

BEDFORD MASTER PLAN

CURRENT CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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OUR VISION

Inspiring all of our communities to thrive

OUR MISSION

To advance Cuyahoga County's social, economic, and environmental health through equitable community planning



City of Bedford, OH

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INTRODUCTION

MASTER PLANNING

A Master Plan is a policy guide created by and for a specific community. It is a long-term plan that explains how land should be used five to ten years into the future to meet the community's vision, needs, and goals.

Both Master Plans and Zoning Codes address land use and development but serve different purposes. The graphic to the right describes key differences between the two.

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC), which outlines the responsibilities and purview of local governments, does not define or require formal adoption of Master Plans. Instead, it considers a local zoning map as equivalent to a plan.

However, Bedford has adopted a Planning and Zoning Code within their Codified Ordinances that defines what a Master Plan is and how it is to be used in the City (see text to right). Including such language strengthens a Master Plan's influence and power.

THIS REPORT

The Current Conditions Assessment is a summary of key community findings collected over the course of five months (August - December 2025). Data analysis, observation, stakeholder interviews, and public engagement form its basis.

The information in this assessment will be used in the upcoming phases of the Master Plan process, described on the following page.

MASTER PLAN (THE VISION)

- Outlines general policies for future development
- Describes what should happen in the future
- Includes recommended actions for the community to undertake
- A flexible strategy that is intended to be adjusted as conditions change

ZONING CODE (THE LAW)

- Outlines specific rules for new development
- Describes what is or isn't allowed today
- Includes mandatory requirements enforced by the City unless specifically waived
- Relatively rigid set of regulations that can only be changed by a legal process

BEDFORD CODIFIED ORDINANCES PART 19, TITLE 5, CHAPTER 1915 SECTION 1915.36

"Master Plan" means the comprehensive long-range plan for the desirable use of land in the community, as officially adopted and as amended by Council on recommendation of the Planning Commission. The purpose of such plan, among other things, is to serve as a guide to the zoning and progressive changes in the zoning of land to meet changing community needs, in the subdividing and use of undeveloped land, and in the acquisition of land for such public purposes as streets, parks, schools and other public buildings or public uses.

(Ord. 7139-99. Passed 7-6-99.)

FIGURE 1 PLANNING PROCESS



PHASES

The Bedford Master Plan project is organized into five distinct phases, shown above and described below.

Project Initiation: Accounts for project preparation such as finalizing a scope, timeline, and kickoff meeting.

Current Conditions: Collects information through interviews and data analysis to better understand the community.

Community Vision: Uses input from community members and stakeholders to develop future goals.

Recommendations: Outlines specific actions to achieve the community’s desired future.

Implementation: Attaches priorities, timelines, and responsibilities to each recommended action item.

Final Tasks: Combines all previous components into a complete, final Master Plan document for review and adoption.

ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a critical aspect of any planning project. It occurs throughout the full process, in every phase, to gather information and feedback. In the Current Conditions phase, the following engagement efforts were undertaken:

August 19, 2025

Project Kickoff Meeting
Community Tour

September 2025 - January 2026

Regional Partner Interviews

September 16, 2025

State of the City Address
Introductory Survey Launch

October 4, 2025

Children’s Fall Fest Pop-Up

October 6, 2025

City Council Presentation

October 7, 2025

Introductory Survey Closes

December 2025 - March 2026

Business Community Interviews

INTRODUCTION

PAST MASTER PLANS

1999 Master Plan

The 1999 Bedford Master Plan had three areas of focus: Downtown, Northfield Road, and the Wellmon Property. The plan outlined the desire to create a vibrant downtown with local retail businesses and restored historic buildings, a well-maintained and code compliant retail/commercial corridor along Northfield Road, and an active partnership with the City to develop the Wellman Property.

OTHER RECENT PLANS

Bedford Reservation Park Plan (2024)

Conducted by the Cleveland Metroparks, this plan proposes updates to Viaduct Park, such as a new nature play space, 4-season shelter, and public restrooms. It also includes improvements to other areas of Bedford Reservation within the City.

Downtown Connectivity Plan (2025)

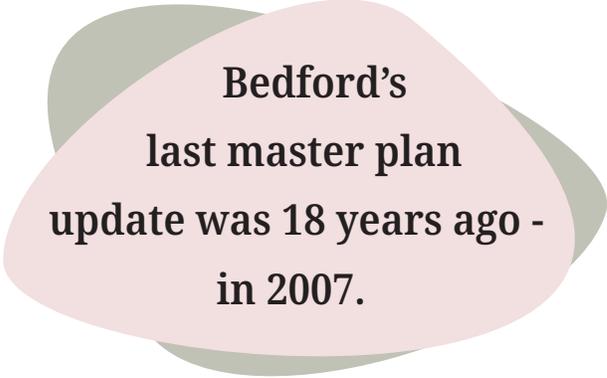
Awarded through NOACA's TLCI program, this multi-modal plan proposes trail connections through Downtown Bedford to Viaduct Park, traffic calming strategies, sidewalk additions, and new signage and bicycle racks to complement infrastructure and better support users.

Bedford Commons Expansion (2025)

Due to complete construction in spring 2026, this project redevelops the Bedford Train Depot parking lot into an expanded public square. It includes a splash pad, street trees, pavilion, landscape plantings, trellises with seating, and a 10-foot multi-purpose path along Willis Street for connecting into Viaduct Park.

2007 Master Plan Update

Recommendations in the 2007 Master Plan Update prioritized bringing more housing to Bedford, enhancing indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, improving stormwater infrastructure, and advancing economic development.



**Bedford's
last master plan
update was 18 years ago -
in 2007.**

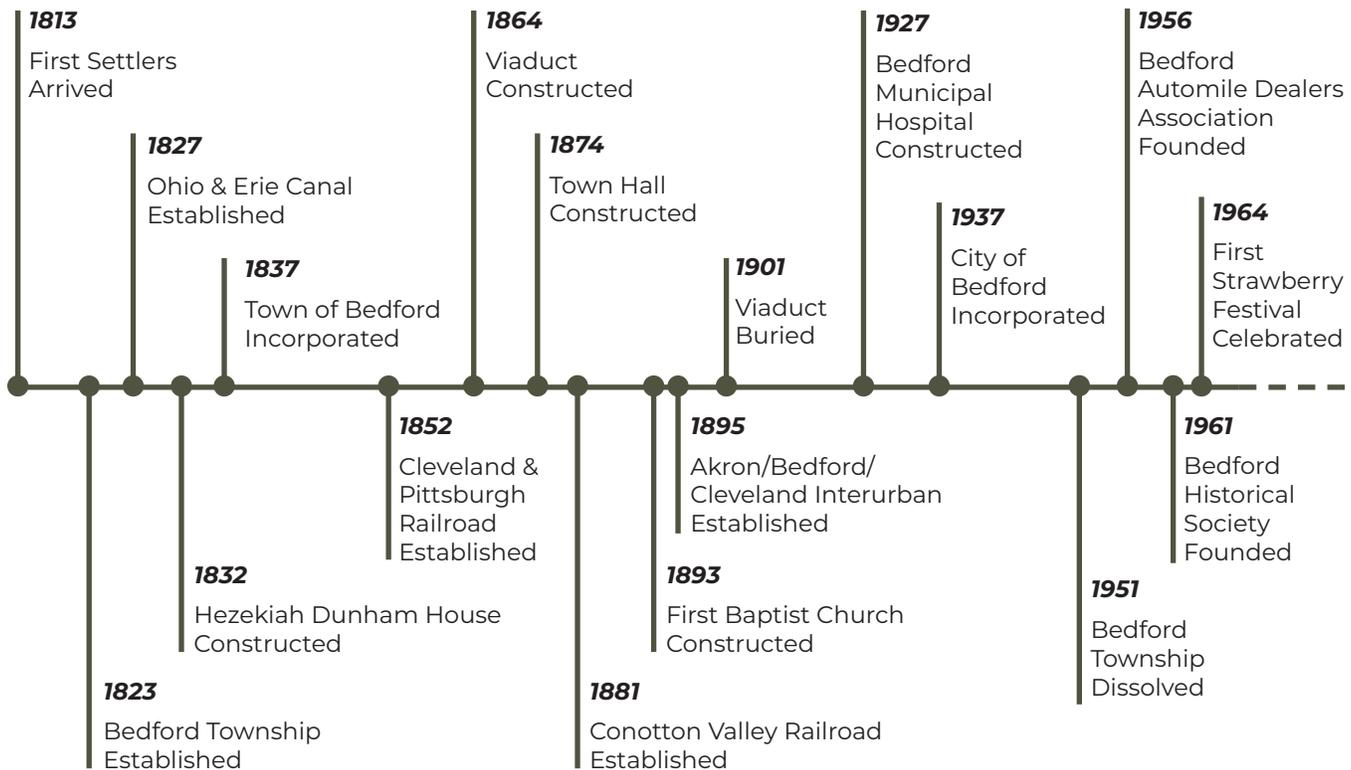
Bridging Bedford (2025)

Led by Cleveland State graduate students, this plan focuses on making Downtown Bedford a more vibrant and accessible destination. It includes downtown design guidelines for historic structures, recommendations for improved pedestrian mobility, and ideas for repurposing the former University Hospital site.

Building a Brighter Future Plan

The Bedford City School District (BCSD) conducted facility assessments to determine the cost of needed maintenance, repairs, and upgrades in their existing buildings. Ultimately, this plan recommended decommissioning three existing schools and consolidating operations in fewer, newer facilities. Construction on the first new school began in 2024.

FIGURE 2 HISTORIC CITY EVENTS



CITY HISTORY

Originally part of the Connecticut Land Company, Bedford Township was surveyed by Moses Cleaveland on his second trip to the region in 1797.

By 1813, settlers arrived to take advantage of nearby natural resources, including large swaths of forested land and access to Tinkers Creek. Sawmill operator Daniel Benedict spearheaded naming the area after his hometown of Bedford, New York in 1823. The Township originally included Bedford, Bedford Heights, Maple Heights, Walton Hills, and Oakwood Village.

The Ohio and Erie Canal, and Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad both began operations in the early-to-mid 1800s, allowing

expansion of industrial development. Other modes of transportation, such as trolleys and light rail, made Bedford Township easily accessible from Akron and Cleveland.

The City of Bedford was incorporated in 1937 and Bedford Township dissolved in 1951. Shortly after, the Bedford Automile Dealers Association and Bedford Historical Society were formed, organizations that have had a major impact on the City through philanthropy and preservation.

The City has since evolved into a residential working-class community with an historic downtown, attainable housing, abundant natural amenities, and convenient access to two major metropolitan areas.

COMMUNITY

The map below illustrates Bedford's place within Cuyahoga County and among 59 other municipalities. The City of Bedford is considered an Inner-Ring Suburb along with 26 other villages and cities that border Cleveland and were generally built prior to 1960.

Brooklyn, Bedford Heights, and Richmond Heights share similar demographic and economic characteristics with the City of Bedford and were therefore chosen as peer communities for the purpose of this assessment.

The table on the following page compares key data points between the City and several relevant geographies, including those explained above and shown below. All data is from the U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2019-2023 5-year estimates unless otherwise noted.

FIGURE 3 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

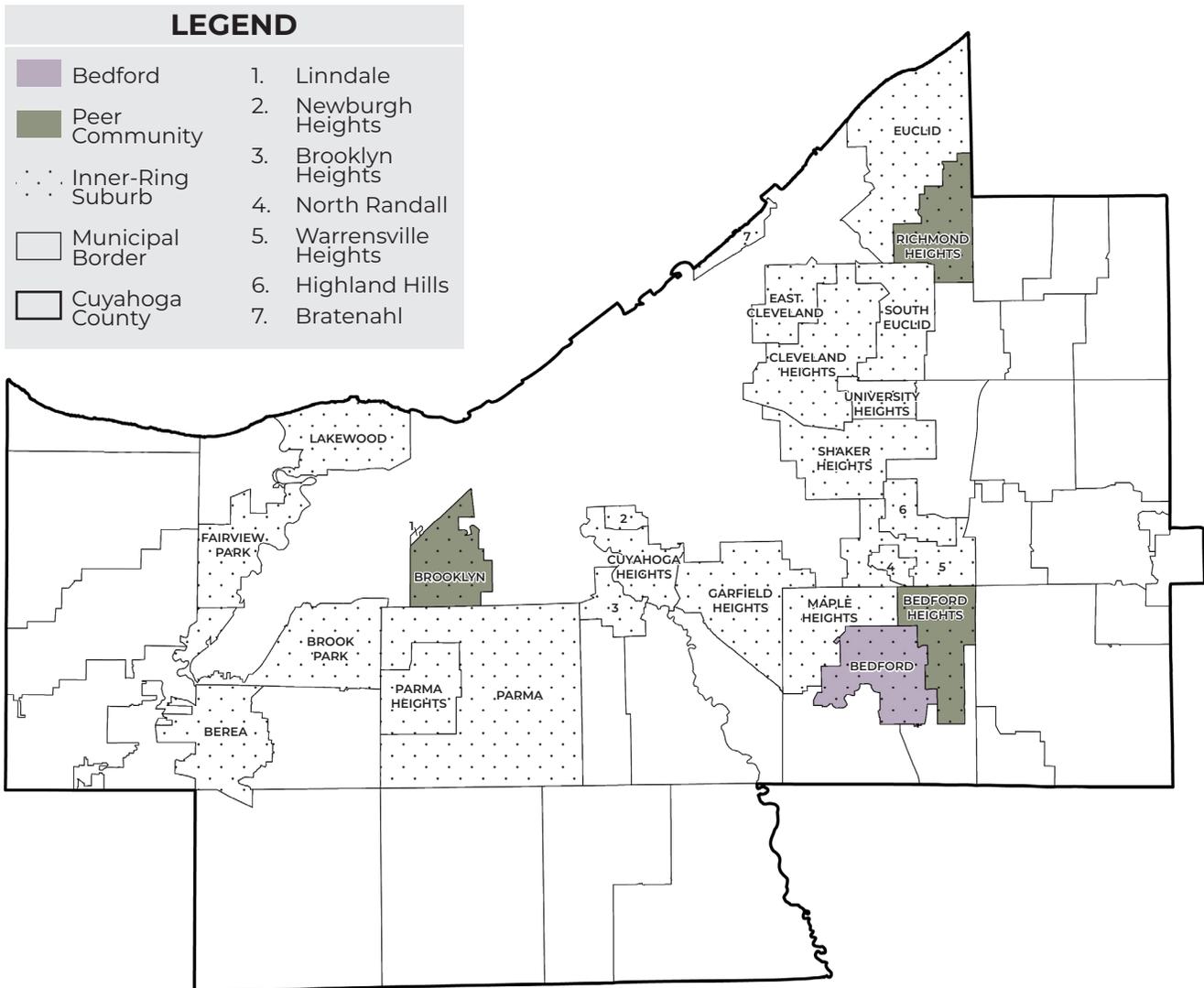


TABLE 1: COMMUNITY BENCHMARKING

POPULATION								
	Ohio	Cleveland Metro	Cuyahoga County	Inner-Ring	Bedford	Bedford Heights	Richmond Heights	Brooklyn
Total Population	11,785,935	2,158,932	1,233,088	487,230	12,960	10,721	10,509	11,022
Population Change ¹	173,854 (+1.5%)	-----	-43,733 (-3.4%)	-18,327 (-3.6%)	-364 (-2.8%)	-204 (-1.9%)	-152 (-1.4%)	-286 (-2.5%)
Population Density ²	288	1,080	2,697	3,849	2,390	2,358	2,371	2,593
Racial/Ethnic Diversity ³	39.6	48.9	58.6	57.8	55.5	38.3	51.5	60.1
Median Age	39.6	41.6	40.5	-----	42.6	43.4	50.9	46.1
Average Household Size	2.38	2.29	2.21	-----	2.15	1.89	2.05	2.15
ECONOMY								
Median Household Income	\$69,680	\$68,507	\$62,823	\$-----	\$56,563	\$47,066	\$56,734	\$69,535
Adults with Bachelor's Degree+	30.9%	33.5%	35.9%	34.5%	23.9%	21.0%	31.2%	22.1%
Labor Force Participation	63.3%	63.5%	63.8%	66.0%	65.7%	64.7%	63.3%	65.9%
HOUSING								
Total Housing Units	5,271,573	1,016,658	615,513	241,814	6,941	5,993	5,526	5,253
Vacant	8.4%	8.8%	10.0%	8.6%	13.3%	4.8%	8.8%	4.7%
Owner-Occupied	67.0%	66.1%	59.1%	59.2%	56.4%	44.2%	64.1%	56.4%
Median Sale Price ⁴	\$-----	\$-----	\$190,000	\$-----	\$136,000	\$190,000	\$226,950	\$192,000
Median Rent	\$988	\$996	\$1,005	\$-----	\$1,061	\$977	\$933	\$944
Cost Burdened ⁵	24.0%	26.0%	28.5%	28.5%	27.6%	38.6%	32.6%	19.4%

1 Calculated by comparing US Census Bureau Intercensal Estimates in 2013 and Population Estimates in 2023.

2 Represents population per square mile; calculated using US Census Bureau 2023 Population Estimates.

3 The Diversity Index is a Census Bureau calculation that illustrates an area's racial mix. A higher number indicates a greater likelihood of two people chosen at random being from different racial or ethnic groups

4 This data comes from the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office and includes single-family homes that are newly built or renovated.

5 As defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, households are considered burdened if they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

COMMUNITY

DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2023, the City of Bedford was home to approximately 12,960 total residents. From 2013 to 2023, the City experienced a modest population decline of -2.8%, which is a slightly better rate than Cuyahoga County and the Inner-Ring Suburbs' averages.

There are approximately 6,015 households within the City, a total that has remained stable for at least a decade. With an average size of 2.15, Bedford's households reflect a national trend of fewer people per home.

Approximately 45.4% of all households in the City consist of individuals living alone, which is the ninth-highest rate in the County. Many of those single-person households are adults age 65 and older, nearly half of which live alone in the City.

Single-parent families account for 11.4% of all households, which matches the County average but is considered high when compared to all other communities individually.

Bedford's median age of 42.6 is slightly older than the State, County, and Cleveland Metro but younger than its peer communities. Young adults aged 18-34 make up 23% of the total population, which is more than all but nine other Cuyahoga County communities.

The median household income of \$56,563 ranks as the eleventh lowest among all municipalities in the County; roughly 5.3% of residents live below the poverty line.

Racially, Bedford is one of the more diverse communities in Cuyahoga County. The City's population is 54.1% Black, 38.8% White, 4.5% Multiracial, 2.3% Hispanic, and 0.2% Asian or other races.

FIGURE 4 POPULATION STATISTICS



FIGURE 5 HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS

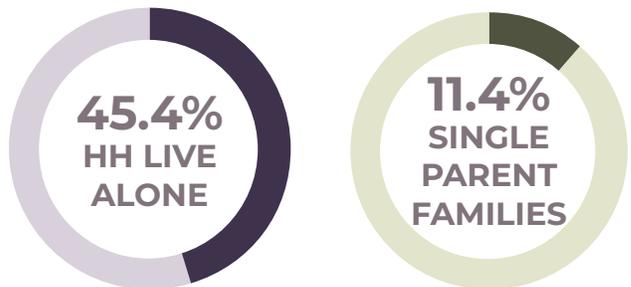


FIGURE 6 AGE STATISTICS



FIGURE 7 DIVERSITY STATISTICS



INTRODUCTORY SURVEY

Starting September 16, 2025, a brief introductory survey was available and promoted for three weeks through social media and flyers. The purpose of this survey was to gain insight into potential focus areas, topics of interest, and priorities for the Current Conditions Assessment and Master Plan. It received approximately 159 total responses.

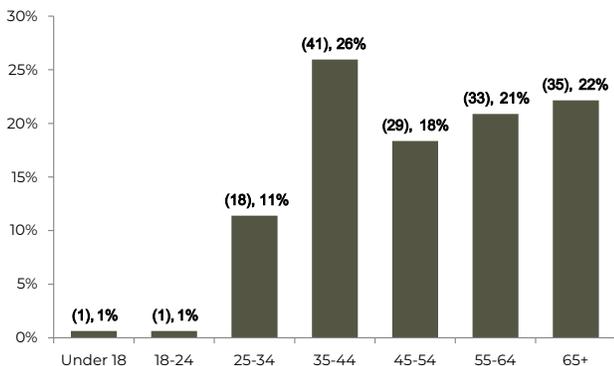
KEY FINDINGS

The first question asked respondents **what they like about Bedford** in an open-ended answer format. The most common responses were:

- 1) **SMALL TOWN CHARACTER**
- 2) **DOWNTOWN BEDFORD**
- 3) **COMMUNITY EVENTS**
- 4) **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**
- 5) **QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS**

Respondents expressed that Bedford’s small town character, particularly the Historic Downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods, make it a desirable place to live. Access to ample greenspace at Bedford Reservation, City parks, and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park was also noted as a positive.

FIGURE 8 AGE OF RESPONDENTS

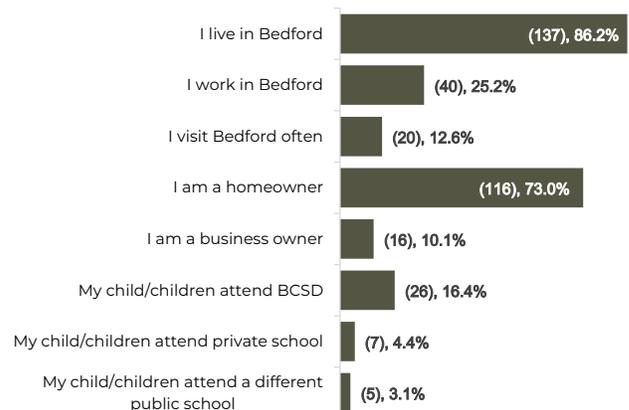


Respondents were then asked **what they would like to see changed or improved**, again as an open-ended question. The most common responses were:

- 1) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- 2) **MORE RETAIL AND DINING**
- 3) **DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**
- 4) **IMPROVED SCHOOLS**
- 5) **IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE**

At the same time, respondents emphasized their desire for new, unique businesses in Bedford, specifically in the Historic Downtown. Residents noted that currently, they must leave Bedford to shop and dine but would prefer to do these activities within their own community.

FIGURE 9 SELECT CHARACTERISTICS



ECONOMY

DATA

Economic data in this section was pulled from the following sources, unless noted otherwise:

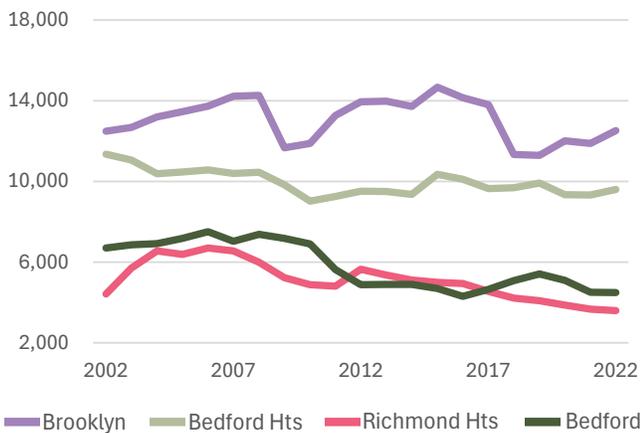
- U.S. Census Bureau “OnTheMap” Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) 2002-2022
- Data Axle
- Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

In 2022, there were approximately 4,486 people employed within the City of Bedford, a number that has remained steady since 2012. From 2002-2022, however, the total number of employees has generally been on the decline, with an average loss of approximately 1.71% annually.

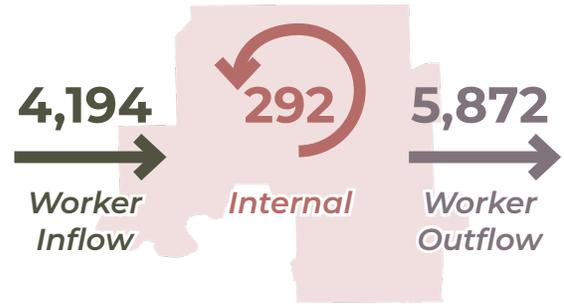
Compared to its peer communities of Brooklyn and Bedford Heights, the City’s number of total employees and employees per capita are lower.

FIGURE 10 EMPLOYMENT OVER TIME



WORKER INFLOW/OUTFLOW

About 93.5% of people employed within the City of Bedford are residents of other communities. There are 6,164 people who live inside the City of Bedford and are employed. Of those residents, 95.3% of them commute to jobs outside the City. Only 292 people both work and live within the City. Bedford experienced net-positive worker inflow until 2010, when the trend reversed.



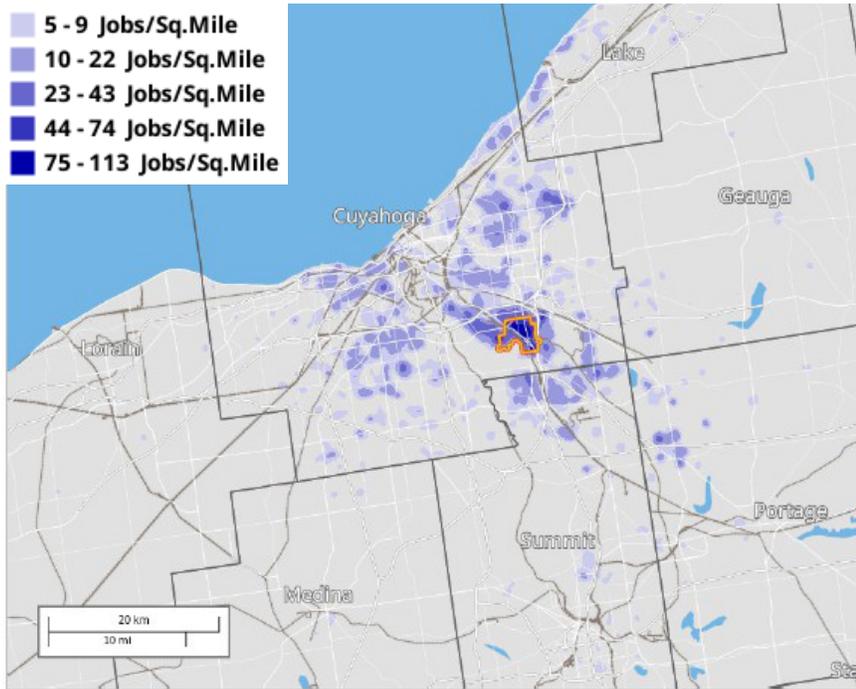
COMMUTE PATTERNS

The maps on the next page indicate the distance, direction, and concentration of where those who work in Bedford live and where Bedford residents travel to work.

People commuting into Bedford (inflow workers) primarily live west, north, and southeast of the City; 44% travel less than ten miles to work. Bedford residents working elsewhere (outflow workers) primarily travel to work northwest of the City in Downtown Cleveland and University Circle.

Most resident workers age 16 and over in Bedford commute approximately 22 minutes to work, according to ACS 2019-2023 5-year estimates.

FIGURE 11 INFLOW WORKERS



**Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2022
All Workers**

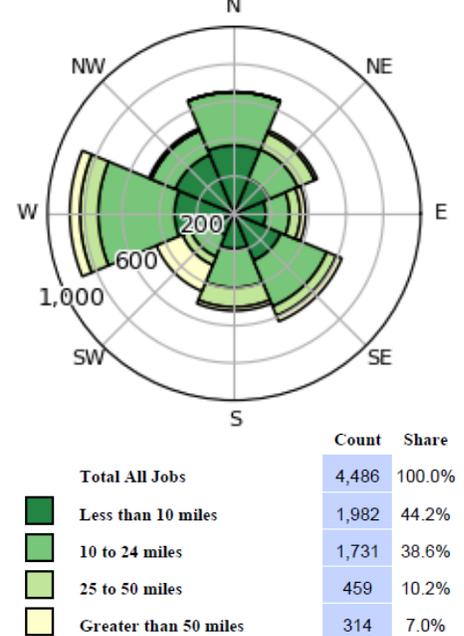
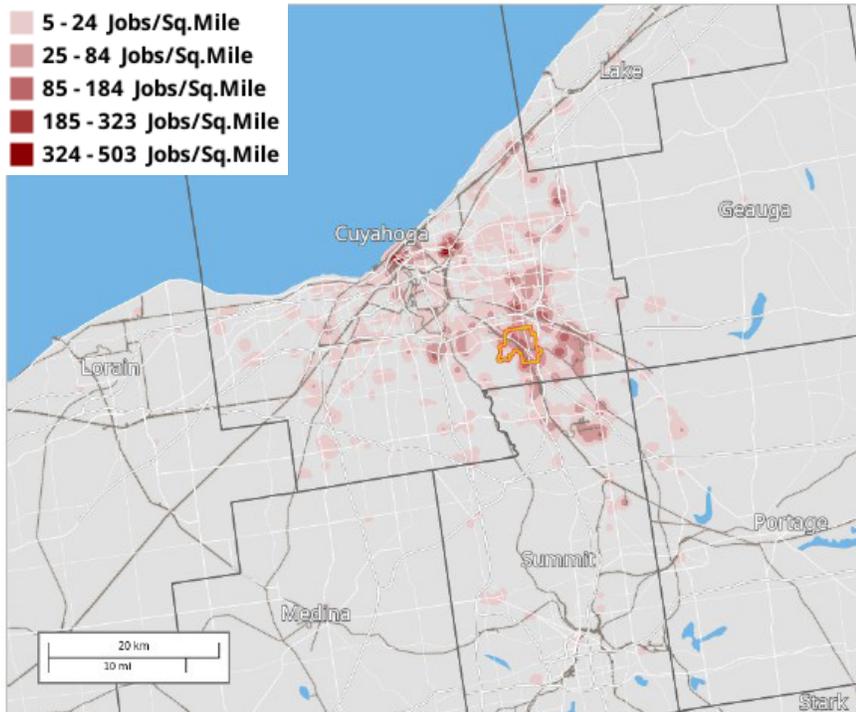
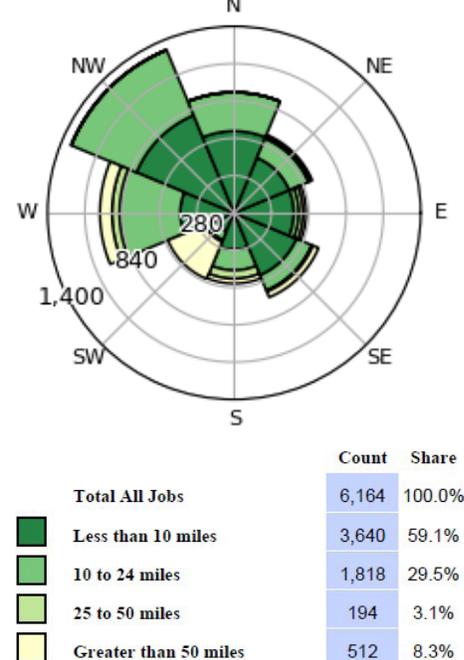


FIGURE 12 OUTFLOW WORKERS



**Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2022
All Workers**



ECONOMY

INDUSTRY

Bedford's largest employment sector by number of employees is retail trade (green highlight in table below) This can likely be attributed to the Bedford Automile and amount of car sales.

The City experienced its most substantial employment loss between 2010 and 2011 (see Figure 10), when it shed nearly 1,500 employees in the manufacturing sector, its strongest industry up to that point. Since 2012, however, manufacturing employment has been on a slow, but steady, recovery trajectory, increasing by 86% in the next decade.

Other sectors experiencing growth in Bedford since 2012 are highlighted in red in the table below. Manufacturing remains high, but health care and social assistance may contract as a result of the recent hospital closing.

The Economic Base Assessment on the next page shows which industries are not just strong in Bedford, but also growing sectors in the County as a whole. These include manufacturing, health care and social assistance, educational services, and public administration.

TABLE 2: PERCENT CHANGE IN JOBS BY INDUSTRY 2012-2022

NAICS INDUSTRY SECTOR	2012 COUNT	2022 COUNT	% CHANGE
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0	0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0%
Utilities	11	22	+100%
Construction	204	224	+10%
Manufacturing	243	452	+86%
Wholesale Trade	171	65	-62%
Retail Trade	1,735	1,363	-21%
Transportation and Warehousing	119	30	-75%
Information	17	4	-76%
Finance and Insurance	67	31	-54%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	82	59	-28%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	118	155	+31%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1	0	0%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	173	117	-32%
Educational Services	392	392	0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	733	920	+26%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	42	45	+7%
Accommodation and Food Services	332	135	-59%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	285	206	-28%
Public Administration	154	266	+73%

ECONOMIC BASE ASSESSMENT

The chart below summarizes results of an economic base assessment for Bedford from 2012 to 2022. This type of assessment uses two separate analyses — Location Quotient and Shift-Share — to indicate which industries are prominent in an area and their relative market strength.

The **Location Quotient (LQ)** analysis measures concentration of industry sectors in the City compared to Cuyahoga County. It is represented by the chart's X-axis. An LQ over 1.00 indicates that Bedford is specialized in the sector.

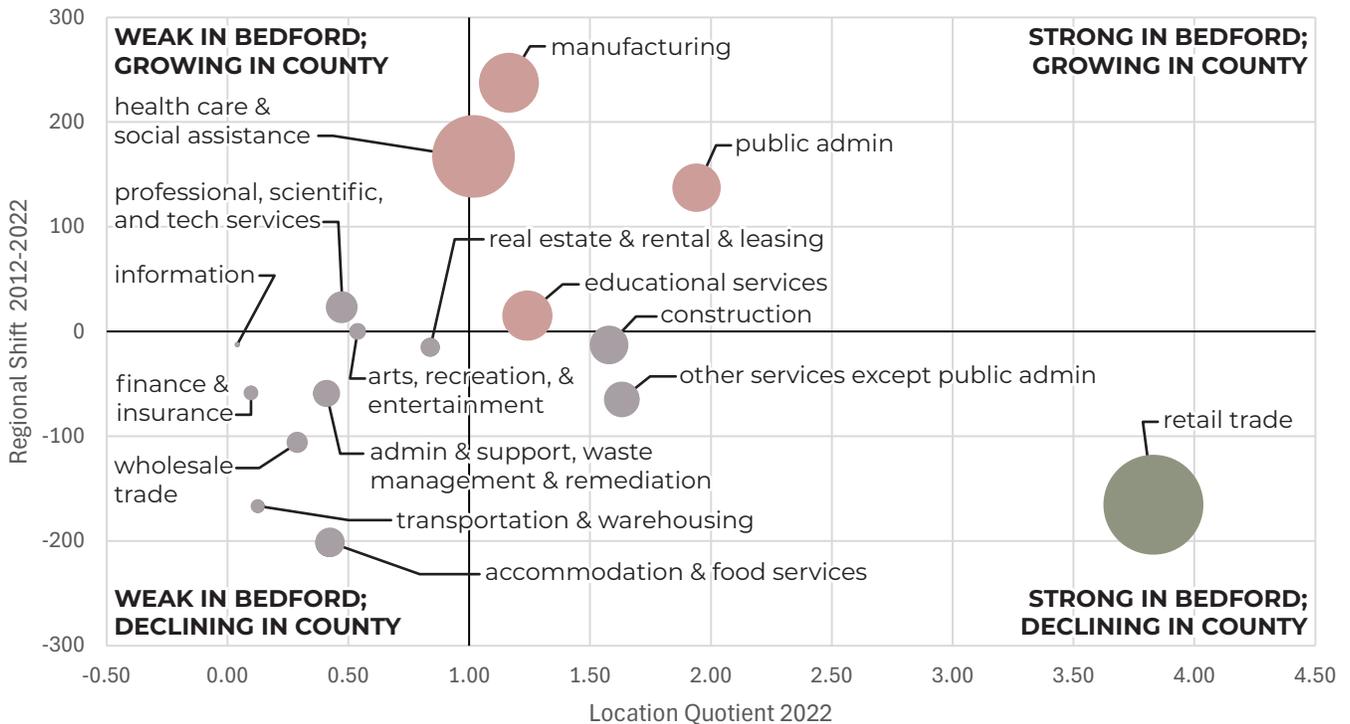
The **Shift-Share** analysis determines how much change in employment within the City can be attributed to Countywide growth or decline for each industry. The chart's Y-axis plots regional shift, which

measures how much an industry is growing or declining (gaining or losing jobs) in the County. The values indicate exactly how many employees have been added or lost within the industry over the given time period — in this case, a decade.

The size of the circles are representative of the total number of employees within that sector in Bedford in 2022. They range from 1,363 employees in Retail Trade to just four employees in Information. The chart shows that manufacturing and public admin jobs are popular in Bedford and the county while retail trade jobs are less common in the county but remain popular in Bedford.

More information on this methodology can be found [here](#).

FIGURE 13 ECONOMIC BASE ASSESSMENT



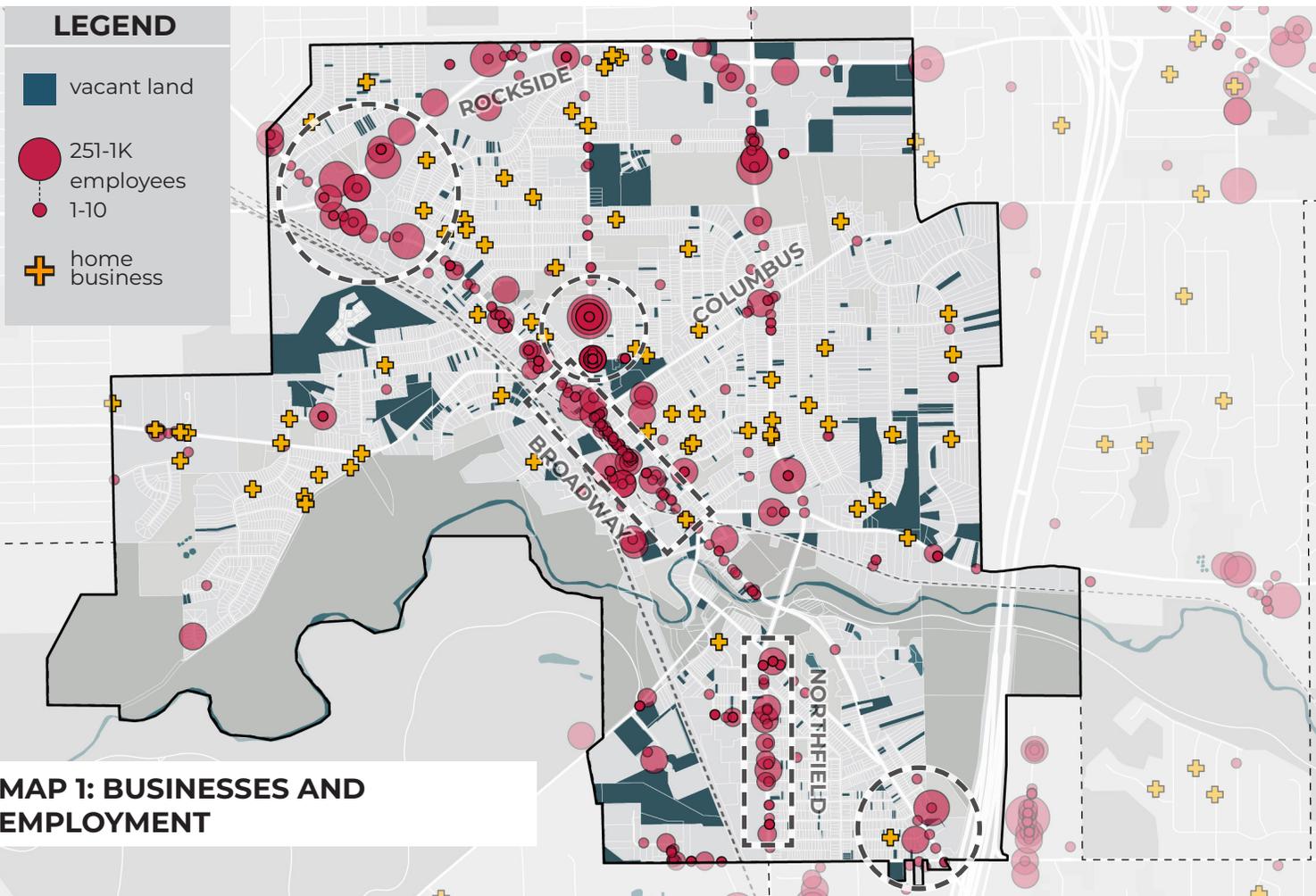
ECONOMY

BUSINESSES

Mapping businesses and employment together allows a place-based assessment of potential growth and opportunity within the City.

Small businesses (1-10 employees) are prevalent along Broadway and Northfield Avenues, while the densest employment areas are located near the Rockside/Broadway intersection, the City's municipal complex, and the interstate.

There are many existing home-based small businesses throughout the City, indicating a healthy entrepreneurial ecosystem and potential need for more suitable small-scale commercial space.



INVESTMENT

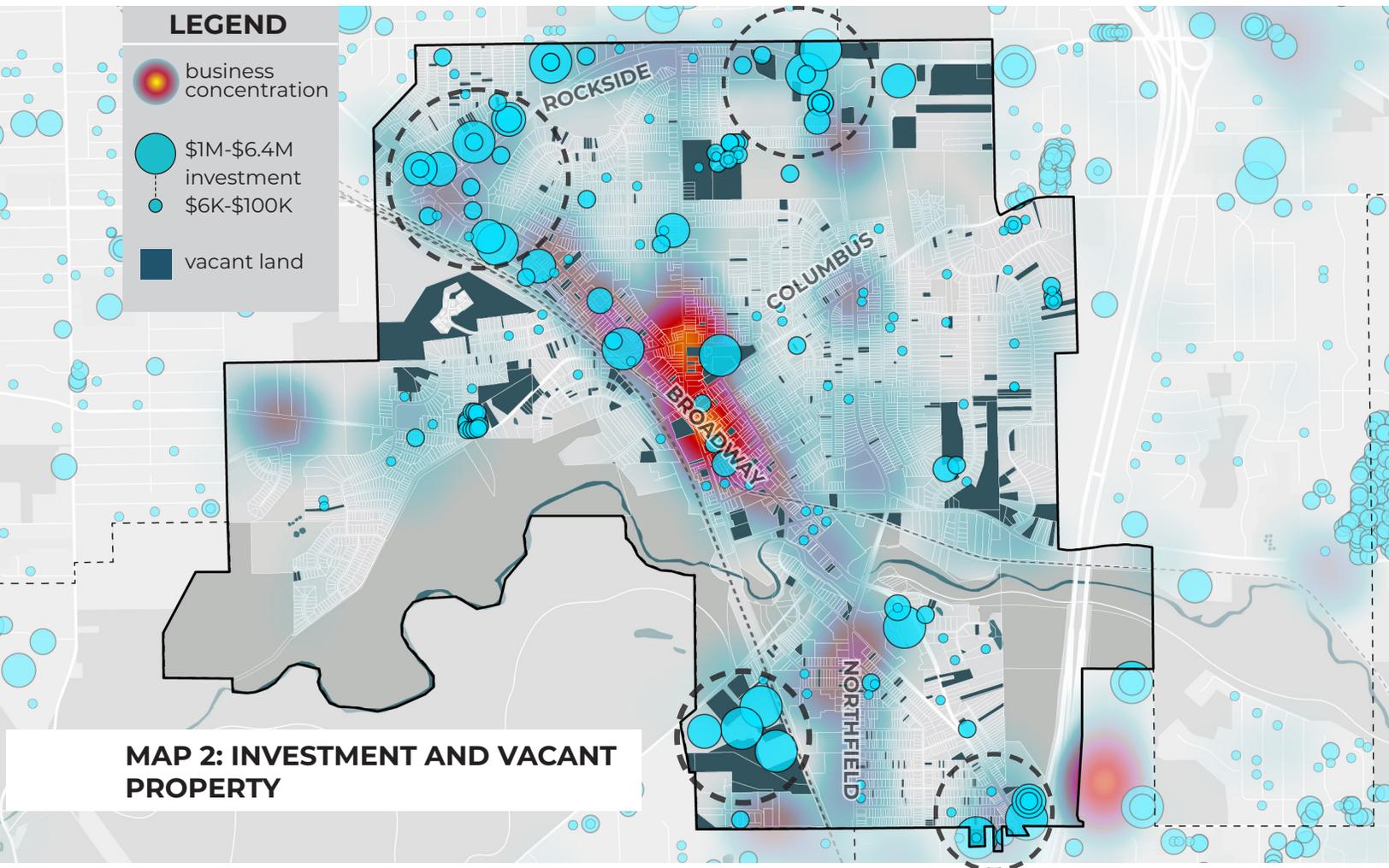
The Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office tabulates the amount of added taxable building value attributable to new construction since the previous year's appraisal. Data for this indicator includes the combined total value of all such projects from 2004-2025.

Despite hosting a high number of businesses, Broadway (including Bedford's Downtown Historic District) and Northfield

Avenues have had little investment over the past two decades.

More substantial investment is apparent at major intersections, notably Rockside/Broadway, Rockside/Northfield, and Broadway/I-480.

Additionally, Tinker's Creek Commerce Park in the southwest corner of the City received targeted investment over this time period.



HOUSING

TOTAL UNITS

The City of Bedford has approximately 6,941 housing units according to 2018-2023 5-Year ACS estimates. This total has held steady over the past decade, only fluctuating by approximately sixty units since 2013.

TENURE

Of the 6,941 housing units in Bedford, 56% were owner-occupied in 2023. In 2018, owner-occupied and rental units were split evenly at 50% each, indicating that homeownership has increased over this 5-year period.

Compared to its peer communities, the county, and the state over the last decade, Bedford is the only place with an increasing homeownership rate. In all but one instance (Richmond Heights), homeownership decreased from 2013 to 2018 and either stayed the same or decreased from 2018 to 2023.

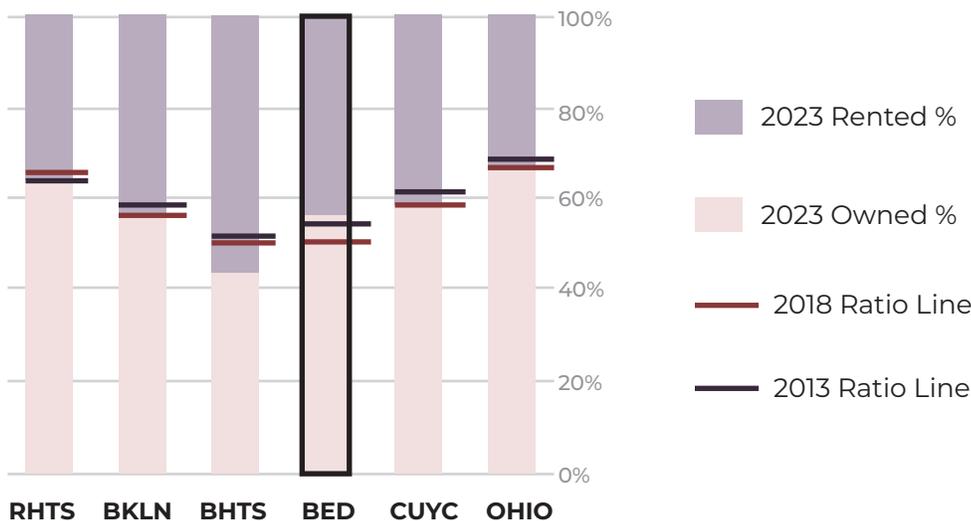
VACANCY

In 2023, approximately 13.4% of all housing units in Bedford were vacant, which is relatively high compared to other geographies.

From 2013-2023, all peer communities, the county, and the state have had decreasing overall vacancy rates; Bedford's is the only rate that has stayed about the same, only fluctuating by +/-1.4 percentage points.

Notably, although overall vacancy has remained high and steady, it is almost entirely relegated to the rental market rather than owner-occupied units.

FIGURE 14 OWNED VS. RENTED UNITS



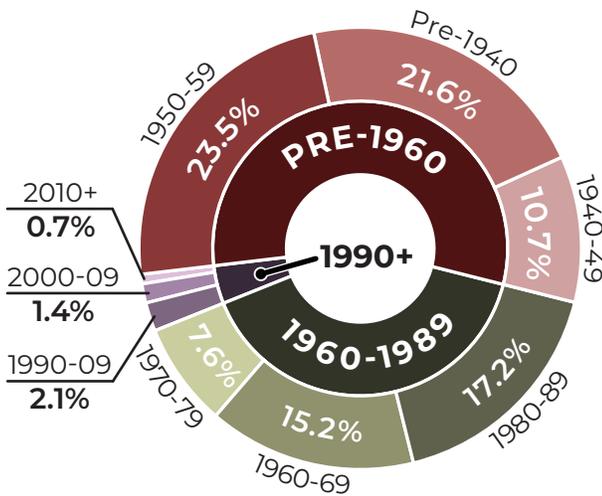
AGE OF STRUCTURE

Over 55% of residential structures that exist in the City today were constructed prior to 1960 — more than 65 years ago — according to 2018-2023 5-Year ACS data.

Furthermore, county fiscal records indicate that nearly 20% of all residential structures were built over a century ago (1925 or earlier). ACS data estimates that only about 145 new residential structures have been built since 2000.

The chart below shows what percentage of residential structures were built by decade, and groups them into three different eras.

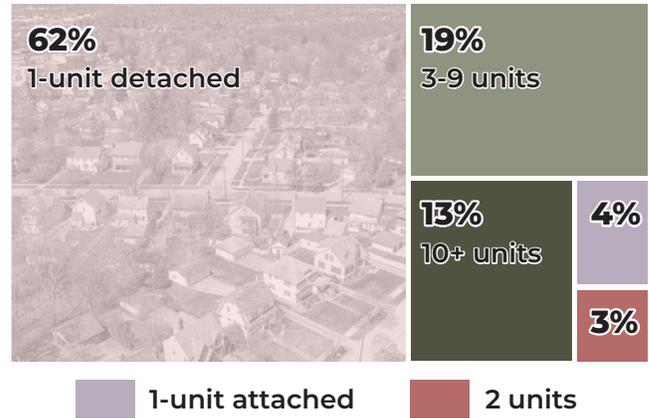
FIGURE 15 YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT



UNITS IN STRUCTURE

Housing units are found in a wide variety of building types, including single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums, and apartment complexes. About 62% of Bedford's housing units are individual, detached single-family homes.

FIGURE 16 UNITS IN STRUCTURE



A lack of variety in housing options can indicate unmet needs for both current and prospective residents. Compared to the County and its peer communities, Bedford has an exceptionally high percentage of structures containing three to nine units (19%) and low percentage of structures containing ten or more units (13%). The differences can be seen in the table below.

TYPE	BED	BHTS	BKLN	RHTS	CUYC
1 (detached)	61.5%	44.6%	67.0%	57.7%	59.5%
1 (attached)	3.7%	2.6%	3.1%	4.4%	5.3%
2 units	2.6%	0.8%	4.4%	0.0%	7.4%
3 to 9 units	19.0%	7.3%	4.9%	3.5%	7.6%
10+ units	13.2%	36.6%	20.5%	35.6%	19.6%
Mobile home	0.0%	8.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.6%

HOUSING

RENTAL UNITS

Median monthly rent in Bedford has increased from approximately \$770 in 2013 to \$1,061 in 2023 when adjusted for inflation. The biggest increase was between 2021 and 2022, where rent rose by approximately 12% in a single year. When compared to the average median rent of its peer communities (\$951), Bedford renters pay over \$100 more.

From 2021 to 2022, median rent increased by 12%.

The City's relatively high median rent and low median income (see economy section) leads to cost burden for renters. In 2023, over 50% of renters contributed 30% or more of their income to rent.

INVESTOR-OWNED PROPERTIES

According to National Stabilization Trust (NST) data from June 2025, approximately 471 single-family residential parcels in Bedford are owned by investment companies. This equates to 10.6% of all single-family residential properties within the City.

Of these investors:

- 21%** are located in Bedford
- 32%** are in the County, but outside Bedford
- 21%** are in Ohio, but outside the County
- 25%** are outside Ohio or the United States

SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

The map on the next page shows gross certified total property value for all single-family parcels in the City. Gross certified total land value is the taxable value of all land and structures associated with a parcel.

From 2019 to 2023, the median sale price of single-family homes in Bedford increased by 82% —from \$77K to \$140K. Despite this increase, Bedford's median sale price is still relatively low compared to its peer communities (\$188K average) and Cuyahoga County as a whole (\$178K average).

CUYAHOGA LAND BANK

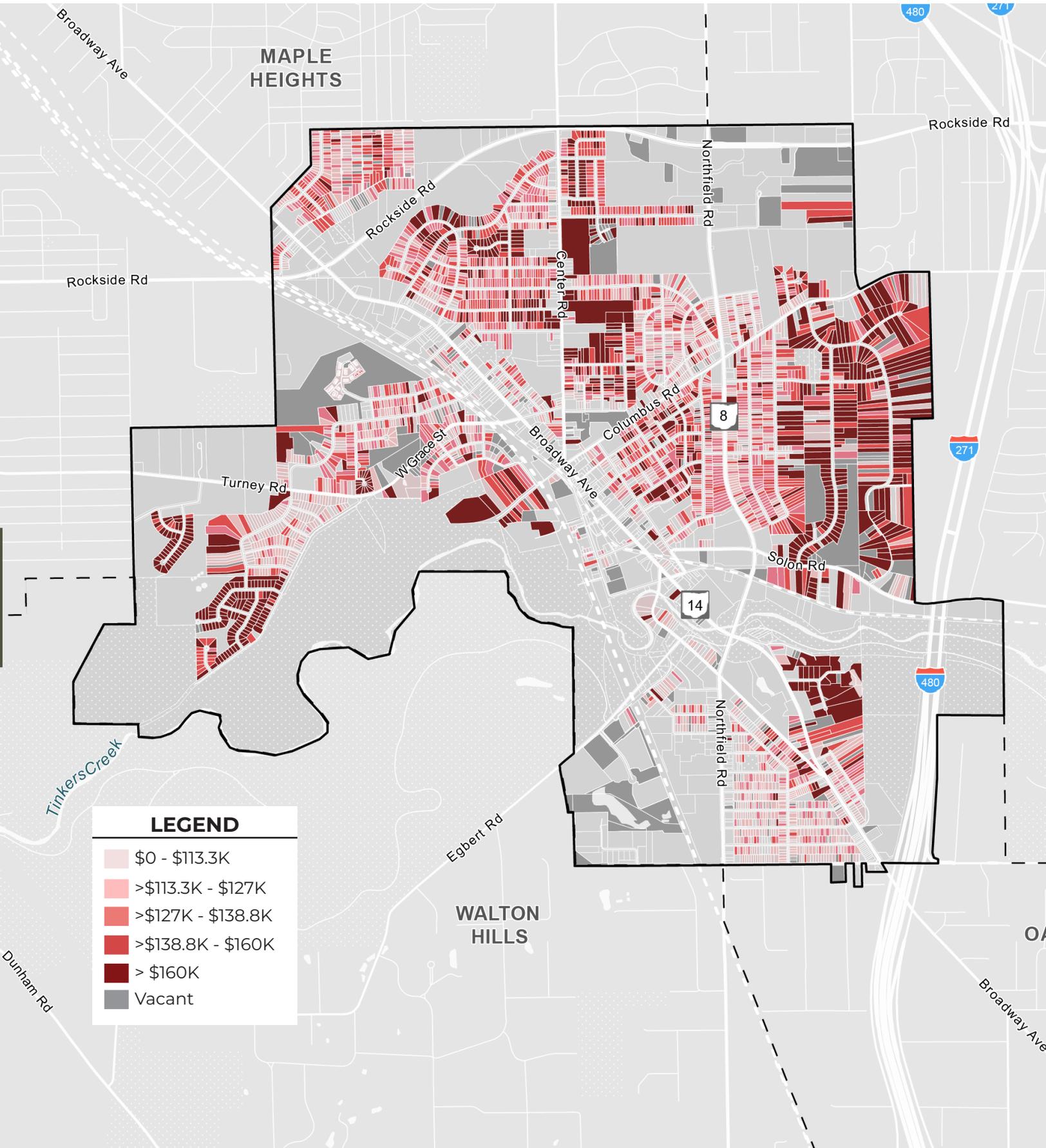
In partnership with the City of Bedford, the Cuyahoga County Land Bank is building a new single-family home on a previously vacant lot at 65 Talbot Drive.

The Land Bank is interested in helping to stabilize housing and increase homeownership within communities. Upon completion, the organization intends to undertake another new build in late 2026.



MAP 3: GROSS CERTIFIED TOTAL PROPERTY VALUE OF SINGLE-FAMILY PARCELS

SOURCE: Cuyahoga County Fiscal Data (2025)



LAND USE

Land use describes how land is currently being used — such as for housing, businesses, parks, or industry — and influences the layout of a City. It influences where people live and work, how they move around, and how neighborhoods grow and change over time.

In Bedford, the largest group of land use is Residential which comprises Single-Family (40.0%), Two-Family (2.0%), and Multi-Family (6.1%) homes totaling nearly half of the City’s land area.

The second and third largest land uses are Institutional and Recreational, Park, and Playground, each making up 13% of the City’s land. Institutional uses include City facilities, medical facilities, schools, colleges, religious establishments, the library, and City-owned lots. Institutional land is scattered throughout the City with the Bedford schools having a large concentration of land along Northfield Road. Recreational, Park, Playground land use is comprised mostly of the northern portion of the Bedford Reservation and a number of City-owned neighborhood parks and playgrounds.

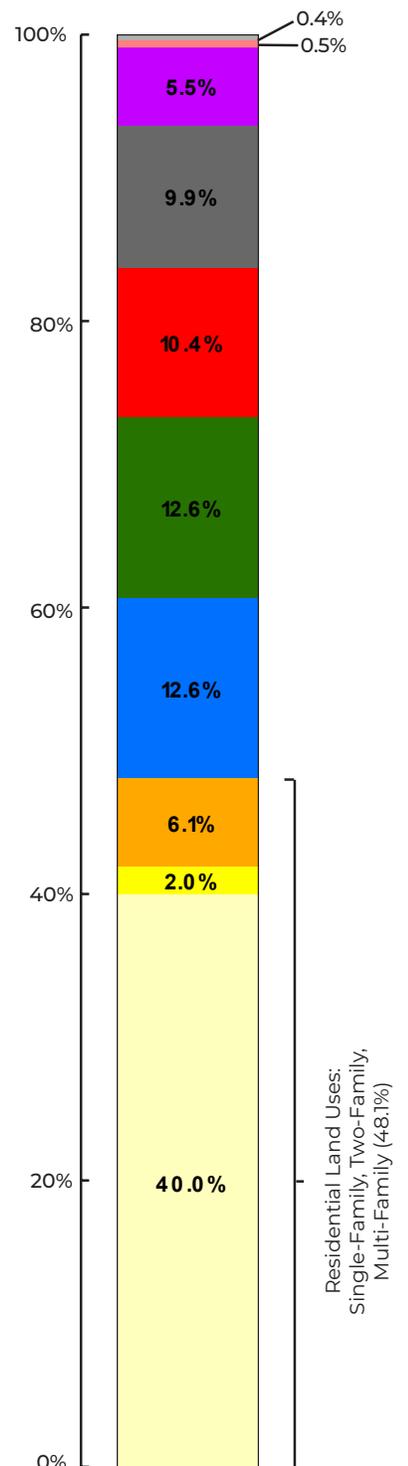
Retail Commercial land use comprises nearly 11% of land in Bedford and is largely found along Broadway Avenue, Rockside Road, and upper Northfield Road in the northeast section of the City.

Vacant land uses include privately owned vacant lots and land bank lots. Vacant land is the fifth largest land use category and makes up 9.9% of the City’s land area. These areas are scattered throughout Bedford with large parcels located near the western section of the City, south of Egbert Road near the railroad.

Industrial land use makes up 5.5% of Bedford’s land area. Industrial uses are located along the railroad tracks which bisect the City southwest of Broadway Avenue with a high concentration of industrial land just east of Northfield Road.

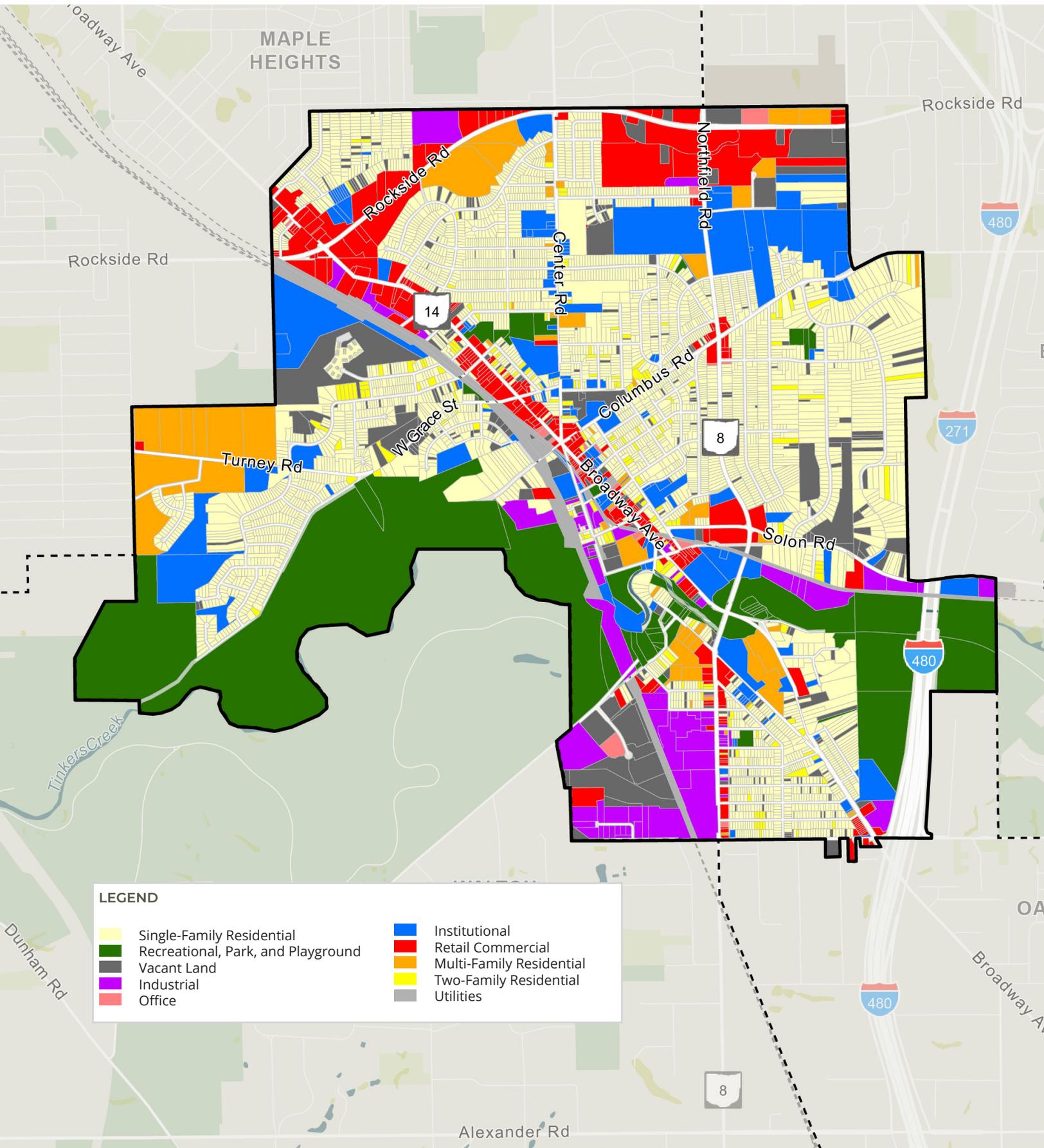
The map below showcases land uses throughout the City of Bedford and can assist in identifying future development opportunities. High concentrations of Retail Commercial land near the Northfield/Rockside corridor and Rockside/Broadway corridor could be areas of opportunity for additional development and redevelopment. Further, high concentrations of vacant and industrial land west of Northfield Road in the southern half of the City may provide additional opportunities. Finally, small vacant lots throughout the City of Bedford provide options for smaller, infill development.

FIGURE 17 LAND USE DISTRIBUTION



MAP 4: GENERALIZED LAND USE

SOURCE: Coutny Planning



ZONING

KEY FINDINGS

A detailed analysis of the City's Zoning Code consolidates regulations into compact charts on pages 26+27 in order to more easily compare current requirements. Through this analysis, several findings stood out:

- The code is well-organized in terms of flow and cross-references, but with significant redundancy.
- There are overly complicated regulations concerning adjacent districts.
- No illustrations help clarify regulations/requirements, limiting the legibility of the ordinance.

SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING

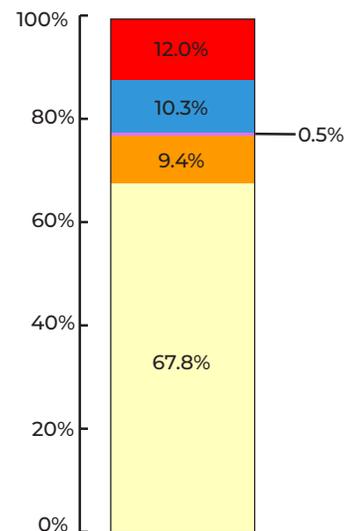
County Planning's 2021 Single-Family Zoning Analysis assessed Bedford's requirements in districts R-1 and R-2. Below, a summary of those findings is provided.

Minimum lot size determines the smallest lot on which a home can be built, ensuring adequate space and promoting spread-out housing. The analysis found that all First Suburbs in Cuyahoga County regulate minimum lot sizes for single-family homes. Many communities allow flexibility for lots that existed before zoning codes were adopted; these smaller lots are typically buildable without variances if other requirements—such as setbacks or yard dimensions—are met. Among the 19 First Suburb communities, lots that do not conform to minimum size requirements range from 4% to 96% of all lots.

Comparatively, Bedford has a low nonconforming rate of 7%. For other dimensions, Bedford's nonconforming percentages are also relatively low: 23% for minimum lot width and 8% for maximum lot coverage (the portion of a lot that can be covered by structures or impervious surfaces).

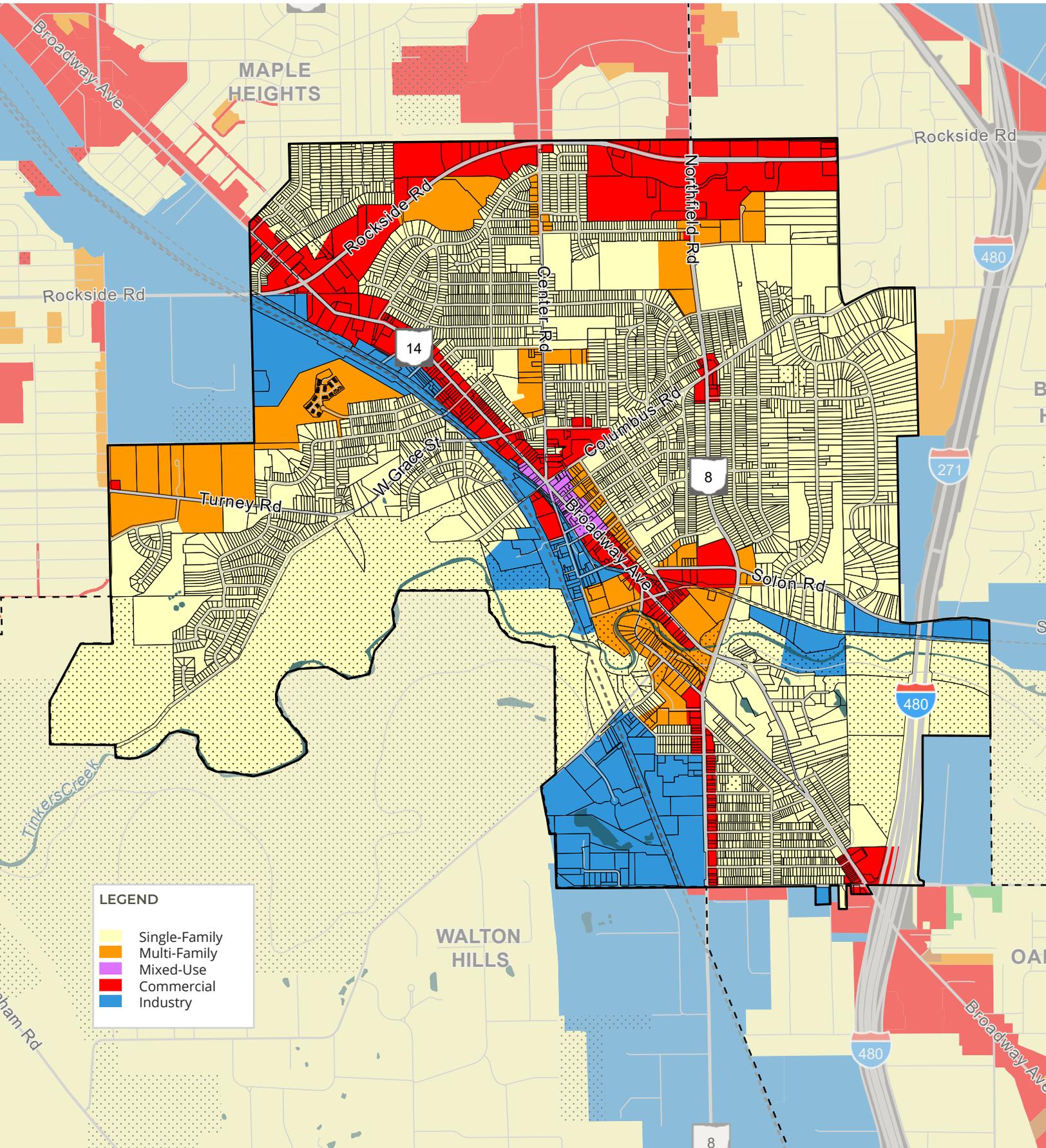
The analysis also reviewed minimum living area requirements, which regulate the size of homes. Bedford uses two approaches, applying a universal minimum and basing minimum size on stories: all homes in R-1 and R-2 districts must have at least 1,100 square feet of living area, plus a minimum first-floor area of 800 square feet for 1.5- and 2-story homes. Bedford's nonconforming rate for living area is 34%.

FIGURE 18 ZONING DISTRIBUTION



MAP 5: GENERALIZED ZONING

SOURCE: County Planning



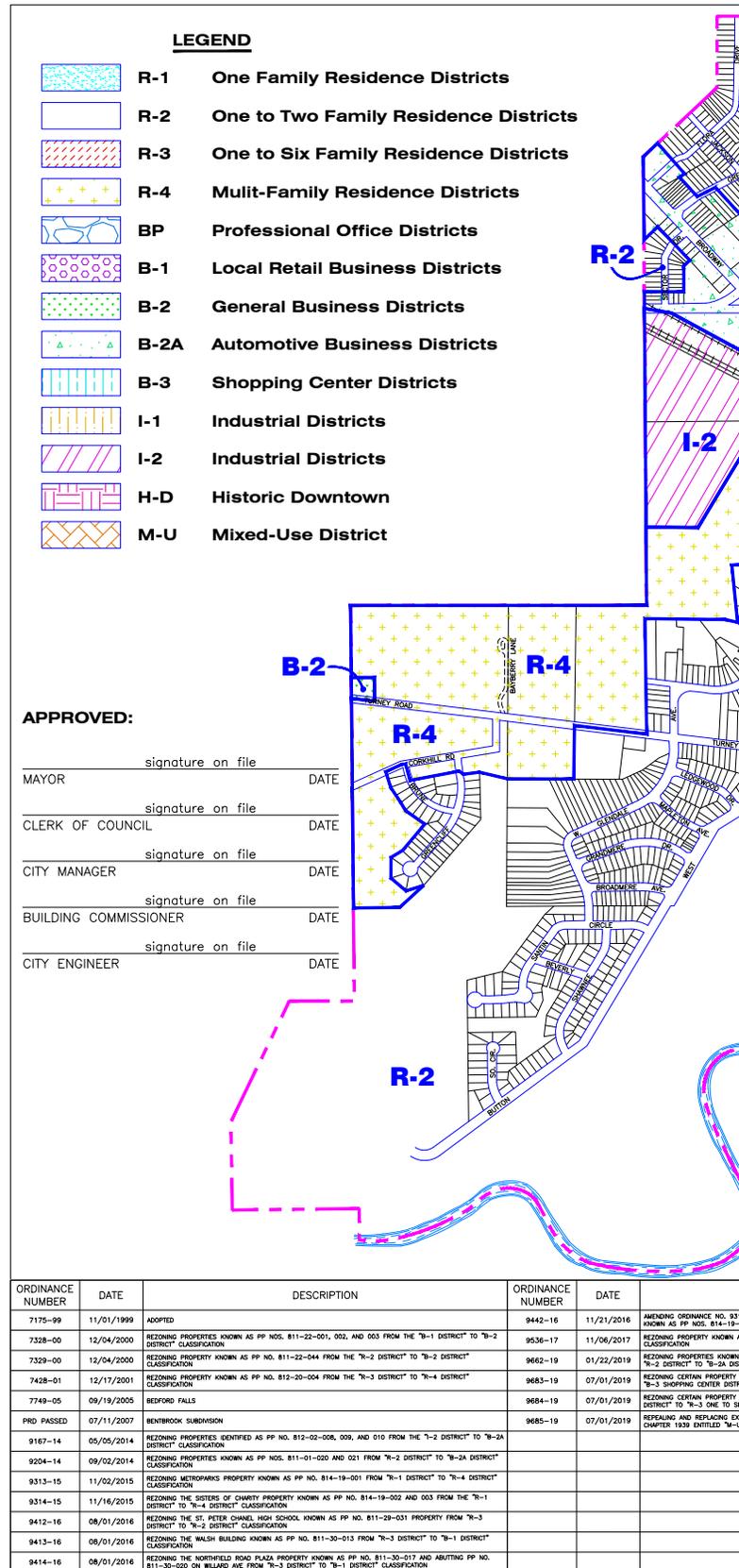
ZONING

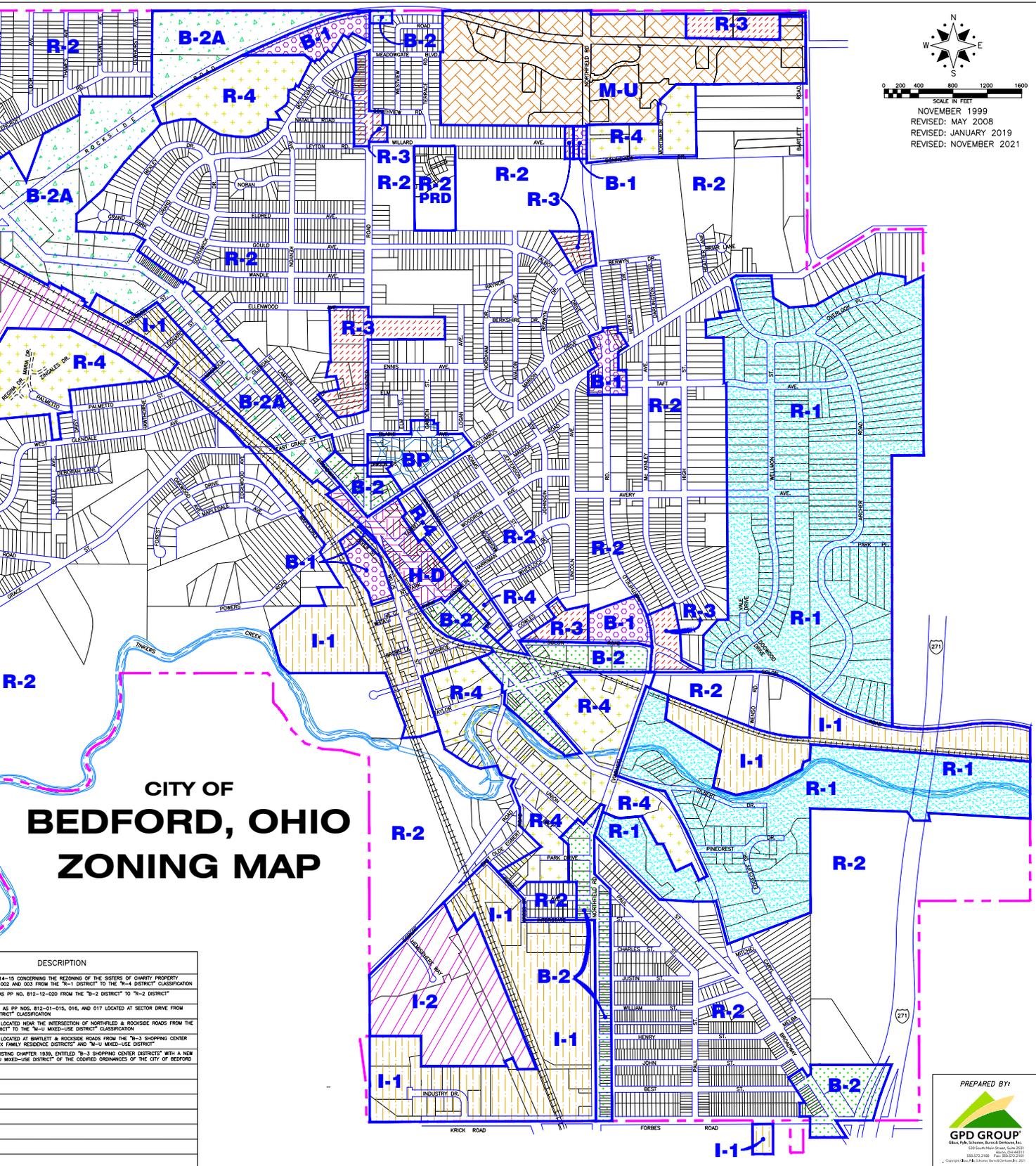
ZONING DISTRICTS

The map to the right is the City's current zoning map. While the generalized zoning map on the previous page allows a compatibility assessment with bordering municipalities to ensure continuation of character and use, the City's district-specific map allows a more fine-grain conditions assessment.

Published in November 2021, the map includes representation of geographic district changes between the code's adoption in 1999 and present day. All changes are recorded in the table in the bottom-left corner of the map.

The most significant district change is the last entry on the table, when all B-3 Shopping Center District designations were replaced with a new M-U Mixed-Use District designation. This adjustment primarily affected the City's "Meadowbrook Plaza" development in its northeast corner and has not yet been applied elsewhere.





N
 W E
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 SCALE IN FEET
 0 200 400 800 1200 1600
 NOVEMBER 1999
 REVISED: MAY 2008
 REVISED: JANUARY 2019
 REVISED: NOVEMBER 2021

CITY OF BEDFORD, OHIO ZONING MAP

DESCRIPTION
14-15 CONCERNING THE REZONING OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY PROPERTY 002 AND 003 FROM THE "R-1 DISTRICT" TO THE "R-4 DISTRICT" CLASSIFICATION
AS PP NO. 812-12-020 FROM THE "B-2 DISTRICT" TO "B-2A DISTRICT"
AS PP NOS. 812-01-015, 016, AND 017 LOCATED AT SECTOR DRIVE FROM THE "R-1 DISTRICT" CLASSIFICATION
LOCATED NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF NORTHFIELD & ROCKSIDE FROM THE "R-1" TO THE "M-U MIXED-USE DISTRICT" CLASSIFICATION
LOCATED AT BARTLEY & ROCKSIDE FROM THE "B-3 SHOPPING CENTER & FAMILY RESIDENCE DISTRICTS" AND "M-U MIXED-USE DISTRICT"
LISTING CHAPTER 1939, ENTITLED "B-3 SHOPPING CENTER DISTRICTS" WITH A NEW MIXED-USE DISTRICT OF THE COOPED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BEDFORD

PREPARED BY:

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ZONING

TABLE 4: RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Zoning Districts	Lot Dimensions				Setbacks				Heights
	Stories	Min Lot Area (sq ft)	Min Lot Width (ft)	Max Dwelling Size (sq ft)	Min Side Yard (ft)		Min Front Yard (ft)	Min Rear Yard (ft)	Max Stories/Ft
					One Side	Combined Sides			
R-1 One-Family Residence District	1 & 1.5	5,000	50	30% of lot area	8 ^(a)	20	35	35	2.5 stories/ 30 ft
	2 & 2.5				10 ^(a)	25			
R-2 One and Two-Family Residence District	1 & 1.5	5,000 ^(*)	50 ^(b)	30% of lot area ^(*)	6 ^(a)	30	35	30	2.5 stories/ 30 ft
	2 & 2.5				8 ^(a)				
R-3 One to Six Family Residence District	1 & 1.5	1F ^(#) : 5,000 2F ^(#) : 10,500 3F ^(#) : 12,000 4F ^(#) : 13,500 5F ^(#) : 16,500 6F ^(#) : 19,500	50 ^(b)	30% of lot area ^(*)	6 ^(a)	15	30	30	2.5 stories/ 30 ft
	2 & 2.5				8 ^(a)	20			
R-4 Multi-Family Residence District	1	1F ^(#) : 8,400 2F ^(#) : 10,500 3F ^(#) : 11,500 4F ^(#) : 12,000 5F ^(#) : 12,000 6F ^(#) : ^(c)	60	n/a	6 ^(a)	15	30	30	6 stories/ 75 ft
	2		60		8 ^(a)	20	32	30	
	3		75		10 ^(a)	22	35	35	
	4		75		12 ^(a)	27	40	40	
	5		85		14 ^(a)	33	45	45	
	6		100		16 ^(a)	40	50	50	
M-U Mixed-Use District	Residential uses in the M-U District shall not exceed six (6) dwelling units per acre for single-family attached dwellings. Lot area, frontage, and yard requirements match regulations in Chapter 1927 (R-2 One and Two-Family Residence District).								

^(#) F refers to number of families (i.e., 2F refers to two families)

^(*) Maximum square footage only applicable for single family dwelling

^(*) Each structure containing more than one (1) family shall be located on a lot having an area of 10,000 sq. ft. for each family
^(a) A single-family home with an attached garage may have minimum side yard widths of 6 ft. on both sides

^(b) Each structure containing more than one (1) family shall be located on a lot with a minimum width of 75 ft.

^(c) Each structure containing more than six (6) families shall be located on a lot having an area of 2,000 sq. ft. for each family

TABLE 5: BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICTS

Zoning Districts	Lot Dimensions		Setbacks				Heights
	Min Lot Area (sq ft)	Min Lot Width (ft)	Min Side Yard (ft)	Min Front Yard (ft)	Min Rear Yard (ft)	Min from Buildings & Boundary Lines (ft)	Max Stories/ Ft
B-P Professional Office District	5,000	n/a	Building Height ^(a)	30	Building Height ^(a)	15 ^(b)	6 stories/ 75 ft
B-1 Local Retail Business District	n/a	n/a	None ^(c)	6	10 ^(f)	15 ^(b)	3 stories/ 45 ft ^(e)
B-2 General Business Districts	n/a	50	None ^(d)	30	10 ^(f)	15 ^(b)	3 stories/ 45 ft ^(e)
B-2A Automotive Business District	n/a	100	None ^(d)	30	10 ^(f)	15 ^(b)	3 stories/ 45 ft
H-D Historic Downtown District	n/a	n/a	None ^(c)	0 ^(g)	10 ^(f)	n/a	3 stories/ 45 ft ^(e)
M-U Mixed Use District	n/a	n/a	10 ^(d)	50	10 ^(d)	n/a	45

^(a) Required yard capped at 75 ft.; minimum 30 ft. yard is required where property line abuts residential district

^(b) Buildings shall be located at least 15 ft. from any other building and shall be at least 15 ft. from any area boundary line

^(c) Except when adjoining residential, then minimum side will be same as least width required in that residential district

^(d) Except when adjoining residential, then minimum not less than 30 ft.

^(e) Places of public assembly may not exceed 6 stories/75 ft.

^(f) Except when adjoining a residential district, in which case the rear yard shall be a minimum of 35 ft., shall match the residential district, or shall be increased based on use of structure

^(g) Buildings along Broadway shall have no front yard setback; buildings fronting any other street shall have a 6 ft. setback

TABLE 6: INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Zoning Districts	Lot Dimensions		Setbacks				Heights	
	Min Lot Area (acres)	Min Lot Width (ft)	Min Side Yard (ft)		Min Front Yard (ft)	Min Rear Yard (ft)		
			Abutting a Non-Res. Dist.	Abutting a Res. Dist.		Abutting a Non-Res. Dist.		Abutting a Res. Dist.
I-1 Industrial District	n/a	n/a	30 ^(a)	100	20	30 ^(a)	100	35 ^(b)
I-2 Industrial District	2	200	25	100	100	50	100	40

Industrial districts include multiple additional setback regulations based on certain uses or site features not shown here

^(a) Yard shall be equal to building height for buildings exceeding 30 ft.

^(b) Certain appurtenant features are capped at 45 ft. in height

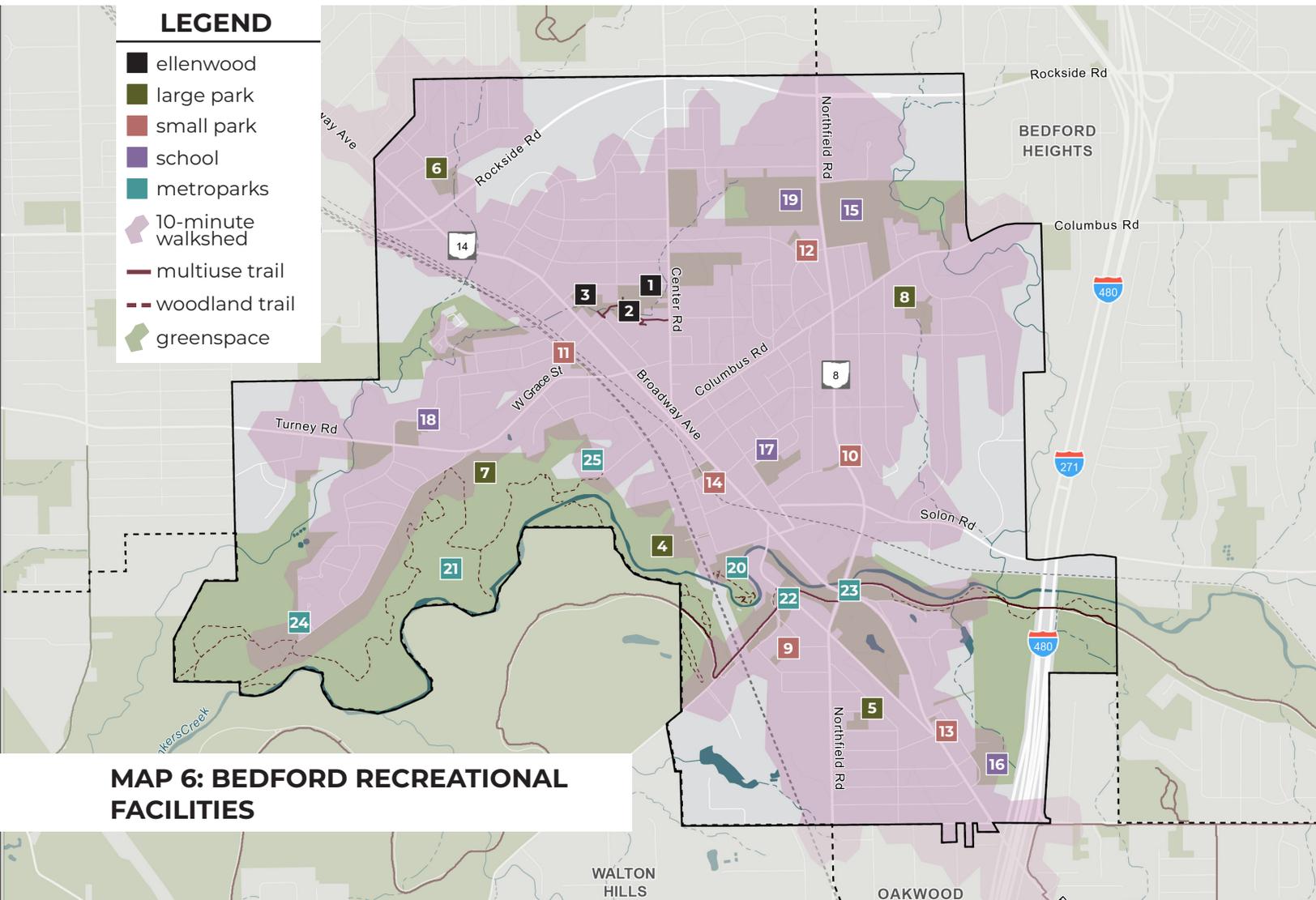
PARKS AND RECREATION

Bedford boasts over 850 total acres of park, green, and open space. Of this total acreage, about 27 acres are owned and/or maintained by the City. Most of the greenspace within the City is located in Bedford Reservation, one of Cleveland Metroparks' "Emerald Necklace" gems.

The map below displays types and locations of Bedford's many recreational assets.

Approximately 86% of Bedford residents have access to public outdoor recreational space within a ten-minute walk (purple highlight). However, the size and amenities of each space vary greatly, from trailheads to a football stadium.

The City's main recreational space — the Ellenwood Complex — is conveniently located near its center and provides the widest range of activity options in close proximity.



In the table below, the leftmost numbers correspond with each facility's location on the map from the previous page and are color-coded by type. The table also lists facility size and amenities, including total number of fields per sport. At first pass, the data indicates an excess of baseball

fields and facilities geared toward young children. Overall, the distribution lacks low-barrier, independent activity options for older children and young adults. Notably lacking are basketball courts, community gathering/meeting space, and indoor active space untethered to schools.

TABLE 7: BEDFORD RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND AMENITIES			ACRES	Soccer Field	Baseball Field	Football Field	Sand Volleyball	Tennis Court	Outdoor Track	Locker Rooms	Pool	Splash pad	Skate Park	Playground	Swing set	Pavilion	Seating	Concessions	Restrooms	Parking	Meeting Rooms	Gymnasium	Potable Water	Electricity	Night Lighting	Multiuse Trail	Wooded Trail
Facility Type, Number, and Name																											
Ellenwood Complex	1	Ellenwood Center/Field			1					x							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	2	Archibald Willard Park	7.5			1								x	x	x	x			x							
	3	Municipal Pool/Skate Park								x	x	x	x				x		x								
Large Parks	4	Bedford Glens/Tim Lally Field ¹	2		1											x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	
	5	Cosgrove Park/Interstate Field	2		1									x	x	x	x			x			x	x			
	6	Greencroft Park/Field	3.8		1									x	x	x	x			x							
	7	Hutchinson Fields ¹	5	3	1												x			x				x		x	
	8	Taft Park/Field	4.5		1									x		x	x			x							x
Small Parks	9	First Avenue Tot Lot	0.8														x										
	10	Lincoln-Cowles Tot Lot	0.5											x	x												
	11	Palmetto Tot Lot/Mizsak Park	0.3											x	x												
	12	Talbot Tot Lot	0.7											x	x												
	13	Mitchell Drive Pocket Park	0.4														x										
	14	Bedford Commons ²	1.5									x				x	x								x		
School Facilities	15	Bedford High School	25	1	2	1	5	x	x	x							x	x	x	x		x	x	x			
	16	Carylwood Intermediate ³	8.8											x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x				
	17	Central Primary ³	3.7											x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x				
	18	Glendale Primary ³	4.7											x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x				
	19	Bedford Middle School ⁴	34	1	1	1			x	x							x		x	x		x	x	x			
Cleveland Metroparks	20	Viaduct Park	15																x	x						x	
	21	Bedford Reservation	--												x	x	x		x	x					x	x	
	22	Egbert/Union Access	--																							x	
	23	Hawthorne/Broadway Access	--																	x						x	
	24	Button Road Access	--																							x	
	25	Powers Road Access	--																							x	

¹ Acreage is reflective of fields maintained by City; land is owned and maintained by Metroparks.
² The Bedford Commons expansion (including splash pad, glider seating, and pavilion) is scheduled to open in spring 2026.
³ These schools are scheduled to be decommissioned, but some aspects of the buildings and/or land may be retained.
⁴ The new middle school is currently under construction as of December 2025; recreation facilities are not finalized.

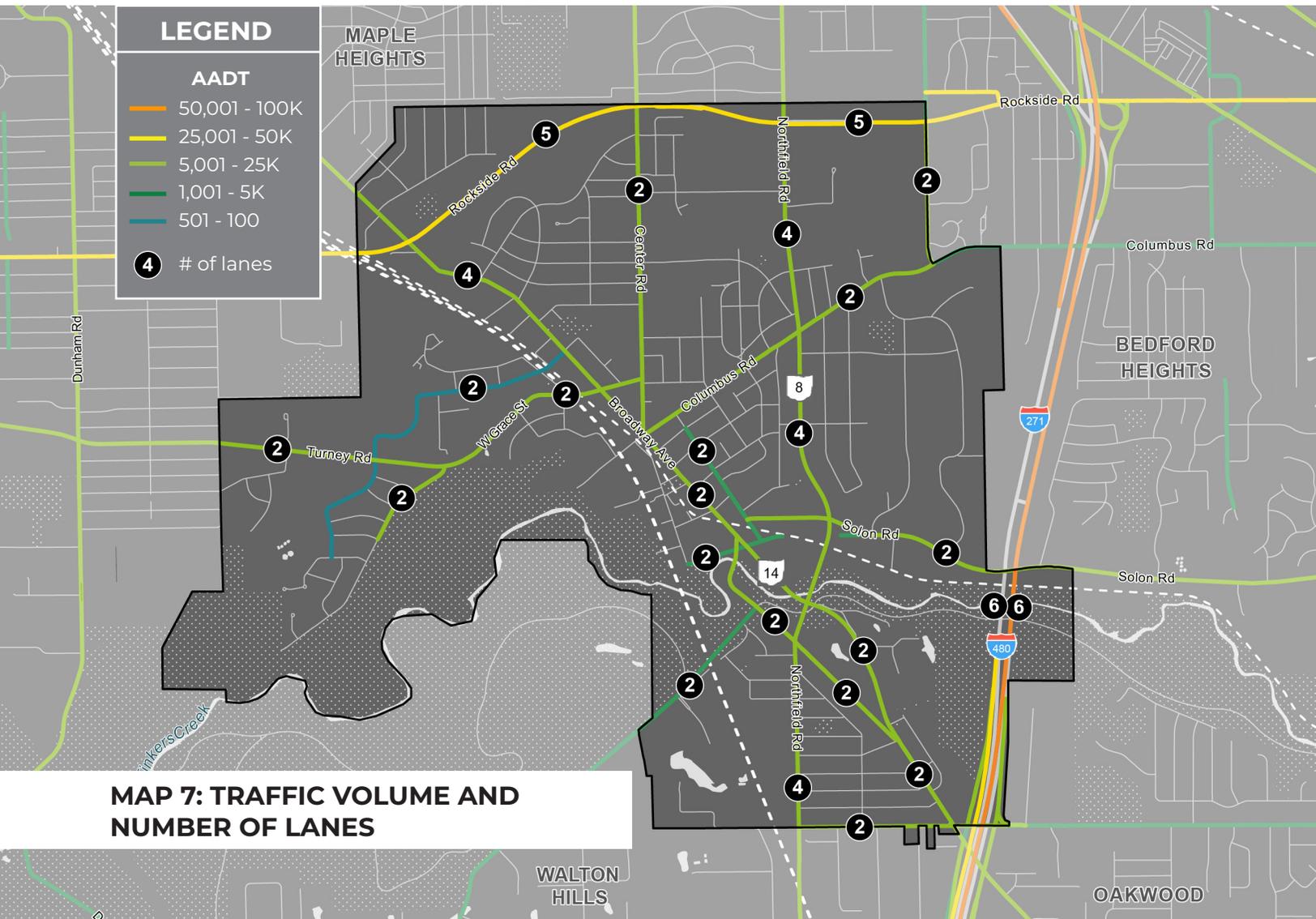
INFRASTRUCTURE

TRAFFIC VOLUME

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is fairly consistent throughout Bedford with most roads seeing between 5,001 and 25,000 in AADT. Excluding I-480, which sees the most vehicle traffic, Rockside Road is the busiest street in Bedford, averaging over 25,000 AADT.

TRAFFIC LANES

Road widths in Bedford vary from two lanes to six lanes, with streets in and around Downtown Bedford mostly having two lanes. The 480 interstate is the only road in the City with six drive lanes, followed by Rockside Road at five lanes, and Northfield Road which typically has four lanes but widens to five lanes at some intersections.

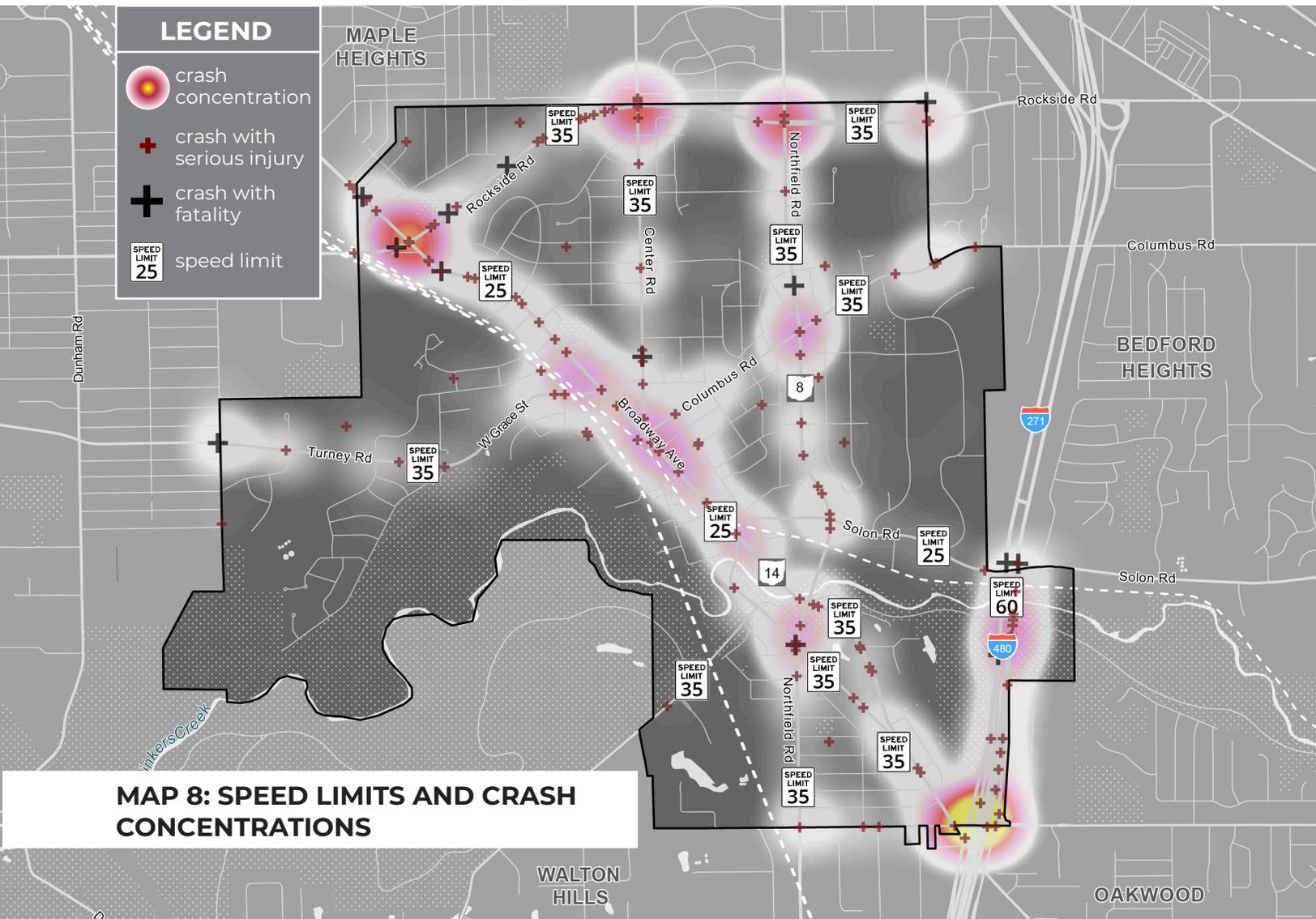


TRAFFIC SPEED

Speed limits in Bedford generally vary between 25 and 35 miles per hour, with most being 35 MPH. Speed limits are lower in the downtown area at 25 MPH but increase to 35 on surrounding roads where number of lanes increase. The 480 interstate on the eastern edge of Bedford is the highest speed limit in the City at 60 MPH.

CRASHES

The map below shows all serious injury and fatality crash instances from 2008-2023. All crashes, regardless of severity, have been mapped by concentration. The I-480 interchange area has the highest concentration of crashes overall; it is also the area with the highest speed limit and car volume.



INFRASTRUCTURE

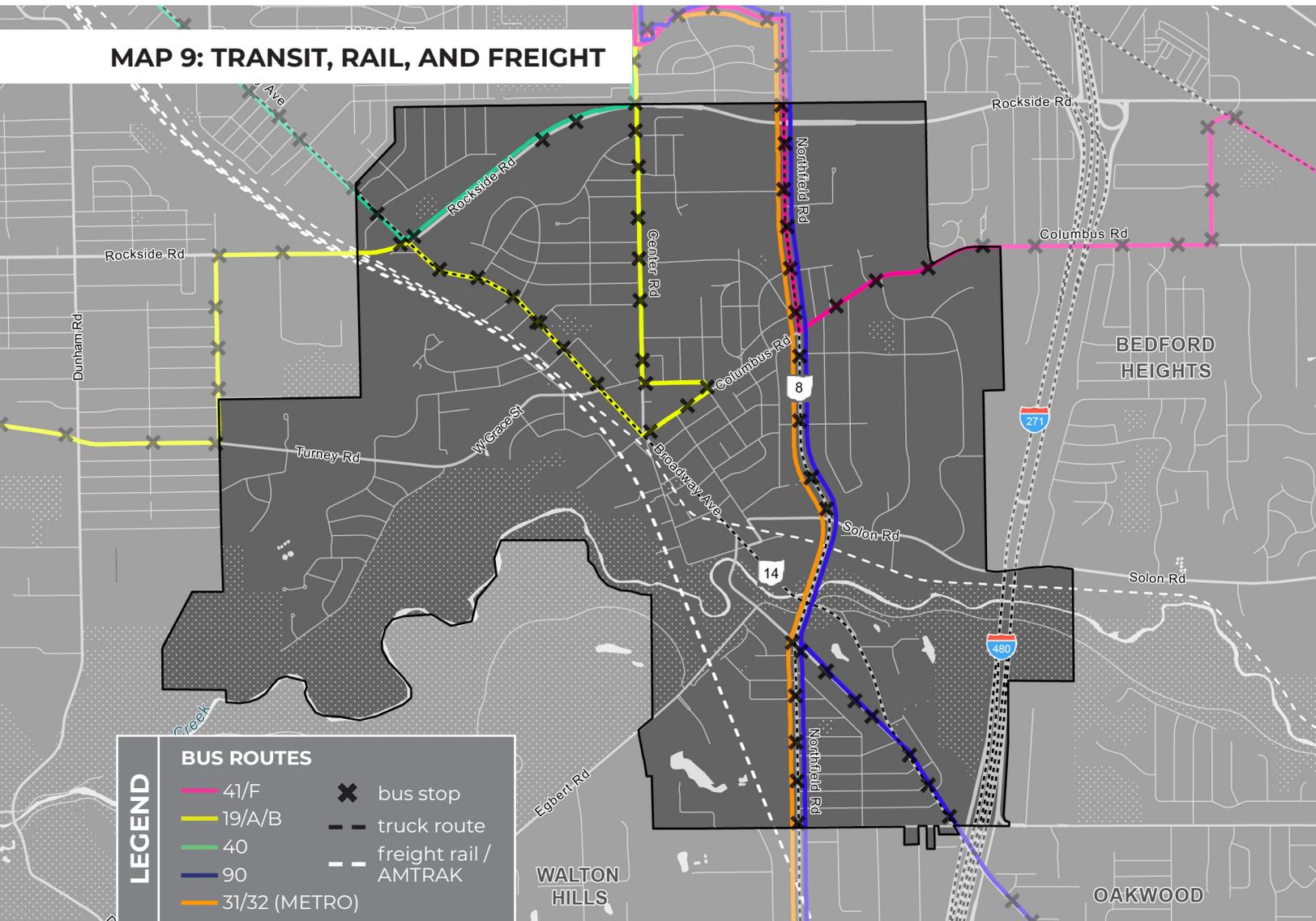
TRANSIT

Bedford has multiple public transit routes that operate in the City. GCRTA has four bus lines that run along Broadway Avenue, Union Street, Center, Columbus, Rockside, and Northfield Roads. Akron METRO's 31/32 line also operates on Northfield Road. These routes are served by numerous bus stops along each of the roadways.

RAIL & FREIGHT

Although it does not make a stop in Bedford, AMTRAK operates a passenger train that runs through the City's downtown. These tracks are also used daily for freight travel coming from Akron. Bedford also has two dedicated truck routes along Broadway Avenue and Northfield Road.

MAP 9: TRANSIT, RAIL, AND FREIGHT



PEDESTRIAN

Bedford has an extensive existing sidewalk network, with most gaps relegated to dead-end streets and industrial areas. A few portions of major roads and residential streets lack pedestrian infrastructure on just one side of the road, including Rockside, West Grace, and Union.

CYCLING

Cycling infrastructure in Bedford is presently limited to a shared use path on Hawthorne Parkway and Egbert Road. In the near future, the City plans to construct an additional shared use path connecting Viaduct Park and Downtown Bedford to northern communities and amenities.

MAP 10: PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING

