

Final Report

July 2010



PARK HILLS
Dixie Study



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Park Hills Dixie Study

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: VISION AND GOALS	5
CHAPTER 3: MARKET ANALYSIS	7
CHAPTER 4: AREAS OF INFLUENCE	15
CHAPTER 5: CONCEPT DIAGRAM	19
CHAPTER 6: REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT	25
SECTION 1: PREFERRED REDEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE	25
SECTION 2: MOBILITY	42
SECTION 3: RECOMMENDED LAND USE	46
SECTION 4: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES	54
SECTION 5: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	58
CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION	61
APPENDICES	
A. OTHER ALTERNATIVES	67
B. COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC MEETING NUMBER 3	77
C. IN THE NEWS	79

LIST OF MAPS

MAP 4.1 – AREAS OF INFLUENCE	17
MAP 5.1 – CONCEPT DIAGRAM	23
MAP 6.1 – PREFERRED REDEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE PHASE ONE	27
MAP 6.2 – PREFERRED REDEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE PHASE TWO	29
MAP 6.3 – RECOMMENDED LAND USE	49

Chapter One Introduction

Background

The Comprehensive Plan Update 2006-2026: An Areawide Vision for Kenton County, adopted in December 2006, recommended that a small area study be conducted for the Dixie Highway corridor through the City of Park Hills. The intent of this small area study, per the Comprehensive Plan, is to encourage the planning and implementation of the renewal of the Gateway Area along Dixie Highway.

Small area studies are intended to be adopted by the Kenton County Planning Commission (KCPC) as a more detailed part of the comprehensive plan for the area covered. It is therefore necessary that the small area study comply with the basic requirements of state law for updates to the comprehensive plan. The *Park Hills Dixie Study* will first be reviewed and adopted by the City of Park Hills after which it will be forwarded to the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission (NKAPC) for a recommendation to be made to the KCPC for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. Once adopted by the Planning Commission, these studies are used as the basis for review by NKAPC staff, the KCPC, and the City for development recommendations in the area.

This study will focus its attention on the redevelopment of the Dixie Highway Corridor through the City of Park Hills. The purpose of this study is to encourage practices and develop recommendations which will promote the economic vitality of the corridor.

Market Analysis

The first step in completing this plan was the preparation of market analysis, conducted by GEM Public Sector Services. This study, entitled *A Market Analysis of the Dixie Highway Corridor in the City of Park Hills, Kentucky* describes the purpose of the study as follows: The purpose of the analysis is to determine the range of potential land uses that can be accommodated in the study corridor in the City of Park Hills, now and in the future, based on the needs demonstrated by the marketplace. The public purposes for conducting market analyses are numerous. Obviously, a market analysis as a prerequisite to a comprehensive planning effort has value. Communities can revise their land use plans on the bases of the needs that are revealed by the market

This study focuses on the redevelopment of the Dixie Highway corridor through the City of Park Hills. Three public meetings were held during the course of the project and input received was used in addition to the market analysis to draft a preferred redevelopment alternative for the Dixie Highway corridor.

analysis. Similarly, communities can make zoning decisions on the bases of current market evidence rather than on conjecture or market hearsay. Quantitative and qualitative support from an objective, third party, market analyst is often better than attempting to defend contentious zoning decisions without any factual, current market information. This market analysis will be discussed in further detail in **Chapter 3** of this *Park Hills Dixie Study*. The entire market analysis can be found online at nkapc.org or a copy can be obtained at the NKAPC offices.

Project Process

Task Force

A major component of this small area study was public input and citizen involvement throughout the duration of the project. A task force comprising 14 members representing various interest groups was formed. Some of these groups included the Civic Association, City Council, the City's representative on the Kenton County Planning Commission, the Business Association, local business owners, and neighborhood residents. The Task Force provided oversight and guidance throughout the study process while representing the interests of the community. Their final task in the planning process was approval of the final draft of this report and submission of it to the Park Hills City Council.

Study Boundary

The study area for the project, as approved by the Task Force in December of 2008, includes the length of Dixie Highway from the Park Hills City border with the City of Fort Wright to the Park Hills City border with the City of Covington. Except for a few locations, the study boundary extends primarily only one parcel deep on either side of Dixie Highway. These locations include a portion of St. Joseph Lane and the inclusion of the Park Hills portion of the Gateway Community and Technical College. The study boundary is shown in green in Figure 1.1.

Key Person Interviews

Interviews were conducted with roughly 35 key persons within the community. These key persons included representatives from such groups as City departments,



FIGURE 1.1

STUDY BOUNDARY

local high schools and colleges, local religious groups, the Kentucky Heritage Council, Duke Energy, Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky, Northern Kentucky Water District, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Vision 2015, Village Green Committee, Business Association, Civic Association and several more. Interviews were conducted to gather information pertinent to the study and identify any plans the various groups had for the area including any issue or concerns for the area.

All of those interviewed were sent monthly updates to keep them informed of the happenings of this study. Keeping them informed also provided opportunity for those key persons to provide staff and the City with any new information which may become important to the study.

Existing Conditions

The study began by conducting an analysis of existing conditions in the area including information regarding outside areas of influence, existing land use and zoning, demographics, community facilities and utilities, green

infrastructure, mobility, and a streetscape inventory. Two additional components of the existing conditions inventory process included a review of past studies affecting the study area and the aforementioned key person interviews.

First Public Meeting – January 22, 2009

After completion of the existing conditions report, the first public meeting for the study was held on January 22, 2009 at the Generations Church (formerly the Covington First Church of the Nazarene). Over 60 people were in attendance for a brief staff presentation, small group discussions, and a visual preference survey. More information on the first public meeting is provided in **Chapter 5** of the Interim Report which can be found at nkapc.org.

Mission Statement and Goals

The Park Hills Dixie Study Task Force worked to create a vision for the study area based on the existing conditions report and public comments received at the first public meeting. The vision statement and goals, as adopted by the task force in February of 2009, can be found in **Chapter 2** of this document.

Interim Report

An interim report was produced by NKAPC staff in April of 2009. This document included the vision and goals for the study, the existing conditions report, comments received from the first public meeting, and a Dixie Highway Corridor Parking Study. This report and is available online on the project webpage at nkapc.org.

Concept Diagram

With vision and goals crafted and relevant information collected about the study area, the Task Force prepared a concept diagram depicting their overall view of how the corridor should be arranged for redevelopment. This conceptual view of the study area was the first step toward preparation of scenarios for redevelopment presented in this plan and a change in the comprehensive plan's recommended land use map. **Chapter 5** of this document describes the concept plan and the specifics about how the Task Force used this diagram throughout the planning process.

Alternative Redevelopment Scenarios

Through several of the monthly Task Force meetings, Task Force members worked with NKAPC staff to create four different redevelopment scenarios. The study area was broken into three areas – North, Core, and South. The scenarios created by the Task Force and staff present concepts for redevelopment over the three parts of the study area. These alternatives can be reviewed in **Appendix A** of this document.

Second Public Meeting – May 14, 2009

A second public meeting was held on May 14, 2009, at the Generations Church. At this meeting, attendees were shown the concept diagram and the four redevelopment alternatives created by the Task Force. These redevelopment alternatives were meant to generate discussion with the public and generate input about the preferred way to redevelop the Dixie Highway Corridor through Park Hills. Participants worked with staff and the Task Force to point out both positive and negative attributes of each alternative. A full recap of this meeting can be found on the project web page at nkapc.org.

Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative (as described in **Chapter 6**) was prepared by the Task Force based on comments received at the second public meeting. This preferred alternative helped the City by depicting development styles, transportation improvements and use of public spaces envisioned for the area in the future. Based on the comments received at the first two public meetings, the preferred alternative is comprised of two phases for implementation. The first phase depicts the use of more existing structures and uses that are envisioned to remain for several years, while the second phase depicts the more complete redevelopment of the corridor with replacement of most of the existing structures.

Recommendations/Implementation

Chapter 7 compiles and briefly describes recommendations of this study. The table in this chapter is intended to provide easy reference to recommendations made in this study. Included in the table are recommended time frames and suggested parties with primary responsibility or roles in the implementation process.

Third Public Meeting – September 10, 2009

A third, and final public meeting was held during the planning portion of this project to gather public input and response to the draft report. This meeting was held on September 10, 2009 and provided the community the opportunity to review the preferred redevelopment alternative as well as the recommendations and implementation strategies selected by the Task Force. Comments received from this meeting can be found in **Appendix B** of this document.

Review and Adoption

The study was reviewed by the Task Force at their September 17, 2009 meeting. The Task Force

recommended the adoption of this study for incorporation into the *Comprehensive Plan Update: 2006 – 2026* to the City of Park Hills. The Park Hills City Council adopted the study and authorized an application to the Kenton County Planning Commission to incorporate the study into the *Comprehensive Plan Update: 2006 – 2026* on October 12, 2009. The Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission reviewed the study on October 19, 2009 and recommended it to the Kenton County Planning Commission for adoption into the *Comprehensive Plan Update: 2006 – 2026* on December 3, 2009.

Chapter Two

Vision and Goals

Mission Statement

The Dixie Highway corridor in Park Hills has a unique history shaped by widespread use of the automobile in the 1920's. The area developed into what was known as "The Gourmet Strip," a collection of restaurants and dinner clubs. Over time, the area lost much of its prominence with the closing of established businesses and the opening of I-71/75, which shifted much of the traffic away from the Dixie Highway. The mission of the Park Hills Dixie Study is to guide the future development along the Dixie Highway corridor through Park Hills in a way that will strengthen the City with a thriving business base while preserving the "small town" attributes enjoyed by our residents.

Goals

- Ensure multiple methods of access and connectivity as well as accessible public open spaces
 - Objective* - Create pathway linkages for both sides of Dixie Highway so that traffic is not limited to the automobile.
 - Objective* – Biking and walking should be just as much a focus as access by automobile.
- Incorporate green building principles into all designs while reinventing the historic core of Park Hills.
 - Objective* - Encourage green practices as part of redevelopment initiatives along the corridor.
- Ensure Park Hills' long-term economic success. Create a corridor that is attractive to new businesses and increase the growth opportunities for existing businesses.
 - Objective* - Create a public corridor that reflects the architectural culture of Park Hills and strengthens the sense of a destination within the boundary.
 - Objective* - Provide a variety of uses by including and balancing office, residential, retail, cultural and civic spaces within the boundary. These uses should be community based and compliment the neighboring uses in Ft. Wright and Covington on the City's borders. Uses should include activities which occur both in the daytime and the night.

The following mission statement and goals for the project were adopted by the Park Hills Dixie Study Task Force in February of 2009. The mission of this study is to guide the future development in a way that will strengthen the City with a thriving business base while preserving the "small town" attributes enjoyed by our residents.

Chapter Three

Summary Of Market Analysis And Demographics

A key component of the Park Hills Dixie Study was the preparation of a market analysis to assist the City of Park Hills in identifying strengths and weaknesses related to potential future land uses. The following summary is provided by Gem Public Sector Services the consultants for the market analysis. A full version of this market analysis including extensive appendices that provide background data is available from the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission or online at nkapc.org.

Definition of the Study Area

The Park Hills Dixie Study area consists of a segment of the Dixie Highway corridor within the boundaries of the City of Park Hills, Kentucky. The study area comprises approximately 110 acres of land demised into approximately 63 separate parcels.

The City of Park Hills contains 0.8 square miles and is located in northwestern Kenton County. Two of the City's major attributes are its proximity to downtown Cincinnati as well as its access to a wide array of suburban venues in Northern Kentucky via I-71/75.

Demographic Highlights

While there are a number of demographic measures that shed light on the make-up and growth trends in a community, there is a short list of key measures that are used as foundation blocks for a market analysis of the community. Among the key measures that will be discussed below are: population, households, the most basic indicators of urban growth and demand for consumer goods and services. Next in importance are household income and consumer expenditures; basic measures of the well being of a community and its ability to purchase goods and services. Other key demographics include estimates of workforce participation of community residents and employment in the community; these measures offer an idea of how self-sufficient a community is in providing employment opportunities for its residents. All of the measures cited above are parts of prerequisite research into the market demand for real estate, and/or land uses.

The median population age and income is increasing in the City of Park Hills. With these increases, City residents want to maintain the City's vitality and seek opportunities for growth, without compromising the small town character of Park Hills. It is essential that Park Hills create a sense of destination on the Dixie Highway corridor in order to attract merchants.

Population

As a result of the current crisis in mortgage lending and the current recession, proprietary data sources have been inaccurate in estimating population and households for 2008 and projected for 2013. Population and household dynamics have both been influenced by current economic and market conditions. The City of Park Hills is no exception to this observation regarding proprietary data. Based on proprietary information supplemented by other data available from public sources, the estimated 2008 population in the City of Park Hills was 2,743 and households totaled 1,285. The projected population for 2013 for Park Hills is 2,628 and households will total 1,233. Both the proprietary 2008 estimate and the 2013 projection anticipate more attrition in the population and households than appears evident from other data sources. The average number

of persons per household is trending downward from 2.15 persons per household in 2000 to a projected 2.13 persons per household in 2013. Proprietary sources indicate approximately 2.13 persons per household in 2008 for the City of Park Hills. This suggests that the population of the City is becoming more aged overall since children typically force the average population per household higher. Additional evidence of an aging population is provided by the trend of the median age of the population, as seen in Figure 3.1 below. The median age of the population is increasing and the population in all age brackets younger than age 45 is projected to decrease while the population the age brackets of 45 and over is projected to grow. The overall decrease in persons per households appears to be a function of an increase in the number of single adults living in households.

PARK HILLS, KENTUCKY, POPULATION TRENDS; 1990-2013									
	1990		2000		2008		2013		TOTAL
									CHANGE
Total Population	3,308		2,960		2,743		2,628		(680)
Total Households	1,443		1,375		1,285		1,233		(210)
Persons per Household		2.29		2.15		2.13		2.13	(0.16)
Female Population	1,814	54.84%	1,544	52.16%	1,425	51.95%	1,363	51.86%	(451)
Male Population	1,494	45.16%	1,416	47.84%	1,319	48.09%	1,264	48.10%	(230)
Age									
Age 0 - 4	6.7%	221	6.0%	177	5.8%	158	4.7%	124	(97)
Age 5 - 14	9.7%	322	10.8%	320	9.8%	269	9.6%	253	(69)
Age 15 - 19	5.0%	165	4.9%	146	5.1%	140	4.7%	122	(43)
Age 20 - 24	8.9%	296	7.2%	212	6.8%	186	7.4%	193	(103)
Age 25 - 34	21.0%	695	17.0%	504	14.0%	385	13.0%	343	(352)
Age 35 - 44	15.4%	509	16.1%	476	13.9%	382	12.7%	333	(176)
Age 45 - 54	10.1%	334	14.0%	414	15.5%	424	14.5%	381	48
Age 55 - 64	8.5%	282	9.3%	276	14.0%	385	16.1%	423	141
Age 65 - 74	8.3%	274	7.5%	221	7.4%	202	9.5%	249	(26)
Age 75 - 84	5.1%	169	5.2%	155	5.2%	142	5.3%	140	(30)
Age 85 +	1.2%	40	2.0%	60	2.6%	71	2.5%	66	26
Median Age	34.2		37.5		41.1		43.5		9.3

FIGURE 3.1
PARK HILLS, KENTUCKY, POPULATION TRENDS 1990 - 2013

Households

Household details indicate that only 23 percent of Park Hills' households have children and only 36 percent of Park Hills' households are married couples. Approximately 8 percent of Park Hills' households are single adults with children: approximately three of every four single adult households with children are single female householders. Of households without children, 73 percent are householders without spouses. Single person households comprised 43.6 percent of all households in the City at the end of 2008 and this percentage is projected to increase slightly to 44.6 percent by the end of 2013. Since many households are occupied by single adults, or unmarried adults the make-up of households directly affects the nature of the housing inventory, at present and in the future. The data indicates that a substantially higher percentage of households in Park Hills are renters than in the context market areas, the surrounding cities, included in this study. The composition of the households in the City is likely to directly influence the composition of household occupancy styles for the foreseeable future.

Household Income

The household income statistics for the City of Park Hills exceed all of the City's context markets in all measures except median household income which trails slightly behind the context markets.

Similar to the context areas of which the City of Park Hills is a part, households appear to have made "real income gains" between 1990 and 2000 and they appear to have outpaced inflation since 2000. Higher household incomes in the City of Park Hills have led to local residents spending significantly more per household on household expenditures and retail expenditures. This statistic is important in evaluating the market for retail enterprises in Park Hills. An important observation from the household and consumer expenditure data is that resident households in the City of Park Hills have similar buying habits and more spending capacity than households in the context geographies included in this study.

Housing Market Observations and Conclusions

Recent experience suggests that the Park Hills housing market will be affected in the same way the national housing market is being affected by the tumult in the housing and credit markets. It is likely that there will be a short-run imbalance between homes offered for sale and qualified buyers. This imbalance is likely to persist and new home construction is likely to be non-existent through 2009 and possibly 2010. It is likely that by 2010 some vitality will return to the housing markets, albeit at a reduced pace from that witnessed in recent years.

Based on an analysis of the City of Park Hills housing market, the following ten (10) market observations and recommendations are offered:

- Park Hills is likely to become less of a "home-owners community" with minimal additions to the housing inventory and a large rental component, it is possible for the City to become more defined as a "renters community" and that could shape the direction of housing for the long-term in Park Hills.
- Because the City is essentially "land locked", the City must focus on maintenance code enforcement of its entire housing inventory. Emphasis should be placed on maintaining the base of owner-occupied housing through the encouragement of regular updates of housing in the inventory and efforts to preserve and protect housing values in the resale market.
- Based on the inventory of housing units in Park Hills, annual freestanding single-family housing additions between zero homes and ten homes is likely with an average annual addition to the housing inventory between three homes and five homes per year.

- The projected rate of freestanding, single-family housing additions is well below the pace needed for a “normal replacement rate” for old existing housing units coming out of the inventory. A replacement rate between 15 units and 30 units per year essentially says that a home in Park Hills can be expected to last between 50 and 100 years. Some homes may survive longer, but deterioration and obsolescence will render the majority of old housing units obsolete and ready for demolition. Of course, casualty losses will claim a small percentage of the housing inventory as well. Some housing units remain on the landscape and are counted in the inventory although they may not have been occupied for some years before they either collapse or are demolished.
- A total of approximately five new single-family homes are projected to enter the housing inventory in Park Hills between the end of 2008 and the end of 2013. The rate of growth between 2008 and 2013 is reduced from a “normal” rate of additions to the housing inventory because of the current mortgage lending crisis and general economic conditions. An average of approximately three units to five units per year could be anticipated in a more normal economic environment, although the City could be challenged to find the land for even this minimal addition of units year after year.
- The projected housing growth of only five units through the end of 2013 would likely consume between one acre and two acres. The densities cited are typical of suburban development. These densities will not be sufficient to introduce meaningful numbers of new housing to the inventory in Park Hills in the future. Higher densities and attached single-family products will be necessary to significantly refresh the housing inventory. This will likely mean the introduction of condominium products to the housing inventory in Park Hills.
- In analyzing the population of Park Hills, it appears that there would be a market for more owner-occupied, “attached dwelling” products than are currently available. These products are envisioned to be of two types; condominiums for empty nesters who no longer want the maintenance burden of freestanding single-family homes as well as residential communities offering extended services to senior citizens. The senior products could be for sale (condominiums) or for rent (apartments). Ease of access and convenience to healthcare services should be factors in the design and location(s) of these projects. This makes sites in close proximity to the I-71/75 corridor more likely with proximity to the new medical center in the vicinity. Similarly, sites in close proximity to the I-71/75 corridor could be developed for a modern condominium community with easy access to the highway for workday commuting to Cincinnati.
- The income characteristics of the City suggest that housing products should be in the mid-range of new housing prices. It is likely that the overall market will be more attracted to condominium units of moderate price ranges of the marketplace in the future as a result of higher household expenses in the future and other economic factors including commuting expenses for work.
- While it is too early to label recent housing market activity as a trend, there is some indication that the average sizes of new homes may have peaked and may actually be declining. This is not inconsistent with the demographics of households in which aging “baby boomers” who are now “empty nesters” are gravitating to smaller, more carefree homes. These demographics appear to be at work in Park Hills.
- The rental housing market in Park Hills has a very small non-traditional component in the form of single-family homes that have transitioned into the rental market at the present time. Slightly over three percent of housing units in the rental inventory are freestanding single-family homes and slightly more than six percent of the rental inventory is comprised of attached single-family units. The addition of new units to the rental inventory in recent years appears negligible. Demand for rental housing in the local market is evident. Since the composition of occupancy styles in Park Hills is

more heavily weighted to the rental housing than is typical of the market, the City must be cognizant of any transitions of owner-occupied housing to rental housing. It will not take much of a shift in occupancy styles to find the majority of housing in Park Hills is rental housing. This is not envisioned as a positive outcome for housing in the City, or for the City's overall vitality, should this housing shift take place.

Office Market Observations and Conclusions

Park Hills does not appear to have much of a competitive market supply of existing office or service business buildings to address any potential market demand that comes its way.

Based on an analysis of the City of Park Hills office market, the following 13 market observations and recommendations are offered:

- Park Hills will never retain all of the indigenous demand its residents generate for services, but the trade-off between residents going elsewhere for services and the influx of non-residents to well located businesses in Park Hills, particularly in the Dixie Highway corridor in close proximity to the I-71/75 corridor, will hopefully balance, or be skewed, in favor of Park Hills based businesses in the future. In essence, more independence rather than dependence on goods, services and employment opportunities located outside of the City.
- A worthy long-term goal would be for the City to better balance employment opportunities within the larger context markets.
- It appears that City residents want to maintain the City's vitality and seek opportunities for growth, but this vitality maintenance and growth cannot compromise the small town character of the Park Hills.
- Concentrating future urban development on sites along the Dixie Highway study corridor in close

proximity to the I-71/75 corridor could serve to accomplish both goals of Park Hills' residents. This favorable balance is dependent on recruiting the "right" businesses to the "right" locations in the City. Much of this direction will be to new improvements on existing or newly developed sites. Managing the development process will be crucial to the outcome for the City.

- The I-71/75 corridor is the "front door" to Park Hills. It is a convenient means of ingress and egress for residents, but it is also a major point of access for non-residents who come to Park Hills as frequently as daily to the private schools located at the south end of the study area. There are potential office-based uses that could serve to extend the time non-residents spend in Park Hills and expand the employment base of the City.
- Based on current market conditions and what appear to be possible future market opportunities, the City may wish to position itself to address market opportunities when presented through cooperative relationships with property owners who understand and embrace the desires of the City to enhance employment opportunities while not just yielding to development pressure to build any project that comes along anywhere a developer wants to locate a project.
- The make-up of employment opportunities in the context markets suggests that there could be demand for between 13,000 and 24,000 square feet of office space in Park Hills if the City aggressively attempts to recruit employers in "Health and Medical Services", "Other Business Services", and "Social Services" categories of office based service businesses. The potential demand is described in square feet of additional space for the array of uses in the categories indicated. Whether this space is new space or existing, but currently vacant space, will be up to the operators of businesses within the categories identified to determine on the basis of their specific requirements.
- Within the category of "Health and Medical Services" a potential market for medical practices involved in sports medicine (based on proximity to

the schools and their athletic programs), physical rehabilitation (based both on the schools and the demographics of Park Hills), senior care (based on the demographics of Park Hills), and diagnostic imaging (based on the interrelationship of this service to the specialties described above).

- Within the category of “Other Business Services” are such enterprises as copy centers (based on convenience to the interstate highway and proximity to schools) and express mail services (based primarily on convenience of access). This is a very broad category with numerous possible specialty areas most of which would be small space consumers and small-scale employers.
- The category of “Social Services” spans both the public and private sector of employers and jobs. In the public sector, the needs are more likely to be directed at support services for senior citizens (based on the demographics of Park Hills). In the private sector the term “Social Services” could be broadly interpreted to include a variety of private services such as home cleaning services, home maintenance services, and transportation and delivery services.
- Consumer services in specialized space or retail storeroom venues could contribute to demand for between 6,200 and 8,500 square feet of space in Park Hills. The square footage range is estimated based on the potential employment additions indicated by the analysis and a market based range of employment densities.
- The vision created through the study area plan currently in progress can only be implemented with the understanding and cooperation of property owners and business operators in the study corridor today.
- The City currently has limited resources to make redevelopment a staff driven implementation process. A City driven approach to development will be necessary in order to manage the growth and future development of Park Hills to retain as much of the current “small town feel” of the community as possible while it continues to grow and evolve.

Retail Market Observations and Conclusions

Based on an analysis of the City of Park Hills retail market, the following 17 market observations and recommendations are offered:

- It is essential that Park Hills create a sense of “destination” on the Dixie Highway corridor in order to attract merchants who can utilize this sense of place to build a solid neighborhood business with the potential to draw consumer dollars into the City.
- The creation of a “destination” will also assist in capturing more retail expenditure dollars from students and parents from the two private schools at the south end of the study area. These people represent non-residents who visit Park Hills on a daily basis. They are already in the vicinity, but they are not likely to be spending any money in Park Hills’ stores today. The objective is to get these non-residents to spend more time and money in Park Hills. This will also serve to broaden the market footprint of Park Hills because these are non-residents who will return home and, hopefully, tell others about their dining, and shopping experiences in Park Hills “Business District”.
- While a concentration of retailers brings consumers and money into the local market, there is a danger in these retail business concentrations. If there is a primary retailer who closes or moves to serve a dynamic market, the “retail gravity” of the merchant cluster can be lost. The retail venue can experience high percentages of vacancy and ultimately languish in the marketplace. It is far beyond the capacity of many small communities to address the land use redevelopment issues that this type of scenario presents.
- In essence, a word of caution is offered to Park Hills in attracting or promoting any more intense retail development in the City; there is a delicate balance of supply and demand to maintain.
- The retail market in the City of Park Hills captures a little less than 30 percent of the indigenous market

demand generated by resident households. The primary problem with improving the percentage of market demand captured by existing, or new, Park Hills' retail businesses is the array of competitive merchants within convenient travel times from the City.

- The analysis estimates that as much as 70,000 square feet of "new" retail space could be needed if all of the unmet market demand in the categories indicated could be captured in Park Hills; approximately 61,000 square feet of retail storerooms and approximately 9,000 square feet of restaurant space. It is unlikely that the City will be that successful in capturing additional market share; therefore, a capture rate of 50 percent will be applied reducing the "new" retail space estimate to 35,000 square feet. This space could be allocated to approximately 30,000 square feet of retail storerooms and approximately 5,000 square feet of restaurant space. Whether all of this space is "new" or simply a new use of existing space is dependent on the available inventory of space at the time it is demanded in the marketplace.
- Among the underserved categories in the local market were "Auto Dealers and Gas Stations". This category appears to be a need in search of a site that does not appear to fit in the study area. It should be noted that much of the demand for gas stations is also found in conjunction with convenience stores. While there are no convenience stores in Park Hills, the number of competitors in close proximity to the City strongly suggest that there sufficient existing competitors in the marketplace to absorb the local market demand.
- The category of "Building Materials, Hardware and Garden" stores is a category that could represent multiple opportunities for the study corridor. This potential is due in part to the aging housing stock within the City. While there are several "big box home improvement stores" in close proximity to Park Hills, it is the small-scale, neighborhood hardware store that is likely to be the best fit for Park Hills. These stores are usually affiliated with a specific supplier; e.g., "Do It Best". They typically require between a minimum of 5,000 square feet and 15,000 square feet and offer a broad range of goods for older, existing home maintenance and repairs.
- Although part of the category cited above a "Garden Store" could be an extension of a flower shop or a specialty all on its own. In Park Hills, this could be a retail storeroom based business that also offers home gardening and landscaping services. The size range could be quite broad. The only concern regarding this category of business is the potential need for outdoor storage and the use of trucks in the normal course of business.
- "Clothing Stores" represent another category of retailer that is envisioned in some niche forms in Park Hills. Small-scale merchants with local name recognition would be the best candidates. These niche retailers may only need storerooms between 1,000 square feet and 5,000 square feet with the typical storeroom comprising 2,000 square feet.
- The category of "Food Stores" is likely to be made up of specialty merchants. The City already has a small concentration of merchants who fit this category. The objective would be to build the range of merchants into a specialty food based destination that would draw consumers from outside Park Hills. Merchants in the specialty food categories can be used to get the non-Park Hills residents who are in the vicinity every day to stop and take something home for a meal. This can be a convenience based need that is founded on the local name recognition of the merchants.
- "Furniture Stores" are envisioned to be more in the realm of decorator shops with some merchandise to sell. Once again, the objective is not to compete with large-scale retailers or "big box" furniture stores, but to focus on the business base that appears to be represented in the demographics of Park Hills.
- "General Merchandise Stores" represent another category of retailing that spans a very broad range. Not unlike the observation regarding auto dealers,

this may be a category of underserved market demand, but not a retail uses that can be readily accommodated in the study area.

- “Restaurants” represent a category with many niches. There are already competitors in Park Hills, but the market can support more competition. This is a category of retail (service) use that works better with more competitors in close proximity to one another. The scope of this study identified an underserved market. This is another category where it is more likely the City could attract a local vendor, or vendors, with name recognition. Typical restaurants require from 5,000 square feet to as much as 10,000 square feet with some rare exceptions occupying even larger spaces. This category continues to build on the basic theme of “destination” creation.
- “Specialty stores” represent another category of merchants better described as “all other types of retailers”. These merchants are more likely to in-fill small spaces in the context of the study corridor. These merchants are likely to be followers rather than leaders in the creation of a destination in Park Hills. They will be small space consumers with minimal employment.
- There are three categories of retail businesses that appear to be bringing dollars into Park Hills; these

are “Bars”, “Other Food Service”, and “Other Food Stores”. The specific sources of revenue for the three categories of retailers bringing dollars into the City are difficult to identify. In all three categories of businesses it appears that the magnitude of their market influence may be driven by their proximity to I-71/75 and Dixie Highway that traverses the City of Park Hills.

- The success of some businesses in capturing consumer expenditures from outside of the City suggests that a stronger base of retail businesses in Dixie Highway corridor could extend the market reach of Park Hills and serve to bolster employment as well as the market perception of Park Hills as a “destination”.

Based on current market conditions and what appear to be possible future market opportunities, the City may wish to position itself to address market opportunities when presented. This may best be accomplished through cooperative relationships with property owners who understand and embrace the desires of the City to enhance employment opportunities while not yielding to development pressure to build any project that comes along anywhere a developer wants to locate a project. The vision created through the corridor plan can only be implemented with the understanding and cooperation of property owners and business operators in the study corridor

Chapter Four

Areas of Influence

The Park Hills Dixie Study focuses primarily on the uses and anticipated uses within the study boundary. However, throughout the Park Hills Dixie Study process, the impact of several neighboring activities surrounding the designated study area were monitored by staff and considered by the Task Force during the formulation of a redevelopment strategy for the Dixie Highway Corridor. These areas of influence were briefly addressed in the Interim Report which can be found online at nkapc.org. Ten different areas near the study boundary were considered for the impacts they may pose on the study area. These ten areas include the following:

- Northern Kentucky University, Covington Campus
- Gateway Community and Technical College
- The Views
- Devou Park
- Realignment of Amsterdam Road
- Trolley Park
- Brent Spence Bridge Replacement
- Multi-Family Area west of Dixie Highway adjacent to I-71/75
- Ft. Wright Developments
- Realignment of Kyle's Lane

While most of these designated areas or projects have the potential for significant impact on the Dixie Highway Corridor through Park Hills, two of these areas were found to likely impact the corridor sooner than the others. Through several interviews conducted by NKAPC staff with Covington city officials and with representatives from the educational institutions it has been established that both the Northern Kentucky University, Covington Campus and the Gateway Community and Technical College are planning changes. Northern Kentucky University's campus was vacated early in 2009 and Gateway Community and Technical College plans to relocate in the near future. Information from these discussions indicated that these sites were currently underutilized and prime for redevelopment. The relocation of these two facilities could leave significant vacancies within the landscape adjacent to Park Hills. However, due to the high land value based on the views of downtown Cincinnati, it is likely these sites could redevelop quickly.

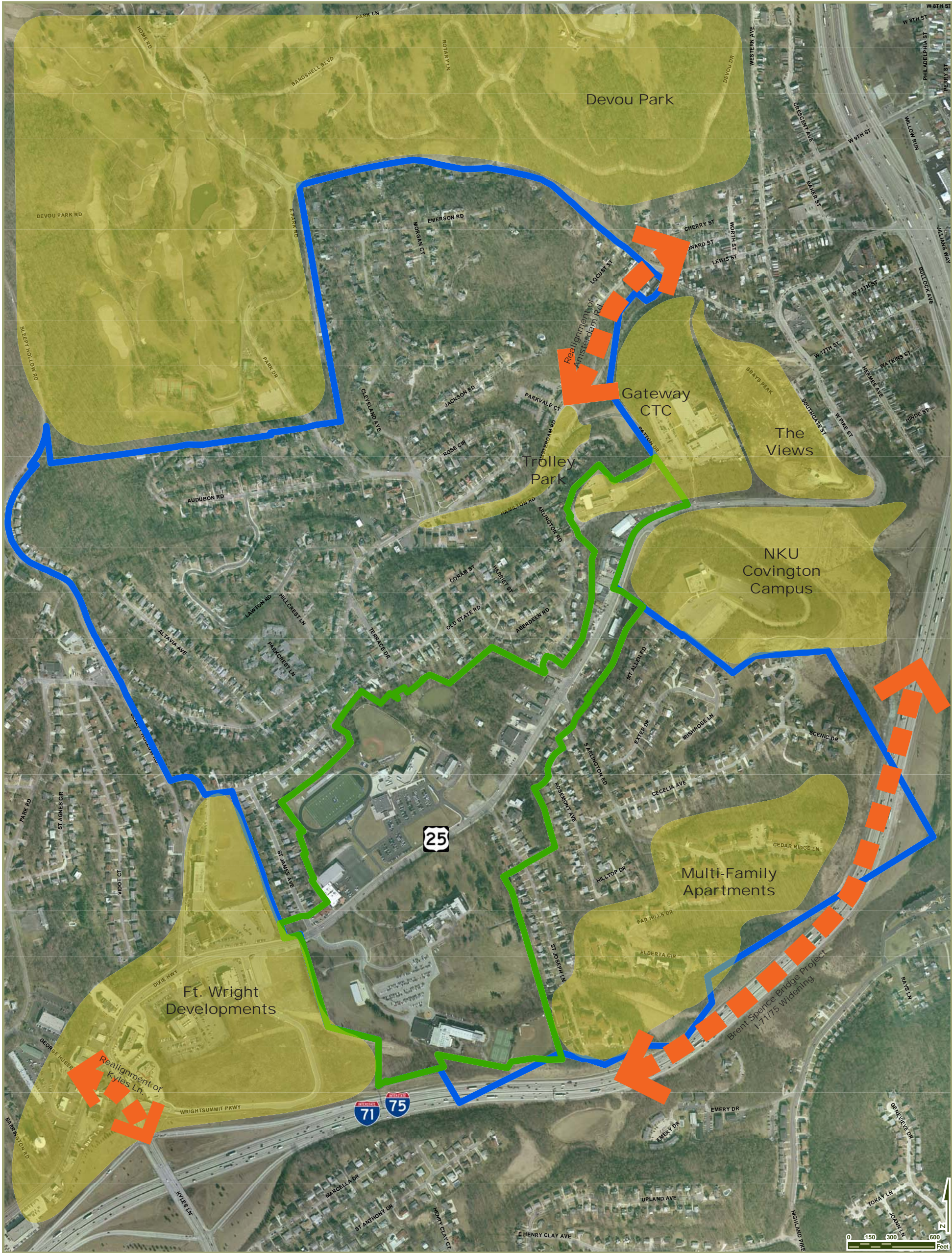
Ten areas of influence have been identified in the study that are not located within the study area but will have significant impact on the redevelopment of the study area. The redevelopment of the Northern Kentucky University, Covington Campus and Gateway Community and Technical College are anticipated to have the most impact on the study area.

Anticipated appropriate uses for these sites, per discussions with the City of Covington appear to be residential uses. With the scenic view of downtown Cincinnati and the high cost of construction due to the topography of the area, it is likely for these sites to move toward a high price-point and higher density residential uses. The market analysis, conducted as part of this study, calls for a limited number of new residential housing units within the next few years in Park Hills. The scale and price point for the redevelopment of these two sites in the City of Covington is likely significantly higher than the scale and price point of units which have the potential to be added within the Park Hills Dixie Study area. Development of residential units on these sites, therefore, may be a very positive influence for the planned redevelopment of the corridor in Park Hills, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Vehicular access to both of these sites will be an issue in which the City of Park Hills and the City of Covington will need to collaborate. Gateway Community and Technical College (a portion, approximately five acres

of which sits within the City of Park Hills) maintains its access only through the City of Park Hills. The primary access to the Northern Kentucky University, Covington Campus from Dixie Highway is currently closed and is experiencing hillside slippage issues which will need to be addressed for future use. A secondary access to the Northern Kentucky University site also utilizes existing City streets for access. Additionally, the Park Hills access to this site is also access for two residential properties within the City. The two cities will need to work together with developers to ensure both receive benefit from the redevelopment of this site.

Other areas of influence for the City of Park Hills to monitor closely within the coming years are developments near the Ft. Wright/Park Hills city border, the Brent Spence Bridge Replacement project, and realignment of Kyle's Lane within Ft. Wright. While all three projects appear to be in the more distant future, it will benefit the City of Park Hills to be involved and prepared to address the impacts of these development/redevelopment issues when they arise.



Legend



Study Boundary



City Boundary



Area of Influence



Roadway Modification



Chapter Five

Concept Diagram

One of the first steps in the preparation of this plan was the creation of an overall concept diagram for the study area. This diagram was used throughout the subsequent planning process by the Task Force and NKAPC staff as a guide in the creation of redevelopment alternatives and the recommended land use plan. One key purpose of this concept plan is to maintain a logical link between the vision and goals created at the beginning of the planning process and the final recommendations made through this plan. During the course of the planning process two concept diagrams were utilized.

Preliminary Concept Diagram

The preliminary concept diagram (Figure 5.1) was created based on two major components – community input previously gathered at the first public meeting and a focus on the goals and objectives created by the Task Force at the beginning of the *Park Hills Dixie Study* process.

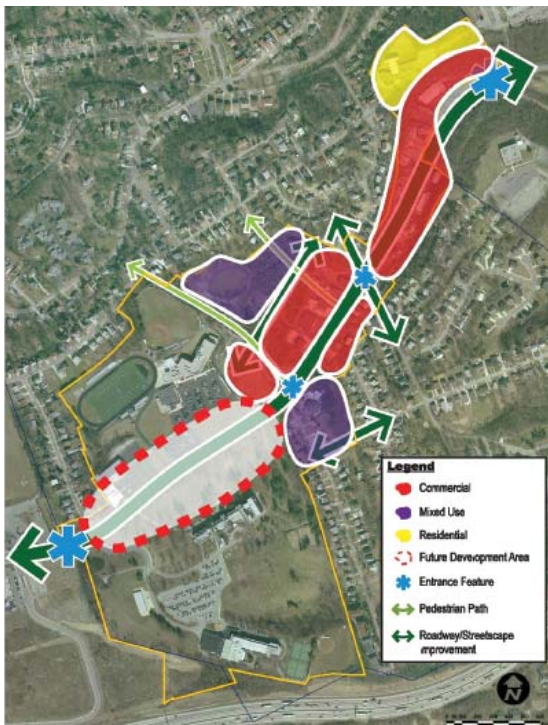


FIGURE 5.1
PRELIMINARY CONCEPT DIAGRAM

The primary vision of the Task Force and city residents includes the desire to create a sense of place and a destination within the corridor. To create this sense of place and provide a way for Park Hills to redevelop into a destination area within the region, the Task Force focused their preliminary thoughts toward promoting a walkable environment with a mix of uses, which provide activity hot spots throughout all different hours of the day.

Identifying gateway areas as well as continuing to

The concept diagram was created with community input and a focus on the goals and objectives created by the Task Force. The primary vision of the Task Force and City residents is to create a sense of place and a destination within the corridor and an economically viable business district within the City of Park Hills.

promote the installation of sidewalks will be some of the first implementable methods to create a sense of place. By creating a destination that defines the City of Park Hills and its unique history within the area, all who travel through this section of Dixie Highway will take note that this is an area that is special. The area will be identifiable as a key city on Dixie Highway which extends approximately eight miles through Kenton County and transverses nine cities.

Priorities

One of the most significant themes identified throughout the concept diagram process was the idea of implementing greenways and connectivity throughout the corridor and surrounding areas. Linking residents from one side of Dixie Highway to the other with both vehicular and pedestrian pathways was a primary goal of the Task Force.

A second priority for the Task Force was to insure and promote the vitality of businesses along the Dixie Highway corridor. This priority prompted the Task Force to envision Dixie Highway as a commercial corridor while maintaining a vision for the implementation process. The northern section of the corridor (from Arlington/S. Arlington to the Covington City limit) was envisioned for commercial uses. The Core Area was identified as the most intense mix of uses that should include retail, offices, and residential uses. The South Area (from St. Joseph's Lane to the Ft. Wright City line) was an area the Task Force viewed as having the potential to develop in a time frame beyond this planning period, or beyond 30 years from adoption. This is supported by information from the market analysis and input from the public at the first two public meetings.

The market analysis conducted for the entirety of Dixie Highway through Park Hills, points out a need for rather limited new development within the planning period that should be focused on small scale and niche type retail land uses. This vision prompted the Task Force to determine that it is best to focus development within the core area to create a destination and move away from the typical strip mall type development seen along Dixie Highway beyond the Park Hills border. Therefore, the preliminary and final concept

diagrams portray the south area as "Potential Future Development Area." In the event the area becomes attractive for development, a preferably after the core area is built out, it may be best suited for further commercial activity.

Better mobility along the Dixie Highway corridor and accessibility from the corridor to adjoining residential areas within the City was a third priority of the Task Force. While this topic will be further discussed in **Section 2 of Chapter 6**, it is important to note that during the concept diagram portion of the study process, the Task Force envisioned new options for motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians be considered. A new connection between St. Joseph's Lane and Rosemont Avenue, new ring road through the Core Area, and connection to Old State Road (through the Core Area) have been included to improve vehicular circulation surrounding the core development area. Additionally, two new multi-use paths have been envisioned from the Core Area to the primary residential area to the north of Dixie Highway along Old State Road.

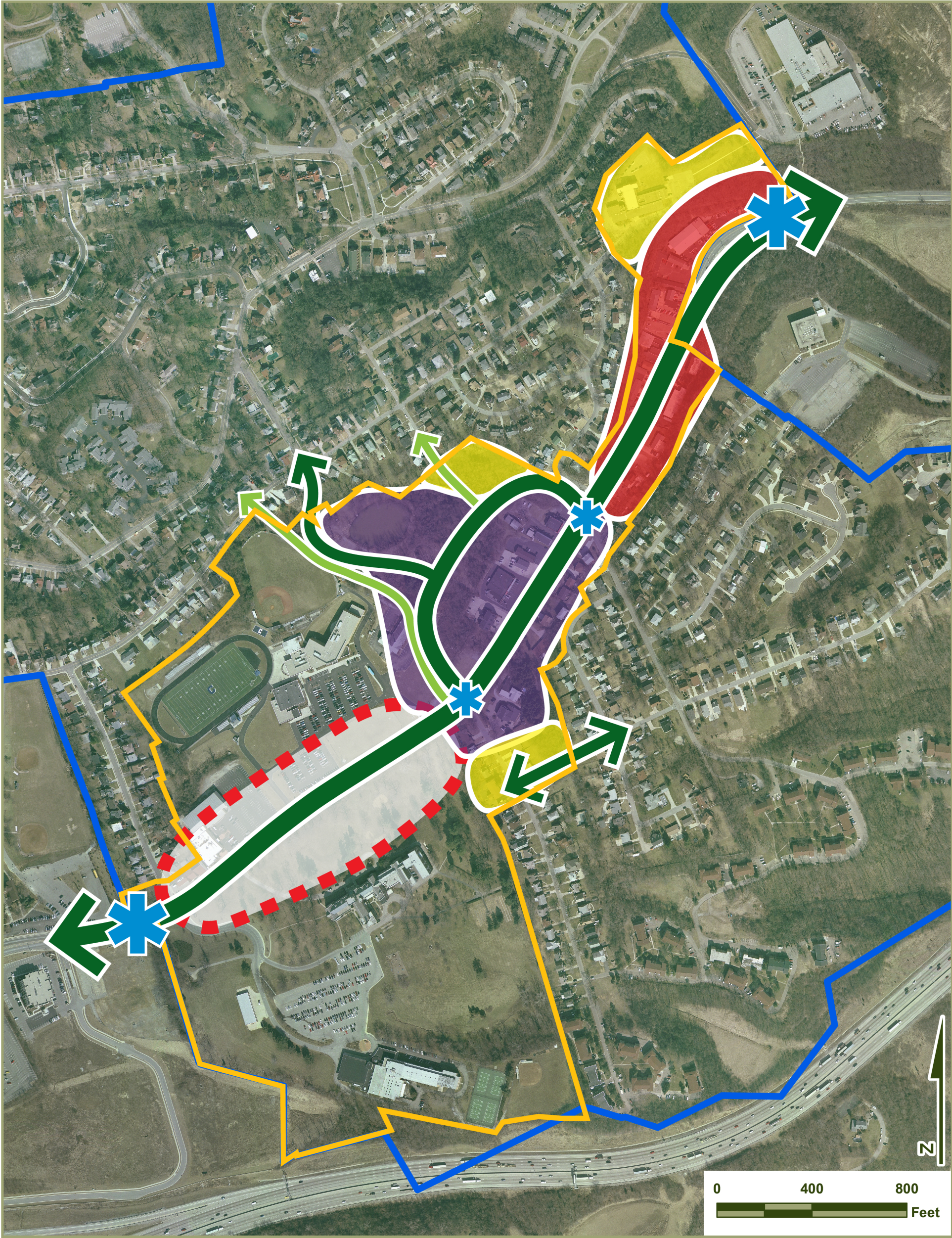
Final Concept Diagram

Two concept diagrams are shown in this chapter; one preliminary and one revised further through the planning process. While they are very similar, it is important to note that slight modifications were made to the overall concept for the area as the planning process progressed. The most notable change between the preliminary concept diagram and the final concept diagram is the land use designations made within the core area. Originally, only commercial activities were anticipated for the property directly abutting Dixie Highway. During the planning process and as a result of findings in the market analysis, it was found that residential uses could be feasible.










Furthermore, some residential uses were found to be desirable as buffers between new commercial and/or office land uses and adjoining residential land uses. Finally, at the second public meeting, residents indicated they liked the idea of mixing residential land use if possible within this area and using them as a buffer from the existing residential uses. As a result the area is now mostly designated as mixed use in the final concept diagram. Two small residential pockets have

also been designated within the Core Area; one on the northeast corner of the Core Area adjacent to Aberdeen Road, and another is located along the southern side of Dixie Highway along St. Joseph's Lane. This second residential pocket is intended to remain as a buffer from Dixie Highway and as a barrier so that commercial development does not encroach into the community along St. Joseph's Lane.

Additionally, the Task Force decided to include the once pedestrian only connection to Old State Road from the Core Area, as a connection that may include vehicular traffic, after hearing comments at the public meeting. More detailed information on land uses and the basis for the plan are found in the following chapters.



Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Commercial |  Pedestrian Path |
|  Mixed Use |  Roadway/Streetscape Improvement |
|  Residential |  Study Area Boundary |
|  Potential Future Development Area |  Park Hills City Boundary |
|  Entrance Feature | |



Chapter Six

Redevelopment Concept

Section One - Preferred Redevelopment Alternative

At the second public meeting, four redevelopment alternatives were presented to gather input and preferences for the redevelopment of the corridor. These alternatives can be reviewed in **Appendix A**. With public input, the Task Force prepared a preferred redevelopment alternative comprised of components from the four original alternatives to express an ideal development style for the City of Park Hills. This ideal development style is meant to guide Park Hills toward achieving their vision for the future. The preferred alternative was then presented at the final public meeting on September 10, 2009, and modifications were made as necessary for the final version presented here as part of this plan.

To help the community visualize how the corridor may redevelop over time, the preferred redevelopment alternative has been divided into two phases. The first phase, as seen in *Map 6.1*, helps to prioritize some of the first steps of implementation and prioritize where the City should focus its attention during the first several years of implementation. The second phase, as seen in *Map 6.2*, depicts how the entire corridor may appear after completion of all recommended development.

The Phase One and Phase Two drawings which follow are not intended to be site plans. Rather, these images are intended to help the community visualize they type of development they seek for the future. As development actually occurs, the finished development will take shape only after more detailed site and engineering design.

The first portion of **Section 1** discusses the overarching themes that are seen throughout the entire corridor. The second portion of **Section 1** describes the details of the preferred redevelopment alternative in terms of the South Area, the Core Area, and the North Area.

The preferred redevelopment alternative prepared by the Park Hills Dixie Study Task Force focuses includes recommendations for the physical redevelopment of the landscape, improvements to mobility, changes in land use, improvements to community facilities, and awareness and improvements in green infrastructure practices.

Overarching Themes

Median

In 2006 the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) in partnership with NKAPC prepared and adopted *The Dixie Fix* study, an overarching plan for the Dixie Highway corridor throughout Kenton County. The plan proposed several recommendations for the thoroughfare, including suggestions for implementation of access management controls where appropriate. Access management is defined as a formal, structured program to coordinate and maintain the safe and efficient use of the arterial street system, while providing necessary vehicular access to adjacent lands. In other words, creating a safer roadway by managing where and how adjoining property is accessed.

Non-traversable medians constitute a primary cornerstone of effective access management plans. These medians limit the location of left turns to strategic locations along the roadway, thus eliminating traffic conflict points. Specific steps are necessary to create the landscaped median and dedicated turn bays along the Park Hills section of Dixie Highway. The current roadway consists of four travel lanes, two northbound and two southbound, that are ten feet in width. Right-of-way widths along the corridor range from 64 to 70 feet, with an average of 66 feet. *The Dixie Fix* study



FIGURE 6.1

ABSENCE OF CURBS AND SIDEWALKS ALONG DIXIE HIGHWAY

recommends expanding the right of way to 70 feet throughout the corridor to accommodate the proposed roadway changes and added facilities. The study also recommends reducing the number of travel lanes from four to two and creating a landscaped center median that will be approximately 12 feet in width. This median will limit the currently unrestricted left turn movement to identified points along the route.

Currently access is unlimited on the northern side of the roadway due to the absence of a defined curb

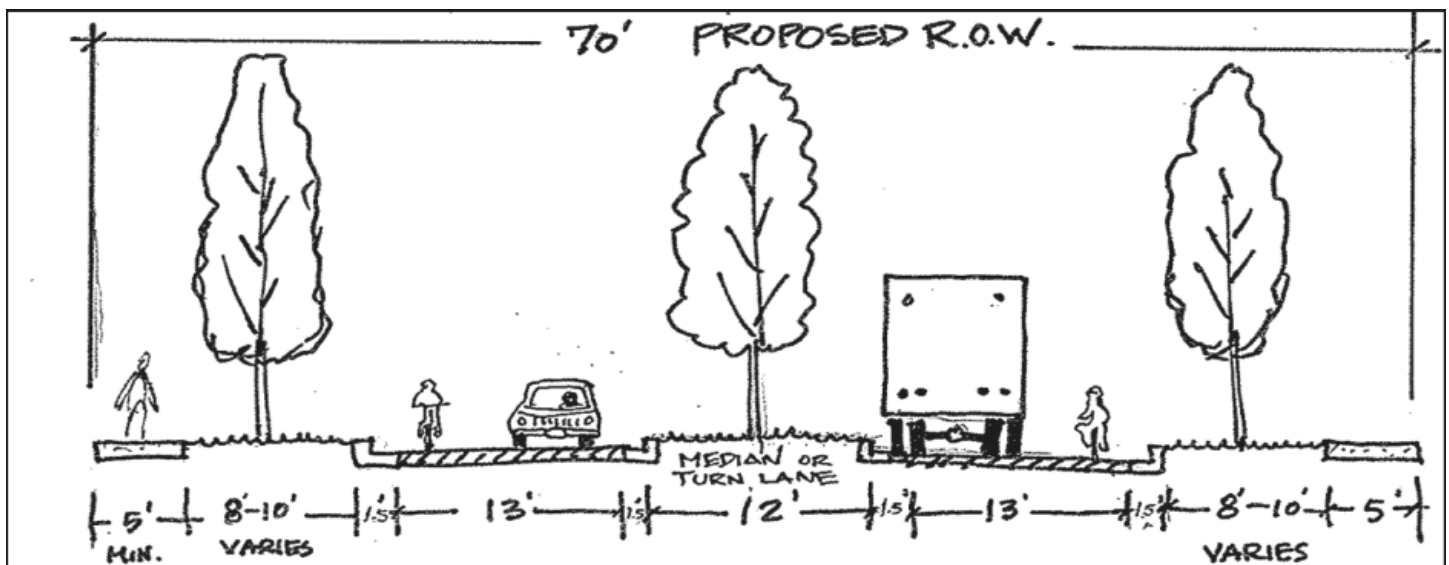


FIGURE 6.2

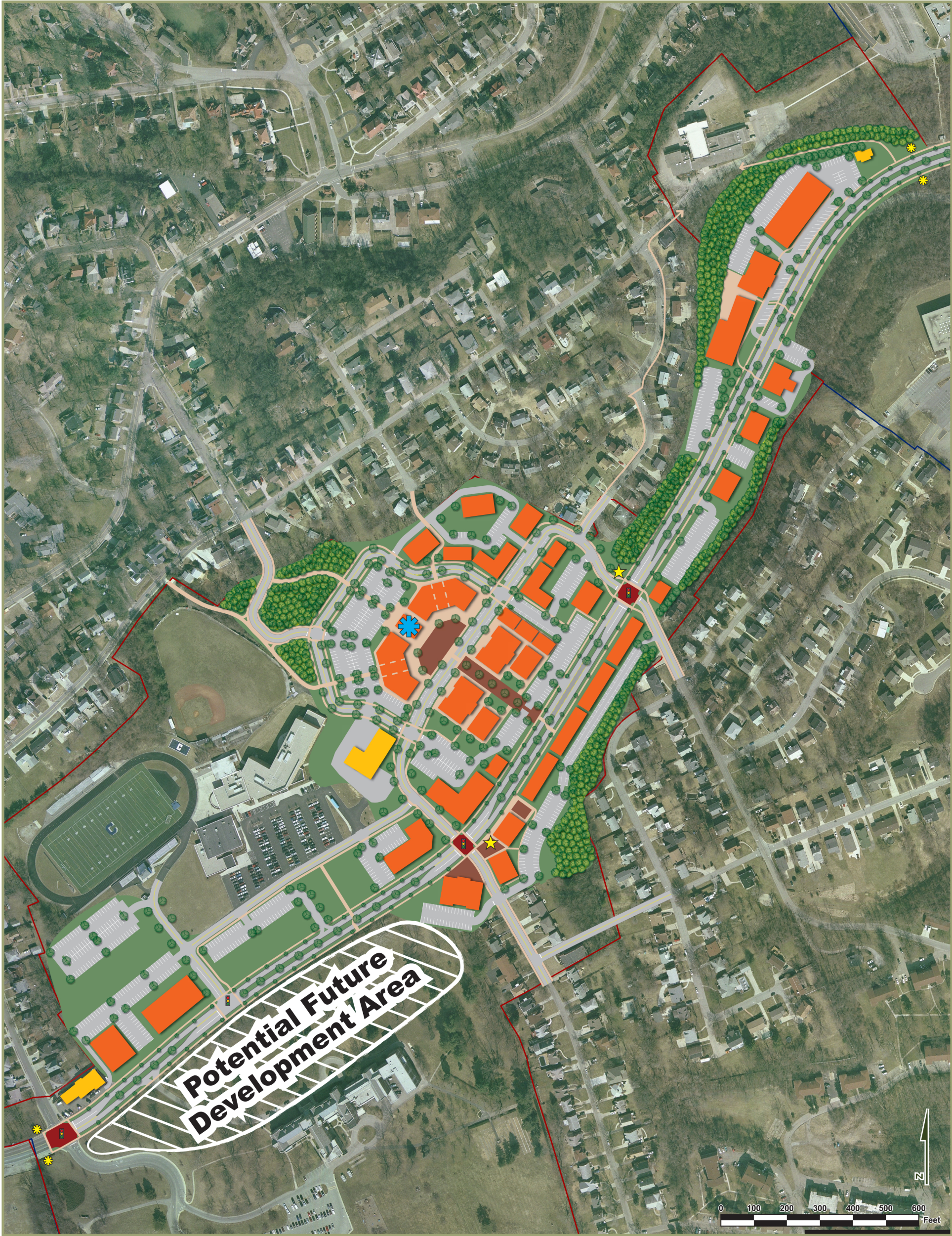
RECOMMENDED DIXIE HIGHWAY CROSS-SECTION IN PARK HILLS



Legend

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Existing Structure | Transit Stop / Shelter |
| New Structure | Intersection Gateway Feature |
| Plaza Area | Added tree or vegetation buffer |
| Pedestrian Path / Sidewalk | Study Area Boundary |
| Signature Building / Feature | Park Hills City Boundary |
| City Gateway Feature | |





Legend

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Existing Structure | Transit Stop / Shelter |
| New Structure | Intersection Gateway Feature |
| Plaza Area | Added tree or vegetation buffer |
| Pedestrian Path / Sidewalk | Study Area Boundary |
| Signature Building / Feature | Park Hills City Boundary |
| City Gateway Feature | |



to separate parking and travel lanes. The lack of a defined curb allows vehicles to enter and exit the primary roadway in a random manner and may create several potential conflict points for drivers travelling on the thoroughfare. Unlimited access also negates many of the positive aspects of median construction because some properties may not have left turn access. Driveway and median construction is recommended for properties between the Zachary Lauren Custom Design jeweler and the Fort Mitchell Garage (*Figure 6.1*).

In addition to increasing safety along the roadway, the landscaped median will also serve to beautify the corridor and provide added protection to pedestrians. *Figure 6.2* shows the proposed cross-section of Dixie Highway in Park Hills from *The Dixie Fix* study. The proposed 12 foot median will provide space for tree and landscaping. The space will also serve as a pedestrian sanctuary by allowing a space to wait between the travel lanes for vehicular traffic to pass when crossing Dixie Highway.

Specific recommendations for Phase One of the Preferred Redevelopment Alternative include construction of a raised non-traversable vegetated landscaped median throughout the study area. The median should be 12 feet in width and include street trees that provide adequate visibility for motorists. A cross section view of the median from *The Dixie Fix* study is provided in *Figure 6.2*. The potential exists that instead of a raised median that this could be depressed as part of the storm water management efforts for the area. (See Section 2 of this Chapter for further details)

The non-traversable landscaped median will change to an auxiliary left turn lane at full access points where left turns are permitted into properties. Phases One and Two of the preferred alternative show auxiliary left turn lanes as a darker grey lane bordered by yellow striping (*Maps 6.1* and *6.2*). Turn lanes should be engineered to provide adequate stacking space for left turning vehicles and they should also offer sufficient space for vehicles that are turning left from properties to wait before joining the flow of traffic. Recommendations concerning the median should be started in Phase One and carried forward into Phase Two of the preferred alternative.

Parking

Parking has historically been an issue discussed by commercial property owners along Dixie Highway. A parking study (Interim Report – Chapter 6: Dixie Highway Corridor Parking Survey) was conducted in conjunction with this small area study to address the issue and determine plans for future parking needs. The study found that while some specific lots operated at or very close to capacity, a vast majority of parking areas along the corridor were more than adequate for parking demand. Additionally, where some areas experienced high parking volumes, immediately adjacent parking lots were either completely or nearly empty. Differences in parking volumes suggest that congregating parking through the elimination of boundaries between lots could allow for more efficient parking scenarios. Both Phase One and Two of the preferred alternative recommend implementing congregated parking areas to allow for greater land utilization for buildings and other uses and to support parking on the smallest area possible.

In conjunction with eliminating boundaries between existing parking lots, the study also recommends mixing land uses and attempting to find a mix wherein parking needs vary during the time of day. Mixing uses in this way could allow for more efficient use of congregated parking areas by alternating business hours between businesses when parking demands are high. An example of this scenario could be a doctor's office that typically needs more parking during daytime hours, which would use the same lot as a restaurant that requires more parking in the evenings and on weekends.

Along with better serving a mix of uses, congregated parking has other advantages as well. More compact and strategically placed parking areas and buildings tend to make an area friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists because these users do not have to cross vast parking lots to get to a destination. Congregating parking areas can also encourage transit ridership. By limiting the amount of parking and making an area more walkable more users could choose to take public transportation to the redeveloped area.

This study specifically recommends reducing the amount of required parking to 3.2 spaces per

1,000 square feet of commercial space. While this recommendation is a reduction of the number of parking spaces currently required by the *Park Hills Zoning Ordinance – Article XIII Off-Street Parking Regulations*, it maintains the parking ratios currently found within the corridor. It should also be noted that the preferred alternative does retain limited amounts of extra land area immediately adjacent to identified parking areas, which could be used for parking expansion if deemed necessary in the future.

On-street parking is another parking option and can be used to make an area more pedestrian friendly by calming traffic on a roadway. The presence of parallel parking spots requires a driver on the thoroughfare to be more mindful of vehicles entering and exiting the roadway. No on-street parking is recommended on Dixie Highway because of potential high vehicle volumes and the need to maintain traffic flow on the thoroughfare. On-street parking is, however, recommended along the roadway within the redeveloped area in both Phase One and Two. These areas will encounter lower traffic volumes than the primary highway and should be designed to include on-street parking. Other traffic calming devices such as raised crosswalks, textured pavement, center islands, and mid-block curb extensions are recommended, where feasible, to increase pedestrian safety.

Walkability and Bikeability

Accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians are growing in importance in today's redevelopment strategies. Complete streets, or streets that have capacity for motorists as well as transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians, work toward solving several problems through a more comprehensive design. Issues such as congestion relief, safety and accessibility can be addressed through inclusionary facilities.

Not only does the inclusion of bike and pedestrian facilities on a street work toward reducing the reliance on the personal motor vehicle, they also promote a healthier lifestyle. Sidewalks provide pedestrians safe havens to walk and exercise, and bike lanes offer cyclists options other than riding in vehicular travel lanes or on the sidewalk. The provision of these facilities gives people the ability to choose more active alternatives

rather than riding in a vehicle. These facilities also provide individuals who cannot drive the opportunity to utilize the redeveloped area, through multimodal transportation options.

Pedestrian facilities in the study area today are solely limited to Dixie Highway. While sidewalks are provided on both sides of Dixie Highway almost entirely between St. James Avenue and St. Joseph Lane they are only present on the south side of the roadway from St. Joseph Lane to the Northern Kentucky University Covington Campus driveway. Additionally, the sidewalks in the northern section of the study area directly abut the roadway, i.e. there is no treelawn (*Figure 6.3*). Treelawns are important safety elements and when designed properly provide a natural barrier between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. *Figure 6.2* shows *The Dixie Fix* study cross section recommendation of separating sidewalks and travel lanes with a tree-lined treelawn that ranges from 8 to 10 feet in width.

The Dixie Fix study also recommends implementing bicycle lanes on Dixie Highway at the time of roadway reconfiguration. The cross section defines a wider vehicular travel lane with the opportunity to stripe the roadway with dedicated bike lanes that would provide a safe travel lane for cyclists and alert motorists that bicycles are likely in the vicinity. While the provision of bike lanes is needed in both directions, it is especially important for southbound traffic, as cyclists will



FIGURE 6.3
LACK OF TREELAWN ALONG DIXIE HIGHWAY

experience significantly slower speeds while climbing the Dixie Highway hill.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be included in the redeveloped area in addition to the Dixie Highway corridor recommendations. Phase One and Two of the Preferred Redevelopment Alternative display numerous sidewalks crossing the design area, which could accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists in the form of shared-use paths. It should also be noted that shared-use paths are recommended to extend from Dixie Highway to Old State Road along the new vehicular connection and points near CCHS and connecting to Alhambra Court. These paths will provide higher levels of connectivity from Dixie Highway, across the redeveloped area and into the existing neighborhood. Bike parking facilities near new businesses and residential areas are also recommended to be included in any redevelopment scenario.

With an increase in bicycle facilities throughout the corridor and a desire to make Park Hills a bike/pedestrian friendly community, the introduction of a bicycling center may be desired for this area. A center of this type would be served by more secure bicycle parking, shower facilities, a clothes-changing area, and storage. This type of center could also be combined with a transit stop, making the area a prime location for multimodal connectivity throughout the Greater Cincinnati region. Park Hills' close proximity to Devou Park would then be better positioned to serve as a key entryway for bike and pedestrian traffic into the park.

Finally, sidewalks should be added to the following neighborhood streets: Arlington Road, South Arlington Road, and St. Joseph Lane. New facilities along these thoroughfares would provide neighborhood access to the core area in the form of safe walkways

for pedestrians. These types of streets, which are residential local streets, do not warrant dedicated bicycle lanes.

Lighting

Lighting throughout the corridor today is predominantly provided by standard cobra head lights attached to utility poles (*Figure 6.4*). *Figure 6.5* demonstrates more decorative lighting on top of the Park Hills monuments at the Arlington Road and Dixie Highway intersection.

New lighting in the corridor should be compatible with the historical character of the area. While *Figure 6.5* is historical in nature, some of its features are problematic. The historical fixture emits omnidirectional light that can glare onto nearby buildings. Care should be taken to choose fixtures that limit the amount of light that spills onto adjacent buildings, especially in areas where buildings are in close proximity to roadways. The chosen fixtures should adequately light the roadway and sidewalk areas while limiting glare onto adjoining buildings. Additionally, it is recommended that full cut-off lighting fixtures be installed to limit the amount of light that emits above the fixture.



FIGURE 6.4
COBRA HEAD ILLUMINATION



FIGURE 6.5
DECORATIVE LIGHTING

Character

Park Hills is one of Northern Kentucky's most unique residential neighborhoods in terms of architectural style and character. Homes in the area were predominantly built in the first half of the 20th Century and are characterized by Tudor and Craftsman styles as demonstrated in *Figure 6.6*. These neighborhoods, which most characteristically define the architecture and essence of Park Hills, are located on residential streets far from the primary thoroughfare of Dixie Highway. Unfortunately, the location of these identifying neighborhoods away from Dixie Highway mean a majority of the City's visitors likely do not experience the historic character of Park Hills. The Task Force expressed an interest in bringing this character to the Dixie Highway corridor as stated in the goals and objectives for this study.

The identifying characteristics of structures found in Park Hills neighborhoods do not currently extend to the Dixie Highway corridor. The corridor itself is characterized by random styles that do not promote a uniform look or feel as demonstrated in *Figure 6.7*. Historically the corridor was developed with little regard for the architectural style of neighboring structures, which provides for the diverse range of building types in the 0.6 mile length of the study area.

This study recommends implementing corridor-wide design standards for new structures as redevelopment takes place. These standards will work toward creating overarching design elements that tie the corridor together, effectively creating a sense of place along the



FIGURE 6.7
VARIOUS RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOUND WITHIN PARK HILLS



FIGURE 6.7
VARIOUS COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES ALONG DIXIE HIGHWAY

Dixie Highway corridor in Park Hills. Furthermore, these standards should incorporate architectural characteristics from structures in the Park Hills neighborhoods. Transferring identifying attributes

from neighborhoods to redeveloped areas will move the entire City toward having an overall architectural style and a greater sense of place. More specific details about design standards can be found in **Chapter 7**.

Details of Preferred Redevelopment Alternative

The descriptions on the following pages present information on each of the three sections (North, Core and South areas) in order to aid in the understanding of how each piece of the Dixie Highway corridor may redevelop in the future. Like the overall plan presented previously, information on each of these sections is described in two phases of development.

South Area

Phase One

- Access and parking will be improved via installation of a landscaped median along the majority of the Dixie Highway corridor through the City of Park Hills.
- There is a gateway opportunity at the vacant lot located on the corner of St. James Avenue and Dixie Highway. This gateway could take the form of a bus stop/pull off (replica of the trolley stations Park Hills is recognized for), landscaping or signage.
- A land swap between a portion of the parking in front of Covington Catholic High School and a piece of vacant land currently located behind the existing commercial development would provide open, developable land directly on Dixie Highway. There is however, a potential issue with stormwater management on the currently vacant site.
- The current right in right out access for Covington Catholic High School will be closed and access rerouted to the existing traffic signal at St. Joseph's Lane.
- New development will begin to occur at the intersection of St. Joseph's Lane. This area is intended to become a "gateway" to the Core Area.

Phase Two

- Development will continue at the intersection of St. Joseph Lane and Dixie Highway further promoting this area as a gateway to the Core Area.
- The new open space in front of Covington Catholic High School created by the potential land swap provides the opportunity for new development to begin occurring in this area. However, it is important to note that this development should not become the focus of development activities along the corridor; rather, it should only be promoted after the Core Area has been developed.



SOUTH AREA PHASE ONE



SOUTH AREA PHASE TWO

Core Area

Phase One

- A full non-signalized access point is added mid-block to help with the consolidation of access points along the corridor.
- Parking and access is consolidated through the implementation of many *Dixie Fix* study recommendations.
- Many existing structures will remain with façade improvements.
- New development will be located at the intersection of St. Joseph Lane to help promote this area as a gateway to the primary Core Area.
- A new access road to the first phase of development will connect St. Joseph Lane to Arlington Road.
- The bulk of new development in Phase One will occur behind existing structures and adjacent to the new road which connects St. Joseph Lane to Arlington Road. This new development will include a public space which could be closed off to vehicular access for special events.
- The new development area will also include a pocket of multi family residential structures which will act to buffer the existing single family residential from the new mixed use development.
- Vehicular access will be created from the back of the new development to Old State Road. This access will help to better connect the existing neighborhood and residents to the center of their community.
- The intersections at Arlington Road and South Arlington Road will be realigned to alleviate traffic incidents in this area.
- The southeastern side of Dixie Highway will begin to see some cohesive development. This development could take the form of townhomes or small office type development with parking behind and access from St. Joseph Lane and South Arlington Road.
- A pedestrian connection across Dixie Highway will be constructed mid-block to help promote a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- A new public space will be constructed at the intersection of St. Joseph Lane and Dixie Highway.

Phase Two

- Redevelopment of existing buildings into new, more cohesive development will take place in Phase Two. This redevelopment will include a pedestrian mall which will help connect Dixie Highway (and those on the southeastern side of Dixie Highway) to the public gathering space located within the Phase One portion of the preferred redevelopment alternative.



CORE AREA PHASE ONE



CORE AREA PHASE TWO

North Area

Phase One

- Consolidation of parking and access is the first priority in this portion of the corridor.
- Most existing structures are to remain within this phase of redevelopment.
- *The Dixie Fix* study calls for the realignment of the curve into Covington, and phase one of this study follows that recommendation.
- With the realignment of the curve, a street-wall or landscaping should be included at a gateway into the north end of Park Hills.
- The potential exists to utilize a section of abandoned roadway that runs directly behind the Fort Mitchell Garage up the hill toward Old State Road as either a road and/or pedestrian access.

Phase Two

- Over time, new structures set closer to Dixie Highway will help to promote general cohesiveness and walkability throughout this portion of the corridor.
- Realignment and shifting of the curve of Dixie Highway, per recommendation from *The Dixie Fix* study will provide improved safety.



NORTH AREA PHASE ONE



NORTH AREA PHASE TWO

Section Two - Mobility

The preferred redevelopment alternative for the Park Hills Dixie Study area relies heavily on the recommendations from *The Dixie Fix* study to address transportation issues within the corridor. The study area for *The Dixie Fix* study extended approximately eight miles along Dixie Highway from Boone County to the City of Covington. The primary method used by *The Dixie Fix* study to address both safety and mobility within the corridor is through the implementation of a thorough access management plan to control driveway movements. *The Dixie Fix* study identified the Park Hills stretch of Dixie Highway as the section of the corridor which would most benefit from access management and projected nearly a 28 percent reduction in crashes with a proper access management plan. The Preferred Redevelopment Alternative chosen for the Park Hills Dixie Study achieves better access management by reducing the number of driveway openings from 45 to 13 and by visibly separating the driveway/parking access points through the introduction of tree lawns and sidewalks which separate Dixie Highway from designated parking areas.

Another major component of *The Dixie Fix* study which has been integrated into the Preferred Redevelopment Alternative is the selection of a new cross-section for Dixie Highway. This new cross-section can be seen in *Figure 6.2* of this Chapter. The new cross-section transforms the corridor from a four lane highway to a two lane highway with a landscaped median. The proposed cross-section provides adequate capacity for the lower traffic volumes on this section of Dixie Highway. The new cross-section will also provide traffic calming and speed reduction benefits to better accommodate the retail and school oriented development adjacent to the corridor. Turning traffic will be better

served under the proposed cross-section through the introduction of dedicated turn lanes at major signalized intersections and access points. Implementation of this cross-section was identified as the highest local priority for Park Hills in *The Dixie Fix* study.

Additionally, *The Dixie Fix* study recommends the incorporation of bike lanes along Dixie Highway. These bike lanes are just one component of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities recommended by the Park Hills Dixie Study. Details about bicycling and pedestrian activity throughout the corridor can be found in **Section 1** of this Chapter. Specific location for new bike and pedestrian facilities can be found within the following subsections.

South Area

In the section of the corridor between St James Street and St Josephs Lane all major changes to the transportation system occurs in the first phase of redevelopment. See *Figure 6.8*. The three entrances to the existing businesses on the north side of the road are closed and the full access is provided through the updated road to Covington Catholic High school. The current full access directly to the Sisters of Notre Dame Convent will become right-in/right-out due to the



FIGURE 6.8
SOUTH AREA – PHASE TWO

vegetated median. See “1” in *Figure 6.8*. The current right-in/right-out access to Covington Catholic High School is removed. A new street connecting Terrace Drive to Dixie Highway at the intersection of St Joseph Lane will also provide access to Covington Catholic High School. In Phase Two a new right-in/right-out access into new developments is located between the Covington Catholic intersection and the St. Josephs intersection. This access reaches the high school through the parking lots of the new development. The intersection at St. James Avenue does not change.

The gateways designated within this section of the corridor could be used to promote alternate modes of transportation. For example, the vacant lot on the corner of St. James Avenue and Dixie Highway could incorporate a replica trolley station to be utilized as a TANK stop.

Core Area

The section between the St Josephs Lane intersection and the Arlington Road/South Arlington Road intersection will undergo many changes. The intersection of St. Josephs Lane will be converted from a full access three-way intersection to a full access four-way intersection with the building of a new road connecting with Terrace Drive. This road will also serve as one of the two primary access points to the core development area along with the Arlington Road intersection. A new ring road which will run parallel to Dixie Highway will be constructed joining these two intersections in order to provide access to the core, as shown in *Figure 6.9* (See “2” in *Figure 6.9*). The development of the ring road will affect access from the west side of Arlington Road, as residents will no longer have direct access to Dixie Highway, but will instead have access via the ring road.

The configuration mentioned above eliminates the offset intersection at Arlington Road as called for in *The Dixie Fix* study. The intersection of Arlington Road and South Arlington Road with Dixie Highway is currently off-set which requires for two traffic signals spaced less than 100 feet apart. The proximity of these two signals creates a chaotic environment in which drivers often mistakenly run one of the two lights by misinterpreting this area as one intersection rather than

two. The preferred redevelopment alternative calls for these two intersections to be consolidated into one by realigning Arlington Road to South Arlington Road.

A non signalized full access intersection located between the St. Josephs Lane intersection and the Arlington Road intersection will also access the core development area on the west side of Dixie Highway. Good circulation through the core development on the west side of Dixie Highway is provided by interconnecting parking lots and internal roads.

Along the eastern side of Dixie Highway all direct property access is removed and access is from St Joseph Lane or South Arlington Road into a series of connected parking lots located behind the expected new structures. Circulation for the eastern residential



FIGURE 6.9
CORE AREA – PHASE TWO

area will also be improved by providing an extension of Cecelia Ave from its current terminus at Rosemont Avenue south to St. Joseph lane.

A new ring road will be constructed joining these two intersections in order to provide access to the core, as shown in *Figure 6.9*. The development of the ring road and the core will affect access from the west side of Arlington Road, as residents will no longer have direct access to Dixie Highway, but will instead have access via the ring road. This configuration also eliminates the offset intersection at Arlington Road as called for in *The Dixie Fix* study. Additional indirect access is also proposed for the western residential areas via an extension of Terrace Drive beyond Old State Road, into the rear of the new development area known as the core area. Circulation for the eastern residential area will also be improved by providing an extension of Cecelia Ave from its current terminus at Rosemont Avenue south to St. Joseph Lane.

North

The section of the corridor north of Arlington Road/ South Arlington Road intersection to the City line undergoes a dramatic reduction in the number of direct access points. See *Figure 6.10*. The plan calls for four on each side of the road with one each being right-in/right-out only. The alignment of Dixie Highway is also shifted, to the east at the north end of the corridor to reduce the angle of the curve as the highway enters Covington.

Additionally, the Preferred Redevelopment Alternative calls for a newly constructed bike/pedestrian pathway to link Dixie Highway with the Gateway Community and Technical College site at the top of the hill. This new access point could provide non-motorized access for any potential new residents of the site at the top of the hill to the activities along Dixie Highway.



FIGURE 6.10
NORTH AREA – PHASE TWO

Existing Residential Access

In addition to consolidating access to the commercial parcels immediately adjacent to Dixie Highway and the proposed cross section, access and circulation for adjacent residential areas have been modified as well. Three existing signalized intersections on Dixie Highway at St. James Avenue/Hilton Drive, St. Joseph Lane and Arlington/South Arlington Road will remain. However, the two intersections at St. Joseph Lane and Arlington Road will also be used to serve as the primary access to the core development area. The intersection at St. Joseph's Lane will be converted from a full access three-way intersection into a full access four-way intersection.

Overall the proposed access plan for the Park Hills study area should greatly improve both the mobility and safety of the corridor. This is primarily realized by the aggressive access management efforts which

aim to consolidate access points and clearly delineate intended accesses and turning movements. Integration of the retail and residential uses which are adjacent to the corridor will also be furthered by the proposed cross-section which reduces the number of lanes on Dixie Highway and adds a landscaped median. This effort will be furthered through the improved connectivity and circulation patterns brought about by the modified local street network. Finally, the corridor during the development process will be designed to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and transit users through the implementation of complete street strategies. These users will be served by the bike lanes on Dixie Highway, pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity to adjoining residential areas, and by existing bus facilities located along Dixie Highway that can be improved with shelters to identify and enhance these locations.

Section Three - Recommended Land Use

The recommended land uses for the study area were developed from a concept plan that was discussed and approved by the Task Force in August 2009.

Concept Plan

The concept plan for the study area is based on several elements as described in **Chapter 5** and illustrated in *Figure 6.11*:

- Vision for the area
- Market Study
- Adjacent land uses
- Resident input at public meetings
- Land availability
- Connectivity and walkability

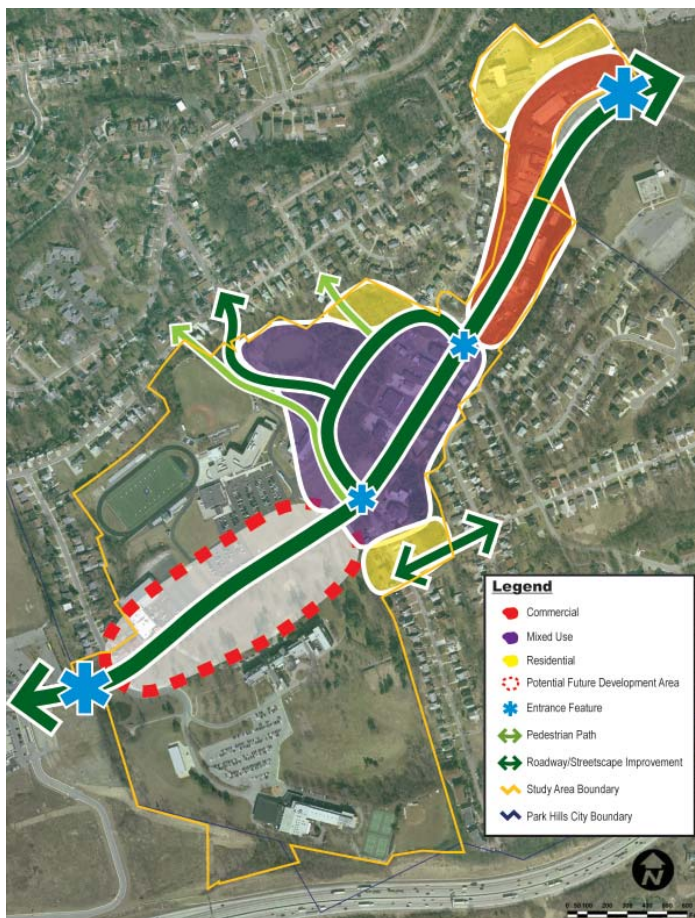


FIGURE 6.11
CONCEPT DIAGRAM

Land Availability

A majority of the land adjacent to Dixie Highway is currently developed with a variety of land uses including institutional, retail sales and service uses, residential and office uses. While all of these are anticipated to redevelop in the future, there are pockets of substantial vacant land available for new development along the corridor. Redevelopment of the corridor is anticipated to occur in two phases as explained in **Section 1** of this Chapter.

For discussion purposes the Dixie corridor in the City of Park Hills has been divided into three sections - South, Core, and North as described below:

South Area

The land immediately adjacent to Dixie Highway, approximately 14 acres on Covington Catholic High School and Notre Dame Academy's properties, is anticipated to develop as part of Phase Two. Development of these areas is not anticipated in the near future and priority should be given to redevelopment of the Core and North Areas as discussed in this section. It should be noted that, if development were to occur significant topographic issues on the Notre Dame property and appropriate relocation of some parking on the Covington Catholic High School property will need to be addressed. These areas have great visibility along the corridor but the land foreseen to be available for redevelopment is fairly narrow and long, thus lending itself to strip development patterns, which are less than desirable.

Core Area

Significant amounts of vacant land, approximately 8 acres, is located in the Core Area behind the commercial development that includes Reality Tuesday; Snappy Tomato Pizza, Loschiavo's Produce and Deli, and Zachary and Lauren Jewelers. Adjoining land to the south yields approximately 2.2 acres of vacant land, 1.65 acres of which is owned by the City of Park Hills, on the west side of Dixie Highway immediately adjacent and north of Covington Catholic High School. The total land area within the Core section is approximately 23 acres. This land is anticipated to be the focus of initial redevelopment efforts in Phase One along the corridor as described in **Section 1** of this Chapter.

North Area

There is no significant vacant land for development within this section along the Dixie Highway corridor. Redevelopment of this area is likely to entail a longer time frame than the Core area because most sites involve redevelopment. The Gateway Community and Technical College land located off of Old State Road and the Northern Kentucky University property located adjacent to the study area within the City of Covington both offer prime redevelopment opportunities.

Recommended Land Use

This section outlines the land uses recommended for the study area. A redevelopment concept plan for the study area is outlined in **Chapter 6: Redevelopment Concept**.

South Area

The south section includes Covington Catholic High School and Notre Dame Academy, the vacant property located on the south side of St. James Avenue and three properties immediately north of St. James Avenue and west of Dixie Highway which is currently occupied by Chef Barone's Catering and The Gardens of Park Hills (Figure 6.12).



FIGURE 6.12
GARDENS OF PARK HILLS

A change in land use is recommended for the property located on the south side of St. James Avenue from residential at 4.1 to 7.0 dwelling units per net acre to other community facilities. This property is currently vacant and is envisioned to be improved with gateway features into the City such as signage, landscaping and possibly an area for TANK busses to pull off as described in **Section 1** of this Chapter.

The recommended land use for the three properties immediately north of St. James Avenue and south of the access drive to Covington Catholic High School will remain as commercial retail/service use as identified in the *Comprehensive Plan Update: 2006-2020*, however as previously noted offices will be included in this land use category.

As illustrated in *Figure 6.13*, both the schools will continue to be identified as other community facilities as they were in the *Comprehensive Plan Update: 2006-2026*. This plan, however, identifies that in the long term areas immediately adjacent and on either side of Dixie Highway in front of these schools may transition to commercial retail/service uses that also include offices as a component. As discussed in **Section 1** of this Chapter, the initial focus of redevelopment along

the corridor is recommended to be in the Core Area. The market analysis cautions the City of Park Hills in attracting or promoting any more intense retail development in the City and concludes that there is a delicate balance of supply and demand to maintain. It is therefore critical that the City focus its initial redevelopment efforts in the core area, where there is potential land available is about the amount, eight acres, suggested by the market analysis. It is strongly recommended that this south area be targeted for redevelopment only after the core area has been established in order to avoid the overabundance of retail which the market analysis cautions against.

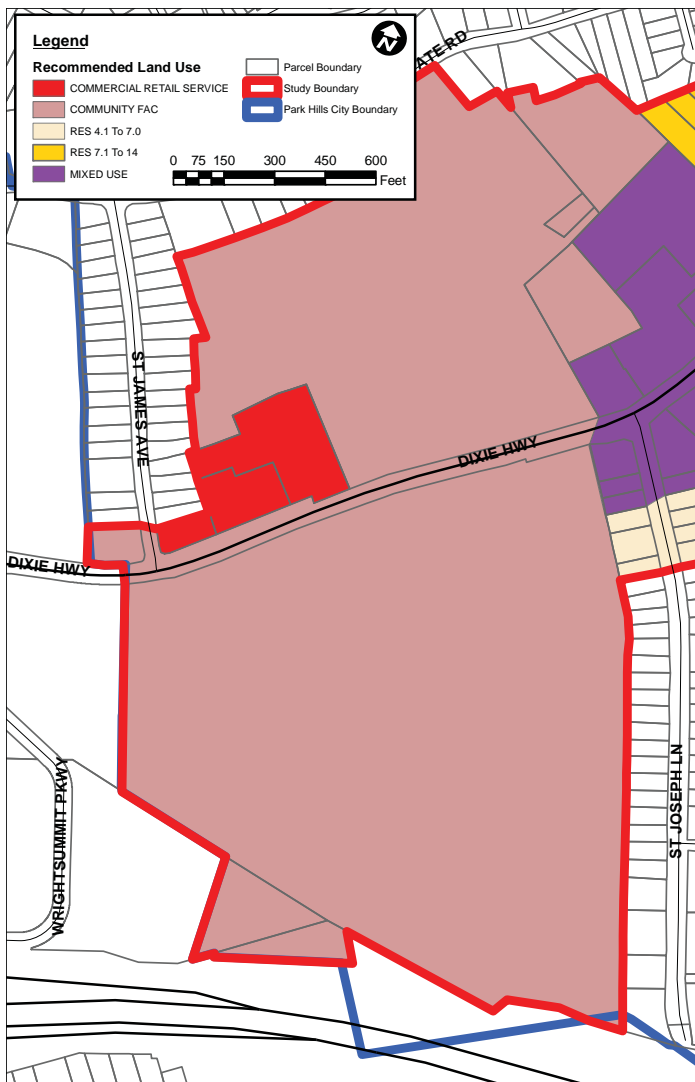


FIGURE 6.13
SOUTH AREA – RECOMMENDED LAND USE

Core Area

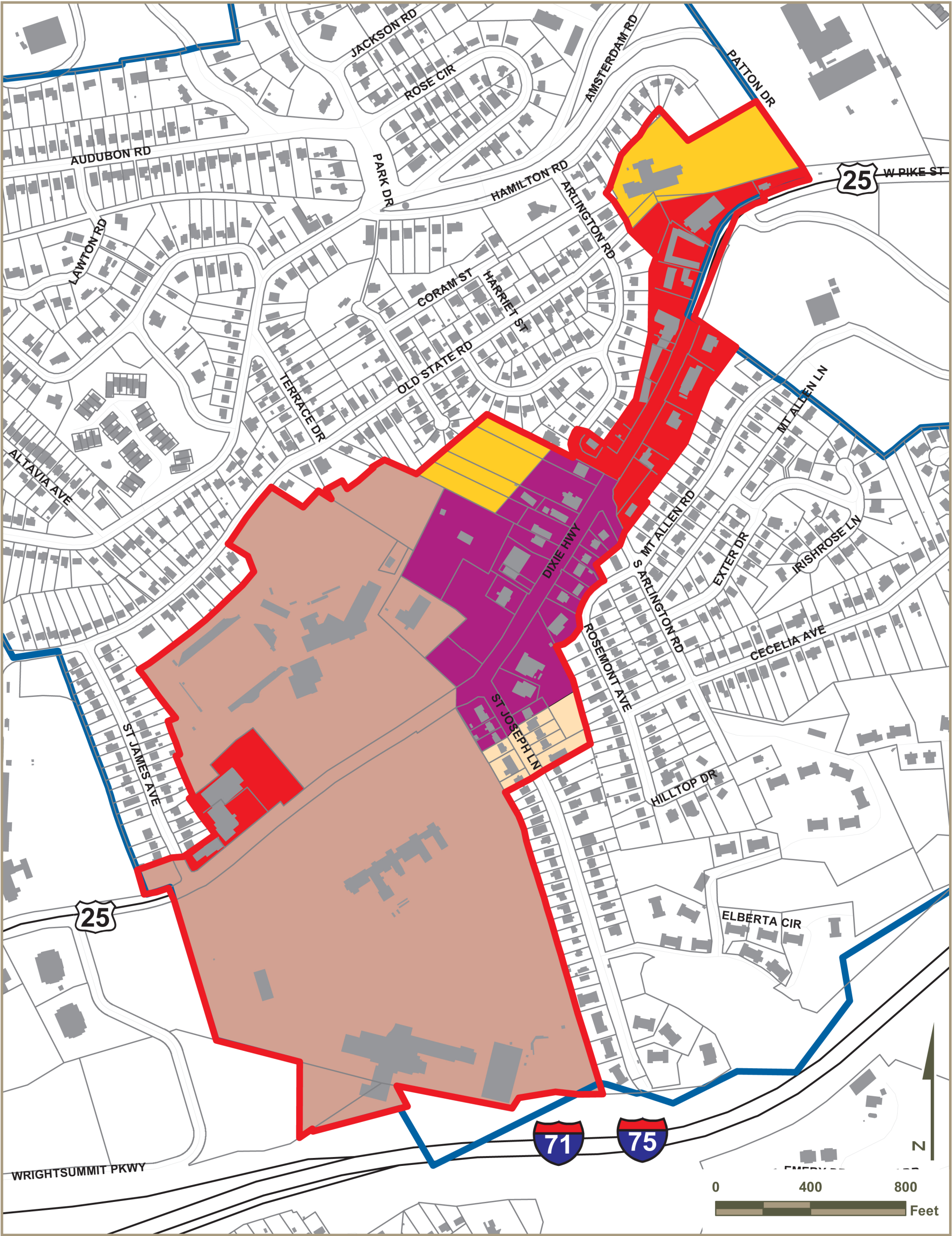
The section encompasses properties on either side of Dixie Highway, generally between St. Joseph Lane and Arlington Road, as shown in Figure 6.14.

The land use of properties immediately adjacent to and east of Dixie Highway are recommended to be changed from residential development at a density ranging from 4.1 to 7.0 dwelling units per net acre to mixed use, which includes commercial and residential uses. This area presently is comprised of single-family residential development. This area is topographically challenging as existing structures are located above Dixie Highway on a hillside that almost abuts the roadway. Mixed uses in this area are envisioned to

work with the topography of the area in terms of small scale structures similar to what is currently along this portion of the corridor. This could include small offices, retail or residential condominiums. Comments from the public indicate that in this area substantial residential uses are not desirable. Furthermore, the market analysis also projects very minimal increase in residential development within the study area in the next five years. It is important to note that while the market analysis identifies minimal demand in the near term for residential land uses, new high density and single-family units will be necessary to significantly “refresh” the City’s housing inventory. A few units as part of a mixed-use development in this area could serve to meet this need and still not add too many residential units where they are less desirable.

The land use of properties immediately adjacent to and west of Dixie Highway are recommended to be changed from commercial retail/service uses to mixed use. Expansion of the adjacent Community Facilities is also envisioned as a possible use on property which the study designates as mixed use and which is presently located in a residential zoning district. In addition, the land use of properties behind these Dixie Highway properties that lies between these properties and property facing Old State Road is recommended to be changed from residential development at a density ranging from 7.1 to 14.0 dwelling units per net acre to mixed use. This area is strongly recommended to be the focus of initial redevelopment efforts within the study area for a variety of reasons. Primarily because it contains a large area of vacant or sparsely developed land, is centrally located and with improved connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods can serve as a positive catalyst for redevelopment along the remaining length of the corridor. Its central location and the planned connectivity to adjoining residential areas is important to draw residents to the area. Changing the recommended land use of this area to mixed use will provide the flexibility to redevelop this area with a variety of uses that will contribute to the vitality of the area.

The intersection of St. Joseph’s Lane with Dixie Highway has been identified as a Village Center area where redevelopment could likely begin to occur early. The City currently owns a small parcel, approximately



Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Recommended Land Use | Parcel Boundary |
| COMMERCIAL | Park Hills City Boundary |
| COMMUNITY FAC | Study Boundary |
| RES 4.1 To 7.0 | |
| RES 7.1 To 14 | |
| MIXED USE | |

PARK HILLS
Dixie Study

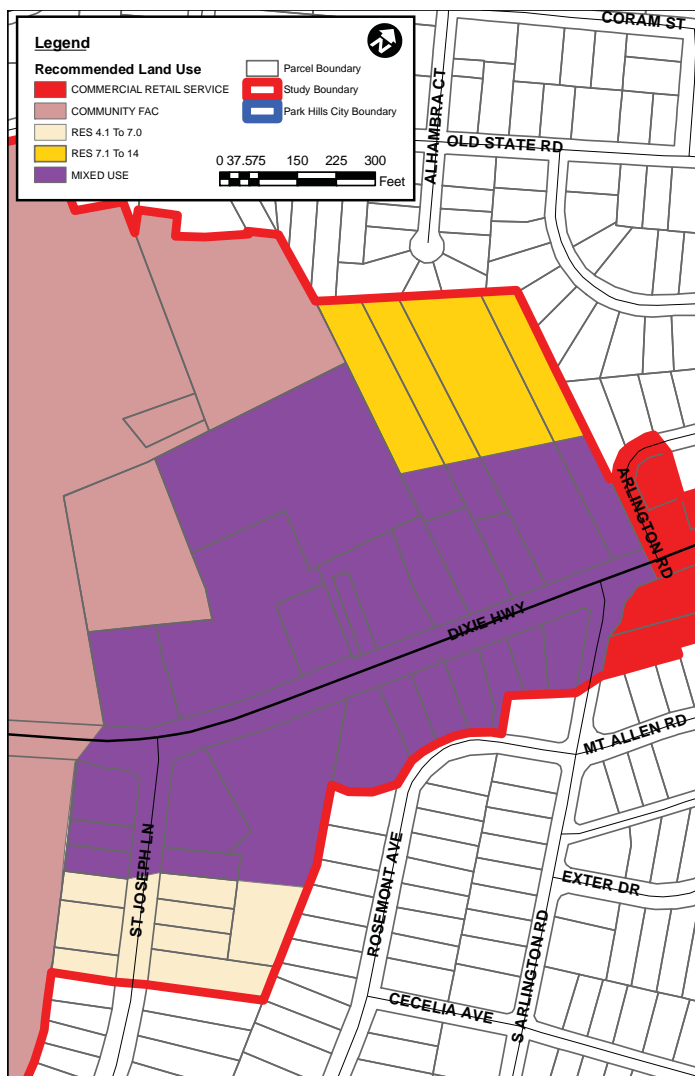


FIGURE 6.14

CORE AREA – RECOMMENDED LAND USE

1.5 acres; in this area and the recommendation to realign Covington Catholic High School’s access as well as construction of the new loop road all prompt the idea to begin development in this area. New development in this area and incorporation of gateway/village center features such as special pavers or signage and landscaping features will help to draw passers by into the core redevelopment area. The existing residential uses and density of 4.1 to 7.0 units per acre are recommended to remain. The residential uses along St. Joseph’s Lane will serve as a barrier limiting commercial activity from moving away from Dixie Highway.

According to the Market Analysis the office market appears to be the least developed of all of the three major land use groups. The study projects a demand

of approximately 13,000 to 24,000 square feet of office space if the City aggressively attempts to recruit employers in Health and Medical Services, Other Business Services, and Social Services categories of office based service businesses. Consumer services in specialized space or retail storeroom venues could contribute to demand for between 6,200 and 8,500 square feet of space in Park Hills.

As previously mentioned, the redevelopment of this core area is anticipated to have significant impact in revitalizing the Dixie Highway corridor. The goals for the redevelopment of the study area as determined by the Task Force and public meeting attendees is to ensure Park Hills’ long-term economic success by creating a corridor that is attractive to new businesses and increase the growth opportunities for existing businesses. The goal is also to provide a variety of uses by including and balancing office, residential, retail, cultural and civic spaces within the study boundary and should include uses with activities which occur in both the daytime and the night.

Considering the goals set forth by the residents of Park Hills of creating a destination that people walk or drive to, it will be crucial to get the right mix of uses. The market analysis is projecting a market for both office and retail uses and so it is important that this area be developed with a mix of both of those uses. While a vertical mix of uses within a single structure could function well, horizontal mixed uses would also lend towards creating a synergy of uses within the core area. The key element for redevelopment of this area would be to obtain the mix of uses with businesses, particularly the retail businesses that provide products and services now underserved in the vicinity. For further information on market potential see the market analysis report that accompanies this plan.

The land use for a portion of this area, to the rear of properties along Aberdeen Road, is also recommended to remain at residential 7.1 to 14.0 dwelling units per net acre. The market analysis suggests that higher densities and attached single-family will be needed to refresh the housing market. The analysis further concludes that medium to high density attached single-family housing units appears to be the only way to add

any significant numbers of new housing units to the inventory in Park Hills. Increased residential density in close proximity to the core area will increase the likelihood of residents walking to their destination for goods and services. Retaining a portion of this area for residential development also acts as a good buffer between the residential development on Old State Road/Aberdeen Road and the more intense mixed use development that is anticipated within the Core Area.

While the market analysis cautions very limited opportunities for any new housing, it states that it would be desirable to find ways to add new owner-occupied housing to the landscape in Park Hills. This will be increasingly important as the existing housing inventory ages. The market analysis further states that in order to introduce as many new owner-occupied housing units as possible, a medium to high density attached dwelling unit format would be the key; in essence, condominiums. A residential density of 7.1 to 14.0 dwelling units per net acre is hence recommended for a portion of the core area, to allow for condominium projects anticipated by the market analysis of 48 or more units. This would be attractive to younger as well as aging homeowners if the property is adequately supported by on-site management and maintenance personnel.

As stated previously, the core area is recommended to be the focus of initial redevelopment efforts within the study area. In order to create a destination with a sense of place that will be a synergy of activity, it is crucial to get the right mix of uses in a development with a character that is reflective of the City of Park Hills. To accomplish these goals, as explained in Chapter 7: Implementation, it is recommended that the development of form based zoning and/or design standards be considered for the area.

North Area

This section includes properties on either side of Dixie Highway north of Arlington Road to the study boundary as shown on *Figure 6.15*. The land uses recommended by the *Comprehensive Plan Update: 2006-2026* includes – commercial office, residential development at a density ranging from 7.1 to 14.0 dwelling units per net acre, commercial retail/service, and physically restrictive development area. The site of Gateway Community and Technical College is recommended for school park land uses.

Two land use changes are recommended for this area. The land use of properties on either side of Dixie Highway and immediately adjacent to it are recommended to be changed to commercial retail/service uses that will include offices. This study recommends residential land use at a density of 7.1 to 14.0 dwelling units per net acre for the Gateway Community and Technical College property located at the end of Old State Road.

Existing uses within this section of the Dixie Highway corridor are primarily commercial uses including offices and retail sales and service type uses. Intense development along a majority of this section is not anticipated due to the relatively low depth of lots and the adjacent topography. It is anticipated that this area will essentially remain and redevelop in its current form. However, a portion of this area closer to the northern boundary of the study area may have greater redevelopment opportunities due to the potential realignment of Dixie Highway at the curve of the hill as proposed in *The Dixie Fix* study. There is a good mix of office, retail and service uses within the northern area which with minimal improvements such as façade improvements and landscaping can significantly alter their presence along the Dixie Highway corridor.

The Market Analysis finds this portion of the corridor may be suitable for service type uses after redevelopment occurs. These service type uses are defined as businesses which serve the local needs of the community. Barber shops and package shipping businesses could be included with these types of businesses. These types of uses may work well for this area based on the minimal lot depths. Service uses are typically those which require a quick in and out and therefore parking is not usually a premium surrounding these businesses.

As explained in **Chapter 4**, it is anticipated that the Gateway Community and Technical College site will be sold in its entirety for some form of residential development. While a majority of residential development is anticipated in the portion of property that is in the City of Covington, the portion within the City of Park Hills also provides prime land for residential development. The concerns of the City of Park Hills regarding redevelopment of this site are

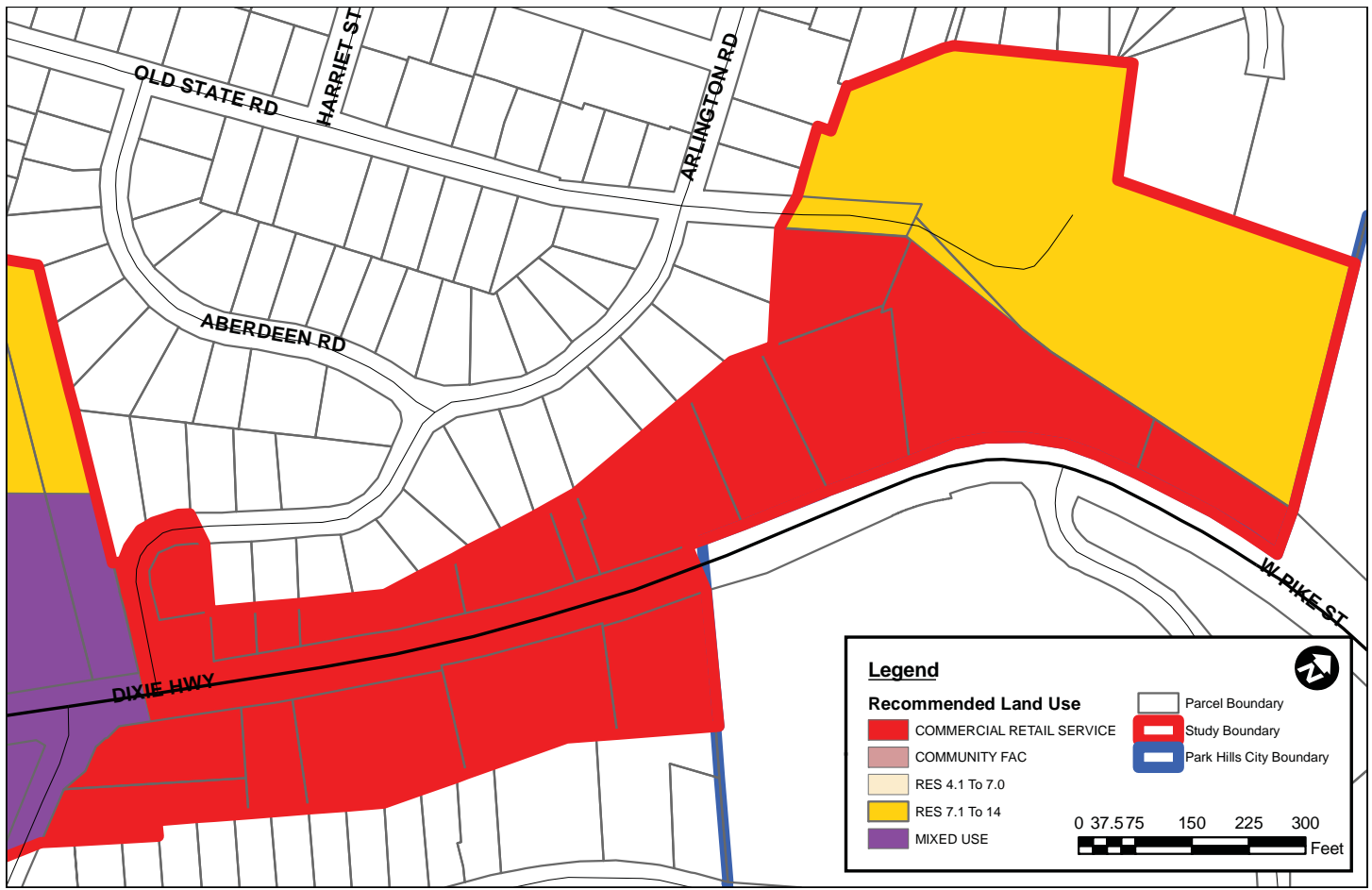


FIGURE 6.15
NORTH AREA – RECOMMENDED LAND USE

primarily focused on access to it and resulting traffic on City streets now lightly used by the existing school facilities. The City will maintain communication with the City of Covington and work with parties seeking to redevelop this site to minimize traffic impacts through existing low density residential neighborhoods. One approach that may be taken would be to locate any common community facility type land uses (e.g.

swimming pool, tennis and other recreation uses) that comprise common use areas for residents of the new development on this site so as to help alleviate traffic through Old State Road. There may be an additional opportunity for developers of this site to share the use and potentially the cost of community facility areas located in Park Hills with the city in some type of public/private joint effort to provide recreation space.

Section Four - Community Facilities and Utilities

Community facilities are services and facilities necessary to support the population such as; schools, recreation and open space, fire and emergency medical service, police protection, library service, and health care. Availability and accessibility to these facilities and services is related to how residents perceive the quality of the community in which they live. Most community facilities are publicly funded and rely on tax based income collected and budgeted by legislative bodies and/or special districts. In the case of Park Hills and this study, however, two important facilities within the study area are private schools that function and provide services similar to public community facilities.

Utilities include sanitary sewer, water, electric, and natural gas service. Storm water is discussed in the Section 5 of this Chapter and encompasses another type of utility. A review of the utilities within and surrounding the immediate study area is intended to ensure that adequate and consistent services are provided to manage anticipated growth and minimize pollution within the planning period. The challenge for community facilities and utilities is to maintain existing facilities and provide a high level of service at a reasonable cost that will support existing and future needs of the community. This Chapter contains information regarding the existing educational, religious, recreation, library, police, and fire community facilities and utilities that are wholly contained within the study area or are close enough to provide services into the area.

Research throughout the planning process indicates Park Hills, and thus the study area, are adequately supplied with community facilities and utilities. No new facilities are recommended; however, while the study area is adequately served by

the utilities and community facilities, this plan makes a few key recommendations for the improvement of community facilities and utilities with the future development/redevelopment plans.

Schools

The students of Covington Catholic High School (*Figure 6.16*) and Notre Dame Academy, as well as their parents, are potential customers of the redeveloped commercial areas and should be viewed as an important asset to the City. Both schools have expressed desires to expand their campuses. Notre Dame Academy has ample property to expand upon and has already done so with little to no impact on the study area. Covington Catholic High School will need to acquire land to allow for expansion space. One potential site for this expansion is on the north side of their campus. With this in mind the City should work with the school in their expansion efforts to develop a plan of action that benefits both parties. One possible solution may be to incorporate adequate parking space in new development adjacent to the school so that it can be shared with the school. Typically school uses and other land uses do not overlap in regards to peak usage times and this would make such sharing of parking potentially feasible. If this can work it may be possible for Covington Catholic High School to reuse some of



FIGURE 6.16
COVINGTON CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

their existing parking for other school facilities.

With the students and their parents in mind, the City should try and locate uses suited to their needs close to the schools. This could include youth related destinations such as clothing stores, video game stores, ice cream and snack shops. A coffee shop such as Reality Tuesday's Café could fill market needs of both students and their parents. Another synergy concept with the students as a primary constituent is a sports medicine/rehab facility. This would provide services for the population at large and benefit from a location close to a large number of students, as well as the aging population of Park Hills.

The study area also includes a portion of the main campus of Gateway Community and Technical College. Gateway Community and Technical College is currently in the process of relocating their facilities into downtown Covington and will become vacant in the near future. The divided parcels in Covington and Park Hills are currently being assembled for sale to a private entity. The assumption at this time gathered from key person interviews is the site will be developed as higher density and/or high end residential.

The potential change of the Gateway Community and Technical College site to residential has sparked concern about an increase in the amount of traffic on Old State Road and along Amsterdam Road, which has already experienced land slippage issues. This study recommends the City further explore the potential of constructing a road to provide direct access to Dixie Highway immediately behind Fort Mitchell Garage. Currently, there is an unused portion of an old road that had historically been use as a service road connection between Old State Road and Dixie Highway. The potential may exist that this road may be able to be reconstructed to support vehicular traffic. While there may be some structural issues with this unused access point, it could prove to be a convenient connection to Dixie Highway for a new development and provide for less traffic through the already established residential area. For further information on this issue, please see **Section 2** of this **Chapter 6**.

Emergency Services

The City is currently adequately provided with emergency services. However, the substantial increase

in commercial activity recommended in this plan may require an increase in police and fire protection along the corridor. With an increase in public gathering spaces within the core area, there is an increased opportunity for both formal and informal gatherings which may demand a need for increased police presence. Additional structures and infrastructure may also warrant increased fire protection and the need for supplementary firefighting personnel and apparatuses.

Utilities

Currently, the area is adequately supplied with utilities. As redevelopment of the area occurs the City should look for opportunities to work with Duke Energy to bury electrical utilities. Existing infrastructure along neighboring streets has the capacity to carry the utility load that currently runs along Dixie Highway. If the opportunity presents itself during any major roadway improvements along Dixie Highway, the City should seek opportunities to shift the backbone load carried along Dixie Highway to neighboring streets and then place the remaining load along Dixie Highway underground.

If major roadway improvements occur along Dixie Highway, the utility companies may be required to move the existing infrastructure at their cost. At that time, Park Hills could seek supplemental funding to offset the additional cost of placing the remaining facilities underground. Burying utility lines during roadway improvements would significantly reduce the City's cost of going underground because the City would only be required to cover the additional cost, not the entire cost of the move. The Northern Kentucky Water District and Sanitation District No. 1 will also need to be kept informed so they can inspect and replace failing water lines while the area is undergoing redevelopment. Additionally, if the City of Fort Wright is considering going underground with their utilities, Park Hills may want to consider working together to reduce the cost of burying lines along Dixie Highway.

The reduction in impervious surface desired by Sanitation District No. 1 is a means to reduce the amount of storm water entering the combined sewer system. This may be very difficult to achieve since the plan calls for an increase in square footage of commercial use. It may be possible to reduce the amount of storm

water entering the sewer system by a combination of using rain gardens, bio-retention areas, and green roofs where possible and utilizing green infrastructure techniques. For more information on this issue see **Section 5** of this Chapter.

Community Center

Public meeting comments and Task Force discussion indicated there is interest in having a community center for the City. These facilities are usually multi purpose in nature and provide a large space for the community to gather. This function fits well with the neighborhood Village Center proposed in the core of the study area. The core area depicts a gathering spot that can provide a symbiotic relationship with the commercial activity. Such a facility should be located on the edge of the core area thus placing the facility in close proximity to the commercial activity limiting interference with energy of the commercial area.

Public Space

Public open space provides a venue for festivals and events that bring enjoyment to area residents and build community identity. The neighborhood commercial center in the core area is the ideal location for these activities. The commercial uses both attract people into the area for events and help provide for attendee's needs during festivals.

Phase Two of the preferred alternative recommends implementing large permanent pedestrian areas (indicated by the tan and brown areas in *Figure 6.17* for public space. While a majority of the outdoor space in these areas is permanently dedicated for public space the areas can be temporarily increased in size with the use of barricades. Figure 6.17 also illustrates how installing temporary barricades (red lines) on the road parallel to Dixie Highway will allow for a larger pedestrian only area (blue line). This larger area could be used for festivals or special events with minimal impact to traffic and parking.

The public space could be a paved plaza that preferably utilizes pervious pavement, unpaved areas, or a combination of both. Ideally public space will surround and compliment commercial buildings in the Core Area and be in close proximity to the community

center. If the City intends to encourage a large number of festivals and events in the area it should consider having separate public restroom facilities located close to the public space. Locating these events in this area will enhance the sense that this area is the center of town, the City's heart. More detailed information about the preferred alternatives can be found in **Section 1** of this Chapter.



FIGURE 6.17
TEMPORARY PEDESTRIAN ONLY AREAS

Religious Institutions

The Generations Church, formerly the Covington First Church of the Nazarene, is located in a strategic position between Covington Catholic High School and the neighborhood commercial center. This building is in a good location for a community building and/or parking for both the school and the commercial center. This transition area between the school and the commercial center provides a variety of opportunities some of which are mentioned above. Phase Two of the preferred alternative recommends removal of this particular structure and two new smaller structures are shown in its place. This is one case

where it is important to remember that the preferred redevelopment alternative is the basic idea of how the corridor should redevelop. If, over time it is found that the existing church structure remains a quality and functional space, it could remain. If however, over time this structure becomes obsolete, this study recommends that this piece of the corridor be used as a transitions area between the high school and the main mixed use area.

Saint Josephs Convent (*Figure 6.18*) likely will not change in any substantial way for the foreseeable future; however, the longevity of convents throughout the county is an issue that will possibly need to be addressed in Park Hills. The facility itself may eventually become vacant and the City should consider what they want to happen with the land and the structure. The grounds and historic structures are quite impressive and could facilitate new tenants in the future through some form of adaptive reuse. Conversion into a hotel with accommodations for retreats, seminars, small conventions and workshops might be one



FIGURE 6.18
SAINT JOSEPHS CONVENT

potential reuse for the structure. The close proximity to the City's primary commercial center gives the city another potential synergistic relationship that could bring activity to the City.

Section Five - Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a concept that elevates importance of the natural environment to the level of the built infrastructure, requiring careful consideration and planning. Green infrastructure utilizes land and water that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to the health and quality of life of our citizens. It also includes community initiatives integrating the natural ecosystem with the built environment using elements such as parks, tree lined streets, rain gardens, bio-retention systems and green roofs.

As described in the interim report, the study area is located within a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) area as defined by Sanitation District No. 1. A brief explanation of CSO's and associated challenges are explained in the Interim Report, which can be found at nkapc.org. In order to alleviate the problem, a focus on green development using various green infrastructure elements is needed.

As described in **Section 1** of this Chapter, the redevelopment within the study area is anticipated to occur in two phases. Following are the impervious area acreages under existing conditions and per the recommended redevelopment concept.

As tabulated in *Table 6.1*, the proposed redevelopment of the 110 acre *Park Hills Dixie Study* area has been projected to increase the impervious surface by approximately ten acres. A majority of the increase (6.67 acres) is associated with additional pavement (parking lot and roadway) with the remainder coming from increased building area. Storm water runoff from the study area flows into combined sewers and is eventually discharged into the Ohio River at the Willow Run combined sewer outfall, located in Covington near the Brent Spence Bridge.

With typical development practices, this ten acre increase in impervious surface has the potential to increase overflow volume at the Willow Run outfall by over five million gallons annually. Federal and state regulations require that the volume and frequency of CSOs be substantially reduced. Therefore, development projects that increase the amount of impervious surfaces in the combined sewer service area of Northern Kentucky can make it more difficult to comply with these regulations. Based on current estimates developed by SD1, the increased size and capacity of the controls needed to accommodate this ten acre increase could increase the capital cost of those controls by over \$1 million.

In response to these facts as well as the overall trend towards more stringent storm water runoff management, SD1 is developing revised storm water regulations for Northern Kentucky that should be in place in 2010. In the combined sewer system area, these regulations would likely require the increased control of storm water runoff volume for storm events up to 0.75-inches. One approach for achieving this control is the use of green infrastructure. While green infrastructure is still relatively new in Northern Kentucky, other areas of the U.S. have been successfully incorporating these features into new development projects for years.

Given the characteristics of this development plan, green infrastructure features that could be applied in the proposed *Park Hills Dixie Study* include:

- Rain gardens / bioretention areas
- Storm water planter boxes
- Grassed swales
- Rain barrels and cisterns
- Green roofs
- Other Practices

	Existing (in acres)	Phase 1 (in acres)	Phase 2 (in acres)	Increase in impervious area between existing and phase 2 (in acres)
Roads	22.18	28.14	28.85	6.67
Building	9.94	11.77	13.49	3.55

TABLE 6.1

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AREAS

Rain Gardens / Bioretention Areas

These features are based on the concept of directing storm water runoff into green space areas of the development that are designed to store, infiltrate, and slow the flow rate of runoff. See *Figure 6.19*. Effective rain garden / bioretention area designs require a consideration of existing soil conditions, the need for engineered soil, plant selection, and overflow structure design. Potential locations for rain gardens / bioretention areas in a mixed use development include landscaping areas around parking lots and buildings. A significant area for improved stormwater management and reduction of impervious surfaces is through the construction of a median along the stretch of the Dixie Highway corridor within the City of Park Hills. Such a median should be 12 feet wide depressed and designed to treat stormwater runoffs. Portions of the median could be used for the installation of rain gardens and bioretention areas which will readily store and infiltrate stormwater runoff from the roadway.



FIGURE 6.19
RAIN GARDEN/BIORETENTION AREA

Storm Water Planter Boxes

Storm water planter boxes (*Figure 6.20*) are a specific type of bioretention feature that are typically used in projects with space constraints. In this development, planter boxes could be used near buildings and along local roadways and access drives. Dixie Highway



FIGURE 6.20
STORM WATER PLANTER BOXES

being a busy transportation corridor, the planter boxes can also act as a buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway making pedestrians feel safer.

Grassed Swales

Grassed swales located in public roadway medians and along roadsides offer an alternative to traditional piped storm drainage systems. The proposed median in Dixie Highway has significant potential for providing stormwater management benefits. The use of swales in road rights-of-way can be very beneficial given the relatively large size of these areas combined with the fact that standard, raised medians provide minimal storm water management benefits.

Rain Barrels and Cisterns

Rain barrels and cisterns (*Figure 6.21*) are an effective way to reduce storm water runoff volume in developments with limited open space. Often, the most important factor to consider when using rain barrels / cisterns is the use of the captured water. This water can be used for typical landscaping purposes as well as certain domestic uses such as toilet flushing. Because the Dixie Study area includes a ball-field and substantial open space on the Covington Catholic campus, there could be significant potential for irrigation water usage.



FIGURE 6.21
RAIN BARRELS AND CISTERNS

Green Roofs

Green roofs are an example of green infrastructure that, in certain cases, can be a desirable addition to a building design that provides storm water management benefits. See *Figure 6.22*. Green roofs are mostly widely used for multi-story buildings in areas with limited open space. In addition to managing storm water runoff, green roofs can reduce cooling energy demand and can be designed to serve as a green space amenity for building users.



FIGURE 6.22
GREEN ROOF

Other Practices

It should be noted that pervious/permeable pavement was discussed by the Task Force and at public meetings as one method to alleviate stormwater flows in the study area. Unfortunately, today's pavement technology combined with the area's poorly draining soils do not yield a substantial decrease in flow. The management practice should be considered as an option if new pavement technology produces better results with the area's soils.

Chapter Seven Implementation

The future of the Dixie Highway corridor presented in this plan is dependent on how the plan is implemented. By itself the plan does not create the planned future. Implementation measures described in this Chapter and carried out by the City of Park Hills and other entities that the City collaborates with is the key to creating the future described within this document.

This Chapter contains a table of specific implementation measures. Each measure contained within the table includes a brief description of the actions anticipated, the status (short or long term, general) and a listing of the party or parties most responsible for assisting with carrying out the action. Generally, the first party listed is the lead for that particular implementation measure. The three status types are as follows: short-term or actions that should be started almost immediately upon adoption of the plan, but which may take 0 to 2 years to begin or complete; long-term or actions that should be started as soon as possible but which may take as long as 10 to 20 years to begin or complete. The general status refers to actions that are either underway or that when started will be of an ongoing nature.

Key Implementation Recommendations

Many recommendations are presented in the table that accompanies this Chapter. All those listed are important, but a few stand out as being of higher priority and importance as the City of Park Hills embarks on realizing this plan. In this section, these recommendations will be discussed in further detail.

Committee/Development Authority

One of the most important implementation measures for the City of Park Hills will be the creation and organization of a committee or authority to promote, direct and manage redevelopment of the Dixie Highway area. This committee must be established with the both the authority and oversight from the City to proactively participate in redevelopment. It is envisioned and recommended that this committee be more than just a citizen/business representative type committee that makes recommendations to City Council. This committee needs the legal authority to negotiate for, take option on, and purchase land for

One of the primary recommendations of this study is the creation and organization of a committee or authority to promote, direct and manage redevelopment of the Dixie Highway area. This committee must be established with the both the authority and oversight from the City to proactively participate in redevelopment.

Another primary recommendation of this study is the creation of a form based code or design guidelines to effectively implement the land use recommendations of the study.

future development and to participate in other key development decisions affecting the corridor. It will be important that this committee be established under any appropriate state and/or federal statutes and that sufficient oversight be maintained by City Council.

Zoning Text and Map Amendments

The adoption of this plan by the Kenton County Planning Commission as part of the *Comprehensive Plan Update 2006-2026: An Area-Wide Vision for Kenton County* will be the prerequisite step to the preparation of or revision of zoning text and map revisions. To effectively implement recommendations of this plan the City's current zoning regulations will need to be reviewed, revised and possibly rewritten to guide future development. Land use recommendations identified in Chapter 6 will generally be best accomplished by the creation of or the addition of some level of form based zoning and/or design standards for the corridor.

Form based land use codes are being used in many cities to provide contextual standards that help ensure that new development will be appropriate to the character desired by the community. For the City of Park Hills, this may be translated into assuring that the character of the City is carried to the Dixie Highway corridor. One aspect typical of form based codes that has been expressed by the public as desirable during the planning process is that new developments within the corridor provide space for community gatherings and places for residents to congregate as part of the experience of shopping.

The specifics of these regulations must be identified and written into zoning text as soon as is practical after the adoption of this plan. The process of accomplishing this task should include a committee that perhaps would be comprised of representatives of the Task Force from this planning process and representatives from the committee or authority, as described above, created to implement this plan.

It is important to note that the adoption of the plan and creation of new zoning regulations both comprise only the beginning of plan implementation. Zoning is a

static implementation tool and although very important will not create the future envisioned in this plan. This is precisely why this plan recommends the creation of a strong committee/authority, as previously described and the following tax increment finance district as one means of generating income for implementation.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing is a technique by which the increase in tax revenue over the base amount set when a tax increment financing district is established is set aside for public improvements within the designated area. At this time Kentucky statutes are not written to allow local units of government to capture all tax revenue (state and local) except for certain larger projects approved by the state legislature (See Kentucky Revised Statutes 154.30). Currently, a city can only capture its own taxes from this area which is somewhat limiting to the level of funds that will be available. Before embarking on the creation of a tax increment financing district the City must thoroughly review the legal aspects involved. One solution is for the City of Park Hills to collaborate with other cities in Kenton County to approach the state legislature to amend state law to accommodate more comprehensive use of this procedure that would allow cities to capture all available tax revenue.

Dixie Highway Improvements and Streetscape

Streetscape and other improvements such as addition of a median, access management and reduction in lanes along Dixie Highway are primary components of this plan. These improvements will help provide much of the context from which remaining portions of the plan can be built upon. Therefore, it is important that these elements are begun soon after adoption of the plan.

Two steps should be accomplished to begin this process. First, City Council should begin specific dialogue with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet in regards to the median. As noted within the plan this median was included as part of recommendations of *The Dixie Fix* study. This plan furthers that recommendation and the

City now needs to begin the process of working with the Transportation Cabinet to come to agreements on how this can happen. Alternate ideas for how this median may be constructed have been presented in the plan. It may be raised as a more typical median or depressed and also used as part of the storm water management approach for the area. Discussion on which alternative works best may take some time because in the case of storm water management the City should also include Sanitation District No. 1 in the process.

The second step that should be taken is to organize for developing the gateway features other landscaping that will define the corridor. This should be inclusive of maintenance of plantings within the right-of-way along the whole stretch. One way to accomplish this may be to utilize an existing organization active within the city. The median and streetscaping together are important as they lie almost exclusively within the realm of implementation by the public and can function as catalysts for private improvements along the corridor.

Green Infrastructure/ Storm Water Management

Management of storm water needs to be a priority for the City as land along Dixie Highway redevelops. Several techniques are available that can be utilized in the corridor as discussed in **Section 5 of Chapter 6**. To most effectively implement green infrastructure techniques it will be important for the City to closely coordinate with Sanitation District No.1 and with land developers beginning at the earliest stages of the development process. Many techniques for implementing green infrastructure components within land development project are new for our area. One key component of plan implementation, therefore, will be to supply information to developers and their design team early in the planning process. It is suggested that the City provide coordination between prospective developers and Sanitation District No. 1. Additionally, the City should research and implement where appropriate incentives and regulations to promote the use of green infrastructure techniques.

Recommendations	Implementation	Status	Responsible Party
Mobility			
Install median on Dixie Highway, per recommendations of the "Dixie Fix" Study and make other roadway improvements outlined in this plan and the Dixie Fix study.	Meet with KYTC, District 6 to begin specific discussions on implementation of this portion of the Dixie Fix project.	Short-Term	City/KYTC/NKAPC
	Develop process for construction of median. This may be a combination of public/private initiatives at time of redevelopment and/or through initiatives by the city to obtain funds through grants or other sources, such as TIF funds.	Long-Term	City
Realign curve on Dixie Highway per recommendations of the "Dixie Fix" Study	Apply to OKI to have a Project Identification Form (PIF) prepared for this project.	Short-Term	City/OKI
	Review PIF request with the Dixie Fix Committee (for information purpose and general support)	Short-Term	City
	Work with state, local and regional officials to secure funding and construction.	Long-Term	City
Provide for pedestrian and bicycle linkages/connectivity from Dixie corridor to adjoining residential neighborhoods	Establish mechanisms necessary to install these connections as redevelopment occurs and/or through and/or through initiatives by the city to obtain funds through grants or other sources, such as TIF funds.	Long-Term	City/KCPC/NKAPC
Work with existing and new businesses to share parking throughout the corridor	Meet with current business owners and future developers to find appropriate ways to share parking spaces throughout the daytime and nighttime hours.	General	City
Construct road connection from core area to Old State Road		Long-Term	City/KCPC/NKAPC

Infrastructure			
Remove overhead utility lines		Short-Term	City
Work with Sanitation District No 1 to utilize green infrastructure approaches in the corridor to manage storm water		General	City
Plan for and organize to maintain landscaping and green infrastructure improvements		General	City
Plan for and construct "gateway" features as part of Dixie Highway corridor redevelopment		Short -Term	City

Recommendations	Implementation	Status	Responsible Party
General			
Adopt a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the project area. (Note: A TIF district was also recommended for Dixie Highway corridor in the Dixie Fix Study.)	Currently, TIF districts in the Commonwealth of Kentucky are not as broad as they could be. Changes need to be made to enable cities, such as Park Hills, to more fully utilize the funding benefits of this mechanism. Nevertheless, the City can begin to accomplish this plan by implementing a TIF district for the study area that captures the increment of increased city taxes.	Short-Term	TANK
Maintain ongoing contact with the City of Covington to coordinate redevelopment and access issues for the Gateway and NKU properties		General	City
Establish an organization, either non-profit or profit, such as a community improvement committee or community development corporation to oversee implementation of the corridor plan.	The role and purpose of this committee is to first assist city council with the ongoing implementation of this plan. Additionally, this organization is necessary to provide a mechanism to work with existing businesses, the community at large to promote the corridor and to secure land for development or redevelopment.	General	City

Housing			
"Refresh" housing inventory by construction of new units and revitalization of existing units.	Organize housing and other programs to maintain and strengthen home ownership and to maintain quality of housing units, particularly existing single-family houses.	General	City
	Develop housing in higher densities than now exist and utilize attached single-family products as part of a mix of housing choices.	General	City/KCPC/NKAPC
Minimize the trend toward rental housing units	Organize housing and other programs to maintain and strengthen home ownership and to maintain quality of housing units, particularly existing single-family houses.	General	City
Housing programs to maintain and strengthen home ownership and to maintain quality of housing units, particularly existing single-family houses.		Short-Term	

Land Use

The following recommendations will be incorporated into the adoption of this study when the Kenton County Planning Commission adopts the plan as a part of the county-wide plan entitled: *Comprehensive Plan Update 2006/2026: an Area-wide Vision for Kenton County*. Implementation measures described must be completed as a second step and initiated by the city and/or by individual property owners. (See Map XXXX)

Recommendations	Implementation	Status	Responsible Party
Change land use for properties, containing approximately 9.2 acres, along Dixie Highway from city limit south to S. Arlington Road to Commercial Retail/Service and to include offices as permitted uses		Short Term	City/NKAPC
Change land use for approximately 4.9 acres at the end of Old State road, formerly Gateway Community and Technical College, from school parks to residential at 7.1 to 14 dwelling units per		Short Term	City/NKAPC
Change land use for approximately 19 acres along both sides of Dixie Highway between S. Arlington and the vicinity of St. Joseph Lane from Commercial Retail/Service, residential at 7.1 to 14 and 4.1 to 7.0 dwelling units per net acre to mixed use (see description in Chapter		Short Term	City/NKAPC
Create new zoning text and map regulations as necessary to implement land use recommendations.	The zoning within the study area should be evaluated and any zone changes required to implement the land use recommendations of the study should be pursued.	Short Term	City
Encourage new retail land uses that can take advantage of this location in proximity to a population with spending capacity that appears to exceed the availability of existing businesses in the vicinity to meet demand	Create a retail/service environment conducive to small neighborhood and niche type retail establishments that provide specialty type products and can survive on business generated by residents in Park Hills, but that can also be a destination for others because of the unique character.	General	City
Reserve/Hold for Dixie Hwy in front of schools		Short Term	City/NKAPC

Appendix A

Redevelopment Alternatives

Several redevelopment alternatives were prepared and discussed with the *Park Hills Dixie Study* Task Force. The preferred alternative is presented in Chapter 6. This section documents the alternatives that were discussed with the Task Force but not selected. The alternatives and accompanying text presented here serve as a reference to the thought process implemented throughout the study. While none of these scenarios were chosen as a whole, certain pieces of each are displayed in the preferred alternative. As it is unlikely nor is it intended that the preferred alternative will be constructed exactly as depicted by developers these alternatives can still serve as examples of how development in the corridor could take place. While each alternative contains different recommendations there are several overarching themes present in each of the alternatives. These themes include:

Implementing recommendations found in

The Dixie Fix (approved June 2006)

- Redeveloping Dixie Highway from four travel lanes to two travel lanes with a center median
- Creating accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian use (sidewalks and bike lanes)
- Realignment of northern curve near the Fort Mitchell Garage
- Realigning intersection of Arlington and south Arlington at Dixie Highway
- Implementing access management controls such as defining curb cuts and implementing a non traversable median for safety

Added vehicular connectivity within the study area

- Addition of new connector road between Rosemont Avenue and St. Joseph Lane
- Creation of a new parallel connector road north of Dixie Highway

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities

- Inclusion of new pedestrian and bicycle connections to Old State Road
- Increased pedestrian facilities throughout study area
- Creation of dedicated bike lanes on Dixie Highway
- Congregated parking areas

Vehicular Parking

- Existing parking ratios maintained throughout the corridor
- Number of spaces based on parking study (Feb. 2009)
- More direct access and visible parking

Mixed Land Uses

- Mix of office and retail uses within the same building / area
- Combination of commercial and residential uses

Green Infrastructure Initiatives

- Work with SD1 to find alternatives to stormwater issues
- Overall goal of reducing flow into combined sewer overflow (CSO)

As described in **Chapter 6**, each alternative is broken down and described in three main sections (north, core and south). The northern section encompasses property along Dixie Highway from the Park Hills / Covington city boundary to the intersection of Arlington / South Arlington Road. The core area consists of the area lying roughly between Arlington / South Arlington Road and St. Joseph Lane. The final section in the southern portion of the study area lies between St. Joseph Lane and the Park Hills / Fort Wright City boundary. Each alternative also includes a list of considerations identified and used in developing the alternative scenarios.

Alternative One

North Area

The northern section of alternative one recommends a complete redevelopment of property along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- Moving structures towards Dixie Highway as redevelopment occurs
- Grouping buildings when possible to make development more walkable
- Congregating parking to allow for use by more than one building

Core Area

The core area of alternative one suggests nearly all structures should be redeveloped. This scenario provides for the most walkable environment out of all the design concepts reviewed by utilizing compact design with few pedestrian / vehicle conflict points. Specific recommendations in the core area include:

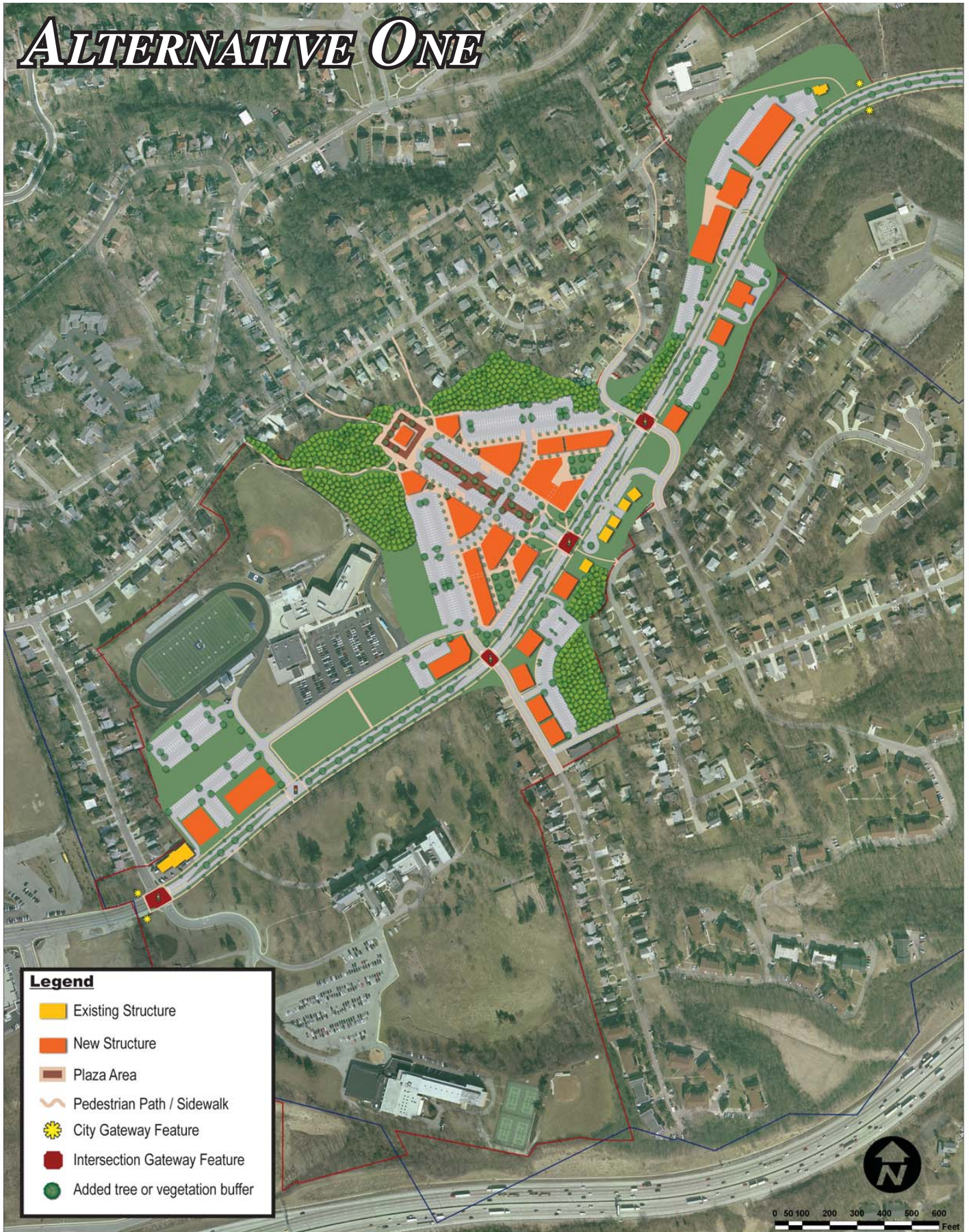
- Three signalized access points from Dixie Highway
- Grouping buildings to make development more walkable and to create places and spaces for people to gather
- Inclusion of plazas and green areas to better accommodate the pedestrian
- Clear sightlines from St. Joseph and Arlington intersections to draw motorist's eye into the development
- Inclusion of a landmark structure at the end of sightlines for greater visual impact
- Tiered design of longer buildings to correspond with topography
- Use of angled "off street parking" near Dixie Highway for uses with higher vehicular turnover
- Central parking spine can be made inactive for special events
- Vehicular access across the development that parallels Dixie Highway
- Adaptive reuse of existing structures on south side of Dixie Highway
- Construction of a new service road for existing structures to consolidate access onto Dixie Highway (south side of Dixie Highway)

South Area

The southern section of alternative one recommends redeveloping the property immediately adjacent to the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- Very limited development along Dixie Highway so that a northbound traveler will focus attention toward structures in the core area and not so much along building adjacent to the road in this area.

ALTERNATIVE ONE



ALTERNATIVE ONE

Alternative Two

North Area

The northern section of alternative two recommends retaining and revitalizing nearly all the original structures along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- Retention of nearly all existing structures along the corridor
- Implementation of street screening through landscaping and a street wall
- Creation of new parking areas that service multiple structures
- Employ service roads where appropriate to reduce access points onto Dixie Highway

Core Area

The core area of alternative two suggests nearly all structures should be redeveloped. Specific recommendations in the core area include:

- Adaptive reuse of existing structures on south side of Dixie Highway
- Implement infill structures on the south side of Dixie Highway where possible
- Construction of new parking areas that are accessed from South Arlington Road and Rosemont Avenue (south side of Dixie Highway)

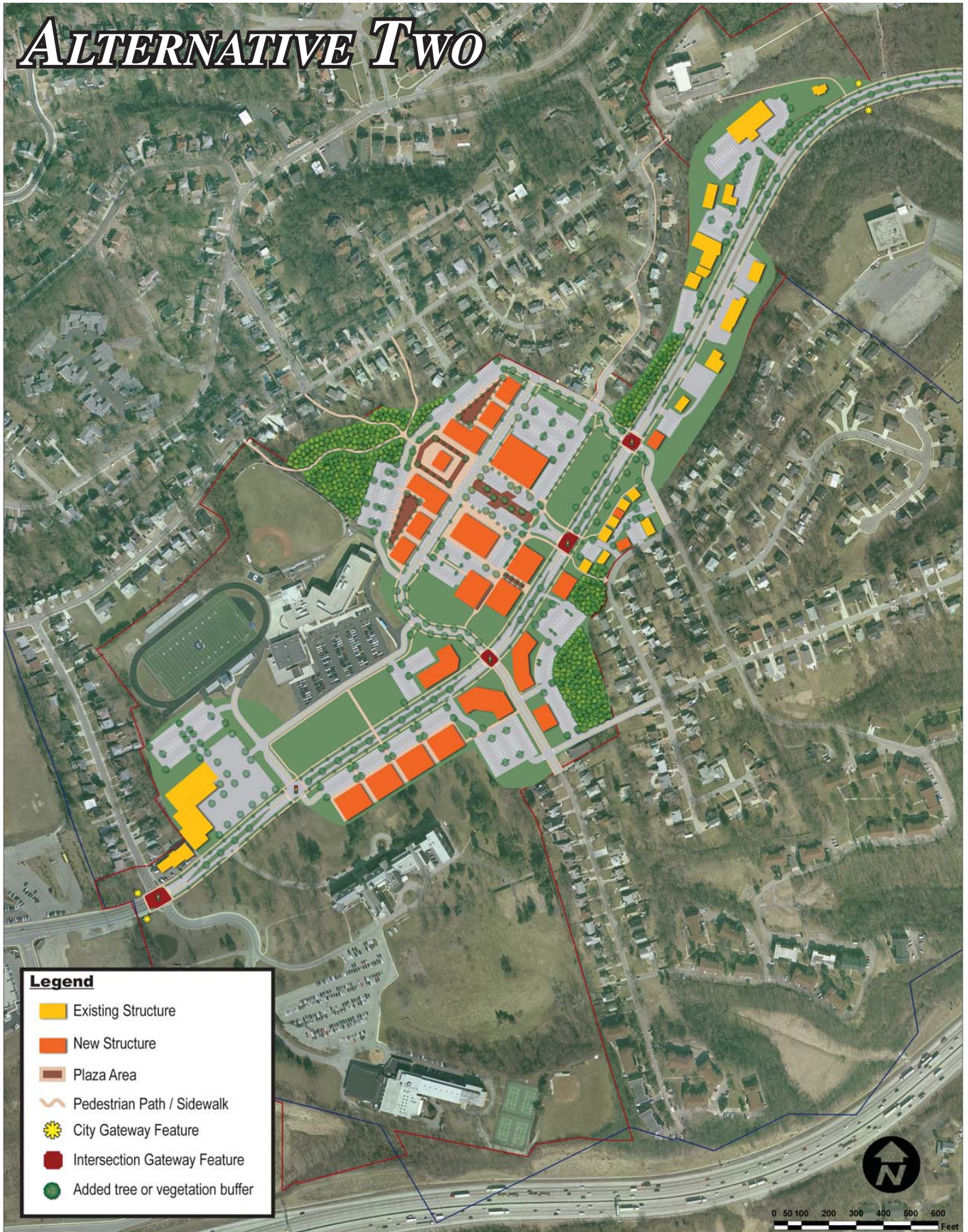
- Majority of new structures are constructed farther from Dixie Highway
- Focus of the redeveloped area becomes new parallel connection road
- Central parking spine can be made inactive for special events
- Inclusion of a landmark structure within the development for greater visual impact
- Three signalized access points along Dixie
- Pedestrian and bicycle access into residential neighborhood that connect to Old State Road

South Area

The southern section of alternative two recommends retaining original structures and creation of new buildings along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- Existing structures are revitalized and maintained
- New development predominantly located on south side of Dixie Highway
- Maintain visibility of CCHS
- Creation of a mid-block pedestrian crossing in between CCHS and NDA

ALTERNATIVE TWO



ALTERNATIVE TWO

Alternative Three

North Area

The northern section of alternative three recommends a complete redevelopment of property along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- Moving structures towards Dixie Highway as redevelopment occurs
- Grouping buildings when possible to make development more walkable
- Congregating parking to allow for use by more than one building
- Creation of small public gathering spaces along the highway to promote a more walkable environment

Core Area

The core area of alternative three suggests nearly all structures should be redeveloped. Specific recommendations in the core area include:

- New cohesive development along the south side of Dixie Highway with parking and access via St. Joseph Lane and South Arlington Road
- New development on the north side of Dixie Highway has been brought closer to the street to allow for ample parking behind the structures
- Two signalized intersections on Dixie Highway and two “right in – right out” access points to Dixie Highway

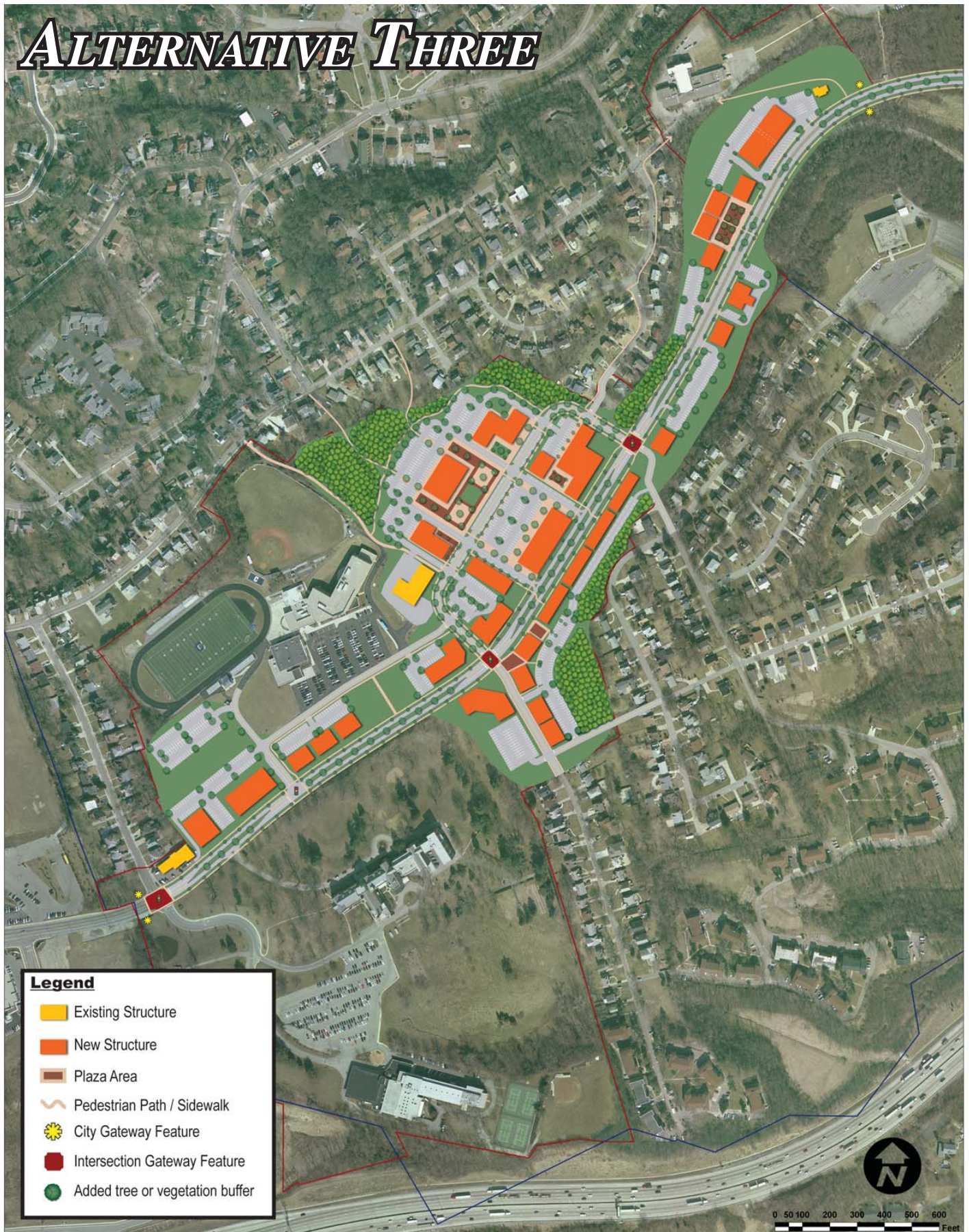
- Construction of a new parallel road allows controlled access through the new development
- New structures are organized around a public gathering space which can be isolated from traffic through the development
- Pedestrian and bicycle access into residential neighborhood that connect to Old State Road

South Area

The southern section of alternative three recommends retaining one original structure and creation of new buildings along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- One existing structure is revitalized and maintained
- New development predominantly located on north side of Dixie Highway in front of Covington Catholic High School
- Maintain visibility of the Sisters of Notre Dame Convent
- New commercial structures with parking located behind and off of Dixie Highway
- Land swap of current Covington Catholic parking with vacant land behind existing commercial property to create a prime commercial location directly on Dixie Highway

ALTERNATIVE THREE



ALTERNATIVE THREE

Alternative Four

North Area

The northern section of alternative four recommends a complete redevelopment of property along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- Moving structures towards Dixie Highway as redevelopment occurs
- Grouping buildings when possible to make development more walkable
- Congregating parking to allow for use by more than one building

Core Area

The core area of alternative four identifies that several existing structures are to remain during the redevelopment process. Specific recommendations in the core area include:

- New cohesive development along the south side of Dixie Highway with parking and access via St. Joseph Lane and South Arlington Road
- New development on the north side of Dixie Highway is located behind existing structures and additional structures have been located near the intersection of St. Joseph Lane to create a node of activity and gateway into the Core Area.
- New development on the north side of Dixie Highway has been brought closer to the street to allow for ample parking behind the structures

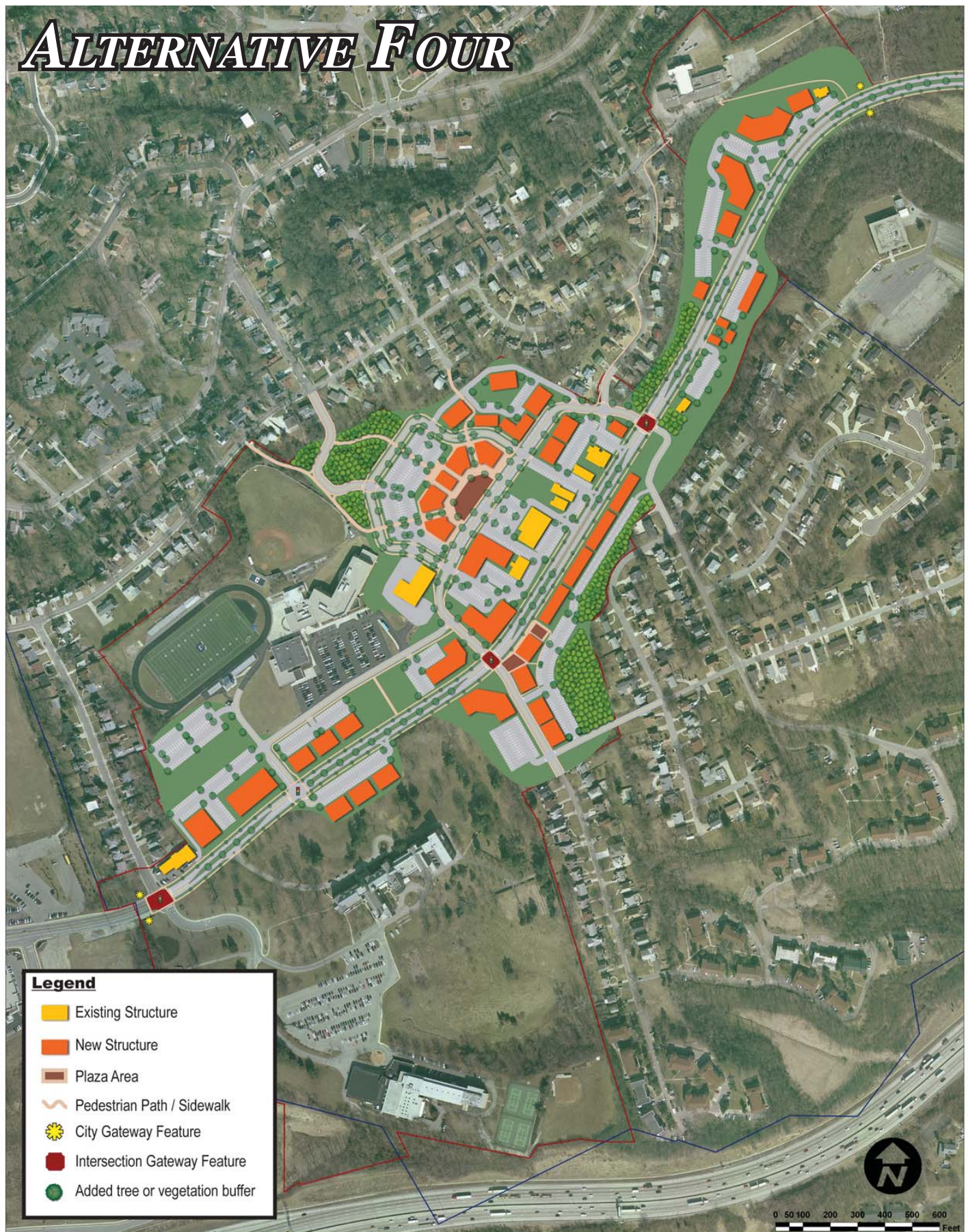
- Two signalized intersections on Dixie Highway, a full access non-signalized access point, and two “right in – right out” access points to Dixie Highway
- Construction of a new parallel road allows controlled access through the new development
- New structures are organized around a public gathering space with can be isolated from traffic through the development
- Pedestrian and bicycle access into residential neighborhood that connect to Old State Road
- Vehicular access to Old State Road
- Multi family residential structures which act as a buffer to the existing residential

South Area

The southern section of alternative four recommends retaining one original structure and creation of new buildings along the corridor. Specific recommendations in this area include:

- One existing structure is revitalized and maintained
- New development located on both sides of Dixie Highway
- Maintain visibility of CCHS through opening between new buildings
- Provide as much opportunity as possible for new development

ALTERNATIVE FOUR



ALTERNATIVE FOUR

Appendix B

Public Meeting Three Comments

The third and final public meeting for the Park Hills Dixie Study project was held on Thursday September 10, 2009 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Generations Church. Twenty eight people attended this meeting including several Task Force members. The meeting was designed in an open house format and provided the community an opportunity to review the recommendations and implementation strategy chosen by the Task Force. Listed below are the comments compiled by meeting participants, Task Force members, and NKAPC staff. Comments have been divided into four categories: North Area, Core Area, South Area, and General Comments.

North Area

- One business owner was most interested in how this access to his access to the highway would be affected. He was shown the proposed curb cuts on the chart. He seemed content, or at least, comfortable, with the proposed changes.
- Looks like very long term. I like the idea of medical offices in front of Covington Catholic High School. I hope the school might be able to gain income from long term leases.
- I think it all looks good, but I don't like the trees in the middle of the Dixie Highway. I like the curb and sidewalk north of Arlington.
- Traffic calming with realignment of curve seems somewhat odd.

Core Area

- One participant really like the proposed green space and icon (water fountain) proposed on the area behind Reality Tuesday.
- Great. I really like the continuation of Terrace to the core area and the loop road. The plan brings the core of the city together in a more walkable plan.
- Generations Church is concerned with what they might be able to do with property in the future. (This concern was expressed by several persons).
- One person commented they thought it would take a long time to implement the final phase.

South Area

- Two home owners on Old State Road were relieved to see the proposed pedestrian path and road connecting the neighborhood to the Core Area did not affect them directly. They warned that the people it did affect would probably not like it.
- Existing looks like we are in Den Lou Denial! Where is it? Anything that improves the look of this area will help our existing businesses.

General Comments

- No comments received

Appendix C

In the News



August 26, 2008

City considers small study

By Regan Coomer
rcoomer@nky.com

PARK HILLS - Representatives from the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission presented information on conducting a small area study of the city's Dixie Highway corridor to mayor and council Monday Aug. 25.

• <http://rodeo.cincinnati.com/getlocal/comm.aspx?id=100036> >More Park Hills news

Mayor Michael Hellmann recently expressed interest in revitalizing the city's portion of Dixie Highway through redevelopment, something NKAPC members assured council the study would facilitate.

Cities such as Independence have already conducted such a study, they said, which would act as a 20-year plan and would include a list of recommendations along with suggested implementations. Council could then adopt the study, which would be incorporated in the NKAPC comprehensive plan for Park Hills.

Should the city decide to conduct the study, the NKAPC hopes to begin in November with completion by August or September of next year, said NKAPC Associate Planner Jenna Haverkos.

Focus for discussion was small area study procedures, including the importance of putting together a citizen task force, conducting a market analysis and interviewing "key persons" in and near Park Hills such as TANK or SD-1, Haverkos said.

Cost for the study, depending on the depth and whether the city chooses to do a market analysis as well, could fall between \$39,000 to \$43,000, estimated Keith Longston, deputy director of Long Range Programming with the NKAPC.

However, Longston suggested the city discuss sharing costs for a market analysis with the city of Fort Wright, whose Mayor Joe Nienaber has also expressed interest in the rejuvenation of Dixie Highway. Longston estimated Park Hills' cost with Fort Wright contributing could be between \$30,000 and \$33,000, a significant reduction.

"If these plans are going to see implementation you've got to have those facts and figures for the study," said Dennis Gordon, executive director of NKAPC, of conducting a market analysis along with the study.

Hellmann agreed, saying the information would "allow you to target yourself and bring in the right business," and know the proper city location for bigger businesses versus "boutique" type businesses.

Hellmann thanked the NKAPC for coming, saying he'd get back to them "as soon as possible. I think we have plenty of things to think and talk about."



October 14, 2008

Park Hills OKs small area study

By Regan Coomer
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Park Hills council authorized the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission (NKAPC) to move forward with the small area study of the Dixie Highway corridor at their meeting Monday Oct. 13.

The city also hopes to conduct a market study along with the small area study to further economic development, but is waiting to finalize with the NKAPC for a definitive yay or nay from the cities of Fort Wright and Covington regarding a shared cost of the market study.

Should Fort Wright and Covington partner with Park Hills, each city will be responsible for around \$9,500. However, with two cities sharing the cost would be about \$13,000 and Park Hills alone would cost between \$18 and 23,000 in addition to the \$20,000 small area study cost.

"We're ready to get started whenever you all are," said Keith Logston NKAPC Deputy Director of the Long Range Plan, adding at this point it looks like Fort Wright will join in the market study, but not Covington.

Logston said he'd like to get started as soon as possible because the first step is to conduct interviews with city businesses and set up meetings with a city task force. If the city waits too long, it'll be December, which is "a wash" for meetings and interviews, Logston said.

"We should go ahead and mobilize on that because it will take some time to get the community task force together and hit the ground running," agreed Council member Steve Ryan.

And though the cost is somewhat hefty, Mayor Michael Hellmann thinks it's worth it.

"It's giving you more than a year to year look at the city," he said. "It's a long term vision for economic development."

Council should take action on the market study and appoint a citizen task force at the November council meeting.

October 16, 2008

Park Hills votes on tax for fire truck

Measure to replace 1983 pumper would be offset by lowering street tax

*By Cindy Schroeder
cschroeder@nky.com*

PARK HILLS - When Park Hills voters go to the polls on Nov. 4, they'll be asked to make a decision on a "revenue neutral" ballot issue to raise money for a new fire pumper and an economic development fund.

The ballot initiative calls for lowering Park Hills' street tax, now levied at \$235 per \$100,000 of assessed property value, by \$80 per \$100,000, for a new rate of \$155 per \$100,000, Park Hills Mayor Michael Hellmann said.

The issue then calls for creation of a fire/development tax of \$80 per \$100,000 of property value to buy a new fire truck and for community development and property acquisition.

If the ballot initiative is approved, the fire/development tax would be revoked after five years, and Park Hills' road tax would go back to its current rate, Hellmann said.

Last week, Hellmann sent letters to Park Hills households explaining the issue and inviting voters who have questions to attend one of two meetings, on Saturday and Wednesday at Covington Catholic High School.

He said he is not aware of any organized opposition to the tax, which would generate about \$150,000 a year.

"The city council and I have looked into many ways to meet the important needs of the city with the least impact to you, the taxpayer," Hellmann wrote. "The solution we are proposing for this issue is to create a fire/development tax, but offset that new tax by lowering an existing one. Voting yes will not increase your bottom-line city tax rate. This is often referred to as 'revenue neutral.' "

With an average home value in Park Hills of about \$150,000, a typical homeowner would pay \$120. That's the same amount that home owner is paying now, but it would be used for a different purpose, the mayor said.

The tax would be used to replace the Fire Department's 1983 pumper with a new one that would be paid off in five years instead of the usual 20 if the project were financed through a bond issue, Hellmann said. He said the shorter pay-off period would save taxpayers "somewhere in the ballpark of \$200,000."

By comparing costs of fire service for cities of comparable size, Hellmann said it's more cost-effective for Park Hills to continue to operate its own fire department, rather than contract with a neighboring one.

The economic development part of the tax would go toward a regional market study of the Dixie Highway corridor business district and would help pay off the city's loan on the vacant Dixie Highway property where the John Popp Floral Co. once operated.

The city eventually hopes to redevelop that site.

If a majority of voters approve the tax, city officials would advertise for bids for a new pumper within a couple of weeks, and delivery of the pumper would take place six to eight months later, Hellmann said.

"Again, this will not increase your taxes, but rather reapportion the existing tax base," the mayor said.



November 4, 2008

Incumbents return to Park Hills, fire truck tax passes

By Regan Coomer
rcoomer@nky.com

All three incumbents, Monty O' Hara, Ted Kleymeyer and Steve Ryan, were re-elected to Park Hills City Council as well as challenger Chris Sudbrink.

- <http://nky.cincinnati.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=blog27> ">Kenton County blog
- <http://rodeo.cincinnati.com/getlocal/comm.aspx?id=100036> ">More Park Hills news

The five write-in candidates drew 426 votes but the winners of council's remaining two spots have yet to be determined.

Incumbent O' Hara came in at 696 with the most votes and his response to his win was simple: "Great. I'm looking forward to serving."

Ryan, for his part, was happy about his win but also excited about passing of the city's tax, with 645 votes, to purchase a fire truck and facilitate economic development.

"I'm really looking forward to dealing with the economic development issues that we've talked about and really making those come to reality, especially business and job growth along Dixie Highway," Ryan said.



December 26, 2008

Cities team up for study

By Regan Coomer
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Crescent Springs and Park Hills have partnered to share costs on a market study that will go along with a Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission small area study currently being done in each city.

- <http://rodeo.cincinnati.com/getlocal/comm.aspx?id=100026>">More Crescent Springs news
- <http://rodeo.cincinnati.com/getlocal/comm.aspx?id=100036>">More Park Hills news

By teaming up with Park Hills the city of Crescent Springs will save \$8,600 on the market study with a total cost of \$34,600 including the \$20,000 cost for the NKAPC small area study.

The study will encompass an area bounded by I-75 and Buttermilk Pike and will center on the Toeppen Executive Center, which Mayor Jim Collett considers the area's flagship.

"Walkable urban communities are important to me," Collett said of what he hopes the studies will accomplish. "Let's find out the barriers to development and let's break those barriers down."

The studies will take most of next year to complete and will utilize a task force of people who will help the NKAPC and GEM Public Sector Services, the market study consultant, better determine the needs and wants of Crescent Springs.

As for Collett, his "vision" is a central plaza surrounded by shops, professional offices and residences that will become a "gathering area for the city."

The biggest challenge the city will have to overcome to make his vision a reality is accessibility, Collett said.

"We want to provide a community where people want to live and provide a sense of place."

Park Hills Council member Monty O'Hara said the city of Park Hills, which wants to study Dixie Highway, will also save about \$8,000 through a partnership with Crescent Springs.

"I think it'll be a good thing as we're trying to market properties in the city or trying to attract people to properties in a business district," he said of the study. "It will be nice to know what would be the most likely business to survive there."

Cities prepare for economic turn around, authorize contracts for small area studies

Seeing the economic downturn as an opportunity to get positioned for the eventual recovery, the city councils of Park Hills and Crescent Springs signed contracts in the past month for small area studies within their jurisdictions. NKAPC's long-range planning staff will focus on the Dixie Highway corridor in Park Hills and on the area bounded by I-71/75, Buttermilk Pike, and the railroad tracks in Crescent Springs.

Since both study areas include a sizeable commercial land use base, both studies will include economic analyses pursued by GEM Public Sector Services of Dayton, Ohio. Recent NKAPC small area studies have utilized market-based analyses as a foundation for recommendations on future uses.

"Staff has initiated its work already in Park Hills," said Keith Logsdon, AICP, NKAPC's deputy director for long-range planning. "We have started preliminary investigations which include interviewing key persons, putting together an existing conditions report, and building a relationship with the task force that will guide our efforts."

Logsdon and his team will be working with the 14-member group appointed by the city. Together they will study the half-mile-long Dixie Highway corridor that stretches from the city's north to south boundaries.

"The study will focus on redevelopment opportunities along the corridor including land use and transportation," said Jenna Haverkos, an associate planner in the long-range planning department. "We will work with the task force to make recommendations on how to revitalize the area over the next 20 to 30 year planning period."

The study effort will include three public meetings, the first of which will take place in late January.

"We will use that opportunity to present our existing conditions report and to get some feedback from those who attend," she said. "We will then take those findings to the task force and craft recommendations so that by the second meeting—in April—we can propose several scenarios and alternatives."

The third and final meeting will be a complete presentation of the recommendations before they are sent to the Park Hills City Council for approval.

Haverkos says many residents are familiar with "The Dixie Fix," a recent study of the entire Dixie Highway corridor from Florence to Covington. That study was pursued collaboratively by the NKAPC and OKI staffs.

"We want to make sure residents don't confuse the two studies," she said. "This is a more specific and focused look at Park Hills and how the city can create a sense of place along its portion of the corridor."

Logsdon and Haverkos suggest late August as the goal for completing staff work and initiating the approval process with the City Council and Kenton County Planning Commission. The intent is for the small area study to be incorporated into the Kenton County comprehensive plan as a basis for future land use decisions.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

NKAPC's long-range planning staff is also in the beginning stages of initiating a small area study for the City of Crescent Springs.

"We will be looking at the redevelopment potential for the commercial area at the main entrance to the city," said Logsdon. "We are still working with city officials on the exact boundaries. Their underlying goal is to facilitate the creation of a place that's conducive to all types of commercial growth and possibly even some residential uses."

A task force is currently being developed by the mayor.

Logsdon said one of the main challenges of this study will be providing convenient access to the study area.

"One of the main issues is that the road that serves the corridor—Buttermilk Pike—is so congested already and they're even putting in a new lane."

Ed Dietrich, associate planner in the long-range planning department, will be working with Logsdon and the task force to develop recommendations for land use redevelopment.

"We will be doing a market study and research," said Dietrich. "We will have three public meetings as we do with most small area studies. The task force will meet at least once a month with the first meeting scheduled for February."

As with the Park Hills small area study, Dietrich said the ultimate goal is to have the Kenton County Planning Commission adopt the recommendations into the comprehensive plan. Dietrich said the projected end date for the approval by the county planning commission is late December 2009 or early January 2010.

Logsdon acknowledges that some aspects of both studies will be challenging during economic recession but asserts that Park Hills and Crescent Springs will be better positioned to seize opportunities that present themselves when the recovery begins.

"Down times—economically speaking—are often really good times to look forward and get prepared, he concluded.

Two Kenton Co planning commissioners step down following decades of service

Two of Kenton County Planning Commission's longest-serving members, Alexandra Weldon and Paul Swanson, stepped down recently after serving a combined 40 years on the county planning commission. Both got involved with planning issues based on their interest and dedication to the community; both served as officers during their long tenure.

Swanson's service to planning in the region also included a six-year stint on the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission following its formation in 1961. He served as treasurer the entire time.

"I had a unique opportunity during the past 48 years to serve both the Area Planning Commission and Kenton County Planning Commission," said Swanson.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

In 1988 the mayor of Erlanger appointed Swanson as Erlanger's representative to the Kenton County Planning Commission. He served on that body continually until last month when his fifth term expired and he decided 20 years were enough. He served as the county planning commission's treasurer from 1996 through 2008.

"I have seen many changes during my tenure," he said. "I have enjoyed working with all the members, but have especially enjoyed chairing the subdivision review committee."

Alexandra Weldon also served 20 years on the Kenton County Planning Commission, being appointed in 1988 along with Swanson. She was one of three Covington representatives to the county planning commission and served as chairperson since mid 2004.

"As chairperson, I hope that I brought an openness to the meetings by allowing for public debate on the many issues that came before us," she said.

Michael Schwartz, AICP, NKAPC's deputy director for current planning, said the two will be greatly missed.

"We can't thank them enough for their years of service and all that they brought to the commission and to NKAPC. We will keep them in our memory and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors."



January 19, 2009

City to amend model sign ordinance

By Regan Coomer
rcoomer@nky.com

Park Hills City Council discussed changes to the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission's model sign ordinance at their regular meeting Jan. 12.

- <http://rodeo.cincinnati.com/getlocal/comm.aspx?id=100036> ">More Park Hills news
- <http://nky.cincinnati.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=blog27> ">Kenton County blog

City Council plans to eliminate pole signs and advertising benches, two signs allowable by the model sign ordinance the city adopted in November.

Pole signs have not been allowable in the city since the 1970s, Mayor Michael Hellmann said, partly because allowing them doesn't make sense.

"Pole signs are fine for cities that have their businesses within sight of the interstate," he said.
"However, in Park Hills, a pole sign can't possibly get high enough for people on I-71/75 to see it."

Advertising benches were allowed in the city's previous zoning as well as in the model sign ordinance. Nonetheless, Hellmann said the benches "are something we have long heard complaints about" from residents.

"It seems that we are the only city in the area that allows them," Hellmann said, adding he and council had held off on prohibiting them until the NKAPC model sign ordinance was finished and adopted.

Hellmann said council will soon be looking at an ordinance causing the removal of advertising benches in the business district and will replace them with a "cohesive" set of benches provided by a TANK program placing rod-iron benches at their bus stops.

"Right now they're unregulated," Council Member Steve Ryan said of the advertising benches. "We could have a proliferation of bench signs if we didn't get it under control."

Once the changes are made to the model sign ordinance, Ryan, the chairman of the Small Area Study Task Force for his city, feels confident it will work well with the results of the study.

"I think it will be consistent with the vision that comes out of that study," he said.

Ryan said council will hear a reading on the advertising benches in February, but the pole sign change must first go to the NKAPC for a public hearing.



January 22, 2009

Park Hills seeks community input tonight

By Cindy Schroeder
cschroeder@nky.com

PARK HILLS – Residents, business owners and other interested parties can help create a vision for the future of the community at tonight's first of three public meetings on the Park Hills Dixie Study.

The meeting will be 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. today at the Covington First Church of the Nazarene at 1550 Dixie Highway. The church is next to Covington Catholic High School.

The study will focus on the redevelopment of a half-mile stretch of Dixie Highway in Park Hills.

"The purpose is to gather input about a vision for the area," said project manager Jenna Haverkos, an associate planner with Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission. "That way, it's not just NKAPC staff doing this study. It's the city's plan."

At a second meeting in April, various redevelopment scenarios will be presented. A final public meeting is tentatively scheduled for late July.

A 15-member task force that includes representatives of all facets of Park Hills, including residents, business owners and local council members, will discuss suggestions presented at the public meetings.

"A small area study eventually becomes part of the (Kenton County) comprehensive plan, which is generally a 20-year vision," Haverkos said.

The study – which is expected to take about 10 months - will explore the community's vision for the Dixie Highway corridor in Park Hills. It will look at whether stakeholders prefer commercial development, residential development or mixed use for the study area.

For more information on the study, visit nkapc.org, click on long range planning and then on studies. You also can call 859-331-8980 or e-mail ParkHillsStudy08@nkapc.org.



The [Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission](#) (NKAPC) has been asked to assist the City of Park Hills in an examination of the Dixie Highway corridor, as recommended by the *Comprehensive Plan Update 2006: An Area-Wide Vision for Kenton County*.

The [Park Hills Dixie Study](#) will utilize the NKAPC's Small Area Study process, which includes monthly meetings between NKAPC staff and the study's 15-member task force, interviews with key stakeholders, and three public meetings. The process is designed to allow participants to clearly understand the intent of the plan and the actions necessary to accomplish the recommendations.

According to NKAPC associate planner for long range planning Jenna Haverkos, it's a comprehensive approach to planning at a neighborhood level, where research and public input are focused on the needs of the area.

"The process is intended to create a plan that will be more readily implemented because the public and decision makers have gone through the preparation process together for an area they easily identify with versus the entire county scope of the comprehensive plan," she says.



The Park Hills Dixie Study launched with its first public meeting in late January, and the next public meeting is scheduled for April.

As of yet, the final goals and recommendations of the study are yet to be determined.

"Staff is working with the task force to review public comments from the first public meeting and work toward a vision for the area," Haverkos says. "Once this vision is decided, the task force will move

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

forward toward alternatives for the area and eventually craft recommendations for the study area."

If the city chooses to adopt the study, it will be forwarded to the NKAPC for a recommendation to the Kenton County Planning Commission, who may choose to include it in the countywide comprehensive plan.

Writer: [Kevin LeMaster](#)

Source: Jenna Haverkos, associate planner/long range planning,
Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission



February 19, 2009

Crescent Springs seeks design ideas

Goal is to make better use of city's 'Uptown' gateway

By Cindy Schroeder
cschroeder@nky.com

CRESCENT SPRINGS - Residents, property owners and other stakeholders can help create a 20- to 30-year development plan for an area that's the gateway to the city at Monday's kick-off meeting for the Crescent Springs Small Area Study.

The yearlong study will focus on what's known as the city's "Uptown," a commercial and residential area bounded by Buttermilk Pike, Interstate 75 and the railroad, said Councilman Tom Vergamini, chairman of the city's long-range planning committee. The study area includes Ritchie, Hazelwood and surrounding streets, and it has only two access points - High Street and Hazelwood.

That area is now "a mish-mash of uses," including limited highway access, business office, residential and retail, Vergamini said. He added the Small Area Study "is long overdue."

Keith Logsdon, the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission's deputy director for long-range planning, said the study will focus on the redevelopment potential for the commercial area at Crescent Springs' main entrance.

"For most of the traveling public that gets off the interstate, this is their first impression of Crescent Springs," Vergamini said.

Because the area includes a sizeable commercial land base, GEM Public Sector Services of Dayton, Ohio, will do an economic analysis to help determine future uses.

As part of the study, Mayor Jim Collett is appointing a 12- to 18-member task force of city residents and property owners to analyze the study area and develop recommendations for future land use and planning.

"We've identified people that we'd like to be on the task force, but there may be people who we're not aware of who'd like to be part of this," Vergamini said.

Because the study will develop a 20- to 30-year vision for the area, Vergamini said he would like to see younger residents on the task force, as well as a cross-section of the city and a mix of male and female stakeholders.

"We're not trying to dictate to people how they should use their property," he said. "We're simply trying to find out what (uses) would be best for the city and (the stakeholders)."

The ultimate goal is to have the Small Area Study become part of the Kenton County comprehensive plan.

The city of Park Hills also is doing a Small Area Study on how to redevelop a half-mile section of Dixie Highway stretching from the city's northern to southern boundaries.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The meeting is 6:30 p.m. Monday at the city building, 739 Buttermilk Pike. Information: 859-341-3017.

Additional Facts

If you go

What: Kick off meeting for Crescent Springs Small Area Study

When: 6:30 p.m. Monday

Where: Crescent Springs city building, 739 Buttermilk Pike

Information: 859-341-3017



Park Hills Business Association members (left to right) Leo Stamm, Sharon Dickman, Bob Dickman and Dave Fangman get ready for some street cleanup along Dixie Highway Saturday March 28. PROVIDED. SUBMIT PHOTOS TO BMAINS@NKY.COM

Park Hills group betters city, has hopes

By Regan Coomer
rcoomer@nky.com

Keeping Dixie Highway neat is one way members of the Park Hills Business Association (PHBA) hope to improve their city.

Every year members pick up trash along Dixie Highway, which five members did March 28.

The business association, which started 15 years ago, also hangs up city banners, participates in the city's Memorial Day Parade and 10 years ago the group petitioned the state to fix flooding problems on Dixie Highway.

"Look how nice it looks," said founding member Tom Stamm of the Fort Mitchell Garage about Dixie Highway. "It does make a difference."

Besides making the area around their businesses better,

recently members have been working with city officials and the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission (NKAPC) on the small area study of Dixie Highway to find ways to make the city better for businesses and residents.

"We feel like that's so important to us and our future here," Leo Stamm said of the study.

Leo Stamm is optimistic the study will make it easier for new businesses to locate in the city as well as give the group a development plan to work with.

"Hopefully the study will be friendly toward our businesses and not hurt our parking or access to our properties," Leo Stamm said.

Elizabeth Dickman of Dickman Realty on Dixie Highway has attended almost every NKAPC task force meeting, a group made up of both residents and businesses.

Dickman said zoning along Dixie Highway is "discombobulated" and hopes the study will help the city make zoning more uniform along that corridor.

"We're trying to get businesses to have the same zoning, the same type of signs and the same look so we'll have continuity for new businesses coming in," she said.

Dickman thinks if businesses along the corridor maximize their "road frontage", vehicles traveling down the road will stop and have a look at the niche shops and restaurants in the area.

But whatever happens with the small area study, PHBA members plan to stay as a presence in the community and offer the best services possible.

"I think the more we stick together, the more we offer to the community the better for your business," Dickman said.

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Community Recorder

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Residents at hotel getting kicked out

Posted: Sep 18, 2009 8:28 AM EDT

Updated: Sep 18, 2009 8:28 AM EDT

By Brad Underwood - [bio](#) | [email](#)

Posted by Trina Edwards - [email](#)

PARK HILLS, KY (FOX19) - The Den Lou Motel is a nuisance or an eyesore to many living in Park Hills. However, to nearly 20 people, it's home. But in six days, the people living there could find themselves out on the street.

"This is a family here, we take care of each other, we check on each other every night," said resident Michelle McWhorter.

Park Hills Police are shutting down the Den Lou, and the permanent residents have to be out by Wednesday, Sept. 23. Police are blaming the owner.

"City violations have occurred and piled up," said Park Hills Police Chief Rick Smith.

The Den Lou doesn't offer a lot of luxury. The rooms are small and rundown, but it's enough for these residents. Some of them are on disability, while others are out of work.

"All we want is answers," said McWhorter. "If we have to go, we're fine with that, but we need time."

Residents say the community's perception of the motel and negative feelings from the city is why this is happening.

"It has nothing to do with the people down there right now," said Smith. "It has to do with Mr. Kenneth Wolfe and the way he's keeping his property and the violations he has occurred over the last year."

The Den Lou residents say they will be in court Friday morning appealing the decision to put them out on the street.

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