

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The City of Middletown created the 2005 – 2010 Master Plan in its continuing efforts to provide a high quality of life and excellent business environment for its residents and employers. The Master Plan is the culmination of two years of intense fact finding, data analysis, and public meetings. This plan is inspired by feedback received from residents and key stakeholders during interviews, steering committee meetings, focus group meetings, and public input sessions. As a result, Master Plan goals, objectives and policy statements were driven, to a large degree, by the public. In summary, the Master Plan is an action-oriented, decision-making tool that:

- 1. Creates a Unified Development and Land Use Policy***
- 2. Manages Development and Growth***
- 3. Focuses Civic Direction and Vision***
- 4. Prioritizes Actions, Funding, and Capital Improvements***
- 5. Supports City Land Use and Zoning Decision Making***
- 6. Provides Foundation for Grant Acquisition and Alternative Funding***
- 7. Generates Proactive Responses to Opportunities and Threats***
- 8. Promotes Ongoing Communication and Participation between Residents and the City and its Various Partners***

PLANNING PERIOD

The Master Plan focuses heavily on economic development and positioning the city to take advantage of near-term development opportunities. As such, the Master Plan and numerous policy statements made within have a five-year time horizon. This is not to imply that the plan is not visionary. Forward thinking, longer term strategies, with a ten- to twenty-year implementation period are also articulated.

The ambitious implementation schedule will require the City to incorporate Master Plan recommendations in everyday staff and departmental functions. Likewise, the Master Plan will require frequent updates as major plan components are implemented. Major updates should occur no less than every five years. A five-year update will ensure the Master Plan remains a living document with relevant policy statements. Planned long-term strategies will need to be re-evaluated based on changing community priorities and resources.

MASTER PLAN ORGANIZATION

The chapters listed below are the major policy chapters contained in the Plan. Chapter 9 Development Opportunity Area Plans and Chapter 10 Implementation and Action Plan summarize the more salient land use and development recommendations and priorities.

- ***Chapter 2*** Community Description contains brief descriptions regarding Middletown's current situation, development history, land use patterns, environment, and development opportunities.

- **Chapters 3 through 7** contain the Master Plan policy chapters dealing with Economic Development, Redevelopment, Housing and Neighborhoods, Quality of Life and Transportation respectively.
- **Chapter 8** Future Land Use contains the City's official land use policy. Together, the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map and supporting text descriptions provide a flexible policy framework to guide land use and development decision making.
- **Chapter 9** Development Opportunity Area Plans focuses on nine different subareas that have uniquely defined development opportunities. Many recommendations from previous policy chapters are summarized in the text and on the provided maps.
- **Chapter 10** Implementation and Action Plan prioritizes key action strategies made throughout the Master Plan and identifies implementation tools. A series of recommendations are made on financing strategies, grants, and ordinance revisions from which the City can choose to achieve plan goals and objectives.

MAJOR COMPONENTS

Gem Public Services (Gem) prepared a *real estate market analysis* to determine approximate levels of demand for each major land use category. The Gem report identified prerequisite conditions that must be satisfied for Middletown to capture a proportional share of new development that is anticipated for the region. Gem also provided valuable information regarding the city's need to establish an economic development organization and to reposition underutilized commercial and industrial properties.

Strategic Public Policy (SPP) prepared a *Fiscal Analysis*. This analysis evaluated income tax revenues and basic city service expenditures by each major land use category to determine cost of services for each. This task was instrumental in the preparation of a sustainable, fiscally responsible land use policy. Gem's and SPP's analyses are integrated into Chapter 3 Economic Development, Chapter 4 Redevelopment, Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods, Chapter 8 Future Land Use, and Chapter 10 Implementation and Action Plan

CDS prepared an analysis of the City's water, sanitary sewer, and roadway infrastructure. CDS' analysis was coupled with infrastructure related objectives and strategies to form Chapter 7 Infrastructure. Planned improvements to the roadway system are shown on the Transportation Map.

BUILDING ON PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

The first City of Middletown Master Plan was adopted in 1965, substantially updated in 1977, and partially updated in 1997 to plan for new growth on the city's east side. Many of the recommendations found in the 1965 Master Plan and the 1997 Update have been implemented. This fact coupled with new community conditions, expectations, and challenges underscored the need to prepare an updated Master Plan.

The number of disparate planning initiatives that were undertaken in the absence of an updated, officially adopted planning document provides further evidence of the need for a single, community-wide Master Plan. Many of these planning efforts, listed in the insert, were never adopted as official City policy. As a result, few, if any, plans were implemented. The lack of action is a source of frustration to numerous individuals and organizations that participated in their creation. Each plan was reviewed to identify viable strategies from each to incorporate into the 2005 – 2010 Master Plan. A summary of each plan is available from the Middletown City Planning Department.

PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

The plan is built upon what can be described as a very successful endeavor to involve residents and key stakeholders in the planning process. The public participation plan was an outgrowth of City Council's desire to develop land use and development policies that are community driven and rooted in public support. The ground swell of public involvement surpassed initial expectations. Tremendous turnout was had at public input meetings indicating a strong interest on the behalf of residents and stakeholders in their community. The planning process is a testament and validation to the type of cooperation and public-private partnerships that are envisioned in this Master Plan.

Past Planning Efforts

- Middletown, Ohio Corporate Area Master Plan Document (1977)
- HyettPalma Creating the Future Downtown (1992)
- City of Middletown Sewer Master Plan (1996)
- Downtown Middletown Urban Design Plan (1996)
- A.C.T.I.O.N. (1998)
- Downtown Middletown Market Analysis and Development Strategy (1999)
- Middletown Own It! (2000)
- Midpointe Centre Conceptual Design and Development Project (2000)
- Strategic Marketing Plan (2001)
- An Overall Housing Assessment of Middletown, Ohio (2002)
- Hook Field Municipal Airport Strategic Development Plan (2002)
- Creating a Competitive Community Advantage (2003)

- **City Council.** City Council gave the directive and provided the resources to prepare this Master Plan. City Council also held two work sessions, one public hearing, and one town-hall-style meeting; considered public comments; reviewed working drafts; and adopted the plan. City Council will provide leadership and direction during the Master Plan's 2005-2010 implementation period.
- **Steering Committee.** City Council commissioned a thirty-member Steering Committee to provide project oversight. Most members were residents but a few were community stakeholders that lived outside of Middletown. Collectively, the steering committee represented a diverse cross section of Middletown's population and business/institutional community.

The Steering Committee met eleven times over one and a half years to discuss issues of vital importance to Middletown's future including community image, brownfield redevelopment, economic development, housing and community development, parks, utilities and transportation. In short, the Steering Committee was the backbone of the planning process as all Master Plan recommendations, actions, goals and objectives were presented to the Steering Committee before the same were presented to the Planning Commission and City Council in draft form.

- **Residents.** Residents were given an opportunity to provide input through a community survey mailed to each household, a public forum and an open house. Residents and property and

business owners also had an opportunity to attend four public hearings and a town hall-style meeting. Residents will be called upon to stay involved as the Master Plan is implemented.

- **Local and Regional Experts.** Experts in the areas of economic development, housing/neighborhoods, and redevelopment were invited to attend one of three Executive Roundtable discussions. These experts were called upon from both the Cincinnati and Dayton metropolitan regions and represented diverse professional backgrounds including banking, finance, real estate brokerage, business development, housing developers, commercial real estate developers, academia, non-profits, utilities, and government.
- **Project Management Team.** The City of Middletown retained the services of McKenna Associates, Inc., and their partners CDS, Inc., Gem Public Sector Services, and Strategic Public Policy to prepare the 2005-2010 Master Plan. This team worked closely with and reported to the City of Middletown Planning Department. The Planning Director and Senior Planner were responsible for project management at the City, day-to-day communications with the consultants, reviewing drafts, and community communications.

PLANNING PROCESS

- **Phase 1 Planning Issues Identification.** The first three Steering Committee meetings were devoted to identifying important issues that must be addressed in the Master Plan. Initial findings were used to create a community survey. The Middletown Opinion Survey was mailed in residential water bills. A statistically significant number of responses, 2,047, were mailed back to the city. Fifteen key stakeholder interviews were conducted during the same period.
- **Phase 2 Vision, Goal, and Objective Development.** The Steering Committee reviewed the results of the Community Survey and key stakeholder interviews and provided the Project Management Team with additional



Master Plan Open House, February 16, 2005

Public Participation and Planning Process Summary and Timeline

- Eleven Steering Committee Meetings
- Community Survey Mailed in Water Bill
- Fifteen Key Person Interviews
- One Public Forum
- Three Focus Groups
 - Economic Development,
 - Community Development
 - Redevelopment Roundtables
- Three Strategic Community Meetings:
 - Downtown Alliance
 - Middletown City Schools
 - Middletown Regional Hospital
- One Public Open House
- Two Planning Commission Work Sessions, including One Public Hearing
- Two City Council Work Sessions, including One Public Hearing,
- One Town-Hall-Style City Council Meeting
- Planning Commission formal recommendation, public hearing (April 13, 2005)
- City Council; 1st Reading, Public Hearing (May 3, 2005)
- City Council; 2nd Reading, Adoption (May 17, 2005)

direction. The end result was draft set of goals and objectives. Residents were invited to attend the July 28, 2004 public forum to review the draft goals and objectives. Participants were divided into four discussion groups. Each group was instructed to critique the initial set of goals and objectives and identify unimportant and/or missing items. At the end of the meeting, each group prioritized the draft objective statements. The results were finalized and presented to City Council on August 31, 2004 for adoption.

- **Phase 3 Data Gathering, Analysis, and Mapping.** Phase 3 occurred concurrently with Phases 1, 2 and 4. The recommendations in this plan are based on an extensive inventory and analysis of Middletown's demographic, physical, housing, transportation, and real estate market characteristics. Thus, Phase 3 in the planning process involved gathering information about Middletown and analyzing that information for meaningful conclusions.
- **Phase 4 Strategy Development.** The Project Management Team created action strategies to implement each Master Plan objective. This task required a considerable amount of research and review of pertinent planning, housing, and (re)development resources. To refine and validate the initial set of strategies, three executive roundtable meetings were organized around Redevelopment, Housing and Community Development, and Economic Development. Roundtable participants were asked to evaluate the general strengths, weaknesses, and shortcomings of each strategy. Emphasis was placed on identifying land use and development strategies that would be embraced by the private sector.

Three strategic meetings of community-wide importance were held with the Downtown Alliance, Middletown City School District, and Middletown Regional Hospital. These meeting were held to create an initial dialogue; give each organization an opportunity to review Master Plan goals, objectives and strategies; and identify potential partnering opportunities to achieve common goals.

- **Phase 5 Master Plan Creation.** The key strategies, conclusions, and land use recommendations were presented to the steering committee for their final review and consideration over a series of four meetings. After consensus was reached, all of the various reports, analyses, and mapping that occurred to date were placed in draft document form.
- **Phase 6 Master Plan Adoption.** The plan was unveiled to the public at an open house on February 16, 2005. Map and text display boards were placed around the ground floor lobby at City Hall. Members of the Project Management Team were available to answer questions and present major themes. Comments and questions were written on index cards provided at each station and inserted into comment boxes. The boards were also displayed at the Middletown Public Library, and electronic versions of the boards were posted on the City's website with an opportunity to email comments to City Planning staff. Planning Commission held two work sessions and one public hearing to review the draft plan. The Commission then held a final public hearing and made a formal recommendation to approve the Master Plan on April 13, 2005. City Council also held two work sessions and one public hearing, as well as a town hall-style meeting. The town hall meeting, part of an ongoing



series known as Conversations with Council, was held at Wildwood Elementary School to discuss the Master Plan with Middletown citizens. Council held a final public hearing, as well as the first reading of the adoption ordinance, on May 3, 2005. The final step in adopting the Master Plan was Council's second reading, which was held on May 17, 2005.

MASTER PLAN THEMES

The following paragraphs summarize the overarching Master Plan themes. These themes were consistently raised by planning participants at public forum, open house, and steering committee meetings and during key stakeholder interviews.

- **Economic Development.** Community input received during the planning process consistently placed economic development, tax base diversification, and job creation among the most important Master Plan issues. Residents are keenly aware that the city's future viability is linked to high-wage employment growth that results in increased expendable income for residents and higher income tax revenues for the city. Additional economic development resources, including increased funding for staffing and related programs, must be provided in the very near future.
- **Growth.** Middletown is strategically located at the leading edge of two converging development patterns expanding outward from Cincinnati to the south and Dayton to the north. Paradoxically, Middletown's land supply of vacant land is insufficient to accommodate long-term sustained growth. A small window of opportunity exists, probably less than five years, for the city to proactively position itself to be an active participant and beneficiary of inevitable development in the I-75 growth corridor. In the absence of growth, Middletown runs the risk of becoming a functionally landlocked city as development in neighboring jurisdictions encircles the city. The alternative to growth is stagnation and potential insignificance.
- **Redevelopment/Revitalization.** Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties is essential to the long term health and vitality of the City. Downtown and neighborhood revitalization cannot occur until such negative influences are removed and the land is placed back into productive use. Likewise, neighborhood issues must be better understood and the forces that are pulling residents away from Middletown must be addressed.

Master Plan Themes

- Economic Development - Higher paying jobs, economic diversification and a growing economy.
- Growth – Additional land with necessary infrastructure in place is needed to accommodate future growth.
- Redevelopment – Blighted, underutilized commercial and industrial buildings must be removed to stabilize neighborhoods and the tax base.
- Image – Showcase the city's many strengths and improve upon obvious weaknesses.
- Involvement – Residents and stakeholders are eager to stay involved. They must have buy-in and be given legitimate leadership roles.
- Partnerships – The City cannot implement this plan alone. Partnerships with private and other public sector entities are mission essential.
- Persistence – City leaders must stay the course and be mindful that challenges were not created overnight and neither will the solutions.

- **Improve Community Image.** Middletonians are keenly aware of the community's negative image as a result of the city's heavy industrial base, older housing stock, brownfields, and public school performance. Frustration was expressed over not knowing how to overcome this pervasive problem. However, Middletown has many existing assets to offer ranging from a large park system, traditional neighborhoods, arts and cultural amenities and events, and world class healthcare and educational facilities. However, more must be done to promote internal strengths and improve upon real and perceived weaknesses.
- **Community Buy-in and Participation.** Master Plan implementation will be difficult without community support. Speed and timing are critical factors for many Master Plan recommendations. The City will be judged at some level by the manner it is able to bring the community together to rally behind Master Plan goals, objectives, and action strategies. Several Master Plan strategies will require an ongoing effort on part of the City and its partners to keep residents and the business community informed and engaged during the Master Plan implementation process. Several steering committee members, key stakeholders, and focus group participants indicated a desire to stay involved after the Master Plan is adopted. Residents are also longing for an active voice and appear eager to participate in broad and meaningful ways.
- **Reestablish Partnerships.** Collectively, the priority Master Plan recommendations are beyond the city's ability to implement within any nominal time period due to human resource and funding limitations. As in the past, private, public, and quasi-public entities must be given meaningful roles to provide leadership, talent, and financial resources in collaborative implementation efforts. Communication, consensus building, inter-governmental cooperation, and acquisition of alternative funding sources are all prerequisites to the successful implementation of this plan. The previous statement is even more important in this era of decreased state and federal financial assistance to municipalities.
- **Persistence.** City leadership, residents, and the business community must be mindful that the challenges facing the city were not created overnight. Similarly, solutions to identified problems will not take hold immediately. Many Master Plan objectives, such as redeveloping brownfields, can take years to accomplish because of the complexity and magnitude of the task. Similarly, neighborhoods and downtown revitalization efforts can take years if not decades to accomplish.

Ancillary themes can be drawn from the main pages of the Master Plan text. One such theme is worth noting: the city cannot rest or become complacent at any time during the five year implementation period. The will to succeed must remain strong in light of inevitable difficulties. City officials must possess a contagious "can do" attitude and be willing to expend available political and financial resources.

MASTER PLAN VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To simplify the use of the Master Plan, the number of goals was kept to a manageable number. Master Plan goal statements and corresponding vision statements are listed below:

Master Plan Goals and Vision Statements

GOAL A: Diversify and modernize our local economy.

Middletown's economy is concentrated in a few industries in categories that are declining or stagnant nationally. The city needs to diversify its economic base and find a new niche in order to add 3,000 jobs and grow the incomes of its residents.

GOAL B: Turn Current Liabilities into Future Assets.

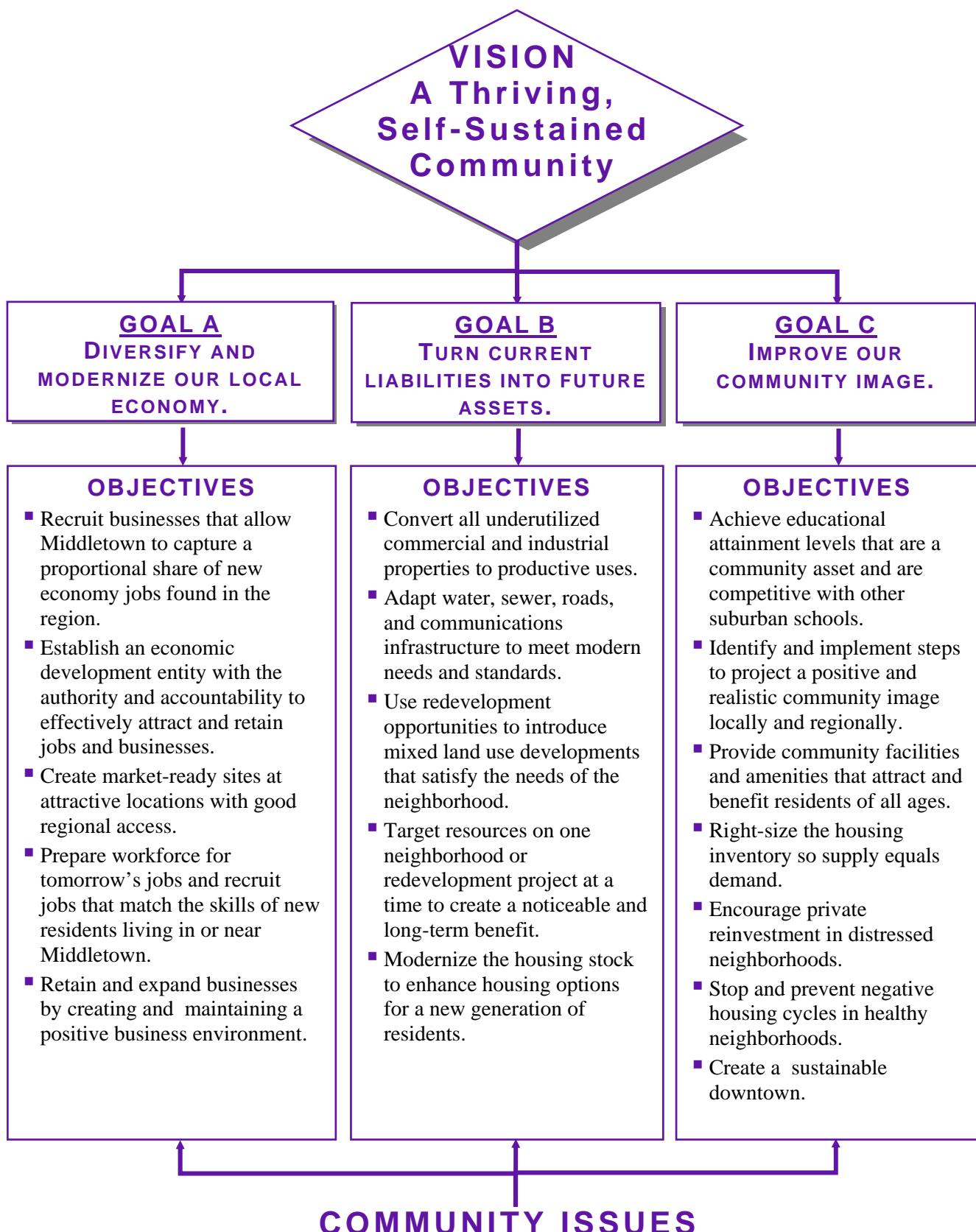
Middletown has underutilized properties and outdated infrastructure that are legacies from another era. Many of these are drains to our tax base and blighting influences on our neighborhoods. Middletown needs to find ways of restoring these properties to active use and updating our infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

GOAL C: Improve Our Community Image

Middletown is a diverse urban community with unique assets not found in surrounding suburban areas. Recent economic changes, however, have posed challenges to our quality of life, both real and perceived. The community needs to capitalize on its strengths and improve upon its weaknesses so that current residents are proud of Middletown, and residents and businesses outside Middletown are attracted to our community.

All three goals are highly interdependent. For example, it will be difficult to improve the quality of life of residents without increasing the city's tax base. The City may find it difficult to attract new businesses if the issues affecting community quality of life are not simultaneously improved. However, consensus held that the limited vacant acreage located near I-75 must be preserved for high tech business park development. It is largely felt that the City will never have the financial or political leverage needed to undertake seemingly more difficult activities if new revenue sources are not secured.

Master Plan Vision, Goals and Objectives, as adopted by City Council on August 31, 2004, are summarized on the next page.



CHAPTER 10

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

The breadth of Master Plan recommendations necessitates a condensed list of the major tasks that require action. Seven “Action Plan” summary tables are provided on the following pages. Each table prioritizes projects and defines a timeframe for implementation. Department responsibilities and possible funding sources are provided for each entry. Costs estimates are provided in most cases. Cost estimates are provided for planning purposes. Actual costs may be much different than estimated. The actual costs cannot be determined until the scope of work is defined for each task.

In most all cases, various organizations, governments and departments are listed as potential partners and funding sources. As mentioned several times throughout this plan, the city must be able to approach projects on a collaborative basis given the aggressive schedule contemplated in this plan and limited local funding.

The Action Plan tables are intended to be used by the City Administration to prioritize departmental actions and to review progress. One of three levels of priority is given under each entry under the “Priority” column. The city will vigorously pursue “high” priority task during the 2005-2010 planning cycle. “Medium” priority tasks will be pursued as staff and financial resources become available. The city, where appropriate, will encourage partners defined for each task to pursue both high and medium priority tasks. “Low” priority activities will likely not be funded or pursued or during the 2005-2010 planning period.

However, City Council will set the course for administrative actions and priority funding over the next five years using the Action Plan tables for guidance. The City Manager and Department Heads will use the Action Plan tables when preparing department budgets and work assignments.

The Economic Development, Zoning, Redevelopment, Neighborhoods and Housing, Quality of Life, Utilities, and Transportation Action Plan tables are provided on the following pages.

Five-Year Update: Although not specifically mentioned in the following tables, a key recommended action that spans all of the aforementioned categories is an extensive update of this Master Plan at the end of the five-year planning cycle. Although this plan includes some longer-term recommendations, the bulk of the strategies must be implemented within five years.

Action Plan Priorities

High Priority tasks are essential and must be implemented over the 5-year planning period. Funding and staff resources must be made available accordingly.

Medium Priority tasks will be pursued by the City as resources become available to implement simultaneously with defined *high priority* tasks.

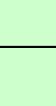
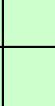
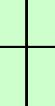
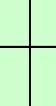
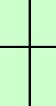
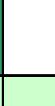
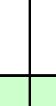
Low Priority tasks will likely not be funded or pursued during the 2005-2010 planning period, unless priorities change or a sufficient number of high- and medium-priority tasks are implemented. These tasks will likely need to be reevaluated during the next Master Plan update scheduled in 2010.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Hire Economic Development Director	H						City Manager	Chamber	\$116,000	General Fund	Improve communication between Council and Economic Development functions. Need dedicated staff person to promote Middletown.	ED 2.1
Create and Fund Industrial Development Corporation	H						City Manager	Chamber of Commerce, businesses and institutions	Funding for projects will likely come from bonds to be paid by TIF or assessment revenue.	Dedicated Millage, Voter Approved; Hotel Tax, Membership Fees	Volunteer organization with board of directors from business community and city officials. Has funding and authority to purchase property, enter into development agreements, and extend infrastructure. Use city staff for support initially.	ED 2.2
Create an Economic Development Incentive Policy	H						City Manager, Economic Development	Chamber, MCSD	\$10,000 for outside assistance	General Fund	Clearly articulate incentives and expectations for use. Seek public school and community buy-in and understanding.	ED 2.3, 4.5
Define and Fund Economic Development Programs/Marketing Strategy	H						City Manager, Economic Development	Chamber	\$250,000 first 3 years	General Fund, Bonds, Dedicated Millage	ED Director should establish programs and marketing strategy working with Chamber and City Council. Funds are needed for promotional materials, web design, targeted marketing efforts, proposals, employee development, professional services, and subscriptions, etc.	ED 2.1, 2.4, 4.1, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3
Annex adjacent land for Business Park Development/Growth	H						Economic Development	Chamber	Not known	General Fund	Ensure adequate land is available for long-term economic growth. A minimum of 200 additional acres are needed for immediate preservation.	ED 3.1
Develop High Tech Business Park	H						City Manager, Economic Development, Engineering, Environmental Services, Planning	Chamber, Port Authority, Industrial Corp., private industry, banks, developers, etc.	\$500 to \$700 per lineal foot for road, water, sewer extensions combined + private utility infrastructure costs. Does not include land costs.	Bonds, TIF, Assessments, EDA Funds, Third Frontier	First park should be at least 100 acres in size located near the interstate and Middletown Regional Hospital Healthcare and Technology Campus. Development costs cannot be accurately determined until the number of acres, location of property, and site constraints are known.	ED 1.1
Hire Economic Development Specialists	M						Economic Development	City activity	\$86,000	General Fund	Hire after Economic Development Director is hired and programs and policies are in place.	ED 2.1
Hire Administrative Assistant	L						Economic Development	City activity	\$51,739	General Fund	Consider giving existing staff person split responsibilities until funding is available.	ED 2.1

= TERMINAL TASK
= ONGOING TASK

REDEVELOPMENT

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Create Brownfield/Greyfield Inventory	H						Planning	Chamber, Industrial Development Corporation,	\$15,000 for intern plus for some oversight by environmental firm	General Fund	Needed to assess extent of problem. Provide data to developers with redevelopment experience. Hire intern to assemble data.	RD 1.1
Create Brownfields Resource Team	H						Planning, Environmental Services	EPA, environmental consultants, County, TID, Port Authority etc to provide expertise, property owners	\$3,000 per year to cover any expenses	General Fund	Members should have broad-based experience in land development. Prioritize redevelopment opportunities and make recommendations to Council. Create a decision making matrix.	RD 1.2
Obtain Critical Feedback on Redevelopment Policies	H						Planning, Environmental Services	EPA, environmental consultants, and local governments	\$3,000 for travel related expenses	General Fund	Meet with jurisdictions that have demonstrated success of redeveloping brownfields and greyfields to learn from their mistakes and best practices before moving forward with actual projects.	RD 1.3
Develop Brownfield Redevelopment Program	H						Planning, Environmental Services, Brownfield Resource Team	EPA, environmental consultants, County, TID, Port Authority etc to provide expertise, property owners	\$5,000 for administrative and copy costs	HUD's BDI	Utilize success of Aeronca as a springboard for the creation of an official brownfields policy and redevelopment program.	RD 1.4
Redevelop Towne Mall	H						City Manager, Planning, Economic Development	Property Owner, TID, Port Authority	Costs could be as high as \$80 million. Actual cost will depend on the design of the new plan.	TIF, Assessments, Private investment, Transportation Enhancement Grant	Redevelop into mixed use open air mall before a competing venue is established nearby and drains all market potential away from mall.	QL 3.3
Redevelop Greyfields in prioritized fashion.	H						Team approach, Multiple City Departments	EPA, County, TID, Port Authority, private sector, property owners, Industrial Development Corporation	Millions will be required. Cost estimates cannot be determined at this time	EPA Assessment and Clean Up Grants; Investor Developer Investments; Bonds/TIF	City will likely have to provide some financial assistance such as environmental assessment and clean up funds. Other strategies include demolition and infrastructure improvements.	RD 1.5, HN 5.3
Build Critical Support for Redevelopment in Community	H						Planning, Environmental Services, City Manager	Chamber, Industrial Development Corporation, Community-Based Organizations	\$5,000 - \$10,000 for promotional materials	General Fund	Inform residents and business community on importance of such actions and realities regarding redevelopment difficulties.	RD 1.6
Start a Land Bank Program	M						Planning, Neighborhood Improvement, Community Development	Neighborhood organizations, CDC		Consider a Vacant Property Registration and Fee Program, Ohio Green Funds, General Fund	Utilize in worst case scenarios when property owner is nonresponsive and structure is creating a nuisance and depressed property values. Landbank highly visible nuisance properties located adjacent to important thoroughfares.	RD 1.8
Promote Mixed Use Development	M						City Manager, Planning Department, Planning Commission	Developers, Property Owners, CDCs, Port Authority	\$5,000 for promotional materials, handouts, etc.	May have to provide incentives in terms of increased code enforcement around site or upgrade infrastructure or more direct subsidy	Encourage developers to provide traditional, mixed use development at larger redevelopment and infill sites to re-establish amenities and conveniently located goods, services, and employment. Inform residents of the benefits of mixed used development to gain support before actual mixed use development projects commence.	RD 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5

 = TERMINAL TASK
 = ONGOING TASK

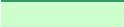
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Increase Code Enforcement Activities	H						Neighborhood Improvement, Community Development	Neighborhood organizations	\$250,000 per year	General Fund, CDBG	Administer enforcement in targeted fashion in healthy neighborhoods to stave off negative housing cycles; improve conditions in target neighborhoods selected for revitalization; and increase attractiveness adjacent to redevelopment projects.	HN 1.5, 2.3, 3.1, 4.1, 5.4
Streamline Eminent Domain Produces	H						City Manager, Legal	Butler County	\$5,000	General Fund	Take Advantage of Reap Program; Acquire and remove blighted properties in the fastest time permitted under law.	HN 4.5
Create Neighborhood Indicators Database	H						Planning, Community Development	Universities, student project	\$5,000 for intern	General Fund, CDBG	I.D. neighborhoods as healthy, transitional, declining. Use data to identify neighborhoods that should be revitalized to prevent negative housing cycles in healthy neighborhoods.	HN 1.1, 5.1
Create Infill Housing Program	H						Planning, Community Development	MCSD, BMHA, NHS	\$5,000	General Fund, CDBG	Include vacant lots, vacated/blighted structures. Share information with housing developers. Database should be linked to brownfield/greyfield database to show all housing development opportunities on vacant or underutilized property.	HN 2.2, 4.4
Target Neighborhood for Revitalization	H						Planning, Community Development	Banks, Realtors, Developers, Foundations, Port Authority, County, NHP, CDCs, BMHA	\$50,000 - \$75,000 planning	General Fund, CDBG	Planning costs to determine appropriate incentives, housing rehabilitation spending limits on a per unit basis, identify units/structures for rehabilitation or demolition, code enforcement strategy, identify larger infill/mixed use opportunities, property acquisition/disposition methods, identify target market.	HN 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Revitalize Target Neighborhood	H						Planning, Community Development	Banks, Realtors, Developers, Foundations, Port Authority, NHP, CDCs, BMHA	Millions in public and private investment. \$45,000/unit rehab; \$10,000/unit demolition; \$1 million property acquisition	CDBG, HOME, Private Investment, Bank CRA Investment, Partnership Funds, TIF	Concentrate available resources in target neighborhood until it is fully revitalized. Repeat process until all neighborhoods are stabilized. Desired impact will take a multi-year effort. Selected neighborhood should be located adjacent to a healthy neighborhood to stop negative housing cycles. Cost for new home construction will vary based on target market.	HN 1.5, 1.6, 4.4
Right Size Housing Inventory; Demolish Nuisance/Blighted Structures	H						Neighborhood Improvement, Community Development	BMHA	\$8,000 per unit residential	CDBG, General Fund	Replace 1% of housing inventory each year to maintain competitive housing in Middletown. Use code enforcement to encourage property owner-initiated demolition. Use public money when property owner is not receptive. Consider creating a vacant building registry.	HN 3.2
Develop, strengthen grass roots neighborhood organizations	M						Planning, Community Development	2nd Ward Community Council, Middletown Community Foundation, PRISM, Neighborhood Watch, United Way	\$50,000	CDBG, foundations, non profits	Strong neighborhoods in mature areas often require strong grassroots activity and self-promotion as an excellent place to live and raise a family. Empower passionate residents to make a difference in their neighborhoods.	HN 4.2, QL 2.3
Create landbanking and property disposition program	M						Planning, Neighborhood Improvement, Community Development	Developers, NHP, CDCs, Foundation, County tax sales	Acquisition and demolition Cost will vary based on the property.	General Fund, Port Authority	Acquire neglected, blighted, nuisance properties that have a negative impact on adjacent property values and are located at highly visible locations. Property acquisition, clearance and landbanking should be done as a last resort to mitigate a problem property.	HN 2.2, 4.5
Neighborhood Promotional Materials	L						Planning, Community Development, Neighborhood Organizations	Media, Community Foundation	\$1,500	CDBG, HOME, Foundation, CDC's	Promote high quality of life found in Middletown neighborhoods to region.	QL 2.4
Acquire/zone additional property for low density, higher end single family development	L						City Manager, Planning	City activity	In-house cost	General Fund	Housing demand for new higher-end residential is stronger than anticipated given success of the Renaissance subdivision developed by Clayton Homes. Additional land will be needed in same general location in next 3 to 5 years to satisfy market demand.	HN 2.1

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QUALITY OF LIFE

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Institute formal communication between schools and city	H						City Manager	MCSD	N/A	N/A	Needed to share critical information and build awareness of each other's needs, strategies, opportunities and constraints.	QL 1.1
Work with schools to gain better understanding and acceptance of community diversity	H						City Manager	MCSD	NA	N/A	MCSD is investing heavily in understanding diversity and make appropriate policies. Promote MCSD's community survey that will be undertaken to assess community views and attitudes as part a larger strategic planning process. Utilize data to address diversity related issues.	QL 1.2, 2.5
Strengthen Civic Unity and participation in government	H						City Manager, Planning, Community Development	Chamber, MCSD	\$10,000	General Fund	Ensure boards, commissions, subcommittees are representative of the entire community. Complaints were heard that the same people do everything. Enhance communication with residents to increase participation. Create communications network to better inform individuals and groups that are interested in civic involvement.	QL 2.3
Revitalize Downtown to increase Civic Pride and Enhance Community Image	H						Multiple Departments depending upon task; Planning should serve as project manager	Downtown Alliance, Chamber	Façade improvements, streetscape, business assistance loans and grants	TIF, SID, Assessments, Downtown Improvement Grants, Private investment, Historic Tax Credits, Transportation Enhancement Grant	Implement past plans, build organizational capacity, attract diverse land uses, establish as cultural/entertainment center, connect to the river.	QL 2.6, 4.1 - 4.9
Work with schools to identify opportunities to share facilities and grounds for the betterment of the entire community.	M						Planning	MCSD	N/A	N/A	Identify possible strategies to share facilities for multiple purposes such as a school/recreation facility or school grounds/park facilities or school facilities/neighborhood centers.	QL 3.1, 3.2
Start a first impression program of creating gateways and streetscape improvements	M						Planning, Economic Development	Chamber, ODOT, OKI, TID, Private Sector	Millions in combined public investment	Transportation Enhancement Grants, Assessments; bonds, TIF, SID	Improve streetscape during scheduled improvements to existing roadway to reduce local cost burden. State highways are eligible for TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement grants which can be used for streetscape improvements. Such improvements are needed to improve the image of Middletown's corridors.	QL 2.1
Develop Marketing/Branding Strategy for Middletown	M						Planning/Economic Development	Chamber, CVB	Up to \$50,000	General Fund, Chamber, CVB	May require the assistance of a Public Relations/Marketing firm. Utilize volunteers to help keep costs down. However, positive information must be constantly released to change regional perceptions. High quality spots, ads, and print materials are needed.	QL 2.4, 4.6
Develop a park on east side	M						City Manager, Planning		500,000	Clean Ohio, TIF, land donation,/dedication	Park should be designed as a business park and neighborhood amenity with outdoor seating, trails and reflective areas. Parks should be encouraged in conjunction with new development.	QL 3.6
Modernize the Park System	M						Planning , Community Services	Neighborhood and civic organizations, business community	\$3 million	Park Impact Fee, Nature Works, LWCF, Clean Ohio, Donations	Consider consolidating facilities into fewer parks to improve the quality of the facilities provided. Prepare a parks and recreation master plan to determine needs. Create new parks in under-served areas in the east and northeast. Resident survey indicated a desire for open space and trails, etc., in addition to new playground and athletic facilities.	QL 3.5

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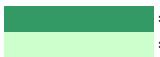
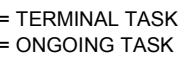
TRANSPORTATION

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Plan Gateway Improvements at I-75/SR 122 Interchange	H						Engineering, Planning	Warren County, Port Authority, OKI, ODOT	\$1 million	Federal Highway, ODOT, Warren County, OKI, TID, City	Similar projects cost up to \$1 million for gateway, landscaping enhancements. Actual costs will be determined by the type and amount of enhancement desired.	QL 2.1, ED 3.6
Plan new interchange at Greentree (preferred)	H						Engineering/ Planning	Warren County, Monroe, Turtlecreek Twp., Port Authority, OKI, ODOT	\$500,000 for IJS	City, Warren County, OKI, ODOT, Port Authority	Must garner support from neighboring jurisdictions and ODOT and OKI. Follow suggested procedure for TRAC approval. Needed to open more land for development and provide better access to existing industrial parks and downtown.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Widen Cincinnati Dayton Road from SR 122 north to 3 lanes	H						Engineering	Warren County, OKI, ODOT	\$1 million to Coles Road	Federal Highway, ODOT, OKI, TID, local government match	Scheduled for 2006 construction date. Warren County and City of Franklin required to improve north of Middletown.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Construct New Interchange	H						Engineering, Planning	Warren County, Port Authority, OKI, ODOT	\$20-\$40 Million	Federal Highway, ODOT, OKI, TID, local government match	Amount shown in cost estimate is a range provided for planning purposes only. A more detailed cost estimate will be provided as part of an Interchange Justification Study/Major Investment Study.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Yankee Road Extension	H						Engineering	Butler County, TID, Monroe, ODOT	Extraterritorial project; cost to others	Butler County, ODOT, OKI, TID, local government match	Provide additional means of interstate access via SR 63 to industrial development.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Widen Yankee Road	H						Engineering	ODOT	\$10 million	ODOT, TID, local government match	Widen in conjunction with Yankee Road extension to Todhunter Road and SR 63.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Widen Union Road	H						Engineering, Planning	Warren County, Port Authority, OKI, ODOT	\$4.5 million	Federal Highway, ODOT, OKI, TID, local government match	Majority of Union road needing improvements is located outside Middletown. Work cooperatively with and provide political support for neighboring governments.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
SR 123/73 Connector Road	H						Engineering, Planning	Franklin, ODOT, OKI	Extraterritorial project; cost to others	Warren County, ODOT, OKI, local match	This is a viable alternative to a new interchange at Manchester/I-75 to increase access to Hook Field and Downtown. Improvement is shown on Franklin's Master Plan. Provide political support to Franklin and other partners to help in implementing this strategy.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Update Thoroughfare classifications	M						Engineering, Planning		In-house	General Fund, department budget	Create single roadway classification system for all city departments to use and update regulations accordingly.	I 1.4, QL 2.1
Improve Grand, Sutphin, Central Downtown Access	M						Engineering, Planning	TID, ODOT	\$20 to \$30 million	TID, ODOT, local match	Difficult to estimate costs until the preferred design is chosen and the need for additional right-of-way is known. Several properties located adjacent to Sutphin must be taken to widen the street.	I 1.4, QL 4.8
Widen Oxford State Road from west of Breiel to SR 4 to 5 lanes	M						Engineering	Butler County, Port Authority, TID	\$22 - \$27 million with grade separation for rail road crossings. Does not include needed r-o-w or utility relocation	Butler County, ODOT, OKI, TID, local government match	Make enhancement in preparation of new interchange at Greentree Road. Create modern industrial spine road that provides direct regional access to an interstate. Right-of-way will be problematic due to existing development located close to the road.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Achieve satisfactory level of street conditions	M						Engineering	ODOT	\$7-\$10 million annually	ODOT Issue II funds		I 1.4.
Widen Hendrickson Road and I-75 Bridge	M						Engineering	ODOT, OKI, Warren County, local government match	\$10 - \$20 million	Federal Highway, ODOT, OKI, Warren County, local government match	Widen existing bridge across I-75 to provide safe alternative to SR 122.	I 1.4
Expand Bicycle Facilities	M						Planning, Engineering	OKI, ODOT, County	\$45/lineal ft bike path; \$15/lineal ft bike lane.	ODOT Issue II funds, Transportation Enhancement Grants, Clean Ohio	Work with OKI to identify ways to increase chances for grant funding. Bicycle Plan is important. Cost estimates are low and do not include costs for right-of-way acquisition, substantial earthwork, or major roadwork.	QL 3.7
Create Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan	L						Planning, Engineering		\$30,000 if outsourced	General Fund	Link neighborhoods to parks, schools, community facilities, retail, and open spaces.	QL 3.7
Construct Union Rd extension between Manchester and SR 123	L						Engineering, Planning	Warren County, Franklin, Franklin twp., ODOT, OKI	Extraterritorial project; cost to others	Federal Highway, Warren County, ODOT, OKI, local match	Extension is needed to create continuous parallel service road to I-75, connecting all local interchanges. Such connections are necessary to provide local alternatives to I-75 and to reroute traffic during emergency closures.	I 1.3, ED 3.5
Construct Central extension/ connector and bridge over I-75	L						Engineering, Planning	OKI, ODOT, County	\$20-\$30 million	Federal Highway, Warren County, ODOT, OKI, local match	Need to increase number of options to get across I-75 as population and business grow.	I 1.4

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UTILITIES

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Create communications technology committee	H	■					Engineering, Planning, Economic Development	Chamber, business community	\$1,500	General Fund	Committee should consist of individuals that have knowledge of telecommunication technology. Purpose is to keep city council informed of opportunities to capitalize on rapidly changing technology and make recommendations regarding the city's policies/regulations.	I 1.7
Create Stormwater Utility	H	■					Environmental, Engineering		\$1.5 million	Utility bills	Help pay to eliminate combined sewer overflow problems.	I 1.8
Assess condition of lines in older sections of downtown to determine replacement needs	H	■	■	■	■	■	Environmental, Engineering		\$250,000- \$500,000	General Fund, Department Budget	Rehab, reline or replace relief and downtown area sewers developed in the 1950s to avoid potential catastrophic disruptions upstream.	I 1.1
Implement LTCP with OEPA	H						Environmental, Engineering	OEPA	\$50 million +	Increase sanitary rates	Ensure that new development is not precluded because of water quality issues.	I 1.2
Install Gravity Sewers to Midd-Cities Industrial park	M	■					Environmental Services, Engineering	Business community, SWAC		Private		I 1.1
Update right-of way regulations and engineering standards	M	■					Engineering, Planning	Chamber, business community	\$15,000	General fund	Include telecommunications infrastructure standards and require development of telecommunications infrastructure during new development along with other utilities to avoid work in road rights-of-way later.	I 1.6
Install Water Main on Oxford State Road	M	■	■	■	■		Environmental Services, Engineering		\$300,000 - \$500,000		Needed to close loop to improve pressure and ensure constant supply.	I 1.1
Increase capacity of first pipe section east of sewage treatment plant	L	■	■	■	■	■	Environmental, Engineering		\$500,000	Increase sanitary rates	A slight flow restriction exists according to the 1995 Sewer Master Plan . Added flows as a result of growth will worsen the problem.	I 1.1
Install Gravity Sewers to Aeronca	L	■					Environmental, Engineering		\$150,000	Private, Bonds, General Fund, Assessment		I 1.1

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ZONING

Action	Priority	1 year	2 years	3 years	5 years	10 years	Responsibility	Partnership	Cost Estimate	Funding Sources	Notes	Strategies
Streamline development review procedures by preparing an overlay district for planned high tech business parks.	H						Planning Department		\$7,000 to \$25,000	General Fund	Overlay district requirements will assure that planned business parks develop consistent to Master Plan objectives. Process involves pre-approved use and design standards and staff review that minimizes time and gives Middletown a competitive advantage.	ED 1.1, 5.4
Replace existing Downtown zoning districts	M						Planning Department		\$15,000 to \$25,000	General Fund	Protect traditional development pattern and architecture and permit more flexible mixed use configurations. Include design standards.	QL 4.2, 4.7
Infill/Mixed Use Design Standards	M						Planning Department	Neighborhood organizations	\$7,000 to \$25,000	General Fund	Articulate minimum expectations for mixed use projects particularly if public incentives are utilized as part of a infill or redevelopment project.	RD 2.3
Prepare a comprehensive zoning remapping	M						Planning Department		In house	General Fund	Portions of city have zoning designations that do not reflect market conditions.	RD 2.3, 2.5, HN 1.5, 2.2
Prepare Comprehensive Update of Zoning Code	M						Planning Department		\$50,000 to \$100,000	General Fund	Zoning Code is outdated and is hard to follow and interpret. This gives the City an unsophisticated image with land developers. Consider developing a form-based code that regulates context of development rather than applying artificial setbacks and use.	ED 5.4, RD 2.3, 2.5, HN 1.5, 2.2

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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OVERVIEW

The following sections present tools and techniques that citizens, community leaders, and city staff can use to implement the Master Plan. Implementation measures are viable only if there are people in the community with vision and tenacity who are willing to invest the time and effort required to make them work. Community improvement requires a compelling vision, persistence, flexibility to respond to changing needs, opportunities, and circumstances, and an ability to achieve consensus.

MARKETING

- **Condensed Brochure.** Produce a more reader-friendly form of this Plan, as most individuals will not take the time to read a hundred-plus page document, and a small brochure with reduced versions of the Future Land Use Map combined with condensed versions of the Goals and Policies and Implementation Plan sections would make an attractive alternative. Such a brochure could be distributed to individuals at City Hall, or even mailed to residents and businesses in the City.
- **Community Implementation Advisory Committee.** The Master Plan was largely viewed as a watershed event for the community, and one that generated renewed optimism about Middletown's future. Members of the Steering Committee, key stakeholders, and individuals attending focus group meetings expressed interest in staying involved during plan implementation.

The city must embrace this activism and incorporate interested residents and community leaders during the Master Plan implementation phase by creating a Master Plan Implementation Advisory Committee. Such a committee, even if advisory, could help to maintain communication, coordination, and cooperation between the city and its residents and business. Such communication, coordination, and cooperation will in the end be one of the key components by which success will be measured.

The committee's responsibilities would be set by City Council. The City Manager and the Planning Director would be responsible for logistical organization and providing the committee with resources and required information to make informed decisions and recommendations. It is anticipated that the committee will be asked to brainstorm, create and consider alternative solutions for each problem, and make action recommendations to City Council. Such committee would also be expected to be community ambassadors by sharing Master Plan information with neighbors, co-workers, and colleagues.

- **Prepare Departmental Strategic Plan Goals.** The Master Plan has numerous goals objectives and recommended actions. Each department head is encouraged to prepare annual strategic plan goals for their department as a means to help interdepartmental coordination and to keep Master Plan strategies on the "front burner". Some communities that implement this strategy find that departmental strategic plans need to be updated more frequently than once a year when items are "checked off" quickly.

ZONING

- **Development Agreement.** Although there is no explicit legislative authority for such agreements, many communities have used development agreements to achieve a mutual understanding between the developer and community concerning the conditions under which

development can occur. Development agreements are often negotiated as part of a planned development approval, allowing the community and developer to address complex issues that cannot be adequately addressed on a typical site plan. Development agreements might prove useful to achieve desired developments, especially if or when a mixed use development is proposed.

- **Overlay Zoning.** Overlay zoning allows the City to impose a new set of regulations on a special area within an existing zoning district. In an area where overlay zoning is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. Thus, the overlay district regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying zoning district. Overlay zoning should be strongly considered in downtown and in the Planned Business Park locations east of I-75. Overlays have been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas, without disrupting the underlying zoning.
- **Mixed Use.** Amend the zoning code to permit residential uses as a permitted use above retail and office in commercial districts, especially the CBD-1 and CBD-2 Districts. Permit accessory residential units and work-live units in commercial districts.

No new zoning districts would be required to accommodate new mixed use development if the Planned Development regulations were utilized. However, the Planned Development District standards for mixed use development should be carefully reviewed. At a minimum, the yard and setback requirements should be revised to provide greater flexibility and allow zero lot line development.

Some communities offer performance-based zoning regulations that give bonuses in return for performance of plan goals. Examples include granting density bonuses in return for the provision of additional open space, mixed-income housing, and appropriate design and land use mix (e.g., retail, office, and residential) on the same development parcel.

- **Parking.** Relax Mixed Use parking requirements in return for staggered parking demand and multimodal transportation including well-designed transit stops, wide sidewalks, and/or multi-use paths that connect to the greater transportation system and adjacent neighborhoods and employment and shopping centers.
- **Mixed Use Design Guidelines/Development Manual.** It is highly recommended that a mixed use development manual be created before promoting mixed use development at infill and redevelopment sites. Such manual should be developed with public input to gain support for mixed use developments and acceptance of mixed use principles. The manual can be shared with developers as communication tool that conveys land use and design expectations.
- **Zoning Review Procedures.** Increase Middletown's competitiveness in the region by creating "by right" zones to streamline review process for infill and redevelopment projects located west of I-75 and new Business Park Development projects located east of I-75. By right regulations must be very precise. Staff would be given the authority to review and approve plans that meet the city's development regulations. A copy of the plan could be forwarded to Planning Commission along with a transmittal of staff's action. The Planning Commission would have one meeting to make additional requests. Staff could include Planning Commission's items in the

administrative approval. This approach may result in a three- to six-month time savings over other communities.

- **Form-Based Zoning.** Prepare a comprehensive update of the City's zoning code to include regulations that are more concerned with context, scale and form rather than the strict delineation of uses and setback requirements. Zoning codes based on form are concerned with pedestrian scale and activity, street design, neighborhood creation, quality of life, mixed use development, landscaping, and transit orientation. This approach would offer greater flexibility in mature neighborhoods where suburban style zoning standards have been artificially applied.

FINANCING TOOLS

Successful implementation of the Master Plan will depend on the ability of the City to secure necessary financing. Besides the general fund, the following sources of revenue are available to the City:

- **Dedicated Millage.** Special millages can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose. For example, several communities have used special land acquisition funds supported by small targeted property tax millages or other public or private sources. A land acquisition fund would be a useful tool to promote open space preservation in the City. The City should explore the feasibility of establishing a land acquisition fund for the purposes of facilitating implementation of this Plan.
- **Special Assessments.** Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding might prove useful to implement utility and road improvements in the City. The City should explore the feasibility of utilizing special assessments for the purposes of facilitating implementation of this Plan.
- **Bond Programs.** Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for a specific community project and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project. The City should explore the feasibility of utilizing bond and other financing programs for the purposes of facilitating implementation of this Plan.
- **Debt Capacity.** The City has very low debt. As a result, the city has a very high debt capacity with an A-1 rating by Moody's. According to the Cost of Services Analysis prepared by Strategic Public Policy, the City could issue approximately \$50 million in additional unvoted debt principal as of December 31, 2003.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** Tax increment financing is authorized by Chapter 5709 of the Ohio Revised Code. TIF service payments may be made to a city in lieu of property taxes and targeted toward the cost of construction of infrastructure or other public improvements according to an established procedure. Often, TIF revenue bonds are issued to finance the improvements, and the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds. The City should explore the feasibility of tax increment financing and other financing programs for the purposes of facilitating implementation of this Master Plan.

- **Tax Abatement, Enterprise Zones, and Community Reinvestment Areas.** These additional economic development tools may provide the City with opportunities for providing for nonresidential development in certain areas, and for utilizing certain income level conditions to meet qualifications. The City should explore the feasibility of tax abatement, enterprise zones, community reinvestment areas, and other financing programs for the purposes of facilitating implementation of this Plan.
- **Lease-Purchase Agreements.** A lease-purchase agreement, or municipal lease, can be an attractive option for a municipality financing large capital improvements. Unlike a standard lease structure, often referred to as a “true lease” or “operating lease”, lease-purchase agreements allow a municipality to lease an asset while receiving a credit for each lease payment. At the end of the lease term, the municipality acquires full ownership of the asset. A municipal lease can be structured in two ways. The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 715.011 grants a municipality the specific statutory authority to enter into such an agreement directly with a contractor, and specifies a competitive bidding procedure that the municipality must follow in awarding contracts. A municipality may also enter into a lease-purchase agreement by relying on home rule power. In this form of municipal lease, a municipality enters into a lease-purchase agreement directly with a bank or other financial institution. This form of lease-purchase agreement may be favored over the statutory form which requires a municipality to enter into a lease directly with a contractor.

A lease-purchase agreement can provide three primary benefits to a municipality. First, because the federal tax law treats a municipal lease like a bond or note of the municipality, the interest component of the municipal lease is tax-exempt under the Internal Revenue Code. Second, monthly lease payments must be appropriated by the municipality on an annual basis and are not considered debt to the municipality. If properly structured, the year-to year structure of a municipal lease allows a municipality to terminate the lease at the end of any fiscal year without penalty. Finally, a municipal lease allows a municipality to take advantage of the above benefits and results in full ownership of the asset at the end of the lease term, unlike a true or operating lease.

While a lease-purchase agreement can provide many benefits, a municipality must ensure that the agreement will not be classified as debt under Ohio Law. A municipality must pay close attention to municipal lease language and provisions addressing non-renewal language, non-substitution clauses, indemnification, property taxes, and assignment of interest to third parties. Taking the above into consideration, a municipal lease can be a creative and attractive option in financing large capital improvements.

GRANTS

- **ODNR Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and NatureWorks Grant Programs.** The Ohio Department of Natural Resources coordinates distribution of grants available for park development and land acquisition. The maximum grant for development varies from grant cycle to grant cycle. In the future, the City may wish to seek funding for acquisition of land principally for open space and natural resource preservation purposes.
- **Clean Ohio Fund Grant Programs.** Recently established following a Statewide referendum, the Clean Ohio Fund will drive four programs coordinated by various State agencies and aimed at open space acquisition, brownfields redevelopment, farmland preservation, and the establishment of trails. Numerous opportunities exist within the City and should be explored to bring direct benefit to the City from the Clean Ohio Fund.

- **Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21):** In 2000, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) distributed more than \$15 million to over fifty (50) Ohio communities for a variety of transportation enhancement projects. This funding is provided through the TEA-21 landmark legislation, which was passed by Congress in 1998. TEA-21 requires each state to set aside ten (10) percent of their Surface Transportation Funds for Transportation Enhancement projects including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transportation beautification projects, and historic preservation projects.

Awarded grants ranged from \$15,000 to more than \$1.5 million in 2000. Thirty-six (36) communities received grants for bicycle and pedestrian facility projects followed by eleven (11) historic preservation projects and three (3) beautification projects. ODOT received 126 applications from fifty-seven (57) counties. Transportation Enhancement Grant applications can be submitted to either the Ohio Department of Transportation or OKI.

- **Federal EPA Assessment and Clean-up Grants.** USEPA offers Brownfield Assessment grants to local communities to prepare Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental assessments to determine the level of contamination of a site or sites. The local community does not have to own the property to receive the grant but cooperation is needed with the current property owner. USEPA grants help offset environmental remediation costs. These grants are also available to local governments. However, the property must be under public control to qualify for the Cleanup grant.

FISCAL ANALYSIS RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are formulated after the Cost of Service Analysis was completed and presented to the Master Plan Steering Committee. These recommendations are designed to augment, reinforce, and blend in with other analysis and goals developed as part of the Master Plan process. They also offer suggestions on how to increase non-tax and tax revenues and decrease expenditures. Several issues, however, need to be reviewed in the total context of the Strategic Public Policy Fiscal Analysis.

- **Diversify Land Use.** The City must attract non-retail commercial development to lower the tax burden on existing residents and businesses. Non-retail commercial properties require fewer public services while substantially adding income tax revenues. Retail development is essentially a wash, in that public service costs for road maintenance and police and fire protection equal property and income tax revenues. Industrial and office development produce more tax revenue than costs to provide essential public services.
- **Property Taxes.** The city revenues derived from real and personal property tax are unusually low. With the reduction of state transfer tax and potential dampening of the productivity of the income tax, property tax revenues will have to play a larger role in the funding of basic operational costs. For that reason, it appears that tax levies to support Emergency Services, recreation facilities, and economic development should be seriously considered by the City.
- **Police and Fire Alternative Funding.** Police and Fire services will continue to place major stresses on local expenditures and indeed will increase their percentage of overall operational costs based on current practices. This trend will prevent the City from making needed expenditures in the areas of road improvements and quality recreational facilities. Other funding sources must be developed to address Emergency Services costs.

- **CDBG.** At present the City utilizes its Community Development Block Grant Funds in a widespread manner. In order to be able to create critical masses needed for successful redevelopment efforts, the CDBG funds should be used in a much more targeted fashion.
- **Recreation.** The report has noted the lack of investment in open space and recreation facilities in Middletown. In addition to the consideration of a dedicated property levy on this issue the City should revise its zoning and subdivision regulations to create more productive open space as new development occurs. This is also important in the area of new office park development. The GEM Report noted the need for high quality office park environments from a marketability perspective. It is more likely that this will occur if zoning requirements include environmental quality issues. These items are an insignificant cost in the overall office park development, but will substantially increase marketing potential and income tax potential.
- **Income Tax Credit.** Middletown currently offers a full 100% credit for income taxes that are owed in the community where residents work. The City should consider elimination of a portion of the income tax credit as a means of dealing with the Master Plan implementation. Many cities are eliminating part of this credit as it makes the community less vulnerable to downturns within specific community-based businesses. With a moderate 1.5% income tax rate, the City is foregoing significant revenues by continuing the 100% credit. The City could increase revenue by as much as \$500,000 for every 0.5% reduction in credit. However, when compared to other Ohio cities with an older industrial base which have seen drops in income tax revenues of 12-15%, the income tax revenues for Middletown have remained unusually steady.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- **Intergovernmental Cooperation.** Some Master Plan strategies can be achieved only if the City is able to achieve cooperation from other units of government. For example, road improvements will affect quality of life, but decisions regarding state highways are made by the ODOT. Clearly, ODOT must be aware of the City's land use planning goals and policies. Coordination and cooperation is also needed with OKI, Butler and Warren Counties and neighboring governments to successfully get a second interchange improved. The Butler County Port Authority and Transportation Improvement District are two unique forms of government that have additional funding mechanisms for transportation and economic development-related projects that local governments do not possess.
- **Butler County Port Authority.** Port authorities are given broad real estate and economic development-related powers by the Ohio Revised Code. As political subdivisions, port authorities are granted a number of powers that can foster economic development in local communities, benefiting both the community and local business. Port authorities possess the following powers:
 - Acquiring Property
 - Issuing Revenue Bonds
 - Facilitating Economic Development Transactions
 - Exercising Eminent Domain Power
 - Acquiring Property to Facilitate Economic Development and Housing
 - Receiving State and Federal Grants and Loans
 - Exercising Powers on Behalf of Another Political Subdivision
 - Issuing General Obligation Bonds

- Levying Voted Property Tax
- Engaging in Extraterritorial Activities

Port Authorities can exercise their powers within any political subdivision located in the port authority's area of jurisdiction. Port Authorities can also exercise their powers in political subdivisions outside of the port authority's area of jurisdiction with prior state approval.

These powers can be used by communities to realize a number of community objectives. For example, a number of the above powers can be used to create new opportunities for growth in areas such as languishing brownfields. A port authority can exercise the power of eminent domain to assemble parcels of land, and they can acquire and develop real or personal property for authorized purposes. These purposes include enhancing, fostering, aiding, providing, or promoting transportation, economic development, housing, recreation, education, governmental operations, culture, or research within a community. Communities can also take advantage of lease-purchase agreements with a port authority to create safety and community centers, as well as private facilities and business centers that can foster economic development. In addition, a port authority can make loans; acquire, develop and then sell interests in a property; and provide guarantees. A guarantee allows the port authority to provide additional financial security for economic development projects.

The numerous tools and powers that a port authority possesses can yield considerable benefits to communities. A port authority allows a community to undertake projects that might be impossible if undertaken alone and allows the community and local businesses to utilize a number of different economic development powers that promote a thriving local economy. In some ways, the recent creation of Butler County Port Authority is serendipitous with the timing of Middletown's Master Plan update and aggressive schedule for action.

- **Butler County Transportation Improvement District.** The Butler County Transportation Improvement District (TID) is a quasi-governmental jurisdiction with authority to improve all aspects of Butler County's transportation system. The TID works closely with local communities and generates intergovernmental cooperation to implement transportation-related projects often of a regional magnitude. According to the TID's website (www.bctid.org), the TID coordinates federal, state, and local resources in planning, financing, constructing, and operating transportation projects in cooperation with and on behalf of local governments. In fostering cooperation among local governments, the TID increases the impact and effectiveness of local transportation planning and funding. The cooperative structure of the TID allows Butler County communities to accomplish more together than they would if they acted alone.

In addition to state and federal sources, the TID initiates innovative funding measures to maximize all available resources. Funding is a key aspect of roadway improvement projects. The sooner money is guaranteed the sooner the project gets approved and built. However, local participation, in the age of reduced funding at all levels of government, is essential. The TID can leverage local funds with alternative funding sources to increase the potential for success. The TID cannot raise taxes but it does have authority to issue debt, acquire grants, apply for state infrastructure lending, and assess property. TID's can also take property needed for right-of-way. A central goal of the Butler County TID is finding innovative and alternative funding for road improvements.

- **Community Development Corporations/Community Improvement Corporations.** Community Development Corporations and Community Improvement Corporations have

authority to do projects anywhere within the State of Ohio. Not all CDC/CICs will be willing to work in Middletown, however, as funding is usually tied to a home geography. Middletown should send the Master Plan to some of the larger, more active CDC/CICs in the state that have the background and resources to assist Middletown in implementing Master Plan goals, objectives and strategies.

Some fundamental differences exist between CDC and CIC's. CDCs have a private board of directors while a CIC is a public-private venture with three public officials on the board of directors. CICs also have an advantage of being able to borrow money and issue bonds. Both can secure mortgages and make residential and business loans. Both can purchase, sell, lease, and/or convey real and personal property.

Example projects undertaken by CDCs include industrial park development, brownfield redevelopment, loan underwriting, business loans/grants, market rate housing, affordable housing, infill development, housing rehabilitation, and housing down payment assistance.

- **Private Sector.** The City must establish relationships with private sector development- related professionals and companies to implement Master Plan goals. Much of this work will require outreach to the City's business community to learn of interest and other networking opportunities. Another part of reeling in private sector partners is persuasive education. The City must be able to effectively communicate the Master Plan vision and the opportunities that exist to make a profit by investing in Middletown.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The success of the Master Plan depends to a great extent on efforts to inform and educate citizens about the Plan and the need for regulatory measures to implement the Plan. Successful implementation requires support by and active participation of residents, property owners, and business owners through a thoughtfully prepared public education program.

For example, citizens should be made aware of the important opportunities and constraints that face the City in the future, from population decline to growth and annexation. Citizens must be informed about the impacts of development and redevelopment on the City, as well as their opportunity for input into what type of development it might be, as well as what the City can and cannot do in working with private property owners towards mutual goals. Efforts should be made to identify the benefits to be achieved from new policies.

Implementation measures are workable if there are people in the community with vision and tenacity who are willing to invest the time and effort required to make them work. Community improvement requires a compelling vision, persistence, flexibility to respond to changing needs, opportunities, and circumstances, and an ability to achieve consensus. By seizing the opportunity to plan now and not letting go of this opportunity in the future, the City will be able to achieve the Master Plan goals, fulfill the Master Plan objectives, and implement Master Plan strategies.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION



- LOCATION 2-1
- DEVELOPMENT HISTORY 2-2
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CHAPTER 2

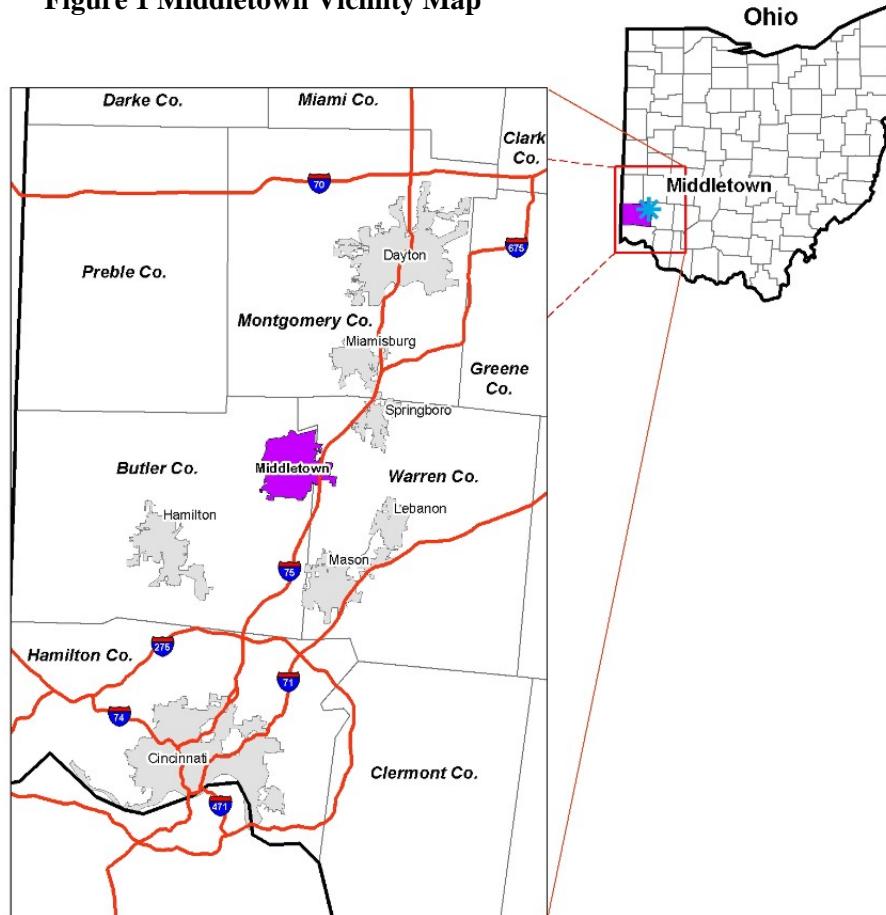
COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

LOCATION

The City of Middletown is located in northeast Butler County in Southwest Ohio. Municipal boundaries have expanded into western Warren County as a result of recent annexations. Middletown is also centrally located between Cincinnati and Dayton along the I-75 growth corridor. Neighboring communities include: the City of Franklin and Franklin Township, Warren County to the north; Franklin Township, Warren County to the east; City of Monroe to the south; and Lemon and Madison Townships, Butler County to the west. The Great Miami River is conterminous with a portion of the Middletown's western and northern municipal boundaries.

Middletown is considered part of the Cincinnati Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA), which collectively contains approximately 1.6 million people according to 2002 estimates. The Cincinnati CMSA includes Hamilton, Butler, Warren, Clermont, Brown counties in Ohio and Boone, Campbell, Kenton, Gallatin, Grant and Pendleton counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn and Ohio counties in Indiana.

Figure 1 Middletown Vicinity Map



DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

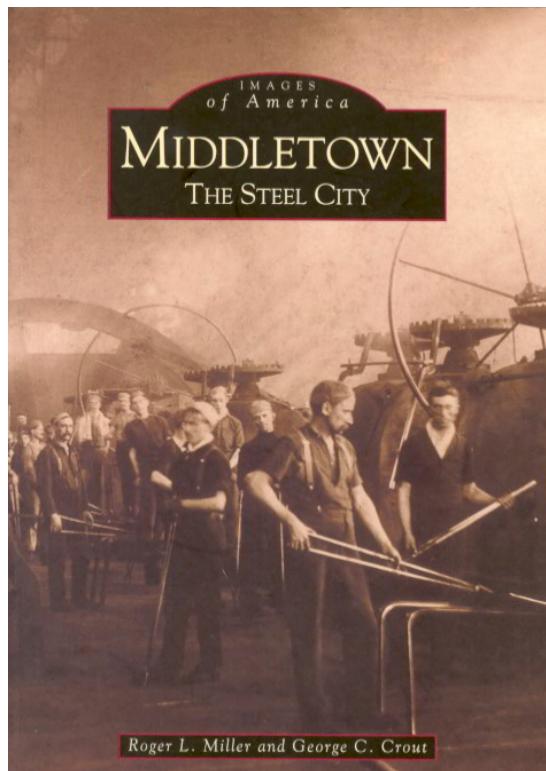
Middletown was incorporated in 1833 as a village along the east bank of the Great Miami River. Initial development and population growth was relatively modest through the 19th Century, though Middletown enjoyed rapid growth during the 20th Century as a result of expanded industrial activity. Growth was continuous and steady through the 1960s. As a result, Middletown residents and businesses prospered and enjoyed a high quality of life throughout most of the 20th Century.

As with most Midwestern industrial cities, Middletown experienced job loss starting in the 1970s as industrial corporations merged, closed, or relocated to regions with more affordable production. This trend continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s leaving the city in its current economic position.

Initial development occurred in nuclear fashion with a strong and vibrant downtown commerce center located adjacent to the Great Miami River and along routes now known as SR 4, SR 73, Main Street and Central Avenue. Streets radiated out from downtown providing access to adjacent neighborhoods, industries, and agricultural land located at the urban fringe. Neighborhoods grew steadily outward as the city's population grew over time in response to increased industrialization.

Access to water and transportation resources in the early to late 19th Century were largely responsible for industrial growth. The Great Miami River provided a water source, and the development of the Miami and Erie Canal in 1845 improved water transportation. Construction of railroads soon followed the canal and further improved Middletown's accessibility. Steel and paper industries flourished in Middletown. Armco Steel opened its first Middletown plant and company headquarters in Middletown 1901. Armco invested heavily on plant improvements and facility expansions throughout the 1900s. As a result, Armco grew to be one of the largest employers in Ohio and producers of steel in the US. AK Steel bought Armco in 1999. The sale to AK Steel created redundant operations at the Middletown plant. Numerous executive and management positions were eliminated or relocated. The paper industry, which at one time included several notable companies such as Sorg, Wrenn, and Diamond, has suffered tremendous employment losses.

The advent of post WW II housing and the opening of I-75 in the 1950s have created a gradual but steady shift in development patterns from the west side to the east. Towne Mall was built in the 1970s at the northwest quadrant of SR 122 / I-75 interchange. The development of this mall and nearby retail venues has relegated downtown from the true center of the community to one that is largely symbolic today. Many industrial and commercial buildings stand as vestiges of the downtown area's glorious past.



New development has occurred intermittently in more recent history in Middletown. However, this trend may change as new development appears imminent in the I-75 corridor. Nearby communities like Mason, West Chester, and Springboro are the current beneficiaries of rapid, outward metropolitan growth diffusing from the Cincinnati and Dayton urban centers. Today, Middletown stands one to two interchange exits removed from being the epicenter of regional development.

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

Middletown has excellent access to state, regional, national, and international markets and enjoys a well-integrated multi-modal transportation system. I-75, with an interchange at SR 122, provides Middletown with tremendous regional access via the national interstate highway system. SR 73, SR 4, and SR 122 provide access to nearby communities such as Lebanon, Hamilton, Springboro, Franklin, and Monroe. Two rail carriers, CSX and Norfolk Southern, provide freight rail service in Middletown. Hook Field, with a 6,100 foot runway, has the capacity to accommodate jet service and freight operations. Both the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport and Dayton International Airport are less than a one-hour drive from Middletown.

CURRENT PLANNING CHALLENGES

Middletown today is a city in transition. While it has a long and proud heritage as a major manufacturing center in Southwest Ohio, the primary foundation for the City's identity has been slowly eroding over the last two decades as industrial employers have contracted or left. This trend is in no way unique to Middletown, as it has happened across the nation over the last thirty years. However, it has generated a sense of frustration and to some degree pessimism regarding the future of the City. Middletown has for many years existed in a form of isolation within the larger Dayton / Cincinnati metropolitan area. The time has come to recognize that the past is past, the future will be different, and the pieces needed to create a new future must be put in place.

To thrive, Middletown must become an integrated part of the larger metropolitan area with a more diversified economic base that relies less on manufacturing as the primary economic activity and more on office and service-oriented employment.

That future should be different than the past in several ways. To thrive, Middletown must become an integrated part of the larger metropolitan area with a more diversified economic base that relies less on manufacturing as the primary economic activity and more on office and service-oriented employment.

This task will require diligence on the part of the city to facilitate this fundamental shift in the local economy. Difficulty stems from the lack of economic development programs and resources and competitive land and building inventory – both of which place Middletown at a serious competitive disadvantage with neighboring communities.

At the same time, the city must confront the degrading forces of an obsolescent housing supply, brownfields, underutilized commercial buildings, and population loss in older parts of the city.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The terms “brownfields,” “greyfields,” and “greenfields” are used extensively in the Master Plan to characterize current land “development opportunities.” Each term is defined in the page insert.

Locations of each type of development opportunity are shown on Map 1 Development Opportunities provided on the following page.

Table 1 Development Opportunities

Development Opportunity	Land Area	Percent of Total
Greenfields	1,490	68.4%
Brownfields	193	8.9%
Greyfields	356	16.3%
(Short-Term Greyfields)	140	6.4%
Total	2,179	--

The City of Middletown encompasses nearly 16,500 acres or 25.6 square miles. The majority of the city is “built-out” with few vacant “greenfield” parcels. Remaining vacant parcels are located close to the municipal boundary with the largest concentration located east of I-75. Limited supply of vacant and agriculture land underscores the importance of redevelopment in Middletown. The scarcity of greenfield sites also underscores the importance of ensuring that development occurs in a manner that is consistent with community goals.

Brownfields and greyfields comprise nearly 32% of all developable land in the city. They are accordingly treated as “development opportunities” in this Master Plan. Beyond that, it is recognized that these properties must be reutilized to create jobs and housing opportunities in order to stabilize larger neighborhoods and bolster the city’s tax base.

Short-Term Greyfields have immediate redevelopment potential due to vacancies and underutilization. Long-Term Greyfields are mostly occupied but known trends in the market indicate that these commercial properties will likely decline in the future unless proactive steps are taken to strengthen their position in the local and regional markets.

Development Opportunities Defined

- Brownfield.** A vacant or underutilized industrial property that has environmental contamination preventing reuse or redevelopment.



- Greyfield.** A vacant or underutilized commercial property that is generally free from environmental constraints but lacks market support for reuse.



- Greenfield.** A vacant property that is suitably located for new development and is unencumbered with existing site improvements or other site constraints that preclude market supported development.



EXISTING LAND USE OVERVIEW

Land use tax codes provided by the Butler County Auditor's office were used to create Map 2 Existing Land Use. Its purpose is to define the general land use pattern of the City of Middletown as it currently exists. Middletown planning staff reviewed the Existing Land Use Map for inconsistencies. Areas in question were field-verified for accuracy.

Middletown is diverse with mature, urban neighborhoods to the west, and newer, suburban-style neighborhoods to the east. The demising line between the "older" and "newer" city appears to follow a north-south axis generally along Breiel Boulevard.

Characteristic of older industrial cities, Middletown's west side contains an incompatible mix of traditional urban neighborhoods and industrial development. Industrial properties in or close to downtown are vacant or largely underutilized. Land underutilization and incompatibilities must be addressed before any one use, residential or industrial, can regain vitality. The west side also contains Middletown's historic town center (i.e., downtown), which contains a mix of retail, residential, office, and industrial uses, as well as the largest concentration of public buildings located in the city.

Neighborhoods located east of Breiel Boulevard are characteristic of single use, suburban style development. Middletown's shopping venues, such as Towne Mall and big box stores, are located just west of I-75 on SR 122. Land located south of Roosevelt Boulevard is largely industrial in nature and includes AK Steel and MADE, Greentree, and Midd-Cities Industrial Parks.

Residential and industrial development combined account for nearly half of the city's land area. AK Steel, with approximately 2,445 acres under common ownership, represents the single largest land user in Middletown.

Residential is the dominant land use north of Roosevelt Boulevard and east of University Boulevard. Public, institutional and commercial land uses are also located adjacent to primary thoroughfares. Miami University at Middletown, at the corner of Breiel and University Boulevards, is an example of an important public/institutional use located in Middletown.

EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Land use designations shown on Map 2 are summarized in Table 2 and include: Industrial, Office, Mobile Home, Multiple Family Residential, Single Family Residential, Park, Semi Public, Commercial, Vacant, Public, Agriculture, and Not Classified. A general description of each land use category follows.

- **Industrial.** Industrial land uses are designated as purple on Map 2. Industrial includes a broad range of less intensive fabrication and storage industries along with heavy industrial operations such as intensive, large scale industrial operations that involve heavy machinery, more intensive fabrication and heavy truck traffic.

- Approximately one-fifth (or 20%) of the city is used as industrial when vacant land approved for industrial use is included in the calculation.
- Industrial land uses dominate the southern third of the city, west of Cincinnati Dayton Road.
- AK Steel's properties and facilities dominate landscape in south-central Middletown.
- Scattered and largely underutilized industrial sites ring downtown.
- Downtown industrial sites are challenged with potential environmental contamination and poor regional access.
- Land use incompatibilities and lack of expansion room will likely prevent industrial redevelopment on many brownfield sites.
- Existing industrial was developed prior to buffering and screening zoning regulations; landscaping is needed to protect residential uses that abut industrial sites.

Table 2: Middletown Land Use by Area

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Office	46	0%
Mobile Home	98	1%
Multiple-Family	440	3%
Park	497	3%
Semi-Public	572	4%
Commercial	1,026	6%
Vacant	1,254	8%
Public	1,458	9%
Not Classified	1,778	11%
Agriculture	1,964	12%
Industrial	2,691	17%
Single-Family	4,033	25%
TOTAL	15,857	100%

Source: Butler County Auditor
McKenna Associates



AK Steel

- **Single-Family Residential.** This classification, shown as yellow on Map 2, includes improved land parcels having one-family detached or attached dwelling units which are located in predominately residential areas. Two-family residential units are also reported as Single-Family on the Existing Land Use Map.

- Single-family residential makes up 25% of the land area.
- Single-family residential is found almost entirely west of the Butler-Warren County line.
- Renaissance, the newest residential subdivision, is located on the south side of SR 122 near the eastern extent of the city.
- Housing age decreases from west to east with the oldest housing located in downtown area neighborhoods.



- **Multiple-Family Residential.** This classification includes land areas that are occupied by predominately residential structures containing dwelling units for three or more households. This form of housing is commonly referred to as "apartments". However, this classification may also include attached condominiums and senior housing complexes.

- Larger multiple-family residential developments are located adjacent to major thoroughfares in most cases.
- The largest concentrations of multiple-family residential are found adjacent to Breiel Boulevard south of Roosevelt Boulevard and Roosevelt Boulevard west of Breiel Boulevard.
- Smaller multiple-family units are located throughout the city and inside predominately single-family residential neighborhoods.
- **Agriculture.** Almost 2,000 acres (or 12%) are classified as Agriculture, which is shown as light green on Map 2.
 - This acreage is located on the city periphery with the greatest concentration east of I-75.
 - It is anticipated that development pressure will convert agriculture land to commercial uses near the I-75/SR 122 interchange within the next five years.
 - Construction of the new Middletown Regional Hospital Healthcare and Technology Campus at the interchange is expected to support new office development on nearby undeveloped land.
 - Single-family residential subdivisions are currently being reviewed for the areas in the northeast corner of the city that are classified as “agricultural”.
- **Airport.** Hook Field Municipal Airport, located in the northwest section of the city, is owned by the City of Middletown. The airport is designated as light gray on Map 2.
 - With a 6,100 foot long runway, the airport can accommodate corporate jet and small freight services.
 - AK Steel uses Hook Field for its home base of aviation operations.
 - City wellfields are located adjacent to airport grounds limiting airport-related economic development potential.
- **Parks.** This classification includes parcels either improved or unimproved that are used for public recreational activities, both active and passive. Dark green is used to depict park locations on Map 2.
 - Nearly 350 acres of public parkland are available for Middletown residents to use.
 - Parks are evenly distributed throughout most of Middletown.
 - The east side is slightly underserved.
 - No parks are located east of I-75.
- **Office.** Office uses, shown as blue on Map 2, include management offices, medical offices and clinics, general offices for professionals such as lawyers, insurance and real estate brokers, architects, engineers, sales offices, and veterinary clinics.
 - Only 46 acres are classified as Office in Middletown.
 - Office uses are found at scattered sites located adjacent to primary thoroughfares.
 - No office parks or “Class A” office space are available in the City.

- **Commercial.** Land uses in this category provide a wide range of goods and services including: vehicle sales, services and repair; retail and entertainment services; and the sale of soft lines (apparel for men, women and children) and hard lines (hardware, furniture and appliances). Commercial land uses are indicated as red on Map 2.



- Commercial land uses comprise nearly 1,000 acres of land or 6% of the land area.
- Commercial land in the City is concentrated largely at the I-75/SR122 interchange and includes Towne Center Mall and numerous big box stores.
- Smaller pockets of commercial/retail development exist along Breiel Avenue, Roosevelt Avenue, and in downtown. These retail pockets are convenience-oriented.
- **Mobile Home.** Two mobile home parks are located in the city. These two parks are indicated as brown on Map 2. The mobile home park designation includes manufactured residential units attached to the ground by a permanent foundation, or more commonly, by anchors.
 - Mobile Home Park accounts for 98 acres of land use (less than 1% of total area).
 - 570 mobile home units were reported in 2000, or roughly 2.6% of the City's total housing units, according to the Census Bureau.
 - Many mobile home units are relatively old and are beyond their useful economic lives.
 - The mobile home park east of Hook Field is largely vacant with several nuisance units.
 - The Hook Field Master Plan designates this same mobile home as industrial to accommodate businesses that benefit from proximity to a general aviation field.
- **Public.** The public land use category includes improved land parcels owned by Federal, State, County, or City governments, local school districts, and public utility companies.
 - Examples of public land uses in Middletown include municipal buildings, post office, and public schools and Miami University at Middletown.
 - 1,458 acres or 9% of the city is classified as public.
- **Semi-Public.** Semi-public uses, designated as light purple, include cemeteries, private schools, hospitals, religious establishments, and other institutional uses.
 - Semi-public uses are dispersed near the I-75 interchange, south of downtown, east of downtown and in the northeastern corner of the City.
 - Middletown Regional Hospital is the largest semi-public land use in Middletown.
 - Semi-public uses account for 703 acres or approximately 4% of the total land area of the City.
- **Vacant.** Vacant lands, shown as gray on Map 2, include all parcels or parts of parcels not included in one of the above definitions and which have no apparent use or are undeveloped.



- 1,254 acres or 8% of the city is classified as vacant.
- Larger tracts of vacant land are generally found near the city's boundary.
- Numerous small, undeveloped residential platted lots within subdivisions are classified as vacant. These sites represent infill development opportunities.
- **Not Classified.** Road and rail right-of-way is classified as "Not Classified" by the Butler County Auditor for tax collection purposes. "Not classified" land represents 1,778 acres or approximately 11% of the entire city land area.

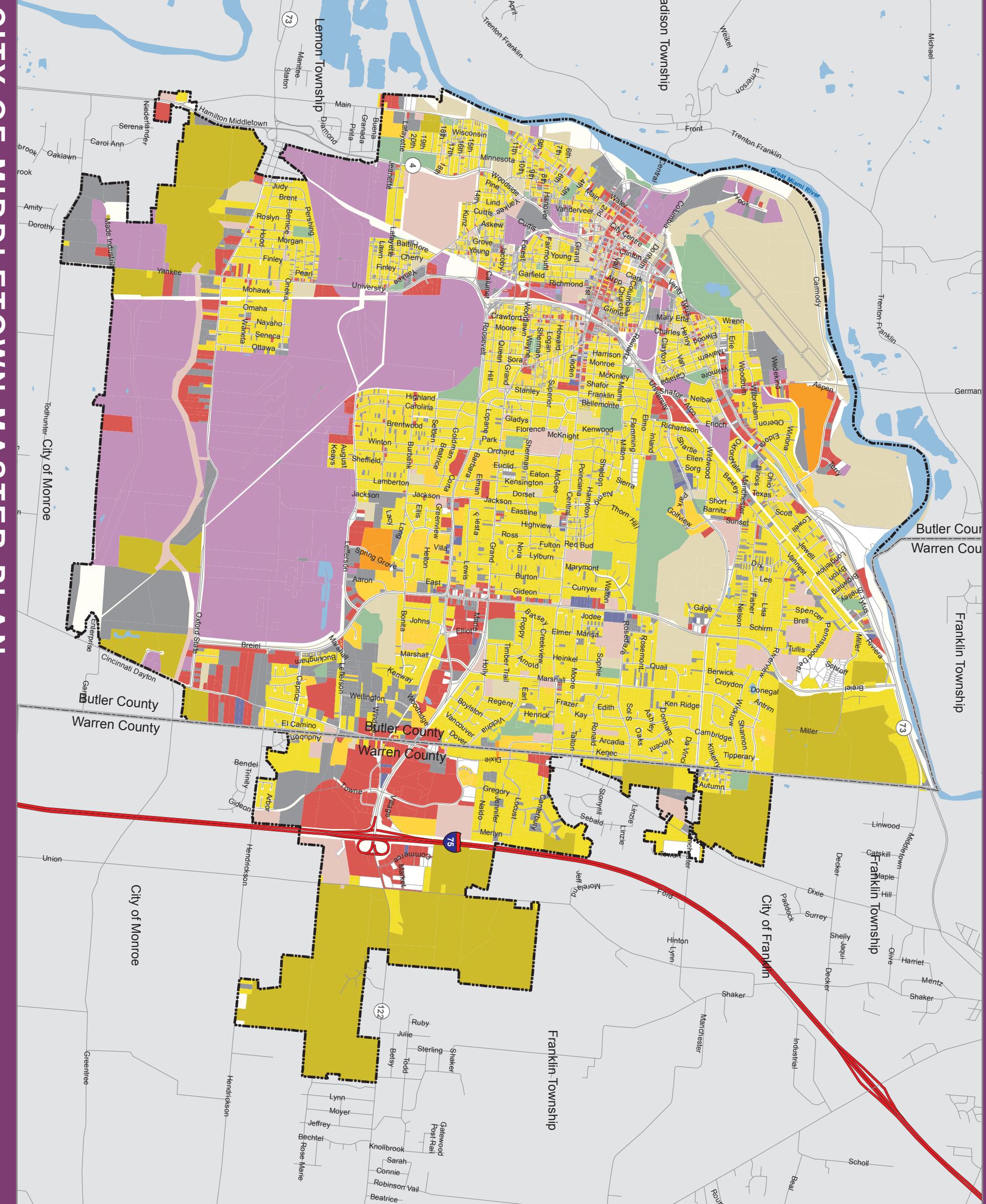
MAP 2 EXISTING LAND USE

Michael

German

Butler County
Warren County

Franklin Township



Legend

Land Use Classification

Agriculture

Commercial

Industrial

Mobile Home

Multiple Family

Office

Park

Public

Semi Public

Single Family

Vacant

Not Classified

Neighborhood Preserve & Enhance

—

County Line



0

0.5

Miles

4/20/05

NATURAL FEATURES

- **Surface Water.** The Great Miami River is the most significant natural feature located in Middletown. However, levee walls and other flood control measures constructed by the Miami Valley Conservancy District have eliminated many natural systems associated with riparian corridors.



Great Miami River

Dick's Creek, and its associated stream network, is the largest tributary of the Great Miami River located in Middletown. It collects water from the northeast, east, and south sections of Middletown. The main channel of Dick's Creek generally follows the south side of Oxford-State Road. Storm water collects in several engineered drainage ditches that empty into ephemeral streams and generally follows the city's gradually sloping topography from east to west and eventually into the Great Miami River.

- **Floodplains.** A very small portion of the City lies within the one-hundred (100) year floodplain. The Great Miami River floodplain is contained within levee flood walls. Dick's Creek represents the largest floodplain hazard in the city.
- **Wetlands.** A permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is required before any regulated wetland is drained and filled. However, wetlands should not be a constraint to land development as few regulated wetlands are known to exist in Middletown.
- **Natural Areas.** Natural areas that provide habitat for native flora and fauna are limited to isolated riparian corridors along portions of Dick's Creek, parks, and golf courses in the City. Examples of quasi-natural areas include Forest Hills Country Club, Wildwood Golf Course, Smith Park, and Bull's Run Arboretum.
- **Topography.** Middletown is relatively flat with isolated pockets of sharper elevation change. Elevations gradually decrease from a high of 800 feet on city's eastside to 640 feet on the west side near the Great Miami River. This represents a 170-foot elevation change over a six-mile distance.

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

- **12-Year Population Change.** The 2002 population of Middletown is estimated at 51,466 by Claritas, Inc.¹, an increase of 12% since the 1990 U.S. Census of Population. This growth is attributed to Middletown's annexation policies throughout the 1990's.

Table 3 Population Change, 1990-2002

	1990	2002	% Change
Middletown City	46,029	51,466	12%
Hamilton City	61,368	60,610	-1%
Butler County	291,479	337,167	16%
Montgomery County	573,809	552,242	-4%
Warren County	113,909	167,549	47%
Cincinnati CMSA	1,526,092	1,658,490	9%

Source: Claritas; Gem Public Sector Services

As shown in Table 3, Middletown gained population at a rate faster than the City of Hamilton, Montgomery County, and the Cincinnati CMSA, but slower than both Butler and Warren Counties.

- **Population Projections.** According to GEM Public Sector Services Middletown's population will increase by between 19 and 2,265 people by 2007. Annexation is not expected to be a source of new population growth. Future annexations will strategically target undeveloped land for office and industrial development.

Table 4 Population Projections

	1990	2000	2002	2007 (Upper Limit)	2007 (Lower Limit)
Middletown City	46,029	51,605	51,466	53,731	51,485
Hamilton City	61,368	60,690	60,610	60,813	60,294
Butler County	291,479	332,807	337,167	356,204	350,097
Montgomery County	573,809	559,062	552,242	543,256	536,737
Warren County	113,909	158,383	167,549	190,101	189,899
Cincinnati CMSA	1,526,092	1,646,395	1,658,490	1,694,717	1,622,809

Source: 1990 Census; Claritas, Inc.; Gem Public Sector Services

¹ Claritas, Inc. specializes in custom demographic reports that include current-year estimates and projections. Planners use this data to analyze trends and plan for future growth.

AGE

- Age Groups.** As indicated in Table 5, population in the “25 to 34” age category declined the most during the 1990's with a decrease of 890 people or 11%. Population losses in the “25 to 34” age group indicate that individuals in their family forming years are seeking employment and housing opportunities outside the City. The City needs to identify why people in this age bracket are leaving and respond accordingly.

The 45-to-54-age bracket experienced an estimated 70% growth between 1990 and 2002. This represents the largest gain among all age brackets.

While population declined in the “65 to 74” age bracket, the “75 to 84” age bracket experienced considerable growth at 33%.

- Median Age.** Figure 2 compares the median age of Middletown with other local governments and the State of Ohio and the United States.

Middletown residents have a median age of 36.4 years, which is significantly older than high growth areas such as Butler and Warren Counties.

This indicates that the city may have to provide for additional services for seniors beyond what is provided by the typical community in Southwest Ohio but with fewer people in their wage earning years to pay for such services.

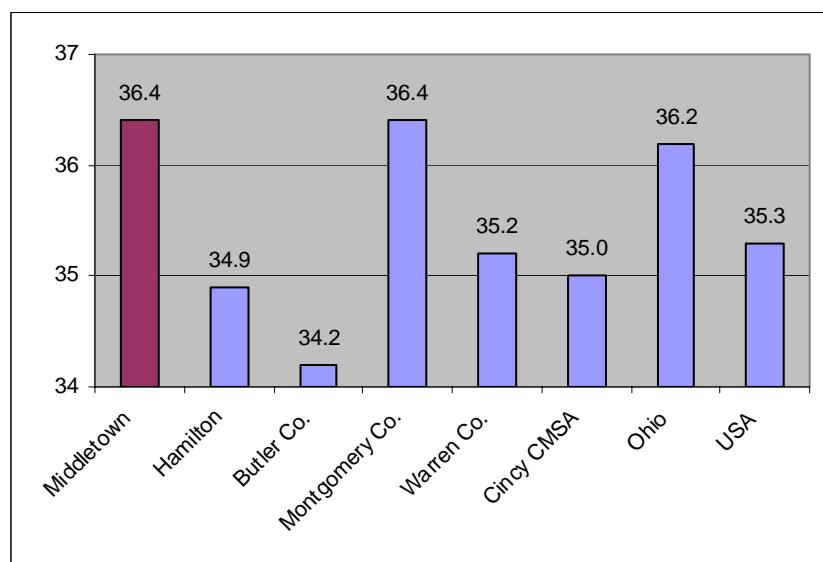
An older median age, coupled with the fact that approximately 14.48% of the city's total population is 65 and older, may have a profound impact on the city's housing supply. It is anticipated that more owner-occupied housing units will be placed on the market over the next decade. Additional supply may create weakness in the local housing market, unless younger households are attracted to Middletown.

Table 5 Population by Age, City of Middletown

	1990	2002	% Change, 1990-2002
Under 5	3,626	3,601	-1%
5 to 9	3,439	3,524	2%
10 to 14	2,959	3,543	20%
15 to 19	3,007	3,409	13%
20 to 24	3,425	3,517	3%
25 to 34	7,789	6,899	-11%
35 to 44	6,494	7,672	18%
45 to 54	4,126	7,031	70%
55 to 59	2,170	2,555	18%
60 to 64	2,270	2,267	0%
65 to 74	3,999	3,918	-2%
75 to 84	2,027	2,700	33%
85 +	698	830	19%
Total	46,029	51,466	12%

Source: 1990 US Census, Claritas, Inc.; Gem Public Sector Services

Figure 2: Median Age, 2000



Source: US Census Bureau

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Table 6 compares the educational attainment levels for Middletown's population with the City of Hamilton, Warren County, Butler County, Montgomery County and the Cincinnati CMSA.

Table 6: 2002 Educational Attainment for Population 25+ Years

	Middletown City Number	Hamilton City Percent	Butler County Percent	Montgomery County Percent	Warren County Percent	Cincinnati CMSA Percent
< 9th Grade	3,503	10%	12%	8%	7%	9%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	6,230	18%	21%	15%	14%	13%
High School Graduate	12,535	37%	37%	34%	30%	34%
Some College, No Degree	5,390	16%	15%	17%	20%	17%
Associate Degree	1,844	5%	4%	6%	7%	7%
Bachelor's Degree	2,887	9%	7%	13%	14%	13%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1,486	4%	3%	7%	7%	7%
Population 25+ Years	33,875	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Claritas, Inc.; Gem Public Sector Services

- **High School.** Approximately 71% of Middletown's population has a high school diploma compared to 66% for the City of Hamilton, 77 % in Butler County, 78% in Warren County and 76% in the Cincinnati CMSA.
- **College.** Less than 9%, or 2,887 Middletown residents earned a bachelors degree and slightly more than 4% earned a graduate or professional degree. The educational attainment level of Middletown's population is lower than all the compared communities except for the City of Hamilton.
- **Workforce.** The data suggests that other areas within Southwest Ohio have a higher educated workforce that results in a competitive advantage to attract, retain, and grow high-tech businesses. This data also punctuates the need to increase enrollment and bolster adult continuing education programs at Miami University at Middletown, Middletown Regional Hospital's Greentree Campus, and Butler Technology and Career Development School. Middletown's workforce must be equipped with an appropriate education to compete for high-tech, high-wage jobs.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

- **Median Value.** The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Middletown in 2000 was \$90,600 according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Middletown's median housing value is the second lowest out of the communities reported in Table 7. Middletown's median value is almost \$26,000 below the Cincinnati CMSA median, and more than \$50,000 below the median value of Warren County.

- **Age and Condition of Housing.** As of March 2000, the

Table 7 Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2000

Middletown City	\$90,600
Hamilton City	\$85,100
Butler County	\$123,200
Montgomery County	\$95,900
Warren County	\$142,200
Cincinnati CMSA	\$116,500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

median year Middletown housing units were built was 1955. This compares to 1973 for Butler County and 1981 for Warren County (see Table 8).

Table 8 Year Structure Built

	Middletown City Structures	Middletown City Percent	Butler County Structures	Butler County Percent	Warren County Structures	Warren County Percent
1999 to March 2000	209	0.9%	3,640	2.8%	3,472	5.9%
1995 to 1998	887	4.0%	11,037	8.5%	10,115	17.2%
1990 to 1994	1,072	4.8%	12,505	9.6%	6,613	11.3%
1980 to 1989	1,703	7.7%	18,535	14.3%	8,880	15.1%
1970 to 1979	3,228	14.5%	24,544	18.9%	9,341	15.9%
1960 to 1969	3,203	14.4%	15,685	12.1%	6,786	11.6%
1940 to 1959	7,361	33.1%	26,711	20.6%	8,716	14.9%
1939 or earlier	4,554	20.5%	17,136	13.2%	4,769	8.1%
Median Year	1955		1973		1981	

Source: Gem Public Sector Services; Data Provided by Claritas, Inc.

Approximately 68% of all housing structures in Middletown were developed prior to 1970 compared to 45.9% for Butler County and 34.6% for Warren County. Traditionally, the need for major housing repairs becomes evident at around 30 years. Middletown has to be proactive in modernizing its housing stock to retain a viable housing supply that competes with housing in Warren and Butler County communities. Programs to encourage reinvestment in the housing stock are needed such as Community Reinvestment Area tax incentives and housing rehabilitation grants/loans.

According to Table 9, slightly over half or 4,717 renter-occupied units were developed prior to 1970. Considerable attention needs to be paid to the condition of these older rental units. Units exhibiting obvious decline and /or structural or functional obsolescence should be rehabilitated or removed from the inventory.

Demand for new homes built with larger, more efficient floor plans and attached garages has increased. Older houses often require substantial renovations to meet the needs of homebuyers.

Table 9: Tenure by Year Structure Built, City of Middletown

Total Units	Owner-occupied housing units		Renter-occupied housing units	
	12,552	100%	8,051	100%
1999 to March				
2000	155	1%	15	0%
1995 to 1998	443	4%	410	5%
1990 to 1994	671	5%	371	5%
1980 to 1989	692	6%	847	11%
1970 to 1979	1,383	11%	1,691	21%
1960 to 1969	1,465	12%	1,427	18%
1950 to 1959	3,077	25%	1,186	15%
1940 to 1949	1,641	13%	983	12%
1939 or earlier	3,025	24%	1,121	14%
Median	1955	(X)	1965	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- **Number of Rooms.** As indicated in Table 10, the median number of rooms for owner-occupied units and renter-occupied units in Middletown are 5.9 and 4.3, respectively.

Housing consumer's demand for increased housing size and amenities, driven by low interest rates and dual-income households, is placing Middletown's smaller owner-occupied housing stock at a competitive disadvantage with larger units being built in adjacent communities in Warren and Butler Counties.

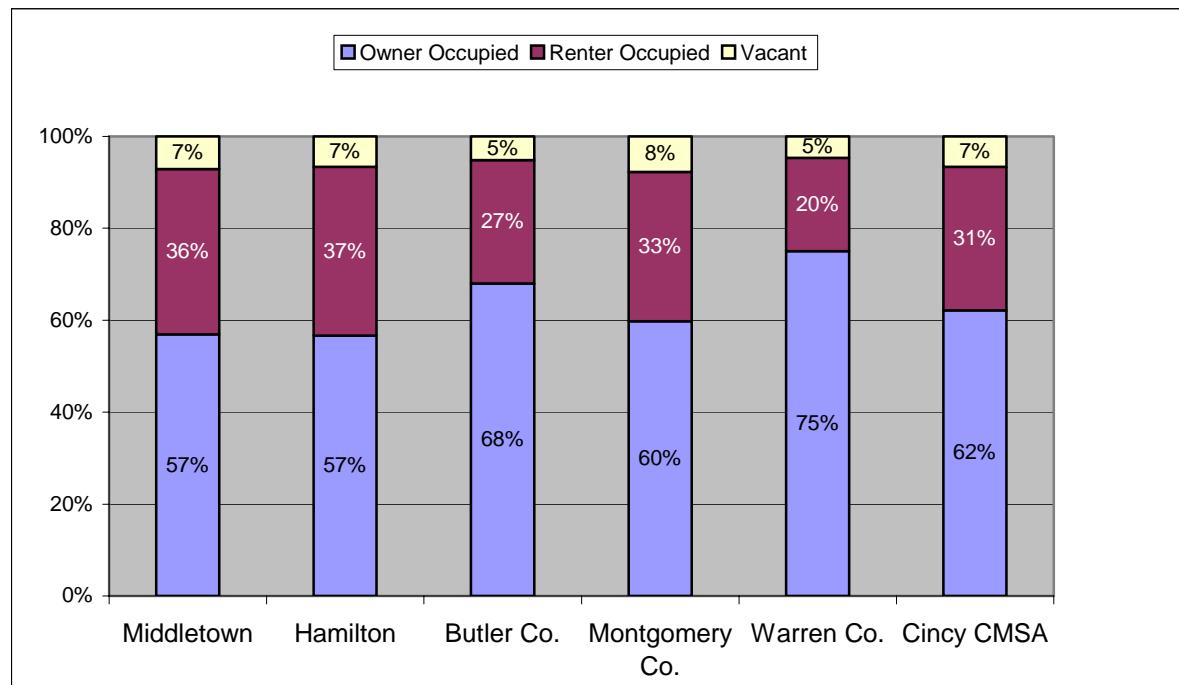
- **Housing Tenure and Occupancy.** Figure 3 display 2000 housing occupancy statistics for Middletown and surrounding jurisdictions. Middletown's owner-occupancy rate at 57% is viewed as healthy for urban areas but it is nonetheless tied with Hamilton as the second lowest in Figure 3. Middletown's vacancy rate of 7% is higher than every area compared except for Montgomery County. According to the 2000 US Census, the vacancy rate for owner-occupied structures is 2.2% and 8.8% for renter-occupied structures. 357 housing units were classified as "other vacant" in the 2000 Census suggesting that these units may be out of service or uninhabitable.

Table 10 Median Rooms, 2000

	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Middletown City	5.9	4.3
Hamilton City	5.8	4.2
Butler County	6.5	4.3
Montgomery County	6.3	4.3
Warren County	6.8	4.3
Cincinnati CMSA	6.5	4.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3 Housing Occupancy, 2002



Source: Gem Public Sector Services; Data Provided by Claritas, Inc.

- **Housing Unit Type.** Approximately 65% of Middletown's 22,217 housing units are single-family detached. This is consistent with the State's rate of 70% single detached housing units.

As Table 11 shows, housing unit types are about the same between Middletown and Butler County and the State of Ohio.

Table 11 Housing Units by Type, 2000

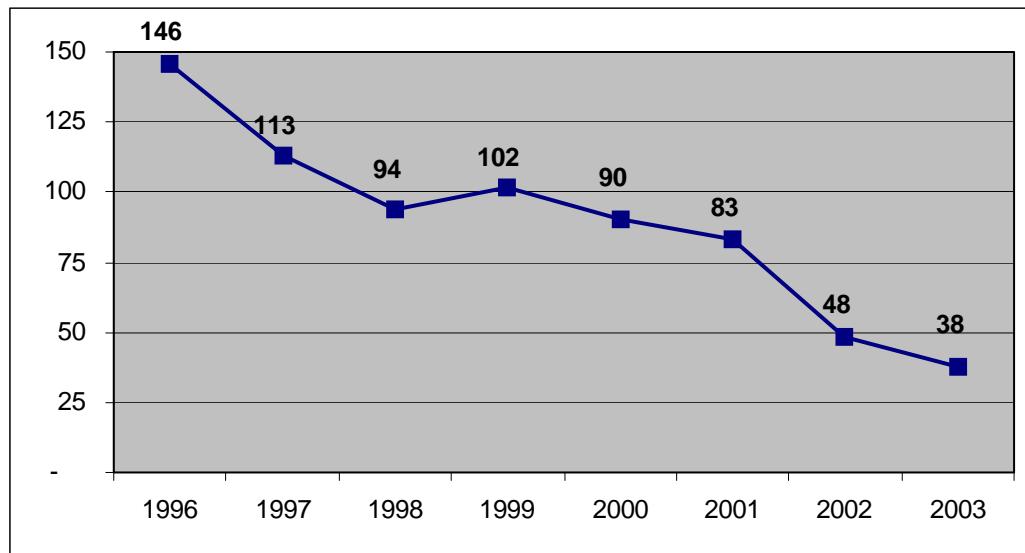
Structure Type	Middletown		Butler County	State of Ohio
	No. Units	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total
Single Detached	14,458	65%	70%	67%
Single Attached	713	3%	4%	4%
2 Unit	1,447	7%	4%	5%
3-4 Unit	1,687	8%	4%	5%
5-9 Unit	1,416	6%	4%	5%
10-19 Unit	1,107	5%	7%	4%
20-49 Unit	297	1%	2%	2%
50 or More Units	522	2%	2%	3%
Mobile Home/Other	570	3%	4%	5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- New Housing Starts.** The number of building permits granted for new single-family home construction between 1996 through 2003 is shown in Figure 4. The number of new home starts has gradually declined from a high of 146 in 1996 to a low of 38 in 2003. This decline is occurring simultaneously with rapid residential growth in Middletown's environs.

This trend of few new housing starts realized on per annum basis could continue into the future should Middletown decide not to partake in the recent housing boom being witnessed in Butler and Warren Counties. Land availability is the biggest constraint. The success of the Renaissance subdivision, located on SR 122, east of I-75 suggests that more land should be made available for higher-end housing.

Figure 4 New Single-Family Unit Permits by Year in Middletown



Source: Middletown Building Inspection Division

- **Gross Rent.** The median gross rent for renter-occupied units in Middletown is \$506, nine dollars less than the State (\$515) and \$63 less than Butler County (\$569).

Table 12 illustrates the breakdown of gross rent based on ranges. The data does not show a large difference between Middletown and the State or Butler County. The only notable difference is that there are fewer renters in Middletown paying more than \$750 a month than the State or the County. Middletown generally mirrors the State in terms of the proportion of units asking given rents.

Table 12 Median Gross Rent of Renter-Occupied Units, 2000

Gross Rent	Middletown	Butler County	State of Ohio
	Units	Percent	Percent
< \$200	480	6%	5% 7%
\$200 to \$299	471	6%	3% 6%
\$300 to \$499	2,796	35%	26% 32%
\$500 to \$749	3,154	39%	43% 36%
\$750 to \$999	622	8%	14% 10%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	184	2%	4% 3%
\$1,500 or more	17	0%	1% 1%
No cash rent	327	4%	4% 5%
Median Rent	\$506	100%	\$569 \$515

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

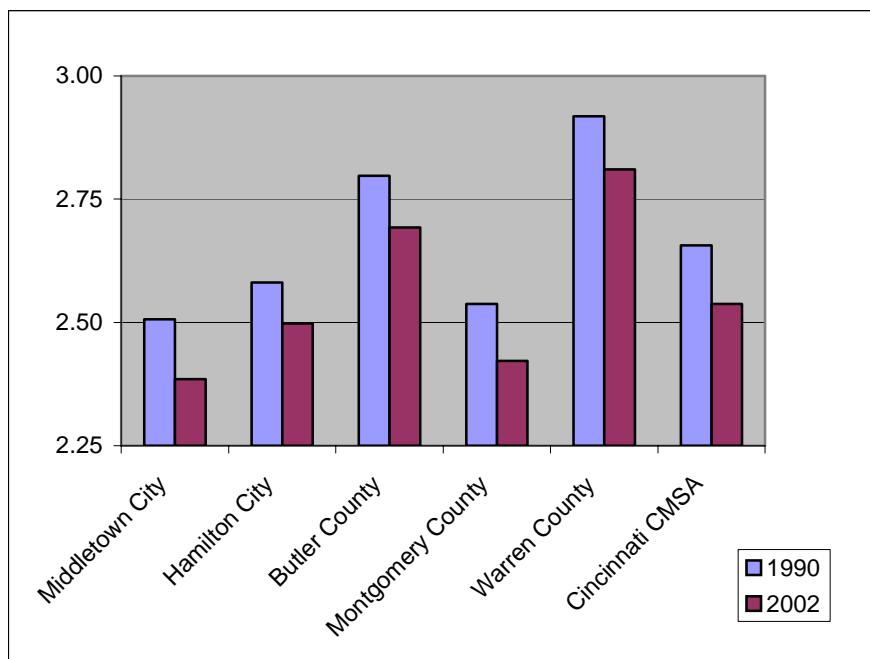
HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

- **Household Size.** A “household” is generally defined as a group of people living together in a single dwelling unit. This can include a family, a single person, or a group of unrelated individuals sharing a house or an apartment, but excluding those persons living in group quarters.

As seen in Figure 5, the estimated median number of people per household in Middletown in 2002 was 2.38, down from 2.51 in 1990 according to the US Census and Claritas, Inc. All communities analyzed for comparative purposes experienced a decline in their median household size over the same time period.

This decline is consistent with national trends. Lower birth rates, people waiting longer to get married, higher divorce rates, and an increase in the average life span thereby resulting in more elderly people living longer either alone or with another family member partially explain the gradual decline in the number of persons per household.

Figure 5 Median Persons Per Household



Source: Prepared by Gem Public Sector Services From Data Provided by Claritas, Inc.

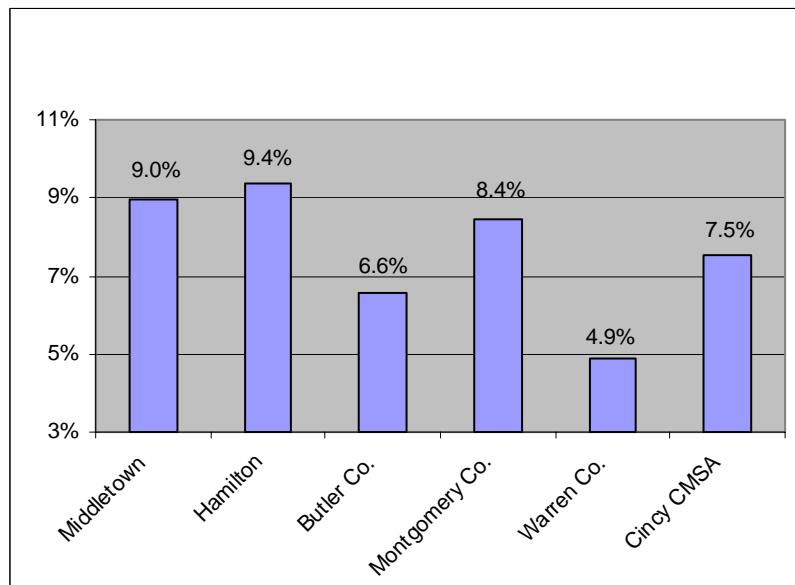
Middletown’s lower median persons per household can be partially attributed to an older median age and the higher number of renter-occupied dwellings compared to the other jurisdictions and areas analyzed.

- **Female Householders.** Figure 6 shows the percentage of female-headed households, where no father is present, with children under 18 years of age that reside in Middletown and surrounding areas. According to the US Census Bureau, there were 1,842 female-headed, single-parent households in Middletown in 2000.

This represents 9.0 percent of all Middletown households compared to Butler County (6.6 percent), Warren County (4.9 percent), and the state (7.3 percent).

This data may suggest that single-parent, female-headed households may need additional services for childcare and after school programs beyond what is typically needed at the regional level.

Figure 6 Percent of Female-Headed Single Parent Households



Source: Prepared by Gem Public Sector Services From Data Provided by Claritas, Inc.

- **Households with Presence of Minors and Elderly.** The presence of minors and individuals over the age of 65 are important household characteristics for planning public services. These household characteristics are described in Table 13.

Table 13: Households, by Presence of Minors and Individuals Over the Age of 65
Middletown, Butler County, and Ohio, 2000

Jurisdiction	Households with one or more people under 18 years	Households with one or more people 65 years and over	Households with one or more people 65 years and over; 1-person household
Middletown	6,902	33.5%	5,428
Butler County	47,169	38.3%	24,755
State of Ohio	1,534,008	34.5%	1,058,224

Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., Data from US Census Bureau.

Fewer households exist in the City with at least one person under the age of 18 than households in the County and the State. Conversely, more households in the City have individuals aged 65 and over than do households in the County and the State. This data and that in Table 13 both suggest an out-migration of family-forming and mature-family households, leaving a larger concentration of older individuals as a percent of the total population. This also implies the need for increased public services with fewer people in their wage-earning years to pay for such services.

A high percentage of the City's households, 11.6 percent, are households of one person, aged 65 or older, living alone. This rate is higher than that for the County as a whole, 7.6 percent, and the State of Ohio, 10.0 percent. Slightly less than half of the City's households that have an individual aged 65 and older, are single-person households. The incidence of older residents living alone suggests that there may be a need for senior housing and senior services beyond that experienced in the average Ohio city. However, the existing elderly housing inventory is sufficient to meet the housing demands of Middletown's elderly population according to the Danter Company.

CHAPTER 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



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- THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE 3-2
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CHAPTER 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The primary focus of this Master Plan is centered on economic development in the City of Middletown. The need for increased economic development resources was heard repeatedly at Master Plan Steering Committee meetings, focus groups, and public meetings. This sentiment echoes similar recommendations made in past planning efforts such as Creating a Competitive Community Advantage (March 26, 2003), Strategic Marketing Plan (August 2001, and Midpoint Centre Conceptual Design and Development Project (2000).

WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

The International Economic Development Council provides a general definition of economic development as:

...a program, group of policies, or activity that seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community, by creating and/or retaining jobs that facilitate growth and provide a stable tax base.

Typically, communities define economic development in terms of their local goals or objectives. Usually the goals and objectives of local economic development programs include:

- **Job Creation.** Job creation is often a primary goal, based on the perceived link between job creation and the overall health of the local economy. Job creation includes not only creating more jobs, but also creating better jobs. Jobs created should support a desired standard of living, offer stability and decent work conditions and provide opportunity for advancement.
- **Job Retention.** Job retention objectives are intended to retain existing, locally owned businesses within established commercial districts. Job retention is a goal because the loss of a job in a local economy means the loss of the economic advantages resulting from that position.
- **Tax Base Enhancement.** Tax base enhancement is an economic development goal because most local governments raise the majority of their revenue through local property and income taxes. New revenues generated by new economic activity can fund service improvements without tax rate increases.
- **Quality of Life.** The final common objective of economic development is to enhance the quality of life in the local community. Quality of life means different things in different communities, but generally include safety and security, education, poverty reduction, environmental quality, and recreation and culture.

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Successful economic development is not an accident. It is the result of several key components that interact smoothly at the local and regional level. Many communities of Middletown's stature have sophisticated programs and strategies in place that are implemented by a staff of professional economic development practitioners. Middletown too must establish an economic development entity and components that interact smoothly in order for the future economic development function of the city to work effectively. Timing of this action is critical to take advantage of the limited number of development opportunities that are currently available to the city.

There are five key components to economic development described in this Chapter. The city must excel at all of these including: (1) An Economic Development Department and Staff, (2) Economic Development Programs, (3) Initiatives and Incentives, (4) Land and Building Inventory, and (5) A Labor Force with Needed Skills.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND STAFF

An economic development director and department need to be brought on-line within city government as soon as possible. This new department must have a formal linkage to the City Manager's office and City Council. The selected economic director must be given adequate resources, responsibility and accountability to succeed at his or her mission. This includes the authority to act and work entrepreneurially on behalf of the city.

- ***Economic Development Staff.*** The staff could be comprised of from four to six individuals given the various functions carried out by economic development departments and the complexity of Middletown's economic development needs. Based on comparisons to other cities in the region, this does not appear to be extraordinary. However, it is generally understood that staffing will have to be increased over time as resources become available.

An economic development director would be the senior economic developer on staff and provide the administrative direction to the overall economic development effort. A senior level person is required to focus on business retention and expansion efforts. At least one additional staff member should be a senior level person with business recruitment skills. The economic development department staff should also have one professional with commercial lender experience if the lending task is offered under the economic development umbrella. If community and economic development projects are among the tasks assigned, then one professional person with development and construction management experience should be a part of the staff.

The economic development staff will need to be supported by one or two administrative assistants skilled in a variety of support functions. Based on the scope of services envisioned, the staff could comprise up to six professionals.

- ***Department Strategy.*** An economic development department's strategy determines the types of programs and activities undertaken by the organization. Effective economic



development departments have well planned and targeted economic development strategies. The community's economic development goals and objectives are identified in the strategy and help direct the organizations activities. Establishing goals and objectives is important for an economic development organization to evaluate its performance. Goal setting and benchmarking performance level setting will be particularly important for a new economic development staff. This will help staff stay focused on their mission and preclude mission creep.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The Economic Development Department will direct Business Retention and Expansion; Business Recruitment; Commercial and Community Development Projects; Business Loans; and Training programs.

- **Business Retention and Expansion.** A key component of any successful economic development program is systematically working with existing employers to make certain their needs are being met and that they have the community's support in pursuing their objectives. Far and away, retaining and growing existing employers is the most productive strategy in any economic development program. This effort should include regular systematic contact with all employers in the city to determine what problems they may be having and to identify any opportunity to encourage and support expansion or relocation within the city. This support should not be limited to large employers; it is often the smaller employers that have the greatest capacity for growth.

Calls on all local businesses and industrial companies must be made on a regular, repeated schedule. The city must know if companies are struggling or if businesses are doing so well expansions are needed. Companies on the verge of expansion are at risk of loss if they cannot expand in their current locations or if they cannot find suitable property at other locations elsewhere in the city.

- **Business Recruitment.** Business recruitment programs are the only way to seek out and attract companies that serve to expand the business base in the community. Specific industries and specific companies may be the targets of business recruitment efforts. This task should be directed at maintaining the city's proportionate market share in all categories of business and industry while keeping the business base broad and at least somewhat insulated from the risk of losing any given company. This topic is discussed further on page 4-6.
- **Development Projects.** The economic development function should be key to the creation and implementation of specific commercial, industrial, and community development projects. These projects should be focused on vitality maintenance in the neighborhoods while working to redevelop sites and areas that are not contributing to the economic well being of the city; i.e., brownfield and greyfield redevelopment.

Critical Economic Development Programs

- Business Retention and Expansion
- Business Recruitment
- Commercial and Community Development Projects
- Business Loans
- Training and Development Programs.



Growing business in Greentree Industrial Park

- **Business Loans.** Business loans are a natural adjunct to the economic development function. Some communities create lending corporations. Middletown may not have sufficient activity to require a specific lending function, but it may need to be able to make business loans to facilitate development projects that are important to the overall vitality of the city.
- **Training and Development Programs.** Training and development programs are important to both economic development and to community development. Entrepreneurial training is an additional facet of economic development that is often overlooked. Approximately ninety percent of new jobs to be created in the future will be created by small businesses. Small businesses and new entrepreneurs must be generalists. A strong training and development function can help these small business operators make more intelligent, more economically efficient decisions. Such programs should be coordinated with the Chamber, SBDA and local business incubators.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND INCENTIVES

The economic development effort will not be effective unless the City of Middletown supports the staff and the function with all necessary initiatives and incentives to make the effort competitive with the other major municipalities in the region.

- **Initiatives.** Community and economic development efforts must work to implement a vision for the city. Brownfield and greyfield redevelopment projects should be supported along with focused community revitalization and enhancement efforts. The economic development initiatives fostered by the city should serve to elevate Middletown above its competitors in the region and create the image of development leadership.
- **Incentives.** The incentives available to the economic development staff should be consistent with those offered by other communities in the region. To inhibit the economic development effort by not offering competitive incentives to attract companies to the city would be inviting frustration and failure. The use of Enterprise Zones, Community Reinvestment Areas, tax abatements and Tax Increment Financing has become commonplace in economic development. However, the use of incentives should be consistently applied and linked to desired performance standards for jobs created, wages paid, and minimal impact on the environment. The city's incentive policy should also receive the support and buy in of tax payers (existing businesses and residents) and tax users (MCSD).

LAND AND BUILDING PRODUCTS

- **Market Ready Sites.** Several communities in competition with Middletown collectively have hundreds of acres of "market ready sites" available with essential infrastructure and services to accommodate office and industrial development. Middletown, on the other hand, has none. This disparity places Middletown at a distinct competitive disadvantage. The time needed to extend water, sanitary, and roads adds months and several hundred thousand dollars to project cost. Time is money and companies will choose the community that can



I-75/SR 122 Interchange

provide the fastest “turn key” site more often than not.

All of the requisite land development conditions must be in place before any economic development market strategy can succeed. As such, creating market ready sites must be one of the city’s top priorities.

Opportunity does exist in several areas near I-75 to create a very competitive land inventory. Most exciting is the potential to create a high-tech business park next to the proposed MRH Healthcare and Technology Campus at Union Road and SR 122. All of the essential infrastructure elements are at or near the proposed hospital site including a large amount of unused broadband telecommunications capacity. The city and its partners must champion the development of this business park concept as soon as possible. A major business park is essential the city’s efforts to retain its proportionate market share of employment in the region.

As with other cities, Middletown most likely will become a market participant if it is to be competitive in the world of economic development. While market ready sites in the private sector are better than no land, sites under the control of the city are the best alternative. The economic development staff can make an available site part of the economic development incentive package only if the available site is owned by the city.

- **Building Inventory.** Available buildings are often only offered when a company fails or relocates to new quarters. Reusing existing buildings can be problematic. Buildings of any magnitude are generally built to suite the specific needs of the first owner. Retrofits and remodeling can be cost prohibitive. And, as is the case in Middletown, many older buildings are obsolete by today’s standards. Worn out, obsolescent buildings are not competitive inventory in the real estate marketplace. The city must take steps to reduce the number of worn out structures in the city. Brownfield and greyfield redevelopment projects should be focused on reducing the numbers of undesirable, outdated structures in the city and replacing them with economically contributing projects. Even if no new use is economically feasible, worn out improvements should be replaced with grassed lots that could be marketed when new uses become feasible; i.e., land banking.



Former paper manufacturing plant

A LABOR FORCE WITH NEEDED SKILLS

Workers will not find employment if they do not have the skills being sought by new employers. In fact, the lack of a trained labor force may deter companies from selecting Middletown as a location.

Employers in Middletown have been heavily concentrated in a few basic, heavy industries. Business trends indicate that the labor force may undergo significant transitions in the next few years as the national, state and local economy continues to evolve into a service economy. The educational attainment of Middletown's population lags the larger, regional market. In addition, the population, and the work force appear to be aging to the point that retirements will reduce the size of the resident, labor force. These observations suggest that the current labor force may not have the educational and training foundation to transition into new sources of employment.

Workers will not find employment if they do not have the skills being sought by new employers. In fact, the lack of a trained labor force may deter companies from selecting Middletown as a location.

In order to keep the skills of the available labor force aligned with available jobs, the city, academic institutions, and labor organizations need to collaborate on programs that can upgrade and broaden the skills of workers that may be permanently displaced from the basic, manufacturing industries that appear to be in decline.

The city, in cooperation with a multi-jurisdictional entity, should support the creation of a "one stop shop" or "job center". This center should have multiple focuses on assisting workers, who have been permanently displaced from their current jobs; to acquire the skills needed to find new jobs; and to provide assistance during the potentially stressful transition period between jobs. This center would help to provide training and education to the existing labor force while long-term, educational programs and business recruitment efforts bring new workers to the local labor force.

While the work force may need to be retrained in order to compete for the jobs that may be available in the future, it is difficult to identify the skills that may be needed in the local market. This is one of the reasons that a business retention and expansion program is needed as part of the economic development function. Economic development officials can collect data regarding the needs of growing companies and coordinate the needs of local companies with the training to be offered through the "job center". Workers can be developed in accordance with the demands of growing, local companies in order to facilitate economic expansion in the city. At the same time new business recruitment can bolster the need for trained workers. Most companies that relocate do so in anticipation of expansion. New employees can be trained and ready when the new companies arrive in the city.

MARKETING STRATEGY

If there appears to have been a historical economic development weakness, the city has relied too heavily on the growth of a small number of major companies, in a few, basic industries to propel its economic growth. The city needs to broaden both its company base and its industry base. Based on this observation, the city's business recruitment effort should have a two prong approach linked to Middletown's diverse geography and land and building offerings.

- **Increase Company Base/Broad Based Marketing.** The first strategy is to increase the overall number of companies that are located in the city. The goal is to recruit companies in a broad range of industries that are compatible with the existing industrial zoning. This appears to be saying that, "any company that will come to town is a good company to have". Certainly, the financial health and vitality of any company recruited is important, but the statement is essentially true.

- **Increase Industry Base/Targeted Marketing.** But a scattershot approach to attracting businesses is unlikely to be successful in the long run. Once defined, adequate resources must be devoted to the pursuit of the target market. As such, in marketing the City of Middletown as a potential location for high-tech economic development, it is important that a target niche be identified which the city is well positioned to pursue. The target niche should be designed to diversify the city's industry base. Companies that meet desired performance standards for use, employment, wages, and environmental impact should be aggressively pursued to locate at planned business parks located in the I-75 corridor, next to Middletown Regional Hospital.
- **Marketing and Incentives.** The use of incentives should be very closely tied to the City's marketing strategy. Future incentive use in the business parks planned east of I-75 should be given only to high-tech companies that can meet City expectations. General industrial uses that cannot meet desired performance standards should be given incentives only if they are willing to locate in one of the City's existing industrial parks.
- **Market Geography.** Middletown should concentrate marketing efforts at the regional level at first. The economic analysis prepared in the Midpoint Centre Conceptual Design and Development Project indicates that Greater Cincinnati is a competitive physical location on a regional level offering cultural and other activities and amenities but it cannot compete at a national or international level. Therefore, the City should market firms that do business in Southwest Ohio and would enjoy equal access to customers in both Dayton and Cincinnati.

MARKET POTENTIAL

Information and analysis found in this section is summarized from Gem Public Sector Services' Market Study dated December 31, 2003. A copy of the full market study is available at the City of Middletown Planning Department. Land development over the last two decades has been at a relative standstill. Gem's market study provides a more optimistic picture for the future. Demand for additional office, industrial, and retail development indicates growth will occur over the 2005-1010 planning period. Middletown must be prepared to guide that development in a manner that enhances the community's quality of life.

- **Retail Market.** The location of a retail hub may be important to a community, but the market the retail businesses serve can be quite diverse from the community in which the retail epicenter is located. Middletown is located at an interstate interchange in two of the fastest growing counties in the U.S. The market for new retail merchants and new retail outlets is very strong. Much of this new retail development will occur in other portions of both counties, but Middletown's location along an interstate highway, with an interchange, on the county line between Butler and Warren Counties places the city in a strong position to compete for a significant regional retail presence, if the city so desires. Projections indicate that the two counties may add over 1,800,000 square feet of retail space between now and 2007. Middletown may add as much as 120,000 square feet of retail space between now and 2007 just to serve its population. In essence, the retail market appears to be in an expansion mode to serve the growing numbers of households in the City of Middletown and the vicinity.

As stated above, based on household growth, coupled with average household income growth, projected in other sections of this report, Butler County and Warren Counties, combined, may be able to support over 1,800,000 square feet of new retail space between now and 2007. Middletown may be able to support up to 120,000 square feet of new retail space in the same time period to support the consumer needs and wants of the city's population.

It should be noted that new space in Middletown, based on household and income growth in the city, is part of the Butler and Warren Counties combined totals. Assuming typical land-to-building ratios of 5:1, retail expansion could consume over 200 acres in Butler and Warren Counties between now and 2007. Based on potential retail demand in the City of Middletown between now and 2007, as much as 15 acres of land could be needed for new retail expansion to serve the needs of Middletown residents, only. Middletown appears to be located centrally to take advantage of the expanding markets in Butler and Warren Counties. The more important question to be answered is whether the City of Middletown wants to attract any significant retail development and whether the city has the land to accommodate any significant new retail development.

Needless to say, the projections indicate that there could be significant retail expansion in the next few years in Butler and Warren Counties including the City of Middletown. The amount of retail development that Middletown is willing, or able, to accept may be a much smaller segment of this development consistent with local goals and objectives. Timing is critical for the City of Middletown to capture a share of the projected retail growth and to defend against the loss of current retail businesses to newer more modern retail hubs that are emerging in various locations in Butler and Warren Counties.

- **Office Market.** Historically the office market in Middletown has been based on the needs of businesses in the local community and the needs of the major corporations based in the city. As a function of mergers and acquisitions over recent decades the amount of office space needed by major corporations in the city has declined significantly. In addition, mergers and acquisitions of financial companies; e.g., banks, has reduced the amount of office space needed in the traditional CBD of Middletown. The current market for office space in Middletown is derived from the needs of the local market, other than the few remaining corporate offices, in town, there are no regional or national office tenants in any significant office developments in the city. This is an interesting market circumstance given Middletown's location between Dayton and Cincinnati along I.R. 75. Health care appears to be the most significant component of the local office market that could experience growth in the near future.

As the Dayton and Cincinnati MSA's grow and expand to fill the interstate corridor between the two central cities, the potential for Middletown to enhance its position as a more significant office venue appears possible.

Based on projections for employment growth in the city, there will be a need for more office space. Much of the new growth that is projected is in the health care segment of the market indicating a possible need for medical office space. Projections indicate that approximately 368 workers will be added to the ranks of typical, general office employees by 2007.

Assuming that educational services and health care workers will comprise a similar percentage of the typical workforce in the future, then approximately 168 of new educational and health care workers will be in typical office environments. This employment growth translates into approximately 50,000 square feet of office space that will



Downtown office buildings

be needed by 2007, assuming traditional office employment densities. There are probably ample alternatives on the landscape to fill this projected demand, but much of the existing office space appears to be physically or functionally obsolescent.

Existing office space in the traditional CBD does not appear to represent competitive inventory due to age, obsolescence, and proximity to I.R. 75. Assuming the projected growth in office employment results in new construction, then approximately 5.00 acres of land would be needed for new office development by 2007.

As a function of overall growth in Butler and Warren Counties, significant growth is projected in the employment base. Slightly over 2,100 hundred jobs are projected to be added in the "finance/insurance/real estate segment of typical office employment and almost 4,100 hundred workers are projected to be added in the "professional and related services" category of employment. Assuming similar ratios of traditional office employment to total employment growth as applied above, approximately 2,845 new office workers could be added to payrolls in Butler and Warren Counties by 2007. Based on traditional office employment densities, the projected employment expansion could require as much as 850,000 square feet of new office space. Office needs of this magnitude would consume approximately 80.00 acres of land.

The ability of the City of Middletown to capture a share of the growth projected for the two counties area is directly related to having well located, market ready sites, and/or buildings for office occupancy. It is likely that interest in new office development will be concentrated around the interchange at S.R. 122 and I.R. 75.

- **Industrial Market.** The industrial segment of the local economy has grown over time as reflected in historical employment totals. Based on previously existing trends in the local market, the industrial segment of the city's employment base is projected to add approximately 351 jobs by 2007. Recent announcements by AK Steel could result in an employment decline in the industrial segment of the city's employment base of over 1,000 persons.

The overall Cincinnati CMSA and Montgomery County are projected to lose jobs over the next few years, but the overall Dayton-Springfield MSA, Butler County and Warren County are projected to add jobs over the next few years. Middletown must be poised to capture at least its proportionate share of these potential new jobs. Based on projections contained elsewhere in this report, jobs in Middletown should represent approximately 22% of the industrial employment in Butler County; however, projected job growth in Middletown represents only 16% of the industrial job growth in Butler County between now and 2007. These projections reflect the growth anticipated in the durable goods manufacturing segment of the local employment market.

Middletown has a relatively high concentration of jobs in the manufacturing segment of industry. Over 26% of employment in the city is derived from manufacturing companies. The percentage of manufacturing employment in Middletown compares to the Cincinnati CMSA with slightly less than 16%, the Dayton-Springfield MSA with slightly less than 18%, less than 17% in Montgomery



County, slightly more than 15% in Butler County and slightly less than 17% in Warren County. Ohio has experienced significant job losses in the manufacturing segment of the economy in recent years. Historical trends may not be good indicators of future employment.

A sluggish economy in the U.S. and off shore competition for manufacturing jobs has taken a serious toll on manufacturing employment. According to a report released by the U.S. Department of Commerce in January, 2004, 2,599,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in the United States between the fourth quarter of 2000 and the third quarter of 2003. This segment of the Middletown economy has to be considered at risk as long as current economic conditions and foreign competition exist.

Approximately 72% of the manufacturing employment is in durable goods manufacturing. Approximately 75% of the durable goods manufacturing employment is derived from one company; AK Steel. Should overall employment in Middletown change structurally to reflect the composition of the larger market area, as many as 3,000 manufacturing jobs could be lost in the next, few years. Because of the heavy concentration of these jobs in paper and steel making companies, and the ages of the existing plants, it is unlikely that the industrial complexes left behind would ever be reused in the industrial marketplace.

- **New Economy Jobs.** Conversely, Middletown has a relatively low number of jobs in the “new economy” segment of the employment market. The new economy is defined for this analysis as employment derived from companies in five SIC codes. The SIC codes included in this definition of companies are as follows; 35-Industrial and Commercial Machinery and Computers, 36-Electrical and Electronic Equipment, 38-Instruments and Related Products, 73-Business Services, and 87-Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management and Related Services.

Not all of these SIC codes are in the industrial segment of the economy; however, the space needs of companies in the “new economy” segment of the employment market more typically represent a mix of specific uses found in the typical industrial or business parks that exist in many communities nationwide. Middletown has little, if any, space that represents available inventory to attract new companies in this segment of the employment market. Additionally, Middletown has very few, market ready, green field, sites for construction of facilities in this segment of the economy. The lack of market ready land for new construction may be a more significant constraint to the attraction of “new economy” business and industry than the lack of physically and functionally adequate buildings.

The city’s employment derived from the “new economy” segment of employers is less than 1,800 jobs representing 6.60% of the jobs in the city. By comparison, “new economy” jobs represent over 9% of the jobs in Butler County, 9.5% of the jobs in Warren County, Over 11.5% of the jobs in the Cincinnati CMSA, and over 14% of the jobs in Montgomery County, the most significant portion of the Dayton-Springfield MSA. If Middletown could attract employers in the “new economy” segment of the employment market in proportion to the Cincinnati CMSA or Montgomery County, between 1,300 and 2,300 jobs could be attracted, or created, in the city.

It is likely that any “new economy” jobs, attracted or created, would require new space to occupy. Based on typical employment densities between 2.1 persons and 2.4 persons per one thousand square feet of building area, this growth could result in a need for between 540,000 square feet and 1,100,000 square feet of space. Depending on future expansion requirements, this potential employment growth could create demand for between 50 acres and 150 acres of business/industrial, park, land, exclusive of rights-of-way and any amenities. Middletown’s proximity between two larger cities suggests that any business/industrial park developments

should be located in close proximity to I.R. 75. While some of the employment growth suggested in this analytical scenario could come from the needs of local companies, it is more likely that companies locating in Middletown would have working relationships with companies in Cincinnati and/or Dayton.

The discussion above leads to two important observations. First, the decline of companies in the traditional, heavy industrial segment of the local market is not likely to result in any physically or functionally adequate, available inventory of industrial space for future employment growth. Second, there appears to be very little available inventory of adequate buildings and, more importantly, market ready sites in close proximity to I.R. 75 to attract new business and industry.

The identification of segments of business and industry that could be a part of projected, desirable, future employment growth in the local economy and beyond indicates a potential demand for as much as 150 acres of business/industrial, park land in the city.

Any projections regarding employment growth and resulting space needs are based on a series of essential prerequisites. Available land and buildings are only two of these prerequisites. Regional competition for economic development opportunities is fierce. The city, or an entity, must be given the task of economic development and strongly supported in its efforts. The economic development staff must be sufficient in numbers to search for new business and industry as well as respond to the needs of growing companies already in the city.

The city of Middletown must be competitive in its initiatives and incentives to foster economic development. Given the large numbers of deteriorated, functionally obsolescent industrial structures on the landscape today, a significant effort should be directed toward “brownfield” redevelopment. While these sites may not be competitive in the current industrial market, the land areas may represent future development opportunities for non-industrial uses. To ignore worn out industrial structures on the landscape encourages urban sprawl and creates a negative perception regarding the city’s vitality and economic health.

Additional information regarding the “new economy” can be found in Appendix B.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The objectives and corresponding tasks are directly linked to Goal A, Diversify and modernize our local economy. Middletown's economy is concentrated in a few industries in categories that are declining or stagnant nationally. The city needs to diversify its economic base and find a new niche in order to add at least 3,000 jobs and grow the incomes of its residents.

OBJECTIVE ED 1: Recruit businesses that allow Middletown to capture a proportional share of new economy jobs found in the region.

ISSUE: Middletown relies on a small number of companies and industrial sectors for its economic base.

ED 1.1 Develop a modern high-tech business park under public ownership and/or control near future hospital site at the I-75/SR 122 interchange. New-economy companies operate primarily in business park environments. Middletown must have one high quality business park near the interstate to compete for new businesses and retain existing companies that need to expand. (See related strategies ED 1.2 and ED 3.2).

- 1.1.1. Determine potential business needs and market demand before designing infrastructure and lot configurations.
- 1.1.2. Consider alternative resources such as Tax Increment Financing and strategic partnerships to finance land acquisition, infrastructure, and business park development.
- 1.1.3. Acquire or control enough land to develop a multi-phase business park, preferably not less than 100 acres. Ideally, all vacant land around the hospital should be preserved for business park development through zoning, development agreements, covenants and restrictions, or public/private venture ownership to preclude undesirable development patterns from taking hold before the office/industrial market revives. This task will likely take public involvement as the private sector is usually not willing to hold large land areas without assurances from a strong market.
- 1.1.4. Extend utilities to the site including high-speed communication infrastructure. Provide redundant electrical and communications systems to reduce service interruptions and to gain a competitive advantage.
- 1.1.5. Create and approve a PUD or overlay for all business parks. Offer companies fast-track administrative approval for development proposals that meet PUD requirements and guidelines. Establish appropriate use restrictions and design standards that complement a modern state-of-the-art institutional campus and office/research development park.

ED 1.2 Market the MRH Healthcare and Technology Campus at the I-75/SR 122 interchange to complementary companies and institutions.

- 1.2.1. Develop a marketing strategy with the Chamber of Commerce and MRH to attract high tech industries and professional office uses.



1.2.2. Working with MRH, commission a feasibility study to create a state-of-the-art regional health care training and research and development facility as a logical continuation of MRH's planned Greentree Academy. Such facility would allow regional hospitals, universities, medical colleges, and private industry to share a centrally located facility to train staff, perform medical research, and commercialize ideas.

ED 1.3 **Modernize right-of-way standards, engineer standards, and subdivision regulations to require high speed data transmission lines in addition to other utilities for new development.** New economy companies operate on ideas, information, and data that must be accessible and quickly shared between offices, partners, and clients located around the world on high-speed data transmission systems. High-speed telecommunications infrastructure is the 21st Century equivalent to the interstate highway system in terms of relative importance for economic development.

OBJECTIVE ED 2: Establish an economic development entity with the authority and accountability to effectively attract and retain jobs and businesses.

ISSUE: **Middletown has not successfully performed necessary economic development functions.**

ED 2.1 Establish an economic development department and program within City Hall.

- 2.1.1. Hire a full-time Economic Development Director that reports directly to the City Manager and is responsible for establishing and managing essential economic development programs and functions on behalf of the city.
- 2.1.2. Create and annually update an Economic Development Strategic Plan with goals and performance measures.
- 2.1.3. Prioritize departmental spending, budgets and capital improvements to implement economic development goals.
- 2.1.4. Hire additional staff to complement a fully operational economic development department including an economic development professional and administrative assistant.

ED 2.2 Create an industrial development corporation with representation from the local business community and public officials. The purpose of this coalition is to: (1) create a single-minded organization to succeed in economic development by influencing companies to locate and expand; (2) develop creative solutions using public and private sector resources to overcome obstacles and meet company site selection or expansion needs; (3) work cooperatively with the City Administration to set economic development-related policy; (4) finance economic development projects (business parks), business start-ups, and small business operations within the city; and (5) prepare sites for development including underutilized greenfield and brownfield properties.

- 2.2.1. Create the shell organization with bylaws and establish a Board of Directors. Give the Board of Directors an operating budget and the authority to execute projects and recommend economic development policy to the City Administration.
- 2.2.2. Assign the Economic Development Director as the corporation's chief executive until the job warrants a full time position.

- 2.2.3. Encourage companies, institutions, and individuals to become members. Annual dues should be charged based on company size.
- 2.2.4. Provide funding for operating budgets and projects through an alternative funding mechanism such as tax assessment or increased hotel tax. Consider creating a revolving loan program.

ED 2.3 Develop an Economic Development Incentives policy that is adopted by City Council and has support from the public and the school district.

- 2.3.1. Use clear and precise language to avoid ambiguity to ensure consistent use of incentives.
- 2.3.2. Receive Middletown City Schools' support and buy-in to circumvent delays and possible negative media releases when such incentives are utilized. Determine alternative funding mechanisms for schools on larger tax incentive deals.
- 2.3.3. Use performance-based measures when determining which companies should receive incentives. Incentives should be given to companies that meet the city's employment and economic diversification goals.

ED 2.4 Develop and execute a strategic economic development marketing strategy. Middletown must become entrepreneurial in its approach to appeal to new companies.

- 2.4.1. Work with partners such as the Chamber of Commerce to create the strategy and determine responsible parties for each action.
- 2.4.2. Create an economic development web page that is rich in content, easily accessible within the City's host web address, and markets the City in a positive light 24/7.

OBJECTIVE ED 3: Create market-ready sites at attractive locations with good regional access.

ISSUE: **Little land is available with good regional accessibility that will attract users needing turn-key sites.**

ED 3.1 Acquire and/or control more land with interstate visibility and accessibility by executing a multi-faceted growth strategy.

- 3.1.1. Enter into creative development agreements with neighbors to share benefits and costs of new commercial development. State law permits such arrangements including Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDS).
- 3.1.2. Purchase additional land as the sole owner or with partners including banks, companies, and/or the Butler County Port Authority.
- 3.1.3. Annex vacant land suitable for long-term business park development.

ED 3.2 Develop one business park adjacent to the interstate to provide development-ready sites to prospective companies seeking interstate locations. (See related strategies ED 1.1 and ED 1.2)

ED 3.3 Redevelop underutilized and/or obsolescent commercial and industrial properties that are either near or easily accessed from the interchange. Demolish obsolescent

structures to make land available for future economic growth and to remove blighting influences.

ED 3.4 **Protect the relatively small amount of vacant land located close to the interchange from undesirable development patterns.** The window of opportunity to prevent undesirable development occurring on this land area is relatively short given forecasted regional population growth.



Open land near I-75/SR122 Interchange

- 3.4.1.** Review the Zoning Ordinance and Map to ensure the property is properly zoned.
- 3.4.2.** Amend the zoning ordinance and/or map should undesirable uses currently be allowed.
- 3.4.3.** Approve a PUD with use restrictions, design standards, and protective covenants. An overlay district or districts should be considered at a minimum.

ED 3.5 **Create new gateways.** Plan new interchanges and alternative means of improved interstate access to enhance access to vacant land located adjacent to I-75, brownfield properties, and existing industrial parks.

ED 3.6 **Provide continued support to the I-75/122 interchange upgrade.**

- 3.6.1.** Work with ODOT and OKI to leverage opportunities to implement aesthetic treatments that emphasize this interchange as the primary gateway to Middletown (See Chapter 6 Quality of Life for strategies relating to community image).
- 3.6.2.** Incorporate pedestrian/bicycle facilities in the interchange design.

OBJECTIVE ED 4: Prepare workforce for tomorrow's jobs and recruit jobs that match the skills of new residents living in or near Middletown.

ISSUE: **Middletown's labor force is hard-working but largely has outdated skill sets that cannot compete for high-paying New-Economy jobs.**

ED 4.1 **Improve the visibility and accessibility of Miami University Middletown (MUM) to the Middletown environs through joint promotion and marketing.** Consider smaller satellite classrooms located in neighborhoods including the downtown or in shopping centers. Also consider improving the streetscape along MUM street frontage.



ED 4.2 Support MUM's and Butler Techs efforts to provide adult continuing education as part of the city's effort to train the workforce for tomorrow's jobs.

4.2.1. In conjunction with MUM, Butler Tech, and Chamber, survey area employers to identify their workforce needs.

4.2.2. Encourage MUM and Butler Tech to continuously expand course offerings if instructional gaps are found.

ED 4.3 Encourage more cooperation, involvement and partnership between Middletown City Schools, Butler Tech, local government, private industry, and concerned residents to continuously improve student preparedness.

ED 4.4 Attract companies to Middletown that require the professional, educational, and occupational skills of residents that live close to Middletown. Marketing efforts should include workforce characteristics of people living within a 20- to 30-minute commute of Middletown.

ED 4.5 Inform and promote the Ohio Job Training Tax Credit program to area businesses as an incentive for companies to spend resources on training.

OBJECTIVE ED 5: Retain and expand businesses by creating and maintaining a positive business environment.

ISSUE: Middletown must be sympathetic towards business needs.

ED 5.1 Maintain business retention and expansion program to help existing companies stay and expand in Middletown. Providing sufficient resources to maintain this program is a top priority (See ED 1.2.1.). Below are essential elements to a successful retention and expansion program.

5.1.1. Create a database with basic information about Middletown companies.

5.1.2. Establish a point of contact with each business and maintain frequent communications to maintain relationships, learn of future plans, growth obstacles, and industry trends; and market City services that may encourage companies to stay and expand.

5.1.3. Follow up as soon as possible to local company needs such as overcoming development obstacles and dealing with state reporting requirements.

5.1.4. Maintain a network of business service providers that can assist with providing solutions to business obstacles and constraints.



Greentree Industrial Park

ED 5.2 Create an entrepreneurial economic development culture within City government with a must-do, can-do attitude.

- 5.2.1.** Responsive. Be responsive to requests made by prospective and existing companies for information about Middletown. The business environment is fast-paced. Communities that are not responsive may lose a potential expansion to a more responsive community. Consider creating high-quality materials with frequently requested community information that can be quickly mailed, emailed or accessed on a website.
- 5.2.2.** Knowledgeable. Staff must be knowledgeable on a wide range of development-related items including land availability, building inventory, zoning, tax and utility rates, available incentives and demographic and workforce characteristics.
- 5.2.3.** Flexible team work. Assemble ad hoc economic development teams with professionals needed to solve complex development issues in a timely manner. Such teams should include the right mix of Industrial Development Corporation members (See ED 1.2.2.), City staff, county staff, elected officials, and business representatives to brainstorm strategies and solutions to land new or retain existing companies.
- 5.2.4.** Professional image. First impressions create lasting impressions. Train all city staff members on the importance of high quality customer service.

ED 5.3 Turn city hall into a business advocacy center. Help businesses navigate the city's complex development-related plans, codes, review and permitting processes and engineering standards.

- 5.3.1.** Establish a case worker system. Assign one staff person to each company that calls requesting help or information or development approvals. This person will help a prospective or existing company to coordinate with other government departments and receive development approvals.
- 5.3.2.** Post permit and development applications, the City charter, zoning code, zoning map, subdivision code, and land use plans online. Consider placing all these items in one easy-to-find location on the City's web page. Ensure continual updating of the web page by integrating the Internet into the management process of all applicable City departments.

ED 5.4 Review development regulations and review processes to identify ways of streamlining the approval and permitting processes.

CHAPTER 4 REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment is a pervasive theme in this Master Plan. Residents and the steering committee consistently expressed their desire for the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial property as a top Master Plan priority. Improving the city's quality of life, creating new economic activity, and stabilizing neighborhoods hinge on the successful removal and/or revitalization of blighted nonresidential structures. Master Plan Goal B is dedicated to this end.

REKINDLED INTEREST IN URBAN AREAS

The timing is right for Middletown to reposition brownfield and greyfield properties located in its mature neighborhoods. As recently outlined in the May 2004 issue of *Urban Land* the real estate market is gaining strength in traditional urban areas. Old neighborhoods are becoming gentrified and downtowns are seeing healthy levels of new housing starts. Many factors can be contributed to this renewed interest but planners typically cite two. Tired of long commutes, people are starting to move back into cities to live closer to work. Others, dissatisfied with the suburban living, seek fuller community experiences and access to cultural and civic amenities. A summary of ULI's findings follow:

- Many of the most successful new communities being developed today emulate Middletown's older neighborhoods including walkable streets, mixed use, and smaller residential lots with access to neighborhood parks, schools, and commerce.
- Recycling old buildings as part of urban infill projects is becoming a common market practice. Older areas and structures offer unique urban spaces and design features which attract consumers and developers alike.
- Developers are spending extra dollars on urban design and planning. Well designed and planned projects require very little marketing, relying instead on word of mouth and positive press.
- The ideal of "live-work-play-shop-learn" shapes the most interesting and successful projects. More and more, people want to live full lives in their communities, not shuttle from one suburban pod to another for work, relaxation, or family activities.

GOAL B: Turn Current Liabilities into Future Assets.

Middletown has underutilized properties and outdated infrastructure that are legacies from another era. Many of these are drains to our tax base and blighting influences on our neighborhoods. Middletown needs to find ways of restoring these properties to active use and updating our infrastructure to meet current and future needs.



Successful New Urbanist development in downtown Cincinnati

- Demographically and economically mixed neighborhoods are finding success. Diversity is a goal for cities and developers alike.
- Higher density sells if it is well done. Buyers are open to the idea of trading large lots for high-quality public spaces and amenities. Although it is probably desirable to reduce some density, in fact, many busy homeowners prefer homes without labor-intensive yards.

REDEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Redevelopment, by its very nature is complex. There are a myriad of potential costs and legal concerns associated with brownfield and to a lesser extent greyfield redevelopment. These costs and concerns in turn act as market deterrents. Federal, state, and local governments are increasingly being called upon to proactively remove development obstacles, some of which are listed below:

- **Increased Development Costs.** Redevelopment is expensive. Costs to place property back in a development ready posture can, in some cases, exceed the entire budget of a greenfield development project. Redevelopment costs include environmental assessments, environmental remediation, demolition of existing structures, and infrastructure improvements in older areas.
- **Environmental Uncertainties.** Developers have historically complained about ambiguity in environmental law, changing clean up targets/expectations during the remediation process, and remaining environmental liability after a site has been remediated.
- **Market Constraints.** In many cases, market support is not strong enough to warrant brownfield or greyfield redevelopment costs. This appears to be true in Middletown where most of the brownfield properties are located in the downtown vicinity far removed from the interstate.
- **Lending Practices.** Lenders, wanting to make sound investments, are generally not as willing to offer equal financing terms for urban redevelopment projects as greenfield projects. Redevelopment projects may require more developer equity and/or higher rates.
- **Land Use Restrictions.** Land use restrictions and unusable land area imposed by governing authorities with brownfield redevelopment oversight can limit the reuse and market potential of a site.
- **Lot Assembly and Clearance.** Development typically consumes more land today than it did even a few decades ago due to larger retail formats and more demand for on-site parking and landscaping buffer yards. In some cases, developers must purchase, clear, and assemble additional adjacent properties to make the redevelopment site marketable.

Barriers to Brownfield Redevelopment

- Environmental liability
- Unknown environmental issues/regulations
- Environmental clean up costs
- Land use restrictions because of contamination
- Lender hesitancy
- Demolition of existing structures
- Weak Market / Location (in Middletown)
- Removing/relocating marginal uses in existing building.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

The use of public resources in the redevelopment process is a legitimate urban vitality initiative. Local government can offer many programs and incentives to make brownfields a more attractive investment. In cooperation with a partner or team of partners, the city will explore potential for creative methods to “kick start” redevelopment projects on a case-by-case basis as opportunities and resources arise.

- **Phase I and II Environmental Assessment Grants.** The city can apply for EPA assessment grants to determine the nature and extent of environment contamination of the site. Grant dollars can be used for Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments. The assessments provide a clear understanding of the type and extent of contamination.
- **Prepare Remediation Plan.** The city can provide assistance towards the creation of a remediation plan. Remediation plans indicate EPA-approved methods and costs of clean up. The level of clean up is based on the proposed end use. Combined, the environmental assessment and remediation plan is designed to remove any question on what the expectations are for clean up.
- **Clean Up Grants.** Remediation can be time consuming and costly. The City can apply for EPA Clean up grants and others to cover most of the costs.
- **Property acquisition.** In many cases, the current property owner can be recalcitrant against any redevelopment plan because of fear of environmental liability and remediation costs. Cities can take such property under nuisance laws or enter into an agreement to convey the property to the city or one of its partners, as permitted by law. The city should not take title of property unless a responsible party is clearly identified. Of course, cooperative and voluntary participation on part of the property owner is optimal.
- **Write-down costs.** The city can provide a developer with reduced land costs or a competitive lease of municipal property to the extent permitted by law as a potential cost savings to the city’s development partner. The city can create a condominium whereby the city owns the land, where the contamination exists, and the developer owns the building.
- **Environmental Insurance.** The city can provide environmental insurance to protect property owners and their lenders from any future liability.
- **Mortgage or Interim Financing Guarantees.** The city can provide gap financing when a lender requests additional developer equity or the city can guarantee a loan. These two techniques should be contemplated only when no other alternatives exist to get project financing approved.
- **Capitalization of Interest.** The city can pay the developer’s interest payment until construction is done or the project is leased or sold. This technique is not atypical when a developer works on a speculative municipal project.
- **Infrastructure Upgrades.** The utility and roadway infrastructure around brownfield sites is typically old and outdated. The city can make improvements to accommodate the new use, such as relocation, repair and upgrading of road and utility infrastructure.

- **Demolition of Existing Structures.** Removing existing structures is one of the more obvious tasks that are not part of greenfield development. Removing structures including subsurface improvements can be very helpful to a developer's cause.
- **Vacation of Public Streets and Alleys.** Obsolete roads, alleys, and easements can be vacated to provide more land for development.
- **Collateral improvements.** Redevelopment sites need to have a critical mass that provides a market catalyst for change in the immediate vicinity. Improvements should be made on surrounding properties and public facilities to make the entire area more attractive. Stepped up code enforcement is also important amid marketing efforts that will ensue.
- **Project Manager.** A staff person could be assigned as a project manager to help the city's developer partners navigate through local, state and federal laws and the overall redevelopment processes. The project manager can act as a trouble shooter and project advocate in city government.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The City does not necessarily want to get in the land development business, but it does want to expedite the rate by which vacant properties get reutilized. To capture developer interest and get partners to the table, the city must do the leg work, be on the front line, prepare the neighborhood residents, and implement plans to even the playing field with greenfield development sites. Reliance purely on the private sector to champion redevelopment projects is unlikely due to the associated costs and market constraints.

To be successful, the city must be able to join forces with the private sector and other public sector entities to create strategic public-private partnerships. There are three basic types of public-private partnerships identified in Table 14. The table lists the actions of the public and private entity for all three partnership types. The city and its development partners should consider which partnership makes the most sense for the projects based on the scope of the project, the city's expectations, and the developer's capacity.

Table 14: Types Of Public/Private Partnerships and Task Assignments/Ownership

Type of Project and Participants	Design	Financing	Development	Construction	Operation	Owner
Private Partner in conjunction with City	Private with little or no Public Input	Private with Marginal Public Capital or Noncapital Investment	Private	Private	Private	Private
Traditional Public/ Private Partnership	Private with Public Input	Private and Public/others	Private	Private with Public Oversight	Private or Public	Private and/or Public
City in conjunction with private developer	Private contract or City in-house	Public/other Entity(s)	Private Developer on a Fee Basis	Private with Public Oversight	Private or Public	Public/ other Public

Source: Public and Private Finance and Development Methodology, Deal Structuring, Developer Solicitation. Stainback, John

REDEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

As discussed in Chapter 5, many of Middletown's older neighborhoods suffer from disinvestment and cannot compete with suburban development located on the fringe. Key factors in this trend are the obsolescence of housing and the absence of nearby amenities such as employment and retail. Brownfield and greyfield redevelopment projects offer the opportunity to provide the missing elements, introduce new housing options and restore these neighborhoods as fully functioning, self-contained communities. This approach will give older neighborhoods a distinct niche in the regional market.

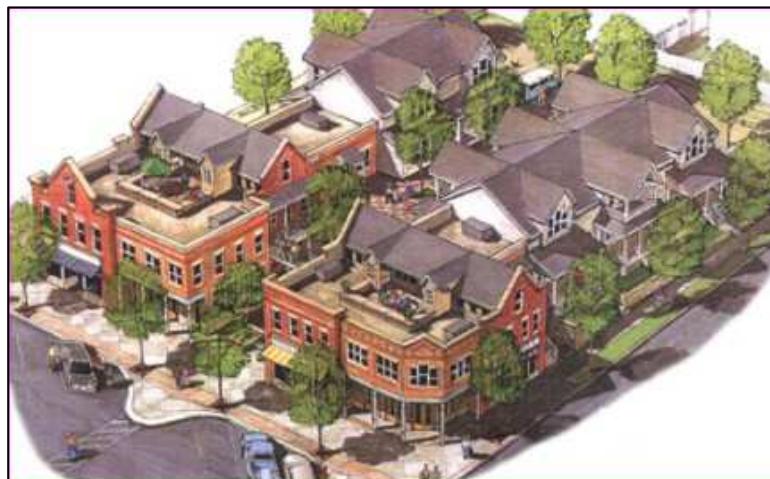
The city will be in a unique position to implement this approach by influencing the design, quality and character of redevelopment projects as a development partner. Redevelopment projects should not be viewed as a quick fix but rather as an opportunity to make a long-term positive impact on the surrounding neighborhood. Settling for lackluster designs, for the sake of development, will disappoint residents and undermine support for future mixed-use infill efforts.

As such, the city must clearly articulate minimum redevelopment performance standards and goals for redevelopment projects as outlined in the adjacent insert. Good urban design must be a hallmark of each city-sponsored redevelopment project to create a stronger sense of neighborhood identity and desirability. Redevelopment efforts shall be consistent with the Key Neighborhood Revitalization and Design Principles identified in Chapter 5.

The redevelopment design goals are time tested and appropriate for utilization at all identified redevelopment sites identified in this Master Plan. The idea is to create comfortable live, work, play spaces to pull and keep people in the neighborhood.

Redevelopment Design Goals

- Restore balance to urban neighborhoods
- Mix residential with office and retail uses to bolster markets, create jobs where people live, and provide convenient access to everyday needs
- Set buildings close to the street to define public spaces to create a pleasing pedestrian environment.
- Incorporate landmark design and architecture to create a unique sense of place
- Include pedestrian-oriented open space amenities for leisure and socialization
- Create internal sidewalk and path system that connects to surrounding neighborhoods
- Increase residential density for cost effective delivery of public services
- Use redevelopment to diversify housing stock; ensure some units are affordable for low income



REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE RD 1: Convert all underutilized commercial and industrial properties to productive uses.

ISSUE: Many commercial and industrial properties that could become new development opportunities currently sit idle and/or obsolete and are underutilized.

RD 1.1 Create and maintain an inventory of redevelopment opportunities throughout the city, with information needed by potential developers.

- 1.1.1. Include properties that are vacant or underutilized and are a significant blighting influence and/or fiscal drain on the city.
- 1.1.2. Compile data for each site including owner, land area, utility information, zoning, infrastructure, environmental constraints, date and results of environmental assessments, existing use/tenants and history.
- 1.1.3. Prepare environmental assessments where needed to determine obstacles and constraints.
- 1.1.4. Map locations and prepare aerial photos for planning purposes and interested investors. Make information widely available to interested investors and residents.



Vacant former paper factory on Main Street

RD 1.2 Create an all-volunteer Brownfield (& Greyfield) Resource Team with broad community representation to guide and facilitate redevelopment.

- 1.2.1. Include individuals from the business community, developers, financial professionals, realtors, City staff, concerned citizens, environmental consultants, architects, etc. The purpose of the team is to brainstorm, make recommendations, prioritize brownfield/greyfield redevelopment projects and use of resources, and facilitate the creation of partnerships.

RD 1.3 Obtain critical feedback on proposed city brownfield redevelopment policies before implementing any plan or strategy.

- 1.3.1. Review policies with at least two Ohio municipalities that have had brownfield redevelopment success. Such municipality should not be in competition for the same developers and local resources.
- 1.3.2. Consult with environmental consultants and Ohio EPA to make sure policies are consistent with Ohio EPA requirements for grant funding.

1.3.3. Request resident, business community and partner feedback to ensure support for city policies are realized early in the process.

RD 1.4 Develop a brownfield redevelopment program.

- 1.4.1.** Utilize a brownfields decision making matrix to prioritize redevelopment opportunities and resource allocations.
 - a.** Identified end user, market potential and location were identified as important criteria at the Redevelopment Roundtable.
 - b.** Blight elimination, corridor improvement, improved environmental and community health, public costs, project viability, recreation and transportation opportunities were also mentioned as worthy criteria.
- 1.4.2.** Assign a project manager within city government to each brownfield redevelopment project. The project manager will act as a case worker and inside problem solver to help partners navigate the review and permitting process and to provide coordination with other governmental departments from project start to finish.
- 1.4.3.** Prepare Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments to determine the extent of contamination.
- 1.4.4.** Assess the real estate market. Invite realtors, developers, and bankers to discuss how they view the real estate market of the impacted area and potential land use options.
- 1.4.5.** Create remedial plans to determine cleanup costs and remediation methods.
- 1.4.6.** Inform business community and partners of specific actions and intentions. Ask for assistance and participation.
- 1.4.7.** Seek an end user and development partner as soon as possible to increase chances of obtaining grants.
- 1.4.8.** Apply for USEPA Brownfield Cleanup, USEPA Brownfield Revolving Loan, and Clean Ohio Brownfield Revitalization grants to assist in remediation costs.
- 1.4.9.** Enter into Voluntary Action Plan (VAP) agreement with Ohio EPA. VAP agreements establish the level of mitigation required to reuse the property for desired land use.
- 1.4.10.** Implement VAP and receive a “covenant not to sue” which limits exposure to liability once the VAP standards are met.
- 1.4.11.** Create an RFP seeking developer assistance if a public-private partnership is not established at this point in time. An RFP can be distributed as soon as the costs for cleanup, goals for land use and design, and levels of gap financing are known. This step is not needed if a developer is identified earlier in the process.



Former paper factory on Park Street

- 1.4.12. Partner with the developer that is willing to work cooperatively with city towards achieving master plan goals. Land use and design standards should be articulated and required as part of an overall development agreement.
- 1.4.13. Restart process after initial brownfield project is completed or well underway or as resources dictate.

RD 1.5 Redevelop greyfield properties in a targeted and prioritized fashion.

- 1.5.1. Utilize the same process as outlined in RD 1.4, except for brownfield-related tasks 1.4.5, 1.4.8, 1.4.9. and 1.4.10
- 1.5.2. Allow for more resident involvement in the greyfield planning process especially where the subject property was a neighborhood anchor. MRH campus serves as an example after the hospital moves to its new location. This involvement however must be tempered with market and fiscal realities to create a plan that is both financially viable and meets resident expectations.

RD 1.6 Build critical support for redevelopment by educating the community and developing strategic partnerships.

- 1.6.1. Share the redevelopment component of the Master Plan with residents, business community, and impacted property owners to build support. Use various outreach methods including televised City Council meetings, chamber meetings, civic club meetings, neighborhood meetings, press releases, and the aforementioned Brownfield/Greyfield Resource Team.
- 1.6.2. Set realistic expectations given fiscal and market realities. The problem was not created overnight. The solution will likewise require time and persistence. Residents and the business community must be knowledgeable of the magnitude of the problem and the redevelopment obstacles that must be overcome to redevelop problem properties.
- 1.6.3. Meet with brownfield/greyfield property owners to learn of their plans and needs and market the city's ability to provide mitigation assistance.
- 1.6.4. Market the City's plans and redevelopment opportunities to brownfield/greyfield developers, investors, and potential reuse candidates. Concentrate efforts on priority sites.
- 1.6.5. Partner with CDCs for technical assistance on planning, development facilitation, gap financing, fund raising, loan underwriting, grant management, etc. Explore option of



Underutilized shopping center on South Breiel Boulevard

creating a Middletown-based CDC if others are not responsive to requests for assistance.

- 1.6.6. Work with other government agencies for technical assistance, political support, and financing including Butler County Port Authority, Ohio Department of Development, and Ohio EPA.

RD 1.7 Consider undertaking a pilot study or small demonstration project before tackling a large, complicated redevelopment project, if time and priorities permit.

RD 1.8 Acquire property through an effective landbanking strategy.

- 1.8.1. Utilize this strategy when a high-priority property does not have a defined end user or has weak market potential but does represent a nuisance or serious health, safety, and welfare issue that must be removed.
- 1.8.2. Purchase brownfield/greyfield properties as they come available through lender and tax-delinquent foreclosures, eminent domain or by other similar method of easy and quick transactions. This should be done with close consultation with legal counsel to limit the city's liability.
- 1.8.3. Remove nuisance structures as soon as possible. Such action removes blighting influences and prepares site for future redevelopment.
- 1.8.4. Mitigate contamination if resources are available. Hold and maintain property until such property can be conveyed to a development partner (in return for a development agreement that clearly lays out City's expectations).

RD 1.9 Utilize public incentives to “kick-start” greyfield and brownfield development as needed on a case-by-case basis.

OBJECTIVE RD 2: Use redevelopment opportunities to introduce mixed land use developments that satisfy the needs of the neighborhood.

ISSUE: **Many neighborhoods are relatively dense with few supportive amenities such as convenience oriented shopping and jobs.**

Use mixed use redevelopment opportunities to make Middletown's neighborhoods and housing more attractive and competitive in conjunction with objectives and strategies stated in Goal C.

RD 2.1 Identify and prepare sites for mixed-use redevelopment.

- 2.1.1.** Work with Middletown Schools and Butler Metropolitan Housing Authority to identify plans for residual properties and identify potential adaptive reuse strategies for buildings or infill development.
- 2.1.2.** Designate brownfield/greyfield sites suitable for mixed use development as such on the brownfield / greyfield inventory databases and map (see RD 1.1).
- 2.1.3.** Prepare brownfield/greyfield properties for mixed use redevelopment utilizing the strategies found under Objective RD 1 including site prioritization, partnership building, and property acquisition and clearance, if needed.
- 2.1.4.** Coordinate revitalization of surrounding blocks with the redevelopment project, in order to support redevelopment efforts.

RD 2.2 Promote the benefits of mixed use development. Build public support, buy-in, and understanding for the need and importance of mixed use infill projects.

- 2.2.1.** Work with community and neighborhood leaders to take the message back to their constituents.
- 2.2.2.** Organize neighborhood workshops and task forces. Listen to concerns and address in individual plans.
- 2.2.3.** Discuss merits of mixed use often at City Council and Planning Commission meetings and in press releases and City newsletter.
- 2.2.4.** Work with local developers, banks, and realtors to gain their support and overcome obstacles. Infill properties often present mixed use opportunities though are often located in weak markets. Development professionals therefore need to be shown hidden opportunities such as underserved markets, untapped labor supply, possible incentives, developed infrastructure, cultural amenities, and parks. Also share the city's vision for the entire area.
- 2.2.5.** Discuss obstacles that developers encounter when pursuing mixed use developments, along with potential solutions. For example, higher density housing is often needed when the retail and office market is weak.

RD 2.3 Encourage good urban design. Mixed use development is more than just a collection of uses. Careful thought must be given to how each use relates to another and with the surrounding community. Mixed use should make communities more livable by connecting residences with schools, parks, shopping and employment.

2.3.1. Create a community-wide design manual including traditional neighborhood development standards for infill and mixed use projects. Such manual will articulate the City's minimum design goals which can be reviewed by developers in advance of making investments. Include provisions for:

- a. Residential, office, and retail land uses;
- b. Open space and internal pedestrian path system;
- c. Well-designed access to transit and bike paths as a means to make automobiles optional versus required;
- d. Street design to include appropriate scale, wide sidewalks, on-street parking, street furniture, and landscaping to create pedestrian-friendly environments;
- e. Building mass, scale and context;
- f. Architectural features like decorative façade treatments, storefronts, balconies, porches, building materials, etc.

2.3.2. Do not accept undesirable designs for the sake of facilitating development. Such developments will disappoint residents and undermine future mixed-use infill efforts.



Supermarket with contextual urban design

RD 2.4 **Include the public in the decision-making process while planning a mixed use project.** Public involvement is needed to accurately articulate use and design expectations, overcome obstacles, and gain consensus.

Community Barriers to Mixed use Development

Barriers

Problematic Solutions

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Single-use zoning regulations▪ Market support may not exist for all uses▪ Resistance to new ideas/higher residential densities▪ Fears of increased traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Need rezoning and public hearing▪ Often requires City approval of higher densities to satisfy banker needs▪ Community advocacy▪ Design for transportation alternatives and transit
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2.4.1. Organize neighborhood workshops and design charrettes. Listen to resident concerns and address in plans for site specific mixed use projects.

2.4.2. Prepare a mixed use development plan for specific priority projects to illustrate how design standards could be applied.



RD 2.5 **Encourage higher density housing in mixed-use development.** Higher density creates a "built-in" market, increases demand for local goods and services, and bolsters the financial viability of a redevelopment project. This technique is vital for downtown revitalization.

2.5.1. Blend housing in with other uses to create

active neighborhoods during all hours of the day.

- 2.5.2.** Create a balanced neighborhood with a variety of owner- and renter-occupied housing options at varying price points to offer something for everybody (e.g., young adults, couples without children, families, and seniors).
- 2.5.3.** Reserve some units as affordable housing to give LMI households access. This approach will likely require incentives such as low income tax credits and HOME funding to make the project marketable.
- 2.5.4.** Plan for minimum of 10 units per acre to support walkable business districts, retail, and transit and to bolster the financial viability of the redevelopment project. The need for goods and services increases as residential density increases. Public service delivery efficiencies likewise increase.

CHAPTER 5

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS



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CHAPTER 5

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the improvement and diversification of Middletown's housing stock. The age, condition, and overall desirability of housing is certainly one indicator of a community's quality of life. Accordingly, maintaining and creating desirable housing is a critical element to the City's economic development efforts to attract and retain companies and to improve the quality of life of existing and future residents.

RESIDENT FEEDBACK

Resident participation during the planning process indicated dissatisfaction with property maintenance of older housing units and the apparent lack of quality imbued in recent new housing starts. Some residents are also concerned with city's ability to attract professionals to the community due to the city's relative lack of high-end, high-quality housing.

A proper balance of housing types and values does not exist in Middletown. Residents are keenly aware that Middletown cannot attract professional, higher income households. Step-up housing is generally not available for younger, upwardly mobile age groups. Likewise, maintenance and carefree housing targeting Middletown's aging population is relatively non-existent.

Resident participation during the planning process indicated dissatisfaction with property maintenance of older housing units and the apparent lack of quality imbued in recent new housing starts.

OBSTACLES TO NEW HOUSING INVESTMENT

Middletown must reinvent old neighborhoods to ensure that a viable housing stock is available to retain and attract future residents. This task, though seen as extremely difficult, is nonetheless worthwhile and most likely essential for Middletown to remain a vital part of the region. More salient examples of revitalization obstacles include brownfield sites, deferred property maintenance, and rehabilitation and new construction costs in excess of current property values.



Again, the scarcity of vacant land to support new residential development underscores the need for wholesale neighborhood revitalization. New, higher-end housing introduced in the Renaissance development has seen tremendous support. Sales have been stronger than anticipated. This indicates that demand exists for new housing units in Middletown, particularly adjacent to the I-75/SR 122 interchange. The city will have to examine the need for additional acreage for residential development in the Renaissance vicinity tempered with economic development priorities for nonresidential development at this same location.



HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD OVERVIEW

A recent study by the Danter Corporation entitled *An Overall Housing Assessment of Middletown, Ohio* dated September 2002 provides some insight on recent neighborhood trends. Danter prepared a submarket analysis of five neighborhoods as delineated on Figure 7. Population, household, and median income statistics are provided for each neighborhood in Table 15.

Table 15: Submarket Population, Household, and Median Income Growth, 1990-2006

	1990	2000	Change 90-00	2006	Change 00-06
Downtown/Airport					
Population	11,073	10,206	-8%	9,700	-5%
Households	4,636	4,372	-6%	4,197	-4%
Median Income*	\$ 21,379	\$ 28,976	36%	--	--
Central/University					
Population	13,959	14,701	5%	15,050	2%
Households	5,445	5,790	6%	5,944	3%
Median Income*	\$ 39,006	\$ 53,577	37%	--	--
Interstate 75 Corridor					
Population	3,762	3,640	-3%	3,995	10%
Households	1,392	1,416	2%	1,577	11%
Median Income*	\$ 39,443	\$ 57,902	47%	--	--
South Main Street					
Population	12,419	11,211	-10%	10,486	-6%
Households	4,417	4,304	-3%	3,788	-12%
Median Income*	\$ 18,776	\$ 27,272	45%	--	--
South/AK Steel					
Population	13,707	14,256	4%	14,443	1%
Households	5,568	5,861	5%	5,954	2%
Median Income*	\$ 24,185	\$ 32,885	36%	--	--

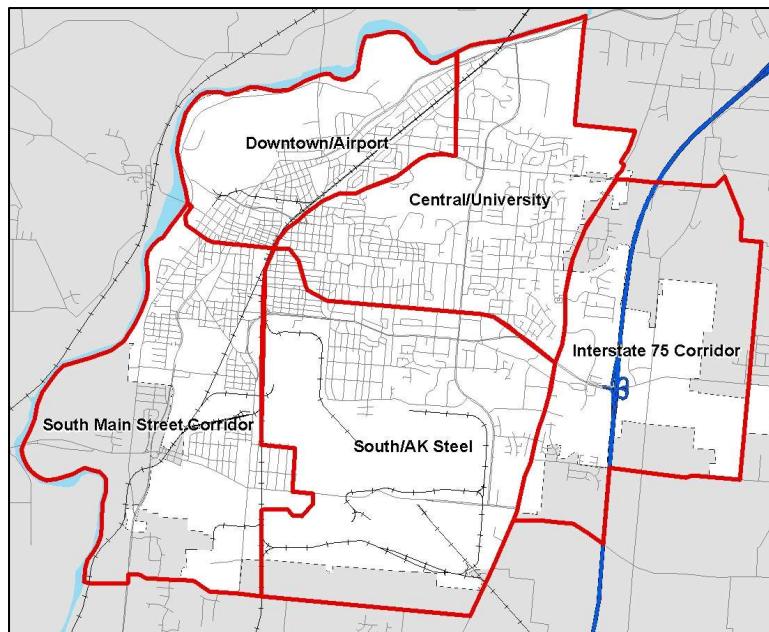
Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census, Claritas, Inc., and The Danter Company

* Median Income data is actually a 2001 estimate provided by Claritas, Inc., as reported by the Danter Company in the Overall Housing Assessment for Middletown Ohio. September 2002.

Danter's data provides significant evidence of polarized neighborhoods. The western neighborhoods, South Main Street and Downtown/Airport, are in severe distress while the northeastern and eastern neighborhoods, Central/University and Interstate 75 Corridor respectively, are stable and growing.

- The South Main Street geographic area lost approximately 10% of its population between 1990 and 2000. Another 6% in population loss is anticipated by 2006. South Main Street has the second highest percentage of subsidized rental units in Middletown. Nondescript rental units are commingled with what is arguably some of the most ornate examples of late 19th and early 20th Century residential architecture located in Butler County. Many single family homes appear to have been converted into rentals. Older industrial properties abut housing in some locations. The area's estimated 2001 median household income is \$27,272 in 2001. The homeownership rate is 54.8%.
- The Downtown/Airport geographic area experienced a population loss of 8% according to the Danter Company between 1990 and 2000. This trend is expected to continue through 2006. This area has the highest percentage of subsidized rental housing units in the city. Neighborhoods closer to downtown include older housing as well as relatively recent redevelopment projects, while some neighborhoods further to the east and north contain post World War II production housing. Much of the housing is situated among older commercial and industrial developments. The homeownership rate is at 56.1%.
- The South/AK Steel area gained 5% population growth over the 1990 decade, according to the Danter Company. Housing in this area is generally isolated by arterial roads and AK Steel and supporting industrial operations. Homes toward the western end of this area are relatively old, small, and in fair to poor condition, while homes toward the eastern end tend to be somewhat larger, newer and in better condition.. The South/AK Steel area has the lowest homeowner occupied rate at 50.6% as of the 2000 Census. This area also has a relatively high number of subsidized rental units. Population growth is anticipated to be stable with a modest gain of 1% between 2000 and 2006. Median household income is the third highest in this area at \$32,885.
- The Central/University geographic area featured a 5% increase between 1990 and 2000, the highest percentage of homeowners at 89%, and a healthy estimated 2001 median household income of \$53,577. According to Danter, single family homes along Central Avenue near Middletown Regional Hospital are some of the largest and highest priced in the city. This area also benefits from Miami University at Middletown. Population is estimated to increase by 2% by 2006. However, MRH is planning to relocate their facility to the Interstate 75 Corridor in 2006.

Figure 7: Housing Real Estate Submarkets



This loss, combined with the possible threat of adjacent negative housing trends moving east place the Central/University area at considerable risk.

- The Interstate 75 Corridor has the highest median income at \$57,902 and is expected to obtain the greatest population growth between 2000 and 2006. New, higher-end housing being offered at Renaissance I and Renaissance II east of I-75 will likely result in growth numbers that match or exceed projected growth. This area has the best potential for new housing development in the city because of great interstate access and a higher than average amount of vacant land.

HOUSING CONDITIONS AND CYCLES

Major housing maintenance and rehabilitation activities are generally needed about every 30 years. Evidence of poor housing maintenance can be found in most neighborhoods in varying degrees indicating that housing maintenance cycles are not being undertaken. This is problematic as more than 80% of the housing units in Middletown were built before 1970. The age of housing indicates a need for increased code enforcement activities and resources along with more incentives and programs to assist homeowners with rehabilitation and maintenance.

Negative housing trends manifest themselves when property owners lose confidence in their neighborhoods. As a result, people leave, market demand decreases, property values decrease, vacancies increase, and excess homes become investment properties/rental units. Remaining property owners have little financial incentive to make repairs. This trend, if not intervened, creates a negative housing cycle that could last for decades. The remaining residents are generally the urban poor who cannot afford to move out. This negative cycle also has a detrimental effect on other land uses including retailers that rely on the disposable incomes of neighborhood residents. Cascades of denigration will occur until nothing is left but vacant commercial buildings, nuisance properties, and a fraction of the original population.

The South Main Street and Downtown/Airport areas are currently experiencing negative housing cycle as indicated by population loss and lower than average homeownership rates. This would not be overly concerning if these conditions could be isolated and precluded from spreading. Adjacent neighborhoods with somewhat healthier conditions are susceptible to the destabilization forces currently found in the South Main Street and Downtown/Airport areas and parts of others.

TARGETED NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

The City has undertaken several initiatives designed to improve the housing stock and neighborhoods such as increasing code enforcement, adopting minimum residential design standards, and placing a cap on new subsidized units. Though seen as steps in the right direction, none of these initiatives alone or collectively will overcome the downward housing cycles that are apparent in the South Main Street and Downtown/Airport neighborhoods. A new, more comprehensive strategy must be enacted to overcome market forces.

Given the condition of some neighborhoods, reliance on the private sector to turn undesirable neighborhoods around is an unlikely strategy. Public sector leadership and incentives are needed to entice private sector participation through a comprehensive, multi-year revitalization process. All blighting influences must be removed and housing units must meet the minimum building code before a neighborhood's revitalization process can be concluded. Fixing one or two problem properties will not bring about the holistic change required to develop a functional neighborhood.

The revitalization strategy fashioned in this Master Plan is designed to prevent negative housing cycles from spreading to *healthy neighborhoods*. This strategy will require a proactive approach and a concentration of resources into select neighborhoods. This deliberate concentration of resources, if implemented, will be a policy shift from using available resources citywide on a first come, first serve basis much like CDBG dollars have been used. The steps to implement the revitalization strategy follow:

- Prepare a sustainable *neighborhood indicators* database to identify healthy neighborhoods, neighborhoods in transition and degraded neighborhoods. Though classification could be done on visual inspection alone, the real underlying trends at the neighborhood level will not be known until a comprehensive analysis of available data is undertaken.
- Present the sustainable neighborhood indicators data to a broad spectrum of public local, county, and school officials; business leaders and key stakeholders; residents; and potential partners in from lending institutions, real estate, and for profit and not for profit housing development organizations.
- Use the data to select and prioritize neighborhoods for targeted revitalization. The selected neighborhood should be based on criteria important to the community and:
 - be in obvious decline or transition
 - be located adjacent to a healthy neighborhood as deemed as such by the community reinvestment committee;
 - be large enough to achieve a critical mass of change. Smaller areas than one-quarter square mile will not change market perceptions. The area can be larger but should not exceed one-half square mile.
 - be assimilated in with the adjacent healthy neighborhood after revitalization is complete or it must be able to stand as its own compact area that is supported by the market.
- Where possible, select a neighborhood that has or will receive an infusion in capital investment to use as a springboard for revitalization. MCSD's new schools initiative is an example. Similarly, consider neighborhoods that have one or more key anchors such as places of worship, employment centers, neighborhood business districts, historic or unique structures or districts, or parks, etc. These elements must be provided as part of the revitalization effort if not present beforehand consistent with the Neighborhood Design Standards listed in the next section.

Signs of Healthy Neighborhoods

- Well maintained structures and landscaping.
- Litter/refuse free
- Pedestrian activity
- Businesses flourish
- Parks and open space use
- Strong demand for housing
- Few housing vacancies

Example Neighborhood Indicators

- Building maintenance
- Single family conversions
- Vacancy rate
- Crime statistics
- Code violations and complaints
- Property foreclosures
- New investment
- Number of units for sale and average time on market
- Housing value trends
- Business/retail vacancies
- Housing occupancy trends
- Neighborhood assets and anchors
- Development opportunities such as public land, vacant land, large land holdings under common ownership
- Brownfields/greyfields.

- Develop a neighborhood revitalization plan for the target neighborhood. Planning is essential to identify development opportunities and constraints, alternative courses of action for individual properties and areas, responsibilities of all parties involved, develop a common vision, create a land use policy, and establish an implementation strategy and action plan. Informing and engaging residents, partners, and stakeholders are critical to developing a consensus and needed momentum to implement the plan.
- Priority actions should be linked to revitalization goals consistent with traditional neighborhood design standards. Initial projects should have a tremendous impact on the neighborhood to demonstrate the city's intent to make a real and lasting change and as means to attract interest and bolster resident confidence. Examples include the acquisition and demolition of a brownfield property or undertaking a high quality infill development project at a highly visible location.
- Implementation will likely require several distinct actions, programs, incentives and partner involvement. The first strategy that should be used throughout any revitalization effort is strong code enforcement. Unresponsive property owners with code violations must be encouraged via fines and court fees to fix problems or sell.
- Select different actions based on needs and opportunities. One portion of the neighborhood may require wholesale acquisition, demolition and clearance. Other areas may need rehabilitation while others may need a combination of all such strategies.

KEY NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The ultimate goal is to create endearing neighborhoods that attract and retain people of all ages and income levels. Mixed housing types and values are desired to achieve this goal.

Neighborhoods are the basic building block of a community. One neighborhood by itself should have all the elements of a village with housing, parks, schools, shopping, employment, and civic uses, etc. Several neighborhoods integrated in one community combine to form a city. All neighborhoods in Middletown should have the following elements:

Neighborhoods are the basic building block of a community. One neighborhood by itself should have all the elements of a village with housing, parks, schools, shopping, employment, and civic uses, etc.

- ***Neighborhood Compact Form.***

Neighborhoods are compact, largely self-contained, pedestrian pockets defined by a quarter mile radius or 5 minute walk. Self contained neighborhoods should be no more than 160 acres in land area with recognizable edges and centers.



- ***Neighborhood Centers and Edges.***

Neighborhoods shall have clearly recognizable centers and edges to create a strong and identifiable image.

Centers serve as the focal point of the neighborhood; edges delineate one unique neighborhood from another. Centers generally are a cluster of nonresidential buildings and uses that serve as the area of primary socialization. Small scale commercial operations, parks, schools, community centers, institutional and civic uses can combine in whole or in part at the center. Edges are typically found at arterial perimeter roads or adjacent to natural features. Centers and edges must have unique architecture that helps define the greater neighborhood. Land uses in centers and edges shall be diverse to serve the needs of neighborhood residents. Well defined centers and edges are a strong source of neighborhood pride and enhance neighborhood desirability and property values.

- ***Network of Walkable Streets.***

Edges and centers must be well maintained and enhanced with streetscape improvements and linked by a finely woven network of interconnected streets. Streets must be detailed for pedestrian use to provide increased transportation choice and provide alternative routes to avoid congestion on a few neighborhood roads. Streets shall be narrow to slow traffic and create more comfortable pedestrian environments. Streets should be treated as part of the public open space system and include neighborhood defining elements such as sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian orientated lighting, art, and street furniture.

- ***Building Scale and Placement.***

Urban neighborhoods are typically built on small, narrow lots. Structures are located close to the road and building heights rarely exceed three stories. New

construction shall be compatible with the building scale, massing, architecture, and building placement of the surrounding neighborhood. Smaller buildings, since they can be seen from the street and sidewalk, provide an important opportunity for embellished architectural detail. Enhanced architecture creates a memorable image of place and lessens the need for landscape screening. Buildings shall be set close to the street to define public spaces and the street as opposed to excessively large setbacks that define parking lots. Buildings shall be easily accessed by automobile and by foot and be diverse in function to accommodate different uses over time in conjunction with changing neighborhood needs.

- **Parking.** Some Middletown neighborhoods were designed before the advent of the automobile while others were created when most families had just one. Revitalized neighborhoods must be retrofitted to accommodate more vehicle parking in a manner that is compatible with the neighborhood's traditional form. On-street parking in the public realm is essential to reduce parking demand on private property. On-street parking also slows traffic down in neighborhoods and places motorists closer to front doors. Off-street parking shall be shielded and provided in close proximity to every building and not concentrated in one part of an area as to become the focal feature of the neighborhood. Consideration should be given to introducing small common parking areas like developers are providing next to higher-density, single-family attached homes. Alleys can also be utilized to provide rear parking that is convenient yet shielded from public view.
- **Mixed Land Use.** Neighborhoods shall have a balance of shopping, employment, and housing opportunities. Neighborhoods with retail and office uses within the defined quarter mile radius are better able to meet the everyday needs of residents at convenient locations. Clustering uses at the neighborhood level saves energy and promotes walking. Buildings at the neighborhood center and edge shall be designed to accommodate multiple uses.
- **Civic and Institutional Anchors.** In addition to having a balance of retail and office, each neighborhood shall have adequate provision of public, institutional, and civic uses (e.g., green squares, houses of worship, community buildings, etc.) Civic and institutional uses typically exhibit the strongest architecture in the neighborhood and serve as neighborhood landmarks.
- **Public Open Space.** Each neighborhood shall have an open space system that includes natural features, park facilities and formal open spaces to encourage resident congregation, socialization, and recreation. Open spaces serve as sources of community character, identity, and pride. Well designed open spaces add value to neighborhoods. Town squares and greens are more formal places of open space organization than parks. They serve an important civic function by framing civic, institutional and commercial buildings around them.
- **Diverse Housing Types and Price Points.** Each neighborhood shall have a sufficiently diverse mixture of housing types at varying densities and price points to accommodate the full range of people needed to build and maintain a complete and real community. Diversity avoids monotonous cookie cutter subdivisions and large enclaves of people in the same socioeconomic class.



OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING MARKET

- ***Market Projections.***

Projections based on historical trends suggest that the City of Middletown can be expected to add between 345 and 917 new owner-occupied housing units by 2007. This is a broad range of projected new units that could add between 2.6% and 6.9% to the overall number of existing owner-occupied housing units currently in the inventory. The net addition to the inventory would probably be less due to attrition due to demolition and fire loss, etc.



It should be noted that much of the housing growth experienced by Middletown between 1990 and 2000 was the result of annexation. New housing developments brought into the city via annexation account for much of the weight resulting in the 2007 growth projections. To achieve projected growth, the city will have to determine whether or not to annex more land to accommodate the high range of the projected growth or to permit new housing to develop on the few greenfield sites that are currently available within Middletown.

- ***Market Maintenance.*** However, a minimum of 150 to 160 owner-occupied housing units should be built per year just to maintain the vitality of its existing inventory regardless of the policies that accommodate the growth. In order to achieve this growth, between 60 acres and 100 acres of developable residential land would be needed per year. It is unlikely that the City could ever achieve the growth approaching the estimates cited above without targeted redevelopment goals and objectives for residential neighborhoods within the City's boundaries or an aggressive annexation policy is pursued.

- ***Market Magnitude.*** Between sales of existing owner-occupied homes and the potential addition of new homes to the inventory mentioned in the previous paragraph, the annual owner-occupied housing market should range between 1,200 units and 1,300 units between now and 2007 based on historical evidence. Between 5% and 15% of the annual owner-occupied housing market should be attributable to the addition of new housing units to the market. Whether these new units are added by way of annexation or new construction is open to question. The annual owner-occupied housing market could go as high as 1,550 and 1,660 housing units assuming a typical annual turnover rate of 10% per year; a replacement rate of approximately 1% (as a function of the attrition of the worst units in the inventory); and including the projected range of 345 to 917 new owner-occupied homes.

The growing demand for owner-occupied structures is dependant upon the stability and desirability of the housing product. The lack of newer and diverse housing product offerings within the city may explain why the market is stable. Residents are not moving because there are no diverse product offerings to move to within the city. It would not be surprising to see the current market stability to destabilize as newer homes continue to be built near Middletown.

- ***Replacement Rate.*** In addition to new housing starts, an annual replacement rate of approximately one percent of the existing owner occupied housing units should be sought to keep

the housing inventory competitive. Replacement should serve as a function of the attrition of the worst units in the inventory. Vacant, blighted, nuisance, and obsolescent non-contributing structures must be removed from the inventory. The site should be used for replacement housing which contributes to one of the new 150 to 160 owner-occupied units needed each year to keep the housing supply vital.

RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSING MARKET

The renter-occupied market is of much greater magnitude annually than the owner occupied market as a result of higher turnover rates. In addition, growth is projected in the actual number of occupied rental units in the inventory between now and 2007.

A renter-occupied housing turnover rate (i.e., the number of units that become available and are released) of 40.0% per year can be considered to be representative of the general marketplace. Middletown's annual renter-occupied housing market appears to comprise approximately 41.0% of the renter-occupied inventory, or slightly over 3,500 housing units annually. This annual turnover rate is, more or less, typical of the marketplace.

- **Market Projections.** Projections based on historical trends suggest that the City of Middletown can be expected to add between 161 and 427 new renter-occupied housing units between now and 2007. This is a broad range of projected new units that could add between 1.9% and 5.1% to the overall number of renter-occupied housing units in the inventory. Once again, the net addition to the inventory would probably be less since some existing units are likely to be taken out of service in this time period.

Between rentals of existing renter-occupied housing units and the potential addition of rental units to the inventory, the annual renter-occupied housing market should range between 3,550 units and 3,600 units between now and 2007 based on historical evidence. Between 1% and 2% of the annual renter-occupied housing market should be attributable to the addition of new housing units to the market. Assuming a stable number of renter-occupied households in the City of Middletown in the near future, a typical annual turnover rate of 40% per year, and a steady replacement rate of approximately 1.35% of the existing housing units per year (as a function of the attrition of the worst units in the inventory), the annual renter-occupied housing market should be approximately 3,460 units.

Adding the projected range of renter-occupied housing unit growth cited above, the annual market for renter-occupied homes could range between 3,500 and 3,550 housing units. This projection is consistent with the current pace of the renter-occupied housing market in Middletown, but it does not appear that new rental housing units are being added in the traditional areas of the City.

- **Replacement Rate.** As with owner-occupied housing, the replacement of units that have come to the end of their economic lives is important to maintaining the vitality of the renter-occupied housing inventory. Based on a replacement rate of approximately 1.35% per year, the City of Middletown should be building approximately 110 new rental housing units per year. This rate of new construction would serve to maintain the vitality of the renter-occupied housing inventory. This rate of annual new unit construction does not take into account the projected growth between now and 2007. Based on unit densities per acre between six and twelve units, a site, or sites, containing between nine and eighteen acres would be needed annually for rental housing construction in the City. Renter-occupied housing has demonstrated its ability to be developed

through the creative, adaptive reuse of older buildings as well as new, conventional construction. Adaptive reuses of older buildings in specifically targeted redevelopment areas could help alleviate the need for land to maintain this segment of the housing inventory.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE HN 1: Target resources on one neighborhood or redevelopment project at a time to create a noticeable and long-term benefit.

ISSUE: Funds that are available to improve neighborhoods are often spent community-wide resulting in little noticeable change in any one locale.

HN 1.1 Develop a neighborhood indicators database to help identify neighborhoods in transition that could benefit from a targeted revitalization strategy.

- 1.1.1. Share data with diverse group of community stakeholders, residents, real estate development-related professionals, etc. to help identify neighborhood trends and revitalization opportunities.

HN 1.2 Identify the target market and know the costs. Neighborhood revitalization is complex and risky. City partners will want to know what demographic will be attracted to a neighborhood, how the city plans to achieve its goals, and how much money it will cost to do so.

- 1.2.1. Prepare a market study with help from local realtors and housing developers to determine plausibility of attracting people to the target neighborhood as part of an organized revitalization effort.
- 1.2.2. Prepare a development pro forma to determine how much subsidy will be required, if any, to revitalize the neighborhood and attract the target demographic.

HN 1.3 Create a revitalization plan for the target neighborhood.

- 1.3.1. Include residents of the target neighborhood and adjacent neighborhoods in an open planning process to identify resident expectations such as design standards, amenities, density, land uses, and housing type.
- 1.3.2. Articulate the city's housing and community development goals in the plan such as mixed use, mixed income neighborhoods, increased housing values, stabilized neighborhoods, etc.
- 1.3.3. Identify rehabilitation, demolition and infill opportunities and map.
- 1.3.4. Analyze the condition of the neighborhood infrastructure to determine if upgrades or modernization are needed.
- 1.3.5. Prepare implementation plan and schedule with cost estimates, revenue sources, and implementing agency.

HN 1.4 Market the revitalization plan.

- 1.4.1. Market the revitalization plan in advance of implementation and throughout the process. Included in this task should be meetings and mail correspondence to residents informing them of the City's intentions. Available programs, desired outcomes, duration, participation, code enforcement actions, and updates should be discussed.
- 1.4.2. Place signs around target neighborhood letting residents know that a long-term redevelopment initiative is in place.

HN 1.5 **Implement plan using all available tools and resources** to stabilize the neighborhood in the shortest amount of time as possible.

- 1.5.1. Utilize code enforcement as the first line strategy. Unresponsive property owners must be held accountable to take action to perform the needed maintenance or sell.
- 1.5.2. Remove all blighting influences such as boarded up houses and vacant or brownfield commercial property in or near the neighborhood.
- 1.5.3. Land bank blighted and nuisance properties as open space. Consider selling such land below market value to a developer as an incentive.
- 1.5.4. Upgrade infrastructure if needed and provide high speed communications infrastructure.
- 1.5.5. Offer housing rehabilitation loans to income eligible households.
- 1.5.6. Purchase properties as they become available and rehab and sell suitable structures or demolish and sell for new housing.

HN 1.6 **Evaluate and Adjust Plan.**

- 1.6.1. Measure the success of the effort against quantifiable plan goals and/or outcomes.
- 1.6.2. Survey residents of adjacent areas and target neighborhood to see if perceptions change.
- 1.6.3. Adjust plan recommendations and implementation strategies accordingly at least once a year.

OBJECTIVE HN 2: Modernize the housing stock to enhance housing options for a new generation of residents.

ISSUE: **Housing is relatively old and does not offer the same amenities as newer housing found in adjacent communities.**

HN 2.1 **Increase suitable land supply.** Annex vacant land near existing and proposed interchanges for new residential development.

- 2.1.1. Encourage a wide variety of new housing types to retain and attract professionals and executives.
- 2.1.2. Encourage amenities such as preservation of natural features, open space, and walking trails to enhance marketability.

HN 2.2 **Create housing infill program.** Encourage infill development on vacant property, excess public property, and on underutilized commercial properties.

- 2.2.1. Create a database of all available infill sites suitable for new residential development and share with developers and realtors.
- 2.2.2. Acquire nuisance residential and commercial structures and tax delinquent property and make available for infill development.
- 2.2.3. Demolish improvements to remove blighting influences and make sites more attractive to private developers.
- 2.2.4. Market the city's intent for infill housing with region's housing developers. Consider selling properties at sub-market prices as an incentive for development.



Maple Park: Infill housing on former abandoned school site

HN 2.3 Modernize multi-family rental housing.

- 2.3.1. Modernize older rental units through code enforcement. The rental housing stock has a high vacancy rate. This is a function of the rental housing market in general but it is also a function of the age and structural obsolescence of some of Middletown's rental units.
- 2.3.2. Encourage higher-density housing on brownfield and greyfield sites to replace existing, obsolete multi-family units.

OBJECTIVE HN 3: Right-size the housing inventory so supply equals demand.

ISSUE: Middletown's housing value is currently flat and has not appreciated to the same extent as surrounding communities due to housing surplus and deferred maintenance.

No single issue can be identified or resolved that will change this situation. Housing values are a function of the overall desirability and demand for the community's housing stock. High quality schools, parks, natural features and access to markets and employment tend to increase demand for housing resulting in stable or increasing housing values. Low quality schools, obsolete and dilapidated housing, and crime are undesirable characteristics that tend to decrease demand and values.

HN 3.1 Strictly enforce building maintenance codes to improve the quality, vitality, and desirability of Middletown's neighborhoods and housing stock.

- 3.1.1. Prepare an inventory of dilapidated housing units including rental units.
- 3.1.2. Concentrate on bringing such units into compliance through fines and penalties. Code enforcement should force the property owner to spend money on repairs or sell the property.
- 3.1.3. Begin nuisance property/demolition proceedings for units that are not brought into compliance voluntarily.
- 3.1.4. Encourage infill development by seeking private sector participation first.

HN 3.2 Identify pockets of housing that are beyond revitalization and allow the market to take its inevitable course.

- 3.2.1.** Allow natural attrition in worst cases.
- 3.2.2.** Provide emergency loan assistance to qualified households for emergency repairs only. Utilize emergency repair and weatherization programs for housing units deemed not feasible for full rehab.
- 3.2.3.** Remove obsolete and nuisance properties from the housing supply. Purchase worst-case properties as they become available through sale or foreclosure and demolish.

OBJECTIVE HN 4: Encourage private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods.

ISSUE: **Some neighborhoods are plagued by pockets of dilapidated and/or vacant housing that is a blighting influence and a barrier to revitalization.**

HN 4.1 Increase code enforcement. This is a pervasive theme in the housing-related strategies. To increase investor confidence and private sector participation blighting conditions must be removed and negative housing trends mitigated.

- 4.1.1.** Concentrate on writing code violations in a targeted fashion. Stay in the neighborhood until problems are fixed.
- 4.1.2.** Demolish nuisance and boarded up structures and remove other negative influences such as refuse piles.
- 4.1.3.** Assess the property owner of the cost accrued to the city.

HN 4.2 Working with housing partners and area CDC's, create and develop effective grass roots neighborhood organizations (see Chapter 6 Quality of Life for additional strategies).

- 4.2.1.** Empower neighborhood groups to be self-policing on code violations and reporting illegal dumping and crime activity.
- 4.2.2.** Work with established, regional CDC's to educate and build capacity of local CDC's.
- 4.2.3.** Establish a landbanking program that enables CDCs to acquire and redevelop property.

HN 4.3 Target neighborhoods for sustained revitalization efforts consistent with Objective HN 1.

HN 4.4 Offer incentives for improvements made in target areas.

- 4.4.1.** Consider CRA districts and historic tax credits, where applicable.
- 4.4.2.** Work with banks to lower fees and interest rates or to partner/sponsor neighborhood development activities.



- 4.4.3. Work with non profit housing developers that can provide down payment assistance or offer more competitive loan underwriting terms.
- 4.4.4. Make obsolete and nuisance properties competitive in the market by demolishing structures and foundations.
- 4.4.5. Sell land at a nominal price to housing developers that are willing to enter into a development agreement that establishes minimum standards for development.

HN 4.5 Streamline eminent domain foreclosures process to remove problem properties from the housing inventory.

- 4.5.1. Update Urban Renewal legislation.
- 4.5.2. Convey nuisance property to a responsible investor.

OBJECTIVE HN 5: Stop and prevent negative housing cycles in healthy neighborhoods.

ISSUE: Pockets of desirable housing exist but are under stress from neighborhood or citywide trends.

HN 5.1 Target and monitor healthy neighborhoods and ensure such areas are not negatively impacted by housing characteristics in adjacent neighborhoods.

- 5.1.1. Create policies and programs for strong neighborhoods to prevent decline.
- 5.1.2. Revitalize adjacent neighborhoods showing decline (see Objective HN 1).

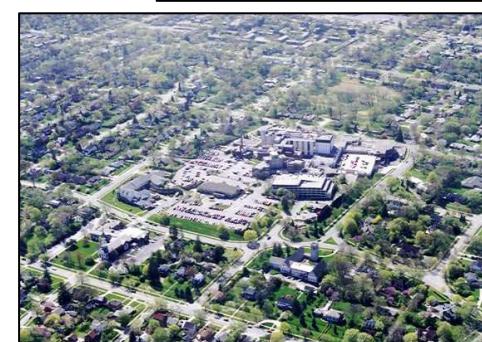
HN 5.2 Target healthy neighborhoods for proactive code enforcement. Do not allow properties to start negative housing cycles.

HN 5.3 Maintain strong neighborhood anchors such as churches, institutions, schools, and parks. Middletown Regional Hospital is an example.



- 5.3.1. Prepare a redevelopment plan for the hospital site to ensure that the property continues to have a positive stabilizing force on the surrounding neighborhood. Follow a similar process for other neighborhood anchors whose loss or continued decline is inevitable.

- 5.3.2. Introduce small pocket parks in neighborhoods that do not have such amenities.



Existing MRH and surrounding neighborhoods

HN 5.4 Enact a land lord registration or licensing program. It is important for the City to be able to contact owners of rental units regarding code violations. Rentals with high vacancy rates are creating more of a blighting influence than owner-occupied properties.

CHAPTER 6

QUALITY OF LIFE



- PUBLIC FACILITIES 6-1
- PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES 6-6
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CHAPTER 6

QUALITY OF LIFE

Community facilities, amenities, events, and aesthetics define a community's desirability and image. The City of Middletown offers residents a wide range of typical municipal amenities, as well as amenities and events that are less common in similar communities but add quality and variety to the amenities available. This section describes the facilities, amenities, and events that are provided by the City, and other sources, to the residents and visitors of Middletown. Map 3 Community Facilities identifies the location of public and some private facilities.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

The City of Middletown provides a wide array of essential services to the City ranging from administration, police, fire, streets, utilities and recreational activities. To facilitate operation of day-to-day city tasks, the City maintains the following municipal buildings. Map 3 shows their locations.

■ **City Hall.** The Middletown City Building is located at 1 Donham Plaza, which is the site of City Hall, administrative offices, and the Police Headquarters. The City Building was constructed in the 1970's. Its size is still adequate to perform essential administrative and departmental functions. Large conference rooms are often used for community meetings. Beneath the City building is the Police Department.

■ **Police Department.** The Middletown Police Department has over 130 men and women staffing a Patrol Division, Detective Division, Services Division, and a Special Response Team. The Patrol Division has 58 assigned officers, 6 sergeants and 3 lieutenants. The Detective Division's staff of 19 handles 1,500 police reports annually. The Services Division includes 17 dispatchers, 12 corrections officers, and several civilian staff in the Records Section.

Middletown Police Department operates a Special Response Team (SRT) to handle high-risk search and arrest warrant situations as well as hostage situations. The team is made up of 13 patrol officers and a Lieutenant in command, and is trained in hostage negotiations, tactical movement, firearms and explosive recognition, crowd control and non-lethal force. Middletown Police Department is unique in that it runs its own full-service jail facility. The average daily population of the facility is 60 persons, requiring a staff of 12 corrections officers and 1 sergeant.

Public Facilities

- City Hall – 1 Donham Plaza
- Police Headquarters – 1 Donham Plaza
- Citizen Service Center – 1 Donham Plaza
- Library – 125 South Broad Street
- Middletown Transit System (MTS) – 55 South Broad Street
- Baker Bowl Skate Park – Located at Smith Park
- Weatherwax Golf Course - 5401 Mosiman Road
- Fire Headquarters - Roosevelt Blvd. and Wicoff St.
- Social Services & Health Care Center
- Middletown Community Center



- **Fire Department.** Middletown's Fire Department provides very good emergency services to the residents and businesses of the City. The Insurance Services Office rates Fire Departments for the purpose of adjusting homeowner's insurance premiums. The ranking system is based on a 10 point scale, where 1 is the best score and 10 is the lowest. Lower ratings generally mean that a house can be insured cheaper. Middletown's ISO rating, as of January 2005, is 3.2, which is an excellent rating.

The City's 1997 Master Plan Update identified four potential locations for new fire facilities to serve the increase in land area after Middletown's annexations in the 1990's. At that time, there were only four fire stations (including headquarters) in operation, but a fifth was added (Station 2) on the east side of the City to serve the new development. The Middletown Fire Department currently operates five fire stations throughout the City:

- Headquarters (Roosevelt Blvd. and Wicoff St.)
- Station One (307 North Broad St.)
- Station Two (Cincinnati-Dayton Rd. and Towne Blvd.)
- Station Four (Tytus Ave. and Jackson St.)
- Station Five (Central Ave. and North Breiel Blvd.)

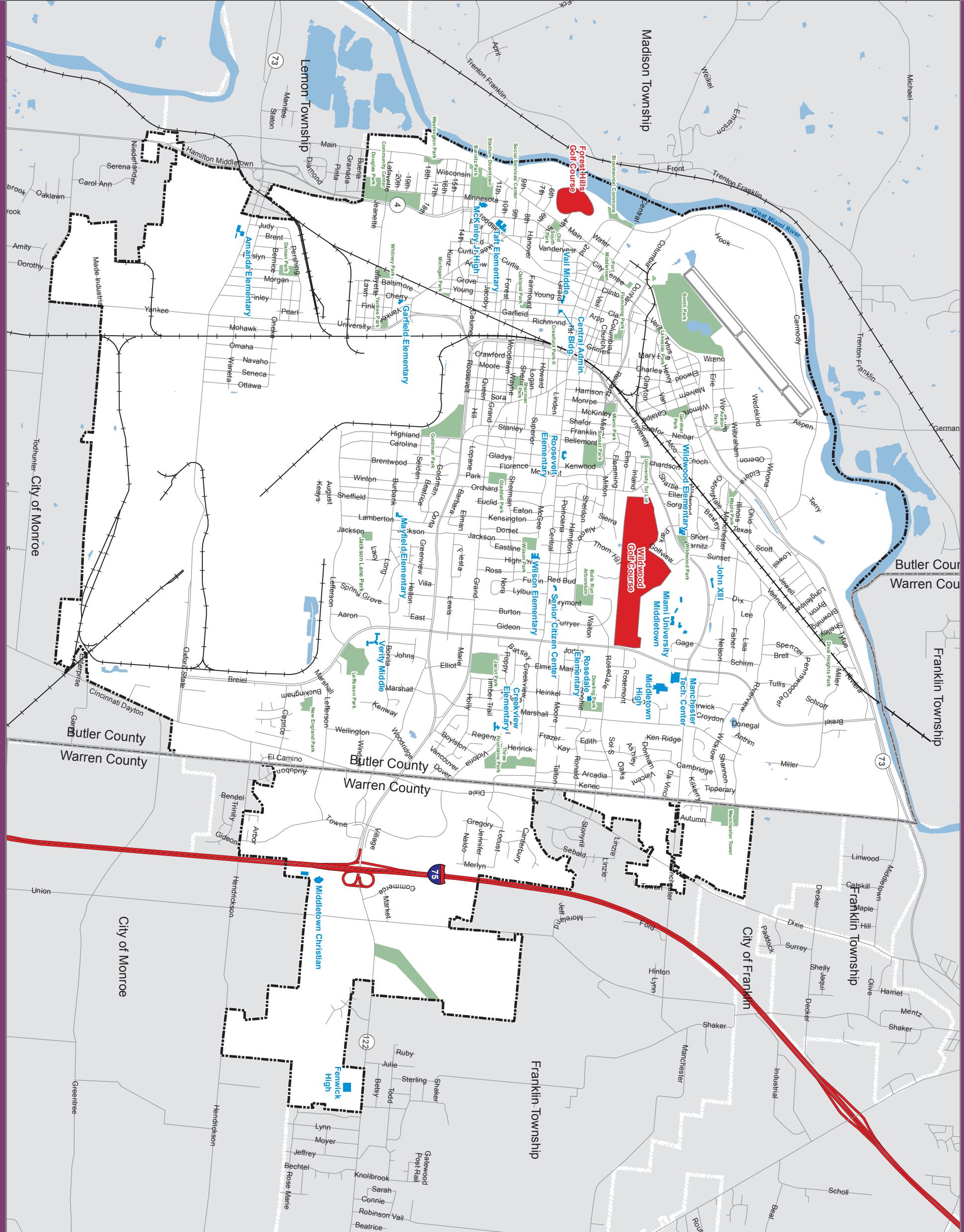
At the end of 2004, City Council reduced funding to the Fire Department reducing the number of on-duty firefighters from 22 to 19, and effectively eliminating one fire engine. The Fire Department presently operates a total of 19 vehicles: six engines (including two reserve engines), one ladder, five medic units (including two reserve units), one administrative vehicle for the Deputy Chief, one Hazardous Materials vehicle, one eight-passenger van, two utility pickup trucks, and two utility vehicles for fire investigation. Because of the reduction in staffing and budget funds, the Fire Department has no plans for expansion in the future. A station located on the east side of I-75 will likely be warranted in the future. However, no immediate plans exist for expansion due to budget constraints.

- **Citizen Service Center.** The Citizen Service Center (CSC), located in the City Building, is the customer service center of the City. The center is a centralized location where residents can visit or call for information and coordination inquiries. CSC also operates an online reporting system for residents to request service, report problems, or request other information.
- **Middletown Transit System (MTS).** The residents of Middletown are served by a public transit system called Middletown Transit System (MTS). MTS operates six 28-passenger buses along four transit lines. All routes terminate and originate downtown, at a recently constructed transit terminal at 55 South Broad Street. MTS service runs from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday. Fares are 70 cents for a one-way trip. Senior citizens receive half-price fares. In addition to the six



MAP 3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

6-3



buses along routes, MTS also operates two 9-passenger paratransit buses with on-demand service for people with special needs. On-demand fares are \$1.40 one-way.

The four transit routes, red, blue, green and gold, provide transit access within walking distance of most of the City. All four routes serve the downtown area well. The green route serves residents and businesses along Main and Verity on the west side of the City, The yellow line runs along the north and west perimeter of AK Steel serving residents and businesses, and also runs north into downtown. The red and blue lines both originate downtown and run east to Towne Mall. The blue line runs along Grand Avenue and serves the retail area including and south of Towne Mall, while the red line runs along University and Central Avenues and serves the retail area including and north of Towne Mall.

Areas of the City which do not have easy access to a transit line are generally in the northeast part of the City, and land east of I-75. Both of these areas are where the most new development is occurring. Once the construction of the new Middletown Regional Hospital campus is complete on S.R. 122 east of I-75, consideration should be given to extending one or two bus routes to the hospital to continue to provide city residents with access to health services.

- **Library.** The Middletown Public Library is located at 125 South Broad Street, just south of the central business district. The library has adequate off-street parking for visitors, and is only a block away from the MTS transit terminal. The library system operates two branch libraries, one in West Chester Township and the other in the City of Trenton. In 2000, the Middletown Public Library was ranked among the top 10 library systems in the nation, according to Hennen's American Public Library Rating Index, compared to libraries of similar size, population, and area.
- **School Facilities.** Residents of Middletown have access to a variety of academic choices; both public and private primary and secondary schools are located within the City, as well as post-secondary options. The community's image, though, is based on the success of Middletown Public School System. As of the 2003-2004 academic year, Middletown Public Schools operated 11 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 2 senior high schools that serve a total enrollment of 7,000 students.

In November 2003, voters passed a \$75.8 million bond issue. The 28-year issue will allow the construction of 6 new elementary schools and the renovation of 2 existing school buildings into elementary schools. Local taxpayers are only expected to pay for 24 percent of the program with the balancing coming from State Department of Education. In addition, several existing buildings will be closed and/or demolished. Table 16 below illustrates the construction and demolition plans.

Table 16: School Building Demolition, Replacement, and Renovation

School	Demolition	Replacement	Renovation
Amanda			X
Creekview	X	X	
Mayfield	X	X	
McKinley	X	X	
Roosevelt	X		
Rosedale	X	X	
Taft	X		
Verity			X
Wildwood	X	X	
Wilson	X	X	
TOTAL	10	6	2

Source: Middletown Planning Department

Miami University Middletown, a branch campus of Miami University Oxford, is located in the northern portion of the City and is primarily a commuter-oriented campus serving both local and regional students.

Middletown residents have a wide variety of choices for post-secondary education as the Cincinnati and Dayton regions are home to a variety of universities with national and international reputations, including:

- Art Academy of Cincinnati
- Middletown Regional Hospital's Greentree Campus
- Butler Technology and Career Development Schools
- University of Cincinnati – including 2 branch campuses
- College of Mount St. Joseph
- Miami University – including 2 branch campuses, 1 in Middletown
- Union Institute
- Xavier University
- Wright State University
- University of Dayton
- Sinclair Community College
- Cincinnati State Community and Technical College

▪ **Social Service and Health Center.** The City of Middletown Social and Health Center opened in 1976 to better serve the medical needs of City residents. Funding originally came from Community Development Block Grant funds, City funds, and client fees. As the community recognized the quality of medical care available combined with fees based upon client's ability to pay, demand for services increased. In 1983, funding was secured to construct a new 7,500 square foot facility to expand services.

The Center is now operated under a contractual agreement with Middletown Regional Hospital to continue to provide a wide range of medical procedures, treatments, and services to the local and regional community. The estimated size of the population served by the Center is approximately 120,000 people from throughout the greater Middletown Area.

Teachers and students have long complained about outdated facilities with falling ceiling tiles, outdated electrical systems, leaky roofs, and other problems. The six new and two renovated buildings are intended to improve their facilities and the community image and allow an educational environment where teachers and students can focus entirely on academia. Furthermore, the school district will reduce the overall number of schools it operates by two, a consolidation that will help eliminate the district's budget deficit.

Middletown Christian School and Bishop Fenwick High School are private religious schools that serve Middletown residents and students from surrounding communities.

- **City Community Center.** The Community Center is located in Douglas Park in the southwest portion of the City. The Community Center provides a location for residents of all ages to congregate and participate in community programs such as continuing education, a wide range of recreational activities, and arts and crafts. The Center has an annual budget and a small professional staff that coordinates programming. Facilities include several meeting and activity rooms, a multi-purpose banquet hall, and a child care center. The Center dates back to 1925 and was once owned by Armco. Armco donated the facility and 15.8 acres of adjacent land to the City in 1968. Middletown recognized the facility as a valuable community asset and remodeled it in 1975. An additional \$900,000 renovation occurred in 1993 with the help of CDBG funding



PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

According to the Department of Parks and Recreation, Middletown's park system currently consists of 349 acres of park space, 304 of which is developed. Parks and Recreation maintain: 28 developed and 5 undeveloped parks; 1 public golf course; 1 stocked fishing pond; 1 community center; 2 softball complexes; 1 baseball, football, soccer complex; a skate park; 2 sand volleyball courts; 22 basketball courts; picnic shelters; a Locktenders Museum; 18 tennis courts; 1 arboretum; and a fitness trail system.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommend that a community park system provide a minimum of 6.25 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. Based on Middletown's 2003 population of 51,941, 325 acres of parkland should be provided. As previously noted, Middletown currently provides approximately 349 acres of park space, of which 304 are developed. Although the total developed parkland falls below the 325-acre minimum, Middletown would have 6% over the minimum parkland recommended by NRPA if all currently owned parkland were developed. Therefore, Middletown is situated well to provide adequate park space for its needs.

NRPA has established a system for classifying park service areas and guidelines for each type of park classification in relation to the population served by the facility. Middletown's parks have been categorized and analyzed based on the following NRPA service area classification guidelines.

- **Mini-Parks.** Mini-parks function to serve young children within a 1/4-mile radius service area, and are typically one acre or less in size with few or no amenities. NRPA recommends 0.25 to 0.5 acres of mini-parks be provided for every 1,000 persons, or approximately 13 to 25 acres based on the City's 2003 population. Currently the City has 6.89 acres of parks that range in size from 0.58 to 1.5 acres and function as mini-parks. This only facilitates 25 to 50 percent of the NRPA minimum suggested provision of mini park space.

- **Neighborhood Parks.** Neighborhood Parks provide active recreation areas that serve a wider array of residents within a service area radius of one-half mile. Neighborhood parks should typically be 15 or more acres in size, with amenities such as playground equipment, soccer fields, ball diamonds, tennis courts and picnic areas. NPRP recommends that one to two acres of neighborhood parks is provided for every 1,000 persons, or approximately 50 to 100 acres based on the City's 2003 population. Currently the City has 207.6 acres of parks that range in size from 15 to 91.6 acres and function as neighborhood parks. This significantly exceeds the 50-100 acres recommended by the NRPA.



Sunset (above) and Smith (below) Parks

- **Community Parks.** Community Parks provide a diverse array of passive and active recreation activities and have amenities similar to but at a larger scale than a neighborhood park. Community parks, which are also commonly used for community events, should be 25 acres or more in size and have a service area of 1 and ½ mile. NPRP recommends 5 to 8 acres of community parks be provided for every 1,000 persons, or approximately 260 and 415 acres based on the City's 2003 population. Smith Park and Douglass Park function as community parks, and together comprise 121.3 acres. These parks facilitate only 29 to 47 percent of Community Park space recommended by NPRP.

Ideally, all areas of a community should fall within the service area of each of the three classifications of parks, but a more realistic vision for Middletown is to have as much of the City as possible served by at least one park. Map 4 illustrates many parts of the City are not within any park service area, especially land east of Breiel Boulevard. Consideration should be given to develop a new Community Park east of Breiel. Coordination with Middletown Regional Hospital is needed to provide hiking trails and a common break area to serve hospital and planned business park employees as well as new residential areas east of I-75.

- **Private Recreation.** Aside from Middletown's public park system, there are many additional opportunities for recreation available to residents. There are a few private recreation facilities in the City; Wildwood Golf Course, Forest Hills Country Club, and Middletown YMCA. The Great Miami River is an asset to the community providing opportunities for fishing and boating. Additionally, some newer residential developments such as Renaissance include private open space and recreational facilities to be maintained by homeowners' associations.
- **Metroparks.** Middletown is within a short distance from three Butler County MetroParks: Sebald Park, a 399-acre park few miles west of town; Miami River Preserve, a 16-acre park with one mile of frontage along the Great Miami River; and Excello Locks, a 4-acre historic site and park at the site where in 1826, the first locks in the Miami-Erie Canal system were built and stand today.

■ **Bike Paths.**

Middletown also has a network of bike paths for residents to use on the west side of town. Along the Great Miami River is a 2.3 mile segment of the Great Connection. The Great Connection is a 28 mile bike path that will link the City of Hamilton north to City of Miamisburg in southern Montgomery County. The trail connects to Smith Park via a bike spur, where City residents have direct access to the trail as well as parking. An additional bike trail exists along South Verity Parkway that was constructed as part of a state-funded transportation project.



Middletown portion of the Great Connection

■ **Great Miami River.** The Great Miami River is largely underutilized as a recreation asset due to current physical constraints. Industrial development walls off the river from residential areas. Creation of flood controls blocks the view of the river. New pedestrian connections, such as the Great Connector path are needed to increase pedestrian access.

MAP 4 PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICE AREA

6-9



Legend

Park Service Area

1 and 1/2 Miles

1/2 Mile

1/4 Mile

Park

Potential Park

City Boundary

RailRoad

Street

Interstate



0 0.35 0.7
Miles

4/20/05

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The City of Middletown offers residents with opportunities for recreation and social activities. Events showcasing culture, music, and performing arts are held throughout the year. Recreation activities are organized for adults and children alike. The City even provides special services such as home appliance recycling in the interest of keeping the city clean and beautiful. Following is a list with descriptions of the many community events provided to Middletown residents each year:

- **Middfest.** This weekend event held annually in early October is a celebration of culture from around the world. Each year a different country is celebrated. 2004's celebration featured Chile. In 1995, Middfest won the prestigious Post-Corbett Award as the "Extraordinary Event" in the greater Cincinnati area. Middfest was also bestowed the Fitton Center for the Arts "Ambassador for the Arts Award" for outstanding organization in 1998.
- **Ohio Balloon Challenge.** This late July weekend event is organized by the Chamber of Commerce. It was first held in 2003 and continues to be an annual event. Events include live entertainment, food and refreshments, balloon exhibitions and the Ohio Balloon Challenge. The challenge is a competitive event where balloonists are awarded points for navigation skills. Ohio Balloon Challenge participants receive points in the National Hot Air Balloon Standings.
- **Summer Sounds Concert Series.** This family-oriented concert series runs on selected dates between June and September at Bicentennial Commons and Smith Park. Music ranges from Blues and Bluegrass to Middletown's Symphony Orchestra.



ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

- **Sorg Opera Company.** The Sorg Opera Company formed in 1990 as the resident opera company in the historic Sorg Opera House. Paul J. Sorg recruited famous architect Samuel Hannaford to design the Theater, which was constructed in 1891. Today, the Sorg Opera recruits performers, directors, conductors and designers from around with national and international credentials and recruits orchestral and chorus talent locally. The Company is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization governed by a board of trustees and is a member of the Mid-Miami Valley Chamber of Commerce.
- **Middletown Lyric Theater.** For the past 25 years, the Middletown Lyric Theater has provided quality family entertainment to the Middletown area. Each season approximately four shows are produced, including musicals, vocals, and plays. The theater is located at 130 Verity Parkway.

- **Middletown Symphony Orchestra.** The Middletown Symphony Orchestra performs 5 concerts annually. Carmon DeLeone is in his 23rd season as conductor of the Middletown Symphony Orchestra. DeLeone has also been the Music Director of the Cincinnati Ballet for 36 years, and is also the Music Director of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, and has served as Host and Conductor of “Family Concert” series at New York’s Carnegie Hall.
- **Rising Phoenix Theater Company.** The Rising Phoenix Theater Company, located in the former Masonic Temple on North Main Street, is a local performing company that puts on four to six shows a year. All performance roles are offered based upon auditions, and most are held by local performers.
- **Middletown Fine Arts Center.** The Middletown Fine Arts Center was founded in 1957 to promote and encourage creative expression through the visual arts. The Center offers a wide variety of educational opportunities for people of all ages. The Center hosts classes in a variety of art media as well as lecture programs. Some classes are free of charge while others range in price from as little as \$35 to more than \$300 for workshops on painting, drawing or sculpting.



COMMUNITY IMAGE AND AESTHETICS

It is recommended that the City, in cooperation with businesses and local development organizations, work toward developing a distinct image and identity for the City. A task force consisting of design professionals (architects and planners), residents, and City officials, should be formed for the purpose of defining the appropriate City image and identifying site and building standards that convey the image.

- **Gateways.** Along with the major corridors, attention must be paid to the various entrance points into the City. These gateways offer the first impression of the City to visitors, and also set the tone for the appearance of the rest of the City. These areas should be improved with landscaping, decorative street lighting and fixtures, and consistent decorative signs designating the areas as arrival points into the City. A plan to improve these gateways should be prepared to facilitate achievement of this goal. Private development can also create an enhanced sense of place at these key gateway locations by utilizing traditional building materials and strong architecture and urban design.

- **Streetscape Improvements.** Map 5 identifies the recommended locations of streetscape improvements. The city has an abundance of streets with wide center

Every year in this county we spend more time on roads than anything else that affects the landscape. We perceive the landscape from the roadway more than in any other way. And we spend more time driving in the landscape: even avid outdoorsmen spend more time driving in the landscape than they do walking in the landscape. It's hard to imagine something that has more impact on our environment and impact on how we see the world around us...

William D. Rieley, University of Virginia



medians including Roosevelt, Breiel, and University Boulevards. Though significant, these boulevards do not create a strong or memorable image. Streetscape enhancements are needed to create community character and a stronger sense of place.

Existing boulevards should be treated as part of the public open space system. For example, regular street tree intervals along with interesting landscape plantings/formations provided at conspicuous locations throughout the Roosevelt Boulevard corridor should be provided to create a “greenway” treatment.

Two levels of streetscape improvement are proposed on Map 5. Major Streetscapes are locations where the streetscape design elements are most concentrated. Thus, the Major Streetscape is designed to define unique areas and strengthen community assets including (1) SR 122 at Towne Mall and the future Middletown Regional Hospital Healthcare and Technology Campus, (2) University Boulevard adjacent to downtown, (3) and Breiel Boulevard adjacent to Miami University at Middletown. Minor Streetscapes are a continuation of the design elements found in the Major Streetscape Areas but with less concentration and impact.

- **Negative Views.** The red zigzag line on Map 5 identifies “negative views” caused by a mishmash of uses, poor design/architecture, and/or areas with a general lack of property maintenance. Though other areas exist with similar characteristics, the negative views shown on the map are highly visible being located adjacent to heavily traveled thoroughfares. Unfortunately, these areas collectively create an undesirable image of Middletown. It is important that the aesthetics of these areas be improved. A multi-faceted approach is probably required to address this issue. Stepped-up code enforcement at these key locations is necessary. In other cases, moving existing uses to more appropriate locations or demolition should be considered.

MAP 5 GATEWAY AND CORRIDOR IMAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Legend

Image Enhancement

— Minor Streetscape Improvement

Negative View

■ ■ ■ Negative view

卷之三

County Li
Street

Street

City Boundary

* Gateway Improvement

A detailed map of Butler and Warren Counties, Ohio, showing numerous place names and geographical features. The map includes the Great Miami River, the Trenton-Franklin Canal, and various roads like Route 75, Route 4, and Route 122. A red line highlights a path through the county, and green lines mark specific areas of interest. Numerous small settlements and landmarks are labeled throughout the map.



QUALITY OF LIFE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE QL 1: Achieve educational attainment levels that are a community asset and are competitive with other suburban schools.

ISSUE: **Education is the cornerstone to the future of our children and our economy.**

QL 1.1 Encourage communication between the City and Middletown City School District that leads both to work toward common interests.

- 1.1.1.** Establish monthly MCSD and City communications. Invite MCSD to address City Council at regularly scheduled City Council meetings. Establish City Manager reports to the School Board at regularly scheduled School Board meetings. This communication could establish trust and greater partnership between the city and MCSD.
 - a.** Invite representatives from MCSD to address Council and the general public regarding school issues and why operating money is needed.
- 1.1.2.** Avoid situations in which City and MCSD bond proposals are on the same ballot and are competing for attention.
- 1.1.3.** City leaders should assist in educating residents about the links between school performance and property values and economic development. Make an effort to talk about the school levy at public speaking engagements and at City Council meetings.
- 1.1.4.** Have a unanimous vote of Council to support the upcoming school levy.
- 1.1.5.** Work cooperatively with MCSD to develop a tax incentive policy. Do so to avoid discussions later that may hinder economic development efforts. Include MCSD when City does its annual performance reviews of companies receiving tax abatements.

QL 1.2 Improve Student Performance Test Scores. Whether right or wrong, test scores paint the brightest picture of a school district. Help schools create programs that identify weaknesses in testing programs and improve. Example: provide foreign-language training to non-English speaking students.

- 1.2.1.** City support is needed for the advancement of MCSD's goal to understand the school's rich diversity and to create solutions that overcome cultural obstacles. Diversity training is seen as a need at all levels of government within Middletown.
- 1.2.2.** Provide city support for MCSD's efforts to increase student enrollment and success at Butler Tech. Success in this regard will require program sensitivity to Middletown students' needs and cultural differences.
- 1.2.3.** Increase the number of tutors that are available at fees that are affordable to Middletown residents in need of such service. MUM is a potential source.
- 1.2.4.** Participate in Sinclair Community College's high school student development program. Recipient high schools receive computers loaded with special software that are placed in one classroom along with an instructor. Specialized software teaches students math and English skills needed to succeed in college.

QL 1.3 Increase civic interest and involvement in Middletown youth and schools.

- 1.3.1. Support the advancement of the existing partnership between the business community and MCSD. Identify ways to increase business and community involvement in this partnership.
- 1.3.2. Create a subcommittee of City Council on youth and education. This committee can work in cooperation with MCSD and youth organizations and service providers to make Council aware of youth-related service gaps and needs.
- 1.3.3. Empower parents to be an active force in their children's education. Provide training on study skills, working with children, reviewing homework etc. Inform parents of the links between education and personal prosperity.
- 1.3.4. Work with schools to start a parent monitoring program in classrooms to provide assistance and to help with disruptive children.
- 1.3.5. Integrate regularly scheduled events and programs in schools to increase public usage, familiarity, and support with the school system. Examples include City sponsored workshops and recreation programs and adult education classes provided by civic groups and area higher-education institutions. (Note: New schools were deliberately designed to accommodate after-school community use.)

OBJECTIVE QL 2: Identify and implement steps to project a positive and realistic community image locally and regionally.

ISSUE: **Regional residents perceive Middletown as a gritty and backward industrial town.**

QL 2.1 Start a First Impressions Program to improve the aesthetic quality of key gateways, intersections and corridors.

- 2.1.1. Landscape wide boulevards throughout the city in a prioritized fashion over time.
- 2.1.2. Create unique gateway at the I-75/SR 122 interchange. Coordinate with ODOT and design engineer to ensure decorative landscaping and attractive building materials such as stone and wrought iron fencing in combination with landscaping. Extend enhancements to SR 122.
- 2.1.3. Adopt street and architectural design standards.
- 2.1.4. Double code enforcement efforts along important corridors.
- 2.1.5. Encourage retail center owners along key corridors to update the image of their shopping centers.
- 2.1.6. Implement streetscape improvements at key business district areas such as Breiel and Roosevelt.
- 2.1.7. Remove eyesore structures located adjacent to heavily traveled corridors that make bad first impressions. (See Chapter 4 Redevelopment)



Median along Roosevelt Boulevard

QL 2.2 Improve intergovernmental relationships and communications

- 2.2.1. Ensure staff or elected officials actively participate and represent Middletown's interest at Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments, Butler County

Planning Commission, Butler County Transportation Improvement District, and Butler County Port Authority meetings.

- 2.2.2. Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions on infrastructure improvements that are mutually beneficial.
- 2.2.3. Keep senators and congressman informed of Middletown's success stories and plans for the future.

QL 2.3 Strengthen civic unity and increase participation in governance.

- 2.3.1. Create a community-based decision making system that is inclusive and democratic. For example, consider more public participation in capital improvement planning.
- 2.3.2. Support the creation of new neighborhood organizations and enhance existing neighborhood organizations to be more effective and active representing their neighborhood. (see Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods for additional strategies)
 - a. Develop registration system in which groups can be formally recognized by City Council.
- 2.3.3. Develop communication system to deliver timely information to civic groups, neighborhood groups, and institutions.

QL 2.4 Market Middletown.

- 2.4.1. Develop "Message Training" for city staff so that all employees can articulate city plans and vision while at work, meetings, or social settings. Each employee should have skills to discuss city vision for varying time segments between 30 seconds and 3 minutes, depending on the situation.
- 2.4.2. Promote Middletown's strengths to residents and businesses and regional population. Promote the city as the center of two larger metro regions with tremendous access to art galleries and museums, performing arts, and regional parks, and universities.

Middletown's Strengths

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Parks▪ Cultural Amenities – Performing Arts▪ Traditional community character▪ Historic center▪ Low traffic▪ Historic structures and districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Central location to regional jobs, cultural and entertainment destinations▪ Events (Middfest, Balloon Challenge)▪ Health Care – MRH▪ Education – MUM▪ Bike Paths
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- 2.4.3. Employ neighborhood marketing efforts in neighborhoods that are desirable but relatively unknown or in danger of decline such as Sunset Park area, hospital area, South Main. Identify strengths, trends, needs and create brochures, display in real estate sections of Dayton and Cincinnati papers. Advertise specific Middletown neighborhoods just as developers advertise new subdivisions.
- 2.4.4. Create a brochure that conveys the merits of living, working, and shopping in Middletown. A portion of the brochure should be used to highlight downtown and its attractions.

QL 2.5 Embrace Diversity

- 2.5.1. Seek understanding and define needs and attitudes of Middletown's diverse population.
- 2.5.2. Provide diversity training to all public employees.

2.5.3. Put principles in action. City and schools must lead by example.

QL 2.6 Celebrate Middletown's past.

- 2.6.1.** Create transportation and industry museum. Such museum could contain machinery and archive materials from the steel and paper industry. A museum could teach children and new residents about Middletown's industrial innovations and contributions, while bringing in visitors to patronize local businesses.
- 2.6.2.** Explore restoration of the hydraulic canal through downtown as a unique recreational amenity and to preserve an important component of Middletown's history.
- 2.6.3.** Expand façade improvement loan program for historic properties in and adjacent to downtown. Provide interest free loans for business owners to improve their storefronts (0% interest for the first 3 years of the loan).
- 2.6.4.** Promote historic tax credits.
- 2.6.5.** Build support for downtown image campaign by promoting uniqueness and variety of downtown shopping, dining, arts, sports and entertainment opportunities through advertising to area residents. (See Objective QL 4 for more details).



Historic mural in downtown Middletown

QL 2.7 Reinforce positive civic activities.

- 2.7.1.** Award residents, businesses, students and organizations annually for the most outstanding beautification projects. Beautification awards encourage landscaping and property maintenance.
- 2.7.2.** Hold annual awards banquet. Honor businesses and institutions for achievement, growth, and community involvement. Could also honor best revitalization projects and new developments.
- 2.7.3.** Give special recognition to individual, institutional, and corporate acts of giving, works, and accomplishments at City Council meetings.

OBJECTIVE QL 3: Provide community facilities and amenities that attract and benefit residents of all ages.

ISSUE: **Middletown's population is aging and has a relatively low percentage of residents in prime income-earning age groups.**

QL 3.1 Encourage shared use of MCSD and city facilities to minimize overall facilities costs.

- 3.1.1.** Consider usage of school buildings before creation of separate public facilities or space for community-based organizations, when uses take place after school hours.
- 3.1.2.** Seek opportunities for use of school grounds as public parks, as well as the utilization of public parks by students.

QL 3.2 **Support and leverage the planning of new schools by MCSD as opportunities to revitalize neighborhoods with renewed anchors.** New schools can improve the quality of life in neighborhoods by providing enhanced community facilities and improving the general appearance of the surrounding neighborhood (see also Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods).

QL 3.3 **Redevelop Towne Mall.**

- 3.3.1.** Recognize Towne Mall is no longer viable as a regional mall. Intervention is needed now before the market takes its inevitable course.
- 3.3.2.** Meet with property owners to share Master Plan recommendations and vision.
- 3.3.3.** Encourage owner to redevelop mall into a mixed use development consistent with redevelopment concepts described in Chapter 4 Redevelopment. Offer public support for a project that meets minimum land use and design requirements.
- 3.3.4.** Market redeveloped site jointly with property owner and partners.



QL 3.4 **Expand geographical distribution of retail activity and increase retail offerings.**

- 3.4.1.** Redevelop brownfield and greyfield properties with retail to provide goods and services to adjacent neighborhoods (see Chapter 4 Redevelopment)
- 3.4.2.** Work with retail developers and management companies to bring diversity to Middletown's retail mix.
- 3.4.3.** Attract desirable retailers to town centers such as fashion stores, more sit-down restaurants, and coffee shops, etc
- 3.4.4.** Consider preparing a retail market analysis including community survey to share with developers, retailers, and investors to show need and demand for desired retail.

QL 3.5 **Modernize the park system.**

- 3.5.1.** Prepare citywide parks and recreation master plan. Survey the community to determine what amenities are desired.
- 3.5.2.** Prepare use study to determine the demand and need for each neighborhood and mini-park. Consider consolidating parks that do not warrant continued maintenance cost versus the amount of people that use the park. Potential eliminations may free up money to improve other parks.
- 3.5.3.** Replace old playground equipment with ADA-accessible playscapes with recommended fall zone areas and materials.
- 3.5.4.** Middletown residents expressed desire for more diversity in park system including natural areas, passive open space, and nature trails. Demand for these types of facilities is growing nationally.
- 3.5.5.** Consider the creation of a dedicated dog park. This is also a growing trend.

QL 3.6 **Plan new park on the east side.**

- 3.6.1. Receive resident input in determining what amenities should be included in new parks.
- 3.6.2. Work with the MRH to determine where a strategic location might be near the hospital campus.

QL 3.7 Expand bicycle and pedestrian circulation system.

- 3.7.1. Prepare a Bicycle Master Plan to layout citywide bike path system that links to existing bike paths.
- 3.7.2. Include bicycle facilities in roadway improvement designs when major road upgrades are planned. Bicycle facilities increase funding state and federal transportation funding scores while simultaneously reducing local burden.
- 3.7.3. Identify and repair missing links in the pedestrian circulation system.
- 3.7.4. Apply for available grants.

OBJECTIVE QL 4: Create a sustainable downtown.

ISSUE:	Downtown has potential to be a source of great civic pride and an amenity to local and regional residents but it is currently underutilized.
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The role of downtowns across the country has changed. Downtowns will never return to the role of dominant employment and retail hub that they fulfilled half a century ago. However, trends in cities across the country have shown a renewed interest in downtowns as neighborhoods. Rather than central business districts, downtowns are evolving into communities that include a balance of residential, specialty retail, office, cultural and recreational activities within a compact, walkable environment.

QL 4.1 Empower the Downtown Alliance in its mission “to create a vibrant downtown environment that is attractive to businesses, residents, and visitors.” An organization such as the Alliance, formed by downtown property owners and businesses, is the best representative of downtown interests.

- 4.1.1. Consolidate all past planning recommendations and identify ones that still make sense.
- 4.1.2. Ensure consistency between Alliance strategic planning goals and Master Plan recommendations, as a means of solidifying the partnership between the City and the Alliance and maintaining downtown as a citywide priority.
- 4.1.3. Pool human and financial resources with other community-based organizations that share common interests with the Alliance. An example would be organizations that represent adjacent neighborhoods.
- 4.1.4. Develop strong public-private partnerships. Rely on expertise and/or financial resources of partners to help in marketing and promotional activities, revitalization and business development efforts when possible.
 - a. Private partners may include



Roger's Jewelers/Fifth Third building: a downtown landmark

- major corporations, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- b. In addition to the City, a potential public partner is the newly formed Butler County Port Authority. The Port Authority can assist with ownership and marketing of individual properties, as well as financing for redevelopment efforts.
- 4.1.5. Build relationships with regional, statewide, and national organizations dedicated to downtown revitalization, such as Downtown Ohio, Inc.
- 4.1.6. Use special events and fundraisers to help with capital and operating costs.
- 4.1.7. Identify and implement at least one signature project that creates optimism and interest in downtown.
- 4.1.8. Consider a future extension of the Alliance's boundaries to include all Central Avenue properties from Carmody Boulevard to University Boulevard. These areas encompass the key gateways to downtown, include many viable downtown businesses and assets, and would benefit from an organization like the Alliance.
- 4.1.9. As capacity outgrows the capabilities of volunteers alone, consider creating a downtown management program with a paid director who is experienced in the field of downtown enhancement and management. The director would be responsible for business recruitment and retention, marketing and promotion, "clean and safe" operations, and management of volunteer committees.
- 4.1.10. Revisit the concept of creating of a Special Improvement District (SID) as a means of financing the downtown management program.

QL 4.2 **Create a synergistic land use mix** to encourage usage of the downtown throughout the day. Residential, retail, entertainment/dining, office and parks/pedestrian spaces are all vital ingredients of a 24-hour vibrant downtown.

- 4.2.1. Identify uses desired and their appropriate locations, both in horizontal and vertical terms, and revise zoning regulations accordingly. For example, retail and entertainment should be concentrated at street level along high-traffic thoroughfares, while residential should be located on upper floors or on side streets.
- 4.2.2. Review building codes to identify whether changes are needed in order to encourage adaptive reuse.
- 4.2.3. Attract each land use simultaneously. Office is needed to bring jobs, retail and restaurants are needed to support office workers through the day, and residential is needed to support downtown at night and weekends. Open space and formal gathering locations are needed to attract people at all times.
- 4.2.4. Promote economic clustering where all stores in a cluster can be reached in 1 walking trip (from a parked car or a nearby neighborhood, depending on your target.) Businesses in a cluster should be able to service the same or similar customers, so that they can all share in the traffic generation.
 - a. Utilize zoning to consolidate retail in a core area, such as Central Avenue.
 - b. Modify roadways to increase traffic in the core retail area (see QL 4.8).
 - c. Coordinate clustering efforts with recruitment efforts.

QL 4.3 **Connect downtown to the Great Miami River.** The river, as well as Bicentennial Commons and the new bike trail, are unique amenities that can benefit downtown merchants and residents. Several obsolete, dilapidated industrial sites, however, form a barrier between downtown and these amenities and harm the image of downtown.

4.3.1. Demolish dilapidated industrial structures to make properties available for reuse and eliminate blighting influences on the downtown. Assess sites for environmental contamination and pursue remediation if necessary.



Bicentennial Commons

4.3.2. Reconnect downtown to the Great Miami River via a well-lit promenade.

4.3.3. Pursue redevelopment of the site of former industrial facilities that improves the connection to the river, attracts residents and visitors to downtown, and does not compete with existing downtown uses. Some possibilities include (separately or in combination):

- a.** Urban housing
- b.** Museum (such as that discussed in QL 2.6)
- c.** Recreational facility

QL 4.4 **Establish downtown as the premier cultural and entertainment center in the community.** Encourage and support arts, cultural, entertainment and recreation venues. Downtown can fulfill these roles because of its pedestrian scale, mix of uses, proximity to recreation facilities, cultural venues and events.

4.4.1. Create a comfortable pedestrian experience by creating ample areas for pedestrian congregation such as outdoor seating areas and plazas, and include trash receptacles and other street furniture.

4.4.2. Construct items of interest such clock towers, water fountains, arches, sculptures and other pieces of public art.

4.4.3. Program activities for targeted audiences in these pedestrian areas such as concerts, plays, movies, and civic organization events.

4.4.4. Organize and promote existing events such as Middfest, the Holiday Tour of Homes, and performances at the Sorg Theatre in a way that benefits downtown businesses.

4.4.5. Maintain a consistently clean and safe perception of downtown. Keep downtown streets, parking lots, and sidewalks free from refuse. Hold individual property owners and business owner accountable to ensure their properties are kept clean. Consider creating a downtown maintenance program (see QL 4.1) to ensure that downtown is maintained more than the average street or park.

QL 4.5 **Grow Businesses** by actively recruiting and retaining businesses, and creating opportunities for entrepreneurship.

4.5.1. Maintain an inventory of existing businesses and available space in the downtown.

4.5.2. Identify niches that should be targeted, using a market study as a



New retail at Broad and Central

resource. For example, Middletown could build off the strength of Downtown's arts community and events by promoting downtown to art studios and galleries. Downtown buildings could be converted to live work units where wares are sold on the first floor and the second stories are lofts designed for artists.

- 4.5.3.** Identify existing businesses in the region that meet the desired range of uses. Identify a short list of top prospects and actively recruit them to downtown Middletown.
- 4.5.4.** Encourage retention and expansion of existing businesses, utilizing the inventory of existing businesses and available space as well as the Alliance's relationships with businesses.
- 4.5.5.** Coordinate and pool resources with citywide economic development functions and strategies (detailed in Chapter 3 Economic Development).
- 4.5.6.** Encourage entrepreneurial activities and small business development by promoting and/or expanding business incubators and working with local education institutions and the Chamber of Commerce Small Business Development Center.
- 4.5.7.** Establish at least one business, ideally a restaurant that provides downtown Middletown with regional notoriety. People are generally willing to travel considerable distances to restaurants with great reputations. The Montgomery Inn serves as an example.

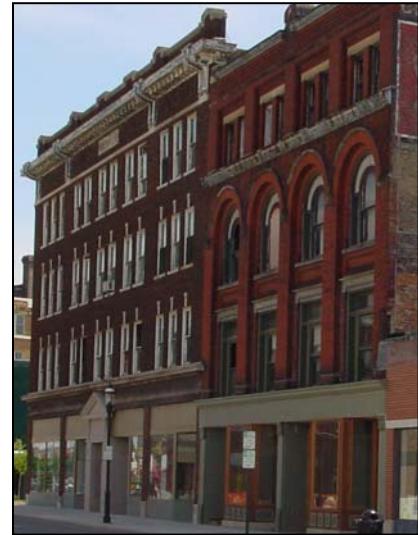
QL 4.6 Promote downtown by creating a comprehensive downtown marketing campaign.

- 4.6.1.** Publicize downtown initiatives, developments, store openings, business openings, expansions, residential developments, streetscape improvements, park enhancements, etc. Relay a constant stream of success stories in the media as free advertisements.
- 4.6.2.** Initially advertise existing resources such as Smith Park, Bicentennial Commons, YMCA, Sorg Theatre, Arts Center, Middletown Public Library, Manchester Inn, new bus terminal, and new charter school in addition to Middletown businesses.
- 4.6.3.** Promote downtown as a place to live, initially by working with existing residential property owners, such as Trinity Apartments, to incorporate downtown amenities into their advertising. If residential reuse of older buildings occurs, home tours could be incorporated. Identify target populations, such as students, young professionals, or empty nesters.
- 4.6.4.** Market downtown businesses to the greater community as a single development, similar to a shopping center, listing stores, businesses and services in full page newspaper ads. This may require more standardized hours of operation for restaurants and retail operations.
- 4.6.5.** Hold coordinated downtown sales events to achieve a greater draw.
- 4.6.6.** Develop a downtown newsletter, web page, and list serve. Incorporate or link the downtown website with other pertinent sites such as the City, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and Chamber of Commerce.
- 4.6.7.** Coordinate downtown promotion with promotion of existing events in or near downtown, such as Middfest and the Ohio Balloon Challenge.
- 4.6.8.** Develop a visitor information center with public restrooms.

QL 4.7 Preserve and enhance Downtown Middletown's unique sense of place.

- 4.7.1.** Set clear design standards that encourage development and rehabilitation that protects the integrity of the downtown and creates an inviting pedestrian environment. Examples include placement of buildings at the sidewalk, placement of parking behind buildings, horizontal and vertical scale, and façade transparency.

- 4.7.2.** Balance the need for parking with the need for a dense, pedestrian-oriented environment. Avoid excessive amounts of surface parking. Encourage use of existing lots, particularly the parking garage, and screen and enhance necessary surface lots. Encourage redevelopment of underutilized lots.
- 4.7.3.** Create consistent signage and way-finding program within downtown, particularly in encouraging the utilization of parking facilities.
- 4.7.4.** Continue and expand programs for grants and low interest loans for façade improvements. Improvements must be consistent with desired architectural guidelines. Explore use of façade easements that allow access to make repairs when the property owner neglects maintenance.
- 4.7.5.** Identify and submit for downtown revitalization grants (bricks and mortar) and Transportation Enhancement grants (streetscape, bike path, historic preservation of transportation facilities).
- 4.7.6.** Creatively use historic tax credits to renovate historic buildings.



QL 4.8 Improve access to the core of downtown.

- 4.8.1.** Explore options for improving access from I-75, such as increasing the capacity of the Grand-Sutphin-Central route. Capacity increases could include widening and/or reconfigurations of key intersections.
- 4.8.2.** Support efforts by Ohio Rail Development Commission and other groups to study the feasibility of using railroad right-of-way along University Blvd. as part of a high-speed rail and/or light-rail corridor. Placing a station along this line and within downtown would spur transit-oriented redevelopment.
- 4.8.3.** Encourage traffic to utilize Central Avenue as the primary route into and through downtown. The following could help in accomplishing this task:
 - a.** Calm traffic on Manchester and First Avenues by changing them to two-way, introducing four-way stops where possible, and/or other traffic calming tactics. These are mostly residential streets that currently encourage traffic to bypass Central Ave.
 - b.** Explore changing the path of SR 122 to follow Central instead of Reinartz/Second. This would better orient drivers to use Central and may open up state funding streams for future improvements on Central Ave.
- 4.8.4.** Widen SR 122 bridge over the Great Miami River. This is a key gateway to downtown and the city overall and currently faces traffic congestion.

QL 4.9 Attract regional recreation facility to downtown.

- 4.9.1.** Prepare feasibility study to determine need and support for community recreation center or ice skating rink.

CHAPTER 7

INFRASTRUCTURE



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CHAPTER 7

INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

This section surveys the condition of essential city infrastructure based on available resources. No primary data gathering was performed for the analysis. Recommendations are made regarding the city's transportation, sanitary sewer, and water systems to accommodate future growth. The condition, availability, and capacity of essential infrastructure is an important element that in part defines a community's quality of life and desirability as a location to establish a business facility.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

An examination of the traffic patterns, access points, and conditions of the street network is an integral part of the Master Plan because land use and the street system are interdependent. For example, commercial uses generate high traffic volumes and numerous turning movements. As a result, commercial uses gravitate toward primary thoroughfares like Roosevelt Boulevard that have high traffic capacity. Industrial and warehousing operations generate heavy truck traffic. Office and industrial employment centers generate high peak-hour volumes and need convenient routes to expressways. Residents desire convenient access to work and shopping, but generally want safe, low-volume streets in their neighborhood.

A well-designed street system can safely accommodate a mix of traffic generated by each land use. This Master Plan proposes an improved road network to accommodate future residential and business growth, improving existing circulation patterns, and improving regional access and circulation to and within Middletown

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Planned improvements to existing roadway and proposed new roadway, and interchange locations are shown on Map 6 Transportation Plan. The Transportation Plan Map graphically summarizes most of the transportation improvements outlined in this section. Improvements to existing roadways are shown as solid lines; planned new roadways or extension of existing roadways is shown as dashed lines on Map 6.

- **Overview.** Middletown has a very good system of streets and highways connecting the City internally and to the greater region. The two major issues with this network are lack of proper maintenance and having one interstate interchange. On two different occasions fairly recently (1996 and 2004) a "street levy" was placed before the voters for an increase in Income Tax specifically for streets but each levy was defeated. The community needs to understand the relationship between proper roadway maintenance and costs. Deferred maintenance costs more money in the long run as costs go up exponentially the longer roads are allowed to degrade.
- **Interstate Access.** The City has shown two different potential new points of interstate access over the years but neither has been very aggressively pursued. One location is at Manchester Road and I-75 (this is also shown on the City of Franklin's present master plan) and the other location is at Greentree Road at I-75. Both of these potential interchange locations would enhance the City of Middletown's access and presence along the I-75 corridor.

An attempt was made in 2002 to add an interchange when the Middletown Regional Hospital was contemplating relocating to the Greentree Road area. But without the support of Warren County, Monroe or Turtlecreek Township, the TRAC committee (ODOT's prioritization body) turned down the application. This denial was given because there was neither consensus nor support from Middletown's neighbors. This sends a signal of the growing importance of having multi-jurisdictional cooperation for highway and other projects of a regional magnitude.

The three existing interchanges currently available to the City of Middletown have all had or are planned to have major safety and capacity upgrades. The S.R. 123 interchange just north in Franklin was recently improved. The southbound S.R. 122 off-ramp in Middletown was improved in 2002. The S.R. 63 and S.R. 122 interchanges are both scheduled for major upgrades in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

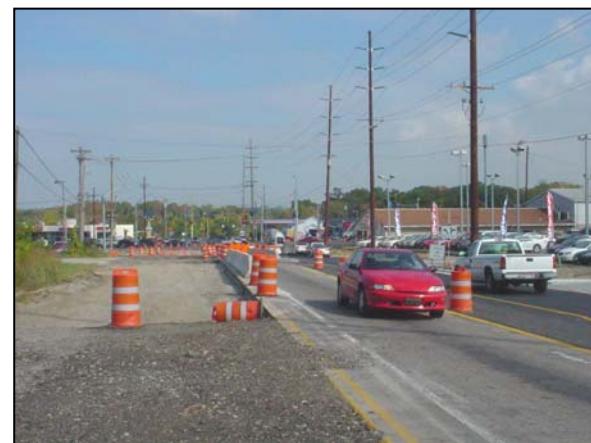
These improvements will increase access to Middletown. However, adding another interchange at Manchester and/or Greentree Road will further that access and visibility for the City. A new Manchester interchange would make the Miami University-Middletown Campus, the Downtown, Hook Field (local 6100' foot runway airport), the new Middletown Regional Hospital site as well as the cities of Franklin and Springboro and Warren County much more accessible.

An interchange at Greentree Road will increase the City's access to AK Steel and the Downtown as well as to the cities of Monroe, Trenton and Lebanon plus the fast growing Warren County. An interchange at Greentree Road will require the extension of either Breiel Boulevard or Oxford State Road to meet with Greentree Road. These 2 new interchanges need to be agreed upon and the alignments journalized before any more development in either area occurs. Development will only add to the difficulty in making them a reality and the cost of the projects for right of way prohibitive.

Making a new interstate interchange a reality is a long and arduous task. The sooner the groundwork is laid the better. At least 5 years and \$15 million would be required for a new interchange with both the time and cost ever increasing as more and more studies, reviews, approvals, etc., become necessary. A more realistic estimate would be 10 years and \$20 million. The biggest stumbling block to the success of building another interchange is political, not physical or monetary.

- **Interchange Alternatives.** An extension eastwardly of S.R. 73 from Cincinnati-Dayton Road and Riley Boulevard paralleling the creek and connecting to S.R. 123 just west of the existing I-75 interchange is shown on the City of Franklin's master plan. This extension would be very beneficial to Middletown especially if another interchange at Manchester never happens. This extension of S.R. 73 would provide a shorter and quicker access northbound I-75. Extending Yankee Road to the south to SR 63 would provide an additional means of interstate access to the I-75/SR 63 interchange.

- **Improve Existing Roadways.** Another interstate access issue being addressed in phases is the “Parallel Roadway” system to I-75 using the Cincinnati-Dayton Road and the Union Road corridors. A cooperative improvement of Cincinnati-Dayton Road from S.R. 63 in Monroe to Oxford-State Road in Middletown was completed in 1998 widening the roadway from 2 to 5 lanes. The next section of Cincinnati-Dayton Road from Oxford State Road north to S.R. 122 in Middletown is currently being widened to 5 lanes, and will be completed the summer of 2005. The last three sections to the north are on the City of Middletown’s long-range plans with the portion from S.R. 122 to Central Avenue (Coles Road) scheduled for 2006. The plans are for a 3 lane section from S.R. 122 to Franklin. The last two sections from Central Avenue to the City of Franklin are almost entirely in unincorporated Warren County. Improvements for these sections will need to be coordinated with the City of Franklin and Warren County. Franklin also has the widening of Cincinnati-Dayton Road from Manchester north to S.R. 73 shown on their master plan but it also is not scheduled.



Cincinnati-Dayton Road widening project

Widening of Union Road (within the current Middletown limits) from just south of S.R. 122 northwardly, has been designed and ready for bids and should be improved in late 2005. The remaining sections to the south and north are again on the City’s long-range plan but no funding is available at present. Completing the Union Road “parallel roadway” will need to be coordinated with the Cities of Franklin and Monroe as well as Warren County, Franklin Township and Turtlecreek Township.

Warren County is currently upgrading the intersection of Union Road and Manchester Road. The Union and Hendrickson Road intersection has been designed but funding was eliminated in 2004. The intersection of Union Road and Greentree Road is on Warren County’s long-range plan but currently not scheduled. Warren County is also working preliminarily with ODOT on widening and upgrading S.R. 122 from Union Road east to at least S.R. 741.

The Trenton Bypass is another major roadway improvement that has been on ODOT and OKI’s long range plans for a number of years. Although none of the Trenton By-pass system is within the City of Middletown, it is important that Middletown understand the alignment and how it can positively affect the City. The upgrading of Yankee Road in Middletown and its extension south through Monroe to S.R. 63 will make the Trenton By-pass an even more important connector for the City of Middletown. Middletown should be a supporter of this project as well as any other local projects that positively impact the City.

- **Extending Existing Roadways.** A few major new roadways need to be built over the next 10 years for continued traffic flow upgrades in the City. The first in the southwest section of the City is extending Yankee Road to S.R. 63. Although this section is in Monroe, it will greatly improve access to some of Middletown’s few remaining acres of commercially/industrially zoned greenfield areas. The portion of Yankee Road within the City needs to be upgraded substantially from the median divided section ending at Lafayette, south to Todhunter Road where it ends at the Monroe Corporattion line.

Hendrickson Road is another roadway that needs to be extended. Extending Hendrickson to the west to intersect with Breiel Boulevard will add another secondary east-west connector in the City's growing east side. Needless to say, the existing section of Hendrickson Road needs to be upgraded substantially. This will take cooperation with the City of Monroe and Warren County as it should be widened to at least its intersection with Union Road east of I-75. Middletown must work with Monroe, Warren County and ODOT on the extension and widening of the Hendrickson Road bridge over I-75. A dedicated pedestrian path should be provided on the bridge as few pedestrian crossings are available across I-75.

The 1997 Master Plan Update identified a new major "loop" in the east end of the City (east of I-75). More recently the proposed alignment as shown has been cut in half by the recent residential subdivision underway. There is pressure from residential builders for build-out and an alignment journalized will be critical if this "loop" is ever to come to fruition. This will take cooperation with Warren County, Franklin and Monroe as well as Turtlecreek and Franklin Townships.

- **Upgrades to Existing Roadways.** Oxford State Road from S.R. 4 to just west of Breiel Boulevard has been shown on Middletown's master plans since the 1970's but most of this area has been outside the City limits until recently. A very small portion remains outside the City's control. Right-of-way acquisition will be difficult through the west half of this project as a number of older houses and small businesses have been built near the roadway. Two major rail lines cross this section of Oxford State Road representing a major expense for grade separation. This project, however, would present an alternative to the Trenton Bypass that would serve a similar purpose while yielding more direct improvements in access to Middletown.

Grade separations would be very beneficial to vehicular traffic and train traffic as well as emergency vehicle access. If and when High Speed Rail Service comes to Ohio, the Conrail Line (the one farther to the east) will have a grade separation built-in. This will be some time in the future, however, if at all. Improving this roadway section will be beneficial to several greenfield as well as brownfield sites within the City identified on the "Development Opportunities Map". As mentioned it will be one of the more difficult and expensive sections to upgrade.

The Downtown partial loop of Reinartz Boulevard (Columbia), Carmody Boulevard and Second Avenue should be revisited including the First-Second connector. This will be more important if and when High Speed Rail Service comes through Middletown. If existing rail lines are used, then this system will run through Middletown's downtown parallel to University Boulevard. Grade separation will be designed where possible. The First Avenue intersection with University has long had excess right-of-way set aside for an overpass with the rail line similar to the overpass at Reinartz Boulevard built in the late 1960's.

The Manchester and Central Avenue connectors with University Boulevard would become more secondary than they are today. However, in understanding that more traffic is desired on Central for business redevelopment, perhaps a possible overpass with Central should be considered instead. More right-of-way would be necessary but not impossible to acquire. First Avenue could be blocked off before University and a longer left-turn lane onto westbound Central Avenue from northbound University could also add to the activity of Central if an overpass never happens.

Grand Avenue from the split with Roosevelt Boulevard near Marshall Road should be evaluated for another major access to the Downtown. The majority is already a four-lane roadway section. The western connector with Central Avenue (which is actually Sutphin) could be widened to four lanes as well with a reconfiguration of the intersection with Central to favor Grand/Sutphin.

Extending Central Avenue east from its present terminus with Cincinnati-Dayton Road should be studied. An overpass crossing I-75 and connecting to Union Road would add another major east-west access through the entire City and improve access to the new Hospital for both the public and Middletown EMS vehicles. Extending Central Avenue would not be an easy extension because of the existing houses and fairly substantial ravine west of I-75.

- **Others:** Extending Marshall Road south to intersect with Lefferson/ Breiel Boulevard; upgrading Lefferson Road from Breiel Boulevard east to Cincinnati-Dayton Road; extending Riverview Drive east to connect with Cincinnati-Dayton Road; extending Miller Road east to connect with Decker Road (in Franklin); upgrading Columbia Avenue west of Main Street; upgrading Nelbar Street, upgrading Lafayette St. west of Verity; extending Rosedale to Cincinnati-Dayton Road; upgrading Highland Street south of Roosevelt; upgrading the Reinartz overpass over University Boulevard; connecting Jackson Lane south of Burbank and upgrading Carmody Boulevard east of Germantown Road are other roadways projects that are important locally for traffic flow.
- **Roads outside the City not previously mentioned.** Todhunter Road (Monroe); Greentree Road (Warren County); S.R. 122 east (Warren County); Manchester Road(Franklin and Warren County); S.R. 73 through Trenton or Trenton By-pass are all regional roadway improvements which Middletown should support both because of the benefit directly to the City of Middletown and to build strong relationships with neighbors. Coordinating with neighbors to have master plans for roadway systems align both from an access perspective and from a funding perspective will help speed up any funding and/or approvals from outside agencies. Competition for the limited outside and internal funds will be reduced.
- **Multi-Modal.** Another important factor for Middletown to keep in mind is its ability to leverage points added to federally-funded projects with ability to have multi-modal access. Middletown has a fixed route transit system, which is quite functional and economically viable. Federal dollars still are available for mass transit projects or for enhancing a roadway project to better accommodate mass transit. Middletown needs to be more active with OKI and ODOT in adding linkages with Warren County, Queen City Metro, Dayton Transit and even the smaller specialized transit services such as Senior Citizens.

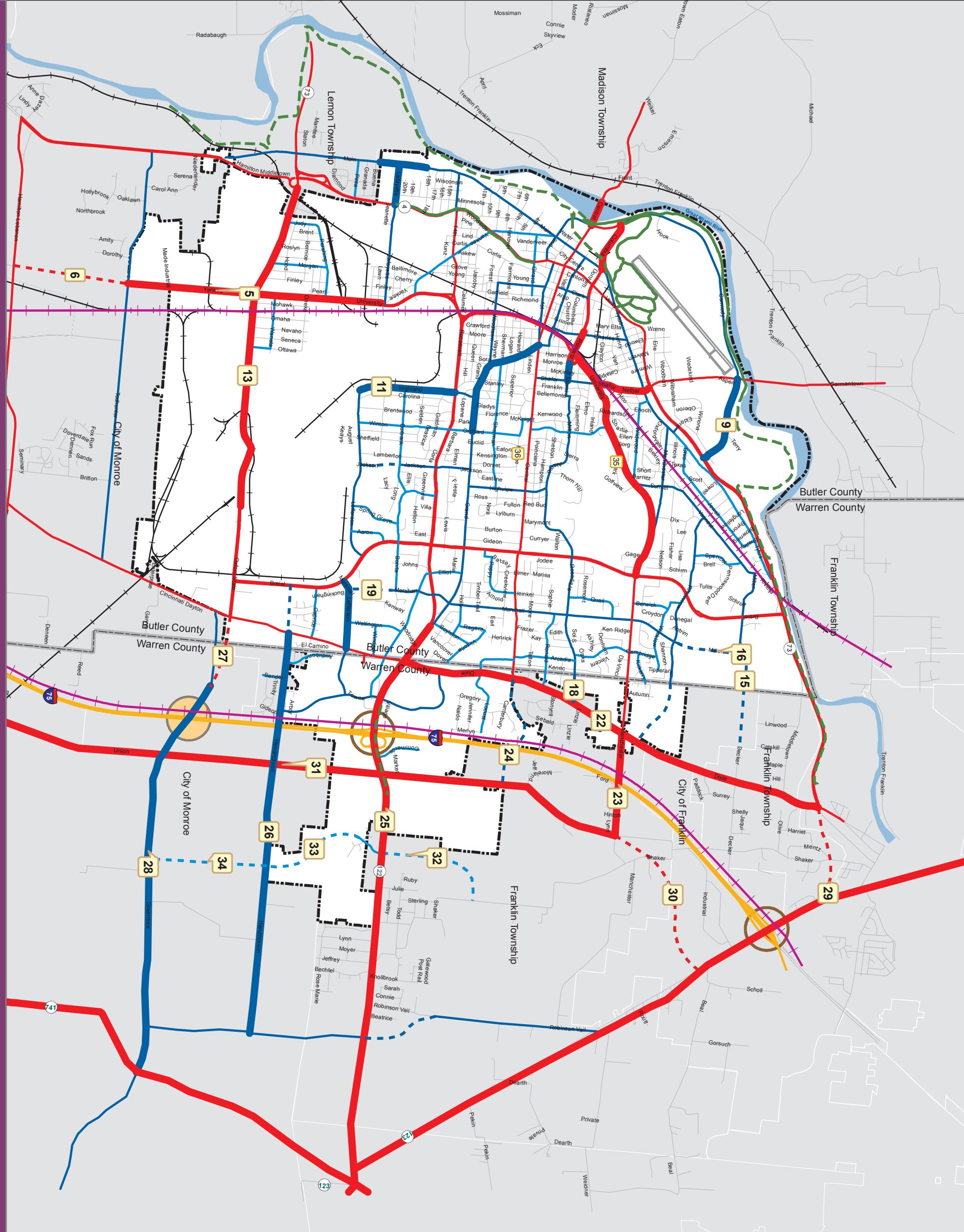
Bike paths are another very good opportunity for advancing multi-modal efforts. Middletown has a very good path system through its downtown Smith Park as well as a 3-mile section along the Great Miami River to which it connects. Another section along the Great Miami River to the south is partially funded and planned for 2005. This is part of “The Great Connector” planned to eventually connect Dayton with Cincinnati. Franklin and Hamilton are both aggressively pursuing construction of their portions of this bike/ trail system for 2005. Additionally a bike path was built parallel to S. Verity Parkway in 2003 but connects to no other path at present. A path/trail around the ravine behind the new Middletown Hospital site northeast of 122 and Union Road has been shown for a number of years but never finalized. This should be brought into the overview of a community system. It is recommended that staff develop a master plan for its bike paths with the community. This could possibly allow the City to avail itself of more Federal dollars when a roadway project lines up with a future bike path section.

A third multi-modal opportunity that may eventually come to Middletown is High Speed or Light Rail service. This topic continues to be discussed by federal, state and local officials. The High Speed Service is proposed at present to use existing rail lines. The connector from Cincinnati to Dayton would go through downtown Middletown parallel to University Boulevard. If the Light

Rail System wins out, the present planned alignment is along the median of I-75, which will run through Middletown's east side. Trenton discusses the need to connect to this rail system in Middletown in their master plan. Monroe and Franklin are both on the alignment but neither currently is shown to have a destination stop. Middletown needs to be a more active participant in these discussions to make sure that politics do not relocate the final alignment away from Middletown. Further, Middletown needs to keep these two alignments in mind when considering any infrastructure improvements over the next 5-10 years.

MAP 6 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

CITY OF MIDDLETON MASTER PLAN



Legend

Thoroughfare

Existing Primary Thoroughfare to be Improved

Proposed Secondary Thoroughfare to be Improved

Proposed Collector

Proposed Light Rail

Proposed Bikeway

Proposed Streets

RailRoad

City Boundary

Existing

Proposed

Planned Improvements

1. Main St. (18th -South Corp) Rebuild, Bikeway
2. LaFayette Ave. (Vertly-Main) Upgrade, Bikeway
3. SR 122 Bridge (over Great Miami) Widening
4. Columbia Ave. (Reinartz-Carmody) Upgrade
5. Yankee Rd. (University – Todhunter) Widening
6. Yankee Rd. (Todhunter – SR 63) Extension
7. Reinartz Blvd. (overpass) Widening
8. Carmody Blvd. (SR 73-Germantown Rd.) Widening
9. Nebar St. (University – SR 73) Widening
10. Carmody Blvd. (SR 73-Germantown Rd.) Widening
11. Highland St. (Roosevelt – Lefferson) Widening
12. University Blvd (Reinartz – Breit) pedestrian improvements
13. Oxford State Rd. (Spurlino – SR 4) Widening
14. Jackson Lane (North to Burbank) Extension
15. Miller Rd. (to Decker Rd.) Extension
16. Marshall Rd. (Riverview-Miller) Extension
17. Oxford State Rd. (Spurlino – SR 4) Widening
18. Rosedale (East to Cin-Day) Extension
19. Marshall Rd. (Bonna – Lefferson) Extension
20. Marshall Rd. (Riverview-Miller) Extension
21. Riverview (Co. Line – Cin/Day) Extension
22. Rosedale (East to Cin-Day) Extension
23. Manchester Rd. (Cin/Day – Union) Widening
24. Manchester Rd. (Cin/Day – Union) Widening
25. Central Ave. (Cin/Day – Union) Extension
26. SR 122 (Grand – East Corp) Widening
27. Hendrickson Rd. (Cin/Day – Breit) Extension
28. Hendrickson Rd. (Cin/Day – Union) Widening
29. Hendrickson Rd. (Cin/Day – Franklin) Widening
30. Union Rd. (Manchester – SR 123) Extension
31. Union Rd. (South Corp – Franklin) Widening
32. Renaissance Blvd. (SR 122 – Shaker) Extension
33. Renaissance Blvd. (Realignment section – Union) Widening
34. Renaissance Blvd. (Hendrickson – Greentree) Extension
35. SR 122 Interchange Improvement
36. Greentree Road Proposed Interchange



0
0.5
1 Miles

4/20/05

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

- **Combined Sewers.** Middletown, being an older industrial city, still has combined sewers (i.e., sewers that carry both sanitary and storm water) that account for approximately one-third of the entire system. Many new lines have been built, particularly in the east end. However, most new sanitary lines flow into the combined system prior to reaching the Wastewater Treatment Plant at the southwest corner of the City. Nine overflows to the Great Miami River are spread along the main interceptor from Manchester Avenue south to Lafayette Avenue. Additionally, a 48" process sewer from AK Steel is interconnected to the City's combined sewer in the Verity Parkway/Yankee Road area.
- **Long Term Control Plan.** A Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) has been developed (submitted but not yet approved), separately with Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's (OEPA) guidance, that will mean millions of dollars in upgrades to the Middletown sewer system. The goal of OEPA is to greatly reduce the impact of the sewer overflows into the Great Miami River. OEPA was recently holding up permits for a proposed new residential subdivision that would add flow to the combined system until a final LTCP was at least preliminary approved or a separate study put together that could prove that no additional pollutants would potentially be added to the river. This development now has approval to proceed under the OEPA "approval credit program" which requires that they remove 5 times the amount of storm water in the system above the projected sanitary flow amount to be added by the development.

This LTCP may have a significant impact on future growth of the City as the existing relatively low sewer rates will have to be dramatically increased. An increase of as much as 60% has been projected for the next 10 years. The City does have a stepped rate system both for sewer and water users that greatly benefits larger users. This is very unusual today as most systems have either a flat rate or a stepped rate that discourages larger users, especially for water users. These reduced rates for larger users have had little impact in recent years as an economic development tool. A slow flattening of the sewer rates should be considered, especially in light of the dramatic sewer rate increases expected. A gradual flattening of the stepped rate system currently in place should also be considered to avoid financial hardship on existing large sewer users. Individual sewer agreements could be considered as an option with reduced rates given for "job credits".

Another consideration for increasing rates would be to set up a split-rate system. A higher rate for those connecting to the main interceptor system (where all the overflows to the river are connected) and a lower rate for those connecting to the East Middletown system where no overflows exist. The legality and political fallout of this option would need further study.

- **Sanitary Sewer Planning Area.** In the mid-1970's, EPA defined the areas that were to be eventually drained into the different jurisdictional wastewater treatment plants. These plans came to be known as "208" plans and have remained virtually unchanged for 30 years until recently. These planning areas were defined primarily by gravitational flow areas. A few thousand acres were removed from Middletown's 208 system planning area at Warren County's request in 2002 with the installation of a new sewer system for the previously unsewered Hunter area east of I-75. Four pump stations were required in this design to pump the sewage north to the Warren County / Franklin Wastewater Plant. Even though the City of Middletown's "East Middletown" sewer system was sized for all of this area, taking away this entirely residential area will allow Middletown's sewer system to potentially add several large sewer users in the undeveloped area in the I-75/122 area. The currently slightly oversized sewer also allows more margins for infiltration (groundwater getting into the sewer system) downstream before major or even minor

sewer backups might occur. The current excess capacity is not to say that any infiltration can or should be ignored. Transporting and treating clean ground water is never a sound economic business practice.

Another very large “208 Planning area” that has been shown since the 70’s is the huge unsewered, rural area west and northwest of the City, across the Great Miami River. Sewers will become a necessity as this area continues to develop. As this area would have to be served with a new dedicated sanitary sewer system, Middletown’s Treatment Plant capacity will be the limiting factor. Butler County also has a wastewater treatment plant farther south but also on the east side of the river and of much smaller capacity than Middletown’s. How best to serve this area west of the river with sewers will require a separate detailed study and service plan. Butler County and Middletown are currently looking into a joint system to sewer the Brown’s Run area of homes with a trunk sewer connecting into Middletown’s system at 9th Avenue after a new “Consolidation Sewer” is in place as per the LTCP. The Wastewater Treatment Plant has a design capacity of 26 MGD for dry weather flow and 48 MGD for wet weather flow. The average daily flow is 14 MGD.

- **Pump Stations.** The sewer system presently has six sanitary and two stormwater pump stations. Two sanitary pump stations were recently eliminated (2001) with the extension of sewers to and under I-75 at S.R. 122.

Another lift station (Mayfield) is under design to be replaced by a gravity system in 2005. There are no known hindrances to service or expansion of service caused by any of these stations. Telemetry has been added to all the lift stations with monitoring at the City’s Wastewater Plant. Other than adding back-up power and security, these pump stations can continue until such time as an economically feasible gravity system can be installed. The existing condition of each station, it’s life expectancy, operating and maintenance costs and cost to extend a gravity system have to be investigated on a site by site basis.

- **Sewer System Service Expansion.** All of the areas identified on the “Development Opportunity Map” as greenfield properties have existing sewers of sufficient capacity within a few thousand feet at most. This is predicated on future development in line with planned usage and normal sewer demands. Any exceptionally large sewer use will have to be explored in detail and a possible “express sewer” or equalization or “holding” system might need to be incorporated. However, treatment plant capacity and sewer capacity exist for build-out of the entire I-75/122 growth area, as well as other greenfield sites.
- **Brownfield Sites.** A number of older unused or underused industrial, commercial and residential sites have also been identified on the “Development Opportunities Map”. All of these sites except for the Aeronca and Crystal Tissue sites have existing sanitary sewer service. The mobile home park located in the northwest area of the City between North SR 4 and North SR 73 has a pump station; however, the capacity designed for the more than 200 homes should be more than sufficient for most any replacement usage if and when this property is redeveloped.

Gravity sewers to serve both the Aeronca and Crystal Tissue/Midd-Cities sites have been preliminarily designed and both are certainly feasible and not cost prohibitive.

For the other brownfield sites with existing sewers, a maximum available sewer capacity could be assigned to each of these redevelopment sites based on existing sanitary sewers to each. The Planning and Engineering Departments might consider assembling a plan for each redevelopment

site showing existing utilities to the site, capacities of each on-site city utility, as well as nearby services such as fiber-optic system, gas, etc.

As a reminder, any of these sites whose sewer flows to the main interceptor sewer may require an additional study or even face a moratorium until such time as OEPA has, at least, a preliminarily approved Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) for the City's sewer system.

- **System Improvements.** A number of system improvements were outlined in a Sewer System Plan prepared for the City in 1996. A number of those improvements have been made, a few more are in the planning stages, a few remain unresolved, some no longer are an issue and a few new items need to be added. Most of these amendments have been made as part of the application for the LTCP approvals from EPA.

Relief sewers and other large, downtown sewers were all installed in the 1950's and earlier. Their condition needs to be carefully analyzed for rehabilitation, relining or possible replacement. A problem with any of these large sewers would be very catastrophic for areas upstream.

The East Middletown Sewer appears to have only two existing areas in need of upgrades at this time. The first pipe section immediately east of the Wastewater Plant and three sections just a little south of Hendrickson Road could present flow restrictions as the system approaches build-out. A plan for replacement, realignment or relining needs to be added into the City's 5-year CIP.

A major sanitary sewer extension (East Middletown) was built in the late 60's and early 70's from the Wastewater Treatment Plant to serve future projected growth areas to the then mostly unincorporated area along I-75. This system also replaced an old Butler County primary treatment facility which served the Amanda/Oneida area, as well as providing for AK Steel (then Armco) expansion.

MAP 7 MIDDLETOWN SEWER SERVICE AREA

7-11

Legend

 City Boundary

- County Line

Middletown Service Area

— Existing Combines

— Existing Sanitary

Proposed

— Existing Warren County

Sewer Treatment Facility

Butler County/Monroe Pump Station Sewer Treatment Facility

Pump Station Sanitary Butler County/Monroe Co.

Pump Station Storm

Warren County Pump Station

— Street

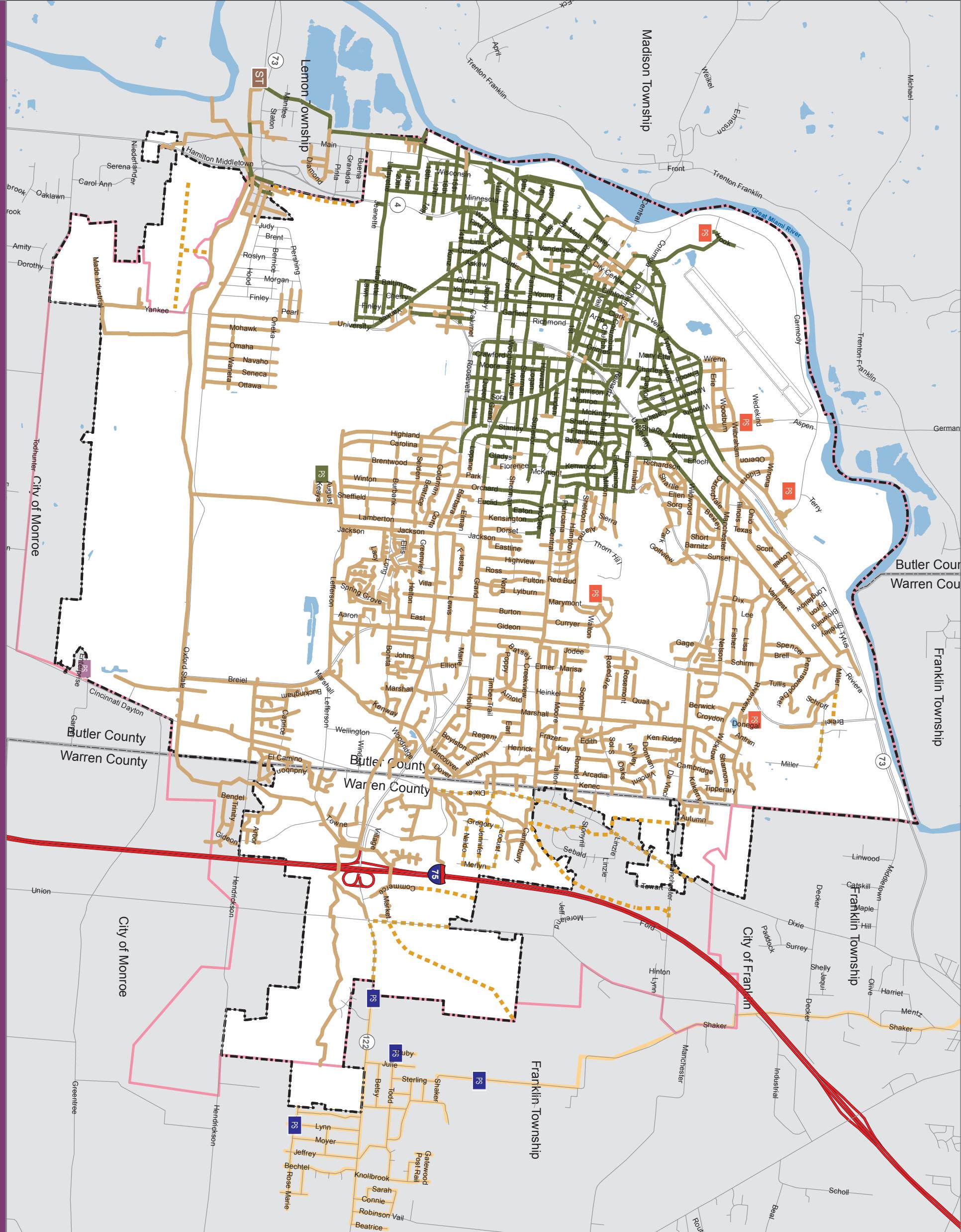
Interstate

Miles

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The logo for Middletown McKenna Associates Incorporated. It features the word "MIDDLETOWN" in a large, bold, purple, sans-serif font. Above "MIDDLETOWN" are three stylized, wavy blue lines of decreasing height. To the right of "MIDDLETOWN" is a vertical purple bar with a small white star at the top. Below "MIDDLETOWN" is a large, bold, black "McKenna" with a small registered trademark symbol (®) to its right. Under "McKenna" is the word "ASSOCIATES" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the logo is the word "INCORPORATED" in a small, black, sans-serif font.

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN MASTER PLAN



STORM SEWER SYSTEM

Little time will be spent discussing the City's storm sewer system as this system is substantially newer and less extensive than any of the other major infrastructure systems. The major problems with the storm sewers are in the "combined sewers" and these issues have been discussed in the previous section. The City does have a number of areas in the community which experience flooding either overland or in sewer backups. Most of the overland flooding is due to inadequately sized or maintained swales and creeks. There are also a few areas of poorly graded sites where very localized flooding occurs. The majority of sewer backups in basements are located in the combined sewer areas. The City initiated a Backflow Prevention Program a few years ago that has eliminated a number of those individual issues.

Several reports have been prepared by the City's engineering staff in recent years and solutions have readily been identified. A Stormwater Utility was proposed several times as the means to fund the improvements identified. In late 2003 a Utility study was authorized with a citizen's committee overview. This report with recommendations was presented to City Council in 2004 but unfortunately no action was taken to implement the plans "action steps". Numerous other funding needs outweigh the storm needs at present with the City.

There are a few of the older storm sewers that are beginning to show signs of deterioration. And, although not as serious as the combined or sanitary sewers, they should be addressed. These storm sewers need to be video taped, catalogued and prioritized as have most of the other types of sewers. The City has its own video equipment as well as sewer cleaning equipment, which is a real plus.

WATER SYSTEM

Much like the sewer system, the water system is well laid out and serves all of the community. The biggest problems with the water system are age and size of much of the Downtown system. Many of these mains were installed in the early part of the 20th century without much planning for the vast growth eastwardly Middletown would experience in the mid to late 1900's. Several large transmission mains were built during these growth periods extending from the Water Treatment Plant located at the City's western edge to the east. However, a number of mains in downtown are undersized for today's demands. These limit both pressure and supply for several sections of the older community.

A number of the brownfield sites for commercial and industrial re-development are located in the downtown area. Another problem with an older water distribution system is an inordinately high number of watermain breaks each year. City employees are well trained and handle the breaks most efficiently. However, as more breaks occur and OEPA becomes increasingly strict on the issuance of "boil advisories", the business community as well as the residential users is more and more inconvenienced. A plan to reline or replace these older watermains systematically should be investigated.

The water treatment plant is of adequate capacity for a substantial amount of growth before any major expenditure would need to be made. The average daily flow is 8-9 MGD while the plant is designed for 20 MGD and the wellfield can supply 23 MGD. Additional lands for new wells may need to be considered before others acquire them and development occurs or possible conflicting wells pop up. This will only be more difficult to achieve in the future. OEPA may be helpful here in acknowledging Middletown's wellfield drawdown limits and its wellfield protection zone as well.

Another need is in replacing or by-passing a number of larger Downtown isolation valves. This has been on the City's scope for a number of years. It needs to be a higher priority to prevent potential major problems with any main break in the Downtown area.

There are expected to be a number of significant leaks in the downtown as this area has granular sub-grade and leaks can go largely undetected. A major leak testing is recommended for this area. A few tests were performed several years ago but never completed.

Several larger water users have their own well such as AK Steel, Bay West, Smurfit Paper, Crystal Tissue even though Middletown has a very stepped rate structure favoring larger users. Bay West is the only system, however, that is close to the City's system. It does not conflict presently with the City's drawdown.

A few water supply loops need to be completed to help the overall system. The most obvious loops are: the section of Oxford State Rd between Yankee Road and Breiel Boulevard; Riviera Drive east to the City corporation line; Carmody Boulevard to 2nd Street; and S. Main Street to the City of Monroe system (now supplied from Middletown's Yankee Road Tank).

- **Growth East.** There are 3 ways to provide for growth to the east of I-75.
 1. Warren County can expand their existing water service system.
 2. Middletown can take over the western portion of the Warren County system and expand.
 3. Middletown can build a parallel system.

Each alternative has its own city of opportunities and constraints that must be thought out more clearly before a decision is made. Expanding water service beyond I-75 by the City of Middletown will necessitate creating a 4th pressure district requiring extra storage and pumping stations for Middletown.

In reviewing the FPS 2001 report “*Plan for Water Service to Area East of I-75*”, the overview is that growth in the area will be gradual and expansion to provide adequate water supply can be very gradual as well. Their plan also shows how any water extensions can follow the growth pattern in their flexibility. Their assessment of “build-out” needs will cost approximately \$17 million but should be able to be paid by tap fees alone from future users.

If Middletown were to expand across I-75 instead of allowing Warren County to supply the water, additional storage and pumping will also have to be added at the Kensington Reservoir site. Capacity of the transmission mains should be investigated as well.

Financing: Like the Sewer System, Middletown's Water System is set up as an Enterprise Fund and as such can and does generate its own revenues since rates can be adjusted by City Council without a vote of the public. By law these 2 funds must remain self-sufficient and pay for themselves.

In reviewing the latest City of Englewood Rate Survey for southwest Ohio, Middletown is in the lower end of the rates at 27th of the 70 cities and systems reporting for their water rates. Their combined rate for water and sewer puts them 13th of 65 systems that provide both water and sewer.

Unlike sewer rates however, there is no huge increase for Middletown's water rates forecast. Continued expansion, replacements, maintenance, etc., should be able to be funded with basically only cost of living increases for the near term.

- **Other Water Systems.** Warren County/Franklin-A new joint water treatment plant was built in 1998 with a capacity of 2.3 MGD and a wellfield capacity of 6.3 MGD. This plant is located just beyond the northeast corner of the City of Middletown on the Great Miami River.

There is an existing water treatment plant on the south side of Greentree Road just east of I-75. This is an older plant on the Dick's Creek leg of the Great Miami Aquifer and is slowly but surely being overused as a water source. Warren County has discussed abandoning this plant in the near future. The Warren County system is tied into the Middletown system on Manchester Road west of Cincinnati Dayton Road.

Monroe's water treatment plant is just south of Warren County's on the same Dick's Creek branch of the Great Miami Aquifer and as stated above is being slowly drawn down. Monroe has been looking for new well fields to the west of town along the Great Miami River. Middletown took over supplying water to the northwest section of Monroe in 1999 with a new joint 1.5 million gallon water tank just north of Todhunter Rd west of Yankee Road. This has helped Monroe keep up with supply and pressure for the rest of Monroe. There is also a Monroe system tie-in with the Middletown system on Cincinnati-Dayton Road just south of Greentree Road.

Trenton is in the planning stages of building a new water treatment plant to replace their existing "pump and chlorinate" plant. There is no tie-in to either Middletown's system or South West Rural Water's systems although either could be easily made.

South West Regional Water gained ownership of the water system for parts of Madison and Wayne Townships (formerly provided under contract by Middletown) from Butler County in the late 1990's. They have added several sections to this system and the connection near the Great Miami River with Middletown's system is still maintained as back up.

- **Capacity for Greenfield and Brownfield Development.** Planned residential areas identified in Chapter 8 Future Land Use are all accessible to sufficient water supply. Sites-The area between S.R. 4 and Yankee Road and south of Oxford State Road have inadequate water service for commercial and industrial growth. It would appear that Middletown can best service this area with water, but Middletown needs to work with Monroe to plan for this area.

The area on the west side of Cincinnati-Dayton Road south of Oxford State Road also has inadequate water service for growth. Again, Middletown should work cooperatively with Monroe for a solution.

As mentioned previously, the major problems in the Downtown are due to the smaller, older mains that were built in the early 1900's. Larger lines, replacing or by-passing non functioning isolations valves and leak testing need to be priorities. A loop for the Reinartz-Carmody-Second Avenue area should be considered as well as total replacement of the entire spiral-welded steel pipe installed in the 50's and 60's. The City has a good inventory of their locations.

Old School sites identified may present water service needs depending on their future use. The City should get with the school system and find out their intended use. At present it appears that no extraordinarily large water user would go in at any old school site.

Oxford State Road between Yankee and Breiel Boulevard needs to be connected to eliminate the two dead-ends that exist there now.

The east end is the largest area for expansion if in fact the City and Warren County decide that Middletown will supply water for this relatively open area. Any expansion, however, can be phased in as development comes in accordance with the 1997 plan the City has on file. Whatever solution is chosen to provide for this future growth area, a new service agreement(s) needs to be developed with Warren County. All service agreements with Warren County have expired.



INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE I 1: Adapt water, sewer, roads, and communications infrastructure to meet modern needs and standards.

ISSUE: Certain elements of the infrastructure need modernization before underutilized sites can be marked for development.

I 1.1 Prepare water and sewer master plans. Plan for phased replacement in areas where existing infrastructure is old or outdated or is undersized to accommodate new growth and/or redevelopment.

- 1.1.1. Assess the condition of water and sanitary sewer lines in conjunction with redevelopment projects and replace/upgrade as needed to enhance project viability.
- 1.1.2. Compile utility service level information as a part of inventory of redevelopment sites discussed in Chapter 4 Redevelopment.

I 1.2 Eliminate combined storm sewer overflows. Create and implement a plan to address this issue before heavy fines are imposed and EPA mandates preclude new development.

- 1.2.1. Adjust sewer rates to a more flattened rate structure as a partial means of financing improvements.

I 1.3 Create new gateways. Plan new interchanges and alternative means of improved interstate access to enhance access to downtown, brownfield properties, and existing industrial parks.

- 1.3.1. Prepare Interchange Justification Study (IJS) for new interchange at I-75 and Greentree Tree Road and get project on OKI's Long Range Transportation Improvement Plan.
- 1.3.2. Widen and extend Yankee Road south to SR 63 to connect to the I-75/SR63 interchange.
- 1.3.3. Create connector road between SR 73 and SR 123 starting at Cincinnati-Dayton Road to provide quicker access to downtown, Hook Field Municipal Airport, and Miami University at Middletown via the I-75/SR 123 interchange
- 1.3.4. Create regional parallel roadway system to I-75 by improving Union Road and Cincinnati Dayton Road to modern primary thoroughfare standards.
- 1.3.5. Widen Oxford State Road from Breiel Boulevard to SR 73.

I 1.4 Improve or extend existing roadways to improve local circulation.

- 1.4.1. Widen Hendrickson Road and bridge spanning I-75
- 1.4.2. Extend Hendrickson Road west to Breiel Boulevard.
- 1.4.3. Get approval and construct new Central Avenue bridge over I-75 to connect to Union Road.
- 1.4.4. Improve efficiency of Grand, Sutphin, Central as a viable downtown route.
- 1.4.5. Implement other improvements as identified on Transportation Plan.

I 1.5 Advocate for a high-speed rail station in Middletown as a part of the long-range statewide plan developed by the Ohio Rail Development Commission.

1.5.1. Leverage high-speed rail as a tool for economic development and community revitalization.

I 1.6 **Encourage high speed communications infrastructure.** Middletown businesses, schools, and homes must have high speed internet access to compete in the New Economy.

- 1.6.1.** Review Right-of-Way Ordinances. Update the City's right-of-way ordinances permitting private sector investment in broadband cable or fiber optics in the City.
- 1.6.2.** Develop Communication Infrastructure Specifications and Guidelines. Create communication technology standards, similar to civil engineering standards, to have consistent and uniform product when developers and communications carriers design and build communication infrastructure.
- 1.6.3.** Install Communication Conduit Infrastructure. Require new development or redevelopment to include conduit and hand holes for the installation of fiber optics. This will save time and money and prevent disruptive construction projects when broadband cable or fiber optics are installed later.

I 1.7 **Prepare technology capital improvement and financing plan.** Set priorities for communication and technology capital improvement projects. The capital improvements should be linked to a technology plan and financing strategy. Assess options and consider forming a public-private partnership that could help defray the costs of implementing a telecommunications infrastructure system in the City. Funding options, including grants, are available and should be considered.

- 1.7.1.** Technology subcommittee. Create a technology subcommittee of Council to consider needs and make recommendations.
- 1.7.2.** Technology Needs Assessment. Determine the city's position in the New Economy from a technology perspective. Inventory existing infrastructure and prepare recommendations to upgrade the City's communication technology. Needs should be based on expert opinion and interviews with industry, business, school and community leaders and residents.
- 1.7.3.** Close the Digital Divide. Technology is quickly becoming the main gap between the "haves" and the "haves not" in American society. Close the digital divide by providing the "last mile" in neighborhoods and business clusters where high- speed internet access is not available.

I 1.8 **Continue the creation of a stormwater utility to address Phase II stormwater requirements.**

- 1.8.1.** Develop a Best Management Practices manual. Examples include stream restoration, natural swales, porous pavement, and green building design, etc.
- 1.8.2.** Reduce utility rates for development that incorporate best practices in site design.

CHAPTER 8

FUTURE LAND USE



- INTRODUCTION 8-1
- LAND USE COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS 8-1
- FUTURE LAND USE PLAN 8-4

CHAPTER 8

FUTURE LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Plan and Map (Map 8) is the culmination of the comprehensive planning process and serves as the City's official land use policy. Together, the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map provide a flexible guide to promote informed public and private decision-making for the betterment of the community. Accordingly, it provides a framework to direct zoning and land use decisions. This chapter sets forth recommendations for continued use, new development, and reuse of land in the City over the next five to ten years. The Future Land Use Map is a link between what exists and what is desired.

The land use designations on the map are generalized; they are not intended to be site specific or follow specific property lines. Although the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map should form the basis for the Zoning Ordinance and other legal controls, the Plan and Map are intended to be flexible policy documents and decision-making guides. This does not imply that Master Plan policies should be ignored when land use decisions are being made. Deviations from the plan should be made only when findings support such deviation and after careful examination of the facts.

Map 8 Future Land Use graphically represents the vision for future land use and development within Middletown. Several factors were taken into consideration when developing the Future Land Use Plan including:

- Plan Goals and Objectives to diversify the local economy, modernize the housing stock, stabilize neighborhoods and revitalize downtown;
- A thorough review of existing conditions such as development patterns, land use, natural features, transportation systems, and development opportunities and constraints;
- Costs of Services study results (summarized in the following section);
- Real Estate Market Analysis results;
- Consensus items originating from interviews, public forums, steering committee and focus group meetings; and
- Sound land use planning principals and techniques.

LAND USE COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS

In an effort to help develop a sustainable economic base, this section evaluates the cost/benefit of various land uses by comparing expenditures (cost assignments) spent on public services with revenues (revenue assignments) received by land use (i.e., residential, retail, office, and industrial). Cost/benefit results vary widely between cities dependent upon their revenue source, development regulatory practices, and general operating procedures. The results for Middletown are summarized in Table 17 Current Land Use Cost/Benefit Analysis, and discussed in the following the paragraphs.

Table 17
Current Land Use Cost/Benefit Analysis

Existing Single Family		New Single Family			
	Cost	Revenue	Cost		
General Government **	\$472	\$639	\$472	\$1,371	
Fire/EMS	\$272	\$44	\$272	\$61	
Police	\$335	\$10	\$335	\$28	
Road Maintenance	\$154	\$92	\$308	\$184	
Recreation/Open Space *	\$27	\$2	\$27	\$4	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>		
	\$1,260	\$787	\$1,414	\$1,648	
Net Deficit	(\$473)	Net Revenue	\$234		
MultiFamily		Newer Office/acre			
	Cost	Revenue	Cost		
General Government	\$315	\$248	General Government	\$81	\$7,758
Fire/EMS	\$272	\$37	Fire/EMS	\$256	\$140
Police	\$402	\$4	Police	\$338	\$96
Road Maintenance	\$62	\$53	Road Maintenance	\$616	\$0
Recreation/Open Space	\$27	\$2	Recreation/Open Space	\$0	\$0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>		
	\$1,078	\$344	\$1,291	\$7,994	
Net Deficit/unit	(\$734)	Net Revenue/acre	\$6,703		
Big Box Retail/acre		Industrial/acre			
	Cost	Revenue	Cost		
General Government	\$807	\$7,712	General Government	\$108	\$3,606
Fire/EMS	\$1,711	\$513	Fire/EMS	\$122	\$120
Police	\$2,257	\$93	Police	\$163	\$15
Road Maintenance	\$3,080	\$0	Road Maintenance	\$1,200	\$0
Recreation/Open Space	\$0	\$0	Recreation/Open Space	\$0	\$0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>		
	\$7,855	\$8,318	\$1,593	\$3,741	
Net Revenue/acre	\$463	Net Revenue/acre	\$2,148		

** Includes Income tax

* Excludes Golf Course Revenue/Expense

- **Residential.** The results of the Cost of Service analysis show that for the average existing single family home value (\$91,600), the City is spending \$473 more per year to provide services than it is receiving in local and state share revenue. This figure is not unusual and is, in fact, at the low end of the scale for older Ohio communities. New single family with an assumed value of \$260,000 actually produces a positive cash flow of \$234 per unit. The current break-even point for the City if a home value of \$235,000. The City has limited land available for new residential development. Attempts should be made to ensure that new housing developed on one of the few remaining suitable greenfields is constructed at the cost of services break even value point.

It is worth noting that if the income tax credit were completely eliminated, a large percentage of existing single-family households would represent a cost/revenue break even point.

Multi-family housing represents a heavy cash flow loss for the City due to the low assessed value of units and the higher service demand requirements related to police response. The City has a relatively high concentration of rental properties (41%), and current data suggests that an increasing number of homes in Middletown will shift from owner occupied to rental property in

the future. Over 30% of current homeowners in Middletown are above 65 years of age. This indicates that an increasing number of owner occupied structures will be coming on the market in the next ten to fifteen years. Elderly owner occupied homes tend to be older and not as desirable from a market standpoint. Some of these properties will likely be converted into rental units. High percentages of rental properties tend to reduce public participation and civic involvement particularly when they represent a high subsidized housing component.

The Cost of Service results highlight the benefits of residential redevelopment. If one acre of obsolete multi-family housing (estimated at 10 units) was replaced by four units of new housing, the resulting cost of service would shift from a deficit of \$7,340 to a positive cash flow of \$936, a net improvement of \$8,276 per acre. The GEM market study indicates a demand for approximately 160 new owner-occupied units per year through 2007. If this were achieved in currently undeveloped areas it would represent an increased revenue source of \$149,760 per year in 2007. If half of that number were achieved through redevelopment of older, obsolete housing, the net increase in operating revenue would be \$927,640 per year. Clearly this indicates the long-term benefits of a defined redevelopment program.

- **Subsidized Housing.** The City has a substantial amount of publicly subsidized housing units living in the City. As the City is heavily dependent upon income tax revenues to meet operational cost demands, the high concentration of units with incomes of under \$10,000 has significant effect. It is understood that programs such as Section 8 are a necessity and that they also create opportunities for owners of rental properties that are exhibiting vacancy rates of over 8%. However, large concentrations within Middletown result in reduced local revenue.
- **Office/Commercial.** Modern office complexes represent a positive cash flow of \$6,703 per acre per year. This high level of net revenue per acre is attributed to higher wages paid to professionals working in office environments. The Cost of Service study supports the Master Plan goal to diversify the local economy (Goal A) and attract high-tech, high paying jobs. High-tech jobs are highly sought after by all communities in the region and nation for the same reasons cited here. Middletown's absence of modern office park land availability must change before "new economy" jobs can be realized.
- **Big Box Retail.** Big box retail represents more of a break-even scenario due to increased usage of emergency services, lower salary scales, and higher road maintenance costs. This analysis suggests that the use of tax abatements, tax increment financing approaches or public participation in infrastructure costs is inappropriate for large-scale retail development on undeveloped land. The financial benefits derived by TIF and abatements do not compensate for the lost property tax revenues. This is particularly true due to the transient nature of retail in today's retail market. The one exception to this would be the use of TIF for a mixed-use redevelopment project in the downtown or at Towne Mall.
- **Industrial.** The industrial development in Middletown is currently contributing to relatively modest revenue per acre cash flows on a per acre basis. However, this is due to the overwhelming spatial requirements of AK Steel. Using the parameters of a new office/industrial park as suggested in the GEM Market Study, an acre of new office/industrial could produce a positive cash flow of over \$11,000/acre for the City even with full property tax abatement. However, GEM study assumes 24 employees per acre. Studies conducted by *SPP* for new industrial parks suggest that the employment rate would be closer to 10 employees per acre which would reduce the positive cash flow to \$3,402 per acre with full tax abatements. If the City offered sites which included road improvements to be paid off over 10 years, a 50 acre new

industrial office park would be reflecting a \$30,000 deficit cash flow for the first 10 years. After the road costs were paid, a 50-acre site would represent a \$170,000 positive cash flow per year.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan and Map concentrate primarily on defined development opportunity areas. Development opportunities in Middletown include a relatively small number of vacant greenfield sites and existing commercial properties with redevelopment potential. Development opportunities are described in more detail in Chapter 2 Community Description. Areas with concentrations of development opportunities were selected as Development Opportunity Areas for additional analysis in Chapter 9.

Map 8 Future Land Use provides a general overview for desired land use in Middletown. A more detailed account and specific development strategies for Development Opportunity Area follow in Chapter 9. Descriptions of planned land use designations shown on Map 8 follow:

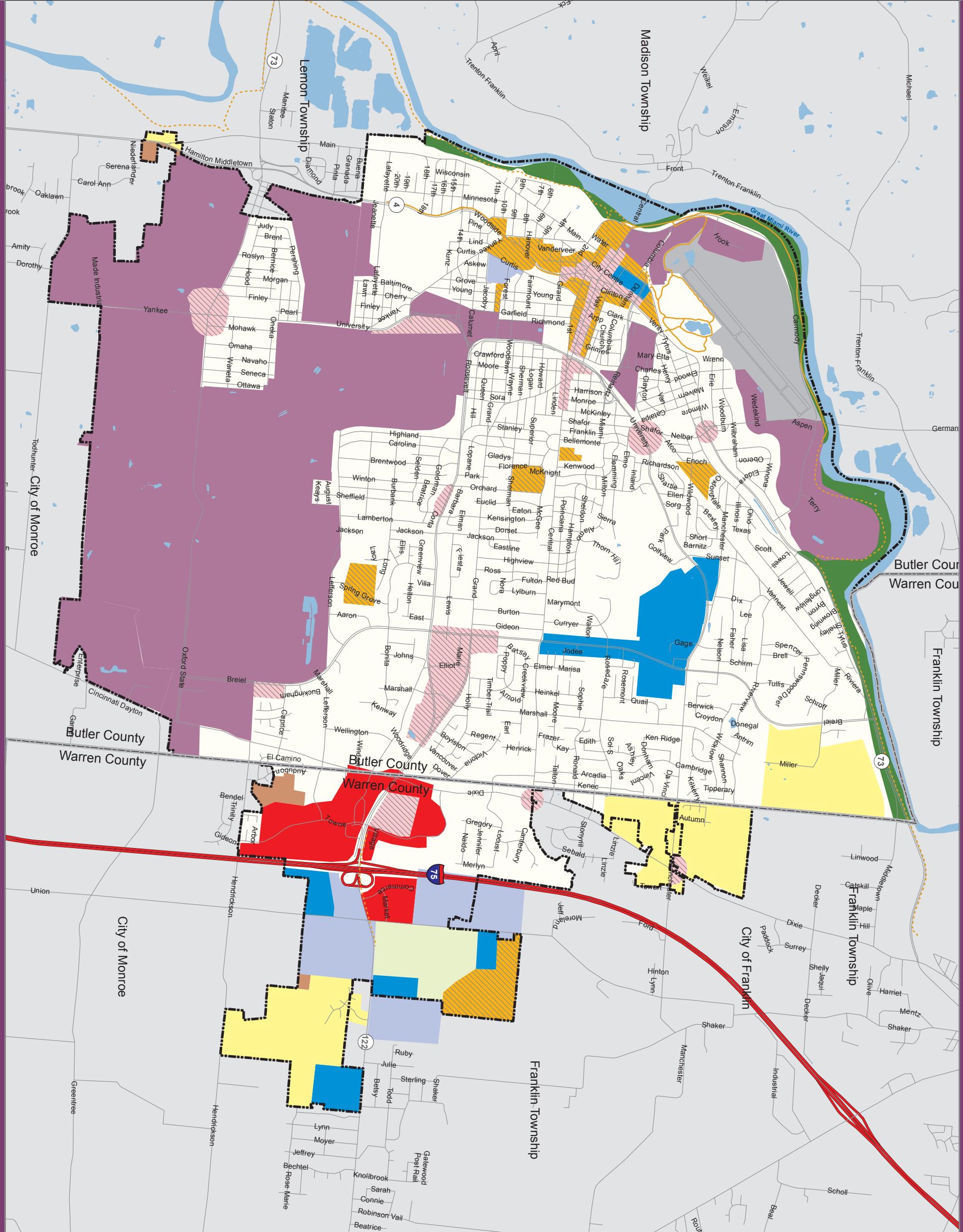
- **Residential Preserve and Enhance.** The Residential Preserve and Enhance designation, shown as a pale yellow on Map 8, calls for the continued use and improvement of established residential neighborhoods including parks and existing neighborhood orientated businesses. Numerous housing infill opportunities exist within established neighborhoods. Infill development must be constructed in a manner that is contextually sensitive to surrounding properties and the greater neighborhood. Neighborhood scale convenience oriented retail and office development that serves the needs of the surrounding neighborhood is encouraged. However, such development should be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis to determine the need and neighborhood impacts. Commercial uses should be located on primary or secondary thoroughfares at the edges of defined neighborhoods. Existing residential properties must be protected from commercial development through the judicious use of landscape buffering and screening.
- **Low Density Residential.** Low Density Residential, designated as yellow on Map 8, is planned on vacant land that is suitably located to accommodate suburban style single family detached residential units. Density should not exceed four units per gross acre. Low Density Residential is limited to two locations: (1) at the south side of SR 122, east of I-75 and (2) in northeast section of the city, east of Breiel Boulevard. Master planned open space communities are desired in Low Density Residential designated areas to help market higher end developments and to provide residents with private recreation opportunities. Developer and homeowner association provided open space and recreation facilities will reduce City burden to provide new park facilities at these locations.
- **Medium Density Residential.** The Medium Density Residential use designation is shown as orange on Map 8 and is limited to one small area east of I-75 and another located on the east side

of Cincinnati Dayton Road and north of Hendrickson Road. A maximum gross density of 8 units per acre is planned in this area. The intent of this designation is to promote modern, higher quality multi-family development or attached single family development adjacent to employment and commerce centers. On-site amenities such as fitness rooms and common areas for socialization and recreation are encouraged. No other Medium Density developments are supported except when proposed in conjunction with a mixed use brownfield or greyfield redevelopment project. Redevelopment of existing, older multiple family structures are also supported.

- **Health Care.** Health Care is designed to accommodate Middletown Regional Hospital's planned campus adjacent to I-75 and SR 122. This land use designation, seen as light green on Map 8, supports health care and allied professions including professional medical offices, medical administrative offices, dentist offices, optometrist offices, outpatient clinics, and ambulatory care facilities etc. Continuing care living facilities for elderly and special needs populations, education and hospitably uses are also appropriate.
- **Industrial.** Industrial, shown as purple on Map 8, is planned extensively in the southern third of the city and by Hook Field in the northwest. This future land use designation preserves the City's existing industrial land base and provides ongoing support for existing industries located in those areas. However, the planned Industrial area located northeast of Hook Field is new. Implementation in this area will require a wholesale change in land use from existing conditions. General industrial uses are appropriate including manufacturing, fabrication, warehousing, and distribution. Heavy commercial uses such as contractor yards and equipment rentals are also appropriate. New industrial uses that generate excessive truck traffic, noise, and vibration etc., should be considered only if the existing roadway system can safely accommodate projected truck traffic and the potential nuisances can be mitigated.

MAP 8 FUTURE LAND USE MAP

8-6



Legend

Future Land Use

Airport

Retail/Office

Mixed Use Residential

Medium Use Commercial

Low Density Residential

Institutional/Office

Industrial

Health Care

Business Park

Open Space

Neighborhood Preserve & Enhance

County Line

Street

Interstate



Miles
0 0.25 0.5

4/20/05

- **Business Park.** Business Park reserves vacant interstate visible and/or accessible land for modern, high-tech business parks. Parcels planned as Business Park are located east of I-75 and adjacent to the planned Middletown Regional Hospital campus. The purpose of the Business Park designation is to:

- Attract a synergistic mix of uses concentrated in healthcare, Information Technology and other “new economy”-related industries;
- Encourage a compatible mixture of clean industry and professional office uses within the same development parcel in a master planned, business park setting;
- Permit a flexible range of land uses to be responsive to the market;
- Allow a limited amount of ancillary service support uses and amenities for the businesses, employees, and residents in and adjacent to planned business park locations; and
- Create a high-tech employment base to diversify the economy and increase city revenues.

Planned professional office uses include medical, engineering, architectural, managerial, corporate and regional headquarters. Research, prototypical development, data storage, and computer centers are also appropriate uses. Suitable clean industry includes manufacturing using advanced or leading technology and industrial research and development. Clean industry uses must harmoniously co-exist with office development and meet similar performance standards for noise, fumes and vibrations, etc. Clean industry building design and materials must be high quality and be indistinguishable from office structures.

Up to fifteen percent (15%) of the land area designated as Business Park may be used for service support uses including dine-in restaurants without drive throughs, convenience orientated retail (less than 15,000 square per free standing store or shopping center), dry cleaning pick up and drop off, child day care, travel agencies, hotels, conference centers, banquet halls, and other similar amenity related uses. Such uses are planned for the preferential use of area employers, employees, and guests.

- **Airport.** This designation supports Hook Field’s continued operation and enhancement as an economic development generator. However, the airport boundaries are not planned to expand. New development shall comply with all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations that apply at this location. The development of an aero-industrial park is highly desirable on airport grounds and/or adjacent property planned as Industrial. This strategy should be used to attract companies that need corporate jet service or air based logistical supply lines.
- **Retail/Office.** The Retail/Office designation is indicated as red on Map 8 and is concentrated at the I-75/SR 122 interchange. The Retail/Office designation envisions a wide range of retail, retail service, and general office uses at convenient locations adjacent to primary thoroughfares. Future development in these areas should consist of convenience orientated commercial uses to provide needed goods and services of residents located in proximate neighborhoods and the community, depending on market context. Big box retail uses, fast food restaurants, carry-outs, shopping centers are appropriate along with smaller retail operations such as cleaners, laundry mats, and beauty salons. Office uses can be placed in stand alone structures or be integrated in shopping center space.

- **Institutional/Office.** Institutional uses include, but are not limited to: colleges, public and private schools; museums, cultural and public facilities; foster care facilities; and religious institutions. Miami University at Middletown and property located adjacent to University and Breiel Boulevards is the largest area planned as Institutional/Office in recognition of the established institutional and office uses located in that area. Likewise, a few smaller areas located throughout the City are planned as Institutional/Office due to the existing land use pattern. Institutional/Office is shown as light blue on Map 8.



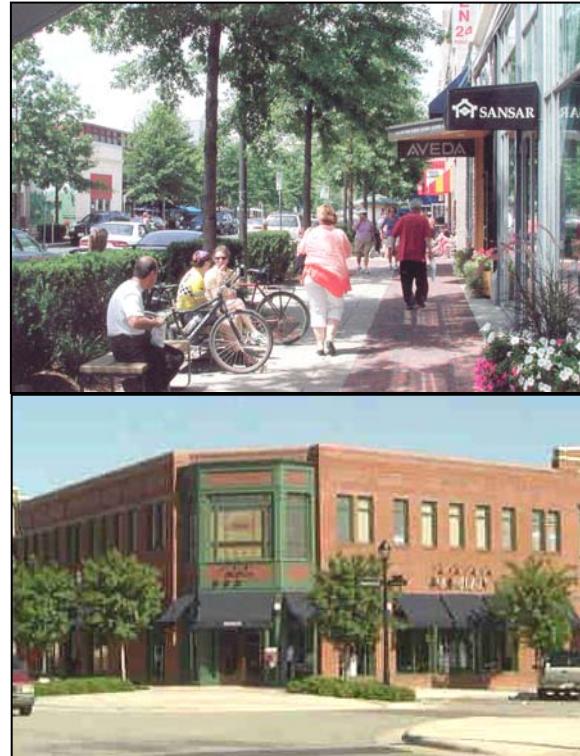
Miami University Middletown campus

- **Mixed Use Commercial.** The Mixed Use Commercial designation, seen as light red with diagonal strips on Map 8, calls for greater flexibility by moving away from prescriptive single use districts. Residential, office, civic, and retail are appropriate in Mixed Use commercial developments. Mixed use can be arranged horizontally, where different uses are provided side by side or vertically, where different uses are located in the same structure but generally on different floors. Retail or office is preferred on the first and office and/or residential is preferred on upper stories in multi-story structures.

The Mixed Use Commercial designation is planned to enhance existing neighborhoods by reintroducing residential, employment, shopping and recreation opportunities in areas that have not seen recent investment or are lacking similar amenity clusters. Mixed Use Commercial is planned extensively in the downtown corridors of Central and Verity Avenues and at brownfield and greyfield development opportunity sites. A few key intersections are also planned as Mixed Use Commercial “activity centers” as a means to promote more neighborhood orientated retail and office amenities for surrounding neighborhoods. Intersections planned as Mixed Used Commercial activity centers include:

- University Boulevard and Nelbar Road,
- Verity Boulevard and Germantown Road,
- Oxford State and Yankee Road,
- Central Avenue and Cincinnati Dayton Road, and
- The northern half of Manchester and Cincinnati Dayton Road

Good urban design is paramount to the success of any mixed use development. Particular attention must be paid to the architecture, scale and placement of buildings in mixed use environments. The Mixed Use



Commercial designation intends to create neighborhood defining landmarks and encourage greater pedestrian activity and socialization at the neighborhood level. Mixed Use Commercial developments must incorporate the design principles articulated in Chapter 4 Redevelopment and Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods

- **Mixed Use Residential.** Mixed Use Residential indicates a preference for stronger residential component in a mixed use environment. In this sense, residential should be the most dominate land use but can have supporting retail and office uses along with desirable open space amenities that accommodate higher densities. An example would include a row of townhomes that is anchored with a corner store or doctors office.

Mixed use is planned at several locations and is designated as orange with a diagonal stripe on Map 8. Mixed Use Residential is planned most extensively in the downtown area to serve as a transition between more intense retail and office operations in the Central Avenue and Verity Avenue corridors and predominately single family residential neighborhoods that surround the downtown.

Mixed Use Residential is planned at scattered redevelopment sites such as the current, but soon to be vacated, Middletown Regional Hospital campus and the former Roosevelt School site both located near Central Avenue. A Mixed Use Residential area is also planned north of Middletown Regional Hospital's future location located on the north side of SR 122 and east of Union Road. It is anticipated that this area will be developed as a master planned residential community with on-site institutional and commercial amenities.



CHAPTER 9

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA PLANS



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CHAPTER 9

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA PLANS

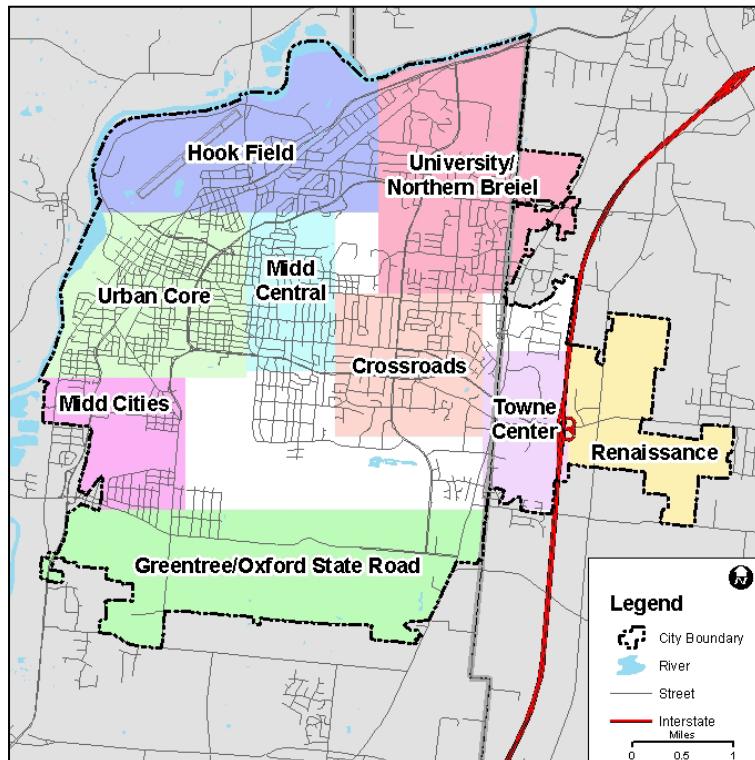
This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of planned future land use and development strategies for nine strategic subareas located within Middletown. These subareas are hereafter called “Development Opportunity Areas.” A closer examination of each Development Opportunity Area serves as a summary of the development vision and strategy created during the planning process. Policy statements, suggested capital improvements, and zoning recommendations are detailed.

SUMMARY

Figure 8 shows the name and location of each development opportunity area. A detailed description and map is provided for each Development Opportunity Area in the following pages.

Future land use designations for residential uses located in established neighborhoods are not shown on the Development Opportunity Area Maps. Unless indicated otherwise, no wholesale land use changes are proposed in these neighborhoods. Future land use designations are shown for existing and proposed commercial development. Brownfield and greyfield development opportunities are identified in dashed lines around the perimeter of such properties. Existing and proposed parks are also shown on each development opportunity map.

Figure 8: Development Opportunity Areas



RENAISSANCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** Renaissance, anchored by Middletown Regional Hospital's Healthcare and Technology Campus, will be the premier high-tech business park in the I-75 growth corridor. Renaissance will be developed as a landscaped, master-planned business park with unique amenities such as common open space, trails, restaurants, business support retail and a hotel and conference center. Growth in Renaissance will fulfill the Master Plan goal of diversifying the local economy and creating 3,000 "new economy" jobs. New economy companies will locate here to take advantage of Middletown's strategic location to larger markets and to access one of the most developed high speed telecommunications systems in the Midwest (see Appendix B for more information about the "new economy").
- **Branding.** A primary objective in developing business parks in Renaissance is to promote economic development in Middletown. It is recognized that success in achieving this objective will depend in part on aggressive promotion of the location within the region and nationally. Such a promotional effort will be more effective if the area being promoted has a unique identifiable image and name. For that reason, the land located east of the I-75/SR 122 interchange is referred to as "Renaissance" in this plan. Thought should be given to more appropriate branding strategies before promotional efforts are undertaken.
- **Future Land Use.** The land use strategy for Renaissance supports "Business Park" development along with limited ancillary support retail as a means to promote and conserve land for high-quality office development. This land use strategy builds a basis for regional economic growth by providing "market-ready" parcels to attract and retain high-tech, "New-Economy" companies.

Retail uses that provide services primarily to the businesses and employees of Renaissance are planned in special circumstances at restricted locations. Fast food restaurants, big box retail, and regional shopping centers are not planned to avoid the proliferation of strip commercial development that is notorious for creating unsafe traffic conditions and unwanted congestion.

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Office, research and development, healthcare and high-tech uses are planned in master-planned business parks to avoid the strip type of development that may diminish Renaissance's appearance as a premier business park location. High-quality single family homes are planned in areas designated as Low Density Residential. Planned housing, designated as Low Density Residential or yellow on Map 9, will serve professionals that work in Renaissance.

- **Key Development Strategy.** Approximately 223 acres of greenfield properties located in Renaissance are planned as Business Park. Additional acreage, located adjacent to the City boundary, is also planned as Business Park. These vacant properties will be under extreme development pressure in the near future as the Cincinnati and Dayton markets continue to converge near Middletown. For that reason, it is essential that part or all of the stated acreage be developed as a business park or be brought under public control as soon as possible to avoid undesirable land use patterns.

This action will likely require some form of public participation in conjunction with potential development partners. The creation of the private-public industrial corporation discussed in Chapter 3 Economic Development should be the driving force behind this initiative. It is also imperative that Middletown have a competitive supply of market ready sites to compete regionally for the limited number of off-site facility expansions and/or relocations that occur each year in the greater region.

- **Zoning Recommendation.** An overlay district is recommended with high-quality, suburban, business park design guidelines. The overlay district should list additional permitted uses that are desired but are not currently permitted in the existing IPO District zoning. Likewise, uses that are not desirable in a business park setting should be expressly prohibited. Performance standards should be established to ensure that office and clean industrial uses can co-locate without intrusions. Minimum building design standards should also be articulated in the overlay district. High-quality building design and materials are important to maintain a lasting, premiere office park environment. Clean industrial uses should be housed in structures that are indistinguishable from office buildings.

A provision to limit service support retail to 15% of the Business Park development parcel should be clearly stated. A streamlined development review process built into the overlay district would increase Middletown's competitiveness with other community in the region that are recruiting similar high tech companies. Streamlined development review is covered further in Chapter 10 Implementation.

- **Capital Improvements.**

- **Interchange.** ODOT earmarked approximately \$30 million to upgrade the I-75/SR 122 interchange and connecting roadway. The city must work with ODOT to ensure gateway enhancements and pedestrian/bicycle facilities are included in the interchange design.
- **Utilities.** Sanitary sewer, water, and high speed telecommunications infrastructure are accessible in sufficient capacity to accommodate planned new development. The most pressing need is to extend these elements into vacant parcels designated as Business Park. Redundant systems for water, telecommunications, and electricity are essential to ensure business operations can continue during line breaks or service interruptions.

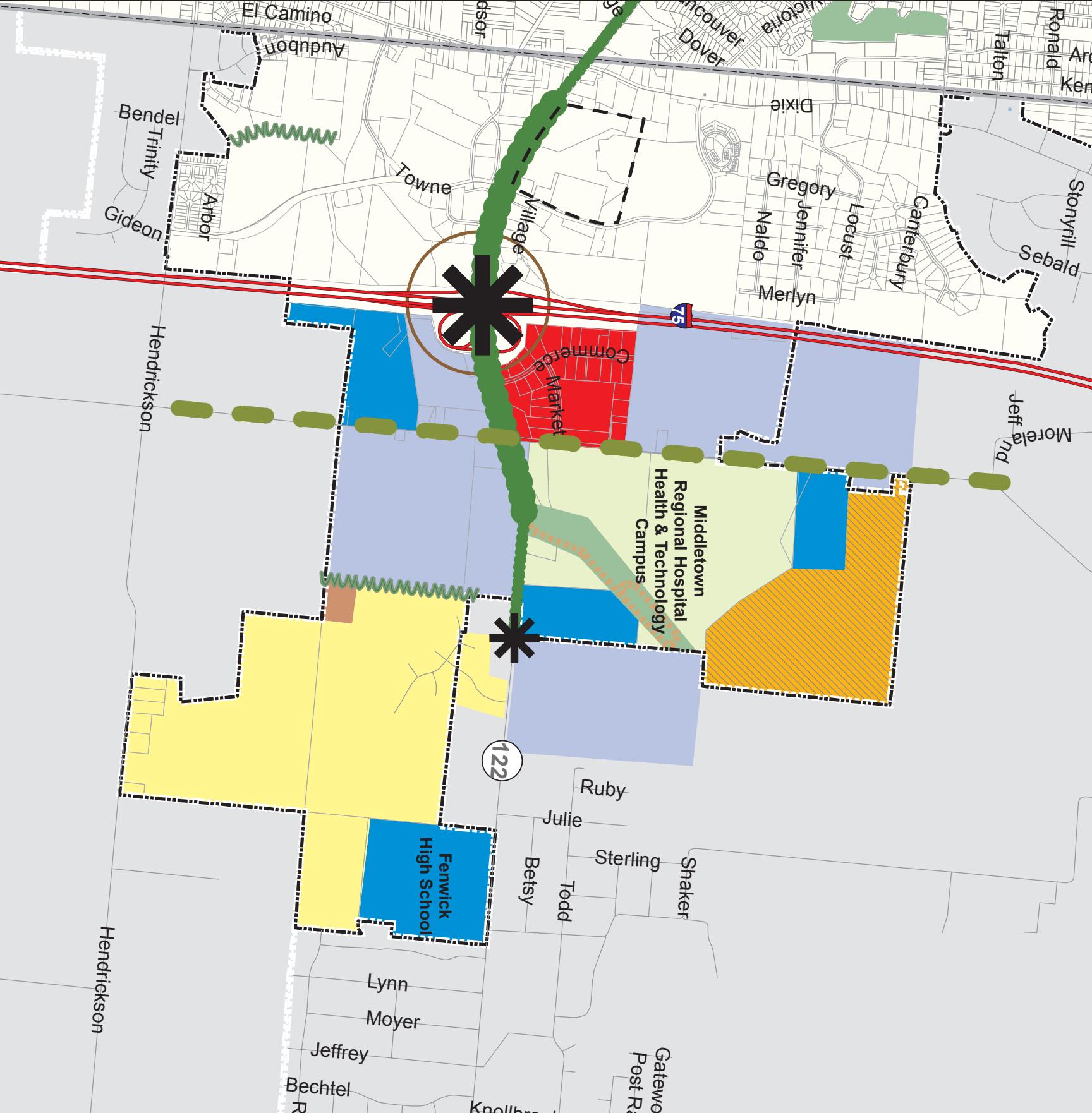
- **Local Streets.** Local streets need to be extended into vacant parcels in addition to utility lines to create market-ready sites. Street spacing should be constructed per ODOT's access management standards.
- **Union Road.** Widen Union Road to a five lane arterial to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate office, hospital and regional vehicular traffic demand parallel to I-75. This improvement will be required before a new interchange is constructed north or south of SR 122.
- **Gateway Enhancement.** The planned interchange improvements represent an excellent opportunity to increase the performance and aesthetics of Middletown's only interstate interchange. Gateway beautification is essential to create a positive "front door" image. Gateway beautification is also vital to create an attractive regional image for future high-tech companies and Middletown Regional Hospital. As such, the interchange and SR 122 must include aesthetic enhancements such as decorative signage, lighting, and a tasteful amount of hardscape and softscape elements.

The use of higher quality building materials on and at the interchange, such as cultured stone and wrought iron fencing, are highly desirable. Landscaped-median boulevards should be provided on SR 122 to complement Middletown's prevalent boulevard street system. Symbols and words can be integrated in the interchange itself similar to Union Center and the Wright Flyer emblem at the I-75/I-70 interchange. The creation of a special assessment should be considered for ongoing maintenance and beautification projects.

- **Public Services.** Renaissance development will benefit from and likely expect excellent public services at some point in the future. Public services and facilities planned at this time include bus service, a park with walking trails and break areas, and public utilities. Increased police and fire protection services will eventually be warranted.

MAP 9 RENAISSANCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-5



Middletown Renaissance Development Opportunity Area	
Opportunities for the Middletown Regional Hospital Health & Technology Campus	
SR122 Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close excessive curb cut openings in conjunction with interchange and SR122 improvements. - Utilize State of Ohio Access Management Standards to prevent undesirable strip development. - Create a high quality streetscape to enhance the area's location as a premier business park location. - Streetscape should include bike path, sidewalk, landscaped boulevard, street trees, and decorative lighting.
Union Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Widen Union Road to 5 lanes to provide parallel service road to I-75 and improve access to MRH campus and planned business parks. - Emulate SR122 streetscape at the Union Road/SR122 intersection and apply boulevard treatment.
Public Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A park will be needed in the near future to service new residents and MRH and business park employees. - At least one of the City's bus routes should provide service to the MRH and business parks. - A new fire station will be needed in the future as Middletown continues to grow in this area.
Opportunities for the I-75/SR122 Interchange	
Major Streetscape Improvement	
Minor Streetscape Improvement	
Boulevard Treatment	
Landscape Buffer	
Gateway Improvement	
Redevelopment Opportunity	
Existing Bikeway	
Proposed Bikeway	
Exploratory Path	
Existing Interchange	
Proposed Interchange	
City Boundary	
Park	

TOWNE CENTER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

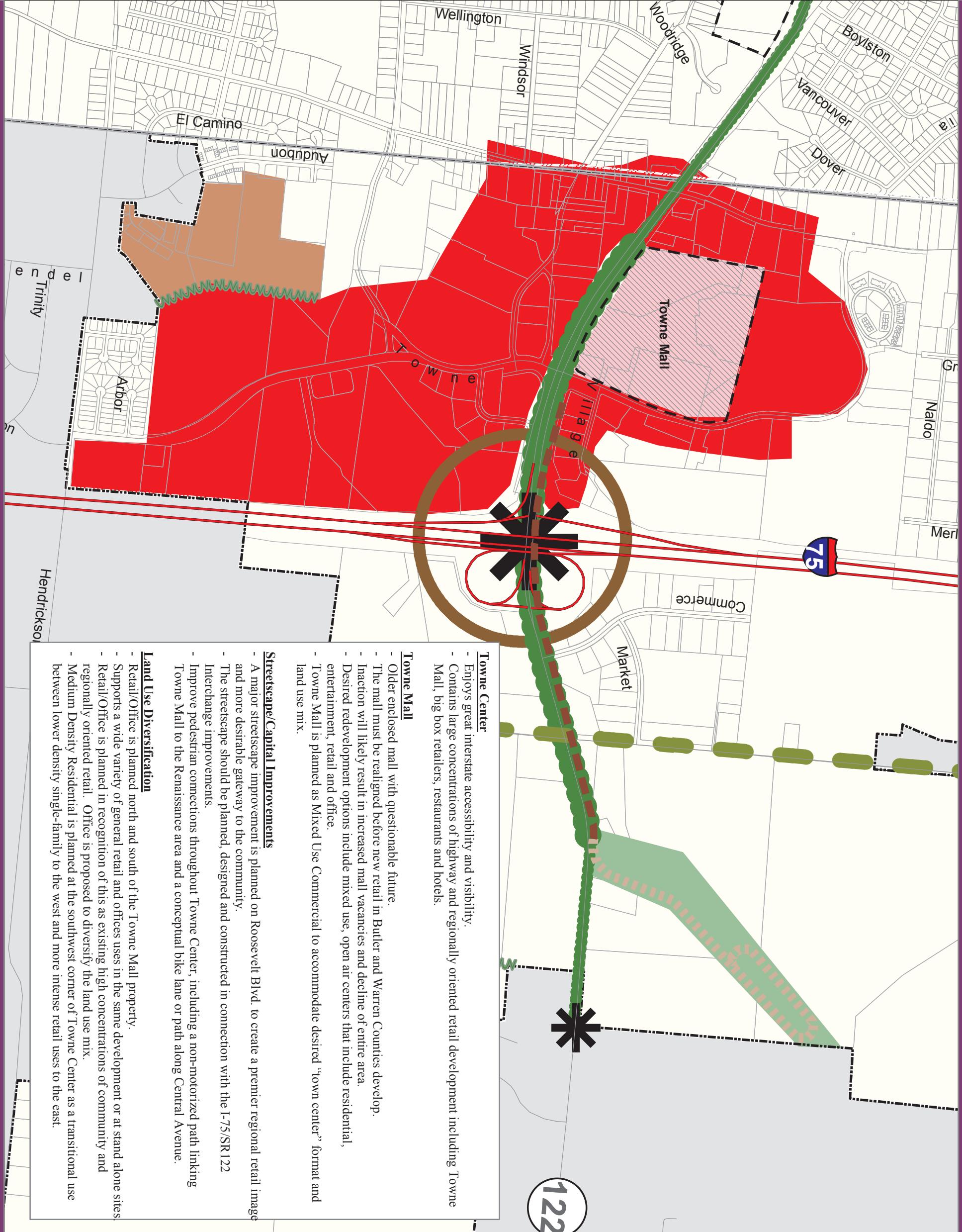


- **Vision.** Towne Center, with immediate interstate access, will continue to be the dominant retail location in Middletown. Redevelopment is anticipated at sites with obsolescent retail structures. Towne Mall, for instance, is envisioned as a vibrant, open air, mixed use development characteristic of the new retail "Lifestyle Center" paradigm. As such, Towne Center will emerge as a diverse neighborhood and business node with office, retail, restaurant and entertainment uses. Clustering mixed uses with higher density residential will realign Towne Center as a complete neighborhood and attractive community asset. The envisioned mixed use configuration will provide further support and complement the planned business park development at Renaissance.
- **Future Land Use.** Mixed Use Commercial and Retail/Office land use designations cover the majority of the Towne Center Development Opportunity Area in recognition of the existing retail land use pattern. Though intense retail is supported at this location, new office development is also appropriate. The Mixed Use Commercial designation, planned at Towne Mall, goes a step further by permitting appropriately located high density residential in addition to retail and office uses. The Mixed Use Commercial designation gives the city and the Towne Mall property owner the greatest flexibility on the types of uses that can be applied to a future redevelopment project.
- **Key Development Strategy.** Towne Mall is largely viewed as an obsolescent structure that lacks desired retailers and apparel. Public forum and Steering Committee meetings indicate public support for a Towne Mall redevelopment project. Such action should occur as soon as possible to retain market share before competing venues are established in nearby fast growing, suburban communities. Other development opportunities are limited to a few remaining vacant properties located at the edges of Towne Center.
- **Zoning Recommendations.** Towne Center is appropriately zoned as C-3 Community Commercial District, which permits a wide range of desirable uses including high intensity convenience oriented retail, professional office, restaurants, entertainment and indoor recreation. Redevelopment of Towne Mall should be approved as a Planned Development to provide the developer and the city additional flexibility in terms of permitted uses and setbacks. Also, consideration should be given to creating minimum commercial design standards to guide future development at Towne Center in a manner that is consistent with community expectations.
- **Capital Improvements**
 - **Bike Path.** A bike path is envisioned along SR 122 as part of the I-75/SR 122 interchange improvement to provide bicycle/pedestrian access to the retail amenities at Towne Center from Renaissance employment centers and residences. The city should express this desire for a bike path facility as soon as possible to ODOT before construction plans are finalized. The bike path could then extend north to Coles Road and turn west to Central Avenue, downtown and the Great Miami River.

- ***Interchange/SR 122 Gateway Enhancement.*** Apply similar streetscape improvements on SR 122 west of I-75 as planned east of the interstate. Such streetscape improvement should extend past Cincinnati Dayton Road. However, the greatest concentration of decorative streetscape elements should be concentrated close to the interchange.

MAP 10 TOWNE CENTER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9



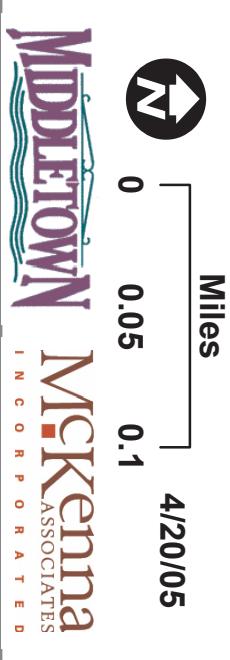
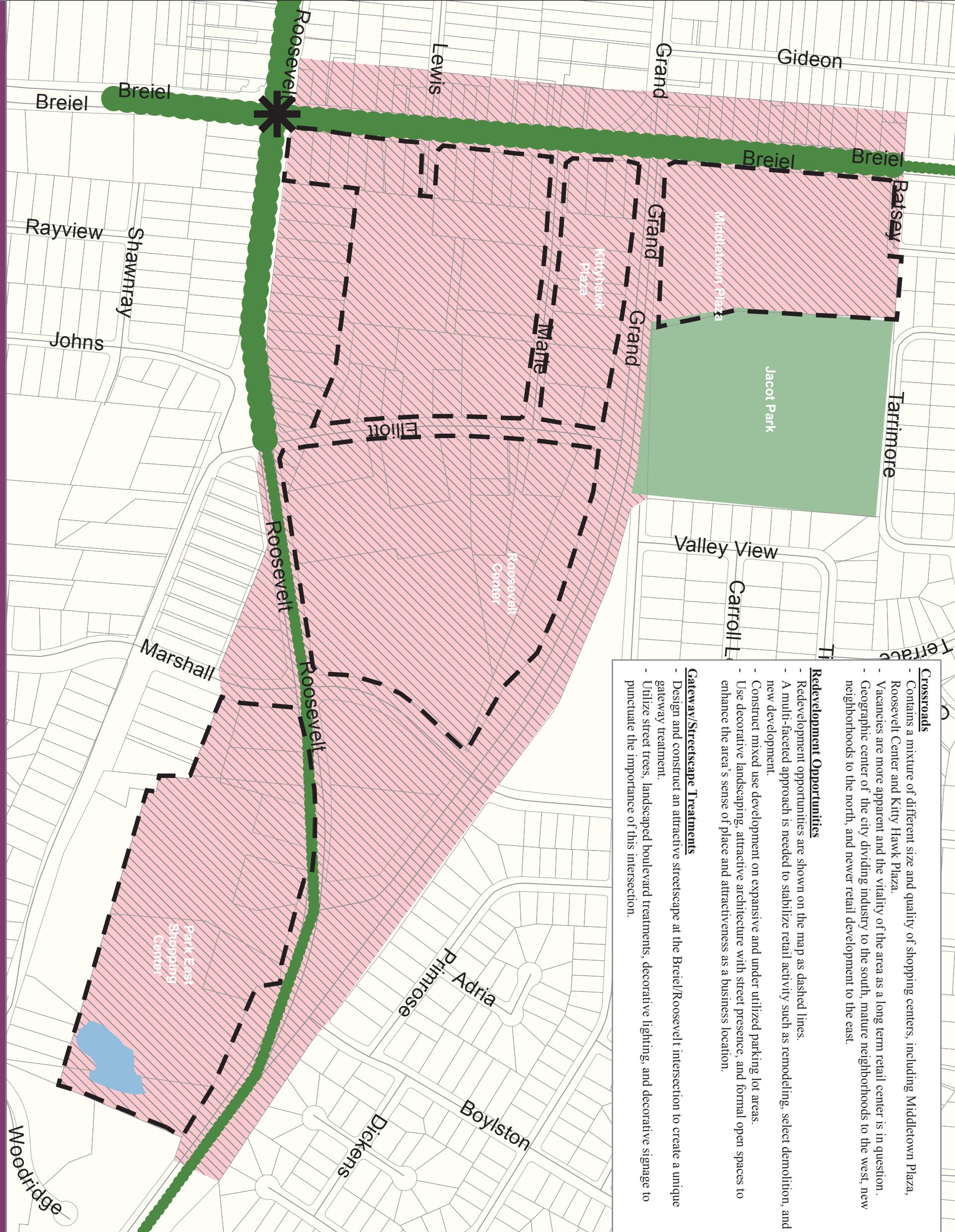
CROSSROADS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** Crossroads contains a mixture of shopping centers of varying size, age, and condition with an inappropriate mix of residential at the northeast and southeast corner of Roosevelt and Breiel Boulevard. Because of its strategic location, proactive steps will be taken to stabilize the market in order to maintain desired occupancy rates and vitality. The outcome will result in rehabilitated shopping centers and new mixed use, pedestrian friendly developments located next to major thoroughfares.
- **Future Land Use.** Mixed Use Commercial is planned at this location to offer maximum flexibility. General retail uses are appropriate that serve the needs of the greater community and surrounding neighborhoods. Office uses are also planned to help fill the vacant retail units. Residential is appropriate above retail/office uses located on ground floors and adjacent to commercial structures in higher density attached single family structures.
- **Key Development Strategy.** A multi-faceted approach is required to stabilize the Crossroads development opportunity area. Modernization/remodeling of existing retail shopping centers are needed. However, new development on underutilized portions of Crossroads is essential to bring new life and vitality to this area. New development should occur on large expanses of relatively unused portions of existing parking lots. Redevelopment should eliminate the mish-mash of uses visible from Roosevelt Boulevard. Buildings constructed at intersection corners and adjacent to the corridors should be multi-story and contain high quality building materials and architecture to create an enhanced sense of place at this strategic location. Pedestrian amenities are necessary to encourage greater utilization.
- **Zoning.** Land north of Roosevelt Boulevard is zoned C-3 Community Commercial District; land located south of Roosevelt is zoned P-2 Professional Service District. Redevelopment is complex. Use of more flexible zoning, such as Planned Development, would be beneficial whereby the City and its development partners could agree upon specific standards to meet development goals and overcome unique development challenges. The creation of mixed use, infill design standards would also be very helpful before redevelopment projects commence to give developers guidance on how to approach the project.
- **Capital Improvements.** An improved streetscape is planned at the Breiel/Roosevelt intersection. Streetscape improvements are needed to improve the overall aesthetics of this strategic intersection and to enhance its prominence as a business district. Decorative lighting, gateway signage, and street trees are example streetscape improvements.

MAP 11 CROSSROADS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-10



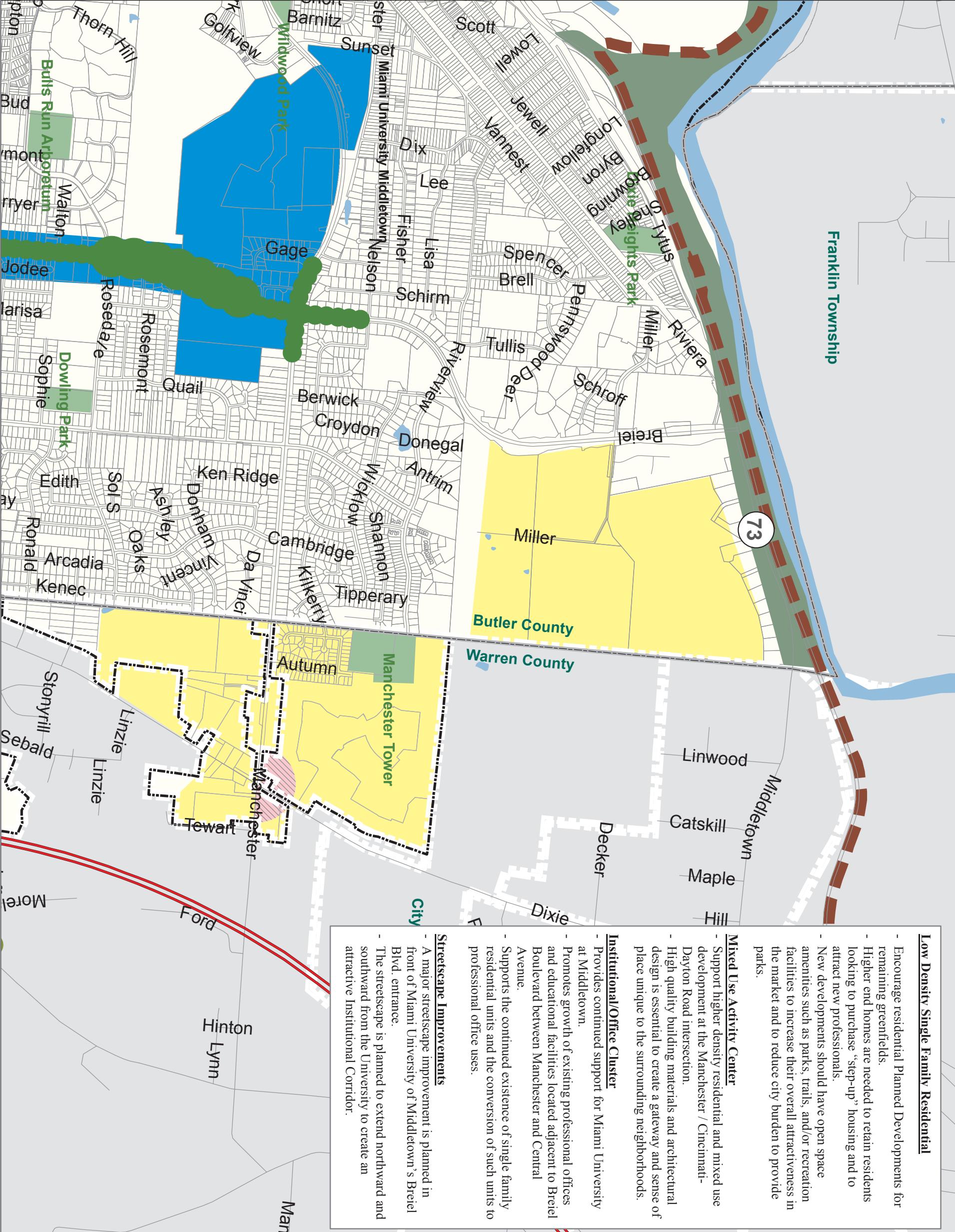
NORTHERN BREIEL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** Breiel and University Boulevard will continue to contain a desirable mix of office, educational, and institutional uses. Nearby neighborhoods offer a wide range of housing options at various price points including new, higher quality homes built in lower density suburban style subdivisions. Neighborhoods are strengthened by the presence of Miami University at Middletown's campus and access to medical offices and public and private schools located in the Breiel Boulevard corridor.
- **Future Land Use.** Institutional/Office land uses are planned adjacent to Breiel and University Boulevards to provide continued support for Miami University of Middletown, schools and smaller professional offices that are established in this area. Low Density Residential is planned at both properties defined as development opportunities on Map 12.
- **Key Development Strategy.** The private market will likely implement the Master Plan future land use recommendations. However, the city should analyze real estate, land use and occupancy trends in the Breiel Boulevard corridor to determine the impact Middletown Regional Hospital's future relocation will have on the professional office market.
- **Zoning Recommendations.** Miami University at Middletown and the west side of Breiel Boulevard are correctly zoned as P-1 Professional-Institutional District. Likewise, the two development opportunities planned as Low Density Residential are appropriately zoned as DS Suburban Dwelling District and D-1 Low Density Dwelling District. These zoning districts permit a maximum density of 1.5 dwelling units per acre and 2.4 dwelling units per acre respectively. Planned Developments should be encouraged for proposed new low density residential subdivisions to encourage open space set asides for parks and private recreation and other desirable amenities that enhance subdivision market appeal.

MAP 12 UNIVERSITY/NORTHERN BREIEL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-12



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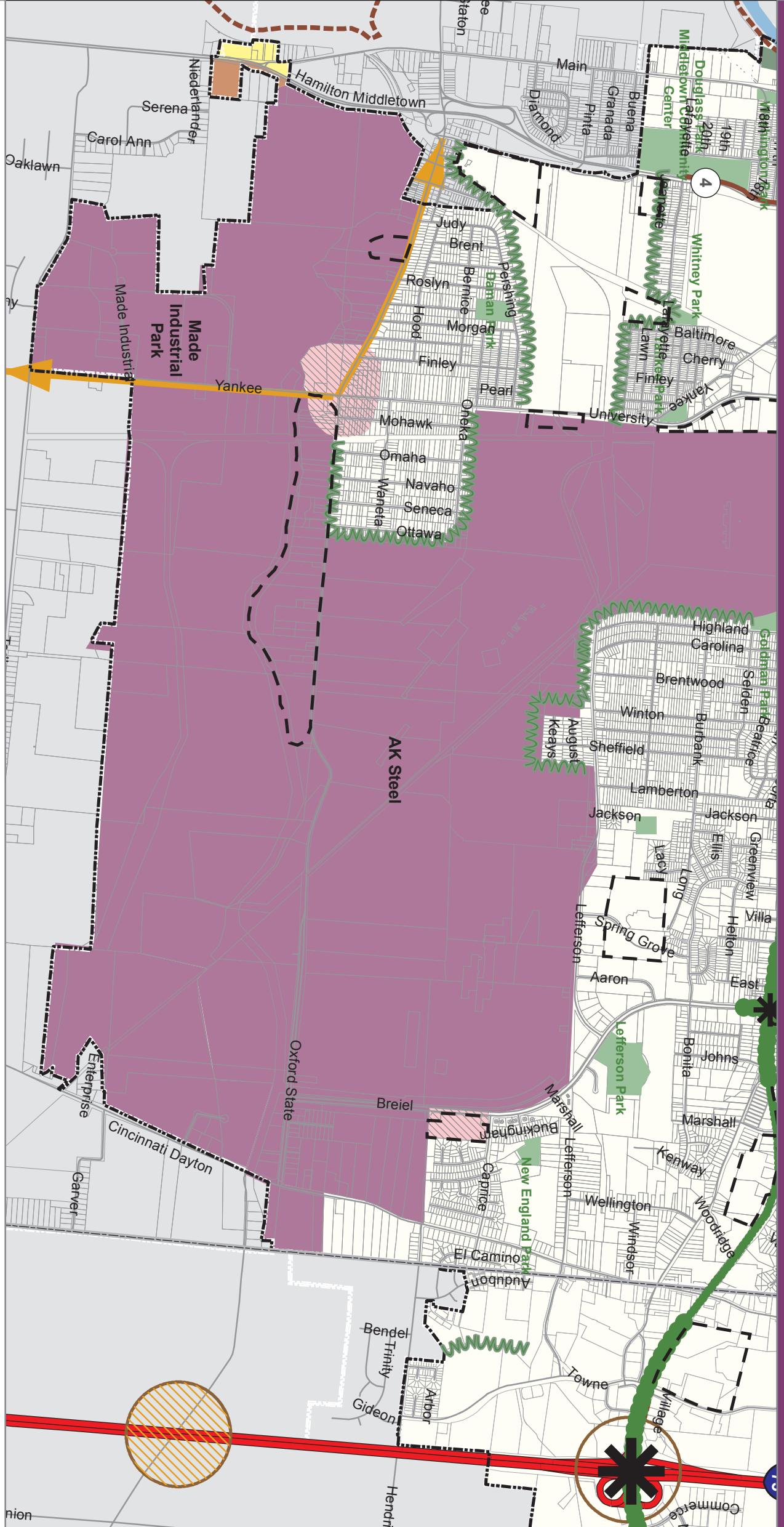
GREENTREE-OXFORD STATE ROAD DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** Greentree-Oxford State Road will retain and attract new industrial development spurred by increased interstate access via the planned interchange at I-75 and Greentree Road. New development will fill existing industrial parks creating the need to provide additional land supply.
- **Future Land Use.** The vast majority of this area is planned as Industrial. The Industrial land use designation provides ongoing support for existing industrial operations including AK Steel. The Mixed Use Commercial designation located at the Oxford State and Yankee Road intersection is planned to attract convenience oriented retail and office development to provide conveniently located goods and services for underserved neighborhoods and adjacent industry.
- **Key Development Strategy.** Industrial uses that cannot meet design guidelines and performance standards for business parks planned near Middletown Regional Hospital in Renaissance will be directed to the Greentree-Oxford State Road Development Opportunity Area. This strategy is consistent with the Economic Development strategy of diversifying the city's company base while simultaneously targeting specific high-tech industries to locate in Renaissance as a strategy to diversify the city's economic base. High-bay, flexible-space industrial units are planned at the defined development opportunity located on the south side of Oxford State Road. Buildings with flexible configurations typically have high ceilings to accommodate warehousing and equipment storage and partition walls so each user can easily define needed office and shop space.
- **Capital Improvements.** Planned capital improvements are essential to implement the above development strategy. Most important, and most difficult to accomplish, is a new interchange at I-75 and Greentree Road. This interchange is needed to: (1) alleviate pressure on SR 122 which currently contains heavy truck traffic intermixed with local automobile traffic; (2) provide direct access to Middletown's industrial base; (3) enhance economic development; and (4) create a modern multi-lane industrial corridor from I-75 to the Miller Brewing Plant. The two-lane section of Oxford State Road, located west of Breiel Boulevard, must be improved to five lanes to the SR 73/4 interchange. A Yankee Road extension is planned to connect to SR 63. This extension would provide another means of interstate access via the I-75/SR 63 interchange in Monroe.
- **Zoning Recommendations.** The Greentree-Oxford State Road Development Opportunity Area is appropriately zoned as I-2 General Industrial District. Rezoning land located at the Oxford State and Yankee Road intersection to a commercial zoning district or planned development is desirable.

MAP 13: GREENTREE ROAD DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-14



I-75/Greentree Road Interchange

- Planned to provide needed additional interstate access to existing and vacant industrial property.
- Interchange will reduce heavy truck traffic on SR 122/Central Avenue (that is currently intermixed with local automobile traffic).
- New interchange, along with proposed Oxford State Road improvement, will create a needed truck route to Miller Brewing facility.

Oxford State Road

- Upgrade existing two lane section to a five lane modern industrial access road from west of Breiel Blvd. to the SR 73/US 4 interchange.

- Construction will require right-of-way acquisition. Redevelopment of current marginal industrial and commercial uses located close to Yankee Road should coincide with right-of-way access.
- Make a direct arterial connection to the planned interchange at Greentree Road and I-75.

AK Steel

- Support AK Steel's operations and ongoing improvement/expansion plans.
- Work with AK Steel to provide and/or to improve landscape buffers adjacent to residential uses and neighborhoods.
- Identify if any AK Steel property is not mission essential. Excess property could be used for future industrial development.



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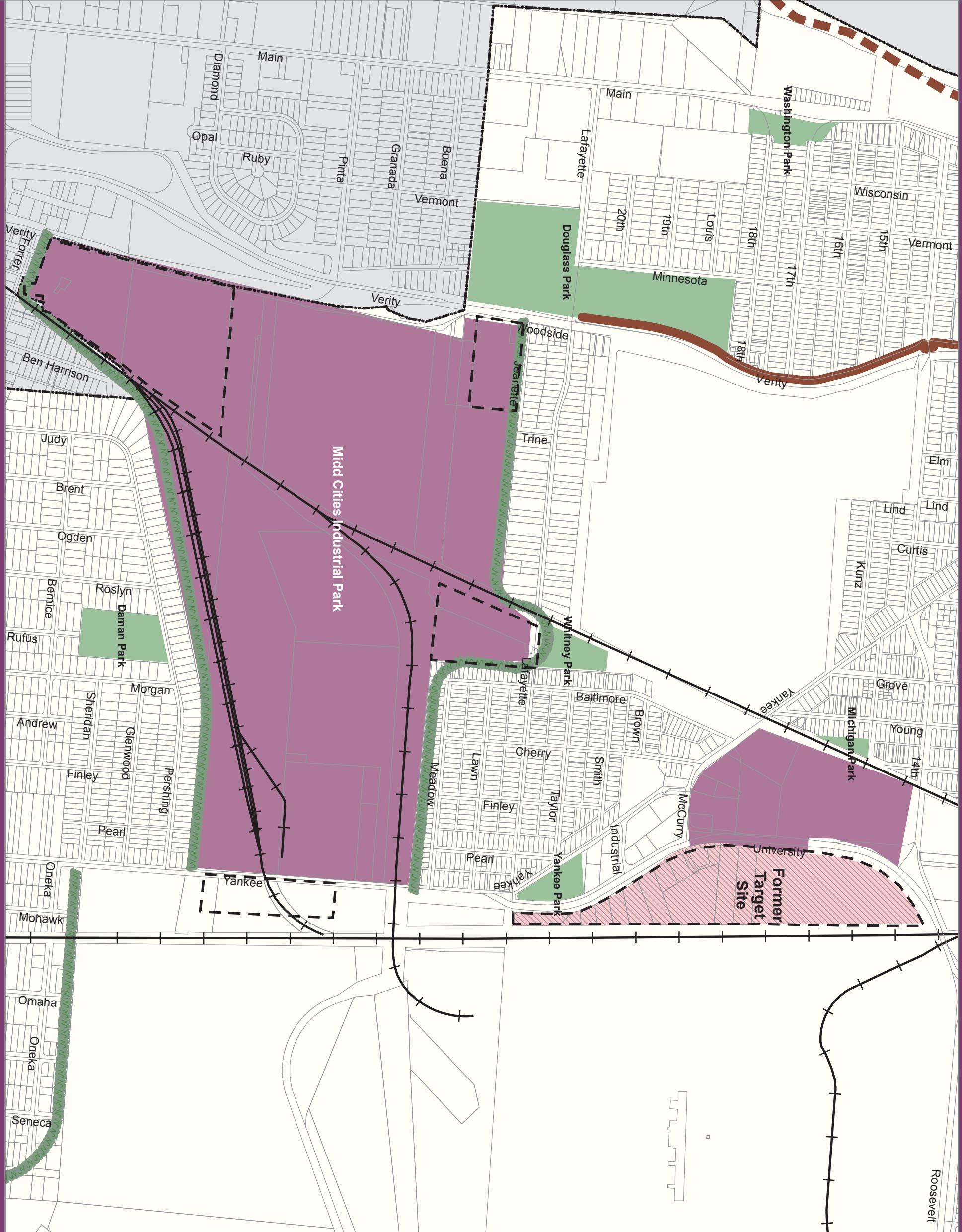
MIDD CITIES DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** The Midd Cities Development Opportunity Area is anchored by the Midd Cities Industrial Park. While vacant lots are available, redevelopment of three adjacent brownfields will stabilize the area for a new generation of industrial users. Adjacent neighborhoods will be protected from industrial encroachment by landscape screening and buffering.
- **Future Land Use.** Two future land uses, Industrial and Mixed Use Commercial, are planned. Industrial recognizes and supports the continuance of the existing industrial land use pattern established in the Midd Cities Industrial Park. Mixed Use Commercial is planned at the former Target property located on the west side of University Boulevard. This future land use designation offers several potential reuse and/or redevelopment options to provide goods and services to adjacent neighborhoods. However, the Target site is relatively isolated. Retail and office uses may not be appropriate. In this sense, the real estate market will be given greater latitude to determine the eventual end use.
- **Key Development Strategy.** Redevelop brownfield properties to place idle land back into productive industrial use. This strategy will require the direction of a Brownfield Resource Team and be implemented in a phased and prioritized manner based on end user availability and funding. Similarly, the former Target property requires a reuse plan.
- **Zoning Recommendations.** Midd Cities development opportunities are appropriately zoned as I-2 General Industrial District. New industrial development must be adequately screened from adjacent residential neighborhoods. Brownfield and greyfield redevelopment projects should be developed under the City's Planned Development regulations to offer greater design and use flexibility.

MAP 14 MIDD CITIES DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-16



Legend

Future Land Use	Mixed Use Commercial
Industrial	
Neighborhood Preserve & Enhance	
Redevelopment Opportunity	
Landscape Buffer	
Proposed Bikeway	
Park	
RailRoad	
Street	
Interstate	

Midd Cities

- Contains active Industrial Park with growth potential.
- Contains three brownfield sites adjacent to Midd Cities Industrial Park.
- Brownfield sites must be redeveloped to open up more land for industrial activity and remove blighting influence on adjacent neighborhoods.
- New industrial development must be properly screened with adequate landscape buffer yards adjacent to residential.
- Mixed Use Commercial is planned for the former Target site to give the market maximum flexibility to redevelop a difficult site.
- Brownfields must be mitigated to stabilize neighborhoods and open more land for industrial development.

URBAN CORE NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** The Urban Core Neighborhood Development Opportunity Area is the symbolic focal point of the City. Planned revitalization will increase community pride, enhance appreciation for the City's history, and contribute to the overall economic health of the community. For many years, however, the commercial and residential areas in and around downtown have experienced economic decline. As businesses and people moved away from the historic center, vacant retail and office space, neglected historic buildings, and poorly maintained housing have become prevalent.

However, downtown and its environs offer what many suburban communities lack. Downtown still has a cluster of performing arts, fine arts, parks, pedestrian-friendly streets and public facilities such as the award-winning Middletown Public Library. In recent years, downtown business owners formed the Downtown Alliance, a nonprofit organization with the mission to foster downtown revitalization. The City has taken its own steps to revitalize the area by removing the enclosed mall structure and opening Central Avenue for vehicular access. The City has also made façade and streetscape improvements and developed a small park. In order to create a viable, healthy downtown, the city and its partners will take further steps to revitalize the area by encouraging the preservation and renovation of historic buildings, and ensuring that new development blends with the architecture and character of the surrounding area. Downtown may not return to its former glory but, with time and incremental improvements, downtown will become a healthy neighborhood and business district with a strong concentration of recreation and arts amenities.

- **Future Land Use.** Mixed Use Commercial is planned along Central and Verity as shown on Map 15. Retail activity should be concentrated within this defined location. Residential uses are desired on upper floors of downtown commercial buildings. "Mixed Use Residential" is planned as a transition between Commercial Mixed Use and predominately single family residential neighborhoods located adjacent to downtown. Residential and offices uses are appropriate in existing buildings. Smaller-scale retail may be appropriate if adequate parking facilities are available and if the retail activity does not detract from the neighborhood.

Downtown is the symbolic focal point of the City. Planned revitalization will increase community pride, enhance appreciation for the City's history, and contribute to the overall economic health of the community.

- **Key Development Strategy.** The area has traditionally been home to commercial, residential, and even industrial uses. Mixed use development is encouraged vertically in multi-story structures and horizontally across the landscape to re-establish vibrancy and increase the commercial viability of the area.

Increased residential will provide customers to downtown businesses and bring life to the downtown throughout more hours of the day. Accordingly, a wide range of housing options are appropriate in the downtown including new market-rate townhomes, lofts, work-live units, and studios. Development of work-live units, lofts, and studios should be strongly considered to attract artists to downtown Middletown. This strategy could capitalize on downtown's existing strengths characterized by Beau Verre, Middletown Arts Center, Sorg Theater Company, downtown murals, etc.

- **Zoning.** Downtown is zoned CBD Central Business District. The CBD has four variations classified as CBD-1, CBD-2, CBD-3 and CBD-4 each with a unique set of use restrictions based on what appears to be defined sub-districts of downtown. This arrangement should be closely reviewed to see if amendments are necessary. To encourage the restoration and adaptive reuse of old buildings, land use regulations should be tailored to provide greater allowance of mixed uses including residential above first floors without the encumbrance of a conditional use permit.

To encourage sensitive renovation and infill development, the City could establish design guidelines, adopt setback and height requirements that reflect the traditional development patterns in the area, and create a pedestrian friendly streetscape by offering collective parking lots at strategic locations.

- **Capital Improvements**

Canal Greenway. Restore the canal bed to create an interpretive and interactive historic attraction. Turn the restored canal into an urban greenway that connects Smith Park to the Great Miami River through downtown. Other means of providing linkages between the downtown and river need to be explored.

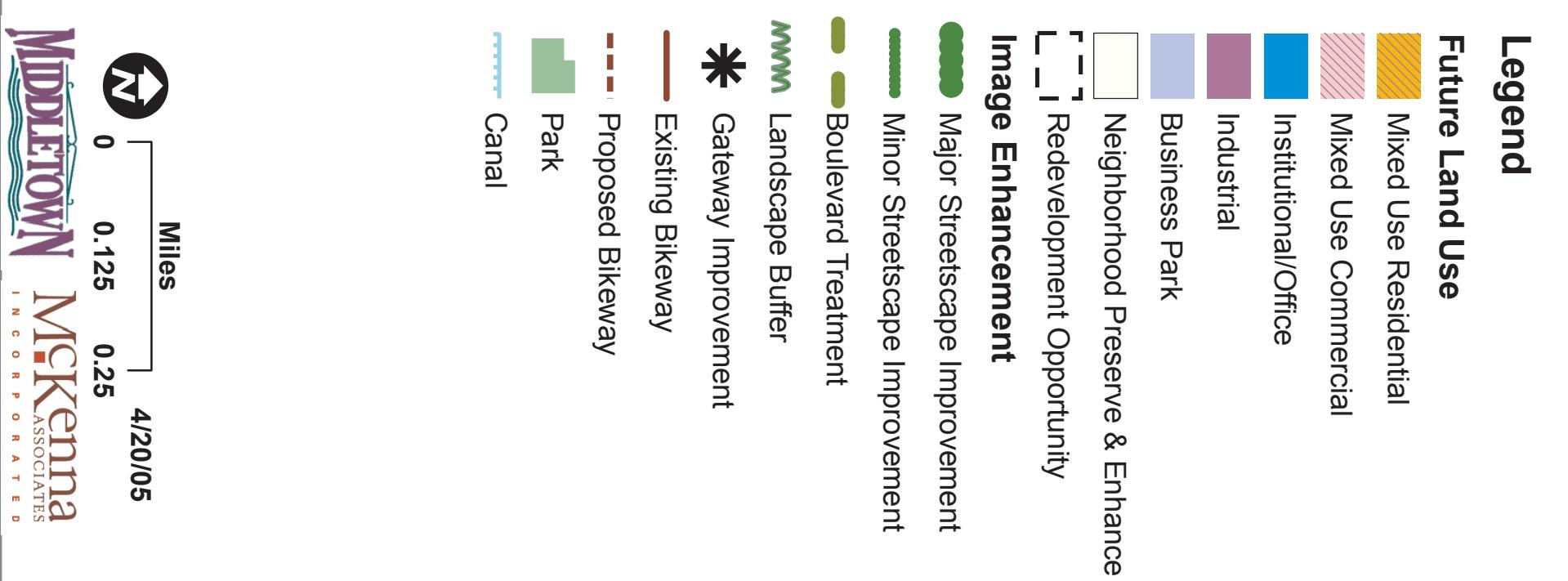
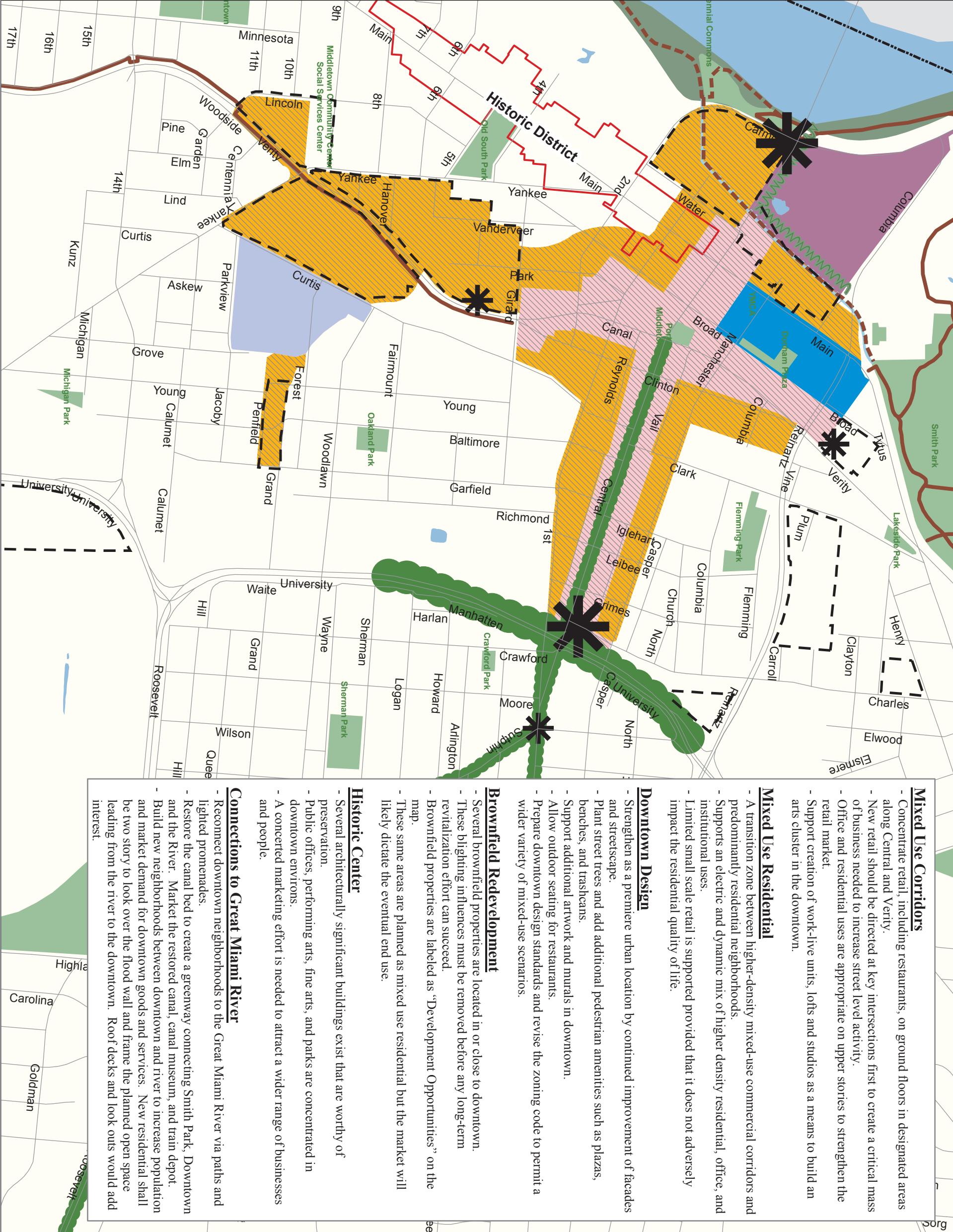
Utilities. Engineering analysis performed as part of this Master Plan indicates that the downtown environs have the oldest and some cases undersized water and sanitary sewer infrastructure. As mentioned in the brownfield redevelopment strategies, the city may be called upon to improve utility services in the downtown to accommodate new growth on brownfield sites.

Bike Path. A cross-town bike path is planned to connect the Renaissance Development Opportunity Area to downtown via SR 122 and Central Avenue. Though the exact path alignment is not known, a logical routing through the downtown needs to be identified and should ultimately end at the bike path located along the river.

Streetscape. Though many positive improvements have been made, continued improvement to the downtown streetscape is needed to strengthen downtown's sense of place and attractiveness.

MAP 15 URBAN CORE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-19



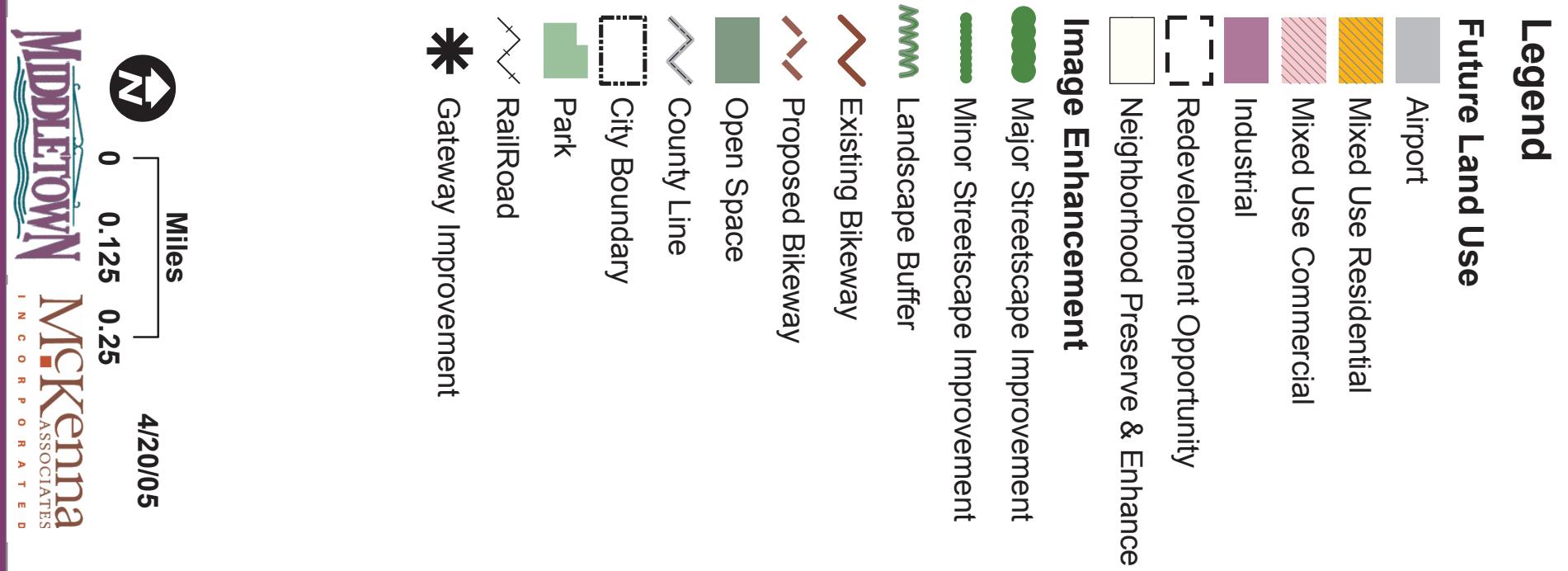
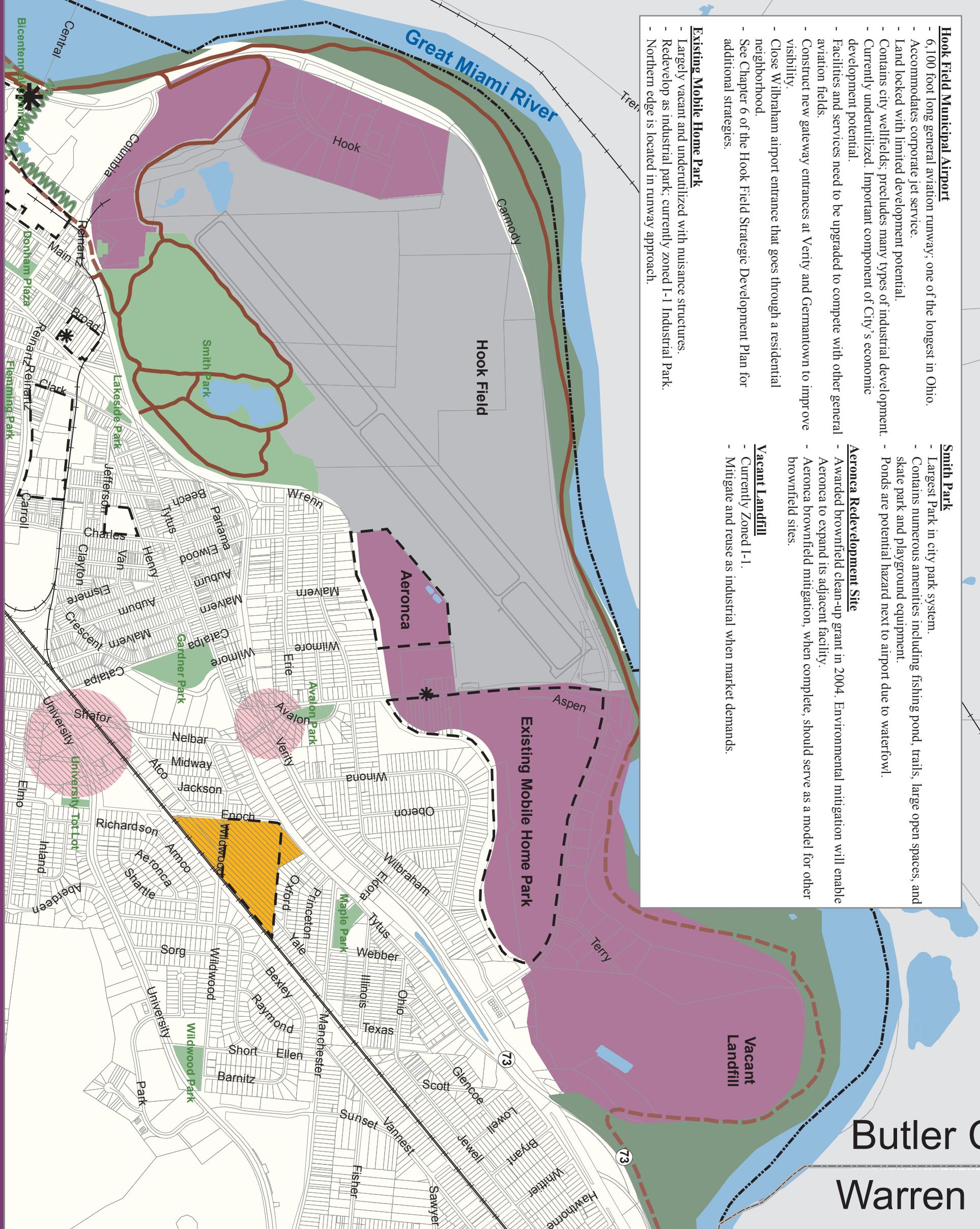
HOOK FIELD DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- ***Vision.*** Hook Field Municipal Airport will be redeveloped with modern air-side accessible amenities to complement and fully benefit from the longest general aviation runway located in southwest Ohio. Demand for airport facilities and services will create the need for a modern aeropark located on and/or adjacent to airport grounds. Additional retail, restaurant, and office support uses will be needed to service airport-related activity.
- ***Future Land Use.*** Hook Field is planned as Airport and supports aviation-related uses and facilities such as maintenance hangars, corporate jet hangers, T-hangers, etc. Industrial land uses are planned east and west of the airport grounds.
- ***Key Development Strategy.*** Hook Field must be maximized as an economic development asset. Airport facilities are currently underutilized given the runway length and capacity. Modernization efforts are needed to enhance Hook Field's image in the aviation industry and to attract additional fixed-base aircraft. The mobile home park located east of the airport is designated as a development opportunity for new industrial development. This mobile home park contains numerous vacancies and nuisance properties. It is also currently zoned as I-1 Industrial Park District. The old municipal landfill site north of Carmody Drive is also planned as a future industrial park location. Funds to mitigate the property for industrial development should be expended only after demand warrants additional industrial acreage in this area. Additional development strategies found in Chapter 6 of the Hook Field Economic Development Plan should be considered.
- ***Zoning Recommendations.*** The airport and adjacent properties identified as development opportunities are appropriately zoned as I-1 Industrial Park District.
- ***Capital Improvements.***
 - ***Airport facilities.*** The airport itself requires on-going capital improvements to meet FAA standards. From a more practical perspective, new airport facilities are needed to modernize Hook Field.
 - ***Airport Gateway.*** A new, high-quality Hook Field entry sign is needed at the Germantown entrance to improve airport branding and visibility.
 - ***Airport Service Road.*** A full length service road is needed to connect the Germantown and Smith Park entrances.
 - ***Wilbraham.*** Cul-de-sac Wilbraham Road to eliminate airport traffic through the adjacent neighborhood.

MAP 16 HOOK FIELD DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-21



MIDD CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA



- **Vision.** Midd Central's healthy neighborhoods will remain vibrant and attractive. Notable characteristics of this area include pedestrian-friendly streets, parks, and neighborhood- oriented businesses that include a sustainable mix of retail, retail services, professional office, and restaurants. The future loss of two long-standing neighborhood anchors, Roosevelt School and Middletown Regional Hospital, are viewed as development opportunities that will be acted upon in the shortest time period practical. Such action will maintain property owner confidence in their neighborhood.
- **Future Land Use.** Future land use designations shown on Map 17 are limited to three small areas being the Middletown Regional Hospital campus, Roosevelt School and the Sutphin/Central vicinity. All three of these areas are planned as Mixed Use. The hospital and school grounds are planned as Mixed Use Residential. Mixed Use Residential places a primary focus on the construction of new residential units mixed with supportive office and small-scale retail. The planned Mixed Use Commercial designation supports the traditional urban development pattern and healthy node of neighborhood businesses located near the intersection of Central and Sutphin.
- **Key Development Strategy.** The loss of Middletown Regional Hospital and Roosevelt School will most likely have a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. For this reason, it is essential that these properties are properly maintained in the interim while new users are identified. More important, a reuse strategy needs to be formulated and implemented within a relatively short period of time. Vacant property at these once active sites will deteriorate property owner confidence. All viable reuse alternatives need to be explored. Elderly housing, single-family residential, and medical office reuse were all discussed as desirable outcomes at the hospital site at Steering Committee meetings.

The Central/Sutphin vicinity has the ingredients to become a premier traditional neighborhood business district that attracts residents from all over the city. Characteristic of successful neighborhood business districts, this area contains a traditional street pattern lined with trees and on-street parking; buildings located close to the street; pedestrian activity, and quaint restaurants, offices and retail stores. The city can bolster this asset by concentrating code enforcement, housing rehabilitation, and homeownership resources in adjacent neighborhoods.

- **Zoning Recommendations.** Mixed use, infill design standards are needed to provide guidance on the implementation of the Master Plan Mixed Use Commercial land use recommendation at Sutphin and Central. New development must be compatible with the architecture, scale, and

intensity of existing uses located in the neighborhood. Roosevelt School is zoned D-2 Low Density Residential, which allows institutional, education, public parks and recreation, and single family residential on 13,000 square foot lots. The hospital campus is zoned P-3 Hospital District. The P-3 district permits medical office and single family residential on 30,000 square foot lots or 13,000 square foot lots with conditional use approval. The D-2 and P-3 zoning may be appropriate depending upon the reuse strategy. However, planned developments will likely be the most appropriate to facilitate redevelopment at both sites.

- ***Capital Improvements.*** The most direct route from Interstate 75 to downtown follows Roosevelt and Grand Avenue to Sutphin Street and Central Avenue. Widening Sutphin and Grand and/or re-configuring the intersections of Sutphin/Central and Sutphin/Grand would improve the capacity and functionality of this route and improve access to downtown. This recommendation will be difficult to implement given the probable need for additional right-of-way and the close proximity of existing structures next to the roadway.

Streetscape improvements are needed to better define the Central/Sutphin neighborhood business district. Pedestrian amenities should be offered including small plazas, benches, trash cans and decorative street lighting.

Bike lanes are planned in the existing Central Avenue roadway. Bike lanes will provide a cross town connector dedicated for the preferential use of bicyclists. Bicycle facilities are envisioned to eventually connect downtown and the Great Miami River to Towne Mall and the Renaissance Development Opportunity Area.

MAP 17 MIDD CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREA

9-24



Legend	
Future Land Use	Major Streetscape Improvement
Redevelopment Opportunity	Minor Streetscape Improvement
Park	Park
Gateway Improvement	Gateway Improvement

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APPENDIX A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SUMMARY FEEDBACK

COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY SUMMARY

In early 2004, the City of Middletown distributed surveys to residents with their utility bills. Of all the surveys sent out, 2,047 were returned. Assuming that only the heads of households filled out the survey, the respondents represent approximately 9.5% of the households in Middletown, based on GEM Public Sector Service's 2002 population and household summary estimates. In this non-scientific survey, respondents were asked to rate the City's quality of life and performance in several areas, give opinions on issues facing the City, and describe key topics that they felt should be examined during the planning process. In summary the following survey response information will most inform this planning process:

- Among all areas of quality of life, City services rated highest, with schools generating the most concerns.
- The greatest overall desired Master Plan focus of survey respondents was jobs and economic development, including both the retention and expansion of existing industries, and the attraction of new industries and other types of employers to the City.
- A consistent area of both interest and concern among respondents was transportation, including traffic, road maintenance, and transit services, as well as sidewalks and bike paths.
- Younger respondents focused more on a desire to improve school quality and new job opportunities, while older respondents focused more on City services and industrial job retention.
- Although crime is not their largest concern, the results indicate that renters are more concerned with crime than homeowners.
- Middletown may be able to attract new residents based on its location between Cincinnati and Dayton, but preserving and increasing the number of local jobs will be essential to attract and keep newer residents in the community.
- With few exceptions (where certain neighborhoods noted a perceived lack of park and recreation resources), the greatest neighborhood concern was property maintenance, along with other issues related to neighborhood character and road safety.
- Consensus does not appear to exist over the future role of the City's downtown area, but more respondents than not supported some level of focus on its revitalization, regardless of use.
- Many respondents appear willing to volunteer and become more involved, particularly in Neighborhood Watch programs. The City may also want to consider channeling respondents' concerns about property maintenance into neighborhood improvement programs where people can volunteer to clean up trash, help elderly neighbors maintain their property, and report code violations.

MIDDLETOWN OPINION SURVEY

---COPY OF ORIGINAL---

We need your opinions! This survey is being done as part of the update to Middletown's 20-year future Master Plan – your opinion as a resident of Middletown is a valuable source of information. Please fill the survey out and return it with your utility payment. Check the Plan's website (www.ci.middletown.oh.us/masterplan) for survey results. You can also fill out this survey on the website if you prefer – just click on “Online Community Survey”

Years I have lived in Middletown: _____

The closest street intersection to where I live is: _____ & _____

Where I live - I Own or - I Rent?

My Age is: _____

How would you rate the following in Middletown?

Excellent Average Needs Improvement

The Middletown park system:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

The Middletown school system:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

The Middletown road system (connectivity and layout – not pavement condition):

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Quality of City Services (Water, Police, Fire, trash collection) :

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Visual appearance of the City:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Opportunity to be involved in my community:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Quality of environment (air, water, green space etc.):

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Quality of civic leadership:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Unity of Civic Leadership:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Overall desirability of Middletown as a place to live:

<input type="radio"/>				
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

MIDDLETOWN OPINION SURVEY (PG. 2)

Why do you live here in Middletown: (choose all that apply)?

I always have /I grew up here	<input type="checkbox"/>	It's between Cincinnati and Dayton	<input type="checkbox"/>
My immediate family is here	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality of life	<input type="checkbox"/>
Because I work here	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parks and Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
The cost of housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Tax Rates	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school system	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	

What is the biggest problem facing Middletown in the future (choose only one)?

Loss of jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	School system	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of City Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Downtown	<input type="checkbox"/>	General Decline	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	

What issue is the most important to the City's future (choose only one)?

Preserving current industries	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improving the school system	<input type="checkbox"/>
New economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining city services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved race relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Redeveloping downtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	

The big problem(s) in my neighborhood is (check all that apply)?

Lack of park and recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Property Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rental Property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deteriorating/Vacant Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	

I wish that Middletown had more of (check all that apply)?

Wider range of housing choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	Range of stores to shop in	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diversity of residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green and open space	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arts/Cultural opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk-ability	<input type="checkbox"/>
New job opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	

Something I really believe should be looked at in a new master plan for the City is:

Something I think I could do to improve my community is:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The future of Middletown is important. The participation of the City's residents in shaping that future will be a critical part of our success.

KEY COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Sixteen (16) interviews were conducted over a period of seven months. The interview subjects included industry, community and religious leaders, key property owners, and professionals. Interview subjects were recommended by Council members, Steering Committee members, City staff, and at the suggestion of other interview subjects. In summary, the following interview information most informed this planning process:

- Offering and supporting venues and opportunities for communication and interaction between local leaders will help to engender a sense of commitment to Middletown among them, with leaders then able to become “ambassadors” for the City.
- Perseverance, consistency, and aggressive action by City officials will be necessary to overcome a perception (whether accurate or not) of economic development ineffectiveness among local leaders.
- Improvements to community image, but without considerable additional (and perceived excessive) regulation on business and industry will help the City greatly in its economic development efforts.
- The City should become involved directly in economic development efforts, rather than continuing a perceived “arm’s length” delegation of such a role to outside entities. This would help, among other things, to coordinate and focus City efforts in this area.
- The City should identify a particular type or size of business or industry to attract, so as to help focus its efforts.
- Even with additional City involvement, outside entities and local leaders should be considered as key stakeholders in the City’s future success and involved in implementation efforts.
- The manner in which the City undertakes change management will determine the level of success that it is able to achieve in its efforts.
- Cultivating a new generation of committed community leaders to implement these key goals will be a strategic component to ensuring future success and stability.

MASTER PLAN OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

Middletown citizens were given the opportunity to write down comments on index cards at the Open House on February 16, 2005 and place them in boxes for staff to review. The following is a summary of citizens' comments:

- Satisfaction with the goals, especially A and C.
- Affect of combined storm sewer problems on future growth (residential) in the northeast portion.
- Concern regarding the future of recreation amenities in the city.
- Future of the present MRH property and impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.
- Desire to retain the retail aspects of Towne Mall stay a shopping mall.
- Importance of supporting public schools that are supported by taxpayers.
- Need to emphasize Miami University Middletown as an image and quality of life asset.
- Concern regarding the impacts of the proposed eastern extension of Miller Rd on surrounding properties
- Desire to address the need for sewers and sidewalks in all areas.

WEBSITE COMMENTS

The following is a summary of comments received through the Master Plan website:

- Satisfaction regarding the comprehensive and ambitious nature of plan.
- Concern regarding level of detail and comprehension by the average person.
- Importance of focusing on most important actions.
- Recommendation to research former economic development efforts and institutions.
- Poor readability of transportation improvement map (former version).
- Concerns regarding the future of recreation amenities in the city.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS AT PLANNING COMMISSION AND COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARINGS

The following is a summary of public comments that were provided at the February 16, 2005 Planning Commission, March 1, 2005 City Council, March 9, 2005 Planning Commission, March 10 Conversations with Council, and March 15, 2005 City Council meetings.

- Satisfaction with Master Plan's recognition of and efforts to address City's image problems.
- Concerns regarding the future of Middletown's community and recreation facilities.

- Desire to avoid duplication of Smith Park on the East End, as Smith Park serves a valuable purpose of bringing people together from throughout the community.
- Importance of strong leadership.
- Need to market tax incentives.
- Downtown as a priority for proactive revitalization efforts; concerns regarding excessive focus on East End.
- Potential assets for downtown, city from Great Miami River.
- Need to raise standards for the quality of development allowed, especially in the downtown.
- Need to highlight new schools planned by Middletown Schools as an important piece of neighborhood revitalization efforts.

APPENDIX B - NEW ECONOMY

Over the past 10 to 15 years, there has been a fundamental shift in the United States from a manufacturing-based economy to an information economy. The shift is often referred to as the “New Economy”, and local and state economic development offices have changed their focus from attracting production jobs to attracting knowledge jobs.

The data supporting this trend is significant. According to the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, the fastest growing industries in the state will be in the service sector, primarily business and health-related services. The data projections indicate that the fastest growing industry will be computer and data processing services. The manufacturing sector is estimated to experience the greatest degree of negative growth in Ohio and the Hamilton-Middletown area. Therefore, it would benefit Middletown to embrace current trends and attract high-tech and high-paying service firms to the City, as opposed to targeting previously sought-after firms in the manufacturing sector.

While the manufacturing sector provided secondary benefits to communities in the Old Economy, (this concept was often referred to as the “Multiplier Effect”), New Economy businesses can also stimulate the local economy. For example, firms in the rapidly-expanding industry of research & development (R & D) and Information Technology (IT) provide real property tax benefits and often utilize advanced computers and machinery that have personal property benefits for the community as well. Employees tend to be well-paid and well-educated professionals from science and engineering fields. Professionals in the New Economy add to the residential property and income tax base and have a high amount of expendable income that can boost the local economy. In addition, R & D and IT facilities do not have the same stigma attached to them as industrial facilities. While the term “industrial development” may conjure up negative perceptions of smokestacks, heavy truck traffic and noise hazards, R & D / IT facilities are viewed as “clean” and unobtrusive.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

How can Middletown tie into the global network of the New Economy? First, leaders must recognize the ways in which the economy is changing. The provided table summarizes the issues at hand, and the differences between the Old and New Economies.

- **Fundamental Change.** A major shift has occurred in industrial and occupational structure, entrepreneurial pursuit, and the level of global competition. Extraordinary advances in information technologies have been cited as the force that moved these structural economic changes forward. Due to the advent of high-speed telecommunications, time and space are irrelevant. Business competition and opportunities are now global. As a result, numerous North American manufacturing operations have moved overseas to take advantage of lower paid labor while the intellectual capacity of these firms often stays in place. American executives can share manufacturing designs and specifications and orders with off-shore facilities and subsidiaries at the speed of a mouse click over the internet.
- **Knowledge, Ideas, and Innovation.** As the foundation of the previous economic order began to erode, the New Economy emerged, based on knowledge, ideas and innovation. Knowledge production firms are the growth engines of the New Economy. A large share of the economy is now involved in managing, processing, and distributing information. The knowledge industries include telecommunications, banking, insurance, law, medicine, government, education, etc. Ideas and innovation are now more important than tangible assets such as facilities and equipment.

Summary Characteristics of the Old and New Economies

Issue	Old Economy	New Economy
Economy-Wide Characteristics		
Markets	Stable	Dynamic
Scope of Competition	National	Global
Organizational Form	Hierarchical, Bureaucratic	Networked, Entrepreneurial, Responsive
Geographic Mobility of Business	Low	High
Competition between Regions	Low	High
Industry		
Organization of Production	Mass Production	Flexible Production
Key Factors of Production	Capital and Labor	Innovation and Knowledge
Key Technology Driver	Mechanization	Digitization
Source of Competitive Advantage	Lowering Cost Through Economies of Scale	Innovation, Quality, Time to Market, Cost
Importance of Research and Innovation	Moderate	High
Relationships with Other Firms	Go it Alone	Alliances and Collaboration
Workforce		
Principal Policy Goal	Full Employment	Higher Wages and Incomes
Skills	Job-Specific Skills	Broad Skills, Cross-Training
Requisite Education	A Skill	Lifelong Learning
Labor-Management Relations	Adversarial	Collaborative
Nature of Employment	Stable	Marked by Risk and Opportunity
Government		
Business-Government Relations	Impose Requirements	Assist Firms' Innovation and Growth
Regulation	Command and Control	Market Tools, Flexibility

Source: Atkinson, Robert D. and Court, Rudolph H. The New Economy Index: Understanding America's Economic Transition.

- **Speed and Fast Logistic Cycles.** Speed is becoming the standard in the New Economy. The cycle between market introduction and eventual replacement by superior products and services continues to get shorter and shorter. In information technology, a product can become obsolete in the time it takes to market it. Perhaps the best example is the depreciation on computer hardware and software due to the rate new products are being introduced into the market. In the auto industry global competition has severely compressed product development time. Businesses and even local governments that do not embrace technological innovations will not be able to respond quickly enough to remain competitive.
- **E-Commerce.** E-Commerce has and will account for a large share of economic growth. Internet commerce, or e-commerce, includes consumer retail and business-to-business transactions, online financial services, and consumer and business internet access services and is a critical component of the New Economy. E-commerce transactions are linked by a connected network via the internet and World Wide Web. Localities that have a high degree of connectivity to the internet will have a competitive advantage to compete in the New Economy. Thus, high speed

telecommunications infrastructure is as equally essential to economic growth today as is access to interstate highway and water and sewer infrastructure.

IS MIDDLETOWN PREPARED FOR THE NEW ECONOMY?

Middletown currently sits at a crossroad in the New Economy. If residents and policy makers do not commit to making changes to tie Middletown into the economy, it will become increasingly stagnant by New Economy standards.

- **Office-Based Service Economy.** The New Economy is a service economy that is based primarily in office and research and development environments. Whereas the old economy was based on mass production, now the majority of workers spend their time moving things, processing or generating information, and providing services to people and businesses. The real estate data provided by Gem Public Sector Services for this Master Plan indicates that office development in Middletown is non-existent. New office facilities will help to lure white-collar and high-tech businesses.
- **Place Matters.** In the New Economy, a tight labor market has been created for high-wage, high-skill jobs. As a result, employers are increasingly realizing the value of locating in areas that are attractive to workers. According to the Urban Land Institute, businesses are locating in places that have “...shops, restaurants, and services nearby so their employees can perform errands without spending much time in their cars...”.

Office parks have become the popular means of serving this function over the last twenty years. By grouping several corporations and buildings with similar uses together, markets are created for entertainment and restaurants, as well as services such as day care and medicine. A more recent trend that has gained popularity is the concept of “place making”. This is certainly taken into account in planning for the Renaissance Development Opportunity Area in Chapter 9.

Companies are finding it easier to recruit and retain highly skilled workers by locating in town centers. Town centers combine a wide mix of uses such as residential, office, and retail, and place them in a pedestrian-friendly environment. Cities are capitalizing on the existing character of their traditional main streets, or creating new main streets entirely. Downtown Middletown has some potential of becoming a hub in this regard provided that a serious revitalization campaign is successfully undertaken. Likewise, the redevelopment of Towne Mall as an outdoor “lifestyle” center has similar opportunity.

- **Economic Disparity.** High-wage, high-skill jobs have grown, but so have low-wage, low-skill jobs. One impact of the service economy is the growth of knowledge-based jobs as a proportion of total employment. Ironically, the largest numerical employment increases will be in service jobs at the other end of the spectrum, such as low-paying cashier, janitor, salesperson, and waiter and waitress positions.

There is a danger (already recognized in New England) that a two-class economy could emerge, with low-wage, low-skill jobs at one end and high-wage, high-skill jobs at the other, with little in-between. This disparity is known as the “digital divide” and it defines the social and economic conditions between those that have access to the internet and those that do not. An educated workforce is critical to increasing per capita incomes and reducing income inequality. Without considerable change, Middletown businesses will continue to employ low-wage workers.

- **Education.** With greater layoffs and less loyalty toward employees, modern businesses have created two distinct classes of people: the “haves” and “have-nots”. The “haves” are well educated and have developed several highly employable skills that allow them to find new jobs at comparable wages quickly and easily. The “have-nots” are those with little education and few skills to offer if they are laid off. The need for continuing education and lifelong learning is high. Education is the fundamental building block upon which success in the New Economy is built. The Middletown City School District is taking great strides to see that it is producing students that are prepared for the New Economy. Students that do not succeed are prone to fall into the “have-nots” category.
- **Market Restructuring.** The net stock of intangible capital (for example, education and research) has grown at a faster rate than tangible capital (such as, buildings, transportation, roads and machinery). For many years, manufacturing was the foundation of Middletown’s local economy. In upcoming years, it is likely that manufacturing’s role will continue to decline. Accordingly, the City’s economic development programs must focus on attracting New Economy companies. It is anticipated that an exclusive focus on manufacturing will become increasingly less effective in the future.
- **Embrace E-Commerce and Information Technology.** Federal and state governments, as well as many local governments, have embraced information technology by placing broadband in their offices, schools and communities and by maintaining a web presence that can be used by residents to do business and find information. Some states, including Ohio, market companies that do business online on the state web page.

The City must be leaders in E-Gov by having a strong web presence that allows residents and businesses to do business with the City. Examples of transactions that can be accomplished on-line include reviewing and downloading codes and ordinances; applying and paying for permits; paying taxes and penalties; and getting timely information from City staff and elected officials. E-gov also strengthens government accessibility by having City policies, agendas, and meeting minutes on-line. A strong economic development presence on the web is essential. Some communities have also designed neighborhood intranets to keep all residents informed of important civic activities and neighborhood issues.

- **Infrastructure.** Middletown is the regional hub of the fiber optic ring that connects all of Southwest Ohio. High-speed telecommunications infrastructure is the backbone of the New Economy. As such, Middletown appears to be well positioned with access to a large and relatively underutilized fiber optic network. City leaders must be proactive by forging a policy to make sure all residents and businesses have access to this vital resource. Local governments are often faced with providing what is referred to as the “last mile” to ensure all residents and businesses in the community have high speed internet access. This is an important public function as private industry is generally not willing to absorb high infrastructure costs in the age of deregulation.

Further, it is equally important for Middletown’s leading institutions such as Middletown Regional Hospital and Miami University at Middletown to have access to Ohio’s Third Frontier Network. The Third Frontier Network, when complete, will be one of the largest fiber optic rings in the country that connects all Ohio universities, colleges and medical schools; defense and aerospace facilities; and all local governments and public schools together. The Third Frontier

Network will allow all with access to share data and work collaboratively towards solving complex problems and commercializing ideas.

APPENDIX C – CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY #1 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

The City of Springfield, Ohio, has many similarities with Middletown. Both historically were viewed as “one company towns” and relied upon a few industries to fuel the local economies. Both have seen a reduction in industrial employment and increase in lower wage service economy jobs. Both have a large supply of brownfield properties. Like Middletown, Springfield gained direct interstate highway access only after an aggressive annexation policy was implemented. This case study outlines several success stories that are applicable to Middletown.

CREATING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Fueled by the loss of its only national headquarters, the city developed an aggressive economic development strategy that included growing the city’s boundaries, developing industrial parks and diversifying the local economy. Today, the City’s economic base continues to transition from manufacturing to service-related industries. As this occurs, the City’s Economic Development Team is striving to aggressively recruit new employers while assisting existing companies to expand within the City limits. The Team, formed in 1991, is directed by the City Manager and takes a comprehensive approach to business retention by meeting local business demands and encouraging expanded economic development.

The City’s economic development team, in cooperation with other community leaders, in particular the Community Improvement Corporation of Springfield and Clark County (CIC), Clark County Economic Development Department, Springfield-Clark County chamber of Commerce, and the Turner Foundation, have joined together to address several challenges that directly impact the community’s ability to attract and retain industry.

The new partnerships are best demonstrated through the joint development efforts of the City and the CIC. Development staff from both entities cooperatively defined target industries and are in the process of outlining marketing plans and budgets to support such activities. Joint advertising, tradeshow exhibitions, and lead development are already proving to be beneficial. In addition, major initiatives are being pursued, focusing on such topics as workforce development, graduate retention, executive recruitment, health care professional recruitment, technology industry recruitment, and many others.

GROWTH POLICY

In an effort to generate and capture growth on the periphery of Springfield, the City, Clark County, and Springfield Township joined to develop an innovative approach to economic growth and service delivery. In December 1999, these three entities together created the first cooperative economic development agreement (CEDA) in the State, covering land identified as the most likely to be developed along Interstate 70 on the southern edge of the City.

A second CEDA was created in December 2000, covering large areas southeast, east, and west of the City. The CEDAs allow the City to annex portions of Springfield Township in return for sharing with that Township 12.5% of income tax revenue from new development within the annexed area. The Township pledges support of future annexations and continues to provide specified services. The annexed areas are not withdrawn from the Township when the City's boundaries are extended. The CEDA Agreements allow the City to continue to capture growth and enhance its economic base. At the same time, the Township is able to preserve geographic and cultural integrity, and to benefit from the preservation of its property tax base and new revenues generated from the shared income tax base. One of the first benefits of the CEDA agreements was the construction of a 36 inch Southern Interceptor sewer line that opens hundreds of acres of vacant land up for industrial and housing development on the south side of I-70.

INDUSTRIAL PARKS

Formed in the 1970s, the CIC is the largest developer of industrial land in Springfield and Clark County. The CIC has developed or aided in development and/or marketing of parks that include Prime Ohio, Springfield Applied Research Technology Park, and Airpark Ohio.

- **Prime Ohio** is a 500-acre industrial park developed throughout the 1990s in the southeast portion of the City near Interstate 70. In 2004, Prime Ohio was fully developed, selling its last 40 acres. It is currently home to 16 businesses, employing approximately 1,700 people. Infrastructure costs to develop the first phase of Prime Ohio were paid, in part, by CDBG funds and a half percent sales tax increase levied by Clark County to pay for economic development initiatives.
- **Springfield Applied Research Technology Park.** In its 2004 Goals & Objectives, the City Commission outlined the need for a comprehensive assessment and strategic plan to boost the technological readiness of the community. This objective was addressed through an initiative labeled "C21 – Connecting to the 21st Century Initiative." The City and Chamber of Commerce led the effort to analyze current technology infrastructure, its utilization, and the supply and demand of technology services within the County. The Study was completed in early 2003. The final report outlined recommendations to help enhance the technology infrastructure that will enable existing companies to remain competitive, as well as position the City to attract new technology-intensive companies.

The C-21 Report confirmed that one of Springfield's strengths is its location. Not in the traditional sense of road access, but rather in access to high-bandwidth technology and communication networks. Major investments in fiber communication and data networks exist within the City's major corridors and highways, enabling the City to leverage these investments by accessing these fiber networks to create a new 215-acre "technology park" called the Springfield Applied Research Technology Park near I-70. \$2,000,000 in 2005 federal appropriations were earmarked for electrical and communication infrastructure improvements at the Applied Research and Technology Park.

In 2004, Springfield experienced dramatic growth in the Information Technology sector. LexisNexis, a global leader in legal, news and business information services built a new facility in Springfield to expand its research and development efforts, host online products, and provide data management and data backup services. LexisNexis is the first occupant of the Springfield Applied Research and Technology Park. LexisNexis plans to hire 80 employees and invest nearly \$40,000,000 in the next three years in the new Springfield facility.

In addition, the Ohio Supercomputer Center will soon construct a facility in the technology park to house a new CRAY Super Computer. The Springfield site will focus on data-intensive supercomputing, large-scale data mining, regional and global climate modeling, materials science, nanotechnology, bioinformatics, and high-energy physics. With the presence of the Ohio Super Computer comes access to the **State of Ohio's Third Frontier Network**, (TFN). TFN is an all fiber, 1600-mile backbone that will connect Ohio's colleges and universities, elementary, middle and high schools, and state and local governments. Medical research centers and hospitals such as The Ohio State University Medical Center, Children's hospitals in Columbus and Cincinnati, and the Medical College of Ohio in Toledo will also use the new network, as well as federal research centers such as NASA-Glenn in Cleveland, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton. TFN is the nation's most advanced statewide education and research network, adding even greater connectivity to the Springfield Applied Research and Technology Park.

Complimenting Springfield's new technology park is a technology staging facility, created to incubate technology-related companies during the start-up phase. The end goal is locating the new business at Springfield Applied Research Technology Park. This operation is currently being housed within the downtown Credit Life building.

- **Airpark Ohio.** Airpark Ohio is one of the City's newest industrial parks and includes a general aviation field with a 9,000-foot-long runway. This airpark is on 190 acres adjacent to the Springfield Municipal Airport. The city extended Taxi Way "F" into the industrial park in order to create an area for corporate hangars that could serve clients utilizing the industrial park. Ali-Gator Air built the first hangar (approximately 8,000 square feet) to house their corporate aircraft that serves the parent corporation, Ali Industries.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

The City has worked hard in the last several years to remediate and revitalize underutilized industrial property, many such buildings located in the downtown area and along the main corridors.

Springfield has taken on several challenging projects funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). Springfield is a recognized leader in brownfield redevelopment in Ohio.

Success lies in the City's multi-prong approach of working with partners and leveraging resources through available grants. Additionally, grant acquisition is a cornerstone of the city's success as millions in federally and state funded dollars have been received. The City Commission and Administration have worked closely with developers, property owners, end users, the Turner Foundation, Springfield-Clark County Chamber of Commerce, and USEPA and OEPA among others.

According to the 2001 and 2002 Commission Goals and Objectives, the City received a \$1 million grant through the US EPA to accelerate the City's Brownfield remediation and redevelopment efforts. This money was used to establish a Brownfield redevelopment revolving loan fund. Example City-initiated brownfield redevelopment projects follow:

- **SPECO Kelsey-Hayes Facility.** The City of Springfield has received millions in federally and state funded grants to turn idle brownfield sites into product uses. Most recently, the City was awarded a \$645,000 grant from the **Clean Ohio Assistance Fund** to implement cleanup activities at the former SPECO Kelsey-Hayes Facility on West Columbia Street. The City of Springfield signed a development agreement with Midland Properties, a real estate development company, to redevelop the property. A local firm, Hauck Brothers Heating and Cooling has expressed interest

in the redeveloped site. This relocation would retain 38 jobs with the possibility of creating 15 new positions in the future.

- **Former D & H Manufacturing Facility.** Located on the east side of the city, this site was a contaminated property due to improper storage and disposal of materials in years before such activities were understood to be hazardous to the environment. The \$2.4 million project funded through Clean Ohio Revitalization Funds and the U.S. EPA has resulted in the complete demolition of the buildings and a water tower, remediation of contaminated soil, and site preparation for new development. The project was completed in August 2000.
- **Former Bayley Manufacturing Facility.** Possibly the most dramatic turnaround thus far in the city's brownfield program, the former wrought iron facility located in the heart of downtown was transformed from a contaminated property to a cancer treatment center. Vacant and frequently graffitied, the Bayley property was a definite eyesore. However, the City of Springfield acquired U.S. EPA Brownfield Cleanup Revolving Loan funding to clean the site and prepare it for the merging hospitals to build and maintain a state-of-the-art cancer facility. The \$9 million Springfield Regional Cancer Center opened on August 2, 2004, only one year after site development by the City was completed.
- **Former Greenwalt-Trenor Redevelopment.** The City received a Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund grant for demolition, asbestos abatement, and soil remediation at the former Greenwalt-Trenor industrial property located in downtown Springfield. After the \$2.4 million project is completed the city will turn the property over to the National Trails Park and Recreation District (NTPRD). NTPRD plans to construct a \$5 million ice skating arena at the site.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

The City's economic development staff has made the revitalization of the downtown a main focus. Downtown Springfield contains an eclectic mixture of architecture set in a traditional block and grid development pattern. Many unique and architecturally significant buildings pronounce downtown Springfield's importance and need for continued redevelopment efforts. Many buildings are relatively underutilized. Much work is needed to transform downtown into the vibrant work, live, and recreation center envisioned by the community in line with the downtown's past glory.

However, downtown is on an up-swing and many developments have occurred that appear to be moving downtown in the right direction. The Center City Association was recently established with three full time staff positions to accelerate revitalization activities. Together with the City, Center City is in the process of implementing the Center City Renewal Plan prepared by the Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (RUDAT) of the American Institute of Architects. The following newsworthy stories were taken from Center City Association's web page (www.center-city.org).

- Huntington Bank announced a three-year commitment to Center City Association and provided a \$75,000 grant to help with building renovation and business development projects. Huntington Bank is committed to making future financial commitments to help with additional projects.
- The Delcamp Loft Condominium project received the 2004 award for Best Upper Floor Development give by Downtown Ohio and Heritage Ohio. The redeveloped structure was originally built for the Steele & Meredith Wholesale Grocery Store in 1895. It later became home to Delcamp Paint & Glass from 1937 until 1997. In 1998 Mercy Health Partners converted the first floor into office space, which they still occupy. The second and third floors were

converted into four luxury residential condominiums with about 2,200 square feet of floor area. Delscamp Loft Condominiums are the first market-rate loft development in downtown.

- A Courtyard by Marriott opened in the heart of Downtown Springfield at 100 South Fountain Avenue in partnership with the Turner Foundation and Center City Association. Courtyard by Marriott renovated the former Springfield Inn building. It has 6 floors with 120 guest rooms and 7 meeting rooms available for meetings and events. The renovation also included the addition of a pool, exercise room, laundry facilities, and renovations to the administrative offices, lobby, restaurant, and banquet facilities.
- Phase 1 streetscape enhancements to the Core Block Downtown Area are almost complete. The City of Springfield helped finance the improvements including \$110,000 for vintage lighting, brick pavers, new sidewalks, and granite curbs. The Turner Foundation and the City Center Association financed the bulk of the project providing over \$500,000 of the total cost.
- A major success was achieved when Community Hospital and Mercy Health Partners-Western Ohio signed a redevelopment agreement with the City that led to the construction of a new regional cancer-treatment center located in the downtown area. The hospitals invested over \$7 million in the new cancer center that they hope will bring the spectrum of comprehensive care to a higher level. City leaders were instrumental in facilitating cooperation among local, state, and federal agencies to ensure success and support of this project.
- In 2005, a merger announcement made by the same two local hospitals launched a city campaign to locate the proposed new \$280,000,000 medical facility in downtown. The new hospital recently released plans to work with the city to develop a downtown hospital campus. The City and its economic partners are working directly with the hospital executives through the site-selection process and expect a decision to be made by the end of 2004.

CASE STUDY #2

CITY OF AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN

The City of Auburn Hills is an example of a community that has been able to successfully make the transition to the New Economy, generate significant positive cash flow, and improve its image, despite being part of an urban school district with mixed perceptions.

Auburn Hills is located in the northern Detroit Metropolitan region. It borders Pontiac to the southwest and Rochester Hills to the east. Interstate 75 runs north to south through the heart of the city, and State Route 59, a limited access highway in Auburn Hills, runs east to west. The city is probably best known for the Palace of Auburn Hills, home to the Detroit Pistons and a year-round schedule of concerts and special events.

The city was at a turning point in the mid 1980's. While it had stable, working class residential neighborhoods, its tax base was stagnant. This was a result of little residential growth and very little commercial and industrial development. The fact that the Pontiac School System, of which Auburn Hills was a part, had one of the worst reputations in the region was a major blight on the city's reputation. Stakeholders and government officials feared that if current trends continued, the city's image would suffer.

As a result, the City Council approved the rezoning of several large tracts of land from residential to commercial and industrial uses. The rationale was that if the City could not attract residents, it would instead attract business. Auburn Hills utilized Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to pay for some of the up-front infrastructure improvements that were necessary to create office and industrial parks. The City also offered a variety of tax abatement and other incentive programs to lure businesses. The City then marketed itself as a pro-business community.

Auburn Hills has subsequently welcomed dozens of new businesses and enjoyed a complete financial turnaround from its increased tax revenue. In addition to the Palace, Auburn Hills is now home to the headquarters of DaimlerChrysler and Siemens, as well as several parts suppliers for DaimlerChrysler. While the City has a wide industrial base including manufacturing and wholesale trade, it is set apart from other communities due to its ability to attract several large research and development (R&D) operations. It has a specific zoning designation for Technology and Research, and has a fiber optic network throughout much of the City.

The City of Auburn Hills has especially benefited from the amount of high-tech machinery that R&D operations utilize. The net effect is that roughly 35% of the City's non-residential tax revenue is derived from its personal property tax. As a result of this success, Auburn Hills is able to spend \$20 to \$30 million annually on capital improvement projects each year. In fact, the community was recently able to pay for a new \$11 million Public Safety Building entirely with cash. Auburn Hills now has a total assessed property value of nearly \$2 billion.

How does this relate to Middletown? It shows that a community can achieve a high level of fiscal health despite being part of a school system that is struggling to improve. Auburn Hills became a pro-development community that provided many of the site location amenities frequently sought by companies. It has good highway access, developable land, tax incentives, and existing infrastructure. The City of Auburn Hills embraced the businesses of the New Economy and has reaped the benefits to its tax base.

While the City of Auburn Hills has greatly increased its tax base, the state of the Pontiac School District remains relatively unchanged. Its graduation rate in 1997-1998 was 62%. Therefore, there is not necessarily a correlation between an improved tax base and the quality of a school system.

Middletown cannot make the mistake of assuming that improving the City's fiscal health is hindered by the school system. The converse may be true. Increased economic development and improved school performance must be viewed as two of many necessary steps toward improving community image and quality of life.

CASE STUDY #3

CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO

For decades, Findlay was a one-company town with Marathon Oil. A hostile take-over attempt of Marathon Oil nearly succeeded in the 1980s prompting local officials to take appropriate action to expand/diversify the local company and economic base.

The City of Findlay is located in northwest Ohio, approximately 45 minutes south of Toledo. Interstate 75 traverses the west side of the city and three state highways converge within the city limits. Unlike Middletown, Findlay is the political and urbanized center within Hancock County. Admittedly, Middletown may find it difficult to emulate Findlay's economic development model due to competing interests in Butler County.

Professionals from McKenna Associates, Inc., called the Ohio Department of Development early in the Master Plan process to identify an Ohio community that excels at economic development. Findlay, Ohio was offered as having one of the best economic development programs in Ohio. Findlay/Hancock County was ranked eleventh nationally for new company site selections in communities under 100,000 in population in 2003.

CREATION OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

- **Findlay-Hancock County Community Development Foundation (CDF).** CDF is a quasi-public economic development agency formed in the 1980s to promote Findlay and Hancock County to prospective industrial companies. The hostile take-over attempt of Marathon Oil brought City and County leaders together to educate themselves on local economic development and to create a strategy for economic growth and diversification. Public leaders later teamed with local business executives to start CDF.

FUNDING

- CDF funds are generated from public and private sources. The city and county increased the hotel tax to provide a small yet necessary funding source. Businesses membership is encouraged to create broad representation and participation in the economic development of the community. Membership in the CDF ranges between \$1,000 and \$7,500 annually, depending upon how many employees a member business has. There are also political and community groups that are members but their memberships are free. Schools are not a member but they are actively involved in CDF functions.
- CDF has had large companies as members, such as Cooper Tire, Marathon, Whirlpool, etc. The key to CDF's success is a very deep and broad membership, all of which are actively involved. All members are engaged because they pay to be members and CDF gives members an equal opportunity to meet with prospective companies to enable business networking. Key people want to be involved.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CDF is a community improvement corporation with public and private sector professionals on the board of directors including the mayor, one county commissioner, one City Councilperson, and several business leaders.

- The CDF board of directors hired a director from funding provided through public and private funds. The director's office is located in city hall. The director is best able to communicate with City staff and the Mayor at this location even though CDF is a division of the Findlay-Hancock County Chamber of Commerce. In return the director receives the support needed from the City to succeed.
- An Operating Board is made up of a representative from each of the 40 to 50 CDF members. There are several different levels of membership based upon the number of employees of a participating company. The Operating Board discusses major spending actions and provides a recommendation to the Executive Operating Committee.
- The Executive Operating Committee consists of one representative from each membership level selected by vote. The Executive Operating Committee meets bi-monthly and votes on major CDF spending actions.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- **Target Market.** CDF looks to diversify Findlay's local economy by landing smaller manufacturing and distribution businesses. CDF's target company contains 100 to 300 employees. CDF wants as many companies in the target employment range as possible to diversify the local economy. CDF realizes that several small companies can collectively employ more people than one large company like Marathon Oil.
- **Tax Increment Financing.** Findlay has used Tax Increment Financing (TIF) extensively to create large industrial parks. Part of CDF's success lies in the local policy maker's decision to create ideally located industrial parks using TIF revenues to pay for infrastructure costs. As a result, CDF can offer development-ready sites to prospective companies that have utilities and the correct zoning. This strategy of creating publicly-developed industrial parks has provided a considerable time savings to prospective companies. One large industrial park was developed on land assembled and purchased by seven banks.
- **Tax Incentives.** CDF does not provide tax abatements within Findlay's city limits. CDF's experience is that companies that go with lowest development costs usually are the first to fail. However, CDF did admit that the pressure to provide tax incentives is increasing. Middletown will likely have to offer tax incentives to be competitive with adjacent communities.
- **Marketing.** CDF aggressively markets Findlay through an up-to-date web page, promotional materials, and attendance at national and international trade shows. CDF has traveled to Japan seven times with Findlay's Mayor and other officials. CDF also attends the Governor's Oversees Trade Missions. Findlay is one of the smaller cities in each delegation but it consistently takes the largest party.
- **Port Authority Involvement.** CDF works with the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority for creative financing including Off Balance Sheet Financing. The land and building is purchased by the Port Authority. The Port Authority owns the land and building for the first 7-10 years and is leased to the company. The land and building is then used by the company at a lower cost. Assets and debt are kept off company financial statements as a result. A fixed purchase price option is available at the end of the lease often with an attractive sales tax exemption.

BENEFITS TO CDF MEMBERS

The CDF director identifies the site selection needs of prospective companies before negotiating with them. After a company's needs are established, a meeting is held with all CDF members and government agencies that oversee development regulations, such as finance, zoning, and engineering. Elected leaders and business executives also attend this meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to brainstorm and identify solutions in order to successfully recruit the prospective company. This engagement gives CDF's business members advance notice of potential new business opportunities before the information is released in the media.

CDF shares the prospective company's business plan to member banks, contractors, architects, engineers etc., after a prospective company commits. This gives local companies an increased chance of financing projects and getting professional service and construction contracts.

CDF'S LARGER ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- CDF and its director is tasked with being a facilitator to get people together that have a common interest, overcome obstacles, gain consensus, and get the job done. CDF is successful because of its ability to bring disparate organizations together for a common cause.
- CDF is willing to take risks and has a can-do attitude from top to bottom in the organization. For example, a manufacturing company expressed interest in locating in Findlay if a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) was available. The CDF director told this company that the timing was perfect because an application to establish a FTZ in Findlay was recently submitted. In reality, the CDF director was vaguely familiar with the FTZ concept. However, an application was submitted shortly after and the FTZ request was approved. This story demonstrates the extent to which CDF is willing to go to successfully recruit one company.

In summary, CDF's success lies in a commitment to achieve a common goal of attracting new industrial development to Findlay. This single-minded goal is shared by CDF's broad constituency and includes active participation from banks, realtors, industries, industry organizations, business executives, and elected officials. CDF can be visited on-line at www.findlayoh.com.