

# Liberty Township

*Delaware County,  
Ohio*

# Plan 2040



# DRAFT

As of September 18, 2023



### Liberty Township Trustees

Scott Donaldson      Shyra Eichhorn      Bryan Newell

### Zoning Commission

Jerry Beigel      Cathy Garland (alt.)      Bonnie Goodson  
Joe Karr      Kevin Popham      Suzanne Vais  
Amy Wilson (alt.)

### Board of Zoning Appeals

David Branhan (alt.)      Dana Costa      Mel House  
Kelly Kammann      Vince Margello      Christie Marker  
Chris Murname (alt.)

### Township Staff

Cathy Buehrer      Eric Gayetsky      Mary Beth Robinson  
Lee Ann Weer

### Architectural Review Board

**Complete**

### Participants

#### **Community Representatives**

Mark Cameron      Eric Ekstrand      Vince Finney  
Nico Franano      Jennifer Gabriel      John K Hartman  
David King      Steve Kuryla      Terry Leach  
Kevin Lee      Kurt Paulus      James Sisto

#### **Stakeholders**

Andy Dutcher, *NAI Ohio Equities*  
Terry Burga, Larry Coolidge, *Powell-Liberty Historical Society*  
Todd Meyer, *Olentangy Local Schools*  
Dan Dillion, *Swan Lake Event Center*  
Dr. Tina Diggs, *Columbus State*  
Tammy Snider, *Chamber of Commerce*  
Karen Schenk, *Columbus Zoo and Aquarium*  
David Bridgman, *Faith Based Community*

### Delaware County Regional Planning Commission Staff

Scott B. Sanders, AICP; Executive Director

Da-Wei Liou, GISP; GIS Manager

Stephanie J. Matlack, Executive Administrative Assistant

Brad Fisher, Senior Planner



*Background information in this Comprehensive Plan was compiled and presented between October 2022 and April 2023. Data was current as of the date it was presented, or as noted, although some tables have been updated throughout the process.*

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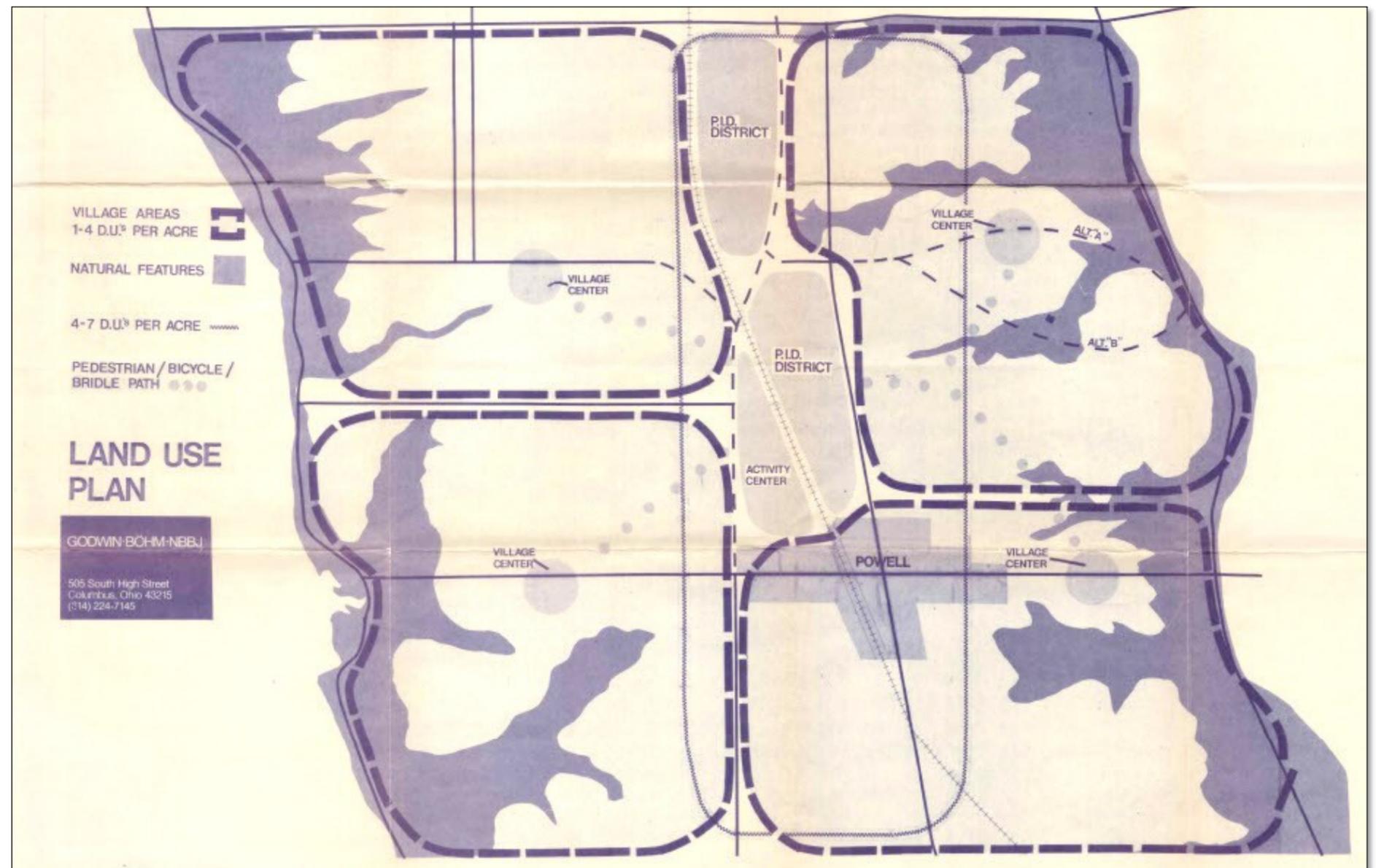
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Early planning for the Powell and Liberty Township area.

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a long-term guide that expresses the values, aspirations, needs, and unique conditions of a community. Liberty Township Plan 2040 will establish a vision for growth and infrastructure investment and address many related topics that impact the township's quality of life today and in the future. The plan is a tool to prepare for change and acts as both a business plan and guidebook for decision-makers.

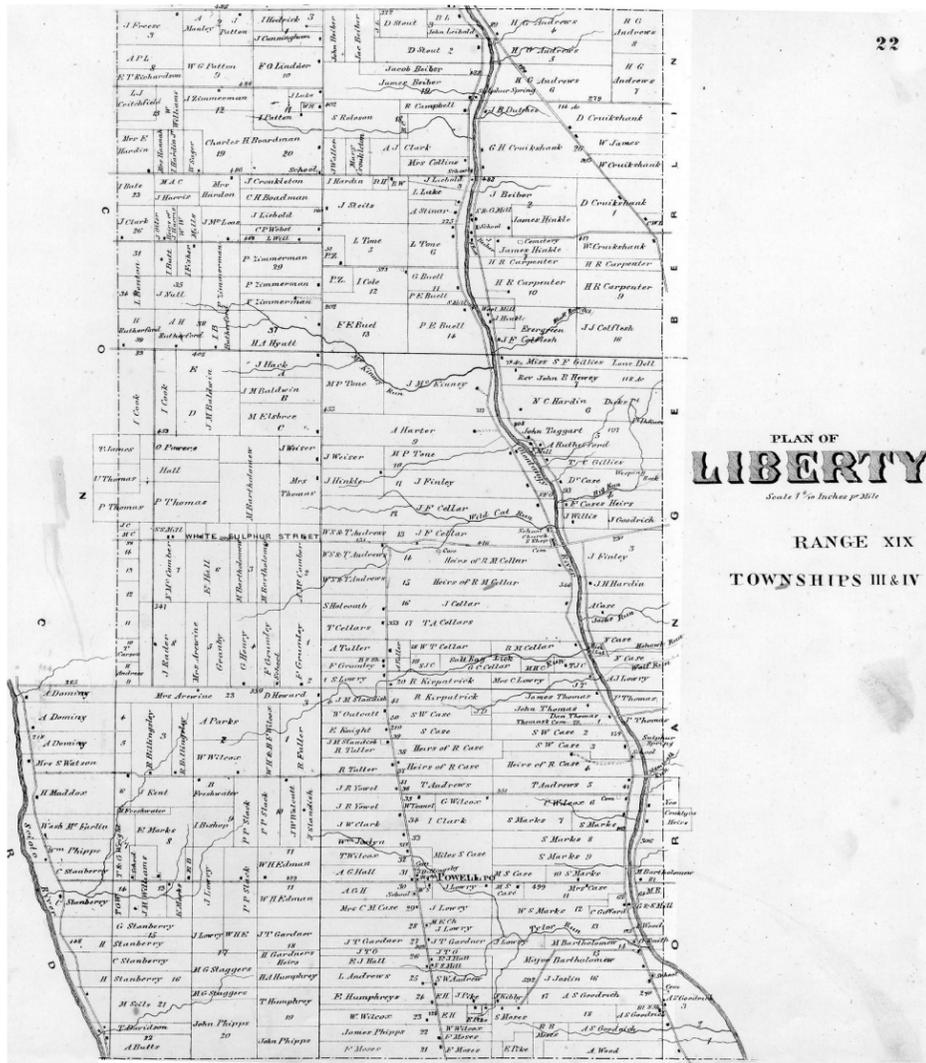
It is a guide, not a strict set of rules. It is persuasive, not punitive. In addition to making policy recommendations, the Plan will make recommendations for future zoning approaches.

The Plan is not a change to the Zoning Resolution. The Zoning Resolution (or "Zoning Code" is the set of rules related to land use that must be followed by landowners. As land develops, applicants request that they land be "re-zoned" from an agricultural or rural residential use to a more dense residential use or another use entirely. During that process, the Zoning Commission and Trustees will consult the Plan to judge if the application meets the vision expressed in the Plan.

# VISION

# VISION

*To be an active and balanced community that preserves our rural heritage and integrates diverse growth opportunities while maintaining a sustainable, welcoming community.*



Liberty Township is a great place, and its location makes it well positioned to thrive. The community must be mindful of its legacy and quality of life as it looks toward the future. This is an opportunity for the township to write its story. In January of 2022, the Comprehensive Planning Committee embarked on a community analysis, looking at **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats**, the following general focus areas began to emerge.

## Government Services

*There are several overlapping governmental entities providing similar services in Liberty Township (ex. township, county, cities). This can create confusion among residents. There is an opportunity to create shared services and improve communication skills.*

## Rural Character vs. Development

*There is a clear tension between the past and future of Liberty Township. There is an opportunity to create balance by identifying areas to be preserved, developed, and redeveloped.*

## Amenities

*The township is part of a great school district, has access to post-secondary options, the zoo, beautiful parks, excellent fire/EMS services, and easy access to medical facilities.*

## Planning

*Concerns exist with the level of planning and an overburden of regulations versus a lack of regulations.*

## Community

*Liberty Township is a well-educated, caring community that is growing in population but lacks diversity. It needs to plan for demographic shifts. This planning process is an opportunity to create a vision that will allow the township to be a place where residents can live, work, and play.*

## Infrastructure

*There is an opportunity to plan for future roadway capacity and broadband infrastructure needs.*

**Early stages of the Comprehensive Planning process** included several exercises. In addition to setting a Vision for the township as represented on the previous page, there was a “Design Preferences” exercise, which is detailed in the “Design” chapter. Part of this project included dividing up the township into four Quads and hosting a meeting for each one, allowing neighbors to express their concerns and ask questions about planning and zoning. Representatives for each Quad area hosted the meetings and fielded questions. The following represent some of those questions (and some responses).

**Question: To what extent is the recommendation in the comp plan, and how is it implemented?**

*A: Policies can be undertaken by the trustees. Rezoning requests will be judged against the Plan during the review of the Zoning Commission and then the Trustees.*

**Question: amount of developable acreage?**

*A: this number is calculated for each subarea in an appendix.*

**Question: Does the city affect Liberty Township Zoning?**

*A: the zoning code is specific to only the unincorporated areas—obviously decisions made by neighboring communities impact the township. Annexation could remove area from the Township and therefore it would no longer be Liberty Township-zoned.*

**Question: Can't everyone just be on a 3-acre lot?**

*A: the lowest-density zoning district is a 1 acre lot size, if certain other standards can be met. The plat has typically advocated for Planned developments that provide permanent open space as a trade-off for densities.*

**Other common concerns and comments:**

**Biking and trails:** More biking routes for families – Dublin-type connections; Addition of more contiguous greenway type off-street bike paths i.e., side paths;

**Preservation:** preserve the mill and Smith’s preserve;

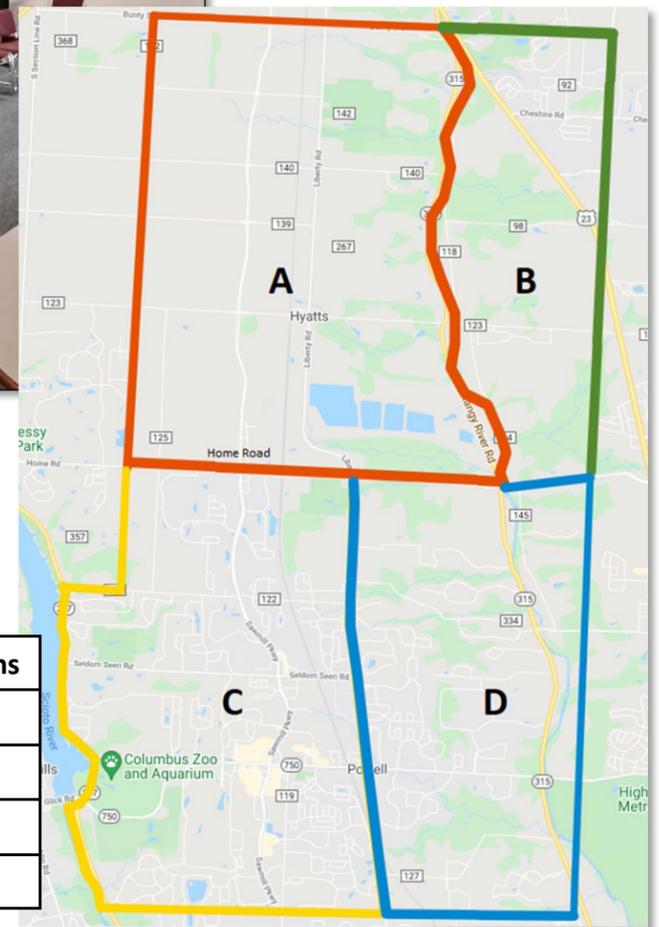
**Commercial development:** Keep this as a “Town Center” type concept, need a new grocery store;

**Recreation:** Additional new or enhance existing recreation center public swimming pool, dog park. Preservation of existing open spaces is important;

**Communication:** Better township communication to residents to make them aware of development proposals and meetings;

**Residential growth:** Idyllic concept: Muirfield Village –low density residential, interspersed with many parks and low density commercial/office; Desire FR-1 across this (northwest) planning area; The spread of multi-family developments should be restricted;

**Transportation:** Concerns over 315 being at capacity—there needs to be a focus about keeping trucks and increased traffic off of 315; Winter Road speeding issues – desire for traffic calming measures and implementation.



Quads	Comp Plan Recommendations
Area A	Subareas I, II, VI, VII
Area B	Subarea III, IX
Area C	Subarea VIII, IV, V
Area D	Subarea I, II

# WHO WE ARE

## Who we are

**Liberty Township** is located in one of the fastest-growing and healthiest parts of Ohio in one of the best school districts. Surrounded by a variety of cities, villages, unincorporated settlements, townships, educational facilities, corporate headquarters, and destinations, it sits at the crossroads of a vibrant region.

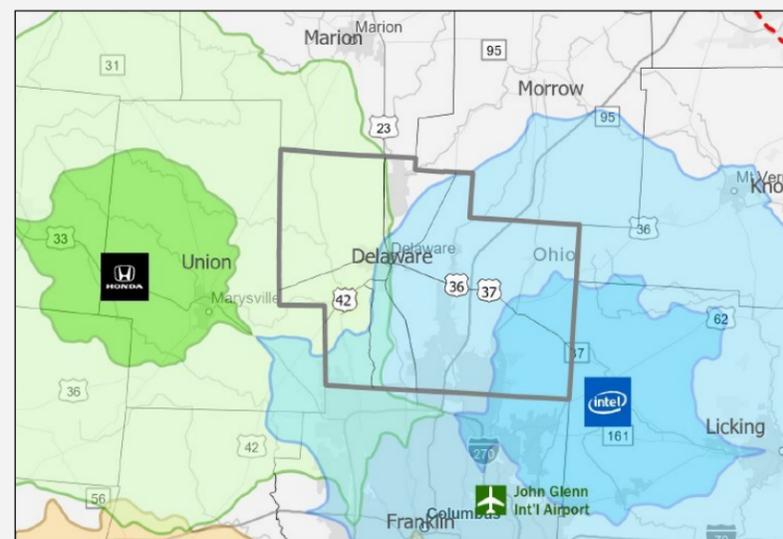
The township served an important role in the development of Delaware County, with initial settlements founded between 1801 and 1804, the organization of the first church, Liberty Presbyterian, in 1810, and the first school in 1827. By 1900, the township claimed 1,379 residents.

Based on its rich farmland, agriculture quickly became a predominant feature. Extensive horse breeding would eventually lead the Columbus Dispatch to refer to the valley as the "Bluegrass of Ohio." The wooded ravines along the tributaries and mainstem of the Olentangy River continue to be a major natural feature of the area. Half of the township drains toward the Scioto River basin and the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir, another prominent feature.

Because of several area Preservation Parks, the adjacent Highbanks Metro Park, and land around the reservoir, hundreds of acres are currently permanently preserved as open space.

The transportation network continues to be improved, but with continued growth comes increased stress and congestions on roads, none of which were originally located or designed as major thoroughfares.

Due to all these factors, the Liberty Township area will continue to experience growth pressures and opportunities. As of the adoption of this plan, several major projects are on the horizon, including continued development of Honda-related activity in the Marysville area, Honda efforts near Jeffersonville, and the Intel Chip Manufacturing site near New Albany.



Twenty and forty-minute drive times from major industrial projects.

The Intel site will be the largest chip manufacturing site in the world. The initial investment is equivalent to **\$20 billion** for the first two Fabs (fabrication plants). The total investment for all eight Fabs will be **\$100 billion**.

Additionally, the company is making an investment of \$100 million in education in the state.

Intel says that for each job it creates, **13 more jobs** will be created in the region through related development. That means the initial Impact of **3,000 jobs** could lead to a total of **39,000 jobs** in the region. The future phases, which are projected to generate 6,000 jobs could result in 78,000 jobs. Based on this need, JobsOhio is increasing its workforce ecosystem by spending \$1 billion in workforce spending, developing or strengthening 200 programs with 18 state partners and over 250 institutions.

The region, and Liberty Township, can expect to see increasing demands for housing based on this economic growth and influx of residents as the initial wave jobs need to be filled. In exchange, new opportunities for job growth will be expected in the area, especially where it is encouraged. Educational and workforce investments will lead to increases in services, quality-of-life, and overall socio-economic levels.



# Demographic Snapshot

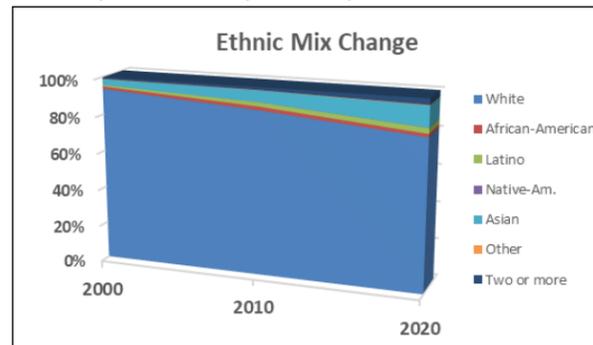
The Liberty Township and Powell area is an affluent, well-educated, mostly white population, two-thirds of whom are 18 or older. Less than two percent is unemployed. Less than three percent of individuals are below the poverty level.

Figure 6. US Census Demographic Profile

US Census Category	2010 Unincorporated Liberty Township Population	2020 Unincorporated Liberty Township Population	2010 Powell Population	2020 Powell Population
Total	14,581 persons	18,271 persons	11,500 persons	14,181 persons
White	12,846	14,779	10,172	11,400
African American	279	312	221	216
Latino	319	539	161	357
Native American	8	21	13	14
Asian	882	1,951	863	1,700
Other	25	50	35	44
Two or More	220	616	196	450
Over 18 population	10,124	13,074	7,506	9,880
Male population	7,247	9,081*	5,663	6,854*
Female population	7,334	9,190*	5,837	6,499*
Median age	37.4	39.5	37.8	41.2
Family households	79.5 %	77.1 %*	85.7 %	84.5 %*
Non family households	20.4 %	22.9 %*	14.3 %	15.5 %*
Average household size	2.98 persons	2.97 persons*	3.04 persons	3.00 persons*
Average family size	3.31 persons	3.37 persons*	3.32 persons	3.33 persons*

\*2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Unincorporated Liberty Township



Incorporated City of Powell

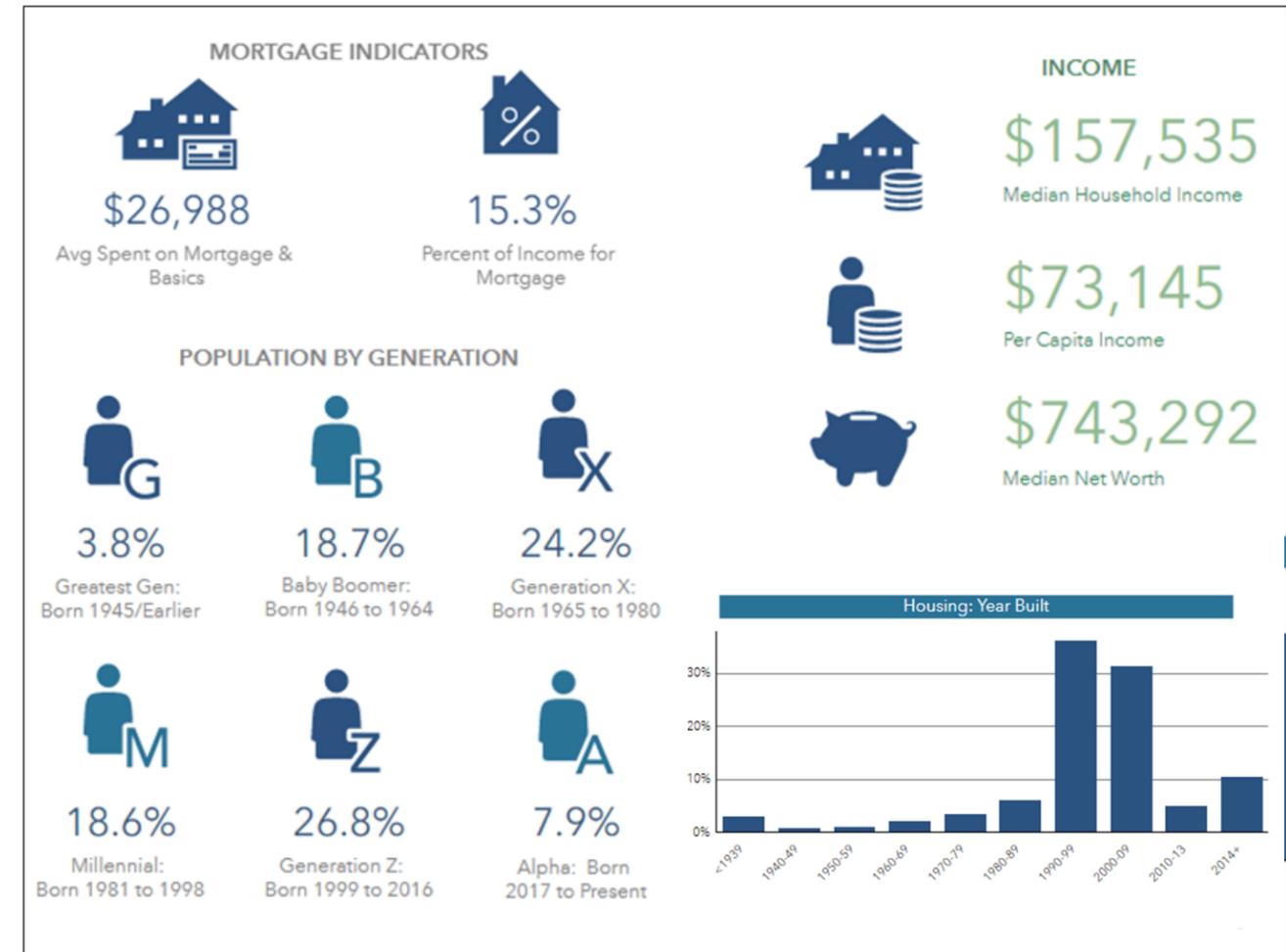
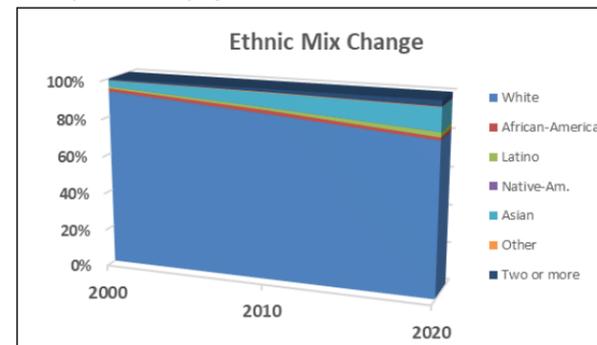


Figure 7. US Census Socio-Economic Profile

US Census 2016-2020 5-year ACS Category	Unincorp. Township	City of Powell	All County Unincorp.	All County Municipalities	All County
Education: Percent H.S. grad or higher	98.1%	97.5%	94.1%	88.3%	96.8%
Education: Bachelor's degree or higher	70.0%	52.1%	52.9%	34.2%	55.5%
# Civilian labor force employed	14,752	6,283	53,569	33,258	106,393
% Civilian labor force employed	65.5%	63.5%	95.8%	95.4%	67.5%
# Civilian labor force unemployed	317	141	2,362	1,620	2,774
% Civilian labor force unemployed	1.4%	1.4%	4.2%	4.6%	1.8%
Median Household income	\$159,361	\$159,368	\$85,591	\$79,109	\$111,411
Median family income	\$169,632	\$165,489	\$94,641	\$90,843	\$131,292
Per capita income	\$65,492	\$62,649	\$36,764	\$34,944	\$48,312
No. families below poverty level	142	26	783	841	1,773
% families below poverty level	1.7%	0.7%	2.6%	5.0%	3.3%
Individuals below poverty level	784	167	3,729	4,367	9,700
% Individuals below poverty level	2.6%	1.3%	3.6%	7.0%	4.8%

Source: US Census Bureau 2016-2020 5-year estimates

# GROWTH

## With Growth

### Recent History

Liberty Township continues to be the third-fastest growing Township in Delaware County. Upscale single-family residential is the most active real estate market, but substantial of commercial services are located along Sawmill Parkway. Sawmill Parkway, planned since the 1980s, was constructed from the Franklin County line to Powell Road by 1997. By 2004 it was extended north to Home Road, built at developer's expense in return for higher density residential and commercial zonings. The road was further extended to Hyatts Road in 2008 and to U.S. 42 in 2016 by the Delaware County Engineer.

With the development of Golf Village, a 1,000-acre golf course community extending from Seldom Seen to Home Road, Liberty Township had its largest development of single and multi-family housing (approximately 1,500 units). Then, in a bond payoff arrangement, Golf Village annexed into Powell, and subject to Powell's planning, zoning, and political jurisdiction.

### Population and Development

Delaware County's population grew from 174,214 in April, 2010 to 214,124 in 2020, an increase of 23 percent. Since the official 2020 Census, DCRPC projects an annual 2% increase to 229,933 at the start of 2023.

Unincorporated Liberty Township's population was determined to be 9,182 by the Census Bureau in 2000. This increased 59% by 2010 to a total of 14,581 residents. The 2020 Census noted the population at 18,271, an increase of 25%. The figure below indicates the building permits in the unincorporated portions of the township since 2009.

Figure 1. Unincorporate Liberty Township and City of Powell New Residential Building Permits 2010-2022

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Township* SF	67	104	116	82	64	110	108	119	109	117	301	227
Township* MF	6	11	17	7	40	7	70	18	6	357	272	130
Powell SF	45	50	68	104	56	80	73	59	32	59	98	75
Powell MF	10	8	27	6	10	308	0	0	8	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>432</b>

Single-family detached condos are counted as Multi-Family

Other figures on the page show the permit trends for the township, both in the incorporated and unincorporated area, as well as the trend among the southern-tier townships and within the whole county. Finally, the bottom right figure shows the population projections calculated by the DCRPC for communities near the township. These projections are considered more current than the U.S. Census because DCRPC has more current building permit data. The projections are speculative and may change drastically based upon major developments. The maximum build-out population is a true depiction of what the build-out population would be for each community as they are currently planned and zoned. Except in a few cases, no date for such maximum build-out is projected.

Figure 2. Building Permit Trends in unincorporated Liberty Township and Powell

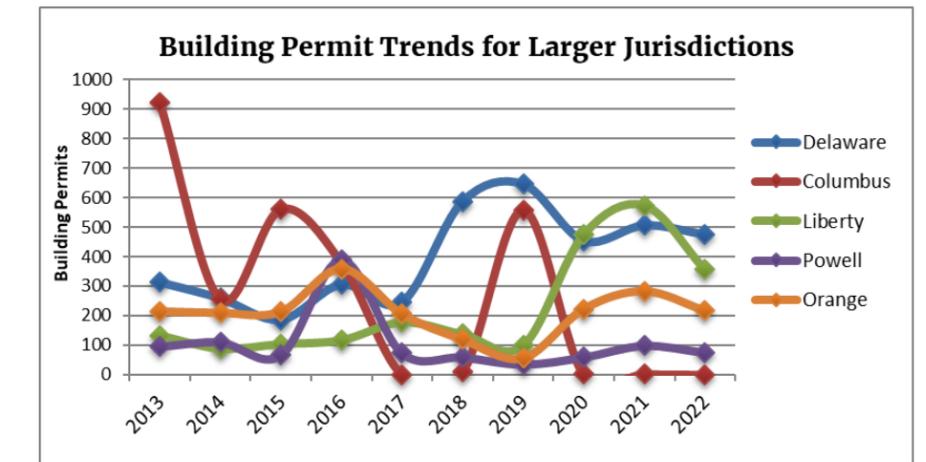
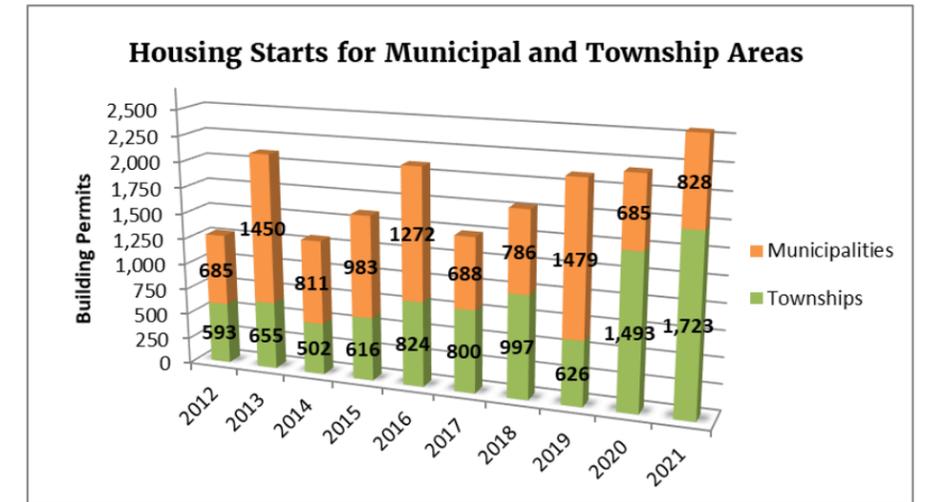
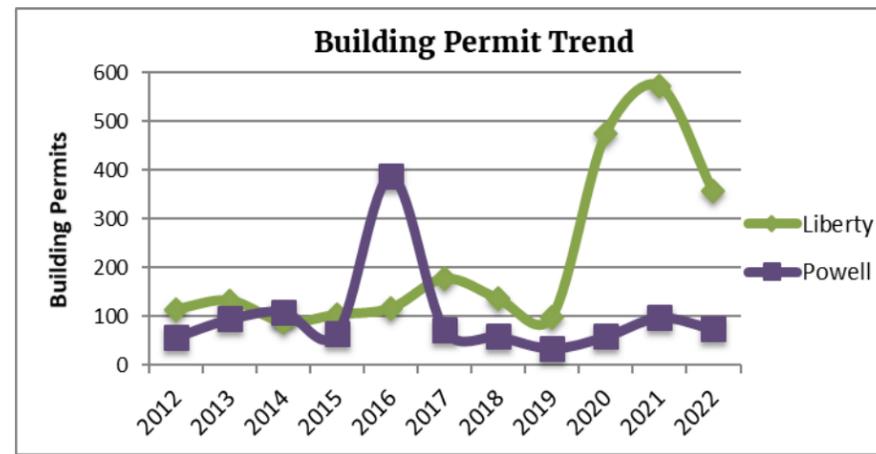


Figure 4. Population Projections for unincorporated Liberty Township, the City of Powell within the township, and neighboring communities.

	2010 US CENSUS	2020 US CENSUS	2021	2022	2025	2030	2035	2040
Concord Township	9,294	10,951	11,623	12,101	13,391	15,392	17,418	19,116
Delaware Township	1,964	2,138	2,172	2,205	2,275	2,390	2,508	2,607
Genoa Township	23,090	24,806	25,058	25,237	26,085	27,266	28,454	28,454
Liberty Township*	14,581	18,270	19,952	21,261	22,492	25,464	28,669	29,900
Powell City*	11,500	14,163	14,554	14,847	15,632	15,826	15,826	15,826
Orange Township	23,762	30,516	31,691	32,509	34,793	38,156	41,490	41,505
Scioto Township	2,350	2,648	2,737	2,845	2,985	3,272	3,574	3,827
Delaware City	34,753	41,302	42,898	43,952	46,314	49,264	52,368	55,404

\*Population for unincorporated Liberty Township—most of City of Powell residents are township residents.

# LAND USE

## stand use

### Development Patterns

Development can take place in a variety of ways, but zoning always applies. But what is zoning? The following table indicates the various zoning districts in the Liberty Township Zoning Resolution:

#### Farm Residence District (FR-1)

Minimum lot size is one acre, but most FR-1 zoned property uses on-site waste treatment systems, meaning that they will typically need more than one acre to accommodate both the primary and secondary treatment systems. Minimum frontage is 150 feet, or 60 feet widening to 150 feet. Individual lots on rural roads are typically FR-1. New subdivisions can be created by building roads and creating new frontage for each lot. Open Space is not required in such subdivisions and the township is limited in preserving trees and other natural features. Lots merely have to conform to size, frontage, and setback requirements.

#### Neighborhood Apartment District (R-3)

This is a rarely-used district. Parcels must be at least 21,780 square feet. Frontage is 100 feet.

#### Planned Residence District (PR)

Most neighborhoods in the township are in Planned districts, where the Zoning Commission and Trustees approved a layout as well as a density and lot configuration. The density within the regulations is 1.5 dwelling units per net developable acre. Some unbuildable features are subtracted to determine this developable acreage. Open space of 20% is required. The Comprehensive Plan is referenced to determine the lot size and there is no minimum lot width.

#### Planned Multi-Family Residence (PMFR)

This district was a fairly recent amendment to direct Multi-Family uses in a specific zoning district, rather than the previous approach of including it within the PR language. Recent developments include Sara Crossing, Hyatts Crossing, and Courtyards at Hyatts.

#### Planned Elderly or Retirement Res. Comm. (PERRC)

The PERRC was created to accommodate the various uses typically required in age-restricted development. It allows independent living as well as nursing care and institutionalized health care. One undeveloped site at Manning Parkway and S.R. 315 is zoned with this designation.

#### Planned Residence Conservation (PRC)

The Planned Residence Conservation district is similar to the Planned Residence district, but with 50% open space. Maximum density is 1.5 units per net developable acre. The Comprehensive Plan is referenced to determine the lot size and there is no minimum lot width.

#### Neighborhood Retail (C-2)

This district is not currently used, but could be utilized for single-site commercial development when a Planned district is not necessary.

#### Planned Commercial (PC)

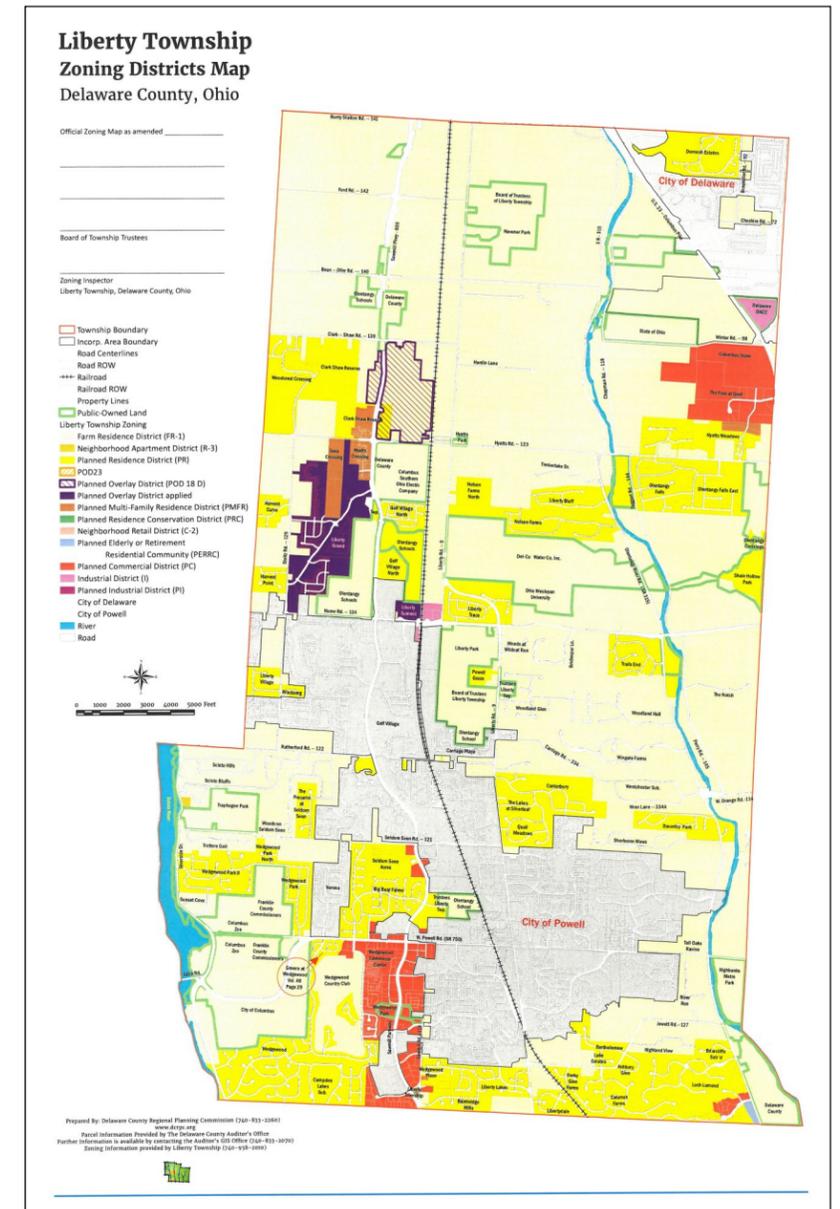
PC is the typical location for township commercial and retail property. Land within Wedgewood and other locations along Sawmill, as well as commercial development on the north side of Manning Parkway is zoned Planned Commercial. Several apartments are also zoned PC, from a time when that was the preferred zoning for apartments.

#### Industrial (I)

All land zoned Industrial is located along the railroad at Home Road. Land north of Home Road and also west of the tracks will remain in the township, but the 35 acres south of Home Road is currently in pre-annexation development review for multi-family in the City of Powell.

#### Planned Industrial (PI)

No land is zoned Planned Industrial but the district is provided for a cohesive business-park-type development of commercial uses.



Zoning Districts	ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE
FR-1 Farm Residence District	11,137.70	71%
R-3 Neighborhood Apartment	3.77	0.02%
PR Planned Residence	3,315.45	21%
PMFR Planned Multi-Family Residence	118.51	0.8%
PERRC Planned Elderly or Retirement Res. Comm.	7.29	0.04%
PRC Planned Residence Conservation	0	0%
C-2 Neighborhood Retail	0	0%
PC Planned Commercial	591.83	3.7%
I Industrial	53.76	0.3%
PI Planned Industrial	0	0%
POD 18B and 18C Planned Overlay	267.29	1.7%
POD 18D Planned Overlay (not yet applied)	189.72	1.2%
<b>Total in Zoning Districts</b>	<b>15,685.32</b>	<b>100%</b>

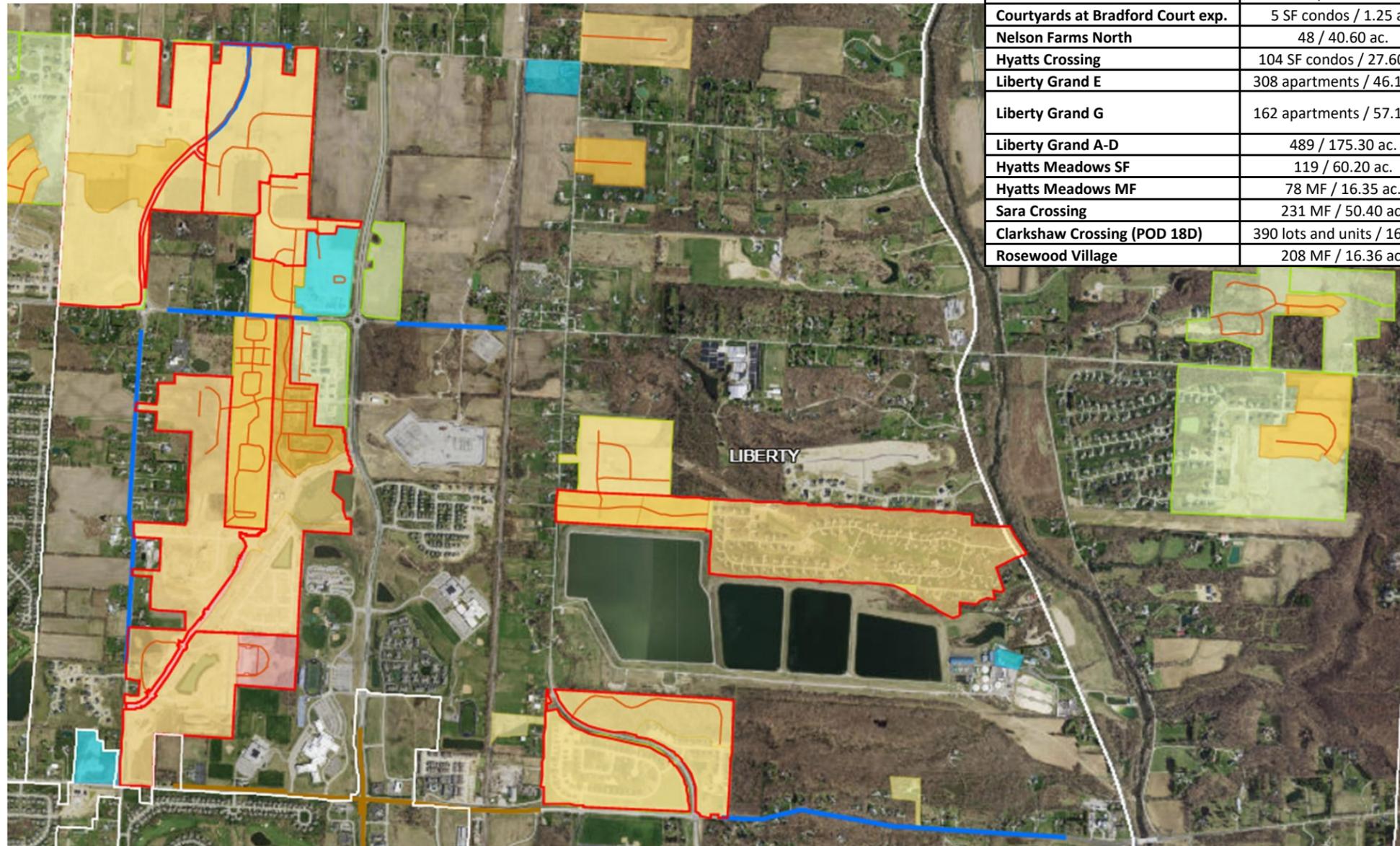
Zoning totals may not agree due to environmental features, right-of-way, etc.

**Planned Overlay District 18B & 18C**

POD 18B and 18C were adopted in 11/19 and applied specifically to the area that would eventually be developed as “Liberty Grand” and the “Liberty Summit” apartments. The maximum number of units was defined for each Sub Area as follows:

- Sub Area A allowed 120 single-family units.
- Sub Area B allowed 180 single or attached homes.
- Sub Area C allowed 52 single or attached units.
- Sub Area D allowed 210 single or attached units.
- Sub Area E allowed 308 single, attached, or multi-family.
- Sub Area F was limited to open space.
- Sub Area G allowed 190 single, attached, or multi-family.

Figure X. Current development activity in Liberty Township (to be updated)



Project	Lots/Acres	Zoning Approval	Preliminary Subdivision	Status (5/23)
Nelson Farms	158 / 154.3 ac.	December, 1993	May, 2006	41 lots remaining
Olentangy Falls East	150 / 146.94 ac.	November, 2014	September, 2014	19 lots remaining
Heathers @ Golf Village North	360 / 47.39 ac.	June, 2013	July, 2013, revised from original approval of 2004	Built out
Liberty Trace	139 / 114.5 ac.	December, 2013	April, 2014	25 lots remaining
Olentangy Falls Sections 4 and 5	37 / 62.93 ac.	March, 2004	November, 2013	19 lots remaining
Liberty Bluff	68 / 81.4 ac.	November, 2014	February, 2015	23 lots remaining
Wedgewood Park N.	14 / 14.02 ac.	November, 2014	July, 2015	2 lots remaining
Harvest Curve	34 / 36.52 ac.	September, 2013	February, 2016	34 lots remaining
Allington Estates	45 / 102.86	October, 2014	July, 2016	Withdrawn
Villas at Loch Lomond	27 SF condos / 15.06ac.	April, 2015	N/A	Built out
Courtyards at Bradford Court	69 SF condos / 9.78ac.	December, 2015	N/A	Built out
Woodcrest Crossing	190 SF, 60 MF / 170 ac.	September, 2016	December, 2019	148 SF, 44 MF remaining
Village of Clark Shaw Reserve	84 / 20.60 ac.	March, 2017	N/A	57 MF remaining
Clark Shaw Reserve	201 / 176.05 ac.	March, 2017		173 lots remaining
Courtyards at Bradford Court exp.	5 SF condos / 1.25 ac.	December, 2017	N/A	Built out
Nelson Farms North	48 / 40.60 ac.	March, 2018	March, 2022	37 lots remaining
Hyatts Crossing	104 SF condos / 27.60 ac.	January, 2019	N/A	58 MF remaining
Liberty Grand E	308 apartments / 46.10 ac.	September, 2019	N/A	Built out
Liberty Grand G	162 apartments / 57.10 ac.	September, 2019	October, 2019	190 MF remaining
Liberty Grand A-D	489 / 175.30 ac.	October, 2019	November, 2019	78 remaining
Hyatts Meadows SF	119 / 60.20 ac.	January, 2020	September, 2020	Roads in, no houses built
Hyatts Meadows MF	78 MF / 16.35 ac.	January, 2020	September, 2020	Roads in, no units built
Sara Crossing	231 MF / 50.40 ac.	March, 2022	March, 2022	Site construction
Clarkshaw Crossing (POD 18D)	390 lots and units / 169 ac.	November, 2022	January, 2023	No activity
Rosewood Village	208 MF / 16.36 ac.	Pending	Sketch Plan reviewed 10/13	No activity

Sub Areas E and G are currently being developed as apartments, with the other areas as single-family lots. Lots have 50-foot widths with 10-foot building separation.

POD 18C allowed 236 apartments on 17.24 acres at Home Road and the railroad.

**Planned Overlay District 18D**

POD 18D is an overlay that was adopted in 4/21 and applied specifically to a 190-acre area between Hyatts and Clark Shaw roads, mostly east of Sawmill. Overlays establish a set of additional standards that must be followed for the uses that become permitted when the code amendment is adopted.

- Sub Area A (19.4 ac.) allowed 208 attached or multi-family.
- Sub Area B (19.47 ac.) specific commercial.
- Sub Area C (30.76 ac.) allowed 75 single-family or attached units.
- Sub Area D (18 ac.) allowed healthcare and professional uses.
- Sub Area E (102.56 ac.) allowed 315 single or attached homes.

Lots have 50-foot widths with 10-foot building separation.

## Existing Land Use

The existing land use of unincorporated Liberty Township, its surrounding jurisdictions, and the area within the historical Township boundary is displayed and analyzed by type according to the County Auditor's Geographic Information System and tax code.

Figure 8. Unincorp. Liberty Township Land Use 7/2016

LAND USE	ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE
Single-Family	6,650	37.7%
Multi-Family	217	1.2%
Commercial	581	3.3%
Industrial	83	0.5%
Institution	965	5.5%
Agricultural	3,121	17.7%
Residential Vacant Land	2,200	12.5%
Other Uses Vacant Land	349	1.9%
Parks	1,506	8.5%
Golf Course	425	2.4%
ROW	1,241	7.0%
River	310	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,646</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

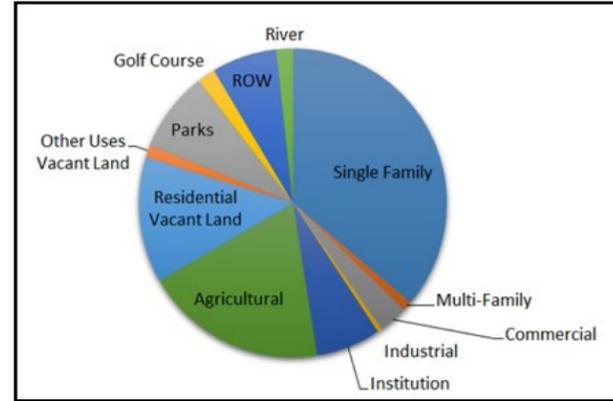
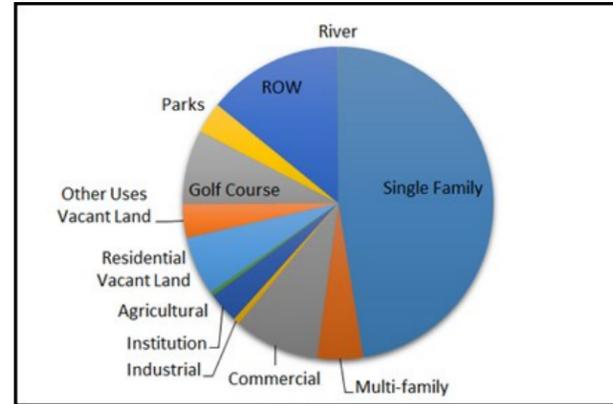


Figure 9. Powell Land Use 7/2016

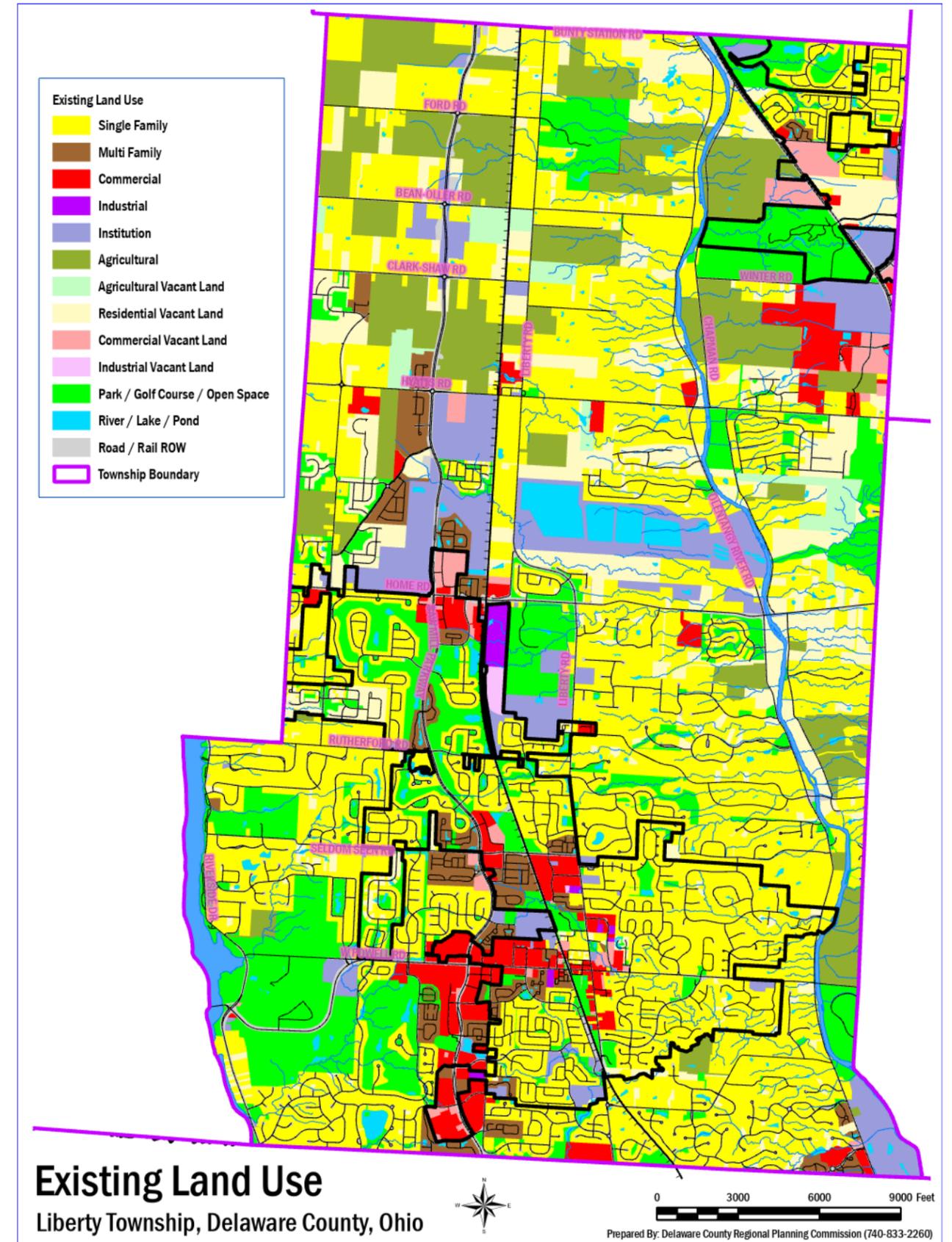
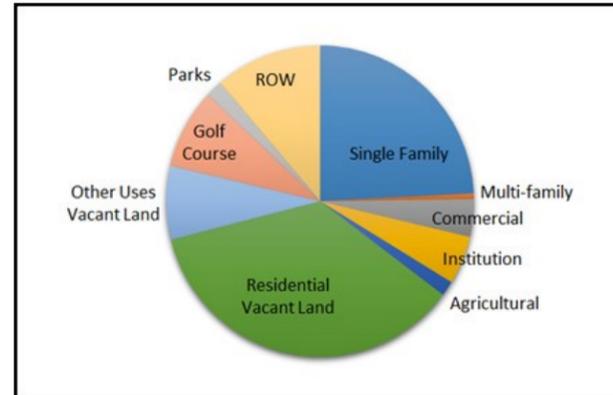
LAND USE	ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE
Single-Family	1,596	46.2%
Multi-family	207	6.0%
Commercial	310	9.0%
Industrial	21	0.6%
Institution	105	3.0%
Agricultural	3	0.1%
Residential Vacant Land	192	5.6%
Other Uses Vacant Land	114	3.3%
Golf Course	321	9.3%
Parks	106	3.1%
ROW	481	13.9%
River	2	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,456</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

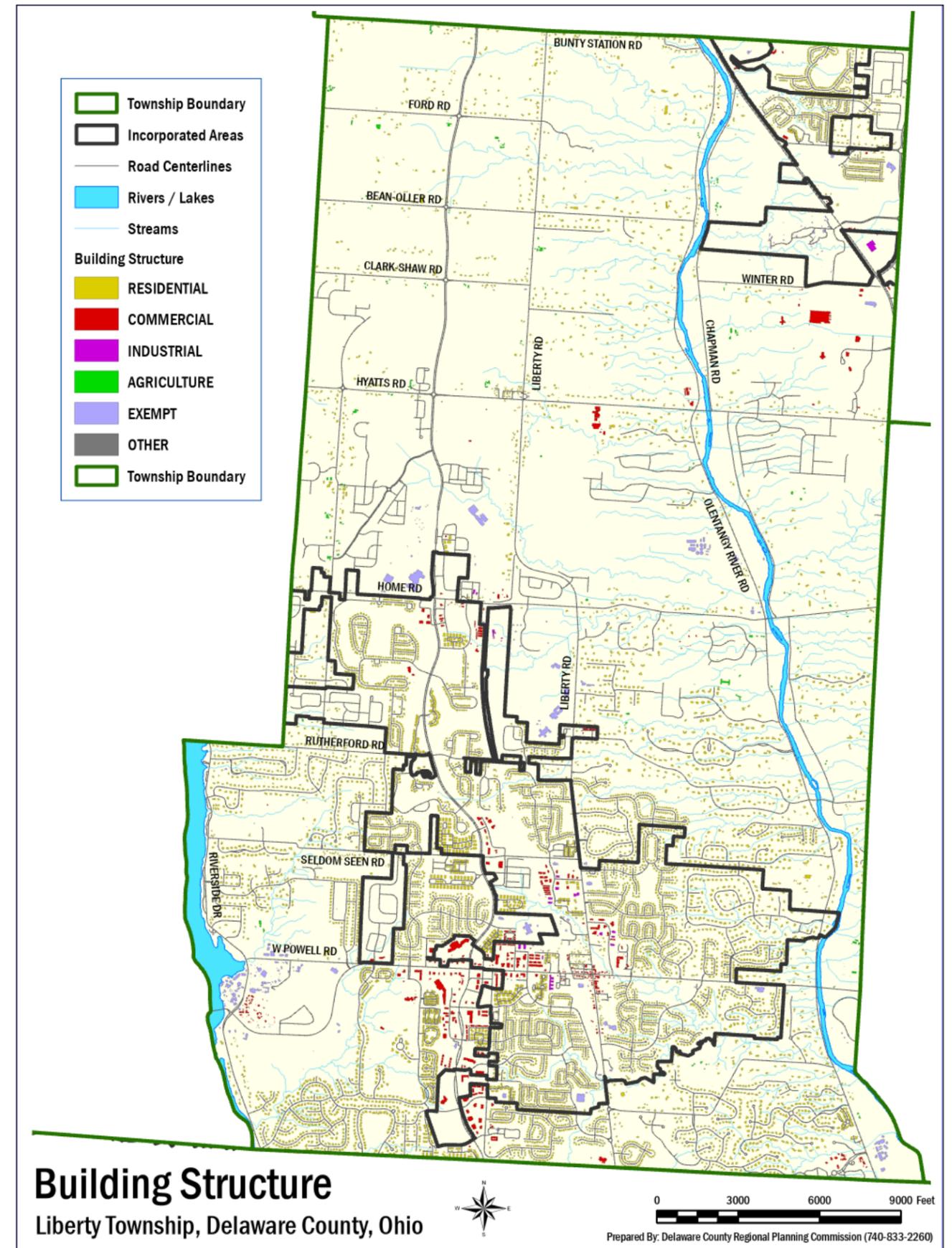
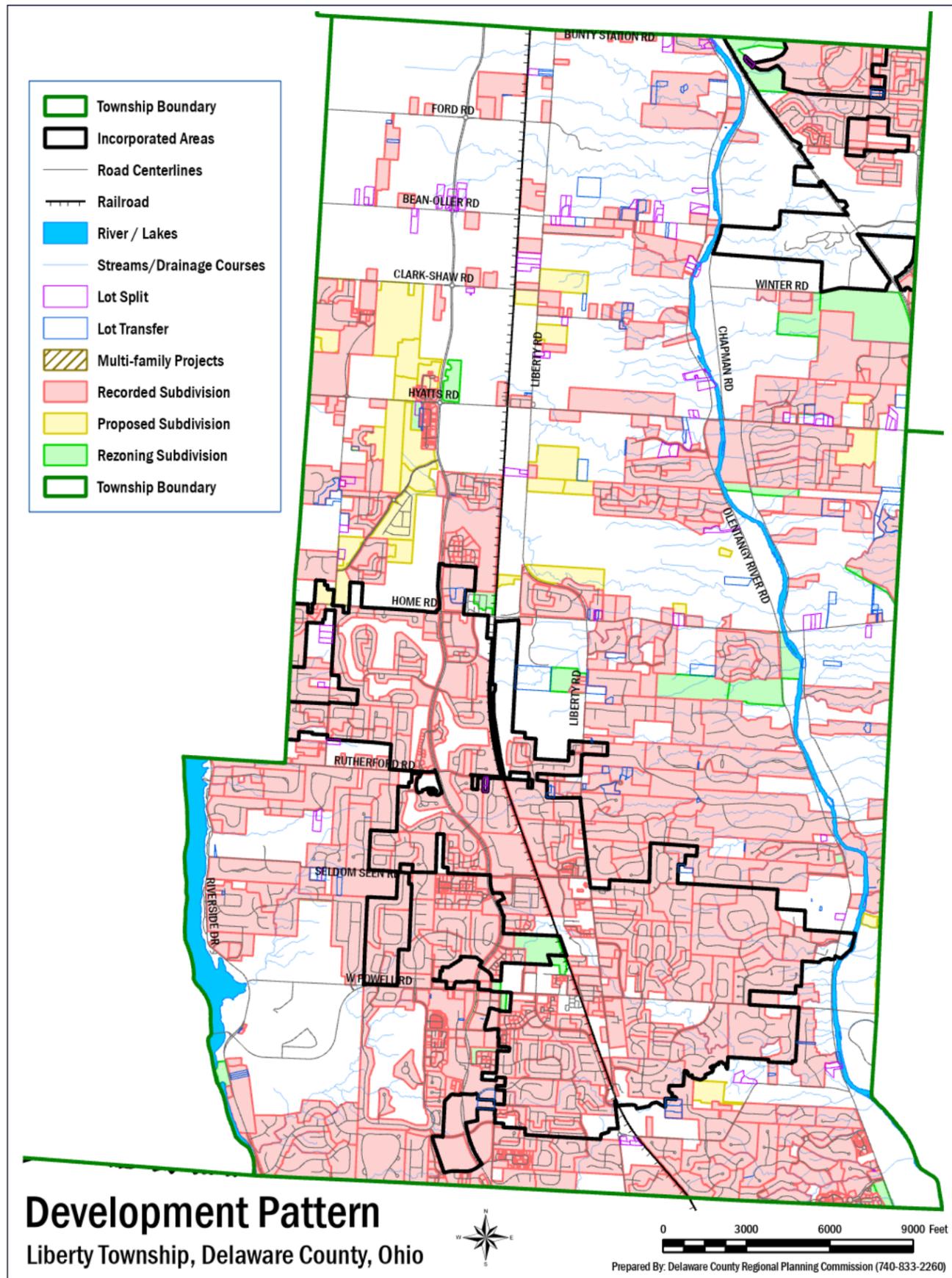


Includes 43 acres annexed from Concord Township

Figure 10. Delaware City Land Use (within Twp) 7/2016

TYPE	ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE
Single-Family	158	28.6%
Multi-Family	14	2.6%
Commercial	22	3.9%
Institution	27	4.9%
Agricultural	9	1.5%
Residential Vacant Land	153	27.6%
Other Uses Vacant Land	47	8.4%
Golf Course	45	8.2%
Parks	10	1.7%
ROW	70	12.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





## Natural Resources

Liberty Township is divided into two major drainage basins: the Olentangy River and the Scioto River. Numerous small tributaries flow through wooded ravines, which contribute to the beauty of the two river valleys.

Both valleys are bordered by relatively steep bluffs, some exhibiting rock outcroppings, up to an elevation of approximately 900 feet above sea level. The center of the Township is a relatively flat plateau that has been cultivated. Forests have generally been sacrificed to agriculture and/or development. Wooded areas continue to provide wildlife habitat, erosion control, water and air quality, energy conservation, and a visual amenity.

## Elevation

Slopes over 20% are typically found in ravines running to creeks and rivers, and their preservation is important to preserve clean surface water, to retain the natural landscape, prevent erosion and sedimentation, and retain rural character.

## Floodplains

Floodplains are located along the Olentangy and Scioto Rivers and tributary streams, providing storage and water conveyance and they reduce flood velocities, peak flows, and sedimentation. Floodplains also moderate stream temperature fluctuations, provide groundwater recharge, and breeding and feeding grounds for fish and wildlife.

For all these reasons floodplains are (partially) protected by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Delaware County is a member, which makes low cost flood insurance available in Liberty Township. In order to maintain eligibility, floodways cannot be filled or blocked. The floodway fringe can be filled, although nationwide experience suggests this should not be allowed. In order to fully protect the 100-year floodway fringe, Liberty Township would have to adopt floodplain zoning.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) has developed a permit that applies to development within the Olentangy watershed. Based on stream type (Perennial, Ephemeral, or Intermittent) stream buffers must be maintained or mitigated if impacted. Protection of the floodplain is also required along the main-stem of the river.

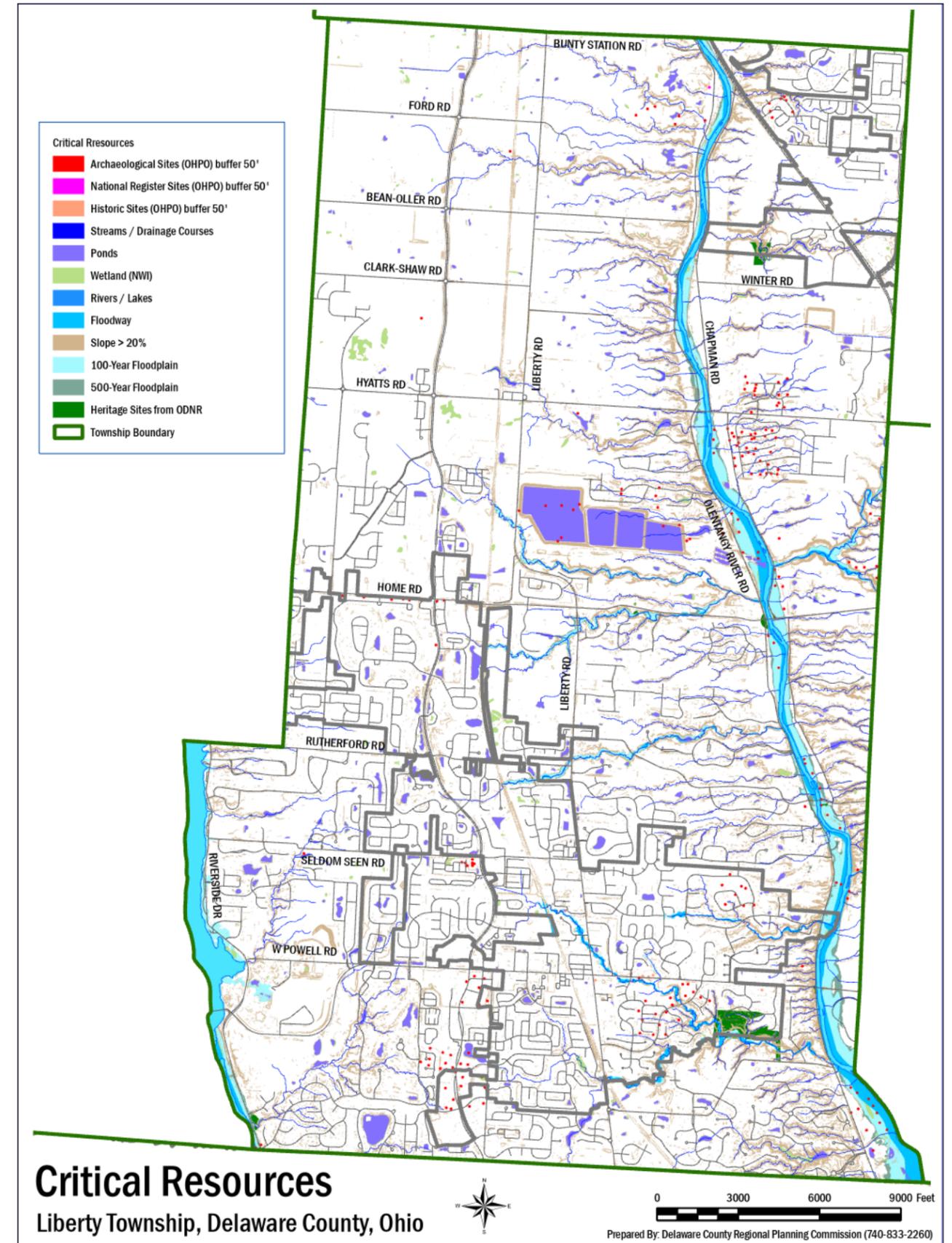
## Wetlands

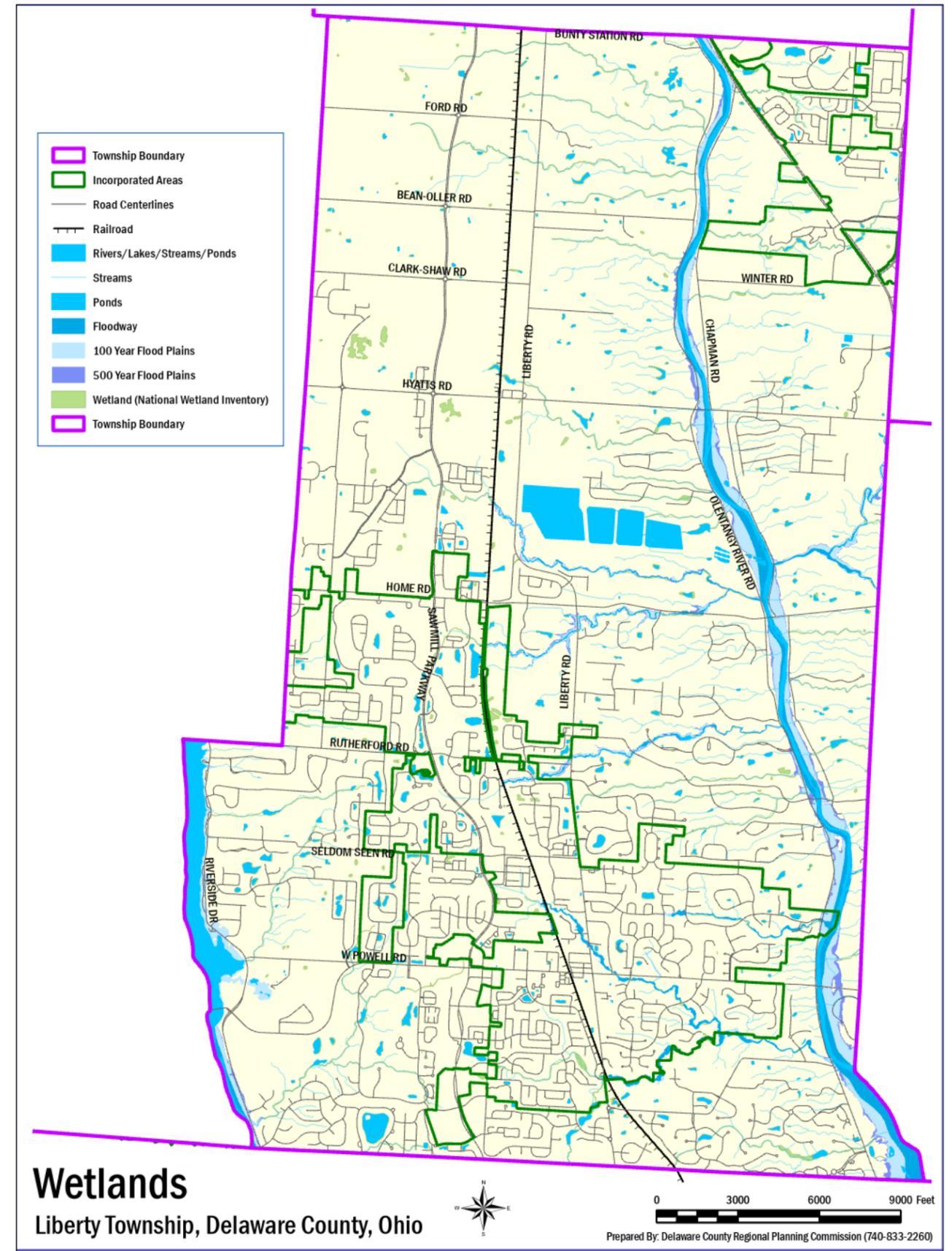
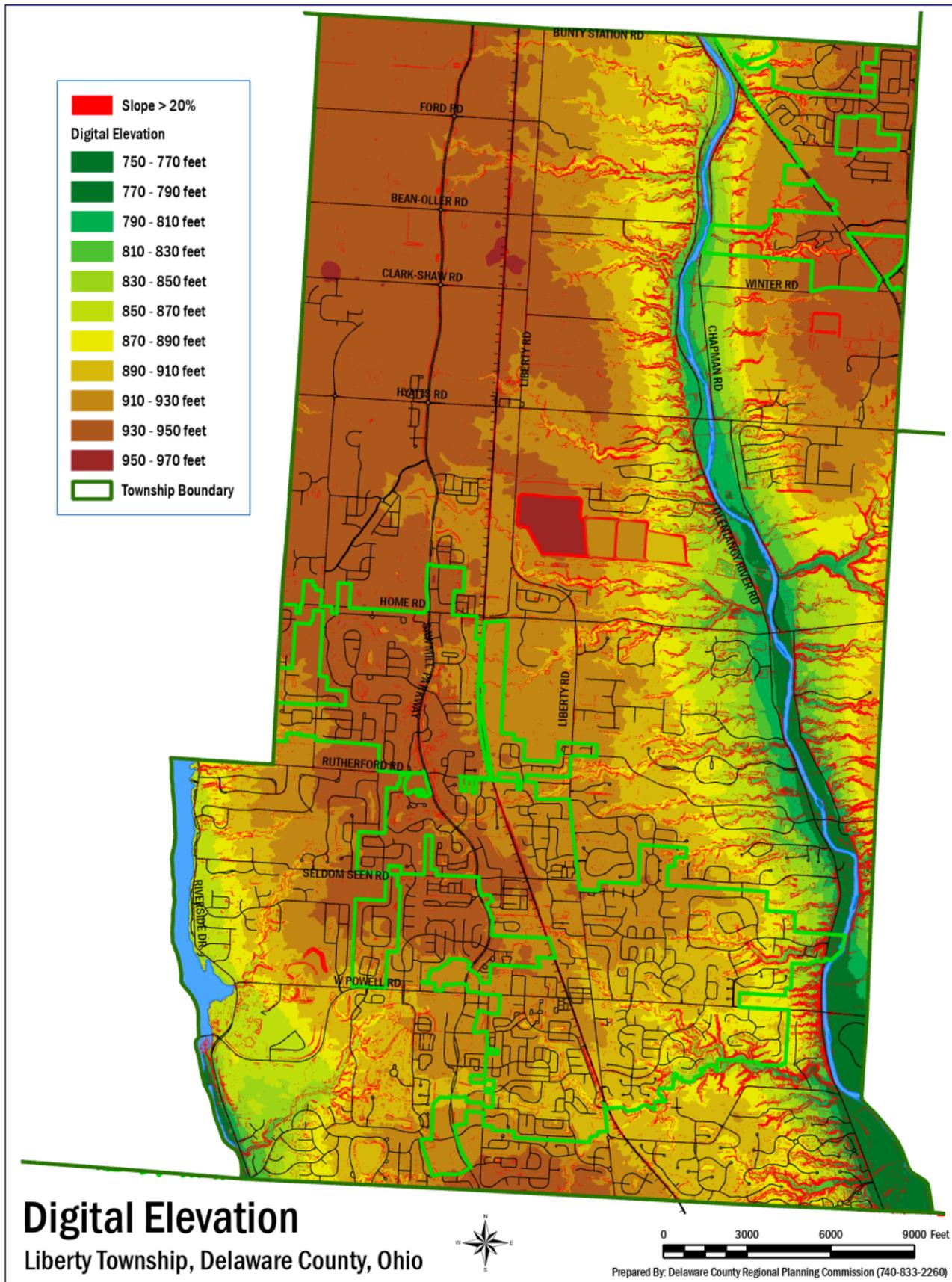
Liberty Township has pockets of wetland soils. Some of these may be jurisdictional wetlands, which are regulated. Wetlands are generally defined as soils that support a predominance of wetland vegetation, or are under water at least two weeks per year.

Wetlands are natural stormwater detention systems that trap, filter, and break down surface runoff. In Liberty Township some former wetlands are now agriculturally-drained (tiled) fields or low-lying areas by existing ponds and waterways.

## Soils

Liberty Township contains heavy clay soils that are slowly permeable and often contain high ground water. Many of these wet clay soils also present problems for full-depth basement foundations due to high ground water. In areas of the Township not served by sanitary sewer, soil suitability for on-site sewage disposal systems is critical. The dominant soils in Liberty Township include Blount (Bo), Glynwood (Gw), Pewamo (Pw), Lybrand (Ly), and Scioto (Sc), all soils that are not ideal for on-site traditional septic and leach systems.





# HOUSING

**In a high-growth region,** new housing is the index of growth. Planning for a range of housing in a developing community can be complicated. Many factors are involved, such as the availability of utilities, raw land values, market demand, proximity to major employment, and the existing and proposed transportation network.

There are also legal considerations related to non-discrimination in housing, and “fair share” provision of the regional housing needs, to the extent necessary services can be provided.

The majority of the undeveloped parts of the Township is zoned Farm Residential (FR-1), which permits single-family residences on a minimum lot size of 1 acre with 150 feet of frontage on a public road. Flag lots with 60 feet of frontage may also be permitted in the FR-1 district, or the frontage may be created on a platted Common Access Drive. Lands within the FR-1 district have traditionally been located in areas not served by centralized sanitary sewer. Minimum square footage for a single-family home in FR-1 is 1,100 square feet.

Landowners served by centralized sanitary sewer may apply for the Planned Residential (PR) zoning district, which permits a variety of housing types and lot sizes, though it has traditionally been used for single-family development. Densities for Planned Developments range from a density neutral one unit per acre to 1.5 units per net developable acre. In the Planned Multi-Family Residence District, minimum square footage is at least 900 square feet.

Values in Liberty Township have been typically some of the highest in the County, as evidenced by the Home Value by Market Total map which uses the County Auditor’s “market total” valuation.

## Future Housing

To make housing projections, a community might anticipate what services they can provide, then anticipate their share of the future area population and allocate the distribution of housing types. Few communities attempt such an analysis, leaving the housing mix up to the traditional power of zoning, which is seldom so analytical. In a high-growth area such as Delaware County, it is impossible to anticipate what the County’s share of the State’s population

will be, and distribute that amount among the townships, villages, and cities.

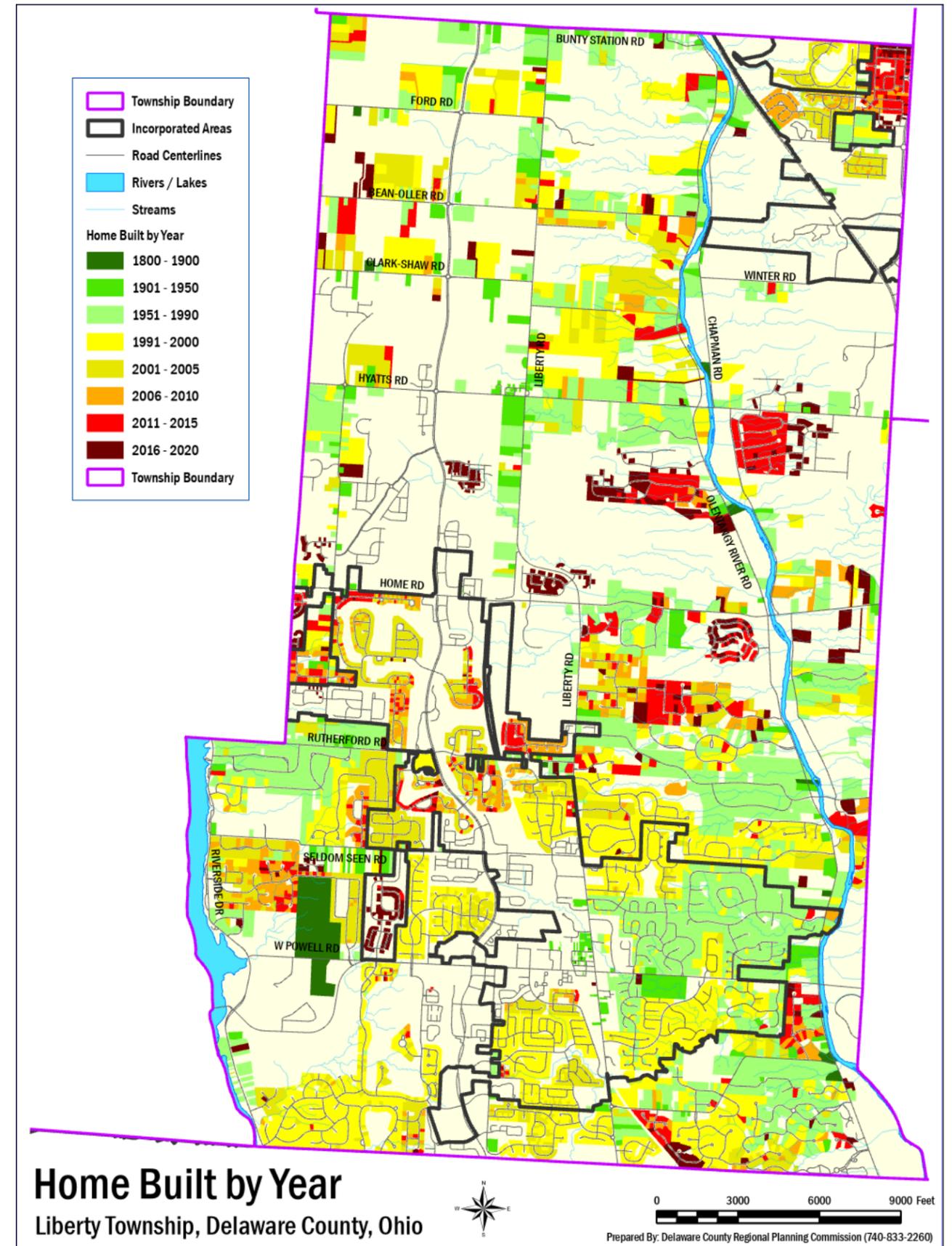
Zoning battles over density sometimes occur along the edges of municipal areas. Where the possibility of annexation exists, townships cannot be certain of their future boundaries. For that reason, it is impossible to assess fair share allocations of housing to be provided by the township when a city or village with separate services may annex land and provide housing at a higher density. A more pragmatic approach to housing distribution is for the township to:

1. determine how the community wants to look when it is all built out (vision);
2. determine what services it can and should provide;
3. anticipate its fair share of the County’s projected population;
4. permit a variety of housing that relates to the other items above.

## Age-Based Housing

An emerging trend in the housing market is the recognition that communities need to respond to different generational needs based on the age and lifestyle of its current and future residents. Single-family suburban development typically appeals to families with children. As children age and leave home, many parents no longer want the maintenance and responsibility related to the single-family home and yard. The desire to downsize is met with the reality that there is no available product in their community and they must look elsewhere. This group of empty nesters is a demographic group that will continue to grow in the coming decades.

In response to this trend (and the recent challenges in the single-family market), developers have proposed several “age-restricted” or “age-targeted” residential developments. These projects seek densities that are not necessarily comparable to those



reflected on the local Comprehensive Plan. Those densities are factored on impacts to traffic, schools, services, and utilities. For example, the average single-family home generates approximately 10 trip ends per day while “detached senior housing” generates approximately 3.71 trip ends per day (source: Institute of Transportation Engineers). For sewage use, an institutional residential unit can use a fourth of the average single-family residence (source: EPA). Delaware County calculates one-bedroom facilities at 60% per unit versus that of a single-family home. However, non-institutional uses are calculated on the same sanitary use as a single-family home.

While these numbers cannot be consistent in every case, it is fair to consider higher densities for age-restricted uses than those identified on the typical Comprehensive Plan. If the application can 1.) truly be limited through zoning or deed to be age restricted, 2.) consider employees (if any) for traffic purposes, 3.) justify that the use fits the location (arterial street, access to other uses), and 4.) meet all other design standards, it may be appropriate to grant a higher density than the one noted on the Comprehensive Plan. This is only acceptable if such density number was originally based on the impacts of single-family residential uses.

This plan will recommend that the Township at least consider a policy that allows slightly adjusted densities in age-restricted developments that are either standalone developments or incorporated as a part of a larger, more diverse community (usually a single-family PRD). Such uses should be situated on arterial streets with access to community services and retail uses. The Township may wish to monitor the status of these projects through an occasional census of demographic information.

## Workforce, or Affordable Housing

“Affordable housing” usually refers to housing that is purposefully constructed for those that cannot afford to live in the average residential unit, but it can also refer to housing types that fill a need for a diverse population that are older, are downsizing, or are in a service-oriented field with lower wages.

Affordable housing as a percentage is diminishing in the County. National trends are showing an increasing population, while the number of all new housing units being built is constantly decreasing. This trend is accompanied by a decreasing household size and an increase in the market price for those units that are being built. HUD seeks to offer assistance to those households that are paying more than 30% of their gross household income toward housing without a choice. The low-skilled job market is not raising salaries to meet the needs of those employees where the cost of living is increasing significantly.

The Central Ohio Region is experiencing rising property values and an increased cost of living. As high-growth development continues, costs will

rise and the impact on schools, public facilities, and infrastructure will be significant. As these costs of living increase, many local residents face job markets that cannot financially meet their needs. Low-skilled employees are forced into other market areas for housing that may meet their budget. If housing is unavailable, these individuals are forced to relocate. This can cause service sector unemployment to increase locally, thus affecting the entire community.

A lack of Affordable Housing as population increases is unavoidable unless developers are encouraged and/or granted incentives to develop more reasonably priced units. The housing market is driven by developer’s profits, which increase with housing market values.

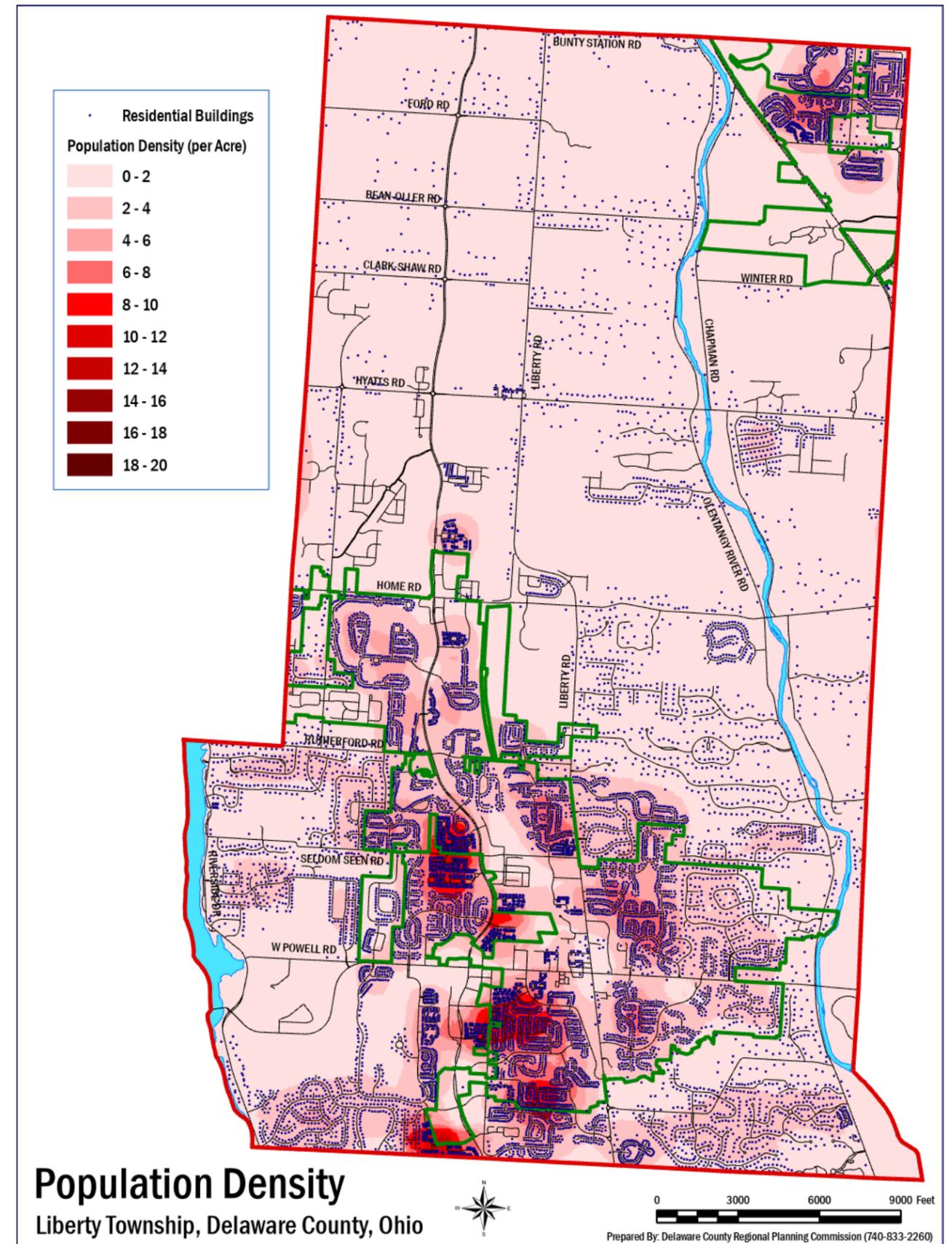
## Development Approaches

Residents of the township generally express the desire to retain the rural character of the area. There are several way to accomplish this, including retaining small pockets of agriculture while economically viable; preserving open space through parks, areas of large lots, as part of Planned Residential subdivisions; and through the encouragement of Conservation Subdivisions.

Understanding each of these approaches is important as the Township considers large-scale zoning proposals, most of which will be limited to the larger parcels noted in the Land in Speculation Map.

## Large-Lot Development

Prior to the extension of sanitary sewer to an area, residential development generally occurs along existing roads. Lots larger than 5 acres can be created without any review while splits smaller than 5 acres use a process known as the “No Plat” or “minor” subdivision. This large -lot development is sometimes accepted as preserving open space and lower densities,





Large lots, mostly over 5 acres, along Ford Road

although no protections are typically put in place to prevent further development of the land or guarantee conservation of any undeveloped land. It will continue to be a viable alternative so long as state law permits such No Plat subdivisions. Liberty Township allows a minimum lot size of 1 acre throughout the FR-1 zoning designation. There has been a market for such development where sewer service is unavailable or prior to its availability.

## Conventional Subdivisions

As road frontage is used up by No Plat lot splits, new access has to be created. This can be done with a Common Access Driveway (CAD) Subdivision, which uses a private driveway to access lots. Delaware County allows CAD subdivisions to serve three to five lots in situations where there will be no extension of the private drive, and where a regular subdivision street might be unfeasible. CAD subdivisions can preserve rural character if done properly. A good example of a well-designed CAD subdivision is Thornton Woods at the southwest corner of Bean Oller Road and S.R. 315. This land is steep and wooded. Public subdivision streets would have been very costly and topographically challenging.

CAD subdivisions follow the procedure that includes a Sketch Plan, Preliminary Plan, and Final Plat. Standards are defined by DCRPC and include a maximum of five lots, maximum grade of 10%, passing areas every 350 feet, tree and shrub removal specifications, and an easement width of 60 feet along the driveway. Additional standards may be applied by the local

fire department, based on the access requirements of local emergency equipment. A private maintenance agreement must be recorded with the County and referenced on the plat.

In addition to CADs, larger subdivisions can be developed with private or public streets built to county standards. Such larger-scale subdivisions also follow the full subdivision process. The developer or consulting engineer takes each project through an approval process with the DCRPC staff as well as an engineering process with the oversight of the County Engineering staff.

In such subdivisions, there are typically no community features (places to walk to, central green, riverbank for community use, etc.) because the land is parceled out to individual landowners. Such subdivisions do not create interconnected open space, nor do they preserve critical natural areas. Conventional subdivisions can, however, provide for easements and no-build/no-disturb areas across a number of individual residential lots, but these can be problematic over the course of time and often do not achieve preservation goals that they seek.

## Cluster Subdivisions

Cluster subdivisions, typically expressed throughout the County as “Planned Residential Districts,” are an improved alternative to the conventional



A five-lot Common Access Driveway on Liberty Road



Conventional subdivisions (Woodland Hall/Woodland Glen)

subdivision. In areas with sewer service, higher densities within Planned Residential zoning has been approved. Typical lot sizes range from 0.6 acre to 0.75 acre.

In Planned districts, greater design flexibility is gained by reducing lot size and width. Language must fulfill community expectations for:

- Open Space** - required open space calculated from the gross area. Must specify type of open space (active or passive) and how much environmentally-sensitive area (wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, stormwater detention basins, and utility easements) counts toward the required open space. Management of common open space is often an afterthought. Guidance should be provided toward protecting critical features through conservation easements, environmental covenants, or HOA management.
- Design** - Need a pedestrian-oriented design, with a possible local commercial and service core, active recreation area, and sidewalks/bike paths to reduce induced traffic.
- Architectural Standards** - to make higher density cluster subdivisions work, considerable thought needs to be given to the architecture, materials, facades, detailing, and landscape features that will bind the neighborhood into a cohesive unit. Although such criteria are often generally required, seldom does a land developer, who intends to sell the subdivision to a builder or builders, bother to provide significant criteria. The result is either a hodge-podge of different builders’ production houses with no continuity of material or architecture or a blandness that results from a single builder using a limited number of home design options. Without specific criteria, a zoning commission must negotiate these details on an individual (and therefore, inconsistent) basis. Cluster housing demands greater advance planning and significant landscape architecture and architectural design elements.



A portion of Trail's End subdivision Although developed under the PR standards, the project includes many features of a Conservation Subdivision (see next section).

- **Density calculation** - Over the past few years, several townships have adopted a “net” density calculation within their District standards, resulting in a hybrid model that does not require the typical 50% open space of a Conservation Subdivision but results in open space of a higher quality than the typical PR zoning.

The Liberty Township Planned Residential District language includes the following design characteristics:

- 1.5 dwelling units per net developable acre;
- Open space of 20% gross acreage, designation of “Common Open Space,” “Open Space,” and “Natural Green Space,” based on definition of use;
- Walkways, street trees, bikeways and bike paths, and screening and buffering;
- Preservation Areas: wetlands, steep slopes, ravines are preserved to the greatest extent possible;
- Other general design features such as landscaping, parking, signage, lighting, etc.

### Alternative Development Patterns

The FR-1 district, which requires a minimum 1-acre lot, has been the prevailing development pattern in areas without sewer service. The Planned Residential and Planned Commercial districts have been the prevailing development patterns in areas with sewer service. There are alternative development patterns to consider.

The American Planning Association, the Urban Land Institute, and the National Association of Home Builders all support “Smart Growth” types of development. Smart Growth is a term intended to represent more compact and efficient designs that reduce sprawl and reduce individual automobile trips. “New Urbanism” is a Smart Growth alternative for urban densities in urban and sub-urban settings. The “Conservation Subdivision” is a Smart Growth alternative for rural areas.

### Conservation Subdivisions: A Way to Preserve Rural Character

Conservation Subdivisions are compact residential neighborhoods that save rural character by preserving open space in a natural setting. They are typically developed at densities of less than one unit per acre. The following descriptions and graphics are presented with permission of Randall Arendt from his book *Conservation Design for Subdivisions* (1996, Island Press).

Conservation Subdivisions incorporate the following elements:

- The design is typically “density-neutral,” meaning the overall number of dwellings allowed is the same as would be permitted in a conventional subdivision layout.
- 50% or more of the buildable land area is typically designated as open space.
- “Primary” conservation areas (wetlands, vegetated corridors, steep slopes, and floodplains) are protected.
- “Secondary” Conservation Areas such as woodlands, meadows, wildlife habitats, historic, archaeological or cultural features, and views are preserved to the best extent possible.
- Compact house lots are grouped adjacent to the open space.
- Streets are interconnected to avoid dead ends wherever possible.
- Open space is connected by trails or walkways.

In its 2015 Zoning Resolution amendments, Liberty Township added the Planned Residence Conservation District (PRC) as an option for landowners. It requires the typical rezoning process as the Planned Residence District. The basic standards include:

- 1.5 units per net developable acre;
- Open space requirement of 50%, 15% of which shall be suitable for active recreation purposes.

### New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Design

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is a reaction to conventional suburban sprawl by a school of architects. Known as “The New Urbanism,” principles of planning and architecture work together to create human-scale, walkable communities similar to neighborhoods that were typical in the United States before World War II, such as Delaware’s north end historic district and old Sunbury. Benefits of this type of development include reduced auto trips, more compact infrastructure, more efficient land-consumption, and potentially positive fiscal impact as values per acre tend to be much higher.

An authentic “New Urban” neighborhood contains most of these elements:

- A discernible center—a square or a green and sometimes a busy or memorable corner. A transit stop would be located at this center.
- Most dwellings within a five-minute walk of the center, an average of roughly 2,000 feet.
- A variety of dwelling types — houses, townhouses, and apartments — so that younger and older people, singles and families, and various economic levels may find places to live.
- A school close enough so that most students can walk from their home.
- Small playgrounds accessible to every dwelling — not



Site before development



Typical layout with acreage lots



Identifying conservation areas



End result, same number of houses



Clark's Grove, a development with a mixture of lot sizes in Covington, Georgia, is a small-scale TND surrounding a school and park site.

more than a tenth of a mile away.

- Streets form a connected network, dispersing traffic by providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.
- Streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees, slowing traffic and creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Parking lots and garage doors rarely front the street. Parking is to the rear of buildings, accessed by alleys.
- Shops and offices of sufficiently varied types to supply the weekly needs of a household located at the edge of the residential area.
- Buildings in the neighborhood center are placed close to the street, creating a well-defined outdoor room.
- Certain prominent sites at the termination of street vistas or in the neighborhood center are reserved for civic buildings. These provide sites for community meetings, education, and religious or cultural activities.

For certain projects, commercial developers are currently incorporating some but not all of these elements in their designs. “Lifestyle Centers” are being promoted as the next generation of the shopping mall. These centers typically include an open-air layout and a mix of specialty stores. Such “hybrid,” retail-intense developments often have an immense scale of retail. Many lack a true mixture of uses and ownership and lack public open space and institutional uses.

In 2016, the rezoning process began on Evans Farm in Orange and Berlin Townships. The overall plan covers more than 1,100 acres and proposes over 2,000 single-family parcels of varying sizes, more than 500 other types of housing units (townhouses, multi-family over retail), two commercial areas, a school site, parks, trails, and recreational features. It will also be the site of a 54-acre Jennings Sports Park.



A smaller-scale town center is a viable option for Liberty Township if a sizeable site with adequate access can be served with sanitary sewer. Such a site could include a small, walkable commercial area surrounded by a core of residential units that would help create a core group of close-by customers.

For Liberty Township to permit a traditional neighborhood design, its zoning code could be amended to provide for additional flexibility and density, unless the new Planned Multi-Family Residence District and current

Figure X. Evans Farm as of March, 2022

Figure X. Evans Farm Development Plan, Orange and Berlin Townships

### Economic Development Tools

The process of actively seeking new businesses and encouraging existing businesses to grow is performed on the county and municipal level. The following is a list of economic tools and development-related issues that the Township should be aware of.

#### Enterprise Zones

Enterprise Zones allow for tax abatements on industrial projects conducted within the zone. Abatements can be made for improvements on the real property as a result of the project. Personal property abatements can be taken on machinery, equipment, furniture, fixtures, and inventory that is new or first-used in the State of Ohio. A three-member negotiation team reviews and negotiates the project.

Delaware County currently has three active zones: the City of Delaware Enterprise Zone, the Orange Township Enterprise Zone, and the Village of Sunbury Enterprise Zone. Tax levels can be abated up to a percentage for a defined number of years. This program has a requirement of job creation associated with any abated project. If properly managed, this program has proven to be an engine of growth.

#### Finance Authority (Port Authority legislation)

Port Authorities are political subdivisions created by statute for the purpose of enhancing and promoting transportation, economic development, housing, recreation, research, and other issues within the jurisdiction of the authority. They can acquire and sell property, issue bonds, loan monies for construction, operate property in connection with transportation, recreation, government operations, or cultural purposes, engage in activities on behalf of other political subdivisions, among many other functions. It may issue revenue bonds, apply for grants and loans, and even levy a property tax not exceeding one mill for a maximum period of five years. In short, the Authorities can accomplish much more in a competitive fashion than a government entity which is limited by disclosure requirements.

### New Community Authority

The “New Community Authority” (NCA) is a tool defined by ORC 349. It is a process where a district is created for the “conduct of industrial, commercial, residential, cultural, educational, and recreational activities, and designed in accordance with planning concepts for the placement of utility, open space, and other supportive facilities.” The establishment of the Authority can identify sources of revenue, such as a community development charge, or a dollar amount determined on the basis of the assessed valuation of real property.

The New Community district is an area of land described by the developer in a petition and approved by the County Commissioners. The ORC allows the addition of land to the district by amendment by request of landowners.

A New Community Authority may do many things as defined in the Ohio Revised Code, including:

- acquire and dispose of property;
- engage in educational, health, social, vocational, cultural, beautification, landscaping, and recreational activities and related services primarily for residents of the district;
- collect and receive service and user fees;
- adopt rules governing the use of community facilities;
- employ managers and employees;
- sue and be sued;
- enter into contracts, apply for and accept grants, and issue bonds;
- maintain funds or reserves for performance of its duties;
- enter agreements with boards of education for the acquisition of land or other services for educational purposes; and
- engage in planning efforts.

Two New Community Authorities currently impact or have the potential impact within Liberty Township. The Liberty/Powell CA was established to help fund improvements in and around Golf Village. That NCA includes Scioto Reserve in Concord Township, as well as Liberty Village at Steitz Road. The Concord/Scioto NCA was created to accompany the development of the Lower Scioto Wastewater Treatment Plant. Projects that include extension of infrastructure into that plant may petition to be part of that NCA. Liberty lands

include Clark Shaw Reserve South, Harvest Curve, and Harvest Point. Liberty Grand also includes a new Community Authority.

### Community Reinvestment Areas

Community Reinvestment Areas (CRAs) are designated zones where tax abatements are allowable on improvements made as a result of a business expansion or relocation project. Job creation is an additional requirement for participation in the Community Reinvestment Area program.

Only one CRA exists in Delaware County, located in the City of Delaware with the same boundaries as the Delaware Enterprise Zone. The available abatement rate can extend up to 100% on the real property improvements for a term of up to 15 years. The abatement rate and term is a unique negotiation for each project, considering such factors as job creation numbers and real and personal property investment levels.

### Tax Increment Financing

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a program to finance public infrastructure by redirecting new real and personal property tax to a debt retirement fund. The value of the property tax exempted is paid as a Service Payment-in-Lieu of Taxes (equal to the amount of exempted value), due at the same time property taxes are due. The portion of the property tax on *improvements* to a site may be up to 75% for 10 years.

TIFs can be created prior to development or after. If existing businesses are involved, a county negotiating committee meets with businesses and discusses if the TIF program can be utilized for a proposed project. If so, the committee will work with the business to reach an agreed exemption level. The Delaware County Economic Development Office works with both the business and negotiating committee to facilitate the process. TIFs are used generally in commercial and industrial settings. Residential TIFs should only be applied where related infrastructure meets a larger public purpose and should be approved only if a number of conditions are met. TIFs should be supported by the local jurisdiction, the applicable school district (unless the district is “made whole”), local fire district, and county representatives.

### Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit

The Ohio Department of Development administers this program in conjunction with local incentive program participation. This program allows a business to receive a tax credit or even a refund against its corporate franchise tax based upon the number of new jobs created with the project.

The requirements of the program are that at least 25 new, full-time jobs must be created within three years of the beginning of the project, and that the new employees must be paid a minimum of 150% of the federal minimum wage.

The Job Creation Tax Credit is a direct credit against a business’ corporate franchise tax. The basis of the credit lies in the state income tax withholding

per new employee. The tax credit will be figured from the state income tax withheld for the new employees. A percentage of the withheld tax will be credited against the business' corporate franchise tax each year for the term of the agreement. This rate can be up to 75% with a term of up to 10 years.

The Delaware County Economic Development Office will work with businesses interested in this program and put them in contact with the Ohio Department of Development's representative.

### Impact Fees

With increased costs due to rapid growth, many communities would like to impose impact fees on new development. Models for estimating the fiscal impact of new development were developed by Robert Burchell, David Listokin, and William Dolphin in *The New Practitioner's Guide to Fiscal Impact Analysis*, (Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 1985), and the *Development Assessment Handbook*, Urban Land Institute, 1994).

Ohio planning and zoning legislation does not empower townships to charge impact fees that offset costs of service expansion (roads, schools, parks, etc.). It has been generally held, however, that if road improvements are needed immediately adjacent to the development, and can be directly attributable to the project, and if the benefit of contributing to the improvement outweighs the burden of such improvement for the development in question, a "fair share" contribution to the improvement can be requested by the community.

Alternatively, if large proposed developments do not reasonably mitigate their own impacts, they may impose an undue burden on the township. In such cases the rezoning may be premature.

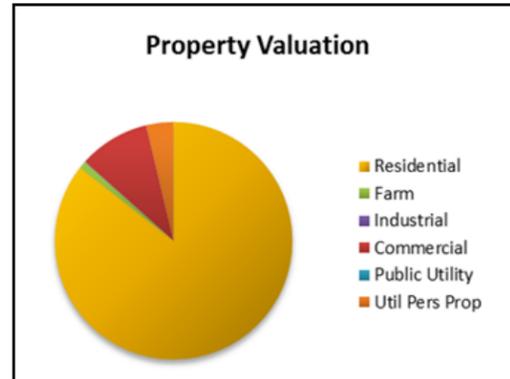
Under the current legal system in Ohio, townships must be aware of the need to encourage a mix of commercial, industrial, and a variety of residential uses to curtail the growth of property taxes.

## Rates of Taxation and Revenues

### Property Valuation

The unincorporated areas in the County are funded primarily with property taxes. As of Tax Year 2021, Liberty Township's residential property was valued at \$961,524,610, which is third behind Orange (\$1.1 billion) and Genoa (\$1.06 billion) Townships. The City of Powell's residential value is \$546 million. The Township has seen steady growth in its residential land value, with a 9.1% growth rate between 2019 and 2020 and 2.9% from 2020 to 2021. Liberty Township's farm value is \$8,713,990.

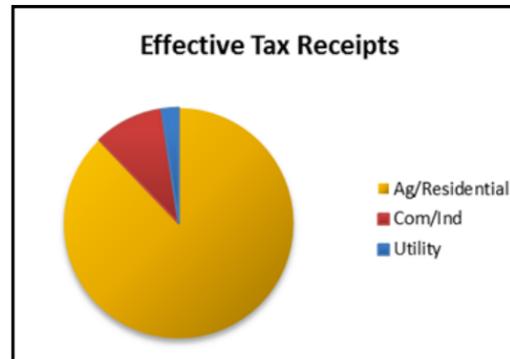
The Township's commercial, industrial, and utility real properties are valued at \$94,478,820, which is second behind only Orange Township with \$227 million. The next highest is Berkshire Township at \$28 million. Powell's non-residential land is valued at \$55 million.



Adding in farm uses, utilities, and personal tangible value, the total valuation for Liberty Township is \$1,109,776,220. This represents 19% of the unincorporated total \$5,823,004,280.

### Effective Tax Receipts

The County Auditor estimates the effective tax receipts from each community, based on land use type. Unfortunately, there are only three broad categories listed: Agricultural/Residential (\$10,312,157), Utilities (\$420,009), and All Others, which are displayed as Commercial/Industrial (\$1,087,347). (2020)



The revenue is divided among four categories in Liberty Township: Road (\$1,316,574), General (\$1,540,652), Bond (\$393,717), and Fire and EMS (\$8,568,569). (2020)

### Millage Paid by Property Owners

The County Treasurer maintains a list of all mills levied on each dollar of property within the County. Individual taxes are based on the rate multiplied by the property valuation of each property. Ohio law limits the amount of tax-

ation without a vote of the people to what is known as the "10 mill limit" (\$10 per thousand of assessed valuation). Any additional real estate taxes for any purpose must be voted by residents.

Several school districts lie within Liberty Township, so there are several calculations for tax rates throughout the unincorporated Township. The Township's 2016 effective tax rates include the following, based on the Auditor's online property report function:

### Residential

The figures in the table are taken from a sample property within the unincorporated portion of Liberty Township in the Olentangy district.

The total market value of this example is **\$418,000**, which is slightly higher than the overall County average. Total tax paid was **\$10,068.44**.

Agency	Eff. Rate	Amount	Percent
Olentangy	56.597	\$7,477.94	74.3
DACC	2.22	\$285.39	2.8
Health	0.486	\$62.25	0.6
Preservation Parks	1.12	\$156.68	1.6
Library	0.77	\$99.37	1.0
*Liberty Twp. (twp)	1.2	\$153.62	1.5
Liberty Twp.	5.622	\$719.66	7.1
**County Agencies	4.915	\$637.28	6.3
Mental Health	0.781	\$100.03	1.0
911	0.545	\$73.29	0.7

### Commercial/Office

Townships also receive a portion of the commercial and industrial taxes collected by the County. As noted previously, non-residential uses play a vital role in the fiscal health of any community. While they generate taxes for the community, they do not generate any costs to the school district. Tax rates within townships are different based on the school district boundaries, at rates slightly above the residential rate.

Agency	Eff. Rate	Amount	Percent
Olentangy	64.081	\$13,425.61	76.4
DACC	2.283	\$478.44	2.7
Health	0.621	\$130.19	0.7
Preservation Parks	1.243	\$260.45	1.5
Library	0.93	\$194.93	1.1
*Liberty Twp. (twp)	1.2	\$251.41	1.4
Liberty Twp.	6.446	\$1,350.50	7.7
**County Agencies	5.44	\$1,140.82	6.5
Mental Health	0.935	\$195.79	1.1
911	0.638	\$133.58	0.8

The figures in the table are taken from a large single-use commercial property in the unincorporated portion of Liberty Township, Olentangy district. The total market value is **\$598,600**. Total tax paid in this scenario was **\$17,561.70**.

\*Incorporated areas do not pay this. \*\*Includes Sourcepoint, DCBDD, Bond, and General Funds.

**Sources of Property Tax**

The following tables and map indicate the highest-paying commercial and industrial uses within the unincorporated areas and within Powell. Each use displays the Taxable Total from the Auditor’s information, the total Taxes Paid in 2021, and the portion of that tax that came to Liberty Township. For the unincorporated areas, this tax includes both effective rates of 1.2 and 5.622 as indicated in the table to the left.

The map indicates all uses that are in the tax category of commercial and industrial. This map is created with the “Taxable Total” figure and includes some uses that do not pay taxes or are taxed at a much lower rate. These can include churches, schools, and other public uses.

**Highest-value Commercial Taxed Properties in Unincorporated Liberty Township**

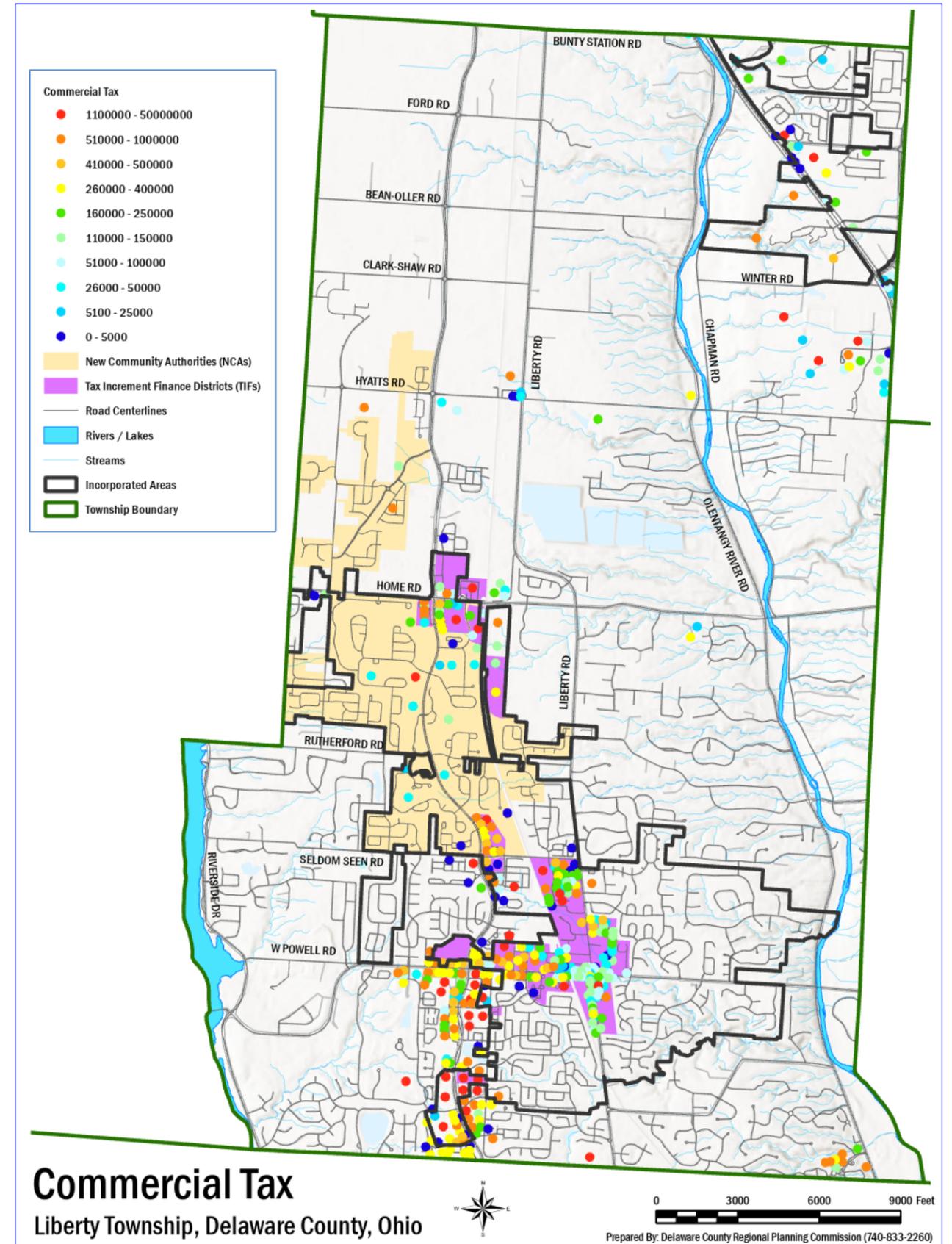
OWNER NAME	Address	Taxable Total	Taxes paid 2021	Twp portion*
Citigroup Technology Inc	306 Greif Parkway	\$58,069,690	\$2,056,213	\$225,566.56
Liberty Summit Apartments	3156 Home Road	\$3,396,820	\$285,059	\$25,972.06
Greif Bros Corp of Ohio Inc	366 Greif Parkway	\$2,770,710	\$232,427	\$21,184.75
SJSS Powell (Kroger strip center with Pet Supplies Plus)	9820 Brewster Lane	\$2,577,510	\$216,208	\$19,707.56
Rennob Inc. (Wedgewood Golf and Country Club)	9600 Wedgewood Blvd	\$2,275,000	\$190,697	\$17,394.65
Powell Plaza Holdings LLC (Drug Mart and retail)	9965 Sawmill Parkway	\$1,927,210	\$161,544	\$14,735.39
Wedgewood Office Park	3751 Attucks Drive	\$1,836,700	\$155,577	\$14,043.35
Greif Bros Corp of Ohio	425 Winter Road	\$1,749,410	\$146,640	\$11,276.64
Greensview Apartments	3800 Greensview Drive	\$1,659,390	\$139,094	\$12,687.64
The Kroger Company	3975 W. Powell Road	\$1,645,000	\$138,124	\$12,651.17
Fred Fitzgerald Ohio Apts. (Bear Pointe Apts.)	3301 Bear Pointe Circle	\$1,590,120	\$133,289	\$12,229.12
Ramar Land Corp (State Auto) (partial abatement)	268 Greif Parkway	\$1,551,520	\$43,251	\$4,744.63
Scarlet Investments LLC (Sheetz)	3641 Seldom Seen Road	\$1,312,500	\$110,017	\$10,035.34
Retail Rocks II LLC (Liberty Crossing Shopping)	9711 Sawmill Parkway	\$1,296,120	\$109,673	\$9,910.17
Sawmill Business Park II LLC	3934 North Hampton Dr	\$1,159,060	\$97,155	\$8,862.13

\*This column is the calculated portion, not the paid portion.

**Highest-value Commercial Taxed Properties in the City of Powell**

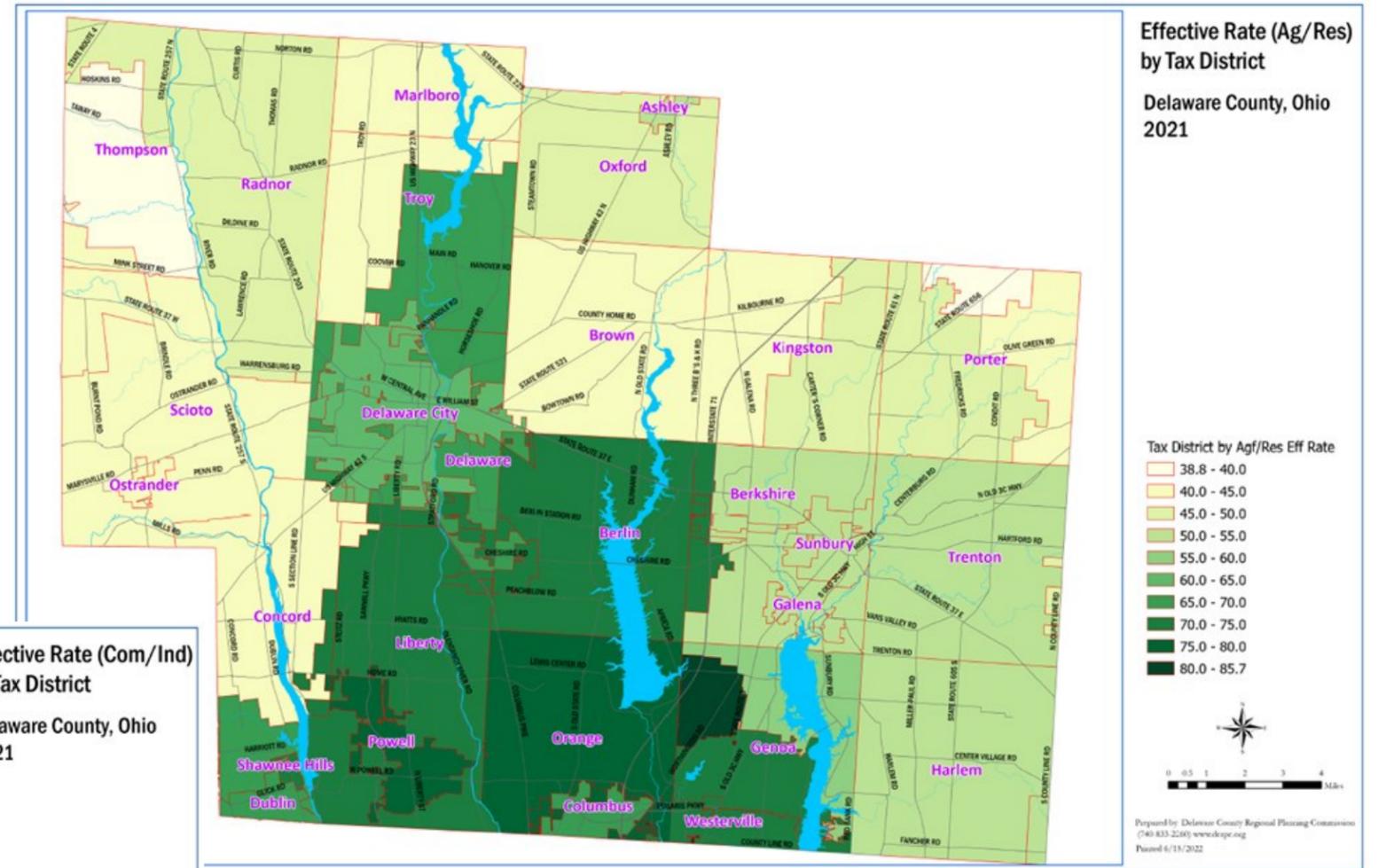
OWNER NAME	Address	Taxable Total	Taxes paid 2021	Twp portion (calc)
Benchmark Investments (Powell Senior Living)	10351 Sawmill Parkway	\$4,812,640	\$427,099	\$31,022.13
Powell Grand Communities	3400 Club Way Court	\$3,639,510	\$308,229	\$23,460.17
Target Corporation	10560 Sawmill Parkway	\$2,922,500	\$253,682	\$18,838.41
Benchmark Investments XII LP	3872 Attucks Drive	\$2,778,020	\$253,682	\$18,838.41
SROA 422 Village Park (Storage Rentals of America)	422 Village Park Drive	\$2,268,600	\$192,292	\$14,623.32
Powell Crossing Apartments	46 Crossing Street	\$2,200,840	\$186,329	\$14,186.55
Ganzhorn Suites of Powell	10272 Sawmill Parkway	\$1,964,830	\$167,418	\$12,665.24
The Kroger Company (unbuilt)	7525 Guard-Well Street	\$1,642,030	\$163,642	\$10,584.48
Mt. Carmel Health System	10330 Sawmill Parkway	\$1,594,920	\$135,030	\$10,280.80
Kinsale Golf and Fitness Club LLC	3737 Village Club Drive	\$1,523,760	\$144,625	\$9,822.17
Store Master Funding IV LLC (Enchanted Care Kids)	8761 Moreland Street	\$1,470,000	\$139,521	\$9,475.57
Nightingale Ventures LTD (Abbotsgate)	177 Penny Lane	\$1,372,630	\$116,210	\$8,847.93
LDH 2000 Family LLC (Wolf Commerce Park)	489 Village Park Drive	\$1,260,000	\$106,675	\$8,121.92
Simply Storage Powell LLC (Mini-Storage)	7533 Woodcutter Drive	\$1,118,640	\$106,173	\$7,210.72
PS Mid-West Two Cardinal 2020 LLC (Mini-Storage)	72 Industrial Parkway	\$1,093,510	\$93,534	\$7,048.73

\*This column is the calculated portion, not the paid portion.



## County-Wide Tax District Comparison

The following maps use County Auditor data to compare the total millage paid by each tax districts. The primary determination of tax districts are the township, incorporation area, and school district. Libraries can also affect boundaries. These maps do not take into account Tax Increment Financing districts and other special tax situation. Income tax is also not a factor.

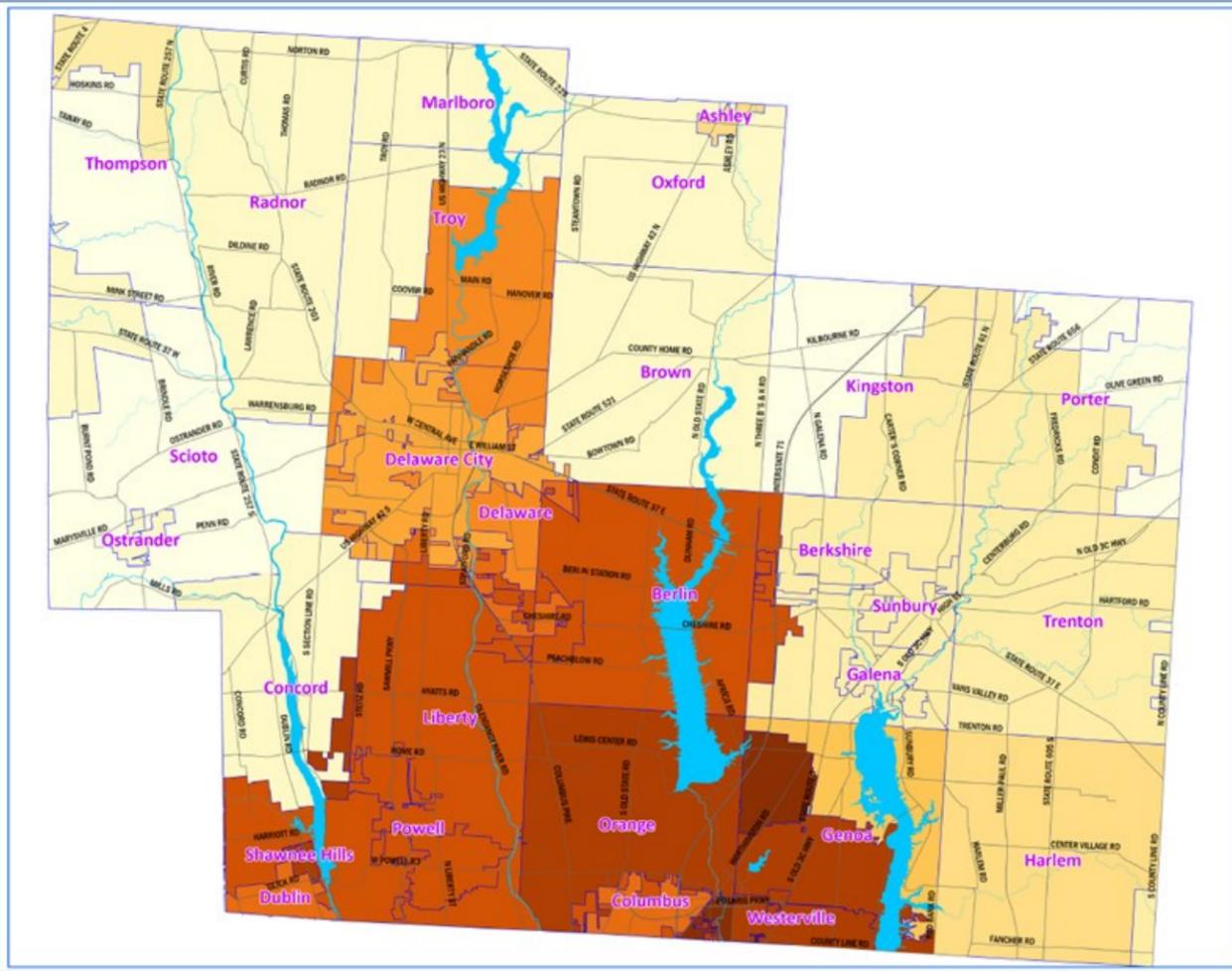


Effective Rate (Com/Ind)  
by Tax District  
Delaware County, Ohio  
2021

Effective Rate (Ag/Res)  
by Tax District  
Delaware County, Ohio  
2021



Effective Rate (Com/Ind)  
by Tax District  
Delaware County, Ohio  
2021



# INFRASTRUCTURE

## infrastructure

### General

Infrastructure is a term that can include a variety of things, mostly having to do with manmade improvements to the natural environment. Drinking water, sanitary sewer, wired and wireless phone service, electric, natural gas, cable television, and high speed internet are desirable utilities in developing areas.

Stormwater management, roads, trails round out what we usually refer to as infrastructure.

How will the Township respond to ongoing density and use challenges while retaining the idea of “rural character?” Are utility constraints also Township growth constraints? The answers lie in this Comprehensive Plan update and corresponding Delaware County plans for future sewers.

### Del-Co Water

Since 1973, the Del-Co Water Company is a cooperatively owned private water company located in Liberty Township on State Route 315. Del-Co Water currently serves all of Liberty Township with the exception of homes south of the zoo on Riverside Drive. Del-Co Water has expanded its service to provide larger diameter water lines for fire protection.

There is generally good water pressure for domestic use and fire protection throughout the Township. Some pockets of lower pressure such as along Ford Road in the northwest area of the Township will receive service improvements in the future upon construction of another elevated storage tank in the Bunty Station and Section Line Road area.

Del-Co Water utilizes water from the Olentangy River, Alum Creek Reservoir, and from the Scioto River utilizing a

recently-installed raw water line in Liberty Township. Wells along the Kokosing River in Knox County provide additional supply. The water is pumped to upground reservoirs in Orange Township (800 million-gallon capacity) and Liberty Township (1.6 billion-gallon capacity). Raw water is purified at the Alum Creek, Old State Road, and State Route 315 treatment plants, and then pumped to a network of elevated storage tanks with 12.5 million gallons capacity. The current purification system has the capacity to treat 21.7 million gallons per day (mgd) of raw water.

With these facilities and others in Morrow County, a total of 38 million gallons per day is the long-term pumping and treatment capacity of Del-Co. Del-Co does not have unlimited supply options. Potable centralized water is not currently a constraining factor to growth of the Township. There is adequate water capacity for human consumption and population growth. The demands for lawn sprinkling systems, however, can quickly tax capacity in dry spells. As a result, Del-Co imposed a year round, three days per week restriction on lawn watering.

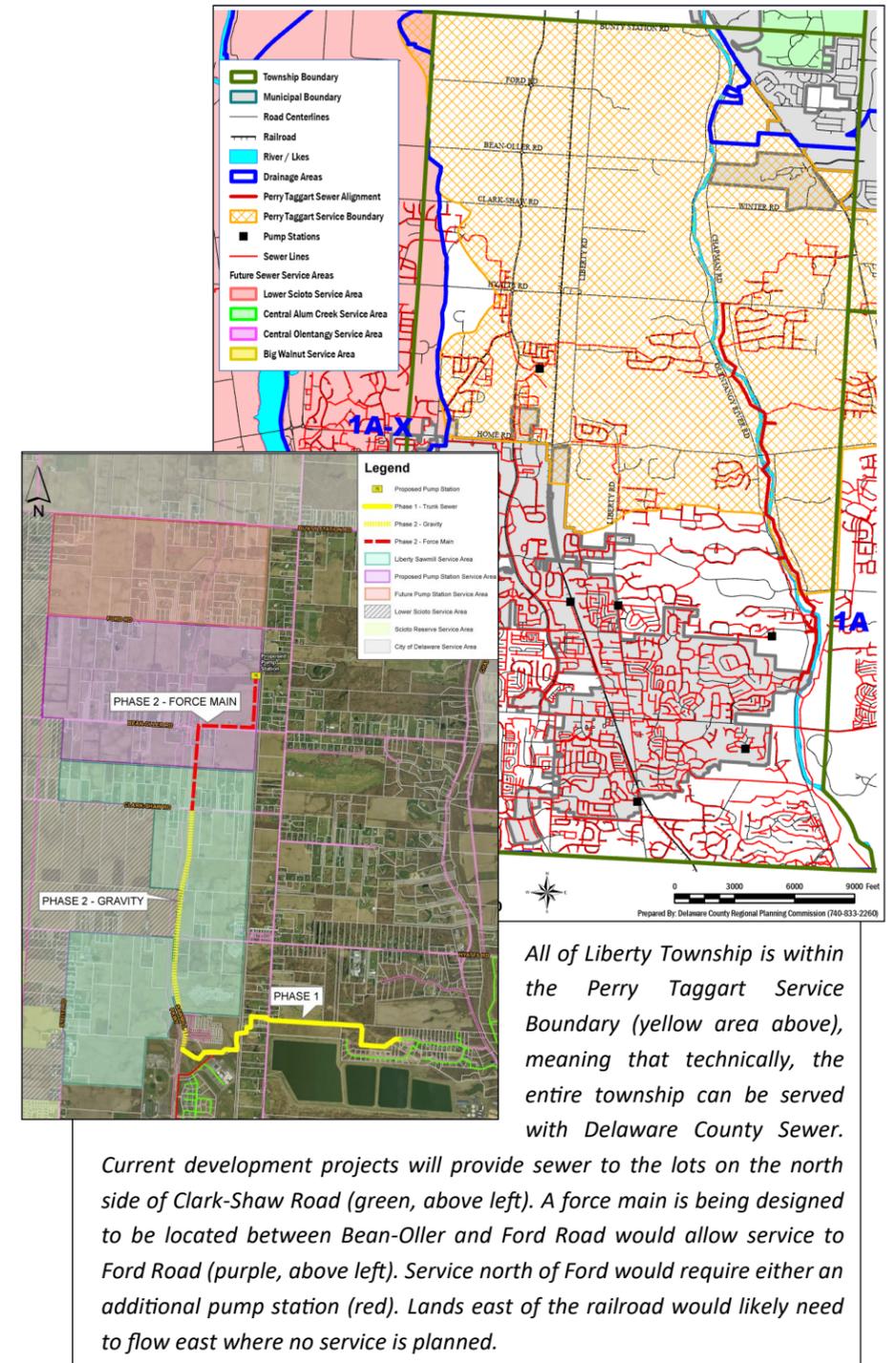
An agreement made by Del-Co Water with the City of Delaware in 2003 impacts local planning and zoning control over a certain area of Liberty Township, specifically north of Camp Lazarus and Peachblow Road. In that agreement, the company gave up approximately 16,000 acres of its established water service area to the City of Delaware. The City of Delaware has the right to provide water service to this area, and to require annexation in order receive city services. If this agreement is enforced, Liberty Township might expect to lose the potential income-generating U.S. 23 commercial corridor to the City of Delaware, depending on the annexation arrangement.

### Sanitary Sewers

Delaware County provides sewer service to southern Delaware County including Liberty Township and the City of Powell. As of 2022, there is sewer service from the Franklin County line north to Home Road on the west side of the Olentangy River. On the east side of the Olentangy River, there is sewer service to various residential subdivisions, eventually extending to the Greif Brothers office park on U.S. 23. West of the Olentangy, lines currently

extend as far north as Hyatts Road. These areas are served by the Olentangy Environmental Control Center (OECC) on S.R. 315.

The Lower Scioto treatment plant is located at Moore Road in Concord Township on the west side of the O’Shaughnessy Reservoir and has a capacity of 1.4 mgd. Going online in 2018, it serves development north of Hyatts road, from Sawmill Parkway west.



Regarding sewer capacity, the County makes the following assumptions:

1. The County Commissioners' sewer user policy is "first come, first served." When the available capacity is gone, no additional taps are issued until improvements are made.
2. It is the local zoning authority's responsibility to control density through zoning, and to assure that excessive densities are not granted to one landowner to the point of depriving another landowner his planned sewer capacity. For these reasons, it is important that Liberty Township's proposed densities not exceed the sewer capacity.

### Electric

American Electric Power (AEP) supplies electric service to Liberty Township. AEP has a substation at the corner of Hyatts and Liberty Roads, as well as a nearby substation in Orange Township at Orange Road and the railroad tracks. Major electric transmission lines cross Liberty Township. There is presumed to be adequate electric power for the growth of Liberty Township.

### Gas

Columbia Gas serves Liberty Township. The steady growth in Delaware County caused Columbia Gas to plan a major new looped supply line from Marion County to serve all of Delaware County. A pipeline was upgraded coming into the township from the east along the high-tension powerline easements, then travelling along the south edge of the Del-Co reservoirs, turning south down a portion of Liberty Road (see purple line on map). Natural gas is not a limiting factor in the long-term growth of Liberty Township.

### Telecommunications/Internet Service

Based on private sector marketing information, areas of the Township are serviced by high-speed cable broadband. It is almost completely serviced by DSL broadband and mostly serviced by Fixed Wireless broadband, except for an area generally along the Olentangy River. The Township is not serviced by Fiber broadband at the moment. Most of Liberty Township is served by Charter Communications, which offers Spectrum internet service. In all, the Township, by one broadband technology or another, has access to at least 25 megabytes per second download, 3 megabytes per second upload.

Delaware County has a robust fiber network from County offices in the City of Delaware to Worthington, including a number of lateral builds off of that main line. This network, intended solely for government use, connects several public agencies with capacity to expand connectivity to other public

agencies not yet connected, provided they pay the cost of adding lateral fiber to the main lines. This public limitation is based on the statutory authority of the County and the desire to not compete with the private sector.

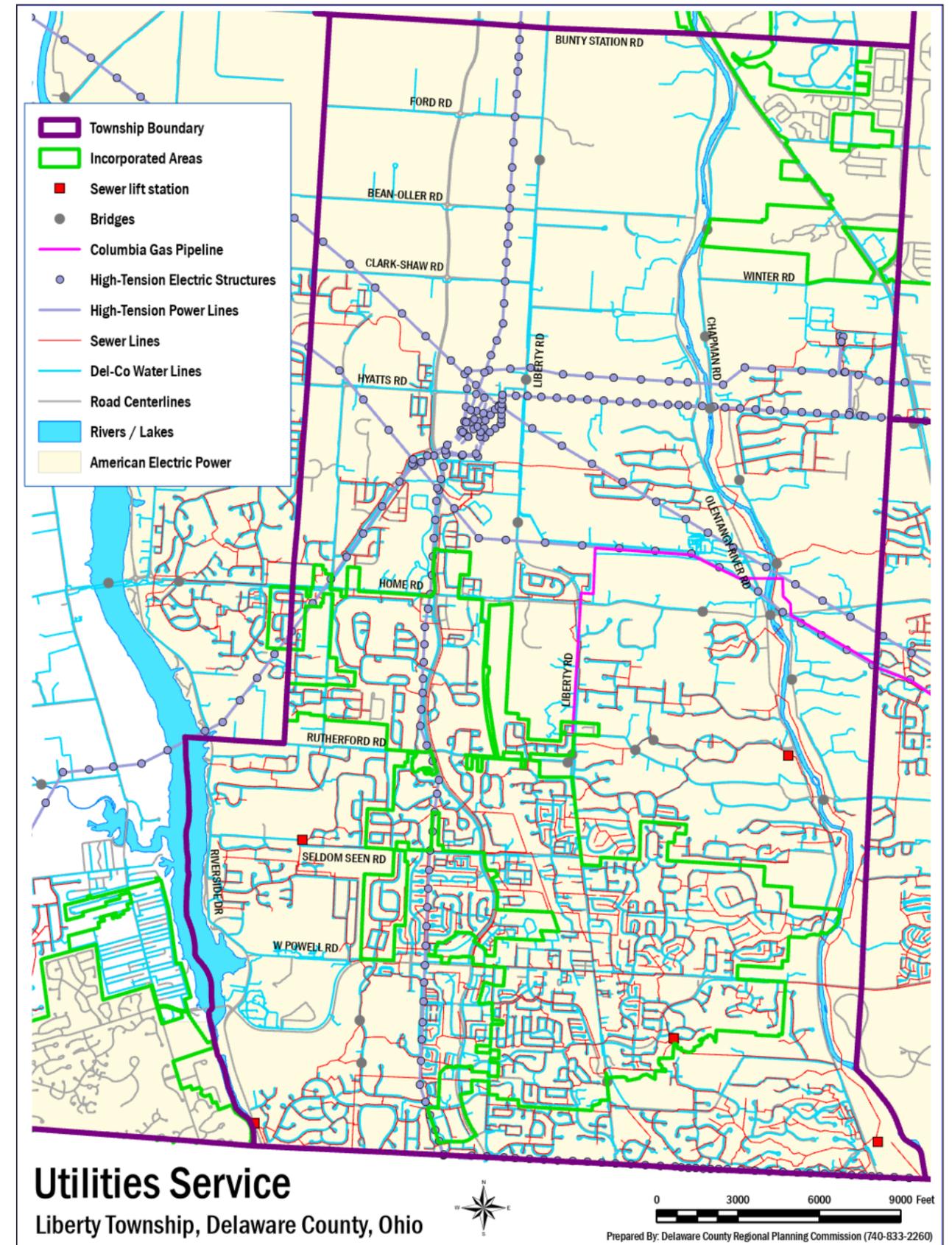
Additionally, Enlite Fiber Networks, part of Consolidated Electric, owns fiber in most of the same locations as the County, as well many more miles of additional fiber, catering to the private sector. Connect Ohio is an effort by the State of Ohio to encourage additional infrastructure where needed.

Under current state and federal laws, telecommunications towers are permitted in any non-residentially zoned districts. Under Ohio law, townships can regulate telecommunications towers in areas zoned for residential use if objections are filed by abutting property owners or a township trustee. Liberty Township has a set of cell tower regulations that were drafted in to implement the federal and state laws regulating telecommunications towers.

### Stormwater Management

Stormwater management is regulated by the Delaware County Engineer's Office for new subdivisions and road construction. The Delaware Soil & Water District maintains ditches on public maintenance and reviews stormwater plans by agreement with the County Engineer.

The following map shows various utilities for which the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission or Delaware County have data. Stormwater structure data is incomplete and not shown in this exhibit.



## Roads and Maintenance

Most of Liberty Township’s principal roads were farm-to-market roads laid out in the 1800s. They were typically built within a 50'-60' wide easement. Today these roads have been paved and generally have a range in width of 14'-20'. According to Delaware County Engineer standards, typical roads should have at least 20 feet of surface width with an additional shoulder of 5-7 feet on each side.

The Township maintains local township roads, the Delaware County Engineer maintains county roads, and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) District 6 maintains federal and state roads.

The need for road improvements represents one of the most difficult issues for Townships and the County. As the county has grown in population, the old road network is becoming overloaded with traffic. Improvements will have to be made, but “skinny roads,” their old fence lines, and street trees are part of the rural character.

### Functional Classifications

Roads are functionally classified by design and/or usage. Delaware County created a Functional Classification Map as part of the 2001 Delaware County Thoroughfare Plan. These classifications assist the County Engineer in determining future right-of-way needs.

**Arterial roads** have the primary purpose of carrying through traffic to and from residential, commercial, and industrial areas and the secondary purpose of providing access to abutting property. They are usually a continuous route carrying heavy loads and Average Daily Traffic (ADT) in excess of 3,500 vehicles.

**Collector roads** provide access to abutting property and also deliver traffic from local streets to the nearest arterial street. Average Daily

Traffic typically ranges from 1,500 to 3,500 vehicles, with AM peak hour traffic about 7-8% and PM peak hour of 10%.

**Local Streets** represent the lowest category. Their primary function is to serve abutting land use. Typical ADTs are 100 to 1,500 vehicles. Local streets are classified as Loop, Through, and Cul-de-sac. All streets other than arterials and collectors are considered local streets.

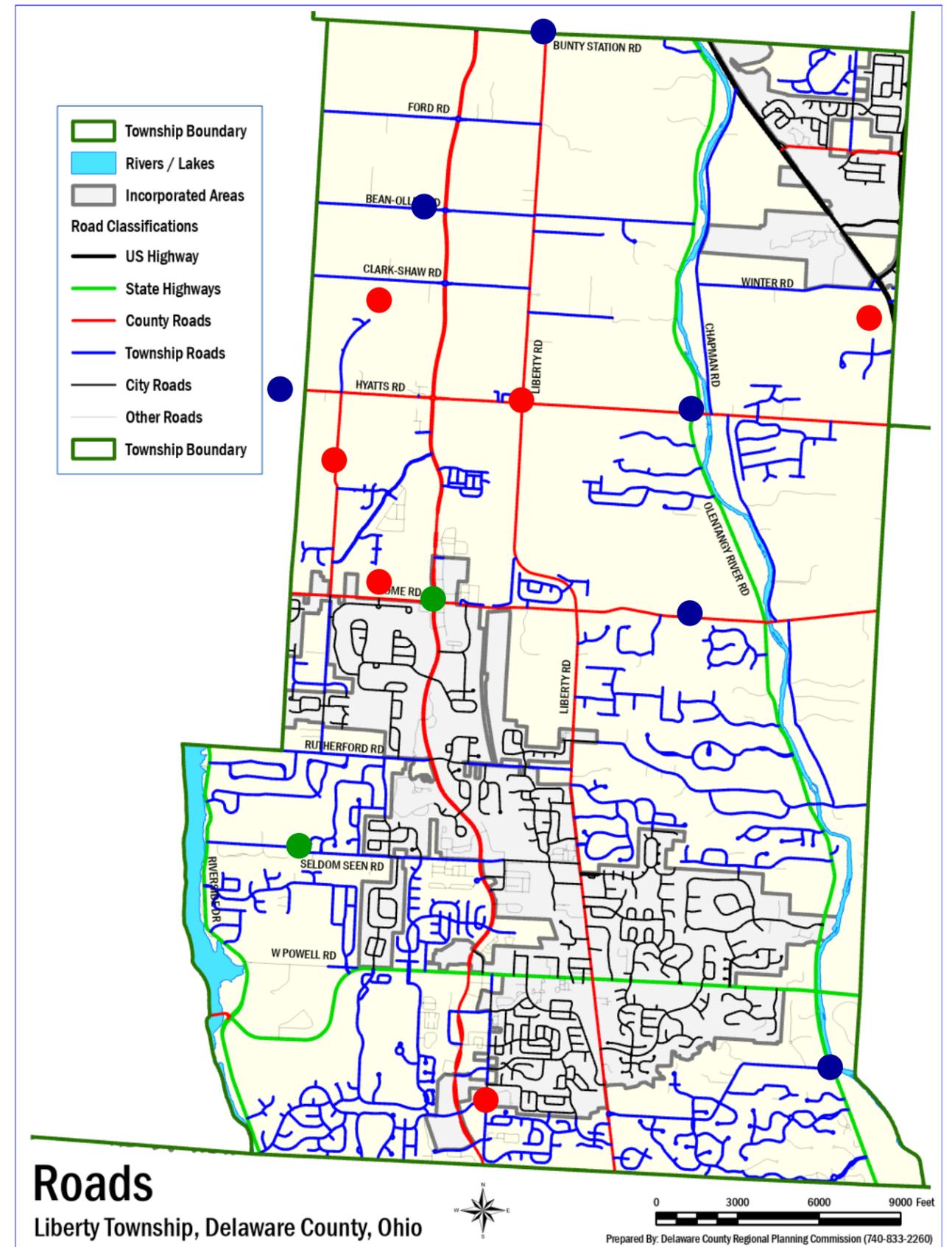
**Traffic Volumes** collected by various entities including ODOT and the Delaware County Engineer are hosted online by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). Roads show significant increased traffic on Liberty Township roads in recent decades. Heavy traffic on narrow roads becomes both a congestion and safety issue to the point the road may need to be upgraded. The Township, the County Engineer, and ODOT should expect to upgrade roads as growth continues.

Road improvements currently in the County Engineer’s Capital Improvement Project list in or near the township are as follows:

### Patterns of Development

Traffic is impacted by the design of development and the mix of land uses. A typical single-family

Project	Timing	Project	Timing
Seldom Seen S Curve	Completed	Steitz completion to Clark Shaw	Developer 2023?
Home Road and Sawmill Parkway Imp.	Completed	Hyatts and S. Section Line imp.	Early Design
Sawmill Parkway at Section Line (Delaware City)	Construction	Home Road from Liberty to 315	Engineering
Presidential/Sawmill Road Intersection	Construction 2023	Bean Oller 200 feet west of Sawmill	Engineering
Home Road Recreation Trail	Construction 2023	Liberty and Bunty Station intersection	Planning
Steitz Road widening	Construction 2024	ODOT—315 and Jewett Road Imp.	Planning
Hyatts Road east of Steitz widening	Construction 2024	ODOT—315 and Hyatts Rd Roundabout	Planning
Liberty Road and Hyatts intersection	Construction 2027	Orange Road Bridge Removal	No date
Cornerstone extention (by Cols State)	Construction 2027		



home in an exclusively residential area typically generates 10 trip ends per day (five out and five back). Condominiums generate almost six.

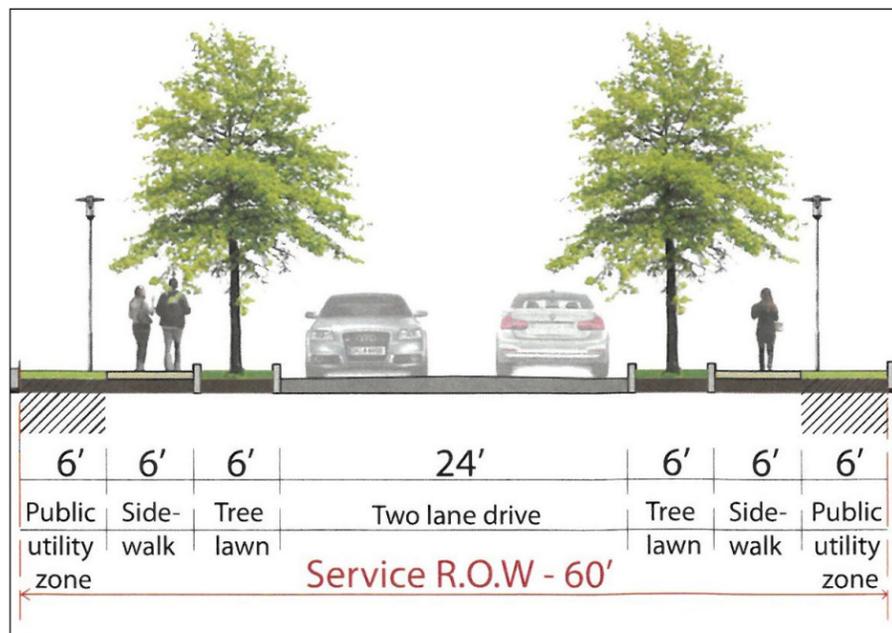
“Traditional Neighborhood Design” (TND) mixes residential and local commercial uses with a network of sidewalks, trails, and bike paths that can reduce auto trips to as little as four trips per home per day. One possible option for Liberty Township is to consider the mixed use, pedestrian-scale traditional neighborhood design type of development at nodes along major routes such as Sawmill Parkway. These TNDs can help reduce overall trips.

### Streetscapes

Streets are a significant part of the look of a community. Every community needs a streetscape standard. Liberty Township has retained some rural look by not unilaterally requiring curb and gutter streets.

For local streets with lot widths of 100 feet or larger, no through traffic, and fewer than 1,500 vehicle trips per day, the current standard 20-foot wide street with open ditches within a 60-foot right-of-way is acceptable. In an open ditch road, the sidewalk is typically located near the outside edge of the ditch, which must be designed thoughtfully. For collector and arterial roads, pedestrian and bike traffic should be separated from vehicular traffic.

Pictured is a conceptual streetscape for collector or arterial streets without open ditches. A 5-foot wide asphalt bike path may be preferable to a sidewalk to maintain the rural character of the road. A wider multi-use path may be placed on one side of the street for minor-collector streets. Major



collectors and arterials should have a bike path on at least one side of the street plus a sidewalk on the other side.

### Alternative Street Designs — The Roundabout

Low Speed Roundabouts have begun to be used as an alternative to the traditional signalized intersection throughout southern Delaware County. Roundabouts have been proven to reduce crashes, flow more traffic than traffic signals, cost less, and require less pavement than signalized intersections. Not all intersections are candidates, but the roundabout is a viable traffic management tool.

### Liberty Township Recommended Road Policies

New development must either mitigate or pay its fair share of the cost to mitigate its traffic impacts, in accordance with County Engineer policies.

**Separate pedestrian/bicycle traffic from vehicular traffic on collector and arterial roads:** Township collector and arterial roads with traffic counts that exceed 1,500 vehicle trips per day should be provided with a bike path on at least one side of the road. For new development, when a traffic impact analysis estimates more than 1,500 trips per day will be generated, a bike path should be constructed as part of the developer’s initial improvements. For existing roads, a bike path should be considered for construction by the Township once the actual traffic counts exceed 1,500 trips per day.

**Use traffic calming devices to maintain speed limits within residential subdivisions on local and minor collector streets:** Traffic calming devices including but not limited to speed tables and roundabouts should be part of the tools used to enforce posted speed limits on local residential and minor collector streets.

**Street connectivity is desirable:** The goal should be for developments to have three points of access. Conservation subdivisions, due to site specific topography or other unique conditions, may have fewer access points subject to development plan approval. Interconnectivity must be provided between developments.

**Access management practices should be followed:** Commercial developments should consolidate entrances and exits wherever possible to avoid multiple curb cuts. Left turn movements should be accomplished with proper spacing between movements to avoid conflicts. New developments that generate more than 150 new trips per day should be reviewed for possible turning lanes. The Delaware County Engineer has adopted access management guidelines for county roads that may be of interest to the

Trustees to use on township roads. Access management can encourage a more productive use of land by discouraging minor lot splits, and promote clustering of land uses and reduced access points.

**Encourage Best Management Practices (BMPs):** Developers should be encouraged to reduce impervious surfaces and manage stormwater runoff with structural BMPs (green infrastructure). These can be incorporated into the street design and roadside landscaping. BMPs include grass filter strips, water quality swales, bioretention cells, tree boxes, sand filters, and infiltration trenches.

### Bikeways/Multi-Use Paths

As roads become more congested there is a need to separate pedestrian and bicycle traffic from automobile and truck traffic for safety purposes, as well as for recreation and alternate transportation. There are no sidewalks or bike paths along many township collector and arterial roads. Sawmill Parkway now has a bike path along at least one side from Attucks Drive all the way to S.R. 42 north of the township.

MUP facilities should be placed along at least one side of collector and both sides of arterial roads. In curb and gutter designs, bikeways and sidewalks should be separated from the road with a 5-foot wide tree-lawn. Such facilities should be placed beyond the swale in an open-ditch road section. Most communities require standard sidewalks in subdivisions that go through the rezoning process. For many years, the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission has also sought sidewalks in subdivision, with a requirement in the Subdivision Regulations to capture those neighborhoods that do not go through the rezoning process, such as those within the FR-1 zoning designation.

The Olentangy, Powell and Liberty (OPAL) trail planning group encourages use of trails and biking in general and serves as an advocate for new trail planning. The Township’s Complete Streets policy seeks roads that function for all users, not just drivers. OPAL identified a number of desired routes prioritized by open houses and public survey. The following is a list of these routes. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate top priorities:

- **Liberty Road Trail\*** - Complete missing segments in trail gaps along Liberty Road. Approximately 1.4-mile trail to extend to Home Road.
- **Home Road Trail\*** - 4.2-mile east-west connector trail. Corridor to connect schools, trails, and parks, from Orange to Concord.
- **Rutherford Trail\*** - 1.5-mile trail to connect residential areas to Sawmill

Parkway on the east and Scioto River Trail on the west. Powell potentially to continue connection to existing trails.

- **Scioto River Trail\*** - 3.3-mile trail along City of Columbus property bordering the Scioto River west of S.R. 257. Trail to provide connections to Dublin, Columbus Zoo, Powell Road, and Home Road.
- **Sawmill Parkway Trail North\*** - 5-mile trail to be constructed in conjunction with the Sawmill Parkway extension. Begins in front of Olentangy Liberty High School and will include a missing piece up to Hyatts Road.
- **Park Trail Connector\*** - Connect South Liberty Park to North Liberty Park.
- **Olentangy River Trail South** - Route north connecting to the existing Olentangy River Trail in Franklin County by Metroparks.
- **Northwest Passage** - Trail to connect Library Park with Belmont Place; route would utilize existing roads to connect to Hills Market.
- **Carriage Road Trail** - 1.8-mile trail that would align with Carriage Road. East-west route that would connect to schools and YMCA. Extend eastern end to connect to Daventry Woods.
- **Olentangy River Trail North** - 5.4-mile trail to utilize existing roadways (Chapman and Taggart Roads) and greenspace to complete a connection to the City of Delaware.
- **Jewett Road Trail** - Proposed route that would connect Powell to the Olentangy River Trail, to run parallel with road.
- **Hyatts Road Trail** - Proposed 3-mile trail to be constructed along Hyatts Road. Beginning at Sawmill Parkway and extending east to U.S. 23

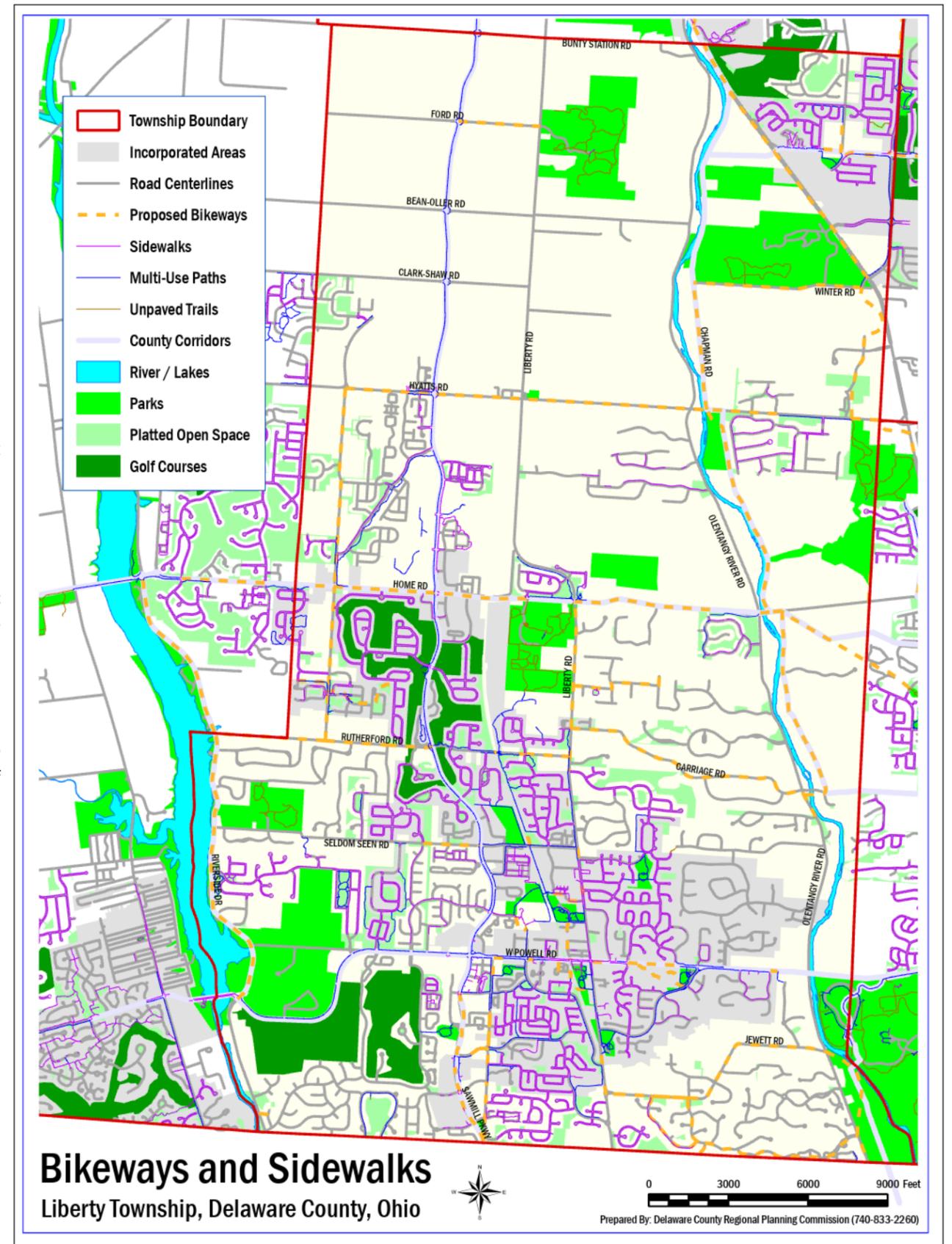


(Orange Township). Trail would connect to Shale Hollow Park and Columbus State.

- **Sawmill Parkway Trail South** - 1.1-mile route to extend Sawmill Parkway south to the County line.
- **Jewett Road Alternate Route** - Proposed second route for Jewett Road connection to S.R. 315, goes south along Loch Lomond Drive and Manning Parkway.

A Delaware County Trail Committee exists to support trail construction. In addition to publishing a county-wide Parks and Trails plan recommending additional trails, the committee advises the County Commissioners on a grant program. The program has distributed an annual amount of \$100,000 for trail improvements. This group includes representatives from DCRPC, the County Engineer, Preservation Parks, the Delaware General Health District, Economic Development, MORPC, and the public. Liberty Township has received funding for these projects over the past four years. These have all been along Home Road. The following map indicates proposed trails from various sources, as well as “committed” trails — those approved as part of subdivision and road plans — and sidewalk data.

Although there are several grant sources, the Clean Ohio Fund is a state-wide funding program often cited for trails and parks. For Delaware County projects, Preservation Parks received \$316,500 in 2020, \$500,000 in 2019, and \$492,000 in 2018, all for Ohio to Erie funding. Also in 2018, Orange Township was awarded \$575,000 for two projects, while \$366,306 was provided to the Village of Galena for trail development. Orange and Galena were also awarded funds in 2017.



## Introduction

The quality of life in the area can be defined by the various community features. These include Open Space, Parks, Police Protection, the Olentangy School System, and public community facilities.

## Open Space & Recreational Inventory

- 1. Liberty Township Park:** The Township's 93-acre Liberty Park at the southwest corner of Home and Liberty Roads has connectivity to the south with 25 acres of woods linking the 51-acre South Liberty Park that is located behind the Liberty Township Powell YMCA and to the north of Liberty Middle School. This 169-acre park campus has stone trails linking each facility. Amenities at Liberty Park include a fishing pond, 2 miles of walking trails, six sand volleyball courts, two horseshoe pits, four tennis courts, two basketball courts, four shelter houses (that accommodate 100 people each), two handball/racquetball courts, three tot lot playgrounds, a Boundless playground with greater accessibility for persons with disabilities and/or handicaps, four baseball/softball diamonds, 12 soccer fields, and a sledding hill in the winter.
- 2. South Liberty Park:** Included a trail connection to Liberty Park, flexible athletic fields, and potential for future growth and other activities. This property has very wet, hydric soils that could be designed as a restored wetland and potential mitigation bank site, creating long-term mitigation credit opportunities for the Township and educational opportunities for nearby schools.

- 3. 25-Acre Woods:** Located between Liberty Park to the north and South Liberty Park to the south. There is about 1 mile of walking trails in the woods that link Liberty Park to South Liberty Park.
- 4. Hyatts Park:** Located on the northeast corner of Hyatts Road and Liberty Road, this 4.3-acre park includes a large shelter house, a 4-bay swing set, a large playground area, a basketball court, and a baseball/softball field.
- 5. Wedgewood Park:** Located along Sawmill Parkway behind Fire Station 322, this 9.8-acre park includes about 0.5 miles of paved walking trails.
- 6. Big Bear Park:** Located on the north side of Big Bear Avenue and on the west side of Scioto Ridge Elementary School, this 5-acre park includes about 0.25 miles of walking trails that link the Big Bear Avenue walking path to the City of Powell's walking paths to the north.
- 7. Smith Preserve at Olentangy Falls:** Located between Taggart Road and the Olentangy River, south of Hyatts Road. This 41-acre preserve was dedicated to the Township as part of the Olentangy Falls subdivision. Since the preserve is located next to the Olentangy Scenic River, this is passive open space, with no active recreation.
- 8. Patriot Park:** Located on the east side of Liberty Road just north of Fire Station 321, this 5-acre park includes two baseball diamonds.
- 9. Havener Park:** Located on the east side of the intersection of Ford and Liberty Roads, this 93-acre park has about seven soccer fields with ample parking, and walking trails extend throughout the undeveloped portions of the park connecting with trails in the adjacent Deer Haven Preserve to the south.
- 10. Preservation Parks Deer Haven Park:** This is a 97-acre area of open fields, wooded areas, and streams/ravines. The park includes a large lodge with meeting space, restroom facilities, and educational/interpretive center. Another 47 acres is owned by Preservation Parks on the



north side of Havener Park, with more acreage to be added in the future.

- 11. Camp Lazarus:** A private Boy Scout Camp on U.S. 23 north of Winter Road in the City of Delaware. The Camp has transferred an open space easement to Delaware Preservation Parks for much of its 232 acres. It is also adjacent to the 114-acre Seymour Woods State Preserve, managed by the State of Ohio and ODNR.
- 12. Preservation Parks Shale Hollow Park and Big Run Preserve at Olentangy Crossing:** This is a 120-acre park that includes walking trails, picnic areas, and a shelter building which provides space for indoor activities and restroom facilities. Access is currently provided from Artesian Run. Future access may be added at Hyatts Road. It is adjacent to a 60-acre preserve of forest, deep ravines, and creeks tributary to the Olentangy Scenic River, proclaimed by Ohio Department of Natural Resources as one of the most pristine undisturbed sites in Ohio, worthy of complete preservation. This will not be generally open to the public, but may be used for nature studies.



Seldom Seen Park, City of Powell

13. **Preservation Parks Emily Traphagan Park:** Located on Seldom Seen Road east of Riverside Drive. This is a 72-acre passive park with 1 mile of walking trails, a picnic area, and a playground. Mature woods, pond, and natural landscape. This park may acquire additional lands to the west.

The City of Powell's local parks provide activities, programming, and recreational opportunities for local residents. Powell's parks include:

1. **Adventure Park:** Gazebo, children's play areas, basketball court, skate park, soccer field.
2. **Arbor Ridge Park:** Tennis courts, children's play area, open space.
3. **Beechwood Park:** Educational and exercise programs, trail hiking, seasonal events.
4. **Library Park:** Athletic fields, court games, and children's and tot play areas.
5. **Meadow View Park:** Pond, children's play area, picnic area, open space.
6. **Murphy Park:** Children's and tot play areas, summer house, horse shoes, and bocce ball area.
7. **Oak Park:** Educational programming, horticulture programs, animal habitat studies, trail hiking, and exercise programs.
8. **Village Green:** Water play area/children's play area, amphitheater, seating/exhibit/market area, open space.
9. **Seldom Seen Park:** The City of Powell is developing Seldom Seen Park (previous page) on the north side of Seldom Seen Road, west of the railroad, including five 120' x 80' soccer fields, wetland preservation, a boardwalk, playgrounds, restrooms, a baseball field, and parking.

**Neighborhood open space:** Many planned residential developments have open space for the use of their residents. Some examples in Liberty Township and Powell are: Wedgewood Park, Calumet Farms, Golf Village, Libertydale, Wedgewood, and Campden Lakes. More private parks should be encouraged as part of future subdivisions.

**Other nearby Recreation/Park Areas:**

- The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) operates the **Alum Creek State Park**, consisting of 8,874 acres, of which 1,050 acres are the lake itself. The park is approximately 5 miles from Liberty Township, and provides boating, swimming, hiking, fishing, riding, and camping.
- **Highbanks Park** is a 1,146-acre metropolitan park in Orange and Liberty Townships. Summer activities include canoeing and fishing along the

scenic Olentangy River, picnic areas, and shelters, including a wetland viewing shelter, nature preserves, programs, pet activities, and scenic hiking trails. Winter activities include sledding, ice fishing, and cross-country skiing.

- **O'Shaughnessy Reservoir, City of Columbus Divisions of Parks** is partially within Liberty Township, and includes boating and fishing along the Scioto River, picnic areas, shelters, and scenic hiking trails.

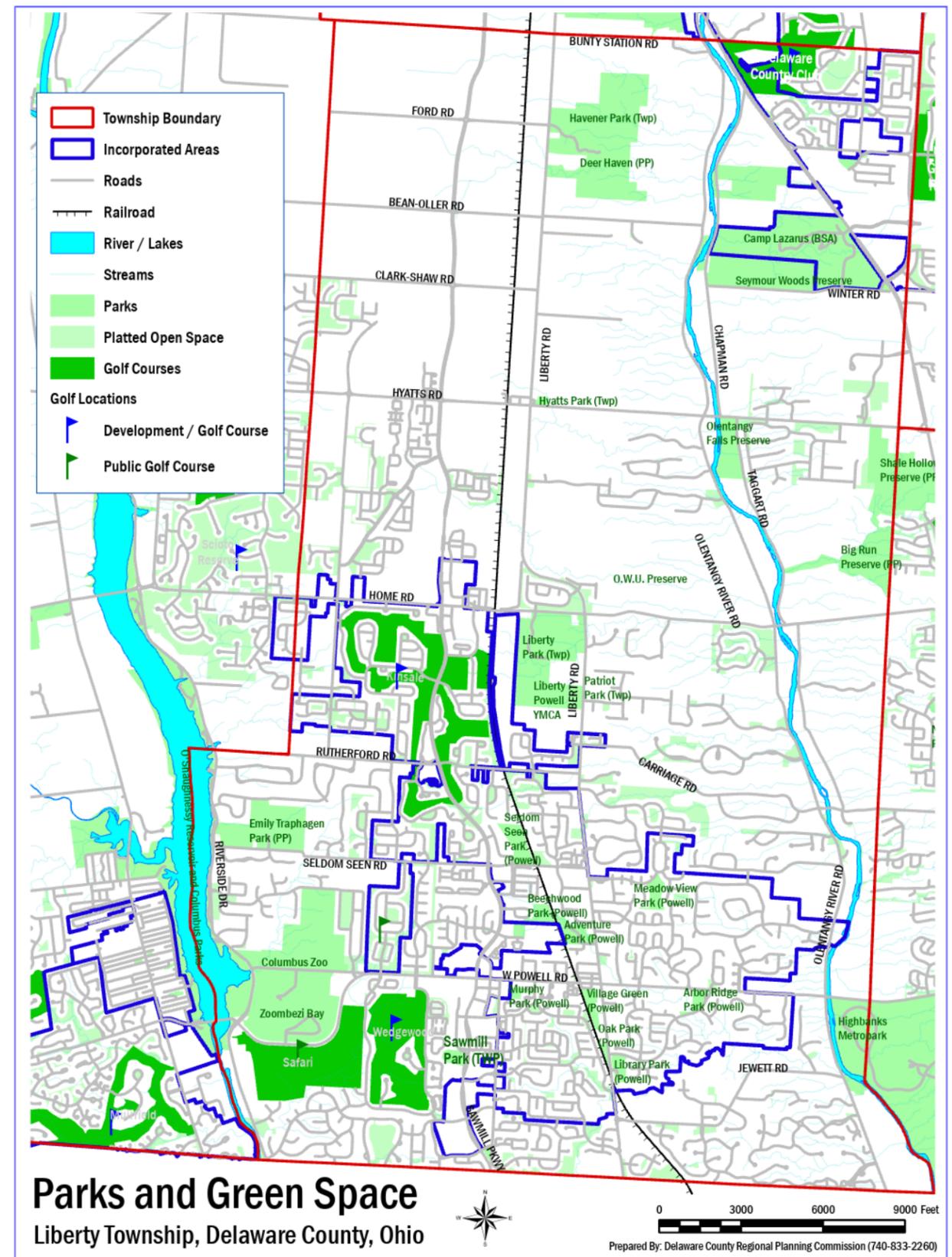
The **Olentangy Local School District** also provides many recreational facilities at Liberty High School, as well as at the various middle and elementary schools.

**Golf courses within Liberty Township:** Wedgewood (private), Kinsale (Golf Village private), and Safari (public). Scioto Reserve (private) is in Concord Township 1 mile west from Liberty Township.

The **Columbus Zoo and Aquarium** and **Zoombezi Bay** are both within the Township. The Zoo welcomes more than 2.2 million guests annually.

The **Liberty/Powell YMCA** is located on township -owned property on Liberty Road. It offers an indoor and outdoor pool, outdoor track, strength and cardio equipment, basketball courts, aerobics studio, sauna, and is connected to numerous outdoor trails.

**Stratford Ecological Center** is a 223-acre nature preserve and educational farm just one half mile north of Liberty Township on Liberty Road. It is a teaching farm that uses sustainable agriculture techniques.



## Greenways/Open Space

Liberty Township’s existing open space and recreational facilities satisfy NRPA activity guidelines, but lack connectivity. The existing Liberty Park is centrally located, but needs additional pedestrian or biking connections to surrounding areas. Havener Park and Deer Haven Preserve are also township features in need of connection to a recreation network.

One way to connect open space is to assure the linkage of neighborhoods by greenways or corridors of natural or man-made paths and trails. These can often be placed in road rights-of-way or along drainage ways, creeks, and land that cannot be otherwise developed. These paths can maintain undisturbed wildlife habitat or create new habitat through plantings and creative use of stormwater retention and detention facilities. These areas, often afterthoughts in the design process of developments, should be viewed as opportunities to improve the value of the development and to link developments. Recent developments in the southern jurisdictions of Delaware County have increasingly included these features thanks to local zoning decisions and development trends.

Another opportunity to create greenway links is through utility (sewer, electric) easements. Sewer trunk lines normally follow drainage and waterways, which can be viable green areas with trails or trail connections.

Additional easement rights may be needed to expand the easement’s use, meaning negotiation and acquisition of such easements from landowners.

## Recreation Standards — How Much Do We Need?

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) developed a set of standards for local developed open space. These standards are intended to serve as a guide to planning.

NRPA suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a “core” system of parklands, totaling 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 residents. The size and amount of parklands will vary from community to community, but must be taken into account when considering a total, well-rounded system of parks and recreation areas. The amount of parkland a community needs is mostly reliant on the proposed activities and facilities that are needed by the community.

Liberty Township appears to have generous parkland available for now, but additional parkland in the northwest quadrant of the Township as that area develops will be desirable, as will pocket parks within neighborhoods.

As Liberty Township grows it may wish to use the NRPA model as a guide.

## Police

Liberty Township and the City of Powell are served by the Powell Police and the Delaware County Sheriff’s Office, (DCSO). With headquarters in the City of Delaware on North Sandusky Street, DCEO’s enforcement services headquartered on State Route 42. The Patrol Division provides law enforcement to all jurisdictions within Delaware County. Patrols offer investigation of criminal offenses, crime prevention, and traffic enforcement. DCSO also has a division for detective services, support services, youth education and specialty units.

In 2021, 22,840 students county-wide were taught safety lessons by School Resource Officers in grades K -12, an 18% increase over the previous year.

2020 saw a drop in Township crime, while 2021 saw an increase. The Table at right shows the breakdown of incidents by year, according to the 2021 Delaware County Sheriff’s Office Annual Report. Although the Powell Police Department also serves the area, the table provides a general view of the types and numbers of various infractions.

This list does not include all non-criminal activity, due to space limitations. These would include well-being checks, found property, crashes, information-only reports, etc.

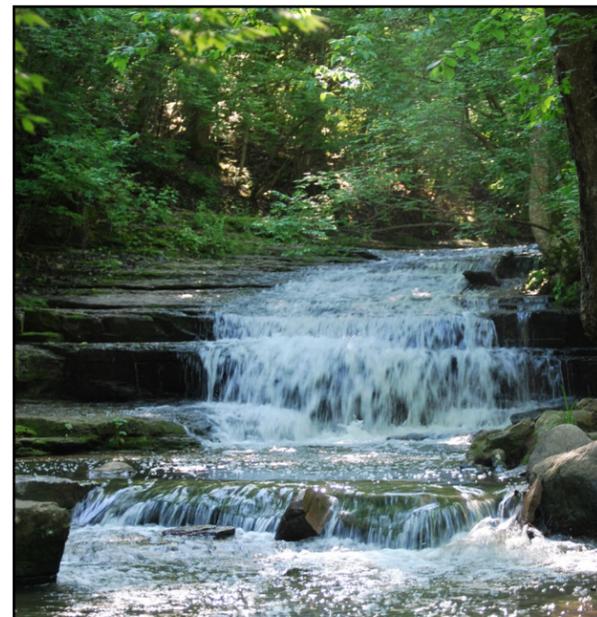
Like many communities throughout the U.S., Delaware County saw a significant increase in thefts of identity, namely due to fraudulent unemployment claims.

Figure 10B.3 Sheriff’s Complaints, Liberty Twp.

	2019	2020	2021
Traffic Stop	157	103	91
Theft/Larceny	53	74	81
Domestic	68	68	45
Theft Of Identity	31	43	169
Theft From Vehicle	15	19	21
Suicide Attempt	25	23	24
Harassment/Threats	40	30	43
Breaking & Entering	14	14	25
Vandalism	26	18	27
Suspicious Activity	13	8	4
Susp. Person/Vehicle	29	23	23
Mental Health Crisis	22	17	23
Juvenile/Unruly	27	16	32
Drunk	10	3	1
Theft of Credit Card/No.	6	7	3
Forgery/Bad Check	9	1	5
Drug/Narcotic	15	11	15
Animal Call	14	5	9
Sex Offense	9	6	10
Stolen Vehicle	7	7	9
Assault	13	5	13
D.O.A.	9	5	10
Fight	6	7	2
Rape	1	1	0
Missing Person	8	5	5
Suicide	3	2	2
Knife-Person with	0	2	0
Gun—Person with	0	1	3
Robbery	1	0	1
Homicide	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>696</b>

Figure 13. NRPA Local/Close-to-Home Space Guide

Component	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres per 1,000 Res.	Desirable Site Characteristics
Mini-Park	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens	Less than ¼ mile radius	1 acre or less	0.25 to 0.5 acres	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse developments, or housing for the elderly.
Neighborhood Park/Playground	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, water play, etc.	¼ to ½ mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000.	15+ acres	1.0 to 2.0 acres	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school-park facility.
Community Park	Area for diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.	1 to 2 mile radius	25+ acres	5.0 to 8.0 acres	May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.



Camp Lazarus Near Chapman Road

Source: National Recreation and Park Association, Recreation, Park and Open Space Guidelines, ©1983

# Olentangy School District

The Olentangy Local School District is located entirely within Delaware County, situated in the southern and central parts of the county. The district's boundary includes all of Berlin, Orange, and Liberty Townships, and some of Genoa, Berkshire, Concord, and Delaware Townships. The district also includes the City of Powell and parts of the Cities of Columbus and Delaware.

## Enrollment

As with the other school districts in the county, enrollment over the last 10 years has increased every year. Increases in student enrollment has mostly been between 3 and 4%, year-over-year. However, in the 2018/19 school year, enrollment increases slowed to between 2 and 3%, and actually declined in the most recent year of data (2020/21 school year). Despite the recent minor decline, enrollment is anticipated to increase due to the significant residential development pressures in the district boundaries.

Current enrollment indicates that the Olentangy District has a distribution of students that is heavily weighted among the elementary schools with almost half of the District's student body enrolled in grades K through 5. The skew towards elementary-aged students indicates a growing number of younger families within the district in general.

The student base is predominately white, non-Hispanic (though less than other school districts in Delaware County) at nearly 70% of the total enrollment. Funding educational opportunities for the disabled and providing resources for economically disadvantaged students is less of an issue than other districts in

the County, with 13% of the student body having a disability, and only 6% being disadvantaged economically.

## Student and Teacher Performance Metrics

The Ohio Department of Education performs an annual evaluation of local school districts based on a Performance Index and a number of Indicators. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the full indicators for each grade 2019-2020 were unavailable. The following figures illustrate the Olentangy Local School District's academic rankings by component. The district's grades were high, with three areas receiving "A" ranks: Graduation Rate, Progress, and Gap Closing. There was only one weakest component that received a "C" rank: Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers.

In addition to the Student Performance Grades, the Ohio Department of Education completes a profile on the educators for the district. Educators for the District have, on average, 12

Figure 26. Overall Enrollment and Demographics

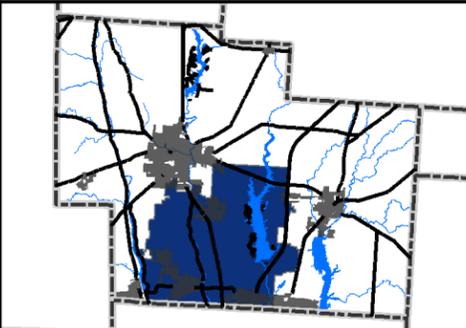
Demographic	Enrollment	Percentage
All Students	21,963	
Native American	-	-
Asian or Pacific Islander	3,503	15.9%
Black, Non-Hispanic	963	4.4%
Hispanic	912	4.2%
Multiracial	1,352	6.2%
White, Non-Hispanic	15,233	69.4%
Students with Disabilities	2,878	13.1%
Economic Disadvantage	1,297	5.9%
Limited English Proficiency	768	3.5%

Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2020-2021

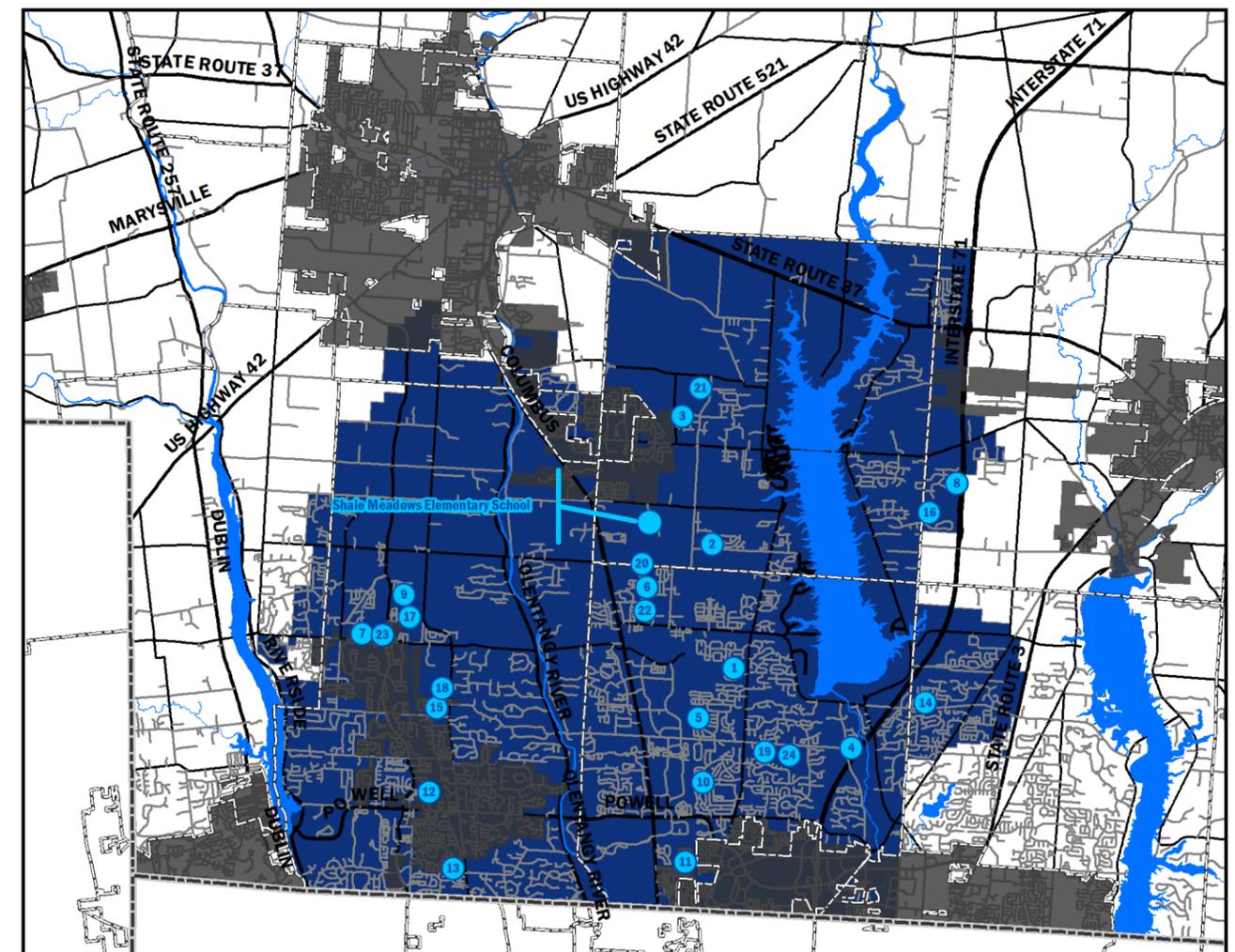
Figure 28. Historical School-Year Enrollment

Grade	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Pre-K – 5	8,963	9,037	9,151	9,344	9,316	9,441	9,646	9,963	10,187	9,871
6 – 8	3,898	4,165	4,413	4,589	4,832	5,021	5,141	5,083	5,099	5,082
9 – 12	4,202	4,511	4,753	5,111	5,511	5,857	6,184	6,512	6,794	6,956
Ungraded	0	0	12	0	0	12	25	11	0	0
<b>Total Enroll</b>	<b>17,063</b>	<b>17,716</b>	<b>18,329</b>	<b>19,044</b>	<b>19,659</b>	<b>20,331</b>	<b>20,996</b>	<b>21,569</b>	<b>22,080</b>	<b>21,909</b>
Change		3.8%	3.5%	3.9%	3.2%	3.4%	3.3%	2.7%	2.4%	-0.8%

Source: Ohio Department of Education, September 2021

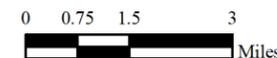


Label	School	Label	School
1	Alum Creek Elementary School	13	Tyler Run Elementary School
2	Arrowhead Elementary School	14	Walnut Creek Elementary School
3	Cheshire Elementary School	15	Wyandot Run Elementary School
4	Freedom Trail Elementary School	16	Berkshire Middle School
5	Glen Oak Elementary School	17	Olentangy Hyatts Middle School
6	Heritage Elementary School	18	Olentangy Liberty Middle School
7	Indian Springs Elementary School	19	Olentangy Orange Middle School
8	Johnnycake Corners Elementary School	20	Olentangy Shanahan Middle School
9	Liberty Tree Elementary School	21	Olentangy Berlin High School
10	Oak Creek Elementary School	22	Olentangy High School
11	Olentangy Meadows Elementary School	23	Olentangy Liberty High School
12	Scioto Ridge Elementary School	24	Olentangy Orange High School



# Olentangy School District

Delaware County



- Schools
- Olentangy School District
- Rivers/Lakes/Streams
- Incorporated Area
- Township Boundaries
- County Boundaries

Prepared by: Delaware County Regional Planning Commission (740-833-2260)  
www.dcrpc.org (3/5/2021)

years of experience, and are highly educated. All educators have a Bachelor’s Degree, and over 75% have a Master’s. The combination of experience and educational attainment lend to the higher average salary compared to other districts, at \$78,584.

### Financial Information

The Olentangy Local School District reported a 2021 total revenue of approximately \$285.5 million, including approximately \$199.3 million in local funds and approximately \$34.3 million in state funds. For the District Spending Per Pupil, the total was \$10,521.

### Current Facilities

The district maintains 25 academic facilities (attendance in parenthesis):

- **Alum Creek Elementary School (540)**, 2515 Parklawn Drive;
- **Arrowhead Elementary School (706)**, 2385 Hollenback Road;
- **Cheshire Elementary School (739)**, 2681 Gregory Road;
- **Freedom Trail Elementary School (598)**, 6743 Bale Kenyon Road;
- **Glen Oak Elementary School (675)**, 7300 Blue Holly Drive;
- **Heritage Elementary School (696)**, 679 Lewis Center Road;
- **Indian Springs Elementary School (577)**, 3828 Home Road;
- **Johnnycake Corners Elementary School (719)**, 6783 Falling Meadows Dr;
- **Liberty Tree Elementary School (586)**, 6877 Sawmill Parkway;
- **Oak Creek Elementary School (676)**, 1256 Westwood Drive, Lewis;
- **Olentangy Meadows Elementary School (712)**, 8950 Emerald Hill Dr;
- **Scioto Ridge Elementary School (590)**, 8715 Big Bear Avenue;
- **Tyler Run Elementary School (655)**, 580 Salisbury Drive;
- **Walnut Creek Elementary School (666)**, 5600 Grand Oak Boulevard;
- **Wyandot Run Elementary School (736)**, 2800 Carriage Road;
- **Berkshire Middle School (1,139)**, 2869 South Three B’s & K Road;
- **Olentangy Hyatts Middle School (889)**, 6885 Sawmill Parkway;
- **Olentangy Liberty Middle School (988)**, 7940 Liberty Road;
- **Olentangy Orange Middle School (1,067)**, 2680 East Orange Road;
- **Olentangy Shanahan Middle School (999)**, 814 Shanahan Road;
- **Olentangy Berlin High School (1,451)**, 3140 Berlin Station Road;
- **Olentangy High School (1,516)**, 675 Lewis Center Road;
- **Olentangy Liberty High School (1,979)**, 3584 Home Road; and
- **Olentangy Orange High School (2,010)**, 2480 East Orange Road.

The Olentangy School District also opened a new elementary school in the 2021/22 school year. Shale Meadows Elementary School is located at 4458 North Road. The district owns a 24-acre site at Bean Oller and Sawmill and a 50-acre site in Delaware Township at Bunty Station and Sawmill.

## Columbus State—Delaware Campus

The Delaware Campus of Columbus State is located on a 108-acre site at 5100 Cornerstone Drive at US 23. Since 2010, the campus has consisted of one large educational building with additional office space in a pre-existing renovated building. Long-range plans call for additional buildings in a campus setting, with parking located in two multi-level parking decks.

The plan indicates up to 45 acres retained as open space and a building intended to serve as a community partnership facility with multi-purpose spaces. No timeline is identified for additions.



## Liberty Township Fire Department

The Liberty Township Fire Department was established in 1947. The coverage area of 34 square miles includes two station locations, Station 321 at 7761 Liberty Road and Station 322 at 10150 Sawmill Parkway. The department provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous materials mitigation, fire inspection, fire investigation, and public education for the City of Powell and Liberty Township. Department staff includes a full-time Fire Chief, an Assistant to the Chief, six Lieutenants, two Battalion Chiefs, two Fire Prevention Lieutenants, one Fire Prevention Inspector, 45 full-time Fire Fighter/Paramedics, eight part-time Fire Fighter/Paramedics, one Chaplain, and one Medical Director. The Liberty Township Fire Department adopted the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan that reflects the views and expectations of the community and helps guide future decisions and planning for the Department’s service area.

The Department is staffed 24 hours a day, with an up-to-date fleet of equipment to serve the community’s needs. There has been a steady increase of requests for service in recent years, with 1,074 incidents in 2016, and 3,163 in 2021. Most responses are for medical incidents, which are just over 69% of total responses annually. The District continues to monitor the development in and around the area to provide a timely and professional response to our residents.

## Liberty Township Facilities

As a result of a 2019 township facilities assessment, Township Trustees held a groundbreaking ceremony January 12, 2022 for the new **Liberty Township Hall and Administrative Offices** just north of the Liberty Township-Powell YMCA. Trustees approved a \$1.987 million contract with Robertson Construction in Heath for construction of the facility, which opened on December 13, 2022.

A new 20,324 square foot **Fire Station** is under construction directly north of the current Liberty Road station. The land was previously the site of two baseball diamonds and related parking. After construction, the existing station will be razed and the baseball field located there.

The third project includes new **Parks and Maintenance Facilities** to be built just south of the volleyball courts at Liberty Park. The proposed work includes a 8,265 square foot maintenance facility, a 2,400 square foot salt storage building, and a cold storage building at 11,965 square feet.



## Introduction

During the early stages of the public input process of this Comprehensive Planning update, an Open House provided opportunities for the public to react to numerous illustrations. The purpose of the exercise was to gauge the types of architectural and building materials, setbacks, and landscaping that could inform the recommendations of this plan.

The following building materials were most frequently listed as desirable: Brick/Stone, Stone/Wood, Brick/Glass.

There was a clear desire for no pre-cast concrete.

For building design, there was a preference for consistency in design and an avoidance of a “hodge-podge” look.

For access, frontage and backage roads should be required with developments, as they are noted as safer and intended to ease congestion.

## Architecture and Building Materials, Landscaping and Setbacks—Positive



These images were the “most liked” in this category, illustrating that natural materials such as brick and stone, are desired as they indicate quality, permanence, and craftsmanship. Several participants noted that the building to the left is too tall. Several noted that the illustration to the right is presented at a residential scale. However, it was also noted that this design choice is too “common” and looks like other suburban development.

## Landscaping and Setbacks—Positive



These images were the “most liked” in this category, illustrating that natural materials such as brick and stone, are desired as they indicate quality, permanence, and craftsmanship. Several participants noted that the building to the left is too tall. Several noted that the illustration to the right is presented at a residential scale. However, it was also noted that this design choice is too “common” and looks like other suburban development.

## Architecture and Building Materials—Negative



The commercial building above was noted as too bland, sterile, modern, trendy, and is likely to go out of style. The image of the retail building to the top right generated negative comments about the poor design, ongoing maintenance, and upkeep.

## Landscaping and Setbacks—Negative



The development at left also generated negative setback comments based on the “sea of asphalt” in front of the building and minimal landscaping. The tight setbacks and minimal landscaping above was also noted as undesirable, but it was also noted that the photo was taken before the trees had produced leaves for the season.

*Exercise and images provided by Crossroads Community Planning, LLC.*

## Elements of Good Design

The following text and visual examples demonstrate positive design principles in the public realm. The following general principles enhance the quality and reflect development goals within commercial and other non-residential areas.

### Site Furnishings

Site furniture helps create a vibrant commercial destination and can be integrated into elements that screen parking lots and adjacent uses. Consistency enhances the visual unity of a commercial area. Furnishings include lighting fixtures, trash receptacles, benches, and other usable structures. Furniture should be permanently installed, be vandal-resistant, have replaceable components, and be easily maintained. It should be of high quality design and “timeless” in style. Seating should be located at logical resting points and situated so they do not block the internal walkway system.

### Buildings Form the Space of the Street

Buildings have the potential to create a shared public “room.” The character and scale of these walls determine the character of the room. Continuous building frontage with active uses on a street creates a welcome space that supports pedestrian and economic activity.

Building indentations, penetrations, and facade treatments can be used to complement adjacent structures. These features also reduce monotonous blank walls often seen on “big-box” developments. A series of doors, windows, porches, and other projections in new construction can add value and character to a commercial development.

### Building Height/Appearance

Streets have a more cohesive, pedestrian feel when contiguous buildings are of similar height. The maximum building height is generally 35 feet, or as otherwise limited by the available emergency equipment. Though this would allow building of two stories, most commercial development has been built with only a single story. Creating a pedestrian-oriented development requires a mix of uses or spaces, where retail would be located on the ground floor with offices or even specific types of residential above.

### Roof Forms and Building Materials

Roofs on new structures should be pitched or hipped. Building materials may be wood frame, brick, or stone. Roof material should have a shingle look, either as asphalt shingles, slate, tile, or metal.

### Environmental Sustainability

Mixing uses results in lower impact to the environment. “Green” buildings can improve worker productivity, enhance marketing efforts, and help to create a district identity. Structures and parking should respond to the specific building site, be efficient in water and energy use, be constructed of sustainable materials, and create a healthy environment for the occupants. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) *Reference Guide for*

*New Construction and Major Renovation*, is a valuable resource for guidance on green building techniques, practices, and standards.

### Parking and Access

Where there is limited access to a major road, circulation streets should be created rather than individual entrance drives to parking lots. Secondary streets should create a network of backage streets. Parking and access to parking should be located at limited locations along these secondary streets.

Parking lots should be screened and separated from the public right-of-way. Large expanses of surface parking should be broken up into smaller areas and may be located beside or between buildings. Parking located directly in front of buildings should be minimized. All lots should be landscaped and shading maximized.

### Pedestrian Orientation

Even large, commercial-only areas can be tailored to the pedestrian and create a walkable environment. Walkways and crosswalks are not sufficient by themselves. Walkways can create a focal point, ending in an architectural feature between or integrated into buildings. Outdoor dining areas are separated from direct contact with parking. Walkways are provided between buildings.

### Service

Service and delivery should be accommodated on side streets or from the rear of buildings. Dumpsters may be grouped for multiple users. All refuse collection areas should be screened from public rights-of-way.



These images indicate commercial development that encourages walkability. Buildings are oriented toward the street, with sidewalks. Buildings are designed with natural materials and designed including unique architectural features.

### Lighting

Building and site lighting should be designed to eliminate light trespass and minimize light pollution. The best lighting schemes will maximize uniformity and eliminate glare. Lighting for pedestrians is an important consideration and should be designed to maximize visibility and comfort. These considerations can decrease initial costs, have marked value in life-cycle costs, and create a more attractive and comfortable nighttime environment.



Creating a hierarchy of lighting standards is another way to unify image and identity. Lighting used to illuminate parking areas, the street, or signage should be indirect and shielded, avoiding off-site spillage of light into other properties. Light fixtures should be designed as a cohesive part of the other site elements. This will include various lighting levels for vehicles, pedestrian circulation, signage, and special accents.

### Signage

The scale of signage should be designed with pedestrians in mind. Signs on awnings, in windows, and projecting from the face of the building can help create an interesting pedestrian environment. Traffic signage should have a consistent look and placement, where possible.



Natural-colored materials should be used for the base of monument signs. Variation of signage themes based on sign type or location should be encouraged. Signs should be of high quality and 'timeless' in style to avoid becoming outdated. Signs should be limited to one per lot or one per multiple lots if devoted to one specific use or user. Graphics should be simple to encourage readability and increase identification. If a ground sign is to be used, the monument-style is mandated. No sign should interfere with the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles.



### Accessibility

Standard concrete walks should be 6 feet wide, where sufficient right-of-way exists. Along secondary streets, the walk should be located 4 feet from the back of curb.

Handicap-accessible curb ramps should be used at all access drives, public streets, private streets, and shared easements that function as public streets.



All major intersections should include painted crosswalks to alert drivers to the pedestrian crossing. Change of pavement (i.e., brick and concrete) should be considered for pedestrian crossings at major intersections.

### Landscaping

Landscaping should be designed to provide shade for pedestrians and generally create a comfortable pedestrian environment in commercial portions of the corridor. Impervious surfaces should also be shaded to mitigate heat island effects. Continuous trees are encouraged to augment the public landscape plan. There are many environmental, as well as psychological benefits to including a tree planting plan. Trees can enhance values, reduce traffic speeds, increase levels of comfort, and unify the look of an area. Correct placement and choice of species can eliminate ongoing maintenance issues.



Large shade trees should avoid conflicts with structures and reinforce the streetscape (assuming they do not conflict with emergency access and utility placement).

Small ornamental trees should be used as accent plants and frame views to special architectural features. Avoid placing ornamental trees in locations that would block the view from the street to the structure and impair visibility for auto operators.

Plant materials should be native to the area when possible.

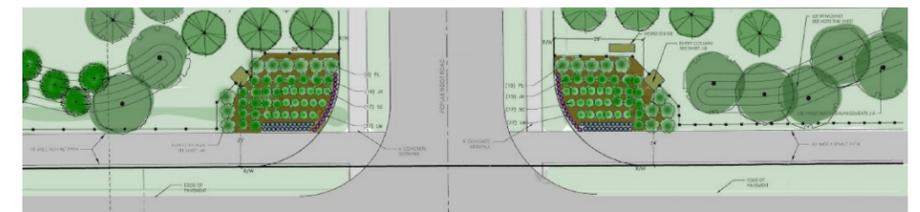
Screen parking lots with a minimum 4-foot high continuous evergreen or deciduous hedge, low earth mounding, or stone wall. Hedge size at installation should be at least 30" in height. A creative combination of these elements is encouraged to avoid visual monotony.

Planting, mounding, and fencing should be incorporated at the rear of commercial areas that are adjacent to residential areas. Screened planting should be 75% opacity at installation during full foliage.

Guidance for minimum standard plant sizes at installation:

- Shade Trees: 2½" caliper
- Ornamental Trees: 1½" caliper
- Evergreen Trees: 6' in height
- Shrubs: 3 gallon

If landscaping is used as screening for trash receptacles, it should have a minimum opaqueness of 80% during full foliage. The height of a screen wall should be at least 6 feet.



Sample of neighborhood entry with established landscaping, and a sample landscaping plan from a recent proposal.



Large franchise big box uses (including office buildings) can reduce their visual impact with ample landscaping and buffering.

## Development opportunities

In an effort to diversify the Township's tax base, the community looks to the future for development opportunities. The following sites are potential development areas for non-residential investment and should be a focus of economic development efforts between the township and the Delaware County Economic Development Department.



A 1.5-acre outlot at the 3975 W. Powell Road Kroger. (Subarea IV)



A half-acre unfinished portion of the office development at Wedgewood Boulevard and Powell Road. (Subarea IV)



The Bridgewater Banquet and Conference Center utilizes a portion of the property under the same ownership to its east. This could be developed as a commercial/office use while preserving overflow parking for the conference center. (Subarea IV)



A half-acre area just west of the Valvoline behind Culver's on Powell Road. (Subarea IV)



Liberty Township owns a parcel just under 10 acres at the corner of Brewster Lane and Sawmill Parkway. It is the location of Liberty Township Fire Station 322 and just over 7 acres of open space with a walking trail. The Township should assess whether this park is utilized as parkland. If not, part of the site could allow the expansion of the commercial and office uses to the north, with development taking access from Brewster Lane.



The POD 18D overlay approved in November 2022 provides a site with roughly 19.5-acres of developable area that would allow a number of commercial uses, as well as established design details such as setbacks, landscaping, and architectural features. Although the details are already approved, the township should seek a cohesive design, with walkability and interconnectedness as a key feature of the site. The current design of Clarkshaw Crossing includes a road connection and at least one pedestrian connection. The Development Plan for the site should enhance these connections with significant landscaping, taking care not to orient service structures toward future residential areas. (Subarea VII)



The Park at Greif includes several undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels that can be marketed to a variety of office uses. (Subarea IX)



Land between Bean-Oller and Ford Road may have access to sewer in the next decade and could be developed with a number of strategies. (Subarea VII)

## Columbus Zoo Properties

Several sites around the edges of the Columbus Zoo and Safari Golf Course have been observed as under-developed or potentially developable. The township could work with the Columbus Zoo to seek development of these sites as tax-generating commercial or office uses that would not compete with services offered by the Zoo.

Sites include roughly 8 acres along Riverside Drive just north Jerry Borin Trace (upper right), approximately 7 acres at the corner of Powell Road and Dublin Road currently an undeveloped part of the Safari Golf Course (lower right), and roughly 16 acres across from the zoo's parking lot, directly across from New Hope Reformed Church (below). This third site has an access to a signaled intersection at the entrance to the zoo.

Any development of these lands should be sensitive to the surrounding uses, with significant buffering and landscaping.



Liberty Township owns a roughly 40-acre piece of open space that was dedicated as part of the Olentangy Falls subdivision. It is located at the southwestern corner of Hyatts Road and Taggart Road and provides access along 2,200 feet of the Olentangy River. The Township should consider additional improvements to this park to increase access and passive use, while being sensitive to the adjacent properties. (Subarea I)



## General

A Comprehensive Plan is a declaration of intent. It is advisory and does not itself constitute a regulation, but its adopted goals, objectives, principles, and recommendations are policies intended to guide the Trustees, Zoning Commission, and the Board of Zoning Appeals in the development of the township.

The Comprehensive Plan and Map for the township is intended to incorporate all the preceding chapters and their recommendations.

## Overall Development Concept

Over the course of many years, the township has maintained an overall concept of development which is summarized with four corridors as follows:

1. The Olentangy Heritage Corridor includes land in the Olentangy River valley, providing for a few remaining small farms, open space, and low-density single-family residences in harmony with the natural resources and historic legacy of the area.
2. The Scioto Valley Corridor, located near the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir, provides for active public recreational uses, open space, and low-density residences in harmony with the natural resources and vistas of the area.
3. A Civic Corridor, which extends from Powell north to Hyatts Road, accessed generally by Sawmill Parkway. It provides opportunities for public, institutional, employment, and other supporting uses for the resident population on a daily basis. The Liberty Road portion of this corridor would remain faithful to the more traditional forms and styles of architecture and landscape.
4. The U.S. 23 corridor includes lands oriented near U.S. 23. This area would be for major commercial and institutional uses and higher densities as shown on the Sub Area plan.



The northern portion of this corridor may be forced to annex into Delaware to obtain water for new development under an exclusive agreement between the Del-Co Water Company and the City of Delaware.

Within these general corridors there are planning Sub Areas, with specific recommendations for use and density shown on the Comprehensive Plan map and within the text that follows this section.

The staged expansion of public sewer and water systems may indicate the general location and rate of development, and the Comprehensive Plan map, together with the Sub Area text establishes the recommended uses and density of land.

## Goals

Liberty Township is a great place to live and its location makes it well positioned to continue to thrive. The community must be mindful of its legacy and quality of life as it looks toward the future. In the early stages of community input, the Comprehensive Planning Committee embarked on an analysis of its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. During that exercise, the following goals emerged

### Seek a Balance when promoting land use, finances, and cooperation

Develop a healthier tax base by allowing for a variety of land uses including housing, retail, commercial, and offices.

Promote an appropriate level of housing forms and densities that will allow for a range of high-quality housing types and provide

housing opportunities for the entire generational spectrum, while taking into consideration the needs of a range of demographic and socioeconomic groups.

Protect strategic open spaces and strategically locate future green areas to create large spans of open space.

Maintain the excellent level of educational, public safety and healthcare services in the township.

Ensure that traffic remains manageable and appropriate for the road network by directing development to high-capacity areas and planning and developing road improvements where needed and appropriate to adjust to increasing demand.

Encourage strategic cooperation between the cities, county, state and township.

## Sustainability

Strategically plan for growth that will provide healthy revenue streams to the township tax base.

Promote partnerships and strategies that will reduce the threat of annexations and help maintain the township form of government.

Assure future developments provide the necessary infrastructure to support future demands on existing services: utilities, schools and public safety.

Ensure that the road network has sufficient capacity to accommodate current and future growth. Future developments should be targeted towards appropriate areas with higher-capacity roads.

Identify various funding sources for infrastructure improvements.

Encourage developments to include alternative approaches including energy, multimodal transportation and green infrastructure systems.

Evaluate future administrative capacity needs for public services such as public safety, park and roads maintenance, and zoning services due to increased development pressures.

Promote opportunities for shared services with surrounding cities, townships and the County where the various entities may provide similar services.

Promote education and training opportunities to residents to support workforce needs of existing and future businesses.

## Growth

Ensure that growth is properly balanced to support a strong tax base.

Identify specific growth sectors. Target sectors that will provide for a strong tax base, will fit with the environment and will be appropriate for the location in terms of impact on the surrounding community.

Be intentional about locations of future infrastructure, such as roads and utilities, to help promote future land uses in the appropriate areas.

Ensure that investments in road network increase capacity in higher-density areas.

Promote vehicular connectivity between developments to reduce impacts to mainline roads.

Strategically identify parcels and corridors for future community needs such future school and park sites, destinations (i.e. zoo), and rights-of-way for roads and utilities.

Encourage pedestrian and non-motorized connections between parks and other destinations.

Promote areas for small, startup businesses where they can grow organically within the township.

Accommodate compatible flex office/industrial space at strategic locations to provide jobs and increase the tax base of the township.

Evaluate compatible uses for sharing of buildings and infrastructure (such as parking, road capacity) for different demand periods.

Engineered natural features should be designed to blend with the surrounding aesthetic environment. These should include soft edges, native species and should blend with the surrounding environment.

Create design standards that reflect a rural character.

## Preservation

Focus development to preserve and enhance the existing tax base in appropriate areas, while allowing for preservation of land in sensitive areas, as well as preserving service capacity.

Preserve rivers, streams, bluffs, ravines, woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife habitats in their natural condition to the greatest extent possible. Protect the Scioto and Olentangy River basins from pollution and destruction.

Ensure the preservation of water quality by creating riparian corridors along waterways, preserving wetlands (including intermittent wetlands) and preventing contamination of the water table and aquifers.

Development should be directed away from preservation areas, and roads should remain lower-capacity in these areas to encourage preservation. Alternate road options should be provided that encourage traffic away from these areas.

Protect from invasive species by utilizing native plantings and coordinating with ODNR and the Ohio Invasive Plant Council to ensure compatibility with the environment.

Maintain scenic views from area roads and preserve existing trees along roads to the greatest extent possible (realizing that in some cases, large trees may inhibit the expansion of roads to accommodate increasing traffic or safety/sight line improvements).

Promote the creation of design standards that help integrate the scale and appearance of new development that translates into landscapes that reflect the township's rural character. These include consideration of sight lines, natural areas, foliage and density that preserves the existing visual landscape.

Recognize and appreciate the auto racing and horse rearing/racing history of the township.

Preserve to the greatest extent possible the agricultural and local foods production in the township.

## Health and Well-Being

Ensure a healthy tax base which can support basic services and provide funding for expanded wellness and recreational opportunities.

Promote a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities to provide residents with year-round access to a variety of activities.

Preserve and enhance the existing park system and nature preserves by increasing access to the recreational areas through existing and new trails.

Enhance programming options for the parks system.

Ensure ease of travel by investing in appropriate road network. Developed areas should include sidewalks/bike paths to encourage physical activity.

Promote the physical health of the community through convenient, high-quality access to healthcare options, including physical and mental care.

Promote medical and medical-related residential facilities that provide care for the aging population.

Encourage development that allows current residents to age in place without needing to move out of the township.

Evaluate future land uses to ensure adequate availability of healthcare options, such as urgent cares, outpatient surgical centers, stand-alone emergency rooms, and other similar uses, both within or in proximity to the township.

Promote the spiritual well-being of the community by providing opportunities for places of worship and community gatherings

Investigate transportation options for the elderly and disabled.



# General Recommendations

## Environmental, Natural, and Historic

- **Preserve historic structures** and natural resources, including ravines in their natural state, woodlands, wildlife corridors, streams, and bodies of water.
- **Prohibit filling** or development within the 100-year floodplain except for necessary public construction or drainage improvements.
- **Encourage greenways** as part of new developments and maintain OEPA stream buffers within open space or in preservation easements on lots.
- **Consider adopting a zoning overlay along the Olentangy River** and its tributaries to emphasize the importance of maintaining water quality. Such an overlay with mitigation setbacks would reference the OEPA Olentangy Permit (*Mainstem Streamside Buffer of 100 feet, Outer Buffer to the Floodplain, Perennial Stream buffer of 80 feet, Intermittent, and Ephemeral buffer of 30 feet*). These setbacks are mapped by the DCRPC and available for use.
- **Identify critical resource** areas to be given primary or secondary conservation status in conservation subdivisions.
- **Establish a typical landscaping design** for developments along Sawmill Parkway including a typical fence standard.
- **Commercial landscaping:** All commercial development should be well-landscaped and buffered against adjacent uses

## Health and Wellness

- **Expand existing tobacco-free policies** within the township to all public spaces.
- Seek opportunities to **expand the trail or pathway network** throughout the township, including opportunities to add benches, trees, and way-finding signage indicating distances between milestones.
- **Expand green space** for future recreational areas such as playgrounds, soccer fields or skate park to increase sustainability. Provide pathways or easements from public areas to dedicated green spaces.
- **Promote bicycling and walking** to nearby public transportation station by providing sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and bicycle racks.
- **Coordinate with the YMCA** to provide and expand active recreational opportunities at parks and other areas.

## Road Placement and Design

New development should mitigate, or pay its fair share of the cost to mitigate its traffic impacts, in accordance with County Engineer policies.

- **Use traffic calming devices to maintain speed limits and increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists within residential subdivisions on local and minor collector streets:** Traffic calming interventions should be part of the tools used to enforce posted speed limits on local residential and minor collector streets. Effective interventions include: roundabouts at specific locations, traffic signals at high-speed intersections; exclusive walk signal phasing; adequate duration of signal timing; sidewalks; bicycle lanes; refuge islands and raised medians on multi-lane, high traffic volume roads; and increased intensity of roadway lighting to reduce nighttime pedestrian crashes.
- **Street connectivity is desirable:** Developments should ideally have three points of access, with a minimum of two. Conservation subdivisions, due to site specific topography or other unique condition may have fewer than three accesses, subject to development plan approval.
- **Access management practices should be followed:** Commercial developments should consolidate entrances and exits wherever possible to limit curb cuts. Left turn movements should be accomplished with proper spacing between movements to avoid conflicts. All developments should undergo a Traffic Impact Study through the County Engineer. This will determine the need for turning lanes and other mitigation. The Delaware County Engineer has adopted access management guidelines for County roads that may be of interest to the Trustees to use on township roads. Access management can also encourage a more productive use of land by discouraging minor lot splits, and promote clustering of land uses and reduced access points.

## Active Transportation and Roads Policies

- **Accommodate all roadway users** with comprehensive street design measures such as “complete streets,” including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and share-the-road signs that provide safe and convenient travel for all users of the roadway.
- **New roads should have sidewalks** installed on both sides of the road, wide enough to accommodate people walking in groups, or pushing strollers, and individuals with disabilities.

- **Promote safe roadway crossings** for new roads through use of small block sizes and cross-walks.
- **Encourage and provide streetscape amenities** such as benches, landscaping, lighting, and public art.
- **Encourage way-finding** with signs, maps, and landscape cues to improve the travel experience for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Encourage bicycle parking** at workplaces and transit stops. Designate bicycle-specific crossings and signals along busier bike corridors. Seek a buffer between bicyclists and cars to increase safety where needed.
- **Ensure that site design**, parking, and fences do not preclude safe and comfortable pedestrian connections to future development.
- **Support physical activity** among people with disabilities by making new roads and paths universally accessible.
- **Provide safe and convenient** bicycle and pedestrian connections such as a trail or easement to dedicated green space and potential public parks and recreation areas.
- **Encourage audible and visual** pedestrian crossing signals where significant pedestrian use is anticipated. Design such crossings for all users. Special consideration should be given to the design of crossing environments for pedestrians with disabilities and vision or hearing impairments.
- **Partner with Delaware County Transit** to provide robust localized micro-transit service that aligns with active transportation networks, and partner with DCT with event management, notably in alleviating parking congestion and safe and efficient site access.

## Trail and Bike Use Development

- **The township should continue to use the OPAL** (Olentangy Powell and Liberty) group to set the vision for future trail construction and grant requests. (See current map in the Appendix with proposed routes reflected in the Parks and Biketrails map.)
- **Encourage the development of trails** in accordance with OPAL and the Delaware County Trail Committee (DCTC) Corridors (Liberty Road Trail, Home Road Trail, Olentangy River Trail North, Olentangy River Trail South, Northwest Passage, Carriage Road Trail, Jewett Road Trail, Jewett Road Alternate Trail, and Hyatts Road Trail).
- **Limit asphalt trails or other hard surfaces** within the 100-year floodplain within the Olentangy Heritage Corridor with the exception of a bike path

from the south (Franklin County) that connects to Highbanks Metro Park. This will support the ODNR Scenic River recommendations to preserve the Olentangy River’s fragile ravine system and to keep impervious surfaces away from the State scenic river.

Permitted trails should be built at existing grade within the 100-year floodplain and generally set back to a minimum of 120 feet from the edge of the river. The area between the trail and the river should be maintained as a natural riparian buffer. This provides a minimum buffer depth necessary to protect stream ecology and water quality and reduces the risk of stream bank erosion which could threaten the structural integrity of the trail.

- **Enhance the intersection of Powell Road and Sawmill Parkway** by partnering with the City of Powell. Create a cohesive landscape design for the four corners of each quadrant that provides year-round green as well as seasonal color. Existing corner bikeway connections should be extended north and south on the west side of Sawmill.
- **Enhance the roundabout at Bunty Station Road and Sawmill Parkway.** Partner with the County Engineer’s office to provide additional landscaping may be provided, as well as southbound township signage.
- **Ensure that all roads** are marked where entering the Township with signage.



Sample of a street identification sign with township branding.



Township identity at the southern entrance should be enhanced, particularly if the north part of the parcel is developed.

## Infrastructure and Fiscal Health

- **Developers should be encouraged to minimize impervious surfaces** and manage stormwater runoff with structural BMPs (green infrastructure). These can be incorporated into the street design and roadside landscaping. BMPs include grass filter strips, water quality swales, bioretention cells, tree boxes, sand filters, and infiltration trenches.
- **Work with Delaware County** and/or local fiber providers to increase availability and speed of data services within the Township, particularly to encourage economic development.
- **Township trustees and staff should consider applying financial tools** to certain current and future projects. JEDDs may be useful in areas where new jobs may be created. New Community Authorities may be considered where projects are mostly residential. The township should consult with the County Engineer and Economic Development office since county and township projects often overlap.



The roundabout at Bunty Station provides an opportunity for township identity through signage and enhanced landscaping.



Bunty Station roundabout from the north.

## Township Identity

- **Develop a street-sign standard** with a township marker or logo to differentiate township roads from those maintained by the City of Powell, County, or State.
- **Enhance the existing gateway feature** at Sawmill Parkway and the Franklin County line. This may be done in accordance with any redevelopment of the northern portion of the site. If additional construction takes place on the site, new landscaping and mounding should be added to buffer any new building(s).



The intersection of Powell Road and Sawmill Parkway (left) presents an opportunity for enhanced landscaping and identity.





## Sub Area I The Olentangy Heritage Corridor

**Boundaries:** east and west sides of the Olentangy River below elevation 900 feet.

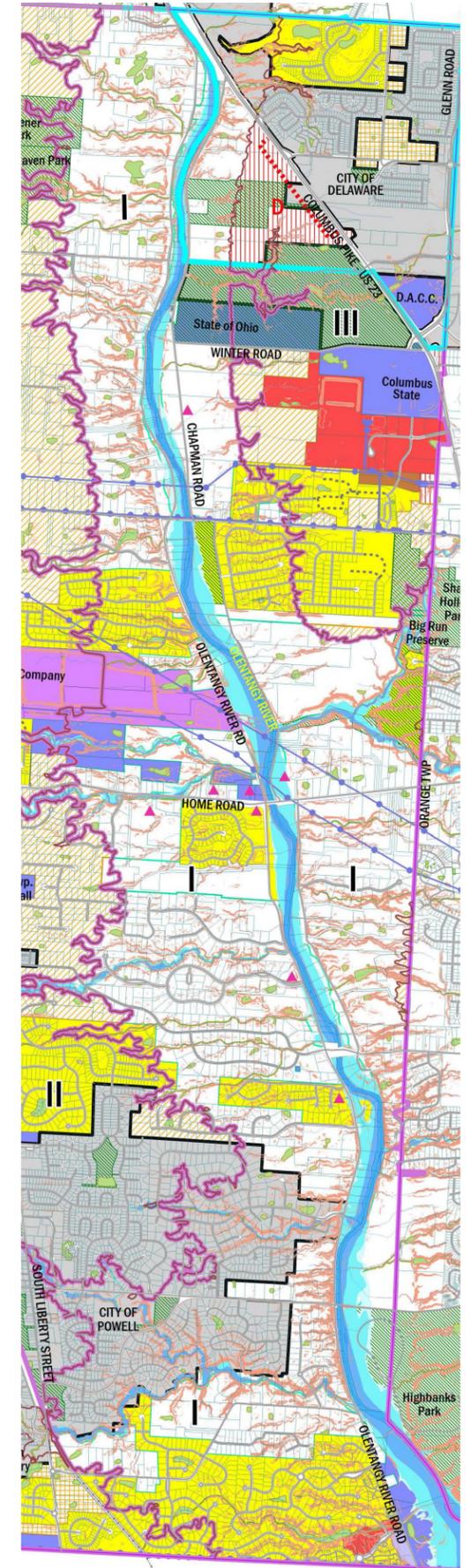
### Background Information

This is one of the earliest-settled areas of the County. There are still many historic structures and natural areas, but residential development has converted much of the farming. The Olentangy River is a state-designated Scenic River, and State Route 315 is a designated Scenic Byway. Del-Co Water Company, a private water cooperative, has a large water treatment plant, office complex, and upground reservoirs that stretch from the west bank of the Olentangy River to Liberty Road.

As of 2023, S.R. 315 will remain a two-lane road in order to protect the Scenic River and Scenic Byway status. Improvements are being studied at the Jewett Road intersection with 315 and at Hyatts Road and 315.

### Recommendations

1. Other than the lands previously zoned for **Planned Commercial** on Manning Parkway at S.R. 315, **no new commercial development is recommended in Sub Area I.**
2. Maintain a maximum residential density of **one unit per net developable acre**, with a standard lot size of 1 acre in the FR-1 zoning district. Consider allowing **Conservation Subdivisions** at a maximum density of **one unit per acre** with clustered lots and a minimum of 50% permanent open space.
3. To protect water quality in the **Olentangy River**, establish a 100-foot streamside buffer and an outer buffer equal to the 100-year floodplain in accordance with the OEPA Olentangy Watershed Permit.
4. Preserve **historic structures** and **natural resources**, including ravines in their natural state, woodlands, wetlands, wildlife corridors, streams, and bodies of water.



## Sub Area II Olentangy West Highlands

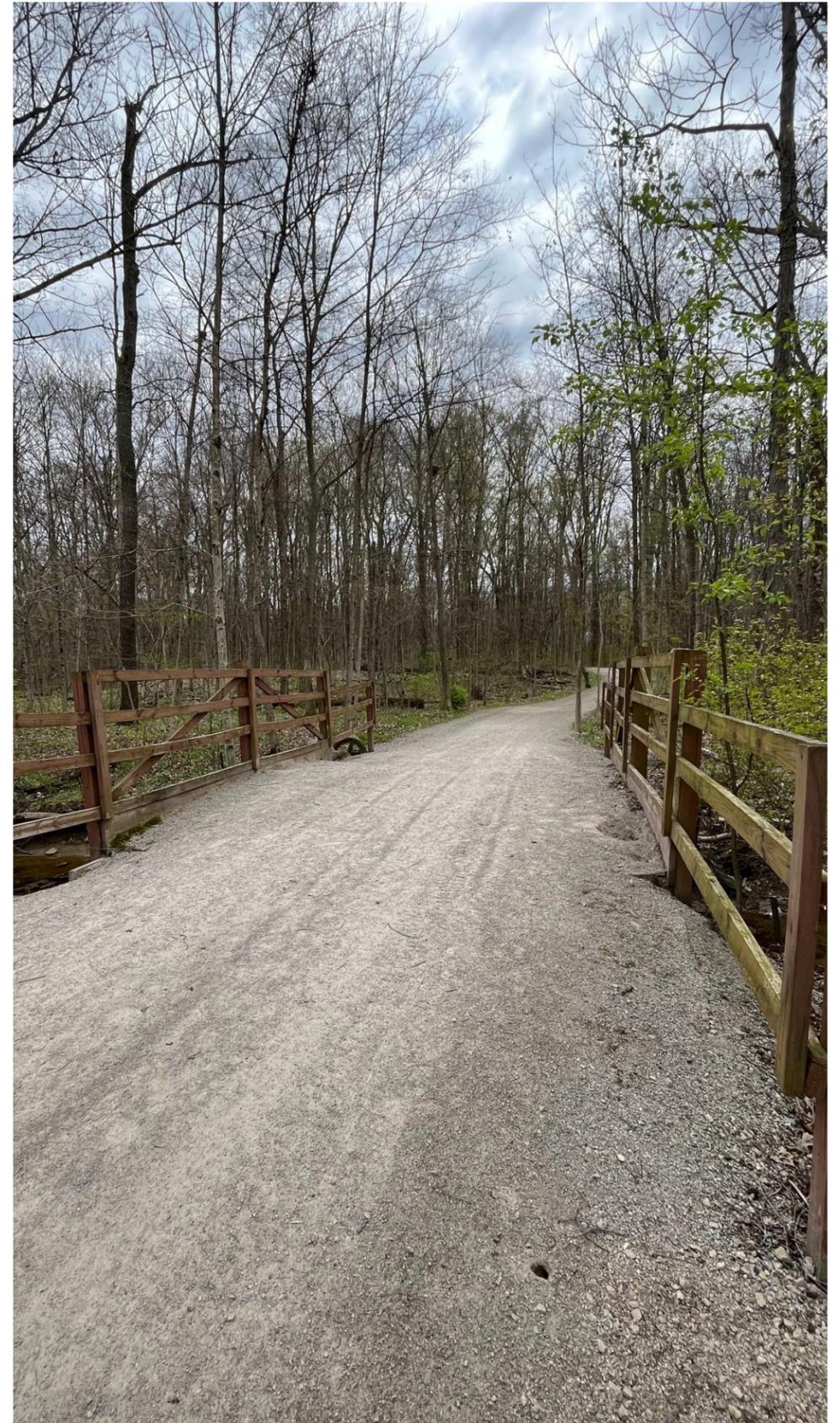
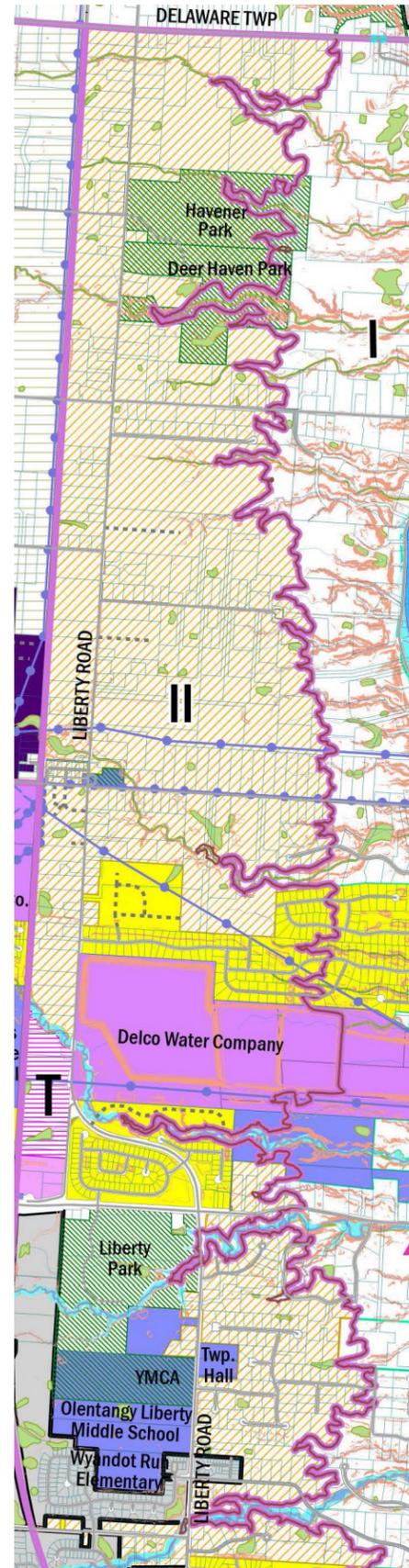
**Boundaries:** Generally east of the railroad and above the 900 foot elevation.

### Background information

Large tracts of open land still exist north of Home Road. However, the amount of such acreage is dwindling. This subarea includes the Township's Havener Park and Preservation Park's Deer Haven Park.

## Recommendations

1. The area north of Home Road, west of Old Liberty Road, east of the railroad, and south of the stream (west of the Del-Co reservoir) is impacted by the railroad to the west, industrial to the south, and three schools west of the railroad. This is no longer the exclusively low-density, single-family area it once was, so the plan may consider alternative **transitional (T) uses, such as commercial and office**. Such uses should provide proper buffering to the existing residential uses on the east side of Old Liberty Road.
2. For lands not served by centralized sewer, maintain a standard minimum lot size of **1 acre in the FR-1** zoning district. To preserve natural open space and all its attributes, consider Conservation Subdivisions at a maximum density of one unit per net developable acre, with a minimum of 50% permanent open space.
3. For lands served by centralized sanitary sewer, consider rezoning for **Planned Residential Developments** at a maximum density of **1.25 units per net developable acre**, with a minimum of 20% preserved common open space.
4. Seek **additional park lands** within this Sub Area as it develops.



## Sub Areas III U.S. Route 23 Corridor

**Boundaries:** All of the land in Liberty Township above 900 feet elevation on the east side of the Olentangy River. Sub Area IX is the Delaware exclusive water service area, which is generally north of Camp Lazarus on the west side of U.S. 23 and north of Peachblow Road east of U.S. 23.

### Background Information

These lands represent a high plateau on the east side of the Olentangy River. The most notable feature is the four-lane, divided U.S. Route 23 that runs down its spine. The U.S. 23 corridor represents a property tax and jobs base for the Township and a sales tax base for the County. Grady Memorial Hospital has built a single office building at its future campus at Glenn Parkway. This is north and east of the expanded Delaware Area Career Center. Glenn Road will eventually link U.S. 23 to U.S. 36/S.R. 37 as a City of Delaware road project.

Lands within Sub Area IX may annex into Delaware in order to be developed pursuant to an exclusive water agreement between Del-Co Water Company and the City of Delaware.

The area includes Columbus State Community College's first building on its 100-acre campus on the southwest corner of Winter Road and U.S. 23; Greif Brothers with its headquarters at The Park at Greif office park; and Camp Lazarus/State of Ohio land at several hundred acres north of Winter Road and west of U.S. 23. A very deep and fragile ravine that runs to the Olentangy River divides these sites. Camp Lazarus has sold conservation easements to the state of Ohio, so this plan views the land as permanently-protected open space.

The Dornoch Golf Club on U.S. 23 uses an on-site sewage treatment plant and land-application (golf course irrigation) system to service the 432 houses built around the golf course in the northeastern corner of the Township. Dornoch is surrounded on three sides by Delaware, so expansion of this system is unlikely, since city sewer is or will be available. Any further development of the golf course would likely require services from the city.

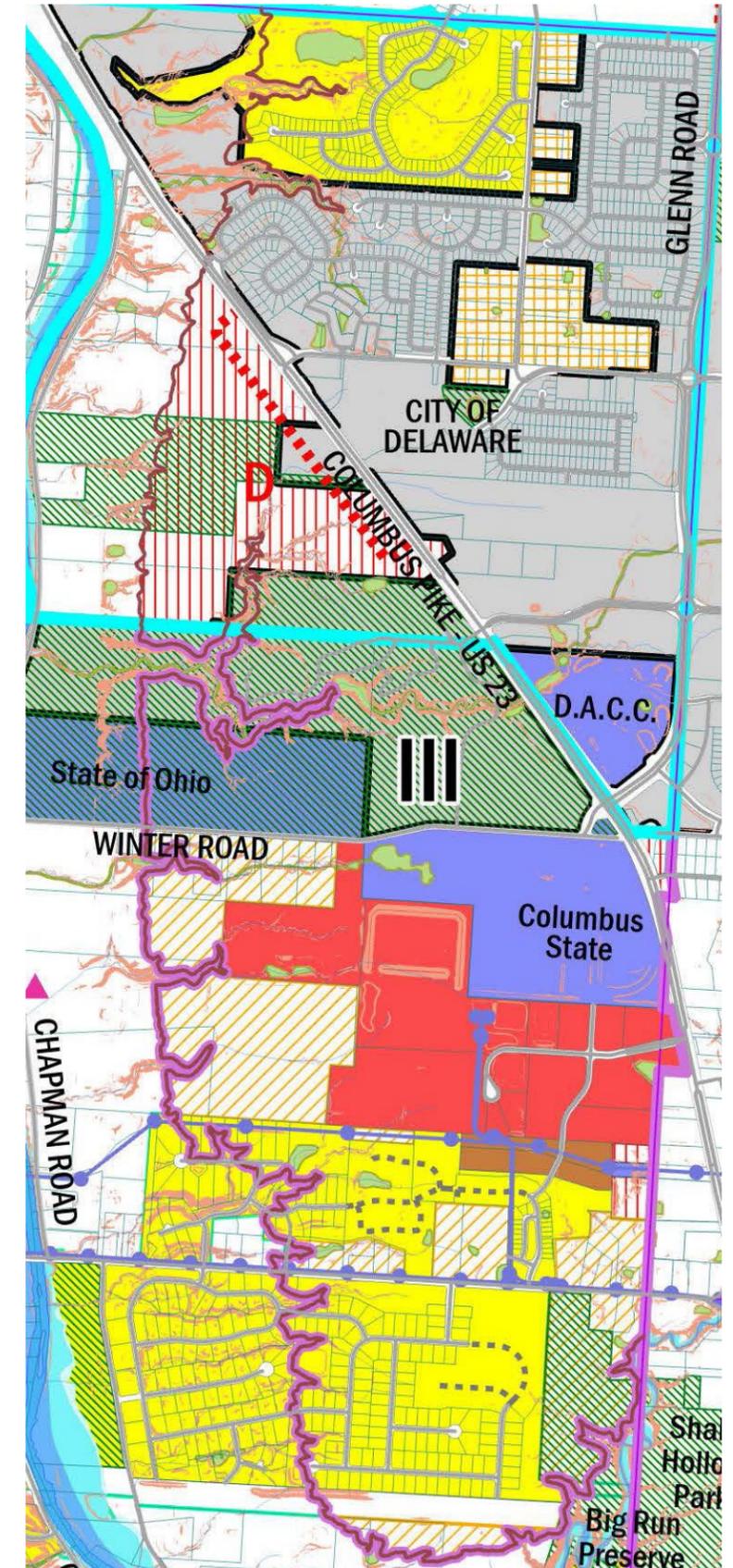
The Perkins Observatory is an active telescope used by Ohio Wesleyan University and area astronomers. New development that casts light upwards can reduce the clear view of the night sky. For that reason, exterior lights should be downward cast or "cut-off" type appliances. Additional development is discouraged by this plan.

## Recommendations — Commercial and Office

1. The **Park at Greif** includes approximately 60 acres of undeveloped land that is zoned Planned Commercial. The Township should work with Delaware County to aggressively **promote this area to site selectors**.
2. The **Park at Greif may be expanded into undeveloped land to the west**. Such development would require amendments to the current park to allow access to those lands. Commercial and office use should be limited to the area **above the 900-foot elevation mark**.
3. All lands that abut or can gain **access from U.S. 23** are potential new **professional office or commercial sites**, provided strict access management standards are used with developer-built parallel access roads, such as the suggested new road "D" on the Comprehensive Plan.
4. **"Big Box" retail**, meaning single stores with more than 65,000 square feet under one roof, is **eligible for location within the Planned Commercial District** provided it has access to U.S. 23.
5. Maintain a minimum **125-foot structural setback from the U.S. 23** right-of-way.

## Recommendations — Residential

1. For lands not served by centralized sewer, maintain a maximum density of **one unit per net developable acre**, and maintain a **minimum lot size of 1 acre** in FR-1 districts.
2. The pockets of single-family homes on 1-acre lots east of U.S. 23 are directly adjacent to and becoming surrounded by Delaware. They lie outside the county sewer service area. The Plan recommends consideration for rezoning as Planned Residential Developments at a maximum density of **1.5 units per net developable acre**, but it is unlikely these lands will redevelop in the Township due to the proximity of Delaware sewer, and exclusive water service agreements between Delaware and Del-Co Water.
3. For residential lands served by centralized sanitary sewer west of U.S. 23, consider rezoning for **Planned Residential Developments** at a maximum density of **1.25 units per net developable acre**, with a minimum of 20% preserved open space.
4. **Multi-family residential** development is recommended as a permitted use within Planned Commercial Districts at a maximum density of **five units per net developable acre**. This density is suitable for empty nester-style condominiums, which typically generate few school-age children.



## Sub Area IV Sawmill South

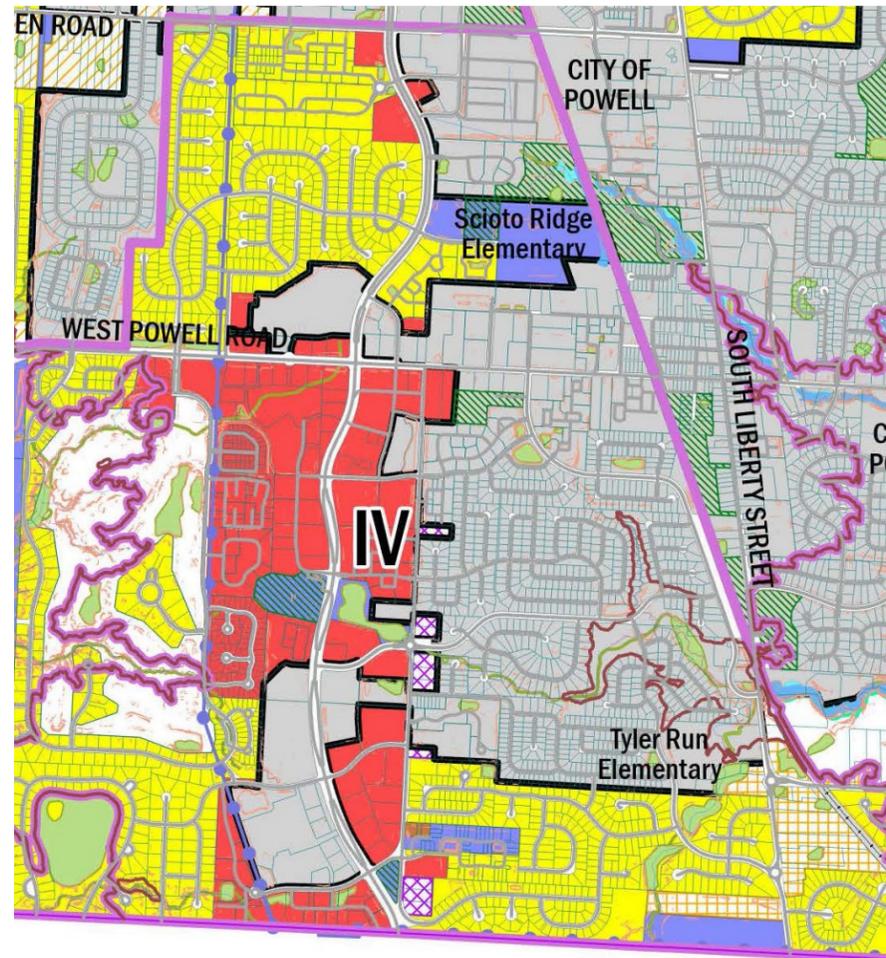
**Boundaries:** North: Seldom Seen Road; South: Franklin County; West: O'Shaughnessy Reservoir; East, railroad tracks.

### Background Information

This Sub Area is almost completely zoned to higher density and commercial uses. The zonings are, for the most part, planned developments. There are some small parcels of land zoned FR-1 on the east side of Sawmill Road still available for development. The Target site and outparcels, as well as Wedgewood Urgent Care, Ganzhorn Suites, and developments just south of Presidential Parkway have developed in the City of Powell.

### Recommendations

1. All lands that directly **abut Sawmill Parkway** in Sub Area IV are recommended for **Mixed Uses**, whether they are new professional office, commercial uses, or residential uses that are compatible with and sensitive to surrounding uses as part of an overall planned development. **Developments should seek pedestrian orientation, integrated green spaces, and mixed uses.**
2. **Multi-family residential** development is recommended as a permitted use within **Planned Commercial Districts**. Modest-density condominium development with one- and two-bedroom units can help reduce new student enrollment loads.
3. If served by centralized sanitary sewer, FR-1 zoned house lots along the east side of Sawmill Road are recommended for **Planned Office** or **Residential Mixed Use**, with a residential density of **1.5 units per net developable acre**. Care must be taken to adequately buffer the existing residential neighborhoods in Powell to the east.



## Sub Area V Scioto Central

**Boundaries:** North: Home Road; South, Seldom Seen Road to Verona, then south; West, Township boundary; East, railroad tracks.

### Background Information

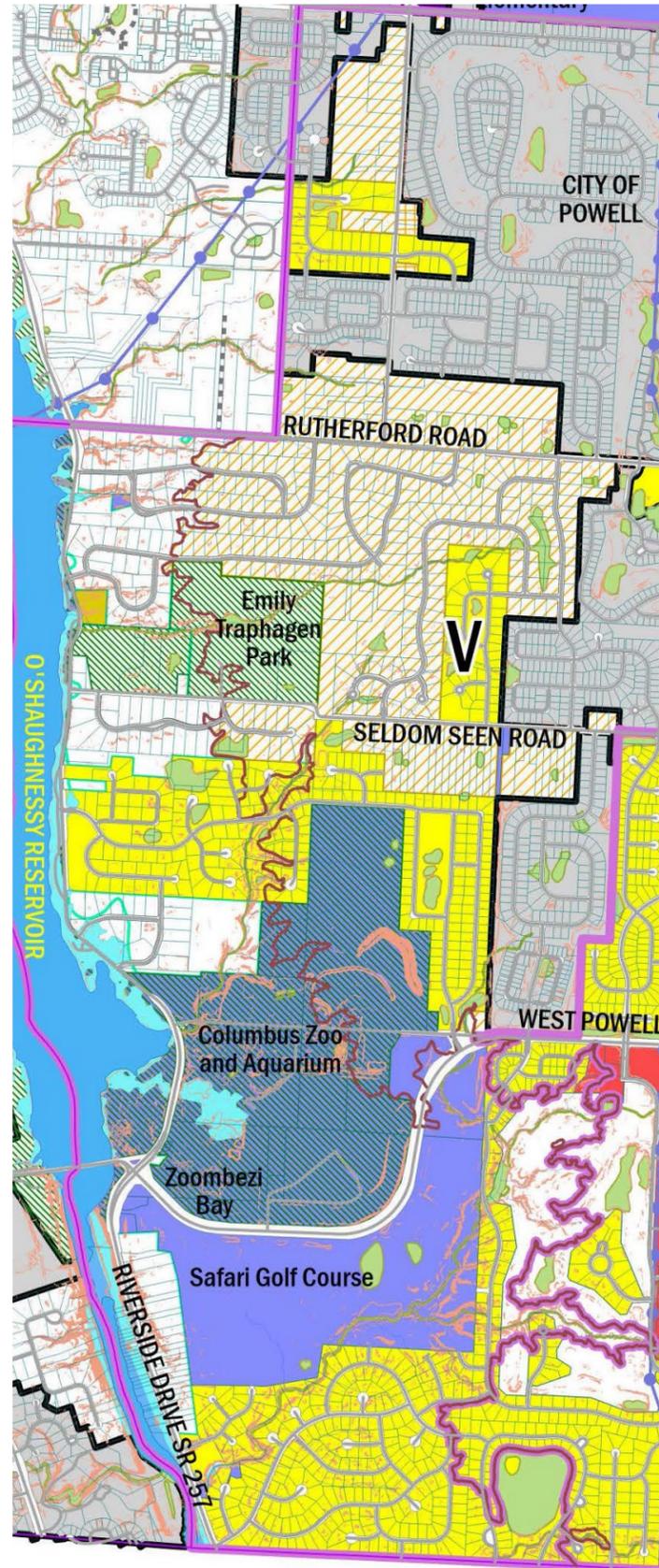
This Sub Area is largely built out, but there are still vacant parcels of land. Any alterations to existing development plans will result in reviews, allowing protection of adjacent uses.

As of this printing, the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is actively working on a framework to plan the future use a programming of all of its properties.

### Recommendations

1. For lands not served by centralized sewer, maintain a minimum lot size of **1 acre in the FR-1 district**. To preserve natural open space and all its attributes, consider allowing **Conservation Subdivisions** at a maximum density of **one unit per net developable acre**, with a minimum of 50% permanent open space.
2. For lands served by centralized sanitary sewer, consider allowing rezoning for **Planned Residential Developments** at a maximum density of **1.25 units per net developable acre**, with a minimum of 20% preserved open space.
3. Work with the **Columbus Zoo** to seek development opportunities at the southeast corner of Powell Road and Dublin Road for non-residential uses that would be commercial and office uses that would not compete with services offered by the Zoo.





## Sub Area VI Liberty Grand Area

**Boundaries:** North: Hyatts Road; South, Home Road; West, Concord Township; East, railroad tracks.

### Background information

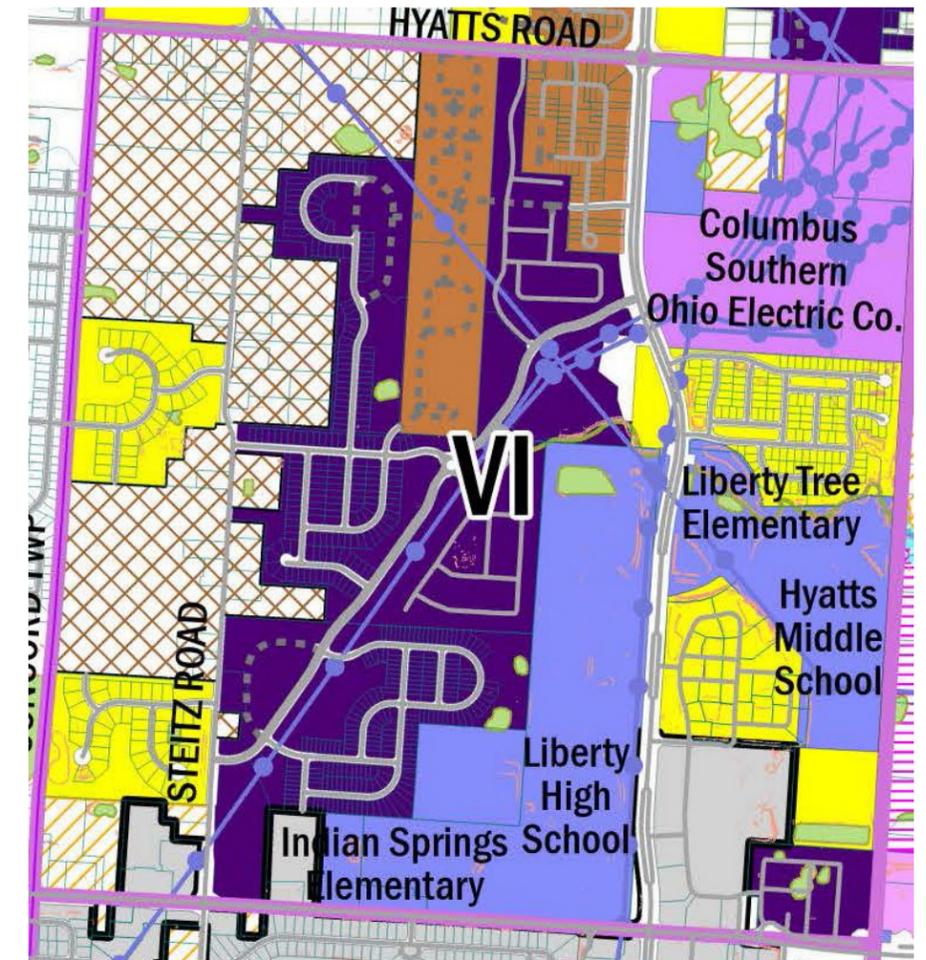
This Sub Area serves as a transition from higher densities to the south to lower densities to the north.

The 136-acre Olentangy Liberty High School and elementary school complex anchor the northwest corner of Sawmill Parkway and Home Road. Two additional school sites of 77 acres Hyatts Middle School and Liberty Tree Elementary School are on the east side of Sawmill. Work is finally underway on the OSU Wexner Medical Center facility on the northeast corner of Sawmill and Home Road. Located within Powell, the 200,000 square foot facility on 30 acres is scheduled to open in May of 2025.

In 2010, the County expanded and elevated Home Road over the CSX railroad tracks. During 2022/2023, additional improvements were made at Home Road and Sawmill in preparation for the hospital development. High tension powerlines crisscross this Sub Area.

### Recommendations

1. For lands not served by centralized sewer, maintain a maximum density of **one unit per net developable acre**. Maintain a standard minimum lot size of **1 acre within the FR-1** zoning district.
2. For land served by centralized sewer, consider allowing rezoning for **Planned Residential Developments** at **1.85 units per net developable acre** for single-family lots with a minimum of 20% open space, to be comparable to densities in Scioto Reserve to the west.
3. Infill areas of Multi-Family may be considered where the standards of the **Planned Multi-Family Residence District** can be met with regard to access and other design standards. Density in such developments should not exceed **4 units per acre** and should be structured with a minimum of **4 units per building** to qualify for commercial taxation.
4. Other than lands already zoned for Planned Commercial within this Sub Area, no additional commercial uses or districts are recommended.



## Sub Area VII North West Estates

**Boundaries:** North: Bunty Station Road; South, Hyatts Road; West, Concord Township; East, CSX railroad tracks.

### Background information

This Sub Area has the most undeveloped land among all the Sub Areas. As sewer service expands to this area, farming may gradually give way to development. The Sawmill Parkway is completed as a limited access, four-lane County road to U.S. 42.

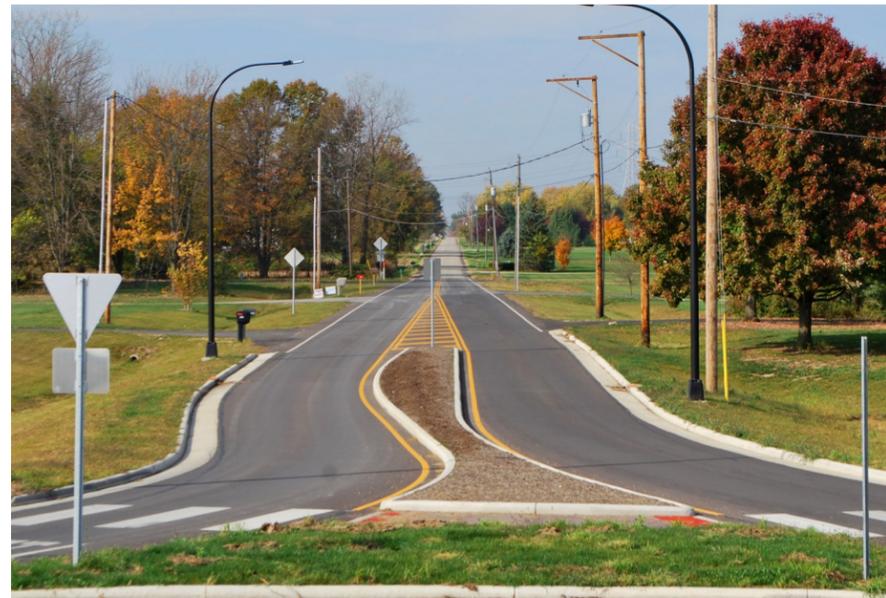
The Perry-Taggart sewer provides service to the area, but additional service lines will need to be extended for this area to gain service. Densities should remain low. Furthermore, the roads are narrow and drainage is poor due to high groundwater, clay soils, and flat topography. Adding density would exacerbate these problems and undermine the character of the area.

The County Thoroughfare Plan recommends a Steitz Road extension, shown as new road "B" on the Comprehensive Plan Map linking Clark-Shaw Road to Ford Road. This alignment may be refined as developments are proposed.

Recent developments within Concord Township and Liberty Township have set the tone for the area south of Clark-Shaw Road. These developments include both single-family and condominium development at an overall density of roughly two units per net developable acre. Clarkshaw Crossing is a project utilizing the POD 18D overlay including 254 single family units and 136 attached units. Rosewood Village, west of Sawmill Parkway, also will utilize the overlay with 208 apartments.

## Recommendations

1. For lands not served by centralized sanitary sewer, maintain a standard minimum **1-acre lot size within the FR-1** zoning district.
2. Maintain a 100-foot setback for any building and 50 feet for any paving from the edge of the proposed Sawmill Parkway right-of-way.
3. No direct access to Sawmill Parkway should be approved (DCEO controls access to the road).
4. In an effort to diversify the tax base of the township, low-impact **Light Industrial** uses may be considered on larger tracts **between Sawmill Parkway and the railroad tracks**, particularly between Bean Oller and Ford Road. Such uses must have appropriate access without accessing Sawmill Parkway. Interconnection should be provided between developments. Appropriate services such as water and sewer must be available.
5. Such non-residential uses should be "clean" industrial, with all operations conducted inside the structure(s). Site design should



include Best Management Practices as noted within this plan where applicable. Sites should include deep setbacks from adjacent residential uses with mounding and landscaping used for buffering. Signage should be minimal with entry features designed to blend with the surrounding development.

6. **Seek additional park lands** within this Sub Area as it develops.

### Rural Trend Option

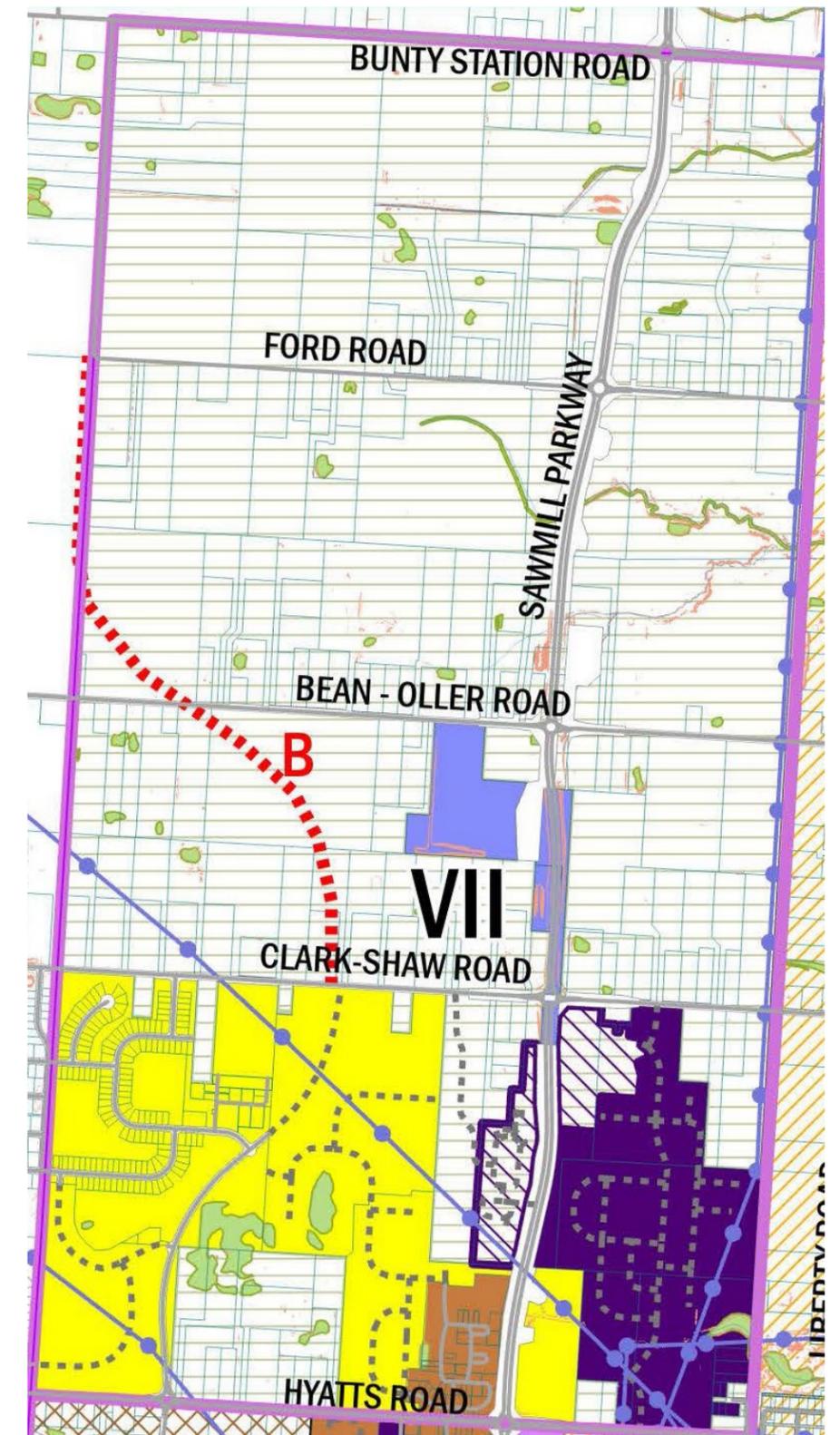
For all lands, whether served by centralized sewer or not, maintain a maximum density of **one unit per net developable acre**.

### Residential Flexibility Option

If the area is served by centralized sanitary sewer, consider rezoning for Planned Residential Developments at a maximum density of **1.25 units per net developable acre**, with a minimum of 20% preserved common open space.

Areas of higher density may be considered where the standards of the **Planned Multi-Family Residence District** can be met with regard to access and other design standards. Apartment-style development would not be appropriate in this subarea, but **age-targeted senior housing** or **single-family detached** buildings with **condominium-style management**. No such use should extend farther than 900 feet from Sawmill Parkway.

In an effort to preserve natural open space and its attributes, allow **Conservation Subdivisions** at a maximum density of **one unit per net developable acre**, with a minimum of 50% permanent open space.



## Land use types and tax implications

The following pages include several tables that provide general projections of the impacts of various uses. The first table looks at different individual uses with sample tax, student generation, and other issues of consideration.

Land Use (sample)	Auditor's value	Selected Taxes	Township/School Impact	Other issues
<b>Data Center (Chase)</b>	\$4,432,900	<b>Total Tax — \$70,986</b> Liberty Township — \$5,478 Liberty Exclusive of Powell and Del — \$1,019 Olentangy — \$54,463	(.9 trips per 1,000 square feet)	Need is limited and this use generates few employees. County has noted that data centers are not a priority due to water usage
<b>Office Use (Wedgewood, 4041 Attucks)</b>	\$1,374,700	<b>Total Tax — \$40,127</b> Liberty Township — \$3,054 Liberty Exclusive of Powell and Del — \$577 Olentangy — \$30,725	(10 trips per 1,800 square feet)	Fire and police services higher than residential.
<b>Single-site Retail Use (Twp) (McDonald's Sawmill)</b>	\$1,509,000	<b>Total Tax — \$44,322</b> Liberty Township — \$3,404 Liberty Exclusive of Powell and Del — \$633 Olentangy — \$33,727	(44 trips per 1,900 square feet)	Fire and police services higher than residential.
<b>Single-site Retail Use (Powell) (Liberty Cleaners, Marathon)</b>	\$1,026,900	<b>Total Tax — \$35,602</b> Liberty Township — \$2,281 Olentangy — \$22,952	(44 trips per 1,900 square feet)	Fire and police services higher than residential.
<b>Apartment Complex (Liberty Summit — 234 units)</b>	\$25,829,900	<b>Total Tax — \$754,301</b> <b>\$3,223 per unit</b> Liberty Township — \$21,895 (\$93 per unit) Liberty Exclusive of Powell and Del — \$4,076 \$17 per unit Olentangy — \$577,304 (\$2,467 per unit)	Projected students: 0.121 students per unit 28 total <b>Olentangy tax collected per student: \$20,618</b> (6.63 trips per dwelling unit)	Multi-family should be located in transitional areas, typically between commercial and single-family uses. Developments should be walkable, with access to community features, such as parks, nearby.  Locate apartments near other uses, near arterial roads. Leaders should use care when redirecting taxes away from potential services.
<b>Suburban Development (PR zoning, Derby Glen) (1/3 acre)</b>	Average value — \$500,000	<b>Total Tax — \$12,317</b> Liberty Township — \$899 Liberty Exclusive of Powell and Del — \$191 Olentangy — \$9,470	Projected students: 1.13 per unit <b>Olentangy tax collected: \$9,470.</b> (9.57 trips per dwelling unit)	Utilize for flexibility in road network and open space design. Conservation Subdivisions continue to offer a design with more open space, but are limited in their density.
<b>Large Lot Development (FR-1 zoning) (5.66 acres)</b>	Average value — \$530,000	<b>Total Tax — \$12,967</b> Liberty Township — \$877 Liberty Exclusive of Powell and Del — \$187 Olentangy — \$9,101	Projected students: 1.13 per unit <b>Olentangy tax collected: \$9,101</b> (9.57 trips per dwelling unit)	Township and RPC can ask for protection of treelines, slopes, and other features. This does prevent more intense development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All financial information is collected from the County Auditor's website and property detail page.</li> <li>Ohio School Report Cards (ODE) reports Olentangy District Spending per Pupil of \$11,148 from the district and \$11,306 from the State.</li> </ul>				

## Implications of Different Development Approaches

This table uses some of that same information and projects it onto hypothetical 18-acre development sites.

Development type	Acreage	Number of Units	Total Valuation	Number of Students*	School District Tax	Cost to educate**	Other public impacts
Farm/undeveloped	18 ac.	0	\$500,000	0	\$3,106	\$0	No services
Single-Family Detached (1.25/acre)	18 ac.	15	\$7,500,000	17 (1.3/unit)	\$141,300	\$204,000	Public street maintenance
Single-Detached Condos	18 ac.	85	\$32,725,000	10 (.121/unit)	\$489,000	\$120,000	Private streets, older population
Multi-family buildings (apartments, townhouses, mixed use)	18 ac.	240	\$28,000,000	30 (.121/unit)	\$756,000	\$360,000	Private streets, parks/social services, enhanced police/fire/EMS usage
Commercial use	18 ac.	0	\$15,000,000	0	\$415,000	\$0	Enhanced police/fire/EMS usage

\* Student generation based on 1.13 per single-family unit and .121 per multi-family unit.  
 \*\* Cost to Educate based on \$12,000 per student (Ohio School Report Card, 2022)



Using the generalized information above, this table looks at various development scenarios and how each might affect the township



Development Option (100 Acres)	Acreage	Number of Units	Number of Students	Trip Ends per Day	Comments
Farm Residential (1 and 2-acre lots)	100	90	117	891	All land in lots, no open space.
Planned Residential at 1.25/acre	100	250	325	2,475	Open space, more efficient extension of utilities.
75 acres Planned Residential at 1.25/acre 25 acres of Multi-Family at 10/acre	100	93 SF + 250 MF	120 + 30 150	920 + 1,650 2,570	Opportunities for financial tools.
50 acres Planned Residential at 1.25/acre 50 acres of Multi-Family at 10/acre	100	62 SF + 500 MF	80 + 60 140	613 + 3,300 3,913	Opportunities for financial tools.

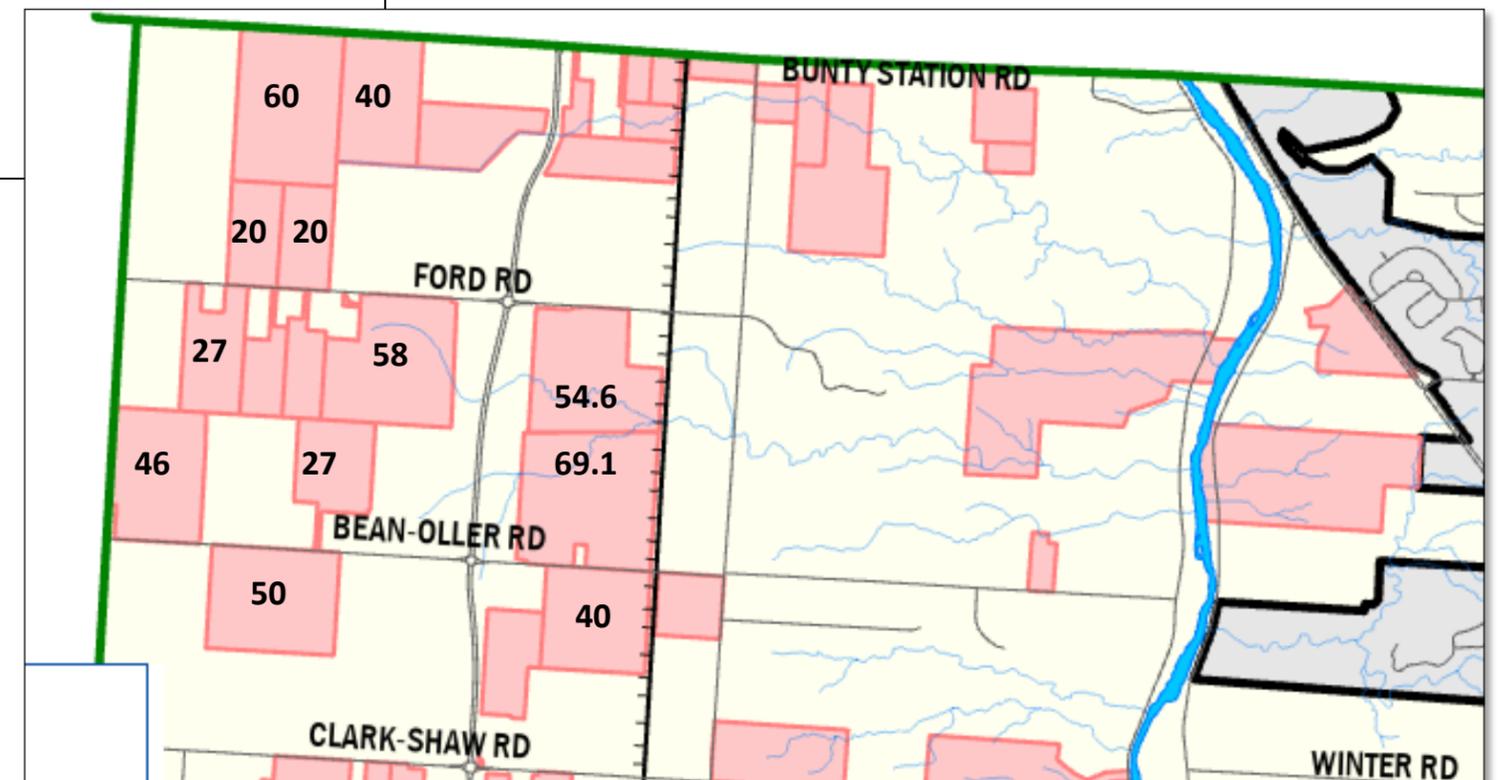
- Student generation based on 1.13 per single-family unit and .121 per multi-family unit.
- Traffic based on ITE projections of 9.9 trip ends per single-family unit and 6.6 trip ends per multi-family unit.

## Build out populations

Subarea	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	Twsp. Total	Powell
<i>Gross acreage</i>	5,667 ac.	3,021 ac.	1,414 ac.	1,270 ac.	2,424 ac.	1,173 ac.	2,233 ac.	17,203 ac.	3,718 ac.
Current units	1,484	958	413	2,305	1,119	848	328	7,455	5,393
Lots in development	61	541	92	3	1	279	511	1,092	42
Multi-family in development	64	0	78	0	0	349	400	891	64
Current population	4,244	2,740	1,181	6,592	3,200	2,425	938	21,321	16,125
Population in development	358	403	486	9	14	1,796	2,605	5,871	317
<i>Net developable Acreage (NDA) estimate</i>	1,067 ac.	457 ac.	332 ac.	.65 ac.	189 ac.	72 ac.	750 ac.	2,868 ac.	N/A
Population increase	2,768	1,444	1,416	3	217	366	2,726	8,940	317
Potential total population								30,261	16,442



- Existing Land Use layer was created based on County Auditor's Office parcel layer dated 4/4/2023.
- For developable land, agricultural and vacant land over 10 acres was selected.
- Net Developable Acreage removed wetlands, floodplains, powerline easements, and slopes greater than 20%.
- Density is based on the Comprehensive Plan or current Zoning.
- Population is based on 2.86 people per household as identified by the 2020 Census.
- Powell figures assume current municipal boundaries and known projects.



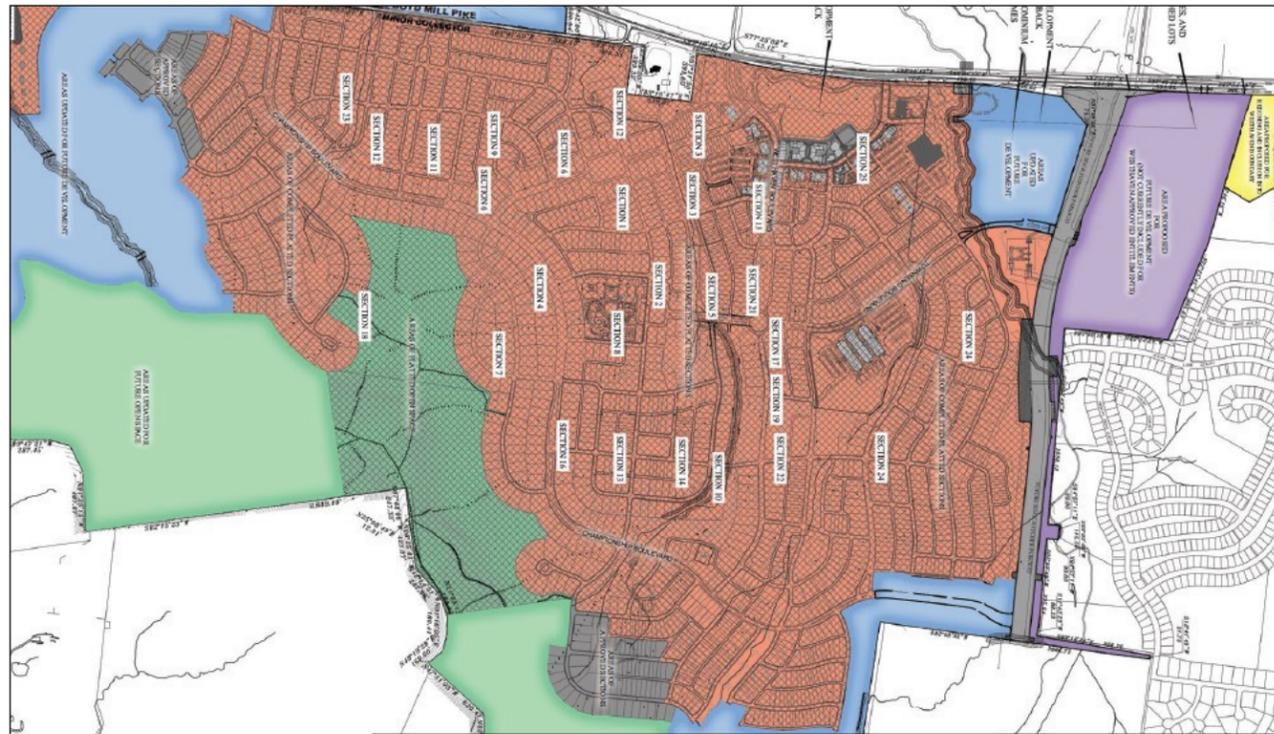
**Larger Undeveloped Parcels  
with acreages  
As of May 1, 2023**

**Westhaven Development, Franklin, TN** — started in early 2000s

Westhaven is a part of Franklin, Tennessee, that was mentioned several times as an example of a relatively self-sustaining neighborhood with a mix of uses including residential, commercial, a school site, and recreation. The Steering Committee used the attached information

to discuss some of the implications of the design and densities used there. It does not represent a recommendation.

Total Acreage	1,520 ac.
Total Dwelling Units	3,516
Gross Density	2.31 units/acre
Commercial space	200,000 s.f.
Estimates acreage	12.5 acres
Open Space Ac.	760 ac. (50% - may include golf course)



Lot 47' x 150'  
3 bed 4 bath  
3,251 square feet  
\$850,000



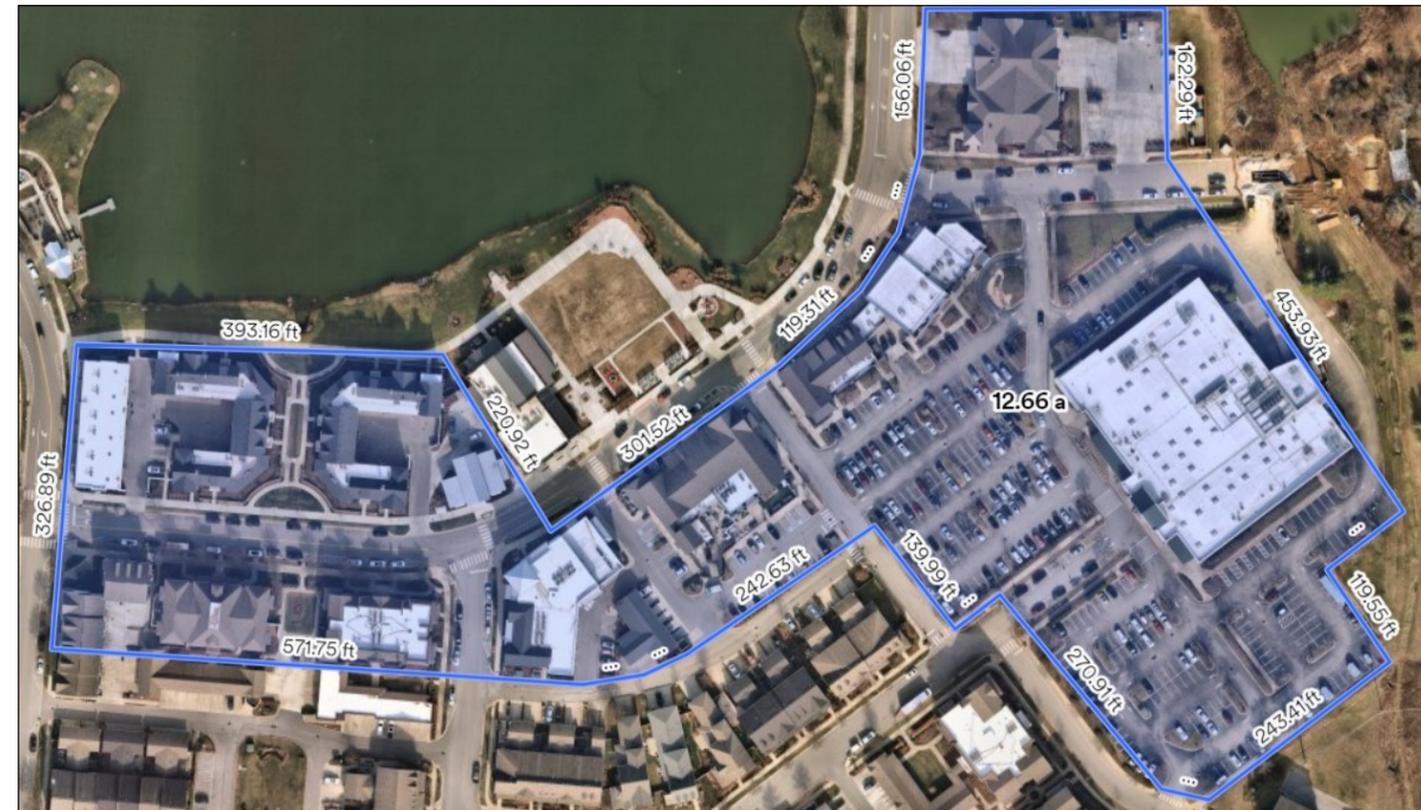
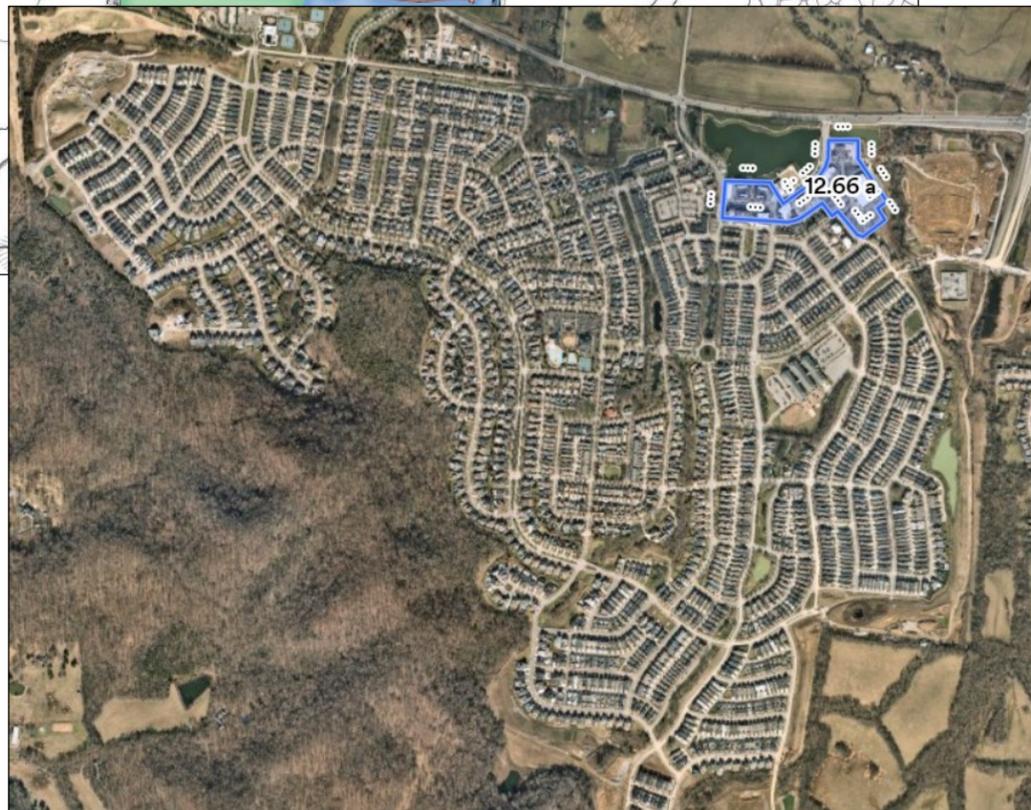
2 bed 2 bath  
3,251 square feet  
\$699,000

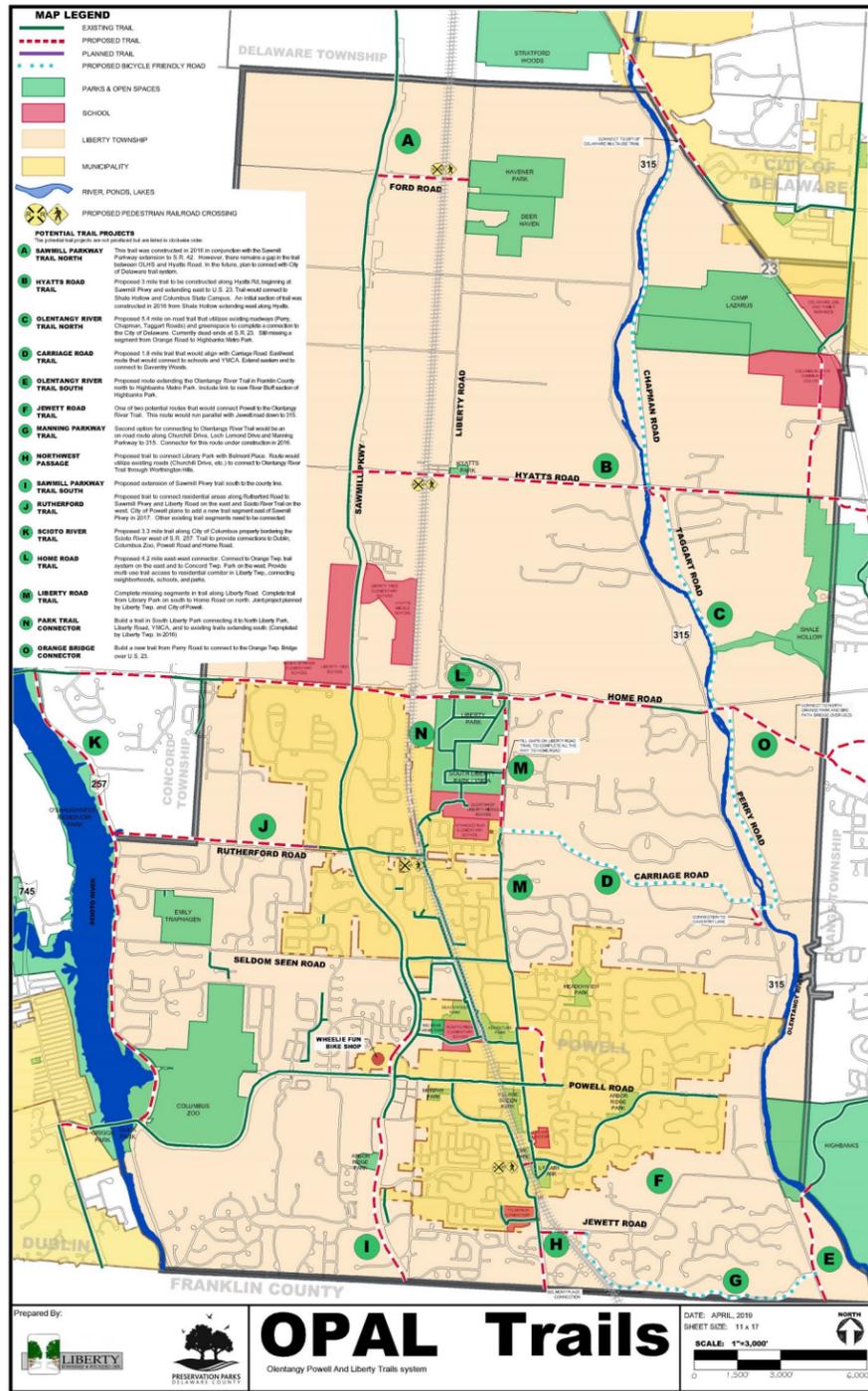


Lot 45' x 130'  
3 bed 4 bath  
2,704 square feet  
\$1,140,000



Lot 57' x 150'  
4 bed 4 bath  
3,526 square feet  
\$1,322,250





Include map as an appendix



document prepared by:  
**Delaware County Regional Planning Commission**  
[www.dcrpc.org](http://www.dcrpc.org)