

City of Sylvania, Ohio

Land Use Plan



2010

Acknowledgements

The update of the City of Sylvania's Land Use Plan was made possible by the combined efforts of many individuals and organizations. Many public meetings took place during the development of this plan representing a significant contribution of time provided by elected and appointed officials and residents. Though it is not possible to list all individuals who were involved with this plan, the following list recognizes key leaders during the planning process:

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Introduction

Background and History

This document represents an update to the City of Sylvania's Land Use Plan. The process to update this plan began on March 17, 2008, when the Sylvania City Council passed Ordinance No. 23-2008. Subsequently, a Steering Committee composed of 19 members was appointed to guide and spearhead this effort. As described later, the planning process involved multiple steps and work elements.



Prior related planning efforts within the City of Sylvania had involved joint planning endeavors with Sylvania Township. These planning processes resulted in the production of planning documents in 1988, 1997 and 2000/2001. This plan however is focused on only the City of Sylvania and is intended to represent a replacement of these earlier documents. Traditions of city-township cooperation are still quite evident and this update builds on the foundation of prior planning work.

Planning and Zoning

Community planning and zoning are linked, but are very different. Community plans are essentially policy documents that offer broad strategies and long-term vision for the direction of development and redevelopment in a community. Zoning on the other hand, is a very specific and structured legal instrument with the full force of law. Zoning ordinances typically divide a community into districts and then require certain development standards in each

district. Development standards often include building setbacks, building height limitations, landscaping and parking requirements, signage control, etc.

Municipal Planning and Zoning in Ohio

Ohio Law does not define how a community should go about preparing a municipal plan, or what specific topics it should address. However, a municipal planning commission established under section 713.01 of the Ohio Revised Code is directed to "make plans and maps of the whole or any portion of the municipal corporation, and of any land outside thereof, which, in the opinion of the commission, is related to the planning of the municipal corporation, and make changes in such plans or maps when it deems it advisable."

While in other states, the link between community planning and zoning is more direct, in Ohio this link is much less clear. Nonetheless, there have been Ohio court cases where the presence of a municipal plan has positively influenced zoning decisions. Generally, municipal plans can demonstrate a rational basis for local zoning and a relationship between regulatory steps and a public purpose and advancement of public health safety or welfare.

See: Ohio Planning and Zoning Law, by Stuart Meck and Kenneth Pearlman, 2007 Ed, Thomson-West Pub. 4.41.

Zoning is a powerful regulatory tool that essentially limits the use of privately-owned real estate. Because zoning regulates the use of such a precious and basic possession, it follows that such regulatory steps should be based on a rational, clear and accepted vision for development and redevelopment in a community. In other words, zoning requirements should be based on something that articulates a well-reasoned direction for physical change in a

community. A relevant and accepted community plan is also an important tool to guide local decisions about where, when and how public infrastructure is provided and upgraded.

Purpose

The previous Land Use Plan provided a purpose statement that remains relevant for this Land Use Plan. This purpose statement is quoted below:

... to provide an overall context for development decisions on issues related to land use, transportation, and community facilities. The Plan focuses on "big picture" issues and development concepts that require many years and much effort to be fully implemented. It defines a vision of how the community desires to look many years in the future, and the necessary steps to get there. In some ways, these steps represent a 'to do list'

Gateway District Plan

Apart from the previous Land Use Plan, another relevant planning effort is the "Gateway District Plan." This plan is generally focused on the Monroe Street Corridor between I-475 and Silica Drive to the west. The planning process included consideration of alternatives, definition of assets, opportunities and challenges, and ultimately divided this area into four distinct areas. These areas included; Regional Gateway, Monroe Street Corridor, Central Business District, Civic Campus. This plan, implementation methods and relevant development policies, are discussed more fully later.



Source: JJR

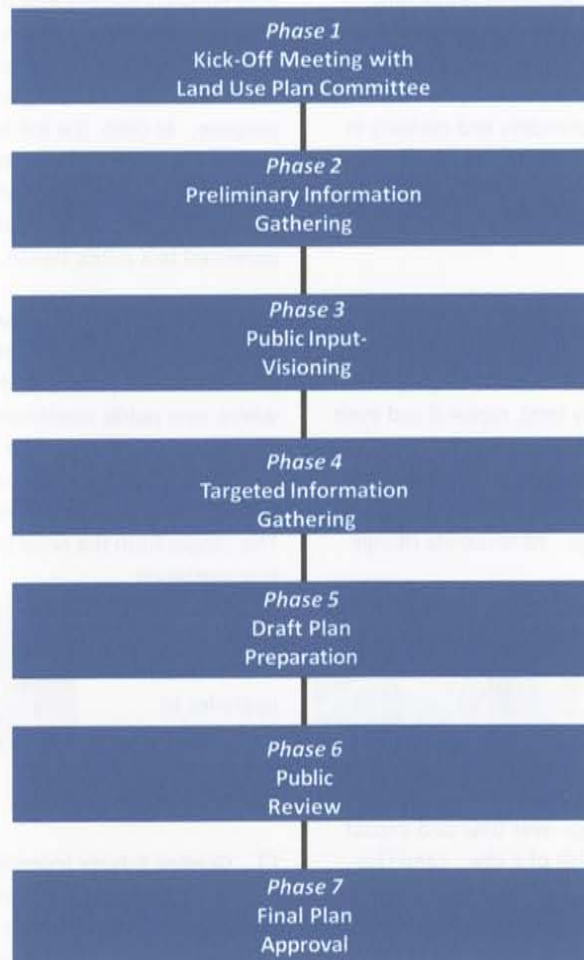
The World Has Changed Since The Last Plan....

The prior land use plan was prepared at a time that predates the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and before anyone could have expected that gasoline could reach more than \$4.00 per gallon. In terms of local milestones, the prior Land Use Plan was prepared before the new Fifth Third Field was built in downtown Toledo and before Fossil Park had opened at a previously abandoned rock quarry south of Centennial Terrace and Quarry.



Process

The planning process used to develop this updated land use plan included seven work phases. These work phases were defined as sequential steps and included the specific elements shown in the following chart:



Land Use Plan - Defined

During the Kick-off Meeting on October 14, 2008, members of the Steering Committee considered a definition of what a Land Use Plan means to Sylvania. The accepted definition was as follows:

A Land Use Plan is a verbal and graphic description of how the Sylvania community wants to see itself in the future. It focuses on the long-term (10-20 years) and big picture community development issues and on the interrelationships that exist between uses of land, transportation and public facilities.

Important Characteristics of This Land Use Plan Include:

Big Picture: Most day-to-day local government decisions that relate to community development focus on very specific issues in specific areas. A Land Use Plan offers the opportunity to look broadly at issues like housing, economic development, public infrastructure, commercial corridors and mobility *in terms of how they relate to each other*. This larger view of the community can help give a new perspective toward individual development proposals and issues.

Identification of Existing Conditions and Relevant Trends: Land Use Plans generally include information regarding how an area is changing and how it might be impacted by local, regional and even national trends. Communities are constantly changing. Populations grow or decline in terms of numbers of residents and the characteristics of the average resident also change. As residents change (i.e., age or other social characteristics) what they want from their community also changes. Other characteristics of a community such as housing choices, public amenities, and job opportunities also change over time and impact the livability and quality of life of a city. Land Use Plans also identify trends that are taking a community and a region in a certain direction.

Public Engagement: The development of a Land Use Plan typically includes opportunities for the general public to weigh in on key community issues. The consideration of "big picture" community development issues is frequently accomplished with the benefit of public consensus-building efforts. Often the development or update of a Land Use Plan affords the rare opportunity for residents to speak out about community development priorities and concerns.



Primary Uses of This Land Use Plan Include:

Guiding Zoning Decisions: Zoning regulates how property owners may use and develop property. In some states, zoning ordinances must be based on a Land Use Plan to make sure that zoning decisions are well reasoned and legitimately related to a public purpose. In Ohio, the link between planning and zoning is less direct, but generally zoning decisions that are supported by a Land Use Plan are less likely to be challenged on the basis of being arbitrary and unrelated to a public health, safety and welfare.

Guiding Public Investment Decisions: The identification of redevelopment areas or possible growth areas implies something with regard to where new public investment should be directed. Often, the need to simulate new development or to support the needs of community growth means that there should be more investment in infrastructure. This ranges from the need for new or upgraded transportation improvements, water/sewer lines or plant upgrades to expanded open spaces or park facilities.



Guiding Private Investment Decisions: As the private sector considers decisions about buying or developing land, a Land Use Plan can be a source of information with regard to relevant public policy. This may help gauge the likelihood of a specific rezoning approval and expectations for future public infrastructure investment.

Supporting Grant Proposals: Communities with a strong and relevant Land Use Plan often are more successful in obtaining grant funding for key projects. Funding agencies are particularly drawn to supporting projects that are clearly part of a long-term community development strategy identified well before a specific grant application was written. Funding agencies



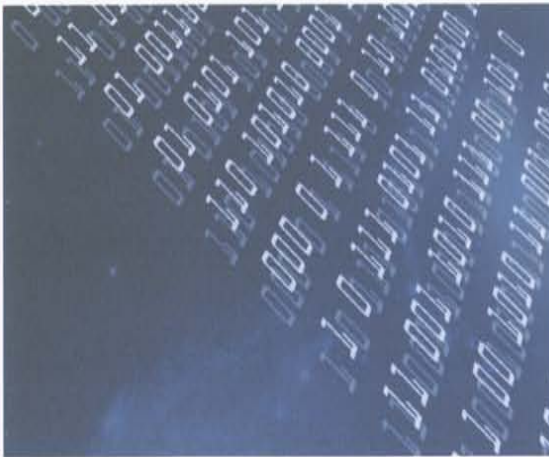
working with communities who articulate shared goals in an accepted community plan. They look for the partnership that is established when they can provide funding for projects that meet both the agency's programmatic goals and clearly articulated community needs.

❑ **Defining Needed Public Initiatives and Follow-up Planning:** Because of its more general nature, a Land Use Plan often points the way toward the need for more focused public initiatives and/or follow-up planning. Some initiatives include regulatory initiatives (i.e., create new zoning districts to apply to a redevelopment area), while some initiatives might be organizational (create a new organization to help address a particular redevelopment concern). Another initiative might be the need for a more focused planning effort (i.e., downtown plan, bikeway plan or corridor plan).



Existing Conditions Update

Since the last plan was prepared, Sylvania has changed. Provided below is a summary of these changes, along with a description of relevant trends that are helping to define the future for the community.



which represents a slowdown from prior decades. Growth in the City between 1970 and 1980 was 29 percent and between 1980 and 1990 it was 11 percent. Considerably more growth is evident in Sylvania Township.

☐ Compared with the State as whole, Sylvania residents are older, live in larger households, are more highly educated, have higher incomes, own more expensive homes, and are less likely to live below the poverty level than an average Ohio resident. Actual statistics that illustrate these facts are shown in the following table:

	<u>Sylvania</u>	<u>Ohio</u>
Median Age	38.5	36.2
Avg. H.H. Size	2.59	2.49
% with B.S. Degree or Higher	43.3	21.1
Median 1999 Family Income	\$57,358	\$40,956
Median Value of S.F. Home	\$156,200	\$103,700
% Families Below Poverty Level	3.7	10.6

Demographics

One of the key considerations regarding how Sylvania is changing relates to demographics. When the last plan was prepared, much of the 2000 census data had not yet been fully released, and estimates were used. Today, new 2010 census data will not be available for three, or perhaps four years. Absent these actual numbers, we do know that the demographic makeup of Sylvania is changing, and those changes have huge implications for how Sylvania will look and function in the future.

What the 2000 Census Told Us

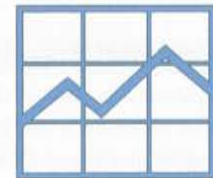
Some major observations from the actual 2000 census counts include the following:

- ☐ The City of Sylvania grew by more than 1,300 people between 1990 and 2000. The 2000 census reported that Sylvania had 18,670 residents in 2000 (compared with 17,301 in 1990).
- ☐ This rate of growth equals about 8 percent,

National Demographic Trends

Sylvania is a unique place, but it is influenced to some degree by national and regional trends. To help provide some context for local change, the following observations are offered.

This information was included in a government report titled; *Demographic Trends in the 20th Century - Census 2000 Special Reports - Issued November 2002.*



- ☐ The U.S. population grew increasingly metropolitan each decade, from 28 percent in 1910 to 80 percent in 2000. Suburbs, rather than central cities, accounted for most of the metropolitan growth. By 2000, half of the U.S. population lived in suburban areas not unlike Sylvania.

- ☐ Over the course of the century, the population density of the United States tripled from 26 people per square mile of land area in 1900 to 80 people per square mile in 2000.

❑ Over the century, the age distribution of the U.S. population changed from relatively young to relatively old. Specifically, the population age 65 years and older increased more than tenfold between 1900 and 2000.

❑ From 1940 to 2000, the number of housing units in the United States more than tripled—from 37.3 million to 115.9 million.

❑ In 1950, for the first time, more than half of all occupied housing units were owned instead of rented. The homeownership rate increased until 1980, decreased slightly in the 1980s and then rose again to its highest level of the century in 2000 66 percent.

❑ Average household size declined from 4.60 in 1900 to 2.59 in 2000, or by 44 percent.

❑ From 1900 to 2000, the total U.S. population increased 270 percent. By comparison, the total number of U.S. households increased of 561 percent.

❑ Married-couple households declined from more than 3 out of every 4 households (78 percent) in 1950 to just over one-half (52 percent) in 2000.

❑ The number of one-person households increased every census, 1960 to 2000, for men, women, younger householders, and older householders.

Regional Trends

Sylvania's location in Ohio and the Midwest means that its future is tied to some degree with the larger region (northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan). Some key demographic considerations that have influenced the City include the following:

❑ Lucas County has been losing population for some time. According to the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Strategic Research, (Ohio County Indicators -June 2007), Lucas County lost 3.7% of its population between 1990 and 2006. This loss occurred while the state as whole grew by 5.8%. Conversely, Wood and Fulton Counties grew by 2.6% and 1.9% in more recent years between 2000 and 2006 respectively.

Nationally, key demographic trends during the last century include huge increases in owner-occupied housing units, along with huge decreases in the size of the average household. This shrinking household size has had important impacts on communities in terms of housing demand and public services. The average U.S. household is nearly half the size it was in 1900. In 1900, nearly half of the U.S. population lived in households of six or more people; by 2000, more than half lived in households of one, two, or three people.

❑ To the north, Monroe County is also a growth area. The 2000 census reported that Monroe County had 145,945 people. The 2006 estimate was 6.2% greater, or 155,035 people. A large part of this growth occurred in nearby Bedford Township.

In 2003, the Ameregis Corporation published Toledo Metropatterns. Similar work was prepared for other major cities in Ohio, with each document addressing regional development trends. Among the major findings from this report were:

❑ The region has seen relatively slow economic growth. Total employment grew 39 percent between 1970 and 2001, which was slower than the 43 percent growth in Ohio as a whole, and much slower than the nation's 86 percent increase.

❑ Despite pockets of revitalization in the Toledo area, the strongest growth during the 1990's took place in low-density places at the edge of the region. Given the outward movement of population and jobs, it is not surprising that the region's unincorporated areas grew by 13 percent, while incorporated municipalities grew by just 4 percent between 1994 and 2000.

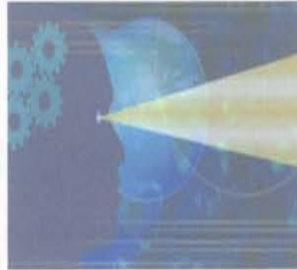
As a region, the Toledo area has seen relatively slow economic growth, and an outward movement of jobs and population to suburban areas. The fiscal health of communities varies widely.

❑ While the region as a whole is struggling, the fiscal health of individual communities varies widely. Some communities have benefited from a growing

inventory of business and expensive homes. Within the region, the Sylvania community is identified as an affluent suburb with comparatively high incomes and tax base.

Projections

Population projections have been made by the Toledo Metropolitan Council of Governments for Northwest Ohio communities. Relevant projections for the City of Sylvania and Sylvania Township are provided below:



Year	Sylvania Twp.	Sylvania City
2000 (actual)	25,583	18,670
2005	26,085	18,886
2010	26,567	19,128
2015	27,091	19,445
2020	27,632	19,754
2025	28,169	20,010
2030	28,713	20,164
2035	29,094	20,271

Source- TMACOG Growth Strategies

As shown, Sylvania Township is projected to grow faster than the City of Sylvania. This is thought to be due to the fact that Sylvania Township has more "developable land" and more on-going platted developments in various stages of build-out.

Along with these TMACOG projections, projections were also obtained from Claritas, Inc. Claritas is a private firm providing demographic data and information about population, consumer behavior, consumer spending, households and businesses. These projections are as follows:

1990 Census	17,488
2000 Census	18,670
2008 Estimate	19,089
2013 Projection	19,281
Growth 1990-2000	6.76%
Growth 2000-2008	2.24%
Growth 2008-2013	1.01%

Of note regarding these projections, is the fact that the rate of growth is projected to decline considerably. This declining rate of growth is true for the State of Ohio as a whole as well.

The Changing Sylvania Resident

Despite the fact that future population growth is expected to be modest (as compared with recent decades) the characteristics of future Sylvania residents will change. Following national trends, we expect the average Sylvania resident in the year 2025 will be older and will have different expectations from community they call home.



Much can be said about Sylvania residents in the year 2025 as most would be current residents and because it is not expected that there will be large numbers of people moving in or out of Sylvania in the coming years. An expected aging of the local population follows the national expectation that the number of people 65 years old or older will double between 2000 and 2025. In Sylvania, the current estimated median age of a resident is 39.14 (Claritas, Inc.), which is up more than half a year from the 2000 census data (38.5). It is possible that when the next census is taken in 2010, the median age of a Sylvania resident will be 40 or older.

The reason this aging trend is important is because as residents age, the interactions they have with their community changes. "Empty nesters" and elderly have different needs for public and social services as



compared with young families. They also have different housing needs and desires. Looking at this in more depth is possible in the context of specific age groups, as shown on the following chart:

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008 (Est.)</u>
Under 5 years	1149	1217
Preschool	6%	6 %
5 to 9 years	1537	1189
10 to 14 years	1621	1431
15 to 19 years	1420	1058
20 to 24 years	805	1824
School/Young Adult	29%	29%
25 to 34 years	1,846	1931
35 to 44 years	3,140	2160
45 to 54 years	3,088	3274
Families	43%	39%
55 to 59 years	892	1478
60 to 64 years	692	979
Empty Nesters	8%	13%
65 to 74 years	1229	1213
75 to 84 years	901	886
85 years and over	350	449
Retired/ Elderly	13%	13%
	18,670	19,089

From the information shown above it is clearly evident that there is a trend toward more empty-nester households as middle-aged families continue to age. Of course, high numbers of people moving into or out of Sylvania in the future for any reason could impact this trend to some degree.

Growth in Households

Along with general population growth, the growth in the numbers of households is an important consideration in terms of understanding how an area has changed and will change. Social trends such as divorces, choices to have fewer children and delayed marriages have resulted in a steadily declining household size nationally and locally. It is common to see the number of households in a community growing much more rapidly than the number of total residents. As a result, there is a greater demand for housing units than might otherwise be attributable to a simple population growth as fewer people reside in each unit. In Sylvania specifically, the growth in the

number of households has been about twice the growth in the number of residents as shown in the table that follows:

	<u>Sylvania Pop. Growth</u>	<u>Sylvania H.H. Growth</u>
1990-2000	6.76%	12.45%
2000-2008	2.24%	5.15%
2008-2013 (proj)	1.01%	2.63%

Sylvania Economic Base

Like most Ohio municipalities, The City of Sylvania relies heavily on income taxes to fund public services. To a somewhat lesser extent, the City also relies on property taxes. In FY 2005, property taxes and income taxes made up 13.3% and 47.8% respectively of revenues to help fund governmental activities. The City's income tax is based on 1.5% of all salaries, wages, commissions and other compensation earned from residents living within the City and from nonresidents when work or services are performed or rendered in the City.



The most recent information obtained from the City's regular state audit notes that the City's economic base is stable. This is attributed to the fact that major local employers include institutions such as Flower Hospital and Lourdes College. These employers typically have stable employment levels that do not typically fluctuate (and thus provide stable tax revenues). The City also has commercial and retail employment is also comparatively stable and there is little manufacturing activity.

Flower Hospital

With about 1,500 employees, Flower Hospital is by far the largest employer in Sylvania and among the largest employers in the area. This 279-bed facility is part of ProMedica Health System which includes Toledo Hospital. Recent new construction at the campus of Flower Hospital includes a cancer center named the Hickman Cancer Center. This center is part of the ProMedica Cancer Institute and includes a 8,500-square-foot expansion along with renovations of a 10,000-square-foot outpatient cancer care facility.



Lourdes College

Lourdes College is a private, four-year liberal arts college with more than 2,100 students (fall 2007), and is among the largest employers in Sylvania. Recently, a new \$6.2 million, 38,000-square-foot classroom building was built, representing the first addition to the campus in more than 40 years. Also located on the campus is The Franciscan Center. This facility is a full-service, state-of-the-art theater and conference center. The theater seats 850 people and the meeting and conference facilities can accommodate large and small gatherings.

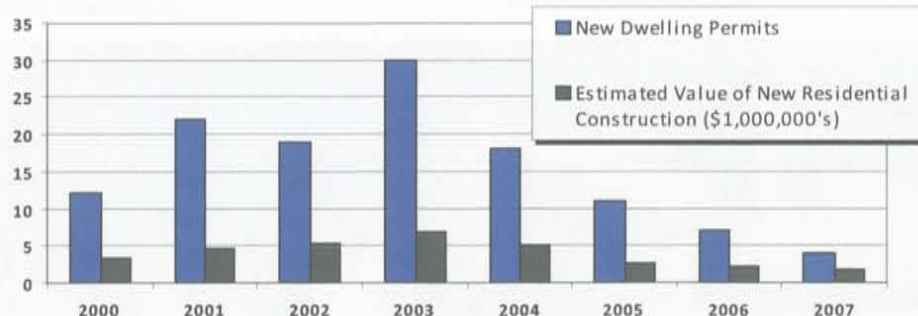
Since 2003, the pace of residential development has slowed dramatically in the City of Sylvania, Sylvania Township, northwest Ohio/ southeast Michigan and even at the national level.

Commercial development in the City (and elsewhere) has been much steadier. Data from the City Zoning Department indicates the following commercial development trends:

	New Commercial Development	Commercial Additions/ Alterations
2000	3	27
2001	5	34
2002	6	27
2003	2	19
2004	1	26
2005	7	19
2006	7	40
2007	7	31

Recent Development Activity

Like many areas in northwest Ohio, development activity has slowed somewhat in Sylvania, especially in terms of residential development. Statistics provided by the City Zoning Department show residential development activity was increasing during the early parts of this decade, and then peaked in 2003 to a point where nearly \$7 million was added to the local tax base from residential development in that year alone.



Source: City of Sylvania Zoning Department - Yearly Reports

Local Income Trends

Households in the City of Sylvania have incomes that are substantially higher (about 40%) than the average Ohio resident according to the 2000 census. Further, current estimates of household income, indicate that household incomes remain substantially higher than the rest of Ohio.

Sylvania

2000 Median Household Income	\$57,358
2008 Median Household Income (Est.)	\$64,943
Percent Change	13%

Ohio

2000 Median Household Income	\$40,946
2008 Median Household Income (Est.)	\$46,681
Percent Change	14%

Housing Values

Housing values in the City of Sylvania are substantially higher than those found elsewhere in Ohio. However, it is also evident that recent increases in local housing values are estimated to lag behind Ohio as a whole. As these are only estimates, it is difficult to discern if this is the beginning of a trend, or is an anomaly. A more definitive conclusion might be evident when 2010 census data is released, and decade to decade comparisons can be made.

City of Sylvania

2000 Med. Owner-Occ. Home Val.	\$156,200
2008 Med. Owner-Occ. Home Val. (est.)	\$183,444
Percent Change	17%

State of Ohio

2000 Med. Owner-Occ. Home Val.	\$103,700
2008 Med. Owner-Occ. Home Val. (est.)	\$130,910
Percent Change	26%

Source: Claritas 2008 Estimates

Housing Choices

Increasingly, as demographic changes and shifts occur in communities, more and more attention is being paid to the degree to which a community offers housing choices to residents. As a person's life-style changes during their adult years, their perspective toward the ideal home changes. Empty-nesters often desire to move into lower-maintenance housing units such as condominiums, while young people typically seek starter homes or apartments. Communities on the other hand, sometimes encourage only expensive detached single family units on large lots.



The housing stock in Sylvania is remarkably similar to Ohio as a whole, which implies that the City offers a considerable amount of housing choice to residents. Many communities regard this as a positive attribute enabling residents to remain in their home towns, rather than have to leave to find housing more suited to changing needs and desires. Specifically, the breakdown of estimated percentages of housing units in different categories is as shown in the following table:

	City of Sylvania %	Ohio %
1 Unit Attached	3.61	3.90
1 Unit Detached	67.98	67.42
2 Units	2.13	4.92
3 to 19 Units	16.40	13.54
20 to 49 Units	3.86	2.16
50 or More Units	5.71	3.29
Mobile Home or Trailer	0.30	4.69

Source: Claritas 2008 Estimates



Housing Age

Not only does the City of Sylvania offer a high level of housing choices, but housing units are generally newer than those found state-wide. The estimated median year that a housing structure was built in Sylvania is 1974 (Claritas estimate). State-wide the median year that a housing unit was built anywhere in Ohio is 1966 (Claritas estimate).

A closer look at the age of housing in Sylvania draws attention to the large wave of housing construction that occurred in previous decades. In fact, it is apparent that 7 out of 10 housing units in Sylvania were



built in the 40-year period that began in 1950 and ended in 1989. During this growth period, the 1970's was by far the most active year for housing construction. Nearly 1 in 4 housing units that we see today in Sylvania were built in the 1970's. Many of these units were located in larger platted subdivisions on the western side of the City. Specific numbers of units built in identified time periods are shown below:

<u>Year Housing Unit Built</u>	<u>Number (%)</u>
1999 to 2008.....	737 (9.36)
1995 to 1998.....	322 (4.09)
1990 to 1994.....	496 (6.30)
1980 to 1989.....	1,297 (16.47)
1970 to 1979.....	1,875 (23.80)
1960 to 1969.....	1,609 (20.43)
1950 to 1959.....	826 (10.49)
1940 to 1949.....	225 (2.86)
1939 or Earlier.....	490 (6.22)

Source: Claritas 2008 Estimates

Housing Needs

As much of the housing stock in Sylvania is newer, larger and more expensive than what is commonly found elsewhere, there is less reason to be concerned about substandard housing conditions as compared with other areas. Lucas County conducted a Community Housing Improvement Study (CHIS) which

looked at county-wide housing issues and set priorities for federally-funded grant programs between 2005 and 2009. Part of this study looked at the housing needs of low and moderate income households and indicators of substandard housing conditions and need throughout Lucas County. Not surprisingly, Sylvania does not stand out as a place of substantial housing needs. However, it is also known that there are residential areas to the north and west of downtown that are made up of older housing units (generally built in the 1950's or earlier). These areas are by no means distressed, but the age of these units and the associated maintenance costs of older units, may signal a need to monitor housing conditions to prevent declining property values and neighborhood decline.

General Development Trends

Physical development occurring in a community is a response to changing demand for buildings that can be used for living, shopping, providing services or employment. While many factors contribute to demand for construction, there are also notable national trends that help provide context for what happens locally. In 2004, the Washington-based Brookings Institution published a report titled: *Toward a New Metropolis: The Opportunity to Rebuild America*.



This report describes the significant amount of new construction expected nationally, based on various projections. Among the more surprising conclusions was the finding that by the year 2030, about half of all U.S. buildings will have been built after 2000. Some of this construction will be the result of the need to accommodate growth while some will be needed to replace old existing space. Most of the new space built between 2000 and 2030 will be of the residential type needed to house a growing number of households. Most of this residential construction will occur in the South and West. However, this study also points out that, while the Midwest is not expected to equally share in all aspects of a national building boom, the projected

Urban Analysis-Land Use

Community Context

Sylvania can be considered to be largely a newer community. As noted previously, the average home in Sylvania is nearly 10 years newer than the state-wide average. Still Sylvania's history extends far back into the early to mid 1800's when the town plat was recorded. Existing buildings in this platted area are among the oldest in the City, representing deep community roots. In this area we find Sylvania's downtown and oldest residential neighborhoods.



Source: www.cityofsylvania.com/Historic/

Due largely to its location, Sylvania benefited from the rapid suburbanization of Lucas County that took place between 1960 and recent years. Many larger platted subdivisions with detached single family housing units have been built in Sylvania in the last 40 years, mostly west and south of the original town plat. The state line to the north has proven to be an effective barrier for development and there is a contrasting rural landscape to the north in Whiteford Township.

Natural Features

The main natural feature in the City of Sylvania is Ten Mile Creek and the Ottawa River. This watercourse is large enough to have an associated 100-year

regulatory flood plain which creates limitations for development. Water generally flows from west to the east, and as this waterway increases in size to the east, there are more variations in topography near the banks. This waterway flows through Harroon Park south of downtown and offers opportunities for certain linkages that will be discussed later.

Another significant natural feature in the area is the bedrock. Bedrock is close to the the surface in western Lucas County (and Monroe County) and hundreds of acres of land just west of the City limits are used as an operating quarry.

Existing Land Use

An existing land use map has been prepared to help illustrate the physical make-up of Sylvania. This map (Map 3-1) was produced using data from the Auditor's Real Estate Information System (AREIS). Data in this system is used for defining property taxation and is maintained by the Lucas County Auditor. Specific categories of land uses were defined and are shown on Map 3-1. With this, the corresponding acres of land in each category have also been determined using the AREIS data and is shown below.

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	23	0.6%
Commercial	745	20.9%
Exempt	824	23.1%
Industrial	25	0.7%
Public Utility	15	0.4%
Residential	1929	54.2%
Total	3560*	

*excludes land in public right of ways

It is interesting to note that nearly 25% of the City of Sylvania is made up of property that is tax exempt. This category includes property occupied by local institutions such as Lourdes College, Flower Hospital and Toledo Memorial Cemetery, along with churches or other tax exempt property. This large amount of tax exempt land is also visually evident on Map 3-1.

Existing Zoning

The City Zoning Ordinance divides the City into districts and each zoning district includes permitted land uses and development standards. Map 3-2 illustrates how the City is presently zoned (June 2008). The future land use map provided later in this document is an illustration of the desired pattern of long-term development and redevelopment.

In terms of districts, the existing zoning code is organized in the following way:

The R-1 Single-Family Residential Large Lot District provides locations for and maintain values in large lot residential developments. Lots must be at least 10,000 square feet in size, which translates into a net density of 4.356 units per acre.

The R-1-A Two-Family Residential Large Lot District provide certain locations for two-family dwellings and maintain residential values. Lots must be at least 10,000 square feet in size, which translates into a net density of 8.712 units per acre (as there would be two units in each building).

The R-2 Single-Family Residential Small Lot District provides a location for medium sized lots and homes and maintain residential values. Lots must be 7,200 square feet and the net density is therefore 6.02 units per net acre.

The R-2-A Two-Family Residential Small Lot District is intended to provide certain locations for two-family dwellings and maintain residential values. Lots must be 10,000 square feet in size and the lot area per family is 5,000 square feet per unit. This translates into a net density of 8.712 units per net acre.

The R-3 Multiple Dwelling Medium Density District provides a location for residential dwellings having two or more separate dwelling units per individual structure including two-family dwellings, townhouses, apartments, garden apartments and motel apartments. The R-3 District is medium density in terms of dwelling units per acre. This district is intended to be reasonably compatible with single-family and lesser density two-family residential areas. The R-3 District is also especially suited as a transition between low and medium density residential areas. The total floor area shall not exceed .30 square feet for each square foot of lot area. The net density translates into 15 dwelling

units per acre (half of the right-of-way can be included in this calculation)

The R-4 Multiple Dwelling Medium High Density District is intended to provide a location for multiple-family apartment structures having a greater dwelling unit density than is permitted in the R-3 District including duplexes, townhouses, apartments, garden apartments, motel apartments and other residential multi-story construction. The R-4 District is medium high density in terms of dwelling units per acre. The R-4 District is generally noncompatible with single family and two-family residential areas. The total floor area shall not exceed .45 square feet for each square foot of lot area and the number of dwelling units translates into 15 dwelling units per acre (half of the right-of-way can be included in this calculation).

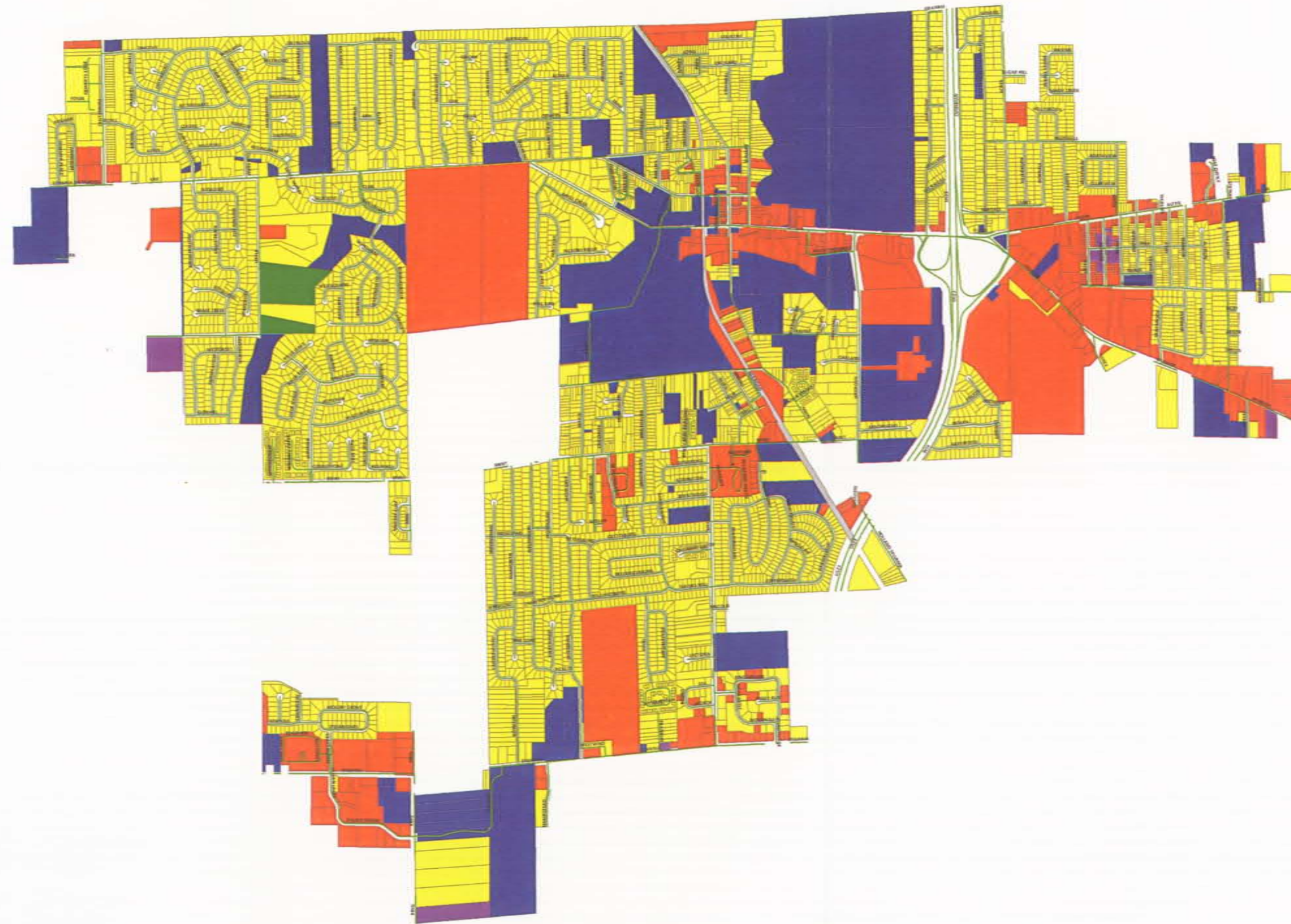
The B-1 Limited Business and Office District is intended to establish a retail, service and office district which is restricted in nature and relatively compatible with residential areas, for the purpose of providing necessary commercial services at convenient locations to the resident population. Uses permitted include R-3 uses, retail stores, personal service businesses, funeral homes, restaurants, etc.

The Professional, Research and Office District is intended to provide a place for professional offices and activities, commercial offices, banking facilities, laboratories, pharmacies, and coffee shops.







The B-1-B Modified Business and Office District is intended to establish a retail, service and office district which is restricted in nature and relatively compatible with residential areas for the purpose of providing necessary commercial services at convenient locations to the resident population. Uses permitted in this district are essentially a blend between the Professional, Research and Office District and B-1.

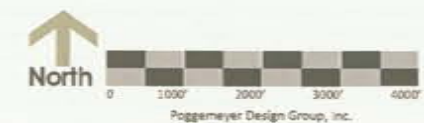
The B-2 General Business District is a district that is intended to provide a place for general commercial activities. Permitted uses include all those permitted in B-1-B, along with a wide range of general commercial uses. More intensive activities are also permitted if conducted within a building.

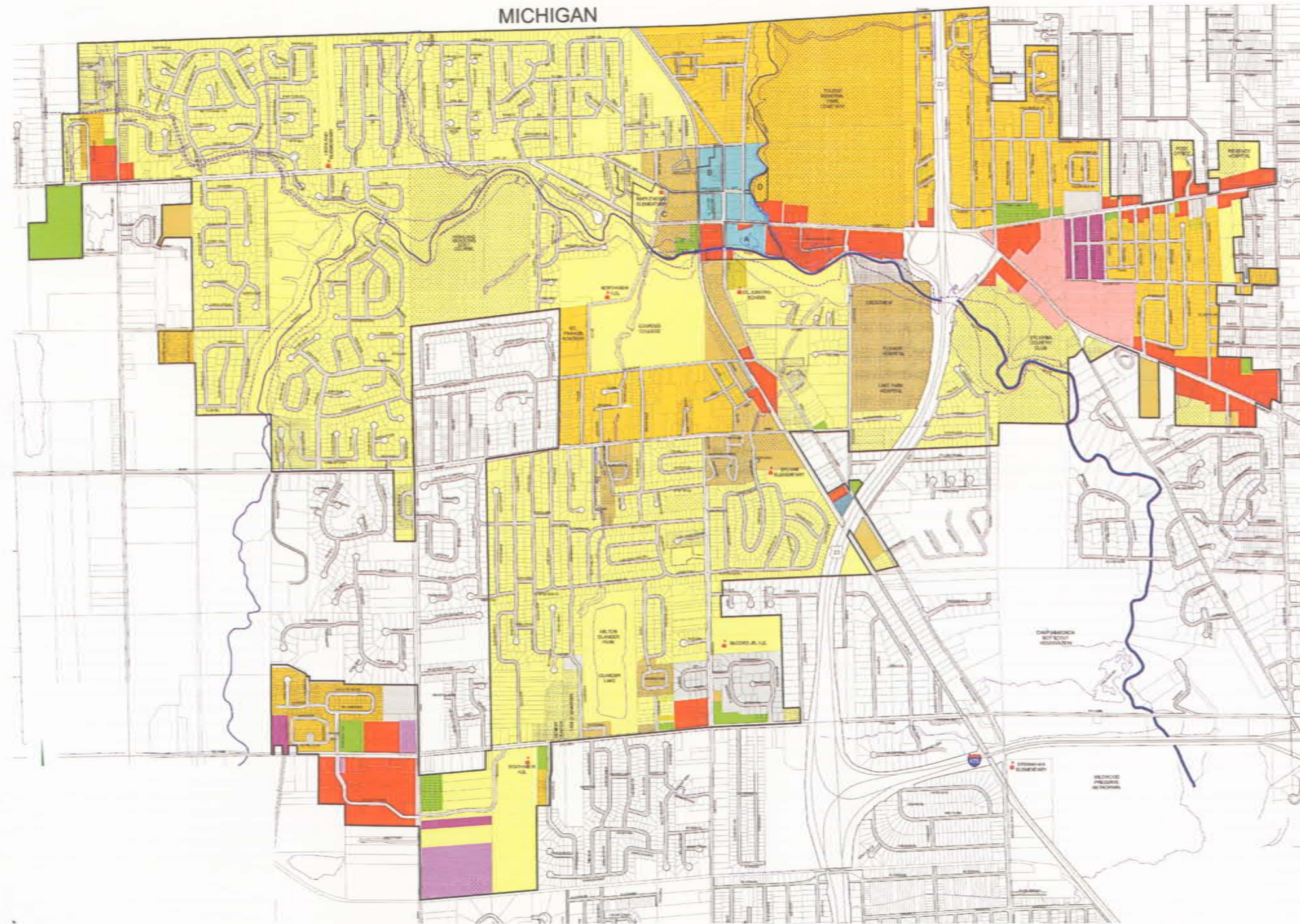
Map 3-1
City of Sylvania
Existing Land Use



Legend

-  Agriculture
-  Commercial
-  Exempt
-  Industrial
-  Public Utility
-  Residential

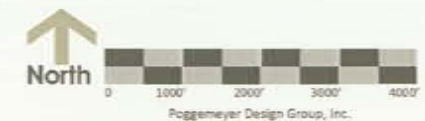




Map 3-2
City of Sylvania
Zoning Districts

LEGEND

- R-1 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (LARGE LOT)
 - R-1A TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (LARGE LOT)
 - R-2 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (SMALL LOT)
 - R-2A TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (SMALL LOT)
 - R-3 MULTIPLE DWELLING (MEDIUM DENSITY)
 - R-4 MULTIPLE DWELLING (MEDIUM HIGH DENSITY)
 - B-1 LIMITED BUSINESS AND OFFICE
 - B-1B PROFESSIONAL/RESEARCH OFFICE
 - B-1B MODIFIED BUSINESS AND OFFICE
 - B-2 GENERAL BUSINESS
 - B-3 CENTRAL BUSINESS
 - B-4 SHOPPING CENTER
 - M-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
 - M-2 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
 - PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
 - SPECIAL USES
 - FLOODWAY
 - FLOODPLAIN
 - OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS
- A SOUTH MAIN STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT
 B NORTH MAIN STREET HISTORICAL CENTER OVERLAY DISTRICT
 C WEST MONROE STREET INSTITUTIONAL OVERLAY DISTRICT
 D EAST MAPLEWOOD AVENUE OVERLAY DISTRICT



The B-3 Central Business District is associated with the downtown section of the City. Permitted uses include those land uses with a city-wide function; such as large stores offering comparison shoppers' goods, specialty stores, business services, banks, offices, theaters, hotels and government buildings.

The B-4 Shopping Center District is intended to encourage the development of modern retail shopping centers to serve the City's residential neighborhoods. A second purpose of this District This District is different from most districts in that the B-4 zoning is not granted outright, but only after submittal and review of a site plan and supporting materials, and determination from same that the proposal is in the interests of the community.

The M-1 Light Industrial District is intended to provide a restricted district for location of light industrial activities. B-2 uses are also permitted in some circumstances.

The M-2 Heavy Industrial District is intended to provide a location for heavy industrial uses. All uses permitted in M-1 are likewise permitted in M-2.

The Flood Plain District is created to comply with FEMA requirements and establishes special development standards in areas prone to flooding.

There are **several overlay districts** in Sylvania that apply to areas downtown. Overlay districts, impose additional development standards beyond those found in the underlying zoning district in order to achieve certain planning objectives. In Sylvania, the overlay districts include the South Main Overlay District, the North Main Street Historical Center, the West Monroe Street Institutional Overlay District and

An overlay district is a zoning district that applies to a specific area and imposes additional development standards beyond the underlying zoning. Overlay districts often apply to a downtown area, commercial corridor, shoreline/river or other special geographic area with unique land use issues. Overlay districts often apply to more than one underlying zone.

the East Maplewood Avenue Overlay District.

The previously described zoning districts apply to individual properties in Sylvania, and from highest to lowest, the corresponding acres and percentages are as shown below (acreages and percentages do not include land in the public right-of-way).

Zoning	Acres	Percent
R-1	2092	61.40%
R-2	695	20.39%
R-3	203	5.96%
B-2	194	5.71%
R-4	68	1.99%
B-1	44	1.30%
B-3	36	1.06%
M-2	32	0.93%
M-1	25	0.74%
B-1B.	15	0.44%
P-R-O	2	0.05%
R-1A	1	0.03%
Total	3,408	

Note: Total acres statistics vary slightly from different sources of data.

As can be seen, more than 60 percent of the city is zoned for low density single family development (R-1). Taken one step further, it can also be said about 90 percent of the City of Sylvania is zoned residentially (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4). This is slightly misleading however since some very large land uses such as golf courses, cemeteries, Flower Hospital and Lourdes College are located in residentially zoned areas, but are not residential uses.

Key Residential Land Use Elements

Several areas in the City stand out as important areas from a land use perspective. These areas are shown on page 3-7.

Older Residential Areas

Two places stand out in Sylvania where the average home was built in the 1950's or earlier. These areas are along the US 23 and north of downtown. Planning issues here include the need to maintain stable neighborhoods and encourage reinvestment.

Low Density Areas

Some areas in Sylvania have very low residential density (two dwelling units per acre or less), and in some places this low density is combined with older housing units. Since the R-1 zoning district permits

single family units on less than a quarter acre, it is possible that some infill could occur in these areas.

High Density Areas

Seven areas can be singled out as high density residential areas. These areas range in density from 11 to 30 housing units per acre. Typically, they are apartment units. Several other areas have a lower overall density (6-9 units per net acre) and these areas typically include townhouses and similar units.

Central Commercial Land Uses

Sylvania's central commercial district is relatively small and compact. The intersection of Main and Monroe Streets is the epicenter for Downtown Sylvania. Corner occupants include a German timber-frame inspired Rite Aid drugstore, Key Bank, a pocket park, and an attractive brick Speedway gas station. Areas to the north, south, east and west of this intersection are discussed below.

The historic core on North Main Street between Monroe and Maplewood Streets is very intimate and welcoming to pedestrians. The flags, flowers, and street furniture nicely compliment the historic Commercial



Italianate structures that line this portion of the street. Though there are some notable post-WWII infill developments, such as the Key Bank at the corner of Main and Monroe with its Classical Revival details, or the Federal Revival Edward Jones building, all buildings in this block respect the original set-back. Decorative cornices, large storefront windows, and colorful awnings line the block. The overall atmosphere in this block is one of activity.

Outside this block, there are clearly more modern influences including a number of wood shake awnings. Sautter's Food Center has a wood shake roof and cupola reminiscent of an old farm. Across the street are two buildings, both of which are no more than 10 years old, that reflect corporate

architecture styles. On the western edge of Downtown, there are Georgian Revival influences, as well as a number of newer, more vernacular, buildings that don't necessarily exhibit a specific architectural style. The building housing the Township Fire Department is clearly historic Commercial Italianate, modifications have removed some of the historic details. The eastern portion of Monroe Street has the same general character as the west, though building set-backs begin to increase, and the corridor generally feels more suburban.

General Commercial Land Uses

The commercial spine for the City of Sylvania is the Monroe Street corridor that combines with Alexis. These roads intersect at the U.S. 23 ramps and areas immediately to the east provide a significant concentration of commercial space. Larger strip centers stand alone commercial uses, office space and car dealerships combine to create a significant center of commerce for the region. Generally, this development is auto-oriented and suburban scale. It is also important to note that a large amount of the building space was built in the 1970's. For example, the Starlight Plaza on Monroe Street is approaching 40 years old (built in 1971).

A considerable amount of newer commercial space has been built in Sylvania Township, particularly along Central Ave. to the south of the City of Sylvania. In fact, between 2000 and 2006 more than \$113 million in commercial development occurred in Sylvania Township.

Industrial Land Uses

The City of Sylvania has very little industrial land. Actually, less than 2% of the land in Sylvania is zoned either M-1 or M-2. Some of this industrial and warehouse space is found in the southwest portion of the City near the Sylvania Ave. and King Road intersection.

The other group of industrial and warehouse space is on the east side of the City south of Alexis and north of McGregor. The intersecting roads with Alexis, specifically, Alger, Schultz and Roan are developed with light manufacturing and warehouse space. The lots platted in this area are generally small (approximately 5,000 square feet in size), but in some cases, multiple lots are jointly owned.



Map 3-3
Unique Residential
Areas



Older residential areas generally built in the 1950's or earlier.



Low density residential areas (below 2 dwelling units per acre).



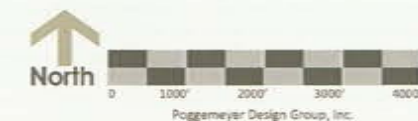
Low density residential areas (below 2 dwelling units per acre) and mostly older units (1950's or older).



Higher density residential areas - 6 to 9 dwelling units per acre. Typically row or town houses.

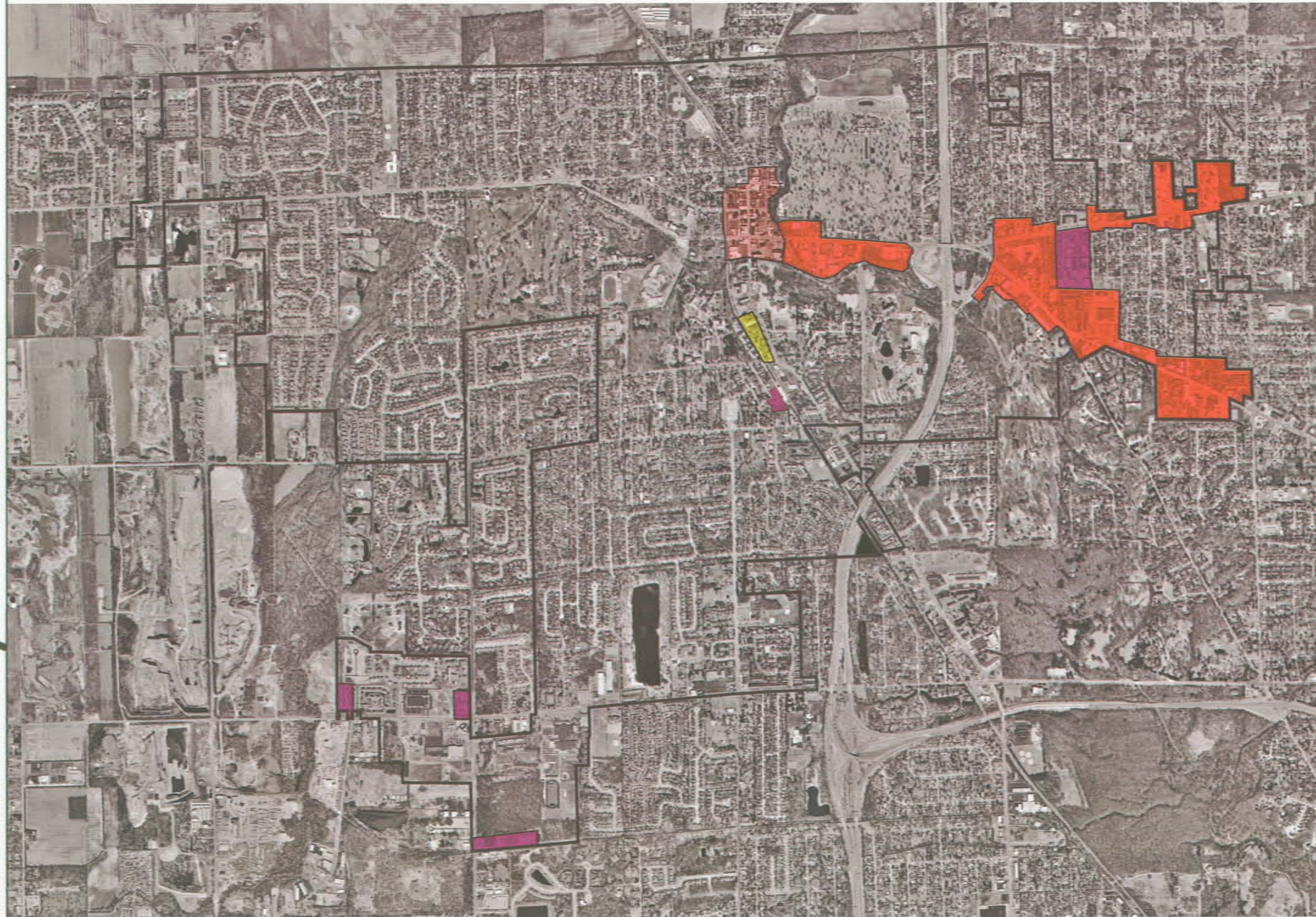


Very High Residential areas - 11-30 dwelling units per acre. Typically apartment units.

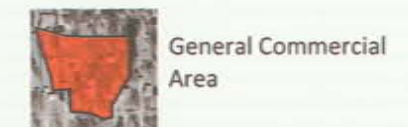
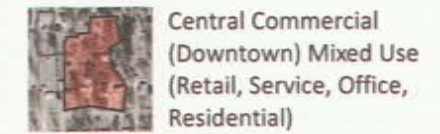


Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.

Urban Analysis - Land Use



Map 3-4
Commercial, &
Industrial Areas



State-Wide Land Use Trends

Boulevard Strategies is a Columbus, Ohio-based consulting firm that is widely regarded as an authority on Ohio housing, retail and office market trends. Based on work in many Ohio communities, work with various economic development professionals and commercial developers, and based on in-house research and monitoring of trade journals and general media outlets, Boulevard Strategies publishes information about development trends that impact Ohio communities. This material is used by permission and certain trends that seem particularly relevant to Sylvania include:

Retail Trends

WIDE OPEN SPACES: Retail Vacancies in Ohio Remain Above National Average.

Vacancy rates run 11-12% in Columbus, Cincinnati and Cleveland, and even higher elsewhere. This compares with a rate of 8.5% nation-wide. Retail chains are engaged in a game of "chicken" that sometimes results in ghost (empty) boxes.

ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?: The Rise of the Lifestyle Center

Lifestyle centers feature dining & entertainment in faux town center settings. Fast casual, gourmet-to-go, home entertainment options allow consumers to take away experiences.

ALL SHOOK UP: Mixed Use is First Choice Instead of Fallback Option

Mixed uses add vitality around the clock and diversify long-term risk in spite of challenges

THE DO-IT-FOR-ME SOCIETY: Retail Economy Shifts Toward Services

Almost all USA job growth has occurred in service-producing industries over the past 10 years. Mainstream retailers add related services to "product" mix.

FIGHTING IDENTITY THEFT: Communities Throughout Ohio Revitalize Downtowns to Preserve Their Unique Heritages and to Promote Their Emerging Assets

Typically public/private partnerships pave the way to success and walkable mixed use developments and historic architecture create memorable town centers where community gathers. Retail is not a catalyst; it must have markets to serve.

DOWNTOWN BELONGS TO EVERYONE: Diversity is Often a Downtown's Middle Name

All are welcome typically, regardless of age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, politics, religion or tattoos.

Office Trends

IT'S THE ECONOMY, STUPID!: Office Vacancies on the Rise Again After Period of Stability

The vacancy rates in most Ohio markets melted away as obsolete office space converted and "spec." space was avoided. The lack of job growth in Ohio dampens future office demand.

THE RISE IN THE CREATIVE CLASS: The Best and the Brightest Thrive in Lively, Mixed-Use Settings

Today's workers abhor five-story cube farms in isolated office parks. The three R's – restaurants, retail and recreation provide key off-site amenities. Hotel and conference facilities and public green spaces attract headquarters operations.

CYBER SPACE TURNS HIERARCHY VIRTUALLY UPSIDE DOWN: Latest Technology Trumps Biggest Office

Team spaces, "high tech" conference rooms, and open designs replace the coveted corner office. Today, five office workers per 1,000 square feet is becoming the norm compared with four in the past. Developers seek greater efficiency of land just as companies seek greater efficiency of space

JUST DO IT: Savvy Employers Offer Flexibility to Boost Work Productivity

Flex-time, job-sharing, telecommuting and hoteling reduce demand for dedicated offices. Many employees are going mobile with technology that frees desk slaves. The choice between outsourcing or adding overhead is an easy choice in most situations.

ZERO COMMUTE TIME: Work/Live Spaces Gain Popularity Beyond Creative Community

Home offices/studios suit freelancers, consultants and semi-retirees in white collar occupations. More business owners seek office locations closer to their residence

HOW DOES IT FEEL?: Medical Office Segment Shines as Boomers Age

Site selection is driven by patient demographics, relationships with local hospitals and complimentary practices. Medical/healing/fitness uses are increas-

ingly co-locating with traditional retailers. Office condos are particularly well-suited to medical/dental practitioners.

Housing Development Trends

SUBPRIME SPILLOVER: Problems in Suburban Single Family Sector Impact Overall Housing Industry in Ohio

Empty nesters are stuck in the suburbs, but will leave in droves once the market corrects itself. Credit-stable markets are positioned to benefit first from lower interest rates.

MY CITY WAS GONE: Suburban Sprawl Threatens Ohio's Way of Life

Back to the future: Traditional neighborhood design guidelines are sparking a new urbanism movement. Walkable + bikable = likable.

THE NEW STARTER HOMES: Condo Craze Sweeps Urban Areas, Including Downtowns

Condos double share of new housing market over past 10 Years. Prices are typically 2/3 of single family homes in the same neighborhood. The resale market is alive and well in spite of building boom.

GRAY POWER: "They'll Have to Take Me Out Feet First"

Most people wish to "age in place" as community & family ties deepen over time. Service co-ops allow seniors to pool the resources needed to stay independent.



Urban Analysis-Transportation

Roadways

Transportation planning in the Toledo region is carried out by the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). TMACOG is a voluntary association of local governments in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan that develops the long range regional transportation plan. This plan is required by federal law and TMACOG is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). TMACOG is authorized to carry out a continuing, comprehensive and coordinated transportation planning process for the area which is articulated primarily in the document titled "On the Move: 2007-2035 Transportation Plan."

A number of long-term roadway projects in and near the City of Sylvania are included in this Transportation Plan. Bike and pedestrian projects are also included in this plan and are discussed later. Roadway projects are briefly described below and shown on Map 4-1.

- ☐ Widen Central Avenue to 5 lanes between from Centennial to Crissy Road and add turn lanes. The goal of this project is to improve safety and efficiency and would cost approximately \$5 million.
- ☐ Widen Sylvania Avenue from McCord Road to Holland-Sylvania Rd. The goal of this project is to improve safety and reduce congestion and would cost approximately \$7.2 million.
- ☐ Improvements to I-475/US 23 are planned to include widening to 6 lanes from Perrysburg to the Michigan state line, along with interchange improvements at Corey Road and Sylvania Ave.
- ☐ Reconstruction of Alexis Road is planned between Hagman Road and US 23 to support freight movement.

Transit

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) has more than 40 routes in the Toledo area and provides services to the City of Sylvania. Specific services include:

- ☐ "Call-A-Ride" curb to curb service is available in Sylvania which allows people to phone a drivers for a pick-up, seven days a week, between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m.
- ☐ There are two park and ride locations in Sylvania. One location is at Centennial Terrace and the other is at St. Joseph Church.
- ☐ Weekday and weekend TARTA bus routes serve the City of Sylvania. Routes connect to the park and ride lots and places such as Lourdes College and Flower Hospital, Franklin Park Mall and downtown Toledo.

Increasing Use of Transit

In a June 2008 press release, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reported that Americans took 2.6 billion trips on public transportation in the first three months of 2008. This is almost 85 million more trips than last year for the same time period. "There's no doubt that the high gas prices are motivating people to change their travel behavior," said APTA president William W. Millar. "More and more people have decided that taking public transportation is the quickest way to beat the high gas prices." Last year 10.3 billion trips were taken on U.S. public transportation – the highest number of trips taken in fifty years. In the first quarter of 2008, public transportation continued to climb and rose by 3.3 percent. In contrast, the Federal Highway Administration has reported that the vehicle miles traveled on our nation's roads declined by 2.3 percent in the first quarter.

Non-Motorized Travel

For many years, the Sylvania Community has pursued the development of bike trails and bike lanes throughout the City. Sylvania is in fact, well known for its non-motorized travel system that. The major elements of this system is are shown on Map 4-2.



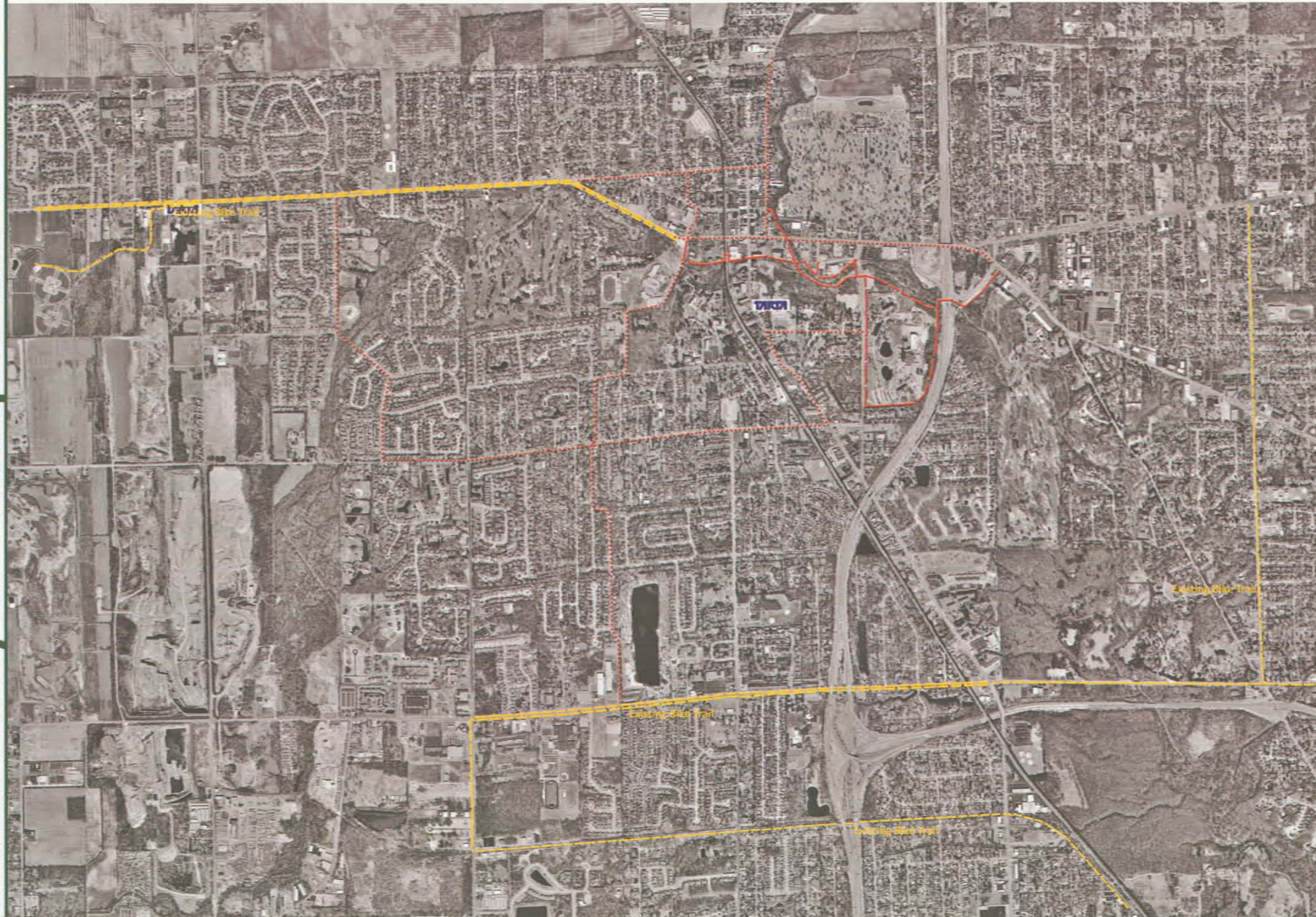


Map 4-1
Transportation
Considerations

-  Railroad
-  Park & Ride Lots
-  Major Planned Transportation Improvements



Urban Analysis - Transportation



Map 4-2
Transportation
Considerations

- Railroad
- - - Existing Bike Trail / Lane
- - - Other Proposed / Planned Trails
- Sylvania Greenway Trail



Urban Analysis-Public Facilities

Background

Apart from land use and transportation, an important community dynamic is the supporting community facilities that serve local residents. As defined in this plan, public facilities include government buildings, public parks and open spaces, and educational facilities and health care facilities. These amenities and critical elements of modern life go a long way toward defining how livable a community is and the overall quality of life provided to residents. Moreover, it is important to consider how changing demographics and the changing patterns of physical development influence the demand for public services and their related physical facilities. Typically, communities that offer a high quality of life are also places where careful community planning has helped align changing needs for community services and facilities with physical and demographic changes.

Parks, Recreation & Landmarks

Sylvania Parks System

The Sylvania community is well known for having an outstanding park system and recreational programs. The City in conjunction with the Sylvania Township Trustees and the Sylvania City School District formed the Sylvania Area Joint Recreation District (the "SAJRD") under the authority of the Ohio Revised Code. The SAJRD Board of Trustees is composed of twelve members, four of whom are appointed by the three governmental entities. Funding for SAJRD is provided by a voter-approved tax levy on all real property and this entity is fiscally independent of the City. Locations of park facilities and related landmarks are shown on Map 5-1 and some major attributes of each facility include the following:

Tam O'Shanter & the Sylvania Sports and Exhibition Center:

Located at 7060 Sylvania Ave., the Tam-O-Shanter, Sylvania Sports & Exhibition Center provides two ice arenas, pro shop, restaurant, indoor athletic facility, and exhibition hall and conference center. The SAJRD operates the City-owned Tam O'Shanter ice skating complex under an agreement with the City. Apart from a wide range of hockey and ice skating activities, this facility offers more than 30,000

square feet of space, and can accommodate up to 1,000 people at one time. Various events such as dog shows, trade shows, concerts, craft shows and weddings are common. In October, 2008 Sylvania's city council has approved an expansion of the Sports & Exhibition Center at Tam-O-Shanter. SAJRD will be expanding the building to the west to accommodate construction of two team dressing rooms and a room for referees.

Olander Park: Olander Park is located adjacent to Tam O'Shanter & the Sylvania Sports and Exhibition Center. Park features include a lake, water sports and a shelter lodge. Olander Park is 60 acres in size and the 28-acre lake offers opportunities for fishing, boating and swimming. A 1.1 mile paved loop around Lake Olander provides a place to walk, jog, rollerblade and bike. Both the two open air shelters and Nederhouser Community Hall can be rented.

Fossil Park: Fossil Park is located on the west side of Centennial Road, just south of Sylvania-Metamora Road. Fossil Park is one of just few parks of its type in the nation, allowing visitors find fossils in a safe environment. Fossil Park is included in the Olander Park System

Sylvan Prairie Park: Sylvan Prairie Park is a 60-acre park located on Brint Road that was purchased in the summer of 2003 by the Olander Park System. Acquisition of this property was made possible by a grant from the State of Ohio. While plans are still under consideration, most of the former farm field and golf course will be rehabilitated into Oak savanna, meadow, & wetlands. Recently, a new \$18,000 playground was opened at this site. Sylvan Prairie Park is included in the Olander Park System.

Whetstone Park

Whetstone is a 3-acre recreation site that has served area residents for nearly 50 years. It features an open air shelter with a 4 foot charcoal grill that is available on a first-come basis. Whetstone has an ADA-accessible playground, sand volleyball court, & 2-acre open field suitable for soccer & other activities. It is located at McGregor & Roan Roads, behind Starlite Shopping Center and is included in the Olander Park System. Restroom facilities are not

available at Whetstone Park.

Pacesetter Park: Pacesetter Park is located just west of the city and is a centerpiece of recreational opportunities in Sylvania. It offers soccer and ball field's and serves nearly a half a million athletes annually. Because voters approved a 0.42-mill bond issue in March, the sale of related bonds has made about \$9 million available for capital improvements system wide. At Pacesetter Park, pipe has been laid for irrigation at the west 67 acres of the park along Mitchaw Road. The park now has a new concession stand with a patio at the southern end of the entrance off Sylvania-Metamora Road. Other improvements include upgraded restrooms, improvement to the ball fields, replaced blacktop, and the paving of a hike/bike trail around the perimeter of the site.

Centennial Terrace: Centennial Terrace is an outdoor ballroom with a 10,000 square foot terrazzo dance floor. It is one of the largest outdoor dance floors in the United States. Centennial Terrace features a wide variety of entertainment styles and is also used as a venue for wedding receptions, fundraising events and company picnics. Plans call for \$1.9 million in improvements that will result in a new bandstand, new concession stand, rest rooms and dance floor.

Centennial Quarry: Centennial Quarry is a deep-water, spring-fed swimming facility. It features diving platforms, water toys and a sandy beach as well as 3 sand volleyball courts and a basketball court.

Burnham Park: Burnham Park is a passive park with picnic area, grills, shelter house, Plummer Pool, tot lot, bandstand Music -in-the-Park series and senior citizen recreation programs. Burnham Park is 3 acres in size and located between Maplewood Avenue and Erie Street. Plummer Pool is an outdoor family swimming pool that is located on the grounds of Burnham Park.

Addington Park: Addington Park is a small (1/3 acre) neighborhood open space park located on Addington Lane.

Centennial Farms Park: Centennial Farms Park is an open game field for Centennial Farms residents. It is 1.72 acres in size and located on Timothy Lane at

Centennial Road.

Harroun Community Park: Harroun Community Park is located just south of the Ottawa River and west of Harroun Road. This 26.67 acre park is a passive recreational facility. Presently, a study is underway to determine how this park should be developed. According to the Harroun Community Park General Management Plan - Visitor Use and Facilities Plan (dated September 17, 2008) four alternatives are under consideration in terms the direction future park improvements should take to shape the visitor experience. Design alternates include a "no action alternative," a "historic reflection alternative" (historic theme(s)), a "nature retreat alternative" (quiet reflection, solitude and natural resources education) and an "active participation alternative" (trail development, playgrounds, sledding hill, seasonal river activities).

Clayton Fischer Park: Clayton Fischer Park is a 3.5 acre active park with ball field; children's play equipment, picnic area and skating circle and is located between Marshall and Carter Road, adjacent to the Sylvania Area Family Services Building.

Maplewood Square Park: Maplewood Square Park is a small (.08 acre) passive park with a gazebo and downtown floral display. It is located at Maplewood and Main.

Lathrop House: The Lathrop house is thought to be a place where slaves were sheltered and transported to freedom. Rev. Lucian Lathrop was a Unitarian minister and abolitionist. Citizens in Sylvania created the Friends of the Lathrop House in order to preserve the home but disagreements on the home's history and its fate continue.

Educational Facilities

The Sylvania School system is widely regarded as a leading school system in Ohio and it has attained an "excellent with distinction" rating from the Ohio Department of Education. Obviously, the district owns and operates many buildings and facilities in the community. The District has placed a 2.89 mil bond issue on the November ballot which would help fund construction and renovation of facilities across the district. Improvements would improve learning environments and academic programs,



Urban Analysis - Public Facilities



Urban Analysis - Public Facilities



Urban Analysis - Public Facilities



1989-90. Sylvania is reportedly, the busiest Toledo-Lucas County Public Library branch in terms of circulation and reference questions. The building includes a 100-person capacity meeting room.

Post Office

The Sylvania's zip code is 43560 and the post office that services the community is located on the north side of Alexis, near the eastern edge of the City.

Municipal Buildings

The Sylvania Municipal Building is located at 6635 Maplewood Avenue. This building also houses the Police Division and Council Chambers. Sylvania's administration building is located at 6730 Monroe Street. This building houses the Departments of Public Service, Public Safety, Finance, Law, Personnel and the Divisions of Taxation, Utilities and Zoning & Inspection. The Sylvania Municipal Court is located at 6700 Monroe Street.

Fire Stations

The Sylvania Township Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services (EMS) and serves the residents of the City of Sylvania and Sylvania Township. The Sylvania Township Fire Department operates within the Lucas County Emergency Medical

Services (EMS) System and holds mutual aid agreements with surrounding Lucas County fire departments. The department operates and staffs four fire stations 24 hours a day, 365 days a year throughout the greater Sylvania area, providing coverage for approximately 44,253 residents. In 2006, the department responded to 3,770 calls for service, with 82% of these calls EMS related.

In 2008, voters approved a 1.25 mill fire levy. Some proceeds from this levy are being allocated toward rebuilding three of the four existing fire stations. The fourth fire station on Sylvania Ave. is undergoing substantial reconstruction.

Health Care Facilities

As described in Chapter 2, Flower Hospital is the largest employer in Sylvania, provides a wide range of health care services and 279 hospital beds. By virtue of its location in the city, most Sylvania residents are just minutes away from a Level III Trauma Center, along with inpatient rehabilitation services and surgical services. Other facilities located on this campus include adult day care at The Goerlich Center, a new 12-bed, private room, hospice residence. Lake Park is also located on the Flower Hospital campus and is a 265-bed, long-term skilled nursing care facility.

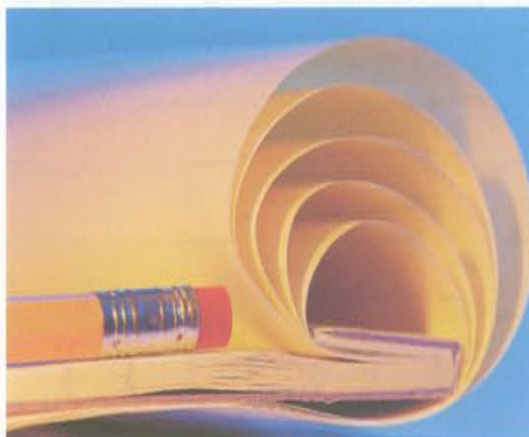


Community Engagement

The process to develop this Land Use Plan update included substantial efforts directed toward discovering public attitudes toward local land use issues. This was accomplished in two ways. First, a community survey was conducted to reach as many residents possible. Secondly a public visioning session was held as a way to engage in residents in a more conversational way. As described below, the efforts put forth yielded some insightful perspectives about key issues facing the City.

Community Survey

A survey of Sylvania residents took place late in December, 2008 through January, 2009. This survey was printed and distributed together with municipal water bills so that every water customer in Sylvania could receive a copy. Additionally, this same survey was made available on the Sylvania web site to ensure that the survey was available to everyone. News releases announcing the survey were also sent to local media and the announcements were published in newspaper articles. Both the printed survey and the web-based survey were accompanied by an explanation of the purpose of the survey and its association with the larger effort to update the Sylvania Land Use Plan. Commonly, community planning processes of this type include efforts to reach out to the public to learn about how residents feel about their community and how they might like it to improve. Results of surveys of this type are often used to guide local land use planning efforts and policies.



Response Numbers and Limitations of the Data

A total of 1,324 surveys were received in City Hall with returned water bills. At the same time, survey responses from the municipal web site yielded a total of 65 results. Tabulations of survey results were kept separate since there were differences in the way they were made available. It should be noted, that while the web-based surveys represent valid survey responses there is no clear way to be certain who responded and how they may have encountered the survey on the city web site. It should also be noted that while the number of returned surveys is large, it cannot be said that this survey represents a truly random sample of Sylvania residents. Additionally, a question to the survey's statistical validity could be raised since not all residents receive water bills, and not everyone is equally inclined to respond to a survey of this type. For example, it is noted later that the typical respondent to this survey is an older resident from a smaller household. While this type of household is very common in Sylvania, it may be that the survey results are weighted toward how residents in this demographic category perceive Sylvania. However, given these caveats, it is thought that the survey results provided a reasonably accurate snapshot of how residents feel about their City and what they might like to see in the future.

Results

Because the overwhelming number of responses came from the water bill mail-back survey, those survey results are reported below. Only in cases where the web based survey differs substantially from the mail survey are those differences noted.

1. Residency – Not surprisingly, all but a few surveys came from Sylvania residents (98.2%), while the web-based survey included a more substantial portion of non-residents. Web-based survey respondents included 23.1% non-residents.

2. Place of Work – The vast majority of survey respondents do not work in Sylvania. In fact, nearly 8 out of 10 respondents work elsewhere.

3. Plans to Live in Sylvania – Perhaps as a testament to a certain level of attachment to their community, the most popular answer to the question about how

long residents plan to remain residents was “all of my life.” More than 4 out of 10 Sylvania residents (40.7%) have no plans to leave the City. Additionally, the next most popular answer to this question (31.7%) was “10 years or more,” so it is obvious that current residents plan to remain residents. When asked to identify what might prompt a resident to relocate elsewhere a range of responses were given, but a common theme among the responses was the local tax burden. Other common factors that might induce a person to relocate include considerations such as family issues, retirement and weather issues. Web-based responses indicate slightly less attachment to the City, as only 26.6% of respondents indicated that they have no plans to leave.

4. Improvements in Quality of Life in Sylvania –

Residents generally feel that the quality of life in Sylvania has stayed the same during the past three years. More than half (54.1%) feel this way and if there is an edge to be given on the positive or negative side, it would be toward the positive side. Almost 4 out of 10 respondents (38.2%) indicated that the quality of life is better today than it was three years ago. The reasons they give for this answer include a range of considerations such as road and park system improvements. Those holding the opposite perception (that the quality of life in Sylvania has declined during the last three years) account for less than 1 person in 10 (7.8%). When given the opportunity to comment on this question, most residents reported not seeing much change in the City one way or the other.

5. The Major Issues Facing Residents Of Sylvania –

Residents consider the big three issues facing the City to include; taxes, utility costs and traffic. The issue of taxes was the dominant response to this question attracting more than three-fourths of all possible responses (77.9%). Utility costs and traffic issues also garnered votes from residents as major issues #2 and #3 respectively, facing the City. School issues and downtown redevelopment also received significant recognition as an issue facing the City.

6. Key strengths of the City of Sylvania – Sylvania has many strengths, but in the minds of local residents, being a nice place to live overall and having a good school system are the kinds of thoughts residents associate with the most. Secondary to these thoughts, are the feelings that important strengths of the City are an orientation toward family values and a good park system. It may also be worth noting that

less than 1 out of 10 (9.6%) of the respondents consider the Downtown area to be a key strength of Sylvania. In the web-based survey, only one person identified the downtown as one of Sylvania’s strengths.

7. Key Weaknesses Of The City Of Sylvania –

Overwhelmingly, people consider local taxes to be a key weakness of Sylvania. About three-fourths (75.7%) of residents view taxes as a City weakness. At much lower levels, other identified weaknesses include heavy traffic flow (34.8%), limited retail options (23.8%) and a lack of jobs (18.2%).

8. What Comes To Mind, When You Think Of The City Of Sylvania?

Residents clearly associate three things with Sylvania – good schools, safety and a nice, friendly place to live. All other choices were selected by residents with far less frequency.

9. What Grade Does Sylvania Get As A Place To Live?

The majority of residents grade (62%) their community a ‘B’ as a place to live. Since the next most popular response (28.8%) was that of giving the City an “A,” it might be said that Sylvania should get an overall grade of B+ or A-. Web-based survey responses were similar.

10. Agreement with Key Statements. Sylvania residents agree with the following statements by the margins indicated:

Strong Agreement

- ☐ Sylvania is a good place to live 99.2%
- ☐ Sylvania is a good place to raise children 99.2%
- ☐ Sylvania is a safe place to live 98.2%
- ☐ Sylvania has a good school system 97.6%
- ☐ Sylvania has adequate parks/public areas 92.9%
- ☐ Preserving historic character is important 88.3%
- ☐ There are adequate services for elderly 87.6%
- ☐ Sylvania has close shopping areas 81.4%



Only Modest Agreement

- ☐ Sylvania has adequate cultural facilities 63.5%
- ☐ Sylvania has an attractive downtown 69.7%

Little Agreement

- ☐ Sylvania has adequate downtown parking 45.8%
- ☐ There are adequate job opportunities 26.3%

11. What Kind Of Development Does Sylvania Need?

According to the survey responses, Sylvania needs the following types of development.

- ☐ Casual Dining 76.8%
- ☐ Family Restaurants 72.4%
- ☐ Small Retail Stores 70.7%
- ☐ Single-Family Homes \$100,000 - \$200,000 69.6%
- ☐ Condominiums/Villas for Empty Nesters 65.4%
- ☐ Senior Citizen Retirement Community 65.1%
- ☐ Housing for Young Professionals 64.4%
- ☐ Senior Citizen Assisted-Living Facility 61%
- ☐ Corp. Offices, Training Research/Facilities 59.2%
- ☐ Downtown Living (Townhomes/Apts.) 56.1%
- ☐ Fine Dining Restaurants 54.6%
- ☐ Professional Offices 52.6%
- ☐ Single-Family Homes \$200,000 - \$300,000 52.2%
- ☐ Senior Citizen /Nursing Home 50.8%

12. What Are The Top Three Things You Would Like To See The City Of Sylvania Accomplish In The Next Ten Years? The top things residents want to see the City accomplish in the next ten years include:

- ☐ Make Downtown more attract./vibrant (45.9%)
- ☐ Maintain/develop/enhance character (44.2%)
- ☐ Create a stronger tax base (34.4%)
- ☐ Expand/connect/existing bike paths (31.8%)
- ☐ Expand parkland & green space (25.9%)

13. Neighborhood Issues. Respondents were asked to identify the neighborhoods they live in and the issues they face. Neighborhood issues raised were varied, however some common themes included concerns over property maintenance and property values and traffic.

14. Public Transportation Use. Public transit use is low in Sylvania. Less than 2 out of 10 respondents have used TARTA and any TARTA services in the last 6

months. The reasons for the lack of public transportation use are varied, but largely center on matters of convenience.

15. The Top Factors Considered To Be Essential To Creating A More Livable Sylvania In The Future.

Residents were given several choices that they could consider to be essential to creating a more livable Sylvania in the future. Among the options given, the following rose to the top in the minds of respondents:

- ☐ A strong sense of community, fostered by public spaces, neighborhoods, walking and using transit, outdoor events and the local economy. (52.2%)
- ☐ Vibrant, well-served neighborhoods (50.2%)
- ☐ The ability to get around town easily (lack of traffic, accessible public transportation, ability to bike and use alternate modes, relatively short commute times) (40.9%)
- ☐ A thriving local economy that provides access to fresh local food, coffee, local musicians and art (40.0%).



16. Profiles of the Respondents. It is important to note the most common age group for a respondent to the mail back survey was 65 years and over (27%). The second most prevalent age group responding to this survey was 55 to 64 years (26.4%). As a result, it can be said that more than one-half of those responding to this survey were 55 years old or older. Additionally, most respondents were female (57.2%) and most of them lived in two person households (44.3%). The vast majority of respondents were also homeowners (98%).

Community Visioning Workshop

On January 12, 2009, the City of Sylvania hosted a community planning workshop at the Sylvania Senior Center. This event was intended to offer residents the chance to join with neighbors and discuss community planning priorities. The workshop began at 7:00 pm with a brief presentation about the history of the City, along with current trends. After this presentation, participants were organized around tables in groups of 8. Each group was asked to appoint a person to record key thoughts generated during the discussion and were asked to respond to three questions:

1. What are the important things the City of Sylvania should be doing in terms of physical development to become even more livable? Some examples could include expanding housing choices, redeveloping specific commercial areas, enhancing local arts and culture, more entertainment venues and/or more bike/walking trails. What key things would need to be done to accomplish those goals?

2. What are the important things the City of Sylvania should be doing in terms of physical development to prosper economically in the future? What key things would need to be done to accomplish those goals?

3. In terms of the physical environment, what attributes do you value most about Sylvania and how would you like to see them further developed and/or enhanced? Physical attributes might include signature buildings, open/public spaces, architectural character, historic features, corridors, distinctive districts, attractive views and natural areas. How would you like to see these attributes further developed and/or enhanced?

Work groups had 15 minutes to discuss each question and each group reported their conclusions to everyone in attendance. The written materials were posted on the walls. Toward the end of the evening, participants were given a set of colored sticky dots to "vote" with. They placed them next to ideas recorded on the large sheets of paper to indicate support for that particular idea.



Question #1 What are the important things the City of Sylvania should be doing in terms of physical development to become even more livable?

Responses to this question are listed below and grouped into general categories.

Downtown-Focused

- ☐ More variety in downtown shopping (i.e., bookstores, stationary, wine store, soda fountain (family), general store, hardware store, tavern/pub, theater/restaurant, organic food/whole food restaurant) **6 Votes**
- ☐ Create senior housing downtown, combined with retail and services **4 Votes**
- ☐ Improve facades (in a historically correct manner) **3 Votes**
- ☐ New business start-ups

General Economic Development

- ☐ Incentives to bring business to Sylvania **2 Votes**
- ☐ Timberstone and Saxon Square Redevelopment
- ☐ Redevelop underdeveloped or deteriorated areas.

Corridors

- ☐ Focus on corridors and intersections for redevelopment and create overlays **4 Votes**
- ☐ Alexis Road **1 Vote**
- ☐ Corridor Improvements

- ☐ Expand Monroe Street South to Erie to 4 lanes.

Lourdes College Issues

- ☐ Southbriar Redevelopment - tie to Lourdes/ "college town." **5 Votes**
- ☐ Assist Lourdes College with growth plans. **4 Votes**

Nature/Parks/Bike Ways

- ☐ Amphitheater at Harroun Park **2 Votes**
Emphasize the river going through downtown **2 votes**
- ☐ Go Green
- ☐ Enhance bikeways and walking paths throughout the community.
- ☐ Create a walkway from Lourdes College to Downtown

Neighborhood Issues

- ☐ Maintain desirable neighborhoods (roads, update housing, tree maintenance). **3 Votes**
- ☐ Improve or expand parks and recreation areas

Question #2 What are the important things the City of Sylvania should be doing in terms of physical development to prosper economically in the future?

Responses to this question are listed below and grouped into general categories.

Organizational Efforts

- ☐ Restart downtown business association

- ☐ Stop piece meal zoning process on the planning commission and special use permits. Look at bigger picture or "pods" of redevelopment

Incentives / Investment

- ☐ Provide incentives to attract business **7 Votes**
- ☐ City investing in small and/or new business start-ups **1 Vote**
- ☐ Expand use of community redevelopment zones

Specific Development/Redevelopment Ideas

- ☐ Redevelop older commercial areas. **8 Votes**
- ☐ Annexation of remainder of water district **6 Votes**
- ☐ Bike Trail Connections **3 Votes**
- ☐ Kids Destination **1 Vote**
- ☐ Small 'arrowhead-like" park to increase tax base **1 Vote**
- ☐ New Industrial Parks inside, outside of Sylvania or in Michigan with revenue from sewer and income tax.
- ☐ King Road Development South of Sylvania Ave.
- ☐ Townhouses along developed waterfront "parkway"
- ☐ Harroun Park Development
- ☐ Parking improvements



- ☐ Pocket Parks

Misc. Thoughts

- ☐ Market Study **3 Votes**
- ☐ Recruit smoke-less industry to "beef up" tax base
- ☐ Stricter rental rules
- ☐ Bike racks – rental bikes
- ☐ Better PR for historical Village
- ☐ Good City Services (snow plowing) people want to live here because of this.

Question #3 In terms of the physical environment, what attributes do you value most about Sylvania and how would you like to see them further developed and/or enhanced?

Responses to this question are listed below and grouped into general categories.

Downtown

- ☐ Neat downtown – could we lower tax rate for downtown to provide incentives for more development. **7 Votes**
- ☐ Better Use of Existing Downtown Buildings
- ☐ Link downtown with Burnham Park
- ☐ Improved Parking Downtown

Nature

- ☐ Parks & Trees – Oak Openings Preserve **2 Votes**



- ☐ Parks & Recreation, Bike Paths are an asset. **1 Vote**

- ☐ River **1 Vote**

- ☐ Enhanced indoor winter recreation

- ☐ Harroun Park

Urban Design

- ☐ Consistent architecture
- ☐ Architectural Control.

Neighborhoods

- ☐ Continue to offer safe neighborhoods **1 Vote**
- ☐ Strong Healthy residential neighborhoods **1 Vote**

Historic Preservation

- ☐ Preserve as many old homes and buildings as possible (including Maplewood). Old homes have character **2 Votes**
- ☐ Historic Preservation Village **1 Vote**
- ☐ Preservation resource (for homes) through city grants for historically correct improvements. **1 vote**
- ☐ Historical homes/sites small town feel – could accomplish this research and plaques that recognize historic properties.

Programmatic

- ☐ Must prioritize areas of the City for redevelopment (can't do everything) **3 Votes**
- ☐ Engage Root Learning to assist us with downtown and creative thinkers. **2 Votes**
- ☐ Create incentive plan to grow area between downtown and Lourdes.
- ☐ Encourage enterprise or development zones around new schools.

Misc.

- ☐ Water Tower **1 Vote**

- ☐ Self contained community – but close to major shopping
- ☐ Movie Theater
- ☐ Gathering Space

Summary

The purpose of the workshop was to allow participants to engage in discussions in a rather unconstrained and open manner. People in attendance were put into small groups to encourage open dialog about community issues using general, but thought-provoking questions. This event was held to compliment the simultaneous effort to reach all residents with a written survey placed in the December water bills. This same survey was available on the City web site. The survey and workshop offered an intentional contrast between the controlled and direct question and answer format in the community survey, and the open, discussion-oriented format of the workshop.

There were a number of recurring themes evident in the ideas brought forward on January 12, 2009. As is often the case with an event of this nature, apart from the absolute ranking of ideas, it is possible to see some common elements among the responses. While there is room for interpretation, the following key thoughts seem to take center stage.

1. There is a desire to focus on redevelopment. This includes older commercial areas built decades ago and in the downtown.
2. People want to see downtown become more relevant to community needs. They want to see destinations that draw people and there is a sense that it would be appropriate to offer incentives of

some type to help make this happen. There is a sense that “things are missing” in downtown. New housing, cultural attractions, entertainment and a connection to nature are included in an ideal picture of revitalized downtown spaces.

3. Annexation of areas contained in the water district would be considered a positive step for the City.

Note - about 1,100 acres are in the Sylvania water service area, but outside the City limits. Much of this land is already developed.

4. More collaboration between the City of Sylvania and Lourdes College is desired, especially in terms of college growth plans. An expansion of Lourdes College raises opportunities for community development. The idea of Sylvania being a college town is new, and better physical, visual and functional connections between Lourdes and Downtown would offer many community benefits.

5. There is a sense that the community needs to step-up efforts to protect historical resources. Since so much of Sylvania is new, local historic resources represent important connections to the past. There is concern over deterioration of historic resources and historically insensitive improvements.

6. Residents want to connect with nature and the outdoors more with park development, bike/walking trails and they want more association with the river, especially near downtown.

7. Most residential neighborhoods are newer and stable and they have few issues.

8. There is a general desire to attract business to Sylvania to strengthen the tax base. There is also a sense of selectivity regarding the kinds of business development most desired.



Updated Land Use Plan

Sylvania's Updated Land Use Vision

Some people say the nation is poised for an overhaul of urban transportation and land use systems. Some see a rebirth of urban areas with greater preferences for urban living and increased reliance on mass transit and non-motorized travel. They see their neighbors drawn to downtowns that are active well past 5 PM to interact with friends in an environment that offers engaging and appealing social and cultural experiences. The extent to which this happens at a national scale may be hard to predict, but certainly, demographic shifts, social change and the increasing need for energy efficiency will influence how land in all communities is used and reused.

In Sylvania, the process to update this land use plan has helped to shed light on local development trends. This process also provided new perspectives about how residents would like to see Sylvania become an even greater community than it is now. Based on Steering Committee meetings, public visioning and surveys that reached every household in town, certain observations can now be made with much greater certainty. Some observations may not necessarily be surprising for those who know the City well, but the fact that they have emerged from a structured process of community engagement now allows the following to be said with greater confidence:

1. Residents like living here. Sylvania is considered to be a good place to live and raise children. Sylvania is regarded as a place where people feel safe and the majority of residents are pleased with municipal services and facilities. If Sylvania were a student in school, its performance and achievement would put it toward the top of the class with a grade of A- or B+. The strength of the school system is a key reason why people live in Sylvania.

2. As nice as Sylvania is, residents look toward an improved downtown, more jobs, and developing a stronger tax base as ways to be even better. There is a sense that the City would be more complete and livable with a downtown that is full of active and vibrant local businesses. Not only would a more diverse downtown improve Sylvania's quality of life, but downtown businesses could collectively become

one of Sylvania's largest employers, thus contributing to a stronger tax base.

3. The path toward creating a stronger tax base and lowering tax rates includes redevelopment of key areas and efforts to "create the places" that will draw and keep knowledge-workers and creative people. Sylvania has the nucleus of this environment now. While pursuing industrial development is not seen as a particularly promising venture at this time, people generally understand that diversity is important in stabilizing the tax base, an idea that is important to many. Thus effort should be given to attracting different kinds of businesses.

4. It is possible that local commercial offerings could be expanded to include more casual dining, family restaurants, and small retail stores. Residents see some voids in the local market that hint at what new business ventures might be successful downtown and elsewhere. One common theme among the identified gaps in the mix of local goods and services is the aspect that residents desire more opportunities for informal social interaction afforded by casual dining, family restaurants and small retail shops. Possibly this is because suburban homes can be somewhat isolated places, separated from each other by both emotional and physical distances, and residents are drawn to places where they can connect with others in a larger social setting.

5. The housing stock is somewhat diversified now, but the demand for more housing should shift away from the larger suburban homes now common in the City. The demand for new housing in Sylvania may be growing toward more modest priced single-family units, condos and villas often desired by empty nesters, seniors and young professionals.

6. The suggestion that Sylvania may be emerging as a college town is new, but real. Lourdes College is expanding, and this growth opens opportunities for the City in terms of economic development, culture and image. College towns have a distinct appeal for many. Not only can a college campus stimulate the development of a knowledge-based economy, but it can also serve as a hub for cultural experiences and social interaction.

Moving forward, this updated Land Use Plan is intended to be the broad policy document that will guide local decision-making concerning physical change. For Sylvania to evolve in desired directions and become more livable, it must physically change in specific directions. The mix of land uses in certain areas must change along with the design of new buildings and exterior spaces.

This Land Use Plan will be implemented over time through many decisions that include annual budgeting, departmental work programs and zoning decisions. As a framework for implementation, broad, long-term community land use goals are established along with more specific and tactical principles for community development and redevelopment. These principles are then expanded to include a number of specific implementation measures and initiatives.

- ☐ Continue to revitalize Downtown Sylvania
- ☐ Redevelop commercial areas in a way that enhances community character and uniqueness of place
- ☐ Respect and preserve the historic character of Sylvania.
- ☐ Continue to develop and maintain a quality transportation system using all modes of transportation.
- ☐ Develop and maintain livable, attractive, and affordable housing for all residents of Sylvania as they move through life stages.
- ☐ Expand, develop and enhance an open space and park system that meets the needs of all residents and helps associate Sylvania with a healthy environment.
- ☐ Preserve, enhance and develop cultural resources and iconic community elements to help create a sense of place.

- ☐ Establish, develop and cultivate partnerships with educational institutions, the business community, and other political jurisdictions to help achieve all goals.

Foundational Land Use Principles

Nine principles for guiding community development and redevelopment have been identified and are visually expressed in the Future Land Use Plan Graphic provided at the end of this Chapter. These principles support the larger community goals and are more specific and direct expressions of local attitudes toward how residents and community leaders wish to see physical land use change. Generally, these principles flow from the awareness that, while Sylvania may not grow much more in a geographic sense, it is still evolving and changing, as areas of town are redeveloped, redesigned and transform over time. These principles are intended to advance the goals stated above, and help Sylvania evolve toward an even more livable, attractive and vibrant city.

Sylvania has spent the last 40 years creating highly desirable residential neighborhoods. Residents who live in these neighborhoods give their community high marks, and few have plans to move elsewhere. Now, attention returns to Sylvania's roots, and efforts to reinforce community character and identity take on more significant meaning and weight. Suburban communities are reinventing themselves across the United States, and Sylvania is no different. Recently, *Time Magazine* (March 23, 2009) identified "recycling suburbs" as one of the top ten ideas changing the world. Following this trend, Sylvania will redevelop itself, becoming an even better and more desirable place to live and work, guided by the following principles:



1. Revitalize Downtown.

Downtown is the heart of the City, and its clearest link to the historical foundations of the community. Unquestionably, downtown needs to be a welcoming and viable center of commerce, social interaction and culture. Residents say that downtown revitalization should be among the City's highest priorities. Deeper discussions suggest that downtown needs to be the single place that reveals the heart and soul of Sylvania. It should draw both young and old, not only for goods and services, but also for entertainment, human interaction, and for the experience of a unique place that is essential to creating and maintaining livable communities. With much of Sylvania having been built in the last 30-40 years, the attachment to and importance of downtown become all the more significant, as residents and visitors seek an escape from common franchise architecture and the feeling of being in an ordinary suburban environment. Not surprisingly, residents place the desire to see Sylvania maintain, develop and enhance its character high on the local "to do" list in the next ten years. Modern commercial strips and corridors of big box retail development will always offer greater convenience for some types of shopping trips, but Downtown Sylvania can offer a special brand of intimacy and local flavor.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Pursue the CDBG Tier 1 and Tier 2 Downtown CDBG program through the State of Ohio Department of Development. In Ohio, similar cities that have made substantial progress toward downtown redevelopment have done so using CDBG funds obtained from the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD). For many years, ODOD has made grants to local governments to fund focused downtown planning and implementation. The Tier 1 Planning Program provides a maximum grant of \$15,000, with a \$1:\$1 match requirement. Funds can be used to develop or update a Downtown Plan, Design Review Guidelines, Market Study (consumer & merchant surveys and analysis), building and/or infrastructure surveys, zoning guidelines, marketing strategy, or other planning documents necessary for downtown revitalization. The plan must include the Main Street four-point approach (design, organization, promotion and economic restructuring). Such a plan would build on existing planning efforts and delve into many aspects of downtown revitalization – engaging various downtown interests in the consensus-building efforts necessary to establish a unified and collective vision. With an approved Downtown Master Plan, a community can apply for a Tier 2 Downtown Revitalization grant for a maximum of \$400,000. This grant also has competitive leveraging and participation requirements, but it is one of Ohio's primary funding sources to help fund uniform facade/sign improvements, interior code violation corrections, parking improvements, streetscape activities, and other CDBG eligible infrastructure and rehabilitation activities.

Investigate Tax Incentives. The City of Sylvania can utilize programs such as the Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) to abate property taxes related to new real estate investment. Such an incentive could prove to be valuable and necessary as a means to encourage reinvestment.

Reevaluate a Special Improvement District (SID). The City of Sylvania has experience with a SID, but it is possible that a new or reorganized SID could be instrumental in activities related to marketing, promotion, organizational development and grant seeking.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Review the Zoning Code in terms of permitted and special uses. Much of downtown Sylvania is zoned B-3. B-3 is called the "Central Business District" and the stated purpose of this district is to have concentrated activities which have primarily a City-wide function; namely large stores offering comparison shoppers' goods, specialty stores, business services, banks, offices, theaters, hotels and government buildings. While this purpose aligns well with most views of how Downtown Sylvania should look and feel, the fact that there is an extraordinary long list of permitted uses is significant. Sylvania has a zoning code that is in part, cumulative. This means that generally, uses allowed in the less intensive zoning districts are also permitted in zoning districts that represent more intensive land uses. In Sylvania, the list of permitted land uses in the B-3 district includes those uses permitted in B-1-B (Modified Business and Office District). This provides for a wide range of potential land uses,

some of which are more appropriate than others in a downtown setting. Future efforts to update local zoning should consider the following:

- i. Establish a downtown zoning district that exclusively defines permitted uses and development standards that advance the principles described in this plan.
- ii. Specifically consider permitted uses that include more “human scale” land uses such as coffee shops, family dining, wine bar, art galleries, specialty food sales, craft shops, card shops and other “one of a kind” establishments. At the same time discourage (or prohibit) more auto-oriented uses such as gas stations, movie rentals and fast food.
- iii. Address the issue of encouraging upper floor utilization through appropriate zoning standards.
- iv. Review zoning standards for residential uses in B-3 in the context of making sure that there is a balance between encouraging residential activity and well-reasoned standards necessary to protect property values. Of particular interest are residential land uses such as artist live-work units, store owner residences and trendy loft-style housing units that may attract younger professional occupants.

Review the Zoning Code in Terms of Development Standards. Apart from land uses, development standards prescribed in B-3 should also be reviewed. Development standards relate to matters such as building size or mass, lot coverage, parking lot design and building setback. Some particular areas that should be reviewed include making sure that development standards advance the principle that downtown buildings should not be setback from the right-of-way, and adequate parking should be located behind buildings to help avoid “gaps” in the street frontage. As downtown becomes more of a draw, the need for parking will increase, and thus its location and design becomes all the more critical. Additionally, consideration should be given to other development standards that help create a downtown environment, such as a requirement for “0” front setbacks to draw buildings to the right-of-way, and maximum individual building sizes since today, uses such as grocery stores, drug stores and office supply stores can vary tremendously in size. Smaller buildings, or larger multiple use buildings may fit well within a downtown setting, while larger single use buildings may not.

Update the Downtown/Central Business District Design Guidelines. Sylvania has design guidelines for the downtown area that were prepared nearly 15 years ago. These design guidelines apply to business, commercial and office properties within the area generally bounded by Erie Street on the north; Parkwood Boulevard on the west; Ten Mile Creek on the south; and Interstate 23 on the east. These guidelines relate to several “Overlay Zoning Districts” and should be reviewed and updated. Areas that require specific attention include, expanded design guidance and direction in terms of desired architectural elements such as roofs, walls, windows, facades and other exterior elevations, and preservation of the unique historic character of the Downtown. It is also possible that further study will reveal the desirability of reducing the number of overlay zones, while enhancing the depth and detail of the design guidelines to deal with the fact that different areas in and near downtown should be redeveloped with slightly different design objectives.



2. Not Only a Revitalized Downtown, But One Framed by Attractive Urban Spaces.

As the civic focal point and community anchor, downtown should be surrounded by historic residential areas and an attractive Monroe Street Corridor. Additionally, the downtown should be centered among public buildings, institutions and areas that are home to professionals and knowledge workers employed in leading-edge firms. Area workers, institutional patrons and visitors of all types should be drawn to downtown by restaurants, support services, unique retail shops, social events and an exciting urban experience.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Investigate Tax Incentives. The City of Sylvania can utilize programs such as the Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) to abate property taxes related to new real estate investment. Such an incentive could prove to be valuable and necessary as a means to encourage residential reinvestment. It is also possible that a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) mechanism could be used to gather financial resources to support downtown redevelopment and physical improvements.

Implement the Monroe Street Gateway District Plan. The Gateway Plan contains a number of enhancements to the Monroe Street Corridor. When fully implemented, an enhanced Monroe Street would help to frame downtown and convey a feeling of quality and sense of arrival.

Support and Encourage Historic District Designation. Historic District Designation could help to solidify the historic character of the areas surrounding downtown and reinforce a sense of place. Several options exist and could include Natural Register District Nomination and /or local designation of a historic district and/or individual local landmarks. Additional steps include becoming designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG) by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office.



Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Update Zoning. The zoning code should be reviewed to make sure that permitted uses in zoning districts directly align with the need to create urban spaces that support and strengthen downtown. This includes the following considerations:

- i. Generally, conversions of homes to offices in areas surrounding downtown should be discouraged or prohibited since such conversions can reduce the demand for existing space downtown as alternatives are provided in surrounding areas. It also contributes to the blurring of boundaries between the downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods and can impact residential property values. It is however possible, and even desirable, for homes to be converted to other uses if accomplished in a deliberate manner to purposefully expand the downtown to accommodate a growing demand for office, retail and/or service uses.
- ii. Conversions of homes to multiple-family dwellings should be discouraged to help maintain the historical integrity of residences.

Code Enforcement. Older residential areas often face greater challenges in terms of property maintenance. Apart from maintaining major mechanical systems, older homes can also require more effort to maintain outward appearances. The areas in and near downtown include many older residences, and therefore code enforcement is emerging as an issue of greater significance. Stepped up code enforcement can be necessary to avert neighborhood decline. Deferring physical maintenance of properties is a vicious cycle that almost inevitably leads to economic decline. It is possible that grant programs, such as the Lucas County CHIP program, can provide funding for low-and moderate-income residents to help reduce financial hardships brought about by code enforcement efforts.

3. Make the Downtown, and the Areas around It, More Walkable and Connected.

Downtown Sylvania must become a walkable destination. If downtown is to reach its full potential, it should draw people from surrounding areas in vehicles and as pedestrians. Vehicular access and parking is important to be sure (especially given Northwest Ohio weather) and a parking garage could someday help conserve open space and enhance convenience, but ultimately everyone is a pedestrian at some point during a trip, so pedestrian linkages and more human-scale designs are needed to provide a safe and enjoyable experience of walking from surrounding neighborhoods to downtown to eat, shop and interact. Providing viable transportation alternatives in and near downtown (and city-wide) helps to reduce health care costs associated with inactivity; appeals to the kind of knowledge worker market desired for the greater downtown area; and reduces water, air, and noise pollution associated with automobile use. Secondly, if downtown is more accessible by walking or bicycling, the need for downtown parking spaces is reduced and there are more opportunities for social interaction. The planned creation of the Sylvania Greenway along 10 Mile Creek south of downtown, and the creation of a new trail that would travel through this greenway, helps to functionally “connect downtown” to the larger community so that non-motorized travel would be more possible, safe and enjoyable. Walkability is especially important in and near downtown, but additionally, this concept is expanded upon for the whole City.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Implement the Sylvania Greenway Plan and Build the Planned Trails. Current plans have established general greenway and trail concepts. These plans should be developed, funded and constructed.

Continue to Develop a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Sylvania has built a solid reputation as a place where non-motorized transportation is valued. This positive tradition can be built upon to maintain an outstanding system that is built on best practices. Key connections that should be developed and strengthened include: connections from Lourdes College to the surrounding Sylvania educational institutions and downtown; connections between the municipal buildings, especially across the railroad tracks; connections between and among the various residential subdivisions to underscore more human interaction in these primarily auto-connected zones; and connections between permanent open/green spaces themselves, as well as the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Include Pedestrian Circulation Criteria in Zoning Requirements. Efforts to incorporate pedestrian circulation requirements into site plan and development review procedures should be considered, especially when a development or redevelopment site is located in or near a downtown area. The weight and relative importance of such considerations should be proportional to the size of the proposed development and proximity of existing or planned bike or walking trails and/or dedicated bike lanes. Consideration can also be given to accommodating transit as a mode of transportation when the proposed development is located along a bus route.



4.Revitalize Eastern Commercial Areas.

Times have changed since the commercial areas east of U.S. 23 were built, and privately-driven plans to redevelop these areas are inevitable and will be welcomed by the City. Presently, the combination of vacant commercial spaces and dated site and building designs raises the question of interest related to redevelopment. For this reason, the City is eager to partner with private parties and embrace development concepts that involve mixed uses and cutting-edge urban design. Municipal planning policies and zoning tools should be realigned to meet this objective as the City of Sylvania recognizes that it must set purposeful development standards to get results.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Consensus-building with Respect to Desired Urban Design. As part of this updated Land Use Plan, only general discussions have taken place with regard to the desired look and feel of revitalized commercial areas east of U.S. 23. However, the general concept is that this area should become an area of mixed land uses in buildings that are generally multiple stories with first floors dedicated to commercial retail and service activities, and upper floors dedicated to office and/or residential uses. Other design considerations include a more compact form that encourages walking, a streetscape designed for pedestrians, buildings set close to the sidewalk, a mix of housing types and price ranges, and a higher level of architectural treatment and design. Familiar area models for this type of urban development include Levis Commons in Perrysburg and/or Mayberry in Sylvania Township. Given this general picture, it is also recognized that redevelopment of this type is challenging and the City of Sylvania would support and encourage redevelopment plans resulting in progressive mixed-use development that fits the character of Sylvania.



Investigate Tax Incentives. The City of Sylvania can utilize programs such as the Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) to abate property taxes related to new real estate investment. Such an incentive could prove to be valuable and necessary to induce redevelopment. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) may also be a useful tool.

Partnership Development. Because redevelopment can often prove to be difficult to accomplish, communities often forge partnerships with developers to encourage redevelopment activity. Historically, the City of Sylvania has experience developing such partnerships. City leaders were involved in land acquisitions south of downtown that resulted in the new hotel, the office building that houses Root Learning and the temporary park at the Southeast corner of Monroe and Main Streets. Similar efforts may be needed to ensure that redevelopment of the eastern commercial areas takes place. Aside from land acquisitions, communities can take steps such as providing tax incentives, regulatory relief, and sometimes indirect financial participation to help transform an underperforming and blighted area toward a more desirable part of the community.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Update Zoning. Presently, the Sylvania Zoning Code may not contain the necessary development standards and procedural requirements to address the kind of redevelopment desired and called for in this Land Use Plan. The City of Sylvania relies heavily on a system of special use approvals (Chapter 1153) and has connected these processes and procedures to the Planned Development Chapter (1155). It is likely that given time to reconsider the current zoning code provisions in light of this new Land Use Plan, certain possible improvements may come to light. This is particularly true in the context of Planned Developments, where better defined parameters for acceptable land use mix, urban design standards and procedural requirements would better define community goals and provide the developer with a clearer view of expectations and procedural requirements.

5. A Place for Economic Development.

Developing a stronger tax base is a key to assuring that Sylvania has the resources to sustain public investments and continually improve the quality of life for residents. Developing this tax base requires aggressive economic development efforts. Most professionals agree that successful economic development in the 21st century is centered on attracting and retaining “knowledge workers” who are driven to create and innovate. Intellectual property and creative abilities are the new building blocks of wealth creation. Individuals with these attributes, and the companies they work for, are drawn to places that value culture, recreation, social interaction, and intellectual pursuits. Local institutions such as Lourdes College, the Flower Hospital campus, local schools, and private businesses such as Root Learning, help to define Sylvania as a place where knowledge workers and professionals are drawn. However, building on this nucleus for economic development requires sustained commitment and redevelopment efforts that will enable Sylvania to offer attractive office space, as well as local amenities, entertainment venues, cultural attractions, unique shopping, dining experiences and educational opportunities.

It is also recognized that a future employment center exists east of King Road and north of the University Parks Bike Trail. This land (about 45 acres) is zoned industrial and is wooded for the most part. An existing 80,000 square foot light manufacturing building is located on the southernmost property. This area is enhanced by the Southview High School Campus to the north and east and should be developed into a employment center with light manufacturing and office spaces. Existing tree canopy should be protected to the greatest extent possible during site development to create an environment similar to Arrowhead Park in nearby Maumee.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Assign Responsibility for the Task of Advancing the Concept that Sylvania is an Emerging Home for Knowledge Workers. This assignment could be directed toward the existing Sylvania Area Community Improvement Corporation (SACIC), or perhaps a new consortium of business leaders could be formed. In either case, the goal would be to advocate the perception that Sylvania has, or is developing, the kind of supportive environment that will attract individuals and firms with creative abilities. From the standpoint of the City and its physical change, the focus should be on two things. First, it should further investigate potential locations for new firms and potential to further develop a cluster of businesses south of downtown. Secondly, effort should be put forth to determine how Sylvania can offer the kinds of entertainment venues, cultural attractions, specialty shopping, unique dining experiences and educational opportunities that are necessary to support and sustain a place that draws entrepreneurs and persons with creative abilities.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Update Zoning. Sylvania’s Zoning Code should be reviewed in terms of permitted uses in the Professional, Office and Research Zoning District. Of particular concern is whether the existing list of permitted uses includes all those likely to be associated with desirable technology-oriented workplaces that represent newer industries. Such uses could potentially involve activities that relate to; assembly of small computer components, electronic testing, software development, medical testing facilities, life sciences firms, telecommunications equipment and business support services and outpatient clinics.

Zoning standards applicable to the employment center east of King Rd. should also be reviewed to ensure that permitted land uses and development standards align with the vision for this property as being more of an upscale, technology-oriented employment center in a natural setting.



6. Better Urban Design & Land Use Policies.

Few people today defend conventional zoning techniques with traditional practices of separating land uses, minimum design or other standards, procedural flaws and other shortcomings. Whereas conventional zoning may have served the City well during its period of growth and expansion, the fact that the City is approaching build-out, and the fact that there are increasing levels of frustration with current zoning policies suggests that it is time to take a fresh look at local land use controls. The increased local reliance on “special uses” in the municipal zoning code is likely symptomatic of a larger problem: that the regulatory tools that helped build the City may not be what is needed to guide redevelopment, as urban design and context-sensitive development take center stage. Increasingly, communities are turning to form-based zoning codes as a way to concentrate more on design issues such as building form, mass, materials, scale, and relationships to surrounding property. Form-based codes are uniquely relevant to redevelopment, and a model such as the *SmartCode* is a logical beginning point, as local leaders pursue new and better ways to manage land use change.

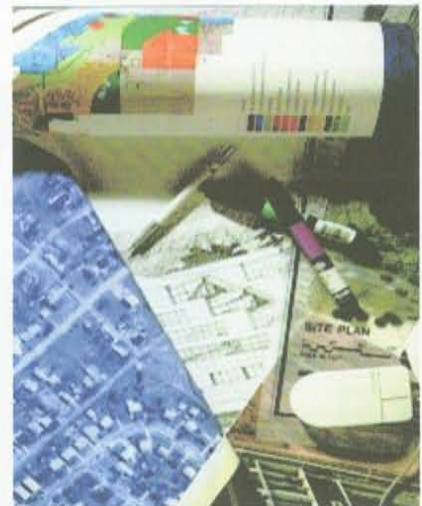
Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Procedural /Organizational Issues

- i. **Site Plan Review:** A possible shortcoming of the existing Sylvania Zoning Code may be a lack of site plan review requirements. Site Plan Review procedures and requirements are often established in communities to allow for a more extensive development review. Generally, development with more substantial impact (above a certain number of square feet or involving more than a certain level of off-street parking) can be required to undergo more substantial review and consideration. Often site plans are reviewed by a Planning Commission who is charged with reviewing proposed plans against established criteria. Generally, site plans apply to both permitted and special uses, and issues such as vehicular access, screening and landscaping, and pedestrian circulation are given attention and relate to performance standards for development.
- ii. **Special Uses:** Chapter 1153 defines procedures for special uses in Sylvania, which include following formal zoning code amendment requirements for approval. It is thought that this process and the list of special uses should be reviewed to make sure that all relevant uses are included as special uses and that all procedural requirements are necessary.
- iii. **Planned Unit Development:** As noted previously, existing planned unit development standards are brief and should be reviewed in terms of possible enhancements to serve the City better. This is especially true in the context of redevelopment of the older commercial areas on the east side of the City. Often communities strive to provide some latitude and flexibility in terms of allowable uses and urban design considerations in order to achieve more creative development. It is important to note in its current state, the Sylvania Zoning Code would make it very difficult to develop a well-designed, mixed-use development such as Levis Commons.

Development Standards

- i. **Landscaping:** Landscaping standards could be enhanced to provide more substantial direction to property owners and design professionals in terms of buffering, screening, acceptable landscaping materials and opacity standards.
- ii. **Access Management:** Existing or new standards for driveway placement should be developed or otherwise incorporated into the Sylvania Zoning Code to make sure that access management objectives are met.



7. Preserve the Neighborhoods and Continue to Maintain High Standards for Public Safety and Excellence in the School System.

Overwhelmingly, the three assets that people associate with Sylvania are “nice place to live”, “safety” and “good schools.” While all of these characteristics are foundational to the essence of Sylvania, they also draw attention to the fact that Sylvania is a City of neighborhoods, and maintaining the City as a “nice place to live” requires different actions in different parts of the City. Older sections of the City that surround downtown have unique demographics and physical attributes that require actions supportive of historic preservation, code enforcement and general neighborhood stability. Newer sections of the City (west and southwest of downtown) require attention oriented more toward maintenance of public services and infrastructure.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Advance the idea that Sylvania is a City of Neighborhoods. As a suburban community, there is a sense that large portions of Sylvania are homogeneous and nearly identical from one area to another in terms of outward appearance. Homes, lot sizes and subdivision design are all often very similar to each other. Naturally, residents see their neighborhoods as being more distinctive and unique. The City of Sylvania can encourage and support the notion that there are neighborhoods in both formal and informal ways.



Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Property Maintenance Codes. Property maintenance code development and enforcement is important throughout Sylvania. Older sections of town face challenges from older housing stock, while newer areas can face challenges from issues such as foreclosures. Several options exist in terms of code adoption and enforcement that need to be carefully evaluated and considered. However, neighborhood preservation and stability are important issues for the City for the long term and should receive attention.



8. Bike & Trail Connections.

Apart from pedestrian access and trail connections in and near downtown (discussed previously), developing more bike and trail connections throughout the City is viewed as being essential to weaving a connected, linked and physically-active community. The bike and walking trail system needs to be both functional and recreational, providing all residents with transportation options and choices.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

Prepare a Long-Term Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for the Whole City. Sylvania has built a solid reputation as a place where non-motorized transportation is valued. This positive tradition can be built upon to maintain an outstanding system that is built on best practices. Beyond current plans to develop the Riverwalk, key connections that should be developed and strengthened include: connections from Lourdes College and surrounding educational institutions and downtown; connections between the municipal buildings, especially across the railroad tracks; connections between and among the various residential subdivisions to offer transportation alternatives in these primarily auto-connected zones. Additionally, connections between permanent open/green spaces, community facilities and the surrounding residential neighborhoods, are important. With an established city-wide, long-term non-motorized transportation plan it would be possible to better address the issue of how private development plans should accommodate and support the development of planned bike lanes and walking/bike trails.

Blend Local Planning with Safe Routes to School Initiatives. Safe Routes to School is an international movement to make it safe, convenient, and fun for children to bicycle and walk to and from school. Since January of 2008 ODOT has awarded funding and engineering services to 140 communities for more than 330 schools, interested in creating and encouraging a Safe Route to School in their communities. Applications came from municipalities, school districts, hospitals, non-profit organizations, and health departments around the state. ODOT has awarded funds for 36 infrastructure and 13 non infrastructure projects. In April of 2009, ODOT released a supplemental funding opportunity for Walk to School Awards. Applications are generally accepted from September to November each year with awards being announced the following March.



Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Regulatory Measures

Include Pedestrian and Bike Circulation Criteria in Zoning Requirements: Steps can be taken to incorporate pedestrian/bike circulation considerations into site plan and development review procedures. This should be considered especially when a development or redevelopment site is located in or near a downtown area, or along an existing or planned non-motorized trail or walkway. Such a consideration is geared toward the idea that attention should be given to defining the space for non-motorized travel along with vehicular movement and parking.



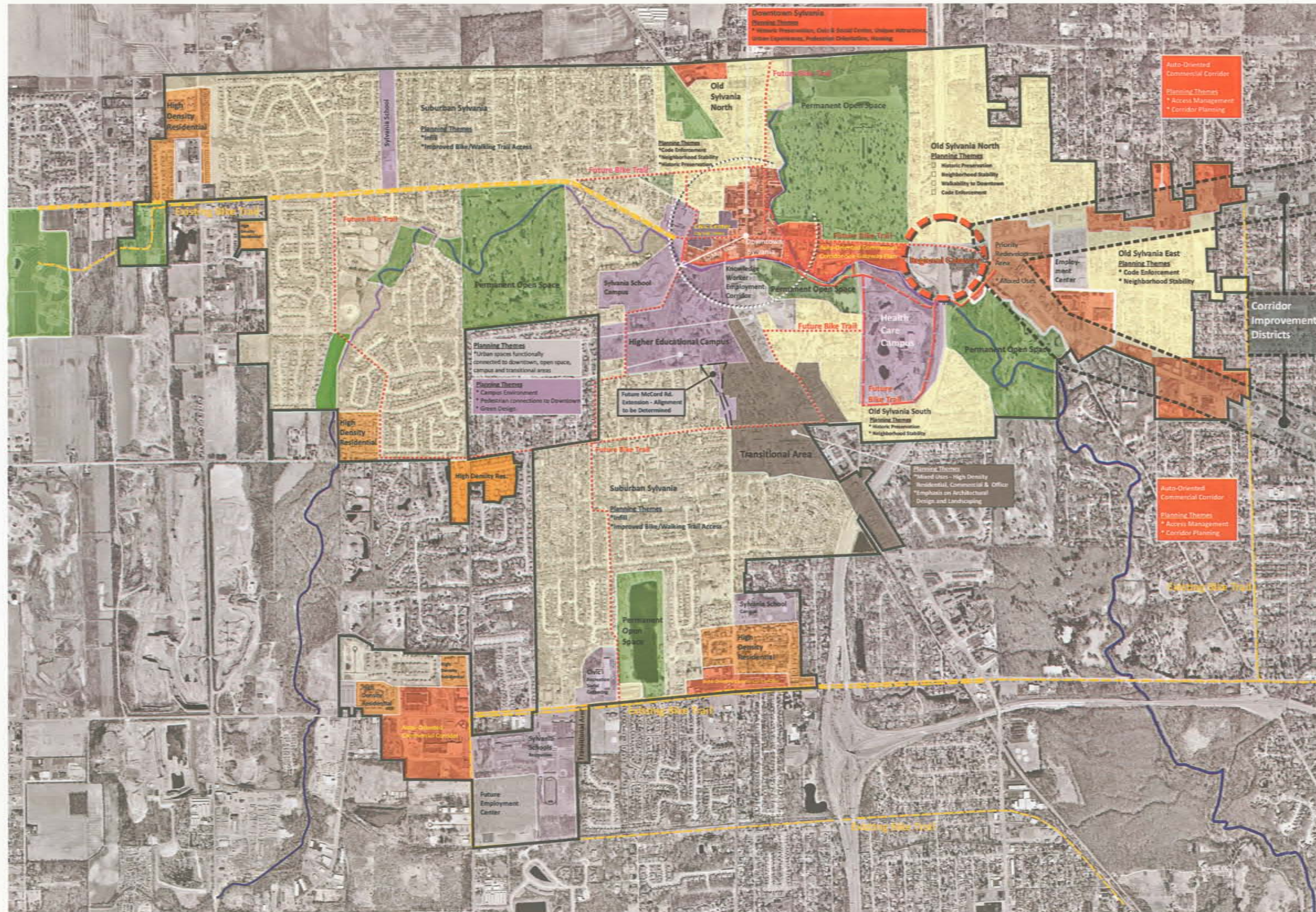
9. Regional Corridors.

Sylvania is part of a larger region and is connected to the northwest Ohio community by major arterials. These major arterials include the Alexis and Monroe Street Corridors to the east. In both cases, these regional corridors are significant not only to the City of Sylvania, but also to Sylvania Township and Toledo. Redevelopment issues relating to both urban design and access management are really inter-jurisdictional matters that should be dealt with collaboratively. Sylvania Township is a willing partner with the City in terms of future corridor enhancement efforts, similar to the Gateway planning efforts undertaken by the City west of US 23.

Implementation Measures/Initiatives - Funding/Financing/Programs

In partnership with Sylvania Township and potentially other units of government such as the City of Toledo and the Ohio Department of Transportation, cooperative and sustained planning is necessary to help guide new development and redevelopment. A cooperative and multi-jurisdictional approach is particularly important as municipal limits along Monroe and Alexis are hardly noticeable, while the challenge of improving traffic circulation, encouraging better architectural design and improving pedestrian circulation is a shared issue that would benefit from a coordinated approach.





Map 7-1
Updated Land
Use Plan

Foundational Land Use Principles

- 1) Revitalize Downtown.** Downtown is the heart of the City, and its clearest link to the historical foundations of the community. Unquestionably, downtown needs to be a welcoming and viable center of commerce, social interaction and culture.
- 2) Not Only a Revitalized Downtown, But One Framed by Attractive Urban Spaces.** As the civic focal point and community anchor, downtown should be surrounded by historic residential areas and an attractive Monroe Street Corridor.
- 3. Make the Downtown, and the Areas around It, More Walkable and Connected.** Downtown Sylvania must become a walkable destination. If downtown is to reach its full potential, it should draw people from surrounding areas in vehicles and as pedestrians.
- 4. Revitalize Eastern Commercial Areas.** Times have changed since the commercial areas east of U.S. 23 were built, and privately-driven plans to redevelop these areas are inevitable and will be welcomed by the City.
- 5. A Place for Economic Development.** Developing a stronger tax base is a key to assuring that Sylvania has the resources to sustain public investments and continually improve the quality of life for residents.
- 6. Better Urban Design & Land Use Policies.** Few people today defend conventional zoning techniques with traditional practices of separating land uses, minimum design or other standards, procedural flaws and other shortcomings. Whereas conventional zoning may have served the City well during its period of growth and expansion, the fact that the City is approaching build-out, and the fact that there are increasing levels of frustration with current zoning policies suggests that it is time to take a fresh look at local land use controls.
- 7. Preserve the Neighborhoods and Continue to Maintain High Standards for Public Safety and Excellence in the School System.** Overwhelmingly, the three assets that people associate with Sylvania are "nice place to live", "safety" and "good schools." While all of these characteristics are foundational to the essence of Sylvania, they also draw attention to the fact that Sylvania is a City of neighborhoods, and maintaining the City as a "nice place to live" requires different actions in different parts of the City.
- 8. Bike & Trail Connections.** Apart from pedestrian access and trail connections in and near downtown (discussed previously), developing more bike and trail connections throughout the City is viewed as being essential to weaving a connected, linked and physically-active community.
- 9. Regional Corridors.** Sylvania is part of a larger region and is connected to the northwest Ohio community by major arterials. These major arterials include the Alexis and Monroe Street Corridors to the east. In both cases, these regional corridors are significant not only to the City of Sylvania, but also to Sylvania Township and Toledo. Redevelopment issues relating to both urban design and access management are really inter-jurisdictional matters that should be dealt with collaboratively.



RESOLUTION NO. 10 -2010

**APPROVING THE SYLVANIA CITY LAND USE PLAN UPDATE, 2009;
AUTHORIZING THE INCORPORATION OF SAID UPDATE INTO
SYLVANIA'S COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN — REVISED 1982;
AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

WHEREAS, the Sylvania Municipal Planning Commission adopted the City's first Comprehensive General Plan on January 18, 1967; and,

WHEREAS, on May 11, 1983, the Sylvania Municipal Planning Commission adopted Sylvania's Comprehensive General Plan--Revised 1982; and,

WHEREAS, Sylvania City Council passed Resolution No. 12-83, on June 28, 1983, approving the recommendation and action of the Municipal Planning Commission and thereby adopted the Comprehensive General Plan--Revised 1982, as a revision of the Comprehensive General Plan of January 18, 1967, and superseding the 1967 Plan; and,

WHEREAS, this Council passed Ordinance No. 71-88, on July 18, 1988, authorizing an Agreement with Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc., to provide professional services for the preparation of an Overall Land Use Development Plan for the City of Sylvania and Sylvania Township; and,

WHEREAS, such an Overall Land Use Development Plan for the City and Township of Sylvania was completed by Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc. dated June, 1989; and,

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 71-88, passed July 18, 1988, authorized the preparation of an Overall Land Use Development Plan for the City of Sylvania and Sylvania Township as a cooperative project between the City of Sylvania, the Township of Sylvania, and the Sylvania

City School District; and,

WHEREAS, the Sylvania Township Board of Trustees, at its regular meeting of November 15, 1990, approved the Sylvania City and Township Future Land Use Plan Update, November, 1990, with one (1) revision, to-wit: the northern boundary of the Timberstone District, north of Sylvania Avenue between King Road and Ten Mile Creek, was dropped to the south so that it was in alignment with the southern boundary of Oak Creek, including appropriate revisions to Exhibits C and D attached to said Update; and,

WHEREAS, the Sylvania Municipal Planning Commission, by action taken October 10, 1990, recommended the approval of the Sylvania City and Township Future Land Use Plan Update, August, 1990, together with comments by others; and,

WHEREAS, said Update revised to November, 1990, was considered at a public hearing held before the Council of the City of Sylvania on Monday, December 3, 1990, after prior public notice was published for such hearing; and,

WHEREAS, subsequent to said public hearing by Council, the Sylvania City and Township Future Land Use Plan Update, November, 1990, was considered by Council, including all comments and recommendations of the Sylvania Municipal Planning Commission and others and directed the preparation of the necessary legislation approving said Update; and,

WHEREAS, the Sylvania Community Improvement Corporation, Sylvania Area Joint Recreation District, and Lucas County Planning Commission also cooperated in the preparation of the Sylvania City and Township Future Land Use Plan Update, November, 1990; and,

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 44-90, adopted May 7, 1990, authorized Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc. to integrate the Sylvania City and Sylvania Township Future Land Use Plan Update, so much thereof as is practicable and feasible, in to the City of Sylvania's existing

Comprehensive General Plan--revised 1982; and,

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 19-98, passed June 15, 1998, approved the Sylvania City and Township Future Land Use Plan Update, 1997 with one exception as to the designation of the area on the south side of Maplewood Avenue, between the railroad tracks and School Drive, that exception being to retain the property's designation as R-3 Multiple Dwelling Medium Density District and not change the designation to Office/Neighborhood Commercial and authorized the incorporation of said update into Sylvania's Comprehensive General Plan--revised 1982; and,

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 25-2001, passed October 15, 2001, approved the Sylvania City and Township Future Land Use Plan Update, 2001 and authorized the incorporation of said update in Sylvania's Comprehensive General Plan -- revised 1982; and,

WHEREAS, at the Council Meeting of December 7, 2009, the Land Use Plan Update, 2009 was considered and referred to the Municipal Planning Commission; and,

WHEREAS, the Municipal Planning Commission met on December 16, 2009 to consider the Land Use Plan Update, 2009; and,

WHEREAS, the Municipal Planning Commission, by a vote of 4-0, recommended the adoption of the Land Use Plan Update; and,

WHEREAS, said Update was considered at a public hearing held before the Council of the City of Sylvania on February 1, 2010, after prior public notice was published for such hearing; and,

WHEREAS, subsequent to said public hearing by Council, the Land Use Plan Update, 2009, was considered by Council and thereafter directed the preparation of the necessary legislation approving said Update.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Sylvania, Lucas County, Ohio, 7 members elected thereto concurring:

SECTION 1. That the Sylvania City Future Land Use Plan Update, 2009, as presented to Council at its regular meeting on February 1, 2010, be and the same hereby is, approved.

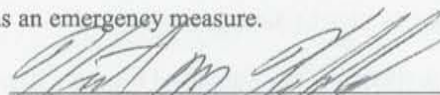
SECTION 2. It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the passage of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 3. That the Clerk of Council is hereby directed to post a copy of this Resolution in the Office of the Clerk of Council in the Municipal Building pursuant to ARTICLE III, Section 12, of the Charter of this City.

SECTION 4. That this Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, property and welfare and for the further reason that an immediate decision should be made on the acceptance of the Land Use Plan Update to provide for the immediate changes to be made in the designation of certain areas. Provided this Resolution receives the affirmative vote of five (5) or more members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force thirty (30) days after it is approved by the Mayor or as otherwise provided by this Charter.

Vote dispensing with the second and third readings: Yeas 7 Nays 0

Passed, February 16, 2010, as an emergency measure.


President of Council

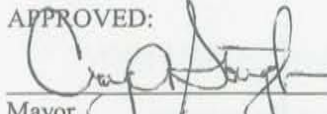
ATTEST:


Clerk of Council

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Director of Law

APPROVED:


Mayor
February 16, 2010
Date

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of Ordinance/Resolution No. 10-2010 duly passed by the Council of the City of Sylvania, Ohio, at its meeting on 2/16/10
Clerk of Council Margaret Lintner