

Southeast Focus Area Plan

City of Delaware, Ohio

March 24, 2025

Southeast Focus Area Plan

City of Delaware, Ohio

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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A SPECIAL THANKS TO

The stakeholders and community members who dedicated their time and attention to this important process.

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Planning NEXT

A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

The City of Delaware is a dynamic place that—along with the County and the region—has experienced significant growth in recent years. The Southeast Focus Area was identified as a top priority for planning in the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan (2021) due to recent and anticipated future development. This plan has been created so that as change is proposed and the City is asked to consider development proposals and make investments within its utility service area, it has a clear guide for decision-making. The purpose is to create predictability—for property owners, community members, and others—and to set a high standard for creating quality places.

The Southeast Area is over 3,000 acres—a vast amount of land. It includes a large tract of undeveloped land with large homes clustered, mostly around its perimeter. The time horizon for this plan is ten years, and it is anticipated that development will take place in phases. Active and recently completed development surrounds the subject focus area in each direction. The City can shape this development, and has a particular opportunity to meet demands for a variety of quality housing types while introducing amenities and services to better support them. The complete evolution of the area will also require addressing transportation challenges in accordance with the City's Thoroughfare Plan, which proposes the future expansion of Glenn Parkway as well as east-west connections, as well as to improve connectivity across the existing railroad tracks along the area's southern, eastern, and western boundaries.

In preparing this plan, the planning team and Staff relied upon both technical analysis as well as the insight of stakeholders and the public. Through this work, the plan was created with a focus on managing change while building upon the community's traditions. It prioritizes high-quality design and amenities, a mix of different uses and activities, the creation of livable and distinctive places, and respect for the existing neighborhoods through appropriate transitions and a focus on compatibility between areas.

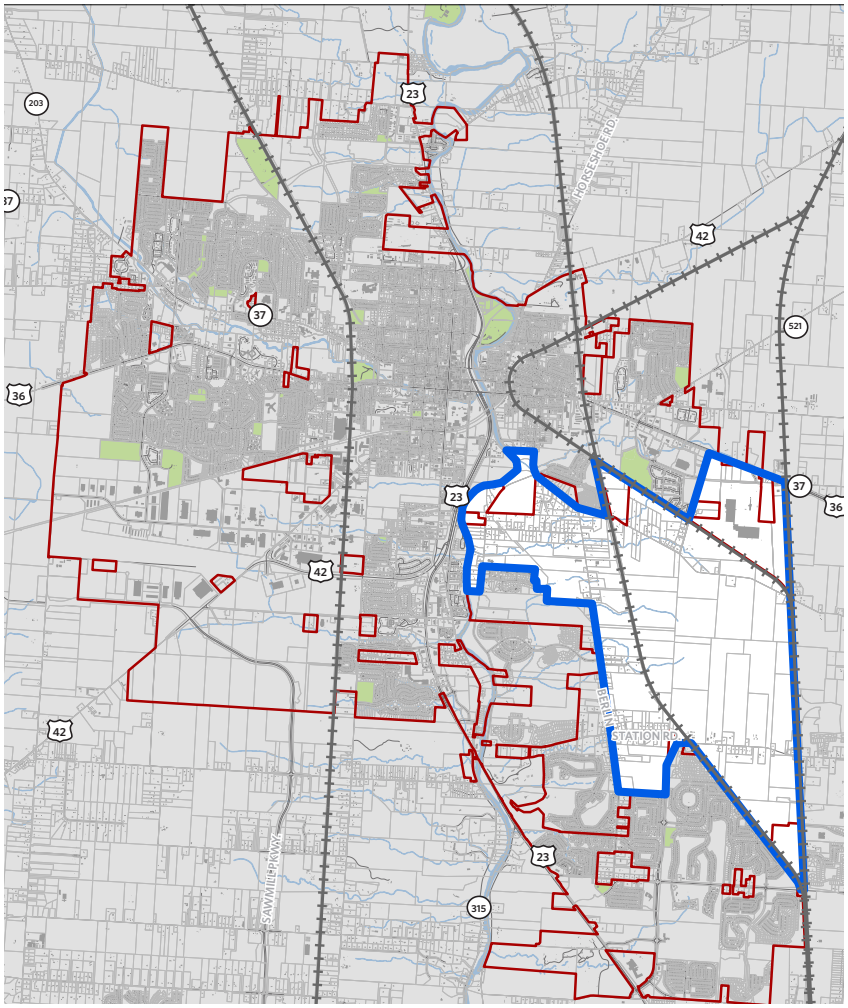
The Southeast Focus Area Plan brings all these elements together in an aspirational document that will have practical applications for all who care about the future of the area over the long term.

1. Introduction



1.1 PURPOSE

The Southeast Focus Area was identified in the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan as one of six areas needing special attention and focus to help guide future land use and development decisions. A variety of active and recently completed development projects surround the focus area in each direction. The City of Delaware has the opportunity to build upon this momentum and manage change while also introducing amenities and services to better support those who live, work, or spend time in the area. Additionally, the plan can help to provide guidance regarding the type, character, and quality of new housing that is anticipated in the area.



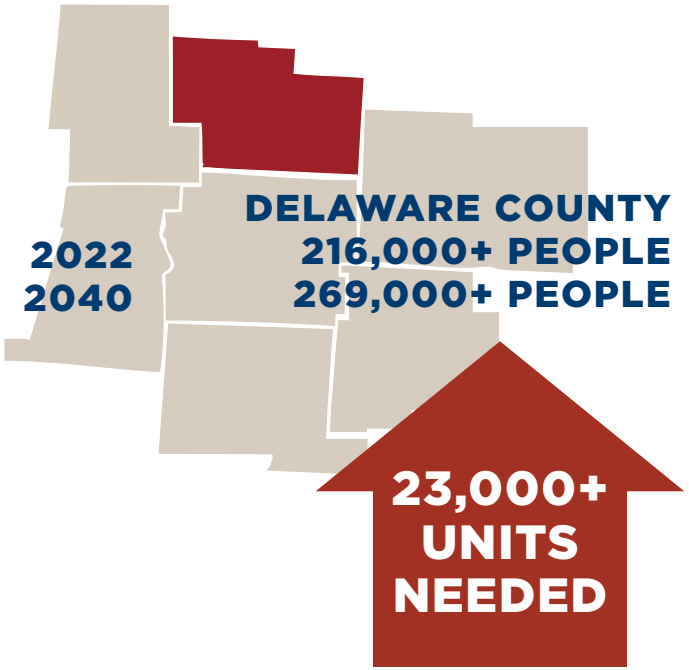
CONTEXT MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

Waterways
Southeast Focus Area Boundary
City of Delaware Boundary

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

REGIONAL HOUSING DEMAND

As demand for housing, in particular, is expected to continue to increase in the County and the region, City leadership has determined that it is important to set clear expectations for new residential construction within its utility service area. Delaware County's population is expected to increase by 25%, to 269,308 people by 2040. To accommodate this increase, 1,170 units of housing need to be built, per year, totaling in over 23,000 units. Additionally, the Columbus MSA is expected to average over 14,3000 new jobs every year through 2050. Central Ohio needs 18,000 new residential permits each year to provide for this job increase. Only 13,000 permits are being created. Decreasing home construction has created strain on Ohio's social, economic, and demographic standing. Just over 19% of Ohio's housing stock was built before 1939 and 6.15% was built 2010 or later.



Sources:

- *2022 ACS 5-Year Estimate, Ohio Housing Policy White Paper (2023) prepared by Montrose Group[3]*
- *Delaware County Housing Strategy (2023) prepared by Urban Partners[2]*

1.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles were developed early on in the planning process to explain the underlying values guiding planning in the area. They reflect sentiments shared by City Staff, a Steering Committee, and Technical Advisory Group that helped guide the plan's development, and the community members who were engaged in the work.

- Allow for a variety of housing options and creative development projects.
- Create a stronger sense of place by connecting the Southeast area to the rest of the community (physically and culturally).
- Leverage development to complete the connection of Glenn Parkway.
- Coordinate development with roadway improvements to ensure adequate site access for community needs, ease of traffic flow, and public safety.
- Integrate amenities to create a vibrant mix of uses and services to the benefit of residents and local workers.
- Promote land use compatibility and consistent buffering along the edges of existing neighborhoods and agricultural areas.
- Encourage more intense uses along the future Glenn Parkway corridor and near US 36/SR 37 that will serve the growing community.
- Increase employment opportunities within the southeast area while maintaining appropriate transition of uses.
- Support the growing need for civic, institutional, and recreational uses within the community.
- Ensure that new development is supported by realistic and fiscally responsible water and sewer infrastructure investments.
- Contribute to Delaware's fiscal health by promoting an approach to development that leverages potential public and private investments to generate revenue.

1.3 DELAWARE TOGETHER

The Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan (2021) identified six Focus Areas where significant change could reasonably be expected to occur within a decade of the plan's adoption, including the Southeast Focus Area.

GUIDANCE FOR AREA PLANNING

Delaware Together recognized that the large, undeveloped southeast district was experiencing and could expect to continue to experience development interest. The plan emphasized the need to shape development along the Glenn Parkway connection, transitioning from suburban commercial to rural residential as uses move farther away from this corridor. Additionally, Delaware Together emphasized that this focus area should encourage walkability and connectivity by extending the Community Network into the area and integrating neighborhood-scale parks.

CONCEPT MAP AND DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Delaware Together included a concept map (right), which indicated potential future development types that could support the vision for the area. The map was anticipated to be refined through a future area planning process. It included a combination of business campus (just north of US 36/SR 37), commercial corridor (along the Glenn Parkway extension), and suburban and suburban mixed residential comprising of both single family and other housing types.



Source: Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan (2021)

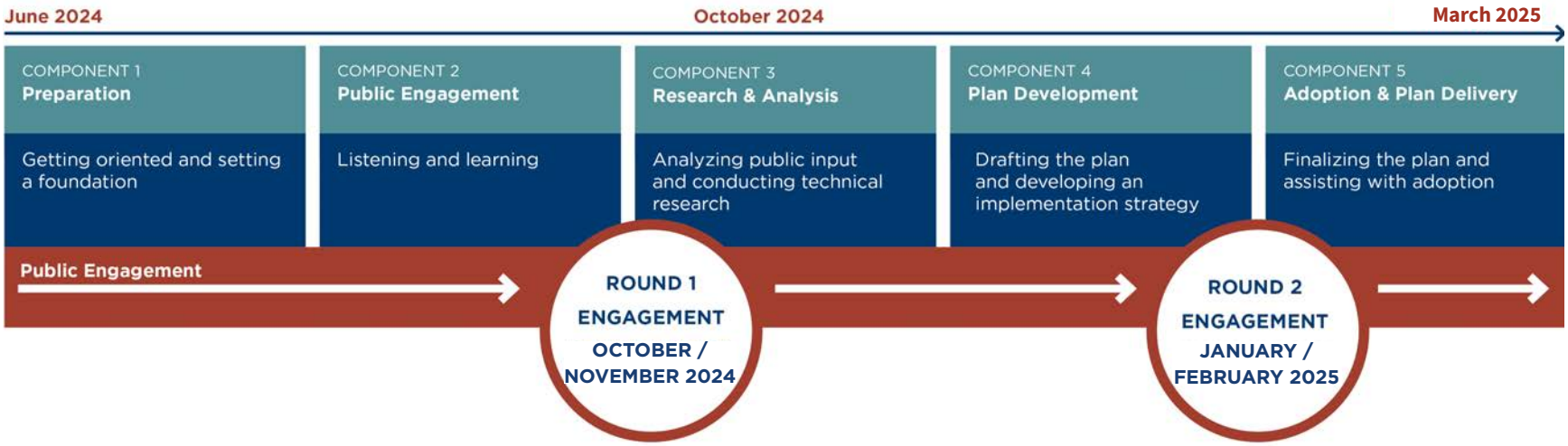
CONCEPT MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

- Suburban Residential
- Commercial Corridor (Neighborhood)
- Business Campus
- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Concept Roads

Notes: Map created in 2019. Concept roads do not reflect current thoroughfare plan.

1.4 PUBLIC PROCESS

Two rounds of public engagement were held during the planning process. Each round included opportunities for both in-person interaction and online review and comment.



TIMELINE

The planning process began in June 2024 and lasted nine months. It was shaped both by input from the community and technical research and analysis. The process included five components of work; the two rounds of public engagement were designed to inform the third, fourth, and fifth components.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The planning team conducted an open call for Steering Committee members that was convened with representation from community members in the planning process, that assisted with public outreach, and provide guidance to the planning Staff at crucial steps in the process. Community members expressed interest in helping to guide the future of the area and submitted applications to serve on the Steering Committee. These individuals also acted as spokespersons for the planning effort and assisted in facilitating implementation.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

A Technical Advisory Group was created to provide technical expertise on key topics for the Southeast Focus Area. This group consisted of professionals and individuals with knowledge of key topics relevant to the plan such as community services, parks and open space, schools, transportation, and utilities. They assisted planning Staff in addressing questions regarding the direction of development in the area and engaged in discussions around constraints and opportunities in the area.

STAKEHOLDERS

Targeted meetings and interviews were conducted with stakeholders to better understand Delaware's needs, and the hopes and concerns of certain groups that would be most impacted by changes to the area. Stakeholders included major property owners, City and local Township officials, school district officials, and others.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Members of the public were invited to participate in two rounds of public engagement. Public workshops and online materials focused on positioning the Southeast Focus Area in the growing region and provided the opportunity for input on how change should be shaped through proactive planning. Public input helped to inform the direction of the plan, including how quality of place could be encouraged within the area.





2. Framework



2.1 SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA TODAY

The Southeast Focus Area, spanning over 3,000 acres, is entirely within the City's utility service area but is only partially developed. The area is close to major regional corridors (US 23 and US 36 / SR 37) and is divided by railways. There is active development surrounding the area with interest from property owners and private groups continuing this development within the Southeast Area.

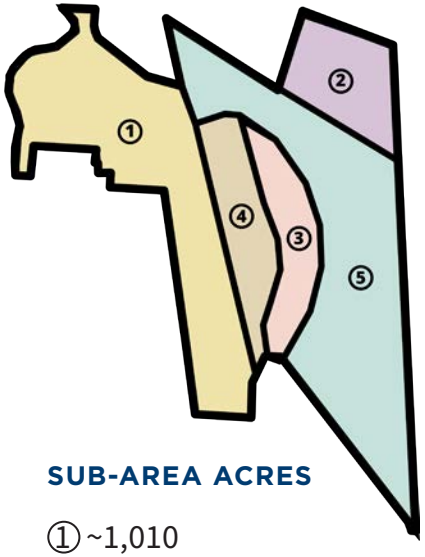
EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use in the Southeast Area is mainly agricultural land with pockets of residential neighborhoods that are comprised of detached single-family homes on larger lots. Outside of the Kroger Distribution Center along US 36 / SR 37, minimal land within this area is currently used for commercial, civic, or employment-oriented uses. The geography of the planning area includes sub-areas with distinct identities, necessitating a sensitive approach to future change; see page 24 for reference. The land north of the railroad tracks includes mostly employment uses, west of the railroad tracks comprises a sub-area that includes mostly single-family residential development, and the land between the railroad tracks contains primarily flat agricultural land.

EXISTING ZONING

Existing zoning in the planning area generally reflects existing land uses. Most of the land outside the City's jurisdiction is farm residential, and the areas within current City limits are a mixture of agriculture, commercial, light, and heavy industrial. Flexibility with future rezoning applications will be necessary to facilitate the goals of the Southeast Focus Area Plan. City Staff has undertaken the process of updating the Zoning Code, with an anticipated adoption of the new code in 2025.

~3,070 TOTAL ACRES



SUB-AREA ACRES

① ~1,010
② ~350
③ ~300
④ ~390
⑤ ~1,020

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

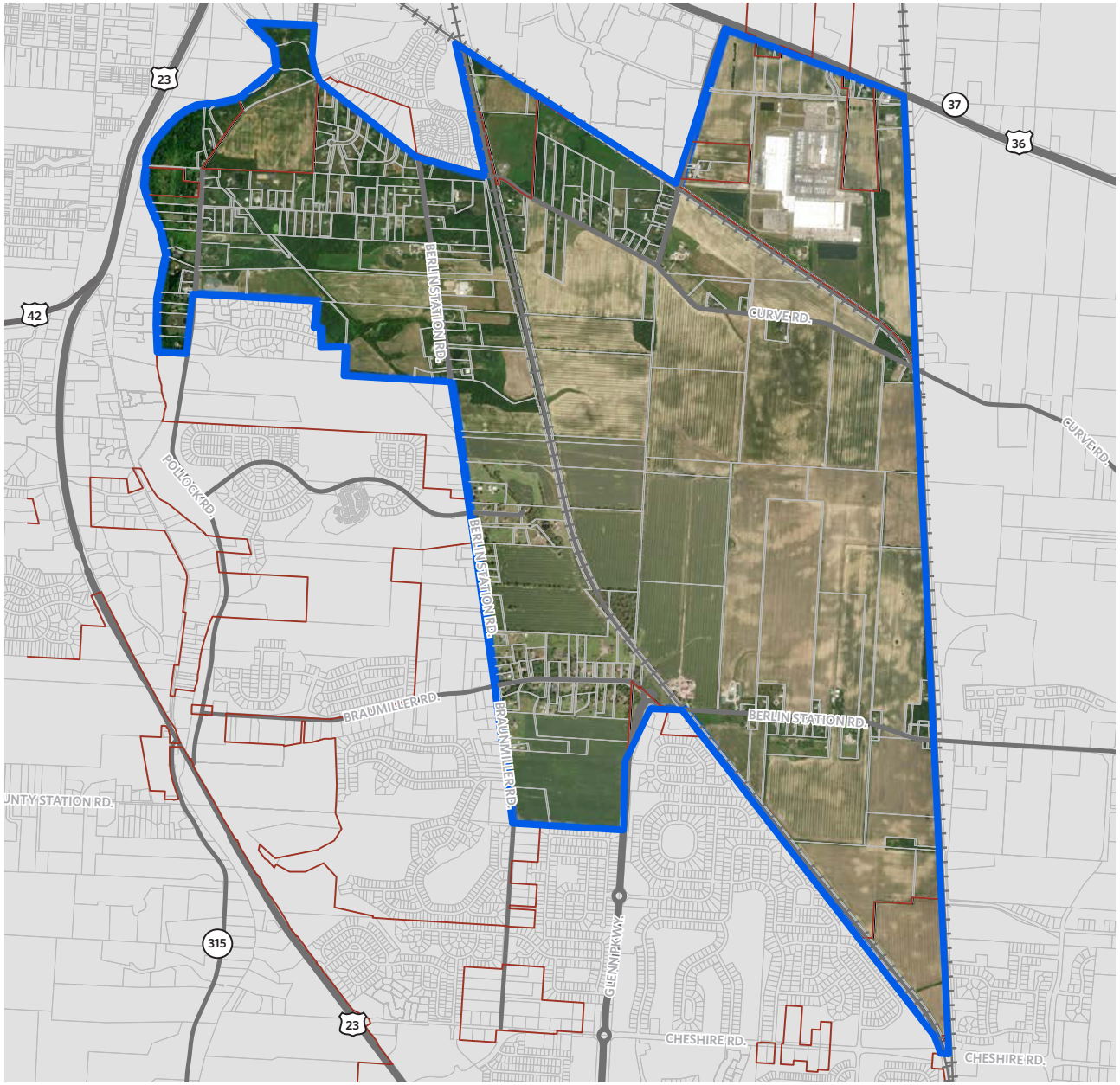
The entire Southeast Area is within the City's utility boundary and can be serviced by existing utilities. However, future utility extensions would be required before most of the land can be developed. The existing road network has limited connectivity and is constrained by the location of existing railways. Additional east-to-west arterial roads are not expected to be built in the planning area. As the area develops, further pressure will be placed upon Curve Road and Berlin Station Road. Due to this, Glenn Parkway's connection would be needed to support the full build-out of the planning area. Improving the few existing gateways and other roadway improvements may also be necessary to boost the community's quality of life.

TOWNSHIPS AND COUNTY CONTEXT

Most of the Southeast Area extends outside the City's jurisdiction but is within the City's overall utility service area (as defined in Delaware Together). Since adopting the comprehensive plan, development activity across the county has increased, with multiple annexation requests being made within the Southeast Area. Due to these trends, the City has sought to establish more control over future development within this area to ensure the goals of Delaware Together are achieved. The Southeast Focus Area Plan includes specific recommendations for implementing a clear, efficient, and predictable game plan for annexation petitions and development requests.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS CONTEXT

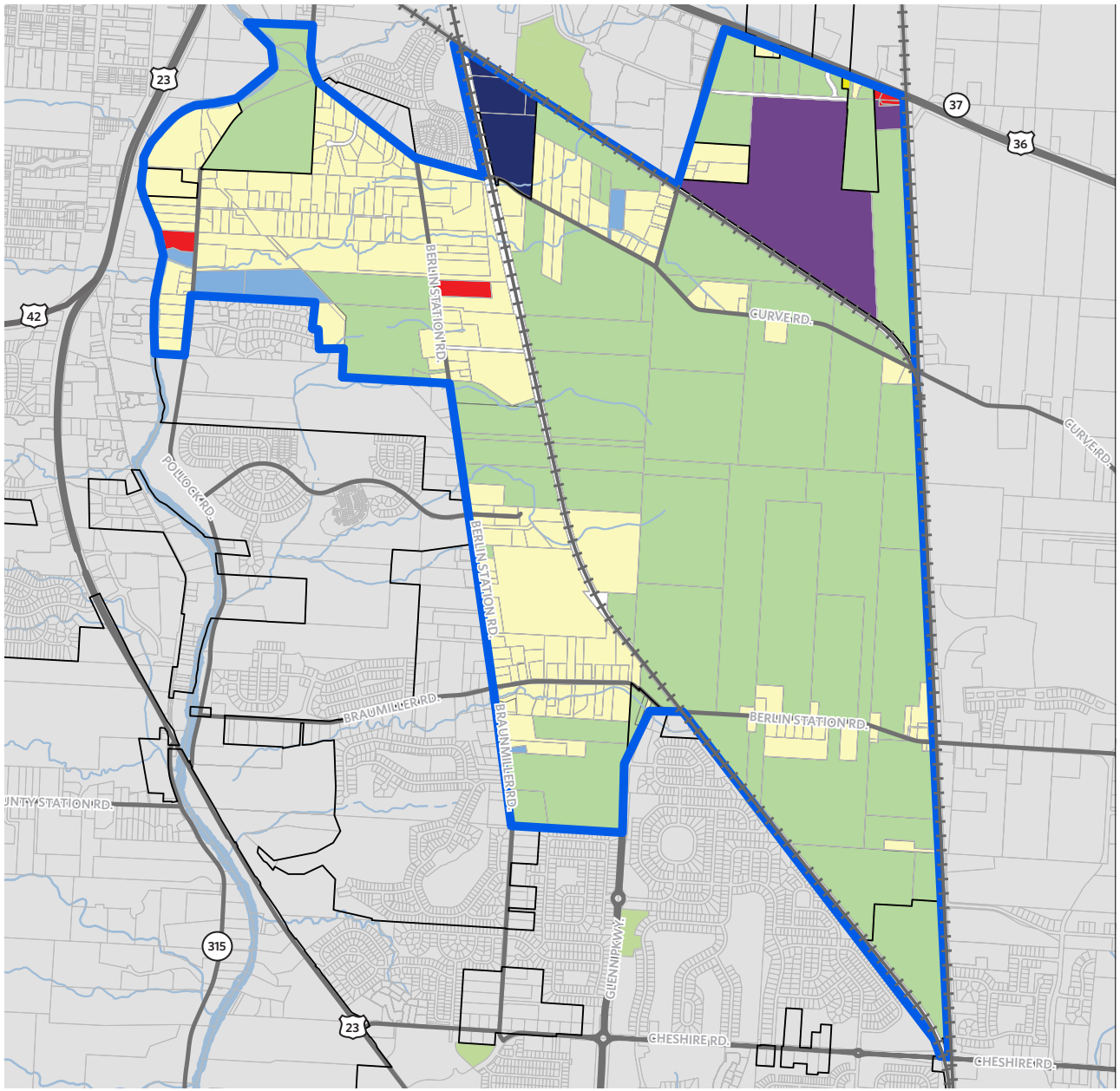
The southeast planning area extends between the Delaware City Local School District and the Olentangy Local School District. Regional growth has put pressure on both school districts to accommodate the increasing student population. This has resulted in a need for additional school buildings, field space, and athletic amenities. Due to increasing land costs, the school districts have not been able to compete against the private sector for available land. The Southeast Area offers an opportunity to address these needs as future development projects have the means to dedicate land to address these concerns. The Southeast Focus Area Plan includes specific recommendations for increasing amenities and services for the community.



EXISTING AERIAL MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

- Parcels
- City of Delaware Boundary
- Southeast Focus Area Boundary
- Railway

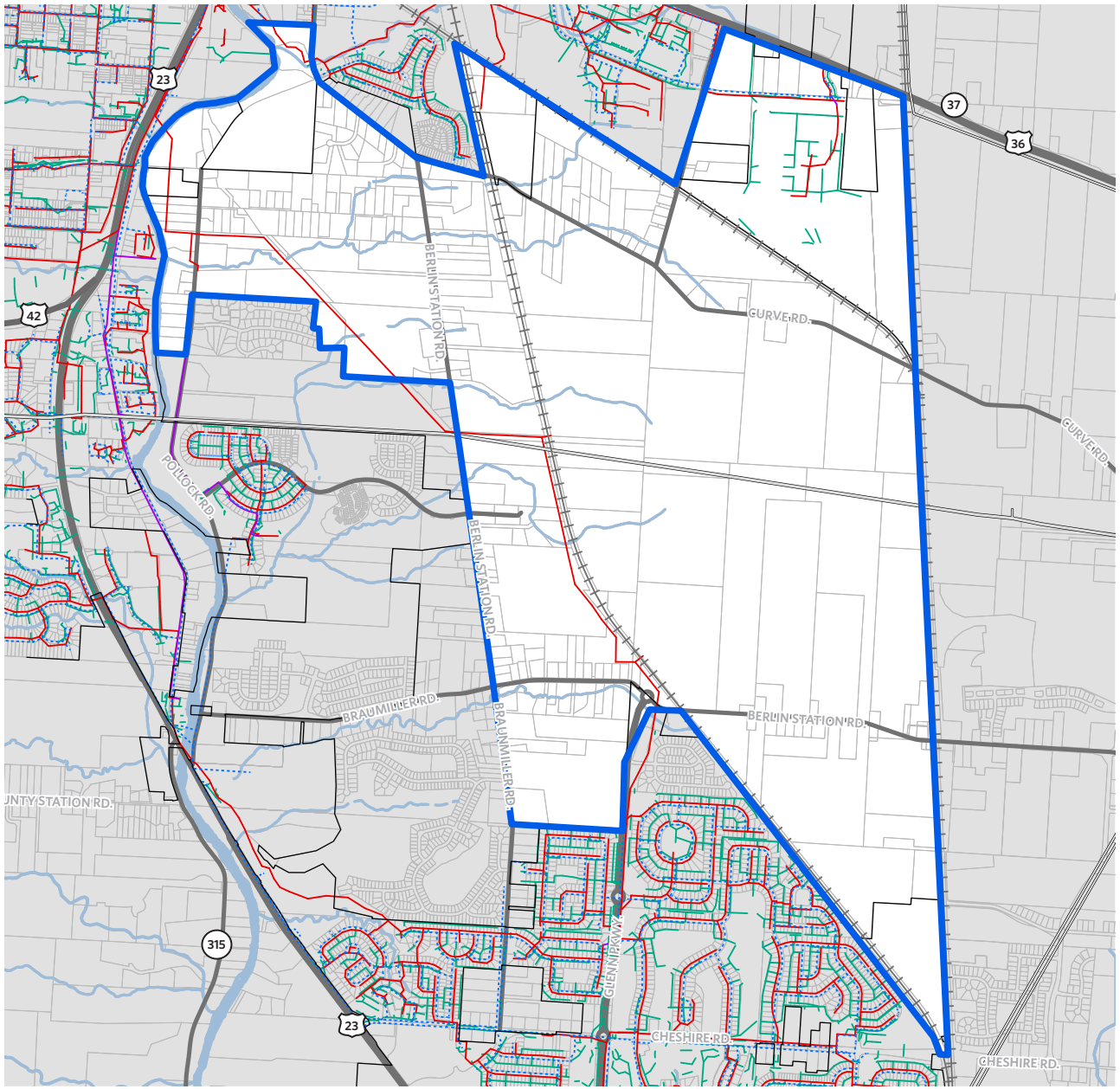
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



EXISTING LAND USE MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Agriculture
- Government
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Parks
- Waterways
- Parcels
- City of Delaware Boundary
- Southeast Focus Area Boundary
- Railway

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

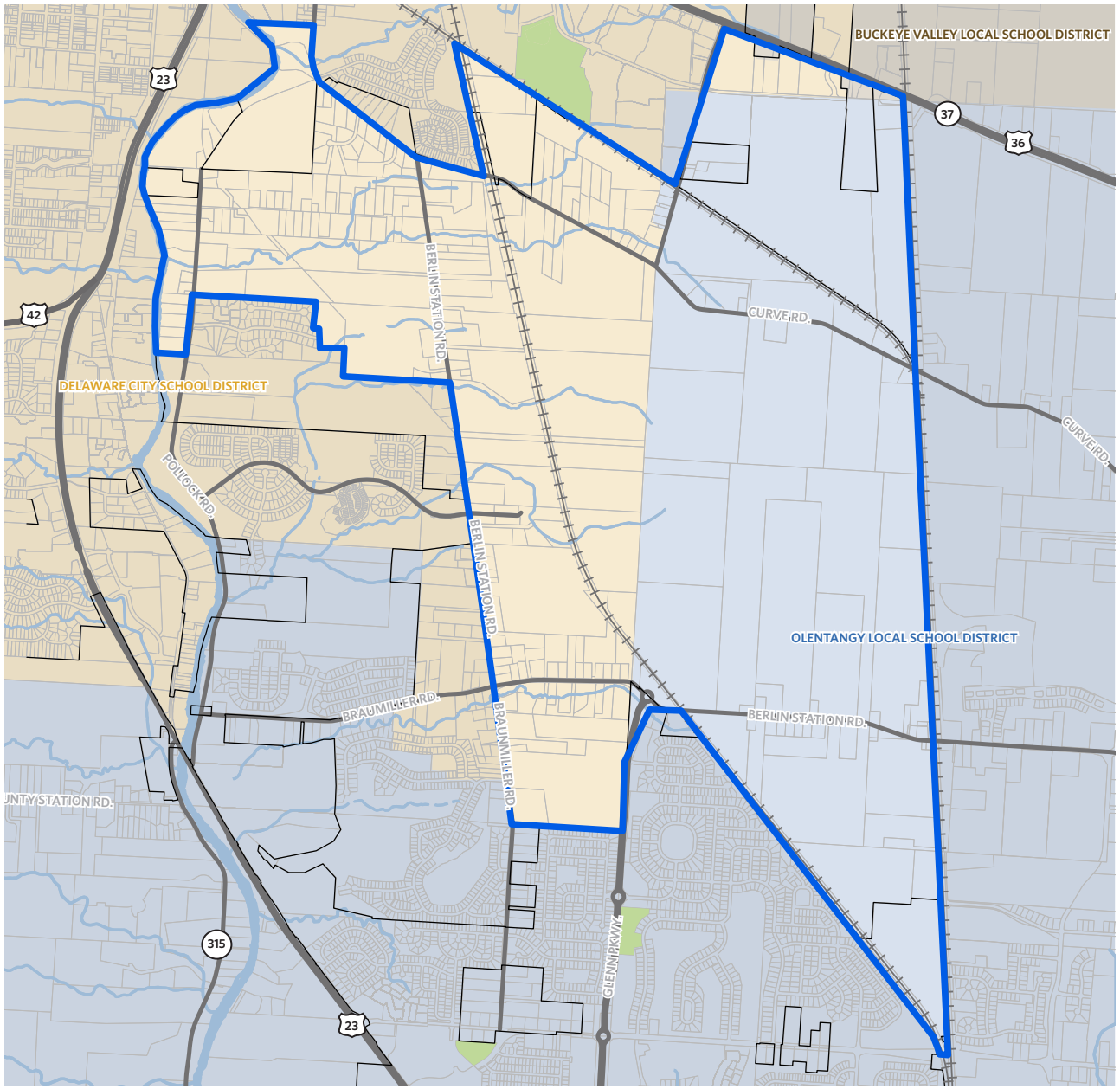


EXISTING AREA INFRASTRUCTURE MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

- Sanitary Gravity Main
- Storm Water Main
- Sanitary Force Main
- Water Pipes
- Electrical Transmission Line
- Waterways
- Parcels
- City of Delaware Boundary
- Southeast Focus Area Boundary
- Railway

Note: The Existing Area Infrastructure Map only displays City water and sewer.

0 0.38 0.75 1.5 Miles



EXISTING SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

- Olentangy Local School District
- Delaware City School District
- Buckeye Valley School District
- Parks
- Waterways
- Parcels
- City of Delaware Boundary
- Southeast Focus Area Boundary
- Railway

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

FISCAL HEALTH CONTEXT

In 2022, as a follow-up to the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan, the City of Delaware engaged a consultant to conduct a fiscal analysis. This analysis assessed the City's long-term fiscal sustainability and estimated the impact of development types in Delaware Together on net revenues. It included demographic and employment projections needed to project revenues and expenditures.

The study found that there is currently a structural excess of revenues over net expenditures. This continues over the current decade, but the more rapid projected expenditure growth causes a steady decrease in excess. The analysis identified an array of "business-type activities" that rely on user fees to be fully self-supporting. These include water, sewer, and storm sewer services, refuse services, and the Hidden Valley Golf Course. The airport within the Southwest Focus Area also falls into this category. In addition, the plan identified street maintenance as a particular concern and need.

While a range of strategies were identified to address a potential growing gap between expenses and revenue, the document put forth that, by far, the most productive way to address the narrowing excess of revenues over expenses is to increase the income tax rate. However, this does not signify that the City should focus solely on revenue-generating land uses. Housing, for example, at all levels was a needed development in the City.

The already adopted Southwest Focus Area Plan directly targets the growth of commercial and industrial properties to contribute positively to the budget. Specifically, through a vibrant mix of uses and a focus on placemaking opportunities, to attract visitors and new residents and improve quality of life. The Southeast Focus Area Plan furthers these themes by promoting the expansion of genuine workforce housing (see page 3 for additional information), which would help to support the needed growth of commercial and industrial properties. The Delaware County Housing Strategy (2023) noted that the median sale price of a house in Delaware County has increased over 35% ($325,250 to $440,000) between 2017 and 2022. The trend of rising housing costs can be mitigated by promoting more targeted housing construction; the recommendations in this plan target specific housing types needed by the community. Implementing the City's comprehensive and focus area plans will enable it to be well-positioned to improve its fiscal position in the long term. This approach will also help address community concerns regarding amenities, services, and infrastructure as the City will have clarified to the public where development should be expected.

2.2 CONSTRAINTS

Natural and environmental features in the Southeast Focus Area, as well as the existing infrastructure map presented in Section 2.1 of this plan, will influence how, where, and what type of development could move forward. The planning area contains some complex development-related constraints and essential environmental regulations to be aware of.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Edge Development. Achieving the most appropriate balance between the existing character of Delaware while meeting the demand for housing, amenities, services, and other uses needed in the region. Managing this balance can consume Staff resources and necessitates flexibility in the development review process.

Transportation. The cost of infrastructure has grown in recent years and is compounded by outward growth. Connectivity to existing public road networks must be established while managing the long-term fiscal impact of maintenance. With new east-to-west arterial roads not expected to be built in the planning area, a traffic impact study will be critical to assess future development's potential impact on the existing road network, particularly along Curve Road and Berlin Station Road.

Topography. The land is relatively flat in sub-areas 2, 3, and 4, with few topographical features. Topography is, therefore, not a major constraint for these areas. However, sub-area 2 contains steep slopes that feed into multiple creeks that are recognized blue-line streams. The grading issues and riparian setbacks create a notable constraint in this area.

Water Bodies. The map on page 17 depicts a limited number of small pond areas that should be considered relative to new development.

Wetlands. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, several small wetland areas exist within this area. These constraints are depicted on page 18.

Tree Stands. Clustered wooded areas and individual trees exist in sub-areas 2, 3, and 4. However, many of the existing trees are not high quality, and it is reasonable that some could be removed and replaced elsewhere with higher-quality trees. Sub-area 1 has a high concentration of trees throughout its boundary. A tree inventory could be conducted to assess tree quality to help inform tree preservation/removal decisions.

Soil Quality. This plan does not include an analysis of soil quality. Therefore, the City should work with the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District to determine if any soil quality-related constraints in the area might impact new development.

Utilities. The map on page 13 depicts the areas from which utilities could be extended into the Southeast Area. The City has the capacity to service the planning area with water and sewer, but the infrastructure will need to be extended as development moves forward. In addition, development will also be constrained by high-power electrical lines and any existing utility easements.

OLENTANGY WATERSHED

The Southeast Area exists within the Olentangy Watershed, where stormwater runoff is regulated through best management practices set by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). Development projects that disturb one or more acres of land must obtain a permit to discharge stormwater from the site. The City's engineering department helps guide this practice and maintains close communication with the OEPA to ensure compliance with these regulations.

Critical elements within the Southeast Area include:

Riparian Areas. These transition areas between flowing water and terrestrial (land) ecosystems are composed of trees, shrubs, and surrounding vegetation that stabilize erodible soil, improve surface and groundwater quality, increase stream shading, and enhance wildlife habitat.

- Riparian areas have also been referred to as "blue-line streams."
- OEPA has set regulations (e.g., setbacks, mitigation requirements, etc.) for development in or near these areas to protect the ecosystems. Preservation of riparian areas has many benefits for both nature and civilization, as many people enjoy the beauty they provide.

Wetlands. Wetlands are areas where water covers soil all or part of the time. They are important because they protect and improve water quality, provide fish and wildlife habitats, store floodwaters, and maintain surface water flow during dry periods.

- In the past, large-scale wetlands were improved by development projects to become a significant community amenity (e.g., City of Delaware Mill Run Park).

Stormwater Retention. Stormwater is rainwater or melted snow that runs off streets, lawns, and other sites. When stormwater is absorbed into the soil, it is filtered and ultimately replenishes aquifers or flows into streams and rivers.

- Development sites typically construct retention basins (ponds) to meet OEPA regulations for managing stormwater discharge. Various options exist (dry and wet basins, underground storage, rain gardens, etc.) to reduce stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., parking lots, rooftops, driveways, streets, etc.).
- With the flat land available in the Southeast Area, a regional stormwater retention strategy would minimize the land needed throughout the planning area to manage stormwater properly.

Olentangy Watershed MS4 Regulated Areas. Stormwater runoff often contains pollutants. Most stormwater discharge locations require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. These permits are regulated depending on the specifics of the surrounding area's municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4). The MS4s each have a program that helps decide how to best discharge pollutants.

- The entire Southeast Focus Area is within the Olentangy Watershed, which has multiple MS4 areas (identified on the adjacent map).
- More information can be obtained from the City's engineering department or the OEPA website: https://epa.ohio.gov

Sources: EPA (epa.gov) and OEPA (epa.ohio.gov) websites

2.3 OPPORTUNITIES

The Southeast Area includes a unique opportunity due to the large amount of undeveloped land within its boundary. Active and recently completed development surrounds it, and the City can help to set the direction of future development at an early stage for an emerging growth area. Through careful planning, the area can accommodate housing, amenities, and services in an integrated way that helps to support communities that provide a high quality of life.

With careful planning, the City can sustainably focus growth by reducing sprawl and maximizing rural compatibility–which is unlikely to occur with piecemealed development. To do so, more intense and denser uses must be located along key corridors within sub-areas 2 and 3, which would then transition into the Suburban Residential and Suburban Mixed Residential development types found in sub-area 4.

In addition, landscape buffers, including parks, trails, and natural areas, should be encouraged along the edges of development sites. Such planning would create an environment where landscaping and open space directly border existing homes, and suburban residential development buffers these preexisting neighborhoods from more intense uses along critical corridors.

A RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY IN A GROWING REGION

As Central Ohio continues to grow, the City should capitalize on the opportunity to shape new development in the Southeast Area. With suitable investments, the Southeast Area can become one of the County's next great places and a major draw for new businesses and residents.

The most pronounced intensification in Central Ohio has recently occurred outside the I-270 outer belt. This would indicate that development is spreading outward from Columbus's core and that people are following new developments. Throughout the region, many workers travel outside their local jurisdiction and across county lines to find employment. Evidence of such in the City was found in the economic analysis completed with the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan and the Delaware County Economic Development Strategic Plan.[6]

The Central Ohio Region has three large employment centers with proximity to major roadways that are actively creating new employment opportunities. These examples include:

- The Intel site in-between US 62, SR 37, and SR 161.
- The Honda Marysville Auto Plant is located along US 33.
- Rickenbacker International Airport and surrounding employment centers are close to US 23.

The Southeast Focus Area is directly adjacent to two of these corridors (SR 37 connecting to the Intel site and US 23 connecting to the Rickenbacker International Airport) and is within commuting distance (approximately 45 minutes or less) to two of these sites (Intel and the Honda Marysville Auto Plant). To provide residential options for workers in proximity to places of employment and bolster employment and income tax potential from these opportunities, a variety of housing options are needed. The proposed development character types and recommendations in the plan lay a framework the City can use to capitalize on these economic opportunities and the chance to build residential areas that are attractive for workers.



During the planning process for the Southwest Focus Area, there was a strong emphasis on workforce housing. These discussions have continued as part of the planning for the Southeast Focus Area.

TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIVITY

The US 36 / SR 37 corridor has experienced a sharp increase in development activity in recent years. The Delaware County Economic Development Strategic Plan anticipates increased interest over the next decade due to the Intel project and other significant regional developments. This presents an opportunity for prioritizing employment opportunities and transportation improvements in sub-area 2.

The direction of future development in sub-areas 3 and 4 will depend upon the connection of Glenn Parkway. As this roadway is constructed, sensitivity will be needed to maintain "good neighbor" practices with adjacent farm fields and township homes.

To maximize these corridors' economic and residential development potential while maintaining the quality of life for local communities, resources must be leveraged to ensure that these corridors do not experience the congestion and poor access control existing along US 23 (in Delaware County). For development to start, improvements would be needed for the two new/updated gateways identified on page 25.

COMMUNITY CENTERS

The Southeast Focus Area can become a place that plans for tomorrow while building upon the community's traditions. High-quality design and amenities and a mix of different activities, services, and uses can help make this area vibrant and unique for the growing community. Respecting the existing neighborhoods by finding the correct transition and buffers can help complement Delaware's traditions.

The proposed development character types for the Southeast Focus Area include Commercial Corridor and Neighborhood Scale Activity Center. These typologies intend to provide amenities and services to the local population but do not intend to compete with the Glennwood Shopping Center. With limited potential for retail in the region, the focus of the Southeast Area is to supplement future residential neighborhoods with amenities and services to facilitate a walkable environment but not as a regional destination. Locating civic uses (such as parks, recreational centers, schools, police/fire stations, libraries, and humane societies) would supplement the purpose of a community center.



At the community workshop held as part of the planning process, members of the public expressed a strong interest in ensuring that transportation connectivity is prioritized in the area.

3. Future Character and Land Use



3.1 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

The sub-areas Map on page 25 is a comprehensive guide to the City's vision for developing and utilizing land in the Southeast Focus Area. The development types described on pages 36 - 43 draw from and expand upon those presented in the Delaware Together Comprehensive Plan. These descriptions can be found on subsequent pages.

A CHARACTER-BASED APPROACH

This plan takes a character-based approach to shaping the City's future development. While the Development Character Types include both primary and secondary land uses, they also display the desired built form in each area.

There are many advantages to a character-based approach, as opposed to a more conventional approach focused only on land use, including the following:

- Describing an overall intent (e.g., building form, scale, etc.) for each development type that helps City Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, developers/ builders, and the public understand and visualize whether a particular development proposal fits the intent of the character type.
- Setting more explicit expectations about the physical characteristics of development in an easy-to-understand format that conveys new development standards that can be used to assess how well a development aligns with community character.
- Indicating the key infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, streetlights, signage, landscaping, etc.) that would be beneficial or expected in a particular area.
- Establishing a foundation for zoning code updates and other regulations.

SUB-AREA GUIDANCE

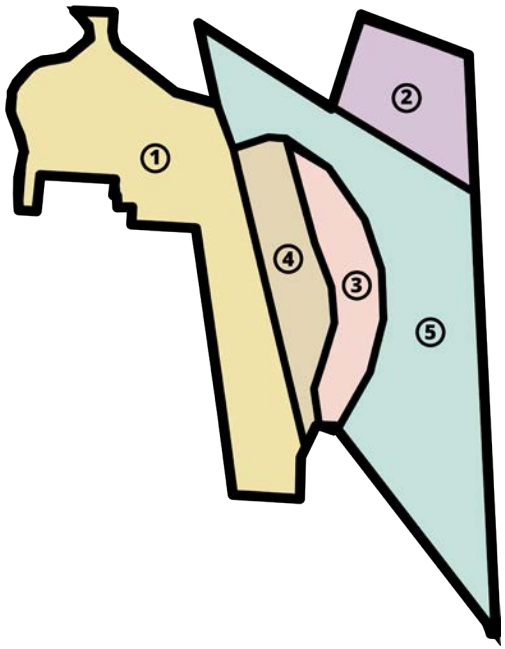
The Southeast Area has been further organized into five sub-areas based on existing characteristics and anticipated future change. Specific guidance is provided for each sub-area, including an overall purpose statement followed by additional information to help guide change including appropriate and potentially appropriate development character types.

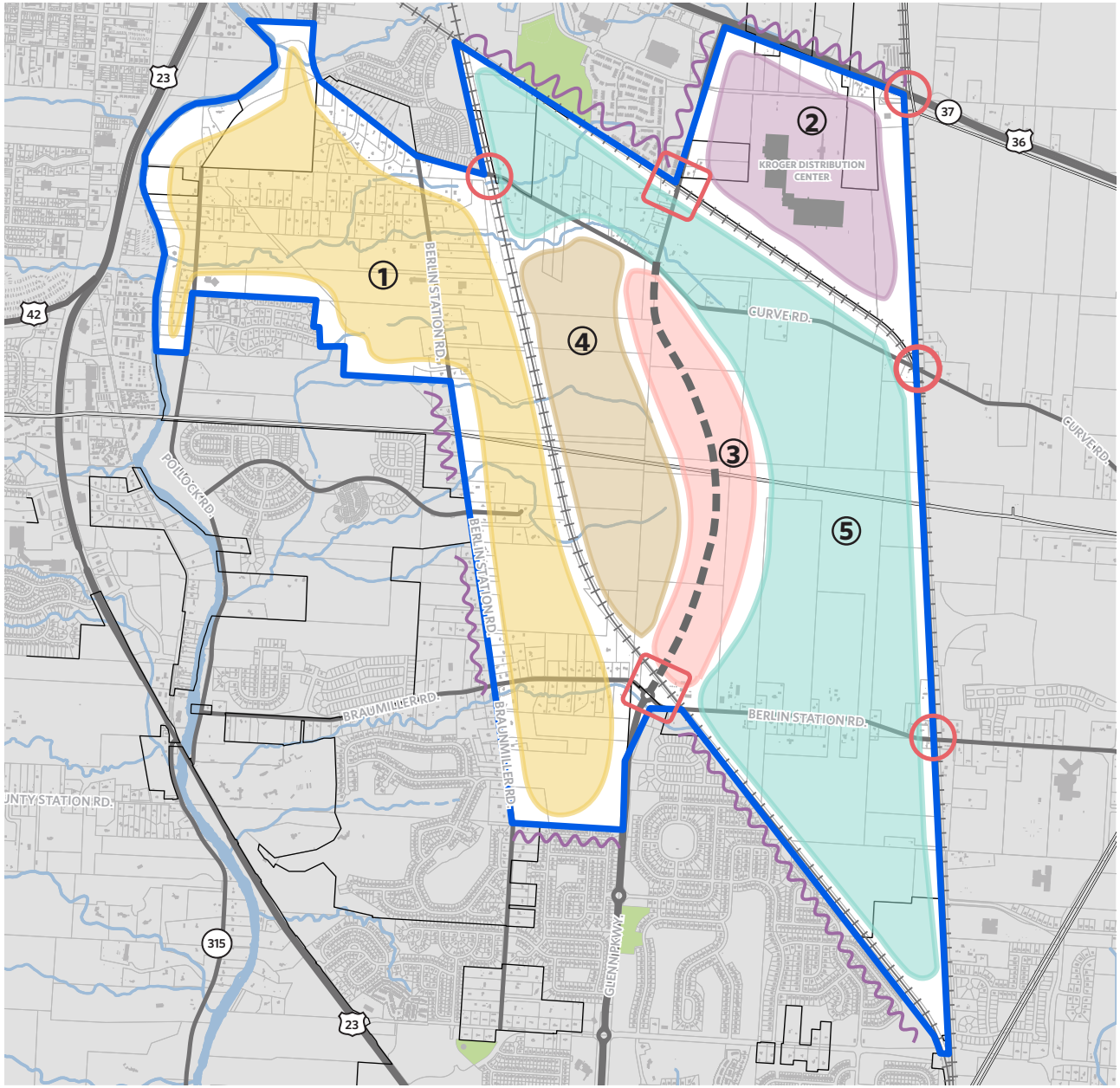
SUB-AREA MATRIX

This matrix is a tool for navigating the eight recommended development character types and the five sub-areas identified within the Southeast Focus Area. Each development character type and sub-area has a full page of information explaining the reasoning behind what is appropriate, potentially appropriate, and not appropriate. This guidance supports the plan's recommendations and focuses on a big-picture approach to the area's future.

● Appropriate
◉ Potentially Appropriate
○ Not Appropriate

Character Types	Sub-Areas ①	②	③	④	⑤
Commercial Corridor	○	●	○	○	○
Neighborhood Scale Activity Center	○	○	●	○	○
Business Campus (Innovation)	○	●	○	●	○
Business Campus (Multi-Innovation)	○	●	◉	◉	○
Multi-Family Complex	○	◉	●	◉	◉
Suburban Mixed Residential	●	○	◉	●	●
Traditional Small Block	◉	○	○	○	●
Suburban Residential	●	○	○	○	●





SUB-AREAS MAP, SOUTHEAST FOCUS AREA

- Existing Railway Crossing
- New/Updated Railway Crossing
- Area from which utilities could be extended
- Parks
- Waterways
- Buildings
- Parcels
- City of Delaware Boundary
- Southeast Focus Area Boundary
- Railway
- Conceptual Glenn Parkway Connection
- Electrical Transmission Line

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

SUB-AREA 1

This sub-area prioritizes the existing character of the community with an allowance for residential infill development to connect and blend into existing neighborhoods. The beauty of existing trees and natural slopes should be emphasized as vacant land develops.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The boundary of this sub-area (~1,010 acres) includes The Ravines of the Olentangy subdivision to the north, the Glennross subdivisions to the south, a railway to the east, and the Terra Alta subdivision as well as the Olentangy River to the west.

CONSTRAINTS:

- Olentangy River
- Elevation changes
- Blue line steams and riparian setbacks
- Higher concentration of existing homes

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Mixed Residential

POTENTIALLY APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Traditional Small Block–must be limited to detached single-family homes and include public open space areas. The compact nature of this character type can allow a developer to achieve the desired number of units while disturbing less land.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO STRENGTHEN QUALITY PLACES

- Utilize the river with walking trails sensitively designed to defend natural elements such as riparian setbacks.
- Pursue opportunities to convert rails to trails.
- Improve connectivity for all transportation methods.
- Allow a mix of housing construction styles that are in scale with the surrounding neighborhoods.

SUB-AREA 2

This sub-area prioritizes employment opportunities and transportation improvements. There is an opportunity to include residential development when a proposal can address a connectivity concern. The existing character along the US 36 / SR 37 corridor allows for larger buildings to be built, which maximizes value for the City's fiscal health.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The boundary of this sub-area (~350 acres) includes US 36 / SR 37 to the north, a railway to the south and east, and existing Glenn Road to the west. Across Glenn Road is the Glennwood Shopping Center and the Quail Pass development.

CONSTRAINTS

- Irregular lot shapes and sizes.
- Roadway improvements are needed.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Business Campus Innovation
- Business Campus Multi-Innovation
- Commercial Corridor

POTENTIALLY APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Multi-Family Complex—must include workforce and/or affordable housing units [page 41 for term definitions] and the development must contribute to transportation improvements within the planning area.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO STRENGTHEN QUALITY PLACES

- Make 36/37 a gateway into the City.
- Pursue rails to trails opportunities (bike trails are needed).
- Encourage low-income housing (density can be maximized here).
- Pursue a hotel; a larger-scale building would be appropriate here.

SUB-AREA 3

The sub-area prioritizes the connection of Glenn Parkway, which necessitates a more intense development pattern to fund its construction. The overall Southeast Area needs more connectivity, and this sub-area would provide that to the larger Delaware community. In addition, this sub-area (~300 acres) would be an ideal location for civic, institutional, and recreational amenities to support the community.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The boundary of this sub-area loosely extends around the conceptual connection of Glenn Parkway, from Curve Road at the north to Berlin Station Road at the south.

CONSTRAINTS

- Cost and incremental construction of Glenn Parkway extension.
- Impact of development on the congestion of Curve Road and Berlin Station Road.
- A need to establish appealing gateways.
- The location of existing utilities will control the phasing and direction of development.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Multi-Family Complex
- Neighborhood Scale Activity Center

POTENTIALLY APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Suburban Mixed Residential—must contribute enough funding toward the connection of Glenn Parkway to allow uses that provide less financial value (e.g., single-family housing) and provide appropriate screening and buffering for residential uses.
- Business Campus Multi-Innovation—must prioritize transitioning into Sub-Area 3 through design upgrades such as high-quality building facades and limiting uses to those that can appropriately coexist near residential homes.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO STRENGTHEN QUALITY PLACES

- Connect Glenn Parkway, but limit curb cuts.
- Maximize walkability and accessibility.
- Encourage design consistency along the corridor but allow for some variation
- Focus on addressing civic needs (schools, parks, police/fire).
- Pursue a hotel; a smaller-scale hotel building would be appropriate here.
- Limit (not prohibit) single-family; the focus must be sustainable development.
- Utilize natural elements as much as possible.

SUB-AREA 4

The sub-area prioritizes an opportunity for mixed-use development to facilitate the transition between Glenn Parkway and the active railway. Multiple options will increase the future value needed for transportation improvements despite the sub-area's geographic constraints. This boundary reinforces the theme of buffering existing rural homes.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

An active railway extends along the western boundary, and the future Glenn Parkway will extend along the eastern boundary. To the north is Curve Road, which contains a distinct rural residential character. Access to Sub-Area 4 (~390 acres) will be reliant upon transportation improvements in Sub-Area 3.

CONSTRAINTS

- Land used for agriculture.
- Streams and riparian setbacks (west half).
- Borders an active railway
- Reliant upon the initial development of sub-area 3.
- Electric transmission lines.
- The location of existing utilities will control the phasing and direction of development.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Suburban Mixed Residential
- Business Campus Innovation

POTENTIALLY APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Multi-Family Complex—must include large-scale open space areas, contain a high-quality design (e.g., four-sided architecture, masonry facades, peaked rooflines, etc.), and must provide significant buffering from adjacent existing homes.
- Business Campus Multi-Innovation—must prioritize transitioning into Sub-Area 3 through design upgrades such as high-quality building facades and limiting uses to those that can appropriately coexist near residential homes.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO STRENGTHEN QUALITY PLACES

- Provide a mix of employment opportunities and commercial services to support the City.
- Avoid locating residential units along the active railway. Use non-residential uses to buffer.
- Integrate open space and greenways into residential areas.
- Integrate civic uses into residential areas to facilitate the transition into sub-area 3 (where more intensity is recommended).
- Carefully design new and improve existing collector roads (impact of potential school site, relief for Berlin Station and Curve).
- Development along Curve Road should be kept to a residential scale. Consider limiting access from Curve Road to "emergency only" for Sub-Area 4 if supported by the Fire Chief and City Engineer.

SUB-AREA 5

The sub-area prioritizes blending residential uses to create an appropriate transition from Glenn Parkway to existing rural homes. High-quality building design, landscaping, and buffers within this sub-area should be expected. Where feasible, parks and recreation opportunities could also be provided.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Railways surround the boundary of this sub-area (~1,020 acres). Five gateways serve as entrances/exits for this area. To the north is existing Glenn Road, to the south is existing Glenn Parkway, and to the east and west are Curve Road and Berlin Station Road (see red circles on map). The north and south gateways need improvements (see red squares on map).

CONSTRAINTS

- Pockets of single-single family homes and land used for agriculture.
- Encompassed by railways.
- A need to establish appealing gateways.
- Electric transmission lines.
- The location of existing utilities will control the phasing and direction of development.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Traditional Small Block
- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Mixed Residential

POTENTIALLY APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER TYPES

- Multi-Family Complex—must include large-scale open space areas, contain a high-quality design (e.g., four-sided architecture, masonry facades, peaked rooflines, etc.), and must provide significant buffering from adjacent existing homes.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO STRENGTHEN QUALITY PLACES

- Provide a mix of housing (both typology and affordability).
- Maximize walkability and accessibility – connect east/west to Glenn Parkway.
- Integrate open space and greenways into residential areas.
- Integrate civic uses into residential areas to facilitate the transition into sub-area 3 (where more intensity is recommended).
- Carefully design new and improve existing collector roads (impact of potential school site, relief for Berlin Station and Curve).
- Uphold good neighbor standards (e.g., maintain development sites, adhere to noise ordinances, keep roadways clean, be respectful with traffic and parking, etc.) with the existing residential homes and farm fields.

COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Commercial frontage development is intended to serve the community and is typically located along major corridors or intersections. Uses may include retail, office, services, restaurant, recreation, and other uses in varying scales. Screening walls or landscaped berms shall be used between these areas and adjacent neighborhoods. An upgraded design is expected in keeping with other such places in the City.

INTENT

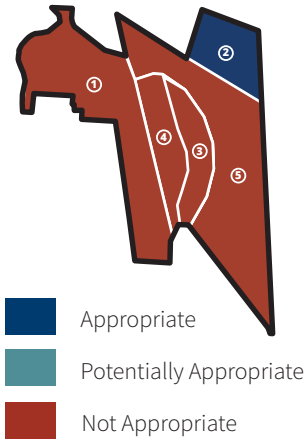
- Incorporate buildings that can accommodate a range of desired functions, providing amenities and services to the area and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Support quality building design in terms of architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.
- Promote design for various modes of transportation (walk, bicycle, automobile, transit) to enhance connectivity.
- Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points along corridors to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.

PRIMARY USE

Commercial, Office

SECONDARY USE

Retail, Services, Restaurants, Recreation, Auto Oriented Business



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE ACTIVITY CENTER

Residential-style neighborhood-compatible architecture providing a local destination for the Southeast Area. It is generally pedestrian-oriented with minimal parking and is usually located on a major road with no internal street network. It may include mixed-use buildings or be adjacent to small apartments or townhouses.

INTENT

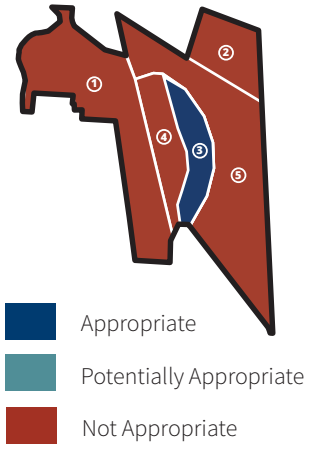
- Built at a scale that allows the building to blend into the middle of a residential neighborhood to provide a needed service to the community.
- Support quality building design regarding architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping
- Foster a walkable environment where alternative transportation methods (walking, bicycle, scooters, public transportation) can be the primary form of transportation.
- Maximize space through adaptive reuse of existing buildings or locating parking behind the building.

PRIMARY USE

Office, Retail, Services, Restaurants

SECONDARY USE

Restaurants



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







BUSINESS CAMPUS (INNOVATION)

An adaptation of a Business Campus where Research and Development companies, strong institutions, and other private entities develop integrated strategies that support thriving innovative ecosystems and attract entrepreneurs, startups, and business incubators.

INTENT

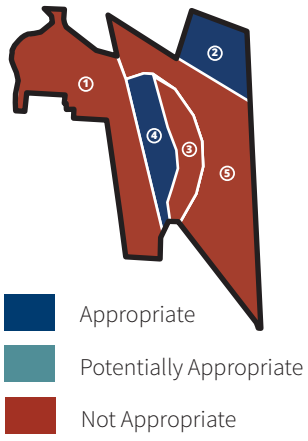
- Provide flexible space to support a variety of low-impact but high-value industrial activities.
- Encourage the transition of existing industrial uses near residential areas to lower-intensity uses more compatible with residential neighborhoods.
- Provide buffering through landscaping and building placement where flex employment sites are adjacent to residential areas.
- Encourage the use of higher-quality building materials and landscaping.

PRIMARY USE

Light Industrial, Office

SECONDARY USE

Commercial



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







BUSINESS CAMPUS (MULTI-USE INNOVATION)

An adaptation of the Business Campus that includes amenity-rich uses such as hotel lodging, short-term rentals, restaurants, and tourism.

INTENT

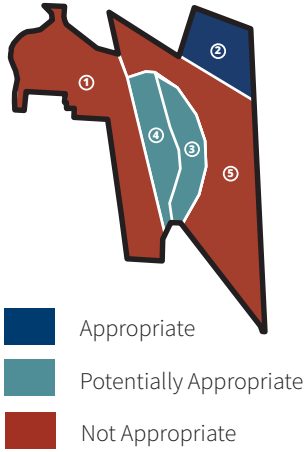
- Allow for synergistic activities that may include more conventional business park uses along with other compatible uses.
- Promote design for various modes of transportation (walk, bicycle, automobile, transit) to enhance connectivity of neighborhoods and employment centers.
- Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- Support quality building design in terms of architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.

PRIMARY USE

Commercial, Office, Hotel

SECONDARY USE

Retail, Services, Restaurants, Fuel Station



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







MULTI-FAMILY COMPLEX

Full-block apartments or smaller townhouses and condominiums, usually in concentrations of 60+ units within a development. These could include up to 12-20 units in three- or four-story buildings or be smaller in scale.

INTENT

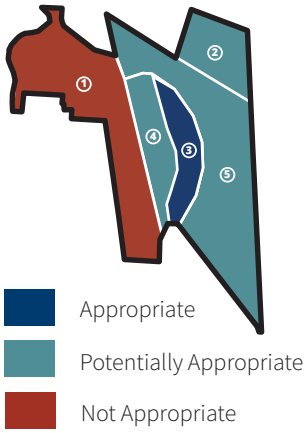
- Provide workforce housing with a high-quality design. The region has experienced a sharp increase in the cost of housing, making it difficult for workers to find quality homes within a reasonable commute.
- Focus on multi-family and "missing middle" housing (e.g., townhouses, condos, etc.) development near commercial and activity centers.
- Support quality building design regarding architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular / pedestrian connectivity.

PRIMARY USE

Residential (small- and large-scale multi-family, townhomes, condominiums, and cottage courts), Residential Care Facility (Assisted Living, etc.)

SECONDARY USE

Civic / Institutional, Open Space (plazas, private recreation areas, passive reserve areas)



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







SUBURBAN MIXED RESIDENTIAL

There are various housing types in one development. Typically, a street will have similar types, but they could vary between adjoining streets. The edges of development sites and major intersections can include neighborhood-scale commercial development. Buildings maintain a similar scale throughout the area.

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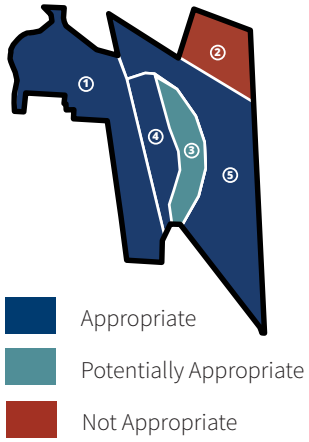
- Focus on multi-family and “missing middle” housing (housing types such as duplexes and row houses) development near commercial and activity centers.
- Support quality building design in terms of architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.
- Support nodes of mixed-use, commercial, and civic activity to allow for services and amenities within walking and biking distance.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular / pedestrian connectivity.

PRIMARY USE

Residential (single-family detached, single-family attached, and small-scale multi-family)

SECONDARY USE

Office, Neighborhood-scale Commercial, Open Space (community parks, neighborhood parks, passive reserve areas)



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







TRADITIONAL SMALL BLOCK

A mix of residential types, with townhouses and three-story homes sitting at the sidewalk edge and small rear yards or side alleys connecting to a shared open space. Housing types vary block-to-block, which allows a mix of uses over a larger area. On-street parking is common. The focus is to create a human-scale environment.

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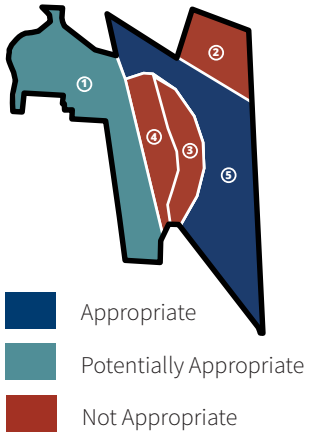
- Provide a variety of housing products that are attractive to different demographic groups and lifestyle preferences.
- Focus on more intense multi-family and missing middle housing development near commercial and activity centers.
- Support higher quality building design regarding architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular / pedestrian connectivity.

PRIMARY USE

Residential (single-family detached, single-family attached, two and three-family, and small-scale multi-family)

SECONDARY USE

Civic / Institutional, Open Space (pocket parks, passive reserve areas)



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Primarily characterized by individual subdivisions or neighborhoods with a specific street and block pattern adjacent to ones with a different pattern. A common characteristic of these neighborhoods is homogeneous housing types and architectural styles in a block, along a street, or clustered in pods around a shared open space.

INTENT

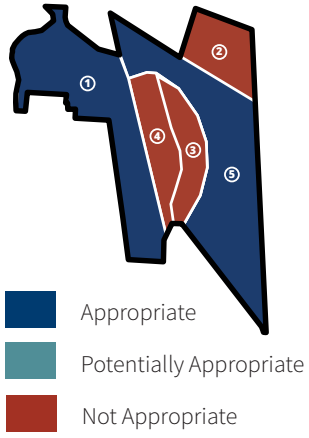
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular / pedestrian connectivity.
- Allow residential infill that complements existing character to support a range of living options, such as attached residential or accessory dwelling units.
- Maintain and expand public realm features including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks

PRIMARY USE

Residential (single-family detached and single-family attached)

SECONDARY USE

Agriculture, Open Space (pocket parks, neighborhood parks, passive reserve areas)



DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES







4. Implementation



4.1 GOALS AND ACTIONS

The following actions are intended to support the guidance provided for each sub-area for the Southeast Focus Area. They reflect key priorities for the City of Delaware and are designed to be implemented within the ten-year time horizon for this plan. As development moves forward within the Southeast Focus Area, the actions should be revisited and reassessed and may need to be modified to meet changing needs.

DEFINITIONS

Goal: An outcome expressed in simple terms. Goals reflect, at a high level, what the community cares about.

Action: A specific recommendation (programs, policies and projects).

Key definitions are included in Appendix 5.1.

The actions are organized under the following broad goals:

- Provide a variety of housing options for the community.
- Improve connectivity between neighborhoods and destinations.
- Increase amenities and services for the community.
- Ensure development is attractive and high-quality.
- Protect the community's physical and social assets.
- Implement a clear, efficient, and predictable game plan for annexation petitions and development requests.

A. PROVIDE A VARIETY OF HOUSING OPTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY.

A.1 **Increase the availability of workforce housing.** Local employers and other community members have expressed a need for more attainable workforce housing to attract and retain quality workers in Delaware. The development of 'missing middle' housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, multi-generational housing, and small-scale apartment buildings in the Southeast Area, will address this community need. The Development Character Type Map has indicated appropriate locations for this type of housing while maintaining an appropriate use transition to preexisting neighborhoods. An ideal development scenario would result in integrating workforce housing across multiple neighborhoods rather than segregating them into one location.

A.2 **Promote multiple types of residential development along the future Glenn Parkway.** A major (arterial) roadway such as Glenn Parkway can support a mix of uses with varying degrees of intensity without significantly impacting the character of surrounding neighborhoods. This corridor can support multi-family housing with multiple stories in certain locations, which can help attract commercial and retail uses to support the surrounding neighborhoods within the Southeast Area. Implementation of this practice necessitates appropriate transitioning of uses, such as decreasing the intensity of uses moving outward from this corridor, culminating in single-family detached development.

A.3 **Promote multiple types of residential development along the future Glenn Parkway. A major (arterial) roadway such as Glenn Parkway can support a mix of uses with varying degrees of intensity without significantly impacting the character of surrounding neighborhoods.** This location can support multi-family housing with multiple stories in certain locations, which can help attract commercial and retail uses to support the surrounding neighborhoods within the Southeast Area. Implementation of this practice necessitates appropriate transitioning of uses, such as decreasing the intensity of uses moving outward from this corridor, culminating in single-family detached development.

A.4 **Integrate attainable housing opportunities throughout the Southeast Area.** The need for housing in the region extends across all demographics. However, new housing within the City and County has reached a price point that is not attainable for a large segment of the local population. There must be housing opportunities at lower price points to keep long-time residents and the children of residents within the community. These opportunities should be managed carefully to ensure everyone shares the Southeast Area's vibrant neighborhood atmosphere. Therefore, the location of attainable housing development sites should be integrated throughout the Southeast Area rather than only existing along busy transportation corridors, as is typical in many larger urban centers.

A.5 **Incentivize affordable and workforce housing opportunities.** The value of land in Delaware County has increased significantly in recent years. With the influx of wealth into the region, the cost of living has increased, which can disproportionately impact those living below the Area Median Income (AMI). In addition, underrepresented housing developers specializing in affordable or workforce housing (e.g., Del-Mor Dwellings, Habitat for Humanity, Homeport, National Church Residences, etc.) have increased difficulty competing for building space. A more mindful approach is needed to serve this underrepresented population better. The City of Delaware can directly address this community need by utilizing density, financial, and process-related incentives to guarantee that new residential developments set aside housing units for low- and moderate-income (LMI) people. Incentives should be coordinated with the City's Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP).

B. IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS AND DESTINATIONS.

B.1 **Complete the connection of Glenn Parkway.** The Southeast Area contains limited gateways, which will experience additional pressure as traffic increases with expected growth. Creating a main north-to-south roadway will significantly improve the region's connectivity, which relies on Berlin Station Road and Pollock Road. In addition, the heavy congestion along US 23 could be lessened by Glenn Parkway acting as a local "bypass," giving residents another option to travel. To complete this connection, the improvements must be initiated by future development projects seeking access to the existing transportation network (a City policy for all roadways on the Thoroughfare Plan). To facilitate this process, the City should be creative with funding mechanisms (See definitions in Appendix). To maximize the experience for residents, the future extension of Glenn Parkway should achieve the following:

- Continue the streetscape design currently in the Glenross Subdivision.
- Construct a bridge or underpass to cross the existing railway.
- Improve Glenn Road, which extends between Curve Road and US 36 / SR 37.
- Achieve compliance with the City's access management standards.
- Accommodate potential activity centers in Sub-Area 3 and maximize the pedestrian experience.
- Require east-to-west connections along Glenn Parkway to be spaced approximately every half-mile, to be roundabouts, and restrict any curb cuts for individual sites (access to these sites should be from a private backage road).

B.2 **Expand the regional trail network by collaborating with Preservation Parks to connect the Southeast Area to Hickory Woods Park.** Hickory Woods Park is a popular destination in the region for recreation and enjoyment of nature. The City and Preservation Parks should identify more locations for trail connectivity as the Southeast Area grows. This would include connecting into the multi-use pathways along Glenn Parkway and the Olentangy River. These connections would allow current and future residents to have better access to this beautiful park. Expanding the city's regional trail network and supporting unique development and public spaces along trails will all be essential to achieving a connected regional network that draws visitors and widens residents' access to nature.

B.3 Coordinate with Delaware County Transit (DCT) to connect employers with the future workforce within the Southeast Area. Through the development of the Southeast Focus Area, an increase in the number of vehicles traveling to and from the area can be anticipated. Promoting public transportation as an affordable, safe, and effective option is critical so that the roadways will not become as seriously impacted as they could be. Delaware County Transit (DCT) currently provides city-wide flex on-demand and county-wide demand response busing throughout the County. DCT has prepared a strategic plan for 2024-2028, outlining its vision, goals, and initiatives to enhance public transportation services in the community. The DCT strategic plan anticipates an increased need for service within the growing region. The Southeast Area can better facilitate DCT's service by incorporating locations for pick-up/drop-off into the design of streetscape and development site plan review. The City should coordinate with DCT on how best practices can be implemented early on in the development of the Southeast Area. Enhancing service to the area for all housing types will provide better access to various jobs for more people while reducing traffic congestion.

B.4 Provide infrastructure for multimodal access and ease of mobility for pedestrians and cyclists. Glenn Parkway should be identified as a multimodal north-to-south connection that extends the multi-use path (10-foot minimum width) along both sides of Glenn Parkway into the Southeast Area to encourage travel by pedestrians and cyclists. This effort must adhere to the City's Complete Streets Policy and Traffic Calming Policy when designing roadways to promote safe traffic on local streets, including potential safety features such as barriers, bulb-outs, crosswalks, separated lanes, widening sidewalks, etc. In addition, there are opportunities within the Southeast Area to implement a rails-to-trails program along some of the seldom-used railways (to the west and north) bounding the planning area. The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan should be updated to reevaluate the impact of a fully developed Southeast Area on the overall transportation network. These improvements will also assist those relying upon Delaware County Transit by creating more desirable connections between transit stops and destinations.

B.5 Implement a connected road network with future development. A well-connected street network with walkable blocks can form the identity of the Southeast Area from the onset. It is essential to recognize that the City's thoroughfare plan shows only major thoroughfares, but collector streets are anticipated and should be determined as development advances. The standard practice for new neighborhoods should be a street pattern of walkable blocks with minimal use of cul-de-sacs, such as a traditional grid-style pattern. Continuing standard City practices, such as requiring sidewalks on both sides of the streets and connecting neighborhoods to adjacent neighborhoods, will ensure connectivity. Controlling the access points along Glenn Parkway, as was done with the extension of Sawmill Parkway, will improve the flow of traffic entering and exiting the Southeast Area. The existing road network is limited, and improvements, such as improving Davidson Lane or widening Glenn Road, can be made to accommodate future traffic demands. Maintaining regular communication with the County Engineer and ODOT will allow the area to facilitate better transportation within the region; this could include future improvements along US 36 / SR 37.

B.6 Execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the County regarding the maintenance of roadways that have sections within both jurisdictions. Roadway maintenance is exceptionally challenging for roadways that are partially within the City limits and partially outside of them. Close coordination between the City and County will be necessary to protect the community's character and maximize fiscal benefits. By agreeing to a maintenance plan that equitably allocates responsibility to one entity and addresses shared costs holistically, both entities will benefit from efficiencies, and a higher standard can be achieved.

B.7 Support an Amtrak stop in or near the Southeast Area. Amtrak is evaluating the 3C + D Corridor (Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, and Dayton) for future railway connections. The CSXT (Great Lakes Division - Columbus Line Subdivision) railway along the eastern boundary of the Southeast Area is a potential railway link for the 3C + D Corridor, and a rail station in or near Sub-Area 2 would be a tremendous economic benefit to the City by creating a new commuter option. Such a station would boost the City's efforts to market the US 36 / SR 37 corridor and the Southeast Area as an affordable and attractive place to live and shop. Also, passenger rail would provide options to target marketing and advertising dollars to further benefit the local tourism industry. Therefore, the City should continue to lobby for an Amtrak stop along the CSXT railway and facilitate its implementation if the opportunity arises.

C. INCREASE AMENITIES AND SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY.

C.1 Identify new park opportunities throughout the Southeast Area. The City of Delaware Parks & Recreation Master Plan completed in 2022 identified community needs and demands for parks, recreation programs, and facilities. The Southeast Area is an opportunity to address these needs and demands by identifying new park locations to accommodate the growing population. Parkland dedication requirements for development projects and pre-annexation agreements should be updated to accommodate the community's needs for the Southeast Area. From a regulatory perspective, establishing a "menu" of options based on the type of park would allow for flexibility and a range of acceptable options while providing more explicit direction to the development community, enhancing the likelihood of approvals. It will be necessary for these improvements to provide trail connections to allow for a walkable environment. In addition, the City must ensure that these amenities are created in a fiscally sustainable manner to allow for continued upkeep (e.g., through Homeowner's Associations or Master Associations).

C.2 Create a large community park with multiple athletic fields and facilities. The high value of land in Delaware County and the growing cost of infrastructure have resulted in difficulties for civic and institutional organizations (e.g., the City of Delaware, Delaware City School District, Olentangy Local School District, Preservation Parks, etc.) in purchasing land. Resources among these organizations can be maximized through collaboration, such as identifying a park location and sharing funding sources for acquisition and maintenance. Another possibility could include a partnership between public and private entities to construct and manage a large site. This would give the greater community more access to nature and outdoor recreation programming. Future development of the Southeast Area could be leveraged to dedicate the needed land and infrastructure.

C.3 Share data and plan proactively for the impact of growth on local schools. The Delaware City and Olentangy Local School Districts have a growing student population and are planning for future expansion. The Southeast Area contains a large amount of land in each school district, and if planned correctly, it can be an opportunity for the schools. Collaboration between City Staff, School officials, City Council members, County/Township Trustees, housing developers, and business leaders can better address this need without duplicating effort and resources. Involving third-party resources (e.g., the APA Public Schools and Communities Division) would provide a neutral perspective on lingering concerns. An open, transparent dialogue will also help build trust within the community, as parents will better understand their children's future experiences in these school districts. These conversations could provide a clear direction on how future TIFs (Tax Increment Financing) or land dedication requests will be handled and help reduce the complexities within the development process.

C.4 Locate civic uses and community facilities within neighborhoods. Future community facilities such as parks, recreational centers, schools, police/fire stations, libraries, and humane societies should be integrated into the fabric of neighborhoods. In growing areas, these uses are typically located at the city's edges, which can result in congestion problems where a high traffic volume during peak hours overwhelms rural roads not designed for them. These uses fit within the neighborhood scale activity center development character appropriate within Sub-Area 3. However, as additional residential development occurs, the need for these uses may exceed the land available in Sub-Area 3.

New developments in Sub-Areas 4 and 5 should include nodes around intersections where civic and other neighborhood-scale commercial uses can maximize value and service. Open space should be mixed throughout neighborhoods to achieve ideal service (e.g., neighborhood parks within ¼ miles of all homes and community parks within ½ miles of all homes). Where feasible, neighborhoods should offer convenient pedestrian access between these nodes and open spaces. This can help create more complete neighborhoods, increase the area's walkability, and improve residents' quality of life.

C.5 Require non-residential developments to be compatible with adjacent uses. The connection of Glenn Parkway offers the community a corridor with high potential for commercial use. To create a neighborhood atmosphere within the Southeast Area, more intense commercial (e.g., big box stores) and industrial (e.g., warehouses, distribution centers) uses should be limited to Sub-Area 2. At the same time, commercial uses that directly serve residents (e.g., medical offices, day-care centers, and restaurants) can be located in Sub-Areas 3 [insert sub-area map page]. Under certain circumstances, neighborhood scale commercial development could be located at the edge of Sub-Areas 4 [insert sub-area map page] and 5 [insert sub-area map page]. In addition, employment centers could be located within Sub-Area 4 if high-quality buildings and compatible uses are located here. During the plan review process, there should be careful consideration for potential nuisances such as noise, setbacks, landscaping, building height and materials, lighting, signage, connectivity, etc., to ensure an appropriate transition throughout the Southeast Area.

D. ENSURE DEVELOPMENT IS ATTRACTIVE AND HIGH-QUALITY.

D.1 Create attractive gateways in the Southeast Area through public and private improvements. The appearance of the streetscape and adjacent development along major thoroughfares and key intersections reflects the community's character, values, and standards. It can shape the experience of both residents and visitors. This would include US 36 / SR 37, Glenn Parkway, Curve Road, and Berlin Station Road [insert sub-area map page] for the Southeast Area. These corridors with key vehicular access points can influence community perceptions as the Southeast Area transitions from the city into the townships. Elements include corridor access, efficient travel, parking, lighting, landscaping, signage, and many other characteristics and features that can significantly impact their overall design quality. Public and private improvements to these locations should be required to incorporate the City's Gateways and Corridors Plan. Considerable care should be given to these gateways to ensure consistency and an appropriate transition between the development of the Southeast Area and the rural landscape.

D.2 Establish a high-quality design for the Southeast Area. A balance can be struck between the existing rural character of the Southeast Area and the demand for housing and other types of development through sensitive design guidance. As new neighborhoods are developed, it will be essential to draw from examples in both the city (e.g., Communities at Glenross, Coughlin Crossing, Del-Mor Dwellings, Mill on Flax) and the county/townships (e.g., Evans Farm) and support high-quality design while being mindful of the rising cost of housing. Appropriate buffering and landscaping along edge conditions while advancing similar use types along existing residential areas will be vitally important to ensure sensitive integration of uses. Creating design guidelines to be applied for edge development and more intense uses along Glenn Parkway can reduce the impact on existing residential areas. Buildings that lack a human scale (e.g., big box stores) should be limited to Sub-Area 2. The guidelines may consider the building envelope (including height and massing), streetscape elements, circulation, building services, parking, open space, lighting, buffering, connectivity, and other elements to conserve the human scale of the built environment. Landscaping improvements, branding/signage, and public art should also be included to help promote a pedestrian-friendly environment.

D.3 Implement quality wayfinding through the Southeast Area. The existing Southeast Area roadway network relies heavily on a limited number of access points. These gateways [insert sub-area map page] into the community must effectively communicate destination points to residents, workers, and visitors. Public realm improvements at the gateways, including minimal but clear wayfinding, will improve walkability. These improvements should be consistent with signage already in the City. This strategy would also help with the effectiveness of improved parking standards by improving the navigation to and from parking lots.

E. PROTECT THE COMMUNITY'S PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ASSETS.

E.1 **Require a regional approach to stormwater retention in Sub-Areas 3, 4, and 5.** A large amount of undeveloped land in these sub-areas presents an opportunity for a mix of residential development. However, modern development practice typically results in a large number of retention ponds to meet stormwater requirements. Such practice reduces the fiscal benefit of residential development due to a reduction in buildable land. This practice can also result in a more significant impact on the environment (the flow of stormwater limits the location of retention ponds). Regional ponds would be more space-efficient than a pond on each development site. This creative solution would increase the land available for development, be less costly to maintain, have a more pleasing aesthetic, and allow for a larger greenspace area from which a park could capitalize. Preserving and maximizing open space is respectful to the existing neighborhoods and can help complement Delaware's traditions.

E.2 **Collaborate with the OEPA to promote awareness of environmental regulations.** Land developed within the Southeast Area is subject to environmental regulations from the Olentangy watershed. There are also additional development constraints within the boundary of the Southeast Area. Achieving compliance with environmental regulations and mitigating constraints has a hidden cost to land development, which is exasperated by the increasing cost of building infrastructure. Creative design solutions can address these issues during the development process, but it is difficult to change the design of a project later in the process. This makes awareness of these issues a critical concern for protecting natural features and lowering the cost of developing land. The City should utilize the Sustainability Coordinator to work with the OEPA and other environmental groups (e.g., Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed) to promote awareness of these regulations and development costs to the public and developers. More transparency in the development review process can help build trust with the community.

E.3 **Encourage housing to be arranged in clusters or enclaves around courtyards.** New developments on the edges of the Southeast Area should prioritize the buffering of existing residents and the protection of natural resources. Dense housing developments are typically discouraged to match the contextual rural setting, but detached single-family housing on large lots consumes a significant amount of land and reduces open space. Utilization of planned districts can enable clustered designs to better preserve existing hillsides, large stands of trees and vegetation, and other environmental features. Cluster designs utilizing duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and townhomes can introduce a human-scale building while still providing needed housing. With residential courts and other opportunities for increased usable open space and recreation facilities, developments can achieve desired densities while being more sensitive to the environment and rural character.

F. IMPLEMENT A CLEAR, EFFICIENT, AND PREDICTIBLE GAME PLAN FOR ANNEXATION PETITIONS AND DEVELOPMENT REQUESTS.

F.1 **Continue the City's financing strategy to provide infrastructure improvements concurrent with development.** The City relies upon development to advance transportation projects needed to accommodate regional growth. Balancing fiscal sustainability with growth and development is essential for the community's future. These efforts are bolstered by the utilization of creative strategies to capture value, such as impact fees, tax increment financing, new community authorities, development agreements, or other models to generate revenue from development to build out and maintain public improvements. Needed improvements in the Southeast Area include (but are not limited to) the connection of Glenn Parkway, a bridge or underpass for Glenn Parkway to cross the railway, improvements to Glenn Road (northern gateway on [insert sub-area map page]), improvements to Davidson Lane, etc. The City should continue these strategies and look to implement new ones to advance these needed infrastructure improvements.

F.2 **Prioritize development that has a long-term positive impact on the community.** Not all development projects bring net fiscal benefits to the City over the long term, especially given the increasing costs of building and maintaining public infrastructure over the past decade. The City's Economic Development Department is creating a land-use value model to help the City better understand the fiscal implications of development on the community. A project deemed high value per this model should be prioritized. Future growth in the Southeast Area can become a net positive to the City's long-term fiscal health if done so in accordance with the Plan. This includes creating critical public infrastructure improvements, such as the connection of Glenn Parkway, or other amenities that will benefit the quality of life for residents.

Annexation and Growth Plan:

Delaware Together included an objective (A.4) to manage outward growth, which should be directed at the Focus Areas. Adopting a City-wide policy identifying the priority for future annexations would further the goals of Delaware Together, the Focus Area plans, and other City plans. Regular review of this policy and continued dialogue with the adjacent Townships (Berlin, Brown, Delaware, and Liberty), School Districts (Delaware City Local School District and Olentangy Local School District), and regional organizations (Delaware County Regional Planning Commission and Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission) would boost this effort. Items to consider for such policy:

- Establishing a preferred direction of annexation within the Southeast Area to follow the extension of Glenn Parkway.
- Creating pre-annexation requirements tied to the recommendations in Delaware Together and Focus Area Plans.
- Providing clear explanations on customary roadway and utility requirements to facilitate a more predictable development review process.

F.3 Explore creating a public-private partnership (PPP) to develop a strategic portion of the Southeast Area. Given the range and scale of potential development in the Southeast Area over the next decade, adding additional tools and capacity to the City's planning and development efforts should be strongly considered. A market-driven approach to developing the Southeast Area will result in parcel-by-parcel development, which can piecemeal the vision for the planning area. A public-private partnership allows a single entity to oversee the planning and development process to better achieve the Plan's goals. This strategy would be most effective in managing the growth in Sub-Area 3 to better facilitate the connection of Glenn Parkway.

Such an entity could attract a range of capital sources to fund projects and negotiate with individual landowners to commit their land as an equity contribution toward a Master Plan for the Southeast Area. Compensation for this land would be tied to the proceeds from the sale of the project to a master developer. Individual contracts would structure compensation for the land contribution in accordance with this sale. This process should only be implemented with clear and transparent communication to the public. Additional transparency could be achieved by requiring the PPP to go through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit bid applications from potential Master Developers. This approach allows the development model to move forward without the need for upfront acquisition of all the land. Landowners could continue farming (or using) the land until the Master Developer moves forward with site development.

Maximize Economic Prosperity

Large-scale development proposals that require infrastructure investment or other financial incentives from the City should be assessed to evaluate their net fiscal impact. A fiscal return on investment (ROI) analysis would determine the fiscal benefits to the City relative to costs for public improvements to support a development. An example of maximizing economic prosperity would be allowing for higher density and mixed uses that promote sustainable development practices. The City should be cautious about annexation requests that result in large-lot developments in the Southeast Area. Future development located south of Curve Road between the railway and future Glenn Parkway presents an ideal opportunity to maximize economic prosperity while maintaining a buffer for rural homes.

5. Appendix



5.1 DEFINITIONS

Affordable Housing

Housing available to those qualifying for Section 8 (Housing Voucher Program) or Low-Income Housing Tax Credits programs.[4]

Age-Friendly Strategy

An age-friendly strategy outlines the key elements of livability in a community and what can be done to support a healthy aging population. Work done by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has provided a framework for forming a strategy. It is intended to be a living process that is regularly updated to accommodate the community's changing needs. Recommendations include:

- Expand housing counseling services to identify loans, grants, or other financial tools to assist property owners and homeowners and encourage and support affordable aging-in-place.
- Support downsizing and "aging in the community" housing options.
- Identify desired models and development concepts, work with regional developers and builders, and match those concepts against local zoning and other development regulations to evaluate the steps needed to attract this type of residential development.

Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)[1]

- Established under Ohio's nonprofit corporation law (see ORC Chapter 1702).
- Have broad authority to borrow money, make loans, purchase or acquire, sell or dispose of real property, and enter into contracts with local jurisdictions.
- Able to acquire or sell land owned or conveyed by the local jurisdiction.
- Reliant upon a viable strategic framework to guide their efforts.
- Operate to promote public welfare, stabilize the economy, provide employment, and assist in development. Conveyances are made without advertising or bidding.

Delaware County Housing Strategy

The Delaware County Housing Alliance commissioned a county-wide housing assessment that focused on the trends of a growing region. This assessment was completed in 2023, and strategies for how the county could address gaps and issues within the community were identified. The data from this assessment was utilized to inform the Delaware Southeast Focus Area Plan recommendations.

Delaware County Housing Alliance

A 501(c)(3) organization and United Way affiliate, this group leads community-wide education and outreach for local housing issues. Their mission is "to address the unique housing needs of Delaware County residents of all ages, thus ending housing insecurity among our citizens."

Grid-Style Streets

Street design strongly influences the choice someone makes to walk, bike, or drive to a destination. Creating an ideal level of connectivity in the Southeast Area through a grid-style street pattern with short blocks would increase walkability. Including quality streetscape design features such as sidewalks and multi-use trails, landscaping, and mindful crossing options would maximize this opportunity. A grid-style street pattern would also provide a more orderly distribution of traffic from new subdivisions into the limited number of gateways in the Southeast Area. Ultimately, the development review process will determine the layout of local streets. However, encouraging the utilization of the grid-style street pattern would make for a more human-scale experience already found in the City (e.g., Downtown and the Northwest Neighborhood). Implementation of a grid-style street pattern could be realized through revisions to the City's street design standards (including traffic calming, complete streets, and parking requirements).

Improved Parking Standards

The reliance upon Glenn Parkway to provide entry into the Southeast Area will make the surrounding neighborhoods dependent on automobiles. With careful planning, the built environment can support parking needs while maintaining walkability. An emphasis on shared parking lots (as determined in the updated zoning code) throughout the planning area would reduce the amount of hardscape surfaces and allow space to be utilized more for amenities, services, and open space. In addition, a neighborhood-scale approach to parking lot design (e.g., locating parking lots behind buildings, screening with landscaping, etc.) would boost the pedestrian experience.

Increasing Supply

New market-rate housing for residents looking to upgrade their homes will create more attainable housing elsewhere in the region. While not directly addressing the supply issue for affordable housing, new housing will reduce demand, indirectly affecting pricing.

Multi-Jurisdiction Collaboration

The City and County must maintain regular communication regarding infrastructure improvements to the Southeast Area. Specifically, the connection of Glenn Parkway may necessitate maintenance agreements or a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD), as annexation cannot result in an "island," and portions of the Southeast Area are expected to remain in the townships.

Missing Middle Housing

A range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood.5

Neighborhood-scale

Residential-style of neighborhood-compatible architecture that provides a local destination for an area of one mile or less. Generally, it is pedestrian-oriented with minimal parking.

New Community Authority (NCA)[1]

- Established in the early 1970s and governed by ORC Chapter 349.
- Created to finance the construction and ongoing maintenance of infrastructure (roads, utilities, schools) and community assets (swimming pools, recreation centers, plazas).
- They can acquire, hold, or dispose of property. Also, they can collect charges to cover costs, apply for grants and loans, or issue bonds.
- Their creation is initiated by a developer and approved by a corresponding local jurisdiction.
- Typically, these involve a millage charge imposed against the property value in a defined area to help fund specified costs. These have an expiration date defined within each ordinance establishing the NCA, which can be as long as 30 years.

Joint Economic Development District (JEDD)[1]

Created by a contract between municipal corporations and townships to facilitate economic development.

- A way to impose income tax collection and provide municipal services to areas in unincorporated townships.
- Their powers are limited to their statute and cannot cause a contracting party to lose other powers but can include a wide range of possibilities, such as:
- Levy an income tax.
- Administer zoning and other land-use regulations, building codes, public improvements, and other regulatory matters with a public purpose.
- Limit and control annexation of land within the JEDD.
- Limit the granting of property tax abatements and other tax incentives.

Planned Districts

The City's zoning code can be a tool to maximize housing opportunities in the community. Planned Districts provide a way to customize development standards. This allows the City to target community needs and increase the overall quality of development (e.g., improved building facades, additional landscaping, etc.) by allowing flexibility with the number of housing units and setback requirements.

Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

Management of a PPP is reliant upon an agreement between a local jurisdiction and a private entity to oversee negotiations with landowners while following a plan (e.g., Southeast Focus Area Plan). This would involve a complicated legal process and investment by Staff to manage the agreement.

- The private entity would negotiate contracts with property owners and conduct real property transactions.
- The private entity typically manages debt issuance for development costs and construction of public infrastructure; however, the local jurisdiction could also be involved with these items.
- The local jurisdiction would define contract terms, monitor compliance, and communicate with the public.

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) allows the above powers to be administered by a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) or a New Community Authority (NCA). A combination of these two entities could benefit the Southeast Area's development.

Tax Incentives

Tax incentives can leverage new developments to produce additional value for the community in exchange for local, state, and federal incentives. Common examples include using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds or Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) to assist a developer in constructing needed infrastructure for the community.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) [1]

These financing tools utilize the fiscal impact of development to better fund the construction of critical infrastructure. These methods have been successfully applied elsewhere in the City and should continue to be used in the Southeast Area.

- An infrastructure financing tool authorized under ORC Chapter 5709 and administered by local jurisdictions. These have been used since the 1940s-1950s, with Ohio adopting its statutory framework in 1976. In recent years, Ohio's TIF laws have undergone several changes to make it more flexible with development projects.
- Exempts property owners from taxes on the increased property value from a development project. Instead, the property owner will make payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) equal to the exempted real property taxes. Taxes that existed before the creation of the TIF continue to be collected.
- The PILOTs are paid directly into a TIF fund managed by the local jurisdiction. The TIF fund pays for public infrastructure improvements that directly benefit the respective development.
- Generally, A TIF exemption cannot exceed 75% for a 10-year period. A greater percentage or an extended period of time may be permitted in certain circumstances, such as consent by the local school distric

Workforce Housing

Housing that can be afforded by households earning between 60-120% of their area median income (AMI).[4]

5.2 REFERENCES

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