

**Draft**

Columbus Planning Division  
7.25.2014

# University District Plan



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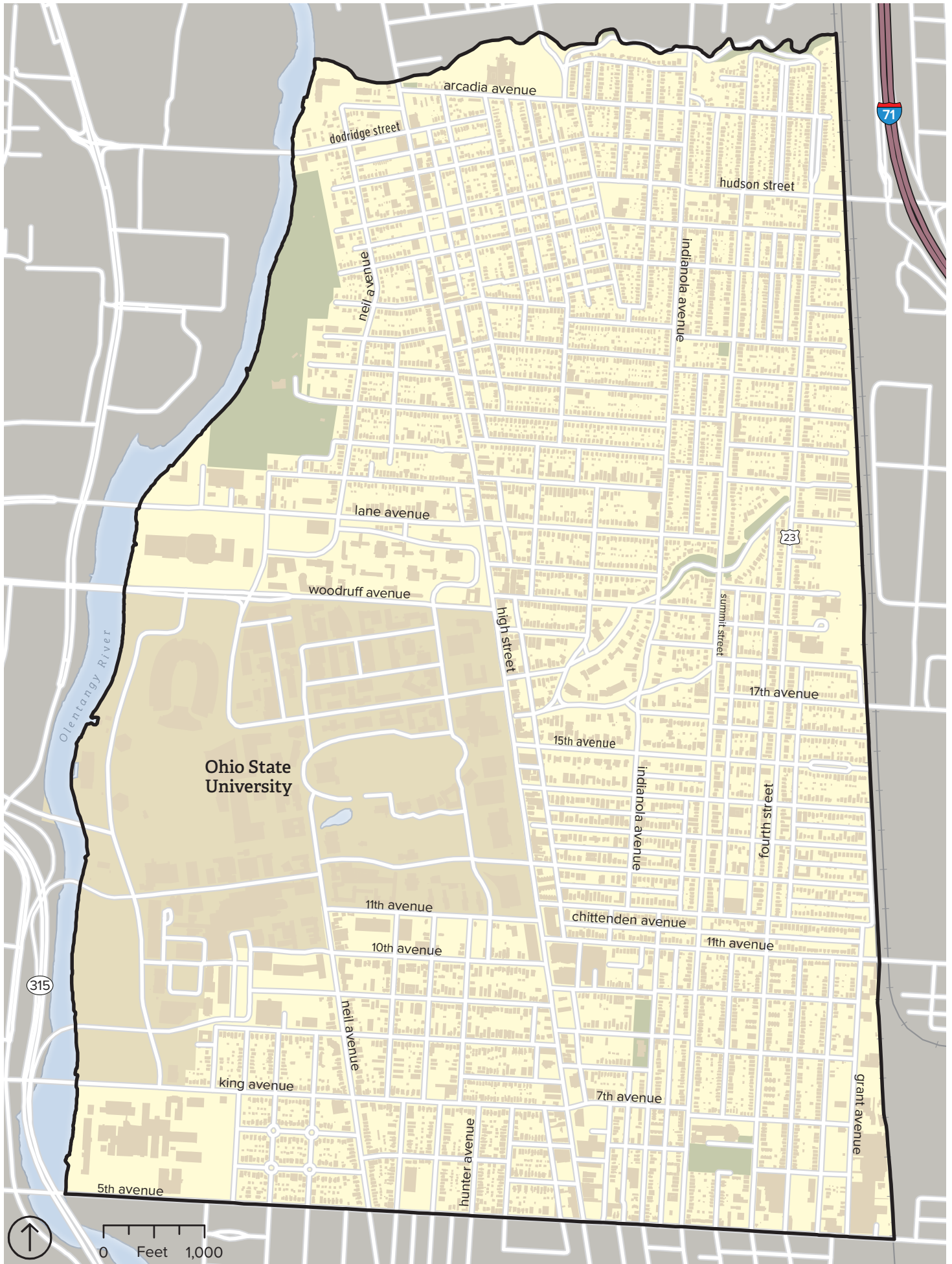
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# introduction

What is a plan and how is it used?

Neighborhood plans address future land use, urban design, and capital improvements. They provide an opportunity for community stakeholders to help shape and direct the pattern of growth and development in their area. Two primary ways a neighborhood plan is used is to guide neighborhood and city review of development proposals and to inform future investments in the area.



0 Feet 1,000

315

71

23

Ohio State University

Olentangy River

dodridge street

arcadia avenue

hudson street

neil avenue

indianola avenue

lane avenue

woodruff avenue

high street

summit street

17th avenue

15th avenue

indianola avenue

fourth street

11th avenue

10th avenue

chittenden avenue

11th avenue

neil avenue

king avenue

7th avenue

hunter avenue

grant avenue

5th avenue

## Planning Area

The University District planning area lies approximately 2 miles directly north of downtown Columbus. The area's 1,857 acres (2.9 square miles) are generally bound by Glen Echo Ravine to the north, the CSX and Norfolk Southern railroad corridors to the east, 5th Avenue to the south, and the Olentangy River to the west.

**Figure 1 | (facing page)**  
The University District

## Neighborhood plans:

- Provide land use recommendations for the planning area that serve as a framework for zoning and other land use decisions.
- Provide guidelines for the design of new development.
- Inform capital improvement priorities.

## *Neighborhood plans do not:*

- Solve issues unrelated to the built and natural environment, such as health care, code enforcement, and public safety.
- Change zoning, although the plan does provide the policy basis for zoning and related development decisions. Plan recommendations found in the Implementation section that address potential zoning code changes would only be considered after plan adoption.

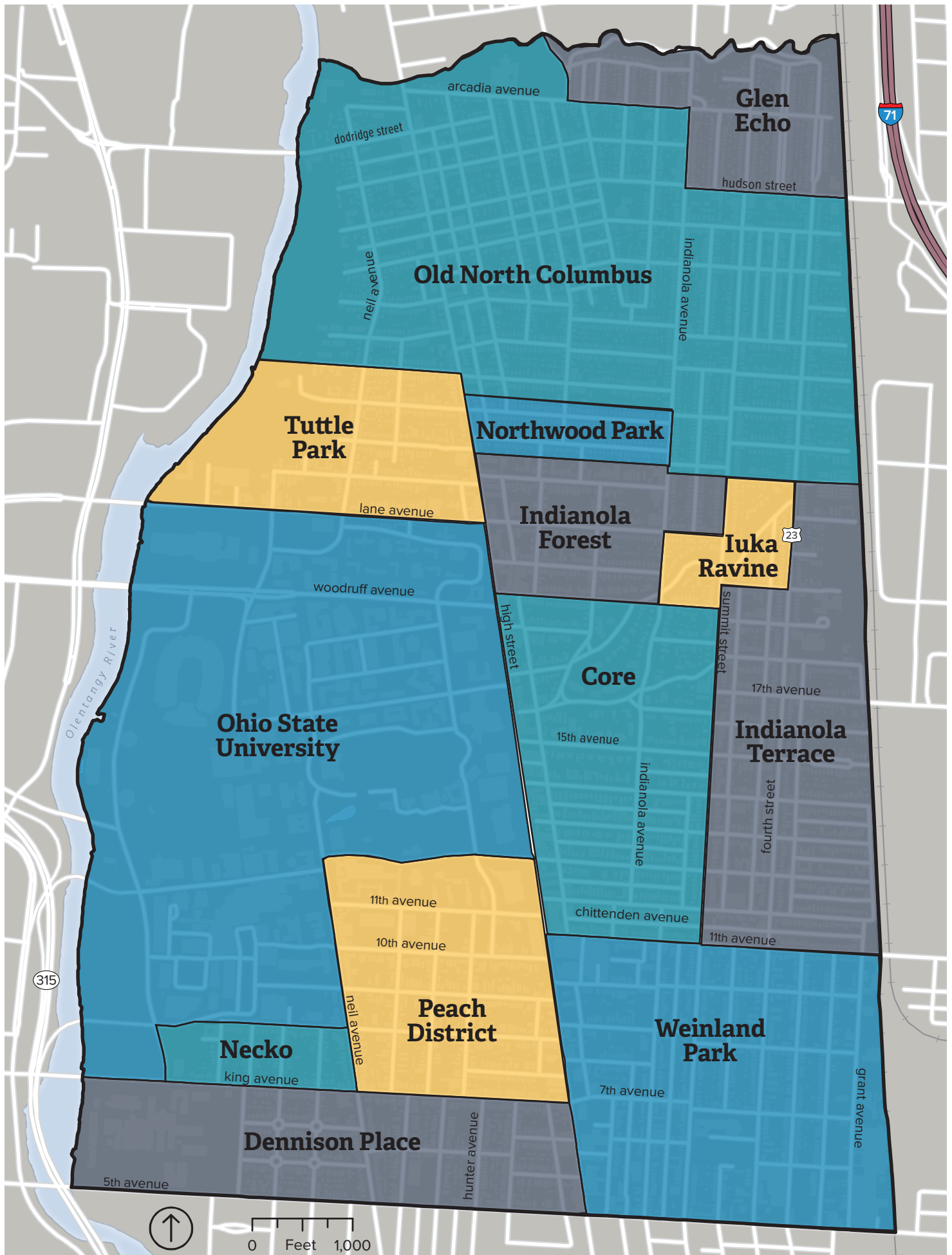
## Relationship to Existing Plans

This plan supersedes previously adopted city planning and development policy for the University area, including the *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan* (1996), *A Plan for High Street* (2000), the *University/High Street Development and Design Guidelines* (2002), and the *Weinland Park Neighborhood Plan* (2006).

**existing conditions**



The Existing Conditions section provides a summary of the planning area's data and trends that inform physical planning and change. The report reviews the area's physical attributes, including land use, zoning, transportation, and environmental resources. Current and forecasted demographics, economic trends, and a historical context of the planning area are examined as well.



**Old North Columbus**

**Glen Echo**

**Tuttle Park**

**Northwood Park**

**Indianola Forest**

**Iuka Ravine**

**Ohio State University**

**Core**

**Indianola Terrace**

**Peach District**

**Necko**

**Weinland Park**

**Dennison Place**

## University

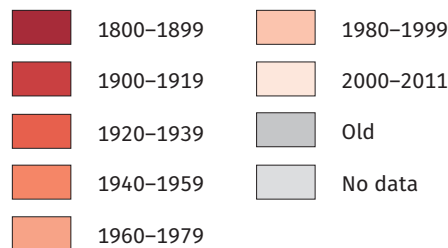
The Ohio State University was established by the Ohio legislature in 1870 and officially welcomed its inaugural class of 24 students in 1873. Today the university occupies approximately \_\_\_ acres within the district or \_\_ percent of the total planning area. Current student enrollment is approximately 56,000 students.

## Neighborhoods

Twelve neighborhoods make up the University District planning area (Figure 2). From largest in area (acres) to smallest, they are: Old North Columbus, Weinland Park, Indianola Terrace, Core, Dennison Place (including The Circles), Peach District, Tuttle Park, Glen Echo, Indianola Forest, NECKO, Iuka Ravine and Northwood Park. This report focuses on the 12 neighborhoods collectively as a whole. Additional information on the University District neighborhoods is available from the University District Organization.

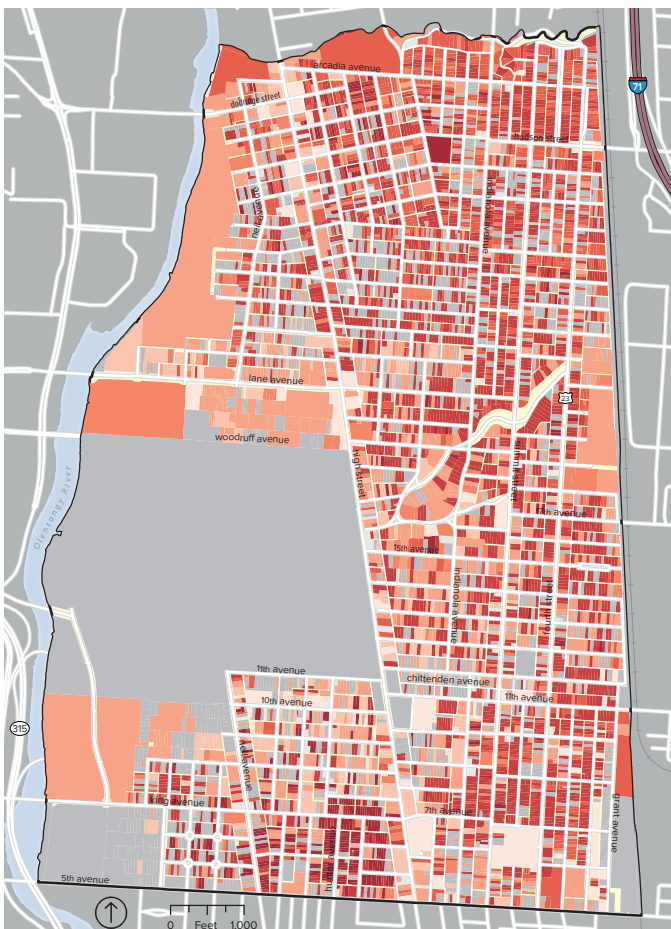
## Historic Development Pattern

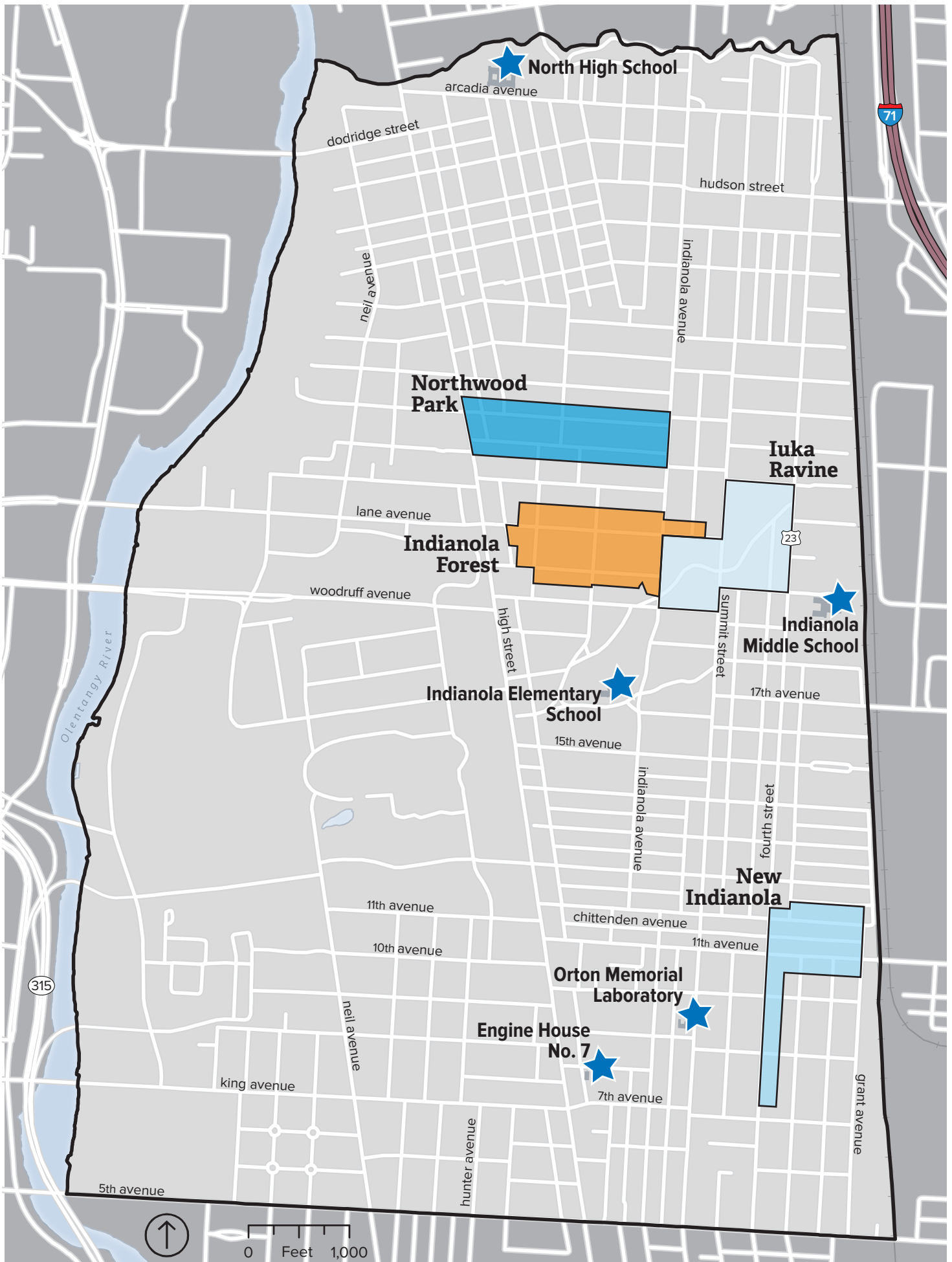
Development in the district has occurred over the past two hundred years. The earliest development recorded in the University District occurred in 1800, 1804, and 1810. Currently, they are being used as single-family homes and one two-family residence respectively. The accompanying map indicates the year individual structures were constructed.



**Figure 2 | (facing page)**  
The 12 neighborhoods of the University District.

**Figure 3 | (below)**  
The development pattern map displays the age and time period of development.





**Figure 4 | (facing page)**

Designated historic districts and individually listed properties located within the planning area.

## Historic Sites and Districts

Five locally designated historic properties: Engine House No. 7, Indianola Elementary and Middle schools, North High School, and Orton Memorial Laboratory—and four historic districts: Indianola Forest, Iuka Ravine, New Indianola, and Northwood Park—are located within the planning area. Exterior alterations to properties within these historic districts are subject to review and approval by the Historic Resources Commission or staff. Indianola Middle School, North High School, Orton Memorial Laboratory, Iuka Ravine, New Indianola and a portion of the Glen Echo neighborhood are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Existing University District Plans

The University District has a rich planning history. Listed below are Council-adopted plans for the area, representing a considerable effort on the part of the city, university, community residents, business owners, developers and others. Credit for much of the planning is to be given to the University District Organization (UDO), formed in 1971. While wide in scope and goals, a number of plan recommendations have been implemented by the public and private sectors. Many plan recommendations remain relevant today.

### **University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan (1996)**

The *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan* is the primary city-adopted planning document in place for (a portion of) the University District. It does not address the area north of Northwood Avenue or the area south of King Avenue and west of the alley parallel to and west of High Street. Led by Campus Partners, the plan was a joint effort of the city and The Ohio State University. The document covers a broad range of topics, but does not include a land use plan. Key recommendations include concentration of development around the university campus and a gradual lessening of development intensity transitioning to predominantly single-family areas.

### **A Plan for High Street: Creating A 21st Century Main Street (2002)**

The *Plan for High Street*, adopted in 2002, was a follow up of the *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan*. The plan presents a vision and detailed development recommendations for High Street. It outlines proposals to improve the public realm and includes revitalization concepts for 19 High Street locations, with particular emphasis on South Campus Gateway.

### **University/High Street Development and Design Guidelines (2002)**

The *University/High Street Development and Design Guidelines* was an outgrowth of both the *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan* and the *A Plan for High Street: Creating A 21st Century Main Street* efforts. It addresses the entire High Street corridor in the University District, except for the portion on the west side of High between 11th and Lane avenues. It also addresses all non-residentially zoned properties within the Impact District, where a design review process outlined by city code is in place. The guidelines are detailed and include photographs and drawings as positive examples.



### **Weinland Park Neighborhood Plan (2006)**

The *Weinland Park Neighborhood Plan* addresses the area bound by Fifth Avenue on the south, High Street on the west, Chittenden on the north (with a portion up to 12th) and the railroad tracks on the east. The plan was developed at a time when a number of changes, including construction of the South Campus Gateway, a new Weinland Park Elementary School, and an early childhood development center were occurring or imminent. The plan addresses a wide variety of matters, but does not include a land use plan or design guidelines. It does include detailed redevelopment concepts for six locations, including land use alternatives and site plans.

## **Other plans, documents, and studies**

### ***Preliminary Recommendations for the Development of the University District (1964)***

This document was a product of the city, and notes the support of the University Office of Campus Planning and the University Community Association. While the plan was published as a preliminary status report, it is relatively comprehensive and addresses the following subjects (as phrased in the plan) compatibility, neighborhoods, traffic, community facilities, residential, commercial, and industrial. The plan also recommends exploring the use of floor area ratio and ground coverage regulations to control density.

### ***University Area Plan 38 (1974)***

This was part of a series of area plans prepared by the Planning Division for the city under a continuous planning effort. The *University Area Plan* was different from the rest in that it was prepared primarily by the UDO in cooperation with the city's Department of Development. The plan addressed housing, recreation and open space, social services, commercial development, and community maintenance. A result of the *University Area Plan 38* was a downzoning of much of the peripheral area of the District from AR-4 to R-2F and R-4.

### ***University/High Street Report (1975)***

This report was a joint effort of the city and the UDO. It analyzed the center portion of High Street from Lane to Chittenden avenues and produced several concepts for how High Street should be developed. This plan proposed the closure of several of the side streets at High in the University District.

### ***Community Directions, A Policy Plan For The University District (1987)***

*Community Directions* was a follow up to the city's *University Area Plan 38 (1974)*. It was developed by the UDO and a partnership between the community and city. Topics covered by the plan included neighborhood services, commercial development, safety, housing, circulation, open space, and community maintenance. The document recommended *development of an overlay to the city zoning code that reflects the best interests of the University District and recognizes the need for new development*. The University District

Planning Overlay, establishing maximum floor area ratios by residential district, rear yard green space, a street facade orientation, height standards, prohibited front yard parking, and other standards, was an implementation outcome of this plan.

### ***Proposals for Change, An Effort of the University Community Towards Developing a Comprehensive Plan (1990)***

*Proposals for Change* was facilitated by the University Community Business Association. The document proposed the development of a ten-year comprehensive plan for the University District, the establishment of an administrative structure for the University community and its organizations, and funding for comprehensive plan implementation. Among the document's recommendations was a call for an *Appearance and Plan Review Board*, made up of area professionals and local community leaders. The board was to guide new development to assure consistency with the architectural context of the neighborhood.

### ***University District Planning Study: Report to City Council (1991)***

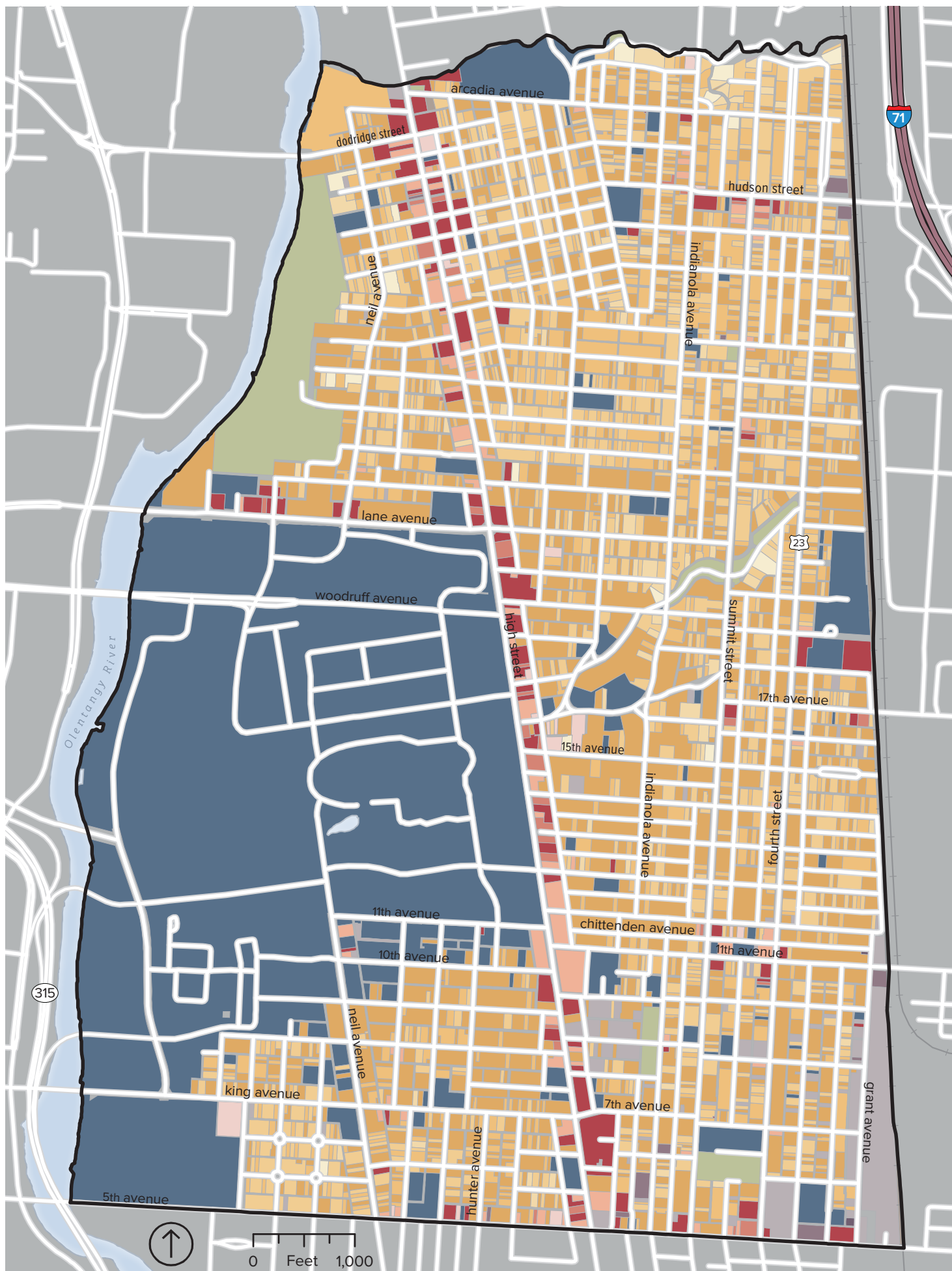
This report was completed by the city Planning Division. Using goals and policies established in the Community Directions plan, the study recommended revised floor area ratio standards, increased green space and trash storage to reflect actual densities. The study further recommended appearance/compatibility review for the core area around campus, development bonuses for preservation of original structures, permit parking, the study of one-way streets for removal of on-street parking and a return to two-way streets, and a number of other initiatives. In 1992, City Council implemented elements of the study by adopting a revised University Area Planning Overlay and establishing the University Area Review Board.

### ***The Riverfront Vision Plan (1998)***

The Columbus *Riverfront Vision Plan* expressed the community's vision for a nine-mile corridor that stretches along the Scioto and Olentangy rivers from The Ohio State University to State Route 104. The Plan made general design and development recommendations for the entire nine-mile corridor, as well as specific recommendations tailored to address the five subareas. Among other provisions for the University area, the Plan recommended the development of a Green Reserve—a connected open space system along the river.

### ***University District High Street Streetscape Plan (2005)***
















The *High Street Streetscape Plan* illustrated the conceptual and schematic design for the High Street corridor in the University District. It was initiated by The Ohio State University and the city. The project goals and design intent focused on the idea of a durable design that re-establishes the pedestrian nature of this vital urban corridor. The plan proposed reopening the closed streets at 13th, 14th, 16th and 18th avenues in order to restore vehicular traffic patterns. Another key provision was a recommendation for a planted High Street median, including street trees and lighting.





**Table 1 |** Existing land use

| Classification          | Acres | Percent |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|
| Residential             | 705   | 48.6%   |
| Institutional           | 559   | 38.5%   |
| Parks and Recreation    | 54    | 3.7%    |
| Commercial              | 52    | 3.5%    |
| Vacant                  | 38    | 2.6%    |
| Mixed use               | 24    | 1.6%    |
| Utilities and Railroads | 10    | 0.6%    |
| Office                  | 6     | 0.4%    |
| Industrial              | 5     | 0.3%    |

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
|    | High density residential              |
|    | Medium-high density mixed residential |
|    | Medium density mixed residential      |
|    | Low-medium density residential        |
|    | Low density residential               |
|    | Parks and recreation                  |
|    | Institutional                         |
|   | Office                                |
|  | Mixed use                             |
|  | Commercial (Neighborhood)             |
|  | Commercial (Community)                |
|  | Industrial (Warehouse)                |
|  | Industrial (Light)                    |
|  | Utilities and railroads               |
|  | Vacant                                |

**Figure 5 | (facing page)**  
Existing land use map with  
classifications identified  
above.

## Existing Land Use

Land use defines how a property and/or a building is used (e.g. single-family residential, a business, an institution, light industry, office, or mixed use in the same building). The existing land use map depicts the pattern of land uses within the planning area.

Residential and institutional uses together make up 87 percent of the area. Residential comprises nearly half (49 percent) of the area and ranges widely in type and density. At 38 percent of the area, the institutional category is particularly high due to the presence of the Ohio State University and its medical campus.

Commercial, industrial, mixed use and office account for 6 percent of land uses, with the majority located in the High Street corridor.

Parks and open space comprise approximately 4 percent of the planning area. This includes Clintonville, Indianola, Iuka, Maynard, Summit, Tuttle and Weinland parks.

Other land uses found in the planning area include utilities and railroad and vacant (undeveloped) land uses.

## Density Pattern

### Residential Density

Figure 6 depicts the residential density pattern in the University District—measured as dwelling units per acre by U.S. Census block. Due to the presence of housing rented to students in some of the University District's neighborhoods, the use of dwelling units per acre as portrayed in Figure 6 is not fully applicable. Population density, derived by looking at persons per acre, provides an alternative approach and is outlined below.

**Table 2 |** Residential density pattern. Measured by dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

| Residential Density  | Acres | Percent |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| 10–16 du/ac          | 420.9 | 23%     |
| No residential units | 401.5 | 22%     |
| 6–10 du/ac           | 353.5 | 19%     |
| Above 16 du/ac       | 318.1 | 17%     |
| Below 4 du/ac        | 259.2 | 14%     |
| 4–6 du/ac            | 102.7 | 6%      |

### Population Density

The University District is one of the densest areas in the city of Columbus in terms of population (See also Demographics, p 27). Figure 7 illustrates the population density distribution in the University District—measured as people per acre by U.S. Census block. The depicted pattern is consistent with general observations that the densest areas are typically closer to campus.

Figure 6 | Density pattern by U.S. Census Blocks

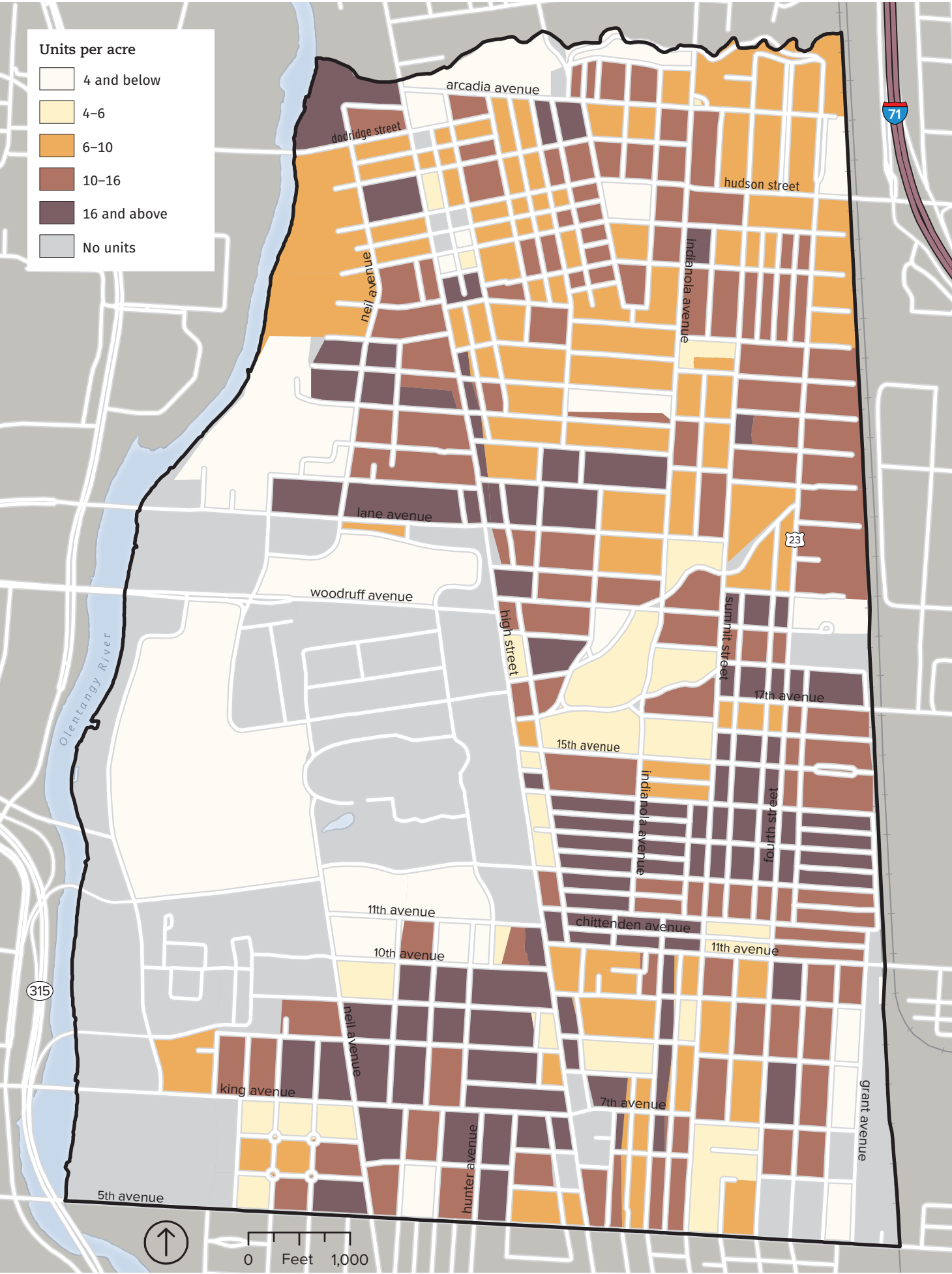
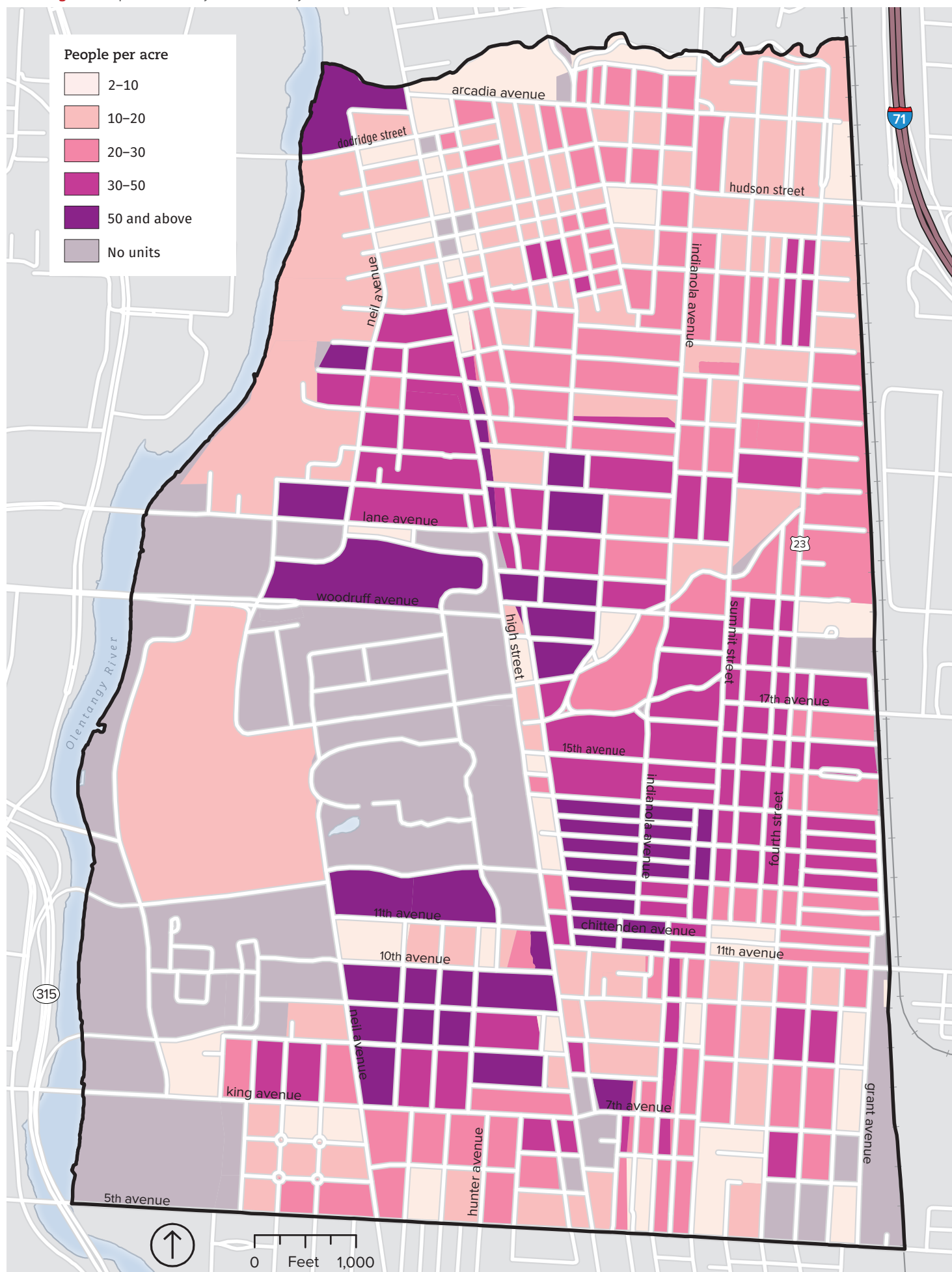
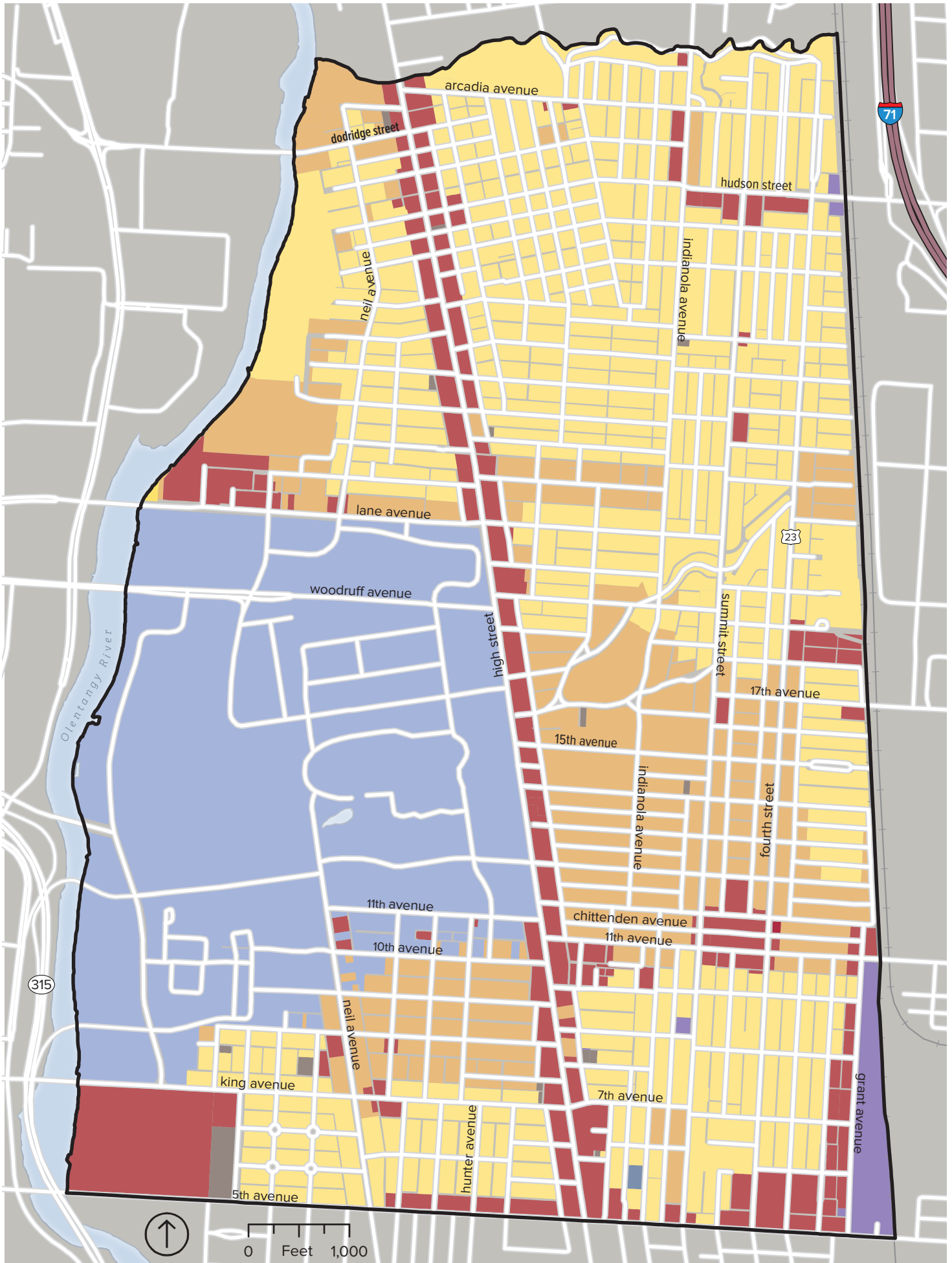


Figure 7 | Population Density in the University District





**Table 3 |** Existing zoning

| General Zoning Classification  | Acres | Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------|---------|
| One to four family residential | 557.5 | 38.4%   |
| Research park                  | 445.9 | 30.7%   |
| Multifamily residential        | 252.3 | 17.4%   |
| Commercial                     | 168.3 | 11.6%   |
| Manufacturing                  | 19.6  | 1.3%    |
| Parking                        | 7.1   | 0.5%    |
| Institutional                  | 0.9   | 0.1%    |

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
|  | 1-4 family residential  |
|  | Research park           |
|  | Multifamily residential |
|  | Commercial              |
|  | Manufacturing           |
|  | Parking                 |
|  | Institutional           |

**Figure 8 | (facing page)**

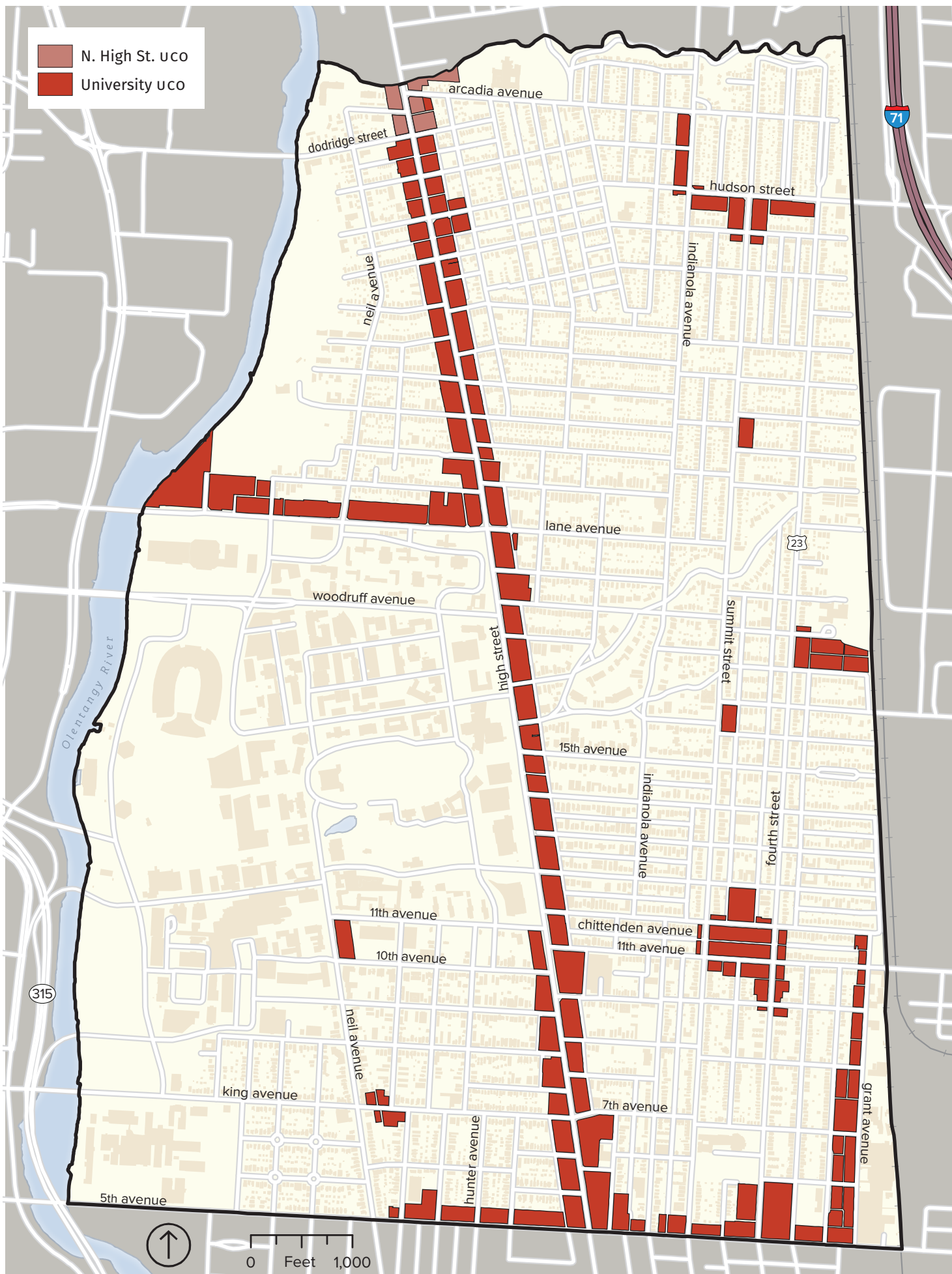
The existing zoning map shows the underlying standard zoning districts, which establish basic land use and development standards. General zoning classifications are identified above.

## Existing Zoning

Zoning regulates the types of land uses that are permitted to be developed. Land can be zoned for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, or a variety of other uses. In addition, zoning policies may regulate density, building height, lot coverage, setbacks, and landscaping and parking requirements.

While the planning area includes 20 different zoning districts, the vast majority of properties fall within four general categories: 1-4-unit residential; multifamily residential; commercial; and research park. Except for the Ohio State University frontage, the High Street corridor is zoned almost entirely commercial. The university is zoned research park, which comprises 31 percent of the planning area. Residential zoning typically allowing four or more dwelling units is found within close proximity of the university. Residential zoning that generally permits one to four dwelling units is the most extensive zoning category.





- N. High St. uco
- University uco

arcadia avenue

dodridge street

neil avenue

hudson street

indianola avenue

lane avenue

woodruff avenue

high street

15th avenue

11th avenue

10th avenue

king avenue

neil avenue

hunter avenue

7th avenue

grant avenue

chittenden avenue

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fourth street

summit street

5th avenue

23

315

71



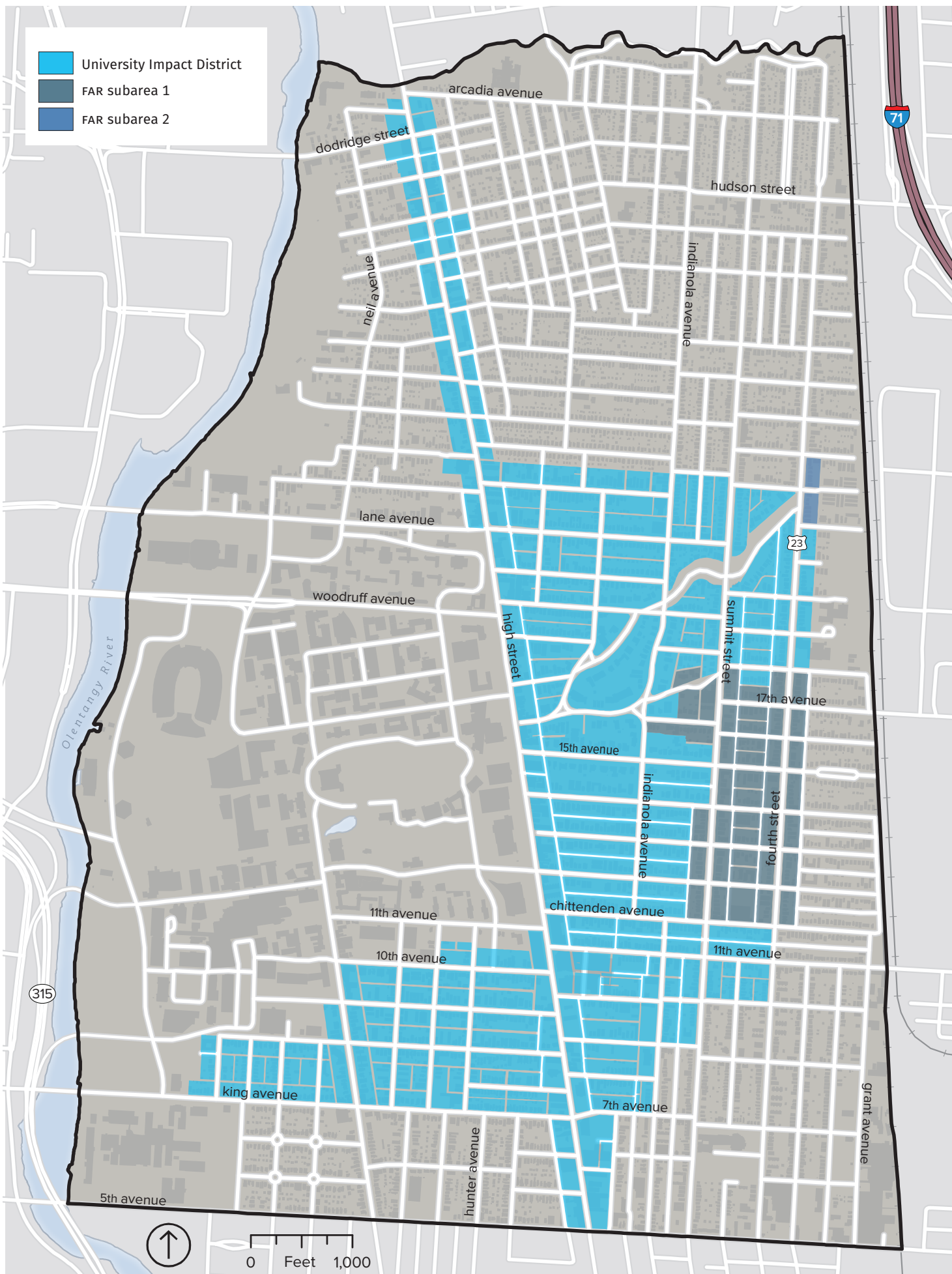
0 Feet 1,000

**Figure 9 | (facing page)**

This map shows the Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO), which establishes additional development standards to ensure a walkable built environment.

**Commercial Zoning Overlays**

The city's Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO) is in place for most commercial areas within the district. The UCO designation establishes additional standards and requirements on top of underlying zoning to commercial properties. The overlay encourages a walkable built environment reflecting the development pattern of late 19th and early 20th century commercial corridors. The UCO applies design standards that address such things as the location and design of new buildings, additions to existing buildings, and parking lot placement. All of High Street within the district has the UCO designation. The overlay is also in place for several commercial nodes and corridor segments through the planning area as depicted on the associated map (Figure 9).



- University Impact District
- FAR subarea 1
- FAR subarea 2



0 Feet 1,000



**Figure 10 | (facing page)**

This map shows the University Impact District, which establishes a special review process and additional development standards to minimize the impact of development on the district.

### University Area Planning Overlay

The University District has experienced a great deal of change to its early 20th century development pattern. Narrow lots once developed for single-family use have experienced ongoing development pressure, frequently being converted to or replaced by rooming houses and apartments. Over time this has led to greater population densities and challenges for existing infrastructure, such as parking and circulation systems. The University Area Planning Overlay was adopted in 19\_\_ in recognition that existing zoning districts and the associated standards did not adequately address the issues facing the area.

The overlay focused on four primary issues: reducing density, increasing parking requirements, insuring compatibility of new development, and improving the livable environment. The planning overlay superimposes additional or more pertinent standards over underlying zoning. It applies primarily within Residential Districts (R-2F and R-4) and Apartment-Residential Districts (AR-4). It is triggered by either a change of use or construction of habitable floor area of 200 square feet or more.

Additionally, a section of the planning overlay establishes the University Area Review Board (UARB), an architectural review body that considers and approves plans on an appearance review basis. The area subject to this architectural review process is a subset of the larger district, known as the University Impact District.

The Impact District was established in 1992. At the time of inception the Impact District only covered the core residentially zoned areas adjacent to the University. In 2002 all properties abutting High Street were added to the Impact District and are now subject to the same architectural review procedures. The Impact District also includes two subareas with specific FAR provisions to ensure compatibility of development and an appropriate density based upon proximity to the Ohio State University.

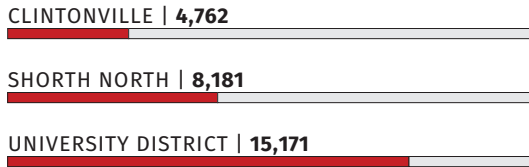
**Table 4 |** Demographics

|                                       | 2010   | Percent | 2000   | Change | Percent |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| <b>Population</b>                     | 43,996 | 100.0%  | 41,692 | 2,304  | +5.5%   |
| By sex                                |        |         |        |        |         |
| Male                                  | 24,781 | 56.3%   | 22,957 | 1,824  | +7.9%   |
| Female                                | 19,215 | 43.7%   | 18,735 | 480    | +2.6%   |
| By race                               |        |         |        |        |         |
| White                                 | 35,612 | 80.9%   | 32,097 | 3,515  | +11.0%  |
| Black                                 | 3,548  | 8.1%    | 5,164  | -1,616 | -31.3%  |
| American Indian                       | 106    | 0.2%    | 124    | -18    | -14.5%  |
| Asian                                 | 3,012  | 6.8%    | 2,570  | 442    | +17.2%  |
| Pacific Islander                      | 13     | 0.0%    | 68     | -55    | -80.9%  |
| Other                                 | 768    | 1.7%    | 621    | 147    | +23.7%  |
| Two or more races                     | 937    | 2.1%    | 1,048  | -111   | -10.6%  |
| Hispanic                              | 1,771  | 4.0%    | 1,109  | 662    | +59.7%  |
| By age                                |        |         |        |        |         |
| Age 0-14                              | 1,620  | 3.7%    | 2,672  | -1,052 | -39.4%  |
| Age 15-29                             | 36,357 | 82.6%   | 31,433 | 4,924  | +15.7%  |
| Age 30-44                             | 3,191  | 7.3%    | 4,637  | -1,446 | -31.2%  |
| Age 45-64                             | 2,274  | 5.2%    | 2,275  | -1     | 0.0%    |
| Age 65 +                              | 554    | 1.3%    | 675    | -121   | -17.9%  |
| Age 18 +                              | 42,121 | 95.7%   | 38,648 | 3,473  | +9.0%   |
| <b>Housing Units &amp; Households</b> | 15,554 | 100.0%  | 16,461 | -907   | -5.5%   |
| By occupancy                          |        |         |        |        |         |
| Households (occupied)                 | 14,316 | 92.0%   | 14,991 | -675   | -4.5%   |
| Vacant                                | 1,238  | 8.0%    | 1,470  | -232   | -15.8%  |
| Average household size                | 2.3    | —       | 2.16   | -0.14  | +6.5%   |
| By tenure                             |        |         |        |        |         |
| Owner occupied                        | 1,578  | 10.1%   | 1,762  | -184   | -10.4%  |
| Renter occupied                       | 12,738 | 81.9%   | 13,228 | -490   | -3.7%   |

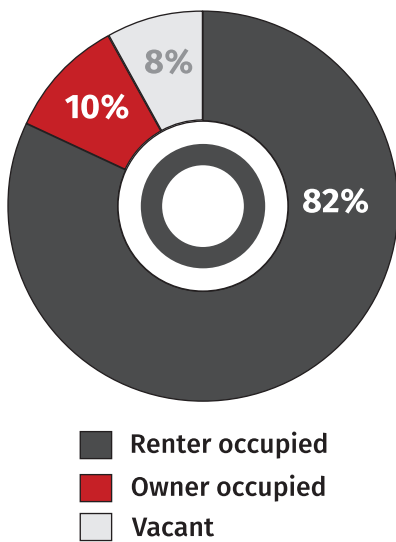
**Table 5 |** Growth forecasts

|                        | 2010 Census     | 2013 Estimate        | 2018 Estimate         | 3-Year Change | 8-Year Change |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>ESRI Forecasts</b>  |                 |                      |                       |               |               |
| Population             | 43,996          | 45,144               | 47,130                | 2.6%          | 7.1%          |
| Households             | 14,316          | 14,772               | 15,600                | 3.2%          | 9.0%          |
| <b>MORPC Forecasts</b> | <b>2010 TAZ</b> | <b>2035 Estimate</b> | <b>25-Year Change</b> |               |               |
| Employment             | 33,938          | 38,252               | 13%                   |               |               |
| Population             | 42,612          | 45,646               | 7%                    |               |               |
| Households             | 13,048          | 13,494               | 3%                    |               |               |

### People per square mile



### Housing Units



## Demographics

### Population

Six percent of the city's total population resides in the University District planning area. Given the area's current population, its density—measured as people per square mile—is 15,171, the highest in the city. By comparison, the nearby Short North and Clintonville neighborhoods have densities of 8,181 and 4,762 people per square mile respectively.

The total population of the planning area increased by 2,304 persons between 2000 and 2010, a gain of 5½ percent. A breakdown provides detail regarding gender, age and racial categories. Of note is the age distribution, where the planning area is clearly impacted by the presence of Ohio State. Nearly 83 percent of the total population is between 15–29 years of age, while only 4 percent of residents are below the age of 18. The median household income level is \$17,927 and 41 percent of the households have household incomes of \$15,000 or less. It is also projected that 48 percent of all households in the planning area are below the poverty level. Further research may be necessary to determine the degree to which income levels are influenced by the high percentage base of college students in the area. The average household size is 2.3.

### Housing

Unlike the total population which experienced growth, both the total number of households and housing units dropped from their 2000 numbers. The total number of housing units declined 5½ percent between 2000 and 2010, while total households also declined—by 4½ percent. Housing in the planning area is dominated by rentals (82 percent). Ten percent of the housing units are owner occupied and 8 percent are vacant. From 2000–2010, the University District experienced a 16 percent decrease in vacant housing units—which contrasts with the city as a whole, where vacant housing units increased 53½ percent during this period.

### Growth Forecasts

The Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) Community Analyst estimates that the University District's 2013 population and number of households both grew 3 percent since 2010. ESRI also projects that the planning area will see a 7 percent population growth and a 9 percent household growth from 2010–2018.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) also provides estimates based on their Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) program. MORPC's 2010 TAZ figures forecast a 7 percent increase in population by 2035. Additionally, MORPC predicts a 3 percent increase in households—and employment growth of 13 percent.

It should be noted that these figures are, in fact, projections based on existing census figures and trends, existing land use plans, development patterns and policies and regional growth levels. Many factors beyond the scope of this plan will ultimately influence the area's growth rate.

**Table 6 |** Employment and businesses

|                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Businesses              | 1,232  |
| Employees               | 31,929 |
| Residents               | 43,996 |
| Employee/Resident Ratio | 0.73   |

**Businesses and Employees by Industry**

|  | <i>Businesses</i> |                | <i>Employees</i> |                |
|--|-------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
|  | <b>Number</b>     | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b>    | <b>Percent</b> |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting                       | 2                 | 0%             | 3                | 0%             |
| Construction   | 46                | 4%             | 120              | 0%             |
| Manufacturing  | 18                | 1%             | 208              | 1%             |
| Wholesale Trade  | 25                | 2%             | 105              | 0%             |
| Retail Trade   | 144               | 12%            | 1,024            | 3%             |
| Transportation & Warehousing                                   | 10                | 1%             | 40               | 0%             |
| Information  | 40                | 3%             | 782              | 2%             |
| Finance & Insurance  | 19                | 2%             | 100              | 0%             |
| Real Estate, Rental & Leasing                                  | 59                | 5%             | 283              | 1%             |
| Professional, Scientific & Tech Services                       | 115               | 9%             | 3,295            | 10%            |
| Management of Companies & Enterprises                          | 2                 | 0%             | 5                | 0%             |
| Administrative & Support & Waste Mngmnt & Remediation Services | 115               | 9%             | 881              | 3%             |
| Educational Services   | 131               | 11%            | 9,631            | 30%            |
| Health Care & Social Assistance                                | 158               | 13%            | 11,107           | 35%            |
| Arts, Entertainment & Recreation                               | 26                | 2%             | 84               | 0%             |
| Accommodation & Food Services                                  | 153               | 12%            | 1,429            | 4%             |
| Other Services (except Public Administration)                  | 165               | 13%            | 2,779            | 9%             |
| Public Administration  | 4                 | 0%             | 53               | 0%             |

## Economic Base

According to Dun & Bradstreet, Inc. (June 2014), there are 1,232 businesses in the planning area employing 31,929 workers in 18 employment categories. The health care and social assistance and educational services trade sectors lead in total number of employees. Sixty-five percent of all employment in the planning area is attributed to these trade sectors—which include the Ohio State University and its medical center.

Businesses are dominated by other services, health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, and retail trade industries. These four industries comprise 50 percent of all businesses in the University District.

## Tax Increment Finance Areas

Tax increment finance (TIF) areas are districts created to facilitate and stimulate new investment. TIF areas enable the use of future increases in tax revenues generated by new development to fund a variety of public improvements. The city has established five TIF areas within the University District. Three of these areas are in the Weinland Park neighborhood on the former Columbus Coated Fabrics site, and were adopted in 2009 and 2010 by Columbus City Council. A portion of the Short North TIF, adopted in 2005, overlaps and stretches into the southern section of the planning area. Last of all, the Gateway TIF was adopted in 1999. All TIF districts in the planning area are in place for a period of 30 years from their respective date of adoption.

**Table 7 |** Major Roadways

| Street            | Traffic Volume |
|-------------------|----------------|
| High Street       | 7,000–31,400   |
| 5th Avenue        | 5,460–21,270   |
| Dodridge Street   | 140–1,480      |
| Hudson Street     | 5,420–23,200   |
| Indianola Avenue  | 1,900–14,700   |
| King Avenue       | 4,870–18,900   |
| Lane Avenue       | 5,940–22,700   |
| Neil Avenue       | 780–15,300     |
| Fourth Street     | 320–19,780     |
| Summit Street     | 470–21,180     |
| 11th Avenue       | 1,310–9,500    |
| Chittenden Avenue | 1,420–8,010    |
| 17th Avenue       | 1,910–6,240    |

## Transportation Network

The University District's existing transportation network consists of major roadways as identified by the Columbus Thoroughfare Plan and alternative transportation options including public transit, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities.

### Roads

Major roadways and traffic volume defined by Average Daily Traffic counts (ADT) that pass a specified location, are given in Table 7.

### Transit

The Central Ohio Transportation Authority (COTA) bus service, Campus Area Bus Service (CABS) and taxi service are the predominate forms of alternative vehicle transportation in the planning area. COTA bus service is provided throughout the entire planning area via 16 separate bus service lines. Seven local routes—Routes: 2-North High Street, 4-Indianola Avenue, 5-W. 5th Avenue, 7-Neil Avenue, 8-Hamilton Avenue, 18-Kenny Road, and 21-Night Owl—provide transit to Downtown. Local routes travel to and from downtown on primarily arterial streets, stopping frequently. Route 21 operates exclusively on Friday and Saturday nights. Four express routes—Routes: 31-Worthington, 32-Crosswoods, 52-OSU/Airport, and 66-Hilliard/OSU—also provide transit. Express routes pick up passengers in outlying areas and operate during peak travel times, with limited stops to and from high-density areas such as downtown and the university area. Route 52 only operates at the beginning and end of each Ohio State University semester. Five crosstown routes—Routes: 80-OSU/Lennox, 81-Hudson/Ohio, 82-Grandview/OSU, 84-Arlington/OSU, and 96-5th Avenue—provide direct transit to activity centers, but do not enter the CBD.

CABS is a free transit service provided by The Ohio State University's Department of Transportation and Traffic Management. The bus service does not require an ID or bus pass, and provides seven bus routes—Buckeye Village (BV), Central Connector (CC), Campus Loop North (CLN), Campus Loop South (CLS), East Residential (ER), Med Center Express (MC), and North Express (NE)—that run throughout the Ohio State campus and adjacent neighborhoods in the University District. Additionally, designated CABS and COTA transfer stops can be utilized where available. Bus lines provided by COTA and CABS are depicted in figure 11.

**Figure 11 | (left)**  
COTA and CABS bus lines in  
the University District

### **Bike**

One of the most popular greenways in Ohio, the Olentangy Trail winds along the Olentangy River and OSU on the western edge of the planning area. This trail offers a 13.75-mile route from Worthington Hills to Downtown where it connects with other trails. The Columbus Bicentennial Bike Plan, adopted in 2008, proposes an extensive system of bike lanes and shared use paths along arterial streets and corridors throughout the city, as well as improved connections to amenities and recreation areas. The Plan's recommendations for the planning area include a combination of bike trails, lanes and routes.

The Ohio State University provides a variety of bicycle amenities on its campus, including bike racks, bike lockers, covered parking, free air for tires and a combination of mixed-use paths and shared lanes with bicycle markings.

### **Walk**

The University District is a very walkable neighborhood. Sidewalks exist throughout the large majority of the District, although condition varies widely.

## **Environmental Resources**

Significant tree cover exists throughout the planning area—most notably along the Iuka Ravine, Glen Echo Ravine, and on the Ohio State University campus. The Olentangy River is the dominant natural feature of the planning area, forming its western boundary. The University District is located entirely in the river's watershed. The Olentangy Trail and Tuttle Park lie adjacent to the waterway, as does the Olentangy River Wetlands Research Park.

In 2012, work commenced to remove the 5th Avenue lowhead dam on the Olentangy River to improve water quality and natural habitat. Restoration upstream of the dam is underway.

Significant improvements have been made to Glen Echo Ravine in recent years as a result of neighborhood efforts.

## Background: Land Use Issues

As part of the background to developing updated land use policies, the following broad issues were considered.

### Development Pattern

- The development pattern in the planning area has been shaped by nearly 200 years of activity.
- The context was established primarily in the late 19th and early 20th century when students, faculty, business owners and residents lived together in residential neighborhoods dominated by single-family homes.
- The influx of students in the second half of the 20th century (post World War II) altered the dynamics affecting growth and generated a significant amount of infill development that was out of scale with the historic context. The growth of automobile use created further conflicts and adversely impacted the development pattern.
- In response to these changes, several neighborhoods were downzoned and the University Overlay/University Impact District was established to minimize the impacts of denser development.
- In the past few years, new pressure and shifts in University housing policy have introduced denser development—some mixed use—and created a level of uncertainty in terms of the housing market.

### Impact of Student Beds

- Privately-owned housing and residential structures that are rented to students typically have a higher occupancy than might otherwise be found in the market (e.g. a four-bedroom unit might be home to eight students instead of a four-person family).
- This overcrowding has obvious land use implications, especially relative to accommodating the automobile (on-site parking, on-street parking and traffic volumes).
- But it also impacts the regulatory process that manages development because regulating household size and composition is very difficult, at times raising questions regarding constitutional protections.
- The Impact District serves as one approach through the use of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) caps (e.g. a comparison of gross floor area to gross land area). Standard zoning districts and parking regulations are based on dwelling unit count, which doesn't fully take into account the higher occupancies found with student housing.
- The FAR approach may be the most effective means of regulating intensity of development and parking impacts. It serves as the basis for land use policy in this plan. A further discussion of FAR is found after this subsection.



## Impact of Parking

- As noted above, parking has a significant impact on the planning area given the density of development and degree of housing occupancy.
- Effective solutions must be identified that address this issue to the practical extent possible. Parking needs must be balanced with the goal of intensifying development near campus—which is more walkable—and lessening intensity in the neighborhoods further from campus.

## Regulatory Complexity

- Another consideration is the complex nature of land use regulation in the University District.
- All property is zoned under one of the city's standard zoning districts (e.g. R-2F, R-4, C4, etc.).
- High Street, Lane Avenue and portions of other corridors are zoned under the Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO), a form-based district that requires building placement at the street and encourages parking to the rear.
- The University Area Review Board (UARB) has design review authority over 515 acres under the Impact District and additional standards are applied to minimize impact of denser development, graphics control and other requirements.
- The University Area Commission (UAC) provides non-binding recommendations to the Development Commission and City Council on rezonings, variances (BZA and Graphics) and Council variances (as does the UARB if their jurisdiction is triggered).

## Public Involvement

The University District Plan was developed by the Columbus Planning Division in cooperation with the University Area Commission (UAC) and other stakeholders. The plan was initiated at the request of the UAC in order to provide an update of existing plans for the area, including the *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan* (1996).

Public involvement in the planning process was extensive and is summarized below.

- Background work on planning effort was initiated in early 2013.
- More than 25 stakeholder interviews were conducted early in the planning process.
- Public workshops were held on: September 24, 2013; February 11, 2014; and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Throughout the planning process, presentations were given to the University District civic associations, developers, and other stakeholders.
- Approximately \_\_\_\_ participants participated in the planning process via the public workshops and online surveys.
- Over \_\_\_\_ pieces of input received in total.
- The primary pieces of input include \_\_\_\_.



**plan recommendations**

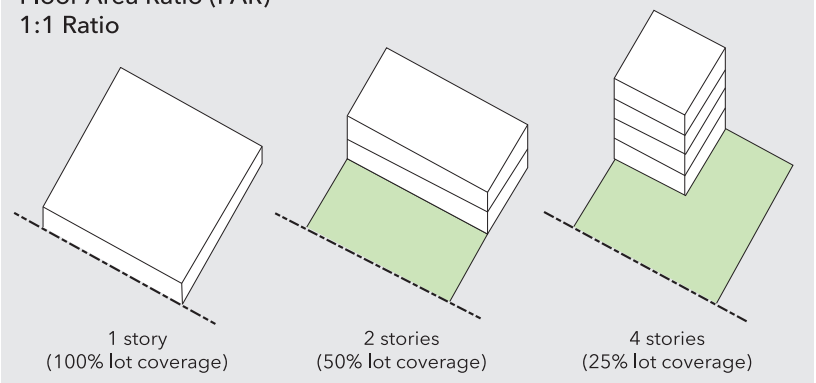
The Plan Recommendations section addresses land use, urban design, and capital improvements. The development principles, policies, guidelines and strategies contained are an outgrowth of existing conditions analysis, stakeholder input and staff analysis. They respond to identified priorities and are consistent with overall city development-related policies. Each development principle is followed by supporting policies and guidelines and strategies. Capital improvement recommendations will serve as the area's UIRF priorities.

## Land Use

Land use defines how a property and/or a building is used—single family residential, a business, or mixed use in the same building (for example, retail on the first floor and residential on upper floors). For neighborhoods to be sustainable over the long term, it is important that a range of land uses is provided. This means that people can live, purchase goods and services, recreate, and perhaps be employed in the same neighborhood. This mix of uses provides for a stable economic and residential base. Mixed use development patterns also tend to support walking, biking and public transportation as options to driving.

The Land Use Plan recommends future land uses for the University District. The map legend corresponds with Table \_\_, which provides generalized descriptions of the recommended land use classifications. Density recommendations from Table \_\_ are to be used as general guidelines. Each development should be judged on its own merits and must consider the specific site and the site's context (adjacent uses and development pattern).

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**  
1:1 Ratio



**Floor area ratio (FAR)** is a measure of intensity of development. FAR compares the floor area of a building to the area of the lot on which the building is located. FAR is particularly helpful in areas, such as the University District, where building types and residential unit sizes vary widely. It is currently used to regulate development within the University District, as administered through the University Planning Overlay.

This plan proposes continued use of FAR to regulate development intensity, with different standards corresponding to different land use categories. The plan also recommends an updated calculation method for application of the standard. The current formula includes a number of exceptions for calculating applicable space. Moving forward, FAR calculations should be based on all finished interior space, regardless of use. This includes stairways, hallways,

etc. Basement and attic spaces that are finished should also be included. Implementing this new formula requires a code change.

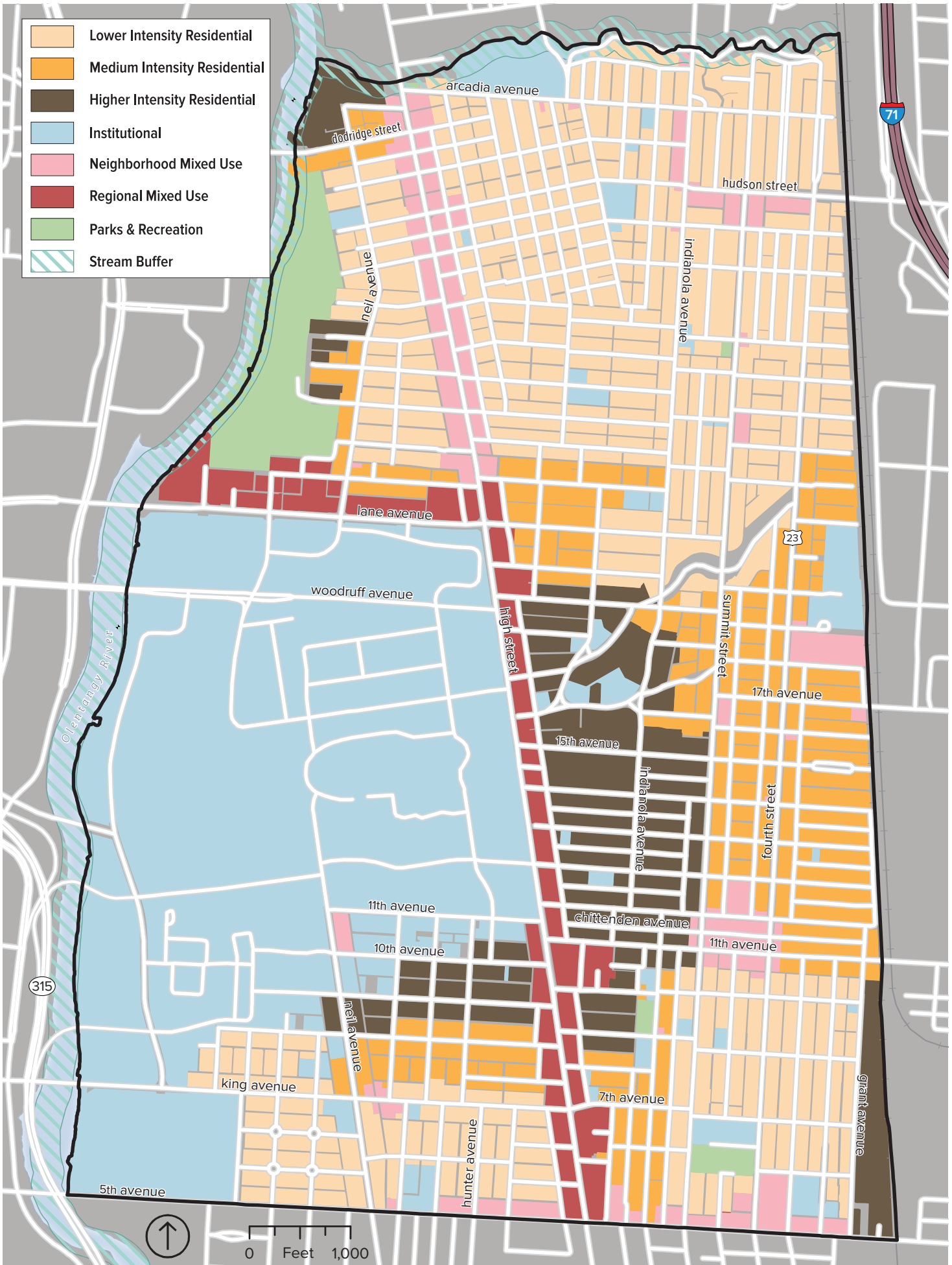
The accompanying diagram illustrates three simple ways that a 1.0 FAR might be reached: one story covering the entire lot, two stories covering half of the lot, or four stories covering a quarter of the lot—all result in the same FAR.

The following text also corresponds with the Land Use Plan map (Figure 12) and provides a general overview of the map's recommendations.

## Guiding Principles

The Land Use Plan provides land use guidance for the entire University planning area. A primary goal is to focus more intense development closer to the Ohio State University campus, with lower intensity development being encouraged in areas further from campus.

1. Highest densities in the form of mixed use buildings should be focused on High Street between Fifth Avenue and Lane Avenue, and Lane Avenue west of High Street. Higher densities in these areas ensure that future development strengthens neighborhood retail and the walkable, transit supportive nature of the area. Focusing density in these areas also reduces development pressure in areas where lower densities are preferred and recommended.
2. The University District should include a mix of land uses in specific corridors, including a variety of housing types, neighborhood based retail, offices and other businesses
3. People should be able to get around by walking, car, transit, and bicycle. The development pattern should continue to be walkable and support transit use.
4. Parking should not dominate the built environment. Parking needs should be balanced with the need to preserve and enhance the walkable nature of the area, as well as preserve the building stock.
5. Natural resources should be conserved and restored. Connections should be strengthened and sought between existing natural areas, parks, and open space in order to increase access.
6. Design guidelines should be used to shape new development that is compatible with the given neighborhood.





## Land Use Map

The proposed land use map serves as a central element to any plan. New development should be consistent with the applicable recommended land use category. For ease of use, the plan has been divided into four quadrants. The proposed land use map is designed to be used in conjunction with the standards from the land use category standards chart (below) and the following plan text.

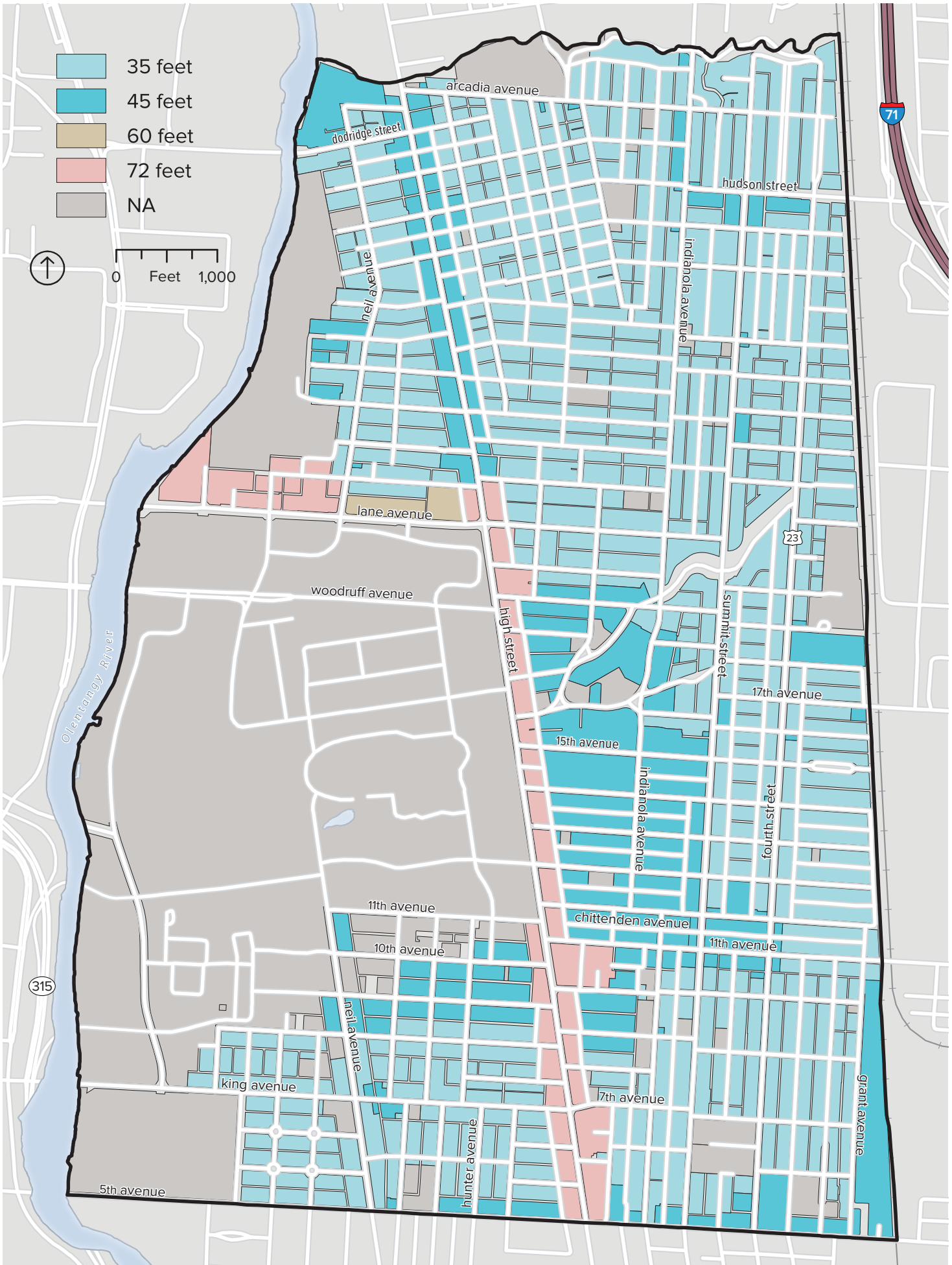
**Table 8 | Land Use Category Standards**

| Land Use   | Floor Area Ratio (FAR) |                         | Building Height |          |          | Minimum Landscaped Area                               | Parking  |          |  |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|---|--|----------|--|
|  | MIN                    | MAX                     | MIN             | MAX      |          |   | MIN  | MAX      | Stacking                                       |
| Lower Intensity Residential  |                        | 0.4                     |                 | 35 feet  |          | 20% of lot size                                       | 2 spaces   | 4 spaces | No double stacking                             |
| Medium Intensity Residential   |                        | 0.6<br>PLUS UARB BONUS* |                 | 35 feet  |          | 12% of lot size                                       | 4 spaces   | 8 spaces | Double stacking allowed;<br>No triple stacking |
| Higher Intensity Residential   |                        | 1.0<br>PLUS UARB BONUS* |                 | 45 feet  |          | 8% of lot size  | 0.75 spaces per bed for all residential                      |          |  |
| Neighborhood Mixed Use   | 0.5                    | 1.0<br>PLUS UARB BONUS* |                 | 45 feet  |          |   | COMMERCIAL Existing zoning code including overlay provisions |          |  |
|  |                        |                         |                 |          |          |   | RESIDENTIAL 0.5 spaces per bed                               |          |  |
| Regional Mixed Use   | 1.0                    | 6.0                     | 24 feet         | 72 feet† | 60 feet‡ | 15-foot landscaped front yard setback for Lane Avenue | COMMERCIAL Existing zoning code including overlay provisions |          |  |
|  |                        |                         |                 |          |          |   | RESIDENTIAL 0.5 spaces per bed                               |          |  |
| Regional Mixed Use: † High Street; Lane Avenue from Neil Avenue to Olentangy River   ‡ Lane Avenue from High Street to Neil Avenue |                        |                         |                 |          |          |   |  |          |  |

**Figure 12 | (facing page)**  
Land Use Map

**Notes:** FAR standard would not apply to structured parking, thereby incentivizing construction of garages in the Regional Mixed Use area.

**\*UARB BONUS:** up to a 0.2 FAR bonus to incentivize rehabilitation or expansion of contributing buildings, replacement of non-contributing buildings with new construction, and residential projects located within 300 feet of the Regional Mixed Use area (to provide a transition).



**Figure 13 | (facing page)**  
Proposed maximum  
building height

## Land Use Categories

### *Low Intensity Residential*

This classification applies to the least intense residential portions of the planning area and is characterized by single and two-family homes with scattered-site row-house style multifamily. This designation is most prevalent north of Lane Avenue; in the Dennison Place and NECKO areas; and significant portions of Weinland Park; and Iuka Ravine and Northwood Park historic districts. Within areas designated as Low Intensity Residential, the following provisions apply:

1. Designation is reserved for residential uses.
2. Priority is placed on preservation of existing contributing buildings.
3. Additional multifamily development is generally not supported.
4. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.4.
5. The proposed height limit is 35 feet.
6. A minimum of two and maximum of four single-stacked parking spaces should be provided.
7. A minimum of 20 percent of the total lot area should be preserved as landscaped open space behind the principle structure (backyard).

[SEE ALSO DESIGN GUIDELINES SECTION]

### **Medium Intensity Residential**

This category is similar to the Low Intensity Residential classification, but has somewhat higher densities and larger buildings. It is characterized by single and two-family homes, row-house style multifamily, and scattered site multifamily development. Areas recommended for this designation include the Peach District; a portion of Weinland Park between High Street and Summit; the area bounded by 20th Avenue, railroad, 11th Avenue and Summit Street; portions of the Tuttle Park area; and limited areas north of Lane and east of High. Some of the existing historic districts are included in this classification because the designation more accurately reflects their existing densities. Norwich Avenue east of High is also included in this classification (while it is currently a higher density area, the plan recommends a gradual transition to a medium density pattern, which would be more compatible with the surrounding historic districts). Within areas designated as Medium Intensity Residential, the following provisions apply:

1. The designation is reserved for residential uses.
2. Priority is placed on preservation of existing contributing buildings
3. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.6.
4. The proposed height limit is 35 feet.
5. Parking should be limited to double stacked spaces, generally no greater than eight per lot.
6. A minimum of 12 percent of the total lot area should be preserved as landscaped open space behind the principle structure (backyard).

[SEE ALSO DESIGN GUIDELINES SECTION]

### **Higher Intensity Residential**

The most intense category focusing on residential uses, Higher Intensity Residential is characterized by multifamily development, row-house style development, scattered site single and two-family dwellings, and, in the case of the Core area, a predominance of student residents. In general, these areas are located adjacent to the Ohio State University campus. A portion of the Tuttle Park area, adjacent to the park, is included. The multifamily being developed on the former Columbus Coated Fabric site, which is anticipated to be fairly high density is well removed from the traditional student housing market, but is included in this classification because of its future development character. Within areas designated as High Intensity Residential, the following provisions apply:

1. Designation is reserved for residential uses.
2. Priority is placed on preservation of existing contributing buildings.
3. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 1.0.
4. An FAR bonus of 0.2 may be granted to projects meeting any of the following criteria:
  - a. Preservation of an existing primary contributing structure
  - b. Replacement of a non-contributing primary structure.
  - c. The project site is located within 300 feet of the Regional Mixed Use boundary.
5. The proposed height limit is 45 feet
6. Parking should be provided at a rate of 0.75 spaces per bed for all residential uses. Parking may be triple stacked. Structured parking solutions are encouraged (such facilities do not count toward FAR limits, but height limits apply).
7. A minimum of 8 percent of the total lot area should be preserved as landscaped open space behind the principle structure (backyard).

[SEE ALSO DESIGN GUIDELINES SECTION]

### Neighborhood Mixed Use

This classification is intended for corridors that support a mix of land uses, including retail, office, multifamily residential, and institutional. While the composition of uses may be similar to the Regional Mixed Use classification, these areas are less intense in nature. Hotels are not recommended in these corridors, but auto-oriented commercial (e.g. gas stations with convenience stores) built to Urban Commercial Overlay design standards would be appropriate. Areas recommended include High Street north of Norwich Avenue; Hudson Street to the east of High Street; Fifth Avenue east of Highland; and smaller scattered sites that currently contain neighborhood scale commercial development. A particular note is that the portion of High Street generally between Norwich and Tomkins should be a focus for preservation of existing buildings to maintain the existing development character (e.g. including a moderate intensity mix of uses, trees, etc.). Within areas designated as Neighborhood Mixed Use, the following provisions apply:

1. A variety of uses are appropriate for these areas, including retail, office, multifamily residential, and institutional.
2. The conversion of existing storefronts to residential uses is not supported.
3. Priority is placed on preservation of existing contributing buildings.
4. Minimum floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.5; maximum is 1.0.
5. An FAR bonus of 0.2 may be granted for projects on High Street or Fifth Avenue meeting any of the following criteria:
  - a. Preservation of an existing primary contributing structure
  - b. Replacement of a non-contributing primary structure.
  - c. The project site falls within 300 feet of the Regional Mixed Use boundary.
6. Proposed height limit is 45 feet with a minimum of two stories being preferred.
7. Parking should be provided for non-residential uses consistent with code standards. Parking for residential uses should be provided at a rate of 0.5 spaces per bed, which is a reduction from code regulations (this provision requires a code change or a variance or rezoning for a specific project).
8. Structured parking solutions are encouraged (such facilities should not count toward FAR limits, but height limits apply).

[SEE ALSO DESIGN GUIDELINES SECTION]

### **Regional Mixed Use**

This classification is the highest level of intensity in the planning area. These corridors contain multiple land uses (in the same building or within the same block) and act as the planning area's *Main Street*. Land uses within this classification include high density multifamily residential, retail, office uses, and institutional. Hotels, theaters and performance spaces are examples of larger-scale commercial uses appropriate for these areas. Retail should be walkable, but may include auto-oriented commercial (e.g. gas stations with convenience stores) built to Urban Commercial Overlay design standards. Within areas designated as Regional Mixed Use, the following provisions apply:

1. A variety of uses are appropriate for these areas, including retail, office, multifamily residential, and institutional.
2. Adaptive reuse and/or expansion of contributing buildings is encouraged.
3. Minimum floor area ratio (FAR) is 1.0; maximum is 6.0.
4. The proposed maximum height limit is 72 feet with a minimum height of 24 feet.
5. Parking should be provided for non-residential uses consistent with code standards. Parking for residential uses should be provided at a rate of 0.375 spaces per bed, which is a reduction from code regulations (this provision requires a code change or a variance or rezoning for a specific project).
6. Structured parking solutions are encouraged (such facilities should not count toward FAR limits, but height limits apply).

[SEE ALSO DESIGN GUIDELINES SECTION]

### **LANE AVENUE FROM HIGH STREET TO NEIL AVENUE**

The portion of Lane Avenue from High Street to Neil Avenue is also recommended for Regional Mixed Use, but with standards that would allow for somewhat lesser intense development. This recommendation is in recognition of existing setbacks on the north side of Lane Avenue and to create a transition between Ohio State's north campus and the Tuttle Park neighborhood. All recommendations for the Regional Mixed Use classification given above apply, other than the following differences:

1. The proposed maximum height limit is 60 feet with a minimum height of 24 feet.
2. A front yard setback of 15 feet.

## Additional Land Use Considerations

### *Expansion of Commercial Uses into Residential Areas*

Expansion of commercial developments beyond an alley into primarily residential districts is discouraged. Such expansion may be supported in limited circumstances, provided that the project adequately addresses the following considerations.

1. General compatibility of the proposed land use with the Land Use Plan.
2. Compatibility of building massing and placement.
3. Compliance with the Urban Commercial Overlay.
4. Buffering and landscaping to minimize impacts on the adjacent neighborhood.
5. Minimization of off-site impacts such as noise and light.
6. Consistency with other applicable plan recommendations, including design guidelines, as well as site specific considerations.
7. Attempts to preserve historic structures.

### *Institutional Uses*

Schools, libraries, places of worship, post offices and other institutional uses play a key role in neighborhoods. Due to the nature of these uses, they are often located in residential areas. This can make proposals for reuse or expansion of an existing institutional use challenging. Consideration of such proposals requires careful attention, with a particular emphasis on impacts to adjacent properties and residences. Additional considerations for such projects include:

1. A broad range of adaptive reuses may be appropriate for existing institutional uses and sites, but is largely dependent on the specific location and associated impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. New uses could include mixed use, retail, office, education, housing, arts and entertainment, recreation, health care, and neighborhood assembly. The scale and intensity of new uses should reflect the location in terms of surrounding uses and access. For instance, retail and entertainment uses may be appropriate on commercial corridors, but not in the midst of a residential neighborhood.
2. New construction should be generally compatible with the existing neighborhood fabric relative to style, scale, and density. Somewhat higher densities may be appropriate for larger sites, provided the development proposal provides usable open space, adequate parking, and addresses other plan design guidelines.
3. Site design for reuse or expansion should minimize negative impacts on adjacent properties and neighborhood character.
4. New or expanded uses should provide adequate parking for current and future needs and consider the availability of public transit services.
5. Preservation of contributing historic sites and structures is encouraged.



### Corner Stores

There are some corner commercial buildings located within residential areas. These situations are distinct from the retail areas designated as neighborhood mixed use. Support for rezoning or variance requests for retail or office uses in these buildings should consider the following conditions:

1. The proposed use is within an existing storefront.
2. Evidence is provided that the development would have minimal negative impact on the surrounding residential area in terms of parking, lighting, graphics, noise, and similar issues. It should be noted that neighborhood retail can also benefit the community through the presence of jobs and convenient access to goods and services.
3. Expansion of the building footprint is discouraged.
4. The conversion of existing storefronts to residential uses is not supported.

### Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units are small, secondary units on a single-family lot, usually the size of a studio apartment. They are typically not attached to the primary dwelling. Accessory units are most commonly associated with existing carriage houses. Support for new accessory dwellings built over a detached garage should include the following considerations:

1. No more than one accessory unit should be allowed per lot.
2. Accessory dwellings should be limited to 720 square feet in floor area.
3. Accessory dwelling units would count toward the recommended FAR for the given area.
4. Accessory dwelling units would be required to meet the parking standard for the given area.
5. Accessory dwellings should comply with relevant design guidelines (see Design Guidelines section).

### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

This category applies primarily to publicly owned parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. It may also include private park and recreation facilities that are restricted for such uses.

1. A neighborhood park, community park or recreation facility (public or private) should be located within one-half mile of all residents consistent with the city's Recreation and Parks Master Plan.
2. As development occurs within the planning area, opportunities to include green space should be explored.
3. Opportunities to enhance connections to adjacent recreation areas and green spaces should be explored.
4. Wherever feasible, new residential development should provide for on-site open space and facilities to meet the recreation needs of its occupants.

### **Natural Resources**

This classification is recommended for natural areas to be conserved, including rivers and creeks, wood stands, steep slopes, ravines, and other features. These areas typically include active recreational facilities such as a multi-use trails. Natural areas provide key benefits in urban settings, including habitat for wildlife, opportunities for recreation, relief from the built environment, and ambient cooling during the summer.

1. The existing natural resources should be protected, conserved, and restored, with particular emphasis on the Olentangy River corridor, Iuka Ravine and Glen Echo Ravine.
2. Significant work is underway to restore the portion of the Olentangy River south of Dodridge Park to a more natural stream corridor. Efforts to continue restoration are encouraged.
3. Iuka and Glen Echo ravines have been substantially impacted by development, including encroachment by buildings, channelization and enclosure in culverts. Efforts to improve the natural condition of the ravines are encouraged wherever possible.
4. Future development along the Olentangy River or adjacent to the area's ravines should be designed to enhance their natural quality, with particular attention to building setbacks in order to reduce negative impacts.
5. Landscaping in conjunction with development, including preservation of existing mature trees, is encouraged in a manner consistent with the Design Guidelines.

## Urban Design

The built environment is a reflection of a community's character and identity. The design guidelines recommended here are intended to promote high-quality development, which contributes to a positive image of the area and encourage additional investment.

The Design Guidelines inform development review by providing developers with policy guidance concerning community priorities relative to urban design issues. Typically they are applied in the zoning process either through incorporation into the design of a project or as conditions of approval that are subsequently met by the developer. Design Guidelines are not regulation and they do not replace the zoning code and its legislatively-adopted standards. But guidelines do help to *mold* projects to better reflect community priorities and gain review board and area commission approvals.

## Design Principles

The following design principles serve as a foundation for the University Neighborhood Plan Design Guidelines:

1. Preserve and enhance the unique design characteristics of the district;
2. Promote the creative design of high quality, sustainable development that fits within the design context of individual neighborhoods and sub-districts;
3. Encourage a mix of uses, attract business investment and promote the economic vitality of commercial areas, while minimizing adverse impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods;
4. Ensure that High Street and Lane Avenue continue as mixed use corridors with the densest development, served by a variety of parking solutions, fulfilling the retail needs of the district, and creating enjoyable public spaces;
5. Enhance the district's pedestrian orientation by reducing reliance on the automobile while enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and access to transit;
6. Support a wide variety of housing opportunities;
7. Promote preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings that contribute to the district's diverse character;
8. Create opportunities for gathering places, public art installations, and civic uses that engage the community; and
9. Continue to encourage demographic and ethnic diversity through design.

## Historic Resources

### GENERAL

1. The University area benefits from having a number of Historic Districts (Indianola Forest, Iuka Ravine, New Indianola and Northwood Park) and individual buildings listed on the Columbus and/or National registers of historic properties/places.
2. Other buildings, while not listed on either register, exhibit historic attributes and contribute to the district's historic building fabric.
3. Exterior modifications to properties listed on the Columbus Register of Historic Properties require review and approval by the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) or the City's preservation staff in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
4. The HRC uses the Columbus Register of Historic Properties Guidelines in reviewing projects.

### GUIDELINES

1. Building and site design requirements for properties listed on the Columbus Register of Historic Properties will be determined, in part, through the historic preservation review process.
2. The University Area Review Board (UARB) should generally defer action on applications addressing Columbus register properties until after review and action by the HRC and/or the city's Historic Preservation Office (HPO) addressing architectural details and related issues under their authority. Close communication among staff, applicants and commissions is critical for these projects to facilitate a coordinated and efficient review process.
3. Building owners/developers are encouraged to conserve and rehabilitate historic buildings and architectural elements, as well as contributing buildings in the University area.
4. Building owners/developers are encouraged to consult the HPO regarding best practices in maintaining and rehabilitating historic structures and architectural elements.
5. Additions to historic buildings should be complimentary and not detract from the building's essential character.
6. New construction should be compatible with adjacent historic districts and buildings.

## Commercial and Mixed Use Development

This section addresses commercial and mixed use development, but these guidelines are also applicable to all other development that is not purely residential, including institutional, civic and other such uses.

### 1. BUILDING SETBACKS

- a. Building setbacks are defined by the zoning code as part of underlying districts and applicable overlays. The Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO), in place for most commercial areas within the district, limits front setbacks to a maximum of 10 feet, with an additional five feet permitted for up to 50 percent of the building frontage in return for the provision of a public-private space (e.g. outdoor dining).
- b. The UCO setback should be applied to commercial development in locations where the overlay is not in place (variances may be necessary).
- c. Consideration of larger setbacks should be based on the incorporation of public spaces, placement of adjacent buildings, and/or unique site geometry.
- d. The placement of vehicle off-street parking and/or maneuvering areas within the setback area is not appropriate.
- e. Buildings, parking structures and other structures taller than four stories should provide additional space for pedestrians adjacent to the public sidewalk if the existing sidewalk is five feet or less in width.
- f. Pedestrian access and connection to the public sidewalk system should be encouraged.
- g. Plazas, courtyards, seating and other pedestrian amenities are encouraged, particularly where larger building setbacks are in place.
- h. Drive-through pickup windows and coverings should not be located on building frontages and may be located to the rear and sides of the principal building only when adjacent property is not residentially used or zoned (see UCO requirements).

### 2. BUILDING ORIENTATION

- a. Buildings should be oriented to the street on which they front.
- b. Primary entrances should be oriented to the primary public street with at least one operable door on the primary public street.
- c. Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner, addressing both streets. Primary entrances of such buildings may be placed at the corner.

### 3. BUILDING HEIGHT

- a. Building heights should be consistent with the urban design standards recommended in the plan and building height map.
- b. Parking structures count toward building height limits.

- c. Care should be taken to mitigate offsite impacts due to a building's height and mass. This includes issues addressed in other sections of these guidelines, such as lighting, screening and traffic circulation. The following guidelines should be considered:
  - i. Setbacks of higher stories from the front facade should be considered for taller buildings to lessen their visual impact.
  - ii. Along rear frontages, floors above three stories (or 35 feet) should be setback at least 20 feet from the property line. This includes rear facades facing alleys and those directly adjacent to other parcels.
  - iii. Support for buildings that exceed recommended height limits should be based on of the following factors: site size and situation, adjacent uses, quality of architectural design and materials, parking provision, and inclusion of a civic component that benefits the community.

#### 4. BUILDING DESIGN

##### GENERAL

- a. The design of new construction, including additions, should be compatible with nearby contributing buildings and surrounding streetscape. When opportunities arise, inappropriate additions (e.g. false mansard roofs, false dormers, boxed over parapets and cornices, boxed entrances and covered windows) should be removed to reveal original building lines, openings, facing materials, architectural features and trim.
- b. Conversions of or additions to residential buildings for commercial purposes are not supported, unless zoned commercial or located north of Lane Avenue on High Street.
- c. When opportunities arise that are supported by the Review Board, removal of non-contributing commercial additions and building elements should be considered, particularly when such removal would facilitate renovation of the residential building.
- d. Building materials should be of high quality and durability, such as traditional masonry.
- e. The choice of materials, texture, and color for new buildings should be influenced by the predominant pattern of the area.
- f. Stucco and stucco like materials, vinyl, wood (as primary surface), and concrete block are generally not appropriate building materials.
- g. Buildings should be articulated by with such means as: expressed structure, piers and columns, recessed and projecting bays, building setback above cornice line, and three-dimensional architectural details, signs, and awnings.
- h. The mixed-use nature of a building should be expressed where applicable. Follow the commercial guidelines for retail facades and residential guidelines for residential facades.
- i. Blank walls should not be presented to primary streets, side streets or adjacent residential.



### **REAR ELEVATIONS**

- a. If possible, provide transparent windows and glass doors to open the store to customers arriving from the back; a minimum of 25 percent transparent glass at ground level is recommended.
- b. When rear elevations include an important business entry, awnings and canopies should be provided.
- c. Along rear elevations, floors above three stories (or 35 feet) should be set back an additional 20 feet at a minimum. This includes rear facades facing alleys and those directly adjacent to other parcels.

### **COMMERCIAL FACADES AND STOREFRONTS:**

- a. Existing storefronts should be repaired and maintained where possible.
- b. Street level facades should incorporate a high level of design and material quality.
- c. Durable, smooth materials such as aluminum, exterior-grade woods such as oak, redwood, poplar, and medium density overlay (MDO) board should be used for finish surfaces of wood storefronts. Rough cedar, pine, or pressure-treated lumber should not be used as finish surfaces.
- d. Storefronts and other street level facades should be contained within the frame of the building, expressed by piers, and subdivided into smaller bays in keeping with typical bay widths of High Street and adjacent streets.
- e. Contemporary design and materials are appropriate, but should be compatible with the scale and proportions of the building and nearby streetscape.
- f. Recessed entryways for primary facades are encouraged.
- g. Primary entrances should be prominently placed and clearly distinguished from secondary entrances.
- h. The floor-to-ceiling height of the street-level story should be at least 12 feet.
- i. Pickup units/drive-through windows and associated maneuvering are not appropriate on or in front of building facades. They should be located in a manner consistent with uco guidelines.
- j. The conversion of commercial buildings, especially ground floor retail spaces, to residential uses is not supported.

### **OPENINGS (WINDOWS AND DOORS)**

- a. Large display windows should be provided along the ground floor to establish visual connection between interior and exterior.
- b. Sixty percent of the ground floor facade, including storefronts, should be transparent, comprised of windows and doors, see uco provisions.
- c. Clear glass should be used for display windows; opaque, smoked or reflective glass may be used for accent elements such as borders, transoms and bulkheads.

- d. Storefront windowsills, or the top of bulkheads, should be located no higher than 30 inches above the sidewalk; for non-retail ground floor facades, locate windowsills no higher than 42 inches above the sidewalk.
- e. All ground floor window tops should be located no lower than nine feet above the sidewalk.
- f. Original doors and windows should be preserved.
- g. When replacement is necessary, the original design and proportion should be maintained.
- h. The proportion of openings (windows, doors) to solid facade areas in new construction should be designed in consideration of the predominant pattern of nearby contributing buildings.
- i. A high degree of transparency should be incorporated into ground floor spaces (see UCO provisions).
- j. Design elements should be used to distinguish between street level and upper story windows.
- k. The design, spacing and dimensions of upper story windows should accentuate vertical proportion.
- l. Windows should not be blocked or boarded up; but if it is necessary to close an original window to accommodate interior changes for the building's adaptive reuse, the original shape and details of the window opening should be maintained.

#### **AWNINGS (SEE ALSO GRAPHICS)**

- a. Awnings should be used to frame storefront display windows, provide a transition between the storefront and upper facade and enhance the pedestrian experience along the street.
- b. Awnings and framing systems should be compatible with building design and installed without damaging or visually impairing distinctive architectural features.
- c. Darker colors are preferred. Structural systems should be finished in low-contrast colors.
- d. Awnings should be mounted below the cornice for one-story buildings or second-story windowsills for taller buildings.
- e. Awnings should be designed to reflect primary entrances and the vertical planes or bays of the facade.
- f. Awnings should be made of soft canvas or vinyl material.
- g. Traditional awnings without side panels are preferred over bull-nosed or molded type awnings.
- h. Internal illumination is not appropriate.

## LIGHTING

- a. Lighting should be used to animate the streetscape, prolong street life after business hours, and address pedestrian activity
- b. Lighting should be designed to complement and enhance architectural features.
- c. Historic light fixtures should be preserved and maintained.
- d. Lighting fixtures should be of commercial quality, materials and construction.
- e. Use of cut-off fixtures and similar techniques to minimize and *up-lighting* and light *spill* is encouraged.
- f. Surface mounted conduit placement should be voided.
- g. Indiscriminate, non-directional area lighting should be avoided, such as wall packs and high-intensity floods (see code).

## ROOFTOP STRUCTURES AND USES

(See also B.1 New Construction, which applies.)

- a. Rooftop structures and spaces should be complementary to the principal building in terms of design and materials with minimal visual impact on the streetscape.
- b. Rooftop uses are supported for residential and mixed use projects that provide outdoor usable space for residents, including patios, decks and pools, provided building code and safety considerations are met.
- c. Rooftop uses for commercial and mixed use buildings that support restaurant, bar or similar uses are not generally supported. In order to support such uses, proposals must meet the design guidelines provided herein, limit visual, light and sound impacts, and ensure safety and building code considerations are fully met.
- d. Commercial rooftop uses are more appropriate on new buildings that incorporate such uses into the design of the buildings. Retrofitting existing buildings is generally inappropriate.
- e. Rooftop structures and spaces should be installed without damaging or visually impairing distinctive architectural features and should be proportional to the building and its architectural features.
- f. Rooftop structures, canopies and awnings should be designed in a manner to minimize negative offsite impacts of light and noise.
- g. Commercial advertising and graphics, televisions, LED displays and amplified sound are not appropriate for rooftop spaces.
- h. The use of green rooftops is encouraged to mitigate storm water runoff and reduce the heat island effect.
- i. Note that, as with all development, building code provisions apply to rooftop structures and uses. This will impact placement and design of such spaces.

## 5. LANDSCAPING, BUFFERING AND SCREENING

- a. Landscape materials and design should be considered as part of projects to enhance structures, create shade, and provide environmental benefits.
- b. Public, semi-public/private, and private spaces should be demarcated clearly through the use of landscape, walls, fences, gates, pavement treatment, signs, and other methods to denote boundaries and/or buffers.
- c. Service and loading zones should be screened from public rights-of-way (other than alleys). Trash and recycling containers, dumpsters and service areas should be centralized and screened in a manner that allows ease of access and is complimentary to the building in material and color. Views from neighboring buildings and properties should be minimized or screened to their full height.
- d. Mechanical systems (HVAC, etc.) should be placed on the roof or behind buildings and screened as necessary in a manner that is complimentary to the building in material and color.
- e. Small cell communication antenna/devices should be sited in a manner that minimizes their visual impact and does not damage or cover distinctive architectural features. Roof top placement in conjunction with chimneys or other structures is preferred, with screening as necessary. Mechanical equipment and devices associated with wireless facilities should be placed in underground vaults or unobtrusive structures.
- f. Chain link fencing is not appropriate for screening.
- g. Landscaping should be used to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation and erosion control, including rain gardens, consistent with the requirements and approvals of Department of Public Utilities.
- h. Landscaping should be used to provide a transition between development and natural settings, such as parks and ravines.
- i. Plant species used in landscaping should be adapted to urban conditions. Invasive species should be avoided.

## 6. OUTDOOR DINING

- a. Outdoor spaces should complement indoor dining, drinking and entertainment uses rather than be the primary focus, thereby serving as a seasonal extension.
- b. Outdoor spaces should not create visual or physical obstacles or hazards to adjacent buildings, streetscape elements, pedestrian travel or thoroughfares. Elevated decks are not appropriate.
- c. Railing and fences used in conjunction with outdoor dining must meet the requirements of the Department of Public Service (DPS) and Ohio Division of Liquor Control.
- d. Patio design and border delineation materials should be compatible with the primary structure in terms of architectural character,

materials and color. Use of landscaping timbers, railroad ties, carpets, pressure treated wood or similar material to demarcate patios and outdoor dining areas is not appropriate.

- e. Masonry walls or other permanent structures proposed to delineate outdoor spaces in public rights-of-way are not appropriate along major mixed use corridors.
- f. Plants used in association with outdoor spaces, such as in planter boxes, should be well-maintained and healthy, being replaced as needed.
- g. Outdoor spaces should be designed in a manner to minimize negative offsite impacts of light and noise.
- h. Banners and other graphics should not to be attached to railings, fences or other materials used to delineate the space. Televisions, LED displays and amplified sound are not appropriate.

## **7. GROUND FLOOR USES**

- a. Ground floor uses should contribute to a lively, pedestrian-scaled environment at the street level. Retail, restaurants, personal services, cultural facilities, and similar uses are appropriate.
- b. Some alleys and side streets have good potential for active ground floor uses. Depending on the context of the location, uses such as retail stores, restaurants, and offices may be appropriate.
- c. Vertically mixed use buildings are encouraged.
- d. Residential buildings located on major streets should incorporate retail or similar uses (including live/work space) on the ground floor when possible.

## **8. MIXED USES**

- a. Mixed uses can occur vertically in a building (i.e., first-floor retail, second-floor office, third and higher floors residential) or horizontally in a development among various buildings (in these cases, the uses should be integrated and not segregated).
- b. Ground-floor uses in mixed-use buildings should include retail, restaurants, services, cultural facilities and amenities, personal services and offices.
- c. A variety of housing unit types and sizes should be provided in the residential portions of mixed-use developments.

## Residential Development, including Additions

The following guidelines apply to all residential uses: single-family, two-family and multifamily.

### 1. GENERAL

- a. New single- and two-family housing should be compatible with nearby housing in terms of height and width, building materials, porches, roof pitch, setbacks, and windows and door size, width, and spacing.
- b. The primary facade of residential buildings should address the primary street (i.e., be a building frontage) and have a high level of design.
- c. The primary facade of the ground level of multifamily buildings should include entrances, stoops, porches, balconies or other features to ensure they contribute to the street.
- d. Building materials should be used to provide visual interest and texture to a building.
- e. Character-defining features of historic buildings should be maintained.
- f. Inappropriate additions (e.g. false mansard roofs, false dormers, boxed over parapets and cornices, boxed entrances and covered windows) should be removed when possible to reveal original building lines, openings, facing materials, architectural features and trim.

### 2. SETBACK AND SITE DESIGN

- a. The setback for residential buildings should be between 10 feet and 30 feet, however this may be varied to match the predominate setback of buildings on the block (this guideline does not recommended to be applicable to residential uses within Regional Mixed Use corridors).
- b. Accessory buildings (including, but not limited to, detached garages) should be located at the rear of the principal building (garages should not access directly onto public streets). A curb cut and driveway from a public street is only supportable were no alley exists.
- c. Landscaping plantings should be provided in the front setback, such as one tree of at least 2½-inch caliper for every 50 feet of frontage or portion thereof.
- d. The land use section of this plan includes recommendations for minimum rear yard landscaping in residential districts. These recommendations, in addition to existing code provisions for front setbacks, rear and side yards, and screening together establish a minimum open space framework for new construction. Additional open space is encouraged, particularly in the form of courtyards and other centralized spaces for larger development.
- e. The existing pattern of spacing between buildings should inform new construction.
- f. New construction should be designed so as to minimize impacts on light and privacy to adjacent properties.
- g. Corner buildings should be designed to respond to both streets with in term of design quality.

### 3. HEIGHT AND MASSING

- a. The scale of new buildings should be influenced by the surrounding contributing residential buildings.
- b. Heights should be consistent with the urban design standards recommended in the plan and building height map.
- c. Setbacks of higher stories from the front facade should be considered for taller buildings to lessen their visual impact.
- d. The shape of single- and two-family residential buildings should be varied through the use of roofs, dormers, bay windows, porches, ell, and other projections.
- e. See also height guidance regarding rear elevations.

### 4. BUILDING DESIGN

#### GENERAL

- a. Building entrances should be designed to enhance the connection between the public realm of the street and sidewalk and the private realm of the building.
- b. Front entrance should be enhanced with a porch or porch-like element with the scale and proportions of traditional porches in the district. The width of a front porch should not exceed 90 percent of the width of the building's front facade. No front porch should be supported above the second story. A porch roof should give the appearance of being separate and secondary to the main roof.
- c. Original architectural features, including but not limited to those listed below, should be maintained: chimneys; cornices & eaves; dormers; porches, stoops and railings; and windows and doors.
- d. The overall depth of a building should be no more than two and one half times the building's overall width.
- e. The ground floor above grade should generally be between two and one half feet and three and one half feet above the finished grade line; or the facade should be designed to give the appearance of a ground floor height within these limits. This requirement is not intended to preclude gentle grade changes or ramping to permit handicapped accessibility.
- f. The pitch of a single- or two-family building's main roof should be no lower than eight units vertical to 12 units horizontal (8:12). A gambrel, mansard, or variation thereof is not supported.
- g. Exclusive of any roof overhang, no portion of a front porch or terrace should extend into the front setback more than eight feet. A balcony may extend into the front setback no more than four feet. Exterior stairs to any floor other than the ground floor should be not supported within the front setback area.



- h. Decks are not supported in front or side yards. Multi-story decks are not supported in the rear yard. A rear deck, rear patio, or combination thereof, should cover no more than 200 square feet of lot area.
- i. The removal of box gutters is not supported.

#### **MATERIALS**

- a. No more than two predominant wall materials, excluding foundations, gables, and windows/doors with associated trim, should be used on a building. The same material treatment should be used around the entire building. Horizontal lap siding should have a narrow exposure. Natural wood tones are uncharacteristic and any exposed wood elements, other than flooring, should be either painted or stained opaquely with a coordinated color.
- b. Exterior walls should be faced with brick, stone, wood siding, wood shingles, or a combination of these materials.
- c. Heavier facing materials of brick, stone, and other masonry are preferred for the ground floor and major structural elements.
- d. Lighter facing materials of wood siding and shingles are preferred for higher sections of the structure and for elements such as dormers and bay windows.

#### **ADDITIONS TO CONTRIBUTING MULTIFAMILY BUILDINGS**

- a. The scale and proportion of additions should be compatible with those of contributing building(s).
- b. The distinctive architectural elements of the original contributing building(s) should influence design and articulation of the new construction.
- c. The contrast between old and new should be reflected with contemporary design and materials.
- d. Additions should not obscure or destroy existing significant building features or materials.

#### **OPENINGS (WINDOWS AND DOORS)**

- a. Original doors and windows should be preserved and maintained.
- b. When replacement is necessary, the original design, type and proportion should be maintained. Replacement doors and windows should fit the entire opening with no filler or additional framing.
- c. The proportion of openings (windows, doors) to solid facade areas in new construction should be designed in consideration of the predominant pattern of nearby contributing buildings.
- d. Windows and doors that are no longer used due to interior renovations should be maintained, but left in place and fixed shut if necessary.
- e. Window and window elements, excluding basement windows, should have vertical proportions of three units vertical to two units horizontal (3:2), or greater. Windows and doors should constitute no less than 20 percent of the building's front facade.

### LIGHTING

- a. Lighting should be designed to complement and enhance architectural features.
- b. Historic light fixtures should be preserved and maintained.
- c. Use of cut-off fixtures and similar techniques to minimize and *up-lighting* and light *spill* is encouraged.
- d. Surface mounted conduit placement should be voided.
- e. Indiscriminate, non-directional area lighting should be avoided, such as wall packs and high-intensity floods (see code).

## Parking Lots and Garages

### 1. GENERAL

- a. Development within the University area should benefit from the reduced parking requirements associated with the UCO. Further reductions may be appropriate for higher density, mixed-use projects close to activity centers and transit service. Shared parking areas that serve uses with offsetting demands, such as business and residential, is encouraged.
- b. Reduction and/or elimination of existing private curb cuts is encouraged as sites are redeveloped. (DPS has authority over access to public right-of-way).
- c. Structured parking is preferred within the regional mixed use corridors of the district and encouraged for higher-density projects in other areas.
- d. Bicycle parking should be incorporated into development projects as required by code. But additional consideration should be given to including supporting facilities in multifamily, higher density, office and mixed use developments (e.g. bike lockers, showers and water facilities).

### 2. SURFACE PARKING

- a. Parking lots, vehicle circulation/maneuvering areas and accessory buildings should be located at the rear of the principal building. Where access to the rear of the property is not possible from a public alley or street, up to 50 percent of the parking may be located at the side of the principal building, provided applicable UCO requirements are addressed.
- b. The use of green technologies to manage storm water runoff in parking lots consistent with Department of Public Utilities requirements and approval is encouraged. Examples include rain gardens, drainage swales and pervious pavement.
- c. Parking adjacent to public rights-of-way should be screened as required by code. Appropriate screening includes masonry walls, decorative metal fencing, and landscaping in a combination that provides necessary opacity. Alternative materials may be considered; however railroad ties, plastic fencing and chain link are not supported as screening elements.

### 3. STRUCTURED PARKING

- a. Parking structures should not front primary corridors, such as High Street and Lane Avenue, but should instead be placed at the rear of development, accessed by alleys or side streets.
- b. The size and massing of parking structures should be guided by the same principles that apply to other buildings, with the added consideration that they are secondary uses.
- c. The exterior design of parking structures should minimize the monotony of the underlying structure through such means as building articulation, window openings, variations in color, material and/or texture. Structures should not include blank walls adjacent to streets or residential uses.
- d. The integration of residential and/or ground floor retail/office uses with parking structures as a means of screening is encouraged. (e.g., Campus Gateway apartments).
- e. Parking structures with blank walls or lacking ornamentation along public streets are not supported.
- f. Landscaping and setbacks should be used to buffer parking structures from adjacent residential that are not part of the project.

## Graphics

Signage is an integral part of a commercial use. Collectively, signage influences a street's character. Signs should also serve as an aesthetic accompaniment to the associated storefront and building. Signs should present a clear message about the business they identify. The guidelines addressed graphics and are applicable to all uses requiring a graphics permit.

### REGULATION

- A Certificate of Approval (Development Department) is required for any graphics within the University area impact district that requires a permit as provided by the Graphics Code.
- Graphics permits are issued by the Building and Zoning Services Department.
- Graphics that project over the public right-of-way may require approval by the Department of Public Service.
- In instances where a graphic is not addressed by these guidelines, the City's Graphics Code is still applicable.

### 1. GENERAL

- a. New signage should be designed to be a logical and complementary component of the overall design of a storefront in terms of lighting, scale, color, style and materials.
- b. Historic and/or iconic signs should be preserved, rehabilitated and maintained.
- c. Buildings should not be dominated by graphics. Crowded or cluttered graphics arrangements should be avoided.

- d. Signs for storefronts/businesses in the same building/development should be of coordinated design in terms of style, size, material, lighting, color, support structures and location on the building —reinforcing rather than competing with each other.
- e. Each ground floor tenant space or building (if single tenant occupancy) should be provided one projecting sign and either one wall sign or awning sign(s) per street frontage.
- f. Signage should not obscure significant architectural elements; the installation of a sign should be reversible and avoid permanent alteration or damage to historic building materials.
- g. Pedestrian-oriented signs (wall and projecting type) are preferred. Pole signs are generally discouraged. The dimensional standards of the city graphics code should be used unless new standards are developed.
- h. The message on signs should be simple and limited to the business name, logo, function and/or street number or address and related artistic treatments. Telephone numbers, business rates, web addresses, and logos advertising individual products rather than the primary business, etc. are not supported.
- i. The use of architectural elements on signage related to the associated business is encouraged (e.g. drawing of a coffee cup for a coffeehouse).
- j. Sign lighting should be designed in such a way as to minimize glare and light spillage onto adjacent properties.
- k. Internally illuminated graphics may be considered if such graphics are integral to the design of a building or development. Internally illuminated box sign cabinets are not appropriate.
- l. Internally illuminated channel letters and uniquely shaped internally lit signs may be appropriate.
- m. On rear elevations of commercial buildings, locate signs above the related door or window, and do not exceed nine square feet in size.
- n. Signs should be regularly maintained and unused sign supports should be removed. Broken, faded signage and empty sign supports suggest a vacant or inactive business.
- o. Lettering: Signs on main facades should generally use letters within the guideline; however, smaller letters for smaller stores and larger letters for larger stores are possible. Internally illuminated individual letters are not encouraged, but back-lit letters are.

## 2. GROUND SIGNS

- a. Ground (freestanding) signs are generally not preferred in the University District, however situations where ground signs may be appropriate include:
- b. Sites with larger setbacks, such as those commonly in place for institutional uses.
- c. Residential buildings adapted for commercial uses where other sign types are not appropriate.

- d. Uses, such as commercial parking lots that are not visible from the street.
- e. Ground signs should be made of durable high quality building materials that complement the primary structure(s).
- f. Ground sign placement must take into consideration vision triangle requirements as determined by the departments of Building and Zoning Services and Public Service.
- g. Ground signs should be limited to no more than 12 square feet in area and no more than five feet in height, in front of residences that have been converted to commercial uses or to identify businesses in buildings not visible from the street.
- h. Existing, legally permitted ground signs may be maintained consistent with the city's non-conforming provisions in the graphics code. Nonconforming graphics are defined and regulated by the provisions of Section 3381.08, Nonconforming Graphics.

### **3. WALL SIGNS**

- a. Wall signs should be sized to fit in with the building's facade design and located within a sign band when one exists, usually above the transom.
- b. Where a sign band doesn't exist, wall signs should be located between the ground floor transom and the second floor windowsill or below the eaves/cornice on a one-story building.
- c. Wall signs should not cover up important architectural details such as cornices, piers and pilasters, doorway pediments and upper-floor windowsills.
- d. Wall signs should be limited in size to a maximum width of two-thirds of the width of the building front and a maximum height of one-third of the height of the space between the ground floor transom and the second floor windowsill or eaves/ cornice on one-story buildings.
- e. The size of a wall sign within the allowable maximum per code.
- f. Use lettering 8 to 16 inches high and which occupies no more than 65 percent of the board.
- g. Wall signs placed on a side or rear facade should be no larger than nine square feet.
- h. Wall signs may incorporate a background board or be formed by installation of individual letters/images mounted directly to the building. This may Internally illuminated box signs are not appropriate.

### **4. PROJECTING (BLADE) SIGNS**

- a. Projecting signs are preferred in the University area because of their pedestrian scale.
- b. Projecting signs should be proportional to the building and located above the storefront display windows or transoms and below the second-story windowsills.
- c. A minimum clearance of 10 feet should be maintained between grade and the bottom of the sign. A right-of-way permit may be required by the Department of Public Service.

- d. Projecting signs should be limited in size to of 6 square feet per side and lettering four inches to 10 inches high.
- e. A three-dimensional object or special shape often makes the most effective projecting sign.
- f. Signs should not project more than six feet from the facade of the building, or half the width of the sidewalk, whichever is less.
- g. The information on a projecting sign need not duplicate the information on the wall sign; it should augment the primary sign by describing the business in a different, more visual way.
- h. The bracket from which the sign hangs is part of the overall sign design. Design and placement should be consistent in cases where multiple projecting signs are installed.

## **5. WINDOW SIGNS**

- a. A window sign is any sign or graphic attached to the exterior of the window or door glass. Window signs should be transparent in overall design.
- b. The cumulative area of all window signs should not exceed 25 percent of the total glass area. Use lettering ½ to 8 inches high.
- c. The use of neon or LED lighting on windows is not supported.

## **6. AWNING/CANOPY SIGNS**

- a. Awning graphics should be limited to the front valance.
- b. The maximum allowable area for graphics on an awning sign should not exceed 50 percent of the area of the front facing valance. Use lettering 6 to 8 inches high.
- c. Buildings with multiple tenant spaces should use a consistent font size, placement and color in specifications for awning signage.
- d. Awnings should not be internally illuminated.

## **7. COMMERCIAL BANNERS**

- a. Permanent banners are not supported.
- b. A temporary banner, such as a *Grand Opening*, is permitted without the need for a Certificate of Approval, if displayed for less than 30 days, subject to applicable review/approval by the Planning Division.

## **8. WAY-FINDING AND ORIENTATION SIGNS**

- a. Publicly sponsored transit information, way-finding, and visitor orientation graphics serve a key function in the University area. They should be considered as part of a coordinated design package.
- b. Electronic Displays used in conjunction with public transit and way-finding information are viewed as distinct from those addressed otherwise.

## 9. PROHIBITED AND NONCONFORMING SIGNS

- a. Sign types prohibited within the UCO (3372.6) and those prohibited in Columbus City Code Chapter 3375 and are not supported. These include off-premises signs, billboards, signs with flashing lights or bare bulbs, co-op signs, rotating signs, monopole signs, automatic changeable copy signs, roof-mounted signs, bench signs, and trailer signs among others.
- b. Nonconforming graphics are defined and regulated by the provisions of the Columbus City Code Section 3381.08, Nonconforming Graphics. Expansion or nonconforming graphics is generally not supported.

## Public and Private Art

### GENERAL

1. The Columbus Art Commission (cc 3115) has statutory authority over the design and placement of all works of art acquired by the city, placed on property owned or leased by the city or within the public right-of-way.
2. Buildings or projects, which incorporate public art but which would otherwise require a Certificate of Approval from the UARB, are also subject to the provisions of the University Impact District. An example of this situation might be a bas relief on a building facade within the public right-of-way. While the bas relief may qualify as public art and therefore be under the jurisdiction of the art commission, the building itself falls within the jurisdiction of the UARB.
3. Art, not subject to cc 3115, placed in an exterior location within view of the public right-of-way, is also covered by the provisions of the Impact District.

### GUIDELINES

1. Art must be approved by and meet the evaluation criteria of the art commission, as provided in City Code. These criteria address the following topics: artistic quality/excellence, appropriateness to the site, originality, permanence, safety, feasibility, maintenance and donor requirements.
2. Existing art incorporated into structures should be conserved whenever possible.
3. Integration of art in larger development projects is encouraged as is placement of art in public spaces, such as plazas.
4. Works of art should be designed and installed so as to not damage or visually obscure contributing buildings or building elements.
5. Works of art should be designed with consideration to maintenance and durability.
6. Art should be designed to minimize the impact on adjacent properties from light and sound that emanates from such art.



**implementation**

The most effective way to implement the provisions of a neighborhood plan is through the consistent and unified advocacy of area residents and businesses working in concert with the city of Columbus and other stakeholders. The most typical mechanism for plan implementation is the review of development proposals for consistency with the plan.

Additionally, the plan can be used proactively to seek investment in the area, advocate for neighborhood issues, pursue grant funding and guide capital improvements. As indicated, this plan will serve as the area's list of UIRF priority projects.

## A. Plan Interpretation and Implementation

Responsibility for implementing this plan will rest with the Department of Development, University Area Commission (UAC) and the University Area Review Board (UARB) specific to certain actions or regulatory authority. Interpretation of plan policies and recommendations is an important part of ensuring consistency with this document. For this reason, the following guidance is provided.

### 1. REGULATING DENSITY

In general, the plan recommendations relative to density provide guidance through the use of floor area ratio (FAR) in terms of new construction. These recommendations will only be implemented through rezonings, variances and council variances – unless code changes are adopted as part of Section B below.

### 2. REGULATING HEIGHT

The plan has specific recommendations regarding building height, especially in the High Street and Lane Avenue corridors. Those recommendations are only policy unless the code is modified to apply these standards. They can, however, be used by the UARB in its regulatory authority within the Impact District, and will be taken into consideration in reviewing rezonings, variances and council variances.

### 3. PARKING STANDARDS

In general, the plan recommendations relative to parking provide guidance in terms of new construction, but will only be implemented through rezonings, variances and Council variances—unless code changes are adopted as part of Section B on the facing page.

In addition, further analysis should be conducted to further evaluate the plan's parking standard recommendations and to explore potential mechanisms to address parking (e.g. garages, permit parking, shared parking, etc.). This should be conducted prior to the adoption of any new development standards as a code amendment.

### 4. ECONOMIC INCENTIVES AND PROGRAMS

As part of community efforts to revitalize the High Street business district, the city should explore economic incentives that are particularly effective in such locations. This might include establishing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for the purpose of funding public improvements (e.g. High Street streetscape improvements).

Establishing a Special Improvement District (SID) would also be an important economic development tool to fund additional services and improvements within the High Street corridor. The Development Department has established guidelines for creating a SID district.

## 5. RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

As a means of expanding homeownership within specific geographic portions of the planning area, the city should explore residential homeownership incentive programs.

## B. Code Changes

Currently, design review occurs in a portion of the planning area (Impact District) under the jurisdiction of the University Area Review Board (UARB). Rezoning, variances and related legislative actions throughout the entire planning area are reviewed by the University Area Commission (UAC), which provide a non-binding recommendation to the appropriate city body. The UARB also reviews such proposals if within the Impact District.

As part of the planning process, a number of code changes were explored. Below is a summary of those recommendations. The adoption of this plan does not implement any of these recommendations. Codification of proposed changes require a separate public process after plan adoption. Any recommended code updates emerging from the public process would then require Council approval.

It's important to stress that without legislative approval, the recommendations provided below will not be implemented.

### 1. UARB BOUNDARY

The plan recommends further consideration of an expanding the UARB's boundary to cover all of the University District planning area in order to extend design review to more projects. In exchange, code changes would also reduce the number of development items that would come before the board. This would mean that certain development (e.g. new construction, expansion of existing buildings, parking, and similar improvements) would require a Certificate of Approval (COA) to be issued by the UARB, but other items (e.g. roof replacement) would not. In addition to code changes, such an initiative would be dependent on the availability of staff resources. Please see the accompanying map.

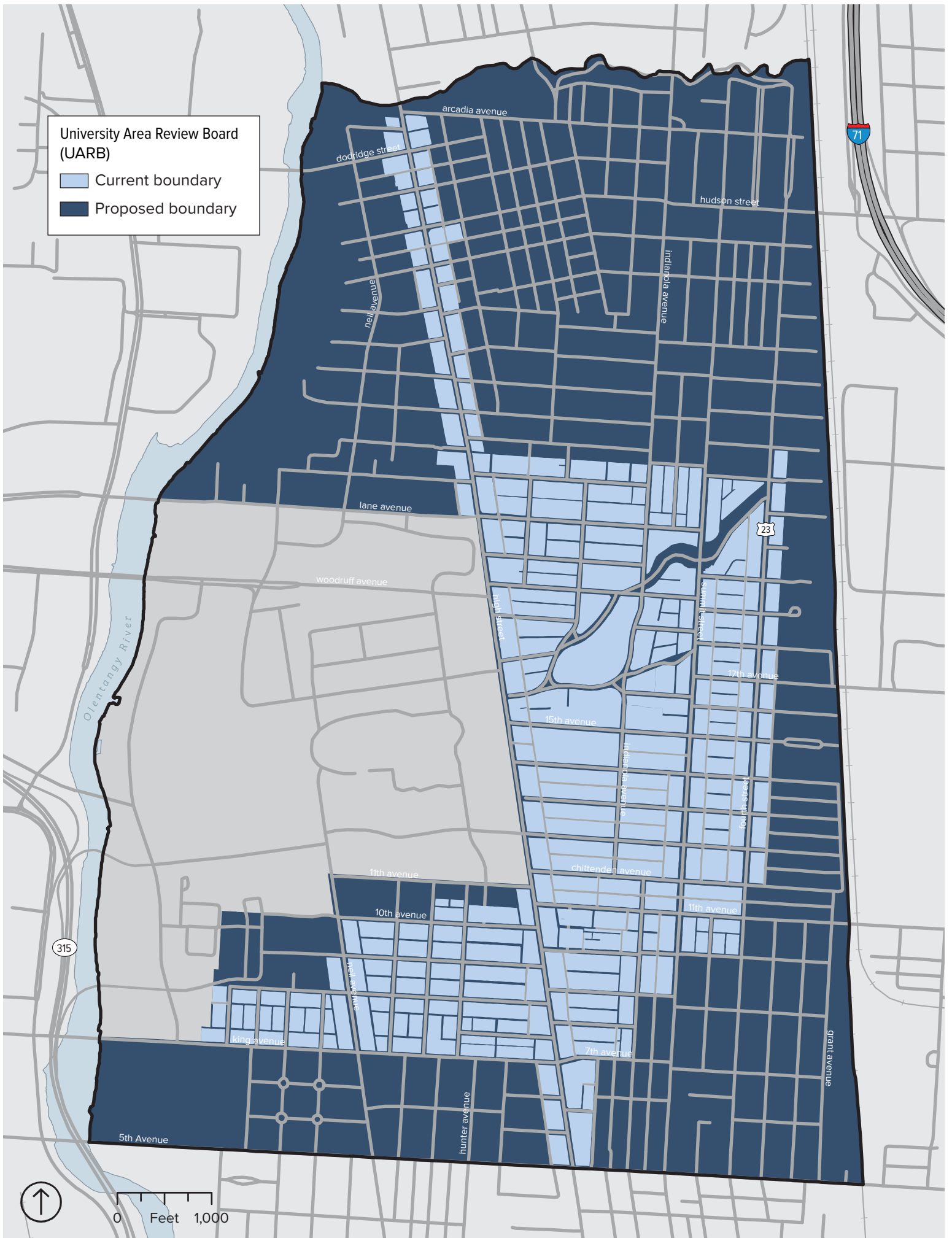
### 2. UARB PROCESS

As part of a consideration to expand the UARB boundaries, specific process changes are likewise recommended to be considered at the same time.

- a. The UARB's authority would focus on all commercial, multifamily and mixed use development (new construction and expansion/remodeling of existing buildings).
- b. Demolition permits for those uses would require an approved Certificate of Approval (COA) for the replacement building prior to issuance of the demolition permit.
- c. Roof and siding replacement for single- and two-family homes would no longer require a COA.

University Area Review Board  
(UARB)

- Current boundary
- Proposed boundary



**Figure 14 | (facing page)**  
Proposed expansion of the  
UARB boundary

- d. New single- and two-family buildings or expansions to existing single- and two-family buildings would require a COA (excluding residential accessory structures).
- e. The list of staff approval items would be expanded to facilitate approvals.
- f. Role of the UARB and UAC would be clarified.
- g. Composition of the UARB should be explored.
- h. The sequence of UARB/UAC review of rezonings and variances should be clarified.
- i. UARB review of Columbus historic districts would be eliminated, as the Historic Resources Commission regulates these districts.

### 3. PLANNING OVERLAY

Concurrent with the consideration to expand the UARB boundaries, the University Planning Overlay should be reviewed and revised to reflect recommended standards from the plan. Such revisions require a public review process and City Council action. Some specific considerations are listed below.

- a. Definition for calculating Floor Area Ratio would be simplified to gross floor area; parking garages would not be included in the FAR calculation.
- b. Parking reductions would be proposed consistent with the Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO) and land use goals for the High Street/Lane Avenue Regional Mixed Use designation.
- c. Commercial overlay standards would be transferred into the new University Planning Overlay and applied to all existing commercial development sites.
- d. Minimum landscape area requirements would be expanded, especially for rear yards.
- e. Demolitions would require a COA from the UARB, which would require an approved replacement use before a demolition permit is issued (applicable only to principal buildings and not accessory structures).
- f. Administrative procedures would be clarified.
- g. A new approach to calculating/regulating residential density would be proposed (based on gross floor area or number of beds/bedrooms).
- h. The parking calculation formula would be simplified.
- i. Allowing private development to provide parking in the form of long term, enforceable parking arrangements at off-site parking structures should be considered.
- j. The UARB appeal process should be revised to incorporate the Board of Commission Appeals (BOCA).

#### 4. HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The establishment of new historic districts on the Columbus Register of Historic Properties should be explored by the community. This requires a neighborhood-based effort to generate sufficient local support to move forward into the adoption process under requirements and process of the Historic Resources Commission (Chapter 3117).

### C. Development Review Checklist

A development review checklist is a summary of the development guidelines and recommendations found in an area plan. It is designed for application by stakeholders in the review of development proposals for consistency with plan provisions. It is intended for use with rezoning and variance requests, investments in community facilities and infrastructure, and other initiatives or requests impacting the built environment in the community. Guidelines from an area plan are not city code. But as part of a city adopted plan they serve as city policy. This provides a basis for stakeholders to review development proposals and make sure the guidelines are considered and optimally included in a proposed development.

Users of the checklist are strongly encouraged to review additional background information for each item on the checklist by referencing the relevant plan element. Nothing in the checklist is intended to speak to the development proposal's conformance with other city code requirements and policies.

Recommendations regarding the use of development review checklists include:

- a. Applicants for a rezoning and/or variance are encouraged to review a development review checklist and incorporate its provisions in their proposals.
- b. Community groups use a checklist to evaluate development proposals in their respective areas.

[illegible]