



Ross Township Land Use Plan

November 14, 2023

Ross Township Goals and Objectives

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to help guide the community's future development over the next 10-20 years. Central to that guidance is the goals and objectives, which form the foundation of a long-term vision for Ross Township. The following are general definitions for goals and objectives:

- A **GOAL** is a desired end state or target that will contribute to attaining the community vision if pursued over the long term.
- An **OBJECTIVE** is a more specific (and often measurable) desired short-term outcome or benchmark that, in conjunction with other objectives, can cause the achievement of the goal.

The goals and objectives are broad statements of policy that will transcend leadership changes and are what the township can aim for during implementation efforts.

These goals and objectives should be read with an understanding that many of the statements are interrelated. For example, improving the overall transportation system or creating a community identity can contribute to the quality of life in the township. In cases where the township may find a conflict between certain goals (e.g., where a specific transportation project may conflict with the protection of natural resources), the township should not use this plan to choose one goal over another but rather should use it to find the best balance among the goals to help achieve the shared vision of the community.

While this plan focuses on land use recommendations, the following goals and objectives can serve as the broader decision-making principles for a variety of actions in the township, including future considerations for capital investments or projects.

Goal: The township will have an expanded, diverse tax base that balances the need to attract and maintain businesses while creating high-quality activity centers within the community. The township will work to:

1. Attract new businesses (commercial, office, and industrial) to the township while continuing to work with local businesses to ensure their long-term viability.
2. Encourage local entrepreneurial efforts.
3. Work with the City of Hamilton, where there is the ability to capitalize on mutually beneficial economic development.
4. Concentrate nonresidential economic development in designated areas along major roads and highways where suitable infrastructure is available or is expected to be available at the time of development.
5. Identify potential sites for new businesses and encourage the redevelopment of underutilized sites based on township and regional planning efforts.
6. Find methods of marketing the township that can help expand the tax base and promote the identity of the township.

Goal: The township will be a community of well-maintained neighborhoods. The township will work to:

1. Develop tools and programs to encourage and/or require the maintenance and upkeep of housing as the housing stock ages.
2. Continue to plan for parks or greenspace in and around major residential neighborhoods to allow for easy access by residents.
3. Continue to work cooperatively with township property owners to resolve issues related to zoning violations.

Goal: The township's rural atmosphere and expansive green areas will be protected for future generations. The township will work to:

1. Protect those areas and resources that contribute to the rural character of the township, including, but not limited to, wetlands, wooded areas, riparian corridors, and other natural resources.
2. Support the development of conservation subdivisions that protect the valued resources while establishing setback requirements to make the housing less visible from roads and adjacent development.
3. Focus on locating higher density and intensity developments within the areas of the township where public infrastructure, such as water and sewer, are readily available or will be at the time of development.

Goal: The township will be a key partner in facilitating the appropriate expansion of public water and sewer service and providing necessary services. The township will work to:

1. New public facilities should be situated in locations that best serve the population through accessibility and ease of services. As such, the township should identify areas that require sanitary sewer and/or improvements due to increased growth, maintenance issues, or necessity.
2. The township should meet or exceed minimum standards for police, fire, and emergency medical services in staffing and response times.
3. Work with appropriate agencies to identify solutions and planning efforts necessary to improve stormwater runoff control and minimize damage from flooding.
4. Promote the continued development of state-of-the-art telecommunications systems and other technologies.
5. Collaborate with surrounding local governments on infrastructure improvements to address economies of scale, resource management, and infrastructure utilization for mandated and other services provided to citizens.

Goal: The township will have adequate parks and open spaces to provide recreation opportunities to the residents and maintain open spaces to enhance the quality of life. The township will work to:

1. Develop a plan or general approach to parks, recreation, and open space that will evaluate the current facilities and make strategic recommendations about expanding and diversifying the programming and facilities parks within Ross Township.
2. Consider long-term approaches to permanent, public open spaces and parks, such as a green space or parks levy to raise funds for the purchase of open space. Such approaches could be explored as part of an overall park, recreation, and open space plan.
3. Allow for conservation subdivisions that incorporate smaller homes and lots or attached housing that may allow for the preservation of 60-75% of open space within a single development.

Goal: The township transportation system will be a model for other communities, addressing both vehicular and nonvehicular modes of transportation. The township will work to:

1. Develop partnerships with the county and state and any regional agencies and task forces to address the township's transportation needs.
2. Develop methods and incentives to encourage people to utilize alternative modes of transportation.
3. Maintain a high level of maintenance of the local roads to minimize the need for costly repairs.
4. Encourage the connection of new or existing roadways to improve the community's interconnectivity. Discourage the use of cul-de-sacs as they limit interconnectivity.
5. Ensure that there is adequate access to all properties for emergency vehicles.
6. Look for avenues to expand sidewalk and bike trail connectivity.
7. Support the engineering and construction of county and regional bike trails and multi-use paths.

Land Use Plan

The future land use element aims to promote the community's values and further the goals and objectives. The Future Land Use Map considers the land use-related recommendations of the previous with some minor updates for clarification purposes and to adjust land use boundaries based on the past decade of development.

The land use element is the basis for physical planning in the township. The future land use categories and accompanying map are the basic building blocks for this land use plan. They provide the geographic representation of the kind of growth and development that is appropriate in various locations, as well as defining the preferred intensity for development.

The future land use categories and the Future Land Use Plan Map are the principal tools the county and township have in making zoning decisions; however, the land use should not be interpreted to be the same as zoning. The land use plan serves as the long-term vision for physical development and creates expectations for what should occur, while zoning is the legislative tool that regulates future development. The adoption of this land use plan will not automatically change any zoning in the township.

The Future Land Use Plan Map on the following page is intended to be general in nature; land use boundaries are not specific. This plan is intended as a flexible and general guideline; it is not intended as a zoning map. Future land uses are shown in the categories described on the pages following the Future Land Use Map.

Incorporated Municipalities

Land areas within the political boundaries of the City of Hamilton or the Village of Millville.

Development Service Boundary

Areas proposed to develop with higher levels of urban services. The areas within the Development Service Boundaries can be served by gravity sewers to either the Wade Mill or Queen Acres Treatment Plants. Sanitary sewer lift stations for new development are prohibited so as to maintain the areas outside of the development service boundary for low-density residential or agricultural uses.

Developmentally Sensitive Land

Areas with one or more physical constraints can potentially limit development, including but not limited to 100-year flood plains.

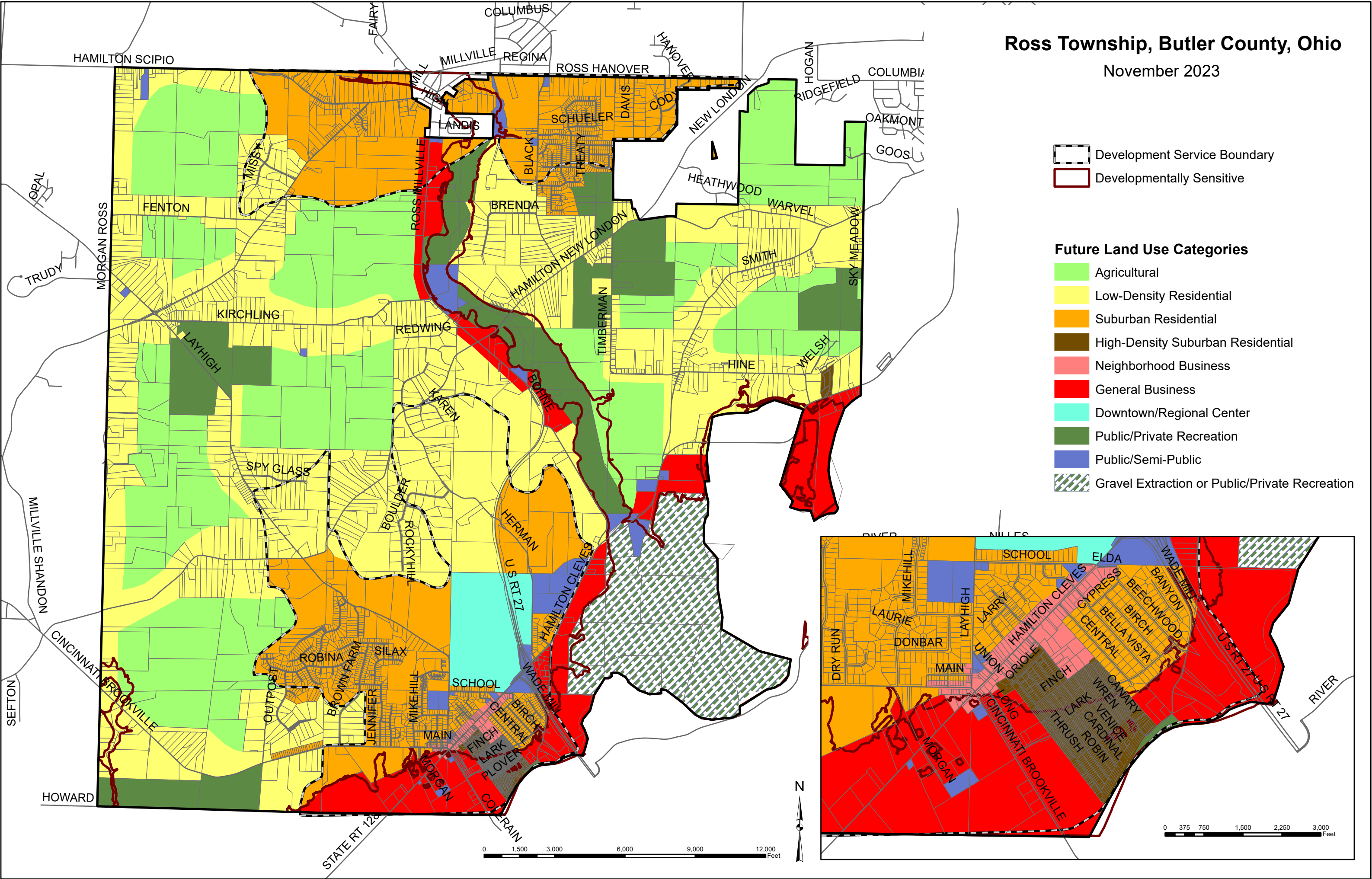
Agricultural

Land that is most suitable for the cultivation of crops, the raising of livestock, or other types of related farm uses. Land may also be suitable for rural residential conservation developments. The conservation development shall consist of 50 percent open space at a gross density no greater than 0.5 homes per acre.

Ross Township, Butler County, Ohio

November 2023

- Development Service Boundary
- Developmentally Sensitive
- Future Land Use Categories**
- Agricultural
- Low-Density Residential
- Suburban Residential
- High-Density Suburban Residential
- Neighborhood Business
- General Business
- Downtown/Regional Center
- Public/Private Recreation
- Public/Semi-Public
- Gravel Extraction or Public/Private Recreation



Low-Density Residential

Areas proposed for single-family residential uses at a gross density no greater than 1.0 dwelling units per acre.

Suburban Residential

Land areas proposed for single-family residential uses at a gross density of no more than 1.9 dwelling units per acre that are generally provided with higher levels of urban services.

High-Density Suburban Residential

Land areas proposed for single-family residential or multi-family residential land uses at a gross density of no more than 6 dwelling units per acre.

Neighborhood Business

Areas characterized by small-scale office, retail, and service establishments serving the needs of residents in the neighborhood.

General Business

- Commercial, retail, service, light industrial, and office uses serving a larger geographic area and population that are developed according to a unified site plan taking advantage of shared amenities, including parking, vehicle and pedestrian access, signage and landscaping.
- Light industrial areas should be limited to areas of the township east of U.S. 27, south of S.R. 128 and areas west of Cincinnati-Brookville Road.

Gravel Extraction

Land areas that are worked or proposed to be worked in the near future for the purpose of extracting sand, gravel or other materials, including accessory sorting areas.

Public/Private Recreation

Areas 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, or areas most suitable, due to their environmental characteristics, to be left in their natural state as undeveloped areas or as natural preserves.

Public/Semi-Public

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

Downtown/Regional Center

- This area will serve as a central focal point for the community, containing a mixture of commercial, office, retail, recreation, housing and public uses, which are developed according to a unified pedestrian-oriented development plan taking advantage of shared amenities, including parking, vehicle and pedestrian access, signage and landscaping. Buildings shall be constructed utilizing high-quality materials and design standards. A major collector road with controlled access points will connect Layhigh Road to State Route 128. The major collector road will feed to a clearly defined "village center" surrounded by various uses, including civic, commercial, offices, shops, restaurants, and housing. No more than one-third of those units should be multi-family unless additional units are oriented to retirees, empty-nesters, or assisted-living households. In this case, the percentage of multi-family units may be higher. The maximum density for multi-family areas shall be eight units per acre unless such units are designated for assisted living facilities or nursing homes. Housing units shall feature individual entrances and individual attached or detached garages, except for housing units designated for assisted living facilities or nursing homes.
- Due to the highly visible location, buildings should use dual front facades toward Herman Road and U.S. 27 and the major collector road and U.S. 27 or provide significant mounding and landscaping to provide a pleasant appearance from either roadway.
- Commercial, office, and multi-family uses should be concentrated at the "village center," State Route 128, and U.S. 27. More intensely developed areas should transition to lower-density housing moving away from the village center.
- Open space within the entire property categorized as "Downtown Regional Center" should be 35 percent.
- Buildings should be constructed of materials such as brick, stone, wood, or cultured materials that resemble brick, stone or wood (not vinyl), on at least 50% of each façade.
- The "village center" portion of the Downtown Regional Center shall be constructed utilizing a unified architectural plan including a gridiron street pattern, on-street parking, mixed uses within and between buildings, parking lots toward the rear of buildings, street lighting and sidewalks. Development of the wooded northern portion of the property shall be limited to large-lot detached housing, which preserves not less than 50 percent of the existing wooded area as an open space conservation area. It is envisioned that the site should contain a mix of residential uses ranging from low-density estates to higher-density multi-family uses. Total gross density should not exceed 2.8 units per acre. Heights of residential structures should take into consideration aesthetic qualities and density for the different types of residential structures, as well as fire protection capacity in the community.