

CITY OF BLUE ASH LAND USE PLAN



City of Blue Ash Land Use Plan

Adopted by the Blue Ash City Council
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Ordinance 2015-38

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Blue Ash, located in Hamilton County in southwest Ohio, is an inner-ring suburb of the City of Cincinnati. Incorporated in 1955, Blue Ash has enjoyed a successful history of well-balanced, high quality development that has resulted in a diverse and desirable community. Blue Ash adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1957, which was updated in 1968, 1989, and most recently in 2003. These plans guided the City during the majority of its development, which occurred in the 70s, 80s, and 90s. During that span, the majority of development was on previously undeveloped land. Blue Ash now faces an almost built-out community, which brings about new challenges and opportunities.

This Land Use Plan reflects on the established land use patterns of the City and provides vision and guidance that will assist the City in making development and policy decisions in the future. Several major themes appear throughout this plan that are the foundation for how Blue Ash will remain a desirable place to live and work in an ever-changing and competitive market. Blue Ash will consider a more mixed-use approach to development, will improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the City, and will demand high quality and attractive facilities in which people want to work and live.

MIXING USES

Blue Ash has been continuously successful in promoting a mix of one-third business, one-third residential, and one-third open space including parks, private open space, and community facilities. This “one-third” approach ensures that Blue Ash has a diverse mix of people, working in, living in, and enjoying the City. Blue Ash believes that a successful City needs this mix for financial security so the City does not rely solely on one type of income to fund services and amenities. Historically, the variety of uses has been physically separated throughout the City. This has worked for Blue Ash. But, as times change, the nature of how things work and what people want also change. It is desirable for the City to maintain this “one-third” approach, but in a much more integrated manner.

It is important to have a balance of business, residential, and open space, but Blue Ash understands that these uses can be located in the same development or even the same building. Mixing uses makes for more sustainable, walkable, and attractive developments that will ensure Blue Ash’s continued competitiveness in an ever-changing market. Mixing uses should occur in thoughtful ways to ensure developments that are both attractive and respectful to adjacent uses. It is evident that many consumers, young professionals, new families, and aging adults are looking for and choosing more economical living spaces that are located in areas that provide a variety of amenities.

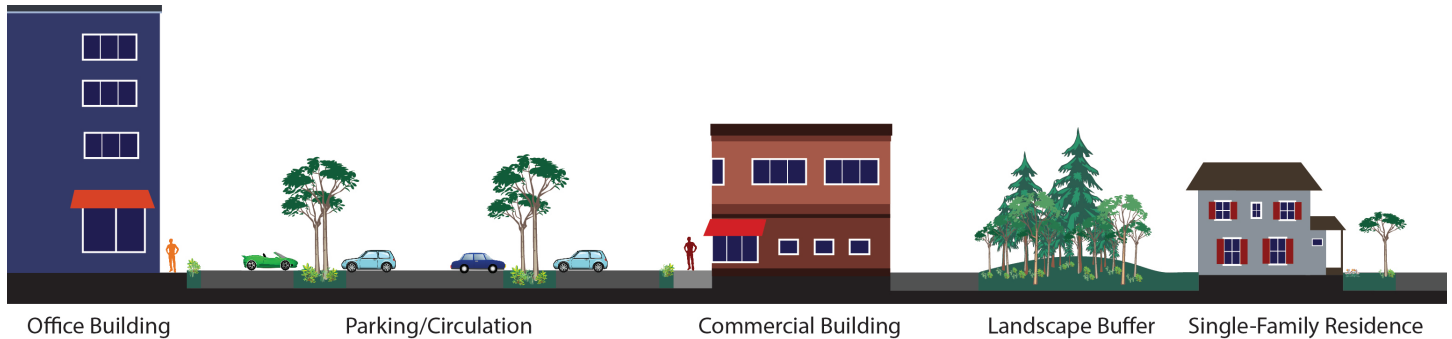
Mixed use developments can be incorporated into many different areas of the City, but would look and function differently depending on where they are located. For instance, in **Blue Ash North** a mixed use development may be comprised of large development sites that include a mix of stand alone office or industrial users with smaller ancillary uses mixed in that are connected by walkways and utilize an overall parking and open space plan. In the **Blue Ash Village**, mixed use would most likely occur within the building with commercial or office users on the first floor and residential or office on the upper levels. Both concepts represent the idea of mixed use and are appropriate in their respective areas of Blue Ash. Therefore, when reviewing projects it is important to analyze the surrounding land uses, development forms, and street network to determine appropriateness of projects.



Mixed-use developments provide the opportunity to work, shop, live, and play all in one location.

TRANSITIONS

Special considerations should be made when higher-density or more intense developments and land uses are located or are proposed adjacent to low-density residential neighborhoods, particularly at the periphery of all of the planning areas. Transitional developments and uses should be designed in a way to mitigate undesirable audible and visual land use impacts and should incorporate smaller-scale buildings, additional setbacks, or significant landscaping and buffers that will provide adequate protection to these existing neighborhoods. An example of a transition from an office building to a commercial use to a residential use is shown below.



IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

Blue Ash has historically developed as an auto-oriented city. Developments have been designed and built to cater to cars with limited connectivity between places. Blue Ash recognizes the need for additional pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians as an amenity to both residents and the City's businesses.

The City continues to implement its Sidewalk Program to improve connections between neighborhoods, businesses, and important City resources (City Hall, Recreation Center, Blue Ash Village, parks, etc.). Since 2003, six miles of sidewalks/connectivity paths have been built to help achieve this goal. Because much of Blue Ash is already developed, existing roadways are being retrofitted to accommodate the additional paths. The City is committed to continuing this effort of further enhancing connectivity and will also be looking for new developments to provide both interior and perimeter pathways that connect with the existing sidewalk network. The map to the right illustrates existing paths within the City.



Top: Blue Ash's 2014 Sidewalk Program Map
Left: Multi-use trails can be used by many people for a variety of purposes.

QUALITY OF DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

People desire to work and live in places that are both attractive and enjoyable. For Blue Ash to remain a competitor in today's market, the community must continue to provide not only attractive residential products, but striking office, industrial, and commercial developments. It is becoming more evident that in many cases it matters more what a building looks like, the character of a development, and a building's interaction with the public network than what use is going on within that building.

All buildings, regardless of use, should be attractive facilities that improve the overall appearance and aesthetics of this community. This includes incorporating high quality building materials, providing variations in façade designs, increasing the amount of transparency, and creating buildings that are designed with the pedestrian in mind, no matter if that building is one-story or five-stories. Regardless of the size, buildings and developments should be approachable with amenities that cater to pedestrians such as sidewalks, attractive entryways, landscaping, and pedestrian-oriented lighting and signage.

Developments should incorporate sustainable practices where practical and applicable. This could include reducing the amount of overall impervious parking areas by allowing shared parking lots and alternative parking and design arrangements. Other sustainable practices could include utilizing environmentally friendly building materials, rainwater management, green power, bicycle parking, and carpooling programs. Incorporating sustainable practices can make developments more attractive to investors, employees, and new businesses.



The Research Triangle Park in North Carolina is an example of another community that is trying to reinvent their established office park. New design guidelines, pedestrian paths, and green infrastructure amenities are to be incorporated into existing developments in order to attract new land uses and employees and infuse new life and energy. Their main goals are to:

- Refurbish and modernize existing facilities;
- Create multi-tenant clusters throughout the research park to foster interaction and collaboration; and
- Develop targeted mixed-use urban hubs that provide pedestrian-oriented centers, including housing and social amenities, which would serve the workforce of the park.

Source: *The Research Triangle Park Master Plan, November 2011, The Research Triangle Foundation of North Carolina.*

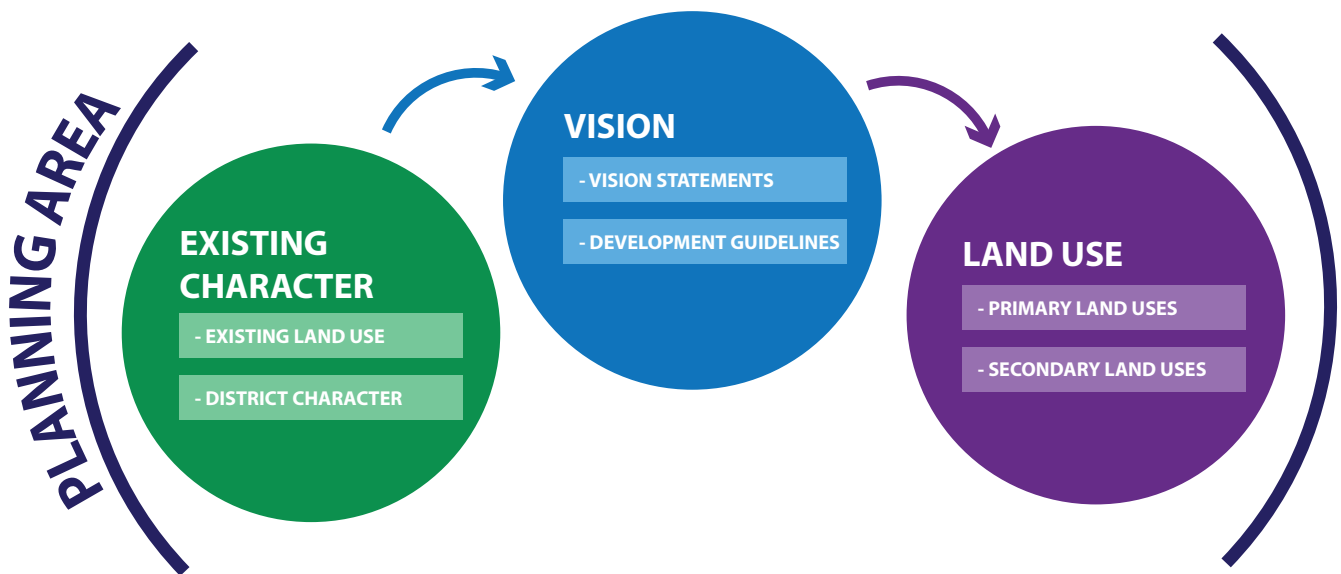
PLAN ORGANIZATION

This plan establishes guidelines for how the City can implement the recommendations previously described, along with area-specific recommendations for different regions of the City. Blue Ash has a diverse mix of development patterns and forms across the City, but six Planning Areas are identified that have similar development characteristics and similar goals for how each area should develop in the years to come. These Planning Areas are Blue Ash North, Summit Park District, Blue Ash South, Blue Ash Village, Blue Ash Village, and Neighborhoods and are shown on Map 1-1.

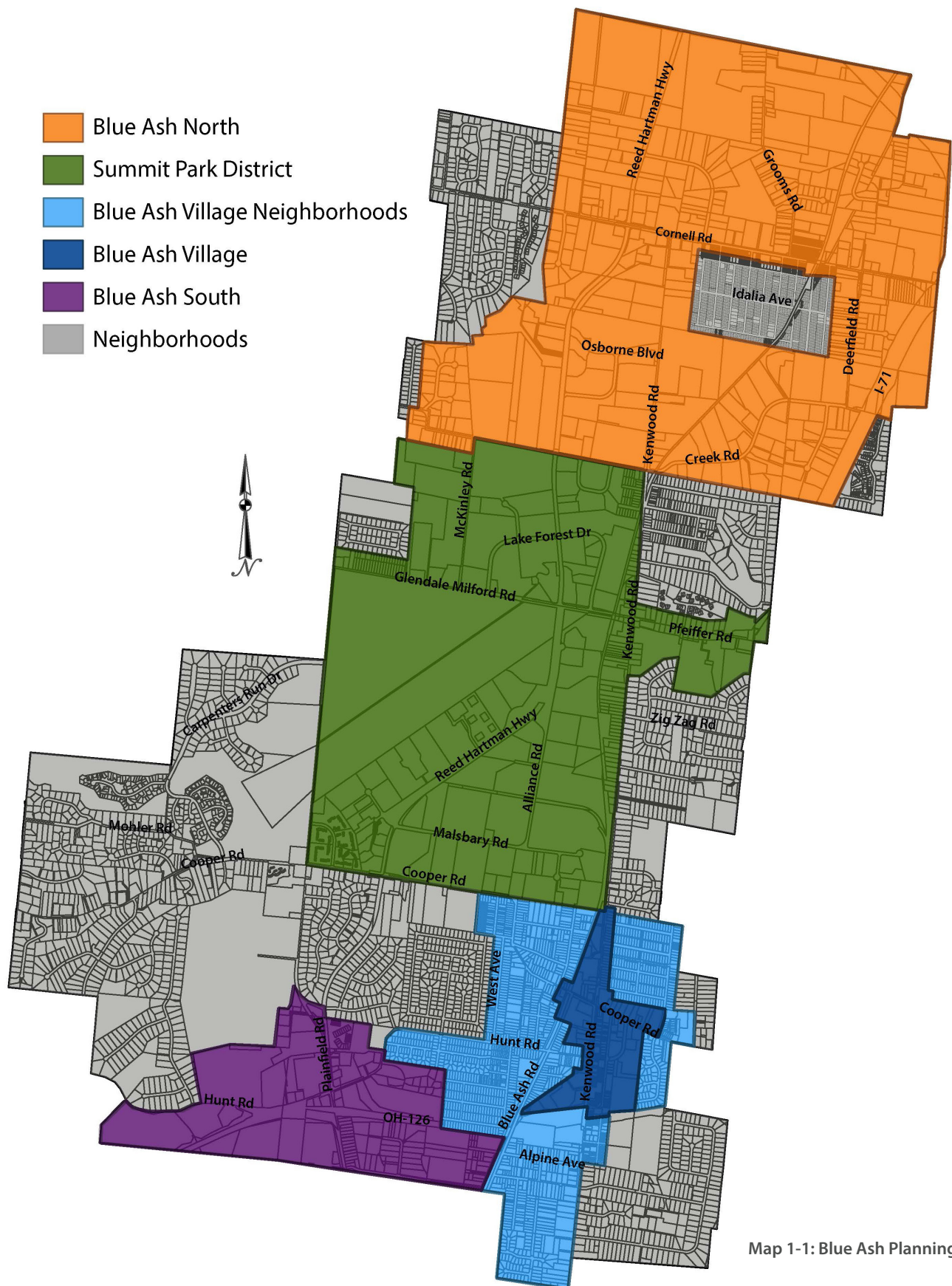
Each of the six Planning Areas are discussed in the following chapters. Each chapter describes the existing conditions for the area including its land use composition, development pattern, and character. Then the vision for each area is presented which includes a vision statement and development recommendations that will assist the City in achieving the established vision. Following the vision, primary and secondary land uses are presented. These are the ideal land uses for the specific Planning Area.

The primary land uses represent a mix of uses that should comprise a majority of the land area within each district, around 70 percent. This is a benchmark though, and not an exact formula, so it is understood that the mix of primary land uses may comprise more or less than the 70 percent. The secondary land uses should, in total, comprise a minority of the land area within each district, around 30 percent. These uses are ones that are necessary or needed in each Planning Area, but don't need to be widespread. They should be located in appropriate locations within the district where they would be suited best. It is understood that additional uses, not listed, may be appropriate in each Planning Area. The City will review proposed uses against the lists presented herein, and when a use is not listed, the City will determine if the use is compatible within the area or not.

After this Plan is formally adopted, it will guide the creation of the Zoning Code and other development Codes that help turn this vision into reality. Though this Land Use Plan is not the law, it is a reference that will help residents, businesses, property owners, and potential developers understand what the City intends to accomplish. It cannot be used to regulate land uses and development patterns, but it will assist City Staff, Boards, Commissions, and City Council members to make informed decisions that are not in conflict with the law.



BLUE ASH PLANNING AREAS



Map 1-1: Blue Ash Planning Areas

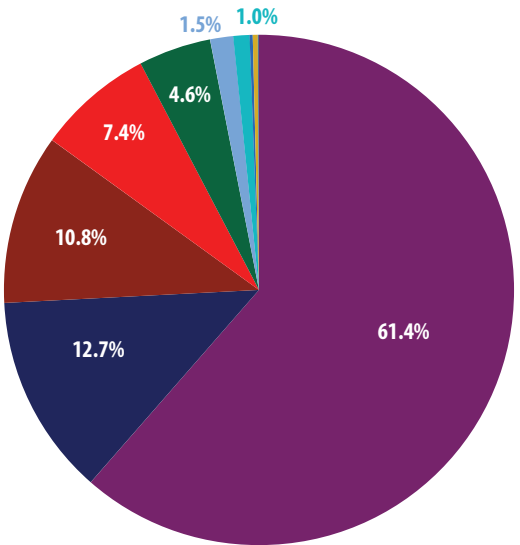
BLUE ASH NORTH

existing character

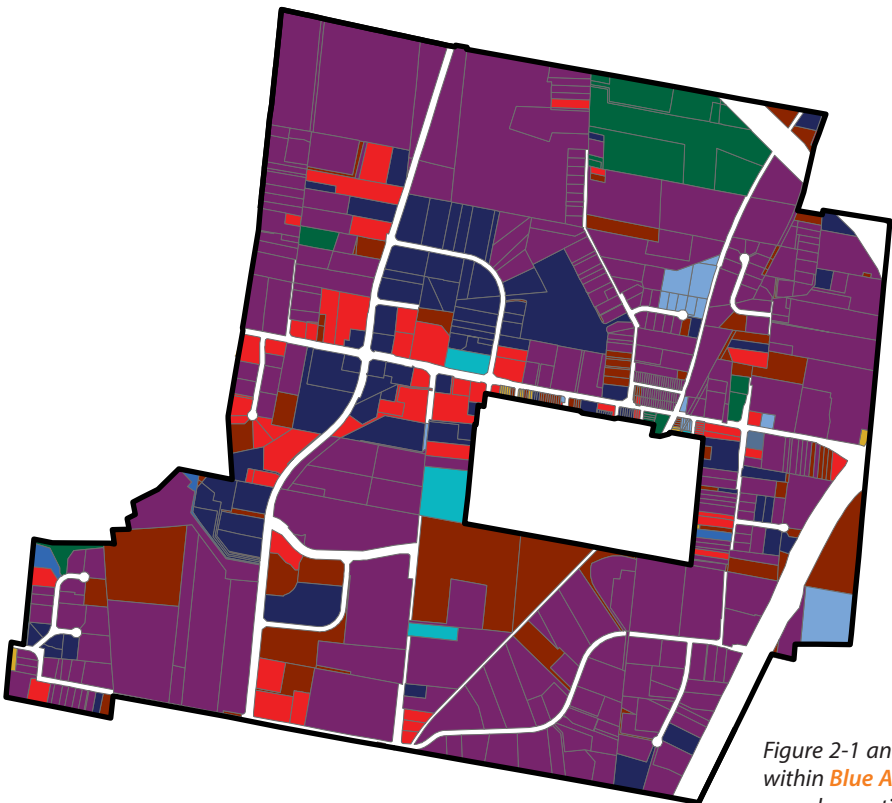
The existing character for **Blue Ash North** is primarily an industrial and office district with a variety of building sizes and styles. **Blue Ash North** is one of the primary employment centers for the City with the largest average building size and the second largest average parcel size.

EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION

Blue Ash North is currently composed of a mixture of land uses, with more than 75 percent being industrial and office uses. The remaining land uses are split between uses that complement the office and industrial users such as commercial (restaurants, coffee shops, dry cleaners, etc.), public facilities, and a small amount of residential. Approximately 11 percent of the parcels within **Blue Ash North** are currently vacant, which shows that there is available space for both redevelopment and new development projects.



LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
INDUSTRIAL	713.5	61.4%
OFFICE	147.9	12.7%
VACANT	125.2	10.8%
COMMERCIAL	85.4	7.4%
GREEN SPACE/PARK	53.5	4.6%
PUBLIC	17.0	1.5%
INSTITUTIONAL	11.8	1.0%
EDUCATION	3.7	0.3%
SINGLE FAMILY	2.3	0.2%
UTILITY	0.9	0.1%
TOTAL		100%



Map 2-1: Blue Ash North Existing Land Use

Figure 2-1: Blue Ash North Existing Land Use Composition by Parcel

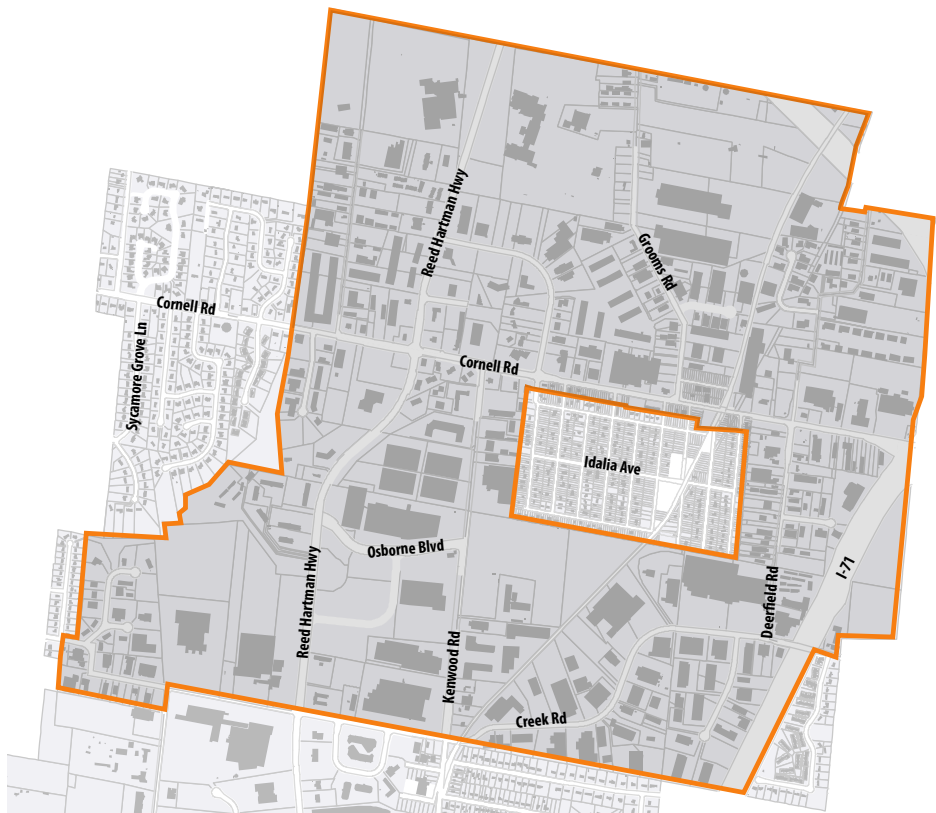
Figure 2-1 and Map 2-1 illustrate the breakdown of existing land uses within **Blue Ash North**. The map clearly shows that the majority of the parcels are utilized for industrial uses. The other uses such as office, public facilities, and commercial are minor and are typically concentrated in a specific area.

DISTRICT CHARACTER

Blue Ash North is primarily composed of large parcels that contain large buildings - this planning area has the largest average building size and the second largest average parcel size in comparison to the rest of the City, and the highest concentration of large-scale office and industrial uses. The area is mostly built-out, but there is an opportunity for infill development and redevelopment in much of the district. Many of the aging industrial buildings are in need of new life and reinvestment.

Buildings are typically set back from the road with landscape buffers adjacent to the right-of-way. On-street parking is limited in this district as most of the buildings have their own off-street parking lots. The road network typically consists of wide, high-traffic thoroughfares, such as Reed Hartman Highway and Cornell Road, designed to get people from I-275 and I-71 to their places of employment, and smaller access roads that lead to individual buildings or developments. The district was not previously pedestrian or bicycle friendly due to the lack of sidewalks and trails. The City has added new sidewalks within the district, which make it easier for pedestrians to get around, but challenges still remain.

Blue Ash North has...	
534 buildings	9% of the total buildings in the City
18,398 sq. ft. average building size	Average building size in the City is around 10,000 sq. ft. Buildings in Blue Ash North are almost double in size.
863 parcels	11% of the total parcels in the City
64,000 sq. ft. average parcel size	Average sq. ft. of parcels in the City is 40,000 sq. ft. Parcels in Blue Ash North are 1.5 times larger.



Map 2-2: Blue Ash North Base Map



The above pictures represent the variety of land uses within the **Blue Ash North** planning area.

Sources: CAGIS (mapping, building, and parcel data), photos by MDC

vision

The vision for **Blue Ash North** is an employment district with attractive office and industrial uses that also includes amenities for the employees of the district such as restaurants and retail uses.

The vision for **Blue Ash North**, as described above, is for this area to remain one of the primary employment areas for the City, that also includes a variety of associated amenities. To ensure the continued success of this area, Blue Ash promotes the idea of new development and redevelopment that provides additional amenities for existing employees and makes the district more attractive to prospective workers and residents. This could be done in a number of ways and incrementally. Little changes, over time, can have a big impact on the area. The concepts below further describe a variety of options that would assist in achieving the City's vision for **Blue Ash North**.

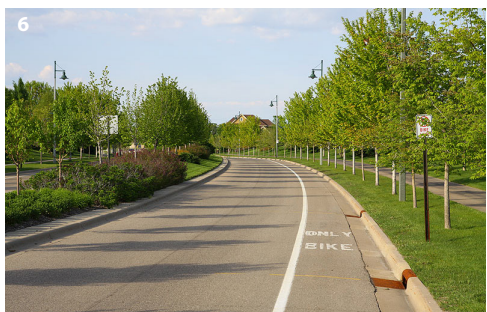
CAMPUS-STYLE DEVELOPMENTS

The existing development form of **Blue Ash North**, as previously described, is primarily large buildings on large lots. These kinds of developments are typically self-contained on their individual lot with minimal or no thought about how they interact with surrounding properties. Future developments should consider campus-style layouts that are walkable, attractive, and contain a mixture of uses. This could be achieved by creating brand new developments on vacant parcels or by retrofitting existing developments with new buildings and new pedestrian and/or automobile connections.



ATTRACTIVE CORRIDORS AND GATEWAYS

A large percentage of those who work in Blue Ash enter the City on Reed Hartman Highway in **Blue Ash North**. This northern gateway to Blue Ash should continue to reflect the high quality design and development that the City strives to achieve. Reed Hartman Highway, Cornell Road, Kenwood Road, and the other corridors in **Blue Ash North** should continue to provide convenient access that will encourage continued investment in adjacent properties.



Campus-Style Development Guidelines

- New developments should be constructed in a campus-style format with a mixture of uses in a walkable and attractive development. Ideally, uses are mixed vertically (i.e., office/commercial uses on ground level with office/residential uses above), but also may be mixed horizontally if appropriate.
- Existing developments should consider infill development on their property, where feasible, to provide more amenities for their employees and/or clients.
- Existing and new office and industrial development should provide pedestrian connections to adjacent parcels, to existing or proposed sidewalks along road rights-of-way, and within the development.
- Green space should be provided with each development that includes street trees, parking lot landscaping and screening, entry features, and common gathering spaces.

CONNECTIVITY

Blue Ash North is an auto-dominated environment. Due to the current road network, it is very unlikely that many people walk or ride their bikes to work within this district. The City is implementing its Sidewalk Program to provide connectivity between neighborhoods and businesses. This program has vastly improved the sidewalk network within the City. New developments should install sidewalks and/or trails along rights-of-way where they do not already exist and sidewalks that are interior to the project to ensure safe pedestrian travel, both within the development and to adjacent developments.

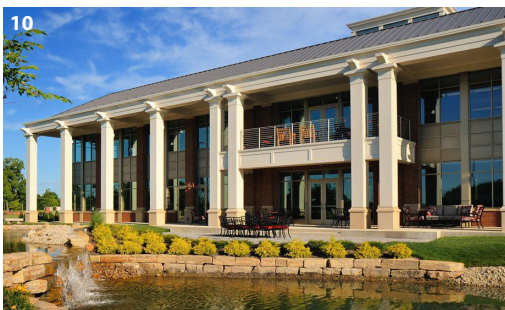


ALIVE AFTER FIVE

Blue Ash North brings in a large number of people during the day for work (the City's population soars from approximately 12,000 to more than 50,000 during work hours), but does not have many amenities to encourage people to stay in the City for dinner, drinks, or other activities. Many of the existing restaurants and services are geared toward lunch crowds. This is a missed opportunity for the City, so it is encouraged that new restaurants, bars, and entertainment activities are built within this area to fill this void.

QUALITY DESIGN

The physical appearance of developments can be more important than what occurs inside of the building. To this end, it is important that new development and redevelopment projects are held to a high architectural and design standard to ensure that the district is an attractive and appealing place to work and live.



Connectivity Guidelines

- New developments should provide both internal circulation paths and sidewalks or trails along all public rights-of-way adjacent to the development.
- Existing developments that do not have sidewalks, should install sidewalks on their property that connect to the public sidewalk network. If the public sidewalk network is not currently available at any of the property boundaries, the property owner should plan to install a sidewalk when a public sidewalk does become accessible.
- New and existing projects should install bicycle racks and, where feasible, bicycle paths.

Quality Design Guidelines

- All new development and redevelopment projects should utilize high quality building materials such as brick, stone, wood, tile, stucco, decorative block, decorative concrete panels, and glass. Other buildings materials may be considered on a case by case basis to determine their appropriateness.
- There shall be no uninterrupted lengths of blank walls and developments should utilize a variety of building materials and colors.
- Buildings and additions should not be designed with or modeled after franchise or formula based architecture unless they satisfy the City's desired quality of building materials and architectural design.

Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

primary uses

Primary uses should account for at least 70 percent of the land uses within each Planning Area. They are the defining land uses and contribute to the overall character and scale of the district. The primary uses within **Blue Ash North** are industrial and office uses along with complementary uses such as retail services and restaurants that cater to both the employees of the industrial and office facilities and Blue Ash residents.

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Includes a range of high-tech, warehousing, and manufacturing uses. These businesses typically do not have outdoor storage and all work is conducted within an enclosed building. Light industrial uses shall maintain an attractive and maintained facility including landscaping, buffering, and adequate screening where necessary.



RETAIL SALES/SERVICE

Retail sales and service uses in this district provide convenient locations for employees to run errands on their lunch break or on their way home. Examples include dry cleaners, hair salons, small retail stores, day care facilities, and copy and mailing services. These are small-scale uses and do not include large retailers such as big-box stores.



MEDICAL OFFICE/CLINIC/HOSPITAL

Includes a variety of medical uses including both large and small facilities. A large hospital may be appropriate in this district along with smaller medical offices and clinics. A medical campus that includes a number of medical offices and complementary uses such as pharmacies and coffee shops may also work well on a large parcel.



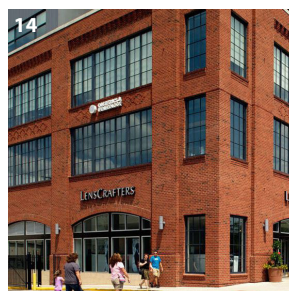
RESTAURANT/BAR

A variety of restaurants and bars should be located in **Blue Ash North** to provide a variety of price points and cuisines that attract a range of clientele. It helps the district to have plenty of attractive options for people to enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner, and drinks in close proximity to their home and/or place of employment.



OFFICE

Includes both single-user buildings, multi-tenant buildings, and mixed-use office developments. Office developments should contain a mixture of uses where feasible. New office developments and redevelopment projects should be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, with attractive facilities that cater to a variety of employees, including young professionals.



ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment uses in this district will attract more people to the area for non-work purposes and motivate employees of the district to stay in Blue Ash after 5:00 p.m. Entertainment uses include movie theaters, bowling alleys, driving ranges, and other similar activities.



secondary uses

Secondary uses should account for less than 30 percent of the land uses within the Planning Area. They should be complementary and supportive of the primary land uses, but should be located sparingly and selectively.

FITNESS/RECREATION FACILITIES

Fitness and recreation facilities such as gyms and sports courts can be appealing amenities for employees within the district. These uses shall be attractive facilities and may be stand-alone or included in a multi-tenant development. These uses are not intended to be located in vacant industrial facilities.



HOTEL/MOTEL

Blue Ash North has a number of hotels currently in the district. If additional hotels are built, they should be high-end or boutique-style hotels in order to offer a wide variety of hotel and motel options for both short and long-term stays. These uses should be designed in an attractive manner utilizing high quality building materials and should be connected within or integrated into adjacent office and commercial developments.



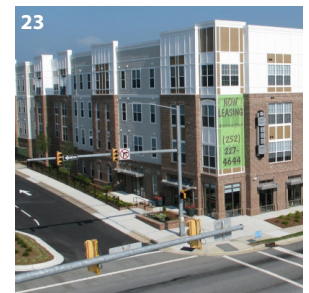
COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Includes a number of uses including libraries, fire stations, police stations, city services, and schools. These uses should be located where practical and convenient for both current and future needs of the City.



RESIDENTIAL

If residential is developed in this district, it should be included in a mixed-use development. These mixed-use developments may vary in size, density, and composition, but typically will have a commercial or office component either on the ground level or integrated horizontally into the overall development or area.



AUTOMOTIVE SERVICES

Fuel stations, oil change facilities, and other related services are a necessary convenience for employees within the district. These uses should be located on major thoroughfares in the district and be designed in an attractive manner utilizing brick, stone, and other high quality building materials so as to match the architecture of adjacent office users. These uses do not include mechanical services or used or new car sales.



PLACES OF ASSEMBLY

Places of assembly may include churches, conference centers, or other similar uses. These uses may vary in size from small places of worship to large convention centers. These uses are ideally integrated into a mixed-use development.



Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

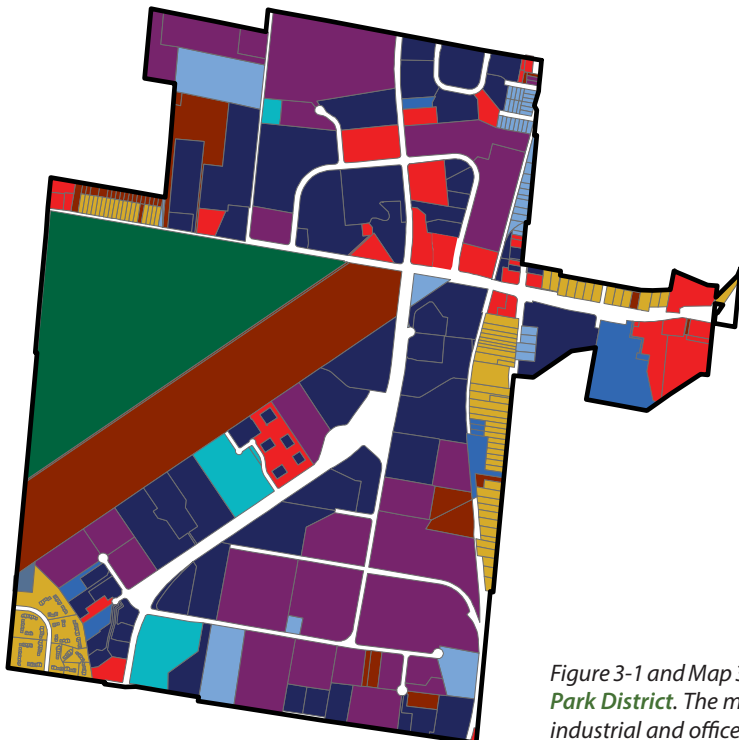
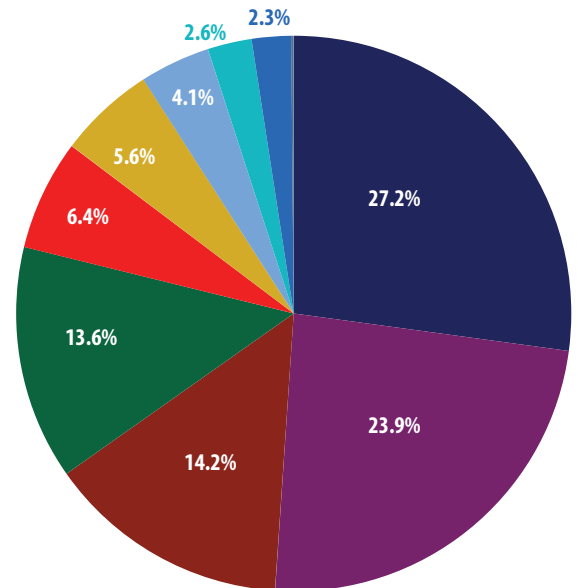
SUMMIT PARK DISTRICT

existing character

The existing character of the **Summit Park District** is a mixed-use area containing a variety of land uses, development forms, parcel sizes, and building sizes. The **Summit Park District** is anchored by the development of Summit Park and the large office and industrial campuses. This district has the largest average parcel size and the second largest average building size.

EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION

The **Summit Park District** is the most diversely mixed Planning Area with uses including single family, office, industrial, public, green space/park, commercial, institutional, and education that take on many different development forms. Much of the land area is taken up by industrial and office uses on large parcels. Summit Park comprises the largest parcel of land within the district. Commercial uses are concentrated along the major thoroughfares such as Reed Hartman Highway, Pfeiffer Road, and Glendale Milford Road. The district also includes some single family residential properties. Where appropriate, some of this residential could, over time, be converted to commercial, mixed-use, or multi-family developments as it is located on high traffic corridors.



Map 3-1: Summit Park Existing Land Use

LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
OFFICE	255.1	27.2%
INDUSTRIAL	224.7	23.9%
VACANT	133.0	14.2%
GREEN SPACE/PARK	127.9	13.6%
COMMERCIAL	60.4	6.4%
SINGLE FAMILY	52.9	5.6%
PUBLIC	38.4	4.1%
INSTITUTIONAL	24.0	2.6%
EDUCATION	21.5	2.3%
UTILITY	1.4	0.2%
TOTAL	939.4	100%

Figure 3-1: Summit Park Existing Land Use Composition by Parcel

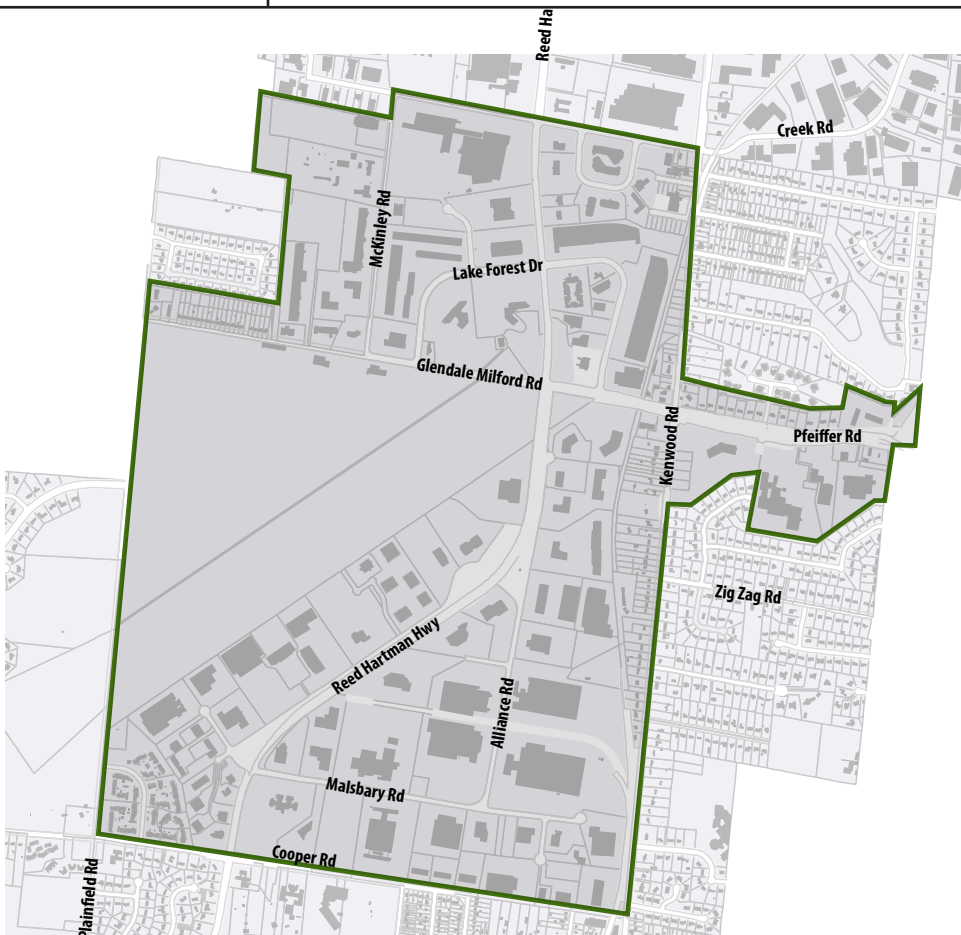
Figure 3-1 and Map 3-1 illustrate the breakdown of existing land uses within the **Summit Park District**. The map clearly shows that this is a mixed-use district with a majority of industrial and office developments, along with pockets of commercial, residential, and special districts.

DISTRICT CHARACTER

The **Summit Park District** has a wide range of existing land uses, development forms, building sizes and styles. The district's driving force is the development of Summit Park, a 130-acre regional park that will include a great lawn, performance stage, an active and adventure play area, natural area, community center, and seasonal skating rink. This park already is and will continue to be a huge draw for the City.

This district includes one of the major gateways into the City, the Pfeiffer Road and I-71 interchange, which is one of the primary ways visitors enter Blue Ash. The Pfeiffer Road/Glendale Milford Road corridor offers a first impression to visitors and provides a direct connection to Summit Park. Reed Hartman Highway is the primary north/south thoroughfare within the City and bisects the **Summit Park District**. Many of the larger lot office and industrial developments are located along this corridor, in the center of the district, while the majority of the smaller lots are located on its periphery.

Summit Park District has...	
356 buildings	6% of the total buildings in the City
15,869 sq. ft. average building size	Average building size in the City is around 10,000 sq. ft. Buildings in the Summit Park District are 1.5 times larger.
536 parcels	7% of the total parcels in the City
80,000 sq. ft. average parcel size	Average sq. ft. of parcels in the City is 40,000 sq. ft. Parcels in the Summit Park District are twice the average size.



Map 3-2: Summit Park Base Map



The above pictures represent the variety of land uses within the **Summit Park District** planning area.

Sources: CAGIS (mapping, building, and parcel data), photos by MDC

vision

The vision for **Summit Park District** is a regional mixed-use area catering to the visitors of Summit Park, existing and new residents, and the adjacent office developments with integrated commercial, mixed housing, and office components.

The vision for the **Summit Park District**, as described above, is for this area to be a regional destination, anchored by Summit Park, that is attractive to a mix of people including young professionals, families, and aging adults. To achieve this, additional amenities such as new restaurants, bars, commercial destinations, and services need to be built. Additionally, a mix of residential building types should be provided, including attached residential, multi-family, and mixed-use developments, to attract a variety of new residents to this area. The concepts below further describe a variety of options that would assist in achieving the City's vision for the **Summit Park District**.

CAMPUS-STYLE DEVELOPMENTS

The existing development form of the **Summit Park District**, as previously described, is mixed but contains many very large parcels with singular office or industrial users on them. These kinds of developments are typically self-contained on their individual lots with minimal or no thought about how they interact with surrounding properties. Future developments should consider a campus-style layout that is walkable, attractive, and contains a mixture of uses. This could be achieved with new developments on vacant parcels or by retrofitting existing developments with new buildings and adding new pedestrian and/or automobile connections.



MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS

Mixed-use developments are encouraged within the **Summit Park District** that include commercial, office, and residential uses in an attractive and walkable development. These developments should be ideally located in the vicinity of Summit Park with direct pedestrian connections to the park. It is intended that these developments will complement the uses within the park and provide a place for people to shop, eat, work, and live.



Campus-Style Development Guidelines

- New developments should be constructed in a campus-style format with a mixture of uses in a walkable and attractive development. Ideally, uses are mixed vertically (i.e., office/commercial uses on ground level with office/residential uses above), but also may be mixed horizontally if appropriate.
- Existing developments should consider infill development on their property, where feasible, to provide more amenities for their employees and/or clients.
- Existing and new office and industrial development should provide pedestrian connections to adjacent parcels, to existing or proposed sidewalks along road rights-of-way, and within the development.
- Green space should be provided with each development that includes street trees, parking lot landscaping and screening, entry features, and common gathering spaces.

Mixed-Use Guidelines

- Developments should include safe pedestrian paths within the development and connect with the public sidewalk system.
- Mixed-use developments may include a mixture of uses within individual buildings or integrated horizontally into an overall development plan.

MIXED RESIDENTIAL

The housing within the **Summit Park District** is currently single family that is located along major corridors such as Kenwood Road and Glendale Milford Road. Additional housing within this district is desirable, especially adjacent to Summit Park, to attract new people and life. Housing types could include single family residential, attached residential (i.e., townhomes, row houses, or patio homes), or multi-family residential that is either stand alone or included in a mixed-use development.

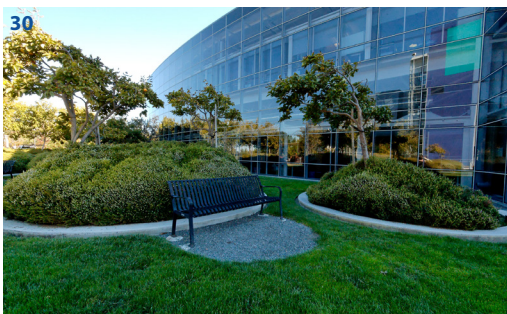


ALIVE AFTER FIVE

The **Summit Park District** brings in a large number of people during the day for both work and the park, but does not have many amenities to attract people to stay in the City for dinner, drinks, or other activities. Many of the existing restaurants and services are geared toward lunch crowds. This is a missed opportunity for the City, so it is encouraged that new restaurants and bars are built within this district to fill this void.

QUALITY DESIGN

The physical appearance of developments can be more important than what occurs inside of the building. To this end, it is important that new development and redevelopment projects are held to a high architectural and design standard to ensure that the district is an attractive and appealing place to work and live.



ATTRACTIVE CORRIDORS & GATEWAYS

The **Summit Park District** contains very prominent corridors including Pfeiffer Road, Glendale Milford Road, Reed Hartman Highway, and Kenwood Road. All of these corridors are very well traveled on a daily basis and should be reflective of the high quality design and development that the City strives to achieve. Streetscapes, signage, and pedestrian improvements should be considered along these corridors, with special consideration toward the Pfeiffer Road and I-71 interchange. This is a primary gateway into the City and should be a welcoming and attractive entrance.

Mixed Residential Guidelines

- A mix of housing types and densities are encouraged.
- Attached and detached single family housing and multi-family housing developments should be located near existing residential developments. Higher-density residential developments can be used to serve as a transitional use between low-density residential and commercial and office uses.

Quality Design Guidelines

- All new development and re-development projects should utilize high quality building materials such as brick, stone, wood, tile, stucco, decorative block, decorative concrete panels, and glass. Other buildings materials may be considered on a case by case basis to determine their appropriateness.
- There shall be no uninterrupted lengths of blank walls and developments should utilize a variety of building materials and colors.
- Buildings and additions should not be designed with or modeled after franchise or formula based architecture unless they satisfy the City's desired quality of building materials and architectural design.

Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

primary uses

Primary uses should account for at least 70 percent of the land uses within each Planning Area. They are the defining land uses and contribute to the overall character and scale of the district. The primary uses within the **Summit Park District** are office, park, and commercial uses. The uses in this district should cater to and attract visitors of Summit Park along with the surrounding office and employment areas.

RESTAURANT/BAR

A variety of restaurants and bars should be located in the **Summit Park District** to provide a variety of price points and cuisines that attract a range of clientele. The district will benefit from having plenty of attractive options for people to enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner, and drinks in close proximity to their homes and/or places of employment.



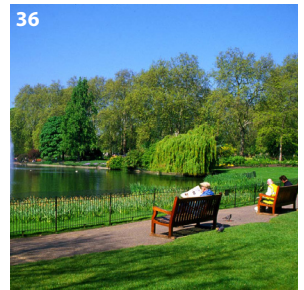
OFFICE

Includes both single-user buildings, multi-tenant buildings, and mixed-use office developments. Office developments should contain a mixture of uses where feasible. New office developments and redevelopment projects should be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, with facilities that are attractive to a variety of employees, including young professionals.



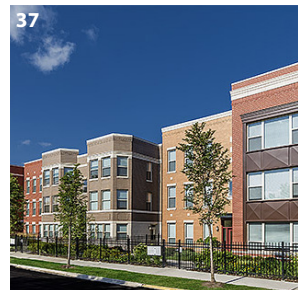
PARK/OPEN SPACE

Parks and open spaces are the cornerstone of this district, due to the development of Summit Park. This park is and will continue to be a huge draw for the City and future uses should complement and build off of this amenity. It is important for Summit Park's continued success to ensure that the surrounding land uses are attractive and the park is safely accessible by pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles.



RESIDENTIAL

New residential developments should be located adjacent to or near Summit Park or existing residential developments whether in this district or in other planning areas. A range of housing types may be appropriate depending on surrounding land uses and development forms.



MEDICAL OFFICE/CLINIC

Includes a variety of small to medium-sized medical uses, offices, and clinics. A medical campus that includes a number of medical offices and complementary uses such as pharmacies and coffee shops may also work well on a large parcel. A large hospital is not ideal for this district.



RETAIL SALES/SERVICE

Retail sales and service uses in this district provide convenient locations for employees and residents to run errands. Examples include dry cleaners, hair salons, small retail stores, day care facilities, and copy and mailing services. These are small-scale uses and do not include large retailers such as big-box stores.



Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

secondary uses

Secondary uses should account for less than 30 percent of the land uses within the Planning Area. They should be complementary and supportive of the primary land uses, but should be located sparingly and selectively.

FITNESS/RECREATION FACILITIES

Fitness and recreation facilities such as gyms and sports courts can be an amenities for the district. These uses shall be attractive and may be stand-alone or included in a multi-tenant development. These uses should complement, and not compete with, the amenities at Summit Park.



HOTEL/MOTEL

The Summit Park District currently has a number of hotels. If additional hotels are built, they should be high-end or boutique-style hotels in order to have a wide variety of hotel options for both short and long-term stays. These uses should be designed in an attractive manner utilizing high quality building materials and should be connected and/or integrated into adjacent office and commercial developments.



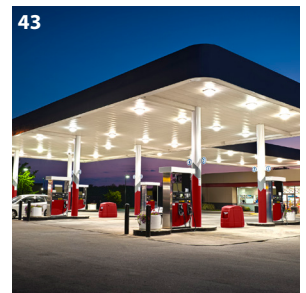
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Includes a range of high-tech, warehousing, and manufacturing uses. These businesses typically do not have outdoor storage and all work is conducted within an enclosed building. Light industrial uses shall maintain an attractive and maintained facility including landscaping, buffering, and adequate screening where necessary.



AUTOMOTIVE SERVICES

Automotive services such as gas stations and oil change services provide a necessary service for the district. These uses should be located on the major thoroughfares in the district and be designed in an attractive manner utilizing brick, stone, and other high quality building materials so as to match the architecture of adjacent office users. These uses do not include mechanical services or used or new car sales.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Includes a number of uses including libraries, fire stations, police stations, city services, and schools. These uses should be located where practical and convenient for both current and future needs of the City.



PLACES OF ASSEMBLY

Places of assembly may include churches, conference centers, or other similar uses. These uses may vary in size from small places of worship to large convention centers. These uses are ideally integrated into a mixed-use development.



BLUE ASH SOUTH

existing character

The existing character of **Blue Ash South** is a car-oriented district that primarily includes large commercial, industrial, and multi-family uses. There are heavily traveled, wide thoroughfares, including the Ronald Reagan Cross County Highway. This area has regional draw due to the highway, and is one of the primary entrances into the City. The parcels and buildings within this area are of average size and scale compared to the City as a whole.

EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION

Blue Ash South has a wide range of land uses, but they are organized in a fairly logical manner. The commercial uses are concentrated around the Plainfield Road and OH-126 interchange. Multi-family developments surround the commercial developments and the industrial uses are centered in the area south of OH-126 and east of Plainfield Road.

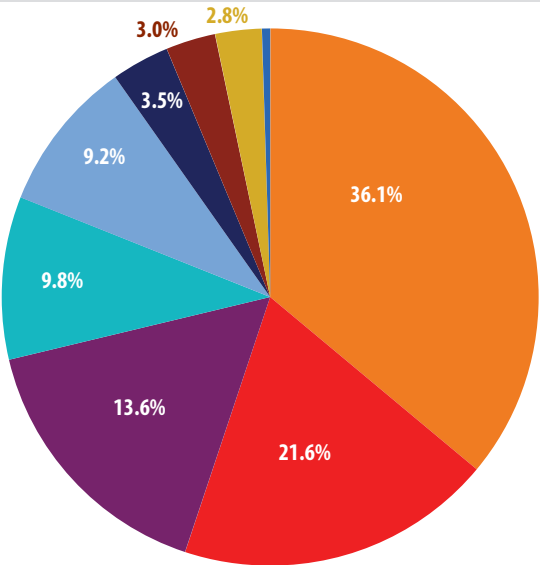


Figure 4-1 and Map 4-1 illustrate the breakdown of existing land uses within **Blue Ash South**. The pie chart and the map illustrate that this is a mixed district with a variety of uses included, but with much of the land area made up of a few, very large multi-family lots. There is also a very logical organization of the land uses with commercial around the Plainfield Road/ OH-126 interchange, multi-family on the fringes adjacent to the neighborhoods, and industrial in the area south of OH-126.

LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
MULTI-FAMILY	96.7	36.1%
COMMERCIAL	57.9	21.6%
INDUSTRIAL	36.5	13.6%
INSTITUTIONAL	26.2	9.8%
PUBLIC	24.6	9.2%
OFFICE	9.3	3.5%
VACANT	8.0	3.0%
SINGLE FAMILY	7.5	2.8%
EDUCATION	1.3	0.5%
TOTAL	268.1	100%

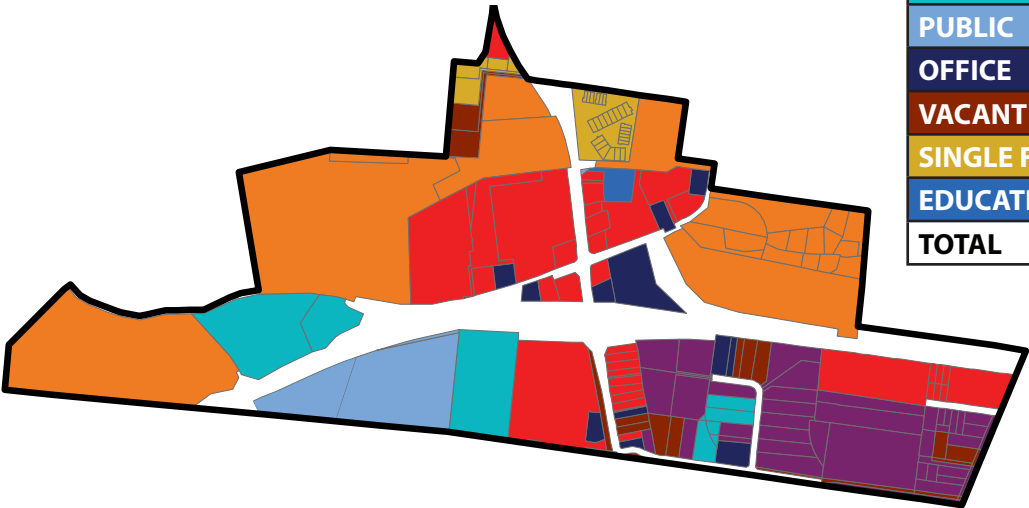


Figure 4-1: Blue Ash South Existing Land Use Composition by Parcel

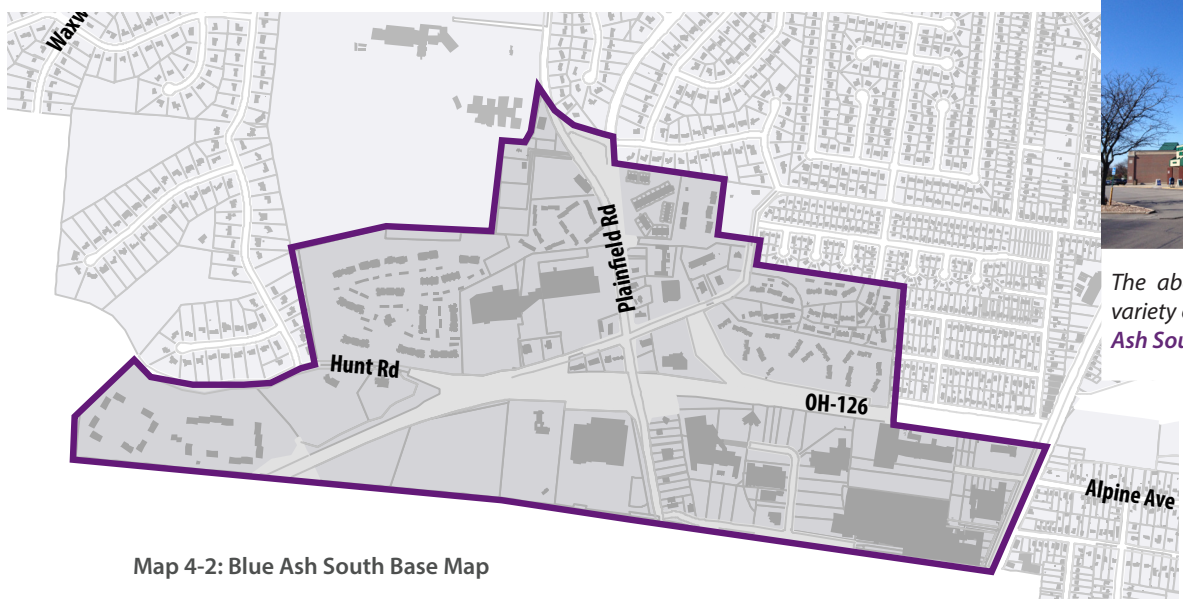
Map 4-1: Blue Ash South Existing Land Use

DISTRICT CHARACTER

Blue Ash South has a fairly diverse mix of building sizes, development forms, parcel sizes and building character. This district has the largest concentration of multi-family developments within the entire City. This may be due to the close proximity to Ronald Reagan Cross County Highway/OH-126, UC Blue Ash, or other regional amenities. This district also includes the largest retail establishments within the City including a major grocery store, Kroger, and a big box retailer, Target. These two businesses are well used by both Blue Ash residents and the region.

As shown on the below map, this district has a diverse mix of parcel sizes and building sizes. It also has multiple properties that are large singular tracts with multiple buildings on each. These are generally multi-family developments and unique to this area. This area caters to highway customers with service retailers and restaurants including drive-thru and fast casual restaurants. This area is also almost completely surrounded by single family developments and the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash property, which ensures that the commercial growth and development in this area will continue to be within the **Blue Ash South** boundaries.

Blue Ash South has...	
206 buildings	3% of the total buildings in the City
9,920 sq. ft. average building size	Average building size in the City is around 10,000 sq. ft. Buildings in the Blue Ash South District are very similar in size.
251 parcels	3% of the total parcels in the City
50,000 sq. ft. average parcel size	Average sq. ft. of parcels in the City is 40,000 sq. ft. Parcels in Blue Ash South are very similar in size to the average



Map 4-2: Blue Ash South Base Map



The above pictures represent the variety of land uses within the **Blue Ash South** planning area.

Sources: CAGIS (mapping, building, and parcel data), photos by MDC

vision

The vision for **Blue Ash South** is a commercial district with retail, grocery, restaurant, and office components that attract from the Blue Ash employment districts, the residential neighborhoods, and travelers along OH-126.

The vision for the **Blue Ash South** area, as described above, is a regional destination district with a multitude of uses that attract a variety of customers for different reasons. This area should have service uses such as convenience retail and personal services to cater to the highway customers along with the residents of Blue Ash. This area currently has a few vacant tenant spaces and some aging developments, so filling empty spaces and renovating existing commercial and residential developments is a priority for the future. The concepts below further describe a variety of options that would assist in achieving the City's vision for **Blue Ash South**.

COMMERCIAL DESTINATIONS

The **Blue Ash South** area currently includes several large retail destinations including Target and Kroger. This is a high traveled area and due to the existing development form, additional large retailers may be supported in this district. In addition to large retailers, small boutique retail shops, specialized shops, and retail services provide people a specific reason to stop and shop. These smaller retailers complement the larger stores and help attract a wider clientele. The City promotes new development in this area, but redevelopment of existing vacant spaces should take priority in this area.



RESIDENTIAL

The housing within **Blue Ash South** is primarily multi-family developments on large parcels and a small number of single family homes. Additional housing options could include attached residential (i.e., townhomes, row houses, or patio homes) or multi-family. Renovating and upgrading existing multi-family developments is encouraged to occur before new projects are built.



Commercial Destination Guidelines

- Redevelopment of existing vacant retail space takes priority over new development projects in the **Blue Ash South** area.
- A variety of commercial uses are encouraged that vary in size, scale, speciality, and target clients.
- New commercial uses and renovations to existing developments should include pedestrian and bicycle amenities to promote a variety of transportation options to and within the area.
- Significant green space should be provided with each new development that includes street trees, parking lot landscaping and screening, entry features, and common gathering spaces.

Residential Guidelines

- A mix of housing types and densities are encouraged.
- Attached and detached single family housing and multi-family housing developments should be located near existing residential developments. Higher-density residential developments can be used to serve as a transitional use between low-density residential and commercial and office uses.

ALIVE AFTER FIVE

The **Blue Ash South** area attracts many people for a variety of reasons, whether they stop for a meal, grocery shopping, or banking. Many of these activities are conducted during the day, as the district does not have many amenities to attract people to stay in Blue Ash for dinner, drinks, or other activities. Many of the existing restaurants and services are geared toward lunch crowds. This is a missed opportunity for the City, so it is encouraged that new restaurants and bars are built within this district to fill this void.

QUALITY DESIGN

The physical appearance of developments can be more important than what occurs inside of the building. To this end, it is important that new development and redevelopment projects are held to a high architectural and design standard to ensure that the district is an attractive and appealing place to work and live.



ATTRACTIVE CORRIDORS & GATEWAYS

The **Blue Ash South** area contains very prominent corridors including Plainfield Road and OH-126. These corridors are very well traveled on a daily basis and should be reflective of the high quality design and development for which the City strives. Streetscapes, signage, and pedestrian improvements should be considered along this corridor, with special consideration toward the Plainfield Road and OH-126 interchange. This is a primary gateway and should be a welcoming and attractive entrance into the City.

Quality Design Guidelines

- All new development and re-development projects should utilize high quality building materials such as brick, stone, wood, tile, stucco, decorative block, decorative concrete panels, and glass. Other building materials may be considered on a case by case basis to determine their appropriateness.
- There shall be no uninterrupted lengths of blank walls and developments should utilize a variety of building materials and colors.
- Buildings and additions should not be designed with or modeled after franchise or formula based architecture unless they satisfy the City's desired quality of building materials and architectural design.

Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

primary uses

Primary uses should account for at least 70 percent of the land uses within each Planning Area. They are the defining land uses and contribute to the overall character and scale of the district. The primary uses within **Blue Ash South** are primarily commercial and office uses that cater both to the commuters of OH-126 and the residents of Blue Ash.

RETAIL SALES/SERVICE

Retail sales and service uses in this district vary in size and scale. This district is the ideal location for larger retail uses and big-box stores due to high traffic numbers on two heavily traveled thoroughfares. Smaller, complementary uses provide balance to the larger stores and provide more specific services or goods.



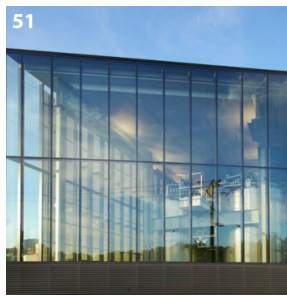
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Includes a range of high-tech, warehousing, and manufacturing uses. These businesses typically do not have outdoor storage and all work is conducted within an enclosed building. Light industrial uses shall maintain an attractive and maintained facility including landscaping, buffering, and adequate screening where necessary.



OFFICE

Includes both single-user buildings, multi-tenant buildings, and mixed-use office developments. Office developments should contain a mixture of uses where feasible. New office developments and redevelopment projects should be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, with attractive facilities that attract a variety of employees, including young professionals.



MEDICAL OFFICE/CLINIC

Includes small medical offices for dentists, doctors, dermatologists, or other similar concentration. These uses may be in small single-use offices or included in a multi-tenant development.



RESTAURANT/BAR

Blue Ash South should have a variety of restaurants and bars that provide a variety of price points and cuisines that attract a range of clientele. The district will benefit from having plenty of attractive options for people to enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner, and drinks in close proximity to their homes and/or places of employment.



ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment uses in this district should be destinations that attract residents and employees of the City. Entertainment uses include movie theaters, bowling alleys, driving ranges, and other similar activities.

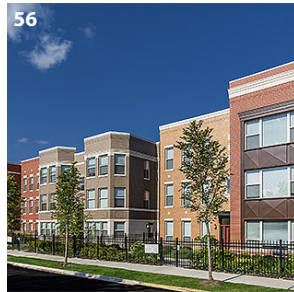


secondary uses

Secondary uses should account for less than 30 percent of the land uses within the Planning Area. They should be complementary and supportive of the primary land uses, but should be located sparingly and selectively.

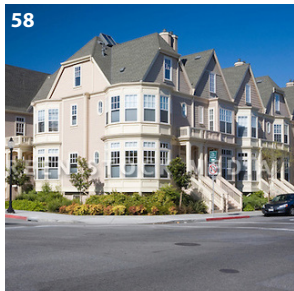
MULTI-FAMILY

Residential in this district should be primarily multi-family structures. These multi-family developments may vary in size, density, and composition. In some cases, smaller scale attached residential may be appropriate as they can be good transitional uses between higher density (commercial, office, multi-family) and lower-density (single family, parks, schools) uses.



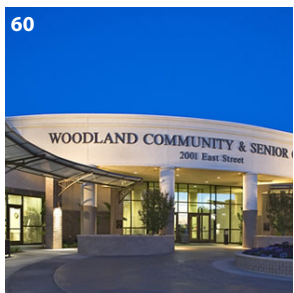
ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL

Attached residential products also may be appropriate in areas that are adjacent to or near single family developments and can serve as a buffer between higher density residential or commercial uses. Attached residential products should have individual entrances and parking garages for each unit.



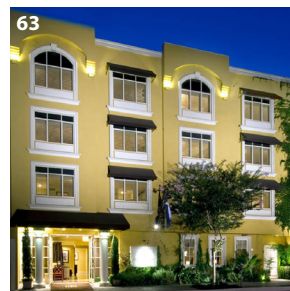
COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Includes a number of uses including libraries, fire stations, police stations, city services, and schools. These uses should be located where practical and convenient for both current and future needs of the City.



HOTEL/MOTEL

Hotels or motels in this district should be high-end or boutique-style hotels in order to have a wide variety of hotel and motel options for both short and long-term stays. These uses should be designed in an attractive manner utilizing high quality building materials and should be connected to adjacent office and commercial developments.



Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

BLUE ASH VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOODS

existing character

The existing character for the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** is a single family dominant district that surrounds the **Blue Ash Village**, with small pockets of other uses including commercial, industrial, and institutional. The single family developments are older and the parcels are smaller in size compared to the single family developments in the **Neighborhoods Planning Area**. The street network is compact with services that are within easy walking distances.

EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION

The **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** planning area is a primarily single family district. This Planning Area has the highest percentage of single family land area with very few other uses present. Vacant land makes up the second biggest land use, but is still under five percent. This area includes the City's original single family neighborhoods and, therefore, the parcels are compact and sit on a mostly grid-like street network. This results in a dense, relatively walkable, and tightly-knit community. There are a few neighborhood-scale non-residential uses scattered throughout the district, typically near the **Blue Ash Village** and located on the major thoroughfares in this district including Kenwood Road, Blue Ash Road, and Cooper Road.

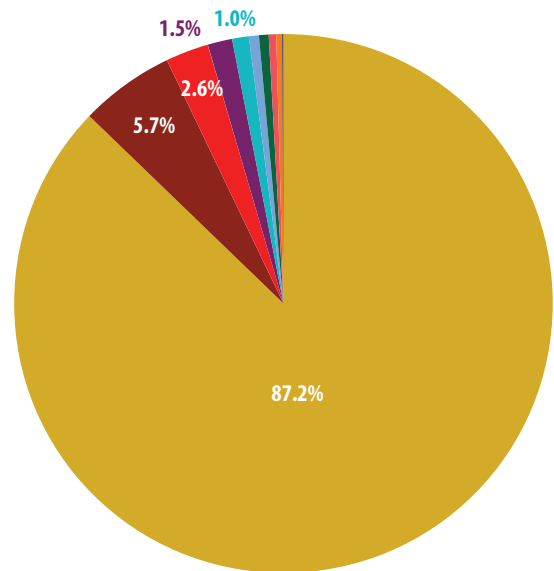


Figure 5-1: Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods Existing Land Use Composition by Parcel

LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
SINGLE FAMILY	247.8	87.2%
VACANT	16.1	5.7%
COMMERCIAL	7.3	2.6%
INDUSTRIAL	4.2	1.5%
INSTITUTIONAL	2.9	1.0%
PUBLIC	1.7	0.6%
GREEN SPACE/PARK	1.6	0.6%
TWO-FAMILY	1.3	0.4%
MULTI-FAMILY	1.0	0.4%
OFFICE	0.2	0.1%
TOTAL	284.2	100%

Map 5-1: Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods Existing Land Use

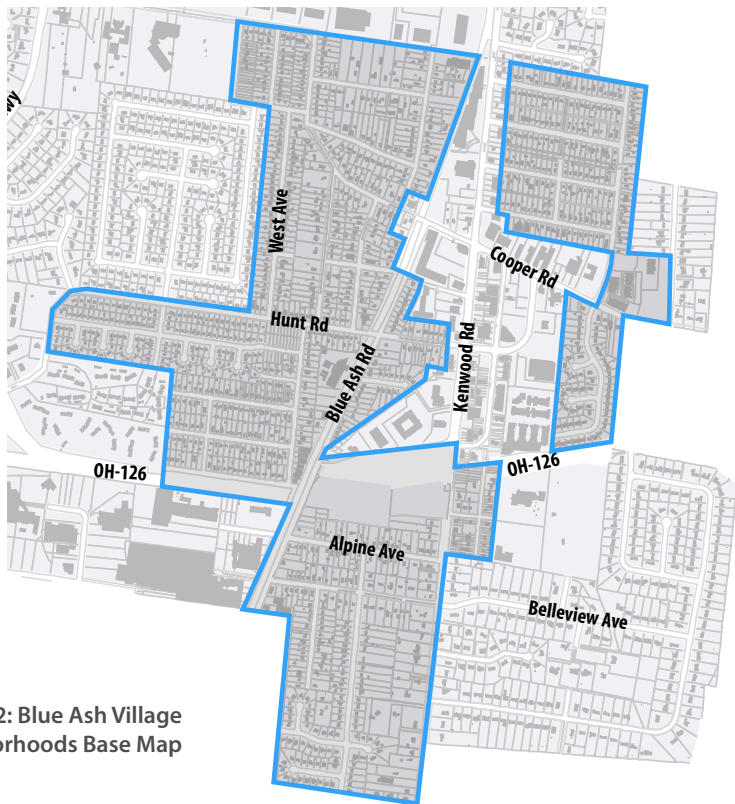
Figure 5-1 and Map 5-1 illustrate the breakdown of existing land uses within the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods**. The pie chart and the land use map clearly illustrate the dominance of single family residential in this district.

DISTRICT CHARACTER

The **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** are primarily made up of the City’s original single family neighborhoods. The district is generally comprised of small houses on small lots, and due to its compact form it includes almost a third of the total buildings and a quarter of the total parcels in the City. Much of the housing stock in this district was built in the first half of the 20th Century and is now showing its age. This has resulted in an increase in the number of rental homes in this district and an increase in the number of older homes that are being torn down so new homes can be built in their place.

Map 5-2 clearly illustrates that this is a compact, interconnected district. In comparison with the **Neighborhoods** district, which includes many newer subdivisions, buildings are half the size (1,025 square feet in the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** and 2,304 square feet in the **Neighborhoods**), and parcels are a third of the size (7,300 square feet in the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** and 21,000 square feet in the **Neighborhoods**). Additionally, many of these neighborhoods were built with narrow streets, no sidewalks, and little to no curbing.

Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods has...	
1,860 buildings	31% of the total buildings in the City
1,025 sq. ft. average building size	Average building size in the City is around 10,000 sq. ft. Buildings in the Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods are nearly 1/10th the size.
1,729 parcels	24% of the total parcels in the City
8,000 sq. ft. average parcel size	Average sq. ft. of parcels in the City is 40,000 sq. ft. Parcels in the Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods are 1/5th the size of the average.



Map 5-2: Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods Base Map



The above pictures represent the variety of land uses within the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** planning area.

vision

The vision for the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** is to preserve the neighborhood character of this residential district, while promoting appropriate redevelopment and new development projects.

The vision for the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods**, as described above, is successful residential neighborhood that caters to a variety of income levels and ages. Dense, walkable traditional-style neighborhoods are increasing in popularity for young professionals, new families, and aging adults who value being able to walk to neighborhood amenities. The **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** planning area has the potential to attract this range of individuals now and in the future due to the development form of the district and the adjacent amenities including the City's Recreation Center and the **Blue Ash Village**. Increasing the quality and the variety in the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** housing market would increase the attractiveness of the district. In doing this, the City encourages new development forms, which are of an appropriate size and scale, while preserving the existing character of the district.

NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES

In order to further the vision of this district, and to make it more attractive to a greater number of potential residents, the City supports the addition of more neighborhood-scale amenities, such as small commercial uses, offices, services, and public facilities within the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods**. These uses should be secondary to the residential component of this district and should be located near or adjacent to the **Blue Ash Village** or existing non-residential uses. Neighborhood amenities are ideal in this district specifically, due to the compact and walkable nature of this district.



RESIDENTIAL

The housing within the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** is almost entirely single family residential, with very few multi-family properties located throughout the district. Additional housing options could include single family residential, attached residential (i.e., townhomes, row houses, or patio homes), or possibly very small multi-family residential.



Neighborhood Amenities

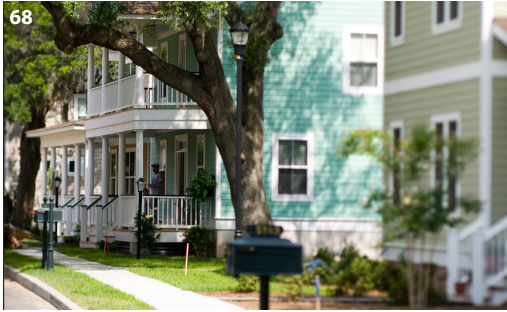
- Neighborhood amenities are encouraged within the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods**, but should be located at key intersections and along major corridors in order to attract more people and have the least amount of impact to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. These would be ideally located near or adjacent to the **Blue Ash Village** or existing non-residential uses.
- Non-residential uses should be of a residential scale and should be designed for the pedestrian.
- Non-residential uses may be located in previously residential homes if located along a major corridor and adjacent to or near the **Blue Ash Village** or existing non-residential uses.

Residential Guidelines

- A mix of housing types and densities are encouraged.
- Single family residential should remain the prominent land use within the district.
- Non-single family residential (i.e., attached single family, patio homes, etc.) should be located near the **Blue Ash Village**, commercial, or office uses and can be used as a transition between non-residential uses and single family residential.

ATTRACTIVE CORRIDORS & GATEWAYS

The **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** contains prominent corridors including Kenwood Road, Cooper Road, and Blue Ash Road. These corridors are very well traveled on a daily basis and should be reflective of the high quality design and development for which the City strives. Streetscapes, signage, and pedestrian improvements should be considered along these corridors and within the neighborhood roads. Many of the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** lack sidewalks, streetscape elements, and pedestrian amenities, which contribute greatly to the overall quality of a neighborhood.



QUALITY DESIGN

Attractive residential and non-residential products, no matter the size, scale, or density, can bring people in with their charm and beauty. All new and redevelopment projects within the district should be held to a high architectural and design standard to ensure that the district is an attractive and appealing place to work and live.



Quality Design Guidelines

- All new development and re-development projects should utilize high quality building materials such as brick, stone, wood, tile, stucco, decorative block, decorative concrete panels, and glass. Other building materials may be considered on a case by case basis to determine their appropriateness.
- Non-residential uses shall be designed without uninterrupted lengths of blank walls. Buildings and additions should not be designed with or modeled after franchise or formula based architecture unless they satisfy the City's desired quality of building materials and architectural design.
- All developments should utilize a variety of building materials and colors.

Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

primary uses

Primary uses should account for at least 70 percent of the land uses within each Planning Area. They are the defining land uses and contribute to the overall character and scale of the district. The primary uses within the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** are low-density residential, to promote a continuation of the existing land use character.

SINGLE FAMILY

Single family residential is and should continue to be the primary land use in this district. New single family residential units should be built in various styles, sizes, and price points to attract a variety of people to the City including both young professionals, new families, and aging adults.



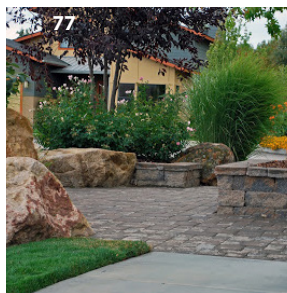
ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL

Attached residential products may be appropriate in areas that are adjacent to or near the **Blue Ash Village** planning area, which includes office, commercial, and multi-family uses to name a few. Attached residential products should have individual entrances and parking garages for each unit.



PARK/OPEN SPACE

Parks and open spaces in this district should be of a neighborhood-scale and should typically be used by the residents of the neighborhood they are in or are adjacent to. This includes both green park land along with hardscape common spaces. All parks and open spaces should be safely accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists.



secondary uses

Secondary uses should account for less than 30 percent of the land uses within the Planning Area. They should be complementary and supportive of the primary land uses, but should be located sparingly and selectively. All secondary uses in the **Blue Ash Village Neighborhoods** shall be small in size and of a neighborhood-scale and located near or adjacent to the **Blue Ash Village** or existing non-residential uses. They should cater to the residents of the district and not the City as a whole.

RETAIL SALES/SERVICE

Retail sales and service uses in this district should be small in scale and be located on the major thoroughfares and not in the residential neighborhoods. Examples include dry cleaners, nail salons, hair salons, small retail stores, day care facilities, and copy and mailing services.



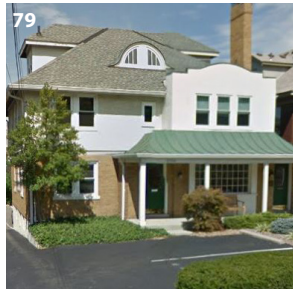
RESTAURANT

Small neighborhood restaurants may be appropriate on the major thoroughfares in the district that cater to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. This may include coffee shops, small restaurants, wine bars, or other similar uses. Drive-through facilities should not be allowed in the district.



OFFICE

Includes primarily single-user small office buildings and residential homes that have been converted to professional office space for lawyers, architects, realtors, accountants, or other similar professions. Offices should be located on the major thoroughfares and not in the residential neighborhoods.



ASSISTED LIVING/CARE FACILITIES

Includes small assisted living and care facilities that cater to either aging adults or disabled individuals. Small facilities may be mixed in with residential neighborhoods or incorporated into commercial, multi-family, or mixed-use developments.



MEDICAL OFFICE

Includes small medical offices for one dentist, doctor, dermatologist, or other similar concentration. These uses may be in a small office or in a converted residential home. Medical offices should be located on the major thoroughfares and not in the residential neighborhoods.



BED AND BREAKFAST

Small bed and breakfasts may be appropriate in this district in either new buildings or in converted residential homes. These uses shall be small in scale and should be located on the major thoroughfares and not in the residential neighborhoods. This does not include hotels or motels; those uses should be located in the **Summit Park District** or in **Blue Ash North**.



Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

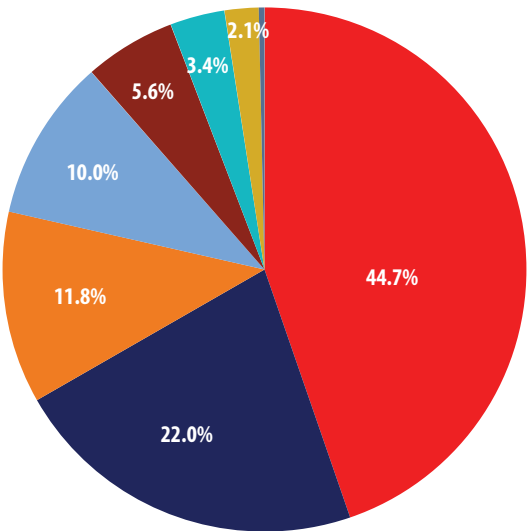
BLUE ASH VILLAGE

existing character

The existing character of the **Blue Ash Village** (often referred to as Downtown) is a mixed-use, walkable center complete with a variety of uses including commercial activities, public facilities, office space, and multi-family residential. The **Blue Ash Village** is the heart of the City and is one of the primary community gathering areas due to the Blue Ash Towne Square Amphitheater and the Veterans Memorial Park.

EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION

The **Blue Ash Village** is the commercial and mixed-use heart of Blue Ash Village. This district includes a variety of uses, densities, and development forms including large and small commercial developments, office buildings, institutional uses, public facilities, and multi-family residential developments. **Blue Ash Village** attracts many people for different reasons as it has both a mix of everyday service and convenience uses such as medical offices, restaurants, pharmacies, and regional destinations. This is a walkable district with plenty of sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, and public gathering areas.



LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
COMMERCIAL	33.0	44.7%
OFFICE	16.4	22.0%
MULTI-FAMILY	8.8	11.8%
PUBLIC	7.4	10.0%
VACANT	4.2	5.6%
INSTITUTIONAL	2.5	3.4%
SINGLE FAMILY	1.6	2.1%
UTILITY	0.3	0.3%
TOTAL	74.5	100%

Figure 6-1: Blue Ash Village Existing Land Use Composition by Parcel

Map 6-1: Blue Ash Village Existing Land Use

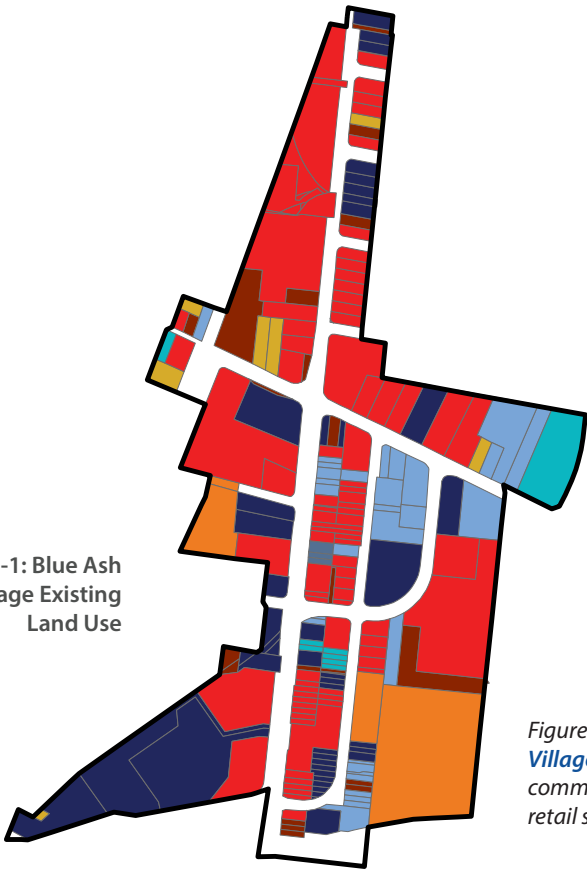


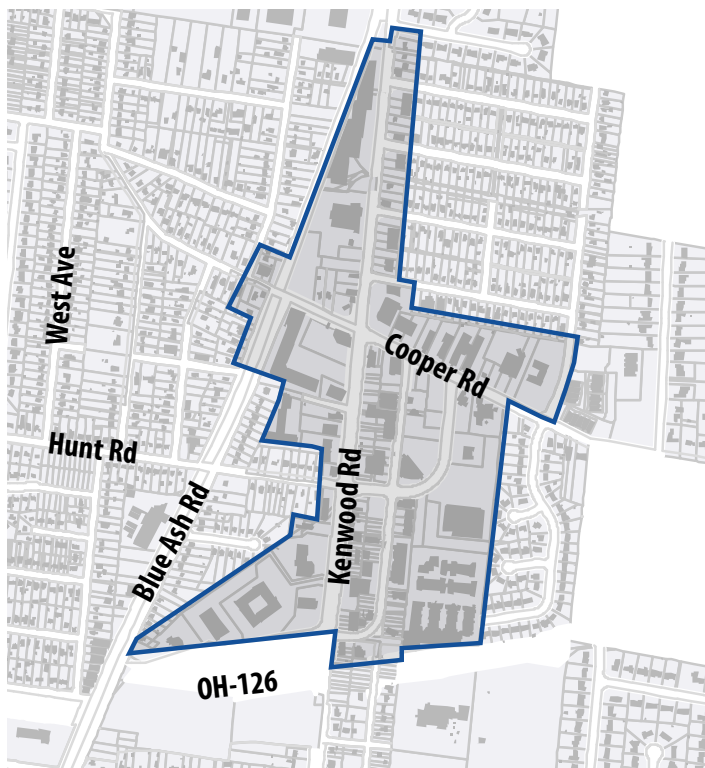
Figure 6-1 and Map 6-1 illustrate the breakdown of existing land uses within **Blue Ash Village**. As illustrated, this is a mixed area with a variety of uses, a majority of which are commercial. These commercial uses range from restaurants, retail stores, pharmacies, retail services, and other similar uses.

DISTRICT CHARACTER

Blue Ash Village is comprised of a variety of parcel sizes and building sizes. The majority of the buildings within this district are multi-tenant structures that include individual units for various uses. These structures vary in size, height, and density, and are especially apparent along Kenwood Road. High density multi-family residential and office complement this commercial area and provide an opportunity for people to work and live in this district. The community often gathers in this area when concerts and other events are held at the Blue Ash Towne Square Amphitheater. The **Blue Ash Village** is an important amenity for the City as it is the only dense, walkable, and truly mixed-use district within Blue Ash.

Most of the development in this district fronts either Kenwood Road, Cooper Road, or Hunt Road, which are the major thoroughfares within the **Blue Ash Village**. The majority of buildings are fairly close to the street, creating a more urban-like, downtown feel. While walkable, the district is oriented towards cars with plenty of public parking areas for community events and for the commercial and office destinations.

Blue Ash Village has...	
98 buildings	1% of the total buildings in the City
8,758 sq. ft. average building size	Average building size in the City is around 10,000 sq. ft. Buildings in the Blue Ash Village are very similar in size.
320 parcels	4% of the total parcels in the City
11,000 sq. ft. average parcel size	Average sq. ft. of parcels in the City is 40,000 sq. ft. Parcels in the Blue Ash Village are 1/4th the size of the average.



Map 6-2: Blue Ash Village Base Map



The above pictures represent the variety of land uses within the **Blue Ash Village** planning area.

vision

The vision for the **Blue Ash Village** is a community mixed-use destination that contains a concentration of retail, restaurant, multi-family, and public amenity uses within an attractive and walkable district.

The vision for the **Blue Ash Village** area, as described above, is for this district to remain a community mixed-use destination that is attractive to Blue Ash residents and to others in the region. The **Village** should continue to evolve into an area where a variety of people want to live, work, and shop. It needs uses that are unique to this district alone and will make it a special and desirable destination. This district should be a park-once and walk environment. Therefore, safe and efficient pedestrian connections, beautiful streetscapes, and amenities such as benches and attractive lighting should be present to encourage people to walk around the district while visiting multiple shops and/or restaurants.

COMMERCIAL DESTINATIONS

The **Blue Ash Village** currently includes a wide variety of commercial and retail destinations such as CVS, Walgreens, Fleet Feet Sports, Starbucks, and Servatii Pastry. However, many of these are “convenience” retail and do not entice shoppers who would browse many stores during a single visit to the area. Additional boutique retail stores and unique restaurants will help make the **Blue Ash Village** more of a commercial destination for residents who could walk from nearby neighborhoods or for visitors who would arrive by car without a specific destination.



MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS

Mixed-use developments are encouraged within **Blue Ash Village** that include commercial, office, and residential uses in an attractive and walkable design. These developments should be incorporated into the existing fabric of the district, while providing additional density and destinations. They should complement the existing uses within the district by contributing to a critical mass of retail commercial activity.



Commercial Destination Guidelines

- Redevelopment of existing vacant retail space takes priority over new development projects in the **Blue Ash Village** area.
- A variety of commercial uses are encouraged that vary in size, scale, specialty, and target clients.
- New commercial uses and renovations to existing developments should include pedestrian and bicycle amenities to promote a variety of transportation options to the area.
- Green and/or open space should be provided with each new development that includes street trees, parking lot landscaping and screening, entry features, and common gathering spaces.

Mixed-Use Guidelines

- Developments should include safe pedestrian paths within the development and connect with the public sidewalk system.
- Mixed-use developments may include a mixture of uses within individual buildings or that are integrated into an overall development plan.

ALIVE AFTER FIVE

The **Blue Ash Village** brings people during the day for work, shopping, and dining, but lacks uses and amenities that attract people to stay in the City for dinner, drinks, or other leisure time activities. Many of the existing restaurants and services are geared toward lunch crowds. This is a missed opportunity for the City, so it is encouraged that new restaurants, bars, and entertainment destinations such as theaters, museums, or galleries be built within this district to fill this void.

QUALITY DESIGN

The physical appearance of developments can be more important than what occurs inside of the building. To this end, it is important that new development and redevelopment projects are held to a high architectural and design standard to ensure that the district is an attractive and appealing place to work and live.



ATTRACTIVE CORRIDORS & GATEWAYS

Kenwood Road, Cooper Road, and Hunt Road cross through the **Blue Ash Village**. These busy corridors should be reflective of the high quality design and development for which the City strives. Streetscapes, signage, and pedestrian improvements should be considered along these corridors, with special consideration given to the Kenwood Road and Cooper Road intersection, which is at the heart of this district. People should know when they have entered and exited the **Blue Ash Village**, therefore the streetscape and signage should be reflective of its downtown-like feel.

Quality Design Guidelines

- All new development and re-development projects should utilize high quality building materials such as brick, stone, wood, tile, stucco, decorative block, decorative concrete panels, and glass. Other building materials may be considered on a case by case basis to determine their appropriateness.
- There shall be no uninterrupted lengths of blank walls and developments should utilize a variety of building materials and colors.
- Buildings and additions should not be designed with or modeled after franchise or formula based architecture unless they satisfy the City's desired quality of building materials and architectural design.
- Buildings should be designed for the pedestrian and not the car. Little or no front setbacks are encouraged.

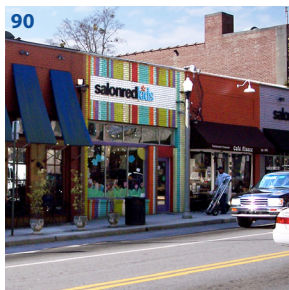
Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

primary uses

Primary uses should account for at least 70 percent of the land uses within each Planning Area. They are the defining land uses and contribute to the overall character and scale of the district. The primary uses within the **Blue Ash Village** include a mix of retail sales and services, entertainment, small offices, and dense residential units that together create a vibrant atmosphere for local residents and regional visitors.

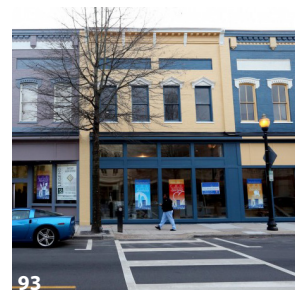
RETAIL SALES/SERVICE

Retail sales and service uses in this district should be destinations where residents and employees of the City want to visit. The **Blue Ash Village** should include a concentration of retail stores including boutiques, clothing stores, home stores, and gift stores and include less retail services such as hair salons, nail salons, and dry cleaners. These are small-scale uses and do not include large retailers such as big-box stores.



OFFICE

Offices in **Blue Ash Village** would ideally be on the upper floors of mixed-use buildings and would likely include multiple tenants. Office developments should contain a mixture of uses where feasible. New office developments and redevelopment projects should be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, with attractive facilities that attract a variety of employees, including young professionals.



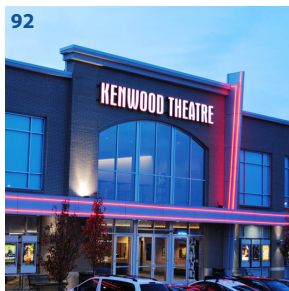
RESTAURANT/BAR

The **Blue Ash Village** should have a concentration of restaurants and bars that attract both residents and employees of the City. Restaurants and bars may be of a small or large scale, and may include both locally owned and chain restaurants. Chain restaurants shall not utilize franchise architecture and should reflect the character of the district.



ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment uses in this district should be destinations that attract residents of the City and from the region. Entertainment uses include movie theaters, play theaters, bowling alleys, art galleries, museums, and other similar activities.

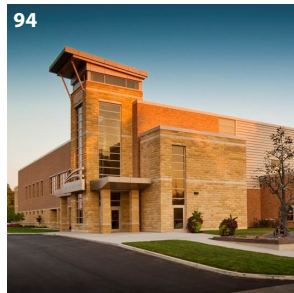


secondary uses

Secondary uses should account for less than 30 percent of the land uses within the Planning Area. They should be complementary and supportive of the primary land uses, but should be located sparingly and selectively.

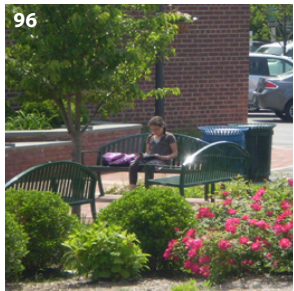
COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Includes a number of uses including libraries, fire stations, police stations, city services, and schools. These uses should be located where practical and convenient for both current and future needs of the City.



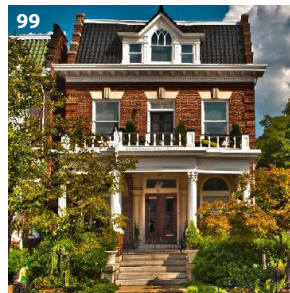
PARK/OPEN SPACE

Parks and open spaces in this district should be designed to provide central gathering areas. The **Blue Ash Village** already has the Towne Square, which is a fantastic amenity for the City. Additional park and open space shall complement Towne Square and not compete with it.



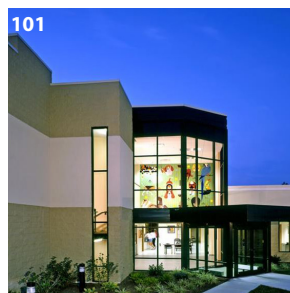
HOTEL/BED AND BREAKFASTS

Includes small boutique hotels and bed and breakfasts. Hotels in the **Blue Ash Village** should be higher-end and of a smaller scale. Large hotels should be located in the **Summit Park District** or in **Blue Ash North**.



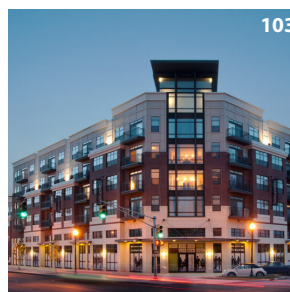
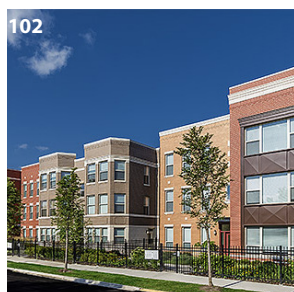
MEDICAL OFFICE

Includes small medical offices for dentists, doctors, dermatologists, or other similar concentration. These uses may be in small single-use offices or included in a multi-tenant development.



MULTI-FAMILY

Residential in this district should be primarily multi-family within mixed-use developments. These multi-family developments may vary in size, densities, and composition. Mixed-use developments typically will have a commercial or office component on the ground level with residential above.



Sources for photos on both pages can be found in the Appendix

NEIGHBORHOODS

existing character

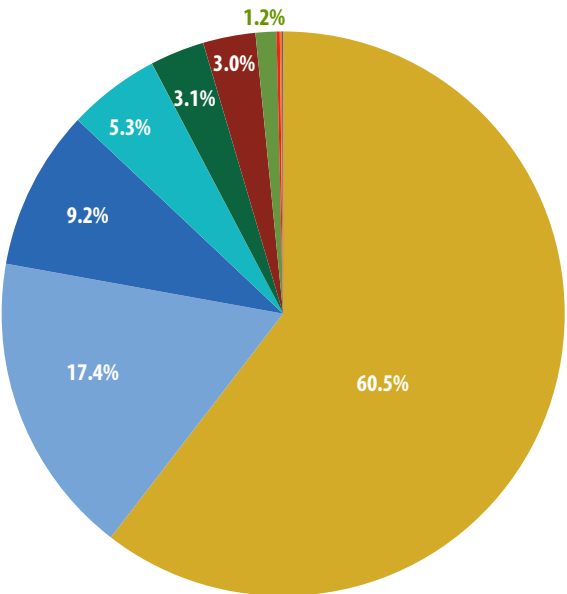
The existing character of the **Neighborhoods** is successful and well-maintained suburban residential neighborhoods made up of a diverse mix of neighborhoods, amenities, and public facilities. In addition to homes, this district includes schools, parks, public safety facilities, Blue Ash City Hall and Recreation Center, and the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash.

EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION

The **Neighborhoods** are the largest Planning Area, in terms of land area, and encompasses the majority of the single family residential neighborhoods within the City. These residential areas vary in size, scale, and development form, but overall represent successful, well-maintained, desirable single family neighborhoods. As shown on Map 7-1, many of these neighborhoods are located on the periphery of the City that in many cases are adjacent to residential neighborhoods in surrounding communities.



Figure 7-1 and Map 7-1 illustrate the breakdown of existing land uses within the **Neighborhoods** Planning Area. As shown, the majority of this district is single family residential homes, with some community facilities scattered throughout including schools, City services, and parks.



LAND USE	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
SINGLE FAMILY	1,103.4	60.5%
PUBLIC	316.8	17.4%
EDUCATION	167.4	9.2%
INSTITUTIONAL	96.2	5.3%
GREEN SPACE/PARK	57.1	3.1%
VACANT	55.0	3.0%
AGRICULTURE	21.7	1.2%
COMMERCIAL	3.4	0.2%
MULTI-FAMILY	2.4	0.1%
OFFICE	0.7	0.0%
INDUSTRIAL	0.2	0.0%
UTILITY	0.2	0.0%
TOTAL	1,824.6	100%

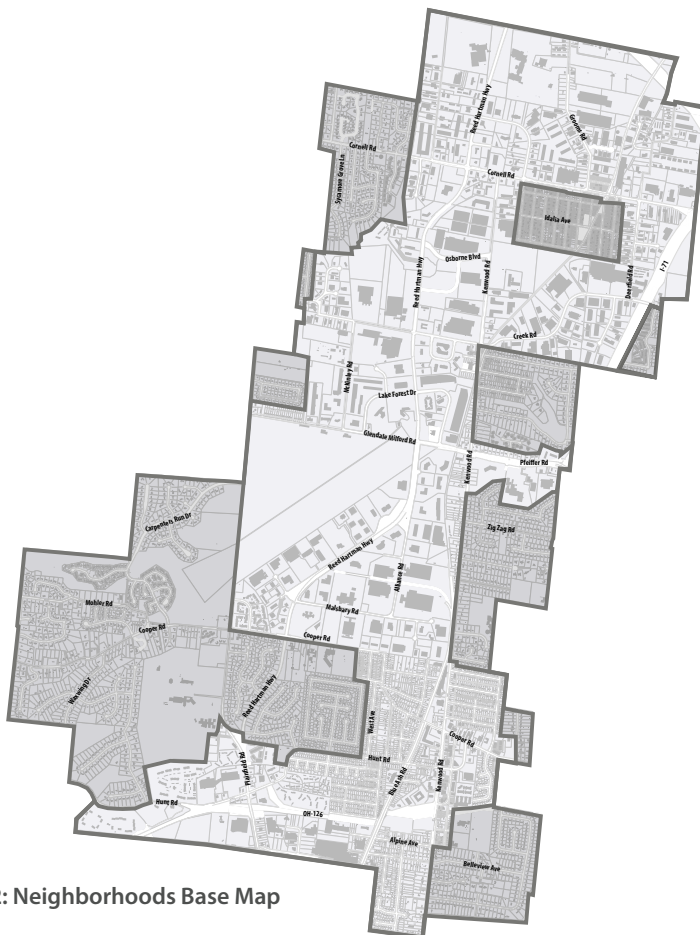
Figure 7-1: Neighborhoods Existing Land Use Composition by Parcel

DISTRICT CHARACTER

Blue Ash is proud of the high quality and character of its existing residential **Neighborhoods**. These **Neighborhoods** provide a strong residential base that supports local restaurants, shops, and services. The City continuously strives to ensure that its residents have high quality amenities such as the City's Recreation Center, local parks, and excellent schools. These amenities attract new people to the City and incentivize existing residents to stay in Blue Ash.

The **Neighborhoods** are primarily a low-density, single family residential Planning Area that is almost entirely built out. These neighborhoods vary in size, density, and design, but all take on a generally suburban form. Non-residential uses within the **Neighborhoods** are generally support services or public facilities such as the Blue Ash City Hall and Recreation Center, fire stations, police stations, schools, churches, parks, and the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash. These uses are generally compatible with residential neighborhoods as they exist to serve those residents.

The Neighborhoods have...	
2,908 buildings	49% of the total buildings in the City
2,304 sq. ft. average building size	Average building size in the City is around 10,000 sq. ft. Buildings in the Neighborhoods are 1/4th the size.
3,887 parcels	50% of the total parcels in the City
22,000 sq. ft. average parcel size	Average sq. ft. of parcels in the City is 40,000 sq. ft. Parcels in the Neighborhoods are half the size of the average.



Map 9-2: Neighborhoods Base Map



The above pictures represent the variety of land uses within the Neighborhood planning area.

vision

The vision for the **Neighborhoods** is to preserve and protect the existing residential areas of the City while promoting the addition of quality public amenities where necessary including bike lanes, signage, and trails.

The vision for the **Neighborhoods** area, as described above, is a successful single family residential area that provides high quality homes in beautiful subdivisions. This Planning Area is not expected to experience much change in the years to come. If change occurs in this mostly built-out area, it will come from renovations, re-builds, and possibly additional amenities being added to existing neighborhoods.

PRESERVE AND PROTECT

The existing quality, beauty, and design should be preserved and protected in the **Neighborhoods**. The City is proud of the high quality, desirable neighborhoods that currently exist and will continue to support and serve the current and future residents of these **Neighborhoods**. Areas within the **Neighborhoods** that may develop or redevelop should continue to reflect the high quality residential products that exist within Blue Ash and be respectful and complementary of adjacent developments.



QUALITY DESIGN

Attractive residential and non-residential products, no matter the size, scale, or density, can bring people in with their charm and beauty. All new and redevelopment projects within the **Neighborhoods** should be held to a high architectural and design standard to ensure that the district is an attractive and appealing place to live or work.



Quality Design Guidelines

- All new development and re-development projects should utilize high quality building materials such as brick, stone, wood, tile, stucco, decorative block, decorative concrete panels, and glass. Other building materials may be considered on a case by case basis to determine their appropriateness.
- Non-residential uses shall be designed without uninterrupted lengths of blank walls. Buildings and additions should not be designed with or modeled after franchise or formula based architecture unless they satisfy the City's desired quality of building materials and architectural design.
- All developments should utilize a variety of building materials and colors.

ATTRACTIVE CORRIDORS AND GATEWAYS

The **Neighborhoods** are primarily comprised of local, residential roadways that are internal to subdivisions or connect to the primary arterials within Blue Ash. The roadways within the **Neighborhoods** should be attractive, well landscaped, welcoming, safe, and pedestrian and bicycle friendly. In areas that lack street trees, sidewalks, pedestrian signage and other pedestrian amenities, they should be added where feasible as they contribute greatly to the overall quality of a neighborhood.



*Sources for photos on both pages
can be found in the Appendix*

primary uses

Primary uses should account for at least 70 percent of the land uses within each Planning Area. They are the defining land uses and contribute to the overall character and scale of the district. The primary uses within the **Neighborhoods** are primarily single family, low-density residential to promote a continuation of the existing land use character.

SINGLE FAMILY

Single family residential is and should continue to be the primary land use in this district. New single family residential units should be built in a variety of styles, sizes, and price points to attract a variety of people to the City including both young professionals, new families, and aging adults.



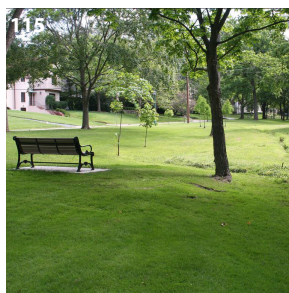
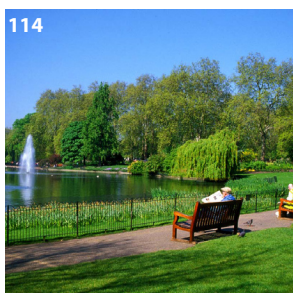
ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL

Attached residential products may be appropriate in areas that are adjacent to or near higher density residential developments. Attached residential products should have individual entrances and associated parking areas in either attached garages, detached garages, or carports.



PARK/OPEN SPACE

Parks and open spaces in this district may be of a neighborhood-scale or regional-scale. Parks and open space areas should provide a variety of amenities including walking trails, playgrounds, water features, dog parks, and natural areas. All parks and open spaces should be safely accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists.



secondary uses

Secondary uses should account for less than 30 percent of the land uses within the Planning Area. They should be complementary and supportive of the primary land uses, but should be located sparingly and selectively.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Includes a number of uses including libraries, fire stations, police stations, city services, and schools. These uses should be located where practical and convenient for both current and future needs of the City.



CONCLUSION

The City of Blue Ash is a successful, well-respected City within the Cincinnati Metropolitan Region and the State of Ohio. Blue Ash strives to bring quality developments, projects, and uses to the City that will serve both the City and the region. To remain competitive in an ever-changing economy, it is important that the City review its current situation and define the vision for how the City wants to grow.

This Land Use Plan establishes that vision and provides development guidelines that define the type, scale, and amenities that should be included with new and redevelopment projects. These guidelines take into account that the City has many different development types, forms, and densities, and the entire City should not develop in the same way. Certain developments may be appropriate in the northern areas of the City that do not fit in the Core or in the residential neighborhoods.

This plan focuses solely on land use and does not include an analysis of how future developments may impact the transportation network or public facilities. The City may review these impacts in additional studies of planning efforts.



APPENDIX

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for this plan included three phases, all of which are herein described. Phase One began in the beginning of 2014 and the plan was adopted on June 11, 2015.

PHASE ONE

Phase One of this planning process included a series of public meetings, held in March 2014, regarding current forces and trends facing suburban communities such as Blue Ash. Six meetings were held with the following groups: the general public, Blue Ash City Council, young professionals, developers/realtors, business owners and representatives, and Blue Ash staff. Each meeting included a 20-minute presentation, a writing exercise where groups at tables answered three set questions, and a mapping exercise where each group classified residential/commercial neighborhoods into categories of stable, in transition, and in need of change.

The writing exercise posed the following questions to each group. Below each question is a summary of the responses:

1. What, if any, alternative housing choices should Blue Ash consider to meet changing demographics?

- Affordable housing options for families (\$150,000-\$200,000)
- Appropriate housing for seniors and aging adults (first floor masters, on-grade entrances, no maintenance...)
- More housing choices (senior housing, patio homes, condos, townhomes...)
- Update/modernize existing housing stock (both single family and multi-family)
- Housing to attract young professionals

2. What can be done to make the Blue Ash office parks competitive in a changing economy?

- Mixed-use
- Pedestrian friendly, walkable
- Campus-like environment
- Improved connectivity between developments
- Modernize
- Increase density/utilize parking lots and open spaces

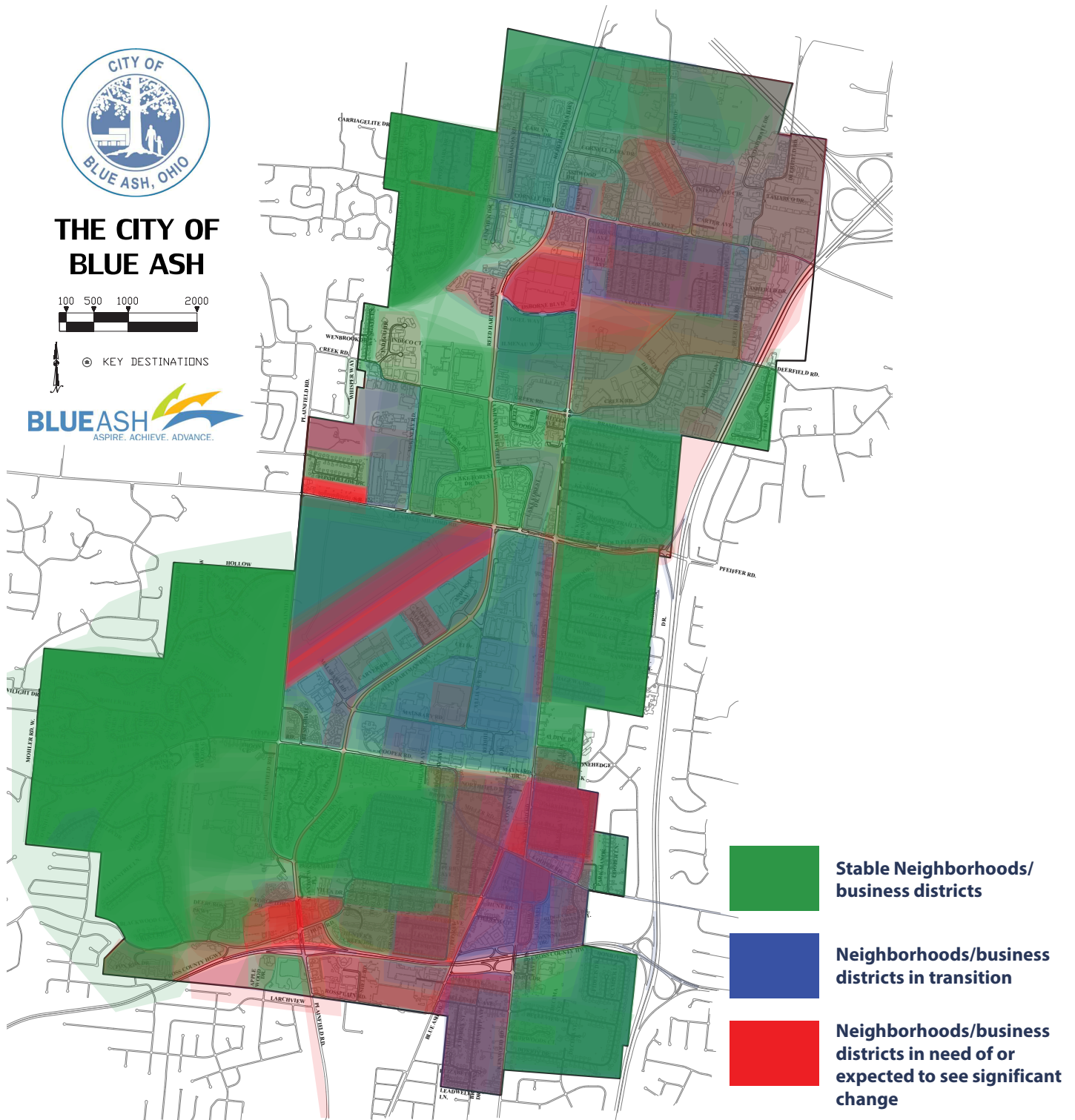
3. What does Blue Ash need to do to improve the quality of life and livability for its residents?

- Existing parks/rec program is doing a great job – keep up the good work!
- More entertainment and nightlife options (bars, movie theater, restaurants, etc...)
- Improve downtown – make it a destination
- Bicycle amenities (bike trails, lanes, racks...)
- Alternative transportation options (shuttles, bus routes, etc...)
- Improved connectivity and pedestrian access

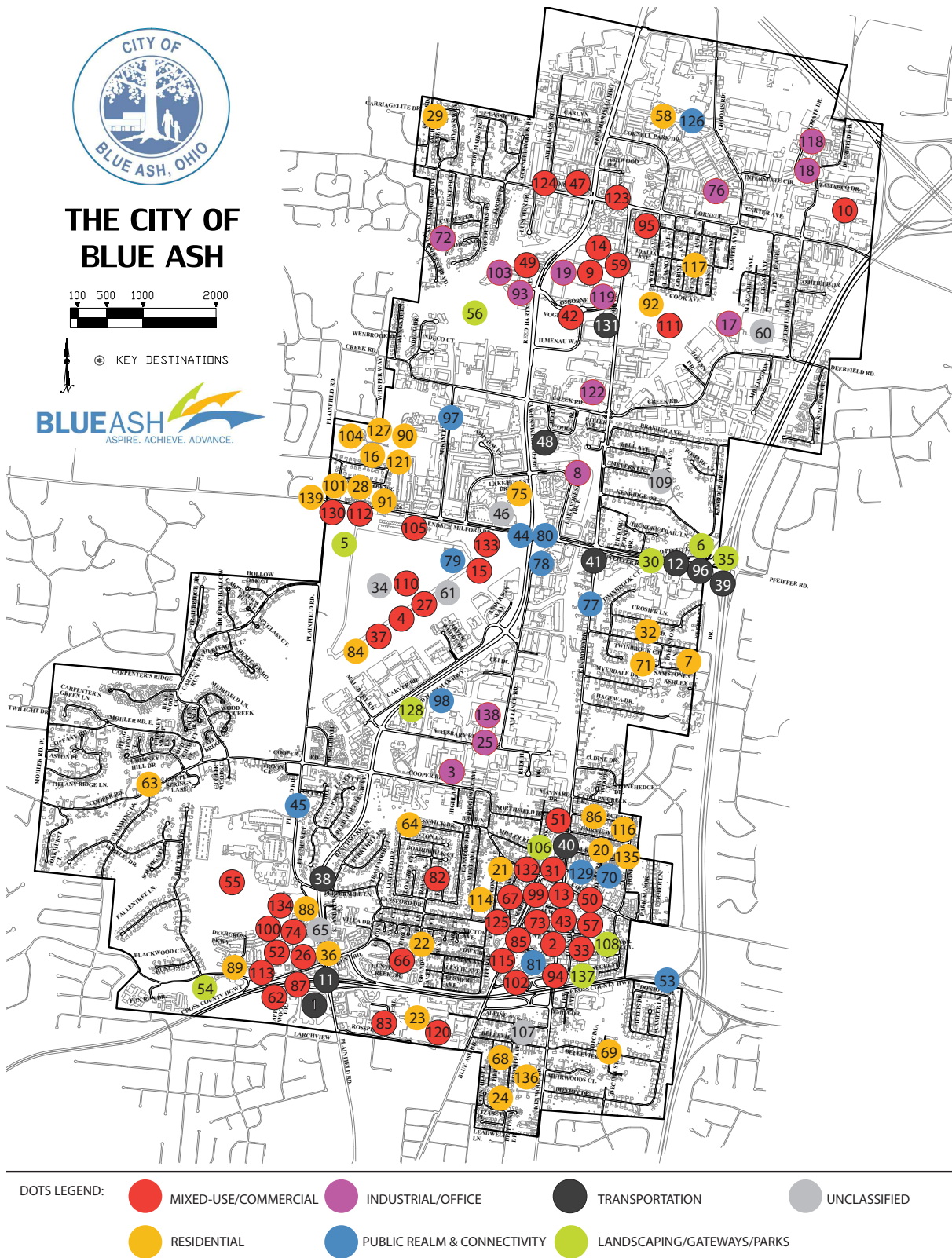


*Above pictures are from the Phase One public meetings
Source: City of Blue Ash*

The mapping exercise asked people to categorize the commercial and business areas of the city into three categories. Each map that was completed was combined to create the below map, which represents a culmination of all the public feedback that was received regarding the City's stable areas and not so stable areas.



During the Phase One mapping exercise, we also allowed participants to make comments on the map. These comments could be for any reason. The below map illustrates the types of comments that were provided and the area of the City that it was regarding.



What resulted from the Phase One exercise was a set of four guiding principles:

Blue Ash is interested in having more housing options available for its current residents and to attract new residents to the City. The quality, design, location, and amenities associated with housing projects is critical.

Blue Ash wants to develop walkable, mixed-use employment campuses that include a variety of amenities including restaurants, entertainment, and services.

Blue Ash is interested in improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods and developments and along major corridors.

Blue Ash wants downtown to be a destination complete with a mix of activities, including entertainment, shopping, and dining.

PHASE TWO

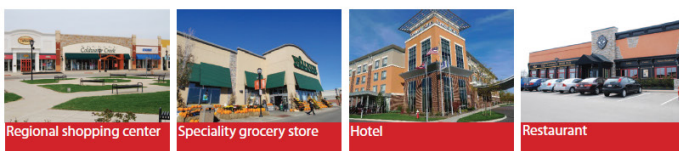
Phase Two included another set of public meetings and events, held in May 2014, this time with the intent of further refining what kinds of uses Blue Ash stakeholders want for their City and where in the City they should be located. Two open public meetings were held along with a meeting of Blue Ash staff. Open house events were also held at the Firehouse Grill and the Blue Ash Recreation Center to allow for additional public input. Each event included a presentation board with a mapping activity.

For each mapping activity, participants were provided with stickers of 32 different development types ranging from a single family home, to multi-family, commercial, mixed-use, industrial, parks, and bike baths. They were then instructed to select the stickers that they were attracted to and place them on a map of the City in the general area that they would like to see that use. The available development types are shown below.

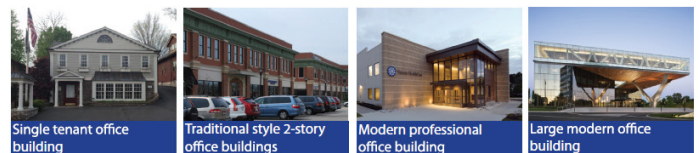
Residential Development Types



Mixed-Use and Commercial Development Types



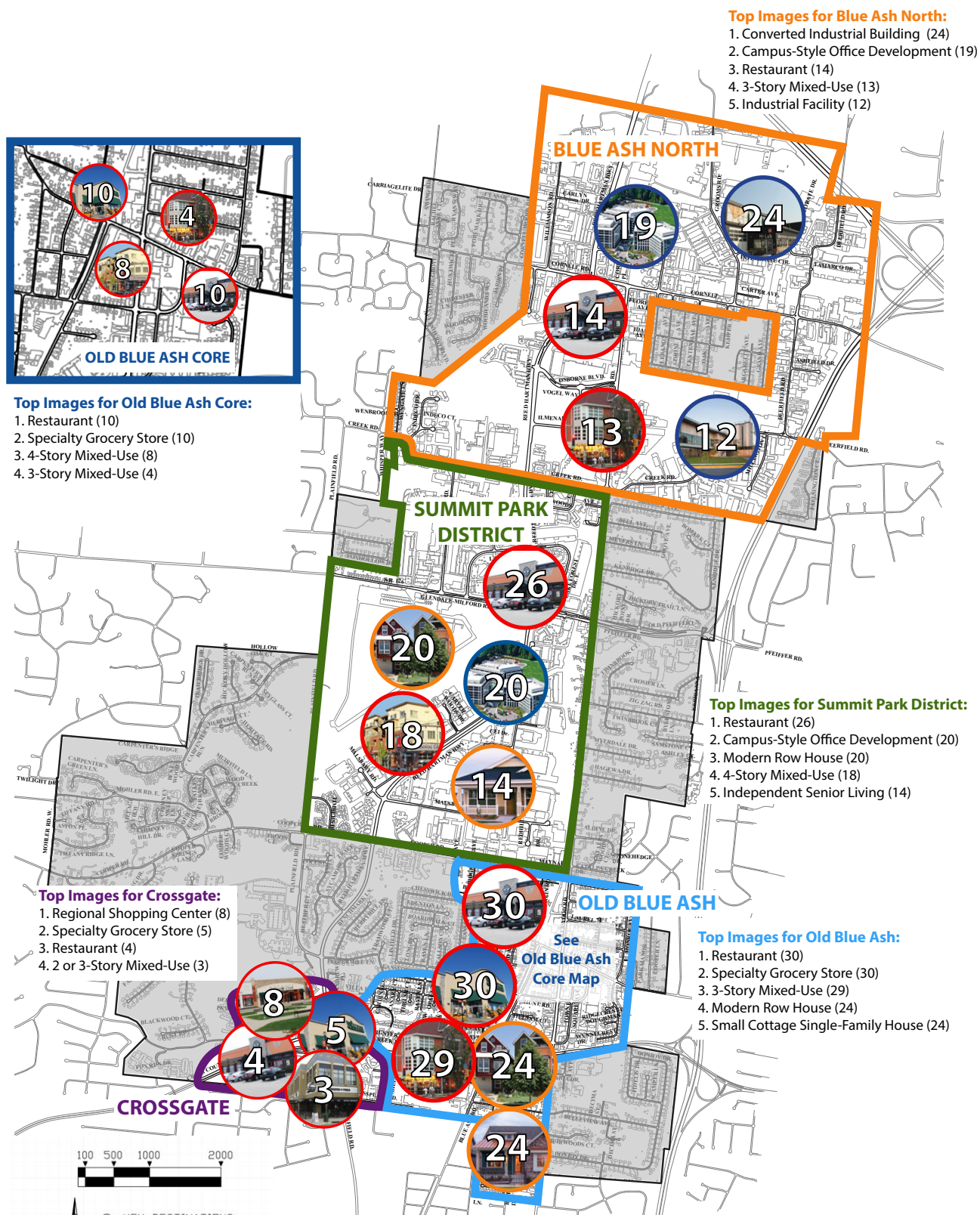
Industrial and Office Development Types



Public Amenities



The most popular images in each of the six Planning Areas are shown on the map below. The mapping exercise from Phase One along with this exercise led to the creation of the Planning Areas and assisted in determining their boundaries.



PHASE THREE

Phase Three included further refinement of the information collected in Phases One and Two and the writing of this plan. The public process was the foundation of this plan as it led to the creation of the Planning Areas, the vision statements for each, and the recommendations within each area. The public process for Phase Three affirmed that the contents of this plan represent the desired future for Blue Ash and how it can be achieved.

PICTURE SOURCES

1. <http://www.stapletondenver.com/community/whats-here/shopping-dining>
2. <http://blogs.bullrealty.com/blogs/retail/2013/07/2nd-quarter-market-report-retail-revs#.VTUTzvnF9Wg>
3. <http://bicycletimesmag.com/surprising-rise-minneapolis-top-bike-town/>
4. <http://olentangyliving.com/2010/04/21/creekside-gahanna-becomes-cosmopolitan/>
5. <http://www.architectureanddesign.com.au/news/industry-news/first-sydney-office-to-target-6-stars-to-begin-con>
6. <http://www.sharperhomes.com/lakes.php>
7. <http://portofkennewick.org/about/art-and-architecture/>
8. <http://www.danbairdlandscapes.com/p/commercial.html>
9. <http://blog.performancebike.com/2011/05/10/bike-commuting-tips/>
10. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wood-n-photography/6076321596/>
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