An aerial photograph of a city street grid, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue layer. The streets are visible as white lines, and the buildings are represented by small white rectangles. The blue overlay is most prominent in the top-left and bottom-right corners, where text is placed.

# VISION UMCH

## CITY OF WORTHINGTON

Worthington City Council  
September 2, 2014

*Presenter:*  
Chris Hermann, Principal, MKSK

# WHAT IS PROPOSED

Update the *Worthington Comprehensive Plan* (2005)

- Specifically the **UMCH Focus Area** section
- Adopt replacement pages for pages 88 (UMCH portion), 89, and 90 of the existing Comprehensive Plan with pages 89-99 being considered tonight, and renumber the following pages of the document.
- This document provides strategic guidance to City staff, Boards and Commissions, residents, businesses, land owners, and potential developers for the reuse, rezoning, and development of land and necessary supporting infrastructure within the City.



CITY OF WORTHINGTON, OHIO  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**  
& 2005 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR WORTHINGTON

Prepared by:  
MyersSchmalenberger / MSI

Design Team:  
Myers Schmalenberger/ MSI  
Schooley Caldwell Associates  
Benjamin D. Rickey & Co.

[www.worthington.org](http://www.worthington.org)

# PROCESS

- Task I: Opportunity Analysis ( Sept. – Oct. 2013)
- Site Walking Tour (Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>)
  - UMCH, WARD, Business Stakeholder Mtgs.

- Task II: Conceptual Site Plan Analysis  
(Oct. – Dec. 2013)
- Design Charrette (Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>)
  - Public Meeting #1 (Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>)
  - Feedback – online, e-mail, letters

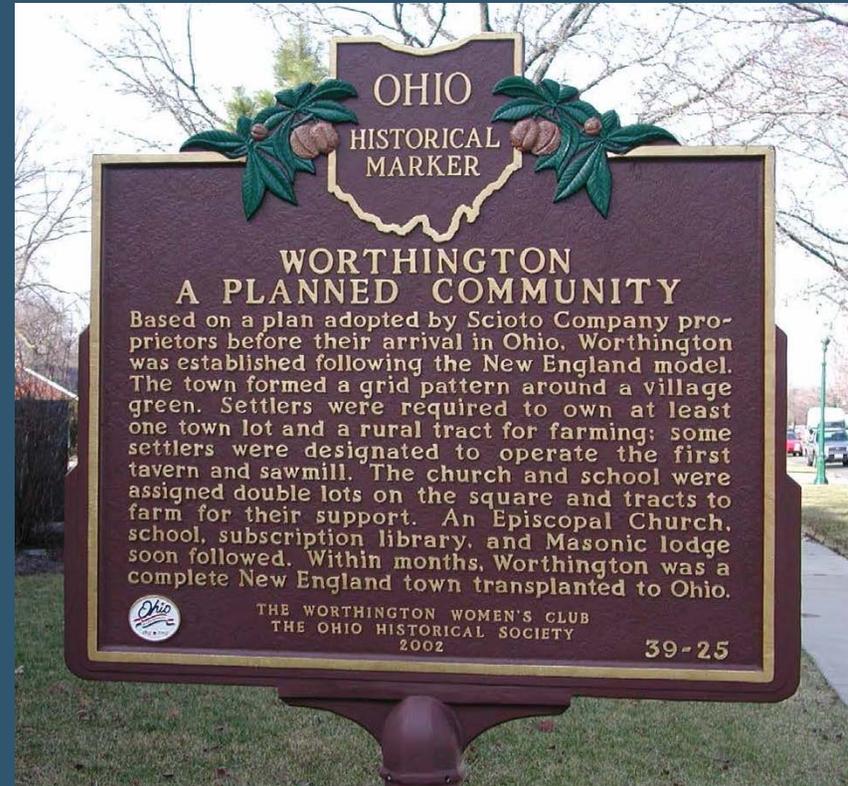
- Task III: Plan Generation (Jan. – March 2014)
- Worthington Young Professionals
  - Worthington College Students
  - Developer Interviews
  - Park & Recreation Commission
  - Development Bus Tour (March 14<sup>th</sup>)
  - Feedback – online, e-mail, letters
  - Public Meeting #2 (March 26<sup>th</sup>)

- Task IV: Review/Adoption Process (April – Sept. 2014)
- Municipal Planning Commission (July 24<sup>th</sup>)
  - Municipal Planning Commission (May 29<sup>th</sup>)
  - **Worthington City Council (Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

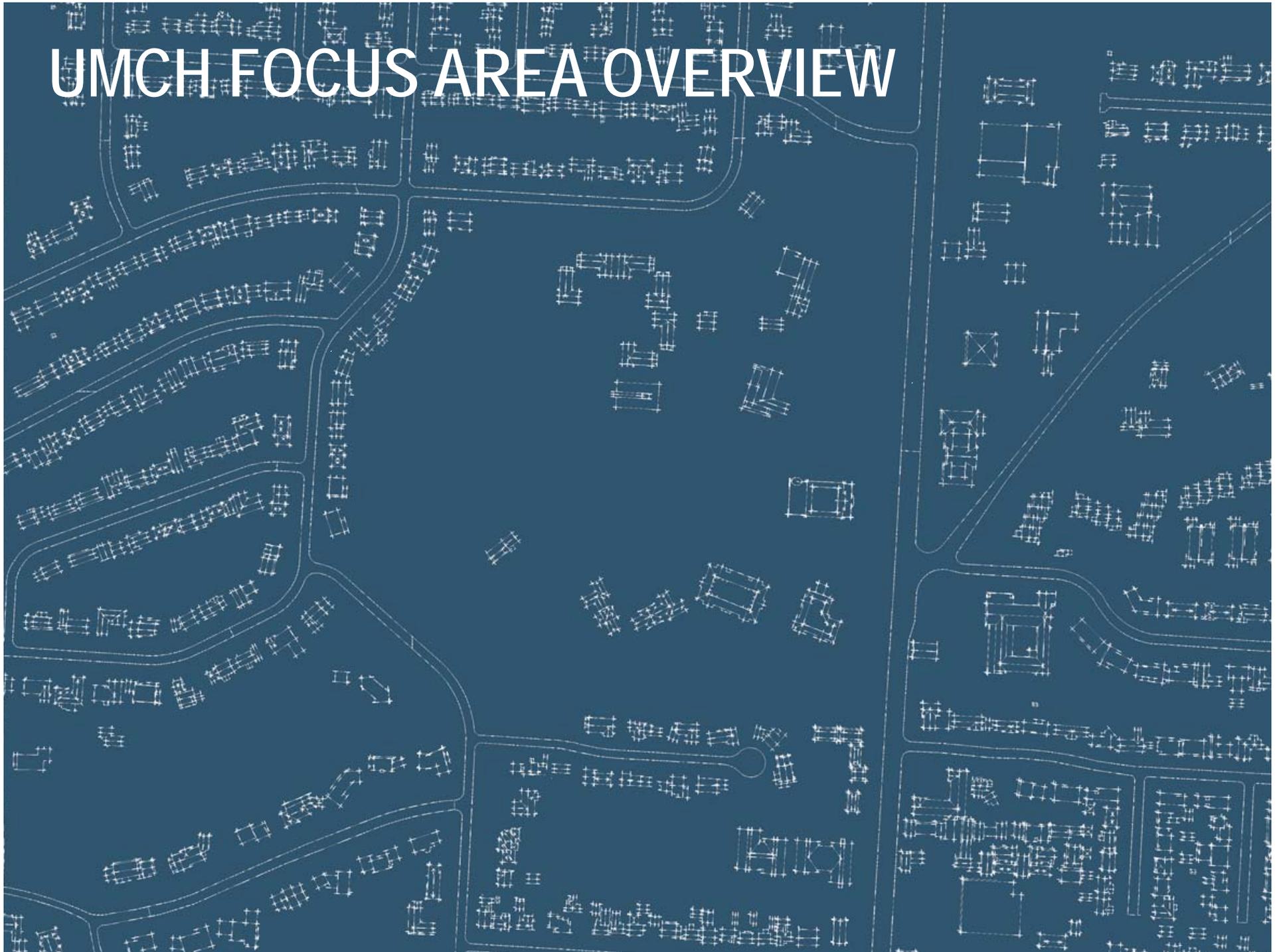


# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Be Proactive
- Build Consensus
- Recognize Worthington is land-locked
- Achieve city objectives of improving tax base and providing intergenerational housing
- Enable once in-a-generation opportunity
- Facilitate Development Approval Process



# UMCH FOCUS AREA OVERVIEW



# UMCH HISTORY IN WORTHINGTON

1926



1947



1947



1950



1938



1957



1964



1995



# UMCH SITE TODAY – PRIVATELY OWNED



# CURRENT ZONING

## Permitted Uses:

### S-1: Special – Institutional:

Preschool, nursery school, child daycare centers, Public uses, Semipublic uses: “churches, Sunday schools, parochial schools, colleges, hospitals and other institutions of an educational, religious, charitable or philanthropic nature”

### S-C: Senior Citizen:

“Higher density multi-family dwellings” for 55+

### C-2: Community Commercial:

supermarkets, department stores, specialty stores, hardware stores, apparel and shoe stores, jewelry stores, appliance and furniture stores, drugstores, personal and business service outlets and discount markets

### C-3: Institutions & Office:

medical centers, fraternal and social organizations, instructional, real estate and insurance offices, legal offices, investment firms and various establishments housing only administrative offices



# CHANGE IN ZONING

It is expected that any zoning change would be to **Planned Unit Development**

Allows a mix of uses and more traditional neighborhood development layout

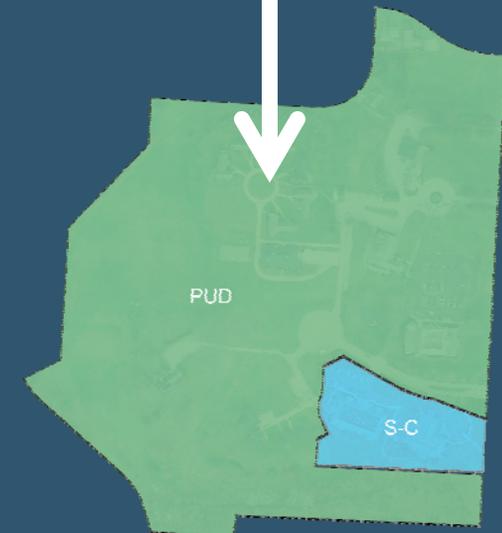
Requires:

1. Preliminary Plan review for entire site
  - a. Review & recommendation by MPC
  - b. Review & approval by City Council
  
2. If approved, site is rezoned
  - a. Final Plan review and approval for each development by MPC

Existing  
Zoning



Possible  
Re-Zoning



# WHY DOES THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MATTER?

## Redevelopment Process for a Site

### A. If following the existing zoning:

1. Submit development application to City
2. Proposed architecture & site plans reviewed and approved by Architectural Review Board
3. Building permits

### B. If desiring different zoning (i.e. "rezone"):

1. Request rezoning from Municipal Planning Commission (MPC).
  - a. MPC references adopted **Comprehensive Plan** for guidance
  - b. MPC reviews zoning plans
  - c. MPC makes recommendation to City Council.
2. Council decides on zoning change request
  - a. Council references **Comprehensive Plan** and MPC recommendations
  - b. Council approves or denies zoning change
3. Developer follows procedures of A above.



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# EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

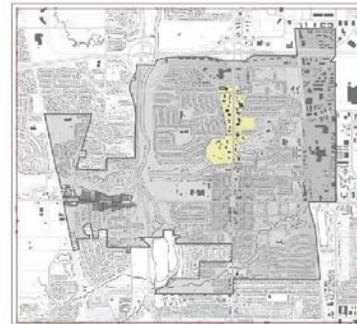
Provides strategic guidance to the City of Worthington

Contains Focus Area sections, including

- United Methodist Children's Home Site

Purpose of Strategic Analysis section:  
*"is to examine areas that are prime for redevelopment, consider their potential, and create a plan that guides redevelopment to complement and meet the needs of the community."*

## STRATEGIC ANALYSIS



High Street Corridor Extents Map

### High Street Corridor (Extents Area)

The High Street Corridor Extents are the portions of High Street outside of the historic core and transition areas located north of Wilson Drive (on page 88). The design character of the High Street Corridor Extents is, by nature, different from that in the historic core. This area is more suburban in style with broad, green front yards, deeper and wider parcels, increased setbacks, and large off-street parking lots.

It represents a distinct development model and serves as a transition from Old Worthington to the freeway commercial areas surrounding Interstate 270. A number of building styles have been constructed here intermittently across the past fifty years. It contains an array of uses including corporate offices, retirement homes, retail services (banks, restaurants, gas station, etc.), and city hall.

The deep lots with green yards and mature trees make this area pleasant to drive through. Some of the larger office sites even located their large surface parking fields to the rear of the site, minimizing their visual impact to High Street. For the most part, the development style is established and should not be disturbed at this point. Improvements can be made, however, to the existing site conditions. Consistent site design should be encouraged such as landscape screening and

interior planting of all surface parking areas and the location of large parking areas to the rear of the site. These types of improvements should be encouraged on existing sites and required for new sites.

The High Street Corridor Extents could accommodate redevelopment at a higher density, similar to that of Blue Cross/Blue Shield, if needed. Such a project should only be approved if it meets the needs of the City and it should provide green setbacks and meet the Architectural Design Guidelines. Large format and strip retail centers are not encouraged or welcome.

### Methodist Children's Home Site

The High Street Corridor Extents does, however, contain a possible redevelopment opportunity in the Methodist Children's Home site. This site is not currently on the market, but it is such a large site that it continues to attract development interest, and in fact has received rezoning approval for commercial development along its frontage (but not built). Therefore, it is important that this Strategic Plan examine the preferred use of this site for the City in case it does become available for redevelopment in the future. It is critical that any redevelopment of sites such as this be guided to benefit the community. An appropriate redevelopment project could provide a major boost to Worthington.



Worthington United Methodist Center



# EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## STRATEGIC ANALYSIS



Figure 45 - Children's Home Potential Redevelopment Concept A  
Professional office and small commercial development along High Street  
with civic green opposite city hall, and single-family residential development buffer.



Figure 46 - Children's Home Potential Redevelopment Concept B  
Medical center and office development with multi-family and single-family residential development transition.



## STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

This 41-acre site offers the opportunity to develop some of the urban village living that is lacking in the City. In particular, higher density residential development could be accommodated here along with transition areas for the single family neighborhood to the west. At the same time, Worthington can not afford to allow potentially significant income-producing ground to be developed for residential or retail uses. The High Street frontage provides an attractive development site for commercial office uses. Thus this is an ideal site for a mixed use, planned development. Planned developments allow flexibility in the site design in a negotiated approval process between the developer and the City. Use of traditional neighborhood development (TND) principles would be appropriate in reuse of this site.

Several development options for this site have been explored in this plan and two are illustrated here (see Figures 45 & 46). Both of the concepts include residential development as a buffer and transition for the single-family neighborhoods in the west. This residential area would consist of cluster residential development and transition to more dense urban village residential development to help address the housing type imbalance of the City. In addition, a pocket park could be provided for the new neighborhood. All the concepts also provide a green setback along High Street and strive to create a relationship (to varying degrees) with the City Hall and Fire Station across High Street. Redevelopment of this site provides the opportunity to create a focal point green, park, or "civic square" with the City campus.



Worthington United Methodist Center

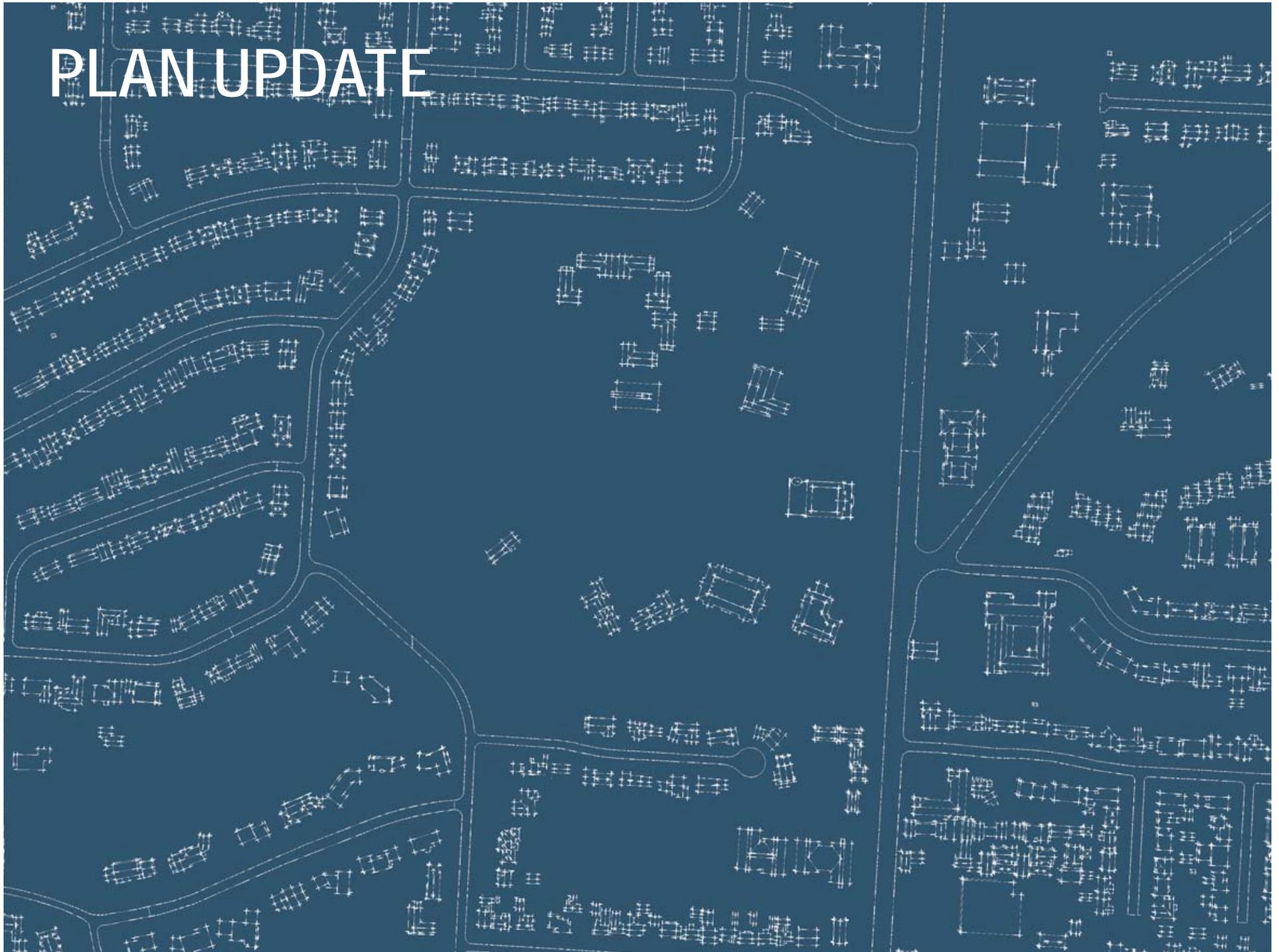
The major difference between the redevelopment concepts are the uses proposed for the front, eastern two-thirds of the site (it should be noted that the existing Children's Home uses could be consolidated to the west, allowing any of the following). Figure 45 shows a neotraditional development with two and three-story commercial office buildings along High Street and mixed-use structures lining an internal "Main Street". A civic green aligns with the city building campus across High Street and parking fields are located to the rear of the buildings, screening the parking. Main Street design creates a very walkable block of restaurants, live-work units, and/or small professional offices. Figure 46 places the building footprint of a surgical hospital on the site with a related medical office campus behind it.

These are just two conceptual site designs out of many. The critical issue is that any redevelopment on this site must address City needs. Worthington requires development that generates employment within the City. Thus commercial and professional offices would be welcomed here. Likewise, a surgical hospital, medical offices, or occupational therapy center would be a great fit. A higher density office, residential, and (limited) retail mixed-use development could be successful as the northern extension of Old Worthington — walkable and interconnected.

It is also important that the residential component of this site address the housing needs discussed in this plan. The residential areas should connect with the existing residential street grid and High Street because interconnections are very important to the community. The redevelopment concept could be further improved if the Sunrise Assisted Living development could be incorporated into the plan, allowing a main entrance to be created opposite Worthington-Galena Road.



# PLAN UPDATE



# GOALS FOR UMCH FOCUS AREA

- a) Consider the redevelopment potential of this 40+ acre site recognizing the critical resource and opportunity it represents within the City.
- b) Provide a mix of desirable uses and green space that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and that are currently underserved in Worthington.
- c) Address the needs of current and future residents by providing new housing types/options that are underrepresented in the market and complement Worthington's current offerings.
- d) Recognize the financial goals of UMCH to enable it to continue its mission within the region.
- e) Expand the City of Worthington's tax base by incorporating uses that allow for new or enhanced sources of revenue.
- f) Preserve and integrate the existing natural features of Tucker Creek.
- g) Create a well-planned, vibrant, walkable, and integrated development of the highest quality that meets or exceeds current best practices for mixed use development, including the provision of communal space and complete streets.

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## Comprehensive Plan Land Use Recommendations:

- High Street Mixed Use
- Worthington Estates Edge
- Neighborhood Core
- Tucker Creek Preserve



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## General Land Use Recommendation



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## General Land Use Recommendation – Tucker Creek



Natural preserve with sensitive multi-use path

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## General Land Use Recommendation – Worthington Estates Edge



Single-family residential, similar density to Worthington Estates and Old Worthington

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## General Land Use Recommendation – Residential Core



Residential neighborhood, integrated site design, similar density to Ville Charmante, three-story height limit, integrated park land

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## General Land Use Recommendation – High Street Mixed Use



Mixed-use commercial/residential/neighborhood retail, tax base focus (office/medical), two-to-five stories, shared parking

# WHAT WE HEARD - COMMUNITY

## 1. Parks and Open Space

The desire for park space as part of any development

## 2. Connections

Input about how connectivity will affect the neighborhood

## 3. Development

Input about the type of development, the quality of development, the density of development, and impacts on adjacent properties, like storm water.



# PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

## Recommendations for Parks and Open Space:

1. Expect the developer to dedicate Tucker Creek ravine natural area.
2. Work with developer(s) at time of rezoning to provide additional park land integrated into the site with community-desired amenities.
3. Identify funding options for parks and open space.



# CONNECTIONS

## Recommendations for Connectivity:

1. Provide multiple complete street connections (pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular) to address safety, provide access, and integrate this neighborhood with the surrounding community.
2. The street design must be carefully done to limit impacts to the surrounding neighborhood and discourage cut-through, non-local, and commercial traffic from High Street to connected residential streets.
3. A Traffic Study must be conducted as part of any development of this site.



# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT COMPARISON

One Acre



**Worthington Estates**



Density:  
3 units per acre

**Old Worthington**



Density:  
4 units per acre

**Ashton Grove**



Density:  
7 units per acre

**Ville Charmante**



Density:  
7.5 units per acre

**Keswick Commons**



Density:  
12 units per acre

**Harrison Park**



Density:  
14 units per acre

Price:  
\$350,000 - \$650,000+

Price:  
\$400,000 - \$600,000+

Price:  
\$350,000- \$500,000

# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TYPES



# PLANNING TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide a mix of housing types not well represented in the City and incorporate intergenerational housing types that provide the opportunity to “age in place” within Worthington.
2. Transition residential density from the west and north sides of the site to High Street (lower to higher).
3. Attract as much office development to the High Street frontage as possible (to improve city revenue base).
4. Allow for neighborhood service retail uses along High Street that are incorporated into the development.
5. Place buildings closer to High Street to improve its walkability/strollability.
6. Ensure that development is of the highest quality.



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## Subsections within the Focus Area Plan

- Background (pg. 89)
- Context (pg. 90)
- Future Land Use Focus Area Plan (pg. 90)
- Design Intent (pg. 90)
- Future Land Use (pg. 91)
- Objectives (pg. 91)
- High Street Mixed Use (pg. 91)
- Worthington Estates Edge (pg. 92)
- Neighborhood Core (pg. 93)
- Tucker Creek Preserve (pg. 94)
- Zone Boundaries (pg. 95)
- Park Space (pg. 95)
- Design Guidelines (pg. 96)
- Connectivity (pg. 97)
- Street Intersection Options (pg. 98)
- High Street Frontage (pg. 98)
- Landscaping and Buffers (pg. 99)
- Storm Water (pg. 99)
- Public-Private Partnerships (pg. 99)

DRAFT 08/04/2014

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

### United Methodist Children's Home Focus Area

This section of the Worthington Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2014 for the United Methodist Children's Home focus area.

#### Background

The more than 40-acre United Methodist Children's Home (UMCH) site presents a rare opportunity for Worthington to experience redevelopment on a visible and sizable site near the heart of Worthington. The site is located north of Old Worthington along the North High Street Corridor. Originally, the United Methodist Children's Home included hundreds of acres that extended to the Olentangy River that are now residential neighborhoods.

The United Methodist Children's Home has been a compassionate steward of the land and an invested and contributing member of Worthington for over a century. It

continues to provide critical services to the greater Central Ohio community.

Following serious consideration by the UMCH Board to sell this site and concerns of the community related to its potential redevelopment, the City reexamined the future land use recommendations of this plan to deliver more clear direction and intent.

The goal, as with all of the future land use recommendations in this plan, is to provide guidance as to the range of desired land uses and development in the event the private land owner and/or future developer requests rezoning of the property; and to assist the City with its review and evaluation of any proposal. The community dialogue and consensus represented by this plan will facilitate any future redevelopment process for this site in a manner that meets the needs of the greater community as well as the land owner.



UMCH Focus Area boundaries (in red)



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

*Context*

Located along North High Street across from the Louis J.R. Goery Worthington Municipal Building and the Worthington Fire Station, the UMCH focus area is approximately a half-mile north of the Worthington Village Green.

This 44.5-acre site contains various built structures, including administrative offices and several residential and service structures that are a part of the UMCH program. It also includes the Conference Center and the Sunrise Senior Living assisted living community on either side of Wesley Boulevard. Once part of the larger UMCH property, the Sunrise Senior Living campus is on 3.5 acres with a long-term ground lease. The United Methodist Church occupies the Conference Center. Neither facility will be included in a UMCH property sale. It should be noted that the two existing residential lots that abut the north side of this site along the south side of Larimer Avenue are included in this focus area plan at the request of their owners.

Though relatively flat, the site's most striking natural feature is a ravine and wooded area surrounding Tucker Creek. This natural area buffers the southern section of the site from single-family homes on quarter-acre lots along Greenbrier Court.

To the southwest, the site borders Evening Street. Directly to the west, the site borders the rear yards of single-family residences on third-of-an-acre lots on Evening Street. To the north, the site abuts Longfellow and Larimer Avenues, with single-family residences on third-of-an-acre lots across the street. The focus area is served by signalized intersections with North High Street at Wesley Boulevard and at Larimer Avenue. The existing site also has two additional access points on High Street between these two signals.

The current zoning of the UMCH focus area consists of commercial zoning C-2 Community Commercial (0.7 acres) and C-3 Office (9.3 acres) along its High Street frontage, SC Senior Citizen (3.5 acres) on the Sunrise site, and S-1 Special (31 acres) across the remainder of the site. Current permitted uses include churches, parochial schools, colleges, hospitals, and other institutional uses (S-1), medical centers and real



Current zoning for the UMCH focus area.

estate, insurance, and legal offices (C-3), and supermarkets, specialty stores, and retail stores (C-2).

*Future Land Use Focus Area Plan*

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan identified the UMCH site as strategic for future growth, a matter particularly critical for an established community like Worthington. While the 2005 plan presented an example of two possible redevelopment scenarios, this update document provides a more in-depth consideration of appropriate redevelopment parameters that incorporate community and stakeholder feedback with current demographic, fiscal, and market trends.

*Design Intent*

Worthington was founded as a master planned community. Because of the size, location, and importance of the UMCH site, it is critical that any redevelopment be master planned and consider the site as a whole. The following sections provide a framework and direction to the City, reviewing Boards and Commissions, and potential developers as to Worthington's desired vision for any change of use and redevelopment that might occur on the site.

Building upon the previously stated objectives, redevelopment of this site must create a high-quality, mixed-use development



Future land use zones for the UMCH focus area.

that is walkable, connected, and integrated within the site and with the City. This mix of uses should contain a range of residential types together with commercial office and neighborhood retail uses integrated with contributing and shared green space and amenities – all of which complement each other to create an active, vibrant place. Any proposed design must be sensitive to the neighborhoods adjacent to the UMCH site, as well as to the natural features related to Tucker Creek. Any development that occurs within the focus area should relate internally to the site and to an overall plan, even if it is built at different times. For this reason, it is expected that any proposed redevelopment include rezoning of the entire site to a Planned Unit Development as an early step. Because of the importance of achieving the full potential of the UMCH site for the City and Worthington community, it is expected that public-private partnership(s) will play a role in the planning and redevelopment of this site.

*Future Land Use*

The future land use map for this focus area divides the site into four general zones:

- High Street Mixed Use (red on the plan)
- Worthington Estates Edge (yellow on the plan)
- Neighborhood Core (orange on the plan)
- Tucker Creek Preserve (green on the plan)

**Objectives**

As part of the update of this focus area plan, a group of consolidated objectives was created. These objectives include:

1. Consideration of the redevelopment potential of this site recognizing the critical resource and opportunity this 40+ acre site represents within the City.
2. Provision of a mix of desirable uses and green space that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and are currently underserved in Worthington.
3. Addressing the needs of current and future residents by providing new housing types/options that are underrepresented in the market and complement Worthington's current offerings.
4. Recognition of the financial goals of UMCH to enable it to continue its mission within the region.
5. Expansion of the City of Worthington's tax base by incorporating uses that allow for new or enhanced sources of revenue.
6. Preservation and integration of the existing natural features found on the site related to Tucker Creek.
7. Creation of a well-planned, vibrant, walkable, and integrated development of the highest quality that meets or exceeds current best practices for mixed use development, including the provision of communal space and complete streets.

Each are described in more detail below:

*High Street Mixed Use*

North High Street is the commercial spine of the City of Worthington. It is home to some of the City's most important corporations and the address for much of its retail and services. The UMCH site lies less than a half-mile from the center of Old Worthington and is situated between both this retail center and the Shops at Worthington Place.

As a result, this is a good location for commercial office use.



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

As discussed throughout this Comprehensive Plan, income-tax generating employment uses such as office are critical to the fiscal sustainability of the City. In addition, this site's close proximity to historic Old Worthington makes it a prime location for walkable residential development and denser, amenity-rich housing types similar to what is discussed in the Improving Housing Balance section of this document (page 73). This location along High Street is attractive for retail and service uses as well. It is not the desire of the City, however, to create a third retail center in close proximity to Old Worthington and the Shops at Worthington Place. Retail in this location should be neighborhood scale and serve the development that occurs on this site and that exists in the surrounding neighborhood, and it should help to activate the High Street frontage.



Conceptual view of possible new development along High Street.

The High Street Mixed Use zone consists of the frontage of the UMCH site along High Street. It permits a mix of office, residential, and retail uses with the focus on commercial office and medical uses with subordinate residential and limited retail uses. Buildings in this zone should be a minimum of two stories and a maximum of five stories in height with attractive, four-sided architecture. Buildings in this zone should address the streets, activate the street frontage, and include opportunities for outdoor dining and other pedestrian-focused activities.

It is expected that the buildings adjacent to High Street will be commercial offices. Residential uses might occur behind as a transition to the Neighborhood Core. Neighborhood-oriented retail uses can complement the development in the first floors of office and residential buildings. The objective of the High Street Mixed Use zone is to create a high-quality, dense, walkable, connected, mixed-use development that creates a dynamic space and signature address to attract Class A office tenants along High Street and add vitality and life to the High Street corridor.

In order to create a walkable environment, it is expected that buildings will line public streets and most parking will be located at the center of blocks, screened from public streets by attractive buildings. Parking beneath buildings may also be considered, provided the public street frontage of a building is

activated. By providing a mix of uses within the High Street Mixed Use zone, parking areas can be shared to optimize their use. To achieve the desired densities, parking decks are encouraged to be integrated into the site. Features expected as part of any parking deck or structure include masonry and architectural elements to dress up the exterior, windowed stair towers, and lush landscaping and pedestrian connections.

Parking structures and/or parking lots could be lined with residential and/or retail development to separate and screen them from the Neighborhood Core. Where the High Street Mixed Use zone is opposite existing single-family residential development, it is expected that the new development will consist of residential development and/or substantial and attractive buffers.

As with all development in the UMCH focus area, it is to be of high-quality in character and design with four-sided architecture. It should follow the *Worthington Design Guidelines*.

*Worthington Estates Edge*

This zone is where development in the UMCH focus area should create a desirable transition between it and the existing single-family housing development that surround its north and west sides. The surrounding development consists of homes on third-of-an-acre lots. The Worthington Estates Edge zone



Future Land Use Map for the UMCH site (bird's eye view).

Legend	
	High Street Mixed Use
	Neighborhood Core
	Worthington Estates Edge
	Tucker Creek Preserve

calls for single-family residential development on lots between a third-of-an-acre and a fifth-of-an-acre. This equates to a residential density similar to Worthington Estates (3 dwelling units/acre) and Old Worthington (4-5 dwelling units/acre). The structures are limited to the same two-and-a-half story height as the surrounding neighborhood.

These may be single-family, detached homes that are more current, updated versions of what is found in the surrounding neighborhoods. Or they may be smaller homes with smaller yards that provide first floor living opportunities for Worthington residents — an option in which many residents expressed an interest during the community meetings. They may be something in between. Regardless, these homes must be of high-quality design, differentiated architecture, and in close proximity to amenities. This zone is for custom-built, individualized homes and not one for homes with repetitious floor plans.

Housing in this zone should consist of individual units, potentially with lots of different sizes, fronting on a street or streets. The use of cul-de-sacs is discouraged. These new

lots must include rear or side yards to provide a substantial buffer and green landscape between these structures and the rear yards of existing homes. Attractive storm water systems designed as a naturalized amenity can be placed within the Worthington Estates Edge zone.

As with all development in the UMCH focus area, it is to be of high-quality in character and design with four-sided architecture. It should follow the *Worthington Design Guidelines*.

*Neighborhood Core*

The Neighborhood Core zone represents the most flexible zone of the UMCH focus area because it is internal to the site. It consists of a higher density neighborhood that creates a transition from the single-family homes along the periphery of



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



Conceptual view of single family homes along a great street.



Conceptual view of townhouses facing a green commons.

the site to the more active uses proposed closer to High Street.

The Neighborhood Core calls for residential development at a density between six and fourteen dwelling units per acre (6-14 du/ac) gross density with a height limit of three stories. It is expected that the Neighborhood Core will be developed with more than one housing type and at more than one density level. The expected amount of park space and amenities correspondingly increases with the density. For a density reference, Ville Charmante along West Wilson Bridge Road is over seven dwelling units per acre.

This area creates the opportunity to introduce different types of housing options that are not readily available in the city. This area should provide residential living that is underrepresented in the market and complements Worthington's current offerings, addressing the needs of aging Worthington residents, future young professionals, and those desiring amenity-rich living. For reference, more information on the need for this type of housing product is described in "Improving Housing Balance" on page 73.

Examples include a mix of single-family detached homes on small lots with rear alley garages, homes with great front porches for outdoor gathering, custom homes designed for first-floor living, luxury residences with integrated front courtyards, well-appointed

walk-up townhomes, and a limited number of high-end flats. To be successful, the Neighborhood Core must incorporate common areas/shared green space(s). These parks create the community gathering and development focal point(s). Shared amenities and facilities should also be provided. In all cases, the buildings must have front doors on inviting tree and sidewalk-lined streets. The objective is not to have streets dominated by garages, so garages must be de-emphasized – set back or placed to the rear of structures, creating a very walkable neighborhood.

As with all development in this focus area, the community expects this development to be of high-quality in character and design, and adhere to the *Worthington Design Guidelines*.

#### *Tucker Creek Preserve*

The southern boundary of the UMCH focus area is the beautiful and wooded Tucker Creek ravine. This plan calls for preserving this area as a natural green space amenity for the site and the community. The creek and the steep slopes that surround it are not developable and the wooded areas along it are important contributing and environmental features.

The community expressed a strong desire to continue linking neighborhoods, parks, and destinations with multi-use trails throughout the City. This includes achieving a dedicated trail along Tucker Creek that highlights this natural feature and



Conceptual view of a mixed-use development along a green commons.

provides an amenity and potential connection between High Street and Evening Street.

As part of any development that occurs on the UMCH site, it is expected that any future developer preserve the Tucker Creek ravine and wooded area. Any storm water systems in this area must be designed as a naturalized, aesthetic landscape feature that fits in the environment.

#### *Zone Boundaries*

The boundaries between zones internal to the site are not absolutely fixed and could be adjusted at the margins. Depending upon the street layout and overall merits of a proposed development, these boundaries might shift. For example, the Worthington Estates Edge might grow or shrink slightly in some areas as part of a formal development plan submittal, or the Tucker Creek Preserve might grow in one area and shrink in another to better protect surveyed natural features. In order to provide appropriate parking and building screening, the High Street Mixed Use zone might be enlarged to the west.

There is one exception. As mentioned throughout this Comprehensive Plan, the need for revenue-producing land uses for the City of Worthington, particularly income-tax generating uses such as well-planned commercial office and

medical, is of strategic importance. If a development plan is proposed that provides significant income tax revenue to the City, the High Street Mixed Use zone could expand into the Neighborhood Core zone. In the event of a substantial expansion of the High Street Mixed Use zone, the sensitive design and aesthetics of the edge treatment/buffer of the zone with the adjoining areas become critically important.

#### *Park Space*

The creation of park space for community and public enjoyment is an important component for any redevelopment on the UMCH site. This is in addition to the Tucker Creek Preserve. Beyond serving community-gathering functions, the park space is critical to providing place-making in development layouts as well as a green space balance to the built environment contemplated in the High Street Mixed Use and Neighborhood Core zones.

In potential redevelopment scenarios, this additional park space was several acres divided between the High Street Mixed Use and Neighborhood Core zones. Park space could be used to provide linear park "windows" into the site from High Street; neighborhood-oriented parks internal to the site; and/or extension of the Tucker Creek preserve. The expected amount of park space and amenities correspondingly increases with the density of development proposed on the UMCH site. Park space as discussed here must be useable, contributing ground



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for residents, workers, and visitors of the redeveloped site, and not, for example, storm water controls or left-over ground.

It is expected that the developer(s) of the UMCH site will integrate usable park land into the development and work with the City to provide acreage in the High Street Mixed Use and Neighborhood Core zones as park space useable by the community.

Creating this additional park space within the UMCH focus area will address the community's desire for park space and amenities here. The public process generated numerous ideas for amenities worthy of further consideration. It is important that the City and the Worthington Parks and Recreation Commission work with the community to plan for and create parks that include the desired amenities in the appropriate places within the City and at this site.

#### Design Guidelines

Because the UMCH focus area falls within the City of Worthington's Architectural Review District boundary, any new construction or alteration is subject to review and approval by the Architectural Review Board (ARB). The Board ensures the high quality of design and site planning for any construction within the Architectural Review District. In order to meet the expectations of the ARB, any development on the UMCH site should adhere to the *Worthington Design Guidelines* used by the City and ARB to review development proposals.

The new residential development portion of the Residential Design Guidelines (page 31) provides guidance on site development, form, massing, and scale, setbacks, roof shape, exterior materials, windows, entries, ornamentation, and color. In general, the goal is to create residences and neighborhoods of a high quality of design with pleasant, intimate character and a strong sense of place and inviting human scale. Architecture and design should be rich and varied (not repetitive/homogeneous) with great attention to detail.

The new commercial development portion of the Commercial/Institutional Design Guidelines (page 25) provides guidance

#### Commercial Design Guidelines

Excerpts from the *Worthington Design Guidelines* for new commercial and institutional construction include:

1. Tend toward simpler geometric forms and uncomplicated massing;
2. Carefully design facades with traditional storefronts to make buildings pedestrian-friendly;
3. Build up to the required setback to get pedestrians closer to the building;
4. Locate parking areas to the rear and avoid front setbacks;
5. Use buildings to screen off-street parking from view;
6. Create unimpeded pedestrian access to the front building façade from the public sidewalk;
7. Make roof shapes in scale with the building;
8. Use traditional materials with a focus on brick and limit poured concrete/concrete block to foundations;
9. Use large areas of glass for storefronts and more traditional patterning on upper floors;
10. Emphasize the primary entry on the street-facing principal façade; and
11. Help create a linkage between Old Worthington and newer areas through consistent design elements.
12. Use compatible colors.

on site development, scale, form, and massing, setbacks, roof shape, materials, windows, entries, ornamentation, color, and signage. In general, the goal is to build upon and extend the pedestrian scale and walkability of the city's commercial heart as well as create buildings that are long-lasting and have four-sided architecture that is attractive on all sides. Building forms, materials, and setbacks should be consistent with historic patterns and help continue traditional patterns into new development.

It is important that the commercial development encourage pedestrian connections and activities. The location along High



#### Residential Design Guidelines

Excerpts from the *Worthington Design Guidelines* for new residential construction include:

1. Avoid facing garages to the street and set them back from the main building plane;
2. Establish multiple connections to existing streets to integrate with the existing community fabric;
3. Carefully consider components of scale;
4. Match roof shapes to the appropriate architectural style;
5. Use building materials in traditional ways;
6. Consider substantial use of brick, fiber cement board is appropriate, and avoid the use of stucco;
7. Carefully design window patterns, sizes, and proportions;
8. Use good quality windows – all-aluminum and vinyl windows are discouraged;
9. Avoid blank wall or walls with few windows;
10. Orient entry doors toward the street, make them clearly visible, and aligned with the window rhythm;
11. Use ornamentation in traditional locations; and
12. Use compatible colors.

Street and the close proximity to Old Worthington and existing neighborhoods creates the potential for strong pedestrian connections. In order to make this area inviting to pedestrian activity, wide sidewalks such as those in Old Worthington should be encouraged in order to allow for connections as well as additional activities. Pedestrian-scale signage, plantings, lawn areas, and street furniture will also create an inviting, walkable atmosphere. By implementing these recommendations and following the standards established in the *Worthington Design Guidelines*, the proposed commercial uses along High Street will introduce complementary uses and provide new amenities within walking distance of the Worthington community.

#### Connectivity

To achieve a high-quality, mixed use development that is walkable, safe, and successful, it is important that any development on the UMCH site be well connected both internally to the site and to the greater Worthington community. The UMCH site is ideally situated along High Street and within close proximity of Old Worthington, the Olentangy Trail, nearby neighborhoods, and Worthington Schools. Therefore, multiple connections should be created to encourage pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicular access to the area in a complete streets fashion.

These street connections must be strategically and sensitively designed and located. It is not enough to simply connect the site to High Street. This development must be integrated into the greater community and neighborhoods. This could include connections to Evening Street and Longfellow Avenue/Hayhurst Street. The development plan must show how these complete street connections are to be made. The objective of these new connections is to interconnect this site but strongly discourage cut-through vehicular traffic from High Street and commercial office uses through the Worthington Estates and Evening Street neighborhoods. In particular, the street system should be designed to discourage through commercial traffic from exiting to Evening Street.

In order to best determine the alignment of the new street connections, a detailed traffic study must be conducted. This study will help determine the alignment of new street connections and what needed street improvements are required, if any. The traffic study will be provided by the developer and approved by the City as part of any redevelopment proposal for the UMCH site.

Streets within the UMCH site should be designed to traditional neighborhood development and complete street standards. This means that they should be narrow travel lane widths (10 feet) with on-street parallel parking, street trees in tree lawns, decorative street lights, and accommodating sidewalks. Bike travel should also be accommodated through the development. The use of cul-de-sacs is discouraged. Any dead-end streets should still provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to



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adjacent streets. Alleys are acceptable as a means of providing access to parking structures, garages, and service areas. Alleys should be sensitive to the overall design and aesthetics of the development and reflect the high design standards of the community, including placement of architecture and landscape along them for visual enhancement. The disposition of any alleys, public or private, will be determined as part of the development plan review, though it is expected that all streets throughout the development will be publicly dedicated.

#### *Street Intersection Options*

Because of the desired development described here, signalized intersections will be critical to providing access to the site and minimizing traffic impacts. At this time, access is provided at only one signalized intersection: Wesley Boulevard and High Street/Worthington-Galena Road. Currently through movement to Worthington-Galena Road from this site is not permitted. This restriction will need to be studied for removal as part of any redevelopment of the UMCH site. Additionally, it is very likely that a drive access will be necessary to the north to provide access to the Larimer Avenue/High Street signalized intersection.

As mentioned in the existing conditions, it is likely that the UMC Conference Center and Sunrise Senior Living will not be part of any initial redevelopment. Because these two buildings sit astride the primary entry to the site, and because of the importance of setting the tone and quality of any redevelopment at the gateway – it is possible that providing an additional signalized intersection on High Street will be requested to achieve the desired redevelopment.

This could take several forms, from creating a new intersection to relocating an existing one. It could also involve realigning Worthington-Galena Road between the Louis J.R. Goorey Worthington Municipal Building and the Fire Station as contemplated in one of the scenarios studied. Regardless, any such roadway and intersection improvement must be carefully considered from a safety and traffic viewpoint as well as a fiscal one. If requested, studies must be commissioned by the developer for City review to determine the potential for a High Street access change.



Conceptual view of possible new development along High Street.

#### *High Street Frontage*

The potential redevelopment of the UMCH focus area as described herein creates a change in the consideration of setbacks along High Street in these blocks. To achieve the desired walkability, vitality, and screening of parking along Worthington's signature street, it is expected that multi-story buildings will be constructed closer to the High Street right-of-way, with parking located behind the buildings. The buildings should engage High Street with broad sidewalks, storefronts, front entries, and outdoor seating that provide an inviting strolling environment for pedestrians.

The buildings constructed along High Street will set the tone and impression for the entire UMCH focus area. As such their architecture, materials, quality, interest, aesthetics, and vitality are critical. These buildings should have a predominance of brick and complement the community character.

Buildings along High Street must have the majority of their building face fronting/parallel to the street. Buildings are expected to be at least two stories in height with substantially transparent storefronts on the first floor, whether retail or office, to activate the street. Operational building entries must be provided along High Street regardless of parking orientation. Neither single-story commercial buildings nor retail buildings on outlots are part of the vision for the UMCH focus area, nor



are buildings placed in the middle of parking lots.

Generally it is anticipated that buildings will be setback from the High Street curb line an appropriate distance based upon the architecture and use(s) of the buildings. The streetscape section between the building and the curb should include a sizable tree lawn or street trees in planters (ten feet +/-), at least an eight-foot wide unobstructed sidewalk, and an outdoor seating and/or landscape planting area. As the building height increases, the buildings should consider the relationship between the setback, the street corridor, and the building height. It is expected that if fourth or fifth stories are included, a variety of techniques will be implemented to mitigate any potential "canyon" effect along High Street, such as the use of floor terracing, changes in building massing, insertion of a green commons, recessed seating and dining areas, and lush landscaping to name a few.

While it is preferred that parking be provided to the rear of building, if parking is provided in front, it should be consistent across the frontage and be limited to either one row (single bay) of parking or on-street parking for short customer visits. This would alter somewhat the streetscape described above. Parking visible between buildings should be screened by landscape and/or masonry wall.

As mentioned in the Parks Space Section, it is expected that some type of green civic space is provided that allows sight line vistas into the site from High Street and at least pedestrian and bicycle connection to the Neighborhood Core area, if not vehicular connection.

#### *Landscaping and Buffers*

Development within the UMCH focus area should be well-landscaped, with particular focus on the streetscapes, building edges, buffers, and public park/community commons. Landscaping should be substantial, lush, well-planned, and commonly-maintained. Landscape should emphasize native species where possible.

Buffers for any redevelopment of the UMCH focus area are the

Worthington Estates Edge and Tucker Creek Preserve zones. The Worthington Estates Edge provides rear yards adjacent to the existing rear yards and new single-family homes across the street from existing single-family homes, similar to other lots within the Worthington Estates neighborhood. The Tucker Creek Preserve maintains the ravine separating this site from the Greenbrier Court development.

#### *Storm Water*

As with any development, the quantity and quality of storm water runoff must be managed per Code. Comprehensive design of the storm water system for the UMCH focus area must be part of the development plan with needed controls located and sized prior to construction of any first phase. Storm water controls should be aesthetically integrated, be natural in appearance, and serve as amenities to the site. Sustainable and green measures should be included to the extent reasonable. Because of the storm water sensitivity of Tucker Creek, it is expected that storm water controls will meet or exceed all requirements.

#### *Public Private Partnerships*

There are several opportunities for public-private partnerships as part of any substantial redevelopment of this focus area. The community has expressed great interest in creating integrated public park space. In addition, parking decks may be important site improvements to achieve the desired office densities and tenants important to the City. Furthermore, relocation or creation of street intersections to facilitate gateway development and attract best-of-class commercial development may be necessary. Public-private partnership opportunities should be explored by the City and any developer of this site to achieve the full potential and quality of this site.



THANK YOU

