

3. LAND USE, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND HOUSING

Land Use is an important element of the Comprehensive Plan as it guides the physical development and redevelopment of the City. Land use decisions will both be informed by and inform the multiple plan elements predominantly transportation, utilities and public services. It is important to understand and plan for each of these elements in order to guide future development in the community in a coordinated manner.

This chapter includes an assessment of the past and current land use decisions. It also outlines recommendations for how land use should be planned in the future to maintain and grow a high-quality community with a focus on minimizing outward growth to reduce the cost of building and maintaining the City's infrastructure, while promoting future economic growth and development in and around the City.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

3.1

existing conditions

- Currently, the City has a sufficient amount of developable land within the city limits to accommodate projected population growth.
- When considering the environmental constraints, a total of 1,042 acres within the City is actually developable as opposed to the 2,137 acre gross development capacity.
- The sanitary sewer service planning area includes approximately 3,000 acres of undeveloped land.
- Assuming the population growth rate remains steady at 5% per decade, the City will gain an additional 1,305 residents from 2010 to 2020, for a population of 27,424 by the year 2020.
- From 2000 to 2010, an additional 1,148 housing units were constructed, while an additional 455 units became vacant.
- The City of Wooster currently has enough residentially zoned land to satisfy housing demand into 2020.
- Assuming an employment growth of 1% per year, the City of Wooster currently has enough non-residentially zoned land to satisfy demand into 2020.

3.2

public input

- There is a desire for infill and redevelopment before outward expansion through new annexation.
- Enhancing the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods is a priority.
- There is support for high-quality development that integrates green building and planning principles to conserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas, and promote environmental stewardship.
- There is a desire to focus on new high-quality multi-family and single-family residential development in and around the downtown.
- Preservation of older housing/historic housing in older 'first ring' traditional neighborhoods is important.
- There is a desire to attract and promote high-quality vibrant developments that will attract and serve a variety of age groups.

3.3

current trends

- There is a growing trend of people wanting to move back into urban settings.
- Millennials and Baby Boomers are increasingly living in more compact and sustainable environments.
- Mixed-use development continues to be a growing trend.
- Public private partnerships are a growing trend that help achieve large and small economic development initiatives.
- Parking is one of the biggest land use challenges facing communities.

3.4

plan principle + objectives

PRINCIPLE: GROW SMART

A prosperous and balanced community that ensures the small town character, green areas, and downtown are preserved and enhanced, while carefully planning for the growth and development of existing and emerging economic centers and neighborhoods.

Objective LU.1

Continue to enhance the Downtown

Objective LU.2

Promote continued economic growth along the 585 corridor through newly planned light industrial and manufacturing, research and development, and office space.

Objective LU.3

Promote new residential development that includes traditional neighborhood characteristics.

Objective LU.4

Improve rental housing

Objective LU.5

Expand housing opportunities

Objective LU.6

Enhance and plan for the area around the Hospital

Objective LU.7

Responsibly manage growth outside the city limits

3.1

existing conditions

Land Capacity

Currently, the City has a sufficient amount of developable land within the city limits to accommodate projected population growth.

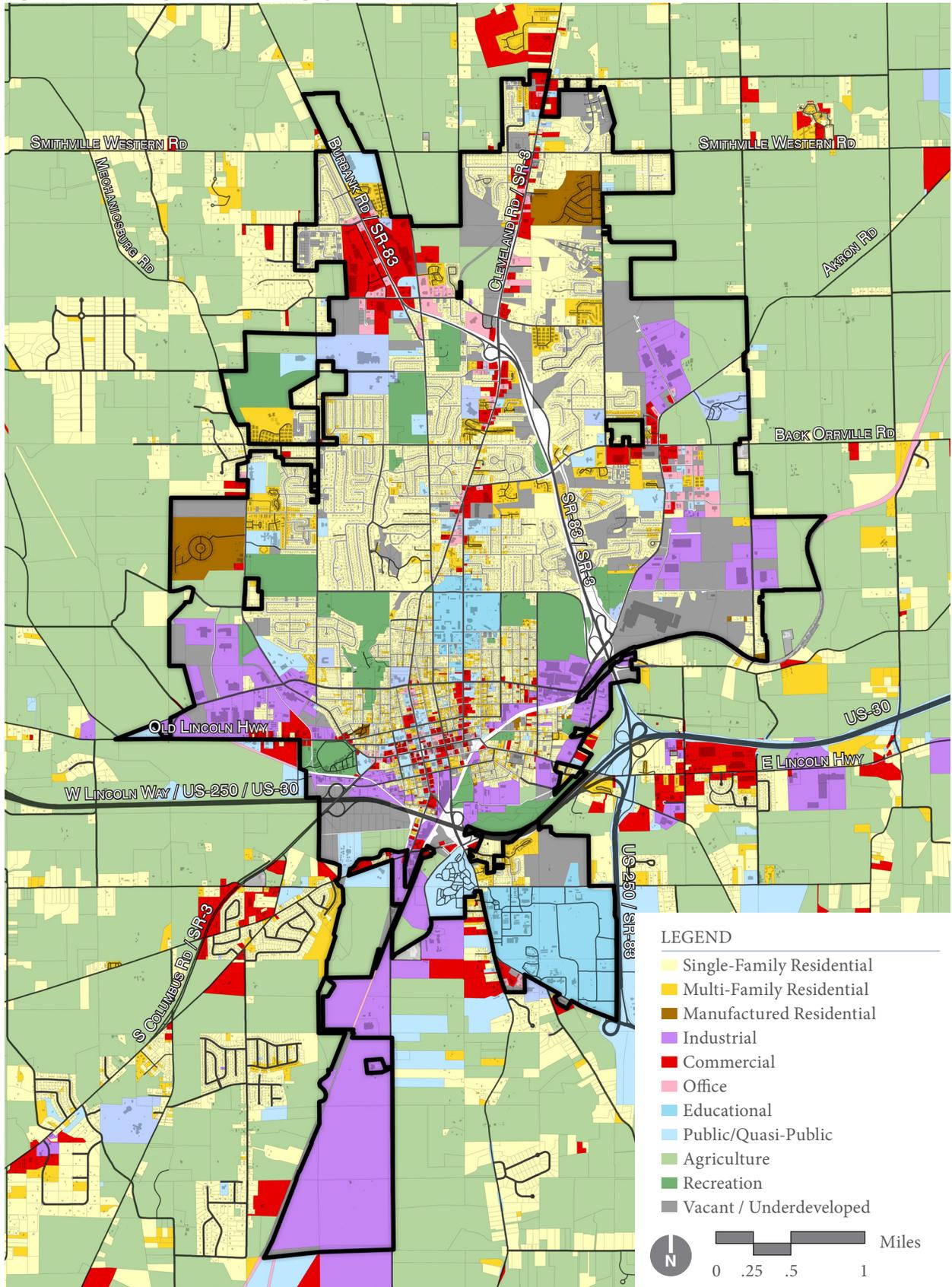
The first step in calculating the City of Wooster’s land capacity was determining how land is currently being uses. A detailed database of land use information was compiled in GIS from the City of Wooster Planning and Zoning Division. The results of the inventory are illustrated in Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1.

Currently, the City of Wooster has over 7,135 acres of developed land, which includes residential, manufacturing, commercial, office, educational, public/ quasi-public and recreational. This developed land accounts for just under 75 percent of the 9,539 acres total acres within the City.

TABLE 3.1 CURRENT LAND USE, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2013

Land Use	Acreage	Share of City Acreage
Single-Family Residential	2,537.15	26.60%
Multi-Family Residential	530.54	5.56%
Manufactured Residential	240.52	2.52%
Industrial	1,356.66	14.22%
Commercial	424.25	4.45%
Office	153.88	1.61%
Educational	718.51	7.53%
Public/Quasi-Public	441.43	4.63%
Recreation	732.25	7.68%
Agriculture	964.12	10.11%
Vacant	1,440.14	15.10%

Figure 3.1 Existing Land Use, City of Wooster, 2013



Single-family residential development represents the largest single land use in the community at 2,537 acres, or 26.60 percent. Multi-family residential consumes approximately 5.56 percent of the City’s land area.

Industrial land uses, which include both light and heavy manufacturing activities, total approximately 1,356 acres or 14.22 percent of the City’s land area. Office and commercial comprise 578 acres, or 6.06 percent of the City. Public parks and green open spaces including golf courses encompass 727 acres or approximately 8 percent of the City’s land area.

The City has approximately 2,369 acres of undeveloped land, which comprises the remaining 25 percent of the City’s total area. Undeveloped land, for the purpose of this capacity analysis, includes unimproved parcels and agricultural land.

The existing land inventory provided a basis for an overall understanding of land use patterns in the City of Wooster. This information was then used as a basis for estimating the existing capacity levels for potential future development within the City.

In assessing the capacity for growth in Wooster, the City’s gross development capacity was calculated using the City’s existing zoning classifications. These gross development capacity calculations were initially based on the allowable zoning densities and without regard to man-made or natural constraints of any kind.

The methodology used for the gross development capacity calculations were based on property identified through the existing land use inventory and visual survey of unimproved, underdeveloped or in agricultural use. These identified properties thus have a potential for development and are considered developable. Figure 3.2 shows the properties uses for the development capacity calculation.

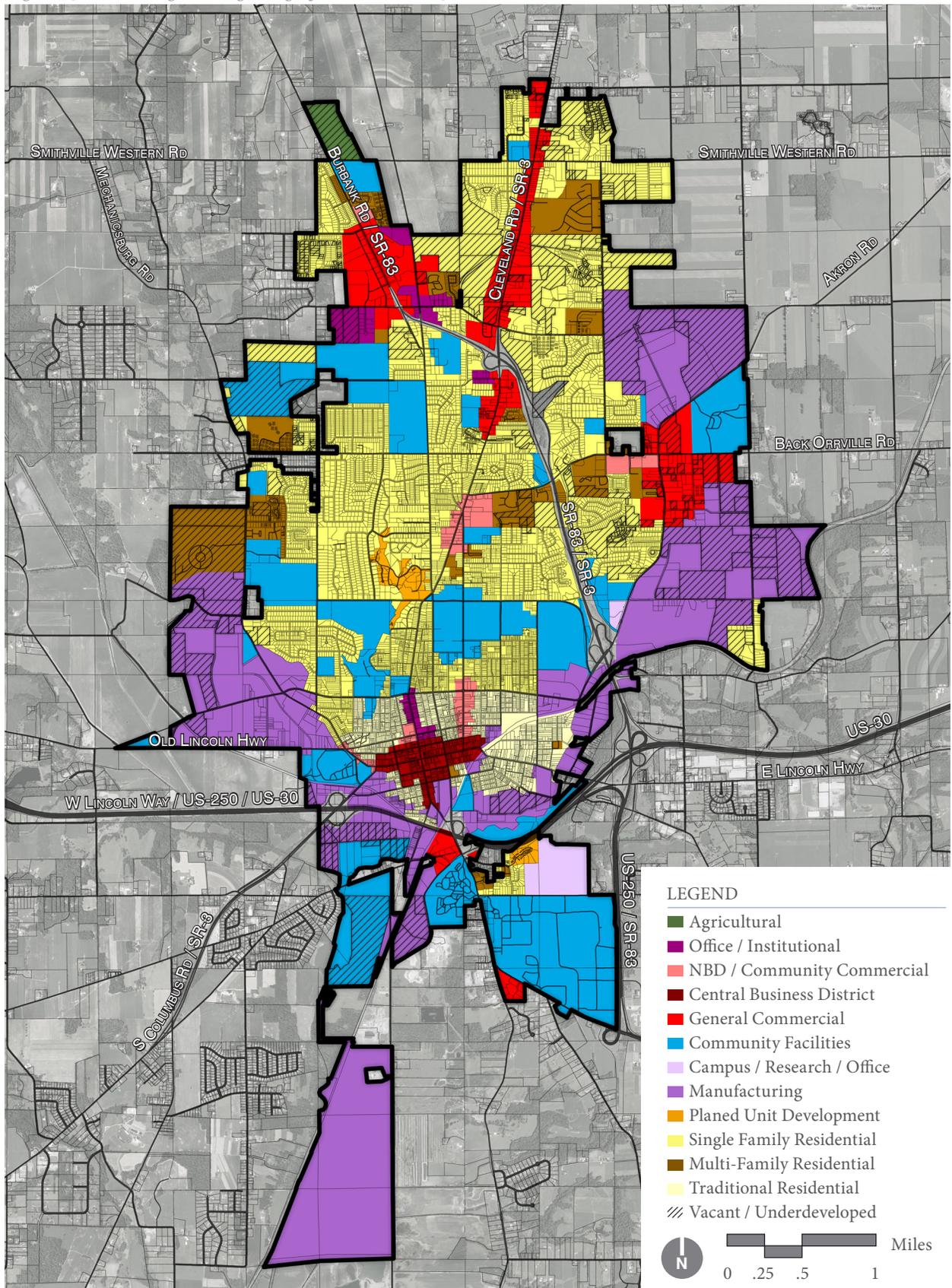
Table 3.2 summarizes existing zoning within the City of Wooster as a whole and the breakdown by percentage of the zoning district. These acreages do not account for right-of-way, and yield a higher total acreage than the land use calculation.

TABLE 3.2 EXISTING ZONING, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2013

Zoning Classification	Code	Acreage	% of City Acreage
Single-Family Residential	R-1	2,553.34	24.22
Medium Low Density Residential	R-2	1,004.15	9.52
Medium Density Residential	R-3	82.90	0.79
Medium High Density Residential	R-4	339.66	3.22
Manufactured Home	R-5	211.75	2.01
Traditional Residential	RT	399.08	3.78
Limited Manufacturing	M-1	353.70	3.35
General Manufacturing	M-2	1,572.38	14.91
Urban Manufacturing	M-3	41.38	0.39
Open Space/Heavy Manufacturing	M-4	698.04	6.62
Campus-Professional-Research-Office	CPRO	104.29	0.99
Planned Development Overlay District	PDOD	83.80	0.79
Community Facility	CF	1,987.51	18.85
Office and Institutional	C-1	122.63	1.16
General Business	C-2	74.86	0.71
Community Shopping Center	C-3	61.984	0.59
Central Business	C-4	113.25	1.07
Planned Business	C-5	677.38	6.42
Agriculture	AG	57.22	0.54
Unknown	UNK	4.93	0.05
TOTAL CITY ACREAGE	-	10,544.32	100%

City of Wooster, 2013

Figure 3.2 Existing Zoning, City of Wooster, 2013



When considering the environmental constraints, a total of 1,042 acres within the City is actually developable as opposed to the 2,137 acre gross development capacity.

While zoning categories represent the total density allowable, there are many areas within the City that have steep sloping topography, are prone to flooding or are heavily wooded. Figure 3.3 illustrates the location of these areas. To provide a more realistic measure of the land available for future development in the City of Wooster, it was necessary to arrive at a net development capacity. These calculations took into consideration the impact of environmental development constraints and typical industry building practices (also known as normal market build-out or NMB), which reduced the potential development capacity.

The most significant physical constraint taken into consideration is the presence of floodplains (see Figure 3.3). The 100-year floodplain (Type A and Type AE) is that area which on average will be flooded at least every 100 years. This is the generally accepted standard interval for measuring flood risk, as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Additional development constraints taken into consideration were the potential right-of-ways needed and the normal market build-out standard for all future development. As a standard, right-of-ways may account for approximately 10 percent of a development’s total acreage. The normal market build-out for residential, commercial, and industrial development reflects past build-out trends in the City of Wooster, in terms of typical number of dwelling units or square feet per acre. The reduction factors aide in calculating realistic development projections for residential, commercial, and industrial development sites.

The application of development constraints such as flood plains, the ten percent (10 percent) right-of-way reduction and the usage of a normal market build-out standard, provides a more realistic assessment of the development potential of the vacant and agricultural land within the City of Wooster. In contrast to “gross development capacity” the amount of land available for development, under a “net development capacity” scenario factors in environmental and man-made constraints resulting in a more realistic measure of development potential (see Table 3.3).

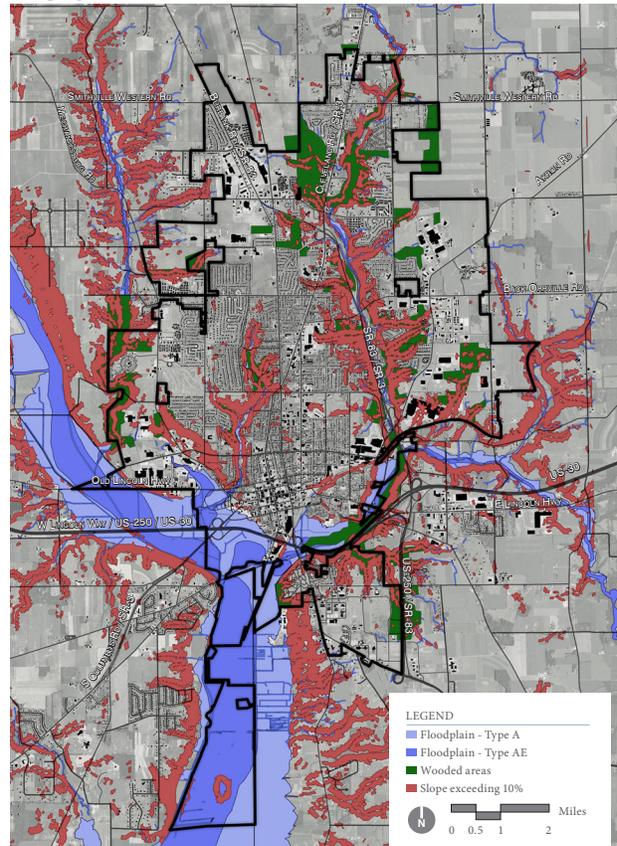
The effect of development constraints on the potential area of developable land zoned for residential is a reduction of approximately 60 percent, with the potential of an additional 1,913 dwelling units (see Table

TABLE 3.3 RESIDENTIAL NET DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY BY ZONING CLASS, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2013

Zoning Classification	Code	Gross Acreage	Undevelopable Land (ac.)	10% ROW (ac.)	Net Acreage	Max Units / Acre	Potential Add'l d/u
Low Density Residential	R-1	471.5	261.9	20.96	188.64	5	943
Medium Low Density Residential	R-2	161.1	74.8	8.63	77.67	6.6	518
Medium Density Residential	R-3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medium High Density Residential	R-4	83.1	63	2.01	18.09	15	274
Manufactured Home	R-5	55.6	37.8	1.78	16.02	11	178
Traditional Residential	RT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Planned Development Overlay District	PDOD	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL		771.3			300.42		1,913 d/u

City of Wooster, 2013

Figure 3.3 Environmentally Sensitive Areas, City of Wooster, 2013



3.3). Note that additional land available for residential uses could be available within commercial districts.

Commercial and Industrial acreage were reduced by 45 percent, leaving 556 developable acres. With the development constraints, the right-of-way reduction, and the normal market floor area ratio (FAR), 8.2 million square feet of commercial and industrial space could potentially be developed.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 illustrate the distribution of potential developable acreage within each Zoning Classification for residential and non-residential land uses respectively. Population and employment projections in the next section reference these numbers to determine if the current land capacity can meet the forecasted demand.

TABLE 3.4 NON-RESIDENTIAL NET DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY BY ZONING CLASS, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2013

Zoning Classification	Code	Gross Acreage	Undevelopable Land (ac.)	10% ROW (ac.)	Net Acreage	Floor Area Ratio	Potential Sq. Ft.
Agriculture	AG	54.3	0.3	5.43	48.87	0.2	425,755
Campus-Professional-Research-Office	CPRO	76	33	3.3	29.7	0.25	323,433
Community Facility	CF	218	133.1	8.49	76.41	0.25	832,105
Office and Institutional	C-1	31.5	0	3.15	28.35	0.25	308,732
General Business	C-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community Shopping Center	C-3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Central Business	C-4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Planned Business	C-5	115.8	35.9	7.99	71.91	0.25	783,100
Limited Manufacturing	M-1	189.4	37.3	15.21	136.89	0.35	2,087,025
General Manufacturing	M-2	544.9	292	25.29	227.61	0.35	3,470,142
Urban Manufacturing	M-3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Open Space/Heavy Manufacturing	M-4	135.9	0	13.59	122.31	0.35	1,864,738
TOTAL		1,365.80			742.05		10,095,030

City of Wooster, 2013

The sanitary sewer service planning area includes approximately 3,000 acres of undeveloped land.

The developable land capacity calculations do not take into consideration land that falls within the sanitary service planning area. Figure 3.4 shows the extents of the existing sanitary service, as well as the level of service expected by 2031. There is some considerable overlap between undeveloped/underdeveloped property and land having no access to sanitary sewer. Since a majority of the land within the City limits is planned to have sanitary access, these numbers were not removed from the calculation. For example, a property not

having sanitary sewer access would still have full development capacity potential.

Figure 3.4 shows a considerable amount of land outside the City that may be served by sanitary service in the future (see table 3.5). Since this property is outside the limits of Wooster, it is unknown what kind of development could occur. However, the potential availability of an additional 3,000 acres of land with access to sanitary sewer could provide a considerable amount of developable land in the future. Based on current development patterns it is likely a majority of this land would be served by low density residential, however the east side of Wooster would likely continue to support manufacturing and industrial uses.

Land Demand Analysis

This section examines the potential residential, industrial, and commercial growth demand within the 2020-planning horizon. Multiple sources were utilized in developing these projections for the City of Wooster. The projections presented in this analysis were extrapolated from local, regional and national historic trends.

This land demand analysis estimates the amount of land that could be consumed by future growth in Wooster, based on certain assumptions. These results are important to consider in comparison with the Land Capacity Analysis, which estimates the amount of land available in each of the land use categories, and in future development policies and land use decisions.

The demand analysis includes the following:

- Population figures, historic, current, and forecasted.
- Estimated demand for future residential development.
- Historic census employment trends in 13 different categories.
- Estimated non-residential square footage demand based on assumed employment growth.

Figure 3.4 Sanitary Sewer Service, City of Wooster, 2013

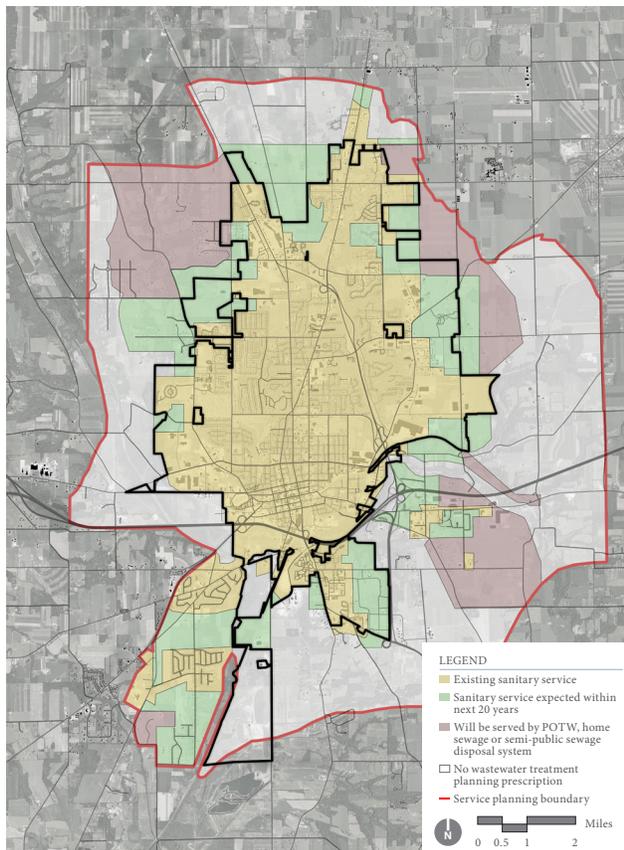


TABLE 3.5 SANITARY SERVICE, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2011

Gross additional acres projected within 20 years	Within Wooster Limits	Outside Wooster Limits
4,664 ac.	1,576 ac.	3,088 ac.

Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization, 2011

Residential Development Demand

Assuming the population growth rate remains steady at 5% per decade, the City will gain an additional 1,305 residents from 2010 to 2020, for a population of 27,424 by the year 2020.

Although the City’s population has continued to grow from 1980 to 2010, the rate of growth has slowed from 15% per decade from 1980 to 1990, down to 5.2% from 2000 to 2010. Since the growth rate per decade has continued to decrease since 1980 (see table 3.6), a conservative estimate of 5% growth was used to project the population at 2015 and 2020. Assuming a 5% population growth per decade, the City will gain an additional 1,306 residents for a population of 27,424 by the year 2020.

TABLE 3.6 POPULATION TRENDS, CITY OF WOOSTER, 1980 - 2020

Year	Population	10-year growth rate
1980	19,289	
1990	22,191	15.0%
2000	24,811	11.8%
2010	26,119	5.2%
2015 (Estimated)	26,772	5.0%*
2020 (Estimated)	27,424	

US Census Bureau, 2014

*5.0% population growth rate per decade estimated for purpose of population projection for years 2015 and 2020.

Since the size of Wooster’s population is relatively small, a single event, such as a large employer moving in or out of the City could potentially change the growth rate significantly. The projected population will be used to determine if the City has enough available land to meet the housing demands of a larger population.

From 2000 to 2010, an additional 1,148 housing units were constructed, while an additional 455 units became vacant.

Data from the United States Census Bureau was used to calculate the City’s housing inventory from the years 2000 through 2010 (Table 3.7). Within this ten year period, an additional 1,148 housing units were constructed. The amount of vacant housing units increased from 634 to 1,089 during the same period, resulting in 10,733 occupied units in 2010.

The housing data also indicates the ownership status of the housing stock within Wooster, categorized by owner-occupied or renter-occupied. Owner-occupied units in 2000 accounted for almost 60% of the units within Wooster, with renter-occupied units making up the other 40%. The data from 2010 indicates less than a 1% change in the the ownership share of the City’s housing. While not a direct match, the types of housing can be inferred from the owner-occupied or renter-occupied classification, as owner-occupied units will tend to be lower density than renter-occupied units.

Data provided by the Wooster Building Department from the ten-year period between 2004 and 2013 (Table 3.8) show a dramatic decrease of single-family houses permits issues from 106 in 2004 to 9 in 2009, with a gradual increase to 23 issued 2013. Multifamily unit

TABLE 3.7 HOUSING PROFILE, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2000 - 2010

Structure	2000		2010		10-Year Change
	Count	% Share	Count	% Share	Count
Total Housing Units	10,674	100%	11,822	100%	+1,148
Occupied Units	10,040	94.06%	10,733	90.79%	+ 639
Vacant units	634	5.94%	1,089	9.21%	+455
Owner-Occupied Units	5,993	59.69%	6,322	58.90%	+329
Renter-Occupied Units	4,074	40.31%	4,411	41.10%	+364

US Census Bureau, 2014

construction has been in the single-digits yearly, with a jump of 62 units in 2013. Since 2010, 146 new residential units have been constructed, including single-family, two-family and multifamily dwellings. The Building Department data start to show a changing pattern of housing choice throughout the period, with a stronger preference for multifamily and a softening of demand for single family residential, a trend that has been seen nationwide.

The City of Wooster currently has enough residentially zoned land to satisfy housing demand into 2020.

Assuming a population increase of approximately 1,305 residents from 2010 to 2020 (see Table 3.6), and an average family size of 2.21, approximately 590 additional residential units are projected to be needed by 2020. Building permit data indicates an average of 47.6 housing units constructed per year from 2004 - 2013. The 146 units built from 2010 to 2013 lower the census estimate to 444, while the Wooster Building Departments expects approximately 336 additional units by 2020. Keeping in mind a stock of 1,089 vacant units in 2010, the total amount of additional land required for new residential development will be low, as some demand can be filled by vacant units. The City currently has enough developable acreage to accommodate an additional 1,913 dwelling units (see Table 3.3), which is more than enough to accommodate the amount of projected population growth and housing unit demand into 2020.

Non-Residential Development Demand

As the Great Recession of 2007 has shown, the forecasting of economic activity can be difficult. Economic Census data currently available for the City of Wooster includes the 2000 Census, as well as the 2008-2012 5-year ACS estimates (Table 3.10). The issue with estimating long-term trends from this historic data, is that recession-era data represents an anomaly, which makes it difficult to predict which industries will experience growth in employment and which will experience a contraction. Since the official end of the recession in 2009, the national and state economy has been steadily improving, but data showing which industries within Wooster that have grown is not available.

TABLE 3.8 NEW HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE, CITY OF WOOSTER, 2004-2013

Year	Single Family	Two-Family	Multifamily	Total
2004	106	2	4	112
2005	87	1	5	93
2006	35	1	4	40
2007	44	1	7	52
2008	23	1	0	24
2009	9	0	0	9
2010	14	0	1	15
2011	25	0	2	27
2012	18	1	0	19
2013	23	0	62	85
10-Year Total	384	7	85	476
Yearly Average	38.4	0.7	8.5	47.6

City of Wooster, 2013

Assuming an employment growth of 1% per year, the City of Wooster currently has enough non-residentially zoned land to satisfy demand into 2020.

This intent of this section is to forecast land use demand based on an assumption of employment growth in various sectors. Since the data for this time period (Table 3.9) is not likely representative of the economy leading into 2020, a 1% per year growth of employment has been assumed. Starting with the 5-year ACS estimate of 12,538 employees and assuming a 1% growth in employment per year, a total of 1,312 employees could be added by 2020. Assuming a conservative estimate of 500 square feet per employee, a total of 656,000 square feet of commercial space could be needed by 2020. Table 3.4 calculates the amount of developable land currently within the City at over 10 million square feet, more than enough to meet any future demand in land.

TABLE 3.9 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY SECTOR, CITY OF WOOSTER

Industry	2000	2008-2012*	% Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	104	271	+161%
Construction	555	308	-45%
Manufacturing	2,903	2,113	-27%
Wholesale trade	385	110	-71%
Retail Trade	1,534	1,490	-3%
Transportation and warehousing, utilities	460	570	+24%
Information	303	277	-9%
Finance and insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	536	577	+8%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services	804	994	+24%
Educational services, health care and social assistance	3,033	3,935	+30%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,088	1,307	+20%
Other services, except public administration	558	370	-34%
Public administration	391	198	-49%
Total	12,654	12,538	-1%

U.S. Census Bureau, 2014

*Indicates data from 2008-2012 ACS 5-year estimate

3.2

public input

Development and Redevelopment

There is a desire for infill and redevelopment before outward expansion through new annexation.

The citizens of Wooster do not wish to expand their city. With a desire to preserve their historic, small-town character, residents would prefer to enhance the existing infrastructure and strengthen the core of the city.

Enhancing the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods is a priority.

Having a unique and vibrant community core is important to the public. Residents value Downtown as a cultural center and major focal point within the City. In a 2013 telephone survey, more than half of respondents (53.3 percent) declared that they visited Downtown frequently. Seventy-three percent reported that more retail, entertainment, and restaurants would encourage them to visit Downtown more often. In addition, enhancing the residential districts surrounding Downtown are a focus among citizens. Many conveyed at the first public meeting that they desire easy access to local amenities, such as, shopping, dining, and social activities.

There is support for high-quality development that integrates green building and planning principles to conserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas, and promote environmental stewardship.

Residents place a high priority on environmental stewardship. At the first public meeting, citizens expressed an interest in preserving their existing greenspace and agricultural lands, modifying underutilized greenspaces to promote ecological and recreational activities, and developing spaces for outdoor community activities.

In addition, many suggested that there should be an increase in environmental awareness, including enforcing the land use code regarding the environment and considering the ecological impact of new development, especially along or near local watersheds.

Figure 3.7: How important is it to you that Wooster works to be a more efficient and sustainable community by focusing on green practices and policies?

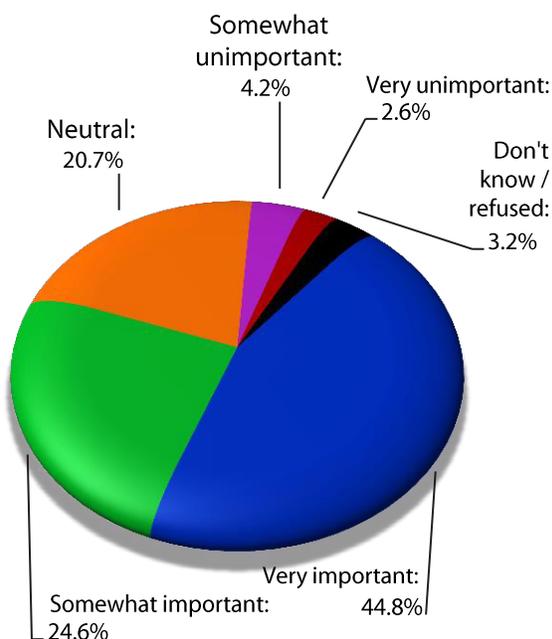
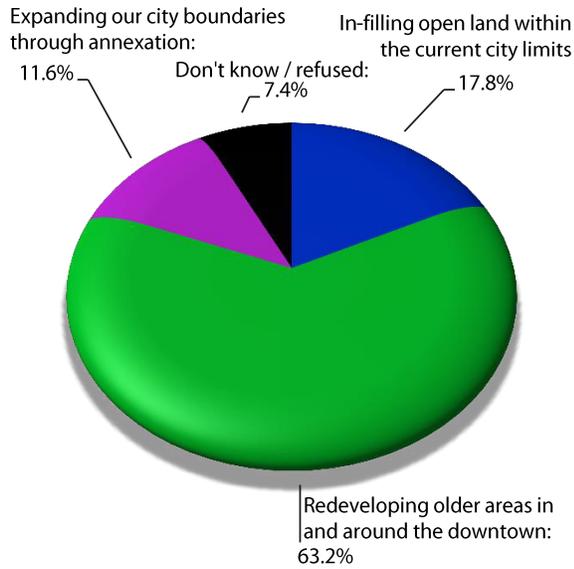
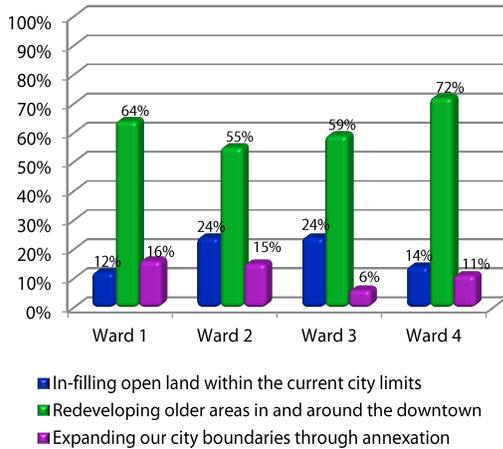


Figure 3.5: How would you prefer for Wooster to develop in the future?



Ward Breakdown



Age Breakdown

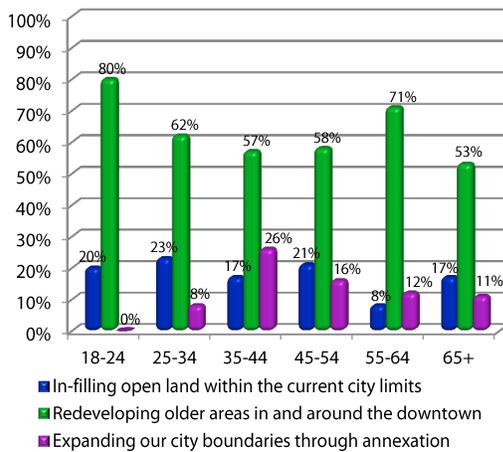
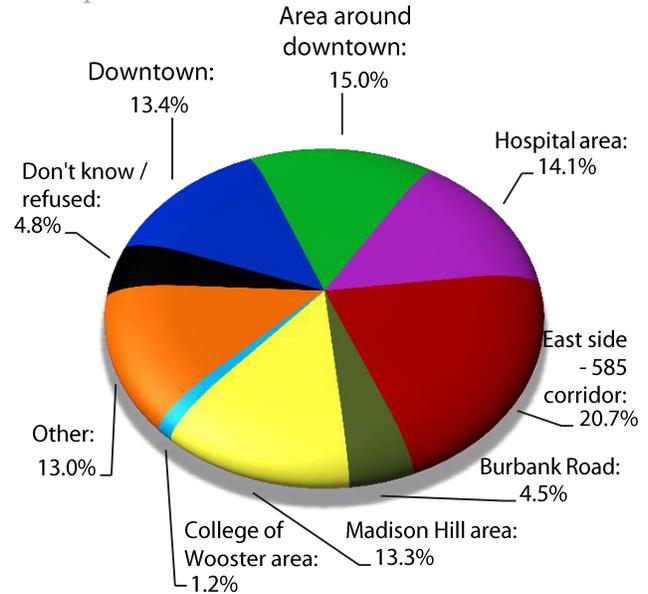
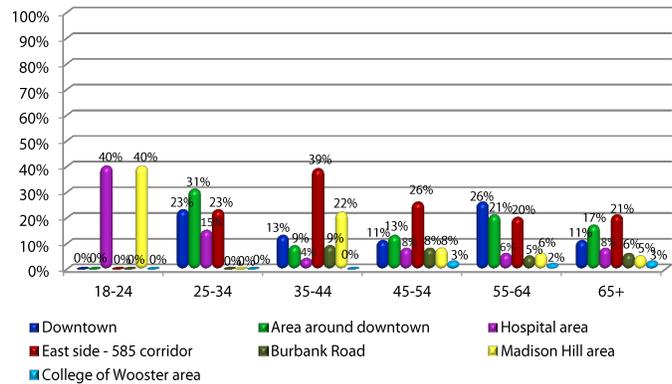


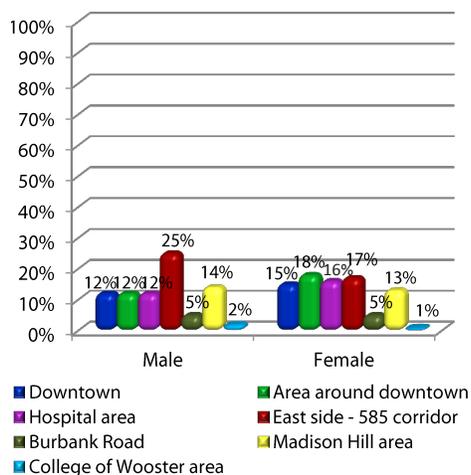
Figure 3.6: What part of the City do you believe should be the highest priority for the new development?



Ward Breakdown



Age Breakdown



Housing

Promoting a variety of housing options.

Citizens expressed an interest in promoting a variety of housing options downtown, including housing for seniors, better quality low-income housing, and higher standards for rental properties.

There is a desire to focus on new high-quality multi-family and single-family residential development in and around the downtown.

A concern was conveyed among residents at the first public meeting regarding the increase of poor-quality multi-family housing in the City. The citizens declared that single-family dwellings were being converted to multi-family units, and that those units should be renovated back to their original condition and purpose. Residents expressed the need to focus on improving existing multi-unit housing along with developing high-quality multi-family residential areas near downtown.

Preservation of older housing/historic housing in older 'first ring' traditional neighborhoods is important.

Wooster residents are in agreement that downtown traditional housing should be a high priority in future development. It supports the citizens' desire to preserve the history of the City and the close-knit community feeling.

Demographics

There is a desire to attract and promote high-quality vibrant developments that will attract and serve a variety of age groups.

The City continues to maintain and attract a family-oriented populations, and most residents agree that Wooster should continue to attract families. According to the 2013 telephone survey, 48.7 percent of participants wanted to attract more families with children.

On the other hand, 40.2 percent of participants desired to attract young professionals. At the first steering committee meeting, members supported an innovative culture that would attract young entrepreneurs and expand intellectual assets.



Promoting a variety of options was noted as a priority by the community, this includes housing such as loft style apartments and new townhome or cluster style developments.

Figure 3.8: How frequently do you visit downtown Wooster?

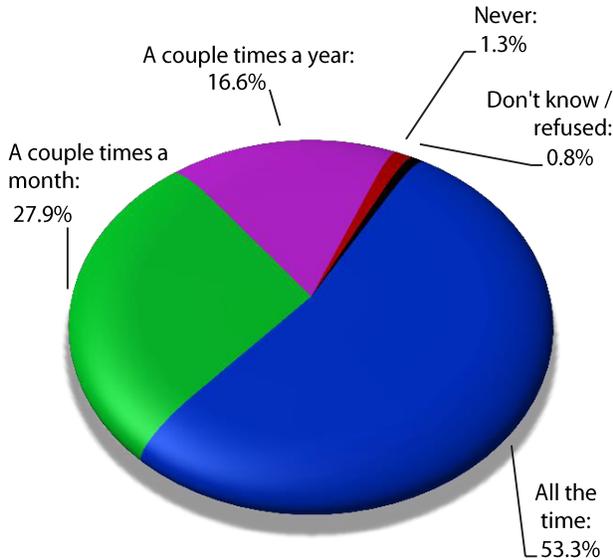
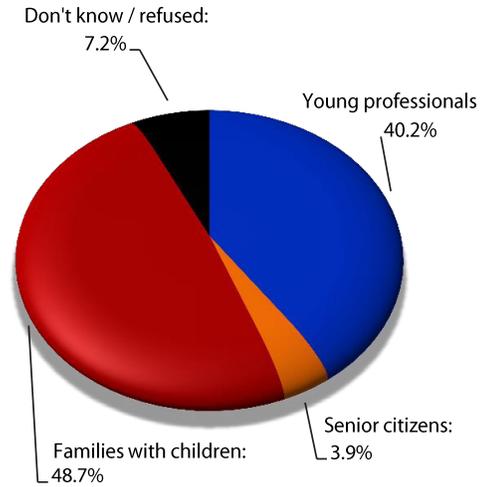


Figure 3.9: Which of the following groups would you most like Wooster to attract more of?



Ward Breakdown

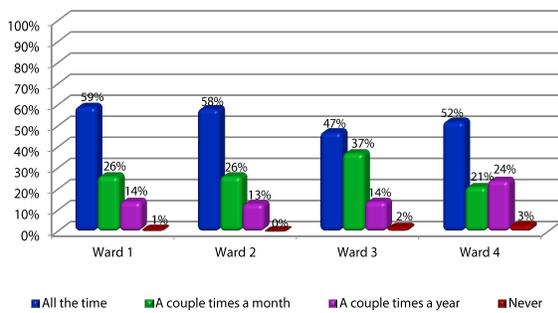
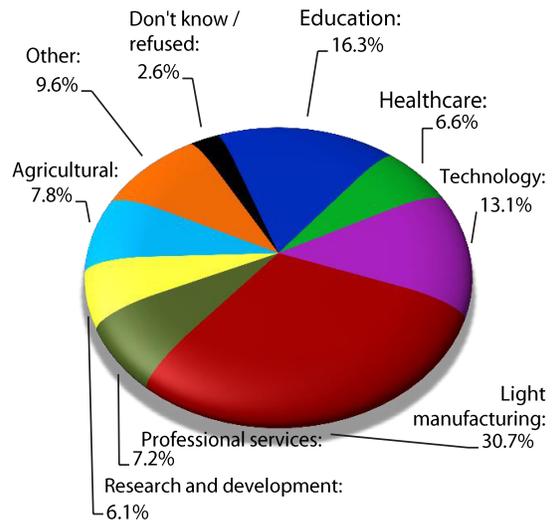
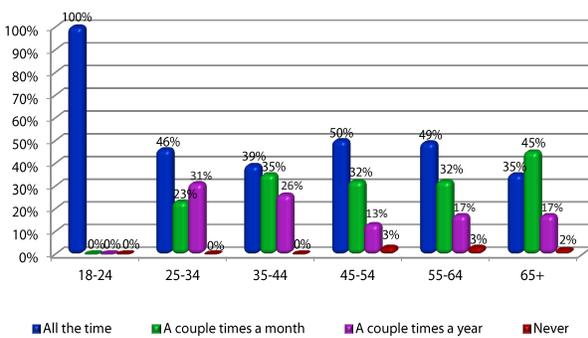


Figure 3.10: What kinds of jobs would you most like to see Wooster attract more of in the future?



Age Breakdown



3.3

current trends

There is a growing trend of people wanting to move back into urban settings.

Recent trends in residential living have shown an increase of downtown living, resulting in an increased demand for new rental and owner occupied units in these areas. Main Street Wooster has made a push to capitalize on this growing trend by guiding new residential development in and around the downtown. This specifically includes incorporating multi-family as part of mixed-use buildings that supports larger economic development initiatives in Wooster.

Millenials and Baby Boomers are increasingly living in more compact and sustainable environments.

Currently Generation Y, or Millenials, and the Baby Boomer Generation, are two of the largest generations to move through the housing market in the history of the United States. These age cohorts are looking to live near services and amenities, in compact walkable environments. There is also an interest in renting before owning, so as to stay flexible and mobile in the job market, and or changing lifestyles.

Mixed-use development such as the one below can incorporate a variety of uses including residential in many forms (e.g. lofts). Mixed-use development in more urban settings are often the result of creative public/private partnerships where a distinct public benefit is achieved that accomplishes a larger community vision.

Offering a variety residential types allows cities to capture some of the population that is seeking these options. When cities capture these populations they reinforce the strength of their community by increasing workforce, spending power, and attracting and retaining the creative class.



Mixed-use development continues to be a growing trend.

Mixed-use development combines multiple uses such as retail, office, residential, hotel, or entertainment. These developments typically combine first floor retail or office space with residential units above, providing services and amenities to those living in the development while serving a broader range of users.

While mixed-use development is typically seen in downtown settings, it can also be successfully implemented in suburban areas, and create a unique environment or destination for work or play.

Mixed-use buildings also provides opportunities for new residential development. Having a greater variety of housing stock establishes a more sustainable market by creating a continuum of housing options. This continuum provide steps up and step down support for residents through the housing spectrum.

Public private partnerships are a growing trend that help achieve large and small economic development initiatives.

Public-private partnerships (P3s) are agreements between municipalities and one or more private sector businesses to finance, build, and/or operate a 'project'. This tool provides an opportunity for multiple parties to achieve a common vision and/or objectives. Usually, P3s are used to help finance projects that have a benefit to both the city and the private sector. These partnerships are often utilized fill the gap of infrastructure of new development where the city pays part of the cost to support private sector investment in a development that improves the community.

Parking is one of the biggest land use challenges facing communities.

Communities are reducing the impact of parking by consolidating multiple surface parking areas into new centralized public and/or private lots and structures that are accessible and conveniently located. In turn, this creates more sustainable communities by reducing the environmental impact of parking. By increasing the efficiency of parking, cities can work to solve their parking problem while keeping a connected and environmentally-friendly downtown.

Shared parking is also a tool that allows adjacent businesses or property owners to share parking spaces, reducing the total number of spaces needed. This can be done in conjunction with minimizing the required parking spaces in general for specific uses if current parking requirements are out date or excessive.

Utilizing shared parking also benefits the environment by planning for runoff in a more comprehensive manner. By designing parking for multiple lots together, runoff can be designed to be better collected and treated by the natural environment.

Shared parking can be done in two ways, contractual agreements between adjacent businesses and through parking management districts. By implementing requirements for shared parking agreements, cities can encourage smarter parking for new development that positively impacts the community and the business. Through implementation of parking management districts, a wide range of businesses can be served by parking that effectively serves businesses while minimally impacting the community.

3.4

plan principle + objectives



A prosperous and balanced community that ensures the small town character, green areas, and downtown are preserved and enhanced, while carefully planning for the growth and development of existing and emerging economic centers and neighborhoods.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

-  WOOSTER LEADERSHIP
-  PLANNING AND ZONING
-  CITY ENGINEER
-  PARKS AND RECREATION
-  POLICE DEPARTMENT
-  FIRE DEPARTMENT
-  CODE ENFORCEMENT
-  WAYNE COUNTY
-  MAIN STREET WOOSTER
-  CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
-  THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER
-  OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER
-  WOOSTER COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
-  PRIVATE LAND OWNERS

TIMEFRAME

Short Term	1-3 years
Medium Term	3-6 years
Long Term	6-10 years
Ongoing	Action to be continuously addressed

Note: The objectives and actions outlined in this section of the plan reference land use recommendations and policies that describe the future land use condition of the City. These recommendations are described in text, and illustrated by [Figure 3.11 Future Land Use Map](#) found at the end of this chapter. Collectively the principle, objectives and actions together with [Figure 3.11](#) should be referenced when future land uses decisions are made.

Objective LU.1 Continue to enhance the Downtown.

Action LU.1.1

Encourage new higher density development where appropriate to support new businesses and residential growth.

To promote the implementation of this action the City should ensure city code allows for medium to high density housing in and around the downtown. Additionally, public private partnerships should be considered as a viable tool to help promote new residential development in the downtown or other priority development areas.



Time Frame: Short - Mid Term

Action LU.1.2

Support new mixed use development that combine ground floor retail with upper story offices and housing.

Endorse mixed-use development downtown that reinforces the downtown atmosphere of walkability and retail storefronts. Mixed-use development may also accommodate new residential units downtown, growing an environment to live, work, and play.



Time Frame: Short - Mid Term

Action LU.1.3

Continue to support retail activity within pedestrian areas, especially outdoor seating areas for restaurants.

Policies should be adopted to enhance the pedestrian experience in order to bring people out to the street and increase social interactions. Pedestrian amenities should be provided by both the public and private sector in order to continue to promote Downtown as an attraction.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.1.4

Consider the establishment of an Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) to provide enhanced services that strengthen the district.

By implementing a business improvement district Downtown, Wooster can creatively plan for and implement a variety of improvements that enhance the overall quality of life in the downtown. The City should work with Main Street Wooster to establish boundaries and structure to create a BID that can operate independently.



Time Frame: Mid Term

Action LU.1.5

Continue to investigate off-street parking options and implement short to mid-term parking solutions with a focus on Liberty Street.

The City should ensure that parking is available and accessible in order to attract shoppers and visitors. Wooster should continue to promote wayfinding strategies that guide residents and visitors to public parking, and serves to enhance the image and brand of the area.



Time Frame: Short Term/Ongoing

Action LU.1.6

Support Main Street Wooster in marketing the downtown and promoting new economic growth.

Downtown Wooster’s beauty and historical character is in large part due to the effort put forth on promotion and advocacy by Main Street Wooster. The City should continue to work with and support Main Street Wooster to market Downtown and promote new economic growth in order to position Wooster in the regional marketplace.



Time Frame: Short Term

Action LU.1.7

Identify areas in and around the downtown that can be developed as new public space (e.g. plazas, gardens, pedestrian malls in alleys, etc.).

Public spaces are a critical element of downtown. New public spaces that serve a variety of purposes should be considered as the downtown continues to develop and redevelop. Special care should be taken to ensure both active and passive areas are considered providing a full-spectrum of public spaces.



Time Frame: Mid Term

Action LU.1.8

Explore alternative truck routes to eliminate truck traffic within the downtown and residential areas.

In order to create a more pedestrian friendly downtown, options should be explored to better manage truck routes, with a focus on routing trucks around downtown, without comprising economic growth or community safety.



Time Frame: Long Term

Action LU.1.9

Enhance the gateways into and within the Downtown area such as those located on Columbus, Market, and Liberty streets.

Improving gateways is an easy low to moderate cost initiative that can dramatically shape the first impression of a visitor, and leave a positive impression of the image and brand of a community. This in turn serve as a strong economic development initiative by enhancing the quality of a place or district.



Time Frame: Short Term

Action LU.1.10

Support the development of a new dynamic entertainment node in the Downtown.

Similar to Action 1.1.7, this action is about creating public space. More specifically this action is addressing the need for a signature event space that can be used for a variety of purposes, is centrally located, and helps to advance the image and brand of downtown.



Time Frame: Mid Term

Action LU.1.11

Create a redevelopment ‘tool box’ that can be used to market downtown development opportunities (e.g. tax abatements, tax increment financing, etc.).

The City should establish a handbook of redevelopment tools including financing options and development techniques to promote new economic growth downtown. This will help to attract new development and allow the City to guide redevelopment in a strategic manner.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.1.12

Upgrade streetscape improvements completed in 1993.

In order to enhance and advance Downtown, the City should look to improve the streetscape by building on and improving upgrades made in 1993. Streetscape elements should be placed that enhance the pedestrian experience in order to make Downtown a destination that is walkable, safe, and comforting.



Time Frame: Long Term/Ongoing

Action LU.1.13

Create a culture campus in Downtown that integrates the library, Red Cross, and Wayne Center for the Arts.

One of the strengths of the downtown is the cluster of civic and cultural groups that are clustered in the area. The presence and partnerships of these groups could lead to the creation of a collaborative space/district that helps to advance their individual missions, and the image and brand of the downtown. The goal of this action would be to promote new partnerships and civic culture throughout the area.



Time Frame: Short - Mid Term

Action LU.1.14

Create a detailed redevelopment plan for East Liberty Street.

The City should look to create a plan that details the strategic redevelopment of East Liberty that defines a vision and redevelopment plan for the area. Infill in this area should be focused on a with mixed-use development scenario that enhances the streetscape, provides new high-quality retail space, new public space, and residential uses.



Time Frame: Short Term

Objective LU.2

Promote continued economic growth along the 585 Corridor through newly planned light industrial and manufacturing, research and development, and office space.

Action LU.2.1

Identify sites that can accommodate new commercial, office and industrial development along the 585 Corridor.

The City should identify areas in East Wooster that are prime for commercial, office, and industrial development. This development should be appropriately planned to minimize impacts on existing infrastructure while accommodating and promoting new development.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.2.2

Enhance the Portage and 585 intersection with gateway features, cross walks, improved street and sidewalks to create a welcoming gateway into the community.

This area of the City was identified by the public as an area that needs to be redeveloped. The location of the area and traffic counts and pattern provide a perfect space to brand the community and construct gateway features and new land uses that promote the economic success of the area and larger community.



Time Frame: Short Term/Ongoing

Action LU.2.3

Consolidate public and private signage to minimize the visual impact from pedestrian and vehicular viewsheds.

By consolidating signage and making it more cohesive, the City can create work to create a clean and refined look that promotes the existing and future economic success of the area. Special signage standards may be considered for this area that help to brand the corridor and industrial parks/areas.



Time Frame: Long Term

Action LU.2.4

Create special architectural and site controls for business park and light industrial development along the 585 Corridor to help grow a distinct image and brand for the area.

The City should consider an overlay district along the 585 Corridor with the goal of establishing a brand and image for the area. The overlay should have specific architectural and site design standards that will create a coordinate image to the corridor, with a focus on creating a high-quality environment for economic growth.



Time Frame: Long Term

Action LU.2.5

Improve Akron Road to enhance traffic flow and support future economic growth.

By improving the road conditions and capacity, this area can advance its economic competitiveness in the region. Complete street elements should be considered such as bike lanes, and best management storm water practices should be incorporated as well.



Time Frame: Short Term/Ongoing

Action LU.2.6

Incorporate walking and biking trails connecting to local and regional trails as part of future public and private sector developments.

Bike trails and pathways serve to move residents and visitors in and around a community safely. They also can serve as amenity that is attractive to existing and new business to locate in an area. These types of amenities are important to a workforce with a growing desire to be 'green' and active.



Time Frame: Short Term

Action LU.2.7

Actively market the Rubbermaid site to attract future development.

The City should actively market this site, and may consider using outside consulting services that specialize in site selection, marketing, and promotion of the reuse of these types of facilities.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.2.8

Maintain a strong and viable infrastructure network to support future economic growth.

The City should continue to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure in the corridor to support anticipated economic expansion in the corridor. A focus of these improvements should be on the transportation network.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Objective LU.3

Promote new residential development that includes traditional neighborhood characteristics.

Action LU.3.1

Consider permitting small-scale neighborhood commercial development as part of large-scale master plan developments.

Code and policy amendments should be made to allow for small-scale commercial development that serves new residential growth. By allowing small developments like corner grocery stores and other amenities that serve neighborhoods. As new



Time Frame: Mid Term

growth occurs a these new commercial nodes should be planned to promote multi-modal options that connect the commercial areas to surrounding neighborhoods, with a goal of having one commercial node within a half mile most residential areas.

Action LU.3.2

Create standards that require high quality pedestrian-oriented streets incorporating sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and tree lawns within newly developed residential areas.

All streets within new residential development should promote walkability and provide pedestrian amenities. City codes should require the incorporation of sidewalks and bike paths/lanes, street trees, lighting, and tree lawns within new residential developments.



Time Frame: Short Term

Action LU.3.3

Create standards, or modify existing standards to allow for a mixture of housing types.

City code should be updated or amended to allow a mixture of housing types within new residential areas. A mixture of housing types provides options to a variety of future home owners, especially millennials and baby boomers who are both looking for alternative housing options from the traditional single family housing product.



Time Frame: Short Term/Ongoing

Action LU.3.4

Encourage connections among neighborhoods via roads, sidewalks and multi-use paths.

Providing multiple connections between districts and neighborhoods should be a priority. Connections should include pedestrian and bicycling options, as well as new roadway linkages that improve access and economic growth.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.3.5

Actively pursue the redevelopment of non-conforming trailer parks.

The City currently has multiple trailer parks that provide housing to local residents. As new development occurs and new housing options are provided within and around the City, these older trailer parks should be considered for redevelopment. The goal should be to promote the development of new housing options for existing trailer park residents prior to redeveloping the existing parks.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.3.6

Review the zoning code and make changes that will allow for and incentivize traditional neighborhood development.

Updates should be made to the zoning code that encourage traditional neighborhood development as opposed to “suburban-style” residential development. These zoning code updates should promote human scaled environments with smaller lots and setbacks, shared amenities, a range of housing types, and public spaces. Architectural and design standards should favor many architectural styles with a focus on quality, as opposed to “cookie-cutter” style development.



Time Frame: Mid Term

Objective LU.4
Improve rental housing.

Action LU.4.1

Improve and expand code enforcement efforts.

Code enforcement efforts should be improved to help manage the condition of both single family and commercial properties. Improvements could include increasing staffing, new educational strategies, as well as working with the legal counsel to prosecute repeat offenders.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.4.2

Continue to support neighborhood improvement efforts by community members and groups.

One of the greatest strengths of Wooster is its community pride and involvement. The City should work to support and facilitate improvement projects by these groups. Specific strategies may include programs such as neighborhood improvement grants. Wooster should provide community resource grants that help residents improve their neighborhood.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.4.3

Create a Neighborhood Improvement District to strengthen code enforcement and support neighborhood improvements.

A Neighborhood Improvement District is an area in which certain public improvements are financed by the city through a special assessment against properties within the area.

The City should consider developing a Neighborhood Improvement District in the traditional neighborhood around Downtown. This District could help generate new financing for streetscape improvement including sidewalks, utilities, street lights, vegetation, and other neighborhood amenities.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.4.4

Provide incentives for redevelopment of properties.

Wooster should provide tax incentives for infill development and redevelopment of existing residential neighborhoods, as a priority over new greenfield residential development.



Time Frame: Mid Term/Ongoing

Objective LU.5 Expand housing opportunities.

Action LU.5.1

Create incentives that encourage moderately priced housing options in and around Downtown.

Millenials/young professionals are one of the largest demographics to move through the housing market in the history of the U.S. This demographic has shown a desire to be close to an 'urban' setting with access to entertainment, and areas that are highly walkable. Wooster has the opportunity to continue to promote new multifamily options that are in and around the downtown to serve this market segment and support the overall economic health of the downtown.

Changing demographic and economic conditions has created a shift in the marketplace for a growing segment of buyers who are looking for small residential units that are both easier to maintain, and more cost effective. The City promote new residential options/projects that offer small and affordable units that include high quality features and amenities adding to the character and quality of the community. Specific incentives such as tax abatements or a streamlined approval process should be considered in order to advance this action.



Time Frame: Mid Term/Ongoing

Action LU.5.2

Support "downsized" housing options for residents.

As the baby boomers continue to move through the housing market there is a growing need to provide new housing choices that are smaller, while still maintaining the same high-quality finishes and amenities demanded by the majority of this market segment. Similar to Action LU.5.1 these housing options should be close to goods and services and entertainment options, as well as medical facilities and emergency services.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.5.3

Provide a menu of incentives to support interior and exterior renovation of older housing stock.

Wooster has a strong traditional housing stock, especially in and around the downtown. New incentives and programs should be considered to support the maintenance and renovation of these structures. Through implementation of this action the



Time Frame: Short - Mid Term

maintenance and preservation of traditional neighborhoods can be achieved, in turn adding to the character and image of Wooster.

Action LU.5.4

Promote new residential on vacant and underutilized sites within developed areas.



City code should be revised to promote residential development on greyfield land, or underutilized sites in the City. By promoting this type of development, the City can make for more sustainable residential areas within the community.

Time Frame: Short Term/Ongoing

**Objective LU.6
Enhance and plan for the area around the Hospital.**

Action LU.6.1

Work with the hospital to enhance and brand the streetscape and intersections near the hospital campus.



The City should work with Wooster Community Hospital to improve the streetscape and intersections immediately surrounding the hospital. These improvements should help to brand the ‘Hospital District’ by creating a distinct character to the area. Specific elements may include new lighting, landscaping, signage, etc. Gateway features and treatments should also be added to brand the District and serve as traffic calming devices.

Time Frame: Short - Mid Term

Action LU.6.2

Encourage new mixed-use development around the hospital that supports hospital activities and serves neighboring residential areas.



Underutilized areas around the Hospital should be redeveloped into mixed-use development that encourages pedestrian activity and new vehicular connections that improve access in and around the hospital. Uses may include residential, medical offices, retail, restaurants, and small hotels. All of these uses should be used to complement the Hospital and build on the existing medical cluster. These uses will help support the overall economic health of the area and serve the visitors and employees in the area. The scale and form of this development should complement the surrounding neighborhoods and include high-quality architecture and public spaces.

Time Frame: Short Term/Ongoing

Objective LU.7 Responsibly manage growth outside the City limits.

Action LU.7.1

Extend the City boundary only when the expansion will result in new targeted economic growth, or serve to accomplish other goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan or other City policies.

One of the clear themes from the public outreach conducted as part of this plan is to put a priority on infill and redevelopment before outward expansion of city boundaries. The City should put a priority on inward growth prior to outward growth to avoid sprawl development and place unnecessary stress on the existing infrastructure.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Action LU.7.2

New residential expansion should be designed in a cluster or conservation style development pattern.

New residential development should be in a cluster or conservation style pattern. Minimizing the footprint of development reduces the short and long term cost of infrastructure, and promotes the preservation and access to public space and opens space.



Time Frame: Short- Mid Term

Action LU.7.3

Ensure new annexations can be served by city utilities.

If and when land is annexed into the City the impacts to the local infrastructure network should be considered. Specific impact studies should be completed (e.g. traffic, sewer, water) to examine the cost of outward of an outward development pattern. These cost should be considered carefully so as to not 'tax' the existing infrastructure network.



Time Frame: Ongoing

Figure 3.11 Future Land Use, City of Wooster, 2013

