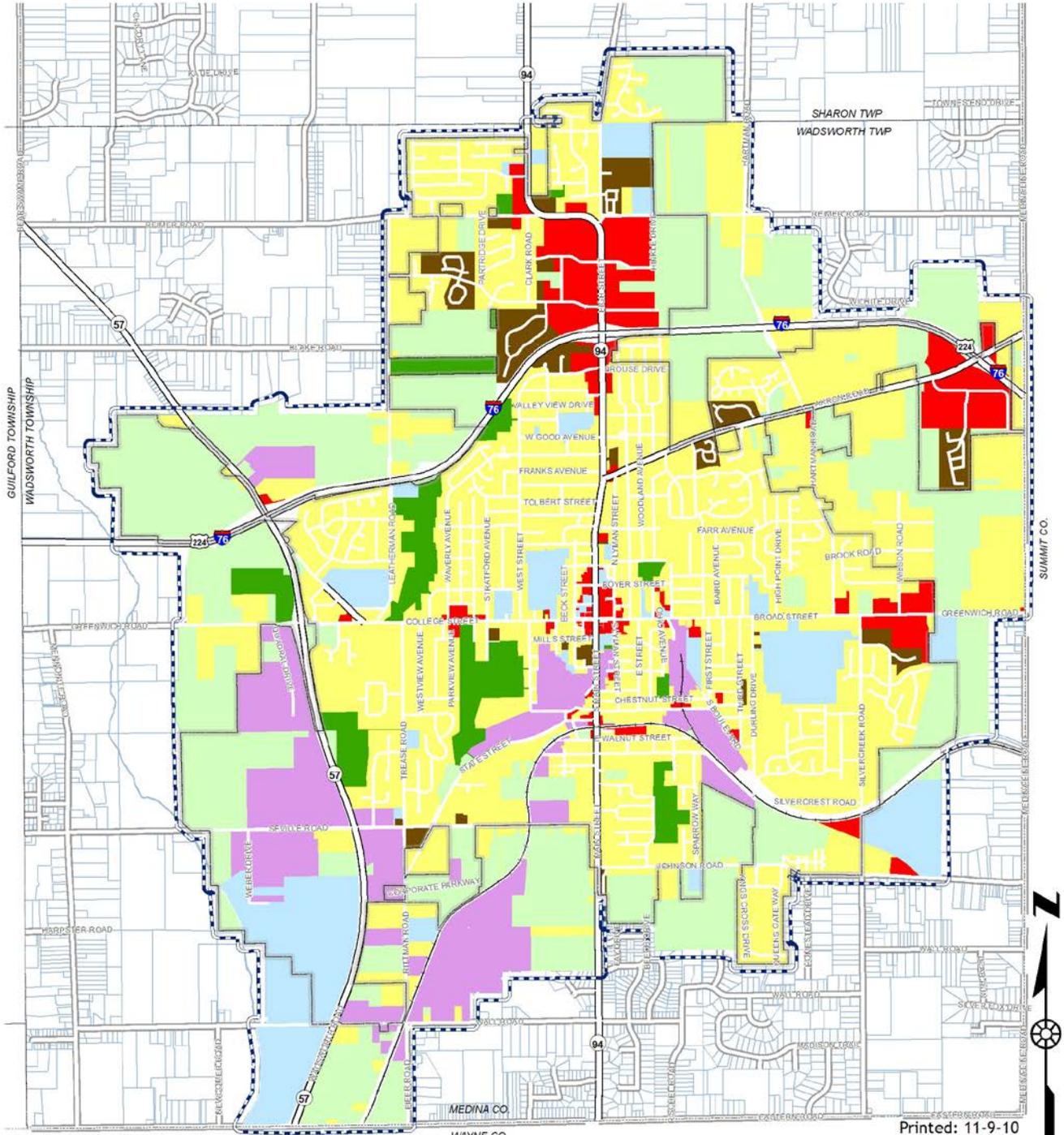
Basic Inventories

EXISTING LAND USE

An assessment of how the land within Wadsworth and the study area is currently being used is an important piece of information that must be evaluated in any land use planning effort. The study area boundary was modified from the 1996 Comprehensive Plan for reasons discussed in more detail on the following pages. Property information and aerial photography available through Medina County's Geographic Information System (GIS mapping) and tax data, along with input from staff, helped establish an updated existing land use map (See Map 1). This map classifies property in the study area within the following land use categories:

- **Agricultural or Vacant** properties are areas that are maintained as farmland, either for crops or for the raising of livestock, or are properties that are not currently used for any use listed below. Large residential properties also fall within this category due to the potential for future development.
- **Single-Family/Detached Residential** uses include those properties with a single, detached dwelling unit located on a single parcel.
- **Multi-Family/Attached Residential** uses cover areas where there are multiple dwelling units, attached to one another, located on a single parcel. This category may include apartment buildings, townhomes, duplexes, two-family homes, and other attached housing.
- **Commercial/Office** uses cover those areas where their primary use is the provision of goods and services to the general public in a neighborhood or suburban commercial center, and office establishments that provide executive, management, administrative, medical, dental, or professional services in either small or large-scale office buildings.
- **Industrial** uses include the manufacturing and production of goods and/or services with little to no commercial or office use related to the main industrial use.
- **Public or Institutional** uses are properties and structures used for the provision of services related to the general public or institutions. These uses include religious places of worship, schools, government buildings, and other public uses.
- **Public Utility** uses are properties that are used for provision of public electric, water, sanitary sewer, telecommunications and other utility-type services.
- **Parks and Recreational** uses are properties used for public open space and recreational uses such as playgrounds, ball fields, horse trails, and other local or regional park lands.

Map 1 – Existing Land Use Map



Existing Land Use

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Agricultural, Undeveloped or Vacant | Industrial | Growth Study Area |
| Single-Family Residential | Public or Institutional | Wadsworth Boundary |
| Multi-Family Residential | Parks and Recreation | |
| Commercial and Office | | |

Printed: 11-9-10
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Some areas have experienced changes in land use since the preparation of the 1996 plan. For example, several new single-family developments in the city now occupy areas located north of Reimer Road, north of Akron Road, and along Silvercreek and Hartman Roads. Multi-family residential development occurred in several locations, including in the Great Oaks Trail and Grant Allen Way areas. Outside the city, new residential developments are located in the southeast quadrant of Wadsworth Township, in the northwest area of Wadsworth Township, south of Reimer Road, and in the southwest portion of Sharon Township, east of Bonita Road. There has also been an increase in commercial land uses with most of the new growth focused along the northern areas of High Street and at the I-76/Akron Road interchange.

As an alternative to listing the breakdown of land uses within each jurisdiction, [Figure E](#) illustrates the percentage of each land use found within either the city or in the township(s) that comprise the study area. This better illustrates land use issues such as the fact that all of the land used for multi-family/attached residential is located in the city but, not surprisingly, almost all of the agricultural and vacant land is found outside of the city. [Table 7](#) provides the breakdown of land uses, by acreage, in each of the jurisdictions as seen in the existing land use map.

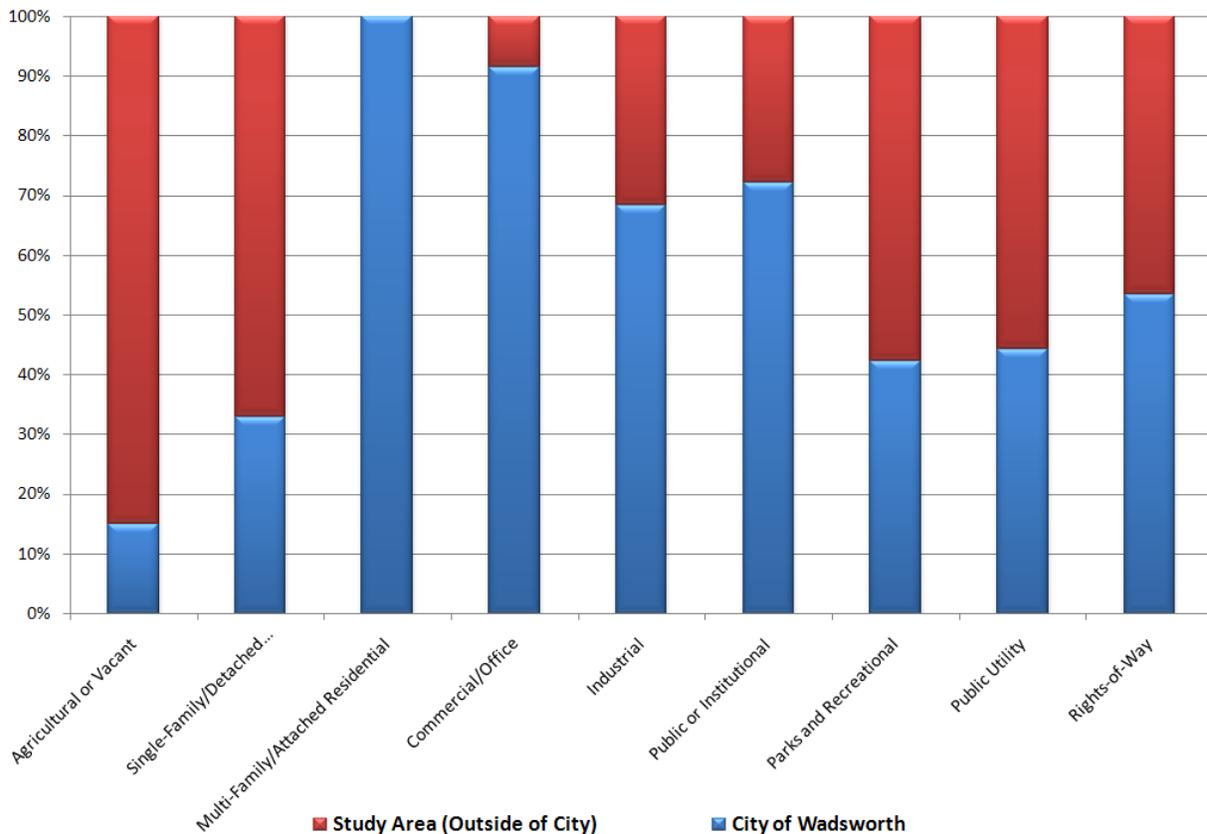


Figure E: Ratio of Existing Land Uses in the Study Area

TABLE 7: EXISTING LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Land Use Classification	Total Acres	City of Wadsworth	Wadsworth Township	Sharon Township (Partial)
Agricultural or Vacant	7,606	1,147 (15.1%)	4,730 (62.2%)	1,729 (22.7%)
Single-Family/Detached Residential	8,860	2,914 (32.9%)	3,821 (43.1%)	2,125 (24.0%)
Multi-Family/Attached Residential	259	259 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Commercial/Office	485	444 (91.5%)	9 (1.9%)	32 (6.6%)
Industrial	771	527 (68.4%)	244 (31.6%)	0 (0%)
Public or Institutional	378	273 (72.2%)	30 (7.9%)	75 (19.9%)
Parks and Recreation	590	250 (42.4%)	322 (54.6%)	18 (3.0%)
Public Utility	466	207 (44.4%)	259 (55.6%)	0 (0%)
Rights-of-Way	1,490	797 (53.5%)	553 (37.1%)	140 (9.4%)
Total	20,905	6,818 (32.6%)	9,968 (47.7%)	4,119 (19.7%)

Percentages in parenthesis are the percentage of that land use category for the entire study area.

DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Population and housing growth was discussed in the previous section in terms of how much growth the city might anticipate if the general trends continue, given both a low and high rate of growth. Knowing how much growth the city might anticipate is very important to a planning process but knowing *where* that growth will occur (as well as in what form it may occur) may be even more important. A development capacity analysis is a simple analysis of how much new development the city can accommodate if all land with some potential for development is developed in accordance with the existing zoning. It is assumed that land classified as agricultural, undeveloped or vacant has at least *some* potential for development. This land, along with any residential lots with a total area of more than 5 acres, was aggregated and then categorized into Potential Development Areas (PDAs) based on existing zoning districts. Map 2 shows the location of all of the PDAs by zoning classification for the plan's study area.

As noted at the beginning of this section, the current plan's study area boundary is different than the 1996 plan. The size of the current study area has been greatly reduced from the study area defined in the 1996 plan. The 1996 plan included all of the city and Wadsworth Township. Plan revisions adopted in 2004 extended the study area into southern parts of Sharon Township.

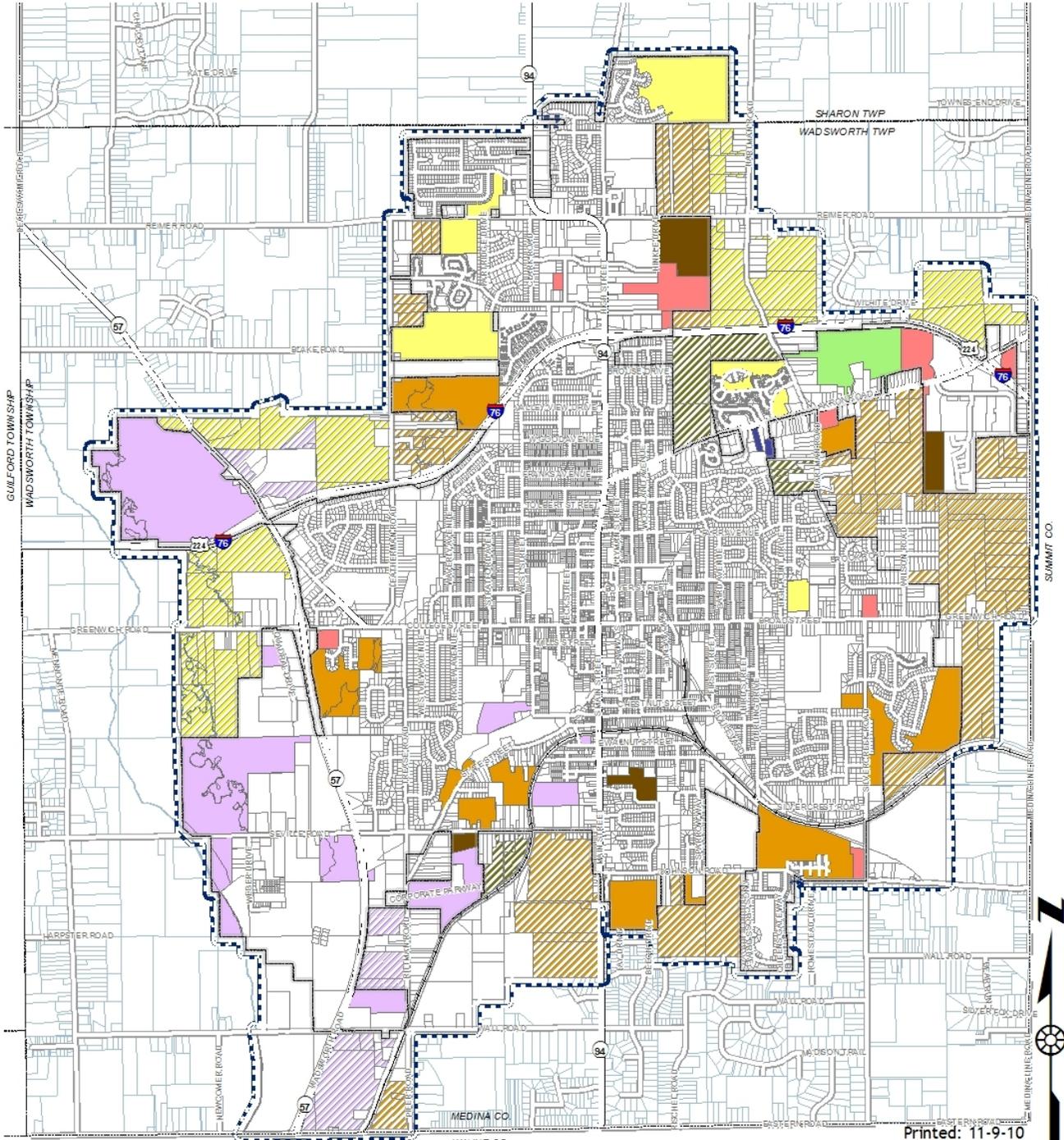
Based on the 1996 plan, that study area could have accommodated over *nine times* the projected population growth. Given the extensive amount of land in the 1996 study area and the fact that annexations are typically "developer-driven" and that it is highly unlikely that public utilities will be extended to service all of the land area shown in the 1996 plan, this plan reduced the study area to the areas where it is reasonable to expect future annexations to occur (e.g. those areas where utility extensions are possible). This "new" study area will still be more than adequate to accommodate future growth.

For these reasons, Map 2 illustrates a smaller study area than was defined in 1996. It is important to remember that even though the city includes these areas in the plan study areas, the township(s) still maintain authority over land use and development in their own jurisdictions until such a time that the land is annexed into Wadsworth.

Table 8 illustrates the total amount of land within PDAs, by zoning, for the entire study area, broken down by the city and by Wadsworth Township (no PDAs in the study area are located in unincorporated Sharon Township). In order to estimate the potential single-family units that could be constructed in the study area, the total acreage of land zoned within each distinct zoning district was reduced by 15% (to account for streets and other required dedications) and then divided by the required lot size.

TABLE 8: DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY WITHIN THE WADSWORTH STUDY AREA			
Zoning District	Acres	Minimum Lot Size	Potential Single-Family Units
PDAs within the City of Wadsworth			
LDR	70.9	20,000 sq. ft.	131
R-1	231.0	11,250 sq. ft.	760
R-2	380.0	10,500 sq. ft.	1,312
R-3	92.9	9,000 sq. ft.	382
C-1	18.6	---	---
C-3	58.5	---	---
C-4	3.0	---	---
C-5	22.8	---	---
I-1	287.2	---	---
I-2	233.8	---	---
Total	1,398.7	---	2,585
PDAs within Wadsworth Township			
R-1	497.2	87,120 sq. ft.	211
R-2	865.7	65,340 sq. ft.	490
R-3	237.2	32,670 sq. ft.	268
I-1	145.3	---	---
I-2	84.6	---	---
Total	1,830.0	---	969
STUDY AREA TOTAL	3,228.7	---	3,554

Map 2 – Potential Development Areas (PDA) Map



Potential Development Areas

City PDA by Zoning

- Low Density Residential
- R-1 Residential
- R-2 Residential
- R-3 Residential
- Commercial Zoning
- Industrial Zoning

Township PDA by Zoning

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Wadsworth Township</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R-1 R-2 R-3 Industrial | <p>Sharon Township</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPD Sharon R-1 Growth Study Area Wadsworth Boundary |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Given that the highest population forecasted in this plan update (see Table 6) would result in an additional 2,310 dwelling units, the city has enough residentially zoned land to accommodate the growth within the **current** municipal boundaries without further land annexations, as reflected in Table 8. While Table 8 does not take into account any reduction in developable land area due to environmental constraints (e.g., floodplains, groundwater wells – See Map 3) or whether vacant land is available for development, it also does not take into account that existing residential lands could be rezoned to a higher density zoning or that nonresidential lands could be rezoned for residential uses. Either case would alter the number of potential dwelling units that could be constructed within the current city boundaries.

Evaluating the available land in Wadsworth Township proved to be a little more difficult. As zoned, the land within Wadsworth Township’s portion of the study area could provide room for an additional 969 units based on current township zoning densities. However, if this land were annexed and given the city’s R-1 zoning (11,250 square foot minimum lot area) designation, this acreage could then accommodate 5,266 housing units. This, combined with the PDAs in the city, provides for a development capacity almost three times greater than what is forecasted within the study area through 2025.

This kind of comparative analysis between population/housing projections (land demand) and the capacity of land for new development (land capacity) is informational for policy purposes. In evaluating the amount of development capacity available in the current city boundaries, the city can begin to ask such questions as:

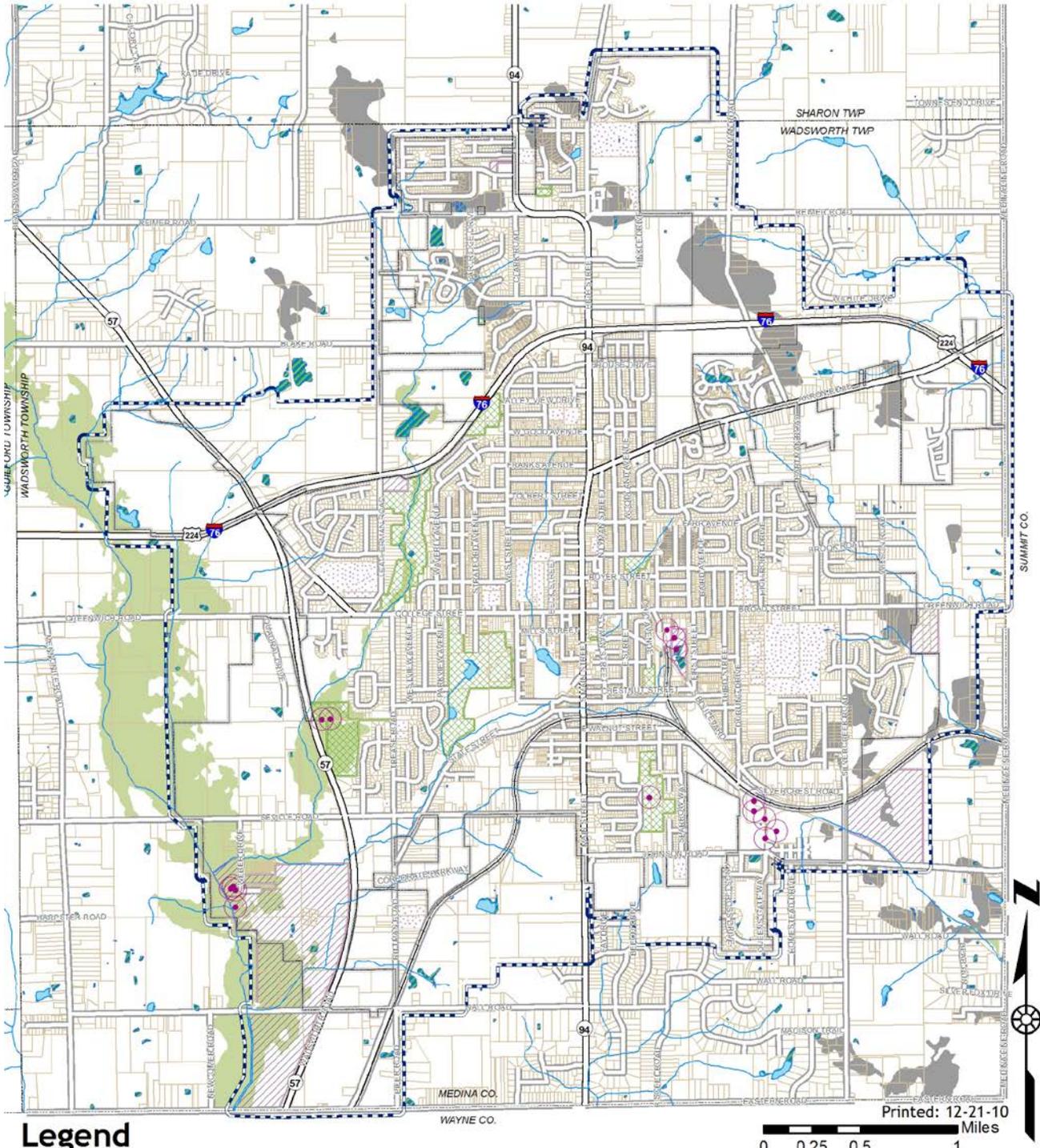
- Do we need to, or should we actively, seek annexation of land in order to preserve future growth areas within the city?
- Should priority be placed on growth and redevelopment in the existing city boundaries over expansion of those boundaries?
- Is the public more concerned about how much growth will occur *or* where the growth will occur and what the “character” of this new growth will be?

All of these questions, and more, were explored as part of the vision development process described in the next section.

Nothing in this section or in this plan should be construed as being either “pro” or “anti-annexation”. This section merely points out that with the given land inventories, development capacities and forecasted population increase, all growth expected over the next ten to fifteen years could be accommodated within the current municipal boundaries.

The decision as to whether land in an adjacent township should be annexed into the city (regardless of whether or not that land falls within or outside of the plan’s study area) should be made on a case by case basis, by evaluating the annexation against the plan’s policies, as well as weighing the anticipated benefits to be derived from the annexation against the cost of servicing and maintaining future public infrastructure in the area considered for annexation.

Map 3 – Environmental Constraints Map



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| Growth Study Area | Floodzones | Wells and 300' Protection Zones |
| Wadsworth Boundary | Schools and Institutions | |
| Streams & Rivers | Parks | |
| Water Features | Airport and Public Land | |
| Wetlands | | |
| Mines | | |

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2010 Vision and Goals

The vision and goals section of a plan lays out a planning framework for a community by documenting adopted policy on what is important to the city and what the long term goals are (i.e., what does the city want to be in the future). It helps establish policy for current and future decision-makers in the city. The vision and goals for this plan update were developed over a number of months utilizing a variety of forms of public involvement including public workshops, a community-wide survey, and involvement by a dedicated steering committee that represented a cross-section of community interests. Below is a summary of the issues identified as part of this planning process followed by the established vision and goals for the future.

ISSUES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE 2010 PLAN UPDATE

The first step in establishing a vision and goals for a plan is to identify the issues of importance to the community. This was accomplished through public outreach with the general public at a kick-off meeting in May 2009 and several meetings with the steering committee. The specific issues identified, and their relative priority, are included as Appendix C. For the most part, the issues and priorities could be generally grouped into the following eight categories:

- 1) **Infrastructure.** The importance of public infrastructure was one of the top ranked priorities with many people identifying issues related to the protection of the city's water resources and developing "green" energy. Quality infrastructure is also viewed as an important factor in attracting jobs and industry.
- 2) **Road and Traffic Improvements.** Measures to improve traffic circulation and access was a high priority to many participants who identified a range of specific intersection, traffic signal, widening, alignment, and road extension projects with specific issues raised about various main roadways throughout Wadsworth.
- 3) **Downtown.** Participants see encouraging infill development and promoting jobs in downtown as an important priority for the future of Wadsworth.
- 4) **Transit.** There is support to expand transit service in the city and for coordinating planning efforts as well as system and service improvements with Medina County Transit.
- 5) **Parks and Trails.** Expanding park land and improving connections between parks and neighborhoods are high priorities to many residents.
- 6) **Redevelopment.** Redevelopment of existing areas is identified as preferable to new development on "greenfield" areas. Participants specifically identified the redevelopment of areas south of town as a priority.
- 7) **Economic Development.** Jobs and economic development received a number of votes and many see economic development as contingent on the city providing incentives for job attraction and investing in infrastructure improvements.
- 8) **Housing.** Maintaining, improving, and providing a variety of housing types and maintaining property values ranked as an important priority.

2010 VISION AND POLICIES

The public feedback provided early in the process, along with the identification of the key issues as noted earlier, helped frame the vision for this plan. The issues were considered and categorized under eight different themes (see the sidebar) that represent the primary framework upon which the comprehensive plan update is formed. These themes encompass all of the priorities described in the previous section.

Within each of the themes is an overarching goal, which is the desired “end state” or target that the city will try to achieve over the long-term. These goals are then followed by a series of policy statements that will provide a basis for future decision-making within the city. Supplementing these goals and policies is the Implementation Strategies section of the plan that outlines specific actions the city can take to work toward accomplishing individual goals.

Planning Themes for the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Update

- Land Use and Development
- Neighborhoods and Housing
- Services and Infrastructure
- Community Mobility
- Downtown Wadsworth
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Economic Development
- Resource Conservation

The goals and policies are intended to be *aspirational* in nature and *do not* set out the specific actions it will take to achieve the goals. Instead, policy statements describe the intent of how the community wants to address the issues in order to achieve each goal. These statements are intended to transcend changes in leadership and are what the city can aim for during the implementation of the various strategies. The city should not use this plan to choose or necessarily prioritize one theme over another. Instead, the plan should be used to help find the best balance among the themes in order to achieve the shared vision of the community.

The themes are also intended to be used collectively since most development projects overlap several themes. For example, the Land Use and Development, Neighborhoods and Housing, Community Mobility, and Resource Conservation themes all apply to the development of a neighborhood oriented commercial use. Similarly, multiple themes – and the policies of each – are relevant to a mixed-use project that includes office, recreational and residential uses. The themes and policies listed for each should not be viewed in a vacuum. Instead it is expected that various policies from multiple themes will be used to guide future land use and development decisions.

THEME 1: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Wadsworth will guide current and future land use and development so that the pace, quality, and amount of growth enhances the community character and quality of life while not overburdening community infrastructure or the ability to provide public services. Wadsworth will guide current and future land use and development so as to enhance the growth of our community in all areas of the city.

Policies for Land Use and Development:

- Encourage, when economically viable, redevelopment and infill development to increase vibrancy in existing neighborhoods and commercial districts.

- Create a more uniform and attractive appearance while still providing for flexibility in site layouts and building appearances.
- Improve the quality and character of both new and infill development.
- Limit the expansion of “commercial-only” zoning districts to help reduce the over-saturation of the retail market land base.
- Encourage high activity uses in specified areas (e.g., downtown, High Street/Great Oaks area, etc.) that attract people to the city throughout the day, every day of the week (e.g., restaurants, bars, entertainment facilities, evening retail hours), helping create the “critical mass” needed for the long-term viability of nonresidential uses while providing activities and services to residents.
- Enhance the aesthetics of the city’s highly visible corridors and gateways.
- Balance the mixture of land uses so that people have a place to live, work, and play all within the community of Wadsworth.
- Encourage a mixture of uses both within buildings and within neighborhoods.
- Encourage use of energy efficiency construction, sustainable development patterns, and best management practices for new and redeveloped buildings and developments (e.g., LEED certified buildings and development), by removing regulatory barriers that may exist, creating incentives for energy efficiency, and improving building and zoning codes to support best practices.
- Incorporate the elements of the other planning documents, studies, and plans adopted by the city in the development process (e.g., Medina County All-Hazard & Flood Mitigation Plan, corridor and access management plans, etc.).

THEME 2: NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Goal: Wadsworth will be a community where families and individuals of different demographic and economic backgrounds can find affordable, quality, and diverse housing options.

Policies for Neighborhoods and Housing:

- Preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods.
- Support sensitive infill and redevelopment that maintains the context of the surrounding neighborhood areas, where appropriate.
- Incorporate open space and improved urban spaces within new developments to provide a mixture of passive and active recreational opportunities throughout the community.
- Improve the quality and character of both the built environment through appropriate design and “streetscaping” standards for renovation, redevelopment and new projects.
- Promote walkable neighborhoods by providing for the creation of convenience services within close proximity of residents.

- Encourage a healthy balance between single-family detached uses and attached residential uses that allow residents to “age-in-place” and that also provide housing opportunities for young professionals.
- Provide a safe and secure environment to reduce crime and protect persons and property.
- Encourage an interconnected street network to maintain high levels of safety and emergency service response times throughout the community.

THEME 3: SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: The city will provide high-quality, well maintained, and accessible services, utilities, and facilities to meet the needs of residents and businesses to ensure the safety of Wadsworth citizens.

Policies for Services and Infrastructure:

- Strive to exceed minimum standards for police, fire, and emergency medical services in staffing and response times.
- Maintain state of the art infrastructure and public facilities.
- Require the provision of adequate public facilities, including water and sewer, prior to any new development or major expansions of existing development.
- Maintain the city’s policy that the provision of city-owned water shall only occur within current city boundaries or upon annexation into the city unless the city enters formal agreements to provide water to areas outside the city through Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) or other special revenue sharing arrangements in lieu of annexation.
- Support the educational system in Wadsworth by considering the impacts of new development on the school system, engaging the schools in the planning process, working with the school district on joint projects and other collaborations.

THEME 4: COMMUNITY MOBILITY

Goal: Wadsworth will have a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network that provides appropriate access and mobility to all users and areas of the community.

Policies for Community Mobility:

- Require “complete streets” for new and redevelopment projects that will encompass aspects of vehicular (roads), pedestrian (sidewalks), and bicycle (paths or lanes) transit in the design of the street. (See the sidebar.)
- Offer a variety of transit options to residents and businesses.

<p>Complete Streets</p> <p>Complete streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, including, but not limited to, motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit and school bus riders, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders. “All users” includes people of all ages and abilities. The concept integrates sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit stops, and safe crossings into the initial design of streets to reduce expense of retrofitting in the future.</p>

- Promote connectivity in new developments by minimizing the use of cul-de-sacs.
- Seek and support opportunities for regional coordination of public transit options.
- Implement access management practices on major thoroughfares as recommended in other plans and policies (e.g., the Medina County All-Hazard & Flood Mitigation Plan and other access management plans) adopted by the City.

THEME 5: DOWNTOWN WADSWORTH

Goal: Wadsworth will have a vibrant, active, and attractive downtown that continues to be a hub of civic, commercial, and cultural activity.

Policies for Downtown Wadsworth:

- Maintain and enhance the activity levels of downtown businesses.
- Allow for the expansion of the downtown form outside of the current Central Business District (CBD) boundaries.
- Promote quality design of new buildings and improvements without regulating the architectural details of individual buildings – focus on the overall urban form of the building to the site (e.g. building height, roof shape & slope, fenestration, setback, etc.).
- Encourage the development of denser housing alternatives in and around downtown to support the business core and provide housing options.
- Maintain and expand the mixture of commercial, service, office, residential and civic land uses throughout downtown.
- Encourage development of housing in the downtown and immediate vicinity. Downtown housing should be of a density and design that preserves and strengthens the character of the downtown’s built environment.
- Encourage reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings. The eclectic mixture existing in downtown contributes to its character and ambiance. New construction should have a scale and design that strengthens these attributes.

THEME 6: PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Goal: The city will have a system of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces that meet the needs of the community and that are located so as to be accessible to users.

Policies for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space:

- Incorporate open space and improved urban spaces within new developments to create private open space; connect these with existing parks and private open spaces when possible.
- Reduce development and maintenance costs by protecting key natural resources (such as floodplains, riparian zones, steep slopes, etc.). Natural areas identified in previously adopted plans and studies should be protected.

- Target new parks and improvements to the park and recreation system in areas where there is a lack of current services and facilities.
- Design parks and recreational uses/facilities based on the needs of all current residents and the anticipated needs of future residents.

THEME 7: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: The city will have a diversified tax base that has a mixture of appropriately located nonresidential land uses that positively contribute to the quality of life in Wadsworth.

Policies for Economic Development:

- Promote and support the commercial and residential viability of downtown Wadsworth.
- Encourage commercial redevelopment by supporting and encouraging new business ventures at existing commercial sites that have exceeded their “design life”.
- Attract new businesses to the area that will provide a diverse tax base and employment for residents of all ages.
- Market the city’s positive qualities, demographics and location.
- Seek regional coordination with both Medina and Summit Counties and all of the surrounding jurisdictions.
- Advocate a business-friendly approach to providing city services by streamlining review processes for those projects that meet or exceed city development standards; making decisions as transparent to the public as possible; and promoting resources that are available to new and existing businesses.

THEME 8: RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Goal: The city will be more sustainable in its day-to-day operations and in the development of the community for the next generations of residents and businesses. The city will adopt procedures, policies, and implementation practices to promote development patterns that conserve the community’s natural, fiscal, and cultural resources in ways that enhance the existing built environment and balance the needs of the existing residents and businesses while maintaining resources for the next generation.

Policies for Resource Conservation:

- Encourage mixed-use development projects that will enhance walkability.
- Provide opportunities for the conservation of our valuable resources including water, environmental, and air.
- Allow for the use of alternative energy systems such as solar, wind, and geothermal.
- Encourage community gardens and opportunities for urban agriculture that promote local food production.
- Be a responsible member of the community by promoting and utilizing sustainable practices in the day-to-day city operations.

- Encourage maintenance and reuse of the existing built environment to reduce the amount of energy and materials needed for new construction and to utilize previous investments in infrastructure.
- Coordinate efforts with other jurisdictions to encourage increased levels of recycling, including use of the Medina County Central Processing Facility.
- Protect groundwater wells from the impact of development to ensure that the water supply quality and quantity is not degraded.

Future Development Plan

In the development of the city's vision for its future, it became clear from comments received at the steering committee meetings and public open house discussions that people are concerned about the character and quality of new growth more so than the precise amount of growth. Two examples of this are:

- Higher density residential developments, while certainly not appropriate in every location (especially where adequate access to services and infrastructure does not exist or cannot be reasonably provided), are no longer exclusively perceived as a “negative”. Given appropriate design standards and the possibility of mixing in other nonresidential uses, higher densities are seen as a way to enhance the city's vibrancy and vitality.
- Large-scale, “retail-only” developments (e.g. big-box stores, destination retail centers, etc.) are no longer seen as the “economic engine” that drives the local economy. Many people stated that this type of development pattern should be strictly limited to areas around highway interchanges where services, infrastructure and access exist to accommodate the large amount of traffic they generate.

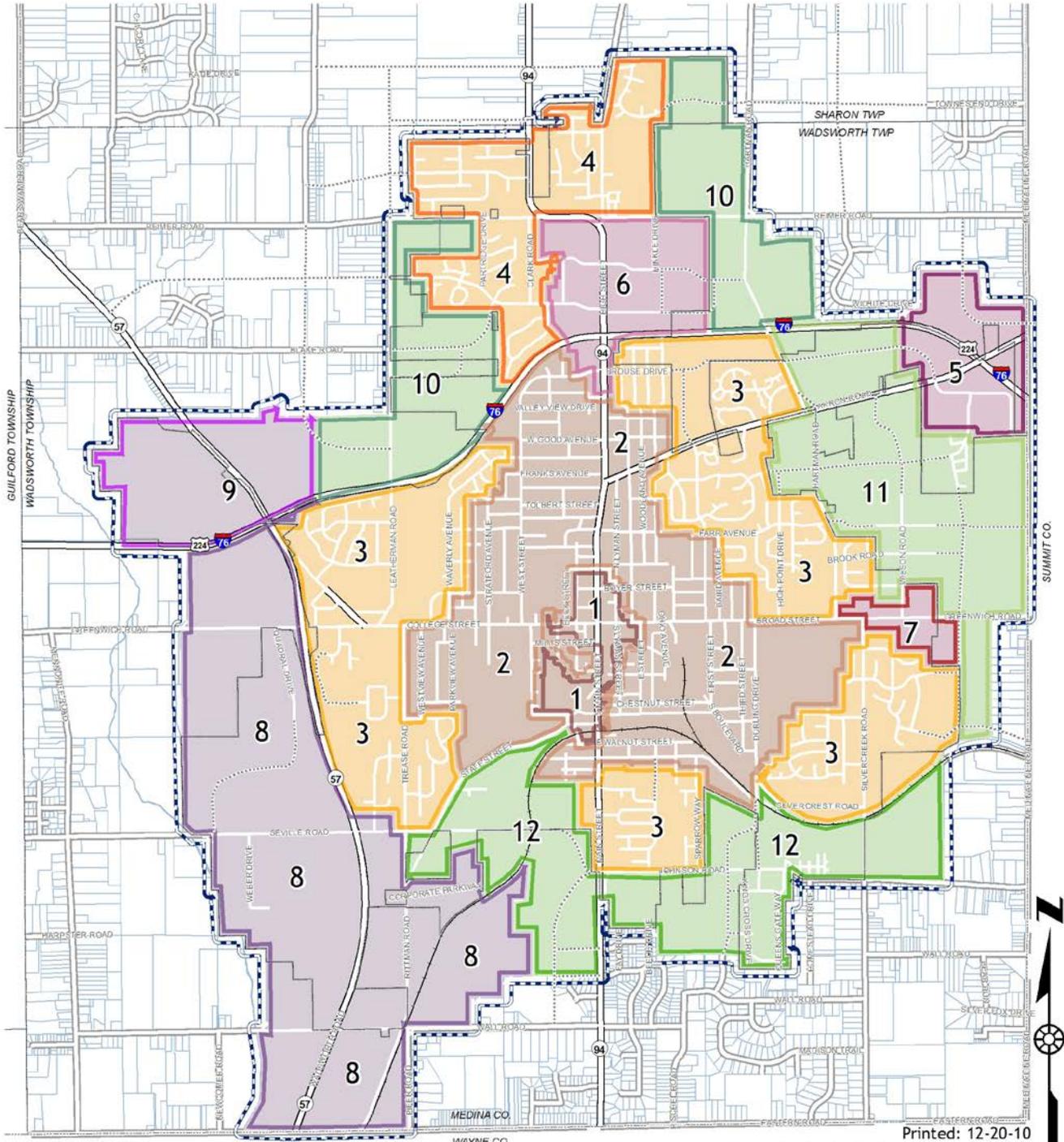
This plan recognizes that both of the development examples above may have an appropriate role to play in the future development of the city.

The future development plan that follows on the next few pages puts the vision set forth previously onto a map of the community. As with the 1996 plan, the city was divided into a number of distinct areas. In 1996, the categories were based on land use “concepts” that proposed appropriate land use and general standards for control of development. This plan update takes the land use concept one step further by dividing the city into 12 *character areas*. The character areas are grouped into five sub-categories as indicated on Map 4. The character areas address land use issues in a more targeted manner and they also include recommendations for a higher level of development standards and policies that focus more on maintaining or enhancing the desired character of each area.

As with the policy statements in the previous section, the primary objectives under each character area are designed to provide guidance for future decisions related to the character area and do not set out a specific action. The development policies that follow each list of objectives are intended to be more specific by outlining various standards and policies for development within the character area or any related sub-areas.

Note that the proposed roads shown on the Character Area maps represent the recommended general alignment of future roads and will require more detailed engineering evaluation prior to actual construction. The proposed roads correspond to the proposed alignments indicated in the Transportation Plan (see Map A-1).

Map 4 – Citywide Character Area Map



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| <p>Urban Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Downtown & South End 2 Core Neighborhoods <p>Established Neighborhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Established Neighborhoods 4 Great Oaks Neighborhoods | <p>Activity Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 I-76/Akron Road Interchange 6 High Street Regional Interchange 7 Broad Street Commercial Center <p>Employment and Industrial Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Wadsworth Industrial Sector 9 Northwest Interchange (I-76/SR 57) | <p>New Growth Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 New Growth Area North 11 New Growth Area East 12 New Growth Area South <p>..... Proposed New Roads</p> <p> Growth Study Area</p> |
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URBAN CORE AREAS

CHARACTER AREA 1: DOWNTOWN & SOUTH END

Downtown and the South End (South Main Street) area of the city developed in the late 19th and early part of the 20th centuries. The Central Business District (CBD) and early neighborhoods typify the pattern of development found in towns and cities from this era, with the main intersection of two roadways forming the center of downtown and the regular gridded street pattern that flowed from this central intersection that helped establish the defining rectilinear street network within the urban core. The urban core represents the traditional, walkable, “main street” Wadsworth.

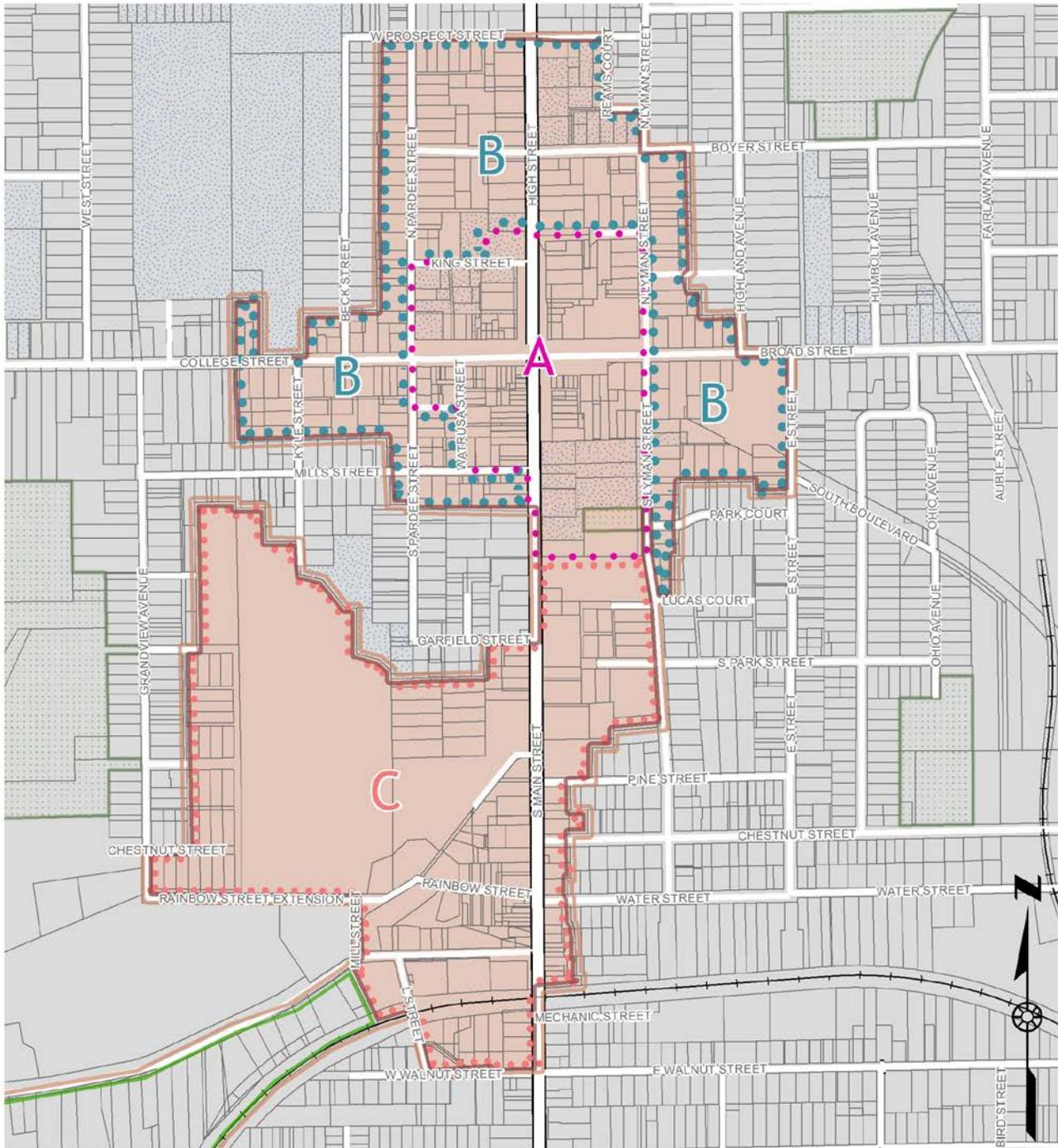
PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The following are the primary objectives for development in the Downtown & South End Character Area:

- Maintain the traditional downtown or “main street” character and form.
- Promote and enhance a healthy economy in the downtown by concentrating businesses in the core and allowing for higher density attached housing around the downtown fringe that will provide a critical mass of residents to support downtown and the community as a whole.
- Encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in the city’s core as a priority along with the former industrial area on Main Street, south of downtown, through the adaptive reuse of buildings and by the provision for a flexible mix of land uses.
- Allow for the continued existence of the mixture of commercial, industrial, and residential uses that have been historically present in this area.
- Improve the aesthetics of redevelopment through enhanced development standards and appropriate urban plantings and landscaping.



Map 5 – Downtown & South End Character Area Map



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| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas | Sub Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas | A-Central Business District |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Urban Core | B-Central Business District Fringe |
| Railroad | Parks | Downtown and South End | C-South End (South of Main Street) |
| | Airport and Public Land | | |

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Within the Downtown & South End Character Area are three distinct sub-areas with the Central Business District (CBD) being the core area of commercial, office, and mixed-use development that is associated with the downtown area. The second sub-area is the area directly outside of the CBD where the predominant use is single-family detached residential mixed with some stand-alone commercial uses that are all currently zoned for suburban commercial uses. A third sub-area is the South End along South Main Street, which shares similar characteristics of the CBD and the CBD fringe but has a broader mix of uses including some older industrial buildings and properties.

Sub-area A: The Central Business District (CBD)

1. The predominant uses in the CBD should be nonresidential uses such as retail commercial, offices, personal services, restaurants, and civic uses. Mixed-use buildings with offices, personal services, or residential uses on the upper floors are also appropriate throughout the CBD.
2. The current street grid and block pattern of development should be maintained with emphasis on enhancing pedestrian mobility and connectivity between downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
3. The focus of development and redevelopment in the CBD should be on following the existing urban form with buildings built to the back of the sidewalk (with exceptions for urban plazas and similar civic uses). Parking should be situated on-street, in parking garages, or to the side and rear of buildings.
4. Parks, plazas, and other public open spaces, like the bandstand on Broad Street, are important features in the downtown and should be maintained and enhanced to accommodate a range of activities and special events.
5. The public areas in the downtown area should include pedestrian-friendly features like raised sidewalks, street furniture, trees and landscaping.
6. The city should partner with businesses and landowners to identify and provide locations for shared parking.

Sub-area B: Central Business District Fringe

1. Flexibility should be given to allow for the expansion of the downtown mixed-use character into areas outside of the CBD, primarily along the two main arterials.
2. The current base of single-family detached residential uses in this sub-area is appropriate and should be allowed to continue. Building setbacks and the location of garages should be modified in order to replicate the existing building pattern.
3. Attached residential uses are also appropriate in this sub-area but should be located outside of the Central Business District. The following guidelines are appropriate for attached residential uses in this sub-area:
 - a. The maximum densities for attached residential should not exceed approximately 10 units per acre.

- b. Residential buildings should be more vertically oriented with two to three stories in height (e.g., townhomes, row houses, and vertically oriented multi-family dwellings) that are consistent with building heights in the CBD.
- c. Front yard setbacks should be minimal. Buildings should be allowed to be set to the sidewalk or have a small landscaping area between the building and sidewalk. Parking for these uses shall be located in a garage, on-street, or behind the building.
- d. Higher density housing may be appropriate but will need to incorporate improved open spaces as an integral part of the development.
- e. Design guidelines should be developed to ensure the quality of development as an incentive for the higher density residential.



Figure F: Examples of “urban scale” attached residential projects that would be appropriate in the areas surrounding the Wadsworth Central Business District.

Sub-area C: South End (South Main Street)

- 1. This area contains a mixture of large-scale, historic, industrial buildings; high-density residential, single-family residential uses; commercial uses; office uses; and a mixture of uses. This mixture of uses should be allowed to continue provided that redevelopment does not create increased “compatibility issues” between permitted uses.
- 2. Uses in this area may include single-family residential, attached residential, mixed-use commercial, office, light industrial, and live/work units (See Figure G.). The live/work units could be developed as a stand-alone use or could be integrated into the adaptive reuse of the existing industrial buildings.



Figure G: A live/work unit allows for residential development that contains designated space for a business that is more intense than a home office or home occupation but does not take away from the residential characteristic of the primary use.

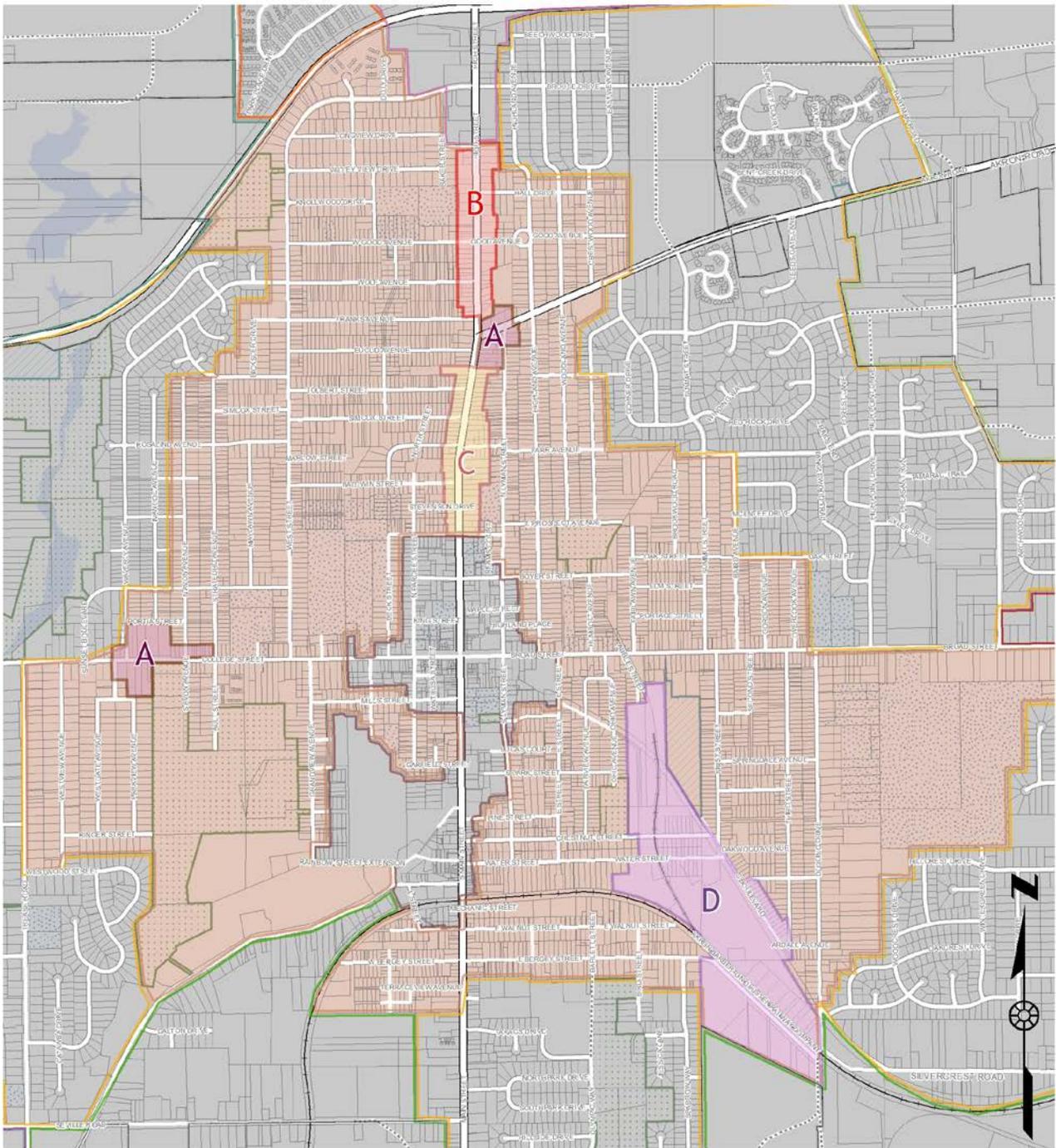
3. Efforts should be made to continue to improve the availability of parking without the creation of large parking areas. Parking lots should be appropriately screened and any large-scale redevelopment should encourage the use of structured parking. The city should consider partnering with businesses and landowners to address parking issues.
4. Additional development standards for landscaping, stormwater management, lighting, architecture, noise, and non-vehicular access should be established for this area to enhance the quality of new investments and reinvestment but also as a method of increasing “connectivity” or compatibility between new and existing uses.

CHARACTER AREA 2: CORE NEIGHBORHOODS

The city’s Core Neighborhoods comprise most of the older neighborhoods in the community that grew as an extension of the downtown area. These neighborhoods tend to be located on a grid street network with minimal use of cul-de-sacs. The Core Neighborhoods also tend to have a higher density than some of the newer neighborhoods around the outskirts of Wadsworth. These neighborhoods are a treasured urban form that the community would like to see maintained through preservation of the scale and intensity of development. There are four distinct “sub-areas”, each of which has their own specific development policies. These sub-areas are discussed later in this section and are identified as follows:

- **Sub-area A:** Neighborhood Business Areas
- **Sub-area B:** Transitional Business Area (High Street Corridor)
- **Sub-area C:** Attached Residential Area
- **Sub-area D:** Existing Industrial Area Uses

Map 6 – Core Neighborhoods Character Area Map



Legend

Growth Study Area	Public and Restricted Land	Wadsworth Character Areas	Printed: 12-20-10
Wadsworth_Boundary	Floodzones	All Other Areas	Feet
Proposed New Roads	Schools and Institutions	Urban Core	0 550 1,100 2,200
Railroad	Parks	Wadsworth Core Neighborhoods	Sub Areas
	Airport and Public Land	A-Neighborhood Business Area	B-Transitional Business Area
		C-Attached Residential Area	D-Existing Industrial Area

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The following are the primary objectives for development in the Core Neighborhoods Character Area:

- Maintain the traditional form of residential development and quality neighborhoods with a focus on single-family residential.
- Promote walkable neighborhoods by allowing for targeted, small-scale convenience uses and offices within this character area.
- Review and revise development regulations to ensure that infill development projects are compatible to the surrounding neighborhoods in terms of scale, density or intensity of use.
- Maintain safe traffic flow through primary transportation corridors and ensure that adequate right-of-way is provided to allow future transportation improvements in accordance with the City's Thoroughfare and access management plans.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

General Policies

The following policies apply to the entire character area with the exception of special sub-areas discussed after these policies:

1. The predominant character of the Core Neighborhoods is, and should continue to be, single-family residential uses at a density not to exceed approximately five to six units per acre, with provisions for densities as high as eight units per acre for areas surrounding the downtown core.
2. Accessory dwelling units should be allowed, with careful regulations related to size, location, and use, when attached to a garage or other detached building.
3. Infill buildings should be proportional to their lot sizes (e.g., large buildings should be placed on larger sites and vice-versa). Cues for this ratio should be taken from surrounding properties and nearby blocks on the same street.
4. The street network should typically be rectilinear or curvilinear but they should always create a grid of interconnected streets. The use of cul-de-sacs should be kept to a minimum and used only when topography or other natural constraints prohibit the reasonable connection of streets.
5. New schools, improved parks, and other institutions that will generate significant amounts of traffic should be located on collector or arterial roads designed to accommodate higher traffic volume in a safe manner.
6. Garages are not as highly visible in this character area as they may be in other areas of the city that developed after the 1950s & 1960s, and this development pattern should continue with any infill development or redevelopment. Garages should be detached from the house and located in the side and rear yard behind the home. When attached to the home they should be located at the side or rear of the main structure.
7. Tree lawns should be maintained throughout this character area.

8. The maintenance of mature shade trees is encouraged, particularly in redevelopment or infill projects.
9. Buffers should be provided between residential and nonresidential land uses to limit impacts on residential uses.
10. Development within primary transportation corridors, such as High Street, should plan for future transportation network improvements, including provision of adequate right-of-way and the implementation of access management principles to minimize the number of driveway curb openings onto the street.

Sub-area Development Policies

Sub-area A: Neighborhood Business Areas

Small-scale convenience retail, personal service, and office uses are appropriate at key intersections along arterial corridors when the uses meet the characteristics established below:

1. Uses should be limited to small offices or commercial uses that provide convenience goods and services to local residents and businesses.
2. Neighborhood business development should be limited to a total area of less than five acres or generally to the four corners of the intersection.
3. A neighborhood business center or district within the Core Neighborhoods must be complementary to the surrounding uses by respecting the scale and architectural form of the surrounding neighborhood. This may be accomplished by employing similar materials, building scale, building massing, and roof forms.
4. No nonresidential building or use should exceed 15,000 square feet in floor area.
5. Vertically mixed-use buildings are encouraged, with commercial and service uses on the ground floor and office, service and residential uses on the upper stories.
6. Parking should be located along the sides of buildings with some limited parking allowed in the front if such design prevents the location of a parking area adjacent to a single-family residential use.
7. A decorative fence or wall needs to be provided between any nonresidential or mixed-use structure and adjacent single-family residential uses. Such fence or wall should be supplemented with the planting of trees to further buffer the residential uses.
8. Signage and lighting should be limited in quantity, scale, and intensity to reduce visual clutter and impacts on surrounding residential uses.
9. Drive-through facilities should be prohibited and any outdoor dining or entertainment areas should be restricted in hours of use to prevent noise conflicts with residential neighbors.

10. A traffic impact analysis should be required and access management principles incorporated into the development of new business uses to mitigate the projected traffic impacts that will be generated by these uses.

Sub-area B: Transitional Business Area (High Street Corridor)

Non-retail office and personal service uses are appropriate uses for the High Street corridor, between I-76 and Akron Road, when the uses meet the characteristics established below:

1. Typical occupants in residential-scale business uses may include low-impact medical or dental offices, studios (architectural, interior design, photography, and artist), salons, spas, daycares, real estate offices, attorney offices, and other professional office or personal services. This area is not appropriate for large scale retail uses, which are dependent on high traffic counts, high customer turnover and large parking lots.
2. Existing residential buildings may be reused and expanded provided the footprint of the principal building does not exceed approximately 1,500 square feet. New buildings may be constructed provided they maintain a residential (design) character, similar to surrounding single-family uses, and provided the footprint of the principal building does not exceed 1,500 square feet.



Figure H: Above are examples of transitional business uses that maintain a residential character.

3. Buildings should not exceed two stories in height.
4. The site's dimensions must be adequate to accommodate parking for the proposed business use behind the building, without significantly impacting the established subdivision pattern. Off-street parking should be located in rear and side yards when possible.
5. A decorative fence or wall needs to be provided between any nonresidential or mixed-use parking lot and adjacent single-family residential uses. Such fence or wall should be supplemented with the planting of trees to further buffer the residential uses.
6. Signage and lighting should be limited in quantity, scale, and intensity to reduce visual clutter and impacts on surrounding residential uses.
7. Adequate parking should be located behind the structure and landscaping and fencing required to lessens visual impacts on neighboring residential uses.

8. Shared means of site access and shared parking should be required when appropriate as a method of enhancing traffic flow along this corridor.

Sub-area C: Attached Residential Area

Attached residential uses, in the form of townhouses, are appropriate uses for the High Street corridor between downtown and Akron Road. Such residential uses should comply with the standards set forth for residential uses in the Central Business District Fringe (see pages 31 & 32).

Sub-area D: Existing Industrial Area Uses

There are “older” industrial areas within this character area that will continue to exist over the life of this plan. Future redevelopment of these areas may continue to be industrial but redevelopment should focus on light industrial uses, such as: enclosed storage, warehousing, and similar “light” uses that do not require much outdoor storage or require other outdoor activities, in order to minimize impacts on neighboring residential uses.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

CHARACTER AREA 3: ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS

This area constitutes the majority of residential development constructed in the city since 1950. Residential, civic, and recreational uses are the predominant uses. The area contains detached single-family subdivisions and attached multi-family developments that share similar characteristics such as low to moderate density, substantial private yards, off-street parking, and wide curvilinear street networks that often utilize cul-de-sacs. This development form creates “pods” rather than rectilinear street blocks like those found in the core neighborhoods. Development patterns may differ slightly from one subdivision to another, but within a given subdivision, lot sizes, building styles, and setbacks are all very consistent.

The Established Neighborhoods should continue to serve the community by providing safe environments in which to live and play. This character is a desirable and functional form that the plan should protect and preserve through sensitive infill and targeted retrofitting of amenities such as parks and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

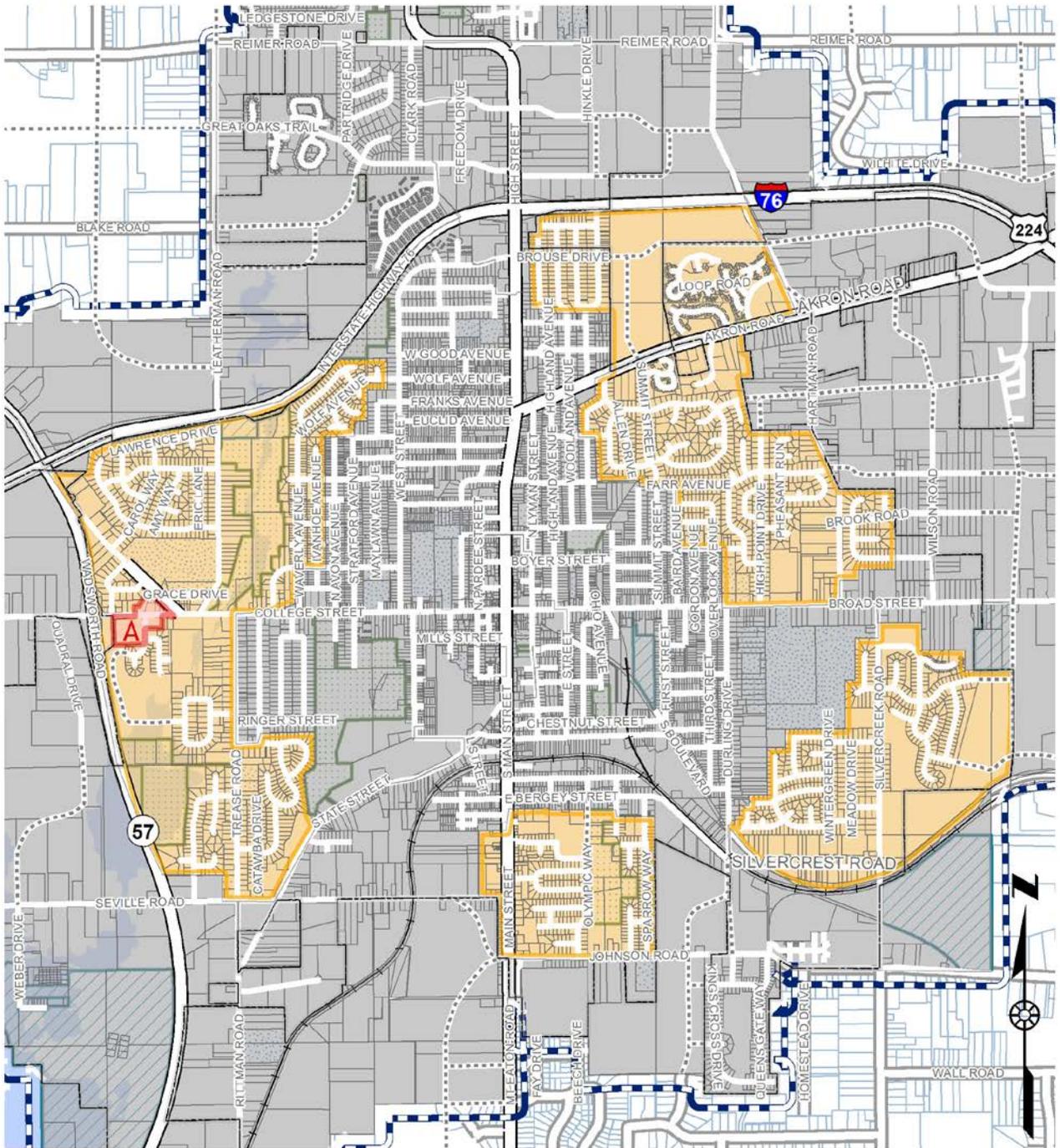
The following are the primary objectives for development in the Established Neighborhoods Character Area:

- Maintain the existing neighborhood form and character.
- Promote compatible redevelopment and infill.
- Improve non-vehicular circulation and connectivity (e.g. pedestrian and bicycle paths) between subdivisions, and between subdivisions and nearby public and commercial uses.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The predominant character of the Established Neighborhoods is, and should continue to be, single-family detached residential uses at a density not to exceed approximately four units per acre.
2. Conversion or division of single-family homes into multi-family or attached residential structures is discouraged.
3. The use of cul-de-sacs is not prohibited but their use should be minimized to situations where topography or other natural constraints prohibit the reasonable connection of streets.
4. New schools, parks and other institutions and improvements that will generate significant amounts of traffic should be located on collector or arterial roads designed to accommodate traffic in a safe manner.
5. Any infill development or redevelopment should contain sidewalks along all streets and should use paths or sidewalks to connect to adjacent developments, nearby parks and other civic and institutional uses.

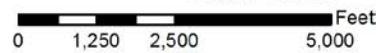
Map 7 – Established Neighborhoods Character Area Map



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Legend

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|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Established Neighborhoods |
| Railroad | Parks | 3 Established Neighborhoods |
| | Airport and Public Land | Potential Neighborhood Business Area |



6. Infill should be consistent with the size, scale, lot placement, and style of surrounding homes and developments.
7. New locations for attached residential uses are not recommended within this character area; however, this should not prevent reinvestment, redevelopment or improvement of existing attached residential sites. Any such redevelopment may incorporate attached residential types as allowed in the Great Oaks Neighborhoods character area described below.

CHARACTER AREA 4: GREAT OAKS NEIGHBORHOODS

The Great Oaks Neighborhoods are similar in nature to the Established Neighborhoods Character Area with a mixture of single-family and multi-family development built in the latter part of the 20th century. Unlike the southern established neighborhoods, the Great Oaks Neighborhoods were built around the larger commercial uses near I-76/High Street and contain a higher percentage of attached residential uses (e.g., apartments and senior housing).

The Great Oaks Neighborhoods should continue to serve the community by providing safe environments in which to live and play, supplemented with enhanced pedestrian/bicycle paths providing access to the adjacent commercial areas. These neighborhoods continue to be desirable and a functional form that the plan should protect and preserve through sensitive infill and targeted retrofitting of amenities.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

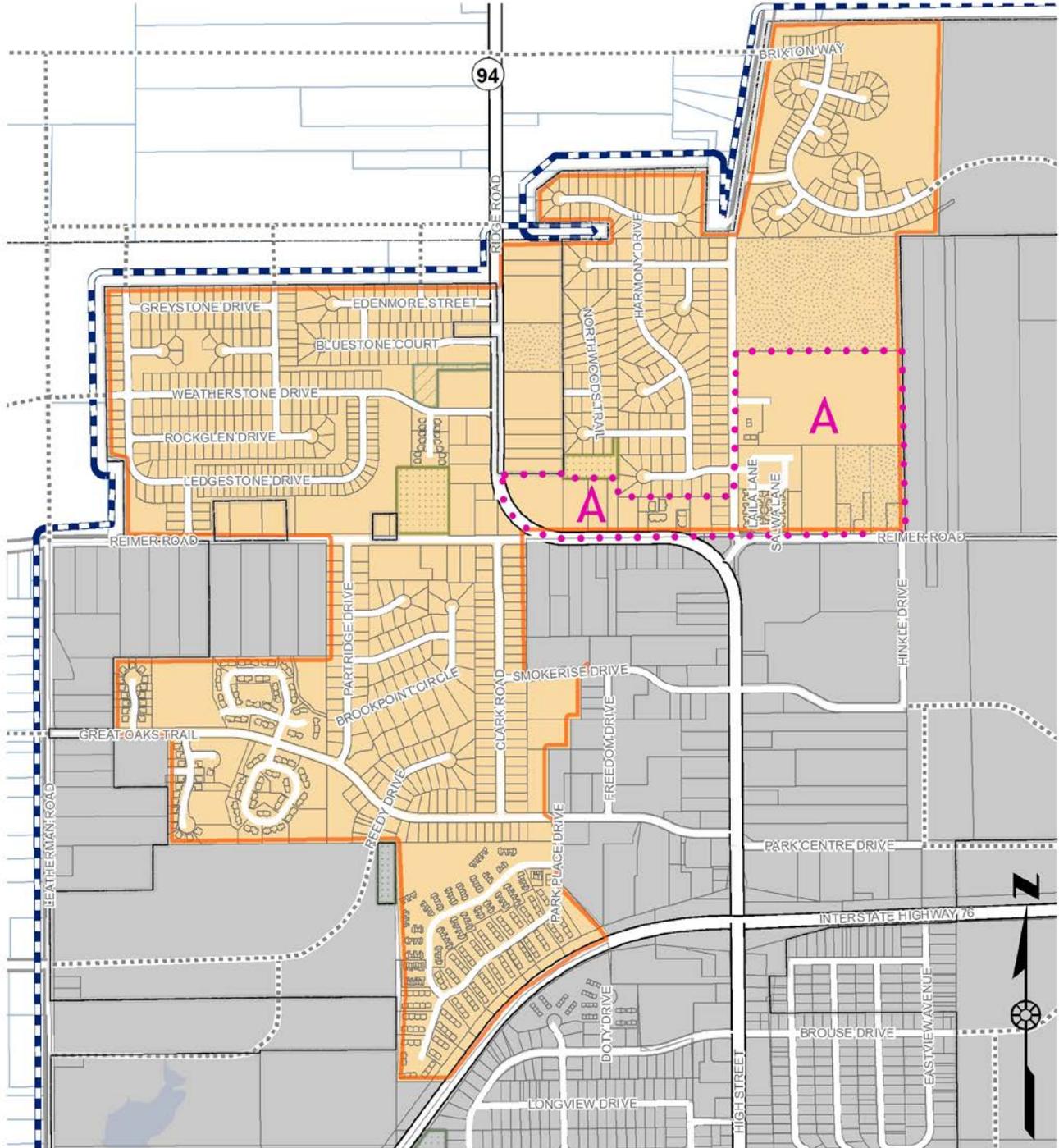
The following are the primary objectives for development in the Great Oaks Neighborhoods Character Area:

- Maintain the existing neighborhood form and character.
- Allow for the continued mixture of residential housing types with the highest densities concentrated around and near the neighboring commercial areas.
- Promote compatible redevelopment and infill.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity between subdivisions/residential development and adjacent residential areas, parks, public and commercial uses.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The general development policies established for Character Area 3 (Established Neighborhoods) shall apply to this area.
2. Both attached and detached residential uses are appropriate for this area with a vision of concentrating attached residential uses near the business areas around the High Street Regional Interchange.
3. There should be no expansion of nonresidential uses into this area, except civic and institutional uses, including parks.

Map 8 – Great Oaks Neighborhoods Character Area Map



Legend

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|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Established Neighborhoods |
| Railroad | Parks | Great Oak Neighborhoods |
| | Airport and Public Land | A-Potential Attached Residential Area |

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0 250 500 1,000 1,500 Feet

4. Single-family detached residential uses should maintain the form and character of existing single-family developments in this character area as well as in the Established Neighborhoods Character Area.
5. Attached residential uses can vary in type which may include a more urban form (e.g., townhomes and row houses), small apartment houses that retain the appearance of single-family detached homes, or low-density multi-family dwellings. Higher densities of approximately six to eight units per acre may be appropriate in the areas directly abutting the High Street Regional Interchange Character Area with lower densities spreading out from there to transition to adjacent single-family developments. Figure 1 illustrates examples of attached residential uses that would be appropriate for the Great Oaks Neighborhood, including the following design elements:
 - Building orientation to the public street.
 - Window placement, spacing and design (fenestration) to avoid blank walls.
 - Pitched roofs.
 - Architectural detailing of entrance and/or porch.
 - Vehicular access and parking to the side or rear of the building.
 - Landscape enhancements.
 - Pedestrian access to the street.
6. All new developments should include strong pedestrian and bicycle (non-vehicular) connections to the neighboring activity centers.



Figure 1: Above are examples of attached residential uses that would be appropriate for new development in the Great Oaks Neighborhoods Character Area.

ACTIVITY CENTERS

CHARACTER AREA 5: I-76/AKRON ROAD INTERCHANGE

The I-76/Akron Road interchange is one of the newest activity centers in the city, having been annexed into the city and developed since the adoption of the previous plan (which was amended in 2004 to account for this area). This character area is another part of the community that is predominantly commercial with a destination-oriented character.

While the newest portions of this development will likely be subject to change in the near future, the new uses will likely cause pressures on surrounding lands for compatible development including residential and office uses. The focus for new development in this area will be on mixed-use office and higher intensity residential uses that can support and complement the “major” commercial developments. Future development should continue to be “destination-commercial” with activity driven design that has the ability to safely accommodate automobiles, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The following are the primary objectives for development in the I-76/Akron Road Interchange Character Area:

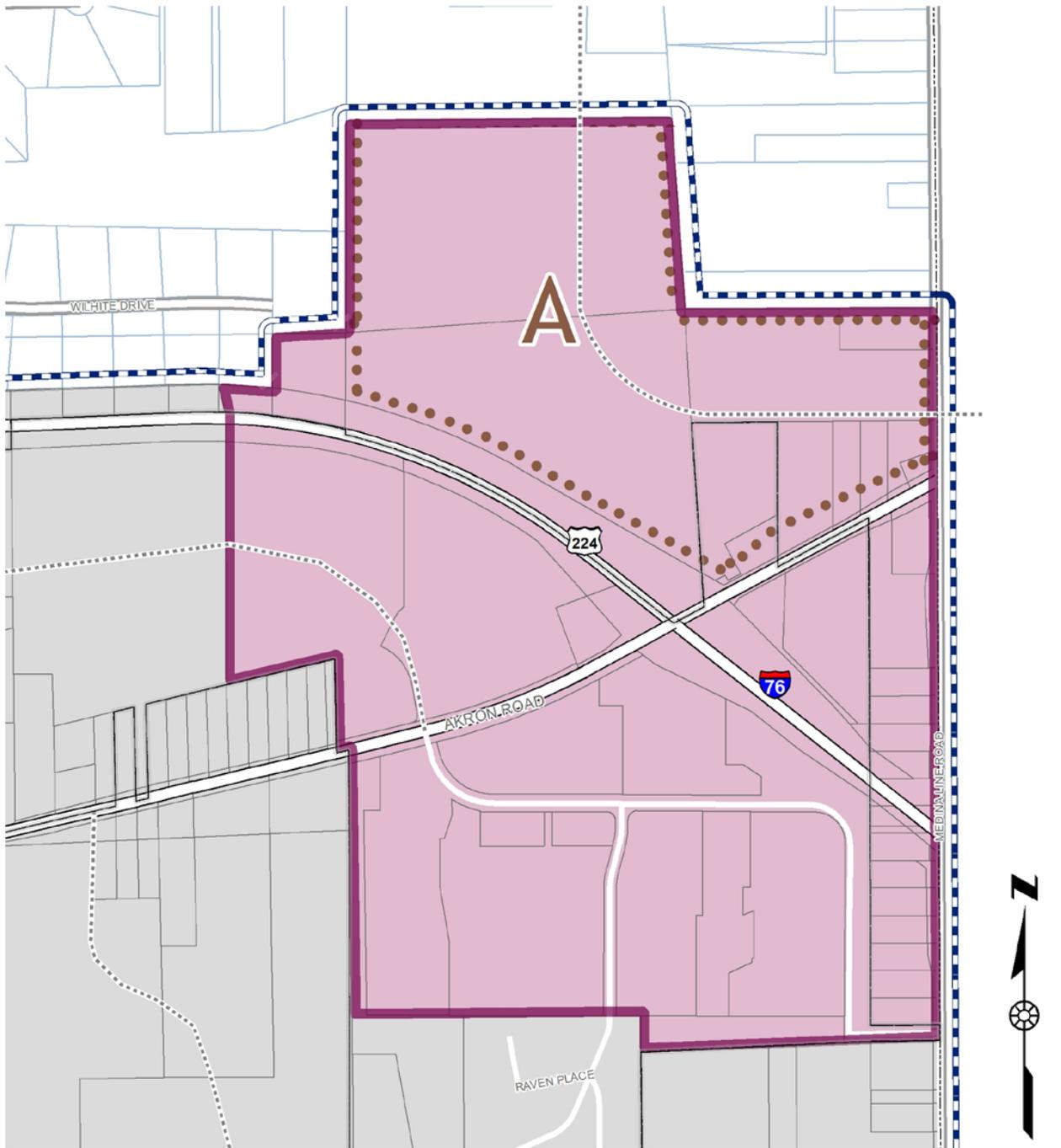
- Provide for an area in the city that can serve as a regional destination that also provides key services and commercial activities for the community.
- Ensure that adequate public facilities exist or can be accommodated before any developments are approved on land north of the interstate. Projects in this area require attractive and efficient mixed-use developments that build off of the southern commercial centers.
- New development projects should include a “walkable design” connecting to existing development sites, while still accommodating vehicular traffic and parking.
- Improve aesthetics of development and redevelopment.
- Promote safe through-traffic flow on Akron Road.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

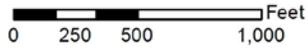
1. The predominant land use south of the interstate is large-scale regional or “destination” commercial uses that should continue but not beyond the current character area boundaries or into adjacent character areas.
2. Any future development of commercial uses should have a “town center” style development that combines retail, office, residential, civic, and open spaces into a cohesive development where the focus is on the human-scale. Emphasis should be placed on the pedestrian experience with parking accommodated in screened surface lots or structured parking so that open parking areas do not dominate the street frontage.

3. Flexibility should be provided to incorporate higher density residential uses or mixed-use developments as part of redevelopment projects south of the interstate to ensure the long-term viability of commercial uses in the area.
4. All development should include a system of sidewalks and multi-use paths to create enhanced connectivity between uses in this area and other areas of the city.
5. Landscaping materials should be used to soften the appearance of larger parking areas and reduce the automobile dominance of retail/commercial site design but without negatively impacting sight-distance on public or private streets.
6. Access management principles and shared parking should be required in order to minimize the number of points of direct access to Akron Road.

Map 9 – I-76/Akron Road Interchange Character Area Map



Printed: 12-20-10



Legend

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|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Activity Centers |
| Railroad | Parks | Potential Mixed Use Area |
| | Airport and Public Land | |

CHARACTER AREA 6: HIGH STREET REGIONAL INTERCHANGE

This regional commercial center was a focal point for new, large-scale developments up until the last decade when new commercial activity starting taking place at the I-76 interchange at Akron Road. This area continues to see change with some new development. At the same time, the area has struggled with increased traffic congestion and an increasing number of vacancies due to oversaturation of “retail only” developments. This area’s layout and design pattern reflects the largely suburban, automobile-oriented development pattern of commercial buildings sitting behind large parking lots that separate them from the street. However, this area benefits from the fact that it is surrounded by residential uses that can “feed” the businesses. This area also has potential for significant redevelopment opportunities that can accommodate higher density mixed-use developments and put people in walking distances of many of the businesses.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

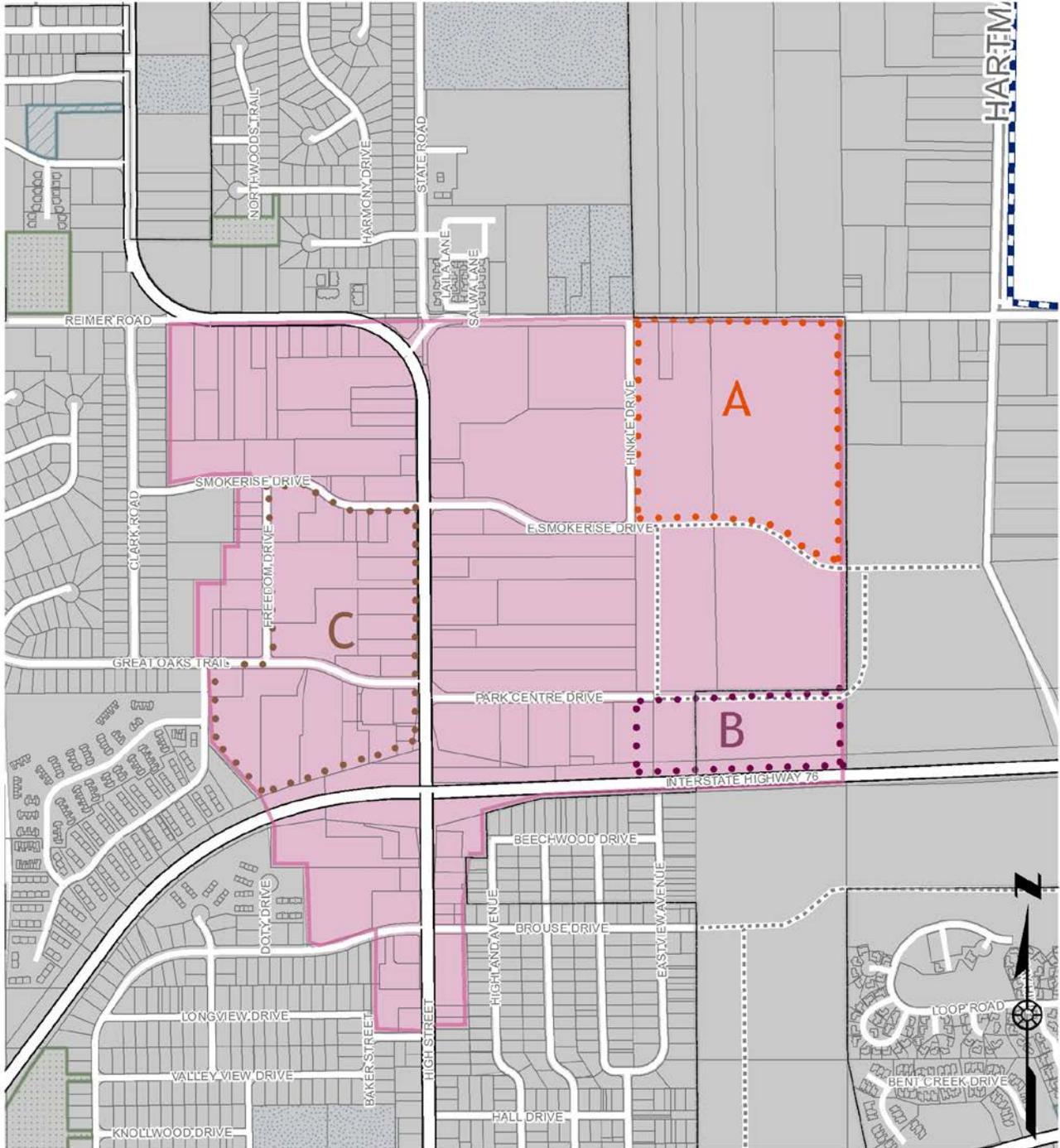
The following are the primary objectives for development in the High Street Regional Interchange Character Area:

- Protect this area as a key business location in Wadsworth with allowances for residential uses when they are a component of a larger, mixed-use development.
- Promote high-quality uses that generate high economic returns for the community.
- Support reuse and reinvestment in this character area.
- Improve access and connection both to High Street and to the surrounding neighborhoods including implementation of the High Street Corridor Access Management & Safety Plan.
- Create design and streetscape standards to improve the aesthetics of new development and redevelopment projects.
- Traffic management should be planned and controlled so that this character area operates as a coordinated circulation system that does not unduly burden the major thoroughfares nor create significant impacts on the overall transportation network. The city should work to incorporate access management principles into its land use regulations and policies for the review of new development and redevelopment projects.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The predominant uses in this area are, and should continue to be, retail commercial uses that provide services locally and regionally. Other uses that currently exist and may continue include offices and some limited residential uses.
2. Mixed-use developments that include residential dwelling units as a component (such as on the upper floors of mixed-use building) are appropriate in this area.
3. Developments should be interconnected to create a circulation pattern that is not entirely dependent on the major arterial of High Street to move traffic from one property to another. Access drives between developments is strongly encouraged, as is increased connectivity to the neighborhoods to the east and west for purposes of providing ease of access to those residents rather than a “cut-through” for commercial users. (See planned connections on Map 10.)

Map 10 – High Street Regional Interchange Character Area Map



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Feet



Legend

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|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas | Sub Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas | A-Potential Attached Residential |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Activity Centers | B-Non-Retail Commercial |
| Railroad | Parks | High Street Regional Interchange | C-Potential Mixed Use Area |
| | Airport and Public Land | | |

4. Implement access management principles to require shared access in order to limit the curb cuts onto High Street.
5. Establish additional development standards for landscaping, stormwater management, lighting, architecture, noise, and non-vehicular access for this area to enhance the quality of new investments and reinvestment, as well as to improve connectivity.

CHARACTER AREA 7: BROAD STREET COMMERCIAL CENTER

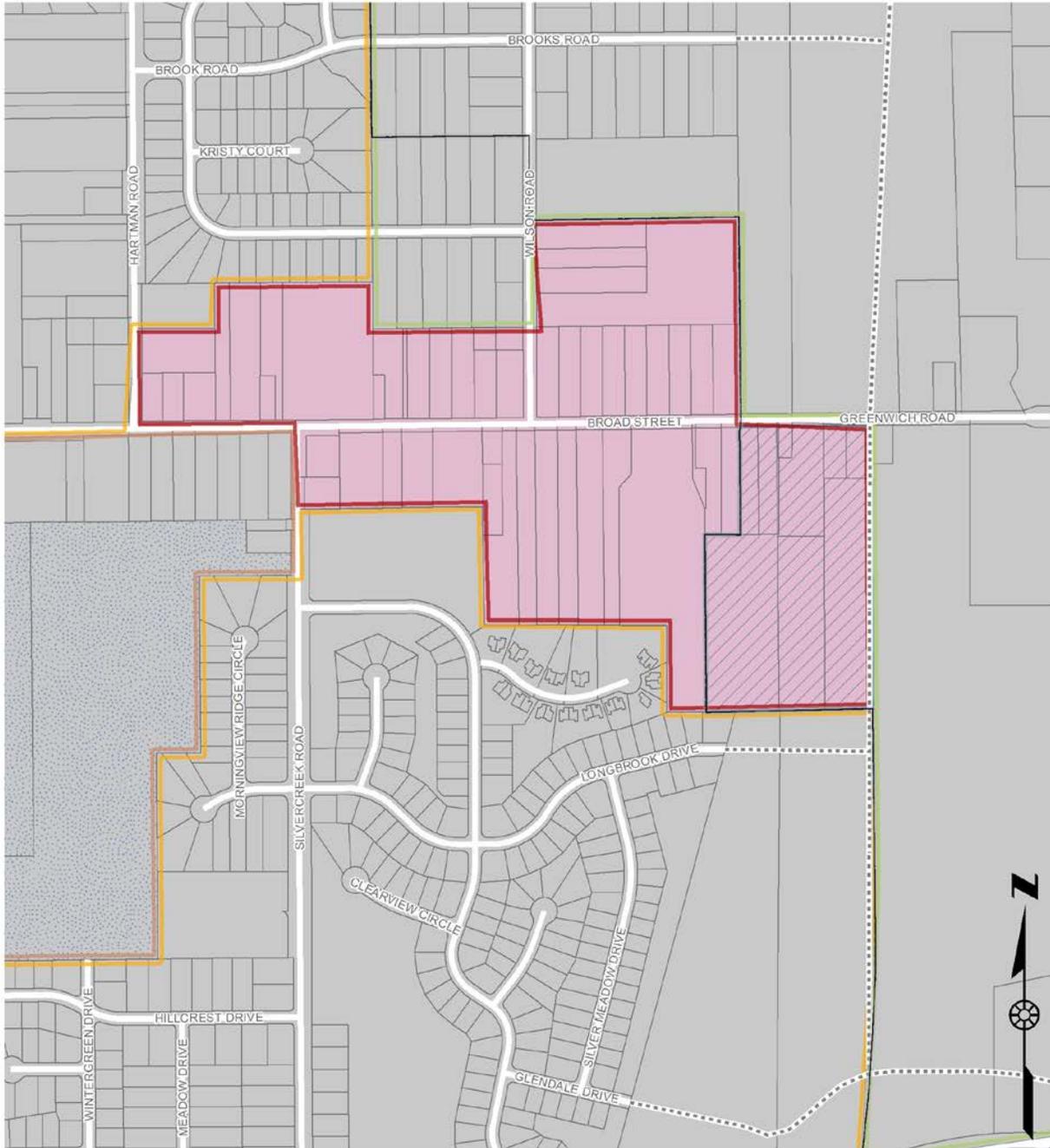
The Broad Street Commercial Center is one of the city's older commercial areas that was focused on automobile sales, services and related businesses. As these automobile-oriented businesses have left, reinvestment opportunities have opened up. The focus of redevelopment in this area should be on new uses and structures "blending in" with surrounding neighborhoods. New uses should include mixed-use developments, residential and even light industrial uses.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The following are the primary objectives for development in the Broad Street Commercial Center Character Area:

- Protect this area as a key business development location with allowances for residential uses when they are a component of a larger, mixed-use development.
- Support reuse and redevelopment of this commercial area, which was historically oriented towards automobile sales, service and repair uses, as it begins to transition into other types of uses. Allowing for a broader range of uses, including the integration of residential uses, will help create a vibrant and stable commercial area.
- Promote high-quality uses that generate high economic returns for the community.
- Encourage low to moderate intensity redevelopment of this area for mixed-use, office, or attached residential uses.
- Improve access and connection from the Broad Street/Greenwich Road corridor to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Improve aesthetics of new development and redevelopment.
- Traffic should be planned and managed so that this character area operates as a coordinated circulation system that does not unduly burden the major thoroughfares nor create significant impacts on the overall transportation network. The city should work to incorporate access management principles into its land use regulations and policies for the review of new development and redevelopment.

Map 11 – Broad Street Commercial Center Character Area Map



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Legend

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|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Activity Centers |
| Railroad | Parks | Broad Street Commercial Center |
| | Airport and Public Land | |

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. Due to the proximity of this area to downtown and the I-76/Akron Road Interchange, and the abundance of underutilized commercial land and undeveloped land zoned for intensive commercial uses, new retail commercial uses should be limited with allowances for retail if it is part of a mixed-use development. In no case should retail commercial uses occupy 50% or more of any building floor area on any lot.
2. Create a special area development plan for this character area that evaluates properties at a more detailed level than in this comprehensive plan. The plan should look at issues including, but not limited to, potential uses, scale of development, parking, stormwater management, traffic flow, access, and connectivity.
3. This area would be appropriate for a mixture of office space and/or mixed-use developments that include residential dwellings as a component, such as on the upper floors of a mixed-use, multi-story building). Live/work opportunities would also be appropriate for this location.
4. Residential densities of up to eight units per acre would be appropriate in this area when part of a mixed-use development where the mixture of uses takes place within the same building as nonresidential uses.
5. Light industrial, warehousing, and office “flex-space” would also be appropriate for this area provided:
 - a. The new uses meet enhanced design standards developed for this area as recommended in this plan;
 - b. Metal buildings or warehouses should be limited to no more than 50% of any structure; and
 - c. All activities must take place inside buildings.
6. The city should establish standards for this area that brings development closer to the road (mandatory build-to lines rather than minimum setbacks) and locates parking facilities to the rear to blend in better with the surrounding residential areas.
7. Access management principals should be incorporated into new and redevelopment projects in order to coordinate access points and share parking between neighboring uses in order to limit impacts to traffic flow on Broad Street/Greenwich Road.
8. There should be no expansion of nonresidential uses except for civic, parks, and institutional uses, beyond the boundaries of this area.

EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

CHARACTER AREA 8: WADSWORTH INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

The Wadsworth Industrial Sector Character Area contains primarily industrial uses and the Wadsworth Municipal Airport. The city should encourage economic development associated with the airport and related businesses as this area is envisioned as the preferred location for future non-retail business uses. However, due to the presence of flood plains and other natural sensitive stream corridors, there are environmental constraints that need to be considered when evaluating future development.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

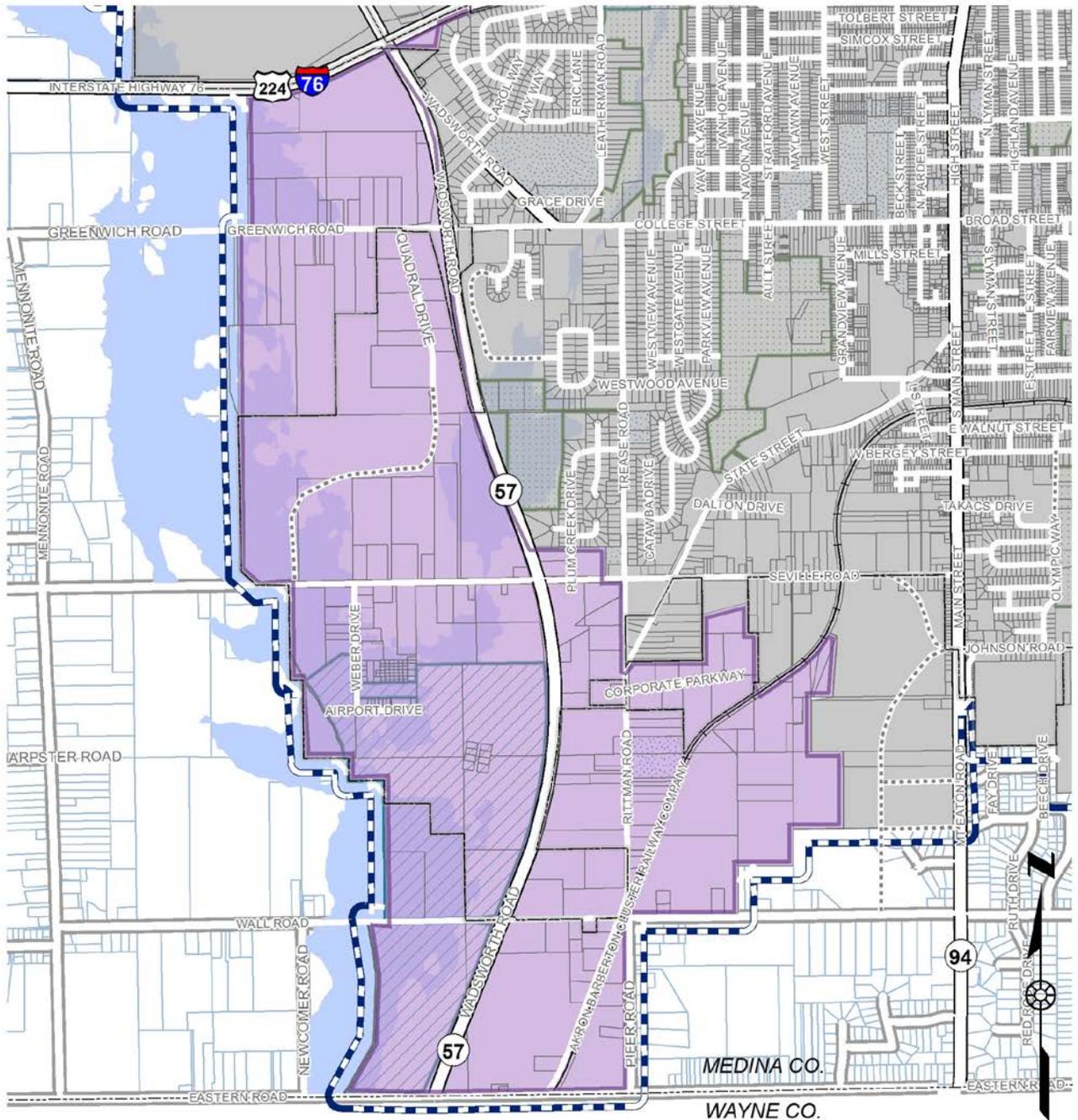
The following are the primary objectives for development in the Wadsworth Industrial Sector Character Area:

- Support business and economic development for local, regional, and national companies.
- Maintain access to regional transportation networks to move goods efficiently.
- Encourage high-quality development and redevelopment of primarily non-retail businesses.
- Promote energy efficient and sustainable development practices.
- Protect and accentuate the functionality of the airport.

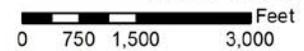
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. This area should continue to be the city's primary non-retail business development area. Appropriate businesses in this area include manufacturing, warehousing, storage, office, and business services, as well as airport related uses.
2. Small areas of retail commercial uses, such as financial institutions, restaurants, and similar businesses, are appropriate in this character area as these uses provide necessary services to the work force. These uses should be limited to major thoroughfares or at the intersection of major thoroughfares to be most accessible. Access management principles should be incorporated into the city's land use regulations to limit access points to the adjacent streets.
3. Sidewalks, trails, and bike paths should be incorporated into all new developments, when appropriate, to provide non-vehicular access to employment as documented by other planning documents adopted by the city (e.g. the Park and Recreation Plan, and Multimodal Transportation Plan).
4. The city should consider providing development incentives for businesses that construct more efficient or sustainable buildings (e.g., LEED certified buildings).
5. Provisions should be made to encourage shared parking areas and the use of pervious pavement in this area due to the potential for large parking areas and outdoor storage areas in order to reduce impacts to the stormwater management system and to lower development costs.
6. The ability of the Wadsworth Municipal Airport to expand services in order to meet future demands should be maintained in accordance with the Airport Master Plan.

Map 12 – Wadsworth Industrial Sector Character Area Map



Printed: 12-20-10



Legend

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|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | Industrial and Employment Growth |
| Railroad | Parks | 8 Wadsworth Industrial Sector |
| Airport and Public Land | | |

CHARACTER AREA 9: NORTHWEST INTERCHANGE (I-76 & SR-57)

This area should remain in agricultural or rural condition until public sewer and water are extended to service the area. When services are available, this area could serve as an extension to the Wadsworth Industrial Sector Character Area. It should be noted that a portion of this area is within a 100-year flood hazard area and special focus should be given for the preservation and protection of the floodplain and riparian areas as development proposals are considered.

Alternatively, given existing topographic conditions, environmental constraints, the lack of public infrastructure and high costs of providing public water and sewer infrastructure, it may be appropriate for this area to be developed as low-density housing in densities of one or two units per acre, depending on requirements for on-site septic systems.

This may also be an area where the city might consider acquiring land for passive park and recreational uses – primarily in the flood prone & riparian areas.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

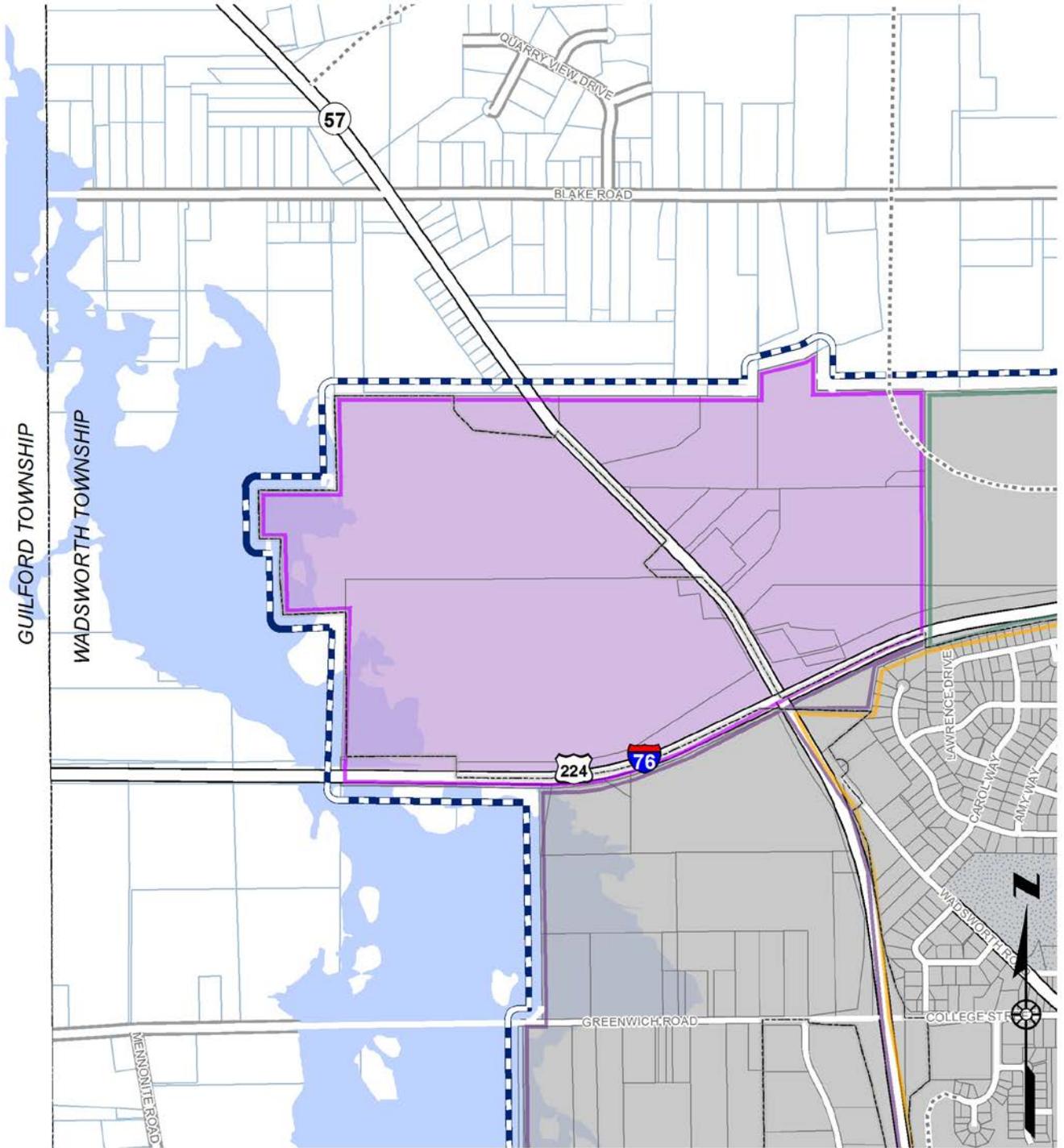
The following are the primary objectives for development in the Northwest Interchange (I-76 & SR-57) Character Area:

- Maintain the area as agriculture or low-density rural development unless a development project includes plans for adequate public utilities and services necessary to serve the proposed project.
- Protect the environmentally sensitive portions of the area.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. Major development proposals should not be considered or encouraged until adequate public utilities and services are available.
2. The City should consider creating a specific development and capital improvement plan for this area should it be determined that it is appropriate and fiscally feasible to extend utilities and services to this area. This area development plan should address such issues as: potential uses, scale of development, parking, stormwater management, traffic flow, access, and connectivity.
3. A detailed analysis is needed to determine the extent and under what circumstances that public funds would be used to construct public utility infrastructure in this area.

Map 13 – Northwest Interchange (I-76 & SR-57) Character Area Map



Printed: 12-20-10
Feet



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Wadsworth Character Areas | Public and Restricted Land |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | All Other Areas | Floodzones |
| Proposed New Roads | Industrial and Employment Growth | Schools and Institutions |
| Railroad | Northwest Interchange | Parks |
| | | Airport and Public Land |

NEW GROWTH AREAS

The new growth areas are where there is a potential for significant amounts of new development. Each area includes land that is in the city as well as land that is located in adjacent townships but within this plan's study area. There are three New Growth Areas designated by this plan: North, East, and South, which are described in more detail below.

CHARACTER AREA 10: NEW GROWTH AREA NORTH

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

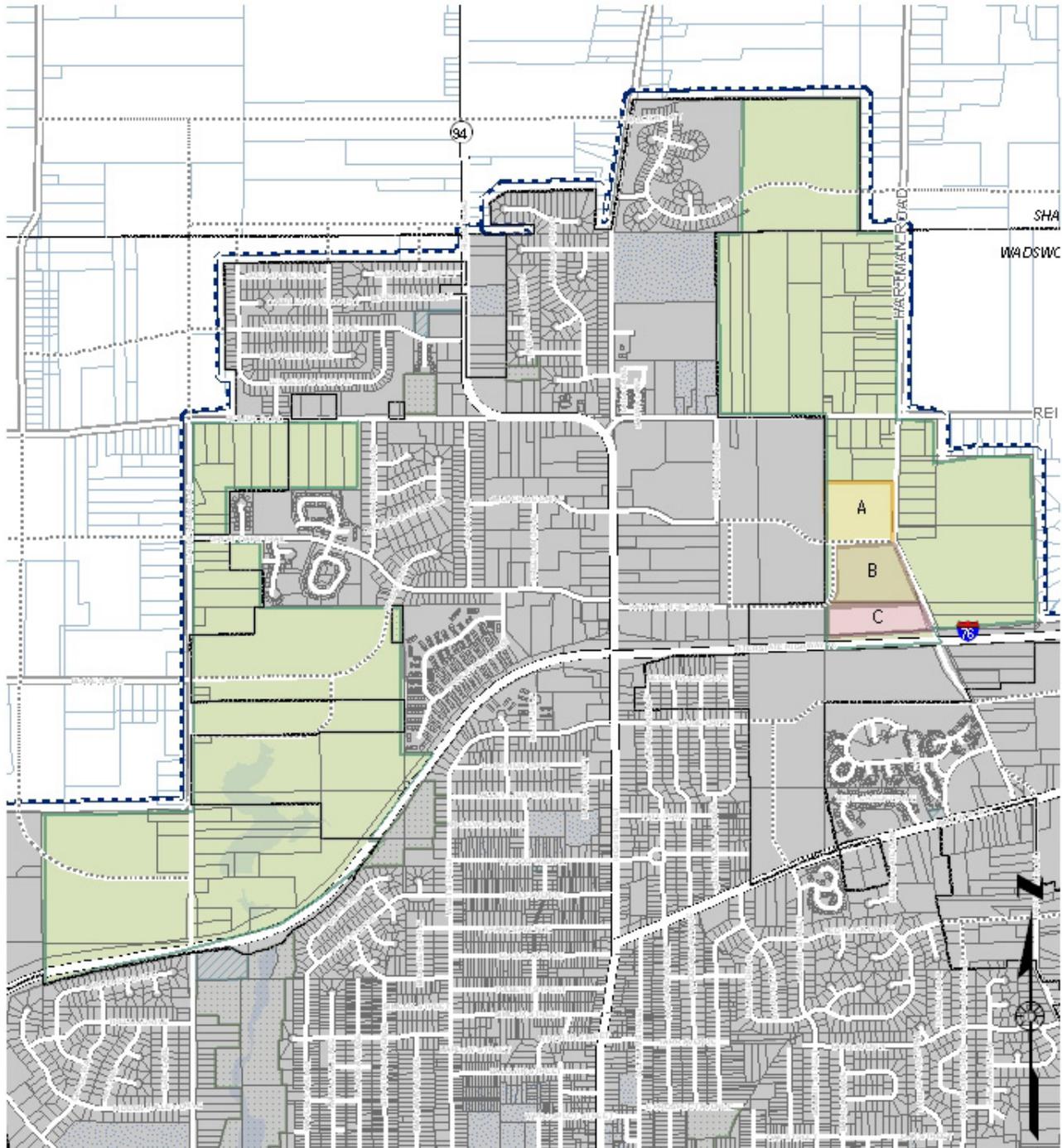
The following are the primary objectives for development in the New Growth Area North Character Area:

- Provide for the development of a variety of housing types and densities as an expansion of the Great Oaks Neighborhoods Character Area.
- Develop appropriate park and recreational uses in this area to serve the needs of new residents.
- Prevent the expansion of new commercial uses into this area from the High Street Regional Interchange.
- Improve non-vehicular circulation and connectivity (e.g. pedestrian and bicycle paths) between subdivisions and adjacent subdivision and/or public and commercial uses.

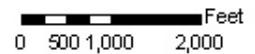
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The predominant use in this area should be single-family detached residential units at a density not exceeding approximately four units per acre.
2. Attached residential uses are appropriate for this area when they are located near or adjacent to the business areas around the High Street Regional Interchange Character Area, and exhibit the following design elements:
 - Building orientation to the public street.
 - Window placement, spacing and design (fenestration) to avoid blank walls.
 - Pitched roofs.
 - Architectural detailing of entrance and/or porch.
 - Vehicular access and parking to the side or rear of the building.
 - Landscape enhancements.
 - Pedestrian access to the street.
3. There should be no expansion of nonresidential uses, beyond civic and institutional uses (including parks), into this area.
4. The use of cul-de-sacs is not prohibited but they should be kept to a minimum and used only when topography or other natural constraints prohibit the reasonable connection of streets.
5. New schools, parks, and other institutions that will generate significant amounts of traffic should be located on collector or arterial roads designed to accommodate the traffic in a safe manner.

Map 14 – New Growth Area North Character Area Map



Printed: 12-20-10



Legend

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas | Sub Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas | A-Potential Attached Residential Area |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | New Growth Areas | B-Potential Mixed Use Area |
| Railroad | Parks | New Growth Area North | C-Non-Retail Commercial |
| | Airport and Public Land | | |

CHARACTER AREA 11: NEW GROWTH AREA EAST

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

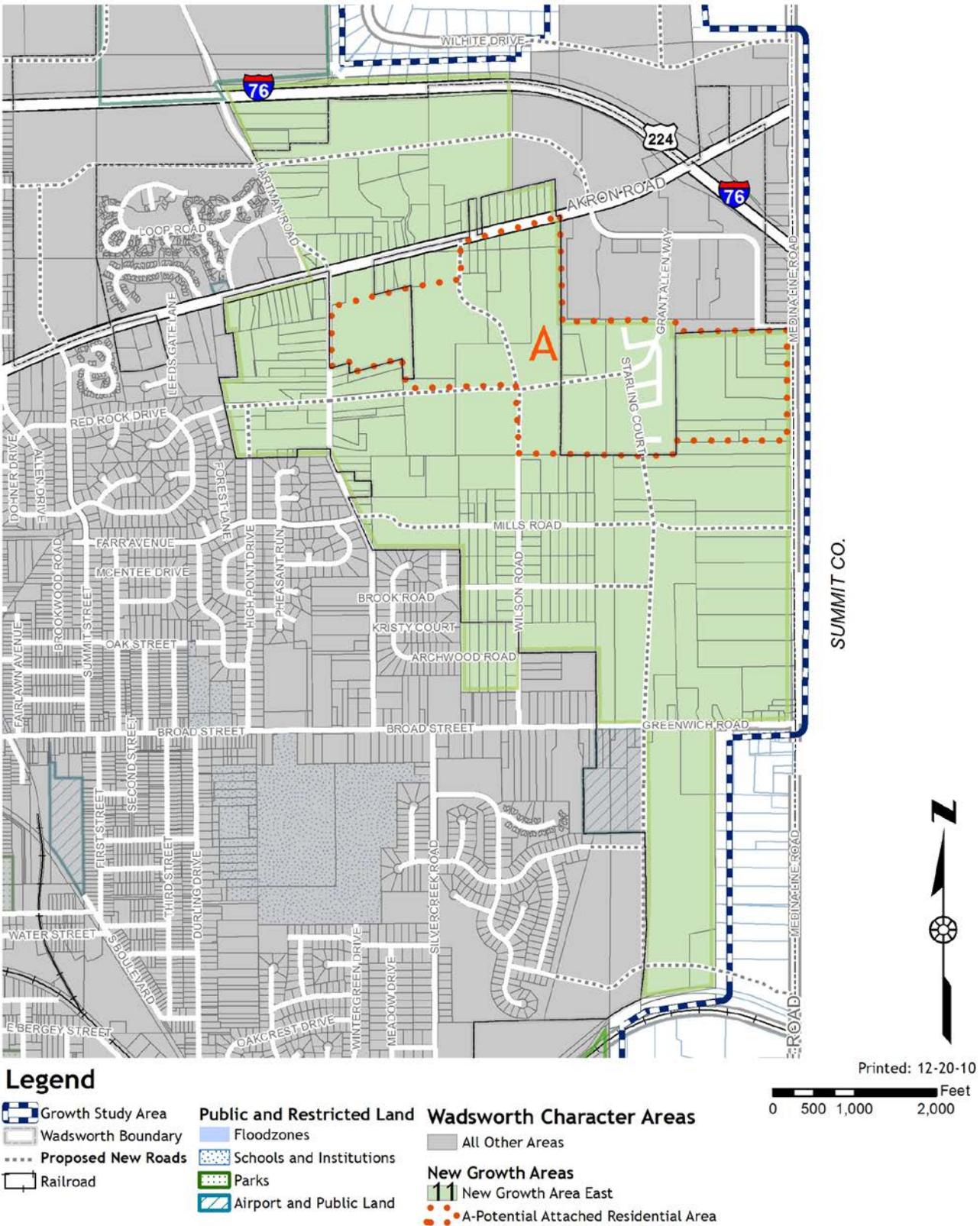
The following are the primary objectives for development in the New Growth Area East Character Area:

- Provide for the expansion of a variety of housing types and densities as an expansion of the Established Neighborhoods Character Area.
- Develop appropriate park and recreational uses in this area to serve the needs of new residents in this area.
- Prevent the expansion of new commercial uses into this area from the I-76/Akron Road Interchange Character Area.
- Improve non-vehicular circulation and connectivity (e.g. pedestrian and bicycle paths) between subdivisions and adjacent subdivision and/or public and commercial uses.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The predominant use in this area should be single-family detached residential uses at a density not to exceed approximately four units per acre.
2. Attached residential uses are appropriate for this area when located adjacent to the business areas around the I-76/Akron Road Interchange Character Area. Such new developments should demonstrate the following design considerations:
 - Building orientation to the public street.
 - Window placement, spacing and design (fenestration) to avoid blank walls.
 - Pitched roofs.
 - Architectural detailing of entrance and/or porch.
 - Vehicular access and parking to the side or rear of the building.
 - Landscape enhancements.
 - Pedestrian access to the street.
3. The use of cul-de-sacs is not prohibited but they should be kept to a minimum and used only when topography or other natural constraints prohibit the reasonable connection of streets.
4. New schools, parks, and other institutions that will generate significant amounts of traffic should be located on collector or arterial roads designed to accommodate the traffic in a safe manner.

Map 15 – New Growth Area East Character Area Map



CHARACTER AREA 12: NEW GROWTH AREA SOUTH

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

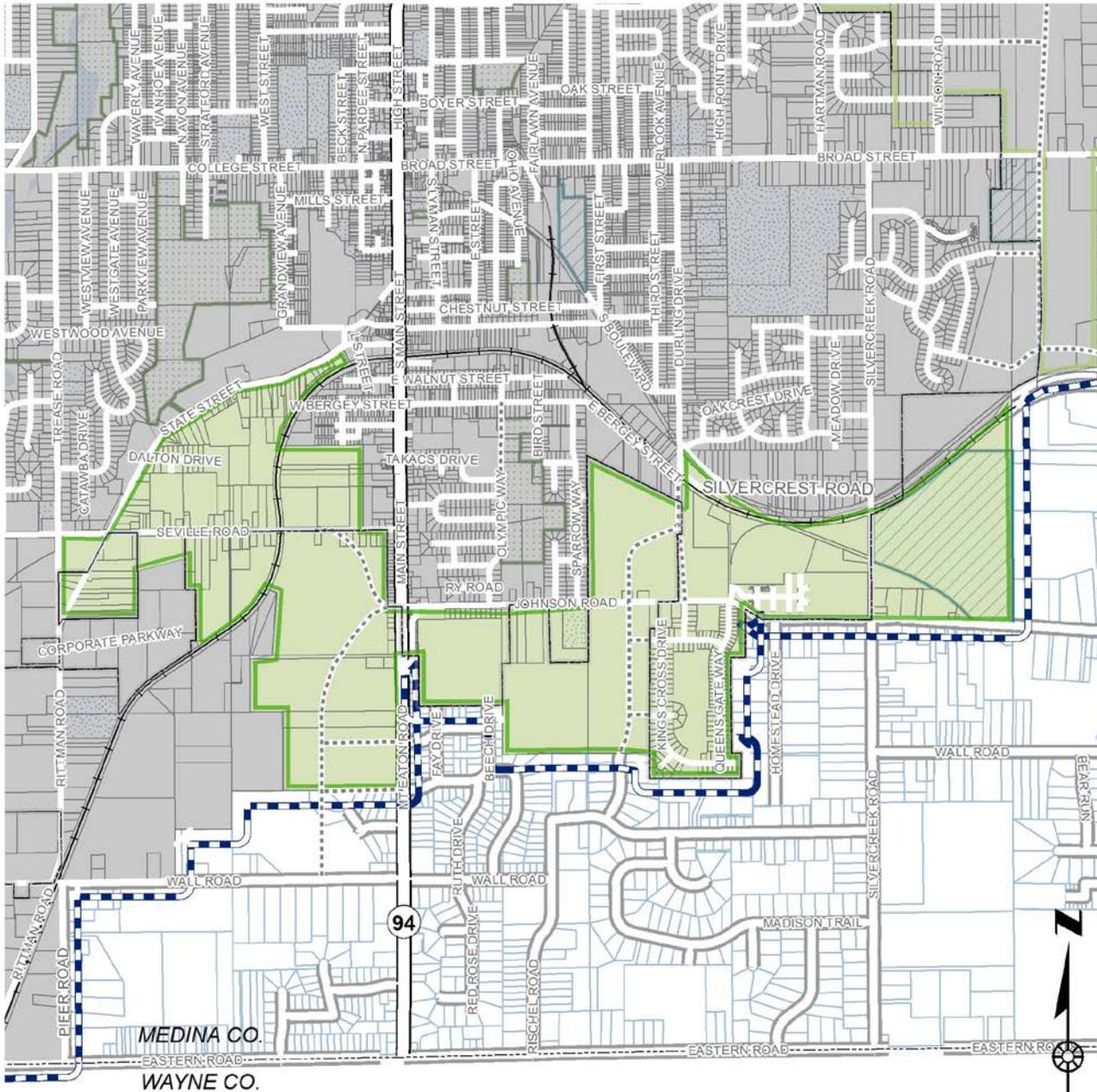
The following are the primary objectives for development in the New Growth Area South Character Area:

- Provide for the expansion of a variety of housing types and densities as an expansion of the Established Neighborhoods Character Area.
- Develop appropriate park and recreational uses in this area to serve the needs of new residents in this area.
- Improve non-vehicular circulation and connectivity (e.g. pedestrian and bicycle paths) between subdivisions and adjacent subdivision and/or public and commercial uses.

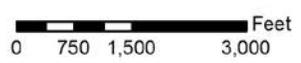
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The development policies for this area are the same for the Established Neighborhoods Character Area.
2. Attached residential uses can vary in type and may include a more urban form (e.g., townhomes and row houses), small apartment houses that retain the appearance of single-family detached homes, or low-density multi-family dwellings. Densities of approximately four to six units per acre may be appropriate at major street intersections or other sites where single-family dwellings may not be, with lower densities spreading out from there to transition to adjacent single-family developments. The following design elements would be appropriate for this Character Area:
 - Building orientation to the public street.
 - Window placement, spacing and design (fenestration) to avoid blank walls.
 - Pitched roofs.
 - Architectural detailing of entrance and/or porch.
 - Vehicular access and parking to the side or rear of the building.
 - Landscape enhancements.
 - Pedestrian access to the street.
3. Lots sizes and yard setbacks for new developments should be based on standards and patterns established by nearby existing developments.

Map 16 – New Growth Area South Character Area Map



Printed: 12-20-10



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Growth Study Area | Public and Restricted Land | Wadsworth Character Areas |
| Wadsworth_Boundary | Floodzones | All Other Areas |
| Proposed New Roads | Schools and Institutions | New Growth Areas |
| Railroad | Parks | 12 New Growth Area South |
| | Airport and Public Land | |

Implementation Strategies

Each section of this plan identifies policies and objectives for what the city wants to achieve over the next 20 years. This section provides an outline of specific strategies and actions that should be considered to implement those policies and achieve the objectives previously identified. This section is broken down into three main sections:

- I. Plan Monitoring
- II. General Implementation Strategies, and
- III. Specific Implementation Strategies

I. PLAN MONITORING

A comprehensive plan is a long-term visionary document that attempts to anticipate and shape what the community will look like over a 20 year period or so. However, this does not mean that the city should wait 20 years before reviewing and/or updating their comprehensive plan. It is highly recommended that the city review the plan on a continuous basis in light of changing conditions that may impact the recommendations. The following is a recommended schedule for review and discussion of the comprehensive plan to help monitor the recommendations of the plan and identify when the city achieves various goals and objectives.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The Vision and Implementation Strategies sections of this plan both create an effective checklist for monitoring the plan on an annual basis. Each year, the plan should be reviewed so that specific objectives and strategies for implementation can be identified. This will allow the city to establish priorities based on public interest and available resources (e.g., staff and funding availability). At the same time, the city can look back over the previous year and evaluate what the community accomplished and where there is a need for improvement. This review allows for flexibility in determining the tasks the city should undertake based on budgetary constraints and/or community input.

This annual review can also be used to create specific, quantitative targets for various policies and goals. For example, if one priority objective is to increase the amount of city park lands, the city might develop a specific benchmark for the year or the next five years that would state that the city and other agencies will increase the amount of park land by 5% by a certain date. Because the benchmarks are quantitative, the city has the ability to monitor specific accomplishments. Developing the benchmarks on an annual or semi-annual basis allows the community to consider various factors such as community priorities, budgets, and available staff and resources. The annual review should be undertaken by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

Major changes can occur in a very short time. Changes in economic conditions, employment, population, infrastructure, the transportation system, development methods, and even changes in elected officials, state law or other regulations can have a significant impact on the recommendations of this plan. Therefore, it will be necessary to periodically review the document to see if substantive

changes are necessary. It may not be necessary to go through a long and intensive review process, but the city should take steps to involve the public in this review process to ensure that the vision and goals are still relevant. The review should also identify major changes in infrastructure, transportation and trends that may change the recommendations of this plan. This review should also be undertaken by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

LONG-TERM REVIEW

This plan is a 20-year visioning document that, while clear on the long-term vision, is intended to be a dynamic document. As time progresses, the city will continue to work toward the overall goals of this plan and by 2025 will have accomplished many of the specific action strategies outlined in this plan. For this reason, the city should go through an extensive comprehensive planning process every ten to fifteen years, similar to the one that led to this plan update.

II. GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

There are a few implementation strategies that truly apply to all aspects of this comprehensive plan and help address future planning topics that may not have been included in this document. The following is a brief discussion of each general strategy:

INVOLVE THE PUBLIC

The City of Wadsworth should continue to involve the public in every affair of the city whether it be input for this comprehensive plan or guidance on the design of new buildings in downtown. Elected and appointed officials, as well as hired staff, are responsible for a large population and public input helps assure that decisions are made in the best interest of those citizens. As the city continues to grow, public input will be a key ingredient in the process.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

The city also needs to recognize that events that affect the city may also have impacts on surrounding townships, the county and the larger region. Likewise, a major event or development change in a neighboring community or adjacent county may have impacts that will be felt in the city. Therefore, city officials and residents alike should continue to participate in regional planning efforts and maintain communications with other governments, agencies and groups that can help the city address its concerns and promote its interests through planning and coordination at the regional and state levels.

COORDINATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS

Along with regional cooperation, the city has found that success often requires “partnering” with other public and private agencies. The city has worked, and is working, on the coordination of public and private improvements to help achieve certain goals. This type of coordination helps the city both by creating opportunities to implement plans but also in spurring economic development and redevelopment. For instance, the city may wish to develop a procedure for determining when it will support tax increment financing for new infrastructure.

III. SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Eight planning themes are identified in the **2010 Vision and Goals** section. An overarching goal is

defined for each theme, followed by a series of policy statements intended to provide a basis for future decision-making within the city. The **Future Development Plan** expands on the themes, goals and policies in the **2010 Vision and Goals** section, and presents primary objectives for each of the twelve character areas specified within the study area of the comprehensive plan update. The goals set forth the “end state” that the city will try to achieve over the long-term. The policy statements and primary objectives describe how the community wants to address the issues to achieve the goals and guide the evaluation process.

Implementation is the realization or execution of a plan and it is about **action**. This section of the plan is intended to identify actions that the city should undertake to achieve the themes, goals, policies and objectives described in the **2010 Vision and Goals** and the **Future Development Plan**. Priorities should be established by Wadsworth City Council and the action strategies presented in this section can be used as a guide by City Council for defining priorities related to the physical, economic, and social aspects of the community.

Consistent with the themes, goals, and policies, the recommended implementation strategies can generally be summarized by the eight action strategies listed below:

- Promote and encourage redevelopment and infill development.
- Focus on the character and quality of new growth.
- Achieve a mixture of compatible uses both within buildings and in neighborhoods.
- Seek a balance between single-family detached uses and attached residential uses.
- Evaluate the use of formal development agreements and other options to manage utility growth outside of the city.
- Promote and encourage high activity areas in specific locations to provide a mixture of live, work and play opportunities.
- Strive for a diversified tax base that positively contributes to the quality of life in Wadsworth.
- Consider energy efficiency and sustainable practices in daily operations, services and development decisions.

The table on the following pages lists specific strategies identified during this planning process to help implement the city’s vision and policies. The table identifies the various themes each specific implementation strategy helps support. The table also identifies a city office as the starting point for implementation. Multiple offices are listed where involvement of multiple departments is anticipated.

The intent of this matrix is not to be exhaustive in nature as it would be impossible to list all of the potential strategies and actions the city could undertake to implement this plan. Instead, the table is intended to summarize some initial actions that have been discussed with the public as reasonable strategies that can be used to implement key themes and goals. As the city continues to monitor this plan, new strategies can be added and evaluated for action. The purpose for highlighting the themes that the individual action will work toward is simply to show the impact of each action on achieving the long-term vision of this plan.

Implementation Strategies	Themes								
	Land Use and Development	Neighborhoods and Housing	Services and Infrastructure	Community Mobility	Downtown Wadsworth	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	Economic Development	Resource Conservation	Starting Point for Implementation
A = Administration; B = Building; C = City Council; E = Engineering; ED = Economic Development; P = Planning & Zoning									
Strategies to Enhance City Programs and Policies									
Improve the appearance of the city's major commercial areas through short- and long-term projects ranging from litter pick-up to redevelopment of underutilized sites and buildings.	X	X			X		X		A, C
Develop enhanced criteria for the city's annexation guidelines to help the decision-making process for future annexation requests by addressing such concerns as infrastructure funding and maintenance, adequacy of public facilities, availability of underutilized sites within the city limits,, density or intensity of potential development, and the overall potential fiscal impact to the city by development that may occur on newly annexed lands.	X		X	X			X		A, C
Enhance existing tools and programs to encourage and/or require the maintenance and upkeep of housing.		X							B
Consider providing incentives and bonuses for infill and redevelopment projects that reuse or will improve existing infrastructure and services, including "fast-track" processes for Planning Commission and engineering plan reviews.	X	X	X		X		X	X	A, C
Identify appropriate economic incentives (e.g. tax abatements, grants, etc.) to attract and retain jobs and housing in downtown.	X	X	X		X		X		ED
Identify and evaluate a variety of options for addressing vacant sites and redevelopment including, but not limited to, landbanking, assistance with demolition, tax or fee incentives for the removal of impervious surfaces, or enhanced design standards for proposals that exceed certain ratios of impervious surface.	X	X				X	X	X	P
Educate the public about programs that encourage families to cultivate vegetable gardens and plant native trees and other plants on their properties to offset the urban heat island effect and enhance food safety and accessibility.						X	X	X	A, P
Monitor the city's operations and facilities to identify ways these can be made more energy efficient.			X					X	A
Maintain clean, safe, and well landscaped public spaces in downtown and the surrounding neighborhood.		X	X		X	X			A, C
Support programs that help retrofit existing homes and buildings that will help increase energy efficiency, resource conservation, which in turn can save money for homeowners and allow for long-term investments back into existing neighborhoods.		X	X				X	X	B, P, ED
Regulatory Strategies									
Minimize visual clutter through enhanced signage requirements by establishing basic uniformity requirements for development with multiple uses or tenants.	X				X				P

Implementation Strategies	Themes								
	Land Use and Development	Neighborhoods and Housing	Services and Infrastructure	Community Mobility	Downtown Wadsworth	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	Economic Development	Resource Conservation	Starting Point for Implementation
A = Administration; B = Building; C = City Council; E = Engineering; ED = Economic Development; P = Planning & Zoning									
Incorporate context sensitive infill and redevelopment regulations that support innovative and adaptive reuse of underutilized properties and quality redevelopment projects throughout the city that do not take away from the character of surrounding properties.	X	X	X		X		X		P
Enhance the city's design guidelines and standards to address, at a minimum, streetscaping, façade appearance, site layout and size, signage, access, and other elements of buildings and sites that will allow for the creation of a more uniform appearance.	X				X		X		P, C
Develop residential design guidelines for attached housing to ensure that attached housing is compatible with the desired character of the city's various neighborhoods.	X	X			X		X		P
Allow for small-scale convenience retail (e.g., banks, dry cleaners, convenient stores, etc.) close to residential uses to allow residents to walk or bike to the store. Develop design standards to ensure that such retail is compatible in size, scale, and appearance to the surrounding neighborhoods.	X	X		X			X	X	P
Enhance the requirements for buffering and screening between residential and nonresidential areas where appropriate.	X	X							P
Ensure the long term protection of established neighborhoods through neighborhood compatibility requirements related to scale and density that will prevent the tearing down of various small-scale homes and replacing them with new housing that does not fit into the context of the surrounding neighborhood, unless more intense development is envisioned by this plan.	X	X			X			X	P
Develop project review guidelines to ensure that new development and redevelopment projects conform to the Medina County All-Hazard & Flood Mitigation Plan and other planning documents, which have been adopted by the city.	X	X	X	X	X			X	A, P
Identify regulatory obstacles to construction and rehabilitation of housing in downtown, and where possible, remove such obstacles.	X	X			X		X	X	B, P
Guide redevelopment of old, abandoned or obsolete commercial districts within the city by defining appropriate uses (and mixture of uses), densities and design standards for these areas (i.e. focus area plans).	X	X			X		X	X	P
Develop construction and design standards for off-street pedestrian/bike paths.	X	X	X	X		X			E
Develop standards for the construction of natural infrastructure to replace engineered infrastructure. Such efforts should be encouraged in new development and redevelopment activities in an effort to improve the amount of open space and protect existing vegetation and riparian corridors.	X		X	X		X	X	X	E

Implementation Strategies	Themes								
	Land Use and Development	Neighborhoods and Housing	Services and Infrastructure	Community Mobility	Downtown Wadsworth	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	Economic Development	Resource Conservation	Starting Point for Implementation
A = Administration; B = Building; C = City Council; E = Engineering; ED = Economic Development; P = Planning & Zoning									
Regulatory Strategies (Continued)									
Enhance existing zoning and development regulations to provide increased direction and guidance for new construction and redevelopment in downtown that focuses on the basic form of the building related to the site (e.g., setback, minimum building height, roof pitch, parking location, etc.). These enhancements may include creation of design guidelines, and a process that integrates the Downtown Wadsworth Committee and/or the Architectural Design Committee as a review and recommending body as part of the city development permitting process recognizing that “guidance” is encouraged to protect and enhance the urban form of downtown without over-regulating property owners.	X	X			X		X		P
Remove the suburban commercial zoning that is in place around the core and replace with flexible regulations that will allow for the expansion of the downtown core with additional mixed-use buildings while also providing for high density attached residential uses.	X	X		X	X		X		P
Consider “fast-tracking” the review process for subdivisions and other development projects that incorporate open space preservation consistent with the city’s vision established in this planning effort and the Parks and Recreation Plan.	X	X				X	X		A, P
Streamline city review processes where possible while ensuring high-quality development review and project assessment.	X	X			X		X		A, P
Require bicycle parking facilities (racks and/or lockers) for all new moderate to large scale developments and for any major redevelopment projects.	X	X		X	X	X	X		P
Consider incorporating more sustainable development practices in the city’s land use regulations (e.g., provisions for small-scale wind turbines, community gardens, solar panel arrays, and low impact development standards).	X	X	X				X	X	P
Modify the city’s landscaping and parking standards to accommodate more natural landscaping and stormwater drainage. Allow for pervious pavement in some areas of large surface parking lots.	X		X					X	P, E
Identify ways to encourage and promote the construction of “green” buildings (e.g. energy efficient mechanical systems, recycled materials, low impact parking) through development incentives.	X						X	X	B, P
Allow for the development of accessory dwelling units on residential properties with limits on size and use. Accessory dwelling units should be allowed above detached garages and as accessory structures.	X	X						X	B, P

Implementation Strategies	Themes								
	Land Use and Development	Neighborhoods and Housing	Services and Infrastructure	Community Mobility	Downtown Wadsworth	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	Economic Development	Resource Conservation	Starting Point for Implementation
A = Administration; B = Building; C = City Council; E = Engineering; ED = Economic Development; P = Planning & Zoning									
Transportation Strategies									
Identify alternative methods of connecting the highway corridors with nearby residential areas in addition to sidewalks (e.g., creating walking/biking paths behind businesses). Consider lighting and visibility when developing such connections.	X	X		X	X		X		E, P
Encourage expansion of the transit systems and opportunities to establish a system that allows both intra-city and inter-city mobility for all residents.			X	X	X		X		A, C, ED, P
Improve the city's traffic impact assessment processes to provide evaluation of impacts on the surrounding area transportation network, not just adjacent streets and intersections. Adjustments to the traffic impact assessment should include analysis of "design year traffic" for a project, and evaluation of city, township, county, state and federal roadways. The revisions should also address non-vehicular transit (e.g., sidewalk and trail mobility).	X		X	X			X		E, P
Create a pedestrian/bike path system that connects residential, recreational, educational, employment, civic, and commerce destinations. The path system should utilize multiple forms of trail types, including street-based and off-street types. Such a system will likely require incremental phasing as opportunities for right-of-way acquisition and construction allow.	X	X	X	X		X	X		E, P
Complete planned roadway extension, expansion, and realignment projects to ensure a transportation network that provides safe and efficient mobility in and through the city, and allows north-south and east-west connectivity. Utilize a capital improvement plan to establish priority projects.	X			X			X		A, C, E
Develop traffic flow and safety studies of the city's major highways to identify projects and strategies that will benefit overall traffic flow and safety.				X					E
Develop a plan to provide a connection from Wadsworth to the Ohio & Erie Towpath Trail system, recognizing the importance that such a connection can have to recreation, leisure, health, and economic development in the city. This effort will require coordination, funding and planning with neighboring communities.				X	X	X	X		A, C, E, P
Plan for the continued maintenance and replacement of existing sidewalks and require construction of sidewalks (or paths) as new construction and redevelopment occurs. This may be accomplished as part of a citywide capital improvements plan identified earlier.		X		X		X			A, C, E
Install bicycle parking facilities (racks and/or lockers) in downtown, in public spaces, and in other strategic areas to encourage the use of non-vehicular transit.		X		X	X	X	X		A, E, P

Implementation Strategies	Themes								
	Land Use and Development	Neighborhoods and Housing	Services and Infrastructure	Community Mobility	Downtown Wadsworth	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	Economic Development	Resource Conservation	Starting Point for Implementation
A = Administration; B = Building; C = City Council; E = Engineering; ED = Economic Development; P = Planning & Zoning									
Long-Term Planning Efforts									
Implement a comprehensive plan monitoring program whereby the city can evaluate and prioritize implementation strategies on a yearly basis, undertake a broad review of the plan every five years to ensure consistency with community values, and complete a more thorough update every 10 years to refresh data and incorporate new ideas and strategies.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A, C, P
Prepare a more detailed analysis to identify areas in the city that would be appropriate for higher density housing options based on proximity to commercial, public, and recreational uses; easy access to the regional transportation network and adequate utility infrastructure .	X	X		X	X		X		A, C, P
Continue to plan for parks and green spaces in and around major residential neighborhoods to allow for easy access by local residents.	X	X		X		X		X	A, C, P
Develop a short-term and long-term capital improvements plan to prioritize transportation and infrastructure improvement projects based on costs of the projects and fiscal impacts of the improvements. Establish priorities for the projects based on the ability to meet the goals of this plan (e.g., give priority to infrastructure improvements and services at levels of service necessary to allow growth of the industrial and service sectors in the city).	X		X	X			X		A, C, E
Review and update, as needed, the transportation and roadway plan to identify future roadway extensions and improvements that correlate with anticipated future land uses. Such plan should identify the priority future transportation routes so that long term connectivity is not hindered by future development.	X		X	X			X		E, P
Review and update, as needed, the Parks and Recreation Plan to help plan for parks and green space in and around major residential neighborhoods that will provide for easy access to recreational activities by all local residents. As part of the plan update, assess the recreational needs of the community (current and future) to determine target levels for active and passive parks and open space systems.	X	X				X		X	A, ED, P
Develop a special area plans for the future use of property surrounding the I-76 interchanges, recognizing that the manner in which these locations are built and used will impact the perception and quality of life in Wadsworth for many years into the future.	X		X	X		X	X	X	A, C, E, P

Appendix A: Transportation Plan

The Future Development Plan represents a recommended future land use pattern based on demand and capacity projections, existing development patterns, concerns for natural constraints, and future goals and policies. Each of these elements is an important area of concern for Wadsworth residents.

The roadway network is an equally important component and determinant of the Wadsworth community image in the future. Whether or not the city is able to provide adequate roads and streets and associated traffic control devices and operations, to address the growth in the future will determine if the community maintains its small town character.

Wadsworth's transportation network and land use pattern are closely associated. The character of current traffic flow is determined by the dual composition of the land uses located on the road as well as the condition of the road itself. The land uses determine and contribute to the amount of trips generated or caused to occur on the road; a single family house will generally generate less traffic than a convenience food store. The conditions of the road also determine the amount of vehicles that can travel on the road within a given period of time; two lane roads generally carry less traffic than four lane roads.

The important factor is that roads and land use are closely linked. Land use conditions determine the amount of traffic on a road and the need for road widening or traffic controls. Traffic conditions determine whether land uses are located (and desirable) on certain roads based on their ability to carry traffic effectively and the safety of the street. For this reason it is important that the city plan the transportation network for future land use conditions and, conversely, that land use conditions are planned based on the transportation network's capabilities.

The Transportation Plan contains three primary elements: a functional classification system; a description of access management principals and their benefits; and a thoroughfare plan. The functional classification system identifies the role of each roadway within the overall transportation system. These classifications allow the city to permit or limit access accordingly, in order to maintain safe traffic movement. The thoroughfare plan recommends new road connections for Wadsworth. These connections are based on anticipated needs resulting from the Future Development Plan development pattern.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The functional classification system provides a hierarchy of roads and streets within Wadsworth. This hierarchy is based on the overall function that each roadway performs within the Wadsworth transportation network. These classifications provide the city with a basis upon which to make future improvement decisions. The classifications were determined based on an examination of previous planning documents and the overall hierarchal role that each road plays in the transportation network. Although traffic volumes and speed are factors in the functional classification, the primary consideration is the role that the road services in providing access between land uses and major traffic

routes. Five functional categories are recommended for Wadsworth and a definition of each is provided below:

INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS

Interstate highways are federally designated thoroughfares designed to move large volumes of long distance travelers at high speeds with limited access such that all access to and from the highway is prevented except at designated locations. Interstate highways also function to provide local businesses and industries access to national markets. Interstate 76 is the only interstate highway in the Wadsworth Study Area.

REGIONAL HIGHWAYS

Regional highways are state designated roads designed to carry relatively large volumes of traffic between and through cities efficiently with minimum access to surrounding properties. Regional highways function to carry traffic from arterial roads to regional destinations or interstates and provide local businesses and industries access to regional markets. State Route 57 is the only regional highway designated in the Study Area.

ARTERIAL STREETS

Arterial streets provide local traffic access to regional highways and movement between different areas in the community. The amount of access to surrounding properties on arterial streets generally increases from regional highways and the speed generally decreases. The arterial streets are listed below:

Akron Road	High St./Main St./Ridge Rd./Mt. Eaton Rd
Broad St./College St./Greenwich Rd.	Leatherman Road
Great Oaks Trail (High St. to Partridge Drive)	Reimer Road
Hartman Road (Broad St. to Akron Rd.)	Silvercreek Rd (Broad St. to School Dr.)

COLLECTOR STREETS

Collector streets are designed to perform the intermediate function of connecting local use areas with arterial roads. Collector streets function primarily to provide circulation within certain districts of the city and secondarily as access to adjacent property. The collector streets are listed below:

East Bergey St.	Hinkle Drive	State Road
East Boyer St.	Johnson Road	State Street
Brouse Dr.	Lyman Street	Summit Street
Durling Dr.	Medina Line Road	Trease Road
Farr Ave. (east of Summit Street)	Mills Street	Water Street
Freedom Dr.	Park Center Drive	West Street
Grandview/Rainbow/Mill Street	Seville Road	
Great Oaks Trail (Partridge Dr. to Leatherman Rd)	Silvercreek Rd. (School Dr. to Johnson Rd)	
Hartman Road (north of Akron Rd)	Smokerise Dr. (Freedom Dr. to Hinkle Dr.)	

Local Streets – Local streets provide access to individual properties, serving short destination trips. Primarily, local streets provide access to residential property *for* vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles. To

a lesser extent, local streets provide traffic movement between other local streets and collectors. Roads and streets not listed in one of the above categories are designated as local streets.

The classification of each roadway is illustrated in Map A-1. Both existing and proposed roads are assigned a functional classification. Future streets should be constructed based on standards established by the city for each functional classification. Arterial and collector streets shown on Map A-1 but not within the plan study area are not included on the above lists.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

The principal concept in access management is the logical control and reduction of traffic access locations on major thoroughfares in order to reduce potential traffic conflicts and maintain traffic flow. Access management can involve a combination of techniques including the control of the location of driveways, the addition of access roads, the installation of additional traffic signals, signage programs, the construction of physical barriers, or restrictions on vehicle turning movements. These approaches can be used to retrofit existing areas or to create a planned access layout for undeveloped areas. The High Street Corridor is an example of a corridor that requires a combination of both techniques to access management, and a corridor where Wadsworth has achieved access management success.

Access management principles result in several benefits to a community, including:

- Improved roadway safety conditions because of reduced crash rates.
- Reduced traffic delay and congestion. This can have positive economic effect on market areas.
- Improved appearance of transportation corridors. Additional landscaping and streetscape can often be installed when access controls are implemented. This can help attract investment and enhance the image of an area.
- Provide property owners and customers with safe access to roadways.
- Reduced air pollution.
- Improved safety for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

A combination of approaches are needed for the city to be successful in implementing an access management strategy. Both public and private sector improvements are generally required. Public improvements can include construction within existing (and future) right-of-way to provide additional turn lanes or access control medians. Private sector improvements are generally achieved during review of proposed driveway design when new construction or redevelopment occurs.

A defined vision for access management in a designated transportation corridor is vital so that there is a blueprint for how improvements will occur. The city has been successful in the past creating logical and workable solutions to access and traffic issues. Successful implementation of access management requires emphasis on the importance of maintaining safe access in high traffic corridors, not only for safety reasons, but for marketability and economics as well, and requires collaboration with property owners. Once an access management plan is developed the city will need to seek feedback from property owners and maintain a level of flexibility to respond to their concerns. Implementation of

access management principles typically occur over a long period, requiring commitment to long-term plans.

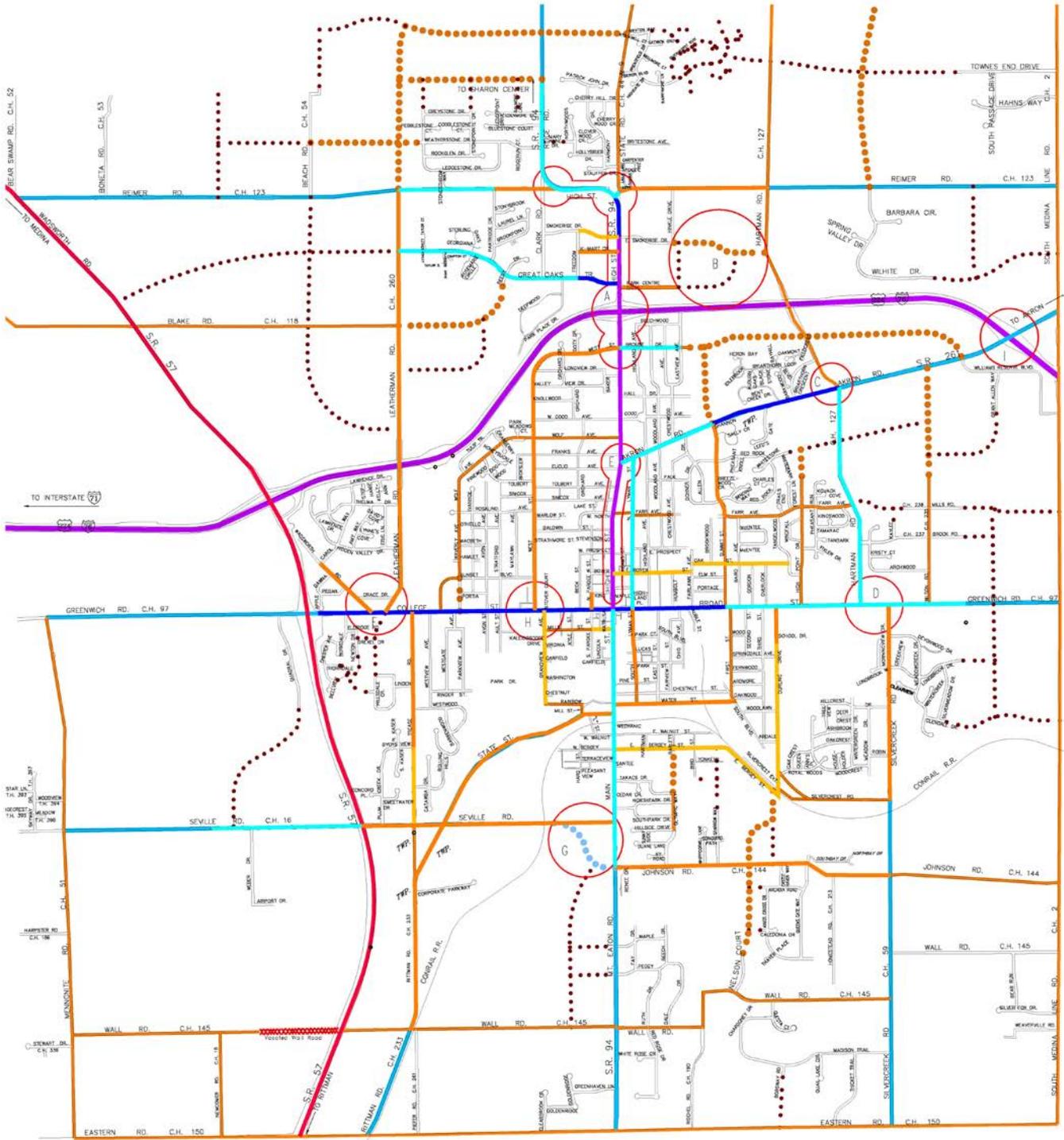
THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The thoroughfare plan indicates recommended new roadways or extensions of existing roads. The recommended future roadway improvements are based on current traffic patterns and movement throughout the city as well as the projected development as identified by the Future Development Plan.

The recommended transportation improvements to the Wadsworth roadway network are illustrated in Map A-1. Proposed new roads are illustrated as dotted lines according to the future functional classification system. Additional local and subdivision streets will be required as development occurs to allow adequate access to property and to provide an efficient transportation network. The proposed new roads have been recommended both to relieve anticipated future congestion as well as to provide logical connections between neighborhoods and major thoroughfares. The proposed roads have also been recommended in consideration of providing access to future development areas.

Table A-1 identifies the potential improvement areas based on the 2003 update of the Transportation Plan.

Map A-1 – Transportation Map



INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
REGIONAL ROADWAY
ARTERIAL
PROPOSED ARTERIAL
COLLECTOR
PROPOSED COLLECTOR
LOCAL
PROPOSED LOCAL



**City of Wadsworth
Comprehensive Plan Update
Transportation Map**

Rev. December 2010

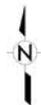


Table A-1
City of Wadsworth
Transportation Plan Update – 2003
Potential Improvement Areas

Area	Description	Potential Improvements	Priority Level
A	High Street Corridor Through Great Oaks Commercial District	Construct new roadways through Great Oaks Commercial District, including Smokerise Drive, widen lanes on High Street, construct turning lanes on High Street, Smokerise & Great Oaks Trail, install traffic signals and coordinate timing from Clarks Corners to Brouse/West Street intersection.	High
B	Roadway Connections between High Street and Hartman Road	Connect Park Centre Drive and/or Smokerise Drive to Hartman Road. Includes complete ROW improvements. Park Centre Drive is classified as a Collector street and should be improved to collector standards.	High
C	Hartman/Akron Road Intersection	Intersection Realignment – land acquisition, construct realigned roadway, close existing road to through traffic, construct turning lanes on existing roadway, install traffic signal.	Completed
D	Broad/Hartman/Silvercreek Intersection	Construct turning lanes, install traffic signal and coordinate signal timing.	High
E	High Street Corridor: Akron Road to CBD	Acquire additional land for ROW expansion, widen existing lanes, construct center turn lane the length of the corridor, coordinate signal timing between CBD and Akron Road.	High/Medium
F	College/Wadsworth/Leatherman	Intersection Realignment – Reconfigure intersection to eliminate close proximity to Leatherman & Wadsworth Road intersections with College Street. Improve Grace Drive & eliminate Wadsworth Road intersection. Improve sight distance on Leatherman Road.	Low/Medium
G	Seville Road/Main Street/Johnson Road Intersection Realignment	Intersection Realignment – land acquisition, construct realigned roadway, close existing road to through traffic, construct turning lanes on existing roadway, install traffic signal.	Low
H	West Street/College Street Intersection	Improved signalization & turning lane improvements including dedicated NB turn lanes from College Street to West Street (land acquisition, pavement widening, lane striping, etc.).	Low
I	Akron Road/I-76 Intersection	Roadway improvements based on potential for commercial development. Improvements could include roadway resurfacing, curb & gutters, land acquisition, construction of dedicated turn lanes, new roadways or private drives serving new development, shared ingress/egress between neighboring uses, etc.	High/Medium (based upon proposed development)

Priority Levels

- High – Within next 5 years
- Medium – Within next 4 to 7 years
- Low – After 5 years

Appendix B: Priorities from the 1996 Comprehensive Plan

The following is a summary of the priorities established in the 1996 Wadsworth Comprehensive Plan.

1996 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - STEERING COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

- Provide quality water, sewer, and other public services.
 - Establish policies for the extension of new services, including timing, service constraints, and cost.
- Manage existing and future traffic, particularly in the north High Street area.
- Improve the quality and type of future growth and development
 - Concentrate on the design, appearance, scale, and location of new development.
- Preserve rural character and prevent development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Maintain the viability of downtown as a civic and commercial center of Wadsworth.
- Maintain quality school facilities.
- Manage the rate of future growth as it affects Wadsworth's services, infrastructure, schools, and quality of life.

1996 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW PRIORITIES

- Provide quality city services.
- Improve traffic around High Street.
- Prepare for an aging population.
- Provide affordable housing.
- Preserve rural character.
- Keep downtown viable.

1996 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - PRIORITIES FOR OTHER PUBLIC INPUT

- Public services should be extended in the future based on adequate capacity availability.
- New growth and development should be sensitive and appropriate to environmental conditions.
- New growth and development should respect existing community and rural character.
- The future growth rate should be defined so that the community can be prepared for demands created by new development.
- The transportation network should be planned to respond to the needs of future development.
- Traffic management issues should be addressed in the north High Street area.

Appendix C: 2009 Issue Identification and Prioritization

On May 12, 2009, the City of Wadsworth held a public kick-off meeting for the comprehensive plan update. At the meeting, attendees were asked to identify the issues, problems, and opportunities that each believed to be important for the future of Wadsworth. After all participants had an opportunity to identify issues, the participants were then asked to rank the top five issues from the aggregate list of issues developed by the attendees. The participants identified 38 issues that ranged from quality of life to “greening” the community. After consolidating common issues, 27 of the topics received at least one “top five” vote. The following table illustrates the results of the issue prioritization with the number of votes each issue received.

TABLE 9: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION		
Priority	Issue	Votes
1	Protect the water resources of the city and complete the purchase of water.	23
2	Realign the intersection of High Street and Great Oaks Trail to be a functional, four-way intersection.	22
3	Create a transit expansion plan.	21
4	Create linkages between parks and neighborhoods by multi-modal trails.	19
5	Encourage redevelopment as the preferred option over new “green field” development.	15
6	Encourage downtown development and occupancy of vacant buildings.	14
7	Create more park land north of I-76 with active recreation uses.	14
8	Maintain and upgrade public infrastructure.	13
9	Make Wadsworth a “green” city.	12
10	Bring in more non-retail jobs and provide incentives for non-retail job creation.	12
11	Widen Hartman Road to include pedestrian paths.	11
12	Create incentives for “green” jobs.	9
13	Encourage quality development on the south side of town.	9
14	Build a connection between Great Oaks Trail and Hartman Road.	8
15	Maintain a diversity of housing values and types.	8
16	Establish a strong vision for the community.	8
17	Improve the appearance of commercial uses in neighborhoods and encourage mixed-uses.	6
18	Attract more industry and provide infrastructure for industrial uses.	6
19	Control “leap frog” development that extends public services.	5
20	Identify appropriate locations and means of alternative energy resources.	5
21	Require development to pay the costs of infrastructure and utility improvements.	4
22	Install a traffic light at Route 57 and College Street.	3
23	Improve the safety of dangerous intersections.	3
24	Build quality affordable housing.	2
25	Make the senior center more user-friendly.	1
26	Get a sense of purpose about “expansion” vs. “consolidating” development patterns.	1
27	Attract a higher education institution to the community.	1