

City of Wooster

Comprehensive Plan

Wayne County, Ohio

Fall Open House

November 2023



We are the community advancement firm.

We believe in the power of multidisciplinary teamwork to find ideas that aren't just different—they're better.

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Today's Agenda

1. Project Overview

2. What did we learn?

- Key Community Findings
- Community Engagement - Phase I Recap

3. Plan Framework

- Goals and Objectives
- Future Land Use Map
- Focus Area Concepts

4. Open House Activities



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Project Overview

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Our goal is to create a blueprint that will guide future **growth and development** in Wooster over the next 10-15 years.

Project Purpose



Best Downtown Placemaking:
Small Town Award (2019)

What a Comprehensive Plan is:

- **Comprehensive & citywide**
- **Long-range**
- **General**
- Focused on **physical development**
- **Relates physical design proposals to community goals**
- Acts as a **policy document**

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What a Comprehensive Plan isn't:

- A zoning ordinance
- A subdivision regulation
- A budget or a capital improvement plan

It is meant to provide the framework for the development of these implementation tools.



Project Outcomes

- Plan for the next step in the **evolution of Wooster**
- Identify **key next steps** to drive growth and development forward
- Create **implementation strategies** for catalytic projects and initiatives



Who Is Creating The Plan

- The planning process is being led by OHM Advisors
 - The plan is being informed and developed by:
 - City staff
 - Project steering committee made up of local residents and stakeholders

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A photograph of a meeting in progress. In the center, a woman with curly hair is looking at a smartphone while holding a blue pen. To her left, a man with a beard and a bun is writing on a piece of paper. To her right, another person is partially visible, also looking at a device. The table is cluttered with papers, pens, and a water bottle. The background shows other people working at tables in a bright, modern office environment.

Learn + Listen

Develop + Finalize

Ignite!



**Phase 1:
Investigate**

Getting started through **initial discovery, preliminary visioning**, and goal setting.



**Phase 2:
Inform**

Understanding the context of the city through **existing conditions analysis** and data collection.



**Phase 3:
Insight**

Listening to the community through **public and stakeholder engagement**



**Phase 4:
Invent**

Taking everything we've learned and creating **recommendations and action items**



**Phase 5:
Ignite**

Testing the recommendations and finalizing the plan for **launch and implementation**

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Learn + Listen

Develop + Finalize

Ignite!



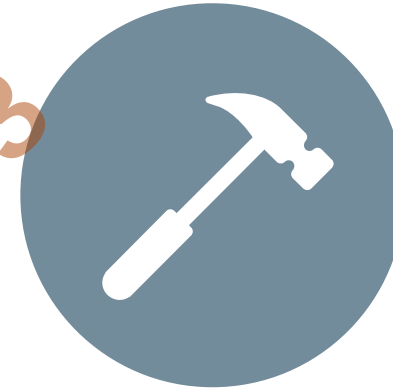
**Phase 1:
Investigate**



**Phase 2:
Inform**



**Phase 3:
Insight**

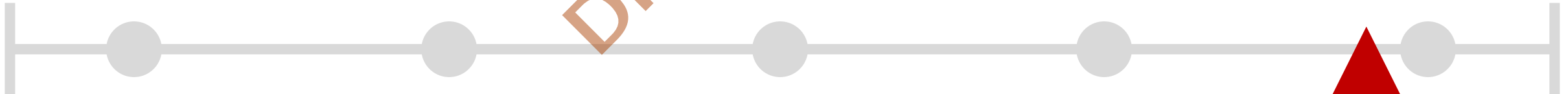


**Phase 4:
Invent**



**Phase 5:
Ignite**

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WE ARE HERE!

What did we learn?

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Plan Inputs

- Technical Analysis
- Community Engagement Phase 1

Key takeaways for each input helped contribute towards identifying goals, objectives, and action items.

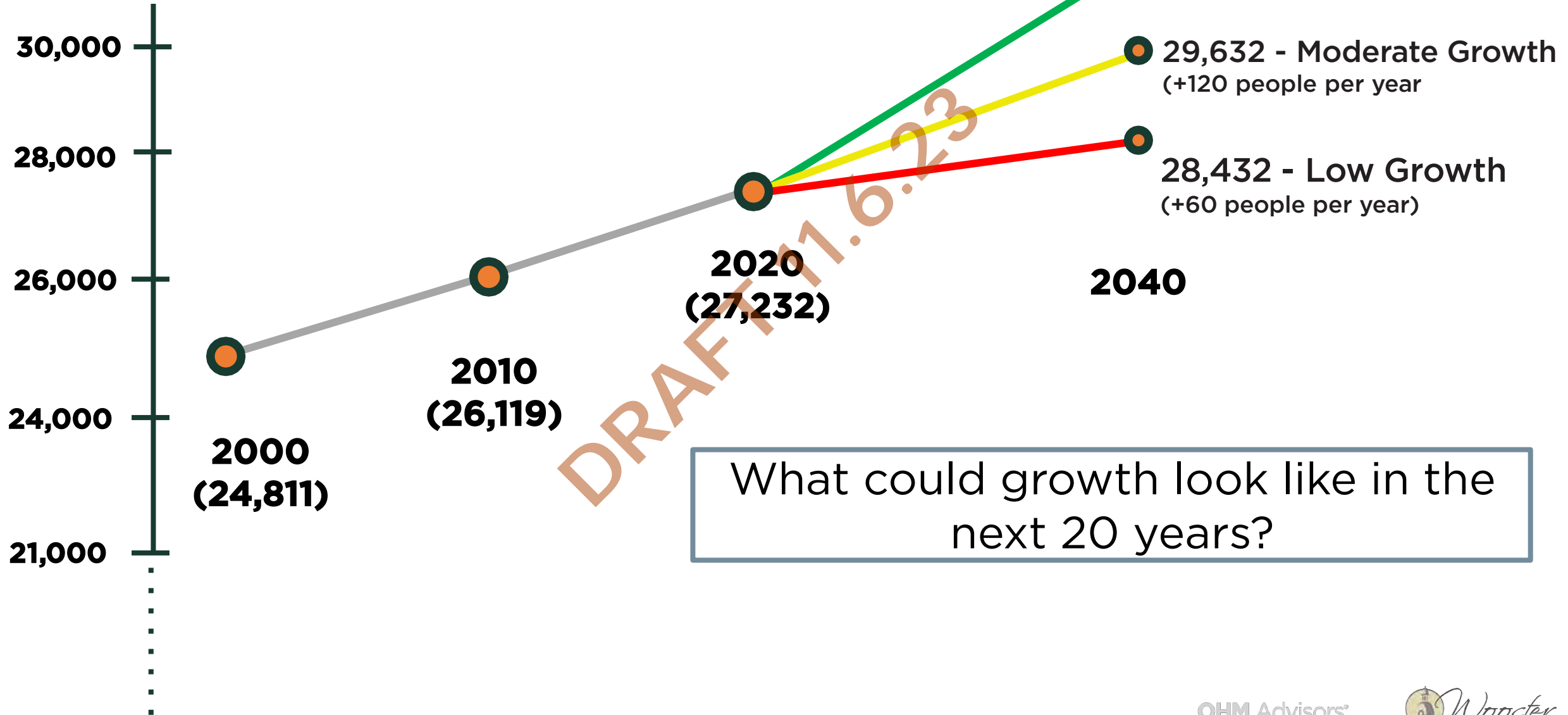


Technical Analysis

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Growth Scenarios

Future Growth



Wooster Households



Total Households

44,113 in Wayne County



Household Size

2.56 in Wayne County

2.42 in Ohio



\$52,485

Median Household Income

\$62,147 in Wayne County

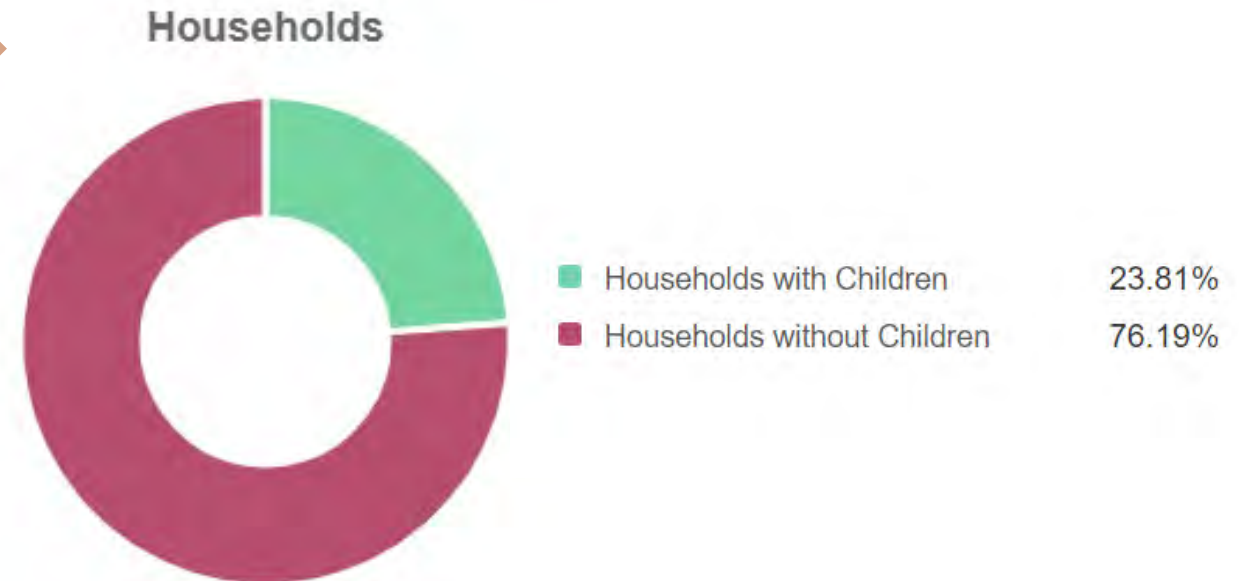
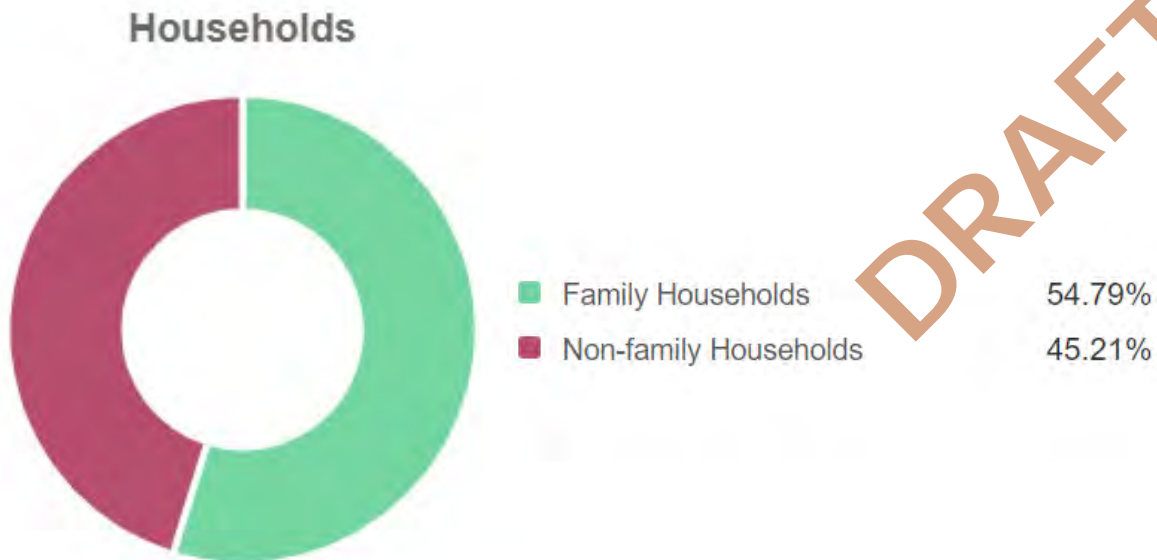
\$57,725 in Ohio

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Who will be living in Wooster in the future?

Demographics

There are a total of 11,148 households in Wooster, each made up of around two members. Family establishments represent 54.79%, while non-family units account for 45.21%. Additionally, 23.81% of households have children and 76.19% are without.



Source: 2020 ACS, Point2Home

Who will be living in Wooster in the future?

Demographics

Approximately 43 percent of adults in Wooster are married, while 57 percent have never been, are divorced, or widowed.

Marital Status



Never Married	38.66%
Married	42.86%
Separated	2.07%
Widowed	5.55%
Divorced	12.93%

Martial Status

Never Married	8,990
Married	9,968
Separated	481
Widowed	1,290
Divorced	3,008

Real Estate and Affordability



\$165,287

Median Home Value

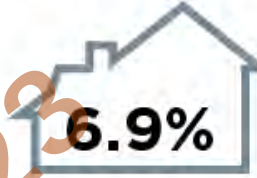
\$181,758 in Wayne County

\$175,857 in Ohio



**Owner-Occupied
Housing Units**

65.3% Ohio average



**Vacant
Housing Units**



\$622

**Median
Contract Rent**

\$586 in Wayne County

1973

**Median Year
Structure Built**

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Where and what housing choice are they living in?

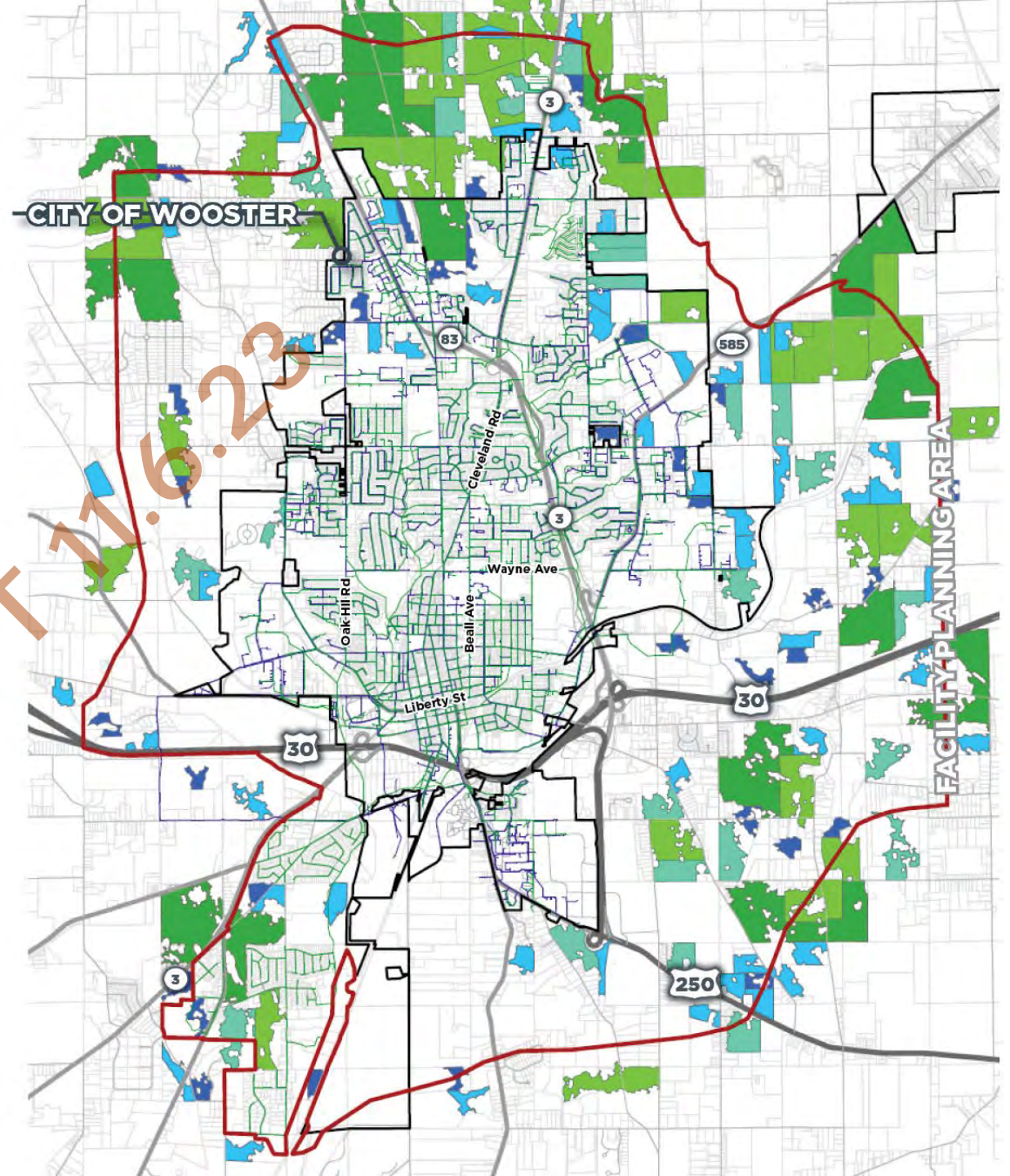
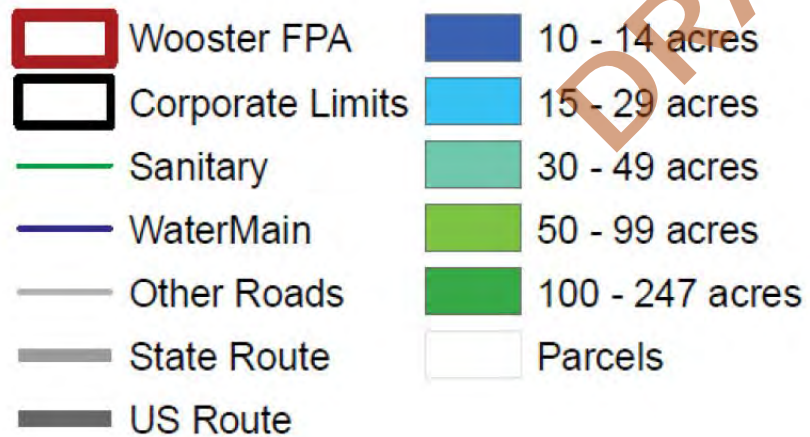
Housing

There are 11,787 housing units in Wooster, the median year they were built is 1974



Developable Areas

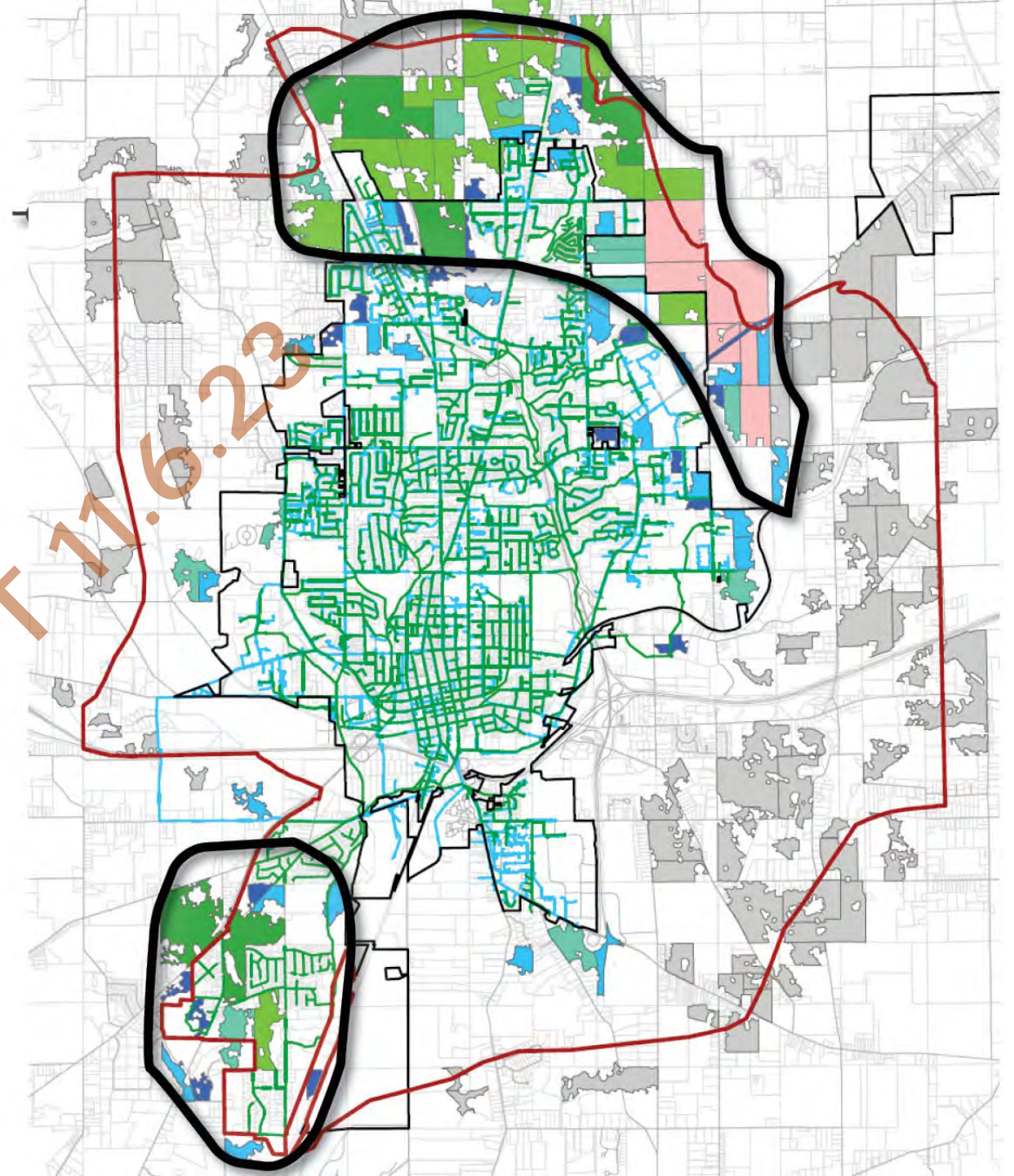
Where could we grow?



Developable Areas

Where could we grow?

- Limited areas for development exist that are..
 - Within FPA boundary
 - Clear of environmental hazards
 - Buildable slope
 - Financially viable (acreage)
 - **Proximity to existing utilities**



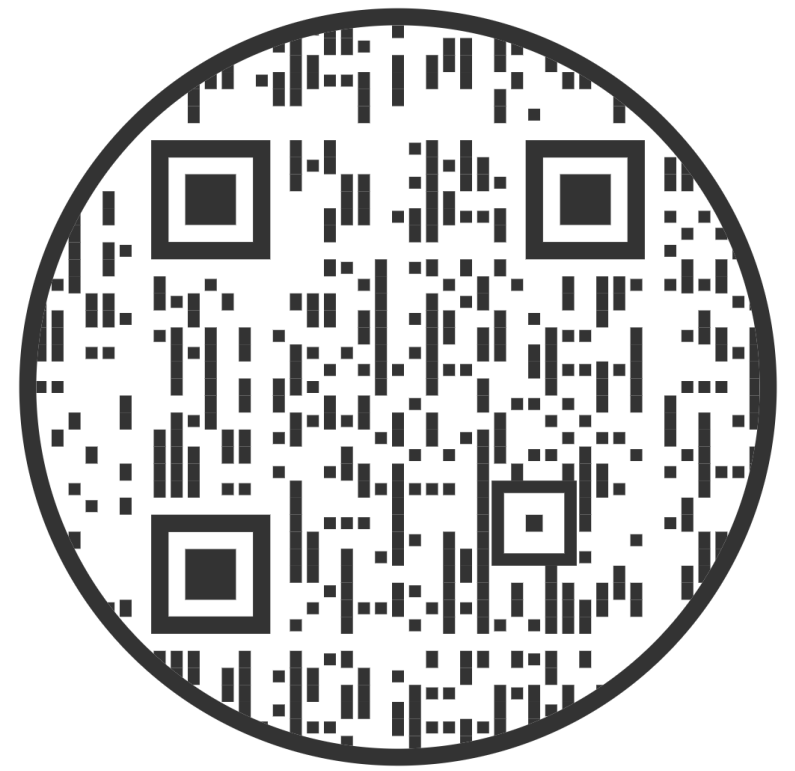
Key Takeaways

Community Impressions

- One of the few **growing Ohio micropolitan cities!** – steady growth over the last 20 years
- Families and **households are evolving** – singles, single parent households, less households with children, etc.
- Housing **stock and affordability** – aging housing stock, affordable compared to state average, less diversity in housing choices, higher percentage of renters compares to state average
- Where and **how to grow?** – Limited area for large-scale infill within Wooster city limits, growth potential within greater Facility Planning Area, limited access to utilities



Community Engagement - Phase 1



**We won't bore you
with the details..**

Scan the QR code to visit the
community engagement memo
with detailed results!

Community Engagement Methods

Phase One

Community Survey

- 1,836 responses

Stakeholder Meetings

- 6 sessions with over 60 attendees (business, real estate, healthcare, education, arts, and housing groups)

Public Open House

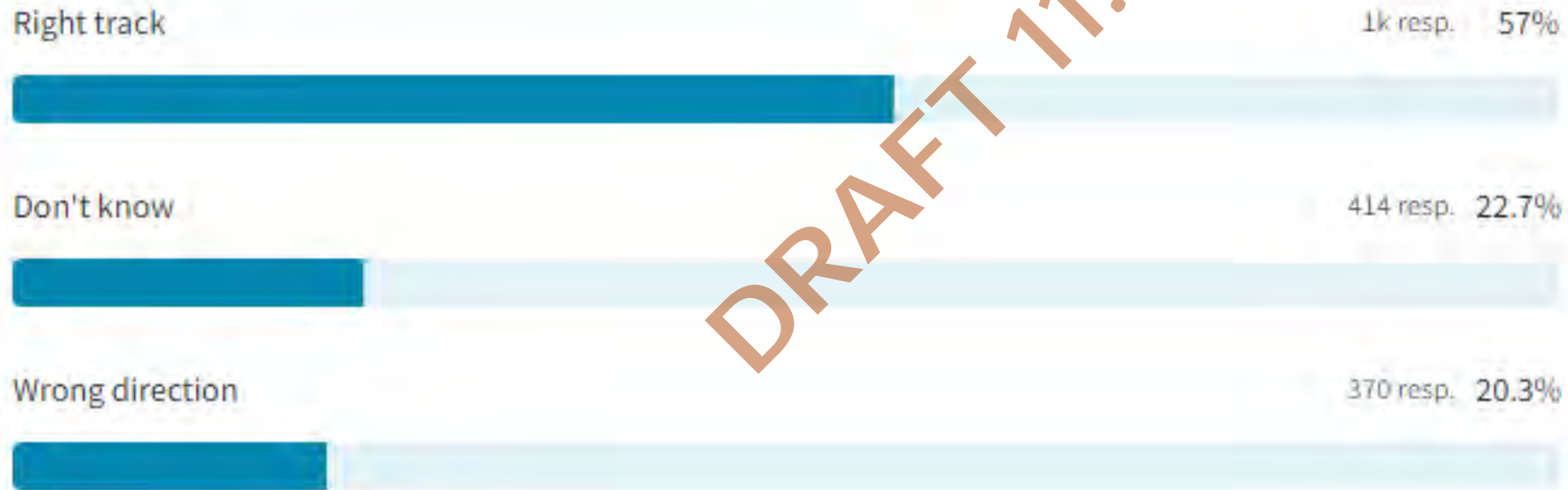
- 2 sessions, with over 50 attendees

Community Survey

1,836 responses to 27 questions over 6 weeks!

Generally speaking, would you say that things in Wooster are on the right track, or headed in the wrong direction?

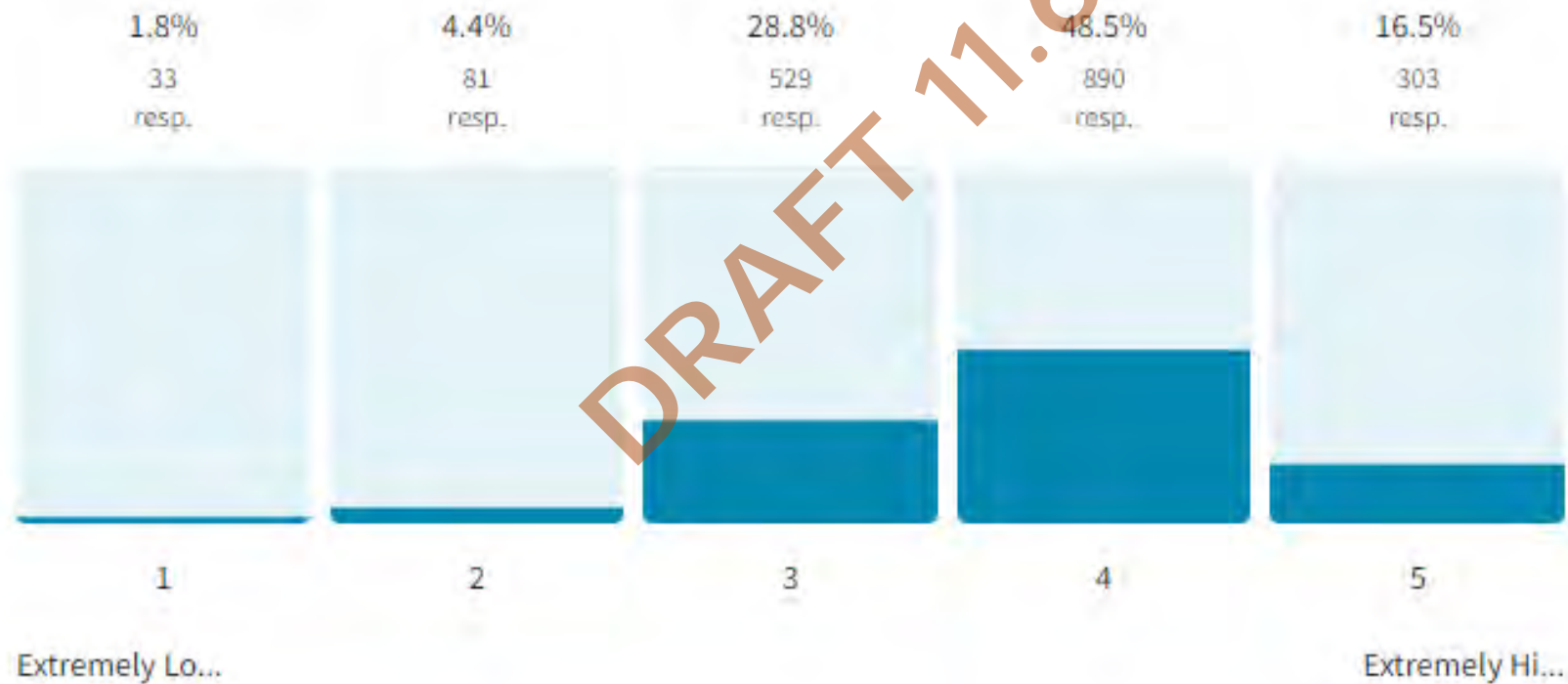
1824 out of 1836 answered



Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “extremely low” and 5 is “extremely high,” how would you rate your **quality of life** as a Wooster resident?

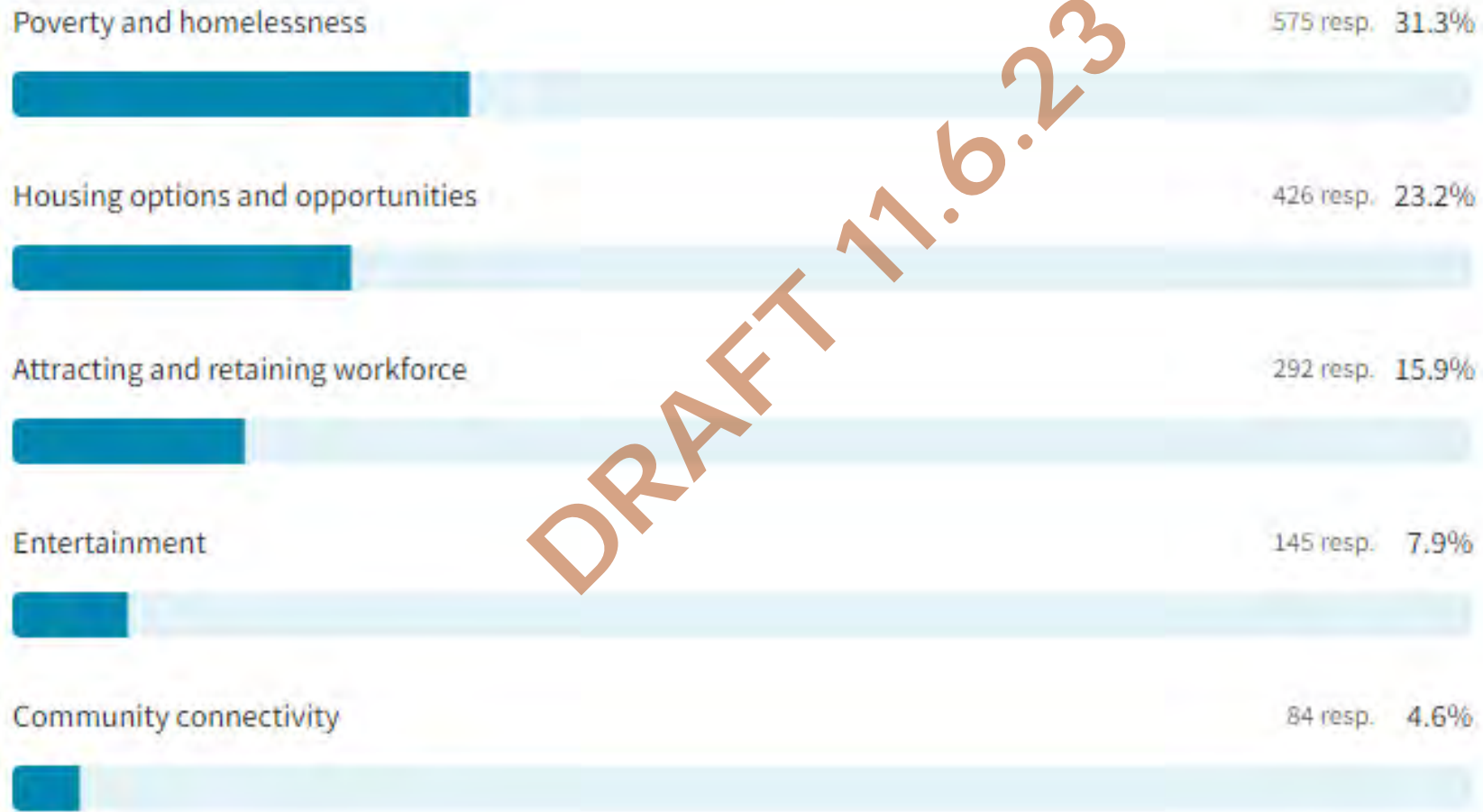
1836 out of 1836 answered

3.7 Average rating



In your opinion, what is the **most significant challenge** facing Wooster?

1836 out of 1836 answered



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How many years have you lived in the City of Wooster?

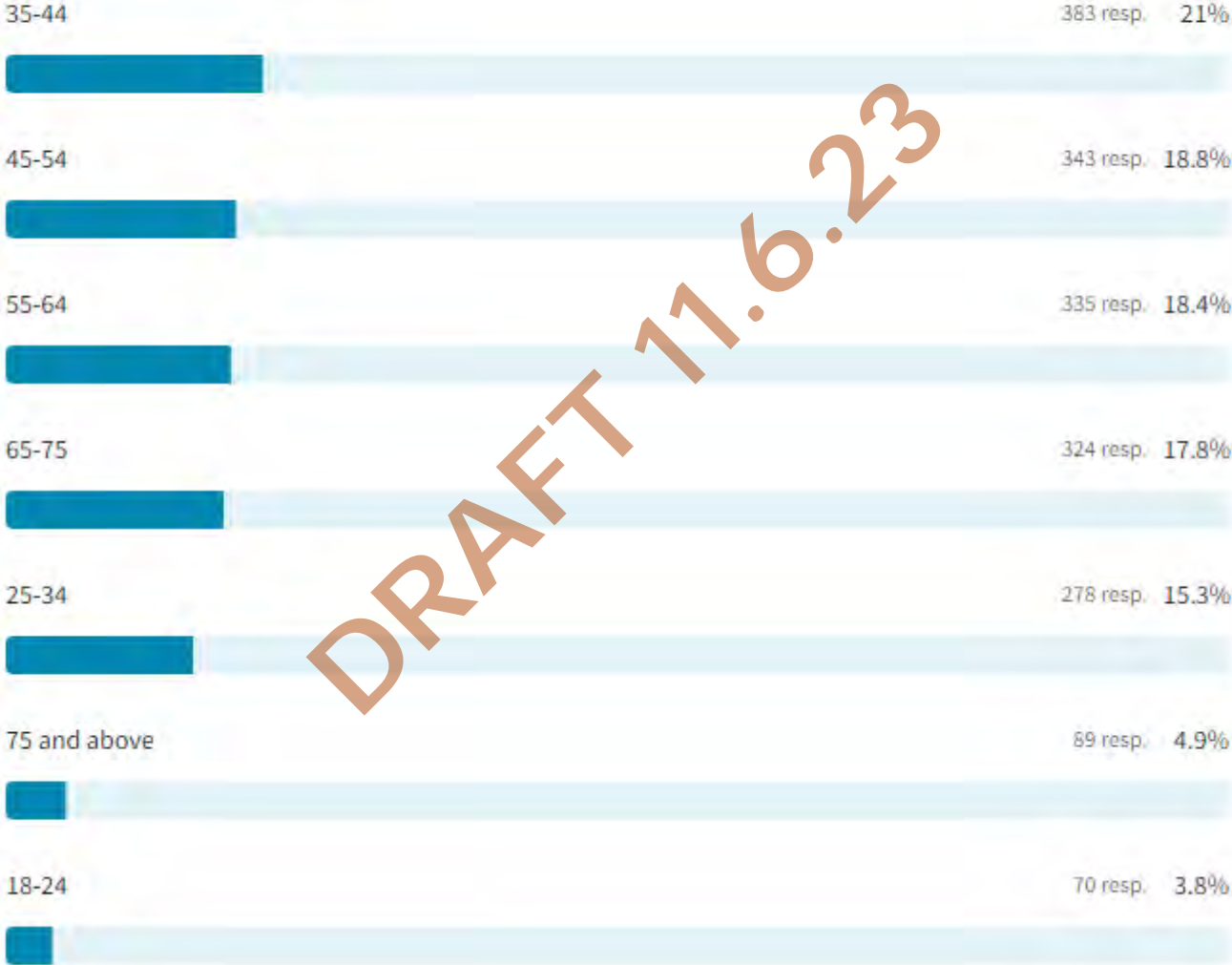
1836 out of 1836 answered



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What is your age category?

1822 out of 1836 answered



Stakeholder / Focus Group Sessions

6 sessions over 2 weeks with 60+ attendance!

Key Takeaways

Stakeholder / Focus Groups

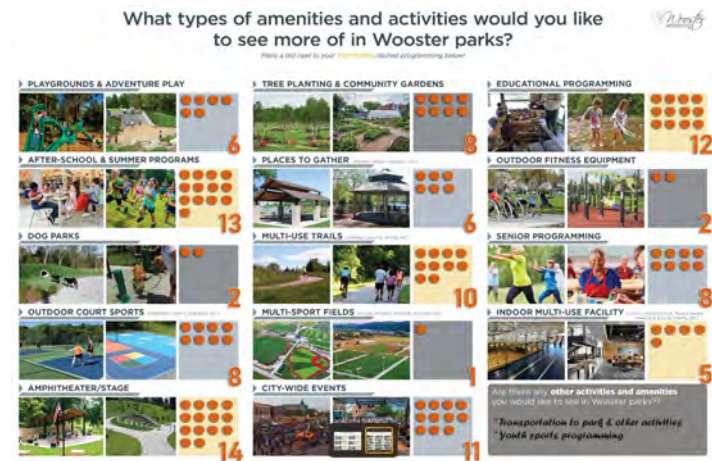
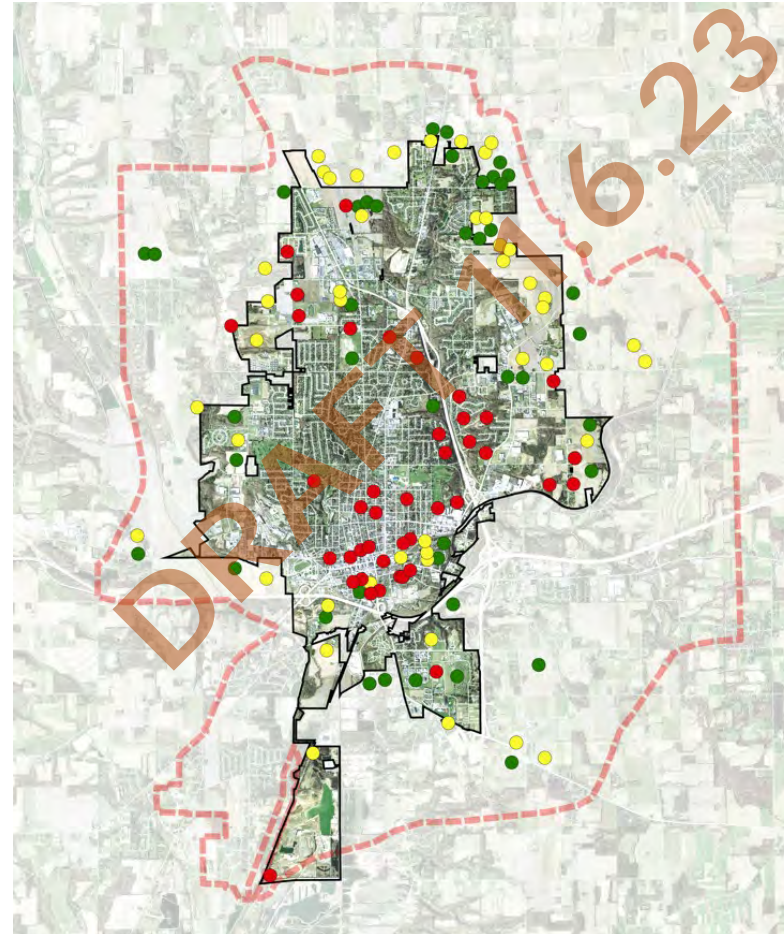
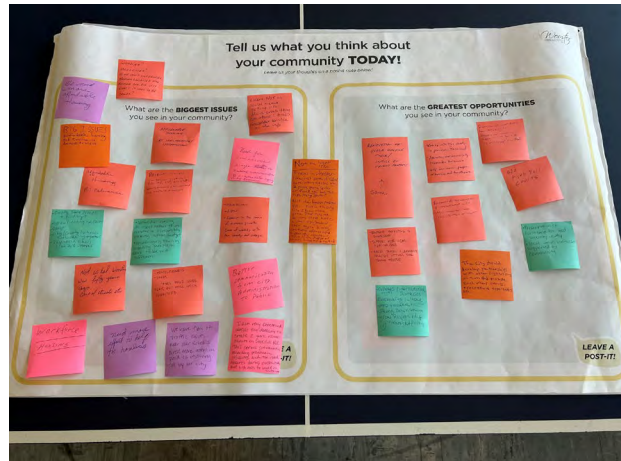
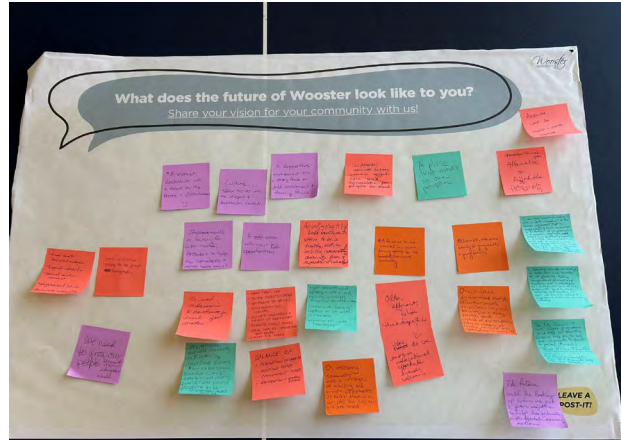
- Stakeholders desire **balanced growth** — keeping workforce and families in Wooster
- There is a desire to create more **affordable housing**
- A desire to support the homeless and underhoused with **mental health and other support services**
- Stakeholders want to continue to reinvent and **revitalize downtown**
- They want to continue streetscaping to create a more **pedestrian-friendly community**
- They want to create more **green spaces** and areas for outdoor performances

Two Open Houses

Day session at Community Center; Evening session at Spoon
Market – 50+ attendees!

Phase One - Open House

Results



Open House

Results

- Respondents overwhelmingly cited the **need for new infill development** in existing neighborhoods, especially **in and around downtown**.
- Generally, the **preferred housing types in the exercise were denser infill development**
- **Educational programming, amphitheater/stage for outdoor events, after school and summer programs for youth, and citywide events** were the most desired parks and recreation offerings.

Community Engagement Summary

A review of the robust community engagement shows that respondents support City action toward the following Key Takeaways:

Community Engagement Key Takeaways

- Respondents noted a lack of **adequate and diverse housing for all demographics**
- There is a desire for balanced growth retaining the **agricultural identity rooted deeply in the community**
- A desire for strategic growth over the long term, balancing **smart growth and new development with preservation**
- Residents would like to see development of more **intracity and intercity transit** options
- Residents desire additional **shopping and entertainment options** in the downtown area with **adequate public parking** to support them
- Working in **partnership with the county and higher education** institutions within Wooster

Community Engagement Key Takeaways (cont.)

- Respondents want to think about the ways the community can **work together to be self-sustaining when considering business growth and development.**
- Continuing to develop **community connectivity and walkability**
- **Developing local workforce** and creating housing and transit options to support it
- Residents would like **more space for parks and recreation which can accommodate expanded programming**
- They desire **more public gathering spaces, especially in Downtown Wooster**

Plan Framework

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How did we get here?

Understanding the context helps **build the plan...**

The plan then outlines **recommendations!**

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Recommendations by the numbers!

6 plan sections

10 goals statements

17 objectives

100 action items

Future Land Use













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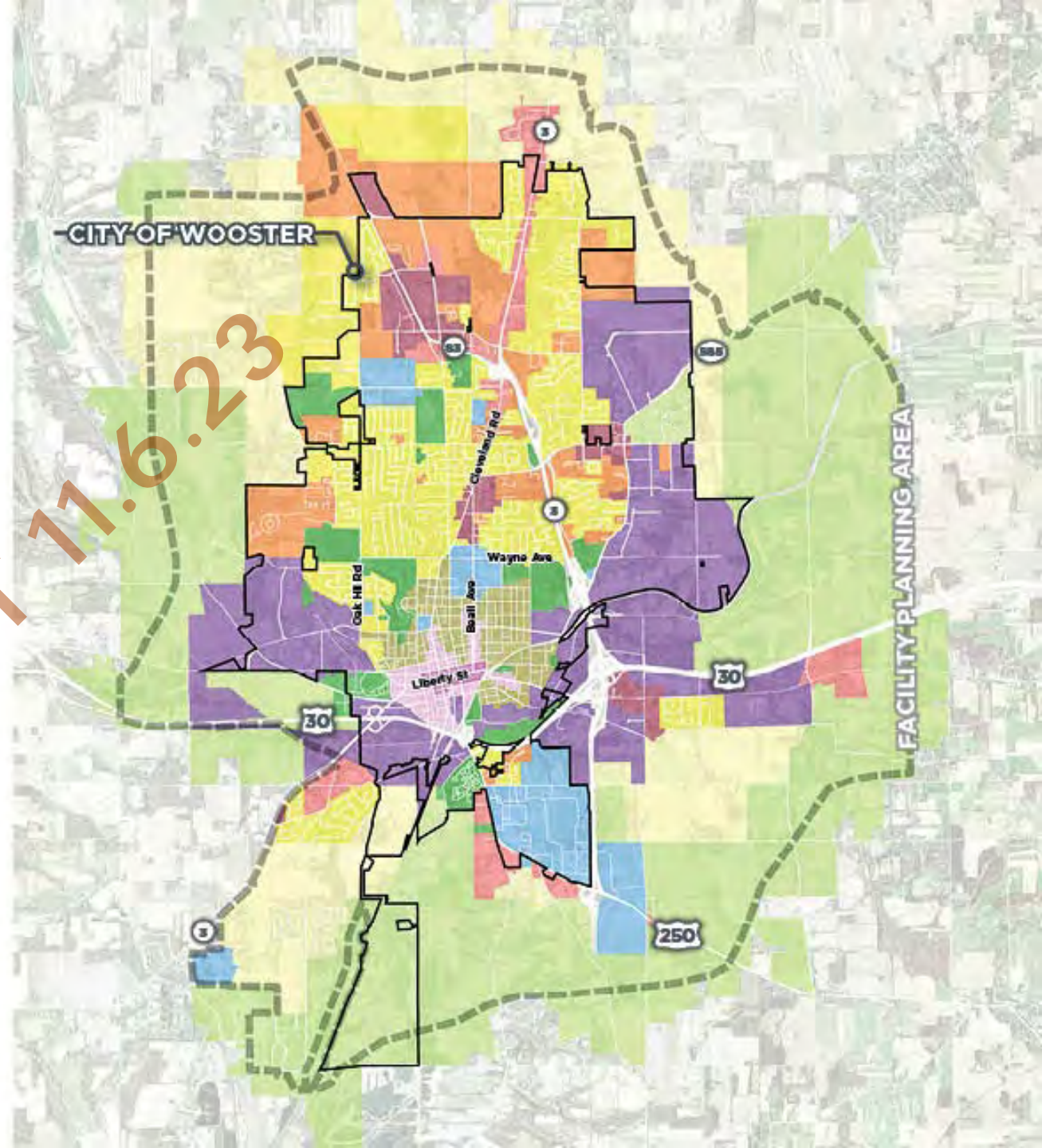
Future Land Use Map

- What is it?
 - **General guidance** in the density, character, and location of land uses within a community
- How does the city use it?
 - Helps guide City staff in **reviewing development applications**, ensuring the application is **in line with the overall vision for growth and/or redevelopment.**

FUTURE LAND USE- DRAFT

-  Parks & Open Space
-  Rural Cluster Development
-  Suburban Cluster Development
-  Suburban Residential
-  Urban Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Neighborhood Mixed Use
-  Downtown Mixed Use
-  Local Commercial
-  General Commercial
-  Education
-  Innovation

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Public Uses

- **Parks and Open Spaces**

- Areas intended to accommodate existing and planned parks and open spaces.

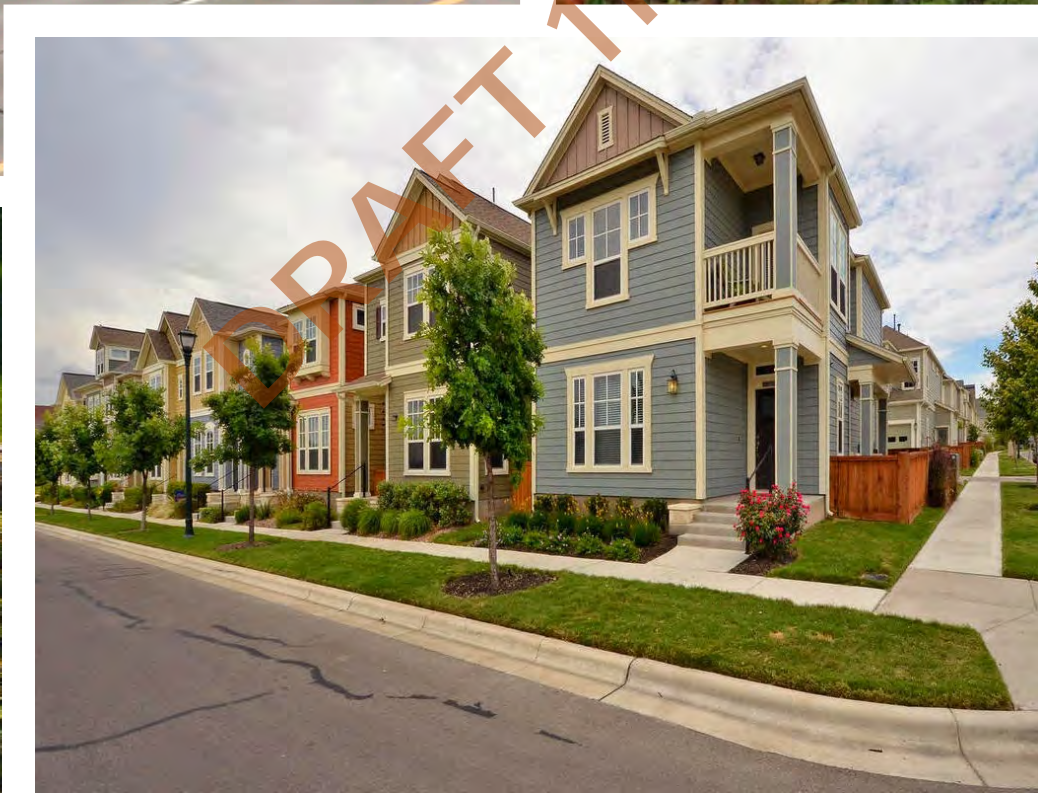
- **Institutional**

- Areas are intended to accommodate public and semi-public uses (government, city service departments, educational institutions)



Residential Uses

- **Rural Cluster Development**
 - Agricultural and rural single-family uses, clustered to reduce land consumption
- **Rural Cluster Development**
 - Single-family uses, clustered to reduce land consumption
- **Suburban Residential**
 - Maintaining existing character of established Wooster neighborhoods, with new development reflecting a similar character
- **Urban Residential**
 - Dense, centrally located neighborhoods with a range of housing options
- **Medium Density Residential**
 - Communities with a range of single-family and multi-family housing options



Mixed Use

- **Neighborhood Mixed-Use**

- Areas near downtown that promote a mixture of uses, intentional public spaces, and walkability through smaller-scale infill in appropriate areas

- **Downtown Mixed-Use**

- Maintaining the existing and historic fabric of Downtown Wooster with a focus on walkability, a mixture of uses, and quality public spaces



Commercial Uses

- **Local Commercial**

- Small-scale retail and office uses that complement and support nearby residential uses and local industries.

- **General Commercial**

- Medium to large-scale commercial uses that serve the regional community. This may include big-box retail, healthcare, entertainment, and large office uses.

- **Innovation**

- Large-scale industrial, manufacturing, logistics, research, and office users that demand proximity to local, regional, and national transportation networks.



Focus Areas

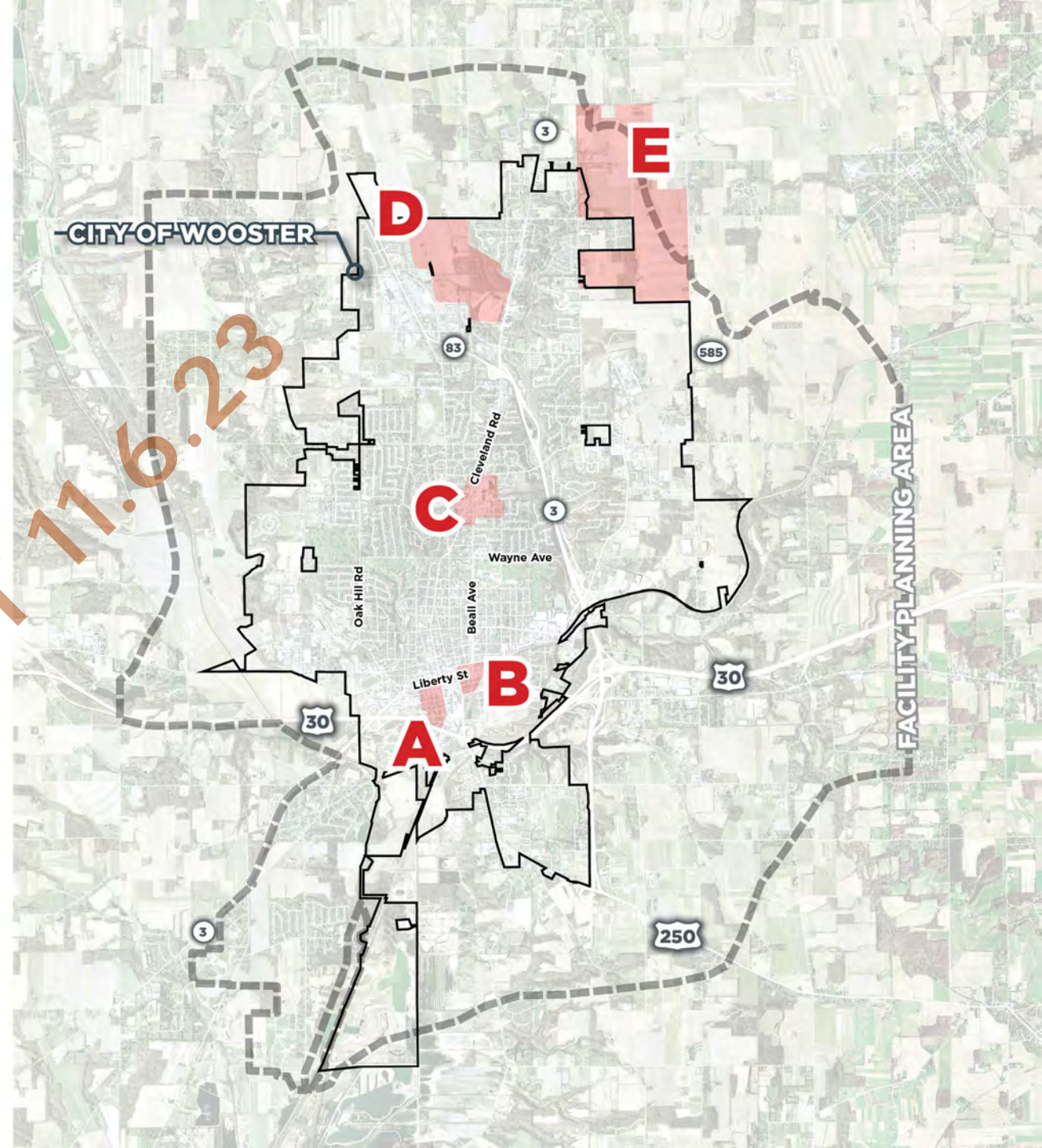
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Focus Areas

- A. The Arts District
- B. East Liberty District
- C. Hospital District
- D. Smithville Western Rd
- E. Geyers Chapel Rd

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Arts District

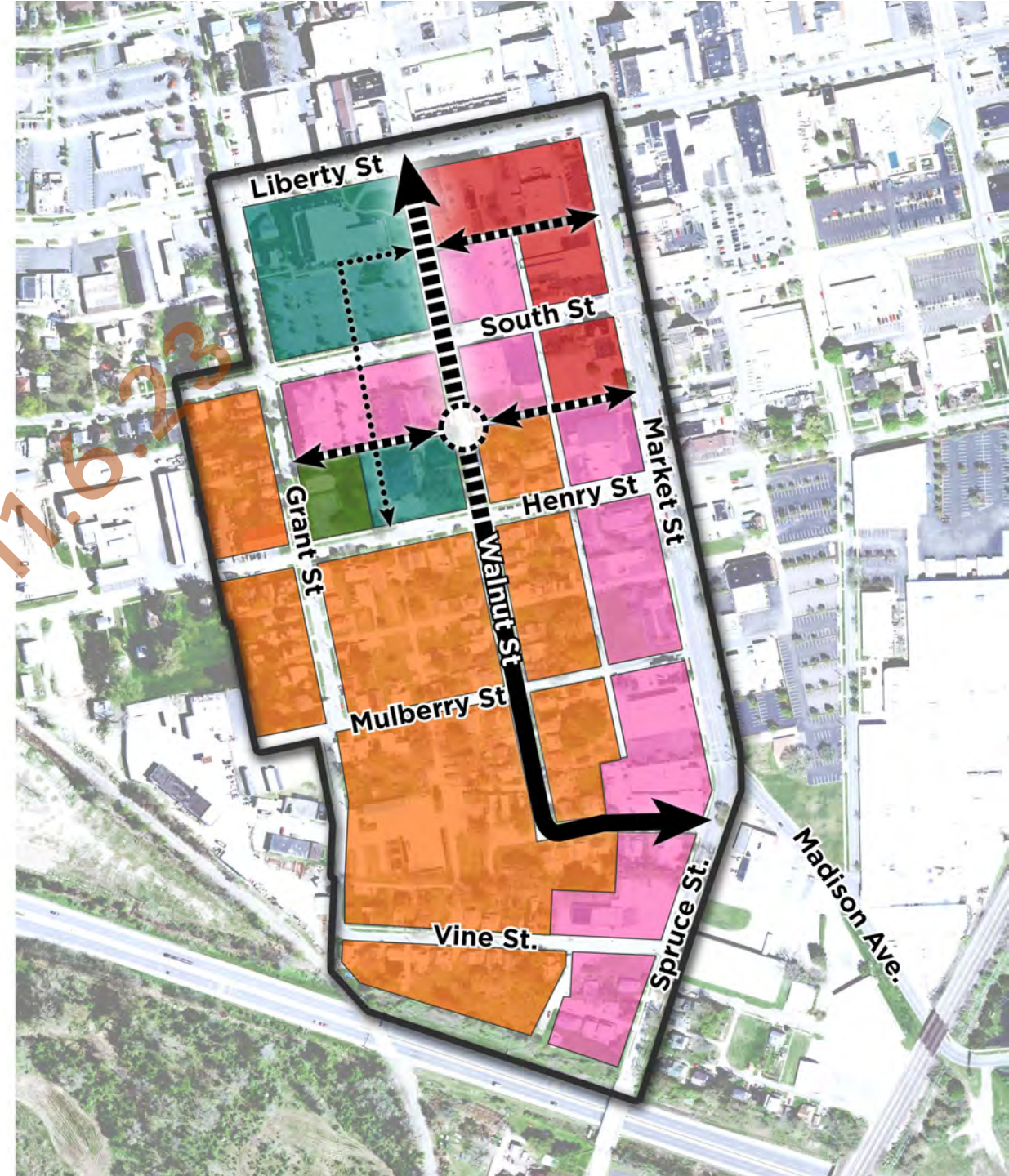
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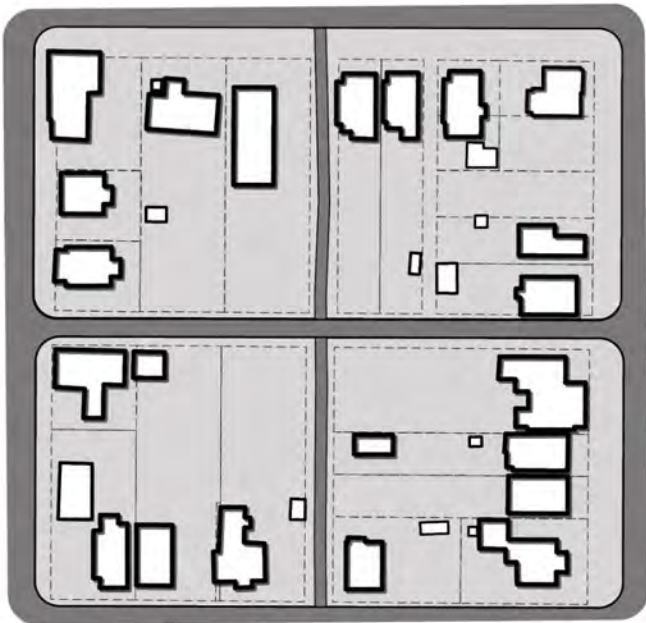
FOCUS AREA:

ARTS DISTRICT

-  INSTITUTIONAL
-  ART PARK / GREEN SPACE
-  3-4 STORY MIXED USE
-  1-2 STORY COMMERCIAL
-  MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
-  EXISTING STREETSCAPE
-  PROPOSED STREETSCAPE "LITE" ENHANCEMENTS
-  PROPOSED ALLEYWAY ENHANCEMENTS
-  PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY ENHANCEMENTS
-  ARTISTIC PEDESTRIAN GATEWAY

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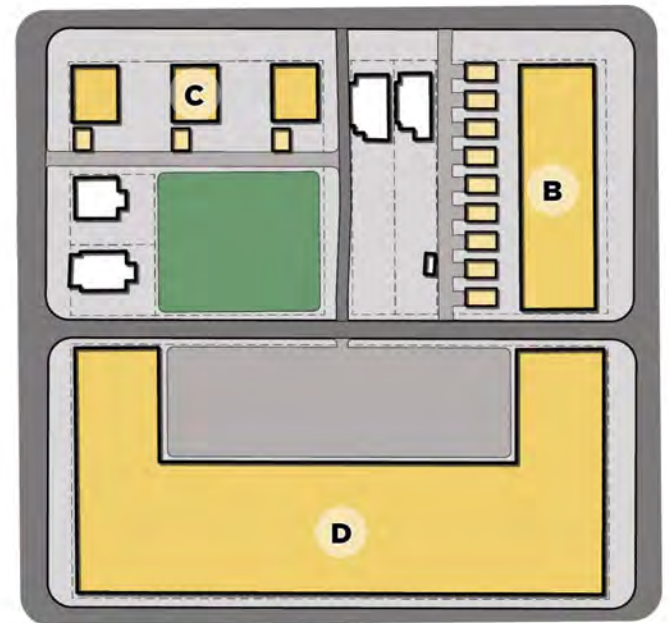




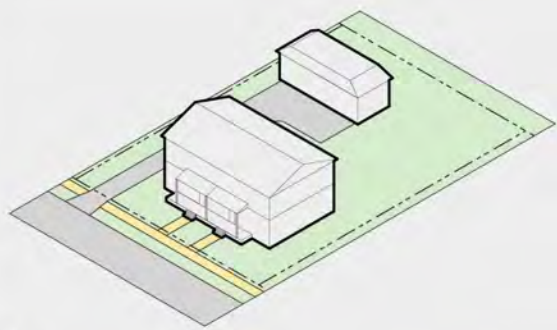
Sample Block
Existing Layout



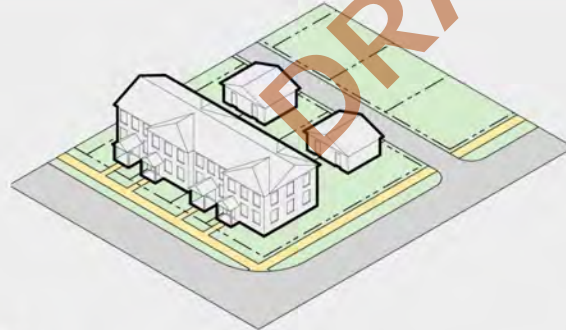
Sample Block
Incremental Infill



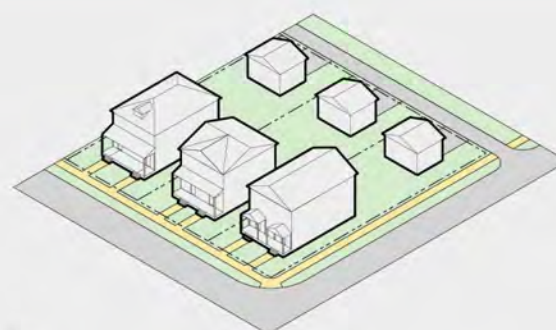
Sample Block
Intense Infill



A.
Four-Plex Building



B.
Townhome Buildings



C.
Duplex Building



D.
Multi-Unit Building



United Way

**Wayne Center
for the Arts**
(front lawn)

**Walnut & South
Intersection**

Ride On
(New Local
Roots Site)

S. Walnut St - Existing



Art Installations

Artistic Seating

Painted Corsswalk

**Lighting and Community
Brand Improvements**

Mural

**Events &
Placemaking**

S. Walnut St - Proposed



E Liberty District

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North St

Beall Ave

JAFB
Wooster
Brewery

CM

MU

MU

Liberty St

CM

MU

MU

MU

CM

Mariola
Italian

Bever St

TH

TH

Existing
Parking

FL

Beall Ave

South St

TH

TH

Minglewood
Distilling
Company

KEY

CM

2-3 Story
Commercial

MU

3-4 Story
Mixed Use

FL

Flats

TH

Townhomes



Mariola Italian

Liberty St

Alley Improvements

Public Parking

Greenspace / Plaza

South St

Gateway Feature

Beall Ave

Streetscape Improvements

Minglewood Distilling Company

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Public Parking

JAFB
Wooster
Brewery

Mariola
Italian

Liberty St

Alley Improvements

Bever St

Beall Ave

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Hospital District

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Ihrig Ave

Portage Rd

Elm Dr

Kurtz St

Bealle Ave

Cleveland Rd

Winter St

Existing Commercial

Cleveland Clinic Wooster

Potential Hospital Expansion

Wooster Community Hospital

Future Hospital Addition

KEY	
MU	2-3 Story Mixed Use
MOB	Medical Office Buildings
TH	Townhomes
MF	Multifamily

MU

MU

TH

MU

MU

MF

MU

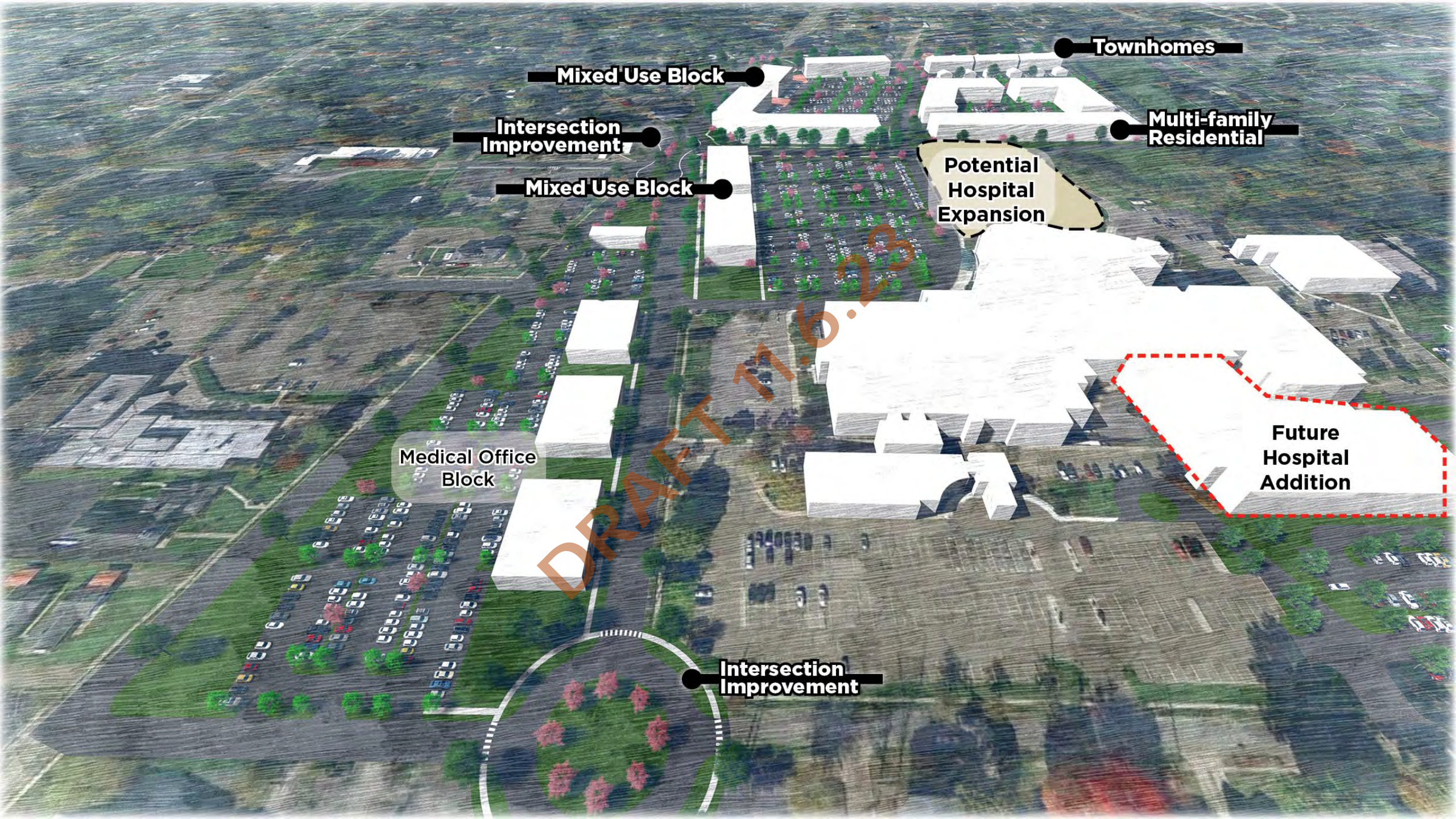
MU

MOB

MOB

MOB

H



Townhomes

Mixed Use Block

Multi-family Residential

Intersection Improvement

Potential Hospital Expansion

Mixed Use Block

Future Hospital Addition

Medical Office Block

Intersection Improvement

Multi-family Residential

Potential Hospital Expansion

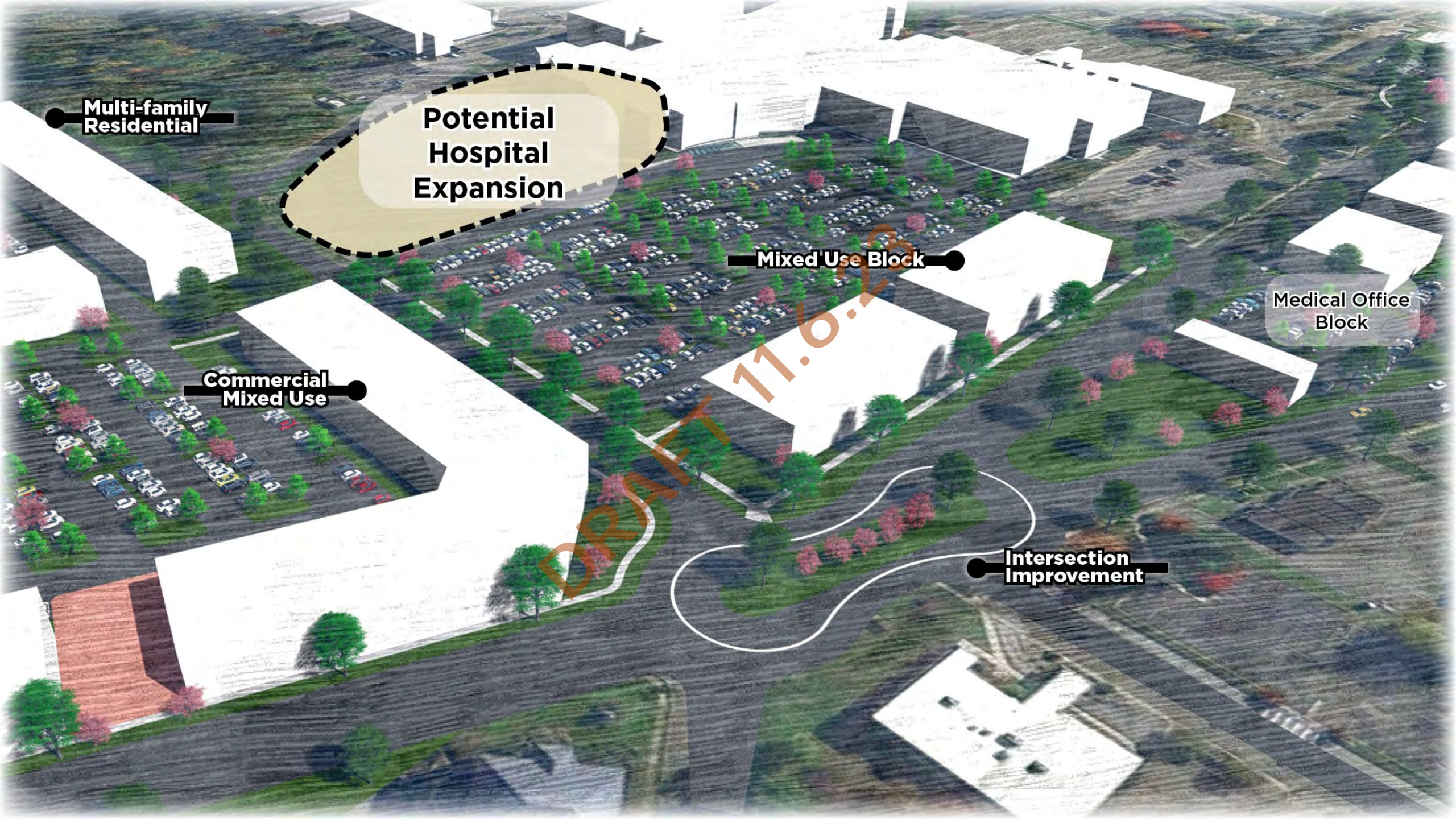
Mixed Use Block

Medical Office Block

Commercial Mixed Use

Intersection Improvement

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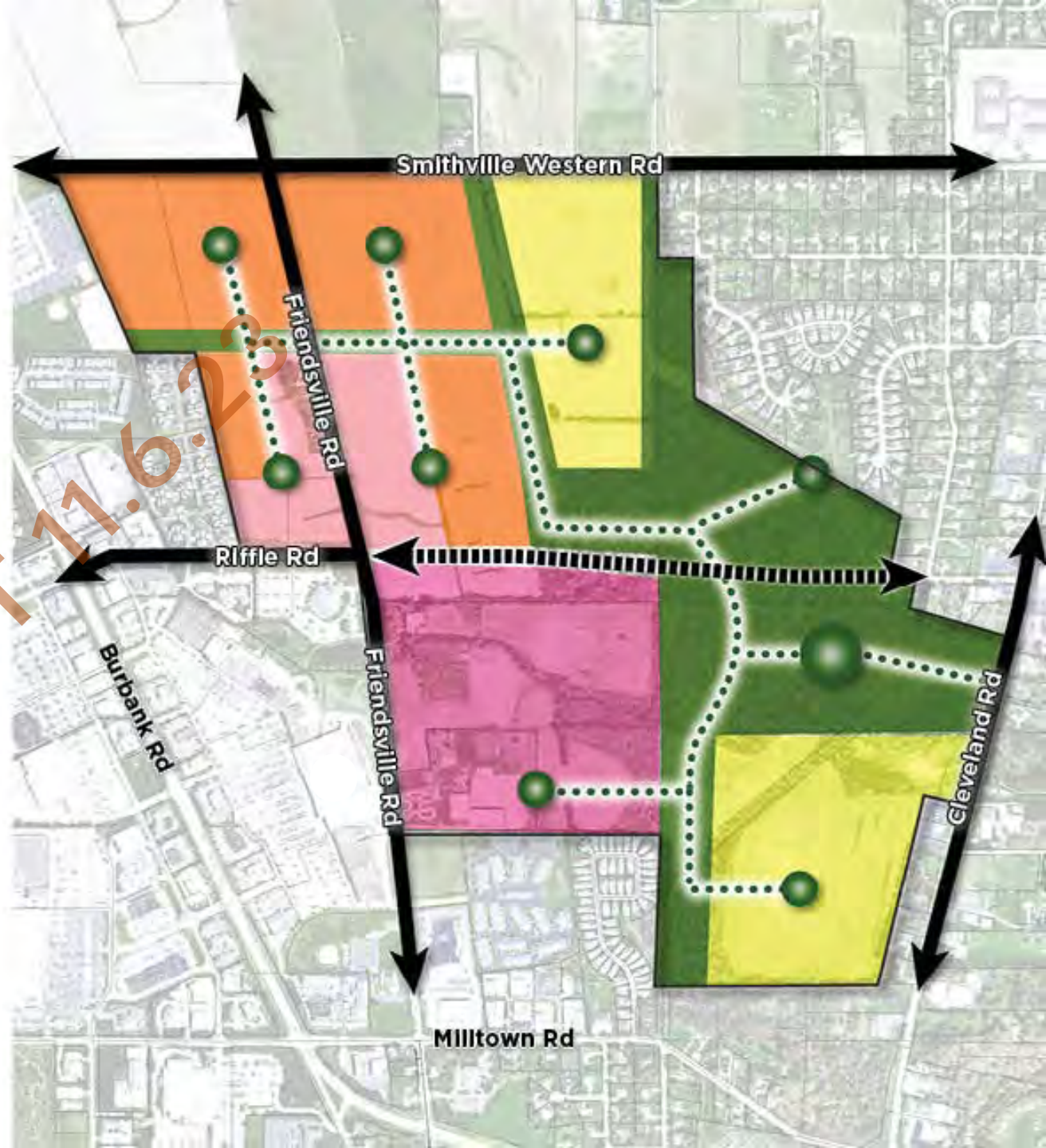
Smithville Western Rd District

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FOCUS AREA:

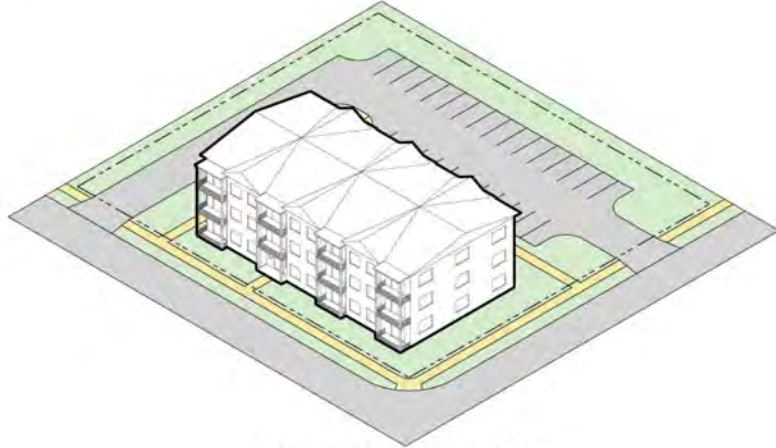
SMITHVILLE WESTERN

-  SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT
-  MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
-  1-2 STORY LOCAL COMMERCIAL
-  2-3 STORY MIXED USE
-  PRESERVED GREENSPACE
-  EXISTING ROADWAY
-  PROPOSED ROADWAY
-  POTENTIAL GREENWAY
-  POTENTIAL GREENSPACE NODES

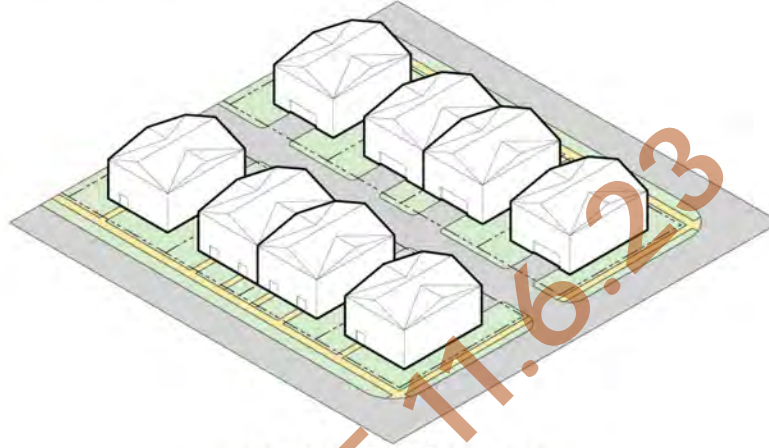


FOCUS AREA:

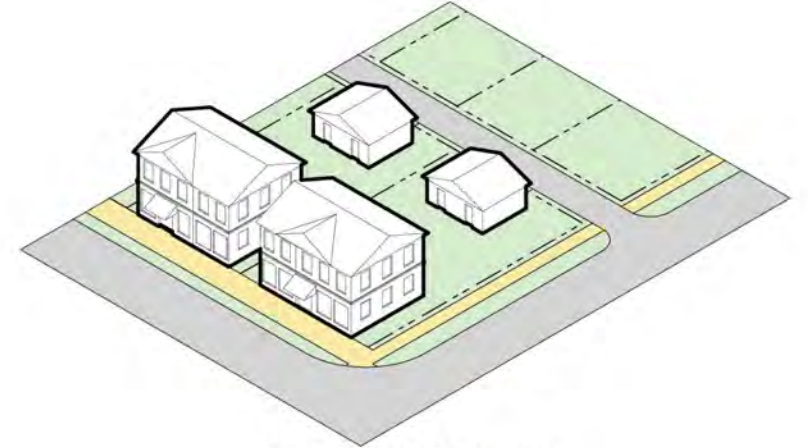
SMITHVILLE WESTERN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TYPES



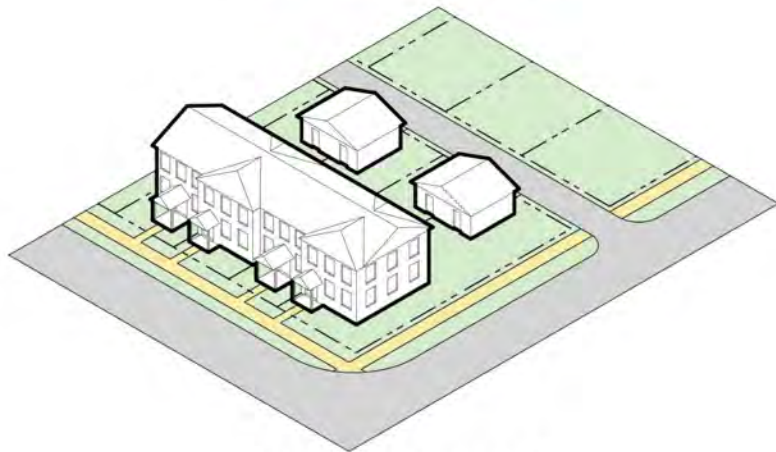
Sample Development
Apartments



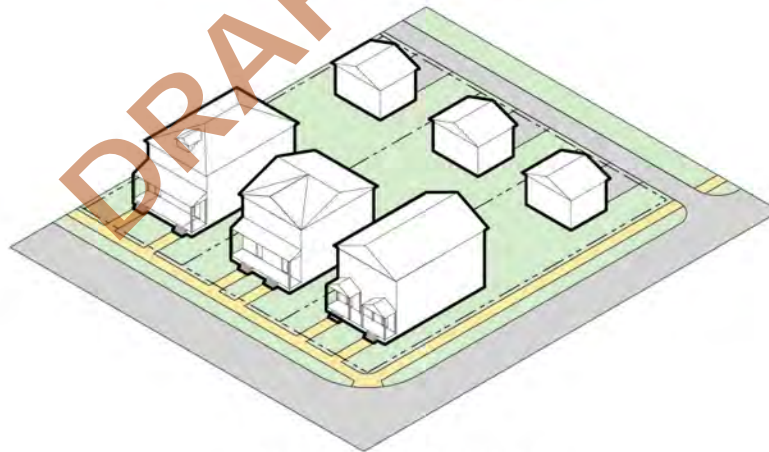
Sample Development
Cluster Homes



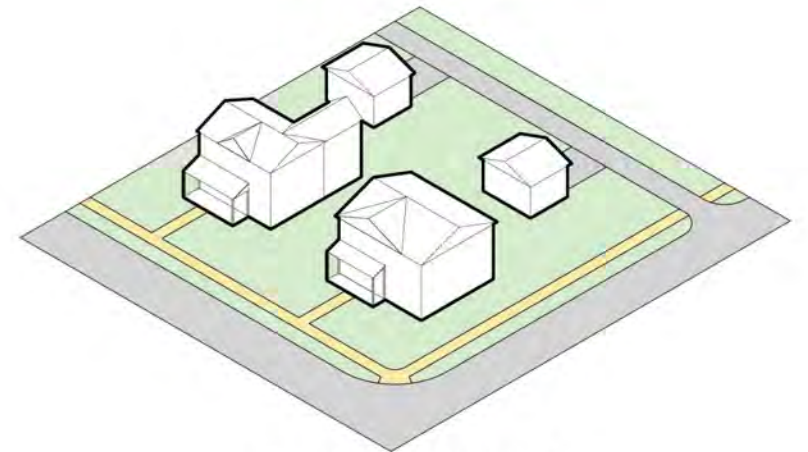
Sample Development
Live-Work



Sample Development
Townhomes



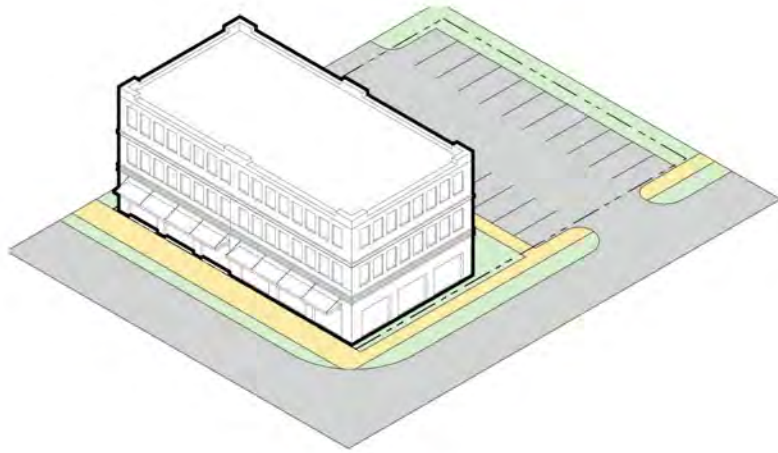
Sample Development
Duplex



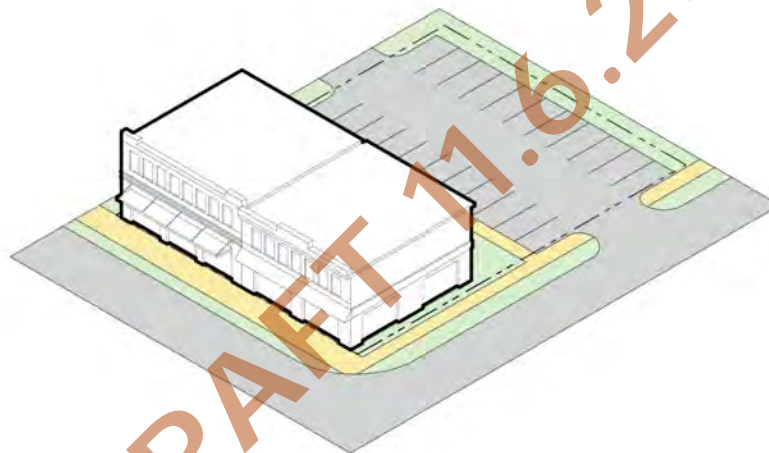
Sample Development
Single-Family *(alley loaded)*

FOCUS AREA:

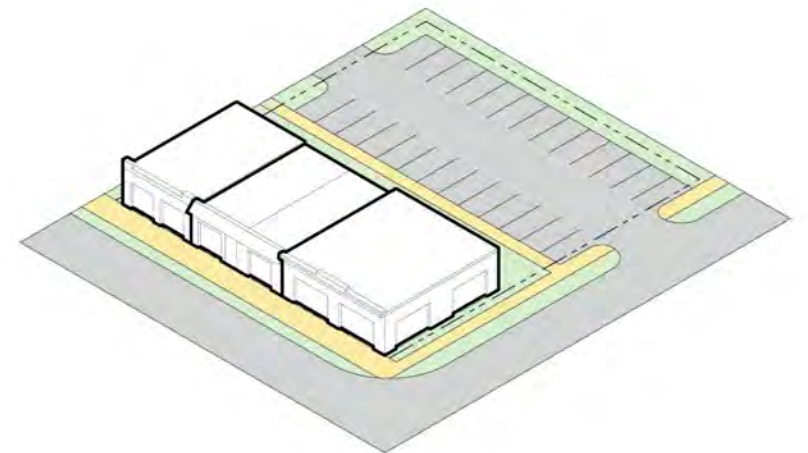
SMITHVILLE WESTERN MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TYPES



Sample Development
Medium Mixed-Use



Sample Development
Medium Flex



Sample Development
Small Flex

Geyers Chapel Rd District

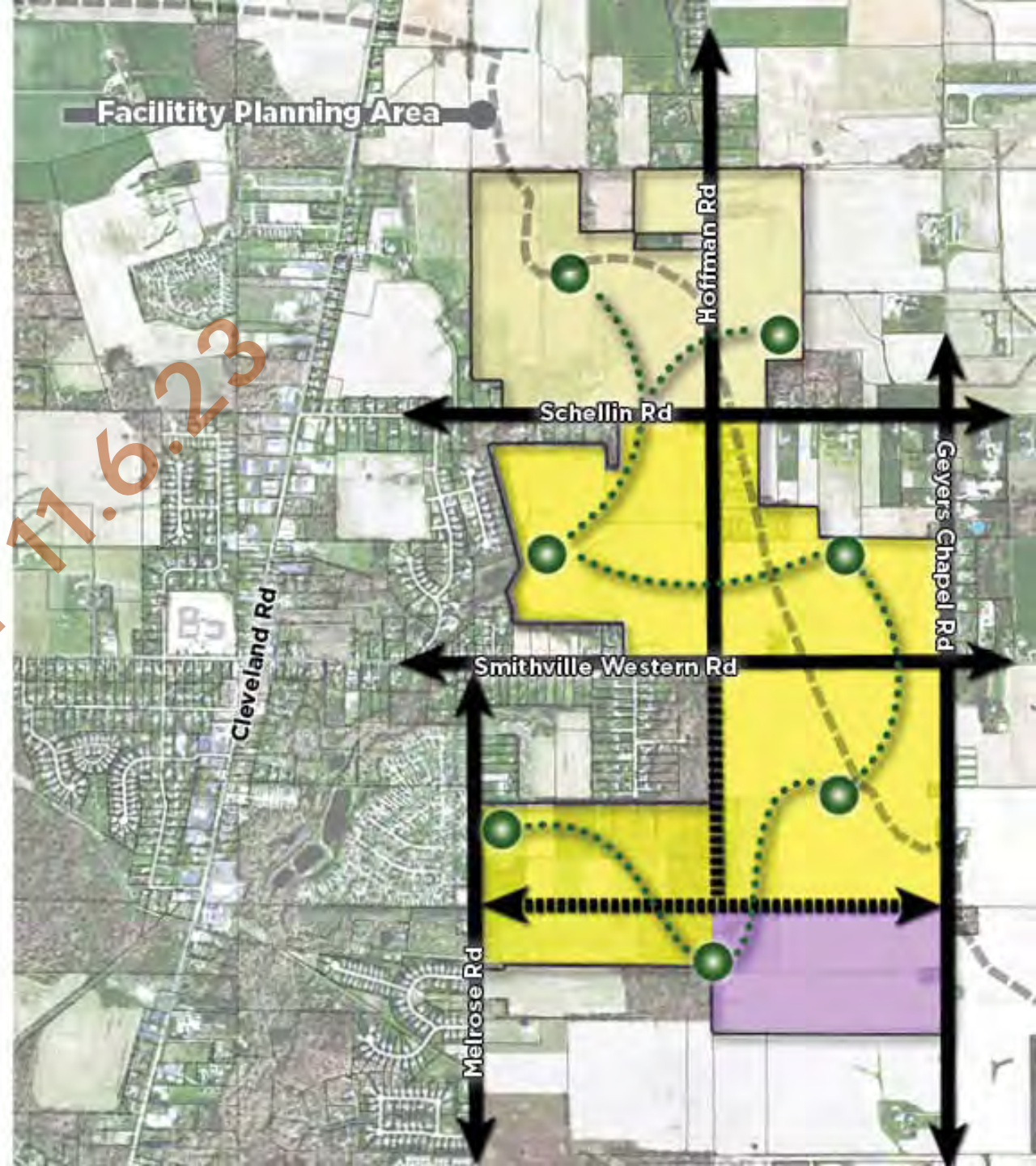
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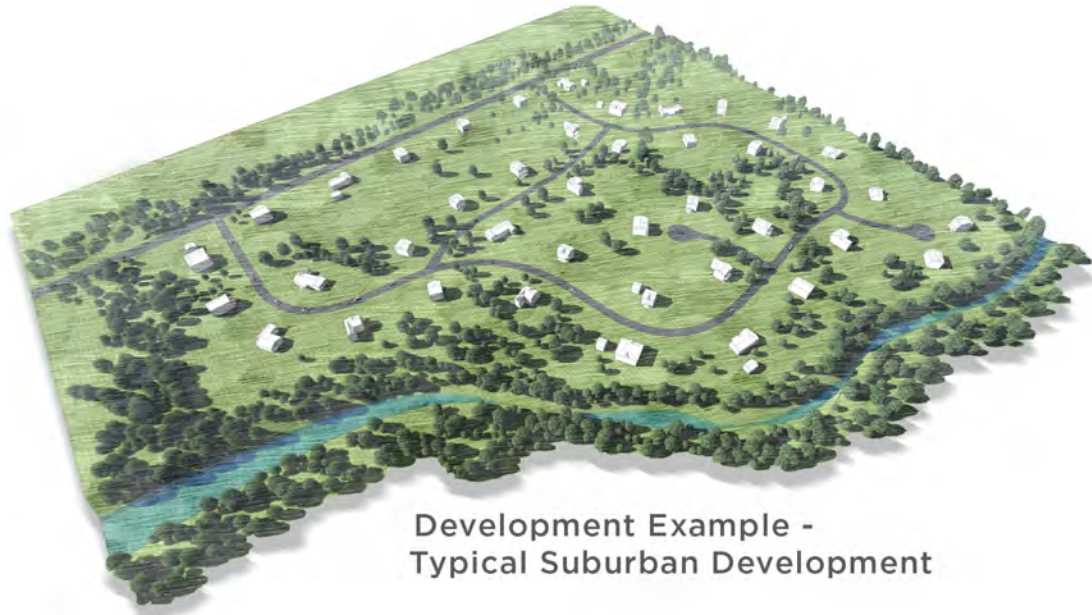
FOCUS AREA:

GEYERS CHAPEL RD

-  SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT
-  SUBURBAN CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT
-  INNOVATION
-  EXISTING ROADWAY
-  PROPOSED ROADWAY
-  POTENTIAL GREENWAY
-  POTENTIAL GREENSPACE NODES

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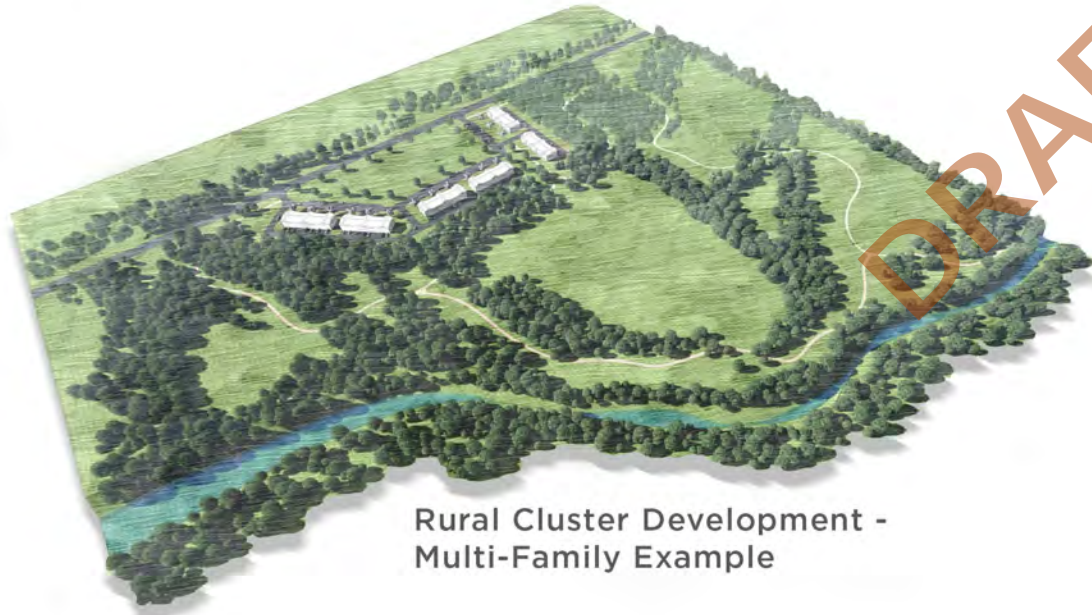




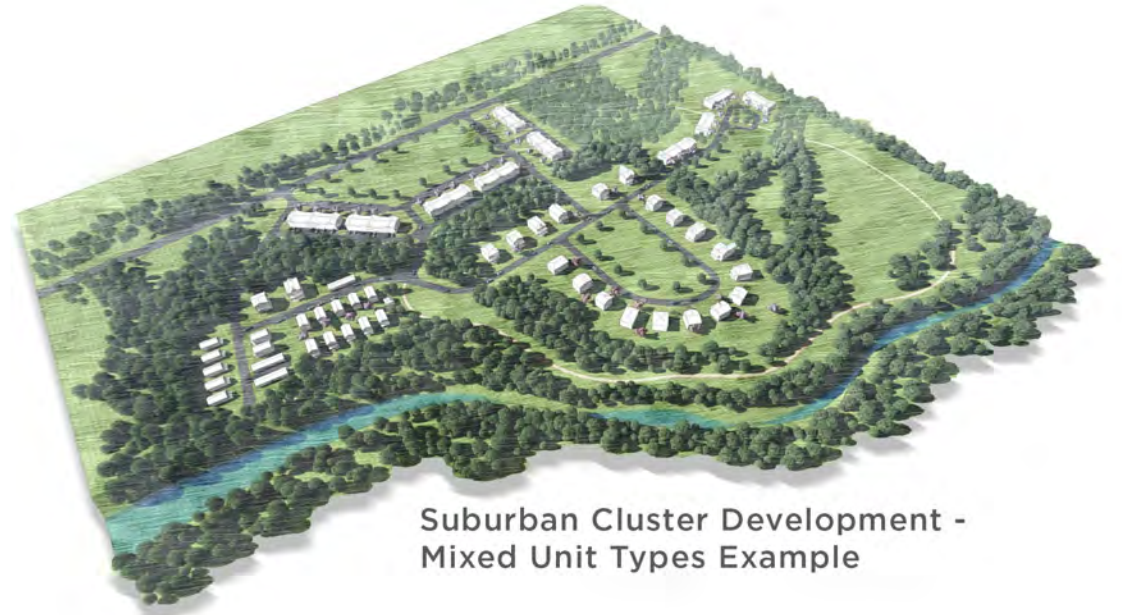
Development Example -
Typical Suburban Development



Rural Cluster Development -
Single-Family Example



Rural Cluster Development -
Multi-Family Example



Suburban Cluster Development -
Mixed Unit Types Example

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Open House Activities

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Interact with us at the Open House!

- Visit the interactive stations to provide feedback on...
 - Future Land Use designations
 - Focus Area concepts
 - Community Center – what's next?
 - Non-motorized Network
 - Implementation Plan

Thank you for your participation!

Next Steps!

- Virtual Open House
 - View this presentation online and provide us comments at your convenience
 - www.woostercomprehensiveplan2023.com
- Final steering committee review
- Plan adoption (Dec – Feb)

Thank you for your participation!

Open House #3

Open House #3 will take place on **Monday, November 6, 2023, from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.** at Wooster City Council Chambers. Come and hear the planning team unveil the plan recommendations and give us your feedback!

Virtual Public Engagement

Stay tuned for online virtual public engagement activities **which will open here on November 9**, inviting you to participate in a final opportunity to give feedback!



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Share your vision with us, and together, we'll
create great places for people.