



COLUMBUS PLANNING DIVISION

# NORTHLAND I AREA PLAN



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

DEPARTMENT OF  
DEVELOPMENT

# NORTHLAND I AREA PLAN

## COLUMBUS PLANNING DIVISION

 50 W. Gay Street, Fourth Floor · Columbus, Ohio 43215

 (614) 645-8036

 [columbus.gov/planning](http://columbus.gov/planning)

### **ADOPTED:**

This document supersedes prior planning guidance for the area, including the 2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I* and the 1992 *Northland Development Standards*. (The *Northland Development Standards* will still be applicable to the Northland II planning area until the time that plan is updated.)

Cover Photo: The Alum Creek Trail crosses Alum Creek at Strawberry Farms Park.



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Advisory Member  
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Northland Community Council  
**(President) Emmanuel Remy**

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the city's Department of Development, I am pleased to present the 2014 Northland I Area Plan, adopted by Columbus City Council on February 3, 2014. I would like to congratulate and thank the residents of the Northland I Planning Area and the many stakeholders who participated in the planning process.

Recommendations of the plan were developed to accomplish the following goals:

- Establish design guidelines for new commercial, light industrial and residential development.
- Investigate the feasibility of adopting commercial zoning overlays on SR 161 and portions of Cleveland Avenue.
- Maintain existing densities in residential neighborhoods.
- Provide better connections in the planning area to improve bike and pedestrian accessibility on the primary corridors.
- Support business growth at a community-scale with a mix of uses (retail, office and multi-family) at Northland Village and the intersection of SR 161 and Cleveland Avenue, thereby establishing mixed use centers at each location.
- Encourage the protection and enhancement of Alum Creek and its tributaries.

In addition, the plan recommends future land use for all properties in the planning area.

Implementation of the plan's goals will be accomplished through the review of zoning applications and proposed public improvements for consistency with city policy as articulated by the recommendations in this area plan.

My express appreciation is extended to the Northland Community Council and other stakeholders for many hours of thoughtful work and leadership throughout the process. The Department of Development looks forward to continued cooperation with the Northland Community Council as we work together towards implementation.

Sincerely,



**Steven R. Schoeny, Director**  
Department of Development

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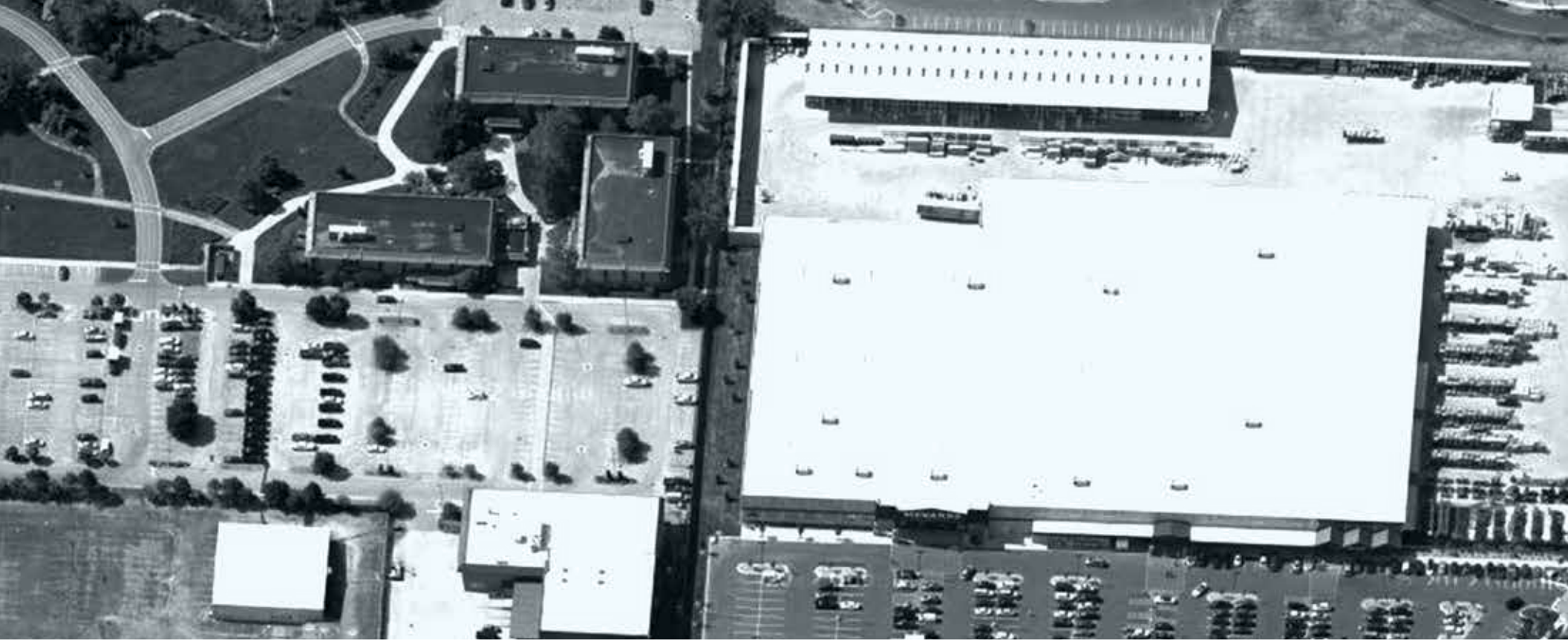
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# INTRODUCTION



# WHAT IS A PLAN AND HOW IS IT USED?

**The Northland I Area Plan** provides an opportunity to help shape and direct the pattern of growth and development within its neighborhoods and business districts. The area planning process addresses land use, urban design, mobility and other potential public improvements.

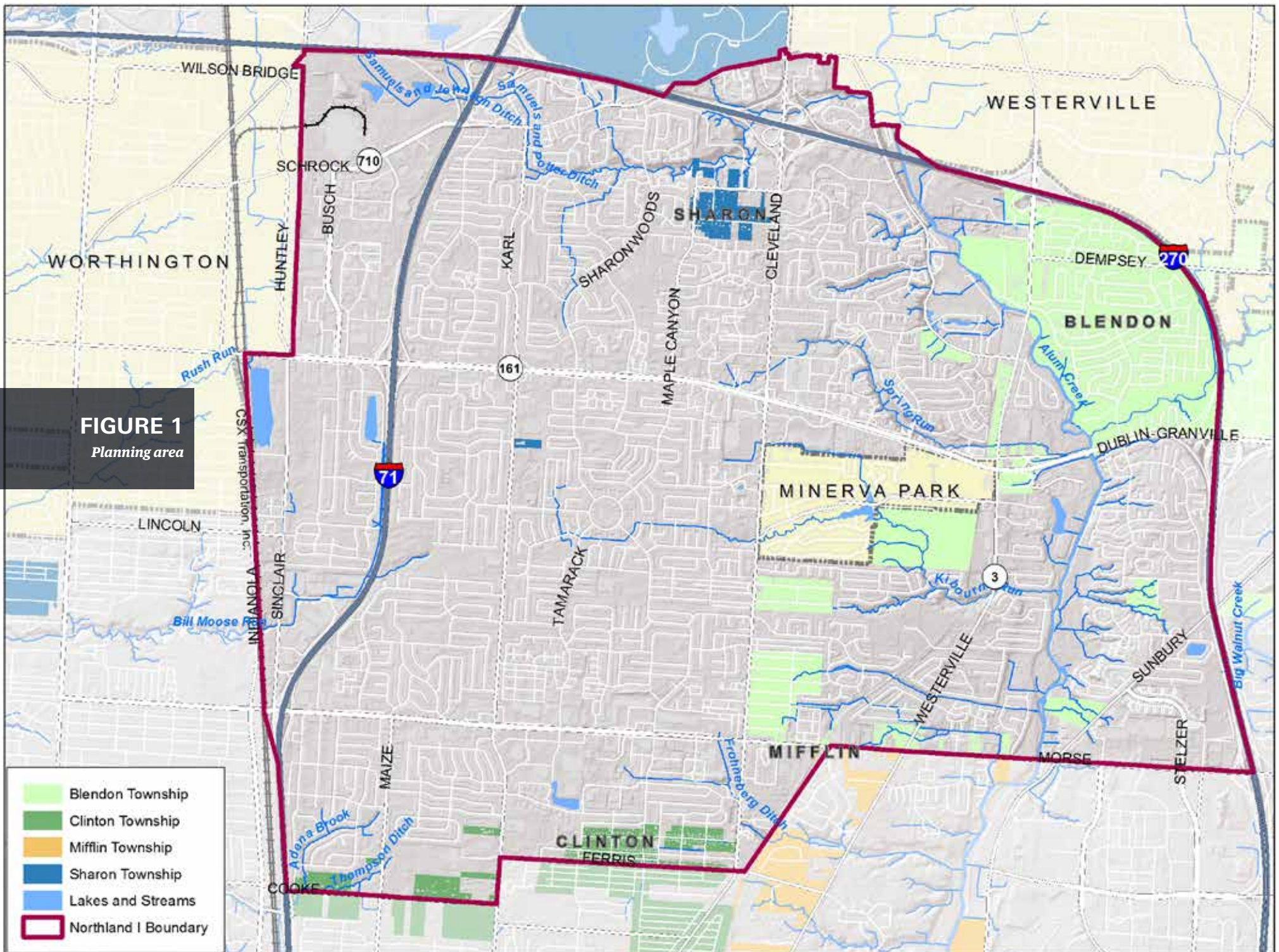
***The adopted area plan accomplishes the following:***

- Provides guidelines for the design of new development.
- Sets goals for improving the built environment.
- Provides a framework for zoning and other land use decisions.
- Creates a clear picture of the type of development that is desired by the community.
- Informs capital improvement priorities.

**An area plan does not address the following:** 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 is not city code or zoning**—though it provides the policy basis for zoning and related development decisions. The *Northland I Area Plan* provides a basis for stakeholders on which to review a proposed development.

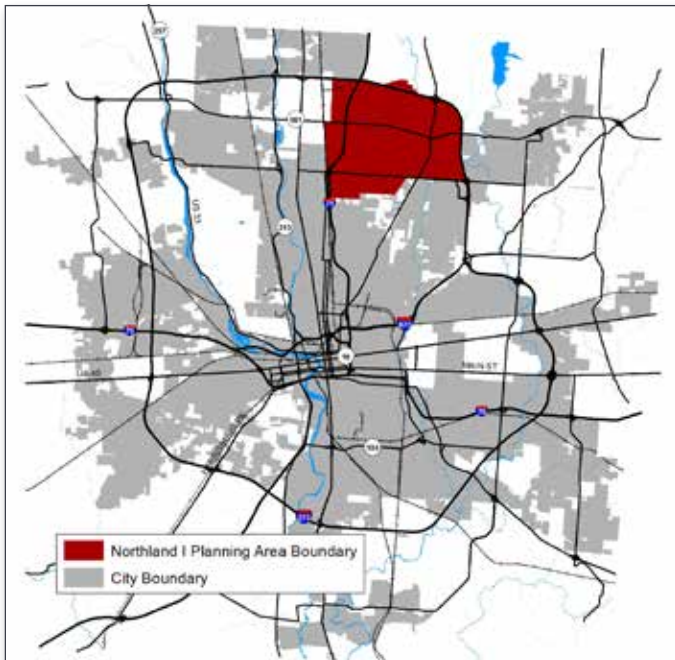




**FIGURE 1**  
Planning area



# NORTHLAND I PLANNING AREA

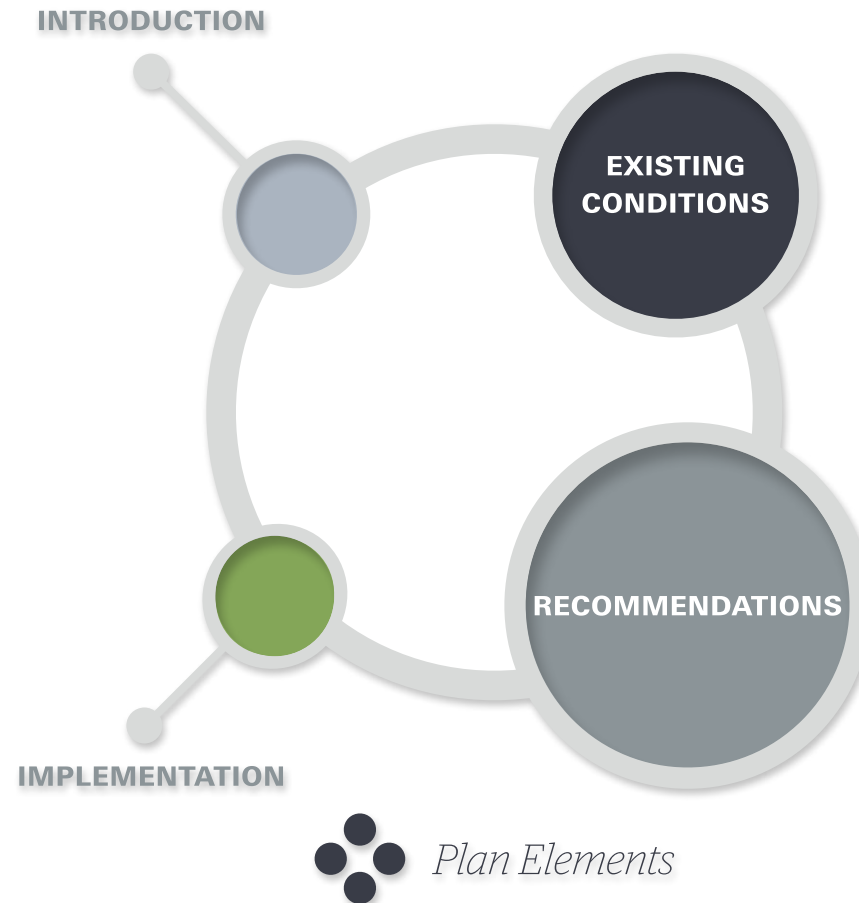


The Northland I planning area is located in the northeast portion of the city of Columbus and covers approximately 11,327 acres or 17.7 square miles. The area is bounded by Interstate 270 on the north and east, Cooke Road, Ferris Road, and Morse Road on the south, and the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks and Worthington city limits on the west (Figures 1 and 2). Six jurisdictions comprise the area—the City of Columbus, Village of Minerva Park, Blendon Township, Clinton Township, Mifflin Township, and Sharon Township. The city of Columbus accounts for 85% of the area.

Figure 1 (opposite page): The Northland I planning area. Figure 2 (above): The location of the Northland I planning area in the city of Columbus.

# AREA PLAN FORMAT

The Plan consists of four elements: Introduction, Existing Conditions, Plan Recommendations, and Plan Implementation. 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, with supporting Policies, Guidelines and Strategies.



# HISTORY

The following is a selection of historical notes relevant to the Northland I planning area.

William M. Maize was son of Clinton township pioneer Samuel Maize, whose family farm was in the Northland area. He served as city councilman from 1889 to 1891 and as a member of the State Board of Equalization in 1890. He became a customs surveyor in 1893. *Source: The Columbus 400, 1896.*

Minerva Park Casino, a vaudeville and related events theater, opened June 27, 1897 with a seating capacity of 2,500. Along with the casino, Minerva Park had a lake and a bridge erected over the span. The lake was man-made and filled with a steam powered water pump using water from Alum Creek. *Source: Columbus, Ohio, 1900: Illustrated guide to the city and pleasure resorts, with map and street railway directions/compliments of the Columbus railway company.*

Northland Mall, the first of the city's three compass-point shopping centers, opened in August 1964. The Columbus Citizen-Journal reported that more than 50,000 people visited the mall on the first day, filling up the parking lot 30 minutes after the doors opened at 10 a.m. The mall closed in 2003, but left the Northland name to the area as its legacy. *Source: Columbus Dispatch, August 13, 2012.*

In 1961 the Metzger Brothers Company developed Forest Park as a planned community, incorporating internal shopping and recreation (including a swimming pool and bowling center). *Source: wikipedia.org.*

The Continent on Busch Boulevard was designed in the mid-1970s like a European village, with apartments above storefronts. Shops were linked with outdoor sidewalks. The French Market was the adjacent mall like building, believed to be the nation's first food court. The locally owned shops sold baked goods, fresh produce, sandwiches and other gourmet food. It positioned itself as a local favorite, as it included one of Ohio's first multi-screen movie theaters. *Source: Columbus Metropolitan Library Images.*



**Top row, left to right:** Minerva Park Bridge. Minerva Park Casino (*Source: Columbus, Ohio*). **Middle row, left to right:** Northland Mall (*Source: <http://www.pleasantfamilyshopping.blogspot.com>*). The Continent in 1976 (*Source: Columbus Metropolitan Library Images*). **Right:** William M. Maize (*Source: The Columbus 400*).



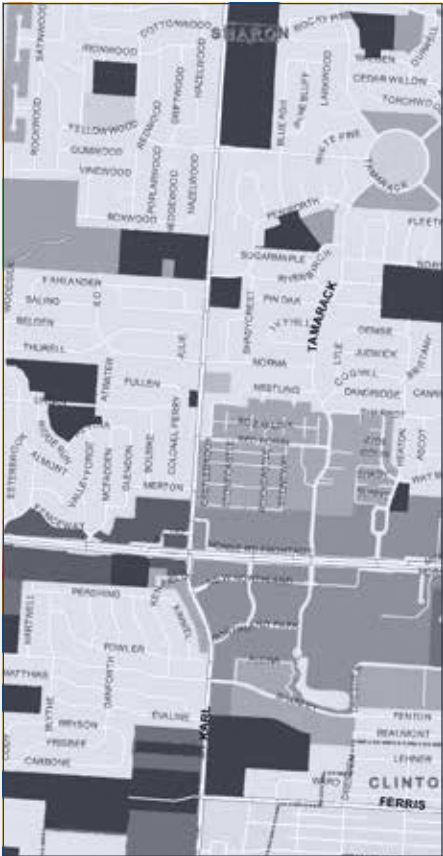
# PLANNING PROCESS SUMMARY

The plan was initiated at the request of the Northland Community Council. The planning process included data gathering and analysis, future land use analysis, consensus through community participation, draft plan preparation, and final plan development and adoption. The Northland Development Committee provided input and guidance throughout the formation of the plan. Three public workshops were held over the course of the planning process, including an issues and opportunities workshop, visioning workshop, and plan text workshop. The Northland Community Council recommended approval of the plan on December 3, 2013.



Stakeholders at public workshops held over the course of the planning process

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



*Key recommendations of the plan are:*

The **Future Land Use Plan map** and accompanying text provide a mechanism for the evaluation of future land-use proposals in the planning area.

**Community Mixed Use designation** (multifamily, office, retail, institutional) is recommended for Morse Road between Karl Road and Northtowne Boulevard/Walford Street (Northland Village) to support future mixed use development. Residential development densities should range from 16-22 units per acre.

The plan recommends **Community Mixed Use** for the intersection of SR 161 and Cleveland Avenue. Considering the planned implementation of Bus Rapid Transit on Cleveland Avenue, this location could ultimately serve the community as a mixed use center.

**Areas recommended for low, low-medium, and medium residential development should be maintained as residential neighborhoods**, as recommended in the Land Use Plan.

Consider the **development of additional commercial overlay designations** for the Northland I planning area.

**New development should be sensitive to Alum Creek** and the small streams that run throughout the planning area.

**Design guidelines** are provided for new commercial and residential development.

The plan includes a **development review checklist** for the evaluation of future proposals and suggests some proactive initiatives neighborhood stakeholders may pursue to promote plan recommendations.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS



# INTRODUCTION

The Existing Conditions element of the plan provides a summary of the planning area's physical attributes, including land use, urban form, transportation, parks, and the natural environment. This element also reviews existing zoning, demographics, and other factors that may influence future development.

Additionally, the Existing Conditions element reviews existing plans that affect the planning area, and includes a summary of the public input received during the planning process.

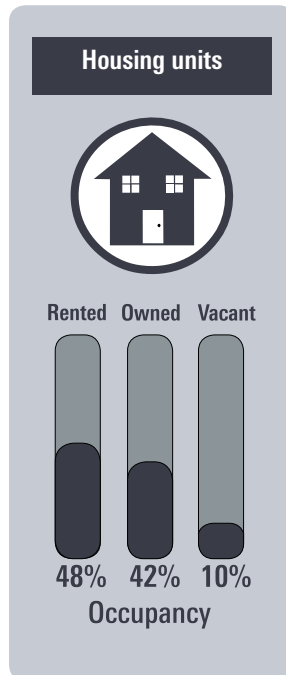
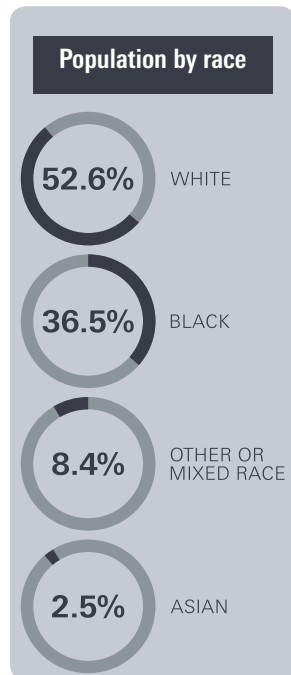


**Table 1**

	2010	2000	1990	2000–2010		1990–2010	
				<i>Change</i>	<i>Growth</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Growth</i>
Population	87,457	84,701	81,042	2,756	3.3%	6,415	7.9%
Housing Units	40,301	39,072	36,631	1,229	3.1%	3,670	10.0%
Vacancies	3,892	2,170	2,194	1,722	79.4%	1,698	77.4%
<b>POPULATION BY RACE</b>							
Black	31,897	19,027	8,811	12,870	67.6%	23,086	262.0%
White	45,960	58,764	68,954	-12,804	-21.8%	-22,994	-33.3%
Asian	2,220	2,318	1,251	-98	-4.2%	969	77.5%
Other race or mixed race	7,380	4,592	2,026	2,788	60.7%	5,354	264.3%
Hispanic Population	7,613	3,079	993	4,534	147.3%	6,620	666.7%
<b>POPULATION BY AGE</b>							
< 14 years of age	17,579	17,292	15,505	287	1.7%	2,074	13.4%
15 - 34 years of age	27,986	29,665	32,894	-1,679	-5.7%	-4,908	-14.9%
35 - 64 years of age	32,097	29,305	25,773	2,792	9.5%	6,324	24.5%
65 + years of age	9,795	8,439	6,867	1,356	16.1%	2,928	42.6%
<b>HOUSING</b>							
Owner Occupied	17,176	17,652	16,722	-476	-2.7%	454	2.7%
Renter Occupied	19,232	19,241	17,709	-9	-0.05%	1,523	8.6%

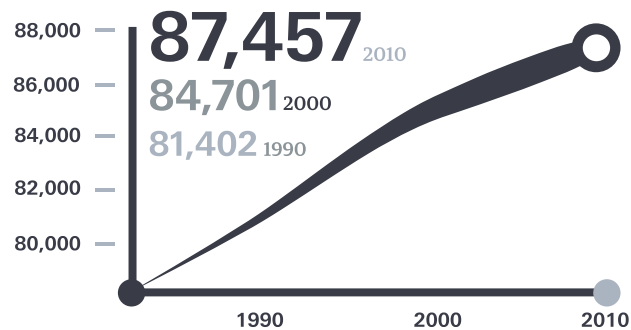


# DEMOGRAPHICS



The Northland area includes 87,457 residents, 74.3% of whom are over the age of 18. The population of the planning area is slightly younger in comparison to the city as a whole, compared to Columbus with 76.8% of its population over the age of 18. The population increased three percent from 2000 to 2010, and the number of housing units increased by three percent. At present, occupancy status consists of 53% renter occupied and 47% owner occupied housing units. A comparison of 2010 and 2000 U.S. Census Block Groups illustrates that the eastern portion of the planning area experienced larger population growth, compared to the western portion which experienced larger population loss.

### Population change



**Table 2**

SECTOR	Businesses		Employees		Employees per Business Ratio	Businesses with 100+ Employees
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	3	0.1%	33	0.1%	11:1	0
Mining	5	0.2%	33	0.1%	6.6:1	0
Utilities	3	0.1%	93	0.2%	31:1	0
Construction	158	6.0%	2,062	5.4%	13:1	5
Manufacturing	87	3.3%	1,973	5.2%	22.7:1	3
Wholesale Trade	89	3.4%	1,637	4.3%	18:1	5
Retail Trade	406	15.5%	5,799	15.2%	14:1	15
Transportation and Warehousing	52	2.0%	594	1.6%	11:1	1
Information	66	2.5%	2,561	6.7%	39:1	13
Finance and Insurance	180	6.9%	1,563	4.1%	8.7:1	1
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	198	7.6%	1,132	3.0%	5.7:1	0
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	174	6.7%	2,290	6.0%	13:1	4
Waste Management and Remediation	125	4.8%	2,136	5.6%	17:1	3
Educational Services	76	2.9%	2,030	5.3%	26.7:1	4
Health Care and Social Assistance	254	9.7%	4,847	12.7%	19:1	8
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	47	1.8%	456	1.2%	9.7:1	0
Accommodation and Food Services	222	8.5%	4,440	11.6%	20:1	7
Other Services (except Public Administration)	388	14.8%	2,593	6.8%	6.7:1	2
Public Administration	27	1.0%	1,595	4.2%	59:1	2
Unclassified Establishments	54	2.1%	319	0.8%	6:1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,614</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>38,186</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>14.61</b>	<b>73</b>

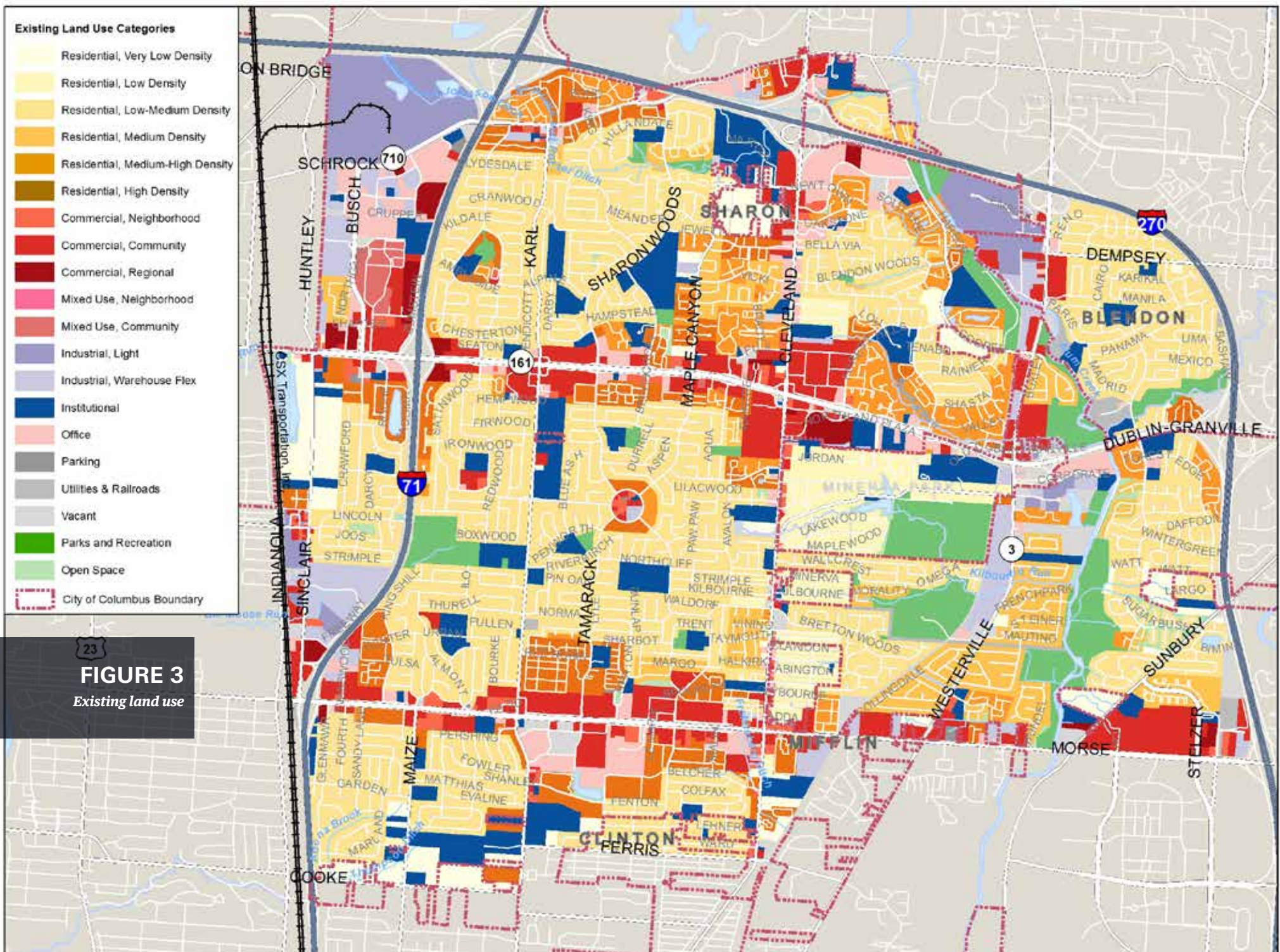
# EMPLOYMENT

According to Infogroup USA, June 2011, there are 2,614 businesses in the Northland I planning area employing over 38,000 workers in 20 employment categories. The retail trade sector leads in both the number of businesses and employees. This sector also provides the most number of businesses with 100 or more employees. Other Services (except Public Administration) follows with the number of businesses, and Health Care and Social Assistance with the number of employees. While only accounting for one percent of the total number of businesses and four percent of the total number of employees, the Public Administration sector leads in the number of employees per business with 59 employees per business on average. The three largest employers in Northland are Anheuser-Busch (900 employees), I-QOR Inc. (800 employees), and the State of Ohio Natural Resources Department (750 employees).

The largest concentrations of businesses are located along the Morse Road and Dublin-Granville Road corridors. Other notable business corridors are Busch Boulevard, Cleveland Avenue, Sinclair Road, and Westerville Road.



Anheuser-Busch is the largest employer in Northland, with 900 employees.



# EXISTING LAND USE

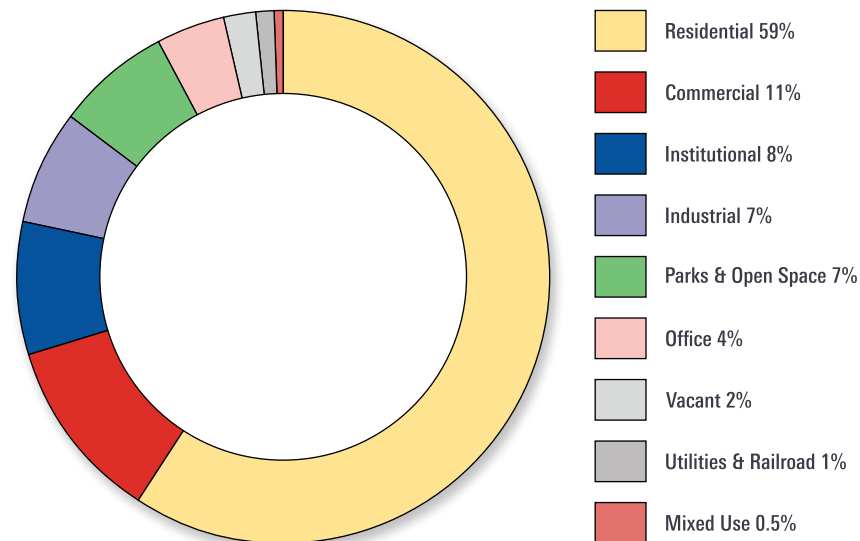
The Northland planning area's existing land use distribution is depicted on the Existing Land Use Map (Figure 3). Residential uses comprise 59% of the land area at varying densities, while job oriented land uses account for approximately 19%.

The residential makeup of the planning area is predominantly suburban-style single family, distributed throughout the area, and multifamily uses concentrated near commercial uses along main arterial corridors.

Cleveland Avenue, Dublin-Granville Road, and Morse Road have a wide mix of retail, commercial, and office uses. The majority of commercial uses located along these corridors occur mainly in the form of auto-oriented shopping centers and stores. Office uses are generally located near commercial uses and in some instances serve as a transition between residential and non-residential uses.

Light Industrial and warehousing uses are generally located in the eastern and western sections of the planning area typically along the Westerville Road corridor and west of I-71, respectively. Industrial and warehousing uses account for eight percent of land uses in the planning area, which includes the Anheuser-Busch brewery facility.

Institutional uses, including libraries, schools, churches, and governmental uses account for eight percent of the land area and are located throughout the Northland area. Additionally, parks and open space comprise seven percent of the planning area, and are generally a mixture of community, neighborhood, and conservation area parks.

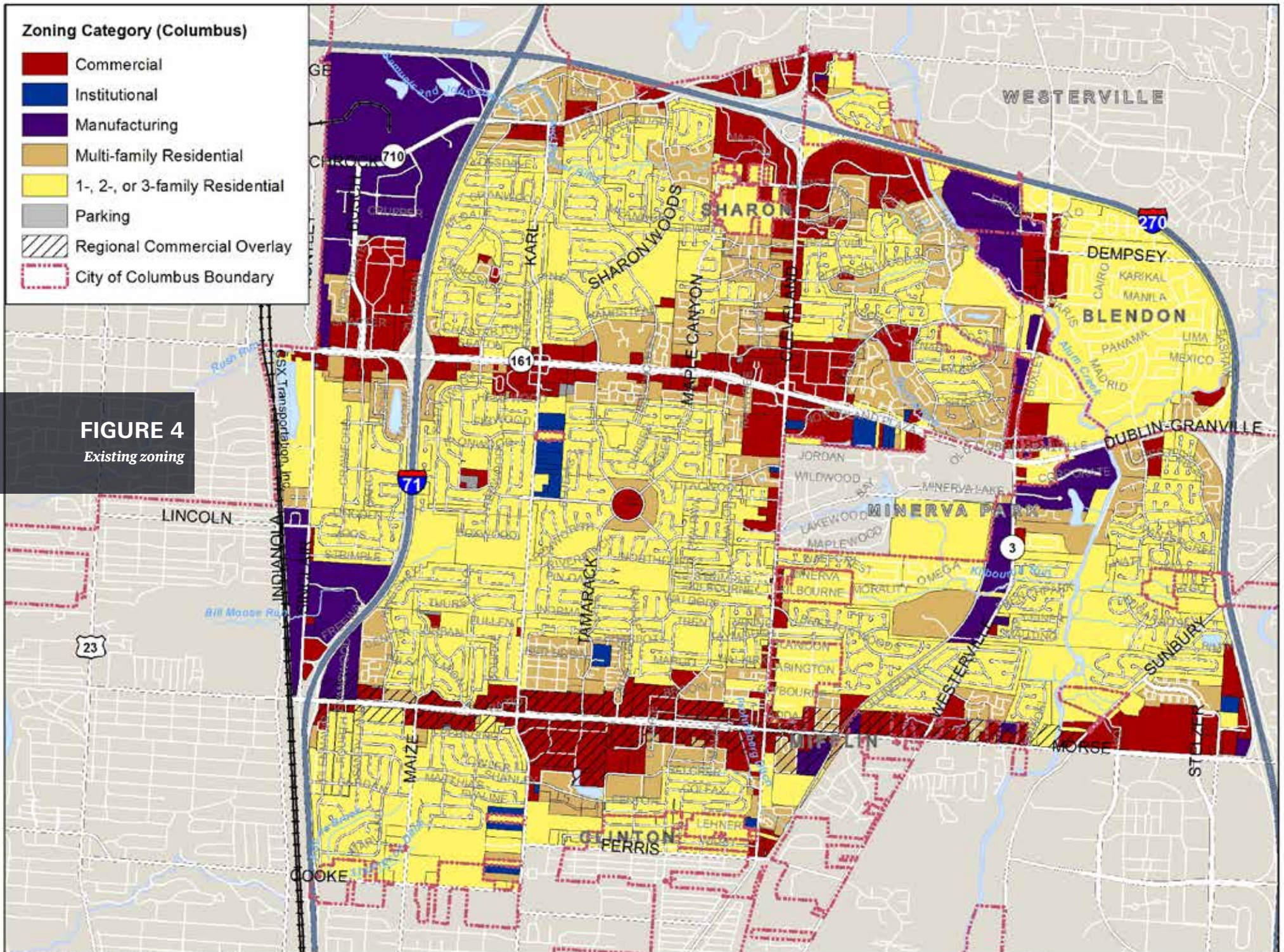


Graph illustrating Northland's existing land use composition

**Zoning Category (Columbus)**

-  Commercial
-  Institutional
-  Manufacturing
-  Multi-family Residential
-  1-, 2-, or 3-family Residential
-  Parking
-  Regional Commercial Overlay
-  City of Columbus Boundary

**FIGURE 4**  
Existing zoning

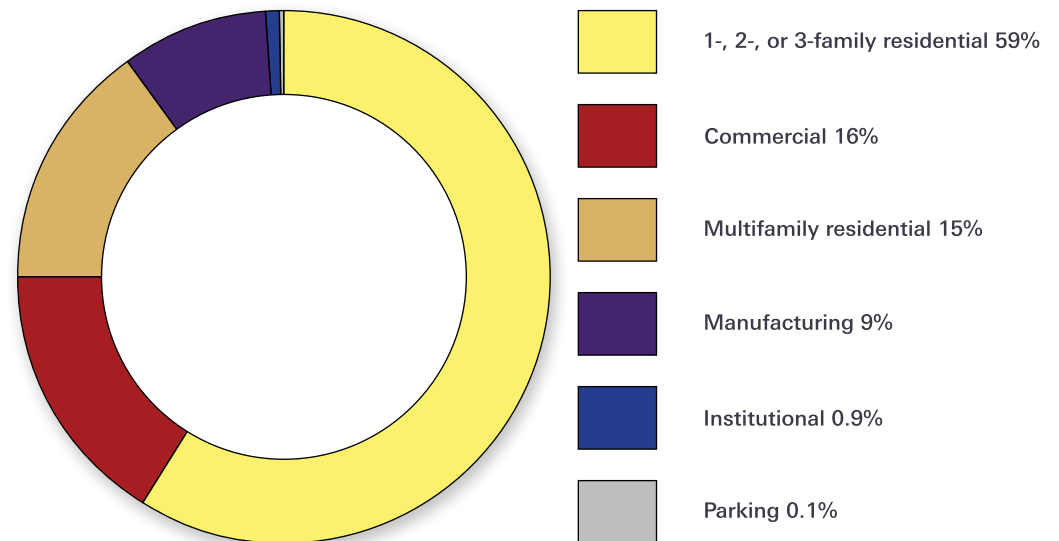


# EXISTING ZONING

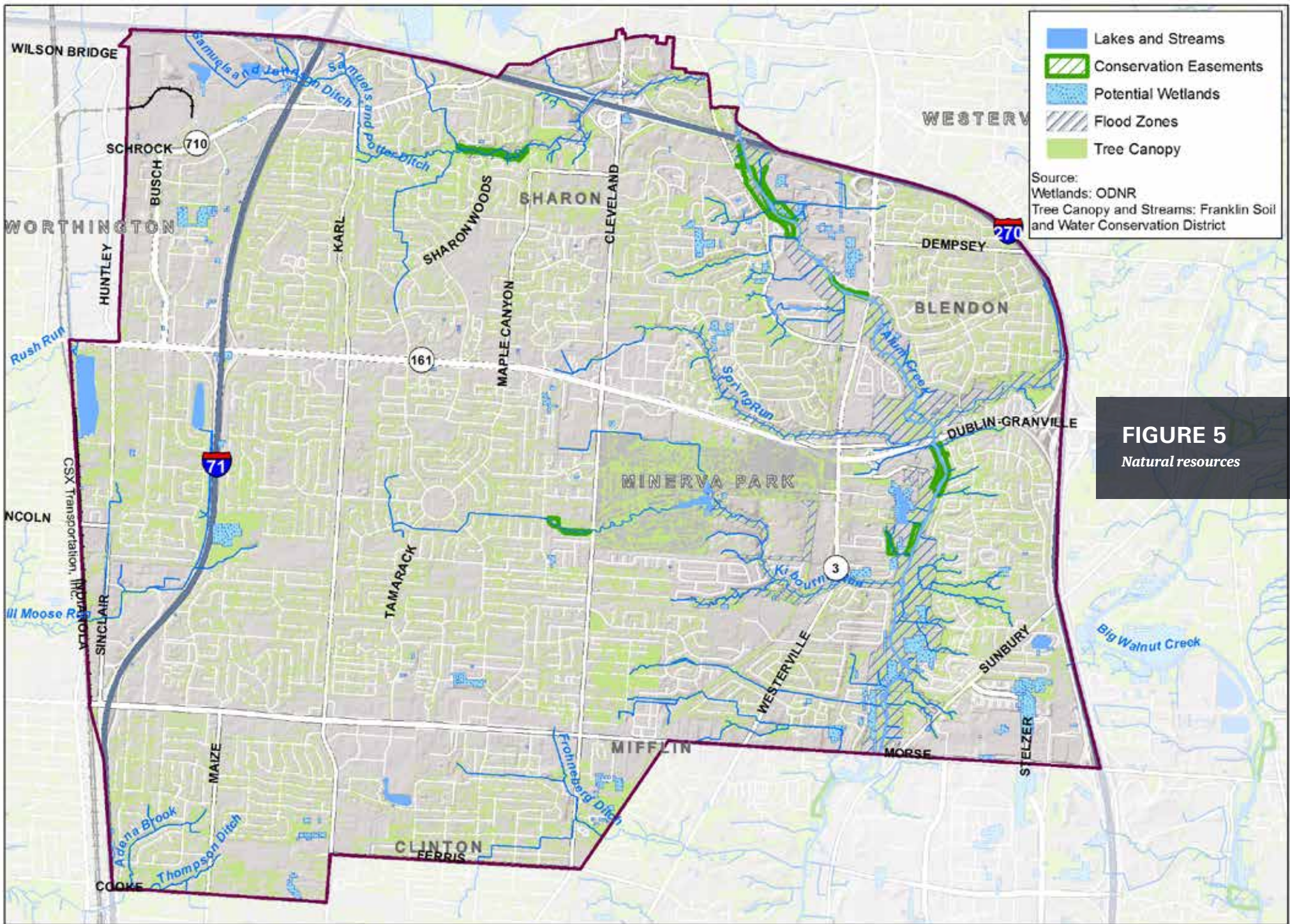
Zoning is an instrument used by local governments to regulate land use. In addition, zoning policies regulate density, building height, lot coverage, setbacks, and landscaping and parking requirements.

The majority of the Northland planning area is zoned 1-, 2-, or 3-family residential, commercial, multifamily residential, and manufacturing (Figure 4). The majority of residential zoning districts are Suburban Residential (SR), followed by Residential Two-Family (R2F). The Cleveland Avenue, Dublin-Granville Road and Morse Road corridors are zoned almost entirely commercial. Multifamily residential zoning districts are generally located adjacent to commercial zoning districts along these major corridors. Manufacturing zoned-property is located on sections of Sinclair Road, Schrock Road, and Westerville Road.

Additionally, Morse Road has a Regional Commercial Overlay (RCO) designation, which establishes additional standards and requirements on top of existing, underlying zoning to commercial properties (See page 51 for more detail). The RCO focuses on establishing safe, aesthetically pleasing, economically viable, and pedestrian friendly atmospheres along commercial corridors. The overlay extends from the east side of I-71 to Sunbury Road.



Graph illustrating Northland's existing zoning composition

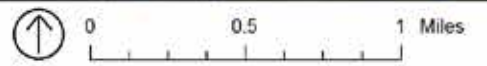


- Lakes and Streams
- Conservation Easements
- Potential Wetlands
- Flood Zones
- Tree Canopy

Source:  
Wetlands: ODNR  
Tree Canopy and Streams: Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

**FIGURE 5**  
*Natural resources*

**NORTHLAND AREA PLAN - NATURAL RESOURCES**





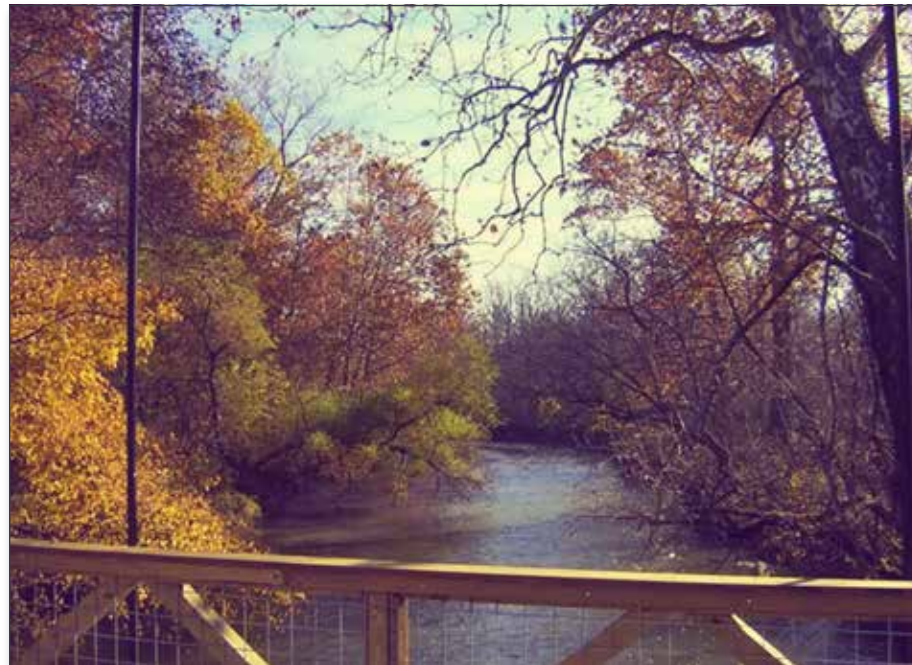
# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The most prominent natural features in Northland are found in the eastern portion of the planning area where Alum Creek, several tributaries, and their floodplains are located (Figure 5). This scenic stream corridor stretches 58 miles and begins in Morrow County. Alum Creek flows into Big Walnut Creek, which drains into the Scioto River.

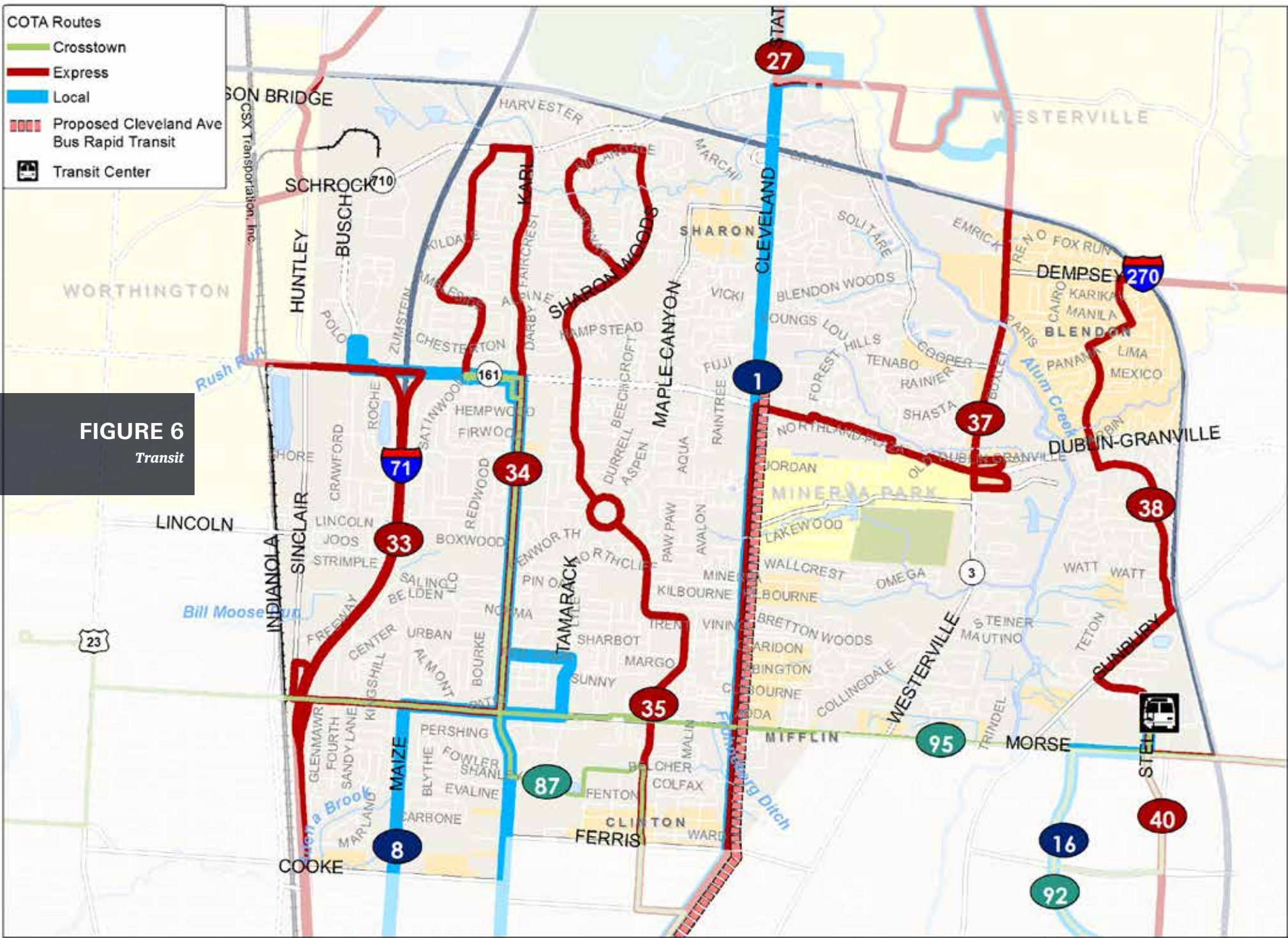
East of Cleveland Avenue elevations begin dropping, reaching the lowest point of about 780 feet at Alum Creek, some 130 feet lower than the higher portions of the planning area. Named tributaries in Northland include Spring Run East, Spring Run West, Kilbourne Run, Samuels and Johnson Ditch, Samuels and Potter Ditch, and Frohneberg Ditch. These streams and several other unnamed streams form a series of ravines radiating from Alum Creek. By contrast, the western portion of the planning area is relatively flat with little variation in elevation, except for the areas around Adena Brook, Thompson Ditch, and Bill Moose Run that flow west to the Olentangy River.

The city of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department has developed a trail that travels along the Alum Creek Corridor from Westerville to Three Creeks Park on the south side of the city. A final central segment from Easton to Nelson Park is under development that will connect the entire 19-mile greenway. In addition, the city of Columbus is working on connecting the Alum Creek Trail with the Olentangy Trail bike path.

Floodplains identified in the planning area are only located along the Alum Creek corridor. Potential wetlands identified by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources are found throughout the planning area, with the majority identified clustered along Alum Creek.



A view of Alum Creek from a bridge along the Alum Creek Trail.



# ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

## TRANSIT

Central Ohio Transportation Authority (COTA) bus service is provided throughout the entire planning area with access to 13 separate bus service lines. Three local routes—Routes 1-Cleveland Avenue, 8-Hamilton Avenue, and 16-Long Street—provide transit to Downtown. Seven express routes—Routes 27-Brookside Express, 33-North Central, 34-Karl Road, 35-Tamarack, 37-Westerville, 38-Easton, and 40-New Albany Business Park—also provide transit to or from Downtown. Local routes travel to and from downtown on primarily arterial streets, stopping frequently. Express routes pick up passengers in outlying areas and operate during peak travel times, with limited stops to high-density areas such as downtown.

The planning area is also served by the Easton Transit Center located on Transit Drive, just north of the Morse and Stelzer Road intersection. The Easton Transit Center serves as both a park and ride facility and childcare center. Routes 16, 38, 40, 92, and 95 can be accessed from the Easton Transit Center.

COTA proposes to expand its coverage in the planning area and introduce one new Crosstown Route along Dublin-Granville Road from Dublin to Minerva Park and extend local Routes 1 and 8 north within the next 25 years.

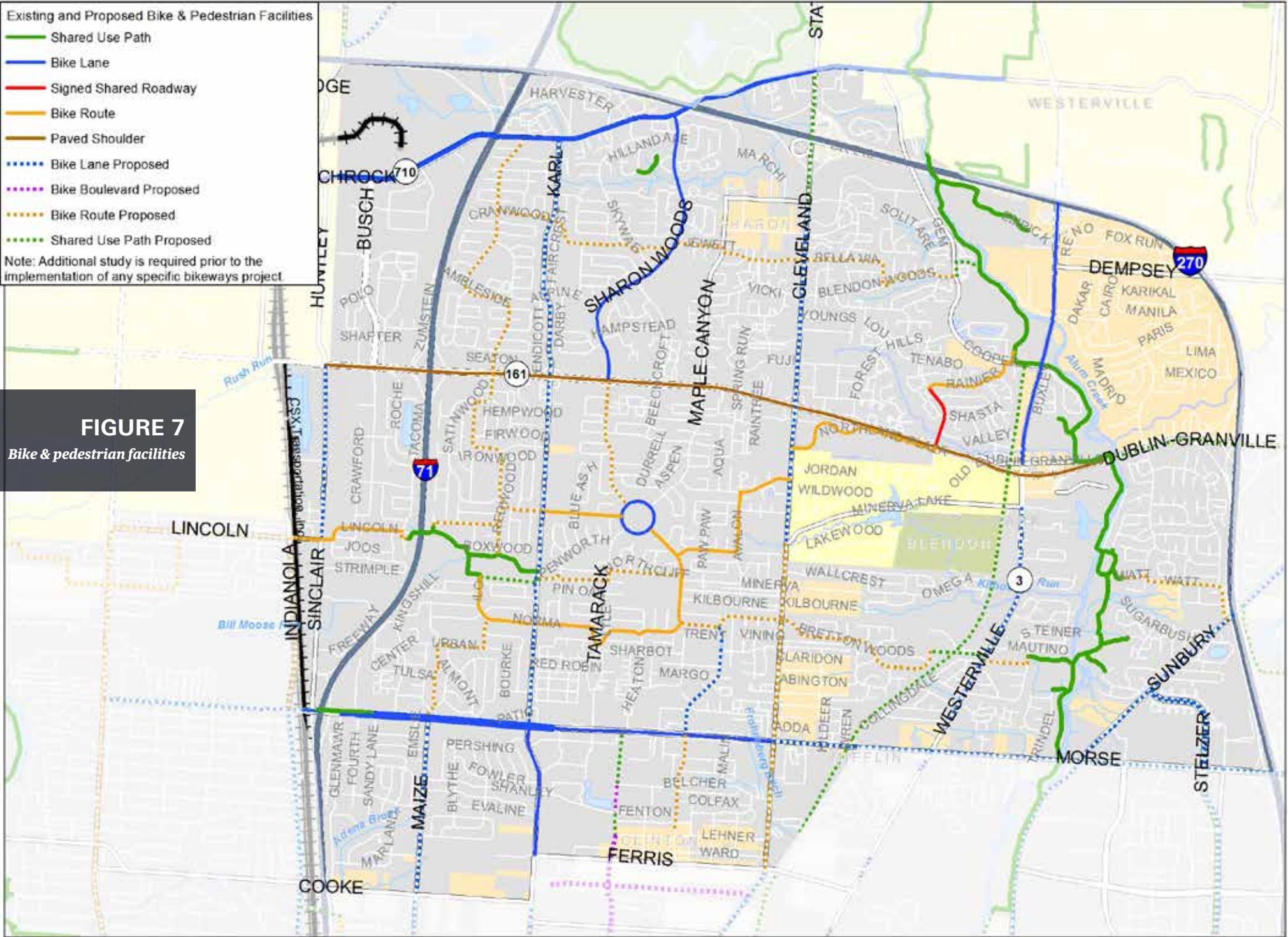
Additionally, COTA plans to establish Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on Cleveland Avenue. Bus Rapid Transit will enable faster travel times along the corridor. The new buses will receive traffic signal priority along the route and will run in mixed traffic on Cleveland Avenue from the OhioHealth Medical Center in Westerville to downtown.

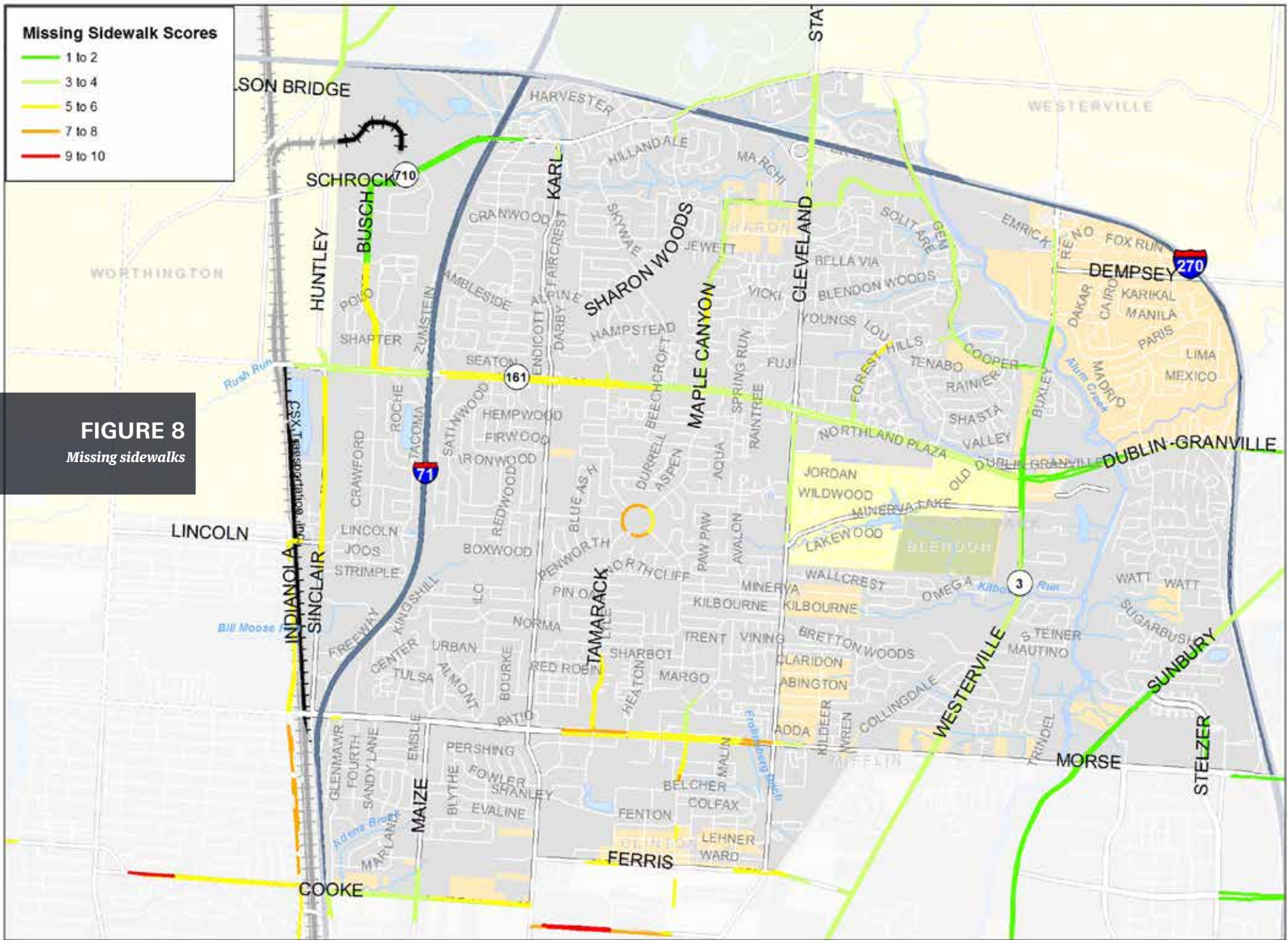
COTA estimates the project will reduce travel times by as much as 20% along the route, which is currently the second busiest line in the system. It is estimated BRT service will begin operations in September 2016.

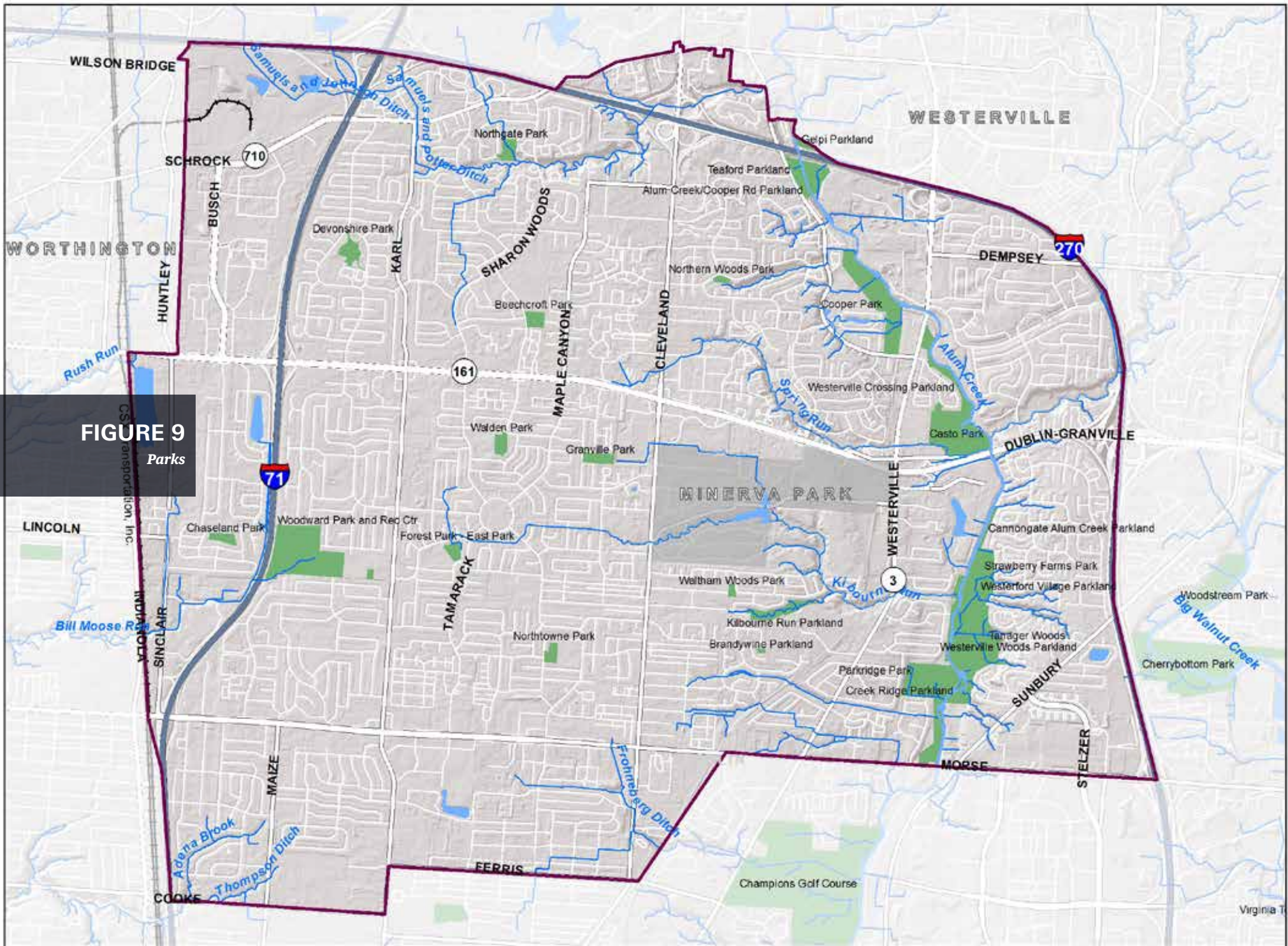
## PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE FACILITIES

Figure 7 highlights several of the recommendations from the *Columbus Bicentennial Bike Plan* (2008) and illustrates existing bicycle facilities. The bike plan focuses on adding shared-use paths, lanes, and routes with improved street crossing protection, such as signals and signs. In addition, it proposes improved connections with an extensive system of bike lanes and shared use paths along arterial streets and corridors. The proposed bikeways will provide connections to neighboring jurisdictions and amenities.

Sidewalks are located within most residential areas but generally are not present along most major roadways within the planning area (Figure 8). It is estimated that 50% to 60% of the city of Columbus does not contain curbs, sidewalks, or both. Some of these areas are older and built when sidewalks were not a standard requirement. Operation SAFEWALKS aims to provide safe pedestrian routes along major arterial roadways through the investment in new roadway infrastructure, including sidewalks. Roadways in the area have priority scores as high as 7-8 and as low as 1-2. One city of Columbus sidewalk improvement is currently scheduled in the Northland planning area, on Ferris Road, which holds a priority score of 7-8.







**FIGURE 9**  
Parks

# PARKS

The Northland area is served by 326 acres of city parkland, which consists of three community parks, 11 neighborhood parks, one neighborhood open space park, one special use park, four parkland reserves, and four conservation/natural areas. Many of the area's parks are located adjacent to schools. One city recreation center, Woodward Park, is located within the planning area and provides programs and activities for people of all ages.

While located outside of the city of Columbus boundary, the Northland planning area is served by the Minerva Lake Golf Club, an 18-hole golf course built in 1931. The golf course falls within Blendon Township.

Northland is in close proximity to three Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Parks. Blendon Woods Metro Park is located to the east of the planning area and includes 653 acres of beech-maple and oak-hickory forests, ravines, an 11-acre lake, and 5.5 miles of trails. Northeast of Northland is the 123-acre Inniswood Metro Garden, a scenic nature preserve filled with streams, woodlands, wildflowers and wildlife. Sharon Woods is located just to the north of the planning area across I-270. This 761-acre park is a mixture of forests and open fields, and includes a 14-acre lake, a 3.8-mile paved multi-purpose trail, and 3 miles of hiking trails.



**Top left:** Casto Park is a community park that provides facilities for child and family friendly activities. **Top right:** Cooper Park is a large, 36-acre area that includes a basketball court, playground equipment and athletic fields. **Left:** Woodward Park is a 50-acre neighborhood park developed in 1960. The recreation center located here offers programs and activities for people of all ages.

# EXISTING PLANS & STUDIES

*The following is a summary of existing plans and studies that contain recommendations for the Northland I planning area.*

## **Northland Plan-Volume I (2001)**

January 29, 2001, Columbus City Council adopted *Northland Plan-Volume I* as the city's long-range guide for development, redevelopment and improvement of the physical environment in the Northland I area. The city prepared the plan in recognition of the need to update the original 1989 *Northland I Plan*. This plan was prepared with the assistance of and input from numerous stakeholders including civic leaders, property owners, and representatives of the business community, public agencies and the Northland Community Council.

## **Northland Development Standards (1992)**

The *Northland Development Standards* were developed to be used as a guideline by developers, the Northland Community Council, and other neighborhood organizations during their negotiations of individual development proposals. The 2013 *Northland I Area Plan* supersedes and replaces the *Northland Development Standards* (the standards will still be used in the Northland II planning area until the time that plan is updated).

## **Morse Road Market Analysis and Redevelopment Strategy (1999) and the Morse Road Design Plan (2000)**

The *Morse Road Market Analysis and Redevelopment Strategy* and the *Morse Road Design Plan* were developed to improve the condition of the Morse Road right-of-way involving access management reconfigurations and streetscape improvements. These improvements were completed in 2010.

## **Big Walnut Watershed Balanced Growth Plan (2013)**

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), an association of local governments in central Ohio, worked with the Big Walnut Planning Partnership (BWPP) to produce this *Big Walnut Watershed Balanced Growth Plan*. Balanced Growth is a voluntary, incentive-based planning process designed to protect Ohio's watersheds and facilitate local and regional economic development. The BWPP is

made up of 31 communities and many watershed stakeholders that voluntarily agreed to direct the development of the Balanced Growth Plan while MORPC provided technical and administrative guidance.

## **Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries (FACT)–Watershed Action Plan (2005)**

The purpose of this action plan is to identify and restore impaired reaches of Alum Creek and tributaries by reducing pollution. The plan strives to incorporate the vision of local communities for improving neighborhoods as they relate to water quality. This plan presents an analysis of the underlying environmental, economic, and social factors related to the impaired areas and outlines strategies for restoration and preservation.

## **Planning Study Report Westerville Road (State Route 3) Corridor Study (2011)**

Community concerns regarding traffic congestion, safety, economic development, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other issues, led to this corridor planning study that was initiated in Spring, 2008. The primary focus of the study is Westerville Road (State Route 3) from just north of the Morse Road intersection to just south of the I-270 interchange (excluding both Morse Road and I-270). The city of Columbus, Franklin County and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) funded the study. The study is intended to identify what transportation issues exist in the corridor, the magnitude of the issues, develop conceptual alternatives for improvements, and refine the alternative or alternatives.



# PUBLIC INPUT

A summary of public input provided at the early stages of the planning process is presented below. The input consists of the initial background survey, interviews that were conducted of neighborhood stakeholders and community input provided at the first public workshop for the plan.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND SURVEY

*The following is a summary of the survey and stakeholder input.*

- People like the area.
- Residents choose to live here for proximity to work and shopping amenities.
- Value the affordable nature of the area and strong housing stock.
- While overall people feel safe, there are concerns about the occurrence of crime in certain areas.
- While vacant retail and offices are a concern, people are excited about the redevelopment potential of the area, given its location.
- Residents enjoy old growth trees and proximity to open space.

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

Participants in the first public meeting were asked to identify places where they felt development should occur, their favorite places in the neighborhood and their least favorite places.

- The majority of participants felt development should occur along the SR 161 and Morse Road corridors, in addition to Cleveland Avenue (between Morse Road and SR 161), The Continent, the shopping center on Sandalwood Boulevard, and Tamarack Circle. In particular participants felt that Northland Village should be the town center for Northland I.
- Alum Creek along with the trail were identified as a favorite place.
- Area parks were identified as favorite places.
- The redeveloped Morse Road streetscape was identified as a favorite for residents.
- The SR 161 corridor was identified as needing streetscape improvements.



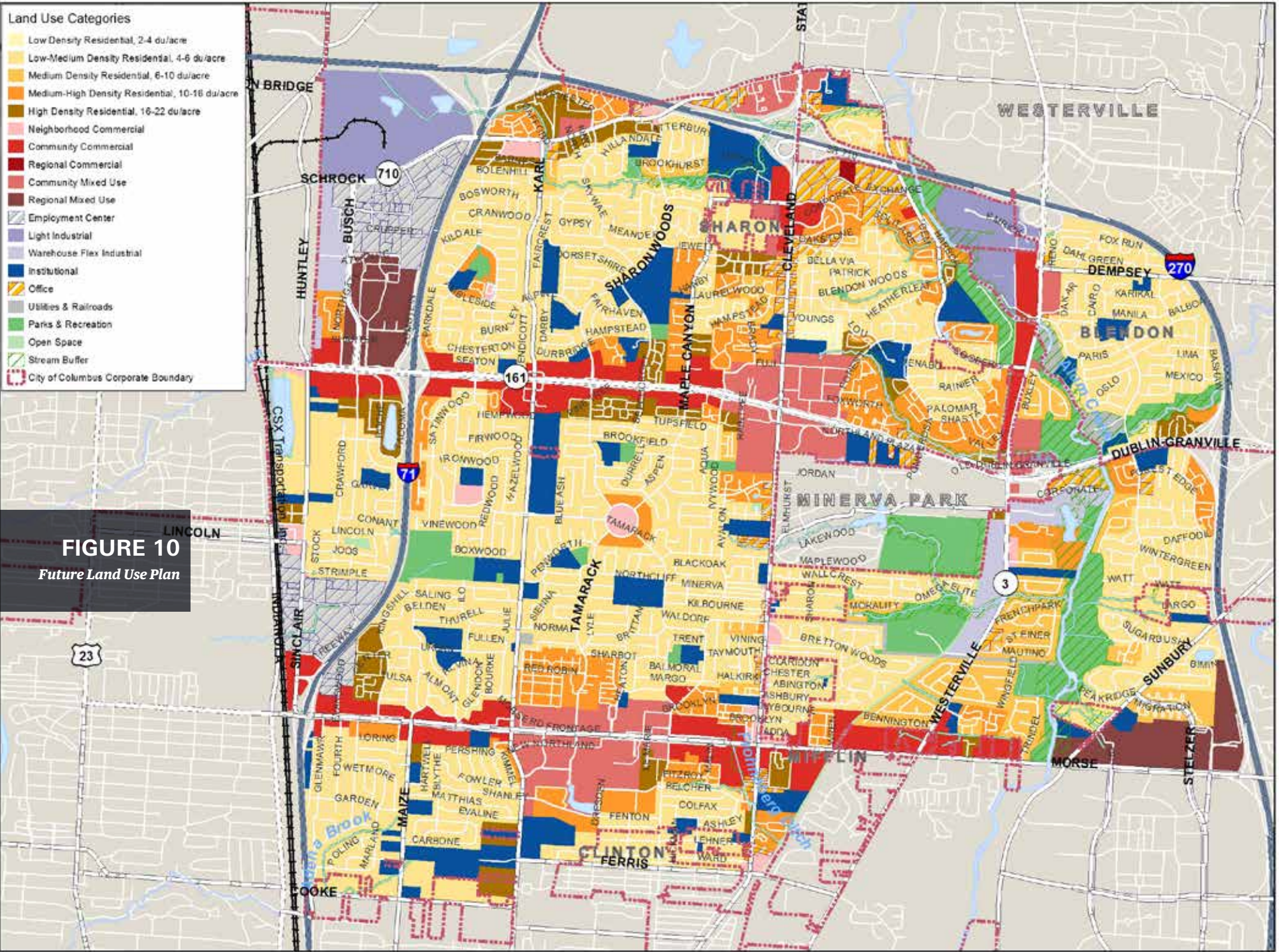
# RECOMMENDATIONS



# INTRODUCTION

The Plan Recommendations element includes four overall development principles that address each of the primary planning priorities that will guide future growth and development, including land use, natural resources, transportation, and urban design. The Plan Recommendations element is an outgrowth of existing plans, staff analysis, guidance from area stakeholders, and the public input summarized in the Existing Conditions. The resultant development principles, policies, guidelines and strategies respond to the identified needs and priorities and are consistent with overall city of Columbus development related policies. Each of the four development principles is followed by supporting policies and guidelines/strategies. Land use, natural resource, and urban design plans are included within the body of this text along with pictures and renderings that illustrate recommended policies.





**FIGURE 10**  
Future Land Use Plan



# PRINCIPLE 1: LAND USE

## Policy:

Neighborhoods will have a mix of uses that provide a variety of housing types, neighborhood services and employment.

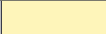







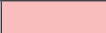










Land use defines how a property and/or a building is used—single-family residential, a business, or mixed use in the same building (for example, retail on the first floor and residential on upper floors). For neighborhoods to be sustainable over the long term, it is critical that a mix of uses is provided. This means that people can live in a neighborhood, can purchase the goods and services they need, and may even be employed in their neighborhood. This mix of uses provides for a stable economic base. It also supports walking and biking as options to driving, provided densities (number of units per acre) are sufficient to encourage such transportation options (such as short walking distances between a home and shops).

The Future Land Use Plan (Figure 10) recommends future land uses for the Northland I planning area. The map legend corresponds with Table 3, which provides generalized descriptions of the recommended land use classifications. The following text also corresponds with the Future Land Use Plan map and provides a general overview of the map's recommendations.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- Community Mixed Use (multifamily, office, retail, institutional) is recommended for SR 161 between Parkville Street/Spring Run Drive and Forest Hills to support future mixed use development. Residential development densities should range from 16-22 units per acre.
- Community Commercial (office, retail, institutional) is recommended for SR 161 between Huntley Road/Sinclair Road and Parkville Street/Spring Run Drive. Hotel uses are appropriate adjacent to I-71.
- Regional Mixed Use (multifamily, office, retail, institutional) is supported for the Continent area (northwest corner of SR 161 and I-71) to support the redevelopment of the area as a regional shopping and living destination.
- Existing single-family homes fronting the north side of SR 161, east of Ambleside Drive, should be protected against commercial redevelopment of individual lots. Any redevelopment or conversion of these parcels for uses other than single family should be done in an aggregated way, rather than incrementally. Development occurring along the corridor should provide adequate buffering to adjacent residential uses. If redevelopment is to occur, it should incorporate adequate landscaping and other forms of screening (2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I*).
- Community Mixed Use (multifamily, office, retail, institutional) is recommended for Morse Road between Karl Road and Northtowne Boulevard/Walford Street to support future mixed use development. Residential development densities should range from 16-22 units per acre.
- Community Commercial (office, retail, institutional) is recommended for Morse Road between I-71 and Karl Road. Hotel uses are appropriate adjacent to I-71.
- Regional Mixed Use Commercial (multifamily, office, retail, institutional) is supported for Morse Road, east of Alum Creek to support the development of this area as a regional shopping and living destination in conjunction with Easton located just to the south.
- Existing office uses along Corporate Exchange, Schrock Road, and Corporate Drive are recommended to continue as office uses.

**Table 3**

Category	Color	General Description
Low Density Residential		Single family residential development in the form of subdivisions. Typical Density: 2–4 dwelling units per acre.
Low-Medium Density Residential		Predominantly single-family development, with limited amounts of 2–4 unit buildings interspersed - often at intersections or along larger streets. This category may also include lower density townhouses/condominiums. Typical Density: 4–6 dwelling units per acre.
Medium Density Residential		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 and multistory buildings with more than 4 units per building may be considered for areas that are immediately adjacent to a neighborhood's primary corridor(s). Typical Density: 6–10 dwelling units per acre.
Medium-High Density Residential		Includes doubles, townhouses and multifamily. Typical Density: 10–16 dwelling units per acre. Somewhat higher densities may be considered for areas that are immediately adjacent to a neighborhood's primary corridors.
High Density Residential		Multi-story multifamily housing in specific areas where high density is considered appropriate, such as the primary corridors. 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 (adjacent uses and development pattern). Typical Density: 16–22 dwelling units per acre.
Neighborhood Commercial		Neighborhood commercial services: smaller scale retail, office, or institutional uses, including gas stations with convenience stores that are built to Urban Commercial Overlay design standards. Typical Intensity: 20,000 square feet per acre.
Community Commercial		Retail, office, hotel, or institutional uses that serve multiple neighborhoods, but generally do not attract residents from outside the area. Typical Intensity: 12,500 square feet per acre.
Regional Commercial		Large scale shopping centers, regional malls, big box retailers, entertainment centers and similar uses that have the potential to attract consumers from major portions of the city and the Central Ohio region. Office or institutional uses may also be appropriate. Typical Intensity: 10,000 square feet per acre.
Community Mixed Use		Retail, office, hotel, or institutional uses with residential units located either above and/or next to the uses, which serve multiple neighborhoods (i.e. neighborhood shopping centers). Typical Density/Intensity: 12,500 square feet per acre; 10–16 dwelling units per acre. <i>Refer to the Land Use recommendations for Morse Road and SR 161 for specific density recommendations.</i>
Regional Mixed Use		Large scale shopping centers and regional malls, entertainment centers, big box retailers, and similar retail uses that have the potential to attract consumers from major portions of the city or the Central Ohio region. Office or institutional uses may also be appropriate. Also includes residential units located either above and/or next to the commercial, office, or institutional uses. Should be located at nodes on major arterials and at interstate highway intersections. Typical Density/Intensity: 10,000 square feet per acre; up to 22 dwelling units per acre.
Employment Center		Business and professional offices, technology park clusters, research and development, light industrial operations, and visitor service establishments, with retail only as a secondary use. Typical Intensity: 10,000 to 15,000 square feet per acre.
Light Industrial		Light assembly, fabrication, and related uses. Light industrial uses should be located in older industrial areas, within industrial parks, and in limited locations on major arterials but not within close proximity of residential uses.
Warehouse Flex		Flex office, warehouse flex, distribution and logistics, and smaller light industrial uses. Should be located in older industrial areas and at locations on major arterials but not within close proximity of residential uses. Typical Intensity: 10,000 square feet per acre.
Office		Should be located at major intersections, sites with freeway visibility, in mixed use buildings, or as a transition between residential and non-residential development. Typical Intensity: 15,000 square feet per acre.
Institutional		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.
Utilities and Railroads		Utilities and railroads should be located in existing locations.
Parks and Recreation		Integrated into residential neighborhoods and/or located adjacent to preserved open spaces. Parks are either publicly- or privately-owned recreational facilities, including golf courses.
Open Space		Conserved lands that are not suitable for development, such as the floodway, wetlands, major wood stands, steep slopes and ravines, and species habitat. These are natural areas that do not provide recreational facilities.
Stream Buffer		Stream corridors should be protected by maintaining a natural buffer of at least the entire floodway or 150 feet from the high water mark, whichever is greater (more specific methodology is found in the city's Stormwater Drainage Manual). In general, the 100-year regulatory floodplain should not be altered.

- Neighborhood Commercial is recommended for Cleveland Avenue between Morse Road and Minerva Avenue. This portion of Cleveland has small and shallow lots, and special consideration needs to be given with buffering through use of such elements as fencing, vegetation, masonry walls and sight lighting. Building heights should be compatible with adjacent residential.
- For the section of Cleveland Avenue from SR 161 to Home Acre Drive, the following recommendations apply:
  - Office uses with appropriate limitations may be supported.
  - Higher intensity commercial uses should be oriented to the intersections of SR 161 and I-270 (2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I*).
- The southeast corner of Busch Boulevard and Schrock Road and the area around Sinclair Road and Freeway Drive are both recommended for Employment Center uses. Any future development or redevelopment in these areas should focus on optimizing jobs and employment. Appropriate specific uses include research and development, light industrial, hospitality, and flex office space.
- The area north of the Busch and Schrock intersection is recommended for Light Industrial uses. This recommendation is consistent with the existing land use pattern. New retail or residential uses are not recommended for this area.
- Westerville Road north of Valley Park on the west side is recommended for Warehouse Flex uses to continue to support the mix of industry-type uses while minimizing its impact on the surrounding residential.
- The undeveloped property on Westerville Road north of Westerville Woods is recommended for Office uses. Two of the parcels are zoned for Limited Manufacturing, however given the small size of the lots and the adjacent residential, Office is recommended.
- The undeveloped property on Westerville Road from Jonathon Noble Way north to just south of the multifamily at Partridge Place is recommended for Neighborhood Commercial. Currently the south parcel is zoned commercial and the northern parcel, while zoned multifamily is used as a home office.
- The intersection at Westerville Road and SR 161 is recommended for Community Mixed Use to accommodate the mix of commercial and residential uses.
- Areas recommended for low, low-medium, and medium residential development should be maintained as residential neighborhoods, as recommended in the Land Use Plan. Any future residential development in these areas should be developed at a density level consistent with the existing development. This generally includes the following neighborhoods: Blendon Meadows, Blendon Woods, Brandywine Meadows, Clinton Estates, Cooper Woods, Forest Park, Parkridge, Karmel Woodward Park, Maize Morse Tri-Area, Salem, Sharon Woods, Strawberry Farms, Waltham, Devonshire, and Westerville Woods.

- The Future Land Use Plan map includes recommendations for Blendon Township properties that are within the Northland I boundaries. Recommendations from this plan are only relevant in the case where these properties are annexed to Columbus. Blendon Township recommendations include the following:

- For the undeveloped property at SR 161 and I-270, Medium-High Density Residential is recommended. For the stretch on the east side of Westerville Road north of Dempsey Road, Office is recommended for the corner site transitioning to residential to the north. Office would also be appropriate for these residential properties.
- The water and waste water plant properties are recommended for Utility. Columbus acknowledges that the *Blendon Community Plan* recommends these sites for parkland/open space. Consideration should be given to the use of park space and easements for

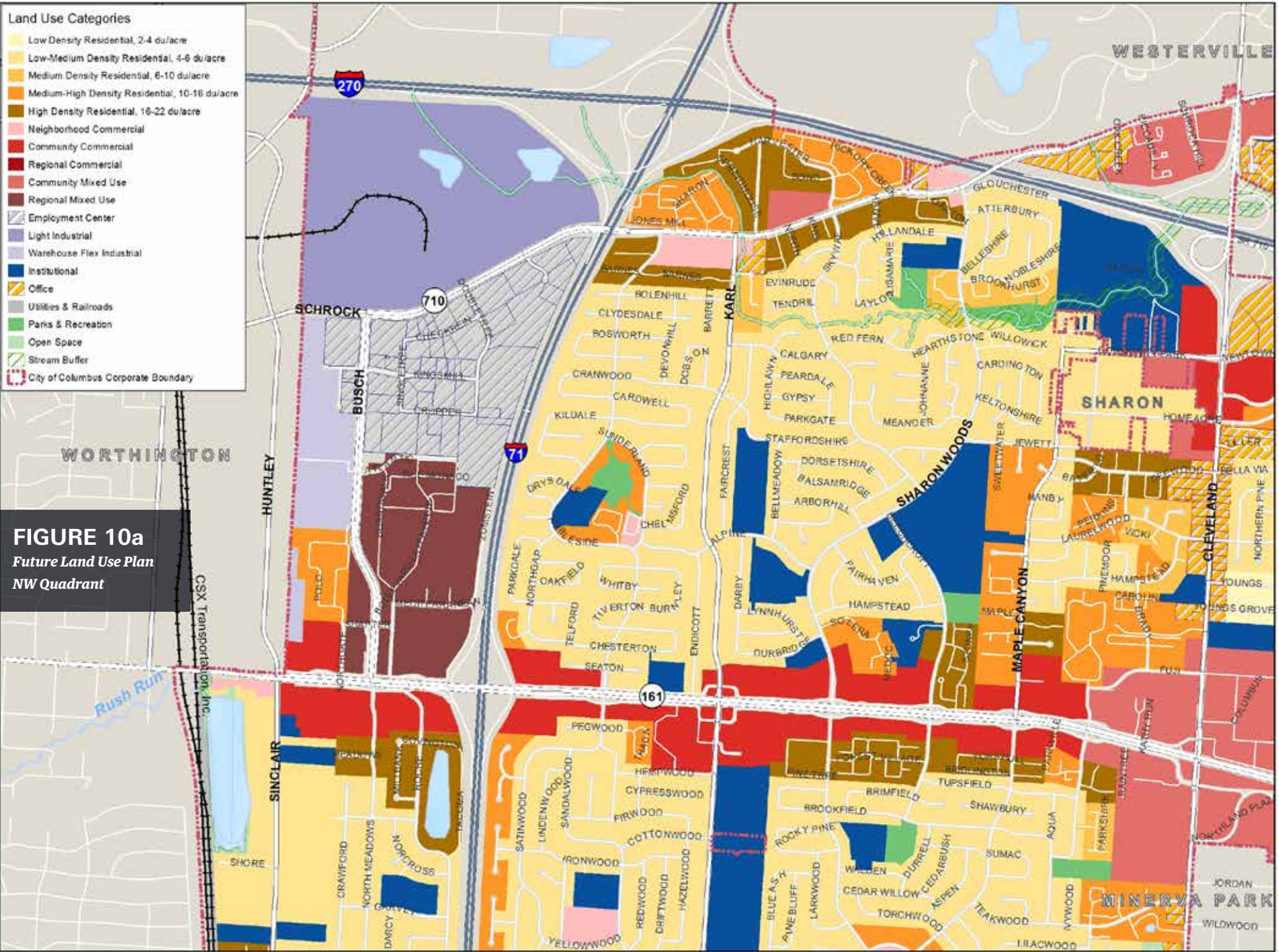
access to the Alum Creek corridor.

- The west side of Westerville Road from I-270 to Alum Creek is recommended for Community Commercial fronting Westerville Road with Light Industrial to the west.
- The east side of Westerville Road from Dempsey Road to Brazzaville Road is recommended for Community Mixed Use.
- As redevelopment occurs, developers are encouraged to cluster retail around nodes primarily in the vicinity of key intersections along the corridor (*Morse Road Design Study*). The land use plan aims to constrain the amount of retail and the Community Mixed Use recommendation is at least partly intended to allow for redevelopment of some retail sites to a new use (office or multifamily).
- The plan recommends Community Mixed Use for the intersection of SR 161 and Cleveland Avenue. Considering the planned implementation of Bus Rapid Transit on Cleveland Avenue, this location could ultimately serve

the community as a mixed use center. This mixed use residential and commercial center could be designed to maximize access to public transport and incorporate features to encourage transit ridership. This development could feature:

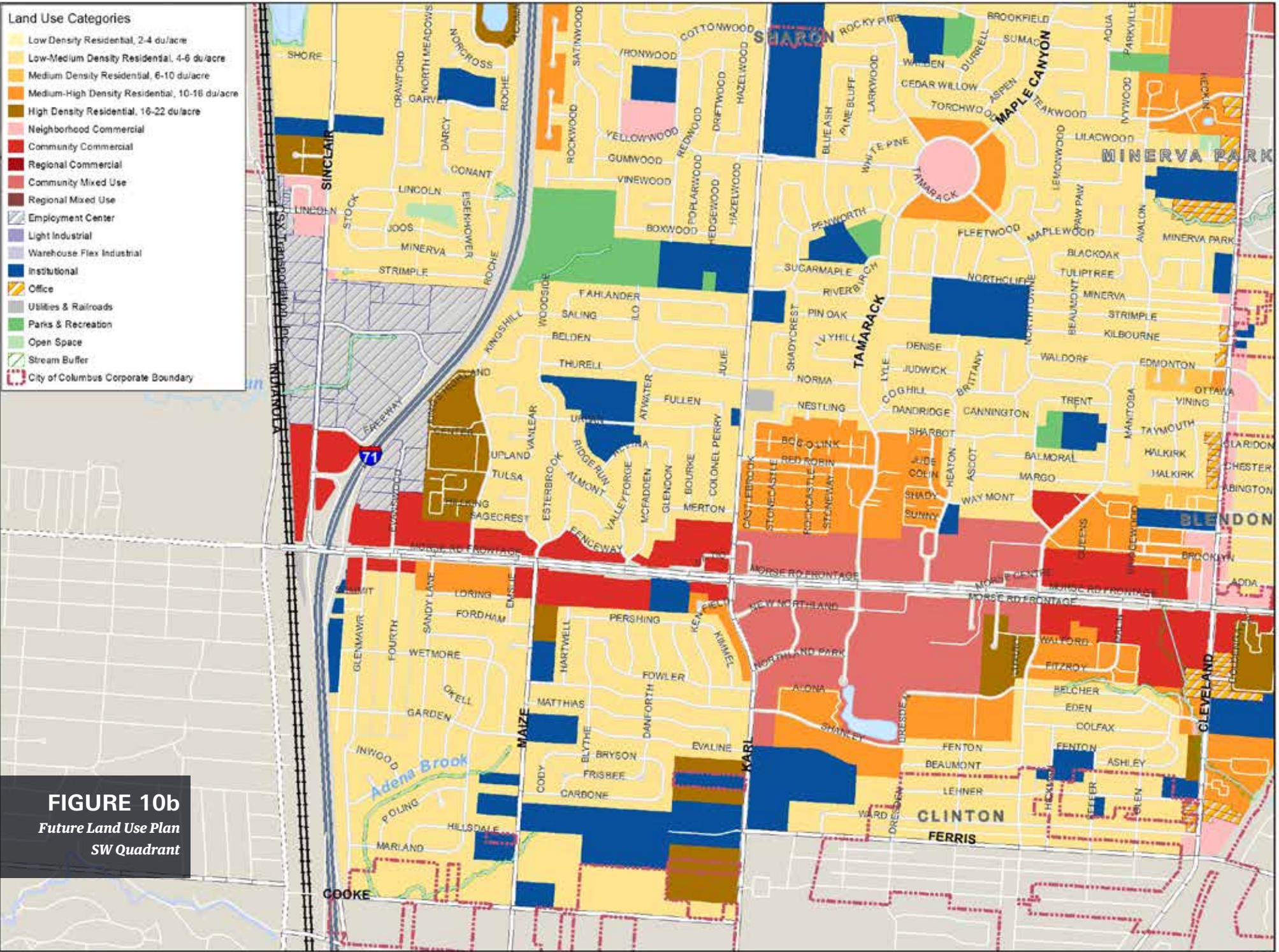
- Walkable design.
- Bus Rapid Transit stop as prominent feature of center.
- A mixture of uses in close proximity including office, residential, retail, and civic uses.





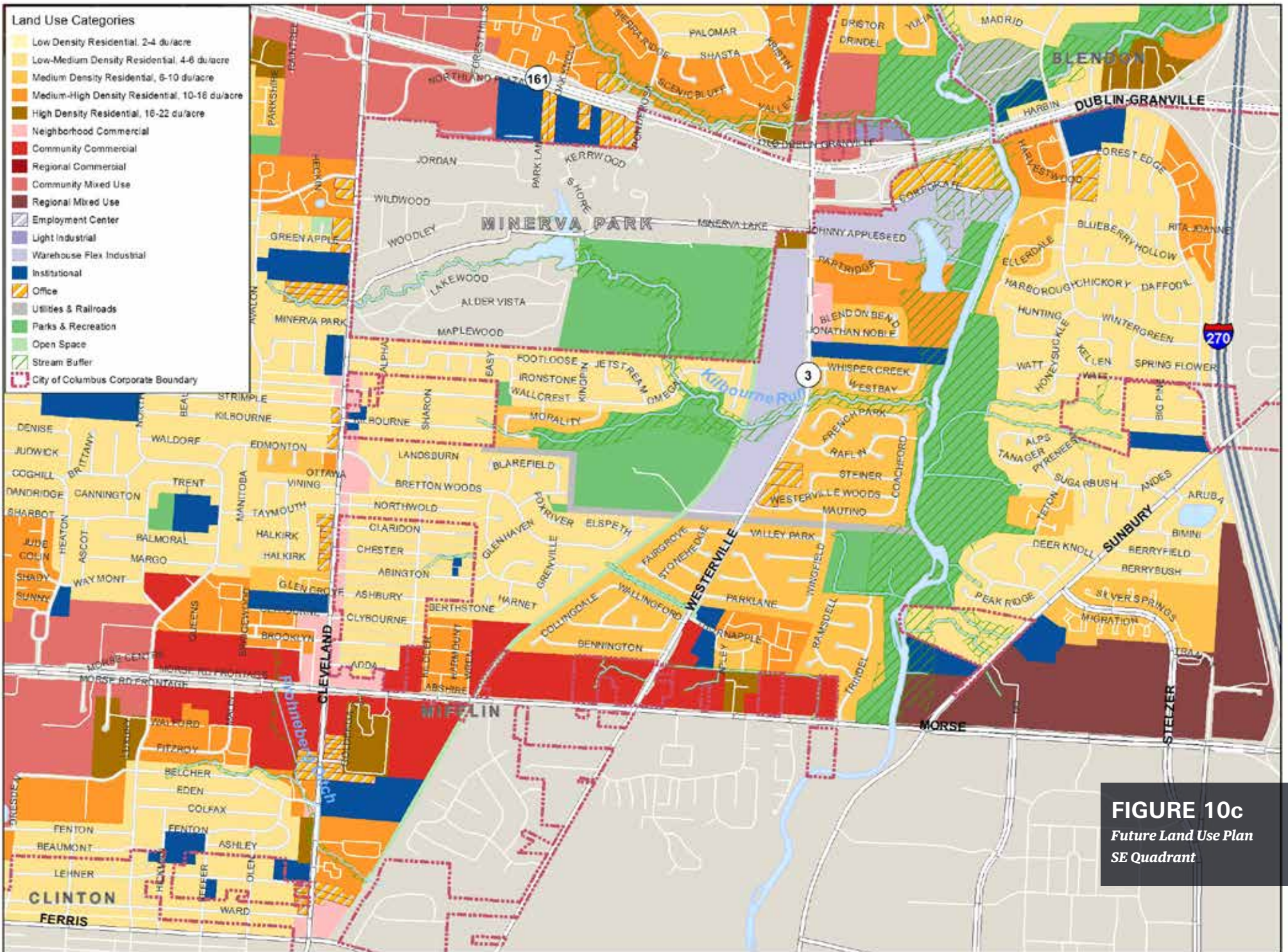
**FIGURE 10a**  
*Future Land Use Plan*  
*NW Quadrant*

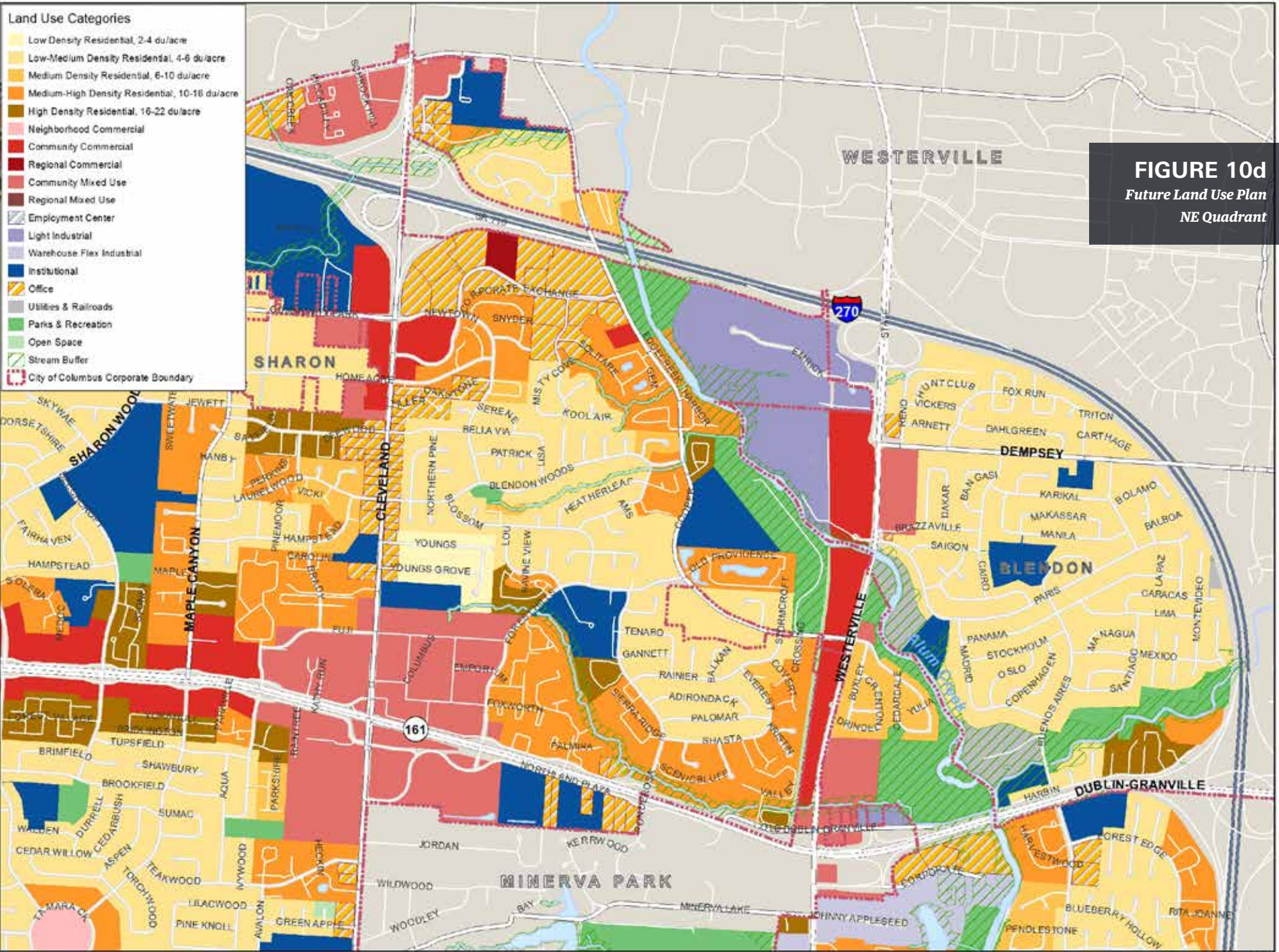




**FIGURE 10b**  
*Future Land Use Plan*  
*SW Quadrant*







**FIGURE 10d**  
*Future Land Use Plan*  
 NE Quadrant



## Policy:

Redevelopment of existing institutional, residential, and private park/recreational land uses should be compatible with surrounding development.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- Schools, libraries, places of worship, post offices, private recreational areas 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. Strategies are as follows:
  - 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.
  - In the case of the Northern Columbus Athletic Association Soccer Fields, if the owner would decide to sell the site, its acquisition and use as parkland would be preferred. If this is not possible, residential development is recommended at a density level consistent with the residential uses around it.

# PRINCIPLE 2: NATURAL RESOURCES

Open space and natural resources should be preserved and protected.

Northland residents and stakeholders continue to support the preservation of natural resources in the Northland I planning area. 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 Northland I focus on building upon the existing network of connections to area open space, parks, and natural areas, preserving the area's natural 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 better coexist.



## Policy:

Natural areas should be preserved as a part of public or private park and recreation systems.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- New development should be sensitive to Alum Creek and the small streams that run throughout the planning area.
- Where possible, acquire land along Alum Creek and small streams in the planning area for preservation of open space, to allow for low impact recreational use of the stream corridor and improvement of water quality. In the case where land cannot be acquired, conservation easements should be considered an alternative. Priority should be given to the stream corridor protection zone and floodplain with additional areas added where possible.
- Pursue development of trail connections from the Westerville Road area to the Alum Creek Trail.
- Alternative methods to manage stormwater should be considered (e.g. best management practices (BMPs), such as bioswales (bioswales: landscape elements designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water), native landscaping, rain gardens, naturalized detention and retention basins, other (refer to city of Columbus Stormwater Drainage Manual).
- The amount of impervious surfaces (surfaces that do not permit the absorption of rainwater) should be minimized in order to reduce stormwater flow and rates, and to facilitate stormwater infiltration.
- Streams that are currently diverted through culverts should be considered for “daylighting” as part of redevelopment of the site, where economically feasible. “Daylighting” refers to the removal of culverts and restoration of a stream to a more natural state.
- Existing tree cover should be preserved as much as possible within any new development or redevelopment locations.
- The riparian corridor along Alum Creek should be enhanced to promote wildlife habitat. The riparian edge refers to the area where the stream interfaces with the land, that is, the stream bank.



Bioswale used to capture rainwater from a parking lot.

### Columbus Stormwater Drainage Manual

The purpose of the manual is to protect existing natural stormwater resources, convey and control stormwater in a safe and responsible manner, and meet water quality goals. The manual establishes Stream Corridor Protection Zones along streams to prevent stream bank erosion, prevent flood related damage, remove pollutants and sediments from the stormwater entering the stream, and provide greenway corridors for wildlife and to provide other environmental and aesthetic values.

*“It’s important that we preserve  
green space to the east along the  
Alum Creek Trail”*

Survey Response from Public Workshop #1



- The Future Land Use Plan map illustrates a 150-foot stream buffer on each side of Alum Creek, indicating a no-disturb zone meant to preserve the greenway. Provide a no-disturb zone along all creeks, waterways, and ravines. No-disturb zone width will vary depending on the creek, waterway, and/or ravine. For Alum Creek, the no-disturb zone should be the width of the floodway or 150 feet on each side of the high water mark of the Creek, whichever is greater. Efforts should be made to extend this buffer beyond the floodway/150 foot buffer whenever possible.
- Structures adjacent to Alum Creek should be set back an appropriate distance to achieve the following:
  - Create a riparian corridor along Alum Creek between any structure, surface parking lot, or shared-use path and the bank of the stream. Replant native plant species and remove invasive plant species along the stream, with an emphasis on a reforested buffer to help protect the water quality: lowers water temperatures, filters pollutants from run-off, and creates better soils for carbon sequestration.
  - Development should not occur in the floodplain.
  - Create usable space along Alum Creek for a multi-use trail and passive recreational use.
- As development/redevelopment occurs in the planning area, opportunities to develop parks and include green space should be explored.
- Establish or enhance connections to adjacent recreation areas with future developments when feasible.
- Coordinate natural and cultural heritage signage on Alum Creek Multi-use Trail (*Alum Creek Action Plan*).
- Name unnamed tributaries of Alum Creek (*Alum Creek Action Plan*).
- Celebrate the Underground Railroad along Alum Creek (*Alum Creek Action Plan*).
- Enhanced connections to adjacent recreation areas should be incorporated in future developments when feasible.
- Former Conrail right-of-way corridor should be preserved for potential use as a multi-use trail or transit corridor.

**Franklin County: The Alum Creek Watershed  
Riparian Setback Overlay (SECTION 655)**

For properties within Blendon, Clinton and Mifflin Townships, the Alum Creek Watershed Riparian Setback Overlay was established to protect and enhance the functions of riparian areas by providing reasonable controls governing structures and uses within a riparian setback along watercourses in the Alum Creek watershed.

**Conservation Easement**

A conservation easement is a deed restriction placed on a piece of land to hold that section in conservation in perpetuity. The landowner still owns the land.

The goal is to: Maintain and improve water quality; Perpetuate and foster the growth of healthy riparian corridors; and migration corridors; Protect scenic vistas visible from roads and other public areas; ensure that lands are managed so that they are always available for sustainable wildlife preservations and forestry.

**Floodplain**

The land adjacent to a stream, river, or lake (constituting both the floodway and the floodway fringe) subject to flooding by storms whose average frequency, severity, and flooding effects can be measured. For example, a 100-year storm will occur, on average, once every 100 years and will be associated with a certain amount of rainfall and flooding demarking the extent of the 100-year floodplain.

A particular floodplain may change over time as development and the related movement of soils occurs, or as precipitation patterns change.

# PRINCIPLE 3: URBAN DESIGN

New development will respect community character and historic features.

Continued redevelopment and infill is certain for the Northland I planning area. Design guidelines for future development will help ensure these changes to the built environment make a positive contribution and help ensure the long-term viability of the planning area.



Buildings with ample windows and pedestrian amenities

## Policy:

New commercial and mixed use development should contribute to the quality of the built environment.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- A consistent level of detailing and finish should be provided for all sides of a building.
- New buildings should be compatible with development in the surrounding area, but should seek opportunities to create a “sense of place” through design and placement.
- Larger buildings should be divided into smaller modules or bays.
- Larger format retail buildings (50,000 square feet or larger in size) should be designed to include elements such as varying roof lines, mix of building materials, and use of individual store bays to provide visual interest when retail is a ground floor component.
- Buildings should be designed to address the street and enhance the pedestrian experience. Examples include the use of outdoor dining areas, transparent windows, or other means that emphasize human-scale design features at the ground floor level.
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)—green building technologies, are encouraged for new buildings.
- Larger surface parking lots should be divided into smaller bays when possible.
- Signs are recommended to be placed and sized such that they are in keeping with the scale and size of the building facades and general streetscape, and do not obscure or interfere with architectural lines and details. Ground/monument style signs are recommended in areas where the city’s Regional Commercial Overlay is under consideration or may be developed.
- Freeway, pole signs, co-op signs, rotating signs, and flashing signs, billboards, “sign benches,” roof signs, larger overhanging signs, LED and other such electronic or digital signs, or excessively large signs that interfere with visual character are discouraged.

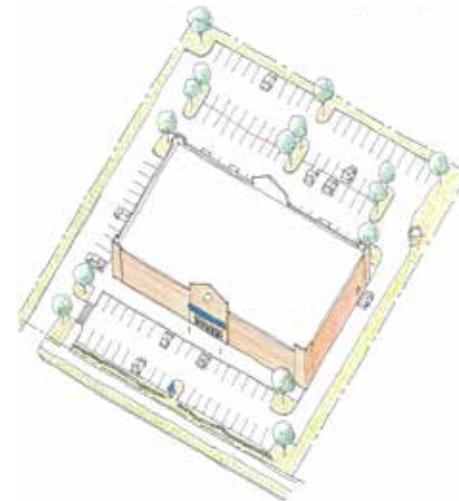
- Large commercial developments should utilize integrated signage, with an emphasis on wall signs and central identification signage rather than multiple freestanding signs. Commercial centers should generally be limited to one primary identification ground sign per arterial street.
- Signs should be coordinated with building architecture in terms of material and color.

**Note: Graphics guidelines are applicable to non-residential uses generally.**

- New development and redevelopment should provide features that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, encourage social interaction and sustain property values such as sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths, and open spaces.
- Consider the development of additional commercial overlay designations for the Northland I planning area. Considerations include: the Regional Commercial Overlay (RCO) on SR 161 and the Community Commercial Overlay (CCO) on portions of Cleveland Avenue. The RCO: seeks to enhance the built environment, screen parking and establish unified landscaping and graphic standards. The CCO: Code requirements that create development that features landscaping, façade transparency, rear/side parking lots, user-friendly access, consistent setbacks, and appropriately scaled lighting and signage along quasi-urban corridors.
- Buildings along Alum Creek should address the stream in a positive way reflecting the aesthetic role of the stream-front as an open space corridor. Building faces adjacent to public open space and to streets should be treated as fronts and should activate the public environment. Buildings should be sited to create usable, open spaces.



Ground/monument (left) and wall (right) signage treatments within the Northland I planning area.



**Figure 11 (left):** Illustration of Community Commercial Overlay (CCO) development standards.  
**Figure 12 (right):** Illustration of Regional Commercial Overlay (RCO) development standards.

## Policy:

Landscaping/screening should be utilized to minimize impact of commercial development on adjacent residential uses and provide appropriate corridor landscaping.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- All areas of a development should be landscaped in context to its surroundings with a mix of deciduous, ornamental and evergreen plant material. Particular attention should be paid to screening and buffering between commercial and residential development.
- Multifamily developments in suburban settings should utilize perimeter landscaping adjacent to non-residential or single-family development.
- Landscaped buffered uses should be established between residential and non-residential uses. Buffer strips can include a combination of plant material, masonry walls, fence and/or mounding. While site situations vary widely, a minimum buffer width of 25 feet is generally recommended. Plant material should be adapted to urban conditions. Native species are encouraged and invasive species should be avoided. Buffers should be designed and maintained to ensure a high level of opacity year round.
- Streetscape improvements should be considered on the major arterials—Cleveland Avenue, SR 161, and Westerville Road. Improvements could include: sidewalks or shared-use paths, landscaping, or street trees (where engineering design standards allow).
- Landscaping should be used to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation and erosion control, including rain gardens (rain garden: planted area that allows rainwater runoff from roofs, driveways, walkways, parking lots, and compacted lawn areas the opportunity to be absorbed).
- Public-private partnerships with local civic groups and schools should be encouraged to assist in maintenance of plantings, trees, and shrubs in the public right-of-way (2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I*).
- Street trees should be considered as infrastructure and be planted where space allows. A priority tree planting program should be developed to fill vacant tree sites (2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I*).



Landscaping treatment near Columbus Square in the planning area.



## Policy:

Residential design guidelines should be used to protect the long-term quality and value of the community.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- New infill housing design, housing additions and garages should be compatible with adjacent nearby housing design, and measured in terms of similar height, width, and setbacks.
- Any new garage should be designed so the garage door openings facing the street frontage should not exceed 40% of the width of the house's façade (including the garage). Efforts to set back garage from the primary façade or other design techniques to mitigate the garage's impact on the streetscape are recommended.
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)—green building technologies, are encouraged for residential buildings.
- Multifamily developments with 16 units or more should have more than one building type and/or façade option, providing a variety of façade treatments.
- Multifamily developments should utilize design treatments to ensure they relate to the public right of way. Potential treatments include the use of entrances, porches, stoops, balconies, other, that face the street.
- Multifamily development should be designed in consideration of the surrounding area relative to height, setback, design, materials, and landscaping. Site design should minimize impacts of noise and light from commercial activity on adjacent residential uses.





## Policy:

Parking needs should be balanced with the goal of reducing development’s impact on the natural environment, as well as the goal of creating walkable and bikeable neighborhoods and encouraging the use of transit.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- To the extent possible parking should be located to the rear or side of a building.
- Shared parking arrangements should be encouraged, particularly between users with differing peak hours to reduce the amount of pervious surface present. Shared parking may only be implemented if a mechanism can be developed that is recognized and enforced by both the property owners and city of Columbus.
- Parking lots are recommended to incorporate Low Impact Design (design that mitigates potential environmental impacts) features to minimize their impact on nearby waterways. For example, features could include use of alternative parking lot surfaces (e.g. permeable concrete, pavers) and stormwater detention swales. The use of pervious surfaces is ideal for areas with low vehicle traffic volumes.
- Surface parking lots and streets adjacent to Alum Creek should be set back an appropriate distance to achieve the following:
  - Create a riparian corridor between any structure or surface parking lot and the bank of the stream.
  - Development should not occur in the floodplain.
  - Create usable space along the stream for passive recreational use.
- Adjacent parking lots should provide pedestrian connections to better utilize parking spaces.

## Policy:

Industrial development should be well designed and limit its impact on adjacent land uses.



## Guidelines/Strategies:

- Buildings should be well designed and consider the use of natural materials on front facades. Remaining elevation treatments should be complimentary in terms of color.
- Buildings should be oriented so that loading, storage, and other external activities and building features that generate noise and other impacts are not facing public rights-of-way or residential or institutional uses. Screening of loading and outdoor storage and activities should comply with applicable city code.
- Parking for customers and/or automobiles should be screened along the public right-of-way.
- Landscaping should be used to soften industrial buildings along front elevations or elevations that face public streets.
- Bike and pedestrian access should be provided on site.

*“Need many more local  
interconnections to/from Alum  
Creek Trail and neighborhoods  
and streets...”*

Survey Response from Public Workshop #2



# PRINCIPLE 4: TRANSPORTATION

People will be able to get around by walking, car, transit, and bicycle

An integrated transportation system eases congestion by distributing vehicular traffic, offering alternative modes of travel for area residents, visitors, and businesses. Benefits include reduced congestion, increased public safety, health and improved air quality.

## Policy:

Arterials and collectors should make accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- Implementation of the *Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Master Plan* is supported to improve bicycle access to the Alum Creek Trail and throughout the Northland I planning area. It is understood that additional study is required previous to the implementation of any specific bikeways project.

## Policy:

Neighborhoods should have an interconnected street and sidewalk system with connections to existing and future residential, commercial, civic, cultural, and recreation areas and to existing and planned paths and trail systems—connecting neighborhoods within the Northland I planning area and to the region as a whole.

## Guidelines/Strategies:

- Parks, schools, and open space should be connected to neighborhoods with pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- Pedestrian/bicycle connections should be built between residential areas (including hotels) and nearby commercial and civic activity centers.
- Steps should be taken to provide as many direct connections as possible between the Alum Creek trail system and adjacent neighborhoods (2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I*).
- Development should provide pedestrian access to transit stops.
- COTA's efforts to improve service provision in the Northland area is supported with an emphasis on providing transportation connections between area residents and job opportunities (2001 *Northland Plan-Volume I*).
- Developments should include a pedestrian connection to the frontage street and associated sidewalk network.



# IMPLEMENTATION



# INTRODUCTION

The most effective way to implement the provisions of an area plan is through the consistent and unified advocacy of the Northland Community Council, 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 proactively 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
- Action Oriented Related Recommendations

## **ORGANIZATION, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

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

- Utilize a website and email to supplement existing forms of communication.
- Ensure copies of the plan and 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 updates may be considered on an as-needed basis. A more complete review and revision of an area plan should be considered within 10 years of adoption.

**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST**

A development review checklist is a summary of the development guidelines and recommendations. 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. However, 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 should 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 are encouraged to use a checklist to evaluate development proposals in their respective areas.

General guidelines and recommendations					<i>Northland I Area Plan</i>
Guideline	Yes	No	N/A	Notes	
Developer has reviewed the recommendations of the Northland I Area Plan?					
Has a site plan of the project been submitted?					
Is the proposal consistent with the Land Use Plan? (p 36)					
Does the proposal plan to preserve existing tree cover as much as possible? (p 47)					
Does the proposal consider opportunities to enhance connections to adjacent recreation areas and green space? (p 49)					
Does the proposal, if in the vicinity of Alum Creek, maintain an adequate buffer from the stream? (p 49)					
Does the proposal consider developing parks or include green space? (p 49)					
Does the development provide features that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, encourage social interaction and sustain property values? (p 51)					
For buildings along Alum Creek, do they address the river in a positive way reflecting the aesthetic role of the riverfront as an open space corridor? (p 51)					
Is the proposed landscaping appropriate according to the guidelines listed on page 52?					
Does the parking lot incorporate Low Impact Design (design that mitigates potential environmental impacts) features to minimize their impact on nearby waterways? (p 54)					
Does the development connect to surrounding parks, schools, and open space with pedestrian and bicycle paths? (p 57)					
Does the development include pedestrian/bicycle connections between residential areas (including hotels) and nearby commercial and civic activity centers? (p 57)					
Does the development provide pedestrian connections to the frontage street and associated sidewalk network along with transit stops? (p 57)					

<b>Commercial-related guidelines and recommendations</b>					<i>Northland I Area Plan</i>
<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
Does the building provide a consistent level of detailing and finish for all sides of a building? (p 50)					
Is the new building compatible with development in the surrounding area and seek opportunities to create a “sense of place” through design and placement? (p 50)					
Are larger buildings divided into smaller modules or bays? (p 50)					
For larger format retail buildings (50,000 square feet or larger in size), is it designed to include elements such as varying roof lines, mix of building materials, and use of individual store bays to provide visual interest when retail is a ground floor component? (p 50)					
Is the building designed to address the street and enhance the pedestrian experience? (p 50)					
Have “LEED” technologies been considered for the proposed building(s)? (p 50)					
Is the proposed signage appropriate according to the guidelines listed on pages 50 and 51?					
Is parking located to the rear or side of the building? (p 54)					
Is a shared parking arrangement being considered? (p 54)					

<b>Industrial-related guidelines and recommendations</b>					<i>Northland I Area Plan</i>
<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
Is the building well designed and consider the use of natural materials on front facades? (p 55)					
Is the building oriented so that loading, storage, and other external activities and building features that generate noise and other impacts are not facing public rights-of-way or residential or institutional uses? (p 55)					
Is the parking for customers and/or automobiles screened along the public right-of-way? (p 55)					
Is landscaping used to soften industrial buildings along front elevations or elevations that face public streets? (p 55)					
Is bike and pedestrian access provided on site? (p 55)					

<b>Residential-related guidelines and recommendations</b>					<i>Northland I Area Plan</i>
<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
Is the proposed density consistent with the density related recommendations from the Land Use Plan? (p 36)					
Is the design of any new housing, housing additions and garages compatible with other housing from the neighborhood with respect to height, width, windows, doors, and setbacks? (p 53)					
Have “LEED” technologies been considered for the proposed building(s)? (p 53)					
If the proposal is for multifamily or mixed use/multifamily development on a primary corridor, does it include design treatments such as the use of front stoops and/or porches, having primary building entrances fronting the street, the use of balconies that face the street, small plazas? (p 53)					
If the proposal is for multifamily or mixed use/multifamily development, does the design take into consider the surrounding area relative to height, setback, design, materials, and landscaping? Does the site design minimize impacts of noise and light from commercial activity on adjacent residential uses? (p 53)					

**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 proactive in nature and require action on the part of the Northland Community Council in cooperation with the city of Columbus and other stakeholders. The chart below lists these action oriented recommendations.

<b>Action oriented recommendations chart</b>		<i>Northland I Area Plan</i>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
The riparian corridor along Alum Creek should be enhanced to promote wildlife habitat. The riparian edge refers to the area where the stream interfaces with the land, that is, the stream bank. (p 47)		
Coordinate natural and cultural heritage signage on Alum Creek Multi-use Trail ( <i>Alum Creek Action Plan</i> ). (p 49)		
Name un-named tributaries of Alum Creek ( <i>Alum Creek Action Plan</i> ). (p 49)		
Celebrate the Underground Railroad along Alum Creek ( <i>Alum Creek Action Plan</i> ). (p 49)		
Develop the former Conrail right-of-way corridor into a multi-use trail or transit corridor. (p 49)		
Consider the development of additional commercial overlay designations for the Northland I Planning Area. Considerations include: the Regional Commercial Overlay (RCO) on SR 161 and the Community Commercial Overlay (CCO) on portions of Cleveland Avenue. (p 51)		
Street trees should be considered as infrastructure and be planted where space allows. A priority tree planting program should be developed to fill vacant tree sites. (p 52)		
Consider streetscape improvements on the major arterials—Cleveland Avenue, SR 161, and Westerville Road. Improvements could include: sidewalks or shared-use paths, landscaping, or street trees (where engineering design standards allow). (p 52)		
Implementation of the <i>Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Master Plan</i> is supported to improve bicycle access to the Alum Creek Trail and throughout the Northland I planning area. (p 57)		
COTA’s efforts to improve service provision in the Northland area is supported with an emphasis on providing transportation connections between area residents and job opportunities. (p 57)		

NOTES



## COLUMBUS PLANNING DIVISION

