

**GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES – LAND USE**

**Land Use Goal:** Promote the public health, safety and welfare through land use decision-making that achieves and maintains a high quality living environment with a well-planned, well-timed and well-placed mix of land uses.

**Objective LU1:** Establish the following land use classifications in St. Clair Township for the purpose of managing growth: Agricultural, Agricultural Estate, Rural Estate Residential, Low Density Residential, Suburban Residential, Planned Residential, Mixed Use, General Business, Gravel Extraction, Industrial, Office/Technology, Public/Semi-Public, and Public / Private Recreation. Make uses of land consistent with these Future Land Use classifications as they are portrayed on the St. Clair Township Future Land Use Map.

Policy LU1.1:

Apply the Future Land Use Map in conjunction with the policies of this element and other elements of this Plan. Future Land Use designations are intended to: a) coordinate land use with the natural environment, including soils, topography, and other resources; b) appropriately mix and distribute residential, commercial, industrial, recreation, public and preservation land uses; and c) encourage an efficient pattern of development and discourage sprawl.

Policy LU1.2:

Provide for residential land uses with a variety of densities and housing types to meet the needs and desires of a range of family sizes, age groups and income levels, and to accommodate different needs and desires of the population. Residential land uses include five sub-categories:

**AGRICULTURAL ESTATE**

Areas so designated include land that is primarily residential in character, which may contain some agricultural uses in a limited fashion on lots greater than ten (10) gross acres in size.

**Comment [PC1]:** [Note: Appropriate for A-1, MHP]

**RURAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL**

Areas so designated consist of single-family residential development, with lot sizes ranging from five (5) acres to ten (10) gross acres in size.

**LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

Areas so designated include single-family residential uses, with lot sizes ranging from one (1) acre to five (5) gross acres in size.

**Comment [PC2]:** [Note: Appropriate for R-1, R-1A]

**PLANNED RESIDENTIAL**

Areas so designated include residential development that preserves natural features and takes advantage of shared amenities including: vehicle and pedestrian access, landscaping, open spaces and communal facilities.

**Comment [PC3]:** [Note: Appropriate for PUD]

**SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL**

Areas so designated include single-family residential uses at a density of one (1) to four (4) homes per gross acre that are generally provided with higher levels of urban services.

**Comment [PC4]:** [Note: Appropriate for R-1, R-1A, R-2]

Policy LU1.3

Base the density of development for undeveloped land on considerations such as: (a) the density of adjacent developed areas for which the undeveloped land would be a logical extension; (b) access to major transportation facilities; (c) the nature of adjacent activities; and (d) residential development in rural areas should be designed to maintain existing rural character of open space and the appearance of low density.

Policy LU1.4:

Provide for very low density and rural-character residential development in areas where urban services such as public water and sewer services cannot economically be provided, and are not anticipated to be provided within the planning period.

Policy LU1.5:

Encourage revitalization of core areas by planned redevelopment and rehabilitation of residential uses.

Policy LU1.6:

Revise the Township zoning ordinance to provide for “by-right” planned development to promote innovative design and to reduce administrative processes.

**Objective LU2:** Encourage the location and design of facilities providing goods and services to serve the unique needs and desires of different types of consumers.

Policy LU2.1:

Use one category for commercial land uses, as follows:

GENERAL BUSINESS

Areas so designated include moderate to highly commercialized retail, office and service business development serving the needs of the neighborhood and beyond. This classification accommodates neighborhood-scale, community business, general business and office uses.

**Comment [PC5]:** [Note: Appropriate for B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4]

Policy LU2.2:

Encourage the provision of centers for goods and services that are conveniently accessible to the population, and a variety to serve the unique needs and desires of different types of consumers, such as: commercial areas oriented to serving immediately surrounding residents with daily convenience needs, commercial areas intended to serve the transient public, major commercial centers offering both convenience and comparison goods and services to customers from a large service area.

Policy LU2.3:

Ensure that new or redeveloped facilities providing goods and services have adequate off-street parking facilities, reasonable control of ingress and egress, landscaping, reasonable separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and similar amenities. Encourage such facilities to be located and designed to minimize any adverse environmental effects.

Policy LU2.4:

Locate proposed commercial uses on the basis of: (a) adequate service population, according to forecasted population distribution; (b) access via good transportation facilities; and (c) relationship to surrounding areas.

Policy LU2.5:

Discourage spot and strip commercial developments as undesirable characteristics of sprawl.

Policy LU2.6:

Avoid siting commercial uses over the sole-source aquifer that have the potential to pollute it.

Policy LU2.7:

Permit commercial development in rural settings at a scale and location consistent with the population and area it serves.

**Objective LU3:** Pursue employment centers that provide a variety of employment opportunities oriented to various segments of the labor force and the skills they exhibit.

Policy LU3.1:

Accommodate employment centers in two categories:

**INDUSTRIAL**

Areas so designated include businesses involved in manufacturing, warehousing, assembling, or handling of goods or commodities.

**Comment [PC6]:** [Note: Appropriate for M-1, M-2]

**OFFICE/TECHNOLOGY**

Areas so designated include office uses and technology based businesses that employ highly skilled workers on campus-like settings.

Policy LU3.2:

Attract the types of employment that appear to have the greatest potential for success in this region and are least susceptible to fluctuations in the economy, according to the most current economic studies.

Policy LU3.3:

Provide for an adequate amount land for the location of industrial uses to meet anticipated industrial employment needs.

Policy LU3.4:

Locate areas planned for employment centers so as to shorten the work trip from residential areas and reduce energy consumption.

Policy LU3.5:

In considering the development of employment centers, give priority to land that exhibits the following characteristics: (a) good access to major transportation facilities; (b) good proximity to urban development (employment sources); (c) relatively flat land; and (d) a full range of urban services.

Policy LU3.6:

Avoid siting industrial uses over the sole-source aquifer that have the potential to pollute it.

**Objective LU4:** Provide for a mix of land uses, where appropriate, to facilitate the efficient use of land, to promote multi-modal transportation options, to promote community centers, and to provide for varying densities and intensities to serve a diverse population.

Policy LU4.1:

Include one category in the mixed land use classification, as follows:

**MIXED USE**

Areas containing a mixture of residential, public and small-scale business uses in close proximity to each other.

Policy LU4.2:

Modify the township zoning ordinance to include a mixed use zoning district.

Policy LU4.3:

Plan and integrate mixed use development with surrounding areas.

Policy LU4.4:

In setting forth mixed use development requirements in the zoning ordinance, pay special attention to use mix and dimensional requirements, off-street parking needs/requirements, the compactness of development, connectivity, and the use of public open spaces.

Policy LU4.5:

In considering locations for mixed use developments, use criteria such as the existence of multi-modal transportation options, access to major transportation facilities, and a full range of urban services.

**Objective LU5:** Make public recreational facilities and programs available that are conveniently located and accessible to the population.

Policy LU5.1

Accommodate recreational uses in one category as follows:

**PUBLIC/PRIVATE RECREATION**

Areas so designated should consist of public and semi-public recreational land use including active and passive recreation, open space, parks, nature preserves, golf courses, playgrounds and other similar facilities.

**Comment [PC7]:** [Note: Appropriate for F-1]

Policy LU5.2

When considering the location and design of recreation and open space facilities, allow for both region-oriented spaces, containing a variety of active and passive recreation pursuits, and neighborhood-oriented spaces, primarily aimed at satisfying the day-to-day desires and needs of immediately surrounding residents.

Policy LU5.3

Evaluate potential recreational areas to ensure the most efficient and reasonable utilization of the area's physical resources and that any short-term uses of man's environment will be to the long-range benefit of all.

Policy LU5.4

Encourage appropriate authorities and private developers to incorporate designs for recreational facilities into the early stages of land development projects.

**Objective LU6:** Provide for conveniently located public facilities such as schools, government offices, libraries and other governmental uses.

Policy LU6.1:

Include one category in the public uses classification, as follows:

**PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC**

Areas for public purposes such as schools, cemeteries, churches, libraries, government offices, utility facilities, and conservation uses.

Policy LU6.2:

Make public uses accessible by multiple modes of transportation whenever possible, and accommodate sidewalks, bus access and automobile access.

Policy LU6.3:

Except for conservation areas, locate public uses where development exists or where new development is anticipated. In areas where intensive development patterns are not established or planned, do not locate public uses other than conservation areas.

Policy LU6.4:

Locate elementary educational facilities so that the student enrollment is within a reasonable walking distance in urban areas. For elementary education facilities in non-urban areas, secondary education facilities, higher education centers, and specialized education facilities, provide locations which are easily accessible to the population of their service areas.

**Objective LU7:** Preserve areas for agricultural uses in order to maintain the agricultural heritage and economy of the township.

Policy LU7.1:

Include one category in the agricultural uses classification, as follows:

**AGRICULTURAL**

Land that is most suitable for cultivation of crops, the raising of livestock, or other types of related bona fide farm uses. This classification includes those areas which are, and will continue to be, used primarily for agricultural pursuits and held in reserve for future development. Within the Agriculture area, residential development should be limited to a density of one unit per 20 gross acres. Within the Agriculture area, land management activities associated with agricultural uses may be incompatible with residential development; however, such management activities are considered to be of primary importance in the Agricultural classification.

**Comment [PC8]:** [Note: Appropriate for A-1]

**Objective LU8: Gravel extraction**

Provide for land areas that can be used for the purpose of extracting sand, gravel or other materials, including accessory sorting areas.

Policy LU8.1:

Set standards for the removal of rock, sand and other minerals from the ground and the transportation of these materials within the Township. Monitor such activities so that they do not adversely affect adjacent land uses or groundwater quality or quantity.

**Objective LU9:** Coordinate proposed future land uses with the appropriate soil conditions, topography, and the availability of public facilities and services.

Policy LU9.1:

Direct development to areas where public facilities and services are available or are projected to be available.

Policy LU9.2:

Issue development orders after consideration of established levels of service for public facilities and services as defined in this plan.

**Objective LU10:** Establish systems to reduce or eliminate existing development and zoning districts that are inconsistent with the Land Use Element and Future Land Use Map. While protecting public safety and minimizing public expenditures on public facilities and services, permit residential development on vested lots of record established prior to this Comprehensive Plan which do not conform to density standards set forth in the Land Use Element.

**Policy LU10.1:**

Ensure that development existing at the time of adoption of this Comprehensive Plan that is inconsistent with the Future Land Use Element or Future Land Use Map will not be expanded, and that if the use of such development is discontinued for a period of more than six months, that it will not be reestablished.

**Policy LU10.2:**

As part of the development review process, identify any properties not having legal access to a city-, county- or state-maintained road, or to a privately-owned road constructed to meet engineering standards established for an approved private road, and convey this information to the county so that building permits will not be issued. Legal access includes:

1. Direct frontage on the road in accordance with minimum width standards established in local land development regulations.
2. Access by easement which meets applicable standards established in local land development regulations and which has been properly recorded in the public records of St. Clair Township or Butler County.

**Objective LU11:**

Adopt and enforce standards that conserve, appropriately use, and protect natural and historic resources. Protect natural resources by regulating land use in proximity to community water system wellfields and other environmentally sensitive lands, and by the management of stormwater runoff and drainage.

**Policy LU11.1:**

Implement procedures to evaluate development proposals in terms of goals, objectives and policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan that address the conservation, appropriate use and protection of natural resources.

**Policy LU11.2:**

Protect floodplains, wetlands, zones of influence, natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas, native vegetative communities and wildlife habitats by evaluating all proposals for development and redevelopment activities for their impacts on natural resources and source water during a review process, and subject such activities to the applicable land development regulations and source water protection program requirements.

**Policy LU11.3:**

Separate incompatible land uses and protect natural resources through the use of buffers as appropriate. Set forth the size, composition and location of buffers in the appropriate land development regulations, based on the proposed land use or development activity, and ensure their consistency with the policies of this Comprehensive Plan, including those in the natural systems element.

**Policy LU11.4:**

Protect historically significant properties. Consider sites listed by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office or listed in the National Register for local historically significant designation by the Township Trustees, and ensure that the alteration or demolition of such sites is consistent with the policies of this Comprehensive Plan, including those in the housing element.

**Objective LU12:** Promote compact development patterns and encourage the efficient use of public facilities.

Policy LU12.1:

Make decisions affecting the development of land consistent with the Future Land Use Element and Future Land Use Map.

Policy LU12.2:

Update development regulations, where necessary, to be consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Consider improvements to the township's land development regulation processes that focus on efficiency and effectiveness through streamlining.

Policy LU12.3:

Work with the appropriate Butler County agencies to consider a program to bring planned, permitted and zoned development capacity into alignment with existing and programmed capital improvements capacity, and in the process recognize and protect vested property rights.

Policy LU12.4:

Work with the Butler County Department of Development to promote innovative land development techniques which mix and distribute land uses to use public facilities in the most efficient manner possible.

Policy LU12.5:

Encourage infill development by providing for:

- a) Expedition of the permitting process for infill development proposals;
- b) Consideration of exceptions to requirements such as minimum lot sizes, minimum setbacks, or minimum parking requirements to provide for residential, affordable residential and economically viable commercial opportunities;
- c) The direction of public expenditures to areas of higher intensities and densities of use, thereby encouraging development to locate where public facilities are more readily and more economically available; or
- e) Coordination of uses with city, county, and state transportation facilities to provide adequate levels of service that support higher densities and intensities of development within or adjacent to currently developed areas.

**Objective LU13:** Ensure that suitable land is available for public facilities and utility facilities to support proposed development.

Policy LU13.1:

Work with the Butler Soil and Water Conservation District, the Butler County Department of Development, the Butler County Storm Water District, and the Butler County Engineer's Office to ensure that adequate land or facilities are available to meet the needs of new development in the following areas:

- a) Drainage;
- b) Storm water management;
- c) Parking;
- d) Open space;
- e) Road right-of-way;
- f) Public utility plant sites; and
- g) Schools.

Policy L13.2:

Require the set-aside, by dedication or easement, of land suitable to accommodate public utility facilities needed to service a proposed development.

Policy L13.3:

Permit public utilities needed to service existing and future land uses in all future land use classifications, provided they meet performance standards in the Comprehensive Plan and any applicable land development regulations.

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