



City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Project

Comprehensive Master Plan

Date

March 2005



Bellevue Comprehensive Plan – Vision 2025

Mayor David Kile

Bellevue City Council

Karen Justice: President of Bellevue City Council
Frank DeBlase: First Ward Council Representative
Steve Cloud: Second Ward Representative
Kathy Loparo: Third Ward Representative
Dave Freitag: Fourth Ward Representative
Jodi Keiser: At Large Representative
Rose Mary Nascone: At Large Representative
Richard Sanders: At Large Representative

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Jeff Crosby, Safety-Service Director, Chairman
David Kile, Mayor
Charles F. Trapp, Former Mayor
Karen Justice, Council Representative
Marc Weisenberger, Recreation Board Representative
Roger Paul, Economic Development Representative
Brian Foos, Commercial Business Representative
Sherri Woodruff, Commercial Business Representative
Dr. James Lahoski, Bellevue School District Representative

The City thanks former Safety-Service Director, Gary W. Haynes, for initiating this Comprehensive Master Plan - Vision 2025 Process.

Also, thanks to all the Steering Committee members for their many hours of service to the City on this project, the Key People who were interviewed for their insight, Community Survey Respondents who completed lengthy survey forms, Township Trustees and staff who worked diligently with the City to prepare agreements on future development scenarios, and all the residents of the City and Townships who attended the various Visioning Sessions and public meetings to express their ideas.

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Inside Cover Sheet rev 31405.wpd

Table of Contents

Cover Sheet

Chapter 1: Introduction 1-1/10

Background and Purpose	1
Planning Process Management	2
Key Tenet	2
Planning Process	3/8
Vision Statement	9/10

Chapter 2: Community Profile 2-1/11

Community History	1
Regional Context	2
Geography	3
Demographics	3/7
Transportation	7
Recreation and Culture	7/8
Utilities	8/9
Education	9
Industries/Economy	10
Community Services	11

Chapter 3: Local Attitudes and Planning Themes 3-1/15

Major Issues identified by the Steering Committee	1/4
Major Issues identified by Key Persons	4/5
Major Issues identified through the Community Survey	5/7
Public Visioning Session #1	7/11
Public Meeting with Four Townships	11/13
Public Visioning Session #2	13
Local Attitudes and Planning Themes Summary	13/15

Chapter 4: General Trends 4-1/4

Local Trends	1/2
National Trends	2/4

Chapter 5 Land Use	5-1/12
Existing Land Use	1/6
Future Land Use	7/11
Urban Design Elements	11/12
 Chapter 6: Transportation	 6-1/14
Background	1/3
Airports	3
Railroad Crossings	3/4
Local Vehicular Transportation	4/8
Access Management	8/9
Gateways	9/10
Sidewalks	10/12
US 20 Bypass	13/14
 Chapter 7: Public Utilities and Services	 7-1/9
Background	1/2
Water	2/3
Wastewater	4
Fiber Optic Lines	5/6
Police/Fire	6/7
Utilities	7
Parks & Recreation	7/9
 Chapter 8: Housing and Neighborhoods	 8-1/9
Background	1/3
Housing Strategy	3
Public Issues Regarding Housing	4/7
Schools	7/9
 Chapter 9: Economic and Downtown Development	 9-1/31
Background	1/3
Future Development Scenarios	3/31
SR 113/ US 20/ SR 4 Triangle	3/7
SR4/ US 20 Intersection	7/8
The Northeast Section of the City including the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park	9/11
US 20 West	12/15
The South Side - SR 269 South & SR 269/Prairie Road Area	15/17
The Downtown	17/31
 Chapter 10: Implementation - Policies & Initiatives	 10-1/6

Land Use & Zoning	1/3
Transportation	3/4
Public Utilities and Services	4
Housing and Neighborhoods	4/5
Economic and Downtown Development	5/6

Charts

- 2-1 Bellevue Area Population Changes
- 2-2 Bellevue Area Household Composition Changes 1990-2000
- 2-3 Household Composition
- 2-4 Age Groups According to Claritas, Inc., 2000
- 2-5 Median Household Income (Claritas, Inc.)
- 4-1 Population Change

Maps

- 5-1 Existing Land Use
- 5-2 Key Facilities
- 5-3 Future Land Use
- 5-4 Redevelopment Areas
- 6-1 Transportation Map
- 7-1 Recreation Center Master Plan
- 8-1 LMI Areas
- 9-1 Future Development Areas
- 9-2 The Smaller Triangle SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road
- 9-3 The Northeast Section of the City including A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park
- 9-4 US 20 West
- 9-5 The South Side - SR 269 and the SR 269/Prairie Road Area
- 9-6 DT Bellevue

Appendices

- 3-1 Steering Committee Key Issues
- 3-2 Key Persons Interview Summary
- 3-3 Community Survey Summary
- 3-4 Visioning Session No. 1 Summary
- 3-5 February 18, 2004 Township Meeting Summary
- 5-1 Sample Signage System
- 6-1 ODOT Bypass Study Summary
- 8-1 Housing Data

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Table of Contents.wpd

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

1

Introduction

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background and Purpose

Communities are constantly changing. Sometimes change is small and almost imperceptible, and sometimes change can be dramatic, as large areas are developed, or as several smaller construction projects are built. Change is driven by decisions, and the Bellevue of today emerged from the past through a series of decisions made by many entities. The City has made decisions about how to regulate land use, and what public infrastructure to build and where. Industries, lending institutions, school districts, and developers have made development decisions to respond to a wide range of needs and demands within the community.

Within this dynamic environment of change and decision-making, it is not unusual for community leaders to question the overall direction of community development, and to pursue a definitive sense of direction and overall vision. The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to provide this vision, capturing and articulating desired community goals, based on community attitudes and preferences. Effective comprehensive plans serve as guides for day-to-day decisions, so that those decisions are made in the context of long-term community goals and objectives.

Comprehensive plans have several common characteristics. First, as the name implies, they address major elements of community development in a comprehensive manner. This means providing an overall, long-term vision of development that recognizes the interrelated elements of community fabric, including how land is used, how people move from place to place, and what public facilities are required to support basic human needs.

Second, comprehensive plans are concerned with long-range, “big picture” issues; often looking 20 years or more into the future. While such a period seems like a long time, it is critical because most municipal decisions are decisions that impact the community both immediately and long-term. Thus, the impacts of decisions made today regarding new land uses, new roads, and investments in infrastructure will be felt for many years to come, and will significantly impact the health and welfare of our children and grandchildren.

Finally, comprehensive plans must represent a statement of public policy and a community vision that reflect community attitudes. The process to develop a meaningful comprehensive plan affords community leaders with an unparalleled and unique opportunity to engage residents in thoughtful and constructive dialog about their future. Thus, comprehensive plans emerge from a localized and thoughtful process of investigation and civic engagement.

One very common aspect of most successful and livable communities is the fact that they are fully committed to consensus-building and effective community planning. Community planning processes are utilized regularly to understand community desires, to identify challenges, to define priorities, and to move confidently toward the future with clear goals in mind.

Planning Process Management

The development of this Comprehensive Plan was guided by an appointed Steering Committee. Nine people were selected to represent a broad cross section of the Bellevue community. Included on the Steering Committee were local elected and appointed officials (past and present), and representatives from the School District, the Recreation Board, local commercial businesses, and the Citywide economic development organization. All members were also residents of the City or the School District. This Steering Committee met frequently during the planning process to make decisions and guide planning activities. Members also participated in the public visioning sessions.

Key Tenet

Early in the planning process, the Steering Committee identified the need for a vision for a period of twenty years in the future, or approximately the year 2025. Within that 20-year period, growth of the community would require development of lands adjacent to the City, which currently are located in one of the four neighboring townships. The fact that each neighboring township is located in a different county adds complications to the planning process. All four townships were specifically invited to participate in the planning process.

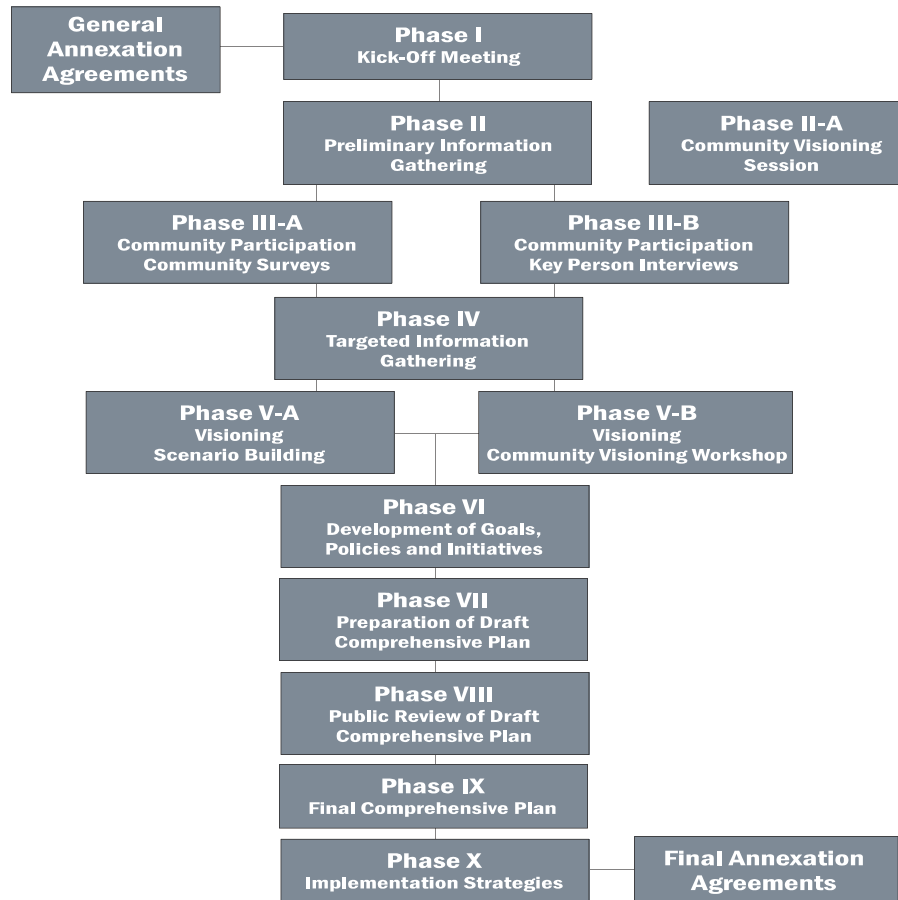
The one unifying factor for the Bellevue community, which embraces both City and township residents, is the Bellevue School District. Residents are committed to the schools and have an enormous amount of pride in the school programs, both academic and athletic. The School District serves the bulk of the lands within the four neighboring townships, providing a common thread of unity and community spirit for the City and townships.

The comprehensive planning process attempted to build upon this School District community spirit and pride, and extend the existing practices of cooperation and coordination into the decision-making process for the future development of the area, or the community “Vision 2025.”

Thus, the key tenet of the planning process for the City of Bellevue was coordinating with and **involving representatives of the four townships within the School District in the planning process, and reaching consensus on annexation and revenue sharing agreements with them.** Having these agreements would provide a seamless economic development process that would benefit the City and townships, residents, the school district, and the businesses seeking to expand or locate in the community.

Planning Process

The comprehensive planning process formally began with the selection of Poggemeyer Design Group (PDG) in October 2003, after months of research and discussion by City officials, specifically with regard to developing a comprehensive scope of services. A planning process was proposed by PDG based on the City's scope of services, modified after discussions with City officials, and approved by City Council. Ultimately, the process included the following phases:



Phase I: Kick-Off Meeting

A kick-off meeting was held with the Steering Committee on October 30, 2003 to discuss the parameters of the planning process, refine the scope of the project, discuss citizen participation mechanisms, identify key development issues, discuss the involvement of the media, develop parameters for general annexation agreements, and discuss other issues related to the overall expectations for the planning process and final products.

It was agreed that a meeting was needed with representatives from all four townships to explain the planning process, request their participation and cooperation, and begin the development of annexation and revenue sharing agreements. A meeting was held with all four townships at the High School library on February 18, 2004. (Beginning in 2005, the City plans to have at least annual meetings with all four townships.)

The City explained the comprehensive planning process that was commencing and requested their participation in it. It was expressed that the City's newly elected and appointed officials had a willingness to cooperate on a variety of community issues, including economic development. City administrators understood that in order for the City to grow, it had to expand its boundaries, and that they were willing to share revenues with the townships in an effort to create a seamless economic development process for the future. The City committed that representatives from PDG would meet individually with each of the four townships twice to develop mutually-agreeable annexation and revenue sharing agreements.

The first series of townships meetings were held as follows:

- Lyme Township (Huron County) March 15, 2004
- Thompson Township (Seneca County) March 29, 2004
- York Township (Sandusky County) March 30, 2004
- Groton Township (Erie County) April 22, 2004

The second series of township meetings were held as follows:

- York Township (Sandusky County) October 12, 2004
- Lyme Township (Huron County) October 18, 2004
- Thompson Township (Seneca County) October 25, 2004
- Groton Township (Erie County) November 18, 2004

Phase II: Preliminary Information Gathering

After the initial meeting, PDG began collecting basic information on the Bellevue community. Information gathered included material from the US Census (2000 data being the most current), projections from Claritas, Inc. (a nationally-recognized market research firm which specializes in demographic analysis and population projections), recent planning studies, EPA and TMACOG 208 planning documents, School District plans, preliminary ODOT information on the proposed rerouting of truck traffic, existing zoning regulations, and other existing studies. The City of Bellevue had not completed a Comprehensive Housing Improvement Strategy (CHIS) in the past, so only limited condensed housing data was available. A Community Profile summarizing this data, was started at this time.

Also in March 2004, PDG conducted a general existing land use analysis of the community. Windshield surveys of the entire community were conducted and general existing land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, farmland, public, parkland, etc.) were recorded onto a base map of the City for further analysis and projections.

Phase II: A - Community Visioning Workshop

The first major effort to reach out to area residents and define community issues occurred on January 13, 2004. A community visioning session was organized to engage residents in an initial effort to identify issues and challenges facing the Bellevue community. Approximately 85 participants attended the session and participated in the discussions. Participants were divided into break-out sessions, which were led by PDG and Steering Committee members. The sessions discussed the following key issues, which were previously identified by PDG and the Steering Committee:

- *Quality of Life Issues*
 - Housing
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Historic Resources
 - Community Facilities and Services
- *Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services*
 - Police, Fire, and EMS
 - Fiber Optics
 - Water and Sanitary Sewer
 - Storm Water
 - Ordinance Enforcement
 - Zoning
- *Transportation Issues*
 - Access Management along US 20
 - SR 18 Rerouting Proposal
 - Downtown Traffic Bottlenecks
 - Alternative East-West Traffic Routes
 - Grade Separation Projects at Railroad Crossings
 - Signage and Gateways
 - Airport and Railroad Services
 - Rails to Trails Projects
- *Commercial and Economic Development Issues*
 - Opportunities for Downtown Redevelopment
 - Desired Retail Stores and Services
 - Development along US 20 East and West
 - City Image
 - Cedar Point Connections
 - The New Sandusky County Airport
 - New Industrial Park in Northeast Section of the City
 - Potential Industrial Property to the South
 - The Role of Schools in Development
 - The Bellevue Development Corporation (BDC)

- *Schools and Education Issues*
 - School Facilities—Conditions of Buildings
 - Operating Issues
 - Additional Space Needs
 - Traffic and Safety Issues around Existing Schools
 - Financial Issues

Shortly after the session, a report was produced summarizing the major findings of this workshop. It was distributed to the Steering Committee members for review. Results helped to formulate the direction and scope of future planning efforts.

Phase III A and B: Community Participation

To achieve more community input using different techniques, PDG proposed undertaking a community survey, as well as key people interviews. It was anticipated that acquiring key issues from a select group of knowledgeable people, and verifying that information through a community survey, would define and refine those issues that the community should concentrate on throughout this planning process.

III A. In March 2004, a number of community leaders representing broad segments of the Bellevue community were selected by the Steering Committee for one-on-one interviews with PDG. The purpose of the interviews was to discuss key issues of concern about the community, and to glean valuable knowledge on these key issues from people who had extensive experience and/or history with the City. When the interviews were concluded, a separate report was prepared summarizing recurring thoughts and ideas that surfaced as a result of this work. This information was shared with the Steering Committee on April 23, 2004.

III B. A draft Community Survey was prepared by PDG and presented to the Steering Committee for their review and input. It was decided that the survey would be undertaken during the summer months so that the City could use its summer interns to assist with distribution and collection of the survey forms.

Survey forms were delivered by the Post Office to every mailbox address within the City. A total of about 3,000 surveys were distributed. Just under 10% (287) of the surveys were returned to various collection points throughout the City. This is a very acceptable return rate. A Steering Committee member and volunteers tabulated the results of the surveys on a format prepared by PDG. The results of the surveys were discussed with the Steering Committee in September of 2004, presented to the public at the second Visioning Session, and incorporated into the balance of the planning process.

Phase IV: Targeted Information Gathering

During and after the public participation processes, PDG concentrated its effort on defining major planning themes, identifying specific development and/or redevelopment areas, and gathering specific and targeted information regarding those themes and areas. The Steering Committee discussed and refined these development scenarios during several meetings, before being satisfied that these scenarios were ready for presentation to the public for its review.

Recommendations were categorized into six key areas for development and/or redevelopment. These included:

- The SR 113/ US 20/ SR 4 Triangle
- The SR 4/ US 20 Intersection
- The Northeast Industrial Park Area
- US 20 West
- SR 269 South and SR 269/Prairie Road
- The Downtown

Numerous recommendations were made regarding the potential development and/or redevelopment of these areas. Issues that were addressed included preservation of farmland, protection of existing residential development, access management, buffering non-compatible land uses, utility extensions, political jurisdictions and related issues, grade separations, gateways, streetscaping, etc.

Phase V - A & B: Visioning – Scenario Building

V A. The development and redevelopment scenarios were discussed and refined by the Steering Committee over several months during the Summer of 2004. Future land uses were discussed for each area, as well as access management issues, gateways, buffering, transitioning between land uses, utility needs, etc. Once general consensus was reached among the Steering Committee members, the planning process again reached out to the general community with another community visioning workshop.

V B. The second Visioning Session, held on September 14, 2004 at Council Chambers, attracted just under 50 people. Participants visited stations depicting the various development scenarios, offered thoughts to PDG staff and Steering Committee members on how to improve the development issues presented, and listened to a presentation of the process to date and the summary of recommendations regarding the six key development and/or redevelopment areas.

A Question & Answer period followed with all questions recorded on cards prior to the discussion, which allowed for accurate recording of the participants' comments. Comments on the development scenarios were shared with the Steering Committee members on October 12, 2004 and changes were made to the concept plans accordingly.

Phase VI: Development of Goals, Policies, and Initiatives

Based on all the information collected and analyzed to date, and the results of the scenario building workshops, the Steering Committee and PDG refined the planning issues and development scenarios, leading to the formation of goals and objectives central to the comprehensive plan. The policies and initiatives primarily focused on the six development and redevelopment areas, although other community issues were also presented. Several meetings were required to accomplish this involved and challenging task. Drafts of each section of the Plan were provided to the Steering Committee as they were completed for review and comment.

Phase VII: Preparation of Draft Comprehensive Plan

Based on the goals, policies and initiatives developed above, PDG began compiling all the information collected, analyzed, and developed over the past year into a draft document for review by the Steering Committee. The document was presented to the Steering Committee for extensive review, and a meeting was held to review overall issues and changes required on the draft document.

Phase VIII: Public Review of Draft Comprehensive Plan

Once the Steering Committee was comfortable with the draft document, the public was provided with another opportunity to review the progress of the Committee and to provide input to the planning process. A public meeting was held on March 21, 2005 with both the Planning Commission and Council in attendance. Comments from the public were recorded and considered in the preparation of the final Comprehensive Plan, as appropriate.

Phase IX: Final Comprehensive Plan

Once the Steering Committee was comfortable that the document encompassed the vision, goals, strategies and initiatives that it desired, PDG prepared a final Comprehensive Plan. The local newspapers were asked to cover the Plan, as they had the earlier visioning sessions.

Phase X: Implementation Strategies

PDG summarized the recommendations made in the Comprehensive Plan - Vision 2025 and identified responsible parties, potential financing alternatives, and suggested timetables for implementation of the various recommendations.

This information will be used to finalize annexation and revenue sharing agreements with the four townships. Final meetings will be held with the townships by City personnel to execute the annexation and revenue sharing agreements.

Vision Statement

One of the most important results of the development of a Comprehensive Plan is the ability to visualize and summarize where the City of Bellevue expects to be twenty years from now. This vision is based primarily on how the City plans to deal with the issues currently facing the City, as detailed in this document. It is also based on the collective hopes for the City as expressed throughout this planning process by members of the Steering Committee, Key People, City Administration, and residents who participated in the public visioning sessions and the Community Survey.

That said, the following Vision Statement is intended to capture and describe the desired future of the City of Bellevue in a non-technical manner. This statement is written from the imagined perspective of a City resident in the year 2025. It is hoped that with an ongoing commitment to keeping the goals and plans for the City current and relevant, a future resident will be able to say...

"The City of Bellevue is becoming a better and better place to call home and raise a family. When I was growing up here in the 1990's, I didn't pay all that much attention to things that are important to me now. School was great as far as I was concerned. We had lots of success in sports, plenty of things to do and get involved in, even in the summers - thanks in no small part to the rec programs the City offered, and I had no trouble getting into Ohio State, my first choice of colleges. But, like most kids my age, I couldn't wait to go away to college, and didn't really plan to make Bellevue my home after college.

"However, as they say, life is what happens to you while you were making other plans, so here I am, family and all, and happy to be here. After getting my degree in business from Ohio State in 2004, I took a middle management job with a manufacturing company in Indiana. A couple of years later, my parents, who still live here, told me about a new company that was moving into the Industrial Park in the northeast part of the City. By that time I was married and we were expecting our first child, so the pleasant memories of my childhood in Bellevue and the thought of my kids growing up near their grandparents easily overwhelmed any negative thoughts I had about coming back to town and raising my family here.

"To make a long story short, I took a job with that company, moved back to Bellevue and bought a house in one of those new subdivisions out near the new hospital. We now have three kids, the oldest one leaning toward Ohio State of course, but being courted by at least two Ivy League schools, among others, thanks to her outstanding SAT and ACT scores and the fact that she has been starting on the varsity basketball team since she was a sophomore. I can't say enough about the Bellevue schools. My youngest attends Shumaker Elementary, which was totally remodeled and expanded about the time we moved back to town. Our middle son is in the also recently remodeled junior high school, which is a big improvement to the junior high building I remembered. And, having top-notch schools sure makes it much easier to bring new companies, and new employees at all levels, to the area.

“Two of the biggest drawbacks to living in Bellevue for as long as I could remember, had been the truck traffic through the downtown and in some of the neighborhoods around Shumaker School and Goodrich Road in the northeast of town (especially around harvest time), and all of the time we used to spend waiting at the railroad crossings around town. Much of that has changed now.

“The first big improvement with the truck traffic was when the City created a third lane at the subway and synchronized the stop lights downtown. The next one was when the City and Groton Township worked together to create that truck route from the industrial park to SR 4 and the Turnpike; that sure relieved a lot of our concerns about all that traffic in front of Shumaker School. But the biggest change will be when ODOT completes the bypass around town that is finally under construction. On top of all that, they are now in the process of building the third new railroad overpass since I’ve been back in town, which has made getting around town much easier for all of us.

“That beautiful restoration of the historic Tremont House shortly after they redid all the downtown sidewalks was a real catalyst towards encouraging downtown building owners to renovate their properties. The downtown already looks so much better than it did when I was growing up here. But with the bypass finally becoming a reality, and with all of the commercial and industrial growth we’ve seen in and around the City in the last fifteen years or so, people are actually competing for the few remaining open spaces in the downtown.

“Not too surprisingly, one of the biggest factors in stimulating growth in the area has been the new Bellevue hospital. Once all of our kids were in school, my wife got back into nursing, and had no trouble finding a good job at one of those new medical clinics in the area surrounding the hospital. Between the hospital, all of those specialty clinics, and the new assisted-living and extended-care housing facilities just west of the hospital, Bellevue has become a true regional medical center, providing a wide variety of top-notch, state-of-the-art medical services, as well as all sorts of good-paying jobs, and bringing many more professionals to the area. As you can imagine, the local housing market has also received a real shot in the arm.

“In fact, now that my daughter is starting to think seriously about what she wants to do and where she wants to live after she gets out of college, it’s nice to know that returning to Bellevue to raise her family (and my grandchildren) someday, is high on her list.”

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter **2**

Community
Profile

Chapter 2: Community Profile

The following community profile is provided to furnish a general factual description of the Bellevue community. Selected characteristics of the City and surrounding region are included to provide an overall perspective of the City and to form the foundation of more in-depth analysis of topical issues in the following chapters.



Community History

The City of Bellevue, situated in north-central Ohio, has a rich heritage as an historical railroad town. Huron County, one of the three counties in which Bellevue lies, was officially established in 1809. The City's first framed house was built in 1817, and later a group of log homes was built in an area that has since become Bellevue's Main Street. The settlement later became known as Amsden Corners when Thomas G. Amsden of Ontario County, New York, further developed the town and opened a general store in 1819 near the present-day intersection of Exchange and Main Streets.

In later years, the Chief Engineer of the Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad, James H. Bell, suggested that the company develop a line through Amsden Corners. Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad acted on Mr. Bell's suggestion, and as a result, the town experienced an economic boom. The boom enabled local proprietors, including Mr. Amsden, to purchase a town plot. In 1835, Amsden Corners was officially renamed "Bellevue" in recognition of Mr. Bell's efforts.



Notably, the Bellevue area has two sites listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The John Wright Mansion, located at 5001 State Route 4, east of Bellevue, is a principal part of Historic Lyme Village. First listed on the Register in 1974, the mansion was built in 1882 in the Second Empire Victorian architectural style.

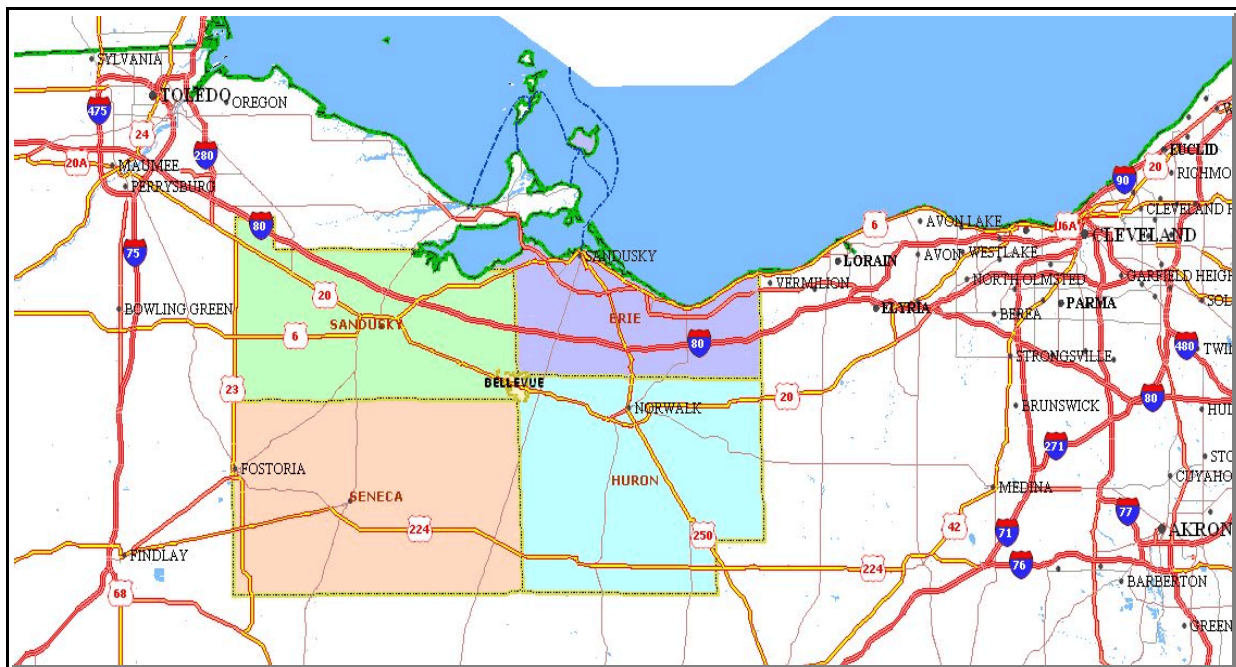


The Second Bellevue area listing on the National Register of Historical Places is Heter Farm, which is located northwest of the City. The Heter Farm is recognized not only for its historical agricultural value, but also for its engineering and architectural attributes. The Greek Revival style structure, built in the early 1800's, was first listed with the National Register of Historical Places in 1979.

Bellevue's first settlers were Mark Hopkins and family, and shortly thereafter, Elnathan George, in about 1815. They constructed log houses on the Huron County side near the Sandusky County line. Return Burlington soon settled on the Sandusky County side and named the community York Crossroads.

Regional Context

Bellevue is located 51 miles southeast of Toledo, Ohio and 62 miles west of Cleveland, Ohio. The City rests primarily within Sandusky and Huron Counties, with a small parcel of land in Erie County and is immediately adjacent to Seneca County. Therefore, the Huron and Sandusky County data will be used primarily in data analysis and statistical comparisons. The dominant industry within Huron and Sandusky Counties is manufacturing.



Geography

The City encompasses approximately 5.1 square miles of land. US 20 crosses the City of Bellevue on an east-west line, and is often used by commercial trucks as an alternate route to the Ohio Turnpike, I-80/90. From southwest of the City, SR 18 joins US 20 in the middle of downtown Bellevue and for several miles to the east. SR 269 crosses Bellevue on a north-south line, intersecting with US 20 and SR 18 in downtown Bellevue. Beneath Bellevue there are Karst formations within a stratus of limestone which have produced a number of natural sinkholes.

Demographics

According to the 2000 US Census, the City of Bellevue's population was 8,193, a 0.6% increase in population from 1990. Sandusky County experienced a 0.3% decrease for the same time period. In contrast, both the State of Ohio (+4.7%) and Huron County (+5.8%) reported population growths for that same period. York Township (+11.3%) in Sandusky County, and Lyme Township (+20.4%) in Huron County, both experienced population increases. The City of Bellevue's slight population increase, when compared to the growth in Huron County, York Township, and Lyme Township, however, is not uncommon in the State of Ohio, as growth in unincorporated rural areas typically outpaced development in urban areas during the 1990's.

Chart 2-1. Bellevue Area Population Changes			
<u>Area</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Bellevue	8,146	8,193	0.6%
Huron County	56,240	59,487	5.8%
Sandusky County	61,963	61,792	-0.3%
Ohio	10,847,115	11,353,140	4.7%

Household Trends

The total household growth rate (4.8%) outpaced the population growth rate (0.6%) in the City of Bellevue between 1990 and 2000. However, much like the population growth rate, the household growth rate trailed the State's by approximately 4 percent (refer to **Chart 2-2**). Like the State, both Huron (+10.2%) and Sandusky (+5.6%) Counties household growth rates outpaced that of the City of Bellevue (+4.8%). (Refer to **Chart 2-2**.)

The Bellevue Family Household, Non-Family Household, Female-Headed Household, and Householder over 65 growth rates trailed both the Counties' and the State's rates of growth. Note that the Householders over 65 decreased in the City of Bellevue while increasing in the three other geographic areas for the same period. Bellevue's Married Couple Households declined at the same rate as the State's. Generally, Huron County's household growth rates were higher than Bellevue's, Sandusky County's, and Ohio's in each category of household, except Householder over 65. Sandusky County had the highest growth rate in that category. Huron County also had the highest population growth rate of these four geographic areas.

**Chart 2-2. Bellevue Area Household Composition Changes
1990-2000**

Household Category	Bellevue	Huron Co.	Sandusky Co.	Ohio
Total	4.8%	10.2%	5.6%	8.7%
Family	0.2%	5.6%	0.5%	9.4%
Married Couple	-0.3%	1.7%	-4.0%	-0.3%
Female Headed	7.1%	23.7%	12.2%	12.3%
Non-Family	16.0%	24.9%	20.7%	21.8%
Householder over 65	-2.1%	9.0%	9.6%	7.0%

The household composition trends for the City of Bellevue are very similar to those of Huron and Sandusky Counties and those of the State of Ohio, as shown in **Chart 2-3**. Married Couple households are the majority household types in the aforementioned communities and the State. Married couples with children households are the second leading type of households within the same communities and the State. In the City of Bellevue, as in Huron County, Sandusky County, and the State of Ohio, female householder with no husband present, outnumber male householders with no wife present, by more than 3.5%. Such trends are comparable to those found nationwide during the 1990's.

Chart 2-3. Household Composition

	Bellevue		Huron		Sandusky		Ohio	
Household Type	No.	% of Total Households	No.	% of Total Households	No.	% of Total Households	No.	% of Total HH
Married Couples	1770	52.8	13,112	58.1	13,355	56.1	2,295,348	51.2
Married Couple w/ Children	791	23.6	6074	26.9	5741	24.1	1,001,804	22.3
Male Householder	86	2.6	516	2.3	616	2.6	90,925	2.0
Female Householder	213	6.4	1519	6.7	1504	6.3	321,371	7.2
Non-Family, Male Householder	108	3.2	603	2.7	628	2.6	139,627	3.1
Non-Family Female Householder	68	2.0	346	1.5	389	1.6	98,316	2.2

Average Household Size

The average household size in the City of Bellevue in the year 2000 was 2.46, which is consistent with the 2.49 average household size for the State of Ohio. However, the 2000 census reported slightly higher average household sizes for both Huron County and Sandusky County at 2.64 and 2.56, respectively.

Age Composition

According to the 2000 Census, the median age in the City is 35.8 years, as compared to the State's median age of 36.2 years. The Census reported a median age of 35.2 years for Huron County and 37.7 years for Sandusky County. Accordingly, the age distribution of the City of Bellevue closely resembles that of Huron County, Sandusky County, and the State of Ohio. In 2000, 14.6% of the City's total population was over 65 years of age. Comparatively, the State of Ohio had a lower rate of 12.8%. Bellevue has a higher ratio of elderly persons than do Huron County, Sandusky County, and the State. Older populations generally require more services from the local governments, but generate very little revenue to cover the expenses of those services. Hence, it is important to have a balanced age composition so that the needs of all residents of the community may be met with satisfaction.

Chart 2-4. Age Groups according to Claritas, Inc., 2000								
Area	0-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Med. Age
Bellevue	22%	12.8%	13.5%	14.6%	13.7%	8.9%	14.6%	35.8 years
Huron County	23.3%	13.5%	12.9%	15%	13.8%	9.3%	12.2%	35.2 years
Sandusky County	21.1%	13.0%	12.0%	15.3%	14.5%	9.8%	14.2%	37.7 years
Ohio	21%	13.8%	12.9%	15.4%	14.3%	9.5%	12.8%	36.2 years

Racial Composition

The majority of people in the City of Bellevue are Caucasian (97.3%). Huron and Sandusky Counties have similar racial compositions with Caucasian majorities of 95.4% and 91.9%, respectively. The largest minority in the City of Bellevue is Hispanic/ Latino with 2.7% of the City's total population, which is similar to the State's Hispanic/Latino population (2.0%). Comparatively, Huron County (3.6%) and Sandusky County (6.8%) had higher Hispanic/Latino populations. The City of Bellevue (3.0%), Huron County (1.0%), and Sandusky County (2.8%), have much smaller populations of African Americans than the State's 11.8%. Similarly, the City of Bellevue, Huron County, and Sandusky County's Asian population is 0.3% each, which is 75% less than the State's Asian population percentage of 1.3%.

Median Incomes

Increasing by 35.6% since 1989, the median household income in the City of Bellevue grew at a rate similar to the growth rate of median household incomes in Huron (35.3%) and Sandusky (38.7%) Counties. In both 1989 and 2003, the City of Bellevue had a lower median household income than the Huron and Sandusky Counties and the State, as shown in **Chart 2-5**. The 2003 median household income in the City of Bellevue, \$36,160, is only 82% of the State's median household income (\$44,039). This compares with the City of Bellevue's 1989 median household income (\$26,670) which was 93% of the State's median income (\$28,707). The median income of the State of Ohio grew at a much higher rate than did the median income of the City of Bellevue.

Chart 2-5. Median Household Income (Claritas, Inc.)

Area	1989	2003	% Change
Bellevue	\$26,670	\$36,160	35.6
Huron County	\$27,432	\$37,123	35.3
Sandusky County	\$29,074	\$40,319	38.7
Ohio	\$28,707	\$44,039	53.4

Housing Units

According to the 2000 Census, the housing unit occupancy rate in the City of Bellevue is 93.3 percent, where 3,332 of 3,559 available units are occupied. Of those occupied, 66.6 percent are owned and 33.4 percent are rented. Comparatively, the State's owner occupancy rate was slightly higher at 69.1 percent.

Claritas, Inc. reported that there were a total of 3,578 housing units in the City of Bellevue in the year 2000, with a median housing value of owner-occupied units of \$72,722. At \$99,749, the State's median housing value was approximately 25% higher than that of the City of Bellevue.

Mobile homes as a percent of all housing in Huron (8.8%) and Sandusky (8.2%) Counties were notably higher than the mobile home percentages for the City of Bellevue (2.8%) and the State of Ohio (4.9%). Housing units built prior to 1960 comprise 65.7% of the City's total housing units, which is higher than those for Huron County (47.3%), Sandusky County (57.0%), and the State of Ohio (46.1%).

The 2000 Census reported a vacant housing unit rate of 6.4 % for the City of Bellevue, which is similar to that for the State of Ohio (7.1%), Huron County (5.5%), and Sandusky County (6.1%).

Housing Construction Trends

In the City of Bellevue, 14 homes and 20 apartment buildings were built between 2000 and 2002. The majority were built in 2000, including 16 apartment buildings (with a construction value of \$2,960,300) and 14 houses (with a construction value of \$2,574,995), with an average cost of construction per apartment of \$185,018 and an average cost per home of \$183,928. However, in 2001, no apartment buildings were built and the average cost of construction per home (\$179,146) was 2.6 percent lower for the eight homes that were built that year. In 2002, 4 apartment buildings and 14 homes were constructed at an average cost of \$136,250 and \$191,410, respectively. The average cost per home built in 2002 increased over the average costs in years 2001 and 2000; however, the average cost of apartment buildings decreased.

According to the Ohio Department of Development, 491 residential buildings were constructed between 2000 and 2002 in Huron County. The average cost of construction per unit increased from \$105,273 in 2000 to \$109,028 in 2002. The number of single-unit buildings built each year comprised more than 80% of the total residential units constructed. During the same period, 502 new residential units were constructed in Sandusky County. Contrary to Huron County, the average building cost per unit fell from \$114,758 in 2000 to \$113,624 in 2002. The number of single units built in Sandusky County rose each year with 141 constructed in 2000, 169 in 2001, and 171 in 2002.

Transportation

Residents of the City currently have access to three major modes of transportation: road, rail, and air. US 20 passes through the City of Bellevue (east and west). SR 18 (generally southwest and east) and SR 269 (north and south) also pass through the City's downtown. SR 4, which intersects with US 20 east of the City and with SR 113 northeast of Bellevue, is a heavily-traveled north-south highway providing the most direct route to Lake Erie for south-central Ohioans, as well as the closest access to the Ohio Turnpike for the Bellevue area. In November 2004, ODOT upgraded and synchronized the traffic signals along US 20 in the City. The US 20 upgrades in downtown Bellevue also included street widening, resurfacing, and lane improvements, as well as sidewalk repairs.

Rail service is provided by the Norfolk & Southern and Wheeling & Lake Erie on tracks passing through the City from the west, southwest, east and northeast. Adjacent to Bellevue's Industrial Park in the northeast, is a large classification rail yard.

Commercial passenger and air cargo service is available at three readily accessible airports: Toledo Express (70 miles west), Cleveland Hopkins (70 miles east), and Akron-Canton (100 miles southeast), and air cargo service is also available at the Mansfield Lahm Regional airport (40 miles south). Private aviation and charter flights are available at several airports in the area including the Sandusky County Airport, just west of Clyde, Griffing Airport in Sandusky, and the Tiffin Airport to the southwest.

Recreation and Culture

The City of Bellevue, Ohio Area Tourism and Visitors Bureau, invites residents, visitors and tourists to "Take a break from the Lake and discover Bellevue." The area offers an array of historical attractions and activities for people to explore. One such attraction is Lyme Village, which provides visitors with the opportunity to experience nineteenth century living. Additionally, Seneca Caverns offer a hands-on experience to residents who wish to personally explore some of the City of Bellevue's natural history. Other historical attractions include The Mad River and NKP Railroad Museum, a collection of memorabilia from the City of Bellevue's railroad history, and the Bellevue Heritage museum. Yet another historical attraction is the Sorrowful Mother Shrine. The Shrine, constructed in 1850, is the Midwest's oldest place of pilgrimage dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and is a center for meditation, religious services, and exploration of the area's religious history.

The City of Bellevue also has many cultural attractions for both residents and visitors to enjoy. One such cultural attraction is the Bellevue Society for the Arts, which provides a 342-seat theater/reception area for lectures and local community concerts. Also, on the third Saturday of

September, the Society hosts its Annual Midwest Bookfest. In the near future, the Bellevue Society for the Arts anticipates hosting larger, traveling shows, musicians, and speakers. The facilities are also available for use by corporations for meetings, training sessions and seminars. In addition, the Society provides many educational programs and studio space that instructors in the community use for music lessons for Bellevue area youth. In the near future, the Society hopes to expand these studio facilities to accommodate painting and sculpting lessons.

In addition to the activities held at the Shrine and Society for the Arts, the City of Bellevue boasts a full calendar of festivals and community events. Representative of these annual events are the Pioneer Days Festival and Halloween of Yesteryear in Lyme Village, the Community Days Festival the last weekend of June, and Christmas of Yesteryear. The Woodcarvers' Den Carving Show, Pancake and Sausage Brunch, and John Gibson Memorial Blue Grass Gospel Sing also offer diverse alternatives for the community.

The greater Bellevue area provides residents and visitors with a variety of outdoor activities and facilities including a campground, numerous area golf courses, a paint ball field, and a hunt club. Within, and managed by, the City of Bellevue, there are two indoor recreational facilities and eight parks, providing fitness, wellness and recreational opportunities ranging from Nautilus equipment workouts, football, soccer, baseball, softball, tennis and basketball to swimming, fishing, and picnics. The City has a 1.5 mile walking trail in the northeast of the community in the wooded area adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant named the Lost River Trail. Open for use, though not yet paved, the trail is to be completed in the Summer of 2006.

The Sandusky County Park District directly supports the City of Bellevue Parks and Recreation Department through the Local Park Improvement Grant Program. The program has supplied the City of Bellevue with more than \$45,000 to provide for outdoor recreation improvements. Moreover, the County Park District is working to extend the North Coast Inland Trail that will lead into Bellevue. Currently, the CR 177 right-of-way is secured and the District plans to construct the Bellevue to Clyde section of the North Coast Inland Trail soon. The County Park District plans to cooperate with Firelands Rails-To-Trails to build the Huron County North Coast Inland Trail segment that will link the City of Bellevue to Kipton.

Utilities

Columbia Gas of Ohio provides natural gas services to the area. Verizon North services the telephone needs of the Bellevue area. The electrical supplier is Ohio Edison, and cable television service is provided by Time Warner Cable.

The City's water treatment plant was put into operation in 1932, and has been modified in 1955, 1967, 1971, 1972, 1976, and 2004. The plant typically filters 1.7 - 2.0 million gallons of water per day, using about 75% of the 2.6 million gallons per day plant capacity. The City also maintains 5 reservoirs, the first of which was constructed in 1874 and the last of which was built in 1946. The capacity of the reservoirs ranges from 70 million to 700 million gallons. The City is in the process of entering into an agreement to purchase treated water from Erie County to supplement its own capabilities and provide for future growth, and has recently completed an optimization study regarding needed upgrades to the water treatment plant and other system components.

Bellevue's Wastewater Treatment facility is located adjacent to the Industrial Park in northeast

Bellevue. Constructed in 1969, with expansions in 1988 and 1994, the plant has a design flow of 2.0 million gallons per day (MGD), with a 24-hour peak flow of 5.6 MGD and an average daily flow of 1.1 MGD. The City has recently completed a \$7 million upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant that included a state-of-the-art process to convert bio solids into compost suitable for residential applications, the first of its type in the State of Ohio.

Fiber optics is critical to the future of the City, especially with regard to industrial and commercial development. Currently the railroad has a high-speed fiber hub on Center Street at the railroad and the School District has its own internal system. Fiber is not available elsewhere in the City or Townships.

Education

Bellevue City Schools, as managed by the Bellevue Board of Education, is committed to meeting the needs of more than 2400 K-12 students. The school district encompasses 137 square miles in the greater Bellevue area. Bellevue City Schools maintains seven educational buildings (one senior high, one junior high, and five elementary schools) and one administration building, all of which were built before 1970. In addition, Bellevue residents have access to two private educational institutions for K-12 students. Within 55 miles, residents have access to higher education institutions including Oberlin College, Ashland University, Tiffin University, Heidelberg College, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green State University Firelands Campus, Terra Community College, and Lorain County Community College. Several technical and trade schools are also readily accessible to Bellevue residents.

In order to comply with the Ohio State Senate Bill 55, Bellevue City Schools developed and published a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) and also published an overview of that plan. The plan details six goals which were developed after community leaders, local business leaders, Board of Education members, and school staff analyzed approximately 12 months of data. The District's first goal is to continuously improve student performance through managerial responsibilities. The second goal is to obtain an "effective rating from the State by improving curriculum, instruction, teaching, and learning. Third, the plan commits Bellevue City Schools to improving existing educational facilities that could lead to improved student performance. The fourth goal listed in the CIP overview, communicates the School District's commitment to improving student services and student service programs. The fifth goal discusses technological improvements and using technology in the classroom to improve student performance. Finally, the Bellevue City Schools CIP indicates that enhancing community involvement in the school district to improve student performance is its sixth goal.

Though each of the six goals targets different subject matter, each goal is in place to improve student performance in order to receive an "effective" rating from the State. Each goal includes 5 to 14 objectives that detail how that goal is to be achieved, and there are 47 total objectives among the 6 goals. As of August 29, 2002, 6.3 percent (3 of the 47 objectives) had been completed, 12.8 percent (6 objectives) had not been started, and 80.9 percent (38 objectives) were in progress.

Industries/Economy

The City of Bellevue Chamber of Commerce's primary functions include guiding development, encouraging business expansion, and promoting industrial growth. Housed with the Chamber is the Bellevue Development Corporation, which has assumed all responsibilities for industrial development. According to the Chamber, the top five employers in the City of Bellevue are:

- Norfolk Southern Railroad (400 employees),
- Bellevue Hospital (400 employees),
- Armstrong Manufacturing (350 employees),
- Auto-Plas Manufacturing/ Precision Automotive (300), and
- Tower Automotive (140 employees).

The Bellevue Hospital, Memorial Hospital (Sandusky County), and the Fisher-Titus Medical Center (Huron County) are among the major employers for Sandusky and Huron Counties. According to the Ohio Department of Development, the area's primary industry is manufacturing. Accordingly, the majority of principal employers are manufacturing firms, who provide more than 21,000 jobs in Huron and Sandusky Counties combined. Not surprisingly, more than 1,800 Bellevue jobs are in the manufacturing sector. The local government, retail trade, health care and social assistance sectors also provide a large portion of the employment for the area.

The City of Bellevue has two industrial parks. The A. D. Wolfe Industrial Park is located in the northeast region of the City and is comprised of 48 acres. The second park, aptly named Bellevue Industrial Park, is comprised of 6.5 acres in the western region of the City.

Unemployment

According to the Ohio Department of Development, the unemployment rates of Huron and Sandusky Counties have been relatively stable. In 2002, Huron and Sandusky Counties had unemployment rates of 8.1% and 6.3%, respectively, both of which were higher than the State's rate of 5.2%. Huron County experienced a rise from 7.2% to 8.1% between 2000 and 2002, a 12.5% increase over three years. Sandusky County's unemployment rate increased from 4.9% in 2000 to 6.3% in 2002, a 28.6% increase over three years. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the State of Ohio's unemployment rate also increased from 3.9% in 1999 to 5.9% in 2002, a 51% increase over four years.

Labor Force

According to the Ohio Department of Development, total employment for Huron County and Sandusky County was 27,400 and 29,400, respectively for 2001. The manufacturing sector was the largest employer in Huron County, employing 36% of the labor force. In Sandusky County, the manufacturing sector was also the largest employer, employing 34% of the labor force. The total civilian labor force of the State of Ohio in 2001 consisted of 5,874,045 people, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Department of Development reported that among the major employers within the State, national retailers, hospital groups, and General Motors were the leading employers.

Community Services

Police Service

The Bellevue Police Department employs a customer-oriented philosophy in order to promote a sense of safety and high quality of life in the City of Bellevue. Thirteen police officers, four communication officers, and a full-time detective are currently employed by the Bellevue Police Department. Thirteen auxiliary officers and one Special Response Team member of the Huron County Sheriff Office assist the City's police staff during special events or circumstances. The Bellevue Police Department patrols more than fifty square miles of roadways covering four major routes in close proximity to the City. In order to patrol those fifty square miles, the Bellevue Police Department has twelve marked and two unmarked cruisers. The Department is located at 3000 Seneca Industrial Parkway, adjacent to the City Administration offices in the City center.

Fire Service

Bellevue's Fire Department has been housed in its current building since its construction in 1985. The facility, located on Southwest St., has 3,800 square feet of office and living space and an additional 3,250 square feet of truck bay space. The Department's three-bay station is used to service a 97 square mile area, which includes not only the City of Bellevue, but also Lyme, Thompson, and York Townships under contract agreements. The department's service area has been extended by mutual aid contracts to all Huron County communities, as well as Attica, Clyde, Fremont, Green Springs, Perkins Township, and the City of Sandusky.

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt02 rev 31405.wpd

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

3

Local Attitudes
and Planning
Themes

Chapter 3: Local Attitudes and Planning Themes

As described previously, the planning process included efforts to reach out to the public and community leaders to identify and define community planning issues. These efforts included the Steering Committee meetings, a joint meeting with the four townships, individual meetings with each of the four townships, key person interviews, two public visioning sessions, and a community survey.

It is recognized that each of the public outreach efforts has inherent advantages and disadvantages. Mail surveys provide information from a representative sample of people who might not otherwise provide their opinions. Public meetings allow for dialog and discussion, but only among a comparatively small group of people who are able to attend a meeting on a given night. By using multiple approaches to reach out to residents and community leaders, it is hoped that this planning process avoided the pitfall of over-reliance on one citizen participation technique, and provides a more complete representation of community issues.

One challenging aspect to utilizing multiple citizen participation mechanisms is the fact that results are not easily compared. Consequently, a substantial amount of time has been spent on the task of discovering recurring themes in the results of the various citizen participation efforts. Summaries of each of the various information gathering sessions are provided immediately below, with more detailed reports from these sessions provided in **Appendices 3-1 through 3-5**. The balance of this Chapter is a listing of the recurring thoughts and perceptions that were identified among the various participation mechanisms, organized into the dominant community planning themes. These are the issues that are addressed in more detail in the subsequent chapters of the Plan.

Major Issues identified by the Steering Committee

In late 2003, the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee had its first two meetings, during which the Committee members were asked to identify the community's assets and liabilities as the likely basis for the framework for the Comprehensive Plan. Discussions were focused on the subjects of: land use, quality of life, public facilities, utilities and services, transportation, commercial and economic development, and schools/education.

(See Appendix 3-1.)

The main issues identified by the Steering Committee early in the planning process, many of which have been echoed in subsequent information gathering, public input sessions, and/or the community survey, include:

Land Use

- Commercial development should be encouraged and planned on the west and east ends of US 20.
- City zoning regulations were last updated in the 1980's and are out of date. Some of the surrounding townships have no zoning.
- Historic homes and buildings are an asset that should be preserved.
- Downtown revitalization is important, including conversions to residential.
- Development of the Quarry area, possibly including parks and recreational space is important.

- Existing and potential land use conflicts between adjacent land uses are an issue, especially between industrial and residential land uses.
- There are few remaining places to build new housing within the current City limits.
- The cemetery will be full within fifteen years.

Quality of Life

- The City of Bellevue has many assets that positively affect quality of life. These include:
 - Excellent schools
 - Senior and assisted living housing
 - The Society for The Arts and its Community Theater
 - The Community Center
 - The City Centre exercise area
 - The Library
 - The Bellevue Historical Society and its plans for the Tremont House
 - The Railroad Museum
- US 20 is the main issue for the downtown revitalization efforts.
- The School District has many issues to address including aging buildings, recent failed levies, the need for additional space, etc.
- The City needs more baseball/softball fields.
- More middle-income housing (\$100-150,000) is needed.
- Senior housing/condos with inside parking is needed.
- The empty movie theater building downtown should be addressed.

Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services

- Storm water issues revolve around the sink holes that are common to this area.
- Water and wastewater systems are current; recent and planned upgrades will address anticipated demands for next 20 years.
 - There is ample water for the future, especially if an agreement with Erie County is executed.
 - All water lines and connections on Main Street in the downtown were replaced with in conjunction with the work in 2004 on US 20 in the downtown.
 - Lyme Township needs water (including Lyme School).
 - The community of Flat Rock in Thompson Township needs water and/or sewer.
- The Police Department is in good shape.
- The Fire Department, with paid full and part-time firefighters, is in good shape.
 - The City contracts fire services with York, Lyme and Thompson Townships.
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are contracted to a private firm at this time.
 - Some thought has been given to a City EMS Department.
 - The City is currently cross-training City firefighters as EMT's.
 - There is generally poor EMS response from the Counties.
 - The EMS contractor also provides services to:
 - Parts of York and Groton Townships
 - All of Thompson and Lyme Townships
 - It could be an issue for the Townships if the City forms its own department. Services may have to be limited to the City, forcing the Townships to rely on County service or to enter into agreements with the City.
- High-speed fiber is recognized as necessary.
 - The railroad has a high-speed fiber hub on Center Street at the railroad.

- The School District has its own internal system.
- Fiber is not currently available in the City or the Townships.
- This could be an opportunity for the City or a private developer.
 - Fiber should be linked to the industrial parks.
 - Fiber should also be provided to City and Township businesses.

Transportation

- The US 20 widening project and the new/synchronized traffic signals completed in 2004 from CR 302 to the east City boundary should be a major improvement to traffic flow through the City, especially in the downtown.
 - The subway (railroad underpass) bottleneck was widened to three lanes in 2004, improving traffic flow.
- Access management issues are important all along US 20 through the City.
- The City's proximity to I-80/90, SR's 18, 269 and 4 is an asset.
- The two railroads are an asset.
 - A grade separation on Southwest Street (SR 269) is planned for 2005.
 - Additional grade separations are still needed.
- The Sandusky County airport and the City's proximity to Toledo and Cleveland airports are assets.
- Signage and wayfinding through the City is okay.
 - There are some issues with temporary signs.
 - New gateways are needed, especially on the west side.

Commercial and Economic Development

- The Downtown is a critical commercial core. Issues include:
 - US 20 truck traffic.
 - The need to identify opportunities.
 - A Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) exists, providing the City with the opportunity to offer tax abatement on new building construction and renovation.
 - The fate of old Theater building.
- New Industrial Park in the northeast quadrant of the City is an asset.
 - Infrastructure to the new park is to be completed in 2004.
- There is a potential industrial area to the south of the City along SR 269.
- New commercial development is likely to occur both west and east along US 20, and north along SR 269.
 - Some businesses identified as needed include:
 - Motels
 - Restaurants
 - A Dry Cleaners
- Good schools help attract new employers, thus the school system needs to be maintained.

Schools and Education

- The Schools are a strong unifying factor among the City and the townships.
- Operating bond issues have passed; while recent facility levies have not.
- The School's Band and Choir programs are highly successful.
 - There is a critical need for additional space for these programs.
- Specific issues regarding schools include:
 - Water and/or sewer are needed to York and Lyme Schools.
 - Transportation issues exist around various schools, especially:
 - Shumaker, where sidewalks are needed and conflicts exist between cars and busses.
 - The high school has transportation issues.
 - There are issues with the facilities, including:
 - Aging buildings at York, Lyme and Ellis, as well as at the High School, which was built in 1963, and renovated in 1968.
 - Some schools require more space, including:
 - Shumaker
 - York (may need new school)
 - Band and Choir facilities
 - Enrollment is decreasing at Lyme School.

Major Issues identified by Key Persons

Interviews were held on March 23 and 24, 2004 with twelve individuals identified by the Steering Committee members as "key people" in the community. Each person was given a list of eighteen areas of concern (many of which were similar to issues in the community survey) and was asked to rank them with regard to degree of importance to the City of Bellevue and the Comprehensive Plan. While the discussions in each interview are to remain confidential, comments on each of the issues were recorded and summarized in order to compare the thoughts of these twelve individuals with those of the Steering Committee and the responses to the community survey.

A summary of how these individuals ranked the various issues and their comments follows. A detailed report on the interviews, including comments, is provided in **Appendix 3-2**. It is noteworthy that just prior to the Key Person interviews in March, there was a lot of publicity regarding some personnel management issues in the Bellevue Police Department that may have distorted both the nature and the amount of attention given to that subject in the interviews, especially when compared to the community survey four months later.

As a composite, the key persons ranked the **eighteen issues** from most important to least important as follows:

1. The City must continue to provide adequate fire protection.
2. The City should coordinate its planning with the School District's Plan and support efforts to improve the schools.
3. There are several specific sites that should have railroad grade separations.
4. Bellevue must provide adequate police protection.
5. The City's plan to provide an increased quality water supply through cooperation with Erie County is very important and should be aggressively pursued.

6. Any new developments should be properly buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.
7. The City needs to promote the interconnection and extension of the existing fiber optic networks already in the Schools, Railroad and Hospital.
8. The City should force property owners to maintain their property.
9. Parking is an issue in the downtown, especially around the Post Office.
10. The City should create and maintain attractive Gateways to the City - especially along US 20 and SR 269.
11. Commercial development should be directed away from traditional agricultural and residential areas and focused in the downtown and along US 20 and SR 269.
12. The City should take advantage of the existing State housing programs (CHIS and CHIP) to improve the housing stock in Bellevue.
13. The City needs to be continually expanding and improving its park system.
14. Industrial development should be concentrated in the northeast quadrant.
15. The City needs to have more parks, ball fields and recreational areas.
16. New land for additional cemetery space needs to be identified and acquired, although possibly not as a City project.
17. The revitalization of the downtown is critical to the future of Bellevue.
18. The City should identify and recruit specific businesses to the downtown.

When asked to rate the City and the Schools on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 the highest rating, the City was rated a 3.50 and the Schools a 3.96.

When asked in what areas the City spends too much or too little money, the most frequent answers were:

The City spends too much money on:

- None. The City is very frugal.
- Overtime pay, especially in the police and fire departments. This is due to being undermanned.

The City spends too little money on:

- Street resurfacing.
- Maintaining streets, water and sewer.

Finally, when asked to rank the infrastructure components that need to be improved the most, the consensus list was:

1. Roadways
2. Water treatment and distribution system
3. Storm sewers
4. Sanitary sewer/wastewater treatment.

Major Issues identified through the Community Survey

In July 2004, the City mailed a Community Survey questionnaire to all City households. Over 3,270 surveys were mailed, with a total of 287, or nearly 10%, returned. This is considered to be a very good return for a survey of this type, and a statistically accurate reflection of the entire community.

Detailed information on the tabulation of the returned survey responses, including comments, is included in **Appendix 3-3**. Summarizing, the **top 10 areas of concern** (out of 35 questions) in the Bellevue Community Survey were:

1. The best alternative for a Route 20 By-pass for trucks needs to be identified and built.
2. The City should consider alternative methods for reducing truck traffic in the downtown.
3. Parking is an issue in the downtown, especially around the Post Office.
4. Any new developments should be properly buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.
5. The improvement and maintenance of sidewalks is important,
6. The City needs to improve its communication with the public.
7. The City should coordinate planning with the School District's Plan and do whatever possible to support and constantly improve the schools.
8. The City's plan to provide an increased quality water supply through cooperation with Erie County is very important.
9. Industrial growth is vital to the growth of the City.
10. Downtown revitalization is critical for the City.

Similarly, the **10 lowest areas of concern** in the Community Survey were:

26. The City should create a Municipal Foundation that can accept tax-deductible donations, bequeaths, etc. to fund civic projects and activities.
27. The City needs to enhance and support tourism.
28. The City needs to create and maintain attractive and welcoming Gateway signage at the entrances to the City, especially on US 20 and SR 269.
29. New lands for additional cemetery space need to be identified and acquired.
30. There is a need to create housing for disabled children as they get older.
31. Bellevue should develop its own municipal electric service.
32. The City needs to have more parks, ball fields and recreational areas.
33. The City should seek a Charter form of government.
34. Additional recreational opportunities (such as the quarry opportunity) should be pursued, even if it means additional finances would be needed.
35. The City needs an ice rink for hockey and recreation.

It is interesting to highlight the *similarities and differences between the **Key Person interview results** and the results of the **Community Survey***, especially with regard to which issues were considered most and least important.

The top two issues from the Community Survey dealing with a US 20 Bypass and alternative methods for reducing the truck traffic in the downtown, were not directly addressed in the Key Person interviews. They were discussed by some of those interviewed when asked about revitalization of the downtown, but even that specific issue was considered relatively unimportant by most of the key persons (#17 of 18); while downtown revitalization ranked #10 out of 35 in the Community Survey.

The areas of agreement regarding *important issues*, arranged in a combined priority order, include:

- The City should coordinate its planning with the School District's plan and do whatever possible to support and constantly improve our schools.
- Any new developments should be buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.
- Parking is an issue in the downtown, especially around the Post Office.
- The City's plan to provide for an increased quality water supply through cooperation with Erie County is very important.
- Fire and Police coverage are adequate for the City.
- There are several specific sites that should have a railroad grade separation.
- Industrial growth is vital to the growth of the City.

In contrast, the areas which were generally agreed to be of *lesser concern* at this time among both the Key Persons and the community at large include:

- Creating housing for disabled children as they get older.
- The City doing more to maintain the appearance of private property.
- Developing Gateways to the City.
- Identifying and acquiring additional cemetery space.
- Improving parks and recreation opportunities.

There were three other opportunities for public input in this comprehensive planning process that are not as easily documented or quantified, specifically the two public visioning sessions and the public meeting to focus on common issues between the four Townships and the City.

Public Visioning Session # 1 - January 13, 2004

The first public visioning session was held on January 13, 2004, in the City Council meeting room and was very well attended, with over 100 residents and officials of both the City and the four surrounding Townships attending.

Following introductory remarks about the comprehensive planning process and the previously identified issues facing the City, there were break-out sessions on each of five separate topics:

- Schools;
- Public Facilities, Utilities and Services;
- Transportation;
- Downtown and Economic Development; and
- Quality of Life.

The break-out session discussions were led by teams made up of members of the Steering Committee and personnel from Poggemeyer Design Group. After the break-out sessions, the entire group reconvened for brief reports of the break-out session discussions.

Summaries of the five break-out sessions are presented in their entirety in **Appendix 3-4**. Highlights of the sessions are as follows:

Schools

- Shumaker School
 - More space is needed. The plan for expansion of this building includes an additional classroom for each grade plus classrooms for gifted, music, and art, and a cafetorium.
(This issue was on the ballot in the Spring of 2004, but did not pass.)
- A middle school may become a reality in the future.
- The School Board feels strongly about preserving the neighborhood elementary schools. They do not want to put all 1200 of the elementary students in the district in one building.
- To date, the Board has been reluctant to approach the State for facilities funding because they are concerned that the State might make them replace all the elementary school buildings and maybe the JHS and HS buildings as well.
- The lack of railroad grade separations is a major issue for bussing and transporting students throughout the District.
- York, Lyme and Ellis elementary schools are aging and have facilities and utilities issues.
- A major problem is getting correct information about the schools to the public, and especially the voting public.
 - The Jaycees have offered to help, especially during levy campaigns.
 - Details about tax abatements and compensating company donations to the schools are frequently misreported. For example, as of 2004, there are 23 school donation agreements in place, with the schools receiving \$470,000 per year more through these agreements than they would have had there been no tax abatements.
 - It was recommended that the schools provide press releases for the local paper and work one-on-one with reporters to make sure that articles provide accurate information.
- The quality of education at the Bellevue Schools has been improving substantially. In 1997, the schools met only 6 of the State's 25 indicators. In 2003, they met 17 of 25, and in 2004 they will be meeting 23 of 25.

Public Facilities, Utilities and Services

- Water
 - The current supply of water is inadequate for future growth. An agreement with Erie County for additional supply is very important.
 - Many wells in the area, especially north of the City, are polluted due to the numerous sink holes in the area that receive run-off storm water.
 - The community of Flat Rock needs City water and/or wastewater service.
 - York School needs water.
- Storm water management

- Major rain events cause flooding in low areas due to the general lack of storm drains and sewers.
- Poor storm water management causes water quality problems for outlying areas.
- Police, Fire and EMS
 - Traffic enforcement along US 20 (speeding and other violations) should be stronger.
 - Groton Township residents do not want fire protection issues tied to annexation.
 - There are concerns about EMS service to the Townships if Bellevue's contract with a private firm to supply these services is not renewed. (The City renewed its contract for EMS services at the end of 2004 for five years.)
- Parks and Recreation
 - There are currently only four City ballfields plus two at the schools.
 - A bike trail is needed to connect with those east and west of Bellevue.
 - There is a need for a year-round swimming pool facility.
 - Flat Rock subdivision needs a park.
- Zoning
 - There are serious concerns that current residential or agricultural land is being converted to industrial or commercial use once it is annexed, without proper buffering from adjacent residential uses.
 - Thompson and York Townships currently have no zoning.
- Cable and Internet services; Electric service
 - All new lines should be installed underground.
 - Fiber optic networks at the schools, hospital and railroad should be connected and used as the basis for a City-wide system.
 - The City should consider having its own municipal power company.

Transportation

- Removing truck traffic from the downtown is critical.
 - There is considerable interest and discussion about US 20 Bypass alternatives.
 - A number of grade separations would be required with a Bypass, especially with a southern Bypass.
 - A Bypass should begin further to the east and west than currently envisioned by ODOT.
- There is strong support for the planned traffic lights on US 20 at both CR 302 and CR 308 intersections.
 - A left-turn lane should be added for eastbound traffic at the New Hospital access road (CR 302 intersection).
- Intersection signage in the downtown needs to be more visible and better maintained.
- Seniors need a transportation service provider.

Downtown and Economic Development

- Changes in the downtown have occurred over time, due to:
 - The impact of Sandusky Mall,
 - Absentee landlords with little commitment to property improvements, and
 - Deterioration of the building exteriors.
- Traffic and Parking in the downtown are critical issues. **(Note: comments were made prior to the Summer 2004 changes to Main Street and the downtown sidewalks.)**
 - Truck traffic hinders parking on Main Street, as it is hard to parallel park and exit the car with the traffic as heavy as is it, and especially with the number of semi-trucks. (Parallel parking improved greatly with 2004 widening and related improvements.)
 - Parking is ample, but inconvenient.
 - There are minimal opportunities for rear parking or rear entry for most buildings.
 - Pedestrian traffic has a difficult time in the downtown.
 - There is no residential housing in the downtown.
 - Farmers must go through downtown to get to Bungee/Solae (formerly Central Soya) with their crops.
- Strengths/Drawing Cards/Promotional Tools for Downtown and the City
 - Historic properties
 - The Library
 - The New Hospital
 - The Hardware Store, new CVS, and the restaurants
 - The existing Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)
- Areas for future development include:
 - Southeast of the City with industrial development,
 - West along US 20.
 - Parks and recreational areas need to be expanded.
- The US 20 Bypass must happen for the area to develop and for the downtown to be revitalized.
 - There is no consensus for the SR 18 alternative being promoted by ODOT as the best location.

Quality of Life

- Housing
 - Develop the quarry area into a residential complex with a golf course.
 - Concentrate industrial areas to minimize land use conflicts with residential.
 - Preserve historic homes, especially those on Main Street.
 - Housing needs include:
 - Independent living units for seniors
 - Upscale housing
 - Housing for disabled children as they get older

- Parks and Recreation
 - Park expansions are needed.
 - More ball diamonds should be constructed.
 - Sand volleyball courts should be considered.
 - Community Park should be expanded to the south.
 - Connect a local bike path to the main bike path that runs from Fremont to Clyde.
 - An indoor pool is needed.
 - An ice skating rink is needed.
- Arts and Institutions
 - Assist the Society for the Arts in their efforts.
 - Expand the library.
 - Enhance and promote the Railroad Museum.
- Other
 - The City needs public transit and taxi services.
 - Convert the old hospital to assisted living units.
 - Create a municipal foundation to fund civic projects and activities.
 - Improve sidewalks, and make them ADA compliant.
 - Expand teen after school programs.
 - A senior center is needed.
 - Better signage for key landmarks and traffic assistance is needed.

Public Meeting with Four Townships - February 18, 2004

The City scheduled a public input meeting at the High School that would focus on the concerns of the four surrounding Townships and the importance of their involvement in the City's comprehensive planning process. Trustees and residents from each of the Townships were in attendance, as were members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, City officials, City residents, and PDG representatives.

A copy of the summary of this meeting is provided in **Appendix 3-5**. Input and discussion from the meeting relative to the planning process are summarized as follows:

Opening comments from each of the Townships regarding their key concerns included:

- Lyme Township (east and southeast of the City, Huron County):
 - Wants to keep the Township intact.
 - Recognizes the need to discuss annexation issues.
 - Wants modest growth, but has few funds to help attract development.
 - Needs to consider both Rural Water and City water soon.
 - The SR 4/US 20 intersection needs water and sewer.
 - Agrees that a plan for growth needs to be in place.

- Thompson Township (southwest of the City, Seneca County):
 - Agrees with Lyme Township's comments.
 - Agrees that trying to match the plans of four Townships and four Counties with the City's planning is a big issue.
 - Stated that the unincorporated Village of Flat Rock needs water and sewer.
- York Township (west and northwest of the City, Sandusky County):
 - Feels that growth along US 20 west of City already impacting York Township.
 - Expressed concerns about streets that are half in the Township and half in the City.
 - Feels that the new hospital will mean a whole new ball game.
- Groton Township (northeast of the City, Erie County):
 - Wants to stay intact as a township.
 - Is willing to work together with City and other Townships.
 - Wants growth, with the schools benefitting.
 - Wants to retain property taxes.
 - Already has Erie County water.

Responding comments by City officials included the following:

- Most growth is likely to be along the US 20, SR 4, and SR 269 corridors.
- The former City position that it would not extend water and sewer services without annexation has changed. The City realizes that it is in its best financial interests to provide water and/or sewer without requiring annexation.
- The City will not force annexations; only volunteer/requested annexations will be considered.
- The Mayor cautioned Townships that they would likely to be disappointed with Rural Water due to quality, volume and pressure of water which could preclude industrial and commercial development.
- The City is two years from being able to meet all foreseeable water demands.
- The City is undertaking a \$7 million upgrade to its Wastewater Treatment Plant to be completed by December, 2005, and will be adding two new water towers.
- The Townships need to tell the City what services they will want, as part of an annexation agreement.

Planning issues to be discussed with the Townships include:

- Land Use
- Water & Sewer
- Recreation
- The new hospital
- Roads
- Storm Water management
- Residential/Commercial land use conflicts
- Schools
- Annexation

Continued discussion at the meeting identified several additional issues, including:

- Why is there a need to add industrial uses on all four sides of the City?
 - The current plan is for no new industrial growth to the west, only commercial and residential.
 - Industrial growth will be primarily in the Wolfe Industrial Park in the northeast quadrant of the City, and south of the City along SR 269.
- The Schools have a concern about the future use of the old hospital which is immediately adjacent to the High School.
- There is a history of unsuccessful attempts at mutual aid agreements between Groton Township and the City.
- The officials of the five communities represented at this largely unprecedented joint meeting should make it a point to get together at least annually to discuss areas of mutual concern.

Public Visioning Session #2 - September 14, 2004

The main focus of the second public visioning session was on the evolving major development scenarios and resulting proposed land use planning. Six separate stations were set up with those in attendance invited to visit each station, ask questions and/or offer additional input. Following an hour of station visiting, everyone convened for a short presentation on the development scenarios and the progress to date of the comprehensive planning process, followed by a question and answer session.

Since the focus of this Visioning Session was on economic development rather than general in nature, it is discussed in detail in **Chapter 9: Economic and Downtown Development**.

Local Attitudes and Planning Themes Summary

All of the various public input mechanisms, including Steering Committee input, Key Person interviews, the Community Survey and the three public meetings/visioning sessions, have been utilized to determine a consensus for the focus of the City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Master Plan.

The remaining chapters of this Plan deal specifically with those issues that were determined to be of most interest and concern to the community as a whole for the future of Bellevue. Those issues are summarized as follows and are discussed in greater detail in their respective Chapters.

Economic/Downtown Development

- Reduce truck traffic in the downtown.
 - Identify and build the best Bypass alternative.
 - Identify other ways to reduce traffic before the Bypass is constructed.
- Improve parking downtown.
- Improve and maintain sidewalks City-wide.
- Develop community partnerships for economic development.

- Consider Heritage Tourism development.
- Identify sites for industrial and business development.
 - Industrial
 - Northeast industrial park
 - 269 south
 - West between US 20 and the railroad and south of the railroad
 - Commercial
 - West along US 20 on the north side
 - East along US 20 (in the little triangle)
 - The US 20/ SR 4 Intersection
 - The area around the new hospital
- Develop Annexation and Revenue Sharing Agreements with the Townships.
- Revitalize the downtown.
 - Identify and attract unique local businesses to the downtown.
 - Design guidelines should be enforced, especially in the downtown.

Communication and Cooperation

- Improvements are needed:
 - With the public.
 - With the Schools, in terms of:
 - Long-range planning coordination, and
 - Support of school funding issues.
 - With the Townships, in terms of:
 - Land use planning, and
 - Zoning coordination.

Urban Design Elements such as Streetscaping/Gateways/Signage

- Design Standards should be developed.
- Streetscaping should be required, and should include:
 - Trees/Planters
 - Lighting
 - Benches
 - Textured pavement
 - ADA requirements
- Signage Control is needed:
 - In the downtown, and
 - Along major corridors (US 20, SR 269, SR 18, SR 113).
- Gateways should be considered from all directions. (However, there was not strong support for gateways in the survey or the key person interviews.)

Public Facilities and Services

Improvements are needed regarding existing infrastructure, the City must plan for renovation and/or expansion to support growth, and there were concerns about scheduled and preventative maintenance practices of the City. Specific issues include:

- Water
 - Erie County agreement
 - New water towers
 - Lines, new and replacement, and the extension of services

- Wastewater
 - Extension of services
- Electric power (not much support for a municipal electric system in survey)
- Telephone and cable
- Fiber optics
- Fire Protection
- Police Protection

Transportation

- A need for railroad grade separations.
- A need for a Bypass.
- Sidewalks require improvements and new sidewalks are needed:
 - In new developments, and
 - Connections with the downtown.

Quality of Life Issues

- Parks & Recreation
 - A comprehensive inventory is needed.
 - Plans are needed for growth, and renovation of facilities.
 - More activities are needed for kids.
 - Bike trails are desired.
 - An indoor pool is needed.
 - A skating rink (low support in survey) is desired.
- Housing
 - Seniors - Independent living
 - Assisted living
 - Buffer existing housing from non-residential uses
 - Areas for new developments
- Additional cemetery space will be needed soon.
(Low priority in survey and key person interviews)
- Environmental Issues
 - Sink holes
 - Storm water management
 - Extension of water and sewer
 - Lyme Township
 - Flat Rock
 - York School

Historic/Cultural Resources/City Image

- Capitalize on Heritage Tourism.
- Conduct an inventory of assets.
- Preserve historic buildings and the downtown.

cP:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt03 rev31805.wpd

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

4

General
Trends

Chapter 4: General Trends

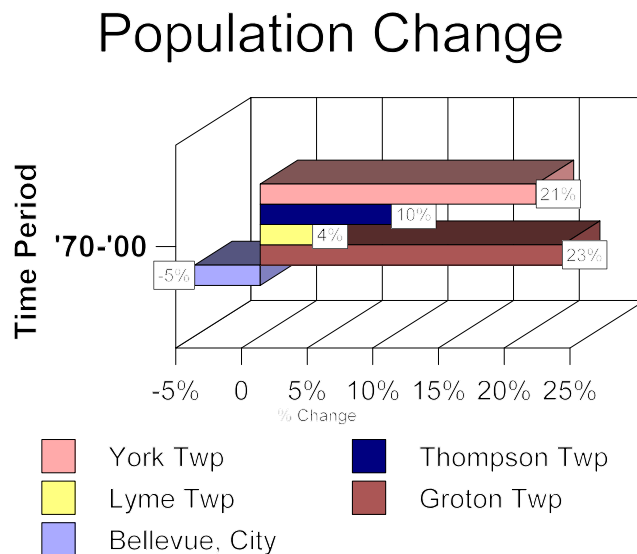
Local Trends

Some local trends were identified earlier that help to describe how the Bellevue community is changing. In a more comprehensive way, the following trends can be isolated as being important factors that are helping to shape the Bellevue of tomorrow:

Growth: Although the City increased slightly in population between 1990 and 2000 (by 47 people or about 0.6%), it is important to note that the townships surrounding the City increased much more substantially in population. York Township had an 4.6% increase in population, Lyme Township a 6.6% increase, and Groton Township an 11.2% increase. Only Thompson Township in Seneca county experienced a decrease (-3.7%) in that decade.

Over the past 3 decades (1970 to 2000), all four townships experienced an increase in population, while the City experienced a 4.8% decrease. Groton Township increased in population by 23.3% over the three decades, while Lyme Township increased by 4.2%, Thompson by 10.3%, and York by 20.5%. The most substantial increase in population in all four townships occurred between 1970 and 1980. Conversely, the biggest decline in City population occurred during that same time period.

Chart 4-1



The thirty-year trend indicates that the community is growing, but not necessarily within the City's corporate limits. This is not uncommon in the State of Ohio. In municipalities with little vacant developable land, population growth is partially a function of annexation activity.

Incomes: General trends in median household income levels in the City point to increases comparable to those found in Huron and Sandusky Counties, with all increases ranging between 35.3% and 38.7%. (*Households* are broadly defined and include one person households.) However, these increases in median household incomes in the City and both counties over the past decade (1990 to 2000) are much lower than that for the State of Ohio, where median household incomes grew by 53.4%. (Refer back to Chart 2-5.)

Residential Construction: New houses are being constructed within the City, primarily in the Quarry Development and along Flat Rock Road in the Gardner Ridge Subdivision. The residential subdivision around the Quarry on the north side of West US 20 has provided many new upscale single-family homes in a unique setting for the City. Additional opportunities still exist in this subdivision.

Another new residential subdivision is planned for just west of the Quarry development. Phase 1 of the County View Subdivision consists of about 37 single-family residential lots. Access to the subdivision is from US 20 West, although no lots are immediately adjacent to the road.

Commercial Development: The City has experienced considerable new commercial and industrial development over the past decade, especially given the economic downturn since September 11, 2001. Banks have constructed new facilities or additions, and a new CVS pharmacy and Fuel Mart recently opened in the downtown. The library has expanded, as has Immaculate Conception School. New commercial retail and office centers have been developed along the south side of US 20 West, with a small retail outlet on the north side.

The Hospital has constructed an impressive new facility, which opened in March 2005, on the west side of the City, north of US 20. Additional plans for this facility include a ring road surrounded by medical offices and related hospital support services. It is likely that this area will be a target for new professional office development in the future.

Several industries have expanded and new industries have located in the City in the past decade. One lot in the new A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park in the northeast has recently been sold, indicating a continuing strong development climate. Also, in 2000, the City moved its municipal offices from leased space in the downtown to a building purchased from an existing industry that was relocating. The new facility offers the opportunity for all offices and services provided by the City to be located in one building. A recreation area is also included with a track and exercise area.

The Medicine Shoppe plans to move into a new facility in 2005 just west of Bassett's, and a new gas station is being considered to replace the existing Sunoco station in the Downtown.

National Trends

There are a number of identified national trends that may have some influence on the Bellevue of 2025. These trends include those that relate to resident attitudes, behaviors, demographics, and economics. The extent to which these trends will impact the Bellevue community is difficult to gauge given the uniqueness of every town. However, an awareness of these trends is helpful background information as the City looks toward the future.

Racial Mix: The national population is becoming more racially diverse. Blacks, Hispanics and Asians represent a growing share of the population.

Family Composition: Nuclear families represent a shrinking share of total households. Today, people who live alone outnumber couples with children. Non-families (people who live alone or with non-relatives) are a rapidly growing segment of the population, as people divorce more readily, postpone marriage, or live together outside marriage. Related to this is the fact that household sizes have declined in recent decades, as families have fewer children and as more households become “empty-nesters”. These trends have implications for housing demand in terms of style, location, and costs.

Crime: Crime rates are down and have been falling during the 1990s. People generally feel safer now than in the 1980s. However, this may have changed somewhat since 9/11.

Leisure Time: Americans have more leisure options than in the past, and the number of people participating in a variety of recreational activities has climbed between the mid-80s and the mid- 90s. Activities that have climbed the sharpest include walking, hiking, backpacking, boating, and cross-country skiing. Americans are also now more likely to go to a movie, historic park, and art museum than they once were. These trends have implications for what a community offers in terms of recreational and leisure time options.

Educational Attainment: Educational attainment has increased dramatically in recent decades. In 1950, slightly more than one third of people 25 years old and older were high school graduates. By 1998, more than 80% were high school graduates. Today, most high school graduates continue on to college. Nationally, college enrollment has been growing steadily for many decades. College enrollment is projected to increase more than 12% between 2002 and 2010 according to the National Center for Educational Statistics.

Health Care: Despite a growing (and aging) population, the numbers of people admitted to hospitals declined 7% between 1975 and 1998. Outpatient care has grown, medical science continues to improve, and people have generally become better informed about a health choices.

Home Ownership: Most households are occupied by homeowners (vs. renters), and the home ownership rate has been rising. To date, the national homeownership rate is 67%. In the mid-west, the rate is even higher; approaching nearly 75%.

Older People: In 2025, there is expected to be more than twice the number of people 65 years old and older than there was in 2000 (35 million in 2000, compared with more than 70 million in 2025). This major trend has implications for everything from housing demand to labor force trends.

Knowledge Economy: The growth of information industries is creating a knowledge-dependent society, wherein information is becoming the primary commodity for more and more businesses.

Research and Development (R&D): Throughout the 1990s, R&D spending rose steadily and future outlays are expected to keep pace with the gross domestic product growth. This activity fuels demand for scientists, engineers and technicians particularly in fields where the research promises business payoffs.

Job Markets: Rapid changes in job markets and work-related technologies fuel demand for worker retraining and places of higher learning. At the same time, specialization is spreading throughout industry and professions, as bodies of knowledge expand and preclude the ability to be successful as a generalist in many professional fields.

Creative Class of Workers: An emerging concept in the community and economic development arena is the identification of groups of workers, in a wide range of occupations and disciplines, who are engaged in complex problem solving and the development of creative solutions. These people, sometimes referred to as the creative class, are increasingly being recognized as a key to long-term and meaningful economic development, as they are generally focused toward innovation, creativity, and new product or service development.

Nationally, places such as Boulder CO, Boston MA, and Raleigh-Durham NC, are identified as magnets for creative people who are drawn to such areas since they have academic and research facilities along with desirable cultural amenities. It has been said that the presence of universities and research centers can be seen as providing a locational advantage in much the same way that rivers and railroads did in the past.

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

5

Land Use and
Urban Design

Chapter 5: Land Use

Existing uses of land are key to any comprehensive land use planning process, as land uses define major parts of the physical environment. Along with pure land use issues are design issues related to buildings, landscaping, and site layout, that also help to define a community's character and appearance. This chapter describes major land use issues facing the City of Bellevue, and general elements of recommended land use policy. Subsequent chapters address issues on a more topical basis.

Existing Land Use

PDG conducted a windshield survey of the City to identify general land uses throughout the community. These land uses were then color coded onto a base map of the City, and can be found in **Map 5-1**. Professional planning standard colors were used to code the land uses, as described in the legend. Existing land use information can be summarized as follows:

Residential

As with most cities, the predominant land use in Bellevue is single-family residential. Residential neighborhoods of varying densities surround the downtown in all four directions, as indicated in yellow on **Map 5-1**. More dense residential neighborhoods, mostly low-density apartments, are scattered throughout the City and are indicated in orange on the map. There are apartments located in all sections of the community; some are totally surrounded by single-family homes, while others serve as a buffer between single-family homes and commercial or industrial used.



New, upscale, larger-lot, single-family residential development is occurring in the northwest section of the City, around the existing quarry. This development is providing an alternative environment to the traditional residential neighborhoods found throughout the City.

Another new residential development, with slightly smaller lots and homes, is developing along the west side of Flat Rock Road south of Gardner Street. These developments are offering residents, both existing and new, alternatives to the older, more established homes throughout the City, providing for many more housing choices.

The most dense residential developments within the City are mobile home parks. These are shown in brown on the map. There are three mobile home parks in or near the City, two of which are located on the west side, between US 20 and the railroad. The third is located on the south side of US 20 on the City's east side.

Industrial

Since the City developed primarily because of the influence of the railroads, there is a considerable amount of heavy industrial land within the corporate boundaries, (as well as just outside the City) as indicated by the dark purple on **Map 5-1**. The most heavily industrial area is the railroad yard to the north and east of the City. This area is primarily outside the City's corporate limits in Lyme Township (Huron County) and Groton Township (Erie County).

Due to the proximity of this railroad facility, however, the City has begun a new industrial park just west of the railroad yard. A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park is located north of Goodrich Road and south of the wastewater treatment plant, where several small companies have located. The City currently has grants pending to construct the infrastructure to develop this new industrial park, and these improvements should be completed in 2005. One lot in the new park has already been sold to a prospective company.

Other heavy industrial areas within the City include the main intersection of the railroads, just southeast of the downtown. Many small industries and businesses are scattered throughout this area. On the lighter industrial side, the City's industrial park to the west, south of US 20, is home to several companies, as well as the City's municipal complex. There are additional lots in this area that can be developed.

One of the City's newest industrial areas is located south on SR 269 around the Tower Automotive facility. In addition to Tower, there are several small businesses along SR 269 in this area. There are other industries scattered throughout the City, as indicated in the light purple on **Map 5-1**.

Due mostly to the manner in which the City developed historically, there are many residential areas of the City that are adjacent to industrial areas, with no buffers between the homes and the industries. This is especially true throughout the City along the railroad tracks, where no buffer of open space, office, commercial, or multi-family housing exists between the single-family residential homes and the railroad. Because of this land use conflict, many of the homes fall to disrepair, become rentals, and lack adequate maintenance.

Commercial

Commercial development has been historically centered in the downtown, which is indicated in red on **Map 5-1** at the heart of the community. In addition to the downtown, commercial land use is expanding primarily along US 20 west. Several small office complexes and stand-alone commercial buildings have recently been constructed in this area.



Of most significance, however, is the construction of the new Bellevue Hospital on the north side of US 20 west, just west of TR 302. Access to the Hospital, which plans to develop medical office facilities along a circular road around the main facility, will be from TR 302. The hospital owns a considerable amount of acreage at this site, and envisions walking trails on the north side amidst the medical office buildings at some point in the future. The Hospital began moving into its new facility at the end of 2004; an open house was held, and full operations began at the new site, in March 2005.



US 20 east is also experiencing continued commercial development, starting at the intersection of SR 113 with US 20. A hotel, fast food restaurants, and small office buildings are being constructed in this area, amidst some single-family homes and agricultural properties.

In addition, there are a few commercial businesses on south SR 269, just south of the railroad, including an equipment sales facility and a building supply facility.

SR 269 north is experiencing continued commercial development with professional office complexes, a funeral home, the Masonic hall, Pamida, and individual businesses being developed there. Similarly, a small pocket of commercial development, containing the Citgo gas station, Hogue Food Store, and Beckley Plumbing & Heating offices, is located east of the intersection of SR 18 (Kilbourne Street) and Flat Rock Road, north of the railroad.

In 2004, the downtown received a significant shot-the-arm with an ODOT project that improved lane configurations; synchronized traffic signals; replaced sidewalks, curbs, and gutters; rerouted SR 269 to Sandusky Street to provide better turning radii off Main Street; added period style street lighting; planted a large evergreen tree in an island at the main intersection; and resurfaced portions of the roadway. This project has made a tremendous improvement in vehicular and pedestrian traffic, parking, and the aesthetic appeal of the downtown.

Several businesses in the downtown invested in their facilities recently including the library and Firelands Credit Union, both of which made tremendous improvements to parking and landscaping; a new laundromat on Northwest Street; a new CVS and renovated gas station on West Main Street; the new car wash at the former BP gas station on South Sandusky and Monroe Streets; and a new building on the south side of West Main street next to the vacant fast food restaurant building (near Atwood Street).



However, there are also several vacant buildings within the downtown, including the Tremont House, portions of Village Square, the old State Bank building and storefronts to its east (except for the pizza shop), the vacated Ace Hardware store, the former Bellevue Music Center storefront, the fast food restaurant on West Main Street at Atwood Street, the former Municipal Building on North Sandusky Street, and other smaller spaces, as well as some of the upper floors of the buildings. Many of the buildings require significant facade and code compliance improvements.



Parks and Green Space

Green space and parks are scattered throughout the City. Robert Peters Athletic Park, a 9.5 acre facility located just south of the High School, has amenities including baseball and softball fields, a newly-equipped playground, shelter house, barbeque pits, picnic tables, restrooms, and basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts.

The City's largest recreational facility is the Mill Pond Park on the south side of town, which includes the Bellevue Community Center building plus 36 acres. Facilities at Mill Pond Park include an outdoor swimming pool, picnic area, grills, baseball/softball fields, athletic fields, sand volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, sledding area, fishing, a shelter house, walking paths, and of course the indoor facilities at the Community Center.



The City maintains other smaller parks including Amsden Heights, Buckingham, Kern Street, Ellis, Harmon, and Waterworks Parks. These are illustrated as green areas on the Existing Land Use Map (**Map 5-1**). With its recent move into the new municipal building off US 20 on the west side of town, the City acquired a large indoor open space, which was formerly an industrial workshop area. This area has been converted to an athletic facility, known as the Activity Centre, with exercise classes offered throughout the week to residents of the City, a walking path, and the potential for basketball and other sports activities.

Golf is provided at the private Twin Lakes Golf Course in the southwest section of the City, as well as at neighboring courses, Sleepy Hollow and Green Hills. The City cemetery north of the Community Center in the south central part of the City, and the various City reservoirs on the southeast, provide additional green space and/or open area for the community.



The School District maintains small parks at its various buildings throughout the City, with the football field being located by the High School and the Robert Peters Athletic Park. Harmon Park, a former athletic field is in the southwest corner of the designated "downtown" area (refer to **Map 5-2**, Key Facilities Map). An attractive pocket park has been developed in the downtown. The quarry on the north side of town, which is privately owned, is currently open space without public access. Upscale homes are being developed around this former quarry.

Institutional Uses

Churches, civic or fraternal clubs, government facilities, museums, and the hospital are indicated as “institutional” uses on the Existing Land Use Map (**Map 5-1**), and are shown in gray. They are scattered throughout the City. **Map 5-2** identifies most of these land uses that are not within the downtown area.

The Mad River & NKP Railroad Society Museum is located at 253 Southwest Street and is the largest railroad museum in Ohio. It includes several vintage railroad cars on the tracks just south of the downtown, as well as a watchman’s tower, depot, and LS and MS section house which serves as a gift shop.



The Bellevue Historical Society owns the treasures of a Heritage Museum, which will soon be located in the Tremont House, an 1846 building located on the northeast corner of Main and Northwest Streets, once it is renovated. Until that time, the Society’s collection of artifacts and pictures is in storage. The Museum was formerly located at the former Savings Bank Building at 200 East Main Street.



The Bellevue Society for the Arts is located at the corner of Maple and Walter Streets in two buildings that were formerly an industrial site. They now serve as an office and a large 342-seat theater and reception area for theater productions, concerts, lectures, recitals, dance and music lessons, children’s programs, and other cultural events, as well as being available for catered receptions. The Midwest Bookfest is held here annually on the third Saturday of September.

The City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is located in the northeast corner of the City, and is the only parcel of land located in Erie County at this time. The Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is located just west of Reservoir 3 at the intersection of Center and Orchard Streets, south of US 20 on the east side of town. Both are indicated in gray on **Map 5-1**.

There is very little vacant land available within the City of Bellevue’s corporate limits for future development of any kind. The bulk of the vacant land in the City today was most likely part of a recent annexation for a specific use, such as industrial along SR 269 south, residential in Country View Subdivision to the east of the new hospital site, residential to the north and west of the Quarry residential development, commercial offices around the hospital, and industrial within A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park. Thus, without cooperative agreements on annexation and revenue sharing, the City of Bellevue is pretty much confined to limited development within its existing corporate boundaries.

Future Land Use

When analyzing a city to determine the most likely locations for new land uses in the future, the most obvious decisions are based on extensions of existing land uses, whenever possible. For example, there are small pockets of open area within the City of Bellevue that, if developed, would likely develop in the same manner as the properties around them. There are other areas of open space, such as the quarry, that have limited alternative uses available for them.

In addition, a number of significant land use issues have been identified during the planning process for those areas outside and adjacent to the City limits, that could be developed as part of an Annexation Agreement with the appropriate township. These projections for future land uses are illustrated on the Future Land Use Map, **Map 5-3**. The same standard color scheme is used on this map as was used on the Existing Land Use Map.

Future land uses in the major development areas identified for properties adjacent to the City, are summarized on **Map 5-3**. They include:

- The SR 113/US 20/SR 4 Triangle on the east side of town;
- The SR 4/US 20 intersection on the east side;
- The Northeast section of the City, primarily around the new Wolfe Industrial Park;
- The US 20 west section of town;
- The south side of town, SR 269 and the SR 269/Prairie Road area; and
- The downtown.

These areas, as discussed in detail in Chapter 9, are projected to be the major future development areas for both commercial and industrial development. Other areas of projected land use changes in the future include:

Residential

Several areas for continued or future single-family residential development exist throughout the community and neighboring townships. These include:

- Continued development of the **Yorkshire Subdivision** (around the quarry), to its north and northwest, on property already annexed into the City of Bellevue. The upscale homes in this subdivision provide an alternative high-end new housing market not previously found within the City. Continued development along the western boundary of the quarry will provide more of the same ambiance provided in the portions completed to date.
- Continued development of **Country View Subdivision** east of the new hospital and Copp Road (TR 302). Phase one of this subdivision is under construction and additional phases are planned.
- Continued development of the **Gardner Ridge Subdivision** on the west side of Flat Rock Road south of Gardner Road. This subdivision is providing new houses in the mid-range market, which are also needed in the community, and which will provide an alternative to the older stock of housing throughout the City.

- **Extensions of existing residential subdivisions** should be encouraged, including:
 - The area east of the assisted living facility on Flat Rock Road, south of the railroad, and west of the Wynfield and Crystal Courts Subdivision, provided an adequate buffer is provided south of the tracks (green space and apartments could provide this buffer);
 - The area east of Hobson and Samson Streets, where a north-south connector could provide access to Monroe Street to service this area;
 - In-fill development along Monroe Street/Bauer Road after it heads north on the east side of town, as well as along the south side of the east-west portion, where an eastern extension of Madden Street could provide access;
- **New areas for single family residential development include:**
 - The large area in Lyme Township north of SR 113, which is already zoned for residential development, as well as the area north of Ridge School;
 - In-fill development along SR 113, although such development should be planned with a rear access road, as opposed to allowing numerous drives onto SR 113;
 - The area in Lyme Township around the Historic Lyme Village, primarily to protect the Village from non-complimentary uses; and
 - The area along SR 269 north (east side) and both sides of Potter Road between SR 269 and the railroad, assuming that proper buffering from the proposed industrial park is provided.
 - The area west and south of the green space area around the large reservoir south of Bauer Road and east of SR 269.
 - The northern area within the SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road Triangle (refer to **Chapter 9**).

These areas should provide adequate land for new single-family residential housing for the next 20 years.

- **Multi-family housing**, which could include apartments, condos, or villas, should be planned for various locations in the City. These potential multi-family housing areas are indicated on the Future Land Use Map (**Map 5-3**) in orange and include areas such as:
 - The area bounded by US 20 on the north, Flat Rock Road on the west, the railroad on the south, and the Redwood Drive subdivision on the east. Adequate buffering from the railroad tracks will be required, and buffering to protect the existing single-family residences along both frontage roads should be required. A new development here could provide the impetus to upgrade existing housing and public utilities in this area.

- The area discussed earlier for future single-family residential, north of Bauer Road and serviced by a proposed extension of Madden Street, could also be a potential location for additional multi-family residences.
- Renovation of buildings in the downtown could provide opportunities for loft apartments or live-work units in the downtown. This could be an additional source of rental units for the community.
- Additional multi-family complexes could be designed along the SR 269 north corridor, especially as a buffer between existing or proposed single-family developments and proposed light industrial uses in or near Wolfe Industrial Park.
- An area within the SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road Triangle (refer to **Chapter 9**).

Commercial

Future commercial development is likely to continue around existing developments and within the downtown. However, proper planning is required to assure that the developments occur in a manner that is compatible with existing land uses - especially single-family residential neighborhoods, has minimal negative impact on prime farmland, and otherwise serves the best interests of the overall community.

As discussed in Chapter 9 in detail, a concerted planning effort should be implemented to enhance and expand the commercial viability of the downtown. As the heart of the community, the downtown already contains the existing infrastructure and buildings to service a thriving commercial hub for the community. However, many improvements and strengthened efforts at revitalization are required.

Key areas for future commercial development outside the downtown, which could consist of retail, office, hi-tech businesses, and highway commercial, include:

- The SR 113/US 20/SR 4 Triangle,
- The SR4/US 20 Intersection, and
- US 20 West.

The future development of these areas is discussed in great detail in **Chapter 9**, and the proposed future land uses are illustrated on **Map 5-3**.

Other commercial areas not addressed in Chapter 9 that are likely to continue to see additional commercial growth include the **SR 269 north corridor**, where a new professional office building, a funeral home, the Masonic hall, and other businesses are located. There are additional parcels available around these businesses that could be developed. Coordination of access points to SR 269 should be emphasized, in an attempt to minimize the number of curb cuts onto this busy highway.

The **intersection of Flat Rock Road and SR 18** will likely continue as a neighborhood commercial area in the future. Potential plans for a grade separation structure at this location could encourage additional neighborhood commercial development, if properly designed to accommodate such development. The limited access portion of a grade separation project could also limit development, thus, the design of the intersection and proper planning will be required.

Similarly, the area south of the railroad and the new scheduled railroad overpass on **SR 269 south of town**, which includes a number of small businesses around the American Italian Club, could further develop as a small neighborhood commercial area to provide convenience services and goods to businesses and employees in the south industrial area. Proper planning is needed in this area to control access points and provide for an efficient and safe flow of traffic.

Industrial

The most likely areas for future industrial development are within the new **A. D. Wolfe Industrial Park** north of Goodrich Road in the northeast section of the City, along **US 20 west** between US 20 and the railroad, and on either side of **SR 269 south** near Tower Automotive. The property east of SR 269 south was annexed into the City with the intention of developing an industrial park between SR 269 and Prairie Road. If the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) continues with its plans to reroute SR 18 traffic along a new road extended east from Seneca County Line Road, this area would become prime industrial property from a transportation perspective. These three main areas for future industrial growth are discussed in greater detail in **Chapter 9**.

There is also an area in **Lyme Township south of the railroad yard** and west of an existing industry that has potential for industrial development, as it is already impacted by the railroad yards. This area would have to be adequately buffered from any future residential development that could occur to its south.

The **industrial areas along the railroad within the older sections of town** require some attention. Renovation of buildings; proper maintenance of properties; additional and better maintained landscaping; better delineation of driving lanes and parking areas; an improved signage system; resurfacing of streets, drives, and parking areas; and the addition of landscaped buffers would help address the aesthetics of this historically industrial area of the community. Conversion of specific single-family homes along the railroad to small offices or businesses may help redevelop selected areas, and provide buffers for single-family homes. Demolition of vacant or underutilized buildings may also be appropriate. CDBG-Formula funds or Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) could be used to assist in this redevelopment effort.

Specific **redevelopment areas** that could benefit from revitalization efforts as described above include:

- The area encompassing Center Street, Broad Street, the railroad tracks to the east, SR 269, Southwest Street and Chapman Street. See **Area A** on **Map 5-4**.
- The area along both sides of US 20 west from about Walter Street west to Flat Rock Road. This area is designated **Area B** on **Map 5-4**. The area south of US 20 qualifies according to the 2000 Census as a low- and moderate-income (LMI) area, and thus qualifies for CDBG-funded activities under the City's Formula program.

- The residential area between Howard Street to the east, the railroad to the south, the Redwood Subdivision to the west and the backs of the properties fronting on US 20 to the north. This area is shown as **Area C** on **Map 5-4**, and also qualifies as an LMI area.
- The mixed use area bounded by US 20 east on the north, the railroad on the west, the railroad south of Armstrong to the south, and the City Water Treatment Plant (WTP) on the east. The existing mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, and City uses in this area calls out for a redevelopment effort. The area is indicated as **Area D** on **Map 5-4**.

Parks/Green Space

The City has a unique opportunity to expand its recreational properties and green space through a joint effort with the owner of the existing quarry property. About 100 acres of land sits at the bottom of the quarry, with few potential adaptive uses, other than open space or parkland. If the owner is willing to work with the City, a plan should be prepared to acquire this property for public passive or active recreational activities, as discussed in greater detail in **Chapter 8**.

A planned expansion at Community Center and Mill Pond Park in the southern part of the City could provide for additional green space and recreational park area there. In addition, walkways and trails connecting various public lands to the Community Center could provide additional recreational opportunities within the City.

Urban Design Elements

The City of Bellevue currently has no identifiable design theme or image that sets it apart from any other community along US 20 or in the geographic area. As part of this overall comprehensive planning process, the City should select a design theme and begin incorporating selected design elements into various projects throughout the community to create an identity or image for the City.

As a start, the new street lights that were installed in the downtown in 2004 could be used elsewhere in the community as a unifying design element. As street lights are replaced, this same light fixture could be used, so that eventually, the entire City of Bellevue has the same decorative street light fixtures. New subdivisions should be encouraged to use this light fixture, or a complimentary one, as should the new industrial park and commercial areas.

Other design elements that should be incorporated into future planning efforts include:

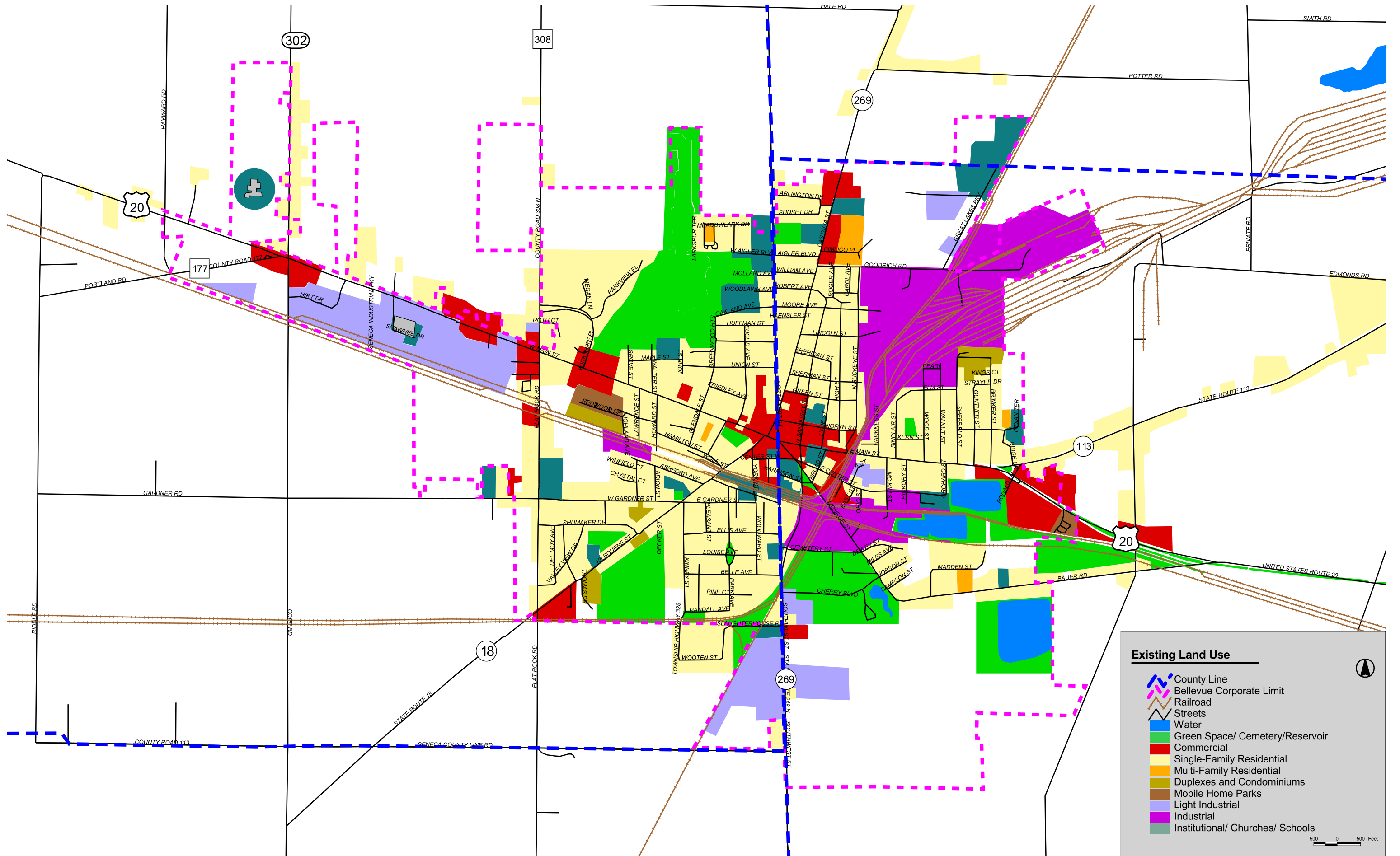
- **Gateways** at all major entrances to the City. The City recently created a preliminary design for these gateways, including a sign made of limestone that is indigenous to the area. These signs should be utilized in a landscaped area, with appropriate lighting, to establish a “sense of place” for the City, letting people know when they are entering the City boundaries and that the Bellevue residents are proud of their community.

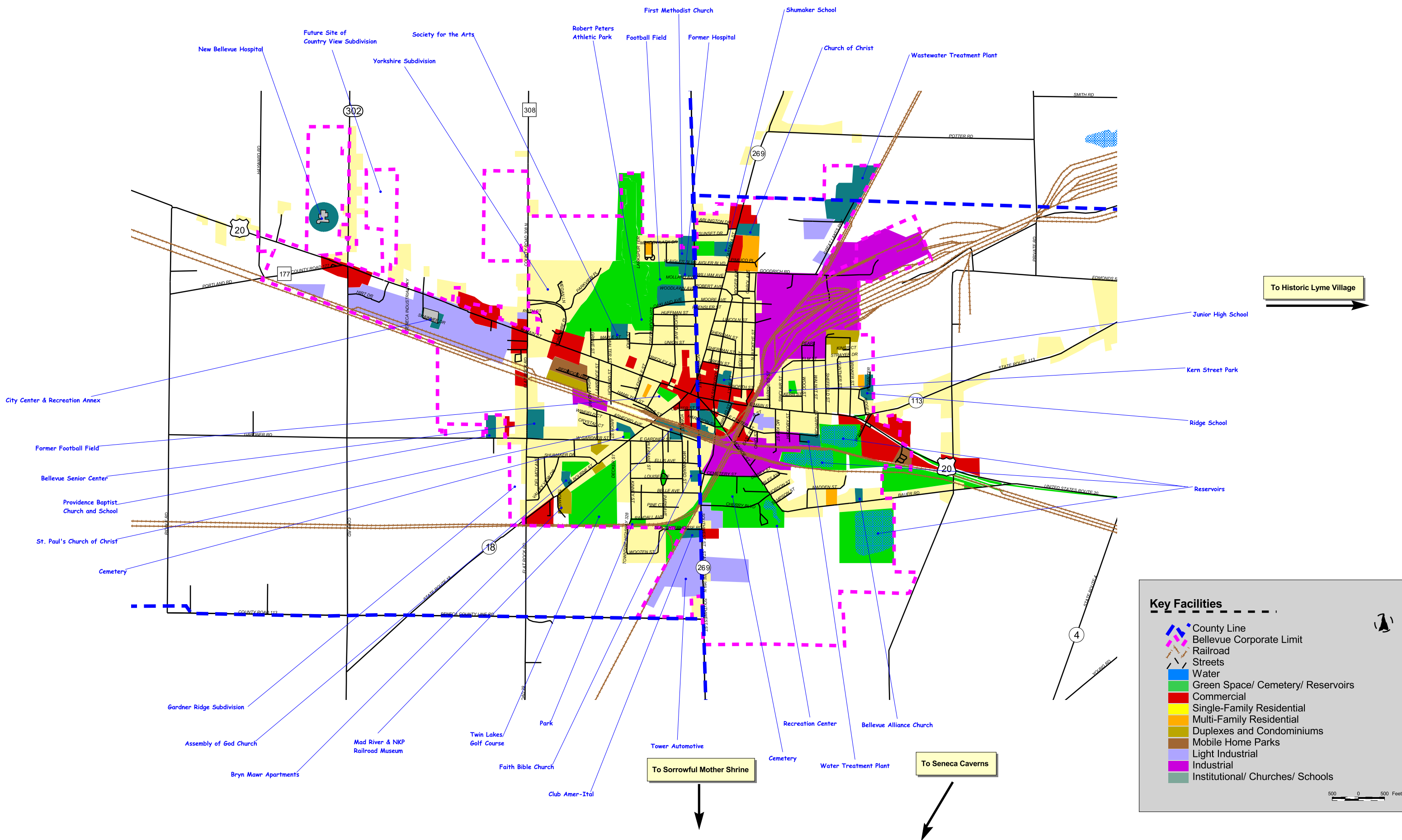
- A **streetscaping theme** should be incorporated into all new developments, as well as redevelopment projects. Appropriate street trees, along with a sidewalk or walkway design, benches, shrubs in select locations, large concrete flower pots, hanging baskets on light poles, banners, etc. should be selected and incorporated into future development plans. Consideration should be given to having a landscaped boulevard in the middle of US 20 on both sides of town. The Village of Evendale, as an example, uses a serpentine stone wall with lighted bollards, up-lighted trees, and flowering shrubs within its medians as illustrated below.

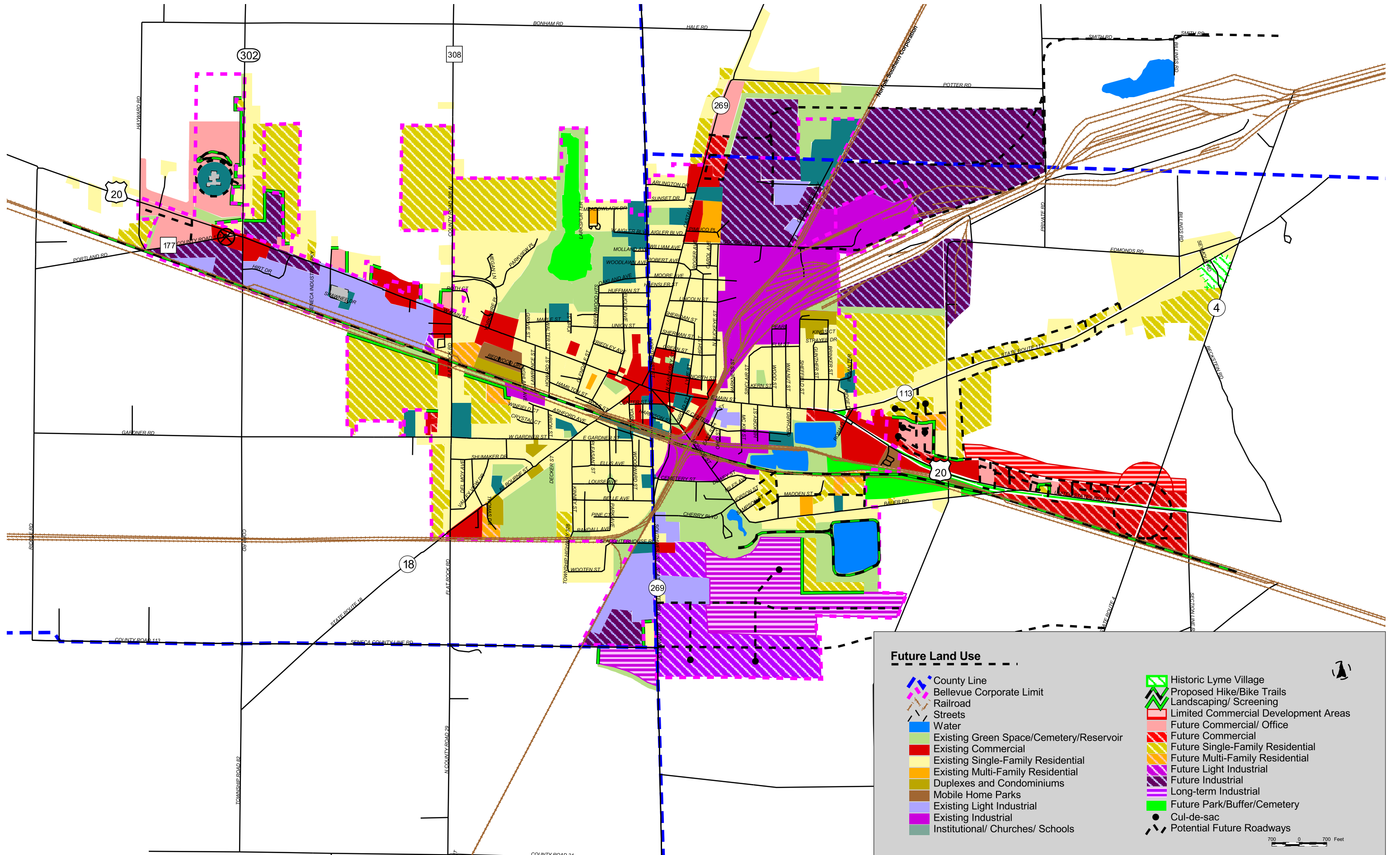


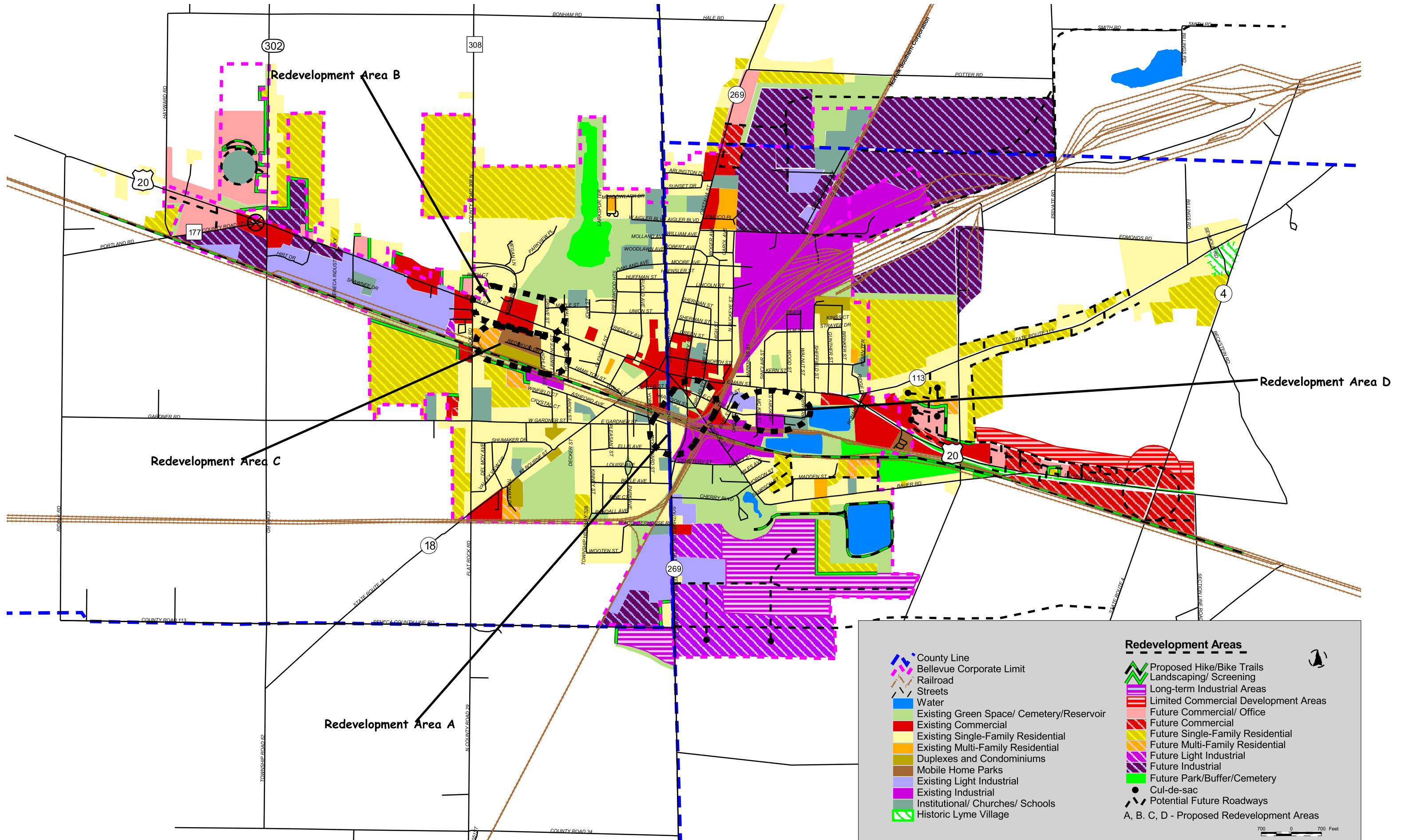
- A **signage design theme** should be developed to include both a way-finding (or directional) system of signage and a locational system for key areas within the City. A color-coded locational system could be used to identify schools, municipal facilities, parks, the library, museums, and tourist attractions. The directional system could help direct transient traffic through the community. A sample signage system is included in **Appendix 5-1**.
- **Design standards** could be established for neighborhoods, the downtown, or a specific commercial or industrial area to set a theme for identifying that specific area. Architectural design standards, similar to what the City adopted for the downtown, are a significant help to property owners (and their neighbors) when decisions need to be made regarding additions or renovations to their buildings or homes.
- Many recommendations are made in the downtown section of **Chapter 9** regarding design issues within the central business district of the City. Some of the above recommendations were implemented in the downtown in late 2004. However, additional design elements within the downtown, as well as in adjacent neighborhoods, should still be considered.

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt05rev 31805.wpd









City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

6

Transportation

Chapter 6: Transportation

Background

Transportation has been a dominant force in shaping development in Bellevue. From the early days of the railroads bringing commerce to the midwest, to the development of the national and state highways, transportation has helped connect Bellevue to major markets throughout the United States, and has been a framework for community development.

The center of downtown Bellevue contains the intersection of one federal highway (US 20) and two State highways (SR 18 & SR 269). Additionally, immediately east of the City is another State highway, SR 4, which is used by a substantial number of central Ohio residents visiting Lake Erie and other destinations near the Lake such as Cedar Point. Within and adjacent to the City's boundaries there are significant railroad assets, with an increasing amount of railroad traffic on both the Norfolk & Southern and Wheeling & Lake Erie lines.

A negative aspect of the confluence of US 20, SR 269 and SR 18 in downtown Bellevue has been the daily and cumulative effect of all the transient commercial truck traffic on the downtown. For residents and downtown businesses, there have been issues of pedestrian safety and inconvenience, the air and noise pollution caused by the constant truck traffic in this relatively confined area, and the difficulty of parking on Main Street (US 20), among others. However, in 2004, several events occurred that greatly improved the pedestrian and parking issues and appear to be reducing both the amount of downtown transient truck traffic and the impact of the remaining truck traffic.

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) completed a US 20 improvement project through downtown Bellevue in early 2005 that included: widening of the highway, improved lane identification, synchronized traffic signalization, renovation of the parking and sidewalks in the downtown, new decorative street lighting, rerouting of SR 269 to improve turn movements, and the creation of a third lane through the railroad underpass (known locally as "the subway") on the east side of downtown. In a concerted effort to help get transient trucks off US 20 and other highways that parallel the Ohio Turnpike, the Ohio Turnpike Commission raised the truck speed limit to 65 and significantly reduced the tolls for trucks on the Turnpike.

Time will tell if these efforts permanently alter the truck traffic patterns in Bellevue, but the general observation among Bellevue residents in early 2005 is that there are definitely fewer transient trucks using US 20, and those that remain are transitioning more easily through the downtown. Further, the improved on-street parking, new sidewalks, attractive street lighting, improved intersections, and new traffic signals, all seem to be making the downtown much more pedestrian friendly.

For decades, there have been formal and informal considerations by ODOT of a US 20 bypass around the City. The most recent ODOT study, completed in early 2004, highlights of which are included in **Appendix 6-1**, consisted of the identification and detailed analysis of several alternative bypass locations. ODOT concluded that the best and most affordable alternative would be a bypass to the south of the City utilizing portions of SR 18. The results of this latest Bellevue bypass study met with mixed local reviews, at best.

Bellevue and Bellevue-area residents, including those living in the vicinity of the proposed bypass routing, were less than enthusiastic about the results of the ODOT study, and pointed out various problems with the plan. Included in the criticisms of the bypass as proposed were:

- The study didn't properly take into account the number of railroad crossings involved in the proposed routing nor the costs of constructing the numerous grade separations that would be required to create a truly useful bypass for transient traffic, and
- The bypass needs to begin further to the west than planned to account for the imminent development along US 20 west of Bellevue.

Both in response to and anticipation of such criticism, ODOT officials pointed out that the US 20 bypass around Bellevue was only one of many projects under consideration throughout the State. Consequently, without essentially unanimous local support for the bypass as proposed, projects elsewhere, with solid local support, would receive a higher priority at ODOT, effectively eliminating this relatively expensive project from ODOT's future project plans. In spite of the thinly-veiled threatened consequences of no official and unofficial local support for the bypass plan as proposed, there remains far less than unanimous support in Bellevue for a US 20 bypass to the south of the City.

With or without a US 20 bypass, the need for additional railroad grade separations in and around the City of Bellevue remains. Presently, there are only two grade separations in the City:

- the subway (underpass) on East Main Street (US 20), and
- an overpass on SR 269 immediately south of the downtown.

Another overpass a little further south on SR 269, after it joins Southwest Street, is scheduled for construction beginning in 2005. While this second overpass on SR 269 will eliminate delays due to railroad crossings for that north-south traffic, and further improve emergency vehicle access to some of the southern areas of town and the townships south of Bellevue, there are still 13 at-grade railroad crossings within the City limits. Each one of these, some to a greater extent than others, is at best a frequent source of irritation and/or frustration for Bellevue residents and businesses, and at worst, a potentially serious problem in times of an emergency.

Therefore, while the highway and railroad assets have certainly been two of the major factors in the founding and growth of Bellevue, both of them also provide on-going challenges for the community, the quality of life in Bellevue, and its future development and economic growth. As one of the key persons interviewed in conjunction with developing this Comprehensive Plan observed, "Most of the people in town seem to be more concerned about truck traffic issues than they are about the railroads and the recent increases in railroad traffic; but I have never had to wait 45 minutes for a truck."

Not surprisingly, in the Community Survey, three of the top five areas of concern were directly related to transportation issues:

1. "The best alternative for a Route 20 bypass for trucks needs to be identified and built."
2. "The City should consider alternative methods for reducing truck traffic in the downtown."
5. "The improvement and maintenance of sidewalks is important."

In addition to the local highway and railroad transportation assets, residents of the City of Bellevue are within ten minutes of an Ohio Turnpike interchange, and have ready access to several commercial and general aviation airports. Also, regional bike trails are being developed in the Bellevue area that will eventually link to a system of bike trails throughout the State. These and other transportation assets and issues are discussed further in the balance of this Chapter.

Airports

The City of Bellevue is situated midway between the Toledo Express and Cleveland Hopkins Airports, both within about a one hour drive. While the Cleveland airport is much larger, served by more airlines and on the “Bellevue side” of Cleveland, both provide a variety of airline flights and/or connections to destinations throughout the US and the World.

The closest general aviation airport able to handle corporate jet and turboprop aircraft operations is the Sandusky County Regional Airport west of the City of Clyde, less than a half hours drive from Bellevue. It has a single northeast-southwest runway that is 5,500' long and 100' wide, with pilot-activated runway lighting and unobstructed approaches, a GPS instrument approach, and automated weather observation reporting. The airport is currently attended daily year-round from 8 AM to 5 PM weekdays, 8 AM to 3 PM Saturdays, and 10 AM to 3 PM Sundays. It has both Jet-A and 100 LL Avgas available, and offers minor maintenance services. Several local corporations base their jet and turboprop aircraft at Sandusky County Regional Airport, and other local companies use the airport frequently. The St. Vincent's Life Flight helicopter is also based there with a crew on site around the clock.

There are several other general aviation airports in the Bellevue area that offer aircraft fueling and maintenance, flight instruction, aircraft rental, and/or air charter services including those in Fremont, Norwalk, Sandusky, Huron, Tiffin and Ottawa County east of Port Clinton.

The proximity of the Cleveland and Toledo airports, and the ability of the nearby Sandusky County Regional Airport to handle sophisticated corporate aircraft with its long runway and unobstructed approaches, contribute significantly to the economic development assets of the City.

Railroad Crossings

There are currently 16 railroad crossings within the City of Bellevue, and at least an additional 6 immediately adjacent to the City limits. With the completion of the new railroad overpass on Southwest Street (SR 269), which is scheduled for construction in 2005, there will be three grade separations in the area.

One of the questions in the community survey, conducted in July 2004, requested the identification of desired additional grade separations. The four sites that were cited the most frequently, in addition to the one already scheduled for Southwest Street, were:

- Southwest Street in the downtown area,
- Kilbourne Street (SR 18) immediately southwest of the downtown,
- Flat Rock Road (CR 308) just south of US 20, and
- Center Street southeast of the downtown.

Another site that was suggested several times in the public visioning sessions as a priority site for a grade separation is on Township Road 302 just south of US 20. On the north side of US 20, TR 302 is the access road to the new Bellevue Hospital.

In the industrial area in the City's northeast, there are three railroad crossings on Goodrich Road. These crossings, with no grade separations, are routinely the source of lengthy traffic tie-ups at shift change times at Bunge Solae, and obviously could become a serious problem in the case of a fire or health emergency at that facility.

The City has an agreement with the Norfolk & Southern Railroad to have the "subway" underpass bridge painted. The color selected is a shade of tan to match the color scheme of the nearby Catholic School building trim.

The City should establish a priority list of desired grade separation sites, and develop a systematic plan to work with ODOT on a continuous basis until these grade separations are constructed.

Goal: The City should aggressively and continuously work with ODOT to plan, schedule, finance, and construct grade separations on prioritized railroad crossing sites within the next decade to improve emergency response times, industrial development, and the general quality of life in Bellevue.

Strategies:

- **Identify and prioritize** railroad crossing sites in and adjacent to the City that are the top candidates for future grade separations, and begin preliminary work to encourage ODOT participation. Based on citizen and City Administration input, these could include:
 - **Kilbourne Street (SR 18)** southwest of the City, just west of CR 308,
 - **Seneca County Line Road**, just west of SR 269,
 - **Township Road 302**, immediately south of US 20, to provide direct access to the new hospital from areas south of the hospital, and
 - **Goodrich Road** just east of Great Lakes Parkway.
- **Work aggressively and closely with ODOT** to get the priority grade separations scheduled in ODOT's process, while at the same time attempting to leverage other State and federal funds to finance these projects. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) should also be considered in appropriate situations.

Local Vehicular Transportation

In addition to the recently completed improvements along US 20 in the downtown, there have been other recent local street and intersection improvements, and there are approved plans for further traffic-related improvements within the City.

The elimination of selected one-way streets, and changes to the directional signage, traffic signals and the rerouting of SR 269 traffic into and through the downtown in order to reduce congestion at various downtown intersections were completed in early 2005. US 20 traffic coming from the east planning to go north on SR 269 will be directed to turn north at the traffic signal at Sandusky Street. With the addition of the third lane under the railroad, there are now

two westbound lanes on US 20 all the way through town, and right turns on red are permitted onto Sandusky Street.

Traffic coming from the north on SR 269 will be directed one of two ways as it enters the City. Those planning to go east on US 20, or continue south on 269, will be directed south on Sandusky Street and either turn left at the improved, signalized intersection with US 20, or continue straight south across US 20, respectively. Traffic going west on US 20, will continue south on Castalia Street and then turn right onto US 20. Similarly, US 20 traffic coming from the west will access SR 269 north or south in the middle of the downtown. SR 18 traffic coming from the southwest still intersects with US 20 and SR 269 at that same downtown intersection, but, with the improved turning radii, more distinctive lane designations, and synchronized traffic signals, congestion at this major downtown intersection should be reduced considerably.

A new traffic signal at the intersection of US 20 and Greenwood Heights will be activated in March 2005. Greenwood Heights is the primary City street to Bellevue High School. This new traffic-activated signal is designed to significantly improve the traffic flow after school and following sports and other special events at the High School. Similarly, a new traffic-activated signal at the intersection of Flat Rock Road (CR 308) and US 20 became operational in January 2005 and should significantly improve local traffic flow. Flat Rock Road is already a busy north-south street and will become even more so as new residential development continues adjacent to it within a few blocks both north and south of US 20.

Another intersection improvement planned for early to mid 2005 is in the north end of town at the intersection of Goodrich Road and Castalia Street (SR 269). Goodrich Road is the only current access road to Great Lakes Parkway and A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park, as well as the existing industrial sites and railroad properties in the northeast part of the City. There are also residential properties both north and south along the first few blocks of Goodrich Road, and it is less than two blocks south of the Shumaker Elementary School. The planned improvements to this intersection include a new traffic-activated signal and relocated curbing to provide improved turning radii to and from Goodrich and Castalia Streets.

The intersection-related improvements at both Greenwood Heights and Goodrich Road are, in part, designed to have a positive impact on the transportation issues at the local schools. The City recognizes the importance of working with the School District to ensure that any traffic-related issues near the school facilities are dealt with as promptly as possible and in a coordinated fashion.

Planned, but not yet scheduled, is a new traffic signal at the intersection of US 20 and Township Road (TR) 302. TR 302 is the primary access road to the new hospital north of US 20 and will be a preferred route to the hospital from the southern portions of York Township (Sandusky County) and Thompson Township (Seneca County).

Directly south of the new hospital on the south side of US 20 is a new commercial and office development. Plans for that development include a rerouting of CR 177 and the creation of internal streets to accommodate planned developments. Currently, CR 177 intersects US 20 immediately west of the TR 302/US 20 intersection at an acute angle. With the anticipated increased traffic on TR 302 because of the new hospital, and the planned new traffic signal at the TR 302 intersection, the essentially five-way intersection could become more confusing and/or hazardous. As now planned, CR 177 will soon turn north at the east side of this new

development and intersect with US 20 perpendicular to it. The developer also plans to access US 20 from the development with a new internal road that will be directly across from a maintenance/emergency road into the new hospital property. The City and the developer will need to work with both the County and ODOT to actually close off the existing CR 177/US 20 intersection.

As is being exemplified in the new commercial/office development south of the new hospital, the City, in concert with ODOT guidelines and as discussed in detail in the various development scenarios in Chapter 9, will be requiring development plans that provide for proper access management along US 20, both east and west of the City, as well as in the other commercial, industrial and residential development areas north and south of the City.

As mentioned previously, the only current access road to the northeast industrial area is Goodrich Road. This is already an issue for the City because of the residential areas on the western portion of Goodrich Road, the proximity of its intersection with SR 269 to Shumaker Elementary School, the three at-grade railroad crossings on Goodrich, and the fact that the truck traffic to the industries there from the east, west or south must all come through some part of downtown Bellevue. Consequently, as described in detail in Chapter 9, several alternatives to route truck traffic in and out of this industrial area from the northeast are being considered. As envisioned, the objectives of the selected route would include: no at-grade railroad crossings, utilizing existing roads as much as possible, disturbing existing land uses in the adjoining Groton Township as little as possible, and providing safe and efficient access to SR 4, US 20, and the Ohio Turnpike to the east and northeast of the City.

The following goals and strategies regarding recommended transportation improvements identified and discussed throughout this Comprehensive Planning process are illustrated on **Map 6-1, Transportation Map**.

Goal: The City and Schools should work together to **ensure appropriate vehicular access, traffic control and safety around all of the various the school buildings** within the City and School District.

Strategies:

- **Schedule annual meetings with the School District** to identify any existing or potential traffic problem areas near each of the schools and determine the best solution for each.
- As discussed in Chapter 9, work with York Township, Sandusky County, and ODOT to **relocate the primary access to York School** from US 20 to Wales Corners Road (288) east of the school. This will require acquisition of an easement or property, and would likely require a traffic actuated signal at the intersection. Closing the entrance onto US 20 in front of the school and channeling all traffic to an existing intersection, which could be signalized, would provide greater safety for all parties.

- Continue to work with the BDC, Lyme and Groton Townships, and Huron and Erie Counties to **identify an alternate truck route from the northeast section of the City to SR 4**, to eliminate much of the transient truck traffic from the Shumaker School area. (This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9.)

Goal: The City should work with York Township, Sandusky County, local developers, and ODOT to provide for an **orderly control and flow of traffic** at the intersection of US 20 and TR 302, the **entrance road to the new hospital**, utilizing ODOT's Assess Management Policy guidelines wherever possible.

Strategies:

- Provide **left and right turn lanes** and proper turning radii onto TR 302 from US 20.
- Install a traffic signal that would be **traffic-activated by TR 302 traffic** needing to cross or turn onto US 20.
- Eliminate the current **angled intersection of CR 177** with US 20, once the relocated northern leg of CR 177 is constructed.
- Provide the same capability now in operation with the new traffic signals in the downtown and elsewhere in the City, whereby the sirens of approaching **emergency vehicles trigger the traffic signals** to go to steady red and green indications as appropriate until the emergency vehicles have passed. (Install **permanent signage** for vehicles approaching this intersection explaining the emergency procedure.)

Goal: The City and the BDC should work aggressively with Groton and Lyme Townships, and Erie and Huron Counties to provide an **alternative access route** from the **northeast industrial area** to SR 4 and thus, the Turnpike interchange.

Strategies:

- **Schedule a meeting** with Groton and Lyme Townships, Erie and Huron Counties, ODOT and area residents and businesses to determine the preferred routing for traffic to and from the northeast industrial area that would eliminate the need for a majority of the traffic to go through downtown Bellevue (and past Shumaker School). (See **Chapter 9** for a detailed discussion of this issue and preliminary identification of alternative routes.)
- As part of this roadway project, **Bragg and Smith Roads may have to be upgraded** to meet heavy truck standards (most likely Michigan loads). Plans to do so, and upgrading the intersection of Smith Road and SR 4, should be included in the total project scope.
- Once a decision has been made regarding the best alternative route, the City and BDC should acquire the necessary **property and/or rights-of-way** to construct this access road.
- An **environmental assessment (and a Phase 1 audit)** should be completed to assure that funding program requirements will be met.

- As new businesses express interest in developing within the industrial park, the City and BDC should **leverage those companies' investments to acquire State and/or federal funds** to construction this roadway. (CDBG-ED, EDA, and ODOT's State Infrastructure Bank should be pursued.)
- The City and BDC should also consider **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** as a method to help pay for the costs of this roadway.

Access Management

The State of Ohio, through ODOT, adopted a *State Highway Access Management Manual* in 2001 to improve safety and function of area roadways, specifically State highways. ODOT is enforcing these regulations on State highways where they maintain control. The policies should be considered on other key roadways, as they provide for greater safety while enhancing the functioning of the roadway system.

Briefly, access management is a comprehensive approach to controlling the number, location, and design of access points along major roadways, to improve safety and preserve the capacity of the roadway, while also providing property owners with "reasonable access" to their sites. Access management techniques include:

- Restricting the number of access points (driveways) by limiting the number of driveway permits for a given area. This reduces the number of stops and slow-downs made by vehicles turning or waiting for other vehicles to turn, reducing accidents and congestion.
- Providing proper spacing of access points. Appropriate spacing between existing and proposed driveways should be provided. Proper distance from intersections is also critical.
- Encouraging shared access to a site reduces the number of access points. This preserves the capacity of the roadway, and provides a more aesthetically pleasing corridor, and can be accomplished with shared driveways, frontage roads, rear service roads, and internal connections between sites.
- Restricting turning movements, which are common causes of traffic conflicts and accidents. This generally involves restricting left turns in certain areas. Installing medians to prevent turns or creating a boulevard to direct traffic to appropriate turn locations are options.
- Requiring proper driveway design with adequate width, turning radii, and depth to allow cars and large trucks to enter and exit safely and efficiently. A clear vision at all driveways and intersections is needed to assure safety. Also, land uses that generate high volumes of traffic may warrant the construction of deceleration and acceleration lanes and left turn lanes.

With the current and potential new development along US 20, both east and west, as well as on SR 269, both north and south, the City should be proactive regarding access management on these corridors. The following recommendations should be considered:

Goal: The City and BDC should work together to **prepare Corridor Plans for US 20 East and US 20 West, SR 269 North and SR 269 South** to address access management issues, landscaping, building set backs, parallel access roads, medians and/or boulevards, interior street systems, signalized intersections, signage, walkways, gateways, and other issues to ensure the safety of travelers and protect the capacity of the roadways.

Strategies:

- **Designate one committee** of interested parties, property owners, businesses, and elected and appointed officials for each section of US 20 and SR 269.
- **Schedule a training seminar with ODOT** representatives to educate the committee members about access management.
- **Retain consultants, if needed**, to work with the City, BDC, and committees to prepare Corridor Plans for these areas.
- **Utilize the information presented in Chapter 9** for each of the areas as base data for the committee planning processes.
- **Require all future developments to comply** with the recommendations of the Corridor Plans, and require developers and property owners to contribute their fair share of the costs associated with any access management improvements.
- **Consider State and federal grants, as well as Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** to assist with these access management improvements.

Gateways

As discussed in detail in **Chapter 9**, coordinated gateways at major entrance points to the City provide a definitive sense of arrival for residents and visitors alike. Gateways can provide a sense of arrival to a special place and can instill pride and identity in a community. Gateways can consist of attractive signage, landscaping, appropriate lighting, artwork, banners, etc. These design elements should be consistent throughout the community to create that specific identity for the City of Bellevue.

In response to early citizen input on the Comprehensive Plan, the City has already initiated steps to design and construct attractive, low-maintenance gateways. These gateways have been designed using limestone native to the Bellevue area, and they would be located on US 20 both east and west of the City, and on SR 269 north and south of the City. Lighting, landscaping and other design elements in and around the gateways are planned to reflect similar elements being employed in the downtown to provide a consistent sense of place unique to the City of Bellevue. These gateway locations are identified on **Map 9-1**.

As the downtown continues to be revitalized, smaller or secondary gateway entrances into the downtown should also be considered. They should maintain some of the same elements as the City gateways, along with a logo or theme for the downtown. Suggested locations for these downtown gateway entrances are indicated on **Map 9-6**.

Goal: The City should continue its efforts to develop attractive, low-maintenance **gateways at all major arrival points** into the City to reinforce Bellevue's sense of place.

Strategies:

- Obtain **City Council approval** of the preferred **basic design/theme** of the gateways to establish or reinforce and coordinate the desired theme for lighting, streetscaping and other design elements throughout the City, including in the downtown.
- As necessary, the City should **identify and acquire the property** for the desired gateway sites east and west on US 20, and north and south on SR 269.
- The City should provide **water and electricity** to each gateway site for proper lighting and maintenance.
- The City should enlist the assistance of a local **garden club or other civic organizations** to have the gateways **maintained regularly and rejuvenated each Spring** and other times of the year as necessary or appropriate.

Sidewalks

A key city planning concern today is the desire by more and more people for “walkable” communities. Today’s common emphasis toward “New Urbanism” developments and “Neo-Traditional Neighborhoods” is a reflection of the desire for the community designs of the past, with more opportunities to walk or bike to work or shop, for recreation and exercise, and/or to reduce the dependence on the automobile. The City should take this Comprehensive Planning process as an opportunity to encourage more walkability in future developments and redevelopment projects.

A similar issue was one of the top areas of concern resulting from the 2004 Community Survey: the “improvement and maintenance of sidewalks.” As development continues outwards from the center of the City, with key community amenities such as the new hospital, the Steering Committee felt it was important to systematically provide well-planned pedestrian connectors along major corridors, at least on one side of the street. The goal is to connect key community assets with walk and/or bike paths. These areas could include the new hospital, the City Centre municipal building - especially its recreation annex, the Community Center and Mill Pond Park, other local parks, and schools. Ideally, these would all connected with each other, the downtown, and City neighborhoods via a well-planned network of sidewalks and pathways. This network should also include more or improved pedestrian connectors throughout the City and the downtown. (See **Map 6-1** for proposed walkways.)

In addition to being built to the latest American Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, these sidewalks should also be landscaped in appropriate areas, and have streetlights that continue the look of those in the downtown. Such treatment would compliment proposed gateways and contribute significantly to reinforcing a sense of arrival into the City of Bellevue for visitors and residents alike.

Areas within the City that have been specifically identified as needing sidewalks are the **areas across from Shumaker Elementary School**, and **US 20 west to the hospital and the City Centre**. All new subdivisions are required to construct internal sidewalks that should be linked to the City-wide network.

There are many sidewalks in neighborhoods around the downtown that need major sidewalk replacement or repair work. From the comments on the survey, it is obvious that there are areas of concern throughout the City with regard to the condition and maintenance of existing sidewalks. While the City has an ordinance regarding the care of sidewalks adjacent to private property, it was the consensus of those commenting in the Survey and visioning sessions that the City's enforcement of the sidewalk ordinance is inconsistent, at best. It has also been suggested that the City consider an assessment program to help fund sidewalk improvements and routine maintenance.

Chapter 903 of the City's Codified Ordinances addresses the sidewalk policy and requirements. It was created and amended by City Ordinances in 1955, 1976, 1992 and 1995. Within this policy are specific requirements and specifications for the construction and repair of sidewalks, property owner's responsibilities with regard to public sidewalks on or abutting his or her property, and the requirements for sidewalks on new residential, commercial and industrial sites. Violators of these policies are subject to a fine of not more than \$100 for each offense, with an additional fine for non-compliance of \$100 per day if the cited repairs or other violations have not been accomplished within 30 days of citation.

The construction of any needed sidewalks in any low to moderate income (LMI) areas in the City could possibly be funded the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Formula program, or Community Distress program. These LMI areas are illustrated on **Map 8-1** in **Chapter 8, Housing and Neighborhoods**.

As discussed in more detail in Chapter 7: Public Utilities and Services, the North Coast Inland Trail is planned to go right through the middle of Bellevue. When complete, this largely "Rails-to-Trails" project will extend for 190 miles across northern Ohio, from Pennsylvania to Indiana and Michigan. One of the completed segments of the trail is the 6 mile multi-use trail from Clyde to Fremont. The Bellevue area portion of the trail is planned for construction within the railroad right of way immediately south of US 20, from Clyde to the east side of Bellevue, as depicted on **Map 6-1**.

Goal: The City should **develop a City-wide plan for sidewalk repair and replacement**, as well as **proposed biking and walking trails**, that will result in a pedestrian-friendly community with well-planned and maintained walkways throughout the City connecting neighborhoods, schools, and significant City assets. Once adopted, this plan should be consistently and aggressively implemented and/or enforced.

Strategies:

- **Assign a committee** to undertake a City-wide assessment and to develop the City-wide plan for sidewalk replacement and pedestrian connectors. Include timelines and areas for replacement programs so that the entire City network of sidewalks is in good condition within a five-year period.
- Include a major **pedestrian connector along US 20 west** to the hospital and City Centre recreation annex.
- **Review the existing requirements** of the City's ordinances and either modify them to match what the City is willing and able to enforce or begin consistently enforcing them as they are.
- **Explore financing alternatives** for walking and biking trails through ODOT and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.
- Explore the use of CDBG-Formula funds for sidewalk replacement projects in qualifying neighborhoods, as indicated on **Map 8-1 in Chapter 8**, as well as handicapped ramp replacements anywhere throughout the City.
- Plans should be created and adopted to **connect local pedestrian walkways to County and regional trails in the area**, specifically the North Coast Trail being constructed along the railroad right-of-way south of US 20. This will increase the use of all pedestrian connectors for recreational purposes.
- The **Community Center and Mill Pond Park should be tied into the local and regional walking and biking trail**, and the **trails at the Center should continue to be extended**, possibly to include walkways around the reservoirs.
- All **new subdivisions should have pedestrian walkways**, which do not necessarily have to be adjacent to the road or concrete. They could be designed as meandering walkways throughout the new subdivisions to provide a more enticing opportunity for recreational purposes.
- The pedestrian connectors **around all school buildings** should be constructed, repaired, or replaced to assure that the children have safe and easily accessible paths for walking or biking. Shumaker School was cited often as having issues with sidewalks.
- To meet current ADA laws, all intersections within the City should be provided with **handicapped ramps to current ODOT standards**. These would be an eligible CDBG-Formula activity anywhere in the City.

US 20 Bypass

As discussed previously in the Background section of this Chapter, the issues regarding an east-west bypass around the City have been studied and debated for decades. Probably as big an issue is the lack of east-west through streets other than US 20 through Bellevue. There are no roads on either the north or the south sides of US 20 upon which one can easily travel from the east side to the west side of town without using US 20.

The most recent ODOT study of alternative scenarios for a bypass concluded that the optimum routing was to the south of the City, and included a rerouting of SR 18. (See **Appendix 6-1** for the ODOT study.) SR 18, which is an east-west State highway in northern Ohio running between the Indiana line near Hicksville and the City of Akron, joins US 20 in the middle of the downtown Bellevue. The two divide again just east of Norwalk. As proposed by ODOT, SR 18 would be rerouted to remain south of the City on County Line Road and then on a new road extending east from SR 269, and would join US 20 again east of the City, thereby alleviating one of the sources of transient truck traffic congestion in the downtown.

From the viewpoint of traffic traveling from west to east on US 20, the ODOT-proposed bypass would begin on US 20 west near the new hospital, head south on TR 302 to County Line Road, then east on County Line road, crossing the current SR 18, to SR 269. It would then continue east on one of two roads that would have to be built (and would coincide with an SR 18 bypass) to either rejoin US 20 just east of the US 20 intersection with Prairie Road, or one that would go straight east to first join SR 4 south of US 20 and the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad tracks, and then northeast on SR 4 to US 20.

As pointed out in the study and by local residents, such a bypass would involve four railroad crossings, which, without grade separations constructed at each crossing, would not make the bypass a reasonable alternative to following US 20 (and SR 18) through the middle of downtown Bellevue.

Even without the discussion of a bypass, there is the potential for significantly improving access to the industrial development area south of the downtown along SR 269 (discussed in detail in **Chapter 9**). This could be accomplished by extending the east-west Seneca/Sandusky County Line Road straight east to SR 4 through the planned industrial area and adjacent agricultural properties in Lyme Township (Huron County). Access roads within the industrial development areas could be designed to properly access this new road. SR 18 traffic traveling through the area from the southwest would be directed to turn right on County Line Road and northeast on SR 4 to continue east on SR 18 and/or US 20. Westbound traffic on SR 18 would also be directed onto these same roads, bypassing the downtown altogether.

With the latest traffic-related improvements along US 20 in the downtown, there is optimism that the necessity of a bypass may already be lessened considerably. Consequently, sentiments among residents and City officials range from “We have been talking about a bypass for years and we don’t seem to be any closer to actually getting one. We might as well forget about it.” to “The only way we will ever get the bypass - which we really need - is to have it be a key component to our plans for the City and keep the pressure on ODOT to continue to include it on its future projects lists, and make it happen.”

Goal: The City and the BDC should continue to work aggressively with ODOT **to plan and design a bypass** around the City of Bellevue for US 20 and/or SR 18 transient traffic.

Strategies:

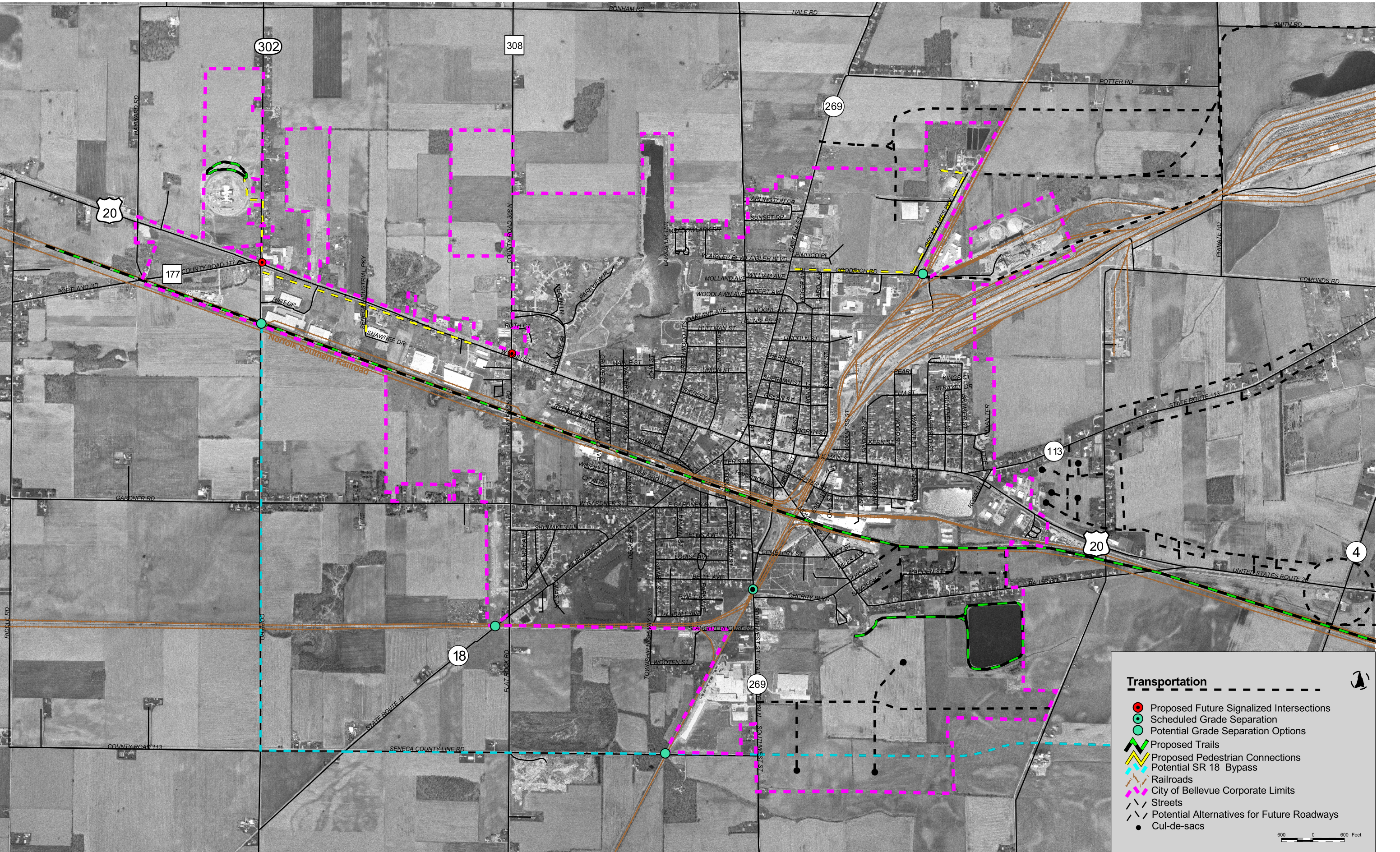
- Strive to **have this bypass project listed on ODOT's planning priority list**. If the project is not listed, it will never get built within the next two decades. The project should include funding for at least two grade separations - one just west of SR 269 and one on SR 4.
- **Work with State and federal representatives** to assure that this project receives a priority from ODOT.
- At the appropriate time, **invest local funds in preliminary planning activities** to indicate to ODOT the earnestness of the City's intent to build a bypass.
- **Do not give up!**

Goal: Until the bypass becomes a reality, the City should work with the BDC and property owners to create a roadway system in the SR 269 south area that would accommodate existing and future industrial traffic demands, as well as the proposed bypass route, so that when the bypass is constructed, a portion of it may already be built.

Strategies:

- **Plan for an eastern extension of County Line Road** to Prairie Road through the future industrial area, as shown on **Map 9-5**.
- Require developers and/or businesses locating in this area to **construct driveways and internal roadway systems that provide a common access** to SR 269 and/or the proposed County Line Road extension, once again so that when the bypass is constructed, existing roads fit into the big picture.
- Selected **County and Township roads in this area**, those that will be used primarily for access to US 20, the hospital, or SR 4, **should be upgraded** to meet truck standards, consistent with an overall plan. Once again, when the bypass is constructed, some of these roadways could become a part of that overall project.

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt06 Rev31405.wpd



City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

7

Public Utilities
and Services

Chapter 7: Public Utilities and Services

Background

The public utilities, facilities, and infrastructure in a city such as Bellevue are the mechanics of city operations. Water and wastewater services are provided for homes and businesses through facilities and an infrastructure system that are seldom seen or thought about by the public, unless, of course, some component of the system fails.

Other city-provided services, specifically police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS), often have life and death consequences hanging in the balance, and the public generally assumes that the people providing those services are well-trained, well-managed, and equipped with the best equipment and vehicles that the city can afford. Other highly visible public services provided by most cities that significantly impact the quality of life of its residents are those provided by a parks and recreation department.

As a city changes physically over time, both the amount and the focus of demands on public facilities and services also change. With these changes, maintaining the quality, availability, and effectiveness of these public facilities and services can be a constant challenge for a city. Similarly, a city must be able to control and afford the costs of providing these services, including such aspects as:

- Facility, equipment and systems maintenance and upgrades,
- Facility and system expansions to meet new or additional demands,
- Acquiring new technology equipment and providing the training for its most effective use,
- Employee costs, including benefits,
- On-going training and certifications of personnel, and
- Effective communications among the public service providers and with city residents and employers who rely on these services.

Staying ahead of these shifting demands and expectations is difficult without thoughtful planning.

Relatively slow total population growth in Bellevue in the past decade has meant that the City has not been faced with the problems of how to pay for new infrastructure to serve a rapidly growing population. Rather, challenges for the City have generally come in the form of meeting new State and federal mandates for water quality and wastewater facilities. In addition, the City is faced with mandates associated with upgrading existing aging facilities, including the replacement of system components such as waterlines that are over a hundred years old.

However, with the relocation and expansion of the Bellevue Hospital to its new facility on US 20, the new residential and commercial development west of the downtown and elsewhere in the City, and the new industrial park in the northeast, new infrastructure is being built and the existing capacity of the water and wastewater systems may soon be inadequate.

In addition, there are constant program and financial challenges for the City's Parks and Recreation Department. Given the local and nationwide growing desire for more and/or

different recreational opportunities among all age groups, and the costs of simply maintaining the expected level of services with today's budget realities, such challenges are common to almost all communities.

At the same time, the need to provide safety and emergency services to new growth areas, at the same level as desired throughout the City and adjoining townships today, means making sure that public safety facilities are where they need to be, are staffed properly, and have the best possible unimpeded access to all areas of the City to ensure adequate response times. (The railroad grade separation issues, both planned and desired, are discussed in **Chapter 6**.)

The balance of this Chapter discuss various components of the City of Bellevue's public utilities and services.

Water

The City's water treatment plant was put into operation in 1937, and was upgraded in 1955, 1967, 1971, 1972, 1976 and 2004. The plant typically filters 1.7 - 2.0 million gallons of water per day, using upwards of 75% of the 2.6 million gallons per day plant capacity.

Waterlines within the City, particularly in the downtown, date as far back as the 1800's. Consequently, the City has developed a **systematic plan for replacing the aging waterlines** on an annual, budgeted basis. New water lines have been recently installed in the downtown area in conjunction with all of the US 20 and sidewalk improvements, and in 2005, the main line from the water treatment plant along Center Street to Southwest Street will be replaced.

In February 2005, the City completed a three-month *Optimization Study* of the City's water system and treatment plant to determine what upgrades need to be accomplished, and to develop a plan for making those upgrades. One of the main factors triggering the study was EPA's new water quality requirements that are mandated to be met by 2008 and 2010. The study indicated that the plant will have no problem meeting the 2008 requirements, but will require that some work be done to **meet the 2010 water quality standards**.

The study also addressed the City's water supply system. Currently, the City maintains five reservoirs, built between 1874 and 1946. The capacity of the reservoirs range from 70 million to 700 million gallons, for a combined total capacity of a billion gallons. Four of the reservoirs are within the City limits; the fifth, and largest, is about five miles southeast of the water treatment plant in Lyme Township.

The water supply system is currently set up so that water can only enter the water treatment plant (WTP) from either Reservoir #1/2 or #3, which are closest to the treatment plant. Consequently, water from Reservoirs #4 and #5 flows north via open ditches to be pumped into Reservoirs #1/2 and #3.

A recommendation of the recently-completed water system study is to **provide the capability to draw water directly from each of the reservoirs** within the next five years, which will preclude the need to pump water into from one reservoir into another to access the WTP. Once that system has been setup, **Reservoirs #1/2 and #3 will be emptied for a much-needed cleaning**, and then refilled.

There are two new stand-by wells near the Bellevue Community Center that were recently dug to augment the raw water supply during drought conditions. Each of the new wells can produce 500,000 gallons of water per day.

To further supplement the City's water supply to insure adequate water for all current customers, and to support future residential, commercial and industrial development, the City is in the process of executing an **agreement to purchase treated water from Erie County**. A key component of this project is the **construction of two new water towers**, one near the new hospital on the west side of town, and one near the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park in the northeast section of town. These towers will complement the City's existing water tower located near Tower Automotive, on SR 269 south. Their locations will optimize the desired water pressures and flows throughout the City, and will also provide the pressures and flows required by the new hospital and industrial sites for both their daily and fire protection requirements.

Once this agreement is reached with Erie County, and other required improvements are planned and under control, the City should continue working with Thompson Township and Seneca County regarding supplying **water (and possibly sanitary sewer) to the community of Flat Rock**. In addition, **York and Lyme Schools also need water** and sanitary sewer services, and the City should work with the School District, the appropriate Townships, and the Counties to provide these services.

Goal: The City will continue to implement the necessary improvements to replace aging waterlines, increase water capacity, improve water treatment, and meet new regulations to provide its residents with a safe and adequate water supply.

Strategies:

- The City will annually budget funds for **replacement of aging waterlines** throughout the City, as was done in the downtown in 2004 in conjunction with the Main Street improvement project.
- The City will schedule improvements, as recommended in the *2005 Optimization Study*, to accomplish the necessary steps to **meet future water quality standards**.
- The City will upgrade the water supply system to provide the **capacity for Reservoirs #4 and #5 to tie directly into the WTP**.
- The City will **execute a water agreement with Erie County** to provide additional water capacity to the City.
- After the agreement with Erie County is executed, the City should ramp up its efforts to **provide water services to the community of Flat Rock, as well as to Lyme and York Schools**.

Wastewater

Bellevue's Wastewater Treatment facility is located adjacent to the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park in the northeast section of the City. Constructed in 1969, with expansions in 1988 and 1994, the plant has a design flow of 2.0 million gallons per day (MGD), with a 24-hour peak flow of 5.6 MGD. The average daily flow is 1.1 MGD, slightly more than 50% of the daily design flow. The collection system throughout the City includes thirteen lift stations.

The City is in the process of completing a \$7 million upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) which includes a state-of-the-art treatment of bio solids patterned after an innovative operation in Minnesota. This process results in the creation of a compost that looks like potting soil and can be used as a fertilizer on residential lawns and gardens. It is being made available



at no charge to Bellevue residents and at a minimal charge to professional landscape firms and nurseries in the City. It is the first such plant in the State of Ohio. The WWTP has a buffer of green space to its north, through which a series of walking trails and habitats are maintained for public use.

The City has expressed an interest in purchasing **additional land to the north** of the WWTP to provide space for future expansion. Members of the public expressed concerns that the WWTP should have a **buffer around it on all sides** to protect adjacent property owners from adverse impacts. Future **housing should be restricted**

in the area immediately around the WWTP, and future land uses to the east should be advised of potential adverse impacts caused by the wind.

For years, the City has had a more traditional composting site adjacent to the WWTP, where City crews and residents could take their leaves, grass clippings and trimmed branches. In the Spring, these materials are run through a screen and residents can pick up the resulting compost for use on their gardens.

Goal: The City will continue to maintain and upgrade the WWTP and collection system as needed to provide adequate service to its residents.

Strategies:

- The City will investigate the **purchase or option of land to the north** of the WWTP to provide space for future expansion.
- The City should **provide a buffer of green space on all sides of the WWTP** to protect future land uses from any negative impacts of the WWTP.

Fiber Optic Lines

Fiber optics is critical to the future of the City, especially from an economic development perspective. Today, many industrial operations and offices require high-speed internet capability to transmit and receive large volumes of data critical to their daily operations. Currently, the railroad has a high-speed fiber hub on Center Street at the railroad, and the School District has its own internal system.

Fiber is not otherwise available elsewhere in the City or Townships, and could be a critical element in the site selection process for the industrial parks, especially with many of the newer, high-tech businesses. **Installation of a high-speed fiber loop** around the City could provide an opportunity for the BDC to recruit and work with a private provider in the near future to provide this asset to the community.

Some communities (e.g. Galion, Ohio) have undertaken studies to determine how best to provide fiber throughout the municipality, assuming that the public sector could do it if needed. As a result of the study in Galion, the private sector came to the table to provide the service once the study was completed. It should be noted that most State and federal infrastructure grant and loan programs now consider fiber as another “utility,” making it an eligible expense for an industrial infrastructure project.

Goal: The City and the Bellevue Development Corporation (BDC) will **study the need and potential for providing high-speed fiber** in the community.

Strategies:

- The BDC should **meet with the City of Galion** (and/or other communities) to review the process and study that it went through, as well as the resulting fiber loop project.
- The BDC should **survey its local businesses and industries** to determine the need for high speed fiber optics.
- If/when a need or desire is identified, the BDC should **undertake a study** to determine how best to provide high-speed fiber optics to those who need it .
- The BDC and the City should **identify financing opportunities** to assist with installation of the fiber optics system. Coordinating this with a new industry location in the City or the expansion of an existing industry, could trigger some State or federal ED grant funds.

Police

The Bellevue Police Department utilizes a customer-oriented philosophy to promote a sense of safety and a high quality of life within the City of Bellevue. Thirteen police officers, four full-time communication officers, and a (new in 2004) full-time detective are currently employed by the Bellevue Police Department.

Thirteen auxiliary officers and one Special Response Team member of the Huron County Sheriff's Office assist the City's police staff during special events or circumstances.

The Bellevue Police Department patrols more than fifty square miles of roadways covering four major routes in close proximity to the City. In order to patrol those fifty square miles, the Bellevue Police Department uses twelve marked cruisers and two unmarked cruisers. The Department is located at the City Centre at 3000 Seneca Industrial Parkway, adjacent to the City Administration offices.

Goal: To continue to provide a well-managed, adequately-financed police department to assure the safety of the residents of the City.

Fire

Bellevue's Fire Department received high marks from all factors of the public throughout this planning process. The Department has been housed in its current building on Southwest Street since its construction in 1985. The facility has 3,800 square feet of office space and an additional 3,250 square feet of truck bay space. Equipment includes a new ladder truck (purchased in 2002), a tanker truck, two front-line pumpers and a HazMat clean-up vehicle. The City has purchased a new front-line pumper to be delivered in 2005, which will replace the 1961 pumper now in the fleet. There are eight full-time firefighters employed, including the Chief and the fire inspector, as well as eighteen part-time volunteers.

The Department's three-bay station is used to service a 97 square mile area, which includes not only the City of Bellevue, but also Lyme, Thompson, and York Townships under contract agreements, all of which were renewed for three years in January, 2005. The department's service area has also been extended by mutual aid contracts with all Huron County communities, as well as Attica, Clyde, Fremont, Green Springs, Perkins Township, and the City of Sandusky.

There are some concerns from the public that firefighters should be cross-trained to provide emergency medical services. There also appears to be some misunderstanding among several of the townships that have fire service agreements with the City about billing procedures and rates. The City is in the process of gathering more specific information on actual costs to provide these fire services to the townships, and is reviewing how other communities provide similar services to their townships, in an attempt to provide more accurate costs in future agreements. The on-going debate with Groton Township regarding a mutual aid agreement for fire protection appears to be hindering negotiations and cooperation between the two entities on other subjects as well.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are contracted through North Central EMS. The City and the adjacent townships recently renewed their contract with North Central EMS for another five years, which will take them through 2009.

There is some concern that, in the future, this private EMS provider may discontinue services. The City is monitoring this carefully and would consider establishing its own EMS service should this happen. Agreements with the neighboring townships currently serviced by North Central EMS should be serviced through contractual arrangements with the City, if this situation should arise.

Goal: To continue to provide a well-managed, adequately-financed fire department to assure safety to the residents of the City and participating townships.

Strategies:

- Continue to **cross-train** personnel for EMS duties, and continue to monitor the status of the private EMS provider.
- Develop informational materials regarding the rates charged to the townships for fire services and **continue to discuss these rate charges** with them so that a better understanding is achieved.
- **Continue to negotiate with Groton Township**, and provide factual evidence regarding costs, so that either a Mutual Aid, or other agreement, is reached.

Utilities

Columbia Gas of Ohio provides natural gas services to the area. Verizon North services the telephone needs of the Bellevue area. The electrical supplier to the City is Ohio Edison, while cable television service is provided by Time Warner Cable. In the southern part of the City, south of the Seneca County Line and west of SR 269, electric service is provided by North Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., which is based in Attica, Ohio. North Central is a member of the Federated Energy Services Cooperative, Inc., and has recently invested in a new substation in the area to encourage industrial and office development. Its rates are generally lower than those of Ohio Edison.

There has been some discussion by the City and the public about the possibility of establishing a municipal electric system, similar to what the City of Clyde did about ten years ago. However, that issue was not strongly supported by members of the public at the various public input sessions. Many stated that they would need more information in order to make an informed decisions, but most felt that the duplication of services was not warranted at this time.

Goal: The City will continue to work with private utility providers to assure that residents achieve the best services as fair costs.

Parks and Recreation

The City manages and maintains eight parks encompassing 80 acres, two recreational facilities and a swimming pool including: the Bellevue Community Center, Mil 'Lympic Swimming Pool, and Mill Pond Park complex; the Community Activity Centre facilities adjoining the Bellevue City Centre; Robert Peters Athletic Field; Buckingham Park; Amsden Park; Kern Street Park; Ellis Park; Waterworks Park; and Harmon Field. In addition the Recreation Department provides over a hundred programs at the various parks and facilities for over 5000 participants annually, as well as several special events each year.



Recent major renovations to the Community Center facility created a new entrance facing the parking lot, and provided a substantial increase in enclosed, indoor space. With the additional space, the Rec Department was able to essentially triple its Nautilus exercise area which has been co-located with the aerobic exercise equipment so that both of those exercise activities could be supervised more efficiently and at the same time. The room that formerly housed the Nautilus equipment is now a multi-purpose room suitable for large meetings, dance and other fitness classes, etc. Other improvements to the building included upgrades to the fire alarm and other safety systems, improved hallway lighting, and a relocated and improved front desk area.

As of March 2005, the Bellevue High School's woodworking industrial arts students had nearly completed a new and substantial, angled wooden reception desk for the Community Center to be installed by late March. This cooperative effort between the schools and the Rec Department is a good example of the kind of benefits that can accrue within a cooperative and improved communications atmosphere, such as the one that the City administration is working to improve throughout the greater Bellevue community, including with the schools and the surrounding Townships.



Adjacent to the Community Center building is a badly deteriorating outdoor concrete amphitheater that was built in the 70's. The Rec Department has been discussing possible alternative uses for this space including removing the concrete work and enclosing the entire space and installing a wooden floor to create badly-needed additional open-space exercise area. This new area would be accessed directly from the locker room areas in the basement of the existing Community Center building.

New play structures have recently been installed at the Robert Peters Athletic Field and Amsden, Kern, and Buckingham Parks. New or renovated swing sets and/or slides have also been installed recently in Robert Peters, Amsden, Kern, Buckingham and Ellis Parks. Picnic tables are in all the City parks, with grills available at Mill Pond Park and the Robert Peters area. There are tennis courts at Robert Peters and the High School, and baseball/softball fields at Mill Pond, Robert Peters and the High School. There are two football fields and three soccer fields at Mill Pond and three football fields at the High School. All of the parks have basketball facilities, some full court, some half-court. Fishing is permitted in Mill Pond.

The Community Activity Centre adjoining the City Centre building complex, is a large, high-ceilinged facility with a perimeter walking track surrounding gymnastics mats and equipment and an open exercise area. It also includes an indoor pole-vaulting pit that is unique to the area, attracting track & field team members from area high schools and colleges.

In 2002, the City developed a Community Park Master Plan for Mill Pond Park, the Community Center Facility and adjoining undeveloped acreage. **(See Map 7-1.)**



This plan calls for additions to the Community Center building - including an indoor pool, increased parking, additional baseball/softball fields, two multi-purpose fields (soccer, football, etc.), expanding the size of Mill Pond, walking paths throughout the area, and accommodations for a variety of other outdoor recreational activities such as frisbee golf, skateboarding and in-line skating, and non-motorized dirt bikes. Obviously, many of these items are in the “wish list” category and will only become a reality as funding permits and serious interest for such activities within the community is demonstrated.

Goal: The City will continue to provide the best possible parks and recreational services to the residents of the City (and others for a fee) for a reasonable cost.

Strategies:

- The City should continue with the development and expansion of the Bellevue Community Center facility and the Mill Pond Park complex in accordance with the **Community Park Master Plan (Map 7-1)**.
- The City should, as grants and other funding sources permit, continually renovate and upgrade all of the City parks and bike/walking trails, in response to the increasing nationwide fitness and healthy living awareness movement, and changing recreational needs/desires within the community that may emerge over the next 20 years.

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

8

Housing and
Neighborhoods

Chapter 8: Housing and Neighborhoods

Background

A community's housing stock and neighborhoods should reflect the needs of its residents' life cycle housing requirements. As individuals progress through life, they have different housing needs based on their income, education, marital status, number of children, special needs, and life style preferences. This life cycle continuum requires different types of housing ranging in size, location, style, and cost. Communities should, therefore, be periodically assessing progress toward providing different types of needed housing at varying types and price levels in order to service the needs of its existing and future residents.

According to 2000 Census data, the City had 3,557 housing units (some Census charts say 3,559). Of these housing units, 93.6% were occupied and 6.4% (227 units) were vacant at the time of the Census. Of the occupied housing units, 70.2% were owner-occupied and 29.8% were renter-occupied. From 1990 to 2000 there was a 7.0% increase in owner-occupied units since 1990, and a 0.1% increase in renter-occupied units. The number of vacant housing units increased by over 50% since 1990, from 148 units to 227 units.

Of the 227 vacant housing units in 2000, 10.6% (24) were available for sale; 53.7% (122) were available for rent; 9.3% (21) were already rented or sold but not yet occupied; and the balance (60) were either seasonal or vacant with no known tenure preference. An interesting statistic to note is that the vacant units available for rent almost doubled since 1990, from 62 to 122 units.

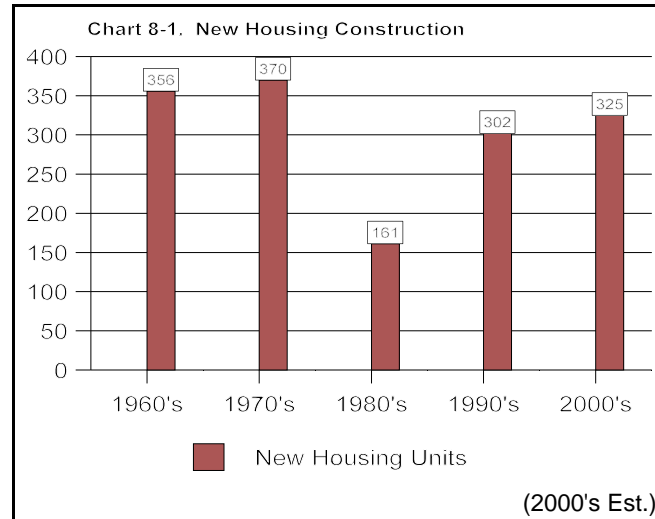
Probable reasons for the increase in vacant units and the increase in vacant units for rent are two-fold (as discussed with a local realtor in Bellevue):

- The rents are probably too high compared to the current housing market that offers 0% down, 100% financing for home purchases; and
- The new assisted living complex in the City offers alternative living arrangements for senior citizens, who likely vacated their family homes, providing a glut of older homes on the market. Other seniors may have opted to move into the condos in Yorkshire, also vacating their family homes, which they could be trying to rent for additional income.

Additionally, 66% of the City's housing was built prior to 1960 and 39% was built prior to 1939. Not surprisingly, some of the neighborhoods in the City have deteriorated over the past few years. Those areas adjacent to the railroad tracks seem to have deteriorated and become rentals more so than other areas of town for obvious reasons.

It should also be noted, however, according to the 2000 census information, that almost twice as many new housing units (302) were constructed in the 1990's than in the 1980's (161). The 1980's figures were also about half of those for new housing unit construction experienced by the City in the 1970's (370) and the 1960's (356). Obviously, the 1980's were tough years to be in the housing construction business in Bellevue. However, the turnaround seen in the 1990's appears to be continuing. **(See Chart 8.1.)**

For the first five years of the new decade, the City has issued building permits for 130 new housing units. 51 of those were for single-family houses; the remaining were for condos, duplexes and multi-unit apartments. This figure is in addition to new housing units that may have been built in early 2000. With the plans for the three new housing developments in Bellevue already in place, there is a high probability that the total of new housing unit constructed between 2000 and 2009 will easily exceed the 300 level.



Other interesting housing statistics from the 2000 Census include:

- 91% of the owner-occupied units had a value of less than \$150,000.
- Over 53% of the households with a mortgage, paid between \$500 and \$1,499 per month, as compared to 33% in 1990.
- 62% of the homes were mortgaged; 38% were not.
- 65% of households paid less than 20% of their household income on housing costs.
- 14% of households paid 30% or more of their household income on housing costs, which compares to 10% in 1990.
- 80% of the renter-occupied units had gross monthly rents of between \$300 and \$749 in 2000, compared to 69% in this range in 1990.
- 10% of renters paid less than \$300 per month in gross rent in 2000, compared to 25% in 1990.
- 23% of renter households paid more than 30% of their household income in gross rent.
- Interestingly though, the gross rent as a percentage of household income statistics did not change significantly between 2000 and 1990.
- The number of homes lacking complete plumbing facilities in 2000 was 24, up from only 5 in 1990.
- The number of homes lacking complete kitchen facilities in 2000 was 21, down from 26 in 1990.

- In 2000, 81 homes lacked telephone service.
- The number of low & moderate income (LMI) persons in the City in 2000, using HUD Section 8 income limits as the benchmark, was 1,479 or 35% of the population of Bellevue.
 - The highest percentage of LMI persons are located in Census Tract (CT) 9621, Block Group 3, (north of US 20, west of CR 308) which recorded a 100% LMI population (only 22 people in this CT are in the City).
 - 55.7% of the persons in CT 9622, Block Group 2 (between US 20 and the RR tracks, east of CR 308) are recorded as LMI.
 - Because of their LMI status being greater than 51%, these two areas are eligible for funding assistance for any activities funded by the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) formula program.
 - The LMI areas are identified on **Map 8-1**.

There are two senior housing facilities within the City: a 40-unit complex called Orchard Grove, which provides assisted living, and Rotary Commons, which provides subsidized housing

Three developments provide housing assistance to lower-income families. These are Pimlico, Frederick, and Bryn Mawr. Most members of the public felt that the housing needs of the low- and moderate-income households within the City were met by these developments.

Housing Strategy

The City of Bellevue has never completed a *Community Housing Improvement Strategy* (CHIS) which is a HUD document that analyzes all housing conditions and needs in the community. The completion and acceptance of the CHIS by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), Office of Housing and Community Partnerships (OHCP), would provide the City of Bellevue with the opportunity to receive grant funds for housing rehabilitation, home ownership assistance, and other housing assistance programs.

Data available for the City of Bellevue, that would generally be used to complete the CHIS, is included in **Appendix 8-1**.

The ODOD, OHCP does have HUD funds available on an annual basis for non-HUD-entitlement cities and counties to undertake comprehensive housing assistance programs. Up to \$500,000 can be requested through the CDBG Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), while other funds may be available for specific housing activities, every other year, if a community successfully completes its CHIS and its CHIP program. Many communities in Ohio have received millions of dollars under the CHIP program.

Grant funds can be made available to eligible private home owners to rehabilitate their homes to Section 8 standards. Many federal regulations, such as lead abatement, apply to these renovation projects.

Public Issues regarding Housing

Public input regarding housing was requested at the visioning sessions, through the Community Survey, and in the Key People Interviews. Comments and concerns included:

- The **historic homes** within the City, especially those along West Main Street, should be preserved and rehabilitated as needed to maintain their historic integrity. Property owners should be encouraged to undertake renovation and preservation activities that are consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*.
- Almost 50% of the survey respondents identified a **need for additional housing for the elderly**. Although Bellevue is blessed with a wonderful assisted living facility on Flat Rock Road, additional housing for the elderly is seen as a continuing need, as people here and elsewhere are living longer. It was also mentioned that senior condos were needed, and that senior housing should have attached garages. Senior day care centers were also mentioned as being needed, although there are two in the City already.
- Although **housing for the disabled** was mentioned by a few individuals, the need, for such housing was not ranked highly in the Community Survey compared to the other issues. Nonetheless, that population group should be considered in new apartment building designs, as there are obviously some people in the community who need that type of assisted living.
- Mention was made of the potential for **housing in the upper floors of buildings in the downtown**. Many communities are renovating these types of buildings into loft apartments and/or live/work units. Overnight parking is always an issue that needs to be addressed when considering increasing the number of apartments in the downtown.
- There are numerous **land use conflicts** between existing housing units in the older established neighborhoods and neighboring industrial and commercial uses, including the railroad tracks. There are no buffers between the tracks and homes in most instances. As a result, these homes often fall into disrepair or become low-cost rental units.
- There was general consensus that **new homes are needed** in the community. This need is being met at this time, and will continue to be met in the near future, with three subdivisions, Yorkshire (at the quarry), Gardner Subdivision, and Country View Subdivision.
- There were strong feelings expressed by lots of people that the City needs to adopt and enforce a **property maintenance code** throughout the community to protect property values, to improve the overall condition of buildings, and to improve the general environment of the City. Of the Survey respondents, 60% stated that a property maintenance code should be enforced. The City of Sandusky's Property Maintenance Code was cited as an example. That ordinance is available on-line.

- It was mentioned that **home ownership needs to be increased** within the City. Interestingly, this is a national goal as well. Statistics for Bellevue, as mentioned earlier, indicate that this could be happening now, as evidenced by a higher vacancy rate currently among rental properties. The current 0% down, 100% financing opportunities appears to be resulting in more householders becoming property owners. The CHIP program could also assist with this effort.

Goal: The City undertakes a housing analysis and develops an **aggressive housing assistance program** to improve overall housing conditions within the City.

Strategies:

- **Prepare a Community Housing Improvement Strategy (CHIS)**, and submit this CHIS to ODOD, OHCP at the next available opportunity. Hire a consultant familiar with the CHIS/CHIP programs to assist with this effort.
- After the CHIS is submitted and approved, **submit an application for Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) funds** to implement the approved housing assistance programs.
- **Target the Redevelopment Areas** identified in **Chapter 5** for the CHIS and CHIP programs, at least initially.
- Consider more promotion of the benefits of the existing **Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)**, so that homeowners are aware that the City can abate new property taxes resulting from improvements made to homes within the CRA. The CRA boundaries may need to be expanded to include additional areas of disinvestment in order to encourage reinvestment and revitalization. This is an additional incentive to entice property owners to upgrade their homes.

Goal: In the City's **Community Assessment & Strategy (CAS)**, which is due each year with its CDBG-Formula application, CT 962200, Block Group (BG) 2 should be targeted. The CAS must address all qualifying areas of the City, identifying potential areas and projects, so that appropriate funding can be requested for those areas.

Strategies:

- An income survey should be conducted within CT 962200 BG 2 to determine if any areas within that block group qualify as 60% LMI, which would qualify that area for CDBG-**Community Distress Program** funds, another newer CDBG program in Ohio.
 - "The goal of this program is to target the investment of public and private resources to improve the quality of life, livability, and functionality of distressed areas and neighborhoods to carry out a comprehensive strategy of revitalization." This can include stabilization and enhancement of residential neighborhoods, redevelopment of brownfield sites near LMI neighborhoods, or redevelopment of commercial or industrial sites.

- Up to \$300,000 can be awarded for any single project.
- If an area qualifies, the City could **request Community Distress Program funds** for eligible activities in the targeted area, which could include:
 - Acquisition and clearance of vacant buildings
 - Code enforcement
 - Curbs and sidewalks
 - Fire protection facilities and equipment
 - Flood and drainage facilities
 - Historic preservation
 - Parking facilities
 - Parks and recreation facilities
 - Public utilities, improvements, and rehabilitation
 - Relocation payments and assistance
 - Removal of architectural barriers
 - Senior centers
 - Water and sewer facilities

Applications must be submitted to the State at the same time as the Formula application, usually July of each year.

Goal: The City works with existing organizations within the community, including the Bellevue Historical Society, to undertake a **comprehensive program to restore historic homes and buildings** throughout the community.

Strategies:

- **Consider designating certain areas as Historic Districts** to obtain protection for the historic properties, and to allow property owners to take advantage of preservation programs and tax credits. These districts could be local or national designations. Areas could include the downtown, West Main Street, some parts of East Main Street, and other sections of older neighborhoods.
- If Historic Districts are not possible or desirable, the City should encourage property owners to **list their individual properties on the National Register of Historic Places**, to assure that some consideration is given in the future to preservation of these properties.
- **Encourage the use of CRA tax abatement benefits** to encourage property owners to rehabilitate their historic buildings.
- Consider the **use of Design Review Boards** and the use of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings* in single-family historic districts. Such regulatory measures control how buildings may be modified, such that the historic qualities of the structure are not compromised with inappropriate renovations, additions, demolition, and maintenance.

Goal: Developers are recruited to provide additional senior living facilities, assuming the need is confirmed by a market analysis, and as evidenced in the CHIS.

Strategies:

- Identify basic elderly housing needs through the **CHIS process**. The need for senior housing within both the affordable market and the upscale market is an issue that is likely to become more important in the near future. A growing national trend is that baby boomers are now having to assist their aging parents with finding senior housing. Many boomers have opted to move their parents close by and place them in quality senior housing. The “continuum of care retirement housing concept” is one that should be pursued. Such senior housing projects would offer a variety of housing alternatives for seniors within one development (e.g., apartments, condos, assisted living and nursing homes).
- **Meet with local developers and elderly housing providers** to discuss the need for additional housing units, the variety of housing needed by seniors, and the price ranges required. Determine if there is potential for existing facilities to be expanded. Elderly housing units should include attached garages.
- Based on the above information, **recruit a developer** to construct additional housing for the elderly within the City. This could be addressed through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.
- **Commit to assisting the developer**, as needed, to assure that the project is completed in the proper location, with the proper affordability ranges, and with adequate variety. City assistance could include financing some of the required infrastructure, doing TIF financing, reducing or eliminating tap fees, providing tax abatement, etc.

Schools

One of the unifying factors throughout this planning process for the City of Bellevue and the Townships adjacent to the City has been the Bellevue School District. Although the City of Bellevue itself has no control over the Bellevue School District, the schools play a major role in the quality of life and the development potential of the City. Having a great school system means that the quality of life in the City is good, the business climate is positive, residential housing values are high, property values increase, and life in general is good. Thus, it is imperative, that as part of any comprehensive planning process, the schools are included as a major element.

The Bellevue School District covers a 138 square mile area, with a current enrollment of approximately 2,450 students, about half of which are in the elementary schools. Over 375 students have special education needs.

The District currently has seven buildings:

- The Senior High School,
- The Junior High School,
- Ridge Elementary School,
- Shumaker Elementary School,
- York Elementary School,
- Lyme Elementary School, and
- Ellis Elementary School.

Three former school buildings have been closed since 1996 to consolidate operations, save costs, and provide the best service to the students as possible. There is a strong desire on the part of the School District administration, as well as the community, to maintain the neighborhood elementary schools.

The Senior and Junior High Schools buildings are in relatively good condition. However, most of the elementary schools are experiencing some problems, such as deterioration due to age, overcrowding, antiquated design, lack of public water and/or sanitary sewers, traffic problems associated with trains and trucks, inadequate or poorly maintained sidewalks in neighborhoods around the schools, and lack of special activity space, etc. Shumaker Elementary currently has several modular units to provide the needed space for classrooms.

The School District administration has spent a considerable amount of time preparing a **Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)**, with the primary goal of achieving “effective” rating from the State by:

- Improving managerial responsibilities which directly relate to improving student performance;
- Improving the curriculum, instruction, teaching and learning which directly relate to the improvement of student performance;
- Improving existing educational facilities which directly relate to student performance;
- Upgrading student services and programs which directly relate to the improvement of student performance,
- Using and developing technology which directly relates to improving student performance, and
- Enhancing efforts for community involvement which are directly related to improving student performance.

As with most school districts in Ohio (and elsewhere) today, the Bellevue School District has less funds available to meet the needs of the students in both the educational and building arenas. The District has had two levies fail since 1996. The District passed an income tax in 2001, which generates about \$1.5 million per year. The School District participates in the City’s tax abatement program, receiving about \$470,000 more than it would have received without the abatements, through 23 tax abatement agreements in the past decade.

The **public offered many comments** about the School District including the need to coordinate development activities with the School plans; the need to provide additional land for a York School expansion; the need to provide water and sanitary sewer services to York and Lyme Schools; the need to address sidewalks and traffic flow around Shumaker School; the fact that the high school band and choir need better facilities; the importance of keeping neighborhood schools (although some mentioned that the most cost-effective solutions should be sought); the potential for the old hospital building to provide additional facility space for the schools (especially the band and choir); and the need to replace modular units with buildings.

It is imperative for the economic well-being of the City of Bellevue, that the School District continue to work to resolve these problems and continue to provide a quality education for its students. There are several ways that the City can assist the school District with this effort.

Goal: The School District and the City continue to **improve communications and cooperative efforts** for the betterment of the community.

Strategies:

- **Regular meetings** between the School District and the City Administration should be held to discuss issues of common concern.
- The two entities should work to **resolve water, sanitary sewer, sidewalk, and traffic problems** to ensure the health and safety of our students.
- Through the Business Advisory Committee, the City and School District should **expand the relationships and create synergies** between private sector businesses and the Schools. This could include:
 - An “**Adopt A School**” **program**, where companies adopt a school building and participate in various events with the schools throughout the year.
 - **Sharing technology and staff** by having classes visit industries and/or having business people teach classes at the schools, with the idea being to provide students with an understanding of what local businesses do in hopes that some of the students may decide to assume a career in those fields of endeavor.
- **Continue the revenue sharing program** provided through the tax abatement program, and look for additional opportunities to assist the schools with funds.
- **Establish a partnership with the School District for future levies** to provide the support and leadership needed to get the levies approved. This includes careful consideration of what levies the City may be placing on the ballot at the same time as the schools. It is imperative to keep the school spirit alive and pass levies supporting the needs of Bellevue area students.

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt08 Rev31505.wpd



City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

9

Economic and
Downtown
Development

Chapter 9: Economic and Downtown Development

Background

In 1983, a group of private businessmen, working with the City of Bellevue, created the Bellevue Development Corporation (BDC) to assist the City with economic development activities specifically related to industrial development. The need for such an organization arose when the railroad had significant layoffs, GE closed its local facility, and Johnson Furnace (the predecessor to Armstrong Furnace Co.) experienced rough times. These companies had layoffs of between 1,500 and 1,700 employees, resulting in a devastating negative impact on the City of Bellevue and its residents. As a result of these plant closures and layoffs, local businessmen organized to address these significant job losses, and the BDC was created.

The primary mission of the BDC, which began functioning as an organization in 1984, was the retention of existing industries within the community. Its mission has since been expanded to include the recruitment of new companies; coordinating tax abatement agreements with the City, counties, and School District; taking a pro-active approach to economic development, such as encouraging comprehensive planning at the City level; and otherwise preparing the City for the future.

Recruitment of new businesses to the community is now a key work element of the BDC's annual work program, which utilizes advertising, personal contacts from local companies, State leads, and constant follow-up on a variety of leads and methods to entice new companies to locate in town.

The BDC has a full-time director, and is housed with the Chamber of Commerce at 110 West Main Street. The BDC and the Chamber share clerical assistance and support facilities. Businesses and the City of Bellevue make contributions to the BDC, which pay for staff and other expenses. Most businesses in the City are represented on the BDC, providing a solid base of support for economic development activities.

The BDC has facilitated many existing business expansion projects, and has assisted many new companies with locating within the City. The BDC works closely with the City regarding the development of industrial parks and sites, negotiating and monitoring tax abatement agreements, and acquiring grants and loans for infrastructure improvements, as well as providing low-interest loans to companies. The BDC also administers the City's CDBG-Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) on behalf of City Council.

Tax abatement is available to companies locating or expanding within the City through the Enterprise Zone, which encompasses the entire corporate limits of the City, and through the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA). Working with the School District, the BDC serves as part of the Negotiating Team, which generally offers a net 75% tax abatement to companies, assuming that a 25% payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) is made to the School District. The Negotiating Team consists of the Superintendent of Schools, the Mayor, a private businessman from the BDC, and the Director of the BDC serving as recording secretary.

Over 23 tax abatement agreements have been successfully negotiated over the past decade, resulting in the creation and retention of many jobs and considerable new investment in the community in both real and personal property. During the last decade, these abatements have also resulted in the schools receiving about \$470,000 more revenue than it would have received without the abatements. The BDC monitors these agreements on an annual basis, and assures that the City's annual reports are filed with the State of Ohio in a timely manner.

Working with the owner of International Metal Hose, the BDC spearheaded efforts to develop a new industrial park in the northeast quadrant of the City. Spurred on by water problems facing AutoPlas, a company located on Goodrich Road, the BDC and the City coordinated the planning and financing of infrastructure to A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park, which remains privately-owned. The park is located north of Goodrich Road, south of the City's wastewater treatment plant, and west of the railroad. Access to the park is from Goodrich Road and Industrial Parkway. With financing assistance from an EDA grant, the City is in the process of constructing infrastructure to service this park, including a new elevated water tower, in 2005. One site has already been purchased by a company, and construction of a new facility began on it early in 2005.

This new industrial park, along with existing and potential industrial sites south of the City along SR 269, and west of the City south of US 20, should provide adequate space for industrial development for the next 15 to 20 years. The area around the new hospital, north of US 20 and west of town, provides adequate opportunities for new office and medical facilities associated with the activities at the hospital. As the hospital opens in 2005, an adjacent medical office facility is being planned, as well as walking trails around the hospital area grounds at some point in the future.

The Bellevue Chamber of Commerce also provides assistance to the City, specifically related to commercial business development, expansion, and recruitment. The Chamber is staffed with a part-time director and clerical assistance (shared with the BDC) and is also housed at 110 West Main Street. The Chamber is involved in a variety of activities in the community, although fewer than it had been in earlier decades.

There was general agreement, from the participants in the public input opportunities associated with this comprehensive planning process, that new industrial growth is necessary and must be aggressively pursued. High-tech companies, and other companies paying higher wages, were frequently mentioned as the types of companies that should be recruited to locate within the City. General manufacturing companies were also mentioned frequently.

There was general agreement that new commercial development should be concentrated along US 20 both east and west of the City. With the potential for this new development, however, is a strong desire for adequate access management and aesthetic controls to protect the community from uncontrolled growth and traffic congestion. These two areas will serve as the first impressions of Bellevue for most travelers, and many people felt that special consideration should be given to how these areas develop.

From a commercial perspective, there appears to be an opportunity to capture disposable income from tourists traveling from the Columbus area to Lake Erie, most of whom use SR 4, just east of Bellevue. At this time, the intersection of SR 4 and US 20 does not have access to municipal water or sanitary sewer. Thus, the ability to provide commercial services to the public is limited.

There is also the potential to capture additional revenues from the traffic that uses US 20 and SR 18, as well as SR 269, all of which converge in downtown Bellevue. Based on all of these perceived opportunities, the following development scenarios were proposed for identified growth areas of the City.

Future Growth and Development or Redevelopment Areas

There are six key areas around and within the City of Bellevue which will likely be the focus of future growth and development efforts. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee spent a considerable amount of time analyzing these areas and preparing conceptual development scenarios for them. These scenarios were presented to the public and the Townships at several meetings for their consideration and input. In addition, the downtown redevelopment scenario was presented to the new Chamber downtown group (at a Rotary meeting in January 2005), and the five industrial and commercial growth area scenarios were presented to the BDC at its January 2005 Board meeting.

Map 9-1 presents an overview of the following six identified development or redevelopment areas, which are:

1. The SR 113/US 20/SR 4 Triangle
 - A. The Smaller Triangle (SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road)
 - B. The balance of the triangle (SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road/SR 4)
2. The SR 4/US 20 Intersection
3. The Northeast Section of City including the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park
4. US 20 West
5. The South Side – SR 269 and the SR 269/Prairie Road Area
6. The Downtown

Planned development within each of these areas was the subject of two visioning sessions with the public, numerous Steering Committee meetings, discussions with individual townships, and the Chamber downtown committee and BDC Board presentations, as mentioned above. Goals and strategies for each area were identified, and are presented below.

1. The SR 113/US 20/SR 4 Triangle

This area is likely to be a key development area in the future, as it is located in the middle of three key State/US highways. East-west access (non-toll) on US 20 is an attractive enticement to both vehicular and truck traffic. The Turnpike interchange, just north of US 20 on SR 4, also attracts a substantial amount of traffic. SR 4 is a major link between central Ohio and Lake Erie and thus, experiences a lot of recreational traffic.

Development currently exists primarily adjacent to the three highways, and is more dense toward the City of Bellevue and less dense further from the City. A key concern for this area is to assure that existing residential properties are protected and buffered from future development, specifically any non-residential development. Also, farmers who are interested in maintaining farming operations into the future should be protected from non-compatible development. However, if/when these farmers decide to divest themselves from farming, future uses of their property should be consistent with an overall vision for the community.

This larger triangle area is divided into two smaller parts for development scenario discussions. Prairie Road serves as the boundary between the two areas, as discussed below and as illustrated on **Map 9-2**.

1A. **The Smaller Triangle (SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road)**

The smaller triangle formed by SR 113, US 20 and Prairie Road has been the subject of an annexation petition in the past, with most property owners requesting to be annexed into the City of Bellevue. The Courts confirmed that the property owners should proceed with the annexation process. However, that process has been stalled.

Goal: The City of Bellevue should work with the property owners who previously expressed an interest in annexing into the City, to **continue the annexation process and properly plan for the coordinated development of this area**. As part of this process, the City should continue to work with Lyme Township regarding revenue sharing and annexation issues as they pertain to this area.

Strategies:

- An **overall plan** for this entire smaller triangle should be developed by the property owners utilizing a “planned development” concept. The City should facilitate this planning process if/when the property is annexed. This overall plan should contain the following land uses as indicated on **Map 9-2**:
 - **Commercial uses** should be permitted along the **north side of US 20**, with primary access from a proposed access road off Prairie Road paralleling US 20, as discussed later. If curb cuts are permitted along US 20 for these commercial properties, they should be right-in, right-out only.
 - **Office development** should be planned north of the planned commercial along US 20. Office condominiums, which are a popular trend today, should be considered to house professional and high-tech businesses .
 - Residential **condos** should be planned along the proposed entranceway on Prairie Road, and along the southern part of the entrance road, thus buffering the single-family homes to the north from future office/commercial uses to the south.

- **Single-family residential** lots should be planned **adjacent to existing single-family homes**, specifically in the northern part of the triangle. Existing homes along both Prairie Road and SR 113 should be buffered from any non-compatible future land uses.
- **Mounded green buffers** should be required in this area whenever non-residential land uses are adjacent to residential uses, as indicated on the map. The responsibility for construction of the buffer should rest with the new property developer. The City should specify the requirements of a “buffer” in its zoning code.
- **Access management policies should be adopted** to provide safe and efficient access to this area, and should include:
 - An **interior roadway system** with the primary entrance(s) located off Prairie Road and a secondary entrance off SR 113.
 - An **access or service road** parallel to and north of US 20 with an entrance off Prairie Road. This access road would service all businesses fronting US 20, so that no new curb cuts would be permitted along US 20, unless they were right-in, right-out only. This access road would also service proposed offices north of the commercial along US 20.
 - A series of shorter **roads with cul de sacs** to service the interior lots, including the condos, single-family residential and office uses.
- Any plans submitted to the City for permitting approval within this area should be consistent with this overall “planned development” concept.

1B. **The Balance of the Triangle (SR 113/US 20/Prairie Road/and SR 4)**

The area east of Prairie Road in the balance of the triangle is a large area that is not likely to develop fully within the next 20 years. The interior will probably continue to be farmed during this planning period; however, the properties facing SR 113, SR 4, and US 20 are likely to be the target of continued commercial and residential development pressures.

Goal: The balance of the triangle area should be planned for **residential development along SR 113** and **commercial development along US 20**, while preserving the **large central area and properties along SR 4 for continued farming** operations, at least for the next 20-25 years.

Strategies:

- **Existing single-family residential** development, which is located primarily along both sides of SR 113 and Prairie Road, **should be protected** from any non-compatible or adverse future uses of neighboring property.

- **Lyme Village**, an historic village located in the southwest corner of the intersection of SR 113 and SR 4, **should be protected** from any adverse adjacent future development.
- Along US 20 east to the 20/4 intersection, **planned commercial land uses** should be permitted, mostly on the north side. It is imperative that these uses be well planned, so that an attractive and safe corridor is maintained.
- A **parallel access or service road north of US 20** should be planned, with the primary access to future businesses on US 20 being from this access road. The access road should start at Prairie Road immediately across from the proposed access road in the smaller triangle, so that a traffic signal could be installed at this intersection if/when needed.
 - The **location** of this access road should be carefully considered, so that development on both sides of the road is possible, thereby identifying more property owners to share in the cost of construction of the infrastructure improvements.
 - The **width of the commercial corridor** should be determined up-front, and the location of the utilities should be identified. Locating the utilities along the new access road would permit additional development to the north of the access road in the future.
 - A Transportation Improvement District (**TID**) or a Tax Increment Financing (**TIF**) District should be considered to finance the construction of the road, as well as other infrastructure improvements.
- If additional **SF homes** continue to be constructed **along SR 113**, consideration should be given to encouraging a developer to build a **parallel access road** south of SR 113, and having all homes directly access the access road as opposed to SR 113. The concern is that SR 113 will end up having a series of continuous curb cuts for driveways, on both the north and south sides, from SR 4 to US 20, resulting in an extremely dysfunctional and hazardous roadway.
- In the more distant future, if additional **SF residential developments** are required, two potential locations could be located in this triangle, providing easy access to goods and services in Bellevue, while providing close access to major highways including the Turnpike. These include:
 - The southeast quadrant of the Prairie Road/SR 113 intersection, behind existing residences; and
 - The southwest section of the SR 4/SR 113 intersection, south of Lyme Village and existing residences on 113. This type of development would protect the historic environment of the Village.

- The SR 4/SR 113 intersection serves as a first impression of the Bellevue area to visitors from the north, and from the Turnpike. Although space is limited, the community should consider developing a **gateway** in this area, welcoming people to the Bellevue area.
- With the railroad tracks so close to US 20 on the **south side**, heavy commercial uses are not likely. However, as that gap between US 20 and the railroad widens to the east, approaching the 20/4 intersection, some **commercial uses** may find the area appealing. Curb cuts should be minimized even though all access would have to be from US 20.
- Long-term, **water and sanitary sewer services should be constructed** within the rights-of-way of the three highways, forming looped systems and providing municipal services to the entire triangle area if/when it develops.
- The City and Township should **agree to an annexation area** that the City could annex over time, and that area should include the large triangle (in the more distant future), as well as the property facing the three highways in this area (primarily US 20 in the near future). The annexation agreement mentioned earlier between the City and Lyme Township should include provisions for this area regarding revenue sharing.

2. **The SR 4/US 20 Intersection**

A key intersection of two major highways, this US 20/SR 4 intersection could experience substantial development and redevelopment if/when water and sanitary sewer are provided to it. Existing businesses (or former businesses) include a bowling alley, restaurant, and gas station. The bowling alley building could be sold to a viable business if it had public utilities available. The gas station has expressed an interest in expanding, but only if utilities were provided to it. A considerable amount of tourist traffic from central Ohio traveling to Lake Erie pass through this intersection. New revenues could be generated for the area if this intersection were properly developed. Proposed development is indicated on **Map 9-2**.

Goal: The City of Bellevue and Lyme Township should adopt a development plan for this area that will generate new revenues, provide an attractive gateway entrance to the City, and provide opportunities for new businesses, some of which could capitalize on tourist traffic. This would include provisions in the annexation agreement for revenue sharing.

Strategies:

- This intersection should be **treated as a gateway** into the City of Bellevue, whether or not it is actually annexed. It is the first impression that visitors from the east (and from the south) will have of the Bellevue area. Thus, attractive gateways should be planned in this area, with a theme that is implemented throughout the Bellevue community.
 - **Common design elements** such as landscaping in parking lots, decorative street lighting (similar to the new lighting in the downtown), streetscaping, and signage should be promoted in this area.
- **Commercial uses** should be planned for this area, preferably with an overall conceptual plan developed and approved first. Since travelers from central Ohio going to Lake Erie

and/or Cedar Point destinations use this roadway, businesses servicing tourists should be considered. This could include motels, restaurants, convenience stores, etc.

- A **peripheral road** around the planned commercial area at the SR 4/ US 20 intersection should be planned to provide for safe and attractive access to the properties visible (but not necessarily accessible) from the intersection.
 - **Access** to the properties should be **from the peripheral road** as opposed to either US 20 or SR 4. Direct access to SR 4 and US 20 should be restricted to the four intersections created by the circular peripheral road. When needed, these four intersections should be signalized. Left turn lanes should also be planned when needed.
- Development and annexation should not go east beyond **Section Line Road** within the next 25 years.
- **Water and sanitary sewer should be extended to the SR 4/US 20 intersection** within the next few years, as this area could provide an excellent development opportunity for commercial uses. Utilities would also allow opportunities for new uses for currently vacant buildings and allow existing businesses to expand.
 - In the more distant future, **water and sanitary sewer should be looped** along SR 113, SR 4, and US 20 providing a fully-serviced and developable Triangle. Annexation of residential properties should not be required, but should be consistent with the terms of a mutually-acceptable Annexation Agreement.
- South of the Triangle and the railroad tracks, a parcel of land is available and should be **planned for a future cemetery**. A private party is interested in potentially developing this property as a cemetery. The City is not interested in future investments in cemeteries and the existing City cemetery is about at capacity. Residential development exists to the south and west of this proposed cemetery site, and room is available for additional residential in-fill development.
- **North of the Triangle**, just east of the corporate limits, Lyme Township has property zoned for **residential development**. This plan incorporates that desire by the Township for future residential development in this area. North of this residential area is property suitable for **industrial development**, as it is adjacent to the railroad and the existing rail yard north of the railroad, as well as being just west of an existing industry. These properties should be **adequately buffered** from each other if/when developed.

3. **The Northeast Section of the City including the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park**

A private property owner approached the City of Bellevue and the BDC regarding property north of Goodrich Road for expansion of the existing industrial area. The City and the BDC worked with this property owner and acquired grant funds to construct the required infrastructure to service this new industrial park. This area, the A. D. Wolfe Industrial Park, is bounded by Goodrich Road on the south, the Norfolk-Southern Railroad and Great Lakes Parkway on the east, the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and farmland to the north, and backs of existing businesses along SR 269 to the west.

There were a number of concerns expressed at the various public input sessions regarding the future development of this area. These included:

- Protection of the existing single-family residential housing along SR 269 and Potter Road,
- The location and proposed expansion of Shumaker Elementary School on SR 269,
- Potential additions to the WWTP in the future,
- Additional truck traffic generated by new industries, given that existing trucks must travel through downtown Bellevue to access the Turnpike, SR 4, US 20, SR 18, and other highways, and
- The potential expansion of the quarry south to approximately Smith Road. This will add heavy truck traffic closer to the City limits.

There have been preliminary inquiries from interested developers regarding possible annexation of residential properties and/or proposed residential developments between the Erie/Huron County line and Potter Road, east of SR 269. Erie County officials were concerned that such an annexation would have a significant negative impact on inside/outside millage and tax revenues for Erie County. After several discussions and research on this issue, it has been determined that annexation with detachment from Groton Township will not negatively impact revenues in Erie County. This is the method of annexation that the City would prefer.

Erie County already supplies water to this area. Groton Township's preference is to have no more annexation of Township property to the City of Bellevue. However, one of the factors driving the consideration of annexation by area residents is concern about fire protection, given the much shorter distance to their properties from Bellevue's fire station than from the Township's fire station.

A primary objective of the community is to minimize or eliminate truck traffic on SR 269 and Goodrich Road, as well as the truck traffic in residential neighborhoods and downtown Bellevue resulting from industrial or commercial activity in this area.

Goal: The City should capitalize on the industrial assets of this area by promoting expansion and development of the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park, while striving to minimize negative impacts of truck traffic and access on the City as a whole. Proposed development is indicated on **Map 9-3**.

Strategies:

- The City should continue to work with the BDC and Mr. Wolfe to **complete infrastructure improvements** to the industrial park, including the construction of the water tower in 2005.
- The City and the BDC should work to **identify an alternative truck route** from this area east to SR 4. In addition to the obvious issue of removing truck traffic from the Shumaker School area and downtown Bellevue, existing businesses are experiencing problems with ingress and egress when Triple Crown stops trains on the tracks for long periods of time. This is unsafe and not cost-effective for companies doing business in the area.
 - The City and the BDC should **work with the railroad** to determine the potential for using an existing road through its property as a **public truck route**, which would then connect to Bragg Road and Smith Road for access to SR 4. This road is located between the Bungee/Solae facility and the railroad tracks, just east of the proposed industrial park. The concept of using this road for a truck route was presented in a 1970's study.
 - If this public truck route through the railroad property cannot become a reality for whatever reason, the City and the BDC should pursue **construction of a new roadway north of the Bungee/Solae property**, most likely along the City/Township line. This road could also intersect Bragg Road, and the truck route could proceed north on Bragg Road and east on Smith Road to intersect with SR 4.
 - **Another alternative for a truck route** that the City and the BDC should consider is north of the City/Township line and north of the WWTP, extending a proposed road from the A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park to the north and east to Bragg Road. This route is indicated on **Map 9-3**, as are the other two alternatives.
 - With any one of the above three alternative truck route locations, both Bragg and Smith Roads would have to be **upgraded to meet truck traffic requirements**, probably Michigan standards.
 - The City should pursue possible financing for this proposed truck route through **TIF or TID**. If industries locating within the proposed industrial park are heavy truck users, **CDBG-ED** may also be a consideration. Since this would not be an ODOT eligible project, funding through ODOT is not likely, although **629 funds** through the Ohio Department of Development could be an option.
- Since it is anticipated that single-family homes will continue to be constructed along SR 269 and Potter Road, the City should **assure that these homes are protected** as much as possible from any adverse impacts of future land uses. Landscaped buffers of adequate size should be a part of any planned industrial or commercial expansion in this area.
- The **area north of A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park** and west of the WWTP should be planned for **longer-term light industrial development**. An adequate landscaped

buffer, as mentioned above, should be constructed to protect existing and future single- and multi-family housing developments from any adverse impacts of continued industrial development.

- The City and the BDC should pursue funding for **extension of the proposed access road in A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park north** and west to SR 269, as well as east (north of the WWTP) to a proposed alternative truck route to Bragg Road.
- The City should continue to provide a **wooded buffer around the WWTP** and should consider **purchasing additional land to the north** of the lagoons as both a buffer and a potential area for expansion in the future. Walkways, habitats, and other natural areas around the WWTP will provide an effective buffer from any development to the west and north.
- The City and Township should work together to provide a **buffer** and assure **appropriate uses on land to the east of the WWTP**. This land is entirely within the Township and, with prevailing winds, could be an undesirable location for most developments. If property owners do not wish to continue farming this property, **industrial uses** would be appropriate for this area, given the neighboring land uses. This type of use would be especially attractive if/when the truck route is constructed.
- The Township should encourage its property owners to **consider farmland preservation** easements on prime farmland or on family farms where future generations wish to continue farming, to assure that future development does not occur.
- The City should agree **to not annex any land north of Potter Road** and develop a position or policy regarding annexation of land between the County line and Potter Road. Water is provided to that area by Erie County and the City should consider providing sanitary sewer to potential users north of Potter Road, as part of a revenue sharing agreement.
- The City and Township should agree to **annexation of the land adjacent to the industrial truck route**, wherever that might be, as it would likely be used for industrial purposes. Terms of the Annexation Agreement would apply.

4. US 20 West

One of the major factors influencing development in and around the western part of the City along US 20 is the new hospital. The entrance to the hospital will be from TR 302, just north of US 20, with no direct access from US 20 (other than an emergency route where the construction drive was). A new traffic signal and turn lanes will be installed at the US 20/TR 302 intersection. There will be a private ring road around the hospital to provide access to planned medical offices and other hospital-related businesses.



The hospital owns the land between the hospital and US 20 and will not permit any development there, neither residential nor commercial. However, commercial development is expected to continue along US 20 between Bellevue and Clyde, on both sides of the hospital's property. There currently exists a 3-mile gap of unincorporated property between the two cities. A major gas line is located along US 20 on the north side of the highway (under the hospital's parking lot), and that must be taken into account with any proposed development or infrastructure improvements.

Another major residential subdivision is currently planned east of the hospital and CR 302, on land that has already been annexed into the City. The area adjacent to US 20 contains several commercial lots, one of which has recently developed as an ice cream shop.

Goal: The City and the BDC should work with private property owners and developers to plan and properly develop US 20 West as a key gateway into the community, to complement the significant investment that the Bellevue Hospital has recently made in the area. Access management policies should be adopted to assure safe and efficient traffic flow. Proposed developments are illustrated on **Map 9-4**.

Strategies:

- The City should develop and execute an **annexation agreement with York Township** regarding future annexations and desired land uses along US 20 West, at least as far west as York School, and as far north as the southern property lines of residential property on TR 205, to implement the future land use recommendations in this Plan. This agreement should include provisions for revenue sharing, if/when appropriate.
- The City/Township annexation agreement should **encourage annexation of existing pockets** of unincorporated property north and south of US 20 that are adjacent to and/or surrounded by property currently within the City. Annexation and development of these pockets should have highest priority whenever possible, so that eventually the boundaries of the City are more easily defined.
- The City should continue to **encourage York Township to adopt zoning** and work with them regarding zoning districts and regulations in areas of mutual concern, such as this area along US 20 West and near the hospital.

- **Commercial and office development should continue** along US 20 north, specifically around the hospital and as in-fill along US 20. The property adjacent to and west of the hospital should also be planned for additional commercial/ office uses along US 20, as well as along the current construction road, should it ever become a permanent roadway. Existing residential developments and farmland should be protected and preserved when so desired by the property owners.
 - **The hospital and ring road area** around the hospital should be zoned B2, to be consistent with the goals of this Plan.
 - The City should require that future developers **provide a buffer** between existing single-family homes along TR 302 and any future non-residential development.
- **Commercial and industrial development should be continued between US 20 and the railroad**, with controlled access onto US 20. Once again, development should occur in a planned manner, with the City working with property owners to identify locations for proposed uses.
- The Facility Planning Area (FPA) for water and sanitary sewer services for the Bellevue area, as outlined by EPA, includes the area west to Riddle Road (TR 292), south of US 20 and the area north to Bonham Road (TR 205) along Hayward Road (TR 296), with the exception of a leg along both sides of US 20 west to Wales Corners Road (TR 288), as indicated on **Map 9-4**. Based on this FPA, the City should plan to **extend water and sanitary sewer lines** at least this far. Extensions beyond this point would involve renegotiating with EPA, and possibly TMACOG.
- The City should work with the School District to provide needed public improvements. As stated in the Facilities Plan, Ohio EPA recommends that **York School be served by a public sewer when feasible**, probably connecting to the City of Bellevue system.
 - The City should also work with the School District to **eliminate the direct access to US 20 from York School**, by providing access to the School from Wales Corners Road (TR 288). This would eliminate the traffic hazards caused by the current entrances, making it safer for children, parents, buses, delivery trucks, and non-school-related traffic in this area.
- The City should **prepare and adopt an Access Management Policy and/or an Overlay District** to address curb cuts, parallel access roads, traffic signals, turn lanes, walking paths, landscaping, signage, and other transportation-related issues on this US 20 West Corridor.
 - The City should work with the Township and ODOT to **provide a parallel access or service road north of US 20** to improve access management by minimizing future curb cuts onto US 20. The location of the gas line will have to be considered in the design of this access or service road.

- The City should work with ODOT and Sandusky County to **modify the intersection of CR 177 and US 20**, which is immediately west of the US 20/TR 302 intersection, so that CR 177 no longer intersects US 20 at an odd and dangerous angle. Options to accomplish this are to dead-end CR 177 just south of US 20, or reroute CR 177 slightly to intersect with TR 302 south of US 20. The goal would be to provide safe and efficient access from the south and southwest to the hospital via TR 302.
- A private developer is currently constructing an interior road system in this area that will intersect with the north side of CR 177, possibly with US 20 south of the current hospital construction road, and with Hayword Road (TR296) on the west side of the property. This road will serve as an access road for future office and commercial complexes planned for this area, while restricting curb cuts to US 20 to right-in, right-out only, if any access is permitted at all. Discussions with ODOT and Sandusky County regarding eliminating the current intersection, however, have not yet occurred.
- The City should **discourage “commercial strip” development** along US 20 by planning and zoning sufficiently deep developable properties north of US 20 in conjunction with the proposed parallel access road. Lots less than approximately 400' deep (depending on use) would provide inadequate space for a public access road. However, private roads through commercial properties could be considered as an alternative to a public access road, although this would not be the preferred alternative.
- **Sidewalks or walking paths should be provided** along the north side of US 20 from the downtown to the hospital, and on the south side of US 20 from downtown to the City Centre/Recreation Annex.
- Residential developers should be encouraged to **provide walking paths** within new proposed residential subdivisions, as well as to connect these walking paths with sidewalks or paths on the north side of US 20, the hospital, the Community Activity Centre at the City Centre, and existing residential neighborhoods.
- To the extent possible, **signage, street lighting and streetscaping should be required** in future developments along US 20, and these design elements should be consistent with the same or similar elements recently constructed in the downtown.
- The quarry presents a unique opportunity for the City in the northwest quadrant of the community. Working with the property owner, the City should **develop a plan for desired recreational and open space land uses in the approximate 100 acres of bottomland in the quarry**. The owner may be willing to donate the property, as part of an overall development plan. Possibilities include additional public park lands with passive and active recreational areas in the lower area, to complement the planned additional residential uses around on higher ground. Given the proximity of the hospital and related medical services, elderly housing alternatives could also be an option for the higher portions of this area.

- A new, attractive, low-maintenance **gateway** to the City should be constructed at the US 20/TR 296 intersection. This gateway should be one of several complementary gateways (also north, south and east of the City) containing a welcome sign, landscaping, decorative lighting, artwork, etc. and should present an impressive first image of the City of Bellevue.

5. **The South Side--SR 269 & the SR 269/Prairie Road Area**

The area south along SR 269, both east and west of the road, is viewed primarily for continued industrial development in the future. With the completion of the railroad overpass on Southwest Street/SR 269, currently scheduled for 2005, access to this area from the north will be improved significantly, providing an opportunity for possible mixed-use development including commercial (non-retail) and office, along with the industrial.

Electric power in this area is provided primarily by Ohio Edison. However, south of the Sandusky County line, and west of SR 269, power is supplied by the North Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., which is based in Attica, Ohio, and is a member of the Federated Energy Services Cooperative, Inc. The Cooperative has recently invested in a new substation in the area to encourage industrial and office development.

With the extension of water and sewer south along SR 269 to accommodate future industrial development, it would be logical to continue extending those lines further south and then west to provide these desired utilities to the community of Flat Rock in Seneca County. Past studies indicate that the City of Bellevue is the most cost-effective provider of these services to Flat Rock, which strongly desires provision of them. The City has initiated discussions with the Township Trustees about Flat Rock in a letter in late 2004, as a result of interest expressed by the Trustees at one of the potential annexation agreement meetings with them.

It should be noted that the Facility Plan on file with EPA states that provision of services to Flat Rock, which is about one half mile south of the Bellevue FPA boundary, would be contingent upon an agreement between Seneca County and the City of Bellevue. Since Seneca County is not within TMACOG's designated planning area, a boundary change in Seneca County would need to be approved by Ohio EPA.

Bellevue's reservoir #4 is located between SR 269 and Prairie Road, just south of Bauer Road. No additional reservoir capacity should be required in this area for the foreseeable future, especially with the plan being considered to supplement Bellevue's water resources with Erie County water. Walking paths around the reservoir were discussed as a desired amenity by several individuals. Also being considered is the possible development of single-family residential properties on the west and south side of the reservoir.

There are also plans being considered by the City and the recreation department to expand the existing Mill Pond Park/Community Center to the south and east of its current location. Connections from the Community Center to existing and future trails and walking paths were expressed as being of interest in the public sessions.

Goal: The City and the BDC should work together aggressively to continue the development of this area as an upscale industrial and commercial/office park, in a manner that will provide an increased revenue base to the City and the School District, that will be in accordance with Annexation Agreements with Thompson and Lyme Townships, and as illustrated on **Map 9-5**.

Strategies:

- The City of Bellevue should continue to **develop and execute annexation agreements** with both Thompson and Lyme Townships for development in accordance with this Plan, for revenue sharing, and for identification of appropriate service providers. Based on the proximity of York Township to SR 269, the York Township agreement should also address development opportunities and revenue sharing in this area.
- The City and the BDC should encourage the planned development of **commercial (non-retail) and light industrial uses** on both sides of SR 269, with properly buffered heavier industrial sites behind any commercial/office areas. Industrial operations desiring highway visibility could build their offices along SR 269 in concert with the land use plan.
- The City should **continue to work with ODOT** to construct an alternate truck route around the downtown, and if that alternate route continues to be an **easterly extension of SR 18**, it should be properly planned to accommodate the proposed industrial development in this area.
 - SR 18 should be continued easterly, then head northeasterly to SR 4, which would then continue on to US 20.
 - Access management policies (as discussed below) should be enforced along this stretch of highway.
 - Curb cuts on to this roadway should be restricted.
- The City should **develop and adopt an Access Management Plan and/or Overlay District** to address traffic and transportation-related issues along SR 269. Minimizing the number of curb cuts onto SR 269, coordinating potential locations of new traffic signals, locating parallel access roads, and requiring landscaping and proper signage should be considered in the plan or overlay to preserve the integrity of the roadway and provide for the safe and efficient flow of traffic.
 - One alternative that should be considered is a **parallel access road** adjacent to SR 269 on the east side, which could provide safe and easy access to businesses fronting on SR 269, as well as to the industrial sites located further from the road.
 - An **internal roadway system** on both sides of SR 269 should be planned, with both roadway systems intersecting at the same point off SR 269, possibly at Tower Automotive's main entranceway. A traffic signal may be warranted at that intersection at some point in the future.

- The City should work closely with ODOT while it plans the grade separation over the railroad at SR 269. The City should **encourage ODOT to widen SR 269 south of the proposed railroad overpass** to create either a four-lane road, or, at a minimum, to provide for a center turn lane where needed. If companies are investing private funds to improve their properties as part of this project, the City should leverage those investments to acquire additional grant funds for the road project.
- The planned **expansion of the Community Center's facilities** should include a proper visual and safety **buffer** between the recreational areas and future adjacent industrial development. Land should be reserved around the center to provide for this expansion, as well as for the buffer, which could include hiking or biking paths. Any industrial uses locating to the south of the Center property should provide the buffer when developed.
- The City should aggressively work with the residents of Flat Rock, Thompson Township officials, and Seneca County to **provide water and/or sanitary sewer to the Flat Rock area**. This would include coordination with and approval by the Ohio EPA. As utilities are extended south of the City to service industries along SR 269, thought must be given to this future extension as well.
- The City should **develop a gateway entrance** in this area to welcome travelers into the City of Bellevue from the south. It should match other gateways proposed for around the City.
- The City should work with the North Central Electric Cooperative, Thompson Township, and the BDC to **entice development to the southwest corner** of the intersection of SR 269 and SR 18 (especially if SR 18 is extended to the east). Development in this area would capitalize on the investment made by the cooperative in the electric upgrades.

6. **The Downtown**

Background. For the purposes of this Plan, the “downtown” is being defined generally as the area along Main Street between Atwood Terrace on the west and the railroad overpass on the east. From Atwood Terrace and US 20 (Main Street), the boundary extends east on US 20 to Euclid St., where it continues north to Friedley St. and on an easterly line to the intersection of Northwest St. and Castalia St. It then heads northeasterly on Castalia Street to Green Street, east on Green Street to Lyme Street, south on Lyme Street to North Street, east on North Street to the backs of the buildings facing Lyme Street. The boundary then heads east again along the backs of the properties facing US 20 to the underpass. It heads south along the railroad to the backs of the buildings facing US 20 and heads west to Broad Street, south on Broad Street to Center Street, west on Center Street to York Street, northeast a short distance on Kilbourne Street, takes a slight jog to the northeast, then heads northwest along the northern residential property line to the old park property to Atwood Terrace.

Prior to the 2004 improvements on US 20/Main Street, the downtown has not received a lot of planning attention since the early 1980's, when streetscaping was added to one block on the south side of Main Street. The heavy truck traffic on Main Street has discouraged the City and Chamber, as well as private property owners and merchants, from expending much energy or resources on improvements to the downtown. With current plans to encourage removal or rerouting of through truck traffic from Main Street, there is renewed interest in aggressively pursuing downtown renovation.

The Bellevue Downtown Revitalization Committee. In the late 1990's, a non-profit organization called the "Bellevue Downtown Revitalization Committee" was created by the private sector to pursue downtown redevelopment initiatives, including downtown beautification and better communication among building owners, business owners, and the community. Membership was open to anyone living in the Bellevue School District. Both the Chamber of Commerce and the Bellevue Development Corporation designated representatives to the Executive Board. The organization was approved as a 501(c)3 organization.

The Downtown Revitalization Committee embarked on a program to provide low-interest loans and grants to businesses and building owners to improve their buildings, from a pool of funds donated by several private companies and individuals. As of October 31, 2004, 27 grants were made for between \$50 and \$3,000, for a total of about \$29,000. Also, seven loans were made, ranging from \$2,940 to \$5,000, for a total of just over \$27,000. Combined, the Committee provided assistance of over \$56,000 to local businesses.

US 20 Improvements. During the Summer and Fall of 2004, the City and ODOT implemented a US 20 improvement program along Main Street, which included new sidewalks, curbs, handicapped ramps, decorative street lighting, synchronization of traffic signals, new traffic signage and pedestrian walk signals, filling in old loading chutes under the sidewalks, rerouting of SR 269 north, and realigning of turn lanes. An island was created at the main intersection for a large evergreen tree for holiday events.

Also, an additional lane was added under the railroad overpass on the east side of downtown (through re-striping), resulting in two westbound lanes and one eastbound lane. This has substantially improved traffic flow in this former bottleneck. These projects will have a substantial positive impact on the downtown and should spearhead additional revitalization efforts.

An Alternate Truck Route. Also in 2004, ODOT developed various scenarios for an alternate truck route through the City. After many town meetings, the route selected was an extension of SR 18 to the east, on the south side of the City, connecting to US 20 at a point east of the developed area of the City. There was much criticism about this proposal, and alternatives were suggested. Due to the lack of agreement, ODOT has decided that the alternate route project would not be pursued at this time.

Changes on the Turnpike. At the same time, however, ODOT worked with the Ohio Turnpike Commission (OTC) to identify ways to encourage trucks to utilize the Turnpike (I-80/90) for east-west traffic as opposed to US 20 and SR 2. In late 2004, the OTC lowered the tolls for trucks on the Turnpike and increased the speed limit from 55 to 65 for trucks. Although it is too early to determine exact results, there is a feeling that fewer trucks are using US 20 through downtown Bellevue today than earlier last year. This could be another shot-in-the-arm for the revitalization of downtown Bellevue.

The Ohio Main Street Program. In 1997, the State of Ohio established the Main Street Program, and began promoting the National Main Street concept for downtown planning and revitalization. Downtown Ohio, Inc. (DOI) was formed to spearhead this program throughout the State. Thus, downtown planning and revitalization have become very popular community planning activities in Ohio in the past decade, and funding is now available to assist with these efforts.

Downtown Design Standards. In December 1987, the City of Bellevue prepared and adopted Downtown Bellevue Architectural Standards (Ordinance 42-87), including the establishment of a Board to enforce them. The Standards were developed to:

- Promote preservation of buildings, structures & sites that reflect the heritage of the downtown;
- Protect and enhance the attractiveness of the downtown;
- Stabilize and increase property values;
- Require compatibility of new construction with the architectural character of the downtown;
- Enhance the visual and aesthetic character, diversity and interests of the downtown;
- Preserve and further enhance civic pride in the downtown; and
- Protect property rights of owners in the downtown.

The City Ordinance states that the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Structures* shall be used as guidelines for the Architectural Review Board in reviewing projects. Certificates of appropriateness must be issued to each project as the official recommendation of the Board. These provisions do not apply to any single-family homes within the downtown district.

Downtown Bellevue has so much to offer to residents and visitors. A substantial amount of new investment has been made in buildings and properties north and south of Main Street. Several banks have expanded or constructed new facilities, including new parking lots and drive-thru facilities. Expansions were also recently completed by Immaculate Conception School and the Library. The lack of concentrated revitalization activity along Main Street, however, gives the impression to people passing through the community, that the town is not as alive and vibrant as it truly is. Hopefully, the City's sidewalk replacement and streetscaping program will begin an ongoing process of revitalization of private properties and enticement of new businesses to Main Street.

Goal: Working with interested parties, the City should develop and implement a comprehensive downtown revitalization effort that continues both public and private improvements in downtown Bellevue, embraces the Main Street approach, capitalizes on existing funding programs, and enhances the 2004 improvement project.

Strategies:

- The City should **spearhead a partnering effort** with the Downtown Revitalization Committee, property owners, and businesses in the downtown to pursue a revitalization effort. It is suggested that the Committee, through the Chamber of Commerce, take the lead in these planning efforts, especially when dealing with private property owners.

- Future downtown planning in the City should **emphasize the four-point Main Street approach**. The Downtown Revitalization Committee should divide work activities into these four areas and appoint sub-committees to implement them. These areas are as follows:
 - **Organization**, which involves building a Main Street framework that is well represented by civic groups, merchants, bankers, citizens, public officials, and the Chamber. A strong organization provides the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.
 - **Design**, which enhances the attractiveness of the business district. Historic building rehabilitations, appropriate in-fill construction, streets and alleys, signs and banners, landscaping, street lighting, etc., all improve the physical beauty of the downtown as a quality place to shop, work, walk, invest and live.
 - **Economic restructuring**, which involves analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions. Municipal infrastructure investment, business expansion and retention, recruitment of new businesses, and creative conversion of unused space for new uses sharpen the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional retail merchants and service businesses.
 - **Promotion**, which involves marketing the downtown as a destination, developing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors. Street festivals, retail events, heritage tourism, and image development campaigns are some of the ways that Main Street encourages consumer traffic in downtowns.
- The **Organization Sub-committee** should undertake the following activities:
 - After reaching consensus with the local community, the Committee and City should **spearhead a visit by Downtown Ohio, Inc. (DOI)**, for technical assistance to continue planning for downtown revitalization.
 - Based on the recommendations in the Downtown Section of this Comprehensive Plan, the Sub-committee should **compile a Downtown Revitalization Plan and Strategy**. This document must include several elements which are required to qualify the City for submittal of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Downtown Revitalization (DT) applications in the future, including:
 - Adoption of a **Downtown Plan** (which may be done as part of the Comprehensive Plan Process).
 - Completion of a **Market Analysis**, which must include at least a consumer survey and a merchant survey.
 - Identification of the **target area** for the first phase of a downtown revitalization grant program.
 - Evaluation of the **physical environment** including all buildings and infrastructure.

- Review and refinement (if needed) of the **Architectural Design Standards**, which include the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*. The Architectural Review Board may require some training, if/when a CDBG grant is awarded.
 - Agreeing with the City that the **lead organization** for all future downtown planning and implementation efforts would be the Downtown Revitalization Committee.
 - Retaining a **downtown manager**, or designating a staff person for this effort if/when a CDBG grant is awarded (CDBG funds can be used to cover the costs of this downtown manager).
 - Joining and participating in **Downtown Ohio, Inc.**, which is a requirement of the CDBG program. Either the City or the Committee (or both) could be members of DOI to meet the requirement.
- The City should **submit the CDBG-DT “thresholds”** in the Spring of 2005, which would make it eligible for CDBG-DT Tier 2 grant funding. These thresholds consist of most of the information identified above and are due on May 23, 2005. These must be submitted and approved in order for the City to be eligible to submit a CDBG Tier 2 application for \$400,000 in the fall of 2005.
 - If the City's thresholds are approved, the City should **submit a CDBG-DT Tier 2 application for up to \$400,000 by October 4, 2005**. If approved, the grant program period would be most of 2006 and 2007. Activities eligible for funding as part of this grant include almost all infrastructure improvements, including water and sewer lines, streets and alleys, parking lots, street lighting, sidewalks, storm drainage, streetscaping, street furniture, signalization, burying electric lines, removal of poles, gateways, signage, focal points, pocket parks, facade improvements, building improvements, historic preservation, etc., provided they are within the downtown target area identified for the grant program.
 - These planning efforts must be **coordinated with any and all projects** to be completed by the City or ODOT on US 20, as well as any other projects planned by the City with other sources of funds such as Issue 2, CDBG, EDA, EPA, OWDA, and/or local funds within the target area and within the program period.
 - The City and Committee should utilize the Bellevue Historical Society or other 501(c)3 organization(s) to **encourage donations and/or unique solutions** to downtown revitalization problems. Any contributions made during the program period within the target area will be used as local match for the CDBG Tier 2 grant.
 - After two or three CDBG-DT grants are acquired and programs are successfully implemented, the City and Chamber should consider working with the property owners to **create a Special Improvement District (SID)** which could provide a continuous income stream for administration and management of the downtown, as well as marketing activities.
- The **Design Sub-committee** should undertake the following activities within the downtown:

- A **Focal Point** should be identified and/or created for the downtown. The main intersection of SR 269, US 20, and Monroe Street appears to be a central location, and it has interesting possibilities for creation of a focal point. There is an island of green space (with a large evergreen tree) as of Fall 2004, and Croghan Bank has attractive landscaping in front of its building, thus the beginnings of a focal point exist. Additional design elements that should be considered include:
 - More intense landscaping,
 - Pedestrian lights and crosswalks of textured and/or colored pavement,
 - Traffic signals on new mast arms (as opposed to wires),
 - The City logo or a "B" (for Bellevue) in the pavement at the center of the intersection,
 - Some textured sidewalk treatment to accentuate this area (preferably in low traffic sections), and
 - Renovation and reuse of the Tremont House, which is on the north end of the intersection. This would provide an historic building and an interesting backdrop to the focal point for traffic heading north on SR 18 and SR 269.
- **Gateways to the downtown** should be developed in the following areas:



The **intersection of Northwest and Castalia Streets** on the north end of the downtown, which has a small green space which could be better developed as a landscaped area and gateway entrance. The view is framed with two tall building towers in the skyline (looking south) that could be enhanced with green space in the triangle south of this intersection. The backs of the buildings at 110-114 West Main Street should be renovated to enhance the gateway view from the north.

The **subway bridge** should be enhanced with paint, murals, decorative stone, or other technique to make it a signature archway into the downtown. The City and/or Design Sub-committee should work with the railroad to accomplish this. Once through the underpass heading west, the grassy banks on both sides of Main Street should be landscaped and designed to better project a proud entranceway into the downtown. Low signage, shrubs, flowers, and lighting could accentuate this area and announce the entrance to the downtown.





The entrance to the downtown from the south on **South Sandusky at Center Street** provides many opportunities for a gateway entrance. The corner that is most visible is that to the south of the new car wash lot. It currently contains electric poles and wires, but could be converted to green space. The median to the east of that corner could also be green. The old gas station on the southeast corner provides opportunities for signage and landscaping, as does the Church property on the southwest side. All of these areas working together could provide an impressive landscaped and nicely lighted gateway entrance to the downtown. Textured pedestrian crosswalks would also enhance the area and provide definition and safety for pedestrians.

- The **green space in the east corner of the CVS store** could be an attractive green area and/or gateway to the downtown from the southwest and the west, if any is remaining after the right turn lane is improved.
- The City and Design Sub-committee should aggressively **pursue creation of a pedestrian-friendly environment**. Downtown Bellevue has a lot to offer residents, shoppers, and visitors. However, it is not very pedestrian friendly. Efforts should be made to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Suggestions include:
 - Pedestrian **crosswalk lights** should be added to major intersections, where applicable.
 - **Shortening the distance between the curbs**, wherever possible, (with bump-outs) should be considered.



More green areas, trees for shade, and benches should be added to appropriate locations throughout the downtown.

A conscientious effort should be made to **create pedestrian walkways to connect key areas** with Main Street. For example, a walking path between Village Square and Main Street could be added through currently vacant land on the west side of North Sandusky Street.



As discussed previously in this chapter, the area at the **main intersection** of Main St. and SR 269, in front of Croghan Bank should be much more pedestrian-friendly, with appropriate crosswalks, benches, trees, lighting, and textured or well-delineated crosswalks indicating the proper place to cross.

The **upgrading of the sidewalks should continue outward** from Main Street, until all sidewalks in the downtown are replaced or repaired and handicapped accessibility is provided.

The City should continue to expand upon the current streetscaping program to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the downtown. This could include trees, patterned or textured pavements in certain areas, bump outs for parking areas, additional decorative street lighting along side streets, pocket parks, banners and attractive signage, awnings and facade renovations, landscaping pedestrian alleys, etc. This should continue through all streets in the downtown. Design elements to consider include:

The current **sidewalk replacement program** should significantly improve the aesthetics and walkability of the downtown. There are several areas off Main Street with severe sidewalk problems, including:

- The west side of Exchange Street in front of the EMS facility.
- The southwest corner of the intersection of Lyme and Green Streets.



There is ample room in some areas along Main Street for **planting of trees**. Significant effort will be required to assure that trees have adequate room for proper root growth. A “structured” soil method may be needed for best results. Suggested areas include:

- **West Main Street, in front of the American Legion** and other offices, has a 24' concrete walk. Ten feet +/- could be used for green space and trees without inhibiting the walking surface for pedestrians.



- In front of the **Sunoco Station** on West Main Street there is adequate space for trees.
- The **tree lawns** in many areas adjacent to Main Street need some attention. Generally this is a responsibility of the property owner. Given some of the conditions of existing tree lawns, possibly the City needs to clarify this responsibility in a newsletter, newspaper, or web site.
- Residents should be **prohibited from parking** vehicles in the tree lawns, especially when the vehicles also infringe on the sidewalks.
- Owners of all tree lawns that do not have trees should be **encouraged to plant trees**.
- **Large concrete flower pots** (4' x 4' +/-) should be added throughout the downtown for summer plantings, as well as seasonal decorations. Some communities (Bowling Green and Evendale, as examples) have used these flower pots to create a very impressive and attractive pedestrian downtown corridor. Arrangements should be made with a garden club, local landscaping company, or City forces to assure that the pots are properly maintained.
- **Private property owners** should be encouraged to add more landscaping around their buildings. Some good examples include the Encore Plastics building on West Main Street, the library, and Firelands Credit Union drive-thru banking center.

- Landscaping could be added to the **back side of Village Square** as a buffer from the homes to the north, and to screen the trash receptacles and loading docks. If buildings are not added to the east side of Village Square, additional landscaping should be added there, as well.
- A **pocket park** could be developed on the property north of Home Savings Bank, in conjunction with a new landscaped parking lot and walking paths. The park and parking lot could include an existing home on the site or be developed around the home.



Continued **landscaping in parking lots** should be required for all future projects and property owners should be encouraged to landscape existing parking lots. The community would substantially benefit from landscaping in islands and around the perimeters of existing parking lots. The new parking lot recently completed by the Library is a great example of how parking lots should look. The plantings, decorative fencing, screened trash receptacles, trees, etc. result in an aesthetically pleasing environment for library users and the community as a whole.

Also very impressive are the new parking lots of Firelands Credit Union and Home Savings, as well as the parking lot in the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Sandusky Streets. Parking lots that could be upgraded include:

- Bassett's Market/Ace Hardware
- The Junior High School (especially since part of it is only gravel)
- Village Square
- The Laundromat and Car Wash on Kilbourne St. This area could benefit from more specific delineation of driving vs. parking spaces, which could be addressed through curbed and landscaped islands. The fencing around the perimeter of the lot could be replaced with design features such as shrubs, trees, bollards, and curbs, that would accomplish the same goals in a more aesthetically-pleasing manner.

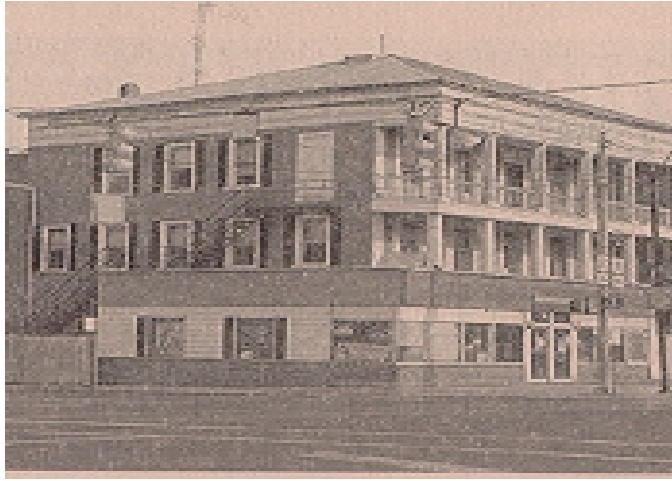
Potential new parking lots could be constructed in available vacant areas including:

- North of Home Savings (in two areas around an existing home or including the site of the existing home),
- North of the Subway shop, and
- By upgrading the gravel lot to the west of the Junior High School paved lot.



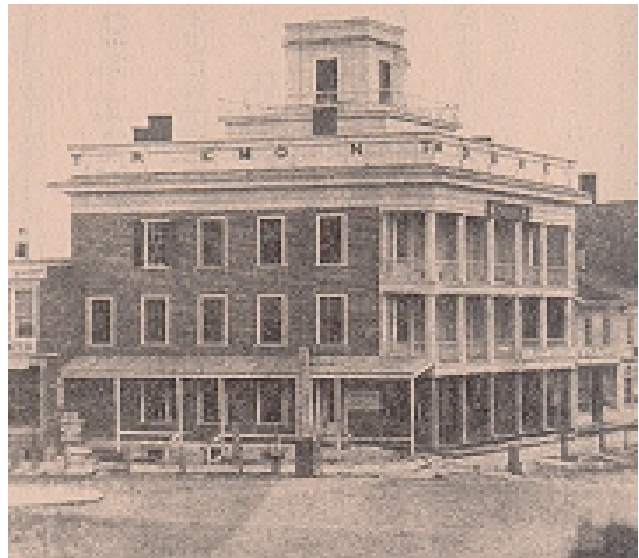
- In the future, when streets are resurfaced, the City should require that efforts be made to **plane down the existing asphalt surface** so that the existing curbs can be reclaimed. The old asphalt could also be rejuvenated and reused for the new asphalt surface. There are many streets in the downtown where the curbs are no longer visible because of the many additional layers of asphalt.
- The community should continue to fight for **slowing traffic down** through the downtown by presenting an image of a “pedestrian” community. Textured crosswalks (or warning strips), trees, bump-outs, large concrete flower pots chock full of flowering plants and shrubs, pedestrian style lighting, benches, etc., all clearly inform vehicular traffic that they are entering a pedestrian environment and should slow down.
- **Historic buildings in the downtown should be preserved and rehabilitated**, with new uses identified and recruited for them. There may be funds available to assist with these efforts. Examples include:
 - The **old theater** (if it is structurally sound and historically significant).
 - All **buildings that form the facade** on Main Street, Castalia Street, and South Sandusky Street.
 - The **laundromat** on Kilbourne Street.
 - The **former bank building** in the southeast corner of Sandusky and Main Streets.
 - Several **private homes** along West and East Main Street.

- The **Tremont House**, which is a key building in the center of town. It has been recently purchased by the Bellevue Historical Society and there are plans to restore it.



The City should work with the Historical Society and other interested groups and individuals to **acquire grant funds (CDBG-DT Tier 3) to renovate the Tremont House** in the downtown. This significant renovation project could serve as a needed shot-in-the-arm for downtown revitalization efforts.

In January 2005, The BDC's Revolving Loan Fund committee approved a request by the City to loan \$10,000 to the Bellevue Historical Society to study the feasibility of renovating the Tremont House. Once this study is completed, Tier 3 funds can be requested for the renovation work.



- The City and property owners should consider implementing a program to **create and/or renovate rear entrances** to businesses, especially in areas where the backs of the buildings are adjacent to public parking areas. This is particularly important because of the heavy volumes of traffic on Main Street, and the inability to easily cross Main Street to access businesses. Efforts should include:

- facade restoration,
- replacing windows that are currently boarded up,
- grouping and screening trash receptacles,
- removing, relocating, or replacing electric poles and burying electrical wires,
- replacing fire escapes,
- improving signage,
- creating new rear entrances to businesses,
- adding decorative lighting and plantings where possible,
 - organizing parking among properties to acquire more total spaces, and
 - providing handicapped accessibility wherever possible.



Current



After Proposed Improvements

Areas which should be addressed include:

- The 100 block of East Main Street on the south side (see above renderings).
- The 100 block of West Main Street on the south side.
- The 100 block on East Main Street on the north side.
- The 100 block of West Main Street on the north side, including the triangular area between Northwest and Castalia Streets.

CDBG-DT Tier 2 program funds could be used to accomplish these efforts.

- The **Economic Restructuring Sub-committee** should undertake the following activities:

- **Recruitment of businesses.**

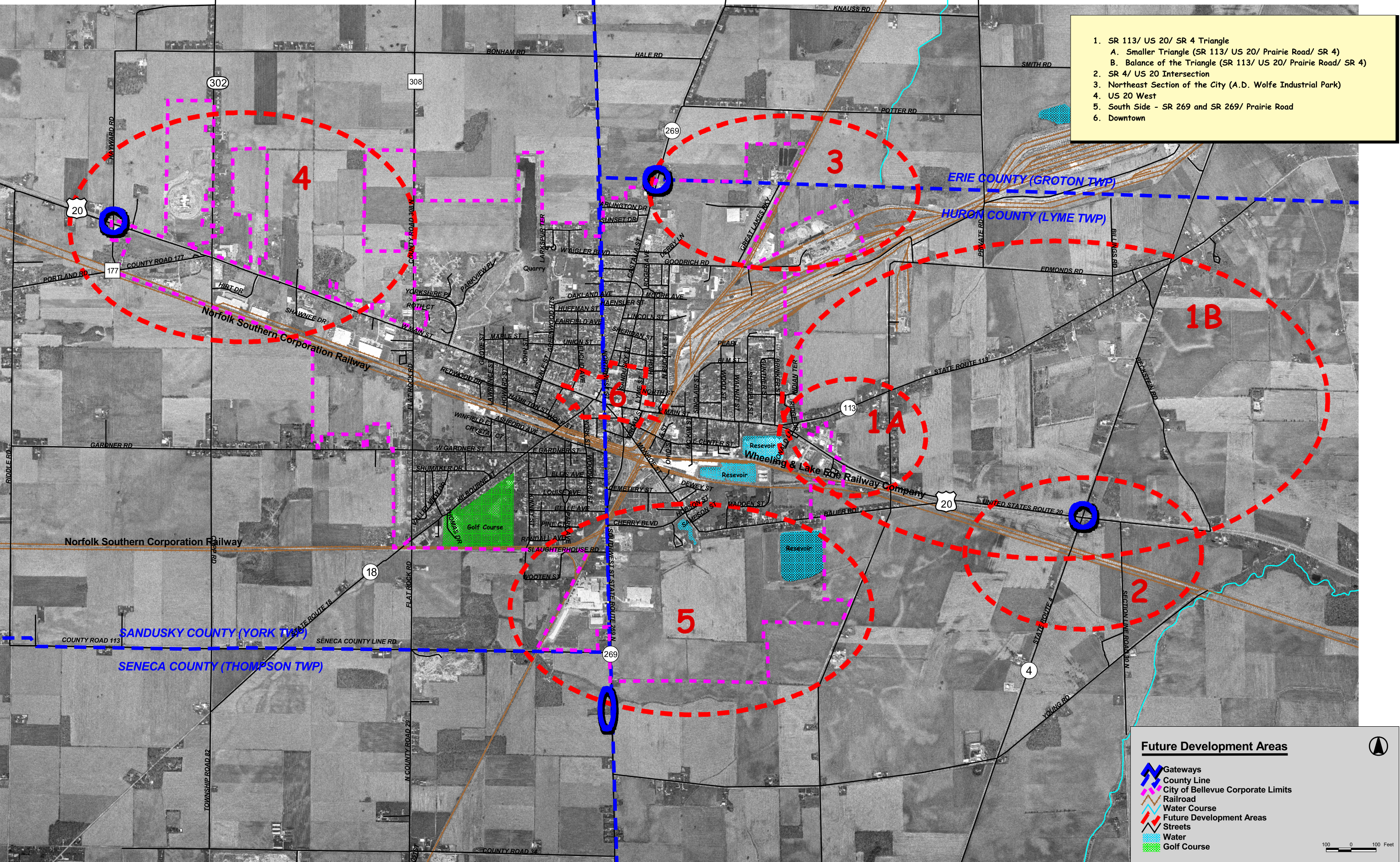
The City has been very successful in recent years with the number of new businesses locating within the downtown target area and with recent renovation projects, especially with new banking facilities, the new CVS, and the new Fuel Mart. Additional new building owners, new businesses, and/or new tenants need to be heavily recruited for buildings in the downtown, including:



- Village Square
- The block of East Main Street, east of South Sandusky Street, where all but one storefront is vacant.
- The vacant lots east of Village Square, which could be marketed to new small businesses, preferably in residential-style buildings to blend into the neighborhood. Some green space should also be designated in this area.
- The old gas station in the southeast corner of Center and Sandusky Streets.
 - The laundromat on the northwest lot adjacent to the railroad tracks.
 - The former Bellevue/Kerr Music Store space on South Sandusky Street.
 - The former municipal building on North Sandusky Street.
 - All other vacant buildings in the downtown.
- The Sub-committee and Chamber of Commerce should work with the merchants to identify needed services and products in the downtown and **develop and implement a recruitment program** to entice existing businesses to expand or new businesses to locate in the downtown. The community survey indicates a desire for specialty apparel and shoe shops, cards/gifts/ and antique shops, and restaurants.
- The Sub-committee should work with property owners to **encourage adaptive reuses and renovation of second and third floors** into housing, offices, or other uses. This must include identifying solutions to potential overnight parking problems.
 - The Sub-committee and Chamber should work with DOI to **provide programs and services to merchants and entrepreneurs** to increase their likelihood of success in downtown Bellevue.
 - The Chamber and Sub-committee should work with local banks to **enhance or expand its loan and grant program** to provide low-interest loans to businesses and property owners in the downtown who make improvements based on the Downtown Plan and the Architectural Review Standards. If CDBG-DT Tier 2 funds are available, this local program could match grant funds from the City through the CDBG-DT grant.

- The City and BDC should consider utilizing a portion of its CDBG-**Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)** to **capitalize a grant program** for facade and building improvements. This could be used in conjunction with a CDBG-DT grant, and/or a Lender Commitment Program.
- The **Promotion Sub-committee** should undertake the following activities:
 - Working with the Chamber, **develop a program of promotional events and activities** to promote the downtown and to entice shoppers and visitors to the downtown.
 - **Work closely with Downtown Ohio, Inc.** and its members to generate ideas for events and activities that involve all age groups, and cover a wide variety of seasons.
 - **Request that the historic groups in the City participate** in the planning of events in the downtown, so that efforts are coordinated and complementary to the benefit of all efforts.
 - **Work with the State of Ohio's cultural heritage program** to piggy-back on programs offered by the State and to leverage funding for special events and promotional materials whenever possible.
 - **Coordinate activities** with other downtown promotion programs in **northwest and north central Ohio**, as the audiences for activities are similar.

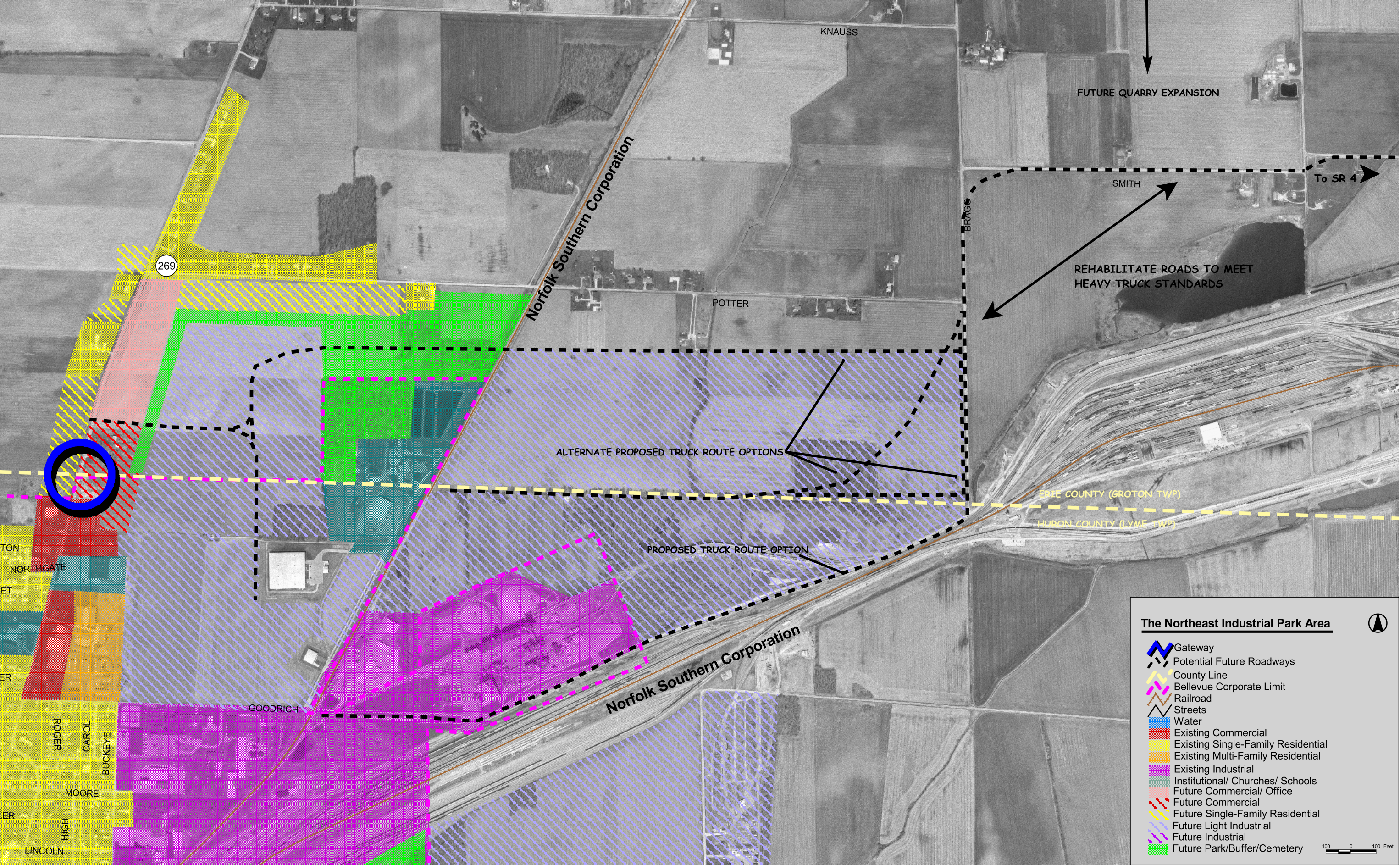
P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt09Rev 31805.wpd

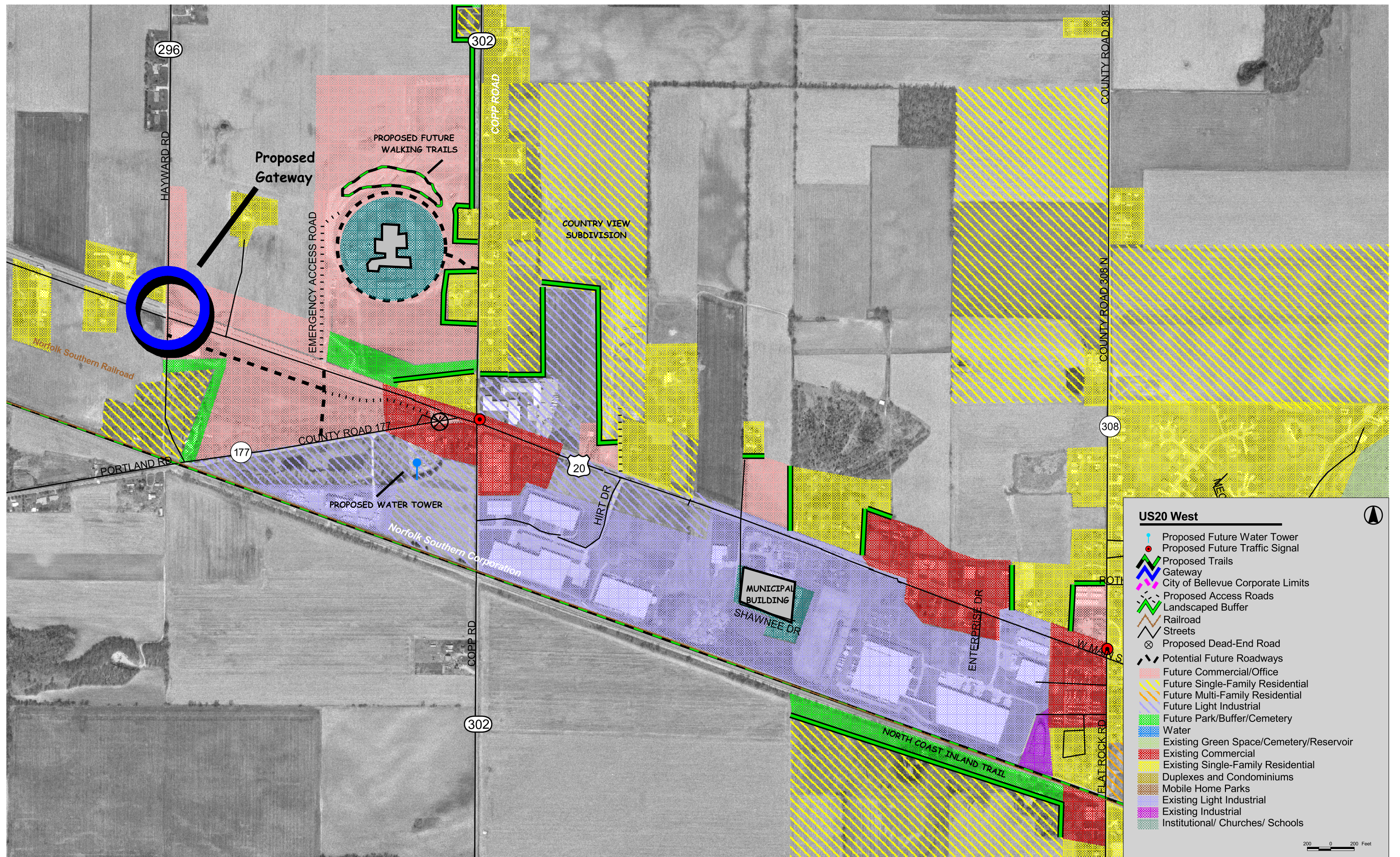


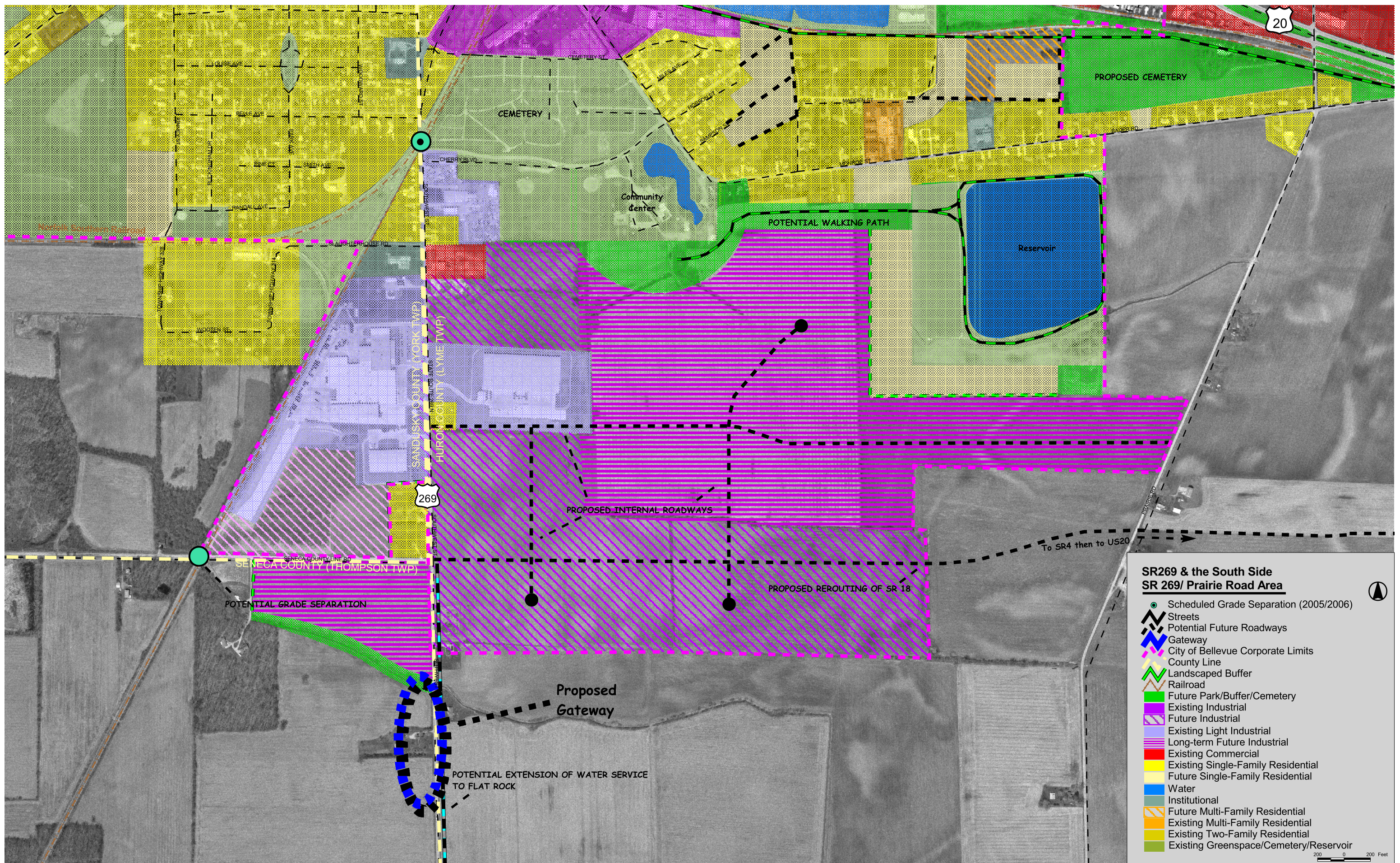
1. SR 113/ US 20/ SR 4 Triangle
 - A. Smaller Triangle (SR 113/ US 20/ Prairie Road/ SR 4)
 - B. Balance of the Triangle (SR 113/ US 20/ Prairie Road/ SR 4)
2. SR 4/ US 20 Intersection
3. Northeast Section of the City (A.D. Wolfe Industrial Park)
4. US 20 West
5. South Side - SR 269 and SR 269/ Prairie Road
6. Downtown











Positive Developments

- Firelands Credit Union (Parking Lot & Drive Thru)
- Home Savings Bank & Parking
- Library Parking Lot
- CVS (Needs More Trees)
- Fuel Mart (Needs More Trees)

North Gateway

- Landscaped Triangles ① ②
- Pedestrian Crosswalks
- Upgrade Parking Lots (3) ③
- Upgrade Sidewalks
- Add Trees and Landscaping
- Gateway Sign
- Potential Parking Lots ④ ⑤
- Need Tenants at Village Square

Medical Shoppe/ Drugstore
Moving into Ace/Bassett Building Expansion

Alternate 269

New 269

Potential Commercial Space ⑥
(Along Street with Parking in the Rear;
Similar to Bank Parking to South)

East Gateway

- Paint Bridge
- Stone Treatment on Bridge
- Landscape Grassy Areas
- Add Signage & Lighting
- Add Pedestrian Crosswalks

Downtown Bellevue

- Potential Mural Locations
- Downtown Boundary
- Walking Path
- Gateways
- Pedestrian Crosswalks
- Trees
- Railroads
- Landscaping and Fencing or Screening
- Proposed Building
- Vacant Building
- Potential Developable Commercial Property
- Potential Parking Areas
- Rear Building Areas (Renovate Buildings and Organize Parking)

60 0 60 Feet



West Gateway

- Landscaped Corner ①
- Add Signage & Lighting
- Add Pedestrian Crosswalks
- Upgrade Sidewalks
- Large Flower Pots on Sidewalks
- Add Benches
- More Landscaping in Front of Bassett's ③
- Landscaped Islands in Parking Lot
- Tenants for Vacant Buildings

Focal Point

- Add Crosswalks and Lights
- Enhance Green Space ① ②
- More Streetscaping
- Add Decorative Street Lighting
- Add Benches
- Tremont House Renovation ③
- Banners and Signs
- Logo in the Center of the Intersection
- Address Backs of Buildings ④

South Gateway

- Remove/Bury Electric Service at Intersection ①
- Add Landscaping ①
- Landscape Southeast and Southwest Corners ② ③
- Add Pedestrian Crosswalks and Lights
- Landscape Median Island ④
- Add "Welcome to Downtown" Sign ② ③ ④
- Need Tenants for Vacant Buildings
- Large Potential Project with Theater and Bank Building ⑤
- Shared Parking with School/Church

City of Bellevue

Vision 2025

Chapter

10

Implementation
Policies and
Initiatives

Chapter 10: Implementation - Policies and Initiatives

Throughout this *Vision 2025 - Comprehensive Master Plan*, numerous recommendations are made regarding steps that should be taken to accomplish the desired goals. This Chapter summarizes these recommendations from the perspective of policies that should be adopted and initiatives that should be implemented in order for the City to accomplish the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and achieve the “Vision.” A Comprehensive Plan is merely a road map of ideas about where the community would like to go. Getting there requires policies to be created, changed and adopted, and new initiatives to be developed and implemented.

Policies and initiatives that the City needs to address to properly implement this Plan include the following:

Land Use & Zoning Policies:

- The City must review, approve, and **officially adopt this *Vision 2025 - Comprehensive Master Plan***, and then make it a routine part of their daily decision-making activities. All department heads should review the document and assure that their operations will be consistent with its goals and strategies in the future. (*City Council, March 2005*)
- The City should authorize the Planning Commission to **update its Zoning Code** to reflect recommendations for land uses and development areas contained herein. (*Planning Commission, Balance of 2005 and early 2006*)

Suggestions include:

- **Reviewing the Zoning Code** for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, assuring that the most current issues are addressed, and making the Code as easily understandable as possible.
- Developing provisions for **buffers** between non-compatible land uses, especially to protect single-family homes.
- Reviewing **commercial and industrial districts** to assure that they provide for the mixed-use type of development recommended for along US 20 West and US 20 East.
- Developing **new districts for mixed-use residential areas or mixed-use commercial and industrial districts**. A **medical office district** may also be beneficial for around the hospital.
- Encouraging and working with **Thompson and York Townships** to adopt Zoning Codes. Both townships are currently unzoned.

- **Considering the creation of Overlay Districts** and incorporating them into the Zoning Code for major commercial corridors and key development areas along US 20 and SR 269.
- Review the **Sexually-Oriented Business (SOB) ordinance** and the **Manufactured Home Policy** (which was updated in 2002) to assure that they meet current standards.
- The **Sign Ordinance** should be revisited, especially regarding temporary signs.

Land Use & Zoning Initiatives:

- City Council should **establish a “Communications Initiative”** that improves all aspects of communication within the City regarding **all City activities and policies, including land use and zoning policies**. To the current Council and Administration’s credit, some of this has already started, such as the meetings with neighboring townships and the publication and distribution of a City newsletter. In order to implement this Plan successfully, the City will need the support of the residents, and residents need to understand what the Plan involves. (*City Council 2005-2006*)

Suggested efforts include:

- Continue with the regular City **newsletter** to all residents. Following the approval of the Vision 2025 Plan, a featured article in the next edition of the newsletter should explain what the Plan means to residents.
- Semi-annual **township meetings** with all four of the neighboring townships to discuss and resolve any common items of concern. One of the issues that should be discussed as often as necessary is how the fire contract fees are established and adjusted, and the allocating of any related insurance payments received.
- Regular **joint BDC meetings** with Council to review economic development initiatives and to assure that both entities are working toward common goals, including the five development areas identified in the Plan (excluding the downtown).
- Regular **meetings with the Chamber of Commerce** to encourage and enhance Chamber activities in the future, and showing Council support for those activities, especially the implementation of recommendations regarding the downtown in the Plan.
- Special **efforts with the media**, by providing regular communication and press releases about important issues.

- **Joint planning efforts with the School District** to continue to meet the District's needs in the future, including identification of new building locations, provision of utilities to school buildings, transportation issues including sidewalks and traffic concerns, continued revenue sharing with tax abatement projects, and support for ballot issues.
- Maximum use of the **web page and Internet** to inform residents about what is going on at the City, including regular updates to the web site.
(Note: The City newsletter is already being posted on the City's web site.)
- Council should appoint a **design committee to develop a design and image initiative** for the City to enhance the aesthetic environment and provide a sense of place. (*City Council, 2006*)

Recommendations made in the Plan that this committee should address include:

- Gateways at all entrances to the City.
- Streetscaping along major corridors and in the downtown.
- Design Standards for key neighborhoods or areas.
- Overlay Districts for US 20 east and west and SR 269 north and south.
- A Signage System throughout the community.
- A Theme or Image for the City.

Transportation Policies:

- The City should prepare and adopt an **Access Management Policy** for the entire community, but especially for US 20, both east and west, and SR 269, both north and south. Issues that could be included are discussed in detail in Chapter 6. (*Engineering Department, 2005-2006*)
- City Council should aggressively pursue and more uniformly enforce its **Sidewalk Replacement Ordinance**, and expand it to include new walking paths throughout the community to connect key community assets. (*City Administration 2005*)

Transportation Initiatives:

- The City should maintain and more strongly pursue an initiative to identify, design, finance, and construct a **bypass or alternate truck route** around the City.
(*Council and Engineering, 2005 - 2010*)

- City Council and Administration should aggressively continue the **development of a gateway program** and begin construction of gateways.
(Administration or Engineering, 2005 - 2008)
- Preliminary ideas for the gateway design and locations should be firmed up and the first gateways should be constructed beginning in 2005.
- The gateway theme should be **extended to include the downtown gateways**, at the appropriate time when revitalization efforts are underway.
- The City should develop a program to identify, design, finance, and construct **additional grade separation structures** within the City in the next decade, as discussed in Chapter 6. Continued dialog with ODOT is required.
(Engineering Department, 2005-2025)

Public Utilities and Services Policy:

- The City should finalize an **agreement with Erie County** to provide an alternative source of water supply to the City. (City Council and Engineering, 2005)

Public Utilities and Services Initiatives:

- Once the water agreement with Erie County is consummated, the City should initiate serious negotiations with residents of **Flat Rock**, Thompson Township, and Seneca County regarding providing **water (and later sanitary sewer)** to that community.
(City Engineering and Administration, Thompson Township & Seneca County, 2005)
- The City, working with the School District, should undertake an initiative **to provide water and/or sanitary sewer services to the various school buildings** in the townships as required to resolve the problems they now have.
(City Engineering & Administration and the School District, 2005 - 2006)
- The City should pursue installation of a **fiber optics system** for the entire City, especially the industrial and office areas, which could include and enhance existing networks at the School District and the railroad. (Engineering and BDC, 2005 - 2007)

Housing and Neighborhoods Policies:

- The City should **adopt and enforce a Property Maintenance Code**.
(Council and Administration, 2005 - 2006)

Housing and Neighborhood Initiatives:

- The City should undertake a **community housing initiative** which would start with the completion of the **Community Housing Improvement Strategy (CHIS)**. This should be done immediately so that the City becomes eligible for CDBG and HOME housing rehabilitation funds. *(City Council and Administration, 2005-2025)*
 - This will require the appointment of a **Housing Advisory Committee (HAC)**, which can provide local input.
 - Once the CHIS is completed and accepted by the State, the City should apply for its first of many **CHIP and HOME grants** for housing rehabilitation efforts.
- As part of the City's **Community Assessment & Strategy (CAS)** for its CDBG Formula program, the City should establish a **neighborhood redevelopment initiative** that would include provisions and projects for CT 962200, BG 2 (Redevelopment Areas B and C). *(City Council and Administration, 2005-2025)*
 - As part of this initiative, CDBG **Community Distress Grant funds** should be sought for qualifying areas with each CDBG Formula application.

Economic Development Policies:

- The City should **finalize the Annexation and Revenue Sharing Agreements** with the four townships within the next six months. A special committee should be assigned to coordinate these negotiations with the townships. *(City Administration and the four Townships, 2005)*
 - The City should **meet with the BDC** to review the Annexation Agreements, and assure that provisions are accurately understood to assist the BDC's with its future economic development efforts within those townships.

Economic Development Initiatives:

- The City and BDC should undertake an initiative to identify responsibilities and roles associated with the **implementation of the five economic development areas** identified in Chapter 9. *(Administration, BDC, and Townships, 2005 - 2008)*

Issues that should be addressed include:

- Land uses should be agreed upon with the townships and property owners.
- Road improvements should be negotiated with townships, counties, and ODOT, as needed.
- Zoning should be changed as applicable.
- Developers and/or businesses should be recruited to the appropriate areas.

- Enterprise Zones should be extended as annexations occur.
- High-tech businesses should be sought for appropriate areas.
- The City should aggressively pursue a **downtown revitalization initiative** with the Chamber of Commerce, and/or the Chamber's Downtown Revitalization Committee. This initiative should include those recommendations contained in **Chapter 9** for the downtown. (*City Administration, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Revitalization Committee, 2005-2009*)

Issues that should be addressed include:

- Based on the Downtown section of this Plan, the City should compile the necessary **"threshold" requirements** to submit to ODOD, OHCP by May 2005 so that the City becomes eligible for CDBG-Downtown Revitalization grant funds.
- If/when those thresholds are approved, the City should submit a **CDBG-DT Tier 2 application** in October 2005 for up to \$400,000 for both public and private rehabilitation efforts.
- The **4-point Main Street approach** should be adopted for downtown revitalization efforts.
- The City should encourage the Bellevue Historical Society to pursue the study and renovation of the **Tremont House** for its home and to serve as a focal point in the downtown. **CDBG-Downtown Tier 3** funds should be sought.
- A **downtown historic district designation** should be considered.
- The City and/or Chamber of Commerce should **join Downtown Ohio, Inc.**
- **Parking** should be addressed in the downtown.
- The City should work with and encourage the **Chamber of Commerce to become more active** in the redevelopment of the downtown and the community. (*City Administration, 2005*)

Steps include:

- The Chamber should be encouraged to develop and implement a successful **Heritage Tourism program**.
- Additional **promotional events and activities** to attract shoppers to downtown should be developed, in concert with the revitalization effort.
- **Coordination with neighboring cities'** activities should be investigated.

P:\CLIENTS\1060\013\CompPlan\chapters\Chpt 10 Rev31605.wpd

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
VISION 2025
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM
11/13/03 and 12/16/03 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Land Issue Assets

- Farmland - Lyme & Groton Townships
- Historic Homes & Buildings
- Commercial Development - Encourage on West & East ends of US 20
- DT Revitalization Committee
- DT Residential conversions
- Quarry land development
 - Golf course
 - Park - Active/Passive
 - (Cooperation with Sandusky County Parks)
 - Yorkshire Development around it
 - Active area near US 20, passive area in back
- Could put sports fields in bottom
- Potential solution to local area storm water issues

Land Use Liabilities

- One vacant gas station
- Industrial uses adjacent to residential (several instances)
 - Ashford, Sheffield, Center, Buckeye
 - Monroe St - new industrial park off 269, just zoned - not developed, still ag
 - Potential New Industrial Park - South
- Zoning regulations out of date - last updated in '80's
 - I-1 and I-2
- Old hospital building - uses?
- How to deal with historic buildings in DT - Preserve/develop or raze
- Township zoning issues
 - Some have no zoning
 - Potential problems with SOB's (sexually orientated businesses)
- Minimal places to build new housing
 - NW area
 - W side of 269
 - N of Willow Run
- Cemetery full within 6 years
- Various school expansions
 - York school needs to buy land
 - Lyme school - no water & sewer

- Downtown issues
 - Converting commercial to residential
 - Restaurants
 - Hotel
- Commercial Center
 - Buffer between it and Bauer Road
 - Tower Auto/Industrial Park
 - Farmland in between
 - I-1 & I-2 Issue
 - Road needed to Prairie Road

Quality of Life Assets

- Quarry has potential for needed parks and recreation space
- Good Schools
 - Operating and renewal issues have passed
 - Band & Choir highly successful (need space, however)
- 40 unit Senior Housing complex
- Orchard Grove - assisted living area
- Rotary Commons - Subsidized senior housing
- Flatrock Road Middle-income development (26-40 units, \$150-250,000)
- Mobile homes/Manufactured housing ordinance updated in 2002 (PDG to ck)
 - Have three now
 - Kasper
 - Redwood Drive
 - Flemings
- Society of The Arts
 - Have building (by Robert Peters Park)
 - Need \$125,000
 - Theater/Community theater
- Community Center (25 years old)
 - Marc has long-term plan (Gary to get copy to PDG)
- City Center exercise area
- Library - has newly expanding parking
- Activities for kids <12 in good shape
- Historical Society
 - Trying to renovate DT building for museum
- RR Museum
- DT - lots of possibilities
 - Theater block (worst in DT now)
 - Bank renovation
 - New parking lot DT (City leasing from Bank)
 - (need to define "Historic")

- Have CRA in DT
- "Rte 20 is, and probably always will be, the issue"
- Have two Senior day care centers
- Need to retain historic houses on west 20

Quality of Life Liabilities

- Need Parks & Recreation space
- Need land for schools
 - Aging buildings
 - York, Lyme (enrollment decreasing), Ellis
 - High school - built in 1963, renovated in 1968 and in 2003
 - Failed levies for building
 - Use of modulars is default solution
 - Need more space at
 - Shumaker
 - Traffic problems - bus and parent loop(s), not repairing blacktop
 - Ridge School
 - York school area - may need new school
 - Lyme school needs water & sewer (137 enrollment)
- Millage increase on March ballot in March of 2003
 - Shumaker improvements
 - Band & Choir facilities
- Sidewalks issues
 - Financial impact on Residents
 - @ Shumaker School
- Signage ordinance - review and enforcement
- Logo/Slogan - don't really have one
 - "A Break from the Lake" has been used
 - Schools have a logo - try to develop compatible logo for City
- Percentage of low-income housing
 - Pimlico
 - Frederick
 - Brian Manor
- Need ordinance on rental properties (Sandusky example?)
 - Regs on subsidized housing maintenance
- Condos not selling (Are more needed?)
 - Brinker
 - in Quarry area
 - Yorkshire (Roth Drive) - 20-30 years old
- Need more baseball fields (in Rec Board plan)
 - South of existing fields (Mark)
- Activities for teens
- Empty movie theater building (20+ years)
- Need middle-income housing (\$100-150,000)

- Need senior condos
 - Use for old Hospital building?
 - No inside parking in senior housing areas
- Need to limit subsidized housing

Public Facilities, Utilities, Services Assets

- Quarry - potential solution to storm water issues
- Parks - (issue for discussion with Twp Agreements)
- Property next to hospital - Park?
- Water and WW systems current and planned renovations address next 20 years anticipated demands
 - No raw water issues
 - With streets project DT, all water lines and connections will be replaced
 - Plan to hook into Erie County water - build new water tower N of town - will provide additional/back-up source of treated water, lines to nearby Twp(s)
- Police and Fire - paid full and part-time - good shape
 - Also have contracts with York, Lyme and Thompson Twps
- EMS is contracted with private firm
 - Training City firefighters as EMT's
 - poor EMS response from County
 - Contractor also provides services to all in immediate area but Groton Twp
 - Half of York
 - All of Thompson and Lyme
 - If City goes to its own EMS, Twps may be without service except thru County (part of annexation agreement discussions)
- RR has high-speed fiber hub (POP) on Center Street at RR
 - Huge opportunity for City (or Private developer?) (RFP?)
 - Lines could be put in existing right-of-ways
 - not now available in Twps
 - (Schools have their own internal fiber optic system - Mark Bishop, technical contact)
 - Need provider
 - Link it to new Industrial Park
 - Needed for hi-tech businesses
 - BDC involvement - recruitment of provider

Public Facilities, Utilities, Services Liabilities

- Storm Water issues
 - Sink hole nature of the land
- Need buffer to north of WWTP before any more housing built there
 - Parks
 - Potter Road - odor complaints
 - Verhoff
 - Wild area
 - Old retention ponds used for ducks
 - Walking trails
 - Recycling of yard waste
- Lyme Township needs water
 - School needs water

Transportation Assets

- Proximity to 80/90 and 18, 4, 269
- New traffic signals and widening scheduled for 2004 along 20 from 302 to East City line (including Goodrich (new light and improved turn radii) and Greenwood Hts.(traffic light), light at 308 will help)
- 5-year paving plan for City
- Community-wide sidewalk ordinance (but no implementation plan or enforcement)
 - Now required with all new residential
 - area across from Shumaker school
 - no assessment process in place (yet)
 - no LMI areas (PDG to ck, especially in rental housing areas and Pimlico area to Shumaker school)
- Sandusky County airport (Discuss with BDC - Roger)
 - American Baler - corporate jet regular user
 - Life Flight based there
- 2 RR's - Norfolk & Southern and Wheeling & Lake Erie
 - Grade separation scheduled for 2005 at 269 & Southwest Street (will eliminate fire issue)
 - Still need other grade separations
- Signage and wayfinding ok
 - (But need to revisit ordinance, esp re temporary signs)
- Rails to trails (County program)

Transportation Liabilities

- US 20 Access management
- Access management issues - 20
- Areas around various schools - esp Shumaker and the High School
- Lack of grade separations
- Bottlenecks - really only 3-5 PM and in the DT and RR underpass
 - three 5-point intersections in Downtown
- 20 is the only E-W continuous road
- Twp roads future use
- Gateways
 - esp on west side.
 - Garden club handles east side

Commercial and Economic Development Assets:

- Sandusky County Airport
- DT Opportunities/Needs (See Quality of Life section)
 - Theater potential use/demolish/historical debate?
 - CRA exists
- New Industrial Park NE
 - Infrastructure to be complete in 2004
 - Should provide sufficient space for next 20 years
- Potential Industrial property to the South - not zoned for industry, sitting in limbo until we see how things develop in area
- Cedar Point Connection
 - Rte 4 traffic
 - Spillover hotel opportunity not as strong with all new hotels close to CP
 - Local hotel no longer a Best Western (no automatic CP area referrals)
- Good Schools

Commercial and Economic Development Liabilities

- DT Route 20 Issues
- Need Commercial development
 - 259N
 - 20 - W & E to Rte 4
 - Motels
 - Restaurants
 - Dry Cleaner

School/Education Assets:

- Good Schools
 - Operating bond issues have passed
 - Band & Choir highly successful (need space, however)
- Good City-Township unifying factor

School/Education Liabilities:

- Various school expansion issues
 - York school needs to buy land
 - Lyme school - no water & sewer
- Need land for schools
 - Aging buildings
 - York, Lyme (enrollment decreasing), Ellis
 - High school - built in 1953, renovated in 1968
 - Failed Bond levies
 - Use of modulars is default solution
 - Need more space at
 - Shumaker
 - Traffic problems - bus and parent loop(s), not repairing blacktop
 - Ridge School
 - York school area - may need new school
 - Lyme school needs water & sewer (137 enrollment)
- Millage increase on March ballot
 - Shumaker improvements
 - Band & Choir facilities
- Sidewalks issues
 - @ Shumaker School
- Transportation issues around various schools - esp Shumaker and the High School

Bellevue Key Persons Interview Summary									
March 23-24, 2004									
Rank	#	Subject	Composite Emphasis	# of 1's	# of 2's	# of 3's	# of 4's	# of 5's	Total # of Responses
1	23	Adequate fire protection	59	11	1	0	0	0	12
2	17	Coordinate with School Plan	56	8	4	0	0	0	12
3	14	Additional RR grade separations	55	8	3	1	0	0	12
4	24	Adequate police protection	53	8	3	0	0	1	12
5	10	Erie County Water	52	6	4	2	0	0	12
6	6	Buffer new Developments	52	6	4	2	0	0	12
7	7	Fiber Optic Network	51.5	7	2.5	1.5	1	0	12
8	13	Force property maintenance	48	5	2	5	0	0	12
9	3	Parking DT	45.5	4.5	4.5	1	0	2	12
10	9	Gateways	44.5	4	4	2	0.5	1.5	12
11	4	Focus Comm Dev DT/20/269	44	3	5	2	1	1	12
12	11	CHIP/CHIS program	42.5	2.5	4.5	3	1	1	12
13	15	Expand/Improve Parks	40	1	4	6	0	1	12
14	5	Industrial Dev in NE	39.5	3.5	2.5	2	2	2	12
15	16	More Ball Fields/Rec Areas	38	2	4	2	2	2	12
16	12	Cemetery space	37.5	1.5	1.5	7	1	1	12
17	1	DT revitalization critical	37.5	2.5	1.5	4	3	1	12
18	2	ID/Recruit specific businesses	33	0	2.5	6	1.5	2	12
		Total of each response		83.5	57.5	46.5	13	15.5	
	18	Rate the Schools	47.5	3.5	4.5	4	0	0	12
	26	Rate the City	42	1	7	2	1	1	12
	25	Infrastructure needing improvement							
1	25c	Roadways	40	7	4	0	0		11
2	25a	Water	33	6	1	3	0		10
3	25d	Storm Sewers	25	0	7	1	2		10
4	25b	Sewer	25	2	3	3	2		10

Bellevue Key Persons Interviews - March 23/24, 2004
Summary of Comments

#	Bellevue Comprehensive Master Plan Issues
1	The revitalization of the Downtown is critical to the future of Bellevue.
	<p>Positive comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clyde is a good example of a City that did revitalize its DT. • Encourage non-competitive services in DT. • Lots of the existing buildings are serviceable. • If trucks are out, could be a quaint DT with specialty shops, professional services, etc. • If we had more parking with easy access to DT, maybe the DT can survive. • Would like to see a nice DT, but trucks don't help. • Rents are cheapest in the DT - can afford to start a business there. • Instead of trying to revive the DT, maybe we could create an Easton-type Town Center out near the new hospital. <p>Negative comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulldoze the DT. • Bulldoze the DT - old buildings are too expensive to keep up and/or fix up (big building in DT square is good example). • Many of the buildings have been allowed to deteriorate beyond the point of being economical to restore/bring up to code. • Merchants are not making any money and therefore not spending any money. • In 1953 and 1987 the State proposed a bypass; the DT merchants opposed it. • Won't attract big boxes. • Mom & Pop operations can't compete. • Shoppers will still go to Sandusky. • Limited alternatives for DT Bellevue. • Not as critical as along 20, where there is potential for Outback, Walmart, etc. • DT is definitely not pedestrian-friendly with all the trucks. • With RR tracks and trucks in town - not going to happen. • Widening main street 3 feet on each side is going to make the DT even less pedestrian-friendly. • Need to correct traffic issues first. • Years ago the truck weighing stations on 20 were removed - had increased truck traffic since. • Won't see the DT come back, especially with competition from chains. • Not a top priority for City. • DT is a mess now and getting worse. • Trucks tear it up. • Less police protection/presence with headquarters move to new location - increased robberies. • Not enough dollars around to revitalize. • City is not going to be able to maintain itself due to DT. • The DT has really shrunk - really talking about 3 blocks on 20 plus Bassets. • Not going to be like it was - but should be up to the BDC and Chamber of Commerce, not the City. • I moved my office from DT due to trucks, dirt and noise. • It would be too expensive to revitalize the DT infrastructure to support substantial growth or revitalization there.

2	The City should identify and recruit specific businesses to Downtown. Suggestions?
	<p>Positive comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home town specialty stores if there are good conditions for shopping. • Lots of little businesses. • Professional services - lawyers, accountants, etc. • Hospital is one place in town that is bringing in new people for services - from areas west of Clyde and north of Castalia. • Maybe not the City's job. It could offer incentives and information about the permits and other required approvals would be helpful. • Need another grocery store/drug store (have one). • Yes, for a Town Center west on 20. <p>Negative comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None - people will not support them. • Look at the economics, apparently even Bob Evans decided it would not be profitable. • We had department stores by Pamida but people go to Sandusky to shop. • City investment in the DT equals a waste of money. • Not possible. • Not the City's responsibility. (BDC - industry, Chamber of Commerce - commercial) • More likely to be able to recruit businesses to the 20 and 269 corridors. • Hardware store moving next to Bassets for parking and traffic reasons - was one main draw to DT. • Don't know what City could do. • Not just Bellevue - most older cities. • Clyde has gotten better, but DT is not on 20, and parking is still tough in Clyde. • Competing against four County seats. • Bellevue has a population of about 8,000; typical cut-off for bringing in new business is around 10,000. • Township residents shop elsewhere for the most part. • Not going to happen in DT. • Tough for mom & pop operations to survive in DT.

3	Parking is an issue in the Downtown, especially around the Post Office.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PO parking is a bad situation, but there is a parking lot 100' away. • Should move the Post Office. • PO is terrible. • People don't like to walk more than half a block. (2) • City parking by Crogan Bank has been a nice addition. • Buy Crogan Bank property to create additional parking. • First National Bank will acquire dry cleaners to expand the bank; result will be even less parking with dry cleaners lot gone. • Plenty of parking - Eagles, Credit Union, Jr, High, City lots. • People are too lazy. • Not a serious problem. • Not much of a problem anymore in the DT. • Seldom a problem except maybe on the south side of street. • Is a problem generally. (2) • Yes, but how do we fix it? • On Main Street - if you get a parking spot, you can't get out with all the truck traffic. • Moving trucks to center lane may help. • There should be 2-hour limits in some areas of parking lots. • The City was considering a new DT parking lot years ago and decided against it. • Privately-owned and public parking lots need to be identified. • Most of the alleys are privately owned which leads to problems with regard to snow removal and other maintenance issues.

4	<p>Commercial development should be directed away from traditional agricultural and residential areas and focused in the Downtown and along 20 and 269.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop west on 20, not along 269. • The new hospital will generate development in that area. • Not in the DT. E and W on 20, N on 269. (2) • West on 20 toward the new hospital. • Commercial development will naturally occur along 20 west. • Given. Will go where it belongs. Most commercial interests want 2-3 acres. • Also along 18. • Might not want to push commercial development along 269 - lots of residential there. • Extending the business area works - like putting Wendy's on W. Main - was a good thing. (Dealt toughly with trucks from start and prevented that potential problem.) • Sandusky County is the only County that supports the City. • Lyme and Thompson Townships are lukewarm; York Township is responsive. • Groton Township is not at all supportive, nor needed. • Castalia Street Center is 30 years old and still has some empty space. • Businesses not looking for space in Bellevue; probably can't do anything about it. • Bassets may be looking at moving to or creating a strip-type shopping area parallel to 20 and the DT. • The warehouse across from Tower is leaving. • Residential in the NW. • It should depend on the better/greater good considerations - even if that means development in traditional residential or agricultural areas.
5	<p>Industrial development should be concentrated to the NE. Elsewhere?</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For sure relative to prevailing winds • Need to develop way to get trucks to Rte 4 without going through DT. • Possibly to the north with waterline from Erie County. • Along 269 have the Patton Track homes on SE corner. Owners won't sell. • No. Develop to the west - have waterline from Clyde. • Maybe not concentrated in NE. • Access not good to site. Near Shumaker School which is proposed for expansion - not a good mix - more trucks and more kids. • Consider around the new City Building and new hospital area and west toward Clyde. • Along 20 has more marketing appeal. Can't see NE Park from 20. Success breeds success. • To the south on 269 - after the NE area is full. • Already a little late - industry is spread out all over town. • With Erie County to the NE, should probably go to south. • North is prime for residential growth. • Should go to south - especially with bypass. • Trains are a big issue. • South on 269 also OK. • Prefer to see it along 20 & RR to the west and east - help keep trucks off the City streets. • Should push industrial development along the corridors. • Why? It may deter some industry that want to be elsewhere in the area.

6	Any new developments should be properly buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important. Should not be new industrial next to existing residential. Buffer. • Center housing around the schools; industry further out. Separate uses. • City needs to take leadership role. • Absolutely. • RR are a big issue for housing. • Yes, within reason.
7	The City needs to promote the interconnection and extension of the existing fiber optic networks already in the Schools, Railroad and Hospital.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed by industry. (2) • Has anyone approached the local cable TV supplier (Time-Warner)? When the franchise agreement expires is the time to negotiate. The amount paid to the City is minuscule compared to the revenues generated. • Interconnection and cooperation - yes; but fiber optic lines may already be becoming obsolete due to satellite and other high-tech options.

8a	If you were opening a new business in Bellevue, what three things would you like the City to help you with?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax abatements. (7) • Tax abatements with school donations. • Financial advice regarding State funding options. • Make person aware of tax abatements and other incentives. • Enterprise zone incentives. • Competitive water and sewer rates. (5) • Parking - most areas of DT. • Water and sewer connect charges. • Land acquisition. • Identification of available sites/land. • What locations are available - perhaps on the City website. • Workforce development/recruiting. • Business consulting - start-up requirements, accounting, etc. - perhaps a volunteer committee of local businesspeople could provide these services. • Cooperation between City and developer. (Dollar General example - started the process at the same time in both cities - open in Norwalk before even approved in Bellevue.) • One-stop center for code compliance/zoning/permits - hand-holding. • A packet of information with a checklist regarding permits, inspections, etc. required by the City, how to contact various utilities. • Cut the red tape including better cooperation from City Council - long-time problem. • Guarantee that permits are approved - make it easy/speedy. • Fire protection. • Maintenance of streets and highways within the City. • Have a website with links to local businesses and clubs. • Help find housing in the City - especially for executives. • Quality of schools is important. • The City needs to focus on attracting small businesses - much more stable to have 200 businesses with 3 employees each than 1 company with 500 employees. • Would never open a business in Bellevue - waste of money

8b What problems would you be likely to meet OR what would likely stop you from opening a new business in Bellevue?

- None within industrial parks.
- Opposition from residents if too close.
- Fighting between City and Townships.
- Lyme Township zoning - prime location is farmland which is controlled by a limited number of excellent farm owners.
- Permitting process - takes way too long.
- When Lorraine was handling it, it was better. People don't know Susan and she can be abrasive and part of the problem. If you do more than one project, you get to know the system, but for just one it is not easy.
- Bureaucratic red tape - non-cooperative in City, especially compared to others in the area.
- Train traffic. (It would help if there were some sort-of signalization that could warn you before you turn onto a given road or street that the nearby crossing already has a train on it.)
- Tough to compete with Fremont, Norwalk, and especially Sandusky. (Everyone heads to restaurants in Sandusky on Friday nights.)
- Folks in Bellevue area - especially those living in the Townships - shop mostly in other towns.
- Traffic flows.
- Parking (Ace Hardware moving due to parking issues). (2)
- Bellevue should, as some cities do, require restaurants or bars to have parking spaces before getting a permit - but keep it minimal so as not to discourage new restaurant and bar businesses.
- Shabby appearance of DT - need to get DT looking better, would improve the whole situation.
- Tough to get wives to move here.
- Unions and their demands. (Health care currently costs \$1,040/month, projected to be \$1,600/month by 2008.)
- Work attitudes.
- High taxes.

9	<p>The City should create and maintain attractive Gateways to the City - especially along 20 and 269.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First impression is important. (2) • Important - especially with new DT lights and sidewalks. • Include the City website on signs. • Yes, but not a priority now. • Do nothing now. • Do at low cost. • There are more important places to be spending resources - schools, incentives for industry, work force development, housing, etc. • There are better ways to be spending money right now. • Hard to define on W end of 20 at the moment. • First visit to Bellevue with family for job interview - wife cried. • Bellevue comes across as a worn-out town; need to reduce absentee ownership of DT buildings.
10	<p>The City's plan to provide for an increased quality water supply through cooperation with Erie County is very important and should be aggressively pursued.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. Need additional water source. • Local water supply is not that good. With Lake Erie only 17 miles away, should be taking advantage of it. Too much runoff gets into reservoir. • Biggest concern at new hospital is quantity of water. • Also need another water tower in SW portion, especially with projected hospital use of water. • Current reservoirs are not maintained. • This is an important issue, but disagree with the approach - will lose control of rates.
11	<p>The City should take advantage of the CHIS and CHIP programs to improve the housing stock in Bellevue. (These are HUD-funded housing assistance programs primarily for home-owners.)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, if it can help. • Young families need help. • Older homes need renovation. • There can be a lot of pride in home ownership. • Favorably impressed with most homes in area. • Rental units are poorly constructed. • Don't like subsidized housing programs. • Fix-up existing housing - yes. New or more government housing - no. • Not more subsidized housing - lots of horror studies re shoddy workmanship in initial program. • Not subsidized housing. • Not a believer in these kinds of programs - stand on your own feet. • Encouraging self-motivation is a better solution.

12	New lands for additional cemetery space need to be identified and acquired. Suggestions?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly south of Monroe Street across from apartments - at least close to existing cemetery. • North of town. • No appropriate space available within City limits. • Not sure when it will be needed. • Should be a long-term plan. • I've already bought my plot. • City should get out of the cemetery business - unless it is a money-maker. It should not be subsidized.
13	The City should force property owners to maintain their property.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top priority! There is so much run down housing. • Especially sidewalks. Enforcement of sidewalk ordinance is inconsistent. • The City should require a certain level of aesthetics. • Need to have a level of aesthetics that can be enforced. • Start with DT buildings - especially those with absentee landlords. • Within reason - safety, sanitation and eyesore issues. • Should do it but not a big issue in Bellevue, except for a few houses. • City does a good job generally. • They do pretty well. • May need to help - once. • Maybe use CHIP/CHIS to help. • Yes, and when people do clean-up their yards and homes, it has a positive ripple effect on the neighbors. • Existing laws are not well enforced. • City needs to get its own house in order first, and then enforce rules uniformly. • Don't know how - must have ordinances and guts to enforce them. • Code-enforcement officer not well-received. • We have an enforcement officer that doesn't enforce codes. • This is a vicious circle: Fix-up = higher rents - already hard to lease in DT - no real DT due to trucks

14	There are several specific sites that should have RR grade separations. Suggestions?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One already planned for 269. (5) • South on 269 at Cherry Boulevard. • 269 and SR 18 are not problem areas. • 302 (2) • Edges of town - 302 and/or 308 west and south of town. • One on 302 would provide a direct route to the hospital. • Rte 18 (2) - both in town and at edge of town. • Kilbourne Street. (5) • On Kilbourne - open up housing development to south. • On 18 out by Hague's. • Goodrich Road near Central Soya. • West in York Twp - County Line Road. • Center Street (relieve subway). • Fix the East side of town (the subway) - the Village of Avery's accommodates 5 lanes. • New highway will take care of this problem. • Emergency - EMS issue! • Big negative for City. • ODOT is the one that determines this now. Most money is going to the big cities.
15	The City needs to be continually expanding and improving its park system.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks department is doing an excellent job. Continue what they are doing. (5) • Nice parks. Great Director. (2) • Take care of existing parks first. • Probably more upgrading than expanding. • Catholic School trying to renovate its playground. • Community Center expansion is good. • Harmon Field has been let go.
16	The City needs to have more parks, ball fields and recreational areas. Suggestions?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If programs require them, yes. • Need indoor swimming pool. (4) • Need an indoor or outdoor pool. (Will probably need a Sugar Daddy to get it.) • More ball fields (baseball and softball). (3) • Put New ball fields in the Quarry area. (2) • Need to provide more ball fields so kids who want to play and learn how to play are not being cut from teams • Racquetball/handball courts. • Maintain existing. • Expand Rec Center. • No soccer fields in City, kids have to leave town to play. • Don't know what or if needed..

17	<p>The City should coordinate its planning with the School District's Plan and do whatever possible to support and constantly improve our schools,</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top priority of all issues covered in this interview! • Schools are #1 issue for recruiting employees/employers. • Must cooperate - largest employer. • I have a young family - this is a big issue for me. • York school building is old - need to build a new school in that area in 15-20 years. • Junior High will be over 100 years old in 15-20 years. • Lyme school is way out there - should close it. • District needs to relook at middle and elementary school needs - create new schools. • The whole system needs to be revamped - possibly at the expense of neighborhood schools. • The schools have to make a decision regarding neighborhood schools in 5 years. • May need to buy 30-40 acres - probably in Sandusky County/York Twp. City and schools should work jointly to solve issue. • There has been discontent over recent tax issues. • In the City - who's role should it be to coordinate with the schools?
18	<p>How would you rate the Bellevue School System? (Same 1-5 scale.)</p>
	<p>Positive comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Lahoski doing fantastic job. (3) • Great return-on-investment. • Great teachers. • Great job with what we have to work with, which is the reality of education in the State of Ohio. Low relative to much of the rest of the US. • I have supported all levies in the past. <p>Negative comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I ride and walk all through town and see too much waste at schools and the City. • Disillusioned with education in general. • Residents don't value future of education. • Lot of blue-collar families - few Rhodes scholars. • I have interviewed kids fresh out of the high school with top grades for a job, and they can't even write a decent letter. • Too athletically oriented. • Fiscal management concerns.

19	In what area(s) do you believe the City spends too much money?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None - City very frugal. (2) • Too frugal. • They do a good job watching the funds. • Overtime pay. (2) • Police overtime pay. Need more bodies. (2) • Overtime due to undermanning - especially police, fire, and cemetery departments, especially prior to Memorial Day re cemetery. • New vehicles for superintendents who don't do their jobs. • Old Harmon Field (owned by City). • Spends a lot on WW system - but mandated to do so. • Plowing private alleys in residential area. • Salting intersections - especially near the high school.
20	In what area(s) do you believe the City does not spend enough money?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street resurfacing (alleys have same priority as streets). • Street reconstruction. • The City should curb all streets they resurface. • Maintaining streets, water and sewer - would be in big trouble if big employer wanted to move into the area. • Water system - waterlines and for a new plant. • Snow removal. • Downtown - looks bad now. • Helping maintain private alleys in DT. • Traffic control - police do not direct traffic even in emergencies. • Marketing the good things about Bellevue. (Signage, billboards) • Long range planning. (EPA regarding storm water system.) • SSD and City Engineer salaries on low side. • Don't have more money to spend in current economy.

21	What are the weaknesses of the current zoning code?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too liberal/easy with variances. (4) • Spot zoning. (2) • City ignores the zoning code. • Weak zoning board. • No building inspector so people do what they please. • Slow to act on requests - especially if an upgrade to current use. • Not enforced. • Not being enforced - junk cars in driveways and at service stations - supposed to be moved within 48 hours. (Service station using as warehouse for spare parts.) • Why have it if not enforced? • Trailer homes next to new houses (esp in the Townships). • PR thing primarily. Have codes but not the backbone to enforce them. Members on commission have too many individual agendas. Need to work things out in work sessions and then stick together in public. • Bellevue is a very provincial place. • Too political - who gets put on committees, etc. 	
22	What are the strengths of the current zoning code?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation of residential areas. (2) • It has gotten better. 	
23	Does Bellevue provide adequate fire protection?	Y 12 N 0
	<p>Suggested changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jiggs is good/super Fire Chief. (3) • Fantastic fire department with great equipment. • Has improved a lot - having big ladder truck now is valuable addition. • Does great job updating equipment. Have replaced 75+ hydrants in town - but have concerns regarding old water lines. • Short staffed - high overtime. • New Fire Hall is good example of how Post Office could be relocated. 	

24	Does Bellevue provide adequate police protection?	Y 9 N 3
<p>Suggested changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief should not have to come up through the ranks - bring in new blood with good credentials. (3) • Need to go outside to get a super-qualified Chief, which should help eliminate 50-50 split in the force. • No leadership starting with Ron Zerman and Chief Denny Brando. • Officers do what they want to. • Poor leadership; non-responsive to requests for coordination on up-coming issues like concealed weapon law. • Police Chief does not fit description/not qualified. • The department is in bad shape and have had significant problems in the last six months. • Recent unrest is mostly petty things. Look at leadership. • Always responsive to calls for police assistance - except for last 2 weeks. • Need more policeman - more good ones. Force is undermanned. • Need for police presence in DT. • Not enforcing current laws - especially speeding through town. • Disappointed in police department. • Current debacle is a good example of how terrible it is and how poorly we are running things. • Expect big changes in Police Department due to pressure on Council and Mayor. • Should consider a Charter form of government. • What Fire Department is, Police Department isn't. 		

25	Which of the following infrastructure components need to be improved? (Shown in ranked order)
25c	<p>Roadways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big issue. • City streets and side streets. • Especially Route 20 - do pavement testing in Columbus. • City does a good job - decent shape. • Doing the best they can with no bypass. • City has let them go too long. • Bypass is not the solution. • Trucks ruin all the roads.
25a	<p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very old plant - both building and equipment - should be building a new water treatment plant now while interest rates are low. • System is original system; breaks in winter. • WTP is result of patched upgrades. • With plans for two new towers and pumps, watch out for leaks in 125-year old lines. • Need to have plan to replace old lines year by year - top priority! • 12" line may not be big enough anymore, especially on 20 West - for both fire protection and regular service. • We have a 1" line coming into a building on Main Street with multiple uses in the building. • Tank, distribution system and reservoirs not maintained well for years - will result in significant cost in near future. • Need to expand reservoirs. • Supply is critical, hooking into Erie County is good. (2) • Current industries do not use a lot of water. • Person in charge of water plant was looking to retire and didn't want hassle of building new plant, so went for half million dollars of upgrades instead - poorly spent money.
25d	<p>Storm Sewers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New developments - absolutely have to have - more important than sidewalks. • Need to have a system. • Don't have much of a system. • Minor flooding is a problem. • Constant issue with water lines/drainage. • Need to face the music - EPA is aware of problem and will be a big issue someday. • Scary what is allowed to go into sink holes. • Where would you go with it given the geology of the area. • Not sure how to handle it due to no outlets and underground caverns. • Not a priority due to large expense to construct. • No way dollar-wise - unless Fed and State would provide 95% grants.
25b	<p>Sewer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In process of updating. (2) • No new industry necessitating increased capacity.

- Wonderful town; good small town.
- Great bedroom community.
- Great place to raise a family.
- Great community.
- City has turned the corner - becoming a more desirable place.
- There is money in this town to get things done - if people get behind an issue.

- Can always improve.
- Room for improvement - two years ago could not buy a pair of sox in town.
- Small town aspect is nice, but lots of improvements need to be done.
- Lots of good qualities - tough road ahead.
- Lots of potential, but things have been let go for so long. Need to spend some money to spruce up the City and fix problems.

- Pretty pleased with City management - except Police Department.
- Leadership over the last 25 years has let the City go downhill.
- No enforcement of laws on the books.
- As an example, City hired contractors for tree removal. They left big holes, didn't clean up the sites and the City did nothing.

- Need more restaurants - everyone goes to Sandusky and Fremont.
- Shouldn't need to drive to Sandusky for everything.

- Sometimes, when my wife and I visit other places like Perrysburg and Dublin, we wonder why we live here.
- Teetering - Why we need this plan.

Additional comments:

- People are selling old homes and moving into new ones.
- Lots of rental housing - don't need more.
- Goodrich Development - who will rent?
- Jim Shelley's quarry development is nice.
- N on 269 could be place for new housing (once the current owner passes it on to his kids). Nearer the Lake, lots of potential for development.
- What does Bellevue offer for the next generation in terms of upscale jobs?
- Develop more jobs and increase employment. Key issue!
- BDC needs to be more aggressive.
- Trucks are being used by industry as Just-In-Time warehouses which adds significantly to the truck traffic in City.
- Make it difficult for the trucks to go through City.
- Trains are more of a problem/source of frustration than the trucks - "Never had to wait 45 minutes for a truck."
- I have the sense that people in Bellevue are always at least slightly on edge due to all the train traffic - a constant source of irritation/frustration.
- In 10 years, Clyde and Bellevue will connect; need to focus on corridor esthetics and access management.
- Where will bypass entrance(s) be on 20?
- 20/4 Intersection is a growth area (commercial not industrial) with traffic to Lake.
- Need to be doing a cost-benefit analysis of any annexations, especially those that could have a big impact on the current infrastructure (water and wastewater capacities for example).
- Need to envision an outcome like a Town Center to be an anchor for a changed community. (There may be a large segment that doesn't want to change; but we can do this without sacrificing what we value and believe in.)
- Cities are dying - big boxes are in - not a big box fan.
- Ace Hardware is excellent.
- Limited restroom facilities DT.
- DT merchants/property owners were stuck with 13 years of a DT revitalization assessment - the money was all shot on one block (brick pavers and street lights).
- Railroads should be theme for City.
- The RR Museum is nice but not enough to attract people to town.
- B & N does a good job paving streets; Erie Blacktop doesn't clean up after a job and installs no berm when resurfacing, so water seeps in.
- Lyme Township has good people and good families, but are better takers than givers as far as City-Township issues.
- Re a new police dispatcher experience - didn't know where 101 W. Main was - "Tell the policeman to get in his car and start driving toward Cleveland, stop in the middle of the first town he comes to."
- Kids want a movie theater (2 screens).

Appendix 3-3

Bellevue Survey Results and Comment Summary Narrative

The citizens of Bellevue were surveyed regarding a number of issues facing the City. Approximately 3,275 surveys were mailed to the residents of the City of Bellevue, one to each household. Survey respondents were asked to rank the relative importance of 35 issues on a scale of 1 to 5. There was also the opportunity for comment on each issue. 287 households (8.8%) responded to the survey and the results have been tabulated.

Based on the 1 to 5 rankings of the 35 issues, the top 10 areas of concern were:

1. The best alternative for a Route 20 by-pass for trucks needs to be identified and built.
2. The City should consider alternative methods for reducing truck traffic in the Downtown.
3. Parking is an issue in the Downtown, especially around the Post Office.
4. Any new developments should be properly buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.
5. The improvement and maintenance of sidewalks is important,
6. The City needs to improve its communication with the public.
7. The City should coordinate planning with the School District's Plan and do whatever possible to support and constantly improve our schools.
8. The City's plan to provide an increased quality water supply through cooperation with Erie County is very important.
9. Industrial growth is vital to the growth of the City.
10. Downtown revitalization is critical for the City.

The 10 lowest areas of concern in the Community Survey were:

26. The City should create a Municipal Foundation that can accept tax-deductible donations, bequeaths, etc. to fund civic projects and activities.
27. The City needs to enhance and support tourism.
28. The City needs to create and maintain attractive and welcoming Gateway signage at the entrances to the City - especially on U.S. Route 20 and State Route 269.
29. New lands for additional cemetery space need to be identified and acquired.
30. We need to create housing for disabled children as they get older.
31. Bellevue should develop its own municipal electric service.
32. The City needs to have more parks, ball fields and recreational areas.
33. The City should seek a Charter form of government.
34. Additional recreational opportunities (such as the quarry opportunity) should be pursued - even if it means additional finances would be needed.
35. The City needs an ice rink for hockey and recreation.

All of the comments written by respondents were recorded, categorized and tallied. There was an average of 56 comments per question. The highest number of comments (137) was on question 9: *"There are several specific sites that should have a railroad grade separation. Sites include:"*

54 (39%) cited the Southwest Street (SR 269) crossing, 31 (23%) the Kilbourne Street (SR 18) location, and 20 (15%) the Flat Rock Road (CR 308) crossing. Interestingly, a grade separation on Southwest Street is already planned for construction in 2005.

Citizen comments for each question have been tabulated and summarized on a spreadsheet (a copy of that spreadsheet titled "Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Summary" is attached). The most frequent comments have been grouped and noted. The comments for each question were categorized into an average of 4 categories, with "other" used as at least one of those categories for each question. In addition, a "Need More Info" or a related comment category (e.g., a "why bother" category) occurred in 10 questions. Questions and other information-seeking comments were also listed under the "other" section.

Traffic Issues

The highest comment rates of the survey occurred in questions about local traffic issues (Questions 7, 8, and 9). Additionally, respondents commented (generally complaining) about traffic issues in nearly half of the questions of the survey, even when the particular question did not directly discuss traffic issues. In fact, more than 20 percent of all of the survey comments were traffic or truck related comments.

For Question 7 (*"The best alternative for a Route 20 by-pass for trucks needs to be identified and constructed."*), 85.6 percent of the comments agreed that a Route 20 by-pass needs to be constructed. Similarly, the comments for Question 8 (*"The City should consider alternative methods for reducing truck traffic in the Downtown."*), suggest that an alternate route would do the most to reduce truck traffic. According to many of the comments, the increased truck traffic is undesirable due to increased pollution, increased traffic congestion, and decreased safety (e.g., children walking home from school and exiting a parallel parked vehicle).

Downtown Revitalization and Growth

Comments generally indicate support for Downtown revitalization and growth. According to 33% of the comments on Question 1 (*"Downtown revitalization is critical for the City."* - which was ranked #10), citizens feel that the Downtown area is unpleasing to the eye and that storefronts should be updated. An additional 30% of the Question 1 comments indicate that the increased truck traffic is the root cause of the Downtown's decline. Citizens feel that the truck traffic creates an unsafe shopping environment and that the truck pollution is contributing to the Downtown buildings' deterioration.

In Question 2 (*"The City should identify and attract specific businesses to Downtown."*), the majority of comments suggest that the City should attract retail merchants and food service businesses to the Downtown area. However, a small percentage of the comments express the opinion that "it's too late", and any efforts that the City would make to attract business would be unsuccessful.

Question 32 comments (*"The City should seek specific types of industry for industrial growth."*), suggested that the City should seek growth from clean and safe industries (11.7%), high-tech and high-paying industries (20.1%), or any industry in general (45.5%). Further, the majority of the comments for Question 33 (*"Industrial growth is vital to the growth of the City."*), stated that industrial growth is necessary, but that support for industrial growth depends upon the types of industry attracted to the community. In general, Questions 32 and 33 comments indicated a desire for increased employment opportunity within the City.

City Utilities Expansion

Questions 13 and 14 discussed issues concerning the expansion and improvement of the community's utility services. The majority of Question 13 comments stated that the City's plan to provide an increased quality water supply from Erie County is a very important issue. Even so, many respondents indicated their lack of knowledge in this area and wanted more information before making a judgement. For Question 14, most responses indicated that Bellevue should develop its own municipal electric service. Many comments suggested using Clyde as an example for this type of endeavor. However, many of the residents' support for this project depends upon its cost saving benefits to Bellevue citizens.

Parks and Recreation

Questions 20 through 24 concern public park and recreation facilities. Throughout these five questions, supporting and opposing responses were somewhat balanced. When asked if the City needs to continually improve its park system, about half of the Question 20 comments stated that the current service is adequate or should be maintained. Many comments suggest that the park service should take better care of the equipment/facilities that are already in place before expansion occurs.

When questioned about the City's parks and ball fields, more than one-quarter of the comments indicated that the current facilities meet the community's needs; but, more than one-third of the comments indicated that the City should upgrade/expand the existing facilities. In accordance with the desire for expanded facilities, the majority of Question 24 comments suggest that the recreation department should add a bike trail to its facilities. Additionally, when asked if the City had a need for an ice rink in Question 22, slightly more than 30 percent indicated a community need for an ice rink, whereas slightly less than 30 percent of the comments stated that a rink is not necessary. Though the majority of Question 23 comments communicate a desire for an indoor community pool, the combined number of comments that requested more information or said that the indoor pool is unnecessary, equaled the number of those in favor of an indoor pool.

In general, questions about parks and recreation were ranked fairly low in the overall survey ranking of issues, which can mean that most of the people are satisfied with the current level of parks and recreation opportunities in Bellevue, or that, when compared to economic and growth issues, they are not as critical at this time.

Other Issues

Other issues discussed in the survey include housing for the elderly and disabled, property maintenance, and the City's communication. Question 17 comments indicated a general strong support (47.9%) for elderly housing, but some respondents indicated a need for more information (27.1%). Regarding the development of housing for aging disabled youth, a third of the comments supported, a third objected, and a third "needed more info".

Questions 29 and 30 comments also indicated that respondents support the City's efforts to maintain the appearance of private properties (60%) and sidewalks (55.4%). Question 30 comments also stated that the City fails to adequately enforce ordinances and programs. Likewise, Question 10 comments stated that the City needs to improve its communication efforts, communication media choices, and meeting times (61.1%).

Demographics

Of the returned surveys, 40% were completed by females, 25% males, and 33% by couples. 88% of those responding were home owners, with 10% renting; and the average number of years lived in Bellevue was 32.2 years. 95% of those responding had at least a high school degree, and 34% had a college degree or above. The average age of respondents was 54.4 years, and the average household size was 2.4 persons. Of those who are working, an equal number work in Bellevue and work elsewhere.

By comparison, 2000 US Census data showed an average household size of 2.46, a owner-occupied percentage of 70.2% and 29.8% renters. The average age of the 5,819 residents of Bellevue over the age of 19 is 47.7 years. The average age of all 8,193 residents of Bellevue is 36.7 years. The census also recorded that 82.8% of the residents of Bellevue had at least a high school degree, and 9.2% had a college degree or higher.

Comparing the demographics of those who responded to the survey with the 2000 census data, indicates that those with more education, those who owned their own home, and those who are older, were more likely to respond to the survey.

There was an 8.8% return rate (287 of an estimated 3,275 mailed), which provides a 95% confidence level that the data from the survey is statistically valid for the entire community within +/- 3.4%.

Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Survey Summary

Total Surveys Returned	287
Total Questions	35
Total Number of Comments	1968
Average Comment Rate	56.229
Median Comment Rate	52
Highest Comment Rate	137 Question 9
Lowest Comment Rate	27 Question 26

Note

The comments for each question were reviewed. The comments were sorted into categories and then tallied. Only those surveys with comments were used in this summary. Accordingly, a survey tallied in one question, may not be tallied in an other question.

Q1: Downtown revitalization is critical for the city.

Response Summary

- 9 Why Bother? Consumers travel elsewhere to do their shopping or it's too late to remedy the situation.
- 24 Downtown is unpleasing to the eye. Business owners need to update storefronts.
- 16 The root cause of the deterioration of the downtown area is the increase in truck traffic.
- 14 Other
- 63 Total Responses

Q. 2: The City should identify and attract specific businesses to Downtown.

Response Summary A: desired types of business

- 24 Retail - Merchants
- 8 Food
- 2 Box Stores
- 14 Other
- 5 Why Bother?
- 45 Total Responses

Response Summary B: Businesses most likely to succeed

8 Retail - Merchants

5 Food

1 Box Stores

5 Other

4 Nothing

23 Total Responses

Q3: Design guidelines should be enforced City-wide, especially in the downtown.

Response Summary

19 Yes

9 No

19 Other

47 Total Responses

Q4: Parking is an issue in the Downtown, especially around the post office.

Response Summary

31 Yes, Other

7 Yes, Build a parking lot

8 No - Parking is not a problem

22 Other

68 Total Responses

Q5: It is important to emphasize and enhance the historic aspects of the city.

Response Summary

15 It is important to restore and preserve our architectural and cultural history.

5 Enhance the historical aspects through restoration efforts.

3 There are more pressing concerns with the Downtown area.

6 No - Why bother? This would serve no purpose.

16 Other.

45 Total Responses

Q6: The city needs to enhance and promote tourism.

Response Summary

11 Yes, especially by promoting history and antiquing business

5 Yes, but (truck) traffic may inhibit tourism.

6 Yes - other

11 No - Why bother? Bellevue is not a tourist town.

4 No - other

12 Other.

49 Total Responses

Q7: The best alternative for a Route 20 By-pass for trucks needs to be identified and constructed.

Response Summary

21 Yes, Something must be done with Route 20

61 Yes - Build an alternate truck route (or Bypass) to regulate the truck traffic

7 Yes - Widen the "Subway" to alleviate traffic flow problems.

20 Yes - Other suggestions

17 Other

126 Total Responses

Q8: The city should consider alternative methods for reducing truck traffic in the downtown.

Response Summary

38 Bellevue needs a by-pass or widening of the "Subway".

9 Yes - Bellevue needs more traffic law enforcement

19 Yes - Other

8 Yes - Concentrating on solutions that alter Turnpike use and/or the Turnpike Commission

21 Other

95 Total Responses

Q9: There are several specific sites that should have a railroad grade separation. Sites include:

Response Summary

Suggested Sites:

7 Center Street

31 Kilbourne St./ St. Rt. 18

54 Southwest St./St. Rt. 269

20 Flat Rock Rd/ Cty. Rd. 308

36 Other (Non street suggestions and questions)

137 Total Responses

Q 10: The City needs to improve its communications with the public.

Response Summary

29 The city needs to improve communication mediums/efforts

4 The City needs to change meeting times.

12 The city is does NOT need to improve

9 Other

54 Total Responses

Q11: The city should help provide more activities for children, especially for the older kids.

Response Summary

15 No - children have enough entertainment options and it is the parents' responsibility.

24 Yes - Desired activities include:

11 Yes - More activities need to be provided

18 Other
68 Total Responses

Q12: The city needs to create and maintain attractive and welcoming "Gateway signage" at the entrances to the City - especially on 20 and 269.

Response Summary

16 Yes - A gateway is Needed

11 There are other issues to be addressed

7 No - Why Bother

9 Other

43 Total Responses

Q13: The city's plan to provide for an increased quality water supply through cooperation with Erie county is very important.

Response Summary

9 Need More Information

22 Yes - This is a must.

10 Other

41 Total Responses

Q14: Bellevue should develop its own municipal electric service.

Response Summary

15 Yes

15 Yes, but only if it produces savings to taxpayers

11 No

15 Need More Information

10 Other

51 Total Responses

Q15: New lands for additional cemetery space need to be identified and acquired.

Response Summary

10 Yes

5 No

13 Other

28 Total Responses

Q16: The city should create a Municipal Foundation that can accept tax-deductible donations, bequeaths, etc. to fund civic projects and activities.

Response Summary

22 Yes - with proper managment and Auditing

4 Need more details

6 No - This is unecessary

7 Other

39 Total Responses

Q17: There is a need for more independent living units for the elderly residents.

Response Summary

23 Yes - There is a strong need for this in the community

8 Yes - Convert existing structures into living units

13 Other - Need more info

4 No - This is not the city's responsibility

48 Total Responses

Q18: We need to create housing for disabled children as they get older.

Response Summary

12 Yes - This is a need in the community

5 No - There are enough facilities in the area

12 This is not the city's responsibility

12 Other

41 Total Responses

Q19: Land uses around the new hospital need to be planned and controlled.

Response Summary

23 Yes - Zoning should be initiated and enforced

5 Owners of the land should decide

6 Bellevue did not need a new hospital in the first place

13 Other

47 Total Responses

Q20: The City needs to be continually improving its park system.

Response Summary

12 The existing parks (recreation areas) must be maintained.

3 No - This is not a pressing issue.

10 The existing park service is fine.

15 Yes - Improvement is necessary

13 Other

53 Total Responses

Q21: The city needs to have more parks, ball fields, and recreational areas.

Response Summary

23 The existing facilities serve the community's needs - maintain them.

5 Park expansion is NOT a priority

30 Yes - We need to upgrade and/or expand existing facilities

9 The Quarry Plan should be put into action

17 Other

84 Total Responses

Q22: The city needs an ice rink for hockey and recreation.

Response Summary

17 Yes - The community needs a rink

15 No - a rink is not necessary/it's not a priority

7 Need More Info

14 Other

53 Total Responses

Q23: The area needs an indoor swimming pool.

Response Summary

28 Yes

9 Yes - This is a great benefit to the elderly/handicap/rehab pateints

9 NO - This is too costly

9 Need more info.

14 Other

69 Total Responses

Q24: There is a need for a bike trail that connects with existing bike trails to the east and west of the City.

Response Summary

29 Yes - There is a need for a bike trail.

3 No - The city should address other issues before addressing a bike trail.

9 Other

41 Total Responses

Q25: Commercial development should be directed away from traditional agricultural and residential areas and focused in the downtown and along 20 and 269.

Response Summary

9 The best interest of the city should determine this

8 No - commercial development is very important

4 The truck taffic is too much of a problem.

11 Yes - Agricultural and Residential areas are very important

18 Other

50 Total Responses

Q26: Any new development should be properly buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.
Response Summary

14 Yes - there should be buffering

2 No - this is not important

11 Other

27 Total Responses

Q27: The city should coordinate its planning with the School District's Plan and do whatever possible to support and constantly improve our schools.
Response Summary

20 Yes - This is a good plan, but must have a reasonable budget

11 No - It is a poor use of tax dollars, monies should be used more efficiently.

14 Other (issues to be addressed by the schools)

45 Total Responses

Q28: We need to keep the neighborhood elementary schools.
Response Summary

28 Yes - The neighborhood schools are important and must be maintained

18 We need to centralize - duplicate schools are inefficient

5 Take action in the most cost effective manner

9 Other

60 Total Responses

Q29: The city should do more to maintain the appearance of private properties.
Response Summary

21 The City should enforce existing ordinances.

21 Yes - This would improve the appearance of the City.

13 No - This is not The City's responsibility

15 Other

70 Total Responses

Q 30: The improvement and maintenance of sidewalks is important.

Response Summary

23 Yes - Fixing the sidewalks is an important issue

13 Fixing the sidewalks is important to the health and safety of citizens

14 Other

15 The City fails to enforce ordinances/programs

65 Total Responses

Q31: The city should seek a Charter form of government.

Response Summary

7 Yes - A charter is a good idea

11 No - A charter is unnecessary

17 Need more information

10 There should be a vote about this issue

11 Other

56 Total Responses

Q32: The City should seek specific types of industry for industrial growth.

Response Summary

9 Yes - Growth from clean and safe industries

16 Yes - growth from High Tech and high-paying industries

35 Yes - The city should seek growth. (primarily mfg requests).

5 No - The city should not seek growth.

12 Other
77 **Total Responses**

Q33: Industrial growth is vital to the growth of the city.

Response Summary

1 No - industrial growth is not necessary.

7 This depends upon the type of industry/jobs.

20 Yes - Industrial Growth is necessary

10 Other

38 **Total Responses**

Q34: Additional recreational opportunities (such as the quarry opportunity) should be pursued - even if it means additional finances would be needed.

Response Summary

12 Yes - This would be in the best interest of the city.

33 No - the potential liability is too great for the City to bear

11 Need more info.

7 Other

63 **Total Responses**

Q35: Fire and Police coverage are adequate for the City.

Response Summary

27 Yes - the service is adequate

10 No - better service/personal is needed.

18 No - The police department is not adequate

19 Other

74 **Total Responses**

Bellevue Community Survey Tabulation Summary
July 2004

Rank	Wt.	#	Question	% Resp.
1	4.44	7	The best alternative for a 20 Bypass for trucks needs to be identified and built.	97
2	4.17	8	The City should consider alternative methods for reducing truck traffic in the Downtown.	93
3	3.97	4	Parking is an issue in the Downtown, especially around the Post Office	98
4	3.87	26	Any new developments should be properly buffered from adjacent conflicting land uses, especially residential.	97
5	3.86	30	The improvement and maintenance of sidewalks is important.	98
6	3.80	10	The City needs to improve its communications with the public.	95
7	3.78	27	The City should coordinate its planning with the School District's Plan and do whatever possible to support and constantly improve our schools.	96
8	3.77	13	The City's plan to provide for an increased quality water supply thru cooperation with Erie County is very important.	94
9	3.77	33	Industrial growth is vital to the growth of the City.	96
10	3.74	1	Downtown revitalization is critical for the City	97
11	3.70	2	The City should identify and attract specific businesses to Downtown.	92
12	3.70	19	Land uses around the new hospital need to be planned and controlled.	97
13	3.61	28	We need to keep the neighborhood elementary schools.	95
14	3.60	20	The City needs to be continually improving its park system.	97
15	3.56	35	Fire and Police coverage are adequate for the City.	91
16	3.56	25	Commercial development should be directed away from traditional agricultural and residential areas and focused in the Downtown and along 20 and 269.	95
17	3.48	9	There are several specific sites that should have a RR grade separation.	81

18	3.47	32	The City should seek specific types of industry for industrial growth.	90
19	3.40	3	Design guidelines should be enforced City-wide, especially in the Downtown.	98
20	3.36	24	There is a need for a bike trail that connects with existing bike trails to the east and west of the City.	98
21	3.29	11	The City should help provide more activities for childrens, especially for the older kids.	96
22	3.28	17	There is a need for more independent living units for elderly residents.	94
23	3.26	5	It is important to emphasize and enhance the historic aspects of the City.	97
24	3.25	29	The City should do more to maintain the appearance of private property.	94
25	3.17	23	The area needs an indoor swimming pool.	98
26	3.13	16	The City should create a Municipal Foundation that can accept tax-deductible donations, bequeaths, etc. to fund civic projects and activities.	95
27	3.05	6	The City needs to enhance and support tourism.	98
28	3.03	12	The City needs to create and maintain attractive and welcoming "Gateway signage" at the entrances to the City - especially on 20 and 269.	97
29	3.0	15	New lands for additional cemetery space need to be identified and acquired.	94
30	2.82	18	We need to create housing for disabled children as they get older.	93
31	2.78	14	Bellevue should develop its own municipal electric service.	90
21	2.72	21	The City needs to have more parks, ball fields and recreational areas.	94
33	2.66	31	The City should seek a Charter form of government.	82
34	2.50	34	Additional recreational opportunities (such as the quarry opportunity) should be pursued - even if it means additional finances would be needed.	94
35	2.43	22	The City needs an ice rink for hockey and recreation.	97

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - VISION 2025
1/13/04 VISIONING SESSION
QUALITY OF LIFE BREAK-OUT SESSION SUMMARY

Major Discussion Topics:

Housing

1. Develop quarry into residential complex with golf course.
2. Buffer the residential areas adjacent to industrial areas.
3. Concentrate industrial areas to the Northeast to minimize land use conflicts.
4. Preserve Main Street Historical Homes.
5. Need independent living units for elderly residents. (Old hospital building?)
6. A market exists for upscale housing.
7. Expand housing in Northern part of the City.
8. Convert existing 3 mobile home parks into green space/parks
9. Bellevue has high number of "garage apartments" - a unique aspect of the community.
10. Need housing for disabled children as they get older.
11. Consider utilizing the CHIS and CHIP programs. (Community Housing Improvement Strategy, Community Housing Improvement Program.)

Parks & Recreation

1. Rt. 269 across from industry and south of existing park/Community Center (southern part of City) ideal location for park expansion.
2. Develop **connections** to main bike path that runs from Fremont to Clyde (6.9 miles)
 - A. Through downtown
 - B. With main activity centers of Bellevue
3. Expand Existing Parks.
 - A. Need more ball diamonds
 - B. Need sand volleyball courts
4. Need indoor pool. (Similar to Norwalk Rec Center)
 - A. Heated
 - B. Olympic size
5. Need bridle path for horses and for 4H Clubs.
6. Need Hockey rink.

Arts & Institutions

1. Assist Society for the Arts
2. Expand library.
3. Need more post office parking.
4. Cemetery almost full. Need to purchase more land for cemetery.
 - A. Ideally next to parks or complimentary land uses (Residential/schools/parks)
5. Attract mixed-uses/retail and antique shops downtown
6. Enhance and promote railroad museum

Miscellaneous

1. Controlled growth outward from City through annexation
 - A. Northeast- New industry
 - B. North- New Residential
2. Need public transit and taxi services.
3. Convert old Hospital to residential use (assisted living)
4. Create Municipal Foundation to fund civic projects and activities (through bequeaths, etc.)
5. Improve sidewalks/ADA compliance.
6. Enact SOB ordinance..
7. Expand teens after school program.
8. Need better signage
 - A. For key landmarks (Museum, Library)
 - B. For circulation
9. Need senior center

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - VISION 2025
1/13/04 VISIONING SESSION
DOWNTOWN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BREAK-OUT SESSION SUMMARY

Major Discussion Topics:

1. Downtown
 - A. Location:
 - (1) from underpass on east side to Hardees on the west
 - (2) about 8 blocks long.
 - B. Historic/Significant Buildings (in DT and/or vicinity):
 - (1) Tremont House (Bellevue Heritage Museum)
 - a. 1846 construction date
 - b. owned by Historic Society now
 - c. currently vacant
 - (2) State Theater (corner Main & Sandusky)
 - a. vacant downstairs - long-term vacancy
 - b. apartments located upstairs
 - (3) Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum - 253 South West St.
 - (4) Bellevue Society for the Arts: 205 Maple St.
 - (5) Nearby, but out of town: Historic Lyme Village & Wright Mansion: ST 113 (near Rt. 4 just east of Bellevue)
 - (6) Nearby, but out of town: Sorrowful Mother Shrine: 4106 Ohio 269 South
 - (7) Nearby, but out of town: Seneca Caverns, 15248 E. Thompson Rd. 178
 - (8) Some buildings may be beyond saving!
 - C. Business Associations
 - (1) Chamber of Commerce
 - (2) Visitors and Tourism Bureau
 - D. Logo/Slogan
 - (1) "Take a break from the lake" used by Visitors and Tourism Bureau
 - (2) Heart of Four Counties - used by Chamber
 - (3) Heart of Northwest Ohio - used by City

- E. Changes in Downtown over time:
- (1) Sandusky Mall - many business closed when Mall opened
 - (2) Impact of Clyde, Ohio - many businesses went there when Mall opened
 - (3) Absentee landlords - no commitment to DT and to property investments; would probably NOT participate in Facade/improvement program (Chamber President's comments)
 - (4) Deterioration of exteriors due to lack of revenue/lack of consumers
 - (5) Downtown Committee has \$ that could be used for exterior facade & painting improvements, but does not seem to be an interest. Tried program and no interest (Chamber President's comments)
- F. Parking/Traffic
- (1) Ample, but not convenient
 - (2) Traffic (trucks) hinders parking on Main St. - can't parallel park with heavy traffic.
 - (3) Available behind Ace Hardware
 - (4) Not much opportunity for rear parking & entry to buildings
 - (5) Owners/employees parking in front of buildings
 - (6) Week-ends (summer) - heavy traffic with Cedar Pt. & Lake traffic esp. on Rt. 4 outside town.
 - (7) Little pedestrian traffic now - no reason to come downtown? no residential in DT.
- G. Downtown Needs - Need REASON (s) to come downtown
- (1) Clothing stores - for men and women
 - (2) Shoe stores
 - (3) Hallmark type store - cards/gifts
 - (4) Variety: Five and Dime Store
 - (5) Entertainment opportunities
 - (6) Lodging; B&B; hotels; motels (only 1 now)
 - (7) Housing - would bring consumers, but where would residents park?
 - (8) Commercial/Office
 - (9) Gas station
 - (10) Residential - throughout town, not just in DT
 - (11) Grocery store
 - (12) Parks - only one has room to grow (Bellevue Park)
 - (13) Downtown "mall" type facility - would need investors & \$ to go forward
 - (14) Variety - more selection in types of businesses (too many antique/specialty shops now??)
 - (15) Office supply stores
 - (16) Traffic calming?
 - (17) Farmers must go through DT to get to Central Soya

- H. Strengths/Drawing Cards/Promotional Tools for the DT/City:
 - (1) CVS - Pharmacy & some variety store items
 - (2) Historic properties: Museum, Shrine, Lyme Village, etc.
 - (3) Historic restaurant - 5 generations have owned McClain's
 - (4) Other restaurants
 - (5) Library
 - (6) Hospital to be built
 - (7) Dairy Queen to open soon
 - (8) Wonderful schools
 - (9) Very few vacancies in DT
 - (10) Historic character of the DT - unique
 - (11) Hardware store
 - (12) CRA exists in DT (not for whole DT - Chamber has map of CRA area)
 - (13) Banners being used
 - (14) Hospital will be a big plus for community
- I. Zoning/Codes
 - (1) Coordinate zoning between townships and City
 - (2) Revisit zoning and development plans
 - (3) Currently have architectural design guidelines - not enforced consistently; permitting done after the fact many times. Painting is reviewed/enforced.
- 2.. Economic/Commercial/Industrial Development
 - A. Water Quality
 - (1) concerns about development impact on water quality (surface & well water)
 - B. Areas for Development
 - (1) SE corner of City - void of new industry
 - (2) Need park/green spaces protected
 - (3) Enlarge pool/ball diamonds for more entertainment and recreational areas; keep what have & expand
 - (4) Monroe St. area
 - (5) Natural area/reservoir
 - (6) South of City on 269
 - (7) West side of town?
 - C. Bypass
 - (1) Must happen for area to develop
 - (2) No consensus as to SR 18 or other alternatives as being best choice.

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - VISION 2025
1/13/04 VISIONING SESSION
TRANSPORTATION BREAK-OUT SESSION SUMMARY

1. Removing Truck Traffic from DownTown - Rte 20 By-pass
 - A. Rte 18 By-pass (south of town) is a waste of time and money - will not significantly impact truck traffic through downtown.
 - B. If rerouting traffic to proposed 18 By-pass from eastbound 20, there are two railroad crossings to deal with that could potentially back-up truck traffic all the way back to 20. (Provisions for grade separations?)
 - C. A 20 By-pass to the south of town would have to accommodate 7 grade separations.
 - D. A 20 By-pass to the north, utilizing Rte 4 to rejoin 20 to the East, would only require 2 grade separations.
 - E. Long-range thinking - Start the By-pass further west (and east?) than being discussed as development will begin to crowd the planned By-pass intersection area shortly after it is completed causing even more access and traffic management issues.
 - F. Suggested positioning portable truck scales/weigh stations at the east and west sides of town (with irregular/unscheduled hours of operation) to help discourage trucks from using 20 through this area. (Not much support for this idea within the group - claimed truckers would still choose the possible inconvenience over the high turnpike tolls.)
 - G. Congested truck traffic in DownTown is not round the clock but primarily from 3 -5 PM. Contributing factors include: schools letting out, industry quitting times, commercial and industrial deliveries and pick-ups.
 - H. There is lots of industry in Bellevue and surrounding area, so, there is a good amount of the truck traffic that does have local destinations - never really quantified in previous studies. Harvest season contributes significantly to seasonal traffic load.
 - I. "Whichever 20 By-pass is selected, remember, in many ways, you are simply moving the annoyance to someone else's backyard." (The other side of that observation as discussed was, if planned and done properly, it could be significant positive economic and quality of life benefit to that backyard - convenience stores, hotels, restaurants, etc.)

2. Get Trucks to use Center Lanes through DownTown
 - A. The full-time "No right turn on red" restriction at the 20/Lyme Street intersection (first light after the RR underpass at the edge of DownTown for westbound traffic) should be a part-time restriction during foot traffic times at the Jr. High School rather than full-time. That would at least allow some traffic to get off 20 quicker than they can now.
3. Traffic Lights in 2004/2005 - along US 20
 - A. Planned for @ CR 302/20 intersection (hospital access road) and CR 308 (Flat Rock Road)/20 intersection (next N-S road east of 302 - lots of residential development in both directions off of Flat Rock.
 - B. Also need a traffic light at Yorkshire Place (next road east of 308), access to a major new subdivision on north side of 20.
4. Signage
 - A. Need more visible intersection identification signage in DownTown area - suggest overhead signs in advance of each intersection
 - B. Most street identification signs need to be bigger and repainted
 - C. Recommend a City-wide routine/preventative maintenance program be developed to repaint signs before they become unreadable.
5. Transportation for Seniors
 - A. Need service provider (as in Huron County) to take seniors where they need to go in town - doctors, shopping, post office, etc.
6. Need Left Turn Lane for turning from Eastbound 20 to Hospital access road (where one of the new traffic lights will be added).
7. Dreaming
 - A. 4-Lane Railroad Underpass is what is really needed (previous estimates of \$30 million to construct).

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - VISION 2025
1/13/04 VISIONING SESSION
SCHOOLS BREAK-OUT SESSION SUMMARY

1. A major issue discussed was Shumaker School.
 - A. More building space is needed at this time.
 - B. There is a program in place for the expansion of this building, which will go on the ballot in March, 2004.
 - C. The plan is to add one classroom per grade, plus classrooms for gifted, music, art and a cafetorium.
2. In response to a specific question, Superintendent Lahoski said that a middle school is an option in the future.
3. The School Board has been reluctant to go to the State for facilities funds, because they feel the State would make them replace all the elementary buildings, and maybe the Jr.HS and HS as well.
4. There are approximately 1200 elementary school children and the School Board feels strongly about preserving neighborhood schools. They would not want to see all 1200 students in one building.
5. There are 138 square miles in the school district. Truck and train traffic present major problems with school busses and transporting of kids throughout the district.
 - A. There is only one grade separation in the City (SR 269), and there is still an at-grade crossing on SR 269.
 - B. There is a grade separation project planned for SR 269.
 - C. It was suggested that weigh stations be placed at both ends of the City to reduce the amount of truck traffic.
6. York Elementary School (on US 20, west of Bellevue) is in bad physical condition. Ellis and Lyme are also aging buildings. York and Lyme have water and sewer problems. Three elementary schools have already been closed since 1992.
7. Enrollment this year is 2,450 kids. There are fewer kids per classroom today but there are exceedingly more requirements for over 375 special needs kids.
8. A major issue of concern, the committee felt, was that the public is not getting the message that the School Board is trying to get to the public.
9. Quality of teachers is always a key issue.
10. The Jaycees has established a goal of educating the public about the Bellevue School system.
 - A. The perception that their tax money goes to sports and extracurricular activities needs to be addressed and corrected and the Jaycees are willing to work with the School Board to do that, especially during the levy campaign.

11. A school income tax was passed in 2001. It will generate \$1.470,000 per year for the Schools.
12. An overall goal for the community should be to maintain elementary neighborhood schools.
13. The JHS and HS, although fine now, may need some improvements within the next 15-20 years, or the time period of this planning effort.
 - A. It may be that the JHS converts to only one grade and facilities are needed for the other grade.
 - B. The JHS cannot be added on to, because of its limited space on the site.
 - C. The HS could be expanded on its current site.
14. There was discussion about the public's perception of company donations to the schools with tax abatement agreements. The recent newspaper articles about Tower Automotive not making its payments was indicative of the bad PR tax abatement can get.
 - A. The Superintendent stated that Tower has been extremely cooperative over the years, and that a specific manufacturing line for which they received an abatement was not actually brought to Bellevue, therefore the school donation agreement needed to be amended.
 - B. The School and Tower are working on amending the agreement.
 - C. The Schools are \$470,000 ahead of the game with the tax abatements and associated agreements than they would be without them.
 - D. 23 school donation agreements are in place.
15. The newspapers unknowingly provide misinformation to the public on a lot of school and other issues.
 - A. It was suggested that press releases be prepared and more one-on-one work be done with the reports so that more accurate information is printed.
 - B. Bellevue still has the luxury of a daily paper, which many small towns do not have.
16. Other avenues for dispersing information were discussed and include:
 - A. Web sites (City and school both have sites),
 - B. Newsletters,
 - C. School board meetings.
17. Senior citizens are always very concerned about increasing taxes, and they will need to be sold on the need for another school levy.
 - A. Methods for the schools to sell the levy to the community are a major issue.
 - B. Families with kids in the school system fail to vote, even though they would likely be in favor of the tax since they are direct beneficiaries.
 - C. We need to get these people to vote.

18. There was some question about the quality of the education provided by Bellevue Schools.
 - A. It was pointed out they Bellevue Schools have ranked on the low end compared to other schools in the area.
 - B. The Superintendent pointed out that in 1997, the schools met 6 of the state's 25 indicators.
 - C. Last year they met 17 and this year they will be meeting 23. So there has been substantial improvement.
 - D. Once again, the group wondered if this information is getting out to the public adequately.
19. It was mentioned that other things were needed in the community for kids to do, such as a movie theater and an arcade.
20. Two school issues have failed since 1996.

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - VISION 2025
1/13/04 VISIONING SESSION
PUBLIC FACILITIES, UTILITIES, AND SERVICES
BREAK-OUT SESSION SUMMARY

I. ***Water Supply***

- A. Wells in Flat Rock are polluted with septic infiltration.
 - 1. Flat Rock citizens would like City water and sanitary sewer.
- B. Sinkholes pollute many of the wells in the area with stormwater runoff from adjacent farmlands and other impervious surfaces.
 - 1. Specifically, this is a problem in York Township to the north of town.
- C. Quarry blasting has damaged or collapsed many wells in the area.
- D. Sewage was also sighted as a source of pollution.
 - 1. According to the focus group, up until the mid-twentieth Century, Wastewater was pumped into sinkholes along with stormwater. Rural areas continued this practice until much more recently and the raw sewage pumped directly into the aquifers for the area has been polluting the water source to rural water users.
- E. Current supply is inadequate for any future growth.
 - 1. During droughts, water supply emergencies have been put into effect limiting car washing, lawn watering, etc.
- F. Possible Solutions:
 - 1. Tap in to Erie County for supplemental supply to be stored in currently proposed water tower at the north end of town by new industrial park.

II. ***Wastewater Treatment***

- A. The City should expand the WWTP facilities.

III. ***Stormwater Management***

- A. Major rains cause flooding in low areas due to the nonexistence of storm drains/sewers in Bellevue.
 - 1. The City needs to address stormwater issues.
 - 2. One comment - there should be no further annexations until Bellevue has storm sewers.
- B. Poor stormwater management practices can be directly linked to the poor water quality in outlying rural areas.
- C. Key Points:
 - 1. Basic infrastructure should be required before any new development occurs, - water/sewer AND stormwater.
 - 2. Residents would like to see a timeframe and implementation strategy for the provision of such infrastructure.
 - 3. SSOE did a Stormwater Study (?)

IV. ***Police, Fire, and EMS Service***

- A. The Plan needs to address Police, Fire and EMS service in the Bellevue area.
- B. Fire Service:
 - 1. Fire protection/service should not be tied to annexation
- C. Police Service:
 - 1. Sheriff response time in Townships is poor
 - a. Specifically in Seneca County
 - 2. Traffic enforcement along SR 20 is an issue (speeding and other violations)
- D. EMS Service:
 - 1. Lyme and Thompson Townships may need EMS service should the Bellevue contract not be renewed
 - 2. All Fire Department personnel should be trained EMT's. (Some are already trained, some are in training, and some have no training.)
- E. 911 emergency service often has slow response time (if any). This was attributed to the four Counties having different systems and residents not understanding what County receives a call.

V. ***Parks and Recreation***

- A. Ballfields:
 - 1. There are currently 4 and 2 more at the schools.
 - 2. More are needed. There is a high community demand for this amenity.
- B. Rails-to-Trails:
 - 1. There is a need for a bike trail connecting with those to the east and west of Bellevue.
 - 2. There is a proposed Rails-to-Trails project currently being initiated by the Sandusky County Park District.
 - 3. The proposal is to convert an inactive line adjacent to the existing Norfolk-Southern line west of Portland in York Township and adjacent to the WLE line in Lyme Township.
 - 4. Key Points:
 - a. There are issues with the width that is available and the existing ROWs.
- C. Indoor Community Pool:
 - 1. Year-round swimming is another recreational demand that the community has.
 - 2. It was asserted that this pool could facilitate multiple uses such as:
 - a. Recreation;
 - b. Safety (i.e. swimming lessons)
 - c. Sports; and
 - d. Therapy.
 - 3. Possible locations mentioned:
 - a. Existing community center by park
 - b. Existing community center by City Hall
 - 4. Key Points:
 - a. Cooperation and collaboration is needed between:
 - (1) Local businesses;
 - (2) The hospital;
 - (3) Local schools; and
 - (4) Local government.

- b. A decision needs to be made on the feasibility of operating both an indoor and outdoor pool (existing), or just maintaining one indoor year-round facility.
- D. Additionally, it was mentioned that Flat Rock needs a park.

VI. **Zoning**

- A. Thompson and York Townships currently have no zoning.
 - 1. Previous attempts were made and failed.
 - 2. Residents seem adamant about remaining unzoned.
- B. Buffers were mentioned several times as a need and a desire between incompatible uses
 - 1. More buffer zones need to be created when zoning changes with property acquisition.
- C. Some participants expressed concern that redevelopment or alteration of a now nonconforming 0-Lot-Line property is cumbersome and deters property owners from making improvements.
- D. Lyme Township is concerned about industrial land uses/zoning being created in the Township (or former Township land).
- E. Key Points:
 - 1. Industrial and commercial development should be focused away from traditionally agricultural and residential uses.
 - a. Commercial in DownTown and along 20.
 - 2. Zoning cooperation was a **major issue** in terms of annexation.
 - a. Participants were very concerned that land that was zoned residential or agricultural when in a township is being converted to industrial or commercial after annexation.
- F. Possible Long-term Planning Solutions:
 - 1. Land Use Plan Update
 - 2. Farmland Preservation (very popular)
 - a. Conservation easements need to be available and easily obtained from those farmers who wish to ensure that their land remain as agricultural use forever.
 - (1) One farmer was seeking a conservation easement and never got a response to his request!

VII. **Property Surrounding New Hospital**

- A. Possible Uses:
 - 1. Remain Farmland - buffer rural property owners/residences
 - 2. Open space and parkland
- B. Hospital representative claimed that current plans for the area is for the 109 acres to remain in a natural state with a walking loop in the front of the property, with the rear of the property to remain farmland.

VIII. **Old Hospital Property:**

- A. Possible Uses:
 - 1. Assisted living facility
 - 2. School expansion

IX. ***Fiber Optic and Other Infrastructure***

- A. Participants strongly asserted that all new utilities (including fiber, phone, cable and electric) should be installed underground.
- B. Time-Warner is the current cable provider and offers current high-speed connection at what participant claimed is too high of a rate.
- C. The current railroad HUB already has fiber optic lines running adjacent to all active lines in town, with the exception of the southbound lines.
- D. There are three existing fiber optic networks which are not connected to each other:
 - 1. Schools
 - 2. Railroad
 - 3. Hospital
- E. It was suggested that Bellevue should create its own municipal electric service.
- F. (See also Galion's Fiber Optic Technology Plan)

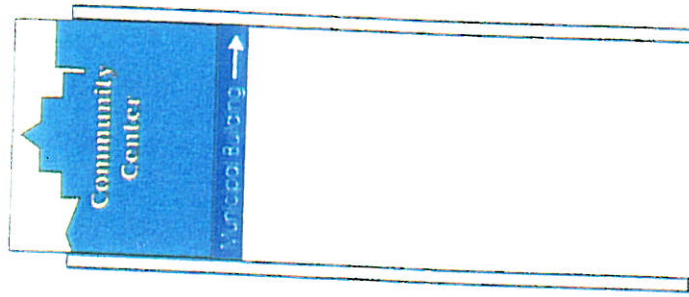
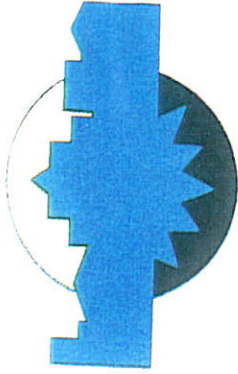
Appendix 3-5

BELLEVUE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - VISION 2025 2/18/04 MEETING WITH ALL FOUR TOWNSHIPS SUMMARY

1. Gary Haynes' introductory remarks to open the meeting stressed the need for a truly comprehensive approach to this Comprehensive Plan, and that meant that it was essential that all four Townships be involved in the process and work together in the future. Cited the schools as a model of all five entities uniting for a common cause.
2. Opening comments from each of the Townships:
 - A. Lyme
 1. Wants to keep the Township intact
 2. Recognizes the need to discuss annexation issues
 3. Wants modest growth but does not have many funds to help attract development
 4. Needs to look at both Rural water and City water
 5. The 4/20 Intersection needs water and sewer
 6. Agree that a plan (for growth) needs to be in place
 7. Need to work on a joint venture regarding development/projects
 - B. Thompson
 1. Echo Lyme's comments
 2. Recognize that trying to match four Township/County plans with the City's plan is a big issue.
 3. Each Township has particular issues
 4. Flat Rock concerns in Thompson Township
 5. What kind of information does PDG need?
 - C. York
 1. Growth along 20 already impacting York Township
 2. Need to plan
 3. Already have streets that are half in the Township and half in the City
 4. New hospital = new ballgame
 - D. Groton
 1. Want to stay intact
 2. Willing to work together
 3. Want growth
 4. Want schools to benefit
 5. Want to retain property taxes
 6. Have Erie County water

3. Gary - Growth likely to continue to be mostly along the 20, 4 and 269 corridors.
 - A. Large industrial park to NE (60-70 acres) near Groton Twp.
 1. New water tower, etc. - \$2.5 million grant
 2. (Mostly residential along 269 in Groton Twp. - Ag and residential to City limits)
 - B. Potential industrial growth along 269 South bordering Thompson (Egler property)
 1. Industrial along 269 - not near reservoir.
 2. Not yet rezoned
 3. Good portion of infrastructure already in place
4. Formerly, it was the City's position that it would not extend water/sewer without annexation. This has changed. The City recognizes that it is in its best financial interests to provide water and/or sewer without requiring annexation.
 - A. Lyme Township noted that they had asked for this 8 years ago.
5. The City will not force annexations - only volunteer annexations will be considered.
6. Mayor Kile advised caution in Townships considering joining Rural Water - they will be disappointed with regard to quality, pressure and volume of water and they would essentially be precluding industrial/commercial development.
7. Bellevue is 2 years from being able to meet all foreseeable area water demands.
 - A. The process has started with Erie County.
 - B. New water tower
 - C. The Townships need to tell the City what they will want.
8. Bellevue is undertaking a \$5 million upgrade to the WWTP; has plans for 2 new water towers and, in general, is moving in the direction of being able to provide services.
 - A. Townships need to decide where they will want water and sewer, and determine how they will be able to pay for the service.
9. Issues to be discussed with Townships could include:
 - A. Land Use
 - B. Water & Sewer
 - C. Recreation
 - D. Hospital
 - E. Roads
 - F. Storm Water management
 - G. Residential/Commercial conflicts
 - H. Schools
 - I. Annexation

10. Thompson Township noted that the Wolfe Industrial Park infrastructure was out for bid, including a water tower. Why are we continuing to add industrial uses on all four, or even three, sides of the City?
 - A. Current plan is for no new industrial to the west - only commercial and residential
 - B. Shelley area looking at 20+ houses and 3 commercial uses.
 - C. Part of the New Hospital plan is for medical offices toward 20.
11. Roger Paul noted that we need controlled growth which will greatly benefit the schools and area residents
 - A. New businesses provide increased commercial property tax revenues, which help reduce the tax burden on residents.
 - B. Also provide job opportunities for graduates that want to stay in the area.
 - C. Hopes that Bellevue will remain primarily an agricultural-based community.
12. Jim Lahosky said that as a resident of York Twp, he likes the country living, and
 - A. Has concerns about what the future use of the old hospital will be since it is immediately adjacent to the high school.
 - B. There is a small issue on the March ballot for additions to Schumaker School.
 - C. Wants the schools to grow without State dollars so we can retain the local schools and buildings and have better programs for the kids.
13. The City is paying for PDG to have two individual meetings with each township. Next step is for PDG to contact each township and schedule meetings.
 - A. PDG will provide list of sample/probable issues for consideration by Townships prior to individual meetings.
14. Nancy McKeen discussed previous unsuccessful attempts to set up mutual aid agreements between Groton Township and the City. Also stressed that annexation should only occur with mutual consent and benefit. (Echoed by Mayor Kile.)
15. Mayor Kile also emphasized that the local economy, the schools and recreational opportunities will all benefit from planned growth.
16. Chuck Highlander asked again why the City won't discuss mutual aid, as they already have such agreements with Clyde, Monroeville, etc.
17. Several of those in attendance suggested that this joint meeting with all four townships and the City in attendance was encouraging, worthwhile, and unfortunately largely unprecedented - except informally at school functions.
18. It was suggested that the five communities plan to get together at least annually from now on to share information.
19. "Change is not easy, nor is it quick"
20. "He who is not busy growing is busy dying."



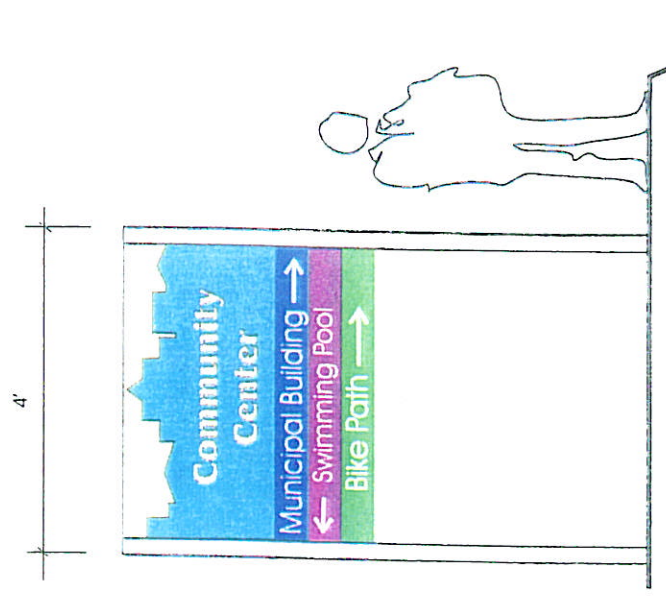
A Proposed Signage System for Mason, Ohio

Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc. PDG Planning
Bowling Green, Ohio

Large Secondary Directional & Identity

Ground-mounted signs or monument-type signage which announce arrival to a district or major destination (i.e., Coal Mine, Downtown, etc.)

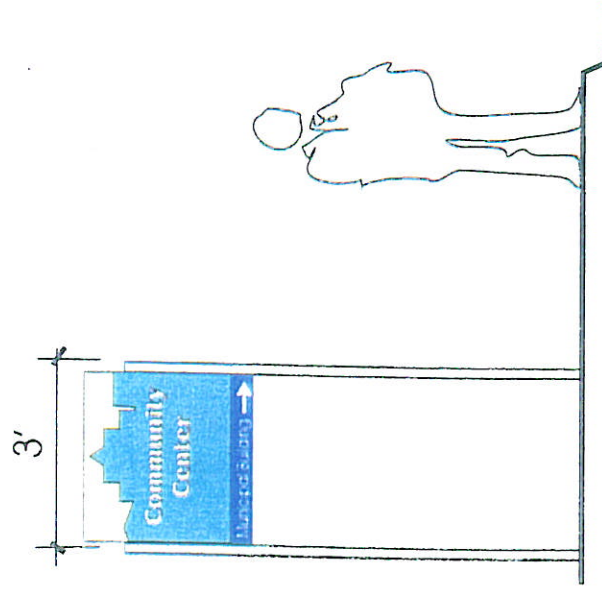
Vehicular-larger scale signs located at the entryways to districts or major destinations.



Small Secondary Directional & Identity

Ground-mounted signs or monument-type signage which announce arrival to a district or destination.

These signs are vehicular and pedestrian - small scale and located at secondary entrances to districts and main destination entrances (i.e., Uptown District.)

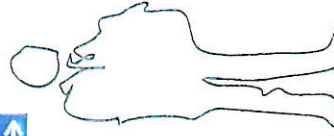


Secondary Directional & Identity Signs

Pedestrian Identity and Directional

These signs are primarily pedestrian in scale and identify entry into districts or provide direction to attractions or information about a property.

Signs may be mounted to street lights, free standing poles, or mounted to buildings.

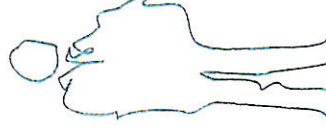
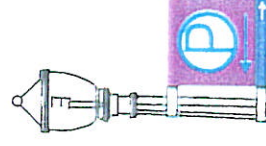


Pedestrian Directional

Parking Directional

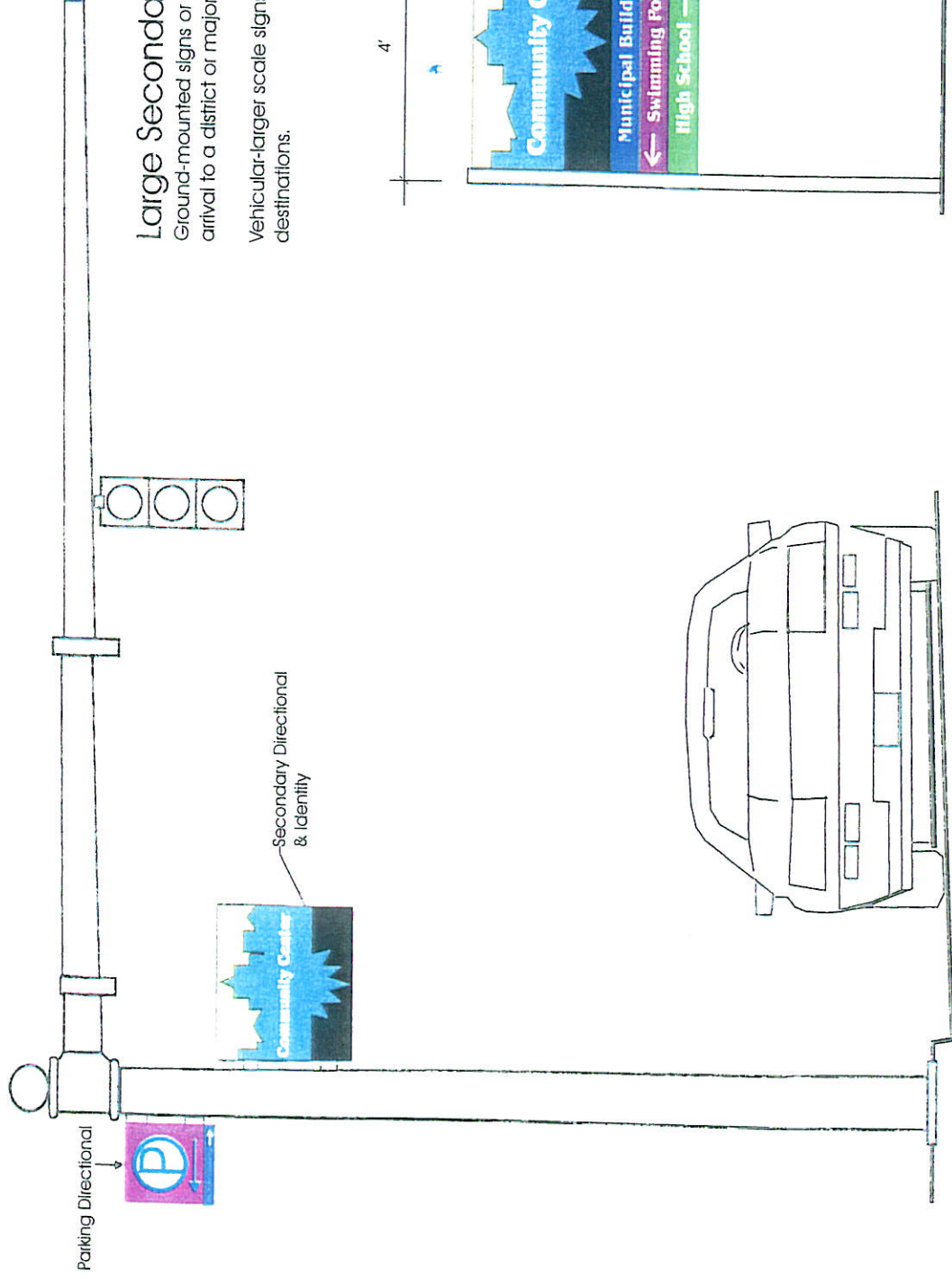
These signs mount to traffic structures or street lights. They direct vehicles to public parking areas.

They are vehicular-small scale and are located at key intersections, primarily Downtown.



Parking Directional

Parking & Pedestrian
Identity & Directional Signs



Large Secondary Directional & Identity

Ground-mounted signs or monument-type signage which announce arrival to a district or major destination

Vehicular-larger scale signs located at the entryways to districts or major destinations.

Small Secondary Overhead Directional & Identity

Identity & Directional Signage

Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.

Proposed Coordinated Signage System for Mason, Ohio



HUR-20-0.00 Bellevue Transportation Study

Informational Handout

Title VI states that "No person in the United States shall be excluded from participation in or otherwise discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance".

Any person who believes that he or she has been denied the benefits of, excluded from participating in or otherwise discriminated against, may file a formal complaint to the Ohio Department of Transportation, EEO Investigations Office at 1980 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43223. All complaints must be filed within 180 days after the date of the alleged act of discrimination.

Purpose of the Meeting:

- To present information and study findings thus far;
- To identify alternatives to US 20 through downtown Bellevue;
- To receive public input and comments regarding the identified alternatives;
- To encourage one-on-one communication between the public and study representatives.

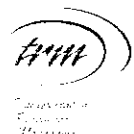
Meeting Format:

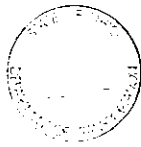
- Open-House;
- Information displayed in exhibits;
- Informational handouts available for distribution;
- ODOT and consultant staff members available for questions;
- Comment forms available for the public to provide input.

Study Area: The study area for traffic analyses extends along US 20 from CR 177 (Portland Rd.) to SR 4 for consistency with previous studies. Alternatives to US 20 were sought in a 7-mile radius area around Bellevue to ensure that all local roadways, residential, commercial, industrial and institutional establishments were taken into consideration in the assessments.

Background & Project History: Trucks pass through downtown Bellevue as they travel on US 20, a major corridor in northern Ohio. A bypass route around the community similarly to neighboring Fremont and Norwalk was viewed as the ideal solution by many Bellevue residents. In the pursuit of a bypass, the City of Bellevue requested the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) to fund such a project. TRAC commissioned a study to evaluate the feasibility of such a request.

The study concluded that various operational and physical improvements of US 20 would yield some congestion relief results in the downtown area prior to implementing a very expensive bypass route. The study did not select a preferred alternative because several evaluation criteria were used and each alternative performed best using different evaluation criteria. The study, however, concluded that a follow-up analysis of US 20





HUR-20-0.00 Bellevue Transportation Study

utilizing a well-defined set of criteria consistent with the stated problems and concerns would be necessary in order to develop alternate routes and to eventually select a preferred route. In the meantime, the City of Bellevue pursued some of the recommended operational improvements of US 20 through a roadway widening and traffic signal improvement project, which had started in 1993.

This study continues where the previous one left off. For consistency and continuity it utilizes traffic volume data and study area boundaries set in the original study. Its scope of work extends beyond the path of US 20 by seeking opportunities for alternative route development throughout the Bellevue proper area and by incorporating economic development and land use compatibility considerations in the analyses. In addition, the study approach and format comply with the transportation planning processes advocated in the ODOT 14-Step Transportation Planning and Environmental Process Manual.

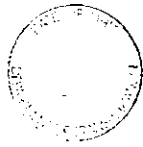
Local Issues of Concern: Early on in the study fact-finding interviews were conducted with downtown business owners, local industry representatives, elected officials, and public sector administrators in order to identify and define – in their own terms -- local issues of concern and problems along US 20. A wide range of issues was brought up. The most frequent ones were:

- *Large Volumes of Trucks* traveling on US 20 through the downtown area;
- *The narrowing of the Viaduct* as a source of downtown congestion;
- *The fragmentation of the city* by rail lines; southern sections of the city become inaccessible by emergency medical, fire and police vehicles when trains block rail crossings.

Study Findings: With an understanding of the local issues of concern, technical analyses were conducted to address issues such as: why trucks choose US 20 through Bellevue; where do these trucks come from and where they go to; how much trucks contribute to downtown congestion; how US 20 traffic volumes -- passenger cars and trucks alike -- flow through the downtown area; are there any unidentified reasons for downtown congestion; what role does the Viaduct play in downtown congestion; how could the city fragmentation be addressed by the proposed alternatives. Understanding of these issues enabled the development of alternatives that are relevant and practical.

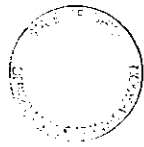
Downtown Area:

1. *Regional highways such as SR 18, SR 269, US 20, and SR 113 intercept in a very small area in downtown Bellevue.* As a result, long-distance trips passing through the city travel on downtown streets although their origins and destinations are beyond the downtown area.
2. *SR 18 – the fastest growing truck corridor in Ohio linking the OH-IN border with the Akron/Canton/Cleveland metropolitan area – merges with US 20 across from*



Exchange St. and it continues eastward as a joint facility SR 18/US 20. The joint facility has the necessary capacity -- pavement width -- to carry the merged traffic loads east of Bellevue and along the Norwalk bypass. The joint facility, however, does not have the necessary capacity to carry the merged traffic loads between Exchange St. and the Viaduct, which is its most congested segment in the study area.

3. *SR 18 northbound traffic volumes, unable to continue on Exchange St., take the first route available to them: at the Northwest St./Castalia St. intersection.* This practice requires SR 18 vehicles merging onto US 20 at the curb lane to rapidly change lanes in order to turn left onto Northwest St. Such vehicle weaving interferes with eastbound US 20 traffic flows by slowing them down. The non-standard intersection configuration of the Northwest St./Southwest St. Monroe St. intersection (i.e., a five legged intersection) contributes to inefficient traffic operations at this location.
4. *SR 269 southbound traffic volumes, unable to continue on Sandusky St., shift to Castalia St. and they eventually select either Exchange St. or Northwest St. depending on their destinations:* Exchange St. accommodates traffic movements to southbound SR 18 and westbound US 20 while Northwest St. serves primarily Southwest St. and eastbound US 20 traffic movements. These traffic volume shifts concentrate traffic loads at the intersections of US 20 with Exchange St./SR 18 and Northwest St./Southwest St./Monroe St. before dispersing locally and regionally via local roadways such Southwest St., Monroe St., Center St., Cemetery St., and Cherry Blvd.
5. *Lyme St. -- located by the Viaduct -- by virtue of its proximity to Sandusky St., Junior High School, the Buckeye St. industrial corridor and the Post Office has the attributes of an alternate route to Sandusky St. in the southbound direction.* The observed traffic volumes at Lyme St. -- especially to/from the east on US 20 -- strongly support the field observation of Lyme St. being used as an access point to the Sandusky St./Castalia St. corridor from the east via US 20.
6. *McKim St. -- located by the Viaduct -- is lightly used to justify a left turn lane on US 20, at a location where trucks queue prior to crossing the Viaduct, vehicles slow down prior to filing into a single lane, and roadway capacity is limited.* The left turn lane onto McKim St. would benefit a much larger population if it were given to westbound US 20 in order to create two westbound lanes under the Viaduct. An occasional vehicle exiting McKim St. does not justify interruptions of mainline US 20 traffic flows in an area already congested and whose roadway capacity is so scarce and precious.
7. *US 20 traffic volumes -- cars and trucks alike -- overwhelmingly prefer to travel on the outside lanes, which carry triple and quadruple the loads of the inside lanes.* The uneven distribution of traffic loads between the lanes of US 20 creates the long queues of trucks along the curb line frequently observed in the downtown area, reduced capacity of US 20, reduced efficiencies of the traffic signals, and uneven (inefficient) utilization of the US 20 pavement.



Bellevue Proper Area:

1. *SR 18 collects regional and local traffic volumes from the fringes of the city and other local roadways and it brings them downtown to its merging point with US 20 across from Exchange St. As a result, regional traffic volumes and a large percentage of local traffic volumes may not need to pass through the US 20/Exchange St. intersection on their way to their ultimate destinations. These traffic volumes contribute to downtown traffic congestion.*
2. *A substantial number of trucks on US 20 are either local to the Bellevue area or they have their origin or destination in the four-county area. Contrary to popular belief, a lower number of trucks pass by Bellevue (often without stopping) on their way to their final destinations. Consequently, the majority of trucks on US 20 being locally generated and serving local businesses and industries would not benefit from a bypass route around the city (i.e., a large bypass) since such route would add substantial mileage to their trip and it would take them out of their service area (i.e., local clients).*
3. *US 20 is a safe highway facility compared to similar facilities elsewhere in Ohio despite its heavy usage by trucks. The majority of vehicle crashes during the last five years were due to driver error or random events. Furthermore, accidents occurred at various locations of US 20, which indicated that there are no locations of vehicle crash concentrations. Therefore, there was no evidence of roadway deficiencies, which would require safety improvements.*
4. *Travel time studies in Bellevue concluded that it takes approximately nine minutes to cross the city (i.e., from Twp.Rd. 302 to Prairie Rd.) on US 20 on an average Friday, which is the busiest day of the week on US 20. This travel time estimate is substantially lower than the reported 30 minutes or higher that was sometimes observed in Bellevue. In addition, the nine-minute travel time estimate is a difficult record to break by current standards since US 20 is the only route through Bellevue that does not cross rail lines. All alternatives identified by the study cross one or more rail lines, which slow down and interrupt traffic flows. The travel time delays expected for each alternative depend on how many rail lines are intercepted by each alternative and how many trains use each rail line daily.*
5. *Widening the Viaduct is not feasible, probable nor attainable at present time. The current ownership of the overhead bridge structure by a private entity, the heavy usage of the rail tracks leading into the yard resulting from the importance that the Bellevue Yard plays in the regional railroad network, and the complexities associated with the coordination, funding and administration of such a project make the prospect of a bridge widening highly improbable. Since the congestion mitigation needs of downtown Bellevue are urgent and imminent, the study assumptions had to be realistic and probable. Therefore, the Viaduct was assumed unchanged in this study.*
6. *Several planned or proposed commercial developments in the Bellevue area were taken into consideration in the development of the alternatives. Site accessibility and*



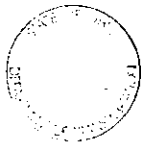
connectivity with local and regional highways were considerations given to the Goodrich Rd. Industrial Park, the recent land annexation off SR 269 on the south side of town, the proposed new hospital at US 20 and Twp. Rd. 302. Existing public facilities that benefit the community such as the Bellevue Recreation Center, the Shumaker School, the City Administrative Complex, the Fire Station, the Bellevue Rail Yard and the four Bellevue Reservoirs were also taken into account in the development of the alternatives. Similarly, sectors of the city that are currently fragmented by rail lines were identified and integrated in the development of the alternatives by providing secondary access points and/or grade-separated rail crossings so that they would not become inaccessible by rail crossing blockages.

A bypass route around the city of Bellevue would not be effective in rerouting trucks from the downtown area because it would add mileage and travel time to their trip, which is not long for most of the trucks on US 20. A bypass route – especially on the north side of the city – would not be effective in capturing and diverting SR 18 traffic volumes before they merge with US 20 flows in the downtown area in order to provide the desired traffic congestion relief in the downtown area. A bypass route around the city would not enhance site accessibility, regional connectivity, and highway visibility of existing, proposed and planned developments, which are locally pursued and administered.

US 20 Alternatives: Twenty-six alternatives were developed by mixing-and-matching twenty-seven roadway segments in different combinations to create continuous routes around the city of Bellevue. These routes connect with US 20 on the west and east sides of town and they bypass the downtown area and the Viaduct. The alternatives also facilitate accessibility of several locally pursued economic development projects by opening up undeveloped land to development, by providing connections to other local and regional highways, and by improving visibility from the regional highway system.

US 20 ALTERNATIVES			
Alternatives	Contributing Segments	Alternatives	Contributing Segments
A-1	1-2-3-4a-11	G-2	6-7-4b-11
A-2	1-2-3-4b-11	H-1	6-7-4a-12-13
B-1	1-2-3-4a-12-13	H-2	6-7-4b-12-13
B-2	1-2-3-4b-12-13	I-1	6-7-4a-9-10
C-1	1-2-3-4a-9-10	I-2	6-7-4b-9-10
C-2	1-2-3-4b-9-10	J	8-10
D-1	1-5-7-4a-11	K	26-25-24-22
D-2	1-5-7-4b-11	L	27-24-22
E-1	1-5-7-4a-12-13	M	23-22
E-2	1-5-7-4b-12-13	N	26-20-19-18-17-15-14
F-1	1-5-7-4a-9-10	O	26-20-19-18-16-15-14
F-2	1-5-7-4b-9-10	P	27-21-18-17-15-14
G-1	6-7-4a-11	Q	27-21-18-16-15-14

Table 1 – US 20 Alternatives

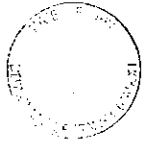


HUR-20-0.00 Bellevue Transportation Study

Consistent with locally received input and results of the technical analyses, the alternatives follow existing roadways as much as possible to minimize impacts to the community and to adjacent properties, they remain as close as possible to the path of US 20 in order to minimize additional mileage for trucks, they bypass the Viaduct and the downtown area of Bellevue (Figure 1). Segment 4 is part of several alternatives. It is also intercepted by an active rail line. As a result, Segment 4 was evaluated under two configurations: an at-grade crossing of the rail line at C.R. 62 (i.e., identified as Segment 4a), and a grade-separated crossing of the rail line at the same location (i.e., identified as Segment 4b). The twenty-seven segments shown in Figure 1 yielded twenty-six alternatives, which are defined in Table 1.

US 20 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION CRITERIA	
Considerations	Performance Criteria
ENGINEERING	Length (miles)
	Estimated Construction Cost (millions)
US 20 TRAFFIC DIVERSION POTENTIAL	2010 Daily Traffic Volume (vehicles per day)
	2030 Daily Traffic Volume (vehicles per day)
	Year 2010 Travel Time (minutes)
	Max. Traffic Volume Diversion Potential (Max 100%)
SR 18 TRAFFIC DIVERSION POTENTIAL	High
	Moderate
	Low
ABILITY TO BYPASS	The Viaduct
	The Downtown Bellevue District
ADJACENT PROPERTIES	Urban Residential Uses (# of Units)
	Rural Residential Uses (# of Units)
	Commercial Uses (# of Units)
	Institutional Uses (# of Units)
	Churches (# of Units)
	Industrial Uses (# of Units)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL	High
	Moderate
	Low
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFICIARIES	Annexed Land off SR 269 South
	Bellevue Hospital
	Goodrich Industrial Corridor
	SR 269/Cherry Blvd. Overpass
	Urban Sprawl
COMMUNITY PLANNING (SUBAREA PLAN DEVELOPMENT)	Southwest Area
	Southeast Area
	US 20 Gateways to the City
	Annexed Land off SR 269 South
	Goodrich Rd. Industrial Corridor

Table 2 – Alternatives Evaluation Criteria



HUR-20-0.00 Bellevue Transportation Study

The characteristics of each alternative were described in terms of engineering, traffic volume, adjacent land composition and economic development potential. These considerations were used to evaluate the performance of each alternative. For a more detailed evaluation of each alternative, performance criteria were also identified. The performance criteria reflect the issues of or concern identified by the project stakeholders in Bellevue and/or they were proposed by ODOT (Table 2).

Alternatives with low performance were eliminated from further consideration. The remaining alternatives will be further analyzed in order to identify potential fatal flaws, which may prevent them from becoming the preferred alternative. Public input is also requested on which alternative(s) would be preferable locally in terms of benefits and/or minimum impacts to the community. The feasible alternatives of Table 3 are also graphically exhibited in Figure 2.

US 20 FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES	
Alternatives	Contributing Segments
A-1	1-2-3-4a-11
A-2	1-2-3-4b-11
B-1	1-2-3-4a-12-13
B-2	1-2-3-4b-12-13
G-1	6-7-4a-11
G-2	6-7-4b-11
H-1	6-7-4a-12-13
H-2	6-7-4b-12-13
K	26-25-24-22
L	27-24-22

Table 3 – US 20 Feasible Alternatives

Next Steps: The public is invited to review the exhibits on display, to discuss issues of concern, and ask questions on the material displayed. ODOT and consultant team representatives will attend the Open House meeting to answer questions.

Comment Forms are also available at the Public Meeting Open House for the public to provide input. Comment forms may be returned during the meeting or mailed by the posted deadline. All written comments received through the comment period will become part of the project and will be given consideration in the next stages of the project. The comments received within the comment period will be summarized, tabulated and made available at the next public meeting. The next stages of the project are as follows:

- Public Meeting (To Present the US 20 Alternatives) - Today
- Receipt of Public Input and Comments – 3 weeks
- Evaluation of Alternatives (Identification of 2-3 feasible) – 3 months
- Public Meeting (To present the feasible alternatives) – Early 2004 (tentatively)
- Preferred Alternative Selected (based on Public Input) – February 2004



HUR-20-0.00 Bellevue Transportation Study



HUR-20-0.00 Bellevue Transportation Study

Appendix 8-1

SOCDS CHAS Data: Housing Problems Output for All Households

Name of Jurisdiction: Bellevue city, Ohio		Source of Data: CHAS Data Book				Data Current as of: 2000					
	Renters					Owners					
Household by Type, Income, & Housing Problem	Elderly (1 & 2 members)	Small Related (2 to 4 members)	Large Related (5 or more members)	All Other	Total Renters	Elderly (1 & 2 members)	Small Related (2 to 4 members)	Large Related (5 or more members)	All Other	Total Owners	Total Households
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)	(K)
1. Household Income <= 50% MFI	103	76	4	54	237	212	62	18	39	331	568
2. Household Income <=30% MFI	75	42	0	16	133	49	4	0	16	69	202
3. % with any housing problems	41.3	90.5	N/A	100.0	63.9	83.7	100.0	N/A	75.0	82.6	70.3
4. % Cost Burden >30%	41.3	90.5	N/A	100.0	63.9	83.7	100.0	N/A	75.0	82.6	70.3
5. % Cost Burden >50%	36.0	66.7	N/A	50.0	47.4	63.3	100.0	N/A	50.0	62.3	52.5
6. Household Income >30 to <=50% MFI	28	34	4	38	104	163	58	18	23	262	366
7. % with any housing problems	42.9	44.1	100.0	100.0	66.3	23.9	74.1	22.2	17.4	34.4	43.4
8. % Cost Burden >30%	42.9	44.1	100.0	100.0	66.3	23.9	74.1	22.2	17.4	34.4	43.4
9. % Cost Burden >50%	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.5	3.8	9.2	32.8	22.2	17.4	16.0	12.6
10. Household Income >50 to <=80% MFI	43	68	19	94	224	206	98	27	32	363	587
11. % with any housing problems	32.6	5.9	21.1	4.3	11.6	3.9	56.1	14.8	87.5	26.2	20.6

12. % Cost Burden >30%	32.6	5.9	0.0	4.3	9.8	3.9	56.1	14.8	87.5	26.2	19.9
13. % Cost Burden >50%	23.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	1.1	2.4
14. Household Income >80% MFI	40	162	37	219	458	254	964	193	174	1,585	2,043
15. % with any housing problems	20.0	4.9	21.6	1.8	6.1	1.6	7.2	9.3	2.3	6.0	6.0
16. % Cost Burden >30%	10.0	2.5	0.0	1.8	2.6	1.6	6.7	4.1	2.3	5.1	4.6
17. % Cost Burden >50%	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.4
18. Total Households	186	306	60	367	919	672	1,124	238	245	2,279	3,198
19. % with any housing problems	34.9	21.2	26.7	16.9	22.6	13.7	15.2	10.9	19.6	14.8	17.0
20. % Cost Burden >30	32.8	19.9	6.7	16.9	20.5	13.7	14.9	6.7	19.6	14.2	16.0
21. % Cost Burden >50	22.0	9.2	0.0	3.3	8.8	7.4	2.0	1.7	6.5	4.1	5.4

[Click here to download report in Excel format.](#)

Click the button below to get the data needed to fill out the CPMP Version 1.2 spreadsheet in MS Excel format arranged for a one-step paste.

[CPMP Version 1.2 HSGNeed Data, One-Step Paste](#)

Note: When using Internet Explorer, please save file in Excel format.

Definitions:

Any housing problems: cost burden greater than 30% of income and/or overcrowding and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Other housing problems: overcrowding (1.01 or more persons per room) and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Elderly households: 1 or 2 person household, either person 62 years old or older.

Renter: Data do not include renters living on boats, RVs or vans. This excludes approximately 25,000 households nationwide.

Cost Burden: Cost burden is the fraction of a household's total gross income spent on housing costs. For renters, housing costs include rent paid by the tenant plus utilities. For owners, housing costs include mortgage payment,

taxes, insurance, and utilities.

Source: Tables F5A, F5B, F5C, F5D

SOCDS CHAS Data: Affordability Mismatch Output for All Households

Name of Jurisdiction: Bellevue city, Ohio		Source of Data: CHAS Data Book		Data Current as of: 2000					
		Renters Units by # of bedrooms			Owned or for sale units by # of bedrooms				
Housing Units by Affordability	0-1 (A)	2 (B)	3+ (C)	Total (D)		0-1 (E)	2 (F)	3+ (G)	Total (H)
1. Rent <=30%					Value <=30%				
# occupied units	45	53	12	110		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% occupants <=30%	64.4	47.2	33.3	52.7		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% built before 1970	8.9	92.5	100.0	59.1		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% some problem	0.0	7.5	33.3	7.3		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
# vacant for rent	15	29	0	44	# vacant for sale	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. Rent >30% to <=50%					Value <=50%				
# occupied units	132	290	113	535		8	86	492	586
% occupants <=50%	40.2	24.1	8.8	24.9		0.0	39.5	21.7	24.1
% built before 1970	51.5	69.0	92.0	69.5		100.0	75.6	87.0	85.5
% some problem	41.7	27.6	3.5	26.0		0.0	11.6	5.1	6.0
# vacant for rent	10	10	4	24	# vacant for sale	4	4	4	12
3. Rent >50% to <=80%					Value >50% to <=80%				
# occupied units	78	110	82	270		0	269	1,053	1,322

% occupants ≤80%	76.9	28.2	35.4	44.4		N/A	34.2	25.5	27.3
% built before 1970	94.9	72.7	78.0	80.7		N/A	86.2	94.9	93.1
% some problem	19.2	27.3	41.5	29.3		N/A	3.0	0.9	1.4
# vacant for rent	4	4	0	8	# vacant for sale	0	8	4	12
4. Rent >80%					Value >80%				
# occupied units	22	4	0	26		0	78	289	367
# vacant for rent	25	20	0	45	# vacant for sale	0	14	0	14

[Click here to download report in Excel format](#)

Note: When using Internet Explorer, please save file in Excel format.

Definitions:

Rent 0-30% - These are units with a current gross rent (rent and utilities) that are affordable to households with incomes at or below 30% of HUD Area Median Family Income. Affordable is defined as gross rent less than or equal to 30% of a household's gross income.

Rent 30-50% - These are units with a current gross rent that are affordable to households with incomes greater than 30% and less than or equal to 50% of HUD Area Median Family Income.

Rent 50-80% - These are units with a current gross rent that are affordable to households with incomes greater than 50% and less than or equal to 80% of HUD Area Median Family Income.

Rent > 80% - These are units with a current gross rent that are affordable to households with incomes above 80% of HUD Area Median Family Income.

Value 0-50% - These are homes with values affordable to households with incomes at or below 50% of HUD Area Median Family Income. Affordable is defined as annual owner costs less than or equal to 30% of annual gross income. Annual owner costs are estimated assuming the cost of purchasing a home at the

time of the Census based on the reported value of the home. Assuming a 7.9% interest rate and national averages for annual utility costs, taxes, and hazard and mortgage insurance, multiplying income times 2.9 represents the value of a home a person could afford to purchase. For example, a household with an annual gross income of \$30,000 is estimated to be able to afford an \$87,000 home without having total costs exceed 30% of their annual household income.

Value 50-80% - These are units with a current value that are affordable to households with incomes greater than 50% and less than or equal to 80% of HUD Area Median Family Income.

Value > 80% - These are units with a current value that are affordable to households with incomes above 80% of HUD Area Median Family Income.

Source: Tables A10A, A10B, A12, A9A, A9B, A9C, A8B, A8C, A11