



COMMUNITY VISION

MAPLE HEIGHTS MASTER PLAN

PREPARED BY THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS

STEERING COMMITTEE
DRAFT NOVEMBER 21, 2017

Acknowledgments



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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.

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01 Introduction

WELCOME TO THE MASTER PLAN — COMMUNITY VISION DOCUMENT

The Maple Heights Master Plan is a collection of community aspirations that aim to inspire and guide City officials and residents as they move the community into the future. By writing down these aspirations, we memorialize the hopes of the Maple Heights community and, importantly, we outline the steps necessary to achieve our goals.

The Maple Heights Master Plan examines the current conditions throughout the City, and develops this profile to determine the demographic trends that are shaping the City today. This helps to determine which trends should be fostered for the future and which need to change. These trends and the input of the public help determine the vision for the future that is outlined in the Master Plan. This vision is uniquely tailored to the community of Maple Heights and residents' goals for the future.

Based on the current conditions, input, and vision for the future, the Master Plan outlines specific steps that can be taken Citywide and in focus areas to deliver the changes residents wish to see. These ideas range from small changes that can improve daily life in Maple Heights, to large changes that will take time to implement.

With actions in hand, the Maple Heights Master Plan outlines specific steps that can be taken to move the City forward.

The Maple Heights Master Plan is the beginning of this process of transformation. It is intended to guide changes over many years. Only with the dedicated work of residents, business owners, and City staff can the Master Plan's goals be achieved. Together, we can work to create a greater Maple Heights.

CURRENT PROGRESS

The Maple Heights Master Plan is presently in the Community Vision phase. This is the second phase of the plan and entails articulating a vision for the future of the City. The Community Vision document outlines specific vision principles and focus areas that are considered important to residents, and these principles and areas will be updated with additional input.

NEXT STEPS

Following completion of the Community Vision phase, the Master Plan will begin the Goals & Actions phase. In this phase, we will showcase specific steps the City and its partners can take to translate vision statements into reality. These actions will be Citywide and in the focus areas to show how the City can grow and change.

1.1 WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN

A Master Plan is a policy guide created by the City of Maple Heights in collaboration with residents, business owners, stakeholders, and interested groups. It is a long-term plan for how the community wants to grow and develop in the future, and it is intended to look five to ten years out.

Generally, a Master Plan inventories what exists today, outlines a community's vision for the future, and describes concrete action steps to achieve that vision. Developing a plan provides the community an opportunity to provide input on the general direction of the City. It prepares residents and business owners for changes, shapes future development, and gives a competitive advantage when applying for grants and funding.

Residents are encouraged to use the Master Plan to see what changes may occur in their neighborhoods and assist implementation by developing community groups or volunteer organizations to support it. Business owners are encouraged to use the Master Plan to find where the City is focusing business expansion efforts, and to see what land may be available. The City is encouraged to use the Master Plan when deciding what infrastructure investments to make, or what grants to apply for. These are substantive ways that members of the community can use the Master Plan to guide their decisions.

MASTER PLAN AND ZONING

The Master Plan is particularly related to land development because it provides a guide for how the community would like to see new uses arranged and developed. While the Master Plan describes potential land use changes, it does not alter any zoning or regulations. Existing zoning remains the same until the City or a property owner seeks to change zoning through a rezoning or an update to existing City codes.

The graphic below showcases some of the key features that differentiate Master Plans from Zoning Ordinances.

MASTER PLAN

- A GENERAL POLICY FOR FUTURE GROWTH
- DESCRIBES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE
- INCLUDES BROAD RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAN BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE CITY, RESIDENTS, OR PARTNERS
- A FLEXIBLE DOCUMENT THAT IS INTENDED TO BE INTERPRETED AS CONDITIONS CHANGE

VS

ZONING ORDINANCE

- SPECIFIC RULES FOR DEVELOPMENT
- DESCRIBES WHAT IS AND WHAT IS NOT ALLOWED TODAY
- INCLUDES MANDATORY REGULATIONS ON DEVELOPMENT THAT ARE ENFORCED BY THE CITY UNLESS SPECIFICALLY WAIVED
- RELATIVELY RIGID SET OF REGULATIONS THAT CAN ONLY BE CHANGED BY A LEGAL PROCESS

PHASES OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan for Maple Heights is grouped into five phases, shown at right. These phases are described in more depth below:

- **Current Conditions:** In this phase, we develop a demographic, land use, and housing overview of Maple Heights
- **Community Vision:** In this phase, we outline a vision for how the community wants to grow and develop in the coming decade
- **Goals & Actions:** In this phase, we outline specific steps that can be taken to achieve the community's desired future
- **Implementation:** In this phase, priorities, timelines, and responsibilities are attached to each action to show how to accomplish them
- **Master Plan Document:** In this final phase, the previous components are combined and completed into a final Master Plan document

PUBLIC INPUT

The planning process involves the input of three groups: City staff, the Steering Committee, and the Public. These three groups are intended to review the Master Plan at various phases to ensure the goals and recommendations in the plan fit what the community would like to see.

City staff provide an in-depth look at the plan due to their knowledge of the day-to-day operations of the City. The Steering Committee is comprised of a small group of residents, business owners, and stakeholders that represent a cross-section of the City. Finally, the Public includes any interested residents or parties that would like to be involved in the process. Each group meets throughout the planning process, with three public meetings that cover the most important parts of the plan.

PROCESS



CURRENT CONDITIONS



COMMUNITY VISION (Current Phase)



GOALS & ACTIONS



IMPLEMENTATION



MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT

NEXT PHASES

DRAFT November 21, 2017

1.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

REGIONAL CONTEXT

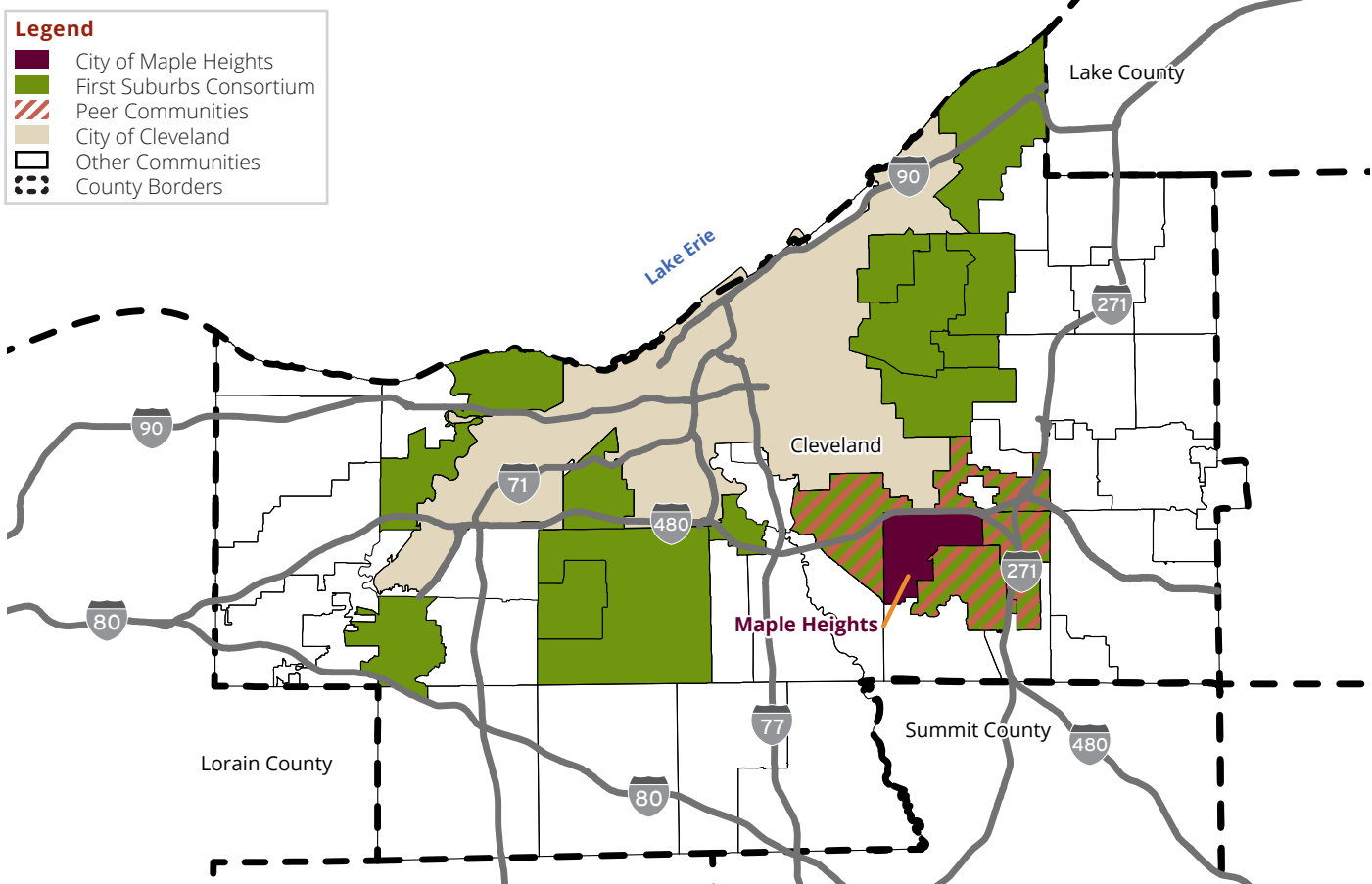
The City of Maple Heights is shown in purple on the map below. Maple Heights is located in the southeast corner of Cuyahoga County and borders Cleveland, Garfield Heights, Walton Hills, Bedford, Bedford Heights, and Warrensville Heights.

The map below shows in green the members of the First Suburbs Consortium, a group of communities that were mostly built out prior to 1960 and which are located in close proximity to Cleveland. These communities share common characteristics due to their development patterns. Maple Heights is included as a member of the First Suburbs Consortium.

The map also showcases four peer communities: Garfield Heights, Bedford, Bedford Heights, and Warrensville Heights. These peer communities border Maple Heights and are particularly good comparisons for the City as they are located in the same section of the County and share many of the same characteristics.

Throughout the Maple Heights Master Plan, comparisons are made between Maple Heights, the First Suburbs (inclusive of Maple Heights), peer communities, and the County as a whole.

Map 1 — Regional Context

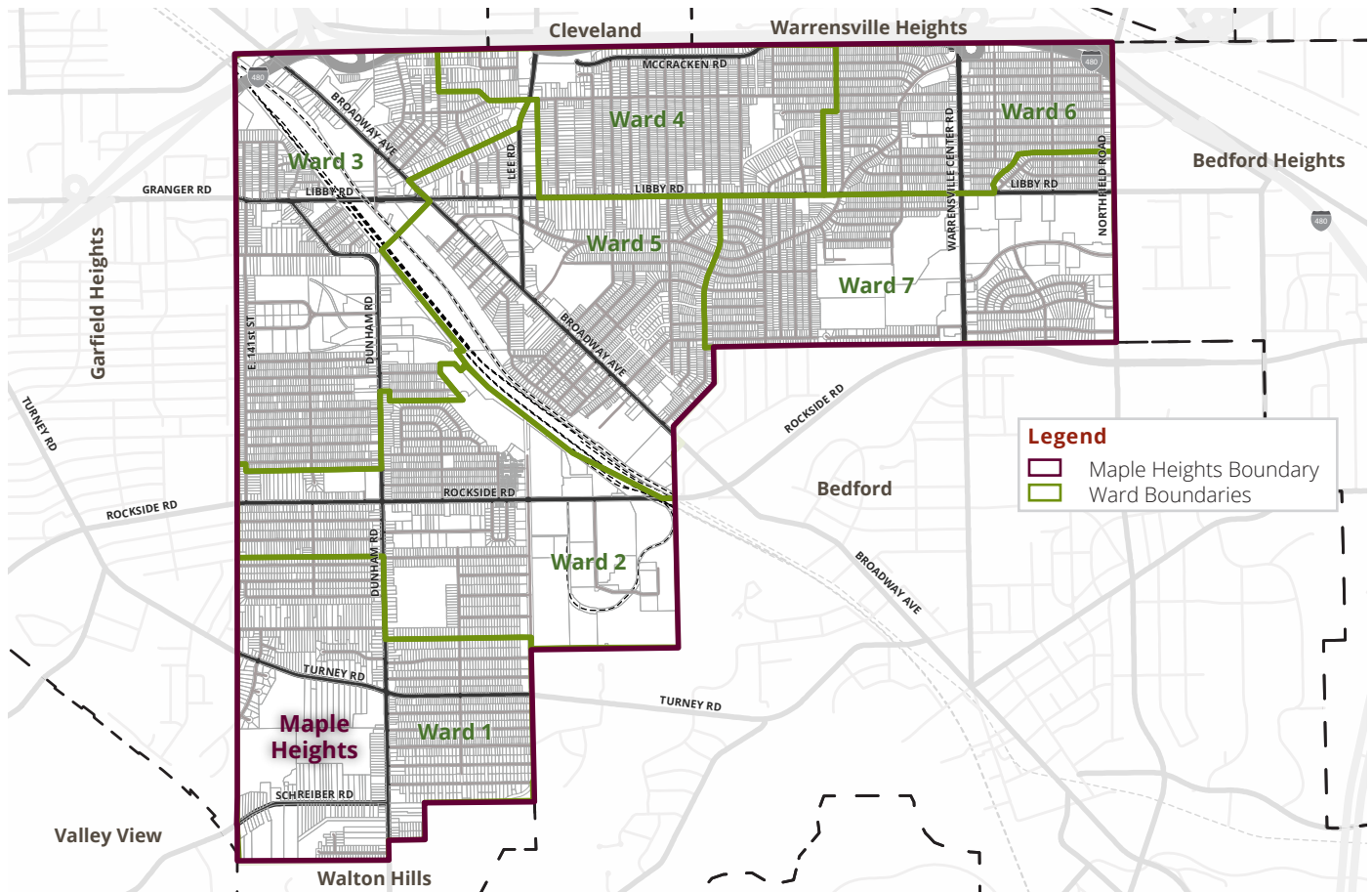


CITY CONTEXT

The City of Maple Heights is shown in the map below. Interstate 480 largely forms the City's northern border, Northfield Road forms the eastern border, and East 141st Street forms a majority of the western border. The City's southern border juts in and out along various roads and municipalities. The City is bisected by rail lines that run diagonally through the City center, parallel to Broadway Avenue.

The City of Maple Heights is grouped into seven wards for the purpose of City Council representation. Three of them are located largely south and west of the railroad tracks and the remaining four are located north and east of the tracks.

Map 2 — Planning Context





02 SWOT ANALYSIS

WHATS INSIDE

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, and is a type of exercise used to better understand a community's assets and issues. When undertaking a SWOT analysis, a community is analyzed for these four areas as a call to action.

To assist in the development of a future vision, the Steering Committee participated in a location-based SWOT activity. Using color-coded dots, they identified the places they felt were strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Maple Heights. The results of this exercise are included in this section.

HOW DO I USE IT?

The SWOT analysis is useful in determining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats a community faces. The identified issues should be used to determine potential visions, goals, and actions. For instance, a community's strength is its infrastructure, which can be marketed to potential businesses or improved to better meet a business' needs.

The SWOT analysis on the following pages should be compared with the Vision Principles and Focus Areas later in the Community Vision document to ensure SWOT issues are being addressed in the plan.

SWOT ANALYSIS

- Strengths & Opportunities, page 14
- Weaknesses & Threats, page 16

2.1 STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

The Steering Committee identified a series of locations throughout Maple Heights as strengths and opportunities for the City. In some cases, members identified the same places as both strengths and opportunities. Map 3 on the following page displays these locations while the paragraphs below describe common areas and themes.

IDENTIFIED STRENGTHS

Strengths are places that provide an advantage that should be protected and bolstered. The City has a variety of strengths in community services, retail, and the intermodal facility.

Schools: Maple Heights Schools' were recently completely rebuilt, providing a high-quality learning environment for students.

MapleParks: The City's Dunham, Stafford, DARE, and Benhoff Parks are community assets that provide green space and gathering areas.

Retail Areas: Southgate USA shopping center and Turney Dunham Plaza are sources of employment and an outside draw for City. These can be leveraged for economic growth.

Intermodal Facility: The Norfolk Southern rail line that runs through Maple Heights is one of the most frequently used routes in the country. The intermodal transfer facility is an asset to manufacturers that can bolster investment and grow employment in the City.

IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are underdeveloped places and assets that could give the City an advantage. These should be studied for improvement to turn the opportunity into a strength. Based on existing strengths and positive momentum, improvements in certain areas of the City could serve to positively impact residents, industries, and retail centers.

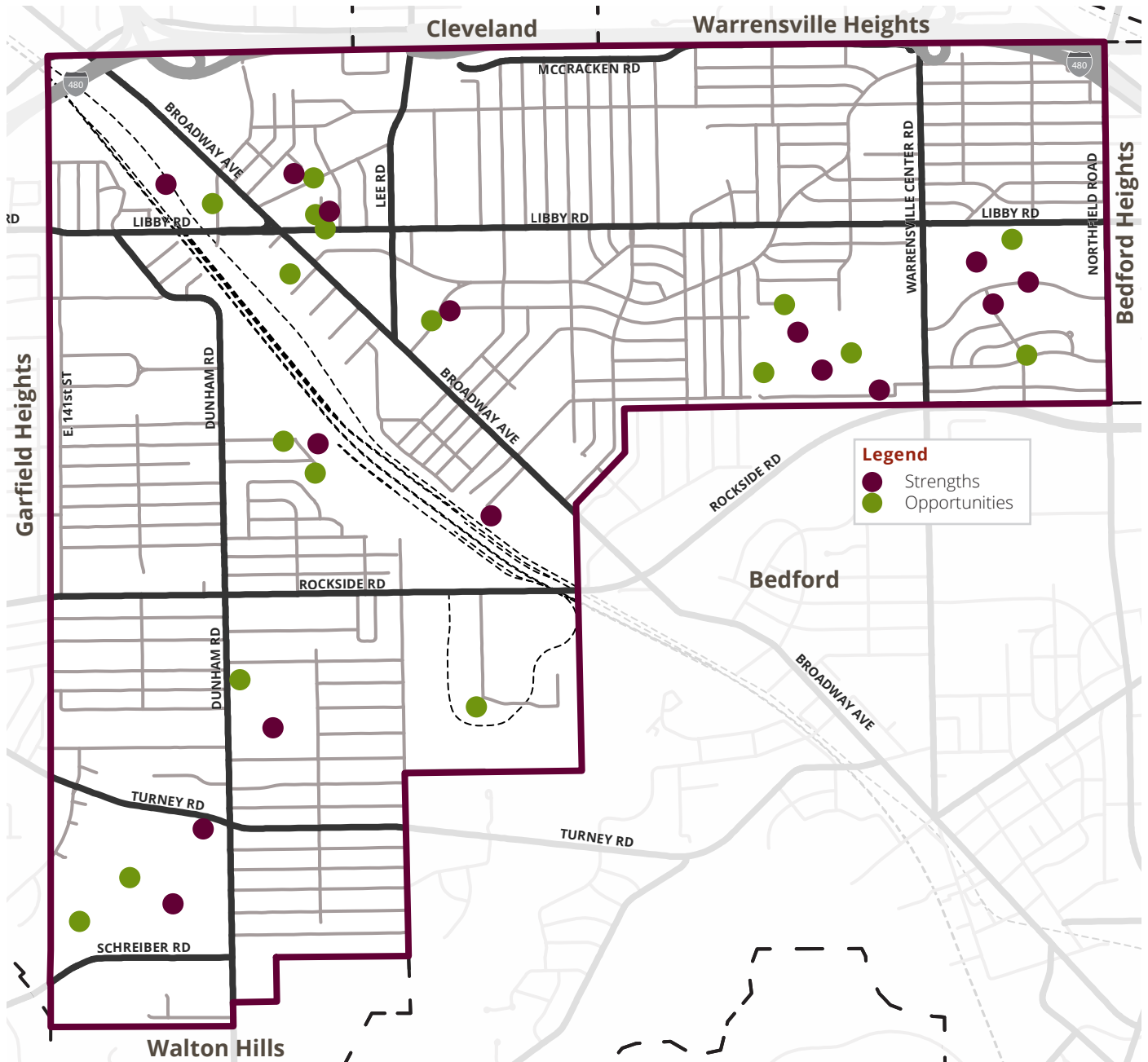
MapleParks: Many MapleParks are currently under-programmed, underutilized, or in need of physical improvements. The parks have potential to serve as neighborhood centers with improvements to facilities.

Community Services: The Senior Center and Library have programming and facilities which can be expanded upon to create a stronger node for the community.

Retail Areas: Maple Town and Southgate USA have the opportunity to grow. They both have some vacancies which could be filled to enhance the attraction of the areas.

Schools: The recently upgraded school facilities serve as an opportunity to attract families to the area.

Map 3 — Strengths & Opportunities Locations



2.2 WEAKNESSES & THREATS

The Steering Committee identified a series of locations throughout Maple Heights as weaknesses and threats for the City. In some cases, members identified the same places as both weaknesses and threats. Likewise, many locations that were considered strengths and opportunities by some Steering Committee members were considered weaknesses and threats by others. Map 4 on the following page displays the identified locations of weaknesses and threats, while the paragraphs below describe common areas and themes.

IDENTIFIED WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are places that are a disadvantage for Maple Heights. These should be defended against or limited. Steering Committee members identified few existing weaknesses, but some themes did emerge.

MapleParks: The larger parks of Dunham, Stafford, and Benhoff are currently lacking in physical upkeep and active recreation options. This is a deterrent to community use.

Home Upkeep: Some Steering Committee members identified specific homes or properties as weaknesses. This underscored a broader theme that home upkeep and maintenance should be a priority.

IDENTIFIED THREATS

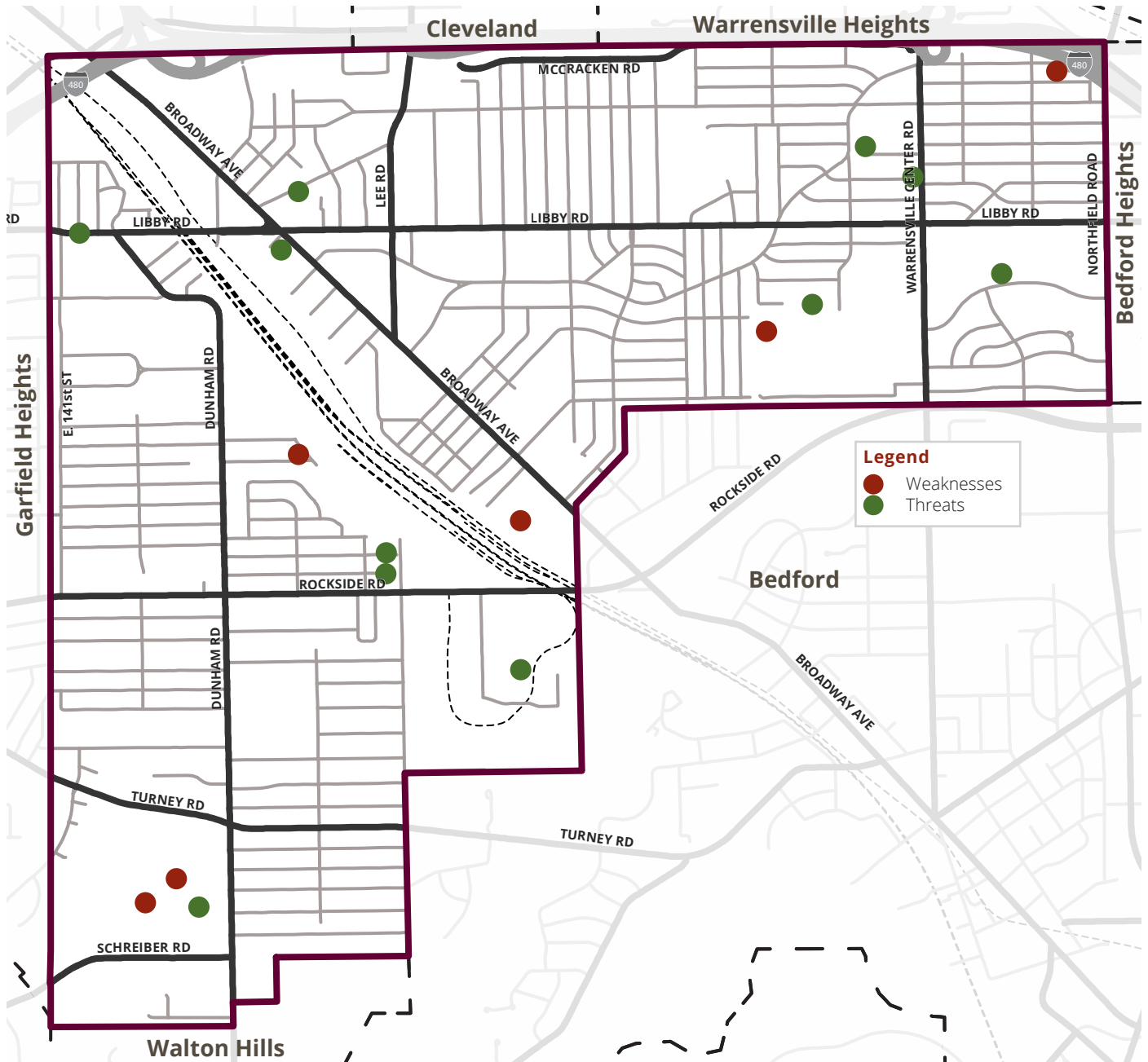
Threats are places that could pose an issue for the community if left unaddressed. These should be defended against or limited.

MapleParks: The underutilization of parks due to lack of upkeep and amenities leaves the space open for vandalism and other illicit activities. This can turn into a threat to community and neighborhood safety.

Industry: While industrial activity is an economic benefit, the environmental impacts of semi trucks and trains can negatively affect the health of homes and residents through air and noise pollution.

Retail Areas: Businesses that are not family-friendly can impact the image and safety of a commercial area when located adjacent to neighborhoods with families and children. Additionally, the national shift away from shopping centers towards online purchasing can be a threat to the stability of major retail areas.

Map 4 — Weaknesses & Threats Locations





03 COMMUNITY VISION



WHATS INSIDE

The Community Vision section covers Vision Principles and Focus Areas. Vision Principles 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 government, and what types of new investments they would like to see. These principles are described in broad descriptions of how the community would like to look and function in five to ten years.

Focus Areas are places in the City which have been identified as areas for more specific review, analysis, and action. These areas are based on the current conditions analysis and SWOT exercise.

HOW DO I USE IT?

The Community Vision section describes the desired future for Maple Heights. The Vision Principles should be reviewed to determine whether they match what residents, business leaders, and community members would like to see. Focus Areas should be reviewed to ensure they reflect the places within Maple Heights that merit additional review.

COMMUNITY VISION

- Vision Principles, page 20
- Focus Areas, page 22

3.1 VISION PRINCIPLES

The Current Conditions analysis and feedback from City staff, regional agencies, and Steering Committee members were combined to identify major issues and opportunities in Maple Heights. These were formulated into a series of Vision Principles, listed below, that describe a future Maple Heights.



1 HIGH-QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS — A COMMUNITY OF ATTRACTIVE HOMES

Maple Heights will be a community of stable, safe, and well-maintained neighborhoods consisting of quaint streets and attractive homes



2 DIVERSE HOUSING — A COMMUNITY WITH HOUSING OPTIONS

Maple Heights will be a community with a high level of homeownership in diverse housing types, with designs and amenities that allow families to live and grow in the City



3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT — A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Maple Heights will be one community with strong and inclusive networks of neighbors that provide open lines of communication, provides opportunities for the City's youth, and empower all residents to be involved



4 POSITIVE IDENTITY — A COMMUNITY WITH PRIDE

Maple Heights will be a community that believes in itself, values its diversity, and promotes its unique characteristics to residents and the region



5 COMPLETE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK — A COMMUNITY WITH TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Maple Heights will be a community with a complete and cohesive network of roads, sidewalks, trails, and transit routes that work together to provide safe and sustainable connections to parks, schools, business districts, and regional employment centers



6 GREAT PARKS — A COMMUNITY WITH A COHESIVE PARK SYSTEM

Maple Heights will be a community with an array of small and large parks that act as safe community destinations that include green features, promote healthy lifestyles, and have active programming



7 COMMERCIAL VIBRANCY — A COMMUNITY OF PROSPEROUS BUSINESSES

Maple Heights will be a community of successful businesses that meet local demand and contribute to welcoming, walkable, and attractive business districts



8 ECONOMIC GROWTH — A COMMUNITY WITH QUALITY JOBS

Maple Heights will be a business-friendly community that supports its industrial base and builds upon existing manufacturing and transportation assets to attract and grow employment opportunities

3.2 FOCUS AREAS

At the first Steering Committee meeting, members were asked to identify places of strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat in Maple Heights. Based on this input and information gathered by County Planning as part of the Current Conditions analysis, we identified areas that were of specific concern for the future. These were combined and named to identify seven areas of focus for the Master Plan, which are presented here.

WHAT IS A FOCUS AREA

The seven Focus Areas are places where additional analysis and review will take place as part of the Master Plan. They include such diverse areas as commercial corridors, parks, and industrial areas. Each Focus Area is a defined location within which specific strategies and policies will be outlined to guide development.

WHY THESE AREAS WERE CHOSEN

The Focus Areas were built from the input of City staff, the Steering Committee, and County Planning analysis. These are the initial areas that were selected; however, these areas are subject to change based on input from the public and Steering Committee.

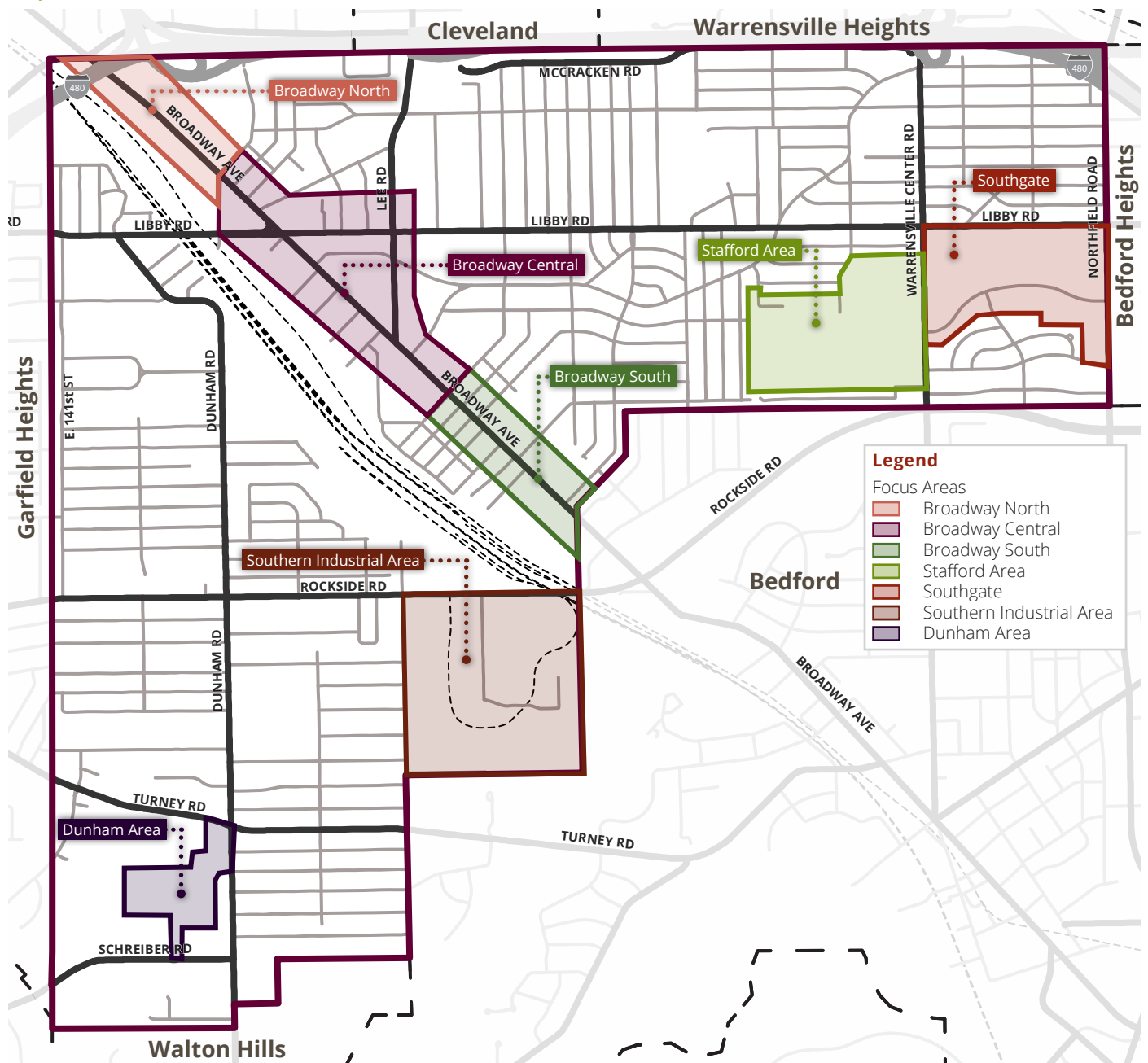
THE SEVEN FOCUS AREAS

The seven Focus Areas are shown on Map 5. They include a variety of types of areas, within which are assets and opportunities. The identified assets within each area are shown on the following pages.

The seven Focus Areas are listed below:

- Broadway North
- Broadway Central
- Broadway South
- Stafford Area
- Southgate
- Southern Industrial Area
- Dunham Area

Map 5 — Focus Areas



3.2



BROADWAY NORTH

Broadway North includes the areas along Broadway Avenue between I-480 and Greenhurst Drive. Assets in the area include highway access, Remington College, and access to the Cleveland Intermodal Facility.



BROADWAY CENTRAL

Broadway Central includes the areas along Broadway Avenue from Greenhurst Drive to Clement Avenue as well as the triangular area of Broadway Avenue, Libby Road, and Lee Road. Assets in this area include numerous civic structures such as the Library, Senior Center, City Hall, Police Station, and Maple Heights High School. The area also includes major retail strips such as Maple Town.



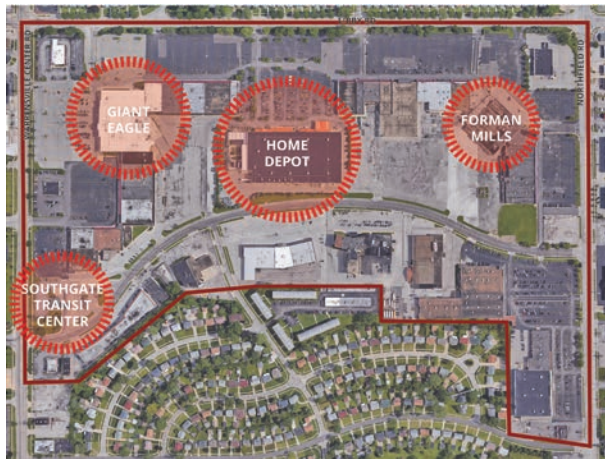
BROADWAY SOUTH

Broadway South includes the areas along Broadway Avenue from Clement Avenue to Flora Drive. Assets in this area include an existing farmers market, access to the Cleveland Intermodal Facility, and unfinished subdivisions and paper streets parallel to Broadway. Just beyond the border of Maple Heights is the Bedford Auto Mile.



STAFFORD AREA

The Stafford Area includes Stafford Park, Milkovich Middle School, and the retail areas along Warrensville Center Road. Assets in the area include the park and its ball fields, the school site, and the Liberty Ford Dealership.



SOUTHGATE

The Southgate Area includes the Southgate USA Shopping Center as well as out-parcels within the area bounded by Warrensville Center Road, Libby Road, and Northfield Road. Assets in this area include anchor stores like Giant Eagle, Home Depot, and Forman Mills as well as the Southgate Transit Center.



SOUTHERN INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Southern Industrial Area includes the industries bounded by Lee Road and Rockside Road. Assets in this area include major employers, rail access to the Intermodal Facility, and undeveloped areas that could contain new development.



DUNHAM AREA

The Dunham Area includes Dunham Park and the retail areas along Dunham Road. Assets in this area include the existing park facilities and the large retail area at Turney Dunham Plaza.



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FOR OUR REGION
FOR OUR FUTURE