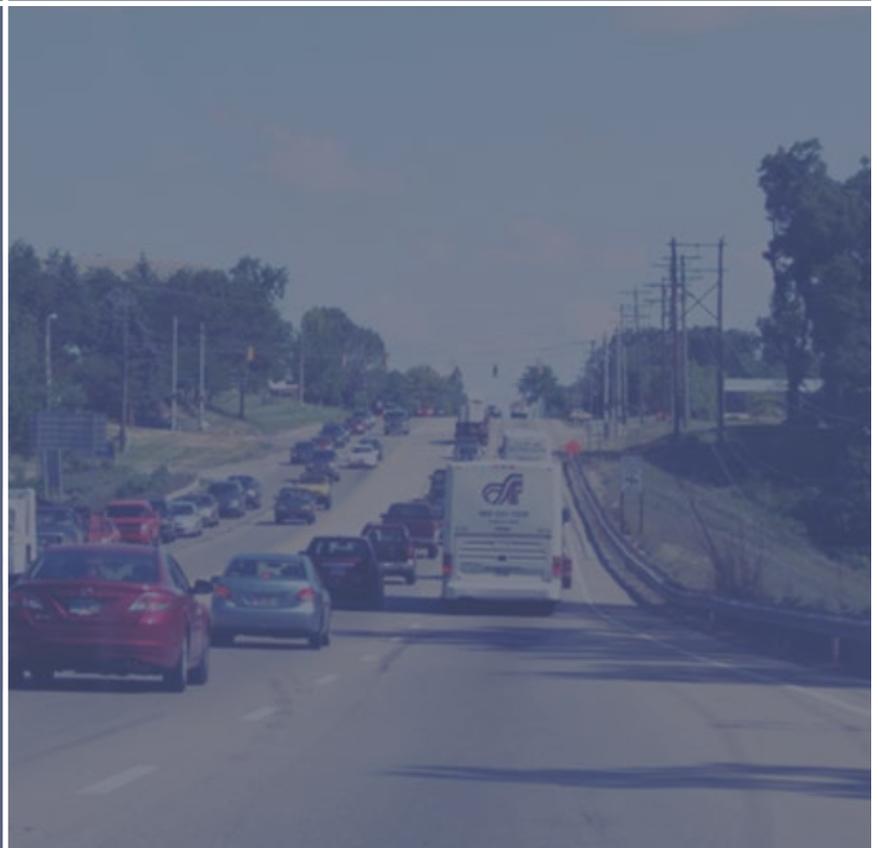


# FAR NORTH AREA PLAN

COLUMBUS PLANNING DIVISION

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF  
DEVELOPMENT





# FAR NORTH AREA PLAN

**COLUMBUS PLANNING DIVISION**

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The *Far North Area Plan* was adopted by Columbus City Council on Month  
Day, Year. This plan supersedes and replaces the 1994 *Far North Plan*.



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Campus View Boulevard

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The Pontifical College Josephinum. Image obtained from Wikimedia Commons (commons.wikimedia.org), and is licensed under CC BY 3.0

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### Sources for figures, tables, and images:

City of Columbus GIS database and staff analysis.  
All images, except where noted, are from the city of Columbus Planning Division.

# ELEMENT 1

# INTRODUCTION

## **IN THIS ELEMENT:**

- 09 What is a Plan and how is it used?
- 11 Planning Area Boundary
- 11 Plan Format
- 13 Area History
- 15 Key Recommendations

There are four steps for how one may use this document to review a development application. **Step 1** is to identify the location of the proposed development by using any of a number of online mapping applications.

**Step 2** is to find that location on the Land Use Plan map, located on page 45 of this document. The recommended land use for that location can then be noted based on the color of the map at that location. Then use the map legend to refer to the “*Classification Description*” of that recommended land use provided on page 44. **Step 3** is to then refer to any additional specific land use text that the plan may provide for that particular location. Finally, **Step 4** is to refer to any relevant design guidelines, provided on pages 60 to 64. The Development Review Checklist on pages 74 to 76 should also be reviewed to ensure any relevant plan provisions are considered.

## What is a Plan... How is it used?

The *Far North Area Plan* provides an opportunity to help shape and direct the pattern of growth and development in the area. The area plan addresses land use and urban design.

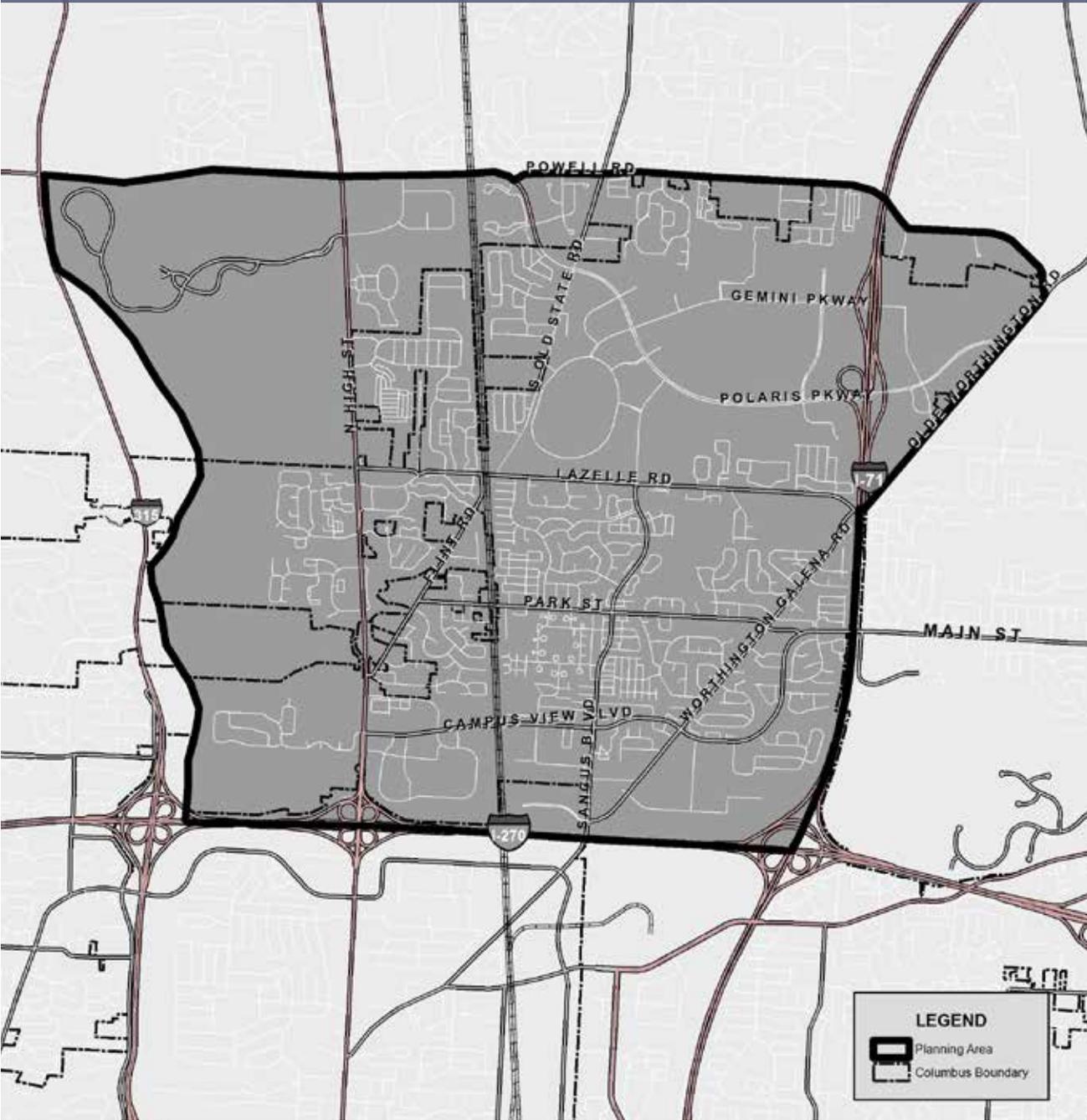
### **The *Far North Area Plan*:**

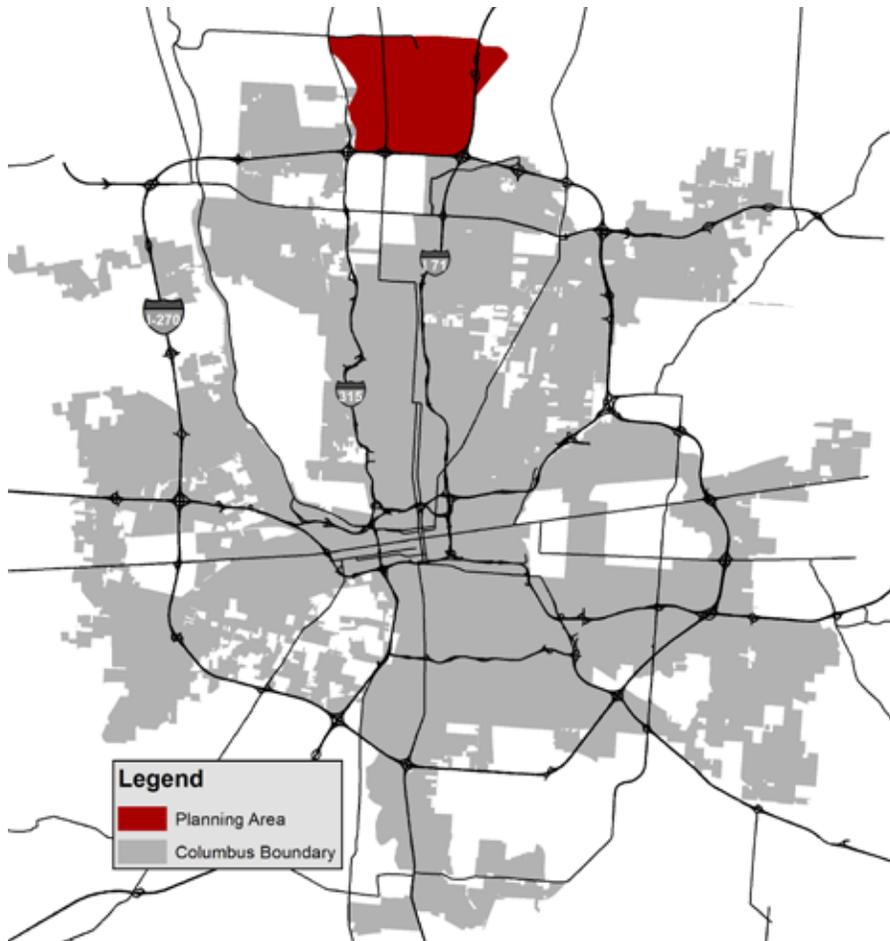
- Identifies strengths and assets.
- Identifies area needs and concerns.
- Sets goals for improving the area.
- Reflects clearly the development priorities for the future.
- Provides a framework for zoning and other land use decisions.
- Informs capital improvement priorities.
- Provides guidelines for the design of new development.

### **An area plan *does not* address the following:**

- A plan does not resolve disputes between property owners.
- It does not solve issues unrelated to the built and natural environment, such as health care, code enforcement, street lighting, and public safety.
- A plan does not *force* public and private entities to do something that they would not otherwise do.
- A plan isn't zoning, though it provides the policy basis for zoning and related development decisions.

Figure 1: The Far North Planning Area





**Figure 2 (above):** The Far North planning area location within the city of Columbus.

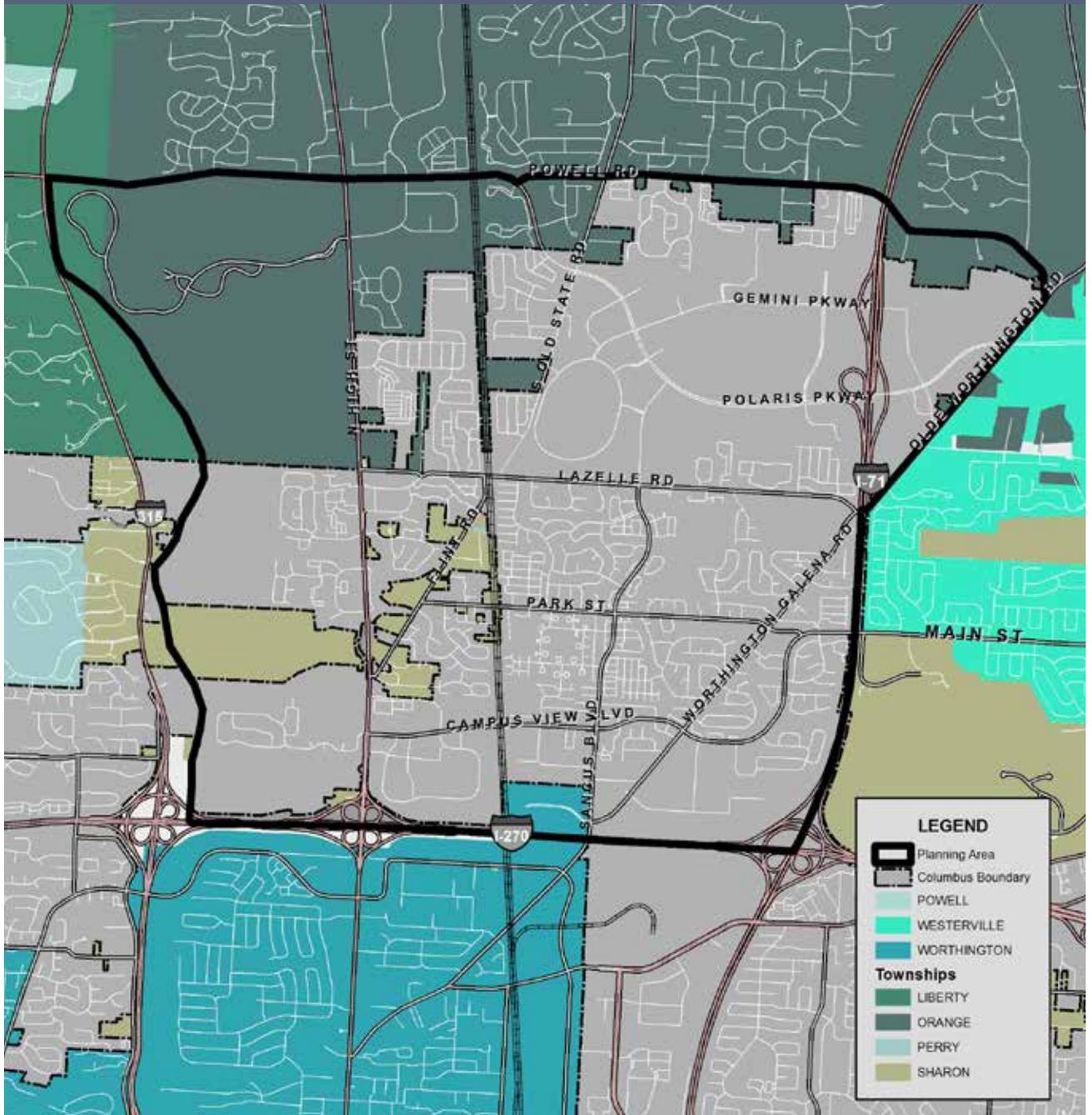
### Planning Area Boundary

The Far North Area is bound by I-71 to the east, I-270 on the south, Olentangy River on the west and Powell Road on the north. The planning area is about 11.2 square miles in area. Approximately 70% (5,083 acres) is within the city of Columbus and 30% (2,112 acres) is within Orange and Sharon Townships. (See Figures 1, 2 and 3.)

### Plan Format

The plan consists of four elements: Introduction, Existing Conditions, Plan Recommendations, and Implementation Strategy. The bulk of the plan consists of the Plan Recommendations Element, which includes text, maps, charts, photos and other illustrations. The recommendations are organized by Development Principles that apply to the Far North Planning Area. Policies were developed for each Development Principle to help guide their implementation. Guidelines and Strategies were then formulated to implement the policies.

Figure 3: Jurisdictions in the Far North Planning Area





**Above:** Flint Train Station.  
Source: [worthingtonmemory.org](http://worthingtonmemory.org)

## Area History

*The planning area covers several different jurisdictions. Each of these jurisdictions has its own history. The following is a brief overview.*

In 1921, Flint, Ohio was a little village in Sharon Township that is now mostly annexed into the city of Columbus. According to the website, Worthington Memory—the former Flint Train Station was moved from the railroad tracks on Park Road in the 200 block almost to Worthington Galena Road. The structure is now a residential property located on Park Road.

Areas within Delaware County were formed in 1808 from land originally in Franklin County. The settlement of Delaware was established as the county seat.

Records scarcely exist of the early settlers of the areas within Orange Township. These settlers came to make homes for themselves in the wilderness. Typical of the time, these settlers did not leave significant recorded history.

Orange Township was originally known as Township 3, Range 18 of the United States Military Lands. On September 18, 1816, the county commissioners granted a petition to set off the original survey as a separate township. The area was to be named the classic name of Virgil, “but this was too much for the simple minded folk of those days” and a petition was presented to the commissioners to change the name to Orange. Additional information on the history of Orange Township is available at the Township website: [Orangetwp.org](http://Orangetwp.org).

The recent history includes major housing development along with regional destinations such as Highbanks Metro Park and Polaris Fashion Mall within the area. Highbanks Park is designated as a National Natural Landmark. It is also rich in native American History. The park contains two Adena Indian burial mounds and a prehistoric earthwork (Metroparks.net).

The construction for Polaris Mall began in 2000 and it opened in 2001. Since then the mall is a popular shopping destination serving Central Ohio residents.

**Below:** Aerial image of the planning area, 1958 (Source: MORPC)



## Key Recommendations

**Land Use** The concentration of retail and office uses in the central portion of the planning area should be maintained as a regional employment center. Development and redevelopment should be consistent and compatible with existing land uses.

**Natural Resources** The plan recommends that new development and redevelopment should respect and preserve mature trees and other natural resources.

**Urban Design** Design guidelines for new residential, commercial, and industrial development are provided to ensure new development contributes to the overall attractiveness and economic viability of the area.

**Transportation** Sidewalk, trail, crosswalks and bicycle facilities are recommended to make the area more pedestrian friendly and to connect neighborhoods and other activity nodes.

**Implementation** Plan implementation is recommended through the use of a development review checklist for the review of zoning and variance applications for consistency with the area plan. A chart of action oriented recommendations is provided to assist with the prioritization of capital improvement-related plan recommendations.

# ELEMENT 2

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

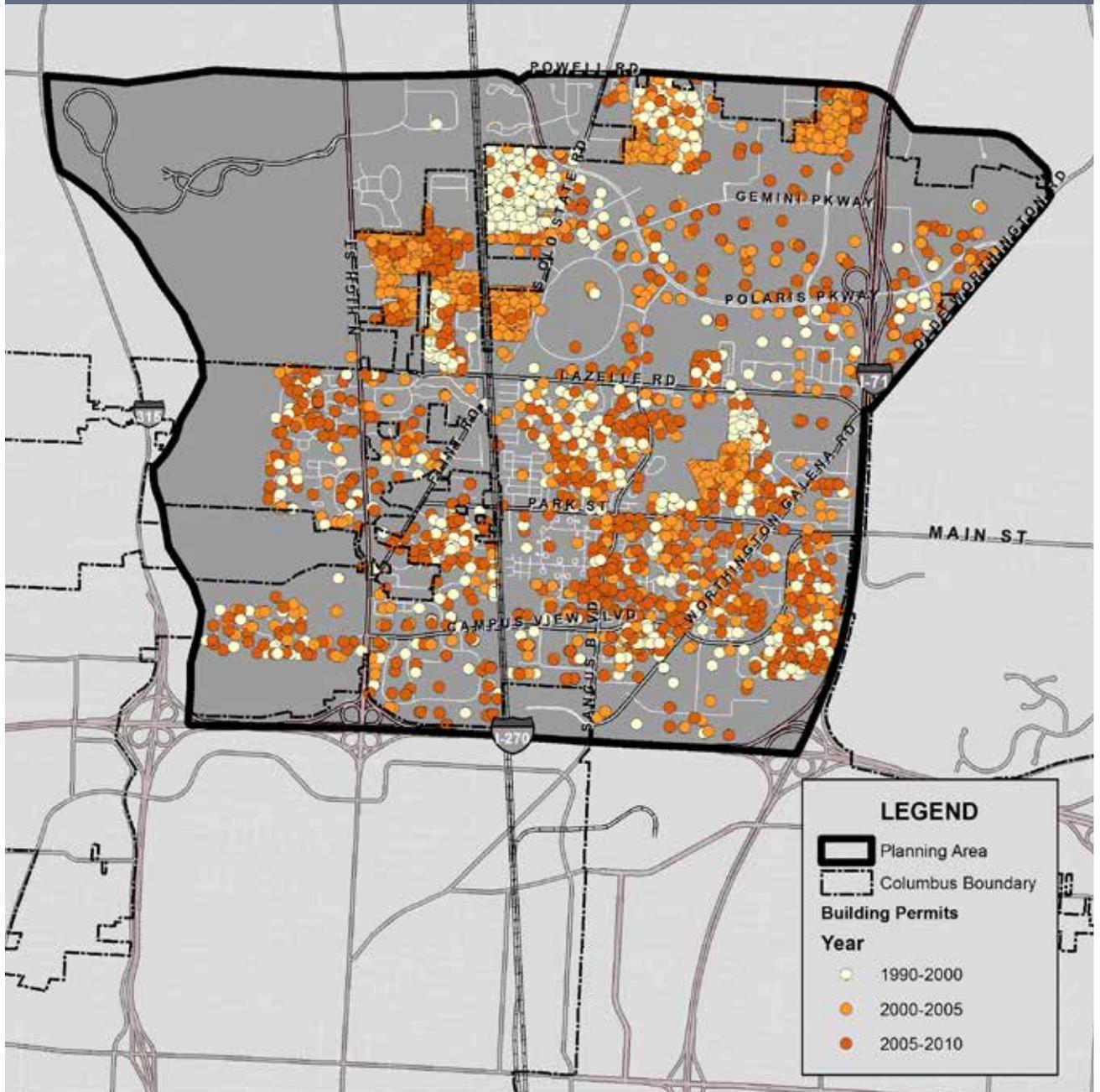
## **IN THIS ELEMENT:**

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## Introduction

The Existing Conditions element of the plan provides a summary of the planning area's physical attributes, including land use, urban form, transportation, community facilities, and the natural environment. This element also reviews existing zoning, demographics, and other factors that may influence future development. The section concludes with a summary of two important pieces of public input in the planning process, including stakeholder interviews that were conducted in the early stages of the process and a summary of the top priorities identified by the community at a public workshop for the plan.

Figure 4: Building Permits by Year and Location



<b>Population</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
Total	22,821	29,593
Male	11,260	14,493
Female	11,560	15,100
Households	10,110	13,080
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
White	19,482	22,766
Black	1,350	2,414
Asian or Pacific Islanders	1,289	3,055
Other or mixed race	700	1,353
<b>Age</b>		
≤14 Years	4,656	5,928
15-29 Years	6,421	7,714
30-59 Years	10,301	13,112
60+ Years	1,443	2,839
<b>Housing Occupancy</b>		
Renter Occupied	4,940	6,455
Owner Occupied	5,170	6,625
Vacant	763	890

**Table 1 (above):** Demographics  
**Chart 1 (right):** Building permit activity by year

## Demographics

The Far North Area includes 29,593 residents and 13,080 households according to 2010 census data (Table 1). The planning area is younger in comparison to the city as a whole with over 45 percent of its population between 30 and 59 years of age, compared to Columbus overall at 35.5 percent. The area’s population and number of households increased 30 percent from 2000 to 2010.

An examination of new building permits in the city of Columbus from 1995–2010 depicts a spike in growth from 1999–2002 (Chart 1 and Figure 4). This data also demonstrates that the majority of the growth is new residential and has occurred in the northern portion of the planning area. Although not as extensive, there has also been growth in the western portion of the area. Development activity has increased again during the last 2 years.

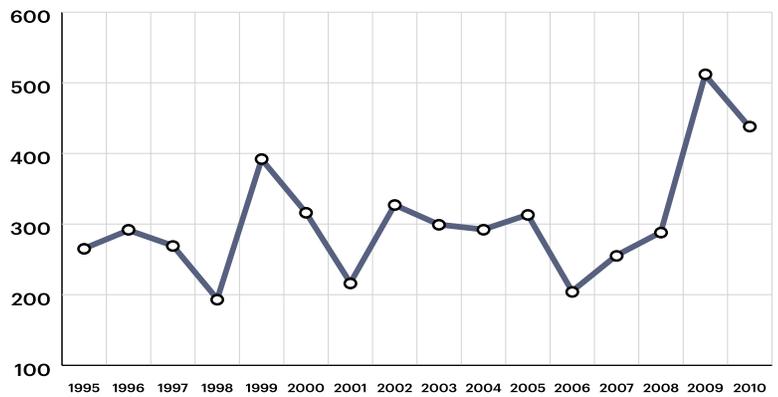
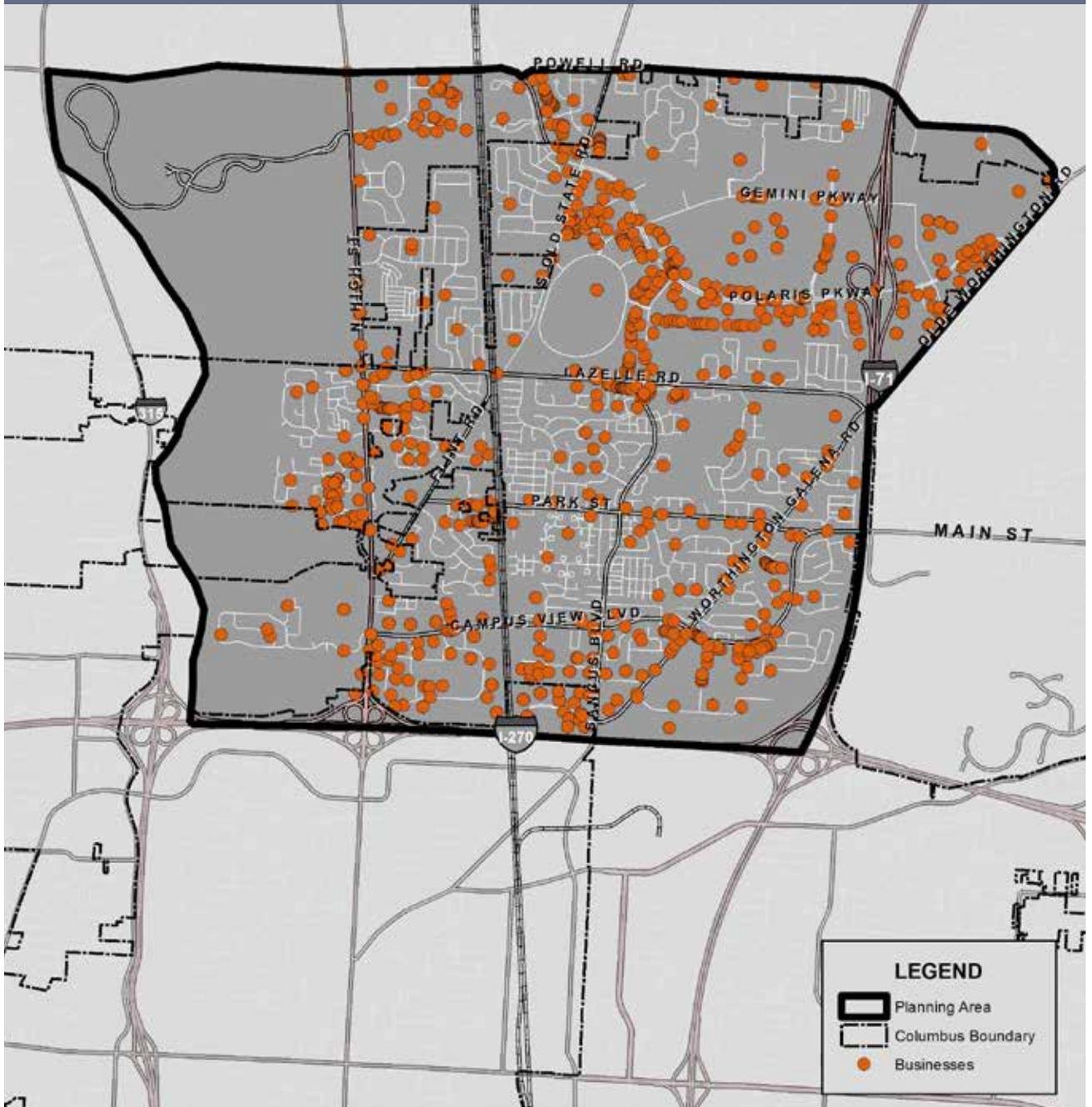


Figure 5: Businesses by Location



Industry	Businesses	Percentage	Employees	Percentage
<b>Retail Trade</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>8,353</b>	<b>20.9%</b>
<b>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>2,025</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>1,513</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
<b>Other Services (except Public Administration)</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	1,178	2.9%
<b>Finance and Insurance</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>12,295</b>	<b>30.8%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	166	8.5%	5,176	13.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	111	5.7%	606	1.5%
Construction	93	4.7%	1,088	2.7%
Wholesale Trade	78	4.0%	713	1.8%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
Not Available	65	3.4%	247	0.6%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	50	2.6%	468	1.2%
Information	38	1.9%	1,444	3.6%
Educational Services	25	1.3%	296	0.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	12	0.6%	552	1.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	11	0.6%	106	0.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	6	0.3%	11	0.0%
Public Administration	4	0.2%	849	2.1%
Utilities	3	0.2%	15	0.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1	0.1%	6	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,958</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>39,938</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2 (above):** Businesses and Employees; the top five industries with the largest percentage of businesses and employees are demarcated.

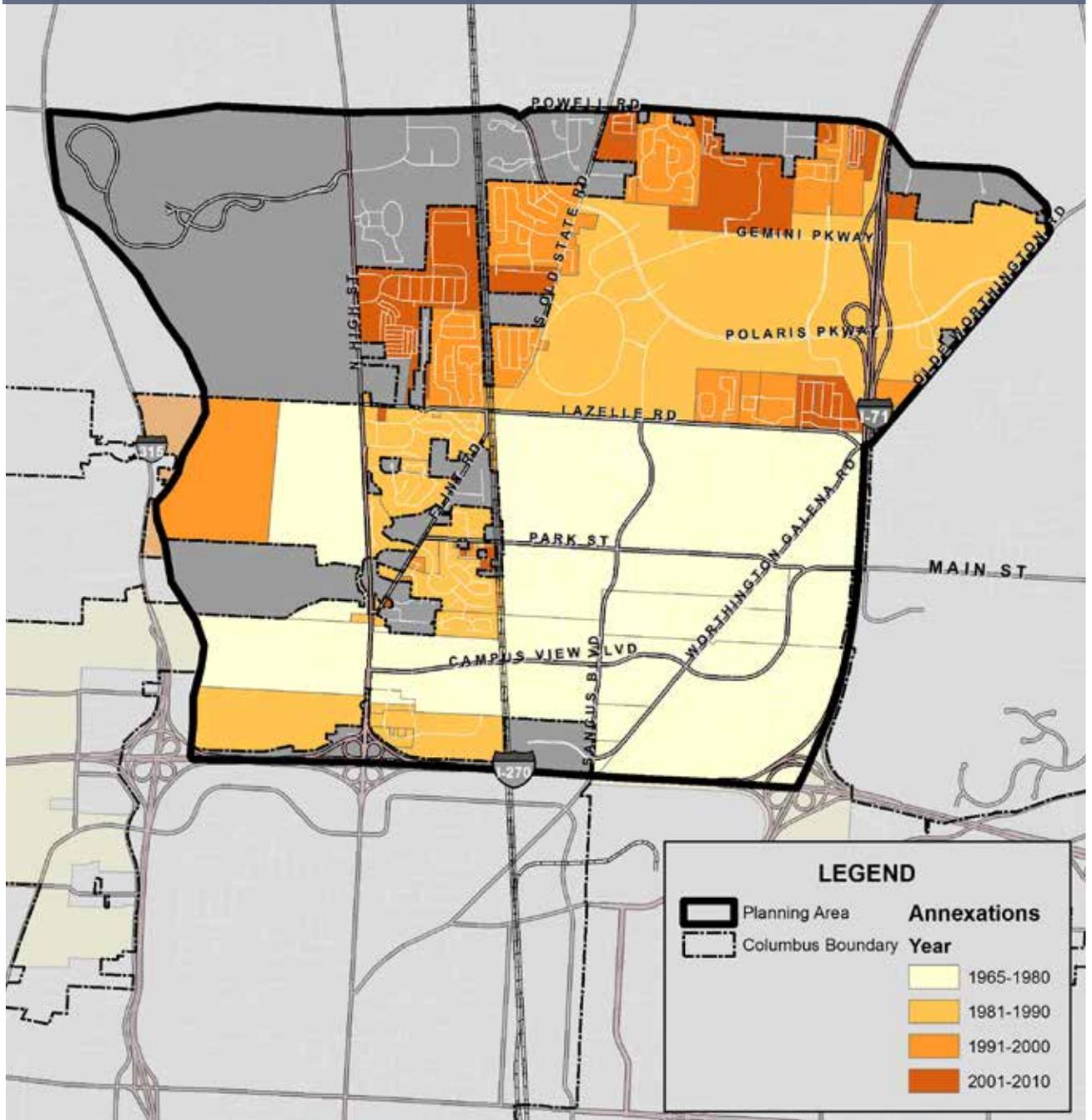
## Employment

According to the Reference USA Database, there are over 20 different employment categories with 1,958 businesses in the planning area as of 2011. The businesses are distributed throughout the planning area with larger clusters along Polaris Parkway and North High Street. The Retail Trade, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and Healthcare and Social Assistance are the top three categories with over 40% of the businesses. Polaris Fashion Mall and JP Morgan Chase are the two major employment centers within the planning area.

Nearly 40,000 people work in the planning area. The largest number of employees work in the Finance and Insurance and Retail Trade categories. This is logical, considering the presence of JP Morgan Chase and the Polaris Fashion Mall.

One of the attributes of the planning area is that the number of people working in the area is three times the number of residents, resulting in considerable commuting traffic counts (Figure 5).

Figure 6: Annexations



## **Population, Housing, and Employment Forecasts**

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) has estimated that by 2030 the Far North area population will have decreased by 8% from its 2010 level (27,054); the number of housing units will have increased by 2% (13,378); the total employment within the area will have decreased by 5% (37,818). It should be noted that these figures are, in fact, projections based on existing land use plans, development patterns and policies and regional growth levels. Many factors beyond the scope of this plan will ultimately influence the area's growth rate.

## **Annexation History**

The majority of the planning area lies within the city of Columbus. The area was annexed to Columbus beginning in 1965, with the bulk of annexations taking place from 1965 to 1980. The Polaris Fashion Mall area was annexed in 1990. Infill annexations have continued to take place with activity slowing down substantially in recent years (Figure 6).

## **Opportunities and Constraints**

The planning area includes significant development related opportunities and constraints. Major opportunities are the employment and retail offerings available at JP Morgan Chase and the Polaris Fashion Mall. A major constraint is that the area experienced considerable growth at a time when development was designed more for the automobile than the pedestrian or bicyclist.

Neighborhoods and retail/ office nodes often lack any pedestrian and bicycle connections resulting in high traffic volumes on all of the corridors within the area. Additional opportunities and constraints include:

- The amount of undeveloped land surrounding Polaris and within the planning area boundary is limited.
- Conrail Railroad tracks bisect the planning area and provide an excellent north/south transportation corridor to downtown Columbus, providing potential route for commuter rail.
- The mostly developed portion of the planning area south of Lazelle Road was developed for the automobile as the primary means of transportation. There is no existing provision for bicycle or pedestrian access between residential areas and the nearby schools, recreation, shopping, and employment. Resolving this lack of access will require retrofitting the necessary infrastructure. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 25**





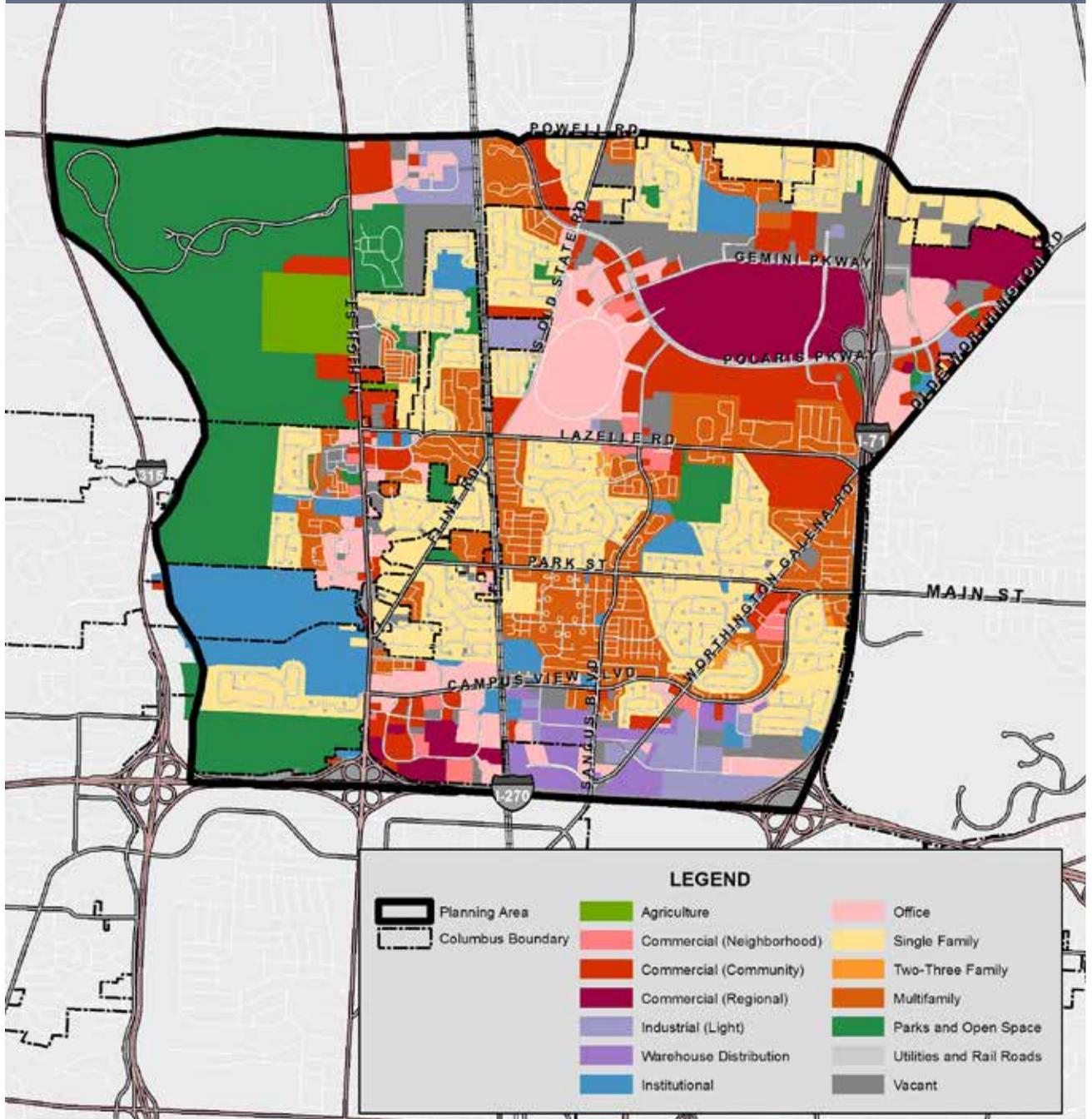
**Above:** North High Street  
**Facing page:** The edge of the planning area at Highbanks Metro Park.

## Opportunities and Constraints

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

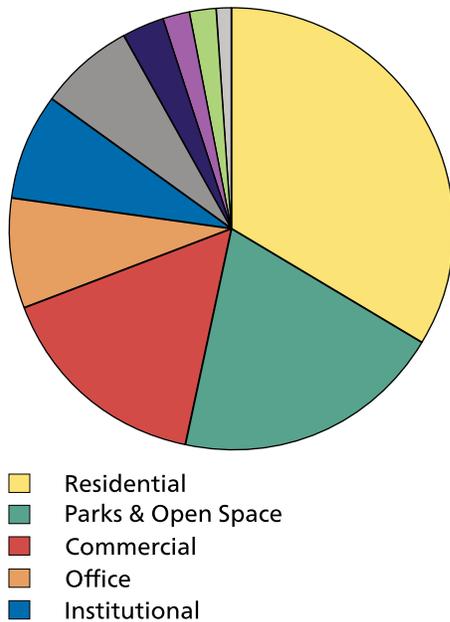
- The portion of the planning area between Lazelle Road and Worthington Woods Boulevard contains single-family, two-family, and multifamily housing in a variety of densities and price ranges. There is also a significant amount of residential development located west of North High Street.
- Major employment centers exist south of Worthington Woods Boulevard, and in the Crosswoods and Northwoods areas.
- Major commercial corridors such as North High Street lack consistency in design and development standards resulting in inconsistent setbacks, landscaping, signage, and building orientation. To ensure economic sustainability over the long term, enhanced standards are warranted.

Figure 7: Existing Land Use



Land Use Category	Acres	Percent
Residential	2,185	34%
Parks & Open Space	1,316	20%
Commercial	1,005	16%
Office	493	8%
Institutional	484	8%
Vacant	451	7%
Industrial (Light)	174	3%
Warehouse	121	2%
Agriculture	112	2%
Utilities & Railroads	88	1%

**Table 3 (above):** Existing land use by category  
**Chart 2 (below):** Existing land use chart



### Existing Land Use

The Far North planning area’s existing land use is depicted in Chart 2, Table 3, and Figure 7. Residential uses comprise 34% of the land area while park and open space land uses account for approximately 20%. Commercial, office and light industrial uses combine for approximately 28% of the planning area.

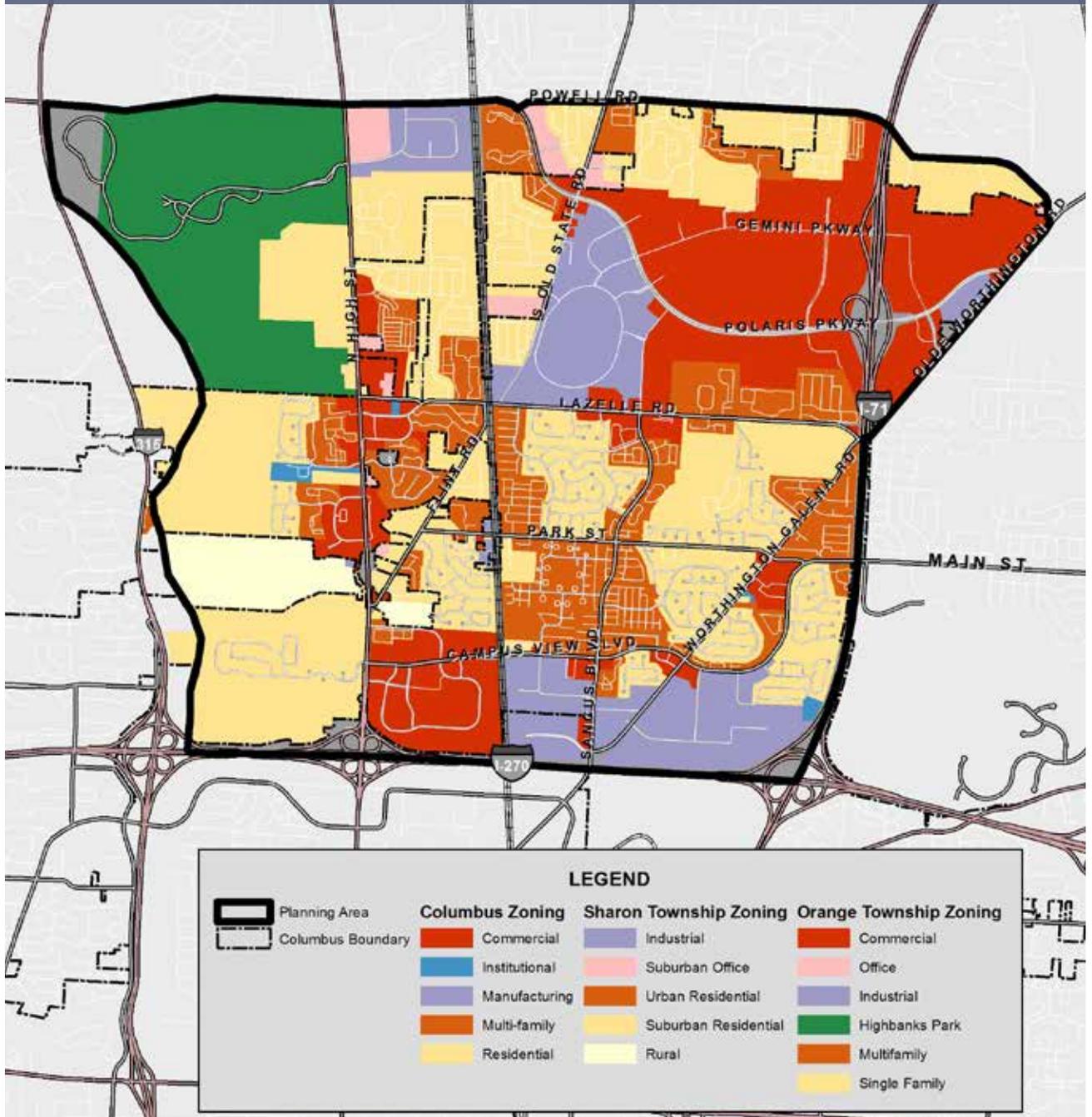
The residential uses within the planning area are single-family (20% of total) and multifamily (14% of total). They are distributed throughout the area. Though single-family uses exceed multifamily uses in number of total acres, multifamily developments have seen major growth in recent years. Several new apartment developments recently completed have increased the residential density in this planning area.

Institutional uses, including a library, recreation center, schools, churches, social service agencies and governmental uses are also found throughout the planning area. The largest single institutional use is the private Pontifical College Josephinum.

Polaris Parkway has a wide mix of retail, commercial, and office uses. The majority of these commercial uses take the form of auto-oriented development. Polaris Fashion Mall encompasses over 1,200 acres of land north of Polaris Parkway. JP Morgan Chase forms a large cluster of finance related uses off of Old State Road. Several additional office buildings in the planning area related to the finance industry contribute to the area’s status as a regional employment center. Industrial uses are focused north of I-270 and east of the railroad tracks.

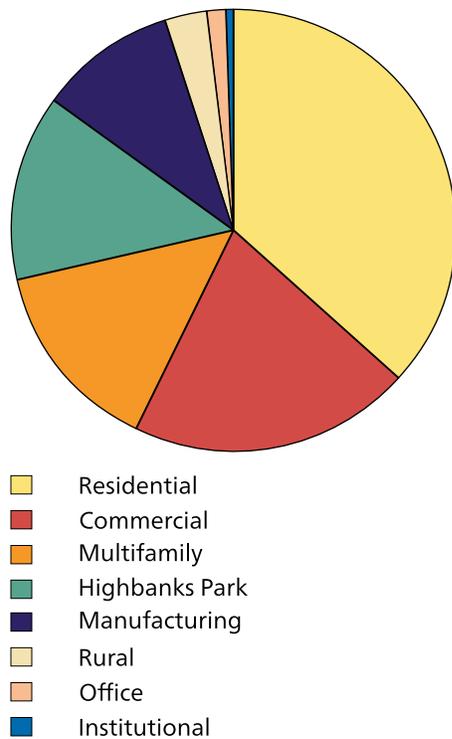
Parks and Open space include both public and private lands and comprise a major portion of the planning area at 1,316 acres. The vast majority of this land, however, is located to the west of North High Street (US 23), including Highbanks Metro Park, York Temple Country Club Golf Course, and Camp Mary Orton.

Figure 8: Existing Zoning



Zoning Category	Acres	Percent
Residential	2,364	37%
Commercial	1,315	20%
Multifamily	929	14%
Highbanks Park	857	13%
Manufacturing	653	10%
Rural	189	3%
Office	100	2%
Institutional	22	0.3%

**Table 4 (above):** Existing zoning by category  
**Chart 3 (below):** Existing zoning chart



## Existing Zoning

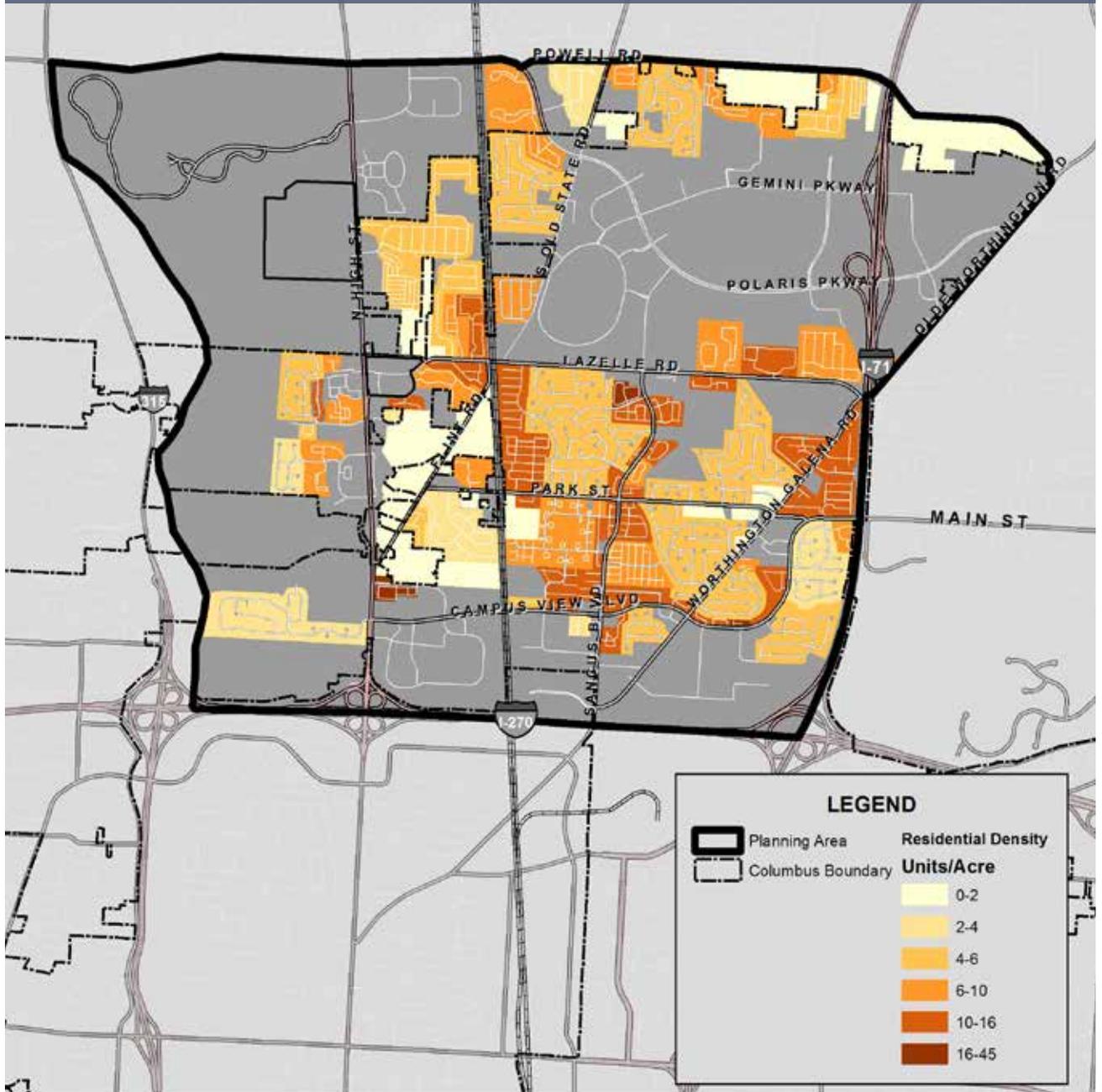
The current zoning pattern generally reflects existing land use (Figure 8). The jurisdictions within the planning area implement their individual zoning code. Figure 8 depicts the combination of zoning districts for Columbus, Orange Township and Sharon Township.

The majority of the area is zoned residential. Although different residential zoning categories exist for the different jurisdictions, the majority of the residentially zoned land is developed as single-family. Multifamily zoning is distributed throughout the planning area as well.

The largest commercial zoning in the planning area is around Polaris Fashion Mall. There are also several parcels located on North High Street (US 23) zoned as commercial. Other commercially zoned intersections include Lazelle Road and Sancus Boulevard and Park Road and Worthington Road. A few parcels along Campus View Boulevard are also zoned commercial.

Several parcels east of the railroad tracks and north of I-270, JP Morgan Chase campus and parcels south of Powell Road and west of railroad tracks are zoned light industrial.

Figure 9: Residential Densities





**Above:** An example of a neighborhood gateway

## Urban Form

**Density** → Housing patterns in the Far North planning area consist primarily of single-family homes at a density of about 2 to 4 dwelling units per acre. Higher density housing (from 6 units per acre to as high as 35 units per acre) is located, to some extent, in all parts of the area, with most found in the more recently developed portions (Figure 9).

**Gateways** → While some individual neighborhoods in the area have signs indicating entry points, there is a lack of gateway identification for the area as-a-whole. The area's identity is generally drawn from its major centers of activity, such as Polaris, JP Morgan Chase, and Highbanks Metro Park.

There are no distinguishing features or gateways to determine when one is within the Columbus corporate limits or other jurisdiction. Possible gateway locations exist along all major streets crossing the planning area.

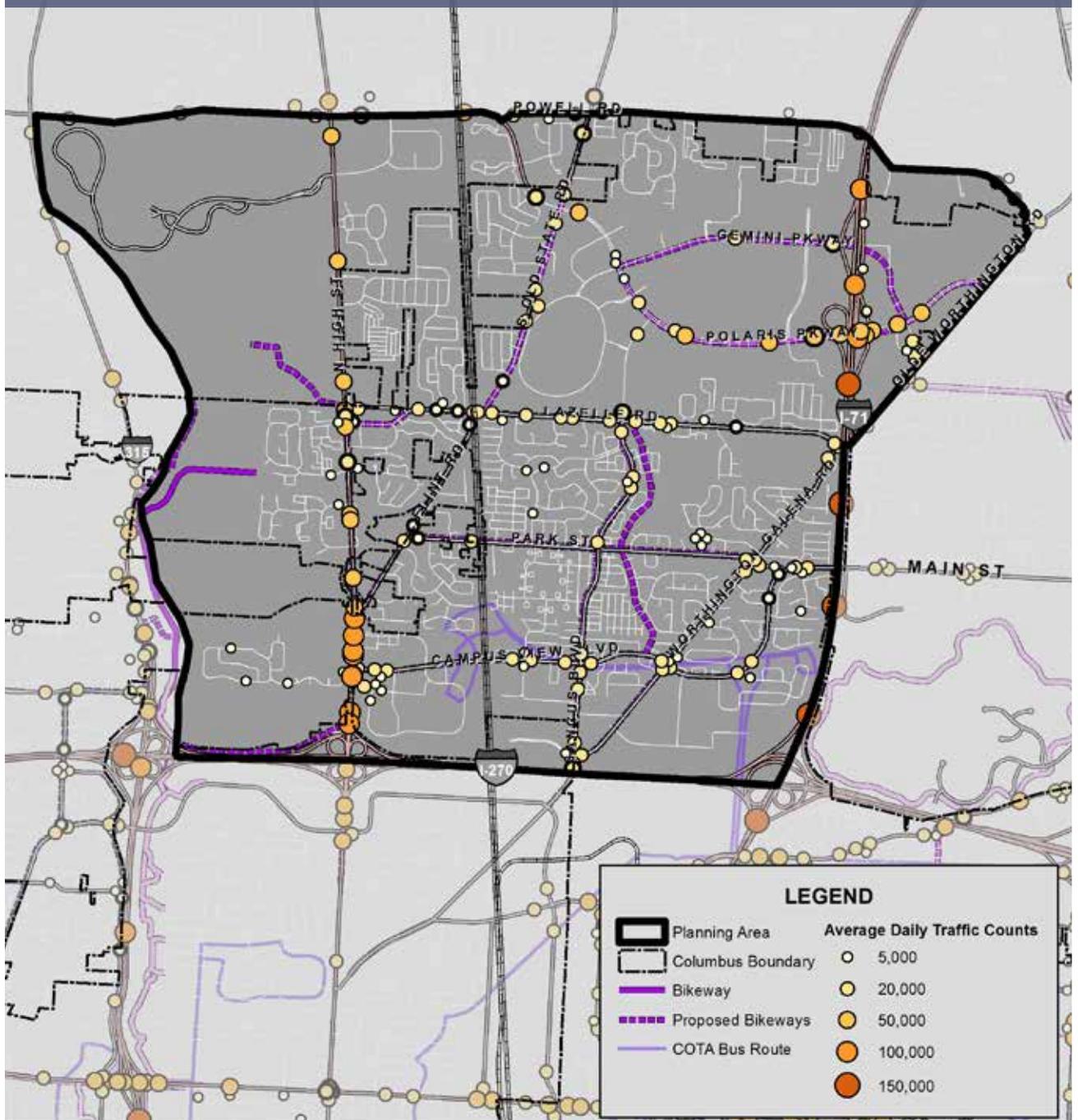
**Corridors** → North High Street (US 23) is the major north-south federal and state highway that runs from Jacksonville, Florida to Mackinaw City, Michigan. This corridor serves as a major divider of the planning area, with most of the area's natural resources located to the west. The road is heavily traveled by commercial trucks and passenger vehicles. During the past decade substantial commercial development has occurred on North High Street (US 23) in the planning area and to the north, attracting additional traffic and heightening the corridor's importance to the planning area.

Interstate 71 is another major north-south corridor bringing traffic both to and around the planning area. Interstate 71 serves as a primary access for visiting traffic to Polaris Fashion Mall and new commercial developments on Gemini Place. Recent ramp improvements to Polaris Parkway from I-71 have reduced traffic congestion and improved circulation significantly. However, this corridor still experiences traffic issues at peak times.

Polaris Parkway has become a major east-west corridor in recent years as a result of the development of regional commercial destinations. In addition to retail destinations, Polaris Parkway serves as major east to west corridor from Powell to Westerville.

**Nodes** → Activity nodes (points of concentrated public activity) exist primarily at Polaris Fashion Mall, JP Morgan Chase, and Highbanks Metro Park, along with other major businesses within the planning area.

Figure 10: Transportation





**Above:** Vehicle traffic on N. High Street  
**Table 5 (below):** Roadway Classifications

Name	Type
Campus View Boulevard	4-2
Columbus Pike (US 23)	6-2D
Flint Road	C
High Street (US 23)	6-2D
Interstate 71	Freeway
Lazelle Road	4-2
Park Road	C
Polaris Parkway	6-2D
Powell Road	C
Powell Road (SR 750)	6-2D
Sancus Boulevard	4-2
S. Old State	4-2
Worthington Road	4-2
Worthington-Galena Road	4-2/C

Road classifications are from the *Columbus Thoroughfare Plan*. The *Columbus Thoroughfare Plan* designates the functional classifications of roads and includes right-of-way requirements for the various classifications.

- 6-2D** Two-way streets that include six moving lanes with median or divider
- 4-2** Two-way streets that include four moving lanes
- C** Collector road

## Transportation

**Motorized Vehicular Traffic** → The planning area is well served by roadways and freeways, making automobile access to Downtown, Port Columbus, and other major activity and employment centers convenient. Table 5 identifies the functional classification of freeways, arterials, and collector streets within the planning area. Figure 10 shows the locations of these roadways and traffic counts. Traffic volumes represented by average daily traffic counts along all freeways range from 50,000 to 130,000 automobiles.

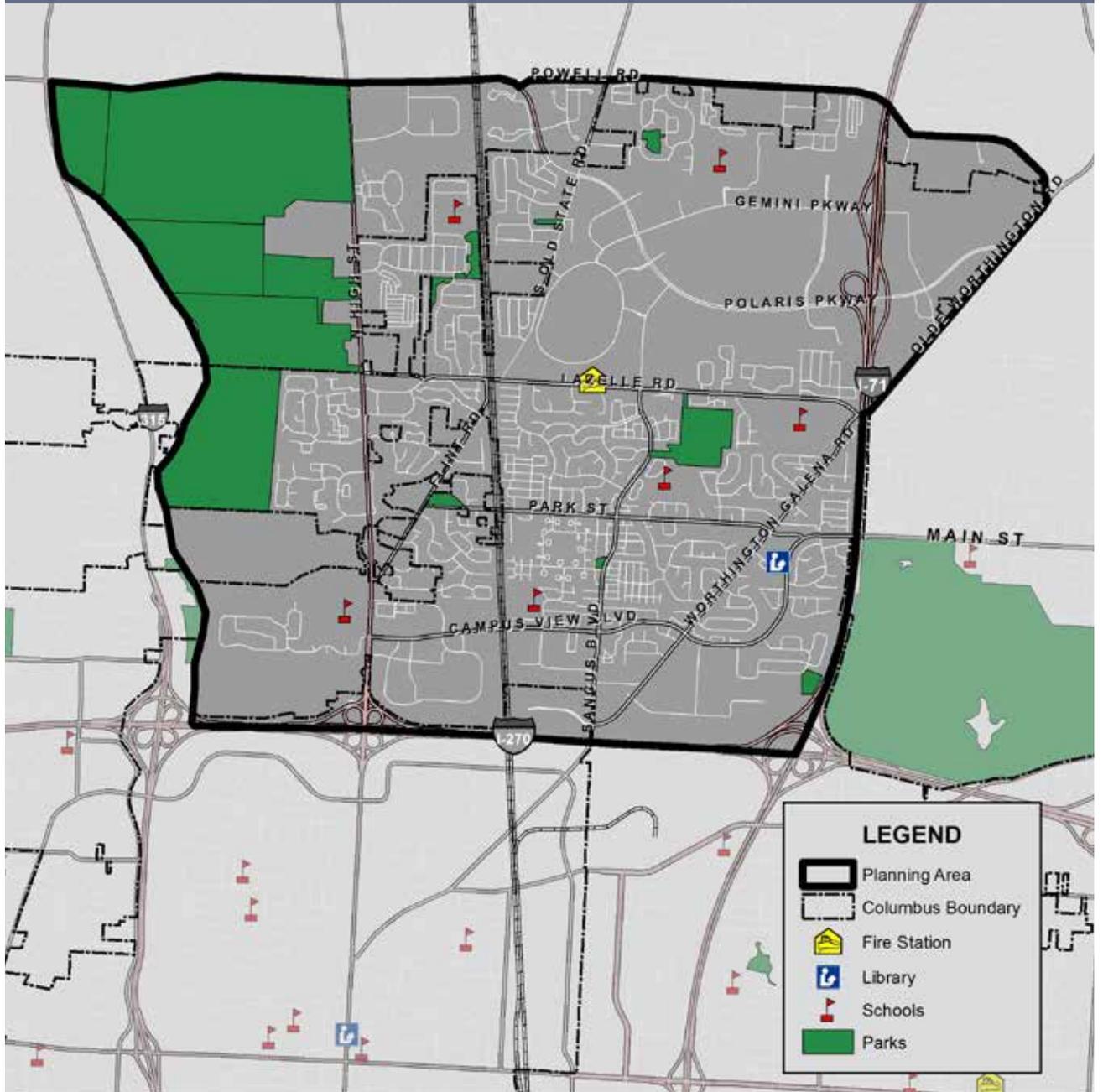
**Pedestrian Movement** → While many of the newer housing developments of the planning area include an internal sidewalk system, pedestrian facilities tend to be lacking in most of the planning area.

A shared use path follows the Olentangy River on the western edge of the planning area, but does not connect to the planning area's neighborhoods. More paths are planned and proposed within the area following the Olentangy River (Figure 10).

**Transit** → Alternative modes of transportation for the planning area are generally limited to the Central Ohio Transportation Authority (COTA) bus service and taxi service. There are three Express Routes within the planning area: Polaris Express 29 connects Polaris Fashion Mall with Downtown to the south; North Central Express 33 connects Downtown to the Westerville Park and Ride via I-71 and Worthington Galena Road; Worthington Express 31 connects High Street to the Crosswoods area (Figure 10).

**Rail** → Conrail Railroad tracks bisect the planning area and provide an excellent north/south transportation corridor to downtown Columbus, which has been identified over the years as a potential commuter rail line. In fact, COTA owns property in Crosswoods, for the purpose of constructing a future rail station (Figure 10).

Figure 11: Community Facilities



## **Capital Improvements**

The Capital Improvements Program is a compilation of the City's infrastructure investment priorities for a six-year period. It includes individual projects as well as categories of projects. Allocations and schedules are subject to change due to such issues as funding availability, right-of-way acquisition, and work flow. Current capital improvement projects proposed in the planning area include sidewalks on Dimension Drive in the Crosswoods area from North High Street (US 23) to High Cross Boulevard and improvements to Sancus Boulevard from Worthington Woods to Lazelle. Those interested in specific projects should contact the implementing department or division to determine the current status.

## **Community Facilities**

The Columbus Division of Fire provides services for the Far North from Fire Station 33, located at 44 Lazelle Road. Sharon Township police station is located off of Olentangy River Road west of planning area. Worthington, Powell, Westerville and Columbus police stations are located in close proximity to the planning area. The area is served by the Worthington Public Library. There are no other libraries in the planning area.

Schools in the planning area include Olentangy Meadows Elementary School in the Olentangy School District; Worthington Park Elementary School, and Slate Hill Elementary School in the Worthington School District. Worthington Christian Middle School and Polaris Christian Academy are private schools within planning area. Pontifical Josephinum College, and sites hosting the University of Phoenix, DeVry University and Strayer University are also located in the planning area (Figure 11).

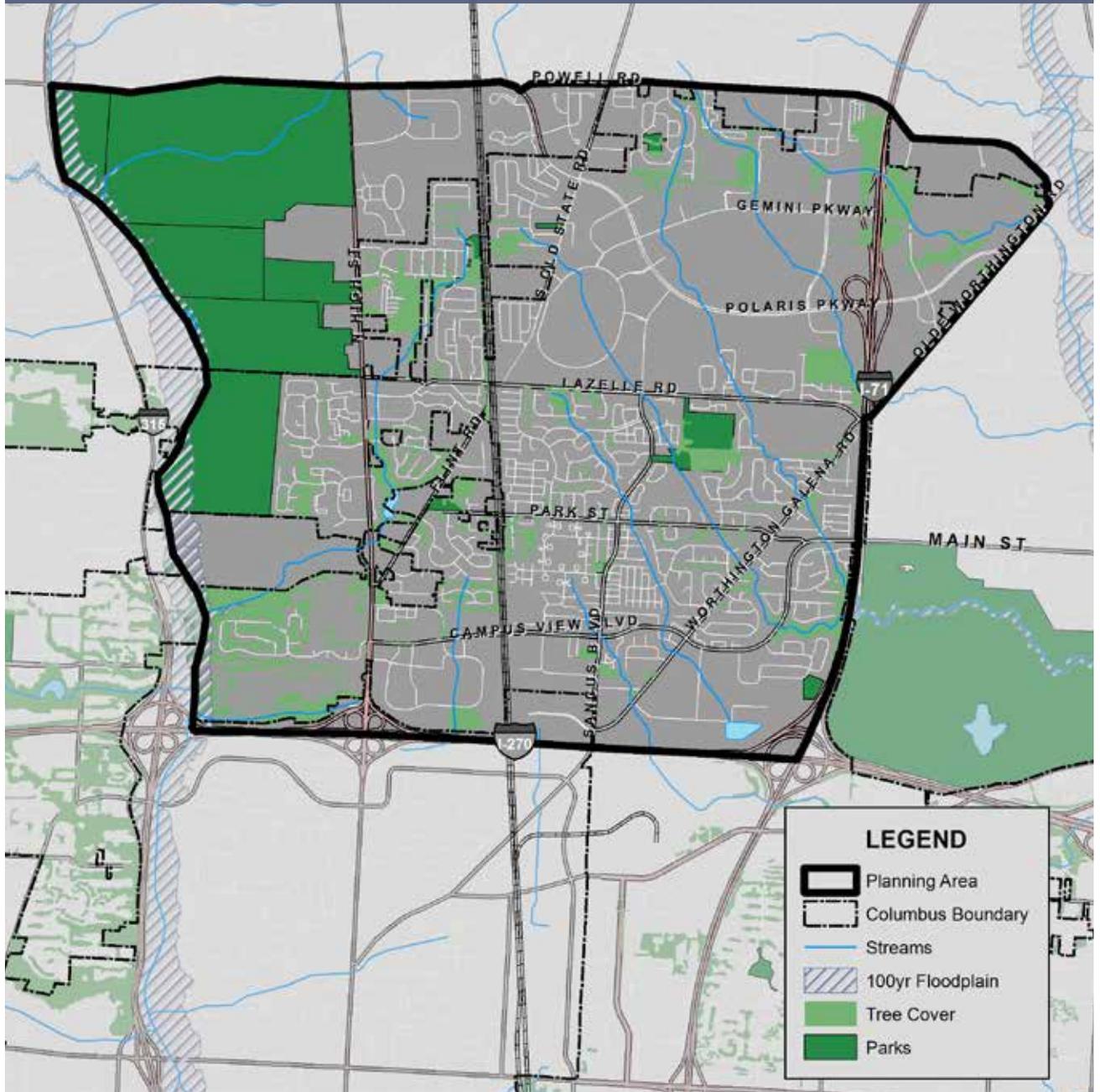
## **Stormwater Facilities**

New Columbus developments must comply with the City's stormwater manual guidelines and treat most of the storm water on site. The drainage is provided by a system of pipes, open ditches and streams that flow into Olentangy River and Alum Creek.

## **Sanitary Sewer Services**

Sanitary sewer service is provided to the Franklin County portion of the planning area by the regional sanitary sewer system operated by the city of Columbus Division of Sewerage and Drainage. Sanitary sewer service to the land located in Delaware County is provided by Delaware County.

Figure 12: Natural Resources





**Above:** Water towers near Lazelle Road  
**Table 6 (below):** Columbus Parks

Name	Acreage
Flint Park	5.7
Lazelle Woods Park	46.0
Olenbrook Parkland	3.5
Olentangy Meadows Parkland	8.4
Pingue Park	5.2
Prestwick Commons Park	4.9
Sancus Park	1.2
Wynstone Park	1.9



**Above:** Flint Park

## Water Facilities

There are three sources of water for the residents and businesses within the planning area. The largest portion of the planning area is served by the Columbus Division of Water. Some areas are served by the Del-Co Water Company from Delaware County and the remaining area is served by private residential wells.

## Natural Environment

**Parkland and Protected Open Space** → Parkland and open space in the area includes the 140-acre York Temple Country Club Golf Course, 1,159-acre Highbanks Metro Park, and Camp Mary Orton—a 166-acre recreational facility owned by the Godman Guild. A few smaller parks are distributed within the Far North (Table 6). Orange Township offers park facilities but none of those are within the planning area. Other major natural resource features include tributaries of the Olentangy River, the Flint Ravine, Deer Creek Ravine, the Olentangy River floodplain and valley, and the grounds of the Pontifical College Josephinum.

**Streams and Rivers** → The Olentangy River watershed is 32 miles long, and includes about 150 square miles of land situated between the Delaware Dam and the Scioto River. Twenty two of those miles were designated a State Scenic River in 1973 because of its exceptional water quality. The *Lower Olentangy Watershed Action Plan* was developed by Friends of Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW, a non profit group) in 2003 with the input of citizens and stakeholders, and contains strategies and recommendations to improve or protect water quality by decreasing pollution and increasing the recreational value of the river. The purpose of creating a watershed action plan is to meet the goals set forth in the Clean Water Act, which include having fishable, swimmable and drinkable streams (The *Lower Olentangy Watershed Action Plan* in 2003).

**Tree Cover** → Aerial photography and windshield surveys indicate many areas of significant mature tree cover most of which is west of North High Street (US 23). Highbanks Metro Park along with Godman Guild Recreational facility is covered with significant mature tree cover. Some clusters of tree cover are preserved within subdivisions or office complexes. Figure 12 on page 36 shows locales where major stands of trees currently exist.



**Above:** Highbanks Metro Park tree cover

## Public Input

The participation of stakeholders is critical to a successful planning process, as consensus must be reached to ensure an implementable plan. Toward that end, input was sought from a wide range of individuals and organizations, in addition to the Working Committee. A summary of this input is provided below.

**Summary of stakeholder interviews** → Planning Division staff interviewed stakeholders representing various interests in the planning area to clarify the perspectives and priorities of the community. Stakeholders are persons with personal, business, or other strong interests in the present and future of the community.

In general, stakeholders felt that while the Far North Planning Area faces some challenges, it has numerous community assets to build upon. Specific input included:

- Good location, short distance to many attractions/destinations as well as day-to-day necessities.
- Traffic congestion at several intersections.
- Limited pedestrian, bicycling connections.
- There is a desire for more housing options.
- Portions of North High Street (US 23) lack aesthetic quality.
- Highbanks Park is a regional destination, but more usable green space is needed within the neighborhoods.
- Extensive concentration of retail uses/ fear of future vacancies.

**Summary of public workshop input** → The first public workshop provided the opportunity to identify top priorities and concerns. The results focused on:

- Transportation/mobility
- Land use and density
- Urban design
- Landscaping, buffering, and screening
- Preservation of natural resources and tree cover
- Housing
- Retail concentration and vacancy issues
- Infrastructure

# ELEMENT 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

## **IN THIS ELEMENT:**

42 Principle 1: Land Use

58 Principle 2: Natural Resources

60 Principle 3: Urban Design

65 Principle 4: Transportation

## Introduction

The Plan Recommendations Element is organized around four development principles and is an outgrowth of staff analysis and guidance from public input. The development principles, policies, and guidelines and strategies are consistent with overall city of Columbus development-related policies. Supporting policies follow each development principle. Guidelines and strategies accompany each policy providing direction on implementation. Together, the development principles, policies and guidelines and strategies are designed to progress from broad to specific. This creates a framework for future decision making in the areas of land use, transportation and urban design.

“Compatible” is a term used in planning documents that is meant to indicate similar to existing development that is adjacent to a proposed development in terms of height, width, density, landscaping, and other standards used in the plan.

## Principle 1: Land Use

A mix of land uses contributes to the sustainability of the planning area and quality of life of residents.

Land use defines how a property and/or a building is used. For neighborhoods to be sustainable over the long term, it is critical that a vibrant mix of uses is provided to help stabilize property values and provide for the needs of residents. This section of the plan provides a future land use map and accompanying policies (collectively referred to as the Land Use Plan).

The Land Use Plan map (Figure 13) illustrates recommended future land uses for the planning area and is used to review future development proposals. The map legend corresponds with the legend on page 44, which provides generalized descriptions of the recommended land use classifications. It should be noted that the recommendations of this plan do not apply to properties outside Columbus. Land use recommendations for areas that are currently not in Columbus are provided in the event they are annexed to the City in the future.

The text within this section of the plan also provides a combination of development related guidelines and descriptions of some of the recommendations from the Land Use Plan.

→ **Policy 1.1** *New development and redevelopment should be consistent and compatible with the land use, density, and pattern of the surrounding area.*

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- Infill development should be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan map and supporting text.
- Non-residential uses are generally not appropriate in existing residential areas except where designated on the Land Use Plan map.
- Residential uses are not appropriate in existing industrial and employment center areas except where designated on the Land Use Plan map.
- New development and redevelopment should provide features that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and encourage social interaction, such as sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths, and open spaces.



**Above:** An example of very low density residential

★ Recommendations specific to the Very Low Density Residential: the area north of the Germain Amphitheater site in the Polaris Subarea are provided on page 55; the site east of the railroad tracks in the Lazelle Woods Park Subarea are provided on page 57.

- Redevelopment and reuse of vacant and underutilized commercial and office sites is recommended in a manner consistent with the Land Use Plan and recommended design guidelines.
- New residential housing should offer a range of housing types, sizes, and price.

→ **Policy 1.2** *Redevelopment of existing Very Low Density Residential should be compatible with surrounding development.*★

A number of parcels are depicted on the Future Land Use Map (shown on page 45) as Very Low Density Residential. These parcels are typically at least half an acre in size and include mix of city and township jurisdictions. While the Far North Plan encourages the conservation of such areas, it is recognized that some may be subject to redevelopment proposals. This generally applies to larger single parcels or assemblage of several smaller lots. Residential remains the preferred land use. Future development should be compatible with adjacent density patterns. Support for redevelopment proposals within these areas should be based on the following considerations.

**GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

- Use of techniques such as sensitive site design and cluster development to preserve open space, natural resources, and other ecologically sensitive areas.
- Buffering of adjacent uses, particularly lower density residential, through the use of such elements as existing and new vegetation, fencing, masonry walls, mounding, orientation of residential garages, and careful placement of site lighting.
- Primary building and side yard setbacks consistent with or greater than that of adjacent uses.
- Heights compatible with those in adjacent residential areas.
- Vehicular access and parking that is screened and oriented away from adjacent residential uses.
- Pedestrian connections to activity centers.

# Future Land Use Plan Legend and Classification Descriptions

## Non-residential

### → Warehouse Flex

Warehouse flex uses should be located in older industrial areas and at locations on major arterials but not within close proximity of residential uses. Typical uses include flex office, warehouse flex, distribution and logistics, and smaller light industrial uses.

### → Employment Center

This classification is intended for business and professional offices, technology park clusters, research and development, and light industrial operations, with retail only as a secondary use.

### → Commercial (Regional)

The Commercial (Regional) classification is reserved for large scale shopping centers and regional malls, big box retailers, entertainment centers and similar retail uses that have the potential to attract consumers from major portions of the city, as well as the Central Ohio region. Office or institutional uses may also be appropriate. Commercial (Regional) uses should be located at nodes on major arterials and at interstate highway intersections.

### → Commercial (Community)

The Commercial (Community) classification supports retail, office, or institutional uses that serve multiple neighborhoods, but generally do not attract residents from outside the area. An example includes neighborhood shopping centers. Gas stations built to Community Commercial Overlay design standards may be supported. Commercial (Community) uses should be located along arterials and at key intersections.

### → Mixed Use (Regional)

This classification is the same as the Commercial (Regional) classification but also includes residential units located either above and/or next to the commercial, office, or institutional uses in multistory buildings. Residential densities of 16–26 dwelling units per acre are appropriate.

### → Mixed Use (Community)

This classification is the same as the Commercial (Community) classification but also includes residential units located either above and/or next to the commercial, office, or institutional uses. Residential densities should fall within the range of 10–16 dwelling units per acre. Community mixed uses should be located along arterials at key intersections and at interstate highway intersections.

### → Office

Office uses should be located at major intersections, sites with freeway visibility, in mixed use buildings, or as a transition between residential and non-residential development. Office uses are also expected within Mixed Use and Commercial designations as secondary uses.

### → Institutional

Institutional uses include schools, government property, and houses of worship. These uses should be located on major arterials, in nodes of commercial activity, and within neighborhoods but only along arterials or collectors provided sites are sufficiently large to accommodate on-site parking.

### → Parks & Open Space

Parks should be integrated into residential neighborhoods and/or located adjacent to preserved open spaces. Parks are either publicly- or privately-owned recreational facilities and include golf courses. Open space should be conserved lands that are not suitable for development, such as the floodway and floodplain, wetlands, major wood stands, steep slopes and ravines, and species habitat. These are natural areas that do not provide recreational facilities.

### → Utilities & Railroads

Utilities and railroads should be located in existing locations.

## Residential

### → High Density

*Sixteen–forty-five units/acre*

This classification is intended for multi-story multifamily housing. Each development application must be reviewed on a case by case basis, be judged on its own merits, and must consider the specific site and the site's context (surrounding uses and development pattern). Proposals that include the highest end of the density range should be scrutinized in regard to their contribution to street level activity, relationship to adjacent neighborhoods, building materials, and architecture.

### → Medium-High Density

*Ten–sixteen units/acre*

A variety of dwelling types, including doubles, townhouses and multifamily are included in this category. It exists in both older neighborhoods and suburban areas. New development patterns should reinforce the existing pattern and type of residential in the neighborhood. Somewhat higher densities may be considered for areas that are immediately adjacent to a neighborhood's primary corridor(s). Proposals for multifamily development in these areas must demonstrate that they will not adversely impact the existing development pattern of the area.

### → Medium Density

*Six–ten units/acre*

In suburban areas, this category is characterized by townhouse and condominium development as well as smaller lot single-family. New development should reinforce the existing pattern and type of residential in the neighborhood. Somewhat higher densities may be considered for areas that are immediately adjacent to a neighborhood's primary corridor(s). Proposals for multifamily development in these areas must demonstrate that they will not adversely impact the existing development pattern of the area.

### → Low-Medium Density

*Four–six units/acre*

This classification is characterized by predominantly single-family development, with limited amounts (generally 10% or less) of two- to four-unit buildings interspersed—often at intersections or along larger streets. In suburban areas, this category may also include lower density townhouse and condominium development.

### → Low Density

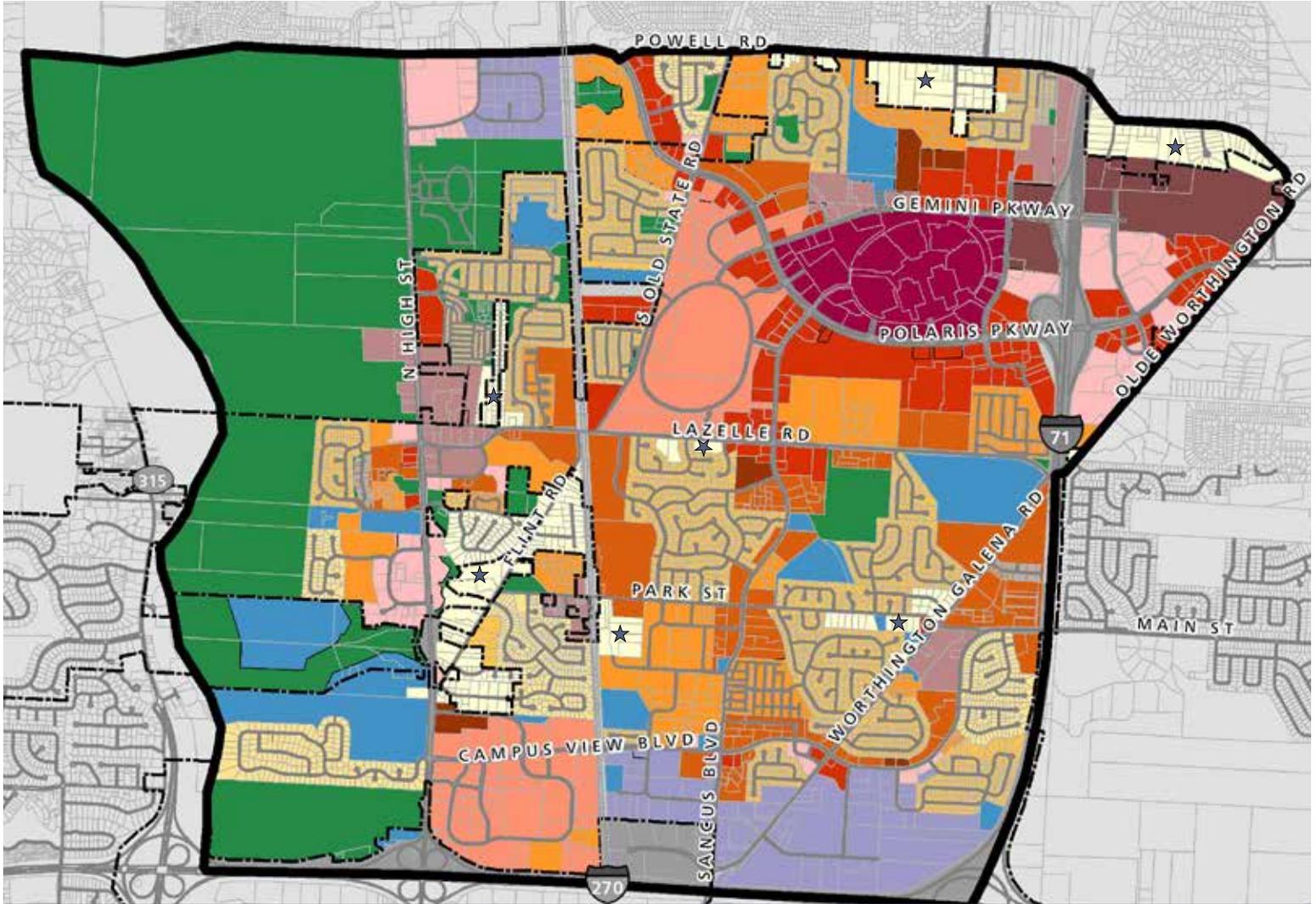
*Two–four units/acre*

This classification is characterized by single-family residential development in the form of subdivisions served by centralized utilities.

### → Very Low Density ★

*Up to two units/acre*

This classification is characterized by single-family residential development ranging from large lot with on-site well and septic systems to subdivisions served by centralized utilities. In many cases, this classification addresses quasi rural development patterns in developing areas. Refer to pages 43, 55, and 57 for supporting text.



**Figure 13: Future Land Use Plan**

**Land Use Category**

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Low-Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium-High Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial (Community)
- Commercial (Regional)
- Mixed Use (Community)
- Mixed Use (Regional)
- Warehouse Flex
- Employment Center
- Office

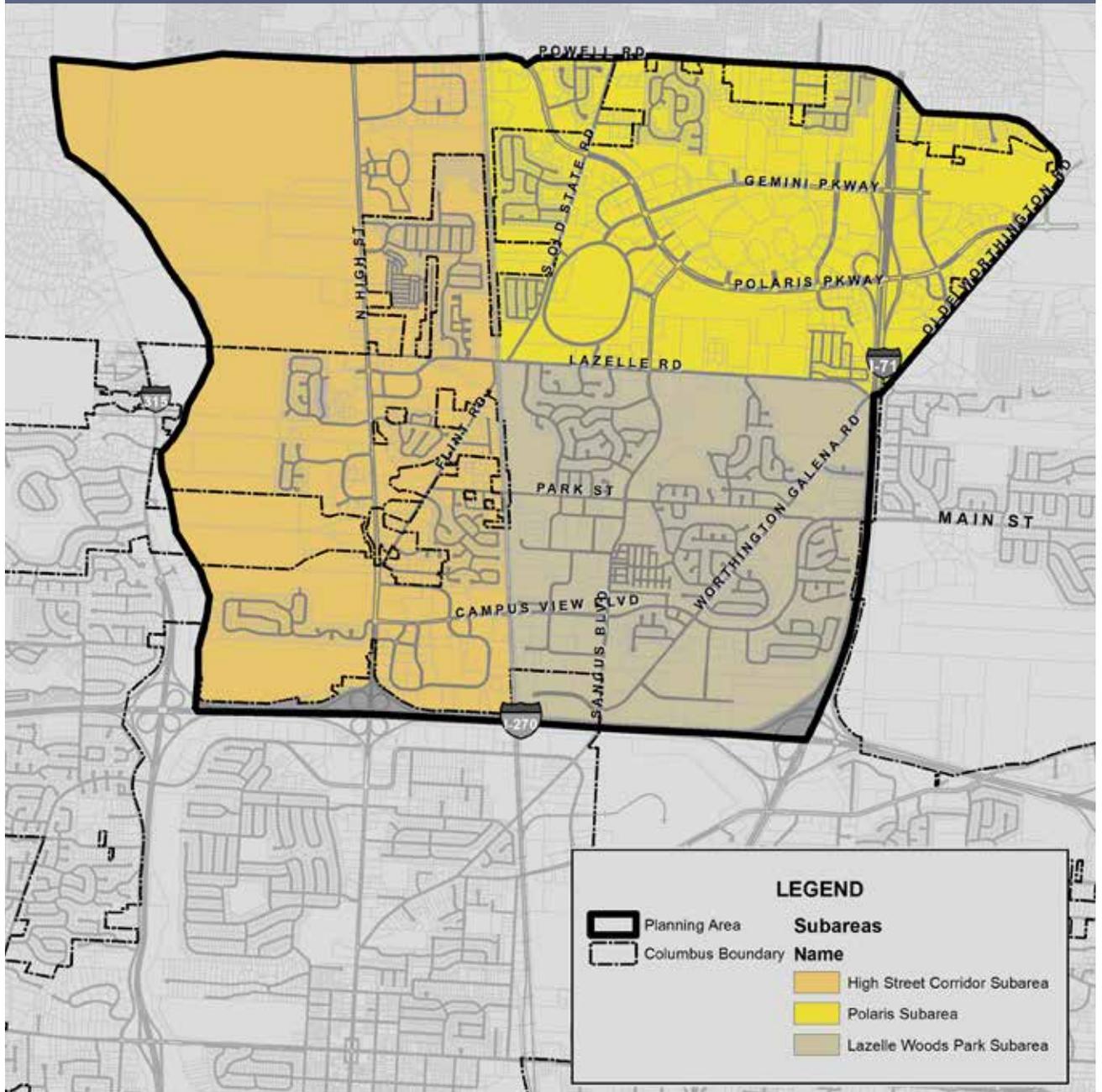
**Compatible Zoning Designations†**

- PUD; R; LRR; RRR
- PUD; RR; RRR
- PUD; RR; SR; R-1
- PUD; SR; R-1; R-2; R-3; NE; NG; R-2F; R-4; AR-12
- NE; NG; R-2F; R-4; AR-12
- R-4; NG; NC; ARLD; AR-1; AR-2; AR-3; AR-4
- C-3; CPD; Some C-4
- C-4; CPD
- C-3; CPD; Some C-4
- C-4; CPD
- M; M-1; M-2
- C-2; CPD; M
- C-2; CPD

**Table 7 (left): Compatible Zoning Designations**

† The Compatible Zoning Designation is provided to give a general idea of what zoning classifications might correspond with the given category from the Land Use Plan. This information is not provided to indicate that this zoning classification is the only potential zoning classification for the given land use category. Nor does it imply that this zoning classification should be used as part of the review of a proposed land use for consistency with this plan.

Figure 14: Future Land Use Plan Subareas



→ **Policy 1.3** *Redevelopment of existing institutional land uses should be compatible with surrounding development.*

Schools, libraries, places of worship, post offices and other institutional uses play key roles in communities. Due to the nature of these uses, they are often located in residential areas. This can make proposals for reuse or expansion of an existing institutional use challenging. Consideration of such proposals requires careful attention, with a particular emphasis on impacts to adjacent properties and residences.

**GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

- A broad range of adaptive reuses may be appropriate for existing institutional uses and sites, but is largely dependent on the specific location and associated impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. New uses could include retail, office, education, housing, arts and entertainment, recreation, health care, and neighborhood assembly. The scale and intensity of new uses should reflect the location in terms of surrounding uses and access. For instance, retail and entertainment uses may be appropriate on commercial corridors, but not in the midst of a residential neighborhood.
- Site design for reuse or expansion should minimize negative impacts on adjacent properties and neighborhood character. Considerations include future access, lighting, outdoor activity, and buffering.
- Expansion should make efficient use of site areas and minimize disruption of sensitive natural resources
- New or expanded uses should provide adequate parking for current and future needs and considers the availability of public transit services.
- New construction should complement the existing neighborhood fabric at a compatible style, scale, and density.
- Preservation of contributing historic sites and structures is encouraged.

**Land Use Plan by Subareas**

For ease of reference, the Land Use Plan is illustrated on pages 48–57 by three subareas. Individual maps and additional recommendations are provided under each subarea section.

Other development principles identified in the plan also contain recommendations relevant to these subareas (Figure 14).

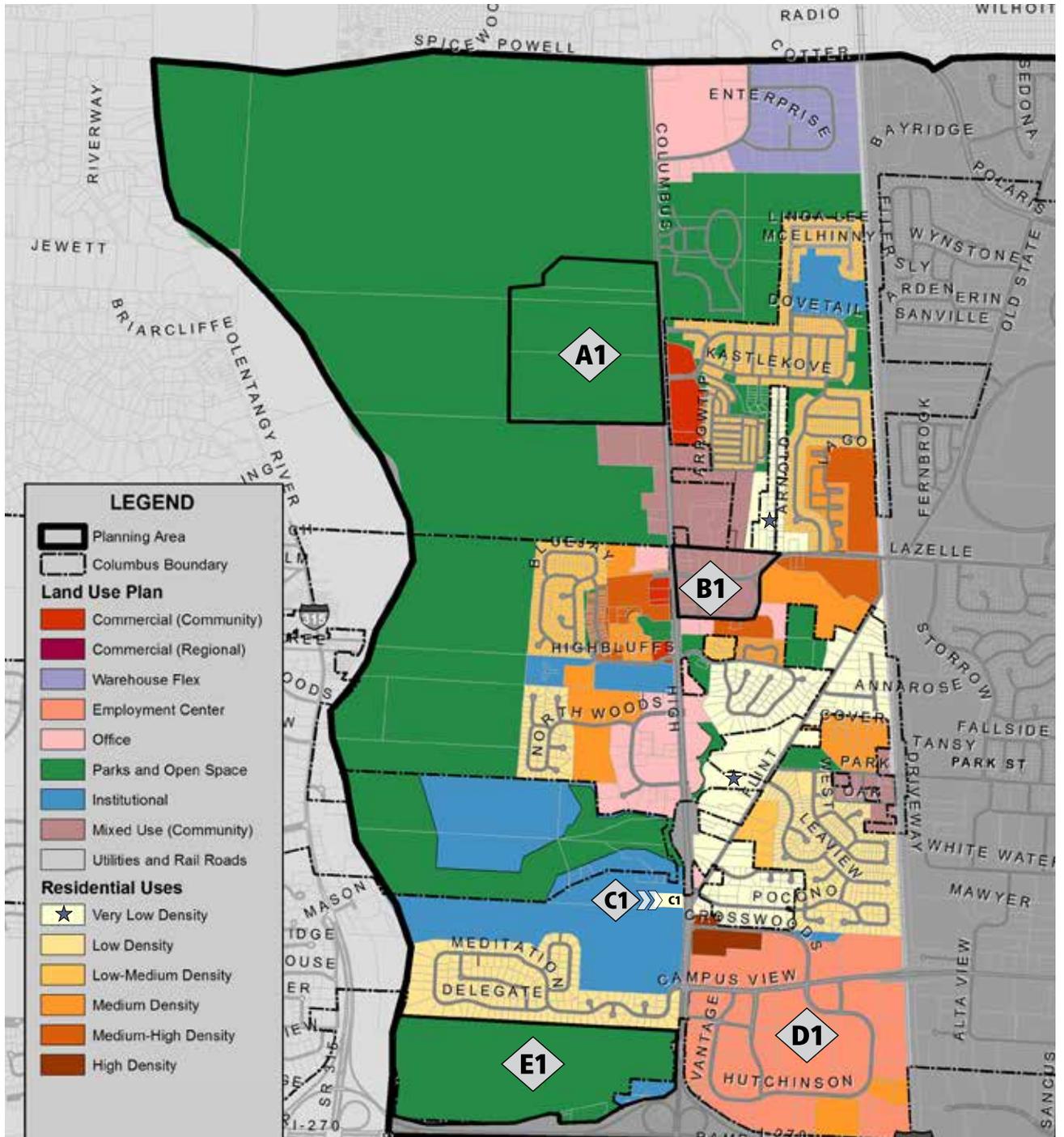


Figure 15: High Street Corridor Subarea

Refer to pages 50–51 for supporting text for sites A1, B1, C1, D1, and E1

★ Refer to page 43 for supporting text.



**Above top:** North High Street traffic  
**Above bottom:** An office use along North High Street

## High Street Corridor Subarea

The High Street Corridor subarea is located along the western edge of the planning area. About half of the subarea is in Franklin County and half in Delaware County. North High Street (US 23) is the major north-south corridor in Columbus and forms the spine of this subarea. The Olentangy River forms the western edge of the subarea and railroad tracks form the eastern edge.

The existing land uses in the subarea include office, institutional, single-family residential, and commercial. The subarea also has extensive open space, including Highbanks Metro Park, which serves the planning area and broader community. This area faces traffic issues, especially from commuters visiting Polaris Parkway or traveling on North High Street (US 23).

Though this area includes several neighborhood scale retail uses and recreational facilities, there is limited pedestrian/bike access for residents.

This subarea also has major natural resources in the form of mature tree cover, open spaces, conservation easements, ravines, and, as indicated, Highbanks Metro Park.

Land Use Plan recommendations for the High Street Corridor Subarea are illustrated on Figure 15.

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES:

- Density of new residential development should be generally compatible with neighboring areas.
- Site-specific land use recommendations are given on pages 50–51 and in Figure 15.
- Urban design standards should be used to improve the image and quality of life of the area and as a means to attract new businesses, with a special focus on landscaping, screening and buffering, and lighting.
- A minimum of 35% of the mature trees on any development site should be preserved. Mature trees are defined as trees having a caliper of 6 inches or greater at a point 4 feet above grade.
- Land uses that support optimal job densities are a priority. Appropriate, specific uses include research and development, and flex office space.



### **Site A1: North High Green Parcels**

These parcels are currently in Orange Township and used for residential purposes. They would best serve the community if merged with the Highbanks Metro Park, protecting existing tree cover and natural resources found on the parcels. Should this not prove feasible, Low Density Residential and Office uses fronting on North High Street (US 23) are recommended with the focus on maximum preservation of existing natural resources.

### **Site B1: Park Place Shopping Center**

This site includes a currently vacant anchor store and other retail. Senior facilities and office uses are also located on the site. The recommended land use for these sites is Mixed Use (Community). In the case of redevelopment, the retail areas should be developed to encourage an active lifestyle that is safe by incorporating pedestrian and biking facilities. Landscaping and buffering standards should be used as recommended in the Urban Design element. Visibility from High Street should be improved with enhanced landscaping and signage, as recommended in the Urban Design element (page 60).

### **Site C1: North High Street House**

This is a single-family house surrounded by institutional land use. This parcel will be best utilized if merged with Pontifical College Josephinum. However, should this not prove feasible, Office uses are strongly encouraged. Retail uses are not supported for this parcel.

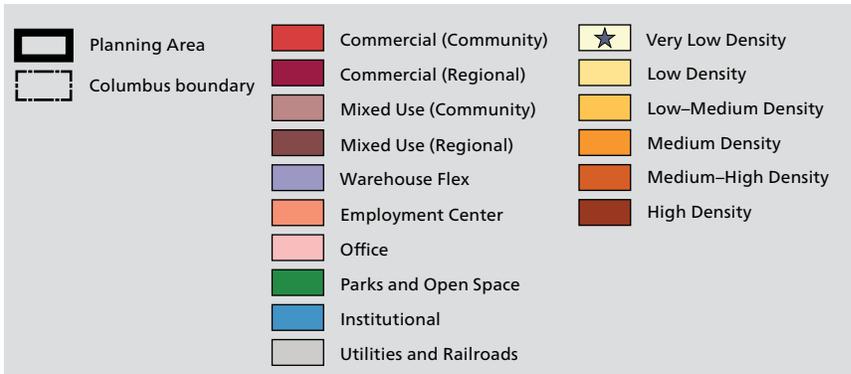
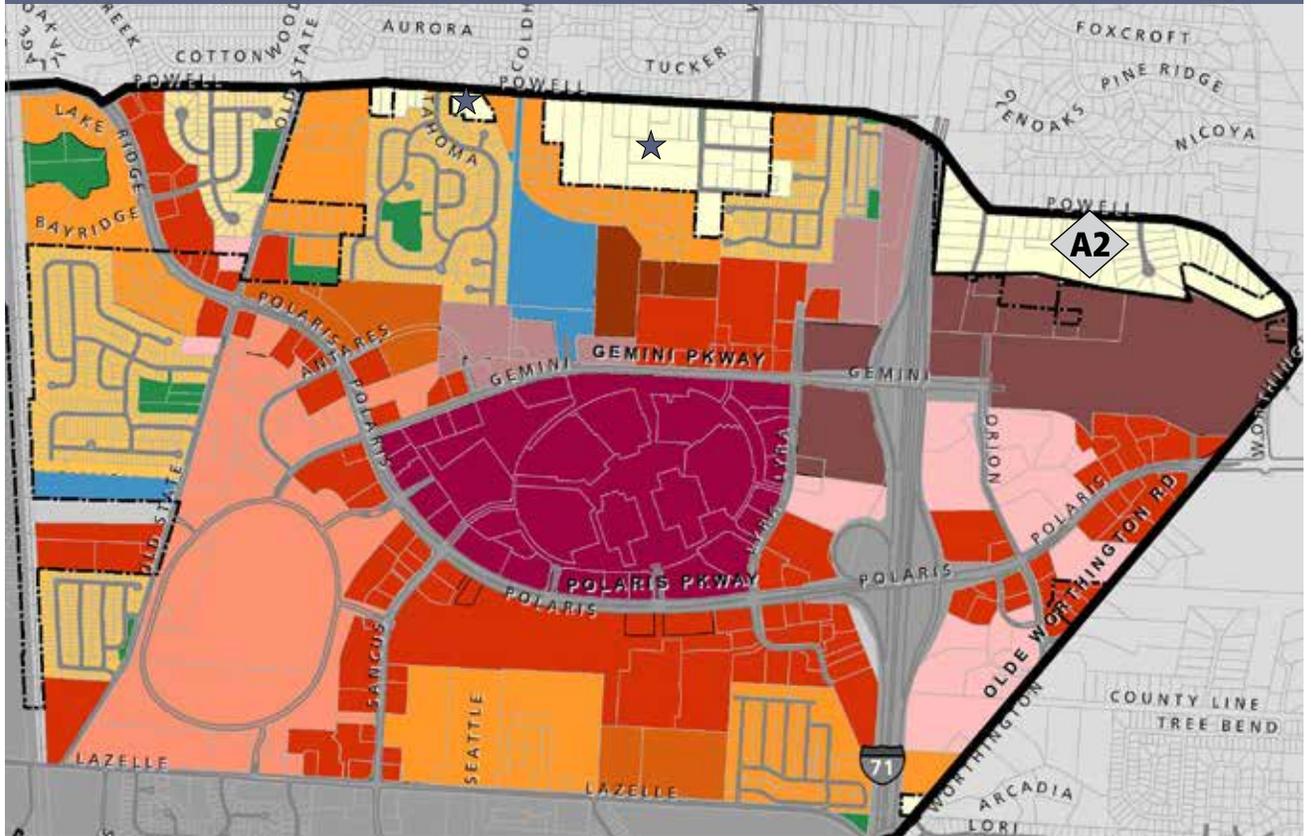
### **Site D1: Crosswoods**

This area includes all of the employment related uses within the Crosswoods complex. These uses are combined into an "Employment Center" category. The focus of an Employment Center designation is to protect current job centers and optimize job creation. Appropriate, specific uses include research and development, and flex office space. Existing uses such as retail, restaurants, hotel, and movie theater are recognized and will serve as amenities to "Employment Center" uses. A central open green space/ park is also recommended to serve the whole area.

### **Site E1: York Country Club Site**

The Land Use Plan recommends Open Space for the York Country Club location, in recognition of the existing golf course. The proposed reconstruction of US 23 at I-270 will provide access to the site via Campus View West, a residential street. If redevelopment is proposed for the site, Low Density Residential is recommended in light of the access constraints and adjacent residential to the north. Any development should also incorporate significant preservation of natural resources.

Figure 16: Polaris Subarea



Refer to page 55 for supporting text for site A2.

★Refer to page 43 for supporting text.



**Above top:** Polaris Fashion Place—a large shopping destinations in Central Ohio

**Above bottom:** Entrance to the Germain Amphitheater site

## Polaris Subarea

This subarea is of importance to the Far North planning area and to the Central Ohio region. Key uses in the subarea include the Polaris Fashion Mall, JP Morgan Chase, and the former Germain Amphitheater. Polaris Fashion Mall is one of the largest shopping destinations in Central Ohio. JP Morgan Chase is the largest employer in the Columbus region.

In addition to these regional land uses, there are various supporting retail, hospitality, office and residential land uses in the subarea. Given the size of Polaris Fashion Mall and JP Morgan Chase, thousands of employees and shoppers travel daily to this subarea, causing traffic issues, especially on major roads such as Polaris Parkway. There is still some vacant land, especially north of Gemini Parkway.

The northern portion of this subarea is lined with existing larger single-family houses off of Powell Road, some of which are in Orange Township.

Land Use Plan recommendations for the Polaris Subarea are illustrated on Figure 16.

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES:

- Maintain Polaris Fashion mall as a “Commercial (Regional)” center.
- Maintain JP Morgan Chase campus and surrounding office uses under an “Employment Center” classification. Any future development or redevelopment in these areas should focus on optimizing jobs and employment. Appropriate specific uses include research and development, and flex office space.
- A portion of the vacant land near the northwest quadrant of the I-71 and Gemini intersection is classified under a “Mixed Use (Community)” category. This designation includes commercial, office and institutional uses, along with residential uses. Primary emphasis should be on office uses. Should this not prove feasible, residential uses are supported with the densities described in the “Mixed Use (Community)” land use classification.
- Germain Amphitheater, once a thriving regional destination, has been vacant since 2007. The Amphitheater site is currently zoned LC4 (limited commercial) under city of Columbus zoning regulations. The site, along with land along Gemini Parkway to the west of I-71, is recommended for “Mixed Use (Regional).” Primary emphasis should be on office uses. Commercial, institutional, and residential uses may also be appropriate consistent with the use and density description provided in the “Mixed Use (Regional)” classification.
- Urban design standards should be used to improve the image and quality of life of the area as a means to attract new businesses, with a special focus on landscaping, screening and buffering, and lighting.
- Where feasible, designated bike and pedestrian access should be provided to encourage residents to use these modes of active transportation.





Examples of mixed use development including office, residential and secondary retail that would be appropriate for the Germain Amphitheater site. In these examples, design standards such as quality building materials, landscaping, and pedestrian connections have been utilized to create a “sense of place” and a walkable environment.

Photos:  
metrocenterom.com

## Site A2

A number of parcels to the north of the Germain Amphitheater site are shown on the Polaris Subarea map (Figure 16) as Very Low Density Residential and labeled “A2.” Most of these parcels remain in the township and range from 1 to 7 acres or greater in size. While the Far North Plan encourages conservation of such areas, it is recognized that some may be subject to redevelopment. Single-family residential of 2–4 units per acre is the preferred redevelopment land use for these parcels. However, multifamily residential, office and institutional uses may also be appropriate. These uses can provide opportunities to conserve natural features and provide additional open space. It should be noted that sewer capacity in this area is currently limited and may prevent some development scenarios. Support for redevelopment proposals involving multifamily, office and/or institutional uses should be based on following considerations:

- Direct access to Powell or Olde Worthington roads or through non-residential development to the south.
- Use of techniques such as sensitive site design and cluster development to preserve open space, natural resources, and other ecologically sensitive areas.
- Incorporation of significant open space.
- Multifamily projects should generally be no more than 8 units per acre. Somewhat higher densities may be appropriate on sites adjacent to commercial uses. Multifamily projects with 50% open space (including side yards, setbacks, etc.) are not uncommon.
- Buffering of adjacent uses, particularly lower density residential, through the use of such elements as existing and new vegetation, fencing, masonry walls, mounding, orientation of residential garages, and careful placement of site lighting.
- Primary building and side yard setbacks consistent with or greater than that of adjacent uses.
- Heights compatible with those in adjacent residential areas.
- Vehicular access and parking that is screened and oriented away from adjacent residential uses.
- Pedestrian connections to activity centers

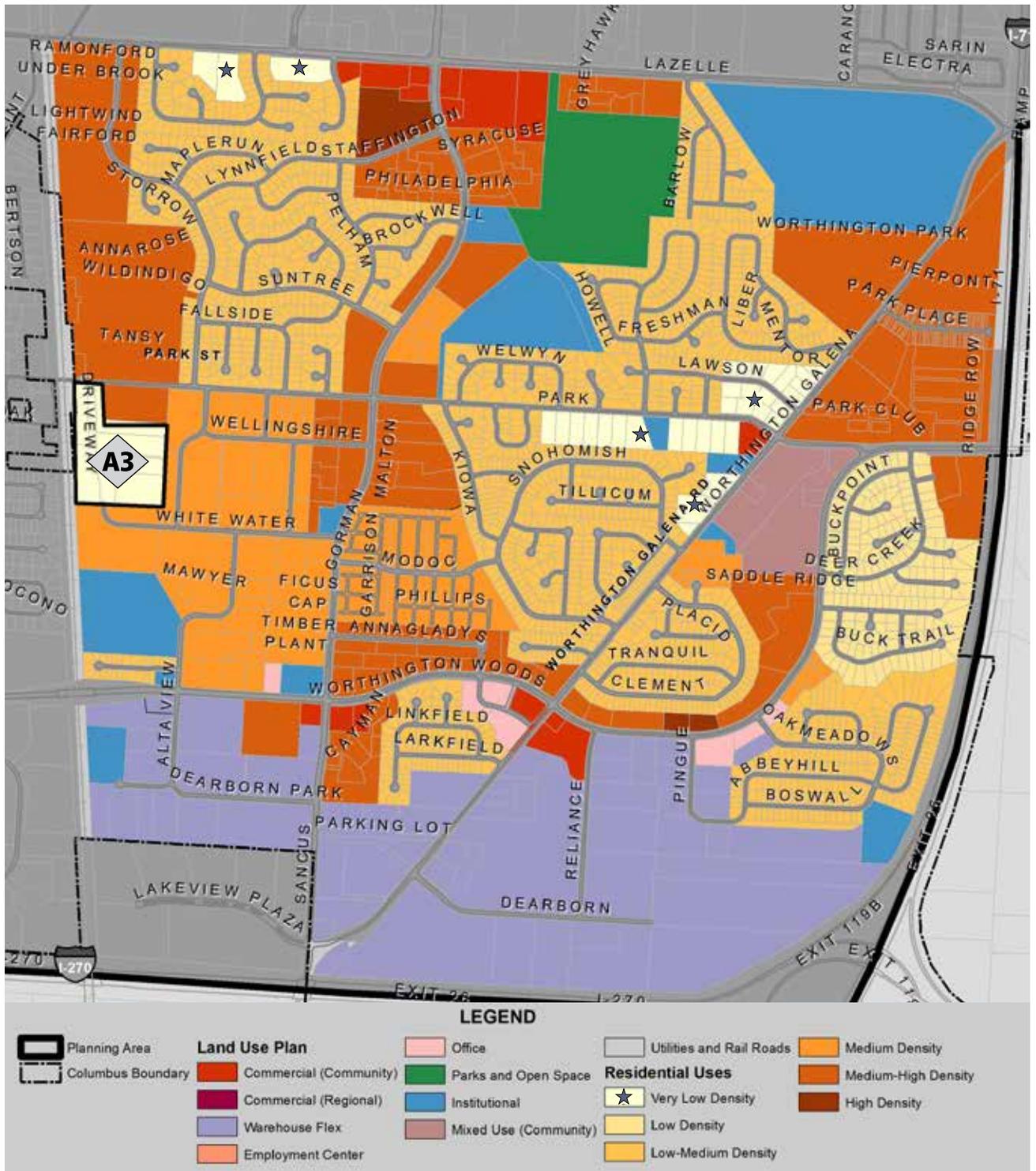


Figure 17: Lazelle Woods Park Subarea

Refer to page 57 for supporting text for site A3

★ Refer to page 43 for supporting text.



## Lazelle Woods Park Subarea

This subarea covers the southeast quadrant of the planning area. It includes several multifamily and single-family neighborhoods. The areas north of I-270 include light industrial and flex-office uses. This area also includes a school and a few other institutional facilities. The subarea is largely developed, but redevelopment opportunities exist—mostly along the main corridors.

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES:

- Stand alone retail should be limited to existing retail sites.
- Rezoning of commercially- and industrially-zoned land to residential use is discouraged.
- Commercial and light industrial development should not encroach into residential developments.
- Urban design standards should be used to improve the image and quality of life of the area and as a means to attract new businesses; with a special focus on landscaping, screening and buffering, and lighting.
- Where feasible, designated bike and pedestrian access should be provided to encourage residents to use these modes of active transportation.

### Site A3

This set of parcels is located just east of the railroad tracks and surrounded by several multifamily neighborhoods. If these parcels are assembled for redevelopment, then Medium Density residential development will be supported with compatible design standards.

## Principle 2: Natural Resources

Open space and significant environmental areas should be preserved

Open space and significant environmental areas provide recreational opportunities for residents, protect functioning ecosystems that support urban wildlife, manage stormwater runoff, act as transitions between land uses, encourage a healthy and active lifestyle, and stabilize and enhance property values. The natural resources recommendations for the Far North Area focus on building upon the existing network of open space, parks, and natural areas, preserving the area's many amenities and making improvements where necessary. These guidelines and strategies work to strengthen existing city policies and help the built environment and natural resources to coexist.

→ **Policy 2.1** *A neighborhood park, community park, or recreation facility (public or private) should be located within one-half mile of all residents.*

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- As development/redevelopment occurs in the planning area, opportunities to develop parks and include green space should be explored.
- Enhanced connections to adjacent recreation areas should be incorporated in future developments when feasible.
- Where feasible, new development should provide for on-site open space to meet the recreation needs of the community.
- The City should consider the acquisition of additional parkland and recreation paths.
- Joint use of schools and recreation facilities should be considered where feasible.
- Areas adjacent to creeks, rich with natural resources, should be preserved and considered for passive recreational use.

→ **Policy 2.2** *Natural areas should be conserved and protected from the impacts of development.*

**GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

- Streams, rivers, and wetlands should be included on development site plans and protected in accordance with the city of Columbus Stormwater Drainage Manual. Protected areas should be expanded when feasible to include other resources such as wooded areas.
- Streams that are currently diverted through culverts should be considered for “daylighting” as part of redevelopment of the site where economically feasible.
- Alternative methods to manage stormwater should be considered, such as bioswales, vegetated swales, native landscaping, naturalized detention and retention basins, minimizing impervious surfaces, and others.
- Natural features, including mature trees, slopes, wetlands and ponds, should be identified on site plans submitted as part of any zoning or variance application.
- A minimum of 35 percent of the mature trees on any development site should be preserved. Mature trees are defined as trees having a caliper of 6 inches or greater at a point 4 feet above grade.
- The 35 percent minimum tree preservation requirement should be in addition to those preserved as part of the regulated floodway or areas set aside for compliance with the city’s parkland dedication ordinance.
- Tree preservation measures should be density-neutral. Any development densities that apply to the area of tree preservation may be transferred to the developable portion of the site. The overall site density would not change, but the net density of the developable portion of the site would be higher.
- Tree protection measures and/or tree protection areas should be incorporated into construction documents, site plans and development text through the zoning process whenever possible. Measures should be taken during the construction process to protect the trees intended for preservation, such as fencing.
- Developments adjacent to creeks and major tributaries should limit the paved surfaces to 25 percent of site area to avoid deterioration of stream corridors.

## Principle 3: Urban Design

Urban design guidelines should be used to enhance a sense of place and create a structured framework for new development and redevelopment.

Development should respect the character of surrounding buildings and the area as a whole. New buildings should add to the built environment.

Continued development is certain for the Far North Area. Design guidelines for this future development are a key factor in ensuring it makes a strong contribution to the overall goals of the plan. The design guidelines recommended here should be used as a tool to promote high-quality development, which will present a positive image of the area. They will also help to ensure long-term economic viability by helping to maintain property values and encouraging additional development.

→ **Policy 3.1** *New commercial and mixed-use development should be held to a high standard, both in terms of its location and the quality of design and materials.*

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- Commercial zoning overlay designations should be considered for the Far North Area. One potential area for the application of the Regional Commercial Overlay is Polaris Parkway between North High Street (US 23) and the Columbus boundary to the east.

*The following guidelines should be utilized in the review of development applications (including corridors recommended for an overlay but where the overlay has not been adopted):*

- Front elevations of buildings should be oriented to address the street and clearly demarcated entryways should face the street frontage.
- Parking should be hidden to the greatest extent possible by locating it to the rear or side of a building and/or with extensive landscaping. For larger shopping centers, parking should be located to the rear of buildings built on the outparcels.
- Building design should incorporate patterns and materials that provide visual interest. This should be accomplished through the use of changes in color, materials, or relief, such as the inclusion of beltlines, pilasters, recesses and pop outs (offsetting planes). Flat, plain building walls should be discouraged.

- Building surfaces over 20 feet high or 50 feet in length should be relieved with a change of wall plane or by other means that provide strong shadow and visual interest.
- A consistent level of detailing and finish is encouraged for all sides of a building, known as “four-sided” architecture.
- Wall signs should be compatible with the size and scale of the building facades and general streetscape. Signs should not obscure or interfere with architectural lines and details.
- Large commercial developments should utilize integrated signage rather than multiple freestanding signs along the street frontage.
- Freeway, pole signs, billboards, sign benches, roof signs, large overhanging signs, LED and other such electronic or digital signs, and excessively large signs that interfere with visual character are discouraged.
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) “green” technologies are encouraged for commercial buildings.
- Landscaped buffers and screening should be provided between residential and commercial uses. Screening should consist of structures and/or landscaping to a minimum height of six feet with 90 percent opacity.
- Convenient, safe, well-marked and attractive pedestrian connections should be provided between the site and adjacent development and from the public street to the entrance.

→ **Policy 3.2** *Gateways should be developed to complement and define entry points to the area’s neighborhoods.*

#### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- The intersections of North High Street (US 23) and Polaris Parkway, I-270 and North High Street (US 23), and Lazelle Road and Worthington Road are possible locations for gateways.

**Below:** Examples of neighborhood gateway treatments



→ **Policy 3.3** *Industrial development should be well designed and minimize its impact on adjacent uses.*

**GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

- Buildings exhibiting a “corporate” architectural character of high quality materials, design and color are encouraged.
- Landscaping should be used to soften industrial buildings along front elevations or elevations that face public streets.
- Buildings should be oriented so that loading, storage and other external activities, as well as building features that generate noise, are not facing public rights-of-ways or residential or institutional uses.
- Accessory uses should be screened from the public right-of-way and adjacent residential and institutional uses to their full height by a solid masonry wall (not cement block) or wooden fence.
- Parking lots used primarily by semi trucks or other large vehicles require more intensive screening when located adjacent to residentially-zoned land.
- Where feasible, safe bike and pedestrian access should be provided to encourage employees to use these modes of transportation.



**Above:** An example of new multifamily development

→ **Policy 3.4** *New residential development should utilize design guidelines to reinforce a sense of community and preserve the integrity of neighborhoods.*

#### **GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

- Developments should create a positive sense of identity at their entries through landscaping, decorative fencing and complementary signage.
- Exterior materials within developments should be complementary, but not uniform. Walled and gated communities are strongly discouraged.
- Garages should be located behind the house or, if facing a street frontage, should not exceed 40 percent of the width of the housing facade (including the garage) and should be recessed at least two feet from the front elevation of the house.
- Houses should not back onto streets, parks or natural features.
- Wherever possible, green building and/or LEED technologies are encouraged.
- Where applicable, subdivisions should be designed to respect existing lot patterns established within neighborhoods to maintain community character.
- New streets should connect to and logically extend external street systems at multiple locations. Subdivisions should connect to existing street stubs and offer stubs for future, adjacent development.
- Streets that form a "T" intersection should be visually terminated with a building centered on the terminus, a public park, or other feature that provides visual interest and a sense of place.
- Multifamily developments with six or more units should have more than one building type and/or façade option providing a variety of building characteristics.
- New development or redevelopment should provide usable open space, in addition to setbacks and buffer areas for recreational purposes and/or for preservation of natural resources such as mature trees, streams etc.



**Above:** Examples of landscaping and buffering

→ **Policy 3.5** *Landscaping plays an important role in creating a high quality environment.*

#### **GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

- In context with its location, all development should be landscaped and buffered as appropriate. Particular attention should be paid to screening and buffering between commercial and industrial development from residential.
- Landscaping should be used to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation and erosion control, including rain gardens.
- The use of pervious surfaces should be encouraged to minimize stormwater runoff and increase infiltration. This treatment is ideal for areas with low vehicle traffic volumes.
- All trees (including street trees) should meet the following minimum size at the time of planting: shade trees, two inches caliper; ornamental trees, one and half inches caliper; and evergreen trees, five feet in height. Tree caliper is measured six inches from the ground.
- Native species are recommended for all landscaping. Invasive species should not be used.
- Explore opportunities to develop community gardens.



**Above top:** An example of a shared use path  
**Above bottom:** An example of a bike lane marking

## Principle 4: Transportation

People will be able to travel by walking, car, transit, and bicycle.

A recent trend in transportation planning is to look at roads in the context of a larger circulation system that includes vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and transit (Complete Streets). An integrated system eases congestion by distributing vehicular traffic and offering alternative modes of travel for area residents, visitors, and businesses. Benefits include reduced congestion, increased public safety, health and improved air quality.

Like other areas in central Ohio, the Far North area developed around the automobile. Land use patterns and the road network maximize vehicular capacity and access. Many of the area's main arterials and neighborhood streets don't have sidewalks or biking facilities. The *Far North Area Plan's* transportation recommendations are aimed at supplementing the existing road network with facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and transit. The *Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan* (2008) recommends a number of bicycle related improvements for the planning area.

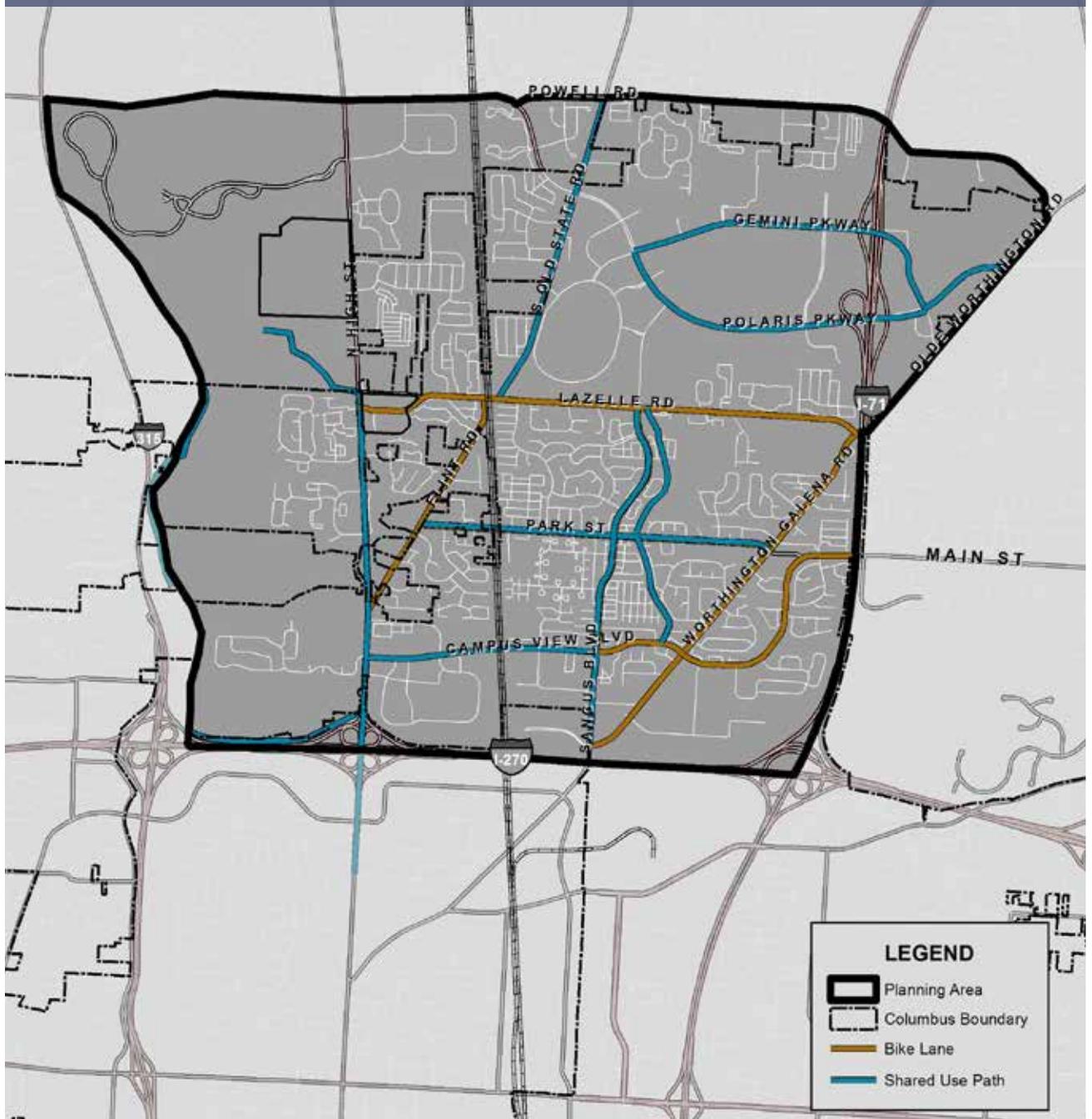
→ **Policy 4.1** *Accommodations should be made for bicycling according to adopted bike plans.*

### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

*Implement the Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan (2008), which identifies the following projects (Figure 18). It is recognized that further study will be required to implement these recommendations:*

1. Bike Lane (Proposed): Lazelle Road–North High Street to Worthington Galena Road.
2. Bike Lane (Committed): Sancus Boulevard–Lazelle Road to Worthington Woods Boulevard.
3. Shared Use Path (Committed): Sancus Boulevard–Lazelle Road to Worthington Woods Boulevard, Worthington Woods Boulevard to Worthington Galena Road and North High Street (US 23), Lazelle Road to Flint Road.
4. Shared Use Path (Proposed): North High Street–Campus View Boulevard to York Temple Country Club and Flint Road to I-270.
5. Bike Lane (Proposed): Flint Road–Lazelle Road to North High Street, Worthington Galena Road–Lazelle Road to Park Road, Worthington

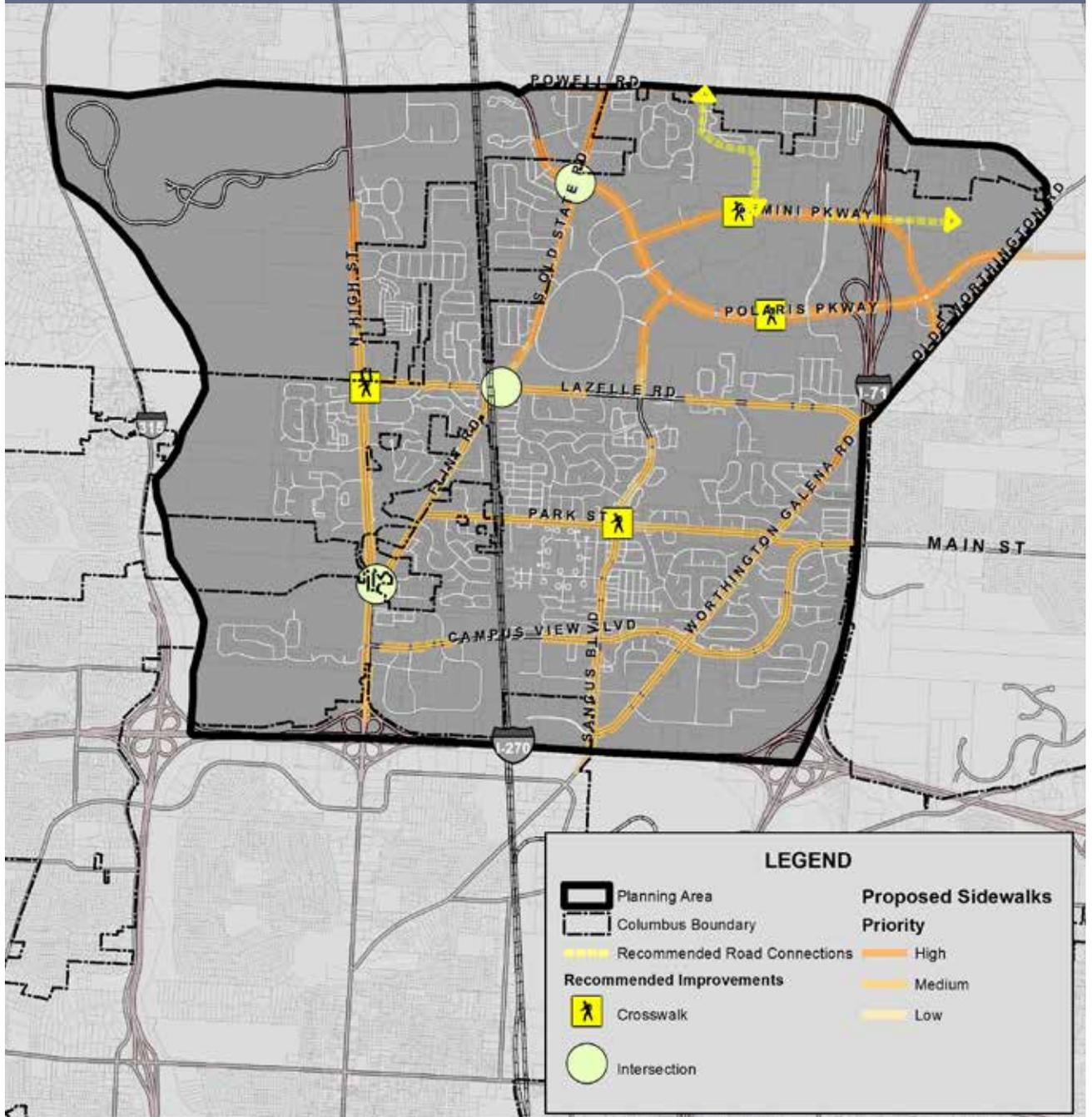
Figure 18: Bicentennial Bikeways Plan



Galena Road–Park Road to Huntley Road, Worthington Woods Boulevard–Park Road to Campus View Boulevard, Park Road–I-71 to Worthington Woods Boulevard, Park Road–Flint Road to Worthington Galena Road.

6. Shared Use Path (Proposed): York Temple County Road–North High Street to Olentangy River, South Old State Street–Powell Road to CSX Railroad, Campus View Boulevard–Worthington Woods Boulevard to North High Street, Worthington Woods Boulevard–Park Road to Campus View Boulevard, Polaris Parkway–Sancus Road to Orion Place, Park Road–Flint Road to Worthington Galena Road, Along Creek–Worthington Woods Boulevard to Lazelle Road.
7. Shared Use Path (Committed): Worthington Road–Hanawalt Road to I-71, Worthington Road–Polaris Parkway to Hanawalt Road. Local shared use path is also recommended internally along Polaris Fashion Mall (Figure 18).

Figure 19: Transportation Plan





**Above:** Examples of decorative crosswalks  
**Below:** A lack of sidewalk from Polaris Church to Polaris Fashion Mall



→ **Policy 4.2** *Neighborhoods should have an interconnected street and sidewalk system.*

#### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- Develop connections to existing and future residential, commercial, civic and cultural areas, coordinate existing and planned paths and trail systems to connect neighborhoods to each other within the Far North planning area and to the region as a whole.
- Sidewalks should be constructed in areas where there are gaps in the network. Connecting neighborhoods, neighborhood retail and parks should be a major priority. Operation Safewalks is a program in the city's Public Service Department that has identified priorities for sidewalk development in the area (Figure 19).
  - In addition to Operation Safewalk projects, develop sidewalks on Sancus Boulevard between Lazelle Road and Park Road to cater to high pedestrian traffic.
- Crosswalk improvements should be considered at major intersections, including the following:
  - Crosswalks connecting retail to south of Polaris Parkway to Polaris Fashion Mall.
  - Crosswalk from Polaris Church south to Polaris Fashion Mall on Gemini Parkway.
  - Crosswalks connecting Park Place Center to retail to the west of North High Street.
  - Crosswalk at Park Street and Sancus Boulevard intersection.
- Parks, schools, and open space should be connected to neighborhoods with pedestrian and bicycle paths.

→ **Policy 4.3** *Public transportation should provide connections within the planning area and to the region as a whole.*

#### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- Consider upgrades to COTA bus stops that include waiting pads, sidewalk access, and/or shelters.
- Development and public improvements should be designed to be walkable and bikeable and encourage personal interaction and active lifestyles.
- Development should provide pedestrian access to transit stops. New development or redevelopment projects should be coordinated with COTA regarding potential installation or relocation of bus stops.





**Above:** Polaris Parkway

**Opposite page:** Proposed I-270 and US 23 Interchange Project (Ohio Department of Transportation)

→ **Policy 4.4** *Road improvements and enhancements should contribute to a walkable and bikeable environment.*

#### GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- As projects are undertaken, streets should be retrofitted to improve walkability consistent with the city policies and plans, provided sufficient right-of-way and funding.
- Consider streetscape improvements on North High Street where they are currently lacking or not planned. Current streetscape improvements are underway or planned on Lazelle Road, Flint Road, Lazelle Road and South Old State Street intersection. Another project includes widening of South Old State Street in Orange Township.
- Gemini Parkway Extension to the east and north–south connection from Powell Road to Gemini Parkway should be evaluated for better traffic distribution.
- Transition from Flint Road to South Old State Road under the railroad bridge over Lazelle Road should be evaluated for better traffic conditions.
- Flint Road and North High Street and Polaris Parkway and South Old State Road intersections should be evaluated for better traffic conditions.

# ELEMENT 4

# IMPLEMENTATION

## **IN THIS ELEMENT:**

73 Organization, Education and Outreach

74 Development Review Checklist

77 Action Oriented Recommendations

The most effective way to implement the provisions of an area plan is through the consistent and unified advocacy of area residents and businesses working in concert with the city of Columbus and other stakeholders. The most typical mechanism for plan implementation is the review of development proposals for consistency with the plan. Additionally, the plan can be used pro-actively to seek investment in the area, advocate for neighborhood issues, pursue grant funding and guide capital improvements.

**Major implementation elements include:**

- Organization, Education and Outreach
- Plan Amendment and Revision
- Development Review Checklist
- Chart of Action Oriented Related Recommendations

**Organization, Education and Outreach**

Organizational, educational and outreach mechanisms can play a key role in area plan implementation. Potential mechanisms include:

- Utilize a website and email to supplement existing information distribution system.
- Ensure copies of the plan and/or its executive summary are distributed to key stakeholders.

**Plan Amendment and Revision**

Area plans should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure timeliness and relevancy. Minor amendments and brief updates may be considered on an as-needed basis. A more complete review and revision of an area plan should be considered within ten years of adoption.

## Development Review Checklist

A development review checklist is a summary of the development guidelines and recommendations found in an area plan. It is designed for application by stakeholders in the review of development proposals for consistency with plan provisions. It is intended for use with zoning and variance requests, investments in community facilities and infrastructure, and other initiatives or requests impacting the built environment in the community. Guidelines from an area plan are not city code. But as part of a city adopted plan they serve as city policy. This provides a basis for stakeholders to review development proposals and make sure the guidelines are considered and optimally included in a proposed development.

Users of the checklist are strongly encouraged to review additional background information for each item on the checklist by referencing the relevant plan element. Nothing in the checklist is intended to speak to the development proposal's conformance with other city code requirements and policies.

Recommendations regarding the use of development review checklists include:

- Applicants for a zoning and/or variance are encouraged to review a development review checklist and incorporate its provisions in their proposals.
- Community groups use a checklist to evaluate development proposals in their respective areas.

	Yes	No	N/A	Conditions to Approval	Mitigating Circumstances
<b>General</b>					
Has the developer reviewed the recommendations of the <i>Far North Area Plan</i> ?					
Has a site plan of the project been submitted?					
Is the proposal consistent with the Future Land Use Plan? (p. 45)					
Is the proposal consistent with the Urban Design recommendations of the plan? (p. 60)					
Are natural features including mature trees, slopes, wetlands and ponds, identified on the site plan? (p. 59)					
Is the proposal consistent with plan's intent of vehicular and pedestrian/ bike connectivity? (p. 65)					
<b>Subareas</b>					
High Street Corridor Subarea: Is the proposal consistent with the guidelines and recommendations for this Subarea? (p. 49)					
Polaris Subarea: Is the proposal consistent with the guidelines and recommendations for this Subarea? (p. 53)					
Lazelle Woods Park Subarea: Is the proposal consistent with the guidelines and recommendations for this Subarea? (p. 57)					

	Yes	No	N/A	Conditions to Approval	Mitigating Circumstances
<b>Commercial</b>					
Is parking hidden to the greatest extent possible by locating it to the rear or side of a building or by extensive landscaping? (p. 60)					
Are buildings oriented to the street with entryways facing the street frontage and clearly demarcated? (p. 60)					
Does the building design incorporate patterns and materials that provide visual interest? (p. 61)					
Are building surfaces over 20 feet high or 50 feet in length relieved with a change of wall plane or by other means that provide strong shadow and visual interest? (p. 61)					
Does the proposal provide a consistent level of detailing and finish for all sides of a building? (p. 61)					
Is the proposed signage appropriate according to the plan's signage guidelines? (p. 61)					
Are convenient, well-marked and attractive pedestrian connections provided between the site and adjacent development and from the public street to building entrances? (p. 61)					
Are landscaped buffers and screening provided between residential and commercial uses? (p. 61)					
<b>Industrial Development</b>					
Is landscaping used to soften industrial buildings along front elevations or elevations that face public streets? (p. 62)					
Are buildings oriented so that loading, storage and other external activities, as well as building features that generate noise are not facing public rights-of-ways or residential or institutional uses? (p. 62)					
Are accessory uses screened from the public right-of-way and adjacent residential and institutional uses to their full height by a solid masonry wall (not cement block) or wooden fence? (p. 62)					
Does the proposal provide bike and pedestrian access? (p. 62)					
Is screening provided for parking lots used primarily by semi trucks or other large vehicles adjacent to residentially-zoned land? (p. 62)					

	Yes	No	N/A	Conditions to Approval	Mitigating Circumstances
<b>Residential</b>					
Are the proposed residential densities consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (map and text)? (pp. 42–57)					
Do multifamily developments with six or more units have more than one building type and/or facade option providing a variety of building characteristics? (p. 63)					
Do houses front onto streets, parks or natural features? (p. 63)					
Does the development create a positive sense of identity at its entries through landscaping, decorative fencing and complementary signage? (p. 63)					
Are exterior materials within developments complementary and not uniform? (p. 63)					
Is the proposal consistent with plan’s garage-related recommendation? (p. 63)					
Does the development design respect existing lot patterns established within neighborhoods? (p. 63)					
Does the development connect to existing street stubs and offer stubs for future, adjacent development? (p. 63)					
Does the development use open space as an organizational element? (p. 63)					
Do streets that form a “T” intersection visually terminate with a building centered on the terminus, a public park, or other feature that provides visual interest and a sense of place? (p. 63)					
Are green building and/or LEED technologies being considered? (p. 63)					
<b>Transportation</b>					
Are road improvements consistent with relevant plan recommendations? (p. 65–71)					
Does the proposal consider pedestrian access to transit stops? (p. 69)					
Are pedestrian connections integrated into new development connecting residential areas with retail and activity centers? (p. 69)					

**Action Oriented Recommendations**

Area plans also include recommendations that are action oriented. These recommendations are not utilized for the review of development applications, but are pro-active in nature and require action on the part of a given community group in cooperation with the city of Columbus and other stakeholders. The chart below lists these action-oriented recommendations.

Action Oriented Recommendations Chart	
Recommendations	Notes
Gateways should be developed to complement and define entry points to the area’s neighborhoods per the suggested locations identified in the plan.	
Investigate the application of commercial zoning overlays to the major commercial corridors as recommended in the Plan.	
Implement the recommendations of the <i>Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan</i> .	
Crosswalks should be considered for areas recommended in the Plan.	
The city should consider the acquisition of additional parkland and recreation paths.	

# Future Land Use Plan Legend and Classification Descriptions

## Non-residential

### → Warehouse Flex

Warehouse flex uses should be located in older industrial areas and at locations on major arterials but not within close proximity of residential uses. Typical uses include flex office, warehouse flex, distribution and logistics, and smaller light industrial uses.

### → Employment Center

This classification is intended for business and professional offices, technology park clusters, research and development, and light industrial operations, with retail only as a secondary use.

### → Commercial (Regional)

The Commercial (Regional) classification is reserved for large scale shopping centers and regional malls, big box retailers, entertainment centers and similar retail uses that have the potential to attract consumers from major portions of the city, as well as the Central Ohio region. Office or institutional uses may also be appropriate. Commercial (Regional) uses should be located at nodes on major arterials and at interstate highway intersections.

### → Commercial (Community)

The Commercial (Community) classification supports retail, office, or institutional uses that serve multiple neighborhoods, but generally do not attract residents from outside the area. An example includes neighborhood shopping centers. Gas stations built to Community Commercial Overlay design standards may be supported. Commercial (Community) uses should be located along arterials and at key intersections.

### → Mixed Use (Regional)

This classification is the same as the Commercial (Regional) classification but also includes residential units located either above and/or next to the commercial, office, or institutional uses in multistory buildings. Residential densities of 16–26 dwelling units per acre are appropriate.

### → Mixed Use (Community)

This classification is the same as the Commercial (Community) classification but also includes residential units located either above and/or next to the commercial, office, or institutional uses. Residential densities should fall within the range of 10–16 dwelling units per acre. Community mixed uses should be located along arterials at key intersections and at interstate highway intersections.

### → Office

Office uses should be located at major intersections, sites with freeway visibility, in mixed use buildings, or as a transition between residential and non-residential development. Office uses are also expected within Mixed Use and Commercial designations as secondary uses.

### → Institutional

Institutional uses include schools, government property, and houses of worship. These uses should be located on major arterials, in nodes of commercial activity, and within neighborhoods but only along arterials or collectors provided sites are sufficiently large to accommodate on-site parking.

### → Parks & Open Space

Parks should be integrated into residential neighborhoods and/or located adjacent to preserved open spaces. Parks are either publicly- or privately-owned recreational facilities and include golf courses. Open space should be conserved lands that are not suitable for development, such as the floodway and floodplain, wetlands, major wood stands, steep slopes and ravines, and species habitat. These are natural areas that do not provide recreational facilities.

### → Utilities & Railroads

Utilities and railroads should be located in existing locations.

## Residential

### → High Density

*Sixteen–forty-five units/acre*

This classification is intended for multi-story multifamily housing. Each development application must be reviewed on a case by case basis, be judged on its own merits, and must consider the specific site and the site's context (surrounding uses and development pattern). Proposals that include the highest end of the density range should be scrutinized in regard to their contribution to street level activity, relationship to adjacent neighborhoods, building materials, and architecture.

### → Medium-High Density

*Ten–sixteen units/acre*

A variety of dwelling types, including doubles, townhouses and multifamily are included in this category. It exists in both older neighborhoods and suburban areas. New development patterns should reinforce the existing pattern and type of residential in the neighborhood. Somewhat higher densities may be considered for areas that are immediately adjacent to a neighborhood's primary corridor(s). Proposals for multifamily development in these areas must demonstrate that they will not adversely impact the existing development pattern of the area.

### → Medium Density

*Six–ten units/acre*

In suburban areas, this category is characterized by townhouse and condominium development as well as smaller lot single-family. New development should reinforce the existing pattern and type of residential in the neighborhood. Somewhat higher densities may be considered for areas that are immediately adjacent to a neighborhood's primary corridor(s). Proposals for multifamily development in these areas must demonstrate that they will not adversely impact the existing development pattern of the area.

### → Low-Medium Density

*Four–six units/acre*

This classification is characterized by predominantly single-family development, with limited amounts (generally 10% or less) of two- to four-unit buildings interspersed—often at intersections or along larger streets. In suburban areas, this category may also include lower density townhouse and condominium development.

### → Low Density

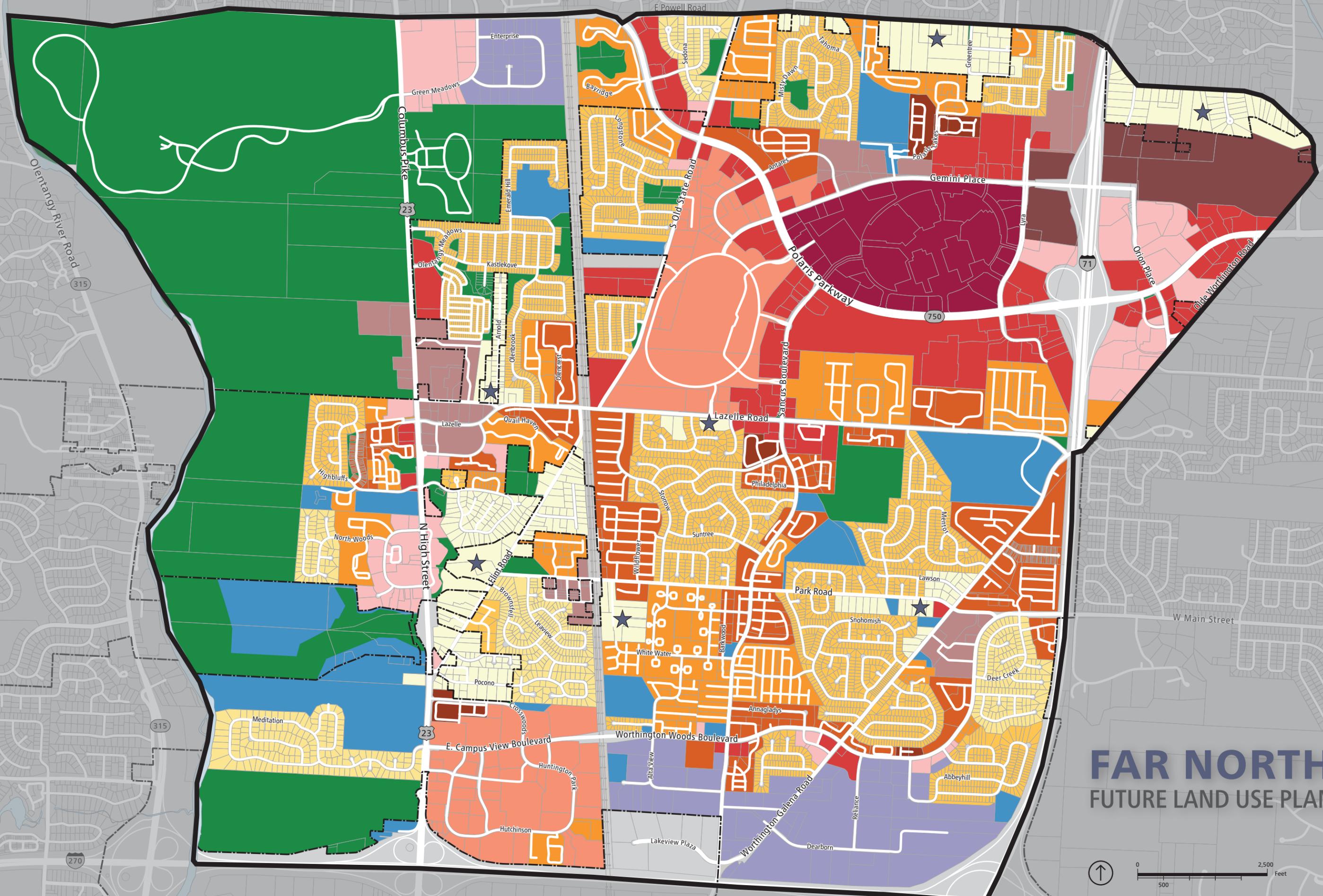
*Two–four units/acre*

This classification is characterized by single-family residential development in the form of subdivisions served by centralized utilities.

### → Very Low Density ★

*Up to two units/acre*

This classification is characterized by single-family residential development ranging from large lot with on-site well and septic systems to subdivisions served by centralized utilities. In many cases, this classification addresses quasi rural development patterns in developing areas. Refer to pages 43, 55, and 57 for supporting text.



# FAR NORTH

## FUTURE LAND USE PLAN





