



# 2023 Comprehensive Plan Update



Howland Township

"A World Class Community"

September 2023

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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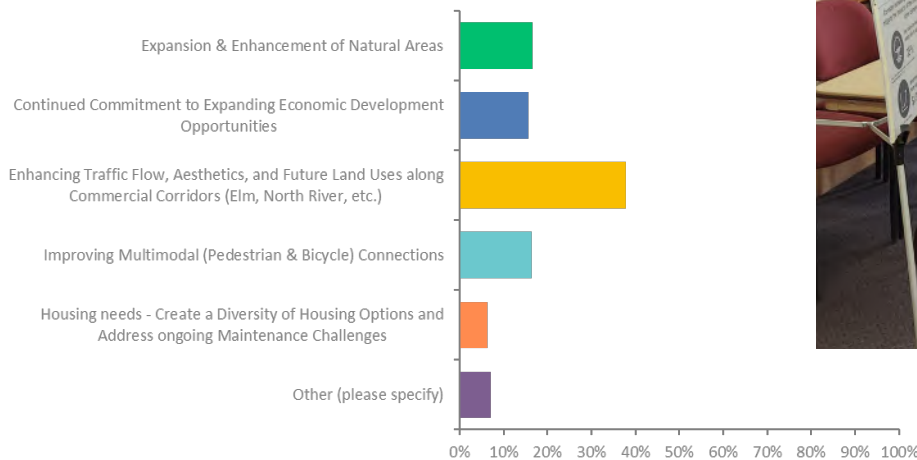
**ENMISION**

## Executive Summary

The Howland Township 2023 Comprehensive Plan is an update of the Township’s 2010 Comprehensive Plan. Select themes and goals within the 2010 plan were brought forward into this plan document, while new and exciting themes and goals were developed during this planning process. To help guide decision making, a Steering Committee was assembled that consisted of representatives from the Township’s Board of Zoning Appeals and Zoning Commission. The group met on a bi-monthly basis, meeting a total of five times, and helped to craft a public engagement strategy, define plan goals and objectives, as well as prioritize plan implementation throughout the planning process.

## Public/Stakeholder Engagement

A robust public engagement strategy was deployed to gather community feedback. A community survey was deployed from December 2022 through January 2023 both online and in print and gathered 782 total responses. Over 4% of Township residents participated. Two public meetings were held to allow the public the opportunity to discuss the plan and plan objectives. The first meeting presented four activity boards asking questions about plan focus areas. The second meeting presented draft



future land use and theme area objectives to the public for comment. Numerous stakeholders and local business owners were contacted and interviewed

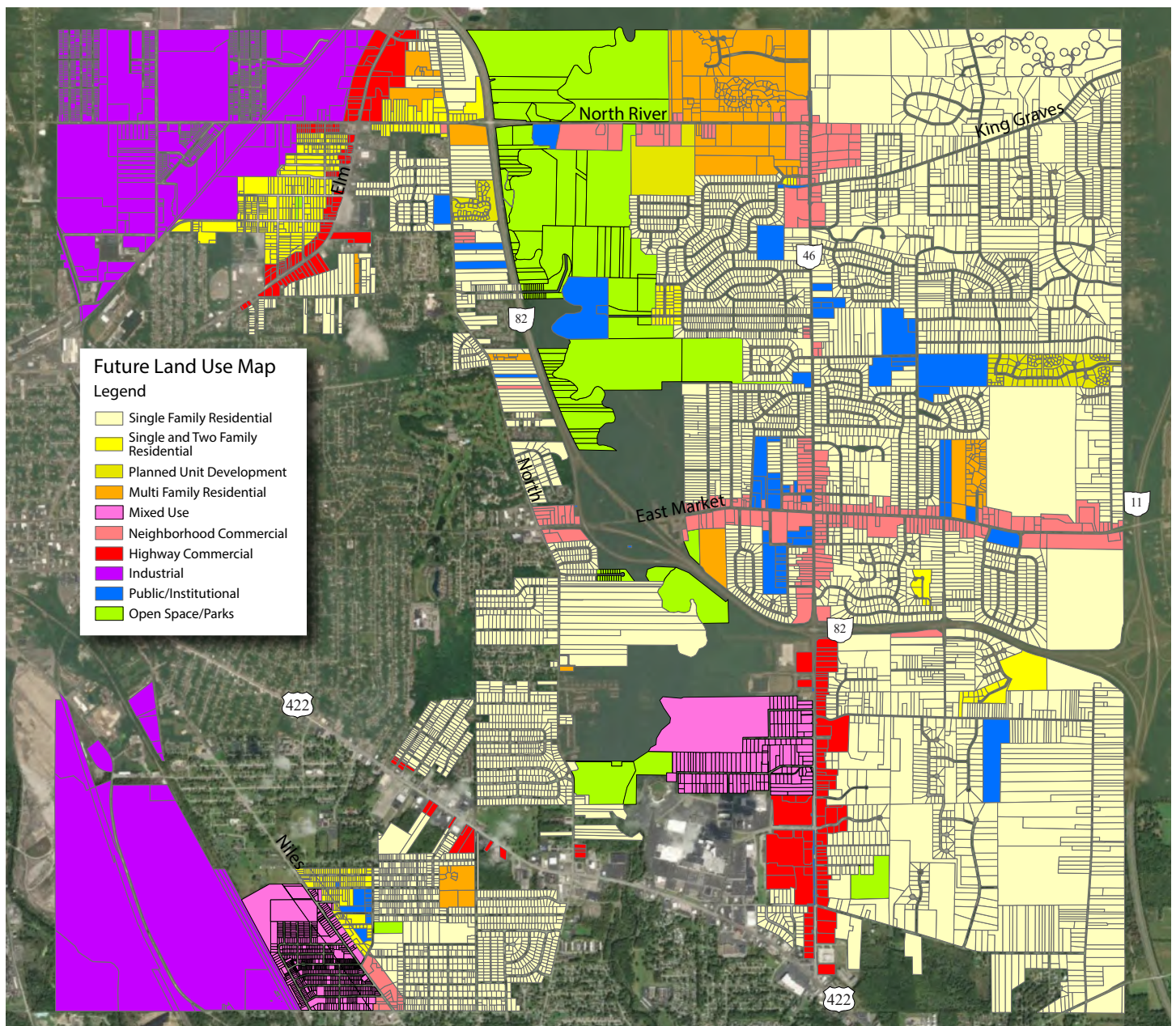
## What would you most like to see addressed in this Comprehensive Plan Update?

throughout the planning process to gain a sense of the local business needs within the community, including the Howland School District, City of Warren, and the Western Reserve Port Authority.



## Future Land Use

Future land use recommendations act as a guide for the Township when considering future zoning changes and future development proposals. A series of future land use recommendations are detailed within this plan update. The Township has a large amount of land area, over 12% or 1,100 acres zoned for various forms of retail and office uses. Future commercial land uses were recommended to be reduced along the North River and Niles Road corridors to Multi-Family and Single Family Residential uses, consistent with neighboring land uses. Additionally, an Open Space/Parks future land use was added to further protect environmentally sensitive areas along the Mosquito Creek and Highway Commercial future land uses were recommended for the area along the southern portion of SR 46, south of SR 82.



## Plan Themes

To better organize plan goals and objectives, five plan themes were created. These themes represent broad priorities identified throughout the planning process based on input gathered from the steering committee, public, and Township staff. These themes include: Neighborhoods & Housing, Economic Development, Sustainability & Resiliency, Public Health & Community Facilities, and Transportation. Priority objectives are defined for each planning theme that detail specific strategies to assist the Township with future implementation.



## Implementation

An implementation matrix was created and is designed to aid the Township in prioritizing objectives from this Comprehensive Plan. The matrix is designed to be a living document that the Trustees and staff use to re-evaluate objectives on a biennial basis. The matrix includes information on preliminary costs, potential funding sources, an estimated timeline to complete, and details the next steps.

## BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS



## Howland Township

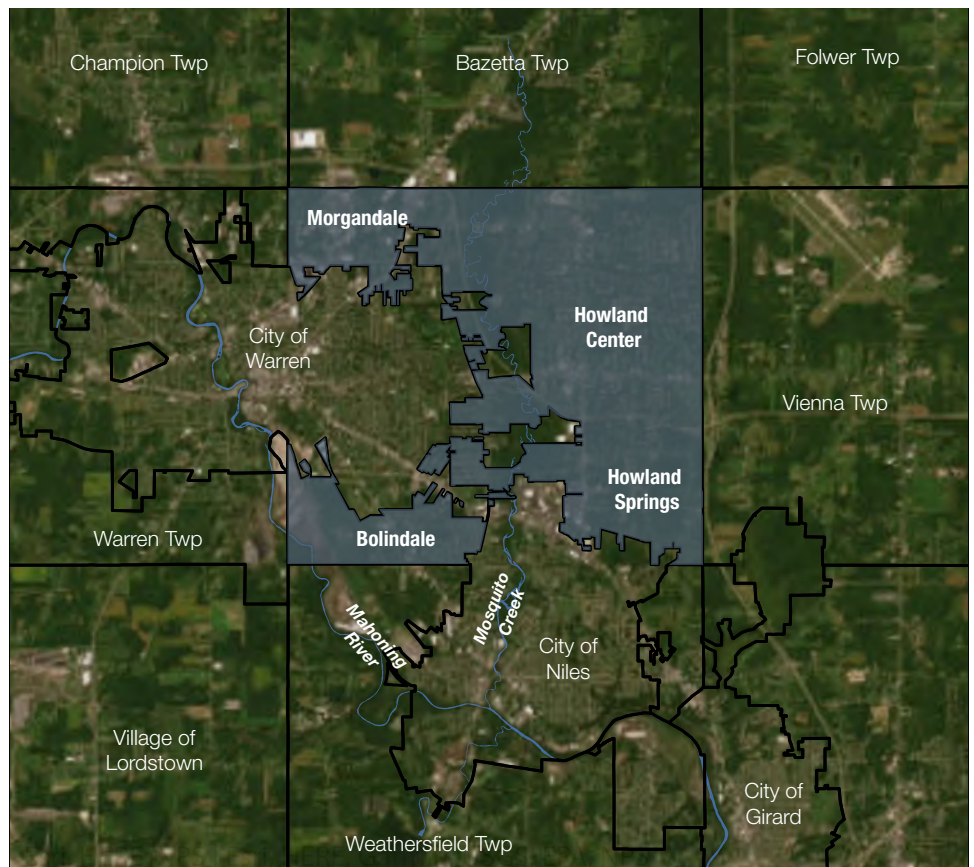
Howland Township is a suburb of the City of Warren, located within Trumbull County and is part of the Youngstown-Warren Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Township is one of two urbanized Townships within the County with a total population of 19,042 as of the 2020 Decennial Census. Howland Township experienced large population growth between 1950 and 1980 and additional growth within the 1990s. The population of the Township has leveled off in recent years and even declined, similar to the region as a whole.

The Township is largely built-out and contains a balanced mix of land uses which includes large industrial areas, commercial shopping centers, and various residential subdivisions. The Township has wonderful access to the region with two highways that bisect the area in SR 82 and SR 11 as well as convenient access to the Youngstown Airport in neighboring Vienna Township.

Due to annexation, the Township is divided into multiple subareas and neighborhoods. Industrial areas occupy the western edges of the Township and supply jobs for area residents. Directly adjacent to those industrial areas are the Bolindale and Morgandale neighborhoods. Both neighborhoods contain older, and smaller homes designed to support middle class, working families. These neighborhoods have experienced moderate to high levels of distress as the region's manufacturing adjusted to global trends causing a decline in manufacturing employment.

The Mosquito Creek floodplain and SR 82 corridor create a barrier within the center of the Township dividing the industrial areas and Bolindale and Morgandale neighborhoods from the rest of the Township. This area is largely untouched by development.

The eastern portion of the Township consists of generally newer housing subdivisions of various middle and upper-middle class income levels. This area contains the Howland Center area which is generally recognized as the "center of the township". There is a plethora of commercial retail and office amenities as well as cultural amenities including Howland



Howland Township - Area Map

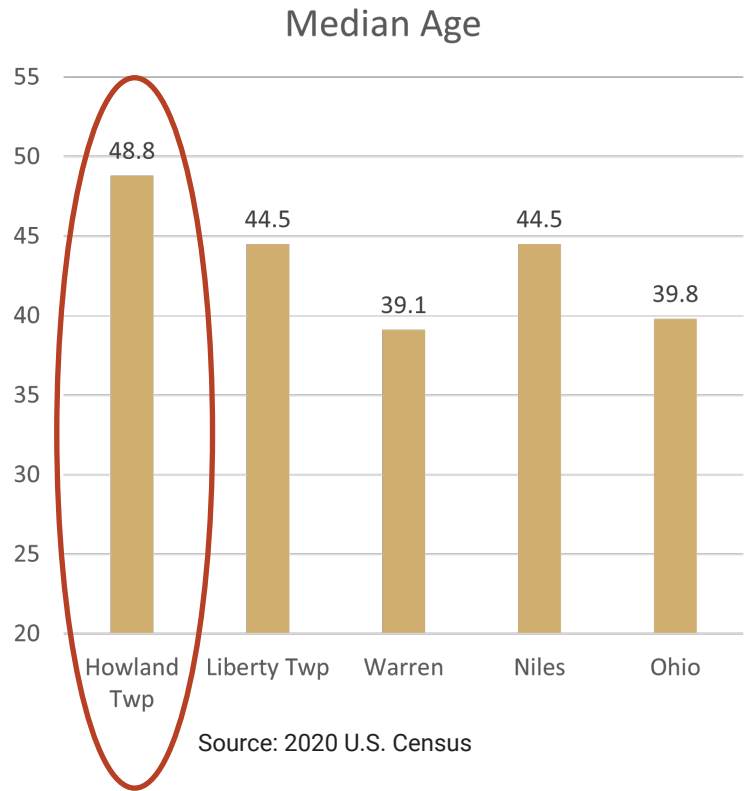
High and Middle Schools, the Howland Public Library, and multiple golf courses. The southeastern portion of the Township is still rural in nature with large lot residential subdivisions and generally isolated from the suburban-style commercial development along the SR 46 corridor and around the Eastwood Mall complex.



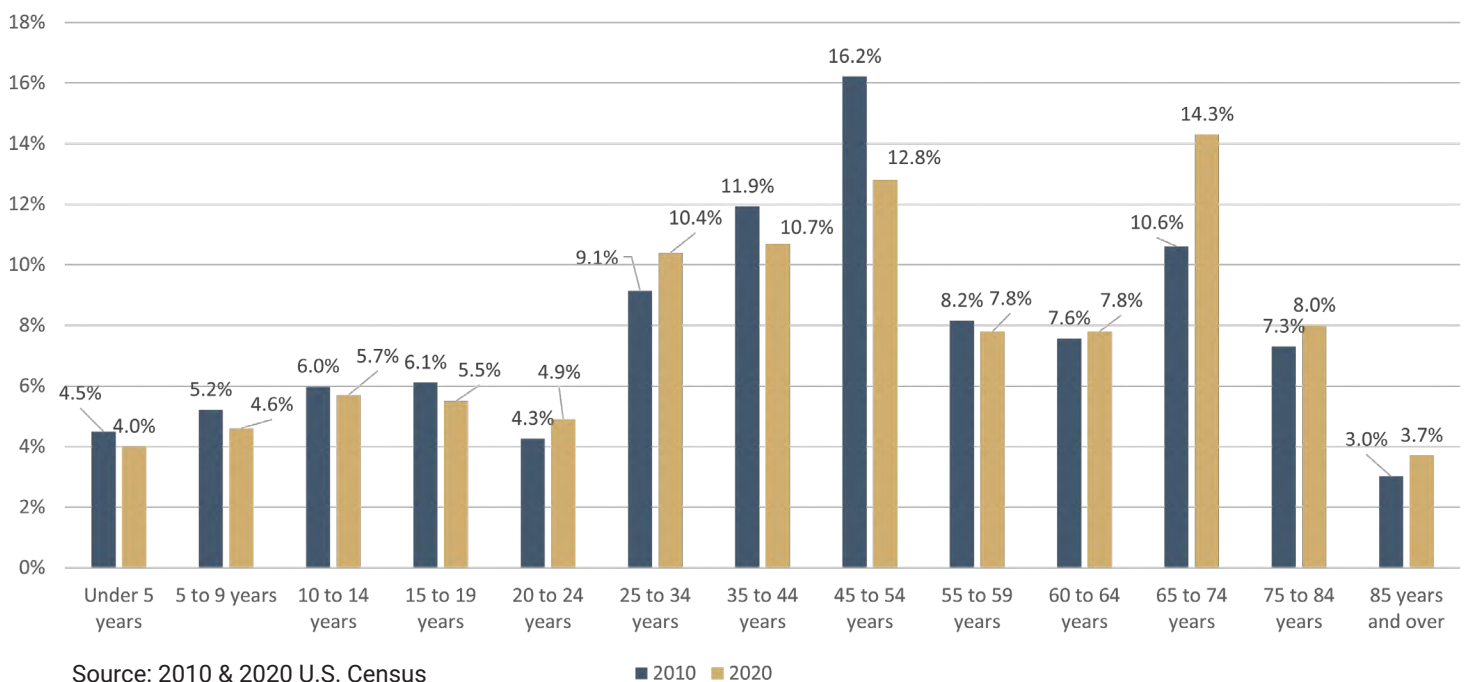
## Demographics

Similar to the County and broader Youngstown-Warren MSA, the Township lost population over the last decade. As of the 2020 Census, the Township's total population is 19,042, down roughly 0.3% from 2010 (19,106).

The Youngstown-Warren MSA lost 6.1% of its population over that same time period, the largest decline for any of the 125 most populace MSAs in the Country. The majority of the Township's population decline has occurred within younger generations as the only age group under 25 that showed a slight increase in population between 2010 and 2020 is the 20 to 24 year old age group as illustrated in the chart below. Every age group over 65 years old showed a rise in population. In general, the Township is older than many of the neighboring communities as well as the State, with a median age of 48.8. The loss of younger populations and the aging of the community point to continued population decline in the future if regional employment opportunities and/or amenities do not improve to attract and retain young talent. Planning for older age cohorts also needs to be considered including "step down" housing options.



Population Comparison 2010 vs. 2020



## Educational Attainment



25 Years or Older with Bachelor's Degree

**16%**

25 Years or Older  
with Bachelors  
Degrees



25 Years or Older with Graduate Degree

**9.6%**

25 Years or Older  
with Graduate  
Degrees

### Leading the Region and In-line with State Averages

As compared to the surrounding area, Howland Township ranks highly in terms of educational attainment with roughly 16% of the population 25 years or older holding a Bachelors Degree. Liberty Township (15%), the City of Niles (14%), and the City of Warren (11%) all have lower educational attainment levels in terms of Bachelor's Degrees. The State of Ohio, however, ranks higher than Howland Township with 17.9% of the population 25 years or older holding a Bachelor's Degree.

### Income

Personal income levels within the Township mimic educational attainment levels when compared to the surrounding region and the State. The Township has a median household income of \$59,573 which is higher than other jurisdictions in the region but in line with the State of Ohio's median household income of \$58,116.

**\$59,573**

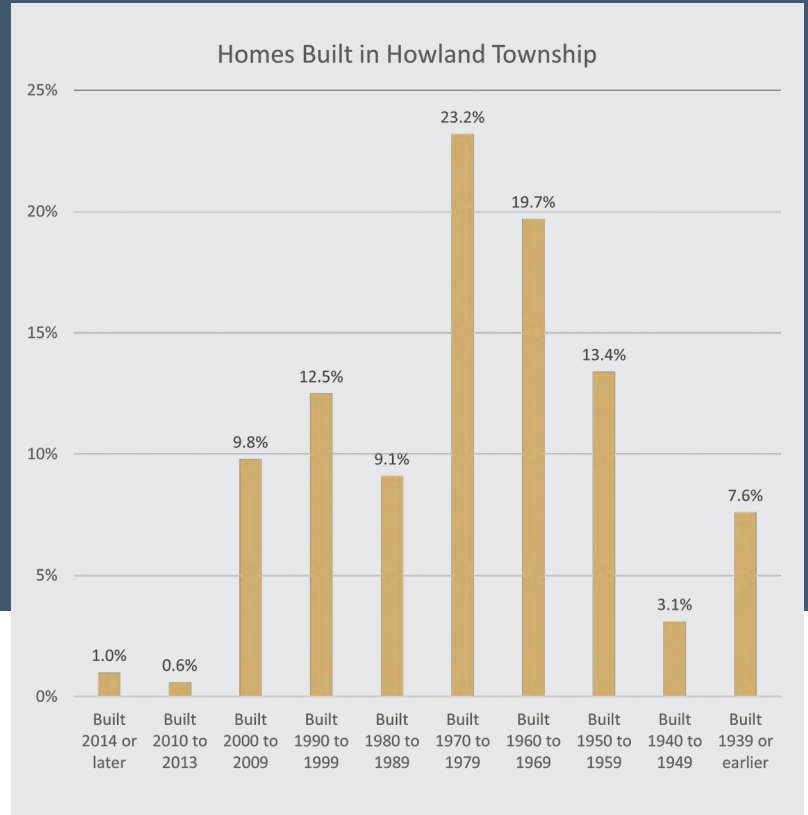
Median Household  
Income in Howland  
Township

## Existing Housing Stock

Maintaining quality housing stock is vital to preserving Howland Township as a community of choice for future residents. The Township is blessed with a fairly diverse housing stock in terms of size of homes, lot size, age of homes, and housing type. In general, the Township’s housing stock is older and as the housing stock ages, the enforcement of maintenance codes are critical. Roughly three quarters of homes within the Township are over 30 years old.

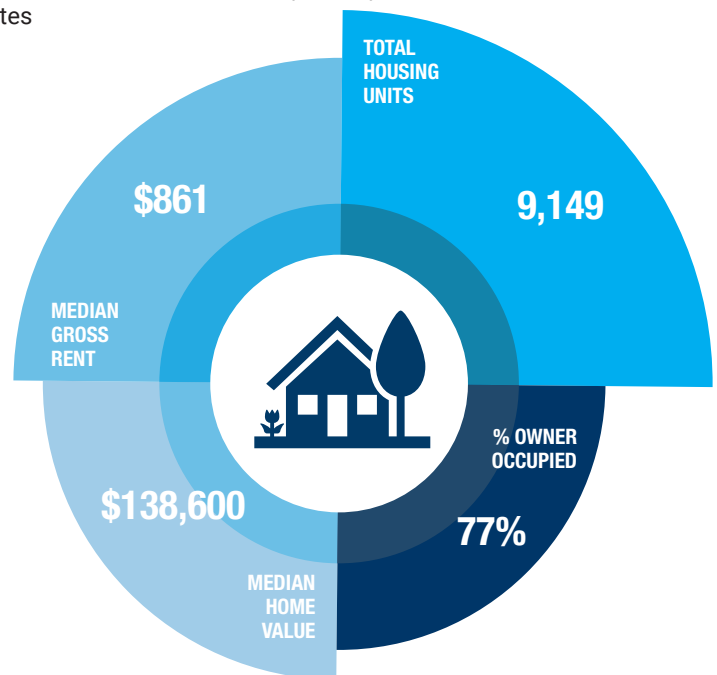
~75 %

Of homes  
are over 30  
years old



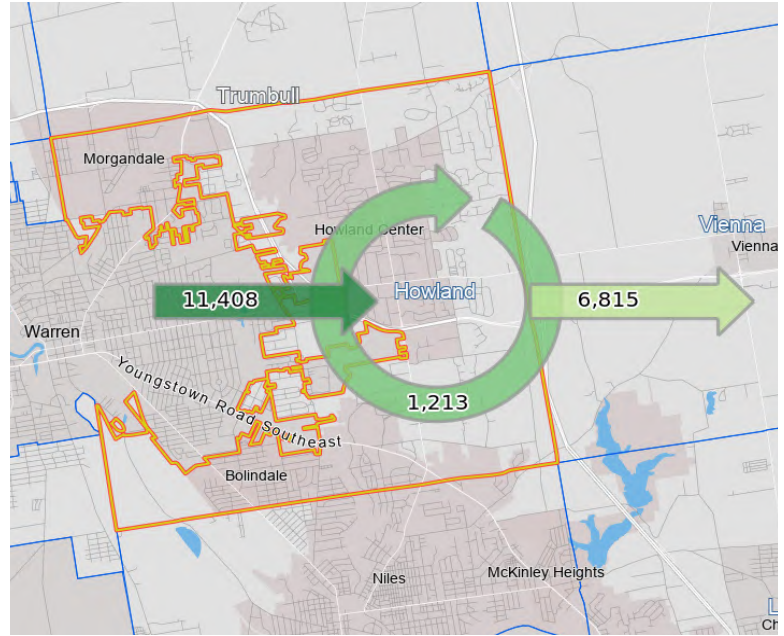
Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

While housing types are fairly diverse, there is still a need for additional “step in” and “step down” housing options within the Township including senior, condo, and multi-generational options. The majority of the homes are owner-occupied (77%). Home values in the Township are strong for the region, but in-line with the State with median home values at \$138,600 in 2022. Gross rent is also strong from the region but in-line with State averages at \$861/month. The Township has seen limited residential growth over the last two decades with annual housing starts averaging between 10 and 20 new homes a year.



## Employment

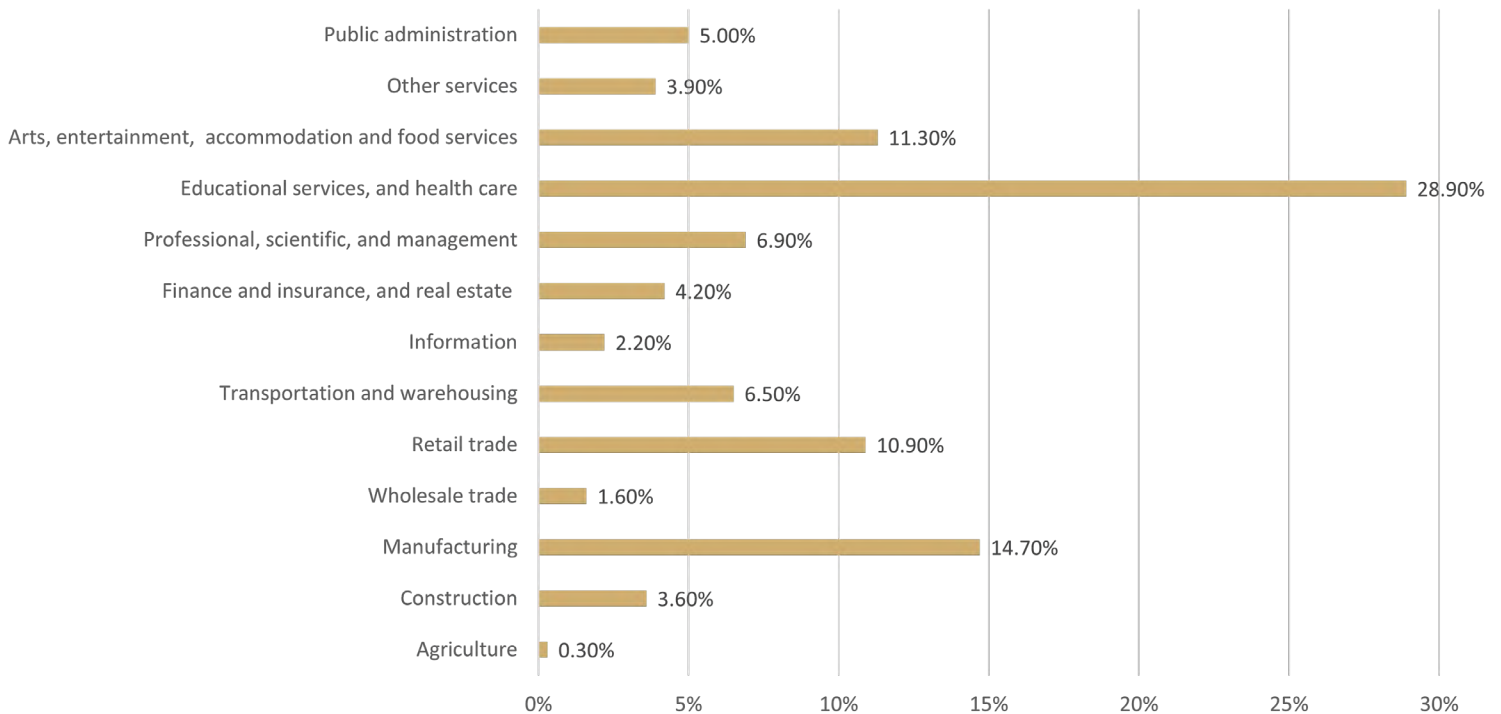
Howland Township has a fairly diverse employment base. The Township is a net importer of jobs with 11,408 people entering the Township daily for work. As shown in the chart below, nearly 30% of workers within the Township are employed in the Educational Services and Healthcare Industry. The Township is home to major educational and health care providers including the Howland School District, Hillside Rehabilitation Hospital, and Mercy Health. The Township still has a robust industrial base with nearly 15% of all jobs in Manufacturing. Improvements within the Golden Triangle and to the former BDM site could continue to expand employment within the manufacturing industry. Over 10% of the Township’s employment is within both the Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations, and Retail Trade industries. This speaks directly to the commercial success of the East Market Street and SR 46 corridors.



Employment Inflow/Outflow - Source: U.S. Census

Roughly 85%, or 6,815 of Township residents work outside of the Township with the majority working in the City of Warren (14%), followed by the Cities of Niles (7%) and Youngstown (7%).

### Employment by Industry in Howland Township



Source: U.S. Census, Center for Economic Studies



## Transportation Network

The Township has a robust vehicular transportation network with easy access to highways in all directions (SR 82 and SR 11). There are two highway interchanges within the Township (SR 82 and SR 46, SR 82 and East Market) and an additional two just outside the Township limits (SR 82 and Elm, SR 11 and King Graves). The Township has three principal arterials (US 422, SR 5, and SR 46) that accommodate large amounts of vehicular traffic throughout the Township.



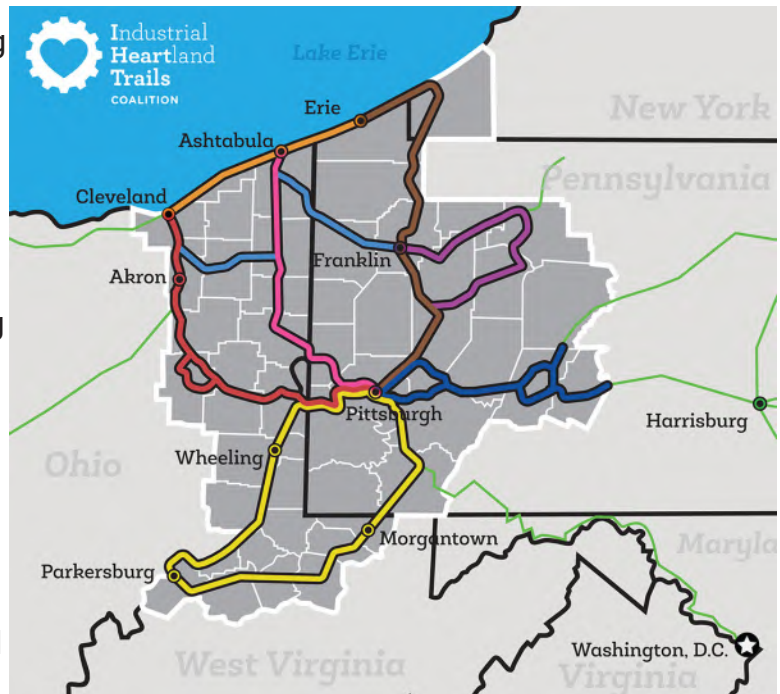
Proposed Diverging Diamond Interchange - Source: ODOT

The SR 82 and SR 46 interchange will be improved by ODOT to a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) to reduce crashes and improve traffic flow. The intersections at SR 46 and SR 82 ramps have experienced continual congestion and safety issues. Initially, traffic signals were added to the intersections, but continued delays and crashes required an additional study and the ultimate determination that a DDI was needed.

The majority of Township roads do not have sidewalks. Pedestrians are forced to walk within the roadway. Existing sidewalks are limited to portions of East Market, North River, Elm, and Clifton Avenues. Sidewalks along East Market Street are narrow and adjacent to the traveled way in some sections further discouraging walkers from using these facilities. Future sidewalk improvements should be buffered from vehicular traffic, particularly on high-volume vehicular corridors.

Bus service is offered through the Western Reserve Transit Authority (WRTA) within the Township but is limited to a few select locations. Bus routes 28 and 74, that run through the Township along US 422 and Elm Road respectively.

The Western Reserve Greenway Trail spans Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties from the City of Ashtabula to City of Warren. The trail caters to bicyclists, runners, pedestrians, and takes its visitors through open fields, sheltering forests, and past suburban neighborhoods. The Western Reserve Greenway is just one of many trails which make up the 100-mile long Great-Ohio-Lake-To-River Greenway (GOLTRG), that is anticipated to stretch from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. A portion of the Greenway is planned to run through Howland Township's Bolindale neighborhood. The trail is highlighted in pink in the map to the right.



Industrial Heartlands Trail Map

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Engagement Summary

A robust public engagement strategy was deployed to gather community feedback. Below is the summary of the public engagement tools that were used throughout the comprehensive planning process.



### Community Survey

A community survey was deployed from December 2022 through January 2023, both online and in print, and gathered 782 total responses. Over 4% of Township residents participated. Respondents tended to skew slightly older than the average age of the Township's population. Over 70% of respondents stated that the quality of life in the Township is "Excellent" or "Very Good".



### Public Meetings

Two public meetings were held (Jan 23, May 23) to allow the public the opportunity to discuss the plan and the plan goals and objectives. Attendance at these meetings totaled 22 and 19 participants respectively. The first meeting presented four activity boards asking questions about plan focus areas. The second meeting presented the public with draft future land use and theme area goals and objectives and allowed for public comments.



### Business/Stakeholder Interviews

Numerous local business owners were contacted and interviewed throughout the strategic planning process to gain a sense of the local business needs within the community. Multiple stakeholders, including the Howland School District, City of Warren, and Western Reserve Port Authority, were interviewed as part of the comprehensive planning process.



### Steering Committee Meetings

The Steering Committee consisted of representatives from the Township's Board of Zoning Appeals and Zoning Commission. The group met on a bi-monthly basis, meeting a total of four times, and helped to guide plan decisions throughout the planning process.

## Community Survey Summary

The community survey asked questions regarding quality of life, existing needs, and future desires within the Township. Respondents ranked “Proximity to Work/Assets” as the Township’s greatest asset, followed by “Public Services” and “Schools”. Major themes from the results of the community survey are highlighted below. The complete survey results are located within Appendix A.



### Limited Desire for Housing Except for Senior/Denser Options

While there isn’t a desire for additional housing, both senior housing and additional condo developments were supported.



### Limit Future Annexations

Respondents are concerned about the rate of annexation along the Township’s southern border. Many expressed the desire to limit annexation as much as possible.

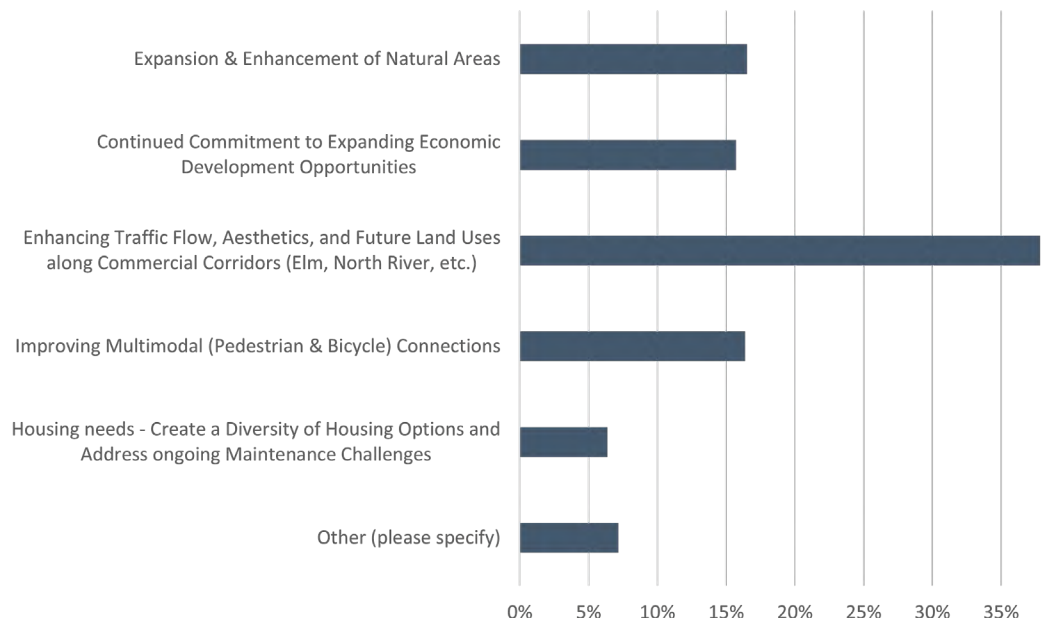


### Improve Bike & Ped. Connections

Many respondents noted the inability to move around the Township and region without a vehicle. A desire for both trail and sidewalk connections to Township assets like Howland Township Park was requested.

The results of the community survey help to guide plan focus areas and objectives within the Township. The results to the right highlight the desire of residents to see physical and land use changes along the commercial corridors within the Township. A moderate proportion of residents also wanted to see natural areas enhanced with improved accessibility, continued economic activity, and improved bike and pedestrian connections. From this feedback, this plan addressed in detail each of these requests.

What would you most like to see addressed in this Comprehensive Plan Update?





## Public Meetings Summary

The Township conducted two public meetings as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The first meeting was conducted in January of 2023 and was attended by 22 residents. The meeting centered around planning themes that were identified by the steering committee at that time. The plan themes included Neighborhoods & Housing, Bicycle & Pedestrian Connections, and Commercial Corridors (2 boards) and activity boards were created to gather feedback from the public.

In general, the public expressed a desire to calm motor-vehicle traffic within residential neighborhoods, increase bicycle and pedestrian connections, and improve access management, signage, and streetscaping along commercial corridors.

The second public meeting was held in May of 2023 and had 19 residents attend. This meeting focused on draft plan objectives. Draft objectives were presented to the public based on plan themes which included Future Land Use, Neighborhoods & Housing, Economic Development, Public Health & Community Facilities, Sustainability and Resiliency, and Transportation. The public was invited to share their thoughts on the draft objectives via activity boards for each theme. Activity boards were also replicated online and gathered 201 responses.

In general, the public was supportive of priority objectives that were presented. An example is shown to the right. The results of each of these public meeting activity boards are detailed within Appendix A.



Commercial Corridors Board Results - Public Meeting 1



Transportation Board Results - Public Meeting 2



Presentation During Public Meeting 2

## Steering Committee

A series of interactive activities were conducted with the Steering Committee to gather feedback from the group, guide objectives, and prioritize implementation. The results of a S.O.A.R. analysis (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Realities) and implementation prioritization are shown below.

# S.O.A.R.



### Strengths

- Strong Local Schools
- Low Cost of Living
- Sense of Community
- Convenient Access to Jobs, Shopping, Transportation
- Natural Areas & Greenspace



### Opportunities

- Enhancing Development in Golden Triangle and BDM Property
- Re-imagining Commercial Retail Corridors
- Expand Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity



### Aspirations

- Develop Strategies to Minimize Annexation
- Leverage Economic Development Tools
- Create a Rental Registry



### Realities

- Traffic Congestion
- Continued Annexation Threat
- Younger Generations Leaving
- Township is Disconnected (Bolindale, Morgandale)

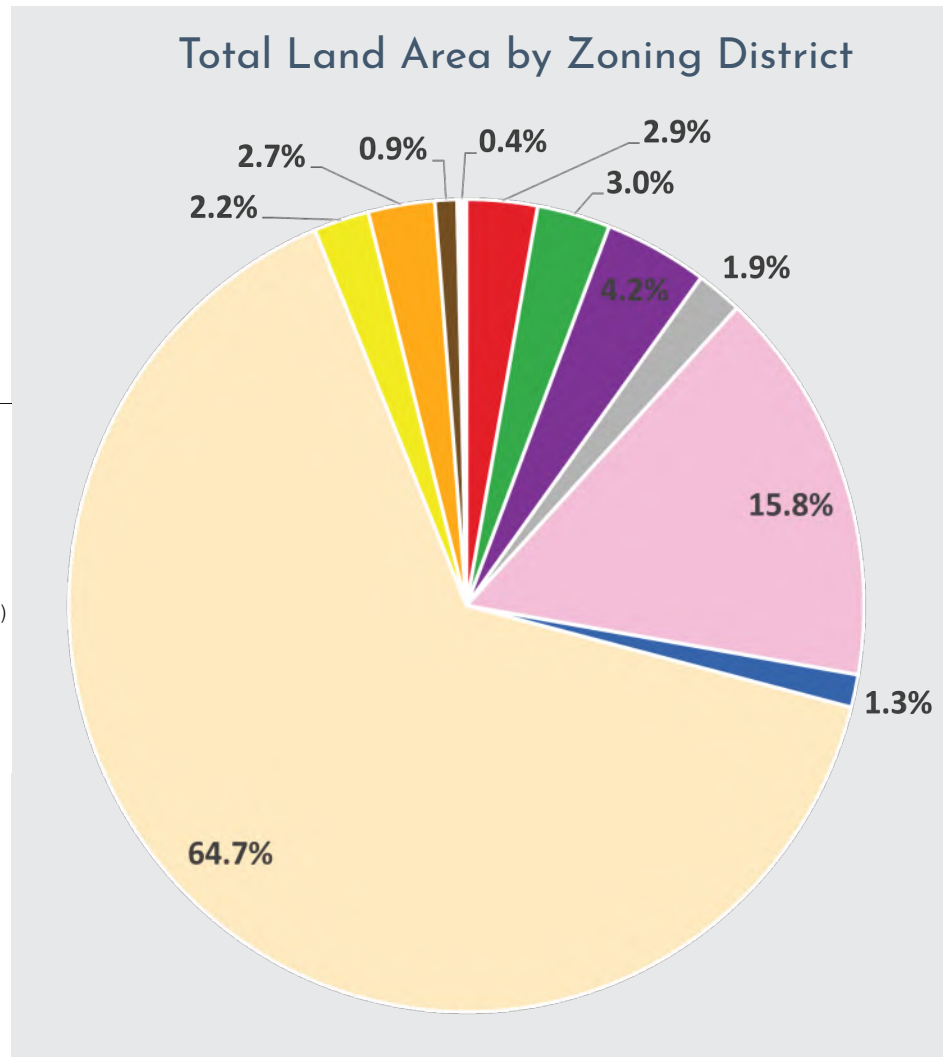
# EXISTING ZONING & FUTURE LAND USE

## Existing Zoning

Roughly three-fourths of the Township is zoned for some type of residential use, with Single Family Residential accounting for the majority of the residential zoning. The Township boasts a large area of Industrial zoning, a large portion of which is currently vacant with the potential for future redevelopment. Maintaining an expansive industrial zoning can provide financial benefits for the Township in the future. Commercial zoning lines the majority of the major corridors within the Township. There are four commercial and office zoning designations within the Township: Commercial, Corridor Review District (CRD) 1, 2, and Office & Institutional. The Commercial zoning designation is the least restrictive designation allowing for a variety of end uses and limited design standards. The CRD's provide higher development standards and limit some higher intensity commercial uses than in the Commercial Zoning District. While requiring a high level of design standards for new developments in the CRD's, navigating district standards can be confusing and therefore a consolidation of these districts should be considered while retaining the appropriate standards.

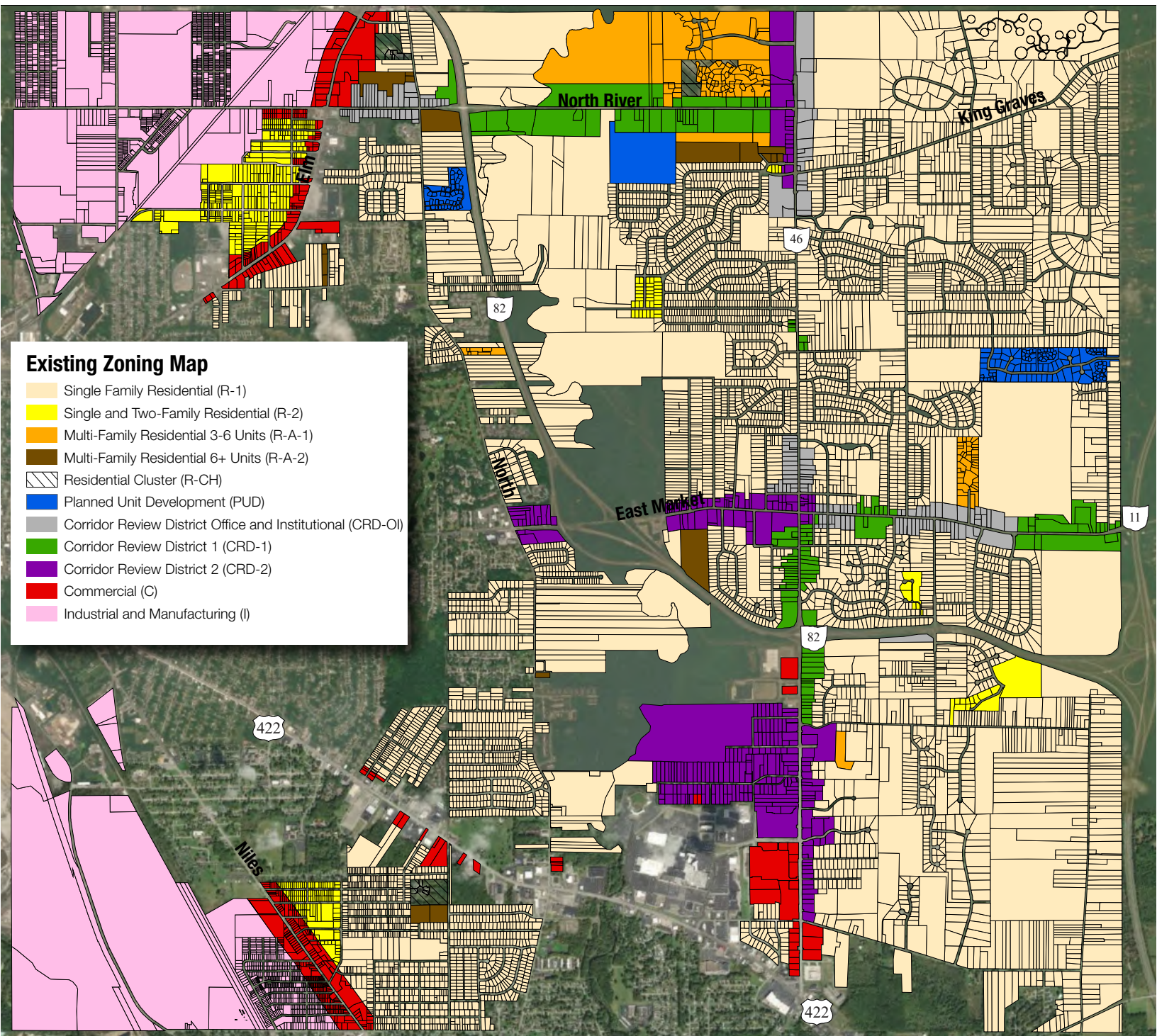
### Legend

- Single Family Residential (R-1)
- Single and Two-Family Residential (R-2)
- Multi-Family Residential 3-6 Units (R-A-1)
- Multi-Family Residential 6+ Units (R-A-2)
- Residential Cluster (R-CH)
- Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- Corridor Review District Office and Institutional (CRD-OI)
- Corridor Review District 1 (CRD-1)
- Corridor Review District 2 (CRD-2)
- Commercial (C)
- Industrial and Manufacturing (I)





# Existing Zoning Map



## Excess Commercial Office and Retail Zoning

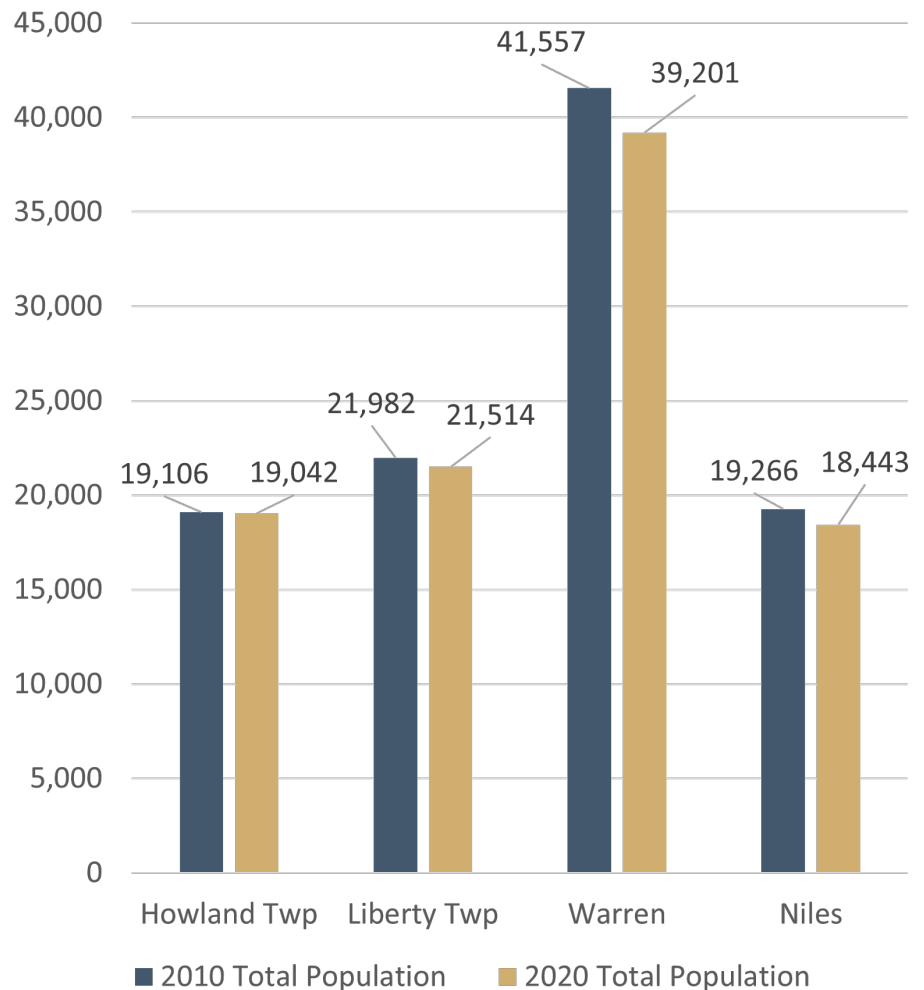
The Township has a large amount of land area, over 12% or 1,100 acres, zoned for various forms of retail and office uses. Commercial retail and office zoning lines many of the Townships major corridors including East Market, Niles-Courtland, Niles, North River, and Elm Roads. With such a large area devoted to commercial development, the Township has many areas with vacant storefronts or vacant commercial land available for redevelopment. The majority of vacancies are centered along Elm, Niles, and North River Roads.



Vacant Land along North River Road

## Population Decline

Since reaching its peak population in 1970, the Youngstown-Warren-OH-PA metro area has lost an average of seven residents every day for over 50 years. Between 2010 and 2020, the metro area lost 6.1% of its population. This represents the largest population loss among the top 125 U.S. Metro Areas over that time period. Similar to the metro area, the Township has also lost 0.3% of its population over the last decade. As shown in the chart to the right, the Township's population decline mimics that of other neighboring communities. Given the general decline of population within the Township, County, and Youngstown-Warren MSA over the past five decades, continued retail and office expansion seems unlikely.



**-6.1%**

Population Loss of MSA from 2010 - 2020

**Largest Loss of all US Metro Areas**

Source: 2010 & 2020 U.S. Census

## Retail and Office Market Trends - COVID-19 and E-Commerce Impacts

Even before the pandemic emerged, businesses throughout the retail industry were already struggling to attract in-person shoppers due to the growing popularity of e-commerce. When pandemic restrictions were implemented across the country, this further exacerbated the rise of e-commerce. In fact, online retail sales continued to surge throughout 2021 by over 14%, accumulating more than \$870 billion in overall sales. This total represents the most considerable annual online sales growth in history.

Brick-and-mortar retailers were hit the hardest even though they are open again after lockdown. Many businesses cannot operate in the same capacity pre-pandemic, while other businesses have permanently closed.

The pandemic forced a substantial number of businesses to transition to fully remote operations, permitting their employees to work from home. 59% of U.S. workers say their jobs can be done from home; currently, six-in-ten of these workers work from home all or most of the time. In fact, 83% of this population said they were working from home even ahead of the spread of the omicron variant. Even as businesses have reopened their workplaces, a considerable number of employees have opted to remain remote, leaving office spaces significantly less occupied.

## Eastwood Mall Complex's Impact

Though national trends show that traditional brick and mortar, indoor malls are struggling in a post-COVID world, Eastwood Mall is bucking national trends and continues to perform well. The Mall sits just outside of the Township's southern border along US 422 and encompasses over 100 acres and logged over 13 million visitors last year. The broader mall complex includes a variety of large commercial shopping centers that expand into Howland Township. Based on Placer.ai cell phone tracking data, Eastwood Mall ranks as the 7th most frequented mall in the United States and 1st within the State of Ohio last year. The Mall boasts five anchor tenants including Boscov's, Dillard's, JCPenny, Macy's, and Target. A new Meijer Grocery Store just opened in 2023 and a Bass Pro Shops is expected to be added to the surrounding mall complex later this year. The mall has a cosmetology and medical education school, a 30,000 square-foot event center, hotel, aquarium, playground, and minor league baseball stadium. The impact of Eastwood Mall and the adjacent mall complex on the surrounding commercial retail and office market cannot be understated.



## Local Supply and Demand - Placer.ai Data

To gain a better understanding of the existing retail market within the Township, retail analysis was conducted utilizing Placer.ai data ([Location Intelligence & Foot Traffic Data Software – Placer.ai](#)). Placer.ai uses cell phone data from over 30 million users throughout the United States to monitor real-time travel and spending patterns of visitors. Placer.ai is used by some of the largest retail companies and real estate brokerages including Target, Amazon, and Cushman & Wakefield to determine retail market viability and to assist with site selection.

As the Township is rather large with multiple neighborhoods of varying demographics, the goal was to find shopping centers that represent these various areas of the Township. The two locations that best represent these varying areas of the Township are Howland Plaza along East Market Street and Elmhurst Plaza along Elm Road. The goal of this analysis was to determine who is shopping in these areas, how far are they traveling, what is their spending power, and are there any gaps within the true trade area in certain business types that would drive future commercial retail development. Quantifying this information will assist with determining future commercial land uses within the Township.



Howland Plaza

Elmhurst Plaza

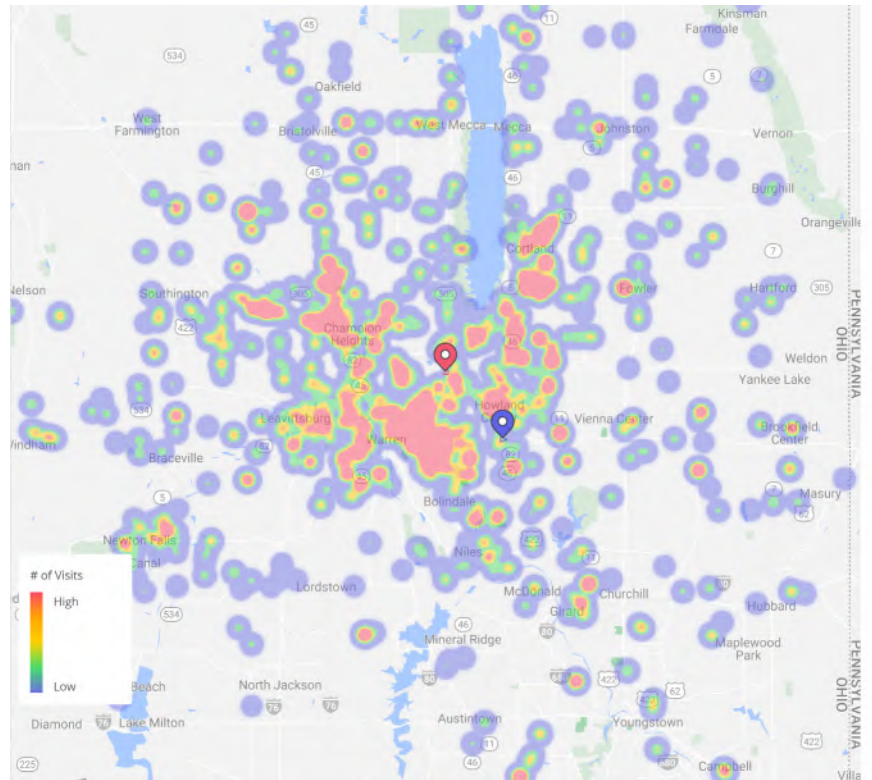
## What is a True Trade Area?

A trade area is the geographic area where most of a property's visitors live. Traditionally, a property's trade area was measured as a ring radius around the property. But since most visitors don't live in neat circles around the properties they visit, the ring radius fails to accurately measure a property's reach.

Location data technology (i.e. cell phone data) is redefining how trade areas are measured and assessed. The true trade area represents the trade area drawn from the actual volume of visitors that visit an area or a property. The true trade area shown below is derived from cell phone data collected October 2021 through October 2022 by Placer.ai as defined by the frequency of visitation volumes to and from Howland Plaza and Elmhurst Plaza. Darker red colors indicate a high density of visitation from that location, while blue colors indicate infrequent visitation.

## Elmhurst Plaza

Over the year-long analysis period (October 31st, 2021 through November 1st, 2022), Elmhurst Plaza had a total of 822,600 visits to the plaza from 150,000 unique visitors. The true trade area developed from these visits is shown to the right. The true trade area illustrates that most of the visitors frequenting the plaza live on the east side of Warren, Champion Heights, Cortland, and the north side of Howland Township.

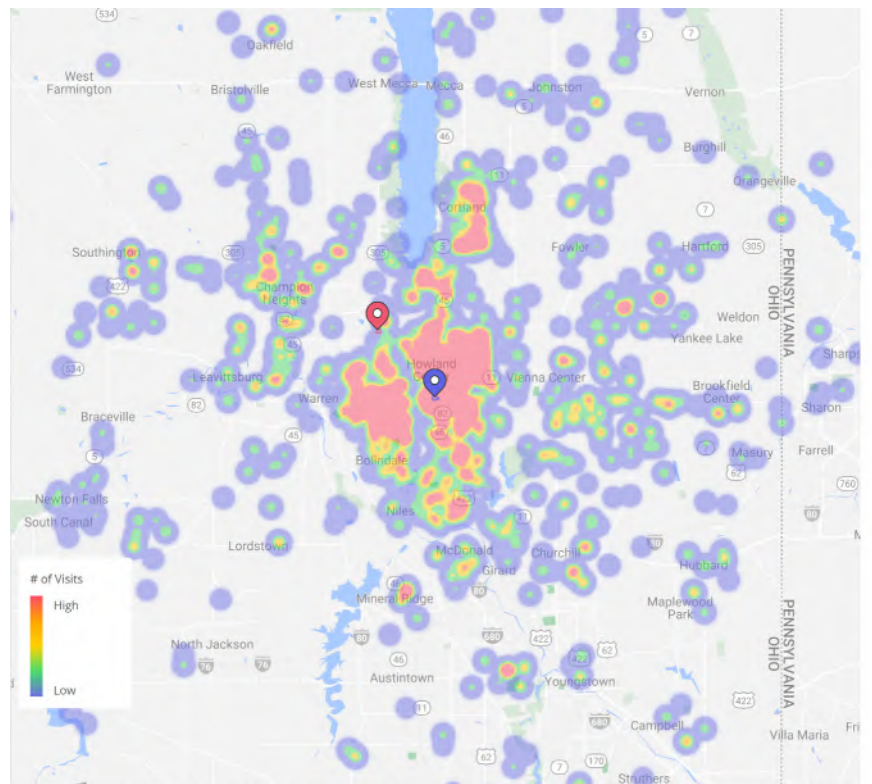


Elmhurst Plaza / 3800 Elm Rd, Warren, OH, United States | Based on visitor Home Location, by Visits | Nov 1st 2021 to Oct 31st 2022 | The locations shown are obfuscated for privacy and randomly placed within a census block. They do not represent actual home addresses. Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))

Source: Placer.ai Data

## Howland Plaza

Over the year-long analysis period (October 31st, 2021 through November 1st, 2022), Howland Plaza had a total of 1.3 million visits to the plaza from 187,700 unique visitors. The true trade area developed from these visits is shown to the right. The true trade area illustrates that most of the visitors frequenting the plaza live within Howland Center, the east side of Warren, Cortland, and the north side of Niles.



Howland Plaza / 8202 East Market Street, Warren, OH, United States | Based on visitor Home Location, by Visits | Oct 1st 2021 to Sep 30th 2022 | The locations shown are obfuscated for privacy and randomly placed within a census block. They do not represent actual home addresses. Data provided by Placer Labs Inc. ([www.placer.ai](http://www.placer.ai))

Source: Placer.ai Data

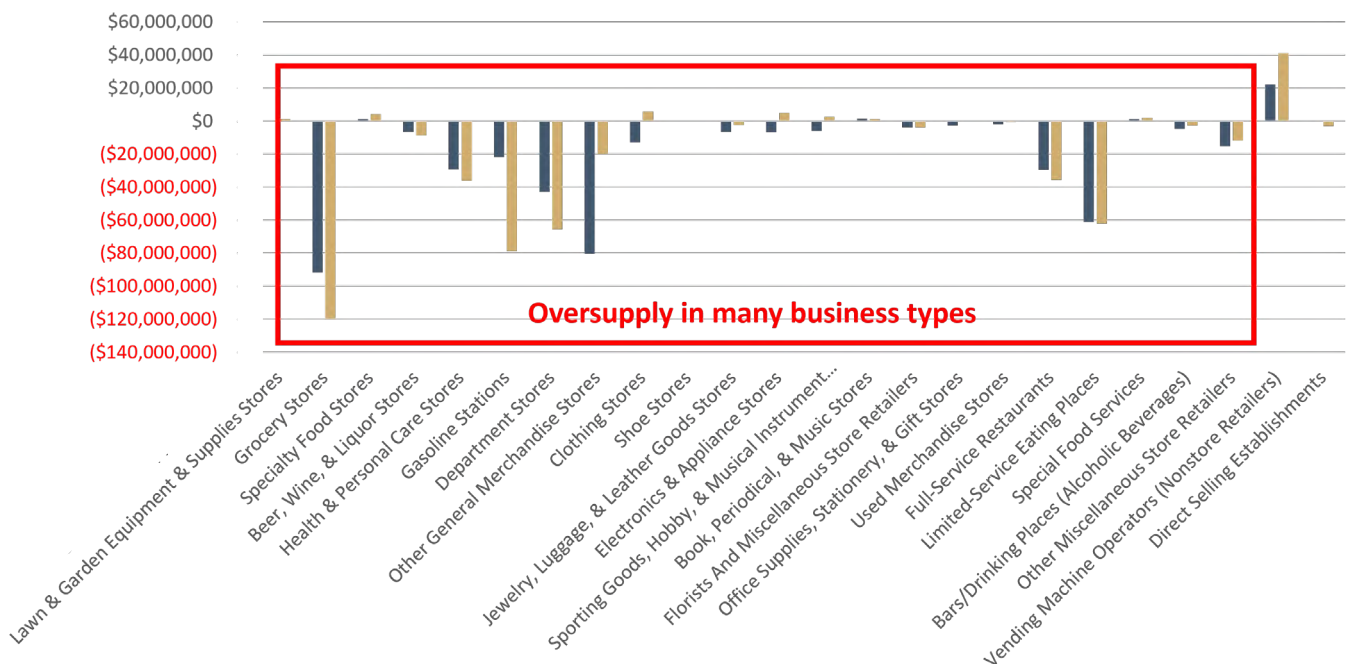


## Comparing Plazas

Both plazas are frequently visited by Howland Township residents. Elmhurst Plaza has a slightly larger true trade area due to its proximity to SR 82 and thus attracts more out of town shoppers (see illustration on the following page). As shown in the bar graph on the following page, visitors to Elmhurst Plaza have a median household income of \$49,000. This is consistent with the demographics of the true trade area. Howland Plaza has a more concentrated true trade area and visitors have a median household income of \$58,000. Both shopping plazas have a high percentage of “loyal” visitors, meaning that the majority of visitors to each plaza visited at least four times over the year-long analysis period.

While each plaza caters to a slightly different demographic from different portions of the region, both plazas’ true trade areas share similarity in the general oversupply of many business retail types. The chart below is developed from Placer.ai data and illustrates excess supply and demand for a variety of retail business types within the true trade areas of both Elmhurst and Howland Plazas over the year-long analysis period. Placer analyzes demographics, spending patterns, and supply within each true trade area to determine supply and demand for each business type. The vast majority of business types show an oversupply relative to anticipated demand. In general, this data reinforces the notion that commercial retail and office expansion in the area is unlikely and thus repurposing future land uses in vacant commercial areas should be considered.

True Trade Area Supply & Demand by Business Type – November 2021 - 2022



Source: Placer.ai Data

■ Howland Plaza ■ Elmhurst Plaza

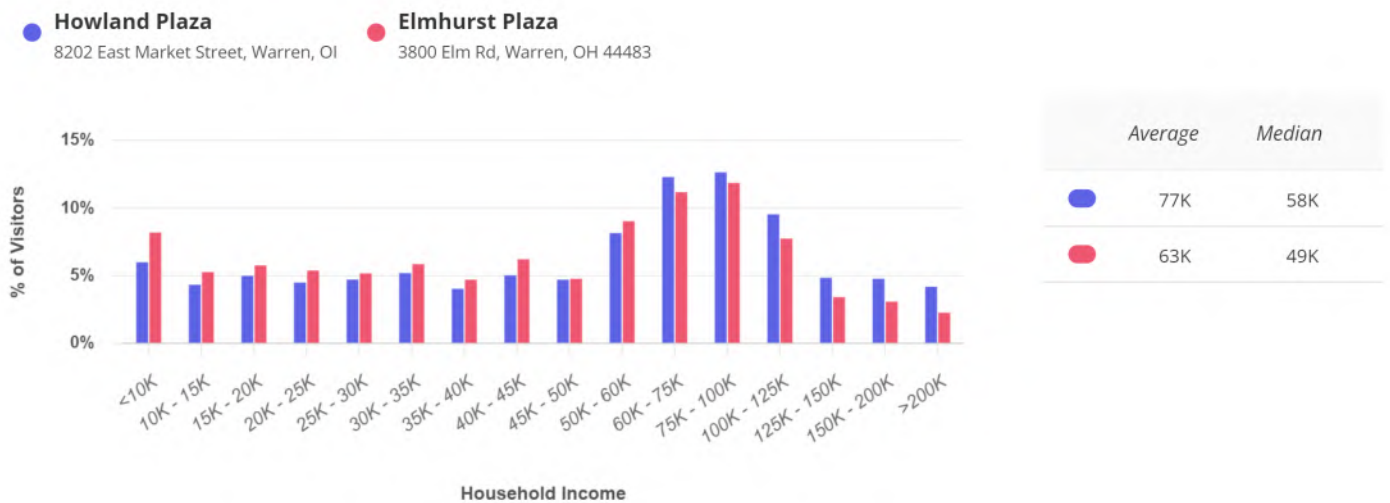
## True Trade Area Size & Overlap



Entities Overlap	Trade Area Size - Traffic Vol 70% (sq mi)	Population
	62.14	114,851
	48.73	86,122
	27.18	63,556

Source: Placer.ai Data

## True Trade Area Household Income



Source: Placer.ai Data

## Future Land Use

Future land use recommendations act as a guide for the Township when considering future zoning changes and future development proposals. These recommendations do not change the Township’s zoning. The Township will have to work with the Zoning Commission to make appropriate updates to the zoning code when desired.

Consistent with the previous analysis, future commercial land uses were reduced from 12% of the Township’s existing zoned land area to 11% of the Township’s future land use. This reduction includes future Mixed-Use areas within the Future Land Use Map. The Mixed-Use area along Niles Road is envisioned to consist mostly of workforce housing with some small scale retail (further detailed within the Neighborhoods & Housing theme). Removing that area from future commercial uses equates to a total commercial land area of roughly 10%. Most commercial land use reductions are centered around the North River Road and Niles Road corridors as detailed on the following pages.

Highway Commercial future land uses were recommended along the southern portion of SR 46, south of SR 82. The area is currently zoned as a CRD. This area is adjacent to Eastwood Mall and caters to vehicular-oriented, large-scale retail shopping. This adjustment is more in line with future uses.

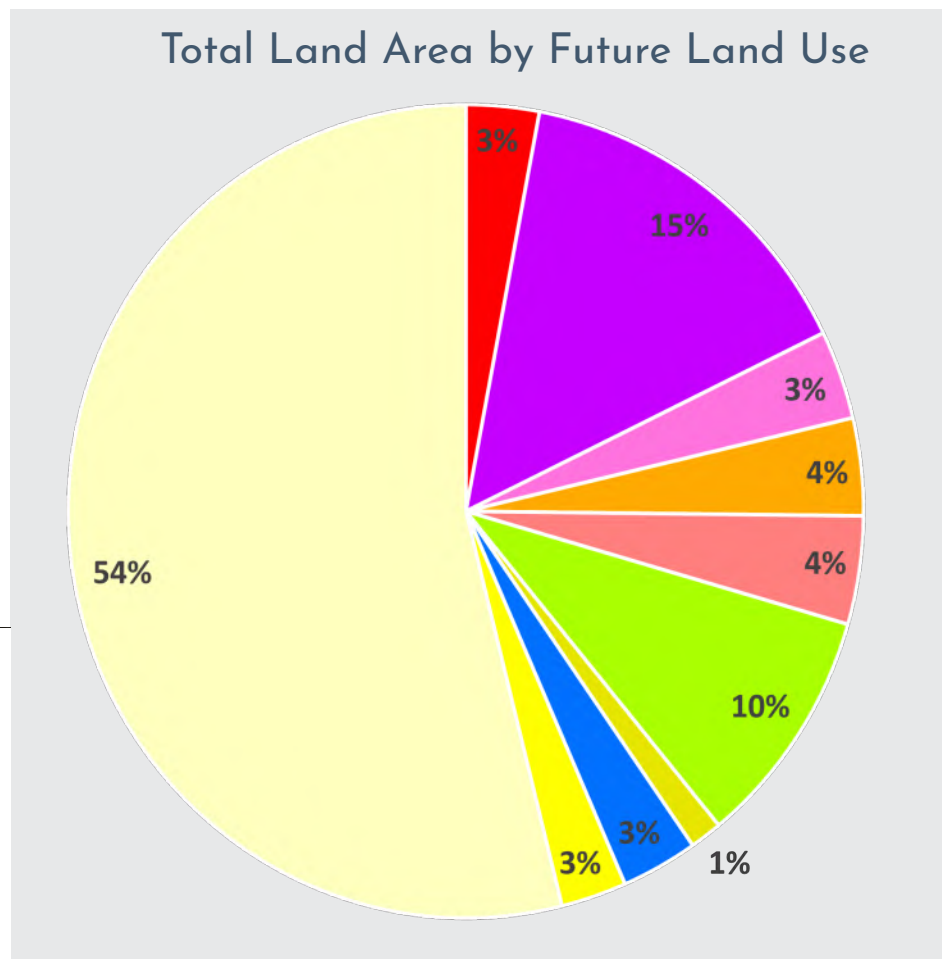
An Open Space/Parks future land use was added to further protect environmentally sensitive areas along the Mosquito Creek. Open Space totals 9% of the Township’s land area. This reduces the total area of Single Family Residential future land uses to 54%.

Multi-Family Residential is recommended along vacant commercially zoned areas of North River Road. Expanding this future land use builds off of other denser, adjacent residential uses. The hope is that this area would attract denser, senior home developments, consistent with the housing that is in that area.

Recommended future land use revisions and classification definitions are detailed on the following pages.

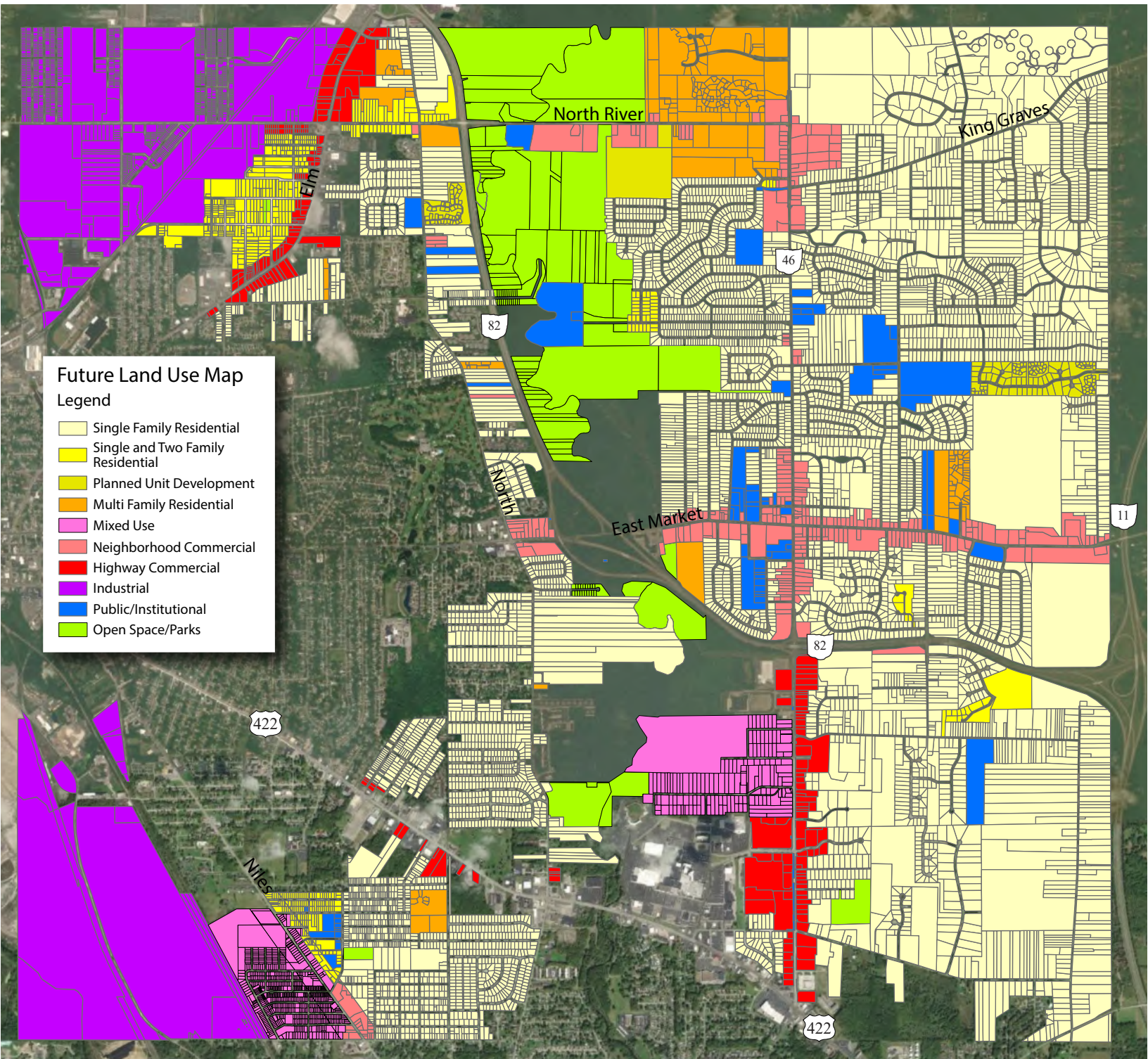
**Legend**

- Single Family Residential
- Single and Two Family Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Multi Family Residential
- Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Highway Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Open Space/Parks





# Future Land Use Map



## Future Land Use Classifications

District	Intent	Uses
Single Family Residential	The intent of this district is to provide single family residences.	Primary use is single family homes
Single and Two Family Residential	The intent of this district is to allow for slightly denser residential development in areas closer to employment centers.	Uses may include single and two family residential homes
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	The intent of this district is to encourage the efficient use of land and resources, promote greater efficiency in the provision of public services, and support the residential development of properties adjacent to high intensity uses.	Uses may include residential cluster developments
Multi Family Residential	The intent of this district is to allow for denser, residential developments (up to 6 units per building) to provide “step in” and “step down” housing within the community.	Uses may include single family or multi family residences, attached or detached townhomes/condos, or senior housing
Mixed Use	The intent of this district is to allow for flexibility in end uses while focusing on the scale and form of development. Mixed Use can be defined as either a mixing of uses vertically or horizontally within the same parcel. This district should focus on coordinated development patterns at a pedestrian scale, with high-quality architecture, plazas, public gathering spaces, sidewalks, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities. Building setbacks from the primary street should be minimal and first floor non-residential uses should include large windows to better activate the adjacent streetscape.	Uses may includes a mixture of higher density residential developments including townhomes/condos and/or senior housing, large medical facilities, commercial office, retail, and restaurants
Neighborhood Commercial	The intent of this district is to allow for smaller-scaled commercial, retail, or office development along major corridors and nodes. This district should encourage pedestrian-friendly places with high-quality architecture, plazas, outdoor dining, and sidewalks, that create active, connected gathering places.	Uses may include a coffee shop, laundry services, groomer, salon/ barber, doctor’s office, café, and restaurants, and other small-scaled retail services



## Future Land Use Classifications

District	Intent	Uses
Highway Commercial	The intent of this district is to allow for large-scaled, auto-oriented commercial, retail and office uses. This district should encompass areas along major corridors adjacent to highway interchanges.	Uses may include fuel stations, big box retailers, larger shopping centers, restaurants, office buildings and medical centers
Industrial	The intent of this district is to allow for industrial development that expands the Township's economic base and creates job opportunities for area residents.	Uses may include light and heavy manufacturing, warehouses, distribution centers, research and development, flex and commercial office
Public/Institutional	The intent of this classification is to define public buildings, religious institutions, and institutions owned and operated by governmental or other public agencies, not including parks and open space.	Uses may include public schools, public cemeteries, places of worship, government offices and other governmental activities
Open Space/Parks	The intents of this classification is to distinguish and protect recreation areas, natural areas, public parks, private recreation facilities, and general open space from development.	Uses may include passive open spaces, active recreation spaces, conservation areas, and environmentally sensitive lands

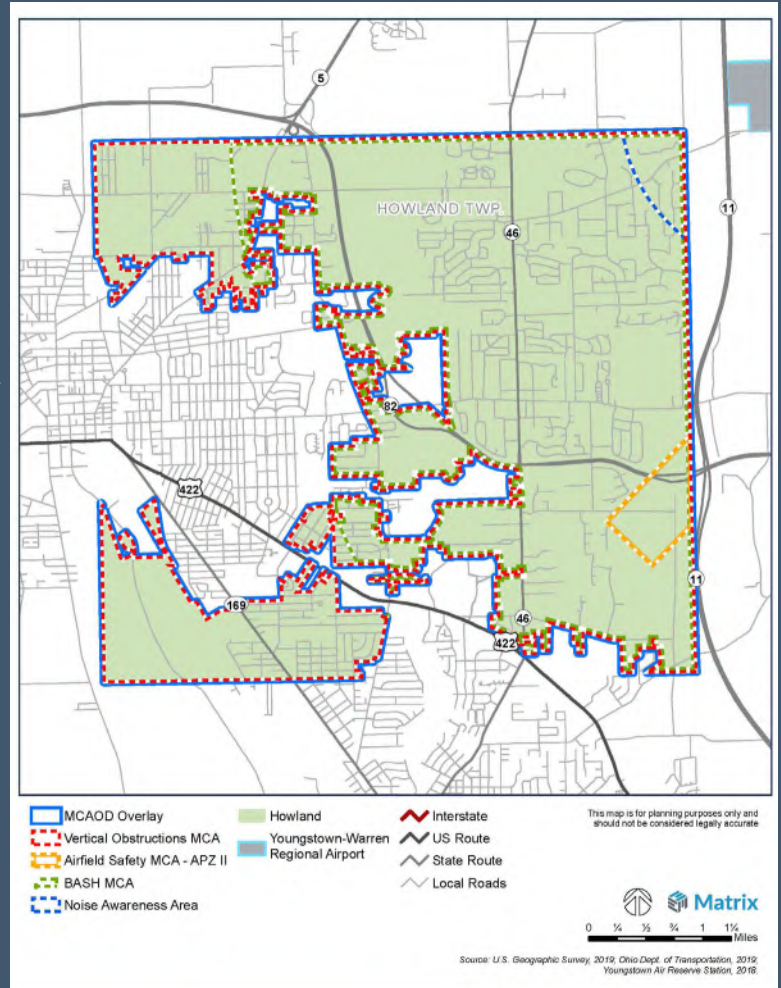
## Zoning Commission Review

The future land use recommendations presented within this Plan should be incorporated into zoning code and zoning map updates in the future as the Zoning Commission sees fit. These updates can occur over time and do not have to be implemented immediately upon plan approval. The Zoning Commission should also allow for sufficient time to review future land use recommendations before officially altering the zoning code or zoning map. The Commission can use this review time to develop/alter design standards as needed and to add, remove, or to better define allowable and conditional uses within the affected zoning district.

# Incorporating Youngstown ARS Joint Land Use Study

The Youngstown ARS Joint Land Use Study was completed in 2019 and was the result of a collaborative process between Howland Township, Youngstown ARS, Youngstown - other partner jurisdictions, businesses, industry, and other diverse stakeholder groups. The resulting Joint Land Use Study defined a shared strategic plan for area jurisdictions, Youngstown ARS, and Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport to work cooperatively and collaboratively to reduce and/or eliminate compatibility issues which can negatively impact the mission of the base, and compatibility issues created by the base which can negatively impact the surrounding communities.

The study recommended multiple Military Compatibility Area (MCA) overlay districts be implemented within Howland Township (MCA's are shown to the right) to limit vertical obstructions, safety concerns, and noise impacts to residents. The Township should incorporate these overlays into the zoning code with other recommended zoning code updates from this plan. MCAs and key recommendations are listed below.



Source: Youngstown ARS Joint Land Use Study

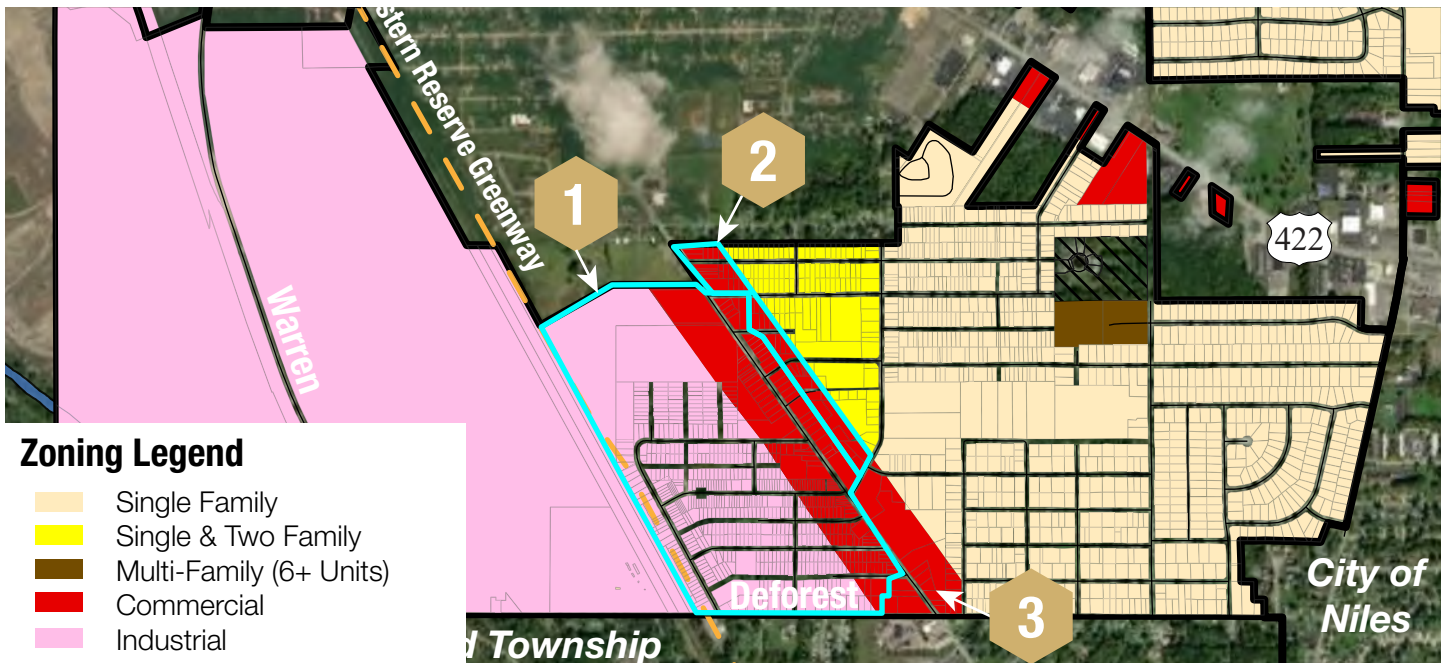
- 1 Bird / Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH)**  
Adopt the BASH MCA in local planning documents and consider minimizing uses that could pose birds and wildlife aircraft strike hazards.
- 2 Noise MCA**  
Establish the Noise MCA in local planning documents and adding noise contours on official maps.
- 3 Drone MCA**  
Develop public education materials on proper drone usage and regulations.
- 4 Vertical Obstruction MCA**  
Amend zoning regulations and procedures for imaginary surface heights and slopes. (Township has already implemented height restrictions.)
- 5 Safety MCA**  
Establishing the Safety MCA in local planning documents and adding safety zones on official maps.

## Bolindale Neighborhood Future Land Use Revisions

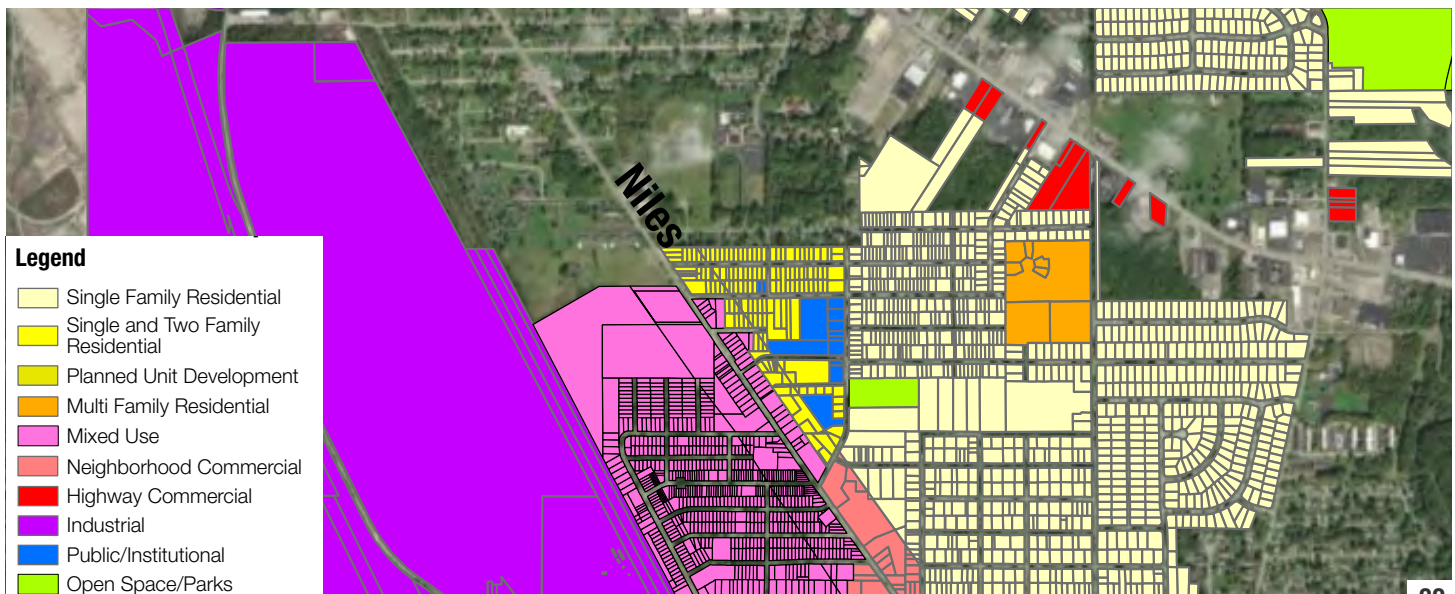
Consider future land use adjustments to the following areas:

- 1 Existing industrial zoned parcels east of the Western Reserve Greenway and existing commercial zoned parcels along Niles Road shall be revised to denser, mixed-use to accommodate potential workforce housing.
- 2 Existing commercial zoning east of Niles Road, north of Ridge Road shall be revised to single and two-family housing.
- 3 Maintain future commercial land use along Niles Road around the Deforest intersection.

### Bolindale Zoning Map



### Bolindale Future Land Use Map





## Morgandale Neighborhood Future Land Use Revisions

Consider future land use adjustments to the following areas:

4

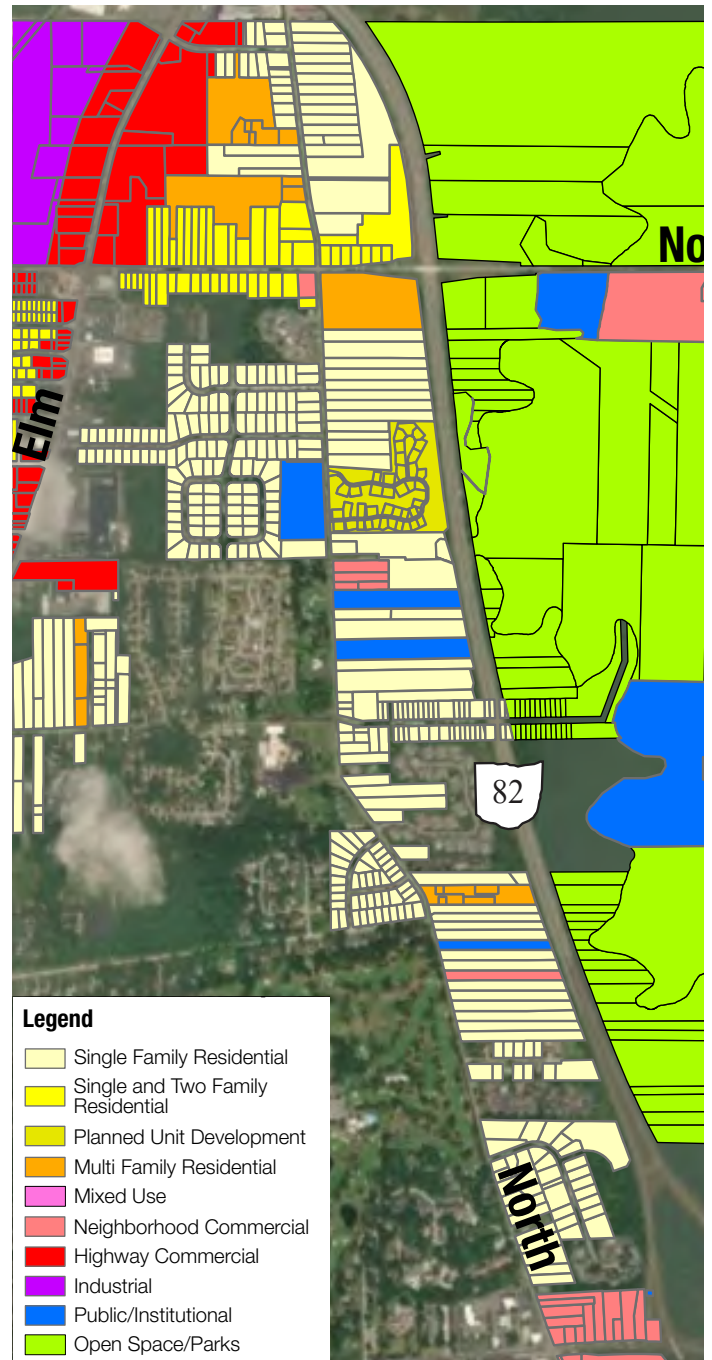
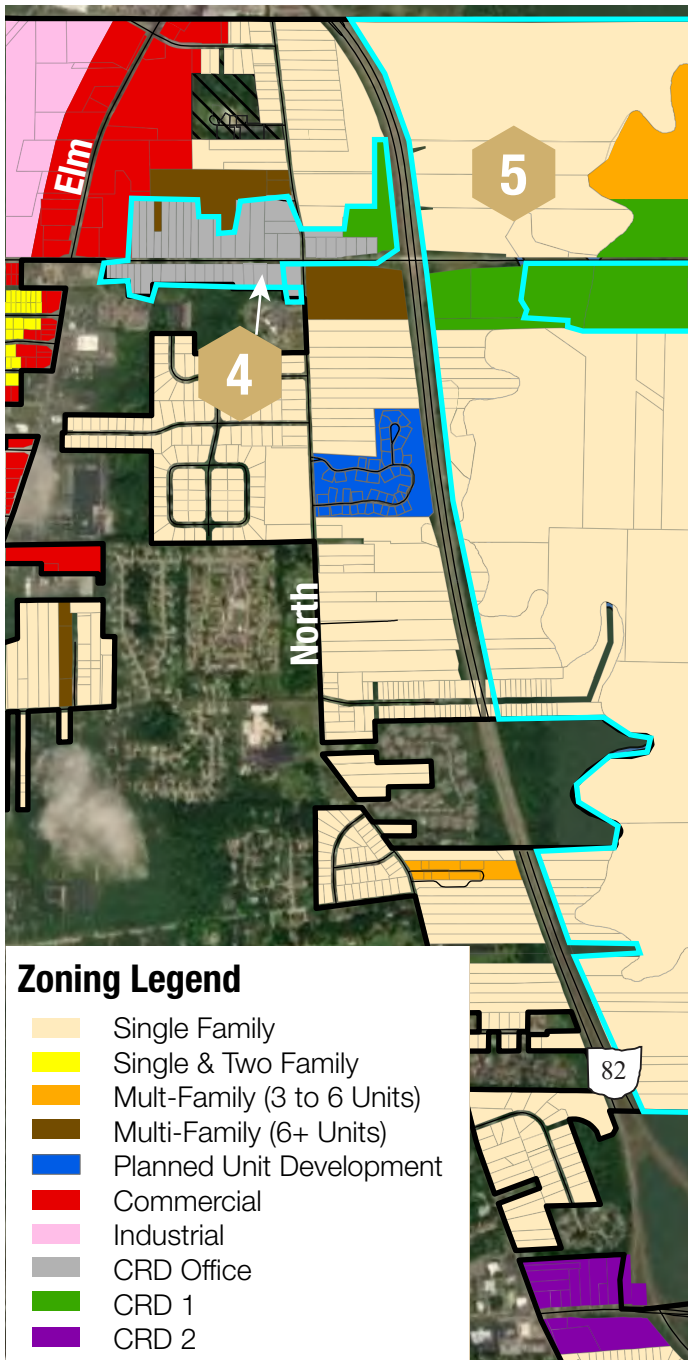
Revise existing CRD Office zoning along North River Road east of Elm to Single Family and Two-Family Residential.

5

Revise existing Single Family Residential and CRD 1 zoning along the Mosquito Creek east of SR 82 to Open Space.

Morgandale Zoning Map

Morgandale Future Land Use Map



## Howland Center Future Land Use Revisions

Consider future land use adjustments to the following areas:

6

Change existing CRD 1 along both sides of North River Road to Multi-Family Residential (3 to 6 Units), consistent with the surrounding land uses. Unless existing commercial development exists. In those locations, maintain commercial land uses.

Change existing CRD 2 along the west side of SR 46 north of the SR 46 and North River Road intersection to Multi-Family Residential (3 to 6 Units), consistent with surrounding land uses.

7

Reduce the limits of the CRD Office district along the east side of SR 46 to the intersection with North River Road to Single Family Residential.

8

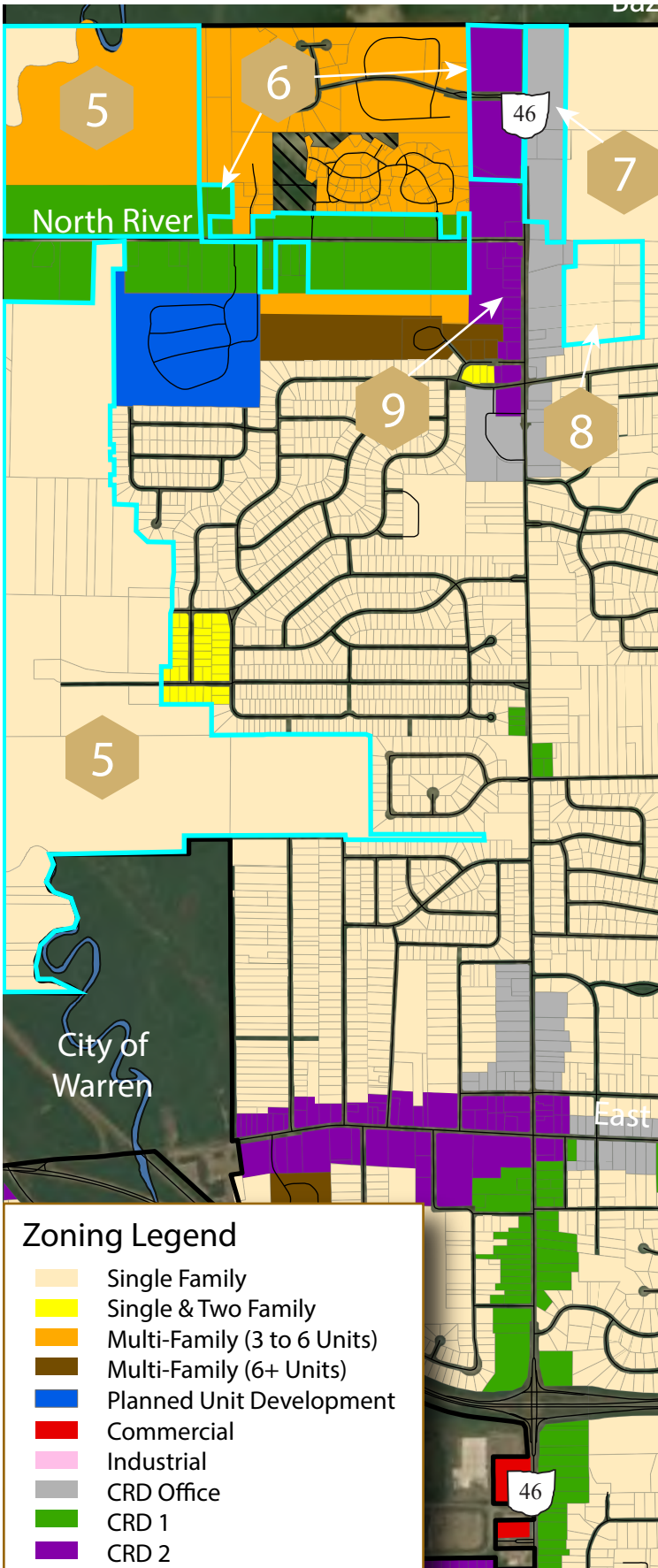
Expand the limits of the CRD Office district to include the limits of land currently owned by Mercy Healthcare.

9

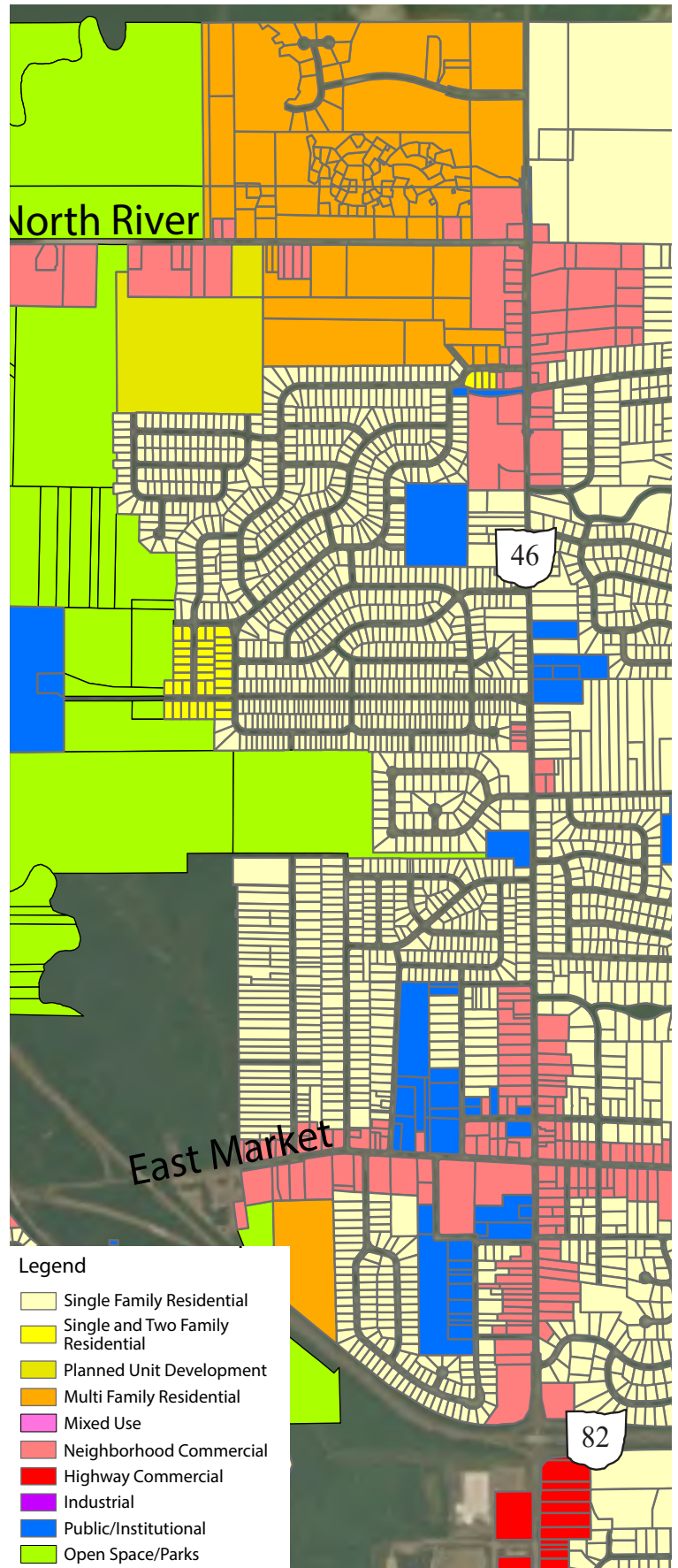
Consider changing the existing CRD 2 zoning around the SR 46 and North River Road intersection to CRD 1. This land use is more in-line with the neighborhood area.



### Howland Center Zoning Map



### Howland Center Future Land Use Map

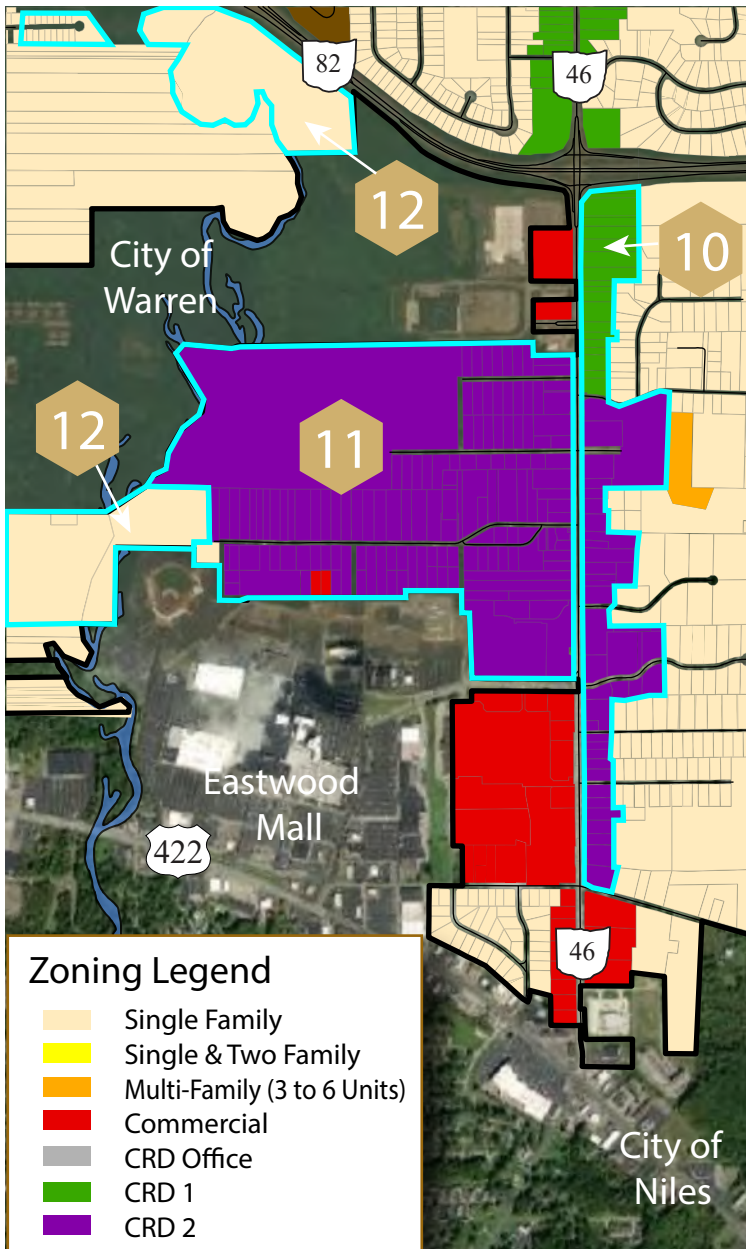


## Howland Springs Future Land Use Revisions

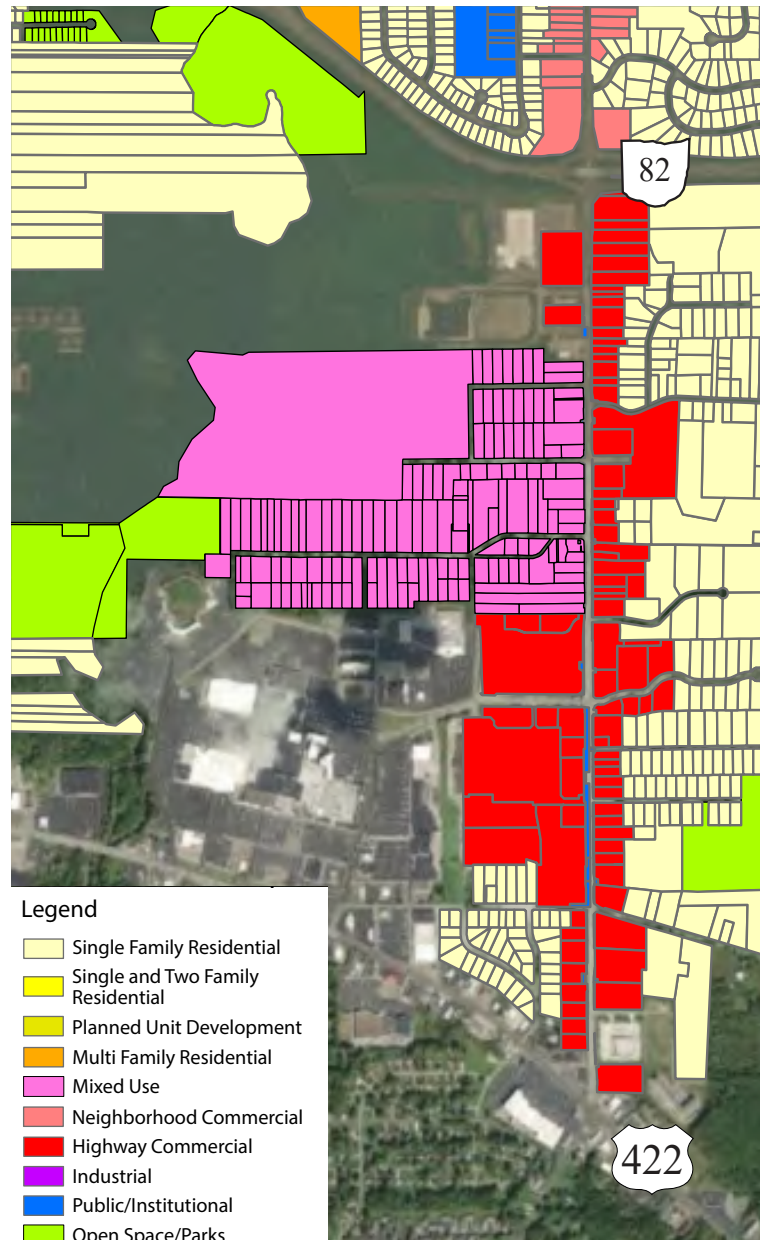
Consider future land use adjustments to the following areas:

- 10** Revise existing CRD 1 and CRD 2 areas along the east side of SR 46 to Commercial land use which is more consistent with surrounding uses along the SR 46 corridor south of SR 82.
- 11** Revise existing CRD 2 area to the west of SR 46 to Mixed-Use to allow for denser residential and commercial uses.
- 12** Revise existing Single Family Residential along Mosquito Creek to Open Space.

Howland Springs Zoning Map



Howland Springs Future Land Use Map



PLAN THEMES, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

## Plan Themes

To better organize plan goals and objectives, five plan themes were created. These themes represent broad priorities identified throughout the planning process based on input gathered from the steering committee, public, and Township staff. These themes include: Neighborhoods & Housing, Economic Development, Sustainability & Resiliency, Public Health & Community Facilities, and Transportation. The remainder of this section details plan goals and priority objectives. The purpose of this section is to provide the Township with sufficient information and tools to work towards implementing these objectives.







# NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

## GOALS

Preserve and enhance the quality of life in existing neighborhoods.

Provide adequate, high quality, and diverse housing and living opportunities within Howland Township.

## PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

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**Collaborate with neighboring communities to develop market-rate housing in the Bolindale Neighborhood**



**Where necessary, due to chronic speeding on side streets, consider physical traffic calming tools including speed tables or speed cushions to slow traffic.**



**Expand senior housing options when practical as regional trends continue to suggest a growing number of seniors are looking to “age in place”.**



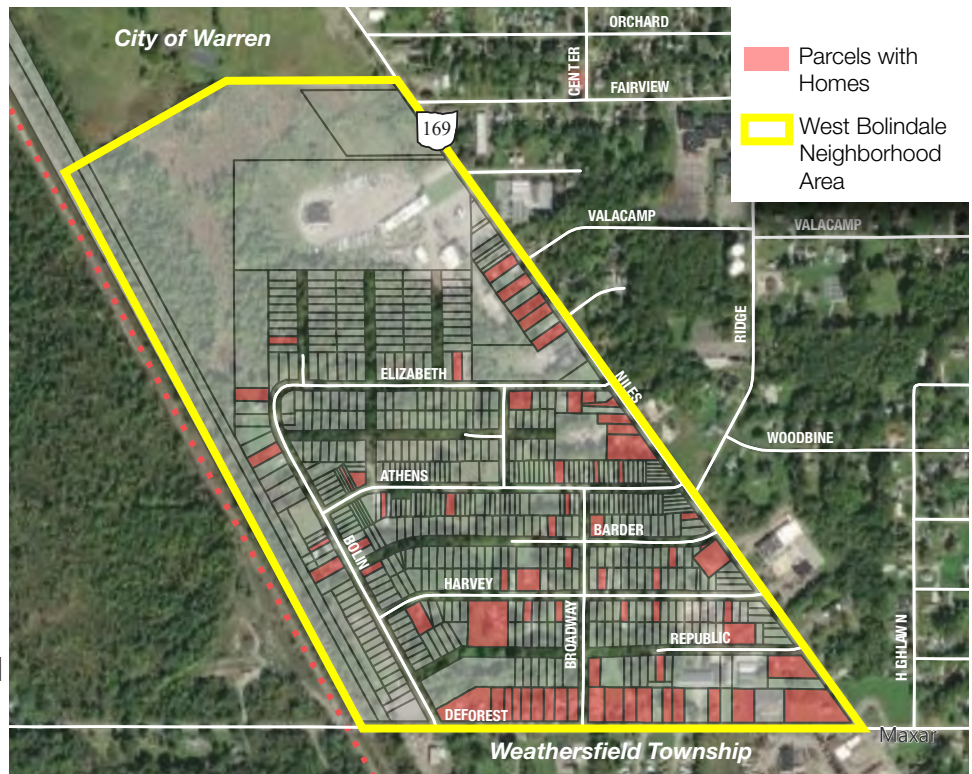


## Collaborate with neighboring communities to develop market-rate housing in the Bolindale Neighborhood

### Challenges

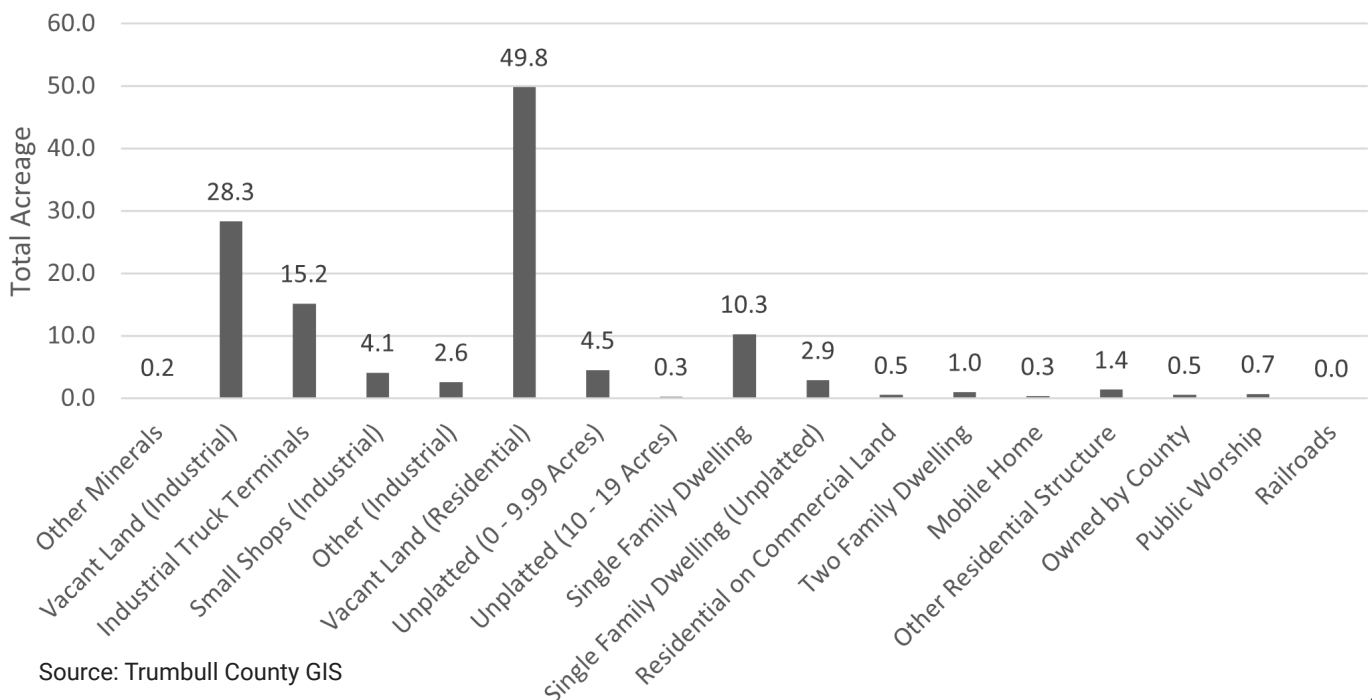
The Bolindale neighborhood faces some unique challenges and opportunities within the Township. The neighborhood is isolated from surrounding areas by both the Mahoning River and the U.S. 422 corridor and experiences high concentrations of poverty, limited access to healthy food, and continued disinvestment. Many of the neighborhood's small, working-class homes have been demolished or are in disrepair.

The west Bolindale neighborhood has seen the largest impact. As shown in the map to the right, only 23% of residential land is occupied and 64% of the total land area, or 78 acres, within the neighborhood is vacant.



West Bolindale Neighborhood Map - Source: Trumbull County GIS

### Existing Land Use by Acreage in Bolindale Neighborhood

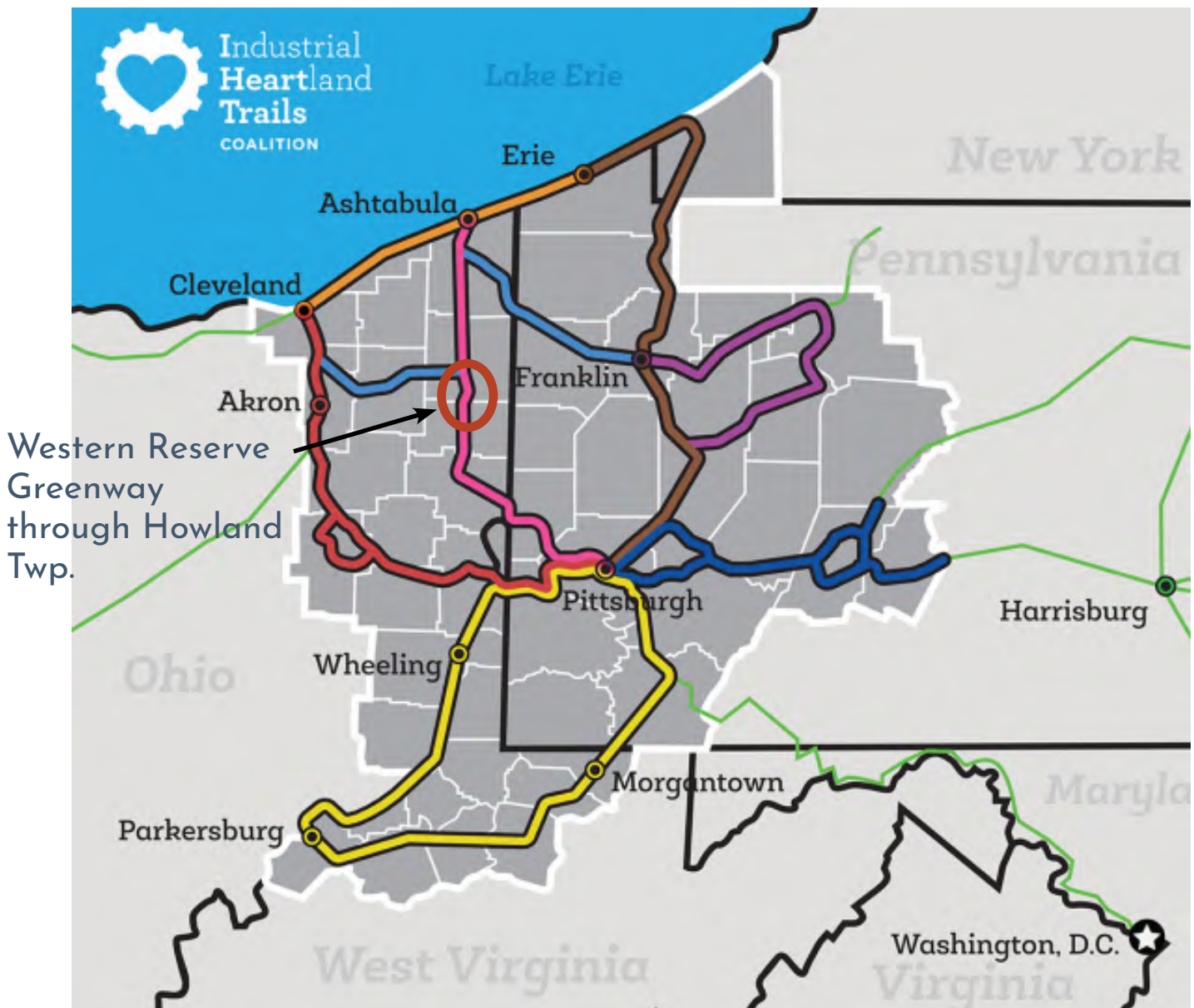


Source: Trumbull County GIS

## Opportunities

While these challenges persist, the neighborhood also has a variety of opportunities that it could leverage. The Western Reserve Greenway Trail is planned to span the neighborhood along the abandoned rail corridor to the east of Niles Warren River Road. The Greenway currently runs from Ashtabula to Canfield, Ohio with plans to link to Pittsburgh. This asset could link to other assets within the neighborhood including Bolindale Deforest Park and increase property values adjacent to the Greenway corridor.

The former BDM site to the west of the Bolindale neighborhood presents another opportunity for redevelopment and job creation in the region. The site has been remediated and is planned for future redevelopment. Development of this site along with private investments into the former Lordstown General Motors Plant by Foxconn and Ultium Cells promise continued job growth nearby. Many regional initiatives are focused on redevelopment within this area of the region. These initiatives are described on the following page. These challenges and opportunities speak to the need for further neighborhoods planning within Bolindale.



Industrial Heartlands Trail Map

## Aligning with Regional Priorities

Developing workforce housing within the Bolindale Neighborhood strategically aligns with multiple initiatives within the Mahoning Valley currently being developed as well as expansive new job growth anticipated within the area.

### Repopulation Strategy

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments and Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber are championing a Repopulation Strategy to reverse decades of out migration and position the region for unprecedented employment growth, anticipated to be 40,000 new jobs over the next decade.

The Repopulation Strategy will have a three-pronged approach to repopulating the multi-state region:

- Retaining existing residents to stop decades of the “Brain Drain” to larger metro markets
- Returning homegrown talent that left the region for educational or employment opportunities
- Receiving global populations in search of American prosperity in Appalachia including immigrants from trade partners and refugees from global areas of political strife and climate crisis

### Regional Housing Strategy

Eastgate is leading a parallel effort to develop a regional housing strategy that will assess existing and future market conditions in the Mahoning Valley to identify housing needs by type, size, price point, and location. The strategy will include a series of implementation toolkits for local communities to encourage housing construction. These include development regulations, expedited approvals, financial incentives, and supporting infrastructure such as transit-oriented development.

### Workforce Demand in Electric Vehicle & Battery Production

With Foxconn’s recent purchase of the former Lordstown General Motors Plant and announcement of commercial production of the all-electric Endurance pickup truck at the location, there is an increased need for skilled workers. Foxconn and YSU have progressed in the creation of a joint training center. The purpose is not only to create a functioning, local workforce and electric vehicle manufacturer, but also to encourage growth in the Mahoning Valley.

In addition, Ultium Cells began battery cell production in August 2022 and continues to accelerate production volume at their facility in Lordstown. It is expected that Ultium will well exceed its original projection of about 1,100 employees needed to produce battery cells for EVs when the plant is fully operational next year.



## The Plan

To take advantage of these opportunities, the Township should partner with the City of Warren to develop a neighborhood plan for Bolindale that seeks to redevelop the neighborhood around quality market-rate housing. The plan should focus on parcel consolidation, targeted demolition, and partnerships with private property owners to create a scalable, market-rate housing development. The plan should define design standards within the neighborhood and focus on creating sustainable and energy efficient residential developments. Walkability and linkages to the Western Reserve Greenway Trail should be a focus of the plan as well. Future land use recommendations in this neighborhood define the area from industrially zoned to mixed-use. Though the focus of the redevelopment in this area should center around scalable, market-rate housing, some small retail/commercial space should also be considered to cater to the needs of the neighborhood. Needed infrastructure improvements should seek to leverage multiple economic development tools detailed below and detailed later within this plan document.

### **Consider utilizing economic incentives like Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) to help business growth.**

TIF is an economic development tool that enables local governments to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in select circumstances, privately owned economic development projects. TIFs are authorized to be created within “blighted” areas and must prove characteristics of economic distress to qualify.

TIF captures the increase in property value of real property. An existing assessed value is established prior to the TIF’s enactment. This sets the taxable value of the property for the life of the TIF. As improvements are made to the public infrastructure in the district and/or development occurs, property values should increase. That projected increase in property value is used to fund the aforementioned public improvements throughout the district.

A CRA provides real property tax exemptions for property owners who renovate existing buildings or construct new buildings. Community Reinvestment Areas are areas of land in which property owners can receive tax incentives for investing in real property improvements.



Valacamp Avenue - Looking East



Harvey Avenue - Looking West





Where necessary, due to chronic speeding on side streets, consider physical traffic calming tools including speed tables or speed cushions to slow traffic.

Limiting speeding on local neighborhood streets was a concern based on public feedback. High vehicle speeds impact bicyclists who try to share the roadway, as well as pedestrian safety, vehicle safety, and neighborhood quality of life. A number of strategies can be used to calm traffic. Using a variety of traffic calming strategies across the Township will best control vehicle speeds.

**(Costs below are shown as relative costs. \$ = Low Cost, \$\$ = Medium Cost, \$\$\$ - High Cost)**



### Speed humps

**Cost \$**

Unlike speed bumps, speed humps are longer and tend to be lower to the roadway. Humps can have a rounded or flat top, and the shape may depend on the length of the speed hump.

While both speed bumps and speed humps can be difficult for bicyclists to overcome, both can be designed with cuts at the side to allow for easy passage for riders. Multiple bumps or humps are needed at intervals of 300 to 600 feet apart to achieve lower vehicle speeds for an entire roadway. Speed humps are cost effective and are plowable during snow events.



### Speed Cushions

**Cost \$**

Speed cushions are either speed humps or speed tables that include wheel cutouts to allow large vehicles to pass unaffected, while reducing passenger car speeds. They can be offset to allow unimpeded passage by emergency vehicles and are typically used on key emergency response routes. Speed cushions extend across one direction of travel from the centerline, with longitudinal gap provided to allow wide wheel base vehicles to avoid going over the hump.



### Chicanes

**Cost \$**

A chicane is a series of alternating mid-block curb extensions or islands that narrow the roadway and require vehicles to follow a curving, S-shaped path, discouraging speeding. Chicanes can also create new areas for landscaping and public space in the roadway. The image above illustrates chicanes installed along Woodward Avenue in Lakewood to control traffic speed.



Expand senior housing options when practical as regional trends continue to suggest a growing number of seniors are looking to “age in place”.

As many communities face the challenge of a rapidly aging population, ensuring that seniors may age in place in their neighborhoods is an important part of ensuring their continued mental and physical health. Typical Euclidian zoning codes separate healthcare facilities and assisted living from residential areas, meaning that older adults with limited mobility may face challenges in accessing services or must move away from their social networks to receive care. Aging in place can be supported through zoning changes.

One strategy is to allow nursing homes and Continuing Care Retirement Communities to be located in single-family residential zones. Creating a senior housing zoning district that specifically caters to senior needs is another strategy.

In addition, the adoption of universal design practices into building codes can require buildings to be accessible to people of all ages and abilities; for example, creating no-step building entries, wide doorways and hallways, height adjustable work surfaces, and visual and tactile warning surfaces are all considered universal design



Shepherd of the Valley - Howland Township

## Universal Design and Visitability

Universal design is generally defined as including those features that enable people of all ages and abilities to enjoy a product. For housing, universal design features typically include elements such as lever faucets and door handles, rollunder sinks in kitchens and bathrooms, and wider doorways. A home designed with visitability offers a more modest set of features for the main level of a detached home. These include at least one zero-step entrance and a bathroom and bedroom on the main level. Visitability features make homes easier for people who develop a mobility impairment to visit friends and extended family so that they do not have to turn down invitations or not be invited at all. These features also provide a basic shell of access to permit formerly non-disabled people to remain in their homes if they develop a disability.

Visitability features are not difficult to build into new homes, and homes built with universal design features look much like other homes. Many residents (and their friends and family) do not recognize the importance of such features until they find themselves physically impaired in some way.

Some communities incentivize the provision of visitability in new home construction through property tax abatements.

# Additional Objectives



1

Advocate for local governments to create regulations limiting the location and operation of short-term rentals (e.g. Airbnbs).



2

Increase access to high speed broadband internet across the Township.



3

Consider creating Energy Special Improvement District (ESID) to facilitate future Residential Property Assessed Clean Energy (R-PACE) financing coming to Ohio to incentivize private reinvestment in energy efficient repairs/upgrades for single-family homes.



4

Review and explore opportunities to modernize the Township's property maintenance code as the Township's housing stock continues to age.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## GOALS

Ensure that Howland is well-served by attractive, cohesive commercial districts in appropriate locations that meet the daily needs of its residents and visitors.

Collaborate with neighboring communities to minimize annexation of Township borders.

Ensure that Howland Township has a diverse economic base and provides an attractive environment for further economic development.

## PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

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**Partner with the City of Warren to develop a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) on the former BDM site and within portions of the Bolindale neighborhood.**



**Consider creating Energy Special Improvement District (ESID) to facilitate Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) financing.**



**Consider creating zoning overlay districts along major commercial corridors that encourage consistent development standards.**





Partner with the City of Warren to develop a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) on the former BDM site and within portions of the Bolindale neighborhood.

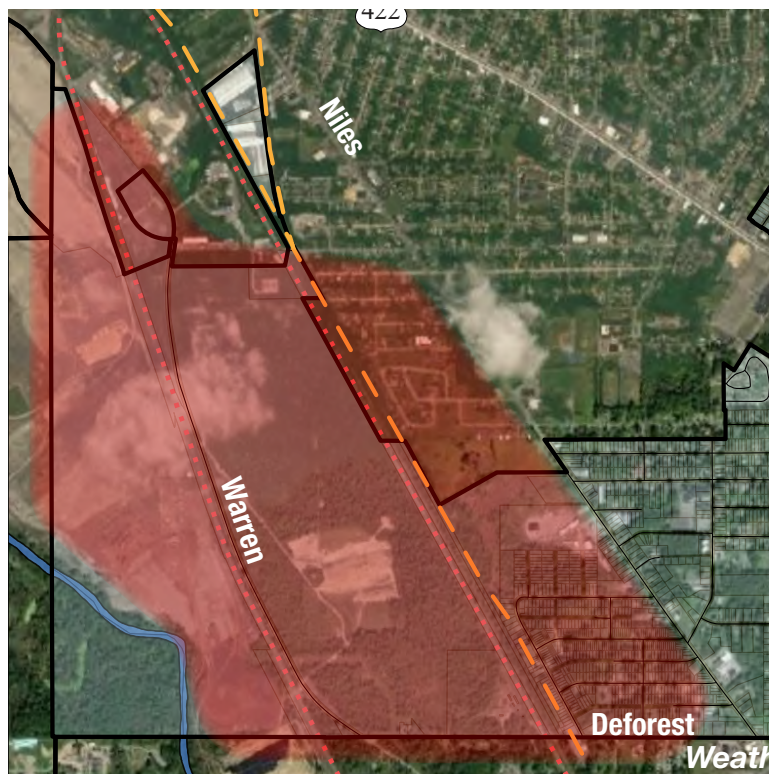
## Facilitating Partnerships

Potential for a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) between the Township, City of Warren, and property owners within the JEDD could be implemented in a mutually beneficial manner. A JEDD could facilitate improvements in infrastructure and public services to facilitate desired growth by:

- Upgrading rural roadways to better accommodate truck freight;
- Providing shared emergency response and public safety services;
- Serving as the applicant for infrastructure projects; and
- Offering technical staff expertise for planning, zoning, legal services, and marketing.

Creating a JEDD is a multi-step process with public input that involves a contract among the local governments involved and the property owners. An economic development plan must be developed for the JEDD which consists of a schedule of the new, expanded or additional services, facilities or improvements to be provided, and a schedule for the collection of any income tax to be levied within the JEDD. There must also be a description of the area to be included within the JEDD, including a map. Next, a public hearing must be held to promote public discussion of the contract and the JEDD.

Business owners located in a proposed JEDD area may “opt out” of the JEDD by filing an action in a court of common pleas on or before six months after the effective date of the JEDD contract. The owner must show: (1) that it operated within the JEDD area before the effective date of the JEDD contract; (2) that it did not sign a petition in support of the JEDD; and (3) that neither the business nor its employees has derived or will derive any material benefit from the new, expanded, or additional services, facilities, or improvements described in the economic development plan for the district, or the material benefit that has, or will be, derived is negligible in comparison to the income tax revenue generated from the net profits of the business and the income of employees of the business.



Potential JEDD Map - Source: Trumbull County GIS

## JEDDs have Advantages for Everyone

The JEDD is a creative, localized tool that allows municipalities and townships to collaborate outside of municipal limits to achieve greater economic growth. Below is a listing of advantages to Townships, Cities/Villages, and property owners that enter into a JEDD agreement.



### For Townships

- A JEDD provides increased revenues through income taxes and increased real property taxes on previously vacant or undeveloped land parcels.
- A JEDD agreement prohibits annexation by the city or village for a period of three years and creates a cooperative agreement with the city or village.
- The increased revenue enables the township to provide additional services to its residents at no additional cost.
- A JEDD enables the extension of utility services to previously unserved parcels.
- A JEDD provides a framework for cooperating with municipalities, enabling the parties to solve local economic development issues and provide new growth opportunities.



### For Cities/Villages

- A JEDD enables a city or village to increase its income tax revenues.
- A JEDD typically results in new utilities customers, therefore generating additional revenue.
- The JEDD provides a framework for cooperating with townships, enabling the parties to solve local economic development issues and provide new growth opportunities.



### For Property Owners

- A JEDD typically results in new roadways and utilities which improves land values and access to properties.
- A JEDD provides enhanced public services (i.e. police, fire, ems) that aid in attracting development



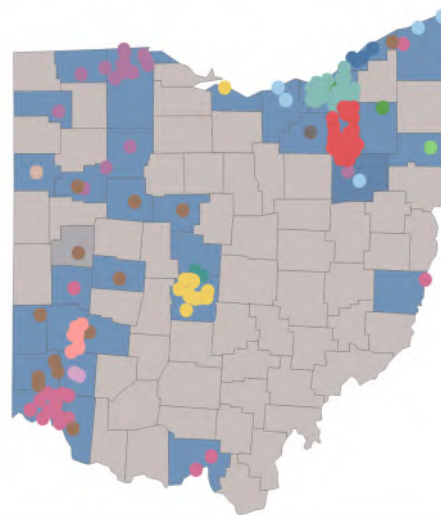
## Consider creating Energy Special Improvement District (ESID) to facilitate Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) financing.

PACE financing involves public-private cooperation between a property owner, a lender, a municipal corporation, and an energy special improvement district (ESID). PACE is a voluntary program where the property owner agrees to place a special assessment on their property to repay principal and interest payments on special energy improvement projects over a certain term. The lender makes a loan to the property owner for the property owner to undertake a special energy improvement project. In order to levy these special assessments, an ESID needs to be created. The ESID provides for the PACE project by working with the property owner to develop a plan for the project. The municipal corporation where the property is located is automatically part of the ESID when it approves the ESID's formation or the addition of property to it.

Once levied, the special assessments are added to the property owner's tax bill. The special assessments are tied to the land, rather than the property owner. So the special assessments can stay with the property upon conveyance.

The ESID can grow to support other projects in the same municipal corporation or it can extend to contiguous municipal corporations and townships.

The Western Reserve Port Authority administers a C-PACE program within Mahoning County. The Township should engage the Port and Trumbull County Commissioners to expand the C-PACE program into Trumbull County. C-PACE programs can cross county lines as the Toledo Port Authority administers C-PACE programs in multiple counties in western Ohio.



Active PACE Program Map - Source: OhioPACE

## What Qualifies as a Special Energy Improvement?

A special energy improvement project is defined as any property, device, structure, or equipment necessary for the acquisition, installation, equipping, and improvement of any real or personal property used for the purpose of creating a solar photovoltaic project, a solar thermal energy project, a geothermal energy project, a customer-generated energy project, or an energy efficiency improvement, whether such real or personal property is publicly or privately owned, energy efficiency technologies, products, and activities that reduce or support the reduction of energy consumption, allow for the reduction in demand, or support the production of clean, renewable energy and that are or will be permanently fixed to real property.

## Positive Impacts of C-PACE

C-PACE financing can benefit everyone involved - from municipalities striving to meet their clean energy goals, to developers seeking financing for improvements for no out-of-pocket costs, and lenders who seek the improved value of their asset.



C-PACE is an innovative economic development tool that gives communities of every size access to capital to support economic development with little or no risk to the local government.

### Advantages

- ✓ The cost of program implementation bore by the utilizing project
- ✓ Expert industry partners provide technical support to local leadership
- ✓ Helps administrations meet their environmental objectives
- ✓ Can be blended with other financing tools
- ✓ Attraction tool to draw developers / investors to community



C-PACE is an innovative financing tool that gives owners & developers access to asset-based capital with long-term fixed-rate for the funding of energy efficiency, water conservation, and renewable energy projects.

### Advantages

- ✓ 100% financing with no out-of-pocket costs
- ✓ Long-term fixed rates up to 30 years
- ✓ Secured by special assessment
- ✓ Non-recourse to owner
- ✓ Debt transfers with ownership
- ✓ Preserves owner's capital for other uses
- ✓ Energy savings offsets the cost of financing
- ✓ Renewable energy or building renovations



C-PACE is a complementary funding mechanism that can be used to complete a capital stack for complex developments. Where conventional debt is restricted due to risk tolerance, debt service coverage requirements or loan to value caps.

### Advantages

- ✓ Lender retains the relationship
- ✓ PACE assessment offset by energy savings
- ✓ PACE to Value capped at 25-30%
- ✓ PACE capital improving their asset and increasing value
- ✓ Debt transfers with ownership
- ✓ PACE funds difficult to securitize improvements



# Continue to Implement Golden Triangle Recommendations

The Golden Triangle is approximately 1,000 acres in central Trumbull County (Howland Township) and Warren, Ohio. The area represents a geographically concentrated hub of advanced manufacturing, material processing, warehousing, and distribution industries. The Golden Triangle is the largest and only manufacturing cluster in the City of Warren. It is one of the largest and economically productive advanced manufacturing clusters in all of Trumbull County.



To address aging infrastructure in the Golden Triangle, the Golden Triangle project partners completed the Infrastructure Improvement Plan in 2015 funded through an EDA Local Technical Assistance Grant. The purpose of completing the Infrastructure Improvement Plan was to work directly with industries and the project partners to identify public infrastructure deficiencies and improvement needs, prepare and cost conceptual engineering solutions to eliminate these deficiencies and develop strategies to implement needed infrastructure improvements.

To date, Golden Triangle project partners have secured over \$2.5 million in local, state, and federal funding to complete many of the projects identified in the Plan.



The Golden Triangle project partners are now seeking (EDA) FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Act Economic Adjustment Assistance funding to complete other infrastructure priorities identified in the Plan to achieve the goals listed above. Completed ED900 Beneficiary forms reveal a \$47million private investment commitment from the Golden Triangle businesses tied to this grant request.



Consider creating zoning overlay districts along major commercial corridors that encourage consistent development standards.

Many communities are finding that traditional Euclidean zoning with discrete residential, commercial, and industrial districts is not sophisticated enough to address complicated growth and development issues. To address this issue and attract quality development, local governments are applying zoning regulations that offer increased flexibility, aimed at targeted development areas, in order to spark private reinvestment in their community.

## Overlay Districts

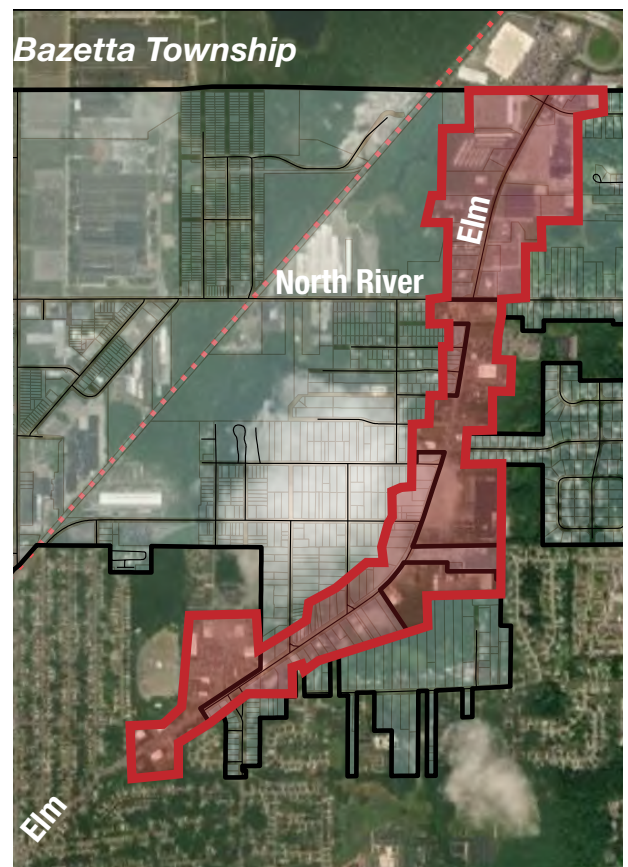
Overlay districts are applied in these situations as additional layers of regulation that are superimposed over the underlying existing districts to address these special conditions. Overlay districts can also be appropriate for economic development purposes, to create community character, to implement a specific plan, or for infrastructure protection, such as roadway access and level of service standards.

Overlay districts can also be used to create flexibility within an underlying zone. This flexibility can come in the form of relaxed setbacks, density bonuses, or other development techniques that may not be permitted under a typical zoning district. This flexibility is sometimes essential when promoting redevelopment or when dealing with a challenging development site.

An explicit purpose and intent statement for design standards that apply to the overlay district helps to clarify the legal and policy basis if they are challenged in court. These statements confirm the policy intent of language within the regulations. They also provide direction for interpretation and discretionary decisions. These purpose statements should be tailored to support the community's vision and objectives for development within the corridor.

## Elm Road Corridor

The Elm Road Corridor is a heavily-traveled commercial corridor that links the City of Warren with the City of Cortland. Howland Township shares a circuitous border with the City of Warren along this corridor from Genesee Avenue to North River Road. In some locations, one side of Elm Road is within the City of Warren while the other is within Howland Township. The haphazard nature of the municipal boundary along the corridor makes it difficult to create a cohesive corridor that has the same



Elm Road Joint Overlay District Map

development standards and goals.

It is recommended that a joint overlay district be created along the corridor as illustrated on the previous page. This district and the regulations within the district would be agreed upon and approved by both Howland Township and the City of Warren. In collaboration with the City of Warren's Planning Department, the following are considered priorities of the joint overlay district: access management standards, sidewalks, and streetscaping elements.

### Access Management

Traffic circulation is always important when planning for development or redevelopment. The traffic demands that are created by development along major roadways can be dramatically affected by multiple curb cuts and uncoordinated access points. Access management involves planning and coordinating the location, design and operation of driveways together with internal roadway design features. Access management techniques such as driveway spacing requirements, shared access drives, cross access easements, right in/right out only access, frontage roads, and medians can provide automobile access to businesses along the corridor in a safe and efficient way.

These techniques can also help maintain capacity of the roadways and drastically improve safety.



Elm Road - Looking Southwest

### Sidewalks

Howland Township has been developing sidewalks along the corridor as redevelopment or development opportunities arise. The City of Warren does not have sidewalk requirements along the corridor and thus the existing sidewalks are disjointed. The joint overlay district should require sidewalks along the entire corridor. The district should specify that walk widths should be at least six-foot-wide with an eight-foot-wide treelawn, where practical, and the walk adjacent to the curb line should be at least eight-foot-wide.



Elm Road - Looking Northeast

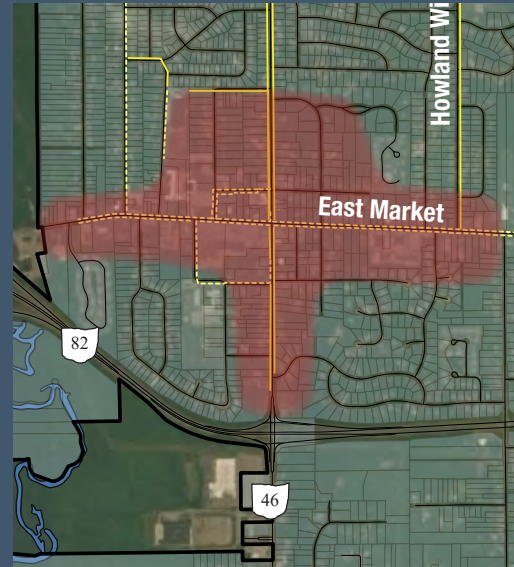
### Streetscaping

The existing corridor has no streetscaping elements and is dominated by pavement and surface parking lots. Introducing some minimal streetscaping elements within the existing corridor right-of-way would improve the aesthetic of the corridor. Improvements could include street trees, decorative medians, planters, enhanced signage, or decorative crosswalks.



# Town Center Overlay

The Howland Town Center roughly encompasses Niles-Cortland Road from State Route 82 north to Woodland Drive and along East Market Street from Rosegarden Drive to Howland-Wilson Road as shown to the right. The area is home to many small businesses and significant cultural assets including Howland High and Middle Schools, the Howland Public Library, Howland Township Administration offices, and the Howland Senior Center. The focus of this overlay district should center on developing design standards that create a small-town, sense of place. The district should consider developing standards that:



Town Center Overlay District Map



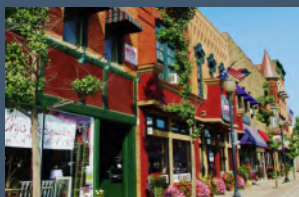
Balance the needs of all users along the street. Provide wide sidewalks, on-street parking (where feasible) and an appealing streetscape to encourage pedestrian activity.



Encourage denser, mixed-use development at a pedestrian scale. Mixed uses can include a variety of retail, office, research and design, service, housing, and public facility uses all within close proximity.



Allow outdoor dining and temporary merchant space on the sidewalk area provided that a minimum six-foot pedestrian right-of-way remains unobstructed on the sidewalk.



Orient buildings towards the street and surrounding buildings. Ensure the main entrance of a building faces the street and that no "blank walls" exist along the front facade of the building.



Encourage joint driveway access and/or access to alleys behind buildings. The reduction of driveways will improve safety and enhance the streetscape.



# Additional Objectives

1

Consider creating shared parking standards or other innovative parking strategies within commercial corridors to encourage density and improve sustainability.

2

Create access management standards along commercial corridors to limit driveway access points and improve traffic flow.

3

Create consistent streetscapes along major roadways to provide a cohesive sense of place.

4

Consider removing and/or consolidating CRD-1, CRD-2, and CRD-OI zoning districts.

5

Consider leveraging Tax Increment Financing (TIF) within areas where redevelopment in planning and public infrastructure improvements are needed.

6

Ensure recommendations from the Golden Triangle Infrastructure Improvement Plan are implemented and that the Golden Triangle Business Advisory Group continues to meet semi-annually.



# PUBLIC HEALTH & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## GOALS

- Support healthy lifestyles in Howland Township.
- Continue to provide adequate police and fire protection and emergency medical services to Township residents.
- Promote quality active and passive recreational opportunities within the Township.

## PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

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**Support programming that increases access to healthy and affordable fresh food.**



**Partner with ODNR, Army Corps of Engineers, and neighboring communities to develop a water trail along the Mosquito Creek**



## Support programming that increases access to healthy and affordable fresh food.

Howland Township has a history of supporting and encouraging local, healthy food production and distribution. The Township promotes and supports successful programs including SNAP, WIC, the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and the Howland Farmers' Market.

The Howland Farmers' Market gives local and regional growers and food producers the opportunity to market their farm fresh items and value added products directly to consumers. The market is dedicated to providing nutritious foods grown by local or regional growers with a selection of non-food items. This open-air market offers the community a unique, vibrant market experience that serves as the hub of community activity every Saturday beginning in June and continuing through October.

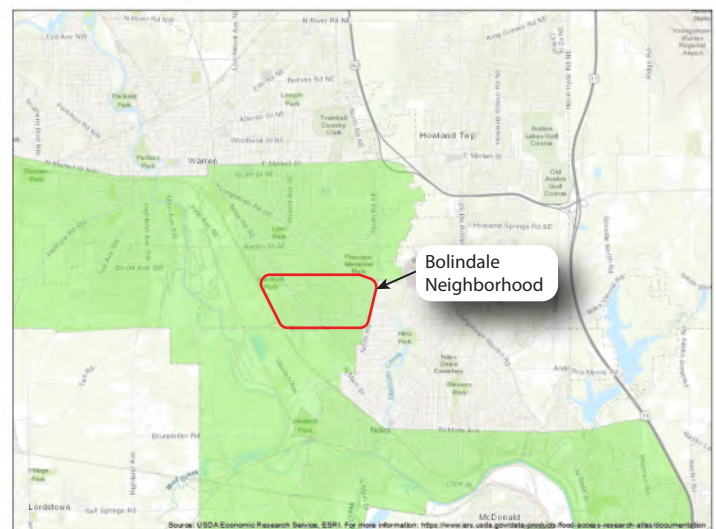


### Encouraging Healthy Food in Bolindale

Despite a general increase in food production within the United States over the last few decades, there is still a lack of healthy, affordable food in low-income communities. The effects of food-insecurity on residents of those communities spill into their everyday lives, including time spent at school, work, and overall health. Residents living in food deserts - neighborhoods with few or limited access to healthy food sources - are more likely to be people of color. Individuals living in food deserts also tend to have lower levels of education, earn lower incomes, and are more likely to be unemployed.

According to the USDA's Food Access Research Atlas, which identifies locations throughout the Country with low income populations and limited access to health food options, the Bolindale neighborhood identifies as a food desert (see map the right).

Local laws that allow land use for specific purposes can be used to create space for urban agriculture in communities. Land use or zoning ordinances can allow healthy food to be grown and sold in communities, allocate public space for community food-growing initiatives such as community gardens, and permit farmers' markets. Considering the needs of the Bolindale neighborhood and the abundance of vacant land, the Township should consider allowing urban farming within the area. Bolindale Deforest Park is central to the neighborhood and already has a small community garden. Efforts should be made to expand the garden within the park.



USDA Food Access Map - Bolindale Neighborhood



## Partner with ODNR, Army Corps of Engineers, and neighboring communities to develop a water trail along the Mosquito Creek.

A water trail is a designated route along a lake, river, canal, or bay specifically designed for people using small boats like kayaks, canoes, single sailboats, or rowboats. The trails, sometimes called “blueways,” are the aquatic equivalent of a hiking trail (or “greenway”). Water trails feature well-developed access and launch points; are near significant historical, environmental or cultural points of interest; and often include nearby amenities such as restaurants, hotels, and campgrounds.

An overarching theme from the steering committee, public, and staff engagement was the desire to protect but also unlock the natural beauty of the Mosquito Creek for residents to enjoy. Due to the Mosquito Creek’s large floodplain and surrounding wetlands, providing direct access via multi-use trails is challenging, but the relatively slow and circuitous route of the creek could make for an interesting water trail. There are limited roadway crossings of the creek from Mosquito Lake State Park to its confluence with the Mahoning River in Niles. These roadway crossings could provide logical, and well-spaced access points for kayak launches.

The Township will need to gather regional support from surrounding communities including the cities of Cortland, Niles, and Warren along with Bazetta Township to develop this water trail. If there is interest in developing the trail, a stakeholder group should be developed to create a plan for the water trail. The plan should address: existing and future access points, safety concerns along the trail including low bridge clearances and rapids, trail maintenance, and funding for trail amenities including access points and trail signage. Once a plan has been developed for the trail, ODNR Division of Parks and Watercraft should be contacted to develop project action steps and obtain technical assistance.

There is an existing water trail along portions of the Mahoning River from Newton Falls into the City of Warren. Eastgate Council of Governments is currently developing a plan as part of their River of Opportunity initiative to expand that water trail through the Cities of Warren, Niles, and Youngstown. The proposed Mosquito Creek water trail could provide direct access from Howland Township into the Mahoning River water trail and beyond.



Source: Ohio Department of Natural Resources



# Additional Objectives

1

Improve the built environment to encourage active lifestyles.

2

Improve access to medical, mental health, and social services for all residents.

3

Protect water quality through greater consideration in land use decisions.

4

Retain and expand, when feasible, full-time fire and police personnel. The size and staffing levels for safety services play a large role in attracting and retaining families in Howland Township.

5

Provide support for police, fire, and EMS through equipment, service, and staffing grants.

6

Timely and continual clearing of roadways is recognized by residents and visitors and can have a positive impact on economic activity during periods of inclement weather.

7

Work with the Howland Park Board to maintain & improve recreational opportunities in the Township.

8

Expand sidewalks and trail connections throughout the Township.

9

Restore Sloas Barn as a community pavilion.



# SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY

## GOALS

Encourage sustainable and resilient businesses, developments, and solutions.

Preserve ecologically sensitive areas for the enjoyment of current and future residents.

## PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

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**Continue to mitigate stormwater runoff in future developments.**



**Consider creating an open space/conservation zoning designation to further protect environmentally sensitive land along the Mosquito Creek.**



**Consider increasing the Township's tree canopy to help mitigate the impacts of the urban heat island, flooding, and other climate impacts.**



## Continue to mitigate stormwater runoff in future developments.

Continued flooding within the Township is a major concern. The Township should continue to enforce and seek to expand stormwater runoff mitigation strategies within future developments or within areas of redevelopment. Stormwater mitigation strategies should address both building and parking lot runoff. The following pages detail some stormwater mitigation ideas that the Township should consider including within the zoning code to reduce stormwater runoff.

### Commercial/Industrial/Residential Buildings

#### Rain Gardens

A rain garden is a shallow, landscaped depression that contains native plants that can tolerate both wet and dry conditions. It captures stormwater runoff from rooftops and driveways and allows it to soak into the ground before it reaches natural waters or sewer systems. Rain gardens also provide habitat for wildlife such as birds, butterflies, and other pollinators.

#### Rain Barrels

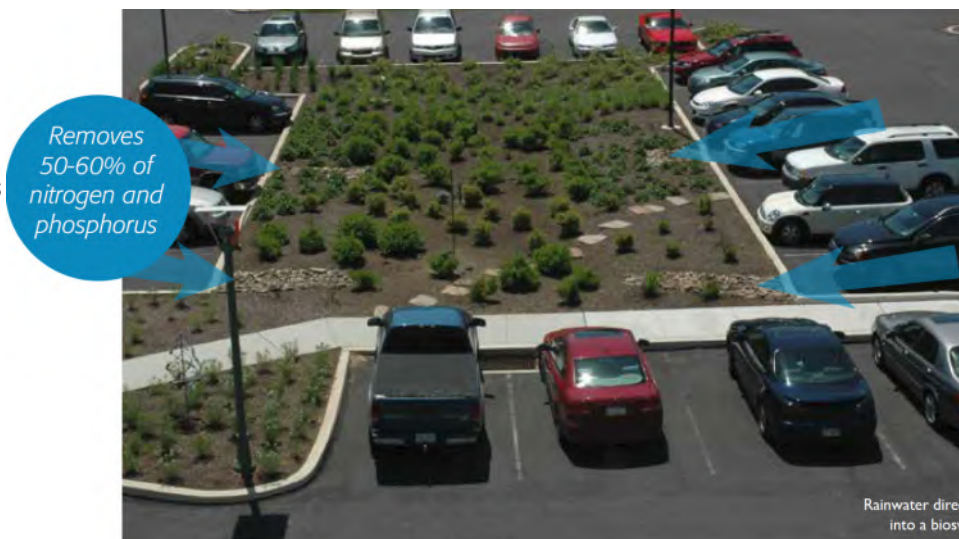
Rain barrels and cisterns are structures that collect rooftop rainwater that would otherwise drain to natural waters or sewer systems. The collected stormwater can be used to water plants, trees, or lawns during dry periods.

#### Green Roofs

Green roofs intercept precipitation and slow and reduce runoff from rooftops through storage and evapotranspiration performed by plants. In addition to reducing the amount of stormwater runoff and improving its quality, green roofs also reduce the effect of city “heat islands” and provide microhabitats for birds and insects.

### Parking Lots

Creating green and sustainable parking lots involves several design elements. These elements include maximizing shading and greening, incorporating naturalized drainage, utilizing paving that infiltrates, using energy efficient lighting and renewable energy generation, adding safe pedestrian circulation, and successfully



Source: Green Sustainable Parking Guide

integrating and connecting parking in the community. Any combination of these elements can be used in new parking lots or the redevelopment of existing lots.

These elements provide many options to make parking lots more sustainable. When natural drainage systems, including bioretention, are combined with permeable paving systems, extensive greening, and sustainable practices, a parking lot can be transformed into an environmental asset.

The Township should continue to promote regulations that mandate the use of green infrastructure within surface parking lots to reduce stormwater runoff.

## Modernizing Parking Code

While the Township has taken steps to reduce the amount of impervious area and surface parking within commercial developments by mandating parking maximums and requiring the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs), additional steps could be considered to further improve stormwater management.

Several potential modern best practices are described below which may encourage the development of more environmentally sustainable development patterns that reduce impervious surface areas and promote walkable neighborhoods throughout the Township:

### **Abolishing Parking Minimums**

While the Township has established parking maximums for commercial developments, the code also requires parking minimums within those developments. Minimum parking requirements make assumptions about what types of cars people drive, how long they park them, and how far they are willing to walk – assumptions that are often false. These standards promote driving rather than other forms of transportation, resulting in higher development costs and rents, as well as increased storm water runoff, urban heat islands, and water pollution. Parking lots created by minimum requirements have resulted in huge gaps between buildings, making communities far less walkable and bikeable, in order to ensure that every building is completely self-sufficient in the unlikely event of a parking catastrophe. Land use has thus become financially inefficient, as largely unused asphalt precludes more income-producing development opportunities.

### **Shared Parking Credits**

Spread-out parking requirements assume that each business has its own separate parking supply and that it must be large enough to accommodate the peak hour of the peak day of the year. That assumption results in excessive parking. Different parking uses peak at different times of day—office parking in the middle of the day, retail in late afternoon and on weekends, restaurants in the evening. Shared parking provisions allow developers to reduce parking supply requirements when different uses can share the same parking spaces.

### **On-Street Parking (Howland Center Area) - Where feasible**

The most valuable parking in most commercial and mixed-use places is parking on the street in front of businesses. Yet many places are careless about keeping on-street parking or do not do enough to ensure the maximum number of spaces per block. Shifting from parallel to diagonal parking can increase parking supply by up to 30 percent per block face.





## Consider creating an open space/conservation zoning designation to further protect environmentally sensitive land along the Mosquito Creek.

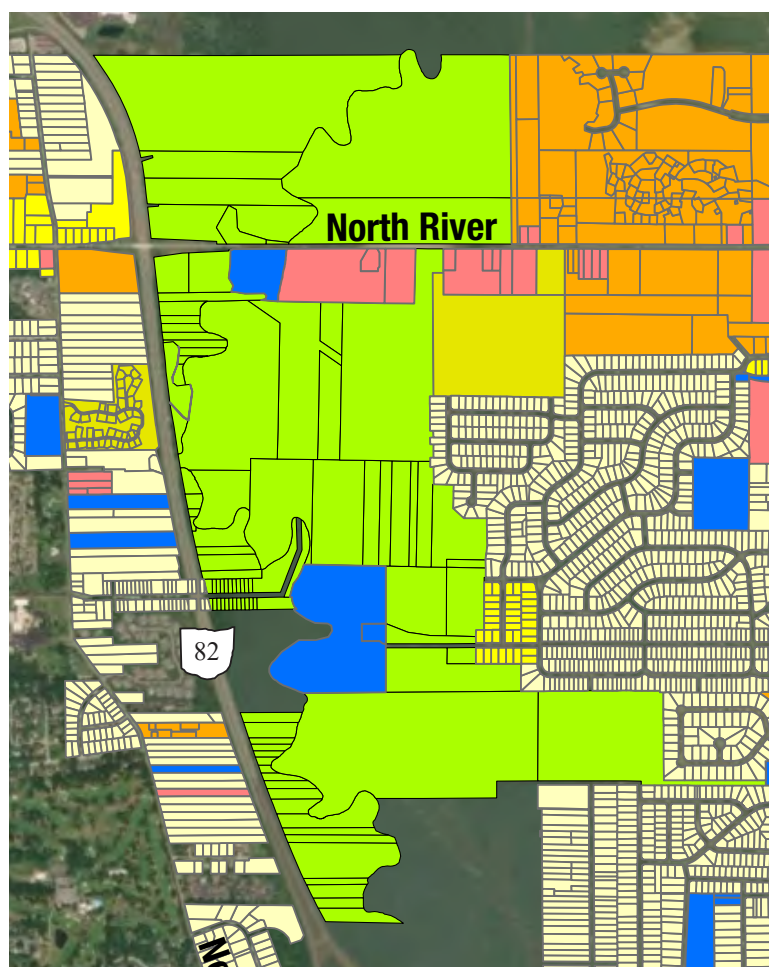
Open space is an important and vital part of daily life in urban areas because it improves the social health of communities, enhances the environmental quality of ecosystems and contributes to the economic viability of the region. Protecting and restoring natural systems, their biodiversity, habitats, and aesthetics will result in a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable region. Naturalized open space is a critical component contributing to storm resiliency which is especially important as the region confronts increasing storm severity due to climate change.

Roughly 9% of the Township's future land use is recommended to be placed within a future Open Space zoning designation. If an open space zoning designation were created the following property types should be included so additional land can be added in the future if desired.

- Significant natural features and historical and cultural sites
- Floodplains and floodways
- Retention or naturalized storm-water management areas that are designed to be an amenity

While the open space zoning designation is meant to conserve sensitive environmental areas from being developed, it should not restrict all types of development. Allowable uses within the open space zoning designation should also be defined and could include the following.

- Trails and walkways
- Farming (with size restrictions)
- Underground drainage fields for individual or community septic systems
- Utilized as wet or dry storm-water management ponds or basins
- Active recreation areas in small portions



Future Land Use Map - Open Space District



Consider increasing the Township’s tree canopy to help mitigate the impacts of the urban heat island, flooding, and other climate impacts.

An urban tree canopy is the percentage of land that is covered by a layer of leaves and branches of tree crowns that shelter the ground when viewed from above. The tree canopy produces critically important benefits for an urban or suburban community, including removing pollutants and carbon from the air and reducing peak stormwater flows. A healthier urban forest is linked to improved health outcomes for residents—including lower rates of respiratory disease, improved birth outcomes, and other physical and psychological benefits. Other benefits include increasing property values, reducing the burden of the heat island effect, and enhancing a sense of safety and community in urban and suburban neighborhoods.

Urban tree canopy assessments allow communities to prioritize planting/greening goals based on social, economic, and ecological criteria such as flooding, wildlife habitat, urban heat island/heat stress, public health (e.g., asthma), crime, income, and other variables. The Township should conduct an urban tree canopy assessment and develop a plan that can be used to inform urban tree canopy goals, prioritize locations for tree planting efforts, establish urban forestry master plans, understand patterns of environmental justice, inform sustainability plans, and justify budget increases for urban forestry programs. Many communities throughout Ohio have conducted urban tree canopy assessments to develop tree canopy goals including the City of Akron, Cuyahoga County (county that encompasses Cleveland), and the City of Columbus.



Valacamp Avenue - Looking East

**“THE BEST TIME TO PLANT A TREE WAS 20 YEARS AGO, THE SECOND BEST TIME IS NOW.”**



Tree shade can lower energy bills by up to

**35%**

Source: “Safe streets, livable streets.” Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol. 71, No. 3



The presence of street trees increases adjacent home values by an average of

**\$13K**

Source: US Forestry Service

# Additional Objectives

1

Create regulations that promote the use of green infrastructure within surface parking lots to reduce storm water runoff.

2

The Township should utilize green infrastructure to reduce surface water runoff within public property and along roadway right-of-ways where practical.

3

Encourage the use of solar powered and energy efficient lighting and Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations, to decrease energy consumption and reduce the Township's carbon footprint.

4

Work with regional partners, including Eastgate Council of Governments and Trumbull County, to pursue electric vehicle charging station funding through State and Federal sources.

5

Continue to acquire, protect, and develop passive recreational amenities on environmentally sensitive land within the Township by pursuing Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Funds.

6

Continue to protect watershed health guided by the recommendations of the Lower Mosquito Creek Balanced Growth Plan.

7

Continue to work with regional partners (e.g. Trumbull County Commissioners, Trumbull Metroparks, etc.) to conserve environmentally significant land along the Mosquito Creek.

8

Adopt hillside regulations that restrict development on steep slopes.

9

Provide trail access to ecologically sensitive areas where practical.



## GOALS

Provide a safe and efficient transportation network that provides convenient access for all Township residents.

Improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity within the Township as well as with adjacent communities.

## PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

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**Develop a corridor plan for East Market Street from Rosegarden Drive to Howland-Wilson Road that focuses on enhancing multi-modal connectivity, traffic flow, and placemaking elements.**



**Focus on improving priority trail, bike lane, and sidewalk improvements as identified within this Plan.**



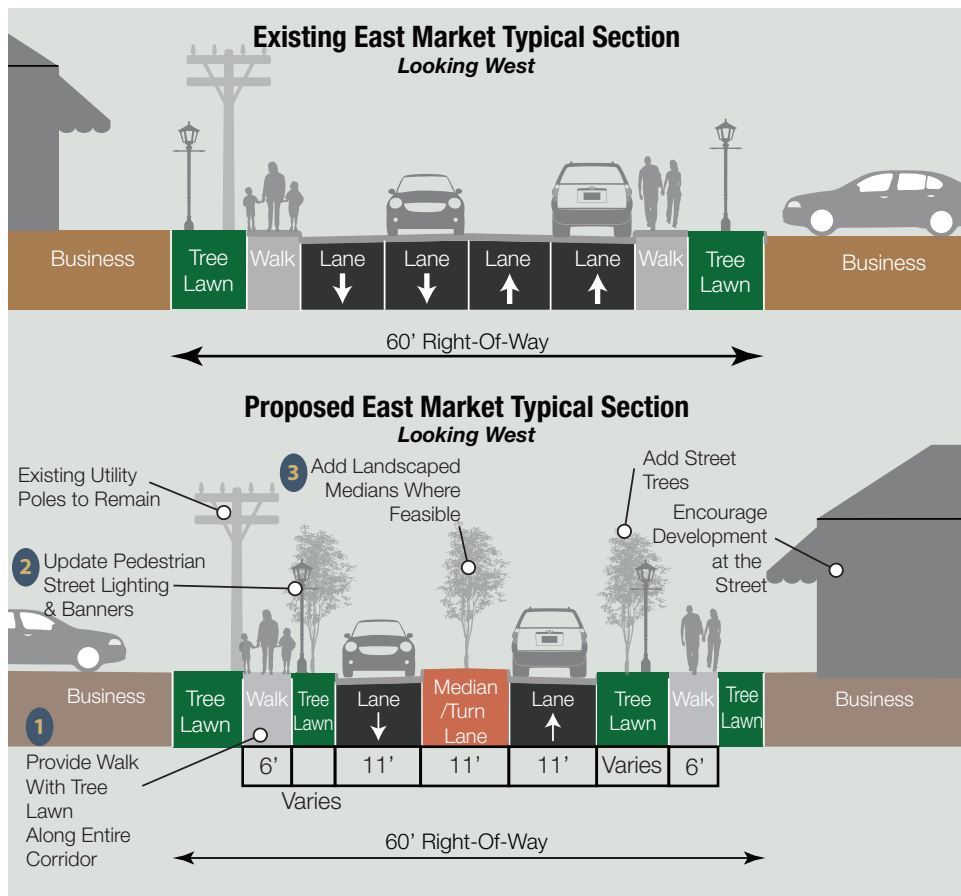
**Ensure future residential developments within the Township provide adequate access to adjacent developments and/or major roadway arterials.**





## Develop a corridor plan for East Market Street from Rosegarden Drive to Howland-Wilson Road that focuses on enhancing multi-modal connectivity, traffic flow, and placemaking elements.

East Market is the central east-west corridor within the Township linking the City of Warren and State Route 82 to the Township. The corridor is the center of activity within the Township and includes many local restaurants, small businesses, and municipal institutions. The existing corridor consists of two distinct sections, a four-lane, curbed section from Rosegarden Drive to Niles-Cortland Road, and a two-lane, uncurbed section from Niles-Cortland to Howland-Wilson Road. The corridor has sidewalks along its entire length and minimal streetscaping elements including decorative lighting. The corridor experiences a moderate amount of vehicular traffic throughout the day and is impacted by both Howland Middle and High School vehicular and pedestrian traffic.



Sample East Market Typical Section

The corridor study should propose recommendations that transform the corridor both visually and functionally, fostering a unique sense of place, encouraging walkability, and developing corridor standards. A proposed typical section and various improvement ideas are shown above and on the following page.

### At a minimum the study should

- Investigate various lane configurations to optimize vehicular traffic flow while also incorporating multi-modal transportation elements;
- Recommend improvements that enhance mobility for all users including improved pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities;
- Analyze existing and future traffic volumes and crash data to improve safety along the corridor
- Consider access management standards;
- Develop streetscaping and signage improvements to create a town center identity;
- Incorporate stormwater best management practices along the corridor.

## 1 Sidewalk Ideas



## 2 Treelawn Ideas



## 3 Median Ideas



Sample East Market Streetscaping Ideas





### Focus on improving priority trail, bike lane, and sidewalk improvements as identified within this Plan.

A major theme that was developed throughout this planning process focused on improving multi-modal connectivity within the Township. Very few of the roadway corridors within the Township have sidewalks and few off-road trails exist. Due to the interest in this topic, a high-priority listing of multi-modal improvements was developed based on steering committee and public feedback. Further details on these improvements are listed on the following pages.

Ultimately, a formal Township-wide active transportation plan should be developed by the Township to take a more comprehensive look at expanding multi-modal connectivity. But in lieu of a formal active transportation plan being completed, this section of the plan was developed to assist the Township in prioritizing multi-modal improvements in the meantime. The information provided should be used to pursue design and construction funding for these improvements. Applicable funding sources for these improvements are detailed within the implementation matrix.

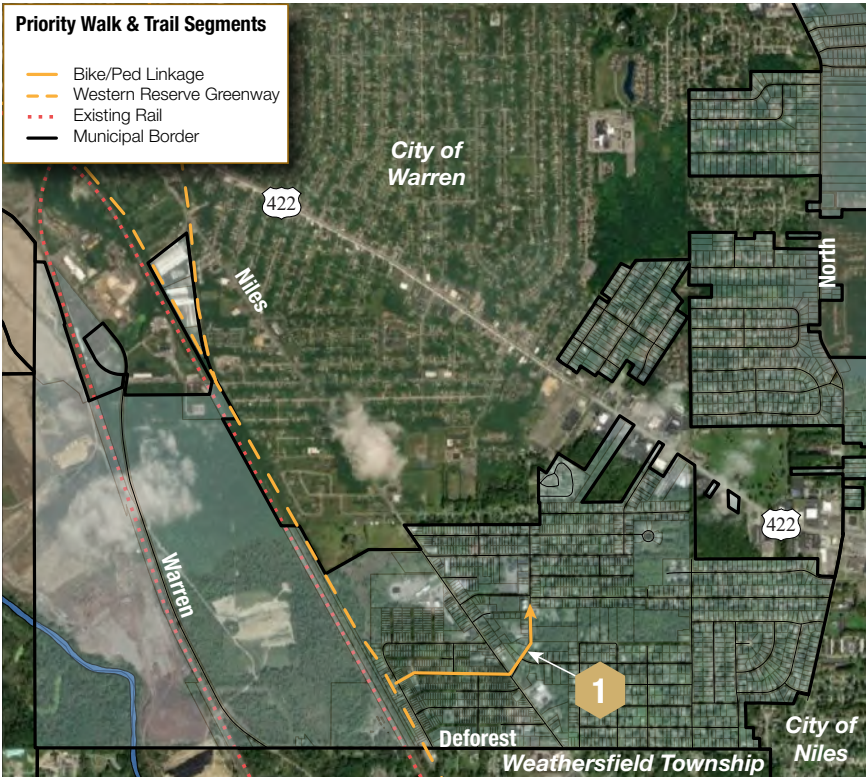


1 Link neighborhood assets including Bolindale Deforest Park and Elim Christian Center via a 10-foot-wide trail to the Western Reserve Greenway

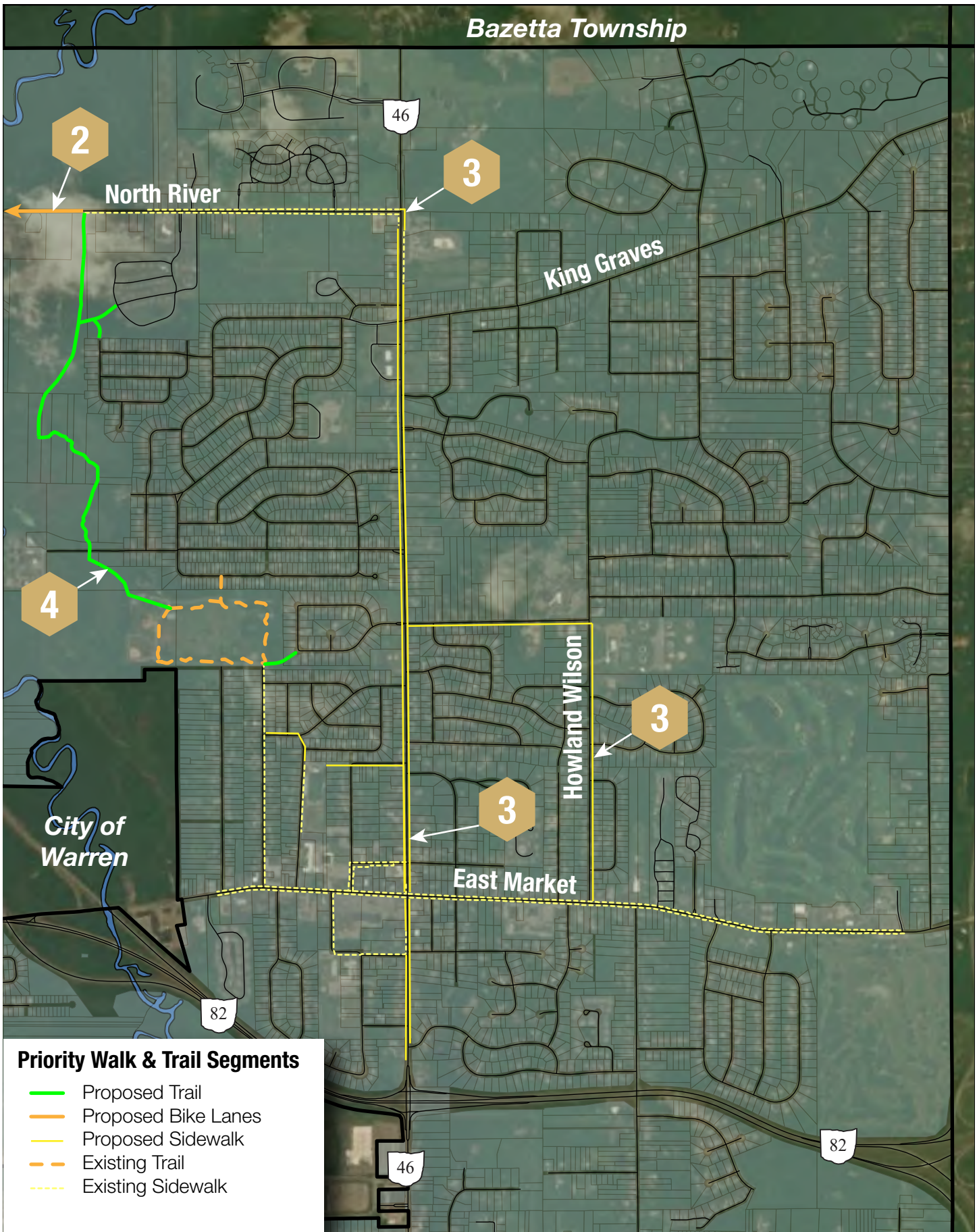


2 Consider the addition of bike lanes along North River Road from the proposed Mosquito Creek Greenway trailhead to the existing trailhead with the Western Reserve Greenway approximately 3.3 miles long.

The existing North River Road bridge over SR 82 (~38 Feet) and the North River Road bridge over the Mosquito Creek (~38 Feet) have sufficient width to allow for two travel lanes and two, 5-foot bike lanes with a buffer.



Priority Trail & Sidewalk Map - Bolindale Neighborhood



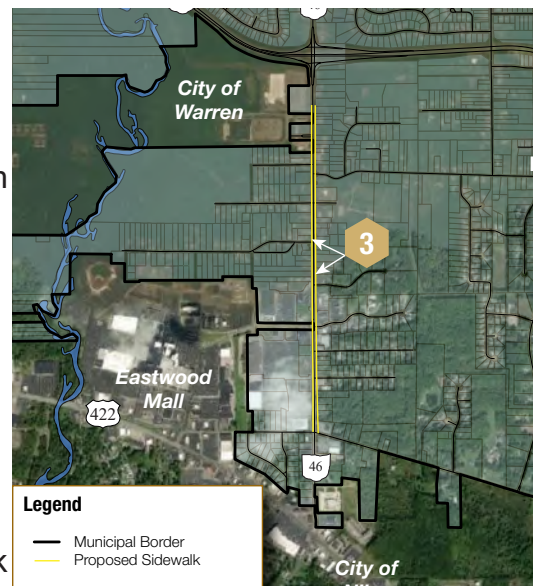
Priority Trail & Sidewalk Map - Howland Center Neighborhood



### 3

Create seamless linkages to Township assets by expanding sidewalk access and filling critical sidewalk gaps within the Township. Priority locations include:

- Both sides of SR 46 from the planned Diverging Diamond Interchange Project being developed by The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) north, through the East Market intersection to North River Road.
- Along the northside of Woodland Drive west linking to Lombardo Field.
- From existing sidewalk along Shaffer Drive north to Fairhill Drive. Continuing west along Fairhill Drive to existing sidewalk along Clifton Avenue. This connection will directly link Howland High School and Lombardo Field with Howland Township Park.
- Complete gap between sidewalk along the east side of SR 46 north to the North River Road intersection. Develop a pedestrian crossing at this intersection and link to the existing sidewalk along North River Road.
- Along the east side of Howland-Wilson Road from East Market, north to HC Mines Intermediate School and along the south side of Squires Lane. This improvement will link students directly to the Howland Public Library on East Market.
- Along the east and west sides of Niles-Cortland from the proposed DDI to Mines Road.



Priority Trail & Sidewalk Map - Howland Springs

### 4

#### Mosquito Creek Greenway

The proposed Mosquito Creek Greenway will link Howland Township Park with North River Road’s proposed bike lanes and multiple residential subdivisions. The approximately 6,600-foot-long, 10-foot-wide trail runs along the edge of the Mosquito Creek floodplain, unlocking beautiful natural scenery for trail users. The goal of the greenway is to improve residents’ quality of life and to directly link residents to the Mosquito Creek and Howland Township Park. The proposed greenway has three linkages to residential subdivisions at Shepherds Way, Pegotty Drive, and Anderson Avenue. The greenway is a direct result of public feedback from the community survey which listed improved multimodal linkages to Howland Township Park (53% of respondents) and to residential subdivisions (37% of respondents) as most and second most desired linkages respectively.

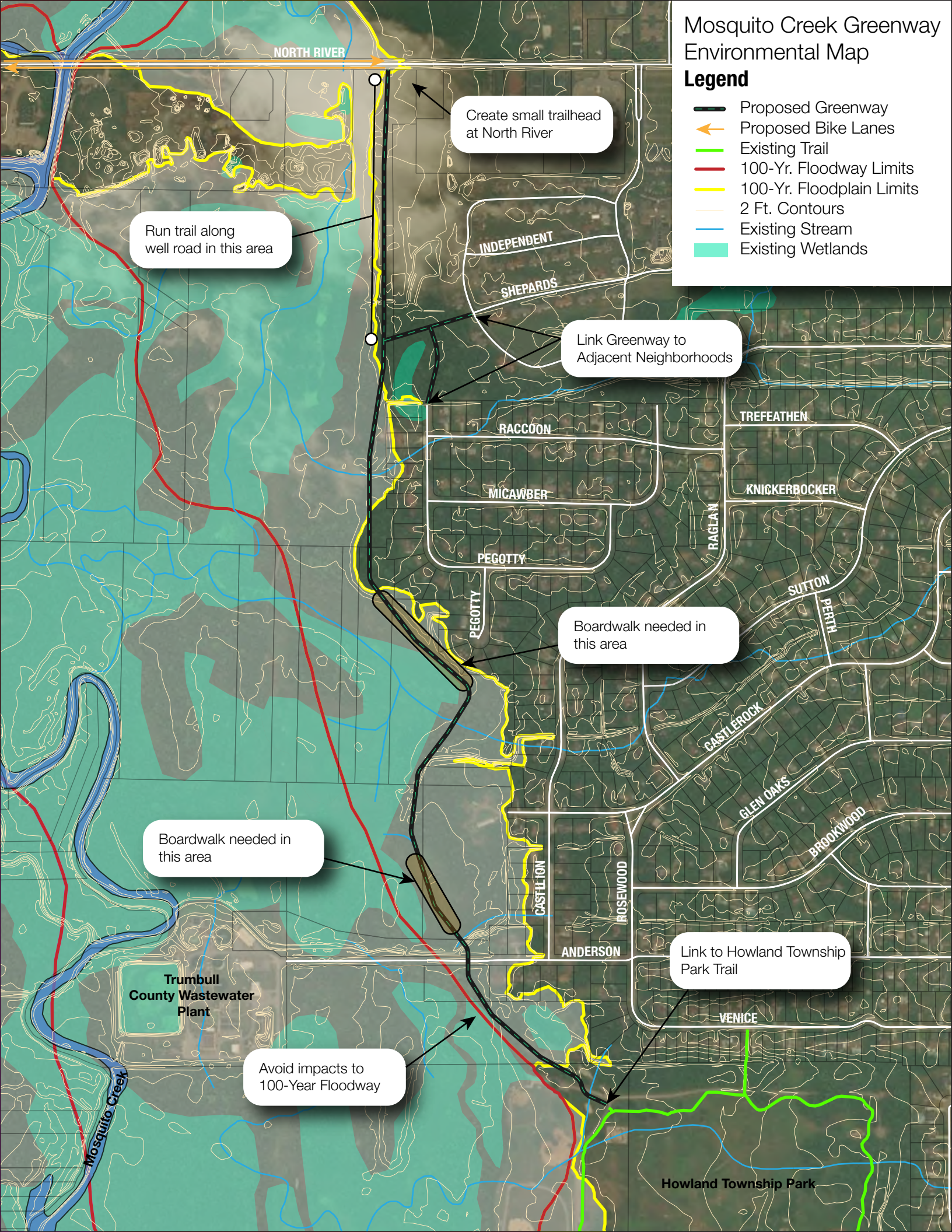
The vast majority of the proposed alignment runs within publicly-owned land as illustrated on the Mosquito Creek Ownership Map. Only two easements will be needed with private property owners to develop the greenway as proposed. The Township should reach out to these property owners to determine if there is interest in providing an easement.



# Mosquito Creek Greenway Environmental Map

## Legend

- Proposed Greenway
- Proposed Bike Lanes
- Existing Trail
- 100-Yr. Floodway Limits
- 100-Yr. Floodplain Limits
- 2 Ft. Contours
- Existing Stream
- Existing Wetlands



Create small trailhead at North River

Run trail along well road in this area

Link Greenway to Adjacent Neighborhoods

Boardwalk needed in this area

Boardwalk needed in this area

Avoid impacts to 100-Year Floodway

Link to Howland Township Park Trail



# Mosquito Creek Greenway Ownership Map

## Legend

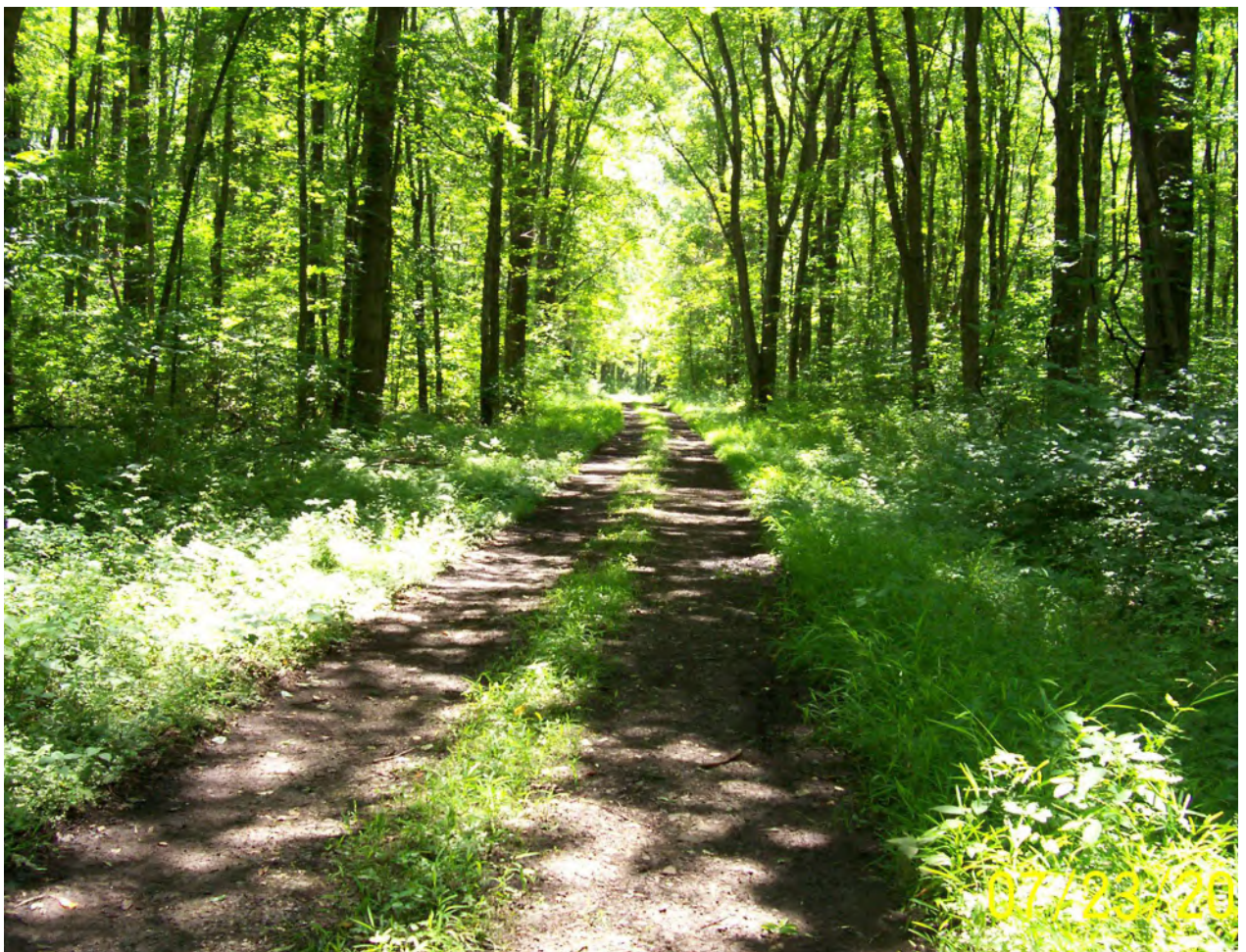
- Proposed Greenway
- Proposed Bike Lanes
- Existing Trail
- Existing Stream
- Township Owned
- Howland Schools Owned
- County Owned





A major concern when developing the proposed greenway route was limiting impacts to the Mosquito Creek floodplain and minimizing impacts to existing wetlands. As such, the greenway alignment avoids any impacts to the Mosquito Creek floodway (outlined in red on the Mosquito Creek Environmental Map) and generally avoids existing wetlands. As the greenway progresses through design, detailed hydraulic analysis will be required to ensure the construction of the greenway does not increase the 100-year floodplain along the creek. Portions of the proposed greenway alignment are within a documented 100-year FEMA Floodplain (AE). In addition, two sections will require boardwalk to avoid impacts to adjacent wetlands as illustrated in brown. The northern section of the alignment will run along an existing well road that intersects with North River Road. A small trailhead is also proposed at North River Road to provide access for residents who do not live in the adjacent neighborhoods.

A preliminary estimate was also developed to provide the Township with an idea of proposed costs and enough detail to pursue grant funding if desired. The preliminary cost for the greenway totals \$2 million dollars. It is possible that the Township could split the greenway into sections to reduce the Township's out of pocket costs and maximize potential grant funding. Applicable funding sources for these improvements are detailed within the implementation matrix.



Existing access drive along North River Road



# Bicycle and Pedestrian Support Infrastructure

While creating quality multimodal connections to desired destinations is most critical to enhancing an area's walkability and bikability, supporting infrastructure also needs to be considered. Detailed below are improvements that should be considered when constructing the multimodal improvements.

(Costs below are shown as relative costs. \$ = Low Cost, \$\$ = Medium Cost, \$\$\$ - High Cost)



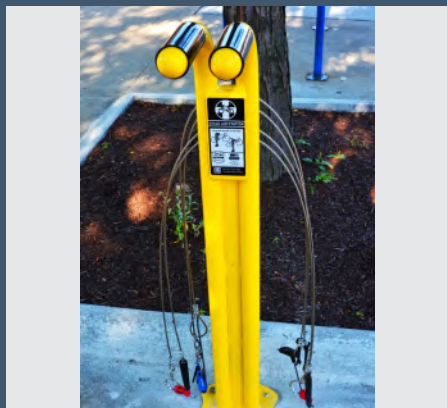
## PEDESTRIAN WAYFINDING COST \$

Pedestrian wayfinding systems are navigational systems that help pedestrians determine where they are and where they need to go to reach a destination. Traditionally consisting of signs, wayfinding systems can now also involve GPS systems and mobile technology. Wayfinding systems can be designed for entire communities or specific districts. Howland Center could benefit from consistent pedestrian wayfinding.



## BICYCLE PARKING COST \$

Installing bike racks at key intersections and adjacent to desired destinations allow a cyclist the ability to take extended trips. Bike parking can generally be accommodated within the sidewalk or treelawn. In some cases, where sidewalk width is limited, bicycle parking can be placed on the street, typically within on-street parking lanes.



## BICYCLE REPAIR STAND COST \$

A bike repair stand includes all the tools necessary to perform basic bike repairs and maintenance, from changing a flat to adjusting brakes. The tools and air pump are securely attached to the stand with stainless steel cables and tamper-proof fasteners. Hanging the bike from the hanger arms allows the pedals and wheels to spin freely while making adjustments.

# Pedestrian Crossing Treatments

Street crossings are points of conflict between vehicle and pedestrian traffic. To ensure that pedestrians are visible and safe at intersections, several proposed treatments are recommended.

(Costs below are shown as relative costs. \$ = Low Cost, \$\$ = Medium Cost, \$\$\$ - High Cost)



## HIGH-VISABILITY/CREATIVE CROSSWALK COST \$\$

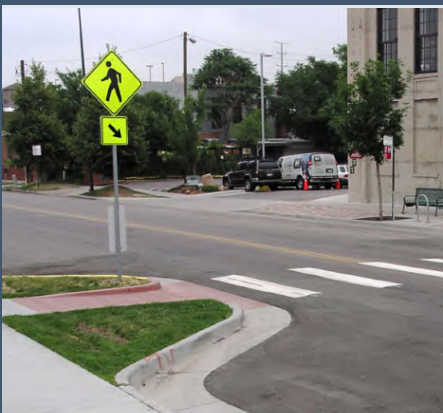
Crosswalks that have a high level of visibility help pedestrians feel more comfortable and improve safety for both pedestrians and drivers. The installation of highly visible crosswalks increases the likelihood that drivers will see pedestrians crossing.

Examples of high-visibility crosswalks include those with a ladder design or diagonal markings. Additionally, creative crosswalks can also be considered (see photo). These crosswalks provide an opportunity for community branding and art projects.



## MEDIAN REFUGE ISLAND COST \$\$

A pedestrian refuge island is one that creates a protected space in the median or center of a street to assist bicycle and pedestrian crossings. Two-way streets with more than two lanes can be difficult for both bicyclists and pedestrians to cross. The construction of a pedestrian refuge island allows people to wait for vehicle traffic to dissipate from a protected gap in the median.



## CURB EXTENSION COST \$\$

Curb extensions are traffic calming devices that physically narrow the roadway, while also giving the appearance of a much narrower roadway. They can create shorter crossings for pedestrians and also reduce vehicle speeds leading to a safer environment for both drivers and pedestrians.



Ensure future residential developments within the Township provide adequate access to adjacent developments and/or major roadway arterials.

Ideally, local streets would form a well-connected, efficient network that provides for safe, direct, and convenient access by a variety of means of transportation from walking to driving. A poorly-connected street network primarily encourages the use of the automobile over other travel modes. It creates longer trips, divides neighborhoods, limits alternative routes to places like schools and shopping areas, and concentrates traffic on a selected number of streets instead of spreading it out across the entire street network.

Subdivision regulations and zoning code revisions can play a critical role in improving and encouraging road and pedestrian connectivity to future developments as well as retrofitting existing ones. The Township should work with the Trumbull County Planning Commission to alter subdivision regulations to ensure future developments are interconnected via roadway, walkways, and trails. The following suggestions could improve interconnectivity within the Township.

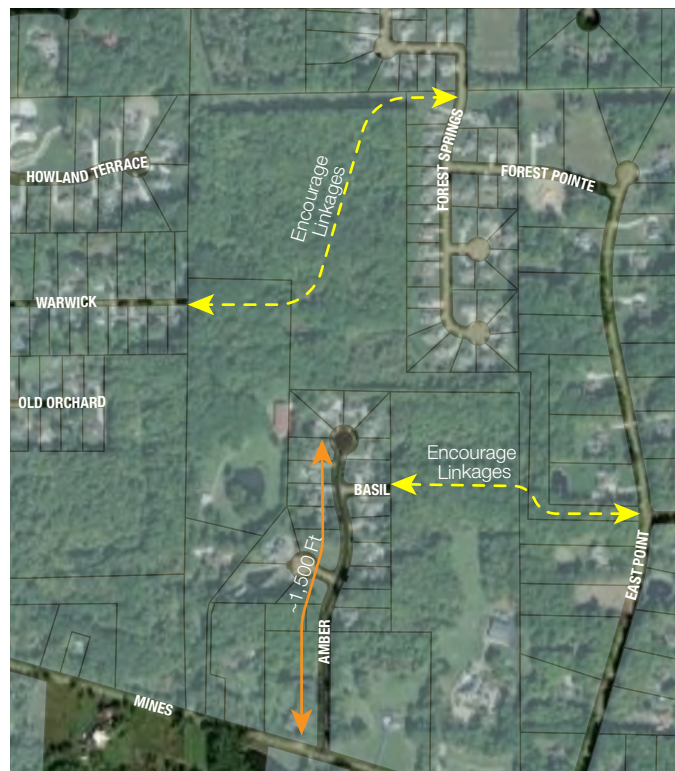
## Limiting Cul-De-Sac Lengths

### Current Regulation

Per Section 508.00 of the Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations the maximum cul-de-sac length is 1,000 feet.

### Suggestion

Restrictions on the use of cul-de-sacs are recommended to improve the overall function of the transportation system over the long term. The International Fire Code suggests that the maximum length of a cul-de-sac be limited to no more than 750 feet. Allowing for longer roadways or higher numbers of dwelling units can lead to significant safety concerns and higher traffic volumes on the cul-de-sac, thereby reducing system connectivity and defeating one of the main purposes of this type of street. The Township should work with the County to consider altering a maximum cul-de-sac length to 750 feet within the existing subdivision regulations.



Sample Connections Map - Howland Springs Neighborhood



## Reducing Block Lengths

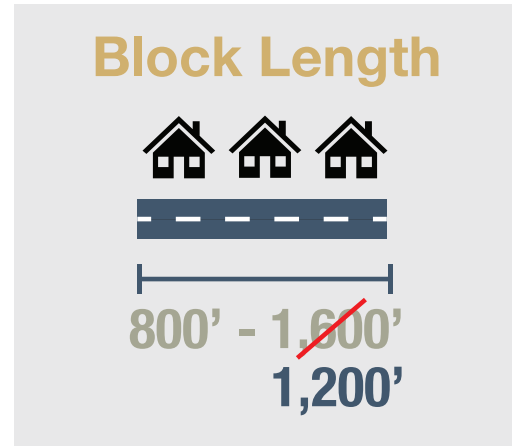
### Current Regulation

Per Section 404.15:

No block shall be longer than one thousand six hundred (1,600) feet, or twelve (12) times the minimum lot width required in the zoning district, and no less than eight hundred (800) feet. Cross streets shall be provided between blocks.

### Suggestion

Block length is used in a number of ways to promote or measure connectivity. A shorter block can create more intersections and, therefore, shorter travel distances and a greater number of routes between locations. The Township should work with the County to consider reducing the maximum block length to 1,200 feet to further promote connectivity.



## Interconnecting Subdivisions

### Current Regulation

Per Section 404.25:

Where blocks are greater than nine hundred (900) feet in length, a walkway easement not less than ten (10) feet in width at or near the halfway point of the block shall be required between streets to provide proper access within the proposed subdivision to schools, recreation areas, shopping centers, and other facilities

### Suggestion

Though neighborhoods are in close proximity, many lack connections between subdivisions. These disconnections encourage more vehicular trips from neighborhood to neighborhood.

One solution to improve connectivity between neighborhoods is to construct a pedestrian walkway as shown to the right. These connections are more cost effective than a new roadway and provide some interconnectivity. The Township should work with the County to consider widening required walkway easements to 15 feet to allow for 10-foot-wide trails to be constructed within these easements.

An example of where a pedestrian connection could be implemented within Howland Township is between Howland Township Park and Westwind Drive as shown to the right.



Source: Street Connectivity Guidance Document.  
Lehigh Valley Planning Commission



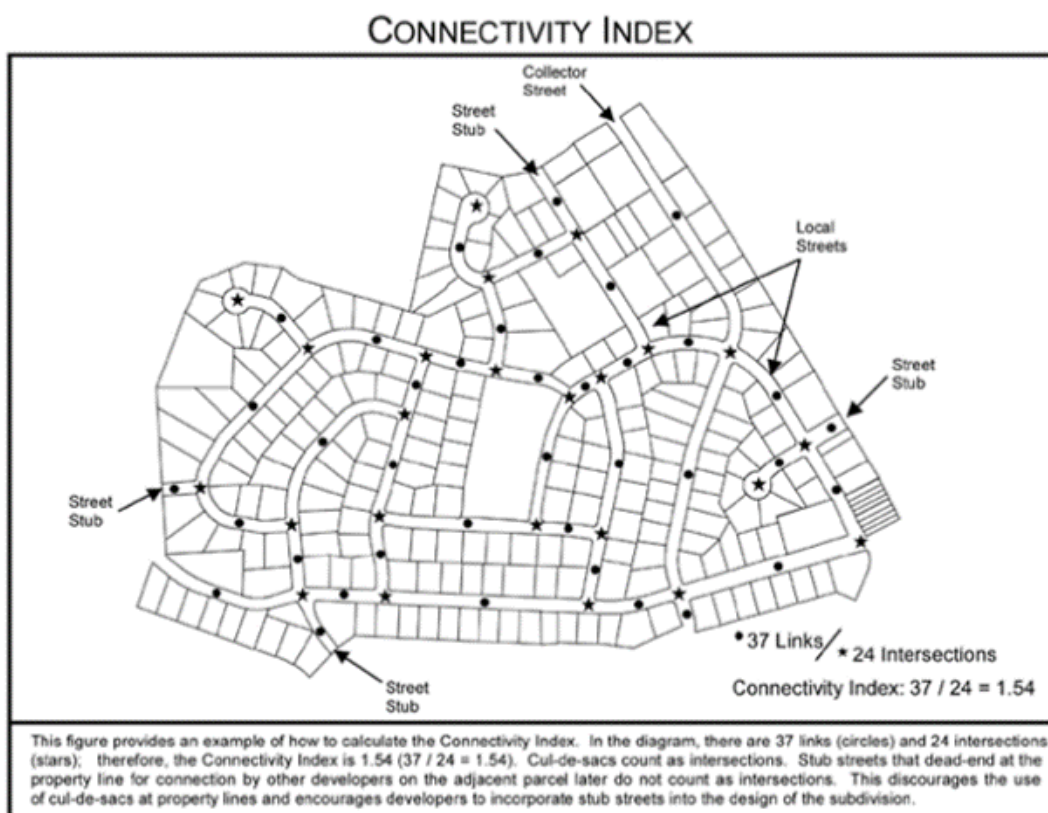
Improved Connectivity Map - Howland Township Park

## Connectivity Index

The Connectivity Index (CI) is a useful measurement tool for municipalities in evaluating and promoting connectivity in proposed subdivision plans. Connectivity Indices have been incorporated into comprehensive plans and subdivision ordinances across the United States. The CI is the ratio of street segments and intersections and cul-de-sacs. Higher numbers indicate a higher level of street connectivity. Cul-de-sacs and street networks with one-way in and one-way out will generally lower the connectivity ratio.

There is no “one size fits all” index number. A higher level of connectivity may be desired in suburban or urban areas rather than in rural areas. Indices may vary across a municipality based on existing land use. According to case studies of cities that adopted a CI and national references on the subject of street connectivity, an index of 1.4 to 1.8 represents an acceptable street network for subdivisions in suburban and urban areas.

A Connectivity Index allows for greater flexibility than using specific block length requirements in designing a development to accommodate environmental features such as floodplains and steep slopes. To use the Connectivity Index in the subdivision review process, local planning commissions must first become familiar with the tool, applying it to recently approved subdivisions before incorporating the index into the subdivision regulations and using it as one of its tools to evaluate connectivity of proposed subdivisions.



Source: Street Connectivity Guidance Document. Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

# Additional Objectives

1

Consider creating an active transportation plan to prioritize non-motorized improvements and leverage grant funding for projects within the Township.

2

Continue to develop and seek applicable grant funding for Howland Springs Road realignment project.

3

Coordinate with ODOT and Trumbull County to assess the need for roadway improvements, including but not limited to walk, bike lanes, and trail improvements throughout the Township.

4

Work with ODOT, Trumbull County Engineer, and Eastgate to maintain and expand the Township's transportation network as needed.

5

Evaluate current and future pedestrian traffic levels generated by schools to facilitate safe pedestrian access to and from school facilities.

6

Partner with WRTA, when appropriate, to expand bus services within the Township.



IMPLEMENTATION

## Implementation Strategy

It is important to understand that the Comprehensive Plan is only a starting point in the identification of various improvements and initiatives that will each undergo their own respective project development processes.

While each project is unique, most if not all will require additional study and refinement. Most importantly, as feasible projects are confirmed and advanced, the public will be reengaged in the iterative process of determining a final course of action. For capital improvements, this means input on proposed details such as project limits, accessibility, and design features. For a zoning amendment, this would include an opportunity to share feedback on proposed regulations relative to permitted/conditional uses, district boundaries, and density.

As the Township moves forward in implementing the vision, projects will be developed based on current priorities and financial considerations. Ultimately, the Comprehensive Plan will serve as a guiding document that Administration and Trustees can reference and leverage as they continue to maintain and enhance Howland as one of the premier communities in Trumbull County.



### Prioritize Investments

Administration and the Trustees should meet after adoption of the Plan to review the implementation matrix and reprioritize near-term and longer-term projects based on current financial considerations, funding opportunities, market demand, and partner interest, if necessary.



### Leverage

Each month, Zoning Commission should have a recurring agenda item to discuss Plan Implementation and capitalize on the latest opportunities to advance strategic initiatives and leverage public-private investment.



### Monitor & Recalibrate

The Trustees should conduct biannual reviews of progress made towards implementing the Plan. The following questions should frame this discussion:

- Did we achieve the goals we set out to?
- What were the challenges?
- Should improvements be made and how?

Based on the biannual reviews, reprioritization of projects and adjustments to implementation strategies may be necessary.

## Implementation Matrix

The implementation matrix detailed on the following pages is meant to aid the Township in prioritizing objectives from this Comprehensive Plan. The matrix is designed to be a living document that the Trustees and staff use to re-evaluate objectives on a biannual basis. The matrix includes information on preliminary costs, potential funding sources, an estimated length of time needed to complete project, and details next steps. The length of time needed to complete each project begins when the project is undertaken by the Township. Some projects may not be undertaken immediately after the Plan's adoption. Priority rankings are based on a scale of 1 through 5, with 1 being the highest priorities and 5 being the lowest.



Howland Township Administration Building



# Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Neighborhoods &amp; Housing</b>					
Collaborate with neighboring communities to develop workforce housing the Bolindale Neighborhood	--	Effort	N/A	2 to 5 years	Conduct Neighborhood Plan with City of Warren  Collaborate with Land Bank/ Port Authority to purchase parcels in area as available
Look to expand senior housing options when practical as regional trends continue to suggest a growing number of seniors are looking to "age in place".	--	Effort	N/A	1 to 2 years	Expand denser residential zoning areas as proposed in future land use map
Advocate for local governments to create regulations limiting the location and operation of short-term rentals (e.g. Airbnbs).	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Monitor State House Bill 563 and advocate for local control to regulate
Where necessary, due to chronic speeding on side streets, consider physical traffic calming tools including speed tables or chicanes to slow traffic and encourage non-motorized activity.	--	\$25K - \$100K	Eastgate Transportation Alternative Program	6 to 12 months	If a street is identified, determine preferred traffic calming device, then install and monitor

## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Neighborhoods &amp; Housing</b>					
Increase access to high speed broadband internet across the Township.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Monitor new trends in broadband speed and ensure Township has access
Consider creating Energy Special Improvement District (ESID) to facilitate future Residential Property Assessed Clean Energy (R-PACE) financing coming to Ohio to incentivize private reinvestment in energy efficient repairs/ upgrades for single-family homes.	--	Effort	N/A	1 to 2 years	Engage the Toledo Port Authority to implement program as they have implemented R-PACE in various locations across the State.
<b>Economic Development</b>					
Partner with the City of Warren to develop a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) on the former BDM site and within portions of the Bolindale neighborhood.	--	Cost & Effort	\$100K	1 to 2 years	Work with City of Warren to determine JEDD limits and complete economic development plan
Consider creating Energy Special Improvement District (ESID) to facilitate Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) financing.	--	Effort	N/A	1 to 2 years	Collaborate with Western Reserve Port Authority and County Commissioners to expand program into Trumbull County; then pass ESID ordinance
Consider creating zoning overlay districts along major commercial corridors that encourage consistent development standards.	--	Effort	N/A	1 to 2 years	Work with Zoning Commission to develop overlay standards

## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Economic Development</b>					
Consider creating shared parking standards or other innovative parking strategies within commercial corridors to encourage density and improve sustainability.	--	Effort	N/A	6 to 12 months	Work with Zoning Commission to adjust parking standards
Create access management standards along commercial corridors to limit driveway access points and improve traffic flow.	--	Effort	N/A	6 to 12 months	Work with Zoning Commission to expand access management standards to all commercial corridors
Create consistent streetscapes along major roadways to provide a cohesive sense of place.	--	Effort	N/A	6 to 12 months	Incorporate as part of overlay districts
Consider removing and/or consolidating CRD-1, CRD-2, and CRD-OI zoning districts.	--	Effort	N/A	6 to 12 months	Revise proposed B1 zoning language
Consider leveraging Tax Increment Financing (TIF) within areas where redevelopment in planning and public infrastructure improvements are needed.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	As redevelopment opportunities arise, create a TIF district to leverage increase in property value
Ensure recommendations from the Golden Triangle Infrastructure Improvement Plan are implemented and that the Golden Triangle Business Advisory Group continues to meet semi-annually.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Schedule quarterly meetings with the Business Advisory Group to continue initiatives



## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Public Health &amp; Community Facilities</b>					
Support programming that increases access to healthy and affordable fresh food.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Continue to promote SNAP, WIC and Farmers Market; Consider zoning changes in Bolindale to encourage urban farming
Provide support for police, fire, and EMS through equipment, service, and staffing grants.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Provide support as needed
Partner with ODNR, Army Corps, and neighboring communities to develop a water trail along the Mosquito Creek	--	\$100K - \$200K	ODNR Paddling Enhancement Grant	2 to 3 years	Engage neighboring communities and parks district to develop water trail plan
Improve the built environment to encourage active lifestyles.	--	Cost & Effort	ODNR Rec Trails State Capital Budget Eastgate TAP Eastgate CMAQ	Ongoing	Pursue funding for identified walk and trail projects
Improve access to medical, mental health, and social services for all residents.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Work with local hospitals/clinics to increase awareness
Protect water quality through greater consideration in land use decisions.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Create Open Space zoning designation to protect Mosquito Creek; Implement green parking and development standards

## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
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### Public Health & Community Facilities

Timely and continual clearing of roadways is recognized by residents and visitors and can have a positive impact on economic activity during periods of inclement weather.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	
Work with the Howland Park Board to maintain and improve recreational opportunities within the Township.	--	Cost & Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Work to expand multi-modal access to recreational amenities
Expand sidewalks and trail connections throughout the Township.	--	Cost Varies	Eastgate TAP ODOT Safe Routes to School Safe Roads and Streets for All	Ongoing	Pursue funding for identified walk and trail improvements; develop active transportation plan
Restore Sloas Barn as a community pavilion.	--	\$400K	ODOR NatureWorks Biannual State Capital Budget Request	1 to 2 years	Work with Metroparks to partner and acquire grant funding to construct.

### Sustainability & Resiliency

Continue to mitigate stormwater runoff in future developments.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Work with Zoning Commission to develop regulations for green buildings and parking lots
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## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Sustainability &amp; Resiliency</b>					
Consider creating an open space/conservation zoning designation to further protect environmentally sensitive land along the Mosquito Creek.	--	Effort	N/A	6 to 12 months	Use parameters detailed within this plan to create open space zoning designation
Consider increasing the Township's tree canopy to help mitigate the impacts of the urban heat island, flooding, and other climate impacts.	--	Cost	ODNR Urban Canopy Restoration Grant	1 to 2 years	Develop Township-wide tree canopy assessment; then pursue funding
Create regulations that promote the use of green infrastructure within surface parking lots to reduce storm water runoff.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Work with Zoning Commission to develop acceptable regulations
The Township should utilize green infrastructure to reduce surface water runoff within public property and along roadway right-of-ways where practical.	--	Cost & Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Consider pilot projects to build awareness; create standards to implement along corridors
Encourage the use of solar powered and energy efficient lighting and Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations, to decrease energy consumption and reduce the Township's carbon footprint.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Adopt EV charging standards in draft form; Add charging stations where appropriate in public spaces



## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Sustainability &amp; Resiliency</b>					
Work with regional partners, including Eastgate Council of Governments and Trumbull County, to pursue electric vehicle charging station funding through State and Federal sources.	--	Effort	U.S. DOT Corridor or Community Charging Program, Eastgate Carbon Reduction Program	Ongoing	Identify competitive project, pursue funding
Continue to acquire, protect, and develop passive recreational amenities on environmentally sensitive land within the Township by pursuing Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Funds.	--	Effort	OPWC Clean Ohio Greenspace Funds	Ongoing	Identify competitive project, pursue funding
Continue to protect watershed health guided by the recommendations of the Lower Mosquito Creek Balanced Growth Plan.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Continue to implement plan
Continue to work with regional partners (e.g. Trumbull County Commissioners, Trumbull Metroparks, etc.) to conserve environmentally significant land along the Mosquito Creek.	--	Cost & Effort	OPWC Clean Ohio Greenspace Grant ODNR Land & Water Conservation Grant	Ongoing	Seek to acquire environmentally sensitive parcels as needed
Adopt hillside regulations that restrict development on steep slopes.	--	Effort	N/A	1 to 2 years	Work with Zoning Commission to develop regulations
Provide trail access to ecologically sensitive areas where practical.	--	Cost & Effort	ODNR Clean Ohio & Recreational Trails Programs	Ongoing	Pursue funding for Mosquito Creek Greenway

## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
<b>Transportation</b>					
Develop a corridor plan for East Market Street from Rosegarden Drive to Howland-Wilson Road that focuses on enhancing multi-modal connectivity, traffic flow, and placemaking elements.	--	\$75K - \$150K	Eastgate Planning Grant	12 to 18 months	Apply for Planning Grant to supplement costs; Solicit consultant RFP; Develop plan
Focus on improving priority trail, bike lane, and sidewalk improvements as identified within this Plan.	--	Costs vary	Eastgate TAP Eastgate CMAQ ODNR Clean Ohio & Recreational Trails Programs	Ongoing	Determine priority segments; pursue funding; develop Active Transportation Plan
Ensure future residential developments within the Township provide adequate access to adjacent developments and/or major roadway arterials.	--	Effort	N/A	1 to 2 years	Work with County Planning to edit subdivision regulations within the Township
Consider creating an active transportation plan to prioritize non-motorized improvements and leverage grant funding for projects within the Township.	--	\$50K - \$100K	Eastgate Planning Grant	1 to 2 years	Solicit consultant RFPs; Develop plan
Continue to develop and seek applicable grant funding for Howland Springs Road realignment project.	--	Determine Cost	Eastgate STBG ODOT Highway Safety Program	2 to 4 years	Apply for funding; develop design plans; reconstruct

## Implementation Matrix

Objective	Priority	Cost/Effort	Funding Source	Length of Project	Next Steps
Coordinate with ODOT and Trumbull County to assess the need for roadway improvements, including but not limited to walk, bike lanes, and trail improvements throughout the Township.	--	Cost & Effort	Eastgate STBG Eastgate TAP Eastgate CMAQ ODOT Highway Safety Program OPWC	Ongoing	Identify priority routes in need of improvements
Work with ODOT, Trumbull County Engineer, and Eastgate to maintain and expand the Township's transportation network as needed.	--	Cost & Effort	Eastgate STBG Eastgate TAP Eastgate CMAQ ODOT Highway Safety Program OPWC	Ongoing	
Evaluate current and future pedestrian traffic levels generated by schools to facilitate safe pedestrian access to and from school facilities.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Continue to monitor pedestrian traffic
Partner with WRTA, when appropriate, to expand bus services within the Township.	--	Effort	N/A	Ongoing	Continue to monitor needs in collaboration with WRTA