



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

DRAFT 3/7/11



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BLACKLICK-MADISON
AREA PLAN

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Blacklick-Madison Area Plan

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Disclaimer: We produced the maps, figures, tables and other information in this document only for Franklin County business purposes. While we made every effort to include complete information, the maps, figures, tables and other information are not guaranteed to be accurate. The content of this plan is for reference purposes only and shouldn't be used for any survey, engineering or commercial purpose.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

Land use planning improves communities by empowering residents to collectively envision their future.

About the Blacklick-Madison Area Plan

The Blacklick-Madison Area Plan focuses on the unincorporated territory within the planning area boundaries described below, outside of municipal jurisdictions. The planning process is divided into four phases: gathering information, creating a vision, developing policies and assembling the plan.

Planning Area Boundaries

The planning area is located in southeastern Franklin County. It includes all of Madison Township, except the areas south of Rohr Road and west of Pontius Road, plus the portion of Truro Township south of Refugee Road.

The unincorporated area is approximately 20 square miles or 12,839 acres.

Policy Recommendations

This document contains four sections, each section includes a cover page with vision statements for the community's future. The pages following the cover pages include general goals that will help the community achieve its vision and specific actions to reach each goal.

The policy recommendations are the bridge between the community's present state and its desired future. The recommendations are a

direct result of the community vision, which was prepared using information gathered from stakeholder interviews and public input meetings held on September 27, 2010 and January 24, 2011.

Next steps

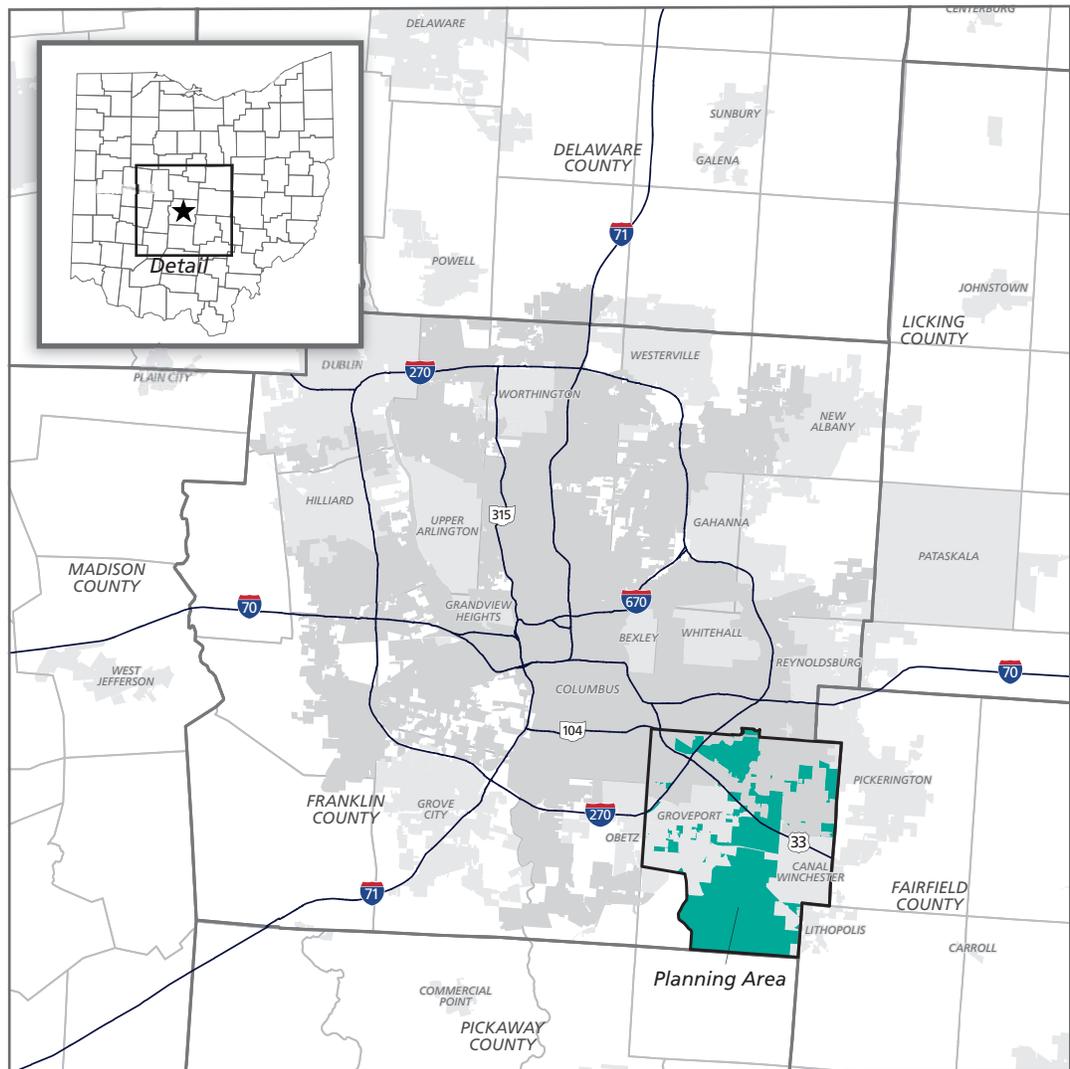
After the working committee reviews this document, we will conduct a public meeting to gather input on the proposed policies.

Once the community endorses the policies, the project team compiles the current conditions, the community vision and the policy recommendations, which constitutes the draft Blacklick-Madison Area Plan.

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PLANNING AREA



The Blacklick-Madison Planning Area is shown in green

LAND USE

RECOMMENDATIONS



VISION FOR LAND USE

A range of uses that supports and respects current areas, preserves agricultural and residential character, efficiently uses infrastructure and supports mixed use areas

Appropriate development that maintains residential and rural character

Attractive commercial development that promotes lasting economic growth

Achieve this vision by:

- Following the Future Land Use map and supporting text
- Adopting the Smart Growth Overlay for mixed use commercial areas
- Revising regulations to maintain and encourage farming

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The Future Land Use map shows where the community desires various land uses



Goal A
Ensure appropriate development in the community

Appropriate development maintains residential character, efficiently uses infrastructure and supports commercial mixed use areas. The Future Land Use map shows the appropriate land uses for specific areas as indicated by the community.

Action 1
Require compliance with the Future Land Use map

Franklin County Economic Development and Planning staff will reference the Future Land Use map when any new development or redevelopment is proposed. A rezoning or variance for a property should only be granted when the proposed use is consistent with the Future Land Use map, land use category descriptions and associated text on pages 12–20.



House size, type and lot placement contribute to community character

Goal B
Maintain residential and rural character

Blacklick Estates, Edgewater Park and Marwick Estates are residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. The area south of Groveport Road is characterized by low-density housing, farmland and scenic waterways.

These uses define the community and should be maintained.

Action 2
Allow only appropriate home occupations in existing neighborhoods

Existing regulations allow two types of home occupations in residential areas. *Permitted use* home occupations must occur within the home and allow just one non-resident employee. More intense *conditional use* home occupations allow three non-resident employees, business activity in accessory buildings and commercial vehicle parking.

Conditional use home occupations must be approved by the Franklin County Board of Zoning Appeals.

Large commercial vehicles such as semi-trucks, dump trucks and tow-trucks change residential character and should not be permitted. Only passenger vehicles designed to carry no more than one ton should be approved with conditional use home occupation requests.

Action 3
Facilitate the creation of neighborhood associations in Blacklick Estates and Qualstan East

Having a collective voice to express desires would benefit the neighborhoods. A neighborhood association is a group of residents and property owners who advocate for and organize activities in a neighborhood. Associations are led by elected leaders and may have voluntary dues. A neighborhood association in Blacklick Estates and Qualstan East could address new development proposals, work with existing Block Watch groups and address any other issues concerning the neighborhoods.

Franklin County should work with Madison and Truro Townships to help set up a neighborhood association in Blacklick Estates and Qualstan East.

Action 4
Identify vacant and abandoned properties for improvement

Vacant and abandoned properties affect neighborhood appearance and reduce property values. Franklin County and the townships should work

together to identify and prioritize these properties for improvement. Developing in existing neighborhoods increases property values, reduces development costs, and preserves farmland and open space.

Franklin County should provide this information to private developers. Developers can help revitalize neighborhoods by converting these sites to productive uses.

Action 5

Require infill development to conform with neighborhood character

Requiring housing projects in existing neighborhoods to conform to building sizes, setbacks and heights of nearby homes maintains neighborhood character.

Franklin County will ensure that projects built in existing neighborhoods with public funds or seeking approval from decision making boards conform to neighborhood character.

Action 6

Use site design techniques that preserve rural character

Grouping houses close together using cluster-style development, blending houses into the landscape with trees or hills in the background and using shared driveways help preserve rural character.

Development proposals on agricultural land, outside of the Farmland Preservation overlay shown on the Future Land Use map, should provide information on the site’s ability to use these techniques.

Franklin County will work closely with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Madison Township and property owners to develop criteria that will ensure rural character is preserved.

CLUSTER-STYLE DEVELOPMENT

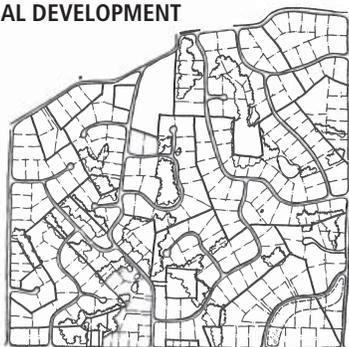
A cluster-style design rearranges development to preserve natural resources and farmland. In a conventional development, land is divided into lots, with small amounts of open space on each lot and all land converted from agriculture.

In a cluster-style development, areas with trees, open spaces and agriculture are set aside before land is divided into lots. Each lot is slightly

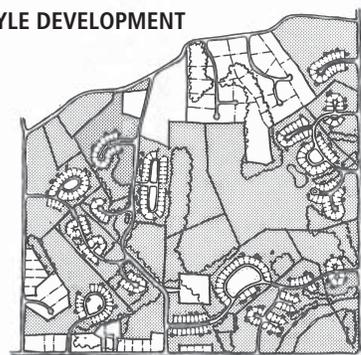
smaller, resulting in larger open spaces or preserved agriculture.

By making each lot slightly smaller, developers can build the same number of homes while protecting natural areas. Studies show homes in developments with protected open space sell for higher prices and better retain their value.

CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



CLUSTER-STYLE DEVELOPMENT



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Agriculture plays an important role in maintaining rural character



Goal C

Maintain sufficient farmland to keep agriculture viable

Farmland protection activities preserve scenic views and rural character, benefit our environment, and protect the economic base of agriculture.

Action 7

Adopt farmland preservation development regulations

Farmland preservation regulations should apply to areas identified on the Future Land Use map as Farmland Preservation overlay. The regulation will prevent the conversion of farmland to non-farm related uses.

We used soil productivity, enrollment in the Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) assessment, parcel size greater than 20 acres and connectivity to other farmland to designate the Farmland Preservation overlay.

Franklin County will work closely with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Madison Township and property owners to develop these regulations.

Action 8

Revise zoning regulations to maintain and encourage farming

Farming requires a sufficient amount of land area to remain viable, current regulations encourage land divisions that do not maintain sufficient space for farming.

Existing regulations allow a parcel, as it existed in 1966, to be divided into four parcels of 2.5 acres. Any additional land divisions must create properties of at least 5 acres. This practice creates properties larger than the common

homeowner needs or desires and properties too small for farming purposes.

The allotment of four divisions should be maintained while changing the 5 acre minimum size requirement to 20 acres. Increasing the minimum size requirement will encourage farming while discouraging land divisions.

Franklin County should work closely with Madison Township and property owners to revise the zoning requirements in the Farmland Preservation overlay area to reflect this recommended minimum property size.

Action 9

Encourage farmers to enroll in Ohio Department of Agriculture farmland preservation programs

The Ohio Department of Agriculture administers three programs that preserve farmland. Two programs permanently protection of farmland by placing an easement on the land. The easement prevents the land from ever converting to a non-agricultural use. The easement programs include the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program and the Ohio Agricultural Easement Donation Program

The programs benefits landowners by paying them for not allowing their land to develop or by becoming eligible for tax deductions based on their donation.

The Agricultural Security Area program is the third program administered by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The program allows one or more landowners of at least 500 contiguous acres to enroll for a 10-year period. Enrollment in the program benefits owners by protecting the land from non-agricultural development, ensuring sufficient land area to keep farming viable and providing possible tax abatements.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District should encourage land owner enrollment in these programs and provide support through the application process.



Goal D

Encourage attractive and economically viable commercial development

New commercial development should have street presence and inviting design to attract and retain business and investment. This will

provide a strong, sustainable tax base for Madison and Truro Townships.

Action 10

Adopt the Smart Growth Overlay for mixed use commercial areas

The Smart Growth Overlay encourages attractive, pedestrian-oriented design. See below for more information.

Franklin County and the townships should work together to add the overlay standards to land use regulations.

Well-designed commercial development looks nice and attracts customers

SMART GROWTH OVERLAY

The *Smart Growth Overlay* is a proposed change to the Franklin County Zoning Resolution to modify design standards. *Smart Growth Overlay* standards differ from the traditional suburban-style standards commonly used. The overlay makes development more attractive and accessible to pedestrians and motorists. These improved standards support economically successful commercial areas.

Below is an outline of the design standards.

Building setbacks

- Approximate 25-foot consistent front building setbacks along main roads
- Maximum side-yard setbacks

Accessibility

- Sidewalks, 5 feet wide
- Bicycle parking
- Main building entrances face main roads
- Walkways from sidewalk to entrances

Building design

- Buildings are oriented toward a main road
- Minimum building height of 16 feet
- Large buildings incorporate architectural features to break up façade

Landscaping

- Front yard is landscaped with shade trees
- Trees and landscaping planted in parking lots

Parking and vehicles

- Parking lots at side or rear of building
- Drive-thru windows facing side or rear
- Reduction in minimum required parking
- Screening parking lots with fence or shrubs

Signs

- Ground-mounted, monument-style signs
- Pedestrian-scale maximum sign height
- Oversized or numerous signs not permitted



Illustration of selected Smart Growth Overlay requirements

The overlay standards should apply in the following commercial areas:

- Chatterton Road and Noe-Bixby Road
- Noe-Bixby Road and Sedalia Road
- Hamilton Road, *between Big Walnut Creek and Winchester Pike*

of Commerce on the services available to businesses.

Action 11

Establish a Cooperative Economic Development Agreement

A Cooperative Economic Development Agreement can provide a means for revenue sharing between jurisdictions and for the installation of roads, water and sewer infrastructure. A CEDA can encourage commercial mixed use development as recommended on the Future Land Use map.

Madison Township should enter into a CEDA with Canal Winchester, Groveport or Columbus to encourage development near the proposed U.S. Route 33 / Bixby Road interchange.

Action 12

Establish a façade improvement program

The façade improvement program should target existing commercial areas. Matching grants can provide incentives for business owners to reinvest in commercial areas. Attractive building facades support and encourage local business development.

Franklin County should establish a façade improvement program to encourage reinvestment in commercial areas.

Action 13

Support small businesses

Small businesses employ more people in Franklin County than big businesses, making them a critical component of a healthy local economy.

Franklin County partners with many groups to provide funding and technical, educational, and marketing support to small businesses. Franklin County should provide program information to the Southeast Franklin County Chamber

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LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS



Low Density Residential

Allowed land uses: Single-family homes

Density: Maximum of 0.4 units per acre, minimum 2.5 acre lot size



Medium Density Residential

Allowed land uses: Single-family and two-family homes

Density: Minimum of 2 units per acre, maximum of 8 units per acre



Office + Residential

Allowed land uses: Offices, single- and multi-unit housing. Uses may mix within the same building.

Density: For buildings without offices, minimum residential density of 4 units per acre. For all buildings, maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Commercial: Limited range + Multi-unit

Allowed land uses: Limited range of retail uses, mostly neighborhood-scale, plus offices and multi-unit housing and townhomes.

Density: Maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Commercial: Full range + Multi-unit

Allowed land uses: Full range of retail and office uses, plus multi-unit housing and townhomes.

Density: Maximum residential density of 24 units per acre



Light Industrial + Office

Allowed land uses: Range of uses including office, industrial, storage and warehousing.



Parks/Open Space

Intended for nature or recreation with minimal buildings.



Farmland Preservation overlay

Preservation of farmland is a high priority. The Farmland Preservation overlay identifies focus areas for preservation. The areas were selected based on soil productivity, enrollment in the Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) assessment, property size greater than 20 acres and connectivity to other land meeting this criteria.

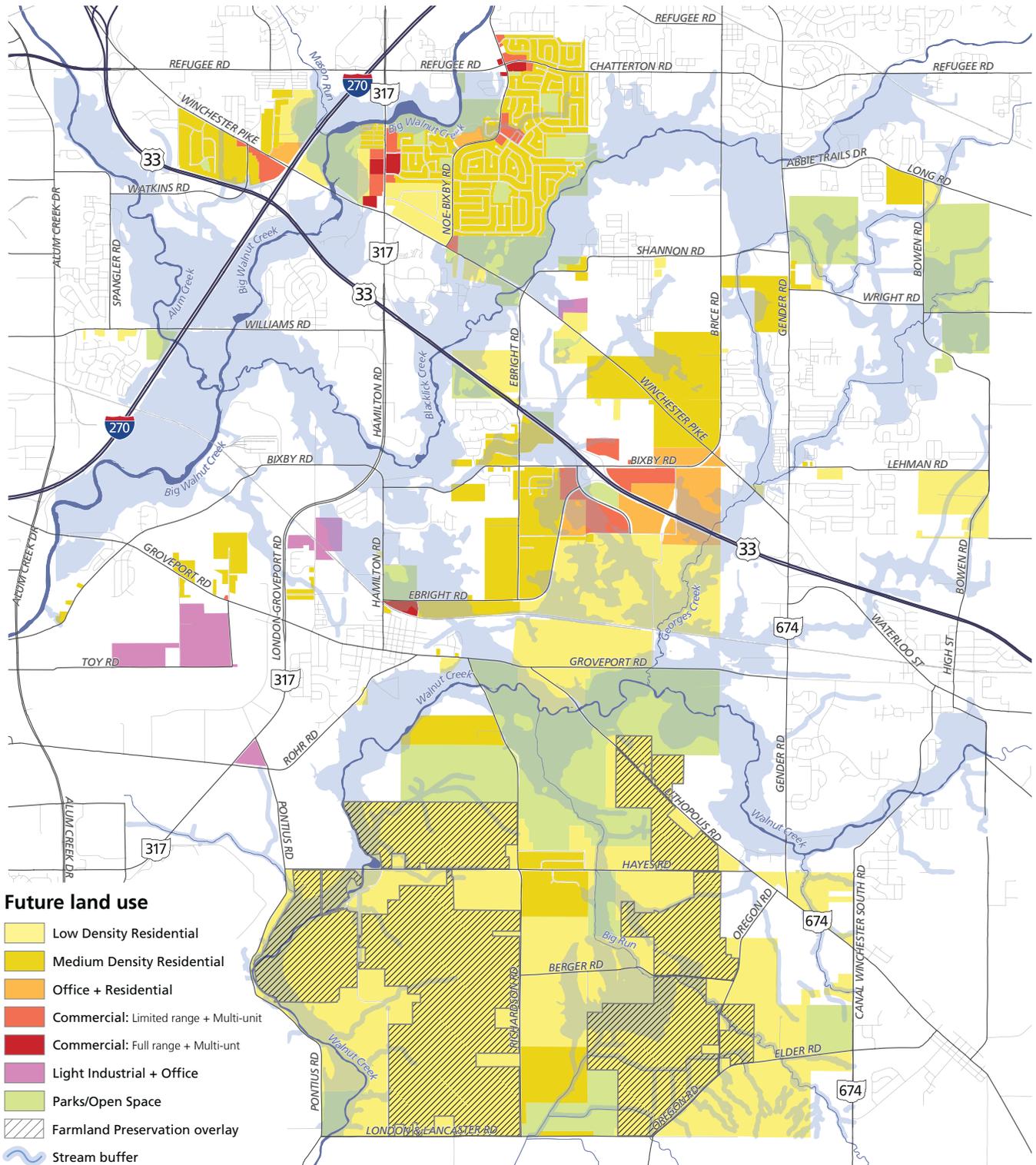


Stream buffer

Environmentally-sensitive area that includes streamways and 100-year floodplain.

Preservation of the stream buffer area is critical to the health of waterways. Development is discouraged in the buffer area and any disturbances should be mitigated.

Use this map in conjunction with the Land Use Category Descriptions on the previous page and text on pages 14 to 20.



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

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The map above shows anticipated roadway improvements in the vicinity of Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33

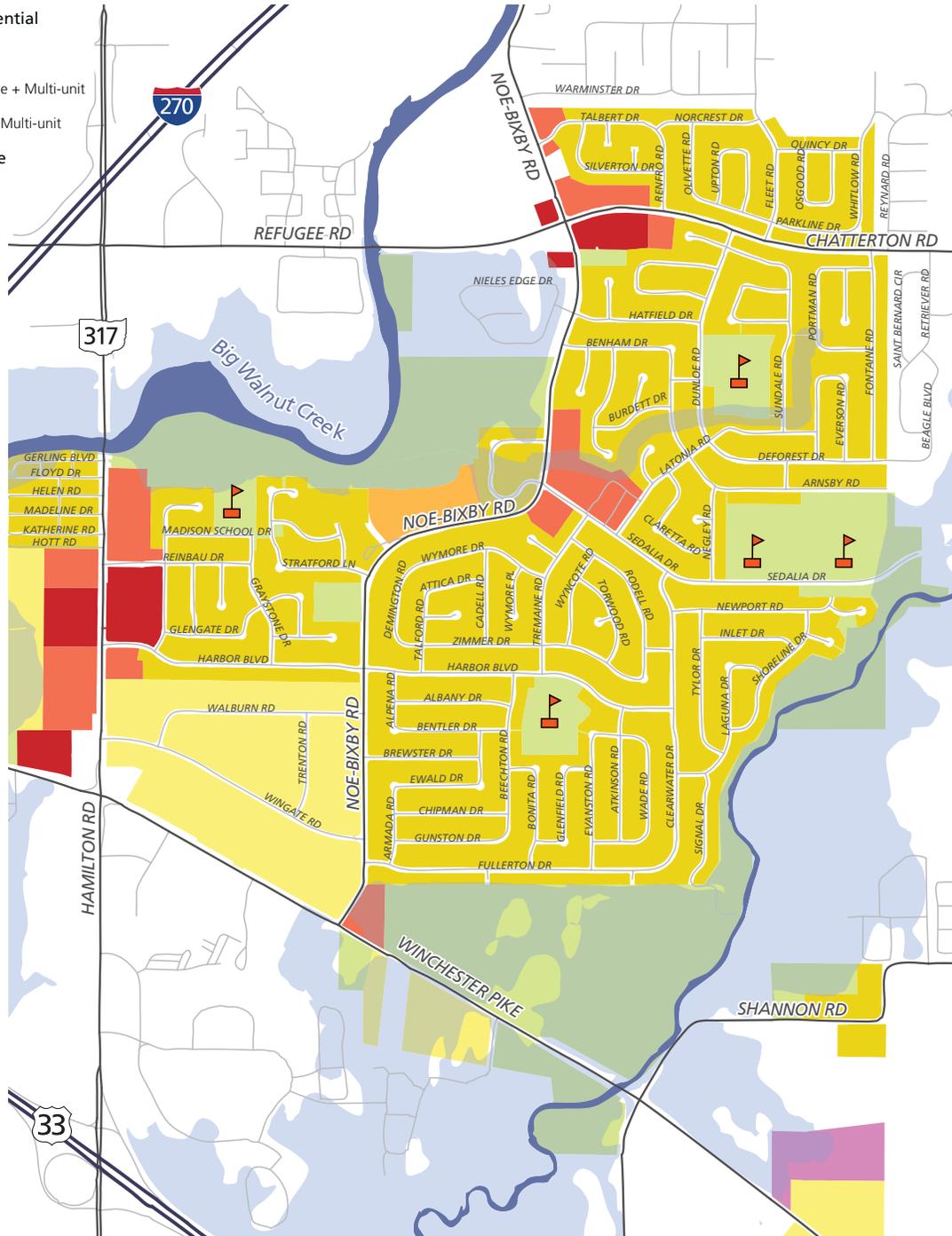
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Future land use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Office + Residential
- Commercial: Limited range + Multi-unit
- Commercial: Full range + Multi-unit
- Light Industrial + Office
- Parks/Open Space
- Stream buffer
- Existing School

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BLACKLICK
ESTATES



See map explanations on next page ►



FUTURE LAND USE MAP EXPLANATIONS

The explanations below and on the following pages provide additional development guidance for each of the four geographic areas. The guidance provides details about the types and designs of uses recommended. This text should be used in conjunction with the Future Land Use map.

Chatterton Road and Noe-Bixby Road Commercial

This intersection will continue to serve as a commercial activity center. Commercial redevelopment should include attractive façades and signage. Multi-unit residential development is permitted. Commercial and residential uses should mix within buildings.

Commercial uses at the intersection's northeast corner should be limited in range and respect the residential development to the north. Commercial uses at the intersection's southeast corner may be a full range since the cemetery provides a buffer to residential uses.

Noe-Bixby Road and Sedalia Drive Commercial

Commercial uses at the intersection will serve the everyday needs of neighborhood residents. Buildings will be appropriately sized to complement the neighborhood's character.

Noe-Bixby Road Office and Residential

Developing office and residential uses in this area will efficiently use land near existing road, water and sewer infrastructure. Developing near existing infrastructure reduces the cost of development and prevents sprawl into undeveloped areas.

Hamilton Road Commercial

Hamilton Road should serve as an attractive commercial corridor for Madison Township, complementing commercial development south of Winchester Pike. A wide range of commercial and residential uses will serve residents in Blacklick Estates, Edgewater Park and the surrounding area. Multi-unit residential uses exist nearby and should continue.

Groveport-Madison school sites

School sites no longer used for education should be converted to recreational facilities or community gathering places.

BLACKLICK ESTATES SITE DESIGN CONCEPTS

Franklin County is partnering with the Neighborhood Design Center to develop site design concepts. Locations were chosen based on input from the first public meeting and stakeholder interviews. Better site designs improve the look of the community and help attract customers.

The site design concepts should be used with the map explanation text on the previous page.



Sedalia and Noe-Bixby Roads

The vacant land at Sedalia and Noe-Bixby Roads is an ideal location for an attractive commercial or retail use.



Site layout



Site profile



Walnut Knolls

The former site of the Walnut Knolls Apartments on Noe-Bixby Road could be used for offices or other commercial use, or could become a new community center to bring neighbors together.



Site layout



Site profile

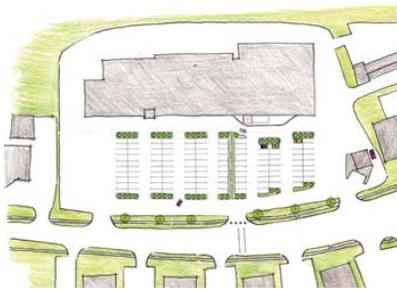


Building elevation

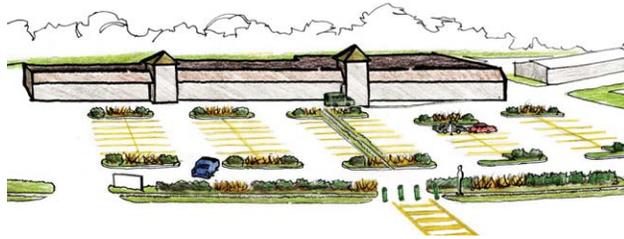


Refugee Center

This site design concept for the Refugee Shopping Center on Chatterton Road consolidates signage, reduces curb cuts and introduces landscaping.



Site layout



Site profile

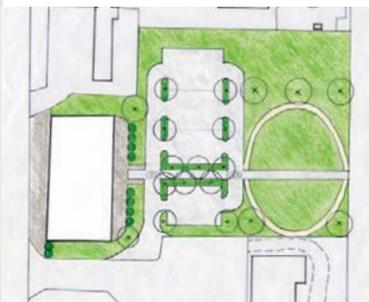


Building elevation



Hamilton Road

The vacant property near Hamilton Plaza is an ideal location for a new commercial development with space for retail.



Site layout



Site profile



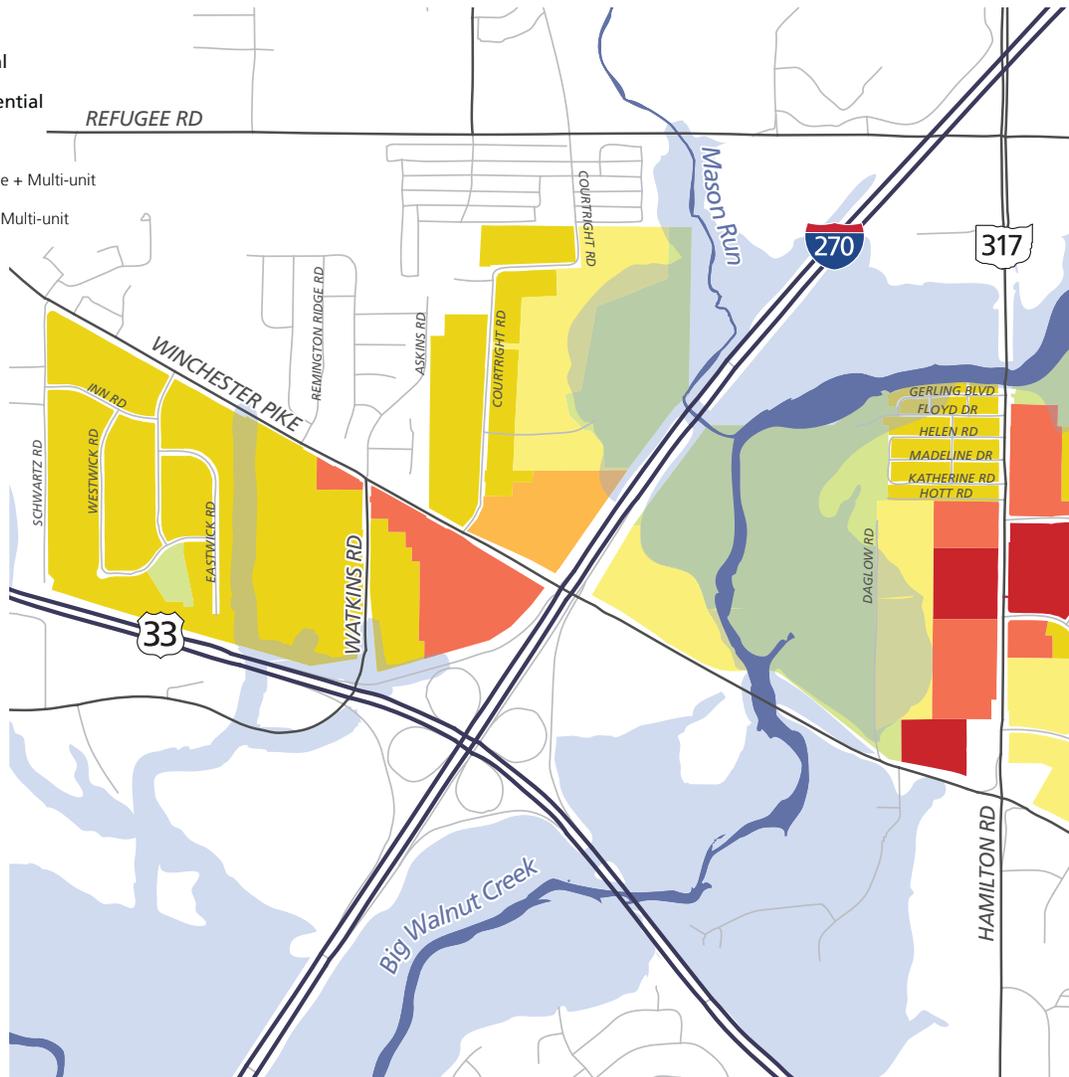
Building elevation

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Future land use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Office + Residential
- Commercial: Limited range + Multi-unit
- Commercial: Full range + Multi-unit
- Parks/Open Space
- Stream buffer

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**EDGEWATER
PARK /
MARWICK
ESTATES**

Winchester Pike Office and Residential

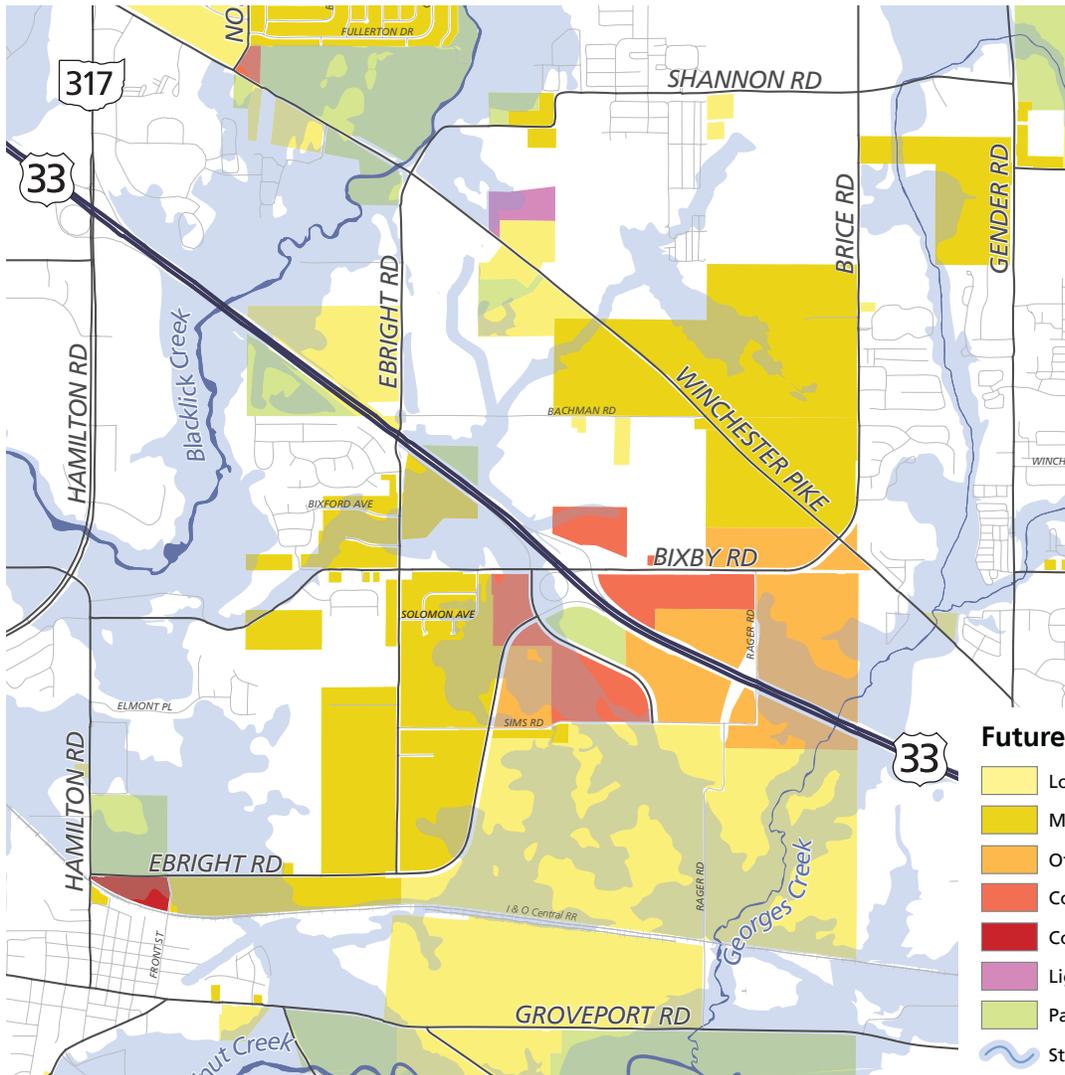
Development between Courtright Road and Interstate 270 should place buildings away from the existing residential area to provide a buffer.

Building height along Courtright Road should be limited to 2 stories while building height along Winchester Pike and Interstate 270 may be 3 stories. These building heights will reduce visual impacts to nearby residents.

Winchester Pike Commercial

Commercial uses should provide services to meet the everyday needs of nearby residents. Building height should be a maximum of 2

stories and be constructed close to Winchester Pike. This will provide a buffer and reduce visual impacts to existing residential uses.



This map shows anticipated roadway improvements in the vicinity of Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33

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Future land use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Office + Residential
- Commercial: Limited range + Multi-unit
- Commercial: Full range + Multi-unit
- Light Industrial + Office
- Parks/Open Space
- Stream buffer

U.S. Route 33 and Bixby Road

Recommendations assume the construction of the proposed interchange and adjacent road improvements. Concentrated development will efficiently use infrastructure and limit impacts to residential and agricultural uses. The recommendations near the interchange complement nearby Columbus land use plans to ensure compatible land uses.

A significant amount of flood-prone land exists near the proposed interchange. Development in this area should include innovative stormwater management techniques to prevent increased flooding to nearby residents. Buildings should

be designed to provide flood protection while limiting floodplain fill.

Residential uses are discouraged between Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33, east of the interchange. Office uses in this area should be large scale and visible from the highway. All development should incorporate high quality building design.

Sims Road Low Density Residential

The area between Sims Road and the railroad is flood-prone. Agricultural uses should continue in this area to preserve floodplains.

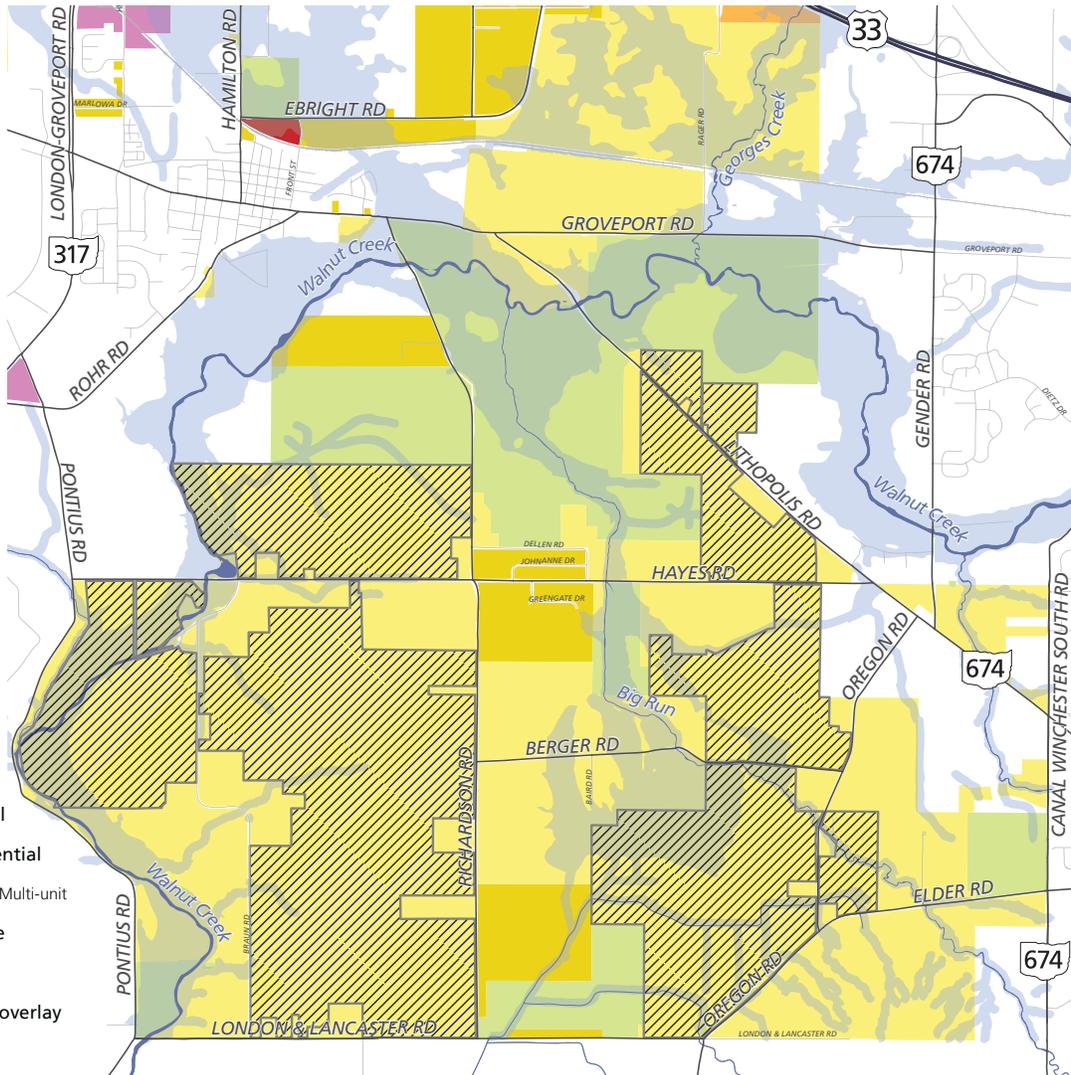


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Future land use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial: Full range + Multi-unit
- Light Industrial + Office
- Parks/Open Space
- Farmland Preservation overlay
- Stream buffer



**SOUTH
MADISON**

Agricultural Uses

A large amount of land is currently used for agricultural purposes and residents desire to preserve farmland. Actions provided in the Land Use and Healthy Living Recommendations sections will preserve farmland.

Open Space

The South Madison area has a large amount of existing parkland. The Future Land Use map recommends additional land for parks and open space. These additional areas were selected based on existing park plans and the flood-prone nature of certain areas.

Medium Density Residential

The areas indicated for medium density residential uses are near existing residential developments and amenities. The location west of Richardson Road is near the park, golf course and downtown Groveport. This is an attractive location for residential development.

Medium density residential developments should maintain the area’s rural character.

HEALTHY LIVING

PARKS · ENVIRONMENT · LOCAL FOODS



VISION FOR HEALTHY LIVING

A parks and recreation system accessible to all that provides opportunities for physical activity and enjoyment of the natural environment

Healthy and accessible developments that have minimal impact on the natural environment

A natural environment that provides clean water, open space and wildlife habitat

A local food system that encourages healthy eating

Achieve this vision by:

- Establishing new parks and playgrounds in Blacklick Estates
- Complying with *AWARE* universal design guidelines
- Implementing recommendations of the Central Ohio Local Food Assessment and Plan

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Parks are community assets, providing recreational opportunities for residents (left); No-step entrances make it easier for people to enter buildings (right)



Goal A

Maintain, improve and expand parks, recreational facilities and opportunities for physical activity

Parks and recreational facilities are assets to a community by providing opportunities for physical activities.

Action 1

Establish new parks and playgrounds in Blacklick Estates

Blacklick Estates residents expressed a need for parks and recreational space in their neighborhood. Parks should include playgrounds for children and activities for adults.

Franklin County can work with Madison Township to establish a new park in Blacklick Estates. Prior to establishing a park a location and funding source would need identified.

Action 2

Encourage physical activity

People that participate in physical activities are often healthier than those that do not but communities are often unaware of the opportunities available to them. Columbus Public Health developed the Franklin County Physical Activity Plan to promote physical activity in Franklin County. The plan outlines recommendations for communities, schools and employers to implement that will encourage physical activity.

Madison and Truro Townships, Groveport-Madison schools, and area employers should endorse the plan and become partners to implement it.

Goal B

Ensure the community has accessible developments that are energy efficient with healthy living areas.

A community with accessible, energy efficient and healthy development is an attractive place to live and maintains a high quality of life for everyone.

Action 3

Require conformance with *AWARE* green and universal design standards

AWARE standards create sustainable, accessible homes that help maintain property values and keep neighborhoods strong. Columbus and Franklin County developed the *AWARE* manual to standardize requirements for building and rehabilitating homes that are energy efficient and accessible. The standards also ensure healthy air inside homes by limiting the use of products and materials containing volatile organic compounds. For more detail see below.

New or rehabilitated homes receiving public funds must follow *AWARE* standards. Franklin County should encourage the Ohio Board of Building Standards to adopt similar requirements for all residential construction.

Action 4

Require new residential development within airport noise overlays to comply with noise reduction standards

Residential development in airport noise overlays experience higher noise levels than in surrounding areas. Reducing noise levels in homes improves the quality of life for those living in airport noise areas.

Current regulations require noise reductions in areas that experience higher noise

levels. Franklin County will continue to send development applications in airport noise overlays to the applicable airport for review and recommendations.

Action 5

Provide information to property owners about energy efficiency programs and alternative energy sources

Reducing household energy consumption is environmentally friendly and reduces utility costs. Utility companies and public agencies offer a variety of financial incentives to retrofit buildings and purchase energy-efficient appliances, equipment and lighting.

The Home Weatherization Assistance Program replaces inefficient household appliances to reduce energy consumption and utility costs. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission should continue to offer this program free-of-charge to income eligible residents.

Alternative energy sources have no emissions and reduce reliance on non-renewable resources. Franklin County supports the use of solar, wind and geothermal energy and can provide information and referrals to public, private or nonprofit organizations.

AWARE STANDARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE, ACCESSIBLE HOMES

The *AWARE* Manual (Accessible, Water conservation, Air quality, Resource conscious, Energy efficient) provides building standards and contractor requirements for residential projects receiving federal funds through the city of Columbus and Franklin County.

Homes built to *AWARE* standards help people live better and stay in their homes as they grow older. The standards use environmentally-sustainable materials, keep indoor air clean and healthy, and make it easy to get around.

Standards apply to both new construction and housing rehabilitation. Below are examples of what the *AWARE* standards require.

Accessible standards:

- No-step entries for easy access
- One bedroom and full-bath on the first floor, to avoid climbing stairs
- Lever-style handles to easily open doors
- Switches, phone jacks and thermostats within reach
- Low-step showers to prevent falls

Sustainable standards:

- Energy-star rated appliances and fixtures
- Low/no use of volatile organic compounds, avoiding harmful fumes
- Recycled building materials
- High-efficiency air conditioning

Following *AWARE* standards makes homes friendlier to people of all ages and abilities. This supports strong communities and benefits property values.

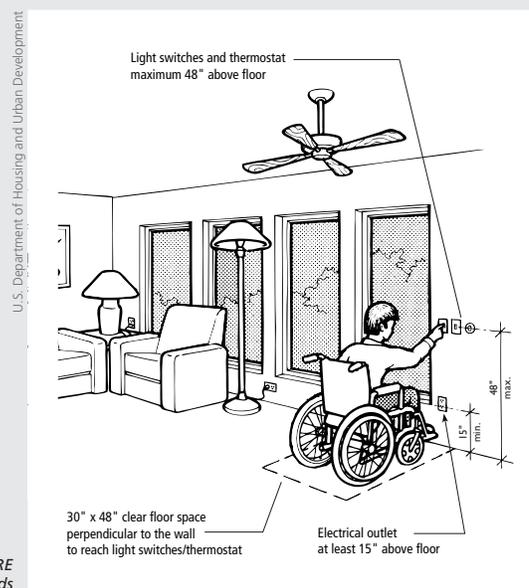


Illustration of selected *AWARE* accessibility standards

Development should limit impacts to the natural environment



Goal C
Protect the natural environment from negative impacts of development

We rely on the natural environment to provide clean air and water in addition to many other benefits. Development that is sensitive to the natural environment uses recycled materials, minimizes waste entering landfills, reduces stormwater impacts and reduces pollution.

Action 6
Use recycled and sustainably harvested products in new construction

Using recycled and sustainably harvested materials will ensure we do not cause irreparable damage to our natural environment.

Many building products can be produced with recycled plastics, cement and metals. Sustainably harvested material refers to wood products that have a fast growth rate and to locally harvested wood products not requiring long transportation distances.

Franklin County should provide information to home builders and developers about such products to encourage their use.

Action 7
Require the use of stormwater best management practices

Stormwater best management practices such as rain gardens, bioswales, and other techniques control stormwater runoff and stabilize soil. These techniques filter pollution that runs off hard surfaces such as rooftops, driveways and parking lots when it rains.

Franklin County will continue to require best management practices for projects seeking approval from decision making boards.

Franklin County, the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District and the townships should work with environmental partners to promote the use of stormwater best management practices in existing developments.

Action 8
Adopt regulations creating a stream buffer zone along Big Walnut Creek, Walnut Creek and their tributaries

The buffer zone is a sensitive area along creeks and tributaries that filters pollution, replenishes groundwater, and provides open space and wildlife habitat.

The buffer zone should include the area adjacent to waterways, the 100-year floodplain and steep slopes.

Construction, parking lots, and dredging and filling are prohibited. Permitted uses include passive recreation, multi-use trails and lawn maintenance.

Franklin County will work closely with the townships, environmental organizations and other county agencies in establishing watershed-wide stream buffer regulations.

Action 9
Support the acquisition and protection of wildlife habitats, open space and sensitive land along creeks

Sensitive land along creeks provide habitats for plants and animals, filter water, and maintain the community’s rural character.

Franklin County and Madison Township should support public acquisition of these areas through grants and other resources. Public acquisition of sensitive areas will ensure their protection and conservation. Any available funds should be targeted to areas designated on township- and county- supported watershed plans identifying priority conservation areas.



Goal D

Promote environmental awareness and stewardship

Public awareness of environmental issues promotes the responsible use of natural resources.

Action 10

Build and maintain relationships with local watershed groups

Friends of Big Walnut Creek and the Walnut Action Group are non-profit organizations that support watershed protection and stewardship. These groups should continue to educate residents on the importance of protecting our waterways.

Watershed groups and public agencies should work together to implement recommendations of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency plans and reports to improve water quality.

Action 11

Sign the Central Ohio Green Pact

The Central Ohio Green Pact is a multi-jurisdictional commitment to make our region more sustainable. Sustainability means meeting our economic and environmental needs today while ensuring that future generations can also meet their own needs.

The Green Pact outlines policies that enhance quality of life, protect the environment and facilitate economic development. By signing this agreement the Madison and Truro Township Trustees would affirm their community's commitment to a sustainable future.

Action 12

Mark storm drains to educate residents

It is critical to the environment that only rain enter storm drains because they empty directly into waterways. When it rains the resulting runoff picks up grass clippings, litter and pollution and carries them into our waterways.

Watershed groups and the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District should organize a storm drain marking event. The event should take place in all neighborhoods that have storm drains and inform residents that whatever goes down the drain ends up in our waterways.

Marking storm drains promotes environmental awareness and helps keep our waterways clean



Goal E

Support a sustainable local food system

A local food system is a network of farmers, consumers and communities that partner to create a more locally-based, self-reliant food system.

Farmers markets bring fresh foods directly to neighborhoods

Action 13

Establish a neighborhood farmers market

Access to fresh food encourages better eating habits and a healthier community. Farmers markets connect producers and consumers of local foods.

A farmer's market could be located at the Refugee Center, the vacant property at the Noe-Bixby Road and Sedalia Road intersection, the vacant property along Hamilton Road between Reinbeau Drive and Harbor Boulevard, or at a Groveport-Madison school site.

A farmers market could be supported through Community Supported Agriculture, where customers buy a share of a farm's harvest and receive food throughout the season. This arrangement gives farmers capital up-front and

enables consumers to receive a variety of fresh food.

Action 14

Identify and convert underutilized sites to community gardens

Community gardens build self-reliance, a sense of community and support local food systems. They are maintained by members of a neighborhood or community organization.

Franklin County, Madison and Truro Townships, and neighborhood organizations should collaborate to identify and acquire properties for community gardens.

Action 15

Establish educational gardening programs at schools

Eating habits have a direct correlation to obesity. To change our eating habits we must educate children on healthy eating. School programs could teach children how to grow and cook fresh foods.

Groveport-Madison schools should partner with a non-profit such as Local Matters to implement

a program to educate children about fresh, healthy foods. Local Matters is an organization working to improve the quality of life for children and adults by promoting healthful nutrition.

Action 16

Implement recommendations of the Central Ohio Local Food Assessment and Plan

Franklin County, townships, neighborhoods and schools should work with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission to implement the recommendations of its Central Ohio Local Food Assessment and Plan, see page 26 for more details.

The Plan summarizes the various aspects of a sustainable local food system including producers, processors and distributors, consumers, resources, and barriers to a sustainable food system. The plan identifies 24 recommendations to achieve a sustainable regional food system.

Actions identified in this document’s Land Use section are intended to meet multiple recommendations listed in the Local Food Assessment and Plan.

CENTRAL OHIO LOCAL FOOD ASSESSMENT AND PLAN

The Central Ohio Local Food Assessment and Plan is an analysis and policy strategy developed by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission for the regional local food system covering 12 central Ohio counties.

The plan seeks to:

- Increase the local food supply and food-processing capacity
- Ensure that fresh, safe, healthy and locally-produced food is accessible to people of all incomes

- Strengthen the local economy by creating jobs in food production and processing
- Improve the viability of local farms and food businesses
- Work with planners, policy makers and farmers to preserve farmland
- Reduce the distances travelled to distribute and sell food
- Promote agriculture on vacant and underused land in urban areas
- Coordinate local food efforts throughout the region
- Educate the public about the benefits of local foods

Franklin County, townships, neighborhoods and schools should work with MORPC to implement these recommendations in the planning area.



Action 17

Educate farmers on specialty crops and markets

The dominant form of farming in the planning area is for row crops including corn, soybeans and wheat. Being located near downtown Columbus there is a market for locally-grown specialty crops.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission should educate area farmers on the markets available for specialty crops.

Action 18

Create incentives for farmers to convert to specialty crops

Converting from row crop to specialty crop production requires different equipment and methods of farming. This conversion can cost a significant amount of money upfront but with a strong demand for these crops in urban areas can help offset this cost. This high upfront cost can prevent farmers from converting to specialty crops.

Franklin County should provide incentives from existing programs to farmers to help cover farming expenses.

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COMMUNITY

RECOMMENDATIONS



VISION FOR COMMUNITY

An identity in residential and commercial areas that builds pride in the community, encouraging community involvement

Safe, well-maintained public spaces that promote community pride and encourage residents to interact

Achieve this vision by:

- Installing gateway signs in priority areas
- Installing street signs incorporating the community identity design
- Improving the appearance of rental homes and properties
- Establishing a community gathering space

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Gateway signs build pride and a sense of community



Goal A

Nurture a sense of place in neighborhoods and along commercial corridors

Features such as gateway signs, street signs and decorative streetlights give neighborhoods a common visual identity, which builds pride and ownership within a community.

Action 1

Install gateway signs in priority areas

Consistent gateway signs create a visual identity and tell residents and visitors when they enter a community. The Franklin County Engineer’s Office and Madison and Truro Townships should partner to install gateway signs.

Important gateways to the community include the following intersections:

- Chatterton Road and Noe-Bixby Road
- Noe-Bixby Road and Winchester Pike
- Hamilton Road and Harbor Boulevard
- Marwick Road and Winchester Pike

Action 2

Install decorative, uniform street signs

Installing decorative street signs builds visual consistency in a community. Priority areas for these signs include commercial areas and neighborhood streets with higher traffic volumes. Madison and Truro Townships should partner with the Franklin County Engineer’s Office to install these street signs.

Action 3

Install consistent streetlights in priority areas

Streetlights can improve public safety and build a community’s visual identity. Madison and Truro Townships should partner with the Franklin County Engineer’s Office and utility

providers to install streetlights in priority areas such as commercial areas and residential neighborhoods. Streetlights should have an attractive, consistent design.

Since streetlights impose both up-front and long term costs, residents and township officials should agree on a funding plan prior to installing new streetlights.

Action 4

Incorporate the agreed upon community identity design into new subdivision gateway signs

People living in residential subdivisions know their subdivision’s name but often do not that they are part of a larger community. Installing the community identity design on residential subdivision gateway signs will ensure that residents living there will know that they are part of the community.

Franklin County should require all new residential subdivisions to include the community identity sign on their gateway signs.



Goal B

Maintain quality neighborhoods by improving the housing stock

New development should complement the use, density, setback and scale of existing development. Existing development should be maintained and improved to retain property values and the quality of neighborhoods.

Well-kept homes support quality neighborhoods and maintain property values

Action 5

Facilitate home rehabilitation and compatible infill housing

Well-maintained housing supports neighborhood stability. Building in existing neighborhoods is an efficient use of land. Franklin County should direct financial assistance to vacant lots and homes in need of rehabilitation. This will provide quality housing and maintain the neighborhood’s character.

Action 6

Turn around neglected properties

Neglected, tax-delinquent and foreclosed properties affect the image of neighborhoods

and reduce property values. The Franklin County Treasurer’s Office tracks properties with overdue taxes and can acquire the properties if taxes are not paid.

Madison and Truro Townships should keep the Treasurer’s Office informed of vacant and abandoned properties and partner to return the properties to productive uses.

Action 7

Improve the appearance of rental homes and properties

Rental housing is an affordable option for singles, young families and seniors. Affordable rental housing should be preserved and

GATEWAYS AND STREET SIGNS

A township logo helps residents and visitors relate with the community and builds identity. The logo design can be used on gateway signage, street signs and lamp posts.

As the planning area covers portions of two townships, there are two proposed logo designs. One is for Madison Township and the other is for the Qualstan East section of Truro Township.

Gateway signs welcome people to the community and create a visual identity for the community.

Lamp posts and street signs with the community logo help orient people and builds a community-wide identity.



Proposed lamp posts

Proposed street signs

Proposed gateway signage

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rehabilitated to appear consistent with the surrounding housing. The curb appeal of rental homes can be improved through landscaping and home improvements.

Franklin County, Madison and Truro Townships and local rental agencies should work together to target resources at improving the appearance of rental homes.

Public gathering spaces encourage interaction among residents

Action 8

Direct financial assistance to help low-income families perform home maintenance and resolve code violations

Many property owners are unable to resolve zoning and building code violations due to limited financial resources. Franklin County should continue to fund programs that help home owners perform home maintenance and resolve violations.



Goal C

Create and maintain public spaces that promote community pride and encourage residents to interact

A strong community relies on interaction between residents. Creating a public space encourages community interaction.

Action 9

Identify a community gathering space

A community gathering space encourages community interaction. Gathering spaces must be conveniently located near residents.

REVITALIZING COMMUNITIES

Franklin County administers federal grant programs aimed at helping revitalize communities.

The Community Development Block Grant program provides federal money to states, counties and cities to distribute for projects. As an urban county, Franklin County receives a portion of these funds each year.

Program objectives

Three national objectives guide where this money is spent. Projects must benefit low-to-moderate income individuals or areas, must combat slum

and blight, or must meet an urgent community need.

Franklin County allocates funding to groups and non-profits to accomplish these goals. Eligible groups can apply for funds for one-time projects or can reapply each year to fund ongoing programs.

Eligible programs

Current programs provide loans to first time home buyers, fund small business start-ups, and repair or modify homes to make them accessible for the elderly and disabled.

Community Development Block Grants can also be used for street repairs, sidewalk installations and parks.



Madison and Truro Townships and residents should identify possible gathering spaces.

Action 10

Consider a levy for the community gathering space

Public spaces require continued maintenance and funding. A property tax levy is one option to generate more funds. If approved by voters, dedicated funds could be used for general maintenance, capital improvements or land acquisition.

Action 11

Establish a community gathering space

A community gathering space should include features accessible to the young and old alike and provide sufficient open area for outdoor events.

Franklin County and the townships should seek funding to purchase and establish a space for public use.

Action 12

Organize community events at the gathering space

Once a community gathering space is established, events are needed to encourage community use.

Madison and Truro Townships should form a group of interested residents to organize community events and to oversee its maintenance.

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TRANSPORTATION

RECOMMENDATIONS



VISION FOR TRANSPORTATION

A well-maintained pedestrian network in built-up areas

A complete bicycle network for recreation and transportation

A transit network offering riders sufficient destinations with bus stops to increase ridership

A well-maintained road network with convenient access to major roads and appropriate traffic controls for safety

Achieve this vision by:

- Installing and maintaining sidewalks
- Providing bikeway connections to existing trails
- Improving bus stops
- Improving roads and intersections

Crosswalks and sidewalks allow residents to travel safely to nearby destinations



Goal A
Create and maintain a complete network for pedestrian traffic

Walking has environmental, social and health benefits. A complete network for pedestrians means that people can get to destinations safely on foot.

Action 1
Install new sidewalks and improve crossings in targeted areas according to the Sidewalk Priorities map

Sidewalks are essential to public safety and beneficial to neighborhood stability. They encourage people to walk, promoting public health while reducing traffic congestion and energy use. Sidewalks connect people to jobs, shopping and other destinations.

Madison and Truro Townships, in collaboration with the Franklin County Engineer’s Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation, should plan for sidewalk installations according to the Sidewalk Priorities map on page 45. Road improvements should include sidewalk installation, sidewalks should be at least 5 feet wide.

Action 2
Maintain and improve existing sidewalks

The majority of streets in the existing residential neighborhoods have sidewalks. Sidewalks in disrepair are unattractive and dangerous to pedestrians.

Madison and Truro Townships should work with the County Engineer’s Office to maintain sidewalks to ensure safety and their continued use.

Action 3
Require sidewalks for new development

New office, commercial, industrial, and multi-unit residential developments should be required to install sidewalks. This will create safe sidewalk connections for pedestrians.

Adopting the Smart Growth Overlay for commercial mixed use areas will ensure that new and redeveloped properties install sidewalks.

Action 4
Use pedestrian-friendly design within shopping centers and commercial areas

In large shopping centers with lots of automobile traffic, defining walkways for pedestrians can prevent accidents. In turn, better pedestrian friendliness can lead to more people traveling on foot.

Any redevelopment of existing shopping centers should include both pedestrian connections from the street to the shops and connections within the parking lot once people leave their cars. These connections should be accompanied by improved landscaping.

Action 5
Complete a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan

The Safe Routes to School program encourages children to walk or bicycle to school and makes walking and bicycling to school safer for children. This can enhance children’s health, ease traffic congestion and improve the quality of life in a community. For more information, see the program description on page 37.

It is recommended that a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan be completed as an amendment to the Blacklick-Madison Area Plan. This should be accomplished with input from the community through a partnership among Franklin County, Groveport-Madison Local School District, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Action 6

Maintain and improve existing school access paths as indicated on the Sidewalk Priorities map

School access paths provide convenient connections between the neighborhoods and schools. Maintaining these paths will increase safety for children.

Madison Township and Groveport-Madison Local Schools should develop a maintenance agreement for school access paths.



Goal B

Develop a complete bicycle network for recreation and transportation

Bicycling has environmental, social and health benefits. A complete network allows bicyclists to travel safely to destinations.

Action 7

Use the Bikeways map to guide development of an area-wide bicycle network

The Bikeways map on page 43 shows recommendations to create an area-wide bicycle network. The map includes recommended bikeway locations from area plans and new recommendations for Madison and Truro Townships.

Franklin County and Madison and Truro Townships should consult the Bikeways map when expanding bicycle facilities or reviewing development proposals. This ensures the creation of a well-connected bikeway system.

Action 8

Provide connections to existing bikeways

The Alum Creek and Blacklick Creek trails are near township neighborhoods but neither is easily accessible. Connections to trails give residents access to more recreational opportunities.

The Bikeways map shows proposed links from neighborhoods to the existing trail system. The Bikeways map should be consulted whenever a new bikeway is proposed to ensure it will connect with the neighborhoods.

Bikeways provide transportation and recreation opportunities

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe Routes to School is a federal, state and local program that encourages children to walk or bicycle to school. The program makes walking and bicycling to school safer and more appealing.

Since 2005 the Ohio Department of Transportation has awarded communities across the state millions of dollars for Safe Routes to School projects.

Successful projects have included:

- Improvements to crosswalks, sidewalks, bikeways, bicycle parking and traffic-calming features around schools
- Teaching children and parents about transportation choices and pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Community crossing guard programs and increased enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws around schools
- Participation in a “Walk to School” Day

- Maintaining a school car pool list for those who cannot walk or bicycle to school

A Safe Routes to School Travel Plan is needed to be eligible for project funding. These plans may be designed for a single school, multiple schools or an entire school district.

The Blacklick-Madison Area Plan recommends creating a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan for one or more of the schools in Blacklick Estates.



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Action 9

Require new development to provide easements to accommodate shared use paths

New development and redevelopments along bicycle corridors should dedicate easements to allow the installation of bikeways. These easements should be a minimum of 20 feet to accommodate future shared-use paths as designated on the Bikeways map.

Action 10

Require the installation of bicycle racks for all new commercial development

New commercial developments should provide racks for bicycle parking. Providing parking for bicyclists encourages more people to bike. One bicycle space should be provided for every 20 vehicle parking spaces.

Adopting the Smart Growth Overlay in commercial mixed uses areas will ensure that new development and redevelopments will provide bicycle racks.

Amenities such as benches make transit services easier to use

Action 11

Add bicycle parking at parks

Bicycle parking is limited at Robert M. Brobst Park. Providing bicycle parking reduces vehicle parking demands and encourages more bicycling. Madison Township should provide at least one bicycle space for every 20 parking spaces.



Goal C

Support a transit network that offers sufficient destinations and frequent service

Transit complements other modes of transportation and provides options to those who do not drive.

COTA LONG-RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

The Central Ohio Transit Authority hosted a series of public meetings from 2005–2006 seeking input on transit service improvements. State and regional planning agencies, local municipalities, and business and community leaders provided additional input to identify transit needs and possible solutions.

The COTA Long-Range Plan makes recommendations to meet transit needs and to create a viable, responsive and modern transit system.



Key recommendations include:

- Using the newest technology to enhance the transit experience
- Increasing access, convenience and reliability for people with limited mobility
- Improving passenger convenience by providing real-time information at major bus stops and transit centers
- Expanding service to employment and activity centers
- Making strategic transit investments
- Adding several neighborhood-oriented circulator or LINK routes

A LINK route is proposed to serve the greater Eastland area. The Blacklick-Madison Area Plan recommends that the circulator route serve Blacklick Estates, Qualstan East, Edgewater Park and Marwick Estates.

Action 12**Improve pedestrian infrastructure near bus stops**

Using transit is more attractive with better pedestrian infrastructure. A safe path to a bus stop encourages transit use. Madison and Truro Townships, the Franklin County Engineer's Office and the Central Ohio Transit Authority should partner to install sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure to encourage ridership.

Action 13**Improve existing bus stops and shelters**

COTA provides shelters at bus stops to protect transit users from weather and provide a place to sit. The presence of bus shelters encourages more people to use transit. In areas without shelters, installing trash and recycling bins, benches, and schedule displays can decrease litter and increase convenience for transit users.

Franklin County will work with COTA to identify locations for bus stop upgrades.

Action 14**Encourage COTA to establish a circulator route serving Blacklick Estates, Edgewater Park and Marwick Estates**

Circulator buses provide transportation within and between neighborhoods. COTA's Long-Range Transit Plan calls for the creation of neighborhood-oriented circulator or LINK routes to expand access to commercial areas, community facilities and existing bus lines. The Long-Range Transit Plan recommends the creation of a LINK route in the greater Eastland area to serve the Blacklick Estates, Edgewater Park and Marwick Estates neighborhoods. For more information about the COTA Long-Range Plan see page 38.

Franklin County, Madison and Truro Townships and COTA should work together in planning a neighborhood circulator route.

COMPLETE STREETS

A complete street is designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the roads. Communities that adopt a Complete Streets policy make a commitment to consider and provide appropriate facilities for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users during new and retrofit road projects.

By adopting a complete streets policy, a community can:

- Support economic growth by providing accessible and efficient connections between residences, schools and businesses
- Reduce crashes and improve safety
- Ease traffic congestion by increasing travel options such as walking and bicycling
- Help children get physical activity and gain independence through bicycling and walking
- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by riding a bicycle or walking

- Save on later street retrofitting costs by integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, transit amenities and safe crossings into the initial design of a project



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Complete streets are safer for everyone**Goal D****Maintain a safe, well-connected automobile network**

The road network is the primary means of transportation within the planning area. The community's easy access and proximity to freeways and major roads is an asset.

Action 15**Use the Road Improvements map to guide road and intersection improvements**

The Road Improvements map on page 47 shows the community's desired locations for improvements. Recommended improvements include road repaving, stop sign and stop light installations, and road realignments. The Road Improvements map should be consulted when funding is allocated for road projects.

Action 16**Adopt a Complete Streets policy for future road improvements**

Complete streets are designed for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists. A network of complete streets is safer, more livable and welcoming to everyone. For more information about complete streets see page 39. Adopting a complete streets policy ensures that future road projects are designed and constructed with all users in mind. Franklin County should work with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission to adopt a complete streets policy.

Action 17**Reduce the impacts of the U.S. Route 33 / Bixby Road Interchange on existing residents**

The proposed U.S. Route 33 / Bixby Road interchange is an economic opportunity for the township but it also concerns nearby residents.

Franklin County and Madison Township should work with the Ohio Department of Transportation to prevent negative impacts to existing residents.

Preventive measures should include easy-to-read signage directing motorists to appropriate routes to reach their destinations and streetscape improvements such as mounding, trees and landscaping. These preventive measures will limit the increase of traffic on existing roads and reduce noise and visual impacts of increased traffic.

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TYPES OF PROPOSED BIKEWAYS

Bikeways map

What it is: The bikeways map shows locations of existing and proposed bikeways. The proposals support a bikeway network for transportation and recreation.

Why we need it: Since bikeways allow people to cover wide distances, communities plan for bikeways on a regional basis. This ensures we connect destinations for people living in the planning area and throughout central Ohio.

In addition to Blacklick-Madison Area Plan bikeways recommendations, the map contains information from these sources: Columbus Bicentennial Bikeways Plan, MORPC Regional Bikeways Plan, Metro Parks, Groveport Parks and Recreation, Canal Winchester Development Department and Pickerington Engineering Department.



Shared Use Path

A path for bicycles and pedestrians, separate from a road. Generally 10 to 14 feet wide.



Bicycle lane

On-street striped lane for bicycles, 4 to 6 feet wide, usually next to the outermost travel lanes.



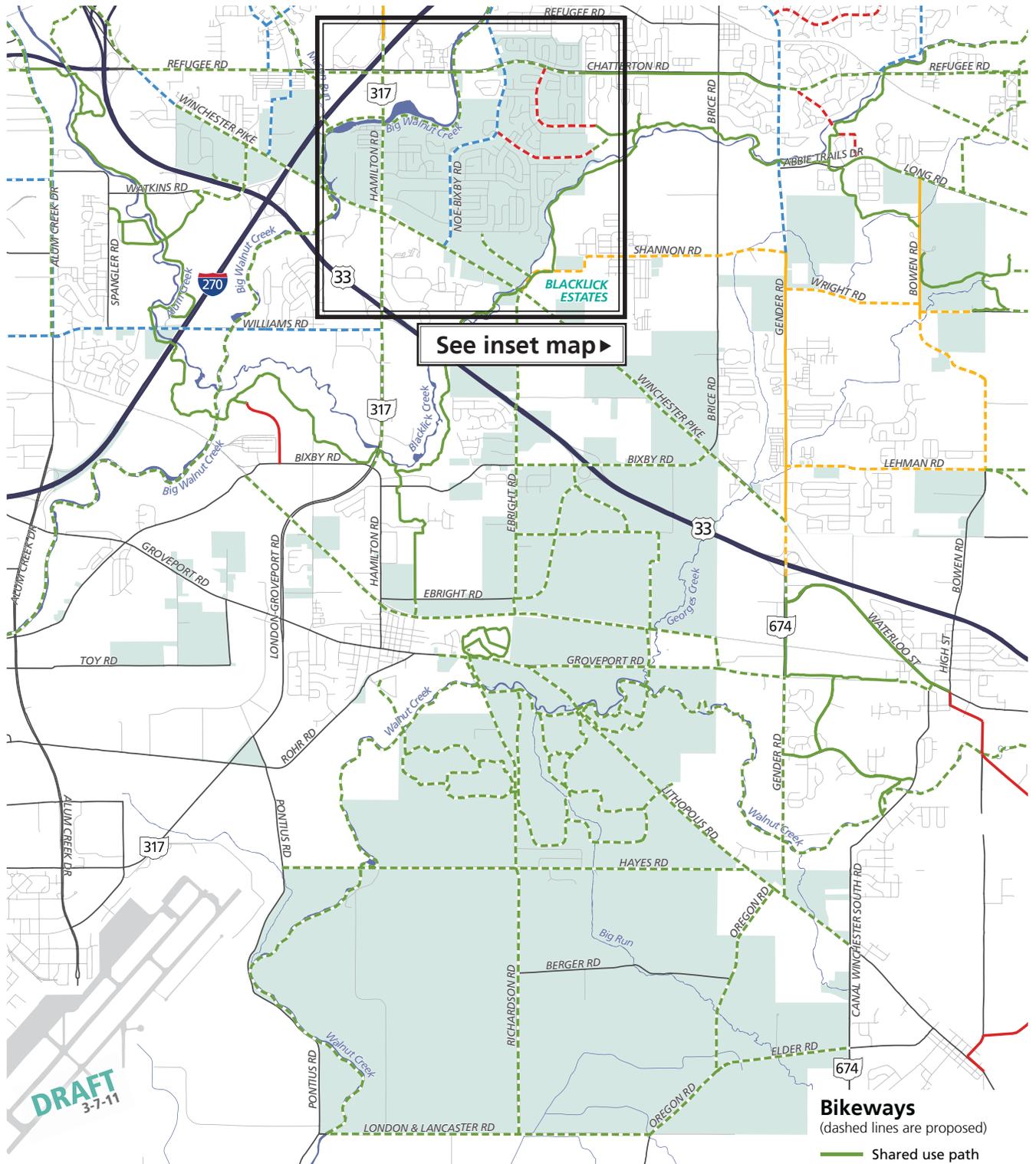
Paved shoulder

A paved area beyond outside travel lanes, 4 feet wide. Common on narrow rural roads.



Signed shared roadway

Standard road with a combination of traffic calming, signage and “sharrows” (shown at right), or a high-volume road with 14-foot or wider outside lanes.

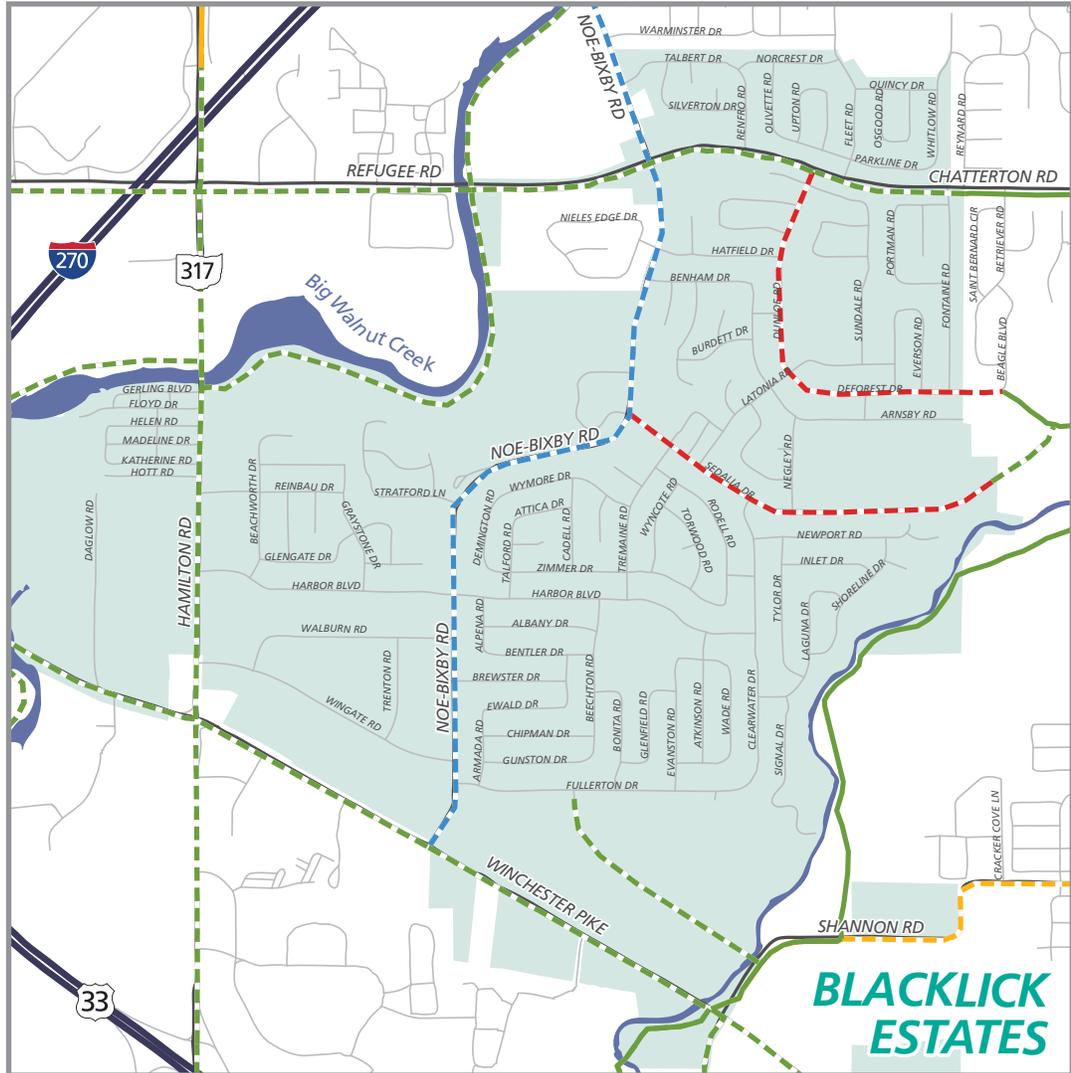


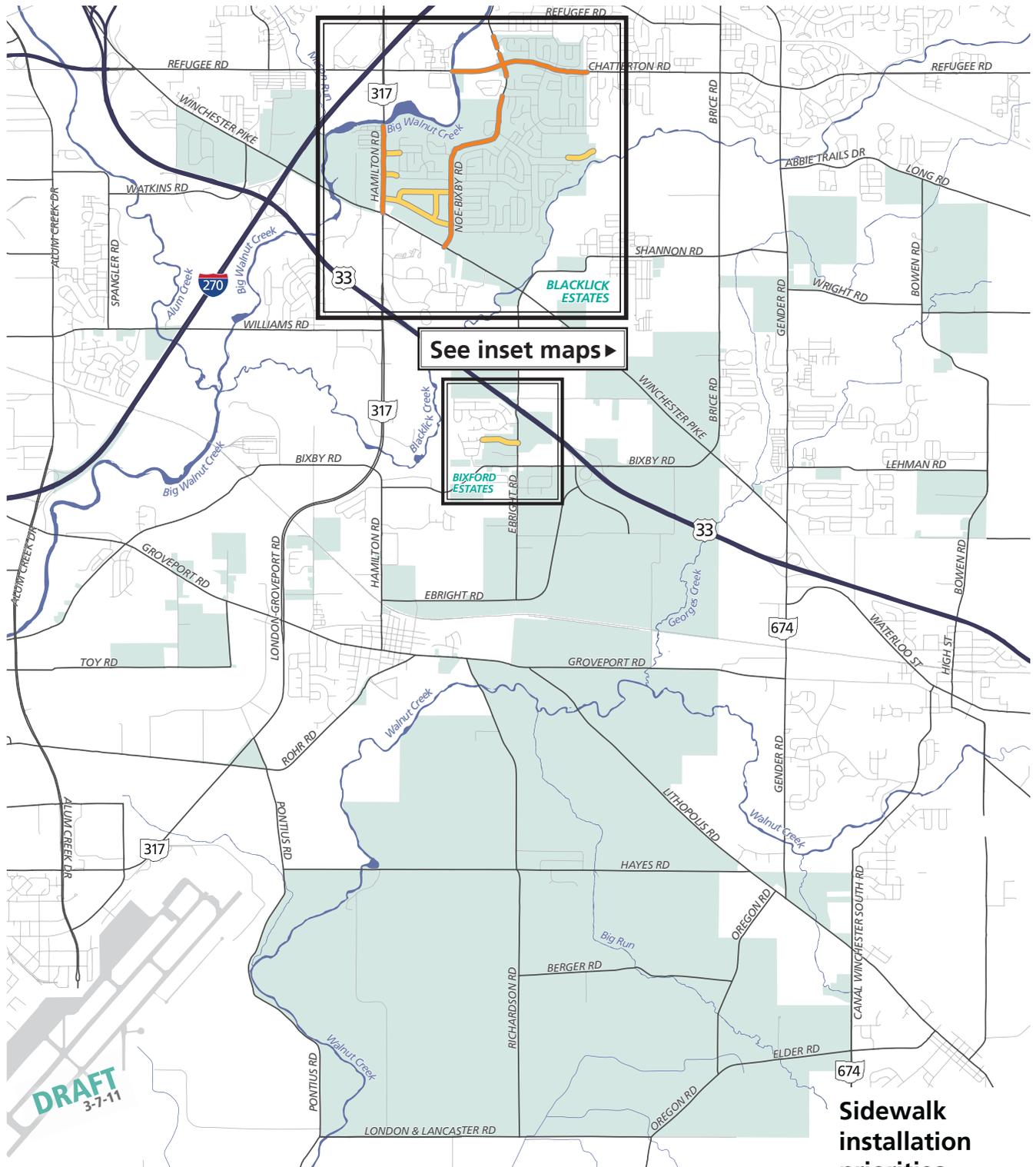
BIKEWAYS MAP

The map above shows anticipated roadway improvements in the vicinity of Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33

- Bikeways**
 (dashed lines are proposed)
- Shared use path
 - Bicycle lane
 - Signed shared roadway
 - - - Paved shoulder

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See inset maps ▶

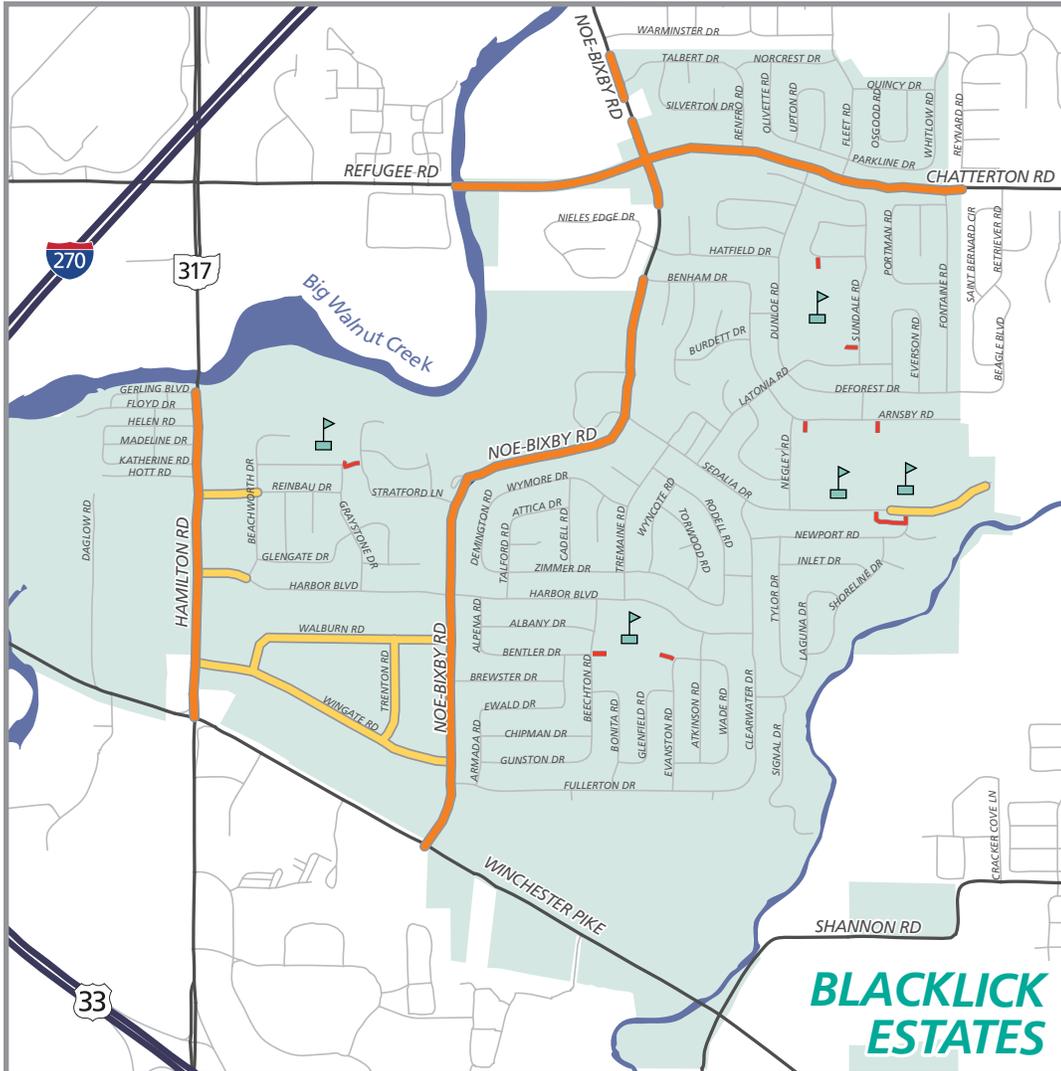
Sidewalk installation priorities

- Primary priority
- Secondary priority

SIDEWALK PRIORITIES MAP

The map above shows anticipated roadway improvements in the vicinity of Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33

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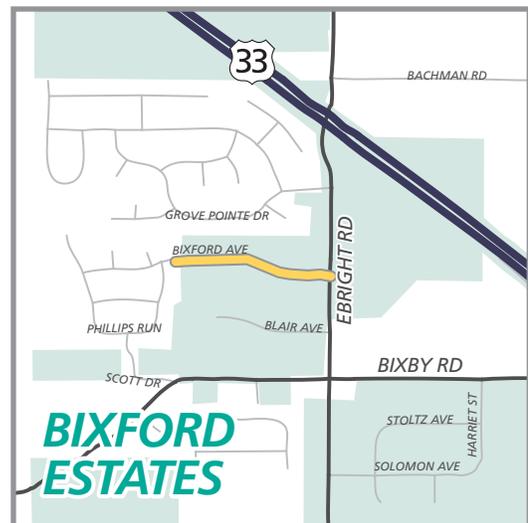


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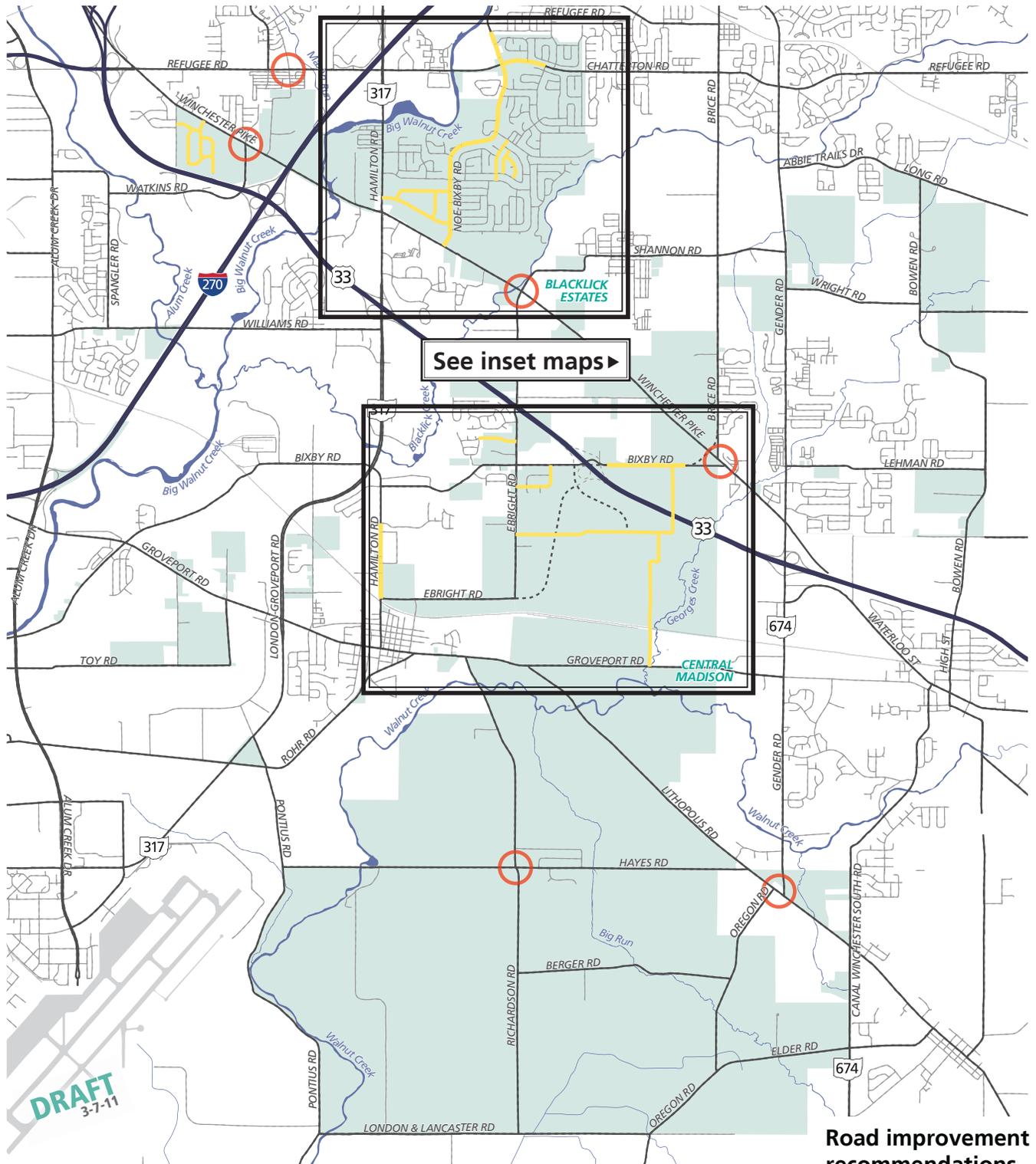
**BLACKLICK
ESTATES**

**Sidewalk
priorities**

- Primary priority installation
- Secondary priority installation
- Existing School Access Path
- Existing School



**BIXFORD
ESTATES**



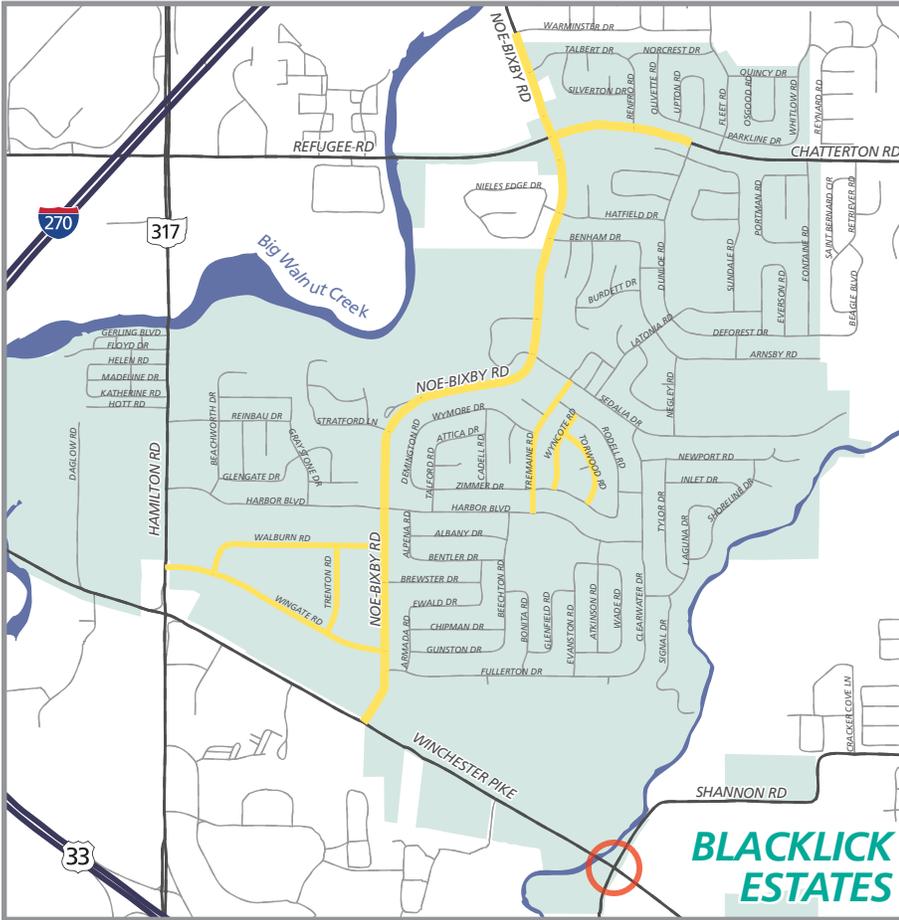
ROAD IMPROVEMENTS MAP

The map above shows anticipated roadway improvements in the vicinity of Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33

Road improvement recommendations

-  Road
-  Intersection

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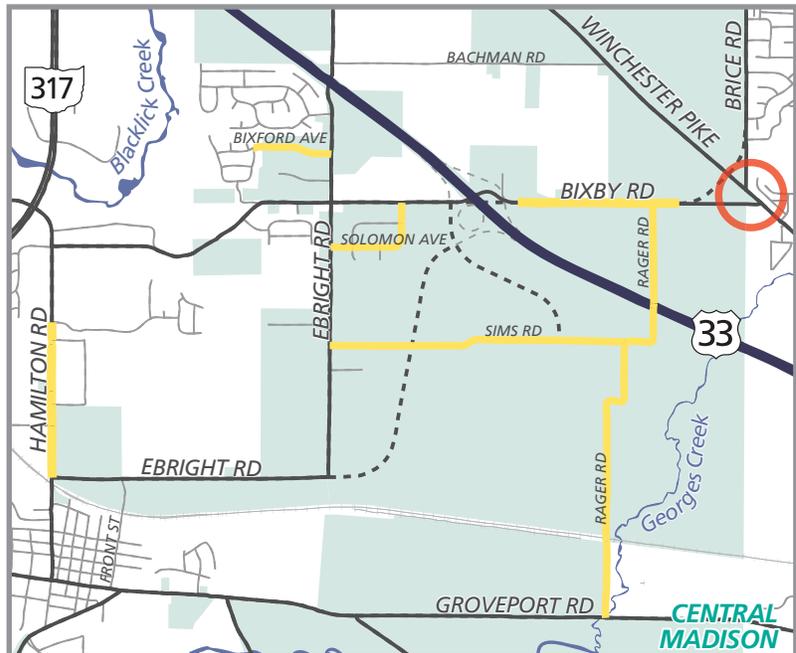


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The map to the right shows anticipated roadway improvements in the vicinity of Bixby Road and U.S. Route 33

Road improvement recommendations

- Road
- Intersection



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