

# *THE CITY OF CHARDON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE*

*January 2019*

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# Acknowledgments...

*...To those city officials, residents, and business representatives who contributed to this Comprehensive Plan Update.*

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# Introduction

## *A. Purpose of the Plan*

For decades Chardon has been diligent in planning for its future!!! This Plan Update is no exception, another step in our ongoing planning efforts which included a 1980 comprehensive plan; a 1996 update which was written but never adopted; and the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update. This update is intended to re-evaluate the City's vision and policies by reflecting on those existing conditions and trends – both regional and local, and the community's aspirations and needs that may have changed since 2008. The results of this evaluation will represent a further refinement of the City's vision for the future, with policies and guidelines for making land use and other decisions in keeping with that vision. The Plan also provides recommendations for how the City can implement the identified policies in order to help achieve the updated goals. The complete Plan Update not only includes this document but a compendium of other policy documents that are relevant to Chardon's future which are listed in the Appendix.

## *B. Planning Process*

To achieve the intended purposes of this study, the City retained CT Consultants to provide professional planning expertise, experience and guidance, as well as to facilitate meaningful citizen participation and input. Essential to the process were regularly scheduled meetings with the Mayor, City Council and the Planning Commission which were advertised and open to the public. In addition, two Public Forums were held, during which Chardon residents and business representatives were able to provide comments as the plan was formulated.

This Plan Update should not be ignored or allowed to become outdated. It should be used regularly as a guide to the City's planning and decision making. To be effective and useful for more than a short time, it should be viewed like a living thing, constantly growing and adapting as it and the City mature.

To remain useful and relevant over time, the data, goals, policies and context should all be reviewed periodically, and amended if and when warranted by changed conditions or circumstances. It should be the responsibility of the Planning Commission and City Council to jointly establish a structured process to re-evaluate the Plan every two or three years, and to conduct a formal update every seven to ten years – which the City has routinely done! A third consideration would be to formulate an annual Action Plan, guided by the Comprehensive Plan, but based on up-to-date City priorities and other factors.

## *C. Historical Context*

History's impact on the form, character, and significance of Chardon began when its site was made the future County seat in 1808. With that one act, it was determined that there would be a community in this location, and that community would be different from others within the County in substantial ways. From the beginning, public works formed the basis for early development. A courthouse was required, and given the early settlers' predilection to replicate their familiar New England background, it would be built on a central "green," surrounded by all of the other essential public buildings required for a new community. The result was Chardon Square which continues to be the determinant development feature, the focus of community activity and identity.

## *Introduction*

By virtually all who participated in the process, the Square is clearly the City's single most significant asset.

For nearly 200 years little changed in Chardon's form, function, or character. Even when relatively recent changes began to occur, the essential aspects remained – the 'green' and County courthouse, surrounded by City and County government buildings, a public school, a public library, shops, and supporting activities. Over those same years, however, a lot was changing elsewhere in the region. Cleveland was growing and the first ring suburbs, inner ring suburbs, and next tier suburbs merged into continuous suburban development.

But for several reasons, including transportation networks, natural features, community barriers, cultural migration patterns and others, the suburban expansion of Northeast Ohio area has not engulfed Chardon. It has passed to the north along Lake Erie, to the southeast through Solon and beyond, and for the most part, in between more intensive development stopped near the western County line. As a result, Chardon continues, unlike so many other early settlements, to remain a relatively self-contained and 'complete' small town. And, as much as possible and reasonable, Chardon has the determination to stay that way.

In 1980, Chardon officially accepted a Comprehensive Plan prepared by Burgess & Nipple, Limited. One of that report's most significant policies was a decision by the City to actively pursue both industrial and commercial economic development and job creation – beyond levels previously targeted – like numerous other communities in the region making similar decisions, to achieve their proportionate share of the economic "pie." Equally important was a clear concern over maintaining

a balance between the 'urban' and 'rural' nature of the community, most likely with some recognition of the potential conflict between these two objectives. These two fundamental principles – expressed in the 2008 Plan - remain the guiding forces as Chardon moves forward.

For any community to direct its future, it is first necessary to understand its past, and how that history has shaped existing conditions and current trends in its growth and development. Knowing where you are and how you got there is the foundation upon which to build goals and policies for the future. This is particularly true for Chardon, where so many of the community's basic characteristics are a direct result of its long history and recent past, as well as the regional context in which these events and trends occurred. The following analysis, therefore, identifies and evaluates those conditions the community believes to be significant factors in formulating its plans for the future. Included are Chardon's physical and functional place within Northeast Ohio, demographic trends, existing development characteristics, infrastructure, and the City's current land use and zoning patterns.

# Part I- Background Data and Trends

## A. Population- Chardon

Chardon's population has been stable since 2000 after seeing strong growth in the 1970s and 1990s. Chardon's population is getting older, which is typical of the region. The population over 65 has been steadily increasing while the population under 18 has been decreasing. The group nearing retirement age (55 to 64) has increased by 64% since 2000. Because of these demographic shifts the number of school-aged children is also decreasing.

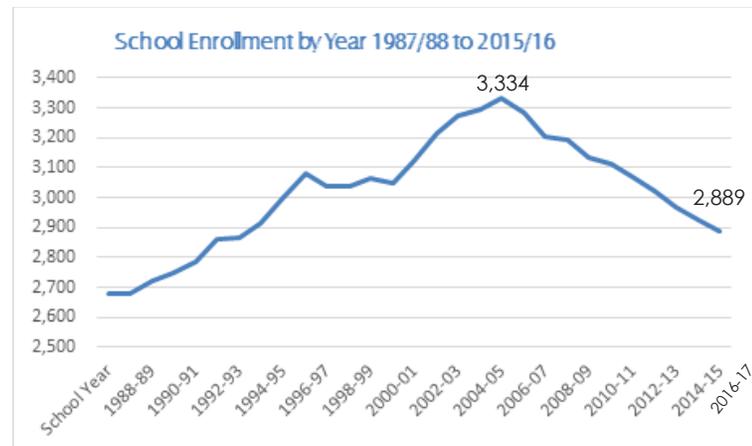
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2016 (est)
Population	3,991	4,434	4,446	5,156	5,148	5,194
Percent Change		11.10%	0.03%	16.00%	-0.20%	0.90%

Household size is decreasing. This means that, in the context of stable population, the total demand for housing units should be increasing.

The changing composition of households, trending to an older population and fewer people per household, may increase demand for certain types of housing units such as townhomes and apartments, while decreasing demand for other types, such as large, single-family homes.

	2000	2010	2016 (est)	Pct Change 2000 to 2016
Population	5,156	5,148	5,194	0.7%
Pop Under 18	1,283	1,210	1,192	-7.1%
	25%	24%	23%	
Pop 55 to 64	465	625	762	63.9%
	9%	12%	15%	
Pop 65 & Over	814	912	940	15.5%
	16%	18%	18%	

	2000	2010	2016 (est)
Median Age	37.4	41.1	40.8
Avg Household Size	2.35	2.21	2.22



# Part I- Background Data and Trends

## B. Population- Region

TABLE 4 - Regional Population Trends (9-county region)			
	2000	2010	2016 (est)
Population	3,170,947	3,092,249	3,068,881
Percent Change		-2.50%	-0.80%

TABLE 5 - Regional Population Trends			
	2000	2010	2016 (est)
Medina County	151,095	172,332	175,543
Portage County	152,061	161,419	161,796
Lorain County	284,664	301,356	304,091
Geauga County	90,895	93,389	94,020
Lake County	227,511	230,041	229,266
Ashtabula County	102,728	101,497	99,175
Summit County	542,899	541,781	541,372
Trumbull County	225,116	210,312	204,908
Cuyahoga County	1,393,978	1,280,122	1,258,710

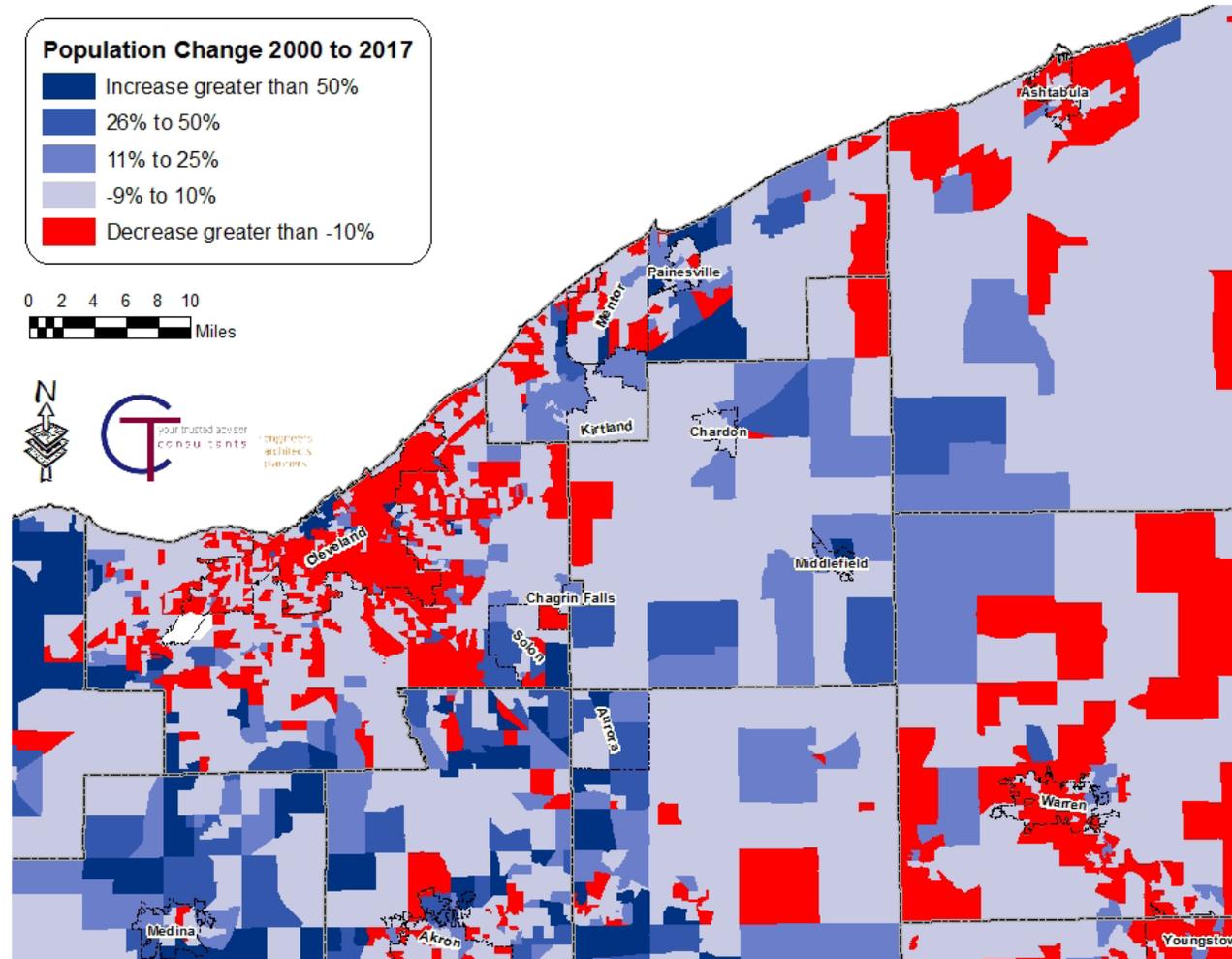
Regional population in a 9-county area surrounding Geauga County is declining slightly.

Regional population change is unevenly distributed. Median, Portage, Lorain, and Geauga County have added population. Lake, Ashtabula and Summit County have been stable or slightly decreasing. Cuyahoga (Cleveland) and Trumbull (Youngstown) have lost significant population.

TABLE 6 - Regional Population Trends (Percent Change)		
	2000 to 2010	2010 to 2016 (est)
Medina County	14.1%	1.9%
Portage County	6.2%	0.2%
Lorain County	5.9%	0.9%
Geauga County	2.7%	0.7%
Lake County	1.1%	-0.3%
Ashtabula County	-1.2%	-2.3%
Summit County	-0.2%	-0.1%
Trumbull County	-6.6%	-2.6%
Cuyahoga County	-8.2%	-1.7%

# Part I- Background Data and Trends

Map 1- Regional Population Trends



The trend of regional migration to the outer areas continues. Map 1 shows areas that lost population between 2000 and 2017 in red, and those that gained population in blue. Urban core communities and inner-ring suburbs continue to decline while outer-ring suburbs and exurbs are, for the most part, growing. However, the dominant, regional trend remains population growth in suburbs, especially those with good freeway access.

# Part I- Background Data and Trends

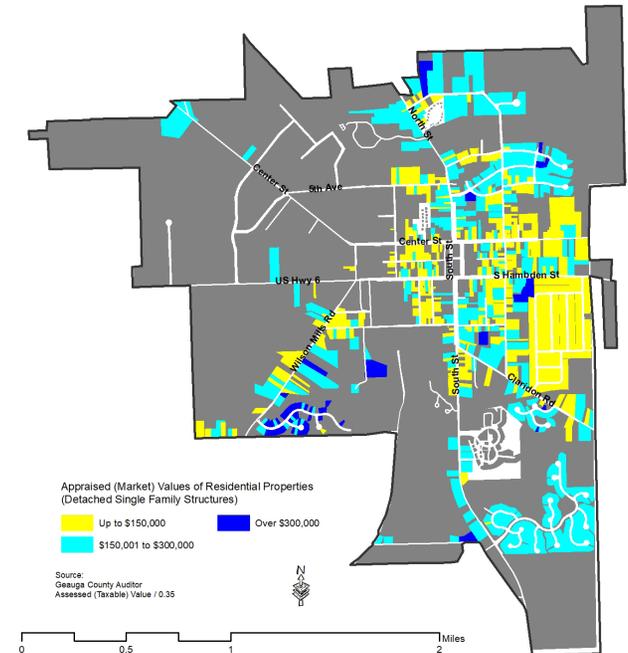
## C. Housing

TABLE 7 - Regional Housing Unit Trends					
	2000	2010	2016(est)	Percent Change	
				2000 to 2010	2010 to 2016 (est)
Geauga County	32,805	36,574	36,733	11.5%	0.4%
Ashtabula County	43,792	46,099	45,850	5.3%	-0.5%
Cuyahoga County	616,903	621,763	618,673	0.8%	-0.5%
Lake County	93,487	101,202	101,885	8.3%	0.7%
Lorain County	111,368	127,036	128,766	14.1%	1.4%
Medina County	56,793	69,181	70,709	21.8%	2.2%
Portage County	60,096	67,472	68,106	12.3%	0.9%
Summit County	230,880	245,109	245,164	6.2%	0.0%
Trumbull County	95,117	96,163	95,466	1.1%	-0.7%
Chardon	2,271	2,457	2,506(a)	8.2%	2.0%

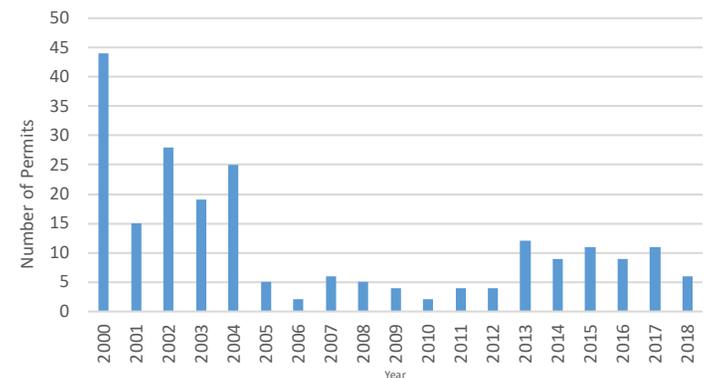
(a) Based on residential building permits issued between 2010 and 2016

Home values in Chardon tend to be lower near the Square, and higher towards the edges of town (Map 2). The average County appraised value of a single family home in 2017 was \$164,805 compared to the average sale price of a single family home in 2017 at \$176,000.

Map 2- Residential Property Values



Permits for New Single Family Residences



# Part I- Background Data and Trends

## D. Economic Development and Taxes

Residential tax rates in Chardon are low. Table 8 shows property tax rates for selected communities sorted by 2017 tax rates, from highest to lowest.

Garfield Heights has the highest tax rate. Communities with the lowest tax rates were Huntsburg Township in 2005 and Claridon Township in 2017. Data on tax rates for those two communities was not available for both years.

Chardon's ratio of residential to non-residential land uses is quite favorable from the perspective of tax base composition. 38% of the total assessed value of land in Chardon comes from commercial and industrial uses – up from 36% in 2004. This ratio is significantly better for Chardon than for many peer communities, and for Geauga County as a whole.



Table 8 - Residential Tax Rates In Surrounding Communities				
County	Community	Effective Tax Rate		Percent Change
		2005	2017	2005 to 2017
Cuyahoga	Garfield Heights	---	136.9	na
Cuyahoga	Shaker Heights	96.8	134	38%
Cuyahoga	Chagrin Falls	69.7	97.7	40%
Lake	Kirtland Hills	66	78.9	20%
Geauga	Bainbridge Twp- Kenston SD	65.5	76.9	17%
Cuyahoga	Solon	65.2	74.7	15%
Lake	Painesville City	57.1	78.7	38%
Cuyahoga	Mayfield Village	55.9	81.8	46%
Lake	Willoughby Hills	51.1	75.4	48%
Lake	Mentor City	50.4	62.4	24%
Cuyahoga	Brooklyn Hts - Cuyahoga Hts SD	48.8	60.2	23%
Geauga	Chardon City	45.4	62.2	37%
Lake	North Perry Village	42.7	54.9	29%
Geauga	Huntsburg Twp	39.4	---	na
Geauga	Claridon Twp - Berkshire SD	---	43.9	na

SD = School District

## Part I- Background Data and Trends

Table 9 - Assessed Property Valuations (Ag/Res/Com/Ind)						
	Total Valuation		Non-Residential Valuation (Commercial/Industrial)			
	2004	2016	\$		% of Total	
			2004	2016	2004	2016
Chardon	\$130,515,510	\$153,920,180	\$46,544,230	\$51,986,330	36%	38%
Painesville	\$209,102,130	\$186,402,010	\$59,952,090	\$59,562,650	29%	32%
Mentor	\$1,405,566,960	\$1,415,143,800	\$380,414,630	\$399,921,250	21%	28%
Willoughby Hills	\$210,151,060	\$243,124,640	\$69,942,040	\$52,862,540	26%	22%
Aurora	\$508,269,190	\$602,500,950	\$93,934,390	\$104,314,310	18%	11%
Geauga County	\$2,504,108,020	\$2,969,681,250	\$262,615,460	\$331,581,590	10%	11%
Lake County	\$5,464,031,350	\$5,480,146,800	\$1,199,415,990	\$1,133,418,960	22%	21%

Table 10 - Chardon's Commercial/Industrial Assessed Values - 2016		
	\$	% of Combined
Commercial	\$41,303,110	79.4%
Industrial	\$10,683,220	20.6%
C/I Combined	\$51,986,330	100.0%

Source: Geauga, Portage and Lake County Auditor records.

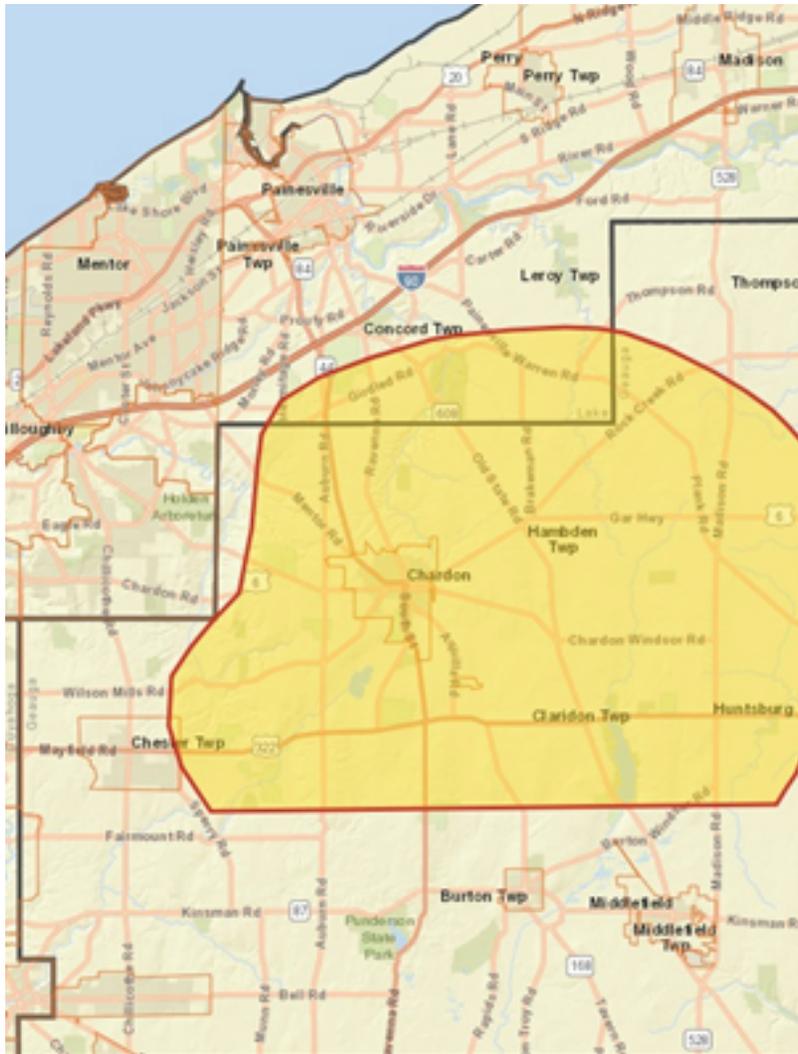
The relatively high proportion of assessed values provided by commercial and industrial land uses lowers the tax burden on City residents.

Seventy-nine (79%) percent of the City's commercial/industrial tax base is derived from retail and office uses. Therefore, the health of the City's retail sector is deeply related to the community's overall economic health.

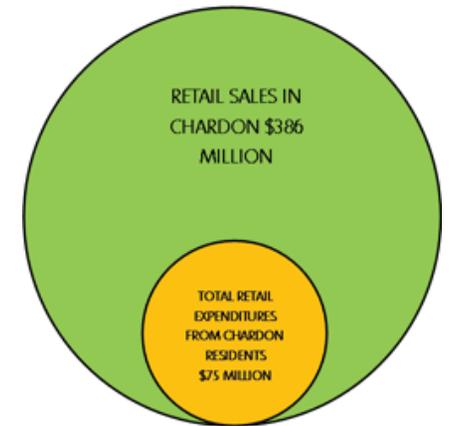


## Part I- Background Data and Trends

Map 3- Chardon Retail Trade Area



Chardon is the primary retail hub for a large, geographic area. The estimated Retail Trade Area from which the City draws shoppers is shown on Map 3. As a consequence of serving such a large area, Chardon is able to support a strong, commercial tax base. The approximate spending power of households living in the City (Retail Potential) is \$75 million while retail sales in the City are \$386 million. This is illustrated by the two circles above. The area in green indicates the portion of retail sales in Chardon that are the result of visitors coming from outside of the City to shop.



When the 2008 plan was developed, the spending power of households in the trade area exceeded total retail sales which meant that Chardon residents and others in the trade area were doing a considerable portion of their shopping elsewhere. The Plan predicted that an increase of approximately 1,600 households above the 2002 number would be required to maintain adequate market support for Chardon's retailers.

The Retail Trade Area had 13,231 households in 2016 and 11,509 households in 2000, an increase of 1,722.

## Part I- Background Data and Trends

Table 11 - Households In Retail Trade Area			
2000	2002	2016	Change 2000 to 2016
11,509	11,998(a)	13,231	1,722

(a) Trade area households estimated in the 2008 Plan

Table 12 - Retail Sales, Spending Capacity and <u>Surplus</u> (Chardon), 2017			
	Retail Sales	Potential Retail Expenditure	Retail Surplus
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$385,935,308	\$75,126,591	\$310,808,717
Total Retail	\$364,711,938	\$67,851,140	\$296,860,798
Total Food and Drink	\$21,223,370	\$7,275,451	\$13,974,919

Table 13 - Retail Sales, Spending Capacity and <u>Gap</u> (Trade Area), 2017			
	Retail Sales	Potential Retail Expenditure	Retail Gap
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$533,135,209	\$575,265,591	\$42,130,382
Total Retail	\$504,668,989	\$519,841,490	\$15,172,501
Total Food and Drink	\$28,466,220	\$55,424,102	\$26,957,882

*The health of the city's retail sector is deeply related to the city's overall economic health.*

These figures align with the positive retail gap in the trade area (see Table 13) and the regional population growth trends (see Map 1).

This means that there may be opportunities for some retail growth within the trade area, provided population and income continue to grow.



# Part I- Background Data and Trends

## *E. Land Use*

Chardon's current zoning map and district requirements recognize both the City's long history and more recent policy decisions. The C-2 Traditional/Classical Commercial District around Chardon Square and along the southern end of Washington Street reflects a commitment to protecting the City's physical, cultural and retail history within those areas. The C-1 Restricted Business District located primarily along Route 6 to the west permits commercial use of land along major highways without compromising the community's character. In part, the C-3 General Commercial District recognizes existing commercial businesses within the western edges of Original Chardon that are not necessarily consistent with the historic character of retail areas zoned C-2. The portion encompassing a majority of the land west of Original Chardon is intended to provide for the more contemporary shopping opportunities and increased economic development, at a time when a dramatically increased number of other communities are also deciding to seek the same benefits.

The R-4 High Density Residential District attempts to recognize and legitimize a significant existing neighborhood, as well as to facilitate specific alternative housing needs. The R-1 Single-Family Residence District can be seen as a way to include another housing alternative within the City, which would also bridge the gap between traditional Chardon lot sizes and the considerably larger new lots being developed just beyond the City's borders.



The R-3 district reflects efforts by the City to accommodate the demand for additional housing, but affording greater flexibility in order to produce developments more sensitive to the environment, site characteristics and city policies.

The R-2 Low Density Residence District is an anomaly in some respects. It is the predominant residential zoning category within the older sections of Original Chardon, but a significant number of existing properties in these older areas do not meet the district's minimum lot size requirement. At the same time it is the predominant zoning for the vast residential areas of the City that have not yet been developed.

# Part I- Background Data and Trends

Map 4- Land Use

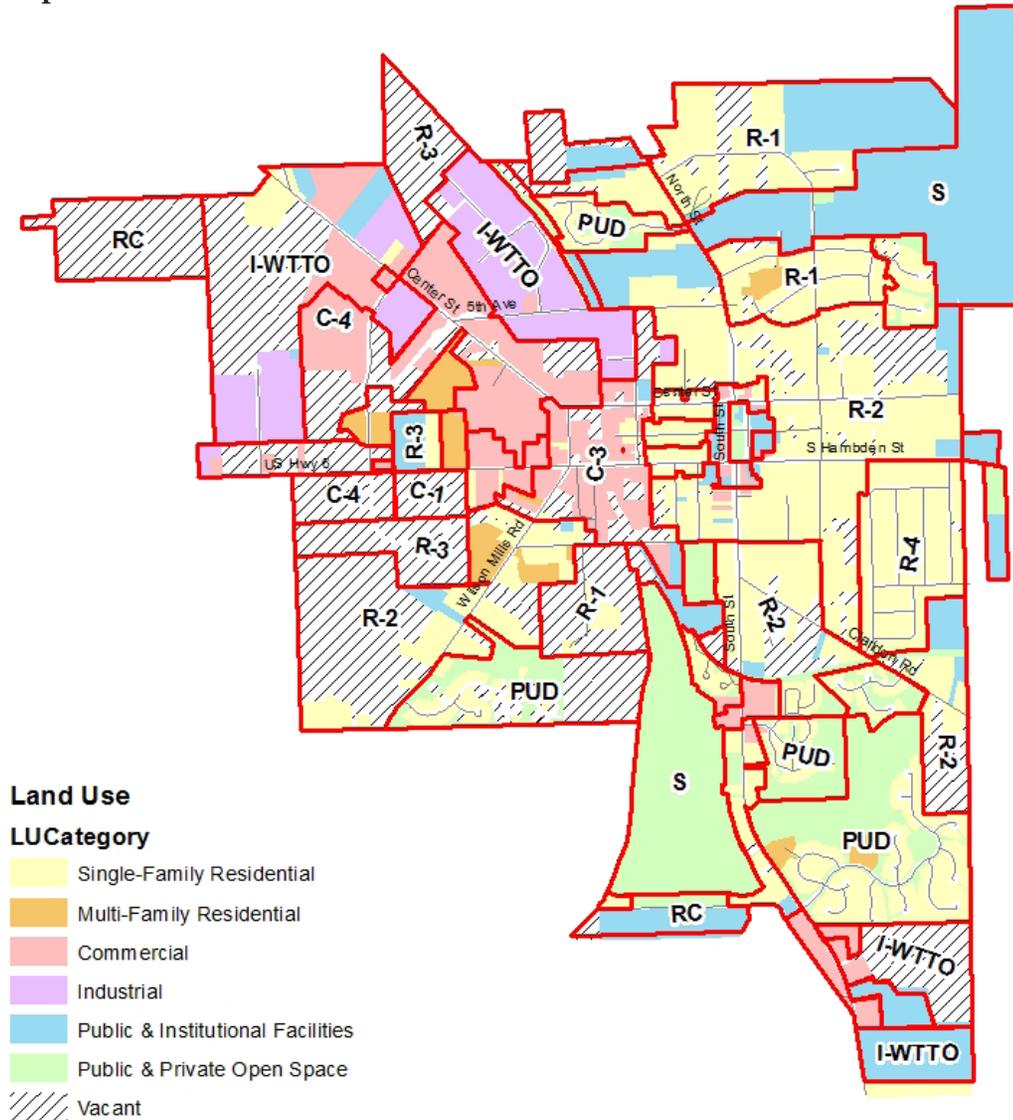


Table 14 - Vacant Land Available for Development	
Zoned Residential	386.9 acres
Zoned Commercial	109.0 acres
Zoned Industrial	74.7 acres
<b>Total Available for Development</b>	<b>570.5 acres</b>

# Part I- Background Data and Trends

## F. Summary of Key Observations

1. Chardon's population is stable; is aging; and the size of households is declining – all of these facts are typical of the region.
2. Regional population is also stable. Growth and housing development that is occurring in suburban and exurban areas is being off-set by declines in the older, more fully developed communities.
3. Population decline, alone, is not necessarily a negative factor.
4. Residential property values, not surprisingly, are higher among the newer homes towards the periphery of town and lower in the center of the community, close to the square, where homes are older.
5. New home construction declined precipitously starting in 2005 and, like most communities, continued at low levels during the recession. Since 2013 residential development has rebounded to a constant annual rate of 8-13 new homes per year.
6. Residential property taxes are relatively low compared to many other communities considered in the area.
7. The ratio of commercial/industrial land valuation to residential land valuation is high, compared to selected communities in the area and to Geauga County as a whole. Commercial valuation (retail and offices) is 82% of the total non-residential valuation.
8. Chardon continues as the retail hub of a larger geographic area.
9. The total retail sales in Chardon is greater than the spending capacity (retail potential) within the City. The total retail sales in the "Trade Area," centered on Chardon, is about the same as spending capacity of the trade area.
10. The City's inventory of vacant land has decreased since 2008 from 907 to 570 vacant acres – about 20% of the land area. Some of this land, however has environmental and topographical constraints that will prevent full development.

## Part II- The Planning Context

### A. Key Findings from the Conversational Interviews

The 2008 Plan states “Chardon is fortunate to have entered into this planning process with a relatively clear and consensus vision for its future.” It became clear, during the interviews, that this statement is as true in 2018 as it was in 2008. There was a high degree of unanimity surrounding the goals, aspirations, and concerns shared by the stakeholders.

The conversational interviews were conducted on July 17th, 18th, and 24th of 2018 with the purpose of helping to identify, in broad perspectives, the subjects that are of greatest concern and interest to the community. The results of this process will help shape the conversation in the review meetings with Council, Planning Commission, and the public.

The interviews were approximately 30 to 45 minutes each, and involved a one-on-one or two-on-one sit down with each stakeholder and a planner from CT Consultants. A total of 34 persons were interviewed. The stakeholders were residents, business owners, developers, public officials and city employees representing a wide diversity of viewpoints. It is the intention that having this wide range of opinions expressed at the beginning of the plan update process, will ensure the conversation is inclusive of the broadest possible range of perspectives to help guide the City’s future. While the following is a summary of the key points made, a full list of the comments, without names, is included in the Appendix. As a group, the following key items stood out:

**The Square.** Virtually everyone concurred that Chardon Square is the City’s key asset; it’s the living, beating heart of this

community. Preserving and building upon this asset is a top priority.

**Growth.** Chardon wants and needs to grow. Stakeholders cherish the ‘Small Town U.S.A.’ feel of the City. There is general agreement that an increase in population and housing units would help support other community objectives and such growth would not be incompatible with maintaining Chardon’s essential character.

**Housing.** A preponderance of those interviewed stated that greater housing diversity, both in type (e.g. senior; smaller size; apartments) and in price point, is needed. Higher density near the Square is preferred. There was broad support, although not unanimous agreement, that new apartments, appropriately designed and located, would be acceptable. Many acknowledged that housing is a component of economic development similar to the traditional non-residential development.

**Community Facilities.** While expressed in a variety of ways, expanding public and private supporting facilities (i.e. public recreation, private recreation, completing sidewalks, small and more independent retail stores, a consolidated school/rec center, an expanded menu of events on the Square) was mentioned by virtually everyone.



## Part II- The Planning Context

**Bike-Ped Transport Network.** Strengthening the pedestrian and bicycle circulation network remains a priority.

**Economically Viable & Self-Sustaining Community.** While it was not raised in all discussions, the existing, and high level of public service (e.g. police, leaf pickup, snow plowing) is one of the best features of living in Chardon. The community needs to plan to ensure that City revenues are sufficient to continue supporting this level of service over the long haul.

**Schools.** The quality of Chardon’s schools is seen as very good, but the physical condition of school buildings are in need of upgrades. Finding the money to build a new school campus is seen as a high priority.

### *B. Strengths and Opportunities*

Through the process the city has determined that the following summary of strengths, opportunities and challenges should guide the future direction.

Table 15 - Strengths and Opportunities	
Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chardon Square</li> <li>• Service Center Hub</li> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Sense of Community</li> <li>• High Level of Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Development &amp; Population Growth</li> <li>• Reinvention/Evolution of Area West of Square</li> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Sense of Community</li> </ul>

**Chardon’s Unique Competitive Advantage.** Chardon is rare as one of a few independent, complete, ‘small towns’ in Northeast Ohio. It is unique in regards to the scale of it’s downtown and

suite of urban amenities AND in that it is located amidst a truly rural context. This status as a true ‘small town with urban amenities in the country’ is an asset to build upon to keep Chardon regionally-competitive as it seeks to attract and retain population.

**Chardon Square.** The Square is universally regarded as Chardon’s beating heart and greatest asset. The underutilized east side, with land available for structure parking, presents an opportunity to build upon and increase the Square’s level of activity.

There is an opportunity to add apartments, both above west side buildings and as part of a potential redevelopment of the east side. This increase in dwelling units can work in concert with other strategies to promote the vitality of the Square and the community at large. Preserving county employment is a high priority.

**Housing Development & Population Growth.** Permitting greater density of housing units, and some mixed-uses within walking distance of the Square and/or permitting apartments in strategic locations as a form of economic development, to support of existing retail and other public/private facilities and amenities.

**Service Center Hub.** Further expand Chardon’s status as the ‘service center’ for the surrounding area by fostering the development of more jobs, restaurants, and entertainment options.

A promising trend related to this opportunity is continued residential development in surrounding, rural parts of Geauga County.

## Part II- The Planning Context

**Industrial & Commercial Development.** Although there is a limited amount of such land, and an uncertain market for industrial development, the land that remains represents an opportunity for expanding the tax base and jobs.

**Recreation.** Many stakeholders observed that improving the physical condition of school buildings and addressing the desire for expanded recreation opportunities could be achieved simultaneously by including a City recreation center with a new school campus.



### C. Key Issues

**Limited Land Remaining for Development.** The total quantity of vacant, developable land has decreased since 2008. Once this supply is exhausted, the City's ability to expand its tax base through greenfield development will be more limited.

**Older Retail Experiencing Some Obsolescence.** Aging retail properties, i.e. west of Square along Water Street and Center Street out towards Cherry Ave, generally experience some obsolescence making it harder to compete in the regional market. Some vacancies exist, and the physical appearance of many properties is considered sub-optimal. Even newer retail uses have a useful life cycle. It behooves the city to monitor these facilities to assure, from regulatory, marketing, functional and maintenance perspectives, that these facilities remain as competitive as practicable.

**Housing Options.** Housing choices that appeal to singles, young families, and the elderly are limited. These include apartments, smaller homes on smaller lots, and units with first floor master bedrooms. To this end some new single-family homes should be developed in the \$175,000 to \$275,000 range compared to the prevailing higher values in more recent single family developments.

**Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility.** The sidewalk network is incomplete. It can be difficult to walk from outlying parts of the city to the town center. The bicycle network is, similarly, incomplete. The existing road and trail infrastructure is not conducive to cycling from one side of the City to the other for less-experienced and younger riders.

**Recreation.** Although proximity to Geauga County Metroparks, Maple Highlands Bike Trail, and events on the Square were all seen as strengths, there were a significant number of observations that the community needs more recreation opportunities for persons of all ages.

## Part III- Plan Goals

Chardon is fortunate to have entered into this planning process with a relatively clear and consensus vision for its future. Following extensive review by city officials and the public at large, as well as the evaluation of existing conditions presented in Section I, that vision has been refined and organized into a set of specific goals. It is these goals that provide the foundation and general framework for the community policies, and implementation strategies presented in Sections IV and V.

### A. Maintain and enhance Chardon as a “complete Small Town:”

- a. Clearly defined,
- b. Economically viable,
- c. Self-sustaining in a manner that is commensurate with the community’s existing image of itself.

Comment: This continues as an overarching objective that is needed to remain ‘economically viable,’ ‘self-sustaining,’ generate tax revenue, and maintain the current level of services expected. Since in recent years, the city has seen less growth, it needs to emphasize the need for development to assure that tax revenue is sustained.

### B. Preserve, reinforce, and grow Chardon Square as the City’s real and emotional “Center:”

- a. As the focus of the community’s identity, including historic character,
- b. As the traditional seat of City and County government,
- c. With viable “main street” businesses, and surrounding housing.

Comment: There is a general consensus that improving the Square is not fully-realized but is necessary to be the real (economically) and symbolic center of the community.

### C. Re-establish the area surrounding Chardon Square as “Original Chardon,” including its own historic function and character, particularly in support of, and along street corridors leading to Chardon Square.

Comment: While suitable zoning regulations were adopted in 2012, the area surrounding the Square is little-changed since 2008. This continues as an important priority for the City; to be aggressively pursued on multiple fronts (marketing, land assembly, architectural controls enforcement, and administrative coordination) including offering financial assistance/incentives to achieve results.

### D. Provide adequate housing options for all segments of the population:

- a. Diverse in price, size, form, and location;
- b. Sufficient to support Chardon Square and Original Chardon retail; and
- c. Generally distributed with density directly related to distance from the “Center.”

Comment: Similar to ‘Goal C’, to achieve this goal requires attention from many perspectives.

## Part III- Plan Goals

E. Provide retail development, and support existing retail, that:

- a. Corresponds to realistic market needs,
- b. Supports the goals for Chardon Square and Original Chardon,
- c. Adequately serves Chardon residents, and
- d. Takes economic advantage of the broader surrounding market.

Comment: While this continues as an important goal, this objective has been “substantially” met. Major investment over the last decade and a half has taken advantage of the broader surrounding market. The challenge is to continue to do so.

F. Serve as the “service center” for the low-density and rural areas in the surrounding townships, functioning as their primary source for shopping, jobs, county government concerns, restaurants and entertainment.

Comment: With respect to shopping (Goal E), this goal has been met. There is, nevertheless, additional room for growth in the jobs, restaurants, and entertainment categories. More attention is warranted to secure and preserve non-retail jobs, to the extent possible, including county employees.

G. Provide residents with a full range of essential services (utilities, police and fire, roads, etc.) as well as quality of life benefits and opportunities (parks, recreation, environment and character.)

Comment: This is an essential goal that continues to be supported.

H. Achieve a vehicular circulation system that maximizes route alternatives in order to reduce concentrated traffic volumes, minimizes traffic through residential areas, maintains adequate access to Chardon Square, and promotes economic development consistent with City goals.

I. Achieve a comprehensive system of pedestrian and bicycle circulation that provides alternatives to vehicular traffic, direct and convenient access to Chardon Square and other prominent destinations, and recreational opportunities.

Comment: This objective continues to be supported. The City has funded a program to expand sidewalks, and the Maple Highlands Trail is nearly complete. However, stakeholders report that there is still a lack of bike-pedestrian connectivity in many parts of town.

## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

Development policies provide what might be described as the community's "Plan," the general means by which Chardon intends to achieve its vision for the future (Section III). These are built upon the foundation of existing conditions identified and analyzed in Section I. Detailed strategies for implementing the City's goals and policies are described in Section V. Virtually, all of the foregoing information and community input – the interviews, review meetings and the public forums – point to the conclusion that: **The City is going in the right direction!!!** The general goals and policies are not fundamentally new but a continuation of the directions in the 2008 Plan. The goal of this section is to primarily determine: **How do we do what we've been doing... but even better!!!**

*The City is going in the right direction!  
How do we do what we've been doing...  
but even better?*

The potential for overlapping implications between different policies, both positive and negative, must always be considered when determining implementation priorities and strategies, balancing the merits of multiple objectives and finding compromises when necessary.

The policies are developed according to eight (8) overriding themes, or categories:

*Economic Development*

*City Wide Housing*

*The Original Chardon*

*Chardon Square*

*Vehicular circulation and thoroughfare planning*

*Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation*

*Parks, Recreation and Open Space*

*Community Image*



## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

### *Economic Development*

#### **Policy Framework**

Key to Economic Development is maintaining current, at least, level of services. This is assured by sustaining, to the maximum extent practicable, the public tax revenue to the City. This objective is within the context that the size of the potential market is limited:

- The amount of retail in the City, generally matches the spending potential in the market area. Therefore, the City should support retail and offices in Original Chardon and discourage competing commercial development outside this area. Creation of additional commercial zoning from residential should be avoided, as much as possible, until it is more clearly demonstrated that additional land is justified by market demand.
- Industrial land is essentially fully developed and the City has experienced very little interest from industrial users in coming to Chardon. While there may be market demand for more industrial, the amount of new development is uncertain. While the amount is difficult to quantify, some industries will continue to desire the small town environment.



- Based on recent reports, the long term intention of the County is to move existing County facilities from the Square. The two options being considered are: (1) Retaining in Chardon only those facilities required to be in the County Seat (Chardon) on land owned by the County on Route 44 at the City's southern boundary with the remainder of the County facilities relocated to the County owned land in Claridon Township; or (2) Retaining most of the County's facilities on the County land, in Chardon, along Route 44.

*It behooves the City to aggressively assure the retention of existing businesses and the related employment while equally striving to attract new businesses.*

## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

Therefore, it behooves the City to aggressively assure the retention of existing businesses and the related employment while equally striving to attract new businesses. While the City has incentives to facilitate development, i.e. CRA authority for both residential and commercial development and expansion, additional public techniques should be evaluated to determine what additional steps may be warranted to achieve the level of economic development desired and needed.

To better gauge the type and level of economic development desired, the generalized tax revenue benefits from various uses are summarized in Table 16, which represent values and estimated tax revenue from new development. These are estimated “averages” for the development value, number of employees, and income – which can vary widely from project to project - but do indicate the relative differences/similarities among the uses.

Within this context, it is generally recognized, however, that older facilities will not yield the same level of tax revenue per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area or per dwelling unit as newer facilities.

	Retail/ Services	Offices	Industrial	Residential -1 Cluster 4 Du's/ac	Residential -2 Townhomes 8 Du's/ac
Development per acre (sq. ft.)	10,000	16,000	8,000	7,200 <sup>(a)</sup>	9,600 <sup>(b)</sup>
Investment value per sq. ft. building and site improvements	\$160	\$140	\$135	\$180	\$180
<b>Total Investment Value</b>	<b>\$1,900,000</b>	<b>\$2,540,000</b>	<b>\$1,180,000</b>	<b>\$1,456,000</b>	<b>\$1,928,000</b>
<i>Building</i>	<i>\$1,600,000</i>	<i>\$2,240,000</i>	<i>\$1,080,000</i>	<i>\$1,296,000</i>	<i>1,728,000<sup>(c)</sup></i>
<i>Land</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>\$160,000</i>	<i>\$200,000</i>
Total Property Tax revenue per acre	\$49,462 <sup>(d)</sup>	\$66,123 <sup>(d)</sup>	\$30,680 <sup>(d)</sup>	\$31,672 <sup>(e)</sup>	\$42,416 <sup>(e)</sup>
City Property Tax Revenue per acre <sup>(f)</sup>	\$5,440	\$7,274	\$3,374	\$3,484	\$4,666
Estimate of Jobs per acre	20 <sup>(g)</sup>	105.6 <sup>(h)</sup>	14.8 <sup>(i)</sup>	4.0 <sup>(l)</sup>	5.4 <sup>(l)</sup>
Average Wages per Employee <sup>(k)</sup>	\$35,000	\$55,000	\$47,000	\$61,000	\$61,000
Income Tax Revenue per acre	\$14,000	\$116,160	\$13,912	\$3,050 <sup>(l)</sup>	\$4,117 <sup>(l)</sup>
<b>Total Annual Tax City – Income and Property per acre</b>	<b>\$19,400</b>	<b>\$123,434</b>	<b>\$17,286</b>	<b>\$6,534</b>	<b>\$8,783</b>
Footnotes:					
(a) 4 units per acre at 1,800 gross sq. ft. per unit					
(b) 8 units per acre at 1,200 gross sq. ft. per unit					
(c) Rental units will not have this value since there is no sales price to include overhead and profit					
(d) 2.6% of total value; effective rate 74.38 mils					
(e) 2.2% of total value; effective rate 62.15 mils					
(f) 11% of total taxes					
(g) 2 employees per 1,000 sq. ft.					
(h) 6.6 employees per 1,000 sq. ft.					
(i) 1.85 employees per 1,000 sq. ft.					
(j) Average 1 employee per dwelling at 4 du/ac; 0.67 employee per dwelling at 8.0 du/ac. Chardon median household income - \$61,000.					
(k) BLS; average for generalized categories. Industrial \$47,000, the average for all workers; Offices the same average with a “bump” to \$55,000 average for professional occupations; retail (27,900) for the sales force with a “bump” to \$35,000 to include managers.					
(l) 2.0% income tax rate (Applies to 25% of residential households; 75% who work outside Chardon pay an estimated 1.0% to Chardon)					

## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

Lastly, economic development decisions should be cognizant of public utility & infrastructure service capacity and condition – the need for capital maintenance - especially water supply, storm drainage, sanitary sewers, and wastewater treatment. In the 2008 Plan the Sewer Plant anticipated its capacity for a population of around 9,000, which was not expected until 2024. The capacity also anticipated the corresponding commercial and industrial development related to residential growth. Since 2000, the rate of development has been less than anticipated. If development of the residential land currently vacant were fully developed based on the existing zoning, say averaging even four (4) dwelling units per acre, the population of Chardon would not likely exceed 9,000 people (See Table 17). If the estimate were based on 3 dwellings/acre the build-out population will be 8,100.

<b>Table 17 - Estimated Residential Development Capacity Current Zoning</b>		
	<b>Dwellings</b>	<b>Population</b>
Existing Dwellings (2016 est.)	2,473	
Existing Population (2016 est.)		5,194
Potential residential development (est. based on 400 acres of vacant residential land developed at 4 dwelling units per acre).	1,600 <sup>(1)</sup>	
Total Dwelling Units at "Buildout"	4,073 <sup>(2)</sup>	
Total Population at "Buildout" applying 2.2 persons per dwelling which is the current average.		8,960 <sup>(2)</sup>
Note:		
(1) Residential development on commercial land would be a substitute of the commercial development, not a total add-on.		
(2) If estimate were 3 dwellings per acre the buildout would be 3,673 dwellings with a population of 8,100.		



# Part IV- Policies and Strategies

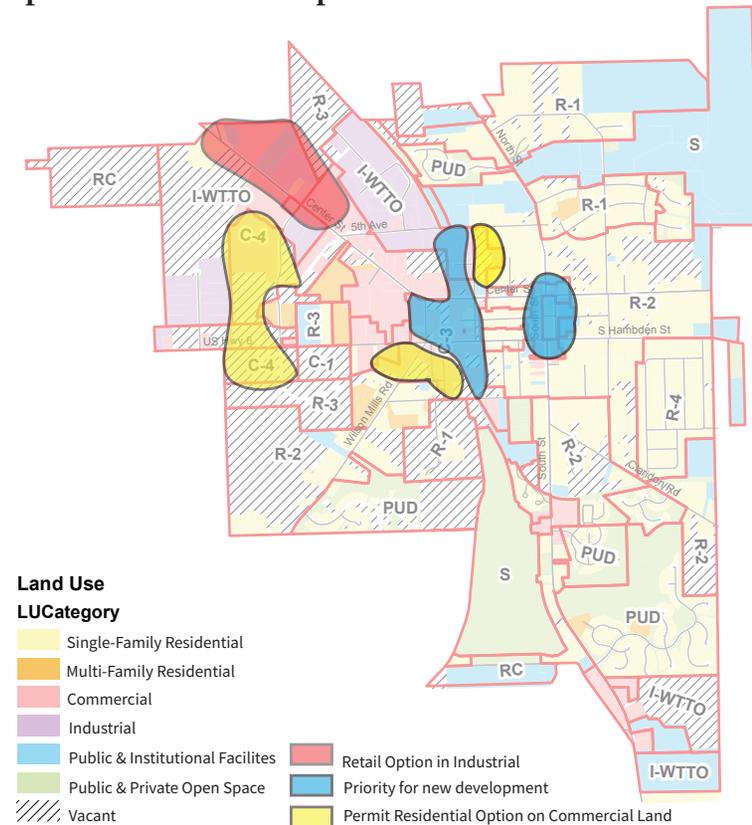
## Specific Policies

- Provide staff administrative capacity that assures 15 to 20 hours per week is devoted to pursuing business development – both retention and expansion – that is not related to administering development projects that are officially in, or expected to be in, the formal review process. More specifically, this administrative time would be devoted to:
  - » Regularly meeting with existing businesses to assure their needs are being reasonably met.
  - » Seeking out and encouraging potential businesses to locate in Chardon.
  - » Promoting more awareness that Chardon is a good place to “do business.”
  - » Assuring that there are no unreasonable regulatory impediments or procedures that discourage investment in Chardon

As an alternative, this administrative capacity could be achieved through a non-profit entity to achieve the same objectives.

- Continue to promote development/redevelopment in the C-3 mixed use zones in Original Chardon.

**Map 5- Economic Development Potential**



## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

- Continue to promote development at Chardon Square. However, given the County's expressed long-term intention to construct new facilities, it behooves the City to expand administrative efforts to assure the economic viability of the Square through marketing, and more aggressively exploring opportunities for redevelopment. The City is currently exploring the feasibility of renovating the County Courthouse and constructing new administrative office on the Square. The City should also coordinate with the County to facilitate long term occupancy of the Court House with either (1) uses permitted that are consistent with the deed restrictions currently in place or (2) taking steps to get relief from the deed restrictions so a wider range of re-occupancy use options are available. This additional flexibility would only be granted with the understanding that the County would continue long term control of the use and renovation of the Courthouse.
- To recognize the new generation of retail uses – i.e. brew pubs; indoor recreation such as climbing walls, trampolines; printing facilities; etc. – the City will evaluate the uses permitted in both the retail and industrial districts to clarify the permitted uses. In addition to meeting current needs this review will also address the needs of older buildings (both retail and industrial) that may be experiencing obsolescence.
- Permit more development flexibility to offer greater investment opportunities in locations that will not adversely impact single family residential areas, such as (See Map 5).
  - » Permitting retail uses in the current industrial zone on either side of Center Street between Meadowlands and the northern City limits.
  - » Permitting residential development on vacant industrial and retail zoned parcels.
- Undertake an evaluation to determine if short term rentals (such as Airbnb, VRBO) are appropriate in Chardon, or selected portions thereof, when considering both economic and community impact factors.

### *City-wide Housing*

#### *Policy Framework*

The general theme is to recognize that the housing policy should be responsive to market shifts because of changing demographics with more affordable housing being needed compared to the current prevailing price of single family homes being constructed in the city. A wider variety of housing options should be available for: young singles, starter homes, empty nesters, and retirees. While this objective was included in the 2008 Plan Update, it now seems to be a significantly higher community priority than it was in 2008. New homes should be available at prices significantly below the current prevailing prices of single family homes being currently built in Chardon. To generally achieve this objective, townhouse (attached single-family) development should be expected in the six (6) to eight (8) units per acre range; apartments in the 12-15 units per acre. This policy framework generally aspires higher density near the center of Chardon and in mixed use areas with lower density in the more outlying areas, nearer the city's edge.

## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

However, when considering residential as an option in commercial zones the higher density in these locations may be necessary to encourage property owners to select the residential option. The higher land values typically associated with land zoned for commercial purposes could be a deterrent unless the density makes residential development “worth while.”

### Specific Policies

- Assure that the regulations – specifically, the number of units permitted, is sufficient to attract investors.
- Offer the option for residential development in commercial or industrial locations, particularly on vacant tracts at a density of 12 units per acre for apartments and 8 units per acre for townhomes (see Map 5).

*Note: The maximum density in the R-4 is 6.7 per acre. There are no maximum number of units per acre established in the C-2 or C-3 Districts. The number of units is capped by the permitted building size based on coverage, setbacks, number of floors and parking.*

- Recognize, that sound public objectives – like, implementing the thoroughfare plan, providing open space and bike/pedestrian paths, and protecting natural resources – may reduce investor interest in the project. In such case the City should consider financial support to make the project attractive when the City determines that the future tax revenue will exceed the public support and the project is consistent with the community’s objectives.

- Consider a new zoning district, say, a new R-3A, to permit the higher residential densities that are envisioned in this Plan Update.
- Establish a “fixed maximum density” for PRD’s in R-1 and R-2 Districts to provide a predictable number of units per acre and to make such development attractive to investors. Currently, the maximum density permitted is now based on a “yield plan.” Since the yield plan results in a lower number of units per acre than the “statistical density” (dividing the number of acres by the lot size) it is not an attractive option for developers. The suggested densities are in Table 18:

<b>Table 18- Residential Densities- Existing and Proposed</b>				
	<b>R-1</b>	<b>R-2</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>R-4</b>
Density – Standard (approximate for SF in R-1 thru R-3)	1.5 du/ac	2.5 du/ac	2.8 du/ac	6.7 (approx.)
Existing Density - PRD	Yield plan	Yield plan	Yield plan	
<b>Proposed Density PRD</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>NA</b>

# Part IV- Policies and Strategies

## Original Chardon

### Policy Framework

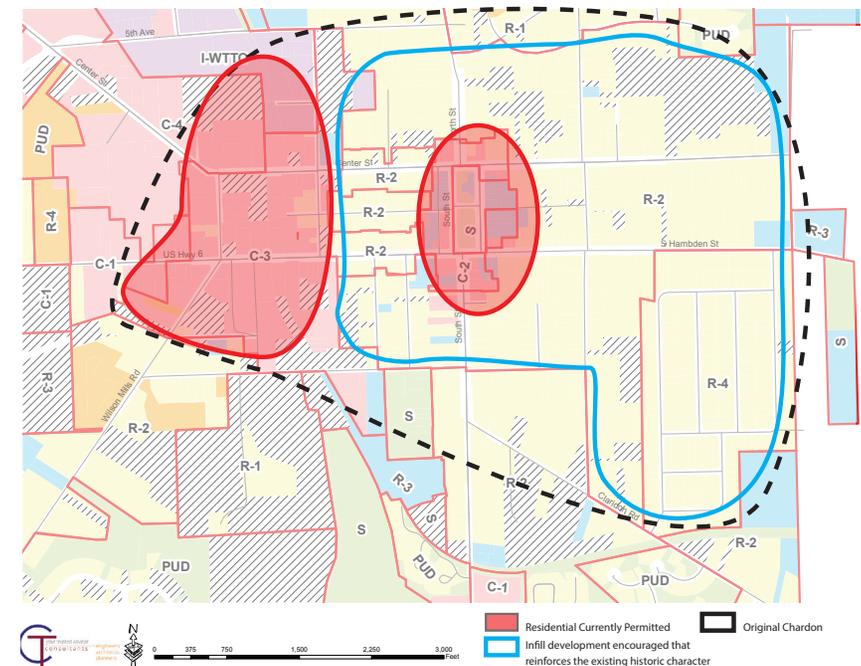
This area has two characteristics. It's comprised of Chardon's older historic homes for which continuing efforts are required to assure the character of the residential environment is preserved – architecture, scale landscaping setbacks, etc. To the west are Chardon's older commercial areas which include a mix of uses in older buildings that may not meet today's standards to be competitive in the market. While the Zoning Amendments, recommended in the 2008 Plan, (to permit mixed-use development) have been adopted, these older commercial areas require continuous public attention to assure that the quality of the environment is retained and re-investment occurs – either renovation of existing buildings or complete redevelopment.

### Specific Policies

- Recognize economic incentives may be needed, particularly in the mixed-use areas, to facilitate development.
- Review the current zoning to assure that no unreasonable regulations continue to exist that are impediments to new investment.
- Continue to ensure that:
  - » The architectural and historic character of the homes and streets are preserved; and,
  - » New construction is compatible with the traditional form, character, design, and site configuration of surrounding buildings

- Consider permitting attached units with architectural design controls as a means of fostering investment in the R-2 residential areas when the design is harmonious with the historic character – particularly, street frontage – in the area.

Map 6- Original Chardon



# Part IV- Policies and Strategies

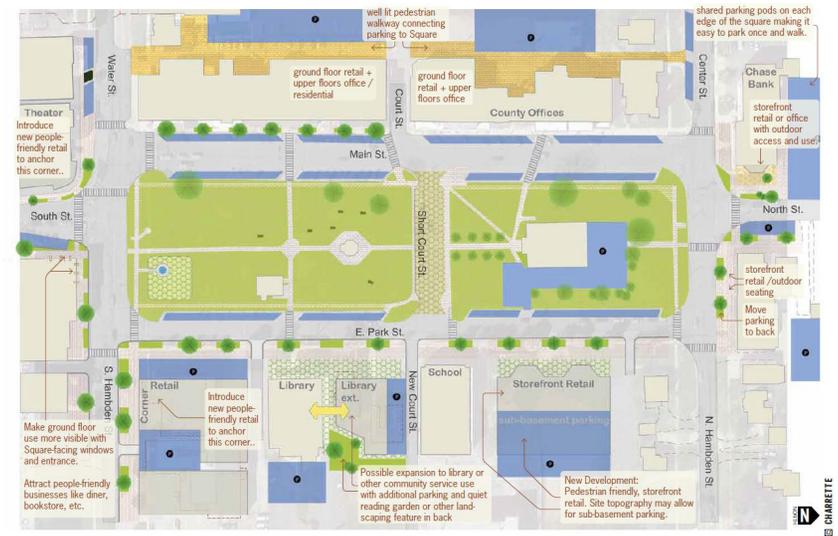
## Chardon Square

### Policy Framework

Chardon Square has been, and continues to be, Chardon's most recognized and cherished feature. It was recognized as such in the 2008 Plan with the same sentiments being expressed today. Both the 2008 Plan and the more recent Chardon Tomorrow Plan have substantially the same vision for the square to be achieved through the same fundamental objectives: preservation of the historic character; expansion of the traditional downtown form with new development on the east side; the addition of housing; retention and expansion of the commercial base; and the Square, as it is today, continuing as the focus of regular community events. The zoning to permit mixed use development and require the traditional downtown form, was adopted based on the recommendations in the 2008 Plan. The Chardon Tomorrow Plan, attached as part of this Plan Update, continues as the planning guide for the Square. The key element moving forward is focusing on the steps necessary to assure implementation.

*Chardon Square has been, and continues to be, Chardon's most recognized and cherished feature.*

Map 7- Chardon Square



### Specific Policies

- Continue the extraordinary level of events that occur every year.
- Develop a financial incentive package that is available to offer developers/investors considering investing in the Square.
- In order to assemble land for larger scale redevelopment, the City should consider purchasing land that may become available with the long term intent of re-selling the land when aggregated with other parcels to achieve the intended development.

## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

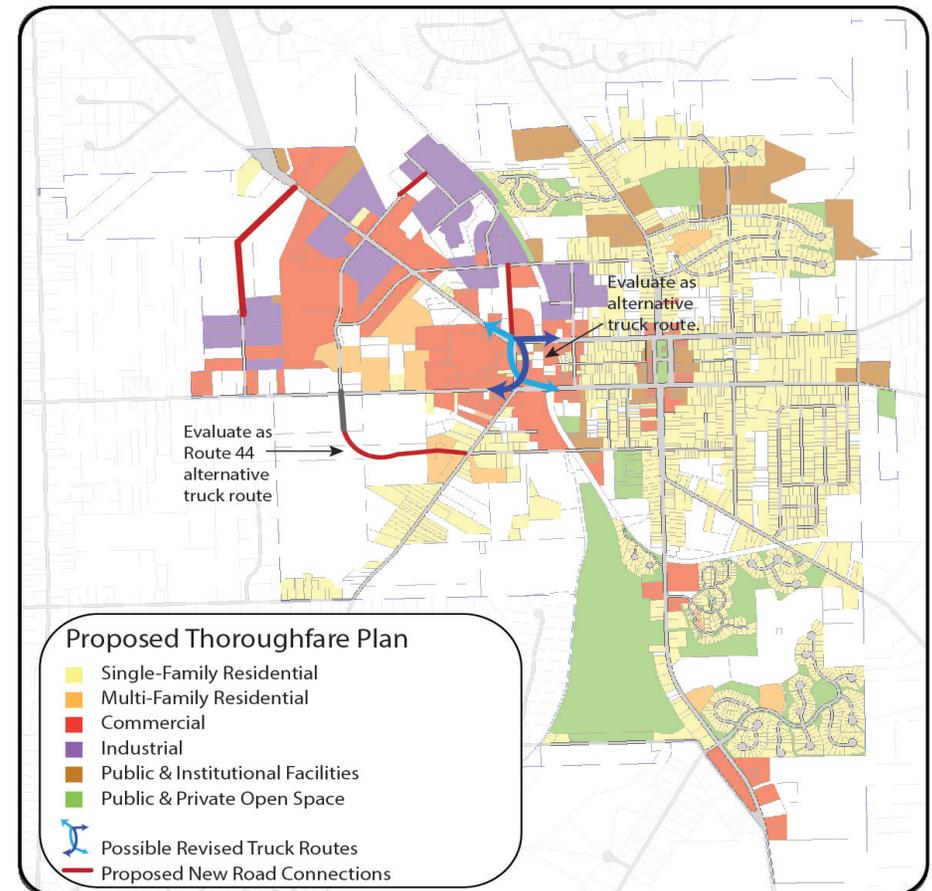
- Work with the merchants to have a common strategic approach to marketing and consistent operational standards for uses in the same complex or area.
- While continuing to urge the County to retain their facilities in Chardon, at least, on the Square, at best, the City will aggressively develop alternative reuse, redevelopment, and marketing strategies to assure the long term vibrancy of the Square that will result in similar, or even greater, benefits to the City.
- Recognize that a fully developed and vibrant Square, consistent with the objectives, will require some deck parking. Meeting the parking demand when the Square is fully developed, with only surface parking would undermine the traditional form of the square to the detriment of the City, visitors and merchants alike.

### *Vehicular Circulation and Thoroughfare Plan*

#### Policy Framework

The City has a long-standing tradition of developing and up-dating the Thoroughfare and Street Classification plans to reflect current conditions and changes that may have occurred or are desired. The revised plans are included herein with the emphasis on the following policies.

**Map 8- Proposed Thoroughfare Plan**



## Part IV- Policies and Strategies

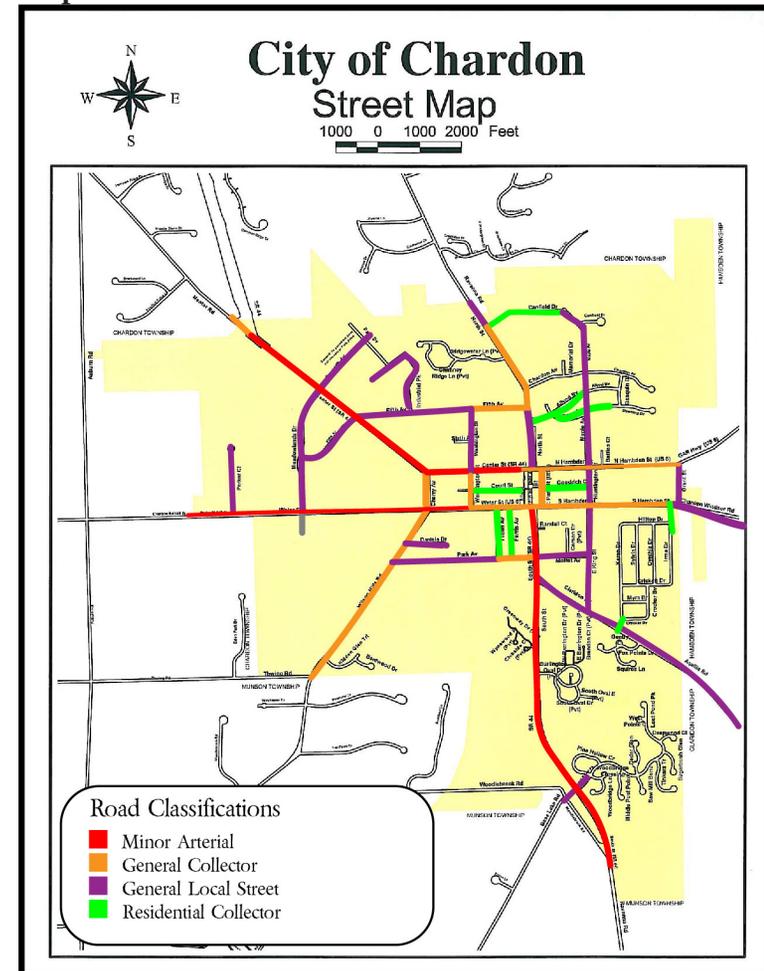
### Specific Policies

- Evaluate two possibilities for shifting the Route 6 & Route 44 truck routes and truck traffic away from Chardon Square:
  - » Shifting their north/south alignment at Cherry Street instead of at the Square; or
  - » Diverting the trucks from Route 44 (Center Street) to Meadowlands Boulevard, extending east on Park Ave. back to Route 44 at South Street.

The evaluation should include both traffic and community impacts. By including this as a planning policy to be evaluated, the City has not determined whether either of these options is better than the current truck alignments.

- Connect 7th Avenue cul-de-sac to Park Drive.
- Complete Meadowlands Extension across Water Street to Wilson Mills Road at Park Avenue.
- Extend Cherry Avenue south across Water Street to Park Avenue & reroute Wilson Mills Road to meet Cherry at a right angle.

Map 9- Chardon Road Classifications



# Part IV- Policies and Strategies

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

### Policy Framework

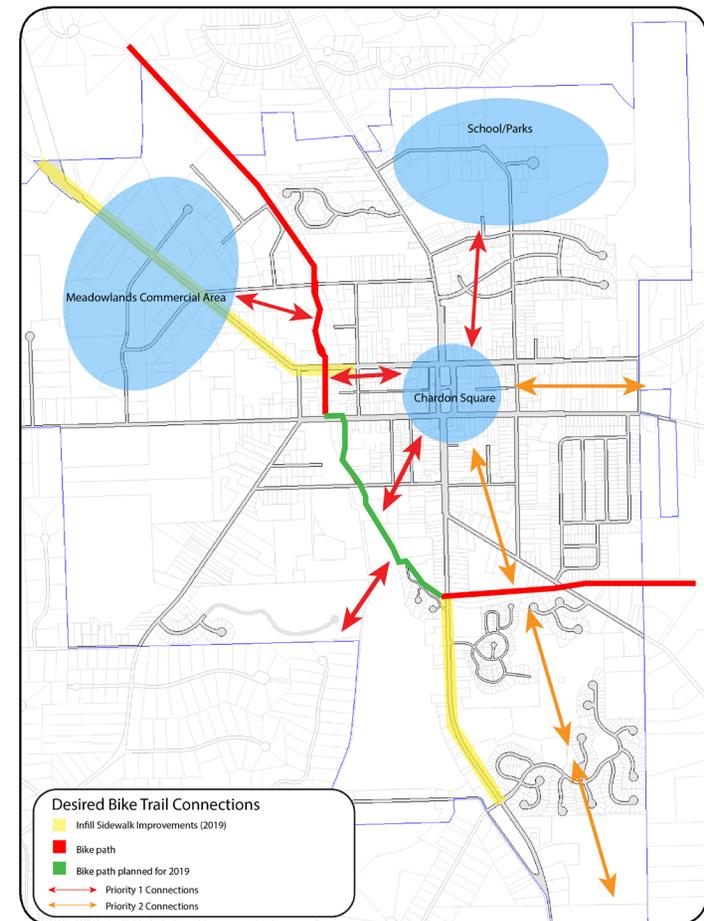
Fulfilling the City's primary objective to maintain and enhance Chardon as a "complete Small Town" requires that the City continues to view the importance of supporting facilities as key components to fostering the City's full economic health and prosperity. To this end, the 2008 Plan included the principles for non-vehicular circulation. From those concepts a detailed bike/pedestrian plan was developed. The northern portion of the main spine through the center of town, connecting the Maple Highlands Trail, will be completed this year (2019); the remainder of the spine, extending from Park Avenue, will also be completed in 2019.

### Specific Policies

- While the merits and feasibility of additional routes may need to be re-evaluated, this Plan includes the main corridors – origin/destination points that connect major activity areas - that should be pursued. These are illustrated on Map 10.
- Private developments should be required to provide trails and road connections to their borders to connect, or potentially connect, with similar trails and potential roads on adjacent land. Specifically, the city should promote short connections to maximize connectivity with minimal costs such as Hidden Glen to the adjacent trail. Wayfinding signs should also be installed and available to make these connections and the complete system more apparent.

- Likewise, Map 10 depicts the sidewalk connections that have or are planned and the priorities for new sidewalk links to be completed with the long-term objective of sidewalks being constructed on at least one side of all streets.

**Map 10- Chardon Desired Bike Trail Connections**



## *Part IV- Policies and Strategies*

### *Parks, Recreation and Open Space*

#### *Policy Framework*

Currently, the City has concept plans for two parks. These concepts continue to serve as the City's guiding principles for the future development possibilities for these facilities. However, this represents policy and guidance for only a small percentage of the City's parks, recreation and open space needs. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach is warranted particularly since the community has expressed overwhelmingly the importance of these public amenities to the future of Chardon.

#### *Specific Policies*

- Develop a comprehensive parks and recreation plan.
- Examine, as the plan is developed, the relationship/opportunities with the private sector and other agencies to assure the recreation offerings are comprehensive while minimizing overlap and unnecessary competition.
- Promote that new residential development should utilize the clustering option as a means of preserving open space, providing additional recreational opportunities, and satisfying the important "connectivity" objectives (trails and bike paths) repeatedly advocated in this Plan Update.

### *Community Image*

#### *Policy Framework*

A community's image in the region and the general market area is an important component to assure continued economic vibrancy and a desired place to live, work, and play. Currently, Chardon does not have a formal or cohesive marketing strategy in place. Yet, the City should consider whether having a formal marketing and branding strategy is important to maintain the City's image and be the thread which is woven into all policies and implementation strategies included in this document.

#### *Specific Policies*

- Determine, in more detail, and to the extent practical, the target market for residential, retail, office and industrial development and the needs for each segment such as location criteria, size of facilities and amenities (particularly for residential).
- Develop a marketing plan that could include: branding, messaging and documents that convey the strengths and vision for Chardon.
- As part of this plan, Chardon will continue to promote, preserve and enhance, the City's "Small Town U.S.A." character and image.

## Part V- Plan Implementation

A comprehensive land use plan is of little value without a clear approach for its short-term implementation. This Part identifies specific actions the community can take to achieve its goals and implement the policies established in Part IV. These proposed actions consist of zoning amendments (both text and map) and administrative and financial measures. They are organized in three (3) time frames for completion: within the first year; within 3 years and “longer term” or a continuing obligation.

Table 19 - Implementation Priorities and Timeframe			
Element	Within		Longer term or Continuous
	1 yr.	3 yrs.	
<b>Zoning Amendments:</b> Revise Zoning Code to implement related polices herein. (i.e. residential in commercial areas, new higher density residential district, housing densities in general and in PRD densities, clarify commercial and industrial uses, connection requirements when development occurs, map changes to offer more development flexibility.)	X		
<b>Economic Development</b>			
<b>Financial Incentives:</b> Evaluate and implement incentives that might be offered.	X		
<b>Administrative Capacity :</b> Evaluate and determine if staff capacity is available to adequately address continuing economic development needs.	X		
<b>Eliminate Legal Impediments:</b> that limit redevelopment/reuse potential of the Court House if the County vacates the building		X	
<b>Redevelopment Tools in Place:</b> to assure the City sufficient financial and administrative tools to be competitive in the regional economy	X		
<b>Marketing /Image</b>			Continuous
<b>Understand Target Markets</b> for the various use and development categories	X		
<b>Branding:</b> Create brand identity – logo, message, outlets		X	
<b>Create Comprehensive Recreation Plan</b>		X	

# *Appendix*

## A. Interview Summaries

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

The numbers in parenthesis (i.e. III) represent the approximate number of times those interviewed made the same or similar comment. *Since the discussions were informal and conversational every subject mentioned below was not necessarily addressed equally among the participants.*

**QUESTION #1 - In your opinion, what are the top three land planning issues currently facing Chardon (land use, transportation, economic development etc.)?**

1. Lack of walkability/sidewalk connectivity & safety outside of Square (IIIIII)
2. Lack of bicycle connectivity & safety. (IIIIII)
3. Need parking at trailheads of bike trails. (II)
4. Limited transportation options aside from private automobiles. Make it easier to get around without a car.
5. Not enough to do on Square. You go for one thing; need more to keep you there.
  - What makes people want to stay? (IIII)
  - More shopping & dining on Square – multiple destinations – date night (IIIIII)
  - Need a cohesive plan for the Square.
6. Need more recreation options (IIIIII). Suggestions listed, some of which overlap.
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Center/Rec Center badly needed (III)</li> <li>• Splash park</li> <li>• Indoor pool (II)</li> <li>• Indoor soccer (III)</li> <li>• Outdoor soccer</li> <li>• Sports center</li> <li>• Rock wall</li> <li>• A bigger “Y”</li> <li>• Ice/Hockey rink (II)</li> <li>• Indoor track (II)</li> <li>• Indoor volleyball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor tennis court (need 5 for varsity matches – currently have only 3)</li> <li>• Basketball</li> <li>• Weight room.</li> <li>• Mini-golf</li> <li>• Local sports leagues for kids (as opposed to travel leagues).</li> <li>• Adult rec options (II)</li> <li>• Live theater</li> <li>• Movie theater (IIII)</li> <li>• More usable green space</li> </ul>
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7. Need more diverse residential development. Potential impediments mentioned were:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High impact fees; water treatment plant; (III)</li> <li>• Development not being easy.</li> <li>• Little available zoned land</li> <li>• Homes are too often above the \$150 to \$300,000 target price (IIII);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable = \$150,000 for senior, \$200,000 for young adults &amp; families</li> <li>• Lack of housing affordable to millennials &amp; young families (II)</li> </ul>
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8. Housing needed
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior; (IIIIII)</li> <li>• Starter homes;</li> <li>• Smaller 1F homes &amp; lots with less maintenance needs – seen as attractive to millennials. Homes to attract young people; (IIII)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifestyle: 1st Floor Master Bedroom;</li> <li>• Townhomes;</li> <li>• Apartments;</li> <li>• Granny flats; in-law suites; carriage houses;</li> <li>• Mixed-use developments</li> </ul>
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9. Aging population. Not enough young people, young professionals, and young families moving to City. (IIII)
10. Need population growth
11. Insufficient housing & density within walking distance of Square to support retail & vitality of Square. (II)
12. Insufficient demand for new development. Population is too small to attract and retain national retailers. (II)
13. Need to diversify housing, improve retail, better medical, and transport (same as 2008 Plan).
14. Underdevelopment of east side of square
15. Too many institutional uses/not enough retail & commercial uses (i.e. restaurants) on square (II)
16. False perception of lack of parking near Square. (II)
17. Lack of parking at Square. (II)
18. Threat of losing County Seat & facilities; need plan for what happens if this occurs. (IIII)
19. Deed restriction on Court House allows only meeting hall or public use. What happens if County leaves?

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

20. Zoning barriers to density; regulations are not conducive to allowing mixed use & higher density residential near square. (III)
  21. Lack of industrial development and too much land zoned industrial sitting vacant. (IIII)
  22. No big industrial companies.
  23. Retail vacancies (III)
  24. Aging/obsolete commercial development west of square needs reinvention. It's a real mish-mash. Incoherent. Ugly. Does not feel connected or thought-out. (IIII)
  25. Need more economic development.
  26. Lack of knowledge about what type of retail community should be chasing.
  27. Too many chain stores & restaurants, not enough mom & pops.
  28. Ensuring that the City has the financial ability to maintain current Level of Service into the future. E.g. snow plowing and leaf pickup. (II)
  29. Need a clear picture/projections of water/sewer/road needs & capacity.
    - Who pays for new infrastructure – City or developer?
    - Need to save to build stuff rather than borrow.
  30. Physical condition of schools (IIIIII)
  31. Schools have limited financial resources.
  32. Lack of State funding for schools as a consequence of Geauga County's relative wealth.
  33. Traffic. (III)
    - Sheer quantity of traffic moving through City.
    - Speed control.
    - Turning lanes
    - Truck traffic (II)
  34. Need to finish Meadowlands Extension. (II)
  35. Lack of certainty/consistency from government decision-makers (County; School; Library; City) turnover among elected officials and lack of consensus vision and timelines makes it hard for developers to move forward and make investment decisions.
  36. Regulatory & bureaucratic hurdles to development. Hard to navigate. Zoning approvals can be difficult to get. Enforcement is too strict. Sign regs too strict. Getting development done could be easier. (III)
  37. Schools & County not working in concert with the City on land use planning.
  38. Somewhat libertarian political culture. People like to do things their own way. Hard to get majority on the same page.
  39. Water bills too high. Perception or reality? (III)
  40. Property taxes too high
  41. Too many rentals
  42. Need better snow storage areas.
  43. Loss of green space
- QUESTION #2 - What are the best features of Chardon?**
1. The Square (Virtually everyone)
    - Activities (III) – i.e. Farmers Market (II), Kids Fest, Brew Fest, Maple Fest
    - Historic character of west side
    - Walkable feel
    - Square Bistro
  2. Small town feel with urban amenities; Semi-urban environment surrounded by rural areas. (IIIIII)
    - Great of shopping options. Everything you need is so close. (IIIIII)
    - Medical Clinics - UH Facility 10 minutes south
    - You can see the stars at night
    - Ease of doing life here.
  3. Rural life – landscape, snow, hills, farmland – but only 30 minutes to Cleveland (II)
  4. Sense of Place (III) - Architectural character of older homes and the square
  5. Great place to raise a family. Family-friendly. (IIII)
  6. Planned development (II)
  7. History (III)
  8. Bike path connections (IIIIIIII)
  9. Walkability. (II)
  10. Library
  11. Schools (III)

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

12. Parks
13. Proximity to green space/nature/walking trails (IIII)
  - Geauga County Park District (III)
  - Holden Arboretum (II)
14. Safety (III)
15. Development opportunity – there’s still a lot of vacant land available.
16. High level of public service. Safety, fire, snow plowing, leaf pickup (III)
17. Drive—in theater nearby
18. Low residential property taxes.
19. Has own water plant
20. Interesting physical topography – hills in every direction.
21. The people

### QUESTION #3 - Describe your vision for Chardon in 2030.

1. A City that enjoys the same level of service it enjoys today. That is self-sufficient with little to no debt.
2. Increased density near the Square.
3. More housing options. (IIII)
  - Smaller units on smaller lots and properties requiring lower maintenance. (II)
  - More apartments above retail on the Square.
  - More housing options for the elderly.
  - More people will live within walking distance of Square.
4. Investing in and preserving older homes
5. A fully-utilized, active, vibrant Square. Develop the Square for an ‘Urban Lifestyle’ (IIIIII)
  - More like Willoughby, Hudson, or Chagrin Falls (II)
  - More to do at night
  - More restaurants (IIII)
  - More shops – i.e. bakery, donuts, boutiques
  - More community events
  - More stuff to do for families, kids and 20’s something
  - A 14-hour district
  - A square where you can do date night – dinner, gelato, cocktail at different places. Give people a reason to wander around at night.
6. Improved east side
  - Parking next to court house turned into green space.
7. Maintained quality of Square. Stays the same but with empty spaces filled. (III)
8. Reduced congestion around Chardon Square. (II)
9. The trucks will be off the Square
10. Narrowed Main St.
11. County offices remain on Square (II)
12. Less institutional/office uses on Square
13. The library stays put (II)
14. Added amenities - movie theater, hotel (II), Increased recreation options for all ages.
15. Preserve historic feel of central part of town while allowing new development that is modern in design, while still being architecturally appropriate. New development does not need to be a replica or cartoon version of historic development.
16. Keep the Square just the way it is.
17. Maintain historic feel of City, keep small town flavor, small town America. (IIII),
  - where people are friendly,
  - where people care about each other and help each other out.
  - people are proud to identify with.
18. Schools remain good. (III)
19. A community that’s willing to pay for new schools.
20. A combined school campus/rec center is completed.
21. Physical condition of schools is improved. (II)
22. IBOLD Park will be developed with walking trails and tennis court.
23. The obsolete shopping centers will have been redeveloped.
24. There will be less, ugly, box store-style retail. (II)
25. Today’s empty retail spaces are filled.
26. The land that’s been sitting vacant for years will be developed. (II) - For more industrial and residential
27. A stronger, local retail sector. More small, independently-owned, locally-owned, unique businesses. (III)
28. Improved bike and sidewalk connections. (IIIIII)

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

28. Strong bike connections between Square, school campus/rec center, and residential areas.
29. You can bike/walk everywhere you would want to go in the town. (III)
30. Have Chardon become a bicyclist destination with the trail connection and having bike friendly businesses and events. Leverage the bike trail to become a destination like Peninsula.
31. Meadowlands Extension will have been completed. (II)
32. Become the senior services/living, & medical hub of the greater Geauga County region.
  - Have a senior living campus: Active senior, assisted living, nursing home, & hospice.
  - Attract new health centers as an ED driver. Clinic, UH?
33. Improved health amenities.
34. A government composed of people who share a common vision and are not beholden to special interests.
35. College extension located here.
36. Dirt bike track

### **QUESTION #4 - Any thoughts you have on how Chardon achieves the community you envision?**

1. Land Bank properties on east side of Square
2. Complete sidewalk system (IIII)
3. Complete bike network (on & off-street) (IIII)
4. Include bicycle-tourism as part of the City's economic development strategy.
5. Complete Meadowlands Drive extension
6. Add parking garage behind Square
7. Physical upgrades to Square
8. Development incentives for
  - Façade upgrades
  - 'Mom & Pop' business development
  - Industrial tax abatement
9. New school facilities
10. New recreation facilities
11. Public Wi-Fi
12. Preserve level of service for leaf pickup, snow plowing, and sidewalk maintenance
13. Ensure that growth occurs in a manner that maintains small-town identity.
14. Develop strategies & policies to preserve tree canopy
15. Create a tree plan, taking into account tree life cycle.
16. Increase the number of 'usable' parks. Develop parks.
  - IBOLD
  - Corner of Wilson Mills & Water
17. Bury power lines a little bit at a time.
18. Improve wayfinding signage.
  - Getting to the square
  - Finding parking once they're on the square
19. Look at City & County owned lots as shared-parking options.
20. Develop higher density residential development. (IIII)
  - Near square. (II), Apartments okay. (III)
  - West of square. (III) - Selective demo okay if part of a good project that advances broader goals. Probably townhomes (III)
  - Washington St is great residential development opportunity (II)
  - Bridal Downs
  - Develop smaller, detached, 1F units in large, vacant R-3 area on SW end of town.
  - Redevelop trucking terminal NW of Square on Washington – develop as loft-style apartments. (II)
  - Down to Cherry along Center & Water
  - Allow true apartments near Wal-Mart
21. Develop smaller lot, detached, 1F. Lots should be small enough that you can mow them in 45 minutes. (I'd say that's about 1/5<sup>th</sup> of an acre).
22. Zoning Changes & Regulatory changes (II)
  - Update zoning code.
  - Change residential zoning to allow greater density and more options for young families, especially, but not exclusively, near Square. That is to say, increased housing options at a smaller scale and more affordable price point are desired citywide, but the area where higher density is most appropriate and desired is near the Square.

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

- Add a historic district overlay to...
    - Regulate modifications of older buildings.
    - Make state and federal tax credits available.
  - Add Form Based Code -style regulations for new buildings.
  - Tighten up ARB standards, especially with respect to proposals for higher density residential near Square. (II)
  - Revise architectural design standards
  - Ensure that new development on east side of Square has similar massing/feel to west side.
  - Rezone Center St from I to C or allow C in I.
  - Require all new developments to include internal trails and trail connections to existing network.
  - Revise permitting process and regulations to make permitting easier and more straightforward. Evaluate City processes to find ways to make the City more development-friendly. Reduce regulatory burden on business owners (IIII)
  - Make zoning more flexible.
23. Improve the Square
- Design to create more opportunities for community to happen on the Square. Make it a place where people go to be together.
    - Play chess.
    - Children play.
    - Create a 'device free' zone (no cell phones – voluntary compliance, of course)
  - Remove cars from Court Street and incorporate it into the park. (II)
    - Consider permeable pavers.
    - Make it a flex space for big events.
  - Add more head-in parking on east side of Square.
  - Provide a space to hear live music.
  - Streetscape upgrades
  - Install bike-station, racks, and/or other bike-friendly facilities on Square.
  - Redevelop 2nd floors of buildings on Square for residential. Preserve 1st floor as retail
  - Attract at least 2 more restaurants
  - Programming:
    - More concerts
    - More winter events
24. East side of Square
- Create a public fund for proactively purchasing land on the east side of Square as it becomes available. (III)
  - Develop a concrete plan
  - Hambden & East Park - Demolish existing, 1-story commercial buildings and replace with an architecturally appropriate 3-story, mixed-use building mirroring the west side of square, with parking in the rear.
  - Library. Add evening hours.
  - Develop consolidated County, School, Library, and Prosecutor's office facility.
  - Construct a parking deck behind east side of Square (II)
  - Don't construct the parking deck, not feasible.
25. Provide public incentives to catalyze development in and around Square. (IIII); i.e. Street façade loan program.
26. Fewer institutional and more retail uses on Square. Make Square more of a commercial hub. Move County off the Square to allow for more retail. (II); More restaurants.
27. Chase philanthropic dollars from wealthy individuals living in surrounding communities to invest in Square.
28. Keep County on the Square.
29. Develop contingency plans for Square
- If County moves
    - Get them to stay in City at south end of town.
    - Provides opportunity to enhance retail, activity, and vitality of square.
    - Have a plan for the annex and Court House if the County moves!
  - If County stays: Get them to be part of redevelopment of east side of square.
  - Figure out where these plans overlap
30. Attract some of the retail businesses from the older strip centers to the Square.
31. Develop a strategy for sprucing up or even redeveloping aging, strip shopping centers east of downtown. Find a way to make them feel more connected to rest of community.
32. Bring a movie theater to the Square

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

33. Public Wi-Fi
34. City possibly take over County Courthouse and locate municipal court there. (II)
35. Convert Court House to a commercial use (deed restriction)
36. Revenue increases. Pass a levy to build a new school. (III); Small tax increase might be okay.
37. Invest in improving physical condition of schools and in operations.
38. Increase community buy-in - have more public input/meetings for plans.
39. Leverage relationships with churches
40. Find outside sources of money.
41. Demonstrate positive fiscal impact of apartment developments. Show that they increase City revenues in excess of the new costs they create.
42. Add staff resources or hire an outside firm to market vacant land and buildings for development.
43. Target industrial users in the 15,000 to 50,000 SQFT building range. Distribution Centers, in particular, should be targeted as industrial users who are likely to be interested in Chardon's remaining industrial land. Available industrial land in Lake County is becoming scarcer.
44. Study best practices in other communities. What are Willoughby, Hudson, Chagrin Falls, PineCrest, Dublin Ohio doing to make themselves successful?
45. Developed detailed fiscal projections of revenue & expenses to identify when/if City will fall into the red. Project against current trend (stable pop) and growth scenario.
46. Hire a firm to analyze retail and industrial need to determine what types of land uses can be brought to vacant land and buildings. Help City market it's undeveloped and vacant properties. (III)
47. Develop a better understanding of how greater NEO views Chardon and develop a strategy to raise the City's profile.
  - Attract more young families: 40 min drive from Chardon to downtown Cleveland; Westlake = 23 min; Hudson = 37 min; Brunswick = 33 min; Medina = 39 min; Willoughby = 23 min.
  - Attract more tourists. (II)
48. Revisit Agro-Tourism concept
49. Create a recreation facility – possibly in conjunction with school redevelopment & YMCA. Full suite of amenities, see #1. Possibly a Sports-Plex. (IIIIIIII)
  - Comparables – Mayfield, Solon, Twinsburg.
  - Lost Nation Sports Park
  - Sports-Plex idea – it's hard to make these work economically as purely private ventures. A fully-public facility would be limited in offerings due to budget constraints. The Sports-Plex is an in-between solution: A public facility for Chardonites that charges a fee to people living outside the City but offers an extensive range of activities.
50. Bring in adult-oriented drinking & outdoor rec business. Example: Kirtland City Tavern.
51. Expand recreation opportunities for adults
52. Create a community sports program. Create more informal recreation opportunities for kids. Today, most organized sports for young people are serious travel leagues. Not enough room for casual play.
53. Create things to do in the winter months. Program the Square with winter-time events.
54. Create a medical hub and campus focused around seniors.
55. Develop senior housing just north of City limits associated with Methodist Church. The church has a 9.7 acre parcel adjacent to church property and outside the north edge of City limits (annexation?). Church also has a 16.2-acre parcel to the rear that is inside the City limits.
56. Provide industrial tax abatements to bring industrial uses to remaining vacant land and vacant industrial buildings. (II)
57. Add a pick your own orchard.
58. Allow community to grow. Chardon could reach 9,000 or even 15,000 people without losing small town feel. (II)
59. Explore annexation of small, strategically-identified lands surrounding the City. Large scale annexation is a political 'no-go'.
60. Work with surrounding communities to develop an anti-poaching policy, so that NEO communities are not competing to draw industrial employers away from each other. Contribute to building regional consensus to abandon 'beggar-thy-neighbor' development strategies.
61. Lower water and sewer taxes
62. Fix the appearance of Cherr-Water-Wilson Mills intersection
63. Follow the plan

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Interview Notes

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. School District's long-term vision is for a single, consolidated campus near current H.S.
2. Park School is likely staying on Square for foreseeable future as school district currently lacks money to realize long-term vision.
3. Library is planning to spend \$1 to \$5 million in next 3-5 years for expansion. Vision is to make it more of a community facility with meeting spaces and community spaces. Look at Hudson & Twinsburg libraries.
4. Property taxes go mostly to the schools.
5. General fund comes mostly from income taxes.
6. Some residents to the east side of square are likely to push back against higher density development.
7. An analysis was allegedly done by (not sure of name? Steve Kellerman?) that determined the immediate area around Geauga County has an adequate supply of senior housing.
8. Middlefield made aggressive use of industrial tax abatement.
9. Commercial losses – just lost Staples. Just lost De Nora Tech to Mentor (largest water user; top-5 income tax).
10. City has observed an increase in payroll tax withholdings over last 4-5 years. This is an indicator that employers are doing well.
11. City is using a Citywide assessment to provide 100% public money for fixing and completing sidewalk network. City will fully take over and maintain sidewalk system by 2022.
12. The original bond for the water treatment plant expansion will be paid off in 2021 or 2022. However, fees have come in below expectations, so the bond has been paid by borrowing from the general fund. The debt owed to the general fund could take years (how many?) to pay off. However, since the City owes that money to itself, forgiving the debt is an option.
  - The impact fee is approximately \$6,000 per fixture.
  - If Council just paid off this debt, wouldn't it be equivalent to a development incentive? If the impact fee is approximately \$6,000 per fixture, then development costs are increased by that amount. If the City proposes to offer financial, development incentives for new construction, why not just use that money to pay off the water plant obligation? The effect on developers is the same: The cost of development is reduced based upon a direct, public expenditure.
13. Chardon Tomorrow helps to promote small business.
14. Chardon Square Association puts on a lot of activities, and the funds they raise go back into the Square.
15. Interview County Commissioners.
16. Look up percent of households w children under 18.
17. Look up rental rate
18. Get school enrollment figures.
19. Disambiguate portion of property taxes that go to schools.
20. What's the situation with liquor licenses in Chardon? I'm kind of shocked there's not a couple of bars. People say they want more to do on the Square... seems like a pub or wine bar would fit and should be economically viable.
21. Do a deeper dive comparative analysis of Chardon against Willoughby, Chagrin Falls, Hudson, and Medina to see what they're doing. These are the communities that keep coming up as comparisons.
22. Study literature on perception of distance and walkability. Measure distances from Square to evaluate what, realistically, is the walk shed for fully ambulatory adults and children and for seniors.
23. What is this community's plan for financial stability once it's fully built-out? Chardon has benefited from growth and new development over the last 50 years. This steady expansion has allowed the City to steadily expand its revenues without becoming a high-tax community (relatively speaking – see Shaker Heights). What happens when developing new land is no longer an option? Likely means higher taxes or reduced services. This is a conversation the City should have in the present.

