Legislative Session Minutes

April 28, 2025

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mount Vernon City Council
Committee Meeting Schedule
April 28, 2025

6:30-6:45 p.m.	Police Department hourly employees	Employee & Community Relations Woods
6:45-6:54 p.m.	Knox County Comprehensive Plan	Land Use & Development Keener
6:55-7:15 p.m.	Public hearing: Rezone of 0 South Main	Land Use & Development Keener

- 04-28-25 Committee Meeting Schedule

MEETING WILL RECESS UNTIL 7:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Attendee	Title	Status
Janis Seavolt	At Large	Present
Tammy Woods	Third Ward	Present
Amber Keener	At Large	Present
Mel Severns	Councilman	Present
John Ruckman	Second Ward	Present
LeNan Hager	Fourth Ward	Present
Bruce Hawkins	President	Present
James Mahan	First Ward	Excused

Keener made a motion to excuse Mahan, with a second by Seavolt. Motion approved by a voice vote of 6-0.

INVOCATION

The Rev. Susan Stevens, Gambier Epworth Methodist Church and Ebenezer Community Church, performed the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All recited in unison.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- City Council - Legislative Session - Apr 14, 2025 7:30 PM

Seavolt made a motion to accept the minutes of the Legislative Session of April 14, 2025, with a second by Woods. Motion passed by a voice vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Janis Seavolt, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	Mahan

RECEIVE PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

An email from Samantha Scoles, 12 Parrott St., in opposition to Ordinance No. 2025-09, was entered into the record.

- 04-28-25 Scoles Letter

RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council accepted without comment the minutes for the Land Use and Development Committee meeting of Feb. 24, 2025, and the two Streets and Public Buildings Committee meetings, two Land Use and Development Committee meetings and the Fire, Police and Civil Defense Committee meeting of April 14, 2025.

- 02-24-25 Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes
- 04-14-25A Streets and Public Buildings Committee Meeting Minutes
- 04-14-25 Fire, Police and Civil Defense Committee Meeting Minutes
- 04-14-25B Streets and Public Buildings Committee Meeting Minutes
- 04-14-25A Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes
- 04-14-25B Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes

LIQUOR CONTROL LICENSE

To Englefield Inc., 4 Newark Road, Mount Vernon

- 04-28-25 Liquor Permit

Council did not request a hearing on a new liquor license permit for Englefield Inc., 4 Newark Road.

PROCLAMATION

None.

PERSONS SPEAKING ON MATTERS OF CITY CONCERN

Kathy Tate, of Howard, suggested the City needs a better plan for downtown parking, that the sidewalk at South Gay and East Vine streets is in disrepair and should be fixed by the City, that there's not enough public parking in that vicinity, suggested that the traffic signal timing on South Main Street is off on the weekends, and advised the City to ask residents and businesses if they think more parking is needed downtown.

RESOLUTIONS FOR THIRD READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-42

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO TRANSFER FEE SIMPLE TITLE TO ONE OR MORE PARCELS OF COMMERCIAL REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO THE KNOX COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION FOR PURPOSES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Streets and Public Buildings: Severns, Ruckman

Severns made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-42, with a second by Ruckman. Safety-Service Director Tanner Salyers detailed four scenarios concerning what could happen to the property parcel mentioned in the legislation, depending on whether Council votes to transfer the parcel to the Knox County Land Bank or votes not to, adding that the property was likely to remain a parking lot either way. The high cost estimate for upgrading the property is $350,000, which Engineer Brian Ball characterized as a long-term fix. Salyers added that no one has come forth expressing interest to buy the property. Keener made a motion to amend the legislation by adding the sentence, "The property is transferred as is" at the end of Section 1. Motion to amend seconded by Woods, and passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Severns made a motion to adopt as amended, with a second by Ruckman. Motion passed by a roll-call vote of 5-1, with Seavolt voting no.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED AS AMENDED [5 TO 1]**
MOVER:	Mel Severns, Councilman
SECONDER:	John Ruckman, Second Ward
AYES:	Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
NAYS:	Seavolt
EXCUSED:	Mahan

RESOLUTIONS FOR SECOND READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-49

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2025 KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS A GUIDE FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON.

Land Use and Development: Keener, Mahan

Keener made a motion to suspend the rule requiring three separate readings of Resolution No. 2025-49, with a second by Woods. Motion to suspend passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Keener made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-49, with a second by Woods. Keener thanked the Knox County Area Development Foundation for its work on the Knox County Comprehensive Plan. Motion to adopt passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Amber Keener, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	Mahan

RESOLUTIONS FOR FIRST READING

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-50

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH MEDICAL MUTUAL FOR THE PROVISION OF 2025 - 2026 MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Employee and Community Rel.: Woods, Keener

Resolution No. 2025-50 was given a first reading. Woods asked for a 10-minute meeting of the Employee and Community Relations Committee on the legislation for May 12, 2025.

RESULT:	**FIRST READING**	**Next: 5/12/2025 7:30 PM**

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-51

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.

Finance and Budget: Seavolt, Woods

Seavolt made a motion to suspend the rule requiring three separate readings of Resolution No. 2025-51, with a second by Woods. Motion to suspend passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Seavolt made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-51, with a second by Woods. Auditor Dan Brinkman, Safety-Service Director Tanner Salyers and Engineer Brian Ball commented on the legislation as it pertained to the monies of the Community Development Block Grant Small Cities Grant. Motion to adopt passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Janis Seavolt, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	Mahan

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-52

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ACCEPT THE DONATION OF A CARVED PIRATE AND PALM TREE STATUE FROM THE KOKOSING VALLEY ROTARY CLUB; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Parks and Recreation: Hager, Severns

Hager made a motion to suspend the rule requiring three separate readings of Resolution No. 2025-52, with a second by Severns. Motion to suspend passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Hager made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-52, with a second by Severns. Hager thanked the Kokosing Valley Rotary Club for donating the carved pirate and palm tree statue to the City for the Riverside Park Splash Pad. Engineer Brian Ball added that the carving, from a tree in Riverside Park, was done by Dave Crego, and that it will be maintained by the Rotary Club. Motion to adopt passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	LeNan Hager, Fourth Ward
SECONDER:	Mel Severns, Councilman
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	Mahan

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-09

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF PARCELS #66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000 AND #66-05629.000 FROM R-1A - CORE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, TO R-3 - ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.

Land Use and Development: Keener, Mahan

Keener made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-09, with a second by Woods. Motion passed by a roll-call vote of 4-3, with Keener, Seavolt and Woods voting no, and Hawkins voting yes to break the tie.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Amber Keener, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	Mahan

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-10

AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE NUMBER OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Employee and Community Rel.: Woods, Keener

Ordinance No. 2025-10 was given a second reading.

RESULT:	**SECOND READING**	**Next: 5/12/2025 7:30 PM**

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-11

AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE, ADOPT AND ENACT THE JANUARY 2005 REPLACEMENT PAGES TO THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES; TO REPEAL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; TO PUBLISH THE ENACTMENT OF NEW MATTER; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Land Use and Development: Keener, Mahan

Ordinance No. 2025-11 was given a first reading.

RESULT:	**FIRST READING**	**Next: 5/12/2025 7:30 PM**

REMARKS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Safety-Service Tanner Salyers congratulated area wrestler Alex Taylor for his accomplishments at the U.S. Open Wrestling Championships in Las Vegas. He also noted that the first Yard Sale Trail was a success, and added that the annual Spring Cleanup will be on May 3.

REMARKS FROM COUNCIL

Severns congratulated the City on receiving $5.6 million from the State for the re-routing of State Route 13, and encouraged voters to vote for State Issue 2 in the May 6 primary election. Woods noted that Council would be voting on Ordinance No. 2025-10 at the next Council meeting on May 12, 2025.

ADJOURN AT THE CALL OF THE PRESIDENT

Seavolt made a motion to adjourn, with a second by Keener. Meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

_____ _____

Bruce E. Hawkins, President of Council Todd Hill, Clerk of Council

CD on file/th

PRESS RELEASE

City Hall
40 Public Square
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Todd Hill, Clerk of Council
740-393-9517 Fax: 740-397-6595

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 23, 2025

Mount Vernon City Council
Committee Meeting Schedule
April 28, 2025

6:30-6:45 p.m.	Police Department hourly employees	Employee & Community Relations Woods
6:45-6:55 p.m.	Knox County Comprehensive Plan	Land Use & Development Keener
6:55-7:15 p.m.	Public hearing: Rezoning of 0 South Main St.	Land Use & Development Keener

The above listed meeting will be held to discuss the above items; but will not be limited to those listed.
Mount Vernon News - WMVO - WNZR – City Hall Bulletin Board

7.1

Todd Hill <clerkofcouncil@mountvernonohio.org>

Tonight's public hearing on rezoning

1 message

Samantha Scoles <mtvsamy43050@gmail.com> Mon, Apr 28, 2025 at 12:12 PM
To: Tanya Newell <clerkofcouncil@mountvernonohio.org>

Mr. Hill,
I tried to send this earlier to the email found in the city directly (thill) but it was not deliverable - you may want to look into that.

Please put this on the record for tonight's meeting:

Mr. Hill,
Please include the following on the record for tonight's public hearing on rezoning parcels on South Main Street:

Mount Vernon City Council,

I apologize for the last minute email, but I am traveling today and thought I would make it back in time for tonight's meeting.

There are a few points I'd like you to consider before casting your vote:

•Through two different zoning requests with Municipal Planning Commission, the property owner has failed to provide the city with an actual plan for what he wants to do with the property. While he did provide several options for what buildings could look like, he has yet to determine what his plans are. In fact, he confirmed he doesn't even know if the building of any structures will happen because of the cost of materials. If he truly intends to build housing, he would have a plan for what he wants to build, cost analysis to determine rental fees and ultimately when his investment would break even. He does not have these facts and figures.

•If you watched the meeting where the vote was taken, the request did not appear to have support — even from Mayor Starr who had been in favor of the change — because of lack of true plans. The temperature in room changed when it was asked whether or not the parcels fit the zoning change. Council, I request that you do not separate the two issues — do the parcels fit the new zoning request and is there a plan in

Communication: 04-28-25 Scoles Letter (Receive Petitions and Communications)

place for use of the new zoning code are not mutually exclusive issues when you have the power to change the culture of a neighborhood. By neighborhood, I don't mean every property within a quarter or half mile away — I mean the houses that are next door, neighbors that drive by and wave every day, neighbors that can see the property from theirs, neighbors that talk to each out when we are doing yard work or putting out the trash.

•Councilman Severns did reference the fact that the new zoning codes do not require actual plans for situations like this and that it appeared to be an oversight of the new codes. Please do not let our neighborhood pay the price for this flaw in the zoning codes that you approved.

•During the final Muni Planning meeting, it was discussed that ingress/egress could be made on both/or Parrott and Adamson streets. Please do not add additional traffic to this area. Unmonitored speed on Parrott Street is already out of control and makes turning into/out of our driveways hazardous any time of day or night. Adding additional vehicles — new residents, guests/visitors, delivery drivers, etc. — will only worsen the current situation.

Please do not vote to rezone the parcels on South Main Street without an actual plan from the property owner and the city.

Samantha Scoles

12 Parrott Street

Address not found

Your message wasn't delivered to **thill@mountvernonohio.org**

MountVernon

Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2025 – 5:40 p.m. to 6:01 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT:

Bruce Hawkins, President
James Mahan, First Ward
Tammy Woods, Third Ward
John Ruckman, Second Ward
Mike Miller, Fourth Ward
Janis Seavolt, At-Large
Amber Keener, At-Large
Mel Severns, At-Large

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Matthew Starr, Mayor
Tanner Salyers, Safety-Service Director
Rob Broeren, Law Director
Brian Ball, Engineer
Jeff Gottke, ADF
Sam Filkins, ADF

The committee went into executive session to discuss the purchase or sale of property. Keener made a motion to enter into executive session, with a second by Mahan. Motion approved by a roll-call vote of 6-0 at 5:40 p.m. Keener made a motion to exit executive session, with a second by Woods. Motion approved by a roll-call vote of 6-0 at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
Amber Keener, Chair
Planning and Zoning Committee
Mount Vernon City Council
AK/th

Communication: 02-24-25 Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes (Receive Committee Reports)

MountVernon

2024-2025

Streets and Public Buildings Committee Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2025 – 6:45 p.m. to 6:55 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT:	Bruce Hawkins, President James Mahan, First Ward Tammy Woods, Third Ward John Ruckman, Second Ward LeNan Hager, Fourth Ward Janis Seavolt, At-Large Mel Severns, At-Large
ABSENT:	Amber Keener, At-Large
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Matthew Starr, Mayor Tanner Salyers, Safety-Service Director Rob Broeren, Law Director Brian Ball, Engineer David Stuller, Treasurer Robert Morgan, Police Chief Aaron Rinehart, Utilities Director Todd Hill, Clerk Jeff Gottke, ADF Sam Filkins, ADF Cheryl Splain, Knox Pages

The committee discussed Resolution No. 2025-42, to transfer fee simple title to one or more parcels of commercial real property owned by the City to the Knox County Land Reutilization Corporation for purposes of economic development. Safety-Service Director Tanner Salyers that of the two parcels, one is a parking lot adjacent to the former Mount Vernon News building, and that it would remain a parking lot after the transfer with mostly public spaces. Sam Filkins of the Knox County Area Development Foundation explained that the Land Bank would not be requesting bed tax funds for maintenance of the parcels. No further meetings were requested on the matter. Resolution No. 2025-42 was up for a second reading at Council's Legislative Session later in the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

Mel Severns, Chair
Streets and Public Buildings Committee
Mount Vernon City Council
MS/th

Communication: 04-14-25A Streets and Public Buildings Committee Meeting Minutes (Receive Committee Reports)

MountVernon

Fire, Police and Civil Defense Committee Meeting Minutes
Committee Meeting
April 14, 2025 – 6:35 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT:	Bruce Hawkins, President Tammy Woods, Third Ward James Mahan, First Ward John Ruckman, Second Ward Mike Miller, Fourth Ward Janis Seavolt, At-Large Mel Severns, At-Large
ABSENT:	Amber Keener, At-Large
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Matthew Starr, Mayor Tanner Salyers, Safety-Service Director Rob Broeren, Law Director Brian Ball, Engineer David Stuller, Treasurer Aaron Rinehart, Utilities Director Robert Morgan, Police Chief Todd Hill, Clerk Jeff Gottke, ADF Sam Filkins, ADF Cheryl Splain, Knox Pages

The committee discussed Resolution No. 2026-41, to prepare and submit an application for a USDA Rural Development grant for the construction of the new Police Department building at 71 Sychar Road. Engineer Brian Ball discussed the legislation, and noted that the City will be using more low-interest loans and fewer grants on this project, in coordination with other building projects, and will come back to Council with a cost estimate for the Police building. Because the USDA grants are not paid out until project completion, interim financing would be necessary. No further meetings on the matter were requested. Resolution No. 2026-41 was up for a second reading at Council's Legislative Session later in the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

James Mahan, Chair
Fire, Police, Civil Defense Committee,
Mount Vernon City Council

JM/th

MountVernon

2024-2025

Streets and Public Buildings Committee Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2025 – 6:20 p.m. to 6:34 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT:	Bruce Hawkins, President James Mahan, First Ward Tammy Woods, Third Ward John Ruckman, Second Ward LeNan Hager, Fourth Ward Janis Seavolt, At-Large Mel Severns, At-Large
ABSENT:	Amber Keener, At-Large
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Matthew Starr, Mayor Tanner Salyers, Safety-Service Director Rob Broeren, Law Director Robert Morgan, Police Chief Jeff Gottke, ADF Sam Filkins, ADF

The committee went into executive session to discuss the purchase or sale of property. Severns made a motion to enter into executive session, with a second by Mahan. Motion approved by a roll-call vote of 6-0 at 6:20 p.m. Severns made a motion to exit executive session, with a second by Mahan. Motion approved by a roll-call vote of 6-0 at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

Mel Severns, Chair
Streets and Public Buildings Committee
Mount Vernon City Council
MS/th

Communication: 04-14-25B Streets and Public Buildings Committee Meeting Minutes (Receive Committee Reports)

MountVernon

Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2025 – 6:55 p.m. to 7:04 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT:	Bruce Hawkins, President James Mahan, First Ward Tammy Woods, Third Ward John Ruckman, Second Ward LeNan Hager, Fourth Ward Janis Seavolt, At-Large Mel Severns, At-Large
ABSENT:	Amber Keener, At-Large
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Matthew Starr, Mayor Tanner Salyers, Safety-Service Director Rob Broeren, Law Director Brian Ball, Engineer David Stuller, Treasurer Robert Morgan, Police Chief Aaron Rinehart, Utilities Director Todd Hill, Clerk Jeff Gottke, ADF Sam Filkins, ADF Cheryl Splain, Knox Pages

The committee discussed Resolution No. 2025-49, adopting the 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan as a guide for future development within the City. Jeff Gottke, president of the Knox County Area Development Foundation, explained that work on the plan began in November 2023, with 1,400 participants offering feedback since then. The City was an addition to the plan, which is currently being considered by the Knox County Commissioners for approval. Mahan requested a 10-minute committee meeting for April 28, 2025 on the legislation, which was up for a first reading at Council's Legislative Session later in the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

James Mahan, Ranking Chair
Planning and Zoning Committee
Mount Vernon City Council
AK/th

MountVernon

Land Use and Development Committee Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2025 – 7:04 p.m. to 7:05 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT:	Bruce Hawkins, President James Mahan, First Ward Tammy Woods, Third Ward John Ruckman, Second Ward LeNan Hager, Fourth Ward Janis Seavolt, At-Large Mel Severns, At-Large
ABSENT:	Amber Keener, At-Large
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Matthew Starr, Mayor Tanner Salyers, Safety-Service Director Rob Broeren, Law Director Brian Ball, Engineer David Stuller, Treasurer Robert Morgan, Police Chief Aaron Rinehart, Utilities Director Todd Hill, Clerk Jeff Gottke, ADF Sam Filkins, ADF Cheryl Splain, Knox Pages

The committee discussed Ordinance No. 2025-09, amending the zoning classification of parcels #66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000 and #66-05629.000 from R-1A – Core Residential District, to R-3 – Attached Residential District. Mahan detailed the legislation, and noted that there will be a public hearing on the legislation at 6:55 p.m. on April 28, 2025. Ordinance No. 2025-09 was up for a second reading at Council's Legislative Session later in the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

_____

James Mahan, Ranking Chair
Planning and Zoning Committee
Mount Vernon City Council
AK/th

NOTICE TO LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

OHIO DIVISION OF LIQUOR CONTROL
6606 TUSSING ROAD, P.O. BOX 4005
REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO 43068-9005
(614)644-2360 FAX(614)644-3166

TO

25230551025 PERMIT NUMBER	NEW TYPE	ENGLEFIELD INC 4 NEWARK RD MT VERNON OH 43050
ISSUE DATE		
03 17 2025 FILING DATE		
C1 C2 PERMIT CLASSES		
42 TAX DISTRICT	077 B E50329 RECEIPT NO.	

FROM 04/10/2025

PERMIT NUMBER	TYPE	
ISSUE DATE		
FILING DATE		
PERMIT CLASSES		
TAX DISTRICT	RECEIPT NO.	

MAILED 04/10/2025 RESPONSES MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN. 05/12/2025

IMPORTANT NOTICE

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE DIVISION OF LIQUOR CONTROL WHETHER OR NOT THERE IS A REQUEST FOR A HEARING.

REFER TO THIS NUMBER IN ALL INQUIRIES B NEW 2523055-1025
(TRANSACTION & NUMBER)

(MUST MARK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING)

WE REQUEST A HEARING ON THE ADVISABILITY OF ISSUING THE PERMIT AND REQUEST THAT THE HEARING BE HELD ☐ IN OUR COUNTY SEAT. ☐ IN COLUMBUS.

WE DO NOT REQUEST A HEARING. ☐

DID YOU MARK A BOX? IF NOT, THIS WILL BE CONSIDERED A LATE RESPONSE.

PLEASE SIGN BELOW AND MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATING YOUR TITLE:

(Signature) (Title)- ☐ Clerk of County Commissioner (Date)

☐ Clerk of City Council

☐ Township Fiscal Officer

CLERK OF MT VERNON CITY COUNCIL
CITY HALL
40 PUBLIC SQ
MT VERNON OHIO 43050

DLC 4052

Communication: 04-28-25 Liquor Permit (Liquor Control License)

Department of Commerce
Division of Liquor Control

com.ohio.gov
Mike DeWine, *Governor* Jim Tressel, *Lt. Governor* Sherry Maxfield, *Director*

Dear Local Legislative Authority Official:

Please find enclosed the legislative notice that is being sent to you regarding the applied for liquor permit as captioned on the notice. You **must**, within 30 days from the "mailed" date listed on the notice under the bar code:

- Notify the Division whether you object and want a hearing; or
- Ask for your one-time only, 30-day extension. o Any requests for a one-time, 30-day extension will be reviewed by the Division upon timely receipt. If granted, your additional 30-days runs from the expiration of the original 30-day period.

To be considered **timely**, your above response **MUST** be faxed, emailed, or mailed to the Division no later than the postmark deadline date stated on the form. To speed up processing times and reduce paper, the Division respectfully asks that you either fax or email your response. Please send your response to:

FAX: (614) 644 – 3166

EMAIL: Liquordocs@com.ohio.gov

MAIL: Ohio Division of Liquor Control
Attn: Licensing Unit
6606 Tussing Road
PO Box 4005
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068-9005

To find out who has disclosed an ownership interest in the permit application to us you can:

- Visit com.ohio.gov/liquorinfo. Select the "Search who has disclosed an ownership interest" tab. Where asked, enter the permit number listed on the legislative notice; or
- Contact your police department or county sheriff (if you are a township fiscal officer or county clerk). We also sent them detailed ownership information to review for any criminal background issues involving the disclosed persons.

We have resources for you at com.ohio.gov/govhelp. Never miss out on when renewal objections are due! Sign-up for our emails at com.ohio.gov/stayinformed.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation,

Division Licensing Section

(rev. 2.12.25)

Communication: 04-28-25 Liquor Permit (Liquor Control License)

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

ADOPTED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Streets and Public Buildings
Severns, Ruckman
Category: Land/Property Acquisition
Prepared By: Rob Broeren
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4216

RESOLUTION 2025-42

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO TRANSFER FEE SIMPLE TITLE TO ONE OR MORE PARCELS OF COMMERCIAL REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO THE KNOX COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION FOR PURPOSES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, Mount Vernon City Council has acquired fee simple ownership of two parcels of commercial real property, located on South Gay Street in the City, tax parcel IDs 66-50090.000 and 66-50091.000 (collectively, the "Subject Property"); and

WHEREAS, the Knox County Land Reutilization Corporation is a county land reutilization corporation, as defined in Section 1724.01(A)(3) of the Ohio Revised Code ("ORC") and operated for the purposes of exercising the essential governmental purposes provided for under Chapter 1724 and Chapter 5722 of the ORC (the "Land Bank"); and

WHEREAS, the Land Bank has agreed to accept and receive fee simple title to the Subject Property for purposes of redevelopment and re-use as allowed by law; and

WHEREAS, the City may transfer property for redevelopment without competitive bidding pursuant to ORC §721.28; and

WHEREAS, Mount Vernon City Council acknowledges the City's interests are best served by having the Land Bank ready, or cause to be readied, the Subject Property for redevelopment and re-use, including site preparation and clearing, marketing, and negotiating with prospective end users; and

WHEREAS, the City is desirous of ensuring Subject Property is again used by one or more commercial end users in the future, which such end users will employ local residents and remit income taxes to the City.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Mount Vernon, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1: That the Mount Vernon City Council does hereby authorize and direct the Mayor, the Safety-Service Director, the Auditor, and the Director of Law, and any other City official, as appropriate, to sign any documents, instruments, or certificates and to take such actions as are necessary or appropriate to consummate or implement the transactions described in or contemplated by this

Resolution.

SECTION 2: That the Clerk of Council is hereby directed to deliver a copy of this Resolution to the President of the Land Bank, after its passage and upon request made by said representative.

SECTION 3: This Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, and for the further reason of expediting the transfer of these parcels will continue the economic revitalization of the Central Business District, and said Resolution shall, therefore, become effective upon its date of passage and approval by the Mayor, provided that it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members elected to the Council of the City of Mount Vernon; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

HISTORY:

03/24/25 City Council FIRST READING

Resolution No. 2025-42 was given a first reading. Severns requested a 15-minute meeting of the Streets and Public Buildings Committee on the legislation for April 14, 2025.

04/14/25 City Council SECOND READING

Resolution No. 2025-42 was given a second reading.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Severns made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-42, with a second by Ruckman. Safety-Service Director Tanner Salyers detailed four scenarios concerning what could happen to the property parcel mentioned in the legislation, depending on whether Council votes to transfer the parcel to the Knox County Land Bank or votes not to, adding that the property was likely to remain a parking lot either way. The high cost estimate for upgrading the property is $350,000, which Engineer Brian Ball characterized as a long-term fix. Salyers added that no one has come forth expressing interest to buy the property. Keener made a motion to amend the legislation by adding the sentence, "The property is transferred as is" at the end of Section 1. Motion to amend seconded by Woods, and passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Severns made a motion to adopt as amended, with a second by Ruckman. Motion passed by a roll-call vote of 5-1, with Seavolt voting no.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED AS AMENDED [5 TO 1]**
MOVER:	Mel Severns, Councilman
SECONDER:	John Ruckman, Second Ward
AYES:	Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
NAYS:	Janis Seavolt
EXCUSED:	James Mahan

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

ADOPTED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Land Use and Development
Keener, Mahan
Category: Planning and Zoning
Prepared By: Rob Broeren
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4221

RESOLUTION 2025-49

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2025 KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS A GUIDE FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON.

WHEREAS, Together Knox spear-headed a year-long process to create the 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan, which is a set of growth, land use, and development policies. It is a foundation for considering various growth, development, and service-related policies, programs, regulations, and capital projects; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,200 people participated in the creation of the 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan though small-group discussions, stakeholder interviews, online surveys and Focus on the Future; and

WHEREAS, based on this gathered information, Together Knox produced the 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan (attached as Exhibit A).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO, THAT:

SECTION 1: The Council of the City of Mount Vernon, Ohio adopts the Knox County Comprehensive Plan as a guide for future development within the City of Mount Vernon, Ohio.

HISTORY:

04/14/25 City Council FIRST READING

Resolution No. 2025-49 was given a first reading. Mahan requested a 10-minute meeting of the Land Use and Development Committee on the legislation for April 28, 2025.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Keener made a motion to suspend the rule requiring three separate readings of Resolution No. 2025-49, with a second by Woods. Motion to suspend passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Keener made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-49, with a second by Woods. Keener thanked the Knox County Area Development Foundation for its work on the Knox County Comprehensive Plan. Motion to adopt passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Amber Keener, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	James Mahan

TOGETHER KNOX

Deep Roots, New Growth

Knox County
Comprehensive Plan

March 2025

DRAFT

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Acknowledgements

Knox County Commissioners

Drenda Keesee

Barry Lester

Bill Pursel

Teresa Bemiller, former

Thom Collier, former

Area Development Foundation Inc.

Jeff Gottke, President

Sam Filkins, Vice President

Julia Suggs, Economic Development Manager

Emily Shipley - Downtown Experience Coordinator

Consultants

planning NEXT

Burgess & Niple

Ninigret Partners

Special Thanks To

Ariel Arena

The Gathering Place

The Woodward Opera House

Photo Credits

Area Development Foundation, Inc.

Kenyon College

Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Mount Vernon Nazarene University

Nicole Leone Miller Photography

Owl Creek Conservancy

Philander Chase Conservancy

Planning NEXT

Skyview Technologles

Steering Committee

The following individuals were invited to support the planning process on the Together Knox Steering Committee.

Doug Beckley

Jason Booth*

Jim Braddock

Hannah Bressi

Rob Clendening

Jeff Derr**

Don Divelbiss

Mitch Durbin

Anne Ellsworth**

Hawthorne Fleckenstein**

Ryan Gallwitz

Craig Gilmore

Jeff Gottke*

Zach Green

Tyler Griffith

Carol Grubaugh

Dave Heithaus

Donna Hochstetler

JJ House**

Joyce Hurd

Whitney Johnson

Amber Keener***

Halle Krajenski**

Rick Lanuzza

Chrissie Laymon

Julia Manning**

Paul McNeal**

Alexis Morrison**

Michael Percy**

Sibley Poland**

Bill Seder

Darrell Severns*

Matt Starr***

John Yoder

**Leadership Group members*

***City of Mount Vernon representatives*

**** Both*

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Letter to the Community

Dear Knox County Community,

Planning for the future is good stewardship. This is especially true in Knox County. The community needs and deserves economic opportunity. It also must be strategic in conserving assets that make it special. These assets include our cultural, educational, natural, historical, and land treasures. This plan reflects these realities with an approach that finds harmony between these two—sometimes conflicting—needs and reminds us that, "We have been making things as long as we have been growing things."

The extensive planning process—known as Together Knox—had **two key inputs** that were gathered on a parallel track. The first was conditions and trends analysis on a range of topics, including land use, housing, economic development, and several more. The second—and equally important—was gathering **insight from people who know Knox County best.** Those who live, work, learn and play in the County.

The process affirmed what you likely experience: **Knox County is a special place** known for its quality small towns, attractive landscapes, rural living, and higher education assets. Our community takes immense pride in these attributes. We understand that the ongoing growth and changes in Central Ohio could threaten these cherished assets if not carefully managed. However, **we acknowledge that growth pressure is inevitable.** And some growth is essential to our ability to provide services and facilities. Located just 20 miles from a $28 billion investment in a region already experiencing growth, Central Ohio anticipates an increase of another one million people in the next 25 years, bringing the total population to three million. Our attractive assets and the overall appeal of our region help drive this growth.

This comprehensive plan is essential to effectively manage our future consistent with your values. It will help us determine what should be conserved along with where and how new development should occur. As mentioned above, this plan is informed by extensive community insight, with over 1,400 residents participating in surveys, town hall meetings, and focus groups. Their input has been invaluable in shaping our vision for the future.

Our commitment to implementation is unwavering. **This plan is not just a document; it is a roadmap for action.** We have engaged with the City, Villages, and Townships, as well as other stakeholders like the Farm Bureau and School Superintendents, to ensure that we can all work together to manage our assets and benefit from the growth we desire.

We still have a great deal of work to do. This plan is the foundation of that work. Together, we will ensure Knox County remains a special place for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued engagement and, mostly, your love for Knox County.

Sincerely,

Together Knox Leadership Group

Jeff Gottke, President
Area Development Foundation, Inc.

Darrel Severns, Panning Director
Knox County Regional Planning Commission

Jason Booth, County Administrator
Knox County

Matt Starr, Mayor
City of Mount Vernon

Amber Keener, Council Member
City of Mount Vernon

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Resolution of Adoption

(County resolution, To be completed)

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Resolution of Adoption

(Mount Vernon resolution, To be completed)

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1
1. Introduction 7
2. Conservation, Character, and Development 17
3. Economic, Workforce, and Housing Resilience 59
4. Quality of Life 75
5. Mobility 91
6. Mount Vernon Growth Strategy 109
7. Implementation 159
8. Glossary 183

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Executive Summary

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Knox County stands at a pivotal moment. As the Central Ohio region continues to expand, the County will confront challenges and opportunities. There has been and will continue to be pressure on the County and its jurisdictions for growth and development. At the same time, agriculture and the rural landscape remain a cornerstone of Knox County, with a substantial portion of land dedicated to farming. The County also boasts exceptional natural and aesthetic assets, including extensive waterways and the scenic beauty of the Kokosing River Valley. Decisions regarding growth and development must balance a robust economy with protecting the county's agricultural heritage and natural landscapes. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan focuses on managing these dynamics while preserving the qualities that have made Knox County a cherished place.

Historic development patterns have centered around towns and villages, creating a mix of higher-density residential areas in suburban and urban settings, and low-density residential areas in suburban and rural settings. By focusing growth inward toward already established city and village centers, Knox County aims to enhance its unique town and country characteristics and strengthen the vibrancy and economic vitality of its town centers, as well as fiscal standing.

Economic prosperity in Knox County depends on housing opportunities, workforce availability, training, and a diversified employment base. The connection between housing and workforce availability is crucial, as the variety, price points, and locations of housing attract the necessary workforce to meet local demand. Diverse and abundant housing also influences retail, restaurant, and commercial opportunities, contributing to financial stability for local governments through increased revenue generation.

Some change is inevitable. Preparing for it should not be optional. Knox County is dedicated to creating a resilient community that adapts to and thrives amidst that growth and change. This includes fostering a robust agricultural community that remains a main contributor to the County's economy and culture. The County also seeks to connect its residents with a shared vision for the future, encouraging community engagement and collaboration. This collective effort ensures that the county's growth and development are guided by the values and aspirations of the community.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Legacy of Planning

Together Knox is the latest effort to craft a vision and action agenda to manage the community. This plan builds on our sustained stewardship commitment for Knox County. And represents a vision for the future, shaped by thoughtful consideration of the past and present.

As we look forward, it is important to **acknowledge the tireless efforts of community leaders who laid the foundation through previous planning processes that continue to guide our growth and development today.** Their foresight, dedication, and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in initiating the long-term strategies that continue to shape our community's path.

When we think of this process, there are several versions of plans dating back decades in our history. Commonly known to the long-term residents of Knox County was the time in the early 1990s when leaders got together to develop the ***Knox County Focus 2100 Plan***. Similar to today, at that time, community leaders felt it was important to know what was going on in the Region such as the development of New Albany, Delaware, Newark, and Sunbury. Community leaders saw this and decided to act. **They determined not to stop growth, but to manage the growth that was surely coming our way, in part to advance economic opportunity for individuals and expand the fiscal capacity of local governments.**

This document reveals the journey of comprehensive planning in Knox County, highlighting the collaborative efforts of local government officials, residents, and community leaders who, through their early advocacy and involvement, **recognized the importance of strategic planning. And the need for strategic doing.** Their actions helped create a framework that balances development, sustainability, and the preservation of the community's unique character. Special thanks go to those visionaries who set the stage for this ongoing journey, whose work continues to inspire and inform the future of Knox County.

By understanding the origins of comprehensive planning and the key milestones achieved along the way, we can better appreciate the collaborative efforts that have brought us to this point—and, more importantly, how these efforts will continue to shape a vibrant and prosperous future for all who call Knox County home.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

What is a comprehensive plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is Knox County's official set of growth, land use, and development policies. It is a foundation for considering various growth, development, and service-related policies, programs, regulations, and capital projects. The plan will act as a policy basis for amendments to the County Subdivision Regulations, updates to local zoning codes, additional joint projects to manage growth, and investments to direct development in suitable locations. While the plan does not replace local zoning, it can serve as a resource for considering code and zoning map amendments to further guide development in each community.

The Comprehensive Plan, funded by the Knox County Commissioners, the Regional Planning Commission, and the City of Mount Vernon, was developed to assist all local jurisdictions in addressing the various pressures and opportunities facing each community. Due to the significant contribution from the City of Mount Vernon, the plan includes a dedicated Mount Vernon Growth Strategy, designed as part of the Comprehensive Plan but also intended to function as an independent document.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Key Themes

Key themes summarize the results of the analysis that is the basis of the Comprehensive Plan and the public input. Themes and findings are detailed within individual chapters.

- **Growth has implications:** Knox County is facing increased growth pressure, particularly on its southwestern area as regional employment growth catalysts such as Intel attract a workforce. This workforce will necessitate the provision of associated services and amenities including housing, transportation network improvements, and secondary goods and service centers.

- **Collaboration remains essential:** Growth management is a collaborative effort involving multiple levels of local government. The County oversees residential subdivision regulations, economic development, water and sewer services, and the transportation network. Townships are responsible for zoning and local services within their jurisdictions, while cities and villages manage nearly all growth aspects within their boundaries. This partnership among various levels of local government is essential to achieving a unified vision for Knox County's future.

- **Rural landscape is changing:** Knox County is largely defined by its rural landscape, which recent development is beginning to reshape. Much of Knox County (35%) is dedicated to prime farmland. The balance in land use between farming, development, and conservation is critical for the county's future character and economic success. Not all growth has to take place in undeveloped, greenfields; redevelopment and infill development can provide alternatives.

- **Distinct "town and country" character is critical:** The county is organized around town and village centers. The concentration of goods and services in centers—with agricultural land making up the majority of the 'in-between' space in the county—defines the character of the County.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

- **Broadly defined prosperity is a priority:** Broadening the tax base and drawing in a skilled workforce are essential for a prosperous future. Ensuring robust local services for residents hinges on maintaining a strong tax base, bolstered by non-residential development that generates real estate and income tax revenue. A skilled workforce is necessary to attract businesses, and cultivating that workforce depends on having ample housing options within the county.

- **Agriculture must remain resilient:** Working farms and the County's agricultural sector are important to Knox County's heritage and culture, as well as food production and successful family farms. Concentrating future development near already developed areas—and in some cases at a higher intensity of use—will support conserving prime farmland and natural assets.

Implementation Structure

The Knox County Comprehensive Plan has four major implementation components that will drive results that are deemed important to the community. They are intended to be used in an interrelated manner.

Principles: Ten statements of intent were instilled from the first round of engagement. They were tested and refined with the Steering Committee and the community in the second round of engagement. The principles influenced the development of the plan. They should be used to determine where and how development should take place in the future.

Future Land Use Map: This map aims to balance development and conservation, creating an integrated growth pattern that aligns with Knox County's potential. It geographically represents the principles' sentiments.

Character Types: To effectively convey the vision of the Future Land Use Map, various Character Types are used. These provide detailed explanations and policy directions for different land use categories, including primary and secondary uses, building forms, transportation modes, and open space details.

Goals, Objectives, and Actions: These elements form the policy foundation of the Comprehensive Plan, reflecting the direction set by the principles, Future Land Use Map, and Character Types. The goals are organized into four chapters, all aligned and mutually-reinforcing.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

1 Introduction

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Situated in one of the nation's most dynamic regions, Knox County boasts an array of economic, natural, and aesthetic assets. Its treasures include fertile agricultural land, the serene Kokosing River, vibrant city and village centers, and higher education institutions. The County is also grappling with considerable development pressure, particularly in its southwest areas. In response, Knox County, in collaboration with the City of Mount Vernon, initiated the Together Knox project in early 2024. The initiative produced the new comprehensive plan, providing a strategic long-term vision that will enable the county to thrive amidst regional and national changes. By proactively addressing these challenges, Together Knox positions the County to not only manage growth effectively but also to capitalize on emerging opportunities, ensuring sustainable development and enhanced quality of life for its residents.

A comprehensive plan is the broadest public policy document a community can create for its future physical development, and it is guided by both technical analysis and the input of community members. The plan is a tool to prepare for change and acts as a guidebook for decision-makers. A comprehensive plan expresses the values, aspirations, needs, and unique conditions of a community. The plan does not replace local zoning or other legal codes but can serve as a resource to consider code and zoning map amendments to further guide development in each community. The plan can also serve as a foundation for land development regulations, budgeting decisions, and more.

Why is Knox County writing a new comprehensive plan?

The County's first comprehensive plan was adopted in 1974, with the first update completed in 1998. Since then, the County has undertaken an update process approximately every 6-8 years, with the most recent update occurring in 2018. Given the significant growth and changes experienced since 2018, a new plan is essential to reflect current trends and priorities while maintaining a forward-looking focus. Regular comprehensive planning demonstrates good stewardship and provides a foundation for well-supported policies, ensuring the best possible future for the County.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

What planning has already been done?

In addition to the 2018 Comprehensive Plan update, the following planning efforts have recently been completed:

- **Centerburg Village Strategic Plan** included a steering committee of community members, public meetings, and online engagement opportunities. The plan was developed over eight months and was adopted in 2020. Key recommendations include diversifying housing to support various household types and aging in place, enhancing Downtown and Village gateways with pedestrian-friendly improvements, encouraging regional efforts to expand recreational tourism, and prioritizing capital projects like revitalizing Downtown and promoting the Heart of Ohio Trail.
- **Danville Village Strategic Plan** was adopted in 2020 and envisions the community's growth, development, and quality of life over the next five to ten years. During the eight-month planning process, a steering committee of community members was organized. Participants in the planning process also included residents, business, employees, and local officials. Key recommendations include enhancing Market Street's streetscape, constructing a trail connection to boost tourism and safety, and fostering regional collaboration to expand recreational tourism.
- **Fredericktown Village Strategic Plan** was adopted in 2020 and outlines a vision for the community's growth, development, and quality of life over the next five to ten years. Developed over eight months by a steering committee of community members, the plan combines data, local expertise, and regional trends to create actionable strategies. Key recommendations include leveraging funding for downtown revitalization, improving streetscapes, redeveloping underutilized parcels, enhancing parks and recreation, and diversifying housing to support various household types and aging in place.

Planning in Adjacent Communities

When undergoing a comprehensive planning process, it's crucial to consider the plans of surrounding communities. This awareness ensures regional cohesion, maximizes resource sharing, and addresses potential cross-boundary impacts effectively.

- **Licking County** completed FRAMEWORK, an intensive 14-month planning effort, in September 2023. Fourteen jurisdictions and the County Commissioners collaborated to ensure continuity between townships, municipalities, and county agencies. The resulting report, FRAMEWORK, provides participating jurisdictions with tools to help manage change.
- **Delaware County** completed a comprehensive economic development plan in December 2023. The plan includes significant land use direction, including priority growth areas.
- **Morrow County** worked with economic development firm Montrose Group, LLC. to adopt an Economic Development Strategic Plan in December 2022.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

- **Gambier Village Strategic Plan** process took place over eight months and was adopted in 2020. The process included a steering committee made up of members of the community as well as public and online engagement opportunities. Key recommendations include diversifying the economic base, investing in housing to address market inefficiencies, constructing a trail connection to boost tourism and safety, and fostering regional collaboration to expand recreational tourism.
- **Mount Vernon Downtown Plan** aims to guide the area's evolution over the next 10-20 years, enhancing the quality of life for residents, visitors, and employees. Developed through collaboration with local stakeholders, the plan focuses on three key areas: West High Street, the Downtown Square, and the Southern Gateway. It includes urban design analyses, recommended improvements for walkability and comfort, and cost estimates for feasibility. The plan also emphasizes the importance of a robust policy framework, proposing design guidelines to supplement zoning codes and parking strategies to support downtown businesses. Overall, it reflects a vision shaped by technical analysis and community engagement.
- **Mount Vernon Strategic Plan** was developed over a year by a diverse steering committee and focus groups and aims to guide the city's growth and development. It emphasizes collaboration, innovation, inclusivity, equity, stewardship, and maintaining hometown character. The plan outlines key priorities for the next five to seven years, including fostering a supportive business environment, enhancing public safety, improving transportation infrastructure, ensuring access to modern utilities, supporting vibrant community life, promoting quality housing, and maintaining effective governance. The plan was adopted in 2021.
- **Knox County Economic Growth Strategy** was completed in 2022 and sought to provide an overview of the existing economic climate of the county and the impact recent economic activities in the Columbus region may affect Knox County, namely the Intel manufacturing site (Ohio One Campus) in Licking County. It includes an analysis of current economic conditions, identification of key growth sectors, and strategic initiatives to attract and retain businesses. The plan emphasizes the importance of infrastructure improvements, workforce development, and collaboration between public and private sectors. Additionally, it highlights the need for sustainable practices and innovation to ensure long-term economic resilience and prosperity for the community.
- **Knox County Workforce Demand Study** combines quantitative and qualitative data to identify local workforce needs. It includes labor market analysis, stakeholder feedback, and evaluations of existing programs. The report, commissioned by community leaders, is divided into three sections: Labor Market Information Analysis, Stakeholder Engagement Sessions Summary, and Recommendations. Key findings highlight low unemployment but a labor force participation rate below pre-pandemic levels, leading to a tight labor market. Recommendations focus on talent recruitment, sector strategies, and job quality to position Knox County employers as preferred choices and attract sidelined workers back into the labor force.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Who was involved in the process?

Together Knox represents the collective vision of the community. Throughout its development, community members actively engaged and contributed thousands of ideas, which have been instrumental in shaping the plan's recommendations. Below is a summary of the participants involved in this collaborative process.

Steering Committe: The Steering Committee was a diverse group of community members who represented a variety of groups throughout the county including schools, businesses, community groups, and residents of the city, villages, and townships. that met regularly throughout the planning process. These community members provided guidance on the process and substance of the plan, served as community advocates, conducted small group meetings, and will serve as stewards of the completed plan.

Stakeholders: Individuals with specific interests or expertise were engaged to provide insight during the process through interviews and focused conversations. These groups included representatives from higher education, K-12 education, agriculture, local government, conservation, infrastructure, services, non-profits, and business, among others.

Public: Meaningful public involvement from all geographies and perspectives in the County was vital to the success of this planning effort.

Elected Officials: Comprehensive plans must be formally adopted by the County Commissioners who have a central role in implementation. County officials participated in this process and monitored the progress of the plan.

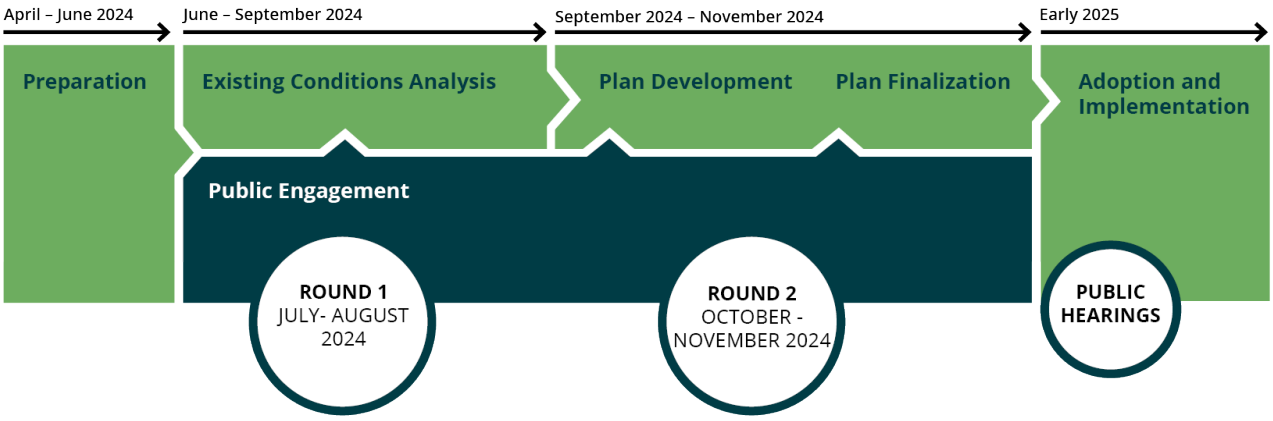
Staff: Staff at the Area Development Foundation, Knox County, the City of Mount Vernon, and the Knox County Regional Planning Commission supported and helped to coordinate the planning effort, while also contributing local knowledge and expertise.

Consultants: A consultant team worked closely with the Steering Committee and staff to facilitate the process, conduct technical analysis, manage public engagement, and draft the recommendations.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

The Planning Process

Together Knox was a year long process to create a new comprehensive plan for Knox County. The planning process included both robust community engagement and technical analysis that helped shape the direction of the plan.



A member of the community participates in the engagement activities for the first round of engagement at the Mount Vernon Farmers Market.

Community members gather for the Focus on the Future event, which featured a panel discussion and activities for the second round of engagement.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Community Engagement

Knox County undertook a comprehensive community engagement initiative encompassing two distinct rounds of outreach. The goal was to ensure that participation was a choice for anyone who lived, worked, or spent time in the county. To achieve this, a multifaceted approach was employed, including email campaigns, distribution of project business cards and promotional materials, as well as coverage in print and radio media, and extensive social media outreach. This concerted effort resulted in over 1,300 participants contributing more than 12,000 unique pieces of feedback throughout the process.

Round 1

In July and August 2024, the first round of engagement for Together Knox was conducted. This phase prioritized meeting people where they were, utilizing small-group discussions facilitated by Steering Committee members, elected officials, and community volunteers. The initiative aimed to introduce Together Knox to the county and gather valuable insights into community values and future aspirations. An online survey was available on the project website. Participants were asked the following questions:

1. What do you treasure about Knox County and its communities, and why?

2. Identify three strong and three weak places in Knox County. As a group, discuss why these places were chosen.

3. When you think about the future of Knox County and its communities, what outcomes would you like to see?

A series of stakeholder interviews were also conducted to supplement insight gathered from the community engagement. Interviews included representatives from various stakeholder groups in the County including K-12 education, agriculture, infrastructure, and services.

1,200+
Participants

4,450
Treasures Identified

4,109
Outcomes Identified

2,047
Places Identified

A strong place is a place that should be protected, conserved, or a location that could serve as inspiration for other places, such as a favorite park or frequently visited business. A weak place is a place that needs to be changed or improved, such as a vacant property or area that is hard to access.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Round 2

The second round of engagement was conducted in October and November 2024. Community members were invited to Focus on the Future, a unique event that brought together Knox County residents, businesses, and community leaders to explore strategies that will shape the County in the years to come.

The event featured a panel discussion focused on economic trends, quality of place, and rural dynamics. Participants were asked to review the draft principles and goals for the Comprehensive Plan and rate them from 1 – do not support to 5 – highly support. They were also asked to review concept maps and provide comments. An online survey was also available on the project website.

Focus on the Future Panelists

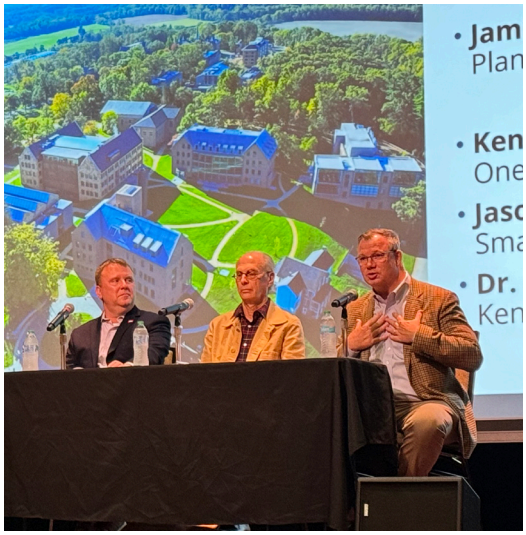
- Jamie Greene, Planning NEXT (facilitator)
- Jason Duff, Small Nation
- Kenny McDonald, One Columbus
- Dr. Howard Sacks, Kenyon College

170+
Participants

910
Principle Ratings

710
Goal Ratings

13
Map Comments



Engagement with the Amish Community

Knox County is home to a significant Amish community, and their input was vital to the comprehensive plan process. The Amish community cherishes their agricultural lifestyle, local businesses, and the trail system that ensures safer travel for horses and buggies. They highly value the small-town atmosphere, friendly community, and peaceful rural living. Looking ahead, they hope to preserve farmland, enhance infrastructure with better roads and buggy lanes, support local businesses, and maintain minimal government intervention to protect their way of life. Additionally, they emphasize the importance of community safety.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Vision

Knox County is a place with a demonstrated commitment to conserving the essential town and country elements that facilitate economic prosperity, reflect genuine community values, and inspire pride. In essence, Knox County is a complete community.

Goals

The following goals were developed based on insights gathered through community engagement. These goals were then tested and refined with input from the Steering Committee and the community. They represent the intended outcomes of the plan, articulated in straightforward terms. The goals are listed in the sequence they appear in this document, not by priority.

1. **Rural Conservation.** Protected and conserved rural and agricultural land maintains unique character, heritage, and natural landscapes.
2. **Strengthened Centers.** Resilient city and village centers have a mix of uses and create a strong sense of community.
3. **Land Use and Development.** Thoughtful and strategic land use and development policies that balance growth with environmental stewardship.
4. **Economic Prosperity.** A robust local economy with industrial growth and a wide range of employment opportunities.
5. **Housing.** A diverse range of affordable, high-quality housing options meet the needs of all community members.
6. **People.** Healthy and proud residents and workers enjoying the benefits of growth and quality of life that drew—and keeps—them in the County.
7. **Natural and Recreational Amenities.** Enhanced natural and recreational amenities are accessible and offer varied opportunities for outdoor enjoyment.
8. **Mobility.** Efficient and accessible transportation options connect residents and workers to key destinations, support economic growth, and enhance quality of life.

Plan Framework

The **vision** is the highest —and therefore most general—expression of a community's future. It reflects the community's values and sets the tone for more specific goals and recommendations.

Goals are intended results expressed in non-technical terms. They represent the overarching desired outcomes for the plan.

Objectives are sub-themes within the goals that serve to organize actions.

Actions are projects, policies, or programs that are recommendations to be implemented.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

2 Conservation, Character, and Development

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Knox County is dedicated to safeguarding its natural resources, conserving its distinctive character, and managing land use to promote responsible growth and development. By prioritizing the protection of scenic landscapes and cultural heritage, the County aims to maintain the unique identity that residents and visitors cherish. Through these efforts, Knox County strives to create a balanced approach to growth that respects both the natural environment and the community's values, fostering a harmonious and vibrant future for all. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan outlines a comprehensive vision for conservation, community character, and sustainable development across the county. The Future Conservation, Character, and Development maps play a crucial role in shaping the plan's various elements, ensuring that all aspects of growth are thoughtfully integrated with the county's vision.

Goals

The content in this chapter is focused on the following goals.

Rural Conservation. *Protected and conserved rural and agricultural land maintains unique character, heritage, and natural landscapes.*

Strengthened centers. *Resilient city and village centers have a mix of uses and create a strong sense of community.*

Land Use and Development. *Thoughtful and strategic land use and development policies balance growth with environmental stewardship*.

Objectives

1. Conserve critical natural assets and prime agricultural land.
2. Enhance rural character.
3. Focus growth and development inward.
4. Optimize and improve infrastructure networks.

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Conditions and Trends

To guide conservation, character, and development effectively, it is essential first to understand the current landscape. The conditions and trends section provides context for recent conservation and development trends, including land use, zoning, and subdivision activity.

Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use map illustrates the location and extent of various land uses, including residential, commercial, parks, and agriculture. This map serves as a valuable tool for inventorying the community, learning from it, and making informed decisions about future land uses. The assessment of existing land use has highlighted several key factors that must be considered in developing the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map and related policies.

- There is an abundance of agricultural land. Eighty-two percent of total land area in the County is agricultural.
- Historic development patterns are focused around the centers of Mount Vernon, Centerburg, Fredericktown, Danville, and Apple Valley Lake.
- High-density residential is defined by single or multi-family housing found in suburbanized and urbanized areas.
- Low density residential is defined by large lot, single-family homes in suburban and rural areas.

Existing Zoning

The map on page 15 shows simplified zoning within the county. Summarizing zoning districts can be challenging because each jurisdiction uses its own unique zoning classifications and codes to categorize properties.

Much of the county is zoned for low-intensity residential or agricultural use, which has helped maintain its treasured rural character. However, recent development trends are altering this landscape. Overall, zoning regulations facilitate single-family residential development, even in areas zoned agricultural. Additionally, the absence of a building code and building permits means there is no comprehensive tracking of development activities. Notably, the county does not have an adopted set of building codes, and four townships in the southeast part of the county lack zoning regulations. These regulatory gaps enable rural residential sprawl and untracked development, leading to the proliferation of residential lots across the county that alters the rural landscape and can impact working farms.

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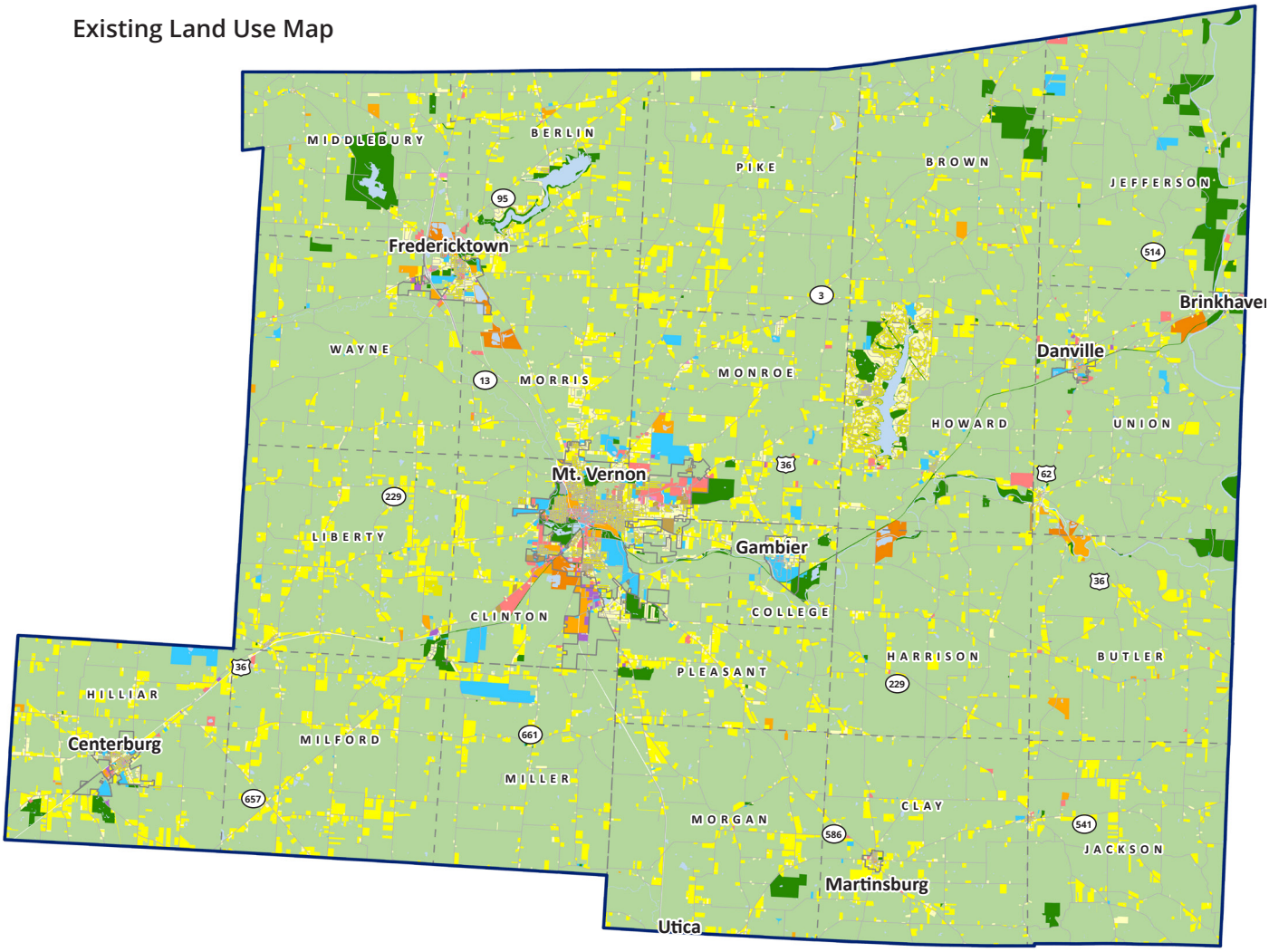
Existing Land Use Map



Existing Land Use Categories	Acres	Sq. Mile	Percent
Agriculture	278,738	436	82%
Rural Residential (less than 0.5 units/acre)	29,614	46	9%
Parks & Open Space	9,217	14	3%
Low-Density Suburban Residential (less than 0.5 - 3 units/acre)	7,078	11	2%
Public Services	3,710	6	1%
High-Density Suburban Residential (less than 3 - 8 units/acre)	2,899	5	1%
Right-of-Way	2,041	3	1%
Commercial	1,617	3	0%
Industrial	1,503	2	0%
Quarry	1,278	2	0%
Urban Residential	555	1	0%
Warehouse	266	0	0%
Vacant	224	0	0%
Office	109	0	0%
Total	**338,849**	**529**	**100%**

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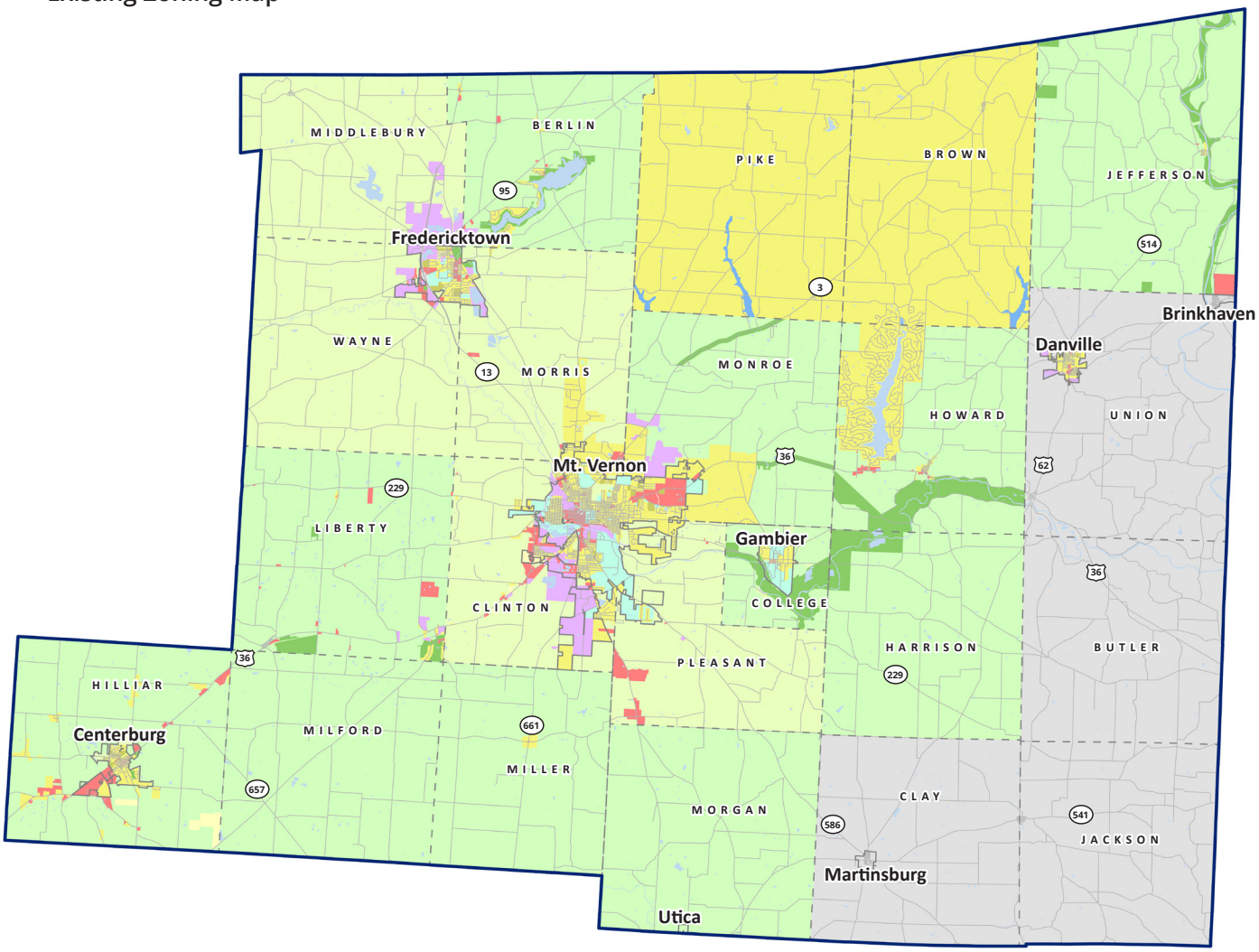
Existing Zoning Map



Existing Zoning Categories	Acres	Sq. Mile	Percent
Agriculture	147,365	230	44%
Unzoned	65,873	103	19%
Rural Residential	60,219	94	18%
Low-Density Residential	50,248	79	15%
Conservation and Open Space	6,318	10	2%
Industrial and Manufacturing	3,424	5	1%
Business and Commercial	2,386	4	1%
Institutional and Civic	1,773	3	1%
Flood Plain	389	1	0%
Mobile and Manufactured Housing	363	1	0%
Mixed and Multi-Family Residential	242	1	0%
Village Center and Mixed Use	21	1	0%
Total	**338,621**	**530**	**100%**

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Lot Splits

Knox County does not issue building permits, making it difficult to track development activity. Lot split data can be used as a proxy to help identify where potential development may occur within the unincorporated portions of the county.

The Knox County Subdivision Regulations guide the lot split process. While the regulations have been periodically updated, including a significant revision in 2006 and changes to lot split regulations in 2019, these updates have not sufficiently provided development controls. For example, in 2019 the regulations were amended to remove limitations on lot splits for parcels over five acres with frontage. Lot splits used to be limited to four for all parcels. Parcels under five acres are still limited to four splits.

From 2019 to 2023, a total of 710 lot splits were completed. Those lots account for 23,419 acres of land in the unincorporated areas of the county with an average split size of 23 acres. The accompanying table summarizes the data for parcels under five acres and those over five acres.

Knox County Unincorporated Area Lot Splits (2019-2023)

	Under 5 Acres	5.01 acres and larger	Total
Lots	192	518	**710**
Acres	435	22,984	**23,419**
Average Lot Size (acres)	2	44	**23**

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Why consider conservation residential development as an alternative to "business as usual" residential rural development?

Rural residential development in Knox County has either occurred in the form of small, platted subdivisions, with either on-site septic and wells, or with package treatment plants. In all cases, these new rural neighborhoods are built at a low density, with a minimum lot size of two acres reflecting township zoning requirements. In addition, individual lot splits occur throughout the County, some subject to public review and others (five-acre splits) requiring sufficient road frontage. Whether building permits can be issued is dependent on the ability of soils to accommodate on-site wastewater treatment and disposal. But in the end, productive farmland is permanently lost.

Conservation Residential Development (Subdivision) Defined. As an alternative to "business as usual" rural residential development, the conservation subdivision offers the opportunity to meet housing demand in Knox County, with public utilities, that preserves part of the land. Conservation subdivisions typically set aside 50% or more of a site as permanent open space that can be farmed, used as an orchard, or set aside as a natural area. Placed in platted reserves, these protected areas would fall under the ownership of the related homeowner's association. The original property owner could also establish a conservation easement on the open space reserve, donating it to a conservation organization (or the HOA) and receiving estate planning benefits.

Comparing Alternatives. To demonstrate the benefits of conservation residential development, the following two scenarios are presented based upon a 300-acre site. The first layout is a more typical two-acre rural residential subdivision without public utility access. The second layout applies conservation development principles by clustering the development on quarter-acre lots, with utility services.

1. **"Business as Usual" Rural Residential Layout:** Two-Acre Lots. The first approach is based on the typical rural residential lot layout style where each lot is at least two acres in size, consistent with typical township zoning. This layout maximizes the number of two-acre lots (minimum 87,120 square feet) that can be placed on the site (108 lots on 261 acres). The result is a layout with less open space, disrupted wildlife corridors, and a loss of working cropland resulting in a wholly changed character for the 300-acre site.
2. **Conservation Development: Quarter-Acre Lots.** The second approach illustrates a layout for a conservation residential development. The standard lot size is one-quarter of an acre (minimum 10,000 square feet). This clustered layout results in a greater number of lots on less space (234 lots on 94 acres), keeping key features of the existing conditions of the site intact (215 acres, noted as open space and cropland). The smaller lot layout also offers greater flexibility in the lot layout design as the layout has room to change without losing lots, depending on the specific goals of any given site. minimizing the physical space required, developers can lower expenses related to land acquisition, construction materials, and labor. Furthermore, a smaller footprint often leads to more efficient use of resources and streamlined maintenance, further driving down overall costs. This layout preserves some of the rural character endemic to Knox County.

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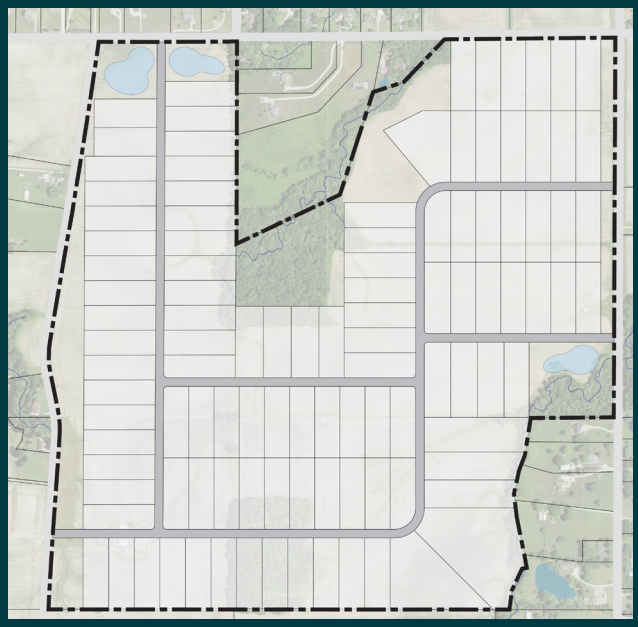
Existing Conditions

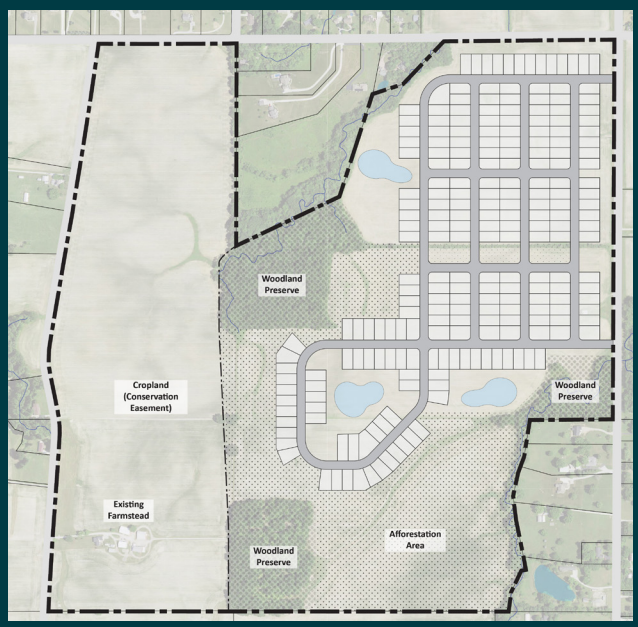
Rural Development



Development Comparison

	Rural Development	Conservation Lots
Lot #	108	230
Lot Size	2 Acres	1/4 Acre
Gross Density	.35 lots/acre	.74 lots/acre
Net Density (excluding cropland)	-	1.12 lots/acre
Open Space	+/- 48 Acres (16%)	+/- 111 Acres
Crop Land	-	+/- 104 Acres

Conservation Lots



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Utilities

Utilities play a crucial role in conservation and development in Knox County. Water and wastewater systems are not widespread in unincorporated areas of the county. Effective utility management and planning will be vital in balancing the needs of current and future residents and businesses while conserving natural resources.

The following water and wastewater systems operate in the county:

Knox County: The county has one water system that serves the Howard and Apple Valley areas. The maximum production is 1.0 million gallons a day (MGD) with an average daily production of 0.5-0.6 MGD. The county has preliminary plans for an upgrade to the well field that is contingent upon funding. The upgrade would increase well production by 0.3-0.5 MGD.

Knox County maintains three separate wastewater treatment facilities.

1. Pleasant View Acres is a small subdivision of around 45 homes located on State Route 3. This is a new facility with approximately 15,000 gallons of capacity with the ability to expand an additional 30,000 gallons.

2. Bladensburg has a small facility that serves around 100 homes with an average daily flow of 0.01 MGD and the ability to treat 0.45 MGD.

3. Little Jelloway Plant is the main treatment plant for the county. It is located in Howard and treats waste from Millwood, Howard and all the properties associated with Apple Valley. Average daily flows is 0.6 MGD with a permit limit of 0.9 MGD. An upgrade was completed on the plant around 10 years ago. Future expansion to this plant could result in major operational changes due to permit requirements.

Mount Vernon: The City of Mount Vernon has one water treatment plant that provides water to the city and to the Village of Gambier. The plant has an average usage of 3 MGD and a capacity of 7 MGD

The wastewater treatment plant treats an average of 2.7 MGD and has a capacity of 7 MGD. The plant has 219 miles of wastewater lines in the city's collection system.

Centerburg: The Village of Centerburg is supplied with water by DelCo Water, a member-owned, non-profit, cooperative water utility.

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The Village's wastewater plant has a capacity of 0.3 MGD, with usage during dry periods ranging from 0.14 to 0.15 MGD and increasing to 0.2 MGD during wet periods. The plant does have the capacity to accommodate some new residences.

Danville: The Village of Danville operates a water plant that was built in 2010 and has an average daily usage of 65,000 gallons per day (GPD). The plant has a maximum capacity of 208,000 GPD and currently serves 511 customers. The Village is in the process of upgrading outdated water lines and plans to upgrade more, based on the availability of grant funding.

The Village also operates a wastewater treatment plant that is designed for an average daily flow of .2 MGD with a peak flow of .32 MGD.

Fredericktown: The Village of Fredericktown distributes approximately 180,000 gallons per day (GPD) of water to more than 3,000 consumers. The treatment plant has a total water capacity of approximately 550,000 GPD.

The wastewater treatment plant treats an average of 150,000 GPD and has a capacity of approximately 650,000 GPD.

Gambier: The Village of Gambier purchases water from the City of Mount Vernon but owns and maintains its own distribution system including a 250,000 gallon water tower. The 50-year water purchase agreement is due for renewal within the next five years.

The Village wastewater plant is a Class II facility and has a design flow 450,000 gallons with a peak flow of 1 million gallons a day. The plant serves nearly all of the households in Gambier. Sanitary sewer service will be added to 23 properties on Kokosing Drive in 2025, leaving about 10 homes in the village with private septic systems. The last major improvement was a $3.4 million project completed in 1997. The Village does not foresee a need to increase capacity in the near future.

Martinsburg: The Village of Martinsburg operates a water treatment plant that serves approximately 110 customers, all located within the village. The plant averages 13,000 gallons per day and fluctuates between 500,000 to 380,000 gallons per month. The system does not have additional capacity but is installing new pipe to establish a loop in the system.

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Principles

The following principles were generated using insight gathered in the first round of engagement and tested and refined with the Steering Committee and the community during the second round of engagement. Principles define the intent of development and conservation in Knox County through simple statements. They are forward-looking and focused on future conditions, especially for 'where' and 'how' growth should occur.

1. **Strengthen the centers for each community, including villages and the City of Mount Vernon.** The historic population centers of Knox County support economic prosperity, provide for goods and services that support all communities, provide housing opportunities for County residents, and facilitate schools and the efficient delivery of government services and facilities. These communities facilitate social interaction at the neighborhood and community-wide level. And most importantly, they reflect many of the values that make Knox County unique.
2. **Focus growth inwardly, prioritizing infill and redevelopment over greenfield locations.** Likewise, the rural landscape is a critical component of Knox County cherished by many, while serving an important economic role. As population centers grow, they should prioritize infill development and redevelopment to minimize impacts on adjacent prime farmland. While greenfield development can expand opportunities, it should not be the only priority as communities grow.
3. **Protect natural assets, including streams, stream corridors, wetlands, ponds, lakes, and steep slopes.** The natural landscape is key to defining Knox County's special qualities, while supporting wildlife, outdoor recreation, and minimizing climate impacts. The County has a strong tradition of open space conservation and this should continue moving forward. Land use practices should reinforce the public's priority to protect the natural landscape and minimize the footprint of future development.
4. **Conserve agricultural land.** Agriculture will remain an important economic sector for Knox County, but it also represents its collective history and culture. Moving forward, agricultural land should be continually prioritized for conservation and production, while minimizing development's footprint on the landscape. Working farms should be protected from the impact of haphazard rural development.
5. **Dedicate places for industrial employment.** The County's strongest economic sector is light/advanced manufacturing and related uses that provide employment opportunities for residents and tax revenues to support public services. Future economic development should build upon the County's successes and land set aside with supporting infrastructure and nearby housing to facilitate additional private investment.

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6. **Provide housing choices.** Current residents and future workers regarding a full range of housing options, particularly as families and individuals go through various life cycles. Housing choices should reflect the changing demographics of Knox County and ensure residents have the option to remain in their communities as households age and that future generations can call Knox County home.
7. **Stabilize established neighborhoods.** Neighborhoods in Mount Vernon and various villages throughout the County will benefit from public and private investments that stabilize home values and the physical environment. These traditional neighborhoods can offer quality environments to raise families and attract new residents, while housing workers and providing affordable housing options for aging homeowners. Their success also ensures a walkable community within close proximity of downtowns and local businesses, schools, and parks.
8. **Support and maintain unique residential places.** Knox County benefits from unique residential places, especially Apple Valley. This community exists as a quasi-public entity via its homeowner association and provides a number of services to its residents. Its continued success, while maintaining the current scale, reinforces its role as a unique residential and recreational asset in Knox County.
9. **Leverage the campuses of the higher education institutions.** Knox County is blessed by the higher education institutions that call the County home. While providing services and facilities to support local students and residents, these institutions can play a larger role in the broader community. This can include further investment in downtown Mount Vernon, educational, cultural and athletic events open to the public, and growing the County's image throughout the United States.
10. **Improve major corridors.** Indirectly, Knox County benefits from its location relative to the interstate system through the state routes that crisscross the County. These corridors link the County and its residents to Metropolitan Columbus, facilitating economic development and commuting patterns. Along with safety improvements, access management is critical to ensure efficient and safe traffic movement. This includes ensuring safe movement by the County's Amish community.

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Concept Map

The Concept Map serves as a precursor to the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Maps, illustrating where and how the County should guide future physical development and change at a conceptual level. The map is intentionally diagrammatic, featuring shaded and colored areas that indicate desired future conditions. It was created based on input from the initial round of community engagement and a thorough review of existing plans and studies. The map was reviewed by the Steering Committee and the community for input that would inform the final Future Conservation, Character, and Development Maps.

Conservation Concepts

Constrained Land
Development should be highly limited in these areas Priority should be given to preservation of natural features. Includes land that preserved and conserved in trusts, parks, etc. and land in the 100-year floodplain.

Partially Constrained
Development should be limited in these areas. Priority should be given to preservation of natural features. Includes steep slopes (15% or greater) and the 500-year flood plain.

Rural
Areas with potential for continued agricultural uses and open space, with some limited conservation oriented residential.

Recreation Focused Residential
Area with unique residential character where scale of use should be maintained.

Growth Concepts

Residential
Areas with potential for home or resident growth based on location, access to services, and surrounding context.

Neighborhood Stabilization
Areas with potential for reinvestment and revitalization.

Mixed Center, small scale
Smaller areas with potential for mixed commercial, retail, and limited residential growth.

Mixed Center, large scale
Larger areas with potential for mixed commercial, retail, and residential growth.

Priority Corridor
Corridors that may need infrastructure reinvestment or that have potential for employment and commercial growth.

Employment Center
Areas with potential for job or employment growth.

Higher Education Employment Center
Areas with potential for higher education focused job or employment growth.

Development Edge
Conceptual growth boundary for areas with development potential.

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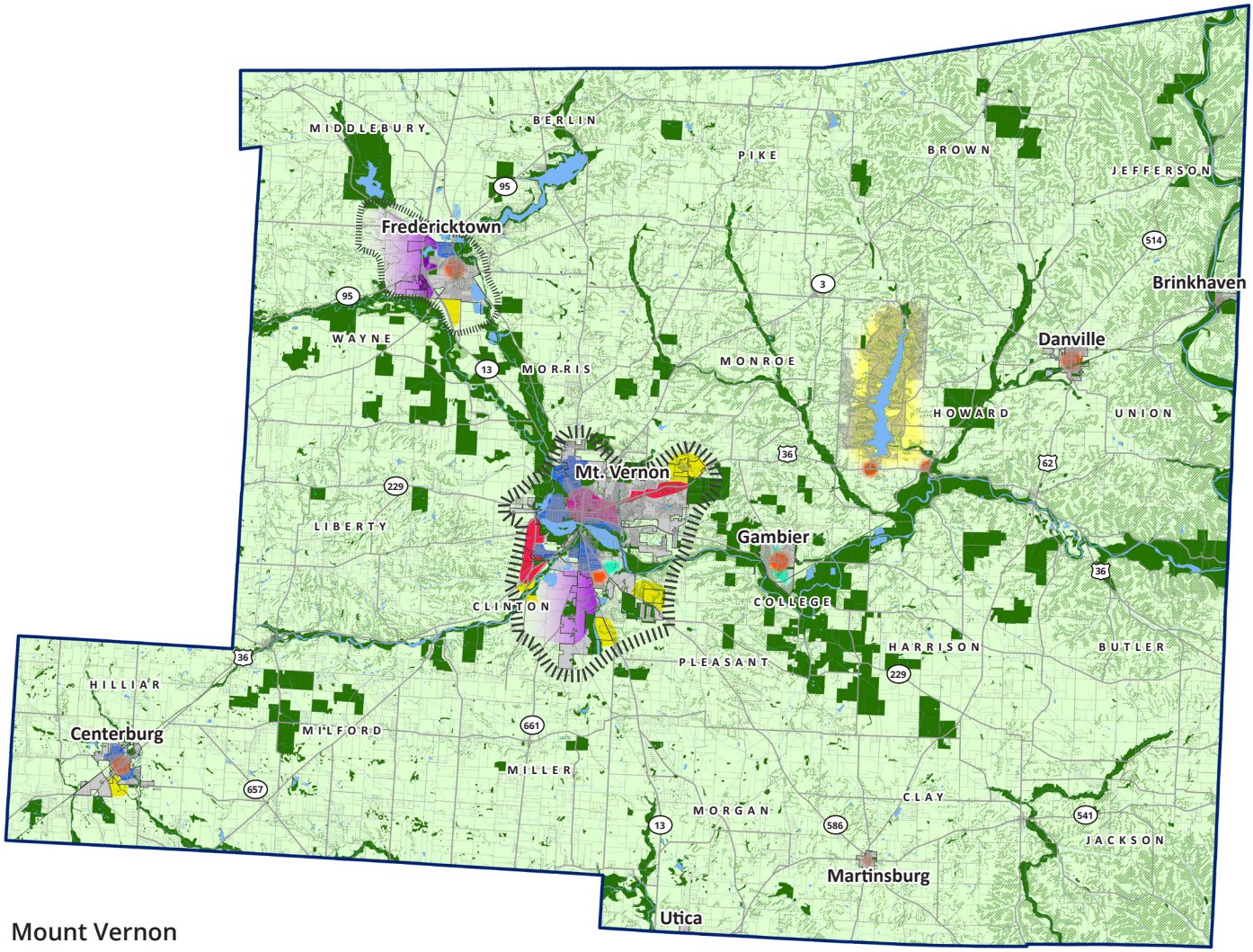
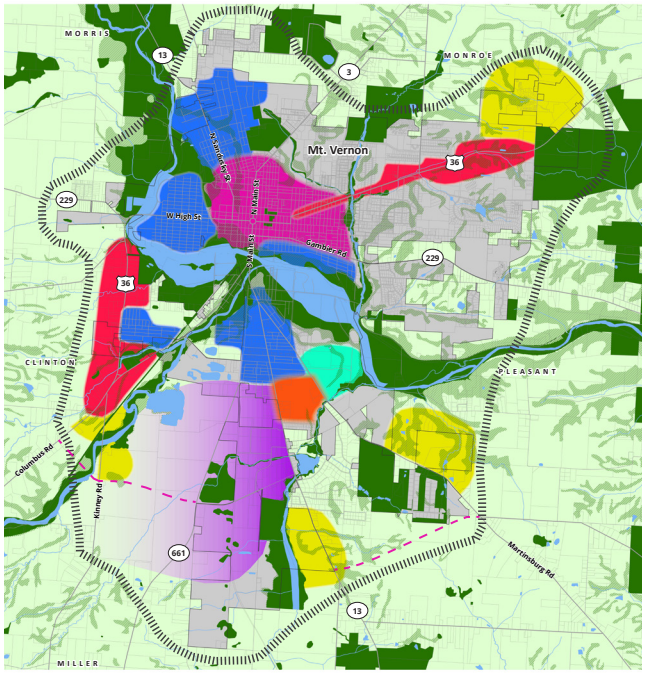
Knox County



Mount Vernon



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Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map

The Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map expresses the county's intent in more specific terms regarding how land resources should be used in the future. The map identifies preferred future character types. Each type describes attributes of form and function, including the size and type of buildings and their relationship to the street, the surrounding street and block pattern, parking and access, and land uses.

Benefits of a Character-based Approach

This plan takes a character-based approach to shaping the county's future conservation, character, and development. While the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map includes both primary and secondary land uses in each character type, it also shows the built form that is desired in each area.

There are several advantages to this enhanced approach, including the following:

- It describes an overall intent for each character type, which helps staff, Regional Planning Commission, elected officials, developers/ builders, and the public understand whether a particular development or project fits the spirit of the character type;
- It sets clearer expectations about the physical characteristics of development in an easy-to-understand format, which conveys standards for new development that can be used to assess how well a development aligns with community character; and
- It establishes a foundation for zoning code updates and other regulations, especially form-based standards.

The Future Concept, Character, and Development Map was developed based on the input and analysis conducted during this planning process, as reflected in the Concept Map.

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Implementing the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map

The Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map depicts appropriate future conservation and development patterns throughout the county. It reinforces existing patterns in some areas and supports changes in other areas. This element of the comprehensive plan is implemented through county regulations and the zoning codes of the city, villages, and townships.

Zoning is a legal tool that regulates land use, including types of structures that may be built, how they are to be built, where they are to be built, and how they may be used. Some townships in the county do not utilize zoning (reference page 17). Each property in a community with adopted zoning is assigned to a zone. There may be more than one appropriate zone for a particular future character type. For example, there is one employment center type, but there may be two or three commercial or industrial zones to account for various intensities, activities, and contexts. The conservation and development map is implemented over time through many distinct public and private development decisions.

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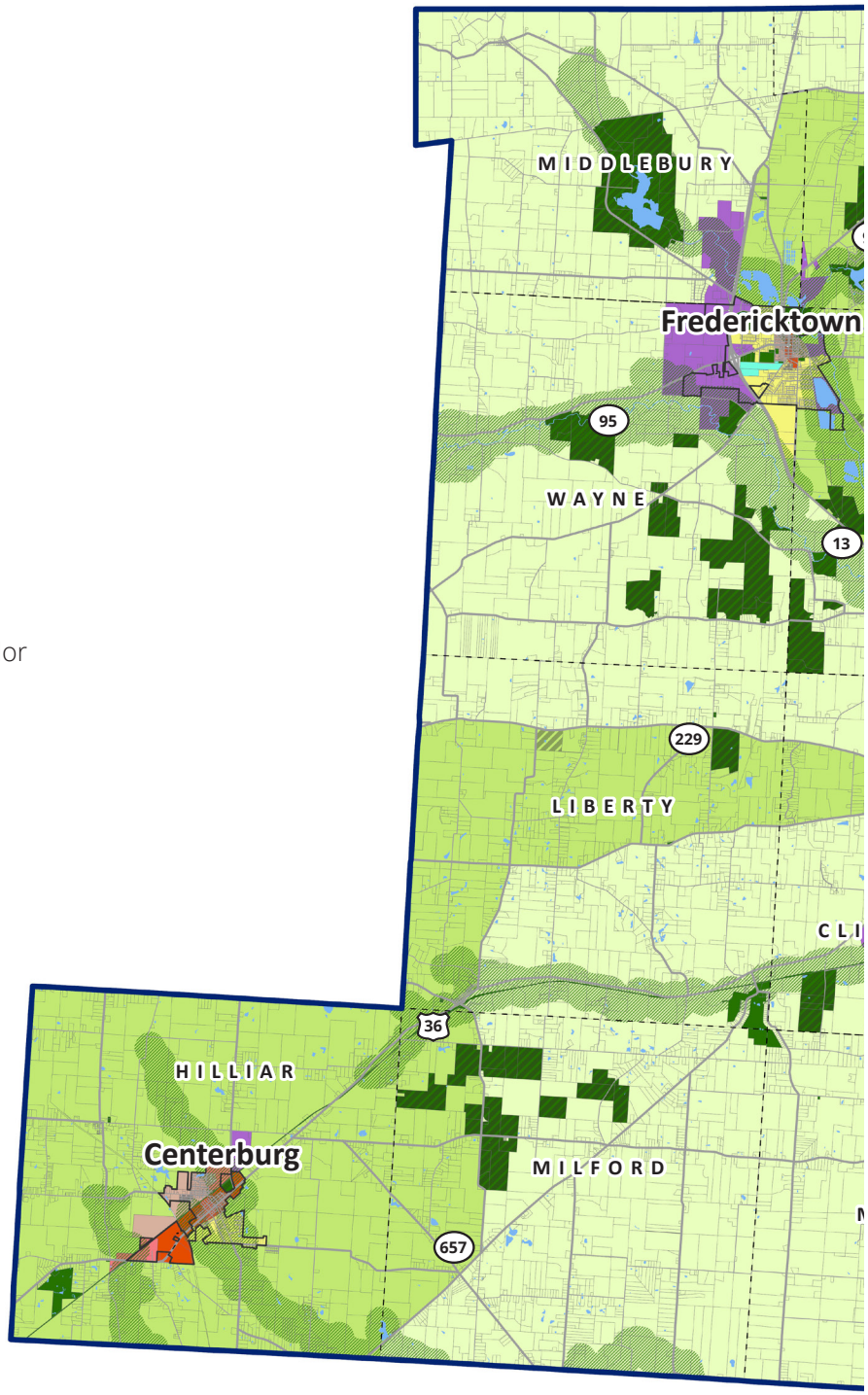
Knox County Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map

Legend

- Open Space *(Public & Private)*
- Low Impact & Conservation
- Traditional Agriculture
- Mixed Rural
- Residential 1
- Residential 2
- Residential 3
- Community / Village Center
- Town Center
- Economic Development Corridor
- Employment Center
- Lake-Oriented Residential
- Campus
- County
- Municipal Boundaries
- Township Boundaries
- Flood Hazard Buffer
- Conserved Land Parcels
- Water



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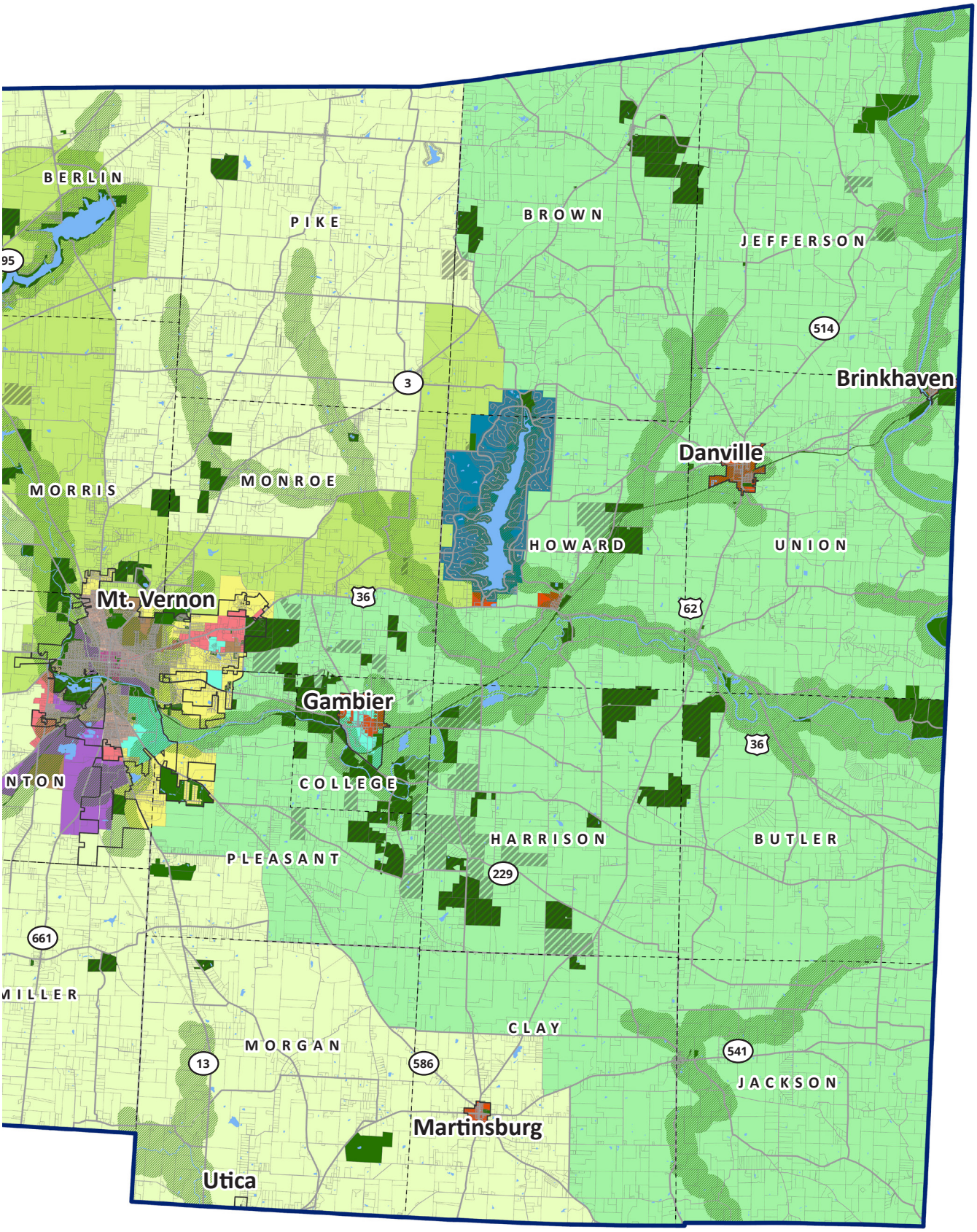

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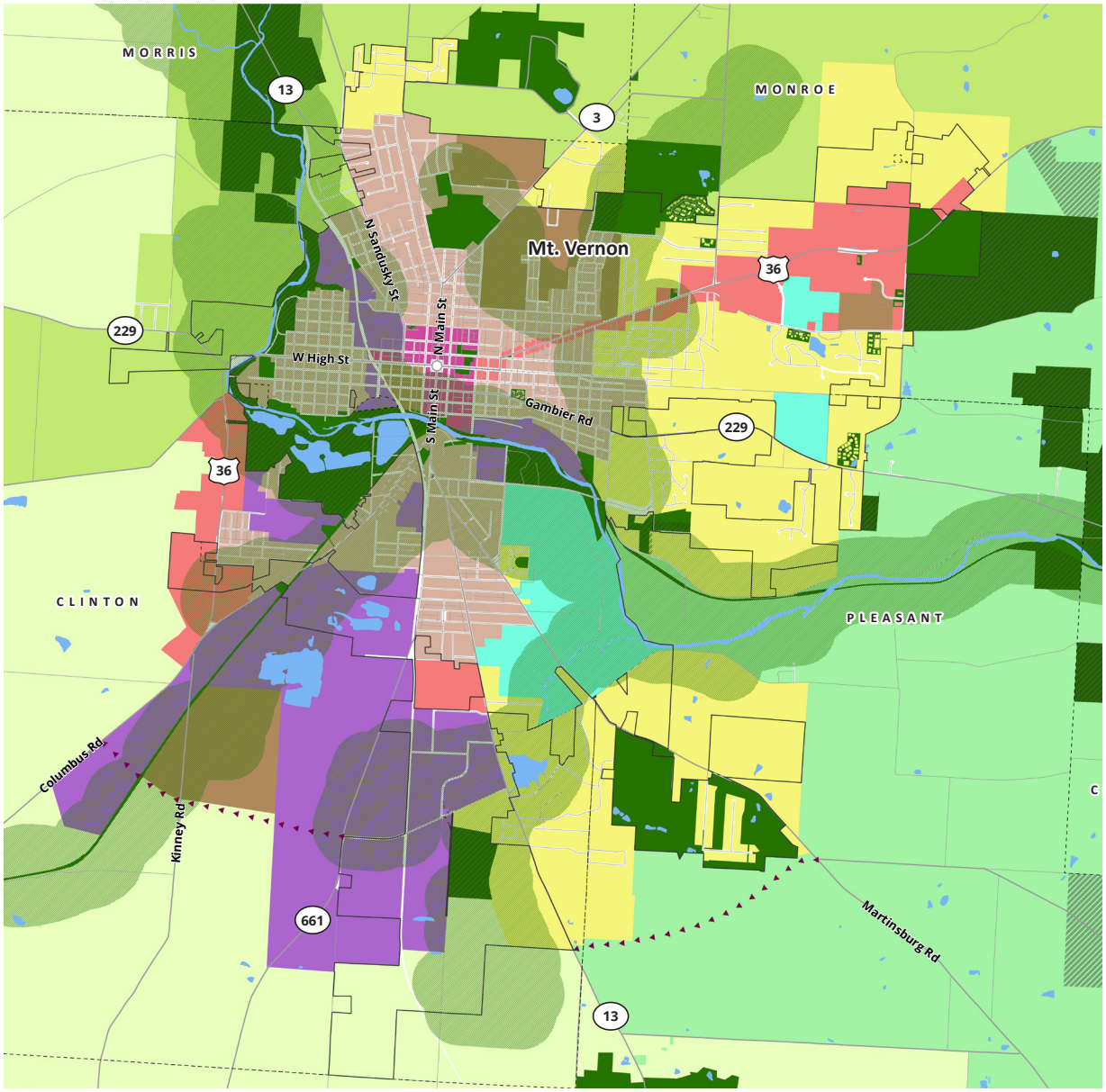
Mount Vernon Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map



Legend

- Open Space *(Public & Private)*
- Low Impact & Conservation
- Traditional Agriculture
- Mixed Rural
- Residential 1
- Residential 2
- Residential 3
- Community / Village Center
- Town Center
- Economic Development Corridor
- Employment Center
- Lake-Oriented Residential
- Campus
- County
- Municipal Boundaries
- Township Boundaries
- Flood Hazard Buffer
- Conserved Land Parcels
- Water

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Open Space

Open Space areas are intended for recreation or land that is permanently maintained as an open area. These areas may be improved with amenities and other enhancements based on community desire. These areas feature large open parcels or wooded areas, as well as regional greenways, trails, and bikeways.

INTENT

- Highlight the natural features of the county.
- Preserve existing green space and limit development.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas.
- Provide access to recreational opportunities.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Parks and open space

Natural and conservation areas

Secondary Uses

Civic and institutional

OPEN SPACE

Could be used for parks and recreation areas, viewshed, historic/geologic attractions, drainage areas, riparian areas, and more.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

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Low Impact and Conservation

Low Impact and Conservation are areas with unique landscape, heavy woodlands, and natural features. These areas include large lot, single-family homesites. Public parkland and conservation areas are appropriate. Public water and sewer services not intended for these areas outside of existing villages. Significant, new development is not appropriate or anticipated.

INTENT

- Conserve valuable environmental and aesthetic resources.
- Protect sensitive natural resources such as waterways, wetlands, and floodplains.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Parks and open space

Natural and conservation areas

Large lot single-family residential

Secondary Uses

Civic and institutional

Community-based commercial and retail

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

N/A

Parking

Private off-street

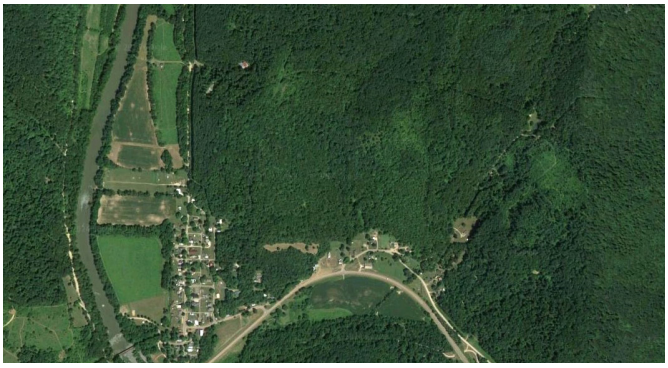
Streets

Primarily automobile access
Subdivisions have long blocks and meandering streets
Sidewalks are uncommon.

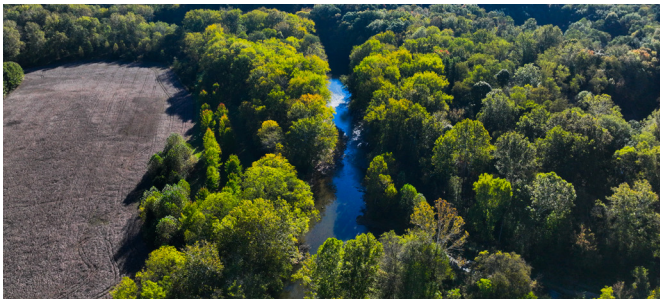
OPEN SPACE

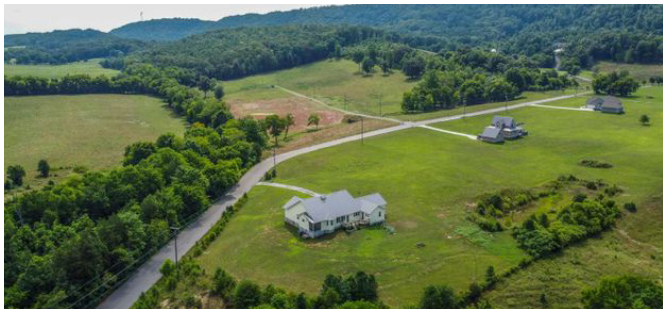
Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access. May include wildlife areas.

EXAMPLE PATTERN



EXAMPLE CHARACTER





Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Traditional Agriculture

Traditional Agriculture areas are primarily of agricultural use and may also include single-family residential within a rural setting. These areas may include some limited commercial that supports agricultural and civic uses. Buildings are generally set far back from the roadway on large lots.

INTENT

- Traditional agriculture aesthetic is maintained.
- Support transition in scale between denser character areas and Traditional Agriculture to preserve the rural character.
- Conserve farmland and ensure the long-term viability of existing farms.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Agriculture

Parks and open space

Secondary Uses

Rural single-family residential

Civic and institutional

Agriculture-related and small-scale commercial

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

N/A

Parking

Private surface lots and private off-street; individual drives.

Streets

Primarily automobile access. Subdivisions have long blocks and meandering streets. Sidewalks are uncommon.

OPEN SPACE

Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Mixed Rural

Mixed Rural areas have a blend of agricultural land, residential, and commercial development. These areas are largely agricultural in character but may see more large lot subdivisions, lot splits, and very limited suburban style patterns in a rural setting. Building setbacks and lot size may vary more widely than in other rural and conservation areas.

INTENT

- Provide residential growth opportunities while maintaining agricultural use.
- Encourage clustered residential development to preserve agricultural land.
- Provide areas for agriculture-related commercial activities.
- Encourage flexible design that maximizes preservation of agricultural land and open space.
- Maintain rural aethetic.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential

Agriculture

Secondary Uses

Commercial-retail, small scale

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Parking

Private surface lots and private off-street; individual drives.

Streets

Primarily automobile access, but development should accommodate walking and biking by providing street and path connections between adjacent commercial sites and neighborhoods.

OPEN SPACE

Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

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Lake-Oriented Residential

Lake Oriented Residetial are primarily residential areas that are intended to support low intensity develoment and access to Apple Valley Lake. These areas are appropriate for single-family housing and limited commercial services. This type has similarities with Suburban Neighborhoods but is distinct due to the unique conditions around Apple Valley Lake. Homes may be situated on large lots or clustered with enhanced protection of open space.

INTENT

- Encourage development and redevelopment that is harmonious with the unique environmental character.
- Preserve the aestetic quality of the lakefront.
- Allow appropriately scaled commercial services.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential

Secondary Uses

Small-scale commercial and services

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

20-30 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Parking

On-street and private off-street; individual drives from street.

Streets

Culs-de-sac should be limited while dead-end streets are restricted unless for future planned street connections.

OPEN SPACE

Public neighborhood parks should be located in prominent locations. Some residential areas could include shared access to private open space.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Residential 1

Residential 1 areas are primarily single-family residential subdivisions with a range of lot sizes. These areas may have limited small-scale multi-family residential. Housing styles are consistent within subdivisions. Neighborhoods should be well-connected by street, trail, and sidewalk networks, and integrate parks and civic uses.

INTENT

- Provide single-family housing options that accomodate a range of family size and preferences.
- Encourage front porches and smaller backyards.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- Encourage development adjacent to commercial/ mixed-use areas or in areas with access to existing utility infrastructure.
- Maintain and expand public realm features including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential

Secondary Uses

Multi-family residential

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

30 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Parking

On-street and private off-street; individual drives from street/alley. Limit front-facing garages.

Streets

Culs-de-sac should be limited while dead-end streets are restricted unless for future planned street connections.

OPEN SPACE

Public neighborhood parks should be located in prominent locations. Schools could also supplement public parks. Some residential areas could include shared access to private open space.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Residential 2

Residential 2 areas are primarily single-family residential with a higher percentage of attached homes and some multi-family units, with connectivity between neighborhoods and other non-residential areas. They are characterized by grid-like street networks and shifting architectural styles.

INTENT

- Allow residential infill that complements the existing character (building scale, placement, design, etc.).
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- Integrate a housing mix of single-family detached, some single-family attached (duplexes, townhomes, etc.), and some multi-family (apartments).
- Continue historic preservation efforts in village and city centers to maintain existing neighborhood character.
- Integrate multi-modal transportation options.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential, detached and attached

Multi-family residential

Secondary Uses

Office

Commercial

Specialty housing (age-targeted, etc.)

Civic/institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-3 Stories

Setback

10-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike, Transit

Parking

On-street and private off street; individual drives from street/alley and shared drives for multifamily. No front-facing garages.

Streets

Culs-de-sac should be limited while dead-end streets are restricted unless for future planned street connections.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Compared to residential 1, there is more public open space in the form of neighborhood and community parks, pocket parks, and preserved passive open space. Schools could also supplement public parks. Some residential areas could include shared access to private open space.

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Residential 3

Residential 3 areas are primarily multi-family residential with connectivity between neighborhoods and other non-residential areas. They are characterized by grid-like street networks and shifting architectural styles. These areas may include small-scale retail or office.

INTENT

- Provide housing options that accomodate a range of family sizes and lifestyles.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- To support residents, neighborhood-scale commercial uses located in convenient and accessible areas are encouraged.
- Preserve historic buildings when possible.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Multi-family residential

Single-family residential, attached

Secondary Uses

Office

Commercial

Specialty housing (age-targeted, etc.)

Civic/Institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-3 Stories

Setback

0-20 feet, generally consistent within a block

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike , Transit

Secondary Mode(s)

Automobile

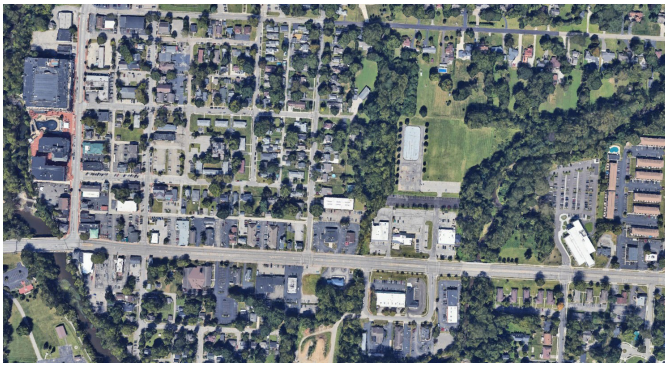
Parking

On-street and private off-street; typically located to the side or rear of buildings and could be shared.

Streets

Blocks are small and walkable with many street connections; alleys are common.

EXAMPLE PATTERN



EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Compared to residential 1, there is more public open space in the form of neighborhood and community parks, pocket parks, and preserved passive open space. Private yards tend to be small and secondary to other open space. Neighborhood schools could serve as open space.

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Employment Center

Employment Center areas are characterized by light industrial-style development, high technology, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and office. Large footprint structures offer flexible space to accomodate market demand for various users.

INTENT

- Encourage industrial and employment uses that provide job opportunities and support the County's tax base.
- Support industrial and employment activities away from neighborhoods.
- Utilize natural or man made buffers to separate industry from other uses.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Light industrial
Advanced manufacturing
Office
Logistics
Flex-office
Data centers

Secondary Uses

Commercial
Civic and institutional
Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-4 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Transit, Walk/Bike

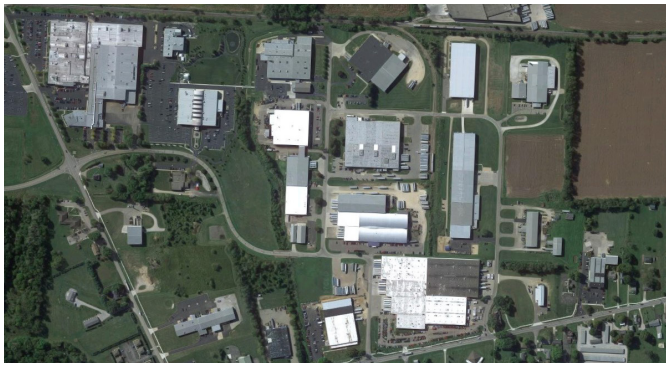
Parking

Surface lots, shared

Streets

Primarily automobile-oriented development, include accommodation for large trucks. Site design and block length should accommodate biking and other transportation alternatives.

EXAMPLE PATTERN



EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Trail connections, passive preserved land, landscaped setback areas, and stormwater detention; generally private.

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Economic Development Corridor

Economic Development Corridor areas accomodate an array of uses that include commercial, office, and light industrial. These uses are adjacent to arterial roads that serve the region or multiple neighborhoods. Existing development is characterized by buildings set far back from the street behind large surface parking areas. Over time, new development and redevelopment in these areas is encouraged to raise design quality and improve mobility and accessibility for all users of the corridor.

INTENT

- Accomodate a wide range of uses to serve a regional market.
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and nearby public uses (schools, parks, etc.)
- Improve/provide public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and street trees.
- Locate new buildings near the street and accomodate parking to the side or rear of buildings.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Office

Vertical mixed-use

Small-scale light industrial

Secondary Uses

Commercial

Multi-family residential

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-3 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Transit, Walk/Bike

Parking

Surface lots

Streets

Primarily automobile-oriented development and may include accommodation for large trucks. Site design and block length should encourage pedestrian and cyclist access.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Trail connections, passive preserved land, and landscaped setback areas; generally private.

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Campus

Campus areas include higher education campuses and the mixed-use areas around them. These areas are arranged in a walkable pattern and include a mix of uses either within a single building or connected sites. Housing in these areas generally serves the residential population and includes a mix of housing types.

INTENT

- Coordinate development with higher education institutions.
- Create and reinforce walkable activity centers that are connected to surrounding development and include a mix of complementary uses.
- Improve public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, landscaping, and street trees.
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between civic spaces and adjacent land uses.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Higher education campus

Student-oriented development

Student housing

Athletic and cultural facilities

Vertical mixed-use

Multi-family residential

Secondary Uses

Small-scale commercial and retail

Single-family residential

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-5 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Secondary Mode(s)

Transit, Automobile

Parking

Large surface lots that are clustered to serve many buildings/uses; Larger campuses may include structured parking.

Streets

Streets should integrate with the surrounding network and be designed to support walking or biking (both within the campus and between adjacent areas).

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Mostly private, may feature neighborhood or pocket parks, and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street). May have trail access.

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Community/Village Center

Community/Village Centers are traditional activity centers with a mix of small-scale commercial and residential uses. These areas may be located in incorporated or unincorporated areas. Buildings are set closer to the road on smaller lots but setbacks and lot sizes may vary.

INTENT

- Provide a vibrant mix of uses that supports a range of activities and amenities.
- Encourage streetscape continuity with respect to scale and character.
- Continue historic preservation efforts to maintain the existing neighborhood character within local historic districts.
- Support adaptive reuse of existing buildings.
- Improve and provide public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, landscaping, and street trees.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses	*Secondary Uses*
Vetical mixed-use	Commercial
Single-family residential	Civic and institutional
Multi-family residential	Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

0-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Secondary Mode(s)

Automobile

Parking

On-street, shared structures, or shared surface lots located to the side or rear of buildings.

Streets

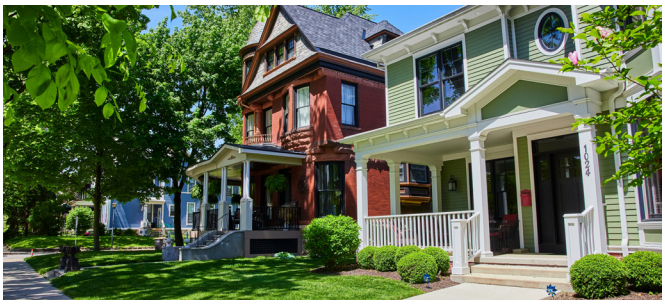
Streets should promote a walkable setting with short block lengths, wide sidewalks, and street trees.

OPEN SPACE

Community and neighborhood parks, pocket parks, plazas, trails, green infrastructure, and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street) act as open space.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER



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Town Center

Town Center areas are large and more compact walkable mixed-use areas with employment, commercial, residential, civic, and supporting uses integrated horizontally and vertically with connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

INTENT

- Provide a wide variety of goods and services contributing to vibrant streets and public spaces.
- Improve connections and transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reduce and consolidate surface parking while encouraging shared parking.
- Provide small-scale public gathering places.
- Create a comfortable pedestrian experience.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Vertical mixed-use

Horizontal mixed-use

Multi-family residential

Secondary Uses

Commercial and retail

Civic and institutional

Office

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-4 Stories

Setback

0-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Secondary Mode(s)

Automobile

Parking

On-street, shared structures, or shared surface lots located to the side or rear of buildings.

Streets

Streets should promote a walkable setting with short block lengths, wide sidewalks, and street trees.

OPEN SPACE

Community and neighborhood parks, pocket parks, plazas, trails, green infrastructure, and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street) act as open space.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Actions

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goals of **Rural Conservation, Strengthened Centers, and Land Use and Development.**

Objective 1. Conserve critical natural assets and prime agricultural land.

Conserving critical natural assets and prime agricultural land is crucial for sustaining Knox County's agricultural productivity and environmental health. These lands offer essential ecosystem services, support biodiversity, and bolster the local economy. Implementing strategies to shield these resources from development pressures and ensure their ongoing use is vital for preserving the County's agricultural heritage and natural beauty.

1.1 Promote opportunities and efforts to protect critical natural resources.

It is essential to support both public and private initiatives to ensure the lasting protection of critical natural resources. By promoting tools such as land acquisition, conservation easements, and other protective measures, all local governments will safeguard these valuable resources against inappropriate development. These strategies will help maintain the ecological integrity and sustainability of the natural landscapes for the benefit of the community.

1.2. Adopt development standards that cluster development and permanently conserve natural assets.

As vacant land is developed, promote clustering development to minimize environmental impact and preserve open spaces. Where appropriate, consider implementing density transfers on development sites to offset the costs of setting aside open spaces. These measures will help balance growth with the preservation of the county's valuable natural resources.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

1.3 Explore a full range of measures to protect prime agricultural areas from the intrusion of residential uses that might otherwise create conflicts.

Protective measures could include establishing agricultural stabilization zones to maintain the integrity of farming areas, implementing conservation easements to limit non-agricultural development, and developing policies that prioritize agricultural uses over residential uses. These strategies will help ensure the long-term sustainability and productivity of prime agricultural lands.

1.4 Continue to promote agricultural conservation programs and practices, while considering alternative funding sources.

Adopting these strategies can ensure the continued protection and sustainability of agricultural resources. This could involve looking at successful examples, such as Granville Township in Licking County, Ohio, which has effectively implemented conservation initiatives by generating revenues via voter-approved property levies and grants. Additionally, exploring alternative funding sources, such as grants and public-private partnerships, will be essential to support these programs. Other programs provided under local, state, and federal law such as Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) and Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) could be explored as complementary actions.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

1.5 Establish and continue partnerships to conserve working farms throughout Knox County.

Collaborations with partners like the Farm Bureau, stakeholders, and property owners are essential to support and sustain working farms. This could involve joint initiatives to promote agricultural best practices, securing funding for conservation projects, and creating educational programs to raise awareness about the importance of preserving agricultural land. Continue to support the Knox County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Ohio Department of Agriculture and more as they continue the long-standing practice of conducting conservation and education efforts with private landowners.

Farming in Knox County

Agriculture in Knox County, Ohio, is a vital part of the local economy, with over 1,300 working farms. While non-farming residents often envision agriculture as picturesque landscapes with rolling hills, peaceful grazing animals, and bucolic charm, the reality can be quite different. Farms may be large, possibly industrial operations that utilize extensive machinery and large farm vehicles, which can lead to increased noise, traffic, dust, and odors. These farms are essential for producing significant quantities of crops and livestock, contributing to the County's substantial agricultural output. Despite the contrast between perception and reality, agriculture remains a cornerstone of the community, balancing modern farming practices with the idyllic rural image cherished by many residents.

A working farm is defined as a farm whose agricultural land and buildings are in active use for crop production and/or the raising of livestock. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines a farm as any place from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year. Historically, family farms were common, with families providing all the labor and owning all the land and capital. However, this is no longer universally true, as many farms now hire nonfamily labor, rent land or other capital, and contract for various farm services. The USDA Economic Research Service categorizes farms into three groups: Residence Farms, which have less than $350,000 in gross cash farm income and where the principal operator is either retired or has a primary occupation other than farming; Intermediate Farms, which also have less than $350,000 in gross cash farm income but where the principal operator's primary occupation is farming; and Commercial Farms, which have $350,000 or more in gross cash farm income and include nonfamily farms. This classification is relevant to understanding the diverse nature of farms in Knox County, which range from small family-run operations to large industrial farms, all contributing to the local agricultural landscape.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

1.6 Revise regulations to discourage development in areas that go against the objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

Updating regulations is crucial to ensure that development aligns with the community's long-term vision. This involves refining zoning laws and land-use policies to protect natural resources, maintain open spaces, and safeguard prime agricultural land. By implementing stricter guidelines and enforcement measures, the county can support balanced and environmentally conscious development while preserving its natural assets and agricultural heritage.

Objective 2. Enhance rural character.

Enhancing rural character is essential for preserving the unique identity and charm of Knox County's countryside. This involves maintaining the scenic landscapes, historic sites, and traditional agricultural practices that define the rural areas.

2.1 Update County subdivision regulations to promote conservation development design and work with townships to provide comparable measures in local zoning resolutions.

Incorporate conservation development design guidelines into the Subdivision Regulations, effectively discouraging urban sprawl and protecting farmland. Townships could adopt a residential conservation development zoning district that permits residential clustering and mandates the permanent preservation of at least 50 percent of a site can create a residential transition that protects nearby agricultural areas.

2.2 Increase minimum lot sizes in primarily agricultural areas to reduce residential densities and discourage the development of rural subdivisions.

Update county subdivision standards to increase the minimum lot frontage to 200 feet and the minimum lot size to two acres for lots utilizing on-site water and septic systems. Revise the three feet to one-foot “depth to width” requirement to a minimum rather than a maximum. Require additional setbacks and buffering when a residential subdivision abuts a farm. Townships should explore increasing minimum lot sizes to five acres or more in areas where farming predominates while allowing a limited number of lot splits from existing farms as a conditional use to provide flexibility for current owners.

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2.3 Investigate appropriate alternatives to on-lot septic and wells.

Explore viable alternatives to on-lot septic systems and wells to discourage rural sprawl and conserve natural resources and agricultural areas. This investigation should focus on identifying and promoting centralized sewer and water systems for clustered development. By reducing reliance on private septic and well systems, Knox County can better manage growth, protect water quality, and preserve the integrity of the rural and agricultural landscapes.

2.4 Provide protections for rural view sheds.

The natural landscapes and viewsheds are integral to the cherished rural character of the County. Conduct an analysis of current protections and implement new measures within the development review process to ensure these rural vistas, open spaces, and natural areas are maintained and conserved.

2.5 *Incorporate viewshed analysis into subdivision regulations.*

This process ensures that new developments do not obstruct or degrade important scenic vistas, maintaining the open, undeveloped feel that defines rural landscapes. Protecting these views can help to retain the unique visual and cultural qualities that make rural areas special. This thoughtful approach to planning balances development needs with the preservation of natural beauty, benefiting both current and future residents.

2.6 Develop a template for township zoning regulations that includes design standards, viewshed analysis, and conservation principles.

This template would provide clear guidelines for new developments, ensuring they adhere to specific design standards that enhance aesthetic appeal and functionality. Incorporating viewshed analysis helps protect scenic vistas and maintain the rural character of the area by preventing visual obstructions. Additionally, integrating conservation principles promotes the preservation of natural resources and biodiversity, encouraging environmentally responsible development. This holistic template aims to balance growth with the preservation of the community's unique visual and ecological assets, fostering a harmonious and sustainable living environment.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

2.7 Mitigate conflicts and educate stakeholders as to the realities of living in an agricultural community.

This action aims to address potential misunderstandings and disputes that may arise between agricultural operations and other community members through proactive communication and engagement strategies. Provide clear information about farming practices, seasonal activities, and the importance of agriculture to the local economy to allow stakeholders to develop a better understanding and appreciation of the agricultural lifestyle. Educational initiatives, such as community meetings, informational brochures, and farm tours, can help bridge the gap between farmers and non-farm residents, fostering a sense of mutual respect and cooperation. This approach not only reduces conflicts but also strengthens the community's support for its agricultural heritage.

Objective 3. Focus growth and development inward.

Directing development towards established communities can reduce urban sprawl, preserve open spaces, and enhance the quality of life for residents. Encouraging inward growth ensures that development is both economically and environmentally responsible. This objective prioritizes the revitalization of existing urban and suburban areas, making the most of current infrastructure and resources.

3.1 Adopt regulations that encourage infill and redevelopment in city and village centers and support higher-density mixed-use projects in downtown areas.

Encouraging infill and redevelopment in city and village centers, along with supporting higher-density mixed-use projects in downtown areas, can create a more walkable community by integrating housing with retail, office, and related services. This approach enhances fiscal sustainability by maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and helps prevent urban sprawl, thereby avoiding the public expense of upgrading utility systems and roads. This can be achieved by adopting regulations that incentivize developers to focus on key vacant sites and underdeveloped corridors, and by providing streamlined approval processes for mixed-use projects in these areas.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

3.2 Implement measures that add value to existing infill sites.

Implementing measures that enhance the value of existing infill sites is crucial for discouraging sprawl. This can be achieved through tools such as density bonuses, which incentivize higher-density development in targeted areas. Cities and villages can also use transfer of development rights, which allow for the preservation of open spaces by shifting development potential to more suitable locations. These strategies help maximize the use of existing urban areas, promoting sustainable growth and efficient land use.

3.3 Update zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure new growth in the city and villages remains compatible with existing scale, form, and intensity of use.

Ensure that new development and infill align with the community's character in terms of density, height, architectural style, landscaping, and other development elements. Review village zoning codes to identify any standards that may conflict with this objective, particularly regarding building height and setbacks. The City of Mount Vernon's CB District Architectural Standards can serve as a best practice for this action. The County should develop similar standards for individual villages to ensure new investments reinforce the historic design character of each downtown in Knox County.

3.4 Update subdivision design standards.

Revise the guidelines that dictate the layout, appearance, and functionality of new developments to ensure that the standards reflect the actions in this Comprehensive Plan. Updating these standards can promote more efficient land use, enhance the visual appeal of neighborhoods, and ensure that new developments are in harmony with the existing character of the area.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

3.5 Support the Downtown Experience Coordinator position.

Supporting the Downtown Experience Coordinator position, housed within the Area Development Foundation, is crucial for enhancing the vibrancy and vitality of the villages in Knox County. This role focuses on creating and implementing initiatives that attract visitors, support local businesses, and foster a lively community atmosphere. By backing this position, stakeholders can ensure that efforts to improve downtown areas are well-coordinated and effective, leading to increased economic activity, cultural events, and community engagement. Ultimately, the Downtown Experience Coordinator plays a key role in making Knox County's villages more dynamic and appealing places to live, work, and visit.

Objective 4. Optimize and improve infrastructure networks.

This objective focuses on upgrading and maintaining critical infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and communication systems to meet current and future demands. Investing in modern, resilient infrastructure supports economic growth and improves public safety. Prioritizing these improvements ensures that the County remains well-connected and capable of supporting a thriving community.

4.1 Prepare a Knox County Water Quality Management Plan.

Water Quality Management (208) plans outline and advocate for effective, comprehensive programs aimed at controlling water pollution from both point and nonpoint sources within a specific geographic area. Collaborate with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and other regional partners to conduct the process and prepare a plan. This proactive approach is essential for accommodating future growth and preserving the integrity of the water supply.

4.2 Develop a comprehensive map of Knox County's water and wastewater systems.

Understanding the layout of Knox County's water and wastewater infrastructure is crucial for planning and accommodating future growth. Mapping the systems will allow the County to identify current capacities, pinpoint areas needing upgrades, and ensure that new developments are seamlessly integrated into the existing network.

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4.3 Adopt a water conservation and reuse strategy.

Water reuse (also commonly known as water recycling or water reclamation) reclaims water from various sources and treats and reuses it for beneficial purposes such as agriculture and irrigation, potable water supplies, groundwater replenishment, industrial processes, and environmental restoration. Implementing a water conservation and reuse strategy in Knox County would ensure a resilient water supply, reducing the strain on natural resources as development increases.

4.4 Promote development on vacant and under-utilized parcels with infrastructure services.

The City and villages should identify vacant or under-utilized properties with access to infrastructure like water, sewer, and storm systems that could attract market interest and stimulate private investment in urban areas. Communities should engage with the owners of these parcels to encourage development and facilitate connections with potential investors.

4.5 Prioritize infill and redevelopment in the existing system service areas before considering system expansions.

Before considering annexation proposals, utility capacity studies should be conducted to determine the current limits of utility systems and identify necessary improvements to maximize existing urban areas. If a private entity proposes development outside existing service areas requiring annexation, the city and villages should evaluate the benefits of such development, considering the need to discourage sprawl and protect farmland or critical natural resources. The City of Mount Vernon and villages with utility services should prioritize infill and redevelopment within existing service areas before considering system expansions unless those expansions support economic development and job creation.

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4.6 Focus attention on major corridors to minimize sprawl, enhance safety, and reduce congestion..

Support increased development intensity along major corridors adjacent to existing density and development, including on US 36 and SR 13. Prioritize capital investments that reflect the character and history of these areas. Additionally, prioritize safety investments that reduce congestion, ensure public safety, facilitate pedestrian and bike access, manage access, and address the unique needs of the Amish community. These measures will enhance the functionality and appeal of major corridors while minimizing sprawl.

Credit: Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

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3

Economic, Workforce, and Housing Resilience

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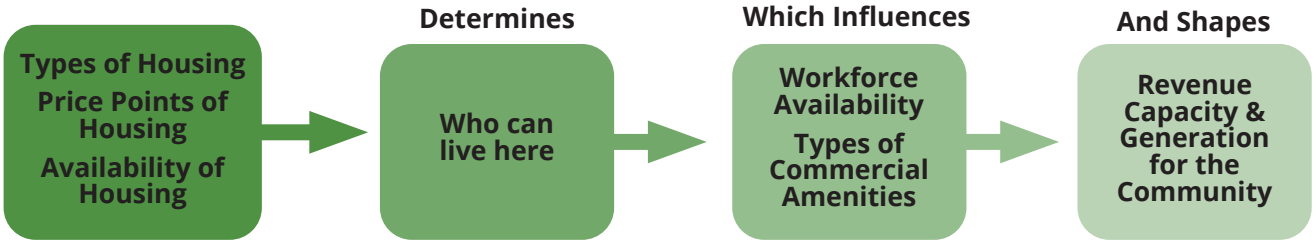
Economic prosperity in Knox County is strongly dependent on the opportunity of housing, workforce availability, training opportunities, and a diversified employment base. Specifically, the connection between housing and workforce availability is vital. The amount of available units, types, price points, and location affects workforce availability as it attracts the amount and types of workers needed to meet local workforce demand. Diverse and abundant housing also impacts what retail, restaurant and commercial opportunities are available in the county. These opportunities, coupled with a robust and stable manufacturing sector, not only provide more employment and spending opportunities, but also creates financial stability for local governments, through increased revenue generation. This chapter further demonstrates the connection between housing availability, workforce demand, and economic prosperity and diversity.

Relationship Between Housing and Workforce



Goals

The content in this chapter is focused on the following goals.

Economic Prosperity: A robust local economy with industrial growth and a wide range of employment opportunities.

Housing: A diverse range of affordable, high-quality housing options meet the needs of all community members.

Objectives

1. Support opportunities, among existing companies, and those looking to move to Knox County.
2. Pursue diversification of manufacturing opportunities.
3. Strengthen the talent pipeline.
4. Create neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing.
5. Strengthen community identity and promote tourism through strategic branding initiatives.

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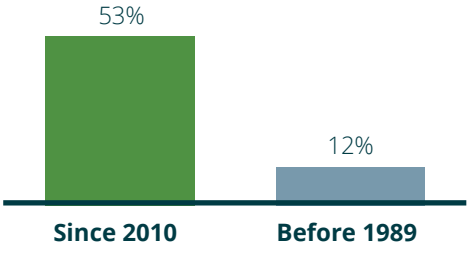
Conditions and Trends

Population, Housing, and Affordability

The housing market in Knox County comprises approximately 26,000 units, with an 11% vacancy rate. Most homes (73%) are owner-occupied, and 39% of these do not have mortgages. The owner-occupied to rental ratio is about 50/50 in Mount Vernon. The rental market makes up 20% of all housing units, with 4% being mobile homes. Notably, 67% of the housing stock was built before 1989. Older housing generally needs more upkeep and without regular maintenance could fall into disrepair, creating a need for a home repair program of some kind. Upkeep on older homes tends to be more expensive than on newer homes as well. Further, rental housing is important to several key demographics in Knox County. Older residents are utilizing rental housing in increasing numbers, due to smaller household size and desire for maintenance-free residences. Currently, 32% of residents over 65 live in an owner occupied single-family home. Younger people, a key workforce demographic, particularly those just starting out on their own, rely on rental housing for residence, while they get financially and professionally established as well. Knox County employers like educational and healthcare institutions utilize short-time (a few months to a year) rentals to house workers, particularly highly-educated professional positions. For example, of those moving to Knox County since 2010, 80% have occupied rental units.

Knox County has shown a modest 3% population growth since 2010, ranking it 18/88 counties in Ohio for population growth. This modest growth is expected to continue over the next several decades. The Mid-Ohio Planning Commission estimates that Knox County's population will increase to about 70,000 by 2050. What does appear to be happening is a robust population transition. Over the next 10 to 15 years, Knox County could see a substantial population change due to a rise in the death rate, a decrease in the birth rate, and the arrival of new residents moving into the county. This can already be observed. For example, more than half (53%) of the county's residents have moved in since 2010. For comparison, only 12% of residents have lived in the county since before 1988. As the population

Moved to Knox County Owners and Renters



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changes, its housing preferences could as well. As work-from-home becomes regularized, and the county population continues to age, the pressure on more diverse housing choices will increase. Those leaving the County had a lower average adjusted gross income (AGI) than those arriving, which could create a demand for more higher-end housing. Entering households are also smaller than the average household with 1.74 persons compared to 2.06 for existing households. The smaller household size could indicate that smaller housing units could be more in demand in the future. Again, older residents often “downsize” to smaller units when they retire and their children move out of the house. Younger residents, just starting out, also look for smaller unit sizes due to smaller household size, and financial constraints. For reference, 93% of housing units in the county are 2+ bedrooms, while only 6% are one bedroom units.

Like many surrounding communities, the housing market, post-COVID, has seen a sharp increase in prices, with the median sales price in Knox County at $275,750 in 2024. While the increase tracks closely with Licking and Delaware Counties, Knox County had a higher indexed rate. Combine the price increases with affordability of the median household, and a challenging picture emerges. The median household income ($73,988) can only afford a home priced at $135,000, highlighting a significant gap in housing affordability for median income households. Rental prices have also surged, with market rents up by 49% since 2015. In 2023, the average countywide rent was $925. For reference, a household with the median income could responsibly afford $716 in rent. Housing affordability issues are widespread, with 13% of homeowners and 47% of renters spending at least 30% (the recommended safe limit) of their income on housing. These challenges are most acute for households earning less than $35,000. Seniors, who comprise 15% of those facing affordability issues, are particularly affected.

2024 Median Home Sale Price

$275,750

Median Household Income

$73,988

Home Affordability for Median Income

$135,000

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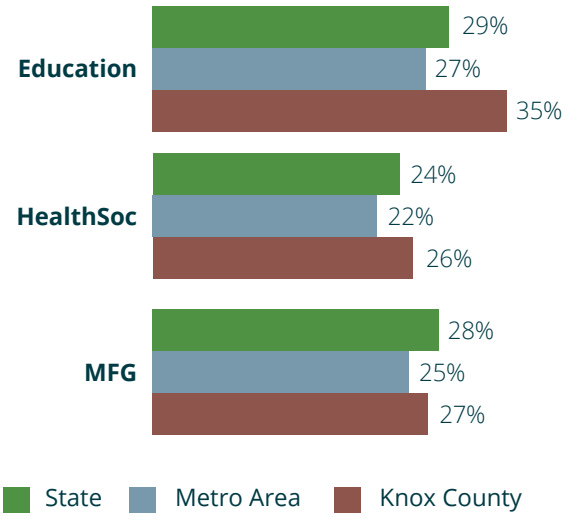
Workforce

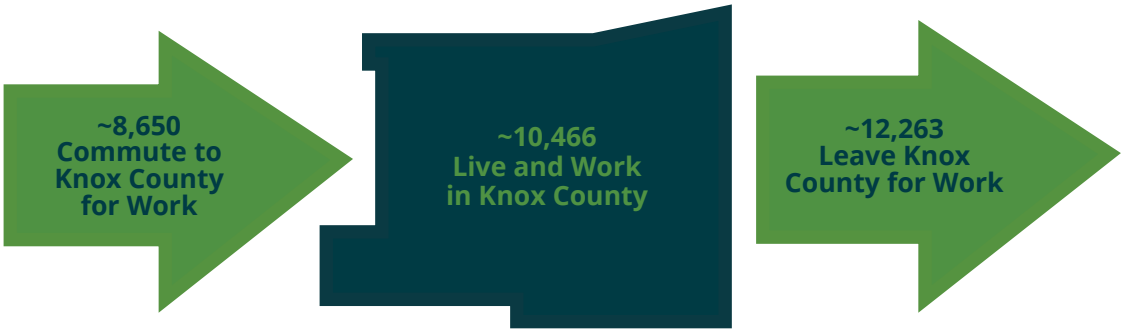
The county's labor force averages 31,572 annually, slightly below its 2019 peak, with a median age of 39.4 years. The unemployment rate was 3.3% in 2023, the lowest since at least 1990, but it rose to 4.9% by June 2024. The workforce participation rate for 20-64 year olds in 2023 was 78.6% was almost identical to Ohio's 78.8%. Educational attainment is rising, with 32% of the population over 25 holding at least an associate degree, mostly employed in educational services. When local colleges are removed, the educational attainment of Knox County residents outside of educational services drops significantly. Most jobs located in Knox County are filled by residents but the majority of residents work outside the County. This marks a significant shift from 2010, when 53% of residents both lived and worked within the County, compared to just 46% in 2022. Key sectors driving this outside commuting, which accounts for 67% of the total, include transportation and warehousing, professional technical jobs, finance and insurance, and hospitality and retail. The average commute time for a Knox County resident to their place of employment is 27.5 minutes, close to the national average of 29 minutes.

The three biggest local employment sectors are manufacturing (22%), healthcare (17%), and educational services (13%). These sectors have above-the-national-average concentrations, and are significant economic drivers to the County. A notable challenge is the high replacement rate needed over the next 10 years, with 55% of the educational service workforce, 25% of healthcare, and 27% of manufacturing workers over age 55. Knox County will need to replace 3,328 manufacturing and 2,612 healthcare jobs by 2032. This will be a significant challenge for the county to meet.

Percent of Workers over 55 in Key Sectors



Inflow Outflow (2022)



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Employers struggle to attract and retain non-local workers, who often leave within a few years. Key reasons include lack of local ties, desire for affordable rental housing near entertainment, and finding housing 30-45 minutes away with jobs closer to home. The shortage of affordable, desirable housing hinders the county's ability to retain workers, especially those with advanced degrees or industry credentials.

Manufacturing Diversification

Knox County boasts a robust manufacturing industry and prides itself as “a county that makes things.” Education, agriculture, and manufacturing are the three-legged stool of the County’s economic success. The County should continue to support existing manufacturers and attract new ones. The County’s manufacturing base is concentrated in four main sectors: automotive parts, energy industry machinery, packaging, and construction materials. The Columbus Region also excels in these sectors, plus warehousing/ logistics and biopharmaceuticals. Due to the volatility in some sectors, like automotive and energy, diversification is advised. The 2024 Knox County Workforce Demand Study identified food and beverage manufacturing as a potential growth area, aligning with local skills. Biopharmaceutical manufacturing is another target, but the county lacks "shovel ready" industrial space despite available buildings at Heartland Commerce Park and limited land at Freederkicktown Industrial Park.

Knox County Wokforce Demand Forecast (2022-2023)

Occupation	2022	2023	Growth	Replacement	Total Need
Total, all occupations	**2,523**	**2,602**	**79**	**2,612**	**2,691**
Total analyzed	**2,460**	**2,537**	**77**	**2,547**	**2,624**
Home health and personal care aides	251	276	25	409	434
Nursing assistants	263	264	1	380	381
Registered nurses	453	468	15	250	266
Dental assistants	54	56	2	76	79
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	90	90	0	70	70
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	49	50	1	69	70

Occupation	2022	2023	Growth	Replacement	Total Need
Total, all occupations	**3,469**	**3,488**	**19**	**3,328**	**3,347**
Total analyzed	**3,365**	**3,382**	**17**	**3,228**	**3,245**
Miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators	584	558	-26	594	568
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	194	202	7	189	196
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	113	116	3	150	153
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	137	141	4	127	131
Machinists	111	115	4	109	113

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Knox County Economic Growth Strategy

In December 2021, Intel Corp announced plans to construct a $20 billion semiconductor manufacturing plant in Licking County. The facility is projected to span 1,000 acres and create 3,000 permanent jobs, along with up to 10,000 additional jobs during the construction phase. This development is expected to significantly impact the local economy, driving job creation and increasing demand for manufacturing, warehousing, residential, and commercial development in adjacent counties.

In anticipation of this growth, Knox County, located just north of Licking County, initiated planning efforts in early 2022. The Knox County Area Development Foundation engaged OHM Advisors, in collaboration with Vista Site Selection and Neighborhood Strategies LLC, to formulate a regional growth strategy.

The Economic Growth Strategy provides an overview of the existing economic climate of the county and the impact recent economic activities in the Columbus region may have on Knox County, including the Intel manufacturing site (Ohio One Campus and other induced economic impacts). Mount Vernon and Fredericktown were identified as the areas most likely to experience land use changes, being 15 to 30 miles from the Intel site. The study highlighted the need for more affordable housing in the county and identified opportunities to provide high-density housing at lower price points. The county's key industries—manufacturing, construction, healthcare/social services, and retail—are well-positioned to enhance the supply chain network for Intel.

Credit: Kenyon College

Credit: Nicole Leone Miller Photography

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Tourism and the Economy

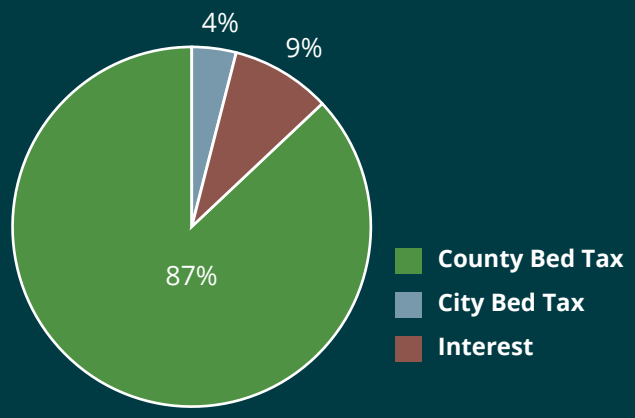
Tourism and visitor spending play a crucial role in the local economy by driving revenue, creating jobs, and stimulating growth across various sectors. Visitors contribute to the economy through spending on accommodations, dining, entertainment, and retail, which supports local businesses and generates tax revenue. Additionally, tourism promotes cultural exchange and enhances the community's profile, attracting further investment and development.

In 2023, the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau (KCCVB) recorded increased visitor spending since 2021, with visitors directly spending $150.6 million at local businesses in Knox County and generating $19.6 million in local, state, and federal taxes. More than 1,900 jobs in the county are supported by visitor spending, accounting for almost 6% of all jobs in the area. According to their annual report, the KCCVB notes that without visitor spending, each household would need to contribute an additional $427 annually to match the compensation provided by the tourism industry.

Knox County Convention and VIsitors Bureau (KCCVB)

The KCCVB mission is focused on showcasing the County's unique attractions, natural amenities, events and local businesses; making it an appealing place for visitors and residents alike. Through the impact of strategic marketing, enhanced resources, and collaborative partnerships, the KCCVB plays a vital role in boosting the local economic position, enriching community development and providing opportunities for the community and visitors to connect with their passions. The bureau is funded through lodging excise tax revenue from Knox County and the City of Mount Vernon.

2024 Income by Income Stream



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Actions

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goals of **Economic Prosperity and Housing.**

Objective 1. Support opportunities among existing companies and those looking to move to Knox County.

Supporting opportunities for existing companies and those looking to move to Knox County is essential for driving economic growth and fostering innovation. These efforts attract community investment, create jobs, and diversify the economy. By providing necessary resources, strong infrastructure, and a supportive regulatory environment, businesses can thrive and significantly contribute to the community's prosperity. Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation ensures Knox County remains competitive and adaptable in a changing economic landscape.

1.1 Develop future land use patterns that align with economic development goals by providing well-located and serviced sites to attract private investment and generate jobs.

Strategically designating and preparing well-serviced sites can attract private investment and stimulate job creation. Focusing on areas that are appropriately located and equipped with necessary infrastructure allows the County to support diverse economic activities, from small businesses to larger enterprises, thereby boosting local employment opportunities. This approach fosters a favorable environment for businesses to thrive, enhancing the County's overall economic vitality.

1.2 Expand existing employment concentrations to grow the County's tax base and provide job opportunities for residents.

Focusing on the growth of established employment centers will attract new businesses, support the expansion of current enterprises, and foster a robust local economy. Enhance infrastructure, provide incentives for business development, and ensure that these areas are well-connected to transportation networks. This action increases revenue and ensures residents have access to a diverse range of employment opportunities close to home.

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1.3 Improve road and rail connectivity to facilitate private investment and utility service investments, as appropriate.

Upgrade existing roads and rail lines and develop new routes where necessary to facilitate the efficient movement of goods and services. This will also ensure that utility services can be extended to new and existing industrial areas to support economic growth.

Objective 2. Pursue diversification of manufacturing opportunities.

Expanding the range of manufacturing opportunities can enhance economic resilience and stimulate growth by attracting a variety of industries. This approach encourages innovation and reduces dependency on a single sector, making the local economy more adaptable to market changes. By supporting diverse manufacturing ventures, the community can create a broader array of job opportunities and foster a more dynamic business environment.

2.1 Promote development of walkable commercial nodes along key corridors.

To support small businesses and foster a thriving local economy, it is crucial to promote the development of walkable commercial hubs along key corridors. These areas should be designed to be pedestrian-friendly, featuring a variety of shops, restaurants, and services that are easily accessible on foot. By focusing on nodal development rather than continuous strip development, the county can create distinct, vibrant commercial nodes that encourage entrepreneurship and provide opportunities for small businesses to flourish.

Nodal Development

Concentrating growth in nodes allows communities to optimize land use, reduce infrastructure costs, and enhance accessibility to services and amenities. This approach promotes mixed-use developments that support vibrant, walkable neighborhoods and reduces reliance on automobiles. Additionally, node-based development can help preserve open spaces and natural resources by limiting urban sprawl. By strategically planning growth in nodes, communities can foster economic vitality, improve quality of life, and ensure conservation of agricultural land and open space.

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2.2 Expand industrial areas on the south side of Mount Vernon to take advantage of the U.S. 36 corridor.

The U.S. 36 corridor is a significant route that runs through Knox County and is crucial to the region's connectivity and economic development. U.S. 36 connects Mount Vernon to major highways, facilitating easy transportation of goods and services. The corridor is well-serviced with necessary infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and communication networks, making it easier for businesses to open and operate. By capitalizing on the corridor's accessibility and connectivity, new industrial and economic developments can be attracted to the city's south and west sides.

2.3 Expand industrial areas on the west/northwest side of Fredericktown adjacent to OH 13 and OH 95.

OH 13 is a significant state highway that provides vital connectivity through several counties, including Knox County. The route's accessibility and connectivity make it an attractive location for industrial and commercial development. The proximity of OH 13 to other major transportation routes enhances its appeal for businesses looking to serve both local and regional markets. Emphasize the expansion of industrial areas adjacent to OH 13 to foster a dynamic economic environment.

2.4 Develop a new commercial and industrial employment center in the Centerburg area.

Developing a new commercial and industrial employment center in the Centerburg area will significantly boost local economic growth and job creation. The strategic location of Centerburg, with its proximity to major transportation routes, makes it an ideal spot for businesses aiming to serve both local and regional markets. By focusing on expanding commercial and industrial zones in this area, Knox County can attract diverse industries, foster innovation, and create a dynamic economic environment that benefits the entire community.

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2.5 Develop shovel ready land along major road corridors with appropriate utilities to expand and attract industrial opportunities.

To keep the county attractive for industrial investments, it's essential to have land that is immediately ready for development. This means having parcels of land along major roadways that are already equipped with necessary utilities like water, electricity, and sewage systems. By doing this, the county can quickly accommodate new industrial projects, making it a more appealing location for businesses looking to set up operations.

Objective 3. Strengthen the talent pipeline.

Investing in education, training programs, and partnerships with local businesses can help the County develop a skilled workforce that meets the demands of emerging industries. Enhancing career pathways and providing opportunities for continuous learning will help retain local talent and attract new professionals. This approach not only supports individual career growth but also fosters a resilient and adaptable economy.

3.1 Organize a session to discuss the workforce needs in biomedicine and food manufacturing showcasing successful programs, and evaluate how well Knox County's educational institutions (K-12 and higher education) can meet these needs.

To address the growing demand for skilled professionals in the biotech and biomedical fields, organize a session focused on understanding workforce needs and exploring successful programs in these industries. This session will bring together industry experts, educators, and community leaders to discuss the specific skills and training required for future jobs in biotechnology and biomedicine. Additionally, the session will evaluate the capacity of Knox County's educational institutions, from K-12 to higher education, to meet these workforce demands. By assessing current programs and identifying gaps, the county can develop strategies to enhance its educational offerings, ensuring that students are well-prepared for careers in these high-growth sectors.

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3.2 Create and implement a strategy to recruit and retain young workers in the County.

This should include efforts to attract young professionals through career development programs, networking opportunities, and partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions. Enhance quality of life to make the County more appealing to young workers. Address housing affordability and availability to ensure that young professionals can find suitable and affordable living arrangements. By integrating these elements, the County can create a vibrant and supportive environment that attracts and retains young talent.

3.3 Continue coordination between Knox County's schools and in-demand employers through the Business Advisory Council.

Continue to foster strong partnerships that align educational programs with workforce needs. This involves regular communication and collaboration to ensure that curricula and training opportunities are tailored to the skills and qualifications sought by local employers. Facilitate internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing programs to provide students with hands-on experience and direct pathways to employment. This coordination helps employers identify and nurture future talent, ensuring a steady pipeline of skilled workers to support the county's economic growth.

Credit: Area Development Foundation

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Objective 4. Create neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing.

Creating neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing will foster inclusive and vibrant communities in Knox County. By offering diverse housing options that cater to different income levels and family sizes, the county can ensure that all residents have access to safe and affordable homes. This approach supports reduced housing insecurity and promotes economic stability. Developing mixed-income neighborhoods also enhances community cohesion and provides opportunities for residents to live near their workplaces, schools, and essential services.

4.1 Revitalize neighborhoods and smaller community areas that have experienced disinvestment.

Encourage new residential investment on vacant parcels in existing neighborhoods to maximize the use of existing utility systems. Invest capital dollars in neighborhood infrastructure to enhance the physical environment. Prioritize sidewalk, crosswalk, and bike connection maintenance to ensure safe access and connectivity within established neighborhoods.

4.2 Create an infill housing strategy for the city and villages.

Identify vacant, zoned parcels with existing utilities to maximize development potential. Partner with the Knox County Land Bank where possible. Consider implementing an incremental development model in codes and processes to strengthen neighborhoods through small-scale projects. Expand the capacity of groups such as the Knox County Land Bank to develop and rehab missing middle housing.

4.3 Prioritize nearby residential development in places within close proximity to employment to provide for future workers and reduce commuting.

Create housing options near employment centers to create convenient living options for employees, making it easier for them to get to work. This approach will reduce travel time and transportation costs and decrease traffic congestion.

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4.4 Create standards that require a mix of housing types in appropriate locations.

Regulations should mandate that residential development projects in designated areas, which exceed a specified acreage or number of units, must incorporate a variety of housing types. This approach ensures diverse housing options, such as single-family homes, townhouses, and multi-family units, are available within the community. Encourage the city and villages to adopt similar standards.

4.5 Explore options and opportunities to provide quality housing for workforce families and seniors.

Assess community needs and identify market gaps to ensure suitable housing solutions for workforce families and seniors. Encourage partnerships with non-profits, leverage housing programs, and promote the inclusion of affordable units in new developments. Engage stakeholders to ensure these initiatives are community-driven and inclusive.

4.6 Develop programs that assist with the rehabilitation of older homes to maintain the housing stock.

Support both homeowners and rental property owners in rehabilitation efforts by providing a range of services, from educational resources to financial assistance. Offering guidance on best practices for home repairs and renovations, as well as financial support for necessary improvements through grants or low-interest loans, to help preserve the quality and safety of housing and ensure that older homes remain viable and attractive living options.

In the initial draft of the plan, there was a proposal to investigate and report on the potential implementation of building codes "within the County". While the recommendation was about studying building codes - versus implementing - the Regional Planning Commission raised sufficient concerns to lead to the removal of the recommendation. However, the topic of building codes may continue to be a point of discussion in the County moving forward.

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Objective 5: Strengthen community identity and promote tourism through strategic branding initiatives.

The County should tailor its branding efforts to reflect the true essence of its community. This approach ensures that the brand is not just a superficial image but a genuine representation of the residents' experiences and values. Highlighting the County's unique cultural, historical, and natural assets through a well-crafted brand can foster a deep emotional connection among residents, enhancing their sense of pride and belonging. Moreover, effective branding initiatives, such as engaging marketing campaigns and vibrant community events, can attract visitors and support local businesses, boosting tourism and driving economic growth. This holistic strategy not only generates revenue and creates job opportunities but also strengthens the community's overall well-being and social cohesion, making the County a more attractive and thriving place to live, work, and visit.

5.1 Pursue a countywide branding effort.

The communities of Knox County possess a unique story that appeals to prospective residents and businesses alike. By undertaking a comprehensive branding campaign, the County can identify and showcase the distinct qualities that set it apart from other regions. This initiative will establish a cohesive identity to guide economic development and highlight community characteristics. It should also be used to reassess and enhance wayfinding for parks, attractions and local businesses. Additionally, this campaign will instill a sense of community pride and emotional attachment, fostering a stronger connection among residents and celebrating the County's heritage and future potential. The KCCVB has developed a marketing brand and extensive strategy to market the County to visitors. The organization can act as a valuable asset and partner in developing a brand for the County.

5.2 Foster stronger partnerships with the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau and other tourism-related organizations to improve the visitor experience in the County.

Building stronger partnerships with the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau and other tourism-related organizations will create a more cohesive and attractive destination for tourists. This collaboration will involve joint marketing efforts, shared resources, and coordinated events that highlight the unique attractions and cultural offerings of Knox County. These strengthened partnerships will ensure that visitors receive a seamless and enriching experience, encouraging longer stays and repeat visits.

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4 Quality of Life

Knox County is characterized by its vibrant communities, cultures, and longstanding traditions. The people of Knox County are its greatest asset, fostering a strong sense of community and connection. The natural beauty, highlighted by the Kokosing River and extensive park systems, offers residents and visitors numerous recreational opportunities. This chapter of the comprehensive plan focuses on enhancing the quality of life in Knox County by addressing the needs of its people and preserving and promoting its natural and recreational resources.

Goals

The content in this chapter is focused on the following goals.

People: Healthy and proud residents and workers enjoying the benefits of growth and quality of life that drew—and keeps—them in the County.

Natural and Recreational Amenities: Enhanced natural and recreational amenities are accessible and offer varied opportunities for outdoor enjoyment.

Objectives

1. Expand and enhance local services and amenities.
2. Strengthen access to and conservation of natural spaces, parks, and greenways.

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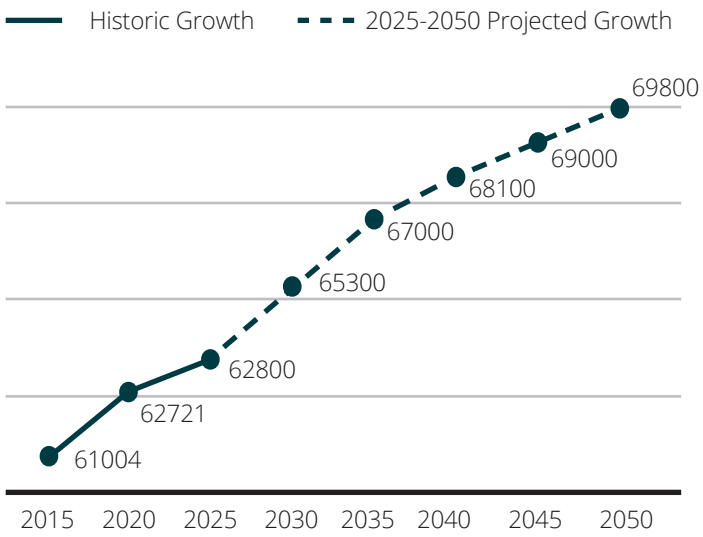
Conditions and Trends

Population

Knox County has experienced stable population growth, averaging 0.4% per year, which aligns with projections from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). This trend is expected to continue, with the county projected to grow by 11% through 2050. Mount Vernon, the largest city in Knox County, comprises 26.6% of the county's population. However, recent stagnation in Mount Vernon's population suggests that future growth may occur outside the city.

The county is witnessing significant growth in its over-60 age cohort while experiencing a reduction in birth rates. This demographic shift could pose challenges to the local economy. The trend of an aging population is consistent with broader patterns observed across Ohio and the nation.



Knox County Age Cohorts (2015 and 2022 Comparison)

Age	2015	2022	Percent Change
Under 5 years	3,778	3,738	-1.1%
5 to 9 years	4,198	3,639	-13.3%
10 to 14 years	3,788	4,423	+16.8%
15 to 19 years	4,939	4,950	+0.2%
20 to 24 years	4,828	4,735	-1.9%
25 to 34 years	6,585	6,885	+4.6%
35 to 44 years	6,875	7,007	+1.9%
45 to 54 years	8,130	7,156	-12.0%
55 to 59 years	4,293	3,500	-18.5%
60 to 64 years	3,944	5,009	+27.0%
65 to 74 years	5,419	6,867	+27.0%
75 to 84 years	3,108	3,305	+6.3%
85+ years	1,119	1,443	+29.0%

Services

Law Enforcement: In Knox County, Ohio, several law enforcement agencies operate to ensure the safety and security of the community.

1. **The Knox County Sheriff's Office** provides a range of law enforcement services, including patrol, criminal investigations, and maintaining the county jail. Additionally, the Knox County Sheriff's Office has contractual agreements to provide law enforcement services to the villages of Centerburg and Gambier.

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2. **The Mount Vernon Police Department** serves the City of Mount Vernon and handles local law enforcement within the city limits.

3. **The Fredericktown Police Department** serves the Village of Fredericktown, focusing on local law enforcement and community safety.

4. **The Danville Police Department** serves the Village of Danville, providing law enforcement services and community policing.

Fire and EMS: Knox County is currently served by eight fire districts.

1. **The Bladensburg Fire District** provides fire and emergency medical services (EMS) to Clay and Jackson Townships, in the southeast portion of the County. The district covers 48.8 square miles with two stations, 10 in-service apparatuses, and over 30 trained members.

2. **The Central Ohio Joint Fire District** was established in 2000 and serves the Village of Centerburg, Hilliar Township, and Milford Township. The fire district also serves South Bloomfield Township and the Village of Sparta in Morrow County. The district serves nearly 75 square miles from one station.

3. **The Eastern Knox Joint Fire District** provides fire and EMS services to 186 square miles in the eastern portion of the County. The district was formed in 2001 and serves Brown, Jefferson, Union, Howard, Harrison, and Butler Townships as well as the Villages of Danville and Brinkhaven. The district operates out of two stations and has a fleet of 16 vehicles.

4. **The Fredericktown Community Fire District** provides fire and rescue services to 9,000 residents in 118 square miles of northwest Knox County. The district serves Berlin, Middlebury, Wayne, and Pike Townships and the Village of Fredericktown as well as a portion of Morris Township from two stations. EMS services are provided by the Fredericktown Community Joint Emergency Ambulance District.

5. **The Homer Fire Department** provides fire and EMS services to Miller Township in Knox County as well as Burlington and Bennington Townships in Licking County. The volunteer fire department operates from one station.

6. **The Monroe Township Fire Department** provides fire and EMS services to Monroe Township, located in central Knox County, from one station.

7. **The Mount Vernon Fire Department** provides fire and EMS services to the City of Mount Vernon and the Village of Gambier as well as Liberty, Clinton, Pleasant, and College Townships and part of Morris Township. The department also contracts with the Mount Vernon Developmental Center and the Knox County Airport to provide emergency services. The department serves 82 square miles from two stations.

8. **The County Line Joint Fire District** provides fire and EMS services to Morgan Township in Knox County and the Village of Utica and Washington Township in Licking County. 29 trained members provide services to 4,200 residents from one station.

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Health and Social Services: Knox County has one main hospital system, Knox Community Hospital. The system operates a hospital in Mount Vernon as well as primary and specialty care offices across the county.

In addition to Knox Community Hospital, Knox Public Health provides a variety of public health services, including immunizations and health education. Knox Public Health also operates the Knox County Community Health Center, with locations in Mount Vernon and Danville. The Community Health Center offers comprehensive medical, dental, and counseling services. It serves as a patient-centered medical home, providing preventive and primary care to residents of all ages.

The County also provides a range of social services, including:

1. Knox County Job & Family Services provides a range of services, including child and adult protective services, public assistance programs (such as food stamps and Medicaid), and employment services.

    a. Children and Family Services: This division of Knox County Job & Family Services focuses on protecting children and the elderly from abuse and neglect. They offer a range of services, including foster care, adoption, and protective services for both children and adults.

    b. Public Assistance Programs: Knox County provides various public assistance programs through Job & Family Services. These include Ohio Works First, Medicaid, food assistance, and disability assistance. These programs aim to support low-income families, children, pregnant women, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.

Credit: Area Development Foundation, Inc.

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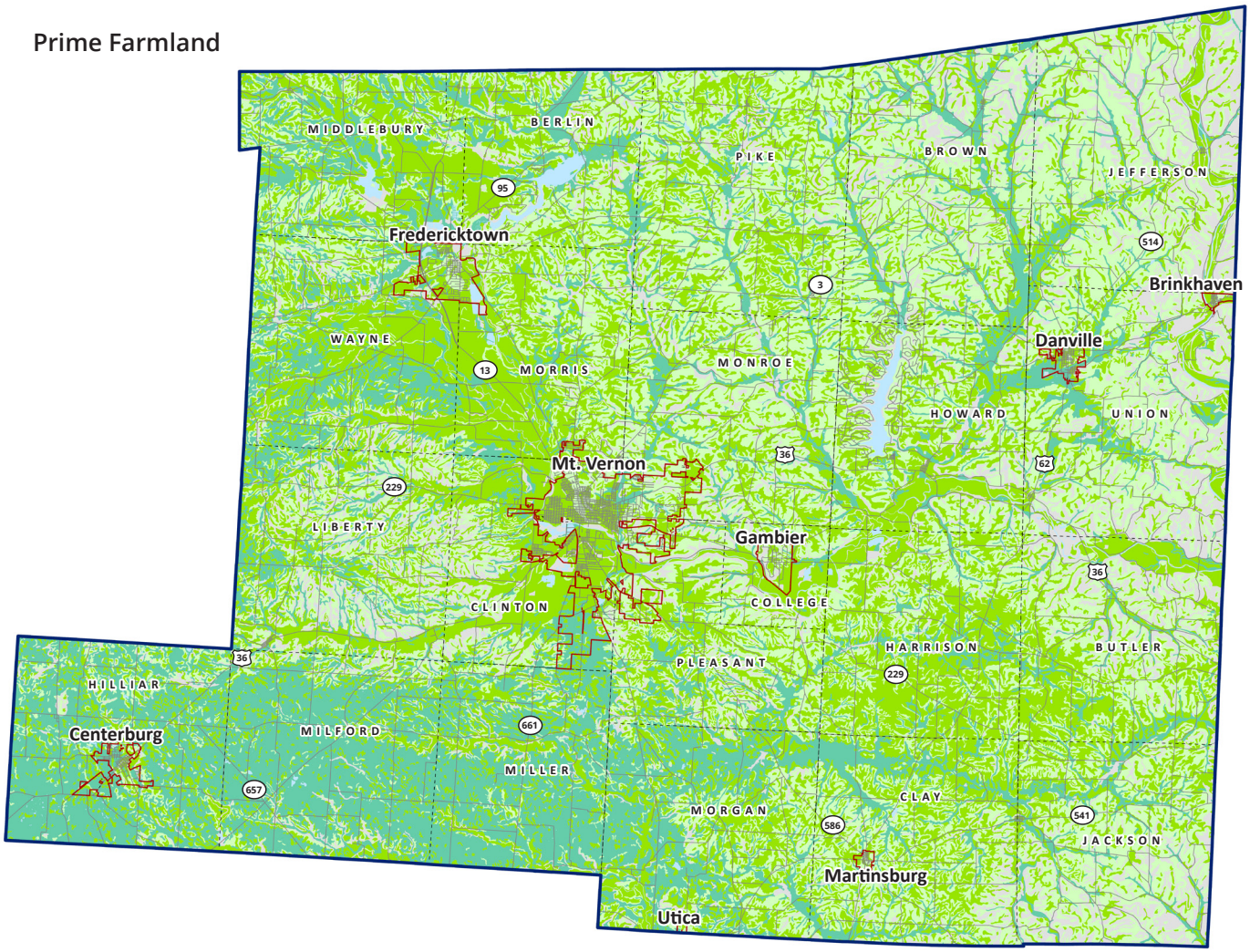
Prime Farmland



Natural Resources

Knox County is rich in natural resources that significantly contribute to its character. The county's abundant agricultural lands, scenic rivers, and lush forests not only support local farming and recreational activities but also play a vital role in preserving the area's rural heritage.

Approximately 35% of the county has been identified as prime farmland, defined as land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Much of the prime farmland is found in the flatter portions of the county. An additional 31% of the County is farmland of local importance, defined as currently producing crops, has the capability of production, or is used to produce confined livestock.

Legend

- Water
- Prime Farmland
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Farmland of Local Importance
- Not Prime Farmland

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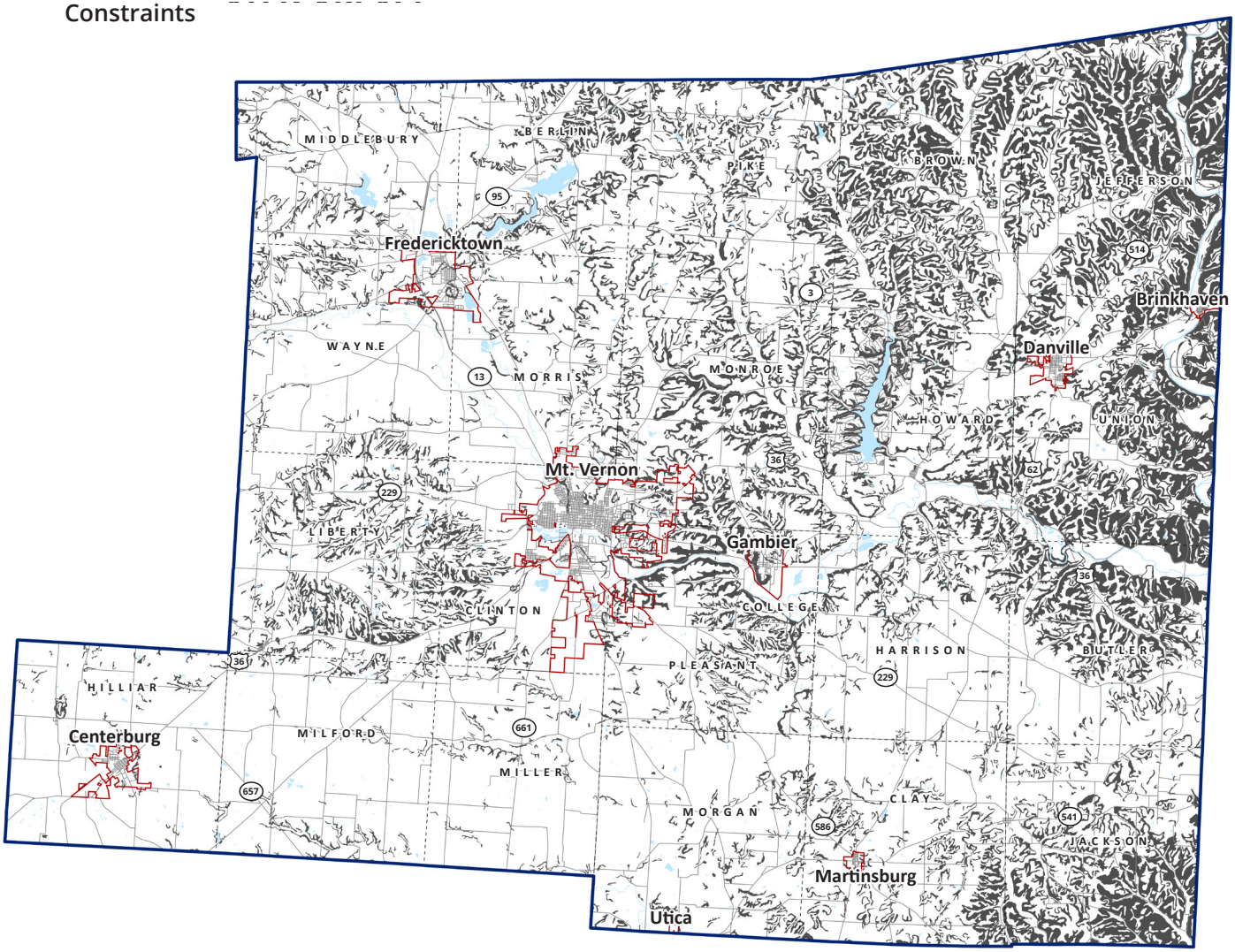
Constraints



Approximately 19% of the county, or about 63,800 acres, is constrained by steep slopes. Steep slopes are defined as hillsides with a 15% slope or greater. The steepest slopes in the county are concentrated in the northeastern section near the Mohican River. Due to the difficulty of developing areas with steep slopes, woodlands are most heavily preserved in those areas.

Based on visual analysis of satellite imagery, 21% of the total land area in the county is covered by heavy woodlands. These areas are found primarily near waterways and are riparian in nature, largely located in the eastern portion of the county.

Legend

Steep Slopes (15% or Greater)

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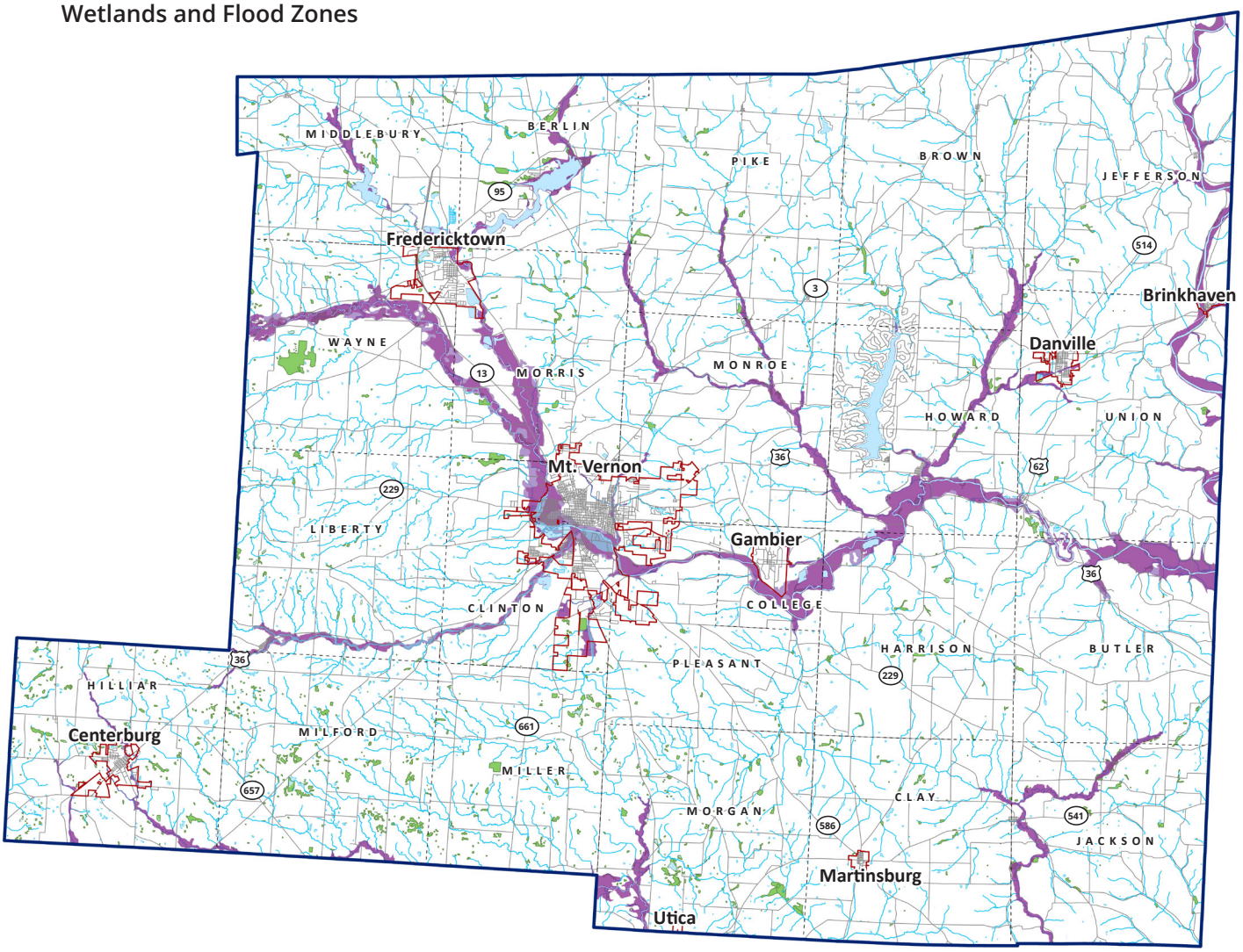
Wetlands and Flood Zones



Knox County also has approximately 18,900 acres of land located in flood zones. Flood zones are areas of land susceptible to flooding and are found near bodies of water. To prevent personal and property damage, construction is often restricted in flood zones. Given the potentially devastating impact of floods, FEMA has designated 500-year floodplains (0.2% annual chance) and 100-year floodplains (1% annual chance) to indicate the probability of damaging flooding. Additionally, 3,500 acres of the county are wetlands, located mainly in the flat portion of southwest Knox County.

Legend

- 500 Year Flood Zone
- 100 Year Flood Zone
- Regulatory Floodway
- Lakes, Ponds, & Riverine Areas
- Wetlands

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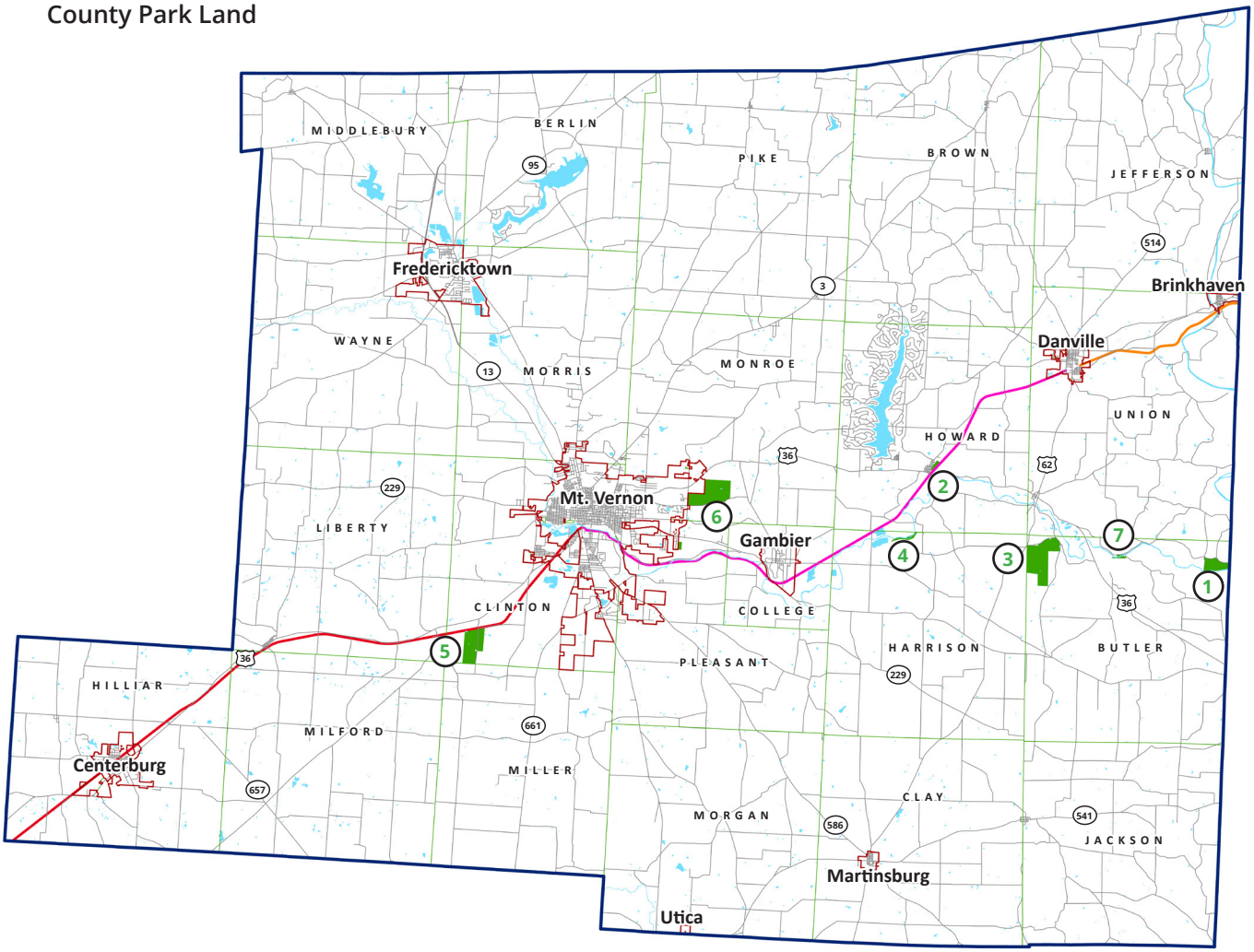
County Park Land



Parks and Open Space

Parks and open spaces are abundant in Knox County, with the Knox County Parks District managing over 1,000 acres of land. The county boasts 16.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, surpassing the national standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). These parks are complemented by a regional trail network that connects the county from east to west.

Legend

- Heart of Ohio Trail
- Kokosing Gap Trail
- Mohican Valley Trail
- Water
- Park Land

Parks

1. Bat Nest Park
2. Hellbender Preserve
3. Honey Run Highlands Park & Waterfall
4. Indianfield Bluffs Park
5. Thayer Ridge
6. Wolf Run Regional Park
7. Zuck Riparian Preserve

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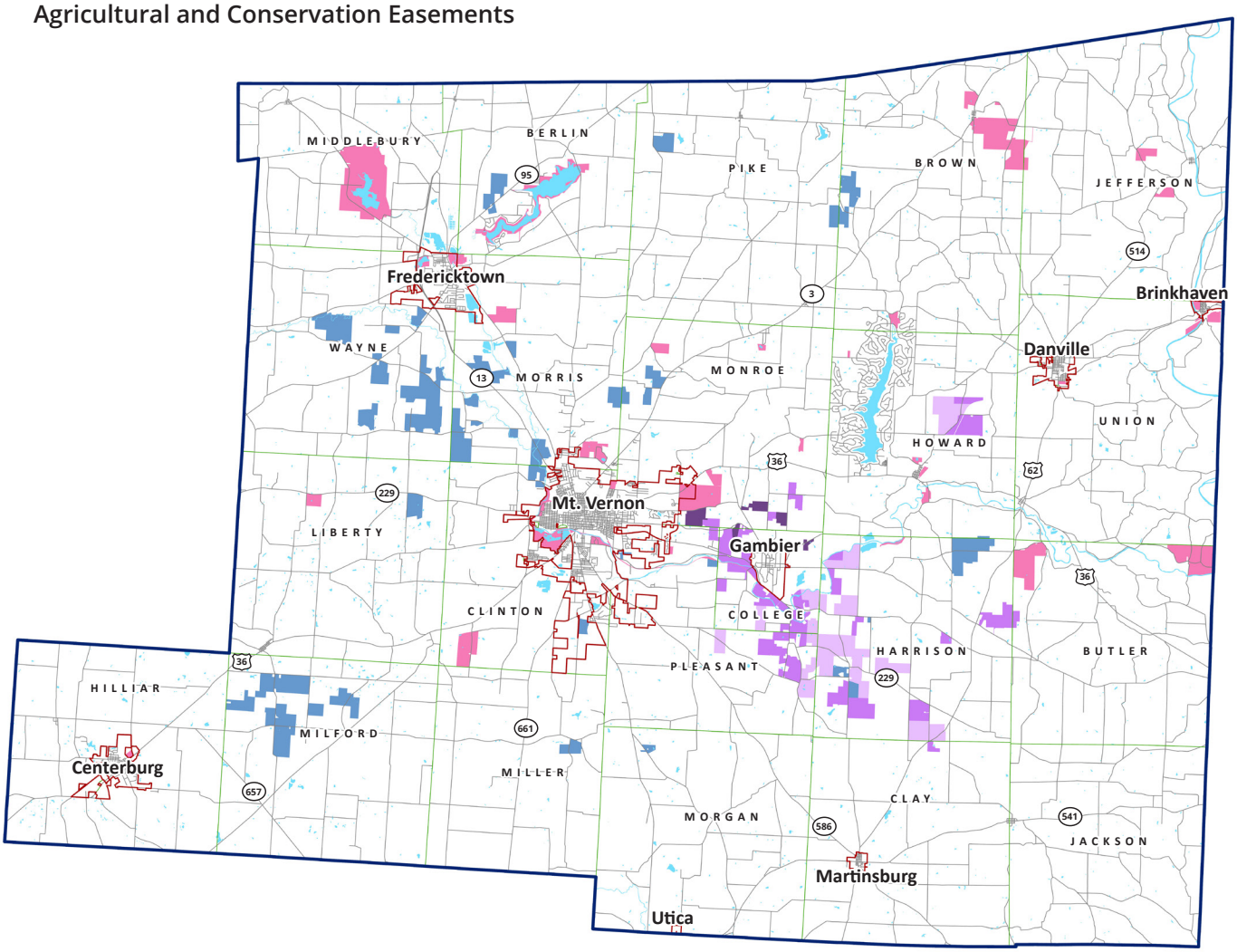
Agricultural and Conservation Easements



Easements also contribute significantly to the county's open spaces, conserving its agricultural and natural heritage. Agricultural easements protect cropland and grassland by limiting non-agricultural uses, while conservation easements preserve land in its natural, scenic, open, or wooded condition. The Owl Creek Conservancy and Philander Chase Conservancy are the primary conservancies operating in Knox County, with more than 10,000 acres of land currently under easement.

Legend

- Owl Creek Conservancy Land
- Philander Chase Conservancy - Agricultural Easements
- Philander Chase Conservancy - Conservation Easements
- Philander Chase Conservancy Land
- Other Open Space

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Higher Education

Higher education institutions are invaluable assets to the County, offering numerous benefits that enhance both quality of life and economic opportunities. These institutions attract a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff, fostering a vibrant and dynamic community. They provide access to cultural events, educational resources, and recreational activities, enriching the lives of residents. Additionally, colleges and universities often serve as major employers, contributing significantly to the local economy through job creation and the attraction of businesses and industries that seek to capitalize on the educated workforce.

Higher education institutions can drive innovation and economic development through research initiatives and partnerships with local businesses. An additional benefit is the availability of town-gown grant opportunities, which are funding sources provided by universities or colleges to support projects that directly benefit the surrounding community. These grants can fund a wide range of initiatives, from infrastructure improvements to social programs, thereby strengthening the bond between the institution and the community. This collaborative approach not only addresses local needs but also fosters a sense of shared purpose and mutual growth.

- **Kenyon College,** located in Gambier, Ohio, is a prestigious private liberal arts institution founded in 1824. As Ohio's oldest private college, Kenyon enrolls around 1,800 students in over 50 majors, minors, and concentrations. Known for its rigorous academics and vibrant campus life, Kenyon offers a unique blend of historic charm and modern facilities, fostering a close-knit community.
- **Mount Vernon Nazarene University (MVNU),** in Mount Vernon, Ohio, is a private Christian university founded in 1968. MVNU offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs, emphasizing academic excellence, spiritual growth, and service. The university is known for its supportive environment, vibrant campus life, and commitment to integrating faith and learning, preparing students for meaningful service and leadership.

Credit: Kenyon College

Credit: Mount Vernon Nazarene University

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Land Conservancies

Land conservancies play a crucial role in preserving natural landscapes and enhancing the quality of life in Knox County. By protecting open spaces, forests, wetlands, and other natural areas, land conservancies help maintain biodiversity, safeguard water quality, and provide habitats for wildlife. These preserved areas also offer recreational opportunities such as hiking, bird-watching, and fishing, promoting physical health and well-being among the community. Conserved lands can serve as natural buffers against flooding and erosion, contributing to the County's resilience against environmental challenges.

Land conservancies can have significant economic benefits. They often increase property values by preserving the scenic beauty and environmental health of the area. Conserved lands can attract tourism, bringing in revenue and supporting local businesses. Furthermore, land conservancies can leverage grants and funding opportunities to support conservation projects, fostering community engagement and education about the importance of environmental stewardship.

- **Owl Creek Conservancy** is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving natural and agricultural lands. The conservancy holds 40 conservation easements and 8 agricultural easements, covering a total of 5,610 acres across Knox and surrounding counties. By working with landowners, Owl Creek Conservancy aims to protect farmlands, stream corridors, wildlife habitats, and other ecologically sensitive areas. Their efforts help maintain the region's natural beauty, promote sustainable land management practices, and provide lasting benefits for both present and future generations.
- **Philander Chase Conservancy** is a dedicated land trust established by Kenyon College in 2000. Named after the college's founder, the conservancy aims to protect the natural beauty of the surrounding farms, woodlands, waters, and open spaces. Over the past two decades, the conservancy has successfully preserved 5,500 acres across 62 farms and properties. By working with local farmers, landowners, and environmental groups, Philander Chase Conservancy ensures that the rural character of the region is maintained, supporting biodiversity and providing recreational opportunities for the community.

Credit: Owl Creek Conservancy

Credit: Philander Chase Conservancy

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Actions

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goals of **People and Natural and Recreational Amenities.**

Objective 1. Expand and enhance local services and amenities.

This objective aims to improve the quality of life for residents by investing in and upgrading community resources. By expanding services and amenities, the County can better meet the needs of the population, support responsible growth, and ensure that all residents have access to essential facilities and amenities.

1.1 Develop and sustain partnerships with the university community to enhance the built environment to benefit students and residents.

Facilitate the creation of collaborative academic, residential, and cultural spaces in Mount Vernon and Gambier, supported by local universities. Continue to support university investments to enhance the physical environment and foster additional office, retail, cultural, and residential development and redevelopment. Facilitate the creation of collaborative academic, residential, and cultural spaces in the community, supported by local universities.

1.2. Maintain an open dialogue with Knox County school districts.

This dialogue should focus on ensuring that both Knox County and the school districts are well-informed about growth and development. By sharing information about local options for housing, transportation, and other critical factors, public, private, and non-profit organizations can proactively address these issues. This approach helps make informed decisions that support the community's educational needs and ensures officials are prepared for future developments.

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1.3 Enhance access to existing health services and resources.

To improve community well-being, it's essential to increase awareness and education about available health services through outreach programs and various media channels. Enhancing transportation options, such as providing affordable rides to medical appointments can make healthcare more accessible. Increased funding and partnerships can bolster resources. Addressing language and cultural barriers, improving facility accessibility, and engaging community health workers are also crucial steps. These efforts collectively ensure that all residents can access the health services they need, leading to better health outcomes.

1.4 Anticipate additional police, fire, and safety service demands concurrent with development activities.

Align infrastructure investments and major development decisions with public safety services, including police, fire, and EMS. Relevant departments should collaborate to assess fire and EMS coverage as development progresses and plan for future facilities. This coordination may include reviewing major development or redevelopment proposals that meet specific criteria and conducting annual assessments of ongoing development in relation to public safety calls and response times. To support these efforts, use five-year capital improvement planning for facilities, equipment, and personnel.

1.5 Incorporate connectivity in future development and infrastructure upgrades to ensure appropriate response times, thereby enhancing public safety.

A more connected street network can provide greater route options and reduce peak traffic on major arterials. Update development standards and subdivision regulations to include street extensions from new developments to adjacent undeveloped land and cross-access requirements between neighboring mixed-use developments. Encourage the city and villages to implement standards that require developers to create additional connections between existing streets, where appropriate.

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Objective 2. Strengthen access to and conservation of natural spaces, parks, and greenways.

This objective focuses on preserving the County's natural beauty while ensuring that these areas are accessible to all residents. Improving access to parks and greenways provides recreational opportunities, promotes physical and mental well-being, and fosters a deeper connection with nature.

2.1 Conserve stream corridors, woodlands, and wetlands.

These natural areas constitute a significant portion of the County's rural landscape and offer essential air and water benefits, such as stormwater buffering and wildlife habitat. Encourage landowners to adopt practices that protect riparian and in-stream habitats through incentives and educational programs. Implement restoration projects to improve water quality and habitat integrity. This can include reforestation of riparian corridors and wetland restoration. Focus on preserving areas with high biodiversity, rare species, and good sport fishing through conservation easements, acquisitions, and landowner programs.

2.2 Prepare a Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources Plan.

A Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources Plan will provide a framework for planning, developing, rehabilitating, and maintaining Knox County's parks, open spaces, recreation facilities and programs, and natural resources. The plan can serve as an inventory of existing open spaces and recreational amenities while identifying new opportunities. County organizations and partners can use this plan to define priorities for conservation and investments in trail development, park amenities, and other improvements.

2.3 Strengthen and connect Knox County parks while being open to new acquisitions.

Community engagement has consistently highlighted the value residents place on parks and greenspaces, as well as their desire for more of these amenities. The County should focus on strengthening and better connecting the existing park system while remaining open to acquiring new areas if the opportunity arises. Utilizing existing natural areas earmarked for conservation can help expand the park and trail system. Ensuring the distribution of parks in areas currently lacking such amenities will further enhance community access and enjoyment.

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2.4 Expand sources of funding for parks and greenways.

Knox County residents highly value the parks, trails, and green spaces available to them. To maintain and enhance these amenities, it is essential to secure additional funding sources. Granville Township in Licking County, Ohio, can serve as a model, generating revenue through voter-approved property levies and grants. Additional grant opportunities may be available through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, and the Ohio Grants Partnership.

2.5 Seek joint-use easements for trail systems within existing and proposed drainage, utility, and right-of-way corridors.

Easements set aside land where future greenways may be built and provide an opportunity for creating a better-connected system. The county should consider the easement width needed to provide a greenway trail as well as unique buffer, maintenance, and access needs of each opportunity.

2.6 Set aside rights-of-way or easements for future greenways as development is planned.

Require private development to build connections or provide easement/ rights-of-way to connect existing and proposed trail corridors. Consider requirements to provide incentives for developer-built greenway trails. County and local subdivision regulations should be amended to support this action.

Credit: Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Credit: Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

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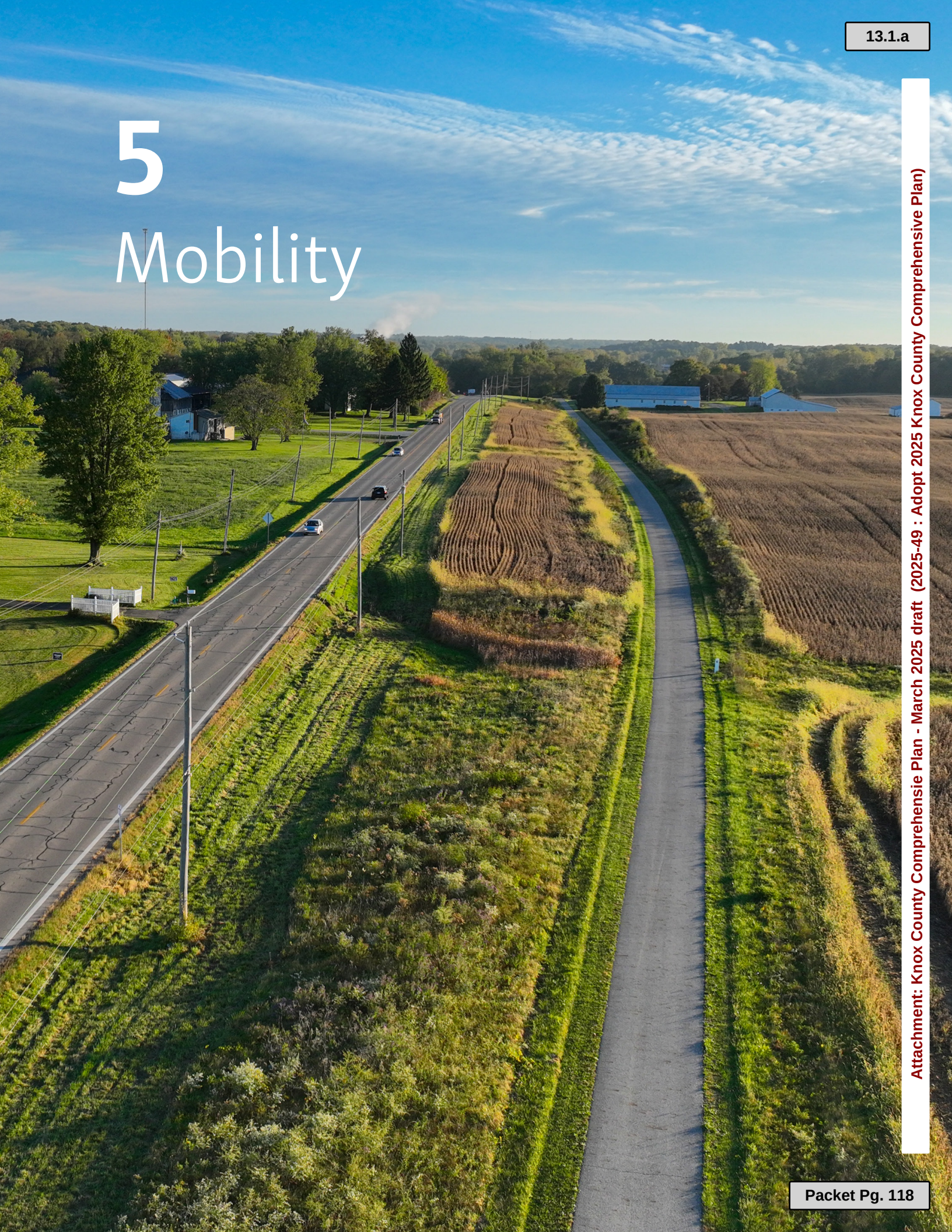
5 Mobility



Efficient and accessible transportation is essential for a thriving community, connecting people to jobs, schools, and services while supporting economic growth and improving quality of life. The Knox County transportation system consists of 400 miles of roadway (including 20 miles of gravel roads), 326 bridges, and over 32 miles of trails. Thoughtful transportation planning ensures that these systems meet current needs and adapt to future demands. This chapter outlines a vision of efficient and accessible mobility for Knox County, The recommendations build on past planning efforts and target critical areas for improvement. By focusing on these priorities, the county aims to create a transportation system that is safe, connected, and adaptable to the needs of all residents and visitors, fostering economic vitality and an improved quality of life.

Goal

The content in this chapter is focused on the following goal.

Mobility. Efficient and accessible transportation options connect residents and workers to key destinations, support economic growth, and enhance quality of life.

Objectives

1. Bridge gaps in the multimodal network.
2. Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.
3. Relieve congestion and improve roadway safety along regional corridors.

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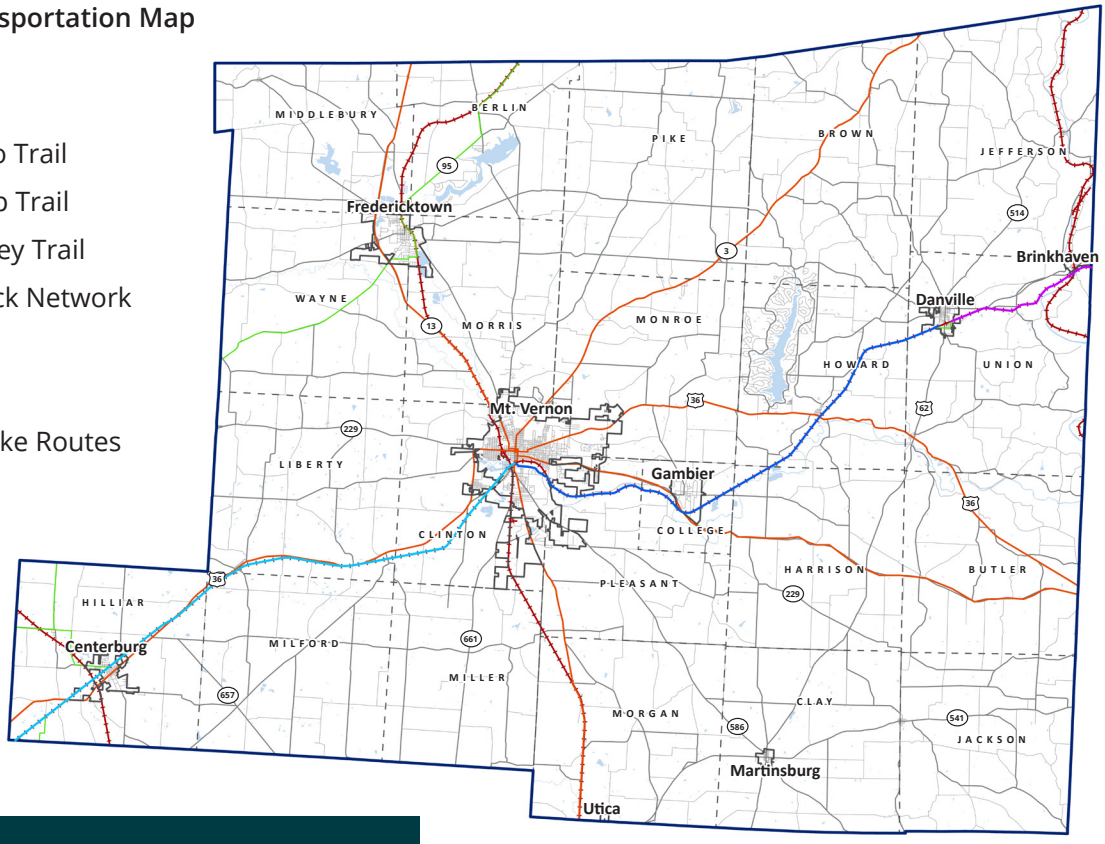
Conditions and Trends

Knox County is primarily rural, with land use generally consisting of agriculture and low-density rural residential outside of Mount Vernon and a few other population centers. This land use pattern has resulted in a generally vehicle-dependent population; nearly 75% of residents travel alone in a personal vehicle as their primary mode of transportation. At the same time, there are people throughout the county who do not have access to a vehicle, choose not to drive, or simply desire to have additional travel options for improved health and quality of life. This includes transit riders, recreational and commuting cyclists, and members of the growing Amish community in Knox County who primarily travel by horse-drawn vehicle or on foot.

Knox County Transportation Map

Legend

- Heart of Ohio Trail
- Kokosing Gap Trail
- Mohican Valley Trail
- National Truck Network
- Roads
- Railroad
- State & US Bike Routes



The Heart of Ohio Trail serves as the central portion of the Ohio to Erie Trail, which spans 362 miles across the state, connecting the Ohio River to Lake Erie.

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Streets and Roadways

Several US and State Routes cross the County. Most of these routes radiate from the City of Mount Vernon and the Village of Fredericktown and are two-lane roads with narrow shoulders and turning lanes at some key intersections and in urban areas. Key corridors include US Route 36 (US 36), US Route 62 (US 62), State Route 3 (SR 3), State Route 13 (SR 13), State Route 229 (SR 229), State Route 586 (SR 586) and State Route 661 (SR 661).

US 36 transverses the county, extending from the southwestern corner of the county through the City of Mount Vernon and across the eastern county boundary. US 62 travels from the City of Columbus through Utica and into eastern Knox County, connecting Martinsburg, Artanna, Millwood, Danville, and Brinkhaven. SR 13 extends through Knox County connecting Utica, Mount Vernon, and Fredericktown, and continues north crossing Interstate 71 toward Mansfield. SR 3 originates in Mount Vernon in central Knox County and travels northeast through Amity and Jelloway, continuing northeast to connect the County with major regional routes and Greater Cleveland. Access to Knox County from the south is provided by US 62, SR 3, SR 661, and SR 13, with limited connections between them. Notably, truck traffic regularly travels through the downtown center of the City of Mount Vernon due to a lack of alternative routes.

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, 2021-2026

The Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Knox County, Ohio, initially developed in 2017 and updated yearly, aims to enhance mobility for all community members, including seniors and individuals with disabilities. The plan, last updated in January 2024, emphasizes the importance of transportation in providing access to jobs, education, healthcare, and human services, enabling community members, including older adults and people with disabilities, to live independently and engage in community life. Local stakeholders collaborated to identify and prioritize community transportation needs, minimize service duplication, and develop strategies to increase transportation options.

A key component of the plan is the creation of a Mobility Manager position to coordinate services and share information. The Mobility Manager works with various transportation resources to develop a knowledge base of services and eligibilities, refer users to appropriate services, and educate the community. Active engagement was fundamental, with participation from seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, transportation providers, and other community organizations to ensure comprehensive planning and implementation.

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Traffic and Congestion

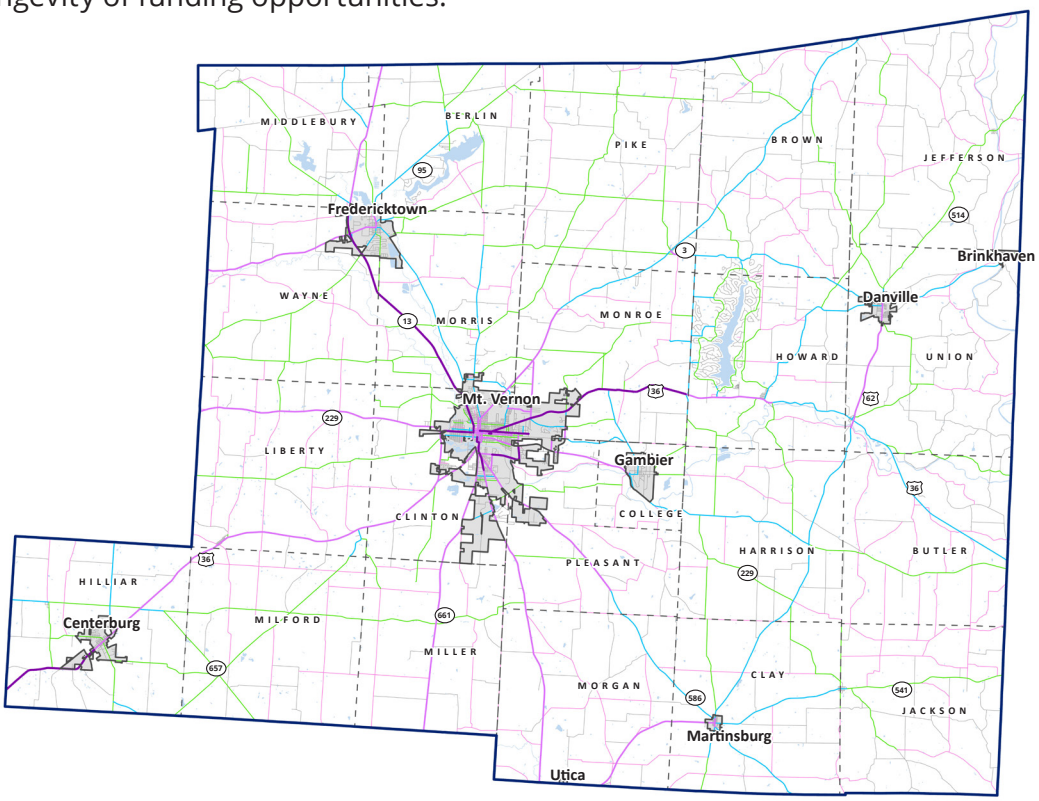
The highest average daily traffic (ADT) volumes occur on the US and state routes, particularly within the City of Mount Vernon. Portions of US 36, US 62, and SR 13 observe over 8,000 vehicles per day on average, representing the highest traffic volumes in Knox County. Traffic volumes above 3,000 are observed on multiple City of Mount Vernon roadways including Martinsburg Rd, High St, Chestnut St, and the segments of State Routes and U.S. Routes that intersect within the city limit. SR 661 and SR 586 also experience ADT in excess of 8,000 vehicles. According to public input provided during this planning process and analysis presented in the Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO) 2018 - 2040 Transportation Plan, network congestion has been observed most frequently in the City of Mount Vernon, along US 36, and along SR 13.

Per the 2023 Knox County Economic Growth Strategy, future potential roadway improvements include the improvement of Sycamore Road to provide increased east-west connectivity in the southern portion of the county, various roadway extensions in the vicinity of Mount Vernon to provide better circulation and connectivity between major routes and to enable trucks to bypass the downtown area, and capacity improvements for major thoroughfares including US 36, SR 3, and SR 229. Roadway improvement projects in Knox County are constrained by a lack of funding, staff resources and capacity, and variation in availability and longevity of funding opportunities.

Daily Traffic Volume

Legend

- Under 300
- 300 - 1199
- 1200 - 2999
- 3000 - 7999
- 8000 or more



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Active Transportation

Major bikeways and trails travel parallel to rail corridors throughout the County. The active transportation system includes approximately 32 miles of trails (primarily consisting of the Heart Ohio Trail, Kokosing Gap Trail, and Mohican Valley Trail) as well as some on street bicycle infrastructure in Mount Vernon and sidewalks, particularly in downtown areas of Mount Vernon, Gambier, Fredericktown, and Danville. The 2019 Knox County Active Transportation Plan (ATP) highlights the need to expand the bicycle and pedestrian networks to better connect non-motorists with their destinations. Residents have expressed concern with lack of trail crossings along major roadways and incomplete sidewalk systems serving local schools, making active transportation both a challenge and a safety risk.

Public input gathered as part of recent planning processes including the Knox County Coordinated Public Transit Plan, the Knox County Active Transportation Plan, and the CORPO Transportation Plan reveal resident concerns about pedestrian and bicycle safety due to gaps in the multimodal network (e.g., lack of completed sidewalks, lack of bicycle lanes, lack of trail crossings, nonfunctional push buttons at active crosswalks). Pedestrians and bicyclists encounter challenges safely and efficiently traveling and cite the need for greater connectivity and safety infrastructure to comfortably do so.

Current transportation network improvement priorities include addressing gaps in the multimodal network, including improving multimodal network maintenance, expanding the trail system to connect with Fredericktown and other locations with latent demand for non-motorized travel, increasing bicyclist safety and awareness on roadways, and correcting the lack of network-wide bicycle and pedestrian crossings to increase comfort and convenience for non-motorists. The network is also addressed and is part of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)'s Central Ohio Greenways master plan.

The 2019 Knox County Active Transportation Improvements includes recommendations for over 20 miles of additional trails, over 10 miles of on street bikeways, close to 9 miles of sidewalks to fill critical gaps, and safe crossing improvements in several locations around the county.

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Transit

Knox Area Transit (KAT) is the primary transit service provider and offers free scheduled and on-demand shuttles within the City of Mount Vernon services to other areas of the county for a fare. Gobus operates a low-cost, accessible bus service connecting Knox County cities and towns. The Knox County Coordinated Public Transit Plan reports that residents desire a greater variety of reliable, consistent transit options, including alternatives to Knox Area Transit, longer transit service hours, and regular busing to and from the City of Columbus. Residents report challenges with transit access including struggles finding consistent transportation services at the beginning of the school year, lack of options for workers with unconventional working hours, and issues with transit vehicles being late.

Horse-Drawn Vehicle Travel

The ODOT 2019 Ohio Statewide Amish Transportation Study notes that five clusters of Amish settlements are located within Knox County: one in the northwestern corner extending northwest from Fredericktown and into Morrow and Richland Counties, one along SR 3 in northeastern Knox County near Jelloway, one near Danville along US 62, and two in the southeastern corner of the county along SR 229 extending south toward State Route 586 (SR 586). Since 2019, there has been growth in the Amish population in Knox County, including in Liberty and Wayne Townships.

Knox County has observed growth in the Amish population in recent years and is expected to see continued expansion of this community in the northeastern corner of the county between US 62 and SR 3. The county has also observed an influx of Amish population movement from the east side of the county to the west side. Existing settlement locations as of 2019 are shown on page 92. Nearly 100% of Amish residents ride a horse-drawn vehicle as their primary means of transportation and walk to destinations if a horse-drawn vehicle is not available; this includes horse-drawn vehicle and pedestrian travel along state routes when necessary.

Safety issues for the Amish population of Knox County include horse-drawn vehicle safety along state routes, specifically related to nighttime visibility, lack of sight distance, limited shoulder width, and disparate speeds between horse-drawn vehicles and motor vehicles. Public input from the 2019 Ohio Statewide Amish Transportation Study is primarily focused on improving horse-drawn vehicle safety through installation of LED lights and reflective tape on horse-drawn vehicles traveling along state routes.

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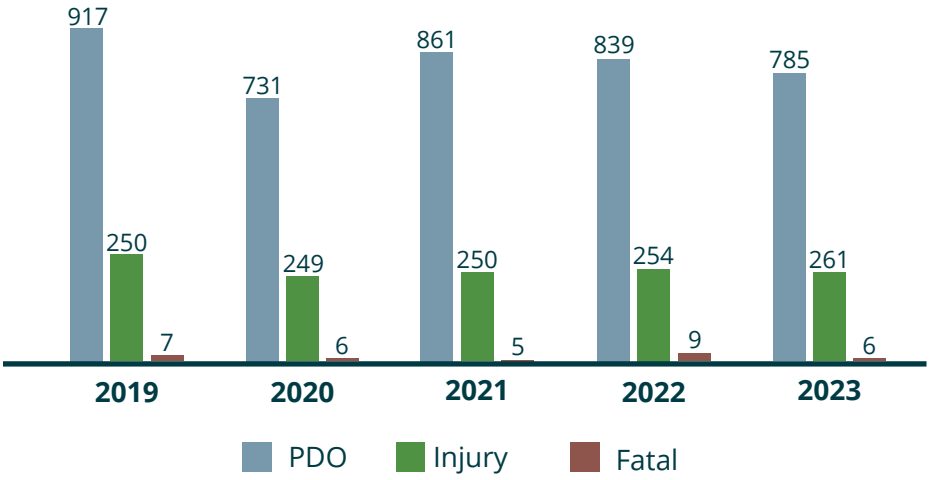
Safety

This analysis considers crashes from 2019-2023 for the full Knox County area, inclusive of freeways. During the crash data period, there were 5,996 crashes including 35 fatalities and 163 serious injuries. Compared to the statewide average, Knox County has slightly higher rates of fatal crashes and crashes only resulting in property damage, and slightly lower rates of crashes causing injury.

Crash Frequency by Year by Severity



Crashes by Severity, 2019-2023			
Knox County		**State of Ohio**	
Property Damage Only	4,520 (75.4%)	Property Damage Only	988,055 (74.2%)
Injury Crashes	1,441 (24.0%)	Injury Crashes	338,612 (25.4%)
Fatal Crashes	35 (0.6%)	Fatal Crashes	5,834 (0.4%)
Total	**5,996**	**Total**	**1,332,501**

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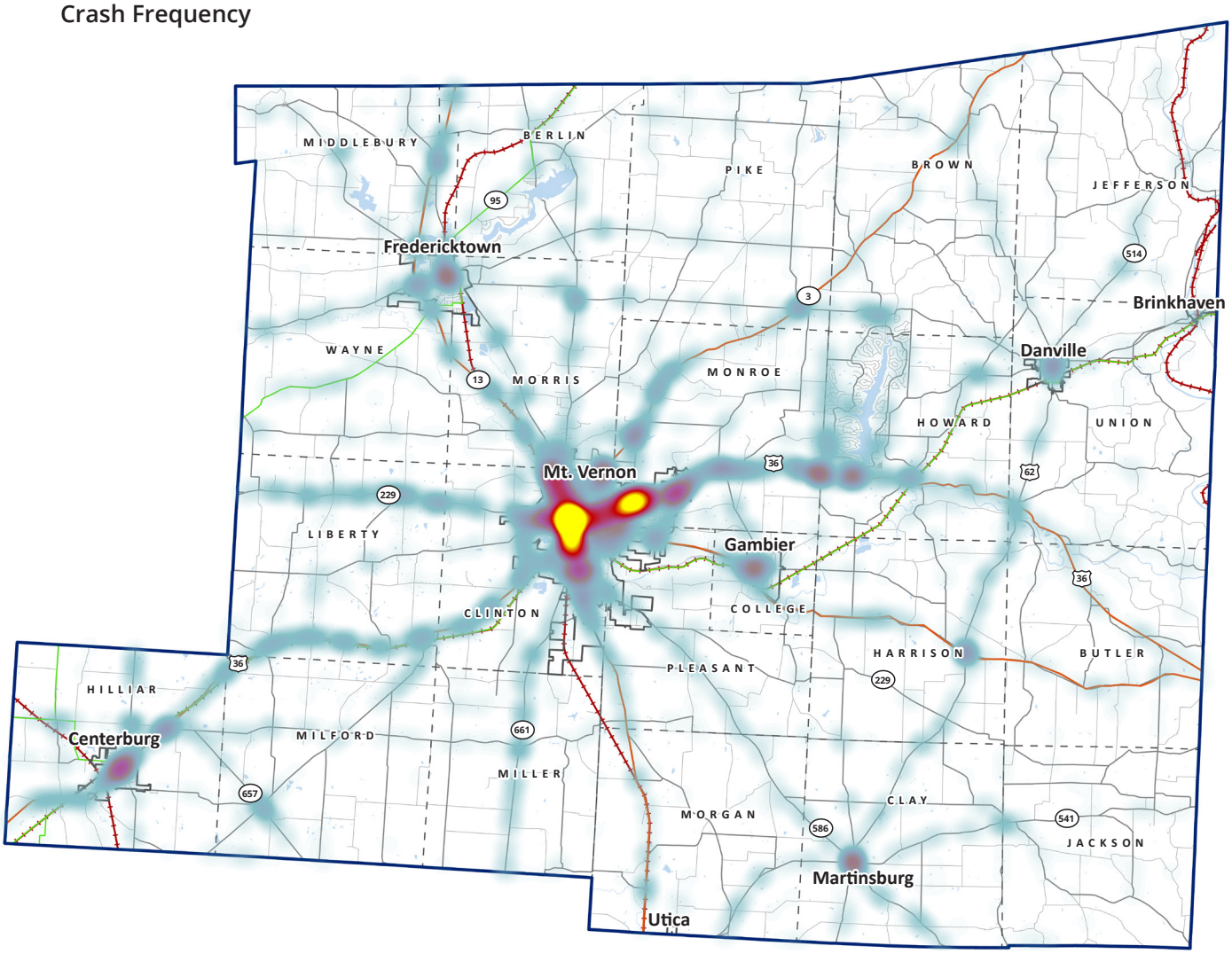
Crash Frequency



This map displays hotspots for all crashes, revealing areas of heightened frequency along the state and US routes within Knox County and within the City of Mount Vernon along SR 3 and US 36. Other hotspots include US 36 through Centerburg, US 36/ Coshocton Rd east of Mount Vernon, US 62 in Danville, SR 13/ Sandusky St in Mount Vernon, and downtown Mount Vernon south of US 36.

Legend

Sparse

Dense

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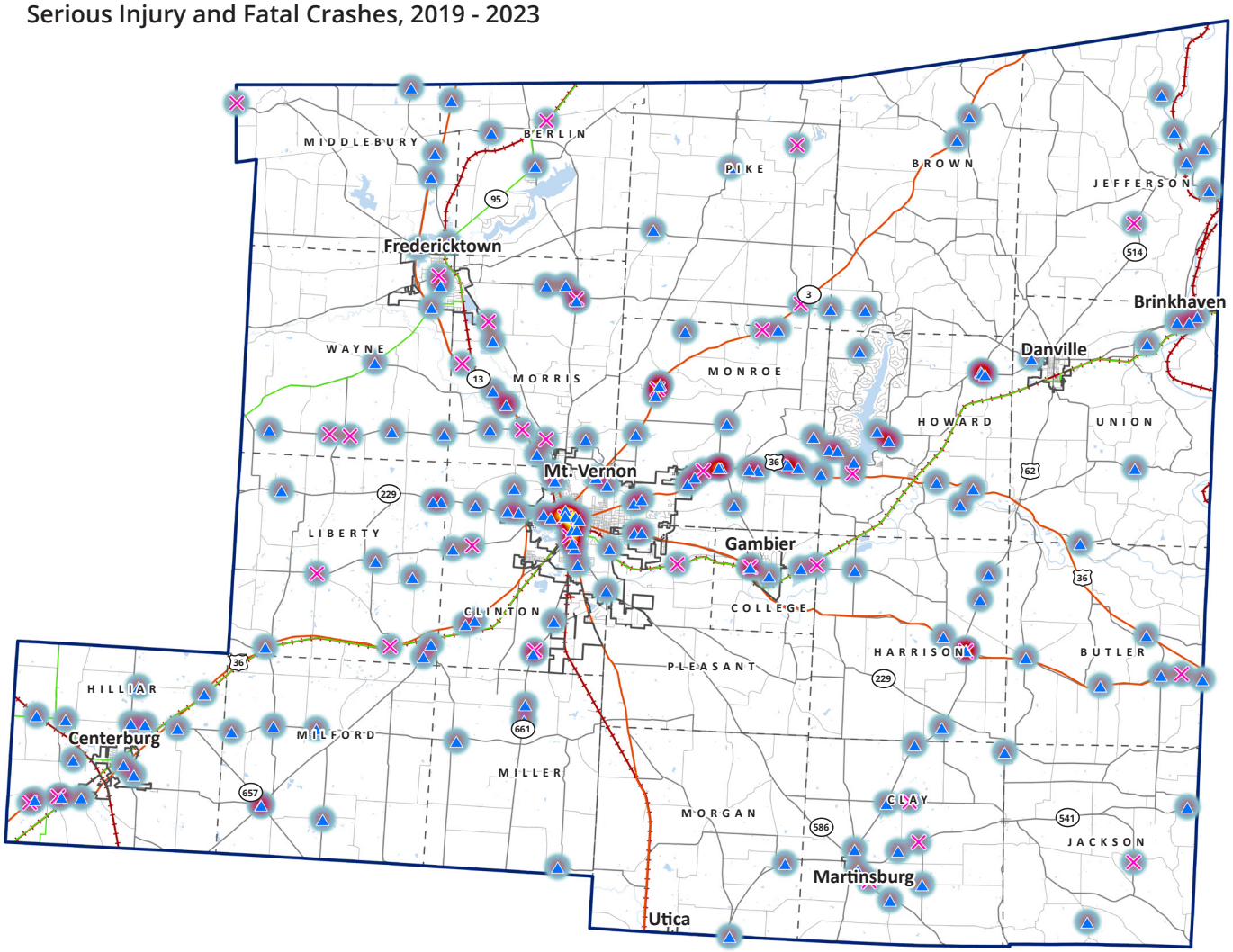
Serious Injury and Fatal Crashes, 2019 - 2023



The map above shows the locations of crashes resulting in serious injury or fatality, including two fatal crashes within the City of Mount Vernon, five fatal crashes along US 36, three fatal crashes along SR 13, and three fatal crashes along SR 3. Other severe crashes are scattered throughout the county but are mainly at intersections or rail crossings.

Pedestrian and bicycle-involved crashes often result in higher rates of injury and fatality due to a lack of vehicular protection. In the timeframe studied, there were 27 pedestrian and 13 bicycle crashes in Knox County. Among these incidents, eight resulted in serious injury and one was fatal. The largest concentrations of bicycle and pedestrian crashes are observed in central Mount Vernon along SR 13 and US 36. Another crash hotspot is observed east of Mount Vernon along the Kokosing Gap Trail.

Legend

Sparse

Dense

Fatal

Serious Injury

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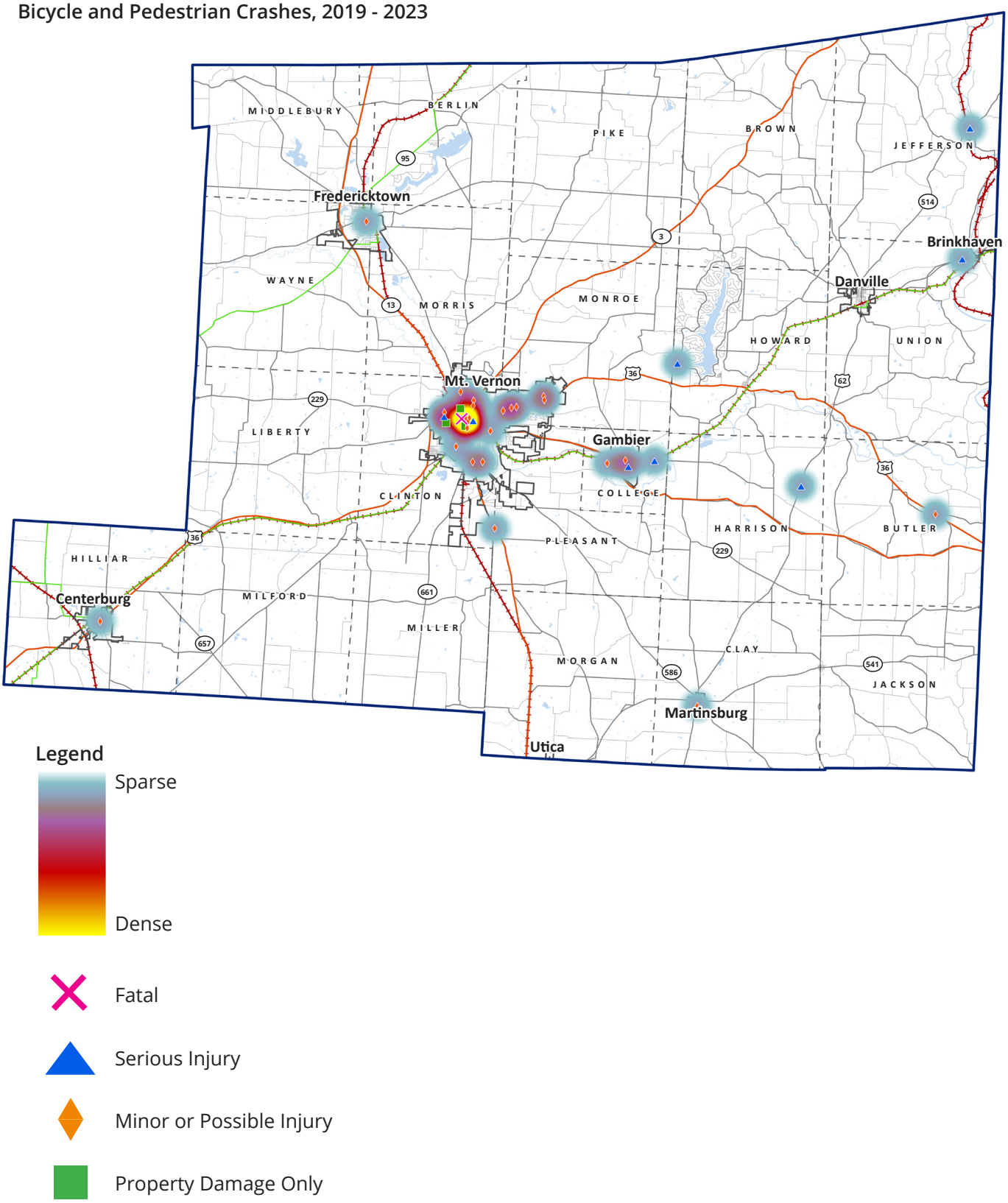
Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes, 2019 - 2023



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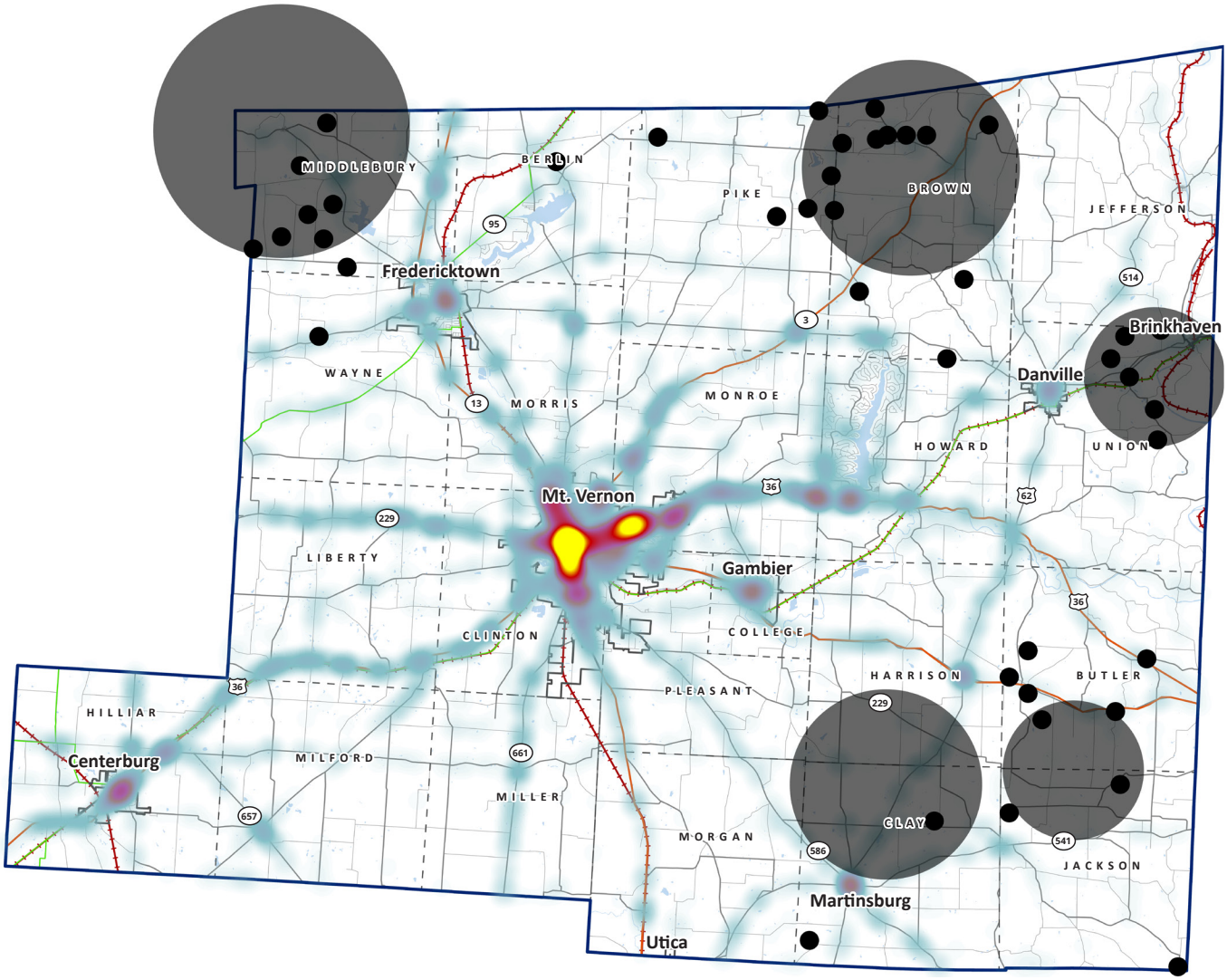
Amish Settlements, Buggy Volumes, and Crash Frequency



The 2019 Ohio Statewide Amish Transportation Study includes information about the volume of horse-drawn buggy travel in Knox County. This information is shown in the map above alongside Amish settlement locations overall crash frequency. Since 2019, there has been growth in the Amish population in Knox County, including in Liberty and Wayne Townships. Crash frequencies, as well as incidence of pedestrian- or buggy-related serious injuries or fatal crashes, are not observed as crash hotspots for the given period of crash data.

Legend

- Sparse
- Dense
- Amish Settlement
- Amish Bishop Present

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Actions

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goal of **Mobility.**

Objective 1. Bridge gaps in the multimodal network.

Knox County is home to the Heart of Ohio Trail, Kokosing Gap Trail, and Mohican Valley Trail—key regional assets that provide recreation opportunities for residents and visitors alike. However, some trail crossings present safety concerns, and opportunities exist to expand connections to these trails.

Beyond trails, gaps in the sidewalk network and safe crossings persist in downtown areas of Mount Vernon, Gambier, Fredericktown, and Danville. The Knox County Active Transportation Plan and other previous efforts have identified strategies to address these challenges.

Building on these efforts, the following recommendations aim to bridge gaps in the multimodal network and create safer, more connected transportation options for all.

1.1 Complete sidewalks and bicycle routes between community destinations where gaps are present.

The 2019 Knox County Active Transportation Plan details prioritized project recommendations that include over 20 miles of additional trails, over 10 miles of on street bikeways, and close to 9 miles of sidewalks to fill critical bicycle and pedestrian facility gaps in the county.

1.2. Determine feasibility of expanding the County trail system to connect Fredericktown with the Heart of Ohio Trail and/or Kokosing Gap Trail.

The Owl Creek Trail is a multi-use trail, developed from a railroad corridor, that runs north and south through Fredericktown. Expanding this trail to Mt. Vernon would greatly expand the regional trail network. The County could conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential routes, costs, environmental impacts, and benefits of the proposed connections. This study should include public input and stakeholder engagement to ensure community support.

1.3 Conduct periodic "walking audits" to monitor changes to and evolving needs of the pedestrian and bicycle network.

Walk audits involve a multidisciplinary team walking in a key area of focus to identify needs and concerns of the active transportation network. These walk audits can help decision-makers determine priorities and experience the built environment from a different perspective.

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1.4 Improve accessibility by bringing substandard sidewalks into compliance with ADA requirements.

Equitable access to the transportation system is essential in order to provide all people the ability to reach their destinations. A key component of equitable access is ensuring that sidewalks and crossings meet ADA standards. Grants from programs like the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) can be instrumental. Additionally, consider local funding options such as bonds or special assessments.

1.5 Update zoning code, subdivision regulations, and/or design guidelines to require new developments to have a well-connected street, sidewalk, and bike path network.

A key component to building the active transportation network that the community desires is developing guidelines, policies, and regulations that specify requirements for what type of facilities must be included in new developments and roadway projects. This could include adopting a complete streets policy, developing zoning code changes that require sidewalks on both sides of all streets and specify minimum widths (e.g., 5 feet for residential and 8 feet for commercial areas), or requiring developments to include sidewalks, paths, or specific active transportation friendly street configurations.

Objective 2. Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.

Many people walk and bike for their commute or for recreation purposes. The environment that they walk or bike in should be comfortable, convenient, and most importantly safe.

2.1 Incorporate amenities such as lighting, seating, and landscaping at transit stops to encourage use.

Transit stops should include lighting and seating to enhance safety, visibility, and comfort for riders. Seating along can provide needed breaks for those with mobility challenges and create a welcoming environment for people utilizing the stop. Landscaping can be helpful to enhance the look and feel of the stop and also create a separation from vehicular traffic. These amenities not only provide benefits for current transit users but may also attract new riders.

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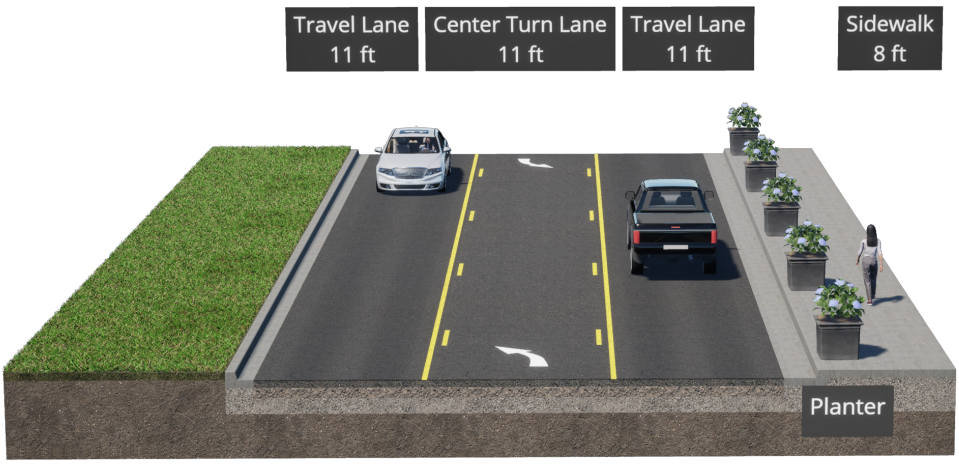
2.2 Implement streetscape improvements such as increased sidewalk widths, street trees, raised medians, and decorative bollards/railings.

Wider sidewalks can help increase the comfortability of a pedestrian along a busy road, accommodate higher volumes of pedestrian traffic, and allow space for bicyclists, particularly around schools where children could be using the sidewalk to bike. Street trees both enhance the look of the environment around a path and provide shade in the warmer months. Raised medians can help pedestrians and bicyclists cross the street by providing a place of refuge between the two directions of traffic flow. They can also help with managing vehicle traffic and reducing speeds. Decorative bollards or other road separation types protect pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicle traffic with a physical barrier, helping these users to feel more comfortable particularly on busier, higher speed roads. They can also improve the look and feel of a street.



Decorative planters separating the sidewalk from the road.
Source: Burgess & Niple

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2.3 Enhance existing crosswalks with high-visibility elements to improve safety.

Safe crossings are a key component of ensuring pedestrian and bicyclist safety. High-visibility elements can include increased lighting, added signage, and high-visibility crosswalk markings (ladder crosswalk).

2.4 Increase bicycle awareness and safety through ongoing planning and coordination with implementation partners.

Continue to update and reference the Knox County Active Transportation Plan to identify gaps and prioritize areas for improvement. Establish partnerships with local advocacy groups to guide safety initiatives. Provide trail crossings recommended in the Knox County Active Transportation where the Heart of Ohio and Kokosing Gap Trails cross State and County roads.

High-visibility crosswalk enhancements
Source: FHWA

Credit: Nicole Leone Miller Photography

Credit: Area Development Foundation, Inc.

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Objective 3. Relieve congestion and improve roadway safety along regional corridors.

A key principle of this plan is to improve corridors, encompassing increased intensity, accommodating a mix of uses, enhancing the public realm, and improving traffic flow and safety. Knox County roads provide transportation for a diverse range of users including horse and buggy travel, transit, vehicles, and active transportation modes. It is important to continue to improve upon the transportation system with all of these users in mind and with increasing safety at the forefront of decision-making.

3.1 Conduct studies to identify potential capacity and/or operational improvements along high-volume roadways including SR 229 between I-71 in Morrow County and Mount Vernon, US 36, and SR 661 between Granville in Licking County and Mount Vernon.

SR 229, US 36, and SR 661 are key regional routes, primarily two-lane roadways, that serve as vital connections for residents, businesses, and visitors. With growing traffic demands, studies should be conducted to explore potential improvements to address congestion and enhance safety. If daily traffic volumes continue to rise and backups become frequent, these studies will help identify effective solutions to ensure these corridors remain reliable and efficient.

3.2 Improve east-west roadway mobility across Knox County. Study the following potential improvements: Improve Sycamore Rd to provide enhanced east-west connectivity in the southern portion of the County; Major upgrades to SR 229 west of Mount Vernon and on US 36 east of Mount Vernon.

Past planning efforts have identified a need to improve east-west mobility in the county. The County should collaborate with regional partners to further evaluate proposed alternatives to improve access and connectivity.

3.3 Extend and connect roadways at the periphery of Mount Vernon to provide better circulation and connectivity between major routes and to enable trucks to bypass the downtown area.

Mount Vernon is a main hub for transportation in the county, but heavy truck traffic must pass through the downtown area. This can lead to congestion, safety concerns, and wear on local streets not designed for these heavy vehicles. Extending and connecting roadways at the city's periphery would improve traffic circulation by providing alternate routes for trucks traveling between major highways and destinations.

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3.4 Update the Knox County and City of Mount Vernon Thoroughfare Plans and Access Management Guidelines.

Thoroughfare Plans provide a long-term vision for the transportation network, identifying key roads and corridors that will need improvements or expansions to accommodate changes in the region. Access Management Guidelines focus on how driveways, intersections, and other access points are designed to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and enhance safety. These updated guidelines will help control where and how new accesses to roadways are created, making the transportation system safer and more efficient.

3.5 Improve access to the Knox County Regional Airport.

As more air traffic comes to Knox County, improving access to the Knox County Regional Airport is crucial. The access roads, Kinney and Airport Roads, should be upgraded to handle increased traffic efficiently. The airport serves as a significant economic driver for the county, and enhancing its accessibility can further boost economic benefits. This improvement should be included in the MORPC Regional Transportation Master Plan to ensure coordinated regional development with state and federal community project requests and the MORPC capital improvement list.

3.6 Implement visibility improvements for horse-drawn vehicle travel including installation of LED lights or reflective tape to prevent collisions with motor vehicles.

In the areas of the county where there are Amish settlements, particularly the roads that have higher horse-drawn vehicle counts, installing visibility enhancements on the road can help reduce the potential for conflicts with motor vehicles and increase the visibility of the road for those traveling by horse-drawn vehicle.

3.7 Increase the number and/or frequency of transit routes to high-demand areas.

Past planning efforts have identified a demand for more frequent transit routes and an expanded transit system. The county should

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6 Mount Vernon Growth Strategy

The City of Mount Vernon is a vibrant community that blends historical charm with modern amenities. Nestled along the picturesque Kokosing River, Mount Vernon is celebrated for its rich heritage, welcoming neighborhoods, and thriving local economy. As a cultural and economic hub, the city offers a diverse array of recreational, educational, and business opportunities. However, the City is not without challenge, including housing affordability, suburban development patterns, and fiscal stress. The following chapter outlines a comprehensive growth strategy for Mount Vernon. This strategy provides measurable objectives and actions to guide decisions and foster responsible development. While aligned with the larger Knox County Comprehensive Plan, the Mount Vernon Growth Strategy is designed to function independently if needed.

What is a growth strategy?

A growth strategy is an approach that outlines measurable goals and objectives to guide a community towards responsible growth and development. It provides clear direction, enhances decision-making by aligning actions with the vision, and improves resource allocation. It fosters adaptability, allowing the community to respond to environmental and situational changes, and aligns stakeholders. Ultimately, a well-crafted growth strategy supports long-term success by proactively addressing challenges and opportunities.

Why does Mount Vernon need a growth strategy?

Mount Vernon is a significant contributor to Knox County, accounting for twenty-seven percent of the county's population and sixty-three percent of its consumer spending. It also serves as the major job center for the county. With much of the county's anticipated growth expected to occur in and around the City, Mount Vernon is poised to experience significant development pressure. A well-defined growth strategy is essential to manage this pressure effectively. Such a strategy will ensure that the city can accommodate new residents and businesses while maintaining its unique character and high quality of life. By proactively planning for growth, Mount Vernon can optimize infrastructure, enhance public services, and preserve green spaces. Additionally, a growth strategy will help align community goals, attract investment, and foster economic resilience.

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Vision

Mount Vernon aspires to be a premier city, with historic hometown values, for a diverse group of citizens, visitors, and businesses ensuring safety and opportunity for all through innovative and fiscally responsible services.

Goals

The following goals were developed based on insights gathered through community engagement. These goals were then tested and refined with input from the Steering Committee and the community. They represent the intended outcomes of the strategy, articulated in straightforward terms.

1. **Rural Conservation.** Protected and conserved rural and agricultural land maintains unique character, heritage, and natural landscapes.
2. **Strengthened Centers.** Resilient city and village centers have a mix of uses and create a strong sense of community.
3. **Land Use and Development.** Thoughtful and strategic land use and development policies that balance growth with environmental stewardship.
4. **People.** Healthy and proud residents and workers enjoying the benefits of growth and quality of life that drew—and keeps—them in the County.
5. **Natural and Recreational Amenities.** Enhanced natural and recreational amenities are accessible and offer varied opportunities for outdoor enjoyment.
6. **Economic Prosperity.** A robust local economy with industrial growth and a wide range of employment opportunities.
7. **Housing.** A diverse range of affordable, high-quality housing options meet the needs of all community members.
8. **Mobility.** Efficient and accessible transportation options connect residents and workers to key destinations, support economic growth, and enhance quality of life.

Plan Framework

The **vision** is the highest —and therefore most general—expression of a community's future. It reflects the community's values and sets the tone for more specific goals and recommendations.

Goals are intended results expressed in non-technical terms. They represent the overarching desired outcomes for the plan.

Objectives are sub-themes within the goals that serve to organize actions.

Actions are projects, policies, or programs that are recommendations to be implemented.

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Conditions and Trends

Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use map illustrates the location and extent of various land uses, including residential, commercial, parks, and agriculture. This map serves as a valuable tool for inventorying the community, learning from it, and making informed decisions about future land uses. The assessment of existing land use has highlighted several key factors that must be considered in developing the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map and related policies.

- The City is 22% agricultural despite having higher density residential uses.
- Most development that has occurred in the past four to five decades has a distinctly different pattern than the core.
- Much of the retail and residential growth in the last 10 years is focused in the northeast (and to a lesser extent) the south side. This is especially true for multifamily residential.
- There is considerable potential to accommodate future growth through redevelopment.

Existing Zoning

The map on page 101 shows simplified zoning within the city. Horizontal residential growth is anchored by a historic urban core, which is zoned for a mixture of uses and residential densities, creating a dynamic center. Low-density residential zoning radiates outward, promoting horizontal sprawl. Industrial land is primarily concentrated on the south side of the city.

Development Activity

Residential development (map on page 106) is occurring in the southern and northeast sections of Mount Vernon. Between 2019 and 2023 a total of 64 parcels, totaling 547 acres, received new construction permits. Seventy-five percent of these permits were issued for housing. New housing development is taking place in the northeast and south-side of Mount Vernon with 475 residential units on the south-side and approximately 700 residential units in the northeast. This trend of new housing can be expected to continue as housing demands will continue from the projected increase of population.

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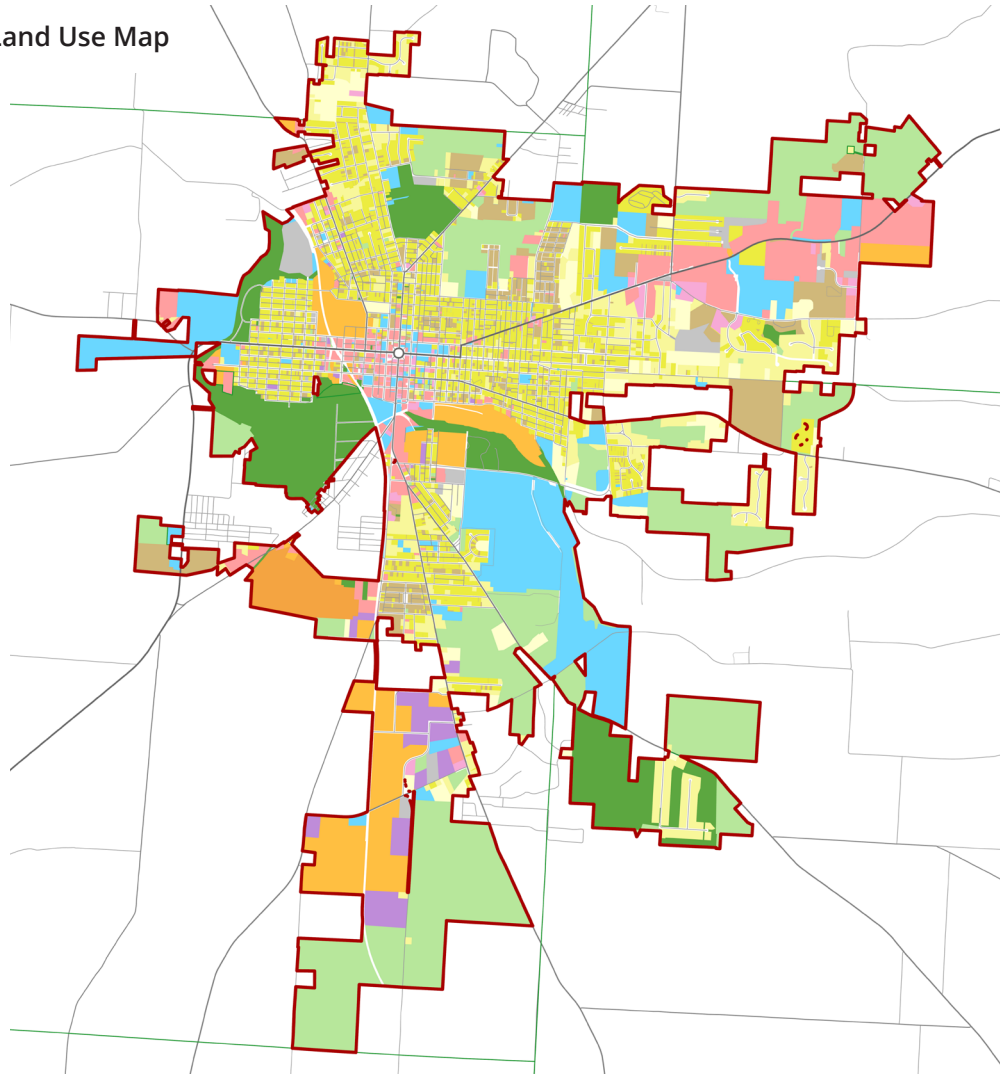
Existing Land Use Map



Existing Land Use Categories	Acres	Sq. Mile	Percent
Agriculture	1,412	2	22%
High-Density Suburban Residential	826	1.3	13%
Public Services	675	1.1	10%
Parks & Open Space	628	1	10%
Right-of-Way	611	1	9%
Low-Density Suburban Residential (less than 0.5 - 3 units/acre)	511	.8	8%
Commercial	422	.7	7%
Industrial	397	.6	6%
Urban Residential	394	.6	6%
Rural Residential (less than 0.5 units/acre)	212	.3	3%
Warehouse	111	.2	2%
Quarry	100	.2	2%
Vacant	86	.1	1%
Office	53	.1	1%
Total	**6,438**	**10**	**100%**

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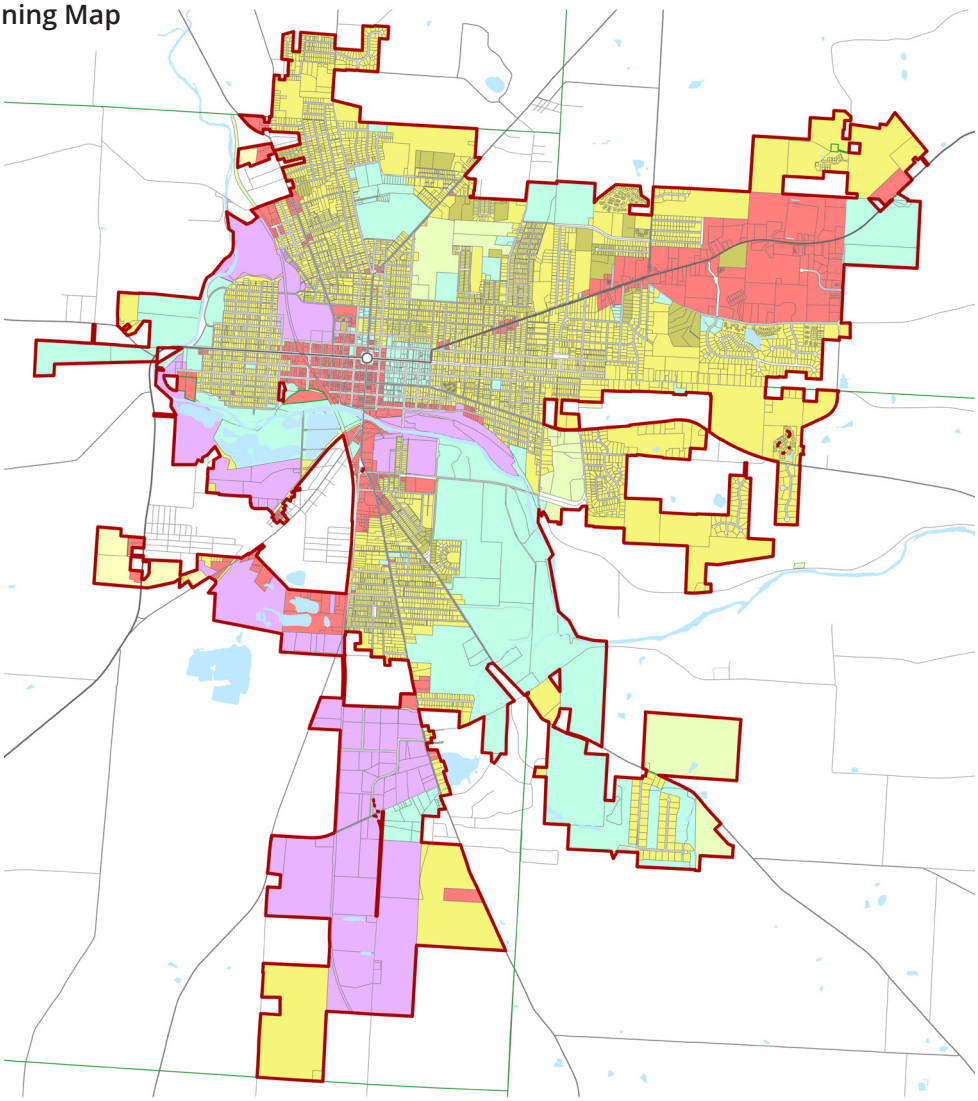
Existing Zoning Map



Existing Zoning Categories	Acres	Sq. Mile	Percent
Low-Density Residential	2,648	4	43%
Institutional and Civic	1,372	2	22%
Industrial and Manufacturing	1,005	1.6	16%
Business and Commercial	655	1	11%
Rural Residential	293	.5	5%
Mixed and Multi-Family Residential	120	.2	2%
Manufactured Homes	59	.1	1%
Total	**6,152**	**10**	**100%**

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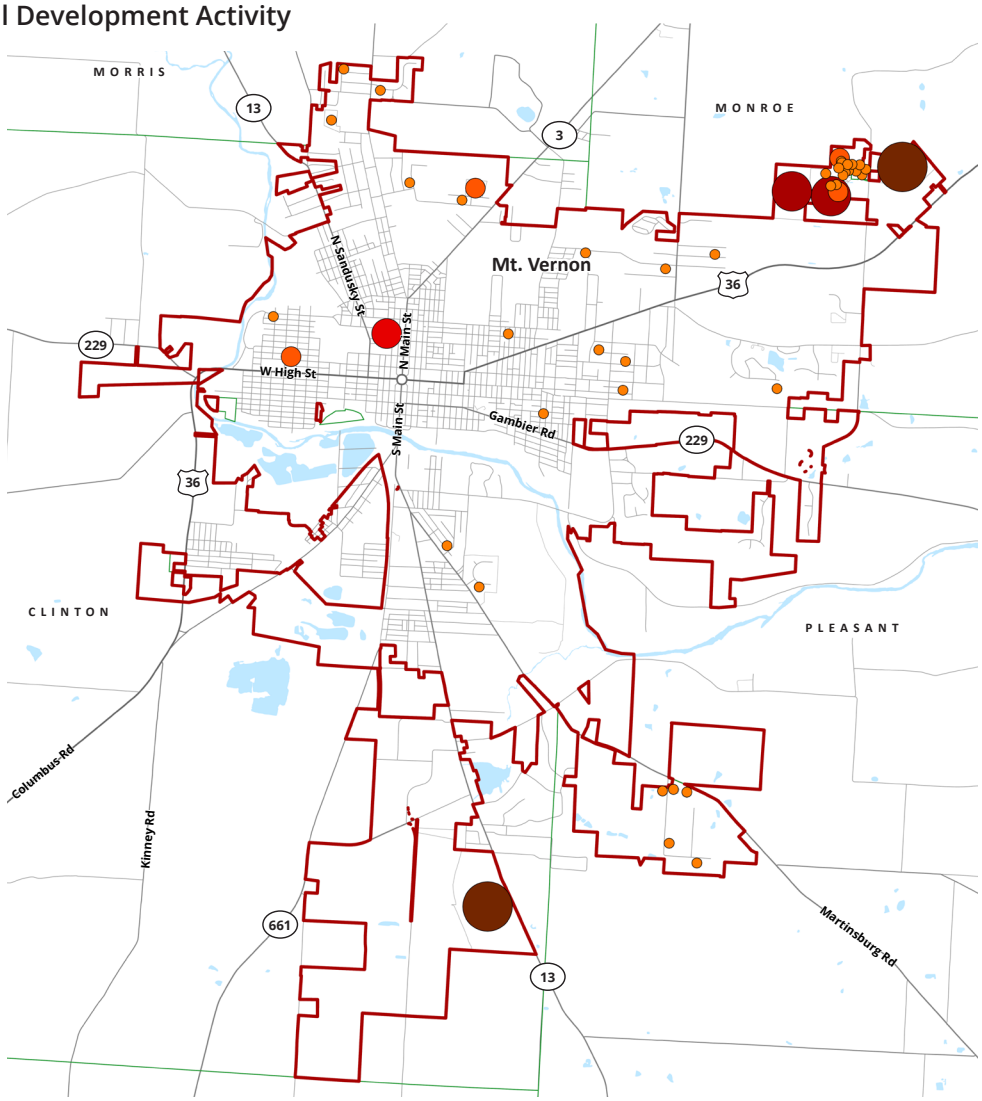
Residential Development Activity



Legend

- 1 Unit
- 2 - 9 Units
- 10 - 99 Units
- 100 - 199 Units
- 200 + Units

Permit Type	Permits	Units
Single-family dwelling	39	120
Multi-family dwelling	9	496
Planned neighborhood	1	475
Commercial	10	N/A
Industrial	4	N/A
Warehousing/storage	2	N/A
Total	**65**	

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Population

Mount Vernon is currently experiencing population stagnation, in contrast to the growth observed in the County. This difference in growth patterns, coupled with the associated age cohorts, suggests an aging population that is becoming less urban. Such a trend is likely to have significant implications for housing, transportation patterns, and service distribution within the city.

Additionally, Mount Vernon exhibits significant variability across different age groups. The City has seen a reduction in births, which could impact the school system as fewer future students enroll. However, there have been notable increases in the population aged 10 to 19, although this school-aged group tends to leave the City as indicated by the 20-24 age cohort. Encouragingly, the population either returns or is replaced in the 25-60 year old cohorts, suggesting a strong workforce age population. Addressing the needs of these age groups will be crucial to maintaining a robust workforce within Mount Vernon.

Mount Vernon Age Cohorts (2015 and 2022 Comparison)

Age	2015	2022	Percent Change
Under 5 years	1,181	691	-41.5%
5 to 9 years	1,164	701	-39.5%
10 to 14 years	641	999	+55.9%
15 to 19 years	1,181	1,617	+36.9%
20 to 24 years	1,806	1,362	-24.6%
25 to 34 years	1,080	1,795	+66.2%
35 to 44 years	2,278	2,391	+5.0%
45 to 54 years	1,873	1,846	-1.44%
55 to 59 years	1,029	1,051	+2.1%
60 to 64 years	1,012	868	-14.2%
65 to 74 years	1,535	1,078	-29.7%
75 to 84 years	922	830	-10.0%
85+ years	523	585	+11.9%

Services

The following agencies operate to ensure the safety and security of the community:

- **The Mount Vernon Police Department** serves the City of Mount Vernon and handles local law enforcement within the city limits.
- **The Mount Vernon Fire Department** provides fire and EMS services to the City of Mount Vernon and the Village of Gambier as well as Liberty, Clinton, Pleasant, and College Townships and part of Morris Township. The department also contracts with the Mount Vernon Developmental Center and the Knox County Airport to provide emergency services. The department serves 82 square miles from two stations.

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Social Development

Investing in people is at the heart of social development. The City of Mount Vernon strives to remove barriers to allow individuals to pursue their dreams with dignity and confidence. The aim is to ensure that poverty is not a permanent condition and to advocate for self-sufficiency as a fundamental right. Mount Vernon fosters a healthier, more educated, and economically stable population by providing opportunities for citizens to grow, develop skills, and contribute meaningfully to their families and communities.

Early education and affordable, high-quality child care are critical components of social development in Mount Vernon. Investing in early learning initiatives helps children achieve greater success later in life, while accessible child care enables parents to be more productive at work, benefiting local businesses and the broader economy. Providing affordable and safe housing is crucial for promoting self-sufficiency and nurturing strong family relationships.

Economic development is also a key aspect of social development in the City. Programs and services for youth, post-secondary education opportunities, job creation, and the promotion of healthy, active living all contribute to the city's economic growth. Encouraging community engagement through faith-based organizations and other initiatives further strengthens the social fabric. This collaborative effort requires the involvement of community organizations, businesses, universities, and local governments to ensure a brighter future for all residents.

Credit: Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

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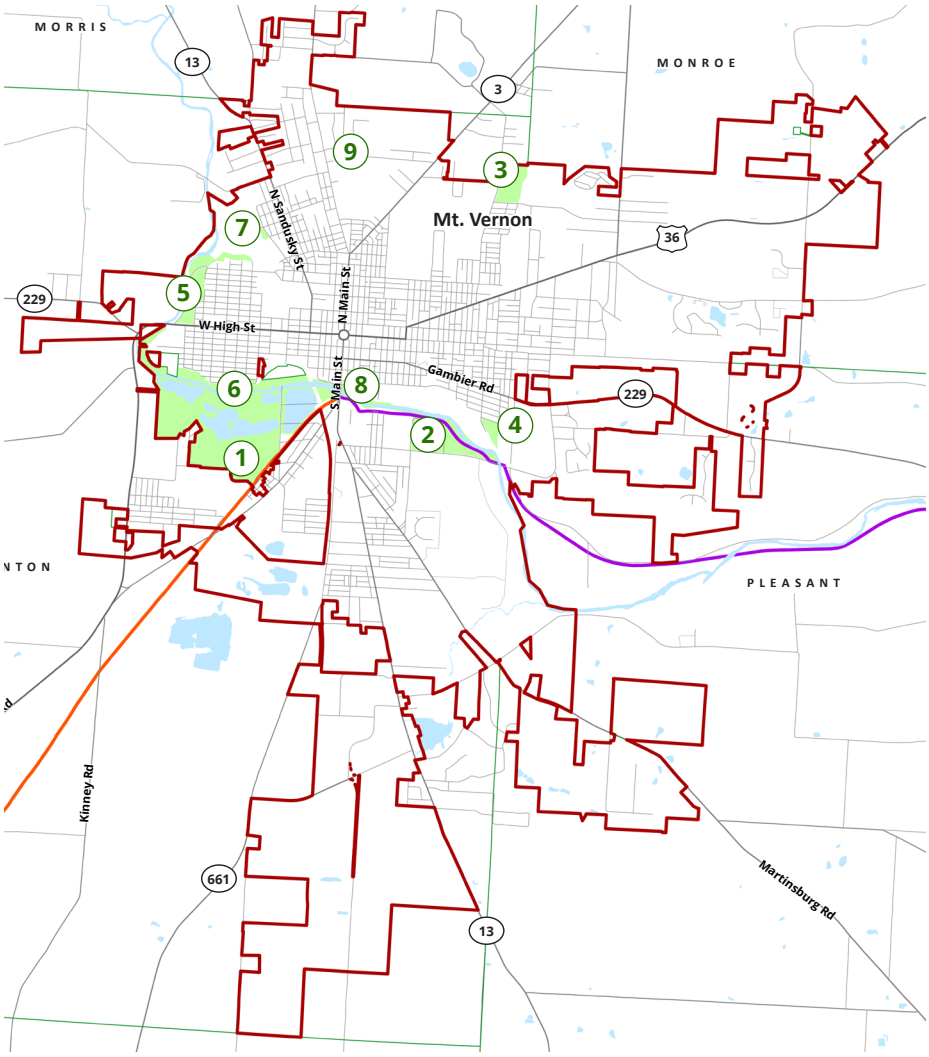
City Parks

Legend

- Heart of Ohio Trail
- Kokosing Gap Trail
- Water
- Park Land

Parks

1. Ariel-Foundation Park
2. Memorial Park
3. Hiawatha Park
4. Phillips Park
5. Riverside Park
6. Arch Park
7. Shellmar Park
8. Riverview Park
9. Dan Emmett Park



Parks and Open Space

Mount Vernon boasts an impressive array of parkland, with 19.8 acres of parks per 1,000 residents, significantly exceeding the National Recreation and Park Association's standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people. This abundance includes a diverse range of park types and amenities, from the 215-acre Ariel-Foundation Park, a regional attraction on a former glass-making factory site, to smaller neighborhood parks. Downtown Mount Vernon, located just north of the Kokosing River, is enriched by Heritage Park, which serves as a junction between the Kokosing Gap Trail and the Heart of Ohio Trail. In addition to the parks mapped above, the City has a number of smaller pocket parks distributed throughout the neighborhoods. This intersection of parkland, trails, and downtown amenities creates a vibrant and engaging experience for residents and visitors alike,

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Cultural Opportunities

Mount Vernon offers a rich array of cultural, entertainment, and gathering opportunities that significantly enhance the quality of life for its residents. The Mount Vernon Arts Consortium, for example, brings big-name events, musicians, and performers to the city, utilizing venues like the historic Woodward Opera House, Knox Memorial, and Ariel-Foundation Park. These events not only provide entertainment but also foster a sense of community and cultural enrichment. Downtown Mount Vernon hosts various events throughout the year, including festivals, holiday celebrations, and community gatherings, which create vibrant social spaces for residents to connect and engage with one another.

Organizations like Experience Mount Vernon play a crucial role in organizing community events that bring people together. The Mount Vernon Music and Arts Festival is a highlight, featuring live music, art displays, and various activities that celebrate local talent and creativity. Additionally, numerous downtown events, such as farmers' markets, parades, and seasonal festivities, offer residents and visitors a chance to enjoy the city's unique charm and hospitality.

These cultural and entertainment opportunities benefit the city by boosting the local economy, attracting visitors, and supporting local businesses. They also contribute to the city's identity and pride, making Mount Vernon a desirable place to live and visit. The integration of cultural and recreational activities into the fabric of Mount Vernon helps build a strong, connected, and thriving community.

Credit: Nicole Leone Miller Photography

Credit: Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau

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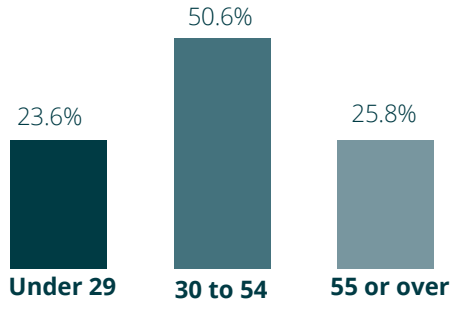
Workforce

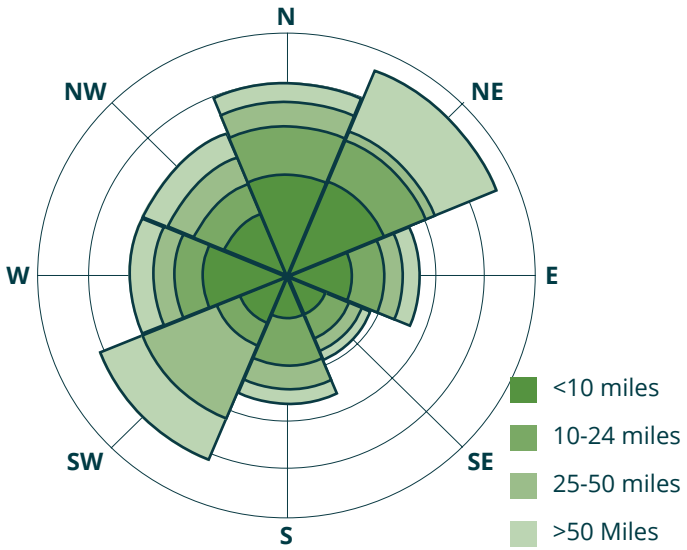
The workforce in Mount Vernon included 8,231 workers in 2022. After experiencing a decline in the early 2010s, the number of people in the workforce has remained generally steady since 2020. Approximately 50% of workers are between the ages of 30 and 54, while around one quarter of the workforce is over the age of 55 and will soon be reaching retirement age. The unemployment rate was 3.3% in 2023 but rose to 4.9% by May 2024. Most of the workforce is employed in the educational services and healthcare sectors, reflecting the city's strong emphasis on these industries.

A significant portion of Mount Vernon's residents commute to work outside the city. In 2010, 40.2% of residents lived and worked in the city, but this number decreased to 34.3% by 2022. The average commute time for a Mount Vernon resident is 19.9 minutes. This commuting trend highlights the need for continued investment in local job opportunities to reduce commute times and retain more workers within the city.

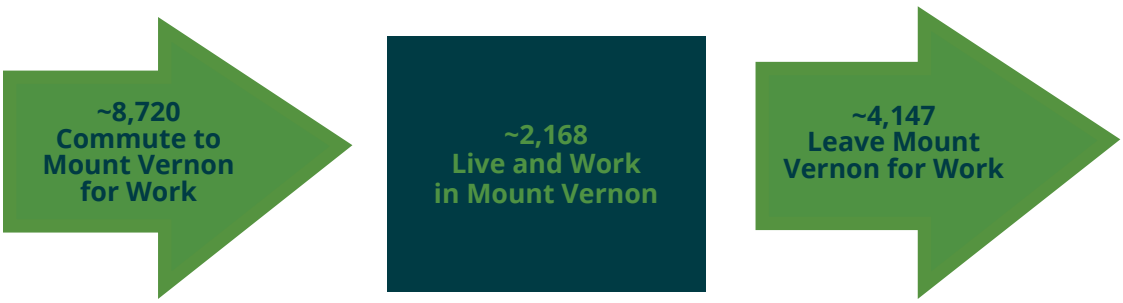
Percent of Workers by Age



Mount Vernon Labor Shed



Inflow Outflow (2022)



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Housing

Mount Vernon has approximately 7,900 housing units, with a 9% vacancy rate. Of these units, 52% are owner-occupied, and 42% of homeowners do not have mortgages. Single-family homes make up 68% of the housing stock, while 42% of the units are rentals and 3% are mobile homes. Notably, 82% of the housing units were built before 1989, making them over 35 years old. This aging housing stock may require significant maintenance and updates to meet modern living standards. Mount Vernon accounts for 37% of the countywide total housing units, and 29% of its residents spend at least 30% of their income on housing costs. Additionally, Mount Vernon represents 43% of the housing affordability issue in Knox County while accounting for only 31% of occupied housing units.

Further highlighting the housing affordability challenge, 14% of homeowners in Mount Vernon pay at least 30% of their income on housing costs, while 51% of renters face the same burden. This indicates a significant portion of the population is struggling to meet their housing expenses, which can lead to financial stress and instability. A significant 84% of the housing affordability issue is concentrated in households with incomes less than $35,000, emphasizing the need for targeted support for low-income families. Seniors, those over 65, represent 24% of the affordability issue, underscoring the importance of providing affordable housing options for this vulnerable population.

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Traffic and Congestion

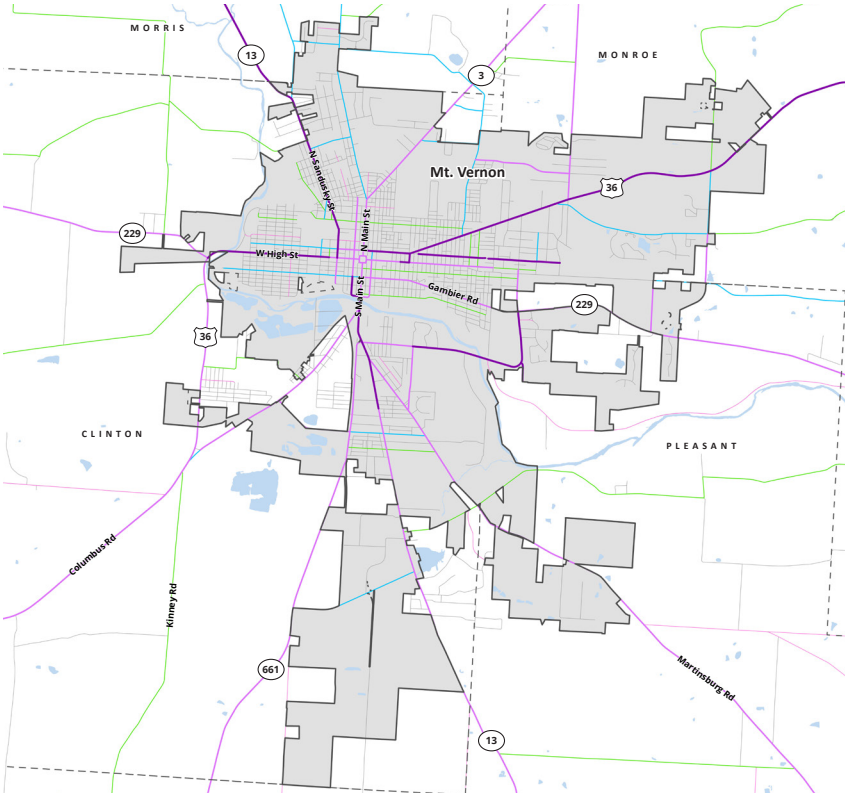
The highest average daily traffic (ADT) volumes occur on the US and state routes. Portions of US 36 and SR 13 observe over 8,000 vehicles per day on average, representing the highest traffic volumes in the City and some of the highest in the County. Traffic volumes above 3,000 are observed on multiple City of Mount Vernon roadways including Martinsburg Rd, Neil Ave, High St, Chestnut St, and the segments of State Routes and U.S. Routes that intersect within the city limit. According to public input provided during this planning process and analysis presented in the Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO) 2018 - 2040 Transportation Plan, network congestion has been observed most frequently in the City of Mount Vernon, along US 36, and along SR 13.

Per the 2023 Knox County Economic Growth Strategy, future planned roadway improvements include the extension of Sycamore Road to provide increased east-west connectivity in the southern portion of the county, various roadway extensions in the vicinity of Mount Vernon to provide better circulation and connectivity between major routes and to enable trucks to bypass the downtown area, and capacity improvements for major thoroughfares including US 36 and SR 229. Roadway improvement projects in Knox County and Mount Vernon are constrained by a lack of funding, staff resources and capacity, and variation in availability and longevity of funding opportunities.

Daily Traffic Volume

Legend

- Under 300
- 300 - 1199
- 1200 - 2999
- 3000 - 7999
- 8000 or more



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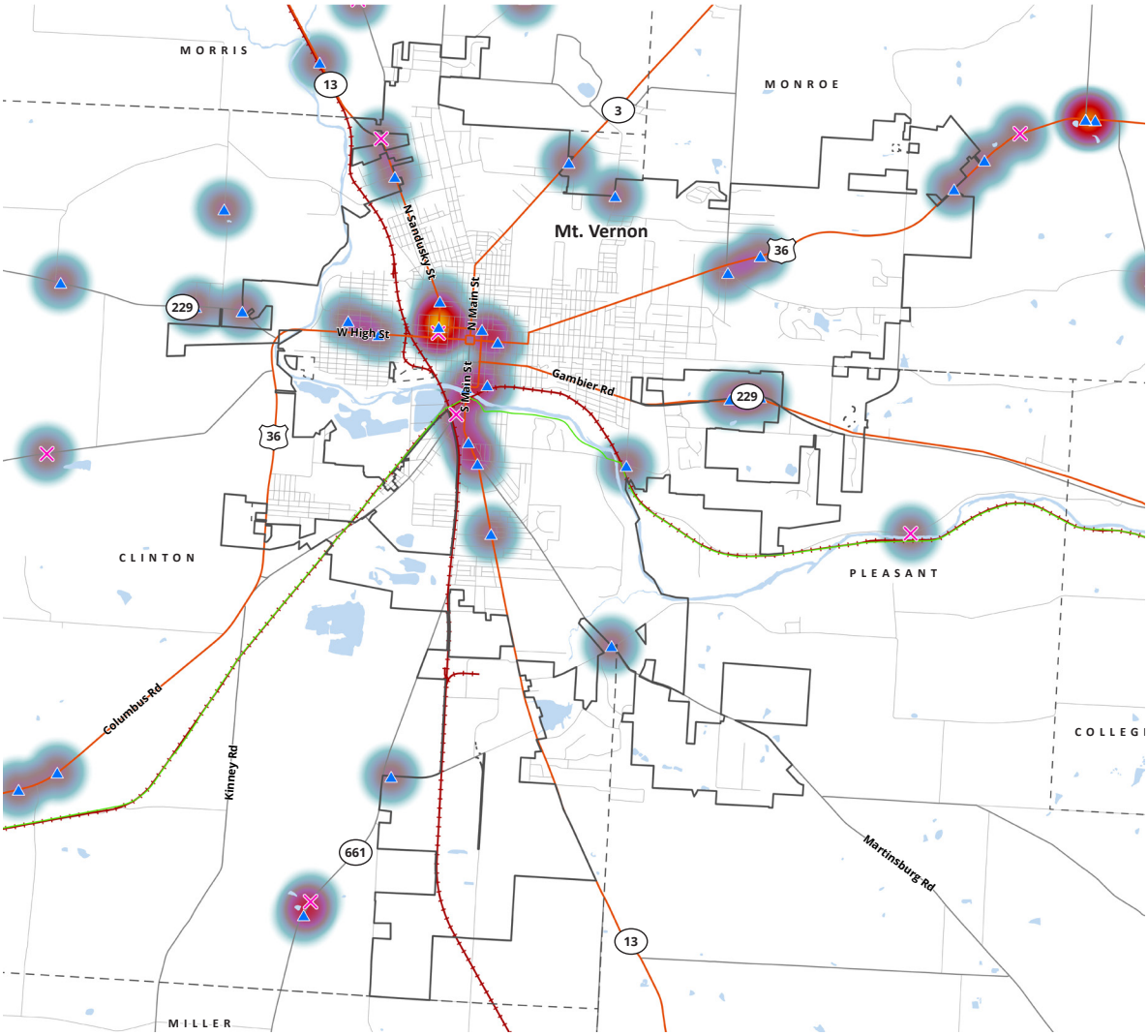
Serious Injury and Fatal Crashes, 2019 - 2023



The map above shows the locations of crashes resulting in serious injury or fatality, including two fatal crashes within the City of Mount Vernon. Three additional fatal crashes occurred within close proximity to the City.

Pedestrian and bicycle-involved crashes often result in higher rates of injury and fatality due to a lack of vehicular protection. The largest concentrations of bicycle and pedestrian crashes within the County are observed in central Mount Vernon along SR 13 and US 36. Another crash hotspot is observed east of Mount Vernon along the Kokosing Gap Trail.

Legend

- Sparse
- Dense
- Fatal
- Serious Injury

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Principles

The following principles were generated using insight gathered in the first round of engagement and tested and refined with the Steering Committee and the community during the second round of engagement. Principles define the intent of development and conservation in Knox County and Mount Vernon through simple statements. They are forward-looking and focused on future conditions, especially for 'where' and 'how' growth should occur.

1. **Strengthen the center of the City of Mount Vernon.** The historic population centers of Knox County support economic prosperity, provide for goods and services that support all communities, provide housing opportunities for County residents, and facilitate schools and the efficient delivery of government services and facilities. These communities facilitate social interaction at the neighborhood and community-wide level. And most importantly, they reflect many of the values that make Knox County unique.
2. **Focus growth inwardly, prioritizing infill and redevelopment over greenfield locations.** Likewise, the rural landscape is a critical component of Knox County cherished by many, while serving an important economic role. As population centers grow, they should prioritize infill development and redevelopment to minimize impacts on adjacent prime farmland. While greenfield development can expand opportunities, it should not be the only priority as communities grow.
3. **Protect natural assets, including streams, stream corridors, wetlands, ponds, lakes, and steep slopes.** The natural landscape is key to defining Knox County's special qualities, while supporting wildlife, outdoor recreation, and minimizing climate impacts. The County has a strong tradition of open space conservation and this should continue moving forward. Land use practices should reinforce the public's priority to protect the natural landscape and minimize the footprint of future development.
4. **Conserve agricultural land.** Agriculture will remain an important economic sector for Knox County, but it also represents its collective history and culture. Moving forward, agricultural land outside of the city limits should be continually prioritized for conservation and production, while minimizing development's footprint on the landscape. Working farms should be protected from the impact of haphazard rural development.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

5. **Dedicate places for industrial employment.** The County's strongest economic sector is light/advanced manufacturing and related uses that provide employment opportunities for residents and tax revenues to support public services. Future economic development should build upon the County's successes and land set aside with supporting infrastructure and nearby housing to facilitate additional private investment.
6. **Provide housing choices.** Current residents and future workers regarding a full range of housing options, particularly as families and individuals go through various life cycles. Housing choices should reflect the changing demographics of Knox County and ensure residents have the option to remain in their communities as households age and that future generations can call Knox County home.
7. **Stabilize established neighborhoods.** Neighborhoods in Mount Vernon and various villages throughout the County will benefit from public and private investments that stabilize home values and the physical environment. These traditional neighborhoods can offer quality environments to raise families and attract new residents, while housing workers and providing affordable housing options for aging homeowners. Their success also ensures a walkable community within close proximity of downtowns and local businesses, schools, and parks.
8. **Support and maintain unique residential places.** Knox County benefits from unique residential places, especially Apple Valley. This community exists as a quasi-public entity via its homeowner association and provides a number of services to its residents. Its continued success, while maintaining the current scale, reinforces its role as a unique residential and recreational asset in Knox County.
9. **Leverage the campuses of the higher education institutions.** Knox County is blessed by the higher education institutions that call the County home. While providing services and facilities to support local students and residents, these institutions can play a larger role in the broader community. This can include further investment in downtown Mount Vernon, educational, cultural and athletic events open to the public, and growing the County's image throughout the United States.
10. **Improve major corridors.** Indirectly, Knox County benefits from its location relative to the interstate system through the state routes that crisscross the County. These corridors link the County and its residents to Metropolitan Columbus, facilitating economic development and commuting patterns. Along with safety improvements, access management is critical to ensure efficient and safe traffic movement. This includes ensuring safe movement by the County's Amish community.

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Concept Map

The Concept Map serves as a precursor to the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map, illustrating where and how the City should guide future physical development and change at a conceptual level. The map is intentionally diagrammatic, featuring shaded and colored areas that indicate desired future conditions. It was created based on input from the initial round of community engagement and a thorough review of existing plans and studies. The map was reviewed by the Steering Committee and the community for input that would inform the final

Conservation Concepts

Constrained Land
Development should be highly limited in these areas Priority should be given to preservation of natural features. Includes land that preserved and conserved in trusts, parks, etc. and land in the 100-year floodplain.

Partially Constrained
Development should be limited in these areas. Priority should be given to preservation of natural features. Includes steep slopes (15% or greater) and the 500-year flood plain.

Rural
Areas with potential for continued agricultural uses and open space, with some limited conservation oriented residential.

Recreation Focused Residential
Area with unique residential character where scale of use should be maintained.

Growth Concepts

Residential
Areas with potential for home or resident growth based on location, access to services, and surrounding context.

Neighborhood Stabilization
Areas with potential for reinvestment and revitalization.

Mixed Center, small scale
Smaller areas with potential for mixed commercial, retail, and limited residential growth.

Mixed Center, large scale
Larger areas with potential for mixed commercial, retail, and residential growth.

Priority Corridor
Corridors that may need infrastructure reinvestment or that have potential for employment and commercial growth.

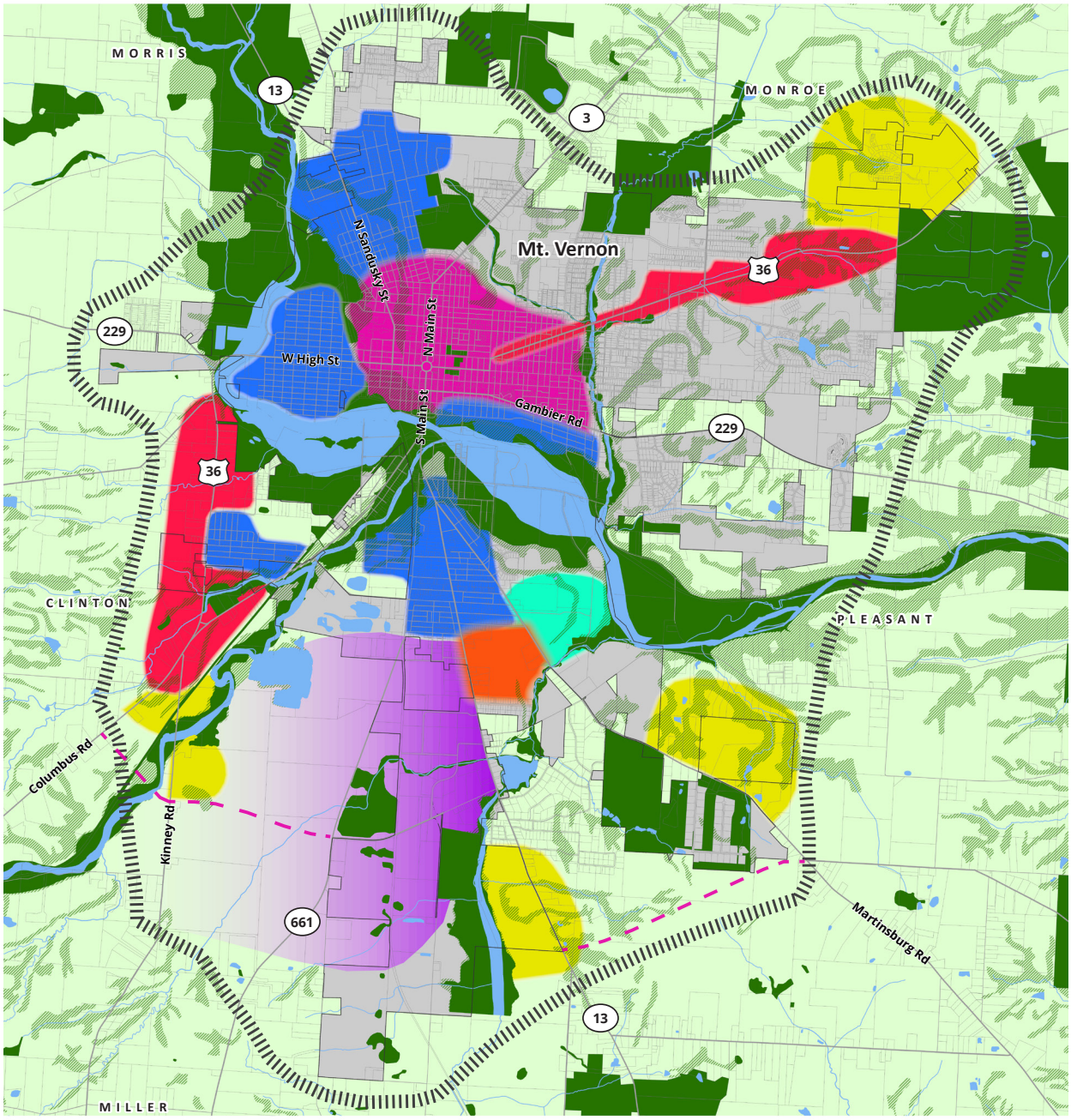
Employment Center
Areas with potential for job or employment growth.

Higher Education Employment Center
Areas with potential for higher education focused job or employment growth.

Development Edge
Conceptual growth boundary for areas with development potential.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Mount Vernon Concept Map



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Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map

The Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map expresses the city's intent in more specific terms regarding how land resources should be used in the future. The map identifies preferred future character types. Each type describes attributes of form and function, including the size and type of buildings and their relationship to the street, the surrounding street and block pattern, parking and access, and land uses.

Benefits of a Character-based Approach

This plan takes a character-based approach to shaping the city's future conservation, character, and development. While the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map includes both primary and secondary land uses in each character type, it also shows the built form that is desired in each area.

There are several advantages to this enhanced approach, including the following:

- It describes an overall intent for each character type, which helps staff, elected officials, developers/builders, and the public understand whether a particular development or project fits the spirit of the character type;
- It sets clearer expectations about the physical characteristics of development in an easy-to-understand format, which conveys standards for new development that can be used to assess how well a development aligns with community character; and
- It establishes a foundation for zoning code updates and other regulations, especially form-based standards.

The Future Concept, Character, and Development Map was developed based on the input and analysis conducted during this planning process, as reflected in the Concept Map.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Implementing the Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map

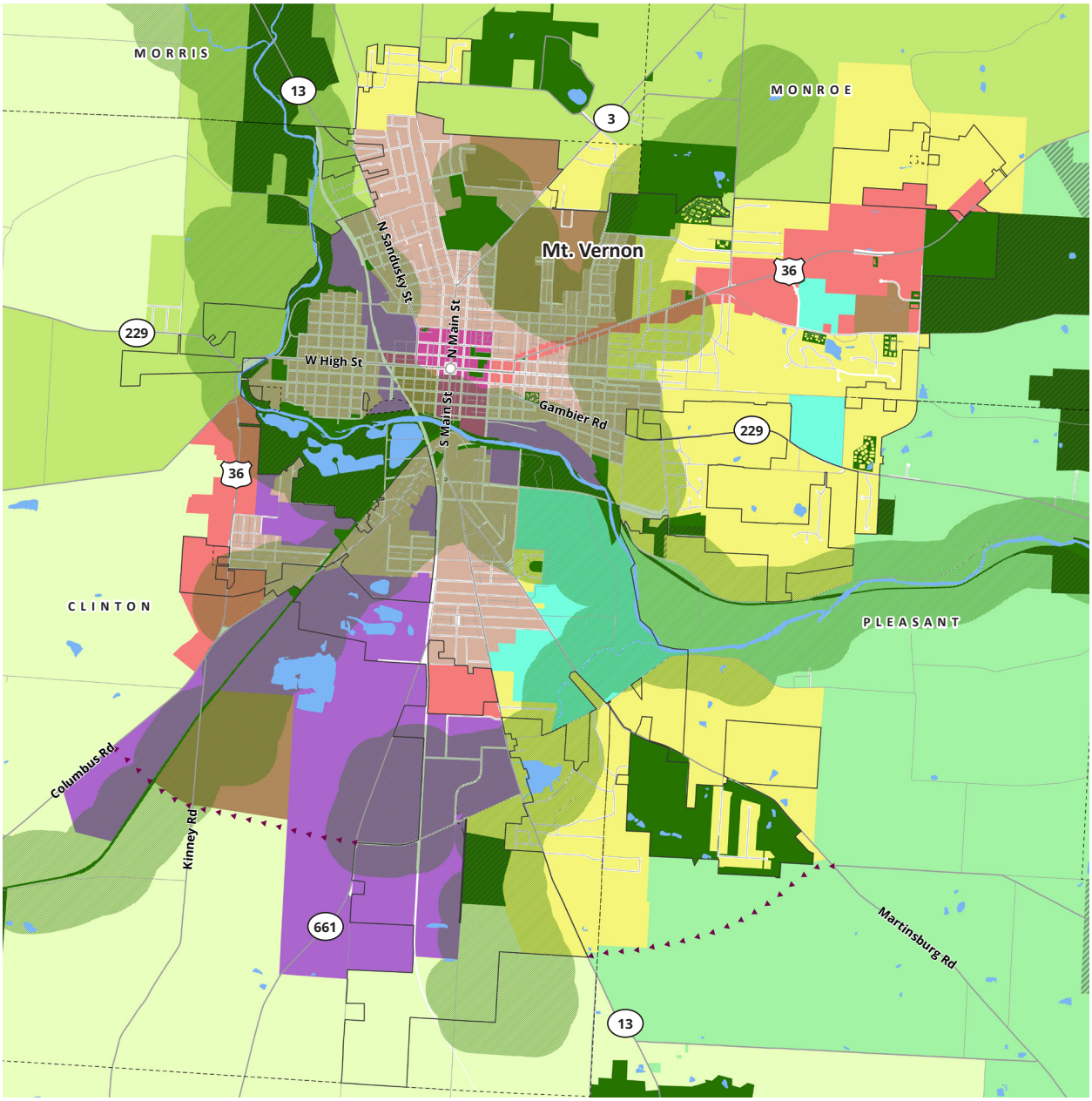
The Future Conservation, Character, and Development Map depicts appropriate future conservation and development patterns throughout the city. It reinforces existing patterns in some areas and supports changes in other areas. This element of the growth strategy is implemented through city zoning codes and other regulations.

Zoning is a legal tool that regulates land use, including types of structures that may be built, how they are to be built, where they are to be built, and how they may be used. Each property in a community with adopted zoning is assigned to a zone. There may be more than one appropriate zone for a particular future character type. For example, there is one employment center type, but there may be two or three commercial or industrial zones to account for various intensities, activities, and contexts. The conservation and development map is implemented over time through many distinct public and private development decisions.

Credit: Area Development Foundation, Inc.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Mount Vernon



Legend

- Open Space *(Public & Private)*
- Low Impact & Conservation
- Traditional Agriculture
- Mixed Rural
- Residential 1
- Residential 2
- Residential 3
- Town Center
- Economic Development Corridor
- Employment Center
- Campus
- Potential Future Connectors
- Municipal Boundaries
- Township Boundaries
- Flood Hazard Buffer
- Conserved Land Parcels
- Water

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Open Space

Open Space areas are intended for recreation or land that is permanently maintained as an open area. These areas may be improved with amenities and other enhancements based on community desire. These areas feature large open parcels or wooded areas, as well as regional greenways, trails, and bikeways.

INTENT

- Highlight the natural features of the county.
- Preserve existing green space and limit development.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas.
- Provide access to recreational opportunities.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Parks and open space

Natural and conservation areas

Secondary Uses

Civic and institutional

OPEN SPACE

Could be used for parks and recreation areas, viewshed, historic/geologic attractions, drainage areas, riparian areas, and more.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Low Impact and Conservation

Low Impact and Conservation are areas with unique landscape, heavy woodlands, and natural features. These areas include large lot, single-family homesites. Public parkland and conservation areas are appropriate. Public water and sewer services not intended for these areas outside of the city limits. Significant, new development is not appropriate or anticipated.

INTENT

- Conserve valuable environmental and aesthetic resources.
- Protect sensitive natural resources such as waterways, wetlands, and floodplains.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Parks and open space

Natural and conservation areas

Large lot single-family residential

Secondary Uses

Civic and institutional

Community-based commercial and retail

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

N/A

Parking

Private off-street

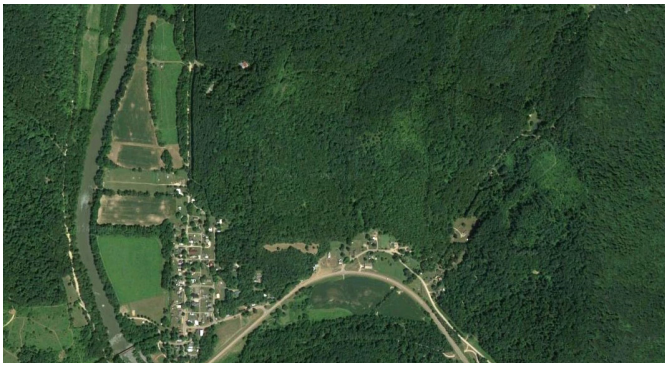
Streets

Primarily automobile access
Subdivisions have long blocks and meandering streets
Sidewalks are uncommon.

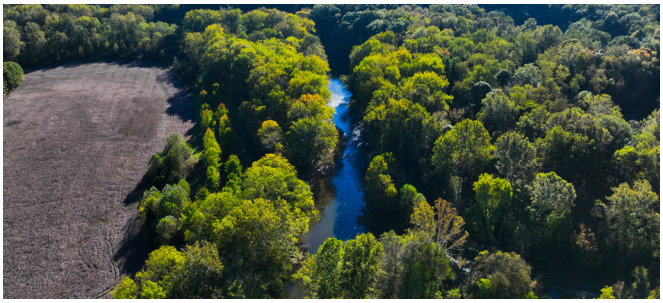
OPEN SPACE

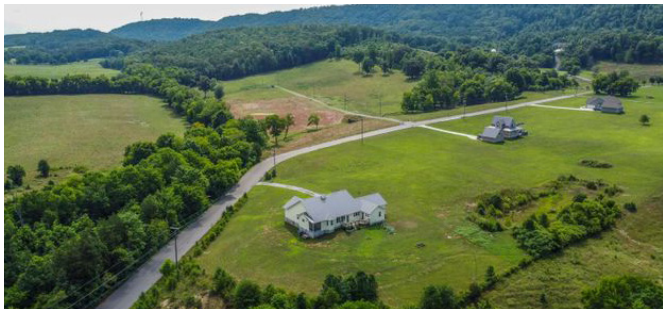
Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access. May include wildlife areas.

EXAMPLE PATTERN



EXAMPLE CHARACTER





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Traditional Agriculture

Traditional Agriculture areas are primarily of agricultural use and may also include single-family residential within a rural setting. These areas may include some limited commercial that supports agricultural and civic uses. Buildings are generally set far back from the roadway on large lots. Traditional Agriculture areas are located predominantly outside of the city limits, though areas contiguous to the city limits could be considered for development.

INTENT

- Traditional agriculture aesthetic is maintained.
- Support transition in scale between denser character areas and Traditional Agriculture to preserve the rural character.
- Conserve farmland and ensure the long-term viability of existing farms.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Agriculture

Parks and open space

Secondary Uses

Rural single-family residential

Civic and institutional

Agriculture-related and small-scale commercial

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

N/A

Parking

Private surface lots and private off-street; individual drives.

Streets

Primarily automobile access. Subdivisions have long blocks and meandering streets. Sidewalks are uncommon.

OPEN SPACE

Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Mixed Rural

Mixed Rural areas have a blend of agricultural land, residential, and commercial development. These areas are largely agricultural in character but may see more large lot subdivisions, lot splits, and very limited suburban style patterns in a rural setting. Building setbacks and lot size may vary more widely than in other rural and conservation areas.

INTENT

- Provide residential growth opportunities while maintaining agricultural use.
- Encourage clustered residential development to preserve agricultural land.
- Provide areas for agriculture-related commercial activities.
- Encourage flexible design that maximizes preservation of agricultural land and open space.
- Maintain rural aethetic.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential

Agriculture

Secondary Uses

Commercial-retail, small scale

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Parking

Private surface lots and private off-street; individual drives.

Streets

Primarily automobile access, but development should accommodate walking and biking by providing street and path connections between adjacent commercial sites and neighborhoods.

OPEN SPACE

Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Residential 1

Residential 1 areas are primarily single-family residential subdivisions with a range of lot sizes. These areas may have limited small-scale multi-family residential. Housing styles are consistent within subdivisions. Neighborhoods should be well-connected by street, trail, and sidewalk networks, and integrate parks and civic uses.

INTENT

- Provide single-family housing options that accomodate a range of family size and preferences.
- Encourage front porches and smaller backyards.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- Encourage development adjacent to commercial/ mixed-use areas or in areas with access to existing utility infrastructure.
- Maintain and expand public realm features including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential

Secondary Uses

Multi-family residential

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-2 Stories

Setback

30 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Parking

On-street and private off-street; individual drives from street/alley. Limit front-facing garages.

Streets

Culs-de-sac should be limited while dead-end streets are restricted unless for future planned street connections.

OPEN SPACE

Public neighborhood parks should be located in prominent locations. Schools could also supplement public parks. Some residential areas could include shared access to private open space.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Residential 2

Residential 2 areas are primarily single-family residential with a higher percentage of attached homes and some multi-family units, with connectivity between neighborhoods and other non-residential areas. They are characterized by grid-like street networks and shifting architectural styles.

INTENT

- Allow residential infill that complements the existing character (building scale, placement, design, etc.).
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- Integrate a housing mix of single-family detached, some single-family attached (duplexes, townhomes, etc.), and some multi-family.
- Continue historic preservation efforts in village and city centers to maintain existing neighborhood character.
- Integrate multi-modal transportation options.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Single-family residential, detached and attached

Multi-family residential

Secondary Uses

Office

Commercial

Specialty housing (age-targeted, etc.)

Civic/institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-3 Stories

Setback

10-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike, Transit

Parking

On-street and private off street; individual drives from street/alley and shared drives for multifamily. No front-facing garages.

Streets

Culs-de-sac should be limited while dead-end streets are restricted unless for future planned street connections.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Compared to residential 1, there is more public open space in the form of neighborhood and community parks, pocket parks, and preserved passive open space. Schools could also supplement public parks. Some residential areas could include shared access to private open space.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Residential 3

Residential 3 areas are primarily multi-family residential with connectivity between neighborhoods and other non-residential areas. They are characterized by grid-like street networks and shifting architectural styles. These areas may include small-scale retail or office.

INTENT

- Provide housing options that accomodate a range of family sizes and lifestyles.
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- To support residents, neighborhood-scale commercial uses located in convenient and accessible areas are encouraged.
- Preserve historic buildings when possible.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Multi-family residential

Single-family residential, attached

Secondary Uses

Office

Commercial

Specialty housing (age-targeted, etc.)

Civic/Institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-3 Stories

Setback

0-20 feet, generally consistent within a block

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Secondary Mode(s)

Automobile

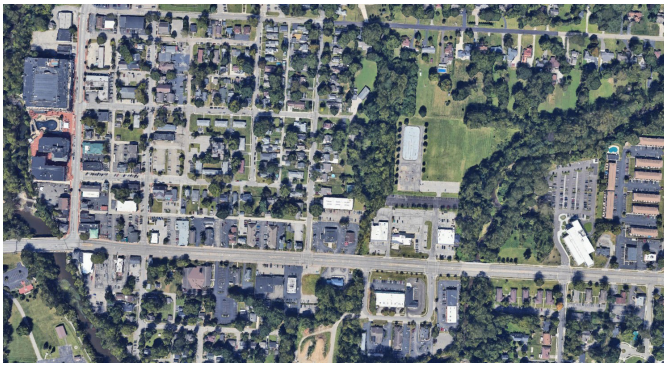
Parking

On-street and private off-street; typically located to the side or rear of buildings and could be shared.

Streets

Blocks are small and walkable with many street connections; alleys are common.

EXAMPLE PATTERN



EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Compared to residential 1, there is more public open space in the form of neighborhood and community parks, pocket parks, and preserved passive open space. Private yards tend to be small and secondary to other open space. Neighborhood schools could serve as open space.

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Employment Center

Employment Center areas are characterized by light industrial-style development, high technology, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and office. Large footprint structures offer flexible space to accomodate market demand for various users.

INTENT

- Encourage industrial and employment uses that provide job opportunities and support the county and city's tax bases.
- Support industrial and employment activities away from neighborhoods.
- Utilize natural or man made buffers to separate industry from other uses.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Light industrial
Advanced manufacturing
Office
Logistics
Flex-office
Data centers

Secondary Uses

Commercial
Civic and institutional
Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-4 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Transit, Walk/Bike

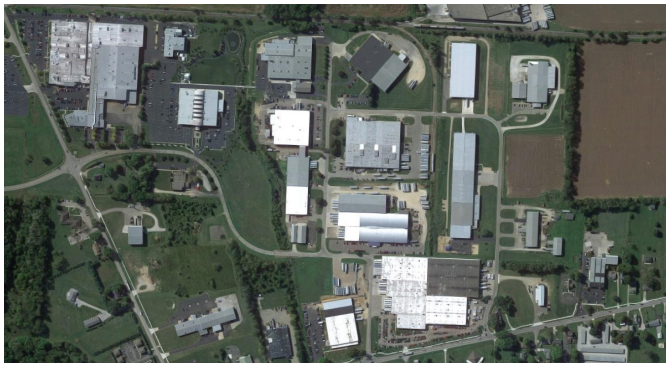
Parking

Surface lots, shared

Streets

Primarily automobile-oriented development, include accommodation for large trucks. Site design and block length should accommodate biking and other transportation alternatives.

EXAMPLE PATTERN



EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Trail connections, passive preserved land, and landscaped setback areas; generally private.

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Economic Development Corridor

Economic Development Corridor areas accomodate an array of uses that include commercial, office, and light industrial. These uses are adjacent to arterial roads that serve the region or multiple neighborhoods. Existing development is characterized by buildings set far back from the street behind large surface parking areas. Over time, new development and redevelopment in these areas is encouraged to raise design quality and improve mobility and accessibility for all users of the corridor.

INTENT

- Accomodate a wide range of uses to serve a regional market.
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and nearby public uses (schools, parks, etc.)
- Improve/provide public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and street trees.
- Locate new buildings near the street and accomodate parking to the side or rear of buildings.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Office

Vertical mixed-use

Small-scale light industrial

Secondary Uses

Commercial

Multi-family residential

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-3 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Automobile

Secondary Mode(s)

Transit, Walk/Bike

Parking

Surface lots

Streets

Primarily automobile-oriented development and may include accommodation for large trucks. Site design and block length should encourage pedestrian and cyclist access.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Trail connections, passive preserved land, and landscaped setback areas; generally private.

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Campus

Campus areas include higher education campuses and the mixed-use areas around them. These areas are arranged in a walkable pattern and include a mix of uses either within a single building or connected sites. Housing in these areas generally serves the residential population and includes a mix of housing types.

INTENT

- Coordinate development with higher education institutions.
- Create and reinforce walkable activity centers that are connected to surrounding development and include a mix of complementary uses.
- Improve public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, landscaping, and street trees.
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between civic spaces and adjacent land uses.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Higher education campus

Student-oriented development

Student housing

Athletic and cultural facilities

Vertical mixed-use

Multi-family residential

Secondary Uses

Small-scale commercial and retail

Single-family residential

Civic and institutional

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-5 Stories

Setback

Varies

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Secondary Mode(s)

Transit, Automobile

Parking

Large surface lots that are clustered to serve many buildings/uses; Larger campuses may include structured parking.

Streets

Streets should integrate with the surrounding network and be designed to support walking or biking (both within the campus and between adjacent areas).

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

OPEN SPACE

Mostly private, may feature neighborhood or pocket parks, and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street). May have trail access.

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Town Center

Town Center areas are large and more compact walkable mixed-use areas with employment, commercial, residential, civic, and supporting uses integrated horizontally and vertically with connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

INTENT

- Provide a wide variety of goods and services contributing to vibrant streets and public spaces.
- Improve connections and transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reduce and consolidate surface parking while encouraging shared parking.
- Provide small-scale public gathering places.

LAND USE MIX

Primary Uses

Vertical mixed-use

Horizontal mixed-use

Multi-family residential

Secondary Uses

Commercial and retail

Civic and institutional

Office

Parks and open space

FORM ATTRIBUTES

BUILDING FORM

Height

1-4 Stories

Setback

0-20 feet

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Mode(s)

Walk/Bike

Secondary Mode(s)

Automobile

Parking

On-street, shared structures, or shared surface lots located to the side or rear of buildings.

Streets

Streets should promote a walkable setting with short block lengths, wide sidewalks, and street trees.

OPEN SPACE

Community and neighborhood parks, pocket parks, plazas, trails, green infrastructure, and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street) act as open space.

EXAMPLE PATTERN

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

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Actions

The following projects, policies, and programs support the following goals:

Strengthened Centers. Resilient city and village centers have a mix of uses and create a strong sense of community.

Land Use and Development. Thoughtful and strategic land use and development policies that balance growth with environmental stewardship.

Objective 1. Conserve critical natural assets.

Conserving critical natural resources is crucial for sustaining Mount Vernon's environmental health. These lands offer essential ecosystem services, support biodiversity, and bolster the local economy. Implementing strategies to shield these resources from development pressures and ensure their ongoing use is vital for preserving the City's natural beauty.

1.1 Promote opportunities and efforts to permanently protect critical natural resources.

It is essential to support both public and private initiatives to ensure the lasting protection of critical natural resources. By utilizing tools such as land acquisition, conservation easements, and other protective measures, all local governments will safeguard these valuable resources against inappropriate development. These strategies will help maintain the ecological integrity and sustainability of our natural landscapes for the benefit of our community.

1.2 Revise regulations to discourage development in areas that go against the objectives of this Growth Strategy.

Updating regulations is crucial to ensure that development aligns with the community's long-term vision. This involves refining zoning laws and land-use policies to protect natural resources, maintain open spaces, and safeguard prime agricultural land. By implementing stricter guidelines and enforcement measures, the county can support balanced and environmentally conscious development while preserving its natural assets and agricultural heritage.

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Objective 2. Focus growth and development inward.

Directing development towards established communities can reduce urban sprawl, preserve open spaces, and enhance the quality of life for residents. Encouraging inward growth ensures that development is both economically and environmentally responsible. This objective prioritizes the revitalization of existing urban and suburban areas, making the most of current infrastructure and resources.

2.1 Adopt regulations that encourage infill and redevelopment in the city center and support higher-density mixed-use projects.

Encouraging infill and redevelopment in city and village centers, along with supporting higher-density mixed-use projects in downtown areas, can create a more walkable community by integrating housing with retail, office, and related services. This approach enhances fiscal sustainability by maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and helps prevent urban sprawl, thereby avoiding the public expense of upgrading utility systems and roads. This can be achieved by adopting regulations that incentivize developers to focus on key vacant sites and underdeveloped corridors, and by providing streamlined approval processes for mixed-use projects in these areas.

2.2 Implement measures that add value to existing infill sites.

Implementing measures that enhance the value of existing infill sites is crucial for discouraging sprawl. This can be achieved through tools such as density bonuses, which incentivize higher-density development in targeted areas. The City can also use transfer of development rights, which allow for the preservation of open spaces by shifting development potential to more suitable locations. These strategies help maximize the use of existing urban areas, promoting sustainable growth and efficient land use.

2.3 Update regulations to require sufficient setbacks, screening/ landscaping, and reduced lighting to minimize impacts by industrial users.

These strategies create a buffer zone that reduces noise, visual disturbances, and light pollution. By incorporating setbacks, industrial activities are kept at a distance from residential and commercial areas, minimizing their impact. Effective screening and landscaping provide a visual barrier, enhancing the aesthetic appeal and further reducing the intrusion of industrial sights and sounds. Reduced lighting helps to prevent light pollution, ensuring that the night sky remains clear and the surrounding environment is not overly illuminated.

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Objective 3. Enhance the vibrancy of downtown Mount Vernon to establish it as a lively, desirable destination where people want to live, work, and visit.

Integrating housing, offices, shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues, can offer a dynamic and convenient lifestyle in downtown Mount Vernon. This variety of uses fosters a sense of community and ensures that the area remains active and engaging throughout the day and evening, making it a desirable destination for everyone.

3.1 Mix residential, office, and academic spaces to create a vibrant, walking destination.

Integrating residential, office, and academic spaces can transform an area into a dynamic, pedestrian-friendly destination. This blend encourages a constant flow of people throughout the day, fostering a lively atmosphere. Residents benefit from convenient access to work and educational opportunities, while businesses and institutions thrive in a bustling environment. This synergy creates a vibrant community where living, working, and learning seamlessly coexist.

3.2 Update codes to allow horizontal and vertical mixed use in new buildings.

Encouraging both horizontal and vertical mixed use in new buildings promotes a diverse and efficient use of space. This approach allows for a combination of residential, commercial, and recreational areas within the same structure or complex, enhancing convenience and accessibility. It fosters vibrant, multi-functional communities where people can live, work, and play in close proximity, reducing the need for long commutes.

3.3 Provide for sufficient retail uses to meet local needs.

Offering a diverse range of retail options can effectively meet the community's needs. This includes the addition of a new grocery store, which provides convenient access to fresh food and essential goods. By offering a range of shopping choices, the area can support local businesses and enhance the quality of life for residents, making it a more self-sufficient and attractive place to live.

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3.4 Create pedestrian and bike connections with Mount Vernon Nazarene University and downtown Mount Vernon.

Establishing pedestrian and bike connections between Mount Vernon Nazarene University and downtown Mount Vernon can significantly enhance accessibility and mobility. These connections provide safe and convenient routes for students, faculty, and residents, encouraging walking and biking as preferred modes of transportation. This initiative not only promotes a healthier lifestyle but also strengthens the bond between the university and the local community, fostering a more integrated and vibrant area.

Objective 4. Revitalize the Coshocton Avenue Corridor.

Increasing the density along the Coshocton Avenue Corridor can transform it into a vibrant and dynamic area. Enhancements will focus on creating a mix of residential, commercial, and other uses, making the corridor more appealing and walkable. Improved pedestrian pathways and bike lanes will encourage active transportation. These improvements will create a lively, accessible cooridor.

4.1 Develop codes to allow appropriate higher density uses on vacant sites and underdeveloped sites.

Encouraging higher density development on vacant and underdeveloped sites can maximize land use efficiency and address housing needs. This approach prioritizes residential projects, offering both rental and owner-occupied options to cater to diverse housing preferences. By transforming these sites into vibrant, densely populated areas, the community can benefit from increased housing availability, economic growth, and a more dynamic urban environment.

4.2 Adopt an overlay zoning district west of Adams Run that supports a walkable built environment.

Position buildings closer to the right-of-way to enhance pedestrian access and visibility. Relocate parking to the rear of buildings to reduce street clutter and prioritize foot traffic. Require architectural character and materials to align with the aesthetic of nearby neighborhoods, ensuring a cohesive and appealing streetscape. Refer to the City of Columbus' urban commercial overlay for guidance.

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4.3 Adopt an overlay zoning district east of Adams Run that supports a larger scale, walkable built environment.

Establish a 20-foot building setback to allow for attractive landscaping along the frontage, creating a welcoming and visually appealing environment. Position parking areas behind buildings to minimize street clutter and enhance pedestrian access. Construct multi-story mixed-use buildings to efficiently utilize space and provide a range of amenities. Refer to the City of Columbus' community commercial overlay for guidance.

Objective 5. Optimize and improve infrastructure networks.

This objective focuses on upgrading and maintaining critical infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and communication systems to meet current and future demands. Investing in modern, resilient infrastructure supports economic growth and improves public safety. Prioritizing these improvements ensures that the City, County, and region remains well-connected and capable of supporting a thriving community.

5.1 Adopt a water conservation and reuse strategy.

Water reuse (also commonly known as water recycling or water reclamation) reclaims water from various sources and treats and reuses it for beneficial purposes such as agriculture and irrigation, potable water supplies, groundwater replenishment, industrial processes, and environmental restoration. Implementing a water conservation and reuse strategy in Mount Vernon would ensure a resilient water supply, reducing the strain on natural resources as development increases.

5.2 Promote development on vacant and under-utilized parcels with infrastructure services.

The City should identify vacant or under-utilized properties, either within or adjacent to city limits, with access to infrastructure like water, sewer, and storm systems that could attract market interest and stimulate private investment in urban areas. Engage with the owners of these parcels to encourage development and facilitate connections with potential investors.

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5.3 Prioritize infill and redevelopment in the existing system service areas before considering system expansions.

Before considering annexation proposals, utility capacity studies should be conducted to determine the current limits of utility systems and identify necessary improvements to maximize existing urban areas. If a private entity proposes development outside existing service areas requiring annexation, the City should evaluate the benefits of such development, considering the need to discourage sprawl and protect farmland or critical natural resources. The City of Mount Vernon should prioritize infill and redevelopment within existing service areas before considering system expansions unless those expansions support economic development and job creation.

5.4 Focus attention on major corridors to minimize sprawl, enhance safety, and reduce congestion.

Support increased development intensity along major corridors adjacent to existing density and development. Prioritize capital investments that reflect the character and history of these areas. Additionally, prioritize safety investments that reduce congestion, ensure public safety, facilitate pedestrian and bike access, manage access, and address the unique needs of the Amish community. These measures will enhance the functionality and appeal of major corridors while minimizing sprawl.

Credit: Area Development Foundation, Inc.

Credit: Nicole Leone Miller Photography

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The following projects, policies, and programs support the following goals:

Economic Prosperity. A robust local economy with industrial growth and a wide range of employment opportunities.

Housing. A diverse range of affordable, high-quality housing options meet the needs of all community members.

Objective 6. Support opportunities among existing companies and those looking to move to Mount Vernon.

Supporting opportunities for existing companies and those looking to move to Mount Vernon is essential for driving economic growth and fostering innovation. These efforts attract community investment, create jobs, and diversify the economy. By providing necessary resources, strong infrastructure, and a supportive regulatory environment, businesses can thrive and significantly contribute to the community's prosperity. Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation ensures that the City remains competitive and adaptable in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

6.1 Develop future land use patterns that support economic development goals to provide appropriately located and serviced sites to attract additional private investment and generate jobs.

Develop future land use patterns that align with economic development objectives by designating and preparing sites that are strategically located and well-serviced. This approach aims to attract private investment, stimulate job creation, and ensure sustainable growth. By providing appropriately located and serviced sites, the City can create a favorable environment for businesses to thrive, thereby enhancing the overall economic vitality of the region.

6.2 Expand existing employment concentrations to expand the City's tax base and provide job opportunities for residents.

Focusing on the growth of established employment areas will attract new businesses, support the expansion of current enterprises, and foster a robust local economy. Enhance infrastructure, provide incentives for business development, and ensure that these areas are well-connected to transportation networks. This action increases revenue and ensures residents have access to a diverse range of employment opportunities close to home.

6.3 Improve road and rail connectivity to facilitate private investment and utility service investments, as appropriate.

Upgrade existing roads and rail lines and develop new routes where necessary to facilitate the efficient movement of goods and services. This will also ensure that utility services can be extended to new and existing industrial areas to support economic growth.

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Objective 7. Pursue diversification of manufacturing opportunities.

Expanding the range of manufacturing opportunities can enhance economic resilience and stimulate growth by attracting a variety of industries. This approach encourages innovation and reduces dependency on a single sector, making the local economy more adaptable to market changes. By supporting diverse manufacturing ventures, the community can create a broader array of job opportunities and foster a more dynamic business environment.

7.1 Promote development of walkable commercial nodes along key corridors.

To support small businesses and foster a thriving local economy, it is crucial to promote the development of walkable commercial hubs along key corridors. These areas should be designed to be pedestrian-friendly, featuring a variety of shops, restaurants, and services that are easily accessible on foot. By focusing on nodal development rather than continuous strip development, the City can create distinct, vibrant commercial nodes that encourage entrepreneurship and provide opportunities for small businesses to flourish.

7.2 Expand industrial areas on the south side of Mount Vernon to take advantage of the U.S. 36 corridor.

The U.S. 36 corridor is a significant route that runs through Mount Vernon, Ohio, and is crucial to the region's connectivity and economic development. U.S. 36 connects Mount Vernon to major highways, facilitating easy transportation of goods and services. The corridor is well-serviced with necessary infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and communication networks, making it easier for businesses to open and operate. By capitalizing on the corridor's accessibility and connectivity, new industrial and economic developments can be attracted to the city's south and west sides.

7.3 Develop shovel ready land along major road corridors with appropriate utilities in the City to remain competitive for industrial opportunities.

To keep the county attractive for industrial investments, it's essential to have land that is immediately ready for development. This means having parcels of land along major roadways that are already equipped with necessary utilities like water, electricity, and sewage systems. By doing this, the county can quickly accommodate new industrial projects, making it a more appealing location for businesses looking to set up operations.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 8. Create neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing.

Offering diverse housing options that cater to different income levels and family sizes, can ensure that all residents have access to safe and affordable homes. This approach supports reduced housing insecurity and promotes economic stability. Developing mixed-income neighborhoods also enhances community cohesion and provides opportunities for residents to live near their workplaces, schools, and essential services.

8.1 Revitalize neighborhoods and smaller community areas that have experienced disinvestment.

Encourage new residential investment on vacant parcels in existing neighborhoods to maximize the use of existing utility systems. Invest capital dollars in neighborhood infrastructure to enhance the physical environment. Prioritize sidewalk, crosswalk, and bike connection maintenance to ensure safe access and connectivity within established neighborhoods.

8.2 Create an infill housing strategy.

Identify vacant, zoned parcels with existing utilities to maximize development potential. Partner with the Knox County Land Bank where possible. Consider implementing an incremental development model in codes and processes to strengthen neighborhoods through small-scale projects.

8.3 Prioritize nearby residential development in places within close proximity to employment to provide for future workers and reduce commuting.

Create housing options near employment centers to create convenient living options for employees, making it easier for them to get to work. This approach will reduce travel time and transportation costs and decrease traffic congestion.

8.4 Interconnect residential and employment areas via sidewalks and bike trails to facilitate commuting options.

Developing a network of sidewalks and bike trails that connect residential areas with employment centers can greatly improve commuting options and make the City a more attractive place to work and conduct business.

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8.5 Create standards that require a mix of housing types in appropriate locations.

Regulations should mandate that residential development projects in designated areas, which exceed a specified acreage or number of units, must incorporate a variety of housing types. This approach ensures diverse housing options, such as single-family homes, townhouses, and multi-family units, are available within the community.

8.6 Develop higher density multi-family to attract workers to Mount Vernon and Knox County.

Higher-density multi-family housing, which can be available for rent or purchase, offer flexible living options that cater to various needs and preferences. The additional housing choices can make the City a more appealing destination for workers in all industries.

8.7 Explore options and opportunities to provide quality housing for workforce families and seniors.

Assess community needs and identify market gaps to ensure suitable housing solutions for workforce families and seniors. Establish partnerships with non-profits, leverage housing programs, and promote the inclusion of affordable units in new developments. Engage stakeholders to ensure these initiatives are community-driven and inclusive.

8.8 Develop programs that assist with the rehabilitation of older homes to maintain the housing stock.

Support both homeowners and rental property owners in rehabilitation efforts by providing a range of services, from educational resources to financial assistance. Offering guidance on best practices for home repairs and renovations, as well as financial support for necessary improvements through grants or low-interest loans, to help preserve the quality and safety of housing and ensure that older homes remain viable and attractive living options.

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8.9 Study and report on the possible implementation of building codes.

Pursue the creation of a professionally prepared, publicly informed report, examining the financial and logistical pros and cons, to the city and tax payer, of building codes and how such codes could be implemented. The report should include a financial and statistical analysis on the benefits and drawbacks of implementing building codes. It should also provide opinions from industry experts, such as those from the building, trades, safety, and insurance industry, on the need and feasibility for building codes. It should also include an overview of best practice models of how other similar communities adopt, fund, and enforce such codes, and a recommended implementation strategy.

The following projects, policies, and programs support the following goals:

People. Healthy and proud residents and workers enjoying the benefits of growth and quality of life that drew—and keeps—them in the County.

Natural and Recreational Amenities. Enhanced natural and recreational amenities are accessible and offer varied opportunities for outdoor enjoyment.

Objective 9. Expand and enhance local services and amenities.

This objective aims to improve the quality of life for residents by investing in and upgrading community resources. By expanding services and amenities, the City can better meet the needs of the population, support responsible growth, and ensure that all residents have access to essential facilities and amenities.

9.1 Develop and sustain partnerships with the university community to enhance the built environment, provide additional physical resources that benefit students and residents, and improve overall quality of life.

Facilitate the creation of collaborative academic, residential, and cultural spaces in Mount Vernon, supported by local universities. Continue to support university investments to enhance the physical environment and foster additional office, retail, cultural, and residential development and redevelopment. Facilitate the creation of collaborative academic, residential, and cultural spaces in supported by local universities.

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9.2. Maintain an open dialogue with Mount Vernon City Schools.

This dialogue should focus on ensuring that bothMount Vernon and the school districts are well-informed about growth and development. By sharing information about local options for housing, transportation, and other critical factors, public, private, and non-profit organizations can proactively address these issues. This approach helps make informed decisions that support the community's educational needs and ensures officials are prepared for future developments.

9.3 Enhance access to existing health services and resources.

The physical and mental health needs of the community significantly impact the quality of life. Local organizations such as Knox Public Health, Knox Community Hospital, and the Knox County Community Health Center are dedicated to supporting the community through various health initiatives and programs. Strengthening existing partnerships, developing new local collaborations, and aligning funding with these programs can ensure that residents, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to essential health services.

9.4 Anticipate additional police, fire, and safety service demands concurrent with development proposals.

Align infrastructure investments and major development decisions with public safety services, including police, fire, and EMS. Relevant departments should collaborate to assess fire and EMS coverage as development progresses and plan for future facilities. This coordination may include reviewing major development or redevelopment proposals that meet specific criteria and conducting annual assessments of ongoing development in relation to public safety calls and response times. To support these efforts, use five-year capital improvement planning for facilities, equipment, and personnel.

9.5 Incorporate connectivity in future development and infrastructure upgrades to ensure appropriate response times , thereby enhancing public safety.

A more connected street network can provide greater route options and reduce peak traffic on major arterials. Update development standards and subdivision regulations to include street extensions from new developments to adjacent undeveloped land and cross-access requirements between neighboring mixed-use developments. Require developers to create additional connections between existing streets, where appropriate.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

The following projects, policies, and programs support the following goal:

Mobility. Efficient and accessible transportation options connect residents and workers to key destinations, support economic growth, and enhance quality of life.

Objective 10. Bridge gaps in the multimodal network.

Gaps in the sidewalk network and safe crossings persist in the downtown area of Mount Vernon. Building on these efforts, the following recommendations aim to bridge gaps in the multimodal network and create safer, more connected transportation options for all.

10.1 Complete sidewalks and bicycle routes between community destinations where gaps are present.

The 2019 Knox County Active Transportation Plan details prioritized project recommendations that include additional trails, on street bikeways, sidewalks to fill critical bicycle and pedestrian facility gaps in the City.

10.2 Improve accessibility by bringing substandard sidewalks into compliance with ADA requirements.

Equitable access to the transportation system is essential in order to provide all people the ability to reach their destinations. A key component of equitable access is ensuring that sidewalks and crossings meet ADA standards. Grants from programs like the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) can be instrumental. Additionally, consider local funding options such as bonds or special assessments.

10.3 Update zoning code, subdivision regulations, and/or design guidelines to require new developments to have a well-connected street, sidewalk, and bike path network.

A key component to building the active transportation network that the community desires is developing guidelines, policies, and regulations that specify requirements for what type of facilities must be included in new developments and roadway projects. This could include adopting a complete streets policy, developing zoning code changes that require sidewalks on both sides of all streets and specify minimum widths (e.g., 5 feet for residential and 8 feet for commercial areas), or requiring developments to include sidewalks, paths, or specific active transportation friendly street configurations.

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10.4 Conduct periodic "walking audits" to monitor changes to and evolving needs of the pedestrian and bicycle network.

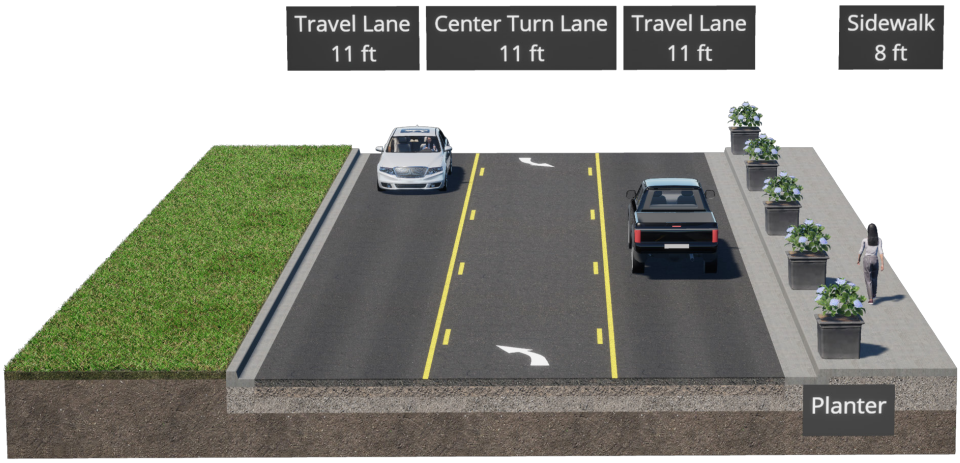
Walk audits involve a multidisciplinary team walking in a key area of focus to identify needs and concerns of the active transportation network. These walk audits can help decision-makers determine priorities and experience the built environment from a different perspective.

Objective 11. Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.

Many people walk and bike for their commute or for recreation purposes. The environment that they walk or bike in should be comfortable, convenient, and most importantly safe.

11.1 Evaluate streetscape improvements such as increased sidewalk widths, street trees, raised medians, and decorative bollards/railings.

Wider sidewalks can help increase the comfortability of a pedestrian along a busy road, accommodate higher volumes of pedestrian traffic, and allow space for bicyclists, particularly around schools where children could be using the sidewalk to bike. Street trees both enhance the look of the environment around a path and provide shade in the warmer months. Raised medians can help pedestrians and bicyclists cross the street by providing a place of refuge between the two directions of traffic flow. They can also help with managing vehicle traffic and reducing speeds. Decorative bollards or other road separation types protect pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicle traffic with a physical barrier, helping these users to feel more comfortable particularly on busier, higher speed roads. They can also improve the look and feel of a street.



Decorative planters separating the sidewalk from the road.
Source: Burgess & Niple

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

11.2 Incorporate amenities such as lighting, seating, and landscaping at transit stops to encourage use.

Transit stops should include lighting and seating to enhance safety, visibility, and comfort for riders. Seating along can provide needed breaks for those with mobility challenges and create a welcoming environment for people utilizing the stop. Landscaping can be helpful to enhance the look and feel of the stop and also create a separation from vehicular traffic. These amenities not only provide benefits for current transit users but may also attract new riders.

11.3 Enhance existing crosswalks with high-visibility elements to improve safety.

Safe crossings are a key component of ensuring pedestrian and bicyclist safety. High-visibility elements can include increased lighting, added signage, and high-visibility crosswalk markings (ladder crosswalk).

High-visibility crosswalk enhancements
Source: FHWA

11.4 Increase bicycle awareness and safety through ongoing planning and coordination with implementation partners.

Continue to update and reference the Knox County Active Transportation Plan to identify gaps and prioritize areas for improvement. Establish partnerships with local advocacy groups to guide safety initiatives. Provide trail crossings recommended in the Knox County Active Transportation where the Heart of Ohio and Kokosing Gap Trails cross State and County roads.

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Objective 12. Relieve congestion and improve roadway safety along regional corridors.

A key principle of this plan is to improve corridors, encompassing increased intensity, accommodating a mix of uses, enhancing the public realm, and improving traffic flow and safety. Mount Vernon roads provide transportation for a diverse range of users including horse and buggy travel, transit, vehicles, and active transportation modes. It is important to continue to improve upon the transportation system with all of these users in mind and with increasing safety at the forefront of decision-making.

12.1 Extend and connect roadways at the periphery of Mount Vernon to provide better circulation and connectivity between major routes and to enable trucks to bypass the downtown area.

Mount Vernon is a main hub for transportation in the county, but heavy truck traffic must pass through the downtown area. This can lead to congestion, safety concerns, and wear on local streets not designed for these heavy vehicles. Extending and connecting roadways at the city's periphery would improve traffic circulation by providing alternate routes for trucks traveling between major highways and destinations.

12.2 Partner with the County to develop an updated City of Mount Vernon Thoroughfare Plan and Access Management Guidelines.

Thoroughfare Plans provide a long-term vision for the transportation network, identifying key roads and corridors that will need improvements or expansions to accommodate changes in the region. Access Management Guidelines focus on how driveways, intersections, and other access points are designed to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and enhance safety. These updated guidelines will help control where and how new accesses to roadways are created, making the transportation system safer and more efficient.

11.3 Increase the number and/or frequency of transit routes to high-demand areas.

Past planning efforts have identified a demand for more frequent transit routes and an expanded transit system. The county should work with the transit authority to determine potential ways to improve transit for residents in the region.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

7 Implementation

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

The Knox County Comprehensive Plan serves as a long-term policy guide for the community, detailing a wide range of actions. Implementing this plan will require collaboration among county, city, village, and township governments, non-profit organizations, local businesses, and residents. This chapter offers guidance on managing and utilizing the plan, including a summary of all identified actions. While much care has been given to the plan's actions, the County should be opportunistic in pursuing other actions that would support its vision and goals.

Promoting Collaboration

The Together Knox Comprehensive Plan will necessitate collaboration among individuals and organizations from diverse geographies, backgrounds, industries, and communities within Knox County. Active community involvement is crucial to ensure that actions are aligned with the community's interests. This comprehensive plan is a dynamic document, serving as a foundation for Knox County to realize its unified vision for the future.

How to Use the Plan

Together Knox is intended to be used on a daily basis for both public and private decisions. It should be considered regarding development proposals, capital improvements, economic incentives, and other matters pertaining to the future of Knox County and its communities. The following is a summary of how decisions and processes should align with the vision and goals of this plan.

- **Capital Improvements.** Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs) for the county, city, and villages should be consistent with the plan's goals and actions. This includes decisions about the provision of utilities, as this plan encourages development where utilities already exist or are easily accessible.
- **Economic Incentives.** Economic incentives should be considered and prioritized relative to their consistency with the plan's actions and areas of growth or investment identified.
- **Private Development Decisions.** Property owners and developers should align their plans with the vision and goals of the plan. Public decision makers can use it to assess if private development meets the County's needs and aspirations.
- **Development Approvals.** Administrative and legislative approvals for development proposals should be used as a means of implementing the plan. Decisions made by the county should reference relevant comprehensive plan actions as well as future conservation, character and development and character type recommendations.
- **Annual Work Programs.** Individual departments, administrators, boards, and commissions should be aware of the goals and actions of the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. It is recommended that progress on implementation of the plan be shared with the community, see implementation actions for more information.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Roles of Local Government

Under Ohio law, units of local government have various functions and authorities in managing growth and development, which are summarized below. In addition to such legal authorities, units of local government can enter into collaborative Inter-governmental Agreements (IGA) to jointly undertake a variety of services, such as joint provision of services (water, fire protection, etc.), policy coordination and information sharing, joint review of development, and Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDD).

- **County.** Authority to adopt and implement subdivision regulations for the creation of parcels to support development; health regulations for managing on-site water and wastewater facilities; thoroughfare plan and access management standards to manage the public road netowrk; engineering standards for the review and approval of of public improvements relative to development; building codes to regulate residential and commercial development; stormwater regulations to manage on- and offsite drainage related to development; provide water and sanitary sewer services; incentives to support economic development; and adoption of sales taxes and fees to raise revenues for public services and facilities.

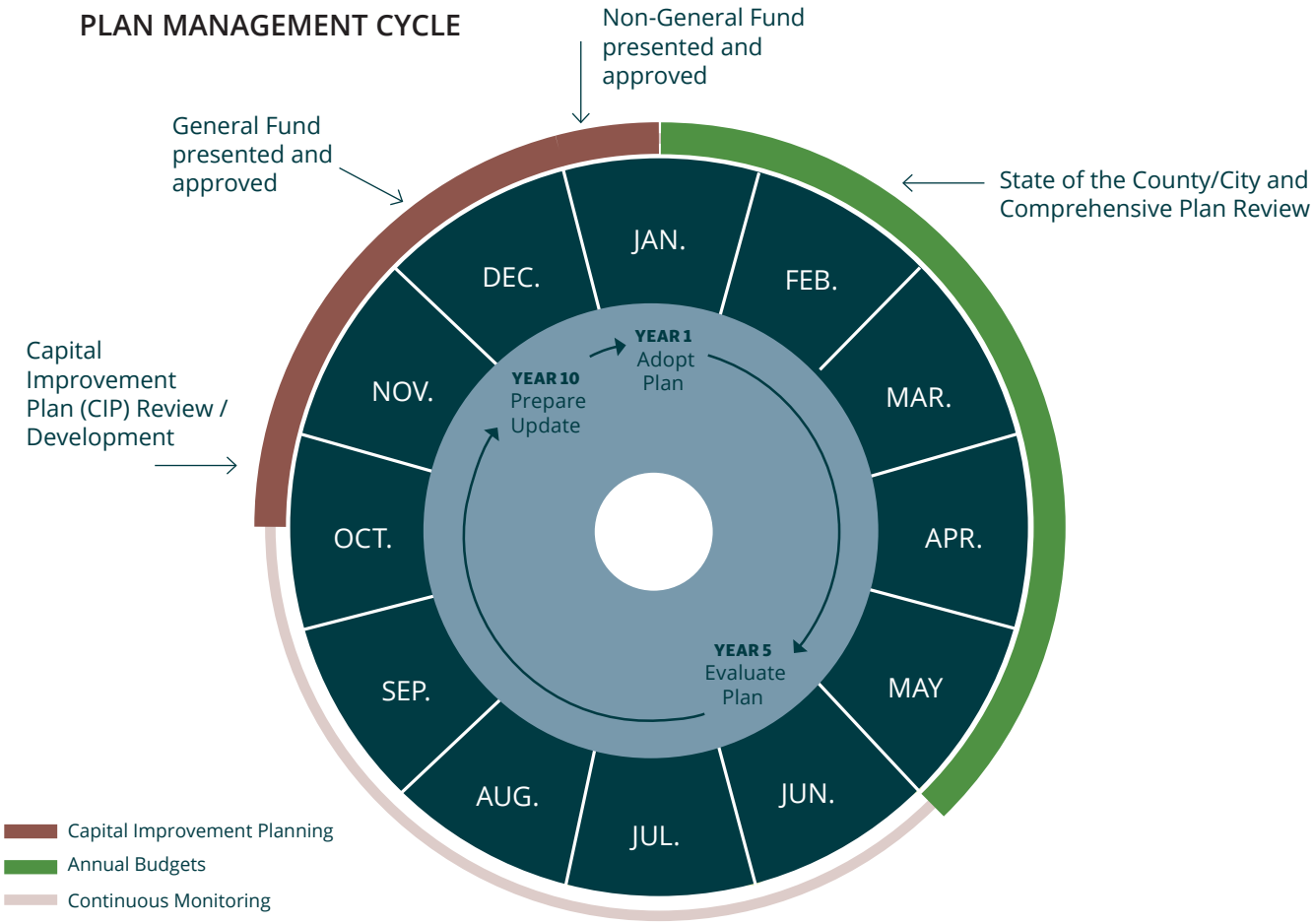
- **Townships.** Authority to regulate the use and intensity of development through zoning resolutions; design guidelines for informing public and private development decisions; code enforcement; incentives to support economic development; and adoption of property taxes and fees to raise revenues for public services and facilities. Under the Ohio Revised Code, townships have the ability to enact limited home rule.

- **Cities and Villages.** Authority to adopt and implement subdivision regulations for the creation of parcels to support development; code enforcement; thoroughfare plans and access management standards to manage the public road network; engineering standards for the review and approval of public improvements relative to development; capital improvement planning; building codes to regulate residential and commercial development; stormwater regulations to manage on- and off-site drainage related to development; provide water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater services; incentives to support economic development; and adoption of property and income taxes and fees to raise revenues for public services and facilities.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Updating and Tracking

The diagram below illustrates the timeline that will be used for implementation and maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan. It also shows how major milestones are connected to annual county processes. The plan should be assessed for progress and effectiveness according to this timeline. If changes or opportunities arise, those should be integrated into the management cycle.



Monitoring

The plan should be monitored on a regular basis for implementation, effectiveness, and relevancy. It should be referenced annually in the development of departmental work programs, budgets, and capital improvements planning. A formal review of the plan's accomplishments and relevancy should occur within five-year intervals.

Updating

In general, an update of the plan should be considered at least every ten years. In Central Ohio, with the anticipated growth, a five-year update may be more prudent. In the interim, key milestones may be reached which necessitate an update sooner than a ten-year cycle. Such milestones should be considered on a case-by-case basis. There may be circumstances that warrant formal amendment of the plan. Amendments to the plan should be made only with careful consideration and compelling justification.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Actions

The following projects, policies, and programs support the implementation of the Knox County Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1. Implement the Knox County Comprehensive Plan.

The following actions will help ensure ongoing success with implementing the Comprehensive Plan and ensuring long-lasting success in Knox County,

1.1 Create a Plan Implementation Task Force.

The task force should comprise of the most relevant stakeholders in the County and should meet quarterly or biannually to prioritize and execute the recommendations in the plan document.

1.2. Report progress at commissioners meetings.

Create a dedicated "Planning" section in the quarterly meeting agendas for the Knox County Commissioners. This section will enable the County and local jurisdictions to provide updates on the progress of plan implementation.

1.3 Integrate plan priorities into County and City annual budget discussions.

Consider requiring departmental work programs and capital requests to identify support of such proposals and requests relative to the Knox County Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals, objectives, and actions. Consider implementing similar requirments in City departments relative to the Mount Vernon Growth Strategy's vision, goals, objectives, and actions.

1.4 Create a grant finder or coordinator position to identify and secure grants for plan related activities.

The grant finder or coordinator should be focused on all components of the plan. The position should be within an organization with a county-wide scope.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Matrix

The following table provides more information on each action including timeframes and identification of lead and supporting entities.

Timeframe Key	Short (0 - 2 Years)	Mid (2 - 5 Years)	Long (6 - 10 Years)	Ongoing (Continuous)

Entities Key

ADF = Area Development Foundation
Cnty Com = Knox County Commissioners Office
Council = Mount Vernon City Council
Engineer = Knox County Engineer
Fire = All Knox County Fire Departments and Districts
Health = Knox Public Health
KCCP TF = Knox County Comprehensive Plan Implementation Task Force
KCCVB = Knox County Convention & Visitors Bureau
KMHA = Knox Metropolitan Housing Authority
KNLB = Knox County Land Bank
MORPC = Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
MPC = Mount Vernon Municipal Planning Commission
Municips = All Villages/Cities in Knox County
MV Engineer = Mount Vernon Engineering Department
MV Parks and Rec = Mount Vernon Parks and Recreation Department
MV WW = Mount Vernon Water and Wastewater Department
ODA = Ohio Department of Agriculture
ODOT = Ohio Department of Transportation
OEPA = Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
OSU Extn = Ohio State University Extension
Park = Knox County Park District
Post-sec = All Knox County Post-Secondary Schools
Police = All Knox County Police Departments
RPC = Knox County Regional Planning Commission
Schools = All Knox County School Districts
SWCD = Knox County Soil and Water Conservation District
Townships = All Townships in Knox County
Transit = Knox County Transit
Utilities = All Knox County Utility Providers

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Funding Key:

Admin = Local Administrative Budget

CDBG = Community Development Block Grants

COH-GC = Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund

CIP = Capital Improvement Program

CRA = Community Reinvestment Area

JOBSOH = Jobs Ohio Revitalization Fund

LFG = Local Area Foundation Grants

ODH = Ohio Department of Health Grants

ODNR = Ohio Department of Natural Resources Grants

ODNR-NW = ODNR Nature Works Grants

ODOT = Ohio Department of Transportation Grant Programs

ODOT-TA = Ohio Department of Transportation Transportation Alternatives Program

OEPA = Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Funds

USDA = United States Department of Agriculture Grant Programs

USDOT = US Department of Transportation Grant Programs

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Conservation, Character, and Development

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goals of **Rural Conservation, Strengthened Centers, and Land Use and Development.**

Objective 1: Conserve critical natural assets and prime agricultural land.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
1.1	Promote opportunities and efforts to protect critical natural resources.	Ongoing	Cnty Com, RPC	SWCD, OSU Extn, Municips, Township	Admin, ODNR, COH-GC, USDA
1.2	Adopt development standards that cluster development and permanently conserve natural assets.	Short	Cnty Com, RPC	Engineer, Townships, Municips	Admin
1.3	Explore a full range of measures to protect prime agricultural areas from the intrusion of residential uses that might otherwise create conflicts.	Long	RPC	Cnty Com, Townships, ODA	USDA,
1.4	Continue to promote agricultural conservation programs and practices, while considering alternative funding sources.	Mid	RPC	OSU Extn, Cnty Com, Townships, ODA	USDA, ODNR
1.5	Establish and continue partnerships to conserve working farms throughout Knox County.	Ongoing	Cnty Com	RPC, SWCD, OSU Extn, ODA	USDA, OFB-GTG,
1.6	Revise regulations to discourage development in areas that go against the objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.	Mid	RPC, Cnty Com	Townships, Municips	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 2: Enhance rural character.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
2.1	Update County subdivision regulations to promote conservation development design and work with townships to provide comparable measures in local zoning resolutions.	Short	RPC	Cnty Com, Townships	Admin
2.2	Increase minimum lot sizes in primarily agricultural areas to reduce residential densities and discourage the development of rural subdivisions.	Mid	RPC	Cnty Com, Townships	Admin
2.3	Investigate appropriate alternatives to on-lot septic and wells.	Mid	RPC	Engineer	Admin
2.4	Provide protections for rural view sheds.	Long	Cnty Com, RPC	Municips, Townships	Admin, ODNR
2.5	Incorporate viewshed analysis into subdivision regulations.	Long	RPC	Cnty Com, Engineer	Admin
2.6	Develop a template for township zoning regulations that includes design standards, viewshed analysis, and conservation principles.	Mid	RPC	Townships	Admin
2.7	Mitigate conflicts and educate stakeholders as to the realities of living in an agricultural community.	Ongoing	Cnty Com	Municips, Townships	Admin

Objective 3: Focus growth and development inward.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
3.1	Adopt regulations that encourage infill and redevelopment in city and village centers and support higher-density mixed-use projects in downtown areas.	Mid	Cnty Com, Municips, Townships	RPC, MORPC	Admin
3.2	Implement measures that add value to existing infill sites.	Short	Municips, Townships	RPC, MORPC	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 3: Focus growth and development inward.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
3.3	Update zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure new growth in the city and villages remains compatible with existing scale, form, and intensity of use.	Mid	Municips, Townships	RPC, MORPC	Admin
3.4	Update subdivision design standards.	Mid	RPC	Engineer	Admin
3.5	Support the Downtown Experience Coordinator position.	Ongoing	Cnty Com	Municips	Admin

Objective 4: Optimize and improve infrastructure networks.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
4.1	Prepare a Knox County Water Quality Management Plan.	Mid	OEPA, Cnty Com	Utilities	OEPA
4.2	Develop a comprehensive map of Knox County's water and wastewater systems.	Short	Engineer	Utilities, Municips	Admin
4.3	Adopt a water conservation and reuse strategy.	Long	Cnty Com, Engineer	OEPA, Utilities	Admin
4.4	Promote development on vacant and under-utilized parcels with infrastructure services.	Mid	Municips, RPC	Cnty Com	Admin
4.5	Prioritize infill and redevelopment in the existing system service areas before considering system expansions.	Short	Municips, RPC	Cnty Com	Admin
4.6	Focus attention on major corridors to minimize sprawl, enhance safety, and reduce congestion.	Mid	Engineer	Municips, Townships	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Economic, Workforce, and Housing Resilience

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goals of **Economic Prosperity and Housing.**

Objective 1: Support opportunities among existing companies and those looking to move to Knox County.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
1.1	Develop future land use patterns that support economic development goals to provide appropriately located and serviced sites to attract additional private investment and generate jobs.	Long	RPC, Municips, Townships	ADF, Cnty Com	Admin
1.2	Expand existing employment concentrations to grow the County's tax base and provide job opportunities for residents.	Long	ADF	Cnty Com, Municips, Townships	Admin
1.3	Improve road and rail connectivity to facilitate private investment and utility service investments, as appropriate.	Short	Engineer, Municips, Townships	ADF, Cnty Com, RPC	CIP, ODOT, USDOT

Objective 2: Pursue diversification of manufacturing opportunities.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
2.1	Promote development of walkable commercial nodes along key corridors.	Mid	RDF, Municips	Cnty Com	CIP, ODOT-TA, CDBG
2.2	Expand industrial areas on the south side of Mount Vernon to take advantage of the U.S. 36 corridor.	Mid	Municips	ADF	Admin, CDBG, CRA
2.3	Expand industrial areas on the west/ northwest side of Fredericktown adjacent to OH 13 and OH 95.	Mid	Municips	ADF	CDBG, CRA, JOBSOH
2.4	Develop a new commercial and industrial center in the Centerburg area.	Long	Municips	ADF	CDBG, CRA, JOBSOH
2.5	Develop shovel ready land along major road corridors with appropriate utilities to remain competitive for industrial opportunities.	Mid	Municips, Townships	ADF, Cnty Com, RPC	CDBG, JOBSOH

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 3: Strengthen the talent pipeline.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
3.1	Organize a session to discuss the workforce needs in biomedicine and food manufacturing showcasing successful programs, and evaluate how well Knox County's educational institutions (K-12 and higher education) can meet these needs.	Short	ADF	Post-sec, Schools	Admin, LFG
3.2	Create and implement a strategy to recruit and retain young workers in the County.	Mid	Cnty Com	ADF	Admin
3.3	Continue coordination between Knox County's schools and in-demand employers through the Business Advisory Council.	Ongoing	Cnty Com, ADF	Schools	Admin

Objective 4: Create neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
4.1	Revitalize neighborhoods and smaller community areas that have experienced disinvestment.	Long	Municips	RPC	Admin, CDBG
4.2	Create an infill housing strategy for the County's city and villages.	Mid	RPC	KNLB, Municips	Admin
4.3	Prioritize nearby residential development in places within close proximity to employment to provide for future workers and reduce commuting.	Short	Municips, Townships	RPC, Cnty Com	Admin, CDBG
4.4	Create standards that require a mix of housing types in appropriate locations.	Mid	Municips	RPC	Admin
4.5	Explore options and opportunities to provide quality housing for workforce families and seniors.	Ongoing	Municips	Cnty Com, KMHA	Admin, CDBG

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 4: Create neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
4.6 Develop programs that assist with the rehabilitation of older homes to maintain the housing stock.	Long	Municips	Cnty Com, KMHA	Admin, CDBG

Objective 5: Strengthen community identity and promote tourism through strategic branding initiatives.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
4.1 Pursue a countywide branding effort.	Mid	Cnty Com	ADF, KCCVB	Admin
4.2 Foster stronger partnerships with the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau and other tourism-related organizations to improve the visitor experience in the County.	Ongoing	Cnty Com	KCCVB	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Quality of Life

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goals of **People and Natural and Recreational Amenities.**

Objective 1. Expand and enhance local services and amenities.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
1.1	Develop and sustain partnerships with the university community to enhance the built environment to benefit students and residents.	Mid	Cnty Com, Municips	Post-sec	Admin
1.2	Maintain an open dialogue with Knox County school districts.	Ongoing	Cnty Com, Municips	Schools	Admin
1.3	Enhance access to existing health services and resources.	Mid	Health	Cnty Com	ODH
1.4	Anticipate additional police, fire, and safety service demands concurrent with development proposals.	Ongoing	RPC	Police, Fire	Admin
1.5	Incorporate connectivity in future development and infrastructure upgrades to ensure appropriate response times, thereby enhancing public safety.	Long	RPC, Engineer	Police, Fire	Admin

Objective 2: Strengthen access to and conservation of natural spaces, parks, and greenways.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
2.1	Conserve stream corridors, woodlands, and wetlands.	Long	RPC	Cnty Com, SWCD	COH-GC, ODNR
2.2	Prepare a Parks and Open Space Plan.	Mid	Park	Cnty Com, Municips	Admin
2.3	Strengthen and connect Knox County parks while being open to new acquisitions.	Long	Park	RPC, Cnty Com, Municips, Townships	ODNR, LFG

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 2: Strengthen access to and conservation of natural spaces, parks, and greenways.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
2.4	Expand sources of funding for parks and greenways.	Mid	Park	Cnty Com	ODNR, LFG
2.5	Seek joint-use easements for trail systems within existing and proposed drainage, utility, and right-of-way corridors.	Ongoing	RPC	Park, Engineer	Admin, ODNR, ODOT-TA
2.6	Set aside rights-of-way or easements for future greenways as development is planned.	Ongoing	RPC	Park, Engineer	Admin, ODNR

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Mobility

The following projects, policies, and programs support the goal of **Mobility.**

Objective 1. Bridge gaps in the multimodal network.					
ACTION		**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
1.1	Complete sidewalks and bicycle routes between community destinations where gaps are present.	Mid	Municips	Engineer, RPC	ODOT-TA, CDBG
1.2	Determine feasibility of expanding the County trail system to connect Fredericktown with the Heart of Ohio Trail and/or Kokosing Gap Trail.	Long	Park	Engineer	Admin, ODNR, ODOT-TA
1.3	Conduct periodic "walking audits" to monitor changes to and evolving needs of the pedestrian and bicycle network.	Short	Municips, Park	Engineer	Admin
1.4	Improve accessibility by bringing substandard sidewalks into compliance with ADA requirements.	Long	Municips	Engineer	Admin, ODOT-TA
1.5	Update zoning code, subdivision regulations, and/or design guidelines to require new developments to have a well-connected street, sidewalk, and bike path network.	Mid	Municips	RPC	Admin

Objective 2: Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.					
ACTION		**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
2.1	Incorporate amenities such as lighting, seating, and landscaping at transit stops to encourage use.	Mid	Municips	Engineer	Admin
2.2	Implement streetscape improvements such as increased sidewalk widths, street trees, raised medians, and decorative bollards/ railings.	Short	Municips	Engineer	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 2: Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
2.3	Enhance existing crosswalks with high-visibility elements to improve safety.	Mid	Municips	Engineer	Admin
2.4	Increase bicycle awareness and safety through ongoing planning and coordination with implementation partners.	Ongoing	Cnty Com	Municips, Townships	Admin, ODH

Objective 3. Relieve congestion and improve roadway safety along regional corridors.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
3.1	Conduct studies to identify potential capacity and/or operational improvements along high-volume roadways including SR 229 between I-71 in Morrow County and Mount Vernon, US 36, and SR 661 between Granville in Licking County and Mount Vernon.	Mid	Engineer, Municips, Townships	ODOT	Admin, ODOT, USDOT
3.2	Improve east-west roadway mobility across Knox County. Study the following potential improvements: Extend Sycamore Rd to provide improved east-west connectivity in the southern portion of the County; Major upgrades to SR 229 west of Mount Vernon and on US 36 east of Mount Vernon.	Mid	Engineer, Municips, Townships	ODOT	Admin, ODOT, USDOT
3.3	Extend and connect roadways at the periphery of Mount Vernon to provide better circulation and connectivity between major routes and to enable trucks to bypass the downtown area.	Long	Engineer, Municips, Townships	ODOT	Admin, ODOT, USDOT
3.4	Update the Knox County and City of Mount Vernon Thoroughfare Plans and Access Management Guidelines.	Mid	Municips, Engineer	ODOT	Admin, ODOT
3.5	Implement visibility improvements for horse and buggy travel including installation of LED lights or reflective tape to prevent collisions with motor vehicles.	Short	Engineer, Municips, Townships	Cnty Com	Admin, ODOT
3.6	Increase the number and/or frequency of transit routes to high-demand areas.	Long	Transit, Cnty Com	Municips,	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Mount Vernon Growth Strategy

The following projects, programs, and policies support the goals of the Mount Vernon Growth Strategy.

Objective 1: Conserve critical natural assets.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
1.1 Promote opportunities and efforts to permanently protect critical natural resources.	Ongoing	Council	SWCD, MPC	Admin, ODNR, COH-GC,
1.2 Revise regulations to discourage development in areas that go against the objectives of this Growth Strategy.	Mid	MPC	Council	Admin

Objective 2: Focus growth and development inward.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
2.1 Adopt regulations that encourage infill and redevelopment in the city center and support higher-density mixed-use projects.	Mid	MPC	Council, MORPC	Admin
2.2 Implement measures that add value to existing infill sites.	Short	Council	MORPC	Admin
2.3 Update regulations to require sufficient setbacks, screening/landscaping, and reduced lighting to minimize impacts by industrial users.	Mid	MPC	Council, MV Engineer	Admin

Objective 3: Enhance the vibrancy of downtown Mount Vernon to establish it as a lively, desirable destination where people want to live, work, and visit.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
3.1 Mix residential, office, and academic spaces to create a vibrant, walking destination.	Mid	MPC	Council	Admin, CDBG
3.2 Update codes to allow horizontal and vertical mixed use in new buildings.	Mid	MPC	Council, MV Engineer	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 3: Enhance the vibrancy of downtown Mount Vernon to establish it as a lively, desirable destination where people want to live, work, and visit.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
3.3 Provide for sufficient retail uses to meet local needs.	Long	Council	MV Engineer	Admin, CDBG
3.4 Create pedestrian and bike connections with Mount Vernon Nazarene University and downtown Mount Vernon.	Long	Council	MV Engineer, MV Parks and Rec	ODOT-TA, CDBG

Objective 4: Revitalize the Coshocton Avenue Corridor.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
4.1 Develop codes to allow appropriate higher density uses on vacant sites and underdeveloped sites.	Short	MPC	Council, MV Engineer	Admin
4.2 Adopt an overlay zoning district west of Adams Run that supports a walkable built environment.	Mid	MPC	Council, MV Engineer	Admin
4.3 Adopt an overlay zoning district east of Adams Run that supports a larger scale, walkable built environment.	Mid	MPC	Council, MV Engineer	Admin

Objective 5: Optimize and improve infrastructure networks.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
5.1 Adopt a water conservation and reuse strategy.	Long	MV WW	OEPA, MV Engineer, Council	Admin
5.2 Promote development on vacant and under-utilized parcels with infrastructure services.	Mid	MV Engineer	Council, MPC	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 5: Optimize and improve infrastructure networks.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
5.3	Prioritize infill and redevelopment in the existing system service areas before considering system expansions.	Short	Council	MV Engineer, MPC	Admin
5.4	Focus attention on major corridors to minimize sprawl, enhance safety, and reduce congestion.	Ongoing	Council, MPC	MV Engineer	Admin

Objective 6. Support opportunities among existing companies and those looking to move to Mount Vernon.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
6.1	Develop future land use patterns that support economic development goals to provide appropriately located and serviced sites to attract additional private investment and generate jobs.	Long	MPC	Council	Admin
6.2	Expand existing employment concentrations to expand the City's tax base and provide job opportunities for residents.	Long-	ADF	Council	Admin
6.3	Improve road and rail connectivity to facilitate private investment and utility service investments, as appropriate.	Short	MV Engineer	Council, ADF	CIP, ODOT, USDOT

Objective 7. Pursue diversification of manufacturing opportunities.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
7.1	Promote development of walkable commercial nodes along key corridors.	Mid	MPC	Council	CIP, ODOT-TA, CDBG
7.2	Expand industrial areas on the south side of Mount Vernon to take advantage of the U.S. 36 corridor.	Mid	Council	ADF	Admin, CDBG, CRA
7.3	Develop shovel ready land along major road corridors with appropriate utilities in the City to remain competitive for industrial opportunities.	Mid	Council	ADF, MPC	CDBG, JOBSOH

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 8: Create neighborhoods with a variety of attainable housing.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
8.1	Revitalize neighborhoods and smaller community areas that have experienced disinvestment.	Long-	Council	MPC	Admin, CDBG
8.2	Create an infill housing strategy.	Mid	Council	MPC	Admin
8.3	Prioritize nearby residential development in places within close proximity to employment to provide for future workers and reduce commuting.	Short	Council	MPC	Admin, CDBG
8.4	Interconnect residential and employment areas via sidewalks and bike trails to facilitate commuting options.	Long	MPC	MV Engineer	Admin, ODOT-TA
8.5	Create standards that require a mix of housing types in appropriate locations.	Mid	MPC	Council	Admin
8.6	Develop higher density multi-family to attract workers to Mount Vernon and Knox County.	Mid	Council	MPC	Admin, CDBG
8.7	Explore options and opportunities to provide quality housing for workforce families and seniors.	Long	Council	KMHA	Admin, CDBG
8.8	Develop programs that assist with the rehabilitation of older homes to maintain the housing stock.	Mid	Council	KMHA	Admin, CDBG
8.9	Study and report on the possible implementation of building codes.	Mid	Council	MV Engineer, MPC	Admin

Objective 9: Expand and enhance local services and amenities..					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
9.1	Develop and sustain partnerships with the university community to enhance the built environment, provide additional physical resources that benefit students and residents, and improve overall quality of life.	Mid-Term	Council	Post-sec	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 9: Expand and enhance local services and amenities..					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
9.2	Maintain an open dialogue with Mount Vernon City Schools.	Ongoing	Council	Schools	Admin
9.3	Enhance access to existing health services and resources.	Mid	Council	Health	Admin, ODH
9.4	Anticipate additional police, fire, and safety service demands concurrent with development proposals.	Ongoing	Council	Police, Fire	Admin

Objective 10. Bridge gaps in the multimodal network.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
10.1	Complete sidewalks and bicycle routes between community destinations where gaps are present.	Mid	MV Engineer	Council	ODOT-TA, CDBG
10.2	Improve accessibility by bringing substandard sidewalks into compliance with ADA requirements.	Long	MV Engineer	Council	Admin
10.3	Update zoning code, subdivision regulations, and/or design guidelines to require new developments to have a well-connected street, sidewalk, and bike path network.	Mid	MPC	Council, MV Engineer	Admin, ODOT-TA
10.4	Conduct periodic “walking audits” to monitor changes to and evolving needs of the pedestrian and bicycle network.	Short	MV Engineer	Council	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Objective 11: Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
11.1 Evaluate streetscape improvements such as increased sidewalk widths, street trees, raised medians, and decorative bollards/ railings.	Short	MV Engineer	Council	Admin
11.2 Incorporate amenities such as lighting, seating, and landscaping at transit stops to encourage use.	Mid	MV Engineer	Council	Admin
11.3 Enhance existing crosswalks with high-visibility elements to improve safety.	Mid-Term	MV Engineer	Council	Admin
11.4 Increase bicycle awareness and safety through ongoing planning and coordination with implementation partners.	Ongoing	Council	MV Parks and Rec	Admin, ODH

Objective 12: Relieve congestion and improve roadway safety along regional corridors.				
ACTION	**TIMEFRAME**	**LEAD**	**SUPPORT**	**FUNDING**
12.1 Extend and connect roadways at the periphery of Mount Vernon to provide better circulation and connectivity between major routes and to enable trucks to bypass the downtown area.	Long	MV Engi-neer	Council, Cnty Com	Admin, ODOT, USDOT
12.2 Partner with the County to develop an updated Knox County and City of Mount Vernon Thoroughfare Plan and Access Management Guidelines.	Mid	Council	MV En-gineer, ODOT	Admin, ODOT
12.3 Increase the number and/or frequency of transit routes to high-demand areas.	Long	Transit, Council	Cnty Com	Admin, ODOT
12.4 Increase bicycle awareness and safety through ongoing planning and coordination with implementation partners.	Ongoing	Council	MV Parks and Rec	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Implementation

The following projects, programs, and policies support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1: Implement the Knox County Comprehensive Plan.					
ACTION		TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT	FUNDING
1.1	Create a Plan Implementation Task Force.	Short	Cnty Com	ADF, RPC	Admin
1.2	Report progress at commissioners meetings.	Shor	RPC	Task Force	Admin
1.3	Integrate plan priorities into County and City annual budget discussions.	Short	Cnty Com	RPC	Admin
1.4	Create a grant finder or coordinator position to identify and secure grants for plan related activities.	Short	Cnty Com	ADF	Admin

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

8 Glossary

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Agriculture.
The science or practice of farming, including cultivation of the coil for growing crops and the rearing of animals to provide food and other products.

Industrial Agriculture.
The large-scale, intensive production of crops and animals and animal products.

Buffer.
A strip of land created to separate and protect one type of land use from another; for example, as a screen of planting or fencing to insulate the surroundings from the noise, smoke, or visual aspects of an industrial zone or junkyard.

Conservation Development (Conservation Subdivision).
A residential development that prioritizes preserving some of the land, these subdivisions typically set aside 50% or more of a development site as permanent open space that can be farmed, used as recreational space, or set aside as a natural area.

Conservation Easement.
A voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government entity that permanently limits uses of land to protect its conservation values. Landowners continue to own and manage their land and retain the right to sell the land or pass it on to future generations.

Density.
The average number of people, families, or housing units on one unit of land. Density is also expressed as dwelling units per acre.

Density Bonus.
Allows developers to build in specified areas densities that are higher than normally allowed.

Development Rights.
Development rights give property owners the right to develop land in ways that comply with local land use regulation.

Environmentally Sensitive Area.
Environmentally sensitive areas have special environmental attributes worthy of retention or special care in order to maintain habitat and open space, provide stormwater management, control flood and erosion effects, and protect surface and groundwater quality.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Farm.
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines a farm as any place from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year.

Family Farm.
Historically, it was common for a family to provide all the labor for a farm and to own all the farm's land and capital. That is no longer true today, although the extent to which individual farms hire nonfamily labor, rent-in land or other capital, or contract for various farm services varies across farms.

Working Farm.
A farm whose agricultural land and buildings are in active use for crop production and/or the raising of livestock.

Farm Typology:
The USDA Economic Research Service groups farms into three similar groups:

Residence Farms. Farms with less than $350,000 in gross cash farm income and where the principal operator is either retired from farming or has a primary occupation other than farming.

Intermediate Farms. Farms with less than $350,000 in gross cash farm income and a principal operator whose primary occupation is farming.

Commercial Farms. Farms with $350,000 or more gross cash farm income and nonfamily farms.

Frontage.
The continuous linear distance along any approved way, measured on the street line, between the side lot lines.

Infill Development.
Development of vacant land (usually individual lots or leftover properties) within areas that are already largely developed.

Infrastructure.
Water and sewer lines, roads, urban transit lines, schools and other public facilities needed to support developed areas.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Land Trust.
A community-based, nonprofit organization that actively works to conserve land permanently. Often, they protect open space via conservation or agriculture easements – a tool that allows private landowners to conserve their land while maintaining ownership. Land trusts can also protect land by purchasing it outright.

Land Use.
The manner in which a parcel of land is used or occupied.

Mixed-Use Development (Horizontal).
A project which integrates a variety of land uses such as residential, office, commercial, service and employment across a development site and can result in measurable reductions in traffic impacts.

Mixed-Use Development (Vertical).
A proposed development that includes non-residential and residential uses within the same building.

Node.
A place where people and transportation routes converge or congregate, a centralized space that could be the focal point of an area.

Open Space.
Refers to land that is left undeveloped, often used for recreation, conservation, or agricultural purposes, including parks, natural areas like forests and grasslands, farms, wetlands, and stream corridors, whether publicly or privately owned; essentially, land set aside for uses other than heavy urban development.

Overlay Districts.
Zoning districts in which additional regulatory standards are superimposed on existing zoning. Overlay districts provide a method of placing special restrictions in addition to those required by basic zoning ordinances.

Primary Uses.
The main use to which the premises is devoted and the primary purpose for which the premises exists.

Redevelopment.
Demolition and reconstruction or substantial renovation of existing buildings or infrastructure.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Secondary Uses.
Uses that support primary uses. By example, a garage is a secondary use on a site that permits single-family homes (in that case, it can also be classified as an accessory use for zoning purposes). Retail uses can serve as a secondary use to employment uses in that it provides services and goods that support the primary use.

Stream Corridor.
Intricate ecosystems that include stream channels, their banks, riparian zones, and the flora and fauna within them.

Subdivision.
A subdivision occurs as the result of dividing land into lots for sale or development.

Wetland.
Land area that is saturated or covered by water for a significant portion of the year, either continuously or periodically. Home to a wide variety of plants and wildlife.

Woodland.
Area of land on which many trees grow, function as important wildlife habitat and improve water quality.

Zoning Ordinance.
A zoning ordinance contains regulations designed to implement the master plan, while regulating the use of property, buildings and structures to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community.

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

Attachment: Knox County Comprehensie Plan - March 2025 draft (2025-49 : Adopt 2025 Knox County Comprehensive Plan)

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

SCHEDULED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Employee and Community Rel.
Woods, Keener
Category: Personnel
Prepared By: Rob Broeren
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4227

RESOLUTION 2025-50

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH MEDICAL MUTUAL FOR THE PROVISION OF 2025 - 2026 MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO:

SECTION 1: That the Safety-Service Director is authorized to accept the proposal and enter into an agreement with Medical Mutual for the provision of 2025-2026 healthcare insurance coverage, based on the proposal attached as Exhibit A.

SECTION 2: This Resolution is declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety and for the further reason that to secure health insurance coverage for City employees before the current policy lapses on May 31, 2025, therefore, become effective upon its date of passage and approval by the Mayor, provided that it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members elected to the Council of the City of Mount Vernon; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Resolution No. 2025-50 was given a first reading. Woods asked for a 10-minute meeting of the Employee and Community Relations Committee on the legislation for May 12, 2025.

RESULT:	**FIRST READING**	**Next: 5/12/2025 7:30 PM**

MEDICAL MUTUAL

PROPRIETARY & CONFIDENTIAL

Proposal For:

CITY OF MOUNT VERNON - EA

Effective Date: 6/1/2025
End Date: 5/31/2026
County: Knox
State: Ohio

Quote ID: 0134732-02

Monday, March 24, 2025
9:01 AM

Attachment: Ex A - Purchase Health Insurance 2025 (2025-50 : Purchase Health Insurance 25-26)

MEDICAL MUTUAL

Group Name: **CITY OF MOUNT VERNON - EA**
Effective: **June 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026**

Benefit Highlights & Premium Rates	$3300 HSA		$1650 Aggregate HSA	
Product / Network	SuperMed Plus		SuperMed Plus	
HSA Option	Yes		Yes	
Includes Major Med. Rx?	Yes		Yes	
	NETWORK	NON-NETWORK	NETWORK	NON-NETWORK
Deductible Type	Embedded		Aggregate	
Single Deductible	$3,300	$6,600	$1,650	$3,300
Family Deductible	$6,600	$13,200	$3,300	$6,600
Employer Coinsurance % *	100%	50%	100%	50%
Single Out of Pocket (Excludes Deductible)	$0	$6,600	$0	$3,300
Family Out of Pocket (Excludes Deductible)	$0	$13,200	$0	$6,600
Single Maximum Out of Pocket	$3,300	$13,200	$1,650	$6,600
Family Maximum Out of Pocket	$6,600	$26,400	$3,300	$13,200
Office Visit	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible
Specialist Office Visit	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible
Urgent Care Office Visits	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible
Emergency Room Visits**	100% After Deductible		100% After Deductible	
Inpatient Services	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible	100% After Deductible	50% After Deductible
Prescription Drug Card Benefit Highlights	Major Medical Drug		Major Medical Drug	
Single Deductible	$3,300		$1,650	
Family Deductible	$6,600		$3,300	
	Retail	Mail Order	Retail	Mail Order
Generic Copay	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Formulary Copay	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-Formulary Copay	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4th Tier Copay	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	OTHER		OTHER	

Rates Effective 6/1/2025 - 5/31/2026:	Enrolled	Rates	Enrolled	Rates
Single	43	$811.71	43	$920.66
Employee + Spouse	21	$1,701.59	21	$1,930.74
Employee + Child	6	$1,458.90	6	$1,655.27
Employee + Children	6	$1,458.90	6	$1,655.27
Family	84	$2,429.70	84	$2,757.17
Monthly Premium		*$292,239*		*$331,599*

Group Official Plan/Rate Selections	Initial Here _____	Initial Here _____

Rate Acceptance

Group Official Initial: _____ *Please initial next to the benefits that have been selected by the group.*

Group Official Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

*** Some non-network services will be covered at a coinsurance less than what is shown.**
**** Emergency room visits that do not qualify as an emergency may be covered at a lesser amount. Coverage for emergency visits and emergency services may vary.**

In accordance with Ohio law, coverage for dependents beyond the federal limiting age of 26 may necessitate additional premium on insured plans.

Employers must disclose any funding of deductibles or coinsurance provided to employees. If funding is not disclosed, Medical Mutual reserves the right to adjust rates at any time during the contract period. This may result in higher than anticipated rate adjustments.

Rates reflect the federally mandated fees. All fees are subject to state premium tax. Fees are subject to change. When a contract period spans more than one calendar year, the fees are averaged over the length of the period.

Rates and premiums for periods beginning January 1, 2022 do not include potential or actual exposure due to section 4980I of the Internal Revenue Code -- Excise Tax on High Cost Employer-Sponsored Health Coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Any Excise tax determined to be payable on your plan(s) will be billed separately from health plan premium rates.

The limiting age for dependent children is 26, except in the case of physical or intellectual disability.

Effective January 1, 2016, Ohio law lowered the limiting age for dependent children from 28 to 26. However, as a large group customer you still have options available to you. You may continue covering dependent children to age 28, reduce the age to 26 for both new and existing dependent children or reduce the age to 26 for new dependent children only. Please note that children with a physical or intellectual disability are not impacted by the change in Ohio law. Please contact your Medical Mutual representative to discuss your options in detail.

CITY OF MOUNT VERNON - EA
6/1/2025
Disclaimers & Contingencies

• Proposal expires in 60 days or upon effective date.
• Rates assume Medical Mutual is the only carrier, with 75% of net eligible employees enrolled.
• Rates are subject to change if enrollment varies by more than 10% from 160 contracts quoted.
• Ancillary coverages will be packaged with Medical coverage and not sold separately.
• Disclosure of disabled participants is required.
• Misrepresentation may result in rescission of coverage.
• Rates include standard reporting and administration.
• Employers must disclose any funding of deductibles or coinsurance provided to employees. If funding is not disclosed, Medical Mutual reserves the right to adjust rates at any time during the contract period. This may result in higher than anticipated rate adjustments.

• Covered employees will automatically have access to Medical Mutual's Basics wellness program, which includes online health resources, health assessments, WW (Weight Watchers) discounts, 24/7 nurse line and tobacco cessation programs. If not already enrolled in a buy up program, additional wellness program options are available upon request for an additional fee.
• The rates in this proposal may include Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute Fee (PCORI), Reinsurance Fee, Exchange Fee, and Market Share Fee when applicable which are federally mandated. Additionally, this policy, Medical Mutual, or you as a Plan Sponsor may become subject to taxes, fees or other charges imposed by State, Local, or Federal governments (collectively, "fees"). Medical Mutual reserves the right to adjust your premium or funding rate (or add the fees to the invoice) consistent with the effective date of the new fees imposed by the government. Adjustments may or may not be noted in a line item on monthly invoices. All fees are subject to change during the contract period.
• Change in enrollment of any one plan of more than 10% or the elimination of a plan may require rates to be adjusted.
• As required by the Affordable Care Act, employees must be notified at least 60 days before the effective date of a material modification if it impacts the contents of the SBC. Please be aware of this requirement when considering an off-renewal plan change or a change in carrier.
• Premiums and rates reflect 2015 ACA requirement to accumulate drug cost share to the maximum out-of-pocket (MOOP). Use of a third party Pharmacy Benefits Manager (PBM) will require additional fees and additional lead time to implement. Please contact your Medical Mutual representative for further details and explanation.
• Effective January 1, 2016, Ohio law lowered the limiting age for dependent children from 28 to 26. However, as a large group customer you still have options available to you. You may continue covering dependent children to age 28, reduce the age to 26 for both new and existing dependent children or reduce the age to 26 for new dependent children only. Please note that children with a physical or intellectual disability are not impacted by the change in Ohio law. Please contact your Medical Mutual representative to discuss your options in detail.

Rate Acceptance

Group Official Initial: _____ *Please initial next to the benefits that have been selected by the group.*

Group Official Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachment: Ex A - Purchase Health Insurance 2025 (2025-50 : Purchase Health Insurance 25-26)

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

ADOPTED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Finance and Budget
Seavolt, Woods
Category: Finance
Prepared By: Rob Broeren
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4229

RESOLUTION 2025-51

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Mount Vernon, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1: That the Auditor for the City of Mount Vernon be, and he herewith is, authorized and directed to make supplemental appropriations as follows:

1. To account 224.1900.53215, Maintenance of Equipment, in the amount of $180.00(Reimbursement received).
2. To account 224.1900.54313, Training/Travel/Expenses- Grant Funds, in the amount of $5,315.20 (1st quarter Law Enforcement Continuing Professional Training Funds grant payment).
3. To account 206.2300.54115, Small Cities Grant Administer, in the amount of $57,510.43 (Grant dollars from PY 2024 Community Development Program that were not carried over to the 2025 appropriation).
4. To account 206.2300.55515, Small Cities Grant Construction, in the amount of $820,000.00 (Grant dollars from PY 2024 Community Development Program that were not carried over to the 2025 appropriation).

SECTION 2: This Resolution provides for appropriations for the current expenses of the City, and therefore, pursuant to Revised Code Section 731.20, it shall become effective upon its date of passage and approval by the Mayor.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Seavolt made a motion to suspend the rule requiring three separate readings of Resolution No. 2025-51, with a second by Woods. Motion to suspend passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Seavolt made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-51, with a second by Woods. Auditor Dan Brinkman, Safety-Service Director Tanner Salyers and Engineer Brian Ball commented on the legislation as it pertained to the monies of the Community Development Block Grant Small Cities Grant. Motion to adopt passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Janis Seavolt, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	James Mahan

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

ADOPTED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Parks and Recreation
Hager, Severns
Category: Parks
Prepared By: Rob Broeren
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4230

RESOLUTION 2025-52

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ACCEPT THE DONATION OF A CARVED PIRATE AND PALM TREE STATUE FROM THE KOKOSING VALLEY ROTARY CLUB; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, the Kokosing Valley Rotary Club desires to donate to the City of Mount Vernon a carved pirate and palm tree statue for installation at the splash pad the City is constructing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Mount Vernon, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1: That the Safety-Service Director for the City of Mount Vernon be and herewith is authorized and directed to accept the donation of a carved pirate and palm tree statue from the Kokosing Valley Rotary Club for installation at the splash pad the City is constructing.

SECTION 2: This Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, and for the further reason to allow installation of the statue before the splash pad's opening in May, the said Resolution shall, therefore, become effective upon its date of passage and approval by the Mayor, provided that it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members elected to the Council of the City of Mount Vernon; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Hager made a motion to suspend the rule requiring three separate readings of Resolution No. 2025-52, with a second by Severns. Motion to suspend passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0. Hager made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-52, with a second by Severns. Hager thanked the Kokosing Valley Rotary Club for donating the carved pirate and palm tree statue to the City for the Riverside Park Splash Pad. Engineer Brian Ball added that the carving, from a tree in Riverside Park, was done by Dave Crego, and that it will be maintained by the Rotary Club. Motion to adopt passed by a roll-call vote of 6-0.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	LeNan Hager, Fourth Ward
SECONDER:	Mel Severns, Councilman
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	James Mahan

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

ADOPTED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Land Use and Development
Keener, Mahan
Category: Planning and Zoning
Prepared By: Todd Hill
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4213

ORDINANCE 2025-09

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF PARCELS #66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000 AND #66-05629.000 FROM R-1A - CORE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, TO R-3 - ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Mount Vernon has received an application for rezoning certain property within the City of Mount Vernon, specifically Parcels #66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000 and #66-05629.000, also known as 0 South Main Street; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Planning Commission for the City of Mount Vernon met on March 13, 2025 and voted 5-0 to approve the zoning change for Parcels #66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000 and #66-05629.000 from R-1A - Core Residential District, to R-3 - Attached Residential District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Mount Vernon, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1: That the City of Mount Vernon hereby amends the zoning classification of Parcels #66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000 and #66-05629.000, also known as 0 South Main Street. The zoning will be indicated:

PARCEL NO.	PROPOSED ZONING
#66-05624.000, #66-05627.000, #66-05628.000, #66-05629.000	R-3 - Attached Residential District

SECTION 2: That the zoning classification be recorded in Title XI of the Planning and Zoning Codes of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Mount Vernon.

HISTORY:

03/24/25 City Council FIRST READING

Ordinance No. 2025-09 was given a first reading. Keener requested a 10-minute meeting of the Land Use and Development Committee on the legislation for April 14, 2025. There will be a public hearing on the legislation at 6:55 p.m. on April 28, 2025.

04/14/25 City Council SECOND READING

Ordinance No. 2025-09 was given a second reading.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Keener made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-09, with a second by Woods. Motion passed by a roll-call vote of 4-3, with Keener, Seavolt and Woods voting no, and Hawkins voting yes to break the tie.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Amber Keener, At Large
SECONDER:	Tammy Woods, Third Ward
AYES:	Seavolt, Woods, Keener, Severns, Ruckman, Hager
EXCUSED:	James Mahan

City of Mount Vernon, Ohio

Application for Zoning Amendment

Applicant's Information	
Owner's Name, Address, Phone, and Email Address Joseph D. Updike 18254 New Gambier Rd.	
Agent's Name, Address, Phone, and Email Address	
Site Information	
Site Address South Main St.	Legal Description
Parcel Number 66-05624.000 66-05627.000 66-05628.000 66-05629.000	Deed Volume and Page Number
Use of Property	
Present Use Vacant	Present Zoning District R1A
Proposed Use Apartments	Proposed Zoning District R3

Documents to be Submitted

The following documents must also be submitted with this application:

1. A statement of the reason(s) for the proposed amendment.
2. A vicinity map at a scale approved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer showing property lines, thoroughfares, existing and proposed zoning, and such other items as the Zoning Enforcement Officer may require.
3. A statement on the ways in which the proposed amendment relates to the comprehensive plan.
4. The $200.00 filing fee as established by ordinance.

I hereby certify that the information submitted on this application and on any sketches, drawings or other documents submitted with this application is true and exact.

Date: 9/25/24 By: Joseph D Updike

Filing Information			
Filing Date	Fee deposit **$200.00**	Date Paid	Receipt Number

This form revised 06-03-2024

Attachment: Application - 0 South Main St (2025-09 : Rezone 0 South Main St)

9/24/2004

Municipal Planning Commission
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

To the Municipal Planning Commission

I am submitting for your review a rezoning of 0 South Main St parcels 66-05624.000, 66-05627.000, 66-05628.000, 66-05629.000. This consists of roughly .75 acres at the southeast corner of the intersection of Parrot St. and South Main St.

The zoning change requested is from R1A to R3. This is to create a pathway for the construction of multi family apartment units on the above property. The total number of units is unclear currently until a site development plan is devised. Upon completion of the zoning change.

The reasons that we feel this would be a good fit are as follows.

- This is a transitional property, as it will act as a buffer between commercial property located to the north (Peppys Pizza) and to the west (Blubaugh's Body and Frame) and residential to the east and south.
- The city is deficient in affordable housing, and this can have a positive impact attracting citizens and new workers to the area.
- It is conveniently located on the south end of town close to the industrial park where most jobs are.

I can be at all meetings to address any questions you may have. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Joe Updike

18254 New Gambier Rd.

740-501-3533

South Main Street

between Parrott ST and Adamson ST

Zoning Amendment from R-1A to R-3

- Buildable land area inside setbacks 70’ x 180’
- 8 Maximum dwelling units, with 90’ x 120’ parking area

Attachment: South Main St Building Options (2025-09 : Rezone 0 South Main St)

Multi-Family in the Southend

- 107 Adamson ST
- 200 Fairmont AVE
- 217 Ames ST
- 211-213 Adamson ST
- 215 Riley ST
- 207 Martinsburg RD
- 228 Martinsburg RD
- 1010 S Main ST
- 20 Adamson ST
- 28 Adamson ST
- 237 Newark RD
- 247 Newark RD
- 200-202 Spruce ST

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

SCHEDULED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Employee and Community Rel.
Woods, Keener
Category: Personnel
Prepared By: Rob Broeren
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4222

ORDINANCE 2025-10

AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE NUMBER OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Mount Vernon, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1: That the following positions are hereby authorized as indicated:

POLICE DEPARTMENT:
11 Supervisors (Lieutenants and Sergeants)
Not more than ~~21~~ **22** Police Officers
One Records Clerk

Use of all above mentioned said personnel is authorized as required to meet the work demands of the Police Department as appropriated.

The authorized number of positions in the Police Department shall revert to 10 Supervisors and 23 Police Officers upon one of the following: (1) promotion of a Supervisor to Chief or Assistant Chief, (2) demotion of a Supervisor to Police Officer or (3) separation (resignation or retirement) of a Supervisor from service with the Mount Vernon Police Department.

SECTION 2: This Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, and to allow necessary staffing in the City's Police Department and said Ordinance shall, therefore, become effective upon its date of passage and approval by the Mayor, provided that it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members elected to the Council of the City of Mount Vernon; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

HISTORY:

04/14/25	**City Council**	**FIRST READING**

Ordinance No. 2025-10 was given a first reading. Woods requested a 15-minute meeting of the Employee and Community Relations Committee on the legislation for April 28, 2025.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Ordinance No. 2025-10 was given a second reading.

RESULT:	**SECOND READING**	**Next: 5/12/2025 7:30 PM**

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

SCHEDULED

Meeting: 04/28/25 7:30 PM
Dept: Land Use and Development
Keener, Mahan
Category: Planning and Zoning
Prepared By: Todd Hill
Initiator: Todd Hill
DOC ID: 4226

ORDINANCE 2025-11

AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE, ADOPT AND ENACT THE JANUARY 2005 REPLACEMENT PAGES TO THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES; TO REPEAL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; TO PUBLISH THE ENACTMENT OF NEW MATTER; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, certain provisions within the Codified Ordinances should be amended to conform with current State law as required by the Ohio Constitution; and

WHEREAS, various ordinances of a general and permanent nature have been passed by Council which should be included in the Codified Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, Council has heretofore entered into a contract with the Walter H. Drane Company to prepare and publish an annual revision; and

WHEREAS, the codification of such ordinances, together with the new matter to be adopted, the matters to be amended and those to be repealed are before the Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Mount Vernon, State of Ohio:

SECTION 1: That the editing, arrangement and numbering or renumbering of the following ordinances and parts of ordinances are hereby approved as parts of the various component codes of the Codified Ordinances of Mount Vernon, Ohio, so as to conform to the classification and numbering system of the Codified Ordinances, to-wit:

Ord. No.	Date	C.O. Section
2024-35	8-25-24	125.09
2024-25	12-9-24	August 2024 Replacement Pages
2024-46	11-25-24	931.02, 931.05

Res. No.	Date	C.O. Section
2024-119	11-25-24	931.045

SECTION 2: That, the following sections and chapters are hereby added, amended or repealed as respectively indicated in order to comply with current State law.

Traffic Code

303.01 Compliance with Lawful Order of Police Officer; Fleeing. (Amended)

333.07 Street Racing, Stunt Driving and Street Takeovers Prohibited. (Amended)

General Offenses Code

513.01 Drug Abuse Control Definitions. (Amended)
513.02 Gift of Marihuana. (Amended)
533.03 Unlawful Sexual Conduct with a Minor. (Amended)
533.04 Sexual Imposition. (Amended)
537.02 Vehicular Homicide and Manslaughter. (Amended)
537.021 Vehicular Assault in a Construction Zone. (Amended)
549.12 Concealed Handgun Licenses; Possession of Revoked or Suspended License; Additional Restrictions; Posting Signs Prohibiting Possession. (Added)

SECTION 3: That the complete text of the sections listed above are set forth in full in the current replacement pages to the Codified Ordinances which are hereby attached to this Ordinance as Exhibit A. The listing above of each new section by reference to its title shall constitute sufficient publication of new matter contained therein.

SECTION 4: This Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, and for the further reason that an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the various departments of the municipal government, and said Ordinance shall, therefore, become effective upon its date of passage and approval by the Mayor, provided that it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members elected to the Council of the City of Mount Vernon; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Ordinance No. 2025-11 was given a first reading.

RESULT:	**FIRST READING**	**Next: 5/12/2025 7:30 PM**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSERTING JANUARY 2025 REPLACEMENT PAGES FOR THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF MT. VERNON

All new replacement pages bear the footnote "January 2025 Replacement". Please discard old pages and insert these new replacement pages immediately as directed in the following table.

Discard Old Pages	Insert New Pages
PRELIMINARY UNIT	
Cover and Certification Page	Cover and Certification Page
3, 4	3, 4
11, 12	11, 12
15 through 18	15 through 18
31, 32	31, 32
36C, 36D	36C, 36D
40G, 40H	40G, 40H
46C	46C
60A, 60B	60A, 60B
PART ONE - ADMINISTRATIVE CODE	
27 through 28A	27 through 28C
PART THREE - TRAFFIC CODE	
13 through 18B	13 through 18C
29, 30	29, 30
65, 66	65, 66
83 through 84D	83 through 84E
PART FIVE - GENERAL OFFENSES CODE	
29 through 30B	29 through 30B
75 through 78	75 through 78
81 through 82B	81 through 82B
118E, 118F	118E, 118F
PART NINE- STREETS, UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE	
89 through 92	89 through 92A

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO

Local legislation current through January 27, 2025

State legislation current through June 26, 2024

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CERTIFICATION

We, Matthew T. Starr, Mayor and Todd Hill, Clerk of Council of Mount Vernon, Ohio, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 731.23 and 731.42, hereby certify that the general and permanent ordinances of the City of Mount Vernon, Ohio, as revised, rearranged, compiled, renumbered as to sections, codified and printed herewith in component codes are correctly set forth and constitute the Codified Ordinances of Mount Vernon, Ohio, 1989, as amended to January 27, 2025.

/s/ Matthew T. Starr
Mayor

/s/ Todd Hill
Clerk of Council

Codified, edited and prepared for
publication by
THE WALTER H. DRANE COMPANY
Cleveland, Ohio

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The Walter H. Drane Company

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, OHIO

ROSTER OF CITY OFFICIALS

(2025)

COUNCIL

Bruce E. Hawkins	President
James Mahan	First Ward
John Ruckman	Second Ward
Tammy Woods	Third Ward
LeNan Hager	Fourth Ward
Amber Keener	At Large
Janis Seavolt	At Large
Mel Severns	At Large

ADMINISTRATION

Matthew T. Starr	Mayor
Tanner S. Salyers	Safety-Service Director
P. Robert Broeren, Jr.	Director of Law
Todd Hill	Clerk of Council
Maureen Hall	Assistant Clerk of Council
Dan Brinkman	City Auditor
David Stuller	City Treasurer
Robert K. Morgan	Chief of Police
Chad Christopher	Fire Chief
John Thatcher	Municipal Court Judge
Lisa R. Mazza	Municipal Court Clerk
Aaron Reinhart	Director of Public Utilities
Tom Hinkle	Director of Public Works
Brian Ball	City Engineer
Lisa Brown	Income Tax Administrator

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

The publisher
expresses their appreciation
to

TANNER SALYERS
Safety-Service Director

P. ROBERT BROEREN, JR.
Director of Law

TODD HILL
Clerk of Council

and all other officers and employees who
assisted in the preparation
of these Codified Ordinances.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

ANIMALS (Cont.)
definitions 505.001
dog registration 505.03
feed, rat-proof storage of 1307.10
freeway, on 303.06
hunting prohibited 505.11
impounding and disposition 505.02
killing or injuring 505.05
livestock, raising 1108.01(g)
noxious odors from shelters 521.09
nuisance 505.08
poisoning 505.06
police dog or horse 525.15
rats (see VERMIN AND RATS)
running at large
prohibited 505.01
trailer camp 783.14(b)(5)
sidewalk, defacing 521.04
snakes, restricted 505.13
street, on 303.05

APPEALS
flood hazard area 1317.04(e)
income tax 183.09
peddler, solicitor 753.07
Planning and Zoning Code 1103.07
property maintenance 1303.10
sewer surcharges 914.09
transient occupancy tax 187.09

APPLICATIONS (see PETITIONS AND APPLICATIONS)

ARREST
resisting 525.09

ARSON
conditions governing 541.02
determining property value 541.01
laws; posting 1501.06

ASSAULT
domestic violence 537.14
inciting to violence 509.011
negligent 537.04

ASSAULT (Cont.)
physical harm 537.03
temporary protection order 537.15
vehicular assault in construction zone 537.021

ASSEMBLY
disturbing lawful 509.04
public place, nonsmoking 521.10
street, on; permit 311.02

ASSURED CLEAR DISTANCE 331.09, 333.03

ATTEMPT 501.09

AUDITOR
bonds 135.01
collection service fee 125.09
composition 125.02
credit card policy 125.09
Deputy 125.03
election; term; duties 125.01
line item transfers 125.06
petty cash, change funds 125.07
Treasury Investment Fund 125.04

BAD CHECK 545.09

BANNERS 931.10

BARRICADES AND WARNING LIGHTS
excavations, at 901.04
required 521.03

BED AND BREAKFAST
zoning regulations 1105.04(w)

BEER (see INTOXICANTS; INTOXICATION)

BETTING (see GAMBLING)

BICYCLE (see also MOTORCYCLE)
bell, signal device 373.05
brakes 373.06
defined 301.04
electric 373.16
freeway, on 303.06

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

BICYCLE (Cont.)
handle bars 373.02
impounding 373.12
licensing; fee; registration 373.11
lights 373.06
motorized 301.04(b), 373.03
parking 373.09
paths exclusively for bicycles 373.15
reckless operation 373.02(d), 373.08
reflector 373.06
riding abreast 373.04
right side of street 373.07
seat, use 373.02
sidewalk, on 373.10
Traffic Code application 373.01
traffic rules, obedience 373.07
vehicle, attaching to 373.03

BILLIARDS AND POOL
license
application; fee 713.02
posting 713.03
required 713.01
penalty 713.99

BILLPOSTING (see ADVERTISING)

BINGO
definitions 517.01(r) et seq.
exceptions 517.13
instant bingo
charitable organizations 517.09
conduct 517.07
electronic 517.16
location 517.10
veteran's or fraternal organization 517.14
methods of conducting 517.06
operator prohibitions 517.12
raffles 517.08
records 517.11

BIRDS (see ANIMALS)

BLACKJACK (see WEAPONS)

BLIND PERSON
right of way 371.02

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS 1102.04

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (see specific subject involved)

BOND
employees, municipal 135.01
fireworks exhibition 1519.02(c)

BONFIRE (see OPEN BURNING)

BOOKMAKING (see GAMBLING)

BOUNDARIES (see WARDS AND BOUNDARIES)

BOWLING ALLEY
license
application; fee 713.02
posting 713.03
required 713.01
penalty 713.99

BRAKES (see JAKE BRAKES; VEHICLE EQUIPMENT)

BRASS KNUCKLES (see WEAPONS)

BRICK
streets, preservation of 311.06

BRIDGE
dropping objects from 541.10
parking on prohibited 351.03
pedestrian on 371.10
speed on 333.05

BUILDING
accessory structures 1108.01
construction
fire limits, within 1525.02
flood hazard area 1317.04, 1317.05
flood hazard area 1317.05
maintenance (see PROPERTY MAINTENANCE)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

COMMERCIAL AND HEAVY VEHICLE (Cont.)
towing requirements 339.07
truck defined 301.49
truck routes 339.02
wheel protectors 339.05
width, maximum 339.03

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS (see BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS)

COMMERCIAL DRIVERS
criminal offenses 341.05
definitions 341.01
employment 341.06
exemptions 341.02
operation 341.03
prohibitions 341.04

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
trailer camp at 783.14(b)(4)

COMPANIES (see ORGANIZATIONS)

COMPENSATION
improper 525.11

COMPENSATION REVIEW COMMISSION
appointment and terms 147.04
composition 147.03
establishment 147.01
meetings and quorum 147.05
purpose and duties 147.02
support and resources 147.06

COMPLICITY 501.10

COMPOUNDING A CRIME 525.04

COMPUTER CRIMES 501.01, 545.01

CONTRACT
interest, unlawful 525.10

CONTRACTORS
construction structures 1108.02(c)
equipment, storage yards 1105.04(cc)

CONTROL
physical 333.01
reasonable 331.34, 333.08

CORONER'S VEHICLE
exemptions 303.041
right of way 331.21

CORPORATION (see ORGANIZATION)

COUNCIL
meetings
emergency 111.03
invocation 111.09
minutes 111.06
notice; specific business 111.05
open to public 111.07
place; matter of public interest 111.04
regular; notice 111.01
special 111.02
Planning and Zoning Code authority 1102.03
standing committees 111.08
traffic control powers 305.01
trailer camp; vote on 783.04

COUNTERFEIT CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES 513.13

COURT, MUNICIPAL
clerks' bailiff's bonds 135.01
Codified Ordinances, copies of 113.04
editor's note Ch. 161

CREDIT CARD
City credit card policy 125.09
defined 545.01
misuse 545.10

CRIME (see OFFENSE)

CRIMINAL DAMAGING AND ENDANGERING 541.03

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF 541.04

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CRIMINAL TOOLS 545.19

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITY
criminal mischief 541.04(a)(7)
definition 541.05(e)
false alarms; defined 509.07
trespass 541.05

CROSSWALK
defined 301.09
obstructing 331.33
parking on prohibited 351.03
pedestrian right of way 371.01
subdivisions, in 1114.13

CRUELTY
animals 505.07, 505.071
children 537.07

CULPABILITY
criminal liability 501.07
knowingly 501.08(b)
mental states 501.08
negligently 501.08(d)
purposely 501.08(a)
recklessly 501.08(c)

CURB
driving over 331.37
parking on prohibited 351.03

CURFEW 509.08

DANGEROUS ORDNANCE (see also WEAPONS)
defined 549.01
exceptions 549.01(k)
failure to secure 549.05
possession 545.19(b)

DEFINITIONS (see also specific subject involved)
Codified Ordinances, generally 101.02
culpability 501.08
dangerous ordnance 549.01
detention 525.01
drug abuse 513.01

DEFINITIONS (Cont.)
explosives 549.01
fair housing 515.02
fire limits 1525.01
fireworks 1519.01
flood damage prevention 1317.02
gambling 517.01
income tax provisions 183.02
intoxicants 529.01
juke box 747.01(b)
law enforcement officer 501.01
liquor control 529.01
material harmful to juveniles 533.01
mechanical amusement device 747.01(a)
nuisance 521.08(a)
obscenity 533.01
offense of violence 501.01
open burning 1511.01
peddler; solicitor 753.01
physical harm 501.01
Planning and Zoning Code 1117.03
property 501.01
property maintenance 1302.01
public servant 525.01
sewers 911.02, 913.04
sexual offenses 533.01
stormwater management 920.01
theft and fraud 545.01
Traffic Code Ch. 301
trailer; trailer camp 783.01
transient occupancy tax 187.01
water system 919.02
weapons 549.01

DEFRAUDING
creditors 545.17

DEMOLITION
permit; standards; compliance; salvage materials 1303.13
violations 1399.05

DERELICTION OF DUTY 525.12

DESECRATION 541.07

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

DETENTION
defined 525.01
shoplifters 545.04

DETENTION FACILITIES
contraband 521.12

DISASTER SERVICES ORGANIZATION
ed. note Ch. 137

DISCRIMINATION
ethnic intimidation 541.08
housing (see FAIR HOUSING)

DISORDERLY CONDUCT
disturbing others 509.03
inducing panic 509.06
intoxicated persons 509.03
riot (see RIOT)

DISTURBING THE PEACE
exhaust system noise 337.20
racing vehicle motor 331.36
squealing tires, peeling 331.36
vehicle exhaust noise 331.36

DOGS (see ANIMALS)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 537.14

DONATIONS
outdoor drop-off boxes 1108.01(g)

DRAG RACING 333.07

DRAINAGE
compliance required 521.05
property maintenance requirements 1305.02

DRILLING OPERATIONS 541.09

DRIVER'S LICENSE
application falsification 335.04(e)
display 335.06
fictitious, revoked, altered 335.04(a)

DRIVER'S LICENSE (Cont.)
lending 335.04(b)
motorcycle, off-highway 375.05
motorcycle operator 335.01(a)
motorized bicycle 373.13
nonresident driver 335.01(b)
Ohio license required for in state residents 335.021
permitting operation without 335.02
possession
more than one 335.02
someone else's 335.04(c)
probationary; curfew 335.031
prohibited acts 335.04
required 335.01
restriction violation 335.01(c)
revoked or suspended driving with
failure to surrender 335.04(d)
prohibited 335.07
reinstatement requirements, noncompliance with 335.073
snowmobile or all purpose vehicle 375.05
suspended, driving under 335.074
temporary, licensed driver required 335.03

DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITIES, PICK-UP WINDOWS
zoning regulations 1108.01(g)

DRIVEWAY
parking in front of 351.03
property maintenance requirements 1305.03
right of way
entering 331.17
leaving 331.22, 331.23
turning into 331.11

DRIVING
accident (see ACCIDENT)
allowing another to drive illegally 335.05
approaching stationary public safety, emergency, road service vehicle 333.031
assured clear distance 331.09,333.03
backing vehicle 331.13
bicycle path use prohibited 373.15

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

DRIVING (Cont.)
cell phone use prohibited 335.032
certificate of title required 335.08
change of course 331.14, 331.34
closed road, on 331.26, 331.45
construction zone,
vehicular assault in 537.021
control of vehicle 331.34, 333.08
crosswalk, obstructing 331.33
distracted driving penalty 303.991
divided street 331.31
driver's view, control 331.25, 337.21
drunk or drugged 333.01
earplugs, wearing
of prohibited 331.44
electronic wireless communication
device use prohibited
while driving 333.11, 335.032
entering or crossing roadway
from other than roadway
duty to yield 331.22
stopping at sidewalk 331.23
exhaust noises 331.36
financial responsibility law
suspension or cancellation,
driving under 335.072
fire hose, over 331.28
following
emergency or safety vehicle 331.27
too closely 331.09
golf carts, under speed
vehicles 376.04
grade crossing 331.39, 331.40
hazardous zones 331.07
immobilization order 333.10
intersection
obstructing 331.33
right of way 331.16
shortcutting 331.41
turning at 331.10
lanes, within 331.08
lane-use control
signal indications 313.04
left side of street 331.06
one-way street 331.30
operate defined 301.201
OVI suspension, under 335.071

DRIVING (Cont.)
passing
left of center 331.05
left side 331.03
no passing zones 331.07
right side 331.02, 331.04
racing motor 331.36
reckless
failure to control 331.34, 333.08
full time and attention 331.34
prohibited 333.09
willful, wanton disregard 333.02
right of way
funeral procession 331.24
intersections 331.16
public safety vehicle 331.21, 331.211
turning left 331.17
right side of street 331.01
rotary traffic island, around 331.30
safety zone, through 331.29
shortcutting 331.41
sidewalk, street lawn, curb; on 331.37
signals for turning
or stopping 331.14, 331.15
speed (see SPEED)
squealing tires 331.36
starting vehicle 331.13
stopping vehicle 333.04
stop signs
emergency or public
safety vehicle 331.20
operation at 331.14, 331.19
street racing, stunt driving,
street takeovers 333.07
street under repair 331.26
suspended license 335.074
texting prohibited 333.11
traffic signal indications 313.03
turning
driveway, alley or building 331.11
intersection, at 331.10
left, right of way 331.17
right on red 313.03(c)
signals 331.14, 331.15
U turn 331.12

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

PARADE 311.02

PARKING (see also OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING)
24-hour maximum 351.14
alleys and narrow streets, in 351.11
angle 351.05
at night
commercial vehicle in residential district 351.13
on City lot 351.17
bicycle 373.09
brake, setting 351.07
bus stop, in 351.10
definitions 351.01
double 351.03
emergency, safety vehicle, near 331.27
fee payment to Parking Fund 357.06
handicapped
private property 351.033
providing 351.04(d)
street 351.032
impounding vehicle 303.08
key removal 303.03, 351.07
liability for violation 351.02
loading zone 351.09
minute parking in designated areas 351.20
motorcycles 351.21
opening door on traffic side 351.08

owner prima-facie liable 351.02
nonliability, lease defense 305.05
parallel 351.04
posted private property 351.15
prohibited places 351.03, 351.12
public square, on 351.034
selling or repairing vehicle 351.06
snow emergency 351.16
spaces 351.18
stopping engine 351.07
taxicab stand, in 351.10, 763.06
trailer 783.16
two hour limit 351.19

PARKING AND LOADING ZONES
business, for 357.02
utility vehicles 357.05

PARKING ENFORCEMENT UNIT 129.041

PARKING LOTS, MUNICIPAL 355.01

PARKING VIOLATIONS BUREAU 351.98

PARKS
Ariel-Foundation Park
Columbus Delano Field of Discovery in 931.045
regulations 931.04
certain vehicles prohibited 375.08
closing hours 931.06
concession stands 931.09
group use reservations 931.07
model airplanes 931.03
penalty 931.99
prohibited uses 931.02
recreation facilities use; fees 931.08
Shellmar Park 931.11
speed limit 931.01

PEACE OFFICER (see also LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER)
false information given to 303.10
fleeing 303.01
ignition key removal 303.03
misconduct, false accusation of 525.16
traffic order, compliance with 303.01

PEDDLERS AND SOLICITORS
appeal 753.10
charitable 753.05
definitions 753.01
hours 753.04, 753.09
intrastate commerce 753.08
investigation 753.07
license
application; fee 753.06
fees 753.05
issuance 753.04
required 753.02
revocation 753.06
notice prohibiting 753.03
penalty 753.99

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

PEDESTRIAN
accessible pedestrian crossing signals 902.02
blind person 371.02
bridge or railroad crossing, on 371.10
control signal 313.05
crosswalk, right half 371.04
crosswalk, right of way 371.01
defined 301.22
diagonal crossing of intersection 371.03
electric personal assistive mobility device 371.12(b)
freeway, on 303.06
hitchhiking 371.06
intoxicated on street 371.09
jaywalking 371.03
personal delivery device 371.13
right of way, yielding 371.03, 371.08
sidewalk, right of way 371.07
sidewalk, use required 371.05
soliciting 371.06
standing in roadway 371.051
street or highway, on 371.05
yielding to public safety vehicles 371.08

PEEPING TOM 533.06

PENALTY
Codified Ordinances, generally 101.99
fireworks 1519.99
offense 501.99
Ohio Fire Code 1501.99
open burning 1511.99
property maintenance 1399.01
Traffic Code 303.99, 303.991

PERMIT (see also LICENSE)
bonfire 1511.05(b)
business loading space 357.02
commercial and heavy vehicle use 339.01, 339.02
demolition 1303.13
fireworks exhibition 1519.02
flood hazard area, developing 1317.04
intoxicant sale or manufacture 529.05

PERMIT (Cont.)
open burning 1511.04
parades; street assembly 311.02
sewer 911.06
sidewalk construction 903.02
stormwater management, erosion, sedimentation control 920.20
street opening 901.02
swimming, wading pool 1311.01
temporary driver's instruction 335.03
tree, shrub planting 141.06
water use 919.03
zoning permit 1103.08

PERSONAL DELIVERY DEVICE
operation; defined 371.13

PETITIONS AND APPLICATIONS
additional fee 107.03
processing fee amount 107.01
disposition 107.02

PETTY CASH FUND 125.07

PHYSICAL CONTROL 333.01

PHYSICAL HARM
defined 501.01
domestic violence 537.14
missiles 549.09
temporary protection order 537.15

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS (see also ZONING DISTRICTS)
development standards 1107.06
purpose 1107.01
review criteria 1107.04
review process 1107.03
scope and applicability 1107.02
uses permitted 1107.05

PLANNING AND ZONING CODE
amendments 1103.03
applicability 1101.04
authority 1101.02
burden of proof 1101.13
consistency with adopted plans 1101.06

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

SOLID WASTE HAULERS (Cont.)
penalty 755.07
refuse collection 755.03
registration 755.02
reporting 755.05

SPECIAL USE (see USE REGULATIONS)

SPEED
bridge, limitations 333.05
construction zone, vehicular assault in 537.021
drag racing 333.07
emergency, public safety vehicle 333.06
maximum limits 333.03
parks, in 931.01
slow, minimum 333.04

STALKING
menacing, by 537.051
trespass, by 541.051

STANDARDS (see OFFICIAL STANDARDS)

STEALING (see SHOPLIFTERS; THEFT)

STOP SIGN (see TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICE)

STORAGE
self-storage facilities 1105.04(dd)

STORM SEWERS (see also SEWERS: STORM WATER MANAGEMENT AND SEDIMENT CONTROL)
connections
illegal, monitoring of 924.09
prohibitions 924.07
definitions 924.01
discharges
accidental, notification of 924.10
industrial or construction activity 924.08
monitoring of illicit discharges 924.09
prohibitions 924.07

STORM SEWERS (Cont.)
inspections 924.09
liability disclaimer 924.04
nuisances and responsibility 924.05
regulations
administration 924.06
applicability 924.02
enforcement 924.11
purpose and scope 924.03
remedies not exclusive 924.12

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT AND SEDIMENT CONTROL
adjacent properties, protection of 920.13
administration 920.02
cease work order 920.28
charges
adjustment 920.45
billing and collection 920.46
crediting/adjustment mechanism 920.47
Fund, deposited into 920.40
necessity 920.42
rate structure, charges, fees 920.41
right to appeal 920.43
service charge collection 920.44
commercial sites 920.22
compliance with state and federal regulations 920.14
definitions 920.01
disclaimer of liability 920.05
easements 920.26
Engineer Plan Review 920.27
fees 920.33
general requirements 920.11
industrial sites 920.22
inspection
during construction 920.28
final inspection approval 920.29
on-going inspections of permanent structures 920.30
interpretation of words, terms 920.09
notification 920.12
nuisances 920.07
peak rate of runoff control methods 920.19
penalty 920.99
performance guarantees; bond 920.32

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT AND SEDIMENT CONTROL (Cont.)
performance standards 920.25
permit
fee 920.33
required 920.20
plans
criteria 920.15
Abbreviated Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan 920.18
Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan 920.15
general requirements 920.21
review fee 920.33
Storm Water Management Plan 920.15
Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan 920.16, 920.17
purpose 920.03
responsibilities 920.08
scope 920.04
severability 920.06
sewers (see STORM SEWERS)
subdivisions 920.24
variance 920.31

STREET (see also ALLEY)
animal on 303.05
bicycle riding 373.07
brick, preservation of 902.01
closing adjacent to unsafe structure 1303.08
closing for repair, driving on 331.26
defined 301.42
divided, driving procedure 331.31
dropping or throwing objects onto 541.10
electric personal assistive mobility device on 371.12
expressway, entering and leaving 331.32

STREET (Cont.)
freeway
backing vehicle on 331.13
entering and leaving 331.32
prohibited use 303.06
injurious material, placing on 311.01
load, dropping on 339.08
obstructing movement 509.03
obstruction 311.01
one-way, driving on 331.30
openings (see EXCAVATIONS)
parades; assembly on 311.02
parking prohibitions 351.03, 351.12
pedestrian crossing signals, accessible 902.02
play 311.05
stunt driving, street takeovers 333.07
subdivisions, in 1114.12
through
right of way 331.18, 331.19
stop, yield signs 313.02
toy vehicles 311.03

STREET DEPARTMENT
created 129.02(e)

STREET LAWN
driving over 331.37
parking on prohibited 351.03

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS
applicability 1114.02
blocks 1114.09
conformity to development plans, zoning, engineering standards 1114.03
developer's agreement 1114.07
easements 1114.15
flood damage prevention 1317.05(a)(4)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

Ord. No.	Date	C.O. Section
2018-15	5-29-18	2018 Replacement Pages
2018-22	11-26-18	187.01(b)
2018-24	11-26-18	521.13 to 521.15; Repeals 521.10
2018-28	3-25-19	1184.01 to 1184.12, 1184.99
2018-29	10-22-18	139.02
2019-01	1-14-19	111.01
2019-02	1-14-19	351.19
2019-03	2-11-19	351.03, 351.033
2019-07	1-28-19	1302.01,1303.06, 1305.09, 1305.25
2019-10	2-25-19	1303.06
2019-24	5-13-19	1323.01 to 1323.13, 1323.99
2019-25	5-13-19	2019 Replacement Pages
2019-27	6-24-19	551.01 to 551.06
2019-28	6-24-19	376.01 to 376.05, 376.99
Res. 2019-56	6-24-19	515.001
2019-31	9-23-19	1167.02
2019-35	11-12-19	920.01 to 920.47, 920.99
2019-36	11-25-19	755.01, 755.05
2019-37	11-12-19	September 2019 Replacement Pages
2019-38	12-23-19	911.02 to 911.11, 911.13, 913.03, 913.11, 919.02 to 919.04, 919.06, 919.08, 919.11
2019-39	12-9-19	187.02, 187.07, 187.09, 187.14
2019-120	11-25-19	931.11
2020-17	4-27-20	2020 Replacement Pages
2020-21	6-8-20	Repeals 135.05
2020-22	7-27-20	303.08(a), 359.03, 359.04
2020-28	8-24-20	351.20
2020-37	11-23-20	1302.01, 1303.13, 1399.05
2020-39	1-25-21	913.07(a)
2020-43	1-11-21	359.02(b)(1)A.3.
2021-01	1-11-21	1153.12
2021-12	4-26-21	2021 Replacement Pages
2021-21	6-14-21	141.04
2021-22	6-14-21	359.02(e)
2021-30	8-23-21	129.031
2021-31	8-9-21	183.013
2021-33	8-9-21	1141.03 to 1141.06
2021-34	9-27-21	1158.21, 1185.01 to 1185.04
2021-36	9-27-21	129.15
2021-38	10-25-21	August 2021 Replacement Pages
2021-47	12-13-21	753.04
2021-51	12-27-21	105.01 to 105.05
2022-01	1-10-22	187.02, 187.07, 187.09, 187.14(g) to (i)
2022-16	4-25-22	February 2022 Replacement Pages
2022-22	6-13-22	902.02
2022-25	7-25-22	Pt. 11 Appx. II
2022-31	10-10-22	August 2022 Replacement Pages
2023-10	4-24-23	February 2023 Replacement Pages
2023-25	6-26-23	919.07(i)
2023-33	8-23-23	1155.03(d)
2023-34	10-9-23	August 2023 Replacement Pages
2023-40	11-27-23	111.01(d), 359.04 (a), 783.04(a), 783.16(e), 911.07 (t), 911.08(g), 1155.17, 1155.18, 1155.28, 1155.31 (b), 1156.03(b), 1156.04(b), 1169(A).02(a)(3), 1172.03(c), 1182.09
2023-44	12-11-23	187.02(a), 187.07 (e), 187.09, 187.14(g), (h), (i)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

Ord. No.	Date	C.O. Section
2024-07	3-26-24	111.08(a)
2024-11	3-11-24	901.01 to 901.04, 901.99
2024-13	4-8-24	129.16
2024-18	3-13-24	Repeals Ch. 551
2024-20	3-13-24	129.17
2024-22	3-28-24	February 2024 Replacement Pages
2024-26	3-28-24	135.02, 135.021, 135.06
2024-28	6-10-24	183.012(B), 183.062(D), (F)(1), (G), 183.094, 183.10(C)(4), 183.22
2024-32	7-22-24	1101.01 to 1101.13, 1102.01 to 1102.05, 1103.01 to 1103.11, 1104.01 to 1104.03, 1105.01 to 1105.05, 1106.01, 1106.02, 1107.01 to 1107.06, 1108.01, 1108.02, 1109.01 to 1109.08, 1110.01 to 1110.06, 1111.01 to 1111.08, 1112.01 to 1112.08, 1113.01 to 1113.13, 1114.01 to 1114.16, 1115.01 to 1115.07, 1116.01 to 1116.10, 1117.01 to 1117.03
2024-33	7-22-24	141.01
2024-34	7-22-24	147.01 to 147.06
2024-35	8-25-24	125.09
2024-45	12-9-24	August 2024 Replacement Pages
2024-46	11-25-24	931.02, 931.05

Ord. No.	Date	C.O. Section
Res. 2024-119	11-25-24	931.045

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

TABLE B - EASEMENTS (Cont.)

Ord. No.	Date	Description
Res. 2022-32	4-11-22	Grants an easement to the property located at 135 South Main Street.
Res. 2023-32	4-10-23	Grants an easement to the property located at 301 Boynton Street.
Res. 2024-70	7-22-24	Grant the following supplemental easements to Ohio Power Company (dba American Electric Power): Easement #34 (Parcel #66-00802.001) - Attached as Exhibit A Easement #37 (Parcel #66-01395.001) - Attached as Exhibit B Easement #38 (Parcel #66-01395.004) - Attached as Exhibit C Easement #45 (Parcel #66-00582.003) - Attached as Exhibit D Easement #46 (Parcel #66-02547.000) - Attached as Exhibit E Easement #47 (Parcel #66-50462.000) - Attached as Exhibit F Easement #48 (Parcel #66-50268.000) - Attached as Exhibit G Easement #50 (Parcel #66-02517.000) - Attached as Exhibit H Easement #51 (Parcel #66-02518.000) - Attached as Exhibit I Easement #56 (Parcel #66-50112.000) - Attached as Exhibit J Easement #57 (Parcel #66-06302.000) - Attached as Exhibit K Easement #58 (Parcel #66-09639.002) - Attached as Exhibit L
Res. 2024-134	12-23-24	Grants Easement to Ohio Power Company (DBA American Electric Power); to the property located at 18 East Vine Street.
Res. 2024-135	12-23-24	Grants easement to Ohio Power Company (DBA American Electric Power); in and around the splash pad in Riverside Park.
Res. 2025-19	1-27-25	Grants the following easements to Ohio Power Company (DBA American Electric Power): Auditor's Parcel #66-07567.000 Auditor's Parcel #66-50091.000 Auditor's Parcel #66-50090.000

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

TABLE H - PURCHASE OF PROPERTY FOR CITY USE (Cont.)

Ord. No.	Date	Description
Res. 2012-63	9-24-12	Authorizes the purchase of vacant property at the northeastern corner of the intersection of South Norton St. and Madison Ave.
Res. 2012-76	12-10-12	Authorizing the purchase of 820 Coshocton Ave.
Res. 2014-32	4-28-14	Authorizing the purchase of 25.123 acres of land on Harcourt Road.
Res. 2014-98	11-24-14	Authorizing the purchase of the property known as 102 North Sandusky Street, (Parcel #66-05572.000) for $190,000.
Res. 2016-82	11-14-16	Authorizing the Safety-Service Director to purchase properties from Pechiney Plastic Packaging, Inc.
Res. 2019-51	5-28-19	Authorizing the purchase of the property known as 301 West Vine Street, (Parcel #66-00361.000).
Res. 2019-127	12-9-19	Authorizing the Safety Service Director to accept the donation of property from the Mt. Vernon Development Company known as Parcel #66-06302.000 (.681 acres).
Res. 2019-132	12-23-19	Authorizing agreements to acquire, by either purchase or accept by donation, either in whole or in part, the following nine (9) pieces of property with the following permanent parcel numbers: 66-09491.000, 66-04632.000, 66-05406.000, 66-05405.000, 66-05905.000, 66-05518.000, 66-03410.000, 66-01594.000 and 66-50289.000.
Res. 2021-04	1-27-21	Authorizing agreements to acquire in whole or in part the following seven (7) pieces of property with the following permanent parcel numbers: 6605520.000, 66-02493.00, 66-02490.000, 66-02494.000, 66-09676.000, 66-01212.000, and 66-01590.000.
Res. 2021-05	1-27-21	Authorizing agreements to acquire in whole or in part the following two (2) pieces of property with the following permanent parcel numbers: 66-00826.000 and 66-02042.000.
Res. 2022-45	4-25-22	Authorizing agreements to acquire, by either purchase or accept by donation, either in whole or in part, the following four (4) pieces of property with the following permanent parcel numbers: 66-00499.000, 66-05506.000, 66-03852.000 and 66-03852.001.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

TABLE H - PURCHASE OF PROPERTY FOR CITY USE (Cont.)

Ord. No.	Date	Description
Res. 2023-87	11-27-23	Authorizing the Safety-Service Director to accept the donation of two parcels of property from the Wesley L. Kline Trust known as Parcel No. 66-03989.010 and Parcel No. 66-03989.011.
Res. 2024-06	1-22-24	Authorizing the Safety-Service Director to enter into an agreement to acquire in whole or in part a single parcel of property, permanent parcel number 71-00002.000.
Res. 2024-20	2-12-24	Authorizing the Safety-Service Director to enter into agreements to acquire additional right of way to complete the Mansfield Avenue Project (KNO-CR5-0.47).
Res. 2024-80	8-12-24	Authorizing the Safety-Service Director to enter into an agreement to acquire in whole or in part a single parcel of property Permanent Parcel Number 66-09399.000.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CHAPTER 125
Auditor

125.01 Election, term and duties.
125.02 Composition of office.
125.03 Deputy Auditor.
125.04 Treasury Investment Fund.
125.05 Annual fee for tax abatement.
125.06 Line account transfers.
125.07 Petty cash and change funds.
125.08 Collection service fee.
125.09 Credit card policy.

CROSS REFERENCES
Uniform Bond Law - see Ohio R. C. Ch. 133
Uniform Depository Act - see Ohio R. C. Ch. 135
State law provisions - see Ohio R. C. 733.10 et seq.
Duties in receiving bids - see Ohio R. C. 733.18
Auditor's seal - see Ohio R. C. 733.20
Appropriation and expenditure - see Ohio R. C. 5705.41

125.01 ELECTION, TERM AND DUTIES.

The Auditor shall be elected for a term of four years. He shall keep accurate records of all moneys received, funds expended, and all property owned by the City and income derived therefrom and from all taxes and assessments. He shall audit the accounts of all officers and departments at the end of each fiscal year and make a report of such audit to Council. He shall have all powers and duties delegated to city auditors by statute.
(Ord. 1960-32. Passed 11-7-60.)

125.02 COMPOSITION OF OFFICE.

The Auditor's office shall be composed of the Auditor and such other employees as Council may designate or authorize from time to time and as are set forth in the current compensation or salary ordinances.
(Ord. 1960-32. Passed 11-7-60.)

125.03 DEPUTY AUDITOR.

There is created the office of Deputy Auditor, who shall be appointed by the Auditor and shall perform the duties of the Auditor in the absence or disability of the Auditor.
(Ord. 1958-4. Passed 7-7-58.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

125.04 TREASURY INVESTMENT FUND.

(a) Moneys which will not be required to be used by the City, in lieu of being deposited in a bank, shall be invested in obligations of such Municipal corporation, in bonds or other obligations of the United States or those for the payment of principal and interest of which the faith of the United States is pledged, discount notes of the Federal National Mortgage Association, bonds issued by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation pursuant to the "Home Owners Loan Act of 1933," 48 Stat. 128, 12 U.S.C. 1461 and the amendments thereto, bonds of this State, and bonds of any municipal corporation, village, county, township or other political subdivision of this State, as to which there is no default of principal, interest or coupons.

(b) Such investments shall not be made at a price in excess of the current market value of such bonds or other interest-bearing obligations. Such bonds or other interest bearing obligations may be sold for cash and for a sum not less than their current market price, in the manner prescribed in Ohio R. C. 731.57 to 731.59, inclusive.

(c) In all respects such investments shall be made and administered in accordance with the provisions of Ohio R. C. 731.56 through 731.59.
(Ord. 1976-1. Passed 1-2-76.)

125.05 ANNUAL FEE FOR TAX ABATEMENT.

(a) It is required that each enterprise which requests and receives a tax abatement enter into an agreement requiring that the enterprise shall pay an annual fee equal to the greater of one percent (1%) of the dollar value of incentives offered under the tax abatement agreement or five hundred dollars ($500.00); provided, however, that if the value of the incentives exceeds two hundred fifty thousand dollars ($250,000), the fee shall not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars ($2,500).

(b) The fee shall be payable to the legislative authority one per year for each year the tax abatement agreement is effective on the days and in the form specified in the agreement. Fees paid shall be deposited in a special fund created for such purpose by the legislative authority and shall be used by the legislative authority exclusively for the purpose of complying with Ohio R.C. 5709.68 and by the tax incentive review council created under Ohio R.C. 5709.85 exclusively for the purposes of performing the duties prescribed under that section.

(c) The Area Development Foundation is designated to prepare the annual reports required by Ohio R.C. 5709.68.
(Ord. 1995-31. Passed 12-18-95.)

125.06 LINE ACCOUNT TRANSFERS.

The Auditor for the City of Mount Vernon be, and he herewith is, authorized and directed to transfers within line accounts in amounts of three thousand dollars ($3,000.00) or less, without the consent of the Council of the City of Mount Vernon.
(Ord. 2022-48. Passed 1-23-23.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

125.07 PETTY CASH AND CHANGE FUNDS.

(a) The following departments are authorized and directed to establish Petty Cash and Change Funds in the amounts as follows:

Department	Petty Cash	Change Fund
Mayor	$50.00	$-0-
Income Tax	100.00	200.00
Municipal Court	-0-	100.00
Police	100.00	75.00
Fire	50.00	-0-
Engineer	50.00	50.00
Pool	-0-	1,100.00
Water/Wastewater Office	100.00	600.00
Water/Wastewater Plant	100.00	-0-
Cemetery	50.00	50.00

(b) Petty Cash shall not be utilized to make any purchase where such purchase could have been made and charged to the City of Mount Vernon. Further, the maximum purchase from Petty Cash Funds shall not exceed ten dollars ($10.00) per purchase.
(Ord. 2013-05. Passed 2-11-13.)

(c) Change Funds are to be utilized only to make change and for no other purpose.
(Ord. 1991-44. Passed 10-21-91.)

125.08 COLLECTION SERVICE FEE.

(a) The City hereby establishes a collection fee up to thirty-three percent (33%) of the balance to be assessed to unpaid utility bills, property maintenance bills, hazardous waste bills, rescue bills, capital improvements bills, and delinquent income taxes, which have been turned over to a collection agency.

(b) The collection service fee shall be automatically assessed once any account is turned over to a collection agency.
(Ord. 2008-33. Passed 11-24-08.)

125.09 CREDIT CARD POLICY.

The City of Mount Vernon hereby authorizes the issuance and use of a credit card(s) for official municipal business purposes.

As used in this policy "credit card account" means any bank-issued credit card account, store-issued credit card account, financial institution-issued credit card account, financial depository-issued credit card account, affinity credit card account, or any other card account allowing the holder to purchase goods or services on credit or to transact with the account, and any debit or gift card account related to the receipt of grant moneys. "Credit card account" does not include a procurement card account, gasoline or telephone credit card account, or any other card account where merchant category codes are in place as a system of control for use of the card account.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(a) Authorized Users. The Mayor and Safety-Service Director, along with any member of the Safety or Service Departments authorized by the Safety-Service Director, are authorized to use the City's credit card account. Before receiving authorization to use the City credit card, authorized officers or employees must complete a written acknowledgment of this policy.

(b) Authorized Expenses. The credit card issued to the Safety Service Office shall be utilized exclusively for the procurement of necessary goods and services directly related to the operation and functions of the Safety Service Office, including but not limited to:

(1) Purchasing equipment and supplies.
(2) Payment for training programs, seminars, and conferences.
(3) Payment for necessary administrative expenses such as office supplies and communication.

(c) Procedure for Acquisition, Use, and Management of a Credit Card Account. The Safety Service Office shall ensure that the credit card is used responsibly and solely for official municipal business purposes. Personal expenditures or unauthorized transactions are strictly prohibited.

All credit cards shall be paid in full by the due date - to avoid interest charges.

(d) Procedure for Submitting Itemized Receipts.. The City recognizes that the credit card provides convenience to employees in acquiring goods and services for the City. The City also recognizes the additional risk inherent with credit card usage. For individual expenditures, the expense must fall within pre-approved budgets. Itemized receipts must be turned in to the Auditor within two (2) business days along with a purchase order designating the account(s) from which the funds are to be drawn. If an officer or employee is out of town during the expenditure, signed receipts should be turned in within two (2) business days of returning to work along with a purchase order designating the account(s) from which the funds are to be drawn.

(e) Procedure for Credit Card Issuance, Reissuance, Cancellation, and the Procedure for Reporting Lost or Stolen Credit Cards. In order to open a new credit card account a written request must be made to the Auditor. The name of the City shall appear on the Credit Card Account(s).

The Auditor is responsible for administration of City credit cards, including; but not limited to, selection of card provider, payment of credit card bills, and managing issuance of cards.

Officers and employees must surrender all City credit cards upon their separation of employment or service from the City or when requested by the Safety-Service Director or Auditor.

In the event the card is lost or stolen, the cardholder must notify the Auditor as soon as reasonably possible. The employee is to assist the Auditor in identifying and resolving any charges made to the account.

An open credit card Account maybe cancelled by the Safety-Service Director and Auditor.

(f) Credit Card's Maximum Credit Limit. Each credit card shall have a minimum limit of five thousand dollars ($5,000.00) and a maximum limit of ten thousand dollars ($10,000.00).

(g) Actions or Omissions by an Officer or Employee That Qualify as Misuse of a Credit Card Account. The use of a City credit card account for expenses beyond those authorized by this Policy, or any failure to comply with this Policy, constitutes misuse of a credit card account.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(1) Criminal Penalty
An officer or employee of the political subdivision or a public servant as defined under section 2921.01 of the Revised Code who knowingly misuses a credit card account held by the City violates section 2913.21 of the Revised Code, as well as any other applicable criminal penalty.

(2) Disciplinary Action
Misuse of a credit card account may also subject an officer or employee of the City to disciplinary action.

(3) Liability
The officer or employee is liable in person and upon any official bond the officer or employee has given to the political subdivision to reimburse the treasury the amount for which the officer or employee does not provide itemized receipts in accordance with this policy and/or for any other unauthorized use of a "credit card" as established by this policy.

(h) Compliance. The Mayor shall appoint a compliance officer. The compliance officer cannot be the Auditor or any person who uses or can authorize another person to use the City's credit card account.
At least quarterly, the compliance officer and Council shall review the number of cards and accounts issued, the number of active cards and accounts issued, the cards' and accounts' expiration dates, and the cards' and accounts' credit limits.

(i) Credit Card Rewards. Annually, the Auditor shall file a report with Council detailing all rewards received based on the use of the City's credit card account.
(Ord. 2024-35. Passed 8-25-24.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CHAPTER 303
Enforcement, Impounding and Penalty

303.01 Compliance with lawful order of police officer; fleeing.
303.02 Traffic direction in emergencies; obedience to school guard.
303.03 Officer may remove ignition key.
303.04 Road workers, motor vehicles and equipment excepted.
303.041 Emergency, public safety and coroner's vehicles exempt.
303.05 Application to persons riding, driving animals upon roadway.
303.06 Freeway use prohibited by pedestrians, bicycles and animals.
303.07 Application to drivers of government vehicles.
303.08 Impounding of vehicles; redemption and disposal.
303.09 Vehicle trespass.
303.10 Providing false information to police officer.
303.99 General Traffic Code penalties.
303.991 Committing an offense while distracted penalty.

CROSS REFERENCES

See sectional histories for similar State law
Disposition of unclaimed vehicles - see Ohio R.C. 737.32, 4513.62 et seq.
Citations for minor misdemeanors - see Ohio R.C. 2935.26 et seq.
Power of trial court of record to suspend or revoke license for certain violations - see Ohio R.C. 4507.16, 4507.34
State point system suspension - see Ohio R.C. 4507.40
Uniform application of Ohio Traffic Law - see Ohio R.C. 4511.06
Marking motor vehicles used by traffic officers - see Ohio R.C. 4549.13
Distinctive uniform required for traffic officers - see Ohio R.C. 4549.15
Exceptions for emergency or public safety vehicles - see TRAF. 331.20, 333.06

303.01 COMPLIANCE WITH LAWFUL ORDER OF POLICE OFFICER; FLEEING.

(a) No person shall fail to comply with any lawful order or direction of any police officer invested with authority to direct, control or regulate traffic.

(b) No person shall operate a motor vehicle so as willfully to elude or flee a police officer after receiving a visible or audible signal from a police officer to bring the person's motor vehicle to a stop.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Refer to Ohio R.C. 2921.331 for filing charges under subsection (b) hereof since the jury or judge as trier of fact may determine the violation to be a felony.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(c) (1) Whoever violates this section is guilty of failure to comply with an order or signal of a police officer.

(2) A violation of subsection (a) of this section is a misdemeanor of the first degree.

(3) Except as provided in subsections (c)(4) and (c)(5) of this section, a violation of subsection (b) of this section is a felony to be prosecuted under appropriate state law.

(4) A violation of subsection (b) of this section is a felony and shall be prosecuted under appropriate state law if the jury or judge as trier of fact finds by proof beyond a reasonable doubt that in committing the offense, the offender was fleeing immediately after the commission of a felony.

(5) A. A violation of subsection (b) of this section is a felony and shall be prosecuted under appropriate state law if the jury or judge as trier of fact finds any of the following by proof beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. The operation of the motor vehicle by the offender was a proximate cause of serious physical harm to persons or property.
2. The operation of the motor vehicle by the offender caused a substantial risk of serious physical harm to persons or property.

B. If a police officer pursues an offender who is violating subsection (b) of this section and subsection (c)(5)A. of this section applies, the sentencing court, in determining the seriousness of an offender's conduct for purposes of sentencing the offender for a violation of subsection (b) of this section, shall consider, along with the factors set forth in Ohio R.C. 2929.12 and 2929.13 that are required to be considered, all of the following:

1. The duration of the pursuit;
2. The distance of the pursuit;
3. The rate of speed at which the offender operated the motor vehicle during the pursuit;
4. Whether the offender failed to stop for traffic lights or stop signs during the pursuit;
5. The number of traffic lights or stop signs for which the offender failed to stop during the pursuit;
6. Whether the offender operated the motor vehicle during the pursuit without lighted lights during a time when lighted lights are required;
7. Whether the offender committed a moving violation during the pursuit;
8. The number of moving violations the offender committed during the pursuit;
9. Any other relevant factors indicating that the offender's conduct is more serious than conduct normally constituting the offense

(d) In addition to any other sanction imposed for a violation of subsection (a) of this section, the court shall impose a class five suspension from the range specified in Ohio R.C. 4510.02(A)(5). If the offender previously has been found guilty of an offense under this section or under Ohio R.C. 2921.331 or any other substantially equivalent municipal ordinance, in addition to any other sanction imposed for the offense, the court shall impose a class one

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

suspension as described in Ohio R.C. 4510.02(A)(1). The court may grant limited driving privileges to the offender on a suspension imposed for a misdemeanor violation of this section as set forth in R.C. § 4510.021. No judge shall suspend any portion of the suspension under a class one suspension of an offender's license, permit, or privilege required by this division.
(ORC 2921.331)

303.02 TRAFFIC DIRECTION IN EMERGENCIES; OBEDIENCE TO SCHOOL GUARD.

(a) Police officers shall direct or regulate traffic in accordance with the provisions of this Traffic Code, provided that, in the event of fire or other emergency or to expedite traffic or safeguard pedestrians, they are authorized to direct traffic as conditions may require notwithstanding the provisions of this Traffic Code. Firemen, when at the scene of a fire, may direct or assist the police in directing traffic thereat or in the immediate vicinity. The direction of traffic may be by word or audible signal, by gesture or visible signal or by any combination thereof. No person shall fail to comply with any lawful order or direction of any police officer or fireman issued pursuant to this section.

(b) No person shall fail to comply with any lawful order or direction of any school crossing guard invested with authority to direct, control or regulate traffic in the vicinity of the school to which such guard may be assigned.

(c) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor on a first offense; on a second offense within one year after the first offense, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree; on each subsequent offense within one year after the first offense, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

303.03 OFFICER MAY REMOVE IGNITION KEY.

A law enforcement officer may remove the ignition key left in the ignition switch of an unlocked and unattended motor vehicle parked on a street or highway, or any public or private property used by the public for purposes of vehicular travel or parking. The officer removing such key shall place notification upon the vehicle detailing his name and badge number, the place where such key may be reclaimed and the procedure for reclaiming such key. The key shall be returned to the owner of the motor vehicle upon presentation of proof of ownership.
(ORC 4549.05)

303.04 ROAD WORKERS, MOTOR VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT EXCEPTED.

(a) The provisions of this Traffic Code do not apply to persons, teams, motor vehicles, and other equipment while actually engaged in work upon the surface of a highway within an area designated by traffic control devices, but apply to such persons and vehicles when traveling to or from such work.

(b) The driver of a highway maintenance vehicle owned by this state or any political subdivision of this state, while the driver is engaged in the performance of official duties upon a street or highway, provided the highway maintenance vehicle is equipped with flashing lights and such other markings as are required by law, and such lights are in operation when the driver and vehicle are so engaged, shall be exempt from criminal prosecution for violations of Sections 331.01 to 331.04, 331.06 to 331.08, 331.31, 333.04, 337.01 and Ohio R.C. 4511.66 and 5577.01 to 5577.09.

(c) (1) This section does not exempt a driver of as highway maintenance vehicle from civil liability arising from a violation of Sections 331.01 to 331.04, 331.06 to 331.08, 331.31, 333.04, 337.01 or Ohio R.C. 4511.66 or 5577.01 to 5577.09.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(2) This section does not exempt a driver of a vehicle who is not a state employee and who is engaged in the transport of highway maintenance equipment from criminal liability for a violation of Ohio R.C. 5577.01 to 5577.09.

(d) As used in this section, "engaged in the performance of official duties" includes driving a highway maintenance vehicle to and from the manufacturer or vehicle maintenance provider and transporting a highway maintenance vehicle, equipment, or materials to and from a work location. (ORC 4511.04)

303.041 EMERGENCY, PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORONER'S VEHICLES EXEMPT.

(a) Ohio R.C. 4511.12, 4511.13, 4511.131, 4511.132, 4511.14, 4511.202, 4511.21, 4511.211, 4511.22, 4511.23, 4511.25, 4511.26, 4511.27, 4511.28, 4511.29, 4511.30, 4511.31, 4511.32, 4511.33, 4511.34, 4511.35, 4511.36, 4511.37, 4511.38, 4511.39, 4511.40, 4511.41, 4511.42, 4511.43, 4511.431, 4511.432, 4511.44, 4511.441, 4511.57, 4511.58, 4511.59, 4511.60, 4511.61, 4511.62, 4511.66, 4511.68, 4511.681 and 4511.69 and all sections of this Traffic Code or other municipal ordinances that are substantially equivalent to the sections listed above, do not apply to the driver of an emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle if the emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle is responding to an emergency call, is equipped with and displaying at least one flashing, rotating or oscillating light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of the vehicle and if the driver of the vehicle is giving an audible signal by siren, exhaust whistle or bell. This section does not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property upon the highway. (ORC 4511.041)

(b) Ohio R.C. 4511.25, 4511.26, 4511.27, 4511.28, 4511.29, 4511.30, 4511.31, 4511.32, 4511.33, 4511.35, 4511.36, 4511.37, 4511.38 and 4511.66, and all sections of this Traffic Code or other municipal ordinances that are substantially equivalent to the sections listed above, do not apply to a coroner, deputy coroner, or coroner's investigator operating a motor vehicle in accordance with Ohio R.C. 4513.171. This section does not relieve a coroner, deputy coroner, or coroner's investigator operating a motor vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property upon the highway. (ORC 4511.042)

303.05 APPLICATION TO PERSONS RIDING, DRIVING ANIMALS UPON ROADWAY.

Every person riding, driving or leading an animal upon a roadway shall be subject to the provisions of this Traffic Code applicable to the driver of a vehicle, except those provisions of such sections which by their nature are inapplicable. (ORC 4511.05)

303.06 FREEWAY USE PROHIBITED BY PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES AND ANIMALS.

(a) No person, unless otherwise directed by a police officer, shall:

(1) As a pedestrian, occupy any space within the limits of the right-of-way of a freeway, except: in a rest area; on a facility that is separated from the roadway and shoulders of the freeway and is designed and appropriately marked for pedestrian use; in the performance of public works or official duties; as a result of an emergency caused by an accident or breakdown of a motor vehicle; or to obtain assistance;

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(2) Occupy any space within the limits of the right of way of a freeway, with: an animal-drawn vehicle; a ridden or led animal; herded animals; a pushcart; a bicycle, except on a facility that is separated from the roadway and shoulders of the freeway and is designed and appropriately marked for bicycle use; an electric bicycle; a bicycle with motor attached; a motor driven cycle with a motor which produces not to exceed five brake horsepower; an agricultural tractor; farm machinery; except in the performance of public works or official duties.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of two or more predicate motor vehicle or traffic offenses, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

If the offender commits the offense while distracted and the distracting activity is a contributing factor to the commission of the offense, the offender is subject to the additional fine established under Section 303.991 of the Traffic Code. (ORC 4511.051)

303.07 APPLICATION TO DRIVERS OF GOVERNMENT VEHICLES.

The provisions of this Traffic Code applicable to the drivers of vehicles shall apply to the drivers of all vehicles owned or operated by the United States, any state or any political subdivision thereof, including this Municipality, except as may be otherwise provided by law and subject to such specific exceptions as are set forth with reference to authorized emergency and public safety vehicles.

303.08 IMPOUNDING OF VEHICLES; REDEMPTION AND DISPOSAL.

(a) For the purposes of this section, "impounding" means taking possession of a vehicle and securing it in a lot designated by the Chief of Police including any lot owned by the City of Mount Vernon and controlled by the Mount Vernon Police Department.
(Ord. 2020-22. Passed 7-27-20.)

(b) Police officers are authorized to provide for the removal and impounding of a vehicle, or the placement of a device designed to immobilize a vehicle, under the following circumstances:

(1) When any vehicle is left unattended upon any street, bridge or causeway and is so illegally parked so as to constitute a hazard or obstruction to the normal movement of traffic, or so as to unreasonably interfere with street cleaning or snow removal operations.

(2) When any "inoperable vehicle" is removed from property pursuant to Section 1309.01.

(3) When any vehicle has been stolen or operated without consent of the owner.

(4) When any vehicle displays illegal license plates or fails to display the current lawfully required license plates.

(5) When any vehicle has been used in, or connected with, the commission of a felony.

(6) When any vehicle has been damaged or wrecked so as to be inoperable or violates equipment provisions of this Traffic Code whereby its continued operation would constitute a condition hazardous to life, limb or property.

(7) When any vehicle is left unattended due to the removal of an ill, injured or arrested operator.

(8) When any vehicle has been operated by any person who has failed to stop in case of an accident or collision.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(9) When any vehicle has been operated by any person who is driving without a lawful license or while his license has been suspended or revoked.
(10) When any vehicle is found for which fifty dollars ($50.00), or more, in unpaid parking fines have accumulated and the owner has failed to respond to such parking fines as lawfully required.
(11) Upon issuance of a court order stating such vehicle is to be impounded or immobilized.
(12) When any vehicle is found to have been left on private property in violation of Section 359.02.
(13) When any vehicle is found to have been left on public property in violation of Section 359.03.
(14) When any vehicle is found to be parked on a public street, or upon the City's right-of-way and is obstructing the completion of a public utilities project. The City shall be responsible for any towing and storage fees if the vehicle in question is legally parked.
(15) Any vehicle found to be illegally parked and is an obstruction to City services (Fire lane, etc.)
(16) Any vehicle taken into evidence as part of a criminal investigation.

(c) The Police Department shall attempt to notify the registered owner of a vehicle once the vehicle has been impounded or immobilized. If the vehicle has been immobilized, an explanation of the reason for the immobilization, and the procedure for the removal of the device, shall be attached to the vehicle. Any person desiring to redeem an impounded or immobilized vehicle shall furnish satisfactory evidence of identity and ownership or right to possession. Prior to release of the vehicle, the claimant shall either pay the amount due for any fines for violations on account of which such vehicle was impounded or immobilized, or, as the court may require, post a bond in an amount set by the court, to appear to answer such violations. The Police Department shall release such vehicle, as soon as practicable, upon payment of all towing charges, storage charges, and all parking fines owed. Vehicles impounded as evidence pursuant to subsection (b)(16) hereof shall be returned to the owner of record without charge for storage unless forfeited by court order. Vehicle forfeitures shall be subject to the requirements of Chapter 2981 of the Ohio Revised Code.

(d) The City assumes no liability for loss or damage to any vehicle while it is immobilized.

(e) All moneys paid as a result of the impounding, and subsequent release, of any vehicle shall be paid as follows:
(1) Money received for parking fines shall be paid into the Parking Fund.
(2) Money received for towing and storage fees shall be paid into the General Fund.

(f) If a motor vehicle impounded pursuant to subsection (b) remains unclaimed by the owner after thirty days, the vehicle shall be disposed of pursuant to Section 359.04.
(Ord. 2014-07. Passed 5-12-14.)

303.09 VEHICLE TRESPASS.
(a) No person shall enter into or upon any vehicle, the property of another person, without the consent of the owner or operator thereof.
(Ord. 1973-20. Passed 6-18-73.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(b) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of two or more predicate motor vehicle or traffic offenses, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

303.10 PROVIDING FALSE INFORMATION TO POLICE OFFICER.

(a) No person shall knowingly present, display or orally communicate a false name, social security number or date of birth to a law enforcement officer who is in the process of issuing to the person a traffic ticket or complaint.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.
(ORC 4513.361)

303.99 GENERAL TRAFFIC CODE PENALTIES.

(a) General Misdemeanor Classifications. Whoever violates any provision of this Traffic Code for which violation no penalty is otherwise provided, is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.
(ORC 4513.99)

(b) Penalties. Whoever is convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of this Traffic Code shall be imprisoned for a definite term or fined, or both, which term of imprisonment and fine shall be fixed by the court as provided in this section.

Classification of Misdemeanor	Maximum Term of Imprisonment	Maximum Fine
First degree	180 days	$1,000.00
Second degree	90 days	750.00
Third degree	60 days	500.00
Fourth degree	30 days	250.00
Minor	No imprisonment	150.00

(ORC 2929.24; 2929.28)

303.991 COMMITTING AN OFFENSE WHILE DISTRACTED PENALTY.

(a) As used in this section and each section of the Traffic Code where specified, all of the following apply:

(1) "Distracted" means doing either of the following while operating a vehicle:

A. Using an electronic wireless communications device, as defined in Ohio R.C. 4511.204, in violation of that section.

B. Engaging in any activity that is not necessary to the operation of a vehicle and impairs, or reasonably would be expected to impair, the ability of the operator to drive the vehicle safely.

(2) "Distracted" does not include operating a motor vehicle while wearing an earphone or earplug over or in both ears at the same time. A person who so wears earphones or earplugs may be charged with a violation of Section 331.43.

(3) "Distracted" does not include conducting any activity while operating a utility service vehicle or a vehicle for or on behalf of a utility, provided that the driver of the vehicle is acting in response to an emergency, power outage or a circumstance affecting the health or safety of individuals.
As used in subsection (a)(3) of this section:

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

A. "Utility" means an entity specified in division (A), (C), (D), (E) or (G) of Ohio R.C. 4905.03.

B. "Utility service vehicle" means a vehicle owned or operated by a utility.

(b) If an offender violates any section of this Traffic Code which provides for an enhanced penalty for an offense committed while distracted and the distracting activity is a contributing factor to the commission of the violation, the offender is subject to the applicable penalty for the violation and, notwithstanding Ohio R.C. 2929.28, is subject to an additional fine of not more than one hundred dollars ($100.00) as follows:

(1) Subject to Traffic Rule 13, if a law enforcement officer issues an offender a ticket, citation or summons for a violation of any section of the Traffic Code that indicates that the offender was distracted while committing the violation and that the distracting activity was a contributing factor to the commission of the violation, the offender may enter a written plea of guilty and waive the offender's right to contest the ticket, citation or summons in a trial provided that the offender pays the total amount of the fine established for the violation and pays the additional fine of one hundred dollars ($100.00).

In lieu of payment of the additional fine of one hundred dollars ($100.00), the offender instead may elect to attend a distracted driving safety course, the duration and contents of which shall be established by the Ohio Director of Public Safety. If the offender attends and successfully completes the course, the offender shall be issued written evidence that the offender successfully completed the course. The offender shall be required to pay the total amount of the fine established for the violation, but shall not be required to pay the additional fine of one hundred dollars ($100.00), so long as the offender submits to the court both the offender's payment in full and such written evidence within ninety days of the underlying violation that resulted in the imposition of the additional fine under this section.

(2) If the offender appears in person to contest the ticket, citation or summons in a trial and the offender pleads guilty to or is convicted of the violation, the court, in addition to all other penalties provided by law, may impose the applicable penalty for the violation and may impose the additional fine of not more than one hundred dollars ($100.00).

If the court imposes upon the offender the applicable penalty for the violation and an additional fine of not more than one hundred dollars ($100.00), the court shall inform the offender that, in lieu of payment of the additional fine of not more than one hundred dollars ($100.00), the offender instead may elect to attend the distracted driving safety course described in subsection (b)(1) of this section. If the offender elects the course option and attends and successfully completes the course, the offender shall be issued written evidence that the offender successfully completed the course. The offender shall be required to pay the total amount of the fine established for the violation, but shall not be required to pay the additional fine of not more than one hundred dollars ($100.00), so long as the offender submits to the court the offender's payment and such written evidence within ninety days of the underlying violation that resulted in the imposition of the additional fine under this section.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(c) If a law enforcement officer issues an offender a ticket, citation, or summons for a violation of subsection (b) of this section that indicates that the offender was distracted while committing the violation and that the distracting activity was a contributing factor to the commission of the violation, the officer shall do both of the following:

(1) Report the issuance of the ticket, citation, or summons to the officer's law enforcement agency;

(2) Ensure that such report indicates the offender's race.

(ORC 4511.991)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

Amendments to Traffic Control Map and File (Cont.)

Ord. No.	Date	Change
1993-26	12-30-93	Authorizes the erection of traffic control signs prohibiting right turn on red from all four directions at the following intersections: S. Main St., at Vine St., S. Main St., at Gambier St., S. Main St., at Ohio Ave.
1993-27	11-15-93	Authorizes the erection of a traffic control signal at the intersection of Sychar Road and Coschocton Ave., and Coshocton Ave., and the entrance to Knox Village Square Shopping Plaza.
1993-28	11-15-93	Authorizes the erection of stop signs at the intersection of Teryl Drive and Marita Drive.
1994-45	11-21-94	Authorizes the erection of a stop sign at the intersection of Industrial Park Road and Commerce Drive.
2001-03	2-26-01	Traffic pattern on Cherry Alley changed to one-way northbound.
2001-47	11-13-01	Removes traffic signal at the intersection of North Sandusky St. and Madison St.
2001-48	11-13-01	Intersection of Yauger Road and Upper Gilchrist Road made a four-way stop.
2007-32	11-26-07	No parking on the east side of Greer St. between Coshocton Ave. and Chestnut St.
2008-22	8-25-08	"No Turn on Red" for south bound vehicular traffic at the intersection of Park Street and East Chestnut Street.
2012-01	2-13-12	Marion Street is declared a two way street from Norton Street to Monroe Street.
2018-18	8-28-18	Authorizing the removal of the Traffic Signal at the intersection of Hamtramck Street and North Mulberry Street; and authorizing the installation of stop signs for Westbound Hamtramck Street and Southbound Mulberry Street.
2019-40	12-23-19	Authorizing the removal of parking spaces numbered forty-five (45) and forty-six (46) from the west side of South Mulberry Street in the block between West High Street and West Vine Street.
2020-15	3-23-20	Authorizing the following changes: (a) Remove the traffic signal at the intersection of West Burgess Street and North Sandusky Street. (b) Erect a traffic control stop sign at the intersection of West Burgess Street and North Sandusky Street for eastbound West Burgess Street traffic.
2020-16	3-23-20	(a) Space Alley is herewith declared to be a two-way alley between East Vine Street and Howard Street. (b) Walnut Alley is herewith declared to be a two-way alley between West Vine Street and West High Street.
2020-27	7-27-20	Authorizing the following changes: (a) Remove the traffic signal at the intersection of North Main Street and West/East Hamtramck Street. (b) Erect a traffic control stop sign at the intersection of East Hamtramck Street and North Main Street for westbound East Hamtramck Street traffic.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

Amendments to Traffic Control Map and File (Cont.)

Ord. No.	Date	Change
2020-29	9-14-20	Authorizing the following changes: (a) Change the traffic pattern for North McArthur Street to one-way between East Chestnut Street and East High Street. The direction of allowed travel shall be from the north to south with traffic entering North McArthur Street from East Chestnut Street. (b) Erect necessary signage to notify motorists of the direction of travel on North McArthur Street.
2024-40	9-23-24	Authorizing the following changes: (a) West Burgess Street, from the intersection of North Main Street to the intersection of North Mulberry Street, will allow two-way traffic with no on-street parking along this block of West Burgess Street. (b) West Hamtramck Street, from the intersection of North Main Street to the intersection of North Sandusky Street, will allow two-way traffic with no on-street parking along these blocks of West Hamtramck Street.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CHAPTER 333
OVI; Willful Misconduct; Speed

333.01 Driving or physical control while under the influence.
333.02 Operation in willful or wanton disregard of safety.
333.03 Maximum speed limits; assured clear distance ahead.
333.031 Approaching a stationary public safety, emergency, or road service vehicle.
333.04 Stopping vehicle; slow speed; posted minimum speeds.
333.05 Speed limitations over bridges.
333.06 Speed exceptions for emergency or safety vehicles.
333.07 Street racing, stunt driving and street takeovers prohibited.
333.08 Operation without reasonable control.
333.09 Reckless operation on streets, public or private property.
333.10 Operation in violation of immobilization order.
333.11 Electronic wireless communication device use prohibited while driving.

CROSS REFERENCES

See sectional histories for similar State law
Drug of abuse defined - see Ohio R.C. 3719.011(A)
Alcohol defined - see Ohio R.C. 4301.01(B)(1)
Alteration of prima-facie speed limits - see Ohio R.C. 4511.21, 4511.22(B), 4511.23
Failure to control vehicle - see TRAF. 331.34
Walking on highway while under the influence - see TRAF. 371.09

333.01 DRIVING OR PHYSICAL CONTROL WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE.

(a) (1) Operation Generally. No person shall operate any vehicle within this Municipality, if, at the time of the operation, any of the following apply:

A. The person is under the influence of alcohol, a drug of abuse, or a combination of them.

B. The person has a concentration of eight-hundredths of one per cent or more but less than seventeen-hundredths of one per cent by weight per unit volume of alcohol in the person's whole blood.

C. The person has a concentration of ninety-six-thousandths of one per cent or more but less than two hundred four-thousandths of one per cent by weight per unit volume of alcohol in the person's blood serum or plasma.

D. The person has a concentration of eight-hundredths of one gram or more but less than seventeen-hundredths of one gram by weight of alcohol per two hundred ten liters of the person's breath.

E. The person has a concentration of eleven-hundredths of one gram or more but less than two hundred thirty-eight-thousandths of one gram by weight of alcohol per one hundred milliliters of the person's urine.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

F. The person has a concentration of seventeen-hundredths of one per cent or more by weight per unit volume of alcohol in the person's whole blood.

G. The person has a concentration of two hundred four-thousandths of one per cent or more by weight per unit volume of alcohol in the person's blood serum or plasma.

H. The person has a concentration of seventeen-hundredths of one gram or more by weight of alcohol per two hundred ten liters of the person's breath.

I. The person has a concentration of two hundred thirty-eight-thousandths of one gram or more by weight of alcohol per one hundred milliliters of the person's urine.

J. Except as provided in subsection (m) of this section, the person has a concentration of any of the following controlled substances or metabolites of a controlled substance in the person's whole blood, blood serum or plasma, or urine that equals or exceeds any of the following:

1. The person has a concentration of amphetamine in the person's urine of at least five hundred nanograms of amphetamine per milliliter of the person's urine or has a concentration of amphetamine in the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma of at least one hundred nanograms of amphetamine per milliliter of the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma.
2. The person has a concentration of cocaine in the person's urine of at least one hundred fifty nanograms of cocaine per milliliter of the person's urine or has a concentration of cocaine in the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma of at least fifty nanograms of cocaine per milliliter of the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma.
3. The person has a concentration of cocaine metabolite in the person's urine of at least one hundred fifty nanograms of cocaine metabolite per milliliter of the person's urine or has a concentration of cocaine metabolite in the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma of at least fifty nanograms of cocaine metabolite per milliliter of the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma.
4. The person has a concentration of heroin in the person's urine of at least two thousand nanograms of heroin per milliliter of the person's urine or has a concentration of heroin in the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma of at least fifty nanograms of heroin per milliliter of the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma.
5. The person has a concentration of heroin metabolite (6-monoacetyl morphine) in the person's urine of at least ten nanograms of heroin metabolite (6-monoacetyl morphine) per milliliter of the person's urine or has a concentration of heroin metabolite (6-monoacetyl morphine) in the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma of at least ten nanograms of heroin metabolite (6-monoacetyl morphine) per milliliter of the person's whole blood or blood serum or plasma.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(2) Notwithstanding Section 303.99(b), upon a finding that a person operated a motor vehicle in violation of subsection (c) of this section, the court, in addition to all other penalties provided by law, shall impose a fine of two times the usual amount imposed for the violation.

(3) If the offender commits the offense while distracted and the distracting activity is a contributing factor to the commission of the offense, the offender is subject to the additional fine established under Section 303.991 of the Traffic Code.

(e) The offense established under this section is a strict liability offense and Ohio R.C. 2901.20 does not apply. The designation of this offense as a strict liability offense shall not be construed to imply that any other offense, for which there is no specified degree of culpability, is not a strict liability offense. (ORC 4511.213)

333.04 STOPPING VEHICLE; SLOW SPEED; POSTED MINIMUM SPEEDS.

(a) No person shall stop or operate a vehicle at such an unreasonably slow speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, except when stopping or reduced speed is necessary for safe operation or to comply with law.

(b) Whenever, in accordance with Ohio R.C. 4511.22(B), the minimum speed limit of a controlled-access highway, expressway or freeway has been declared and the appropriate signs giving notice have been erected as required, operators of motor vehicles shall be governed by the speed limitations set forth on such signs. No person shall operate a motor vehicle below the speed limits posted upon such signs except when necessary for safe operation or in compliance with law.

(c) In a case involving a violation of this section, the trier of fact, in determining whether the vehicle was being operated at an unreasonably slow speed, shall consider the capabilities of the vehicle and its operator.

(d) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of two or more predicate motor vehicle or traffic offenses, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

If the offender commits the offense while distracted and the distracting activity is a contributing factor to the commission of the offense, the offender is subject to the additional fine established under Section 303.991 of the Traffic Code. (ORC 4511.22)

333.05 SPEED LIMITATIONS OVER BRIDGES.

(a) No person shall operate a vehicle over any bridge or other elevated structure constituting a part of a street at a speed which is greater then the maximum speed that can be maintained with safety to such bridge or structure, when such structure is posted with authorized signs stating such maximum speed. Such signs shall be erected and maintained at a distance of at least 100 feet before each end of such structure.

(b) Upon the trial of any person charged with a violation of this section, proof of the determination of the maximum speed and the existence of such signs shall constitute prima-facie evidence of the maximum speed which can be maintained with safety to such bridge or structure.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of two or more predicate motor vehicle or traffic offenses, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

If the offender commits the offense while distracted and the distracting activity is a contributing factor to the commission of the offense, the offender is subject to the additional fine established under Section 303.991 of the Traffic Code. (ORC 4511.23)

333.06 SPEED EXCEPTIONS FOR EMERGENCY OR SAFETY VEHICLES.

The prima-facie speed limitations set forth in Section 333.03 do not apply to emergency vehicles or public safety vehicles when they are responding to emergency calls and are equipped with and displaying at least one flashing, rotating or oscillating light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of the vehicle and when the drivers thereof sound audible signals by bell, siren or exhaust whistle. This section does not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons using the street or highway. (ORC 4511.24)

333.07 STREET RACING, STUNT DRIVING AND STREET TAKEOVERS PROHIBITED.

(a) As used in this section:

(1) BURNOUT. A maneuver performed while operating a vehicle whereby the vehicle is kept in a stationary position, but the wheels of the vehicle are spun, which may cause the tires of the vehicle to become heated and emit smoke from the friction.

(2) DOUGHNUT. A maneuver performed while operating a vehicle whereby the front or rear of the vehicle is rotated around the opposite set of wheels in a continuous motion, which may cause a circular skid-mark pattern of rubber on the driving surface, or the tires of the vehicle to become heated and emit smoke from the friction, or both.

(3) DRIFTING. A maneuver performed while operating a vehicle whereby the vehicle is driven in a manner that causes a controlled, sideways skid during a turn, with the front wheels pointing in a direction that is the opposite of the direction of the turn.

(4) STREET RACING. The operation of two or more vehicles from a point side by side at accelerating speeds in a competitive attempt to out-distance each other or the operation of one or more vehicles over a common selected course, from the same point to the same point, wherein timing is made of the participating vehicles involving competitive accelerations or speeds. The operation of two or more vehicles side by side either at speeds in excess of prima-facie lawful speeds established by Ohio R.C. 4511.21(B)(1)(a) to (B)(9) or rapidly accelerating from a common starting point to a speed in excess of such prima-facie lawful speeds shall be prima-facie evidence of street racing.

(5) STREET TAKEOVER. Blocking or impeding the regular flow of vehicle or pedestrian traffic on a public road, street, or highway or on private property that is open to the general public for the purpose of street racing or stunt driving.

(6) STUNT DRIVING. Performing or engaging in burnouts, doughnuts, drifting, or wheelies, or allowing a passenger to ride either partially or fully outside of the vehicle while operating that vehicle.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(7) WHEELIE. A maneuver performed while operating a vehicle whereby the front wheel or wheels of the vehicle are raised off of the ground or whereby two wheels that are on the same side of the vehicle are raised off of the ground.

(b) No person shall knowingly participate in street racing, stunt driving, or street takeover upon any public road, street, or highway, or on private property that is open to the general public.

(c) Whoever violates this section is guilty of street racing, stunt driving, or street takeover, a misdemeanor of the first degree. In addition to any other sanctions, the court shall suspend the offender's driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege for not less than thirty days or more than three years. No judge shall suspend the first thirty days of any suspension of an offender's license, permit, or privilege imposed under this division.

(d) Persons rendering assistance in any manner to street racing, stunt driving, or street takeover shall be equally charged as the participants.

(e) This section does not apply to the competitive operation of vehicles on public or private property when the political subdivision with jurisdiction of the location or owner of the property knowingly permits such operation thereon. (ORC 4511.251)

333.08 OPERATION WITHOUT REASONABLE CONTROL.

(a) No person shall operate a motor vehicle, agricultural tractor, or agricultural tractor that is towing, pulling, or otherwise drawing a unit of farm machinery on any street, highway, or property open to the public for vehicular traffic without being in reasonable control of the vehicle, agricultural tractor or unit of farm machinery.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of operating a motor vehicle or agricultural tractor without being in control of it, a minor misdemeanor.
(ORC 4511.202)

333.09 RECKLESS OPERATION ON STREETS, PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROPERTY.

(a) No person shall operate a vehicle on any street or highway without due regard for the safety of persons or property.

(b) No person shall operate a vehicle on any public or private property other than streets or highways, without due regard for the safety of persons or property.

This subsection does not apply to the competitive operation of vehicles on public or private property when the owner of such property knowingly permits such operation thereon.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of two or more predicate motor vehicle or traffic offenses, whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

333.10 OPERATION IN VIOLATION OF IMMOBILIZATION ORDER.

(a) No person shall operate a motor vehicle or permit the operation of a motor vehicle upon any public or private property used by the public for vehicular travel or parking knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that the motor vehicle has been ordered immobilized pursuant to an immobilization order issued under Ohio R.C. 4503.233.

(b) A motor vehicle that is operated by a person during a violation of subsection (a) hereof shall be criminally forfeited in accordance with the procedures contained in Ohio R.C. 4503.234.

(c) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree. (ORC 4503.236)

333.11 ELECTRONIC WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICE USE PROHIBITED WHILE DRIVING.

(a) No person shall operate a motor vehicle on any street, highway, or property open to the public for vehicular traffic while using, holding, or physically supporting with any part of the person's body an electronic wireless communications device.

(b) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply to any of the following:

(1) A person using an electronic wireless communications device to make contact, for emergency purposes, with a law enforcement agency, hospital or health care provider, fire department, or other similar emergency agency or entity.

(2) A person driving a public safety vehicle while using an electronic wireless communications device in the course of the person's duties.

(3) A person using an electronic wireless communications device when the person's motor vehicle is in a stationary position and is outside a lane of travel, at a traffic control signal that is currently directing traffic to stop, or parked on a road or highway due to an emergency or road closure;

(4) A person using and holding an electronic wireless communications device directly near the person's ear for the purpose of making, receiving, or conducting a telephone call, provided that the person does not manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;

(5) A person receiving wireless messages on an electronic wireless communications device regarding the operation or navigation of a motor vehicle; safety-related information, including emergency, traffic, or weather alerts; or data used primarily by the motor vehicle, provided that the person does not hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(6) A person using the speaker phone function of the electronic wireless communications device, provided that the person does not hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(7) A person using an electronic wireless communications device for navigation purposes, provided that the person does not do either of the following during the use:

A. Manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;

B. Hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(8) A person using a feature or function of the electronic wireless communications device with a single touch or single swipe, provided that the person does not do either of the following during the use:

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

A. Manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;
B. Hold or support the device wtih any part of the person's body;

(9) A person operating a commercial truck while using a mobile data terminal that transmits and receives data;

(10) A person operating a utilty service vehicle or a vehicle for or on behalf of a utility, if the person is acting in response to an emergency, power outage, or circumstance that affects the health or safety of individuals;

(11) A person using an electronic wireless communications device in conjunction with a voice-operated or hands-free feature or function of the vehicle or of the device without the use of either hand except to activate, deactivate, or initiate the feature or function with a single touch or swipe, provided the person does not hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(12) A person using technology that physically or electronically integrates the device into the motor vehicle, provided that the person does not do either of the following during the use:
A. Manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;
B. Hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(13) A person storing an electronic wireless communications device in a holster, harness, or article of clothing on the person's body.

(c) If a law enforcement officer issues an offender a ticket, citation or summons for a violation of subsection (a) of this section, the officer shall do both of the following:

(1) Report the issuance of the ticket, citation, or summons to the officer's law enforcement agency;

(2) Ensure that such report indicates the offender's race.

(d) Whoever violates subsection (a) of this section is guilty of operating a motor vehicle while using an electronic wireless communication device, an unclassified misdemeanor, and shall be punished as provided in subsections (d)(1) to (5) of this section.

(1) The offender shall be fined, and is subject to a suspension of the offender's driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege, as follows:

A. Except as provided in subsections (d)(1)B., (d)(1)C., (d)(1)D. and (d)(2) of this section, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not more than one hundred fifty dollars ($150.00).

B. If, within two years of the violation, the offender has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one prior violation of this section, Ohio R.C. 4511.204, or a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not more than two hundred fifty dollars ($250.00).

C. If, within two years of the violation, the offender has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to two or more prior violations of this section, Ohio R.C. 4511.204, or a substantially equivalent or municipal ordinance, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not more than five hundred dollars ($500.00). The court also may impose a suspension of the offender's driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege for ninety days.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

D. Notwithstanding subsections (d)(1)A. to (d)(1)C. of this section, if the offender was operating the motor vehicle at the time of the violation in a construction zone where a sign was posted in accordance with Ohio R.C. 4511.98, the court, in addition to all other penalties provided by law, shall impose upon the offender a fine of two times the amount imposed for the violation under subsections (d)(1)A., (d)(1)B., or (d)(1)C. of this section, as applicable.

(2) If the offender is in the category of offenders to whom subsection (d)(1)A of this section applies, in lieu of payment of the fine of one hundred fifty dollars ($150.00) under subsection (d)(1)A. of this section and the assessment of points under subsection (d)(4) of this section, the offender instead may elect to attend the distracted driving safety course, as described in Section 303.991. If the offender attends and successfully completes the course, the offender shall be issued written evidence that the offender successfully completed the course. The offender shall not be required to pay the fine and shall not have the points assessed against that offender's driver's license if the offender submits the written evidence to the court. This subsection does not apply with respect to any offender in the category of offenders to whom subsection (d)(1)B., C., or D. of this section applies.

(3) The court may impose any other penalty authorized under Ohio R.C. 2929.21 to 2929.28. However, the court shall not impose a fine or a suspension not otherwise specified in subsection (d)(1) of this section. The court also shall not impose a jail term or community residential sanction.

(4) Except as provided in subsection (d)(2) of this section, points shall be assessed for a violation of subsection (a) of this section in accordance with Ohio R.C. 4510.036.

(5) The offense established under this section is a strict liability offense and Ohio R.C. 2901.20 does not apply. The designation of this offense as a strict liability offense shall not be construed to imply that any other offense, for which there is no specified degree of culpability, is not a strict liability offense.

(e) A prosecution for an offense in violation of this section does not preclude a prosecution for an offense in violation of Ohio R.C. 4511.204 based on the same conduct. However, the two offenses are allied offenses of similar import under Ohio R.C. 2941.25.

(f) (1) A law enforcement officer does not have probable cause and shall not stop the operator of a motor vehicle for the purposes of enforcing this section unless the officer visually observes the operator using, holding, or physically supporting with any part of the person's body the electronic wireless communications device.

(2) A law enforcement officer who stops the operator of a motor vehicle for a violation of subsection (a) of this section shall inform the operator that the operator may decline a search of the operator's electronic wireless communications device. The officer shall not do any of the following:

A. Access the device without a warrant unless the operator voluntarily and unequivocally gives consent for the officer to access the device;

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

B. Confiscate the device while awaiting the issuance of a warrant to access the device;

C. Obtain consent from the operator to access the device through coercion or any other improper means. Any consent by the operator to access the device shall be voluntary and unequivocal before the officer may access the device without a warrant.

(g) As used in this section:

(1) "Electronic wireless communications device", includes any of the following:

A. A wireless telephone;

B. A text-messaging device;

C. A personal digital assistant;

D. A computer, including a laptop computer and a computer tablet;

E. Any device capable of displaying a video, movie, broadcast television image, or visual image;

F. Any other substantially similar wireless device that is designed or used to communicate text, initiate or receive communication, or exchange information or data.

An "electronic wireless communications device" does not include a two-way radio transmitter or receiver used by a person who is licensed by the federal communications commission to participate in the amateur radio service.

(2) "Utility" means an entity specified in Ohio R.C. 4905.03(A), (C), (D), (E) or (G).

(3) "Utility service vehicle" means a vehicle owned or operated by a utility.

(4) "Voice-operated or hands-free feature or function" means a feature or function that allows a person to use an electronic wireless communications device without the use of either hand, except to activate, deactivate, or initiate the feature or function with a single touch or single swipe.

(ORC 4511.204)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(ss) "Presumption for a prison term" or "presumption that a prison term shall be imposed." A presumption as described in Ohio R.C. 2929.13(D) that a prison term is a necessary sanction for a felony in order to comply with the purposes and principles of sentencing under Ohio R.C. 2929.11.

(tt) "Professional license." Any license, permit, certificate, registration, qualification, admission, temporary license, temporary permit, temporary certificate or temporary registration that is described in Ohio R.C. 2925.01(W)(1) to (W)(37) and that qualifies a person as a professionally licensed person.

(uu) "Professionally licensed person." Any of the following:

(1) A person who has received a certificate or temporary certificate as a certified public accountant or who has registered as a public accountant under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4701 and who holds an Ohio permit issued under that chapter;

(2) A person who holds a certificate of qualification to practice architecture issued or renewed and registered under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4703;

(3) A person who is registered as a landscape architect under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4703 or who holds a permit as a landscape architect issued under that chapter;

(4) A person licensed under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4707;

(5) A person who has been issued a barber's license, barber instructor's license, assistant barber instructor's license, or independent contractor's license under R.C. Chapter 4709;

(6) A person licensed and regulated to engage in the business of a debt pooling company by a legislative authority, under authority of Ohio R.C. Chapter 4710;

(7) A person who has been issued a cosmetologist's license, hair designer's license, manicurist's license, esthetician's license, natural hair stylist's license, advanced license to practice cosmetology, advanced license to practice hair design, advanced license to practice manicuring, advanced license to practice esthetics, advanced license to practice natural hair styling, cosmetology instructor's license, hair design instructor's license, manicurist instructor's license, esthetics instructor's license, natural hair style instructor's license, independent contractor's license, or tanning facility permit under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4713;

(8) A person who has been issued a license to practice dentistry, a general anesthesia permit, a conscious sedation permit, a limited resident's license, a limited teaching license, a dental hygienist's license or a dental hygienist's teacher's certificate under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4715;

(9) A person who has been issued an embalmer's license, a funeral director's license, a funeral home license or a crematory license, or who has been registered for an embalmer's or funeral director's apprenticeship under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4717;

(10) A person who has been licensed as a registered nurse or practical nurse, or who has been issued a certificate for the practice of nurse-midwifery under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4723;

(11) A person who has been licensed to practice optometry or to engage in optical dispensing under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4725;

(12) A person licensed to act as a pawnbroker under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4727;

(13) A person licensed to act as a precious metals dealer under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4728;

(14) A person licensed under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4729 as a pharmacist or pharmacy intern or registered under that chapter as a registered pharmacy technician, certified pharmacy technician, or pharmacy technician trainee;

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(15) A person licensed under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4729 as a manufacturer of dangerous drugs, outsourcing facility, third-party logistics provider, repackager of dangerous drugs, wholesale distributor of dangerous drugs, or terminal distributor of dangerous drugs;

(16) A person who is authorized to practice as a physician assistant under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4730;

(17) A person who has been issued a license to practice medicine and surgery, osteopathic medicine and surgery, or podiatric medicine and surgery under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4731 or has been issued a certificate to practice a limited branch of medicine under that chapter;

(18) A person licensed as a psychologist, independent school psychologist, or school psychologist under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4732;

(19) A person registered to practice the profession of engineering or surveying under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4733;

(20) A person who has been issued a license to practice chiropractic under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4734;

(21) A person licensed to act as a real estate broker or real estate salesperson under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4735;

(22) A person registered as a registered environmental health specialist under Ohio R.C. Chapter 3776;

(23) A person licensed to operate or maintain a junkyard under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4737;

(24) A person who has been issued a motor vehicle salvage dealer's license under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4738;

(25) A person who has been licensed to act as a steam engineer under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4739;

(26) A person who has been issued a license or temporary permit to practice veterinary medicine or any of its branches, or who is registered as a graduate animal technician under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4741;

(27) A person who has been issued a hearing aid dealer's or fitter's license or trainee permit under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4747;

(28) A person who has been issued a class A, class B or class C license or who has been registered as an investigator or security guard employee under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4749;

(29) A person licensed to practice as a nursing home administrator under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4751;

(30) A person licensed to practice as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4753;

(31) A person issued a license as an occupational therapist or physical therapist under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4755;

(32) A person who is licensed as a licensed professional clinical counselor, licensed professional counselor, social worker, independent social worker, independent marriage and family therapist, or marriage and family therapist, or registered as a social work assistant under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4757;

(33) A person issued a license to practice dietetics under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4759;

(34) A person who has been issued a license or limited permit to practice respiratory therapy under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4761;

(35) A person who has been issued a real estate appraiser certificate under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4763;

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(36) A person who has been issued a home inspector license under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4764;

(37) A person who has been admitted to the bar by order of the Ohio Supreme Court in compliance with its prescribed and published rules.

(vv) "Public premises." Any hotel, restaurant, tavern, store, arena, hall or other place of public accommodation, business, amusement or resort.

(ww) "Sale." Has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 3719.01.

(xx) "Sample drug." A drug or pharmaceutical preparation that would be hazardous to health or safety if used without the supervision of a licensed health professional authorized to prescribe drugs, or a drug of abuse, and that, at one time, had been placed in a container plainly marked as a sample by a manufacturer.

(yy) "Schedule I", "Schedule II", "Schedule III", "Schedule IV" or "Schedule V." Have the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 3719.01.

(zz) "School." Any school operated by a board of education, any community school established under Ohio R.C. Chapter 3314, or any nonpublic school for which the Director of Education and Workforce prescribes minimum standards under Ohio R.C. 3301.07, whether or not any instruction, extracurricular activities or training provided by the school is being conducted at the time a criminal offense is committed.

(aaa) "School building." Any building in which any of the instruction, extracurricular activities or training provided by a school is conducted, whether or not any instruction, extracurricular activities or training provided by the school is being conducted in the school building at the time a criminal offense is committed.

(bbb) "School premises." Either of the following:

(1) The parcel of real property on which any school is situated, whether or not any instruction, extracurricular activities, or training provided by the school is being conducted on the premises at the time a criminal offense is committed.

(2) Any other parcel of real property that is owned or leased by a board of education of a school, the governing authority of a community school established under Ohio R.C. Chapter 3314, or the governing body of a nonpublic school for which the Director of Education and Workforce prescribes minimum standards under Ohio R.C. 3301.07 and on which some of the instruction, extracurricular activities or training of the school is conducted, whether or not any instruction, extracurricular activities, or training provided by the school is being conducted on the parcel of real property at the time a criminal offense is committed.

(ccc) "Standard Pharmaceutical Reference Manual." The current edition, with cumulative changes if any, of references that are approved by the State Board of Pharmacy.

(ddd) "Substance Addiction Services Provider". Means an agency, association, corporation or other legal entity, individual, or program that provides one or more of the following at a facility:

(1) Either alcohol addiction services, or drug addiction services, or both such services that are certified by the Ohio Director of Mental Health and Addiction Services under Ohio R.C. 5119.36;

(2) Recovery supports that are related to either alcohol addiction services, or drug addiction services, or both such services and paid for with federal, state, or local funds administered by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or a board of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(eee) "Unit dose." An amount or unit or a compound, mixture or preparation containing a controlled substance that is separately identifiable and in a form that indicates that it is the amount or unit by which the controlled substance is separately administered to or taken by an individual.

(fff) "Wholesaler." Has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 3719.01. (ORC 2925.01)

513.02 GIFT OF MARIHUANA.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Former Ohio R.C. 2925.03 from which Section 513.02 was derived was superseded by the changes made to Ohio R.C. 3780.36 enacted by Initiative Petition. See "Section 513.16 Adult Use Cannabis Control; Limitations on Conduct by Individuals" for relevant provisions.)

513.03 DRUG ABUSE; CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE POSSESSION OR USE.

(a) No person shall knowingly obtain, possess or use a controlled substance or a controlled substance analog.

(b) (1) This section does not apply to the following:

A. Manufacturers, licensed health professionals authorized to prescribe drugs, pharmacists, owners of pharmacies and other persons whose conduct was in accordance with Ohio R.C. Chapters 3719, 4715, 4729, 4730, 4731 and 4741.

B. If the offense involves an anabolic steroid, any person who is conducting or participating in a research project involving the use of an anabolic steroid if the project has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration;

C. Any person who sells, offers for sale, prescribes, dispenses or administers for livestock or other nonhuman species an anabolic steroid that is expressly intended for administration through implants to livestock or other nonhuman species and approved for that purpose under the "Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act", 52 Stat. 1040 (1938), 21 U.S.C.A. 301, as amended, and is sold, offered for sale, prescribed, dispensed or administered for that purpose in accordance with that Act;

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(j) "Material" means any book, magazine, newspaper, pamphlet, poster, print, picture, figure, image, description, motion picture film, phonographic record, or tape, or other tangible thing capable of arousing interest through sight, sound, or touch and includes an image or text appearing on a computer monitor, television screen, liquid crystal display, or similar display device or an image or text recorded on a computer hard disk, computer floppy disk, compact disk, magnetic tape or similar data storage device.

(k) "Performance" means any motion picture, preview, trailer, play, show, skit, dance or other exhibition performed before an audience.

(l) "Spouse" means a person married to an offender at the time of an alleged offense, except that such person shall not be considered the spouse when any of the following apply:

(1) When the parties have entered into a written separation agreement authorized by Ohio R.C. 3103.06;

(2) During the pendency of an action between the parties for annulment, divorce, dissolution of marriage or legal separation;

(3) In the case of an action for legal separation, after the effective date of the judgment for legal separation.

(m) "Minor" means a person under the age of eighteen years.

(n) "Mental health client or patient" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 2305.51.

(o) "Mental health professional" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 2305.115.

(p) "Sado-masochistic abuse" means flagellation or torture by or upon a person or the condition of being fettered, bound, or otherwise physically restrained.

(q) "Place where a person has a reasonable expectation of privacy" means a place where a reasonable person would believe that the person could fully disrobe in private.

(r) "Private area" means the genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or female breast below the top of the areola, where nude or covered by an under-garment.
(ORC 2907.01)

533.02 PRESUMPTION OF KNOWLEDGE; ACTUAL NOTICE AND DEFENSE.

(a) An owner or manager, or agent or employee of an owner or manager, of a bookstore, newsstand, theater, or other commercial establishment engaged in selling materials or exhibiting performances, who, in the course of business does any of the acts prohibited by Section 533.11, is presumed to have knowledge of the character of the material or performance involved, if the owner, manager, or agent or employee of the owner or manager has actual notice of the nature of such material or performance, whether or not the owner, manager, or agent or employee of the owner or manager has precise knowledge of its contents.

(b) Without limitation on the manner in which such notice may be given, actual notice of the character of material or a performance may be given in writing by the chief legal officer of the jurisdiction in which the person to whom the notice is directed does business. Such notice, regardless of the manner in which it is given, shall identify the sender, identify the material or performance involved, state whether it is obscene or harmful to juveniles and bear the date of such notice.

(c) Section 533.11 does not apply to a motion picture operator or projectionist acting within the scope of employment as an employee of the owner or manager of a theater or other place for the showing of motion pictures to the general public, and having no managerial responsibility or financial interest in the operator's or projectionist's place of employment, other than wages.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(d) (1) Sections 533.11, 533.12(a) and 533.13 do not apply to a person solely because the person provided access or connection to or from an electronic method of remotely transferring information not under that person's control, including having provided capabilities that are incidental to providing access or connection to or from the electronic method of remotely transferring the information, and that do not include the creation of the content of the material that is the subject of the access or connection.

(2) Subsection (d)(1) of this section does not apply to a person who conspires with an entity actively involved in the creation or knowing distribution of material in violation of Section 533.11, 533.12 or 533.13, or who knowingly advertises the availability of material of that nature.

(3) Subsection (d)(1) of this section does not apply to a person who provides access or connection to an electronic method of remotely transferring information that is engaged in the violation of Section 533.11, 533.12 or 533.13, and that contains content that person has selected and introduced into the electronic method of remotely transferring information or content over which that person exercises editorial control.

(e) An employer is not guilty of a violation of Section 533.11, 533.12, or 533.13 based on the actions of an employee or agent of the employer unless the employee's or agent's conduct is within the scope of employee's or agent's employment or agency, and the employer does either of the following:

(1) With knowledge of the employee's or agent's conduct, the employer authorizes or ratifies the conduct.

(2) The employer recklessly disregards the employee's or agent's conduct.

(f) It is an affirmative defense to a charge under Section 533.11 or 533.13 as the section applies to an image transmitted through the internet or another electronic method of remotely transmitting information that the person charged with violating the section has taken, in good faith, reasonable, effective, and appropriate actions under the circumstances to restrict or prevent access by juveniles to material that is harmful to juveniles, including any method that is feasible under available technology.

(g) If any provision of this section, or the application of any provision of this section to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this section or related sections that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To this end, the provisions are severable.
(ORC 2907.35)

533.03 UNLAWFUL SEXUAL CONDUCT WITH A MINOR.

(a) No person, who is eighteen years of age or older, shall engage in sexual conduct with another, when the offender knows the other person is thirteen years of age or older but less than sixteen years of age, or the offender is reckless in that regard.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of unlawful sexual conduct with a minor, a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the offender is four years older or more than the other person, or if the offender has previously been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of Ohio R.C. 2907.02, 2907.03 or 2907.04, or former Ohio R.C. 2907.12, unlawful sexual conduct with a minor is a felony and shall be prosecuted under appropriate State law.
(ORC 2907.04)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

533.04 SEXUAL IMPOSITION.

(a) No person shall have sexual contact with another; cause another to have sexual contact with the offender; or cause two or more persons to have sexual contact when any of the following applies:

(1) The offender knows that the sexual contact is offensive to the other person, or one of the other persons, or is reckless in that regard.

(2) The offender knows that the other person's or one of the other person's ability to appraise the nature of or control the offender's or touching person's conduct is substantially impaired.

(3) The offender knows that the other person or one of the other persons submits because of being unaware of the sexual contact.

(4) The other person or one of the other persons is thirteen years of age or older but less than sixteen years of age, whether or not the offender knows the age of such person, and the offender is at least eighteen years of age and four or more years older than such other person.

(5) The offender is a mental health professional, the other person or one of the other persons is a mental health client or patient of the offender, and the offender induces the other person who is the client or patient to submit by falsely representing to the other person who is the client or patient that the sexual contact is necessary for mental health treatment purposes.

(b) No person shall be convicted of a violation of this section solely upon the victim's testimony unsupported by other evidence.

(c) Whoever violates this section is guilty of sexual imposition, a misdemeanor of the third degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of Ohio R.C. 2907.02, 2907.03, 2907.04, 2907.05, 2907.06 or former Section 2907.12, or a substantially similar municipal ordinance, a violation of this section is a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to three or more violations of Ohio R.C. 2907.02, 2907.03, 2907.04 or 2907.05, 2907.06 or former Section 2907.12 or of any combination of those sections, a violation of this section is a misdemeanor of the first degree and, notwithstanding the range of jail terms prescribed in Ohio R.C. 2929.24, the court may impose on the offender a definite jail term of not more than one year. (ORC 2907.06)

533.05 IMPORTUNING.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Former Section 533.05 has been deleted from the Codified Ordinances. Section 533.05 was identical to Ohio R.C. 2907.07(B) which the Ohio Supreme Court held to be unconstitutional in State v. Thompson, 95 Ohio St. 3rd 264 (2002).)

533.06 VOYEURISM.

(a) No person, for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying the person's self, shall commit trespass or otherwise surreptitiously invade the privacy of another, to spy or eavesdrop upon another.

(b) No person shall knowingly commit trespass or otherwise secretly or surreptitiously videotape, film, photograph, broadcast, stream, or otherwise record another person, in a place where a person has a reasonable expectation of privacy, for the purpose of viewing the private areas of that person.

(c) No person shall secretly or surreptitiously videotape, film, photograph, or otherwise record another person above, under or through the clothing being worn by that other person for the purpose of viewing the body of, or the undergarments worn by, that other person.

(d) Whoever violates this section is guilty of voyeurism.
(1) A violation of subsection (a) hereof is a misdemeanor of the third degree.
(2) A violation of subsection (b) hereof is a misdemeanor of the second degree.
(3) A violation of subsection (c) hereof is a misdemeanor of the first degree. (ORC 2907.08)

533.07 PUBLIC INDECENCY.

(a) No person shall recklessly do any of the following, under circumstances in which the person's conduct is likely to be viewed by and affront others, who are in the person's physical proximity and who are not members of the person's household:
(1) Expose the person's private parts;
(2) Engage in sexual conduct or masturbation;
(3) Engage in conduct that to an ordinary observer would appear to be sexual conduct or masturbation.

(b) No person shall knowingly do any of the following, under circumstances in which the person's conduct is likely to be viewed by and affront another person who is in the person's physical proximity, who is a minor, and who is not the spouse of the offender:
(1) Engage in masturbation;
(2) Engage in sexual conduct;
(3) Engage in conduct that to an ordinary observer would appear to be sexual conduct or masturbation;
(4) Expose the person's private parts with the purpose of personal sexual arousal or gratification or to lure the minor into sexual activity.

(c) (1) Whoever violates this section is guilty of public indecency and shall be punished as provided in subsections (c)(2), (3), (4) and (5) of this section.
(2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c)(2) of this section, a violation of subsection (a)(1) of this section is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one violation of this section, a violation of subsection (a)(1) of this section is a misdemeanor of the third degree or, if any person who was likely to view and be affronted by the offender's conduct was a minor, a misdemeanor of the second degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to two violations of this section, a violation of subsection (a)(1) of this section is a misdemeanor of the second degree or, if any person who was likely to view and be affronted by the offender's conduct was a minor, a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to three or more violations of this section, a violation of subsection (a)(1) of this section is a misdemeanor of the first degree or, if any person who was likely to view and be affronted by the offender's conduct was a minor, a felony which shall be prosecuted under appropriate state law.
(3) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c)(3) of this section, a violation of subsection (a)(2) or (3) of this section is a misdemeanor of the third degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one violation of this section, a violation of subsection (a)(2) or (3) of this section is a misdemeanor of the second degree or, if any person who was likely to view and be affronted by the offender's conduct was a minor, a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the offender previously has been

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

CHAPTER 537
Offenses Against Persons

537.01 Negligent homicide.
537.02 Vehicular homicide and manslaughter.
537.021 Vehicular assault in a construction zone.
537.03 Assault.
537.04 Negligent assault.
537.05 Aggravated menacing.
537.051 Menacing by stalking.
537.06 Menacing.
537.07 Endangering children.
537.08 Unlawful restraint.
537.09 Coercion.
537.10 Telecommunication harassment.
537.11 Threatening or harassing telephone calls.
537.12 Misuse of 9-1-1 system.
537.13 Adulterating of or furnishing adulterated food or confection.
537.14 Domestic violence.
537.15 Temporary protection order.
537.16 Illegal distribution of cigarettes, other tobacco products, or alternate nicotine products; transaction scans.
537.161 Smoking and possession of tobacco prohibited; an enforcement policy.
537.17 Reserved.
537.18 Contributing to unruliness or delinquency of a child.
537.19 Hazing prohibited.
537.99 Penalty.

CROSS REFERENCES

See sectional histories for similar State law
Physical harm to persons defined - see GEN. OFF. 501.01 (c), (e)
Fighting; provoking violent response - see GEN. OFF. 509.03

537.01 NEGLIGENT HOMICIDE.

(a) No person shall negligently cause the death of another or the unlawful termination of another's pregnancy by means of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance as defined in Section 549.01.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of negligent homicide, a misdemeanor of the first degree. (ORC 2903.05)

537.02 VEHICULAR HOMICIDE AND MANSLAUGHTER.

(a) No person, while operating or participating in the operation of a motor vehicle, motorcycle, utility vehicle, mini-truck, snowmobile, locomotive, watercraft, or aircraft, shall cause the death of another or the unlawful termination of another's pregnancy in any of the following ways:

(1) A. Negligently;

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

B. As the proximate result of committing, while operating or participating in the operation of a motor vehicle, utility vehicle, mini-truck, or motorcycle in a construction zone, a speeding offense, provided that this subsection applies only if the person whose death is caused or whose pregnancy is unlawfully terminated is in the construction zone at the time of the offender's commission of the speeding offense in the construction zone and does not apply as described in subsection (d) of this section.

(2) As the proximate result of committing a violation of any provision of any section contained in Title XLV of the Ohio Revised Code that is a minor misdemeanor or of a municipal ordinance that, regardless of the penalty set by ordinance for the violation, is substantially equivalent to any provision of any section contained in Title XLV of the Ohio Revised Code that is a minor misdemeanor.

(b) (1) Whoever violates subsection (a)(1) of this section is guilty of vehicular homicide. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, vehicular homicide is a misdemeanor of the first degree. Vehicular homicide is a felony and shall be prosecuted under appropriate State law if, at the time of the offense, the offender was driving under a suspension or cancellation imposed under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4510 or any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or was operating a motor vehicle or motorcycle, did not have a valid driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege, and was not eligible for renewal of the offender's driver's license or commercial driver's license without examination under Ohio R.C. 4507.10 or if the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of this section or any traffic-related homicide, manslaughter or assault offense. The court shall impose a mandatory jail term on the offender when required by Ohio R.C. 2903.06(E).

(2) Whoever violates subsection (a)(2) of this section is guilty of vehicular manslaughter. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, vehicular manslaughter is a misdemeanor of the second degree. Vehicular manslaughter is a misdemeanor of the first degree if, at the time of the offense, the offender was driving under a suspension or cancellation imposed under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4510 or any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or was operating a motor vehicle or motorcycle, did not have a valid driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege, and was not eligible for renewal of the offender's driver's license or commercial driver's license without examination under Ohio R.C. 4507.10 or if the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of this section or any traffic-related homicide, manslaughter, or assault offense.

(c) The court shall impose a mandatory jail term of at least fifteen days on an offender who is convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of subsection (a)(1)B. of this section and may impose upon the offender a longer jail term as authorized pursuant to Section 501.99. The court shall impose a mandatory prison term on an offender who is convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of subsection (a)(1)A. hereof if either of the following applies:

(1) The offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of this section or Ohio R.C. 2903.06 or 2903.08.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(2) At the time of the offense, the offender was driving under suspension or cancellation under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4510 or any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or was operating a motor vehicle or motorcycle, did not have a valid driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege, and was not eligible for renewal of the offender's driver's license or commercial driver's license without examination under Ohio R.C. 4507.10.

(d) Subsection (a)(1)B. does not apply in a particular construction zone unless signs of the type described in Ohio R.C. 2903.081 are erected in that construction zone in accordance with the guidelines and design specifications established by the Director of Transportation under Ohio R.C. 5501.27. The failure to erect signs of the type described in Ohio R.C. 2903.081 in a particular construction zone in accordance with those guidelines and design specifications does not limit or affect the application of subsections (a)(1)A. or (a)(2) of this section in that construction zone or the prosecution of any person who violates any of those subsections in that construction zone.

(e) As used in this section:

(1) "Mandatory prison term" and "mandatory jail term" have the same meanings as in Ohio R.C. 2929.01.

(2) "Traffic-related homicide, manslaughter or assault offense" means a violation of Ohio R.C. 2903.04 in circumstances in which division (D) of that section applies, a violation of Ohio R.C. 2903.06 or 2903.08, or a violation of Ohio R.C. 2903.06, 2903.07 or 2903.08 as they existed prior to March 23, 2000.

(3) "Construction zone" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 5501.27.

(4) "Speeding offense" means a violation of Ohio R.C. 4511.21 or a municipal ordinance pertaining to speed.

(5) "Motor vehicle", "mini-truck" and "utility vehicle" have the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 4501.01.

(f) For the purposes of this section, when a penalty or suspension is enhanced because of a prior or current violation of a specified law or a prior or current specified offense, the reference to the violation of the specified law or the specified offense includes any violation of any substantially equivalent municipal ordinance, former law of this State, or current or former law of another state or the United States. (ORC 2903.06)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(g) The court imposing a sentence upon an offender for any violation of this section also shall impose a suspension of the offender's driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege from the range specified in division (B) of Ohio R.C. 4510.02 that is equivalent in length to the suspension required for a violation of Ohio R.C. 2903.06 or division (A) or (B) of Ohio R.C. 4511.19 under similar circumstances. (ORC 4510.07)

537.021 VEHICULAR ASSAULT IN A CONSTRUCTION ZONE.

(a) No person, while operating or participating in the operation of a motor vehicle, motorcycle, utility vehicle, mini-truck, snowmobile, locomotive, watercraft, or aircraft, shall cause serious physical harm to another person or another's unborn as the proximate result of committing, while operating or participating in the operation of a motor vehicle, utility vehicle, mini-truck, or motorcycle in a construction zone, a speeding offense. This subsection applies only if the person to whom the serious physical harm is caused or to whose unborn the serious physical harm is caused is in the construction zone at the time of the offender's commission of the speeding offense in the construction zone and does not apply as described in subsection (d) hereof.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of vehicular assault. Except as provided in this subsection, vehicular assault is a misdemeanor of the first degree. Vehicular assault is a felony if, at the time of the offense, the offender was driving under a suspension imposed under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4510, or any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or if the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of this section or any traffic-related homicide, manslaughter, or assault offense, and shall be prosecuted under appropriate state law.

In addition to any other sanctions imposed, the court shall impose upon the offender a class four suspension of the offender's driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege from the range specified in division (A)(4) of Ohio R.C. 4510.02.

(c) The court shall impose a mandatory jail term of at least seven days on an offender who is convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of this section and may impose upon the offender a longer jail term as authorized pursuant to Section 501.99.

(d) This section does not apply in a particular construction zone unless signs of the type described in Ohio R.C. 2903.081 are erected in that construction zone in accordance with the guidelines and design specifications established by the Director of Transportation under Ohio R.C. 5501.27.

(e) As used in this section:

(1) "Mandatory jail term" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 2929.01.

(2) "Traffic-related homicide, manslaughter or assault offense" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 2903.06.

(3) "Construction zone" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 5501.27.

(4) "Speeding offense" has the same meaning as in Ohio R.C. 2903.06.

(f) For the purposes of this section, when a penalty or suspension is enhanced because of a prior or current violation of a specified law or a prior or current specified offense, the reference to the violation of the specified law or the specified offense includes any violation of any substantially equivalent municipal ordinance, former law of this State, or current or former law of another state or the United States. (ORC 2903.08)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

B. An active duty member of the armed forces of the United States who is carrying a valid military identification card and documentation of successful completion of firearms training that meets or exceeds the training requirements described in Ohio R.C. 2923.125(G)(1) has the same right to carry a concealed handgun in this state as a person who was issued a concealed handgun license under Ohio R.C. 2923.125 and is subject to the same restrictions as specified in this subsection (b).

C. A tactical medical professional who is qualified to carry firearms while on duty under Ohio R.C. 109.771 has the same right to carry a concealed handgun in this state as a person who was issued a concealed handgun license under Ohio R.C. 2923.125.

D. A fire investigator who is qualified to carry firearms while on duty under Ohio R.C. 109.774 has the same right to carry a concealed handgun in this state as a person who was issued a concealed handgun license under Ohio R.C. 2923.125.

(6) A. A qualified retired peace officer who possesses a retired peace officer identification card issued pursuant to subsection (b)(6)B. of this section and a valid firearms requalification certification issued pursuant to subsection (b)(6)C. of this section has the same right to carry a concealed handgun in this state as a person who was issued a concealed handgun license under Ohio R.C. 2923.125 and is subject to the same restrictions that apply to a person who has been issued a license issued under that section that is valid at the time in question. For purposes of reciprocity with other states, a qualified retired peace officer who possesses a retired peace officer identification card issued pursuant to subsection (b)(6)B. of this section and a valid firearms requalification certification issued pursuant to subsection (b)(6)C. of this section shall be considered to be a licensee in this state.

B. 1. Each public agency of this State or of a political subdivision of this State that is served by one or more peace officers shall issue a retired peace officer identification card to any person who retired from service as a peace officer with that agency, if the issuance is in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures and if the person, with respect to the person's service with that agency, satisfies all of the following:

a. The person retired in good standing from service as a peace officer with the public agency, and the retirement was not for reasons of mental instability.

b. Before retiring from service as a peace officer with that agency, the person was authorized to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of, or the incarceration of any person for, any violation of law and the person had statutory powers of arrest.

c. At the time of the person's retirement as a peace officer with that agency, the person was trained and qualified to carry firearms in the performance of the peace officer's duties.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

d. Before retiring from service as a peace officer with that agency, the person was regularly employed as a peace officer for an aggregate of 15 years or more, or, in the alternative, the person retired from service as a peace officer with that agency, after completing any applicable probationary period of that service, due to a service-connected disability, as determined by the agency.

2. A retired peace officer identification card issued to a person under subsection (b)(6)B.1. of this section shall identify the person by name, contain a photograph of the person, identify the public agency of this state or of the political subdivision of this State from which the person retired as a peace officer and that is issuing the identification card, and specify that the person retired in good standing from service as a peace officer with the issuing public agency and satisfies the criteria set forth in subsections (b)(6)B.1.a. to (b)(6)B.1.d. of this section. In addition to the required content specified in this subsection, a retired peace officer identification card issued to a person under subsection (b)(6)B.1. of this section may include the firearms requalification certification described in subsection (b)(6)C. of this section, and if the identification card includes that certification, the identification card shall serve as the firearms requalification certification for the retired peace officer. If the issuing public agency issues credentials to active law enforcement officers who serve the agency, the agency may comply with subsection (b)(6)B.1. of this section by issuing the same credentials to persons who retired from service as a peace officer with the agency and who satisfy the criteria set forth in subsection (b)(6)B.1.a. to (b)(6)B.1.d. of this section, provided that the credentials so issued to retired peace officers are stamped with the word "RETIRED".

3. A public agency of this state or of a political subdivision of this State may charge persons who retired from service as a peace officer with the agency a reasonable fee for issuing to the person a retired peace officer identification card pursuant to subsection (b)(6)B.1. of this section.

C. 1. If a person retired from service as a peace officer with a public agency of this state or of a political subdivision of this state and the person satisfies the criteria set forth in subsections (b)(6)B.1.a. to (b)(6)B.1.d. of this section, the public agency may provide the retired peace officer with the opportunity to attend a firearms requalification program that is approved for purposes of firearms requalification required under Ohio R.C. 109.801. The retired peace officer may be required to pay the cost of the course.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

TITLE FIVE - Public Services
Chap. 931. Parks and Playgrounds; Camping.
Chap. 933. Mound View Cemetery.

CHAPTER 931
Parks and Playgrounds; Camping

931.01 Speed limit in parks.
931.02 Prohibited uses in parks.
931.03 Model airplanes.
931.04 Ariel-Foundation Park regulations.
931.045 Creating the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery in Ariel-Foundation Park.
931.05 Closing hours.
931.06 Official opening of parks.
931.061 Closing hours for Public Square.
931.07 Group reservations.
931.08 Recreational facilities use; fees.
931.09 Operation of concession stands.
931.10 Banners on Public Square.
931.11 Shellmar Park.
931.99 Penalty.

CROSS REFERENCES
Land appropriation for parks - see Ohio R. C. 715.21,719.01
Playgrounds - see Ohio R. C. 755.12 et seq.
Power to regulate vehicle speed in parks - see Ohio R. C. 4511.07(E)
Recreation Board - see ADM. Ch. 139

931.01 SPEED LIMIT IN PARKS.
No person shall operate any vehicle faster than ten miles per hour in Riverside Park, Phillips Park, Memorial Park, Arch Avenue Park, Ariel-Foundation Park, or any other municipally owned park.
(Ord. 2013-20. Passed 6-24-13.)

931.02 PROHIBITED USES IN PARKS.
(a) No tent shows or carnivals shall be permitted to use or exhibit in any municipally owned park within the City.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(b) No camping trailers shall be permitted to park and no tents shall be erected for living quarters in any municipally owned park within the City. The Safety-Service Director is authorized to issue a permit for overnight camping in designated City-owned parks. The Safety-Service Director shall issue rules regulating overnight camping. Permits shall only be issued for recreational, educational, and community events.

(c) Any trailers remaining overnight require the permission of the Safety-Service Director. (Ord. 2024-46. Passed 11-25-24.)

931.03 MODEL AIRPLANES.

(a) The Mayor is authorized to designate any area of land that is owned, or leased, by the City, to be used exclusively for the flying of internal combustion, or electrically powered, model airplanes. The Mount Vernon Knox County Radio Control Club shall establish rules and regulations for the safe operation of model airplanes. A copy of the rules and regulations shall be posted at the designated flying area. Hours for operation of model airplanes shall be Monday through Sunday from noon to dark.

(b) The flying of internal combustion, or electrically powered, model airplanes within the limit of the City is prohibited, except in such designated areas.
(Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

931.04 ARIEL-FOUNDATION PARK REGULATIONS.

(a) The following activities are prohibited in Ariel-Foundation Park: swimming, hunting, (except as part of a controlled hunt for Canada Geese authorized and regulated by the Safety-Service Director), trapping, ice skating and sledding. Motor vehicles are prohibited in areas other than designated parking lots and driveways. Only electric trolling motors may be used to power boats on any Ariel-Foundation Park lake; combustion engines are prohibited.

(b) As part of regulating a controlled hunt for Canada Geese in Ariel-Foundation Park, the Safety-Service Director may set the opening and closing hours and restrict access to some or all of Ariel-Foundation Park or any surrounding property owned by the City of Mount Vernon. (Ord. 2016-23. Passed 12-27-16.)

931.045 CREATING THE COLUMBUS DELANO FIELD OF DISCOVERY IN ARIEL-FOUNDATION PARK.

(a) Purpose and Intent. The purpose of this section is to establish the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery within Ariel-Foundation Park, to enhance public awareness of Delano's contributions to government and conservation, to provide an ecologically diverse environment, support native species, and offer educational and recreational opportunities to the community.

(b) Designation of the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery. The area designated as the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery shall be located within the West Prairie area of Ariel-Foundation Park, an area chosen for its natural beauty, accessibility, and alignment with conservation values upheld by the City of Mount Vernon and its various committees and community partners dedicated to the same goals.

(c) Components of the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery.

(1) Native Pollinator and Grass Zones. The field shall feature sections planted with native pollinator flowers and grasses indigenous to Ohio. These zones will promote biodiversity, support pollinators like bees, butterflies, and birds, and enhance the aesthetic value of the park.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(2) Sunflower Fields. The Columbus Delano Field of Discovery shall contain dedicated fields of sunflowers, symbolizing growth and the power of nature, and providing a visual and sensory experience for visitors.

(3) Walking Trails. Environmentally friendly, accessible walking trails shall be established throughout the field to provide public access and enhance recreational opportunities while preserving natural ecosystems.

(4) Educational Kiosks. Kiosks placed strategically throughout the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery will offer educational information about Columbus Delano's contributions, native Ohio ecosystems, conservation practices, and the importance of preserving native flora and fauna.

(5) Biodegradable Public Art Installations. To inspire ecological awareness, public aii installations composed of biodegradable materials shall be periodically installed. These installations will blend with the environment and gradually return to the earth, embodying the principles of sustainability and conservation.

(6) Native Trees of Ohio Grove. A grove featuring over fifty (or more) native Ohio trees shall be established, showcasing a variety of species. This grove will serve as a lasting tribute to Ohio's natural heritage and provide shade, habitat, and educational opportunities for visitors.

(7) Johnny Appleseed Heritage Arbor. An arbor of apple trees, directly descended from the original Johnny Appleseed orchards, shall be cultivated in the Columbus Delano Field of Discovery. This feature will honor Ohio's agricultural history and allow visitors to experience a living connection to Johnny Appleseed's legacy.

(d) Management and Maintenance. The Columbus Delano Field of Discovery shall be managed by the City of Mount Vernon. The City shall continue in partnership with the Ariel Foundation Park Conservancy. Management will ensure the area is maintained sustainably and aligns with ecological preservation practices, including seasonal planting, routine upkeep of trails, and preservation of native species. (Res. 2024-119. Passed 11-25-24.)

931.05 CLOSING HOURS.

(a) No person is permitted in Dan Emmett Park, Riverside Park, Phillips Park, Memorial Park, Arch Avenue Park or Hiawatha Park, used for public recreation and owned or operated by the City, between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. of the following day. No person is permitted in Ariel-Foundation Park between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. unless the person is actively fishing.

(b) During the winter months between November 15th and the first Monday of April of each year no person shall occupy the Parks specified in subsection (a) hereof between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. of the following day.

(c) The Safety-Service Director may waive the closing hour requirements for those who receive a permit issued pursuant to Section 931.02(b).
(Ord. 2024-46. Passed 11-25-24.)

931.06 OFFICIAL OPENING OF PARKS.

On the first day of April of each year Dan Emmett Park, Riverside Park, Phillips Park, Memorial Park, Arch Avenue Park and Hiawatha Park will be officially open for public recreation. (Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

931.061 CLOSING HOURS FOR PUBLIC SQUARE.

The park area of the Public Square, including sidewalks, will be closed for public activity between the hours of 11:00 p.m. each night and 6:00 a.m. of the following day. (Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

931.07 GROUP RESERVATIONS.

(a) Pavilions and shelters may be reserved for group use on application through the Park's Office. Application must be made through the Park's Office at least twenty-four hours in advance of the date and time of reserved use.

(b) No group or person shall use facilities, which have been properly reserved by application during the period of reservation except the group having made the reservation. (Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

931.08 RECREATIONAL FACILITIES USE; FEES.

(a) This section applies to all individuals, groups, or organizations, teams and/or churches who wish to utilize the Mount Vernon City recreational softball or baseball fields, tennis courts, or any other athletic facilities. Any of the above individuals reserving these facilities for the purpose of financially benefiting themselves or the sponsor, will pay the rental fees as stated. Sanction fees must also be paid to the appropriate associations. Any of the individuals using the facilities for charity or a nonprofit purpose may be exempted from paying the following fees by action of the City Recreation Board (with the exception of the deposit required). The exemption may be granted for recognized charitable groups and not-for-profit organizations, as outlined in subsection (b)(3).

(b) The following fees will be assessed for use with the above mentioned facilities in Mount Vernon, Ohio:

(1) There will be a fee of fifty dollars ($50.00) for each facility, each weekend. This fee will include the use of all lights and restroom facilities. (This fee is for a tournament consisting of eight teams or more. If there are fewer than eight teams, this fee will be prorated.)

(2) There will be a fee of twenty dollars ($20.00) for a group or organization using one facility (day or night) for any organized activity. This fee also includes the use of lights and restroom facilities.

(3) All groups or organizations reserving the facility are also responsible for their own equipment and general maintenance at the completion of their activities. A deposit of twenty-five dollars ($25.00) will be required to cover any cost of cleaning after a group activity. If the necessary clean-up is not required, the fee will be refunded.

(4) In the event of cancellation or cancellation due to inclement weather, the fees paid will be refunded in full.

(Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

931.09 OPERATION OF CONCESSION STANDS.

(a) Regulations as to the operation of concession stands within Dan Emmett Park, Memorial Park, Riverside Park, Phillips Park and Hiawatha Park excluding Community Pool, being recreational parks within the City are as follows:

(1) There shall be no more than one concession stand per ball diamond.

(2) Concession stands are to be operated only by those individuals involved with a ball league.

(3) All profits are to be directed to the Treasurer of the League operating the concession and those profits are to be used in programs.

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)

(b) If by May 1st, of any year no individual associated with a ball league commits to operate a concession stand at a ball field, the Safety-Service Director shall enter into contract for a period of one year for the operating of a concession stand. The contract shall contain the following provisions:

(1) Contract shall be for the duration of one year.

(2) Ten percent (10%) of all gross receipts shall be paid to the general fund for the City to be used for park equipment.

(c) Exceptions to the above regulations may be granted with the approval of the Recreation Board. Upon the approval of the Board a special permit shall be issued by the Safety-Service Director. Such special permit shall be limited to no more than two events per year, per business or individual. Ten percent (10%) of all gross receipts shall be paid to the general fund for the City to be used for park equipment. The ten percent (10%) provision may be waived by the Safety-Service Director for non-profit organizations. Such special permits must be displayed during the permitted event.
(Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

931.10 BANNERS ON PUBLIC SQUARE.

Banners, pennants and streamers are not permitted on the Public Square.
(Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

931.11 SHELLMAR PARK.

(a) The vacant ground at the corner of Madison Street and Marion Street is to be developed into a neighborhood park, named Shellmar Park.

(b) Council authorize the placement of a memorial for Shellmar Products Corporation, which was once developed on this site, for the historic preservation and the important part of this neighborhood it once was.
(Ord. 2019-120. Passed 11-25-19.)

931.99 PENALTY.

(a) Whoever violates Sections 931.01; 931.02; 931.03; 931.04 or 931.07 shall be guilty of a minor misdemeanor.

(b) Whoever violates Section 931.05, 931.06 or 931.061 shall be fined not more than two hundred fifty dollars ($250.00) or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both.
(Ord. 2006-28. Passed 5-22-06.)

Attachment: 04-28-25 Exhibit A (2025-11 : Adopting January 2025 Replacement Pages)