

VI Proposed Land Use

The proposed Land Use Plan is the basic planning tool used to guide future development and policy decisions to achieve the desired vision for the future of Liberty Township looking at a 20 year build-out scenario. The Land Use Plan makes recommendations of future land use classifications and densities and provides “General Location and Development Characteristics.” It should be noted that the Land Use Plan is a vision for the future and is to be used as a guideline for making recommendations. The Township Zoning Commission and Liberty Township Board of Trustees shall have the ability to analyze specific proposals and uses based on current market conditions and impact to adjacent properties while making future land use decisions.

There are several factors to take into account when reviewing the Land Use recommendations. The first is the Planning Issues associated with the Neighborhood Concept Areas Analysis (Exhibit 16), the second is the Land Use Categories, and the third is the Land Use Plan (see Exhibit 17).

Cost of County Community Services¹

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee evaluated the Cost of County Community Services (average net fiscal impacts of existing land uses on local budgets) as part of the review and analysis during the preparation of the Land Use Plan. The data used to evaluate the Cost of County Community Services came from a study prepared by the American Farmland Trust (AFT) for Butler County that compared the net fiscal impacts of farm/open land uses to residential and commercial/industrial land uses. AFT analyzed the revenues generated by each of these land uses and compared them to the expenditures with county services. The study was prepared in October 2004. County services include education, public health and safety, public works, local government and courts.

The findings of the Cost of County Community Services Study presented a snapshot in time of revenues versus costs of providing services to major land uses. The findings show:

- 85 percent of county revenue was generated by residential land uses, 13 percent by commercial/industrial land uses, and 2 percent by farm/open lands.
- 93 percent of expenditures were used to provide services to residents, 6 percent for services to the commercial/industrial sector and 1 percent for farm/open lands.
- For every \$1 of revenue generated by the residential sector, \$1.12 was spent to provide county-level services to residents.
- For every \$1 of revenue generated by commercial/industrial land uses, 45 cents was spent to provide county-level services to businesses and industries.
- For every \$1 of revenue generated by farm/open lands, 49 cents was spent to provide county-level services to farm and undeveloped lands.

¹ The Cost of County Community Services Study is based on county level services and does not reflect all of the services that are provided by the township, including but not limited to: police, fire and emergency services, road maintenance, parks, cemeteries, and zoning.

The findings show that farm/open and commercial/industrial land uses are important to fiscal equilibrium. Together these uses offset the shortfall associated with providing county-level services to residential development. The findings suggest that decisions that retain and enhance commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses can help improve the long-term fiscal stability of the community.

In order to identify the need for balanced growth in Liberty Township the Steering Committee reviewed the Cost of County Community Services Study based on the 1999 Adopted Land Use Plan.

Land Use	Acres	Avg. Tax \$/acre	Total Taxes (using 2005 avg. values)	Cost of County Comm. Services
Residential = 69%	12126	\$16,729	\$202,854,641	\$227,197,198
Commercial/Industrial = 16%	2872	\$16,827	\$ 48,327,201	\$ 21,747,241
Farm/Open Space = 15%	2704	\$37.50	\$ 101,400	\$ 49,686
TOTAL			\$251,283,243	\$248,994,125

The results above showed that with 16% Commercial/Industrial land use and 15% Farm/Open Space land use, that the community at build out could have fiscal stability based on the Cost of County Community Services only. It was noted that the cost of providing Township Community Services may exceed the cost of providing County Level Community Services and as time passes it is anticipated that the Cost of Providing Community Services will continue to increase and the need for increased commercial/industrial and/or farm/open space will be needed for Liberty Township's fiscal stability.

The Steering Committee recommended that the community carefully evaluate land use decisions as they relate to the fiscal impact such uses may have on the community.

Neighborhood Concept Areas

The Steering Committee divided the Township into “Neighborhood Concept Areas” to better analyze existing conditions, market factors, and anticipated future development (see Exhibit 16). For each concept area “Planning Issues” have been identified to assist in the preparation of the land use plan. The goal was to analyze the bigger picture of the area prior to looking at land use on a site by site basis.

Concept Area	Planning Issues
A: Canal Town Commercial Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognize potential redevelopment of Golf Course – Make Golf Course “Planned Community Mixed Use” with the following uses; office, retail, multi-family, single family, parkland, open space, recreation b. Promote highway commercial development / redevelopment along State Route 4 c. Look at industrial development where existing mobile home park is or “Planned Community Mixed Use” d. Preserve area along river for future park and canal bike trail connecting to Gregory Creek e. Recognize infill development and work with owners to find new uses f. Buffer existing residential uses g. Similar signage / lighting shall be used throughout the corridor h. Take advantage of fiber backbone along State Route 4 for development i. Link / extend bike / hike trails
B: Kyles / State Route 747 Commercial Node	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote neighborhood retail / service uses (non-regional, no 24-hour service), pedestrian scale with commercial uses close to road, parking, and access in rear b. Buffer / transition commercial uses to single-family uses c. Upgrade / widen and signal intersection d. Create an image / identity for development on the intersection (lights, signs, landscaping, materials) e. Provide planned transitional uses between commercial and residential f. Link / extend bike / hike trails

Concept Area**Planning Issues**

C: Farmington

- a. Analyze farmland preservation tools and work with individual property owners
- b. Preserve Gregory Creek corridor and promote hike / bridle path
- c. Provide hike / bridle connection from Gregory Creek to Great Miami River
- d. Evaluate larger minimum lot size or conservation development potential to allow cluster development at one (1) dwelling unit per acre (gross) max with greater open space preservation
- e. Link / extend bike / hike trails

D: Liberty North

- a. Continue Linn Road extension to Yankee Road to provide secondary access to State Route 63
- b. Promote O-2 (Office and Limited Industrial) development as a new employment center in northwest corner of concept area only
- c. Provide transitional buffers between O-2 (Office and Limited Industrial) and different uses
- d. Work with Butler County to make water / sanitary sewer improvements / connections
- e. Work with Lemon Township to coordinate development up to State Route 63
- f. Rezone northwest corner of concept area to O-2 (Office and Limited Industrial) to reserve the land
- g. Take advantage of railroad for O-2 (Office and Limited Industrial) uses and evaluate rail spurs
- h. Improve Salzman, Hankins, and Yankee Roads to State Route 63
- i. Link / extend bike / hike trails
- j. Provide Transitional development between O-2 (Office and Limited Industrial) and existing / proposed Single Family Residential
- k. Provide Estate Residential in northeast corner of concept area (1-5 acre lot size)
- l. Provide ½ acre minimum lot size Single Family Residential use where existing subdivisions planned and include southeast corner of concept area

Concept Area

**F: Cincinnati-Dayton / Kyles
Station Commercial Node**

Planning Issues

- a. Promote neighborhood retail / service uses (non-regional, no 24-hour), pedestrian scale with commercial uses close to road, parking and access in rear
- b. Buffer / transition commercial uses to single-family uses
- c. Provide area for future Fire Station
- d. Link / extend bike / hike trails

G: Central Station

- a. Preserve Gregory Creek Corridor and promote hike / bridle path and link from Dudley Woods Metropark to Incline Park and west to State Route 747 Town Center
- b. Provide higher density residential development as a transition to commercial development in Town Center and adjacent to State Route 747
- c. Promote and preserve ½ acre minimum lots for single-family detached residential
- d. Evaluate conservation development in the Gregory Creek Corridor
- e. Promote pedestrian / bike / hike connections between developments and parks
- f. Provide neighborhood park near Lesourdsville-West Chester Road and Millikin Road
- g. Provide landscaped median along State Route 747 and Princeton Road to enhance image of Liberty Township and to assist in controlling access points
- h. Promote planned community mixed use development along State Route 747 Corridor
- i. Link / extend bike / hike trails

Concept Area

I: Liberty Town Center

Planning Issues

- a. Promote centralized location of public services
- b. Create community gathering area(s)
- c. Promote Planned Community Mixed Use development
- d. Provide transitional uses between commercial and residential development
- e. Promote pedestrian friendly development to link neighborhoods to Town Center which could include landscaped median street on State Route 747 and Princeton Road
- f. Provide graphics and pictures of landscaped medians and pedestrian crossings
- g. Use common light fixtures and signage as an image component
- h. Link / extend bike / hike trails

J: Yankee Estates

- a. Provide intersection improvements and traffic calming devices (landscaping) at Yankee Road and intersecting streets
- b. Provide higher density residential uses and broad range of housing types to support adjacent commercial uses in Liberty Commerce Center and Interstate 75 office / manufacturing corridor in Huntsville / Jericho area
- c. Include retirement communities / empty nester development
- d. Promote ½ acre lot sizes on available property
- e. Promote connection to Dudley and Yankee Parks and evaluate expansion of existing park facilities
- f. Link Hunts Creek to Gregory Creek with hike / bike trail
- g. Link / extend bike / hike trails

Concept Area

L: Liberty Commerce Center

Planning Issues

- a. Promote Liberty Interchange project including Cox Road Extension and Hamilton-Mason Road
- b. Upgrade of Hamilton-Mason Road will require the redevelopment of properties on the north side of the road
- c. Rezone land along Bethany Road (west of Interstate 75) for commercial use
- d. Promote redevelopment of Bethany along Cincinnati-Dayton Road for arts, entertainment, and business district. Evaluate overlay district to allow for mixed use, new urbanism concepts encouraging pedestrian friendly, shared limited access, shared parking, and streetscape
- e. Provide transitional uses between commercial and residential uses
- f. Upgrade Hamilton-Mason Road at railroad overpass near Maud Hughes Road
- g. Link / extend bike / hike trails

M: Four Bridges

- a. Coordinate Butler-Warren County Line Road widening with Warren County
- b. Re-evaluate Cox Road Corridor Overlay District to maximize business development potential and to protect residential properties
- c. Support Bethany Road upgrade
- d. Buffer Trails of Four Bridges from Liberty / Interstate 75 office and manufacturing corridor
- e. Mixed use on northwest corner of Township line and Butler-Warren County Line Road
- f. Link / extend bike / hike trails

N: Liberty Central

- a. Location should be a focal point of community because of its location in the center of the Township
- b. The Ohio Rail Commission is evaluating this railroad line for a possible future commuter train location that would run from Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, and Cleveland and beyond. If this line is selected Liberty township should evaluate the impact on the community and continue to participate in the studies that are completed.
- c. Evaluate future central community gathering space
- d. Link / extend bike / hike trails

Land Use Classifications

Based on the evaluation of the Neighborhood Concept Areas and Planning Issues described for each area, the committee identified and defined the Land Use Categories to be applied to the land use plan (see Exhibit 17). While many of the categories are unique to certain Concept Areas, many are community-wide. These Land Use Categories shall be reviewed with each development proposal that comes before the Township.

- **Conservation Development**

Conservation Development is intended to maximize the protection and preservation of existing natural features (wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, steep slopes, agriculture, forestry, and woodlands) while balancing landowner rights to develop their property at a low gross density with clustered home sites and large amounts of open space.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Located along sensitive stream corridors, steep slopes, woodlands, wetlands, and flood plains;
2. Maximize the potential for each residence to have direct physical and visual access to inter-connected open space;
3. Gross density shall be one (1) dwelling unit per acre;
4. Houses shall be concentrated where the best home sites are located;
5. Open space shall be at least 40% with the focus on the preservation of natural features;
6. Open space shall protect natural environment that provides wildlife habitat and undisturbed natural vegetation to absorb and slow water runoff; reduce soil erosion, stream sedimentation, and flooding; improve on-site and downstream water quality; and enhance infiltration and groundwater recharge; and
7. Density Bonus: 40% open space minimum will be required with one (1) additional dwelling unit granted for each additional one percent (1%) of open space up to 50% open space (for an additional 10 dwelling units maximum).

- **Cox Road Corridor Overlay District**

The purpose of the Cox Road Corridor Overlay District is to provide certain design standards which are unique to a particular area. The standards specifically are created to address the unique existing and desired physical and architectural characteristics which are inherent to a particular area in order to:

1. Improve the compatibility between residential and non-residential uses;
2. Mitigate the detrimental effects concerning intensity of use within the Corridor concerning the safety of residents and their use and enjoyment of their property;
3. Preserve the streetscape along the roadways, maintaining the character, and promoting safe pedestrian movement;

4. Reduce traffic congestion;
5. Improve the appearance, usefulness, and signage; and
6. Extend overlay district to Millikin Road to protect Trails of Four Bridges Subdivision.

- **Estate Residential 1-5 Acre Lot Size**

Large parcels of land with country-like characteristics, containing low density detached single-family homes.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Large lots – between one (1) to five (5) acre(s) per dwelling unit;
2. Significant amount of open space – rolling fields, pasture; and
3. Significant amount of road frontage (200 feet minimum) and yard setbacks (100 feet minimum front yard).

Redevelopment Criteria

1. One dwelling unit per acre gross density and
2. Significant setback from existing public roads (100 feet minimum) to preserve rural character.

- **Planned General Business**

The purpose of the General Business use is to reserve certain land areas for a broader range of retail, service, and office uses serving a greater population than those uses permitted in the Neighborhood Business Classification. These areas shall accommodate the most intensive commercial and office development.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Shall not be located adjacent to residential districts unless situated on a collector or arterial road;
2. Uses adjacent to residential shall provide significant mounding and buffering;
3. Uses shall serve the community or regional market; and
4. Shall be developed according to a unified development plan (PUD) taking advantage of shared amenities including parking, vehicle and pedestrian access, signage, and landscaping.

- **Multi-Family Residential**

Medium density detached or attached housing (apartments, townhouses, condominiums, landominiums, and row houses).

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Densities consistent with surrounding uses, but generally not exceeding six units per acre;
2. Access shall be provided to a collector or arterial road, or in close proximity to high volume traffic area;

3. Shall serve as a buffer between high intensity commercial uses and single family residential uses;
4. Building and parking areas shall be screened and buffered;
5. Typically will be one or two story structures with exceptions for three story structures where there will be no impact on adjacent uses;
6. Unique development and architectural design characteristics are encouraged;
7. Common vehicular access and parking shall be provided;
8. Common open space and recreation shall be provided; and
9. Designed to encourage easy pedestrian access.

- **Planned Neighborhood Business**

Low intensity neighborhood oriented retail, office, and service uses that provide a transition between residential uses and other types of development or that achieve compatibility with and provide services to the adjacent residential areas.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Road frontage on or near Collector or Arterial road, or at major intersections;
2. Small or unique sites developed as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) on sites between three (3) and (10) acres;
3. Adjacent to or near residential areas;
4. Buildings and structures designed at a residential scale maximizing the use of natural materials (brick, stone, hearty plank, cedar shake), sloping roofs with dimensional shingles to be compatible with adjacent residential uses;
5. Buildings and parking areas shall be buffered and screened from adjacent residential areas and rights-of-ways; and
6. Designed to encourage easy pedestrian access.

- **Office / Retail / Light Industrial**

Professional and corporate office, warehouse, and research and development uses, and related compatible uses including restaurants, retail, and service uses, provided to support the adjacent development.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Developed as a Planned Unit Development or Community Mixed Use Development with controlled access, adequate internal street network, and common / shared parking areas;
2. Open space areas to serve the needs of the employees and community;
3. Internal and perimeter landscaping shall be maximized; and
4. Multiple building layouts shall consist of coordinated architectural design and building materials.

- **Office and Limited Industrial Development**

The purpose of this district is to provide space in the Township for more intensive office development, research facilities, and limited commercial and industrial

activity, provided it is compatible with the more intensive office development and related compatible uses including restaurants, retail, and service uses provided to support the adjacent development. It is also intended to provide space for larger employment centers without traffic congestion and for certain community facilities.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Large scale office / industrial developments should be clustered, open settings with adequate access to a collector or arterial road;
2. Planned large scale developments with internal street network, common / shared parking areas, and a high degree of internal landscaping and open space; and
3. Multiple buildings with coordinated architectural design features and building materials.

- **Open Space**

Areas designated to remain in their natural state, areas set aside or designated as open space in an approved PUD Development Plan, areas which contain natural environmental features which shall be preserved, and active and passive recreation areas.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Open space areas shall include but not limited to: wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, steep slopes, and woodlands;
2. Open space areas may contain walking trails, bike / hike trails, or other recreational (active and passive) and natural uses;
3. Development of adjacent parcels shall provide connecting open space to allow for larger expanses of open space lands;
4. Open space areas shall remain in their natural state or improved / maintained as recreation areas with the goal of minimizing impacts to existing natural areas;
5. Open space areas shall be maximized to promote a high quality of life for the residents; and
6. Promote the use of conservation easements.

- **Planned Business Park**

Large scale corporate, research, medical, technical, and limited industrial uses, with limited and compatible commercial uses.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Campus style layout;
2. Unified and extensive landscaping and open space plans;
3. Attractive entrance treatments;
4. Controlled vehicle access and parking areas;
5. Shared amenities including parking, vehicle and pedestrian access, signage, and lighting; and

6. Unified building materials.

- **Planned Community Mixed Use**

Planned Community Mixed Use includes areas that develop with a mix of uses (office, retail, recreational, and residential) which maintain a more vibrant, walkable, and economical development. Neo-traditional street and pedestrian patterns shall be maximized to achieve a community oriented urban lifestyle.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Large sites, generally 20 acres or more;
2. Developed as Mixed Use Planned Unit Development;
3. Max building height three (3) stories or 45 feet, whichever is greater;
4. Retail uses are only permitted on the first floor;
5. Office and residential uses are permitted on all floors;
6. Commercial (retail / office) uses shall be at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the overall development;
7. Residential buildings may be freestanding from other uses;
8. Mixed Use Buildings (Residential / Commercial) shall not exceed twelve (12) dwelling units per acre;
9. Residential density that is free standing within the mixed use development shall not exceed six (6) dwelling units per acre and have at least 30% open space;
10. Detached residential units shall not exceed two (2) dwelling units per acre;
11. Minimum open space shall be thirty percent (30%);
12. Streetscape design shall be included in development plan;
13. The sidewalks and parkways must be tree lined;
14. Parking rations must conform to the zoning resolution except when common / shared parking areas can be provided;
15. Community gathering areas and/or focal points shall be provided at all major nodes;
16. Uniform building materials, signage, lighting, and landscaping shall be provided throughout the development or divided by neighborhood district;
and
17. Buffering shall be provided between existing adjacent divergent or less restrictive uses.

- **Professional Office**

Low rise office uses (including the conversion of single family homes to offices) that provide a transition between residential uses and other types of development.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Located along a collector or arterial road;
2. Located between residential uses and other types of development;
3. Professional office uses designed to fit in with adjacent residential character including pitched roofs, compatible building materials and scale;

4. Landscaped buffers and berms located between the residential use and the Professional Office use that effectively screens the use and parking areas; and
5. Max building height of two (2) stories or 35 feet (whichever is greater).

- **Public / Institutional**

Public or semi-public uses such as government buildings, churches, schools, utilities, cemeteries, and historic properties or structures that should be preserved, that possess a unique character representative of the past and/or a feature which plays an important role to the identity of the area, and/or possesses historical or architectural value.

- **Public / Private Recreation**

Public, semi-public, and private park and recreation facilities.

- **Senior Independent / Assisted Living**

Senior Independent / Assisted Living are areas that provide an alternative for seniors who are looking to remain in the community. Independent senior living shall provide distinctive retirement living for seniors in a full service club residence. Assisted Living shall provide independent senior living and private retirement living with up to 24-hour healthcare services available.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Located on sites near or adjacent to community services for ease of transportation;
2. Developed according to a unified Planned Unit Development Plan;
3. Located in areas that shall serve as a transition between single-family residential uses and more intense uses;
4. Located along or adjacent to arterial or collector roads; and
5. Developments shall be heavily landscaped and provide passive recreation options for the residents.

- **Single Family Residence – Planned Development**

Variable residential densities that are developed and maintained with integral recreational uses and protection of historic and natural resources on land set aside for open space use only.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Developed as Planned Unit Development (PUD);
2. Densities shall be consistent with surrounding development as approved on a PUD plan;
3. Developments shall be unique and creative in the design of how the subdivision is laid out;
4. Common open space, recreational facilities, and pedestrian walkways shall be provided and maintained as part of the development;

5. Existing historic resources as identified on the historic properties map may be preserved and become an integral part of the character of the development;
6. Consideration for connectivity to adjacent open space, park lands, natural features, and historic resources shall be considered for the location and character of open space provided;
7. Developments are encouraged to preserve as many natural features (streams, wetlands, woodlands) as possible; and
8. Usable open space is encouraged.

- **Single Family Residence – Suburban**

Areas existing or proposed for single-family detached residential uses which are generally provided with a higher level of urban services, including: public water and sewer, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and other amenities.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Densities shall not exceed 2.25 dwelling units per acre;
2. Minimum lot size shall not be less than 15,000 square feet unless part of a Planned Unit Development;
3. Developments are encouraged to provide lot widths not less than 100 feet to allow for side entry garages; and
4. Developed as part of a recorded subdivision.

- **Single Family Residence ½ Acre Minimum Lots**

Areas existing or proposed for single-family detached residential uses which are generally provided with a higher level of urban services, including: public water and sewer, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and other amenities.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Densities shall not exceed 1.7 dwelling units per acre;
2. Minimum lot size shall not be less than 20,000 square feet unless part of a Planned Unit Development;
3. Developments are encouraged to provide lot widths not less than 110 feet to allow for side entry garages and to provide an “estate” feel to the development; and
4. Developed as part of a recorded subdivision.

- **Single Family Residence 5 Dwelling Units Per Acre Maximum Density**

Medium density detached residential uses that provide a transition between more intense and less intense uses which are generally provided with a higher level of urban services, including: public water and sewer, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and other amenities.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Located adjacent to a major thoroughfare;
2. Located between more intense and less intense uses to serve as a transition; and
3. Developed as part of a recorded subdivision.

- **Transitional**

Transitional shall be a development of a blend of adjacent uses that provide a transition between more intense and less intense uses.

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Located between more intense and less intense uses (e.g. commercial and single-family residential) and
2. Buffering shall be provided between more intense and less intense uses unless the development itself provides adequate buffering.

- **Two-Family Residence**

Two-Family attached housing (townhouses, condominiums, landominiums, duplexes).

General Location and Development Characteristics

1. Located adjacent to arterial or collector roads and single family residences, which serve as a transition between the more intense and less intense uses and
2. Shall be developed as part of a recorded subdivision and include public water and sewer, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and other amenities;

Land Use Plan Breakdown

In order to create a sustainable long term community through the balance of land use, the Steering Committee strived for a good balance of commercial / residential land use as provided in the chart and table below. Eighteen Percent (18%) of the land area on the Land Use Plan has been identified for commercial use.

Figure 5: Land Use Plan Table and Chart

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Conservation Development	767
Cox Road Corridor Overlay District	453
Estate Residential 1-5 Acre Lot Size	2109
General Business	194
Multi-Family Residential	85
Neighborhood Business	157
Office / Retail / Light Industrial	97
Office and Limited Industrial Development	1189
Open Space	384
Planned Business Park	665
Planned Community Mixed Use	862
Planned Professional Office	26
Public / Institutional	477
Public / Private Recreation	659
Senior Independent / Assisted Living	28
Single Family Residence – Planned Development	1357
Single Family Residence – Suburban	2376
Single Family Residence ½ acre min lots	3569
Single Family Residence 5 d.u. / acre max density	40
Transitional	241
Two Family Residences	16

