



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

DEERFIELD TOWNSHIP

Warren County, Ohio

2019

SPECIAL THANKS

The Residents of Deerfield Township

Deerfield Township Board of Trustees

- Lelle Lutts Hedding
- Kristin Malhotra
- Lonnie Vestal

Eric Reiners, Township Administrator

Jim Flick, Economic Development Director

Sam Hill, Planning and Zoning Director

Joel Smiddy, Parks and Recreation Director

Jennifer Wagner, Finance Director

Steering Committee for the Deerfield Action Agenda

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



First of all, I would like to thank the members of the Deerfield Township Board of Trustees and the Township Administrator, who believed in my vision and gave me the opportunity to join the township as Economic Development Director and Public Information Officer in July 2018.

I would also like to thank the members of the Steering Committee for the Deerfield Action Agenda. If not for their diligent and inspired work my job likely would not have been created.

I am extremely humbled and grateful for the opportunity to serve the residents of Deerfield Township. Since taking office, I have worked to build a robust knowledge base, a strong network with regional stakeholders, and bring about greater transparency to the work being done here.

This economic development strategy is the next logical step in my efforts to make Deerfield a vibrant, connected, and thriving place to live, work, visit, and do business.

It is my hope that my work, and the direction I am taking the Deerfield economic development efforts, enables the community to achieve future growth and success.

I look forward to working with the residents, business owners, and site selectors to complete each of the goals set forth in this plan and bring about sustainable and vibrant development that serves the needs of the community now and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Flick', written over a horizontal line.

Jim Flick
Economic Development Director and Public Information Officer
Deerfield Township



SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



1.1 About the Economic Development Plan

This economic plan was created internally to drive economic development activities in Deerfield Township. It is guided by the vision of the Board of Trustees, the Township Administrator, and the Economic Development director as well as the community outreach conducted during the formulation of the 2019 Parks Master Plan, the Deerfield Action Agenda (2018), and the township’s Comprehensive Plan (2015).

The township is currently undertaking an effort to update the Comprehensive Plan. When complete, this economic development plan will be updated to align with the vision and goals that will be included in the new 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Looking farther ahead, this plan will then be updated every five years to ensure that the economic development goals reflect the growth and changing needs of township residents and businesses.

1.2 Deerfield Action Agenda Process Overview

Work on the Deerfield Action Agenda began in 2017 and was completed in February 2018. It was a five-phase research and strategic planning process. A steering committee, consisting of stakeholders from public, private, and non-profit sectors, guided the process to ensure the residents and businesses continue to thrive in the community.

The five phases of the Deerfield Action Agenda included:

1. Stakeholder Engagement

The Stakeholder Engagement consisted of focus groups, interviews, and surveys which provided qualitative feedback that was used in the other phases of the strategic plan.

2. Community Assessment

The Community Assessment examined the townships ability to compete in terms of placemaking. It sought to frame Deerfield Township as a place to live, work, visit, and do business and included a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis.

3. Economic Development Service Gap Analysis

The Economic Development Service Gap Analysis examined where Deerfield Township's economic development efforts could be complement existing programs and meet the needs of the community that don't currently have dedicated resources. The economic development services that were examined in the gap analysis included:

- Recruitment and lead generation
- Lead and project management
- Business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts
- Small Business
- Workforce development, attraction, and retention

4. Deerfield Strategic Action Agenda

Based on the results of the first three phases, the Strategic Action Agenda provides a plan for the development of an economic development program for Deerfield Township. The plan consists of tactical, measurable, and actionable items as well as best practices.

5. Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan is the "how to" road map for the Strategic Action Agenda, outlining economic development activities to be done on daily, monthly, and yearly basis.

1.3 Deerfield Action Agenda Recommendations and Activities

The final Deerfield Action Agenda included several key recommendations pertaining to the economic development activities of Deerfield Township. Ownership and responsibility for these recommendations fell onto both the Deerfield Township administration as well as the Mason Deerfield Chamber (MADE Chamber). Throughout this report, the recommendations that Deerfield Township has responsibility for will be identified and activities associated with them will be used to as the basis for the strategic action items of this economic development plan.

1.4 Developing a Local Economic Development Organization (LEDO)

The Deerfield Action Agenda made three recommendations pertaining to the development of a lead economic development organization (LEDO) within the Deerfield Township administration.

Recommendation 1.1 – Maintain Strong Relationships with all Economic Development Partners

Prior to July 2018 Deerfield Township did not have a dedicated economic development position staffed. As a result of the Action Agenda the township hired an Economic Development Director/Public Information Officer.

Action Step: The Director is to be assigned the task of building the LEDO and serving as the point of contact for all economic development issues.

An integral part of building a LEDO is relationship building. Economic Development activities require the engagement of numerous regional stakeholders and organizations. These include:

- MADE Chamber
- Sinclair College
- United Way of Warren County
- Warren County Small Business Alliance
- Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Cincinnati
- Ohio Means Jobs
- Warren County Economic Development/Port Authority
- City of Mason
- Mason City Schools
- Kings Local School District

Action Step: The Director is to meet regularly with these groups to ensure economic development inquiries are received.

Recommendation 1.2 – Actively Support Economic Development Marketing and Project Management Activities.

Action Step: In the event of an economic development inquiry being received and converting to a project, the Director of Economic Development is to engage regional partners and stakeholders as necessary.

For a LEDO to properly function it is important that the Director stay up to date on the economic development activity occurring throughout the region, understand best practices of other communities, attend any trainings to further skills development, and meet with regional stakeholders to ensure awareness of services they provide that could assist businesses within the community.

Action Step: As opportunities arise, the Director is to participate in any applicable economic development related meetings and events.

Data collection is a vital component of running an effect LEDO. The types of data that should be collected includes:

- Companies/Contacts
- Commercial Real Estate Properties in Deerfield Township
- Economic Development Leads
- Economic Development Projects
- Business Retention and Expansion Visits

Action Step: The Director is to proactively work with stakeholders including businesses, developers, real estate brokers, and others to collect data relevant to economic development activities and build a database capable of storing the data that is collected.

Recommendation 6.2 – Utilize regulations and development tools to promote high-quality redevelopment

The effectiveness of a LEDO is determined by the tools it has to conduct economic development activities. The tools that Deerfield Township is capable of offering the following programs either directly or with the assistance of Warren County, The Warren County Port Authority, REDI Cincinnati, JobsOhio, the State of Ohio, and/or the Small Business Administration (SBA).

Local Incentives and Services

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Sale of Township Property
- Site Selection Assistance
- Business Development Assistance
- Workforce Development
- Zoning Assistance
- Infrastructure Support
- Network Development

County and State Tax Credits

- Job Creation Tax Credit
- Data Center Tax Abatement
- Job Retention Tax Credit
- Research and Development Investment Tax Credit
- Sales and Inventory tax Exemptions

For Small Business

- SBA 504 Loan

JobsOhio Loan and Grant Funds

- JobsOhio Economic Development Grant
- JobsOhio Growth Fund
- JobsOhio Research and Development Grant
- JobsOhio Revitalization Program
- JobsOhio Workforce Grant

State of Ohio Loan and Grant Programs

- Research and Development Investment Loan Fund
- 166 Direct Loan
- Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund
- Innovation Ohio Loan Fund
- Roadwork Development (629) Funds
- Ohio Investment in Training Program

Action Step: Using the existing tools, the Director will work with businesses, developers, and regional/state partners to identify any applicable incentive, loan, or grant programs that would business with (re)location, business expansion, workforce development, or anything else needed for those businesses to thrive within the Township.

Furthermore, after the examination of existing economic development tools, the township administration has recommended the creation of a community improvement corporation (CIC) as a means to enhance its ability to promote redevelopment activity. Upon creation, the CIC will act as the LEDO for the township and take on the responsibilities and strategies outlined in this plan. Information about the CIC will be discussed in the next section.

Action Step: The Director shall create the Deerfield Township Community Improvement Corporation and utilize it as the LEDO for Deerfield Township.

1.5 Analyzing the Current Land Use and Real Estate Products

The Deerfield Activity Agenda included a recommendations that pertained to analyzing the current real estate market and variety of real estate types that currently exist in the township.

Recommendation 1.3 – Develop and share in-depth information about Deerfield Township’s real estate “product”

This recommendation was to develop and share in-depth information about Deerfield Township’s real estate “product.” Included in this, the Action Agenda tasked the township with developing relationships with key stakeholders and assembling a knowledge back about the locate real estate product and development climate.

Action Step: The Director shall meet regularly with members of the real estate brokerage community, as well as property owners to understand the real estate market, what leads and prospects are looking for space, and to provide them with materials that promote Deerfield Township as a place to do business.

Action Step: The Director shall develop a database of real estate properties in order to maintain contact information and track activity within the township. The Director is to update this information and report on it quarterly to the Board of Trustees and Township Administrator.



SECTION 2: DEERFIELD TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION

2.1 What is a Community Improvement Corporation?

Community Improvement Corporations (CIC) were established by the State of Ohio General Assembly in 1961 under Senate Bill 299 and are currently defined under the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 1724. CICs essentially are non-profit economic development corporations created for the following purposes:

Advancing, encouraging, and promoting the industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development of a community.

According to Chapter 80 of the Ohio County Commissioners Handbook, “CIC’s assist with the promotion and financing of economic development by providing loans to individuals and businesses; buying, selling, and leasing real and personal property for economic development purposes; and, by entering into contracts with the state and local governments.”

2.2 Powers of the CIC

By creating a CIC for economic development purposes, the township is better able to control (re)development activity throughout the township.

A CIC can perform the following activities:

- Borrow money for CIC related activities
- Provide loans to individuals or businesses
- Buy, lease, and sell real estate
- Acquire the good will, business rights, property, and assets of an individual or business.
- Charge fees to political subdivisions for services.
- Enter into contracts with government agencies
- Apply for/administer grants.

Additionally, a CIC must comply with Ohio Ethics Law, does not have eminent domain authority, can only recommend tax abatements, and cannot levy taxes.

2.3 CIC Funding

Funding of a CIC can come from a number of different places. These include:

- Township general funds (requires unanimous vote from Board of Trustees)
- Donations from Businesses
- Membership Dues
- Grants
- Property sale proceeds
- Lease revenue
- Contracts for services

2.4 Mission and Core Principals

The Deerfield Township CIC is guided by a mission and core principles that fall into five categories (Functioning CIC, Civic Community, Business Community, Infrastructure, and Sustainability).

Mission

The mission of the Deerfield Township CIC is to:

Facilitate collaborative, strategic, and sustainable economic development in Deerfield Township that improves the lives of residents, increases business investment, and promotes the Township as a thriving and vibrant place to call home.

Core Principals

Functioning CIC

- Develop the operational structure of the CIC including securing board members and resources
- Seek general and project-specific funding from public and private organizations
- Define and develop CIC activities and programs

Civic Community

- Further define the needs of the residential community as identified in Township strategic planning efforts (Deerfield Action Agenda, Parks Master Plan, Comprehensive Plan)
- Increase awareness of CIC

Business Community

- Encourage dialogue between Township, CIC, and local businesses
- Inventory land and buildings that are targets for (re)development
- Identify the needs of the business community through the launch and operation of a Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Recruit new businesses to Deerfield Township

Infrastructure

- Identify opportunities to increase connectivity throughout the township

Sustainability

- Participate in ongoing and future strategic planning efforts of the township
- Promote development that reflects the wants/needs of township residents and promotes aging in place
- Identify and acquire strategic parcels of land to control for future (re)development
- Promote Deerfield Township as a brand and increase awareness and identity

2.5 Leadership Structure of the Deerfield Township CIC

The Deerfield Township CIC is led by the Economic Development Director for Deerfield Township. The Director will serve as the Executive Director under a loan agreement wherein they remain an employee of the Township, but can lead the CIC.

Under a similar arraignment, the township's Finance Director will serve as the Finance Director for the CIC.

The work of the Executive Director and Finance Director is overseen by a five member Board of Directors, 40% of which must be elected or appointed township officials. With that said the five board members includes the President of the Deerfield Township Board of Trustees, the Township Administrator, and three members from residential/business community.

The inclusion of township staff and board members in the leadership structure of the CIC ensures that it acts in the best interest, and with the guidance of the Deerfield Township residents.



SECTION 3: COMMUNITY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS

3.1 About Deerfield Township

Deerfield Township was formally established on May 10, 1803, although early settlements of the area date back to the 1790s. The area got its name from the large deer population that was supported by numerous springs that scattered the landscape. Today, Deerfield Township is a vibrant community of 38,500 plus residents in the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area who enjoy a diverse housing stock, excellent schools, a top notch park system, and a bustling retail and entertainment scene. It is the most populous jurisdiction in Warren County comprising approximately 16.8 square miles in southwest corner of Warren County and borders both Hamilton and Butler Counties.

Located on I-71 and just 2 miles from I-275, Deerfield Township is situated at an important crossroads for both travel and commerce, as it has since its founding. Residents and businesses enjoy easy access to all parts of the Greater Cincinnati Region and beyond. In fact, Deerfield Township is located within 600 miles of over 50% of the United States' purchasing power, population, and manufacturing establishments.

3.2 Demographics

Population

Total Population	38,579
YOY Population Growth	1%
% Male Population	49%
% Female Population	51%
Median Age	36

Income

Average Household Income	\$117,655
Median Household Income	\$88,977
Average Earnings	\$119,373
Per Capita Income	\$43,954

Labor Force

Total Labor Force	21,244
Labor Force Participation Rate	73%
Unemployment Rate	3%

Employment by Industry

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0%
Construction	3%
Manufacturing	16%
Wholesale trade	3%
Retail trade	11%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4%
Information	2%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	10%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	17%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	22%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	7%
Other services, except public administration	4%
Public administration	2%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Acommunity Survey 2017 - 5yr Estimates

3.3 Education

Deerfield Township offers a well-educated workforce with nearly 66% of its population over 25 years old holding at least an Associate's Degree. Furthermore, there is access within 50 miles of a robust network of colleges and universities including the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati State, University of Dayton, Miami University, Mount St. Joseph University, Northern Kentucky University, Ohio State University Butler County Extension, Sinclair College (Mason and Main Campuses), Wright State University and Xavier University. Collectively, these schools have a total enrollment of over 158,000 which produces a deep talent pool for companies to get the next generation of well-educated and talented employees.

Educational Attainment (Pop. Over 25)

Less than 9th grade	1%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	10%
Some college, no degree	9%
Associate's degree	6%

Bachelor's degree	25%
Graduate or professional degree	14%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Acommunity Survey 2017 - 5yr Estimates

Total Enrollment by School

University of Cincinnati	45,300
Cincinnati State	11,200
University of Dayton	10,800
Miami University	19,700
Mount St. Joseph University	2,000
Northern Kentucky University	14,500
Sinclair College	32,000
Wright State University	16,600
Xavier University	6,500

Source: Deerfield Township Research

3.4 Business Demographics

Deerfield Township is a significant economic driver for Warren County. There are over 1,050 companies that call Deerfield home employing over 23,000 employees. These companies span across many business sectors and range in sizes from small firms to large, multinational corporations.

Largest Employers

Large employers in the Township include:

- Anthem
- Macy's Credit and Customer Service
- Cengage Learning Inc
- Atos IT Solutions
- General Revenue Corporation
- MedPlus Inc. a Quest Diagnostics Company
- Down Lite International
- Mercy Health Partners
- Clopay Corporation
- Apex
- Neo Tech

Below is a breakdown of all of businesses in Deerfield Township:

Sector Description	# of Firms
Accommodation and Food Services	116
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	62
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	25
Construction	54
Educational Services	23
Finance and Insurance	75
Health Care and Social Assistance	104
Information	21
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1
Manufacturing	51
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	3
Other Services (except Public Administration)	109
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	123
Public Administration	1
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	73
Retail Trade	167
Transportation and Warehousing	14
Wholesale Trade	35
Grand Total	1,059

3.5 Competitive Advantage

Cost of Living

Overall the cost of living in the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area is 9% below the national average making it an affordable amenity rich location to reside in.

- The median gross rent in Deerfield Township is \$1,164.
- The median home value in Deerfield Township is \$228,100

No Local Income Tax

As a Township in the State of Ohio, Deerfield **DOES NOT** have a local income tax.

Fiscal Responsibility and Exceptional Services

After any rollbacks, exemptions, credits, etc., Deerfield Township typically receives about 17.5% of total annual property taxes for its operations—a figure which includes all levies. Those funds go to operate fire, police, public works (roads), cemeteries, parks, zoning, and any other functions associated with a larger suburban township. The remaining 80% of what residents pay annually in property taxes go to schools, the county, and any other special assessments, such as a lighting district to fund street lights.

The Township is continuously exploring and uncovering outside funding sources and grant opportunities for projects and improvements, where available and appropriate. This approach to operations works to stretch every tax dollar, and in some cases, leverages local resources against matching outside dollars to fund improvement projects.



SECTION 4: FUTURE GROWTH ANALYSIS



4.1 Historic and Future Population Growth

Historic Population

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2017
Deerfield Township	5,700	6,640	8,126	15,039	25,515	36,059	38,579
Mason	4,727	5,677	8,692	11,452	22,046	30,712	32,317
Warren County	65,711	85,505	99,276	113,927	158,383	212,693	223,868

American Community Survey, 2017- 5yr Estimates

Deerfield’s 2017 population, according to the American Community Survey, was 38,579, which represents an approximately 3% annual population growth since 2000. Deerfield and its neighbor, the City of Mason, have seen relatively high rates of population growth since the 1960s, with annual growth in Deerfield ranging between 2% in the 1960s to as much as 6% in the

1980s. The table above shows the Deerfield Township population for the last several decades along with the current population in Warren County and the City of Mason.

Percentage of Warren County Population

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2017
Deerfield Township	8.7%	7.8%	8.2%	13.2%	16.1%	17.0%	17.2%

American Community Survey, 2017- 5yr Estimates

The population of Deerfield Township has grown to nearly seven times what it was in the 1960s. Deerfield Township’s portion of the Warren County population has continued to grow since 1960 showing that new development is happening in the township at a larger scale than other communities.

The table above shows the percentage of the Warren County population in Deerfield Township.

Growth in the Mason Deerfield Area



American Community Survey, 2017- 5yr Estimates

The Chart above shows in the increase in population in the Mason-Deerfield area since 1960. Since 2010, Deerfield has been out-pacing the City of Mason with a significant increase in population growth and the percentage of the Warren County population.

Understanding the growth of the combined Mason-Deerfield area is important because the two jurisdictions share roads and area residents frequent business establishments in both areas.

Population Density

The township consists of approximately 10,752 acres, or 16.8 square miles. With a population of 38,579, the township’s average population density is 3.59 persons per acre or 2,296 person per square mile. This density will continue to increase as the population grows within the township. Further increases in population density will result in an expanded need for services, infrastructure, and amenities. All of which will need to be factored in when considering new economic development projects. Strategies to limit the amount of density that occurs in the township will be addressed in Section 5 of this report, but consists of pursuing single family residential instead of multi-family residential and to focus on the redevelopment of existing assets instead of new construction activity.

Population Forecasts

Forecasting population is challenging because it is impossible to predict the future, however, using historic trends to create an estimate of what future growth may occur provides a point of comparison for how long it may take a community to reach a certain population, or in the township's case, buildout. The Deerfield Township Comprehensive Plan (2015) started with the year 2012 and forecasted the community's population to 2035 under five different scenarios. They were as follows:

- **Scenario 1:** assumes that the population will continue to grow at an average annual rate of 4% through 2035.
- **Scenario 2:** assumes the population will continue to grow at an average annual rate of 2% through 2035.
- **Scenario 3:** assumes the population will continue to grow at an average annual rate of 1% through 2035, which accounts for the fact that the township now has a population in excess of 30,000 people, is about 85% built-out, and that opportunities for growth are becoming more limited thereby slowing the rate of growth for the future.
- **Scenario 4:** assumes that the rate of growth will fluctuate in the future slowing to 2% annually from 2020 to 2030 and then to 1% from 2030 to 2035, for the same reason as indicated in Scenario 3.
- **Scenario 5:** assumes that the township will continue to grow by 602 people annually to 2035.

These scenarios resulted in the following population projections for 2020-2035:

	2020	2025	2030	2035	Change
Scenario 1	51,487	62,642	76,213	92,725	55,104
Scenario 2	44,079	48,667	53,732	59,325	21,704
Scenario 3	40,738	42,816	45,000	47,296	9,675
Scenario 4	46,723	51,586	54,217	56,983	19,362
Scenario 5	42,437	45,447	48,457	51,467	13,846

Deerfield Township Comprehensive Plan (2015)

Population Assessment

The wide range of potential population growth pointed out in the Comprehensive Plan (2015) stresses the importance of examining potential areas of growth in township to determine capacity. As this report will show, there is limited available land for greenfield development. The density at which this land is developed will ultimately determine the future population in the township. If the population were to continue to grow in a manner reflective of historic trends, the 2035 population could reach somewhere between 47,296 and 92,725. If the land were able to accommodate this, it would result in an additional population of between 9,573 and 54,526 people.



SECTION 5: DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

5.1 Potential Development and Redevelopment Sites

The Deerfield Action Agenda included a recommendation (number 6.1) that would enable township staff to evaluate potential sites for development or redevelopment activities.

Recommendation 6.1 – Inventory all potential redevelopment sites in Deerfield Township

The database of real estate product discussed in Section 1 of this report would enable the Economic Development Director to inventory all potential redevelopment and greenfield sites in Deerfield Township. Once this information is collected the Director could work with the community to identify potential projects.

5.2 Target Areas

Based on the Comprehensive Plan and early discussions with the business community, a number of sites stand out as existing targets for development activity.

Business Redevelopment Districts

The current zoning map (see previous page) showcases a number of zoned Business Redevelopment Districts. These areas are located along Fields Ertle Road near the intersections of Mason Montgomery Road and US 22-3 are vital gateways into the main business and retail centers of Deerfield Township and therefore are prime targets for redevelopment efforts to achieve a higher and better use for these properties. Redevelopment of these sites could be in the form of:

- Office
- Mixed Use
- Retail

Action Item: The Director will pursue redevelopment activity focused in the zoned Business Redevelopment Districts

Fosters Crossing

The Little Miami River, which runs on the eastern boundary of Deerfield Township, is a high underutilized asset the Township should consider, when promoting economic development activity. Foster's Crossing, the point when State Route 22 and 3 crosses the Little Miami River, serves as the best option in terms of attractive development activity.

The township already owns approximately 8 acres of land along the waterfront at Fosters Crossing. The the types of development that could be attracted to this location is:

- Retail
- Community Space
- Outdoor Activity Hub

Furthermore, a development at Foster's Crossing would enable the opportunity to provide connectivity to the Loveland Bike Trail and Carl Rahe Park, a State Park on the south side of the crossing that has an outdoor picnic area as well as a canoe launch located on it.

Action Item: The Director will work with the development community to determine the scope and type of development activity to pursue on the Township owned parcels near Foster's Crossing.

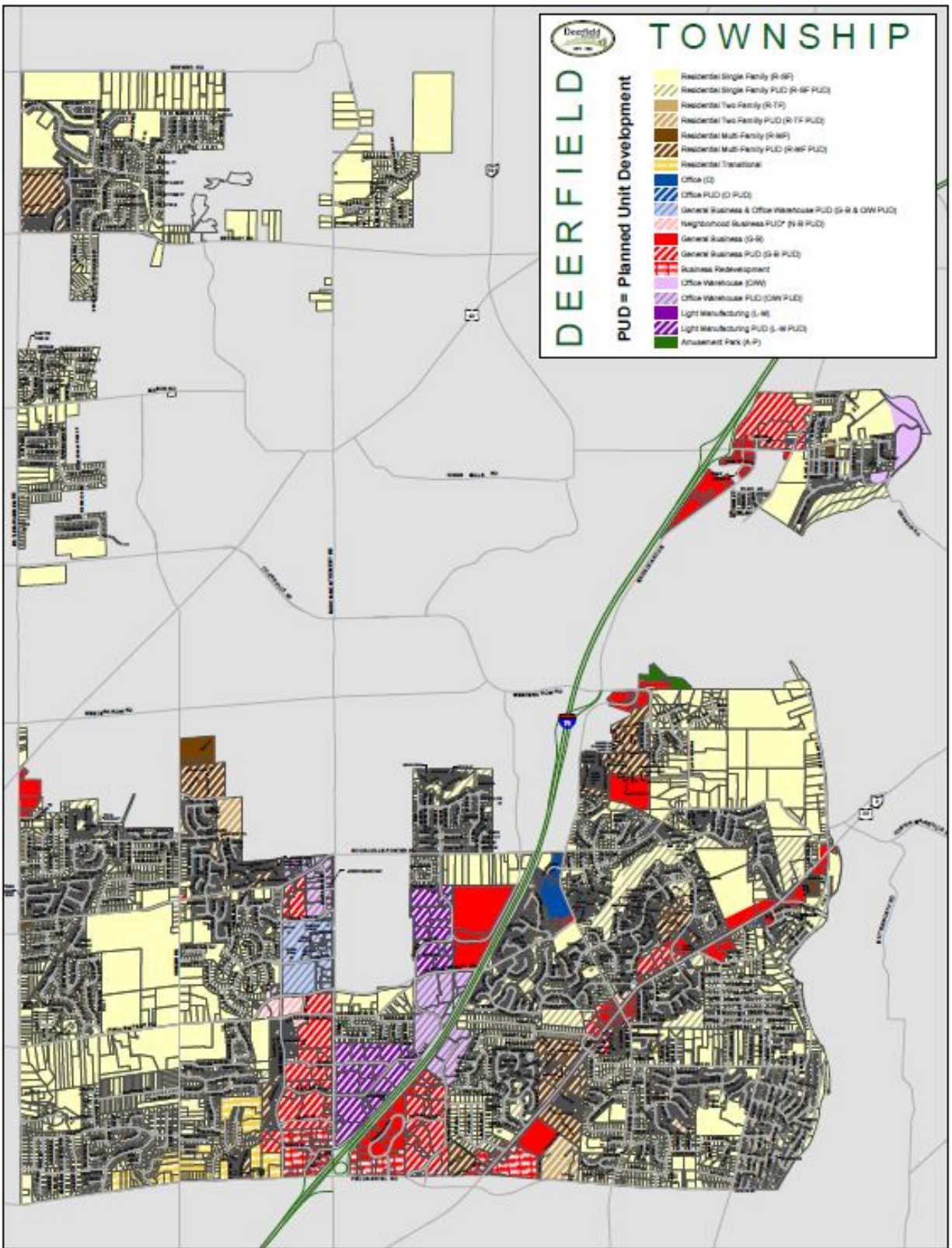
Duke Boulevard Corridor

There are several properties along Duke Boulevard that could serve as targets for (re)development activity. These properties include several parcels of vacant land varying in size, as well as multi-tenant single story office buildings that could be targets for a higher and better use.

The types of development that could be attracted to this location include:

- Retail
- Office

Action Item: The Director will work with current building owners and development community to determine the scope and type of development activity to pursue within the Duke Blvd Corridor



5.3 Types of Development to Pursue

Recent public engagement efforts as well as projects that have come before the Board of Trustees for approval have shown a preference for hospitality, office, retail, and single family housing development. The economic development efforts in Deerfield Township should primary focus attention to these types of developments.

Office

Office is a targeted as a means to grow the employment base in the township. Currently, Deerfield Township is the primary economic driver for Warren County, and companies are attracted to the township for a variety of reasons including the location, amenities and the fact that the township does not have a local income tax.

Based on the business community analysis in Section 3 of this report, economic development activity will target industries where there is already of cluster of businesses. This includes finance and insurance, administrative and support services, health care and social assistance, and educational services.

Retail, Entertainment, and Hospitality

As the population continues to grow in the township, additional retail services will be needed to ensure that the community has all the amenities and products they need. Retail attraction efforts will be focused on bringing boutique shops, non-chain restaurants, and entertainment options designed for families.

Furthermore, hospitality uses offer opportunities due to the large business community in the area, as well as sporting and family events that take place in the region. Hotels also provide the township with an additional revenue stream through the hotel and excise tax.

Single Family Housing

Additional single family housing will be needed as the population continues to grow. By pursuing single family housing in favor of multi-family residential, the township will minimize the rise in population density caused by the growth.

Multi-Family Residential

While multi-family development is not among the preferred property types, any multi-family projects that are proposed within the township boundaries will be assessed on a project by project basis. Furthermore, the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update will reevaluate the needs and desires for multi-family housing based on population trends analyzed as a part of that report.

Zoning

Current zoning of the township, for the most part, allows for the growth in these property types. The zoning classifications in the township will be further examined by the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update and any adjustments needed to this report will be made using that analysis.

Action Item: *The Director will pursue development opportunities that feature office space, retail, hospitality, and single family housing.*

5.4 Analysis of Property Use in Township

An analysis of Warren County Auditor Data shows that the mix of property use (based on acres) in the township is as follows:

- Retail – 6%
- Office – 3%
- Industrial/Warehouse – 1%
- Single Family Residential – 46%
- Multi-Family Residential – 5%
- Hospitality - 1%
- Farm/Vacant Land – 21%
 - Agricultural Farm Land – 12%
 - Vacant Residential Land – 6%

- Vacant Commercial Land – 3%
- Parks/Open Space – 7%*
- Other – 10%

*Data from Parks Master Plan Process

With economic development activity focused on retail, office, single family residential, and hospitality uses, these percentages will likely fluctuate. Additionally, based on feedback from the community from the Parks Master Plan process, park space and open space will be preserved and potentially expanded. Staff will work to balance activity and achieve a property mix that will feature:

- Retail between 6% and 10%
- Office between 3% and 10%
- Single Family Residential between 46% and 55%
- Hospitality between 1% and 3%
- Multi-Family Residential – 5%
- Park/Open Space between 7% and 10%

According to the analysis of Warren County Auditor data, the value per acre of retail, office, single family residential and hospitality uses, is as follows:

- Retail - \$725,486
- Office - \$1,019,739
- Single Family Residential - \$516,866
- Hospitality - \$1,934,825
- Multi-Family Residential - \$907,474

By targeting growth in retail, office, single family residential, and hospitality, the township would be poised to see significant property tax revenue increases based on the value per acre of land within these types. This additional revenue would help offset the cost of any infrastructure or service improvements caused by the growth.

5.5 Deerfield Action Agenda Recommendation for Mixed-Use Gathering Space

The Deerfield Action Agenda made the following recommendation and action steps.

Recommendation 5.1 – Identify a potential scope, site, and development partners for a vibrant, mixed-use gathering place

While plans have shifted for Kingswood Park to an open-space park setting from a mixed-use development based on feedback from residents gathering during the Parks Master Plan Process, there is still the possibility of transitioning a portion of that property to a vibrant gathering space for the community.

The participating community members and Parks Master Plan Steering committee has given feedback that will help the economic development staff to understand what the revised vision for a vibrant mixed-use gathering space at Kingswood Park could look like and how it can be developed it to meet the community’s vision. With this guidance economic development efforts will be focused to ensure that property offers a park setting that is unique from the other parks in Deerfield Township and provides space for the community to gather for a variety of activities.

With that said, the District of Deerfield is now underway with the ground breaking of a medical office building for Mercy Health. This development, when completed, should fulfill the Deerfield Action Agenda’s initial vision as it will feature 300+ apartments, 90,000 square feet of retail space, a community gathering space that will be actively programmed, and a space for a hospitality use.

Looking ahead, economic development staff will continue to look at other areas within the township that may be suitable for redevelopment into the vibrant mixed use space this recommendation speaks of.

5.6 Infrastructure Needs of the Community

The Deerfield Action Agenda sought to address the infrastructure needs of the community. Considering these, along with the pursuit of economic development projects should be a major focus of staff. The recommendations that the Action Agenda included were:

Recommendation 6.3 – Improve walking and biking connectivity throughout Deerfield Township

The Parks Master Plan process is helping to gather information on this topic. When that report is complete and the feedback from the community is compiled, staff will be able to better access the community’s desire for expanded pedestrian and trail systems.

Additionally, this item is likely to play a significant role in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update. During that process the Director will work with the Planning and Zoning Department, and the selected consultant, to identify opportunities to provide more pedestrian connectivity throughout the Township.

Recommendation 6.3 – Support regional efforts to enhance transit connectivity

Much like the pedestrian and trail systems, this topic is going to play a significant role in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update and the Director be a critical part of this effort.

One potential target for the Director is a bike share system that would not only provide a new and popular means of transit, but also improve the biking connectivity throughout the township.

Action Item: the Director will research and advocate for additional transit connectivity throughout the region and assess the feasibility of bringing a bike share to the community.



SECTION 6: BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

6.1 What is Business Retention and Expansion?

Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) is an economic development strategy of proactively connecting with existing businesses to understand and respond to local business needs.

6.2 Establishing a Business Retention and Expansion Program

In addition to the (re)development activities expressed in this strategic action plan, the township needs to establish a BRE program. The Deerfield Action Agenda emphasizes this point through recommendation 2.1, which states:

Recommendation 2.1 – Actively support the business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts of regional partners

In a similar way that a database is needed in order to assemble knowledge about the local real estate market, prior to being able to launching a BRE program a complete a business inventory must be completed to know all the businesses in the township and contact information for them.

Action Item: the Director will complete a full business survey of all the companies in Deerfield Township.

Once the database is complete, the Director should work launch the program with an information blast to local businesses to inform them that the township will be reaching out to meet with them to understand how their business is performing and if there is any assistance that is needed to continue to operate in the township at a high level. This can be accomplished through:

- Social media posts

- Postcard mailed to businesses
- Website page

Action Item: the Director will develop and implement a marketing strategy to reach out to businesses to inform them of the BRE program.

Finally, the Director should would with region partners to meet with local businesses. The regional partners that should be included in BRE visits include:

- REDI Cincinnati
- Warren County Economic Development/Port Authority
- MADE Chamber
- Sinclair College
- Warren County Small Business Development Center

Action Item: the Director will work with regional partners to meet with local businesses through the BRE program.