



OLMSTED FALLS MASTER PLAN



Adopted June 14, 2016

City of Olmsted Falls
26100 Bagley Road
Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138

440.235.5550
www.OlmstedFalls.org



County Planning

Cuyahoga County Planning Commission

2079 East 9th Street
Suite 5-300
Cleveland, OH 44115

216.443.3700
www.CountyPlanning.us
www.facebook.com/CountyPlanning
www.twitter.com/CountyPlanning

About County Planning

The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission's mission is to inform and provide services in support of the short and long term comprehensive planning, quality of life, environment, and economic development of Cuyahoga County and its cities, villages and townships.

Planning Team

Rachel Culley, *Planning Intern*
Meghan Chaney, *AICP, Planner*
Glenn Coyne, *FAICP, Executive Director*
Ryan Dyson, *Planning Intern*
Patrick Hewitt, *AICP, Planner*
Dan Meaney, *GISP, Manager, Information and Research*
Travis Gysegem, *Planning Intern*
James Sonnhalter, *Manager, Planning Services*
Micah Stryker, *AICP, Planner*
Jesse Urbancsik, *Planning Intern*
Robin Watkins, *Geographic Information Systems Specialist*

Date of Publication: June 16, 2016

Front source: www.OlmstedFalls.org



OLMSTED FALLS MASTER PLAN

City of Olmsted Falls

26100 Bagley Road
Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138

440.235.5550
www.OlmstedFalls.org

2016 Elected Officials

Ann Marie Donegan, *Mayor*
Jay Linn, *Council President*
Linda A. Garrity, *Council Pro-Tempore*
Jim Haviland, *Council-at-Large*

Charles Robert Sculac, *Ward I Councilperson*
Paul Stibich, *Ward II Councilperson*
Terry Duncan, *Ward III Councilperson*
Kyle Miller, *Ward IV Councilperson*

2015 Elected Officials

Kathleen A. Fenderbosch, *Council President*
Kevin Roberts, *Ward II Councilperson*

Samuel A. Pulice, Jr., *Ward IV Councilperson*

Project Team

Ann Marie Donegan, *Mayor*
Joe Borczuch, *Service Director*
Rosann Jones, *Business & Community Services Manager*
Bailey Klimchak, *Planning Intern*

Don Sheehy, *City Engineer*
George Smerigan, *Planner*
Allie Shea, *Planning Intern*
Mira Singhal, *Planning Intern*

Steering Committee

Ann Reichle
Brett Iafigliola
George Smerigan
Grace Vedda-Sayre
James Riddle
Jeanine Colozza

Jen Kanaba
Kevin Roberts
Marcia Hawkins
Mike DeSan
Mike Reitz
Rosann Jones

Shawn Jeffrey
Terry Klimchak
Tom Grassi
Tony Budak
Willis Boyer

This page intentionally left blank.

Contents

Section 1. Introduction.	15
About Olmsted Falls	16
Planning Process	20
Section 2. Community Vision	23
Vision Statements	24
Section 3. Current Conditions.	29
Population	30
Educational Attainment	34
Income	36
Housing and Neighborhoods	37
Employment	46
Municipal Tax Base	48
Parks and Recreation	51
Community Facilities	54
Environment	56
Transportation Network	62
Land Use and Zoning	68
Downtown District	72
Key Undeveloped Areas	76
Section 4. Goals and Actions	79
Transportation	80
Parks, Recreation, and the Environment	94
Quality Government	104
Economic Development	110
Housing	120
Community	128
Land Use	136
Downtown Development	146
Section 5. Implementation.	165
Actions and Collaborations	166
Implementation Tables	167

This page intentionally left blank.



OLMSTED FALLS **MASTER PLAN** **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



Adopted June 14, 2016

City of Olmsted Falls
26100 Bagley Road
Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138

440.235.5550
www.OlmstedFalls.org

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan outlines a community's vision for the future and then describes specific action steps community leaders can undertake to accomplish that vision over the next five to ten years. It covers topics such as transportation, housing, economic development, parks and recreation, and downtown development.

The Master Plan Process

The City of Olmsted Falls Master Plan was constructed over the course of a year. The Master Plan included four phases, as outlined below.

Phase 1: Current Conditions	The Current Conditions phase involved accumulating and analyzing baseline data such as population changes, housing changes, and maps of land use and environmental features to understand Olmsted Falls today.
Phase 2: Community Vision	The Community Vision phase outlined the major topic areas for the Master Plan. Vision statements—broad descriptions of how the community would like to look and function in five to ten years—described the City's desired future in each topic area.
Phase 3: Policy Development	The Policy Development phase proposed action steps to help the community reach its desired future. Action steps specifically addressed issues, concerns, and desires identified in Public Meetings and the Current Conditions analysis.
Phase 4: Implementation	The Implementation phase addresses how to accomplish actions. This includes identifying responsible parties, timelines, and priorities for accomplishing goals.



"Improve walkability"

"Develop housing
and restore the older
homes"

"More sidewalks! I can
not get to downtown
from my home"

"I love the small town
feel of OF."

Public Involvement

The Olmsted Falls Master Plan relied on the thoughtful input of residents, business owners, and stakeholders. The process included three Public Meetings in August 2015, November 2015, and February 2016.

At all three meetings, representatives from County Planning gave a short presentation and answered questions. Residents were then

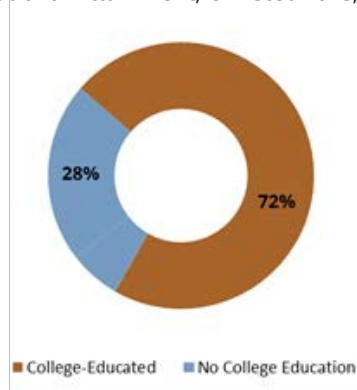
asked to review a series of boards around the room and give feedback on proposals.

County Planning incorporated the feedback of the public to develop a plan that reflects the desires and input of residents. This included changes to proposed actions, new actions, and different priorities for implementing the Plan.

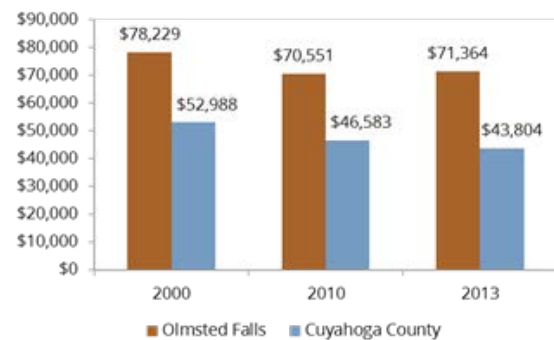
Current Conditions: Olmsted Falls Today

Many factors affect a community's future, including population and housing trends, existing development patterns, transportation networks, and natural features. The Current Conditions analysis used Census data, local information, and maps to describe Olmsted Falls today.

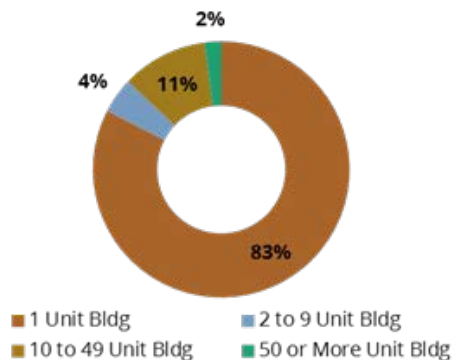
Educational Attainment, Olmsted Falls, 2013



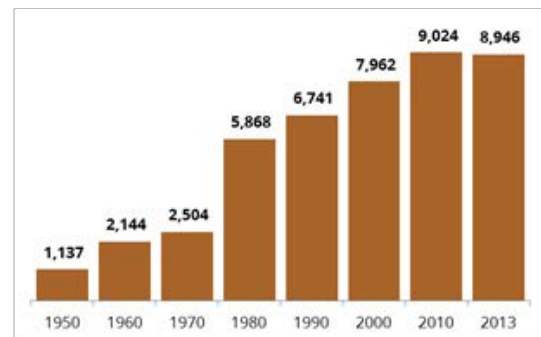
Median Income, 2000-2013



Number of Units in Structure, Olmsted Falls, 2013



Population Change, Olmsted Falls, 1950-2013



A Distinctive Community

Olmsted Falls is a historic community with a vibrant Downtown, strong neighborhoods, and beautiful parks and natural features.



Policies: Reaching the Future

Based on an understanding of the Current Conditions, the Policies section identified action steps the City and its partners can undertake over the next decade to achieve the community's desired future. With City and resident input, these action steps were refined, and example actions are outlined below.

Transportation Actions

- Construct a complete all-purpose trail network for residents to walk or bike safely around the community
- Construct bicycle parking Downtown and in new mixed-use developments
- Improve pedestrian crossings over train tracks in Downtown, and build an attractive and well-lit pedestrian underpass beneath the tracks
- Construct new sidewalks in places where they are missing, and require property owners to repair broken sidewalks
- Standardize parking signage Downtown, and develop an online parking guide
- Conduct a Downtown parking analysis to adjust parking requirements, add parking in select areas, and develop a plan for parking during large events



Source: Google Earth and County Planning



Parks, Recreation, and the Environment Actions

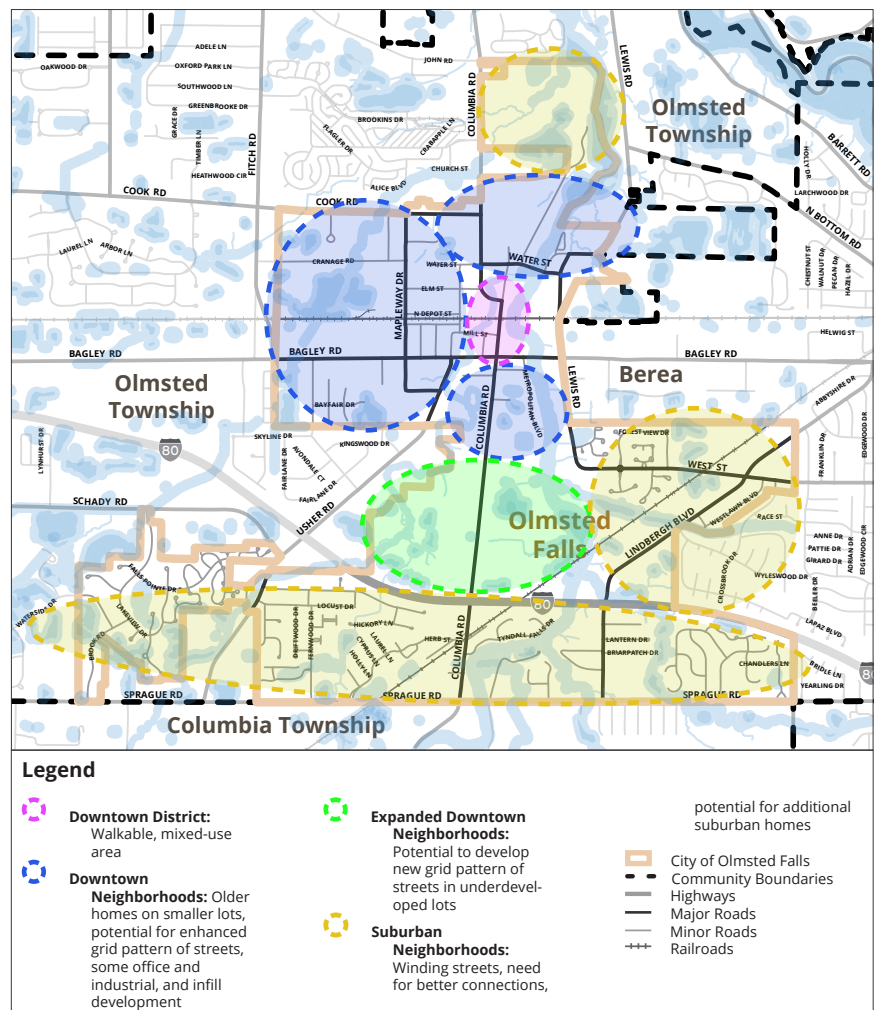
- Consider park improvements such as a kids play area Downtown, different uses for Mills Park, and connecting Tyndall Falls Park to the river
- Requiring residential developments—that are already required to build green spaces—to construct them in ways that are usable for the community
- Provide better maps and wayfinding signage into the City's park system
- Promote the use of innovative stormwater features such as rain gardens, downspout disconnects, and permeable pavers that can limit flooding and protect the environment
- Consider a complete and green streets policy that incorporates innovative designs and considers trails, sidewalks, and green features in road designs
- Review, update, and actively enforce the City's existing tree protection and stream setback ordinances

Land Use and Housing Actions

- Update Downtown zoning requirements to ensure new buildings are attractive and enhance the walkable feel of the City's quaint Downtown
- Establish streetscape plans and conduct traffic studies to determine the need for enhancements to Columbia and Bagley Roads
- Develop a traditional neighborhood zoning district that encourages walkability and architectural variety in new housing developments
- Develop general design standards for new housing to ensure new construction is attractive and fits the community's desired character
- Provide home renovation financial incentives for the neighborhoods around Downtown
- Encourage and incentivize universal design that makes living in your home easier for all stages of life

Economic Development Actions

- Apply for entertainment district status to expand the availability of liquor licenses for new bars and restaurants Downtown
- Partner with small business development organizations to attract unique, local retailers
- Update the Zoning Code to allow a bed and breakfast or boutique hotel



- Advertise to Baldwin Wallace visitors, promote internships for BW students, and investigate the use of BW's Jacket Express card for retailers
- Showcase the City's nearby greenhouses with cooperative sales or festivals

Downtown Development Actions

- Layer incentives to attract development to underused sites and City-owned land
- Develop a modern website, social media presence, and tourism itineraries for Downtown
- Host frequent community events, including a late-night retail opening or signature event that occurs on a monthly basis
- Consider walking tours of Downtown
- Consider streetscape improvements, new public areas, improved crosswalks, better lighting, and new mixed-use development Downtown



Source: Google Earth and County Planning



Government Services Actions

- Invest in enhancements to new infrastructure such as quality lighting, durable materials, and attractive designs
- Appoint a governance commission and hold an intergovernmental summit to study merger possibilities with Olmsted Township
- Conduct a comprehensive joint services study with Olmsted Township in the absence of a merger
- Develop an online guide and a one-stop-shop for those seeking information about opening a business in Olmsted Falls
- Hire an economic development director, and develop a job creation and retail recruitment incentive program

This page intentionally left blank.



SECTION 1



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2016 Olmsted Falls Master Plan. This document outlines the path for growth and change in Olmsted Falls. The Master Plan lays out current conditions, community input, policies to undertake, and parties responsible for action.

understand previous studies and plans and how they fit into the current Master Plan.

What's In This Section?

The Introduction section includes an overview of the City and context maps. It also includes a brief summary of the process and public involvement.

How Do I Use It?

The Introduction section is an overview of the process and the City. Use it to

About Olmsted Falls

Much of Olmsted Falls' history follows that of Olmsted Township. The area was first settled by New Englanders in 1814 and organized into a Township in 1829. In 1843, a town known as Norris Falls was founded at the center of the Township, and was later renamed Olmsted Falls. The Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati Railroad was built through the town in 1849, spurring early population growth. In 1857, the town was incorporated as a village.

Relatively far from Cleveland and the first-ring suburbs, the City and surrounding Township grew very slowly until after World War II. Olmsted Falls had just 2,144 residents up until 1960; however, with the construction of interstate highways and population expansion into the outer ring suburbs, development soon followed.

Today, Olmsted Falls preserves much of its small town atmosphere but has grown to a City of nearly 9,000. It consists primarily of residential neighborhoods among abundant open space, woodlands, wetlands, and streams.

Downtown Olmsted Falls features several 19th century buildings, contributing to the City's small town charm. The

Grand Pacific Junction Historic District, in particular, contains numerous small businesses and the Grand Pacific Hotel, considered to be the City's oldest commercial structure still standing today.

Planning History

The City of Olmsted Falls published its most recent comprehensive plan in 1994 with an addendum in 2000. The plan detailed several vision statements and policy recommendations. The vision statements highlighted the City's commitment to preserving historic small-town character, encouraging economic development, increasing traffic circulation, and maintaining interaction with regional and county governments.

Since the initial plan was adopted and updated in 2000, numerous targeted reports and market studies have been completed. These planning documents were reviewed as part of the Current Conditions and Community Vision document and are described on the following page. Key recommendations were carried forward into the Master Plan's policy recommendations.

Downtown Market Study, 2014



Source: City of Olmsted Falls

This study documented downtown's assets and challenges. Recommendations included enhancing walkability, increasing higher-end housing, and opening a Bed and Breakfast.

Downtown Public Parking Report, 2014



Source: City of Olmsted Falls

This report examined four publicly-owned downtown areas for possible conversion into parking. The report determined that several of these locations could potentially be used, while also recommending shared parking solutions and the purchase of several privately-owned lots.

Housing and Commercial Study, 2010



Source: OlmstedFalls.org

This study examined options for development and improvement of commercial, residential, and industrial sectors. Recommendations included wayfinding and parking improvements in downtown, increased housing options for young professionals and empty-nesters, and industrial development on key vacant properties.

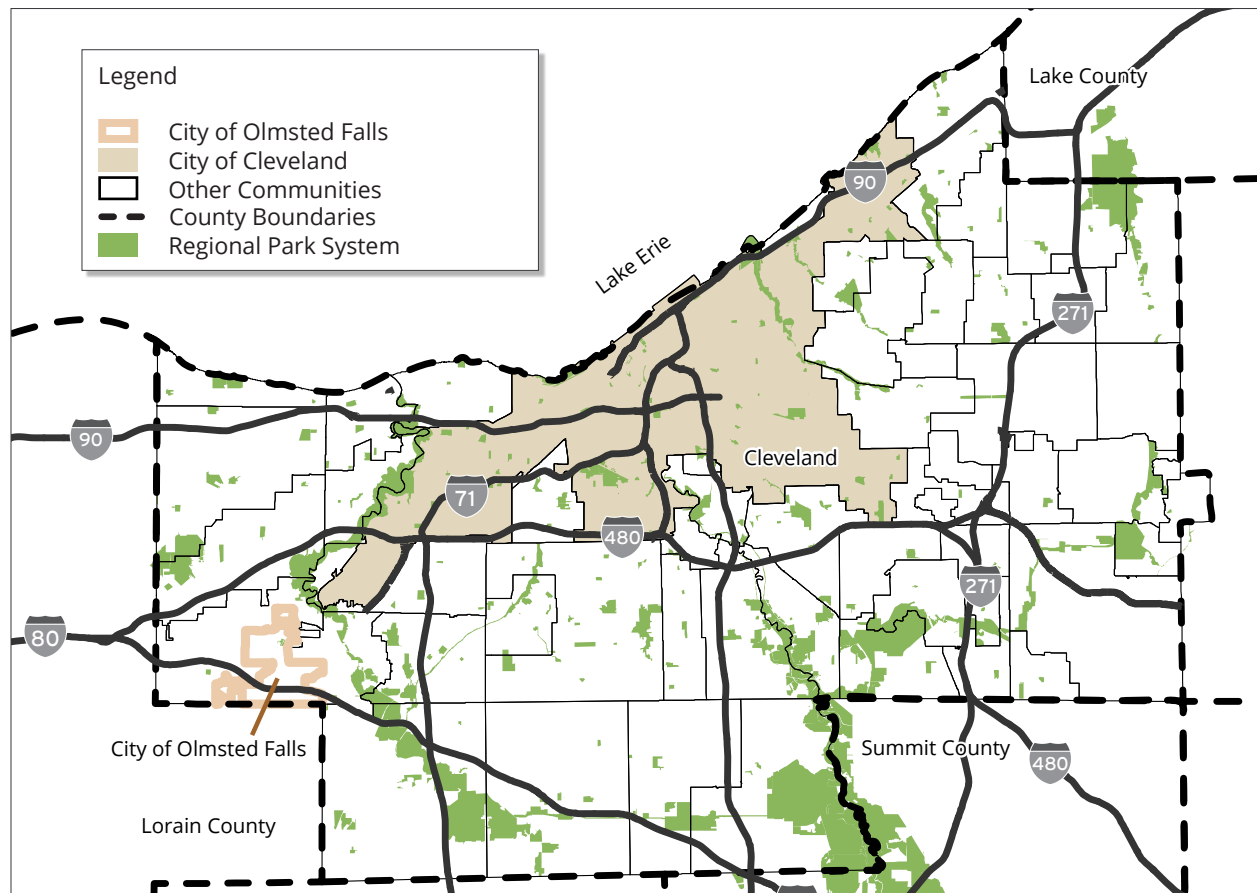
Comprehensive Park Master Plan, 2003



Source: City of Olmsted Falls

This plan provided an inventory of existing parks in Olmsted Falls, as well as recreational needs in the City, such as ball fields, playgrounds, and pools. Recommendations included improvements for existing parks, as well as a proposed new park along the southern end of Columbia Road.

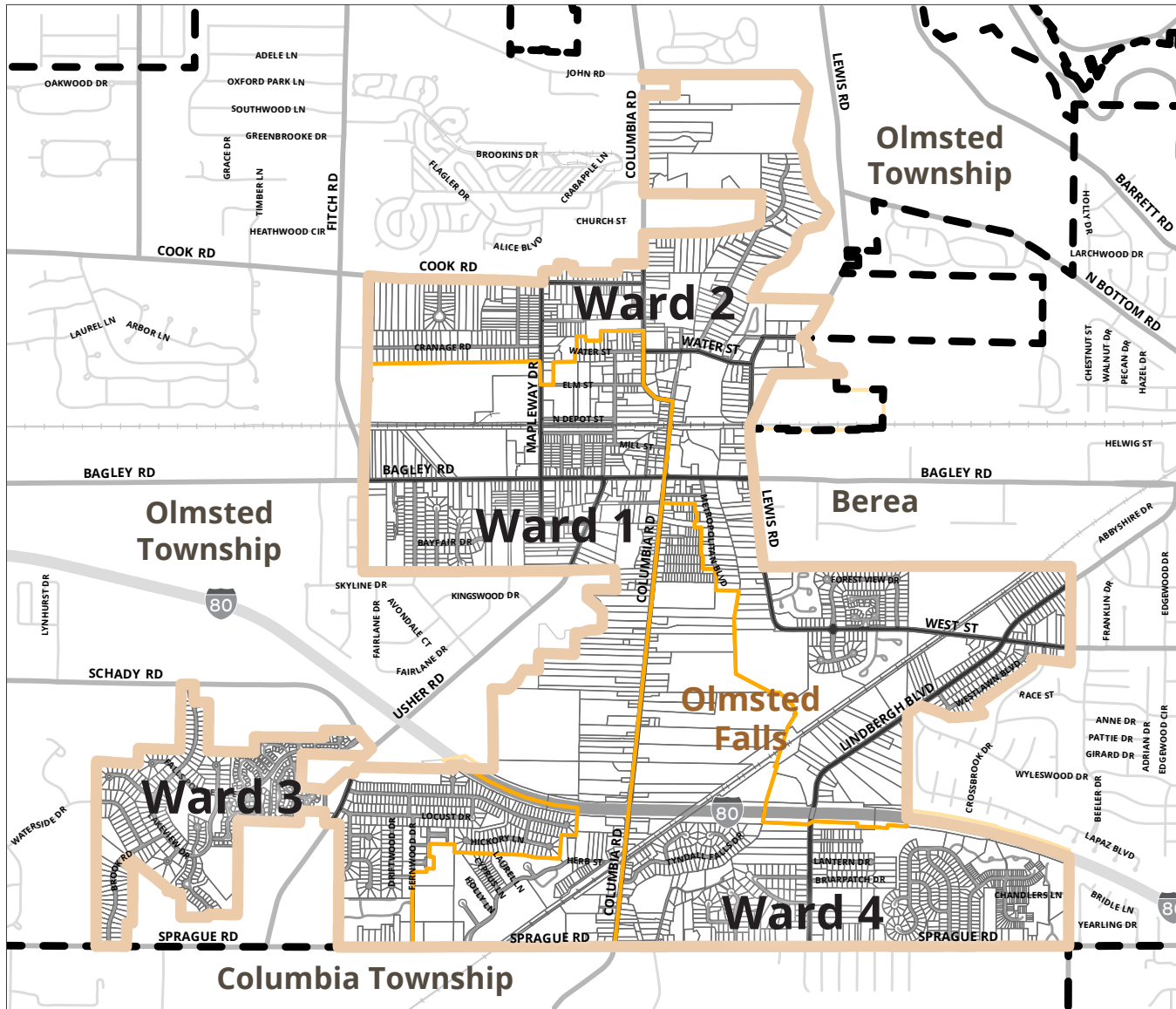
Map 1 Regional Context



The City of Olmsted Falls (outlined in light orange on Map 1) is located in the southwestern part of Cuyahoga County along the County's border and bisected by I-80. It is adjacent to

Olmsted Township and the City of Berea in Cuyahoga County, and Columbia Township (also known as Columbia Station) to the south in Lorain County.

Map 2 Planning Area



Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| City of Olmsted Falls | Major Roads |
| City Wards | Minor Roads |
| Community Boundaries | Railroads |
| Parcels | |

Planning Process

The Master Plan process includes numerous opportunities for public involvement to ensure that the plan reflects the concerns, ideas, and priorities of residents and business owners. Each phase included the involvement of City staff and the public.

Project Team and Steering Committee

The planning process included the involvement of two bodies to review the Master Plan in detail before information was presented to the public. The Project Team was comprised of City staff and public officials with an in-depth knowledge of the day-to-day concerns of residents. The Steering Committee was comprised of a small group of residents, business owners, public officials, and property owners that represented a cross-section of the City.

The inclusion of these groups was important in confirming that the data, ideas, and policies to be presented were appropriate for Olmsted Falls. The involvement of the Project Team and Steering Committee also assisted in identifying areas of the plan that should

be presented to the public for further feedback.

Public Meetings

The Olmsted Falls Master Plan included three public meetings in late 2015 and early 2016 to allow community members the opportunity to provide input on the plan recommendations.

All three public meetings were held in City Council Chambers in Olmsted Falls City Hall. Meeting information was posted on the City's website, was announced at City Council meetings, was advertised through flyers, and was mailed in City newsletters. Each meeting was attended by approximately 40 residents, business owners, and City officials.

Public Meeting 1

The first public meeting was held August 20, 2015.

Representatives from County Planning introduced residents to the planning process, described the groups involved, reviewed the Community Vision

statements, and answered questions. Members of the public were then asked to review boards that included written community vision statements and prioritize them and write down any comments.

Public Meeting 2

The second public meeting was held November 5, 2015.

At this meeting, County Planning described the results of the first public meeting and introduced the proposed goals and action items to help the community accomplish their vision. Again residents were asked to review the items, prioritize them, and write down any changes or suggestions.

Public Meeting 3

The third and final public meeting was held February 18, 2016.

At the final public meeting, County Planning presented changes to the goals and actions presented at the previous meeting. Priority actions and implementation partners were presented, and the public was asked to write down any changes they wished to see and any partners that might be helpful in accomplishing the actions.

At each public meeting, County Planning introduced the process and invited residents to review boards and provide feedback.

Source: County Planning

Online Feedback

Information from each public meeting was posted on the City's website. Residents were encouraged to call or email any additional comments to the City. These comments were included in the Master Plan process.

Using the Results

County Planning used the results from the public meetings to make changes to the Master Plan. After presenting information to the public, the Master Plan documents were changed and updated to incorporate feedback from the public.

At the second and third public meetings, County Planning presented the results of the public meetings and showcased the changes that were made to ensure the public was aware of how the plan was responsive to their comments.



This page intentionally left blank.



SECTION 2



COMMUNITY VISION

The Community Vision section describes what type of future residents and public officials want. This future described in vision statements—broad descriptions of how the community would like to look and function in five to ten years.

Community visions cover a wide range of topics, describing how a community and its residents would like to get around, where they would like to recreate, how they would like to interact with the government, and what types of new investments they would like to see.

What's In This Section?

The Community Vision for the City of Olmsted Falls Master Plan was developed using two sources: existing planning documents and meetings with

City staff. Initial visions were reviewed and updated based on input from the Steering Committee, on the results of the Current Conditions analysis described in Section 3 beginning on page 29, and on the first public meeting.

How Do I Use It?

The Community Vision forms the basis for developing specific goals and actions that the community should undertake to achieve its vision.

Source: Flickr User Ron Dauphin

Vision Statements

The vision statements describe the community's desired future in words. The statements are grouped into eight topic areas as displayed below and on the following pages.



Flickr: Ron Dauphin

Vision for Transportation

- Direct routes that connect Olmsted Falls to the region's system of highways
- Safe railroad crossings that do not hinder residents, visitors, or businesses
- A complete sidewalk network that links downtown Olmsted Falls to nearby neighborhoods
- A trail network that provides access to destinations, amenities, and the regional bicycle network



Flickr: Jen Goellnitz

Vision for Parks, Recreation, and the Environment

- A park system that serves residents of all ages, interests, and abilities
- Expanded access to underused parks and historic resources such as the falls and the historic mill
- Enhanced connections into the region's networks of parks, open spaces, and trails especially Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Reservation and the Valley Parkway Trail
- Healthy streams, tree coverage, and wildlife habitats through appropriate regulations and enforcement



Flickr: Ron Dauphin

Vision for Quality Government

- Streamlined development process that more effectively serves residents and businesses
- Solid relationships and shared services with surrounding communities



Source: City of Olmsted Falls

Vision for Economic Development

- A mix of offices, retail stores, and restaurants that act as a regional draw
- Office and commercial development that is appropriately scaled and can offset the tax burden on the community's residential property owners
- Development that leverages the City's proximity to Cleveland Hopkins Airport, Baldwin Wallace University, and natural amenities



Source: *OlmstedFalls.org*

Vision for Housing

- Walkable neighborhoods with high quality connections to Downtown Olmsted Falls
- Well-maintained and restored residential neighborhoods through effective planning and zoning regulation
- Appropriate incentives for neighborhood development
- A wide range of housing to attract millennials and empty-nesters



Source: *OlmstedFalls.org*

Vision for Community

- A historic community with small-town character
- New cultural offerings and community events that promote tourism and build community pride
- A well-defined sense of place through gateway entrances, wayfinding signage, and a community brand



Source: OlmstedFalls.org

Vision for Land Use

- Sensible and consistently enforced design standards to ensure new developments fit the community's character
- Fully developed vacant tracts that maximize their potential and promote environmental stewardship
- Well-connected land uses that allow people to easily access nearby amenities, neighborhoods, and natural areas via trails and sidewalks



Flickr: Ron Dauphin

Vision for Downtown Development

- A vibrant, denser, walkable, and authentic Downtown that is safe, comfortable, and appealing for all users
- Mixed-use buildings that are context-sensitive and contribute to Downtown's vibrancy
- Increased tourism that leverages Downtown as a unique regional destination for shopping, history, entertainment, and community
- Rehabilitated historic structures in harmony with new construction that maintain the integrity of Downtown Olmsted Falls



SECTION 3

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Many factors affect a community's future, including population and housing trends, existing development patterns, proximity to highways, and natural features. The Current Conditions section provides an overall assessment of the current conditions and trends in Olmsted Falls.

What's In This Section?

The section includes the following topics:

- Population, page 30
- Educational Attainment, page 34
- Income, page 36
- Housing and Neighborhoods, page 37
- Employment, page 46
- Municipal Tax Base, page 48
- Parks and Recreation, page 51

- Community Facilities, page 54
- Environment, page 56
- Transportation Network, page 62
- Land Use and Zoning, page 68
- Downtown District, page 72
- Key Undeveloped Areas, page 76

The data for this section comes from numerous sources, including the U.S. Census' American Community Survey, Cuyahoga County, and the City of Olmsted Falls.

How Do I Use It?

The Current Conditions data gives a baseline understanding of the community. This data was used to inform the Master Plan's goals and actions. You can use this information to get a better understanding of community issues and opportunities.

Population

Land use and municipal service needs are influenced by population size, household composition, and growth trends. Understanding these trends can help communities anticipate future needs and better allocate resources.

Population

Olmsted Falls' population increased considerably from 1950 to 1980, growing from 1,137 to 5,868 residents. Since 1980, the population continued to increase steadily, topping off at 9,024 residents in 2010. The most recent Census estimates placed the City's population at 8,946 in 2013. This is a slight decrease in population that indicates a population stabilization. This information is displayed in Table 1.

Olmsted Falls' neighbors in North Olmsted and Strongsville have experienced similar population trends. These communities experienced exponential population growth between 1950 and 2000 and have since stabilized. Other nearby communities experienced a population stabilization much earlier. Both Berea and Fairview Park peaked in population in 1970.

As a whole, Cuyahoga County has steadily lost population since peaking in 1970. Olmsted Falls' continued growth after 1970 is indicative of its location at the furthest corner of the County, where developable land has allowed for ongoing growth.

Table 1
Population Change, 1950-2013

Year	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
1950	1,137	1,389,532
1960	2,144	1,647,895
1970	2,504	1,721,300
1980	5,868	1,498,400
1990	6,741	1,412,140
2000	7,962	1,393,978
2010	9,024	1,280,113
2013	8,946	1,272,533

Source: Cleveland.com, County Planning, U.S. Census Bureau

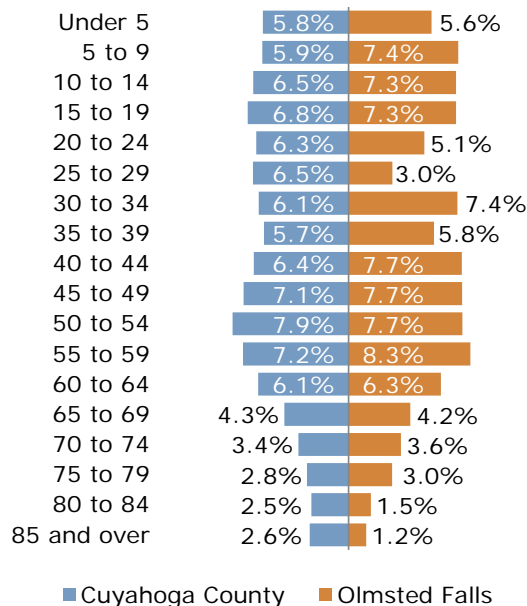
Age of Residents

The age of residents can determine a community's housing and social needs. Most residents in Olmsted Falls

are between the age of 40 and 60. Compared to the County as a whole, the City has a slightly lower share of senior residents and a slightly higher youth population. The greater percentage of young children could be attributed to the City's detached single family housing, school district, and opportunities for youth development.

The population pyramid in Figure 1 displays the age of populations in Cuyahoga County and Olmsted Falls in 2013. The City has an extremely high proportion of persons age 40 to 59, and low proportion of residents aged 25 to 29 and aged 75 and over.

Figure 1
Population Pyramid, 2013



Source: American Community Survey, B01001

Comparing the population of Olmsted Falls in 2000 and 2013, the City's senior population share increased from 9.9% in 2000 to 13.4% in 2013, consistent with the countywide trend of growth in

this age group. The proportion of youth in the population remained relatively constant, decreasing from 26.6% in 2000 to 25.1% in 2013.

Table 2
Population by Age Group, 2000 and 2013

Year	2000		2013	
	#	%	#	%
Under 18	2,115	25.1%	2,241	26.6%
18 to 34	1,577	18.1%	1,619	19.8%
35 to 64	3,479	43.4%	3,886	43.7%
65 and Over	791	13.4%	1,200	9.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, P1; American Community Survey, B01001

Households and Families

Like population figures, household and family statistics are other key indicators of a community's profile and needs. The U.S. Census defines a household as any person or group of people living together in a residence regardless of relationship. A family is a household where two or more people (one of whom is the householder) are related by birth, marriage, or adoption and reside in the same housing unit. A household may consist of a person living alone or of multiple related and/or unrelated individuals living together.

Household Characteristics

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in Olmsted Falls increased by 563 (18%). Between 2010 and the most recent Census estimate in 2013, the number of households fell by 246. The number of households in 2013 remains 10.2% higher than in 2000. In

comparison, the number of households in Cuyahoga County has decreased each year since 2000, for a total loss of 6.5% over the 13-year period. This information is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
Household Change, 2000-2013

Year	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
2000	3,121	571,457
2010	3,684	545,054
2013	3,438	534,476

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, P18, P018; American Community Survey, B11001

Race and Ethnicity

The racial and ethnic background of a community can help to inform policy and program decisions. Compared to Cuyahoga County as a whole, Olmsted Falls has a less diverse population. The City's population is 95.6% White, 1.5% Black, 0.2% Asian, and 2.7% other races. In comparison, Cuyahoga County is 64.1% White, 29.7% Black, 2.6% Asian, and 3.6% other races. All minority groups are of smaller proportions in Olmsted Falls than the County as a whole.

Compared to 2010, the White population in Olmsted Falls has decreased numerically but increased as a proportion of the total population from 94.9% in 2010 to 95.6% in 2013. Black and Asian populations have decreased both numerically and as a proportion of the total population.

The portion of the population identifying as another race or two or more races

increased from 1.9% to 2.7% between 2010 and 2013.

The Census counts Hispanic ethnicity independently of race. Those identifying as Hispanic accounted for 4.3% of Olmsted Falls residents in 2013. This was similar to the 4.9% Hispanic figure across Cuyahoga County. The proportion of Hispanics in the population has almost doubled in Olmsted Falls since 2010.

Table 4
Race and Ethnicity, 2013

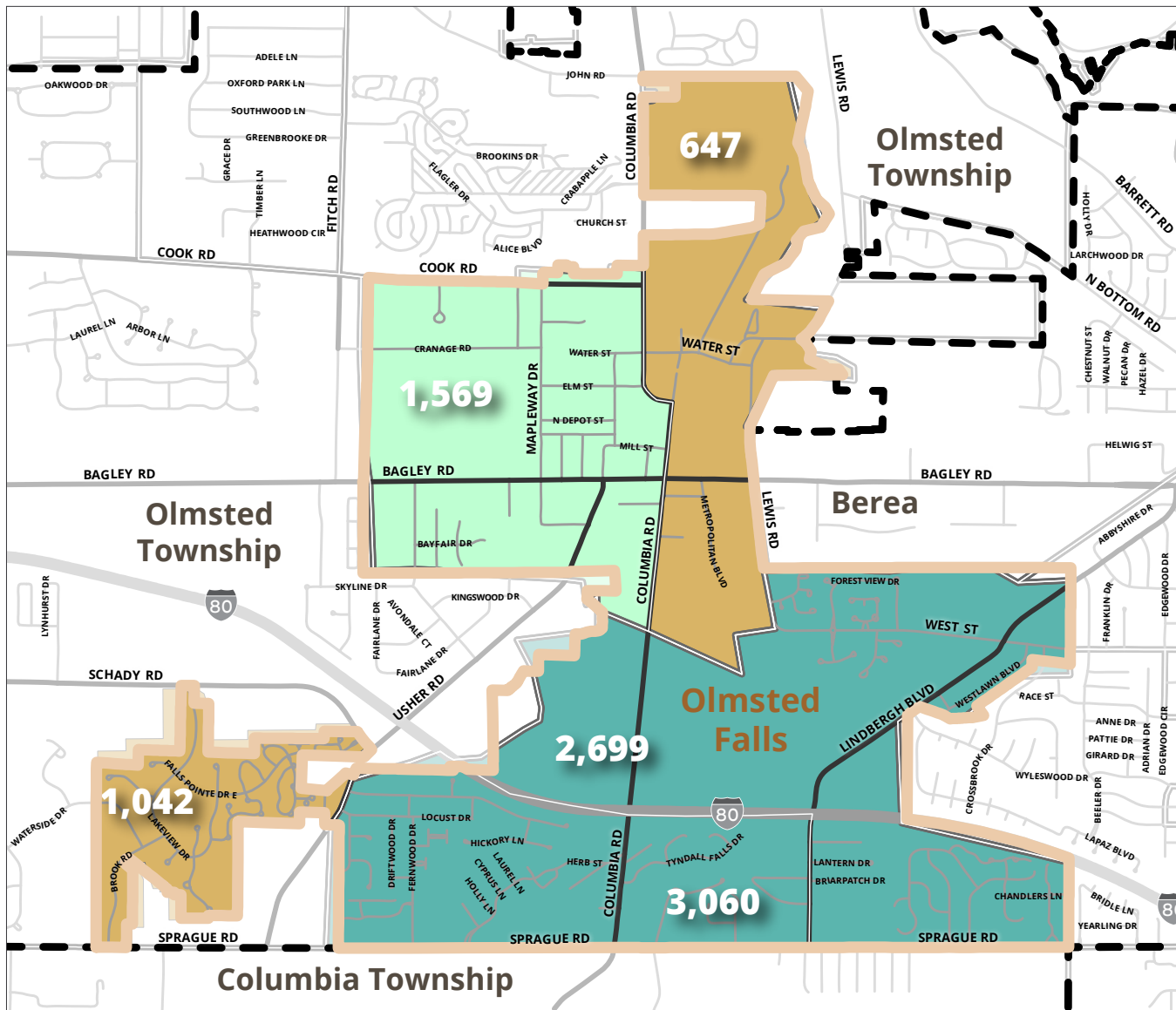
Race/ Ethnicity	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
White	8,552	816,138
Black	134	377,415
Asian	17	33,714
Other	243	45,266
Hispanic	383	62,778

Source: American Community Survey, B03002, B02001

Neighborhoods

Map 3 on page 33 displays the neighborhoods of Olmsted Falls as defined by the U.S. Census. Neighborhoods are color-coded based on the number of residents residing within them. The neighborhoods in the southern half of the City have the highest population, while the northern and western neighborhoods have lower populations.

Map 3 Population and Neighborhoods



Legend

Number of Residents

1,042 or Fewer

1,043 to 1,803

1,804 or More

Neighborhoods (white line)

City of Olmsted Falls

Community Boundaries

Highways

Major Roads

Minor Roads

Railroads

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of formal schooling that an individual has completed. Higher attainment generally correlates to higher incomes. A well-educated population can also help draw higher-paying employers, thereby strengthening a community's economy and tax base.

Attainment in Olmsted Falls

Compared to Cuyahoga County, Olmsted Falls has a considerably more educated population. While 58.2% of City residents have a Bachelor's degree or some college, only 46.9% of County residents attained the same educational level. The City also has a slightly higher percentage of residents with a Master's degree or higher than the County overall. Conversely, Olmsted Falls has a significantly lower level of residents

Table 5
Educational Attainment, 2000 and 2013

	Olmsted Falls			Cuyahoga County		
	2000	2013	% Change 00-13	2000	2013	% Change 00-13
Less than High School Diploma	6.2% 331	6.2% 374	+13.0% +43	18.4% 171,962	12.5% 109,191	-36.5% -62,771
High School Graduate	27.3% 1,454	21.9% 1,317	-9.4% -137	30.0% 281,264	28.6% 250,557	-10.9% -30,707
Bachelor's or Some College	54.7% 2,913	58.2% 3,501	+20.2% +588	42.0% 393,489	46.9% 410,066	+4.2% +16,577
Master's or Higher	11.6% 619	13.6% 820	+32.5% +201	9.6% 89,433	12.0% 105,075	+17.5% +15,642

Source: U.S. Census, P037; American Community Survey, B15002

The Olmsted Falls City School District is ranked highly for its graduation rates.

*Source:
OlmstedFalls.org*



without a high school diploma, with only 6.2% of the City, as opposed to 12.5% of the County.

In addition, Olmsted Falls has become more highly educated over time. The percentage of City residents with a Bachelor's or some college has increased by 20.2%, while those with a Master's or professional degree has increased by 32.5% since 2000. These overall trends are consistent with County trends as a whole, with the exception that the County has seen a decrease in the percentage of residents without a high school diploma while Olmsted Falls has seen an increase.

School Systems

The Olmsted Falls City School District offers K-12 education and preschool to residents of Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township. The district enrolls over 3,500 students and includes a high school, middle school, intermediate school (grades four and five), primary school (grades one through three), and an early childhood center. All of the district's schools are located in Olmsted Township, outside of the City limits of Olmsted Falls, with the exception of the primary school. The district is also affiliated with the Polaris Career Center, a vocational school located in Middleburg Heights.

The Ohio Department of Education gave the Olmsted Falls City School District a "B" grade on its 2014 Performance Index Report Card, which measures student test scores. The district's current four-year graduation rate is 95.4%, which is well above the statewide average of 82.2%, and which earned the district an "A" grade in Graduation Rates. The district recently adopted their 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, which will focus on developing and fostering artistic, academic and athletic growth in all students.

Olmsted Falls is also home to St. Mary of the Falls School, a private, Catholic school offering preschool through 8th grade education.

Income

Income data assists in understanding a community's purchasing power, the ability of residents to maintain their homes, and future income taxes.

in 2000, while the County's MHI was 11.8% higher.

Median Household Income

Median household income (MHI) is a measure of income distribution in which half of households earn more than that amount and half earn less. In 2013, Olmsted Falls had an MHI of \$71,364, about 40% higher than Cuyahoga County's MHI of \$43,804. In both the City and County, the MHI increased from 2000 to 2013. Olmsted Falls' 2013 MHI was 23% higher than it was

Inflation-Adjusted Income

While raw numbers suggest median household income has increased, when adjusted for inflation, MHI has decreased. Compared to 2000, the City's 2013 MHI was down 8.8% when adjusted, while Cuyahoga County's was down 17.3%. This decrease in inflation-adjusted income has ramifications for purchasing power among the City's residents.

Table 6

Median Household Income, 2000 and 2013

	Olmsted Falls		Cuyahoga County	
	2000	2013	2000	2013
Median Household Income	\$57,826	\$71,364	\$39,168	\$43,804
Percent Change from 2000	-	23.4%	-	11.8%
Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income	\$78,229	\$71,364	\$52,988	\$43,804
Percent Change from 2000	-	-8.8%	-	-17.3%

Source: U.S. Census, P052; American Community Survey, B19013; BLS Inflation Calculator

Housing and Neighborhoods

Housing is a vital component of a community because it is the cornerstone of neighborhoods. The size, quality, and type of housing affects who will seek to live there. This section displays the types of units available in Olmsted Falls, as well as recent housing market activity.

Housing Units

Olmsted Falls added 623 housing units between 2000 and 2010, an increase of 20.0%. This is significantly greater growth than Cuyahoga County, which experienced a 0.9% increase during the same years. From 2010 to 2013, however, housing units in the City decreased 1.6%, slightly more than the 0.4% decrease in the County overall. This information is shown in Table 7.

This decrease in housing units could be a result of the margin of error in the statistical analysis of the Census Bureau, but it could also indicate home demolitions, units going offline, or vacated homes.

Table 7

Housing Unit Change, 2000-2013

Year	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
2000	3,267	616,903
2010	3,897	621,761
% Chg 00-10	19.3%	0.8%
2013	3,684	620,028
% Chg 10-13	-5.5%	-0.3%

Source: U.S. Census, H001, H1; American Community Survey, B25001

Redevelopment Initiatives

Despite large tracts of vacant land, Olmsted Falls has few easily developable areas for new housing construction. There is, however, a 500-unit development planned for Mapleway Drive, near the Evergreen Packing plant. This neighborhood has the potential to increase the City's population and housing unit count.

Tenure

Tenure describes whether a housing unit is owned or rented by the household

residing in it. In Olmsted Falls, 17.9% of housing units are renter-occupied, compared to 39.1% in Cuyahoga County. This indicates a higher rate of owner-occupation (82.1%) consistent with the City's location as a bedroom community, and is displayed in Table 8.

Olmsted Falls has not only a lower rate of renter-occupation than the County as a whole, but also lower than many of its neighboring communities as well. In comparison, 28.4% of units in Berea are renter-occupied, 27.9% in Olmsted Township, 21.5% in North Olmsted, and 19.3% in Strongsville.

Table 8
Tenure, 2013

	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
Renter-Occupied	615 17.9%	209,087 39.1%
Owner-Occupied	2,823 82.1%	325,389 60.9%
Total Occupied Units	3,438	534,476

Source: American Community Survey, B25003

Age and Types of Units

The age and type of housing units also gives insight into the needs of neighborhoods. For example, older units, while often having greater renovation costs, may also have more opportunities for historic preservation efforts.

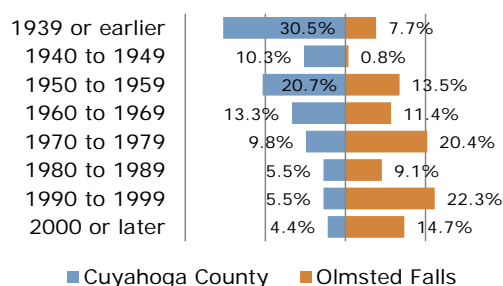
Age of Housing Units

Figure 2 shows the year housing units were built in both Olmsted Falls and Cuyahoga County. The data indicates

that almost all housing in Olmsted Falls was built in the post-War period beginning in 1950. Unlike Cuyahoga County as a whole, the City has experienced significant home construction in each decade since 1950. In contrast, a majority of Cuyahoga County's housing stock was built before 1960.

The construction of new housing units in each decade indicates a wide range of available units at various price points. This can provide greater choice for households seeking to move to the City.

Figure 2
Year Built



Source: American Community Survey, B25034

Type of Housing Units

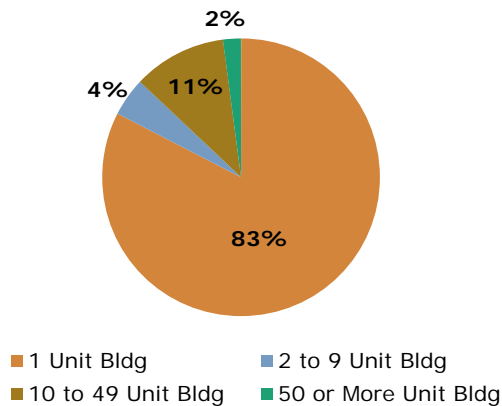
In addition to the age of housing, the type of units available shows the options for prospective households. Analyzing housing by the number of units in a structure describes the types of buildings in a community. For example, a 1-unit structure refers to a single-family home or possibly an attached townhouse, a 2-unit structure indicates a duplex, and a 50-unit structure would be a large apartment or condo building.

As displayed in Figure 3, 83% of housing units in Olmsted Falls are in 1-unit buildings compared to 64.5% of units in the County as a whole. This indicates a

much higher percentage of single-family homes in the City. Olmsted Falls also has a much lower percentage of 2 to 9 unit buildings, with only 4% of the City's housing units located in 2 to 9 unit buildings, compared with 17.4% of the County's. Finally, 11% of Olmsted Falls' housing units are in 10 to 49 unit buildings, while 2% are in buildings with 50 or more units.

The significantly higher percent of single-family homes in Olmsted Falls can have the effect of limiting the choice of households seeking smaller homes or apartments. This is especially true of millennials and empty-nesters who are increasingly choosing rental housing and walkable neighborhoods.

Figure 3
Number of Units in Structure, Olmsted Falls, 2013



Source: American Community Survey, B25024

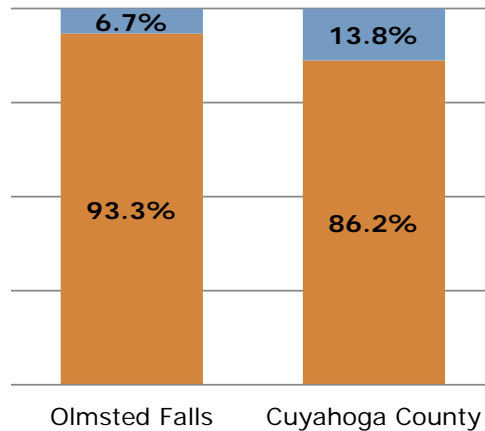
Occupancy

Occupancy rates display what percent of housing units within an area are currently occupied. Units listed as vacant are not necessarily vacant and

abandoned, but may also refer to homes for sale or second homes.

In Olmsted Falls, the 2013 vacancy rate was 6.7% which is less than half of Cuyahoga County's vacancy rate, which stands at 13.8%.

Figure 4
Occupancy Rate, Olmsted Falls and Cuyahoga County, 2013



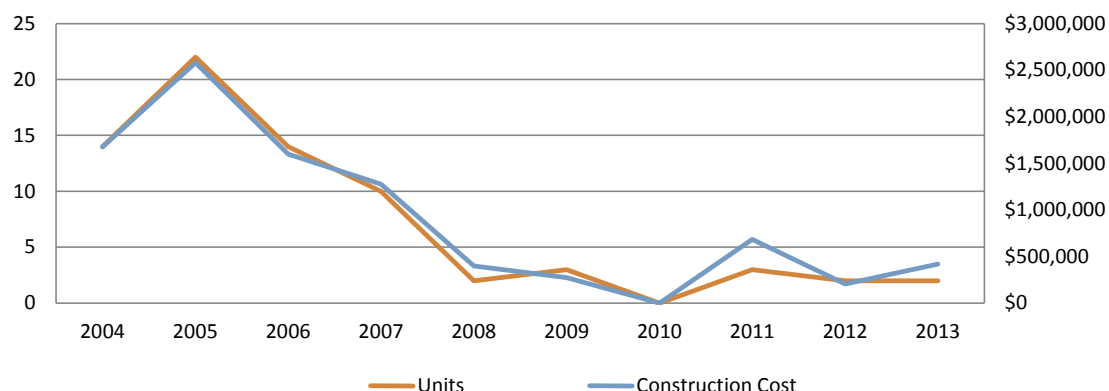
Source: American Community Survey, B25002

Building Permits

The number of units issued building permits in Olmsted Falls has been rising since 2010; however, permits are still much lower than the number issued in the early 2000s. Permits peaked in 2005 with 22 units but then dropped to zero in 2010 after the height of the Great Recession (officially from December 2007 to June 2009). Since 2010, an average of 2.3 units have been built each year. While the lower number of building permits issued reflects changes in the national economy, it also reflects the difficulty of developing the remaining land in Olmsted Falls. The environmental

Figure 6

Building Permits by Number of Units and Construction Value, 2004-2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Estimates

constraints to development in Olmsted Falls are outlined in the Environment section on page 56.

In addition to the number of permits, the construction value of these units has followed a roughly similar trajectory. The value of new units peaked in 2005, a few years before the housing bubble. The Great Recession stopped all new construction in Olmsted Falls in 2010, resulting in no added value for an entire year. This information is displayed in Figure 6.

Median Sales Price

The median sales price of homes is an important indicator of the strength of the housing market and can display trends in housing sales over time. The median sales price in Olmsted Falls for 2014 was \$147,500. When compared with the surrounding areas, Olmsted Falls was roughly in the middle. Berea and North Olmsted had lower median sales prices of \$110,000 and \$132,000, respectively, while Olmsted Township and Strongsville had higher median

sales prices of \$174,000 and \$180,000, respectively. This information is displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

Median Sales Price, 2014

Community	Median Sales Price
Berea	\$110,000.00
North Olmsted	\$132,000.00
Olmsted Falls	\$147,500.00
Olmsted Township	\$174,000.00
Strongsville	\$180,000.00

Source: Cleveland.com Home Sales Database

When compared to 2007, the 2014 median sales price in Olmsted Falls had fallen 10.3% as a result of housing issues related to the Great Recession. In comparison to surrounding communities, only Olmsted Township's sales prices weathered the Great Recession better; however, homes prices in the Township are still 8.9% lower in 2014 than in 2007. Figure 7 displays the change in median sales price compared to 2007 for Olmsted

Falls and surrounding communities. It indicates falling prices through the Great Recession and a slow rebound in the ensuing years.

Median Rent

Median gross rent is also an indicator of housing market strength. Combined with other housing cost indicators, it gives insight into housing affordability and the burden placed on households.

The median rent in Olmsted Falls in 2013 was \$771, just slightly higher than the median gross rent in Cuyahoga County which was \$732. The median rent in Olmsted Falls has increased since 2000 when median rent was \$590. Between 2000 and 2013, Olmsted Falls' median rent increased 30.7% while Cuyahoga County's increased 35.3%.

When considering inflation-adjusted median rent, however, prices in Olmsted Falls have fallen slightly. Inflation-adjusted median rent in 2000 was \$798 in Olmsted Falls and \$731 in Cuyahoga County. This indicates that when

adjusting for inflation, median rents have remained flat.

Table 10

Change in Median Rent, 2000-2013

Year	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
2000	\$590	\$541
2013	\$771	\$732
% Chg 00-13	30.7%	35.3%
Inflation-Adjusted Median Rent		
2000	\$798	\$731
2013	\$771	\$732
% Chg 00-13	-3.4%	0.1%

Source: U.S. Census, H063; American Community Survey, B25064

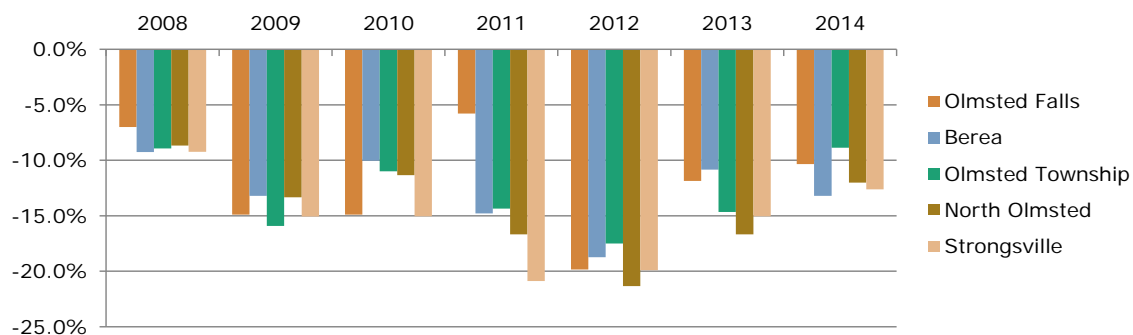
*The question of median rent was asked differently between 2000 and 2013. Comparisons between the two years should be used cautiously.

Housing Affordability

The price of housing as it relates to the income of residents can determine who is able to afford to live within Olmsted Falls, what type and quantity of housing

Figure 7

Change in Median Sales Price Compared to 2007



Source: Cleveland.com Home Sales Database

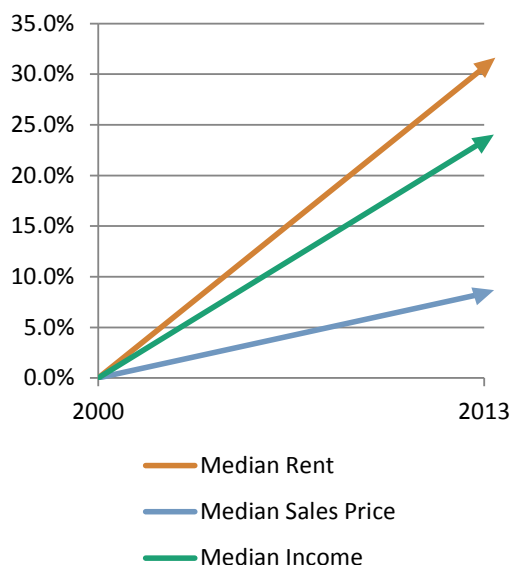
can be built, and what the potential market for residents is.

By comparing the change in median rent—without adjusting for inflation—median sales price, and median income between 2000 and 2013, trends can show whether increases in income are keeping pace with increases in housing costs. While rent, sales price, and income have all increased in Olmsted Falls, they have increased at different paces. Median rent has grown the fastest, increasing by 30.7% between 2000 and 2013. Median income has increased by 23.4%, and median sales price has increased by 8.4%.

The change in rent, income, and sales price indicates that increases in rent are outpacing increases in income, while increases in income are outpacing median sales prices. This means residents are spending a larger amount of their money on rent than in the past but may be able to more easily afford to purchase a home. This information is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Change in Rent, Sales Price, and Income, 2000-2013



Source: U.S. Census, H063; American Community Survey, B25064

*The question of median rent was asked differently between 2000 and 2013. Comparisons between the two years should be used cautiously.

Neighborhood Profiles

The U.S. Census Bureau divides the City of Olmsted Falls into three Census Tracts, one of which is shared with Olmsted Township. These Census Tracts are further subdivided into five Census Block Groups. Information on Olmsted Falls' neighborhoods was compiled by looking at the estimates for these five Block Groups. By analyzing data at these localized levels, trends within neighborhoods emerge. This information is displayed on Map 4 on page 45.

Northern Section

The Northern Section includes the historic district of Olmsted Falls and is the least populated in terms of housing units. When compared to the City as a whole, this area has moderate median housing unit values. Housing units in the Northern Section are predominantly single-family, owner-occupied structures. The North 1 area, in particular, is home to the highest percentage of single-family and owner-occupied structures in the City. The North 1 area also has the highest vacancy rate in the City at 20.9%, while the North 2 area has one of the lowest at only 4.0%.

Southeastern Section

The Southeastern Section has the most housing units, with more than twice the number of units than the Northern Section. This area is more recently settled than the Northern Section and features slightly lower median housing unit values than the rest of Olmsted Falls.

Although both of the Southeastern Block Groups share some similarities, there are many distinctions as well. For instance, 80.1% of existing units in the Southeastern 1 area were built by 1980, whereas only 27.2% of Southeastern 2's housing units had been constructed. In fact, between 1990 and 2009, 64.8% of all housing units in Southeastern 2 were constructed. Southeastern 1 also has the lowest percentage of owner-occupied units, the highest percentage of multi-unit structures, and one of the highest vacancy rates in the City. In contrast, the Southeastern 2 area has no vacant units and much more moderate levels of owner-occupancy, comparable to the City as a whole.

Southwestern Section

The Southwestern Section includes the small southwestern portion of Olmsted Falls as well as a large part of Olmsted Township. Of the 2,257 housing units in this Block Group, 353 are located within Olmsted Falls city limits. Unfortunately, additional information cannot be obtained for these specific units, only the Block Group as a whole.

This area is the most recently settled area in the City, with 73.5% of existing housing units built between 1990 and 2010. Like the City as a whole, the Southwestern Section is mostly single-family, owner-occupied housing units. Compared to other areas in Olmsted Falls, this area has higher median housing values.

North 1

Total Units: 292
 Owner Occupied: 82.3%
 Multi-Unit: 9.6%
 Built Prior to 1980: 66.4%
 Vacancy Rate: 20.9%
 Median Value: \$173,500



North 2

Total Units: 622
 Owner Occupied: 91.6%
 Multi-Unit: 5.5%
 Built Prior to 1980: 71.5%
 Vacancy Rate: 4.0%
 Median Value: \$152,800



Southeast 1

Total Units: 1,298
 Owner Occupied: 64.9%
 Multi-Unit: 33.7%
 Built Prior to 1980: 80.1%
 Vacancy Rate: 12.3%
 Median Value: \$135,500



Southeast 2

Total Units: 1,119
 Owner Occupied: 88.9%
 Multi-Unit: 12.8%
 Built Prior to 1980: 27.2%
 Vacancy Rate: 0.0%
 Median Value: \$142,900



Southwest*

Total Units: 2,257
 Owner Occupied: 82.7%
 Multi-Unit: 14.6%
 Built Prior to 1980: 24.6%
 Vacancy Rate: 7.3%
 Median Value: \$221,400

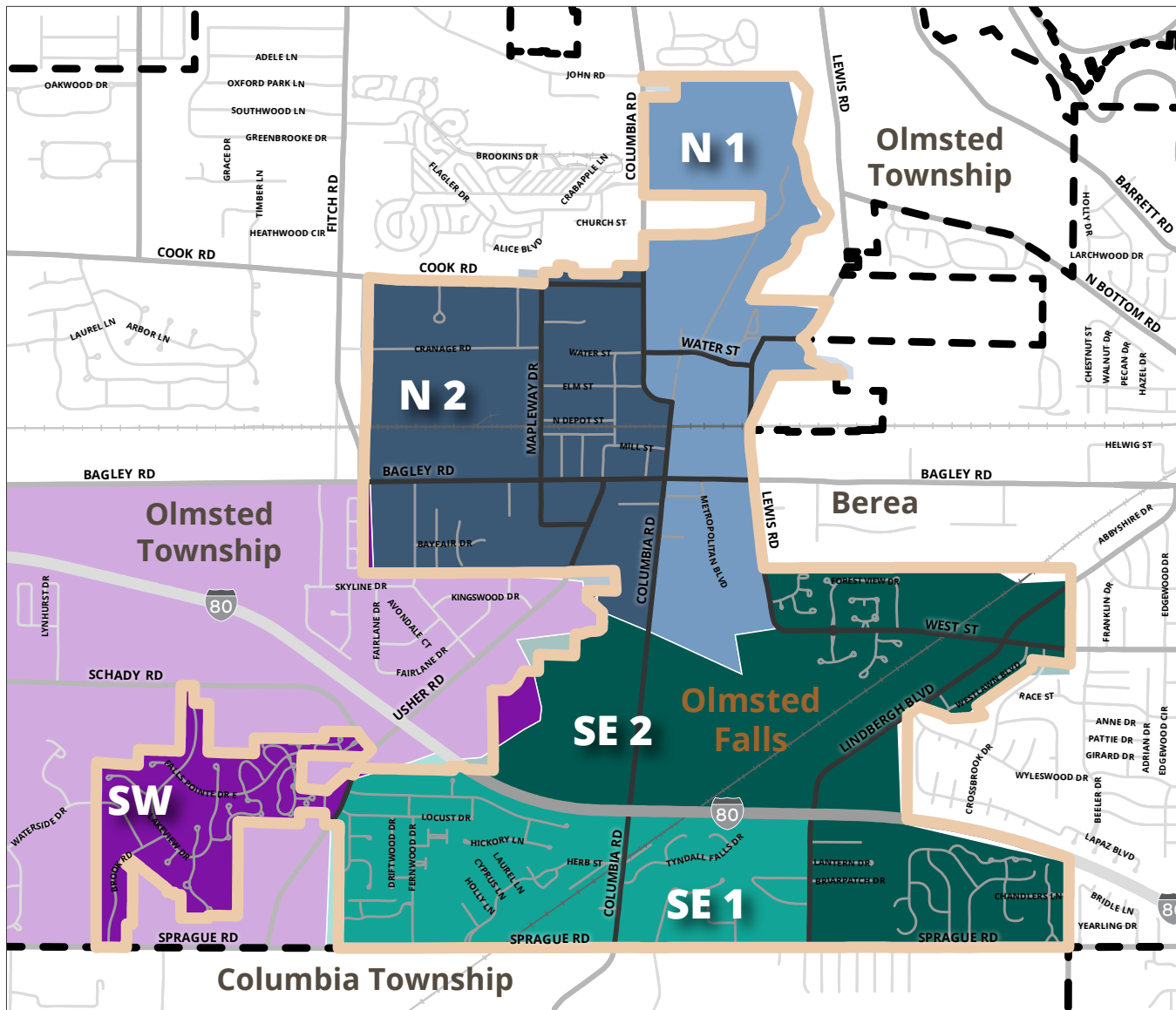


Legend

- Higher Value
- Average Value
- Lower Value

**The Southwest neighborhood includes a large section of Olmsted Township due to constraints in the Census boundaries. This should be noted when reviewing and using this data.*

Map 4 Housing by Neighborhood



Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
| North 1 | City of Olmsted Falls |
| North 2 | Community Boundaries |
| Southeast 1 | Highways |
| Southeast 2 | Major Roads |
| Southwest | Minor Roads |
| | Railroads |

Employment

Employment trends are important to understanding income tax receipts, housing needs, and business interests. The U.S. Census provides employment data for communities through its Local Employer-Household Dynamics partnership. While the data is localized, it is also older. The most recent year of data available for Olmsted Falls is 2012.

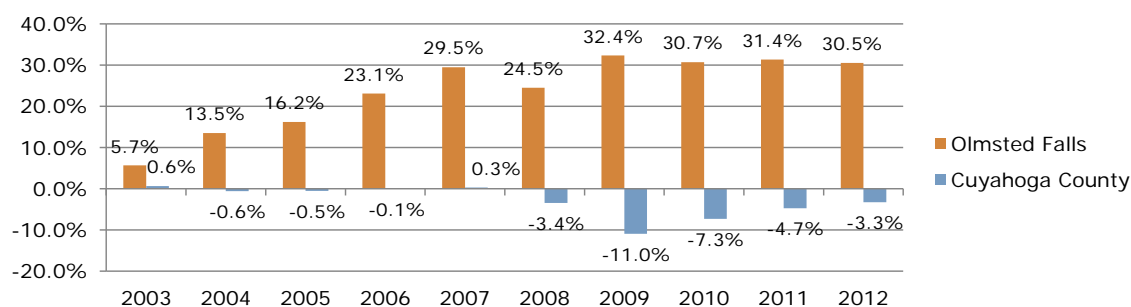
1,594 jobs were located in Olmsted Falls in 2012. When viewed in comparison to a baseline count in 2002, employment in Olmsted Falls was increasing steadily between 2002 and 2008, when employment fell as a result of the Great Recession. While employment rebounded between 2008 and 2009, it has remained relatively stable between 2009 and 2012.

Total Employment

According to the U.S. Census' Local Employer Household Dynamics data,

In comparison, employment in Cuyahoga County was relatively flat before the Great Recession and fell dramatically between 2007 and 2009. Since that time, however, the County's

Figure 8
Total Employment Compared to 2002



Source: Local Employer-Household Dynamics

employment has rebounded and has grown each year while Olmsted Falls has fluctuated and remained relatively flat. The raw employment numbers for Olmsted Falls and Cuyahoga County are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11
Employment Change, 2002-2012

Year	Olmsted Falls	Cuyahoga County
2002	1,221	749,145
2003	1,290	753,787
2004	1,386	744,762
2005	1,419	745,362
2006	1,503	748,690
2007	1,581	751,333
2008	1,520	723,340
2009	1,616	667,100
2010	1,596	694,272
2011	1,604	713,581
2012	1,594	724,575

Source: Local Employer-Household Dynamics

When compared to a baseline number in 2002, the City of Olmsted Falls has 30.5% more jobs in the City in 2012 than it did in 2002 while Cuyahoga County has 3.3% fewer jobs. This information is shown in Figure 8.

Employment Profile

In terms of income, 28.0% of jobs located in Olmsted Falls paid a monthly wage of \$3,333 (approximately \$40,000 annually) or more. In comparison, 42.0% of jobs countywide paid similarly. This indicates a proliferation of lower-paid jobs, consistent with Olmsted Township's lack of major office developments.

Industries in Olmsted Falls

The highest number of jobs in Olmsted Falls were in the following fields:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance: 30.3%
- Manufacturing: 16.1%
- Accommodation and Food Service: 9.5%
- Retail Trade: 8.1%
- Educational Services: 7.9%

In comparison to the County as a whole, Olmsted Falls had a greater concentration in the health care and social assistance sector (483 jobs). The Manufacturing sector in Olmsted Falls also comprised a higher proportion of jobs (16.1%), than Cuyahoga County (10.0%).

Employment Location

While Olmsted Falls had 1,594 jobs located in the City in 2013, only 143 employees both lived and worked within the City. According to the Census, 1,451 people were employed within Olmsted Falls but lived outside the City. Additionally, 3,852 persons living within the City were employed outside its borders.

Of those 3,852 persons living in Olmsted Falls but employed elsewhere, the top employment locations were in nearby areas such as Middleburg Heights, Brook Park, Parma, Olmsted Township, and Berea, with an additionally significant portion of persons commuting to downtown Cleveland and University Circle.

Municipal Tax Base

A community's fiscal condition determines its ability to provide quality public services and infrastructure. As is the case for most Ohio municipalities, Olmsted Falls collects revenue from a number of sources, two of which are directly tied to the composition of land uses: income and property taxes.

Income Taxes

Municipal income taxes are paid by three entities:

- Individuals working in the City pay a withholding tax;
- Businesses pay taxes on net profits on activities in Olmsted Falls;
- In some cases, residents who work outside the City pay income tax on their earnings.

Income Tax Rates

In 2015, the income tax rate in Olmsted Falls was 1.5%, which is shown in Table 12. This is lower than almost all of its neighboring communities, with the exception of Olmsted Township, which cannot levy an income tax.

According to the Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA)—the entity that collects municipal income taxes on behalf of its members communities—Olmsted Falls collected nearly \$3 million in income taxes in 2013. This is a lower amount than all surrounding communities that collect an income tax.

Table 12
Tax Rates and Taxes Collected, 2013

Community	Tax Rate	Taxes Collected (in millions)
Olmsted Township	0.0%	-
Olmsted Falls	1.5%	\$3.0
Fairview Park	2.0%	\$7.6
Berea	2.0%	\$11.1
North Olmsted	2.0%	\$13.5
Strongsville	2.0%	\$31.6

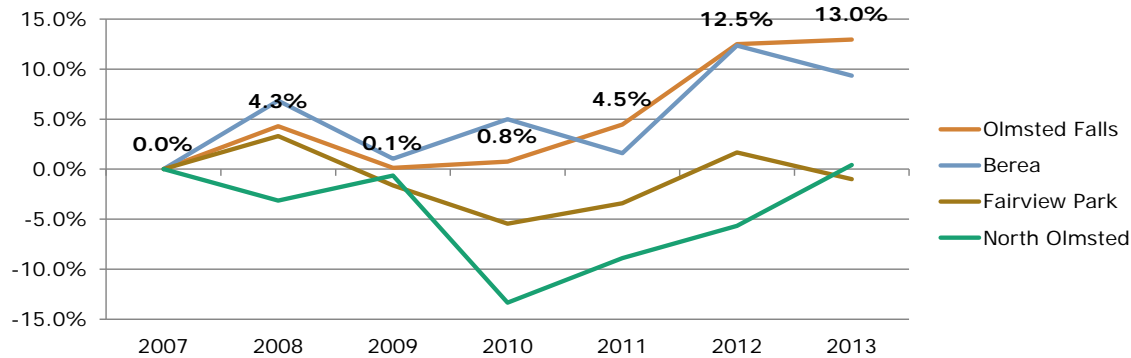
Source: Regional Income Tax Agency

Change in Income Tax Receipts

Figure 10 shows the increase or decrease in income tax receipts as compared to a baseline number in 2007 for Olmsted Falls and three neighboring communities. The data indicates that income tax collected is 13% higher in

Figure 10

Change in Income Tax Collected, Compared to 2007 Baseline



Source: Regional Income Tax Agency

2013 than it was in 2007. This is the greatest increase in taxes collected for any of the comparison communities.

Income Tax Per Capita

In 2013, Olmsted Falls collected \$332 in income tax per resident. Compared to neighboring communities, this is a low level of tax revenue per capita. North Olmsted was second lowest, with \$417 collected per resident, while Strongsville had the highest tax revenue, with \$707 collected per resident. This information is displayed in Table 13.

Table 13

Income Tax Collected Per Capita, 2013

Community	Taxes Collected (per capita)
Olmsted Township	\$0
Olmsted Falls	\$332
North Olmsted	\$417
Fairview Park	\$457
Berea	\$581
Strongsville	\$707

Source: Regional Income Tax Agency

Property Taxes

Property taxes are levied on land and buildings owned by private individuals, businesses, and public utilities located within the taxing district. Real estate taxes are based on three elements:

- The determination of market value;
- The percentage at which the market value is assessed; and
- The property tax rate.

Appraisals in Olmsted Falls

The Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office is tasked with appraising all taxable real property once every six years to determine market values. Property tax bills are calculated on the assessed value of property, which according to the Ohio Revised Code equals 35% of the auditor's appraised value. Therefore, a home with an appraised value of \$100,000 will be taxed on the value of \$35,000. The County collects the tax and then redistributes it to the taxing jurisdiction.

The appraised value of property in a community is a key factor in determining the potential for real estate tax

collection and is a function of the types of land uses found in the City. According to the County Fiscal Officer's 2014 records, property in Olmsted Falls was valued at approximately \$189.4 million. This valuation is significantly lower than surrounding communities, as is displayed in Table 14.

Table 14
Total Tax Valuations, 2014

Community	Tax Valuation Actual (in millions)
Olmsted Falls	\$189.4
Berea	\$356.8
Fairview Park	\$364.8
North Olmsted	\$785.4
Olmsted Township	\$278.4
Strongsville	\$1,414.7

Source: County Fiscal Office

Like its neighboring communities, a majority of Olmsted Falls' tax valuation comes from residential properties. In 2014, 87.4% of the City's tax valuation came from residential property, 10.2% from commercial and industrial properties, and 2.4% from public utilities. Compared to other communities and the county as a whole, Olmsted Falls generates a relatively higher percentage of tax valuation from residential properties.

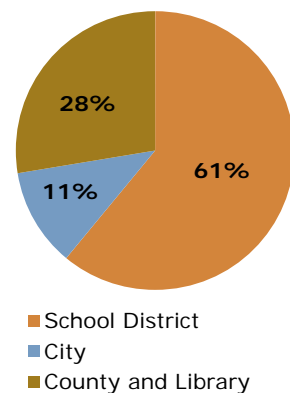
Millage Rates

A variety of governmental entities levy a tax on real property. The amount of taxes a property owner pays is based on a combined rate, known as a mill, for all jurisdictions including the local school district, county, library, and the municipality. The majority of property taxes are paid to the local school district,

while a much smaller percentage is paid to the local government. For Olmsted Falls, the total effective property tax rate is 92.6 mills, with 61% from the local school district levies and 11.4% from the City millage. The remaining percentage is disbursed between the County and the library system.

Though property taxes contribute only a small percentage of the City's general fund revenues, property owners often choose where to buy property based on the total amount of property taxes paid, which is typically a result of the school district's portion.

Figure 9
Percentage of Millage Dedicated to Taxing Jurisdiction, 2013



Source: County Fiscal Office

With a total effective rate of 92.6, Olmsted Falls residents living within the Olmsted Falls City School District pay a slightly lower rate than most surrounding communities. Berea has a nearly equivalent rate, while Fairview Park, North Olmsted, and Olmsted Township have considerably higher rates. Strongsville, on the other hand, has a much lower rate of 77.5.

Parks and Recreation

Olmsted Falls has a wide variety of parks and recreation areas, featuring six parks that total over ten acres of City-owned land. Parks and recreation areas are important because they provide places for physical activities and community interaction. These areas can also positively affect a community's economic and social activity. Olmsted Falls has multiple parks and recreation facilities available to residents:

- *Village Green Park:* Located in the historic district, this three acre park offers a playground, recreational fountain, and basketball courts. The space also holds a gazebo and picnic tables for family and community gatherings.
- *Fortier Park:* Fortier Park covers five acres along the West Branch of the Rocky River and Plum Creek,

in the western portion of the city. The park features many historical elements important to Olmsted Falls. Residents have access to the Rocky River as well as a large network of paved and nature trails. The park provides fishing and picnic opportunities as well.

- *East River Park:* This park offers many activities for children and families. It has a playground and sledding hill as well as a picnic shelter and multi-use open space. East River Park also has trails that allow visitors to connect to the Village Green and Fortier Park.

Three remaining parks include Bradford Gate, Tyndall Falls Park, and Mills Field Park. Although various sizes, these parks feature multi-use fields,

The waterfalls in Olmsted Falls are the centerpiece of a park system that attracts tourists and provides space for residents.

Flickr: Jen Goellnitz



playgrounds, and walking areas. All are easily accessible by neighboring homes.

Regional Park System

Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Reservation is located east of Olmsted Falls, in neighboring Brook Park and Berea. The Reservation encompasses more than 1,500 acres, stretching from its mouth at Lake Erie in Rocky River south to intersect with the Mill Stream Run Reservation in Berea and Strongsville. The reservation follows the Rocky River Valley and encompasses its steep shale cliffs, deep floodplain forests, meadows, and wetlands. The Reservation offers hiking, biking, and bridle trails, winter sports opportunities, shelters, and golf courses.

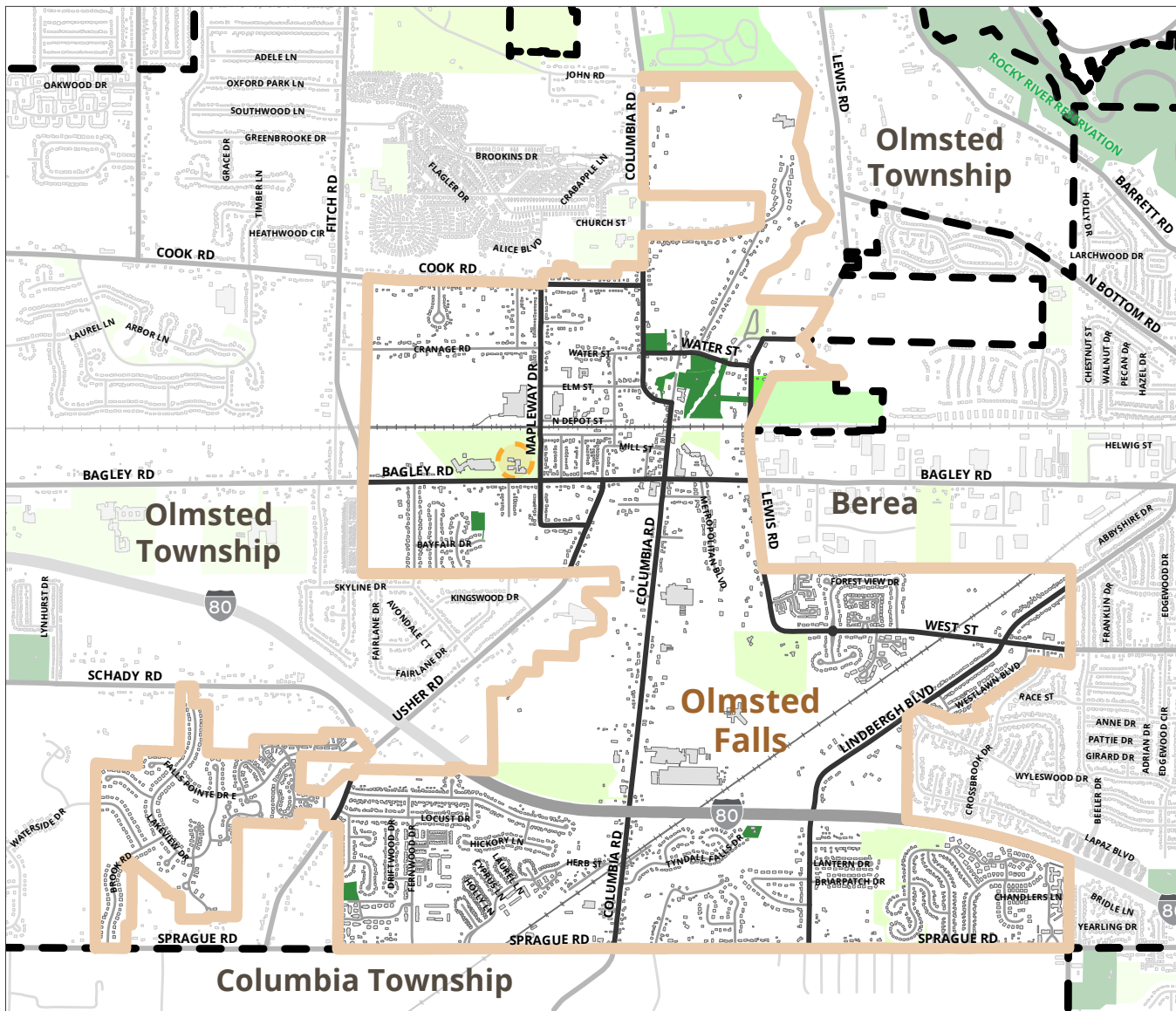
Cleveland Metroparks has developed vision plans for each of its reservations, including the Rocky River Reservation and Mill Creek Reservation. The visions for each included a connection between Rocky River Reservation, the parks in downtown Olmsted Falls, and the Mill Creek Reservation. Such a connection could be a hiking, biking, and walking trail that would link the park systems, promote active transportation, and increase tourism in Olmsted Falls.

Olmsted Community Center










The Olmsted Community Center (OCC) is a non-profit organization that serves as a family recreation center. It is located in the north wing of the former Olmsted Falls Middle School building on Bagley Road, while the south wing contains City Hall and the Police Department, and the west wing is home to KidsFirst daycare center. The OCC's mission is "to be a family-friendly center for the whole community to enjoy." It runs a variety of activities for adults,

youth, and seniors including yoga, fitness, sports leagues, arts and dance, and it is open for use to all residents and all surrounding communities.

Map 5 Parks and Open Spaces



Legend

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|
|  | Olmsted Community Center |  | City of Olmsted Falls |
|  | Parks |  | Community Boundaries |
|  | Cemeteries |  | Highways |
|  | Other Open Spaces | | Major Roads |
|  | Building Footprints |  | Minor Roads |
| | | | Railroads |

Community Facilities

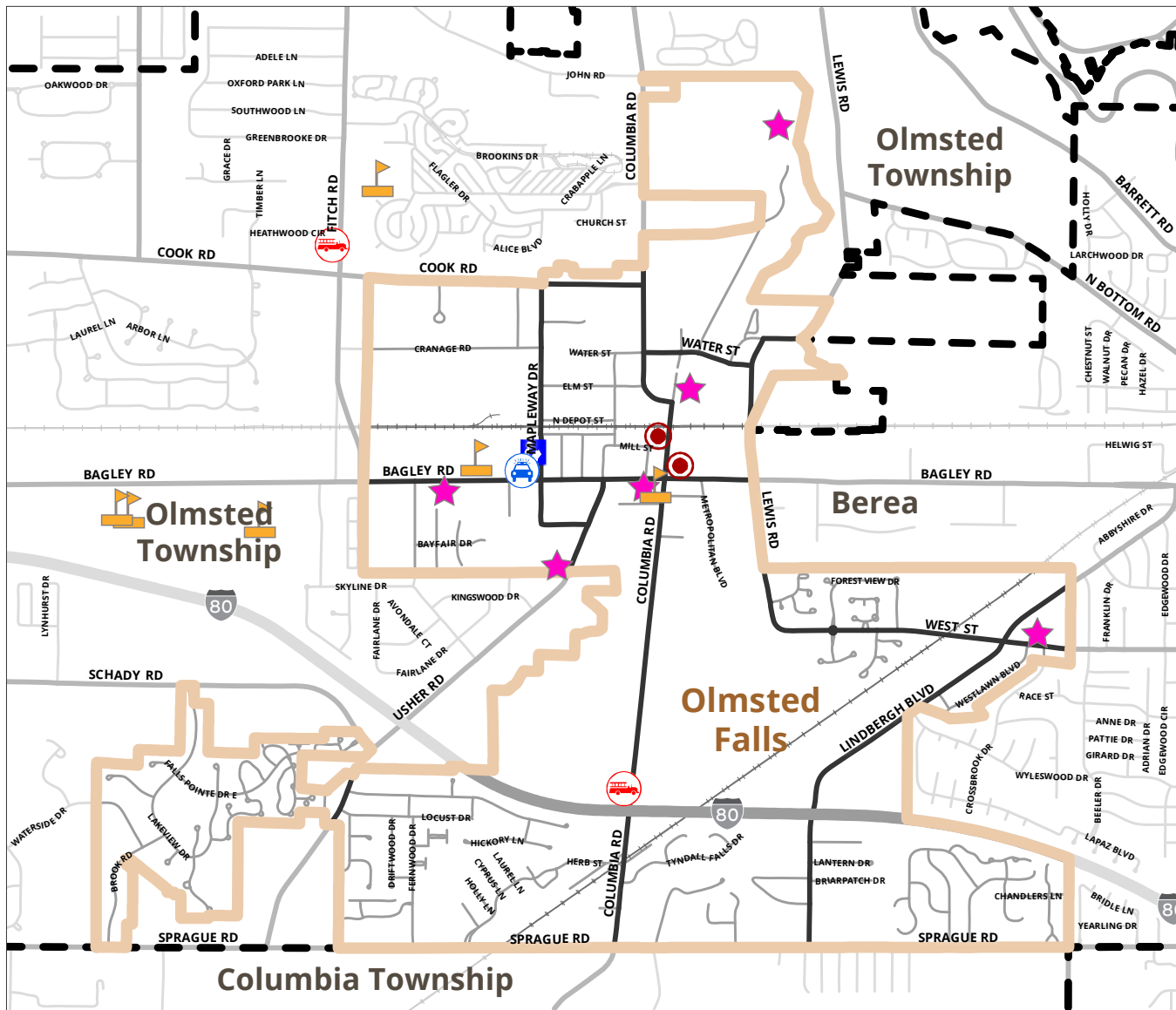
Community facilities act as a vehicle for public service and often serve as landmarks within a community. They encompass a variety of purposes, including protecting public health and safety, education, contributing to culture, or providing places of worship.

Existing Community Facilities













The facilities listed below are displayed on Map 6 on page 55.

- *Schools:* These include both public and private elementary through high schools. Four out of the five schools within the Olmsted Falls City School District are located outside of the City in Olmsted Township to the west. Falls-Lenox Primary School is the only public school within city limits. The other school within the City is St. Mary of the Falls, a private preschool through 8th grade Catholic school.
- *Shopping Centers:* Olmsted Falls has two main shopping areas: the Mill River Plaza and Grand Pacific Junction. The Mill River Plaza is an 83,000 ft. retail center located at the corner of Bagley Road and Columbia Road. Grand Pacific Junction is a historic shopping district containing a mix of 26 specialty shops and restaurants located along the Columbia Road corridor north of Bagley Road.
- *Fire Stations:* Olmsted Falls has one fire station positioned in the southern half of the City on Columbia Road near I-80. The Olmsted Township fire station is located near the western City limits.
- *Police Stations:* The City's only police station is located near the center of Olmsted Falls along Bagley Road.
- *Libraries:* The Olmsted Falls Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public library is located on Bagley Road.
- *Religious Institutions:* Olmsted Falls is home to six centers of worship spread throughout the City.

Map 6 Facilities



Legend

- | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|------------------------|--|-----------------------|
|  | Schools |  | Libraries |  | City of Olmsted Falls |
|  | Shopping Centers |  | Religious Institutions |  | Community Boundaries |
|  | Fire Stations | | |  | Highways |
|  | Police Stations | | |  | Major Roads |
| | | | |  | Minor Roads |
| | | | |  | Railroads |

Environment

Natural amenities and ecological resources are not only essential to a community's environmental health, but also to an area's economic and social health. Communities have increasingly recognized that natural amenities attract and retain businesses and residents by providing meeting places, opportunities for recreation and active lifestyles, and natural beauty. Natural features also prevent flooding, mitigate stormwater, stabilize soil, and purify air and water, thereby reducing the need for costly and unsightly infrastructure. The following section discusses the environmental landscape of Olmsted Falls.

Rivers and Watersheds

A watershed is the area of land that drains into a lake or stream. Watersheds can be small—like the area that drains into the creek behind a house—or they can be large—consider all the land, streams, and rivers that drain into Lake Erie or the Ohio River.

The City of Olmsted Falls is completely located in the Rocky River Watershed. The Rocky River headwaters begin in

Medina and North Royalton and flow north to Lake Erie in Rocky River.

Olmsted Falls is comprised of several subwatersheds—smaller areas that drain into branches of the Rocky River. These include the Plum Creek, Busby Ditch, Baker Creek, Blodgett Creek and the West Branch watersheds—meaning that portions of the City are drained into these tributaries. Three of these branches actually flow through Olmsted Falls: the West Branch, Busby Ditch, and Plum Creek. The West Branch and Plum Creek are described in further detail below.

West Branch of the Rocky River

The West Branch, which flows from the south central portion of the City and travels north along the eastern border, is almost entirely held by private owners and remains in a largely natural state. Throughout its length, development has not encroached on the banks of the West Branch. South of Olmsted Falls, agriculture and urbanization have resulted in siltation and some stream alteration, which can damage the river and ecosystem. Additionally, negative impacts from continued development upstream—bacteria, sedimentation, and

other pollutants associated with urbanization—will impact the portion of West Branch flowing through the City.

Plum Creek

Plum Creek enters the City's western border and flows northeast into the West Branch. According to the 2006 Rocky River Action Plan, the Ohio EPA considers this portion of Plum Creek to be in non-attainment, meaning that it exceeds safe levels of various pollutants and bacteria for recreational use.

Plum Creek is impacted by agricultural runoff, and to some extent urbanized runoff. Mitigating the negative effects of agricultural runoff involves preventing animal waste from reaching the stream and minimizing the nutrient, fertilizer, and chemical runoff from crop production. To mitigate the negative effects of storm water runoff from urbanized areas, the Watershed Action Plan recommends reducing the amount of impervious surfaces (such as concrete and asphalt) in lower Plum Creek to 15%, and minimizing the storm water impacts associated with likely development in the Olmsted Falls portions of the watershed. In part, this can be achieved by maintaining the natural area along the stream channel.

Riparian Zones

Riparian zones are identified as a specific distance from a river, stream, or waterbody based on the size of that water feature. They are important because they hold water during periods of heavy or continuous rain that might otherwise flood residential or developed areas and can harm ecosystems.

The City of Olmsted Falls does currently have restrictions on construction within the areas adjacent to major waterways.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas of land that are inundated with water throughout the year, and they provide natural habitat to diverse species of plants and animals. Wetlands purify water and are vital to flood control because they can easily absorb large quantities of water that would otherwise require costly storm-water infrastructure.

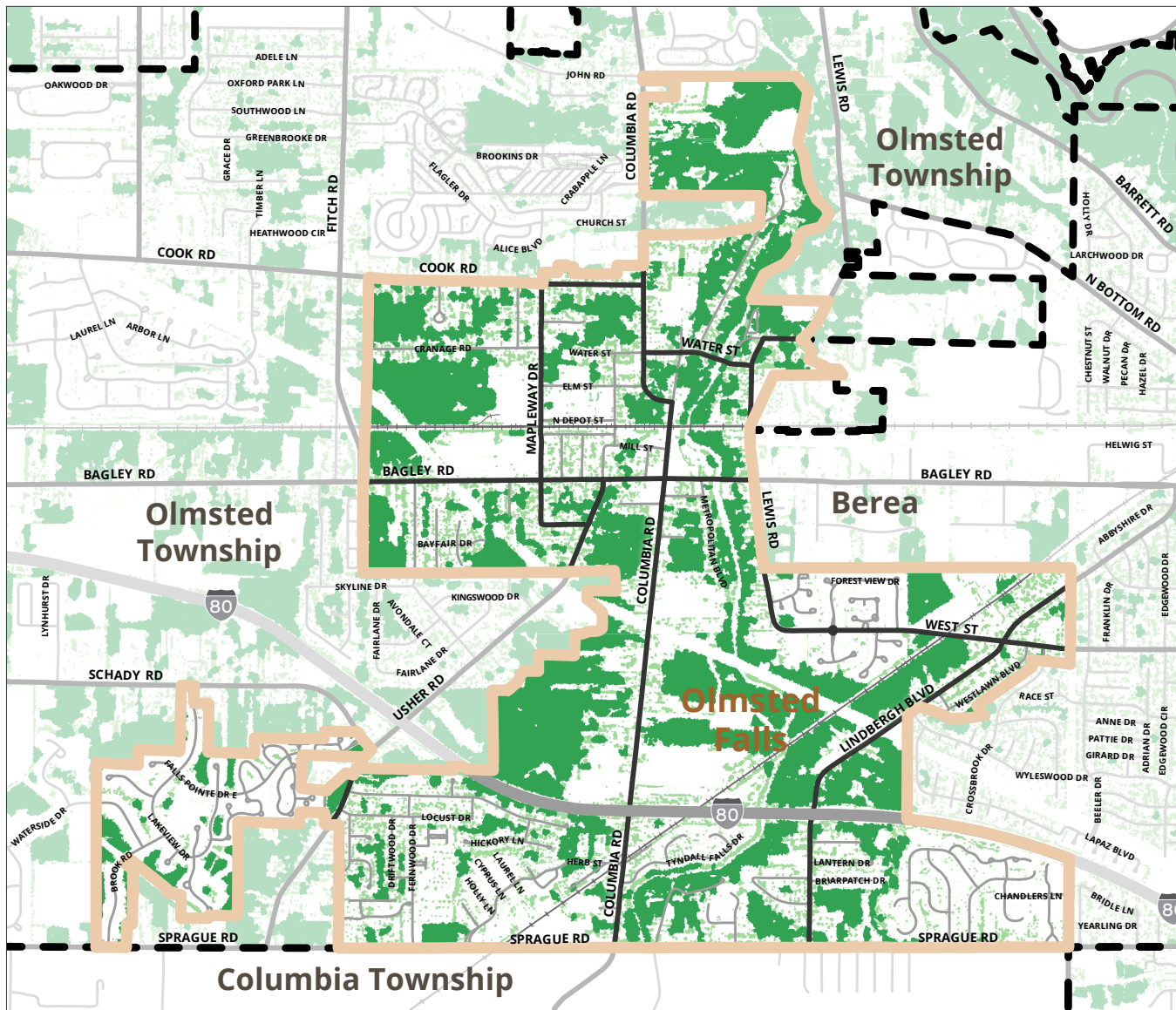
Olmsted Falls has a significant number of wetlands. The largest are located within the vacant parcel of land behind the Evergreen Packaging facility between Cranage Road and the railroad tracks. Other large wetlands are located on either side of River Road in the northern part of the City and in the backs of the deep residential lots that front Columbia Road. In general, wetlands are an environmental constraint to development as they are located in almost every large, undeveloped portion of the community.

Tree Canopy

The tree canopy is the layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above. Tree canopy can provide many benefits including improving water quality, reducing erosion, reducing stormwater runoff, saving energy, lowering City temperatures, reducing air pollution, and enhancing property values.

Olmsted Falls ranks well in terms of tree canopy. According to the Urban

Map 8 Tree Canopy



Legend

- Large Forest Patch
- Medium Forest Patch
- Small Forest Patch
- City of Olmsted Falls
- Community Boundaries
- Highways
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Railroads

Tree Canopy Study completed by the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, 46% of Olmsted Falls has intact tree canopy, making it 15th in terms of overall amount of tree canopy of all Cuyahoga County municipalities. It is estimated that an additional 846.6 acres of vegetated land and 252.6 acres of paved land could be repopulated with trees to further increase the canopy.

In comparison to surrounding communities, Olmsted Falls has a significantly larger tree canopy and has greater coverage than the countywide average, as shown in Table 15.

Table 15

Tree Canopy Coverage as a Percent of Land Area

Community	Tree Canopy Coverage
Brook Park	18.4%
Berea	33.1%
Cuyahoga County	37.6%
Olmsted Township	41.8%
North Olmsted	42.1%
Strongsville	43.1%
Olmsted Falls	45.7%

Source: County Planning

The Tree Canopy map on page 59 displays patches of forested areas in Olmsted Falls. The darkest green color shows the largest sections of contiguous tree cover in the City.

Tree Preservation and Management

The City of Olmsted Falls has adopted a Tree Preservation and Management chapter of the zoning code that restricts any developer with a lot greater than two acres from removing any trees of

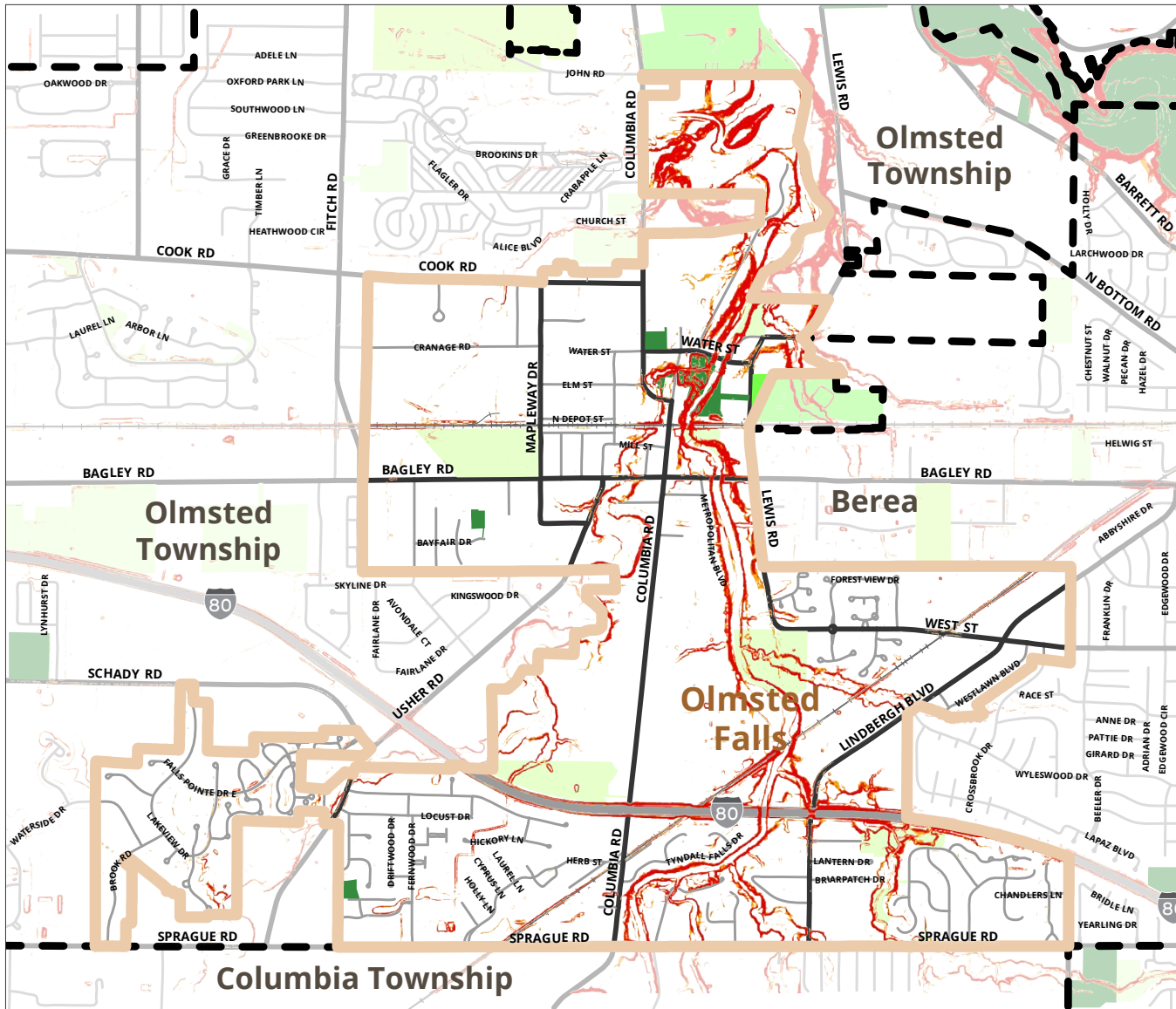
a certain size without first obtaining a permit. Similarly, any development plans requiring City review must also consider tree protection in consultation with the City Arborist.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are defined as land with a slope of 12% or greater. They are an environmental constraint that limits a community's developable land because they require additional engineering work such as filling, erosion control, and slope reinforcement. While constraints to development, steep slopes can also be incorporated into construction as scenic overlooks or beautifying features.

With the exception of the valleys created by Plum Creek and the West Branch, the City's topography is relatively flat. The slopes along waterways range from 12% to 18% grade, becoming more pronounced further north, where Plum Creek joins the West Branch and the West Branch continues northward. Slopes of more than 12% grade have traditionally not been developed in these areas. The slopes in Olmsted Falls have aided in the preservation of a great deal of the City's natural character and have also helped maintain the integrity of portions of the Rocky River that traverse the City.

Map 9 Steep Slopes



Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
|  12.7% - 18% Slope |  City of Olmsted Falls |
|  18.1% or Higher Slope |  Community Boundaries |
|  Parks |  Highways |
|  Cemeteries |  Major Roads |
|  Other Open Spaces |  Minor Roads |
| |  Railroads |

Transportation Network

An adequate transportation system is essential to moving people and goods throughout a community and region. These networks are made up of roads, bridges, public transit routes, sidewalks, railroads, and bikeways. Complete transportation networks are important to accessing and developing land uses that are efficient and accessible.

Commuting Patterns

According to data from the Census, a large majority of Olmsted Falls' residents (90.4%) drive alone to work. Among other forms of commuting, 4.5% of residents carpool, 1.1% walk, 0.6% take some other form of transportation, and 1.7% take public transit, less than half the percentage of Cuyahoga County residents as a whole. In addition, 1.9% of residents work at home.

Roads and Highways

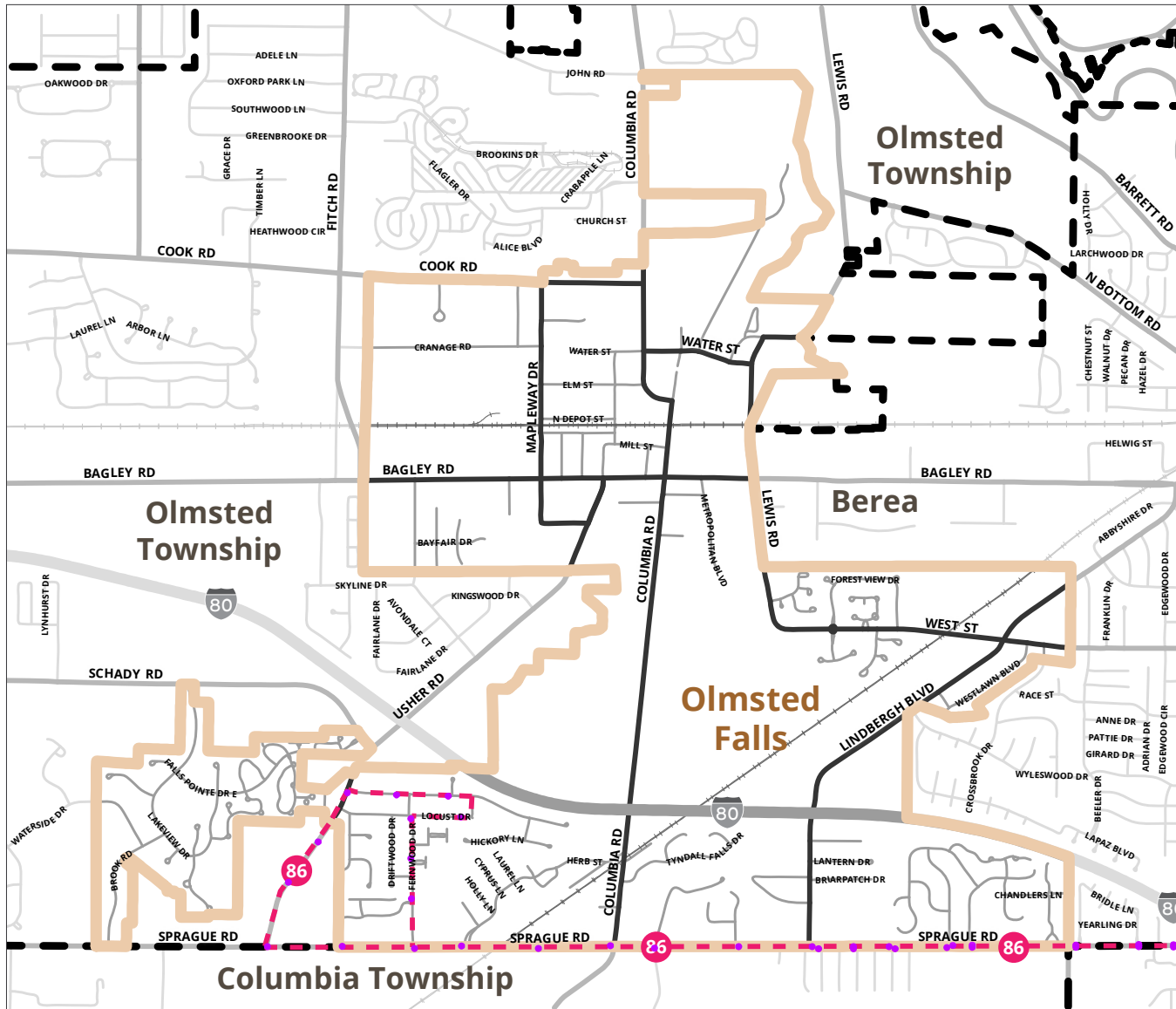
Roads and highways form the most basic type of transportation by connecting a community to other areas.

Olmsted Falls' connections include the following:

- *Highways:* Although the I-80 Ohio Turnpike travels through Olmsted Falls, there are no entry or exit points within city limits. Drivers must enter and exit the highway route in surrounding communities.
- *Major North-South Roads:* Olmsted Falls has one major north-south connector running the length of the City: Columbia Road. Columbia Road is part of State Route 252 connecting Medina, Lorain, and Cuyahoga counties.
- *Major East-West Roads:* Bagley Road and Sprague Road are the two main east-west roads in Olmsted Falls. Bagley Road cuts through the center of the City and connects to North Ridgeville in the west and Middleburg Heights in the east. Sprague Road forms part of the City's southern border and provides access to many residential areas.

A few road improvement projects have been considered within the City, including the construction of a noise wall along the eastbound side of I-80 and

Map 10 Roads and Transit



Legend

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bus Route (circle shows route number) | City of Olmsted Falls |
| Route Spur (limited frequencies) | Community Boundaries |
| | Highways |
| | Major Roads |
| | Minor Roads |
| | Railroads |

functional and aesthetic improvements to the Bagley Road bridge over Plum Creek.

Transit

Accessible transit is a critical component of a complete transportation network, connecting those without vehicles to the region's jobs and amenities. The City of Olmsted Falls is served by one limited frequency extension of a GCRTA transit route, as shown on Map 10:

- *Route 86 (Rocky River - Berea):* Travels from the Sprague Road Park-N-Ride through Berea ending at the West Park Rapid Station in Cleveland, 7 days/week; limited service along Sprague Road to Usher Road in Olmsted Falls, weekdays

The North Olmsted Park-N-Ride Lot and Transit Center is located within a mile and a half drive of the City's limits. The Park-N-Ride is served by two GCRTA routes:

- *Route 75 (Lorain):* Running from the Lorain County line in North Olmsted to the West Park Rapid Station in Cleveland, 7 days/week
- *Route 263 (North Olmsted Park-N-Ride):* Running from North Olmsted to downtown Cleveland via I-480 and I-71, weekday rush hour

Sidewalks

Sidewalks increase mobility by connecting residents to services, schools, and amenities while providing opportunities for exercise and environmentally friendly transportation. They also

provide a safe way for people on foot to move throughout the community.

Sidewalks in Olmsted Falls

Olmsted Falls has a largely disconnected sidewalk network making pedestrian travel through the City difficult. Although a majority of streets contain sidewalks on both sides, there are missing links involving sections of road either without sidewalks on one side or no sidewalks at all. This information is shown on Map 11.

Most notably, a large section of Columbia Road between I-80 and Bagley Road does not have sidewalks on either side, and numerous streets in and near Downtown Olmsted Falls do not have complete sidewalks. Frequent breaks in the sidewalk network also occur in the City's southern residential subdivision streets.

Bikeways

Bikeways have become increasingly important as people seek to travel in ways that are safe, environmentally friendly, and healthy. Bikeways can take many forms including markings to share roads, bike lanes, or off-road paths.

Existing Bikeways

The City of Olmsted Falls does not contain any existing bike routes, bike lanes, or off-road paths.

The 13.6 mile Valley Parkway trail is located two miles east of Olmsted Falls' municipal boundaries. The trail runs north and south along the Rocky River Reservation from Berea to Lakewood.

Proposed Bikeways

County Planning worked with the City of Olmsted Falls as part of the 2004 Greenprint to identify potential bikeways running through the City. Two trail possibilities were identified: a trail running north-south along the West Branch of the Rocky River and one running east-west under the existing utility lines. This information is shown on Map 12.

Railroads

Railroads are a key component to a complete transportation network. Railroads provide vital routes for both human and freight travel and they support industrial land uses.

Two major railroads travel through the City of Olmsted Falls: the Norfolk Southern Chicago Line and the CSX Greenwich Subdivision. Both rail lines pass next to industrial areas in Olmsted Falls where there are possibilities for employment growth.

Norfolk Southern Chicago Line

The double track Chicago Line extends from Chicago to Cleveland passing through Olmsted Falls just north of Bagley Road. Amtrak operates the Capital Limited service from Chicago to Washington DC and the Lake Shore Limited service from Chicago to New York/Boston on the Chicago Line. Speed limits on the track are 50 mph for freight trains and 60 mph for intermodal trains.

The Chicago Line through Olmsted Falls includes two main line tracks and a third siding track. As of January 2014,

an estimated 92 trains pass through Olmsted Falls daily, with half of those trains passing through at night. The line is not marked as a quiet zone.

CSX Greenwich Subdivision

The 69.4 mile Greenwich Subdivision extends from Berea to Martel passing through Olmsted Falls over I-80 and Columbia Road. Speed limits range from 40-50 mph for freight trains and 50-60 mph for CSX intermodal trains.

The Greenwich Subdivision through Olmsted Falls includes two main line tracks. As of July 2014, an estimated 51 trains traverse Olmsted Falls on a daily basis, with slightly more than half passing at night. The rail line is marked as a 24-hour quiet zone.

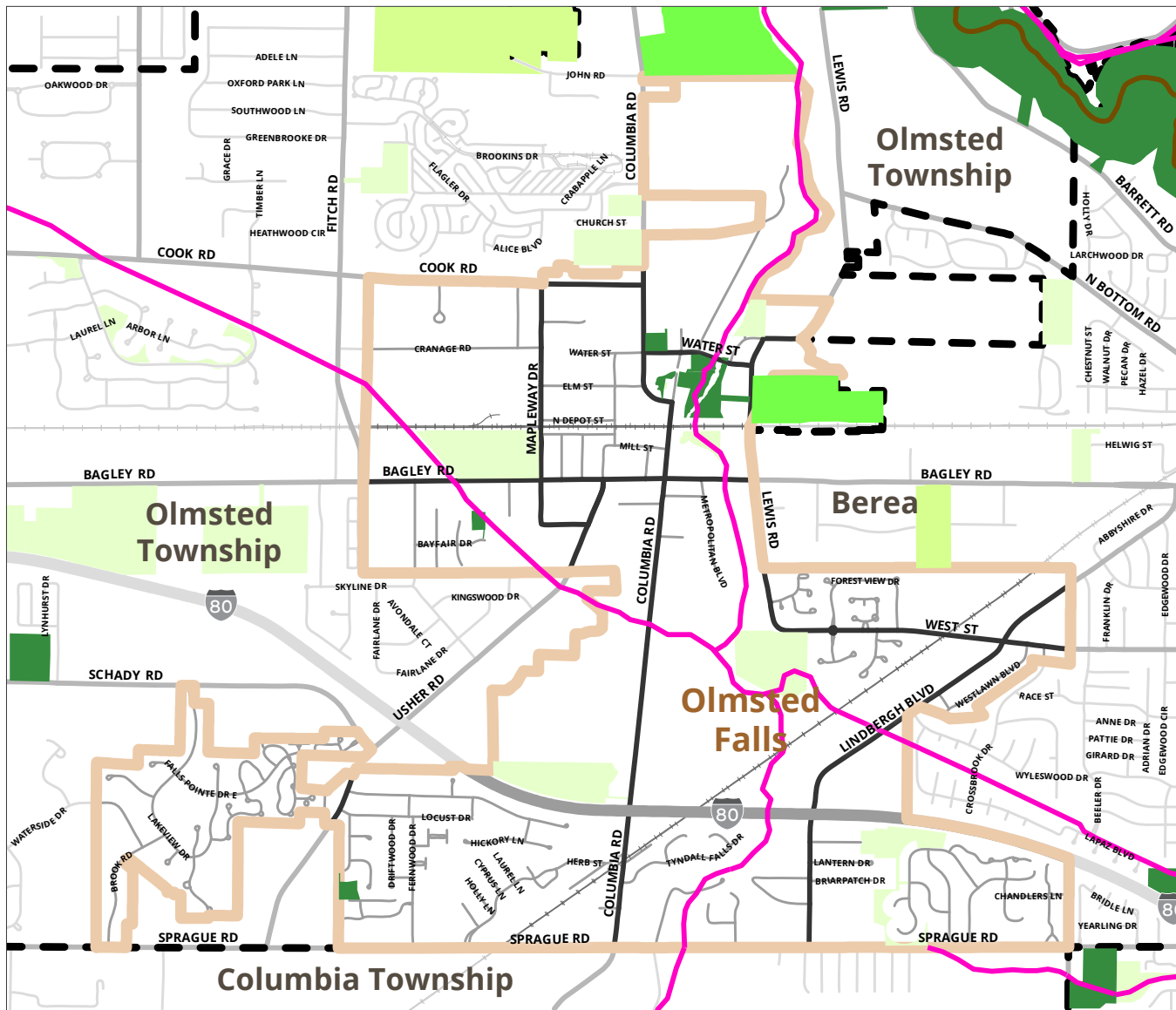
Cleveland Hopkins International Airport

Olmsted Falls is in close proximity to Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, the main public airport for the County and region. The airport has an average of 142 daily nonstop departures to over 40 destinations.

While Hopkins International Airport has undergone recent changes with United Airlines dehubbing, Hopkins is successfully transitioning to an origin-destination airport. Numerous airlines have entered the market, including Frontier Airlines, Spirit Airlines, and JetBlue.

Both the airport's passenger and freight traffic provide an opportunity for Olmsted Falls to capitalize on the economic potential of the City's proximity.

Map 12 Trails and Bikeways



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Existing Trail | | Proposed Trail |
| | Parks | | Community Boundaries |
| | Cemeteries | | Highways |
| | Other Open Spaces | | Major Roads |
| | | | Minor Roads |
| | | | Railroads |

Land Use and Zoning

Land use and zoning describe two different but related topics. Land use describes how land is currently being used while zoning describes what uses are allowed to be constructed.

Land Use in Olmsted Falls

Land use is commonly depicted using broad categories such as residential, commercial, or industrial areas. The map on page 69 displays current land uses in Olmsted Falls, which are further described below:

Residential Land Uses

The City is mostly residential, with a mix of typical single-family suburbs south of I-80, deep lot rural residential along Columbia Road, and more traditional grid-pattern neighborhoods surrounding Downtown Olmsted Falls. While much of the community is residential, large areas of land are vacant or are deep lots with uses fronting the street and expansive backyards.

The City has a number of multi-family areas including the apartments lining Fernwood Drive, the units in the Raintree community, the small apartment complexes along Douglas Lane, and the apartments backing up to Rocky River in Downtown Olmsted Falls.

Commercial Land Uses

Commercial areas in Olmsted Falls are largely contained to Downtown Olmsted

Falls. A few commercially zoned properties exist along Bagley Road, Columbia Road, and Sprague Road; however, most are vacant or small. The majority of the community's retail transactions take place in Downtown.

Industrial Land Uses

The community also has a number of industrial areas; however most are vacant. The largest occupied industrial areas are located along Mapleway Drive and Sprague Road.

Institutional Land Uses

Finally, the City has large areas devoted to institutional uses. These include churches, the Berea Children's Home, the Riverview Pointe Care Center, the Board of Education, and the Olmsted Performing Arts center.

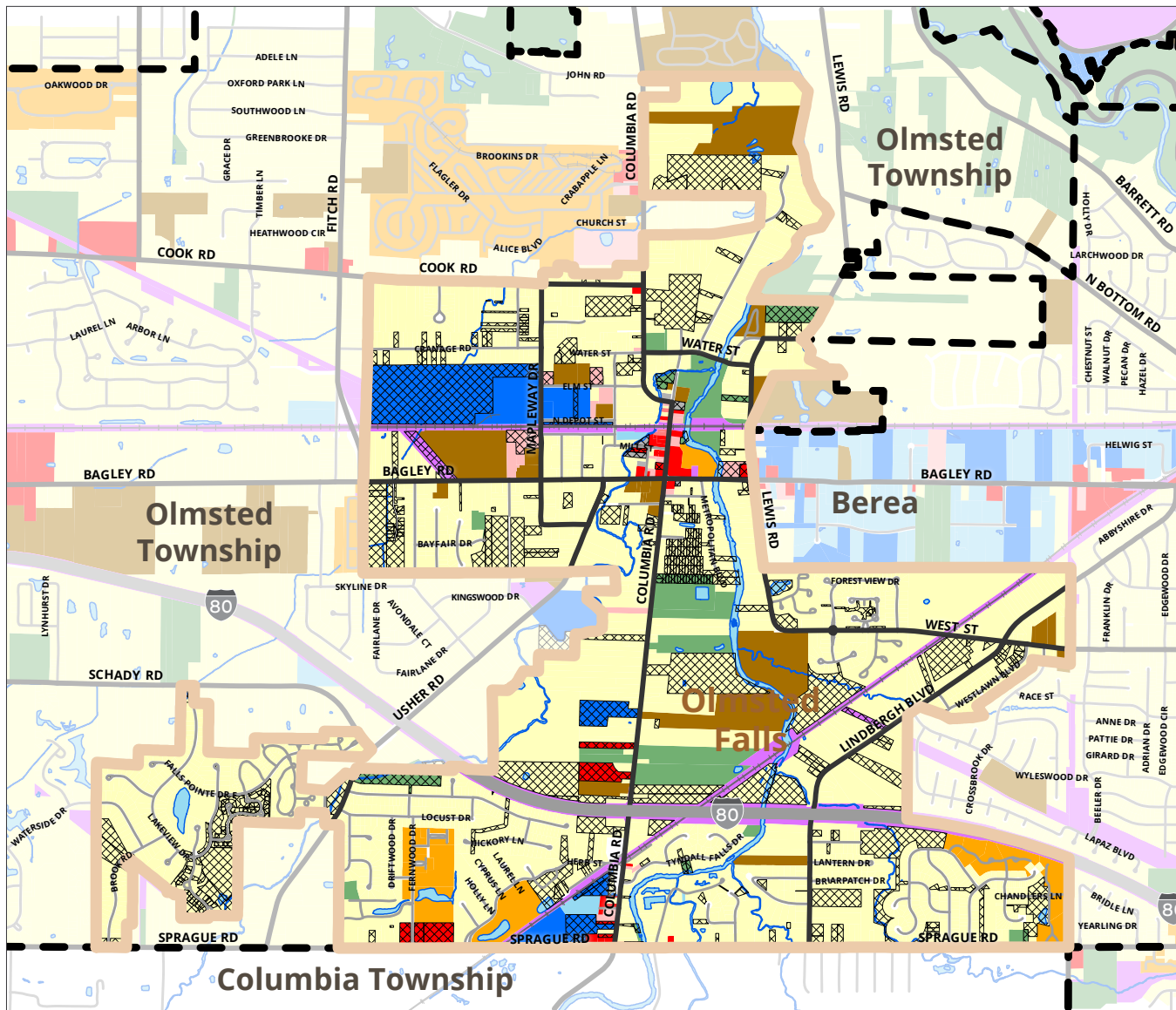
Zoning in Olmsted Falls

Zoning is the primary mechanism used by local governments to regulate the use of land and the manner in which those land uses are distributed throughout the community.

Residential Districts

The City has five strictly residential districts. Three are limited to single-family dwellings of various densities while two permit attached units and apartments. The City's residential districts are

Map 13 Current Land Use



Legend

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Single-Family | Transportation/Utility | City of Olmsted Falls |
| Multi-Family | Institutional | Community Boundaries |
| Retail | Open Space | Highways |
| Office | Vacant Land | Major Roads |
| Mixed Commercial | Streams | Minor Roads |
| Light Industrial | Major Waterways and Lakes | Railroads |
| Industrial | | |

largely suburban in nature, with large setbacks and generous lot sizes.

Commercial Districts

The City's commercial districts include a convenience district, a general commercial district, and a community commercial district.

The convenience district permits most retail uses with the exception of auto-oriented uses. This zoning category is currently in use only along a few parcels on Sprague Road.

The general commercial district permits the widest range of uses, including auto-oriented uses that are generally prohibited in other districts. These include drive-thru facilities, motels, car washes, and vehicle sales.

The community commercial district mostly encompasses Downtown Olmsted Falls and a few parcels fronting Bagley Road. The district allows retail uses with the exception of auto-oriented uses. It also allows residential uses to be located above retail uses, such as apartments over small stores. In general, this district is geared toward walkable development with small setbacks and thin parcels.

Mixed-Use District

The mixed-use planned development district is confined to parcels facing Columbia Road. The district permits single-family detached dwellings and recreational areas in addition to conditionally permitting apartments, offices, retail, and hotels. Intended to allow a wide range of uses in close proximity, the district has yet to be used in practice.

Industrial Districts

The City has two industrial districts; however, only one is currently in use on the zoning map. The I-2 Industrial Manufacturing District is confined to parcels north of the Norfolk Southern railroad track that bisects downtown and parcels in the triangle located between Columbia Road, Sprague Road, and the southern railroad tracks.

Much of the industrial land in the City is vacant with the exception of some smaller manufacturers. With limited highway access, shipping into Olmsted Falls is difficult.

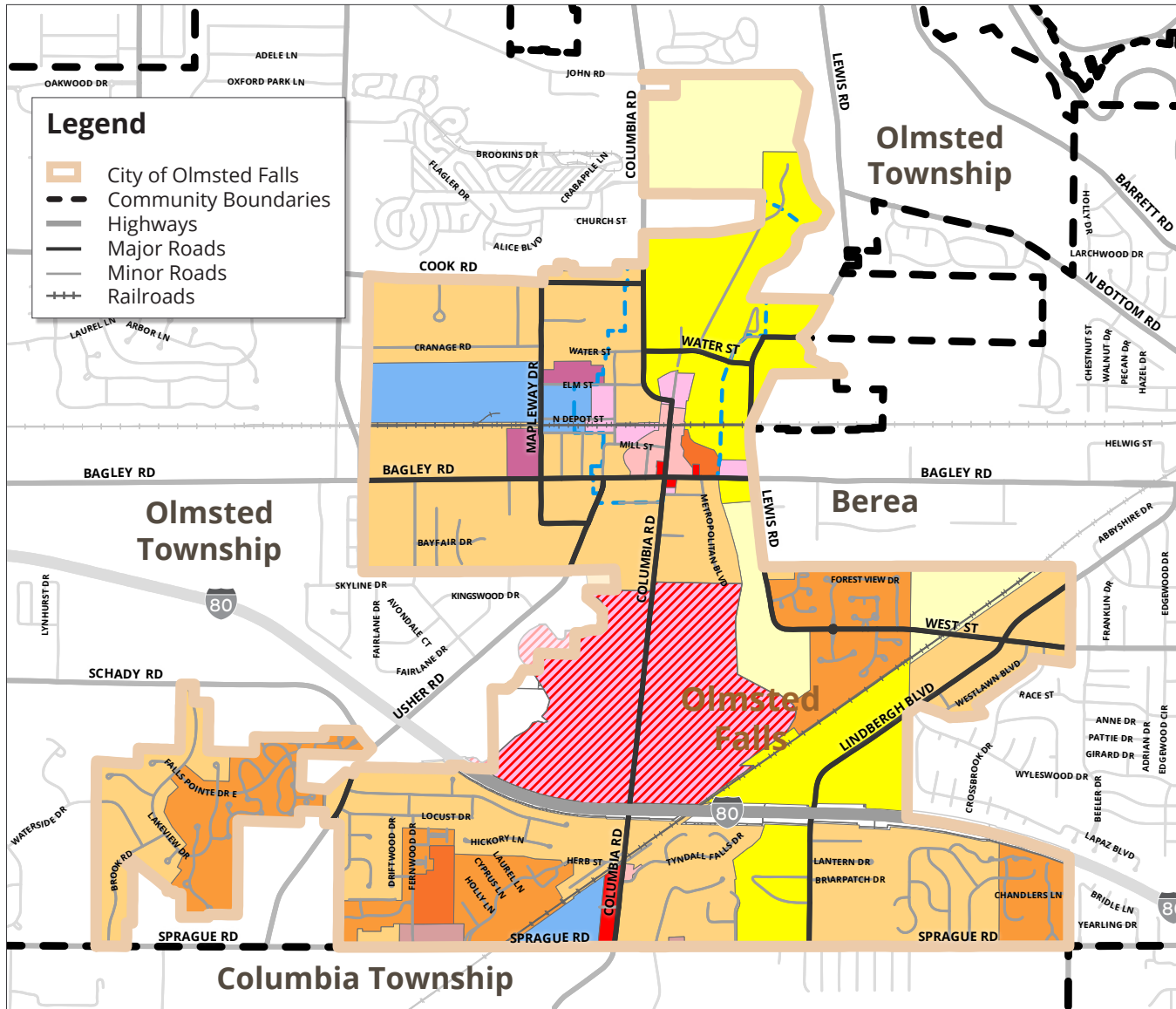
Professional Districts

The City's two professional districts permit a wide variety of office uses. The Professional and Medical District also conditionally allows certain medical institutions such as hospitals and funeral homes within the district boundaries, while the Professional Office/Multi-Family District conditionally allows certain multi-family units. These districts are limited to the areas north and west of Downtown Olmsted Falls.

Historic Area

The City has a Historic Area Conservation District that encompasses Downtown Olmsted Falls and historic neighborhoods running north of the City. This historic district requires additional design review of any renovations or new construction to ensure it maintains historic integrity or complements historic designs.

Map 14 Existing Zoning



Legend (cont'd)

- | | |
|---|--|
| C-1 Convenience Commercial District | D-5, Multi-Family Dwelling District |
| C-2, General Commercial District | I-2, Industrial Manufacturing District |
| C-3, Community Commercial District | MUPD, Mixed Use Planned Development District |
| D-1, Single-Family Attached Dwelling District | P-1, Professional and Medical District |
| D-2, Single-Family Dwelling District | P-2, Professional Office/Multi-Family District |
| D-3, Single-Family Dwelling District | Historic Area Conservation District |
| D-4, Single-Family Attached Dwelling District | |

Downtown District

Vibrant city centers serve as the heart of communities and are made up of key civic institutions, retail, and government services. They act as primary places for people to work, shop, dine, and recreate and generate essential tax revenue for municipal operations. Both residents and visitors can form their opinion of a community based on their impressions of a downtown area.

Downtown Olmsted Falls

Olmsted Falls is home to a unique and celebrated downtown district. The downtown is located along Columbia Road and Bagley Road and contains the historic Grand Pacific Junction shopping district. The 26 eclectic shops and restaurants of Grand Pacific Junction are contained inside 19th and early 20th century Greek revival and late Victorian storefronts. The district's architecture and historic character make it one of the most unique shopping destinations in the region.

In addition to the district's historic charm, downtown enjoys scenic ties to the Rocky River and Plum Creek via numerous parks. Many visitors travel

downtown to enjoy nature and view the falls along the Rocky River and the covered bridge over Plum Creek.

Downtown Olmsted Falls serves as a destination for weddings and train enthusiasts. Several businesses including a chapel, reception hall, bridal shop, florist, and a beauty salon support Olmsted Falls as a venue for weddings. Train enthusiasts are drawn to the large volumes of trains passing at-grade across Columbia Road and the original train depot located on Garfield Avenue just west of the downtown.

Downtown Market Study

In 2014, the City of Olmsted Falls worked with the Center for Community Planning and Development at the Cleveland State University Levin College of Urban Affairs to prepare a Downtown Market Analysis. The downtown study examined the current conditions of the district as well as provided recommendations for retail improvements.

The study examined 135,500 square feet of retail and office space in the downtown area. As of the 2014 report,

the vacancy rate was an exceptionally low 2%. Despite the few vacancies, merchants reported insufficient shopper traffic during business hours.

The Downtown Market Analysis identified a few challenges facing downtown Olmsted Falls, including:

- A shortage of available liquor licenses restricts evening and weekend dining activity
- A lack of critical mass for visitors looking to spend the entire day in Olmsted Falls
- No strong downtown image related to insufficient local and regional awareness

Several other northeast Ohio historic downtowns experience similar challenges to Olmsted Falls. Of five other downtowns examined (Chagrin Falls, Amherst, Vermilion, Wellington, and Medina), Olmsted Falls had the fewest estimated number of total businesses despite having above the average market area population. Overnight lodging accommodations are a notable missing

component to downtown Olmsted Falls. Overnight lodging provides critical mass to a downtown area and appeals to potential visitors living outside of the region. The five other downtowns each contain at least five lodging rooms, as shown in Table 16.

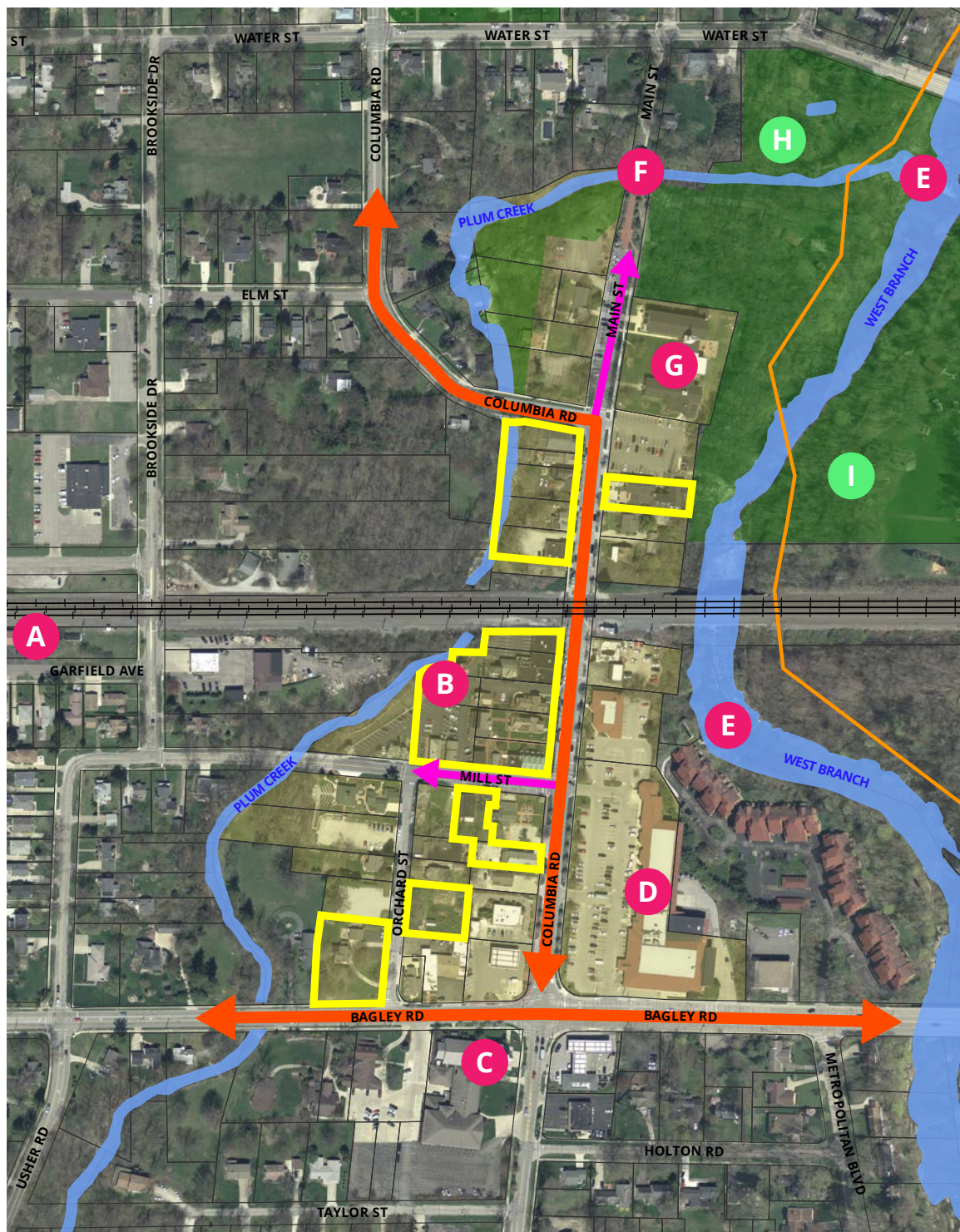
The study provided a list of recommendations, including:

- Developing an urban design plan to address downtown identity
- Enhancing connections with residential neighborhoods and downtown
- Exploring opportunities for modest retail and office expansion
- Integrating overnight lodging
- Focusing economic development on local business

Table 16
Downtown District Comparisons, 2014

Downtown District	Estimated Total SF	Estimated Total Businesses	Estimated Retailers	Estimated Offices	Market Area Population	Bed & Breakfast Lodging Rooms
Chagrin Falls	293,776	252	111	141	168,744	15
Amherst	68,237	91	39	52	180,903	5
Vermilion	144,300	74	41	33	10,507	11
Wellington	215,900	100	60	40	55,081	15
Olmsted Falls	135,500	69	37	32	126,859	0
Medina	358,100	242	74	168	157,971	6

Source: *Downtown Market Analysis, Cleveland State University, 2014*

Map 15 **Downtown Olmsted Falls**

Downtown Resources

Downtown Olmsted Falls has a number of historic resources that attract shoppers from the community and region. These include a number of train-related amenities that attract rail enthusiasts, a historic shopping center, and various picturesque views that attract weddings and bridal parties.

A

Historic Train Depot

Train depot located along existing tracks within close proximity to downtown

B

Historic Locomotive

Historic locomotive set at the rear of the Grand Pacific Junction shopping center

C

St. Mary of the Falls Church

D

Mill River Plaza

Suburban-style shopping center

E

Falls

F

Covered Bridge

G

Olmsted Community Church

H

Fortier Park

I

East River Park

Legend

	Downtown Parcels		Major Roads
	Grand Pacific Junction		Minor Roads
	Parks		Proposed Trail
	Rivers		Parcels
			Railroads

Key Undeveloped Areas

Previously undeveloped places are often the focus of development pressures. By identifying these areas and appropriately planning for future development, the City can be prepared for any development plans that are submitted.

City-Owned Vacant Properties

The City currently controls certain large properties throughout the community that can be used as the City develops. The most important of these are the following:

- The land just north and south of I-80 and west of Columbia Road
- The areas lining Mapleway Drive surrounding the municipal complex
- Properties in downtown including parking facilities, the community center, and a parcel facing Bagley Road

These areas are particularly important as the City considers development plans.

Other Undeveloped Areas

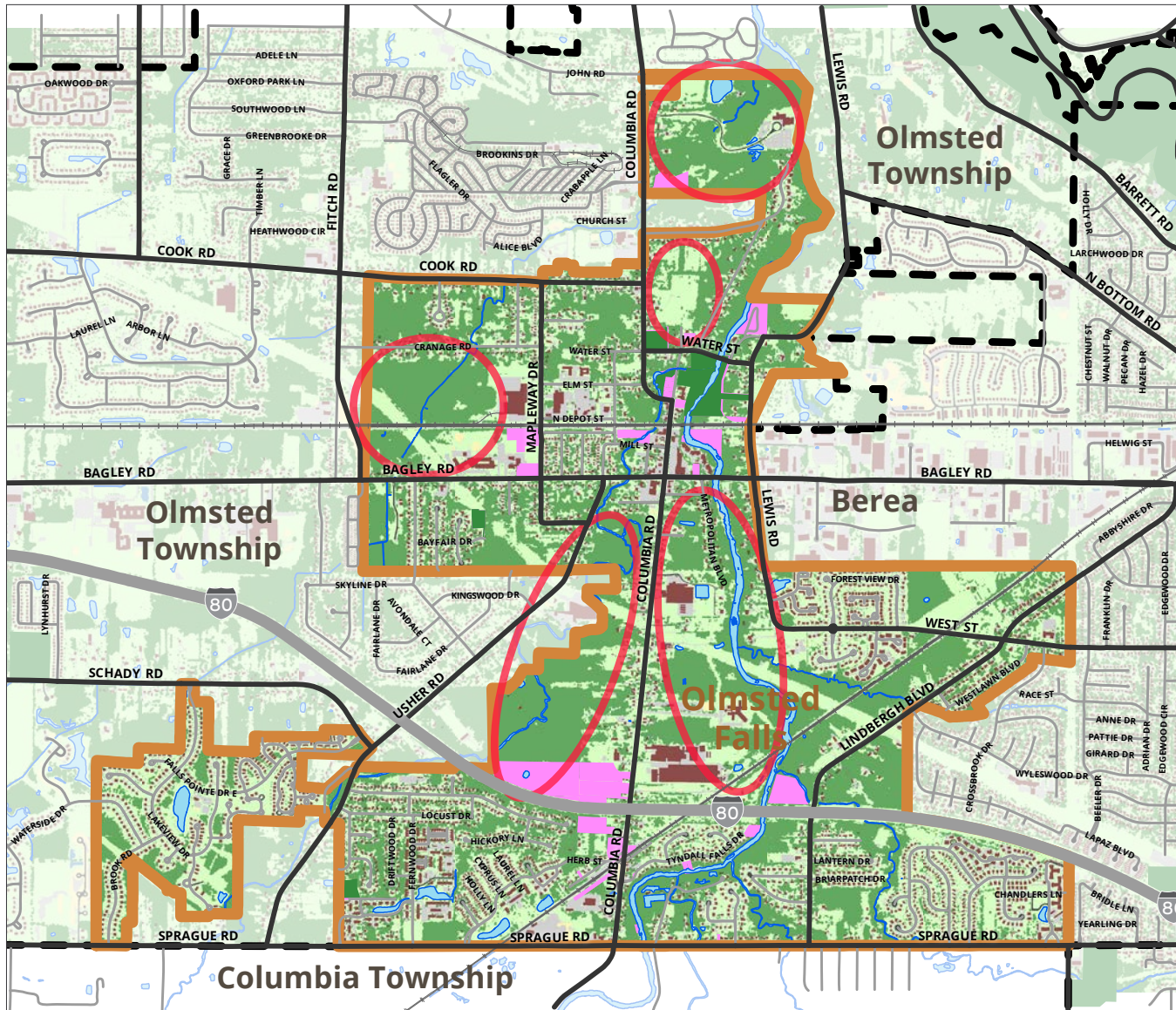
In addition to government-owned land, County Planning has completed detailed studies of aerial imagery to identify natural areas that have the potential to be developed in the future. The City could consider these areas either prime for future development or in need of protection to ensure their maintenance as natural areas.

The largest areas include the following:

- The large backyards of parcels fronting Columbia Road
- The area just north and south of the railroad tracks west of Mapleway Drive
- The area surrounding the Olmsted Performing Arts center
- The area just north of Water Street and west of Columbia Road

Map 16 shows City-owned vacant parcels in addition to land cover data identifying tree coverage, paved areas, buildings, and grassy areas.

Map 16 Key Undeveloped Areas



Legend

- Grass/Shrub
- Bare Soil
- Buildings
- Paved Areas
- Tree Canopy

- Streams
- Major Waterways and Lakes
- City-Owned Vacant Land
- Other Undeveloped Areas

- City of Olmsted Falls
- Community Boundaries
- Parcels
- Highways
- Major Roads
- Minor Roads
- Railroads

This page intentionally left blank.



SECTION 4



GOALS AND ACTIONS

To accomplish the community's vision, there are many individual goals and actions the City must undertake. The Goals and Actions section lists each of the steps recommended to complete the plan goals.

What's In This Section?

The section includes an overview of the visions outlined for each topic area before delving into individual goals and action steps that can be undertaken to accomplish each of these visions.

The goals and actions were developed with data from the Current Conditions analysis, input from the City of Olmsted Falls Master Plan Project Team and Steering Committee, and the public meetings. Together these policies are

meant to advance the collective vision of the community.

Throughout the Goals and Actions section, orange boxes indicate additional information about critical topics or example communities.

How Do I Use It?

The Goals and Actions section informs the types of actions the City and its partners should undertake in the coming years. It provides detailed information, maps, images, and potential partners to accomplish the actions.

Photo Source: Flickr User Ron Dauphin



Transportation

The transportation network is critical to quality of life and business attraction, making it a fundamental government responsibility. With Olmsted Falls residents seeking more opportunities to get around their community and into Downtown without use of their cars, the City should respond with improvements

to the complete transportation network.

Vision for Transportation

The community developed four visions related to Transportation, as outlined here:

- A trail network that provides access to all neighborhoods, surrounding communities, destinations, amenities, and the regional bicycle network
- Safe railroad crossings that do not hinder residents, visitors, or businesses
- A complete sidewalk network that links Downtown Olmsted Falls and its neighborhoods
- Direct routes that connect Olmsted Falls to the region's system of highways

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.

PBIC: Laura Sandt



GOAL 1: PROMOTE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION WITH A NETWORK OF ALL-PURPOSE TRAILS

During the first public meeting, residents of Olmsted Falls consistently reported a desire to get around by bike and on foot via a safe network of trails and paths.

Likewise, the next generation of residents is increasingly interested in a more active lifestyle that includes alternative forms of transportation not only for recreational travel but also for every day activities. The "America in 2013: a ULI Survey of Views on Housing, Transportation & Community" report showed that 76% of millennials said walkability was important in choosing housing compared to only 67% of Generation X. Similarly, 71% of millennials said distance to shopping/entertainment was important compared to only 58% of Generation X.

To retain and attract these residents, Olmsted Falls needs to develop a comprehensive trail network that connects residents to the places they want to go.

Action 1: Construct a complete all-purpose trail network

A complete trail network is one that provides access to all of Olmsted Falls' neighborhoods and to Downtown.

A complete network also connects Olmsted Falls with surrounding amenities and into surrounding communities, especially Olmsted Township, Berea, and nearby Cleveland Metroparks.

The map and descriptions on page 82 and page 83 show the proposed locations of trails. These trails range from paths along the sides of the road, to those running on unused rail beds, and those running in the center of power line right-of-ways.

NOACA technical assistance is available for the planning of multi-modal connections. The City should work with NOACA to evaluate potential routes, determine final engineering, and assist with funding.

Action 2: Construct a greenway that combines an all-purpose trail with green stormwater infrastructure in First Energy's power line right-of-way

While a number of trails are proposed throughout the City, the trail running diagonally across the City in First Energy's power line right-of-way has the potential to be a complete greenway. A greenway incorporates not only a trail, but also ponds, plants, and other natural features that can assist in improving water quality. By linking the construction of a trail with the development of green infrastructure, this greenway could be a more attractive connection between Olmsted Falls, neighboring communities, and Cleveland Metroparks.

Olmsted Falls should evaluate, design, and construct a greenway along this power line right-of-way within City

Potential Trail Descriptions

The trails could better connect Olmsted Falls neighborhoods with Downtown as well as surrounding communities. The Potential Trail Network map identifies potential trails and is linked to the descriptions below.

A

Rail Line Trail

The Rail Line Trail would run in existing rail right-of-ways parallel to Bagley Road and could connect Downtown Olmsted Falls with Downtown Berea.

B

Power Line Greenway

The Power Line Trail would run diagonally through the City beneath existing First Energy electric lines. The trail could include stormwater improvements to help with flooding, and would connect Olmsted Falls to the Mill Stream Run Reservation.

C

Usher Road Trail

The Usher Road Trail would run parallel to Usher from Sprague Road to Downtown Olmsted Falls. The trail would likely consist of a widened sidewalk and may require the purchase of additional right-of-way.

D

Columbia Road Trail

Like the Usher Road Trail, the Columbia Road Trail would run parallel to Columbia Road and be sited as a widened sidewalk on one side of the road. The trail would run from Sprague Road to Downtown Olmsted Falls.

E

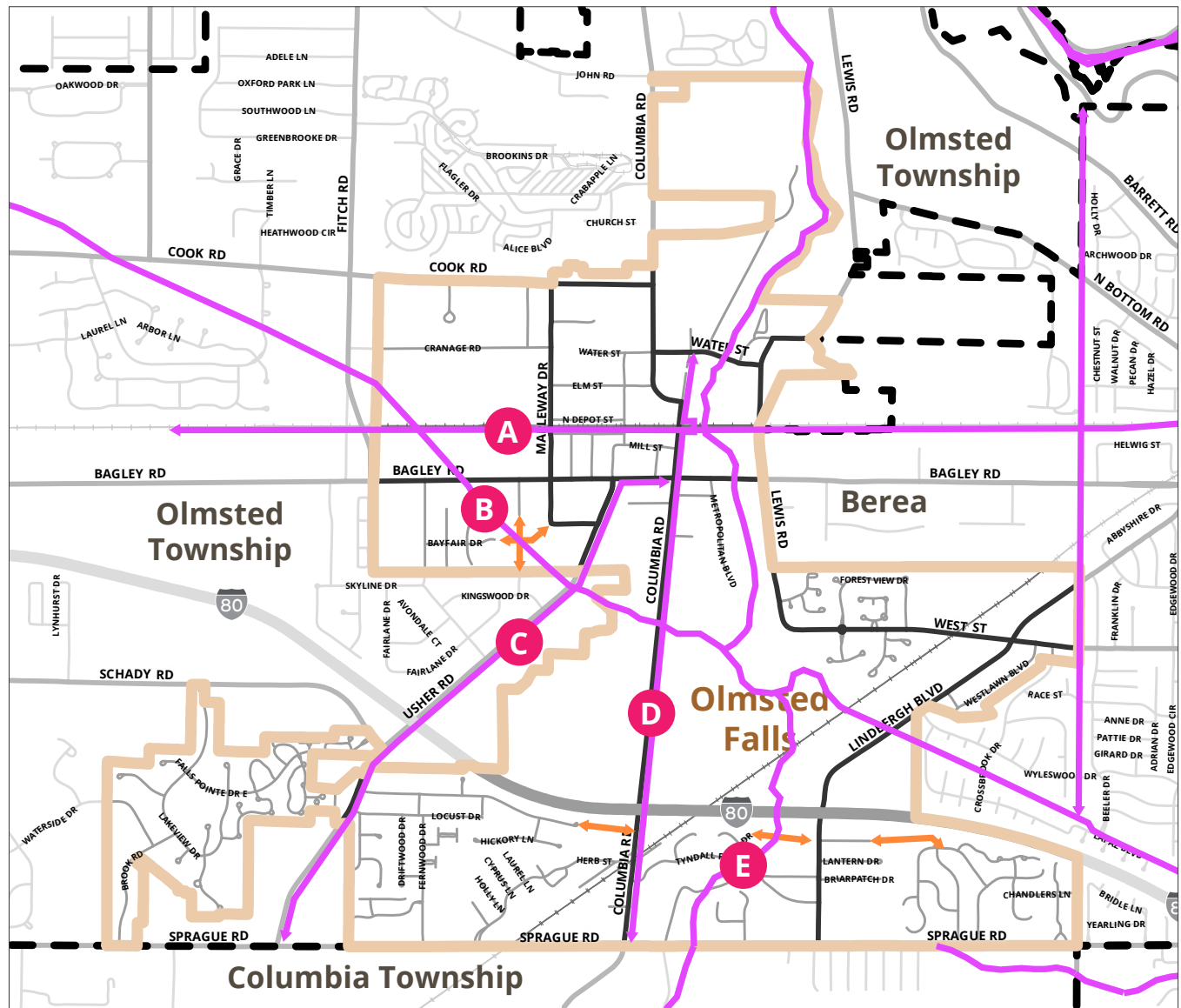
Rocky River Trail

The Rocky River Trail is a potential trail running parallel to the Rocky River. Such a trail would be the most technically difficult given the constraints of purchasing land along the River; however, it also could provide the greatest access to the Rocky River. This trail would run from Sprague Road to Downtown Olmsted Falls and north to the Rocky River Reservation. Where possible the trail could run along the river, while running on-street in areas where homes abut the river.



Source: Google Earth

Map 17 Potential Trail Network



Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
| — Potential Major Trails | City of Olmsted Falls |
| — Potential Minor Connectors | Community Boundaries |
| | Highways |
| | Major Roads |
| | Minor Roads |
| | Railroads |

limits. Olmsted Falls should also work with Olmsted Township, Berea, Middleburg Heights, First Energy, and Cleveland Metroparks to expand the Greenway east and west.

A rendering of this potential greenway is shown on page 82.

Action 3: Ensure any new railroad overpasses or bridges over the turnpike incorporate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure

Critical to the City's trail network are highway and train bridges. Because a bridge's life cycle extends into decades, ensuring they include the necessary width to accommodate a path is crucially important. Adding width to an existing bridge or building a separate bridge can become prohibitively expensive.

Two bridges in Olmsted Falls are scheduled to be replaced: the Columbia Road bridge over the turnpike and the Bagley Road bridge over Plum Creek. In both cases, trails are proposed along those corridors. The City should actively coordinate with ODOT, NOACA, Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works, the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission, and other appropriate agencies to ensure bridge replacements include trail infrastructure.

Action 4: Construct bicycle parking Downtown

In addition to trails, bicycle riders require a safe and secure place to park their bicycles at their destination. In order to facilitate bicycling and encourage bicyclists to stop and walk through

Downtown, the City should work with existing property owners to construct bicycle parking Downtown.

Bicycle parking can include basic racks, more unique racks with specialty designs, as well as much larger bicycle boxes. Should the City undertake streetscape plans for Columbia and Bagley Roads as described on page 138, bicycle parking should be included.

In general, bicycle parking should be sited in very close proximity to the places pedestrians want to go, should be easily viewable from the street, and should be well lit.

More information on improved bicycle parking and bicycle parking designs can be found in the orange box on page 85.

Action 5: Require bicycle parking in new developments

In addition to constructing bike parking in existing locations, the City should update the Zoning Code to require developers to provide safe, accessible, and attractive bicycle parking near the front doors of commercial and office buildings.

Action 6: Work with advocacy groups to provide bike education and safety training

The region has a number of extremely capable bicycling advocacy groups including Bike Cleveland and Bike Shaker, among others. The City should work with these advocacy groups to provide bike education and safety

training to residents and public employees. This ensures that people know the 'rules of the road' when it comes to interacting with traffic and using bike facilities.

Flickr: Ron Daupin



GOAL 2: MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE CITY'S MANY RAIL CROSSINGS

Olmsted Falls developed because of proximity to the rail network; however, the resulting rail crossings can be cumbersome for residents and visitors, and the City should work to mitigate the negative effects of these crossings.

Bicycle Parking

Safe and convenient parking is critical to bicyclists, yet it is often overlooked in the design and development of shops, offices, schools, and other buildings. Bicycle parking should be located near places that draw a large number of people. Parking should be in areas that are well-lit and in plain view without obstructing pedestrians, vehicles, or other cyclists.

Bicycle parking can include racks, corrals, lockers, and bicycle stations.

- Bicycle racks are fixed objects to which bicycles can be securely locked. Communities and neighborhoods often take the opportunity to celebrate community identity through bike racks, as did a neighborhood of Lakewood known as Birdtown, as shown in the picture.
- Bike corrals allow for a car parking space to be converted into a parking area for multiple bicycles.

- Bicycle lockers are used to securely store a single bicycle within an enclosed box.
- Bicycle stations are buildings or structures designed to provide secure bicycle parking and often incorporate other amenities such as showers or bike maintenance services.



Source: City of Lakewood

Action 1: Improve pedestrian crossings over train tracks at Columbia Road in Downtown

The railroad tracks running directly through Downtown Olmsted Falls can be an impediment to the safe and easy movement of joggers, shoppers, and visitors. Presently, the pedestrian crossings in Downtown are not well marked, are not attractive, and do not adequately separate pedestrians from vehicles.

The City should work with business owners and the railroad to improve and beautify the rail crossings. Improvements could include basic elements like painted lines to indicate pedestrian areas or could be more elaborate such as laid bricks, lighting, plantings, or fencing.

More information on improved rail crossings can be found in the orange box on page 86.

Action 2: Continue to monitor and police idling trains and educate residents on how to report them

The City has been aggressively ticketing trains that idle at railroad crossings in order to discourage railroad companies from stopping trains for long periods of time. The City should continue to monitor and police illegally stopped trains and should educate residents about how and when to report idling trains to City safety forces.

Action 3: Construct electronic signage to inform drivers of oncoming trains and alternate routes

The City's rail crossings—especially the Columbia Road crossing in Downtown—is unlikely to ever include a grade-separated solution. Rather than seeking elaborate and expensive engineering solutions, the City should use electronic signage to inform drivers of oncoming trains and outline alternative routes.

Improved Rail Crossings

Railroad crossings are the places where fast-moving trains intersect with pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. As such, there is the potential for collisions.

The railroad crossing in Downtown Olmsted Falls is wide, unmarked, and poorly paved. Modern rail crossings can be attractive and more friendly to pedestrians. As shown in the picture, modern crossings can be marked clearly, well-paved, lit, and attractive. This not only looks more attractive, but is safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Source: Flickr User Oran Viriynicy

Attractive Pedestrian Underpasses

The pedestrian underpasses between Cleveland's Battery Park neighborhood and Cleveland Metroparks Edgewater Park include lighting, artwork, and attractive plantings to make the trip beneath the railroad feel safe and comfortable.

Any pedestrian underpasses in Olmsted Falls should follow similar methods of better lighting, attractive design, and quality upkeep to ensure that underpasses feel safe for residents and visitors to use.



Source: Cleveland.com

Given recent investments in overpasses such as Fitch Road, these alternative routes already exist and signs simply need to inform motorists how to access them.

Action 4: Build an attractive and well-lit rail underpass for pedestrians and bicyclists in Downtown

Pedestrians and bicyclists in Downtown Olmsted Falls do not always want to wait for passing trains to continue through Downtown. The City should work with qualified engineers to evaluate and construct a pedestrian underpass beneath the railroad crossing.

More information on attractive pedestrian underpasses can be found in the orange box on page 87.

Action 5: Consider plantings along the City's railroad tracks to mitigate railroad noise

The City should consider partnering with property owners and the railroad to plant trees, shrubs, and other vegetation along rail lines outside of the rail right-of-way. Dense vegetation can act as an attractive sound barrier that limits noise from passing trains.



GOAL 3: EXPAND THE SIDEWALK NETWORK

Sidewalks are the first step in connecting people to places. They provide a safe connection between neighborhoods and amenities.

Action 1: Construct new sidewalks according to the Missing Sidewalk Priorities map

Despite an active Downtown, the City of Olmsted Falls does not have a complete sidewalk network to connect neighborhoods to the City's center. The City should focus on constructing sidewalk connections that create safe pathways for residents to get around.

Based on an analysis of existing sidewalk connections and reviewed by residents at public meetings, the priorities for new sidewalk connections are displayed on the Missing Sidewalk Priorities map on page 89.

Action 2: Undertake a Safe Routes to School Plan

The Safe Routes to School program is intended to encourage and enable students to walk or ride their bicycle to school in a safe and comfortable environment. The Ohio Department of Transportation funds Safe Routes to School programs that can include planning, engineering, and programing that advances safe paths to schools. Examples include improved crosswalks, educational programs, or planning studies.

The City of Olmsted Falls should work in conjunction with Olmsted Township and the Olmsted Falls City School District to apply for Safe Routes to School funding to ensure that Olmsted students have the opportunity to walk to school in a safe and comfortable environment, thereby promoting health, protecting the environment, and enhancing community spirit.

Action 3: Improve the Columbia and Bagley Road intersection to be friendlier to pedestrians

The Columbia and Bagley Road intersection is the major crossing for the City. As an important juncture and the critical connector between Downtown Olmsted Falls and the neighborhoods to the south, this intersection should be improved to be an attractive gateway as well as a pedestrian and bicycle friendly crossing.

The City should apply for technical assistance from NOACA to study improvements to this intersection. Engineering should consider the following improvement possibilities:

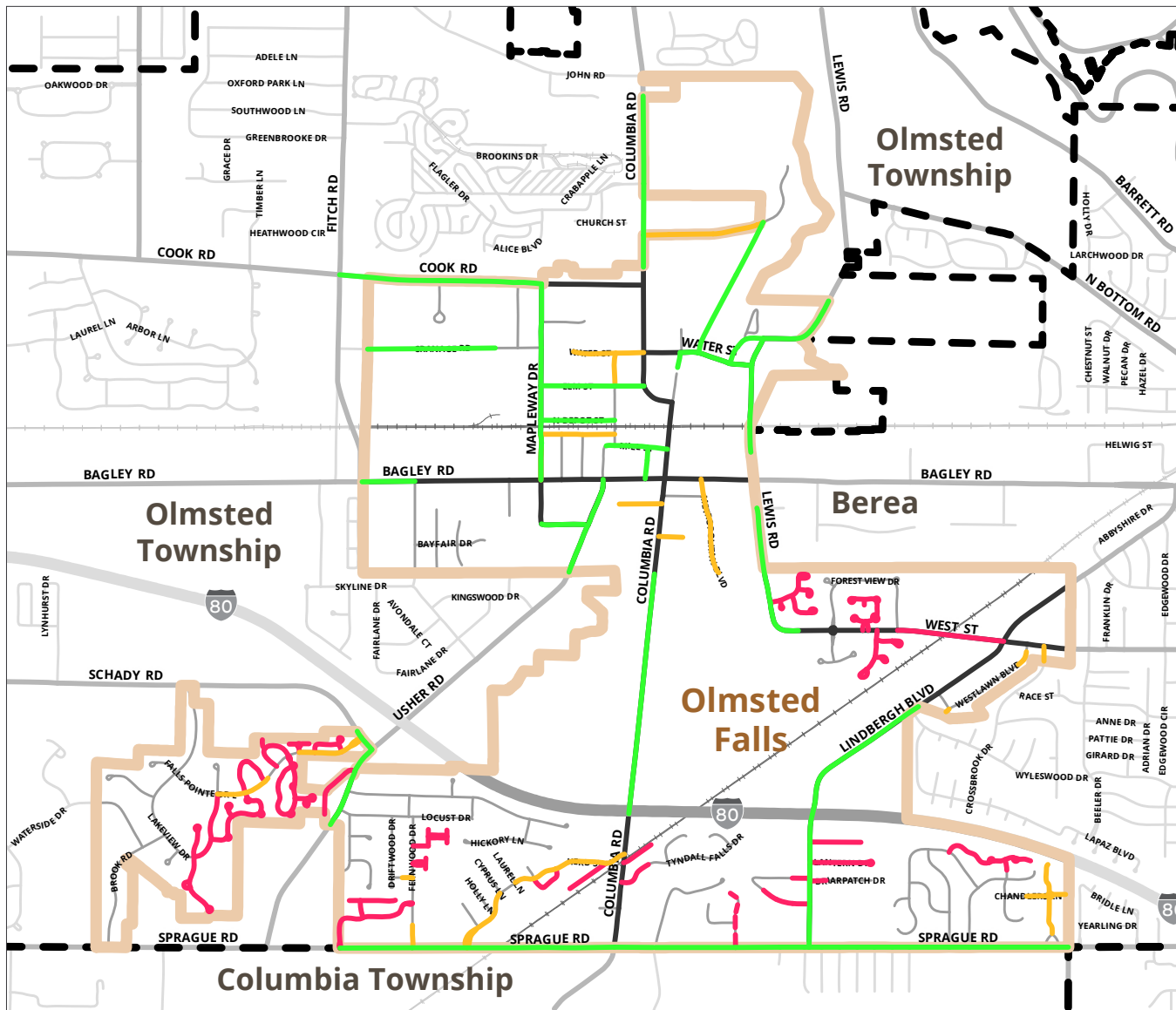
- Wider sidewalks
- Decorative crosswalks such as brick or unique paint
- Mast arms to replace overhead wires
- Improved plantings at all four corners
- Narrowing of all cross walks through elimination of an excess lane on Bagley Road and tighter turn radii on the remaining corners

A rendering of potential improvements to this intersection is displayed on page 160.

Action 4: Conduct a survey of existing sidewalk conditions and require residents to make improvements where necessary

Preliminary analysis of sidewalks and comments from the public indicated that the condition of some sidewalks in residential areas are not good. The City should conduct a survey of existing

Map 18 Missing Sidewalk Priorities



Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
| — High Priority | City of Olmsted Falls |
| — Medium Priority | Community Boundaries |
| — Low Priority | Highways |
| | Major Roads |
| | Minor Roads |
| | Railroads |

sidewalks and require residents to make improvements in those locations where sidewalks are dangerous or damaged.

In coordination with such a program, the City should evaluate monetary assistance for those owners unable to afford the expense of maintaining their sidewalks.

Action 5: Require sidewalks in new developments to be at least five feet wide on both sides of the street and to connect with existing sidewalks

The City's current code only requires four foot sidewalks in new developments. This dimension is proven to be too narrow for two pedestrians to walk comfortably side by side. The City should update their code to require at least five foot wide sidewalks on both sides of the street, and perhaps wider ones in the walkable neighborhoods near Downtown.

Additionally, the City must ensure that these sidewalks are built throughout new subdivisions and that they connect into existing sidewalk networks to ensure the entire system is complete and safe for those walking.

Source: Provo, UT



GOAL 4: ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF PARKING ARE NOT OBSTACLES TO RUNNING A BUSINESS

Many visitors to Downtown Olmsted Falls arrive by car, and a lack of available and easily accessible parking can make the process of visiting Downtown difficult. The City should work with businesses and property owners to ensure that parking is not an obstacle to running a business Downtown.

Action 1: Standardize parking signage in Downtown

The City already owns and operates various public parking lots Downtown. To make the process of identifying and accessing these lots simple, the City should design and install standard, easily visible parking signs throughout Downtown to showcase the location of public lots. Parking signage should be consistent with other signage and with the City's logo, as outlined in the wayfinding action on page 130.

The City should also work with private owners to coordinate parking signage for all Downtown lots. By developing consistent parking signage, the City can make navigating Downtown easier for visitors. Signage could take the form of markings, walk signs, standalone signs, arch ways or other features that are appropriate for the area.

Action 2: Develop an online parking guide

With visitors increasingly planning their trips ahead of time, the City should develop an online parking guide that maps the available parking lots in Olmsted Falls and provides directions to each. Placing the map online will allow visitors to plan their trip beforehand.

Action 3: Conduct a comprehensive Downtown parking analysis to determine potential parking investments and adjust parking requirements

The City should conduct a comprehensive Downtown parking analysis that looks at the number of spaces available, determines demand and utilization throughout the day, and makes recommendations for improvements to existing parking lots, on-street parking, locating any new parking lots, and the possible use of valet service. Existing parking lot owners—especially at Grand Pacific Junction—should be included in this parking analysis.

Action 4: Develop a parking management plan for large-scale events Downtown

As Downtown Olmsted Falls hosts more and larger events, the City should develop a parking management plan for large-scale events. Such a plan should consider publicly and privately owned lots in and near Downtown for overflow parking. Church and office parking lots could be used for event parking, while lots further from Downtown could be used if safe pedestrian connections or a shuttle service was offered. A parking

management plan for events should take into account these potential parking sources and strategies.

Action 5: Build a direct sidewalk connection from the Orchard Street parking lots to Columbia Road

The Orchard Street parking lots are located very close to Downtown Olmsted Falls, but are not well-known by residents or visitors. In addition to providing better signage to access these lots, the City should construct a direct sidewalk connection to Columbia Road. Such a connection should be well lit, attractive, and advertised from the entrance along Columbia Road.

One potential connection would be to build a pedestrian path next to Kroft's Emporium, through the rear yard, and between Taqueria Junction and Le Bistro Du Beaujolais. With appropriate lighting and signage, this short connection will make parking in those lots significantly more appealing to visitors.

A rendering of this potential connection can be found on page 163.

Action 6: Allow property owners and developers in Downtown Olmsted Falls to pay into a fund for area-wide parking improvements in lieu of the required number of dedicated on-site parking spaces

Presently, the City of Olmsted Falls requires dedicated, on-site parking for businesses located in Downtown. Due to the small lots and the walkable nature of the business district, accommodating such parking can be difficult, if not impossible.

The City already owns various parking lots Downtown. To accommodate the construction of new businesses and infill development Downtown, the City should allow property owners to pay a into a fund for area-wide parking improvements in lieu of the required number of spaces.

The fund should only be allowed to be used for parking improvements in Downtown that directly support all businesses. These improvements could include adding or updating meters, making improvements to existing City-owned lots, purchasing or building additional lots, or building a parking deck or garage.



GOAL 5: UPGRADE THE STREET NETWORK

The growth of Olmsted Falls from a small village in the 1950s to a City of more than 9,000 residents in 2010

A pedestrian-activated signal at Columbia and Main could create a safer crossing for pedestrians while limiting traffic congestion.

Source: Cape Gazette



means that some of the community's roads have not been updated to accommodate that growth. Small improvements to the street network including potential road widenings and a study of the Bagley and Columbia Roads intersection could alleviate traffic issues.

Action 1: Conduct a traffic study of Columbia, Bagley, and Usher Roads as part of any streetscaping plans

As part of a streetscape plan for Columbia and Bagley Roads outlined in Action 1 on page 138, the City should conduct a traffic study to determine whether the current road configuration, light timing, and width are sufficient for existing traffic. This is especially true for Columbia Road south of Bagley Road where turn lanes may be necessary, as well as the intersection of Columbia Road and Main Street where a pedestrian-activated streetlight could make the pedestrian and vehicular interactions safer. Any improvements should be considered as part of a complete street approach to ensure that improvements to the roadway are matched by improvements to the City's bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

In addition to Columbia and Bagley Roads, the City should work with

Olmsted Township to determine the extent to which Usher Road requires improvements such as light timing, lane configuration, or road widenings to develop a smooth traffic flow.

Action 2: Study the Columbia and Bagley Roads intersection for potential traffic timing and other improvements

The Columbia and Bagley Roads intersection is critical for Olmsted Falls. As outlined in Action 3 on page 88, the City should consider improvements to make the intersection pedestrian-friendly. As part of that analysis, the City should also study the potential for traffic improvements. The easiest of such solutions would be the timing of the lights at the intersection to facilitate smoother traffic flows. If such an analysis did not produce sufficient improvements, the City should consider physical improvements such as longer turn lanes or a potential roundabout as alternative configurations. Any improvements to the intersection should include purposeful and meaningful improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure at the intersection due to its prominence as a connector to the City's central and southern neighborhoods.

Action 3: Consider road improvements of the City's narrowest residential streets

The City has a number of residential streets with a width of 22 feet or less. Such narrow roads can become dangerous if overwhelmed by on-street parking. A number of these streets will be widened and improved in the coming years; however, others will remain.

The City should undertake a preliminary engineering analysis to evaluate the monetary feasibility of widening these streets to include curbs, gutters, on-street parking, sidewalks, and associated utilities. Due to the potential expense of road widenings given the close proximity of utilities on many of these streets, the City should work with local and state partners to secure funding for improvements.

While existing road widths can become dangerous when emergency vehicles are unable to maneuver, exceedingly wide streets can become equally dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians as wide roads encourage speeding. The City should balance these needs by widening City streets only to the extent needed to provide safe accessibility for emergency vehicles and on-street parking, while keeping streets narrow enough to discourage speeding.

When the City makes improvements to these streets, it should consider the opportunity to incorporate sidewalks, bikeways, and green features as part of the reconstruction. By adding these features during the road widening, the City can lower the cost and add aesthetic and environmental enhancements.



Parks, Recreation, and the Environment

The City of Olmsted Falls maintains various parks ranging from regionally significant ones in and around Downtown to smaller neighborhood parks. These parks highlight natural amenities that serve to beautify the community and play an important role in determining storm water quality and preventing floods. A strong park system and protected natural environment provide exercise opportunities, improve property values, and beautify the community.

Vision for Parks, Recreation, and the Environment

The community developed four visions related to Parks, Recreation, and the Environment, as outlined here:

- A parks and recreation system that serves residents of all ages, interests, and abilities
- Expanded access to underused parks and historic resources such as the falls and the historic mill
- Enhanced connections into the region's networks of parks, open spaces, and trails especially Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Reservation and the Valley Parkway Trail
- Healthy streams, flood control areas, tree coverage, and wildlife habitats through appropriate regulations and enforcement

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.

Flickr: Heather McLaughlin



GOAL 1: MATCH PARK RESOURCES TO THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

The City of Olmsted Falls has a series of tremendous parks; however, residents have noted some park additions or changes that may improve park use. The City should evaluate its park system to ensure that the system matches the resident needs.

Action 1: Update the City's Parks Master Plan

The City completed a Parks Master Plan in 2003. The plan included an analysis and recommendations for improvements to each park. Comments and suggestions at the Master Plan public meetings indicated a desire for a number of additional or different amenities within the City's parks system. Suggestions included better bathrooms, additional lighting, more picnic tables, active recreation, security call boxes, and activities for teenagers.

The City should update the City's Parks Master Plan with recent data and new input from residents. This will ensure the plan continues to be relevant as a guide for park investments.

Action 2: Consider installing a kids play area in Downtown Olmsted Falls

Downtown Olmsted Falls is a destination for families due to its historic district, quality parks, churches, and family-friendly stores. As part of a comprehensive strategy to engage families in visiting Olmsted Falls, the City should consider installing a play area for kids. Such an area could be a draw for visitors, could provide a resting area for families, and would further contribute to the family-friendly atmosphere of Downtown.

Potential locations could include areas within existing parks, at the Olmsted Falls Community Center property, at the current service center site, or could include upgrades to the St. Mary of the Falls' existing school playground site.

Action 3: Conduct a design charrette for reuse options of Mills Park

Mills Park presently consists of a baseball diamond, basketball courts, and a parking lot. The City should conduct a public design charrette for reuse options of Mills Park to determine possible future uses in the park.

To accomplish this, the City could work with qualified design professionals or area students to come up with ideas for the park.

Action 4: Connect Tyndall Falls Park with the river and provide access from across the river

Tyndall Falls Park is a very small park with limited activities; however, the park is located adjacent to the Rocky River. The City should move service buildings from the site and provide access to the River.

Additionally, the City should construct a bridge over the Rocky River so the park is accessible from communities on both sides of the River.

Action 5: Consider purchasing the Grist Mill Run park and incorporating it into the City's system

The park located along Grist Mill Run is presently owned by Plumb Creek Village Inc. The park—accessible to residents of the surrounding subdivision—could be opened to all of Olmsted Falls residents if the City purchased the area and converted it to a City park using grant

and loan funds available from the State, County, and private sources.

Action 6: Require new residential developments to incorporate green space that is accessible and centrally located

The City already requires new developments of a certain size to set aside green space as part of large, planned development; however, this green space is often placed at the periphery of developments. This creates unusable green space located in the rear of existing lots.

The City should require new developments to locate green spaces at the heart of new developments and in configurations that are accessible and usable.

More information on usable parks in residential developments can be found in the orange box on page 96.

Usable Parks in Residential Developments

Green space is an important component of a neighborhood. In newly constructed neighborhoods that are required to construct green space, those areas should be central to the community rather than located in the rear of parcels.

The picture at right shows a proposed community that has made required greenspace the center of the development rather than an afterthought. Homes face the park, the park has active uses, and nearby residents can easily access it.



Source: *The Baltimore Sun*

City of Olmsted Falls



GOAL 2: EXPAND ACCESS TO UNDERUSED PARKS AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

The City's park system is largely focused on the river ravines that traverse the City or smaller parks located in the rear of residential developments. Many residents and visitors are unaware of the quality park connections available; and as such, the City should take steps to expand access to underused parks and historic resources.

Action 1: Provide better maps and wayfinding signage into the City's park system

Olmsted Falls has a series of large and inviting parks in and around Downtown and its neighborhoods; however, many are located in the basins of stream corridors. Because these parks are secluded and lower in elevation than the areas that surround them, residents and visitors may be unaware of these natural amenities located nearby.

To facilitate better access to the City's parks, Olmsted Falls should design and construct entrance signage and maps that encourage people to access the City's parks. Signage and wayfinding should be part of a comprehensive package that should be applied to all buildings, public amenities, wayfinding, and gateway entrances as outlined in the wayfinding action on page 130.

Action 2: Connect the City's southern parks with a series of off-road paths

Olmsted Falls has a series of small parks scattered throughout the neighborhoods south of I-80. These parks offer an array of amenities including open areas, river access, and playgrounds.

These parks could be better connected by off-road trails so that residents can more easily access them. By building short trail connections, the City can link these open spaces along safe routes that do not require residents and children to use high-speed streets with no sidewalks to move between parks.

A map and description of these connections is displayed on page 98.

Flickr: Chris Hamby



GOAL 3: INCORPORATE INNOVATIVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN NEW AND EXISTING DEVELOPMENTS

Stormwater management is important to protecting the City from flooding and environmental disruptions. Olmsted Falls should incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques such as bioswales and rain barrels into new and existing developments to better manage stormwater in more environmentally friendly ways.

Connecting the City's Southern Parks

The City's southern parks are relatively small and disconnected; however, by developing minor trails, the City can connect these parks and create safer paths for children and residents to move between them.

A

Mills Field

Mills Field is located along Lake of the Falls Boulevard. Connections could include sidewalks and trails along Lake of the Falls Boulevard and connecting the Boulevard to Fernwood Drive.

B

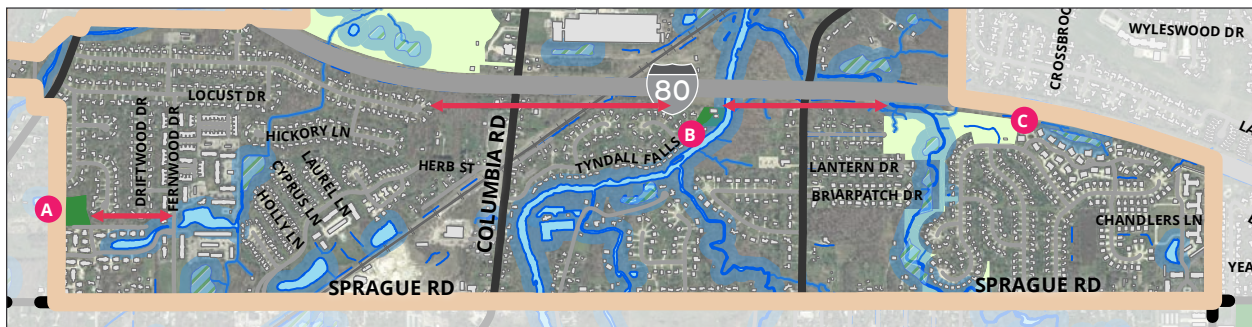
Tyndall Falls Park

This park is located at the end of Tyndall Falls Drive and could provide access to the West Branch of the Rocky River. Connections could include a trail running alongside the Ohio Turnpike connecting Redwood Drive to Tyndall Falls Park.

C

Plum Creek Park/Grist Mill Run Park

Plum Creek Park/Grist Mill Run park is located at the northern end of Grist Mill Run and is a privately owned park as part of the residential development there. Connections could include a trail from Tyndall Falls Park following the Ohio Turnpike into Grist Mill Run park.



By constructing these connections, the City could not only link the parks in the southern half of the City, but also the southern neighborhoods by a series of safer paths than the high-speed roads such as Sprague Avenue.

Action 1: Incentivize the use of innovative stormwater techniques

The City of Olmsted Falls and surrounding communities experience flooding that results from heavy rains that cannot be handled by the storm system. To effectively manage stormwater, the City should invest in low-cost stormwater infrastructure such as bioswales and rain gardens that collect and hold rainwater that would otherwise flow directly into the storm system.

Rain garden infrastructure consists of native plants that are located to capture large amounts of stormwater and absorb it. By holding this rainwater in place, it is not released into area streams and rivers, which can be harmed by pollutants, fast moving water, and high volumes of water. Bioswales and rain gardens should be used in residential neighborhoods to not only improve stormwater but also beautify streets.

The City should work with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District to apply for green stormwater infrastructure funds to pay for construction.

Action 2: Review the Zoning and Building Codes for obstacles to innovative stormwater solutions like downspout disconnects, rain barrels, and innovative parking lot designs

Zoning and Building Codes can often have unintended consequences, especially as new technologies and needs arise over time. With the desire for environmentally friendly development, the City should review the existing code for impediments to green development. Impediments can include floor area

ratios that restrict the addition of exterior building insulation, restrictions on the use of sun awnings that can reduce heating and cooling costs, restrictions on residential solar panels, requirements for asphalt rather than permeable pavement, and restrictions on green roofs or rooftop greenhouses.

Action 3: Consider a complete and green streets policy that incorporates innovative stormwater management practices

Complete streets are streets that consider all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit users. Given resident interest in being able to get around a community on foot or by bike, complete streets policies help to balance transportation investment by requiring transportation improvements to consider all users when engineering.

Green streets are streets that include rain gardens, LED lighting, multi-modal transportation options and other green features in their design.

The City of Olmsted Falls should adopt a complete and green streets policy that requires any transportation improvements to consider the needs of all transportation users and the environmental needs of the community. While not all streets will require striped bicycle lanes, for instance, it is important to put all bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on equal footing for evaluation when considering road improvements so that pedestrians and cyclists are safely accommodated.

More information on complete streets can be found in the orange box on page 100.

County Planning's Complete Streets Toolkit

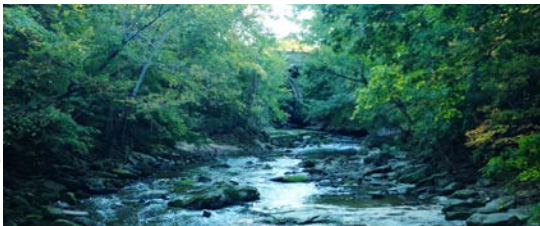
Complete streets are roadways designed and operated to safely and comfortably accommodate multiple users of all ages and abilities. They can include improved sidewalks, dedicated bike lanes, transit facilities, and landscaping as part of a comprehensive program.

County Planning has developed a Complete Streets Toolkit to help municipalities learn about complete streets and adopt policies appropriate for their communities. It includes a 'how to' tool for engineers, planners, and public

officials to plan, engineer, and implement complete streets. For more information, visit www.CountyPlanning.us.



Source: PBIC Ryan Snyder



GOAL 4: ADEQUATELY PROTECT THE CITY'S ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The City of Olmsted Falls has put in place numerous protections for environmental features, especially stream setbacks. This and other regulations should continue to be enforced to protect the environmental integrity of Olmsted Falls' natural areas.

Action 1: Review, update, and actively enforce the City's tree protection ordinance

A City's tree canopy is the layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above. Not only is tree canopy

coverage attractive, it has been shown to improve property values, provide wildlife habitat, reduce stormwater runoff, and reduce air pollution, among many other benefits. The City of Olmsted Falls already has an existing tree protection ordinance; however, it should review the effectiveness of the ordinance, update it if necessary, and continue to actively enforce it.

Action 2: Actively enforce stream setbacks to restrict development in flood-prone areas, thereby minimizing flooding and protecting the City's natural resources

Olmsted Falls has existing stream setback regulations that limit development in areas next to rivers. These setbacks prohibit new development in order to protect the health of streams and help prevent flooding by allowing water to flow naturally into the ground rather than flow off rooftops and directly into rivers.

By allowing water to drain naturally into the ground, water cannot flow as quickly into rivers. Fast-moving water can cause flooding, can damage eco-systems, and can be dangerous for residents.

County Planning has developed an online mapping and best practices guide called the Greenprint that can assist communities in determining environmental constraints and planning for protection efforts. More information on the Greenprint can be found in the orange box on page 101.

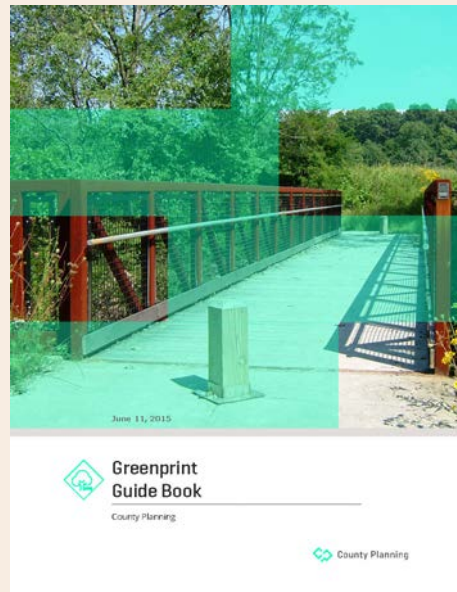
Action 3: Partner with conservation organizations to purchase easements along the City's rivers to protect them in perpetuity

While the City already limits new construction in the areas along its rivers, further efforts could include the purchase of easements along the City's rivers to protect them in perpetuity. By purchasing the land along the rivers, the City could limit future development, could further tend to the health of the river in those areas, and could incorporate public access and trails along the riverfront. Programs through conservation organizations can assist in the compilation of funds to purchase such easements.

County Planning's Greenprint

The 2015 Greenprint is a set of mapping and planning tools to help communities map their current environmental resources and learn about best practices for conserving them. Developed with local and regional planning, transportation, and environmental organizations, the Greenprint includes an online viewer with interactive maps as well as a guide book that includes a description of environmental features and recommended practices for protecting and enhancing environmental resources.

The Greenprint can be used to map a community's bikeways, waterways, wetlands, parks, watersheds, and other environmental features for planning, development, and grant application needs. For more information, visit www.CountyPlanning.us.



Source: County Planning

Action 4: Establish hillside protection regulations to limit development on hillsides

Steep slope regulations protect people and property from instability and erosion due to inappropriate development of steep slope areas. When buildings are constructed on steep slopes they can risk erosion, landslides and sedimentation, all of which can damage property, cause flooding, and harm rivers and streams. By protecting these steep slope areas from development, the City can protect rivers and streams as well as structures.

The City should conduct a detailed study of slopes and soils in Olmsted Falls to determine areas where specific soil types and steep slopes combine to create dangerous conditions. Using the results of this study, the City should implement hillside protection regulations that limit development in these areas or require additional measures to prevent damage.

Action 5: Protect existing wetlands as a way to reduce flooding

Wetlands are important environmental areas for a variety of reasons: they hold water after heavy rains that would otherwise risk flooding, they provide natural habitat to diverse species of plants and animals, and they purify drinking water.

As a community with numerous sensitive wetlands, Olmsted Falls should be particularly cautious in the disturbance of wetlands. The City should adopt regulations to protect existing wetlands and steer development toward areas

with fewer environmentally sensitive features.

This page intentionally left blank.



Quality Government

businesses, and the ongoing maintenance of these services should be a primary focus of community leaders.

The effective management of governmental services and infrastructure is the prime directive of public officials. Quality services and infrastructure attract residents and

Vision for Quality Government

The community developed three visions related to Quality Government, as outlined here:

- Solid relationships and shared services with surrounding communities
- A complete evaluation of the benefits of an Olmsted Township merger
- A streamlined development approval process that more effectively serves residents and businesses

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.

City of Olmsted Falls



GOAL 1: CONSOLIDATE GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES WHERE POSSIBLE

The many small communities of south-east Cuyahoga County should work to evaluate whether current overlapping services could be made more efficient through collaborative efforts.

Action 1: Convene an intergovernmental summit to discuss merger possibilities with Olmsted Township

During the Master Planning process, Steering Committee members expressed an interest in merging Olmsted Township and Olmsted Falls. Convening a group of elected officials, staff, and other key players in both Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township could help clarify questions, concerns, and the costs and benefits of various options.

Action 2: Appoint a governance commission to study a potential merger in coordination with a parallel commission in the Township

Olmsted Township is currently in the process of forming a Governance Commission to explore the Township's various governance options and the associated costs and benefits of each option. Likewise, an Olmsted Falls

Governance Commission could study the ramifications of a merger in coordination with Township's Governance Commission.

Action 3: Absent a merger, conduct a comprehensive joint services study with Olmsted Township

Even if a merger is not feasible, a shared services agreement would be mutually beneficial to the City and the Township and could be explored through a joint services study. Both Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township enjoy a high level of governmental services—police, fire, recreation, and many others. These services come at a large cost to each governmental entity. Sharing services would allow the communities to maintain service levels while decreasing costs.

The development of a successful program requires the commitment and cooperation of all participants. A study would clarify current services of each entity, finances involved, and where improvements to service or infrastructure could be coordinated.

Action 4: Partner with Cleveland Metroparks for advice on the best method of managing the City's current and future parks as well as connecting into existing parks

Olmsted Falls provides its residents with a wide variety of parks for their recreation needs and enjoyment. Cleveland Metroparks has been a valuable community partner, assisting many Cuyahoga County communities in park management and establishing connections from municipal parks to Cleveland

Metroparks network. Continued collaboration with Cleveland Metroparks to further explore best practices of managing the City's parks, increasing connections, and increasing safety and accessibility would be beneficial to both the City and Cleveland Metroparks.

local community—reviews the proposals and makes recommendations for approval or disapproval to other boards and commissions.

For board members to be effective and fair in their roles, members must be properly trained about the regulations that they are upholding.

Montgomery County
Planning Commission



GOAL 2: STREAMLINE THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Developments within a City must undergo various reviews for approval, including the Planning Commission, the Building Department, and the Architectural Board of Review, depending on the location and nature of what is being proposed. It is in the best interest of both the City and the developer for these processes to be as streamlined as possible.

Action 1: Ensure design review board members are offered appropriate training

In order to protect the City's property values and enhance its character and visual image, certain proposals for construction, exterior alterations, building demolitions and signs in the City must undergo a process known as 'design review.' A design review advisory committee—made up of design professionals and representatives of the

Action 2: Streamline the internal review process of development proposals among City staff

The City should review its internal development process to determine ways to streamline it. For instance, the City could identify and convene an internal development review team that meets on a regular basis to review all aspects of a project before it is presented to various boards and commissions. Such an internal review team should include representatives from City departments such as building, fire, police, and planning.

Action 3: Review the plan approval process to determine whether certain actions can be approved administratively or by a single board rather than multiple boards

The City's plan approval process requires that a development proposal undergo a complete review process before building permits can be issued. While major developments should undergo scrutiny before construction is allowed, the City should review its codes to determine whether certain actions could be approved administratively or by a single board.

In the case of administrative approval, the City could review permits for signs or fences to determine the type of sign or fence desired by the community. Signs or fences that meet those requirements should be approved administratively.

The City should review the authorities granted to its boards and commissions with regard to specific requests. It may make the process easier if certain requirements could be waived by a single board rather than having to go to multiple boards. For instance, the Planning Commission could grant minor waivers of requirements instead of having to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals. The City should review and determine this process in coordination with the legal opinions of the City's Law Director.

Action 4: Require all developments to be approved or denied within a specific time from a full and complete application

Specifying the number of days the City has to review a project creates a less stressful atmosphere for both City staff and developers. Staff know exactly when reviews must take place, while developers know when they can expect an answer.

Such a timeframe requires a strong internal review process to ensure that all necessary documentation is in hand before developments are forwarded to appropriate boards and the development review time frame begins.

Additionally, the City and the various boards and commissions should schedule their meeting times collaboratively

to ensure there is not an unnecessarily long wait period between the approvals of various boards.

Action 5: Ensure all boards and commissions meet as needed to facilitate development

To attract development, the City must be an active and willing facilitator of the development review process. By expediting the review of projects, the City can lower costs to developers and attract new revenues.

One of the easiest ways of attracting development in an appropriate time frame is to ensure that all boards and commissions meet as needed to facilitate development. Long delays in the review process can discourage investment, so meeting as needed to facilitate the process can encourage investment.

Flickr: Heather McLaughlin



GOAL 3: ASSIST IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BUSINESSES

Attracting businesses to Olmsted Falls is important to maintaining tax receipts, retaining the vibrancy of the community, and providing the full range of amenities for residents. The City can assist in this process by making the process of establishing a business easy.

Action 1: Develop a one-stop-shop for those seeking to develop in the City

The City should identify a single point-of-contact for those seeking to open a business or develop within the City. That single point-of-contact should be knowledgeable in the most up-to-date information on what would be required of developers, what the process for approving a business or development would be, and what incentives or assistance would be available. This single point-of-contact could assist in corralling community resources and navigating the process to facilitate business growth.

This one-stop-shop could be linked to the proposal to hire an economic development staff person, as outlined in Action 1 on page 117.

Action 2: Develop an online guide to opening a business in Olmsted Falls

The process for opening a business in Olmsted Falls can be confusing to someone who has not navigated it before. For example, a business must get various permits and approvals from different agencies.

To facilitate that process, the City should develop an online guide to opening a business in Olmsted Falls. That guide should describe the requirements, process, boards, and steps that a business must take to open.

This page intentionally left blank.



Economic Development

Economic development activities include efforts to attract, retain, and expand employment opportunities. These efforts are important to maintain a stable and diverse

tax base made up of residents and workers. Given the importance of Downtown to the City's economy, many goals and policies focus on developing and expanding development in Downtown.

Vision for Economic Development

The City developed four visions related to Economic Development, as outlined here:

- Development that enhances existing specialty markets including local retail, weddings, train enthusiasts, unique dining, and greenhouses
- Office and commercial development in the City and the Joint Economic Development District that is appropriately scaled and can offset the tax burden on the community's residential property owners
- A mix of offices, retail stores, and restaurants that act as a regional draw
- Development that leverages the City's proximity to Cleveland Hopkins Airport, Baldwin Wallace University, Cleveland Metroparks, and other natural amenities

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.

Flickr: Ron Dauphin



GOAL 1: LEVERAGE DOWNTOWN OLMSTED FALLS AS AN ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION

Downtowns around the United States are being rediscovered and reinvigorated as residents and visitors seek authentic forms of entertainment. The City of Olmsted Falls should capitalize on this trend by promoting and investing in entertainment-related programs.

Action 1: Apply for entertainment district status to expand the availability of liquor licenses

Increasingly, visitors to business districts are seeking a variety of opportunities to shop, dine, and entertain themselves. Much of the revenue to businesses in such areas comes from the sale of liquor; however, the cost of a liquor license and difficulty in obtaining one can make operating a restaurant prohibitively expensive.

To increase the availability of liquor licenses in Downtown Olmsted Falls, the City should apply for entertainment district status, as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code, section 4301.80. Entertainment districts can assist in expanding the number of liquor licenses available and at cheaper prices, thereby stimulating investment.

Entertainment district status should be matched with appropriate review and regulation to ensure that new establishments in Downtown contribute to the character and charm of Olmsted Falls.

Action 2: Partner with small business development organizations to attract unique, local retailers

A cluster of unique, local retailers in Downtown Olmsted Falls can attract visitors seeking a special retailing experience. The City already has a strong cluster of such businesses; however, property owners and the City should partner to attract additional local retailers as turnover occurs.

Funding sources already exist to assist in the startup of local businesses. The Economic and Community Development Institute of Cleveland offers small business loans to assist in the start-up of micro-enterprises that would otherwise be unable to secure financing. The City should partner with ECDI or a similar small business lender to match existing resources to aspiring retailers. Due to Olmsted Falls' existing small business climate, new small businesses have a greater opportunity to thrive in the community.

The City should also consider encouraging small business growth by hosting informational sessions, workshops, and discussion groups to educate and advance entrepreneurship.

City of Olmsted Falls



GOAL 2: LEVERAGE DOWNTOWN OLMSTED FALLS AS A TRAIN ENTHUSIAST DESTINATION

Olmsted Falls is bisected by various rail lines that can make traveling through the City difficult; however, this can also be an economic driver. Train enthusiasts are potential tourists that could be a source of revenue.

Action 1: Build a connection between Columbia Road and the historic train depot

Train enthusiasts already come to Olmsted Falls to witness the many crossings that occur as well as to visit the historic train depot just west of Downtown. The depot is home to the Cuyahoga Valley and West Shore Model Railroad Club, which attracts train enthusiasts to its displays.

By connecting Downtown Olmsted Falls via a trail to the historic train depot, the City could expand access between the two sites and leverage their proximity to increase tourism. The trail could connect either on the edge of the railroad right-of-way as part of a larger trail system or through the service center site. Both trails would need to cross Plum Creek.

Such a trail would connect Downtown Olmsted Falls, the historic train car located there, and the train depot all located safely along active right-of ways. This would create a strong tourism trail that could be advertised to rail enthusiasts.

Action 2: Using street furniture and plantings at safe distances, upgrade areas adjacent to Downtown rail tracks as train viewing areas

Because rail lines cross directly through Downtown Olmsted Falls, pedestrians come in close contact with trains. The City should ensure that the areas where pedestrians must wait are attractive and safe. By constructing seating areas with appropriate lighting, benches, and plantings near these pedestrian

Plant City, Florida constructed a train viewing platform to attract tourists with an interest in trains and their history.

Source: The Tampa Tribune



crossings, the City can ensure that lengthy waits are comfortable.

Additionally, in specific areas of interest to rail enthusiasts, the City should consider constructing train viewing platforms that are comfortable areas for train enthusiasts to view from. This could either be located in Downtown Olmsted Falls or in the grassy area next to the historic train depot.

Action 3: Conduct a design charrette for upgrading the green space around the train depot to a formal park

The historic train depot is a community icon and tourist attraction. While the station has been renovated and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the green space around it remains either overgrown or grassy.

The City should work with the Cuyahoga Valley and West Shore Model Railroad Club to upgrade the grassy area around the train depot. Improvements could include additional trees, plantings, walkways, benches, art, and other park features that could make the green space more attractive.

City of Olmsted Falls



GOAL 3: LEVERAGE NEARBY AMENITIES TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT

Olmsted Falls is strategically located near two Cleveland Metroparks, Baldwin Wallace, and amidst a cluster of greenhouses. The City should leverage this proximity to promote economic development.

Action 1: Develop a bicycle rental shop in Downtown Olmsted Falls once a trail connection is established to Cleveland Metroparks

Once the City constructs a complete bicycle network as outlined on the map on page 83, the City will be uniquely positioned as a tourism location for bicycle enthusiasts and visitors seeking to experience the region's world-class park systems. As the Towpath Trail has demonstrated, bicycling on dedicated trails through scenic environments can be an economic boon. Olmsted Falls could similarly position itself as a location for active recreation and tourism by developing a bicycle rental shop in Downtown. This would allow visitors to experience Downtown, ride into Cleveland Metroparks, and return to Olmsted Falls. Visitors could then patron local restaurants, benefiting local businesses.

Action 2: Advertise Olmsted Falls as an entertainment destination for Baldwin Wallace visitors and hold University events in Downtown

Downtown Olmsted Falls has grown as an entertainment destination in recent years with the expansion of bars and restaurants. The City should advertise these amenities to the students, faculty, and staff of Baldwin Wallace University. Given the numerous visitors that come to the University, attracting them to Olmsted Falls can boost income and foot traffic Downtown.

To accomplish this, the City should provide advertising materials in new student welcome packets, at the campus admissions office, and in other appropriate locations to advertise Downtown's amenities.

Action 3: Connect Olmsted Falls employers with Baldwin Wallace to promote internship programs

Internships are an important way for students to gain real-world experience in particular fields. Students receive mentorship and training while getting hands-on experience working in a particular business.

The City should work with employers and Baldwin Wallace to connect those seeking internships to local employers. By building these connections, the City can assist in finding skilled workforce while Baldwin Wallace students benefit from expanded opportunities. Likewise, the City can advertise itself as an attractive place to live, work, and visit.

Action 4: Investigate the feasibility of accepting Baldwin Wallace's Jacket Express card at Downtown merchants

Baldwin Wallace students are issued a Jacket Express Card as a form of University identification. The card is also accepted at certain off-campus merchants in Berea as a form of payment.

To encourage students to explore and visit Downtown Olmsted Falls, the City and merchants should work with Baldwin Wallace to investigate the feasibility of accepting Jacket Express cards for payment at Downtown merchants. The City should arrange a meeting between merchants and Baldwin Wallace representatives to facilitate this discussion.

Action 5: Showcase the City's nearby greenhouses with cooperative sales or festivals

Olmsted Falls is centrally located among a plethora of greenhouses in Olmsted Falls and surrounding communities. This cluster of assets could be utilized more effectively to showcase the City as the center of the greenhouse economy of Greater Cleveland.

To accomplish this, the City should organize area greenhouses to hold cooperative sales or a large-scale festival that can be held in the City. Bringing various greenhouses together into a single area could become a recurring and signature community event.

The City should personally meet with area greenhouses and garden centers to build support and organize groups. Area greenhouses include the following:

- Hansen's Greenhouse
- Uncle John's Plant Farm
- Schuster Greenhouse Ltd
- J&J Greenhouse

Greenhouses outside Olmsted Falls include:

- Maria Gardens Greenhouse
- Casa Verde Growers



GOAL 4: LEVERAGE DOWNTOWN OLMSTED FALLS AS A WEDDING DESTINATION

The beauty and resources of Downtown Olmsted Falls have attracted numerous weddings. The City should ensure that this industry complements other Downtown businesses and should capitalize on this industry to attract businesses that assist all of Downtown.

Action 1: Update the Zoning Code to allow a bed and breakfast or boutique hotel

Olmsted Falls' does not currently have any overnight rooms for visitors to Downtown. When compared to similar historic Downtowns, most others have at least a small number of rooms in and near Downtown.

The City's existing regulations only allow a bed and breakfast to have a maximum of 4 guest rooms with the

owner residing on the premises. The small permitted size of such an establishment could hinder its development. The City should consider allowing a larger number of guest rooms in a bed and breakfast. Alternatively, the City could consider adding boutique hotel regulations that would allow small hotels of fewer than 30 rooms in which the owner does not need to live on the premises. A bed and breakfast or a boutique hotel could benefit from weddings while providing other out-of-town visitors the opportunity to stay the night in Olmsted Falls.

Action 2: Consider parking for weddings as part of a broader Downtown parking analysis

Weddings bring a large number of people into Downtown Olmsted Falls. This is an important component of the health of Downtown; however, wedding-related parking can impinge upon the spaces needed for other businesses.

When the City undertakes a comprehensive Downtown parking analysis—as outlined in Action 3 on page 91—it should consider solutions for wedding parking such as overflow areas or lots outside of Downtown. Options include shuttles to City-owned lots at City Hall, use of St. Mary of the Falls' parking, or new or expanded lots such as those along Orchard Street.

Action 3: Develop a strategy to advertise Olmsted Falls to wedding visitors

The wedding industry in Downtown Olmsted Falls brings visitors to the City that might never have considered

shopping, dining, or visiting Downtown otherwise. The business community should capitalize on these visitors by advertising the City's many other restaurants, shops, parks, and amenities to visitors. A strategy to advertise the City's other assets could include pamphlets, leaflets placed on visiting cars, a Downtown map, or discounts given to wedding guests. By tracking the use of these discounts, Downtown businesses could monitor their effectiveness and the way in which weddings contribute to other businesses.

Action 4: Develop an example Olmsted Falls wedding itinerary and contact sheet

The City should develop an example Olmsted Falls wedding itinerary and contact sheet that lists all of the available wedding-related amenities in Olmsted Falls including shops and churches. Such an itinerary and contact sheet should include businesses such as restaurants and shops that are not typically considered part of the wedding day but could be advertised as part of the itinerary and contact sheet.

A wedding itinerary could be posted on the City's website, distributed to wedding planners, and advertised by the Olmsted Chamber of Commerce as a way of informing visitors of the opportunities for shopping, dining, and recreating while in Olmsted Falls.

Flickr: USACE



GOAL 5: ASSIST THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

While the City of Olmsted Falls does not have much easily developable land remaining, it does have large areas of underutilized property—areas with extremely deep lots that could accommodate additional development. The City can assist in developing these areas to continue to grow the City's population.

Action 1: Establish a Community Improvement Corporation that strategically acquires parcels for future development

Because redevelopment of underutilized properties can require a long-term vision, the City needs an entity that can strategically acquire parcels, hold them, and aggregate them for future development.

In order to facilitate the acquisition of parcels, reuse of underutilized land, and redevelopment, the City should set up a Community Improvement Corporation or other similar non-profit organization that can navigate the complexities of redevelopment.

The non-profit should work to accomplish the goals of the plan including the redevelopment of areas as new, walkable neighborhoods, and the

construction of road connections to build a grid pattern of streets.

As with most new Community Improvement Corporations, the City will need to provide funding for the start-up costs of such a non-profit; however, many organizations become self-sufficient through revenue streams associated with property management, grants, and donations.

Action 2: Develop a Tax Increment Financing district to fund infrastructure improvements in vacant and underutilized areas

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements. Funding is drawn from the taxes raised from the increased assessed value of any real property improvements. That is, any new taxes resulting from a new development above and beyond what was being paid prior to the new development are funneled toward infrastructure improvements.

The City should consider a Tax Increment Financing incentive district for vacant and underutilized areas. Such a funding mechanism should be used to construct the roads, bridges, and utilities needed to support the construction of new walkable residential areas.

Flickr: Ron Dauphin



GOAL 6: DEVELOP A COMPETITIVE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The City must be competitive to attract new jobs and investment. To do so, the City should develop programs to recruit and retain investments in the City.

Action 1: Hire an economic development director, retail recruiter, or Ohio Main Street director

Residents and the City are interested in maintaining a healthy Downtown and attracting businesses that boost income tax receipts. To accomplish this, the City should investigate the feasibility of hiring a full- or part-time staffer that focuses on economic development activities.

An economic development position could be housed within the City administration, as part of a Community Development Corporation, or in coordination with a Downtown Special Improvement District.

Action 2: Develop a job creation tax incentive program

The City of Olmsted Falls must remain a competitive tax environment for businesses seeking to grow by developing a competitive tax incentive program.

Tax incentive programs come in many forms, and the City should evaluate which programs would be most effective in Olmsted Falls.

Other communities in the region have a variety of tax incentive programs including Beachwood—which offers a percent rebate on new payroll taxes over a set number of years—and Avon Lake—which offers a 25% rebate on any increase in income taxes from the previous year.

Action 3: Develop a retail recruitment incentive program and coordinate with small business incubators

Attracting new retail stores to a City's Downtown is incredibly important to maintaining vibrancy. The City should actively develop a retail recruitment incentive program to ensure a pipeline of new businesses to fill any vacancies.

Cities around the country offer various incentive programs to attract new businesses including incentive programs to fund facade improvements, build-out costs, retail consulting, exterior signage, and marketing. These can be funded through a variety of mechanisms including regular tax dollars or Tax Increment Financing districts.

Additionally, the City should tap into existing streams of funding available on the County level. These include the Economic and Community Development Institute's micro-enterprise loan fund, the Grow Cuyahoga fund, Accion USA, Bad Girl Ventures, and other small business funding streams.

Action 4: Work with Olmsted Township to promote job creation and the development of the JEDD

The Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) formed in coordination with Olmsted Township is an opportunity to increase the tax base for both communities; however, development has been limited. The City and Olmsted Township should continue efforts to attract development to the JEDD through advertising and updating of zoning standards.

This page intentionally left blank.



Housing

As a suburban community, Olmsted Falls' housing and neighborhoods are the bedrock of the City. The construction, maintenance, rehabilitation, and demolition of housing units is a constant process that can maintain desirability among prospective homebuyers. As the City continues to grow, the development of new housing has the potential to

expand walkable neighborhoods, attract new residents, strengthen Downtown, and contribute to positive community character.

Vision for Housing

The community developed four visions related to Housing, as outlined here:

- Walkable neighborhoods with high quality connections to Downtown Olmsted Falls
- Well-maintained and restored residential neighborhoods achieved through effective planning and zoning regulation, design guidelines, and development standards
- A wide range of housing to attract and keep millennials and empty-nesters
- Appropriate incentives for neighborhood development

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.



GOAL 1: SUPPORT A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN WITH WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Downtown Olmsted Falls will be more successful when a critical mass of people live nearby. Olmsted Falls should support walkable neighborhoods with appropriate zoning and design standards.

Action 1: Develop a traditional neighborhood zoning district that encourages walkable neighborhoods and architectural variety

Traditional neighborhood zoning districts have been used by communities to develop new standards for housing construction that reflect historic neighborhood designs. Traditional neighborhoods include slightly smaller lots, homes that are closer together, garages or parking located behind the house, front doors, and large porches. Traditional neighborhoods also include sidewalks, buildings that are closer to the street, and more robust plantings that all combine to make traditional neighborhoods pleasant to walk through, architecturally interesting, and higher value.

Olmsted Falls is uniquely positioned as a community with a compact and strong Downtown neighbored by relatively low-density or vacant residential areas. By developing and applying a traditional neighborhood zoning district, the City

could expand the walkable neighborhoods that border Downtown. These walkable neighborhoods, with attractive homes, and options to walk or bike to Downtown will provide a greater number of housing options within walking distance to Downtown that are attractive to millennials and empty nesters.

For more information on traditional neighborhood design features, see the spread beginning on page 126.

Action 2: Encourage higher density residential near Downtown to boost retail success and walkability

In addition to developing a traditional neighborhood zoning district, the City should more generally encourage higher density residential developments—such as homes built closer to one another, townhouses, or small apartment buildings—near Downtown. Higher densities of residential provide more people that can easily frequent Downtown stores and restaurants, thereby improving business opportunities.

Action 3: Develop general design standards for new housing in Olmsted Falls

The City should develop neighborhood design guidelines that set standards for the look and feel of new homes. These standards could address elements such as height, materials, windows, landscaping, shape and form of the home, and complementary architectural styles.

For information on an example community's design guidelines, see the orange box on page 123.



GOAL 2: DEVELOP TOOLS TO ASSIST HOMEOWNERS IN IMPROVING THEIR PROPERTIES

Ensuring the maintenance of homes is important to strong neighborhoods and stable property values. The City can assist in home maintenance through programs to facilitate renovation.

Action 1: Remove regulatory administrative obstacles to improving and modernizing homes

A City's Zoning Code can often be a barrier to the improvement or modernization of a home if the code is not matched to the problems on the ground. The City should review its Building and Zoning Codes for obstacles to building reuse. Examples of such obstacles may be floor-area ratios that are too low for existing neighborhoods or setbacks that limit the potential for expansions.

Any changes to the code should increase flexibility to ease the redevelopment of existing homes. An example includes allowing modest expansions into back yards to facilitate larger homes while maintaining the front building line.

Action 2: Designate a Community Reinvestment Area for the neighborhoods around Downtown, including homes in the historic district

The City of Olmsted Falls should establish a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) in targeted locations to spur new development and redevelopment, as outlined in O.R.D. § 3735.65. Community Reinvestment Areas allow cities to grant real property tax exemptions to residential, commercial, and industrial property owners who renovate or construct buildings within the CRA.

The City should establish a CRA that focuses on Downtown Olmsted Falls and the nearby neighborhoods. The CRA should support the construction of walkable neighborhoods, mixed-use construction, and offices.

Action 3: Review the building permit fee schedule for homes in the historic district and throughout the community

Homeowners in the City's historic district have held themselves to a higher standard of development review due to the historic nature of their homes. While the purpose of a historic district is to preserve housing stock, it also can lead to higher home renovation costs as historic standards are more stringent.

To encourage home renovation, the City should review permit fees to determine whether they can be reduced or eliminated to encourage specific types of development such as the renovation of historic homes or the construction of walkable communities.

New Albany's Development and Design Guidelines

The City of New Albany, Ohio has established a set of branding and design guidelines for new buildings in the City. The guidelines are built on the premise that the desirability of New Albany as a place to live, work, and invest is directly related to the quality of its built environment.

The design guidelines are based on the following principles:

- Quality building design on all building sides
- Design based on historic American architectural styles
- Pedestrian-friendly development
- Connectivity to existing streets
- Screened and landscaped parking
- Authentic and high-quality materials
- Attention to details and ornamentation
- Street trees, landscaping, and open space to enhance character
- Stewardship of natural and historic resources

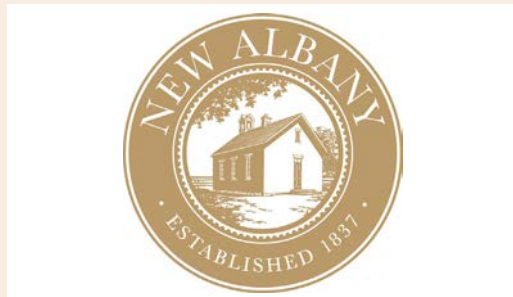
Together, these principles translate into specific architectural styles, designs, and layouts for homes, businesses, and public buildings that are used throughout the community.

The development and design guidelines have been used to develop a distinct community in New Albany. The focus on American architectural precedent has also been used in the City's public buildings, branding campaigns, and park designs to create a seamless feel through the entire community, as shown in the associated images.

For more information on New Albany's branding and design guidelines, visit www.NewAlbanyOhio.org.



Source: New Albany Facebook



Source: New Albany Facebook



Source: New Albany Facebook

Action 4: Develop regulations to allow live-work units

The City of Olmsted Falls can attract new income tax dollars by facilitating the construction of live-work units. Live-work units can have larger spaces for the at-home businesses and tele-commuting workforce. To accommodate home occupations in live-work units, the City should review its zoning code and consider appropriate updates.



GOAL 3: PROMOTE A POLICY OF AGING IN PLACE

“Aging in Place” means building cities, homes, and places that allow and encourage people of all ages to actively use them through their lifetime. By thinking about how homes or stores are built to allow access for senior residents, children, or those with disabilities not only provides access for those people now and as they age, it also provides a wider range of potential buyers, and expands the choice for persons looking to buy a home in the City.

Action 1: Encourage and incentivize universal design to allow aging in place

Universal design is a new way to view home reconstruction that allows all

members of the community to better access homes. Universal design can involve a variety of basic changes to home construction and layout including the following:

- no-step entrances
- one-story homes or master bedrooms on the main floor
- wide doorways, hallways, and stairs
- non-slip surfaces
- lever handles and faucets
- first-floor laundry and bathroom facilities or utilities
- higher wall outlets and lower switches

These changes can make houses easier for the elderly, children, or those in a wheelchair to access and use. Not all are appropriate for all types of projects, but the City can require certain elements through regulation, encourage others through education, and incentivize others by tying aging in place requirements to real property tax abatements.

By constructing housing stock that can be used by all families easily, the City of Olmsted Falls can develop a community that attracts a wider range of possible future residents.

This page intentionally left blank.

Traditional Neighborhood Design

Traditional neighborhood developments include housing and mixed-use neighborhoods that are designed with historic arrangements and styles. They are characterized by a range of housing types, streets that are generally laid out in a grid pattern, short blocks, common public spaces, and homes that are designed in traditional styles. The images below describe some of these features.

The images on the left are good examples of traditional neighborhood developments, while the images on the right display homes and designs that are inconsistent with traditional neighborhood design.

Walkable streets and sidewalks

Streets with slower traffic, sidewalks, and street trees make walking comfortable and safe.



Architectural variety

Different styles and designs of buildings make neighborhoods more interesting.



Mixing of densities

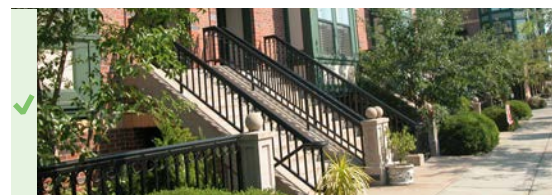
Mixing the densities of housing provides multiple options for families to choose from.



Source (clockwise from top left): Eliza Harris, PBIC, Jan Baranski, APA, Michael Hicks, County Planning

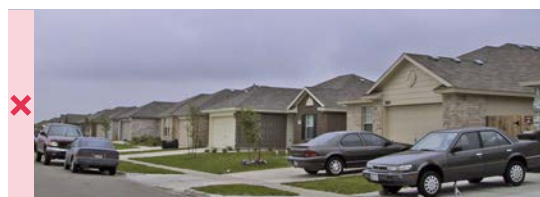
Front porches and doors

Front porches and front doors provide the opportunity for neighbors to more easily interact with one another.



Pedestrian-oriented design

Houses that are close to the street, have front porches and attractive designs, and include sidewalks to the front door make neighborhoods more walkable.



Hidden garages

Garages that are placed to the side of a house or accessed from an alley behind the house make streets safer by prioritizing pedestrians.



Interconnected layout

Streets arranged in a grid pattern allow people to walk more easily between places.



Source (clockwise from top left): David Wilson, Brett VA, Brett VA, David Wilson, Rachel Elaine, Google Earth, Brett VA, Brett VA



Community

Community and sense of place are determined by many factors including the physical character of buildings and places as well as the culture and events that draw residents together. Ensuring that Olmsted Falls maintains and enhances its sense of community is an important part of keeping and attracting residents, businesses, and visitors.

Vision for Community

Olmsted Falls developed four visions related to Community, as outlined here:

- A historic community with small-town character
- A well-defined sense of place through gateway entrances, wayfinding signage, and a cohesive community brand
- New cultural offerings and community events that promote tourism and build community pride
- Enhanced services such as the library, schools, parks, and historic districts

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.



GOAL 1: MAINTAIN THE HIGH-QUALITY HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Olmsted Falls Historic District is an integral part of the community. The district protects property values by ensuring renovations or new construction consists of high quality materials and matches the aesthetic of the neighborhood. The City should take efforts to ensure the historic district maintains its value.

Action 1: Continue existing efforts to maintain the integrity of the Historic District

Residents and the City should continue efforts to maintain the Historic District by advertising it and educating property owners. Additionally, the City should connect property owners with the resources available to them, including the following resources available from the Heritage Home Program:

- Free historic renovation consultations
- Low-interest home improvement loans

Similarly, the City should actively maintain its relationship and good status with the Heritage Home Program to ensure these homeowner benefits continue.

Action 2: Invest in enhancements when new infrastructure is constructed

Historic districts are defined by quality craftsmanship and attention to detail. Modern designs and construction often do not include this level of detail due to cost constraints.

To complement the design aesthetic of the historic district, the City should invest in enhancements to infrastructure investments that match the historic character of the area. Enhancements could include decorative fencing, lighting, ornamentation, trees, and other historic features.

The incremental cost of enhancements is significantly lower when undertaken during regular construction, rather than investing in improvements later. Whenever new infrastructure is planned, the City should consider enhancements before moving forward.

For information on an example of enhanced infrastructure, see the orange box on page 131.

Action 3: Update the City's sign code to facilitate the construction of appropriate signage

Property owners and businesses have noted that the City's sign code can be cumbersome. To address this, the City should update the sign code to better facilitate appropriate signage.

The City should initiate a process to update the code that identifies the type and design of signage that is desired and develop language to require this type of signage.



GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE A SENSE OF PLACE

Branding is often associated with logos and printed design; however, cities can brand themselves through infrastructure and signage. The City of Olmsted Falls can encourage a sense of place by constructing standard signage in Downtown, at public buildings, and at community gateways.

Action 1: Design and install standardized wayfinding signage throughout Downtown and for public buildings and amenities

The City of Olmsted Falls attracts tourists and visitors due to its quaint charm and historic character. Because many visitors—and even many residents—are unfamiliar with all of the amenities available to them, the City should invest in standard wayfinding signage in Downtown Olmsted Falls and at public locations. Wayfinding signage should be smart, attractive, and easy to understand. This could include directional signage to area amenities, pedestrian maps in Downtown, standard park entrance signs to highlight the City's green spaces, and standard entry markers on public buildings.

A consistent and attractive series of wayfinding signs can make navigating Olmsted Falls easier and can encourage visitors to return.

Action 2: Construct community gateways using the City's new logo

The City's borders are not well-defined, providing little visual cue to identify the difference between Olmsted Falls and surrounding communities. In order to mark the City's neighborhoods and borders, gateway entrances should be constructed at priority locations.

Gateway entrances should have a common look and feel that matches the unique identity of the City; however, they should be scaled to match the gateway's importance. Large and clearly identifiable gateways should be constructed at prominent entrances while smaller signs should be placed at neighborhood entrances.

Given the historic and ongoing relationship between Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township, the City could coordinate signage with Olmsted Township to reflect a more consistent feel between the two communities.

More information on gateway types and locations can be found on the spread beginning on page 134.



GOAL 3: USE EVENTS TO PROMOTE AND ADVERTISE DOWNTOWN OLMSTED FALLS

Residents indicated a desire to enhance Downtown Olmsted Falls with more

Enhanced Infrastructure

Design elements help to foster a unique sense of place and community identity, while aesthetic quality encourages people to visit and remain in an area—contributing to its overall vitality. Design elements also can contribute significantly to the safety of an area, when concerns such as lighting, visibility, sidewalks, and bike lanes are considered.

Often, when infrastructure needs to be constructed or replaced, design elements are not carefully considered, and an opportunity is lost to turn that infrastructure into a meaningful component of the community. By considering enhancements when designing infrastructure improvements, the City can improve the look and feel of the community.

One local example of enhanced infrastructure was the 2012 reconstruction of the Fulton Road Bridge in Cleveland. Originally built in 1932, the bridge spanned the popular Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and Brookside Reservation, which is attended by over a million visitors annually. The distinctive and highly

visible bridge had been an important symbol to the Old Brooklyn and Brooklyn Center communities in Cleveland. For these reasons, the project team used inter-agency collaboration and extensive public input to design a bridge that focused on aesthetics, maintaining the unique character and cultural significance of the original structure, minimizing negative impacts to the zoo, long-term durability, and anticipated maintenance requirements. The final alternative was an arched bridge similar to the previous bridge but with modern materials, making it safer and easier to maintain, and includes lamp posts, decorative railings, and a bike lane and sidewalk on each side.



Source: Ohio Department of Transportation

events. The City should continue to host current events and expand offerings.

Action 1: Continue hosting existing Downtown events

While the City may seek to add limited new event offerings, it is important to note that existing events—such as the Evening in the Falls series—are serving

the City well. Residents and businesses noted that existing events are attracting vibrancy to the Downtown and should continue.

Action 2: Consider walking tours of Downtown Olmsted Falls

Walking tours are common in historic districts as people seek to learn more

about the communities they are visiting. The City of Olmsted Falls should consider working with the historic district and Downtown merchants to establish walking tours. These could be led by volunteers or part-time workers and could be historic in nature.

Action 3: Coordinate and market a regularly occurring late-night retail opening or event that occurs year-round

Cities around the country have turned to regularly occurring events as a way to attract residents and visitors to explore their commercial areas. Regularly occurring late-night retail openings or events can be supplemented with music, art, and street performances to create memorable experiences.

By holding events at regularly occurring times—often monthly—Downtown events become consistently and predictably timed, so residents and visitors

know when special events are happening. By combining recurring events with new featured performances or exhibits, events can be both predictably timed and unique and interesting.

Such an event will only be successful with an active event organizer, the ongoing commitment of retailers and businesses, a marketing campaign, and unique programming.

Examples of similar events include the following:

- *Gallery Hop (Short North, Columbus, OH):* a monthly event that brings artists and music to brighten a commercial district
- *MIX at the Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland, OH):* a monthly event that showcases themed musical performances to attract people to the museum

More information on the Short North Gallery Hop can be found in the box on page 132.

The Short North Gallery Hop

The Short North is a neighborhood located just north of Downtown Columbus, Ohio. The neighborhood—once dangerous and abandoned—has been transformed into a vibrant, arts-oriented community. Much of that transformation came from the neighborhood's monthly Gallery Hop. The event brought thousands of people to the struggling neighborhood to view art, performances, and music.

The event attracted visitors because it was held on a consistent basis yet showcased new and interesting art each month.

For more information on the success of the Short North Arts District, visit www.ShortNorth.org.



Source: *Experience Columbus*

Action 4: Hold additional, frequent community events that support target audiences and economic niches

Downtown boosters and economic development experts have increasingly seen the benefits of holding frequent community events on community main streets. With many people moving to online shopping, providing a unique experience in Downtowns is one way to keep residents and visitors coming.

The City has a strong track record of Downtown events, but should supplement these with additional ones. Specifically, these events should target the niche markets outlined in the economic development section. Event possibilities include mass weddings, farmers markets, movie nights, a restaurant week, garden shows, or others that serve to enhance existing business clusters.

Major Gateways

Major gateways are located along the major spines of Olmsted Falls: Columbia and Bagley Rods. These entrances are seen by thousands of people every day and are suitable for larger gateway signs.

Minor Gateways

Minor gateways are located at slower-speed, largely residential entrances to the City. These gateways should be smaller and more appropriate to a neighborhood scale.

Downtown Gateways

Downtown gateways are located at the main entrances to downtown: where Columbia Road intersects with Main Street and where it intersects with Bagley Road.

Highway Gateways

While Olmsted Falls does not have any on-ramps to the turnpike, the City can use new bridges and sound barriers to display its new City logo and brand.

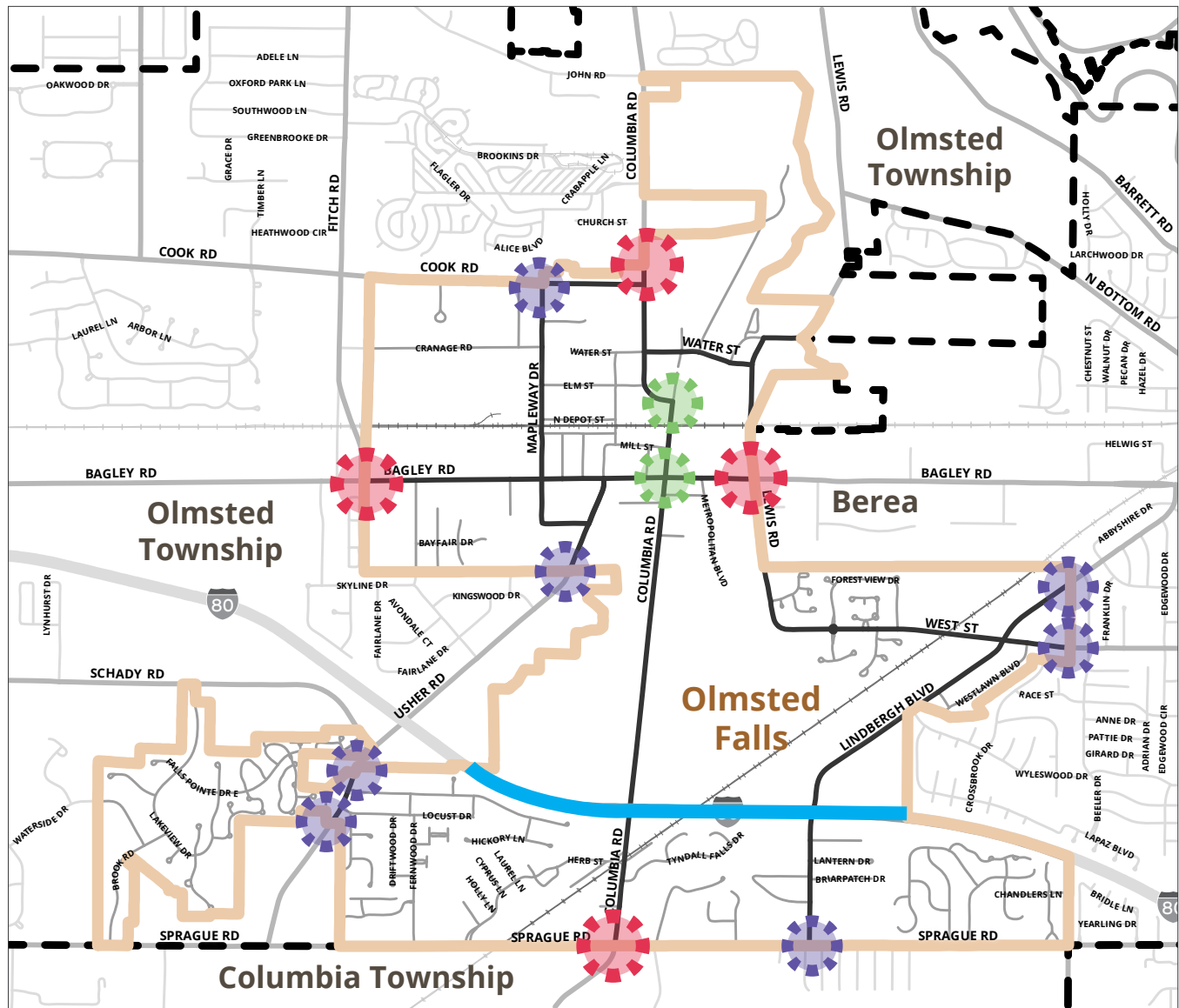
Example Identity System

This example of an identity system from Provo, Utah shows signs of different scale and type that all fit into a consistent signage system.



Source: www.ProvoMayor.com

Map 19 Gateway Priorities



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | Major Gateways | | City of Olmsted Falls |
| | Minor Gateways | | Community Boundaries |
| | Downtown Gateways | | Highways |
| | Highway Gateways | | Major Roads |
| | | | Minor Roads |
| | | | Railroads |



Land Use

Land use—or the type and intensity of buildings and activities that take place on land—is a critical component of the livability and functionality of municipalities. The way land is used has implications for transportation networks, economic resilience, the health and prosperity of the residential population

and the overall attractiveness and sustainability of the community.

The following goals and action ideas are meant to ensure that land in Olmsted Falls is used in such a way that promotes the wellbeing all those who live, work, and play in Olmsted Falls—both now and in the future.

Vision for Land Use

The community developed three visions related to Land Use, as outlined here:

- Sensible and consistently enforced design standards to ensure new developments fit the community's character
- Fully developed vacant tracts that maximize their potential and promote environmental stewardship
- Well-connected land uses that allow people to easily access nearby amenities, neighborhoods, and natural areas via trails and sidewalks

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.

City of Olmsted Falls



GOAL 1: PROMOTE LIVABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND DOWNTOWN OLMSTED FALLS

Olmsted Falls is fortunate to have a traditional and walkable Downtown area with a variety of local merchants. A truly vibrant Downtown area should feature walkable streets, visually interesting buildings, and a mix of uses including residential and commercial. It should also be easily accessible by surrounding neighborhoods so residents can choose to walk to Downtown.

Action 1: Update Downtown zoning requirements to ensure walkable development

Walkability aids in creating and sustaining a livable and vibrant place. Likewise, zoning ordinances and design guidelines can aid in creating a walkable environment by requiring sidewalks, landscaping features, limiting building setbacks, and requiring a certain percentage of wall space on the first level be windows or doors that overlook or open to the street. Other zoning regulations can include mixed-uses or Downtown overlay districts that allow and encourage mixed-use developments, limit the number and size of parking lots and spaces, and minimize building setbacks.

Municipalities can also foster walkability by adopting policies that make walkability a priority, endorsing or mandating

that spaces and infrastructure be designed to encourage pedestrian activity, such as installing sidewalks in the rights-of-way, creating wider and more visible crosswalks, or installing various streetscape improvements.

The City should review and update its Downtown zoning requirements—including setbacks, height, windows, and landscaping—to ensure new developments match the community's goal for greater walkability.

Action 2: Rezone the parcels at Bagley and Columbia to eliminate auto-oriented uses in the future

Auto-oriented uses—such as car washes, gas pumps, or drive-throughs—encourage greater vehicular traffic, thereby diminishing the pedestrian experience and often creating hazardous conditions for both pedestrians and vehicles. In pedestrian-oriented environments, uses that are compatible with dense, walkable development should be encouraged—such as cafes, boutiques, galleries, and service businesses.

The City should rezone the commercial parcels at Bagley and Columbia Roads to ensure future development is pedestrian-oriented. While rezoning the parcels does not change any current uses on the site, it will encourage the pedestrian-scaled uses in the future.

Action 3: Consult the Character Areas and Future Land Uses map when considering zoning decisions

The Character Areas and the Future Land Use maps describe the types of development the City wants to see in

the future. The Character Areas map shows the organization of land uses currently and how they can be conceptualized in the future. The Future Land Use map describes these future uses more specifically. It is an extension of the Character Areas map as it links land use goals to zoning districts.

The Character Areas and the Future Land Use maps do not change any existing zoning or remove any existing development rights. Rather, they display the community's priorities for new development should proposals surface.

The City should consult the maps when development proposals are submitted. The Character Areas map is displayed on page 139 and the Future Land Use map and associated descriptions are displayed on pages 142 to 145.



GOAL 2: BUILD A NETWORK OF ROADS THAT FORM CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY

Connectivity is defined as how often streets or roadways intersect, or how closely intersections are spaced. Grid-like street patterns usually have greater connectivity than those with curving streets and cul-de-sacs. Combined with better designed streets that offer amenities such as lighting, trees, and benches; this greater connectivity

makes walking and biking easier as the distances between places are reduced.

Action 1: Establish streetscape plans for Columbia and Bagley Roads

The term streetscape describes the physical layout and design elements of a street. Layout and design not only impacts the overall aesthetics of the street, but also impacts the street's ability to function as part of the public realm—recognizing that the street is a public place where people engage in various activities. The quality of a community's streetscapes impacts a aesthetic quality, economic prosperity, and social health.

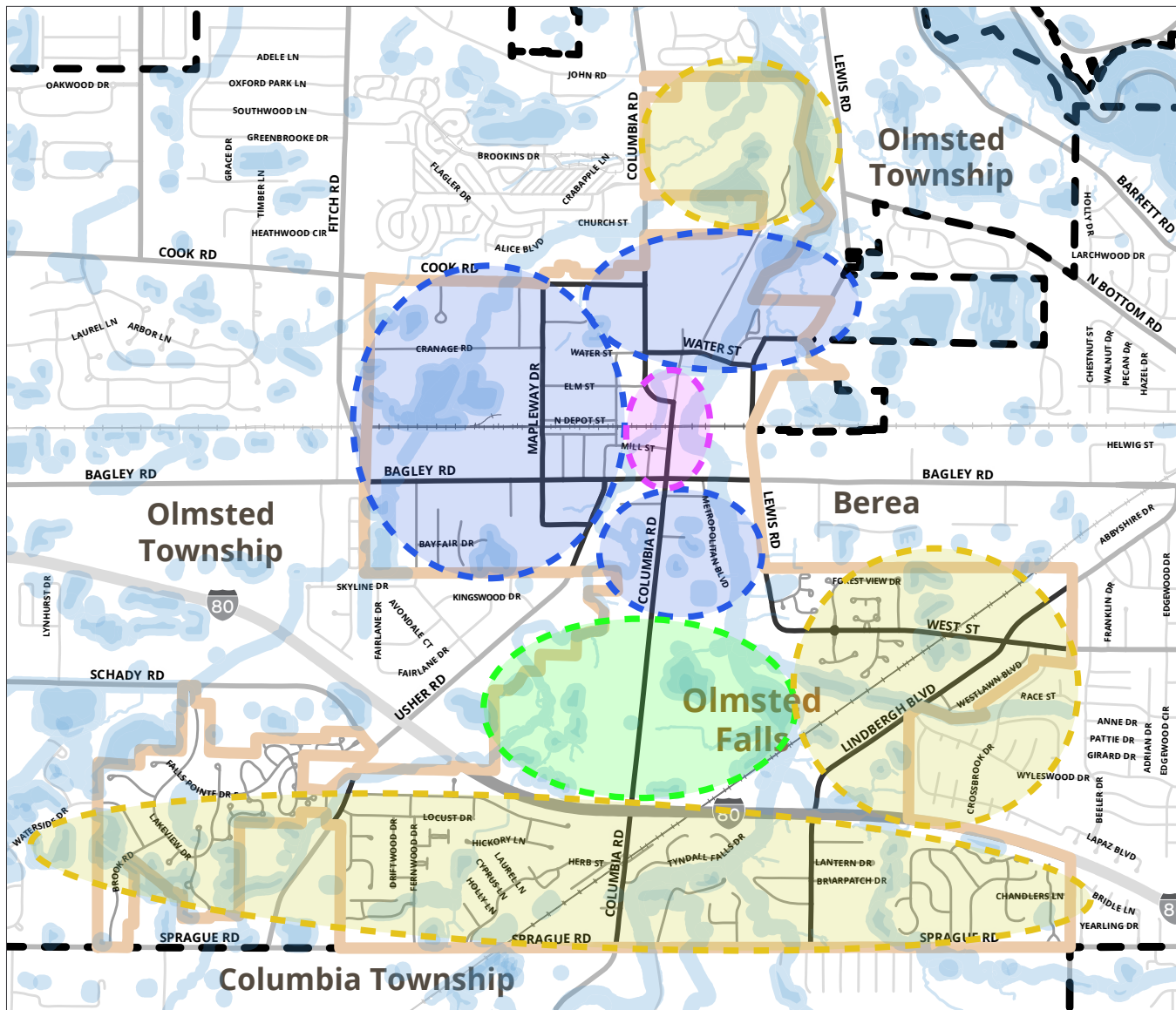
Streetscape enhancements can take the form of better and more attractive street lighting and landscaping, wider sidewalks, and the reorientation of buildings and infrastructure toward the street and at the pedestrian scale. These enhancements are meant to entice people to interact at the street level, thus creating a safer and more vibrant atmosphere.

Streetscaping plans are a common way to visualize how improvements would create a better streetscape, get feedback from the public on proposed changes, and are often necessary to secure money for construction of improvements.

Action 2: Enhance and expand the City's grid pattern, especially in the area around Downtown

Streets serve an important role in any neighborhood: they connect different

Map 20 Character Areas



Legend

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| | Downtown District:
Walkable, mixed-use area | | Expanded Downtown Neighborhoods: Potential to develop new grid pattern of streets in underdeveloped lots | for additional suburban homes |
| | Downtown Neighborhoods:
Older homes on smaller lots, potential for enhanced grid pattern of streets, some office and industrial, and infill development | | Suburban Neighborhoods:
Winding streets, need for better connections, potential | |
| | | | City of Olmsted Falls | |
| | | | Community Boundaries | |
| | | | Highways | |
| | | | Major Roads | |
| | | | Minor Roads | |
| | | | Railroads | |

parts of a neighborhood and allow for social interaction. Quality-of-life issues are contingent upon streets—whether they contribute to or detract from a safe, quiet, and healthy environment.

Disconnected streets are inefficient and reduce accessibility between neighborhoods. Many new subdivisions and communities are trying to reinstate the grid pattern to create clearer and more direct pedestrian routes that increase connectivity and accessibility.

In many areas of Olmsted Falls, the original grid pattern has been disrupted; however, opportunities exist to reconnect communities. In addition, the City can expand the grid by requiring new subdivisions to have a grid-like pattern and by limiting the block size. The City should update its regulations to facilitate this change.

A map of the potential grid pattern can be found on the spread beginning on page 141.

Action 3: Prohibit private streets in future developments

Private streets have been standard practice in many subdivision developments. Private streets need not conform to County standards for public streets and are turned over to the homeowners' association for maintenance and repair, so the municipality is not burdened with new roads to care for.

Many private roads become a liability for both homeowners that reside on them and the municipality because homeowners are unaware of the large fees associated with road upkeep. As the roads begin to fail, the homeowners associations cannot or will not keep

up with needed maintenance. The City should not allow private streets in future developments to limit these negative consequences.

Action 4: Update subdivision regulations to require walkable, neighborhood-scale streets

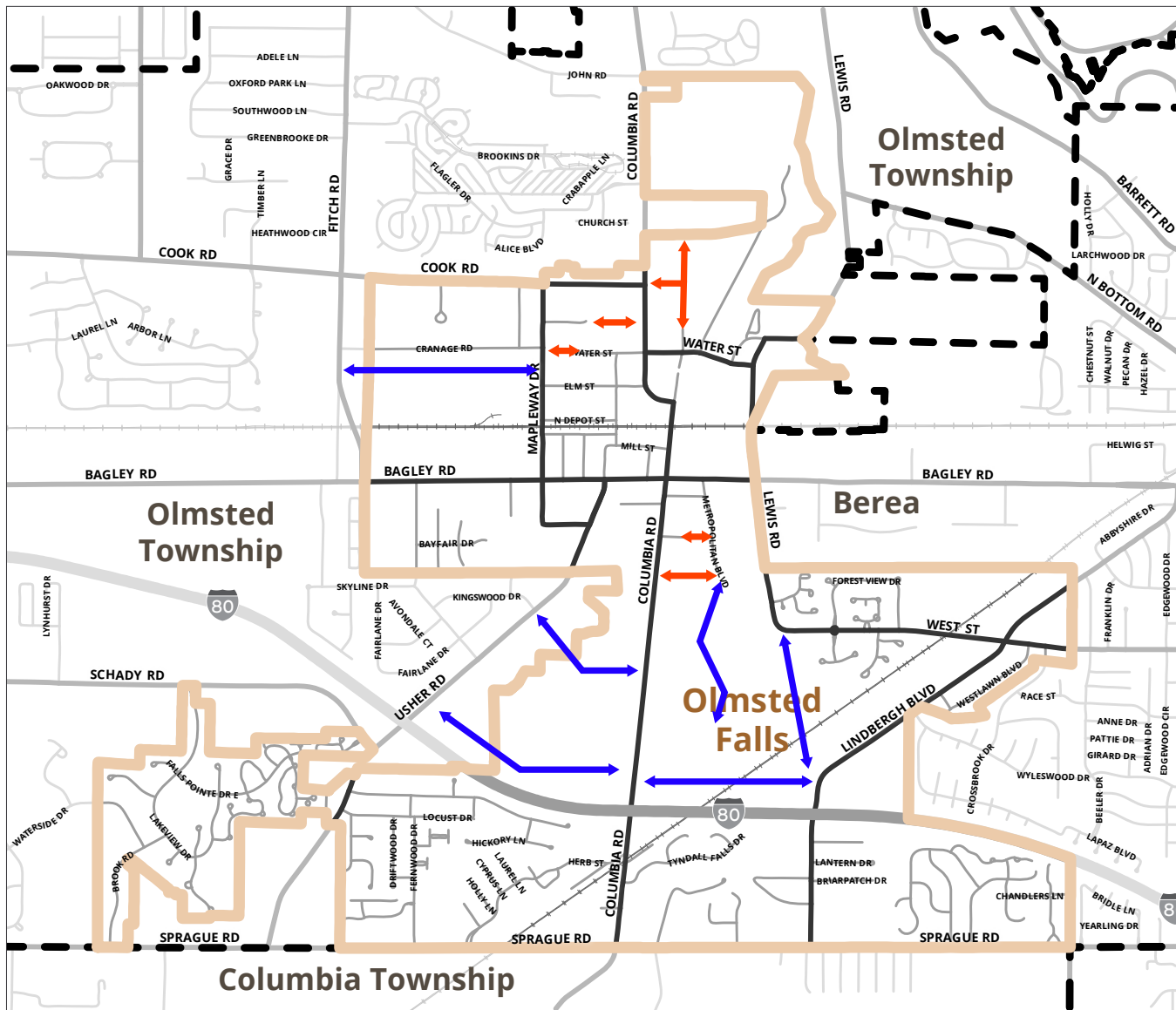
Common roadway design within subdivisions include streets that are overly wide and that do not include sidewalks, creating an environment where car travel is the only viable means of transportation. Rather, streets should include sidewalks to make walking easy and safe, and should be scaled to fit the size of the neighborhood, such that the road is not the dominant feature of the neighborhood.

Action 5: Ensure that cul-de-sacs are only constructed when a logical grid pattern is not possible

Although the original concept behind the cul-de-sac design—which typifies many suburban and subdivision development roads—was to create safe and quiet environments, curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs are inefficient and hinder accessibility from one portion of a neighborhood to another. As such, cul-de-sacs should be avoided.

In some instances, a grid pattern is unattainable due to topography or other obstructions in the natural or built environment. In these instances, cul-de-sacs could be allowed as long as bicycle and pedestrian access is provided.

Map 21 Grid Pattern Potential



Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
| — Potential Grid Pattern Expansion | City of Olmsted Falls |
| — Restored Historic Grid Opportunities | Community Boundaries |
| | Highways |
| | Major Roads |
| | Minor Roads |
| | Railroads |

What is the Future Land Use map?

The Future Land Use map displays the range of uses the community would like to see in the future. For instance, in areas displayed as attached single-family, the community would like to see townhouses, duplexes, and other attached, single-family uses in the future.

The Future Land Use map differs from the Current Land Use map. The Current Land Use map displays the types of uses currently constructed on the land, while the Future Land Use map displays desired land uses. These land uses may differ.

Importantly, a future land use designation that differs from current land use does not change any landowner's existing rights or outlaw any existing uses. The Future Land Use map is meant as a long-term vision for property uses and is meant to guide development over the next decade.

As an example, an existing single-family home that is displayed as multi-family on the Future Land Use map means that if the existing home is sold, it can be replaced with a higher-density apartment building. However, the home can also be maintained as a single-family home in perpetuity.

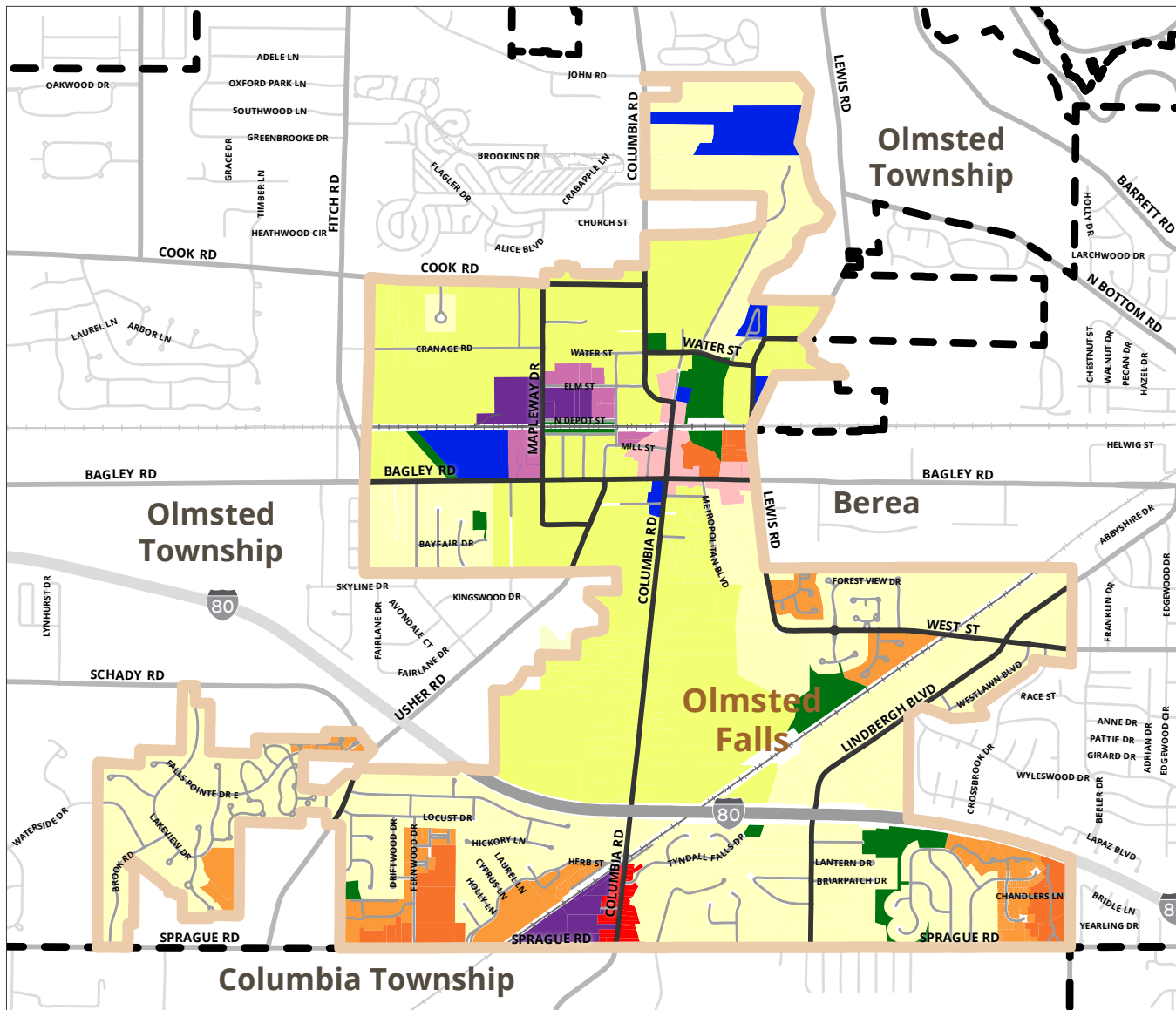
How is it used?

The Future Land Use map is generally used as a responsive tool for the City. Should a property owner desire to change their current type of land use, the City will consult the Future Land Use map to see if the proposed re-zoning would fit with the community's goals as

outlined in the map. The City can also initiate a property rezoning to match zoning to desired future land uses.

What are the districts?

The Future Land Use map districts are displayed in the legend below the map. They are also described on pages 144 and 145 with additional text descriptions and an image of a possible building associated with that use.

Map 22 **Future Land Use****Legend**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Detached Single-Family | Institutional | City of Olmsted Falls |
| Attached Single-Family | Industrial | Community Boundaries |
| Multi-Family | Professional, Medical, Multi-Family | Highways |
| Traditional Neighborhood | Parks | Major Roads |
| Downtown | | Minor Roads |
| General Commercial | | Railroads |

Future Land Use Categories

The following future land use categories correspond to the map on the previous page. The pictures and descriptions are meant to display the types of development envisioned in each zone.

Flickr: Liz-West



Detached Single-Family District

Separated single-family, residential uses

Flickr: Michael Hicks



Traditional Neighborhood

Mix of residential uses and limited commercial uses in traditional layouts

Flickr: Steven Martin



Attached Single-Family District

Townhouses and other attached, single-family residential uses

Flickr: Brett VA



Downtown District

Mix of residential, office, and retail uses in multi-story, low-rise buildings

Flickr: Ryan



Multi-Family District

Range of residential options including townhouses and apartment buildings

Flickr: Random Retail



General Commercial

Large-scale retail including gas stations and hotels, fast food, some limited multi-family residential

Olmsted Falls

**Institutional**

Government or other non-profit-owned areas

Flickr: Jen Goelnitz

**Parks and Open Spaces**

Parks, open spaces, and green spaces owned by the City or set aside by developers

Flickr: Nicholas Eckhart

**Industrial**

Industrial uses including light manufacturing and warehousing

Google Earth

**Professional, Medical, Multi-Family**

Office buildings including medical office buildings, or multi-family residential



Downtown Development

Olmsted Falls has a great asset in its historic Downtown, which acts as the heart of the community. Featuring turn-of-the-century buildings and a walkable development pattern, this area distinguishes Olmsted Falls from many other communities. Like many historic areas, however, significant infrastructure improvements and investments are needed to keep Olmsted Falls fresh and vibrant.

Vision for Downtown Development

The community developed four visions related to Downtown Development, as outlined here:

- A vibrant, denser, walkable, and authentic Downtown that is safe, comfortable, and appealing for all users
- New construction of mixed-use buildings that are sensitive to historic designs while providing layouts that support contemporary retail practices, and contribute to Downtown's walkability and vibrancy
- Increased tourism that leverages Downtown as a unique regional destination for shopping, history, entertainment, dining, and community events
- Improved signage, marketing, and social media strategy to promote Downtown to residents and visitors

The Goals and Actions on the following pages address these visions.

Flickr: Mrhayata



GOAL 1: TACTICALLY INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Downtown Olmsted Falls is a walkable community center that serves as the heart of the City. The infrastructure built in Downtown must be conducive to walking and shopping in the City. To accomplish this, the City should invest in infrastructure that encourages walkability.

Action 1: Consider improvements to the Downtown district

The City of Olmsted Falls should consider improvements to Downtown to ensure that it is safe, comfortable, and attractive to visit. By investing in infrastructure that improves the quality of the spaces in Downtown, the City can attract new development and increase revenues for businesses.

Improvements to Downtown are described in maps and renderings beginning on page 152.

Action 2: In partnership with businesses and land owners, consider a Special Improvement District to fund improvements and services

Enabled by the State of Ohio in 1994, Special Improvement Districts (SIDs)

allow stakeholders in an area to provide funding for that area's improvement. Property owners pay assessments on their property values to create a fund to pay for special enhancements, improvements, or programs beyond regular City services. SIDs are in use throughout the country. The Downtown Cleveland Alliance represents Downtown Cleveland's Special Improvement District (SID), which funds workers who help clean streets and sidewalks among other services.

A SID in Downtown Olmsted Falls could help fund investments in the streetscape, such as landscaping, street furniture or lighting, as well as improvements to shared parking areas, among other physical improvements. A Special Improvement District could also fund ongoing cleanup and maintenance.

For information on an example Special Improvement District in Cleveland's Gordon Square area, see the orange box on page 148.

Action 3: Consider art installations Downtown

Art in walkable places enhances the experiences of people who are shopping, dining, or visiting. The City and Downtown property owners should consider adding art installations to blank walls or in public spaces to help create a vibrant community center.

One potential place for an art installation would be the blank wall on the side of the Music Box building facing the railroad tracks. This location could include a historically appropriate mural or a sign welcoming visitors to Downtown Olmsted Falls.

Gordon Square Special Improvement District

Special Improvement Districts or SIDs are voted on by property owners in a district to levy additional fees to pay for improvements or services in the district.

One successful example of this is the Gordon Square SID in Cleveland. Property owners in Gordon Square pay a fee of \$29.25 for a linear foot of frontage on Detroit Avenue, meaning approximately \$900 per year (\$75 per month) for a store with a 30-foot front. The Gordon Square SID generated \$122,180 according to its 2013 income tax filing, with more than 90% of that budget going to “Clean

and Safe” programs that maintain the attractiveness of the district.

A SID in Olmsted Falls could be used for similar programs, capital improvements such as streetscapes, or ongoing cleanup and maintenance.



Source: GordonSquare.org

Flickr: Nican45



GOAL 2: ATTRACT NEW DEVELOPMENT TO UNDERUSED SITES

Underused and vacant areas in a Downtown have a huge impact of its overall vitality, impacting the success of other businesses and its attractiveness to potential visitors. Infill development—either by attracting new development or using these areas as spaces for community events—can bring new life to Downtowns.

Action 1: Consider reuse scenarios for important sites in Downtown Olmsted Falls

The reuse of vacant or underused sites can take many different forms. Marketing to new businesses or investors is one way, but using these spaces for other uses can also bring new life to areas. Large vacant spaces are perfect for indoor farmers market or holiday markets, and can also serve as a venue for private or public events, from wedding receptions to community festivals. Vacant storefronts can also serve as an exhibit space for community artwork or crafts.

The City should work with community members to identify desired reuse scenarios for Downtown sites.

Action 2: Layer incentives to attract development to underused sites

For Downtown sites targeted for development, the City should layer incentive programs to make development financially viable. Various incentives exist at the municipal level to help attract development and investment to target areas. These include selling City-owned property at low costs, giving local income tax breaks, and financing infrastructure with tax increment financing.

The City should consider to what extent Downtown sites require tax breaks to facilitate development.

Action 3: Package City-owned land and proceed with a request for proposals for development

In some instances, vacant or underutilized land is, or comes under the control of the City. This land can be “packaged” to be more attractive to potential developers, businesses or investors. Packaging could include land aggregation, consolidation of smaller parcels into larger ones, installing utilities so the site is ready for development, or clearing land of all obsolete structures or infrastructure.

The City should then proceed with a request for proposals to gauge interest from developers for critical sites in Downtown Olmsted Falls.

Infill Development

Infill development is an important component to sustaining a neighborhood, especially historic downtowns.

Deteriorated buildings or vacant plots of land make an area feel unsafe or incongruent. However, infill development must be appropriate to the area, or context-sensitive. While a building has its own identity, it should be recognized that it is also part of a whole—influencing the aesthetic and functional quality of the streetscape, and the overall economic and social health of the district.

Compatible infill development creates a visually seamless and cohesive

streetscape, reinforcing the historic character and development patterns of the area. Elements to consider include building materials, detailing, height, mass, proportion, scale, setback, shape, as well as street accessories and workmanship.



Source: Wisconsin Historical Society



Businesses have long known that marketing is an essential component of success. Increasingly, cities are also embracing this concept—that marketing and branding play a huge role in a community's sustained attractiveness and success. Marketing the unique attributes of Downtown Olmsted Falls to encourage visitors, tourists, and potential businesses will help attract patronage and investment.

Action 1: Develop a modern Downtown Olmsted Falls website

A web presence is essential to increasing visibility and attracting attention. A Downtown Olmsted Falls website that includes links to businesses in Downtown, contains information about available commercial space, wedding itineraries, property or realtor information, City information, and updates about developments or events would help attract visitors and investors. This creates a one-stop-shop for all those interested in working, living, or visiting Downtown Olmsted Falls.

Action 2: Develop a social media presence for Downtown Olmsted Falls

Increasingly, social media is becoming the predominant form of information sharing and marketing. In addition to a website, organizations must also have a social media presence as well. Social media is a fast, easy, and cost-effective way to advertise and distribute information.

A Downtown Olmsted Falls social media presence could include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other sites.

Action 3: Develop tourism itineraries for a day in Olmsted Falls

Visitors to Olmsted Falls may not know all of the attractions and sites in Downtown. The City should develop tourism itineraries for a day in Olmsted Falls to outline the must-see attractions, most popular stops, and potential sites to visit as a way to showcase the City to potential visitors. These itineraries should be posted online to encourage tourism.

Action 4: Partner with NOACA, ODOT, and the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission to ensure Olmsted Falls' marketing is placed on future sound barriers and bridges

Transportation agencies have been constructing sound barriers along major highways to shield nearby homes from the noise pollution that highways bring. Currently, plans call for sound barriers to be built along the turnpike throughout Olmsted Falls, providing an

opportunity for the City to expand its brand.

The City should work with transportation agencies to ensure that the City's new logo is featured along the sound barriers, thereby advertising the City to passing cars.

Framework for Downtown Improvements

The framework for Downtown Olmsted Falls improvements includes four types of improvements:



Potential development areas

Potential development areas are places that could, in the future, be redeveloped as denser, more pedestrian friendly places that could enhance Downtown through the addition of commercial spaces, residential units, or offices.



Nodes and intersection improvements

Five nodes and intersections along Columbia Road have been identified as particularly important locations for changes in the future. These nodes and intersections are places where improvements could make the pedestrian experience in Downtown Olmsted Falls more pleasant.



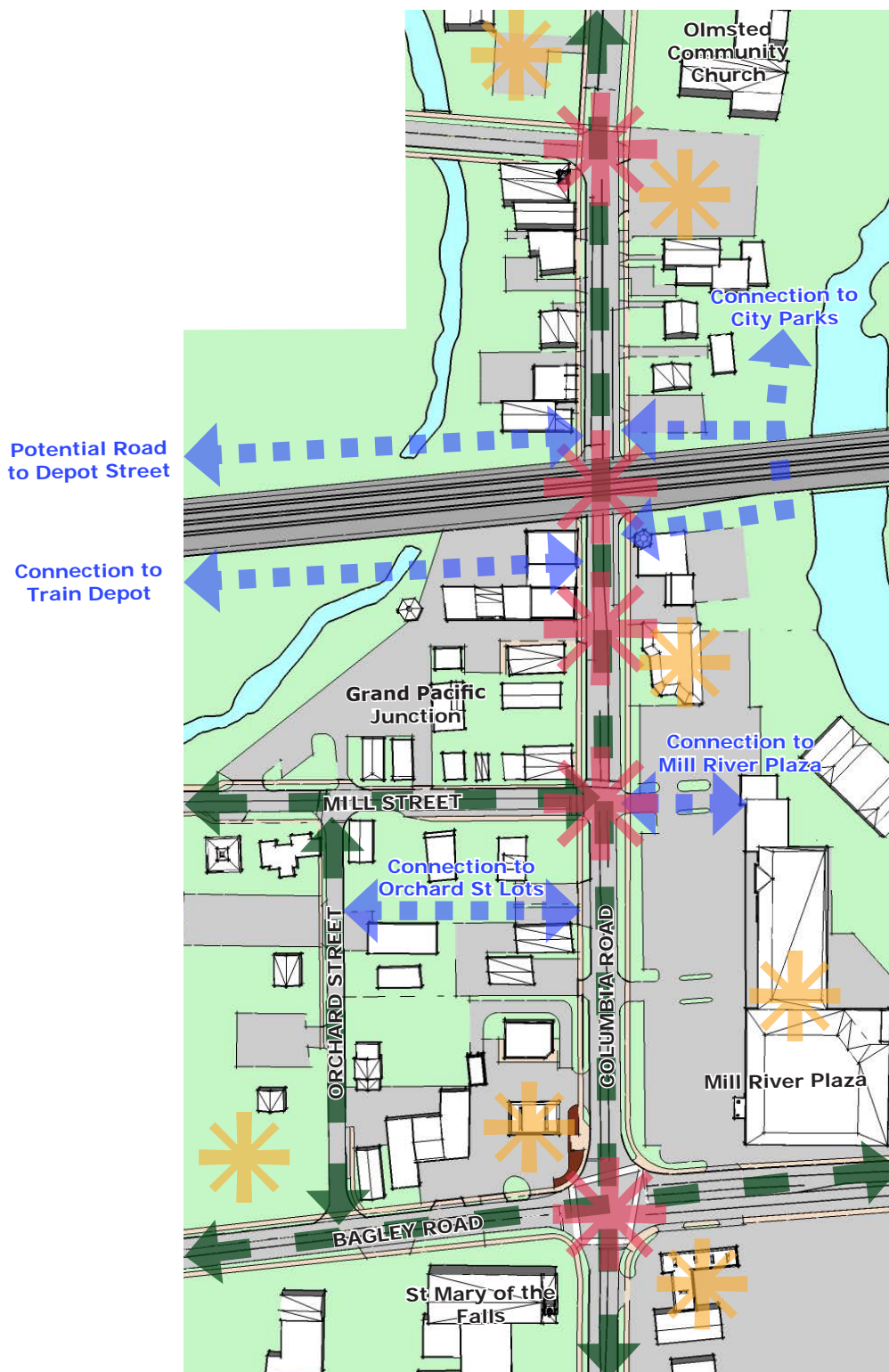
Streetscapes

Four major streets have been identified in Downtown Olmsted Falls: Columbia Road, Bagley Road, Orchard Street, and Mill Street. These four streets are candidates for streetscape improvements that include wider sidewalks, more trees, plantings, benches, bike racks, lighting, and signage. Columbia Road especially should be a priority for streetscaping.



Paths and connections

Paths and connections are locations where a road, sidewalks, or trails would better connect pedestrians and bicyclists with nearby amenities. These include a path between Orchard Street and Columbia Road to connect the parking lots to the retail districts, a path into Mill River Plaza, a path to connect to the historic train depot, a road extension from Columbia Street to Depot Street, and a pedestrian underpass that connects either side of the railroad tracks and a potential spur into the park system.



Current Downtown

Downtown currently features a mix of building types with various setbacks, heights, and orientation towards the street level. While some buildings feature prominently in the overall streetscape, others do not, including a group of one story buildings set farther back from the road—Mill River Plaza and the gas stations.



Legend

- Green Space
- Paved Areas
- Rivers and Waterways

Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Mill River Plaza Addition and New Housing: 1-2 Years (Option 1)

With this in mind, one development possibility would be to concentrate on bolstering the visibility of those buildings that do not have a large street presence. For instance, by building a second story on Mill River Plaza—even if only ornamental—the visibility of these buildings would be augmented, giving the street a more cohesive feel while also attracting more customers to commercial enterprises located in these buildings. Additions to the buildings would be context-sensitive, feature design not only compatible with the existing buildings, but also echo the overall character of the street.

Additionally, the development of additional residential buildings Downtown could bolster businesses that would benefit from proximity to new residents. Townhouses could be placed at appropriate locations including the large areas just north of Bagley Road and west of Orchard Street.



Legend

- Green Space
- Paved Areas
- Rivers and Waterways
- Commercial and Mixed Use Buildings
- Residential

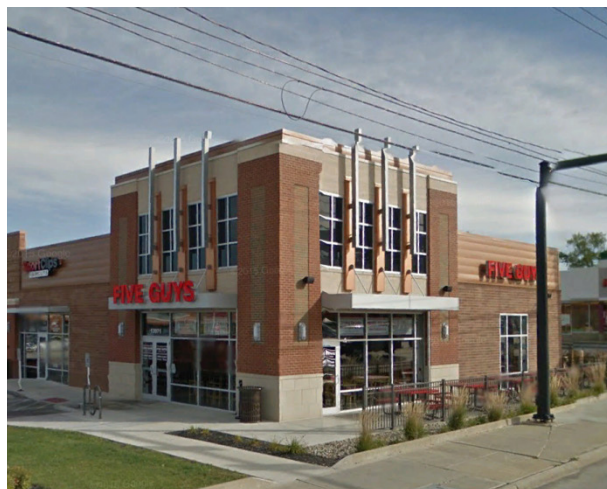
Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Mill River Plaza Potential Improvements: 1-2 Years (Option 1 Continued)

Mill River Plaza could model potential improvements off other shopping centers that have attracted new tenants by improving the exterior look and layout of their plaza.

The images at right showcase Cedar Center North in South Euclid. By building second-story false facades and improving the design of the storefronts through cohesive architecture and bold signage, the center has become more attractive to retailers and shoppers.

The image below showcases Lennox Town Center in Columbus, Ohio. Lennox includes extensive landscaping, inviting sidewalks, and decorative archways to highlight the shopping center and encourage people to visit.



Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Redevelopment and Mixed-Use Infill: 4-5 Years (Option 2)

Either in place of adding a second story to Mill River Plaza or after such a renovation, another option would be to remove existing buildings that are currently setback from the road, and construct new mixed-use buildings closer to the street. Orienting buildings to the street and placing parking behind the buildings would be in keeping with older structures along Columbia Road, creating a consistent building setback and establishing a more unified and attractive streetscape. This option would also feature multi-story buildings that would feature a mix of uses, such as commercial, office, and possibly residential on the second story. New buildings would also assist in enhancing the walkable retail spaces by creating a consistent edge of stores and businesses along Columbia Road.

As in Option #1, buildings should be context-sensitive, in keeping with the overall building character, scale, design, and materials of the other building on the street.



Legend

- Green Space
- Paved Areas
- Rivers and Waterways
- Commercial and Mixed Use Buildings
- Residential

Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Expanded Mixed-Use and Streetscape: 5-10 Years

Additional mixed-use buildings could take the place of the gas stations should those uses be redeveloped. New development could be augmented by intersection and streetscape improvements such as better lighting, more trees, and wider sidewalks.



Legend

- Green Space
- Paved Areas
- Rivers and Waterways
- Commercial and Mixed Use Buildings
- Residential

Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Full Build-Out and Parking Improvements: 10+ Years

As buildings take the place of parking lots, a parking deck could be constructed behind the new mixed-use buildings along Columbia Road. This would free other surface parking lots for additional infill development. Over time, the Downtown would have a consistent line of retail shops and restaurants to support overall vibrancy.



Legend

- Green Space
- Paved Areas
- Rivers and Waterways
- Commercial and Mixed Use Buildings
- Residential
- Parking Structure

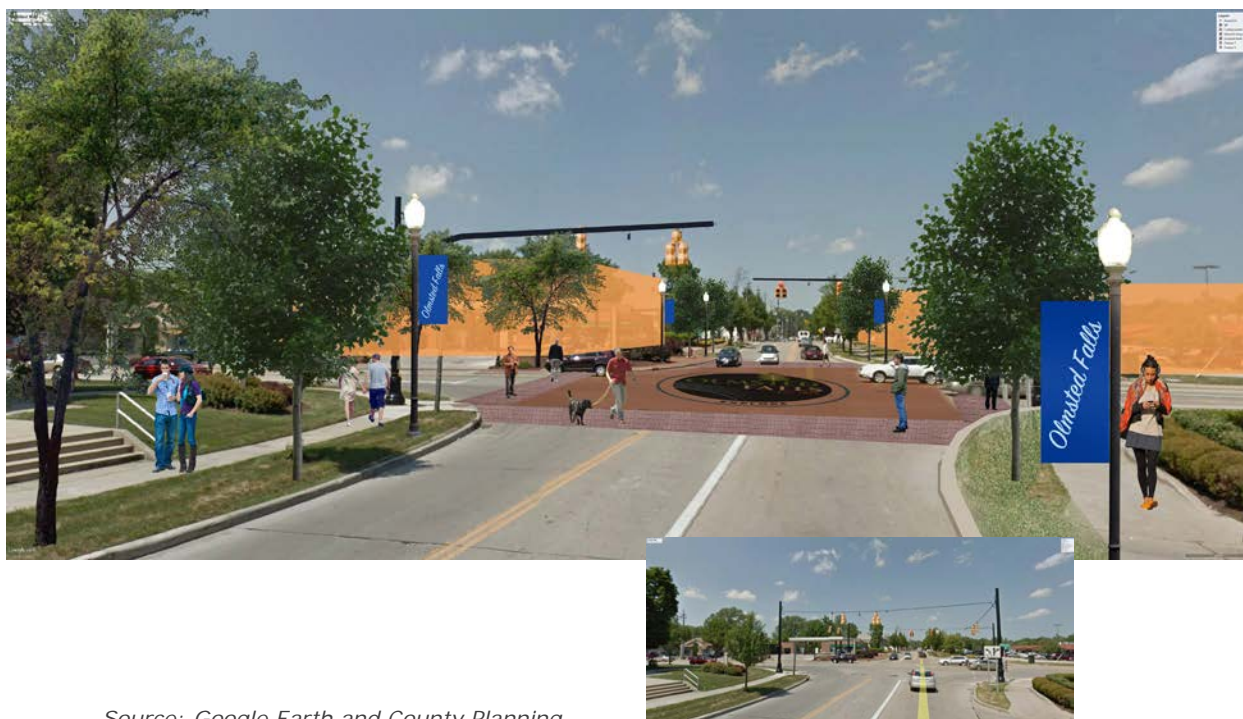
Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Columbia and Bagley Road Intersection

The intersection of Columbia and Bagley Roads is the main crossroads in Downtown Olmsted Falls. This importance should lend itself to a more robust infrastructure that highlights the intersection.

Improvements could include the following:

- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Banners identifying Downtown Olmsted Falls
- Textured crosswalks
- Painted intersections
- Reduced vehicle lane widths
- Eliminated through-lane on Bagley Road
- Narrower turn radii
- Replaced overhead wires with traffic signals mounted on mast arms
- Additional street trees
- Enhanced streetscaping



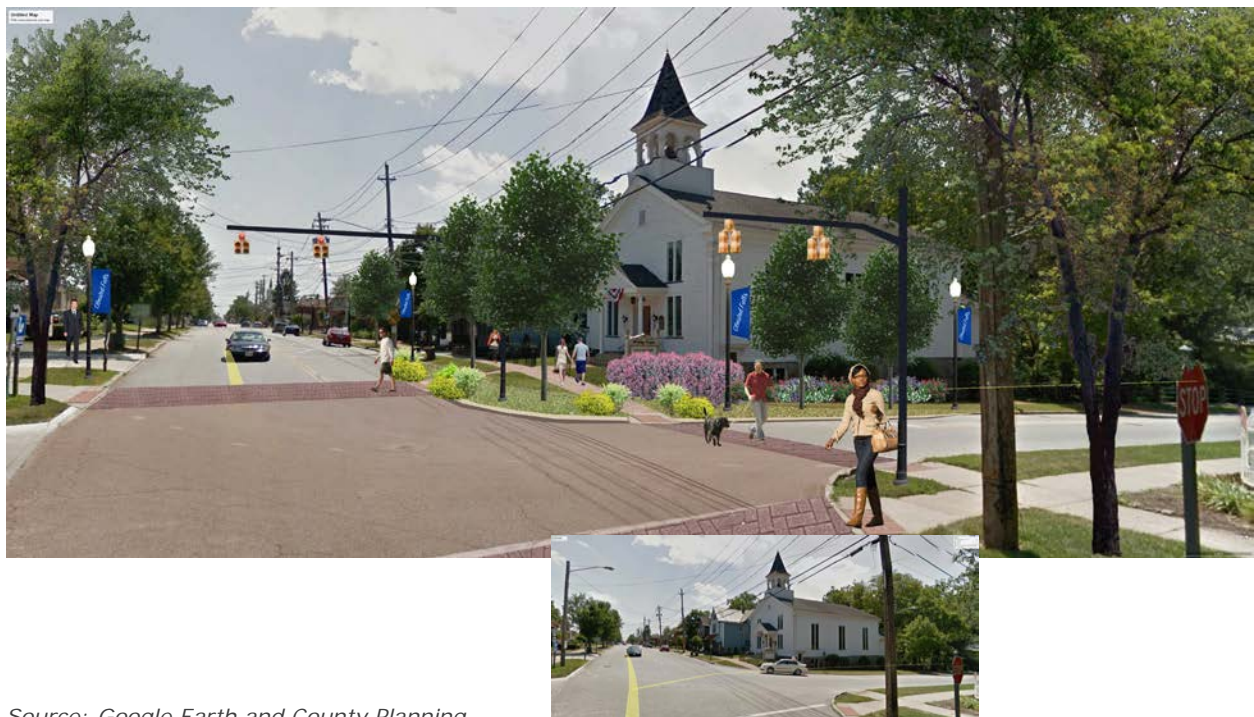
Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Columbia Road and Main Street Intersection

The Columbia Road and Main Street intersection forms a critical gateway into Downtown Olmsted Falls. Not only do many vehicles come through this intersection, it also forms the northernmost border of the commercial district, thereby becoming a main decision point for pedestrians.

Improvements could include the following:

- New pedestrian-activated stop light
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Banners identifying Downtown Olmsted Falls
- Textured crosswalks
- Painted intersections
- New curb bump-out to slow traffic and reduce crosswalk length
- New plantings and trees to beautify the entrance
- New crosswalk at southern part of the intersection



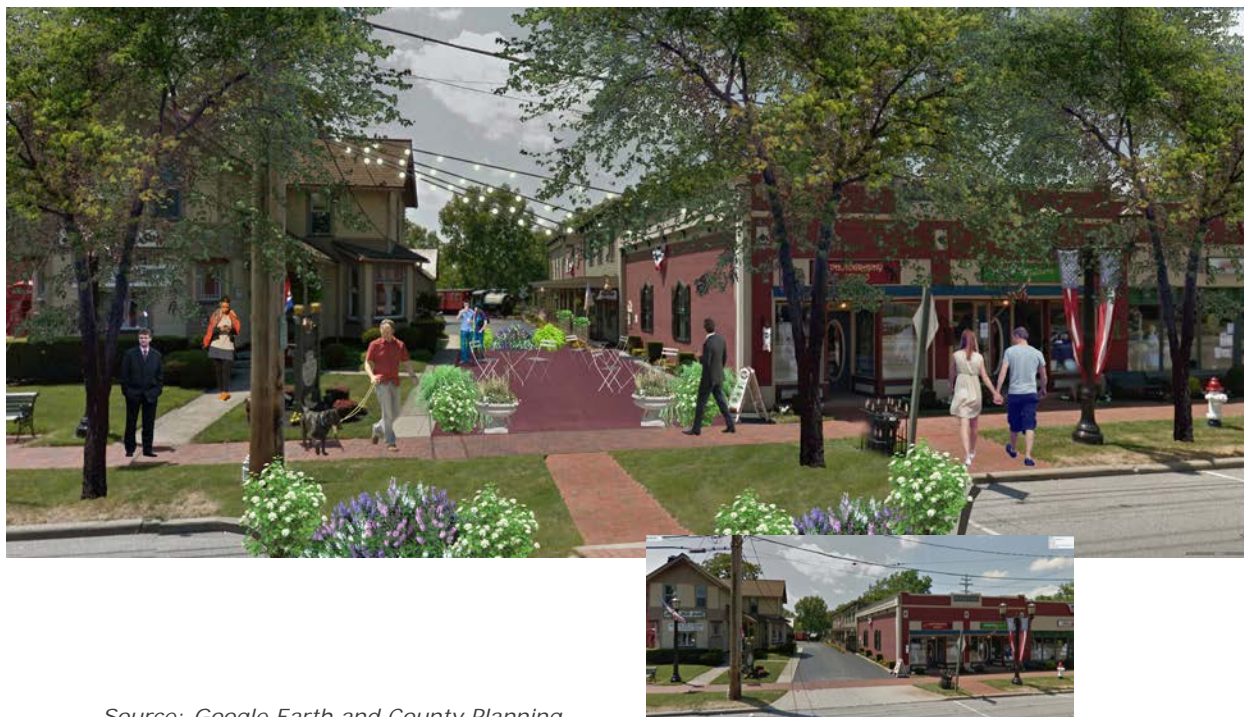
Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Parking Lot Entrance

The parking entrance from Columbia Road into the Grand Pacific Junction parking lot is narrow and cuts directly across the pedestrian zone. Since there are other entrances to this parking lot, this entrance could be repurposed as a pedestrian plaza that will enhance access to the shopping area. Improvements could include chairs, places for farmers markets, and signage directing drivers to other entrances.

Improvements could include the following:

- A new pedestrian plaza featuring brick pavers, plantings, and seating
- Eliminated curb-cut
- Additional trees and plantings
- Decorative lighting



Source: Google Earth and County Planning

Pedestrian Pathway, Landscaping, and Streetscape

The streetscape along Columbia Road could be improved to be friendlier to pedestrians. In addition to new lighting and banners, new trees and more robust plantings could improve the experience of pedestrians. Additionally, a new path could be installed between Columbia Road and Orchard Street to facilitate better access to the parking lots along Orchard Street.

Improvements could include the following:

- A pathway connecting Columbia Road to the Orchard Street parking lots
- Consistent signage identifying the path to parking
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting
- Banners identifying Downtown Olmsted Falls
- Textured crosswalks
- New plantings to improve the pedestrian experience and shield people from barren walls and parking lots
- Buried overhead wires
- Additional street trees



Source: Google Earth and County Planning



SECTION 5



IMPLEMENTATION

Moving from vision to implementation requires commitments of time and resources. The Implementation section ties individual actions to responsible parties, timeframes, and potential funding sources to ensure everyone is aware of how actions will be accomplished.

What's In This Section?

This section includes tables that correspond to each topic, goal, and action item from the Goals and Actions section. Each action includes a time frame identifying how long it could potentially take to accomplish the action, parties that are responsible for its implementation, potential level of funding, and possible funding opportunities.

The implementation tables are meant to serve as a guide; however, priorities, funding streams, and responsible parties can change over time. New resources should be evaluated against the action items as they arise.

How Do I Use It?

The Implementation section informs not only City staff and administration of who is responsible for undertaking actions, but it also discusses partnerships with private property owners, other municipalities, and other levels of government to demonstrate that accomplishing the plan will take efforts from many groups.

Actions and Collaborations

It is intended that this Master Plan will be used by the City of Olmsted Falls—as well as property owners and developers—when deciding where, when, and how to make investments. A viable implementation program—one that sets forth specific action items—is a valuable tool to ensure that the recommendations are acted upon.

Types of Actions

The action steps can be categorized in three ways:

- **Proactive Actions** include recommendations for revising, expanding, promoting, or developing new programs or services conducted by the City. These are actions that would not otherwise occur without new action undertaken by the City.
- In addition to proactive actions, the plan recommends certain **Responsive Actions**. These actions are to be undertaken when certain conditions are met. For instance, reviewing the Future Land Use map is triggered when a development proposal is submitted to the City.

- Finally, the Master Plan recommends certain **Ongoing Actions**. These actions are meant to underscore positive steps the City is already undertaking and which are important to continue.

Collaboration

It is important to recognize that there are factors that impact the City that are beyond its control. In such cases, it is important to forge and maintain supportive partnerships with those who do have control. In addition, because cities across the County and State are facing declining resources, it is becoming more important than ever to engage firms, institutions, and citizens to collaborate in the work of government.

The Master Plan identifies opportunities for engaging with other entities in developing mutually beneficial programs. With this in mind, the City can serve as a champion and supporter to help spur collaborative action.

Implementation Tables

The implementation tables on the following pages link directly to the actions in the Goals and Actions section. The tables outline the goals and actions, projected timeline, responsible parties & partners, estimated cost, and potential funding sources.

Responsible parties & partners are identified through symbols as shown in the legend on the following pages.

While responsible parties & partners, estimated timelines, and potential funding sources are outlined, changing circumstances, priorities, and funding streams may require this action table to change. It is important to recognize the table is a guide that is intended to be updated when circumstances warrant.

The City should evaluate the status of the plan every six months to ensure that actions are being completed.

Cost Estimates

The implementation tables contain three levels of cost estimates: high, medium, and low. Because of the ever-changing nature of projects, costs are variable; however, we have provided ranges to

give a general understanding of the scope of undertaking a project.

For the purposes of this plan, high, medium, and low cost ranges can be understood as follows:










Estimated Cost Range	
High Cost	Over \$500,000
Medium Cost	\$100,000 to \$500,000
Low Cost	Up to \$100,000

Importantly, estimated costs are only supplied for the action as described. They do not take into account additional steps. For instance, the cost of the action “Update the City’s parks master plan” is only for the plan’s development. The cost does not take into account the cost of any actions—such as new construction and capital purchase—that would follow from the development of such a plan.






Action Priorities












Priority actions are identified by stars in the implementation tables. Actions with three stars are the highest priority while actions with fewer stars are lower priority.



















Transportation Actions












Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Promote active transportation with a network of all-purpose trails, page 81				
Construct a complete all-purpose trail network, page 81	5+ Yrs	★★★★         	High	ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund ODNR Recreational Trails Program Transportation Alternatives Program NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program County Surface Transportation Program State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) The People for Bikes Community Grant Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants Rockefeller Foundation Grants

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls  General City  Finance  Building & Zoning  Business & Community Services  Economic Development  Planning  Service  Police and Fire	 Non-Profits  Private Property Owners  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)  The Trust for Public Land  Qualified Design Professionals	 Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)  Ohio Division of Liquor Control  Ohio Rail Development Commission  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission  Olmsted Falls City Schools  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
Private and Non-Profit Entities  Baldwin Wallace University  Bicycle Advocacy Groups  First Energy	Other Governmental Agencies  Cleveland Metroparks  County Planning  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District	Nearby Communities  General Surrounding Communities  Olmsted Township


Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Construct a greenway that combines an all-purpose trail with green stormwater infrastructure in First Energy's power line right-of-way, page 81	5+ Yrs	★★★		   	     	High	ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund ODNR Recreational Trails Program Transportation Alternatives Program NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program County Surface Transportation Program ODOT Safe Routes to School Program State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) The People for Bikes Community Grant Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants Rockefeller Foundation Grants The George Gund Foundation NEORS Green Infrastructure Grant Program ODSA Alternative Stormwater Infrastructure Loan Program Ohio EPA Surface Water Improvement Fund Ohio EPA 319 Grants

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Ensure any new railroad overpasses or bridges over the turnpike incorporate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, page 84	Ongoing ★★★			   	—	ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund ODNR Recreational Trails Program Transportation Alternatives Program NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program County Surface Transportation Program ODOT Safe Routes to School Program State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) The People for Bikes Community Grant Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants Rockefeller Foundation Grants
Construct bicycle parking Downtown, page 84	1-2 Yrs	★★★		   	Low	NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants The People for Bikes Community Grant Private Sponsors
Require bicycle parking in new developments, page 84	Ongoing			   	—	—
Work with advocacy groups to provide bike education and safety training, page 84	Ongoing			 	—	Section 402 Highway Safety Funds Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants The Cleveland Foundation




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Mitigate the effects of the City's many rail crossings, page 85				
Improve pedestrian crossings over train tracks at Columbia Road in Downtown, page 86	2-3 Yrs ★★★	     	High	Transportation Alternatives Program NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program County Surface Transportation Program ODOT Safe Routes to School Program ORDC Grants and Loans State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) Downtown Special Improvement District
Continue to monitor and police idling trains and educate residents on how to report them, page 86	Ongoing ★★★	    	—	—

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls





-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals













Other Governmental Agencies











-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Construct electronic signage to inform drivers of oncoming trains and alternate routes, page 86	2-3 Yrs	★★★		  		Medium	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program ORDC Grants and Loans Railroad Partnerships Downtown Special Improvement District
Build an attractive and well-lit rail underpass for pedestrians and bicyclists in Downtown, page 87	3-5 Yrs	★★		  		High	ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund ODNR Recreational Trails Program Transportation Alternatives Program NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program County Surface Transportation Program ODOT Safe Routes to School Program ORDC Grants and Loans State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) The People for Bikes Community Grant Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants Rockefeller Foundation Grants Railroad Partnerships Downtown Special Improvement District
Consider plantings along the City's railroad tracks to mitigate railroad noise, page 87	1-2 Yrs	★★★		  		Low	NEORSD Green Infrastructure Grant Program ODSA Alternative Stormwater Infrastructure Loan Program Ohio EPA Surface Water Improvement Fund Ohio EPA 319 Grants ORDC Grants and Loans Railroad Partnerships




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Expand the sidewalk network, page 87				
Construct new sidewalks according to the Missing Sidewalk Priorities map, page 88	3-5 Yrs ★★★	  	High	Transportation Alternatives Program NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program County Surface Transportation Program ODOT Safe Routes to School Program State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP)
Undertake a Safe Routes to School Plan, page 88	1-2 Yrs ★★	      	Low	ODOT Safe Routes to School Program







Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls




-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals
































Other Governmental Agencies

-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Improve the Columbia and Bagley Road intersection to be friendlier to pedestrians, page 88	3-5 Yrs	★★★		  		Medium	NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Surface Transportation Program ODOT Safe Routes to School Program State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP)
Conduct a survey of existing sidewalk conditions and require residents to make improvements where necessary, page 88	2-3 Yrs	★★★		 		Low	NOACA TLCI Program NOACA Technical Assistance Program
Require sidewalks in new developments to be at least five feet wide on both sides of the street and to connect with existing sidewalks, page 90	Ongoing					—	—
Ensure availability and accessibility of parking are not obstacles to running a business, page 90							
Standardize parking signage in Downtown, page 90	2-3 Yrs	★★★		 		Low	National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town" Grant Downtown Special Improvement District
Develop an online parking guide, page 91	1-2 Yrs	★★		 		Low	Downtown Special Improvement District
Conduct a comprehensive Downtown parking analysis to determine potential parking investments and adjust parking requirements, page 91	1-2 Yrs	★★★		    		Low	NOACA TLCI Program Downtown Special Improvement District
Develop a parking management plan for large-scale events Downtown, page 91	1-2 Yrs	★★★		    		Low	Downtown Special Improvement District
Build a direct sidewalk connection from the Orchard Street parking lots to Columbia Road, page 91	2-3 Yrs	★★★		   		Medium	Downtown Special Improvement District

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners				Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Allow property owners and developers in Downtown Olmsted Falls to pay into a fund for area-wide parking improvements in lieu of the required number of dedicated on-site parking spaces, page 91	1-2 Yrs	★					—	—
Upgrade the street network, page 92								
Conduct a traffic study of Columbia, Bagley, and Usher Roads as part of any streetscaping plans, page 92	1-2 Yrs	★★★					Low	NOACA TLCI Program
Study the Columbia and Bagley Roads intersection for potential traffic timing and other improvements, page 93	1-2 Yrs	★★★					Low	NOACA TLCI Program
Consider road improvements of the City's narrowest residential streets, page 93	3-5 Yrs	★★					High	State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP)

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls

- General City
- Finance
- Building & Zoning
- Business & Community Services
- Economic Development
- Planning
- Service
- Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

- Baldwin Wallace University
- Bicycle Advocacy Groups
- First Energy

- Non-Profits
- Private Property Owners
- Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
- Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
- The Trust for Public Land
- Qualified Design Professionals

Other Governmental Agencies

- Cleveland Metroparks
- County Planning
- Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
- Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District














- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Ohio Division of Liquor Control
- Ohio Rail Development Commission
- Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
- Olmsted Falls City Schools
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
- Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities

- General Surrounding Communities
- Olmsted Township


Parks, Recreation, and the Environment Actions

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Match park resources to the community's needs, page 95				
Update the City's Parks Master Plan, page 95	1-2 Yrs ★★★	P S CS	Low	—
Consider installing a kids play area in Downtown Olmsted Falls, page 95	1-2 Yrs ★★	S P CS	Medium	ODNR NatureWorks Program ODNR Land and Water Conservation Fund Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants The George Gund Foundation Corporate Sponsorship KaBOOM!
Conduct a design charrette for reuse options of Mills Park, page 95	1-2 Yrs ★★	P S CS	Low	—
Connect Tyndall Falls Park with the river and provide access from across the river, page 96	3-5 Yrs ★	S P	High	ODNR NatureWorks Program ODNR Land and Water Conservation Fund Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants The George Gund Foundation
Consider purchasing the Grist Mill Run park and incorporating it into the City's system, page 96	2-3 Yrs ★★	S CS F	High	ODNR NatureWorks Program ODNR Land and Water Conservation Fund Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants The George Gund Foundation
Require new residential developments to incorporate green space that is accessible and centrally located, page 96	Ongoing	P CS S B	—	—




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Expand access to underused parks and historic resources, page 97					
Provide better maps and wayfinding signage into the City's park system, page 97	1-2 Yrs	★★★	  	Low	—
Connect the City's southern parks with a series of off-road paths, page 97	3-5 Yrs	★★	     	High	ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund ODNR Recreational Trails Program
Incorporate innovative stormwater management in new and existing developments, page 97					
Incentivize the use of innovative stormwater techniques, page 99	1-2 Yrs	★★	   	Medium	NEORSD Green Infrastructure Grant Program Ohio EPA Surface Water Improvement Fund Ohio EPA 319 Grants The George Gund Foundation

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls





-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals

































Other Governmental Agencies

-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District










-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township


Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Review the Zoning and Building Codes for obstacles to innovative stormwater solutions like downspout disconnects, rain barrels, and innovative parking lot designs, page 99	1-2 Yrs	★★		  	 	Low	—
Consider a complete and green streets policy that incorporates innovative stormwater management practices, page 99	2-3 Yrs	★★		  		Low	—
Adequately protect the City's environmentally sensitive areas, page 100							
Review, update, and actively enforce the City's tree protection ordinance, page 100	1-2 Yrs	★★		    		Low	Keep America Beautiful Grant Programs Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund Horticultural Research Institute Grants
Actively enforce stream setbacks to restrict development in flood-prone areas, thereby minimizing flooding and protecting the City's natural resources, page 100	Ongoing	★★★				—	—
Partner with conservation organizations to purchase easements along the City's rivers to protect them in perpetuity, page 101	3-5 Yrs	★★		     		Medium	Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Program ODNR Land and Water Conservation Fund Western Reserve Land Conservancy Grants
Establish hillside protection regulations to limit development on hillsides, page 102	2-3 Yrs	★★		 		Low	—
Protect existing wetlands as a way to reduce flooding, page 102	Ongoing			 		—	Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Program ODNR Land and Water Conservation Fund

Quality Government Actions




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Consolidate governmental services where possible, page 105				
Convene an intergovernmental summit to discuss merger possibilities with Olmsted Township, page 105	1-2 Yrs ★★	  	Low	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program
Appoint a governance commission to study a potential merger in coordination with a parallel commission in the Township, page 105	2-3 Yrs ★★	  	Medium	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program
Absent a merger, conduct a comprehensive joint services study with Olmsted Township, page 105	2-3 Yrs ★★	  	Medium	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program







Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls





-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire


Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals
























Other Governmental Agencies

-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners				Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Partner with Cleveland Metroparks for advice on the best method of managing the City's current and future parks as well as connecting into existing parks, page 105	Ongoing ★★						—	—
Streamline the development review process, page 106								
Ensure design review board members are offered appropriate training, page 106	Ongoing ★★						Low	ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program
Streamline the internal review process of development proposals among City staff, page 106	1-2 Yrs	★★★					—	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program
Review the plan approval process to determine whether certain actions can be approved administratively or by a single board rather than multiple boards, page 106	1-2 Yrs	★★★					Low	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program
Require all developments to be approved or denied within a specific time from a full and complete application, page 107	Ongoing ★★						—	—
Ensure all boards and commissions meet as needed to facilitate development, page 107	Ongoing ★★						—	—
Assist in the establishment of businesses, page 107								
Develop a one-stop-shop for those seeking to develop in the City, page 108	1-2 Yrs	★★					Low	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program The Cleveland Foundation The Kresge Foundation
Develop an online guide to opening a business in Olmsted Falls, page 108	1-2 Yrs	★★		 	 		Low	—

Economic Development Actions

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Leverage Downtown Olmsted Falls as an entertainment destination, page 111				
Apply for entertainment district status to expand the availability of liquor licenses, page 111	2-3 Yrs ★★★	ED P CS DLC	Low	—
Partner with small business development organizations to attract unique, local retailers, page 111	Ongoing ★★★	ED CS	—	Grow Cuyahoga Fund Cuyahoga County Enterprise Zone Tax Incentives ECDI Cleveland's Microenterprise Loan Fund Program Cuyahoga County Storefront Renovation Program

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls

- General City
- Finance
- Building & Zoning
- Business & Community Services
- Economic Development
- Planning
- Service
- Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

- Baldwin Wallace University
- Bicycle Advocacy Groups
- First Energy

- Non-Profits
- Private Property Owners
- Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
- Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
- The Trust for Public Land
- Qualified Design Professionals































Other Governmental Agencies













- Cleveland Metroparks
- County Planning
- Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
- Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Ohio Division of Liquor Control
- Ohio Rail Development Commission
- Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
- Olmsted Falls City Schools
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
- Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities




- General Surrounding Communities
- Olmsted Township

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Leverage Downtown Olmsted Falls as a train enthusiast destination, page 112				
Build a connection between Columbia Road and the historic train depot, page 112	3-5 Yrs ★	     	Medium	ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund ODNR Recreational Trails Program Transportation Alternatives Program The People for Bikes Community Grant Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants Rockefeller Foundation Grants The George Gund Foundation
Using street furniture and plantings at safe distances, upgrade areas adjacent to Downtown rail tracks as train viewing areas, page 112	2-3 Yrs ★★★★	    	Medium	National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town" Grant The Cleveland Foundation The Kresge Foundation Downtown Special Improvement District
Conduct a design charrette for upgrading the green space around the train depot to a formal park, page 113	1-2 Yrs ★★★★	     	Low	—
Leverage nearby amenities to promote development, page 113				
Develop a bicycle rental shop in Downtown Olmsted Falls once a trail connection is established to Cleveland Metroparks, page 113	1-2 Yrs ★	     	Medium	—
Advertise Olmsted Falls as an entertainment destination for Baldwin Wallace visitors and hold University events in Downtown, page 114	1-2 Yrs ★★	   BW	Medium	Olmsted Chamber of Commerce Downtown Special Improvement District
Connect Olmsted Falls employers with Baldwin Wallace to promote internship programs, page 114	Ongoing	  BW	Low	Olmsted Chamber of Commerce
Investigate the feasibility of accepting Baldwin Wallace's Jacket Express card at Downtown merchants, page 114	1-2 Yrs ★★	  BW	Low	Olmsted Chamber of Commerce




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Showcase the City's nearby greenhouses with cooperative sales or festivals, page 114	Ongoing				Low	Olmsted Chamber of Commerce Downtown Special Improvement District
Leverage Downtown Olmsted Falls as a wedding destination, page 115						
Update the Zoning Code to allow a bed and breakfast or boutique hotel, page 115	1-2 Yrs	★★★			—	—
Consider parking for weddings as part of a broader Downtown parking analysis, page 115	1-2 Yrs	★★		   	Low	NOACA TLCI Program Downtown Special Improvement District
Develop a strategy to advertise Olmsted Falls to wedding visitors, page 115	1-2 Yrs	★			Low	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund Olmsted Chamber of Commerce Downtown Special Improvement District

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls

-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



Non-Profits



Private Property Owners



Proposed Community Improvement Corporation



Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)



The Trust for Public Land



Qualified Design Professionals

Other Governmental Agencies



Cleveland Metroparks



County Planning



Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works



Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District



Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)



Ohio Division of Liquor Control



Ohio Rail Development Commission



Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission



Olmsted Falls City Schools



Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)



Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

















Nearby Communities
















General Surrounding Communities



Olmsted Township


Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Develop an example Olmsted Falls wedding itinerary and contact sheet, page 116	1-2 Yrs	★	ED		Low	Olmsted Chamber of Commerce Downtown Special Improvement District
Assist the development process, page 116						
Establish a Community Improvement Corporation that strategically acquires parcels for future development, page 116	3-5 Yrs	★★	ED	  	Low	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program The Cleveland Foundation The Kresge Foundation
Develop a Tax Increment Financing district to fund infrastructure improvements in vacant and underutilized areas, page 117	2-3 Yrs	★★	ED	  	Low	—
Develop a competitive incentive program, page 117						
Hire an economic development director, retail recruiter, or Ohio Main Street director, page 117	1-2 Yrs	★★★★	ED		Low	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program Heritage Ohio Main Street Program
Develop a job creation tax incentive program, page 117	1-2 Yrs	★★	ED	 	Medium	—
Develop a retail recruitment incentive program and coordinate with small business incubators, page 118	1-2 Yrs	★	ED	  	Medium	ODSA Local Government Innovation Fund ODSA Local Government Efficiency Program
Work with Olmsted Township to promote job creation and the development of the JEDD, page 118	Ongoing ★★		ED	  	Low	—

Housing Actions




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Support a successful Downtown with walkable neighborhoods, page 121						
Develop a traditional neighborhood zoning district that encourages walkable neighborhoods and architectural variety, page 121	1-2 Yrs	★★★		  	Low	—
Encourage higher density residential near Downtown to boost retail success and walkability, page 121	Ongoing			  	—	—
Develop general design standards for new housing in Olmsted Falls, page 121	2-3 Yrs	★★		   	Low	—







Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls




-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals






Other Governmental Agencies

-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District



-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District












Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Develop tools to assist homeowners in improving their properties, page 122				
Remove regulatory administrative obstacles to improving and modernizing homes, page 122	1-2 Yrs ★★★	P B  	Low	—
Designate a Community Reinvestment Area for the neighborhoods around Downtown, including homes in the historic district, page 122	3-5 Yrs ★	ED P F   	—	Community Reinvestment Area Program
Review the building permit fee schedule for homes in the historic district and throughout the community, page 122	1-2 Yrs ★★	P B F	—	—
Develop regulations to allow live-work units, page 124	1-2 Yrs ★★	P B	—	—
Promote a policy of aging in place, page 124				
Encourage and incentivize universal design to allow aging in place, page 124	1-2 Yrs ★★	P F	Low	—




Community Actions

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Maintain the high-quality historic district, page 129				
Continue existing efforts to maintain the integrity of the Historic District, page 129	Ongoing ★★	B  	—	Ohio State Historic Preservation Fund Certified Local Government Grants Ohio State Historic Preservation History Fund Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program Heritage Home Program Heritage Ohio Main Street Program




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Invest in enhancements when new infrastructure is constructed, page 129	Ongoing ★★					Medium	—
Update the City's sign code to facilitate the construction of appropriate signage, page 129	1-2 Yrs	★★				—	—
Encourage a sense of place, page 130							
Design and install standardized wayfinding signage throughout Downtown and for public buildings and amenities, page 130	2-3 Yrs	★★★				Medium	National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town" Grant The Cleveland Foundation The Kresge Foundation Downtown Special Improvement District
Construct community gateways using the City's new logo, page 130	2-3 Yrs	★★★			 	Medium	National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town" Grant The Cleveland Foundation The Kresge Foundation Downtown Special Improvement District







Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls





-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals











Other Governmental Agencies

-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District















-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District











Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Use events to promote and advertise Downtown Olmsted Falls, page 130						
Continue hosting existing Downtown events, page 131	Ongoing ★★★				—	Cuyahoga Arts and Culture Various Grants
Consider walking tours of Downtown Olmsted Falls, page 131	1-2 Yrs	★			Low	Cuyahoga Arts and Culture Various Grants
Coordinate and market a regularly occurring late-night retail opening or event that occurs year-round, page 132	1-2 Yrs	★★		 	Low	Cuyahoga Arts and Culture Various Grants Downtown Special Improvement District
Hold additional, frequent community events that support target audiences and economic niches, page 133	Ongoing ★★			 	Low	Cuyahoga Arts and Culture Various Grants Downtown Special Improvement District



Land Use Actions

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Promote livable development in and around Downtown Olmsted Falls, page 137						
Update Downtown zoning requirements to ensure walkable development, page 137	1-2 Yrs	★★★		  	Low	—
Rezone the parcels at Bagley and Columbia to eliminate auto-oriented uses in the future, page 137	1-2 Yrs	★★★			—	—
Consult the Character Areas and Future Land Uses map when considering zoning decisions, page 137	Ongoing				—	—
Build a network of roads that form connections between the community, page 138						
Establish streetscape plans for Columbia and Bagley Roads, page 138	1-2 Yrs	★★★		    	Low	NOACA TLCI Program




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority	Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Enhance and expand the City's grid pattern, especially in the area around Downtown, page 138	Ongoing ★★			—	NOACA TLCI Program Tax Increment Financing
Prohibit private streets in future developments, page 140	Ongoing			—	—
Update subdivision regulations to require walkable, neighborhood-scale streets, page 140	1-2 Yrs ★★★		   	Low	—
Ensure that cul-de-sacs are only constructed when a logical grid pattern is not possible, page 140	Ongoing			—	—







Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls




-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire


Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals

Other Governmental Agencies




































-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township




Downtown Development Actions

Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners		Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Tactically invest in infrastructure improvements, page 147						
Consider improvements to the Downtown district, page 147	3-5 Yrs	★★★		         	Medium	NOACA TLCI Program Downtown Special Improvement District Private Property Owners
In partnership with businesses and land owners, consider a Special Improvement District to fund improvements and services, page 147	2-3 Yrs	★★		   	—	Downtown Special Improvement District Private Property Owners
Consider art installations Downtown, page 147	2-3 Yrs	★★			—	Downtown Special Improvement District Private Property Owners
Attract new development to underused sites, page 148						
Consider reuse scenarios for important sites in Downtown Olmsted Falls, page 148	1-2 Yrs	★★★		     	Low	—
Layer incentives to attract development to underused sites, page 149	1-2 Yrs	★★			—	Tax Increment Financing Community Reinvestment Area Program
Package City-owned land and proceed with a request for proposals for development, page 149	1-2 Yrs	★★			—	—
Market Downtown Olmsted Falls to the region, page 150						
Develop a modern Downtown Olmsted Falls website, page 150	1-2 Yrs	★★★		 	Low	Downtown Special Improvement District
Develop a social media presence for Downtown Olmsted Falls, page 150	1-2 Yrs	★★★			Low	Downtown Special Improvement District
Develop tourism itineraries for a day in Olmsted Falls, page 150	1-2 Yrs	★★★		 	Low	Downtown Special Improvement District




Goals and Actions	Projected Timeline and Priority		Responsible Parties & Partners			Est. Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Partner with NOACA, ODOT, and the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission to ensure Olmsted Falls' marketing is placed on future sound barriers and bridges, page 150	1-2 Yrs	★★★		 	 	—	—

Responsible Parties & Partners Legend

City of Olmsted Falls




-  General City
-  Finance
-  Building & Zoning
-  Business & Community Services
-  Economic Development
-  Planning
-  Service
-  Police and Fire

Private and Non-Profit Entities

-  Baldwin Wallace University
-  Bicycle Advocacy Groups
-  First Energy



-  Non-Profits
-  Private Property Owners
-  Proposed Community Improvement Corporation
-  Railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern)
-  The Trust for Public Land
-  Qualified Design Professionals

Other Governmental Agencies

-  Cleveland Metroparks
-  County Planning
-  Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works
-  Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

-  Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
-  Ohio Division of Liquor Control
-  Ohio Rail Development Commission
-  Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
-  Olmsted Falls City Schools
-  Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
-  Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

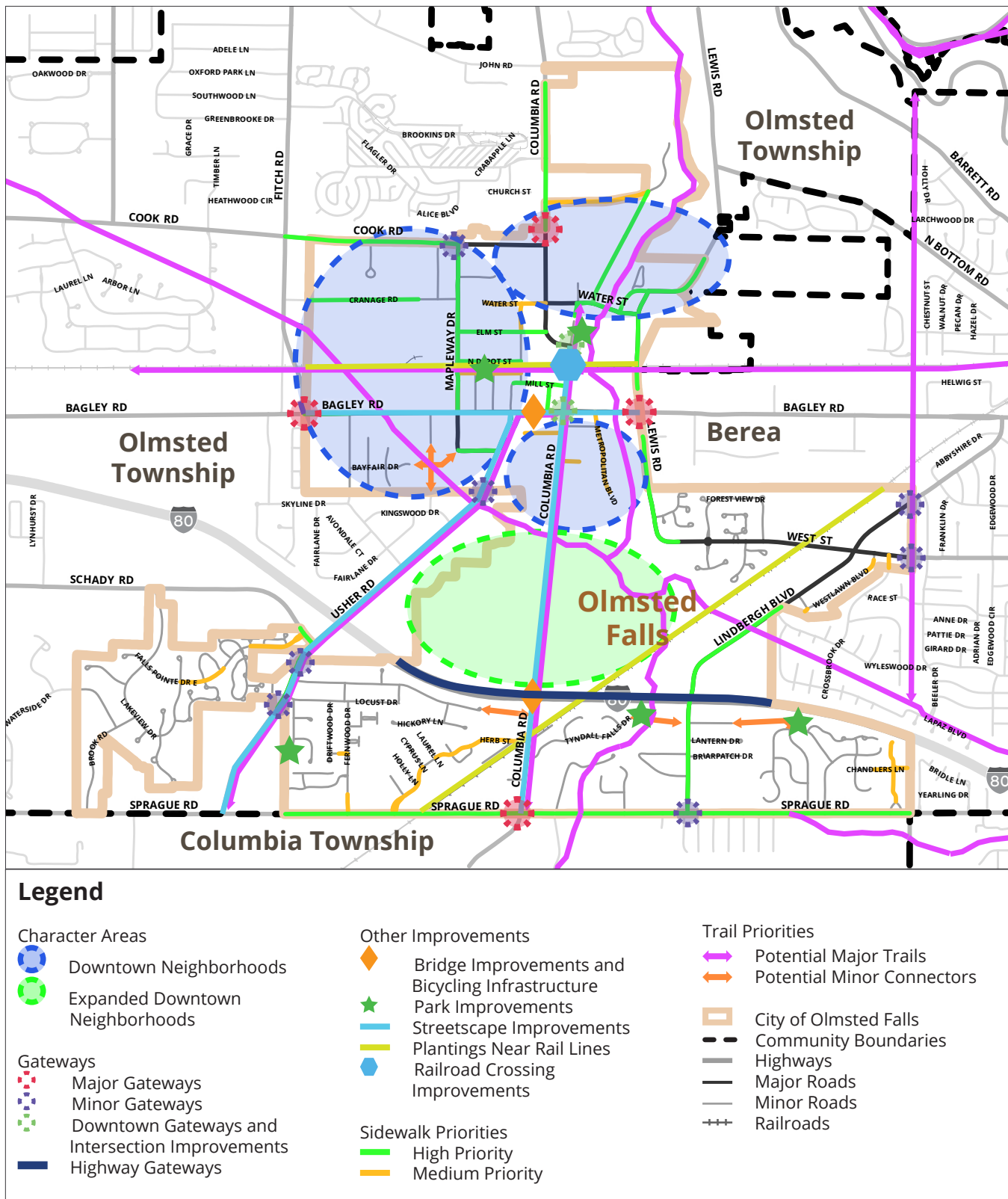
Nearby Communities

-  General Surrounding Communities
-  Olmsted Township

Acknowledgments

A special thank you to all the residents, groups, public officials, business owners, and community representatives that participated in the Master Plan process. Your input and assistance made it possible.

Map 23 Policy Overview





County Planning

FOR OUR COMMUNITY
FOR OUR REGION
FOR OUR FUTURE